

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

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.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

WHERE THE BIRDS ARE

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH AT 8A

HALF DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF FALL MIGRANTS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 7

CARLYLE LAKE

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19TH AT 630A

ALL DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF WATERBIRDS AND FALL MIGRANTS.

SEPTEMBER OPEN HOUSE—PAGE 5

ST. CHARLES NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15TH AT 7P

DISPLAYS AND EXPERTS COVERING ALL OUR CHAPTER EFFORTS

VOLUNTEER WORK DAY—SEE OUR WEBSITE

CREVE COEUR LAKE MEMORIAL PARK

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26TH FROM 9A TO 1P

JOIN OTHERS IN CLEANING UP THE AREA.

WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.ORG FOR REGISTRATION DETAILS

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

BK LEACH CONSERVATION AREA

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3RD AT 8A

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

AUDUBON MISSOURI ANNUAL MEETING—PAGE 5

JOINT ANNUAL MEETING OF AUDUBON MISSOURI AND THE

MISSOURI PRAIRIE FOUNDATION

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10TH IN COLE CAMP, MISSOURI

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

TWO RIVERS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SATURDAY OCTOBER 17TH AT 8A

ALL DAY TRIP IN SEARCH OF WATERFOWL AND OTHER BIRDS.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3

CLARENCE CANNON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 21ST AT 8A

ALL DAY TRIP

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One Birder's Journal By Bryan Prather

Editor's Note: We begin an occasional feature sharing the observations and thoughts of willing area birders.

Over the past spring and now late summer, I have been asked many questions while birding. A preface to this observation is that I am usually the only one wearing binoculars and/or cognizant of the natural world around me.

Questions that I have found amusing:

"Did you see THE hawk?"

"Have you seen the Blue Canary?"

"Have you seen any good birds?"

While jogging, a man asked me what I was watching. I said a Prothonotary Warbler. He smiled and said he had never seen one before (while jogging in place). I asked if he wanted to view it. "I don't have time," was the reply.

I had a guy whistle a whippoorwill song while blowing past me on rollerblades.

But, the kids with parents are great! I have given away numerous field guides to them and shared in bird activity with them, even if that only lasts five minutes. My hope is to give encouragement to the youngsters in appreciating the birds and to always be curious and respectful to them.

Planting seeds?

See Page 6 for Another Entry

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.

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Newsletter

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

The Changing Birding Seasons By Dave Rogles

August and September mark the beginning of fall migration, a migration that will last through the first two weeks of December. This prolonged period of movement has a notable pattern, a rhythm, that is repeated as the different groups of birds flow through Missouri. First, the breeders depart; then the long distant migrants begin to appear, peak and then dwindle before finally disappearing; and finally the winter residents appear. The waves of movement can be relatively short, as in the warblers, or can be protracted over a couple of months.

August and September are the times of shorebird migration. These birds travel the longest distances and their movement can last into the first couple weeks of October. In the St. Louis area we seek out habitat at Riverlands, Columbia Bottom, Carlyle Lake, and BK Leach. The fall is the best time to see Buff-breasted Sandpiper and the rare Red Phalarope. The Carlyle Pelagic is our signature trip for shorebirds and the rare and beautiful Sabine's Gull. Be sure to check our schedule for other trips.

The period between September 10th and the 20th can be the peak period for seeing warblers, vireos and other migrant passerines. You will want to check willows at Riverlands, the trees at Tower Grove, and of course the pre-pelagic walk at Carlyle.

October arrives and we can catch migrant sparrows in the grasslands. The beautiful and elusive Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow and the LeConte's Sparrow can be found in groups in the grasslands at Riverlands, at B.K. Leach and at Creve Coeur Lake. October is also the

See Seasons on Page 6

White-eyed Vireo

Mike Grant Photo



From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

The mission of the St. Louis Audubon Society—to *establish a community connection to nature through education and conservation*. While writing that sentence at my desk, I can hear the buzz of the cicadas in the trees through the open windows; earlier at lunch I mused at nearly a dozen sparrows taking turns, sort of, in the bird bath; and, first thing this morning I saw my first Baltimore Oriole in the backyard—fueling up for migration on the fruit of pokeweed that I let grow every year. Like our *Birder's Journal* author, Bryan Prather, I too often wonder if many folks notice such things—how many have **lost** that connection to nature.

All of our Chapter's programs in some way circle back to that mission and work to **re**-connect folks with their natural environment. However, even with new programs and more volunteers, our **direct** impact will continue to be small—perhaps 10,000 annually in a few years. With nearly 3 million people in the Metro Region, you can see the difficulty in any number of ways. So, we are counting on those of you already “connected” to help us reach more of the community, faster.

