

Sycamore Warbler

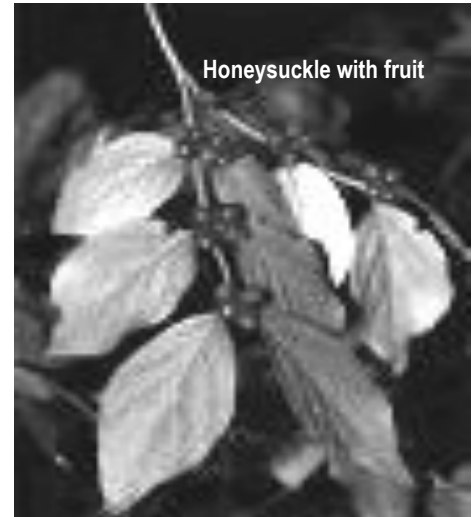
Volume 39, Issue 1 Spring 2014

New Funding Partners for Ross Hills Park Brush Removal

**Roy Whistler Foundation and
Tipmont EnviroWatts help with grants**

SAS is pleased to report that our joint honeysuckle/autumn olive removal project with the local INPAWS chapter at Ross Hills Park is moving ahead. The Roy Whistler Foundation gave a grant of \$8,000 for the effort and Tipmont provided \$4,000 via their EnviroWatts Program. We are extremely grateful for their support. The weather wasn't very cooperative for working in January or February but it improved in early March and removal is again underway.

Most of the grant money is being used to hire professional help but the remainder will purchase loppers, gloves, and herbicide for use by individuals and group volunteers. ***Volunteer help removing the plants is critical for success and we'd love to see you on a workday.*** Many of the plants are small and easily pulled up in spring or cut with loppers. People with brush cutters or chainsaws are especially useful to get rid of the large seeding plants, but there are plenty of smaller plants too. Check the RIP Squad work-days on page 3 for dates at Ross Hills Park as well as garlic mustard pulls at other sites. SAS has a work day scheduled at the park on Sunday, April 27th from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. as well as from 10-noon Saturday April 12 following the field trip. And yes, there will be brownies!



Honeysuckle with fruit

Bush Honeysuckles produce lots of berries but these berries are like junk food for birds—they lack nutrients and the lipids (fats) which birds need. The seeds do get eaten and spread around, but the plants honeysuckles replace are healthier and produce better nest sites for our native birds and animals.

Other Ways to Help:

- Work on your own to cut or pull plants. Susan Ulrich can give you herbicide to treat the cut stems.
- Donate unwanted loppers, gloves, herbicide, etc. for the effort
- Donate money to help pay for supplies or professional help.
- Have a group you belong to organize a workday in the park or come to one.
- Donate items for Garden Expo April 26th at the Tippecanoe Fair Grounds (p.2) to help fund the effort.



American Woodcock

Big Day in May Count is May 10th

Most birders can hardly wait for the second Saturday in May to take part in the Big Day in May migration count. Dozens of species of birds are in Indiana at that time. Counts here and in other states produce a snapshot of what's happening to bird populations. The information is priceless, but the counts themselves are pure fun. Any bird seen during the 24 hours of May 10 can be counted. People are assigned territories to avoid duplication and can spend as much time looking for and counting birds in their area as they wish. To participate, simply contact the compiler for your county, or if there isn't one, help out in another county. There's an awful lot of territory to check so not all areas get covered and your help would be appreciated.

Tippecanoe County:	Barney Dunning	see p. 7
Warren County:	Susan Ulrich	see p. 7
Cass County:	Landon Neumann	landonneumann25@gmail.com

Inside this issue:

Chapter News	2
Local events & news	3
Nature Notes	4
Conservation	5
Christmas Count Results	6
Rusty Blackbirds; Kankakee	7
Wednesdays in the Wild	8

CHAPTER NEWS

Audubon Adventures

SAS is looking for 4-6 grade classrooms to sign up for **Audubon Adventures**, National Audubon Society's Environmental Education Program. There is no charge to the school as SAS pays for the program. If you are a teacher or know one who might be interested in this program contact Rick Read (p.7).

