



# Southern Illinois Audubon Society Newsletter

August 2025  
Vol. 32 No. 5

Southern Illinois  
Audubon Society (SIAS)  
P.O. Box 222  
Carbondale, IL  
62903-0222  
*Established in 1970*

<http://www.siaudubon.org>

Email SIAS at:  
[siaudubonsociety@gmail.com](mailto:siaudubonsociety@gmail.com)

## SIAS Board of Directors

President & Programs Chair:  
Vicki Lang-Mendenhall  
618.697.9868  
Vice President: Joe Merkelbach  
618.532.3112  
Secretary: Mary McCarthy  
618.684.8182  
Treasurer: Judy Marshall  
618.559.0147  
Conservation/Education Chair:  
Cathie Hutcheson  
618.529.2022  
Hospitality Chair: Phyllis Beck  
618.549.9819  
Membership Chair: Kirsten  
Trimble 618.521.4266  
Outings Chair & Newsletter  
Editor: Rhonda Rothrock  
618.684.6605 /  
[woodthrusheola@hotmail.com](mailto:woodthrusheola@hotmail.com)  
SIAS Webmaster: Jim Shofstall

SIAS is the sponsor of  
*The Birding Blitz of  
Southernmost Illinois*

Details can be found at:  
[www.facebook.com/group  
s/317666471615613/](http://www.facebook.com/group/s/317666471615613/)

## Gardening for Moths by Kimberly Rohling

**Join SIAS on Friday, August 22nd, to up your moth gardening!**

Gardening for Moths is a program designed to create sustainable and moth-friendly garden spaces that support the survival and thriving of moth populations. The program emphasizes the importance of moths as pollinators and beautiful nocturnal creatures often overlooked in traditional gardening practices.

**The presentation will start at our new meeting time of 6 P.M.,** in the meeting room at Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St. Carbondale. Entrance to the Township Hall is from the rear of the Building, off 216. E. Monroe St., where two parking lots are available.

Kimberly Rohling is the Horticulture Educator with the IL Extension serving Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, & Williamson Counties. As a child, Kim enjoyed reading books about wildlife in faraway places. Kim rekindled her love of birding in 2006 when she visited Ecuador and the Galapagos islands for a winter term undergraduate experience.



## SIAS 2025-26 Meeting Calendar

**September 14th-** SIAS annual fall picnic, at Ferne Clyffe

**October 24th-** Program canceled due to SIU Homecoming & City of Carbondale Downtown Events

**December 5th-** Nov/Dec combined meeting. Program: Tom Caldwell on Art in Nature, the Bower Bird

**January 23rd-** Annual Meeting, Potluck, & Program. Speaker to be announced.

**February 27th-** Program to be announced

**March 27th-** Program to be announced

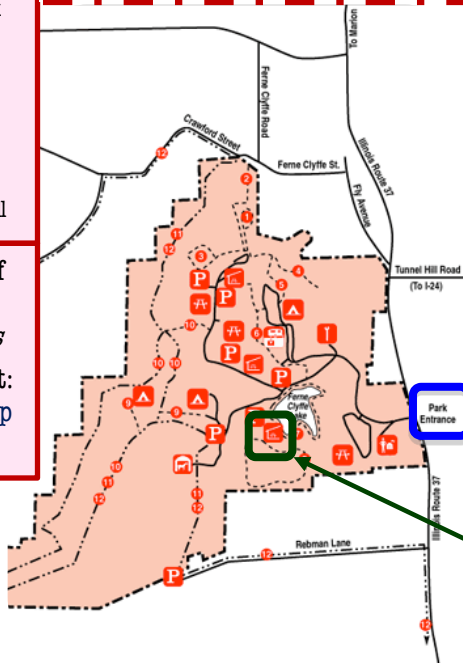


Shagbark Hickory in flower

## Sept. 4th > SIAS Fall Picnic at Ferne Clyffe

SIAS's Annual Picnic will be Sunday, Sept. 14th at Ferne Clyffe State Park Lakeview Picnic Shelter. **Arrive to help set up and for socializing at 1 p.m. with dining at 2 p.m.** SIAS will provide hotdogs, buns, and condiments. Veggie option will be available. Members are asked to bring a dish to share and their own beverages, dinnerware, and utensils.

