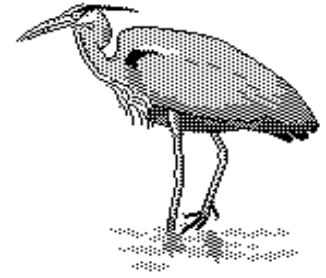




TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties, Indiana
Volume XXVII, Number 1, January 2001



OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



COMING EVENTS



JANUARY 2001

NO FIELD TRIP OR PROGRAM IN JANUARY

FEBRUARY 2001

FIELD TRIP, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, AT 9:00AM - The Silver Creek Tree Farm Southwest of Silver Lake

The field trip group will assemble at the T-junction where CR-450W intersects with CR-1200S. From the center of Silver Lake in Kosciusko County drive south on SR-15 one mile to CR-1200S then west about 1¼ miles to CR-450W. Owner Dean Baker and field trip leader Dave Hicks will lead the way through various tree farm habitats looking for winter birds.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 7:30PM - Video on Sparrows and Other Members of the Finch Family in Action

NORTH MANCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY BLOCHER ROOM. This 62-minute video covers all 55 species of North American finches and sparrows. The narration deals with habitat, behavior, and field marks that help birders identify each species. The video will enable viewers to become familiar with look-alike species as preparation for seeing them in the wild.

NEW TIPPECANOE AUDUBON INTERNET WEBSITE

Tippecanoe Audubon has a place on the Internet. The web address is www.tippeaudubon.org. Each issue of *Tippe-Topics* will be posted on the website making it easy to check on activities in case you discarded or lost the issue that came in the mail. Eventually you will be able to check this website for information about wildlife sanctuaries and conservation issues. Special thanks are due to board member Greg Clark of the Manchester College Physics Department who is developing the website.

BIRDERS BENEFIT BLUEBLOODS

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

A dinosaur wandering along the seashore about 150 million years ago would have had a good chance of spotting a domed, multi-legged creature about the size of a meat platter. The creature would have had a stiff, spiky tail. It would have been the Horseshoe Crab that was already there to greet the first dinosaurs when they arrived on the scene. Even 350 million years ago Horseshoe Crabs were haunting the world's seashores. Remarkably, in the intervening years this creature has changed very little. Evidently it is so well adapted to its environment that genetic alterations are quickly "weeded out". The Horseshoe Crab is a true blue blood--its blood is really blue. Unlike the red iron-containing blood of most other animal species, Horseshoe Crab blood contains copper. This makes its blue blood highly valuable for various medical tests.

But what do Horseshoe Crabs have to do with birds? The answer is a lot. It turns out that the time when Horseshoe Crabs climb up on the beach to lay their eggs coincides with the time when many shore birds are making the final leg of their migration north from South America to the Arctic Circle. The millions of eggs the crabs have deposited in the sand become a bountiful food source for the migrating birds. Of course the birds do not eat all the eggs. There are always enough eggs left to maintain a healthy population of Horseshoe Crabs. At least that is the way it used to be.

Enter human beings into the picture. Horseshoe Crabs can be processed into an excellent bait to attract conches and eels. Although the blue blood of the crabs is used to test the safety of injectable medicines, this use amounts to only a minor use of the crabs. Furthermore, withdrawal of some of an animal's blood does not usually result in its death. It is the harvesting of Horseshoe Crabs for bait that has caused their population to dwindle rapidly. A recent study found that their numbers are

only a tenth of the 1990 level. Although most Atlantic coastal states have voluntarily complied with a 25% cut in their Horseshoe Crab harvests, Virginia continues to allow the species to be "strip mined". According to Daniel P. Beard, speaking on behalf of the National Audubon Society, "Virginia has been undermining the conservation efforts of all other Atlantic states." As a consequence, Commerce Secretary Norman Y. Mineta ordered the state of Virginia to reduce its take of Horseshoe Crabs significantly or face a total shut down of the industry by the federal government.

The results of this action, taken last August, have not been publicized, but apparently there are responsible people and organizations fighting on behalf of Horseshoe Crabs. This gives hope that they will once again visit our shores in something like their former numbers. They will then continue to serve as the food source so essential to migrating shore birds.

It must be noted that the key player in this drama has been Secretary of Commerce Mineta, not the Secretary of the Interior or the director of the Environmental Protection Agency. Secretary Mineta was evidently aware of the fact that birds' watchers spend some \$35 million in Atlantic Coast states during their observations of the shore bird migrations. It is gratifying to learn that the economic activity of birders is beginning to have some clout, even in a department not usually associated with the conservation movement. So if conservation helps Horseshoe Crabs rebuild to their former numbers, birders can share in the credit. Stand up and take a bow!

(Information for this article was taken from an article by Francis X. Clines, "U.S. Acts to Protect Vital Horseshoe Crab," *The New York Times*, August 9, 2000.)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS IN TIPPECANOE AUDUBON TERRITORY

By David L. Eiler, Newsletter Editor

The National Audubon Society sponsors over 1500 Christmas Bird Counts in North America and elsewhere. More than 50,000 people take part in these counts. The results are put on the Internet by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and may be found at www.birdsource.org. They are also published jointly by the National Audubon Society and the American Birding Association in a special issue of *North American Birds*. Every count participant is assessed a \$5 fee that helps pay for publication costs. Christmas Bird Counts in Indiana are also published by the Indiana Audubon Society in the *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*. The three Christmas Bird Counts conducted in Tippecanoe Audubon Society territory were part of this great endeavor.

The custom of counting birds on Christmas day was started by birdwatchers in south Florida a century ago to replace a traditional Christmas day bird shoot. This helped to start the Audubon movement that began with a campaign to end the shooting of Great Egrets and Snow Egrets. Professional gunners shot them for their plumes to be used commercially to adorn women's hats. In the hundred years since that small beginning the Christmas Bird Count has grown into a major

yearly undertaking. It represents the greatest effort of any kind to track bird population trends, and to discover the winter ranges and population densities of each species. Both professional and amateur ornithologists use Christmas Bird Count data for research purposes of this kind.

The twenty people who took part in the count sponsored by the Tippecanoe Audubon Society in northern Kosciusko County were Parks Adams, Vernon Campbell, David Eiler, Steve Hammer, Karen Heinzman, Emma Lou Henning, David Hicks, Deborah Hustin, Don Kill, Tom Leggett, Mary Lutz, Wilson Lutz, Corliss Rink, Wayne Rink, John Rouch, Don Ryan, Cydney Townsend, Frances Townsend, James Townsend, Lauren Townsend. The nine people who took part in the Marshall County Count in the Plymouth area were Edith Enos, Jean Green, Margaret Jurkewitz, Walter Jurkewitz, Charles Leggett, Tom Leggett, Carol Surber, Cora Ziessler, Gary Ziessler. The eight people who took part in the Three-County Count northeast of Rochester covering parts of Fulton, Kosciusko, and Marshall Counties were Tom Leggett, Billie Rakestraw, Corliss Rink, Wayne Rink, and at feeders, Violet Seriwert, Bob Kern, Judy Talbott, Walt Talbott.

	TAS KOSC JAN 1	LEGGETT MRSHL DEC 16	LEGGETT 3-CO DEC 30
Pied-Billed Grebe	2		
Great Blue Heron	10	1	1
Mute Swan	23		5
Canada Goose	418	89	111
Wood Duck		2	
American Black Duck	2		
Mallard	482	61	122
Redhead	126		
Common Goldeneye	1	69	
Bufflehead		14	
Hooded Merganser	12	6	
Common Merganser		8	
Bald Eagle, immature	1		
Sharp-Shinned Hawk		1	1
Cooper's Hawk	3	2	4
Red-Shouldered Hawk			1
Red-Tailed Hawk	41	4	20
Rough-Legged Hawk	4	5	4
American Kestrel	15	5	4
Wild Turkey			29
American Coot	17	32	
Common Snipe	1		
Ring-Billed Gull		22	3
Rock Dove	135	75	42
Mourning Dove	282	176	153
Belted Kingfisher	1	2	
Red-Headed Woodpecker			2
Red-Bellied Woodpecker	38	6	13
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	1		
Downy Woodpecker	48	18	33
Hairy Woodpecker	7	6	12
Northern Flicker	14	3	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1		1
Horned Lark	161	1065	469

	TAS KOSC JAN 1	LEGGETT MRSHL DEC 16	LEGGETT 3-CO DEC 30
Blue Jay	197	64	76
American Crow	336	131	355
Black-Capped Chickadee	72	27	22
Tufted Titmouse	68	23	29
White-Breasted Nuthatch	58	20	13
Brown Creeper			1
Carolina Wren		1	1
Winter Wren	1	2	1
Golden-Crowned Kinglet			2
Eastern Bluebird	60	16	5
American Robin	3	3	5
Northern Mockingbird			2
Cedar Waxwing	81	30	19
European Starling	796	759	638
Yellow-Rumped Warbler	1	1	1
Northern Cardinal	225	81	195
American Tree Sparrow	101	86	89
Field Sparrow	1		
Song Sparrow	26	22	12
Swamp Sparrow		5	4
White-Throated Sparrow	2	5	
White-Crowned Sparrow	5	18	2
Dark-Eyed Junco	368	161	266
Lapland Longspur		146	53
Snow Bunting		649	149
Common Grackle		1	
Brown-Headed Cowbird	4	59	29
Purple Finch	4	16	4
House Finch	448	289	457
Pine Siskin	1	14	7
American Goldfinch	225	149	82
House Sparrow	1535	1401	1277
TOTAL SPECIES	50	51	50
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	6507	5851	4827

SEND ALL MEMBERSHIP DUES TO LOCAL MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE MAKE YOUR CHECK OUT TO THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY BUT SEND IT TO LOCAL MEMBERSHIP CHAIR JAMES TOWNSEND. THIS WILL ENABLE HIM TO RECORD YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN TIPPECANOE AUDUBON.

Name _____	Enclose your check with this form and send to:
Address _____	James Townsend, Tippecanoe Audubon Society
City _____	6331 S 300 E
E-mail _____ Phone _____	Warsaw, IN 46580
	HO-8

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@manchester.edu.

WHITLEY COUNTY - A note from Carol Schieferstein who lives northwest of Columbia City reports several interesting sightings. She saw a flock of **NORTHERN BOBWHITES** in her garden several times in late November and early December. She sees a **COOPER'S HAWK** make regular raids on the birds at her feeders, and once she saw a flock of **AMERICAN CROWS** harassing the hawk. On December 15 she saw a **NORTHERN HARRIER** hunting in the wetland behind her home. On December 31 she saw an **EASTERN BLUEBIRD** visit the heated bird bath in her yard. On January 4 she saw two **RING-NECKED PHEASANT** cocks eating wild rose hips at the rear of her property.

KOSKIUSKO COUNTY - In mid-December Harold and Norma Dome of Sydney saw an adult **BALD EAGLE** along SR-13 between Sydney and Pierceton. Harold is a brother of chapter member Suzy Townsend. Sue Clutter of Milford saw a **RUFFED GROUSE** north of Milford. On January 10 Dave Eiler saw a **NORTHERN HARRIER** near CR-300W and CR-800S.

WABASH COUNTY - Steve and Connie Doud who live south of Roann saw a **WINTER WREN** near their house in mid-December. Maurice & Julia Metzger who live at Timbercrest Retirement Home in North Manchester saw a **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** on January 3 near their feeder. A little flock of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** visited the heated bird bath in Dave and Ruth Eiler's back yard in North Manchester on December 29 and January 4. On December 30 a **CAROLINA WREN** flew out of their garage when Dave went in to get the car. The next day it made a brief visit to a suet feeder in their back yard, and on January 13 it was there again. A **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** has been visiting their feeders now and then since late November. On January 17 Dave Eiler saw a **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** along CR-50E south of Wabash.

MARSHALL COUNTY - Tom Leggett of Argos has had **PINE SISKINS** and **REDPOLLS** coming to his feeders since mid-December. He has also been seeing **SNOW BUNTINGS**, **LAPLAND LONGSPURS**, and **HORNED LARKS** south of Plymouth at CR-13W and US-31.

ALLEN COUNTY - Steve & Connie Doud of Roann were in Fort Wayne on January 13 and saw the **VARIED THRUSH** that showed up there the second week of January. This is a bird of the Pacific Northwest that seldom appears in the eastern United States.

INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS

The Indiana Audubon Society has scheduled several field trips for the first half of 2001 that promise to be outstanding. Members of Tippecanoe Audubon are welcome to go on field trips. For more information on any of these field trips call Alan Bruner at 765-597-2459.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 8:00AM - TO WABASH RIVER ON WEST SIDE OF INDIANA FOR EAGLES AND TRUMPETER SWANS
Meet field trip leader Alan Bruner at the Turkey Run Inn in Turkey Run State Park for group breakfast at 8:00 or field trip departure at 9:00. The field trip group will look for Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, and Trumpeter Swans along the Wabash River in Parke and Vermilion Counties.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 9:00AM - TO INDIANA LAKESHORE FOR GULLS AND OTHER LAKESHORE SPECIES
Meet field trip leader Ken Brock at the Michigan City Harbor at the west end of the Washington Park beach parking lot. The field trip group will look for various kinds of gulls along the beach and at the LaPorte County landfill.

SATURDAY, APRIL 21 - TO AYRSHIRE MINE IN WARRICK COUNTY, SOUTHERN INDIANA, FOR WADERS AND WATERFOWL
Details will be announced later.

FOUR-DAY WEEKEND, JUNE 1-4 - TO MIO, MICHIGAN, FOR RARE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER AND CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
Details will be announced later.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16 - TO BIG OAKS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN SOUTHERN INDIANA FOR GRASSLAND BIRDS
Details will be announced later.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18 - TO CHAUTAUQUA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN ILLINOIS FOR MIGRATING SHOREBIRDS
Details will be announced later.

PLANS FOR A SECOND MIGRATING FLOCK OF WHOOPING CRANES

Through the joint efforts of US and Canadian wildlife personnel the flock of Whooping Cranes that migrates between northwestern Canada and southern Texas has increased to nearly 190. However, its future is still not secure. Just one disaster could wipe it out. In fact eighteen were killed by a storm in the Midwest during migration last fall. Because the survival of the cranes is so precarious, plans are being implemented to develop a second migrating flock that will travel a much shorter distance between Wisconsin and Florida. The first step in the effort was getting a flock of hand-raised Sandhill Cranes to migrate following an ultralight airplane from Wisconsin to Florida last fall. Using techniques developed for that successful project, the second step will be to do the same next fall with Whooping Cranes. The planned migration path will cross Indiana.

Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Inc.
c/o James Townsend
6331 S 300 E
Warsaw, IN 46580
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization

TIPPE - TOPICS

**PUBLISHED BY THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY,
INC.**

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

David L. Eiler, Editor

Phone: 219-982-2726; E-mail: dleiler@manchester.edu

**DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY**

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

White-breasted Nuthatches are frequent visitors to winter bird feeders. If you watch your feeder for a while you will likely see one come just long enough to grab a sunflower seed. It will then fly to a tree, jam the seed into a crack in the bark, and hack it open to get the kernel. Then back to the feeder it goes for another seed. The name nuthatch refers to the way it uses its beak like a hatchet to hack open seeds and nuts. It is equally fond of suet, and takes turns with the woodpeckers at the suet feeder.

With three toes pointing foreword and one pointing backward, the White-breasted Nuthatch's feet are specially adapted for clinging to bark and climbing around in any direction on a tree trunk or limb. Unlike woodpeckers or Brown Creepers, it climbs with its feet wide apart and does not use its tail for support.

Walking into a woods in winter you may soon hear the "ank-ank-ank" call of a White-breasted Nuthatch as it climbs somewhere along a tree limb searching for insects hibernating in cracks in the bark. If you continue watching, you will likely find that it is part of a mixed flock of small birds moving together through the woods, including Chickadees, Titmice, Downy Woodpeckers, and sometimes a Brown Creeper.

The White-breasted Nuthatch's distinctive behavior and appearance make it easy to identify. The face, cheeks, neck, and underparts are white, contrasting with a black cap extending down the back of the neck, and a blue-gray back. The wings are black with flight feathers edged with white. The central tail feathers are blue-black bordered by black feathers edged with white that shows up when it flies.

The diet of the White-breasted Nuthatch includes insects, insect larvae, and spiders, that it finds hidden in tree bark. It also eats seeds and the kernels of soft-shelled nuts that can break open with its beak. In winter it stores nuts and seeds in bark crevices. Squirrels and Blue Jays often raid these caches.

Courtship begins in early April with the male displaying to the female by spreading his wings and tail, ruffling his feathers, and bringing her offerings of food. The female chooses a nest site in a tree cavity, often an old woodpecker hole, anywhere from five to forty feet high, and lines it with grass, rootlets, bark shreds, and hair. She usually lays eight eggs that are white with brown and purplish speckling concentrated at the large end. The male helps by bringing nesting material, and by bringing her food when she is incubating the eggs. The eggs hatch in about twelve days.

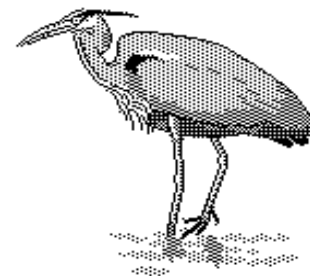
The White-breasted Nuthatch ranges from coast to coast across the United States. Its range also extends north into southern Canada and south into Mexico along mountain ranges. It does not migrate. Three populations in the West differ in various ways from the main eastern population, and have been given different subspecies names. The various populations also have calls that sound somewhat different.

Nuthatches belong to the Sittidae Family that includes 25 species worldwide. The other three North American species are the Red-breasted Nuthatch, ranging from coast to coast, the Brown-headed Nuthatch in the Southeast and the Pygmy Nuthatch in the West. The most widespread species is the Eurasian Nuthatch which ranges from Great Britain to China.



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OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

COMING EVENTS

MARCH 2001

FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 1:30PM - TO KOINONIA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER NORTHEAST OF SIDNEY

Koinonia is a diverse natural area northeast of Sidney owned by Manchester College and used by college biology and environmental studies classes. It has oldfields in various stages of succession, deciduous forests of various ages, a pine plantation, and a small lake with a restored wetland. Many elementary school classes visit Koinonia to learn about natural history and conservation under the tutelage of director Barbara Ehrhardt. Meet field trip leader Dave Hicks at the entrance gate. From Pierceton take SR-13 south just past the first curve to CR-650E, turn left (south) at the Koinonia sign and go south about one-and-a-quarter miles to the Koinonia entrance on the right marked by a sign. From North Manchester go north through Sidney to CR-650S, turn right (east) at the Koinonia sign, go east two miles to CR-650E, then turn left (north) on CR-650E about a quarter mile to the Koinonia entrance on the left.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 7:30PM - AMY LYBARGER OF THE WATERSHED ALLIANCE OF THE UPPER EEL

RIVER BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. Under the leadership of Amy Lybarger of North Manchester, a federally employed conservationist, the Watershed Alliance recently completed the bioremediation of an eroding bank of the Eel River in the South Whitley town park. She will present a video and a set of slides showing how this was done.

TIPPECANOE AUDUBON INTERNET WEBSITE

Tippecanoe Audubon has a place on the Internet. The web address is www.tippeaudubon.org. Each issue of *Tippe-Topics* will be posted on the website making it easy to check on activities in case you discarded or lost the issue that came in the mail. Eventually you will be able to check this website for information about wildlife sanctuaries and conservation issues. Special thanks are due to board member Greg Clark of the Manchester College Physics Department who is developing the website.

PETITIONERS REQUEST DREDGING OF HURRICANE CREEK

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

At the request of the chapter president, Stan Moore, a farmer in Kosciusko County north of the Flory-Gemmer Marsh Preserve, recently presented a concern to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society board of directors. A petition to the Kosciusko County drainage board is being circulated among farmers in the area requesting that Hurricane Creek be dredged and converted from a natural free-flowing stream to a regulated drain. The ostensible reason for the proposed dredging is to reduce flooding of farm fields along the creek during times of high water.

The county drainage board has the authority to order the dredging of a stream through all properties where a stream flows. Property owners who oppose having the stream dredged on their properties have no way to prevent it. Furthermore, all farmers in the watershed of the creek would be assessed to pay for the dredging, including farmers who did not want dredging on their properties.

The Tippecanoe Audubon board of directors decided to present a statement to the drainage board opposing the dredging of Hurricane Creek. This stream flows from Whitley County

through Kosciusko County into the Eel River a little over a mile north of the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve in the northeast corner of Wabash County. Although Hurricane Creek does not flow through any Tippecanoe Audubon property, its dredging could lead to a petition to dredge Wheeler Creek which does flow through one corner of the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve, and along the north edge of the preserve at another place. The Tippecanoe Audubon Society would be forced to pay part of the costs of dredging Wheeler Creek, even though it opposes the dredging and its property would be harmed by it.

A dredging operation on Wheeler Creek would do great damage to the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve. Dredging includes the removal of all trees and brush along the bank of the creek and deepening of the stream bed to speed up the flow of the water. This would have several harmful consequences. Removal of shade would raise the temperature of the water in the creek and thereby reduce the amount of oxygen dissolved in the water. It would also increase erosion along the stream causing excessive sediment and muddiness. And it would increase

flooding along the lower stretches of the creek. All of these changes would be harmful to small fish and other aquatic life in the creeks. Speeding the flow of water and sediment in Hurricane and Wheeler Creeks would also cause increased flooding and erosion along the Eel River where it flows through Liberty Mills and North Manchester. The additional sediment washed into the river would also increase its muddiness and harm its aquatic life.

Many streams in northern Indiana have been ditched, channelized, and debrushed. This increases the biological and esthetic value of those few creeks that still remain in their natural condition as free-flowing streams. Such streams enhance the beauty of the countryside in contrast to dredged streams that give the landscape a butchered appearance.

A public hearing will be held March 8, from 9:00am till 12:00noon at the Public Library in Warsaw. Some members of the Tippecanoe Audubon board of directors will attend the meeting in order to present a statement opposing the dredging of Hurricane Creek. Chapter members are encouraged to attend the hearing and to state their views on this issue. Any member of the public is free to attend the hearing and can ask for the privilege of speaking for or against proposed actions.

