



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

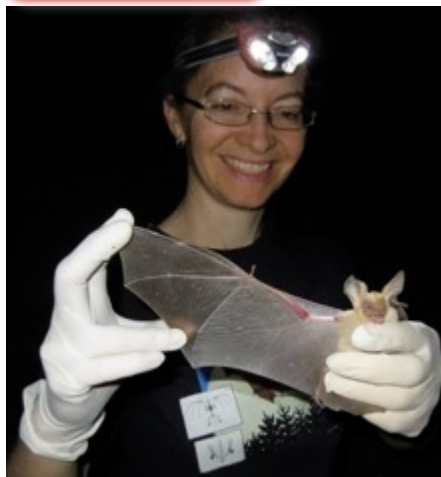
NEWSLETTER

February 2023 - Vol. 30 No. 2

P.O. Box 222

Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

Established in 1970



Long-eared bat

Local Diners: Ecosystem Services of Bats in the Midwest

will be the subject of a presentation by Dr. Joy O'Keefe for SIAS on Friday, Feb. 24th, starting at 7 p.m. in the meeting room at **Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St. Carbondale.** Entrance is from the rear of the building (216 E. Monroe St.) where two parking lots are available for use. Mask wearing is encouraged but not required.

Dr. O'Keefe will describe the status of bats and the threats they face, both globally and regionally. Then she'll use research from her lab and others to show that bats have been undervalued in forests and that, while we may have given bats too much credit for insect suppression in big agriculture, we need more deliberate, localized studies to fully understand their value in the ecosystem.

Assistant Professor and Wildlife Extension Specialist Dr. Joy O'Keefe states she joined the faculty at the University of Illinois in 2020. She studies endangered bats in landscapes where bats intersect with human activity, deriving new information about bat biology and ecology, and identifying strategies to facilitate coexistence of bats and humans. Her research primarily focuses on ways to facilitate the coexistence of bats and humans in human-altered landscapes. She works to understand the roosting and foraging ecology of bats, identify best practices for studying bat ecology, characterize bat behaviors, and assess the quality of mitigation practices designed to help bats. Dr. O'Keefe collaborates with many organizations and people who interact with bats, including private landowners, USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, and state agencies.

Growing up in suburbia, Dr. O'Keefe says she interacted with harmless critters in her backyard, such as easily captured earth snakes, and rescued songbirds and voles maimed by their outdoor cats. Joy first aimed for a career as a veterinarian, though she really longed to aid in conserving wildlife in far flung places. She'd almost completed her undergraduate degree in Zoology when she was exposed to the possibility of a career in ecology or wildlife biology. Cataloguing animal behaviors during internships at the NC Zoo and the Duke Primate Center motivated her to pursue research and her MS degree. Later, as a biologist and environmental educator for a rural utility company, Joy conducted surveys for federally endangered Indiana bats to evaluate the potential effects of proposed utility projects. This illuminating experience led her to her doctoral research on the ecology of forest-dwelling bats. Joy remains motivated to study bats because populations of these fascinating and unique mammals are in peril not only in North America, but worldwide, due to habitat loss, disease, climate change, and human persecution, among other threats.

SIAS Meetings Moving back to Carbondale Township Hall

SIAS is moving our meetings back to the Carbondale Township Hall. It will be our permanent meeting location unless otherwise specified. We thank Nelda Hinckley for getting access to the church.

January Annual Meeting Highlights

Over 30 members and friends attended the January annual meeting and our first indoor in-person gathering since February 2022. (John Schwegmann's Rare Plants of Natural Areas of southern Illinois was that last indoor presentation before CoVid lockdown.)

Our potluck was brimming with yummy entrees and desserts. The new and returning officers elected are: President - Vicki Lang, Vice-President - Joe Merkelbach, Treasurer - Laraine Wright, Secretary - Mary McCarthy, Membership - Kirsten Trimble, Outings Chair - Rhonda Rothrock, and Hospitality Chair - Phyllis Beck. Our thanks to the folks who brought such an interesting array of items for our silent auction.

Special thanks to Nancy Garwood for offering her laptop for John's presentation and to Nancy, Richard Thomas and Chris Benda, via text messaging, who all contributed to helping us overcome our projector technical difficulties.

