
THE GOLDFINCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY 2004

MEETINGS EACH 2ND MONDAY SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE

AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER BOULEVARD

WE'RE PRUNING OUR NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST

For every business entity, whether for profit or not, there comes a time to take stock, to examine its efforts for the purpose of determining what works and what doesn't, what promotes its mission statement, and what changes need to be made. For our chapter this self-analysis is done each year between May and July as we prepare our annual report for the National Audubon Society, NAS.

Education is our number one expenditure, just as it should be. Our second largest cash outlay is for the newsletter. We buy 100% post-consumer recycled paper, use do-it-yourself copy machines, and pay first class postage of \$.37 per piece because our membership number falls well under the postal service's threshold for bulk mail.

For years we have mailed newsletters to people we don't know, names and addresses we don't recognize, because those names were sent to us by NAS. For years NAS gave DCAS a portion of the dues paid by most people living in the Owensboro zip codes. That money came close to covering the cost of the newsletter. Now things have changed. NAS no longer gives a portion of dues to local chapters. For the past couple of years, NAS has sent a small amount of money to us calling it "a safety net". The money sent to us is intended to help wean us away from

'dues share', the term NAS used for the portion of some membership dues that was returned to local chapters.

So now we find ourselves needing to analyze our second largest annual expense, about \$500, the cost of our newsletter. As an environmental organization, it behooves us to take stock of our use of natural resources as well as what we do with our limited funds.

We have to realize that people in America today are overwhelmed by print material sometimes termed junk mail. We have to consider that when we send newsletters to people who never respond in any manner, perhaps we are being wasteful of paper and our limited resources. In interacting with other Audubon chapters all across the country, we have learned that our chapter is not unusual, only about 20% of any local chapters' members actually intend to belong to the local chapter. Roughly 80% only intend to belong to NAS.

The purpose of our newsletter is to inform DCAS members and the general public of chapter programs and activities, to educate about environmental issues worldwide with a local emphasis, and to foster cohesiveness among our members. We are placing a task on some of you with this issue that will allow you to opt out of monthly mailings. If there is a self-addressed postcard attached to this page, **all you need do to continue receiving this newsletter is attach a stamp and drop it in the mail** or you may indicate your interest in continuing to receive *The Goldfinch* by sending an email to

littlefizgig@starband.net

May Calendar

Thursday, May 6th

10 AM at 4-H Camp in Dawson Springs join Rhea Ewing at the lake for a planning session for her work designing and building a Nature Trail as a requirement for her **Girl Scout Gold Award**.

Saturday, May 8th 8AM-10AM

Ben Hawes Park bird count. Meet at the parking lot at the entry on Highway 60 West. This field trip is our **International Migratory Bird Day** commemoration.

Saturday, May 8th

National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day
See editorial on page 3. For help with helping your cat adapt to life lived indoors www.abcbirds.org/cats/catsindoors/htm

Monday, May 10th 7 PM

Monthly meeting at First Christian Church. Use the Portico entry on J.R. Miller Boulevard. Happy Half-Hour with refreshments before the meeting.

Thursday May 13th-Tues May 18th

Expected fledging days for 4 Bluebirds from the camera box at Wayland Elementary School.

Monday, May 17th Noon to 3PM

Education Committee's celebration of International Migratory Bird Day with **migrant students** at Estes Elementary School's shelter on the Leitchfield Road. The program will feature games, a nature walk and refreshments. For more information contact Mary Kissel, mjkisselchirp45@aol.com

Shorebirds. Seen any Lately?

They have been called the hardest of all birds to distinguish. They are often seen in large flocks and when the hordes are carefully studied, there is usually a lone bird or a small number that is a species unto itself. Birds are just like anything else, the more you know about them, the more you enjoy and appreciate them.

Come to our meeting the second Monday in May, the 10th, to hear Beth Cuzio of the Department of Fish and Wildlife talk to us about Shorebirds.

Let's go to Ford Farm's Heron Rookery

At the time the newsletter is headed for the copy machine, the exact date and time of May's field trip has not been firmed-up. It is expected that we will target the Great Blue Heron nests on the edge of the Green River where Joe Ford has invited us again to his family farm. We will try to have one or more members bring their spotting scopes so that we can watch these animated birds as they interact high in their avian nursery. The details of the trip will be decided at the meeting on May 10th.

The students and faculty at Wayland Alexander Elementary School, the Together We Care Foundation, and the community of Hartford, Kentucky proudly announce the hatching of 4 beautiful baby Eastern Bluebirds in their East Wing Camera Nest Box on April 29th. Thank you, Daviess County Audubon Society and Mr. & Mrs. Bill Freels, for your funding of this blessed event.



It's not just for the birds....

It's for the best.

Many birders are labeled, almost always unfairly, as cat haters. The logic is that cats kill birds; birders love birds; ergo bird lovers can't be cat lovers. The truth of the matter is that well informed environmentalists, among them birders, are painfully aware of the toll that free-roaming cats take on wildlife, especially birds. Another fact is that birders, bird watchers, the group dubbed 'bird lovers' likely have about the same percentage of pet cats sharing their homes as the bulk of Americans.

The general population does not know that the common house cat is not native to North America. Cats were brought here more for rodent control than for the beloved pets they have become for many millions of people. I will use my own history with pet cats to illustrate the different phases of this cat lover and bird lover's life journey:

Childhood- Our cat was poisoned by a neighbor who resented her trespassing from our yard into hers. I was devastated by the inhumane infliction of suffering and death upon our pet.

Young adult- I kept my pet cats indoors because of the dangers to them of the busy city street just outside my rented home.

Office worker- During nesting season I kept our office cat, Leroy Brown, indoors because he inventoried every bird's nest within 500 feet of our building and either cleaned them out or waited for the fledglings to drop to the ground for his amusement and their demise.

Adult homeowner- Having moved to the

country, I allowed our cats freedom to be indoors or out and didn't give a thought to what they might be doing to birds, toads, and small mammals while I was away at work.

Senior Adult- I learned from the American Bird Conservancy of their Cats Indoors program and finally faced the music about how harmful cats are to wildlife if they are allowed to roam freely. I then began to keep our pet cats indoors except when the willer of the two streaks past my ankles and through the doorway for brief and infrequent periods of time outside.

Ground nesting birds are the most vulnerable to being wiped out by cats. In backyards it is the Towhee, Goldfinch, and Song Sparrow that are easy targets for felines. The next most vulnerable are chicks in the nest and newly fledged birds that are either unable to fly at all or are only able to fly clumsily for very short distances.

The American Bird Conservancy, many Humane Society organizations and Veterinary associations encourage feline pet people to keep their cats indoors for their own health and safety, for good relationships with neighbors, and for a wildlife habitat free from an introduced species that is by nature a killing machine.

May the 8th, which is also International Migratory Bird Day, has been designated as **National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day**. I think I can speak for our chapter when I encourage our own members, our neighbors and our community leaders to join the effort to reduce the carnage by joining the Cats Indoors effort. Brenda Little, Editor

The Goldfinch
306 Hoover Hill Road
Hartford, Kentucky 42347

May 2004

Note: There is dated material inside which may require action on your part. Please give this your prompt attention.

Printed on 100% post consumer recycled paper

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

daviessaudubon.org
