



# Southern Illinois Audubon Society

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P.O. Box 222  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0222

## NEWSLETTER

*Established in 1970*

### **BSI (Bee Scene Investigation): the case of the disappearing bees**

University of Illinois Entomology professor and department head May Berenbaum will give a presentation on the ongoing pollinator crisis in North America for SIAS on **Friday, January 27th at 8:00 p.m.** The "pollinator crisis"—the widespread decline in the viability of animals that transport pollen and allow most of the planet's flowering plants to reproduce—may lack marquee appeal as a form of global change but it has real potential for profoundly altering the terrestrial world. Close to 100 crop plants in the U.S. rely on a single pollinator—the honey bee—to survive and reproduce. Over the past five years, mysterious annual losses of up to one-third of America's honey bees, due in part to what has become known as colony collapse disorder, has focused attention on how little is known about U.S. pollinators and how dependent we are upon them. May Berenbaum will discuss the pollinator crisis, the plight of the honey bee, and advances in entomology that provide hope for the future of America's bees.

May Berenbaum graduated summa cum laude, with a B.S. degree and honors in biology, from Yale University in 1975; she attended graduate school at Cornell University and received a Ph.D. in ecology and evolutionary biology in 1980. Since 1980, she has been a member of the faculty of the Department of Entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; she has served as head of the department since 1992 and has held the endowed Swanlund Chair of Entomology since 1996. Dr. Berenbaum is known for her contributions to the field of chemical ecology, particularly in elucidating the chemical mediation of interactions between plant-feeding insects and their host plants and the function of these interactions in the organization and structure of natural and managed communities. She is interested in the practical application of ecological principles toward developing sustainable agricultural and wildland management practices.

**SIAS will be returning to the Fellowship Hall at First United Methodist Church, 214 W. Main St., Carbondale for this, our annual meeting.** The evening will begin with a potluck dinner followed by a short business meeting. Set-up starts at 6 p.m. with the potluck starting at 6:30 p.m. SIAS will provide the main course and some beverages. Bring an entree to share, and your dinnerware and utensils.

This meeting will include an election of officers. The slate of officers to be elected/re-elected are: Conservation/Education - Cathie Hutcheson, Finance Chair - Greg Kupiec, and Outings Chair - open. If you are interested in filling the Outings Chair position, please contact Rhonda Rothrock at 618.684.6605. Nominations for positions can also be made from the floor the evening of the meeting.

SIAS will hold a silent auction and a door prize(s) drawing as part of the evening's events. Members are encouraged to bring new or lightly used items for the auction or to be given as door prizes. Folks giving auction items are asked to suggest a value at which to start the bidding. In past years the silent auction has proven quite profitable for SIAS.

### **Nov./Dec. Program Highlights**

#### **Black and White Elegance**

The December SIAS program about loons was a revelation, at least to me, about an elegant looking bird that is a quiet and hard to see visitor on our big lakes in the winter, but a flashy and very vocal resident of northern lakes during its breeding season.

Mary (McCarthy) had an opportunity to work with Dr. Ed Miller, of Governor's State University in a wilderness study area within the Ottawa National Forest of upper Michigan. The calls of loons are an iconic signature of wilderness, they really do not tolerate close encounters with humans and Dr. Miller was convinced that individual birds had calls that were distinctive and used to maintain breeding territories.

Mary helped with making recordings of individual loons with directed high sensitivity microphones, sometimes mounted on kayaks to get closer to the birds. These recordings were processed through tracing sonogram devices and the distinctive calls of individuals were indeed recognizable. Eventually Mary and the others could identify individuals by call; trying to take pictures to tie to calls was a major challenge.

The conventional wisdom was that loons need large lakes to have enough food resources to fledge young. The ability to identify specific birds, males by their territorial calls, led to some important discoveries. Pairs defend groups of smaller lakes in order to have a territory large enough to provide food. Photographs showed birds holding fish in their bills and moving from the source lake to another lake with a known nest.

Mary had really bad luck with weather conditions disrupting her study nests, but the final year was a charm and she was able to follow at least one through to fledged birds.

I have always thought that loons are intriguing birds, perhaps from a long ago summer vacation in Minnesota, and learning more very interesting information about their lives and ecology made a great program. Our thanks to Mary McCarthy for this great presentation.   
- Joe Merkelbach, President

### **Future SIAS Program Speakers:**

**Feb. 24th** – Dr. George Waring

**March 23rd** – Chris Benda

**Ways to Help Birds in Bad Weather** from <http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/>  
Make sure seed is accessible and dry. Make a windbreak. Keep extra feeders for use in bad weather. Scatter seed in sheltered places. Put out high-energy foods such as suet. Use a birdbath heater wisely. Offer mealworms in a heavy dish or small crock. Furnish your birdhouses with some dried grass or dry wood shavings in the bottom of the houses. Plug the air vent holes in your birdhouses with removable weather stripping. Be ready for big changes in weather.

