



Sycamore Warbler



Volume 35, Issue I

Spring 2010

Mind BOGgling Event at Celery Bog April 10

The final schedule for this all-day celebration in honor of Celery Bog Park organized by the Friends of Celery Bog isn't available yet, however there will be bird hikes going during the morning (Temple Pearson, Barny Dunning, and Susan Ulrich) plant hikes in the afternoon (Sam Postlethwaite, Nick Harby), along with wetland tours (Mary Cutler), a butterfly garden tour (Lynn Layden and John McDonald), teen and elementary school art activities, Plein Air art workshop (fee), activities for children and families, and tree planting.

An art exhibit organized by Rena Brower and Brenda Moore which features artist works that were inspired by Celery Bog will be set up in the meeting room. There will also be a display of children's art and writing. Watch for the final printed schedule which should be available soon. The event is sponsored by the Friends of Celery Bog, the West Lafayette Parks Department, Sycamore Audubon Society, INPAWS, and Master Gardeners.

ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTING: Help needed Tree planting is scheduled for 1-2 or 2:30 p.m. as part of West Lafayette's Arbor Day Events. Mayor John Dennis will be there to kick it off, along with his friend, Smokey Bear.

The trees are courtesy of Jan Meyer who donated a number of young buttonbush and Bald Cypress to SAS that she grew in a plot at University Place. People are needed to help dig and transplant approximately 50 trees. Bring a shovel and a bucket and join us. If you or your family would like to adopt and plant one of the trees. Contact Dan Dunten at WL Parks. The cypress and buttonbush will add to the diversity of the park and provide great habitat for birds and wildlife.

The evening program begins at 7 p.m. with some light refreshments supplied by the Master Gardeners (coordinated by Sue Hiser), followed by a brief introduction to Friends of Celery Bog and the bog's history (Joan Mohr Samuels and Mary Cutler). There will be readings by Nancy Patchen and the Women's Creative Writing Group. **Deep & Simple** is providing live music and you can watch Rena Brower in action as she creates a new painting.



NAS President Steps Down

After 15 years of dedicated service, John Flicker has decided to end his stay as president of National Audubon.

The transition comes after major advances during the past year, including the spread of an Audubon-championed approach to save imperiled Greater Sage-Grouse while allowing properly located energy development, and

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Join the crowd at Celery Bog on April 10th: there's great trail access by bike or foot.

CHAPTER NEWS

SCIENCE FAIR RESULTS

Audubon judges for the 2010 Lafayette Regional Science Fair were Paul Brooks, Lora Martin, Diane Packett, and Susan Ulrich. SAS awards go to the best environmental/conservation projects.

1st Place Elementary: \$25 award

James Mustillo, Happy Hollow
"A Taste of the Wabash".

Honorable mentions:

Rosalie Stanley, Klondike MS

Bethany Wagner, St Boniface

1st Place Junior: \$50 award

Sarah Campbell, St James
"The Effect of Carbon Sequestration on the Bioluminescence of *Pyrocystis fusiformis*."

Honorable Mentions:

Chase Latour, Klondike MS

Hannah Morman, St James

1st Place Senior: \$50 award

Maggie Furtner, W Lafayette HS
"The Effect of Glutamic Acid on Earthworm Casting"

Honorable Mentions:

Dimi Boutselis, Jefferson HS

Sunland Gong, W Lafayette HS

BOARD HELP NEEDED:

Serving on SAS's board is easy and keeps the organization going. New people with an enthusiasm (don't have to be an expert) for birds and wildlife are needed. If you are interested please call or email Susan Ulrich (p 7). The board meets the first Monday of each month. Meetings usually last an hour. Possibilities include secretary or publicity person or....

GARDEN EXPO April 24

Garden Expo is the Saturday of Earth Week which happens to be April 24th. The location is the Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds' Swine Barn. Hours run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. There are loads of vendors and several lectures. Audubon will pass out information and sell plants and other donated items. You can help by donating those plants and items &/or by volunteering at the booth. Contact Susan Ulrich (p. 7).

5TH GRADE BIRD HIKES

Here's a chance for **YOU** to increase bird appreciation in the younger generation.