Remember: If you want your newsletter sent via email/website rather than as a paper copy, tell sueandtedulrich@msn.com.

Grant Received for Monticello Audubon Club

Rick Read successfully applied for a Round-up grant from the Carroll-White County REMC for \$1,100 to cover the cost of SAS's Monticello Audubon Nature Club meetings for 2014. Thanks Rick and thank you Carroll-White REMC!

Bake & Plant Sale April 4-6

Plants and other sale items needed

SAS's semi-annual Bake & Plant Sale is coming up quickly. Donations of items are needed as are people to help cashier at the booth. As usual, the sale is at the West Lafayette Public Library. Donations can be dropped off starting Friday at 10 a.m. Hours are 6:30-9 on Friday, 10-5 on Saturday, and 1-5 on Sunday. Garden plants are always good sellers but given this year's weather many may be barely starting to show in early April. If you have anything you can donate, please drop it off. Funds raised at these sales are used by SAS to help various conservation and environmental education efforts that arise during the year.

Birding on the Fly...

Birding on the FLY is an email list. If there is an unusual bird sighting locally (e.g. the Snowy Owl at Celery Bog, Dec. 2) or around the state, Barny sends out an email to the list so anyone interested can pursue the bird by themselves or often via a carpool. Contact him to be added to the list. His email is on page 7. This service is for your information only, you are under no obligation to follow up on any of the sightings.

Garden Expo Sat April 26

SAS will have an information booth and items to sell. Money is going to help with Bush Honeysuckle and Autumn Olive removal at Tippecanoe County's Ross Hills Park. You can help out by donating plants (perennials or annuals) as well as miscellaneous garden equipment and books—or come out and buy some. At last year's Expo SAS raised enough money to hire 28 hours of brush removal. That takes care of a lot of honeysuckle... We hope to do as well this year.

Expo runs from 9:30-3 p.m. at the Hog Barn at the Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds (1010 Teal Rd, Lafayette). There are dozens of vendors, lectures, and door prizes. Items for SAS can be dropped off Friday from 3-6 p.m. or Saturday morning. If you can't bring items then, contact Susan Ulrich (p.7) to make other arrangements. If you'd like to help sell plants during the event, let her know.

Nature Club Reports

Tippecanoe: Audubon Junior Nature Club members planted wildflowers at the February meeting. The plants are part of the restoration project at Berlovitz Children's Forest. Much of the natural understory was lost due to invasive species taking over the site. Once the invasives are gone there will be lots of space to replant what should be there. The

wildflowers have begun germinating in the greenhouse. The children will plant them at the end of April. It will give the kids a chance to get their hands dirty and also go exploring.

In March, the children took home new pets... caterpillars! This will let them observe the magical transformation called metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a Painted Lady Butterfly. And since they were trapped inside so long by a brutal winter, a scavenger hunt on Celery Bog's trails was the first order of business.

White County: The Monticello Audubon Nature Club will meet at three local schools from 3-4:30 p.m. Cindy Isom runs the program and Rick Read, SAS board member, is a guest speaker at one of the sessions.

Oaklawn (3rd-4th): 4/17, 4/24, 5/1
Meadowlawn (3rd-4th): 4/9, 4/16, 4/23
Meadowlawn (5th): 4/30, 5/7, 5/14
Eastlawn (3rd-4th): 4/8, 4/22, 4/29.

Spring welcomes the return of migratory birds to the nation's backyards and woodlands. Learn more about your favorite avian visitors with Audubon's online bird ID guide, covering over 800 North American species. Explore descriptions, photos, range maps and bird songs at <http://birds.audubon.org/birdid>.

