

# TALE FEATHERS

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

### BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS

FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER AT 5595 GRAND DRIVE

FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

WALK FROM 830 AM TO 10 AM, MEET AT 815 AM

For info e-mail [birding@forestparkforever.org](mailto:birding@forestparkforever.org).

### STEWARDSHIP PROJECT—PAGE 7

HONEYSUCKLE HACK AT CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK

SATURDAY MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> FROM 9A TO 1P

### BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BUSCH CONSERVATION AREA WOODCOCK/OWL PROWL

SATURDAY MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> AT 5P

### BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

HORSESHOE LAKE STATE PARK IN ILLINOIS

SATURDAY MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup> AT 8A

### STEWARDSHIP PROJECT—PAGE 7

CONFLUENCE TRASH BASH AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS

SATURDAY MARCH 23<sup>RD</sup> FROM 9A TO 1P

### DISCOVERING MISSOURI'S NATURAL AREAS—PAGE 4

STL COUNTY LIBRARY MID-COUNTY BRANCH

THURSDAY MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> AT 730P

### STEWARDSHIP PROJECT—PAGE 7

HABITAT RESTORATION AT CREVE COEUR PARK

SATURDAY APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup> FROM 9A TO 1P

### BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

DRESSER ISLAND CONSERVATION AREA

SATURDAY APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 630 AM

### PEREGRINE FALCON PROGRAM—PAGE 4

STL COUNTY LIBRARY—TESSON FERRY BRANCH

THURSDAY APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup> AT 7P

### JUNIOR AUDUBON SPRING BULLETIN ONLINE

FILLED WITH OVER A DOZEN EVENTS ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES, CHECK IT OUT HERE:

[HTTP://WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.ORG/INVOLVED/BULLETINS/SCREEN.PHP?VERSION=SPRING\\_13&PAGE=1](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/involved/bulletins/screen.php?version=spring_13&page=1)

FOR MORE INFO ABOUT THE JUNIOR AUDUBON PROGRAM, SEE:

[HTTP://WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.ORG/EDUCATION/EDUCATION.PHP](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/education/education.php)

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## Supporter Thanks!

It is that time of year when we thank our supporters. We are blessed to have so many of you who financially contribute to our projects and programs. Our 2012 year-end appeal is winding down and we are again in sight of our \$10,000 goal! 138 contributions have been received for nearly \$9,400—outstanding! If you would like to help insure we make that goal, see the donation form at the back of this issue or visit our website at <http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/giving/giving.php>.

In addition to our year-end appeal, contributions were received throughout last year. Another \$2,600 was given by 30 supporters. For a complete list of all of our supporters, see pages 8 and 9 of this issue.

Members provide the balance of our individual support, either chapter-supporting or the National Audubon membership. The latter is fixed at \$6,300 a year with over 3,000 members managed by National. Our local members have provided over \$2,500 just since the start of our fiscal year last May. The April *TaleFeathers* will include a list of our chapter supporting members. If you would like to become a member at either level, visit <http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/involved/getinvolved.php>.

To all of you, on behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we extend a heartfelt THANK YOU! As we approach our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015, we reflect upon the many supporters and advocates over the years. Your support continues a very proud tradition! THANKS! ♦

## Board Meetings

Open to All. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of Every Month 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.

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## Newsletter

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



## Bring Conservation Home

On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, over 220 people attended the second annual Partners in Native Landscaping Workshop for Homeowners at Powder Valley Nature Center! St. Louis Audubon's *Bring Conservation Home* program was one of several key supporters of the event. Presentations included the need to re-create habitat in our personal landscapes, the identification and replacement of non-native invasive plants and water quality improvement through native landscaping.

Novus International, Inc. in St. Charles hosted our second Habitat Advisor Training Workshop on March 2<sup>nd</sup> with 14 new volunteers getting certified. John Vogel, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Roland Biehl, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, provided key training on invasive plants and storm water management, respectively. The volunteers will receive follow-up training in the field and have already begun signing up for surveys later this month. Many thanks to Ellen Dierenfeld at Novus, John Vogel, Roland Biehl and Dave Tylka! ♦



Exhibitors at the Partners in Native Landscaping workshop at Powder Valley



Dave Tylka led the Habitat Advisor Training Workshop at Novus International, Inc.

## From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Each of us makes decisions every day that have an impact on our environment. Actually, at the core of ALL of our activities is the natural world. In some way, it all comes from or goes back to that—the air we breathe, the water we drink, the raw materials for our homes and cars and technology. The measures we take to minimize those impacts are myriad from recycling to buying organic to CFL or LED bulbs to hybrid vehicles. All of which are important but few of which hold our attention long, and none of which are alive (save for our food—once).

