
THE GOLDFINCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

JANUARY 2003

MEETINGS EACH 2ND MONDAY SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE
AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER BOULEVARD

LBJ's, LBB's, and Peeps

Our January 13th program and January 18th field trip are planned to reinforce each other. Steve Hahus, a Biology teacher at Apollo High School, has prepared a presentation designed to help us identify birds that we collectively describe as sparrows and shorebirds. Considered the most difficult to recognize because of their small size, similar markings, plus rapid and elusive movements, birders often shrug in uncertainty and pronounce the bird just seen as an LBJ or an LBB, little brown job or little brown bird.

The Saturday following the program will offer an afternoon field trip to Peabody Wildlife Management Area as an outdoor study of sparrows. The plan is to include the Short-eared Owl in the target species for the trip. The field trip will depart the south parking lot at Owensboro Community College [where we meet for the monthly campus count] at 11:00 AM. For more information about the trip, phone Steve at 733-9342.

The Great Backyard Bird Count 2003

This month our members will be placing posters in high traffic locations around Owensboro that announce the days of February 14-17 as the time when we will be counting birds at our feeders, at schoolyards and public parks all across America. The results of this count will be entered by computer to Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology. For people who don't have computers, there is access to the Internet at the Public Library's Reference Dept.

Now more than ever, Citizen Science is important and the GBBC is fun, and easy. It is something that almost everyone can do from the comfort of indoors.

More info? www.birdsource.org/gbbc/

<http://audubon.wku.edu/daviess/audubon.html>

In this Issue:

- ❑ Christmas Bird Count Report
- ❑ Slough's Program Report
- ❑ Feeding calcium
- ❑ Pneumonoultramicroscopic silicovolcanoconiosis
- ❑ January Calendar of Activities
- ❑ House Bill 1848
- ❑ New Year's Resolutions

Christmas Bird Count Report 2002

Every now and then things go right. This year's holiday bird count was close to perfection. First the weather gave us a break. Unlike the past two years, the temperatures were moderate with bearable wind speeds and without precipitation. Our turnout of counters was higher than we'd hoped. We knew that in order to meet National Audubon Society standards, we had to have a minimum of 10; 17 turned out ranging in age from four years to sixty-somethings. 52 species were identified and 11,694 individual birds were counted. To see details of our count go to

www.audubon.org/bird/CBC

Calcium Feeding For The Birds

This time of year birds are often seen working roadsides for nutrients. It is reasonable to assume they are feeding on spilled grain from farmers' trucks, but it is more likely that the birds are searching for much needed calcium. The environmental detriment of acid rain has decreased the amount of calcium available to birds and when snow and ice cover the ground, they are severely limited to the areas where calcium is available to them.

People who tend feeders for birds can easily add calcium by offering chickens' eggshells. The shells should be dried before they are crumbled and placed outside for the birds. Drying in either microwave or standard ovens is fast and easy.

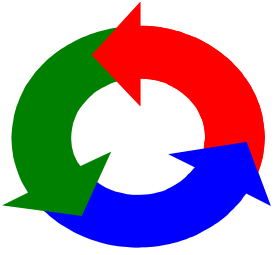
This was the 103rd year that the Audubon Society has overseen the largest citizens' science project in history. For our chapter, it is the first year that we have participated with Audubon's Christmas Count. Hooray for us!

About the Sloughs-- December's Program

Mike Morton explained to our club that 80% of America's wetlands and 90% of her marshes are gone and, for the most part, cannot be reclaimed. As an organization of environmentalists, we know that progress does not preclude all regard for natural stewardship. And, while we cannot go back 200 years to put a plan in place to care more responsibly for our continent, we can, as Mike Morton has, look around us to see what we can do to make our world healthier for everyone.

Morton has installed the mothers of all pumps in the flood plain of the Ohio River where a bottomland hardwood forest grew before Native Americans and European settlers either burned the woods or cleared it for agriculture. In less than 10 minutes, Morton's monster pumps can flood almost 100 acres with water drawn from deep wells. What this means is that thousands of waterfowl and shorebirds can be provided with food and habitat with just the flip of a switch. The water drains into the river when the level is too high for the sloughs' critters.