The board of directors would welcome expressions of opinion from chapter members on this issue and on what kind of efforts, if any, the chapter should make to oppose the dredging of Hurricane Creek.

LET AUDUBON REDUCE YOUR TAXES

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

Is your family suffering from too much taxable income? Will your cash on hand look to the IRS like a plum ripe for the picking? Do you have Christmas gift funds left over that need to find a home? Your local Tippecanoe Audubon chapter can help! As a volunteer, non-profit organization with a 501c(3) classification, the Tippecanoe Audubon Society can put your money to work for the cause of conservation and education. Neither you nor Tippecanoe Audubon will have to pay taxes on it. In fact, your potential contribution has already been put to work. Here is how it happened.

Tippecanoe Audubon Education Chair Karen Heinzman has found nineteen elementary school teachers who wanted to use *Audubon Adventures* this year. As many readers already know, *Audubon Adventures* is a classroom newspaper published by the National Audubon Society as a learning resource for wildlife and conservation studies at the fourth or fifth grade level. One *Audubon Adventures* package includes a set of newspapers

for each student in the classroom and an outstanding teacher's guide to help the teacher make the best possible use of the material. Each teacher is free to schedule the use of *Audubon Adventures* in whatever way works best for his or her class.

Tippecanoe Audubon has to pay \$35 for each set of *Audubon Adventures*. Simple arithmetic shows that buying a set for each of the nineteen classrooms whose teachers requested this great educational resource cost a total of \$665. Paying this bill has created a \$300 deficit in the Tippecanoe Audubon Society Education Fund. Here is how you can help reduce this deficit while also reducing your own state and federal income taxes. Just write a check payable to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society and designate it for the Education Fund. Mail your check to Deborah Hustin, Treasurer of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society, 721 Wayne Street, North Manchester, IN 46962. Then claim the amount of your check as a deduction on your state and federal income tax returns.

A BLUEBIRD BOX REMINDER FROM JIM TOWNSEND

Eastern Bluebirds are already looking for nesting cavities. If you have nest boxes to put up, they should go up right away or it may be too late. For advice contact Ann and Jim Auer of the Indiana Bluebird Society at 219-858-9050 in Leesburg.

TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY, 2000-2001

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BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@manchester.edu.

MIAMI COUNTY - In January Don & Mary Ritchey of Mexico saw a **BALD EAGLE** along the Eel River near Mexico and fifteen catfish lying on the ice in the river that the eagle had apparently caught and left. They have also seen several **BALD EAGLES** along the Wabash River between Peru and Logansport that are easiest to see from county roads on the south side of the river. On CR-300N between Meridian Road and CR-100W they saw a lone **SNOW BUNTING** with a flock of **HORNED LARKS**. At their home near Mexico they have had a **CAROLINA WREN** making daily visits to their suet feeder.

A FOUR-COUNTY BIRDING TRIP - On January 29 Parks Adams and Dave Eiler of North Manchester took a birding drive through parts of Wabash, Kosciusko, Fulton, and Marshall Counties. The greatest surprise came when they saw a **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** in the northwest corner of Wabash County quite a bit further north than could be expected. Another exciting moment came south of Plymouth when some **AMERICAN CROWS** chased a **COOPER'S HAWK** across US-31 right in front of them. Other highlights were several raptors, two **RED-TAILED HAWKS**, a **NORTHERN HARRIER**, and an **AMERICAN KESTREL**. The most beautiful birds they saw were **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** in Wabash and Marshall Counties. Also quite beautiful were **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS** at feeders in Wabash and Fulton Counties. They were beginning to become concerned when they saw no **MOURNING DOVES** anywhere. Then unexpectedly they came upon a flock of forty or fifty along Linden Road south of Plymouth. Also south of Plymouth there were hundreds and hundreds of **HORNED LARKS** with flocks extending away from the road further than eyes and spotting scopes could see in a large field where manure from a huge cattle feeding operation had been spread.

WABASH COUNTY - In late January Don & Mary Ritchey of Mexico saw a **RED-TAILED HAWK** pair building a nest along US-24 near the Rich Valley Road west of Wabash. Also along US-24 west of Wabash they saw large flocks of **AMERICAN ROBINS**. On February 22 Wilson Lutz and Paul Steffen saw a **NORTHERN HARRIER** gliding over the Flory-Gemmer Marsh Preserve, and at the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve they saw two **RED-TAILED HAWKS**. On February 26 Wilson Lutz of North Manchester saw a **NORTHERN FLICKER** at his back yard feeder.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - Jeannie Flynn who lives near Lake Tippecanoe recently had a **PILEATED WOODPECKER** visiting her sunflower seed feeder. Bob Frantz has also seen a **PILEATED WOODPECKER** several times since mid-February at Wildwood east of Silver Lake. Other birds Bob has seen were a **FOX SPARROW** on January 15, a **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** on February 2, an **EASTERN BLUEBIRD** on February 20, and a **BROWN CREEPER** on February 17 and 25. Several times in late January and early February he saw a **GREAT BLUE HERON** standing on his ice-covered pond. Jim Townsend reports that **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** began investigating nest boxes near his home southwest of Pierceton in late February.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIP TO SILVER CREEK TREE FARM

On February 10 field trip chair Dave Hicks and tree farm owner Dean Baker of the Pike Lumber Company in Akron led a field trip group through several parts of the Silver Creek Tree Farm southwest of Silver Lake. It was a pleasant walk despite the cold weather. We observed the way in which the tree farm combines the protection of natural habitat and tree harvesting. Winter birds seen included Tufted Titmice, Northern Cardinals, Black-

capped Chickadees, and Downy Woodpeckers. The group appreciated Dean Baker's gracious hospitality.

PROGRAM ON FINCHES AND SPARROWS

On February 27 program chair Steve Doud presented a video on Finches and Sparrows at the North Manchester Public Library in the Blocher Room. For each species it gave a range map and described migration patterns, plumage and field marks, song and call notes, typical nesting habitat, and feeding behavior.

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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NORTHERN HARRIER: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

The Northern Harrier is easily recognized by the way it hunts soaring low across fields with its large white rump patch clearly visible. It is also easy to tell whether the bird you are watching is the larger brown female or the smaller gray male. The wings of the male are white on the underside with black tips and black trailing edges, whereas the wings of the female are mottled brown on the underside with no black. The breast and belly area of the female is whitish with brown speckled streaking, whereas the male has a bright white underside with only a little brown speckled streaking on the breast. It often holds its banded tail straight rather than fanned when soaring.

The Northern Harrier is easy to distinguish from other hawk species. It has longer and narrower wings and a longer tail than the Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, or Broad-winged Hawk. Its longer wings and low soaring flight over open fields distinguish it from the smaller Cooper's Hawk which is primarily a woodland species.

The hunting technique of the Northern Harrier differs from that of other North American hawks. Instead of looking for prey from a high perch or from high in the air, it flies low over open fields listening for prey as well as watching. When it detects something it hovers and then drops down upon its intended meal which it eats right on the spot unless taking it to nestlings. Its diet consists mainly of small rodents, especially mice, but it also eats birds, snakes, lizards, and frogs. Like an owl it regurgitates pellets of indigestible hair and bones.

The male Northern Harrier performs an elaborate courtship flight above the female, sometimes flying in a large semicircle

and then suddenly diving down and swooping up again in a series of U-shaped maneuvers, turning over on his back at the top of each U. After mating the female builds her nest on or near the ground, often in a wetland and sometimes directly over water. This habit helped give the Northern Harrier the alternative name Marsh Hawk used in older books. The male helps gather the sticks, plant stems, and grass used by the female in building her nest. She then lays and incubates four to six eggs that hatch in about 24 days.

The Northern Harrier ranges all across North America and Eurasia, and occurs throughout the year in much of its range. It seldom nests in Indiana but is frequently seen on spring migration, especially in April, and less often on fall migration, especially in October. It nests from Alaska and northern Canada south as far as the north-central United States, and from Scandinavia, Russia, and China south as far as northern India. In winter northern populations shift southward moving out of northern North America and northern Eurasia. Southern populations move further south into northern South America, central Africa, and southern Asia.

The Northern Harrier, *Circus cyaneus*, has gone by several English names. It used to be called the Marsh Hawk in North America. In Great Britain it is called the Hen Harrier, and the name Marsh Harrier is used for a different species, *Circus aeruginosus*, not found in North America. Worldwide there are thirteen *Circus* species, with only one occurring in North America and two in South America. Among Old World species three nest in northern Asia or Eurasia and migrate south. The other seven are tropical or Southern Hemisphere.

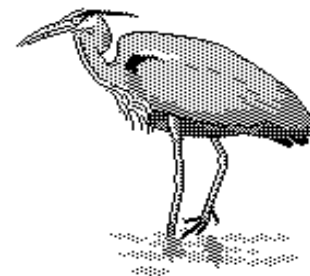


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties, Indiana

Volume XXVII, Numbers 3-4, March-April 2001



OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

COMING EVENTS

APRIL - MAY 2001

FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 1:30PM - Annual Trip to the Great Blue Heron Nesting Colony North of Warsaw

This is your chance to visit the fourth largest Great Blue Heron colony in Indiana. About 200 Heron pairs nest here over the Tippecanoe River and have probably done so for hundreds of years. They use the same nests year after year enlarging them a bit each year. The females lay two light blue eggs the size of a small chicken egg. After the eggs hatch the adults may fly up to fifty miles to find food for the young. Meet on the Petro auto dealership entrance drive off SR-15 about a third of a mile north of US-30. From there we will caravan to the place we park to visit the colony. Wear boots because the ground may be muddy.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 7:30PM - Birds of Australia by Australian Ornithologist and Guide Andrew Ley

AT THE BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. Andrew Ley lives in the town of Armidale which is located in the northeastern part of the province of New South Wales, Australia. He will share his extensive knowledge of Australian bird life in a program of slides and overhead projector transparencies on the birds of Australia. He has been interested in birds all his life, first as an amateur birder, and for the last eight years as a professional ornithologist and birding guide. He served as the birding guide for a four-week Australian Birdwatching Elderhostel in the fall of 1999 that *Tippe-Topics* editor Dave Eiler took part in. He has studied at the University of Adelaide and at the University of New England in his home town of Armidale. He is a licensed bird bander, or ringer as banders are called in Australia, and is the local representative in Armidale of the Australian Bird Banding Scheme. He is also the chairman of the Local Birds of Australia Group. He has authored or co-authored twenty research papers on ornithology and is currently the aquatic birds editor of the journal, *The Australian Bird Watcher*. Two of his special research interests are the endangered Regent Honeyeater of the mountains of eastern New South Wales and the breeding waterbirds of the semi-arid interior of northwestern New South Wales.

FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY, MAY 6, 1:30PM - Wildflower Walk at Taylor Wildlife Sanctuary Led by Botanist Dave Hicks

In what has become an annual event Dave Hicks of the Manchester College Biology Department will identify spring wildflowers for the field trip group. Each spring Taylor Sanctuary has an outstanding display of woodland wildflowers such as Hepatica, Trout Lily, Dutchman's-breeches, Fire Pink, and Appendaged Waterleaf, that carpet the forest floor. Taylor Sanctuary is a wooded bluff on the south side of the Eel River northeast of Liberty Mills. It has two trails that form a loop running the entire length of the sanctuary, one loop near the river and the other near the boundary fence. Meet the field trip group at the Taylor Sanctuary entrance lane cable gate by the Eel River northeast of Liberty Mills at the location shown on the map.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, MAY 22, 7:00PM - Raptor Rehabilitation by Laura Edumands of Soarin' Hawk Avian Rescue

AT THE ASHERWOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER WEST OF WABASH. This special program sponsored jointly by the Asherwood Environmental Center and the Tippecanoe Audubon Society will be presented by Laura Edumands who is the professional rehabilitator at Soarin' Hawk Avian Rescue in Leo north of Fort Wayne. The Asherwood Environmental Center is southwest of Wabash. From Wabash go south on SR-13 to SR-124, then west on SR-124 to the entrance lane marked by a large sign by a wooded area about five miles east of SR-13 at the west edge of Wabash County on the north side of SR-124 opposite CR-750W. If you come at 6:00 you may join a bird walk led by Jerry Sweeten of Asherwood.

TIPPECANOE AUDUBON INTERNET WEBSITE

Tippecanoe Audubon has a place on the Internet. The web address is www.tippeaudubon.org. Each issue of *Tippe-Topics* will be posted on the website making it easy to check on activities in case you discarded or lost the issue that came in the mail. Eventually you will be able to check this website for information about wildlife sanctuaries and conservation issues. Special thanks are due to board member Greg Clark of the Manchester College Physics Department who developed the website.

AUDUBON HEROES PAST AND PRESENT

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

John James Audubon is the greatest hero of the birding community. His classic paintings of North American birds and his writings stimulated a great interest in birds and helped give rise to the Audubon movement toward the end of the nineteenth century. Every Audubon Society, including the Tippecanoe Audubon Society, gets its name from him. Thus every birder

and every Audubon member owes him special respect and a debt of gratitude.

We should also revere the first Audubon warden to patrol a newly created Audubon sanctuary in Florida a century ago. He was shot dead by poachers who did not want their trade in Egret plumes disrupted. This led to laws protecting most birds.

Birders also have other heroes whom we should honor. One of the greatest of all authorities on North American birds, Roger Tory Peterson, created the first practical field guide called *A Field Guide to the Birds*, published in 1934 and covering birds east of the Rocky Mountains. He wrote the text and painted the illustrations. North American birders have relied upon it ever since, and it has been revised and updated several times. More recently David A. Sibley put birders throughout the United States in his debt with a new and innovative field guide, *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Indiana birders also rely upon books by Charles Keller and Ken Brock to help them locate Indiana birds.

We also have local Audubon heroes who deserve commendation. Looking back into our history we note several people who played key roles in the Tippecanoe Audubon Society right from its beginning in 1975. Heading this list is Paul Steffen who was the founder and first president of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society, and then president again later on. Over the years he has taken on a variety of other responsibilities including field trip chair, conservation chair, and now sanctuary chair.

Not to be forgotten is Marie Steffen who, from the beginning of Tippecanoe Audubon till her untimely death in 1995, put in countless hours of work in a variety of positions. She was the first editor of the newsletter, first membership chair, perennial bird count organizer, frequent board member, and president for four years. She and Paul together engaged in the conversations and negotiations that led to the donation of the wetland that became the Syracuse Sanctuary, and the woods along the Eel River near Liberty Mills that became the Taylor Sanctuary.

Another is David Eiler who was also a charter member of Tippecanoe Audubon. He served as the first conservation chair, later as program chair, board member and officer, including a term as president. Since 1992 he has been our newsletter editor. This requires him to spend countless hours gathering material, editing it, and putting it in final form each month for the printer and then mailing. After it is printed he, with the help of his wife Ruth, prepares it for mailing. This includes putting on address labels and the little tabs required by the post office and then organizing it into bundles by zip code. The job of getting each ready to mail takes the two of them almost an entire day each month.

Another charter member was Jim Townsend, who served as the first vice president of Tippecanoe Audubon, and also the first program chair, and then as conservation chair. He has served two terms as president, and has held a variety of other positions. Since 1995 he has served as membership chair responsible for keeping track of Tippecanoe Audubon membership records and addresses. Each month he has to go over a chapter membership list received from National Audubon and correct whatever errors he finds. He also prints out the address labels each month for mailing *Tippe-Topics*. His efforts ensure that Tippecanoe Audubon members receive *Audubon* magazine from National Audubon, and the local Audubon newsletter *Tippe-Topics*. One more important service Jim performed was a series of experiments in holding program meetings in various locations. This eventually led to the

selection of the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton as the current meeting place, the best place we have ever had.

Another unsung hero of Tippecanoe Audubon is Deb Hustin, our hard-working treasurer since 1989. She keeps meticulous financial records, manages the chapter's bank account, writes the checks to pay our bills, and fills out the forms required every year by county, state, and federal offices to maintain our tax-free status. Tax officials have complimented her on her neat and well-organized tax statements. She also prepares the annual financial report required by the National Audubon Society and gathers the information need for the comprehensive required annual report to National on chapter activities.

Ferne Baldwin is another person to whom much credit is due. Starting in 1989 she has served several one-year terms on the board, one two-year term as chapter president, a one-year term as secretary, several years as conservation chair, a couple years as education chair, and since 1996 as chapter historian. She is also the person who initiated the conversations with Myrna Flory-Gemmer that led to the donation of the two pieces of land east of Liberty Mills that became the Flory-Gemmer Marsh Preserve and the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve.

Another important responsibility is preparing and mailing out the publicity releases that enable announcements of Tippecanoe Audubon activities to be published in the newspapers and aired on the radio stations that serve the eight-county area in which Tippecanoe Audubon members reside. Kay Batdorf performed that duty for ten years from 1978 to 1988. Ruth Eiler began sending out news releases in 1992 and continued until Rosel Egolf took over the job in 1999.

Another important job is organizing the two annual bird counts and then compiling the results and sending them in. Christmas Bird Count results must be submitted both to the National Audubon Society and to the Indiana Audubon Society, and the Spring Bird Count results to the Indiana Audubon Society. Marie Steffen carried out that responsibility from the beginning of Tippecanoe Audubon in 1975 till her death in 1995. Since then JoAnne Mock has helped to recruit participants for bird counts, and Dave Eiler has organized the counts, compiled the results, and sent them in. Also important is the annual evening chili feed organized by Suzy Townsend that follows each Christmas Bird Count.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Wilson Lutz, who wrote the preceding article, was too modest to mention his own contributions to Tippecanoe Audubon. However, his work is too important to overlook. He was elected to the board of directors in the spring of 1992, when he retired from the Manchester College Chemistry Department. Next he served as secretary from 1993 to 1996, and again from 1999 to 2000. He became vice president of Tippecanoe Audubon in 1997-98, and in 2000 was elected to a two-year term as president. In 1993 he was appointed sanctuary chair and held that position till 2000. As sanctuary chair he was responsible for overseeing the wildlife sanctuaries owned by Tippecanoe. That included mowing the trails at the Taylor Sanctuary and the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve a couple times each spring and summer.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

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FORT WAYNE - On March 2 Richard Holmes of Syracuse was in Fort Wayne where he noticed a flock of juvenile **CEDAR WAXWINGS** in trees eating berries in a north-side residential area.

SOUTHERN KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - On April 2 Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler took a birding drive in southern Kosciusko County. Ducks they saw were **HOODED MERGANSERS**, **RING-NECKED DUCKS**, **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, **BUFFLEHEADS**, **REDHEADS**, **CANVASBACKS**, and **MALLARDS**. They saw only a few **CANADA GEESE**. Other species seen were **PIED-BILLED GREBE**, **KILLDEER**, **AMERICAN ROBINS**, **RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD** males, **COMMON GRACKLES**, and **EUROPEAN STARLINGS**.

(continued on next page)

TAYLOR SANCTUARY - On April 4 Wilson Lutz and Paul Steffen were working at the Taylor Sanctuary where they saw **CAROLINA CHICKADEES** investigating a Bluebird house, **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES**, and **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**.

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While photographing wildflowers on April 8, Dave Eiler saw a **SHARP-SHINNED HAWK**, a **NORTHERN FLICKER**, a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**, a couple **DOWNY WOODPECKERS**, several **AMERICAN ROBINS**, and several **SONG SPARROWS**. **WESTERN INDIANA** - On April 14 Tippecanoe Audubon members Steve Doud and Dave Eiler journeyed west to join a field trip sponsored by the Stockbridge Audubon Society of Fort Wayne and led by Jeff McCoy of Columbia City. In Newton County, at the Kankakee Sands Nature Conservancy Preserve, they saw a **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW**, a **HENSLOW'S SPARROW**, a **FIELD SPARROW**, and a **NORTHERN HARRIER**. In shallow field ponds nearby they saw **GREATER** and **LESSER YELLOWLEGS**, **PECTORAL SANDPIPERS**, **AMERICAN WIGEON**, **NORTHERN SHOVELERS**, **GREEN-WINGED TEAL**, **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, and a highly unusual **CINNAMON TEAL/BLUE-WINGED TEAL** hybrid. In another part of the preserve they saw and heard a **WESTERN MEADOWLARK**. At Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area, also in Newton County, they saw **OSPREYS**, **DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS**, **RED-TAILED HAWKS**, **RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS**, **NORTHERN FLICKERS**, and a variety of duck species including **RING-NECKED DUCKS**, **LESSER SCAUP**, **BUFFLEHEADS**, **GADWALLS**, **NORTHERN SHOVELERS**, **AMERICAN WIGEON**, **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, and **RUDDY DUCKS**. The best sightings of the trip were a dozen or so **SMITH'S LONGSPURS**, and a flock of a thousand or more **AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVERS**, both in Benton County farm fields. The day ended at the Big Pine Creek Preserve, also in Benton County, where they saw a **BELTED KINGFISHER**, several **GREAT BLUE HERONS**, a couple **DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS**, more **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, and a **RING-NECKED PHEASANT**.

NORTH MANCHESTER - Glen Campbell supplied a complete list of birds he has seen recently in his back yard at and near feeders. On his list are a **COOPER'S HAWK**, **MOURNING DOVES**, a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**, a couple **DOWNY WOODPECKERS**, a **NORTHERN FLICKER**, **BLUE JAYS**, a **CAROLINA WREN**, **CAROLINA CHICKADEES**, **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES**, **TUFTED TITMICE**, **EUROPEAN STARLINGS**, **AMERICAN ROBINS**, two **FIELD SPARROWS**, several **CHIPPING SPARROWS**, **DARK-EYED JUNCOS**, **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES**, **HOUSE FINCHES**, **NORTHERN CARDINALS**, **COMMON GRACKLES**, **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS**, and **HOUSE SPARROWS**.

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BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

Wood Warblers in full breeding plumage make spring migration the most exciting time of the year for Indiana birders. Some nest in Indiana, but the majority only pass through on the way to breeding grounds further north. One that passes through our state, but sometimes stays to nest, is the Black-and-White Warbler.