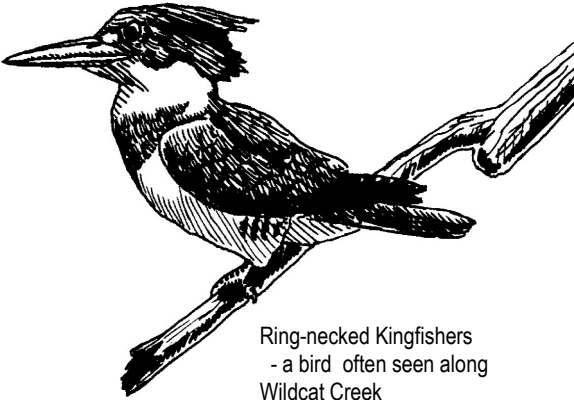
Tweet & Ribbit

That's the title of Rick Read's Feb 26th program held at the Monticello Library. Rick played the sounds of certain birds, frogs, and a few other animal make, then gave participants a guide to help them remember which species made what sound.

February Field Trip Report - Barny Dunning

Five people gathered for an SAS bird walk Feb 22nd that did **NOT** feature blizzards or even snow storms. We were blocked from a few areas by flooding along the Wabash River. But we hit a number of other locations with the main goals of seeing raptors and waterfowl.

Highlights included a flock of 350 Snow Geese (with many "blue morph" birds), side-by-side comparisons of Greater Scaup, Canvasback and female Ring-necked Ducks, a possible Golden Eagle, and many signs of spring (at least until the snow started again that evening).



NICHES Has a New Home

NICHES moved its office from downtown Lafayette to Clegg Memorial Garden on beautiful Wildcat Creek at 1782 N 400 E in Lafayette. The Clegg Foundation transferred the property to NICHES which will now maintain it and use it as their new headquarters. NICHES phone number remains 423-1605.

Mind BOGgling Event at Celery Bog May 17

This is the fourth official celebration of Celery Bog Park and National Wetlands Month to be organized by numerous community groups including SAS. Celery Bog is a jewel and well worth visiting. This Festival features numerous family and individual activities and an activity area for children. There will be many new demonstration/hand's-on-booths this year including ones on natural dyes, weaving, and paper-making. The art show in the family room of the Nature Center will showcase the fiber arts with a focus on basketry, weaving, etc. The art show will remain on exhibit until mid-July.

Last year's new outdoor classroom and stage will be used by the SAMI musicians from 12-1 for a concert of their original music. There are four other stage events, highlighted by a presentation by **Joel Vanderbush** of **Animalia natural history programs**, who will bring live wetland animals to share with the audience. His presentation will run from 10:45-11:30. A herp program by Rod Williams is another one of the stage events.

New this year will be food! The **Emergency Munchie Truck** will be there to provide snacks and lunches from 11-2, or people can bring their own food and sit and eat while listening to music or just soaking up the atmosphere.

There will be hikes throughout the day—some topic oriented, some general nature hikes. Most will last up to 45 minutes. Event programs will be ready soon. You can pick one up at Lilly Nature Center.

RIP Squad Garlic Mustard Pulls & Honeysuckle Removal

Help improve habitat for wildlife and native plants in local parks by coming out to one or more of these two hour workdays with the RIP (Remove Invasive Plants) Squad. To get on the RIP email list for reminders and updates email Patty Rader patty.rader@gmail.com.

In addition don't miss the **Special Earth Day Afternoon** on Tuesday April 22nd at Ross Hills park from 12:30-4 p.m.

Tuesdays 3-5 PM West Lafayette Parks

April 1	Celery Bog Nature Area
April 8	Celery Bog Nature Area
April 15	Happy Hollow Park
April 22	Happy Hollow Park
April 29	Michaud-Sinninger Woods
May 6	Michaud-Sinninger Woods
May 13	Happy Hollow Park
May 20	Celery Bog Nature Area
May 27	Celery Bog Nature Area

Thursdays 3-5 PM Tippecanoe Co Parks

April 3	Prophet's Rock Woods
April 10	Ross Hills Park
April 17	Ross Hills Park
May 1	Ross Hills Park
May 8	Ross Hills Park
May 15	Prophet's Rock Woods
May 22	Prophet's Rock Woods
May 29	Prophet's Rock Woods

Wabash Sampling Blitz - April 11th 2:30pm-5pm!

