
THE GOLDFINCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

JUNE 2004

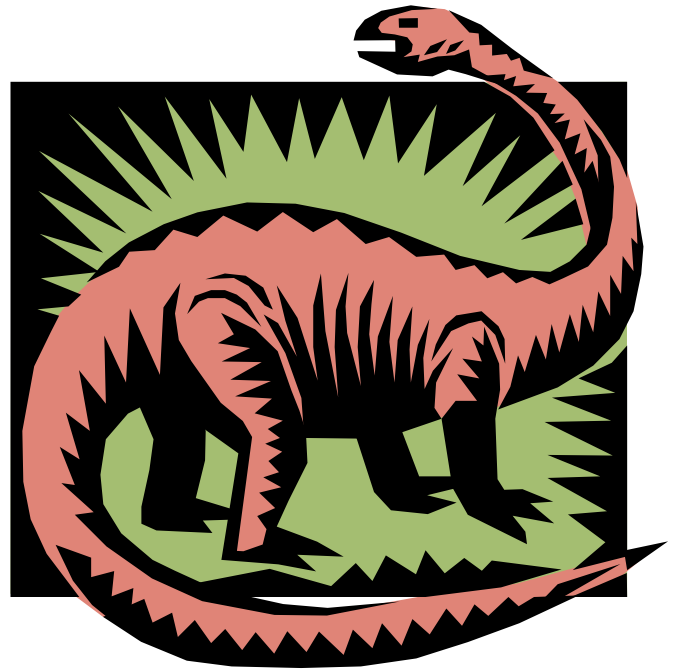
MEETINGS EACH 2ND MONDAY SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE
AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER BOULEVARD

NEWSLETTER LIST

The results are better than we expected. We polled most of our mailing list members last month to ask them to send in request cards if they wish to continue receiving *The Goldfinch*. We have cut our postage and printing costs by almost half. This leaner and meaner mailing list will not only help our chapter's bottom line, but we have decreased the waste of paper. Our newsletter is available to everyone at no cost on our Website www.daviessaudubon.org

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Owensboro Area Museum's *Roots & Shoots*

On June 14th, Jeff Jones of the Area Museum will discuss the idea of coordinating programs between the museum and organizations in the community such as Daviess County Audubon Society. This type of cooperative approach is hoped to be a win-win situation. The goal is for the museum to extend its outreach deeper into the region. At the same time, the participating organizations hope to benefit from the exposure to museum visitors and the name recognition that results. For a meet the speaker experience, everyone is invited to a no-host dinner at the MoonLite at 5:30 PM.

Summer Calendar

Saturday, June 5th 8-10

Bird Count at Ben Hawes Park. Trip leader, Steve Hahus HShahus@aol.com

Monday, June 14th

Regular monthly meeting featuring homemade ice cream during Happy Half-Hour beginning at 7 PM.

Come see pictures of Wayland's baby Bluebirds from eggs to fledge.

Saturday, June 19th 8-11 IS

Great Ohio River Sweep community trash clean up of the riverbank. Meet at Smeathers Park, wear long sleeves and pants plus sturdy shoes. Pack a snack and bring bottled water.

Sunday, August 15th

All Day Trip to Wickliffe, KY to count migrating shorebirds at Lake # 9 and environs. Car Caravan will depart Owensboro Community College south parking lot at 8 AM with stops en route to pick-up tagalongs. Charles Morris is trip leader and count coordinator

wanderingtattler@bellsouth.net
(270) 926-8803

Have fun. Be safe. Use sunscreen and insect repellent. Wear clean underwear in case you're in an accident.

See you in September.

Now THAT'S a Fieldtrip!

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You will remember that Mr. Chuck Mills recently presented a program to our chapter about Least Terns and their nesting grounds very near here. We learned a lot about the Terns' precarious hold onto its population here and elsewhere, but what we did not realize is that Mr. Mills is quite the group travel agent and ecotourism guide. His most recent trip in March was for a group of 17 Gibson Southern Science Club students to Costa Rica. Mills is not a novice when it comes to organizing and chaperoning these educational excursions. In addition to this being his third trip to Costa Rica, he has also escorted Science Club members to Europe 12 times and traveled once to Hawaii.

A few from our chapter have enjoyed the Costa Rican rain forest, hospitality and cuisine, and they will no doubt have fond memories of the young Hoosiers' itinerary:

La Fortuna dormant Poas Volcano

La Paz Waterfall Gardens 9 waterfalls and

world's largest enclosed Butterfly Observatory

Arenal Volcano Mills described the "**fountains of lava**" he saw from his hotel window at 3 AM as the most memorable experience of the trip.