It migrates earlier in the spring than most warblers and also stays later in the fall. In the spring in northern Indiana it is seen most often during the second half of April and the first week of May. In the fall it moves through Indiana mostly during October.

Although not as colorful as many other warbler species, its unusual behavior makes it interesting to watch. Instead of flitting about in the foliage of trees and bushes looking for insects it forages by climbing around on tree trunks and limbs somewhat like a Nuthatch in bark crevices and crannies looking for food. This behavior pattern gave it the alternative name, Creeping Warbler, that was often used in times past.

The Black-and-white Warbler is well adapted to this special way of life by having an unusually long down-curved beak and long toes. Its streaky black-and-white plumage also makes it hard to see on streaky or mottled bark except when it moves about. If your hearing is good and you listen carefully, you may hear its high-pitched song that is a series of soft notes that have been paraphrased variously as seep-seep-seep, weet-weet-weet, weesa-weesa-weesa, or weetse-weetse-weetse.

The Black-and-white Warbler is a woodland species, though it may sometimes be seen on migration in towns, suburbs, and parks where trees are plentiful. In the northern forests where it

nests the usual location of the cup-shaped nest is on the ground hidden under a log, between tree roots, or in the undergrowth. The female builds the nest lining it with grass, rootlets, plant fibers, and sometimes animal hair. She then lays four or five creamy-white eggs with dark speckling that she incubates until they hatch in about eleven or twelve days. Both male and female share the task of bringing food to the nestlings. In fragmented forest habitats Brown-headed Cowbird females often lay their eggs in Black-and-white Warbler nests.

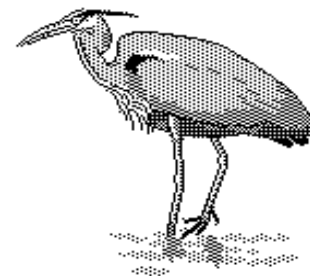
The nesting range of the Black-and-white Warbler extends from the Atlantic coast to the Rocky Mountains and from the southern United States to southern Canada. It is much commoner in the northern portion of its range than it is further south. It winters in Florida, the Gulf Coast, the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, and northern South America.

Its scientific name, *Mniotilta varia*, is very appropriate. The genus name *Mniotilta*, used only for this one species, means "moss-plucking" and refers to its habit of searching moss-covered tree trunks for insects. The species name *varia* means "variegated" and refers to its streaked or striped appearance. Although it has no close relatives, ornithologists list it next to the American Redstart, *Setophaga ruticilla*, and close to the *Dendroica* genus that includes many familiar warblers such as the Yellow-rumped Warbler, the Yellow Warbler, the Magnolia Warbler, the Blackburnian Warbler, the Yellow-throated Warbler, the Cape May Warbler, the Black-throated Green Warbler, and the Bay-breasted Warbler.



TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties, Indiana
Volume XXVII, Numbers 5-6, May-June 2001



OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

COMING EVENTS

MAY-JUNE 2001

SPRING BIRD COUNT, SATURDAY, MAY 12, DAWN TO DARK - All of Kosciusko County

To join the spring bird count call count coordinator JoAnne Mock at 219-982-4588, or bird count compiler Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726. They will be glad to assign you to a field party. Field parties will be limited to two or three people, but the more field parties the better. Each field party will be led by an experienced birder, but people without special expertise as birders are needed to serve as drivers or recorders. If you enjoy birds, the spring bird count offers an excellent opportunity to improve your bird identification skills and to see birds you may have never noticed before.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, MAY 22, 7:00PM - Raptor Rehabilitation by Laura Edumands of Soarin' Hawk Avian Rescue AT THE ASHERWOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER WEST OF WABASH.

This special program sponsored jointly by the Asherwood Environmental Center and the Tippecanoe Audubon Society will be presented by Laura Edumands who is the professional rehabilitator at Soarin' Hawk Avian Rescue in Leo north of Fort Wayne. The Asherwood Environmental Center is southwest of Wabash. From Wabash go south on SR-13 to SR-124, then west on SR-124 to the Asherwood entrance lane marked by a large sign on the north side of SR-124 opposite CR-750W near the west edge of Wabash County. If you come at 6:00 you may join a bird walk led by Jerry Sweeten of Asherwood.

TIPPECANOE AUDUBON INTERNET WEBSITE

Tippecanoe Audubon has a place on the Internet. The web address is www.tippeaudubon.org. Each issue of *Tippe-Topics* will be posted on the website making it easy to check on activities in case you discarded or lost the issue that came in the mail. Eventually you will be able to check this website for information about wildlife sanctuaries and conservation issues. Special thanks are due to board member Greg Clark of the Manchester College Physics Department who developed the website.

RESTORING GENE STRATTON PORTER'S LIMBERLOST

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

What does the word "swamp" mean to you? Mosquitoes? Dank, stagnant, scum-covered water? Impassable terrain? Snakes? Wasteland? All these are negative terms. Few birders, however, would use such terms to characterize a swamp. Certainly not Gene Stratton Porter, the famous Indiana nature writer and exponent of the Limberlost Swamp of eastern Indiana. To her the word swamp represented adventure, inspiration, mystery, and opportunity, a place to be loved--passionately.

In the May-June 2001 issue of *Audubon* magazine, starting on page 78, is the fascinating story of the Limberlost Swamp written by Scott Russell Sanders. This article should be a "must read" for all Tippecanoe Audubon Society members. The Limberlost Swamp today consists of only a small remnant of a wetland that once covered some 13,000 acres. It is located just south of Geneva, Indiana, in Jay County. In the DeLorme *Indiana Atlas* it can be found on page 35 in square D-10. On the Indiana map in the *Rand-McNally Road Atlas* it can be found in square F-13.

Gene Stratton Porter and her husband lived near Geneva a century ago, beginning in 1895. She was an adventurous woman who did not hesitate to enter places that would repel or frighten most people. What she found in the vast Limberlost were butterflies, birds, reptiles, plants, trees, and the inspiration for

such books as *Girl of the Limberlost*, *What I Have Done with Birds*, *Freckles*, *Laddie*, and many others. But, even as Gene Stratton Porter was exploring and writing about the Limberlost, destructive interests were at work draining it, logging it, and converting it to "more productive" uses such as farming. After eighteen years of loving exploration of the Limberlost, she became so disheartened by what was happening that she pulled up stakes and moved to the Sylvan Lake area near Rome City, Indiana.

Now, a century later, this sad story may have a happy ending. The Limberlost is being rejuvenated, at least in part. A group of concerned people have gained access to Loblolly Marsh, a fragment of the Limberlost, and have begun work to restore it. Reports on the Indiana bird hotline indicate that birders have found Loblolly Marsh to be an excellent place to look for birds.

We Hoosiers should rejoice in the fact that another major wetland restoration project, besides Loblolly Marsh, is being carried out. That is the partial restoration of the Grand Kankakee Marsh in northwestern Indiana. All of us who care about birds and wildlife habitat should support these efforts in whatever way we can.

CROWS ARE INTELLIGENT BIRDS

By Ernest Shull

The article by Wilson Lutz, "Crows are Fascinating Birds" in the December 2000 issue of *Tippe-Topics*, reminded me of some stories and facts about Crows and their intelligence. Crows, Ravens, Jays, and Magpies are all members of the Corvidae family and all are noted for their cleverness. I find the members of this family fascinating, and I read about them with great interest. There are 117 species altogether in the Corvidae family. They occur on every continent except Antarctica, and in nearly all climate zones. I have sighting records for 29 species which I have seen in India, Kenya, Australia, Mexico, and the United States.

Over eighty years ago, in April 1920, the *National Geographic* published an article entitled, "The Crow, Bird Citizen of Every Land." In this article the author tells the story of a dog and a crow becoming strange playmates. The crow would place a stick near the dog. When the dog went to sleep the crow would pick up the stick and nip the dog. Then the dog would awaken and go after the stick, but the crow would fly and grab the stick, darting just out of the dog's grasp. The game would end only when the dog quit in frustration.

Another *National Geographic* article tells about a crow that played a game on an old-fashioned slanting cellar door. The crow would pick up a tin can lid and fly to the higher end of the

cellar door. Then it would stand on the lid and slide down to the lower end of the door. It would then pick up the lid and do the same thing over and over again.

The crow is a mischievous bird according to still another *National Geographic* article. One crow seemed to enjoy picking clothes pins off the laundry that had been hung on the line to dry. The owner of the clothes had to take the laundry indoors or the crow would continue to pluck pins off the line till the clothes fell to the ground. The crow seemed to have no motivation other than enjoying this activity.

My son Jim tells a story about Jungle Crows, a species that lives in India. In about 1959 or 1960 while attending school in the Himalayan village of Landour, Mussoorie, he and the other children saw a strange dark cloud moving up the mountain from the plains. When it got closer they realized it was a huge swarm of locusts. There were so many locusts that streets were reported to be so slick as ices from the crushed bodies of the locust hoard that cars trying to stop would slide on them as if on ice. Then dozens of Jungle Crows appeared and began to fly up and down through the locust swarm, apparently eating locusts on each pass. Crows are omnivorous and opportunistic feeders and are always ready to make good use of any such unexpected bounty.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@manchester.edu.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - On April 22 Glen Campbell, Wilson Lutz, and Dave Eiler of North Manchester took a birding drive in southern Kosciusko County. Some of the birds they saw were an **AMERICAN KESTREL**, a **PIED-BILLED GREBE**, two **GREAT BLUE HERONS**, five **MUTE SWANS** on one pond, a **NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW**, a male **LESSER SCAUP**, several **RING-NECKED DUCKS**, many **AMERICAN COOTS**, and many male **RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS**. On April 24 Dave Eiler took Australian birder Andrew Ley on a birding drive in southern Kosciusko County. Birds they saw included a **SAVANNAH SPARROW**, a **RED-TAILED HAWK**, several pairs of **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, a **GREAT BLUE HERON**, two **HORNED LARKS**, and a **LESSER YELLOWLEGS**. At Wildwood, home of Bob and Alice Frantz east of Silver Lake, they saw a **DOWNY WOODPECKER**, a **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER**, two **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS**, a **NORTHERN FLICKER**, a pair of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**, a **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, a male **BLUE-WINGED WARBLER**, a **CAROLINA CHICKADEE**, and a **DARK-EYED JUNCO**. Vernon Campbell, who lives by Lake Wabee in northern Kosciusko County, saw a **RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** at his feeder on April 24, and more recently two **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS**, and a **BALTIMORE ORIOLE**.

WABASH COUNTY - On April 25 Dave Eiler, Glen Campbell, and Wilson Lutz took Australian birder Andrew Ley to the Taylor Sanctuary northeast of Liberty Mills where they saw a **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, a **CAROLINA CHICKADEE**, several **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS**, and a **RED-TAILED HAWK**. They also took him to the Laketon Bog where they saw a **BELL'S VIREO**, a male **YELLOW WARBLER**, a **BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER**, a **GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH**, and a pair of **WOOD DUCKS**. On April 26, and again on April 27, Steve Doud and Dave Eiler took Andrew Ley on walks through Steve and Connie Doud's place south of Roann. Some of the birds they saw were a **RED-TAILED HAWK**, a pair of **WOOD DUCKS**, two **COMMON SNIPES**, two **BELTED KINGFISHERS**, a **DOWNY WOODPECKER**, a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**, a pair of **EASTERN PHOEBES**, a **BROWN THRASHER**, a pair of **GRAY CATBIRDS**, a **WARBLING VIREO**, a male **YELLOW WARBLER**, a male **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT**, a pair of **EASTERN TOWHEES**, a **BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER**, a couple **CAROLINA CHICKADEES**, a **SWAINSON'S THRUSH**, many **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES**, several **CHIPPING SPARROWS**, a **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW**, a couple **SWAMP SPARROWS**, a **SONG SPARROW**, and a **FIELD SPARROW**. On April 27 they heard a **BARRED OWL**. On April 27 Steve Doud and Dave Eiler also took Andrew Ley to the Asherwood Environmental Center southwest of Wabash where they saw a **NORTHERN FLICKER**, a **TREE SWALLOW**, a **HOUSE WREN**, an **EASTERN PHOEBE**, and several **CHIPPING SPARROWS**. Several times in late April and early May 3 Dave Eiler saw in his back yard in North Manchester a **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW**. On May 1 and 3 he saw a **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**. On May 2 he saw a **LINCOLN'S SPARROW** and a **CAROLINA CHICKADEE** in his back yard, and **CHIMNEY SWIFTS** flying overhead. On May 3 Glen Campbell of North Manchester had a male **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** and a **SONG SPARROW** at his feeders. He has also been hearing a **BALTIMORE ORIOLE** somewhere near his house.

MIAMI COUNTY - On April 27 in the Paw Paw United Methodist Church yard and cemetery southwest of Roann Steve Doud, Dave Eiler, and Australian birder Andrew Ley saw a **KILLDEER**, a pair of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**, an **EASTERN MEADOWLARK**, and a **SAVANNAH SPARROW**.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

KOINONIA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

On Sunday afternoon, March 18, nine people led by Dave Hicks visited the Koinonia Environmental Center northeast of Sidney. They had fairly good weather for the time of year. They walked through several plant communities, including dry forest, marsh, mixed hardwoods, old fields, and plantations. They also visited the new talking rock trail and a prairie restoration. Few birds were seen other than Canada Geese and Mallards on the lake, Red tailed Hawks overhead, and Song Sparrows in the old fields.

PROGRAM ON RIVER BANK RESTORATION

The March 27 program was presented at the North Manchester Public Library by Amy Lybarger of North Manchester. She is employed by the U. S. Soil and Water Conservation Service and heads the Watershed Alliance which works to restore badly eroded banks along the Eel River in Whitley and Wabash Counties.

After discussing various issues related to stream ecology, she presented a video and slides showing how a badly eroded bank of the Eel River was reconstructed at a site near the South Whitley city park. First the bank was reshaped and covered with a layer of rip-rap at the water level. A sort of shelf was then cut back into the bank above the rip-rap and a trench was dug in the shelf. So-called "fascines" consisting of bundles of slender willow and osier dogwood twigs and branches were then laid. These in turn were covered with a layer of soil followed by a layer of cocoa fiber matting fastened into place by stakes of scrap lumber and live willow. This created a shelf on which still more soil and matting was laid followed by willow and dogwood branches with twiggy ends projecting toward the river. Finally more soil was added and the bank shaped to the proper slope. It was then seeded with grass. After this elaborate restoration the bank should be able to resist further erosion.

HERON COLONY FIELD TRIP

On a warm and sunny Sunday afternoon, April 22, Paul Steffen of Milford led the annual field trip to view the Great Blue Heron nesting colony along the Tippecanoe River north of Warsaw. Since the flood plain had water up to a foot deep, the 16 participants had to wade several hundred yards, going around logs, or stepping over them, to get to a position near the river where they could look up and see the nests. Upwards of 200 nests were visible in the tops of tall sycamore trees over the river.

PROGRAM ON AUSTRALIAN BIRDS

The March 27 program was held at the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton. Andrew Ley of Armidale, New South Wales, Australia, gave a presentation on Australian birds using slides and overhead projector outlines. The overhead projector transparencies summarized major points.

Most of the bird species, and many bird families, that occur in Australia do not occur anywhere else outside the Australasian Region which includes Australia and the island of New Guinea just north of Australia. Likewise, many bird families and groups familiar to Indiana birders do not occur in Australia. Among these are Nighthawks, Woodpeckers, Hummingbirds, Old World Flycatchers, New World Flycatchers, Chickadees and Titmice, Kinglets, Wrens, Old World Warblers, New World Wood Warblers, Vireos, Sparrows, Tanagers, and Blackbirds, Grackles, New World Orioles, and Meadowlarks.

At the same time Australia has many bird families that do not occur in anywhere else outside the Australasian Region. This includes the largest Australian family, the Honeyeaters, that pollinate the blossoms of many Eucalyptus tree species and a variety of other plant species as they probe for nectar. Another large family occurring only in Australia, New Guinea and New Zealand includes such

species groups as Pardalotes, Bristlebirds, Scrubwrens, Gerygones, and Thornbills. A family with unusually colorful little birds is the Australian Robin Family that has no connection with Robins in other parts of the world. Some smaller families unique to the Australasian Region are the Mound Builders, the Magpie Goose which is so distinctive it is in a family all by itself, the Bowerbirds, the Australian Treecreepers, the Lyrebirds, the Cockatoos and related species, and the Fairy-Wrens, Emu-Wrens, and Grasswrens.

Australia also has a great many bird families found in other parts of the world, though the species in Australia are mostly different from species in these same families elsewhere. These include such families as the Geese, Swans, and Ducks, the Coots and Rails, the Kites, Hawks, Eagles, and Harriers, the Falcons, the Sandpipers and related species, the Plovers and related species, the Parrots and related species, the Cuckoos, the Crows and Ravens, the Swallows and Martins, and the Finches.

Australia has the same introduced pest species that humans have spread all over the rest of the world. These are the European Starling, the House Sparrow, the Rock Dove, and the Common Myna.

The distinctive geography of Australia affects bird life in two important ways. The only significant mountain range, called the Great Dividing Range, runs north and south along the east side of Australia. This area receives a great deal of rainfall, in some places enough to create rainforests. The tropical northern coastal region and the temperate southern coastal region also receive quite a bit of rainfall. However, the vast interior called the outback and most of the western part of the continent, are very arid. Nevertheless, every few years enough rain falls in the interior to create a vast shallow lake that provides breeding habitat for many species that reproduce only in those years.

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**DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY**

PALM WARBLER: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

You can recognize the Palm Warbler the moment you see it by the way it constantly bobs its tail up and down as it walks around on the ground or climbs about in bushes near the ground looking for insects and spiders. It can also be recognized by its brown cap, pale eyebrow line, and yellow undertail coverts. The yellow below sometimes extend all the way forward to the breast. The back is brownish with faint streaking. The wings are also brownish with pale feather edging and no wing bars.

Despite its name, the Palm Warbler's nesting range extends across Canada from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains, a thousand or more miles away from the closest palm trees. It spends the winter in Florida, along the Gulf Coast, and southward through the West Indies and eastern Mexico as far as Central America.

In northern Indiana the main Palm Warbler northward migration in the spring begins during the last week of April, reaches its peak about the end of the first week of May, and ends during the third week of May. In the fall the main migration southward begins during the first week of September, reaches its peak during the fourth week of September, and ends during the first or second week of October. On migration Palm Warblers may be seen in wooded areas, brushy fields, and residential areas with shrubs or evergreens. They are easier to see than most warblers since they usually forage close to the ground. They are also fairly tame and easy to approach.

The Palm Warbler's soft song is seldom heard on migration. On its nesting grounds its song consists of a soft buzzy trill a little louder in the middle. It is said to be somewhat like the song of a Chipping Sparrow. The call note is a musical chuck sound.

Palm Warblers nest in the coniferous forests of Canada where the female builds a small bowl-shaped nest, usually on the ground but sometimes in the lowest branches of a conifer. When on the ground the nest is hidden in sphagnum moss or among lichen-covered hummocks. The nest is made of dry grass and weed stems, and is lined with fine grass, rootlets, and feathers. The female lays four or five eggs that are white with brown dots and spots, especially at the large end. She incubates the eggs and the male feeds her.

The Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*) has many close relatives in the *Dendroica* genus. Altogether twenty-seven warbler species are included in that genus. Sixteen nest in the eastern United States or Canada. Four nest in the western United States or Canada. One nests only in central Texas. Six occur only in the West Indies. Members of the genus often seen in Indiana are the Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), the Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*), the Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*), the Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*), the Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*), the Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*), the Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*), the Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), the Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*), the Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*), the Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*), the Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*), the Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*), and the Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*).

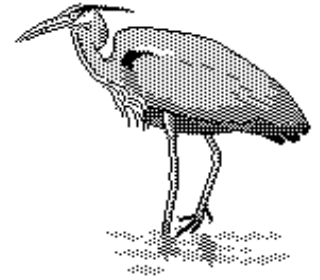


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COMING EVENTS

JUNE 2001

FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY, JUNE 10, 2001, 1:30 P.M. - The Auer Bluebird Trail near Clunette West of Leesburg

The field trip group will look at several of the nest boxes put up for the Indiana Bluebird recovery project led by Jim and Ann Auer of Clunette. This should be a good time of year to see nests, young birds, and lots of adult activity. There may even be a demonstration of banding. To join the field trip group go to the Auer home at 4100 West Country Drive north of Clunette. From SR-15 south of Leesburg turn west onto SR-600N at the Clunette sign. Go west on CR 600N about 3½ miles to the four-way stop in Clunette. At the four-way stop turn north (right) onto CR 400W and continue to a housing development. Turn left off 400W into the development area, then bear left in development to the Auer home second on the right with 4100 in large numbers. From here participants may carpool to follow the Bluebird trail. Glen Campbell will be the field trip leader.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 7:30PM, BLUE LION IN PIERCETON - Costa Rica from Top to Bottom

Dave Hicks and Deb Hustin of Manchester College will present a program on the natural history of Costa Rica from sea level to ten-thousand feet. Their slides will show the various major habitat zones of Costa Rica, including rain forest, tropical dry forest, cloud forest, and paramo or tropical alpine zone, and examples of characteristic birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, and plants found in each zone.

FUND DRIVE TO PRESERVE WILDWOOD BEGINS

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

On Saturday, May 5, 2001, Bob and Alice Frantz, along with many guests, celebrated the conclusion of an agreement with ACRES Inc. of Fort Wayne to begin the process of setting Wildwood aside as a nature preserve. Many Tippecanoe Audubon Society members will recall Wildwood as the property owned by the Frantzes located on SR-14 a few miles east of Silver Lake. They have always been happy to welcome visitors to share their own enjoyment of Wildwood's natural beauty. Thus Wildwood has become known far and wide as an outstanding place to walk woodland paths and to see birds and spring wildflowers.

