



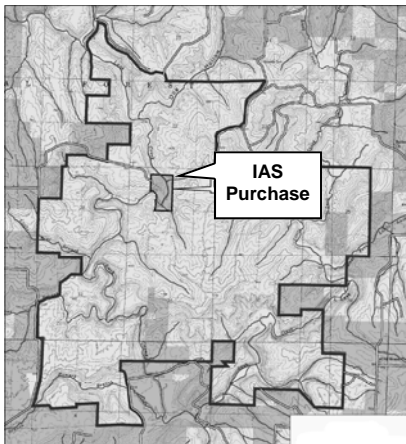
The CARDINAL NEWS

ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Spring 2007

www.illinoisaudubon.org

IAS Protects Property in Shawnee National Forest 56-acre purchase made in Lusk Creek Wilderness Area



The Illinois Audubon Society has purchased a rare and ecologically valuable land parcel in the heart of the congressionally designated Lusk Creek Wilderness Area of the Shawnee National Forest. The acquisition of the 56-acre Pope County parcel, one of Lusk Creek Wilderness Area's last remaining waterway in-holdings, is an important step toward forever protecting one of Illinois' most significant streams.

The Wilderness Area includes a National Natural Landmark, National Forest Natural Areas, State of Illinois Nature Preserves and Lusk Creek is a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System candidate stream.

Springs and caves throughout Lusk Creek's course add to the biological diversity of the river system and provide habitats for species unknown elsewhere in Illinois including a state endangered amphipod and the state threatened least brook lamprey. Other noted state threatened species found within the Lusk Creek river system include French's shooting star and the timber rattlesnake.

Dr. David

Thomas, Illinois Natural History Survey Chief said Lusk Creek is one of Illinois' biologically significant streams, those streams important to protect and manage for their outstanding biological characteristics. He applauded Illinois Audubon's efforts and indicated Lusk Creek is a good candidate for Outstanding Resource Water designation.

Included on Illinois' Natural Areas Inventory, protection of Lusk Creek and its surrounding woodlands "contributes to the long-term viability of a large block of forest and the breeding birds it supports" said Randy Heidorn, Deputy Director for Stewardship for the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission has recognized the importance of Lusk Creek and its watershed since at least 1970 when 125 acres were dedicated as Lusk Creek Canyon State Nature Preserve.

Surrounded by United States Forest Service property and located on Lusk Creek in the middle of the Wilderness Area, Illinois Audubon's acquisition of this parcel is significant to the future management of the Lusk Creek Wilderness. Although other nonfederal lands remain on the edges of the Wilderness Area boundary, according to USFS Forest Supervisor Hurston A. Nicholas, Illinois Audubon Society's acquisition of this parcel "will contribute significantly to improving the wilderness character of the Lusk Creek Wilderness."

IAS Staff and Board Members toured the property on April 19 after the final documents were signed. A list of plant species observed can be found on page 3.

The Lusk Creek Wilderness Area is the largest, most biologically significant tract of public land in the Shawnee National Forest.

IAS TRIVIA 50 Years Ago... The 1957 IAS Annual Meeting was held in Rockford, hosted by the North Central Ornithological Society. The weekend offered field trips, board meetings and a banquet. The speakers for the event focused on the subject of "bird observation and records." We return to Rockford this year for our 2007 Fall Gathering and Annual Meeting, hosted by Sinnissippi Chapter, September 21-23, 2007.



2007 Conservationist of the Year and Youth Conservation Awards presented at IAS Annual Spring Gathering

story on page 4

IAS Calendar (2007/2008)

- May 5 Statewide Spring Bird Count
 - May 12 International Migratory Bird Day
 - May 18-20 Southern Illinois Field Trip
 - June 8-10 Northwest Illinois Field Trip
- The following **Hummingbird Festivals** have been scheduled for 2007. (Times denoted as *9am to Noon or **3 to 6pm)
- July 7 Siloam Springs State Park*
 - July 22 Smithfield (2:00-5:30 PM)
 - July 28 New Athens*
 - July 29 Sugar Grove Nature Center**
 - Aug. 4 Trail of Tears State Forest*
 - Aug. 5 Trail of Tears State Forest*
 - Aug. 11 New Salem State Historic Site*
 - Aug. 12 Pere Marquette State Park**
 - Aug. 18 Siloam Springs State Park*
 - Aug. 19 Smithfield (2:00-5:30 PM)
 - Aug. 25 Forest Park Nature Center*
 - Sep. 8 Hillsboro*
- September 21-23 Annual Meeting and Fall Gathering, Rockford
 - October 5-7 Saw-Whet Owl Trip, Stevens Point, WI
 - January 27-28, 2008 Bald Eagle Watch Weekend, Utica

Kane County Audubon Society shows off their owls

It is once again spring in Geneva Illinois and for the third year in a row, Great Horned Owls have nested in a Tamarack tree right outside the county courthouse in downtown Geneva. This year two young hatched on about February 14. Often, on the courthouse building one of the parents can be seen resting from its nightly hunting for rabbits, birds, and whatever they can find to feed the young's voracious appetites.