## **Upcoming Events & Activities**

### **January 25 > Shawnee NF Proposed Land Swap Open House**

Shawnee National Forest officials will host an open house from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at their Harrisburg office to will allow for people to ask questions, collect information, or offer comments about the proposed land exchange with Peabody Energy. The U.S. Forest Service host office is located at 50 Highway 145 South in Harrisburg.

Comments may also be submitted by emailing to: [comments-eastern-shawnee@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-shawnee@fs.fed.us) or can be mailed to Hurston A. Nicholas, Forest Supervisor of Shawnee National Forest, Attn: ALHI-Shawnee NF Land Exchange Proposal, 50 Highway 145 South, Harrisburg, IL 62946.

### **February 4 > Southwest RC&D Eagle Trek**

Join Southwestern IL Resource Conservation & Development for eagle-watching at Kaskaskia Lock & Dam, 4800 Lock and Dam Rd., Modoc, IL, at the confluence of the Mississippi & Kaskaskia Rivers. Enjoy short interpreted walks both upstream and downstream from the Dam. Folks from the World Bird Sanctuary will be on hand with some feathered friends from 9 a.m.-noon!

Please phone Allie McCreary at 618.566.4451 or via email [allie.mccreary@swircd.org](mailto:allie.mccreary@swircd.org) to reserve your spot by February 1st so the RC&D folks can account for the number of lunches. A suggested donation of \$5/person is asked to cover lunch expenses. Families and leash-trained dogs welcome for the hike. More info at [http://www.swircd.org/2012%20Eagle%20Trek\\_01.pdf](http://www.swircd.org/2012%20Eagle%20Trek_01.pdf)

### **February 4 > Explore Bellrose Waterfowl Reserve**

Bundle up and join the folks at Cypress Creek NWR at Bellrose Waterfowl Reserve, an area typically closed to the public, to witness the majestic sight of ducks and geese arriving at sunset to roost on the icy water. The Reserve includes 400 acres of wetlands managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to provide food and shelter for waterfowl during migration. For more information and directions, call the Refuge at 618.634.2231. Phone ahead in the event of inclement weather.

### **February 17 - 20 > Annual Great Backyard Bird Count**

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone, from beginning bird watchers to experts, can participate. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. For more details or to register, visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> or download a powerpoint presentation with step by step count instructions at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/get-involved/give-a-slide-show>

### **February 18 > SIAS / Cape Swamp Candle Birders joint outing to Union Co. hotspots - Tentative**

Plans are being arranged for a joint outing with the Cape Girardeau area birder group, the Swamp Candles. Vicki Lang and Rhonda Rothrock have been asked lead an outing to introduce Cape birders to some of the southwestern IL areas known for great spring birding. Tentative plans are to meet at Winter's Pond, at the base of LaRue Pine Hills, at 9 a.m., then work our way to Trail of Tears St. Park, then on to Union Co. Refuge. *If you're interested in attending this outing, please phone or email Rhonda Rothrock by Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> just to be sure the plans haven't changed or the outing has not been canceled. Rhonda can be reached at 618.684.6605 or [woodthrusheola@hotmail.com](mailto:woodthrusheola@hotmail.com)*

### **February 21 > Doug Tallamy "Bringing Nature Home" INPS encore program**

In 2011 the Illinois Native Plant Society (INPS), with support from many local organizations, sponsored a visit and program by Entomologist Douglas Tallamy, Author of *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. At that time and with authorization from Dr. Tallamy, INPS recorded the program. They are sponsoring an encore performance of the program, via powerpoint, on Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Carbondale Township Hall, East Main St., Carbondale.

If you missed Dr. Tallamy's original presentation, here's your chance to see it. *Bringing Nature Home "offers simple solutions that anyone with a patch of earth can follow: Make a contribution to biodiversity by choosing native plants. Bringing Nature Home passionately argues that it isn't too late to save ecological communities, and that we all have a significant role in the process."* For more on his book, visit Dr. Tallamy website: <http://www.plantanative.com/douglas-tallamy-bio.html>

### **February-May > Movie Night at the Cache, 1st Thursday of the Month**

Grab your family & friends for a relaxing and fun evening of watching movies about nature at the Cache River Wetlands Center. This year's movie series theme will be "Creepy Critters of the Cache". Each month will focus on a different "misunderstood" critter and try to dispel the negative perceptions surrounding them. For more information or movie schedule, call the Wetlands Center at 618.657.2064