Wildwood consists of 236 acres of forest, wetlands, grass plantings, and farm fields. There are some large and impressive oak, maple, and hickory specimens, and a variety of other tree species. The wooded areas provide excellent habitat for migrating Warblers and for nesting woodland birds such as Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers, and Eastern Wood Pewees. The wetlands also attract a variety of birds. Wood Ducks raise families there, and Red-headed Woodpeckers nest in the tall dead snags. A Prothonotary Warbler pair has sometimes nested near the edge of one of wetlands. Sometimes they would visit feeders outside the Frantz's large picture window.

The picture window looks out from their living room over a mowed lawn and a tranquil pond beyond that straddles the boundary between Wildwood and an adjacent property. On most any day a Great Blue Heron can be seen in the pond, and during migration a variety of ducks stop over on the pond. Bird feeders and baths in the lawn in front of the house attract a variety of birds that can be viewed from the living room through the picture window.

ACRES Inc. is an organization based in Fort Wayne that acquires and preserves outstanding natural areas in northeastern Indiana.

Some properties come to it as gifts and other properties are purchased with funds raised by ACRES. Wildwood is the largest parcel of land that ACRES has ever attempted to preserve as a single property. Since ACRES is a non-governmental organization it receives no state funds and must depend entirely on foundation grants and donations from members and friends. Whether or not ACRES can carry through on its commitment to purchase Wildwood will depend on raising the money needed for its acquisition. If the fund drive is successful ACRES will be able to purchase the entire 236 acres and make it a permanent nature preserve.

Wildwood is not just a dream for the future, it is a place of beauty and inspiration here and now. Over the years it inspired Bob to write many fine essays describing and celebrating the beauty and fascination of Wildwood's natural features. These were published as newspaper columns, and eventually Bob collected many into a book that he sold at cost to friends. All who cherish wildlife and the realm of nature owe a debt of appreciation and gratitude to Bob and Alice for their stewardship of Wildwood and for their eagerness to share their enjoyment of it with others.

Those who attended the celebration on May 5 were offered a variety of potted young trees ready for planting as a memento of the event. There was also live music, and ACRES provided a variety of refreshments including a cake decorated with colorful images of butterflies. Several guided nature walks completed the celebration.

Visitors are always welcome at Wildwood. There is a box at the parking area with a trail map and a notebook for visitors to sign. Whenever visitors drive up to the house and park, Bob and Alice are likely to come out and greet them and may even take them on a personal guided tour. Those who have experienced their hospitality carry away warm memories of Bob and Alice and of Wildwood.

SPRING BIRD COUNTS IN TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY TERRITORY, MAY 12, 2001

The day started out sunny, but became overcast with a few sprinkles by evening. The temperature was chilly, below 50° in the morning and never getting above 60° in the afternoon. It was also breezy with the wind blowing foliage so that birds in the tree tops could seldom be detected by leaf movement.

The total number of species seen in Kosciusko County was about average for the spring count. Thanks especially to Steve and Connie Doud, twenty-six warbler species were recorded, but

that was nine less than the thirty-five species that should have been in our area during spring migration. Five vireo species were recorded of the six that could have been expected. Of the seven or eight flycatcher species that might have been expected seven were recorded. Only five duck species were recorded, indicating that most migratory ducks had already passed through our area.

SPECIES	KOSCI CO	MARSH CO
Common Loon	1	
Pied-billed Grebe	2	8
Double-crested Cormorant	4	11
Great Blue Heron	224	4
Green Heron	12	2
Mute Swan	10	
Canada Goose	606	201
Wood Duck	15	31
Mallard	186	36
Blue-winged Teal	7	8
Gadwall	2	
Redhead	4	
Hooded Merganser	1	2
Turkey Vulture	85	9
Northern Harrier	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	1
Cooper's Hawk	5	2
Broad-winged Hawk		1
Red-tailed Hawk	22	4
Rough-legged Hawk	1	
American Kestrel	6	3
Ring-necked Pheasant	17	
Wild Turkey		8
Northern Bobwhite	1	1
Virginia Rail		2
Sora	3	3
American Coot	6	17
Sandhill Crane	3	
Semipalmated Plover		5
Killdeer	69	13
Greater Yellowlegs		12
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	2
Solitary Sandpiper	5	4
Spotted Sandpiper	12	3
Upland Sandpiper		2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	3	
Least Sandpiper	7	13
Pectoral Sandpiper	4	10
Dunlin	1	2
American Woodcock	3	
Ring-billed Gull	7	13
Forster's Tern	2	
Black Tern	5	7
Rock Dove	70	137
Mourning Dove	181	236
Black-billed Cuckoo		1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	3	2
Eastern Screech Owl		1
Great Horned Owl	2	
Barred Owl	2	
Common Nighthawk	1	3
Chimney Swift	56	500
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	10	12
Belted Kingfisher	10	2

SPECIES	KOSCI CO	MARSH CO
Red-headed Woodpecker	16	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	49	15
Downy Woodpecker	16	10
Hairy Woodpecker	2	8
Northern Flicker	27	3
Eastern Wood Pewee	18	2
Acadian Flycatcher	18	
Willow Flycatcher	8	1
Least Flycatcher	12	1
Eastern Phoebe	15	1
Great Crested Flycatcher	18	3
Eastern Kingbird	42	5
White-eyed Vireo	3	2
Blue-headed Vireo	1	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	18	
Warbling Vireo	66	1
Red-eyed Vireo	41	8
Blue Jay	71	4
American Crow	231	69
Horned Lark	22	200
Purple Martin	87	28
Tree Swallow	201	99
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	110	600
Bank Swallow	289	780
Cliff Swallow	6	
Barn Swallow	265	
Black-capped Chickadee	9	250
Carolina Chickadee	21	6
Tufted Titmouse	71	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	24	
Brown Creeper		10
Carolina Wren	2	3
House Wren	68	3
Sedge Wren		13
Marsh Wren		2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	20	1
Eastern Bluebird	107	6
Veery	3	1
Swainson's Thrush	8	
Hermit Thrush	1	
Wood Thrush	22	1
American Robin	1185	2
Gray Catbird	185	769
Northern Mockingbird	3	11
Brown Thrasher	15	
European Starling	865	3
Cedar Waxwing	4	705
Blue-winged Warbler	12	5
Tennessee Warbler	22	
Nashville Warbler	5	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	10	
Northern Parula	5	1
Yellow Warbler	149	83

SPECIES	KOSCI CO	MARSH CO
Chestnut-sided Warbler	7	4
Magnolia Warbler	14	1
Cape May Warbler	2	2
Black-throated Green Warbler	3	2
Blackburnian Warbler	3	1
Yellow-throated Warbler	4	
Pine Warbler		4
Palm Warbler		2
Bay-breasted Warbler	1	3
Blackpoll Warbler	1	2
Cerulean Warbler	10	2
Black-and-white Warbler	4	2
American Redstart	25	16
Prothonotary Warbler	1	3
Ovenbird	7	1
Louisiana Waterthrush		1
Common Yellowthroat	146	79
Hooded Warbler	2	
Canada Warbler	3	
Yellow-breasted Chat	6	2
Scarlet Tanager	20	5
Northern Cardinal	233	127
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	20	12
Indigo Bunting	106	10
Dickcissel		2
Eastern Towhee	9	4
Chipping Sparrow	170	91
Field Sparrow	75	2
Vesper Sparrow	1	2
Savannah Sparrow	19	2
Grasshopper Sparrow	8	2
Henslow's Sparrow	5	
Fox Sparrow	1	1
Song Sparrow	171	10
Swamp Sparrow	2	4
White-throated Sparrow	4	4
White-crowned Sparrow	10	10
Dark-eyed Junco	2	
Bobolink	37	2
Red-winged Blackbird	1266	1385
Eastern Meadowlark	47	2
Rusty Blackbird		1
Brewer's Blackbird	4	
Common Grackle	518	837
Brown-headed Cowbird	131	46
Baltimore Oriole	134	25
Purple Finch		5
House Finch	101	199
Pine Siskin		2
American Goldfinch	233	127
House Sparrow	689	583
SUMMARY	TOTAL S	TOTAL S
TOTAL INDIVIDUAL BIRDS	10410	8768
TOTAL SPECIES	142	132

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TIPPE - TOPICS

**PUBLISHED BY THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY,
INC.**

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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**DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY**

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

The Eastern Wood-Pewee often makes its presence known by repeatedly flying out from a perch in a tree to catch a flying insect and then returning to its perch to eat it. But sometimes its soft *pee-a-wee* song, with the last note on a slightly higher pitch, is heard before the bird is seen. Its characteristic song can be heard all summer and is of course how it got the name Pewee.

An Eastern Wood-Pewee has a dull gray-brown head, back, wings, and tail, and a whitish underside. It has two white wing bars that make it easy to distinguish from the Eastern Phoebe that lacks wing bars but otherwise looks very similar. It has almost no eye-ring which distinguishes it from flycatchers belonging to the *Empidonax* genus that have prominent eye-rings. It has a two-tone bill with the upper mandible black and the lower mandible yellow. The Eastern Wood-Pewee and the Western Wood-Pewee are very similar, but since their ranges do not overlap there is little need to distinguish them in the field. In uncertain situations they can be distinguished by their songs which are quite different.

The Eastern Wood-Pewee nests from southern Canada south to the Gulf Coast and from the Atlantic Coast west to the Great Plains. It spends the winter in Latin America as far south as northern Bolivia and western Brazil. In March 1999 I saw it in the lowland Napo River rainforest of eastern Ecuador. In northern Indiana it usually arrives about the second week of May and leaves by mid-October.

As its name implies, the Eastern Wood-Pewee is a forest-dwelling species, though it sometimes nests in suburban parks and residential areas with plenty of trees. The nest is a cup built entirely by the female using grass, weed stems, plant fiber, hair and spider webs. It is covered on the outside with lichens

making it blend in with the lichen covered tree bark. She nearly always places it in the horizontal crotch of a tree limb far out from the trunk. It may be anywhere from fifteen or twenty feet to sixty or more feet above the ground. The female usually lays three eggs, and she alone incubates them. The eggs hatch in about twelve or thirteen days.

Altogether there are fourteen *Contopus* species. Three have nesting ranges that are mostly in the United States and Canada or extend into the United States from Mexico. The closest relative of the Eastern Wood-Pewee, *Contopus virens*, is the very similar Western Wood-Pewee, *Contopus sordidulus*, that occurs from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast and winters as far south as northern South America. Another relative occurring north of Mexico is the somewhat larger Olive-sided Flycatcher, *Contopus cooperi*, that nests in southern Canada and the mountainous regions of western North America, and winters in Latin America as far south as Bolivia. Also somewhat larger is the Greater Pewee, *Contopus pertinax*, that ranges from southeastern Arizona southward through the mountain ranges of Mexico to Central America. The other ten *Contopus* species occur in either Latin America or the islands of the Caribbean.

Other close relatives of the Eastern Wood-Pewee occurring in the United States are several flycatcher species in the *Empidonax* genus, and several Phoebe species in the *Sayornis* genus. Less closely related Indiana species in the large Western Hemisphere Tyrant Flycatcher Family, Tyrannidae, are the Eastern Kingbird and the Great Crested Flycatcher.

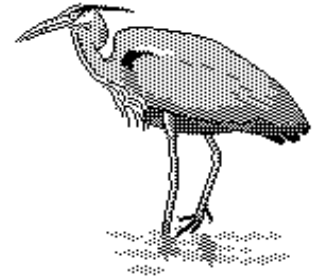


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties,
Indiana

Volume XXVII, Number 7, July 2001

OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



COMING EVENTS

JULY 2001

SUMMER PICNIC & FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY, JULY 15, 1:00PM - Bart & Cinda Culver Place East of North Webster

To reach the Culver place from US-30 at Pierceton, go north on SR-13 about eight miles and turn east onto Backwater Road (also called CR-550N). Follow Backwater Road a little over two miles as it curves north and then east again to become CR-600N. Just after you pass CR-975E on your left, watch among the trees on your right for a paved driveway entrance between two brick pillars, and follow it back to the parking area in front of their home. The grill will be fired up at 1:00 to begin the cookout. Bring meat to grill for yourself and your guests, and a potluck dish to share. Cool drinks will be provided. Starting at 3:00 Bart will lead a field trip to a nearby area. Those who choose not to go on the field trip may swim in the pond behind the house, watch and photograph pond critters, or simply relax and enjoy the view.

NO FIELD TRIP OR PROGRAM IN JULY

TIPPECANOE AUDUBON AND WILDLIFE EDUCATION

By Wilson Lutz, Chapter President

How would you like to participate in a field trip with E. O. Wilson and David Sibley as the co-leaders? E. O. Wilson is one of the world's greatest entomologist who has traveled all over the world studying ants. David Sibley is one of the world's leading authorities on birds, and his field guide to North American birds published last year has become a best seller. Author Sue Halpern had the rare opportunity of going on a three-day series of backyard birding trips in the suburbs of Boston led by Wilson and Sibley. The purpose of these field trips was to help participants learn what biological riches might be found in their own backyards. This led Halpern to point out in a recent feature article "The Wildlife Next Door" that people who travel all over the world looking for exotic species are sometimes unable to name species that occur in their own backyards (*New York Times*, June 14, 2001, page 31).

These Massachusetts field trips were dubbed "Biodiversity Days". As one field trip participant noted, "If we get people to appreciate what they are seeing, they will want to save it." Likewise, when someone asked E. O. Wilson what a person concerned about the environment could do to save our natural heritage, his response was, "Educate, Educate, educate!"

Tippecanoe Audubon field trips and programs are designed to make wildlife education enjoyable as well as informative. Too few members take advantage of the many educational opportunities that our field trips provide. Our field trip leaders may not be world renowned, but they are certainly competent and knowledgeable, and a lot can be learned from them. Paul Steffen is a self-educated naturalist and nature photographer who for years presented outstanding nature programs in elementary schools. Before that he ran a plant nursery and

landscaping business, and before that he raised honeybees. He is especially effective in communicating with children.

David Hicks is a botanist and member of the Manchester College Department of Biology. As a field trip leader he can identify almost any wildflower or tree in northern Indiana. Another field trip leader is Glen Campbell who can recognize most Indiana birds by their songs and call notes. He enjoys helping others see them, and he is good at pointing out the field marks that distinguish one species from another. Tippecanoe Audubon members Steve Doud and Greg Clark can do the same. Also knowledgeable is Dave Eiler who used to collect butterflies and can identify most butterflies seen on field trips.

Why not learn more about Indiana wildlife by going along on Tippecanoe Audubon field trips and taking advantage of the all this expertise? Thanks to Greg Clark who manages our website, it is easy to find the field trip schedule. Field trips are announced regularly on our web site, www.tippeaudubon.org, in *Tippe-Topics*, and at our program meetings. The next field trip will be held in connection with the summer picnic on July 15 at the home of Bart and Cinda Culver east of North Webster. On August 18 David Hicks will lead a field trip to two of our Tippecanoe Audubon sanctuaries east of Liberty Mills.

Tippecanoe Audubon programs provide opportunities to learn about wildlife and wildlife habitats both in the United States and in other countries. On Tuesday evening, August 28, at the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton, Dave Eiler will give a slide program on South Africa where he and his wife traveled last February. It will stress the diversity of South African habitats and wildlife. Plan now to attend the July summer picnic, the August field trip, and the August program.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at deiler@earthlink.net.

ELKHART COUNTY - On June 16 Glen Campbell of North Manchester saw close to a dozen **GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS** at the Spring Meadow Golf Course in Middlebury.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - On May 25 Dave & Ruth Eiler and friends from Pennsylvania saw two **SANDHILL CRANE** adults with two fledglings in a field north of Pisgah Marsh southeast of North Webster. On May 30 Wayne and Corliss Rink who live southwest of Warsaw saw a pair of **SANDHILL CRANES** doing a courtship display near CR-100S between CR-400W and CR-600W. In early June Jim Townsend reported that he had **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** and **HOUSE WRENS** nesting in nest boxes near his home southeast of Warsaw.

MARSHALL COUNTY - In an IN-BIRD post dated June 2 Tom Leggett of Argos listed the following sandpiper species that he saw on May 26 and/or June 2 at what he calls the Humane Society Pond south of Plymouth at US-31 and 13th-Rd: **UPLAND SANDPIPER, PECTORAL SANDPIPER, WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, SOLITARY SANDPIPER, SPOTTED SANDPIPER, LEAST SANDPIPER, GREATER YELLOWLEGS, DUNLIN, COMMON SNIPE, and AMERICAN WOODCOCK.**

WABASH COUNTY - On May 27 Glen Campbell of North Manchester saw a juvenile **HORNED LARK** on a feeder behind his house. On May 26 Dave Eiler saw a **VESPER SPARROW** along CR-700N just west of SR-13. On June 9 and 10 Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler saw **DICKCISSEL** males, **BOBOLINK** males, **EASTERN KINGBIRDS**, and **FIELD SPARROWS** in grass fields along CR-700W north of SR-114. On the same day they saw **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** and a **BROWN THRASHER** along CR-1400N between CR-600W and CR-700W. On June 11 a **SONG SPARROW** came to the bird bath in Dave & Ruth Eiler's backyard in North Manchester. On June 23 Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler of North Manchester took a birding walk through the Tippecanoe Audubon Society Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve east of Liberty Mills where they saw and heard a little flock of **BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES** and heard two **BELL'S VIREOS** and a **YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT.**

WHITLEY COUNTY - On June 8 Dave & Ruth Eiler of North Manchester saw two **BELTED KINGFISHERS** and a **GREEN HERON** on a dead tree in a pond at SR-14 and CR-350W a couple miles east of South Whitley.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

BLUEBIRD TRAIL FIELD TRIP REPORTED BY PAUL STEFFEN

Did you miss another great Tippecanoe Audubon field trip on June 10? Okay--I'll do my best to give you a good picture of what you missed and what those of us who went saw and learned.

We spent a very interesting afternoon hosted by the articulate Jim and Ann Auer family, including their daughter Ashley (age 10 and going on 20), who live in Clunette west of Leesburg. In the yard behind their house we looked at two of the seventy-eight Bluebird houses they maintain there and at other locations in and around Clunette.

We looked at two houses in the Auer yard. Both were in use. Jim took one of the houses down so we could see and photograph the eggs. From the Auer residence we went down the road to visit several other nest boxes within half a mile. To discourage vandalism most of the houses are located on private property.

The rule-of-thumb is that Bluebird houses should be approximately 300 feet apart. Unlike Tree Swallows that also use the Bluebird houses, Bluebirds require a rather large territory. When nest boxes are closer to each other than 300 feet, only one is likely to be used by Bluebirds. The other one will most often be used by some other species such as Tree Swallows or House Wrens.

Unlike Bluebirds, Tree Swallows will use all compartments in a house with two or three compartments. All bird species are territorial at nesting time, but some such as the Purple Martin is comfortable with much smaller territories than others such as the American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, or Red-tailed Hawk.

Currently 23 of the Auer nest boxes, 30% of the total, are occupied by Tree Swallows. But the Auers don't mind because Tree Swallows are as desirable as Bluebirds. Only one house is currently occupied by House Wrens.

The one truly unwelcome bird house occupant is the House Sparrow. It was brought to North America from Europe and is therefore not a native species. It displaces native cavity-nesting birds. Therefore, when House Sparrows take up residence in Bluebird houses, the Auers trap and dispose of them.

The Auers visit each of the seventy-eight houses on their fifteen-mile Bluebird trail once a week. This takes a good deal of time and work. They keep a chart for each house and an additional chart for each brood raised or attempted in each house. When daughter Ashley can accompany her mother on the Bluebird trail, she records the data for each nest while Mother drives the car. When they stop at a nest box, Mother opens and closes the box and tells Ashley what details to enter on their charts. With all

these records to keep Ashley's help is a real time saver for Mother.

On each visit to a house Ann checks to see which species is occupying it, how many eggs or nestlings are in it, and whether there are parasites on the nestlings. The most serious parasites found on the young are Blow Fly larvae that attach themselves to the feet of nestlings and feed on their blood. Very many of these larvae can seriously weaken or even kill a nestling. However, the larvae can be removed simply by pulling them off. Of course that means handling the nestlings, but contrary to the "old husband's tale," touching the nest or handling the baby birds does not cause the adults to abandon the nest. Birds have virtually no sense of smell and, so long as no real damage has been done, cannot tell that someone has been doing something to the nest.

One other step connected with keeping records is banding nestlings before they fledge. Ann's banding permit allows her to band all of the Bluebird and Tree Swallow nestlings. Last year 350 young Bluebirds fledged, and so far this year there have already been 156.

At the end of the nesting season the charted information is sent to the North American Bluebird Society. During the off season Jim is often busy building new Bluebird houses, mounting houses in new locations, and repairing old houses.

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_____ **YES!** Enroll me as a NEW MEMBER in the National Audubon Society & the Tippecanoe Chapter and send my membership card. Start sending me *AUDUBON* magazine and *TIPPE-TOPICS*. Enclosed is a \$20 check payable to the National Audubon Society for my one-year introductory membership.

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_____ I am not a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society but would like to receive *TIPPE-TOPICS*. Enclosed is a \$6 one-year subscription donation check payable to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. I have a membership in the National Audubon Society carried with the following local Audubon chapter:

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Warsaw, IN 46580 **7XCH**
E-mail: jimvjmc@kconline.com

CORRECTIONS FOR THE MARSHALL COUNTY SPRING BIRD COUNT ON MAY 12

Tom Leggett's sharp eyes caught a series of careless errors made by the editor in the June issue of *Tippe-Topics* when entering some of the species count numbers for the Marshall County Spring Bird Count on May 12. The correct figures are given below for these species.