Directions to Ferne Clyffe State Park: Ferne Clyffe can be reached from I-57 and I-24. The park is well signed from both interstate highways. If traveling south on I-57, take the Goreville exit, #40, approximately 12 miles south of Marion, IL. At exit #40 turn left (east), go 5 miles to IL Rt. 37. Turn right (south) on Rt. 37, you will see the park entrance 1 mile south of Goreville. Traveling north on I-57, take exit #40, Goreville, turn right (east), go 5 miles to IL Rt. 37, turn right (south) on IL Rt. 37 and you will see the park entrance 1 mile south of Goreville. If traveling on I-24, take exit #7 (Goreville), turn west and go 2 miles to IL Rt. 37, turn left (south) and go 1/2 mile to **park entrance**. Follow signs to Lakeside Shelter and Roundbluff Trail. Go past lake on left and follow signs to parking for **Lakeside Shelter** and Roundbluff area.



## What's Happening in Southernmost IL...

*...We're having a heatwave, an "upper ridge" heatwave!  
The temperature's rising. It isn't surprising. We just want to stay indoors!*

### SIAS Brown Bag Birding & Socializing at Evergreen Park, Carbondale

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month lunchtime birding at 11:30 a.m.

September 9<sup>th</sup> & October 14<sup>th</sup>

Meet at Red Oak Pavilion located in Evergreen Park, Carbondale, rain or shine! Directions (from IL Rt. 51/ South Illinois Ave.) Take IL Rt. 51 south from Carbondale to stop-light intersection with Pleasant Hill Rd, turn west onto Pleasant Hill Rd, follow it to western most park entrance then turn south next look for Red Oak Pavilion on right.

Pavilion has picnic tables, if you would be more comfortable in a folding chair, then please bring one. Bring your lunch, drink, binoculars, and conversations. Sponsored by the SIAS. For more info, contact Kathryn Jenkel at 618.559.2908 or [katjenkel@yahoo.com](mailto:katjenkel@yahoo.com)

### Landscaping with Native Plants Garden Tour at TON

August 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Join Lyle White, Master Naturalist and SIAS member, on a tour of the gardens at Touch of Nature Outdoor Education Center, 1206 Touch of Nature Rd, Makanda. View the results from 6 growing seasons. Learn why to shift to native plants, which methods Worked, and which methods didn't. Be inspired! Registration required at : [go.illinois.edu/nativeTON](http://go.illinois.edu/nativeTON) Or scan→



### Friends of the Cache River Watershed Annual Mtg.

Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m.

At the Carbondale Civic Center, 200 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale.

Join the Friend of the Cache for their annual meeting and a 45-minute presentation about the Alligator Gar's return to the Cache River.

*Return of the "Megafauna" Alligator Gar to the Cache River Watershed*

After nearly 60 years of absence, the Alligator Gar, one of N. America's largest native freshwater fish, is once again swimming in the Cache River.

Will be presented by Guest speaker Mark Denzer, Little Grassy Fish Hatcheries Natural Resource Coordinator for IL Dept of Natural Resources.

### Fun Birding Walks with Master Naturalist Lily Glaeser

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. / Various Dates / Various Sites

Join Master Naturalist, Lily Glaeser, for a leisurely walk in nature to look at birds! All ages and experiences are welcome. Registration is required in case the event needs to be cancelled due to inclement weather. Binoculars are available for use. SIAS is one of the sponsors of these birding walks.

Online registration for each event at [go.illinois.edu/BirdWithLily](http://go.illinois.edu/BirdWithLily) will close the Tuesday before each event. Participants will be emailed the Wednesday before the outing. Questions, contact Lily at [littleglaser@gmail.com](mailto:littleglaser@gmail.com)

Sunday, August 24 -GreenEarth Chautauqua Bottoms, 2100 W Chautauqua Rd

Thursday, Sept. 11 -GreenEarth Oakland Nature Preserve, 1201 N Oakland, C'dale

Sunday, Sept. 28 -Giant City St Pk Post Oak Trail: 460 Giant City Lodge Rd, Makanda; event is a sit so bring your olawn or camp chair to be comfortable.