That is my point. Only habitat re-creation is vibrant, exciting and literally full of life. Using native plants to re-build the food web of life in your own landscape draws insects, birds, butterflies and more into your life, daily. I still provide suet and black oil sunflower seed with feeders. Yet, my attention is drawn more each season to the native habitat I've been creating. This winter, I watched White-throated Sparrows snap the seed heads from the Cliff Goldenrod planted last spring while Cardinals took some of the late-season fruit off the American Beautyberry shrubs. I'm anxious for the Black Chokeberry and Ninebark shrubs that I planted last fall to mature and provide similar opportunities.

My space is small—some 7,600 square feet—including the house, garage and driveway. I have some turf and retain some amount of ornamental plants, but the yew hedge across the front of the house may be the only one with a long-term future. Plans are already in the making for a new native bed at the front of the house—a triangle of maybe 100 square feet. Its days of daffodils, tulips and a non-native creeping phlox are numbered. Come April, it will be planted with a variety of coneflowers—butterfly and bee nectar in the summer and finch food in the fall!

No matter where or what size your space, you can start the same journey. How much and how quickly you re-store the habitat is up to you, but we stand ready to help you. Visit our website and online application for Bring Conservation Home at [www.stlouisaudubon.org/BCH](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/BCH). You'll be glad you did!

We are pleased to recognize Missouri American Water as a returning sponsor of Bring Conservation Home. The Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District has pledged financial support for this year, and The Trio Foundation of St. Louis has provided us our first grant. Many thanks to all of them! They are essential to our success! ◆



## Field Trips, Etc.

### **March 9<sup>th</sup> at Busch Memorial Conservation Area:**

John Solodar will 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.

**Mar 16<sup>th</sup> to Horseshoe Lake State Park:** Mike Grant leads this all 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.

**April 13<sup>th</sup> to Dresser Island Conservation Area:** Sue Gustafson and Pat Lueders will lead this all day trip that starts at 6:30 am and will include quite a bit of walking. From Hwy 67 in West Alton, take Hwy 94 west 4.5 miles to right at Dresser Island Dr, a gravel road that ends at the parking lot.

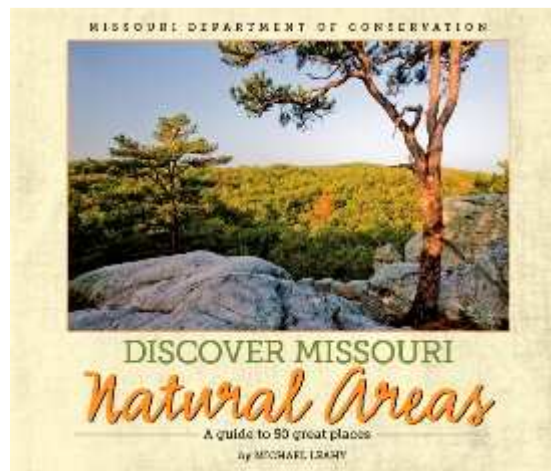
All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. For questions, contact Mike Grant at [mikecurlew@att.net](mailto:mikecurlew@att.net).

## Discovering Missouri's Natural Areas

Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm

Mike Leahy, natural areas coordinator with the Missouri Department of Conservation, will give an overview of Missouri's natural areas and their role in the conservation of the state's natural heritage. From cypress swamps to desert-like glades, we will explore the myriad of native plants and animals that inhabit the remnant natural areas of Missouri. We will explore natural areas across the state but will also focus on those in the St. Louis region that are great destinations to visit to learn more about the natural history of this place. Come learn about the great natural features of our state.

This is the annual joint program with the Eastern Missouri Group of the Sierra Club, to be held at the St. Louis County Library's Mid County Branch. The library is at 7821 Maryland Avenue in Clayton, Missouri 63105 at Central Avenue and just blocks from two Metrolink Stations. The program is in the large auditorium. Questions, call (314)



## *The Peregrine Falcon: A Success Story*

Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Jeffrey Meshach, Director of the World Bird Sanctuary, will present a brief history of the Peregrine Falcon, its struggle with the effects of the pervasive pesticide DDT and its amazing population recovery. He will highlight the Sanctuary's efforts in this process, including its critical role in re-establishing wild populations in the St. Louis region. Jeff may be able to bring a falcon with him to the program.