Common Loon	6	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	780	Eastern Bluebird	21
Red-headed Woodpecker	7	Bank Swallow	0	Veery	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1	Barn Swallow	250	Hermit Thrush	1
Acadian Flycatcher	1	Black-capped Chickadee	6	Wood Thrush	2
Blue-throated Vireo	0	Carolina Chickadee	0	American Robin	769
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	Tufted Titmouse	13	Gray Catbird	11
Warbling Vireo	8	White-breasted Nuthatch	10	Northern Mockingbird	0
Red-eyed Vireo	4	Brown Creeper	3	Brown Thrasher	3
Blue Jay	69	Carolina Wren	3	European Starling	705
American Crow	200	House Wren	13	Cedar Waxwing	5
Horned Lark	28	Sedge Wren	2	Blue-winged Warbler	0
Purple Martin	99	Marsh Wren	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	43
Tree Swallow	600	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	6		

VIAGRA GIVING NEW HOPE FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

A major threat to several animal species in Southeast Asia has long been the traditional Chinese belief that various parts of such animals as Tigers, Rhinoceroses, Bears, Monkeys, and Whales could enhance sexual performance when eaten. Now that Viagra has become widely available as a far more effective medication for that purpose, the demand for these traditional aphrodisiacs has been declining. Most likely to benefit are Seals that have been killed by the tens of thousands each year in Newfoundland and Quebec partly to supply the demand for Seal penises that were believed to enhance male virility. But the demand for these traditional products is likely to end only gradually since Chinese pharmacies throughout east Asia and elsewhere continue to advertise and sell them. (Information taken from an article by Ilene R. Prusher, "Some unexpected relief for endangered species," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 29, 2001, pages 8-9.)

GLOBAL WARMING AND THE MELTDOWN IN ALASKA

Scientists who study the dynamics of the earth's atmosphere in relation to climate change have been anticipating for quite some time that global warming will have more extreme effects in the most northerly regions of the planet. There is now much evidence from Alaska and elsewhere that this is happening. While the average global temperature rose only one degree Fahrenheit during the Twentieth Century, the average temperature in Siberia, Alaska, and northwest Canada has gone up five degrees in only thirty years.

During the past quarter century many noticeable changes have occurred in the Arctic as the result of rising temperatures. Warmer temperatures have brought more snowfall, but this has not enlarged glaciers. Instead it has caused glaciers and Arctic Sea ice to melt faster. Arctic Sea ice is now 40% thinner than it used to be, and the area covered by ice has shrunk by 15%.

Warming temperatures are also causing many ecological changes resulting from the widespread melting of permafrost. Shrubby plants are overrunning what used to be tundra. Roads, buildings, and power lines are collapsing. Ancient taiga forests are being killed by heavier winter snows, drier summers, and Spruce Bark Beetles that thrive in the warmer weather. An estimated one third to one half of all the White Spruce trees in Alaska have died in the past fifteen years. As temperatures rise Mosquitoes are also moving northward.

There is ongoing debate over how much global warming is a result of natural fluctuations and how much is due to human activities. However there can be no debate about the obvious havoc that rising temperatures are causing in the Arctic.

(Information taken from an article by Ed Hunt, "Is Alaska melting?" *Christian Science Monitor*, June 12, 2001.)

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**DATED MATERIAL
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CHIPPING SPARROW: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

Chipping Sparrows are among the commonest birds foraging for insects and worms on lawns in residential areas. They may also be seen along woodland edges and in grassy fields and pastures with brushy fencerows. Although Chipping Sparrows are less noticeable than American Robins, they are probably almost as abundant. We may hear their simple song but pay no attention to it since it is little more than a series of simple unmusical high-pitched chirps all on the same pitch. Their diet consists of insects and larvae along with weed seeds. They seldom come to feeders. In their fondness for insects Chipping Sparrows differ from most other Sparrow species which feed primarily on seeds.

Chipping Sparrows can be easily recognized by their reddish-brown cap, white eyebrow line, and dark eye line. They have a brownish streaked back and wings and an unmarked whitish throat, breast, and belly. Juveniles, which may become as abundant as adults in late summer, have a streaked upper breast and flanks, fine dark streaks on the head instead of a reddish cap, and a dull pink bill.

Chipping Sparrows nest in southeast Alaska, throughout most of Canada south of the Arctic, throughout most of the United States, and on south through much of inland Mexico and the mountainous regions of Guatemala and northeastern Nicaragua. Western birds tend to be slightly larger and paler than eastern birds. In the fall populations in Canada and much of the United States gather in small flocks and move south for the winter to the southern states and Mexico. Spring migration brings them back to northern Indiana in April. They leave Indiana in mid to late October for their southward migration.

A pair of Chipping Sparrows usually raises two broods in a single season. The female weaves a little cup-shaped nest out of grass, rootlets, and small weed stems, and lines it with hair and fine grass. The usual nest site is seldom more than ten feet above the ground in a tree or bush. She lays four pale bluish-green eggs with dark spots and blotches, and incubates them till they hatch in about two weeks or a little less. The male feeds her while she is incubating, and both share in the work of bringing food to the nestlings. Often he will bring items of food and pass them to his mate who will then feed the babies.

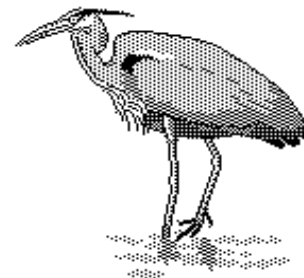
From the Chipping Sparrow's scientific name, *Spizella passerina*, we can track down its closest relatives. Most familiar is the American Tree Sparrow, *Spizella arborea*, that looks like the Chipping Sparrow except for a black dot in the center of its whitish breast. It nests in northern Canada and migrates south to the United States each winter. It arrives in northern Indiana in November soon after the Chipping Sparrow has left and heads back north in April, about the time the Chipping Sparrow is returning. Another close relative we see in Indiana is the Field Sparrow, *Spizella pusilla*, which spends the summer in southern Canada and the United States east of the Rocky Mountains and overwinters in the southern states. Three other members of the genus nest in western North America. They are Brewer's Sparrow, *Spizella breweri*, the Clay-colored Sparrow, *Spizella pallida*, and the Black-chinned Sparrow, *Spizella atrogularis*. There is one other member of the genus, Worthen's Sparrow, *Spizella wortheni*, that lives in northern Mexico.



TIPPE-TOPICS

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Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties, Indiana
Volume XXVII, Number 8, August 2001

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COMING EVENTS



AUGUST 2001

FIELD TRIP, SATURDAY FORENOON, AUGUST 18, 9:30AM - TO AUDUBON SANCTUARIES EAST OF LIBERTY MILLS

Drive into the grassy lane that leads to the Taylor Sanctuary and park near the cable gate. The grassy lane starts at the Audubon sign northeast of Liberty Mills at the corner where CR-600E turns east and becomes CR-1500N. From Taylor we will drive the two miles to the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve where there is a grassy parking area off the road by the sign. The trip will focus on wild edible plants. We will also look for birds and other interesting plants and summer wildflowers.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 28, 7:30PM - DAVE EILER, "SOUTH AFRICA: FROM CAPE POINT TO KRUGER"

Dave and Ruth Eiler went on a two-and-a-half week Elderhostel trip to South Africa last February. The first week they stayed in Cape Town and made day trips to various places on the Cape Peninsula and inland. Trips from Cape Town took them to Cape Point, the Cape of Good Hope, the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, and a beautiful beach at Maiden's Cove. Dave went on a half-day boat trip to Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for many years, and where there is a large colony of Jackass Penguins. They also made an overnight trip from Cape Town to a Bushman settlement at a place called Kagga Kamma in a scenic high desert area northeast of Cape Town. Then they flew from Cape Town to the twin cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria where they spent a couple day. Next they went to the nearby town of Graskop that served as the base for several more sightseeing drives. Finally they had a day at Kruger National Park where they went on game drives. The slides will feature varied scenery along with some typical birds and animals and a few plants.

NOTE ON WEBSITES: Tippecanoe Audubon has an Internet website at www.tippeaudubon.org, where back issues of *Tippe-Topics* are posted. This website also provides links to other websites of interest to Indiana birders. Some websites that *Tippe-Topics* readers might want to check out are the **National Audubon Society** at www.audubon.org, the **Indiana Audubon Society** at www.indianaudubon.org, and the **American Birding Association** at www.americanbirding.org.

HUMANS CAUSE MOST ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

By Wilson Lutz, President, and Dave Eiler, Vice-President

"Be fruitful and multiply." This command given by God to human beings in the first chapter of Genesis in the Bible is familiar to almost every American, even to those who don't read the Bible or know where these words are found. The command is part of our religious and cultural heritage taken for granted by religious and secular people alike. This can be seen in another less familiar quotation, "The world must be peopled." This quotation from Shakespeare's play, *Much Ado about Nothing*, appeared on a banner in the Manchester College post office. The choice of this quotation suggests that the students are eager to get on with that very task!

Less familiar to most Americans are the commands at the end of the first chapter of Genesis. There God gives the plant life of the earth as food, not only to the humans but also to the animals that have also been told to multiply and fill the earth. Thus clearly, according to Genesis, God intended that both humans and animals should have the habitats they need to fulfill these commands. When we humans overpopulate the earth and appropriate an excessive share of its habitats and resources for ourselves, we are doing so at the expense of the animals. This violates God's intention as presented in Genesis that humans and animals should live together on the earth and that the animals should have an equitable share of its resources.

We Americans are reminded in a variety of ways that our own country is overpopulated. Traffic jams in our cities are all too common. Airports are also overloaded. Crowds of travelers wait around for hours at large airports for overdue flights that are held up by runways that are inadequate to handle the large number of planes trying to land and take off. Likewise major

interstate highways are often dangerously overloaded with traffic. Passenger trains that once carried people hither and yon far more efficiently than either airplanes or automobiles have been discontinued and old railway lines are either torn up or used only by freight trains. A hundred years ago the little town of North Manchester was served by four railway lines with daily passenger trains that took people to nearby towns or faraway cities. Now the only choices readily available for long trips are either to travel by car or to fly from Fort Wayne or some city further away such as Indianapolis or Chicago.

As airlines and highways become more and more crowded, the problems become harder and harder to resolve. There is increasing and justifiable resistance to constructing new airport runways or new interstate highways such as the proposed extension of I-69 from Indianapolis to Evansville. The current energy crisis in California and elsewhere and the growing cost of petroleum based fuels force us to worry about energy supply problems that become ever more serious as our population grows relentlessly. We here in Indiana have so far escaped the threat of our electrical power being cut off by lack of generating capacity, but that threat is very real in California and other western states. Sooner or later it is bound to affect us in the Midwest as well.

Nuclear reactors could solve many energy problems, but no one wants to live near a nuclear reactor, and no county or state wants to host a nuclear waste disposal site. We are told that there is still plenty of petroleum available, even more natural gas, and enough coal to last several centuries. But using these fossil fuels produces the growing amount of carbon dioxide in the

atmosphere that is raising temperatures worldwide and changing climate patterns in ways that lead to more violent storms. Carbon dioxide also helps to produce the acid rain that is damaging forests and lakes in the east and northeast. Among the main culprits are power generating plants in Indiana.

Damaging forests has long-term consequences as well since they are the main way in which nature cleans the atmosphere. Like all green plants, forest trees take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and use it as a resource for producing wood and leaves. In the process they give off to the atmosphere the oxygen that is essential for all animal life, including human life. Human population growth leads to the destruction of countless woodlands to make way for the endless expansion of cities and suburbs. Many of us feel sad when we see another woodland put to the ax to make way for yet another housing development, but we feel helpless to stop the inevitable.

Forests, like fossil fuels, are a resource that humans are depleting and using up. They cannot last forever. But forests are different. They are what ecologists call "a sustainable resource". This means that, if used with appropriate foresight and restraint, they can survive indefinitely as a usable resource instead of being depleted.

As a society Americans think of petroleum, natural gas, and coal only as energy resources, but to chemists they have special value as synthetic intermediates. That is, they are the best resources available for producing many dyes, pigments, plastics, and drugs. This is another reason why long-term conservation of fossil fuels should take precedence over short-term profits that will eventually lead to long-term losses for society as a whole. The best way to secure the long-term future of humans on planet Earth is to use nonrenewable resources sparingly while at the same time developing renewable sources to replace those that are nonrenewable.

All power sources except nuclear energy derive ultimately from the sun. If we want to cut down our use of fossil fuels and nuclear reactors as our main energy resources, what can we use instead? Besides hydroelectric power, which is already used extensively in the West, the other two possibilities are wind power and solar power. Unlike fossil fuels these three energy sources are renewable and we can count on using them indefinitely. The sun also provides the energy that evaporates ocean water to produce the clouds that give the rain that feeds the rivers we use to produce hydroelectric power. Although

hydroelectric power does not produce the kind of pollution associated with fossil fuels, the dams built to produce it disrupt stream life and are especially harmful to migratory fish such as salmon. Furthermore most of the best sites for producing hydroelectric power have already been developed.

However, there are two other kinds of energy derived from the sun that we have only begun to develop. The sun drives the weather, including the winds that are used to produce wind power in ways that do little environmental damage. Much more wind power could be generated to feed into the national electrical grid and to supply power for local municipalities and individual householders where wind is fairly constant. Electrical energy can also be produced directly from sunlight by means of solar cells. Various efforts are under way to develop more efficient solar cells that would be practical for large-scale production of electricity.

The current energy crisis has forced us to begin thinking about these possibilities. It should also prompt us to think about the root problem which is the continual growth of the human population. Economists and businessmen seem to like the idea of endless economic growth fed by endless population growth. But that depletes the very resources that make economic growth possible. A more-or-less stable population using resources with restraint would be much better. Couples who already have large families should not be criticized since what is done is done. Contraception cannot be made retroactive! But couples recently married, and all couples still in their reproductive years, need to take a hard look at family size in relation to what is best for planet Earth.

With a worldwide population of some six billion people, humans have indeed been fruitful and multiplied far beyond anything the authors of Genesis and readers in past ages could ever have imagined. We now need to look at the other part of the future envisioned in the first chapter of Genesis. That is a future in which humanity and animals share the earth's resources and living space. This is the only hope for the wild flora and fauna that grace the earth and that Audubon members enjoy. This is the value that Tippecanoe Audubon seeks to foster through its field trips and programs. As chapter officers we urge you to support Audubon, not only with your pocketbook, but also with your personal participation in its field trips, programs, and other educational activities.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNT

By Jim Townsend, Membership Chair

FROM NOW ON ALL CHECKS FOR NEW MEMBERSHIPS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY AND MAILED TO TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP CHAIR JIM TOWNSEND, 6331 S 300 E, WARSAW, IN 46580. This will ensure that you are enrolled as a member of both Tippecanoe Audubon and National Audubon. Starting next January it will also ensure that your entire new membership fee will be sent back to Tippecanoe Audubon.

IF YOU USE THE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM THAT COMES FROM NATIONAL, PUT THE CODE "HO-8" IN LARGE PRINT IN THE LOWER RIGHT HAND CORNER OF THE FORM. THIS IS THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON CHAPTER CODE. PUTTING IT ON THE RENEWAL FORM WILL ENSURE THAT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON GETS CREDITED WITH THE MEMBERSHIP. Put a note on your mirror or computer screen to help you remember! Your check should still be made out to the National Audubon Society. Here is the reason we are asking you to follow this new procedure.

For as long as anyone can remember Tippecanoe Audubon has received a share of the annual membership dues that all Tippecanoe Audubon Society members have paid. We have

used **the dues split** we received each year from National primarily to pay for the printing and mailing of our monthly newsletter *Tippe-Topics*. National requires all chapters to publish local chapter newsletters for their members. Apart from the newsletter our annual expenditures have been minimal and we have been able to maintain a balanced budget with nothing to spare. **Our policy as a chapter** has always been to engage in fund raising only to support special projects such as maintaining our wildlife sanctuaries and putting *Audubon Adventures* into elementary school classrooms.

However, because National Audubon has been having some financial problems, it will cut the dues split that Tippecanoe Audubon receives by 25% starting in January. **This cutback in dues shares is forcing us to rethink our financial situation** in order to avoid cutting back on the number of newsletters published each year and on the number of classrooms for which we provide *Audubon Adventures*.

Fortunately National is providing us with **a new membership recruitment option** that will enable you to help Tippecanoe Audubon at no extra cost to yourself. Starting in January National will send Tippecanoe Audubon the entire \$20 received

MAIL THIS APPLICATION FORM
FOR AN INTRODUCTORY \$20 NEW AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP
Or for a \$6 *Tippe-Topics* Subscription

NOTE: Send *membership renewal* checks directly to National using the renewal form that comes with your renewal notice.
Be sure to place the code **HO-8** in the lower right-hand corner of the form.

<p style="text-align: center;">NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY & TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY Chapter HO8 7XCH</p> <p>_____ YES! Enroll me as a NEW MEMBER in the National Audubon Society & the Tippecanoe Chapter and sends my membership card. Start sending me <i>AUDUBON</i> magazine and <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclosed is a \$20 check payable to the National Audubon Society for my one-year introductory membership.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TIPPE-TOPICS SUBSCRIPTION ONLY</p> <p>_____ I am not a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society but would like to receive <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclosed is a \$6 one-year subscription donation check payable to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. I have a membership in the National Audubon Society carried with the following local Audubon chapter:</p>
<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Telephone _____ E-mail _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MAIL TO MEMBERSHIP CHAIR James Townsend 6331 S 300 E Warsaw, IN 46580 HO-8 E-mail: jimvjmc@kconline.com 7XCH</p>

from each new membership instead of the \$15 we now receive. The catch is that new memberships must go through the local chapter instead of going directly to National. Tippecanoe Audubon will receive nothing if new memberships are sent directly to National.

Here are **some suggestions for you who are already members**. You have probably received dues renewal cards from National requesting \$40 to renew your membership. However, if you look closely, the card "suggests" this amount but gives no other option. In reality the normal renewal fee is \$35 and this is all you need to send. The deceptive \$40 renewal card is actually a request for a \$5 donation above and beyond the \$35 membership renewal fee. Tippecanoe Audubon would also welcome

donations. They can be sent to Deborah Hustin, Tippecanoe Audubon Treasurer, 721 Wayne, North Manchester, IN 46962.

According to plans announced by National Audubon, local chapters such as **Tippecanoe Audubon will gradually receive less and less dues split money** from National. Eventually we will receive less than 25% of our local funding from National in contrast to the 95% we receive now. In other words National plans to keep an ever larger portion of the dues money you send in. This will force us to raise money elsewhere to print and mail the newsletter.

In the meantime, to make sure that Tippecanoe Audubon gets the current dues split, **put our chapter code number "HO-8" on the renewal card** you receive from National.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@earthlink.net.

WABASH COUNTY - On July 15, while riding their bicycles southeast of North Manchester, Steve and Lila Hammer saw a **NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD**. On July 20 Steve Doud, who lives south of Roann, saw three Vireo species, a **WARBLING VIREO**, a **WHITE-EYED VIREO**, and a **YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** from the roof of his house while putting on new shingles. Some of the other species he has seen or heard from his roof top are **WILLOW FLYCATCHER, ACADIAN FLYCATCHER, EASTERN PHOEBE, EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, RED-EYED VIREO, YELLOW WARBLER, COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, CERULEAN WARBLER, EASTERN BLUEBIRD, WOOD THRUSH, EASTERN TOWHEE, CEDAR WAXWING, ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK, YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO**, and a screaming **RED-TAILED HAWK**. Glen Campbell of North Manchester reports that while golfing at the Sycamore Golf Course east of North Manchester this summer he has seen or heard 44 bird species. Among species he has seen are **GREAT BLUE HERON, GREEN HERON, RING-NECKED PHEASANT, NORTHERN BOBWHITE, BELTED KINGFISHER, NORTHERN FLICKER, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, EASTERN KINGBIRD, EASTERN PHOEBE, EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, CAROLINA CHICKADEE, TUFTED TITMOUSE, WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH, GRAY CATBIRD, EASTERN BLUEBIRD, CEDAR WAXWING, RED-EYED VIREO, WARBLING VIREO, BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER, COMMON YELLOWTHROAT, EASTERN MEADOWLARK, BALTIMORE ORIOLE, INDIGO BUNTINGS, FIELD SPARROW, SONG SPARROW**. On July 27 Dave Eiler of North Manchester saw more than 50 **KILLDEERS** in the beach area south of Mississinewa Lake.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

<p>PROGRAM ON COSTA RICA On June 26 at the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton Dave Hicks showed slides of Costa Rica taken by his wife Deb Hustin. The slides showed a variety of habitats, plants, animals, and birds. Dave and Deb take a Manchester College class on Tropical Ecology to Costa Rica every other January. Dave teaches the class while Deb helps with the logistics and takes pictures. They go to a variety of</p>	<p>habitats at different elevations. By going to various locations they also experience weather conditions ranging from hot and humid to warm and dry. They spend an entire week at La Selva Biological Station in an Atlantic slope lowland rainforest. They spend several days in a montane forest near the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. They go to tropical dry forest areas on the Pacific slope such as Palo Verde National</p>	<p>Park that also has a large fresh water marsh with a variety of water birds, and also crocodiles. They sometimes drive to a paramo bog at the tree line above 11,000 feet along the Pan-American Highway where South American plants meet North American plants. And they sometimes drive up an active smoking volcano.</p>
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Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Inc. c/o James Townsend 6331 S 300 E Warsaw, IN 46580 CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED	Non-Profit Organization U. S. POSTAGE PAID North Manchester, IN 46962 Permit No. 174
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TIPPE - TOPICS
PUBLISHED BY THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
David L. Eiler, Editor
Phone: 219-982-2726; E-mail: dleiler@earthlink.net

DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY

VEERY: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

During spring and fall migration Veeries often stop in northern Indiana to forage in residential yards and gardens that have enough bushes and hedges to provide nearby cover. They spend most of their time on the ground. Some stay in northern Indiana for the summer when they can find suitable woodland nesting habitat. Their diet consists of about half insects and half berries.

The nesting range of the Veery extends from coast to coast in the northern United States and southern Canada. They migrate into northern Indiana during late April and early May. In September they migrate back south to northern South America for the winter.

Veeries are easy to recognize. They have what most field guides describe as a cinnamon-brown back. The underside is whitish with a few dark spots on the upper part of the breast. The head is the same color as the back, and there is a very faint eye ring. Like other Thrushes the Veery has a beautiful song, a series of descending flute-like notes, *veer-e*, that gave it the name Veery. This song is heard most often at dusk. The call note is a descending whistle-like *veer*.

