

# THE GOLDFINCH



Daviess County Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.org

September 2008

## One man's trash ... chapter treasure



From left: Donna Hanley, Mike Henshaw, Steve Hahus, Sherry Henshaw, Tony Eaden, Carolyn Williams, Jill Flachskam and Rose Ann Radzelovage pose with trash picked up along two roads. Also participating were: Madeline Oetinger, Grace Ford and Mary Kissel.

### *DCAS hits road to raise program funds*

Members of the Daviess County Audubon Society began the chapter year by taking trash off the road to put cash in the chapter's treasury.

Eleven members participated in Daviess County's Trash for Cash program, removing more than 25 bags of garbage off Fisher and Keller roads southwest of Owensboro Aug. 9. Tony Eaden pulled a trailer to haul the trash off.

Healthy club participation lightened the load for all, as they worked both sides of three miles of roads. At \$100/center line mile, the club made \$330.85 from the project, plus \$5 from salvaged aluminum cans Rose Radzelovage took to a local recycling center.

*See Trash, Page 2*



Left; Carolyn Williams and Sherry Henshaw tidy up Keller Road; right: Jill Flachskam, Madeline Oetinger and Rose Ann Radzelovage don safety vests.



# September meeting critical to chart chapter year

The 2008-09 chapter year will begin with a 7 p.m. meeting Sept. 8 at First Christian Church, Seventh Street and J.R. Miller Blvd. Who is the program speaker? You. Please bring your ideas for meeting programs. What sort of subjects would you like to learn more about this year? Ideas also are needed for field trips. Where would be ideal places to spot birds, animals and plants in the tri-state?

Also to be resolved is the future of the education committee. The June meeting ended without anyone stepping up to replace Grace Ford as chapter chairman. A key mission of the Audubon Society is education – we must teach the next generation to protect the Earth. The team already has been asked to lead a November Girl Scout birding program at Camp Pennyroyal.



## Goin' Camping

*Charles Morris and Mary Kissel taught beginning bird watching during the annual summer camp at the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden in mid-June. The students braved warm weather to gaze at feeders, circle the garden and check out the hopping frogs at the pond.*



## Volunteers needed for annual Scarecrow Festival

Volunteers are being sought for a Daviess County Audubon Society information table at the annual Western Kentucky Botanical Garden Scarecrow Festival and contest.

The celebration, part of the series of Wondrous Sundays for David Rogers' Big Bugs sculpture display, will be 2 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 14 at the garden, 25 Carter Road (next to the Thompson-Berry soccer complex).

With hundreds visiting scarecrows made from local students and organizations, the festival has proven to be a good way for the DCAS to gain additional exposure in the community. Promotional material will be distributed, and volunteers will apply free bird tattoos to kids.

Anyone interested in participating or supplying a table for the event may sign up at the September meeting or contact Mary Kissel at [mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net](mailto:mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net) or 926-3321.

## Trash

*From Page 1*

The club benefited from relatively cool, dry weather. With a 7:30 a.m. start, members worked in pairs to complete their task in about three hours.

"It sure beats selling donuts," Carolyn Williams said, with Radzelovage noting that long-ago daylong bird seed sales didn't reach a third of that total.

Traffic on the roads wasn't particular heavy as members combed roadsides and ditch lines for garbage. Several safety measures also were in place. Members donned neon green vests and wore plastic gloves for the mission. Members were not to remove potentially dangerous items, such as broken bottles and syringes, dead animals and large objects. Large warning signs were posted at the entrances of the roads. With ditches several feet deep, concentration was a key, even in the face of a singing bobwhite and darting indigo buntings. Members were instructed to face traffic as they worked.

Participants in the project included: Carolyn Williams, Steve Hahus, Rose Ann Radzelovage, Tony Eaden, Mike Henshaw, Sherry Henshaw, Jill Flachskam, Madeline Oetinger, Donna Hanley, Grace Ford and Mary Kissel.

# Junior Audubon Society joining study on pollination, bee threat

By Brenda Little

The Junior Audubon Society at Wayland Elementary in Hartford is raring to go. We are happy to have all five of the adult leaders, Starla Cravens, Scott Harp, Chanda Shock, Bill and Brenda Little, returning with a year's experience under our belts which should bode well for a good year.

During the summer, the students have conversed with their adult sponsors about their enjoyment of the club's activities during the 2007-2008 school year. They brag that they believe the JAS is the very best club at their school. Parents as well have told us about their children's enthusiasm and excitement relating to the club's programs and events. It appears that we have filled all the available slots for membership already.

This summer the students have been cultivating two types of plants in a garden. There are sunflower seeds sprouting for a bee pollination study planned for late September and early October as part of the Great Sunflower Project under the auspices of the Department of Biology of San

Francisco State University. There are more than 32,000 participants across the United States and Canada collecting data and studying pollinators. It will be exciting to see how these data map across the United States and Canada. The impetus for the study by JAS of bees using sunflowers came from Colony Collapse Disorder, which suggests that it is still having a major effect on honey bees. Last year, 32 percent of the commercially managed hives in the United States were lost (29 percent to Colony Collapse Disorder), and this year the Apiary Inspectors of America are reporting that 36 percent

of the hives have been lost. Wow, that is a third of the honey bee colonies!

From San Francisco State University, we have learned other disturbing bee news: Bumblebees appear to have crashed in some of the Midwestern states. Chip Taylor (of MonarchWatch in Kansas) writes "Bumblebees appear to have crashed in a number of locations on the west coast, in some places in the east and here in Lawrence, Kan. I'm a longtime bumblebee watcher, and I haven't seen a queen yet this year nor has one of my colleagues, Rudolf Jander, who has a large garden devoted to attracting pollinators."

