

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

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

FOREST PARK

SATURDAY MAY 8TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP VERY SUITABLE FOR BEGINNERS

WINGS OF SPRING BIRD FESTIVAL

NATIONAL GREAT RIVERS MUSEUM IN ALTON, IL

SATURDAY MAY 8TH FROM 9A TO 3P

FREE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY DAY WITH ACTIVITIES, LIVE BIRDS, FIELD TRIPS, EXHIBITS AND MORE. FOR DIRECTIONS AND DETAILED INFO VISIT WWW.WINGSOFSRING.ORG.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

TOWER GROVE PARK

SATURDAY MAY 15TH AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP WITH LIGHT WALKING

MAY MONTHLY PROGRAM—PAGE 5

TONGUES, TOES AND TALES OF MISSOURI WOODPECKERS

MONDAY MAY 17TH AT 700P

ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY HEADQUARTERS AUDITORIUM

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

COLUMBIA BOTTOM AND RIVERLANDS BIRD SANCTUARY

SATURDAY MAY 22ND AT 730A

HALF DAY TRIP WITH LIGHT WALKING

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BLUE GROSBEAK TRAIL & LOST VALLEY

SATURDAY MAY 29TH AT 630A (NOTE THE TIME)

HALF DAY TRIP GOOD FOR BEGINNERS

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

COLUMBIA BOTTOM AND RIVERLANDS BIRD SANCTUARY

SATURDAY JUNE 5TH AT 700A

HALF DAY TRIP WITH LIGHT WALKING—GOOD FOR BEGINNERS

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BLUE GROSBEAK TRAIL & LOST VALLEY

SATURDAY JUNE 19TH AT 545A (NOTE THE TIME)

HALF DAY TRIP WITH MODERATE HIKING

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—WHERE THE BIRDS ARE

SATURDAY JULY 24TH AT 7A

DAVE ROGLES WILL LEAD THIS TRIP TO WHATEVER AREA LOCATION HAS THE BEST BIRDING AT THAT TIME. CHECK THE SLAS WEBSITE, WWW.BIRDINGONTHE.NET "REGIONAL SPECIALTIES-MISSOURI" SECTION OR THE MOBIRDS LIST SERVE A FEW DAYS IN ADVANCE FOR DETAILS.

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NO TaleFeathers in June or July

Please note that *TaleFeathers* will not be published over the summer months of June and July. August will be our next full issue. Do not be alarmed or feel you have been dropped from our mailing list during this time. We will keep our website up to date and will not hesitate to use our mailing list to update you on any significant Society or related news.

This has been our standard procedure for quite some time. With very limited activities over the summer, such as monthly programs and field trips, eliminating the newsletter for the period is a wise use of our limited resources.

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

(636) 391-4898

Karen Meyer, VP Conservation

(314) 602-7318

conservation@stlouisaudubon.org

Jim Wilson, VP Finance

(314) 367-7275, ext 20

wilsonjh@umsl.edu

John Solodar, Treasurer

(314) 862-5294

Solodar@sbcglobal.net

Sharon Nickl, Secretary

(636) 391-8751

nicklone@swbell.net

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.



www.earthsharemo.org for more info.

St. Louis Audubon 2010 Awards Dinner

On Saturday, April 10th Orlando Gardens in Maryland Heights was again the site for the St. Louis Audubon Awards Dinner. New this year, we moved the Annual Meeting that has typically kicked off the Dinner to the April program held on the 20th (our bylaws only require the Meeting be held in the spring). If the Board determines the separation was positive, we may move the 2011 Awards Dinner earlier in the year to avoid conflict with the multitude of spring events. Watch for our calendar this fall.

Karen Meyer received the evening's first award as Outstanding Volunteer. Her tireless work on conservation issues was compared to the passion of Jim Holsen. Karen has already begun working her next "assignment" as membership chair by staffing outreach tables at events around town.

Jean Siesener, science teacher at Ladue Middle School, was presented the Outstanding Educator award by Sue Gustafson. Jean has used birds as a tool and inspiration in her curriculum, including coaching teams of students to success in ornithology at regional and state science fairs.

Warren Lammert accepted the Audubon Conservation award on behalf of the Missouri Prairie Foundation. The volunteers and staff of MPF have worked for 44 years to restore the native grasslands of Missouri. In the process, they have inspired many private landowners, established the Grasslands Coalition and preserved over 4,000 acres in Missouri. The evening fundraiser resulted in a donation to the Prairie Foundation.

