

TALE FEATHERS

St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, St. Louis, MO 63122-0227
www.stlouisaudubon.org director@stlouisaudubon.org (314) 599-7390

Calendar

BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS

FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER

FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 815 AM

Special walk just for the new and/or casual watchers.

Reservations not required, but for further info contact Chris at birding@forestparkforever.org.

NATURE WALK FOR KIDS—PAGE 2

FOREST PARK—KENNEDY WOODS

SUNDAY AUGUST 15TH AT 10A

SEE THE CHAPTER CALENDAR FOR DETAILED DIRECTIONS.

AUGUST PROGRAM—PAGE 5

ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY—THORNHILL BRANCH

TUESDAY AUGUST 17TH AT 7P

MOVIE SHOWING,

OPERATION CLEAN STREAM

MERAMEC RIVER, MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

SATURDAY/SUNDAY AUGUST 28TH/29TH AT 10A

SEE WWW.OPENSPEACESTL.ORG FOR THE DETAILS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

TOWER GROVE PARK

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH AT 8A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF EARLY FALL MIGRANTS.

NATURE WALK FOR KIDS—PAGE 2

CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK—RIVER TRAIL

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH AT 10A

SEE THE CHAPTER CALENDAR FOR DETAILED DIRECTIONS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

CARLYLE LAKE

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 18TH & 19TH AT 7A

TWO ALL DAY TRIPS IN SEARCH OF WATERBIRDS AND FALL MIGRANTS. SUNDAY TRIP REQUIRES REGISTRATION.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM—PAGE 5

ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY—FLORISSANT VALLEY BRANCH

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 21ST AT 7P

MOVIE SHOWING,

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—CHAPTER CALENDAR

MONROE COUNTY, IL DRIVING TOUR

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH AT 9A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF MARSH BIRDS AND FALL MIGRANTS.

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Thanks and Welcome!

Every summer is a time of transition for the Chapter's Board of Directors. We bid thanks and farewell to those that have served and are moving on. We offer a hearty welcome to those that have stepped up to lead.

With over 40 years of service between them, our departing directors will be missed. Mary Dueren, Sue Gustafson, Joel Porath, Mike Thelen and Linda Tossing gave their time and energy as officers, field trip leaders, special project coordinators, organization liaisons and even president. The great news is each of them has continued their volunteer commitment in a non-leadership role. Amazing!

Also, please help us welcome three new directors to the Board: Jamila Harris, Craig Lanham and Bryan Prather. Jamila has taken an at-large position and will be valuable support for our Education Team, given her position as education consultant at the Missouri Dept of Conservation. Bryan, also at-large, has already begun helping out with our Trivia Night and our new Nature Walks. Finally, Craig has taken over as VP of Conservation. See his Update on Page 4 for background on him. Welcome aboard to them all!

Finally, we would like to thank Sharon Nickl and Jim Wilson for stepping into officer positions. Sharon has assumed the role of Secretary and Jim took over from Sue Gustafson as VP of Finance. We look forward to a challenging, but good year with all their support! ◆

Board Meetings

Open to All. 1st Tuesday of Every Month at 7 pm. Powder Valley Nature Center at 11715 Cragwold.

Board recruitment is an ongoing process and requires your interest and our need. If you have thought of serving in such a way, stop by or call one of us.

Officers

Dave Rogles, President

(636) 541-1069

president@stlouisaudubon.org

Lisa Nansteel, VP Education

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Mitch Leachman, Executive Director

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director@stlouisaudubon.org

Newsletter

TaleFeathers is published monthly. For submissions, comments or corrections, contact Mitch Leachman as noted above.

From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Hello! I welcome this chance every year to talk directly to all of our 3,000 plus members. Thank you so much for joining Audubon! We appreciate your interest and support.

We have tried to share something about every major program in this issue, and have provided contact info in the left column in the event you want to know more. If you like what you read and want to stay current, please send us your e-mail so we can add you to our monthly e-mail list. No strings attached, and we would never give out your e-mail address. Simply send me a note at stlaudubon@charter.net. You will then receive a message at the start of every month with a summary of our current events and a link to the current issue.

