

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 830 AM

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

www.stlouisaudubon.org or (314) 367-7275

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

EMMENEGGER PARK IN KIRKWOOD

WEDNESDAY MAY 6TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

FOREST PARK

SATURDAY MAY 9TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

TOWER GROVE PARK

WEDNESDAY MAY 13TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

CUIVRE RIVER STATE PARK

SATURDAY MAY 16TH AT 730A

ALL DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

MAY PROGRAM—PAGE 5

POWDER VALLEY NATURE CENTER

TUESDAY MAY 19TH AT 7P

ALASKAN ADVENTURE: TESHEKPUK LAKE WILDERNESS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

RIVERLANDS & COLUMBIA BOTTOMS

SATURDAY MAY 23RD AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

LOST VALLEY & KATY TRAIL

SATURDAY MAY 30TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

COLUMBIA BOTTOMS & RIVERLANDS

SATURDAY JUNE 6TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BLUE GROSBEAK TRAIL & LOST VALLEY TRAIL

SATURDAY JUNE 20TH AT 545A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF SPRING MIGRANTS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Annual Dinner Highlights	2, 4
From the Director	3
Field Trip Details	3, 6
Monthly Program Announcement	5
Wings of Spring Recap	6
Marsh Bird Survey	7
St. Louis Audubon Honor Roll	8
Audubon Magazine Photography Contest	9

NO TaleFeathers Newsletter in June or July

Please be aware that we have no intention to publish a full newsletter over the summer months of June or July. August will be our next full issue of *TaleFeathers*. Do not be alarmed or feel you have been dropped from our mailing list during this time.

This has been our standard procedure for a number of years. Many of the Society's activities wane over the summer, including monthly programs and field trips, and we have felt summer newsletters were not a good use of our resources. We will, however, utilize our mailing list to update you, if necessary, on any significant Society news during this time.

Thanks and have a GREAT summer! ◆



Mike
Grant
Photo

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

Karen Meyer, VP Conservation

(314) 982-1774

conservation@stlouisaudubon.org

Sue Gustafson, VP Finance

(314) 968-8128

smgustafson@juno.com

John Solodar, Treasurer

(314) 862-5294

Solodar@sbcglobal.net

Susan Krupa, Secretary

(636) 405-1230

smkrupa@msn.com

Mitch Leachman, Executive Director

(314) 599-7390

director@stlouisaudubon.org

Newsletter

TaleFeathers is published monthly.

For submissions, comments or corrections, contact Mitch Leachman as noted above.

2009 Annual Awards Dinner

Jim Mallman, president and co-founder of Watchable Wildlife, Inc. highlighted our 2009 Annual Awards Dinner, held at Orlando Gardens in Maryland Heights on April 11, as keynote speaker. Jim provided a very inspired talk on the economic value of nature-based tourism and its potential impact on the preservation of our treasured open spaces.

Scholarship certificates were presented by Lynne Breakstone to Eliot Miller and L. Maria Svensson to support their graduate studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Corinne Kozlowski also received a scholarship but was unable to attend the Dinner. Also, awards were presented for Outstanding Educator, Outstanding Conservationist and Outstanding Volunteer.

Jan Oberkramer, Education and Volunteer Manager at the Green Center, received the Educator Award for her work in combining environmental education and art for children throughout the St. Louis Area. Prior to joining the Green Center, Jan was a program coordinator at Shaw Nature Reserve.

Pat McGinnis, Riverlands Area Operational Manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, received the Conservation Award for his decades of work on numerous environmental stewardship projects. Most importantly, Pat was instrumental in the concept development for, and implementation, of the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary.

John Solodar, Chapter Treasurer, received the Volunteer Award for his ten-plus years of dedication to St. Louis Audubon including field trip coordinator, passionate conservationist and finance vice president. John is now treasurer and has played a critical role in the transition from an all-volunteer organization to a paid executive director.