People are needed to lead West Lafayette 5th graders on an early morning bird walk Tuesday and/or Thursday morning May 4 and 6 at Camp Tecumseh. Hikes last about 45 minutes and are a nice refresher for the Big Day in May Count. At least one 5th-grader who was introduced to birds at 5th Grade Camp became an ornithologist! Volunteers can carpool from WL or drive themselves. Breakfast is provided after the hikes and you can be back in town by 9 or 9:30 a.m. (earlier if

you skip breakfast) Call Chuck Tuttle for more information (p.7).

BAKE & PLANT SALE BENEFITS OBSERVATION TOWER

A new observation tower is being built for birders along the lakeshore. Money raised at SAS's March 26-8 bake and plant sale will help pay for it. Donations of plants and food and other items are needed. So are cashiers. **Please help**, just contact Susan Ulrich (see p. 7). Hours are Friday evening from 6-9, Saturday from 10-5, and Sunday from 1-6.

Items can be dropped at the library starting Thursday after 10 a.m. or contact Susan to make other arrangements.

THANK YOU, TRAVIS

Special thanks to Travis Harris for stepping up to lead the bird hike to the Purdue Wildlife Area when Rick and Barny both developed conflicts.

REFRESHMENTS

If you can supply nibbles for the April or May programs, please contact Susan Ulrich (see page 7). SAS takes care of beverages.

CHECK OUT www.sycamoreaudubon.org

Paul Books, SAS's newest board member, has refreshed and upgraded SAS's website. Check it out. There are interactive features and links to other sites of interest. The current and back issues of **The Sycamore Warbler** are also on line.

There are many items that don't fit this 8-page newsletter that we'll post there —such as interesting facts, other programs, etc.



Trumpeter (L) & Mute Swan (R), Celery Bog Nov 11. Photo Ning Wu

Fall-Winter Sycamore Audubon Calendar

Save the Dates! Program meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:15 PM in the Lilly Nature Center in West Lafayette. People are invited to join other members and the speaker for "Dinner and Conversation" starting at 6:00 PM at the MCL Cafeteria (West Lafayette) except for September's Carry-In dinner. Field trips times vary, see below.

-
- March 11
Thursday **PROGRAM: *Hellbender Stories.*** Rod Williams, assistant Professor in Forestry and Natural Resources, will talk about this rarely seen large amphibian found in southern Indiana. 7:15 Lilly Nature Center. West Lafayette.
- March 20
Saturday **FIRST DAY OF SPRING MIGRANT TRIP.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Celery Bog gravel parking area. We will look over the wetlands at Celery Bog for migrating water birds and move to other areas if birds are being reported elsewhere.
- March 25
Every Thursday **EARLY BIRD HIKES START.** Barny Dunning 8 a.m. Purdue Horticulture Park. These will be held every Thursday during the spring migration period.
- March 26-28
Fri-Sunday **SPRING BAKE & PLANT SALE.** Bring donations to the WL Library. Funds will help build a bird observation tower along the lake shore. Donations needed. More info on page 2.
- April 8
Thursday **PROGRAM: *Chattering in the Chimney: the mysterious Chimney Swift.*** Shirley Needham, Wildlife Rehabilitator, Fulton County. 7:15 p.m. Lilly Nature Center, W Lafayette. Sign up for a Big Day in May Bird Count starting at 6:45 p.m.
- April 18
Sunday **PROPHETSTOWN STATE PARK.** Meet at 6:30 PM (evening!) at the far end of the drive in Prophetstown. We will walk the trails along the boundaries of the park and look at the prairie in spring, while watching for migrants passing through. Contact Barny for directions.
- April 24
Saturday **INDIANA BEACH CAMPGROUND.** Rick Read will lead a walk through the Indiana Beach Campground. Habitats include riparian, lake/pond, field & forest. The campground is located on the north side of Monticello, off West Shafer Drive. At Indiana Beach Road, turn west (away from the amusement park). Meet outside the campground registration office at 7:30 AM for a 2-3 hour walk. We'll enter the park together; participants can leave at any time.
- April 30-
May 1 **IAS Spring Birding Festival.** At Indiana Audubon Society's Mary Gray Sanctuary near Connersville. Loads of activities. Go to Indianaaudubon.org for more information. Bill Cummings, who used to be on SAS's board years ago, is organizing the event.
- May 8 **BIG DAY IN MAY BIRD COUNT.** All day bird count. See back page for info.
- May 13
Thursday **PROGRAM: *BIRDS AND WILDLIFE OF INDIA.*** Russ Mumford, former professor of Wildlife Science, will share his photos and paintings from his travels in the forest reserves of India. 7:15 Lilly Nature Center. West Lafayette.
- May 15
Saturday **TIPPECANOE RIVER STATE PARK & WINAMAC SF&WA.** Jon Chapman will take us to his favorite birding spots in two outstanding state refuges that straddle US-31, 4 miles north of Winamac. Jon will lead us through various habitats to view resident & migrant waterfowl and passerines. Carpools will depart from two locations. Barny Dunning will lead one from the W Lafayette Celery Bog gravel parking lot departing at 6:00 AM. Rick Read will lead another departing from the Monticello Public Library at 6:30 AM. We will meet Jon inside Tippecanoe River SP at the Waterfowl Area Parking Lot at 7:30 AM.
- May 29
Saturday **MARTELL FOREST TRIP.** Meet at 7 AM for a half day trip starting at the entrance to Purdue's Martell Forest on the east side of County Road 725 West in Tippecanoe County (south of SR 26 & north of Division Rd). We will be looking for birds of the mature forest, plus late spring migrants. This is the time Connecticut Warblers migrate through Indiana.
- June 9
Wednesday **GRASSLAND BIRDS AT PROPHETSTOWN STATE PARK.** Susan Ulrich 1-3 p.m. A Wednesdays in the Wild program. There is an charge for each car entering the park. We will see what grassland birds and other interesting things we can find that might be around.