As all nonprofits, we are constantly looking for ways to put the FUN in fundraising. Two approaches are highlighted in this issue, our first Trivia Night with silent auction and raffle on October 16th (detailed on page 8) and our chapter-supporting membership with a very colorful and informative bird book incentive (page 10). Also, we have setup an account with the Schnuck's Community Card by eScrip, allowing you to support us through the enjoyable and essential act of eating. Just pickup a card at any Schnuck's courtesy counter and register it to the St. Louis Audubon Society. The card costs nothing and Schnuck's donates a small percentage of every purchase to us. I hope you consider one of these.

Whether or not you just joined, I encourage you to visit our website. We continue to add content and other improvements. For those of you on Facebook, we have a page, and I hope you will become a fan. Also, in a more traditional way, we have enclosed our annual chapter calendar. I encourage you to remove and save it as a year-long reference tool.

Thanks again for choosing Audubon and caring for the birds! ◆

Audubon Nature Walks for Kids

Breaking news! St. Louis Audubon will now be offering Nature Walks for children ages 6 and up. Bring your kids (or grandkids) to see and learn about our amazing birds and their surroundings. Led by volunteers experienced with children, groups and our natural environment, the walks will be easy and offered at a variety of spots. See the enclosed chapter calendar for dates, times and locations.

Wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather. Don't forget your water bottle, sunscreen and bug spray. If you have binoculars, bring them along. Reservations not required. Walk will only be canceled for severe weather. If you have questions please contact Nikki Davenport at (314) 566-3445 or nikiastro@att.net.

President's Message

By Dave Rogles

What is green?

In the last 10,000 years the human population has gained the upper hand on earth. For the last 10,000 years the earth's climate, its being, has been a teeter totter, moving from slight variations on either side, always within a limit, and enabling humans to take advantage of benign (mostly) conditions to exploit ever-increasing amounts of energy for an ever increasing population.

In the last 100 years, the Audubon Society (and others) has been teaching a message of conservation, of sustainability, with an eye toward maintaining the delicate "balance" that has enabled us to flourish.

In the last decade I have heard, increasingly, the meme, "we will all be dead in the long run." This is usually directed toward consideration of the extinction of other species, members of the pyramid of life on earth, our pyramid. For Dick Cheney the long run was 2050; for T. Boone Pickens it is the day the Ogallala aquifer is pumped dry; for my brother it is the day Atlantic Tuna can no longer be found and he has to fish the Pacific. From where I sit in the arc of my life, I can see all these things; I might witness most of them.

BP is green. Fiji Water is green. Windmills are green. Carbon offsets are green. What is green? Is it just marketing?

Green is now. Green is survival. Green is the teeter-totter on the pyramid of life, carrying 7 billion humans on its bending board. Green is local. Green is all-embracing. Green is multi-cultural. Green is long-term. Green is cooperative, green is us. Green is you. Green is now. ◆

St. Louis Audubon Birding Trip to Northeast Mexico

St. Louis Audubon Society, in conjunction with Tropical Birding Company, is sponsoring a birding trip to northeastern Mexico in early 2011. We should encounter a wide variety of tropical birds including a number of endemic species. A particular highlight of the trip will be a stop at the renowned El Cielo Biosphere Reserve. With safety in mind we will avoid all border crossings by flying directly to the starting city. Our guide will be Michael Retter who has vast experience birding and leading trips in Mexico. Michael is a native of Illinois and still lives in the Midwest.

Our current plan is to have an 8-9 day trip and to run it during February. Costs will be determined sometime in the fall. If you have any interest at all in participating in this trip please contact John Solodar at Solodar@sbcglobal.net to have your name put on the follow-up list. Contacting John does not obligate you in any way, but this will give us some idea of the overall interest. ◆

Field Trips, Etc.

Sep 11th Tower Grove Park: Torrey Berger will lead this half-day trip, good for beginners, starting at 8 a.m. Meet at the entrance to the Gaddy Bird Garden. From I-44, take Kingshighway south to Magnolia. Turn left on Magnolia. Follow to park entrance on right. Take first right and follow to Bird Garden.