Finally, Bill Salsgiver was honored with the Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement Award. Bill has served St. Louis Audubon for over 30 years, including two separate terms as board president. He was instrumental in strategic planning efforts, the recruitment of many key volunteers, and chaired the executive director planning and search committees. Bill Salsgiver has inspired many and continues to lead by example.

Our keynote speaker Tim Barksdale presented footage from his ongoing work for PBS on the Greater Prairie Chicken—which he has generously offered to show this winter as a private screening and fundraiser for the Chapter—and his award-winning *Adventures with Birdman* documentary. More importantly, Tim used his passion for birds to challenge the birding community to fill the widening financial gap in conservation support as sporting revenue continues to decline. He believes we can and must!

Please help us thank our sponsors who made the evening a success thru their generous support. Carr Lane Manufacturing, Lewis, Rice & Fingersh, L.C., Mark X. McCarthy, D.M.D, and Paramount Financial, LLC all made generous contributions. Arch Engraving and Minuteman Press–Westport provided discounted services. We encourage you to support them when possible.

Thanks for **your** support and we hope to see you at our 2011 event! ♦

President's Message

By Dave Rogles

America has chosen to live in a state of continual war for oil and the lifestyle it affords. We have chosen to pay the costs in billions of dollars, military lives, and international goodwill. We have chosen to believe that the oil companies can operate safely, anywhere (I have never believed that one). Oil wells leak. In the Midwest they are surrounded by moats, because they leak. A look at the driveways, the parking lots and the garage floors demonstrates the fallacy of a leak-free belief.

Now we have the disaster in the gulf. This may turn out to be the largest oil disaster in history; certainly it is one of the easiest ones to predict and one of the hardest to contain. It comes on the heels of President Obama's wrong-headed announcement to drill, drill, drill in the ocean. The environmental community opposes this plan; the gains in oil can be measured in a few months of world supply and the possible losses, the damage to the environment, will measure many years (Exxon Valdez has not been cleaned up as of this date, more than 20 years later).

You can join Audubon in voicing your opposition to the President's plan by signing petitions through 350.org and Oceana at the following addresses:

http://action.350.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=2785

http://takeaction.oceana.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=42&utm_source=enews&utm_medium=email&utm_term=apr-1-10&utm_campaign=offshore%2Bdrilling

On a much different note, I would like to thank the following people, on behalf of the Board of Directors, who volunteered their time this year to help with our weekly bird walks:

Connie Alwood, Bob Bailey, Paul Bauer, Torrey Berger, Mary Dueren, Joe Eades, Dave Garcia, Mike Grant, Sue Gustafson, Jim Malone, Bill Rowe, John Solodar, Mike Thelen, and Josh Uffman.

Also, a special thanks to Pat Lueders who organized the schedule and managed the year.

Now, get out and see the migration! ◆

Field Trips, Etc.

May 8th 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 15th at Tower Grove Park: Mike Thelen leads this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Gaddy Bird Garden in the NW corner of the Park.

May 22nd at Columbia Bottom and Riverlands: Josh Uffman leads this half day trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Columbia Bottom Visitor Center parking lot—just 2.5 miles north of I-270 on Riverview Drive.

May 29th at Blue Grosbeak & Lost Valley: Mike Grant leads the half day trip. *Meet at 6:30 am.* From Hwy

40, take Hwy 94 south ~ ¾ mile to the Lot on left.

June 5th at Columbia Bottom and Riverlands: Pat Lueders leads this half day trip. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Columbia Bottom Visitor Center parking lot—just 2.5 miles north of I-270 on Riverview Drive.

Jun 19th at Blue Grosbeak & Lost Valley: Mike Grant leads the half day trip. *Meet at 5:45 am.* From Hwy 40, take Hwy 94 south ~ ¾ mile to the Lot on left.

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.

2010 Awards Dinner Highlights



Graduate scholarship recipients (from left) Jamie Palmer, Maria Wilhelmina Barbosa de Oliveria Pil and Eliot Miller.



Jean Siesener (right) receives the Outstanding Educator Award from Sue Gustafson.



Warren Lammert accepts the Conservation Award on behalf of the Missouri Prairie Foundation.



Karen Meyer receives the Outstanding Volunteer Award from Mitch Leachman.



Bill Salsgiver (left) receives the Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement Award from Dave Rogles.



Tim Barksdale, keynote speaker.