Monteverde (Green Mountain) Cloud Forest Reserve

Tabacon Baths

Nocturnal rainforest guided walk

Canopy Tour A 'flight' through the treetops as high as 150 feet above ground while tethered to a thick wire cable.

Jaco Beach Sun, surf, and beach volleyball.

Manuel Antonio National Park

Carara Biological Reserve

For the future environmentalists he is nurturing, DCAS salutes Mr. Chuck Mills, ecotourism leader extraordinaire.

Penalty Flag! Piling-On

It only makes sense that Mary Kissel should have a way with words, after all, as copy editor at *The Messenger Inquirer*, words are her bread and butter. One after the other of our members has lost loved ones during the past few years, and as Mary stood beside the casket that held her beloved father last Christmas, she observed that it had come her turn to come under "the dreaded Audubon curse". As we tree huggers, birders, nature freaks, and wing-nuts deal with the losses of spouses and parents, we've jokingly referred to ourselves as "a bunch of losers". We knew that the truth of the matter is that everyone goes through the losses from which we were hurting. In addition, we knew that we were much better able to recover from our losses than many people because of our close connection with nature, its calming quiet solace, and feeling a part of the cycle of life that we know so well.

Rose Ann Radzelovage uses a term to describe her fellow Audubon friends as "my people". Recently Mary applied terminology for a football foul, not fowl, to setbacks that have happened to more of "our people". The foul Mary thought accurately describes events of the past couple of weeks is "**Piling-on**". When a player is down and others just keep jumping on top of him, there is usually a penalty assessed for piling-on.

Blow the whistle and throw the red flag! Our President, Rob Rold was in the hospital for 11 scary days last month. He fought-off a life threatening infection and narrowly escaped major surgery. He and his wife, Durinda, have recently been through the death of Durinda's mom, Mrs. Greer, and were not yet back on their feet before life's piling on hit them. Sounds like clipping and piling on.

Yes, you are hearing another whistle and yet another red flag is flying, for in the week of May 24th one of our founders, Bert Powell, suffered a scare with internal bleeding and was in the process of dealing with the best treatment path to choose. Wife Millie's broken leg was in the final stages of healing when, Bam!, **Piling-on!** again! The windstorm that hit Daviess and surrounding counties the night of May 27th damaged the Powell family home in Maceo. Bert and Millie's son, Willie, and his wife were occupying the home and had spent the past several months remodeling it. No one was injured in the storm. Bert proudly calls himself a tree hugger and the irony of the event is that most of the damage to the home was caused by fallen trees.

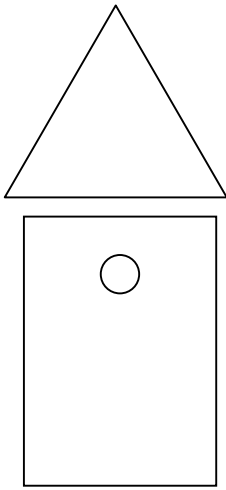
To all the losers, to Rob and Durinda, to all the Powell family, we send our love and compassion. We are a small and closely-knit group of people in the Audubon Society who think of "our people" almost as family. One thing those at the bottom of the pile can count on is that their friends are close by and with them daily. When they can see the light of day again, when the clouds part, **and the clouds WILL part**, when that beautiful ray of sunlight breaks through, they will see a circle of smiling faces and outstretched hands. Their people, fowl friends, have been with them all the while. They've never been alone.

The Tooth of the Matter

This tip comes from Sharon Sorenson's presentation to the Evansville Audubon Society in April. A good, easy and safe way to clean hummingbird feeders, especially the hard-to-clean pieces such as bee guards, is to soak them in denture cleaner. Do not put the feeder in the dishwasher because the detergent is too harsh and may leave a residue.

She recommends bringing the feeders in at dark after the end-of-day feeding; soaking them in something such as Polydent overnight; refilling them and replacing them before retiring or very early the next morning before the birds arrive.

If you use bleach, even in very diluted solution, rinse, rinse, rinse and then rinse again.



Wayland's Little Bluebird Trail's Financial Plight

Things are going well on the school campus where we have our nestbox trail and camera project set up. To date we've fledged 4 Eastern Bluebirds and 5 Robins. We have resident Bluebirds, Robins, Tree Swallows, and House wrens in various stages of avian family life at the present.