Al Smith Photo

While populations have been slowly building, the Peregrine Falcon is still listed as endangered in the state of Missouri. Historically, the birds nested on the bluffs of the region's big rivers. Today, they find the concrete ledges of tall buildings suitable for nesting with plenty of pigeons and other birds as prey. Diving at speeds up to 260 miles per hour, they are believed the fastest birds in the world.

A short business meeting, our Annual Meeting, will precede the program and will include the election of the board of directors. All are welcome to attend, but only members may vote.

The event begins at 7 pm at the Tesson Ferry Branch of the St. Louis County Library at 9920 Lin-Ferry Drive, St. Louis, MO 63123, just east of the intersection of Tesson Ferry and South Lindbergh. For questions, call (314) 599-7390. ◆



## Conservation Update

By Jean Favara

The first meeting of the St. Louis Audubon Conservation Committee for 2013 was held in January. The group mapped out some short-term activities and reviewed continuing restoration and conservation projects at Castlewood State Park, Queeny Park, and Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park. This first meeting was a great way for new members to get acquainted with each other and to start planning future activities. During this month, committee members also participated in meetings concerning Castlewood State Park restoration efforts and Kiefer Creek Watershed planning. The February committee meeting focused on creating an updated conservation strategy and goals document which will be used as input to the St. Louis Audubon Strategic Plan now under development.

In early February, the committee efforts became quickly focused on the proposal for a tree-top adventure course installation at Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park. Go-Ape Ltd, an outdoor adventure company based in the UK, first sought approval of such a course at Greensfelder Park (also opposed by SLAS). After this proposal was dropped late in 2012, St. Louis County Parks Department then requested St. Louis County Council approval for a similar installation at Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park. This installation would occur in the north section of the park near Corporate Shelter #1 and utilize about 7 acres of the approximately 150 acres of upland forest in that location. St. Louis Audubon Society objected to this proposal for several reasons. There has been no study of the potential impacts of the project on forest canopy bird foraging and nesting behavior in a park designated as an IBA (Important Bird Area). Such activities do not appear in the current park master plan, and there was no public engagement process to share details of the project and hear concerns from the community.

The conservation committee members participated in three St. Louis County Council meetings during this opposition effort, giving testimony about our concerns and submitting position letters to the St. Louis County Council. In addition, the group worked with several local media outlets including KMOX, the St. Louis Post Dispatch and Patch.com to raise public awareness of the concerns with the project proposal and to advocate for the importance of undisturbed bird habitat in parks designated as IBAs. The proposal was passed, however, by the St. Louis County Council at the Feb. 19th meeting with 5 yes votes (Erby, Burkett, Wasinger, Dolan, Stenger), 1 no (Quinn) and one absent (O'Mara). Despite this disappointing result, St. Louis Audubon representatives have already been in touch with the St. Louis County Parks Department. We plan to be a part of the planning, design and installation process for the adventure course, hoping to minimize its impact on the IBA habitat and the bird life. Our decades-long collaboration with the Department remains strong and will continue to guide future restoration projects.

If you have a heart for conservation, please consider joining the conservation committee. We have a variety of activities that can use your support. If you are interested, please contact Jean Favara at [jpouf1@swbell.net](mailto:jpouf1@swbell.net). ♦

### Bird Monitoring Begins a New Season

It's hard to believe that Purple Martin scouts have already been seen in the area, seeking nesting sites. Spring migration is just weeks away, and we'll be into our 2<sup>nd</sup> season of Purple Martin house monitoring, and our 4<sup>th</sup> season of bluebird box monitoring. Each year has been a fun and educational. If you have some time to spare, we'd be happy to have you for our weekly monitoring opportunities at Creve Coeur Park. No experience necessary. Please contact Karen Meyer for info at [kb2bird@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kb2bird@sbcglobal.net) or (314) 602-7318. ♦

## Baldwin Lake Birding Report

By Pat Lueders

18 St. Louis Audubon members spent yesterday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, in Illinois, beginning first at Baldwin Lake/Kaskaskia River State Fish & Wildlife Area. On the drive down, we saw a large number of American Kestrels on the wires and Red-tailed Hawks hunting the fields. While the group was gathering, Jan had 2 Purple Finch near the pit toilets. We were hoping to see five species of geese at the lake but we ended up with three. When we arrived, there were only a few Snow Geese on the fields but ribbons of them in the sky. We could often pick a Ross's Geese out of each ribbon. We watched a male Northern Harrier hunt very close to our cars and a number of Killdeer were in the fields vocalizing. We also had nice views of beautiful Eastern Bluebirds. After about an hour, a few of the ribbons of Snow Geese came down into the fields, and we were able to view a few Ross's Geese on the ground, a life bird for some in the group. There were few Canada Geese in the area and no Greater White-fronted. There were a few Pied-billed Grebe and American Coot on the lake but few other ducks. We spotted Bonaparte's Gulls two different times as well as Ring-billed.

