



## The Illinois Audubon Society's Land Acquisition Program

- will be featured in a program by Tom Clay, IAS Executive Director, on Friday, Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 p.m. to be held at the Carbondale Township Hall, 217 E. Main St., Carbondale. (Use the back entrance where adjacent parking is available.)

The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) serves a vital role in preserving Illinois open space by pre-acquiring land for the State and Federal government by using funds dedicated to land acquisition. Income from the sale of these properties, sold at fair market value, are placed back into the land acquisition fund to be used for future purchases. IAS makes no profit from these transactions. IAS recently pre-acquired (to be sold to the US Fish & Wildlife Service) an Indiana bat hibernacula (cave) in Pope County and are poised to pre-acquire (to be sold to the IL Dept. of Natural Resources) a Pulaski County site hosting state-endangered dusky salamanders. By year's end, IAS also hopes to pre-acquire (to be sold to the IL Dept. of Natural Resources) a 200-acre Marion County parcel adjacent to 12-mile Prairie within the PRSNA site complex.

**The evening will begin with a potluck dinner.** Potluck set-up begins at 6 p.m. with the potluck starting at 6:30 p.m. SIAS asks members to bring an entree to share and their own dinnerware and utensils. SIAS will provide some beverages.

### Future SIAS Programs:

**Dec. 3 (Nov./Dec.)**—Kim Wrenn-King, *Mexican Wolves*

**Jan. 22**—Annual Meeting with potluck, elections, and silent auction. Program to be announced.

### SIAS Fall Bird Seed Sale On Hold

The Annual SIAS Fall Bird Seed Sale has tentatively canceled until a new supplier and location can be secured. Our friends at D&M Feed will not be able to assist us at this year. The Board is pursuing various options for the upcoming Winter Seed Sale and future Fall Seed Sales.

### Visit two memorial trees on SIUC campus

Next time you are on the SIUC campus in Carbondale you might want to locate two memorial trees that SIAS paid for in honor of special friends of our organization.

A young oak tree on the south side of Wham (immediately west of Pulliam, which has the familiar clock tower) honors Barbara Cordoni Kupiec, who served many years on the SIAS board and who, with husband Greg Kupiec, presented many programs of their overseas travel adventures. Barb was the founding director of the Achieve Program at SIUC, which helped thousands of students with learning disabilities successfully earn college degrees.

The second tree, a Jeffersonian elm, was planted this year just

northeast of Parkinson Lab, which is two buildings south of Shryock Auditorium on the Old Main Mall. The tree honors John Utgaard, professor emeritus of geology, a popular teacher and mentor who continued to share his knowledge and love of nature well into retirement. Like Barb, he was a longtime member of the SIAS board.

Both trees are marked with ground plaques that identify Southern Illinois Audubon Society as the contributor of the tree. -- Laraine Wright

### Almost 700 bluebirds fledged at CONWR

Now in its 23rd year, our 172-box bluebird trail at Crab Orchard NWR fledged 697 bluebirds this year, plus 318 tree swallows and five prothonotary warblers. Twelve volunteers put in 494 volunteer hours on monitoring the boxes and improving their segments of the trail. Six volunteers are members of SIAS, which "owns" the boxes and helps support the effort financially: *Mary Luh Fraunfelter, Genevieve Houghton, Karen Kaufman, Dave Kvernes, Jerry O'Malley, and Laraine Wright.*

### Illinois Audubon Society As a Land Trust

(From the IAS website <http://www.illinoisaudubon.org>.)

For the first 75 years of its history, the Illinois Audubon Society's involvement in saving wildlife and habitat was purely as an "advocate for wildlife"--sponsoring or supporting legislation to protect birds, acting to educate and change public attitudes about wildlife and the natural environment, helping partner organizations raise money for projects and campaigning to enlarge state parks and nature preserves. This changed in the 1970's, when the Society was given several gifts of land and became an active steward of its own sanctuaries, now some 1357.50 acres statewide wildlife.

#### Saving Stamps can help IAS protect habitat for wildlife.

Illinois has already lost 90% of its original wetlands and nearly 100% of its original prairie. The Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) collects, sorts, and sells stamps to raise funds for land acquisition to protect habitat in Illinois. With your help Stamps for Wildlife Habitat can help raise thousands of dollars each year.

Collect (see\*\* below) Commemorative stamps that you receive on correspondence, not Definitives (the most common stamps, usually less than an inch square and printed regularly...they are not worth collecting unless they were issued prior to 1940 or they are of larger denominations of at least \$1.00.) Encourage your friends and family to collect commemoratives as well. Do you know of a school district, business, scout troop, garden club or any group that would collect stamps for you?