However the funding cutbacks that have come out of Frankfort have caused a shortfall of \$150 that was planned to come to the project from the Wayland Elementary School budget. Therefore, we are coming to the members of Daviess County Audubon Society and others who receive this newsletter to ask if you would

Adopt a Box.

If we can find sponsors for each of the 7 boxes on the nestbox trail, we can make-up our funding shortfall. If you would like to adopt a box, the cost is only \$20 each for 5 of the boxes and \$30 for each of the two boxes that contain video cameras. You can mail your donation to our treasurer, Charles Morris, at 1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, KY 42303 with a notation on the memo about the reason for your contribution.

For your sponsorship, you will receive information about your box from the children who will be monitoring the boxes each week. You will be able to see how your donation is being used. You will receive a photo of the nestbox you've adopted along with the thanks of the students who are fledgling ornithologists in need of some financial assistance before our year's end, June 30th.

North American Bluebird Society Meeting

The state of Kentucky will be represented in Ithaca, NY next month as the NABS meets at Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology. Bill and Brenda Little plan to attend the convention of state affiliate members representing the Kentucky Audubon Council and the Kentucky Bluebird Society. Bill is the President of the KAC and Brenda is the coordinator for the KBS in Ohio County.

The NABS meeting the second week of July features 3 kinds of educational venues. The four-day meeting is packed with program presenters from all across North America. The display area at the convention features booths of the finest vendors, educational materials, and high quality arts and crafts both for sale and for free as many of the people manning booths offer tips, information and advice without any charge at all. And the third offering of the convention is a series of field trips all around the countryside of upstate New York scheduled before, during and after the core dates of the convention.

A word of warning might be in order here. Just the same as when your Uncle Mike comes back from his first trip to Europe with a bazillion photos, you might want to keep an eye peeled in parking lots and grocery stores to avoid getting cornered by the Little's when they return from New York. They have a tendency to rattle-on a bit for the first month or so after one of these meetings

West Nile Virus Program Follow-up

The shirts and pants being sold by a variety of mail order stores under the label **Buzz Off** Insect Shield have proved to be effective, but in order to work, they must be worn. Some of the clothes have proved to be too hot for some of our testers. We have found kits for sale on the Internet costing \$10 to \$20 plus shipping that can be used to treat clothes with permethrin. www.travelerssupply.com No local source has been found for treated clothes or kits.

Gratification R Us

But Our Gratification is Not Always Instant

It is a good thing that the National Audubon Society asks us to prepare a report at the end of each year. Were it not for the self-assessment requirement, it is likely that years would pass without the evaluation we go through every June. We maintain a notebook with copies of our annual reports going back several years as part of the chapter archives. Sometimes as we prepare the report for the current year, we look back at prior years just to be certain we have not overlooked anything. Preparation of the report is as much a tool for looking back at where we've been as it is a valuable tool for planning the year that lies ahead.

One thing that was noticed as the past few years' reports were reread recently is that sometimes projects don't come to fruition for a few years. Silky Dogwood trees were sold as a fundraiser and were given as gifts at First Christian Church's Earth Day Block Party 3 years ago. These native shrubby trees, which are wonderful for birds, were planted in Daviess, McClean, and Ohio counties. The first year the tree seedlings appeared to be struggling without much growth at all. Then they survived the winter of '03 which was a real doozie. It is this spring that the trees have come into their own. They are now averaging 4' in height with about equal diameter. They were covered in blooms last month and promise to be heavy with purple fruit this fall.

Remember when Tornado 2000 ripped up mature trees that awful January from the area around Apollo High School, across Wesleyan College's campus, and over the hills of Elmwood and Rosehill Cemeteries? The American Association of Retired Persons, AARP, undertook a program, *Breathe Easy*, of planting tree seedlings in small nursery settings. *Breathe Easy* set up a display at one of our meetings and recruited a few volunteers from DCAS to weed, water, and cultivate the seedlings for a year. Many of those trees have been transplanted already and now tower over our heads.

Over a year ago, Eric Williams gave a program to our club about using native plants in the landscape. Eric provided excellent handouts with his Power Point presentation. When the students at Wayland Alexander



Elementary School in Hartford, Kentucky worked with their birding trail this spring, they quickly realized that their birds were in need of habitat improvement. Wayland was built 5 years ago and the campus is made up mostly of mowed utility turf. From a bird's viewpoint, there is a great need for shelter and food on the hills and valleys that make up the 30-acre school grounds. The students decided to transplant some of the White pine trees from the nursery that *Breathe Easy* gave them for planting 3 years ago. It was a blustery spring day in March when the youngsters and their teachers wrestled the trees out of the nursery and moved them to a ridge where they could serve as a windscreen. One of the children stated adamantly, "These birds have got to have some shelter from the wind!"