Lastly, Paul Bauer received National Audubon's Great Egret Award for a lifetime of service in support of the Audubon mission. Paul joined the National Audubon Society in 1972 and his volunteer work focused on introducing and educating people about birds. He co-authored the "Birds of the St. Louis Area: where and when to find them;" created a twice-a-year birding festival which introduced the public to the joys of bird watching; and escorted over twenty foreign birding tours and donated a portion of the proceeds to the Chapter. Further, Paul has been a tireless advocate for wetland habitat conservation, especially for shorebirds. His work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers led directly to multiple shorebird projects at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. One of those projects, a large expansion of an existing wetland pool, is to be completed this year and supported by a significant financial contribution from Paul and a matching gift from St. Louis Audubon. ♦

Please see photo highlights on page 4

From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Please remember the following numbers: 10 million, 100 million and 1 billion. In order, they are the number of bird fatalities **every year** from lawn pesticides, domestic cats and window strikes! Of course, these are not the **only** human factors that kill birds, or even the worst. Habitat loss is largely accepted as the worst killer, yet virtually impossible to quantify. Other bird-killers often go unnoticed (or have become accepted), like vehicle collisions, electrocution, agricultural pesticide poisoning, power line collisions, and cutting of hay and other grassy fields. Yet, the first three—lawn pesticides, cats and windows strikes—are largely preventable and can be affected by each of us.

Many bird- and wildlife-friendly alternatives are often better for humans, too; pesticides are a perfect example. Homeowners apply nearly 70 million pounds of herbicides and pesticides annually to their lawns and gardens—a 50% increase in herbicide use in just the last 20 years. Now, pesticides are routinely found in surface and ground water across the country. Also, a recent study of children in a major metropolitan area found traces of garden chemicals in 99% of their blood samples! There are alternatives. For nearly every garden or lawn pest problem, challenge yourself (and your neighbors) to **not** take the chemical route. Consult a local alternative garden resource such as Worm's Way (www.wormsway.com), an expert resource such as the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (<http://www.pesticide.org/factsheets.html>), or the Audubon at Home resources at http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/ReducePesticideUse.html.

As wildlife watchers and conservationists, please recognize the ways you can prevent bird fatalities and promote healthy habitat for birds and **ourselves**. Then, as you make improvements, share your activities with your friends and family. It can be fun. It certainly is rewarding, and it is the right thing to do! ♦

Field Trips, Etc.

May 6th at Emmenegger Park in Kirkwood: John Solodar will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. From Watson and Lindbergh, go west to Geyer. Turn right, cross over I-44 and take the first left on Craigwold Rd. Follow the road over I-270 and turn left. Road dead-ends into Park entrance.

May 9th at Forest Park: Bob Bailey will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Kennedy Forest parking lot. From the Wells Dr park entrance in the SW corner, the lot is on your left just after Govt. Dr.

May 13th at Tower Grove Park: Bill Rudden & Pat Lueders will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Gaddy Bird Garden in NW corner of the Park.

May 16th at Cuyve River State Park: Jim Malone & Joe Eades will lead this all day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the carpool lot on the SE side of Hwy 94 & Hwy 40 interchange.

May 23rd at Riverlands and Columbia Bottoms: Josh Uffman will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. Take Hwy 367 north to Alton. Turn right on the last road before the Clark Bridge. Turn right again on first road after gas station to Teal Pond Parking lot.

May 30th at Lost Valley Trail: Mike Grant will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the trailhead parking lot, 5.7 miles west of Hwy 40 on Hwy 94.

June 6th at Columbia Bottoms and Riverlands: Pat Lueders will lead this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Columbia Bottoms Visitor Center parking lot.

June 20th at Blue Grosbeak Trail & Lost Valley: Mike Grant will lead this half day trip. Meet at 5:45 a.m. at the Blue Grosbeak parking lot on your left just a ½ mile west on Hwy 40 on Hwy 94.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted. Contact Pat Lueders with questions at (314) 359-9364.

2009 Annual Awards Dinner Highlights



"The Crowd" socializing at Orlando's.



Keynote speaker, Jim Mallman, makes a point during his talk.