The local bumblebee decline may be related to a series of warm winters with little snow cover. Under these conditions, predation by skunks and opossums of overwintering queens that tend to winter in abandoned mouse nests appears to be higher than in cold winters. The local decline also may be due in part to the 4-10 April freeze in the spring of 2007. The extreme conditions during this cold period and the lack of flowers for the following month may have eliminated many of bumble bee nests initiated in 2007.

Also in the school's garden, there are 30 hills of pumpkin plants with an average of three plants per hill. We are excited to see just how many pumpkins our garden will produce for the students at Wayland. We opted not to thin the plants because we are interested in producing many small pumpkins rather than fewer very large ones.

We expect that Scott Harp, our favorite "critter gitter," will kick off the year with specimens that he gathers from ditches, forests and leaf litter near the school grounds. Scott is building quite a reputation with the kids who can hardly contain their excitement when they hear that Scott will be doing the program for their after-school club.

## Adventures program to focus on natural feats

With the start of the school year comes the next season for Audubon Adventures – curriculum-based packets to enhance science classes in local schools.

This year's theme for student news magazines is "Feats of Nature" – four ways organisms adapt to their environment. They include:

**Migration:** Find out all about birds that migrate from North America to Central and South America. Students will learn about other orders that migrate in the Northern Hemisphere: including gray whale, salmon, caribou, monarch, pronghorn ram and polar bears.

**Animal builders:** This will explore why and how animals build. All animal builders are remaking their environment in a way that aids their survival, providing shelter from weather and protection from enemies to keep young safe.

**Animal defenses:** Students will investigate strategies that animals use to defend themselves, including camouflage, spitting, intimidation, mimicry, emission of bad odors and playing dead.

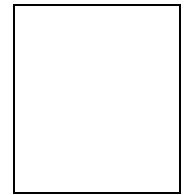
**Plants:** Students will learn how plants make their own food using solar energy, supply the planet with oxygen and shelter animals and insects.

The in-class kits also include a classroom resource manual and poster, with other resources available online, including quizzes based on material. Teachers also are eligible for a subscription to *The Goldfinch*.

Last year's teachers will get the first opportunity to renew.

## Chapter won't join ecotourism effort

At the June picnic, members opted not to partner with retired teacher Chuck Mills for a regional ecotravel program. Members thought the financial costs tied to the trips would be too great a burden for the chapter.



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## Playing 'tag' may save butterflies

Help track the migratory movements of Mexico-bound monarch butterflies by participating in tagging activities at John James Audubon State Park in Henderson.

Public tagging events will take place at 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 13 and Sept. 20. After an introductory program at the Audubon museum, participants will carpool to the Sloughs Wildlife Management Area for two to three hours of outdoor tagging. Tags and nets will be provided. Dress for potentially marshy conditions. The fee is \$3/person.

Julie McDonald, parks spokeswoman, notes that the sessions are part of the 17<sup>th</sup> fall season of the University of Kansas Monarch Watch. Tagging efforts, and the subsequent recoveries of tagged butterflies, contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of the monarch population, so the public can learn about all factors, human caused and natural, which affect it. Two of the butterflies tagged last September were recovered in March in Mexico.

In addition, the park has 20 mini tagging kits available at the gift shop. Each kit is \$5 and includes five tags and complete instructions, along with a coupon for 10% off your next online purchase from the Monarch Watch Shop. All proceeds go toward future tagging programs at the park.



### Sloughs trip begins Girls Inc. nature study with Joe Ford library

One of Owensboro's most-honored youth organizations will be "walking the walk" toward a greater understanding of the region's natural history this school year.

The Joe Ford Nature Library will be presenting their yearlong "Walking the Walk and Talking the Talk" program with Girls Incorporated, beginning Sept. 13 with a trip to Hardy Slough in Henderson County.

The girls will leave for the Sloughs Wildlife Management Area at 9 a.m., where they will learn about the refuge and learn why it has become an important rest stop for food-seeking birds along the Mississippi Flyway.

After a brown bag lunch, the girls' return trip will include a stop at the Hopewell Indian site on Kentucky 811, where they will learn about this tribe and look for relics. Back in Daviess County, they will take a brief nature hike at Ben Hawes State Park.

### Officers

Steve Anderson, president, 273-9747, [stevoander@peoplepc.com](mailto:stevoander@peoplepc.com)

Steve Hahus, vice president, 733-9342, [Hshahus.aol.com](mailto:Hshahus.aol.com)

Sherry Henshaw, secretary, [mikesherry@vci.net](mailto:mikesherry@vci.net), 275-4250

Charles Morris, treasurer, 926-8803, [wanderingtattler@yahoo.com](mailto:wanderingtattler@yahoo.com)

Mary Kissel, newsletter editor, 926-3321

Local dues are \$15 a year. Please keep your local chapter dues current by mailing this page with your check to: Charles Morris, treasurer, 1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, KY 42303.

If you have a news item or Goldfinch question, contact editor Mary Kissel at 926-3321, or [mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net](mailto:mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net).

### Convert Goldfinch to online edition

Would you like to save a tree ... and the club a little money?

With the recent jump in postage, members are being encouraged to have their Goldfinch newsletter delivered to them online instead through "snail mail." If you would like to convert your Finch to an online subscription, please contact Mary Kissel at 926-3321 or [mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net](mailto:mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net)