

TALE FEATHERS

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

Calendar

BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS

FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER AT 5595 GRAND DRIVE
FIRST SATURDAY OF MOST MONTHS
WALK FROM 830 AM TO 10 AM, MEET AT 815 AM
For info contact Amy at birding@forestparkforever.org.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

ANYWHERE YOU WANT TO BIRD, WWW.BIRDCOUNT.ORG
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12 THRU MONDAY FEBRUARY 15

BEGINNER BIRD WALK—PAGE 3

MALLARD LAKE AT CREVE COEUR PARK
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20TH AT 8 AM

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

RIVERLANDS MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20TH AT 8A

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BUSCH CONSERVATION AREA WOODCOCK/OWL PROWL
SATURDAY MARCH 12TH AT 5P

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

HORSESHOE LAKE STATE PARK IN ILLINOIS
SATURDAY MARCH 19TH AT 8A

BEGINNER BIRD WALK—PAGE 3

MALLARD LAKE AT CREVE COEUR PARK
SATURDAY MARCH 19TH AT 8 AM

CONFLUENCE TRASH BASH WATERSHED CLEANUP

[VARIOUS PLACES AROUND THE REGION](#)
SATURDAY MARCH 19ST FROM 9A TO 12P

MARCH PROGRAM—PAGE 2

SIERRA CLUB OFFICE--MAPLEWOOD
THURSDAY MARCH 24TH AT 7P

NATIVE LANDSCAPING WORKSHOP—PAGE 7

POWDER VALLEY NATURE CENTER
SATURDAY MARCH 26TH FROM 8A TO 4P

NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR—SAVE THE DATE

10 RESIDENTIAL GARDENS IN THE U CITY AREA
SATURDAY JUNE 18TH FROM 9A TO 4P
REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 1ST
WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.ORG/NPT

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Eagle Days Thanks

The wind was blowing and the temps were dropping, but nearly 3,000 people still came out for Eagle Days weekend at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge on January 16 and 17! St. Louis Audubon volunteers were posted inside the warming tent with a touch table exhibit of the birds of St. Louis. The Education Team was also on-hand all weekend with additional exhibits and activities. Thanks to everyone who helped out, especially Jerry Castillon, Mary Dueren, Ann Earley, Katy Fechter, Anne Horton, Herb Huebner, Mitch Leachman, Julie Nicolai, Bob Siemer, Linda Tossing and Dave Tylka! ♦



Board Meetings

Open to All. 2nd Tuesday of Even Months at 7 pm at the Sunset Hills Community Center at 3915 S. Lindbergh Boulevard.

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

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Newsletter

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

NATIVE BEES

What Are They? Why Should We Care?

How Can We Help?

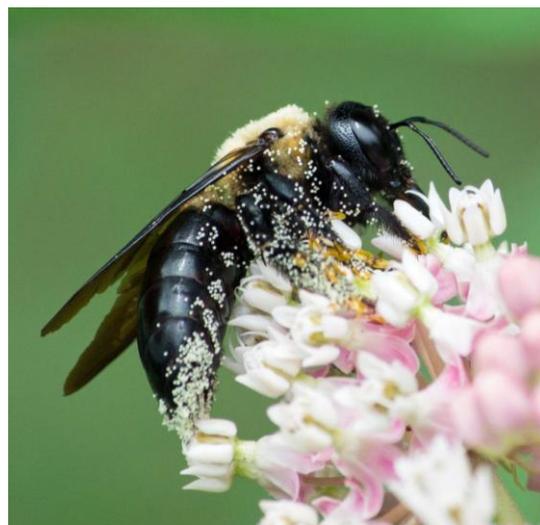
Thursday March 24 at 7 p.m.

Pollination is the cornerstone of most ecosystems. 80% of flowering plants need the help of animals to move pollen for reproduction, and 75% of crop plants grown worldwide for food, beverages, fibers, condiments, spices, and medicines are pollinated by animals. In North America bumble bees, sweat bees, carpenter bees, leafcutter bees, and the rest of the 4,000+ species of bees, along with European honey bees, are the most important group of pollinators.