John's presentation title, "Rarely Seen Natural Phenomena that I have Photographed" was not an understatement. The images he showed were truly rarely seen, some maybe never before seen. Images went from of a fawn that mistook John for its mother to images of some animals that found themselves in precarious situations after having made poor eating choices. Attendees were treated to over 100 images from around the world; an amazing array of plants and animals. John shared a friend's video of a startling landslide. John's friend captured the video right after having passed along a steep hiking path that then slid down a hill/mountain side, trapping other hikers on the wrong side of the slide.

SIAS is so grateful to John (and Martha) for again sharing so much of their marvelous lives with us via their photos. Through the years, John and Martha have taken us around the world and back again. -Rhonda R.

"Natural divisions are geographic regions of a larger entity like a state or a continent. A division contains similar landscapes, climates, and substrate features like bedrock and soils that support similar vegetation and wildlife over the division's area. Natural divisions help conservationists classify land for purposes like protecting natural diversity"

—retired state botanist John Schwegman, 1973

Silent Auctions Are Back!

Given that SIAS made \$218 at our January meeting's silent auction, we may keep going with these during the rest of the year. Bring something to donate, if you wish: book, puzzle, bird house, picture, really anything that someone else would enjoy or find useful. Thanks to all those who participated as donors and buyers at our happy-to-be-back January meeting.

- Laraine Wright, treasurer

SIAS Meeting & Program Calendar

March 24 - Dr. Brent Pease on Sounds of Nature

April 28 - to be announced **May 21** Picnic! (date tentative)

June & July - Summer break

What's Happening in Southernmost IL...

...American woodcocks have been displaying at dawn & dusk on calm days

IL Extension Book Club vis Zoom – The Bird Way

Starting March 1st at 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Discussion will be guided by Kimberly Rohling, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator and Kirsten Trimble, SIAS Membership Chair. Book to be discussed is *The Bird Way*, by Jennifer Ackerman. It's described as a radical investigation into the bird way of being, and the recent scientific research that is dramatically shifting our understanding of birds – how they live and how they think. Discussion Dates and Reading Assignments: March 1 Introduction to Chapter 4; March 15 Chapters 5 to Chapter 8; April 5 Chapter 9 to Chapter 12; April 19 Chapter 13 to Further Reading

Register with Kimberly Rohling by Sunday, February 26, by emailing kimrohli@illinois.edu. You may submit a favorite quote or discussion question from the reading the Monday before the club meets. For the Wednesday, March 1 meeting, please share some of your thoughts by February 27. If you are new to the club, RSVP so you are emailed the Zoom link.

SNF Spring Trash Blast at Dutchman Lake

March 3rd, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Join University of Illinois Extension is partnering with Friends of the Shawnee and the USDA Forest Service to host spring trash blasts in the Shawnee National Forest. They will take place on the first Friday of the month, March through June, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at various locations in the Shawnee National Forest. This March cleanup will take place at Dutchman Lake, Johnson County.

Anne Townsend will coordinate small teams of volunteers to collect litter. To be prepared, volunteers should wear sturdy shoes, bring their own work gloves, wear long pants and closed toed shoes. Buckets and trash grabbers will be provided. Registration required. For directions to the Dutchman Lake location and to register., visit go.illinois.edu/TrashBlastsSpring2023

What Frog is That at Giant City SP

March 4th, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Spring is almost officially here and the frog calls have started! Join Biologist John Palis as we get a jumpstart on warmer weather by learning how to identify our local frogs by sight and sound. Registration required. Call 618.457.4836 for complete details and to register.

Tricky Pollinator Questions and Answers -Webinar

March 9th, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Are annual plants “junk food” for bees? Can I help pollinators by not mowing my lawn? How can I help pollinators if I don't have a garden? Learn what the latest science has to say about some of your most challenging pollinator questions. Presented by [Brodie Dunn](#), State Pollinator Coordinator and Extension Specialist Register at <http://bit.ly/3I6nOxj>

Increasing and Diversifying Carbondale's Trees: Past, Present, and Future

March 9th, 7:00-8:00 p.m. Mark McDaniel, Carbondale's tree arborist will discuss how to use trees to help with such problems as climate change, spread of tree diseases, tree equity and more. Sponsored by Shawnee Group Sierra Club. In-person at Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St. Parking and entrance behind building off of Monroe St. Masks required. For more details, contact Jane Cogle: jane.cogle@gmail.com

2nd Saturday Monthly Birding with SIAS Outing Moving to Evergreen Park, Carbondale

March 11th, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. The location of SIAS's monthly birding gathering has moved from Bogart Point at Crab Orchard NWR to Evergreen Park on the south side of Carbondale. Meet at the Red Oak Shelter, that sets along Carbondale Reservoir lake.