Sep 18th Carlyle Lake Land Trip: Joe Eades will lead this all day trip that begins at 7 am. Take I-64 east to Illinois. Exit at Hwy 50 and go east. Follow Hwy

50 to Hwy 127 and turn left at the junction. Meet at the McDonald's on the right. Bring your lunch.

Sep 19th Carlyle Lake "Pelagic" Trip: Joe Eades will lead this all day trip that begins at 7 am. See the Sept 18th listing for directions. Bring your lunch. Space is limited. Reservations are required.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. Contact Pat Lueders with general questions at (314) 359-9364.

Conservation Update

By Craig Lanham



Craig Lanham enjoying his weekend planting trees at Creve Coeur Park.

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Craig Lanham and have been recently elected as the Vice President of Conservation for the St. Louis Audubon Board of Directors. I am an avid outdoor junkie, backpacking into remote places to view wildlife and long distance kayaking to enjoy the grandeur what we call nature on this beautiful planet. When it comes to birds, I volunteer at the World Bird Sanctuary as a Raptor Rehabilitator. Birds are amazing, and I am always thrilled and enchanted by their physical feats. I am following Karen Meyer in my new position and hope I can live up to the high standards she has set for the chapter.

Conservation efforts have been in full swing this summer with Keith Lee, volunteer and Wildlife Biology Major at Missouri State University, conducting weekly nest box surveys in Creve Coeur Park. He has been enjoying his time conducting the surveys for the Chapter.

Our Executive director Mitch Leachman has been busy with the final reporting on last year's Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen grant, while securing another, larger grant from the same source. The \$9,000 in new funding will be supplemented by another \$7,300 from the Missouri Dept of Conservation Community Stewardship Program. Both will support a continuation of our volunteer-oriented habitat restoration at Creve Coeur

Park. Work will continue in the Little Creve Coeur Area, but major attention will shift to the "Bluffs," or upper park. We will begin an upland forest restoration project next spring, converting large areas of invasive bush honeysuckle to native understory trees and shrubs. Please see the enclosed Chapter calendar for a schedule of the workdays already planned. For future updates, visit our website, Facebook page or watch for *TaleFeathers*. We hope you can join us. You will find it informative, fun and rewarding.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun a multi-year effort called the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (MRAPS). It will encompass the whole Missouri river basin from headwaters to its confluence with the Mississippi here at St. Louis. Mitch Leachman, Karen Meyer, and I attended an open house on July 9th to gain more information on this study.

The Corps was directed by Congress to review the 1944 Flood Control Act and the eight "authorized purposes" of Missouri River management for currency and the need for revision. At 66 years old, it was the right plan at that time, but I do believe it needs revisions when it comes to fish and wildlife. Channeling and controlling the flow of such a great river has degraded habitat for many different species of fish, mammals and birds. The Corps recognizes this and has initiated projects to recover species such as the Least Tern, Piping Plover, and Palid Sturgeon. More needs to be done. Habitat loss is the most significant factor in the decline of most species, and climate change will only worsen the effect (see the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2010 State of the Birds report at www.stateofthebirds.org and as discussed in the April 2010 *TaleFeathers*). The Army Corps is providing several different ways to comment on MRAPS, and I encourage all of you to do so. The study can be found at www.mraps.org. The comment period ends September 20th, 2010.

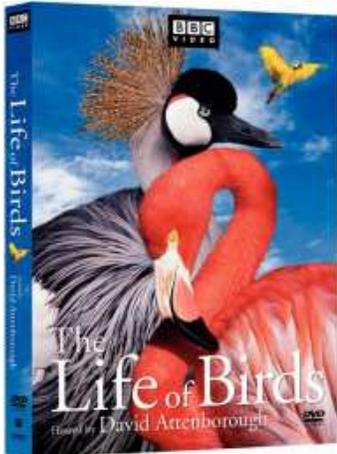
Until next month, enjoy and share our birds and natural world! ◆

The Life of Birds: Finding Partners

Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

St. Louis County Library—Thornhill Branch

Finding a partner is never an easy business. In dense forest it is difficult to attract attention, and even harder to keep a potential mate around long enough to show off and prove that you are the hottest thing on two legs. In a highly competitive market, male birds go to enormous lengths to display their worth. With amazing settings like the Galapagos Islands, the Alaskan tundra and the rainforest of the Amazon, see the mating displays of frigate birds, red phalaropes, calfbirds and cock-of-the-rocks, to name just a few. Watch birds dance, fight, sing, build and even “decorate” to win a mate.