The Veery builds its bowl-shaped nest on the ground or close to the ground in a bush or wood pile. Favorite sites are on a hidden pile of dead leaves or in a clump of grass. The nest is constructed of twigs and weed stems and lined with grass, rootlets, and fine strips of bark. It is fairly large for the size of the bird and takes about a week to build. The female lays and incubates three to five unmarked blue eggs that hatch in about a week and a half. Brown-headed Cowbird females often lay eggs in Veery nests that the female Veery never tries to remove.

The Veery belongs to the large Thrush Family, Turdidae, that includes such species as the American Robin and the Eastern Bluebird. The scientific name of the Veery is *Catharus fuscescens*. Close relatives occurring in Indiana are Swainson's Thrush, *Catharus ustulatus*, the Hermit Thrush, *Catharus guttatus*, and the Gray-cheeked Thrush, *Catharus minimus*.

Usually placed in a different genus is another well-known member of the family, the Wood Thrush, *Hylocichla mustelina*. The *Catharus* genus is limited to the Western Hemisphere except for the Gray-cheeked Thrush that has a nesting range extending into eastern Siberia. Altogether there are nine members of the genus. The rare Bicknell's Thrush, *Catharus bicknelli*, nests in New England, northeastern Canada, and Newfoundland. Members of the genus are noted for their beautiful flute-like songs that have led to the name Nightingale-Thrush being given to some Latin American species. The Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, *Catharus gracilirostris*, lives in the mountains of Costa Rica and Panama. The Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush, *Catharus frantzii*, and the Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush, *Catharus mexicanus*, occur in southern Mexico and Central America. The Solitaires in the *Myadestes* genus, including Townsend's Solitaire, *Myadestes townsendi*, in the western United States, constitute a smaller Western Hemisphere Thrush Family group with a dozen members. A large Thrush genus, *Zoothera* with 33 species, is found only in the Eastern Hemisphere. The largest Thrush genus, *Turdus*, that includes the American Robin, *Turdus migratorius*, has 64 species that can be found on every continent except Antarctica and on many oceanic islands.

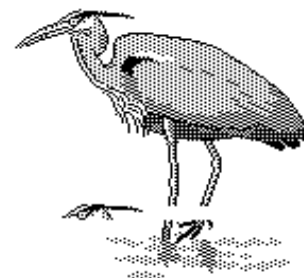


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties,
Indiana

Volume XXVII, Number 9, September 2001

OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2001

FIELD TRIP, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 9:00AM TO 3:00PM - BIRDS, BLOSSOMS, AND BUTTERFLIES AT WILDWOOD

Kids, adults! Ever wonder what that beautiful bird or butterfly was that visited your back yard recently? Or what that colorful wildflower was that you spotted yesterday along the roadside? Here is an opportunity to sharpen your knowledge of our natural world. Meet at the Wildwood nature preserve any time between 9:00AM and 3:00PM on Saturday, September 22, 2001. Naturalists from the Tippecanoe Audubon Society will be there to assist you as we explore the natural beauty of Indiana fields and forests. Separate field trip walks looking for birds, wildflowers, and butterflies will occur simultaneously. Each walk will be repeated so that participants will be able to take part in all three walks. Wildwood is the Bob and Alice Frantz nature preserve and farm east of Silver Lake in southern Kosciusko County. To get there, pick up SR-14 at the stop light in Silver Lake and travel three-and-a-quarter miles east to the entrance, or pick up SR-14 at the stop light on SR-13 south of Sidney and travel west four-and-three-quarters miles to the entrance. The Wildwood entrance sign is on the south side of SR-14 about a quarter mile east of County Farm Road. Turn south at the sign and follow the gravel driveway through the fields and woods, past the pond, and on to the parking area by the house. Bring a lunch if you plan to be there over the noon hour.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 25, 7:30PM - PAUL STEFFEN, "LANDSCAPING FOR WILDLIFE: ESTHETIC HABITATS?"

AT THE BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. Have you ever wondered whether you can have an attractive landscape design and good wildlife habitat at the same time? Here are some "how to" ideas from twenty years in the landscaping business and sixty years in the woods. A slide presentation will be followed by discussion.

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SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP TIPPECANOE AUDUBON

By Wilson B. Lutz, President

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR FLORY-GEMMER MARSH SIGN

As a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society, would you consider using your recent income tax rebate check to benefit the chapter? Here is a list of items needed for maintenance projects at our sanctuaries east of Liberty Mills. The so-called tepee at the Taylor Sanctuary has deteriorated badly over the years and needs to be rebuilt. The brush mower used for maintaining trails is stored in the tepee along with other equipment. Also, a wind storm a few weeks ago blew down and broke up the sign at the Flory-Gemmer Marsh. Several items of material are needed for constructing a replacement sign. These can either be new or "pre-owned" if in usable condition. Here is a list of the items needed and the estimated dollar value of each.

- Lumber and materials for rebuilding the tepee, \$1500
- Chain saw for removing fallen trees from trails, \$350
- Treated lumber for new sign
 - 4 boards, 2" x 12" x 16', \$25 each
 - 2 boards, 2" x 6" x 16', \$11 each
 - 4 boards, 2" x 4" x 16', \$8 each
- Dark brown sign paint, \$30
- Router bits for sign lettering, \$??

Tippecanoe Audubon is a non-profit organization and all contributions for these projects will be deductible on your state and federal income tax returns. For more information on these opportunities contact Paul Steffen or Wilson Lutz. Paul can be reached by telephone at 219-658-4504, or by e-mail at ecoexpo@kconline.com. Wilson can be reached by telephone at 219-982-6754, or by e-mail at wLutz@ctlnet.com.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL

If you are connected to the Internet you can save Tippecanoe Audubon a substantial amount of printing and postage money by choosing to receive your copy of the newsletter electronically each month. Here is how you can take advantage of this new Tippecanoe Audubon Society service. Just send an e-mail message to gclark@ctlnet.com giving your e-mail address and indicating your desire to receive each monthly issue of the newsletter by way of the Internet. Each month you will receive an e-mail announcement from Greg Clark when the newest issue of *Tippe-Topics* is available. Then to receive your copy of the newsletter, go to the Tippecanoe Audubon website, <http://www.tippeaudubon.org>, and click the "Newsletter" button. You will then be able view the new issue of the newsletter and print it out if you wish.

KEEPING CATS INDOORS BENEFITS BOTH CATS AND BIRDS

By David L. Eiler, Editor

An organization called the American Bird Conservancy based in Washington, DC, is conducting a nationwide campaign to persuade cat owners everywhere to keep their cats indoors. It has a website called "Cats Indoors" that encourages cat owners to keep their cats indoors. It also calls for local laws dealing with cat overpopulation and stray cats.

Local governments use various methods for controlling feral cat populations. Some require pet cats as well as dogs to be licensed and immunized against common diseases. Some have an animal control officer who captures stray cats and puts them to sleep. Others have a pound where stray animals may be kept for a while till claimed by an owner or taken by a new owner.

The most important reason for keeping cats indoors is that cats kill millions of songbirds each year. Even cats whose owners take good care of them and feed them well still have a strong instinct to catch birds and small animals. No amount of training can overcome this basic instinct. If a cat is outdoors you can be certain that it will kill birds. Since cats are not a native North American species, native birds do not have an instinctive fear of them. That makes birds at bird feeders easy prey for cats if there is a hiding place close enough to a feeder for cats to ambush birds eating under the feeder.

Another reason for keeping cats indoors is that cats face many hazards when allowed to roam. Many cats are run over by cars or trucks since they do not have an instinctive fear of motorized vehicles. They can be attacked and even killed by dogs. They may eat poisoned bait put out by someone trying to get rid of stray animals. They can be a hazard to small children who may get scratched when trying to play with or pick up a cat that seems friendly. A tame and friendly cat may also get stolen. Even cats that are accustomed to being outside may get lost and be unable to find their way home. Furthermore, cats outdoors face various health hazards. They can acquire fleas, ticks, or internal parasites. They can also catch infections or diseases, some of which can be transmitted to humans. Worst of all they can be bitten by a rabid animal and catch rabies.

Cats can be quite content to live indoors. If a cat has spent its entire life indoors, it will have little desire to go outside and may even be afraid if put outside. A cat that is used to going outdoors can become accustomed to living indoors, or it can be put outdoors part of the time in a pen or large cage.

Information for this article came from a website maintained by the American Bird Conservancy. You can find it at the web address www.abcbirds.org/cats/catsindoors.htm.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

SUMMER PICNIC & FIELD TRIP

At the annual Tippecanoe Audubon Society summer picnic on July 15 we were once again treated to a field trip led by Bart Culver. The trail passes through what was a wheat field when the Culvers first acquired it. However, their attempt to grow wheat was not encouraging and so they allowed the land to revert to more natural flora. Some trees were planted, but others propagated naturally. The trail passes through this new growth, then into more mature woods, and down to the edge of Backwater Marsh.

Among the interesting trees along the trail were a grove of Shagbark Hickories, some Kentucky Coffee trees, Ironwood trees, Catalpas, Paw Paws, a variety of Maples and Oaks, and a row of tall Blue Spruce trees serving as a sound barrier. Many wildflowers and fungi were also seen along the trail.

A new tract acquired recently by the Culvers adjoins their home property and also overlooks the Backwater Marsh. The former owner used the property as a dump. So the Culvers had to remove five semi loads of junk appliances and trash to make it once again a place of beauty.

The Culver home looks down upon a pond that was originally devoid of fish. Recently, however, it was stocked with fish by natural means. Runoff water entered the pond from a ravine and brought in a

variety of fish. The pond also has a great variety of frog species along with a population of Northern Banded Water Snakes that feed on the frogs and small fish. The pond also offers a plethora of insect life. Six Dragonfly species and several Damselfly species were seen on the day of the picnic.

There is even a colony of Beavers living in the pond. However these beavers don't build a typical beaver lodge out in the water. Because the banks of the pond rise rather sharply from the pond, the beavers can excavate dens in the pond bank under the root systems of the trees. The tangled roots keep the roof of the dens from caving in. There is plenty of evidence of their presence because of the "beaver stumps" found around the pond. But the best evidence of their presence is the beavers themselves. At about 7:00PM two beavers swam across the pond to feed among the lily pads on the west side.

What a great day! You MUST join us next year!!! A mild day with pleasant temperatures made this year's field trip a very enjoyable part of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society annual picnic.

Reported by Paul Steffen

EDIBLE PLANT FIELD TRIP

The August 18 field trip featured plants of the Herbert L. Taylor Sanctuary northeast of Liberty Mills. Plant expert David Hicks of the Manchester College

Biology Department provided memorable examples of edible and inedible wild plants cooked on the spot for Tippecanoe Audubon Society field trippers.

Dave pointed out numerous examples of what NOT to eat, including Buckeyes, Pignut Hickory Tree nuts, and such obvious ones as Poison Ivy and Poison Oak. Oak Tree acorns cannot be eaten as found on the ground or on the tree, but they can be eaten after special treatment.

On the other hand, numerous edible wild plants or plant products were identified including Black Walnuts, Beechnuts, Chicory roots, all parts of young Dandelions, Wild Black Cherry fruits, and various berry leaves. Even Stinging Nettles can be eaten if young plants are selected. Several attractive looking Buckeyes were found on the East Loop Trail, but alas they are inedible. As we were discussing what Buckeyes might be good for, one member of the group told us with a smile that Buckeyes are supposed to be good to carry in your pocket if you have hemorrhoids.

Field trippers were treated to a generous supply of Wild Cherry scones baked by Professor Hicks prior to the trip. Because of a short supply of Wild Black Cherries, Dave included some Black and Red Raspberries in his recipe. In appearance, the scones somewhat resembled oatmeal cookies except for being interspersed with

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<p style="text-align: center;">NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY & TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY Chapter HO8 7XCH</p> <p>_____ YES! Enroll me as a NEW MEMBER in the National Audubon Society & the Tippecanoe Chapter and send my membership card. Start sending me <i>AUDUBON</i> magazine and <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclosed is a \$20 check payable to the National Audubon Society for my one-year introductory membership.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TIPPE-TOPICS SUBSCRIPTION ONLY</p> <p>_____ I am not a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society but would like to receive <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclose an \$8 one-year subscription donation check payable to Tippecanoe Audubon Society. I have a membership in National Audubon Society carried with the following local Audubon chapter:</p>
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cherry and berry fragments. The unanimous opinion of the field trippers was that they were tasty indeed!

Dave also brought along a camp stove and made some bergamot tea. This was prepared by steeping in boiling water a mixture of Black Raspberry and Blackberry leaves along with Wild Bergamot leaves and flowers. The result was a pale yellow tea with a taste so strong that some of us found it unpleasant. Dave also brought a container of Staghorn Sumac lemonade. He had made this by crushing the fruits of the Staghorn Sumac in water, straining the liquid, and adding sugar. It provided a pleasant drink tasting somewhat like lemonade but without the citrus-like flavor of genuine lemonade. Since the focus of the trip was on wild green plants, Dave did

not look for mushrooms or discuss which kinds are edible and which are poisonous.

Are you sorry you missed this trip? If so, be sure not to miss the birds, blossoms, and butterflies field trip on September 22 at Wildwood east of Silver Lake.

Reported by Wilson Lutz & Paul Steffen
PROGRAM ON SOUTH AFRICA

Last February Dave and Ruth Eiler went on a two-and-a-half-week Elderhostel trip to South Africa. On August 28 at the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton Dave presented a slide program entitled "South Africa: From Cape Point to Kruger". The slides showed scenes from Cape Peninsula south of Cape Town and the Cederberg Mountains northeast of Cape Town.

Other slides depicted the distinctive South African plant and wildflower community known as fynbos that still

survives on top of Cape Point near the Cape of Good Hope at the south end of Cape Peninsula and on Table Mountain in the city of Cape Town at the north end of Cape Peninsula. A few slides showed birds and plants seen in the Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden. Landscape views and plants of the very different desert fynbos plant community of the Cederberg Mountains were also shown.

Slides taken in Kruger National Park in northern South Africa and elsewhere showed some typical South African birds and mammals. Game drives in Kruger's forested landscape enabled Dave to get close-up photographs showing how beautiful such animals as Zebras, Giraffes, Impalas, and even Rhinoceroses, are in their natural habitat. He also managed to get close-up shots of a few birds.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@earthlink.net.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - John Rouch and Vernon Campbell who both live on the south side of Lake Wabec near Milford reported an **OSPREY** flying over the lake on August 8. That evening Vernon saw a **RED-TAILED HAWK** near his house. On August 11 in the forenoon Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler of North Manchester saw two **AMERICAN KESTRELS** along CR-400E near SR-14, and further north four **EASTERN MEADOWLARKS** at the railroad crossing just south of CR-850S.

HUNTINGTON COUNTY - On a September 5 birding trip to the Salamonie area some of the birds Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler saw in the Huntington County portion of Salamonie were a **COOPER'S HAWK**, a **RED-TAILED HAWK**, a **GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER**, and a family of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**.

WABASH COUNTY - On August 11 Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler saw a family of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** near CR-1400N west CR-200E. Early in the evening on August 12 Dave saw two **YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOOS** in the woods along the Eel River by the Manchester College athletic field, and in the same area dozens of **CHIMNEY SWIFTS** were circling overhead. On August Dave saw a **COMMON NIGHTHAWK** dive-bombing the flat-roofed education wing of the First Brethren Church at Fifth and Sycamore Streets in North Manchester. Presumably it was a male courting his mate who may have been roosting or tending young ones on the flat roof. Common Nighthawks do not make nests. Instead the female just lays two speckled eggs on a gravelly place, either on the ground or on a flat gravel-covered roof. The male often dives toward her, either while she is flying or while she is on her eggs or tending her brood. His dives make a "swooshing" sound that is easy to recognize. On a September 5 birding trip to the Salamonie area some of the birds Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler saw in the Wabash County portion of Salamonie were three **RED-TAILED HAWKS**, an **AMERICAN KESTREL**, a **RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** female, an **EASTERN PHOEBE**, a flock of **AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES** eating thistle seeds, a family of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**, and a **COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** juvenile, and they heard but were unable to see a loud **CAROLINA WREN**.

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

David L. Eiler, Editor

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EASTERN PHOEBE: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

The Eastern Phoebe is perhaps our most familiar flycatcher. Pairs may often be seen in woodland areas, around farm buildings, or in residential areas. The nest may be built on almost any sort of shelf-like projection such as a rock ledge in a cave or on a cliff face, a rafter or beam in a barn, or a bridge girder. I recall finding a Phoebe nest with eggs in a hole in a sloping rock surface so small that I could hardly reach in with my hand.

The nest, built mostly by the female, is made of weed stems, grass, and plant fibers held together with mud, and covered on the outside with lichens. It is shaped almost like a ball with a small, cup-like depression on top to hold the eggs. The female may wait a week or so after completing the nest before laying her eggs. The eggs, usually five in number, are white with faint dark speckling. They hatch in a little over two weeks. She raises a second brood in the summer. Unfortunately Brown Headed Cowbird females often choose Eastern Phoebe nests in which to lay their own eggs. Also bird mites often infest Eastern Phoebe nests and weaken the nestlings. Mites can be eliminated by dusting the nest with a mild insecticide.

The Eastern Phoebe is entirely dark gray-brown above and whitish below. The eye is black and lacks any kind of eye-ring or eye-line. The wing feathers of the adult have pale edges, and juveniles have faint wingbars. The Eastern Phoebe habitually wags its tail, and like other Flycatchers, has an upright posture when perched. Its name comes from its repetitious *fee-bee* call.

The breeding range of the Eastern Phoebe extends from west-central Canada through the United States east of the Great Plains, and south as far as northern Mississippi, northern Alabama, northern Georgia, and western South Carolina. Its winter range extends from Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and southern Missouri south along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, and southwest through Arkansas, Texas, and much of eastern Mexico. It arrives on its breeding grounds as early as mid-

February and begins nesting in March. It does not leave till November.

Like other Flycatcher species the Eastern Phoebe feeds by perching on a shrub or tree branch and flying out to catch passing insects. It then returns to the same perch, or to a nearby perch, to await another insect. If insects are not yet available when it first arrives in late winter, it may resort to eating weed seeds.

The Eastern Phoebe, *Sayornis phoebe*, has two close relatives, the Black Phoebe, *Sayornis nigricans*, in the western United States, Mexico, and Central America, and Say's Phoebe, *Sayornis saya*, in western North America including Mexico. They belong to the large Tyrant Flycatcher Family, Tyrannidae, found only in the Western Hemisphere. Another familiar member of this family occurring in Indiana is the Eastern Wood-Pewee, *Contopus virens*, which has two close relatives, the Western Wood-Pewee, *Contopus sordidulus*, in the western United States, Mexico, and Central America, and the Greater Pewee, *Contopus pertinax*, in the southwestern United States and Mexico. Several Flycatchers in the *Empidonax* genus occur in Indiana, the Willow Flycatcher, *Empidonax traillii*, the Alder Flycatcher, *Empidonax alnorum*, the Acadian Flycatcher, *Empidonax virescens*, the Least Flycatcher, *Empidonax minimus*, and the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, *Empidonax flaviventris*. One other Flycatcher occurring in Indiana is the Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*.

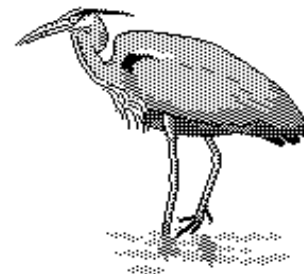


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties,
Indiana

Volume XXVII, Number 10, October 2001

OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2001

FIELD TRIP, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, OCTOBER 14, 1:30PM - To Pisgah Marsh Nongame Area SE of N. Webster

This natural area has several interesting glacial features such as eskers, a pothole pond, and a pothole quaking bog. The trail follows the top of a long esker that overlooks a large wetland area. After climbing up the south end of the esker the trail along the top of the esker is easy. This is a good area to look for migrating fall birds. At the north end of the esker the trail goes past a beaver dam and around a large pond. The hike will take us to the quaking bog where beautiful fall-blooming Fringed Gentians grow. Join the field trip group at the parking area by CR-350N at the east edge of Kosciusko County. From US-30 at Pierceton go north on SR-13 to CR-350N south of North Webster. Follow CR-350N east across CR-900E, and on east another mile to the parking area on the left just past the wetlands. Wear boots or other footwear suitable for wading through the water-logged quaking bog. If you have questions, call field trip leader Dave Hicks at 219-982-2471 (home) or 219-982-5309 (office).

PROGRAM, TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 23, 7:30PM - Chad Watts of the Indiana Nature Conservancy

AT THE BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. Chad Watts is employed by Nature Conservancy to work on the Tippecanoe River restoration and preservation project. This project includes reforesting the river bottom and protecting aquatic species. His program will be on the project. He will show slides and tell us of some ways we can participate in the preservation effort. See the article on the next page for more information.

A QUOTATION TO CONSIDER: "We still think in terms of conquest. We still haven't become mature enough to think of ourselves as only a tiny part of a vast and incredible universe.... But man is a part of nature and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself..." Rachel Carson

NOTE ON WEBSITES: Tippecanoe Audubon has an Internet website at www.tippeaudubon.org, where back issues of *Tippe-Topics* are posted. This website also provides links to other websites of interest to Indiana birders. Some websites that *Tippe-Topics* readers might want to check out are the **National Audubon Society** at www.audubon.org, the **Indiana Audubon Society** at www.indianaaudubon.org, and the **American Birding Association** at www.americanbirding.org. The website www.webdirectory.com/LandConservation/Wetlands/ has a link to a website that gives the names and addresses of most **conservation organizations** in the United States. You can go to the website actionnetwork.org/ct/l7q4.xM1upJW/SUVs to find out how your senator and representative voted on **drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**.

