

Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

November 2017



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Total Eclipse 2017 — A Magical Experience!

By Tamima Itani

I had the opportunity to travel to the Carbondale area for the eclipse, and so got to experience the "totality." I settled at Oakwood Bottoms Greentree Reservoir, part of the Shawnee National Forest.

As I had some time prior to the eclipse starting, I walked the 1.5 mile trail and could hear a persistent bird call. I was able to spot the juvenile Mississippi Kite making it! The temperatures were in the 90s and the kite was hot!



As the time of the eclipse start was approaching, I went back to my spot and settled down on a blanket on the ground. The cutest Chipping Sparrow kept me company as the eclipse cycle started.

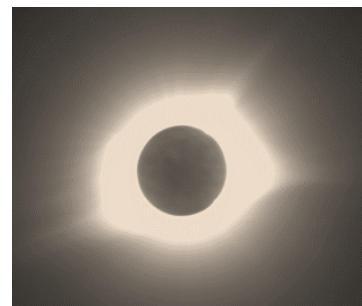


Photo by
Jamie Godshalk
Carbondale
August 21, 2017

Things were relatively quiet, save for the sound of insects. Many darters could be seen; a Double-crested Cormorant flew overhead. Then about 10 minutes before the total eclipse, as if sensing the impending darkness, the woods exploded with the sound of insects buzzing and birds calling. It lasted for a few minutes only, before things went totally quiet, leading to the total eclipse. Darkness descended on the woods. It was a surreal, goose-bump inducing moment.

Soon, the moon moved away from the sun just enough for a point of light to come through and illuminate the world again. Another round of bird calls, somewhat less loud than the preceding one, took place, to welcome the new, extra sunrise. And then things went back to "normal!"

(More experiences on page 3.)

A Huge Victory for Birds Migrating along the Lakefront

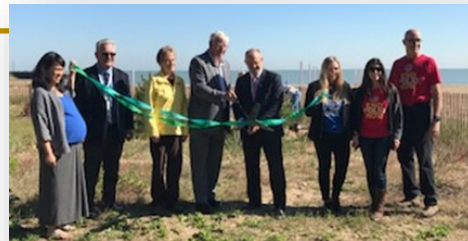
GREAT NEWS!! Bird deaths from window collisions on Northwestern's Evanston campus have been a known fact of life for many years, but until recently the University had shown little inclination to act on our concerns. That changed earlier this year when Allison Sloan, a member of Bird-Friendly Evanston's advocacy group, presented them with 82 dead or injured birds she collected from one building, the new glass behemoth, Kellogg Global Hub, over a 2-1/2-week period last spring. To its credit and to our applause, they responded that they wanted to make their campus a national leader in bird-friendly buildings!

Northwestern hired Christine Sheppard, Director of the American Bird Conservancy's Glass Collisions Program, to survey the campus, point out window hazards and suggest corrective measures. Subsequently, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors agreed to conduct a monitoring effort this fall, to gather baseline data, document the scope of the problem and evaluate the impact of any corrective steps taken. CBCM developed protocols for the project and recruited a team of monitors from CBCM, ENSBC and Bird-Friendly Evanston. They began monitoring 12 problem buildings in mid-August.

Recently their efforts paid off, when Clear View Solutions West, a window film firm hired by the university, applied bird strike prevention films to all the windows of Frances Searle Building, which has historically killed many birds. They applied a different style of film to a particular problem area of Kellogg Global Hub and asked for data from us that will help pinpoint other problem areas on the building. This is a great start to what we hope will be many more building fixes that will save many bird lives.

Hats off to those early-rising monitors, and to Northwestern for finally seeing the light.

Special Thanks to Rotary International!



On Monday, October 16th, Rotary International had its 1.2 Million Tree Planting Challenge kick-off at the Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary. The Rotary headquarters staff has raised funds to plant 8 trees - 4 Burr Oaks and 4 Jack Pines.

Many of you have supplemented their fundraising to allow ENSBC to plant an additional 10 shrubs at the same time - 4 Sweet-Fern, 3 Sand Cherry and 3 New Jersey Tea. The president of Rotary, Evanston

Mayor Hagerty, Paul D'Agostino, and several other officials were there for the ribbon cutting and tree planting ceremony.

Volunteer workdays will start up again in spring on Thursday afternoons and the second Saturday of each month. Keep in touch by watching our web-site. And, we need Bird Monitors for the coming spring migration at the Sanctuary.

Welcome to the following new members:

Madeleine Cusick,	Evanston
Robert Hazelrigg,	Arlington Heights
Douglas Macdonald,	Evanston
Kent Ford and Dave Parlin,	Evanston



*Grasshopper Sparrow
by Mark Vaughan*

More Eclipse Experiences...

I stayed home and went down to the alley behind my building. Some of my neighbors had the same idea, and I got to view the eclipse with borrowed eclipse glasses. Most birds around me were silent. There were Chimney Swifts, which had been sitting on power lines, foraging for insects when it was at the darkest, twittering as they did so. There was also a whole horde of Crows voicing their opinion. They flew into a tree above a neighboring building, shouting all the way, and then went out patrolling the neighborhood in full cry.