**How should these stamps be saved?** Using scissors, cut that part of the envelope where the stamp was affixed allowing about 1/4" to 1/8" of paper around the stamp. (Sometimes the top and right margins where the stamp was placed will be smaller.) NEVER try to remove the stamp from the envelope as this damages the stamp and destroys its value. *When in doubt-- save the entire envelope.* Give your collected stamps to Rhonda Rothrock at any SIAS meeting. Rhonda regularly forwards them to Vern Kleen, stamp project coordinator.

\*\*Stamps worth collecting/donating include: airmail stamps, express mail stamps, foreign stamps, state conservation stamps, federal duck stamps, high denomination definitives, picture postcards (new or used), unused stamps (no matter how old,) stamp collections (complete or incomplete), and all canceled commemoratives. For complete details, pick up a Stamps for Wildlife brochure at the next SIAS meeting or visit the IAS website: <http://www.illinoisaudubon.org>

## Upcoming Events & Outings

### Oct. 17, 24, & 31 > Crab Orchard NWR Discovery Tours

On these designated days, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge opens up the restricted portion of the refuge for a visitor, self guided, tour. The Tours begin at the Wolf Creek Causeway from 1 - 4 p.m. For more information, phone the Refuge at 618.997.3344

### Nov. 6 > Wild Weekend at Cypress Creek NWR

In celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week, Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge will provide canoe tours along the old Cache channel. This abandoned section of river is maintained by the Ohio River floodgates. Reservations required for canoe tour. For more details or to make reservations call the Refuge at 618.634.2231

### Dec. 14- Jan. 5 > Christmas Bird Count Season (CBC)

Mark your calendar for the 111<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count!

Local count names and dates follow:

Big Oak Tree State Park (Missouri)- Dec. 16, 2010

War Bluff Valley (IAS) Sanctuary- Dec. 18, 2010

Rend Lake- Dec. 18, 2010

Mingo National Wildlife Refuge (Missouri)- Dec. 18, 2010

Crab Orchard NWR- Dec. 19, 2010

Carlyle Lake- date currently unknown

Cypress Creek NWR- Dec. 20, 2010

Newton Lake- date currently unknown

Marion County- date currently unknown

Arklands/Pyramid St. Pk. - date currently unknown

Horseshoe Lake (Alexander County)- Dec. 28, 2010

Union County- Dec. 29, 2010

Memmet Lake- Dec. 31, 2010

Jackson County- Jan. 1, 2011

### Jan. 4-11, 2011 > Costa Rica, the Birds & Natural History

This tour will introduce you to the incredible range of habitat present in the small nation of Costa Rica...cloud forest, elfin forest, paramo, and humid coastal forest. See Resplendent Quetzals at your first stop at Savegre Lodge. The following day visit the Corcovado Lodge, located in the longest contiguous rainforest in Costa Rica. The trip continues on to Wilson Botanical Gardens and La Amistad National Park, the largest most remote national park in Costa Rica.

Trip price is \$2,450, not including airfare. For more information or to register, contact Nelda Hinckley at 618.549.5588 or 618.457.7676 ext 8323. Email Nelda at [neldahinckley@jalc.edu](mailto:neldahinckley@jalc.edu)

## Another Non-native Plant Invades Illinois

Here is a link to an Alert about a new non-native invasive species being found in Illinois, Japanese Chaff Flower. It seems to be moving down the Ohio River where infestations are being found in adjacent woods and bottomlands. Japanese Chaff Flower is now found in every county adjacent to the Ohio River in Illinois (Alexander, Pulaski, Massac, Pope, Hardin, Gallatin) along with Williamson County.

<http://www.rtrcwma.org/Japanesechafffloweralert.pdf>

## Seeing Birds:

As eNature states in an article in "News Bytes & Tidbits" below, the best time to see hawks, harriers, eagles, and other raptors is during

their fall migration, which is in full swing across the country right now. Raptors tend to fly known routes which means folks can count on seeing large numbers of them as they head south. Here is a list of the best U.S. hawk watching spots as per eNature (<http://enature.com>):

Hawk Ridge, MN

Manzanos Mountains. NM

Hawk Mountain, PA

Chelan Ridge, WA

Hanging Rock, WV

Kiptopeke, VA

Cape May, NJ

Chimney Rock, NJ

Grand Canyon, AZ

Corpus Christi, TX

Florida Keys, FL

Marin Headlands, CA

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society have introduced a new, convenient way for birdwatchers to not only keep a personal record of their bird sightings but to have their sightings be part of a bigger collective data base through their new eBird internet checklists program. eBird allows birders to record sightings, keep track of bird lists, explore dynamic maps and graphs, share sightings with the larger birding community, and have their efforts contribute to science and conservation. eBird founders describe it as a global tool for birders and a critical database for science.