Since the fall of 2009, volunteers throughout the Region of the Great Bend of the Wabash River watershed have provided a snapshot assessment of water quality across the watershed. In spring 2011, the effort expanded to include parts of the Wildcat Creek watershed. The volunteers monitor temperature, water cloudiness (turbidity), nutrient levels, and pathogen concentrations. Each volunteer group is assigned a staging area or a start location. Join us for the Spring 2014 Wabash Sampling Blitz April 11th! Call 420-8505 for information or to volunteer.

Nature Notes & News

● Dec 11 Landon Neumann found 10 Eastern Meadowlarks along Georgetown Rd & a Green-winged Teal at the river confluence in downtown Logansport. He also had five Yellow-rumped Warblers at France Park and nine Turkey Vultures at the landfill.

● On the 15th Russ Allison's feeders were busy thanks to the snow. Visitors included a Common Grackle.

● That same day Joan Samuels had a Rufous-sided Towhee at her feeders.

● Landon Neumann turned up a Spotted Towhee (a western species) on the Dec 19th Cass County CBC. It caused a lot of excitement and obligingly stayed until the 21st, allowing birders from around the state to see it.

● This was an exceptional winter for Snowy Owls. Hundreds of owls came south some even made it to Bermuda! So--why did this happen? There's no complete explanation. The majority of the invading owls were young birds that hatched this year, indicating excellent breeding success in the Canadian Arctic. Evidently there wasn't enough food in the Arctic to sustain them, so they moved south. But are there exceptional conditions in the Arctic--unusual weather, unusual lack of sea ice--that could have affected the owls' movements? No one knows, but it led to fun for birdwatchers here in Indiana.

● Tim Street found a Snowy off I65 just about 8 miles south of Lafayette.

● On Dec 29 Barny joined Rick and Debbie Read to hunt for Snowys in one of the major concentration sites in Laporte County. They spotted three. The previous day, one person found 15 — an amazing total for Indiana.

● Barb Lucas reported a Snowy near Brook in Newton County in late December. It was about 1 mile NW of Brook.

● A snowy was also reported near Lebanon. Wes Homoya & Amy Wetzel both got to see it near Boone County Roads 450 N and 250 E.

● Then coming back from Monticello on March 3, Barbara Allison looked up

into a perfectly Blue sky and said, "look at that!!" A Snowy Owl was flying directly over her and Russ's heads. It was fairly low and moving eastward. They watched it for a few minutes and saw another all white bird farther to the East.

● Dean Zimmerman hosted a nice group of birds in the first few weeks of Feb: up to 4 male Eastern Towhees, several Common Grackles, a Brown Thrasher and a young Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. He also had a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers coming to his suet feeder

● Feb 24 Ken Foster found a group of 15 Sandhill Cranes on the ground in the northwest corner of the cross road of 400 N and 1000 E.



● Barny Dunning had about 100 Greater White-fronted Geese fly over his house in northern Tippecanoe County on Feb 27. They were heading west and calling their heads off.

● March 3rd Landon Neumann and his brother worked some of the river road in Cass County. The highlight was a Snow Goose along Georgetown Rd and White-winged Scoter along East Wabash River Road.

● Del Arvin saw a groundhog crossing 225 in Tippecanoe Co on Feb 3. It missed Groundhogs' day by one and was the earliest Del had ever seen. On Feb 5 Del had 2 small flocks of Sandhill Cranes flying South. A few days later he had sandhills flying north, and on Feb 22 there were multiple skeins flying north. He counted over 1,000 birds. That same day he saw the first 2 Turkey Vultures of spring. Great-horned Owls were a bit late with their winter hooting. Del heard his first on Dec 21st. On March 13 2 Rusty Black-birds showed up. His son Mark saw a

Red-shouldered Hawk at Capilano by the Lake that was carrying nest material.