Thursday, Oct. 19 -GreenEarth Stan Harris Prairie,

corner of Edgewood Ln & New Era Rd, C'dale

Sunday, Oct. 19 -Giant City St Pk Indian Creek Trail, Giant City Lodge Rd, Makanda

### Events at Giant City State Park -Registration Required

Sept. 6 -Mark Motsinger: Stone Fort Hike & Presentation, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> -Anne Townsend: Using Native Plant Dyes, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

October 4<sup>th</sup> -Explore the So. IL Outdoors Day at Giant City St Pk, Noon-3:00 p.m.

Phone the Visitor Center at 618.457.4836 for full details or to register.

## Fall Trash Blasts on the Shawnee National Forest

First Friday of each month, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> Iron Mountain, Union Co.; Oct. 3 Dutchman Lake,

Johnson Co.; Nov. 7 Iron Mountain, Hardin Co.

The USDA SNF Forest Service, Friends of the Shawnee Nat Forest, and the IL Extension Office partner to host these annual Trash Blasts. Attendees will break into small teams of volunteers to collect litter from selected sites. No matter what we find, we try to remove it to help restore the area to its natural state. Volunteers should wear sturdy shoes, bring their leather work gloves, wear long pants, and closed-toed shoes. If you do not have leather gloves we can help provide them for you. This event is limited to 30 participants. For complete details and location directions, contact Anne Townsen at [cupquake@illinois.edu](mailto:cupquake@illinois.edu) Register at <https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/fall-trash-blasts-2025>

*These hardworking folks are awesome and inspiring.*

*They greatly deserve our thanks and admiration! -Rhonda R*

### Friends of Crab Orchard Nature Dialogues

Saturday, Sept. 13, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Speaker Karen Mangan on The Waterfowl of Crab Orchard NW Refuge

Dialogues will be at Crab Orchard Visitor's Center,

phone the Refuge at 618.997.3344 for all details or to register.

### Dogtooth Bend, a Floodplain Restoration Project

October 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

Tharran Hobson, Southern Illinois Program Director for the Nature Conservancy (TNC) will present "Dog Tooth Bend", a landscape-scale floodplain restoration project in Alexander County. Hobson will also discuss TNC partnerships with the Army Corps, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), focusing on human dimensions of the project as well as restoration of natural infrastructure.

Program will be at Carbondale Township Hall Meeting Room, 217 East Main St. Enter through the back door. Park behind the Hall, off Monroe St. Sponsored by Shawnee Group Sierra Club, free and open to the public. For more information, contact Barb at 618.549.9684.

Thirty year old Austin Trey Davidson and a fellow Forest Service employee were performing maintenance at Oakwood Bottoms in Jackson County on August 20, 2024. While using a weed-eater, Austin unknowingly hit a bumblebee nest. The bees attacked him, stinging him dozens of times. That evening Austin passed away, leaving behind his wife, a newborn baby, and a toddler.



## IN-HONOR OF AUSTIN DAVIDSON VOLUNTEER EVENT

Location: Oakwood Bottoms Interpretive Site

Date: August 20, 2025

Time: 1PM- 3PM

Join the Forest Service and his family in honoring Austin (Former Forest Service Employee) by giving back to the National Forest he loved so much. Projects include replacing and painting the interpretive sign, installing wood duck boxes for wildlife habitat improvement, and general recreation maintenance including picking up branches, weed whacking, leaf blowing, power washing the pavilion and tables. Please feel free to bring a fishing pole to fish after the event.

To register for this event:  
Contact Alyssa Macuiba at  
[alyssa.macuiba@usda.gov](mailto:alyssa.macuiba@usda.gov)

# ILLINOIS IAS BIG SIT COMPETITION SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2025



## Join the SunnySide (Not So) Swifts for a Big Sit at Little SunnySide, Sunday Sept. 28th

SIAS will be competing in the Illinois Audubon Society's (IAS) annual Illinois Big Sit Competition the weekend of Sept. 26-28. Our Big Sit will take place at SunnySide, the Rothrock property, at 7398 Hickory Ridge Rd, rural Pomona, on Sunday Sept. 28th. SunnySide is 2 miles north of Little Grand Canyon, in the Shawnee National Forest.