For more details, see the eBirds article that follows in "News Bytes & Tidbits". Log on at <http://ebird.org/> to sign up.

Speaking of hawks, you don't necessarily have to travel far to witness their migration as I found out on 09/25, as 16 rough-winged hawks soared south over our house (in rural Pomona) in less than an hour. Rob and I were watching migrating Monarch flutterbys gliding south over the house at the time.

- Rhonda R.

- Dennis Hale has been enjoying the rewards of having set up a water feature in his Mt.Vernon back yard. During this fall migration, as in past years, the water feature is attracting an amazing number of songbirds. The dry weather might be adding to its attraction, as the bushes surrounding the water have been full of warbler species.
- On the morning of 10/12 the Rendlemans were surprised and entertained by a great horned owl that decided to take a morning bath in their garden pond in rural Carbondale. Mary said it sauntered up, perused the pond, then stepped right in.

## News Bytes & Tidbits

### USFWS Grants to Study Bat White-nose Syndrome –

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently announced six grant awards totaling approximately \$1.6 million to investigate the cause of white-nose syndrome in bats and to identify ways to manage it. White-nose syndrome has killed more than a million bats in eastern North America and has spread rapidly across the U.S. and into Canada since its discovery in 2007.

"Bats are essential components of our nation's ecosystem," said Acting Service Director Rowan Gould. "These grants provide critical funding to help the Service and our partners understand white-nose syndrome and address this unprecedented wildlife crisis."

The *Geomyces destructans* fungus, the fungus associated with white-nose syndrome, has been detected from Canada south to Tennessee and as far west as Oklahoma, and it is expected to continue to spread. Four endangered species and subspecies of bats in the U.S. are already affected by or are at risk from white-nose syndrome. The Endangered Species Act protects 6 bat species in the contiguous U.S.

Additional information about white-nose syndrome may be found at <http://www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome/>.

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**eBird with eBird** -- eBird, a real-time, online checklist program, (at <http://ebird.org/>) has revolutionized the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution at a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers. It is collecting and storing one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence.

The observations of each participant join those of others in an international network of eBird users. eBird then shares these observations with a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists. In time these data will become the foundation for a better understanding of bird distribution across the western hemisphere and beyond.

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### **President Obama Signs Conservation Funds Stamp Act --**

Earlier this month, President Obama signed the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp Act of 2010, to provide for the issuance of a stamp to be used as a source of revenue to benefit wildlife conservation.

Revenues will be transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to be divided equally among the African Elephant Conservation Fund, the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, the Great Ape Conservation Fund, the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, and other international wildlife conservation funds authorized by the Congress. The revenues will be administered by the USFWS as part of the Multinational Species Conservation Fund. The U.S. Post Office will now begin their work designing the stamps, due out in 2011. <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-1454>

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### **Prehistoric Bird Sets Wingspan Record -- 09/16/10**

Jennifer Viegas of Discovery News has reported that researchers have found the remains of what they believe was an enormous bony-toothed bird with the largest wingspan ever recorded. Soaring the Chilean skies several million years ago, its wingspan would have been at least 5 meters. The measurement is based on well-preserved wing bones from the newly named bird species, *Pelagomis chilensis*, also known as "huge pseudoteeth". The animal weighed about 64 pounds and belonged to a group known as pelagornithids (birds characterized by long, slender beaks bearing many spiny, tooth-like projections.)

It's now thought that 5 meters may be close to the maximum wingspan that can be achieved by a flying bird. Prior wingspan estimates for pelagornithids went up to 6 meters, but they were based on more fragmented fossils. "Most likely, evolution of such large sizes was to avoid competition with other birds," says lead author Gerald Mayr, a palaeornithologist at the Senckenberg Research Institute in Germany. "Birds with such a large size can, of course, sail across huge distances and may more easily find prey in the open ocean."

But, "there are a number of drawbacks if you become so large," he adds. Chicks would have to be raised over a long period of time, making them more prone to predation. "Moreover," Mayr says, "bird feathers are quite heavy, so very large birds may have become too heavy." Mayr and palaeontologist David Rubilar of Chile's National Museum of Natural History analysed the big bird's fossilized remains, which are 70% complete. The bird is described in the latest issue of the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*. For the complete story, visit: <http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2010/09/16/3013480.htm>

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### **The 111th Christmas Bird Count - <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count> --**

From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. Families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides and checklists go out on an annual mission - often before dawn. For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the Holiday season.