We spent lunch time at the Kaskaskia River boat launch area and had a few Northern Shovelers and Mallards in the River. John Solodar saw an Eurasian Collared Dove near Baldwin on the drive there. A nice variety of raptors included 2 Sharp-Shinned Hawks, a Cooper's Hawk, Red-Shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, more Kestrels, and a Bald Eagle.

After lunch we drove to Peabody River King State Fish & Wildlife Area. It's interesting to note that we had a sky full of Snow Geese in the morning before noon and didn't see any in the afternoon. This year all of the water was open but there were few ducks on the ponds. We saw a few Northern Harriers and Northern Mockingbirds as we searched the area for a shrike. We counted a group of 30+ Eastern Meadowlarks, a few Mourning Doves, but few sparrows. The habitat there did not look good for Short-eared Owls, possibly because of last year's drought. An adult Bald Eagle was fishing very close to the road on Goose Lake. After 2 hours, while we were visiting the restrooms at the north end of the area preparing to return to St. Louis, Mike Thelen spotted a shrike west of the parking area in the long brush. After prolonged scope looks at him, we agreed it was a Loggerhead Shrike, certainly the bird of the trip!

As Mike has reported, a few birders remained till sunset and saw one Short-eared Owl and heard American Woodcocks peenting. ◆



*Ross's Goose (left); Loggerhead Shrike*

*Al Smith Photos*

## St. Louis Audubon Society Habitat Restoration Workdays

### Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at Castlewood State 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 Park office is at 1401 Kiefer Creek Road in Ballwin. From I-270, take Big Bend or Manchester to Ries Road south to its end. Turn left. Office is just ahead on the right. We may meet elsewhere, so please register as noted below.

### Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> Confluence Trash Bash. Watershed Cleanup.

All ages welcome. To register: <https://behrmann.wufoo.com/forms/5th-annual-confluence-trash-bash/>

### Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at Creve Coeur Park. Habitat Restoration.

All ages welcome, but those under 18 must have parental/adult supervision at all times. Bring your favorite lopper or saw. Please register for directions to this remote site.

### Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at Castlewood State Park. Tree Planting.

All ages welcome. Help us celebrate Earth Day! Follow directions for March 9<sup>th</sup> project.

### Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> 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. Meet in the upper park—west of I-270 and north of Dorsett. Take I-270 Exit 17 for Dorsett Rd and go west about 1.5 miles. Enter Park on right, just before light at Marine and take Streetcar Drive north. Continue past park office, ball field and tennis court to gravel parking lot on right. Parking is somewhat limited, so please carpool if possible.

Volunteers are requested to register for all projects by providing their name, contact information and number attending at [director@stlouisaudubon.org](mailto:director@stlouisaudubon.org) or (314) 599-7390.

All projects begin at 9 am (registration starts at 8:30 am). All are half-day and include lunch. Gloves and other supplies/materials are provided. For Audubon info, visit [www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org).



*These projects made possible by support from a National Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen grant and REI. For more info, visit [www.togethergreen.org](http://www.togethergreen.org) or [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com).*



## Many Thanks to All Our 2012 Donors!!

Board President Rixey Ruffin, Executive Director Mitch Leachman, and the entire Board of Directors extend their heartfelt thanks for your support this past year. You are critical to our success!

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*The list includes contributions received from March 2012 thru Feb 2013. Every effort was made to be accurate and complete. We apologize for any errors. For corrections, please contact Mitch Leachman at (314) 599-7390.*

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3/13

We are proud of our accomplishments and the variety of programs we use to achieve our goals. Still, the threats facing our environment are growing and require new or expanded efforts.

Your past support has made our success possible, and we need your help again to sustain our growth. Help us continue to build strong bonds with nature for our children and our community. If you share our passion and our

\$250    \$100    \$60\*\*    \$30    Other\_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Donations at the \$60 level or higher will receive a *Birds of St. Louis* note card set as our gift, with favorite images from Paul Bauer's personal photo collection.

Thank you so much for your interest and support!

*Donations are tax-deductible.*  
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If you prefer credit card, visit our website  
<http://www.stlouisaudubon.org>

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