Tongues, Toes and Tales of Missouri Woodpeckers

Monday, May 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Imagine for a moment slamming your face into a brick wall at 16 miles per hour. This self-destructive (and foolish) act would require about 1,200 *g* of force, almost certainly resulting in your death. Yet, a Pileated Woodpecker exerts the same force up to 20 times per second, and as many as 12,000 times per day, pounding its head into trees! The woodpecker anatomy is perfectly suited for its climbing and excavating lifestyle. Some woodpecker species also possess adaptations for aerial acrobatics, for drilling sap wells, or for extracting ants from underground burrows. And, woodpecker adaptation goes well beyond the anatomy. Cavity excavation, drumming, and food storage are just a few examples of their amazing specialization.

Join Oregon naturalist and North American woodpecker specialist Steve Shunk as he discusses the lives and times of Missouri's woodpeckers. From the omnivorous lifestyle of the Red-headed Woodpecker to the impressive carpentry of the Pileated, Steve will explain the broad variation in each species' anatomy and how it helps define their behavior and ecological niches in our local woodlands.

Stephen Shunk started birding in 1989 and for over 10 years has led birding tours and classes throughout the West with his company, Paradise Birding. Steve's 12 years of woodpecker study throughout North America has led to his recent completion of the *Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America*.

The program will be held in the auditorium of the St. Louis County Library Headquarters at 1640 S. Lindbergh. Heading south from Hwy 40/64, it is located just across from Plaza Frontenac. Questions, call Mitch at (314) 599-7390. ◆



Northern Flickers Steve Shunk

Woodpeckers of Missouri Workshop

Saturday, May 22nd, 8am to 4 pm

Castlewood State Park

Join North American woodpecker specialist, Stephen Shunk, for an inside look at Missouri's woodpeckers at the peak of breeding season. As you explore a variety of habitats, Steve will provide detailed natural histories and identification of woodpeckers while we observe courtship, feeding, and communication behaviors. Steve will also discuss the ecological roles that each species plays in its respective habitats, as well as historic and current conservation challenges.

All species of woodpecker have been observed at Castlewood and nests of several species have been located. You need not be an expert birder for this course, but simply desire a more in-depth appreciation and field experience of these amazing birds.

Fee: \$40. Registration is required. E-mail Mitch at stlaudubon@charter.net or call (314) 599-7390.

Class size is limited, so please register early.

This is a field class that involves significant hiking over some rough terrain. Also, it will be held rain or shine and only moved inside for heavy rain. Additional details will be provided to confirmed registrants. ◆

The Audubon Center at Riverlands

By Dr. Patty Hagen



Progress on the development of the National Audubon Society's new Audubon Center in the St. Louis region has been significant. A successful partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Riverlands has resulted in a significant opportunity for Audubon to establish its new Center at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. The Corps is building a new visitor orientation center at Riverlands, and Audubon and the Corps are working through a series of agreements and processes for Audubon to partner with the Corps in operating the new visitor

center. This will allow both organizations to leverage expertise and resources in support of common educational and outreach activities.

The new center was funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, and is set to be completed by September 2010. The National Audubon Society has committed resources that will add to the center's offerings, and will continue to work in partnership with the Corps to enhance and improve the visitor and educational experiences that the center will offer.

The Audubon Center at Riverlands has been operating as a "virtual" center in the meantime, with participation by its staff in policy and educational activities focused on the Mississippi River and its bird and wildlife habitats, including the Center's signature program—The RiverVision Leadership Project (*see description below*). The Audubon Center has space for its offices and programming at Riverlands, in the Corps' Rivers Project Office and in its Environmental Learning Facility.

The Audubon Center at Riverlands has also been partnering in planning and program activities with the St. Louis Audubon Society and the Great Rivers Audubon Society in Illinois. The Center's staff include: Dr. Patty Hagen, Executive Director; Jane Drake, Environmental Educator; and Lucia Herleth, Program Assistant.

RiverVision Leadership Project

RiverVision is part of an overall effort to raise awareness of the environmental value of one of our nation's greatest rivers--the Mississippi, understand the complicated policy issues that surround the river, and develop leadership skills required to address its future. To implement the project, the Audubon Center at Riverlands has partnered with the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Crossroads College Preparatory School.

The pilot program serves approximately 140 Crossroads students in 7th - 11th grades with a focus on river policy issues and water stewardship. Approximately 40% of these students are African-American. Students are exposed to a wide variety of water stewardship and water management issues associated with the River. Students visit with environmental groups, the Corps of Engineers, the Metropolitan Sewer

See *Audubon Center* next page

The Audubon Center at Riverlands

District, the barge industry, the Missouri Botanical Garden, and others. Exposure to a diverse group of professionals who use the resources of our Great Rivers in different ways allows students to begin to understand the delicate balance that environmentally-minded leaders must find to accomplish sometimes disparate objectives.