Jan Oberkramer (left) receives the Outstanding Educator Award from Nancy Solodar (center) and Kathleen Evans.



Pat McGinnis (left) receives the Outstanding Conservationist Award from John Solodar.



John Solodar (left) receives the Outstanding Volunteer Award from Torrey Berger.



Paul Bauer (left) receives National Audubon's Great Egret Award from Dave Tylka.

All Photos by Mitch Leachman

Alaskan Adventure—Teshekpuk Lake Wetlands

Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Powder Valley Nature Center

Please join Richard Spener and Toni Armstrong as they present photos and commentary from their 10-day July 2008 paddling trip through this critical wetland complex near the north coast of Alaska. Teshekpuk Lake, southeast of Barrow, is a fragile wilderness that is home to an incredibly diverse variety of migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and wildlife. Part of the National Petroleum Reserve–Alaska, or NPR–A, the vast network of wetlands surrounding Teshekpuk Lake has been recognized since 1977 by Congress and three Interior Secretaries as a “special area” for its importance to wildlife. Over one million migratory birds use the

area for breeding and it contains the most important goose molting area within the entire Arctic. In addition, the 45,000 head Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd returns to this habitat each year to bear its calves; Inupiat Natives, who have lived in this region for thousands of years, depend on the caribou as a food source.

Richard Spener is a member of the Alaska Wilderness League’s Board of Directors. He and Toni have made more than a dozen backpacking and paddling trips to the wilderness areas of Alaska, including five unguided trips to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This was their first trip to the Teshekpuk Lake area. Richard serves on the advisory board of the Hotel and Restaurant Management program at the University of Missouri–Columbia. Toni and Richard are active in the Sierra Club as trip leaders and instructors in canoeing and kayaking.

From the intersection of Interstates 44 & 270, take Watson Rd. to Geyer Rd. Turn north on Geyer and cross the bridge to Cragwold Road on your left. Go west on Cragwold for 1 mile to nature center entrance on right. Follow drive to parking lot. Enter building through left entrance. Questions, call Mitch Leachman at (314)–599–7390. ♦



Black-bellied Plover.

Richard Spener Photo



Red-throated Loon.

Richard Spener Photo



Wings of Spring Simply Amazing



Children making origami swans for wetland preservation.



Julie Nicolai (left) and Karen Meyer demonstrate.

More Field Trips...

May 8th at Calvary Cemetery Prairie in N. St. Louis:

Pat Lueders will lead this short walk co-sponsored by The Green Center. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Calvary is host to the largest original prairie in Metro St. Louis and recent restoration efforts have been led by The Green Center. Please register by calling (314) 725-8314 or events@thegreencenter.org.

May 16th at Klondike Park in St. Charles County:

Mike Thelen will lead. See April 18th trip for details.

All field trips are FREE. For Klondike and Quail Ridge walks, please register with the St. Charles County Parks Dept at (636) 949-7535. Contact Pat Lueders with other questions at (314) 359-9364.

The 4th Annual Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival was held on Saturday, April 25th at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in West Alton. It was a resounding success! Over 1,200 people attended the large array of family-oriented, bird- and nature-related activities including bird walks, canoe classes, live bird programs, riverboat tours, bird house building, and much more.

Festival coordinating committee chair was Patty Hagen, Director of Audubon's St. Louis Center Project. The committee was supported greatly by the U.S. Army Corps' Rivers Project Office, the Alton Convention & Visitor Bureau, Lewis & Clark Community College, SIU-Edwardsville, Sierra Club, Missouri DNR, Trailnet, and St. Louis Audubon (to name just a few). Patty is already starting discussions about how to improve and adjust for next year. If you have ideas or feedback, you can contact me and I will pass the information along.

The Chapter was well represented on Saturday by our field trip team and outreach volunteers. Many thanks to Bob Bailey, Mary Dueren, Pat Lueders, and John Solodar for leading field trips. Pat also coordinated those same efforts. Many thanks also to Karen Meyer and Julie Nicolai for their support to our interactive, education table. Karen also provided major planning input to the exhibit, itself. (Also note the Education Team was fired up for their support to the Festival's Education Day on the 24th, which was canceled due to low registrations.)