Nature Notes & News

- Dec 2 & 5 **Russ Allison** had a **Hermit Thrush** show up at his feeders in West Lafayette. Jan 18 he reported a **Brown Creeper**. **Joan Samuels** (Battle Ground) had a creeper on Feb 26. **Noble Kizer** (Lafayette) and **Susan Ulrich** (Warren Co) have had them regularly this winter.
- **Marianne Sadowski** was delighted to have a **Fox Sparrow** show up at her feeders Dec. 28. She also enjoyed the **Pileated Woodpeckers** coming for suet. **Joan Samuels** found the antics between two Pileateds and a **Northern Flicker** fascinating to watch as the Pileateds excavated in a tree outside their window while the flicker hung around and did a bit of digging too .
- **Rick Read** (Monticello) has been keeping his eyes open since he retired. He reported 9 **Hooded Mergansers** on Lake Freeman Dec 5; 9 **Common Mergansers** on Jan 26; and 29 **Bald Eagles** along the Wabash in Carroll County on Jan 15 while scouting for an eagle trip. He also found a 400-500 mixed bird flock on Jan 9 made up of **Snow Buntings**, **Lapland Longspurs** and **Horned Larks**. The attraction was a waste seed spill. Feb 28 Rick saw 4 **Herring Gulls** near Tall Timbers Marina.
- On Jan 8 between 3 & 5 p.m. **Del Arvin** counted 615 **Sandhill Cranes** in various groupings, heading south near Buck Creek. His son and his daughter who live nearby heard and saw additional flocks that same day. In early January Del had up to 50 **Snow Buntings** and another day 150 **Horned Larks** and 10-20 **Lapland Longspurs**. His feeders have been busy too: 2 **Field Sparrows** and up to 5 **Fox Sparrows** have been around
- Celery bog visitors keep your eyes open for **Coyotes**. Jan 27 **Larry Miller** was running on the Cattail Trail in Celery Bog Park when a dog, coyote or siren sounded to the north. So many coyotes responded from the area of the pothole sign he found it a little unnerving.
- Feb 7 **Marylou Pumroy** spotted a **Snowy Owl** in Carroll Co near US421 x 1100 N. Rick Read tried relocating it with no success.
- **Ning Wu** found a number of interesting birds this past season. Dec 15 he noted a **Whooping Crane** with a flock of Sandhill Cranes fling over the Purdue Research Park. Next month, on January 31 he discovered a female **Surf Scoter** on the Wabash near Williamsburg Apartments. He was able to get this picture the next day. **Ed Hopkins** relocated it Feb 2. Finally, Feb 20, Ning noted a **Ross's Goose** grazing among the Canada Geese on Purdue's Golf Course south of Lindberg Road in W Lafayette.
- **Michael Retter & Matt Hale** had 29 **Greater White-fronted Geese** fly over their apartment north of Celery Bog in West Lafayette on Dec 14. On the 27th they saw an **American Pipit** in Warren County.
- **Dan Dunten** saw his 1st **Red-winged Blackbirds** at Celery Bog March 1.
- Feb 1 **Ed Hopkins** noticed a small falcon land atop a power pole at US 52 & Salisbury in WL. He parked at CVS pharmacy and identified the bird as a female **Merlin**. The bird was still on the pole at 6 p.m. when Ed left.