Though the disappearance of honey bees has made headlines, we may be experiencing a loss of native bees on a greater scale than honey bees. Franklin's bumble bee was last seen in 2006 and may be extinct. Several other species of bumble bees, masked bees, mason bees and digger bees in the U.S. have disappeared across their ranges. These species may be disappearing due to pesticides, loss of habitat and the introduction of diseases.

Ed Spevak, Curator of Invertebrates at the St. Louis Zoo and Director of the Center for Native Pollinator Conservation (CNPC), will present this overview of native bees and their conservation. Of the many efforts underway, Pollinator Roadsides is a CNPC collaborative with Missouri Department of Agriculture, Missouri Department of Transportation and the Xerces Society.

This is our annual joint program with the Eastern Missouri Group of the Sierra Club. The program will be held at their office at 2818 Sutton Blvd, Maplewood, MO 63143. For questions about this event, contact Mitch at (314) 599-7390 or mitch@stlouisaudubon.org.



Dawn Weber Photo

Proud Member of the



From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Tower Grove Park's Gaddy Bird Garden restoration is now underway! (See the December *TaleFeathers* for more background on the project.) Invasive plants have been cleared and removed from the area with seven large brush piles created as cover for the birds and other animals. Over 100 native trees and shrubs and many more native perennials will be planted in the garden before Spring. The woody plants will be as large as possible to encourage a quick maturation and include many dense, multi-stemmed species. This should minimize the overall impact of the clearing operation.

Also, Park contractors began the conversion of approximately one acre of turf into a native plant savanna with shrubs, grasses and flowering plants, including milkweeds to attract monarch butterflies and perennials that provide ground habitat for ground-roosting birds. These natural communities will flank the Bird Garden on the north and east, extending habitat for wildlife traveling from Forest Park and the nearby Missouri Botanical Gardens. In its original form, Tower Grove Park was one very large prairie. This project will return a sample of that landscape to the Park and create a valuable educational opportunity.

As mentioned in the December article, the existing "bubbler" is also in need of replacement. A design has been completed and funds may already be secure for the initial install. However, it is very likely additional money will be required, and the creation of a Gaddy Garden Stewardship Fund is in discussion. We will keep you posted on this potential opportunity to contribute.

Park Director Bill Reininger sees these projects as valuable opportunities to engage the community in the park and reinforce partnerships with groups like St. Louis Audubon and WGNSS. That will include as much direct participation as possible. So, if you're interested in helping plant this spring or assist with other future aspects of the project, contact Cindy Anich at piperph@towergrovepark.org or (314) 771-4454.

Visit the [Tower Grove Park Facebook photo album](#) for pics of the work so far. You do not need an account to see them. We hope you share our excitement over the restoration of the Gaddy Bird Garden! ◆

Field Trips, Etc.

Feb 20th Beginner Walk at Mallard Lake: This easy walk starts at 8:00 am from the south parking lot at the Creve Coeur Lakehouse, 2160 Creve Coeur Mill Rd. Bring your binoculars, if you have them; loaners are available. We should finish about 10. Check our Facebook page for any last-minute updates. The details are the same for the March 19th Beginner Walk.

Feb 20th to Riverlands Bird Sanctuary: This all day trip meets at 8 am. Take Hwy 367 north from I-270. Turn right on the last road before the Alton Bridge (at the gas station). Turn right on the next road to the Teal Pond lot.

March 12th at Busch Memorial Conservation Area: M. Grant & S. Gustafson lead this evening

Woodcock and Owl Prowl. Meet at 5 p.m. (note the time). Take Hwy 94 south from Hwy 40. At 1.3 miles, turn right at light for Hwy D. Go 2 miles to entrance on right. Turn left at T to Hampton Lake and meet in lot.

March 19th to Horseshoe Lake State Park: This half day trip starts at 8 am and is good for beginners with some light walking. From St. Louis, take I-70 east to Hwy 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go ~2 miles to Park entrance and meet in first parking lot on right inside Park.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. For questions, contact Mike Grant at mikecurlew@att.net.

