

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

August 2022



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Great News: Important Breeding Birds Doing Well in Our Area!

A recent analysis of 22 years of data by the nonprofit Bird Conservation Network (BCN) reveals that dozens of local breeding birds, including the Sandhill Crane, Red-headed Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, and Henslow's Sparrow, are doing surprisingly well in the Chicago area. This is great news! The study is an update on the status of more than 100 nesting species across grassland, shrubland, wetland, and woodland habitats.

BCN has been promoting bird conservation as well as preserving and restoring bird habitat in the Chicago Region for more than 20 years. A coalition of 21 bird clubs, Audubon chapters, ornithological societies and conservation organizations, BCN represents more than 35,000 people living in northeast Illinois, northeastern Indiana, and southern Wisconsin.

Northern Flicker



For this important and ongoing study, which began in 1999, BCN recruited experienced volunteer birders to conduct nearly 30,000 surveys of breeding birds in some 2,500 parks and nature preserves. They used eBird, a free app and online database, to record their sightings. For more information on eBird, visit <https://ebird.org>.

In a recent article in the Chicago Tribune, Nora Schoenberg reported, "Of 104 key species tracked in the study, 56% had populations that were stable or increasing." This is probably due to the Chicago region's many forest preserves. She added that these sites "cover nearly 10% of land in the six-county area....Only 37% of the tracked birds are increasing or holding steady in other areas of the state, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey."

BCN President Eric Secker states that agriculture has often consumed prime bird habitat in many parts of Illinois. Loss of wetlands and oak woodlands, vital for many birds and more prevalent in Chicagoland, are also possible reasons for the decline in certain species elsewhere. The creation, preservation and restoration of tallgrass prairies near Chicago has helped grassland species such as the Henslow's Sparrow. On the other hand, the Survey showed that some local species are declining, including the Ovenbird, which nests on the ground, and Bobolink, which may prefer prairies with shorter grasses.



Ovenbird

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BCN's findings reveal a dynamic landscape in which some breeding bird species are stable or expanding while others face declines. The organization now wants to use the data to identify priority birds and address the needs of declining species. "We're really trying to take the next steps to collaborate more with land managers and make change happen," Secker said. To access the entire study, visit www.bcnbirds.org/trends21.

Resources for this article are BCN's website (including the Survey) and press release of June 7, 2022, as well as the Tribune article of July 15, 2022 cited above.

Conservation Corner: Vote YES in November to help the Cook County Forest Preserves!

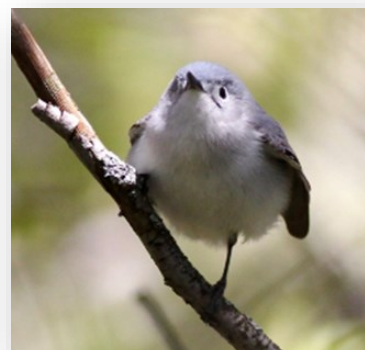
It's summertime, — a time to get outside and enjoy nature! Since 1914, the Forest Preserves have been an integral part of our lives, managing 70,000 acres of public land (11% of Cook County) that helps clean our air and water. More than 100 threatened or endangered species depend on the Forest Preserves and sixty-two million people visit annually.

On **November 8th, 2022**, voters will have a historic opportunity to protect our water sources, air quality, and wildlife habitat as well as reduce flooding and expand our forest preserves by approving a property tax increase of 0.025%. That amounts to less than \$1.66/month for the vast majority of homeowners.

If you haven't already, please take the pledge to vote YES this November to help the Forest Preserves. And tell your friends and family to do the same! Visit <https://www.voteyesforestpreserves.org>.

By Leslie Shad

*Blue-grey Gnatcatcher,
Ryerson Woods, Spring 2022
by Lorra Rudman*



Illinois Bird Day Proclaimed!

by Jarod Hitchings, Andrea Tolzman and John Leonard

The Illinois Ornithological Society (IOS) is proud to announce that Illinois Bird Day was proclaimed by the State of Illinois on May 14th, 2022. Illinois is at the heart of a globally important waterfowl and shorebird migratory passage, the Mississippi Flyway. This traveling corridor coincides with the Mississippi River and all of its tributaries thus bringing in hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl and shorebirds to our area. These birds find ample food sources in our fallow agricultural fields while migrating to their northern breeding grounds. To the east, Lake Michigan serves as a barrier to a variety of colorful neotropical songbirds that build up along the shores, to the delight of birders.