Since the first year, Kane County Audubon Society (KCAS) members have also been there, setting up scopes and educating people about the owls, and their behaviors. The KCAS members always like hearing the "Oh Wow," or "I've never seen an owl before," or a child saying "Is this cool or what?" One person even asked "Is that a real owl?" KCAS will often have photographs to show the development of the birds throughout this nesting season, and people are always surprised at how fast they have grown.

Some friendships have developed with the same people coming back at the same time period and asking about how 'their' owls are doing. They also pass out cards with our local website (www.kanecountyaudubon.org) to view the many awesome photos that have been taken by both members and nonmembers alike.

KCAS takes this opportunity to talk about the Illinois Audubon Society and the work it has done for our state. If the nest stays for one more year, KCA will once again be there to 'man the scopes' and help the public appreciate the courthouse owls.

From the Director's Journal by Tom Clay

While visiting San Francisco, a friend asked me "how can you live in the Midwest?" She was referring to our sometimes-extreme climate conditions, wind-chill factor, tornadoes, blizzards, oppressive summer heat and humidity. Although her question momentarily took me off guard, and while refraining from shooting back a "no earthquakes" zinger, I managed to quickly regroup my thoughts and respond "because of the seasons."

Many of us dread the onset of bitterly cold winter or sauna-like summer days. But as Midwesterners, and especially as birders, the pay-off comes with our changing seasons. In fact, I like to think that Midwesterners are overall more tolerant people because of our seasons. We have a deep appreciation for beautiful spring mornings because we've just weathered a few not-so-perfect winter mornings. Simply put, we tolerate cold and hot spells because we know the next migration is always near.

This is my first spring season on the job for Illinois Audubon. That being the case, the folks who contact this office with their birding stories have overwhelmed me (in a good way). From March pectoral sandpipers to April yellow rails, our phone has been constantly ringing, plus we've received emailed photos and one adventurous birder even sent us a sound-byte of what we interpreted to be an American robin with a head cold.

Imagine having a job where people, often times beside themselves with excitement, are calling because they've just seen something good. Each day, working for the Illinois Audubon Society is a birding adventure because of someone else's birding adventure. How cool is that? To all of you who have contacted us this spring with your birding stories, thanks so much for sharing.

I'll close this journal entry by extending a huge thank-you to our friends at Emiquon and Peoria Audubon Society chapters for your hard work in hosting this season's Annual Spring Gathering. Although I regretfully could not attend, my understanding is fun was had by all. Great job to all of you who helped coordinate the gathering including all of our field trip leaders. I look forward to seeing everyone again this September in Rockford.



Bob Andrini, IAS Board of Directors, shows off his owls to an interested passerby.

The Illinois Audubon Society's Hummingbird Festivals are back again — and there is a full calendar scheduled throughout the summer months. Hummingbird Festivals are a great opportunity to see hummingbirds up close during the capture and banding of these fascinating creatures. The festivals are free and are great family events. Everyone is welcome to stay as long as they like.

Hummingbird Festivals

zips by

Vernon Kleen, Master Permit Bander and member of the IAS Board of Directors, captures and bands the birds during the festival. "The hummingbirds are captured by a unique, remote control trapping mechanism, held only long enough to record basic data, then released," explains Kleen.

The purpose of banding is to determine how far into Mexico or Central America the birds go for the winter, where they stop during their travels, how long they live, and whether they come back to the same sites year after year. Kleen reports that birds banded in Illinois have already been found in Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Texas.

Attendees may also "adopt" a bird by making a \$5 donation to the Illinois Audubon Society's land acquisition fund; this fund is earmarked for the protection of Illinois wildlife habitat. Donors will receive an attractive, signed certificate, be given the privilege of releasing their adopted bird, and will be notified if their bird is ever recaptured. For exact locations of these festivals please refer to the IAS website, call the office, or e-mail Jo at jskoglund@illinoisaudubon.org.

