

Bird Calls



Northern Shrike by Nancy Halliday

Newsletter of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club

November 2025

It's Fall! Get out in the Garden!

by Leslie Shad

Whether you're doing fall planting, putting your garden to bed for the winter or both, there are lots of things to think about. Here are some of them:

If you're planting, use native plants which provide seeds, nuts and berries. Why natives? They evolved with our local insects. Many species rely on specific plants for their development. Without milkweed, no monarchs; the same relationship holds true for many moths, butterflies, flies and bees.

Layer foliage to provide groundcover, midstory and overstory greenery for nesting, roosting, and hunting. It provides safe harbor for insects that are easy feasting for birds all year long.

Leave the leaves, seedheads and stems. Many insects, essential for birds, spend their lives in them, and seedheads provide birds with a depository of winter seeds. Leave a brush pile under trees for birds to hunt insects and roost out of the wind in winter.

Trees? Plant an oak, the top native plant for wildlife in North America. It's a larval host to more than 500 species of caterpillar which in turn are pollinators (e.g., moths or butterflies) and essential for baby birds. Fruit and nut trees/shrubs and conifers. They add bird-value too since they are larval hosts for caterpillar species and sources of seed. They also offer protection in winter.

Leave a tree snag which can give woodpeckers productive areas to forage for burrowing insects, as well as providing important nesting and roosting sites for birds that seek out wood cavities.

For more information on specific species of trees, shrubs, wildflowers and groundcover that are good for birds and insects, see

[Native Plant Gardening for Birds — Chicago Bird Alliance \(formerly Chicago Audubon Society\)](#) and

<https://www.climateactionevanston.org/natural-habitat-actions/plant-a-native-tree>

Fall is also a great time to make sure your yard is bird-friendly.

See some tips on page 2...



Clearwing Hummingbird Moth,
Lorra Rudman, Lincolnshire

Yard-friendly tips...

Treat dangerous windows. Add film, screens or hanging strings to the outside of windows, or use a ceramic pen to draw vertical lines 2" apart. Walk the outside perimeter of your house; see where foliage, feeders and birdbaths are reflected in windows, or where birds might see glass corners or walkways as a fly-through.

Avoid pesticides and synthetic chemicals. Instead of insecticides, let birds manage the insects. Avoid herbicides that reduce biodiversity such as fireflies, beetles, spiders and other yummy bugs. Evolve to tolerate insect damage, and even to view it for what it is: a sign of a healthy yard.

Reduce light pollution. Over-lighting the outdoors is deadly to birds especially during migration. It also disrupts other wildlife and is even unhealthy for people. Attracted by lights, birds fly closer to windows, especially in bad weather. Use light on the amber-orange range as well as shades, motion sensors, timers and your phone flashlight, rather than stationary lighting.

Dear ENSBC Members,

As we continue to soar through another exciting year of birdwatching, I am reminded of the incredible sense of community that makes our club so special. Our shared passion for birds brings us together, not only as individuals but as a collective force working toward something greater...preserving the beauty and diversity of the avian world.

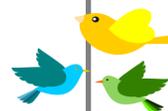
This year, I am especially proud to highlight our partnership with organizations which ENSBC supports through its donations -- Bird Conservation Network, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, Illinois Young Birders, Illinois Environmental Council and Monteverde Institute. Their tireless efforts to protect ecosystems align perfectly with our mission, and we are honored to support their initiatives.

As we continue to nurture our love for birds, let us also nurture the bonds we share as a community. Whether you're an experienced birder or are just beginning to explore the world of birds, each of us plays an important role in the conservation of our natural world. Together, we can make a meaningful impact.

*Joe Flanagan
President*

New members of the Flock!

<i>Rinad Beidas</i>	<i>Winnetka</i>
<i>JoAnn Olsen</i>	<i>Evanston</i>
<i>Nancy Perla</i>	<i>Evanston</i>
<i>Juliana Reese-Clauson</i>	<i>Chicago</i>



The Ecology Center has officially reopened!

For years, the Ecology Center at 2024 McCormick Blvd was the Club's home for its meetings. Closed since the end of last year, it has finally reopened! For us, this will mean a great high-tech capacity for hybrid programs.

The grand reopening of the Evanston Ecology Center was on Wednesday, Oct. 29. The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony, tours of the renovated facility and previews of upcoming programs. We look forward to being back in our old but improved digs!

And, ENSBC T-shirts are back !

Assorted sizes of this long-sleeved forest green shirt with a very cool logo are available for \$20. And we still have some short-sleeved shirts for those going to the tropics or thinking about summer. To order a T-shirt, contact Jlflanagan60@gmail.com.



*Indigo
Bunting at
Ryerson by
Peggy Reil-*



Jeff Sanders — In Memoriam

From Dave Johnson

I am feeling great regret and sorrow that one of my very good friends has passed. I've known Jeff Sanders as a fellow bird watcher for over 50 years. Early on in the mid-70s, Jeff got me to be Field Trip Chairman for the Evanston North Shore Bird Club. For years I did canoe trips up the North Shore Channel for the Chicago Urban Christmas Bird Count which Jeff compiled, and we tallied some excellent birds like Little Gull and some fantastic "Winter Warblers" (like Prothonotary!). Jeff loved to chase rare birds! Some years ago, I remember meeting him and Jill Anderson at Clinton Lake, IL relishing, in the rare sighting of a Pomarine Jaeger. Jeff saw the Mexican Violetear with me and Karen Lund when it was first discovered in Mundelein, IL. Jeff loved hawk watching. Recently he and Sandy Kroll would be armed with cupcakes and binoculars, noting the migrating hawks over Ft. Sheridan in Lake Forest. I loved seeing Jeff there almost every week in fall. He also helped lead many "Looney" trips out on the Chain O'Lakes in early spring. I still have Jeff's old orange "Top Birding Spots near Chicago" pamphlet which is long out of print. I'll always have great birding memories of him. Jeff, may you be in the heavens with the bird spirits and hawks! 🐦 So long!

