

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

August 2025



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

A Special Day in the Lake County Forest Preserves

by Marj Lundy



On a sunny day in May, I was walking in Half Day Preserve in Lake County when I was thrilled to hear the lovely song of a Woodthrush. I'd heard it for several years in the same place but had never spotted it. As I searched for the bird, I saw a woman with a serious camera and lens trained on the top of a bare tree, and there he was, singing his little heart out!

Peggy Reilly, the photographer, and I stood for a number of minutes just listening and looking. What a treat, especially since the Woodthrush is no longer frequently seen in Lake County and is named as a "Species of Concern" by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This list includes species that may be in need of conservation actions based upon current research. Peggy got a wonderful shot which you see here.

We talked for a few more minutes during which she told me she had heard and seen a Prothonotary along the Des Plaines River just before the bridge crossing over into Daniel Wright Preserve. I headed that way, found the path to the river she had described and heard the bird singing! Then spotted him hopping around and continuing to sing.

What a day! I was so lucky, not only to see the birds but to meet Peggy. You'll likely see more of her wonderful photos in upcoming issues of Bird Calls. Thanks so much, Peggy!

Newest members of the Flock!

Margaret Reilly Park Ridge
Jennifer Woodring Evanston



Prothonotary in Perkins Woods
by Jason Hicks

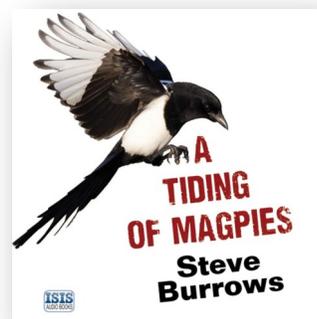
Thanks to the many folks who have renewed their ENSBC membership; and a reminder that we are hoping for 100 percent renewal! If you haven't renewed yet, please do it now by USPS or on our website www.ensbc.org.

Book Review Corner

(This is the first of occasional reviews of books we think might be of interest.)

Birder Mystery Series Reviewed by Marcia Weflen

Steve Burrows, the author, is an enthusiastic international bird watching hobbyist with experience as a former editor of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society magazine and contributing field editor for Asian Geographic. All of the nine books in the series feature a bird with its group nomenclature in the title from A Siege of Bitterns to A Nye of Pheasants. I am reading a Tiding of Magpies, my third one so far.



The author is a skilled writer who details the detective work in solving murders along with authentic knowledgeable birding, conservation and scientific content. Descriptions of the settings reflecting the natural habitat and climate along with ones of birds and their behavior are integral to the story. Detective Chief Inspector Domenic Jejuene, the main character has left Canada to take a position in Norfolk on the eastern coast of England. He has exceptional skills in solving murders while at the same time frustrating the officers under his command by his creative approach, sometimes bringing him into conflict with his superiors as well. He is relentless in the pursuit of the solution of the crime. The interaction between and genuine relationships with Jejuene, Miak, the Sergeant, and Holland, the Constable, add to the interest.

Torn between his career and leading a life as a birder, Jejuene is often distracted by sighting birds. The relationship with Lindy, his girlfriend, a writer, is impacted by this longing of his. Jejuene brought a history with him from Canada that complicates the plot with additional levels of mystery.

The murders always involve the bird species in the title in some manner. The intriguing, cleverly constructed narrative grabs and rivets my attention. International characters are involved in the crimes, adding to the complexities as well as the sensitivity of the investigation. The books I have read leave strands of the subplots hanging, leaving the reader ready for the next book in the series. I recommend this series featuring relatable characters and intriguing plots for birders who enjoy mystery novels.



Red-headed Woodpecker, Daniel Wright Woods by Peggy Reilly

In Memoriam – Ray Pershing

by Dave Johnson

Ray passed away on March 30th of this year. He was a long-time member and supporter of ENSBC and as long as I can remember (nearly 50 years), he participated in the Christmas Bird Count and helped with the countdown event, cooking and serving the field participants at Libby Hill's home. Ray also participated in local field trips and out-of-state birding tours to Point Pelee Canada, New Mexico and Arizona. He was an excellent wood carver and carved birds professionally. In his working days, he was a pharmacist for Osco Drugs.

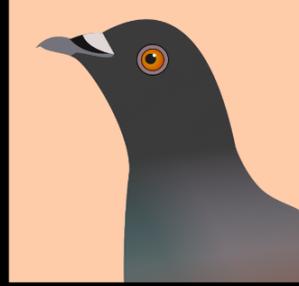
Still have a Window Dangerous for Birds?

ENSBC is giving away Feather Friendly dot window treatments, while supplies last. To request one contact Leslieashad@gmail.com, and fix your windows in time for fall migration.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak by Peggy Reilly



THE URBAN BIRDING FESTIVAL



SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2025 * CHICAGO, IL * theurbanbirdingfestival.org

Discover Chicago during fall migration!

Featuring urban parks rich in bird diversity, Lake Michigan, the Mississippi Flyway and Keynote Speaker, Rosemary Mosco.

Spring 2025 at Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary by Nancy Pinchar

We had an active Spring bird monitoring season starting on March 23, with early arriving Field and Song Sparrows, and ending the first week of June, with the last of the Chestnut-sided and Canada Warblers passing through. We identified a total of 81 species within the CSBBS habitat, including 61 migrants and an additional 20 species in the surrounding beach and park areas.