● Russ Allison spent a few hours on March 3 watching the Wabash River from the Williamsburg parking lot. The highlight was a lone White winged Scoter that swam from the West side of the River to the East. It joined a mixed group of Ducks and caught 2 fish while he watched.

● Susan Ulrich had a flock of 350 Snow Geese flying south and a bit east Feb 22nd when getting the mail in eastern Warren County (same ones Barny had on SAS's field trip?). She also had a flock of 25 Red-winged Blackbirds passing through and her first spring Killdeer.

● March 7 Rick Read checked the unfrozen part of the Tippecanoe River from the Norway Dam (5% ice) downstream almost to US-24, where it was 95% ice-covered. Waterfowl were beginning to

flood in with hundreds of geese along with other species on the open water.

● That same day Landon Neumann and Bud Dodrill found 4 White-winged Scoters along the Wabash in Cass Co.

● Ed Hopkins decision to explore Fountain County on March 10 was a good one. He ended up driving 30 miles which took 6.5 hours as he had to spend a lot of time counting the 27,000+ waterfowl of 18 species he ran across. Geese were most common with 15,053 Snow Geese, followed by 10,752 Canada Geese, 1,474 Greater White-fronted Geese, 11 Ross's Geese, and 1 Cackling Goose. In all he turned up 63 species of birds.

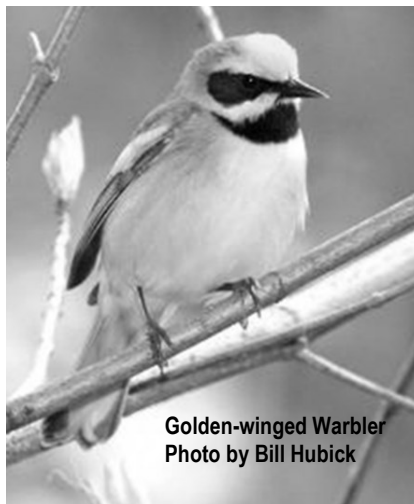
● In mid-March Landon Neumann reported a Red-necked Grebe along the River Bluff Trail. The single grebe became a flock of three that were easily viewed. At least one remained for several weeks. On the 12th, while checking on the grebe, Landon found a Merlin.

Send your nature notes to the editor at sueandtedulrich@msn.com

CONSERVATION NEWS

"Biggest Week" benefits Golden-winged Warbler

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is partnering with Black Swamp Bird Observatory to sponsor the "Biggest Week" birding festival in northwest Ohio on May 6-15. Funds raised at the festival this year will benefit ABC's ***Save the Golden-Wing project***, which will help with habitat preservation, restoration, and local education in Nicaragua, part of the wintering range of the rapidly declining Golden-winged Warbler. For more information on the festival or to register, visit the website: www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com/.



Golden-winged Warbler
Photo by Bill Hubick

Registration is open now, so no need to wait. There are two ways for individuals to donate to the ***Save the Golden-Wing project***. Participants in the Biggest Week can make a donation as part of the registration process or those who want to give to the project without attending the event can contribute via a special donation page which can be found at <http://support.abcbirds.org/biggest-week>.

More on Pebble Mine

At the end of February, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it would take official steps to identify options for protecting Bristol Bay from the potential dangers of the proposed Pebble Mine. This is the critical first step toward banning this destructive mine, which would be gouged out of Alaska's incomparable Bristol Bay wilderness. The agency did so by initiating a rarely-used process under the Clean Water Act that allows it to protect extraordinary resources when they are threatened. This mine would be one of the world's largest open pit copper mines and threaten the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery along with several dozen Global Important Bird Areas (IBAs).