Students will also use the Corps' successful conservation initiative for the federally-endangered interior least tern at Riverlands as a metaphor for many complex river issues. A culminating symposium being planned partially by the students will include leadership from Audubon, the Corps' St. Louis District, the Corps' Mississippi Valley Division, Missouri American Water, the Metropolitan Sewer District, and the Waterways Council. The symposium will be held at the Missouri Botanical Garden and the local community will be invited to the discussion. Students will be involved in formulating a program that will incorporate many of the river issues they will have discussed.

The ultimate goal of the RiverVision Leadership Project is for students to understand the complexity of issues that surround stewardship of America's great rivers; to understand how effective leadership can result in positive environmental change; and to hone their own leadership skills in thinking through the issues to arrive at potential working solutions. ◆

Columbia Bottom Trip Report—March 31st

By Pat Lueders

A group of 15 birders enjoyed this wonderful warm and sunny day birding Columbia Bottom CA. We started at the visitor's center where there are still ETS coming to the feeders. We walked a portion of the River's Edge trail which starts after the boat ramp. A Vesper Sparrow stayed a few yards ahead of us on the levy trail before we entered the wooded area. We had Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, Hermit Thrush, White-throated Sparrows and kinglets along the trail.

Just past the Bridge to Nowhere, we had 5 American Golden Plovers in the field before the pond. There were large numbers of ducks in the ponds including Shovelers, Gadwall, Coot, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal. The only shorebirds we found were Killdeer. We had a large number, maybe 10, of Golden-crowned Kinglets on the board walk at the flooded slough. After visiting the Confluence, we ended the day with views of a Brown Creeper and Fish Crows while eating lunch. ◆



Turtles at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Al Smith Photo



American Golden-Plover

Al Smith Photo

Raffle for the Bird(s)

Proceeds Benefit the St. Louis Audubon Society

The Raffle has been postponed.

Please stay tuned.

We expect to re-start it in August.

Sorry for any confusion.



Raffle Prices

1 Ticket	\$5
2 Tickets	\$8
3 Tickets	\$10

Wind Energy Guidelines Signal Hope for Wildlife

*From U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Service Press Release*

April 13, 2010: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service transmitted a set of final recommendations on how to minimize the impacts of land-based wind farms on wildlife and its habitat to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. These recommendations represent the consensus of the 22 diverse members (including National Audubon) of the Wind Turbine Guidelines Federal Advisory Committee, culminating a two-year process.

The document contains both policy recommendations and recommended voluntary guidelines for siting and operating wind energy projects in order to avoid or minimize potential impacts to wildlife and habitat. After the Interior Secretary's review, the Service will use the Committee's recommendations to develop and publish its revised guidelines in the Federal Register and open them for public comment. The document, as well as a complete list of Committee members, is available for download at:

http://www.fws.gov/habitatconservation/windpower/wind_turbine_advisory_committee.html.

Highlights of the Committee's recommendations include a decision-making framework that guides all stages of wind energy development; reliance on the best available science when assessing renewable energy projects and their potential environmental impact; and the use of landscape-scaled planning that recognizes the need to think long-term about protecting our nation's economic and natural resources.

"It's encouraging that industry, government and wildlife interests came together to chart the course to wind energy that's truly wildlife friendly," said Mike Daulton, National Audubon Society Senior Director of Government Relations. "These guidelines will enable project planning that is smart from the start and that will help wind power to fuel a future that is both prosperous and wild." ◆

Conservation News

By Karen Meyer

Ed Emery's proposed [House Bill 2343](#) cleared the House Utilities Committee this week and is with the Rules Committee. This bill favors coal and nuclear energy by allowing funding upfront from ratepayers for construction of new plants. If this passes it could lead to consumer electric rate hikes of up to 40% to pay for expensive utility projects before the energy is available for use. Does this sound familiar? A similar proposal in 1976 was defeated by Missouri voters with a ballot initiative to stop Construction Work in Progress (CWIP). HB 2343 supports CWIP, and additionally removes all authority of any local government over siting, operations or maintenance of nuclear and coal-fired power plants.

Where are the needed incentives to produce clean, renewable energy such as properly sited wind and solar that will create jobs and innovation in Missouri? HB 2343 will put the risk on ratepayers, while historically completion of the plants may not even be realized. Environmental risks are also inherent in these projects. Read about the bill <http://house.mo.gov/content.aspx?info=/bills101/bilsum/intro/sHB2343I.htm>

Please urge your state representatives to protect fair electric rates and listen to Missouri voters by continuing the ban on CWIP: **Stop HB 2343**. [Find your state representative](#) at http://www.senate.mo.gov/lookup/leg_lookup.aspx now and give them a call.