From Alan Anderson

Jeff started birding in 1961, convincing his father to buy his 'first pair of real binoculars' in 1963 (\$20 back then!). Over the years, Jeff went on to contribute so much to knowledge of birds and birding in the Chicago region. Dr. James Landing included him as one of the "Birding Pioneers" in the Chicago area from 1950 and 1980. It's amazing just how many organizations Jeff was involved with -- Fort Dearborn Chapter of Illinois Audubon (President), Park Ridge Audubon Society, Lake-Cook Chapter of Illinois Audubon to mention only a few. He was a bird monitor at The Grove and Prairie Wolf Slough and butterfly monitor at others. He contributed to bird research including the Illinois Breeding Bird Atlas and the Cook County Nesting Season Bird Census. Jeff organized and compiled the Chicago Urban Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for 50 years, participating in at least one CBC every year from 1963 on. Jeff served on the Board of the Evanston North Shore Bird Club from 1970 to 2007, was ENSBC President from 1975-1976 and led innumerable field trips. As a member of the Chicago Audubon Society Board from 1968 to 2023, Jeff contributed in so many ways, and his input on the CAS "Birds of Greater Chicago Area" checklist was critical. Jeff's impact on Chicago area birding and birders was huge. It is with sadness and great appreciation that we say a fond farewell to an amazing volunteer and birding legend.

Memorial gifts may be made to Temple Jeremiah Social Justice Fund, www.templejeremiah.org, or Illinois Audubon Society, www.illinoisaudubon.org.



Photo by
Jill Anderson

From Joel Greenberg

I grew up with the Evanston North Shore Bird Club and have known Jeff since 1968 or so. He contributed greatly to the local birding community, as well as to my own development as a birder. Over the years we engaged in many collaborations including Christmas Bird Counts and at least two memorable trips. One of these was when the two of us traveled to Big Bend National Park in Texas and a second was when my mother took Jeff, Ira, and me to Florida for some fine birding. In recent years, our interactions were largely restricted to the Ft. Sheridan hawk watch, although unfortunately we failed to cross paths last fall. I wish we had.

Program in November you won't want to miss!

7:30 pm on Zoom; will be recorded.



Tuesday, November 25 - *"Do migrating birds use Monteverde's restored forests? What the research tells us."* Presenter: Debra Hamilton, Monteverde Institute Costa Rica

With the great loss of tropical forests in the past 50 years, the question of what happens to migratory birds on their overwintering grounds is urgent. Are restored forests providing the habitat they need? What do migrants encounter when they return each year to Costa Rica, a country long recognized for its leadership in environmental stewardship? Debra Hamilton, research affiliate with the Monteverde Institute and president of the Costa Rican Conservation Foundation, will share her insights and those of her collaborator Luisa Moreno whose work is tracking these birds at banding stations and studying how reforested landscapes and native tree plantings on agricultural land are shaping their survival. Debra started the MoSI (overwintering survival of neotropical migratory birds) station in Monteverde. Working alongside a dedicated team of naturalists, she explores how restoration, conservation, and human pressures are reshaping the future for migratory birds in the tropics.

And in 2026...

Tuesday, January 27 - *"How birds fly."* Peter Cavanagh, Scientist from Washington State (on Zoom)

Tuesday, February 24 - *"Interactive Primer on Bird ID."* Presenter, John Bates (on Zoom)

Our October Program, Amar Ayyash's excellent presentation on gulls, has been recorded and is available.

Contact libbyhill@comcast.net

And speaking of gulls...

Registration is open for the 24th Annual Gull Frolic at Winthrop Harbor Yacht Club, North Park Marina on Sunday, February 15th!

This is a unique winter event at Illinois' premier gull-watching hotspot which ENSBC supports. Bring your binoculars, scope and cold weather gear, and join birders outside of the yacht club to enjoy a close study of some of our harder-to-find winter species, including Iceland (Thayer's and Kumlien's), Glaucous, Great Black-backed, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls! A variety of waterfowl typically make an appearance too (scoters and other diving ducks), along with the occasional raptor, owl or winter finch. Birders wearing bright orange hats will be available to help answer questions along the "boardwalk".

And inside the Club, you'll find tables sponsored by various birding organizations — including ENSBC. There'll be lots of good information, great conversation with other birders and a lunch buffet you'll definitely remember.



White-crowned Sparrow by Lorra Rudman

Christmas Bird Count

The 2025 ENSBC Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 27. John Leonard, compiler, (jleonard5440@gmail.com) will contact area leaders who will organize their groups. There will once again be an in-person countdown dinner this year at Libby Hill's home. Joel Greenberg will again coordinate the backyard feeder counts, and sign-up sheets for that will be available by emailing Joel at joelgreenberg@gmail.com.