Lusk Creek Sanctuary Yields Springtime Wonders The following list was recorded by Karen Fraley on April 19: Mayapple, French's Shooting Star, Bloodroot, Pussy Toes, Bluets, Blue Phlox, Sweet William, Bluebells, Dwarf Larkspur, Prickly Pear Cactus, Cream Violet, Yellow Violet, Blue Violet, Johnny Jump-Up, Golden Seal, Sessile Trillium, Sessile Wake Robin, White Trillium, Jack-In-The Pulpit, Green Dragon, American Columbo, Bellwort, Yellow Bellwort, Putty Root Orchid, Spring Cress, Spatterdock, Cow Lily, Sedum, Black Cohosh, False Garlic, Waterleaf, Spiderwort, Wild Ginger, Dutchman's Britches, Fragile Fern, Christmas Fern, Hairy Lip Fern, Marginal Shield Fern, Bladdernut, Ohio Buckeye, Eastern Red Cedar

January Ice Storm/Flooding/Fog Impacts 2007 Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey



A mixture of weather related conditions dramatically impacted this year's annual mid-winter bald eagle survey. Ice-free river channels, dense fog, inaccessible flood-plain forests and a devastating ice storm all combined to produce Illinois' lowest mid-winter bald eagle survey results in recent years.

Ground surveys conducted January 3 through 17, with target dates of January 12 and 13, resulted in a total count of 1,920 bald eagles within Illinois' main watersheds. The Mississippi River basin produced 1,631 eagles while the Illinois River basin netted 93. Other count areas included 196 eagles found combined on the Ohio and Wabash Rivers, Crab Orchard, Carlyle and Horseshoe Lakes.

The bald eagle survey categorizes eagles counted as adult, immature and un-aged. Illinois' 2007 total breakdown of these categories were 1,235 adults, 623 immature and 62 un-aged eagles.

Illinois' 2006 mid-winter bald eagle survey resulted in a total of 2,922 birds counted. The geographical breakdown of those results found 2,642 eagles on the Mississippi, 232 on the Illinois and 48 within the other count areas. The 2006 breakdown by categories was 1,584 adults, 1,255 immature and 83 un-aged.

Although the 2007 survey results are much lower than previous years, the Illinois Audubon Society cautions not to be alarmed by this year's results in terms of the bald eagle's overall recovery. The approximately 40 statewide survey volunteer's efforts were hampered with reports of dense fog, inaccessible flood-plain forests, open river channels and ice storm conditions that made travel nearly impossible.

Being reluctant migrants, bald eagle movement is predicated by weather conditions and available food sources. With a mild winter through the end of January, six bald eagles were counted at the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center lock and dam in Utica, Illinois on Saturday, January 27, 2007. Three weeks later, with the onset of well below normal temperatures, 130 bald eagles were counted at the same location.

Illinois' Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey is coordinated by the Illinois Audubon Society and takes place in conjunction with the national survey coordinated by the United States Geological Survey and the United States Army Corp of Engineers.

The Cardinal News is produced quarterly at the office of the Illinois Audubon Society, 230 E. Broadway, Springfield. Mailing address: PO Box 2547, Springfield, IL, 62708. Contact us at (217) 544-BIRD or e-mail jskoglund@illinoisaudubon.org.

Focus on our Board — The focus this issue is on *President* of the Board, Don Goerne, from the Starved Rock Chapter.

Nickname: "tick magnet" (given to me by John Wallace, aka John Muir)

Favorite bird: If I were to answer with anything other than bald eagle, would anyone believe me? Actually, of equal significance to me is the black-capped chickadee. Over the years, when separated on the trail from my wife Elaine while hiking, we would locate each other by imitating the high pitched whistle "feebee" of the black-capped chickadee. I know it sounds corny but more importantly, it was and still is, a neat thing to do.

Hometown: Streator, Illinois

Second favorite hobby: Attempting to care for Plum Island and Sandy Ford Land & Water Reserve.

My best birding accessory is: John & Cindy McKee. Cindy's auditory and visual birding skills are uncanny while John's textbook knowledge means one can leave the birding field guide at home. Actually, the storage area in the back of their vehicle serves as a traveling nature library just in case one encounters an unidentified natural object (uno). They are truly the best birding accessory one could hope for and at no cost I might add.

A website that I often visit is: livinglandsandwaters.org to keep track of Chad Pregracke's river cleanup group

Where would you live if you won the lottery: Although I've never been there, I would give the Pacific Northwest a try.

