

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

August 2023



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Piping Plover Adventures!

by Tamima Itani

In the movie “Baby’s Day Out,” loveable toddler Bink escapes his kidnappers and lives the stories of his favorite book, riding a bus, visiting a department store, the zoo and a construction site. He crosses busy Chicago streets unharmed, navigates the beams and dangers of the construction site like a pro, and melts a Gorilla with his cuteness.

The captive-reared Piping Plover chicks — Searocket, Prickly Pear and Wild Indigo — released at Montrose Beach Dunes on July 12, appear intent on living their own version of Baby’s Day Out. Since arriving, these three Piping Plover chicks, hatched and raised at the University of Michigan Biological Station in Pellston, MI, have been living a life of excitement and danger. The monitors thought their greatest challenge would be following the chicks from the pier to the dog beach and back, logging a mile each way several times a shift. That’s until the 3rd morning after their arrival, when a text came in at 5:45 am indicating one of the chicks was feeding on earthworms in the parkway along Simonds Drive. Another text and a photo later showed a second chick feeding in a muddy spot on the lawn behind the Dock Restaurant.

They both returned to the beach and the matter appeared resolved. However, if you are a Piping Plover, once you’ve had a taste of earthworms you have to get more. At 10:30 am the same day, the Bait Shop on Montrose Harbor Dr. sent an email that they had spotted a chick by them, and witnessed it crossing the street in busy traffic then sauntering onto the sidewalk by the bike racks. A frantic search ensued. Within the hour, all three chicks were thankfully accounted for.



*Ring-billed Gull and Prickly Pear
by Demond McDonald*

Since, there have been visits to the vicinity of the Hot Dog stand on Simonds drive in the morning. Prickly Pear, still learning that size matters, decided to feed at the feet of a Ring-billed Gull. Put off by this pesky newcomer to the beach, the gull picked Prickly up by the tail and held it for a few seconds before letting go of the chick who promptly flew away. That’s a lesson that Prickly will likely never forget! The instant was captured by Montrose regular, Demond McDonald, and the photo is as mesmerizing as it is horrifying! Prickly Pear now carefully avoids gull and moves away if one approaches. As for Imani, Monty and Rose’s chick hatched at Montrose in 2021, he has yet to fully warm up to the new tenants of the location, periodically chasing them out of the protected beach area.

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Evanston Becomes 6th “Bird City” in Illinois!

by Libby Hill

What is a “Bird City”?

Bird City Illinois is a project of the Audubon Council of Illinois, a coalition of Illinois chapters of the National Audubon Society. It was formed in 2022 and modeled on Bird City Wisconsin, which in turn was modeled on the success of the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree City USA. Bird City Wisconsin received its first funding in 2009.

Illinois Bird Cities are part of the Bird City Americas program, established by the American Bird Conservancy and Environment for the Americas, to encourage local towns to take action to help birds. As of April 24, 2023, Evanston is the 6th city in Illinois to be awarded this title. Others are Waukegan, Rockford, Freeport, Grayslake and Libertyville.

Evanston’s application was initially suggested by City Manager Luke Stow in recognition of the adoption in October 2022 of the bird-safe building ordinance. The application addresses four categories of attainment in bird conservation: habitat creation, protection and monitoring; limiting or removing threats to birds; public education and inclusion; and actions toward climate and sustainability. Evanston met or exceeded qualifications in each category. Bird city status is usually recommended by residents of the city, and in Evanston's case, it was recommended by Judy Pollock. ENSBC spearheaded the application.



Left to right: Wendy Pollock, Jennifer Koruda (Bird City Illinois President), Libby Hill, Mayor Daniel Biss

Conservation Corner

Speak up in support of strong climate pollution standards. Climate disruption caused by carbon emissions threatens birds, other wildlife and people too. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed a new plan to reduce carbon emissions from coal and natural gas power plants—the country's second-largest source of climate pollution. Send your comment to the EPA today. **The deadline to send comments is August 8.** [Support EPA Climate Pollution Plan](#)



May Bird Walk at Ryerson Woods by Joel Greenberg

P. Plovers, continued from Page 1

Four other chicks were released on a restricted access beach at Illinois Beach State Park. These four are thriving as well. The Fish and Wildlife Service released these 7 chicks in Illinois, the first time captive-reared chicks have been released outside of Michigan.

It’s an experiment of sorts we all hope will be greatly successful. The chicks need to survive their remaining time in Illinois, their treacherous migration to unknown wintering grounds, a winter of hurricanes, algae blooms and busy beaches, and an equally treacherous migration back north. I have faith in them and can’t wait to greet them back in our midst in years to follow.

Announcing Fall 2023 Field Trips



This spring's field trips brought out a record number of participants and trip leaders for our old standard trips and new destinations. Members made new friends and experienced new locations that they can continue to visit. We hope our fall field trips will tempt new and renewing members! Here's a list. For details, **please refer to the website, www.ensbc.org.**

Fridays — September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Birds & Coffee at Jarvis Bird Sanctuary

Saturday — September 2, 2023, 7:30 a.m. Techny Basin, Glenview.

Thursdays — September 7, 14, 21, 28, 7:30 a.m. Perkins Woods, Evanston.

Friday — September 8, 7:30 AM -- *New Trip!* LaBagh Woods, Chicago.

Saturdays — September 9 and 16, 7:30 a.m. Northwestern University Campus, Evanston.