Notable observations in the sanctuary included Orchard Oriole, Scarlet Tanager, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in May, as well as a small flock of **American Avocets** on the beach in April. The sanctuary becomes a summer residence for some of our migrants. These include Red-winged Blackbird, Warbling Vireo, Eastern Kingbird, Baltimore Oriole, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Song Sparrow, Barn Swallow and more in the high and low canopies or swooping over the grasses.

Detailed checklists for CSBBS can be found at <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L3615041>. And, learn more about CSBBS at <https://clarkstreetbeachbirdsantuary.org/birds>.

Also, think about joining us as a Bird Monitor! Right now we're welcoming new monitors for the Fall season; we'll be observing and counting daily from late August to mid-October. We schedule one monitor per day to observe and record counts in eBird, about a 30-minute effort. Interested? Please contact Nancy Pinchar at npinchar@gmail.com.



American Avocets

Welcome to Our New Members!

Dear ENSBC Members,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the sights and sounds of the season—whether it's the flash of a Scarlet Tanager in the canopy or the familiar song of a backyard friend.

I'd like to extend a heartfelt welcome to our newest members. We're so glad you've joined our birding community! Whether you're just beginning your journey into bird watching or you've been in love with birds for years, you've found a group of passionate, knowledgeable and friendly people who are excited to share in the joys of discovery with you. Our club is more than just a group of birdwatchers; it's a community built on curiosity, conservation and connection. We learn from one another, help protect habitats, offer enlightening programs and organize birding field trips.

There are many ways to get involved:

Join a bird walk: These guided outings are perfect for learning from others and spotting local avian treasures.

Volunteer: From leading walks to helping with conservation efforts, there's always a way to give back.

Share your sightings: We love to hear what our members are seeing whether it's at a nearby preserve or your own backyard.

If you have ideas or would like to get more involved, I encourage you to reach out. Your enthusiasm and energy are what keep our club thriving. Once again, welcome! I look forward to meeting you in person.

Joe Flanagan
President, ENSBC

Upcoming Programs

(In person at 7:30 at the Crown Center, 1801 Main Street, Evanston)

September 30: "Photographing Around the World," Dick Paulson. For three years, longtime ENSBC member Dick Paulson was a student field instructor for the Spring Ornithology course at Principia College, 10 miles up the Mississippi River from Alton, Illinois. His mentor was Dr. John Wanamaker who had a PhD from Cornell. When Dick retired in 2010, he started photographing birds, ultimately on all 7 continents. He will share his photos from Africa, Central and South America and Asia, as well as photos from Georgia's Little Saint Simmons Island here in the U.S.

October 28: "Man & Gull - A Complex Relationship," Amar Ayyash. Among the world's "seabirds", gulls are the most accessible to humans, invading our most immediate surroundings. Gulls are sometimes perceived as 2nd class avian creatures. This, along with the identification challenges they present and their readiness to hybridize, has created a love-hate relationship for many birders. Amar Ayyash will take us through an entertaining and intriguing exploration of the natural history of gulls, including their thorny taxonomy, and he'll share some of their lesser-known adaptations and quirky behaviors.



*Bald Eagle by
Lorra Rudman*

A podcast all about birds....

Two bird experts talk with two amateur birders on all things bird related. With access to one of the largest bird collections in the United States, the hosts dive into exotic, rare, extinct, and also common birds. For experienced birders to people who are brand new to birding, this podcast is for anyone who has ever been interested in birds! Join John Bates, Shannon Hackett, RJ Pole, and Amanda Marquart for Birds of a Feather Talk Together Podcast. www.youtube.com/@BirdsofaFeatherTalkTogetherPod.

Field Trips Comin' Up (further details at www.ensbc.org/calendar)

Sunday, August 24: Calumet Water Reclamation Plant. See shorebirds and other migrants, 7 to 11 a.m. Waiver forms due August 11 and will require a copy of your driver's license. Leader: Isoo O'Brien. Register at libbyhill@comcast.net.

Thursdays, September 4, 11, 18, 25, Oct. 2: Perkins Woods. See warblers, thrushes, other migrants. 7:30 a.m. at the corner of Ewing Ave. and Grant St., Evanston. Leader: John Bates.

Fridays, September 5, 12, 19, 26: Birds & Coffee at Jarvis Bird Sanctuary. See www.ensbc.org; click on Calendar/date for parking map. Leaders from Red Hill Birding will be on the platform 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Coffee and fixings provided.

Sundays, September 7, 14, 21, 28 and October 5: Canal Shores Golf Course. Walk the course's birding loop, north or south depending on the date. 7:30 a.m. on Maple Ave. in Wilmette, just west of the canal. Email matthewarooney@gmail.com to attend.

Tuesday, September 9: Waukegan Beach: Shorebirds, migrating warblers moving through in large numbers. 7:30 a.m. Register at libbyhill@comcast.net. Leader: Adam Sell.

Wednesday, September 10: Emily Oaks Nature Center and Oakton College. Look for warblers and other Fall migrants. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Nature Center parking lot, 4650 Brummel Street, Skokie. Leader: John Bates.

Wednesday, September 17: West Ridge Nature Park. Look for fall warblers, other migrants, local raptors in nearly 22 acres of restored woodlands, wetlands and a pond. 7:30 a.m. at the main park gate, 5801 N. Western Ave, where Ardmore dead-ends into Western. Leader: Scott Judd.

Saturday, September 20 and October 11: Northwestern University South Campus. Migrants of all kinds! 7:30 a.m. Park on lakeside of upper deck, south parking lot off Sheridan and Clark, north of Clark St. beach. Leaders: Libby Hill and Sarah Flax.

Bird Calls is a publication of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

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