

Bird Calls



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

November 2024

First Urban Birding Festival in Chicago! by Josh Engel

Local birders and birding organizations have long talked about putting together a birding festival. But it took some added initiative to get it going. Thanks especially to the leadership of Matt Igleski, the newly appointed Executive Director of the Chicago Bird Alliance (formerly Chicago Audubon Society), this was the year that a birding festival took root in the Windy City.



Named *The Urban Birding Festival*, it is one of the few festivals in the country based in a major metropolitan area. My company, Red Hill Birding, was one of the lead sponsors and kicked off the event with our Friday morning Birds & Coffee at the Jarvis Bird Sanctuary for over 60 participants.



More than 450 birders registered for the festival, and over the following weekend there were dozens of field trips around the city, presentations and a vendor area at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, and a keynote dinner featuring a presentation by University of Illinois researcher Benjamin Van Doren.

Mark your calendars now for next September 12-14 for a bird-filled and fun-filled weekend at your local birding festival!

ENSBC contributes annually to organizations that share our purpose and mission.

Below is a letter from one of the recipients

"On behalf of the Illinois Ornithological Society, I would like to thank you for your generous donation to the IOS Grants program. With your support, we were able to fully fund seven projects this year. The research being conducted will benefit Illinois' birds, and the scientific and birding communities will see an increased understanding and knowledge from this research and education. We thank you for your support!"

Andrea Tolzman, IOS President

Species Profile Corner



"During a birdwalk on September 18 at Lincoln Marsh in Wheaton, the bird that took the show was the Belted Kingfisher. The slate blue color, robust beak and stylish head crest make this bird unmistakable. When you add in their unique call and entertaining hunting behavior, it turns into a full-on PBS nature special. The bird flew across the open waters of the marsh and only stopped for a moment to share a bare branch with the nearby Great Blue Heron. Soon after taking flight yet again, the kingfisher changed directions and dropped out of the sky, diving face first into the dark water, splashing his wings and quickly devouring his prey. This bird lacked the orange patterns along his belly, indicating to us that it was a male. In most male birds, we see more vibrant colors and extravagant feathers, but with Belted Kingfishers, it is the female who flaunts a little more pizzazz. With kingfishers, herons and egrets, there were plenty of fish-eating birds to catch our eyes between the challenging non-stop movements of warblers."

Nate Hambel, Wildlife Interpreter

Community Engagement-DuPage Wildlife Conservation Center

Send a write up of your favorite species to catbird3@comcast.net!



A Great Season for Bluebirds in Lake County

by Jack Nowak (Volunteer Coordinator, Lake County Bluebird Monitors)



Matt Tobin, Summer 2024

58 Bluebird trails in Lake County, with over 800 Bluebird nest boxes, fledged 888 Bluebirds this season, 240 more than in 2023! What a fantastic year, the best year we've ever had as far as I know. I'm not sure of all that contributed to the higher number, but I am sure a lot of it had to do with the early spring and food supply. Many of us had two broods in the same box which added to the increase.

As always, a lot of eggs didn't hatch and many that did didn't make it to fledge. There are many reasons this could happen including predation, drastic weather changes and loss of one or both parents. Also, habitat will change over the years around the boxes. Many can be relocated replaced or

have damage repaired before the next season. I'm hoping with the increase in fledglings this year, we will have many more returning next spring to nest.

Besides the Lake County Forest Preserves using our data for conservation and research, the data is shared with the East Central Illinois Bluebird Society which shares all their data with the North American Bluebird Society (NABS). We form a confederation of equals, working together in a partnership for international Bluebird conservation. There are many advocates for Bluebirds in Lake County. Counted among them are our volunteers who did a great job monitoring the nest boxes, logging 1268 hours on the trails this year.

Programs Comin' Up!

Reminder: Check out our November 26 Program — "Cranes in Illinois: Learn about them from the Experts" — at www.ensbc.org. (on Zoom)

January 28, 2025 (on Zoom): Foraging for Food: How do Birds do it? Chris Whelan, an evolutionary biologist at the U. of I. at Chicago, who gave us a delightful presentation on bird eggs last year, returns to provide insight on how birds forage for food. Foraging Ecology influences many aspects of bird life -- who lives where, with whom and ecological impacts. The 11,000+ species of birds exhibit fascinating examples of this, so Chris's review will be limited by the time available.

**Hummingbird
Moth last summer
by Lorra Rudman**



An Accounting: What Progress since McCormick Place Bird Strikes in 2023

By Leslie Shad, Conservation Chair

A year ago, an event drew national attention to bird collisions in Chicago. At McCormick Place, volunteers collected 977 dead birds that had flown into windows, according to Dave Willard at the nearby Field Museum. Another 2007 were collected around the city. Since 1978, more than 40,000 birds have died at McCormick Place.

So, did that terrible October 2023 night make a difference? An Accounting:

The strikes drew wide media attention. The Guardian, BBC, NPR, CNN all reported it, with articles and updates into 2024.

