



Southern Illinois Audubon Society

NEWSLETTER

May 2023 – Vol. 30 No. 5

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

Established in 1970

May 28 > SIAS Annual Picnic at Giant City State Park

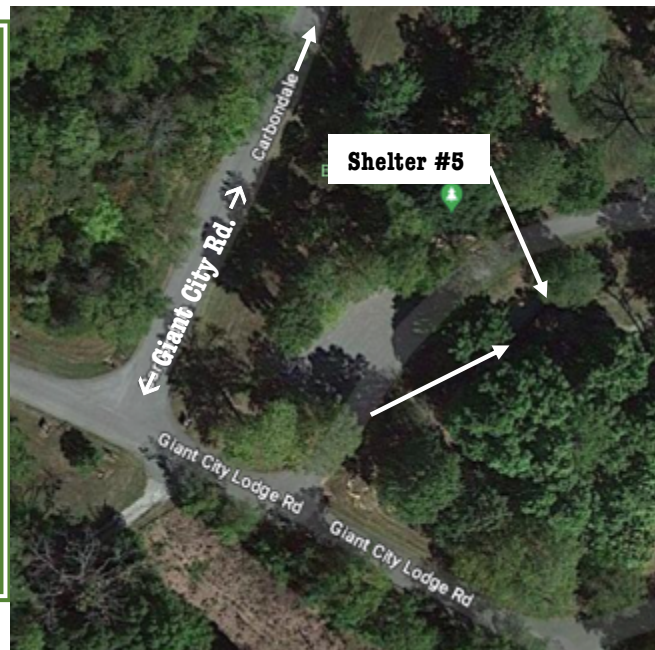
SIAS will hold our Annual Picnic on Sunday, May 28th at Giant City State Park, Shelter #5. Shelter #5 is located south of the Visitor Center, at the intersection of Giant City Rd. and Giant City Lodge Rd., across from the Post Oak Trail entrance.

<https://goo.gl/maps/wTGBPeqMSFJVGuJ87>

This is the most accessible shelter site, adjacent to the large ball field on the way to Indian Creek Trail.

Arrive at 1 p.m. for set up and socializing. We will eat at 2 P.M. SIAS will provide the meats (& a non-meat option), buns, condiments, and some beverages. Please bring a side dish, your own plate(s), utensils, and a beverage. We hope to see your there!

After the meal, join members for a stroll to the accessible Post Oak Trail to visit the SIAS sponsored bench while birding along the way.



Another Great Birding Blitz! 182 Bird Species Tallied!

A Big THANK YOU to all the participants and pledgers who contributed to make the 2023 Blitz another big success! **We raised over \$2600** in pledges for habitat restoration and preservation in the Cache River Wetlands. The total will be higher as pledges are still trickling in.

Saturday was nearly one of the best weather days we've ever had for the Blitz, with slightly overcast to partly cloudy skies, temperatures between 57-67 degrees, and almost no wind. Had it been an average late April migration day, it would have been an amazing day. But it was far from that. Even with nearly no wind, songbird sounds were minimal. Nesting species were in good numbers but migrants were sparse.

We had 36 individuals in 9 teams that participated. Despite the weirdness of this spring's migration, the combined species seen total was 182. That said, there is one list yet to be turned in. We all agreed that many of those 182 species were not easily found. And many others that were expected were missed. Other than the occasional 40-50-foot puddle, shorebird habitat was non-existent. Still, 14 species of shorebirds were located.

>The Open A Big Day and overall winning team were the SI-Hotshots with 157 species, a good total for this particular Saturday and an anagram of their last year's total (and the highest blitz total ever) of 175. They were the only team competing in the Open A category.

>The County Big Day category contained 4 teams with the Boom Shakalaka Chachalakas (in Union county) pulling off the win with 123 species. Tied for second were the Two Old, To Slow, Too Bad team (in Saline county) and the Beasts of Birdin' team (in Jackson county) both tallying 114 species. Close in third place were the Lucky Horseshoe Lakers (in Alexander county) with a total of 112 species.

>Only one team, that didn't choose a team name, participated in the Dawn to Dusk category and tallied 108 species for their win.

>Also, there was only one team in the Muscle-powered category, who spent their day walking at Midland Hills south of Carbondale. The Fair to Midlands won their category with a total of 55.

>There were two teams in the Senior category. The 49ers won the category with 105 species. In second place were the 2 Long-tailed Ducks and an Old Coot with a total of 34. The latter team also included a "junior" ride-along member, Remy age 9.

It's so magical knowing all these wonderful bird lovers are out at the same time throughout southernmost IL on the same day birding!

Blitz team names and members:

SI Hotshots – Colin Dobson, Keith McMullen, Dan Kassebaum, and Tony Ward.

Two Old, To Slow, Too Bad – Craig Taylor and Mark Seifert.

Lucky Horseshoe Lakers – Jacob Cooper, Zach Skubiszewski, Xiaoni Xu, Jing-Yi Lu, and Alex Files.

Beasts of Birdin' – Elisabeth Spratt, Robert Kaminsky, Janis Valdez, Nick Wells, and Kyle Wells,

Un-named team – Shasta Corvus, A.J. Collins, Steph Honcharenko, Becca DuCay, and Jonathan Escamilla

Fair to Midland – Susan Berry, Chris Benda, Jacob Gyore, and Mike Baltz

The 49ers – Cathie Hutcheson, Nancy Garwood, & Mike Bowers

Two Long-tailed Ducks & an Old Coot – Nelda Hinckley, Joanne & Michael Christopher, and Remy Champion

Boom Shakalaka Chachalakas – Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, Mark Vukovich, and Rhonda Rothrock.



2nd Saturday Monthly Birding with SIAS

Outing at Evergreen Park, Carbondale

June 10th & August 12th, from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

NOTE: No birding day at Evergreen in July, it's just too hot!