Please don't worry! You do not have to lead a field trip or teach a class. You do not have to be an “expert.” You simply have to be passionate about “your birds,” your favorite place, some amazing flower—you get the idea. Then, you simply have to share it! Please don't be shy and do not allow yourself to think others do not care about your passion. If they know you, if they are a friend, if they are a relative—they care about you and have likely been wondering all along why you have not shared more with them. Take them for a walk; show them how to listen; discover together—you will think of something. You are offering to share beauty and wonder, the miracles of nature. They will thank you for it.

The **awareness** of one's surroundings (through your sharing) is just the first step to that connection. We know that many times it leads to a desire to understand and ultimately to want to protect what is now so much more personal. A community working together to protect and conserve the Outdoors is our goal, but that rarely ever happens without first a class, a field trip, or **your sharing**. Please help us connect the people of St. Louis to their natural surroundings by sharing your experiences with your friends and neighbors. We can do it, together! ♦

Field Trips, Etc.

Sep 12th “Where the Birds Are” Trip: Torrey Berger will lead this half-day trip beginning at 8 a.m. to whatever area location has the best birding. Check the SLAS website, www.birdingonthe.net “regional specialties–Missouri” section or the MoBirds list serve a few days in advance for details.

Sep 19th Carlyle Lake “Pelagic” Trip: Please see page 7 for details of the morning, land-based portion of this trip ONLY. The pelagic boat trip is fully reserved. There are no more spaces.

Oct 3rd to BK Leach Conservation Area: Josh Uffman will lead this all day trip. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Space is limited. Reservations are required. Meet in the

southeast corner of the Dierberg's parking lot at the southwest side of I-70 and Hwy 79.

Oct 17th to Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge: Mike Thelen will lead this all day trip. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Gilbert Lake parking lot just north of the entrance to Brussels Ferry outside Grafton, IL. Carpools will leave from Riverlands Teal Pond lot by 7 a.m.

Oct 21st to Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge: Pat Lueders will lead this all day trip. Meet at 8 a.m. in the Dierberg's lot described in the Oct 3rd trip.

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 Karen Meyer

If you attended our August hummingbird program you may have seen the recent report from the Union of Concerned Scientists, [Confronting Climate Change in the U.S. Midwest–Missouri](#) (click on the report name or go to www.ucsusa.org to read it). We are assisting Audubon Missouri and Missouri Votes Conservation in distributing this very important and easy-to-read report to the public and our elected officials.

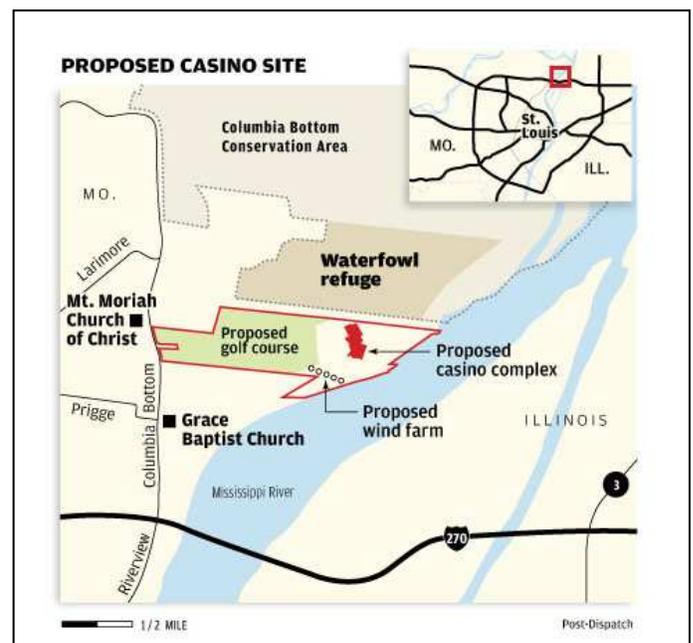
The report describes severely damaging impacts of the climate trends in our area, including more heavy rains, floods, and periods of drought, leading to higher numbers of invasive pests, plants and crop failures. Increases in heat-trapping emissions are the fundamental cause of these issues, and have already led to air and water quality problems in our home state. If you are concerned about these effects, tell your elected officials that you want legislation to encourage solutions such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, and improved vehicle fuel efficiency.