What is a Big Sit? A Big Sit, similar to a Big Day, is a competition where a team of bird watchers count as many species as possible within a 24-hour period. While the Big Day involves moving around from spot to spot to maximize the number of species sighted, a Big Sit is precisely that! You stay (sit or stand) in one location, a 17-foot diameter circle called a "count circle". Only species seen and/or heard from within that circle count toward the final day's tally.

While the Big Sit is a 24-hour competition, SIAS members and friends are invited to come and go throughout the day at their leisure. We will count as a team but folks can come and go from our count circle as long as there are no more than five people actively counting at one time. The Big Sit is all about slowing down, enjoying good company, and great birds. Some snacks will be provided.

Our Team, SunnySide (Not So) Swifts, has been registered with Rhonda Rothrock as Team Captain. Folks intending to actively participate, are requested to register at the IAS link:

<https://illinoisaudubon.org/illinois-big-sit/>

Also please RSVP with Rhonda if you plan on stopping in by calling at 618.684.6605 or emailing at [woodthrusheola@hotmail.com](mailto:woodthrusheola@hotmail.com) so she will know who to expect. Note: cell service in the Rothrock's area is limited, sometimes nearly non-existent.

Directions to SunnySide: From Carbondale, take Old Hwy 13 west to IL Rt. 127. Drive 3.7 miles south on Rt. 127 to Orchard Hill Rd. Go west on Orchard Hill Rd. to Poplar Ridge Rd. Continue west on Poplar Ridge Rd to a 4-way intersection with Hickory Ridge Rd. Take Hickory Ridge Rd. southwest 1 mile.

Watch for old red barn and metal grain bin. Sign will direct to parking.



## Durbin Introduced Legislation To Protect More Than 13,000 Acres Of Shawnee National Forest

The Shawnee National Forest Conservation Act of 2025 would create 12,700 additional acres of special management areas and 750 acres of wilderness in the Shawnee National Forest

WASHINGTON July 31, 2025 –U.S. Senate Democratic Dick Durbin (D-IL) introduced the Shawnee National Forest Conservation Act, legislation that would create 12,700 additional acres of special management areas and 750 acres of wilderness in the Shawnee National Forest. Securing this designation for these acres would offer critical protections to the area.

"The Shawnee National Forest welcomes thousands of visitors each year, who take advantage of the beautiful views and hiking trails. It's critical that our natural areas are preserved to ensure that generations of Illinoisans can continue to enjoy all that Shawnee National Forest has to offer," Durbin said. "I'm introducing the Shawnee National Forest Conservation Act to protect more than 13,000 acres of one of our state's richest natural resources."

"Protecting these wonderful areas in the Shawnee National Forest, including the new Camp Hutchins Wilderness Area, will go a long way to preserving some of the most remarkable landscapes, biodiversity, and water resources in Southern Illinois," said Howard Learner, Executive Director of the Environmental Law & Policy Center. "Illinois cares about Wilderness areas in the Shawnee, and we now have a great opportunity to continue protecting these special places for hiking, camping, and wildlife."

"These three areas are rich in biodiversity and among Illinois' most pristine habitats, but they are not currently protected against logging or other commercial activities," said Barbara McKasson, a leader with the Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club. "Senator Durbin's proposal will ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy these high quality natural areas, and that they will continue to support a rich diversity of wildlife."

The 12,700 acres of special management areas will be from the following areas: 2,953 acres from Camp Hutchins; 3,445 acres from Ripple Hollow; and 6,310 acres from Burke Branch. The 750 acres of wilderness will be in Camp Hutchins.

The Shawnee National Forest consists of 289,000 acres and its boundaries have been expanded three times since the U.S. Forest Service originally purchased the land in 1933. Roughly 10 percent, or about 30,000 acres, of the Shawnee National Forest is currently protected as wilderness.