**President Obama denies permit for Keystone IL Pipeline!**

On 01/18/12 President Obama denied the permit for the Keystone IL Pipeline after recent legislation put it on a fast track for a decision. President Obama stated that he would not approve it without proper assessment. "The rushed and arbitrary deadline insisted on by congressional Republicans prevented a full assessment of the pipeline's impact," he said. "This announcement is not a judgment on the merits of the pipeline, but the arbitrary nature of a deadline that prevented the state department from gathering the information necessary to approve the project and protect the American people." This denial does not preclude future permit requests but would put the process, more or less, back at the starting line.

On the day the permit was denied, Oil Change International and Natural Resources Defense Council released a report "Keystone XL: Undermining Energy Security and Sending Tar Sands Overseas". The report states The Keystone XL pipeline is not the energy security boon as it has been presented. The report goes on to say that the oil industry is not concerned with U.S. energy security or the U.S. national interest. It is purely interested in maximizing profits. For tar sands producers, maximizing profits means breaking out of the Canadian and American Mid West markets, which are currently saturated with tar sands oil leading to a reduced price for the commodity. A pipeline to the Gulf Coast achieves this goal.

<http://priceofoil.org/keystone-xl-undermining-energy-security/>

The Washington Post just printed an Op Ed report, "Five myths about the Keystone XL pipeline" that addresses five of the big pipeline issues at: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-the-keystone-xl-pipeline/2011/12/19/gIQApuAX8P\\_story.html?tid=pm\\_opinions\\_pop](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-the-keystone-xl-pipeline/2011/12/19/gIQApuAX8P_story.html?tid=pm_opinions_pop)



**Snowy Owl Sightings Snowball**

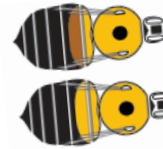
Most Snowy Owls normally live year-round in areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other sites north of Alaska's Brooks Range; a few overwinter in the Northern Plains and New England. But this fall they are spreading across the United States in great numbers and turning heads. The nearly two-foot-tall, predominantly white owls are hard to miss as they sit perched atop telephone poles and fence posts.

Why do snowy owls sometimes fly south en masse? Snowy owls' favorite prey is a small rodent called the lemming, which are notorious for boom and bust population cycles. Biologists think the owls' sudden upsurge south from the Arctic occurs when lemmings are in short supply. If you should see a Snowy Owl, these birds are already stressed, as they are far from their normal wintering grounds where there is a possible food shortage, so please respect them and their activities.

**Be all that you can bee as a Bee Spotter**

Honey bee colonies are in decline in many states, but little is known about their wild cousins, the bumble bees, or, for that matter, honey bees living on their own in the wild without beekeepers. A new initiative from the University of Illinois seeks to build a better record of honey bee and bumble bee abundance and distribution in Illinois by recruiting citizen scientists to report on wild bees seen anywhere in the state.

The BeeSpotter website at <http://beespotter.mste.uiuc.edu/> connects bee enthusiasts to resources that will help them identify locate bees, post photographs and enter geographic information about wild bees seen in backyards, parks or other Illinois locales. Learn the biology of bees. Download full color bee ID charts, instructions for photographing bees, and a guide for making a bee-friendly garden.



*Never Bee flat*

*Never Bee sharp*

*Always Bee natural !*

**It's SIAS Dues Renewal Time! If you haven't already renewed your dues, please consider doing so at or before the annual meeting, January 27, 2012. For those receiving a newsletter via U.S.P.S., check your mailing address label for your dues expiration date. (It's located on the top line following your name.) For those receiving a newsletter via email only, I will try to follow up with an email to each of you. Let's hope I don't forget to do that. -Rhonda R.**

✂—cut here and return with dues—cut here and return with dues—✂

✂—cut here and return with dues—cut here and return with dues—✂

**-- Join SIAS OP**

**Renew Your Membership --**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we would like to receive my newsletter via email. YES or NO  
**Interested on being on the Board? Contact a Board Member!**

**Southern Illinois Audubon Society** Individual 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.

## Whooping Crane Killed In Indiana in December

Law-enforcement officers in Indiana are pursuing "certain persons of interest" in the December 30 shooting death of a Whooping Crane in Jackson County, Indiana. Phil Nale, a conservation officer with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources has been working overtime investigating the crime, and now he has been joined by Special Agent Buddy Shapp of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Shapp investigated the Nov. 2009 shooting of a crane in Vermilion County, Indiana.