OUR CALLING TO SAVE THE BIRDS

By Wilson B. Lutz, President

If there is a rallying cry for Audubon chapters nationwide it has to be "Save the Birds". On the other hand, the rallying cry for a number of other environmental organizations has been "Save the Whales". Has there been much progress in either case? According to James Brooke writing in the *New York Times*, August 19, 2001, dollars and time are coming to the aid of "Save the Whales". How? Whale-watching has become a big business. No less than fifty companies are providing whale-watching tours in the vicinity of Vancouver, British Columbia, alone. Several companies operate out of Provincetown, Massachusetts.

Worldwide there are no less than 492 companies providing whale-watching services. According to one monitoring organization, some eleven million people participated in whale-watching tours during the year 2000. All told whale-watchers have paid some \$1,000,000,000 for tour tickets. By way of contrast, the sale of whale meat in Japan, one of the two

remaining nations along with Norway that still allows whaling, amounted to only \$32,000,000. Thus in pure economic terms alone, whales are worth far more alive than dead. Clearly, live whales provide long-term benefits to coastal communities that provide whale-watching tours. Even in Iceland, until recently a whaling nation, whale watching engaged over thirty thousand people in 1998 compared to only two-hundred people in 1994. The whales of the world are not entirely out of danger since Russia wants to resume whaling. However, the economic factors summarized above give hope for the future of whales.

Those of us whose rallying cry is "Save the Birds" can learn something from all those organizations that are working to save the whales. There is no reason why we cannot have a similar success story. Large sales of bird identification books show what can happen. Roger Tory Peterson revolutionized the art and science of bird identification when he published his first field guide to birds of the eastern United States back in 1934. His

field guide has gone through many revisions and remains one of the most popular. The *National Geographic* guide, first published in 1983 and now in its third edition, continues to sell well. At the same time new guides keep appearing. Recent books by David Sibley and Kenn Kaufman are now enjoying good sales. Thus, just in terms of field guides alone, bird study and bird watching have become big business for publishers and book sellers.

Furthermore the amount of money that bird watchers spend annually for bird seed, bird houses, and bird-watching travel adds up to many more millions of dollars. Thus, in sheer economic terms, bird watchers ought to have some clout on environmental issues. Of course, most Audubon members might

argue that the natural world has its own right to exist regardless of economic benefits for humans. But if economic factors can help in the campaign to "Save the Birds", we should not turn down such help.

What can you do as a member of Tippecanoe Audubon and a reader of *Tippe-Topics*? One important thing is to talk to your friends and neighbors about birds. When you see an interesting bird, mention it. And why not invite a neighbor or friend to go along with you to a Tippecanoe Audubon program or to join you on a field trip? Nonmembers are more than welcome to take part in all Tippecanoe Audubon activities. Who knows? They just might become new members and join with us in the campaign to "Save the Birds".

NATURE CONSERVANCY WORKING TO SAVE THE TIPPECANOE RIVER

By Chad Watts

The Nature Conservancy, through its Tippecanoe River Project office in Winamac, is announcing a tree-planting program aimed at reforesting the Tippecanoe River flood plain. This tree-planting initiative will help landowners pay for reforesting and protecting bottomland areas along the river. The Nature Conservancy will work with landowners to help them secure the services of a qualified forestry professional who will help plan the planting, perform the planting operation, and work on any related maintenance activities associated with the tree-planting. The goal of the program is to increase the number of acres in the floodplain that are planted to native pines and hardwoods so that the benefits of this type of land use can be restored to the Tippecanoe River and its species.

The Nature Conservancy is a worldwide, not-for-profit, membership-based, conservation organization. Its mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that constitute the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. A recent analysis by The Nature Conservancy ranked the Tippecanoe River as the eighth most important river in the entire country for the protection of imperiled aquatic species. The Tippecanoe River supports healthy populations of several rare and endangered species, and is recognized nationally for its high quality mussel populations and mussel diversity. The Tippecanoe River also supports a wide array of fish species, both sport fish and endemic non-game

fish populations. Many of the species that the Tippecanoe supports are indicators of its overall good water quality. It is the presence and diversity of these species, and the overall quality of the Tippecanoe River that has brought The Nature Conservancy to initiate a comprehensive protection program in this area. Recent scientific studies have shown that an intact forested riparian or flood-plain corridor is essential for the health and maintenance of these imperiled, high quality aquatic communities.

A forested flood plain corridor has many benefits related to water quality and the protection of these sensitive species. Some benefits of this type of forested corridor are filtering overland runoff to reduce stream sedimentation from nearby sources of soil erosion, shading the stream to maintain constant and consistent water temperatures, protecting stream banks, and thereby conserving the habitat that aquatic species need to survive. The Conservancy is working to implement this comprehensive tree-planting program for all of these reasons.

If you have land along the Tippecanoe that you would like to put into the reforestation program, or if you have another conservation need relating to the Tippecanoe River, you should contact Chad Watts, Tippecanoe River Project Manager, The Nature Conservancy, PO Box 69, Winamac, IN 46996. He can also be reached by telephone or FAX at 219 946-7491, or by e-mail at tncptippy@pwrct.com

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

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KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - On September 21 in the forenoon Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler of North Manchester visited Wildwood east of Silver Lake and saw **WOOD DUCKS**, **RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS**, a **GREEN HERON**, an **EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE**, a couple **CHIMNEY SWIFTS**, and a **HOUSE WREN**. On September 27 Dave and Ruth Eiler of North Manchester saw a **NORTHERN FLICKER** along River Road west of CR-700E.

WABASH COUNTY - Steve Hammer who lives in a woods beside the Eel River in North Manchester has recently seen or heard several bird species of interest. On August 16 he saw a **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER**. On August 19 he heard both an **EASTERN SCREECH-OWL** and a **BARRED OWL**. On September 5 he saw a **GREEN HERON**. And on September 10 he saw a **GREAT BLUE HERON**. On September 15 Dave Eiler of North Manchester walked the trail at the Taylor Sanctuary and saw only **BLUE JAYS** and **TUFTED TITMICE**. During a quick stop at the Flory-Gemmer Woods Preserve he heard a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER**. He saw a family of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** along CR-1450N west of Liberty Mills, a **GREAT BLUE HERON** in a small pond by CR-200E just north of CR-1400N, and a pair of **AMERICAN KESTRELS** along CR-100W a quarter-mile north of CR-1300N. On September 21 Glen Campbell and Dave Eiler of North Manchester saw a large flock **RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS** in a cattail marsh by CR-1400N west of CR-200W, presumably headed south for the winter, and a large flock of **HORNED LARKS** in a plowed field by CR-1400N west of CR-100E. At a marshy pond by CR-1400N east of CR-100E they saw a **GREAT BLUE HERON**, three **BLUE-WINGED TEAL**, and many **MALLARDS**. On September 27 Dave and Ruth Eiler saw **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** along CR-1450N west of Liberty Mills.

WHITLEY COUNTY - On September 27 Dave and Ruth Eiler of North Manchester stopped at a pond by SR-14 at CR-350W east of South Whitley where they saw **AMERICAN COOTS**, **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**, and a **SONG SPARROW**. Along River Road west of South Whitley they saw more **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS**, and along CR-950W southwest of Collamer they saw an **AMERICAN KESTREL** and a **TURKEY VULTURE**.

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TIPPE - TOPICS

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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NOT DELAY

BLUE JAY: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

Blue Jays are among our most common birds. They thrive equally well in residential areas, brushy fencerows, or woodlands. Blue Jays can be raucous and noisy, or they can sneak around quietly and almost unnoticed. They are often aggressive, and smaller birds quickly get out of the way when a Blue Jay comes to the feeder. Often a pair will show up together, eat a few seeds, and then leave.

Blue Jays are so familiar they hardly need to be described. They have a jaunty blue crest that seems to express surprise or aggression when raised. The throat and sides of the face are white. The beak and back of the head are black, and a black necklace separates the white throat from the white breast. The back is plain blue. The wings and tail are blue crossed by narrow black bands, and there is a prominent white wingbar.

Blue Jays range from the Great Plains east to the Atlantic Coast, and from the Gulf Coast north into southern Canada. Throughout most of their range they are nonmigratory, but there is some southward movement out of the northernmost parts of their range during the winter.

Blue Jays build a large and rather crude nest of sticks and twigs lined with leaves, grass, moss, and rootlets. The nest site is usually a well-hidden crotch anywhere from five to fifty feet high in either a deciduous or coniferous tree. The female lays four to six shiny pale greenish eggs with brown spots and speckles. The eggs, incubated mostly by the female, hatch in about two-and-a-half weeks. In Indiana Blue Jays are usually able to raise two broods in a season. Though noisy the rest of the year, they remain very quiet while nesting.

Blue Jays make a variety of sounds. Most familiar is a loud harsh call repeated several times. Another resembles the high-pitched scream of the Red-tailed Hawk. Still another is a bell-like

note quite different from the more usual raucous noises. If Blue Jays discover a hawk or owl perched in a tree they may gather to harass it with raucous calls and attacks from behind.

Blue Jays eat seeds and acorns and often bury acorns in the ground. Some of these hidden acorns are later retrieved and eaten, but many are never retrieved. Thus Blue Jays plant many oak trees.

Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*), along with other species of Jays, Crows, and Magpies, belong to the Corvidae Family. The closest relative of the Blue Jay is the bluish-black Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) in western North America. Other North American relatives are Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) and the Gray Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) of Canada and the West, the Florida Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*), the Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), and the Island Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma insularis*) on Santa Cruz Island off the coast of southern California. Living in southern Texas and Arizona and southward is the Mexican Jay (*Aphelocoma ultramarina*). The Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) inhabits the pinyon-juniper woodlands of the West. The Green Jay (*Cyanocorax yncas*) and Brown Jay (*Cyanocorax morio*) range from southern Texas to South America. Other North American relatives are the American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), the Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*), and the Common Raven (*Corvus corax*). There are 117 species in the Corvidae Family occurring on every continent except Antarctica. Perhaps the most widespread member of the family is the Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) that ranges all across Eurasia.

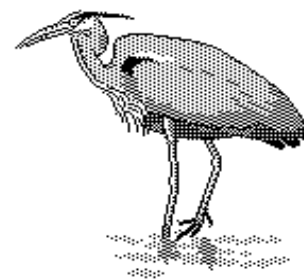


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties,
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Volume XXVII, Number 11, November 2001

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COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2001

FIELD TRIP, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 9:30AM - To Various Places along the Indiana Shores of Lake Michigan

We will meet at or before 7:00AM in North Manchester on East Seventh Street in front of the Town Life Center to carpool, and we will leave from there at 7:00. People not wishing to join the carpool can meet us at Michigan City in the parking area near the beach at Washington Park. From there on we will remain flexible since the weather will determine where the best birding will likely be. If you plan to join the group in Michigan City, please give a call ahead of time to Steve Doud at 765-833-7793, or to Dave Hicks at 219-982-2471 (home) or 219-982-5309 (office). Bring a lunch, binoculars, and a spotting scope if you have one. Dress for cold weather since the wind along the lakeshore can be brutal this time of year. On the way back we may have time to swing by Jasper-Pulaski for those who would like to see the Sandhill Cranes there.

PROGRAM, TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 27, 7:30PM - Video: "Owls Up Close"

AT THE BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. This outstanding video shows intimate views of more species of owls than most of us will ever get to see in the wild. It covers eighteen species of North American owls with stunning shots and informative narration. The video will be projected on a big screen so that everyone will be able to see it well.

BACK ISSUES OF NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE: The editor has on hand back issues of *Tippe-Topics* going back as far as 1992 that he will soon need to discard. If you would like to receive a set of these back issues, or any one particular issue, please contact him soon. You can send him an e-mail at dleiler@earthlink.net, telephone him at 219-982-2726, or drop him a note addressed to Dave Eiler, 606 East Seventh Street, North Manchester, IN 46962.

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IN MEMORY OF JOHN ROUCH: THE CONSUMMATE CONSERVATIONIST NOVEMBER 22, 1939, TO OCTOBER 10, 2001

By Paul E. Steffen

John H. Rouch was born in Pierceton Indiana on November 22, 1939. He and Rosemary Miller married in 1960 and John graduated from Manchester College in 1962. He completed his masters at the University of Northern Iowa in 1968. It was there that John "discovered" birds. He enjoyed birdwatching the rest of his life and helped each winter and spring with Tippecanoe Audubon Society bird counts.

His teaching career began when he and Rosemary spent two years in the Church of the Brethren mission in Nigeria with Brethren Volunteer

Service. There he taught high school level biology and agriculture at Waka Schools. John then returned to Indiana where he taught biology and Chemistry at Fairfield Community Schools near Goshen for 30 years.

One of his important projects there was developing an outdoor laboratory. He was honored with several awards recognizing his outstanding accomplishments. He was named Indiana High School Conservation Teacher of the Year in 1975, 1988, and 1993. He won the Howard Michaud Award in 1999 from the Environmental Educators of

Indiana. He also won the Kosciusko County Environmental Enhancement of the Year award in 2001.

Along with his contributions to education, John's work on the quality of Indiana streams had an impact that extended to the entire state. He was part of a core group that brought the Water Watchers program to northern Indiana. This program involved students in an interdisciplinary study of water; from the science of water testing to the historical and social impacts of water.

Wanting to share this program with the rest of the state, he was instrumental in developing, funding, and implementing a statewide program called Indiana Rivers and Streams. Through this program he trained hundreds of Indiana teachers and students in water monitoring techniques. These efforts laid the groundwork for what is now a state-sponsored program in Indiana called Hoosier River Watch.

He assisted the Kosciusko County Health department with water monitoring efforts and helped develop a tremendous data base for

monitoring results. He spent 1999 and 2000 training volunteers, conducting water tests, and gathering data for a special project in the St. Joseph River Basin.

When asked about him, one of his admirers commented, "He always lived what he believed, he taught by example." John H. Rouch's commitment and dedication to promoting environmental quality is a legacy that will live on in his students. It is a challenge not only to Tippecanoe Audubon but also to the entire human community. He has shown us how to make changes that count. We can honor that challenge by emulating his example. And, sandwiched somewhere in the middle of all those accomplishments, John and Rosemary raised two brilliant children, both of whom are now medical doctors.

After a five-year illness John died on October 10, 2001. Memorials may be sent to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society or Church of the Brethren Missions in Nigeria. You may contact Paul Steffen at 219-658-4504 or ecoexpo@kconline.com.

THE FOX OF THE FOX RIVER

By Wilson B. Lutz, President

Did you know that "The Fox" died on October 3, 2001? This fox did not have a bushy tail, but his actions were foxy. Here is how James F. Phillips of Aurora, Illinois, earned his nickname, "The Fox".

In the late 1960s Mr. Phillips noticed a number of dead ducks on the Fox River that flows through the city of Aurora west of Chicago. He was infuriated by what he saw and by the pollution that was the obvious cause of their demise, so he decided to do something about it. He got in his canoe and paddled to an industrial discharge pipe that was spewing foamy wastes into the river. He then plugged up the pipe! He told *Newsweek* magazine that since no one else had befriended the river he would act as its friend.

Later Mr. Phillips took on other polluters such as US Steel. He made a sign that read, "Making steel is my business, murdering your environment is my sideline." Then he posted the sign in a coffee shop window. On other occasions he gained the attention of executives of polluting industries by depositing dead skunks on their doorsteps. One company that was dumping pollutants in Lake Michigan had an even more direct experience of Mr. Phillips' indignation. He dredged up fifty pounds of the company's crud from the lake bottom and deposited it in the company's reception room.

In 1970 he told a *Time* magazine reporter, "I got tired of watching the smoke and filth and the little streams dying one by one. Finally I decided to do something since the courts were doing nothing to stop these polluters. Instead they just granted one continuance after another.

Mr. Phillips usually left a note with the word "FOX" on it at the site of each escapade. Inside the O he drew a face that was sometimes grim and sometimes smiling. He left one such note near the top of a smokestack. He had noticed the smokestack belching black smoke. This led him to climb surreptitiously to the top of the stack and plug it with a metal cap.

Mr. Phillips would have been charged with trespassing and criminal damage to property had the police been able to prove his guilt. But they never succeeded in getting legal evidence against him. One policeman explained by saying, "It's kind of hard to lift fingerprints from the inside of a sewer."

Not everyone was bitter about The Fox's exploits. In 1970 David Dominick, commissioner of the federal Water Quality Administration, proclaimed in a speech to the American Society of Civil Engineers, "The Fox, by his deeds, challenges us all with the question: Do we, as individuals in a technological society, have the will to control and prevent the degradation of our environment?"

As the years went by, Mr. Phillips' actions bore fruit. Antipollution laws were enacted and even enforced. He gave up his derring-do in favor of more legal methods. For example, in his later years he became a field inspector for the Kane County Environmental Department west of Chicago. Still later he formed the Fox River Conservation Foundation. He is also survived in death by a local environmental organization, Friends of the Fox, named for him. At the international level the Greenpeace organization was apparently inspired by Mr. Phillips' methods.

Most Audubon members are not inclined toward civil disobedience, nor are we inclined to climb smokestacks or to crawl into sewers. But we can do our part to protect the environment by vigorously supporting the various legal means that are now available for stopping industrial pollution and protecting wildlife. One important way to do this is by working through conservation organizations such as the Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Acres Inc., the Nature Conservancy, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Wilderness Society.

Note: Information for this article came from an article by Douglas Martin in the *New York Times*, October 22, 2001, Section A, page 19.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers.

Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@earthlink.net.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - On the afternoon of September 30 Dave Eiler of North Manchester took a birding drive in Southern Kosciusko County where he saw a **LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** on CR-600S between CR-300E and CR-400E, a **GREATER YELLOWLEGS** in a pond at CR300E and CR-700S, two **PIED-BILLED GREBES** on a pond by CR-400E between CR-400S and CR450S, and two male **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** by the home of Jim and Suzy Townsend on CR-300E a quarter mile south of CR-600S. On October 31 Wilson Lutz and Dave Eiler saw a **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** along CR800S east of CR300E.

WABASH COUNTY - On September 28 Dave Eiler in North Manchester saw a **RED-BREADED NUTHATCH** at a feeder in his back yard, and has been seeing one or two almost every day since then. On September 30 Steve Hammer who lives in a woods by the Eel River in North Manchester was surprised to see an **AMERICAN WOODCOCK** walking across his yard. From the end of September to the middle of October a **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** often visited Dave Eiler's back yard in North Manchester. A **SWAINSON'S THRUSH**

MAIL THIS APPLICATION FORM
FOR AN INTRODUCTORY \$20 NEW AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP

Or for an \$8 *Tippe-Topics* Subscription

NOTE: Send *membership renewal* checks directly to National using the renewal form that comes with your renewal notice.

Be sure to place the code HO-8 in the lower right-hand corner of the form.

**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
& TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Chapter HO8 7XCH

_____ **YES!** Enroll me as a NEW MEMBER in the National Audubon Society & the Tippecanoe Chapter and send my membership card. Start sending me *AUDUBON* magazine and *TIPPE-TOPICS*. Enclosed is a \$20 check payable to the National Audubon Society for my one-year introductory membership.

TIPPE-TOPICS SUBSCRIPTION ONLY

_____ I am not a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society would like to receive *TIPPE-TOPICS*. Enclosed is an \$8 one-year subscription donation check payable to the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. I have a membership in the National Audubon Society carried with the following local Audubon chapter:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ E-mail _____

MAIL TO MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

James Townsend
6331 S 300 E HO-8
Warsaw, IN 46580 7XCH
E-mail: jimvjmc@kconline.com

came to his back yard every day October 8-12. A **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** showed up for a brief visit on October 9. A **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** visited feeders every day October 10-14. Several **DOWNY WOODPECKERS** come every day to a suet feeder, and a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** stops by every now and then. A couple **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES** have been taking turns with a couple **TUFTED TITMICE** and a couple **CAROLINA CHICKADEES** at seed feeders. On October 17 a **PURPLE FINCH** female stopped briefly at a seed feeder. On October 18 a juvenile **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** and the first **DARK-EYED JUNCO** of the season made brief stops. On October 23 he saw a **CHIPPING SPARROW**, a **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**, two **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS**, three **CEDAR WAXWINGS**, three **PINE SISKINS**, two **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES**, a **WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, three **CAROLINA CHICKADEES**, a **RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** female, a **RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET**, and a **COOPER'S HAWK**.

WHITLEY COUNTY - In an IN-BIRD e-mail posting dated November 2 Jeff McCoy of Columbia City reported that on October 31 he saw a **CATTLE EGRET** in a pasture on a dairy farm north of SR-14 near CR-150E. According to the report the same bird was seen again by Ed and Cynthia Powers on November 1 along a fence row behind the barn.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIP TO PISGAH NONGAME AREA

We had nice weather for the October 14 field trip to Pisgah Marsh, despite rain earlier and later in the day. We saw Wood Ducks in the marsh, in winter plumage, a Cooper's Hawk hunting on the ground in the open field, and some of the usual "gray fall birds". The Beaver dam and lodge showed signs of recent activity, although no Beavers were in evidence. Despite high water in the fen and a frost, there were still some Fringed Gentians in flower. We also had a good look at the Pitcher Plants.

Reported by David Hicks

PROGRAM ON THE TIPPECANOE RIVER

Restoring and preserving river bottom forests along the Tippecanoe River is a task that is being undertaken by the Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy is a worldwide conservation organization dedicated to preserving wildlife diversity and endangered species through community-based programs. It is supported financially by membership donations, foundation grants, and grants from government agencies.

The Tippecanoe River reforestation project is based at an office located in the town of Winamac. Chad Watts who is in charge of the

project presented a program to a meeting of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society on Tuesday evening, October 23, at the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton. His program explained the purposes of the project and described how it is being carried out. He also handed out the first issue of a newsletter called *Tippeca-News* that has provided much of the information for this article.

Like many Nature Conservancy projects the Tippecanoe River reforestation effort depends mainly upon the voluntary cooperation of private landowners who have homes or agricultural land along the river. Purchasing the river bottom portions of all these properties would be prohibitively expensive. For property owners the main incentive to support the reforestation project is the enhancement it will provide for their own properties.

Some sections of the Tippecanoe River are already publicly owned. One section flows through the Tippecanoe River State Park where the bottomland forests are already protected. However, a long section of river bottom forest near the lower end of the river north of Monticello was drowned by an artificial reservoir called Lake Freeman.