Each of the citizen scientists who annually braves snow, wind, or rain, to take part in the Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action. This year's count will help scientists understand the impact of the Gulf oil spill on vulnerable species.

From feeder-watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition -- and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.

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### **eNature Hawkwatch -- <http://enature.com/outdoors/hawkwatch/>**

Every fall, millions of birds fly south to spend the winter in sunny places with mild climates and plentiful food. Most smaller birds migrate under the cover of darkness, stopping to fuel up on insects or seeds by day and using the stars to guide them at night. Hawks, by contrast, are diurnal migrants; they depend on currents of rising warm air to lift them to high altitudes where they glide on their broad wings without flapping, thereby conserving energy. During these flights, hawks use their keen eyesight to recognize landmarks, follow landforms that provide rising thermals, and steer a course to their ancestral wintering grounds. In some places these migrating hawks gather in huge numbers, and people gather to watch them with binoculars and data sheets in the phenomenon known as hawkwatch.

Counting hawks during migration is more than a competitive pursuit for list-oriented birders. The data collected at hawkwatches helps experts monitor the health of various ecosystems. Because hawks are top predators — that is, they occupy the top of the food chain — they're very sensitive to changes that affect prey species. Comparing hawk numbers from year to year reveals trends that offer insight into the well-being of the environment in both the breeding and wintering areas.

But more than simply counting hawks, there's the spectacle of it all. Standing atop a ridge on a crisp autumn day while hundreds of hawks circle and stream past is an unforgettable experience, which helps explain why people return to these sites day after day and hawkwatch programs across the country attract volunteers by the dozens. Visit any hawkwatch site, and you'll find people who came one day out of curiosity and soon became regulars.

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**eNature Offers Birding by Ear Quiz** - Can you tell a twitter from a tweet? A warble from a gobble? A chip from a cheep or a buzz from a trill? Many experienced birders can identify birds by ear, merely by listening to their distinctive songs, whistles, and chatter. Test your knowledge of the songs and calls of a region's birds with the eNature audio quiz at: <http://enature.com/challenge/birdcallchallenge.asp> Enter your zip code to begin the challenge.

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## -- Join SIAS! --

To join or renew your membership, fill in the following form and return it along with your dues to:

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Southern Illinois Audubon Society** Individual voting member \$15  
**Attn.: Membership** Additional member in a family \$10  
**P.O. Box 222** Student voting member \$5  
**Carbondale, IL 62903-0222** Amt. Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual membership renewal month is January and coincides with board elections held at the annual meeting in January.

**Member address labels reflect current dues status.**

✂-----cut here and return with dues-----cut here and return with dues-----✂

I/we would be interested in being on the Board. (circle one): YES/NO

I/we would like to receive my newsletter via email. (circle one): YES/NO

✂-----cut here and return with dues-----cut here and return with dues-----✂

### SIAS Board of Directors:

President: Joe Merkelbach 618.532.2112 Conservation/Education: Cathie Hutcheson 618.529.2022  
Vice-President: Vicki Lang Mendenhall 618.697.9868 Finance: Greg Kupiec 618.684.5168  
Secretary: Mary McCarthy 618.684.8182 Hospitality: Open  
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Newsletter Editor: Rhonda Rothrock 618.684.6605, email woodthrush@earthlink.net  
**SIAS Website: <http://www.siaudubon.org> Email: [siaudubonsociety@gmail.com](mailto:siaudubonsociety@gmail.com)**

Always  
leave  
'em  
laughing...  
:-)



### Volunteers Needed for Nominating Committee

SIAS needs three volunteers to serve on the annual Officer/Board Nominating Committee. The volunteers, with the aid of one Board member, will a slate of officers for the January 2011 Elections held at the Annual SIAS meeting at the end of January. If you are willing and able to serve on the committee or are interested in a Board position, Please contact one of the current Board members listed above.

*Saving Stamps can help IAS protect habitat for wildlife!*

**Southern Illinois Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 222**  
**Carbondale, IL 62903-0222**

*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society  
And the Illinois Environmental Council*

Don't Forget to Save Your Stamps for the IAS Land Acquisition Fund. ✂

Bring 'em to any SIAS meeting!

For more info visit: [www.illinoisaudubon.org](http://www.illinoisaudubon.org)



Artist's perception of *Pelagomys chilensis* also known as "huge pseudoteeth"  
- in life estimated to weigh 64 pounds & have a 5-meter wingspan.



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