What famous person would you like to have lunch with: Mrs. Henry W. King, Illinois Audubon's first president. I would enjoy learning about the early years of Illinois Audubon, our trials and tribulations as well as any success stories.

Favorite spot in nature: Any forested stream bank.

My favorite music: 60's-70's light rock. My kids call them the "oldies tunes", go figure.

108 Bird Species were counted during the Spring Gathering — "Exploring the Illinois River Valley"

Conservationist of the Year



The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) presented the Conservationist of the Year for 2007 and the Conservation Youth Award during the annual Spring Gathering banquet held April 14 in East Peoria where IAS members and guests gathered midway through a weekend of field trips to nearby areas.

The Youth Conservation Award was awarded to Eve and Nadia Studnicka, Chillicothe, for their efforts to support Operation Migration, a Wisconsin organization that has become recognized for its whooping crane project.

Nadia had been following the progress of the cranes as they made their journey to Florida, led by an ultralite aircraft when tragedy struck the flock during violent storms earlier this year in February, wiping out all but one of the 17 young birds.

Eve had recently learned of the Japanese legend which promises positive outcomes to anyone who folds a thousand cranes. Turning their sadness into positive action, they vowed to fold 1000 cranes and donate all the proceeds to help support future generations of whooping cranes raised by Operation Migration.

Since then the girls have folded over 1300 cranes and during the

2-1/2 day IAS event in East Peoria, they were able to raise an additional \$500.

Vern Kleen, Springfield, was named the 2007 Conservationist of the Year. Kleen, a retired IDNR employee was honored for his tireless effort to educate others and raise awareness of the importance of habitat protection through his actions such as coordinating the Stamps for Habitat program, IAS field trips and many Hummingbird Festivals.

Kleen's was also recognized for his contributions in the field of scientific survey. "Vern should be commended for bringing serious data collecting to the forefront," commented Marilyn Campbell, former IAS Director and current President of the Middlefork Audubon Chapter. Kleen was also the driving force behind the data gathering in the compilation of information for the Breeding Bird Atlas, published by IDNR in 2004.

Spring Field Trips

Northwestern Illinois, June 8-10, 2007

The northwestern route will travel to Spring Lake NWR, Mississippi Palisades State Park, Lost Mound NWR Lowden-Miller State Forest, promising marshes and premier grasslands. An optional evening trip to the Green River State Fish & Wildlife Area is also on the agenda. Attendees will spend a night in Savannah (6/8) and Rock Falls or Sterling (6/9).

Southern Illinois and Shawnee National Forest, May 18-20, 2007

During the 2-1/2 day itinerary, the trip will visit unique areas of the Shawnee National Forest, the Union County Conservation Area, Ft. Massac State Park, Mermet Lake Conservation Area, Heron Pond Nature Preserve and Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge. Attendees will overnight in Murphysboro (5/18) and Metropolis (5/19).



REGISTRATION

Please **confirm** your intentions to be a participant on the trip with Vern Kleen as soon as possible. Call (217) 787-3515 or e-mail to kleen@insightbb.com. If you care to mail your reservation, please send to Vern's home address at 1825 Clearview Drive, Springfield, IL 62704

PARTICIPATION DONATION: \$50 per person (Members of the **Illinois Audubon Society**), \$65 per person (others) This fee is totally tax-deductible and does not include any travel, food, lodging or other expenses.

MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT: WWW.ILLINOISAUDUBON.ORG

Bartel Sanctuary - Yellow Rail Capital of Illinois!!!

report submitted by Jeff Walk, IAS Board of Directors

Huge kudos to Bob Shelby, IAS' "Man in the Field," who keeps Illinois' birders in-the-know with his regular IBET posts (Illinois Birders Exchanging Thoughts) -- including the recent great bird sightings at Prairie Ridge and the IAS sanctuaries located here. From goshawks attacking prairie-chickens, to the arrival of upland sandpipers, to this: *an Illinois high-count of six yellow rails at IAS's Bartel Sanctuary in Marion County!*

Because seeing even one elusive yellow rail is such a treat, the American Birding Association has listed the yellow rail as one of the "10 most wanted" regularly-occurring birds in the lower 48 states. Bob Shelby, Travis Mahan, and Tyler Funk located the sixrds on April 18th. Based on similar reports (including my own experience of finding three yellow rails in 15 minutes last April), the

"After being employed at Prairie Ridge for 8 years it is rewarding to see the avain response to the new grassland/wetland habitat provided by the IAS."
Bob Shelby



wetland at the Karl Bartel

Sanctuary could be crowned the new yellow rail hotspot for Illinois!