The Wayland students also used Eric Williams' handouts to design a butterfly garden for one corner of their campus. Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife's Salato Wildlife Education Center donated plants for the garden. Eric's handouts were also used for planting a garden of Kentucky native ornamental plants at the Ohio County Senior Center in April.

The Daviess County Audubon Society does a lot of good things. Sometimes you just have to wait a bit to see how much good we've really done.

Mary's Migration Fiesta

It was just past noon and the skies were threatening a spring cloudburst while the education committee was making final preparations under the picnic shelter at Estes Elementary. Mary Kissel was giving her pre-game pep talk to her volunteers du jour. "Ok, guys, this is it. When we get through today, we're done for the year. It's downhill from here."

Before long they could be seen coming from the back door of the school, walking slowly at first and then like a storm moving over the western plains, they picked up speed and began to run toward the shelter. It was not because of the threatening weather that their approach sped up, but because of memories of International Migratory Bird Day classes [to be more precise, parties] from years past. There are only about 8 of them plus the faculty and staff in a ratio of 3:1, but they are huge in importance to our chapter's education outreach goals. They are the children of Spanish-speaking parents who have moved to Kentucky to work as laborers on farms and in factories.

Jose burst out with, "Are we going to hunt for worms?", remembering the games we played at our first attempt to make contact with the Hispanic children in our community 4 years ago. We remember the year when tiny Rosa, who spoke only a few words of English, understood that the object of the game was the same as a migrating Hummingbird's challenge, to find food, nectar, and a place to rest. Rosa's speed, tenacity,

and defiance of school bus traffic were key to her successful feigned migration from the Yucatan Peninsula to Kentucky. Her tiny arms were loaded with sipper pouches of fruit juice, plastic bags of gummy worms, and sesame seed cookies at game's end.

These children have grown in our hearts through the years. Their black eyes and hair, their sparkling smiles, and their exuberance are infectious. These young people have also grown in their second language skills to the point that it is no longer necessary to weave charades into sentences directed at them. Their map skills were evident last month as they pointed on a map to countries in South and Central America, traced a line across the Gulf of Mexico, and proudly shouted their knowledge of where Tennessee and Kentucky are.

Education Chair, "Maria", as she's called in Spanish, had prepared games to help the youngsters deal with obstacles that avian migrants face. Migration hopscotch was not too difficult the first time but as squares were blocked by "development", communication towers, and logging operations these Hispanic bird imitators found it harder and harder to reach their destination. It isn't as easy as it looks to be a bird. That's a fact in any language. Another fact is that a DCAS mission is being accomplished. Mary Kissel is directing this effort, just one of several programs, that is fun and meaningful to a group of youngsters who are loaded with pizzazz and potential. Gracias, Maria!

Would you like some Mercury with your glass of Arsenic? You might have noticed that our federal government is proposing to allow power plants to make changes in the **Clean Air Act** that would allow them to continue dumping unhealthy levels of Mercury into the air. That mercury winds up in the water where it poisons everything and everybody from plankton to homo sapiens. Because of a public outcry from 500,000 citizens, the EPA has extended until June 29th a period to accept comments from the general public. We'll have a table set-up at the meeting June 14th with letter-writing materials. This is a very serious issue. To read more, go to <http://www.capitolconnect.com/audubon/summary.asp?subject=298> You can write directly to the EPA at **EPA, Docket #OAR-2002-0056; 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; Washington, DC 20460.**

The Goldfinch
306 Hoover Hill Road
Hartford, Kentucky 42347

June 2004

Please check the address label above to determine the expiration date of your membership. To renew your membership, please send a check for \$10 to Charles Morris, Treasurer 1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, Kentucky 42301. Your newsletter subscription is part of your local membership dues. Please include this page with your check so that your old address label can be used to update your newsletter subscription. Thank you.

We strongly urge you first to keep your membership current on the local level and then if you wish you may renew your membership in The National Audubon Society as well. The National Audubon Society has sent a small amount of money to our chapter the past two years, termed a 'Safety Net'. The amount is not enough to pay for our newsletter. We need your local dues. Thanks.

Officers 2003-2005

President	Rob Rold 684-3209
Vice President	Carolyn Williams 683-5863
2 nd Vice President	Steve Hahus
Secretary/Treasurer	Charles Morris