Sir David Attenborough, one of the world's foremost naturalists, hosts this extraordinary series into the secret lives of these magnificent creatures. Over three years in the making, with stunning slow-motion and computer enhanced special effects, this landmark series is timeless. (Please note that the nature of the material may make it unsuitable for some children.)

This 60 minute documentary will be shown in the auditorium of the St. Louis County Library Thornhill branch at 12863 Willowick Drive. From I-270, take Exit 16 Page Ave/Hwy 364 west to Bennington. Turn left at the end of the ramp and right at the next light at Fee Fee. Turn right again at the next light at the library. Questions, call Mitch Leachman at (314)-599-7390. ◆

American Eagle, A Nature Documentary

Tuesday, September 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

St. Louis County Library—Florissant Valley Branch

They are one of nature's largest raptors, with wings that can span eight feet, and nests that weigh up to a ton. Unique to North America, the bald eagle is the continent's most recognizable aerial predator, with a shocking white head and electric yellow beak. Yet most people know little about it beyond its striking appearance.

In the 1960s, the bald eagle was on the brink of extinction caused by the pesticide DDT and other human pressures. Following their protection as an endangered species, bald eagles have come roaring back. But even in the best of times, life in the wild for these birds is a surprisingly tough struggle.

From the pristine wilderness of Alaska to the Upper Mississippi River Valley, *American Eagle* goes behind the scenes and into the nest to provide the ultimate bird's eye view into the private life of an American icon.

Join us for this showing of the 55 minute PBS Nature episode, *American Eagle*, initially premiered in 2008. From I-270 in north St. Louis County, take Exit #27 just one mile north on New Florissant Road. The library is at 195 New Florissant in Bangert Park. Questions, call Mitch Leachman at (314) 599-7390. ◆



Mike Grant Photo

Education Team Hits Milestone

By Lisa Nansteel



*Audubon hands-on "bird table" at Eagle Days
Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, January 2010*

The St. Louis Audubon Education Team had another great school year, delivering 137 programs to 2,400 children and nearly 900 adults from September 2009 through June 2010. Our most popular offerings included 60 bird programs, 15 bat programs, and 4 owl programs. Since 2001, our efforts have now reached over 30,000 children and adults! In addition, Chapter volunteers staff outreach tables at a variety of events around St. Louis including Eagle Days, Earth Day and the Wings of Spring Bird Festival.

Our star team member was Sharon Nickl, who led or participated in over 50 different programs. The team currently consists of twelve members, two of which are new and in the process of training. We also have two people who have very recently expressed interest and have not yet started.

Please help me thank all of our Team members, including David Bruns, Nancy Clark, Maureen Conway, Vicki Flier, Sharon Nickl, Bobbie Poor and Marty Smigell. We are excited about the coming year and the additional support! Planning and outreach has already begun on expanding our presence into new school districts. If you are a teacher or a parent and would like your children to learn from our programs, call me. If you love birds and nature and enjoy sharing it with others, call me. It would be great to add even more Team Members. All training is provided. The hourly commitment is up to you, as is the time of day for instruction. I look forward to your phone calls: Lisa Nansteel at (636) 391-4898. ♦

Save the Confluence Update

By Karen Meyer

Those of us hoping to keep a new casino out of the Spanish Lake area near Columbia Bottom received some positive news recently. St. Louis County Executive Charlie Dooley sent a letter expressing serious concerns about the project to the Gaming Commission in May. He understands that the majority of Spanish Lake residents and many others in our area do not want this casino in Columbia Bottom, and he reiterated our group's concerns about the impact the project would have on the environment. Also, there are other casino companies and communities throughout the state that have staked a claim for the newly available license, including the City of St. Louis, Cape Girardeau and Sugar Creek, near Kansas City.