Directions (from IL Rt. 51 a.k.a. South Illinois Avenue): Take IL Rt. 51 south from Carbondale to the stop-light intersection with Pleasant Hill Rd., turn west onto Pleasant Hill Rd., follow it to west most park entrance, turn south, follow road south then east to the small shelter near the water. For more details, contact Kirsten Trimble at 618.524.4166

Birding Hikes at Giant City SP

March 11th, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

March is a great time to look for spring migrators in Giant City! Join Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, park volunteer and Southern Illinois Audubon Society member, as she guides participants along the 3/4-mile Indian Creek Nature Trail. Registration required. Call 618.457.4836 to register.

Movie Screening: The Peregrine Falcon

March 16th 2-3:00 p.m. & 6-7 p.m., at the Cache Wetlands Center For 2023, the monthly nature films at Cache River State Natural Area the theme is raptors of Illinois. This month featured species will be the peregrine falcon, the world's fastest animal. Join us for a screening at the Barkhausen-Cache River Wetlands Center, 8885 IL-37, Cypress, IL. For more details, contact the Visitor's Center at 618.657.2064.

Nature Walks at SunnySide

Tentative dates: March 25th & April 16th

SIAS Outings Chair Rhonda Rothrock (and hubby Robert) invite you for nature walks on their 40 acres, that Rhonda calls SunnySide. Their place is in rural Jackson County, just two miles north of the Little Grand Canyon. A combination of woodlands and a prairie planting, SunnySide is home to or has been visited by 164 species of birds (some as flyovers), is host to 500 species of plants, and supports a mix of other animals including woodrats, red milksnakes, green tree frogs, and armadillos. Confirmed details, including times and directions, will follow in the March.

A Climate Preserve? There is no such thing.

What is a climate preserve? Google it and your first hit is: Climate Preserves: A New Tool to Fight the Climate Crisis, Apr 13, 2022, PDA News. There you will find a proposal to eliminate our Shawnee National Forest so to replace it with a National Park and climate preserve. Looking further you will find “A National Climate Preserve is a new concept, preserving areas where forests grow as intact ecosystems, free from CO2-releasing resource extraction.”

While the concept sounds lovely, there's just one problem, it is only a concept, a notion, a whim. There is no such thing as a climate preserve. There is no definition or methodology. There is no outlined structure or blueprint; no rules or regulations. There is no management developed. There is no such thing.

To add to the ambiguousness of their pitch for a National Park and climate preserve (no such thing), one of this group's founding members admitted in a public meeting in December 2022 that, “we know our proposal is vague.” True that!

This group is willing to put our Shawnee National Forest at risk of elimination for a vague proposal of something that doesn't exist. That would be rather like agreeing to surgery without knowing what was going to take place, what was going to be repaired or removed, and with no follow-up.

-Rhonda R.

Interesting Research Summaries *By Laraine Wright*

ANTS. Biologists estimate there are 20 quadrillion ants on earth, or 2.5 million for every living human.

ERECT-CRESTED PENGUINS. This endangered species lives on the remote Antipodes Island south of New Zealand, inhabited only by birds. The penguins lay two eggs each breeding season, usually a smaller first egg followed by a larger second. Then the female throws the first egg out of the nest and doesn't incubate it. Biologists who have tried to study these penguins, which is difficult to do, theorize they incubate only one egg because of food scarcity. Globally, all penguins species are in trouble. In a plea for us to pay attention, Lloyd Davis, a New Zealand biologist, says, "If you don't know about them, you can't care about them."

COCKATOOS. Australian biologist Alice Auersperg has proven that the wild Goffin's Cockatoo is now the third animal, along with humans and chimpanzees, shown to select various tools based on specific tasks. Other animals such as ravens use tools, too, but not different ones tied to individual problems. The cockatoos in lab experiments used their beaks to fashion wedge, knife, and spoon type implements to release cashews from different puzzle boxes. In some experiments, the birds had to select the right tools from an assortment on a table and carry them in their beaks across a ramp to the puzzle box.

BIRDS IN DECLINE. BirdLife International, which documents data on bird numbers every four years, has said that almost half of the world's bird species are declining and one in eight faces extinction. In the U.S. there are 70 species at the "tipping point," including chimney swifts. Cavity nesters show the greatest dangers. Habitat loss, of course.