Indiana's *Turn In a Poacher program* (TIP) announced it is offering a \$7,500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crane's death. TIP launched the Whooping Crane Fund with a \$2,500 commitment, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service immediately matched it with a \$2,500 donation. The Humane Society of the United States and its Humane Society Wildlife Trust Fund also added \$2,500. Doug Featherston, a TIP board member and representative of Indiana Quail Unlimited stated, "The TIP Citizens Advisory Board has unanimously decided to offer a reward 10 times the normal amount to motivate citizens to come forward with any information that will lead to the quick arrest and expeditious prosecution of the perpetrator."

The U.S. Attorney's Office of Southern Indiana has offered its full support in the prosecution of the individuals responsible for killing the endangered crane. The attorney's office took heat from birders and crane enthusiasts last year when the young killers of the bird in Vermilion County, Indiana, received the most lenient penalty ever in a crane shooting.

### Be Sure Before You Shoot

If you know a waterfowl hunter, please consider sharing the following youtube link with them. It is a short video being used to familiarize waterfowl hunters with non-hunttable waterfowl including cranes. It's a helpful identification tool for hunters and non-hunters alike. Know your big white birds.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLCZDvbNu20&feature=youtu.be>



Bats, the world's only flying mammals, are

exceptional, delightful, fascinating and likeable.

Bats may be mysterious and misunderstood, but the earth's only flying mammals are essential to our global environment.

Find out more at this website: <http://www.yearofthebat.org/> \*



*Save Our Bats* is The Center for Biological Diversity's awareness campaign. They're inviting citizens to become bat advocates. Visit their website to join their campaign and/or sign one of their petitions.

<http://www.saveourbats.org>

## North American Bat Death Toll Exceeds 5.5 Million From White-nose Syndrome

On the verge of another season of winter hibernating bat surveys, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists and partners estimate that at least 5.7 million to 6.7 million bats have now died from white-nose syndrome. Biologists expect the disease to continue to spread.

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is decimating bat populations across eastern North America, with mortality rates reaching up to 100 percent at many sites. First documented in New York in 2006, the disease has spread quickly into 16 states and four Canadian provinces. Bats with WNS exhibit unusual behavior during cold winter months, including flying outside during the day and clustering near the entrances of caves and mines where they hibernate. Bats have been found sick and dying in unprecedented numbers near these hibernacula.

For more information about white-nose syndrome, visit [www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome](http://www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome). Connect with the Service's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/usfwswns](http://www.facebook.com/usfwswns)

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Bats are the only flying mammals. Like all mammals, they suckle their young until they are fit and ready to forage for themselves. They have a thin, elastic wing membrane between their fingers and legs that gives them the acrobatic flight capacity. The scientific name for their wings is Chiroptera, which translates to 'hand wing'. Such a 'hand wing' allows better maneuverability in flight and thus allows bats to be remarkable flying mammals.

There are more than 1,000 bat species around the world, which can be found in every continent except Antarctica. Lending from their unique wing morphology, bats are classified as either Mega-bats Megachiroptera or Micro-bats Microchiroptera. Mega-bats are tropical and 'Old World' bat species from Africa, Asia and Australia. They have large wingspans and bodies just like the Golden-Crowned Flying Fox with a 1.5 meter wingspan and weighing up to 1.2 kilograms. Mega-bats have fox like faces with long noses, large eyes and/or small ears. Micro-bats on the other hand, have smaller wingspan and bodies and can be found worldwide. Unlike Mega-bats, they have diverse and distinct facial features. Differences between the two classifications also extends to their diet with Mega-bats primarily feeding on fruit, flowers and nectar and Micro-bats feeding primarily on insects and other broad and diverse items.

Bats (except most fruit bats) orientate and hunt by means of a highly sophisticated system of echolocation, emitting high-frequency calls that beyond the range of the human ear.

Echolocation helps bats avoid collisions and help them locate prey as calls bounce off obstacles or prey. They make calls as they fly and listen to the returning echoes to build up a sonic map. Bats are sophisticated hunters and some bats can even distinguish between different insect species by their wing-beat frequency. Most fruit bats, like the grey headed flying-fox, have larger eyes and a sharp sense of smell. They find food by sight and smell.

Bats have a low reproduction rate and a long life expectancy – one baby per year and can live up to 30 years. They are warm-blooded animals with the ability to regulate their body temperature and are also able to maintain their energy efficiency by reducing their body metabolism.

–from the Year of the Bat website\*

## 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Trinidad and Tobago Tropical Adventure - June 1<sup>st</sup> - 8th, 2012

Learn about the Tropical Ecology and the natural history this beautiful two-island nation in the Caribbean. Nelda Hinckley will again lead this visit to several unique natural areas throughout both islands. Participants will also have an opportunity to experience the unique culture of this island-nation through its food, music, and history.