July 15 was the deadline for those interested parties to have their economic proposals to the Missouri Gaming Commission. Now, as the Commission reviews those proposals, they need to **hear from all of you** who share our concerns that the proposed site near Columbia Bottom Conservation Area is not a good idea economically or environmentally. Visit www.savetheconfluence.org for more info and please complete and mail the postcard contained in our newsletter that is addressed to the Gaming Commission.

The Columbia Bottom area best serves people and wildlife as a flood plain and flyway. Plan a visit soon to this lovely place where one can experience wonderfully expansive views and soak up the serenity and abundance of birds and other wildlife. Send in your postcard today to help Save the Confluence! ♦

Wanted: All Birders

By Pat Lueders

All birders, new and old, won't want to miss out on attending the 2010–2011 St. Louis Audubon FREE birding field trips! Some of our popular trips have been restructured, and new locations and leaders have been added to provide an exciting year for everyone. Below are some of the highlights and changes for this season. Remember to check our web site, www.stlouisaudubon.org, www.birdingonthe.net or MOBIRDS for current information the Wednesday before a trip.

Our always popular Carlyle Lake Pelagic trip has been extended to an optional two-day event. Saturday will be all-day land birding so this excellent area can be thoroughly covered. Sunday morning will be the pelagic portion where every year we see rare gulls, shorebirds and ducks "at sea," a must-see annual event. Birders will have the option of attending one or both events or can make this a great birding weekend trip. Reservations will be necessary for the pelagic portion.

Six new birding destinations have been added to our schedule, and you won't want to miss learning about these areas from our knowledgeable leaders. New for 2010–2011:

- Monroe County, IL—great area for shorebirds and waders
- St. Stanislaus Conservation Area—sparrows and migrants can be studied here
- Hilda Young Conservation Area—evening trip for woodcocks and owls
- Hawn State Park—early warblers and a beautiful hike
- Magnolia Hollow Conservation Area—early migrants and warblers
- Meramec State Park—great Summer birding
- Castlewood State Park—a favorite migrant spot and hike returns to our schedule
- Lincoln County—a driving tour of this popular birding area

We will caravan or carpool on some of our trips that require driving to multiple locations, so check the directions for each trip.

Do you want to bird at the right location at the best time of the year? Do you want to learn about the birding "hot spots" of the St. Louis area? Do you want to meet and bird with some of the best birders in St. Louis and from other area birders? Do you want to learn about binoculars, scopes, birding equipment, books, photography, etc?

If you answered YES to any or all of these questions, the St. Louis Audubon Field Trips are for YOU. Come and join us! ◆



Mary Dueren and birders at Creve Coeur Lake Park

Mitch Leachman Photo



Trivia Night & Silent Auction

Saturday, October 16th



Sponsors: St. Louis Audubon Society and the Maryland Heights Residents for Responsible Growth

Date: Saturday, October 16th

Location: Bridgeton Community Center, 4201 Fee Fee Rd, Bridgeton, MO 63074

Time: Doors open at 6 p.m. and the Trivia begins promptly at 7 p.m.

Cost: \$25/person or \$160 for a table of 8

Registration includes soda, popcorn and snacks while they last. You are welcome to bring your own food and beverages (including alcohol). Get a table of friends together and test your knowledge!

The evening is a fundraiser and will include a silent auction and raffle of an attractive, framed cross-stitch work. Mulligans will be sold. Games will be held between rounds, and prizes will be given for the first and last place teams.

Proceeds benefit the conservation and education programs of St. Louis Audubon and the community awareness efforts of the Maryland Heights Residents for Responsible Growth.

For more information about the event sponsors, visit www.marylandheightsresidents.com or www.stlouisaudubon.org. For questions about the event, contact Mitch Leachman at (314) 599-7390 or e-mail via stlaudubon@charter.net.

The Community Center is on Fee Fee Rd between Natural Bridge and St. Charles Rock Rd, one block north of the I-70 overpass.