Our hands-on "bird feet quiz" went over well with six specimens of unique bird feet and what they can tell us about the diet and habitat of the bird (thanks to Meramec Community College for most of the specimens). Also, we helped the kids make origami swans and discussed wetland preservation. Most of the swans made were collected and have been sent to National Audubon for their distribution to Congress on May 8th, International Migratory Bird Day, to specifically support protection of Teshekpuk Lake in Alaska. ♦

Marsh Bird Survey—BK Leach Conservation Area

By John Solodar

For the last four years St. Louis Audubon Society members have helped biologists at B K Leach Conservation Area conduct surveys of Rails, Bitterns and other birds in late May and early June. The surveys are very easy to conduct and one need not be an experienced birder to participate. The late spring evenings on the levees overlooking the marshes are normally very delightful. The goal is to find evidence of nesting birds in the recently created marshes at B K Leach.

Our procedure is to gather in late afternoon for a briefing and to receive our recordings of the eight birdcalls. We then head disperse to our locations, play the recordings and listen for replies at five areas along our routes. Very simple, yet quite enjoyable. We do this for three Saturday evenings in May and June. The first gathering is at 4:00 pm so we may review the procedures and prior year's results. Food is supplied at the first gathering, and this year we are promised some pictures of last year's flood.

The schedule for this year is:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
May 23, 2009	4:00 P.M.
June 6, 2009	5:30 P.M.
June 20, 2009	5:30 P.M.

B.K.Leach Conservation Area is located along the Mississippi River near Elsberry on Hwy 79. If you are interested in helping please contact John Solodar and Gary Calvert, manager of B.K. Leach. Please provide both your e-mail address and phone number. The latter is in case we have to cancel due to weather conditions such as rain or wind.

Gary Calvert

Wildlife Management Biologist
Missouri Department of Conservation
Upper Mississippi Conservation Area
PO Box 201
Elsberry, Missouri 63343
(573) 898-5905
(573) 898-5426 (Fax)
gary.calvert@mdc.mo.gov

John Solodar

St. Louis Audubon Society
8135 Cornell Court
St.Louis, MO 63130
solodar@sbcglobal.net
(314) 862-5294

Mary Smidt (left) and Linda Zurfluh participate in a marsh bird survey.

Photo by Noppadol Paothong, Missouri Department of Conservation



St. Louis Audubon Society Honor Roll

In appreciation of the volunteers who helped St. Louis Audubon achieve its mission in the past year, we, the Board of the St. Louis Audubon Society, recognize and thank heartily the following for their service.

Phone and Voice Mail Service

LaVern Koyn, Sue Leonard and Linda Virga answered our phone and promptly responded to messages for many years. The addition of a paid staff executive director eliminated that need.

Field Trip Leaders

Connie Alwood, Mike Arduser, Torrey Berger, Bob Bailey, Mike Brady, Shawn Clubb, Joe Eades, Chris Ferree, Mike Grant, Sue Gustafson, Pat Lueders, Jim Malone, Bill Rowe, Bill Rudden, John Solodar, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman and Jim Wilson.

Website Design & Support

Diane and Dave Pierce for many years of managing our website and Aaron Clubb for its recent redesign.

Julie Leeman

We extend our very warm thanks for the work that Julie Leeman has been doing for over ten years as a member of the Scholarships and Awards Committee. She could always be counted on to handle her responsibilities carefully and with a wonderfully cooperative attitude.

Dr. Owen Sexton

We extend our appreciation to Dr. Owen Sexton for his annual contribution to our scholarship program. For many years he has very generously served as our expert reader for the graduate scholarship applications.

Retiring Board Members

Tom Creley, Cathy Devine, Vicki Flier, Anne Rankin-Horton and Mary Smidt.