Track hummingbird migration at: www,humminbirds.net/map.html



Female Surf Scoter on Wabash. Photo: Ning Wu

MAGEE MARSH

In 2002, Indiana Audubon Society went to the area now known as Magee Marsh Wildlife Area on the southern shore of Lake Erie, and came back with a list of 156 species of birds, including 30 warblers. A super bonus was Ohio's first, and only, Garganey.

In 2004, the IAS trip had "only 151 species" including 27 species of warblers, American White Pelican, Willet, 10,000 Dunlin, and a bonus Brown Pelican at Eagle Creek on the way.

Magee Marsh has become the premier neotropical migrant hotspot in the Midwest, if not the entire country. The boardwalk provides an experience no birder should go without. It is not every day you practically have to kick warblers out of your way. Nearby are extensive marshes and wetlands that offer a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders.

What will 2010 hold for IAS's May 21-24 trip? Friday & Monday will be travel days, giving the group at least one afternoon, two full days, + another morning to bird Magee Marsh and surrounds. Rob Ripma and Alan Bruner will make the arrangements for the trip. Please contact Rob (317-748-4140, robripma@yahoo.com) for information on lodging. A block of rooms is reserved at a local hotel until April 15.

Information about Magee Marsh can be found at:
www.friendsofmageemarsh.org/birding.php

CONSERVATION NEWS

Endangered Species Act No longer Endangered

Responding to urging from thousands of Audubon activists and others, the Obama administration revoked a controversial last-minute rule change imposed by the Bush administration, which effectively gutted critical protections offered by the Endangered Species Act for threatened and endangered wildlife on the brink of extinction. Score one for the good guys and for species survival.



The Endangered Species Act has rescued the Kirtland's Warbler and other species, such as the recently delisted Brown Pelican, from the brink of extinction.

Photo by Ron Austing,

Banner Year for Conservation Programs

It was a historic year for federal funding of Audubon conservation priorities, alleviating years of under-funding that starved conservation budgets.

- The Stimulus package passed by Congress earlier this year contained billions of dollars for green jobs, energy efficiency programs, improvements to the National Wildlife Refuges and National Parks, and ecosystem restoration projects.
- The Interior appropriations bill increased funding in several important areas, including \$503 million for operations and maintenance of the National Wildlife Refuge System, up from \$463 million in FY 2009, and \$31.03 million for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Management, up \$1.5 million from the FY 2009 appropriations.
- The Land and Water Conservation Fund included a number of state and chapter priorities, including Audubon Connecticut - Steward B. McKinney NWR - \$2,000,000; Houston Audubon - San Bernard NWR - \$1,250,000; **Evansville Audubon - Patoka River NWR - \$1,150,000**; Central New Mexico Audubon - Sevilleta NWR - \$500,000; and Audubon South Carolina - Waccamaw NWR - \$600,000.
- Audubon's Coastal Louisiana work got a boost when the White House Council on Environmental Quality announced it was creating a new federal interagency task force to coordinate the "economic and environmental resiliency" of Louisiana and the rest of the Gulf Coast region. This was a great shot in the arm for restoration of critically important Louisiana Coastal wetlands.
- The study of restoration projects in Coastal Louisiana has tripled, going from just about \$8 million in the FY 2009 bill to over \$24 million for 2010. It is our goal to move this money from "study money" to actual project construction money in FY 2011.
- Long Island Sound restoration funds got a much needed increase in funding — \$7 million in FY 2010, up from \$3 million in FY 2009.
- The complex array of Everglades projects and funding enjoyed also huge increases overall, with millions more going to projects designed to restore the natural water flows that make the Everglades a special place for birds and wildlife.

Flicker, continued: the opening of three new Audubon Centers serving urban communities.

During Flicker's tenure Audubon focused on keeping common birds common, educating the public and decision makers about the important role of birds as indicators of environmental health, and connecting new and diverse audiences to nature to increase the power to protect it. Flicker envisioned a network of Audubon Centers nationwide to build that connection. Today, 43 Audubon Centers engage more than a million people each year in nature discovery and conservation action, and Urban Centers are helping to revitalize abused landscapes and empower local communities. Flicker also led Audubon through dramatic growth in revenue and programs as the organization identified more than 2,400 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) cross America.