Wednesday — September 20, 7:30 a.m. Waukegan Beach .

Tuesday — September 26, 7:30 a.m. West Ridge Nature Park, Chicago

And in 2024... June 18 - 24, In cooperation with Red Hill Birding: Western South Dakota is a classic summer vacation destination. The abundance of public lands, dotted with famous tourist attractions, provides a fantastic cross section of landscapes, birds and Americana. This trip will take in Badlands National Park, the Black Hills (an outpost of the Rocky Mountains) and the vast Great Plains to the north. Western birds abound, with iconic species like American Dipper and Lark Bunting, as well as an excellent diversity of raptors and birds typical of these areas. Leader: Josh Engel. **One space left.** For more information: [South Dakota — Red Hill Birding](#) or libbyhill@comcast.net.

In Memoriam:

Fair Carpenter

Fair passed away in March at the age of 92. He and his wife Lynne, long-time members of the Club, have birded locally for decades; they also traveled all over the world on birding trips. Lynne was ENSBC President in the late 1970s and for years has been the inveterate leader of the Club's May Friday morning bird walks at Skokie Lagoons.

Kathleen Trahan

Kathy Trahan, who passed away recently, was – along with her husband Mike – a respected birder on the local scene. ENSBC members for many years, the two also traveled internationally on birding trips. Mike, an accomplished photographer as well as an excellent birder, continues to travel and make presentations to local clubs and organizations.



Great Egret, Lincolnshire, Lake County, by Jamie Godshalk

ENSBC Officers and Directors are elected annually in April. Current officers are:

President	Marcia Weflen
Vice-President	Open
Treasurer	John Hockman
Recording Secretary	Nancy Halliday
Corresponding Secretary	Nancy Halliday
Program Chair	Libby Hill
Membership Chair	Kathy Stohrer
Conservation Chair	Leslie Shad
Ass't Conservation Chair	Marianne Griebler
Field Trip Chair	Libby Hill
Ass't Field Trip Chair	Nancy Pinchar
Bird Calls Editor	Marj Lundy
Publicity	Amanda Engel
Archivist	Sarah Miller

Fall ENSBC Programs

All at 7:30 pm except Oct. 17 which is at 7:00; please note location and whether in person or on zoom.

Tuesday, Sept. 26

Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd.

Geoff Williamson: "Shifting status and distribution of Illinois Birds"

Tuesday, Oct. 17 — at 7:00 pm (co-sponsored with Lake Cook Audubon)

Heller Nature Center, 2821 Ridge Rd., Highland Park

Mark Glenshaw: "How to Find Owls in Your Neighborhood"

Tuesday, Oct. 24

Levy Senior Center, 300 Dodge Ave, Evanston

John Bates: "Birds of Bermuda"

Tuesday, Nov. 28 (7:00 Social hour, 7:30 program — ON ZOOM)

Dan Klem: "Solid Air, Invisible Killer: Saving Billions of Birds from Windows"

Dan has been the foremost researcher on this topic.

For details, please refer to the website, www.ensbc.org.

New Members! Welcome to the flock!

Masha Abramovitz, Wilmette
Diana Chiropoulos, Evanston
Andrea DeMers, Evanston
Linda Faller, Evanston
Jean McCullough, Evanston
Mark Mershon, Evanston
Hoa Nguyen, Evanston
Karen OMara, Evanston
Rachel Spatz, Evanston
Marcia Stoll, Evanston
Michelle Yu, Evanston



"Bird News" from Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary By Nancy Pinchar

One of the goals of CSBBS is to monitor bird activity seasonally to assess usage of the habitat by migratory and resident birds to inform future plantings and habitat maintenance needs.

This Spring, between late March and early June, our bird monitors observed 98 different species of birds at the Sanctuary and in the beach area. These included 11 species of migrating warblers, 4 types of thrushes, 4 kinds of flycatchers and 10 varieties of sparrows. Many of these species will visit again on their migration south in the Fall. Some of the most frequently seen are the busy Palm Warblers, furtive Hermit Thrushes, darting Least Flycatchers and singing White-throated Sparrows. For a full listing of birds observed at CSBBS, see eBird (<https://ebird.org/hotspot/L3615041>.)

Also, an exciting rare bird visited the beach area for several days, the Black-legged Kittiwake. This small gull is typically found along the east and west coasts where it has nesting colonies and forages over the ocean. It infrequently makes its way inland along the Great Lakes and may have last been seen in the Chicago area in 2017.

Black-legged Kittiwake
by Scott Judd



Recently we also analyzed our 2022 bird count data from both the Spring and Fall seasons to identify species of concern or threatened species observed at the Sanctuary. The analysis was based on the latest BCN Birds of Concern listing – "2021 Birds of Concern—Bird Conservation Network for the Chicago region" (<https://www.bcnbirds.org/trends13/concern.html>).

Approximately 17 percent of the species (23 of 139) were rated as of concern or threatened, and 5 percent (7 of 139) as experiencing moderate to strong regional population declines. Some of the birds of concern include the frequently seen Palm Warbler, Field Sparrow, Brown Thrasher and Caspian Tern. These results underscore the importance of the Sanctuary mission.

For more information about the mission and activities of the sanctuary, see:
<https://clarkstreetbeachbirdsantuary.org/>.



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 photos to Marj Lundy, Editor, at catbird3@comcast.net.