IOS not only supports our fine feathered friends but also our statewide community of birdwatchers, birders, feeder-fillers, and outdoor enthusiasts who share a common vision that the diversity of bird species reflects a truly healthy natural scape that we all call home. IOS is a working team that partners with many local, state, and nationally affiliated bird conservation groups advocating for the birds we love. The second Saturday in May has been widely recognized as World Migratory Bird Day since 1928. That Illinois and international tradition has now been enhanced by the addition of Illinois Bird Day.

ENSBC March Getaway to Costa Rica

In 2021, as part of our conservation efforts, ENSBC “adopted” a bird-banding research station at Monteverde, Costa Rica. Our \$500 gift supported efforts to learn about the vital relationship between wintering grounds, migration, and breeding territories of what we think of as “our” spring birds.

ENSBC is offering a field trip to Monteverde and nearby sites from March 17-25, 2023. Locations to be visited, lodging and activities include Cerro Lodge, Carara National Park (with its large population of Scarlet Macaws), Cala Lodge at Monteverde Institute, bird-banding at Monteverde, and a stay at Pocosol Station in the heart of the rainforest.

We will be led by local English-speaking Costa Rican guides and the trip will be slow-paced. The price is \$2,649.00, not including airfare. For details and to sign up, contact Libbyhill@comcast.net. For information about the importance of bird-banding to understanding summer, winter and migratory patterns, visit [A Bird In The Hand Is An Opportunity. Let's Make the Most of It.](#)



*Scarlet Macaw in
Costa Rica*



*Twelve-spotted Skimmer, June 2022,
by Lorra Rudman*

Welcome, new members!

Jobi Cates	Evanston
Katherine France	Chicago
Tamara Grusin	Evanston
Connie Smith	Chicago
Ford Soderstrom	Wilmette
Valerie Veneziano	Evanston
Karren Wood	Evanston
Karen Woodhouse	Wilmette
Christina Ziegler	Evanston

From the Archives: “From Mother to Daughter” by Libby Hill

Mary Hotson joined ENSBC in 1996. I know her from field trips and as one of the bird monitors at Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary. On a search through the ENSBC archives for something else, I came upon notes taken by then Recording Secretary, Merna Hotson. Merna was Secretary from April 1969 to May 1972, a transition time when the Club changed its name from Evanston Bird Club to Evanston North Shore Bird Club.

On a whim, I asked Mary if by any chance they were related, and she said, “That’s my mother!” Merna took many birding trips throughout the United States. Locally, she led trips to Skokie Lagoons and hoped the birding bug would capture her daughter. It did!

In Merna’s records of a meeting in October 1971, she wrote: “About 300 persons attended this meeting and enjoyed the dramatic personality of Frances Hamerstrom as she told of the effects of DDT on eagles and other raptors as proved in their (*she and her husband’s*) research. At the end of her talk, she walked around the room with her eagle perched on her out-stretched arm clothed in a long falconer’s glove. This was the high point of the evening.” The Hamerstoms sold their book, “An Eagle to the Sky” and cleared \$500.

“From the Archives” will be an occasional feature in Bird Calls.



Bird Calls is a publication of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club
P.O. Box 1313, Evanston, IL 60204, info@ensbc.org.
Send ideas, articles and photos to Marj Lundy, Editor, at catbird3@comcast.net.

Field Trips Comin' Up!

Fridays, August 26 and September 16, 23 & 30, 7:30 to 9:30 am: Birds & Coffee at Jarvis Bird Sanctuary. Come any time. Coffee and fixings provided. Park in metered Waveland Parking Lot (<https://goo.gl/maps/ovFmu2P21ewTXiAF7>); meet on viewing platform on east side of fenced-in bird sanctuary where Red Hill Birding leaders will be hanging out.

Thursdays from September 1 – 29, 7:30 am: Perkins Woods. Look for fall warblers, thrushes and other migrants. Meet at corner of Ewing Ave. and Grant St. Leaders: John Bates and/or Josh Engel.

Saturday, September 3, 7:30 am: Techny Basin. A great place to look for shorebirds -- Yellowlegs, sandpipers, killdeer, herons, egrets, maybe even snipe. Turn north on Willow Rd at Founders Drive (<https://goo.gl/maps/sqQJ3krp95MHRP6S7>). Meet at the parking lot behind the Sheraton Hotel facing Techny Basin. Leader: Owen Woodhouse.

Sundays, September 4 and 18, 7:30 am: Canal Shores Golf Course North Loop. Meet on Maple Ave in Wilmette just west of the Canal. Free street parking. Register with Matt Rooney at matthewarooney@gmail.com.