Kathy Stohrer

Phyllis Reynolds (ENSBC member) and I traveled to Carbondale for the total eclipse. We had seats in the stadium with a good view of the sky. Unfortunately, a cloud came over just during totality, but I was able to see the "diamond ring " at the end. I saw swallows flying around before the eclipse, but no birds during totality. It got dark enough for me to see Jupiter peering out between the clouds. When the light returned, I saw chimney swifts flying about, which I hadn't seen before the eclipse. Then the swallows returned.

Nancy Halliday

Like Tamima and Nancy, we were in Carbondale, and it was truly magical. Besides the quiet and darkness, the temperature dropped significantly as the sun slipped behind the moon. At totality, the corona around the dark sun was absolutely stunning!

Marj Lundy



*Snoozing Nighthawk
by Mark Vaughan*



Join This Years Christmas Bird Count!

Christmas bird counts are the largest volunteer effort in the world to monitor birds and changes over the years. They have been going on nationally since 1900. Get involved! Call the compiler for information and assignments. We can always use help. If you don't want to go out in the cold, contact the compiler about feeder watches. You can also help out with the Count Dinner.

December 25, 2017 – Monday: Chicago Lakefront Count Compiler: Joel Greenberg, 630-725-9416.

December 30, 2017 – Saturday: 57th Chicago-North Shore Count and ENSBC Post-Count Potluck dinner at Libby Hill's house, 2715 Woodland Rd., Evanston. Arrive any time after 4 p.m. 847-475-2096 or libbyhill@comcast.net. Compiler: Tim Wallace, 847-548-2654.

December 17, 2017 – Sunday: 52nd Chicago Urban Count Compiler: Jeffrey Sanders, 847-657-6431.

January 1, 2018 – Monday: Waukegan Count Compiler: Joel Greenberg, 630-725-9416.

Programs and Field Trips, November 2017 – February 2018

Check <http://www.ensbc.org>

PROGRAMS

November 28, 2017: Amar Ayyash, “Gulls – More Than Meets the Eye”. Often approached with apprehension, gulls have gained a love-hate relationship with many birders. Come hear Amar Ayyash delight in this diverse group of “seabirds”. He will highlight key identification field marks for separating winter gull species and touch on some often-ignored topics such as the aging process and molt. Come learn why an increasing number of people are being drawn to this family of birds and brush up on your gull ID skills before the Gull Frolic!

January 23, 2018: Josh Engel, “Changing Chicago Bird-life”. The historic literature provides a wealth of information about Chicago-area birdlife from Robert Kennicott's time in the early 1800s to William Dreuth's notes during his daily outings in Lincoln Park from 1928-1943. Suffice it to say, times have changed! Josh

will compare Chicago's birdlife today with that of the last two centuries and will examine how things might continue to change in the face of continuing climate and habitat change.

February 27, 2018: Nancy Halliday, “New Zealand”. Nancy will narrate and illustrate her experiences from her birding trip to New Zealand in 2016.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIP

November 19: Jeff Sanders’ 48th Annual Fall Specialty Trip! “North Shore Lakefront”. Bird Northwestern, Gillson Park, Maple Park, Tower Road Park, Park Ave., Rose Beach in Highland Park, and others as time permits. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Gillson Park Beach House in Wilmette. Bring scopes and dress for cold lake wind.

Leader, Jeff Sanders, yellowstart5@yahoo.com. 847-657-6431.

*Lark Sparrow by
Mark Vaughan*



A BIG MONTH IN PERKINS!

ENSBC joined the Forest Preserves of Cook County Big Month (October) competition. We adopted Perkins Woods Forest Preserve and registered a team, the Perkins Prairie School Warblers. (*The woods are named for Dwight Perkins, an architect associated with both the Chicago and Prairie Schools of Architecture, see Wikipedia.*) John Bates of the Field Museum signed on as our team captain.

The idea was to see how many bird species we could total up for all visits to Perkins during October. Folks did NOT have to be expert birders to participate. They could bird any day, any time, on their own, with friends or on

an ENSBC field trip. All bird sightings entered into the eBird hotspot would count toward team totals. We were aiming toward at least one checklist each day in October!

We were small but determined, intending to show CAS's Creatures of the Skokie Lagoons and Camp Pine Siskins, the Field Museum's Eggers Grove Field Tyrants and the Sand Ridge Audubon Sandhills what we could do!

The FPCC is awarding prizes to the team that: saw the greatest number of bird species; had the highest percentage of bird species seen compared to the historical totals; and had the greatest number of checklists entered on eBird.

Also ENSBC has established club prizes for things such as most visits by an individual, earliest start time, least likely bird sighting (as judged by John Bates), and coldest day. Many thanks to trip leaders John Bates, Sarah Flax, Gerry Ginsburg, Wayne Swoboda and Mark Vaughan.

As of this issue, the results are not in, but we know our mighty Perkins Prairie School Warblers will have done us proud!