McCormick Place added dot film to the outside of the glass. "It was really that incident that made us realize that we needed to up our game as it related to preventing those bird fatalities," Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority Chairman Jeff Bethke told CBS News. Lighting solutions are also being explored.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service got involved. Chicago Bird Alliance was heartened: "We are encouraged that their involvement will play a critical role in enacting the changes that need to be made to this and other buildings."

Holly Greenberg was inspired to launch Bird Collisions in the Anthropocene, a crowd-sourced art project using upcycled materials to make replicas of 10,836 birds killed and collected on Chicago streets in 2023, resulting in a 300 foot "carpet" of some 300 species. Through outreach and education, Holly is promoting treating windows with easy solutions and reducing light pollution. And **Palm Warbler Remembrance Day** was born. Holly is asking her mailing list to make a Palm Warbler each October 5. Of the birds that died on that day, 981 were Palm Warblers, the most killed species.

Are other North Shore communities looking more bird-friendly?

Lake County requires new government-owned facilities to use at least 80 percent bird-friendly glass on their exteriors from ground level to 100 feet high. (May 2024)

Evanston building projects will test its new Bird-Friendly Building Design Ordinance, applicable to all planned developments, including buildings at Northwestern University and on Chicago Ave., Dempster Ave. and Main Street.

Wilmette's Optima proposed 2024 development drew attention from bird advocates.

Please Welcome These New Members to the Flock



Linda Factor	Highland Park
Ilene Grossman	Evanston
Christopher Vice	Dallas, TX
Carrie Von Hoff	Evanston

What can YOU do?

Make your windows bird-friendly and turn down your lights. Talk with neighbors and friends about the steps you take.

If you are building a new home or outbuilding, consider birds in the design.

Advocate locally for bird-friendly building design, with the [Evanston ordinance](#) as a model.

Push for strong Chicago bird-friendly construction standards by emailing SDP@cityofchicago.org.



American Robin and chicks,
May 2024 by Laura Rudman

The 23rd Annual Gull Frolic 2025

presented by Illinois Ornithological Society with support from others including ENSBC.

Sunday, February 16th @ 9:30 am

Guest Speaker: Amar Ayyash, author of "The Gull Guide: North America".

[Click here](#) for tickets.

President's Letter to ENSBC Members

One of my favorite activities is taking a walk in nature searching for birds. There's something special about the quiet moments of discovery, but these walks are always more fulfilling when shared with fellow birders. There's an old saying in the birding world: "Many eyes make for better birding." It's true; having a group of people, each with a unique perspective and skill set, enhances our chances of finding more birds and enjoying our time in the field.



With this sense of fulfillment in being part of a community, I am proud to share with you the organizations that ENSBC has chosen to support this year. As we reflect on our growth and accomplishments, we are excited to announce our continued commitment to both bird conservation and education.

Chicago Bird Collision Monitors – a volunteer conservation project dedicated to the protection of migratory birds through rescue, advocacy and outreach.

Bird Conservation Network – a coalition of over 20 organizations, including bird clubs, Audubon chapters, ornithological societies and conservation organizations sharing an interest in the conservation of birds.

IL Audubon Society – promotes the perpetuation and appreciation of native flora and fauna of Illinois and the habitats that support them.

IL Environmental Council – advocates for the Illinois environmental movement in order to influence decision makers and ensure clean air, clean water and healthy communities.

IOS (Gull Frolic) - a unique winter event at Illinois' premier gull-watching hotspot, North Point Marina

IOS Young Birders - fosters and ignites a passion for birding among young people, provides community, promotes conservation, investigates careers in birding and builds positive relationships with other birding groups.

Monteverde Institute, Costa Rica - a collaborative, international network of bird monitoring stations across the northern neotropics. ENSBC supports their bird banding research station.

As we continue to grow as a club, we are reminded of how important it is to give back to the causes that ensure the future of the birds we all cherish. We encourage you to learn more about these groups and consider how you might get involved.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our Club. Together, we are making a difference for birds and their habitats. We look forward to another year of birding, conservation and community!

Warmly,

Joe Flanagan

President, Evanston North Shore Bird Club



Join a 2024 Christmas Bird Count

The 2024 **ENSBC Christmas Bird Count** will be held on Saturday, December 28. John Leonard, compiler, (jleonard5440@gmail.com) will contact area leaders who will organize their groups. There will be an in-person countdown dinner this year at Libby Hill's home, after a long hiatus due to Covid concerns. Joel Greenberg will again coordinate the feeder counts, and sign-up sheets for that will be available at Wild Birds Unlimited, Glenview or by emailing Joel at joelrgreenberg@gmail.com.

In addition to the Evanston North Shore CBC, two other counts share a strong historical link with the Bird Club:

* **Chicago Lake Front CBC**: Wednesday, December 25 -- Covers the Chicago lakefront from Montrose to La Rabida Children's Hospital. Compiler: Edward Arden (edwarhzan@gmail.com).

* **Waukegan CBC**: Wednesday, January 1, 2025 -- Circle centered at Routes 120 and 41. Compiler: Adam Sell (Adamwardsell@gmail.com).