As Audubon begins searching for a new leader, Dr. Frank Gill, current National Board Member and former Audubon Chief Scientist, will serve as interim President. Frank is the former Vice President of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia and past President of the American Ornithologists' Union. He authored the acclaimed textbook *Ornithology 3e*. Frank understands the unique strengths of the Audubon network and will seek to maximize their benefit as we pursue our shared conservation objectives.

John Flicker will take some time off (and do some birding) but will return to work with NAS in a new capacity.

CHRISTMAS RARITIES

On Feb 10 John Cassady listed the following unusual birds that had been reported on various CBC's. He noted many counts still hadn't reported.

Red-throated Loon; Golden Eagle; Surf Scoter; White-winged Scoter; Black Scoter; Virginia Rail; Least Sandpiper; Indigo Bunting; Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull; Northern Shrike; Varied Thrush; Rufous Hummingbird; Great Egret; Le Conte's Sparrow; Chipping Sparrow; Vesper Sparrow; Western Grebe; Palm Warbler; Barn Owl; Long-eared Owl; Baltimore Oriole.

Wednesdays in the Wild

The April through June program schedule is now set. You can pick up a copy of the various program descriptions at the Lilly Nature Center.

Topics include managing Wildlife Populations; Spring Wildflowers at Black Rock; Spring Warblers & Other Migrants (Apr 28 Celery Bog); Indiana's Native Shrubs in Flower, Hike at the Granville Sand Barrens; Frogs and Toads of Indiana; Mist-netting birds (June 2 at Wa-Ba-Shik-a); Birds of the Grasslands (June 9 at Prophetstown SP); hike at Weiler-Leopold Nature Reserve; Going Batty (all about bats); Stream Critters (bring boots).

Most programs go from 1-3 p.m. but some vary. Check the schedule for time and meeting places.

GARLIC MUSTARD

Help celebrate forty years of Earth Days by going out to pull garlic mustard this spring to make the earth a little bit better for native plants and animals.

You can 1) go on your own, 2) join the RIP Squad (Remove Invasive Plants), or 3) attend a NICHES Land Trust work day. The RIP Squad visits various local parks each Wednesday and Thursday from 3-5. NICHES work days are usually held on Saturday mornings from 10-1 p.m. Call 583-2275 for information on dates, times, and locations.