Audubon submitted detailed comments to the EPA about the enormous importance of this region for birds. Bristol Bay is home to 27 global IBAs, from coastal areas to seabird nesting colonies. In addition to the food provided by spawning salmon, the rivers that empty into the bay provide nutrients that support other rich sea life that in turn feeds millions of waterbirds. Some key species that rely on the bay include Steller's Eiders, King Eiders, Black Scoters, Emperor Geese, and Bar-tailed Godwits.

The EPA received more than 850,000 requests from people ranging from sport fishermen to jewelry companies to Alaska Native corporations asking the agency to protect the incredible wildlife resources of the bay. The EPA's announcement is a tremendous step towards protecting a resource that will last for generations of both people and birds.

Congress Seeks to Undermine EPA on Climate Change

As part of the never ending attacks on the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to reduce carbon pollution from new and existing power plants, the House passed the Whitfield-Manchin bill (HR 3826) by a vote of 229-183.

This bill requires Congress to set a date before EPA can move forward on its proposed rule to curb carbon pollution from existing power plants. Getting such a date from Congress is highly unlikely, so the bill effectively strangles the EPA's ability to work on climate change, the number one threat to birds and global biodiversity.

More troubling is a possible strong bid in the Senate (S 1905) as West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) buttonholes his colleagues to give it a serious look. EPA has held a series of listening sessions and is working closely with states to get advice on the best way to reduce carbon pollution—the leading cause of climate change—without creating undue burdens on the economy. The draft rule on regulating carbon from existing power plants which are responsible for 40% of the carbon pollution in the U.S., is expected this summer. In the meantime, EPA is also collecting comments on the final rule to curb pollution from new power plants, wrapping up a multi-year process to finalize this first, but important, step.

Another, more technical attack on EPA's ability to move forward on climate change may come from Mitch McConnell (R-senator) in coming weeks and its effect would be similar—shutting down EPA's ability to limit carbon pollution. If either of these bills starts getting traction in the Senate, you can expect to hear from National Audubon that your urgent help is needed to keep EPA on the job.



Long-eared Owl

Christmas Count Comments

SAS members helped with three separate Christmas Bird Counts this winter. Results are to the right. The Lafayette Count was hampered by driving snow all day which affected access and visibility. Many waterways were also frozen, leading to fewer waterfowl than last year. Snow slowed and stopped in the late afternoon which helped as birds became more active and started to sing and chirp. As always, there were interesting finds such as an Eastern Phoebe and Water Pipits as well as a number of Killdeer, and a Merlin.

The Cass count was new and 19 people showed up to help Landon Neumann. The weather was excellent and so was the birding with 76 different species showing up including a rare Spotted Towhee. Other species of interest were a Winter Wren, and five Northern Mockingbirds.

Willow Slough Iroquois Preserve was the latest count. Much of the water was frozen as evidenced by the low number of ducks. Birds of interest were two Snow Geese, both Short-eared and Long-eared Owls, and seven Rusty Blackbirds.

Overall 91 species and over 26,000 birds were reported on the three counts.