Nature & Native Landscaping Courses

Dave Tylka is again offering his *Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People* class through a series of short continuing education classes at Meramec Community College, starting in April. They've created a new section for just such classes, focused on native plants, called Go Native. Cost per class is \$25, but those at least 60 years of age may enroll in classes for half-price. Enrollees 65 and older may apply for a Senior Citizen Scholarship and register for up to five classes per semester for \$5 each! These 2-3 hour-long classes qualify for the Master Naturalist Certification Program.

<http://www.stlcc.edu/Continuing-Education/Classes/index.asp?Cat=XGAR>

<http://www.stlcc.edu/Continuing-Education/Classes/index.asp?Cat=XNAT>

You also might consider his 8-week, 3-credit class at Meramec that runs from March 24-May 12, BIO 156. It runs in-class on Thursdays from 5p to 7p and all-day Saturday field trips on April 2, 16, 30 and May 7. District Tuition for a three-hour course is \$309, but Senior Discounts of 50% or more are available to those who want to audit the course (not take exams). Registration at 314/984-7601 or

https://selfservice.stlcc.edu:9199/SLCC/bwkschd.p_disp_detail_sched?term_in=201610&crn_in=14210

Finally, Dave is also teaching a couple classes at the Missouri Botanical Garden. One on March 15th on natives for a woodland garden and April 19th on Monarchs. Register online at www.mobot.org/classes or call 314/ 577-5140. Cost per class is \$28 for members, \$34 for non-members.

For additional opportunities, check out the Native Plant School at Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit, Missouri. They have classes throughout the year for a very nominal fee. They do fill up quick, however, so register as early as possible. Select "classes by location" at www.mobot.org/classes and look for the Native Plant School classes under "gardening and landscaping." ♦

Audubon Society of Missouri—Spring Meeting

Bunker Hill Retreat at Mountain View, Missouri

April 29 – May 1, 2016

This beautiful resort on the Jacks Fork River has previously been open only to members of the Missouri State Teachers Association. It is now open to the public and will be our host the weekend of April 29--May 1. www.bunkerhillretreat.com

A diversity of full-day and half-day field trips will be offered. Many of the locations are known for the variety and abundance of warblers that can be seen. Among the field trip sites are Greer Spring on the Eleven Point River, Big Spring on the Current River, Stegall Mountain at Peck Ranch Conservation Area, and a 10-mile float on the Jacks Fork River.

Visit the [ASM website](#) for a complete description of all field trips and to register for the meeting. Everyone is welcome, ASM member or not! ♦

St. Louis Audubon Spring Stewardship Projects

Tuesday, March 8th at Creve Coeur Park. Honeysuckle removal.

Help us continue our multi-year project partnership to create prairie, woodland and pollinator gardens! All ages welcome, but those under 18 must have parental/adult supervision at all times. Bring your favorite lopper or saw. The work site just south of Page/364 near the Creve Coeur Lakehouse restaurant. We will meet in the south lot at the Lakehouse, 2160 Creve Coeur Mill Road, St. Louis, MO 63146.

Honeysuckle Sweep for Healthy Habitat—March 5th thru 13th

For additional opportunities around the St. Louis region to remove invasive bush honeysuckle and help restore our natural areas see the [BiodiverseCity St. Louis website](http://BiodiverseCity.St.Louis.website) for all the details.

Saturday, March 19th Confluence Trash Bash. Watershed Cleanup.

All ages welcome. For all the details, and to register:

<https://www.greenwaynetwork.org/projects-issues/confluence-trash-bash.php>

Saturday, April 23rd at Creve Coeur Park. Honeysuckle removal.

All ages welcome, but those under 18 must have parental/adult supervision at all times. Bring your favorite lopper or saw. The work site is in the far southwest corner of the park, but can be accessed easily from Olive Boulevard or Page/Hwy 364. Use this address in your device: 150 River Valley Dr, Chesterfield, MO 63017. You will arrive at a sharp bend in the road. Go through the gate, into the gravel lot and follow the signs from there. Parking is limited, please carpool if possible.

All projects begin at 9 am with registration starting at 8:30. All are half-day. Gloves and other supplies/materials are provided.