One way to stay informed and to easily let your voice be heard on issues such as this is to sign up for one of the many online advocacy services. Obviously, we highly recommend the Audubon Advisory. You can sign up at <http://audubonaction.org/audubon/join.html> for this very low key, non-intrusive service through your e-mail. Also, the Union of Concerned Scientists, www.ucsusa.org, and Missouri Votes Conservation, at www.movotesconservation.org, have their own useful mechanisms. Nearly all such systems will match your address with your particular elected officials, provide you with recommended text for correspondence on specific issues and allow you to edit, or personalize, that same text.

On the very local scene, there is a proposal to build a casino in Columbia Bottom in North St. Louis. This proposal is in close proximity to the Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, which has been painstakingly managed as a superb place for wildlife and wildlife viewing, and has been designated as one of Missouri's Important Bird Areas. The casino would bring continuous disturbances of traffic, light pollution, and water run-off from extensive impervious structures and pose a serious threat of increased flooding in the area. The Conservation Department and the Coalition for the Environment, among others, have raised objections to this project. St. Louis Audubon believes this area should remain as an undeveloped flood plain and part of the contiguous, renowned Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

We suggest you consult the Post-Dispatch online at www.stltoday.com, and search for “north county casino development,” for more details of the project and the issues. Please consider attending the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing at 7 p.m. on Monday, September 14th in Clayton at 41 S. Central Avenue. Finally, and especially if you cannot attend the hearing, let your County council representative know that you are opposed to re-zoning the 377 acres of farmland as commercial for this development. ◆

St. Louis Post-Dispatch Graphic showing the project location and proximity to the Columbia Bottom natural area.





We Need You, Your Neighbor or Your Friend!

Audubon Open House

Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

St. Charles Nonprofit Development Center

Please make a note of the date and consider stopping by for light refreshments and a tour of all the St. Louis Audubon programs. You will be able to wander, open-house style, at your own pace and visit one-on-one with the folks that make it happen.

The Nonprofit Development Center is co-located with the Community Council of St. Charles at 425 Spencer Road. From I-70, take Cave Springs exit #225 south to Mexico Road. Turn right and go 2.2 miles to Spencer Road. Take Spencer left for 0.4 miles to the Center on your left, just behind the Spencer Road Library. Parking is in the rear and at the library and entrance to the center is adjacent to the library. ◆

October Program—Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

The Daniel Boone Branch of the St. Louis County Library will be the location of our October program. Please watch our website and the October *TaleFeathers* for details. A potential topic is the flora and fauna of Costa Rica. The Library is at 300 Clarkson Road, just 0.6 miles north from Manchester on the left. ◆

Audubon Missouri Annual Membership Meeting and Prairie Days

The Annual Membership Meeting for Audubon Missouri members will be held jointly with the Missouri Prairie Foundation in Cole Camp, Missouri the weekend of October 10, 2009. There will be events scheduled such as social get-togethers, birding trips, and other activities, with a membership meeting held on Saturday, October 10 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 at City Hall. More details to follow in October!

October 10

Early risers will gather for various bird hikes which are being coordinated separately. Consult the Prairie Days schedule referenced below.

8:00 a.m. – Join us for breakfast in Cole Camp at Maple Street Cafe, 124 S. Maple Street, (660) 668-2273 (breakfast on your own)

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Audubon Board and Membership business meeting at Cole Camp's City Hall

All day scheduled Prairie Day events. Visit <http://mo.audubon.org/events/946> for a downloadable schedule, a map and more details.

5:30 p.m. – Joint Missouri Prairie Foundation and Audubon Missouri members sunset reception on the prairie. Complimentary food and drinks available at no charge, but donations welcome at the door and go to support Missouri prairie conservation efforts. To RSVP for the Saturday evening joint reception, please contact info@moprairie.com or (888) 843-6739.

RSVP's are recommended for the Audubon membership meeting, so if attending please contact Audubon Missouri to let us know. ◆

One Birder's Journal

Continued from Page 1

May 3rd (an eternity ago), I had "my" hummingbird return to her kingdom. Little Love (LL) is my nickname for her (this is her 2nd year here). I have a modest backyard, yet it is filled with H-Bird specific plants, along with two feeders. The landscape plants for her is xeriscape—mint family mostly, Agastache and Salvias. One feeder is in the middle of the plants, the other is on a window—first story. I also have an arbor with hyacinth bean that is near the window feeder.

She had the lay of the land until this week. LL was at the window feeder, yet was chattering up a storm. For three months, I have been able to sit on the back porch while she was at the window feeder. So why the fuss? I quickly noticed six marauders sampling the plants and feeder. Aha! This was most unacceptable. This Motley Crue must go!

