

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

May 2021



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday



Birds of Concern Mural: A Work in Progress

The ENSBC Board has initiated an exciting new project! Plans are in the works to create an outdoor mural in Evanston featuring regional birds threatened by climate change. In this project, art and science come together to: highlight the beauty of birds that people in the area are likely to see, particularly during migration; and raise awareness about the threats they face. Our partner in this effort is Art Encounter through its Evanston Mural Arts Program.

And our membership has already been involved. To decide which “birds of concern” to recommend the muralist consider, ENSBC recently held a contest among its members. **The top five vote-getters were Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blackburnian Warbler, American Kestrel and Black-crowned Night-Heron.**

As indicated, this is a work in progress. A process established by Art Encounter, which will direct the artist and the installation, is underway. Funding has been requested. A well-known mural artist from Chicago and a tentative site for the mural have been selected. Final approval will be up to the Evanston Arts Council.

Along with this public display, ENSBC intends to produce and distribute simple educational materials explaining the plight of birds today and indicating what can be done locally. The mural project fits well with Evanston’s Climate Action Resilience Plan (CARP).

Now a little history. This mural follows a tradition called the Audubon Mural Project that began in New York City in 2014 and came to Chicago two years later. In New York, the initial objective was to create murals of [climate-threatened birds](#) throughout John James Audubon’s old neighborhood. As the situation since 2014 became increasingly urgent, mural efforts were initiated in other areas. Audubon Society scientists predict that possibly as soon as 2080, climate change will threaten at least half of all North American bird species with extinction, and no bird will escape the impacts such as increased wildfire and sea level rise.

ENSBC wants to be part of the effort to mitigate the effects of climate change on birds. The mural project, which merges ecology and ornithology with art, can produce a powerful message. Stay tuned for updates as the project unfolds.

By Libby Hill

SPRING FIELD TRIPS COMIN' UP!

The following Covid-19 instructions apply to all ENSBC field trips until further notice:

- Participation limited to Members only. • Registration required except Gillson Park; register at libbyhill@comcast.net.
- Carpool only with family or your own pod. • Tight-fitting masks required; social distancing as indicated by leader.
- Instructions and trip limits determined by trip leaders. • Bring your own scope if you want to use one.

May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Sundays at Gillson Park , Wilmette . Sponsored by our partner Go Green Wilmette. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at beach by the dog park. Parking available for non-residents of Wilmette through May. For information, contact kglennemeier@gmail.com

May 4 and 18: Tuesday Mornings at Montrose. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the handicapped parking near the entrance to the nature preserve. Leader: Wayne Svoboda.

May 6, 13, 20, 27: Thursdays in Perkins Woods. Find warblers and other migrants as well as a great display of spring wildflowers. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the corner of Ewing Ave. and Grant St. Park along Ewing Ave. Leader: John Bates and/or Josh Engel.

May 7, 14, 21, 28 : Fridays at Skokie Lagoons. These trips pack a great list of warbler species during spring migration. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Erickson Woods Forest Preserve. Turn north into the parking lot from Willow Rd. just east of the Edens Expressway. Leader: Lynne Carpenter.

May 12: Wednesday at The Grove. Look for migrants. Meet at the Grove at 8 a.m. See the exhibits at the newly-renovated Interpretive Center. Leader: Nancy Halliday.

May 15 and 22: Saturdays at Northwestern University, Evanston. A stopover for migrants of all kinds heading north in spring. Meet at 8:30 a. m. Park on the lake side, upper deck of parking lot north of Clark St. beach. Leaders: Libby Hill and TBA. Watch for possible date changes.

June 13: Plum Creek Forest Preserve. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the main forest preserve parking lot, on the east side of Burnham Avenue, south of Sauk Trail (about an hour south of Evanston, via Rte 94/394/Sauk Trail). Return to Evanston by 12:30 or stop for lunch on the way. Leader: Josh Engel.

Additional walks may be scheduled. Please check ENSBC.org for changes and further trip details.

A Gem in Evanston: Perkins Woods

By Libby Hill

Located in northwest Evanston, Perkins Woods has long been a destination for birding and a beautiful display of spring wildflowers. An area of about 7 acres, it is part of the Forest Preserves of Cook County. ENSBC members have been caring for the woods since the 1950s, and in 1991, Perkins had its first official Forest Preserve Volunteer Steward, an ENSBC member. In 2020, when volunteers began raising funds to plant shrubs to improve the habitat for birds, ENSBC's Board officially adopted the woods and became its financial manager.

In 2019, the Forest Preserves removed about 50 dead ash trees and cut many Norway maples that had been deeply shading the woods. Once light reached the interior, the shrubs responded, growing and blossoming. More blossoms, more berries, more birds!