Mammals have benefitted from the efforts of the Wildlife Management Area staff too. Recently, River Otters have been observed after many years of absence. Bravo, Mike!



Stamps of Approval

If you have not yet discarded your holiday greeting card envelopes, The Florida Audubon Society collects foreign stamps, all U.S. commemorative stamps, other U.S. stamps with a face value of at least \$1, all mint stamps, duck and migratory bird stamps, and all postcards from anywhere with stamps on them. Proceeds from the sale of these stamps are used to support the Center for Birds of Prey.

You may send stamps to John Lampel, 4442 Cayo Grande Drive, Sarasota, FL 34233 or bring your stamps and postcards to the meeting on January 13th and we will pool our donated stamps into a single mailing.

Calendar

Monday January 13th
7 PM Monthly meeting at First
Christian Church

Saturday January 18th
Sparrow study field trip to
Peabody WMA

Sunday January 19th
Community College Count
Meet in the parking lot across
from Deer Park Elementary
at 2 PM

All month, members will be distributing Great Backyard Bird Count posters in public places with high traffic such as groceries, sellers of bird seed, lawn and garden stores and such. Posters can be downloaded and printed from www.birdsource.org/gbbc/

Also, posters will be available at the meeting January 13th for those who volunteer to help with placement for the public's notice.

Resolutions and House Bill 1848

How about making room for one or two environmental related resolutions as we think about our goals for 2003? Targeting an area or making a time commitment to litter pick-up, asking local groceries and pharmacies to recycle the millions of plastic bags and bottles they hand us, and improving the insulation in our homes are examples of kindness to our planet.

If letter writing is one of your environmental resolutions, a great need is for contact with our 4 legislators about the Green River National Wildlife Refuge proposal that is the topic of House Bill 1848. If you need ideas about the need for this refuge here are 4: (1) Tourism-there are more bird watchers than football fans (2) A refuge would save this area from the loss of wildlife habitat to suburban sprawl (3) 25% of earth's wildlife species are expected to go extinct in our lifetimes and loss of habitat is a major reason (4) Kentucky has suffered so much from mining and nuclear pollution that our state deserves the gift of a refuge. To Washington, DC write:

Mitch McConnell 361-A Russell Senate Bldg
20510

Jim Bunning 316 Hart Senate Bldg 20510
Ed Whitfield 236 Cannon HOB 20515-1701
Ron Lewis 2418 Rayburn HOB 20515-1702

And if you have problems keeping resolutions, for \$6 a month, mygoals.com will send you email reminders.

Just to see if you are paying attention, pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis is the longest word in our language **AND** it is a lung ailment that afflicts residents of our region. It results from air pollutants that hang in the Ohio Valley.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

____ I would like to subscribe to paperless membership renewal. Please send me one bill 2 months before my membership expires. 800-274-4201

- For membership in all three: the National Audubon Society, Kentucky Audubon Council, and Daviess County Audubon Society with 10 issues of *The Goldfinch* and 4 issues of *Audubon Magazine*.
- _____ 2 year membership \$30 _____ 1 year membership \$20 _____ 1 year Student or Senior \$15

- _____ **Newsletter Subscription \$10 per year** _____

This newsletter is printed on post consumer 100% Recycled Paper.

DCAS Officers, Chairpersons and Directors: Mike Henshaw, President Rob Rold, Vice-President
Tom Hicks, Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Williams, 2nd Vice-President and Education Madeline Oettinger, Secondary Education Bill Little, Publicity Charles Morris, Community College Census
Mary Kissel, Birdathon Brenda Little, Newsletter Editor Eric Williams, Webmaster
John Thacker, Registered Agent

The Daviess County Audubon Society
306 Hoover Hill Road
Hartford, KY 42347-9522

The Goldfinch
January 2003

Happy New Year!