LL tried on several attempts to "encourage" the crew to leave. She would retreat to the window feeder and lash out verbally her frustrations. After several days of this, LL chose height, rather than rich natural nectar for her current territory. She sits on an outcropping of the vine, or perches on the window feeder. Either way,



Mike Grant Photo

her beak movements are as if she is watching a tennis match. The crew is an untidy group with arguments between themselves. From what I have seen, they are made up of juvenile males. There is a neutral zone in the yard. I find it most interesting that height was chosen over natural nectar sources.

Last year, LL was last seen on September 9th even though the plants were in full bloom until the first hard frost. I will be curious when the crew leaves and when my Little Love is compelled to go. ◆

Seasons from Page 2

time of hawk migration (which begins in mid-September) and a good time to pick up the Marsh and Sedge wrens. Ducks, small numbers of which begin to appear even in August, increase mid-month and will reach a peak during November. For the past two years we have searched the marshes for the Yellow Rail, a prized rarity. Fifty people saw one bird at B. K. Leach in 2007—such is the effort required to turn up this shy migrant!

In November the scene shifts to ducks, geese and swans. A stray grebe is possible, and large numbers of Horned Grebes are occasionally seen. Rafts of several thousand American Coots gather in Riverlands, providing photo opportunities. The wintering population of Trumpeter Swans begins to arrive near the end of October and continues to gather in small family groups through the middle of December. We now have over 350 swans wintering in Riverlands and some of the families are now on the 5th and 6th generation.

As December rolls in we see an increase in ducks, many making the last big push ahead of the advancing freeze-up. Following the freeze line, gulls start to gather and Riverlands is the place to be—18 species of gull have been recorded here (verified; several additional species are hypothetical and have been seen by at least 1 knowledgeable observer). When the gull population reaches several thousand birds, and the temperature settles below freezing, the migration is over. The area locks down until the spring thaw when everything begins in reverse! ◆

St. Louis Audubon Inventory Clearance

By Sue Gustafson

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 24! St. Louis Audubon Society has had numerous items in a storage facility for many years, and it's time to make these items available to interested folks. Come peruse the contents of our storage facility. We have over 60 boxes of nice quality bird books, field guides, natural history topics, travel guides, and nature-related fiction and non-fiction books. Other items include bird feeders, bird houses, wood book shelves, metal shelves, filing cabinets, folding chairs, kitchen table, wooden desk with rolling drawer cart, desk chair, office & kitchen supplies, tools, refrigerator and more.

Items are available for a donation in lieu of a set price—no credit cards, please. Some larger items will have a suggested donation amount. Donations will go to our General Fund which supports our day-to-day operations including member communications, new program development, recruitment, orientation and training of new board members, etc.

Our unit at Haskins Storage will be open for viewing on Saturday, October 24 from 8 AM to 3 PM. Haskins is located at 2751 Little Antire Road High Ridge, Missouri 63049. Take I-44 west from I-270 and exit at the Antire Rd-Beaumont exit (probably exit 269). Go back over I-44, start to your mileage count and turn right to go down the hill. At the bottom of the hill (0.7 mile mark) take the left fork, Beaumont-Antire Rd.

At the 2.7 mile mark the road name changes to Little Antire. At about 3.6 miles you will see a lot of RVs stored on the right. At 3.7 mile is the entrance to Antire 44 Haskins Storage on the right. You might have seen a gate earlier, nearer the RVs, but the later gate is the one that you want. Enter the lot and go through the gate which will be open for us. You will see a row of green-doored storage units in front of you. Our unit is in the first building and our doors are numbers 129 on the near side and 152 on the far side.

If questions, contact Sue Gustafson at smgustafson@juno.com or John Solodar at solodar@sbcglobal.net. ♦



September 19th, Carlyle Lake Birding Trip

This description is for the morning land-birding only! The pelagic is full—no more spots available. Meet at 6:30 am at the McDonald's in Carlyle near the intersection of Hwy 50 and Hwy 127. Beware, it may take you over an hour to get there. DIRECTIONS: Take I-64 east across the Poplar St. Bridge. Exit I-64 at Hwy 50 east toward Carlyle. Follow Hwy 50 to Hwy 127 and turn left at the junction. Turn right and meet at the McDonald's parking lot. Make sure you find the right group of birders, as IOS (Illinois Ornithological Society) is doing their pelagic trip the same day.

Joe Eades will lead the group from McDonald's no later than 6:45 am and start with the West Access boat ramp to scan the gulls on the beach. Then, off to Hazlet State Park for the Cherokee Trail and surrounding area from ~7:30 am until 10:30 am. Wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes—mud is possible. Bring insect repellent if you so desire.

If you have any questions, please e-mail Joe at joseph.w.eades@monsanto.com.

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

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