IVORY-BILLED? Maybe! A small family of ivory-billed woodpeckers could still exist at a super-secret research site in Louisiana. A photo sequence taken on Nov. 30, 2019, shows what appears to be the birds foraging together on one tree. Another photo, in January that year, supposedly shows a male-female pair.

TUFTED TITMOUSE. Do many birds pluck hairs from fur-bearing animals for their nests? In the "Ecology" scientific journal recently, six researchers reported on a search for literature and videos about this question. They found 99 videos on YouTube showing this practice. In 93 percent, it was a Tufted Titmouse that plucked the hair of a human, a dog, a cat, raccoons, squirrels, woodchuck, cows, and others. Most of the hair donors gave willingly. Only an opossum objected.

EUROPEAN STARLINGS. Their numbers are falling in Europe, at least, because of continuing decline in cavity nest sites. But a 2021 article in "Wilson Journal of Ornithology" documented a starling serving as a nanny to a Hairy Woodpecker by bringing food to the hatchlings and even helping to remove fecal sacs.

ANCIENT PENGUIN. Recently discovered fossils in New Zealand dating to 60 million years ago have produced *Kumimanu Fordycei*, a penguin species weighing 340 pounds, about the size of an adult gorilla. Modern penguins top out at 88 pounds.

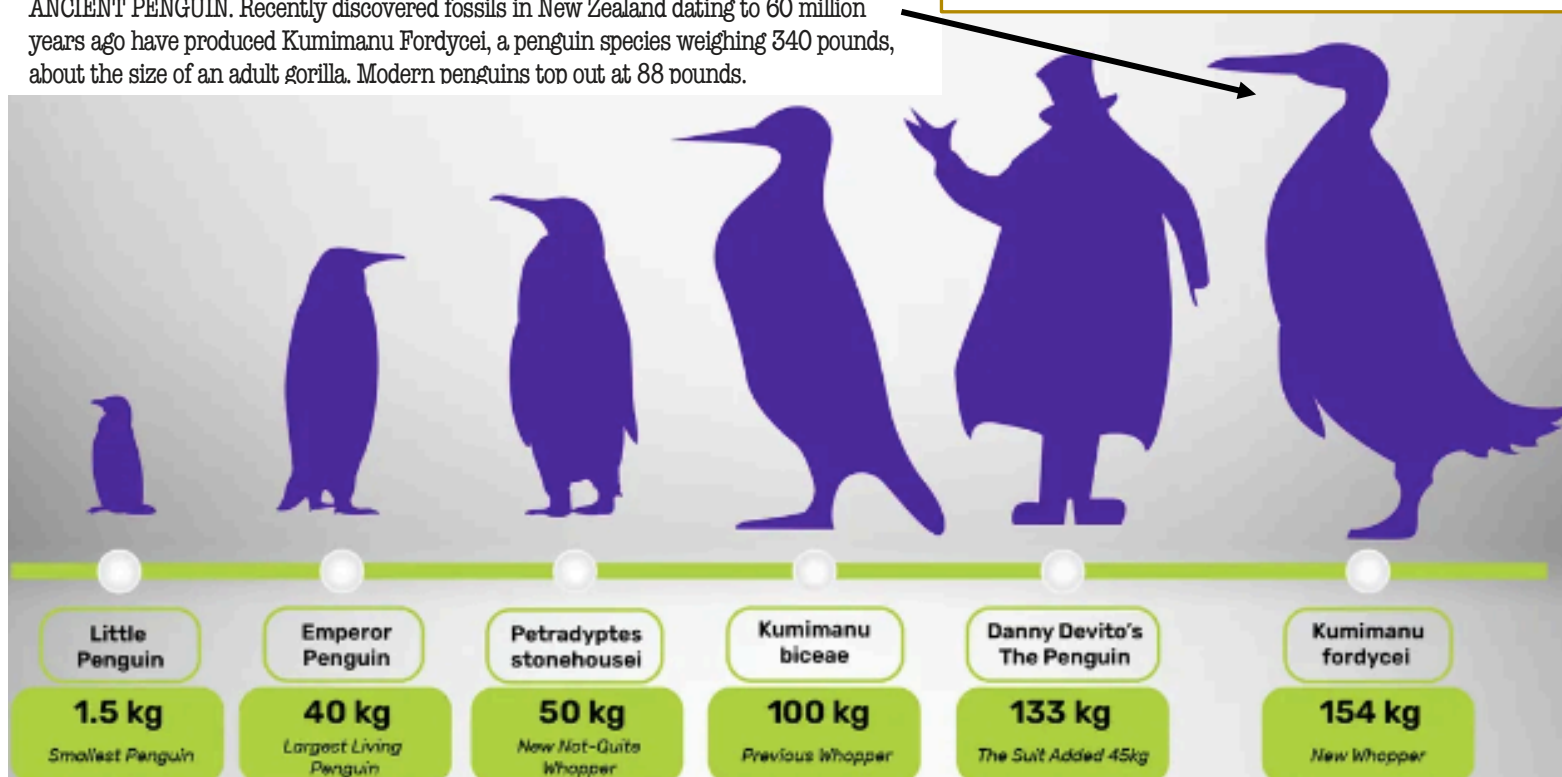
Links Between Tourism & Climate Change

Many countries that are vulnerable to climate change are considered tourism hotspots. During COP25 (2020), Patricia Espinosa (The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Executive Secretary) said that climate change is happening in destinations that are dependent on tourism, leading to losses of jobs, homes, lives, and hope. Areas that are close to the ocean as well as mountainous areas and polar regions are especially affected by the impacts of climate change in the form of floods, droughts, heatwaves or hurricanes. While the tourism industry in the Arctic may benefit from the global warming induced reductions in sea ice, tourism destinations in the tropics are projected to experience a decrease in visitor numbers due to more extreme temperatures and increases in the frequency and intensity of storms. Despite that, the travel and tourism industry remain one of the most polluting industries regarding carbon emissions, hence perpetuating global warming and natural disasters. <http://bit.ly/3xtOUJN>

Tourism | UNEP - UN Environment Programme