The Ridgway (Jasper Co) and Bartel (Marion Co) sanctuaries at Prairie Ridge are the only areas open to the public, so IAS is playing a crucial public education/outreach role at the site. These sanctuaries are great for birds, and by allowing public access, they help to reduce disturbance pressure by visitors in other more sensitive areas owned by IDNR that Illinois Audubon has helped to secure.

www.illinoisaudubon.org

Renwick Honored for Volunteer Work

The Forest Preserve District of Will County announced that **Rita Renwick** is the Volunteer of the Year during their annual Recognition Banquet on April 20. Rita is currently the President of Will County Audubon and serves on the IAS Board of Directors. For over 17 years Rita has helped recruit volunteers to do programs at Lake Renwick — a natural area that she herself helped to save in the mid-1980's. In her "spare" time Rita helps with migration hikes in the spring and fall at Lake Renwick. "She is well deserving of this award, — always there to help with set-up and provide any information we need," says fellow Will County Audubon member, Ruth Meyers. IAS would like to extend their congratulations to Rita and her supportive family — volunteers make the world a better place to be in!



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The mission of the Illinois Audubon Society is to promote the perpetuation and appreciation of native plants and animals and the habitats that support them.



Kane County Owls
Look Inside on Page 2 !

REMEMBER: Memberships in the Illinois Audubon Society make great gifts! Introduce someone to IAS – they'll receive a welcome package along with the Cardinal News and the IAS Magazine.

Welcome New IAS Members

Charles Auer, Belleville
Jeff Baker, Downers Grove
Wanda Black, Macomb
Jack & Betty Crelling, Carbondale
Brian Eigenheer & Family, Plainfield
Rhonda & Mark Ferree, Havana
Ruth Frear, Beach Park
Karen Greenberg, Carbondale
Joel & Lisa Gruver, Macomb
Lazar & Marilyn Hamparzomian, Shelbyville
Rosemary Heileman, Buffalo Grove
Beverly Hemmen, Teutopolis
Ardis Henerfauth, Waterloo
Connie & Mike Hill, Hillsboro
Joe & Karen Hills, Springfield
Deb Kaufmann, Davis Junction
Ruth Kelley, Chicago
Tim & Jeanie Klein, Bloomingdale
Lynn Kuczewski, Joliet
Nancy Kuhajda, Joliet
Becky Lambert, Batavia
Les & Susan Lange, Murphysboro
Cynthia Lubecke, Prospect Heights
Paula Lukancic, Oak Park
Deb Walens & John McCrosky, LaSalle
Cally Lence McGrath, Anna

Nancy Mores, Wheaton
Earl & Jeanne Naue, Gurnee
David & Marjorie Peck, Batavia
Arlene Pierce, Wilmington
Kathy & Joe Pranschke, Chicago
Pat Pritchard, Palatine
Teri & Tony Prokes, DesPlaines
Nancy Reichen, Henry
Trisha Rich, Palatine
Brian Smith, Chicago
Lily St. Pierre, Chicago
Sam & Geneil Stearns, Stonefort
William Stephens, Galesburg
Charles Stickels, Libertyville
Normalie Strickland, Effingham
Derek Strom, Elgin
Jean Tarwater, Justice
Susan Terronez, St. Charles
Phyllis Thomas, Danville
Kate Todd, Grayslake
Greg & Jeannie Verklan, Minooka
Tony Gerard & Chris Walczak, Vienna
Joan Walker-Hurst, Adair
Susan Weis, Chicago
Jackie Wilen, Charleston
Richard Wilson, Huntley

Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary Program

The following have successfully applied for and have officially received certification as owners of IAS Bird and Butterfly Sanctuaries:

Marlene & Joseph Nowak, South Holland
Lois Johnson, Wonder Lake
Shelbyville Rehab & Health Care Center, Shelbyville
Ted & Karen Forcum, Mode
Marla & Greg Turek, Naperville
Nadine Burke, Chicago

Acres for Wildlife
IAS Stamp Project
Commemorative or Foreign Stamps
Partial or complete collections
Picture Postcards — Used or New
Save Stamps!

Mail your stamps to:
Illinois Audubon Society
c/o Adams Wildlife Sanctuary
PO Box 20106, Springfield, IL62708