Area Christmas Bird Counts

Species Name:.....	Laf	WS/I	Species Name:.....	Laf	WS/I
Pied-billed Grebe	1	0	Bluebird.....	4	0
Great Blue Heron	60	1	Hermit Thrush	0	1
Canada Goose.....	1884	1667	American Robin	336	5
Cackling Goose.....	8	3	European Starling	6422	21
Gadwall	1	0	American Pipit.....	0	1
American Black Duck.....	3	0	Cedar Waxwing	16	87
Mallard	1102	0	Gray Catbird	2	0
Blue-winged Teal	1	0	Brown Thrasher	2	0
Green-winged Teal	3	0	Eastern Towhee.....	6	2
Ring-necked Duck.....	1	1	American Tree Sparrow	410	1125
Lesser Scaup	cw	0	Vesper Sparrow	4	0
Bufflehead.....	1	0	Field Sparrow	0	1
Common Goldeneye	cw	0	Fox Sparrow	6	1
Hooded Merganser	4	1	Song Sparrow	104	7
Common Merganser	2	0	Swamp Sparrow	13	2
Ruddy Duck	0	1	White-throated Sparrow	171	9
Bald Eagle.....	cw	2	White-crowned Sparrow	14	13
Northern Harrier	5	14	Dark-eyed Junco.....	427	328
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	2	0	Lapland Longspur	0	387
Cooper's Hawk.....	7	2	Snow Bunting.....	0	27
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	0	Northern Cardinal	362	62
Red-tailed Hawk.....	48	17	Red-winged Blackbird.....	23	1
Rough-legged Hawk	5	12	Brewer's Blackbird	2	0
American Kestrel.....	7	7	Common Grackle.....	7	0
Ring Necked Pheasant	6	2	Brown-headed Cowbird	78	0
Wild Turkey	45	1	Eastern Meadowlark	0	1
American Coot	5	0	Purple Finch.....	2	1
Killdeer	1	0	House Finch.....	166	26
Ring-billed Gull.....	287	0	American Goldfinch	168	135
Rock Pigeon.....	391	3	House Sparrow	625	169
Mourning Dove.....	418	147	Total Individuals	15,095	4908
Eastern Screech-Owl.....	14	12	Total Species	74	56
Great Horned Owl	4	9	"cw" means bird seen during count week		
Barred Owl	5	1	Total Participants	25	9
Long-eared Owl	0	2	Feeder Watchers only	1	1
Short-eared owl.....	1	13	Party Miles Afoot.....	51.35	13.2
Belted Kingfisher	11	0	Party Hours Afoot.....	54.58	13.8
Red-headed Woodpecker	3	6	Miles by Car	361.7	151
Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	93	23	Hours by Car	28.92	19.4
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	0	Feeder time	8.5	4
Downy Woodpecker.....	94	11	Owling Time	6.08	5.34
Hairy Woodpecker	12	4	Owling Miles	31.0	15.13
Northern Flicker	13	3	Total Miles	413.1	163.8
Pileated Woodpecker.....	14	0	Total Time (Hrs)	83.5	33.2
Blue Jay	168	122	Lafayette Participants: Delano, Kevin,		
American Crow	468	46	Mark Arvin; Joyce & Mike Brattain; Barny		
Horned Lark	16	325	Dunning, Cecilia & Michael Henessy, Ed		
Black-capped Chickadee	0	12	Hopkins (compiler), Elsa Janle, Noble Kizer,		
Carolina Chickadee.....	173	0	Al Laasanen, Diane Packett, Temple Pear-		
Tufted Titmouse	125	10	son, Harry Potter, Rick Read, Susan		
Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	1	0	Scherrer, John Skene, Larry & Rebecca		
White-breasted Nuthatch	194	15	Theller, Chuck Tuttle, Sue Ulrich, Harmon		
Brown Creeper	31	0	Weeks, Amy Wetzel, Ning Wu.		
Carolina Wren	51	1	Willow-Slough/Iroquois Participants:		
Winter Wren	1	0	Ed Hopkins, (compiler), Susan Bagby,		
Golden-crowned Kinglet.....	9	0	Leslie Bury, John Cassady, Travis Harris,		
			Jed Hertz, Jeff McCoy, Susan Schnere,		
			David Spitznagle.		

Join Sycamore Audubon Society!

You can support Sycamore Audubon Society's local educational programs and field trips by becoming or renewing as a Friend of the Sycamore Audubon Society (SAS). Friends become chapter members of the Sycamore Audubon Society and receive our quarterly newsletter, *The Sycamore Warbler*.

You can support national conservation efforts by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). When you join NAS, you will receive *Audubon* magazine **along with automatic chapter membership in SAS**. Since NAS dues primarily support national projects, we encourage national members to ALSO become Friends of SAS. As a Friend, you contribute directly to our local chapter and its projects.

Membership Application

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Friend of the Sycamore Audubon Society \$15/year x ____ year(s) \$ _____

Note: SAS's membership year runs September 1 through August 31.

New member Renewal

I would prefer to receive the chapter newsletter by: e-mail or paper copy.

National Audubon Society membership \$20 for first year \$ _____
Special introductory offer for new members (renewals are \$35/year)

Additional contribution to SAS \$ _____
For _____ (if specific purpose)

Total enclosed \$ _____

Send checks to : Sycamore Audubon Society,
P.O. Box 2716, West Lafayette, IN 47996-2716.

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Sycamore Audubon Society 2009-2010 Board of Directors

Susan Ulrich, President & Publications
11907 E 500 N, Otterbein, 47970
765-583-2275 sueandtedulrich@msn.com

Diane Packett, V. President
1928 Indian Trail, W Lafayette, 47906
463-9231 dlpackett@pex.net

Roy Applegate, Treasurer
3445 Woodfield, W Lafayette 47906
463-4337

Paul Brooks, Webmaster
219-221-0254
paulbrooks@gmail.com

Noble Kizer, Membership
4890 Whippoorwill Dr, Lafayette, 47909
538-3656 NobleK@hotmail.com

Barny Dunning, Conservation, Field Trips
7509 N 75 E, W Lafayette, 47906
(H) 497-3082 (W) 494-3565
jdunning@purdue.edu

Chuck Tuttle, at large
1708 Maywood, W Lafayette, 47906
463-0531 catuttle@comcast.net