Volunteers are requested to register for all projects by providing their name, contact information and number attending to mitch@stlouisaudubon.org or (314) 599-7390. ◆



Baldwin Lake Field Trip Report

By Pat Lueders

Saturday February 6th about 20 birders met at Baldwin Lake State Fish & Wildlife Area to begin our annual trip to this Southern Illinois area. We were treated to a fairly warm, sunny day for February and worked hard to find many birds. We started with a few birds on the open lake water: Pied-billed Grebe, Ruddy Duck, American Coot, Great Blue Heron, and Canada Geese. We drove to the southern end of the road and found a flock of around 400 Snow Geese loafing in the field with good scope looks of several Ross's Geese. Approximately 100 American White Pelican were counted in flight. This was the first year in some time that we were unable to find Greater White-Fronted or Cackling Geese. A number of Bonaparte's Gulls were seen feeding in the lake from the fishing ramp, and Eastern Bluebirds were fighting over the Bluebird house. A Sharp-shinned Hawk flew up from the tree line as we left, and Mike Thelen heard a Hairy Woodpecker vocalize.

We drove agricultural roads to the IL DNR World Shooting Complex but found only a few blackbirds, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel. After a picnic lunch at the now quiet shooting complex, we saw a few Northern Harrier, a Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawk, and walked around a marshy area finding many Swamp, Song, American Tree Sparrows, Carolina Chickadee, and a Downy. A large flock of Snow Geese could be seen in the air and appeared to land across from the complex.

Driving Risdon Road towards Peabody River King State Fish & Wildlife Area, we stopped and scoped an active Bald Eagle nest with an adult sitting on it. While there, another adult flew in and landed close by. Nearby was another eagle nest which didn't have a visible adult. Ring-necked Duck flew from a pond near the road.

The habitat for Short-eared Owl at Peabody looked very promising. We drove the area, parked at the northern end, and walked some of the trails. A few sparrows including American Tree & Song were in the brush, and 2 Killdeer were flushed by a Great Blue Heron. As sunset got close, a large number of Northern Cardinal were flying to roost, and our first large flocks of blackbirds was seen. A large kettle of gulls caught our attention.

We took one last drive of the refuge's main road looking for the previously reported Loggerhead Shrike when one was spotted by Jean & Bernie Favara. The shrike was viewed and photographed as it fed in the field near the cross road to the refuge headquarters.

We returned to the fields near the Short-eared Owl roosting sign and watched 4 Northern Harrier fly into the field from the East, I assume coming in to roost. Shortly afterwards, the first of at least 4 Short-eared Owls began flying in the area, one landing on a Short-eared Owl perch for great views in the colorful sunset. After we left, Mike Thelen heard the peenting of American Woodcock.

Thanks to leaders Mike Thelen, Mike Grant, and Bernie Favara for their help, and to all the birders for their spottings and enthusiasm! ◆



Loggerhead Shrike (above)

Short-eared Owl

Al Smith Photos



Partners for Native Landscaping

...a beginners' workshop for homeowners.

Sat., March 26, 2016 8am-4pm

at Powder Valley Nature Center • Kirkwood • MO

Beginners' Workshop offers information and resources on how to landscape with native plants for greener communities.

Dave Tylka

Keynote Presenter



An Introduction to...

- Gardening for Wildlife
- Gardening with Native Plants
- Rainscaping
- Basic Gardening Practices

Also...

- Hear about Organizations
- Discover Upcoming Events
- Meet Other Native Gardeners
- Purchase Missouri Wildflowers

Register Today! Space is Limited

Register Online at
www.stlouisaudubon.org/PNL
 Workshop at
 Powder Valley Nature Center
 11715 Cragwold Rd.
 Kirkwood, MO 63122

Cost: \$10 Includes Lunch

Partner Organizations...



St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
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ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY YEAR-END FUNDRAISING APPEAL

We are proud of everyone who helps us achieve our goals, including passionate volunteers, dedicated members and enthusiastic donors.

Your past support has made our success possible, and we need your help to sustain our programs. Help us continue to connect our community to the nature that surrounds us all. Please send in your gift today!

\$250 \$100 \$60 \$30 Other _____

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