Audubon & U.S. Army Corps Sign Agreement

Press Release Excerpts

Vicksburg, MS, April 1, 2009 – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) and the National Audubon Society today signed an agreement to strengthen collaboration and communication aimed at restoring and protecting habitat and water quality along the Mississippi River, one of this nation's greatest natural and economic assets.

The regional Memorandum of Understanding unites ecosystem restoration experts from the environmental and natural resource staff of MVD's six districts with those of Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative to collaborate on key conservation initiatives within the 12 states and 370,000-square-mile geographic boundary of MVD that stretches from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. Corps and Audubon staff have already begun exploring sustainable management of important habitats such as the Atchafalaya River system in Louisiana; Mississippi River diversions to restore wetlands and strengthen storm protection below New Orleans; and conservation education projects at places such as the Mississippi and Missouri River confluence near St. Louis.

Corps and Audubon representatives will meet in May for joint planning and implementation efforts. The agreement was announced before members of the Mississippi River Commission. The panel is making its annual high-water inspection tour as part of its mission to advise Congress and the administration of President Barack Obama on the management of the Mississippi River. ♦

Audubon Magazine Announces Call for Entries for the Audubon Magazine Photography Awards: *Birds in Focus*

New York, NY–April 20, 2009--- *Audubon* magazine is launching the 2009 Audubon Magazine Photography Awards: Birds in Focus, created to celebrate the beauty and diversity of birdlife through the art of photography, and to honor the exceptional work of talented professional, amateur and youth photographers from all over the U.S.

Audubon will be accepting submissions online until July 15 in three categories: Professional, Amateur, and Youth. Photographers are encouraged to reveal a new angle or perspective in their work. "Think creatively," advises *Audubon's* design director Kevin Fisher, one of the judges. "Originality and drama rank high at *Audubon*. Include tight shots, such as close-ups of eyes, feathers. We welcome uncommon perspectives."

Other judges include renowned wildlife photographer Joel Sartore, a regular contributor to *Audubon* and *National Geographic*; Kim Hubbard, longtime *Audubon* photography editor and an accomplished photographer in her own right whose work featuring the birds of Bonaire is currently on exhibit at the Greenwich (CT) Audubon Center; and Steve Freligh, publisher of *Nature's Best Photography*.

The Award winners will be announced in December and will see their work showcased within the pages of both *Audubon* and *Nature's Best Photography* magazines, as well as on their respective websites. An impressive array of prizes will be awarded, including top-of-the-line photo and optic equipment from award sponsor, Nikon. **Prizes include:**

- Journey to Peru's Tambopata National Reserve (Inkaterra Amazonica Lodge)
- An ultimate birding safari to Australia's "Top End," the Northern Territory
- 14-day Tropical Rivers and Rainforest cruise through South America (Travel Dynamics International)
- Opportunity to travel to Honduras with *Audubon* wildlife photographer Roy Toft as your photographer/guide (Roy Toft Photo Safaris and Pico Bonito Lodge)
- A Nikon D80 digital SLR camera, 18–55mm NIKKOR VR lens, and a set of Nikon EDG 8x32 binoculars

Submissions: Accepted May 15 – July 15, 2009. Up to 10 images per entrant. For details, visit www.AudubonMagazinePhotoAwards.com

Audubon magazine, the flagship publication of the National Audubon Society, has been connecting people with nature for over 100 years, and has been recognized with an impressive number of photography, design and editorial awards, including:

ASME National Magazine Award Finalist: General Excellence
ASME National Magazine Award Finalist: Design
Communications Arts Photography Award of Excellence
American Photography Award
Photo District news (PDN) Award
Ozzie Platinum Awards for Photography

CONTACT: Delta Willis dwillis@audubon.org. (212) 979-3197. ◆

St. Louis Audubon Society Donation Form

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

Your support will allow us to maintain and expand our efforts in the St. Louis Metro Area. All our programs are free to the public. Thank you very much for your past support!

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

Education Only

Conservation Only

International Efforts Only

General Fund--Unrestricted

Contributions are Tax Deductible

Visit us at:

www.stlouisaudubon.org

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



Customer Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code