The Perkins family provided a gift of \$1500 to plant shrubs to replace the trees and a grove of ash saplings that volunteers removed from the center of the woods. In spring, 2020, a fundraising drive raised over \$3,000 to replace the buckthorn with grasses, sedges and more shrubs. In fall 2020, a group of volunteers dug out hundreds of buckthorn, some in impenetrable thickets. Shrubs planted or on order to be planted in late April 2021 include: Red-osier dogwood, Gooseberry, American Plum, Chokecherry, Hazelnut, Blue Beech and Prickley Ash, Spicebush, Nannyberry, Blue-fruited Silky Dogwood, and Elderberry, all native and recommended for planting anywhere in Northeastern Illinois. The fund continues to accept donations for much needed continual planting.

The Club offers birdwalks during migration in May and September. Check the list above or www.ENSBC.org for dates. Come see what's happening in "the Woods."



Photo by John Bates

A Salute to Suzanne Checchia

For the past several years, Suzanne has served as bird monitoring coordinator at Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary. She's done a superb job! Suzanne started the CSBBS bird monitoring program, wrote the protocol and recruited many of our bird monitors. Due to her efforts, eBird lists 194 bird species seen with 844 checklists submitted. She personally submitted/reviewed 193 of those checklists. Truly amazing! On top of this dedication, Suzanne continues to be an active bird collision monitor, collecting injured or killed birds from downtown and Northwestern University to be cared for at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum or added to the bird collection at the Field Museum. She also continues to publish eNews for ENSBC and serve as the Board's Conservation Chair..

A huge thank you, Suzanne!



CSBBS by Arden Davidson

And now, an opportunity to continue Suzanne's work

CSBBS is a lovely dune site on Lake Michigan, just south of Northwestern. Plantings and stewardship began in 2015. We're seeking an experienced birder to be sure each day is covered by a regular volunteer daily during migration -- April/May and September/October -- or find a substitute if needed. We'll train you regarding our site and protocol which allows for flexible morning start times.

Interested? Contact Julie.Dorfman@gmail.com
or call 847-899-5432

ENSBC Livens up Website

Another work in progress but already lots of good stuff!

Descriptions of members' favorite north shore birding sites
Featured artists and rotating exhibits in our Gallery
New and developing projects and partnerships

Check it out at www.ENSBC.org.

Our first guest photographer is Tamima Itani.

Members may contact libbyhill@comcast.net about exhibiting.

April 27 Program (on Zoom):

"Our Migrating Birds in Winter."

Steven Albert and Lauren Helton

What are our migrating birds up to while they're down south? Who's finding out and how? What's the effect of winter habitats on summer breeding? **The Institute for Bird Populations (IBP)** is partnering with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a new initiative to connect conservation organizations in the Upper Midwest with groups protecting and studying migratory birds on their wintering grounds in Latin America. The effort is to help under-resourced conservationists in some 100 groups from Mexico to Argentina achieve their goals, while providing tangible benefits to North American partners. Steve Albert and Lauren Helton are biologists with the IBP.

In Memoriam:

*Dave Johnson remembers **Mary Pick Hines**, a former ENSBC member, as an excellent birder who attended many of his field trips in the late 70s-early 80s. She was also in Dave's Bird ID class at New Trier where he taught an adult continuing education class. Mary was a regular on the Club's Friday walks. An active volunteer, her passion for birding led her to become a member of the board of Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Mary, 88, passed away at home on November 25, 2020.*

Election of ENSBC Officers

Officers are elected annually at our April meeting.
Here is the slate offered by the Nominating Committee.

President Jim LaRoche	Conservation Chair Suzanne Checchia
Vice-President Arden Davidson	Field Trip Chair Libby Hill
Treasurer John Hockman	Assistant Field Trip Chair Mark Vaughan
Recording Secretary Nancy Halliday	Bird Calls Editor Marj Lundy
Corresponding Secretary Nancy Halliday	Publicity Open
Program Chair Libby Hill	Archivist Sarah Miller
Membership Chair Kathy Stohrer	Education Director Mark Vaughan

Election will take place at the beginning of the April 27th meeting.

So what's your Board been up to in the age of coronavirus?

Besides initiating a possible mural project, continuing to manage Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary, adopting Perkins Woods and updating the website (all featured elsewhere in this newsletter), the Club has another important partnership: **Bird-Friendly Evanston.**

BFE's mission is to make buildings in Evanston safer for the hundreds of thousands of birds that migrate through our city each year. It consults with city planners, developers, building managers, architects and homeowners on ways to construct bird-friendly buildings and mitigate bird hazards. BFE supports an Evanston bird-friendly ordinance. Learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/birdfriendlyevanston/about>.



Snowy Owl by Isoo O'Brien



News of the Flock

Welcome to the following new members:

Amy D'Arco, Wilmette
Sara Jones & Brian Reiser, Evanston
Nancy Kruger, Evanston
Natalie McFaul, Lemont

It's ENSBC Membership Renewal Time.

Notices will be in the mail soon or renew online anytime.

Checks are also welcome.

Visit www.ensbc.org for details.



Bird Calls is a publication of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club. P.O. Box 1313, Evanston, IL 60204, info@ensbc.org.

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