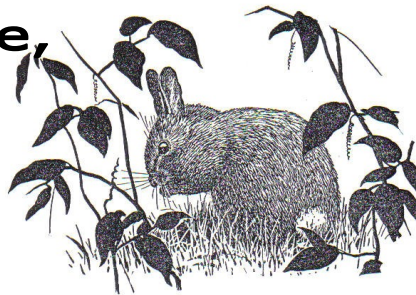
Judy Gasvoda, At-Large
1511 W 350 N, W Lafayette, 47906
463-2098 wildbirdshoppe@comcast.net

Rick Read, Field Trips, White Co Rep
402 E Terrace Bay, Monticello 47960
574-583-3431 Richardaread@hotmail.com

The Mink, the Eagle, and the Rabbit

While watching the feeders at our cabin along the Tippecanoe River I noticed a female mink walking on the ice shelf and frequently sliding into the water and diving for minnows. After about five minutes she disappeared on the island in front of the cabin.

A few minutes later a flock of Canada geese that were sitting along the bank upstream began to vocalize, which usually means another flock of geese were flying in. I looked downstream and saw an adult bald eagle instead, flying upstream, low to the water heading between the cabin and the island. The eagle flew within 30 feet of the cabin deck and made a loop around the island and came back to the near bank, landing along some rocks protruding from the ice ledge along the river's edge. The binoculars revealed it had landed on an eastern cottontail rabbit and was proceeding to pick at it. Suddenly a buck mink boldly charged it, stood on it's hind legs and con-



fronted the eagle, which stood it's ground on the rabbit. The mink ran up the bank, returning within a few seconds to again charge the eagle, which again, held it's ground. The eagle then carried it's prize to the island and ate it's meal.

Finding the buck mink's behavior a bit puzzling I later walked downstream to see if I could figure out what happened. The fresh snow told the whole story....a fresh set of mink tracks led to a groundhog den facing the river on a high bank, apparently where the rabbit was denned up. The rabbit and mink scuffled down the 12 foot vertical bank onto the ice shelf where a small pool of blood and some rabbit fur indicated the mink had subdued it's prey. The mink then proceeded to drag the rabbit through the snow along the ice shelf about 20 yards downstream until the eagle, apparently seeing the activity, flew low past the mink, causing it to release it's meal and run for cover, allowing the eagle to loop around the island and steal its catch. The mink then confronted the eagle to reclaim its prize but to no avail. -Jon Chapman



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 West Lafayette, IN 47996

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The Sycamore Warbler is published four times a year by the Sycamore Audubon Society, a chapter of National Audubon Society serving Audubon members in Benton, Carroll, Clinton, Tippecanoe, Warren, and White counties in central northwest Indiana.

A subscription to the *Warbler* is included with membership in National Audubon Society &/or to the local chapter.

Send items you think SAS's membership might find interesting to the editor, Susan Ulrich (see page 7).

Sign up and join us for the Big May Day Bird Count on May 8

Yep, May 8th is this year's Big Day in May. Normally forms and territory assignments are done at the May meeting, but that occurs after the second Saturday in May this year, so forms will be distributed electronically where possible. You can also sign up at the April meeting, or call one of the compilers listed below. Close to 250 species of birds are usually tallied in counts across Indiana. The Lafayette Count finds around 140 species. You can see that there are a lot of different out there to make the day interesting.

SAS sponsors counts in Tippecanoe, Warren, and White Counties. The count area is the county's boundaries. That's a lot of area to cover. Since counts are all done by volunteers, your help would be greatly appreciated.

How can you participate?

- 1) **in-the-field counters** scour an area of the county by foot, car, boat &/or bicycle to find as many birds as possible in the time they have available to look on count day (a boater on the river or lakes would be great).
- 2) **feeder counters** record birds at their feeders and yards (or neighborhood area).

Each participant gets a set of report forms and has a specific area to cover in order to prevent duplication. You can spend part of the day or all day counting. The count period is midnight to midnight. May counts aren't just for fun—they make an important contribution to changes in bird populations and ranges. Our local data is added to state, national and international data to provide a snapshot of bird numbers and locations. To help, simply contact one of the compilers or sign up at SAS' **April** program.

<u>Compilers:</u>	<u>Tippecanoe:</u>	Barny Dunning	(W) 494-3565	jdunning@purdue.edu
	<u>Warren:</u>	Susan Ulrich	765-583-2275	sueandteddulrich@msn.com
	<u>White:</u>	Rick Read	574-583-3431	Richardaread@hotmail.com