Meet at the Red Oak Shelter that sets along Carbondale Reservoir lake in Evergreen Park on the south side of Carbondale.

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 phone Kirsten Trimble at 618.524.4166

Nature Walks at SunnySide On Hickory Ridge

Prairie Plants - June 17th & August 26th, 9:00 a.m.- noon

SIAS Outings Chair Rhonda Rothrock (and her hubby Robert) invite you for two more nature walk on their 40-acre property in rural Jackson County, adjoining the Shawnee National Forest, just two miles north of the Little Grand Canyon on the same road. A combination of woodlands and a prairie planting, June brings a new look to SunnySide. As some prairie plants are going to seed, many other species will be blooming. And as August rolls around, you'll observe how later season species are over all bigger than early season species.

Google map link: <https://goo.gl/maps/pyY1ZNABEC7npPMHA>

Rothrocks request that interested folks register, either by calling our land line at 618.684.6605 or emailing Rhonda at woodthrusheola@hotmail.com.

SIAS Program Calendar:

June & July - Summer break! Have fun!

August 25th – Pat Dunbar and Mary McCarthy on Dragonflies

Sept. 22nd – Mark Vukovich on Cerulean Warblers

April Presentation Highlights will follow in the August newsletter. But until then, just a couple points: historic Ozark hellbender population estimate was 27,000, current population estimate is 1,000. Factors that likely contributed to decline include habitat degradation, predation, water quality issues, disease and pathogens, abnormalities, and exploitation. But reproduction is occurring in the wild, artificial nesting boxes are successful, and captive-reared individuals are breeding in the wild. We thank Dr. Jeffrey Briggler for a fascinating presentation!

The following are submissions from two local Herrin youths to the IL Audubon Society Magazine Summer Student Edition. As the work was not going to be used in its entirety, their work is being provided here in its entirety for our members to experience. I believe you will find their poetry and drawings as moving as I did. -Rhonda R.

Upland sandpipers
are found in tall grasses green
in small colonies.

Being threatened birds
prairie homes lost bring concern
their song grows quiet.

We need to preserve
grasslands small farms and pastures
so this bird can be.
- Arden Perkins, age: 9, Fourth grade



The cerulean warbler is flying high,
swiftly swooping through the sky.
Trying to find a place to rest,
but it has lost its habitat, and has no nest.

Spring brings the warbler
to our Illinois home.
Where it hopes to find a place to
nest and roam.

Cerulean warblers are beautifully blue,
we hope that we will always be able to see their colorful hue.
But that will depend on efforts to preserve,
and provide a sanctuary for this wonderful bird.

We need to save the highest of trees,
and give the warblers a home in their leaves.
Kids can help too by spreading the word,
about all the dangers that surround this most unique bird.
- Greer Perkins, age: 9, grade 4



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Don't Believe the Local Radical Logging Reports

If you're concerned about reports of logging in the Shawnee NF, the areas are being greatly misrepresented. Here are Google map links to sites where trees are being selectively removed so sunlight can get through the canopy to oak and hickory saplings on the forest floor.

Kinkaid, Jackson County:

<https://goo.gl/maps/6zf6daC7xrxv5cM68>

and Bean Ridge, Alexander County:

<https://goo.gl/maps/WBSm3sHk8YFh5sH59>

The red pins are at the landings where logs are stored before removal by truck. Zoom out to see the adjacent large open private landowner properties/inholdings. -Rhonda R.

What's Happening in Southernmost IL...

...at least one red crossbill fledged here this spring!

Let's Go Chasing Fireflies...in the Cache

May 26th, 7:30-9:30 PM, at Heron Pond Trail

The cypress firefly was first documented in early 2019 in high-quality cypress swamps in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Indiana. A confirmed IL sighting was recorded at the Heron Pond boardwalk in June 2019.

Natural Heritage biologist Christina Feng will tell us about fireflies of Illinois while leading a night hike on the Todd Fink-Heron Pond Trail to the Heron Pond boardwalk in search of the cypress firefly. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Heron Pond Ln, Belknap. For full detail phone 618.657.2064. <https://goo.gl/maps/pCsxGhL8JZRxt54t7>

Night Sky Viewing with the

Astronomical Association of Southern Illinois

June 10th, 8-9:00 PM, at Giant City State Park

Giant City State Park is a great place to do a little night sky viewing and what better people to view the sky with than the Astronomical Association of So. IL (AASI). Join the Park Naturalist for a short evening hike to the viewing field where AASI will have telescopes set up to enjoy the beautiful night sky and all that it has to offer! This program is weather dependent. Registration is required, phone 618.457.4836 for complete details and to register.

Magnificent Moths at the Cache

July 29th, 9:00 AM - noon., at the Cache Wetlands Ctr

Join UofI Extension and IL Dept. of Natural Resources for this Magnificent Moths event during National Moth Week. A variety of educational activities and resources will be offered for the young and young at heart. For more details, contact the Visitor's Center at 618.657.2064.

SILICATE CHEMISTRY IS SECOND NATURE TO US GEOCHEMISTS, SO IT'S EASY TO FORGET THAT THE AVERAGE PERSON PROBABLY ONLY KNOWS THE FORMULAS FOR OLIVINE AND ONE OR TWO FELDSPARS.

AND QUARTZ, OF COURSE. OF COURSE.



Even when they're trying to compensate for it, experts in anything wildly overestimate the average person's familiarity with their field.

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Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,
the Illinois Environmental Council, & the North American Bluebird Society



Fledgling red crossbill photographed on 05.17.23 by Mark Vukovich, USFS biologist in a recently thinned short-leaf pine stand in the southeast Shawnee National Forest. Details to follow in August Newsletter.