SIAS has sent a letter to Senator Durbin in support of his proposed legislation. You can help bring this to fruition by contacting Senator Durbin to let him know your support of his bill, **SB2548, the Shawnee National Forest Conservation Act of 2025**. Phone his office at

202.224.2152 OR use his website email link  
<https://www.durbin.senate.gov/contact/email>

**Don't Forget to Renew Your Membership or Please Join if you appreciate our newsletters & programs!  
Fill in this form and return it with payment. Thank You!**

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

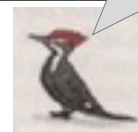
|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Your Name        | _____ |
| Street Address   | _____ |
| City, State, Zip | _____ |
| Phone Number     | _____ |
| Email            | _____ |

**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 Judy M.. or Rhonda R. to check your dues status.

As long as it's not too much of a birden, we'd be grateful if you renewed your dues.



## SIU Wildlife 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: A Celebration of Our Past and Future 1950-2025

On September 26 and 27 join in the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of wildlife research at SIU. Since Dr. W D Klimstra founded the Research Lab in 1950, more than 1,000 students have joined the ranks of local, state, and federal natural resource agencies, conservation groups, and academic institutions.

Klimstra's Conservation Challenge guided students during 75 years of wildlife conservation education, research, and training. Research Lab students became nationally and internationally recognized conservation leaders, educators, research scientists, wetland and waterfowl ecologists, mined land restorationists, and habitat management experts.

The next 25 years will represent greater conservation challenges for the Lab as natural resource agencies face broader challenges to address habitat loss and land use changes"

—(J. Nawrot - Sr Scientist Emeritus CWRL 1972 – 2025)

Activities include:

Friday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>: 10 a.m. Lower Cache River Kayak Launch Dedication & CWRL "Cache Conservation Pioneers" Recognition; 4-6:00 p.m. Reception at SIU Banterra Center; 6-8:30 p.m. Dinner and Awards Recognition at Banterra Center. Please RSVP

Saturday, Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>: 9 a.m. Burning Start 5 State Fish and Wildlife Area – Recognition and Tour (sack lunch provided, please RSVP).

Register at:

<https://conferenceservices.siu.edu/conferences/siu-wildlife-75th-anniversary.php>

## Forest Service to Abandon Nine Regional Offices

As Washington continues slash-and-burn policies for federal agencies, USDA announces consolidation of offices responsible for 193 million acres of public land. The U.S. Forest Service will abandon its nine regional offices as its parent Dept of Agriculture consolidates out of Washington, D.C., according to a memo released Thursday, July 24, by Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins. The reorganization plan left many Forest Service experts wondering what the benefit would be, including former Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth, who served during the George W. Bush administration.

Excerpts from <https://mountainjournal.org/forest-service-to-abandon-nine-regional-offices/>

## Mississippi River Named America's Most Endangered River for 2025

American Rivers annually releases a list of the most endangered rivers in the U.S., for 2025, the Mississippi River has topped the list, according to the organization.

The designation highlights the river's vulnerability to increased flooding, declining water quality, and inadequate disaster prevention and response, particularly due to potential cuts in federal funding for FEMA. The river faces threats from agricultural runoff, industrial pollution, and habitat loss.

The Mississippi River is crucial for drinking water, is a critical artery for economic activity (agriculture, industry, transportation, and recreation.) It's also a vital part of the Mississippi Flyway, a major migratory route for birds.

Conservation groups are urging increased federal, state, and local action to protect the river and its ecosystems. This includes addressing flood risks (modernizing floodplain development standards to ensure riverside investments and communities are resilient to flooding), improving water quality, and ensuring adequate disaster preparedness.

For more details visit <https://mostendangeredrivers.org/>

Or <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/scientists-face-ecological-and-economic-hurdles-to-save-mississippi-river-delta>

**Two tectonic plates collide.**

**One says to the other, "Sorry, my fault."**

**Southern Illinois Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 222**  
**Carbondale, IL 62903-0222**

*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society and  
the Illinois Environmental Council*

Printed on



Paper