Seating is limited, so register early. This is a smoke-free event.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street: _____ E-mail: _____

City/St/Zip: _____ No. of Tables/Person: _____

Total Amt. Enclosed: _____

Payment due with registration. Detach this form and send with payment via check or money order payable to St. Louis Audubon at P.O. Box 220227, St. Louis, MO 63122. To pay with credit card, visit www.stlouisaudubon.org.

Please print clearly the names of those attending on the back of this form.

In Memory of Mary Lou Miller

By Dave Tylka



Mary Lou Miller lost her battle with leukemia on April 12th, 2010. She was 71 years old. Mary Lou had three children: Debra Johnson, Derek Scott (deceased) and Steven Scott. She is also survived by her husband of 38 years Jerald Miller, a son-in-law Jerry Johnson and grandchildren Rebecca Johnson and Sean Lafoy.

From 1970 to 2000, there are few members of St. Louis Audubon who volunteered more of their time than Mary Lou Miller. She served as Treasurer twice, Vice President for Education, Vice-President for Conservation and as our chapter's first female President. She was an integral player in the revitalization of our chapter back in the 1980's, organizing our financial records into detailed ledgers so budgets could be based upon accurate records (before software programs were readily available), contributing her time and talents to formulating the first two strategic plans and taking on various tasks to keep our chapter moving forward. In countless committee meetings over the years, Mary Lou would say, "Ya' know, we (our chapter) really need to do that," which

many times meant that Mary Lou would add that to her personal "to do" list. Her dedication to tasks was remarkable! She was one of the best environmental networkers in the state. When her employer, Emerson Electric, graciously allowed her complete office and mailing privileges for the Chapter, she tirelessly collected and dispersed nature-related information to SLAS board members and officers of other nature organizations in the state.

Although Mary Lou was active in the environmental arena (helping with a state highway billboard ban, regularly writing legislators on behalf of the natural world, etc.), her passion was conservation education. Her efforts over the years really put SLAS into the mainstream environmental education movement. As VP for Education, she revitalized our chapter's educational pursuits and started holding regular monthly meetings. (An active education committee still thrives today.) Besides personally giving classroom presentations, organizing the week-long International Migratory Bird Day Celebration held each spring and helping with the SLAS booth at Earth Day celebrations and Eagle Days, Mary Lou actively participated in the St. Louis Environmental Education Council. When the National Audubon Society actively produced a monthly classroom newspaper for fifth-graders called *Audubon Adventures*, she not only worked with science curriculum coordinators from all school districts in the St. Louis area to get them to subscribe, but also diligently worked to obtain thousands of grant dollars to provide *Audubon Adventures* to the disadvantaged districts. Through her efforts, all fifth-grade classrooms in the entire St. Louis City School District had this nature newsletter delivered to their students each month. As an acknowledgement of her efforts, Mary Lou and her husband, Jerry, were awarded our highest honor in 2004, the Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement Award.

We will miss Mary Lou's wide, friendly smile, her dedication to the Audubon cause and that attitude that said, "Ya' know, we really need to do that." Contributions are welcome to help defray the medical costs of her illness. They should be made in care of Jerry Miller at 3927 Lucas and Hunt Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63121. ♦

St. Louis Audubon Society Chapter Only Membership Form

Mission: to create a community connection to nature through education and conservation.

Your Chapter only membership will begin when your current National Audubon membership expires. At that time, you will no longer receive *Audubon* magazine. We will then begin managing your renewals. If National Audubon continues to send solicitations, you may contact them directly and request they stop.

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-Mail or Phone (if desired):

Make checks payable to:
St. Louis Audubon Society
Mail Checks to:
St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
St. Louis, MO 63122-0227

\$20 \$30 \$50** \$100 Other_____

** Memberships of \$50, or above, will receive a copy of Dr. Stephen Kress' *North American Birdfeeder Guide*, a \$25 value, as our gift. This 220 page book covers feeding and observing tips and includes common species profiles.

100% of your dues stay in St. Louis supporting our local efforts. All our programs are free. Thank you very much!

If already a local member, you need do nothing but accept our thanks!

Contributions are Tax Deductible

St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
St. Louis, MO 63122-0227



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