Area Christmas Bird Counts

Species Name: Laf WS/I Cass

Great Blue Heron.....	136	3	17
Mute Swan.....	0	0	8
Trumpeter Swan.....	0	0	0
Snow Goose.....	0	2	0
Canada Goose.....	2003	899	2727
Cackling Goose.....	12	1	10
Wood Duck.....	2	0	0
American Black Duck.....	2	0	3
Mallard.....	814	15	551
Northern Shoveler.....	15	0	0
Northern Pintail.....	0	0	1
Canvasback.....	0	0	0
Gadwall.....	0	0	9
Redhead.....	0	0	0
Common Goldeneye.....	0	2	13
Bufflehead.....	0	0	1
Hooded Merganser.....	2	0	0
Red-breasted Merganser.....	0	0	1
Ruddy Duck.....	2	2	0
Ring-necked Pheasant.....	0	15	0
Wild Turkey.....	0	15	3
Northern Bobwhite.....	0	12	0
Turkey Vulture.....	0	0	10
Bald Eagle.....	8	1	8
Northern Harrier.....	8	12	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	2	1	2
Cooper's Hawk.....	4	2	6
Red-shouldered Hawk.....	4	0	4
Red-tailed Hawk.....	23	15	24
Rough-legged Hawk.....	3	24	6
American Kestrel.....	15	3	15
Merlin.....	1	0	0
American Coot.....	14	1	0
Sandhill Crane.....	0	0	0
Killdeer.....	8	0	1
Wilson's Snipe.....	1	0	1
Ring-billed Gull.....	8	0	77
Rock Pigeon.....	174	6	199
Mourning Dove.....	469	202	304
Eastern Screech-Owl.....	8	7	4
Great Horned Owl.....	0	3	2
Barred Owl.....	0	2	3
Short-eared Owl.....	0	2	0
Long-eared Owl.....	0	2	0
Belted Kingfisher.....	10	1	6
Red-headed Woodpecker.....	1	6	7
Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	55	20	46
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	1	0	10
Downy Woodpecker.....	45	12	50
Hairy Woodpecker.....	9	3	8
Northern Flicker.....	19	1	31
Pileated Woodpecker.....	5	0	5
Eastern Phoebe.....	1	0	1
Blue Jay.....	53	146	141
American Crow.....	527	225	201
Horned Lark.....	667	500	387
Black-capped Chickadee.....	0	12	0
Carolina Chickadee.....	64	0	98
Tufted Titmouse.....	40	14	69

Species Name: Laf WS/I Cass

Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	0	2	2
White-breasted Nuthatch.....	44	19	74
Brown Creeper.....	23	0	31
Winter Wren.....	0	0	1
Carolina Wren.....	32	1	36
Golden-crowned Kinglet.....	34	1	50
Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	0	0	1
Bluebird.....	31	12	74
Hermit Thrush.....	0	0	8
American Robin.....	457	12	347
Northern Mockingbird.....	0	0	5
European Starling.....	2620	154	1635
American Pipit.....	5	0	0
Cedar Waxwing.....	4	0	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler.....	23	0	18
Spotted Towhee.....	0	0	1
Eastern Towhee.....	0	0	2
American Tree Sparrow.....	658	821	175
Chipping Sparrow.....	1	0	0
Field Sparrow.....	6	0	3
Savannah Sparrow.....	0	0	0
Fox Sparrow.....	0	2	5
Song Sparrow.....	132	9	44
Swamp Sparrow.....	27	0	6
White-throated Sparrow.....	40	3	38
White-crowned Sparrow.....	14	0	13
Dark-eyed Junco.....	346	539	203
Lapland Longspur.....	665	1063	265
Snow Bunting.....	0	10	21
Northern Cardinal.....	161	43	131
Red-winged Blackbird.....	1	2	7
Eastern Meadowlark.....	0	9	10
Rusty blackbird.....	0	7	0
Common Grackle.....	1	1	0
Brown-headed Cowbird.....	201	1	400
Purple Finch.....	1	4	1
House Finch.....	222	44	109
American Goldfinch.....	120	37	76
House Sparrow.....	783	224	378
Total Individuals.....	11,885	5,320	9,233
Total Species.....	67	59	76

cw means species seen During Count Week

Lafayette Participants: Delano, Kevin, Mark, Arvin; Mike & Joyce Brattain; Kimberly Cheesman; Barny Dunning; Roger Hedge; Wes Homoya; Ed Hopkins (compiler), Elsa Janle; John Skene; Larry & Rebecca Theller; Chuck Tuttle; Sue Ulrich.

Willow-Slough/Iroquois Participants: Ken Brock, Barb Lucas, John Cassady, Lynn Daugherty, Jed hertz, Linea Hinchman, Ed Hopkins (compiler); Jeff McCoy; Randy Pals.

Cass County Participants: 20 participants, Landon Neumann, compiler.