Thanks to all who have already sent a letter or postcard to the Missouri Gaming Commission regarding the proposed casino in Spanish Lake adjacent to Columbia Bottom Conservation Area. We continue to spread the word that this is not the right place for any such development. The land serves an important function as part of the floodplain just south of the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Please help by sending a letter to the Missouri Gaming Commission to let them know you don't want to see a license given to North County Development LLC for a casino in Spanish Lake. [See the sample letter below](#). Also visit <http://moenviron.org/floodplaincasino.asp> or <http://www.savetheconfluence.org/> for additional info.

Sample Letter:

Save the Confluence! I support efforts to help preserve wildlife habitat, floodplain, and natural areas at Columbia Bottom in Spanish Lake. Please deny any future request of North County Development, L.L.C. for a casino license or any other permit that would be required to develop the proposed floodplain casino complex on 377 acres of floodplain along the Mississippi river in Spanish Lake, Missouri. I believe that you should deny the license for the proposed casino because it will:

- Undermine **\$25 million of investment** in the adjacent **Columbia Bottom Conservation Area** at the confluence of the two greatest rivers in North America, the Missouri and the Mississippi.
- Eliminate **farm land and wetlands** in the floodway that absorb **floodwaters** and provide **habitat** for millions of migratory waterfowl, eagles, and other wildlife.
- **Cost all taxpayers millions** because the area currently has no sewer service, no stormwater service, no public transportation, insufficient roads and public services for development.
- Increase air, light, and noise **pollution**.
- **Spanish Lake residents** do not support this development.

Sincerely,

Mail to: Leann McCarthy, Missouri Gaming Commission, 3417 Knipp Drive, P.O. Box 1847, Jefferson City, MO 65102. Or you can e-mail the same letter to leann.mccarthy@mgc.dps.mo.gov.

Thanks for all you do for conservation! ◆

Middle Schoolers & Monsanto Fund Help Finish Tree Project

Another beautiful day greeted the volunteers gathered in the southwest corner of Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park on Saturday, April 17th. Nearly 80 people turned out to plant 450 trees, completing an almost mile long bird and wildlife corridor that was begun on a workday last November. The workday was the sixth and last scheduled under the National Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen grant that provided funding for tools, food, volunteer incentives, supplies, and staff support for planning and coordination.

Two-thirds of the volunteers represented just three groups, including our first middle-schoolers! Erin Marsh and three other faculty led a group of 14 boys from Loyola Academy on Washington near St. Louis University. The Academy is a Jesuit middle school for boys in grades six through eight. Erin is the volunteer coordinator and is constantly looking for ways the boys can be involved in the community.

Also, Eva Kain and Michael Wyatt brought nine boys from the Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club—Hazelwood Southeast Middle School Unit. Eva used the workday to teach the boys about Earth Day and environmental stewardship. Herbert Hoover regularly serves over 3,500 youth in the St. Louis area and is a chartered member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Our third and largest group included nearly two dozen employees and their family from CenterOne Financial Services in Earth City. Kathleen Rock, Collections Director, coordinated their participation which came on the heels of their assistance with the Trash Bash on March 27th. CenterOne is a unit of JM Family Enterprises, Inc. a diversified automotive corporation founded in 1968 by St. Louis area auto dealer, Jim Moran.

The trees, valued at nearly \$5,000, were purchased from Forrest Keeling Nursery in Elsberry, Missouri, using a grant from the Monsanto Fund. The grant will also support the purchase of a variety of deer protection and repellent measures that will be placed by volunteers later this spring. “The Monsanto Fund is pleased to partner with the St. Louis Audubon Society to support the planting of trees to improve the bird and wildlife habitat at Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park,” said Deborah Patterson, president, the Monsanto Fund. “An important objective of Monsanto’s philanthropy is to invest in the communities where our employees live and work.”

In just eight months and six workdays, over 300 volunteers contributed nearly 1,100 hours to benefit the wildlife and habitat of Creve Coeur Park. They removed 7,600 pounds of trash, planted 900 native Missouri trees and restored six acres of wetland. Amazing! Thanks to all who helped! Will you come out next year? We begin a bush honeysuckle conversion project in the upper park this fall. Stay tuned! ◆



Kathleen Rock (center) and the CenterOne Crew



Erin Marsh and a group from Loyola Academy

St. Louis Audubon Society Donation Form

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

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!

- Education Only
- Conservation Only
- General Fund--Unrestricted

If you prefer credit card, visit our online donation page at <http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/giving/giving.php>.

Contributions are Tax Deductible

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