Sundays, September 11 and 25, 7:30 am: Canal Shores Golf Course South Loop. Meet on Lincoln St. in Evanston, just east of the Canal. Free street parking. Register with Matt Rooney at matthewarooney@gmail.com.

Sunday, September 11, 7:30 am: NEW TRIP, Waukegan Beach. It's hard to beat Waukegan Beach in September -- shorebirds moving through and warblers near their peak. We'll walk the beach, targeting shorebirds including Baird's and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Sanderling and others; in previous years, we've seen Whimbrel and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. In the

swales, we'll look for early waterfowl and lingering Least Bitterns; in wooded lots and beachfront park -- Blackpoll, Bay-breasted, Blackburnian, Wilson's and Magnolia Warblers among others. Meet at <https://goo.gl/maps/1QFRdEPAA3J2fEg67>. Registration required at libbyhill@comcast.net.

Saturday, September 17, 8:00 am: Northwestern University.

The campus has long been a stopover for migrants headed south. Park on lakeside of the upper deck of south parking lot off Sheridan Rd. and Clark St., north of Clark St. beach. Leaders: Libby Hill and Sarah Flax.

Friday, September 18, 8:00 am: NEW TRIP! West Ridge Nature Park. We'll look for fall warblers, other migrants, local raptors and more. Meet at WRNP Main Entrance (5801 N. Western Ave). Free street parking on both sides of Western Ave. Leader: Scott Judd.

Saturday, September 24, 8:00 am: Northwestern University.

NOTE NEW LOCATION: Meet at the north end of campus.

Turn east on Lincoln Street into campus. Stay on Campus Drive to parking lot by the lake. Leaders: Libby Hill and Sarah Flax.

Sunday, October 9, 7:30 am: Northwestern University. October is sparrows' peak migration time. Also look for late fall warblers, both kinglets, Brown Creepers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and maybe jaegers or Franklin's Gulls. Meet at north end of campus. Turn east on Lincoln Street into campus. Stay on Campus Drive to parking lot by the lake. Leaders: Sarah Flax and Libby Hill

Sunday, November 20, 8:00 am: Jeff Sanders 52nd Annual Fall Specialty Trip to the north shore lakefront – Gillson, Maple and Tower Road Parks, Park Ave., Rose Beach in Highland Park and other areas. Meet at Gillson Park Beach. For details and to register, visit yellowstart5@yahoo.com.

Pamela Feldman talked to us about a favorite park:

"Harbert-Payne Park is a beautiful place located on the east side of Evanston's Northshore Channel, between Dempster and Main Streets. There is parking along McDaniel and side streets. The park has paved and woodchip paths that weave in and out of the wooded area. In addition, there is a viewing deck overlooking the Channel. The park was renamed in 2020 for **Elizabeth Boynton Harbert and Betty Jean Payne**, women with strong ties to Evanston." A major volunteer ecological restoration project under the leadership of ENSBC member Allison Sloan is responsible for the woodchip paths and the many new native plants. Volunteers are welcome.

Elizabeth Boynton Harbert (1843-1925) was a prominent leader in the women's suffrage movement and close associate of Susan B. Anthony. Born in Indiana, Harbert attended several women's colleges and was outraged when she was denied admission to all-male Wabash College. Harbert wrote a piece about this for the New York Independent in 1865, beginning her long career as a prolific writer of publications and speeches, and activist in women's rights. A leader in suffrage organizations in Indiana and Iowa, she moved to Evanston in 1874, living there until 1906. There she served as president of the Illinois Woman Suffrage Association and vice president of the National Woman Suffrage Association for Illinois. Harbert also was involved in the founding and management of other local, state, and national organizations, including the Woman's Club of Evanston. In acknowledgment of her many contributions, Evanston dedicated Harbert Park in her honor.

Betty Jean Payne (1938-2017) resided in Evanston for over 40 years. During this time, she dedicated herself to creating programs and promoting a variety of causes to improve the safety and economic wellbeing of her community. She attended Evanston Township High School (ETHS), Evanston Business College, and worked for many years at the Horizon Federal Savings Bank and Loan. She was a Board Member of the Evanston YWCA and ETHS Treasurer, as well as initiating programs in her community, including the Canal Park Neighbors Association. In 1988, although Payne lost her bid for City Council Alderman, her determination to reform and make positive impacts in her community continued. In 2020 Harbert Park was renamed Harbert-Payne Park, memorializing her many accomplishments over decades in her canal neighborhood.

The resource for this article was the Evanston Women's History Project.