United Nations Environment research has indicated that the tourism sector's consumption of key resources – energy, water, land and materials (such as fossil fuels, minerals, metals and biomass) – is growing commensurately with its generation of solid waste, sewage, loss of biodiversity, and greenhouse gas emissions. In a 'business-as-usual' scenario, tourism would generate through 2050 an increase of 154% in energy consumption, 131% in greenhouse gas emissions, 152% in water consumption and 251% in solid waste disposal. <http://bit.ly/3Z2KNjP>

The Conference of the Parties (COP 26 - 2021) to the The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2021 called for a 50% reduction in tourism emissions by 2030.



To Join SIAS or Renew Your Membership, please fill in this form and return it with payment. Thank You!

Individual Member \$15
 Family \$25
 Student Voting Member \$ 5
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 Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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**Mail to: Southern Illinois Audubon Society
 Attn: Membership
 P.O. Box 222, Carbondale, IL 62903-0222**

I/We would like to receive our newsletter via email: YES / NO
 If you receive your newsletter electronically,
 contact Laraine W. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.



21st Anniversary Birding Blitz, April 29th!

SIAS will be sponsoring the Birding Blitz of Southernmost IL on April 29th with the Awards Brunch on the 30th. It's 21 years, 225 species (and counting), and over \$50,000 raised for habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache River Wetlands. This year we're hoping for good weather, the same outstanding participation as we had last year, and that the Haven, on IL Rt. 13, will again be available as our Awards Brunch location.

For all Blitz details including registration forms (due 04/15), visit our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/317666471615613/> or contact Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605 / woodthrusheola@hotmail.com.

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P.O. Box 222
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222



Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,

the Illinois Environmental Council, & the North American Bluebird Society

Illinois Extension
 MASTER GARDENER &
 MASTER NATURALIST

**BOOK
 CLUB**

1st & 3rd
 Wednesdays
 9AM-10AM;
 ZOOM Meetings



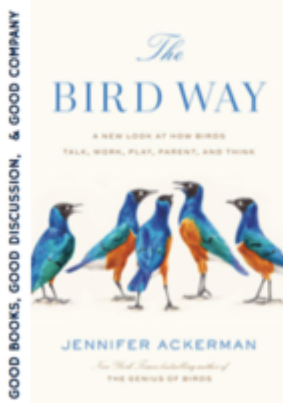
READING SCHEDULE

March 1
 Introduction to Chapter 4

March 15
 Chapters 5 to Chapter 8

April 5
 Chapter 9 to Chapter 12

April 19
 Chapter 13 to Further
 Reading



Register with Kim Rohling
 at kimrohli@illinois.edu
 by Sunday, February 26.