For complete details visit: [http://www.jalc.edu/internationaleducation/trinidad\\_tobago/index.php](http://www.jalc.edu/internationaleducation/trinidad_tobago/index.php) To reserve your spot on this great trip, please phone Nelda at 618.549.5588 or email her at [neldahinckley@jalc.edu](mailto:neldahinckley@jalc.edu).

(The trip qualifies as 3 hours of Biology 241 credit at John A. Logan.)



**CITIZENS FOR SOUTHERNMOST ILLINOIS**  
*Save our businesses, our family farms and our unique environment.*



The Citizens for Southernmost Illinois have serious concerns with the purpose, planning and development of I-66. The negative impacts simply outweigh any questionable benefits for the people who live and recreate here. We can't afford to gamble away our remaining economic and natural resources. CSI is dedicated to promoting and protecting our rural lifestyle and the rich natural environment that is part of our home and livelihood.

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS FROM THE PROPOSED INTERSTATE 66

**GOVERNMENT WASTE:** \$4.5 million dollars just to study a feasible route. \$3.6 million per mile to construct an Interstate highway.

**LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND:** Acquired through eminent domain, thousands of acres of quality farmland can be taken out of production and removed from the tax rolls. This will not only impact family farms and private land but could result in restricted drainage and increase flooding.

**DRAIN TO LOCAL ECONOMY:** Business and jobs continue to be lost in the area and the addition of another interstate will add to this exodus. Local businesses owners have indicated that the proposed interstate will detrimentally impact their operation by taking potential customers away from the area



**LOSS OF TOURISM:** Interstate 66 will take tourism through the state instead promoting tourism to the state. Why stop in Southernmost Illinois when you can go on to the highly promoted Paducah, KY or Cape Girardeau, MO for cheap gas, shopping, gambling, or a nice dinner?

**INCOMPATIBILITY WITH OUTDOOR RECREATION:** The biologically rich and diverse environment of Southernmost Illinois has made it a destination with a reputation for high quality outdoor recreation experiences such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, canoeing, hiking, nature photography and much more. The environmental devastation resulting from yet another Interstate highway in this area will have dire consequences for the natural resource-based recreation and economy of the region.



Please visit our website at <http://citizensforsouthernillinois.org> and sign our petition to support our efforts to stop Government waste.

**Shawnee National Forest Proposed Land Swap** - The Shawnee National Forest will be hosting an open house concerning the environmental analysis of a proposed land exchange between American Land Holdings of Illinois, LLC (ALHI) and the Forest Service. The open house will be held Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. in Harrisburg, Illinois at the Shawnee National Forest Headquarters. The open house provides the public an opportunity to ask questions and exchange information about this proposal. Forest team members will be on hand to answer questions. For driving directions to the office call 618-253-7114 or 800-My-Woods.

Recently a scoping letter and the proposed action was mailed to interested citizens, outlining the land-exchange proposal. The scoping information, land exchange proposal and maps are available at the Forest's website. Printed versions of the proposal are available upon request.

Feedback from the public is welcome and the Forest Service requests comments be submitted by January 31, 2012 to aid the development of the environmental analysis of the proposal. When submitting input, please make comments site-specific to this proposed land exchange and include the following information with your comments: Date, Name, Contact Information (organization, email, mailing address) and Project Title "Land Exchange Proposal" in the subject line.

Comments may be submitted either in written or electronic format. Submit electronic comments by email to: comments\_eastern-shawnee@fs.fed.us, with "Land Exchange Proposal" in the subject line. Mail written comments to: Allen Nicholas, Forest Supervisor, Shawnee National Forest, Attn.: Land Exchange Proposal, 50 Highway 145 South, Harrisburg, IL 62946.

Administered by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the Shawnee National Forest is one of 155 national forests nationwide. To discover more about the Shawnee National Forest, visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee>.

SIAS has not formally taken a stance on the Shawnee NF proposed land swap, which offers a 2 for 1 net gain in contiguous land but the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club is speaking out in opposition of the proposal. To review their concerns, addressing an Indiana Bat maternity hibernaculum on the Gallatin parcel, visit their website: <https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=7714>

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*Affiliate of the Illinois Audubon Society,  
 the Illinois Environmental Council,  
 & the North American Bluebird Society*

Don't Forget to Save Your Stamps for the IAS Land Acquisition Fund.   
 bringing you the best of our state's membership  
 For more info visit: [www.illinoisaudubon.org](http://www.illinoisaudubon.org)

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