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 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 otherwise \$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.

C3ZH10 OZ

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Rusty Blackbird Blitz

Rusty Blackbirds are undergoing one of the steepest declines of NA land-birds. More is being learned about their breeding and wintering ecology, but little is known about their migration needs. Are there hot spots where birds congregate? Stopover areas used each year? Are there areas land protection would help? A new 3-year Rusty Blackbird spring migration blitz is trying to find answers as well as new questions.

Indiana's Blitz window is March 1 to mid-April 2014 To contribute, seek out the best known places for seeing rusty blackbirds or explore uncharted areas. Report ALL of your observations to eBird—they want to know both where birds are seen and where they aren't seen. Check out the website rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz for info.

Reconnecting the Kanakee

The Porter County chapter of the Izaak Walton league is buying a 30-acre property with an isolated Kankakee River meander on it in order to reconnect it to the river. This will be a first for the ditched portion of the Kankakee. The river used to meander though 2000 bends across the Grand Kankakee Marsh but was channelized and most of the marsh drained by the 1920's. This meander is between two others owned by the IDNR. All three will be part of the restoration.

The project is the brainchild of LaPorte County Surveyor, Tony Hendricks. He wants the restoration to help with silt and sand deposition to lessen impacts downstream. Izaak Walton wants it to help with water quality and wildlife habitat. The channelized ditch where the river now flows will serve as an overflow during high water events, slowing down the water flow, helping with downstream flooding, and collecting suspended solids.

Tidbits

♦ Thick coal deposits exist today because during the Carboniferous era which occurred 360 to 300 million years ago, plants evolved into lignin-bearing trees and nothing could decompose them until white-rot fungus evolved at the end of the era.

Now when a tree falls in the woods it rots away but, during the carbon era when a tree fell it stayed there and the falling trees coming later just piled on top forming a thick layer that eventually turned to coal.



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Indiana Audubon Spring Program and some Field Trips

Spring Program:

Mark May 2-4 on your calendar as that is when the Indiana Audubon Society (IAS) is holding their 2014 spring meeting at their Mary Gray property near Connorsville. There are programs, field trips, workshops, good food, a big sit, and more. This year's keynote speaker is Joel Greenberg, author of ***The Echoes of their Wings: The life and legacy of the Passenger Pigeon***. His program will be at 8 p.m. Saturday evening and is followed by a book signing. Afterwards, there is a late night bat banding demonstration. Other programs include *Ready, Set, Resplendent Quetzal!*, *Do it Yourself Costa Rica* (Ann Oliver), *Sharing your Birding Passion with Others* (Barb Lucas), *Toxic Effects of Non-native Landscaping* (Jack Berninger), *Birding South Texas: a birthday for the birds* (Chad & Ceth Williams) and *Bats of Indiana* (Ryan Slack). Go to www.Indianaaudubon.org for more information and to register.

Field Trips:

April 26 Atterbury Fish & Wildlife Area. over 5,000 acres of upland, woodland, and marsh habitat with running creeks and multiple shallow impoundments. This trip will consist of light walking and car caravanning to different locations. Doug Gray will be leading this trip, with Bob Carper as co-leader. Meet Doug at the parking lot on the north side of Pisgah Lake at 8 AM. The majority of the trip will be concluded by 11 AM.. Attendance is free for IAS members and youth. Non-members are \$15 each or can purchase a membership the day of the event and the fee will be waived.

June 13-15 Kirtland's Warbler Tour, Grayling, MI. Target species will be the federally endangered Kirtland's Warbler. Other specialty species include Upland Sandpiper, Clay-colored Sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, Common Raven and more. Trip Cost: \$20 IAS members. For more info contact Brad Bumgardner (president@indianaaudubon.org).



Last but not least: **DeTrash the Wabash is April 19 with a May 10th Raindate.**
Meet at Riehle Plaza at 9 to register. Contact raeschnap@gmail.com for more.