With its many twists and turns the Tippecanoe River flows 225 miles to cover a straight-line distance of only 70 miles from where it flows out of Lake Tippecanoe at Oswego northeast of Warsaw to where it flows into the Wabash River at Monticello.

The Tippecanoe River and its tributaries provide important habitat for no less than twenty-one wildlife species classified as "at risk", and six fish and mussel species that are classified as "endangered species" under the federal Endangered Species Act. The river system is especially valued by fisherman who catch such species as Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Walleye, Sauger, and Crappie. It is also a favorite of canoers and rafters who can travel much of the river's length with no dams or dangerous rapids to block the way.

The purpose of reforesting the river bottom is to maintain the water quality of the river and to enhance the habitats of plant and animal species living along, and in, the river. The Tippecanoe River ranks as the eighth most important river in the entire United States in terms of biodiversity and endangered species that depend upon it for survival.

Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Inc.
c/o James Townsend
6331 S 300 E
Warsaw, IN 46580
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TIPPE - TOPICS

PUBLISHED BY THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY,
INC.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

David L. Eiler, Editor

Phone: 219-982-2726

E-mail: dleiler@earthlink.net

DATED MATERIAL DO
NOT DELAY

RED-TAILED HAWK: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

The Red-tailed Hawk is the large hawk species you are most likely to see when driving along country roads in northern Indiana. You may see it perched in a tall tree or soaring over the fields. If you are walking near a woods you may hear its harsh, high-pitched scream, *keer-r-r, keer-r-r*, before you see it.

The Red-tailed Hawk has a range that extends from southeastern Alaska across southern Canada, south through the entire United States and Mexico, and through Central America as far as Costa Rica. During the winter northern populations shift southward. In Indiana, where it may be seen throughout the year, it migrates north from early March to late April and south from mid-August to mid-November.

There are fourteen named subspecies and many plumage variations. In the eastern United States two common plumage variations known as light phase and dark phase can be seen. Light phase birds are dark brown above and white below with a band of dark spots across the upper belly. Dark phase birds are entirely dark brown black mottling. In both plumages adults have the rusty red tails that give the species its name. Juveniles have dark gray tails with black banding. In the Great Plains an uncommon subspecies called Krider's Hawk is more pale than light phase eastern birds, lacks a belly band, and has a pale reddish tail. In Alaska and western Canada there is a subspecies called Harlan's Hawk, long thought to be a separate species, which is usually very dark with a gray tail.

Red-tailed Hawks have adapted to a variety of habitats and climates ranging from eastern deciduous forests to Great Plains grasslands to western mountains and deserts, and from cold northern latitudes to hot southern latitudes. In the eastern United States they have readily adapted to farmlands with scattered trees and wood lots.

Red-tailed Hawks feed primarily on small animals such as ground squirrels, mice, voles, squirrels, and rabbits, which they usually spot from a perch in a tree. They also eat birds, especially Red-winged Blackbirds that are abundant in the same habitats inhabited by the Hawks. They may even eat bird species as large as Northern Flickers and Screech-Owls. With eyesight several times more acute than that of humans they can spot prey from a great distance.

In Indiana Red-tailed Hawks begin nesting in March or April. Their chosen nest site is usually near the top of a tall tree in a woods or along

a wooded stream. The same nest made of sticks and lined with vines and moss may be enlarged and reused year after year. The female lays and incubates two or three speckled eggs. While incubating she is fed by the male. The eggs take nearly a month to hatch, and the nestlings take another month and a half to fledge.

The Red-tailed Hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*, has three close relatives in Indiana, the Red-shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus*, the Broad-winged Hawk, *Buteo platypterus*, and the Rough-legged Hawk, *Buteo lagopus*. In the western United States two other species are common, Swainson's Hawk, *Buteo swainsoni*, and the Ferruginous Hawk, *Buteo regalis*. Two common Latin American species, the Short-tailed Hawk, *Buteo brachyurus*, and the Zone-tailed Hawk, *Buteo albonotatus*, have ranges that extend into the southern United States. Worldwide there are 26 species in the *Buteo* genus. The two most widespread are the Rough-legged Hawk, *Buteo lagopus*, with a range that extends across northern North America and northern Eurasia, and the Common or Eurasian Buzzard, *Buteo buteo*, which has a nesting range that extends across Eurasia north of the Himalayas from Great Britain to Japan, and that migrates as far south in winter as India and South Africa.

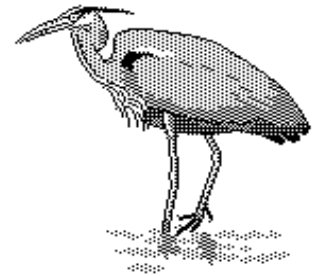


TIPPE-TOPICS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Cass, Fulton, Kosciusko, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Wabash, Whitley Counties,
Indiana

Volume XXVII, Number 12, December 2001

OUR MISSION: THE TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY SUPPORTS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO PROMOTE APPRECIATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND PRESERVATION OF BIRDS, OTHER WILDLIFE, AND DIVERSE ECOSYSTEMS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



COMING EVENTS



DECEMBER 2001

CHRISTMAS DINNER, TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 11, 6:00PM - Meal Followed by Slide and Picture Fest AT THE BLUE LION COFFEE HOUSE IN PIERCETON. The Blue Lion is on the south side of Market Street directly behind the James Townsend & Son building, one block west of SR-13. Proprietor Dave Taylor and his employees will set up a buffet with two quiches per person along with soups, relishes, desserts, and a choice of coffee, tea, or lemonade. **Reservations are required, and must be made by Friday evening, December 7.** To make reservations contact Jim Townsend by e-mail at jimvjmc@kconline.com, or by telephone at 219-839-5203, or Wilson Lutz by e-mail at wlutz@ctlnet.com or by telephone at 219-982-6754. Give the name of the person making the reservations and the number of reservations needed. The cost for the meal is \$12, including tax and gratuities, the same as last year. Meals must be paid for unless reservations are canceled by Monday evening, December 10. Payment may be made that evening by check or cash. Members and guests are invited to bring their best nature slides, prints, sketches, or paintings of 2001 to display. Or just come to see what others have brought. A projector and screen for showing slides will be provided, and there will be table space for displaying photographs and paintings.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, DAWN TILL DUSK - Northeastern Kosciusko County Teams of two or three people will be assigned to designated areas of the 15-mile count circle. Each team will have a car and driver and at least one experienced birder to serve as leader and to ensure that identifications are accurate. Each team will also have a recorder, who need not be an experienced birder, to record the numbers of every species seen when each flock of birds is counted. Both experienced and inexperienced birders are invited to help with the count. Names of participants are needed by December 21, just before the Christmas weekend. To join the count contact JoAnne Mock at 219-982-4588, or by e-mail at jalmock@hotmail.com, or Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, or by e-mail at dleiler@earthlink.net. Participants are asked to meet at 6:30AM for breakfast at McDonald's on the south side of US-30 on the east side of Warsaw. At that time each team will receive a packet of material with instructions, map, and forms for recording data. Teams will spend the day counting birds in their assigned areas, taking breaks as needed. Team leaders are asked to collect a \$5 fee from each team member that must be sent to National Audubon to help pay the costs of publishing the results of all 2001 Christmas bird counts. The count will conclude with a chili supper and count compilation, starting at 5:00, at the home of Jim & Suzy Townsend, 6331 S 300 E, southeast of Pierceton (on CR-300E the first house south of CR-600S). Each team leader should bring all count forms and fill them out ready to turn in. Other count participants are welcome to come. This will be one of over 1800 counts, with more than 50,000 participants, conducted across North America and beyond during the 2001 Christmas season. The results of all counts will be integrated into a huge data base covering many years that is used by researchers to track winter bird population trends.

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WE CAN STILL SEE SPECTACULAR BIRD FLIGHTS IN INDIANA

By Wilson B. Lutz, President

When we read about what John James Audubon and other naturalists observed in the 1800's we cannot help but be

awestruck. They saw flocks of Passenger Pigeons that darkened the sky overhead and took several days to pass. The pigeons

perched in trees in such thick masses that large tree limbs broke under their weight. Some ornithologists have claimed that the number of Passenger Pigeons in bygone days exceeded the combined total of all other North American birds! Unfortunately, the Passenger Pigeon became extinct early in the 1900's, so we will never see flocks such as Audubon observed.

Do we have anything comparable today in Indiana? Below is a quotation from an e-mail that appeared on the Indiana bird hotline on November 20, 2001. It was posted by Lee Sterrenberg, a member of the Sycamore Audubon Chapter of Bloomington, Indiana. Lee was observing bird activity on Lake Lemon, a large lake northeast of Bloomington. Here is his report. "This evening (November 19, 2001) I went to Riddle Point at Lake Lemon, Monroe Co., to do a lake watch in the cold north front. The

highlight was a spectacular Sandhill Crane flight. I arrived at 4:40pm and the first cranes showed up at 5:05pm. Sandhills passed over continuously until 6:02pm. My count for that almost one-hour period was 6316 Sandhills! All the birds came in from the north, and all but about 32 initially came in west of Riddle Point or west of the dam. Well over 2000 turned east and flew over my head, checking out the east end of the lake or going up in thermals over the south shore. Many of the cranes were low and the calls of juveniles could frequently be heard. At 6:15pm I drove to the east end and checked out the mudflats from the Hengevelds'deck. By then it was too dark to count birds on the ground. It sounded like a good congregation of Sandhills preparing to spend the night on the flats near Little Africa."

ANSWERS TO MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS

By James Townsend, Membership Chair

Because of procedural changes recently introduced by National Audubon several questions have arisen concerning memberships. Here are the answers to those questions.

HOW IS THE BEST WAY TO RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP?

If you receive a renewal notice from National Audubon, you should go ahead and send in your renewal payment to the National Audubon Society using the form they provide. However, you should be sure to put the Tippecanoe Audubon chapter code number "HO-8" in the lower right hand corner of the form. This will ensure that you are also registered as a member of your local chapter. That way you will receive both *Audubon* magazine from National Audubon and the local Tippecanoe Audubon newsletter *Tippe-Topics*.

The cost of a one-year membership renewal is \$35. That is all you need to send even if your renewal notice urges you to send a greater amount. If you send any amount greater than that, it is simply a donation to National Audubon.

HOW IS THE BEST WAY TO START A NEW MEMBERSHIP?

A new membership costs \$20 for the first year. New membership applications, including gift memberships, should be sent to the membership chair, Jim Townsend, 6331 S 300 E, Warsaw, IN 46580. The easiest way to send in a new membership application is to use the application form at the top of page 3 of this newsletter. This will ensure that you are enrolled as a member of both the National Audubon Society and

the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. You will then begin receiving *Audubon* magazine and the chapter newsletter, *Tippe-Topics*.

If for any reason you use a membership application form from National Audubon you should put the Tippecanoe Audubon chapter code number "HO-8" in the lower right hand corner of the form. This will ensure that you are also enrolled as a member of both the National Audubon Society and the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. It will also ensure that the dues money you send stays with the Tippecanoe Audubon Society where first-year dues belong.

HOW IS THE BEST WAY TO SEND A GIFT MEMBERSHIP?

An Audubon membership makes a good Christmas gift for a relative or friend. Each gift membership costs only \$20. Gift membership applications should be sent to membership chair, Jim Townsend, 6331 S 300 E, Warsaw, IN 46580.

Sending gift membership applications to the local membership chair ensures that the person becomes a member of both the National Audubon Society and the Tippecanoe Audubon Society. It also ensures that Tippecanoe Audubon receives credit for the membership and that the \$20 dues you send in will stay with Tippecanoe Audubon. The new member who receives a gift membership from you will begin receiving *Audubon* magazine and *Tippe-Topics*, and will become a full member just like you!

PLAN NOW TO TAKE PART IN THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society will cooperate in sponsoring a backyard bird count February 15-18, 2002. You can take part along with people throughout the United States. You do not need to be a skilled birder. All you need to be able to do is to identify birds that come to your feeder. If you are not a birder, any field guide will make it easy to identify the ten or a dozen bird species you are likely to see.

Here is how to take part in the count. Go to a nearby park or a natural area of some kind, or just watch the feeders in your own

backyard. Sometime during the four-day period, February 15-18, count all the birds you see for at least fifteen minutes, or longer if you have the time. Then, to report your count, go to your computer and log on to the Backyard Bird Count website at <http://www.birdsource.org>. There you will find simple instructions on how to submit your report.

The results of all backyard counts will be compiled at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and displayed on maps that can be viewed on the same website where you submitted your count. Plan now to take part just for the fun of it.

BIRDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

SIGHTING REPORTS WANTED - *Tippe-Topics* readers are invited to report bird sightings so they can be shared with other readers. Call newsletter editor Dave Eiler at 219-982-2726, mail him a note at 606 E 7th St, North Manchester, IN 46962, or send him an e-mail message at dleiler@earthlink.net.

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY - A November 10 e-mail from Don Kill of Cromwell reported that on October 27 he saw eleven **MUTE SWANS** on Backwater Lake near North Webster, and that a flock of **EASTERN BLUEBIRDS** has been frequenting his yard all year. Vernon Campbell who lives by Lake Wabee reported that on November 11 he saw two **EASTERN TOWHEES** at Camp Mack by Lake Wabee, and that at his feeders he has been seeing the usual variety of winter birds.

MARSHALL COUNTY - A November 10 e-mail from Jack Cunningham, who lives in Culver by Lake Maxinkuckee, reported that he had recently seen a **DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT**, an **AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN**, a pair of **COMMON LOONS**, many **MALLARDS**, **BUFFLEHEADS**, and **RING-BILLED GULLS**, and several thousand **AMERICAN COOTS**, one of which appeared to be an albino.

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NOTE: Send *membership renewal* checks directly to National using the renewal form that comes with your renewal notice.

Be sure to place the code HO-8 in the lower right-hand corner of the form.

<p style="text-align: center;">NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY & TIPPECANOE AUDUBON SOCIETY Chapter HO8 7XCH</p> <p>----- YES! Enroll me as a NEW MEMBER in the National Audubon Society & the Tippecanoe Chapter and send my membership card. Start sending me <i>AUDUBON</i> magazine and <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclosed is a \$20 check payable to the National Audubon Society for my one-year introductory membership.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TIPPE-TOPICS SUBSCRIPTION ONLY</p> <p>----- I am not a member of the Tippecanoe Audubon Society but would like to receive <i>TIPPE-TOPICS</i>. Enclose an \$8 one-year subscription donation check payable to Tippecanoe Audubon Society. I have a membership in National Audubon Society carried with the following local Audubon chapter:</p>
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WABASH COUNTY - Paul Eiler of North Manchester saw a **GREAT BLUE HERON** in the pond behind his house on November 10. Steve Hammer of North Manchester saw an **EVENING GROSBEAK** female in his yard on November 14. Arlene Kindy, who lives by the Flory-Gemmer Marsh Preserve east of Liberty Mills, saw a flock of migrating **SANDHILL CRANES** circling over the marsh on November 19. She was disappointed when they flew away instead of landing in the marsh. On November 28 Dave Eiler of North Manchester was delighted to see a **CAROLINA WREN** in his back yard.

WHITLEY COUNTY - On November 28 Pam Koch of Columbia City called and reported quite a number of interesting birds she and her husband Dick have seen in their back yard this fall. On September 15 they saw an **EVENING GROSBEAK** in the top of one of their trees. Also in September they saw a **NASHVILLE WARBLER**. On October 9 they saw a **YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER**. On October 16 there was still a **HOUSE WREN** in their yard. On October 23 they saw a **PINE SISKIN**, a **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH**, and a **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**. On November 24 they saw a **CAROLINA WREN**. And on November 28 they were very surprised to see a **YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** flitting about near the feeders.

RECENT TIPPECANOE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIP TO LAKE MICHIGAN

What is so rare as a warm sunny day in November? On an almost balmy November 10 a group of Tippecanoe Audubon Society members joined other birders at the south end of Lake Michigan to look for birds along the lake shore, starting at Michigan City.

When the weather on the lake shore is good for humans, it is not necessarily good for seeing birds. Therefore our bird list for the day was short. Do you know what the experienced lake shore birders up there relish most? A gale force wind from the northwest. That makes it miserable for the birders, but it brings a lot of birds to the south end of the lake. Under such conditions ducks, gulls, and other aquatic species tend to congregate along the south shore where they can be seen.

As our group toured the lake shore, we enjoyed such notable sightings as seven Red-throated Loons, many Common Loons, a distant Northern Shrike, and a Cooper's Hawk. The main highlight of the day for me was simply rubbing elbows with such virtuoso birders as Ken Brock, Jeff McCoy, Jim Haw, Linea Hinchman, and our own Steve Doud. These people brought along both their encyclopedic knowledge of birds and the high quality telescopes needed to properly observe birds along the lake shore.

If you decide to go birding at the lake shore, I would still advise taking along plenty of warm clothing! The weather can

be brutal in late autumn when rarities are most likely to appear. And don't forget that telescope!

Reported by Wilson Lutz PROGRAM ON HAWKS

At the Blue Lion Coffee House in Pierceton, on the evening of November 27, Tippecanoe Audubon Society program chair Steve Doud presented an Audubon video entitled "Hawks Up Close" that showed many excellent views of hawks found in North America. Altogether there are thirty North American hawk species occupying a great variety of habitats. The four main types of hawk are the Buteos, the Accipiters, the Falcons, and the Kites.

Buteos are large and have broad wings and short tails. They soar over open country or hunt from perches on trees or power poles. One segment showed a Red-tailed Hawk swooping down upon a rat. Another showed a pair of Red-tailed Hawks raising two nestlings. The female brought food for the nestlings, and the male brought food and fed it to the female near the nest. Other Buteos found in the eastern United States are the Red-shouldered Hawk, the Rough-legged Hawk, and the Broadwing Hawk. Two common western Buteos are Swainson's Hawk and the Ferruginous Hawk.

Accipiters have short wings and long tails that enable them to pursue prey through dense cover and trees where they catch birds and squirrels. Both the small Sharp-shinned Hawk and the somewhat

larger Cooper's Hawk raid bird feeders during the winter. The Northern Goshawk is much larger.

Falcons have long, narrow, pointed wings, and long tails, that enable them to fly fast and catch prey on the wing. The American Kestrel is a small Falcon that often catches large insects such as dragonflies. The Peregrine Falcon drops on prey in power dives that can reach speeds of nearly 200 miles per hour.

Kites have long wings and tails that enable them to fly buoyantly. The Mississippi Kite has a forked tail and often catches insects on the wing. The Snail Kite lives in southern wetlands where it preys exclusively on large snails.

The Northern Harrier soars low over open fields in search of prey. As with many hawk species, the female is noticeably larger than the male.

Harris' Hawk of the arid Southwest is unusual in that it lives and hunts together in family groups.

Eagles are simply large hawk species. Our most familiar Eagle is the Bald Eagle that lives along lakes and streams where it catches fish. It also eats carrion.

The Osprey is a hawk that preys entirely upon fish. It lives along ocean shores and freshwater lakes. It soars over the water and dives down to the surface to catch fish in its talons which it then takes to a perch to eat.

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**DATED MATERIAL DO
NOT DELAY**

TUFTED TITMOUSE: BIRD OF THE MONTH

By David L. Eiler

The Tufted Titmouse is usually one of the commonest bird species at feeders in Indiana. It loves sunflower seeds even though it cannot crush them to get at the kernel. Instead it picks up a seed from the feeder and flies to a nearby tree limb. There it holds the seed against the limb with its feet and pecks it open to get the kernel. Then it flies back to the feeder for another seed, repeating the same operation over and over till it has its fill.

Tufted Titmice have a nesting range that extends from the Atlantic Coast to the eastern edge of the Great Plains, and from the southern Great Lakes, New York state, and southern New England south to the Gulf Coast. They do not migrate. Instead they overwinter in the same areas where they nest. They are a woodland species, but easily adapt to parks and residential areas where trees are numerous. During the winter small flocks of Titmice and other small birds such as Chickadees and Downy Woodpeckers forage together in woodlands.

A Tufted Titmouse is easy to recognize by its often repeated call that sounds like *peter-peter-peter* with the first note louder and higher in pitch. You are likely to hear this call before you see the bird. It also has a loud scolding call that rises in pitch. When you see it, you will notice the distinctive crest that makes it easy to identify at a glance. Its head, back, wings, and tail are plain unmarked gray. The eyes are large and dark, the forehead black, and the cheeks, throat, breast, belly, and undertail coverts white. It has no wingbars, but the sides below the wings are tinged with orange. Juveniles lack this orange tinge. Throughout most of its range there is little plumage variation. However, a subspecies found in Oklahoma and Texas has a black crest and gray forehead.

Tufted Titmice pairs stay together throughout the year. They begin building nests in mid-April and fledglings may leave

the nest by the end of May. They nest in tree cavities often just a few feet above the ground but sometimes as high as eighty feet or more. They use either natural cavities or abandoned Woodpecker holes. They will also use nest boxes. The cup-shaped nest is built in the bottom of the cavity using grass, dead leaves, moss, strips of bark. It is then lined with hair, fur, and sometimes pieces of string or cloth. Hair or fur is often plucked right from the back of a living animal such as a groundhog. I once saw a groundhog high up in a tree being harassed by a Titmouse that came repeatedly, landed on its back, and plucked out tufts of hair which it took to a nearby nest cavity. There are even reports of Titmice plucking hair from the heads of people.

The Tufted Titmouse female lays anywhere from four to eight speckled, creamy white eggs and incubates them herself. The male brings food and calls her away from the nest to give it to her. The eggs hatch in about two weeks, and the nestlings fledge in another three or four weeks.

The Tufted Titmouse, *Baeolophus bicolor* (*Parus bicolor* in older field guides), belongs to the Tit Family, Paridae, that includes 55 species in Eurasia and North America. Two relatives occur in Indiana, the Black-capped Chickadee, *Poecile atricapilla*, and the Carolina Chickadee, *Poecile carolinensis*. The dividing line between the ranges of the two Chickadee species in northern Indiana runs roughly parallel to SR-14 in southern Kosciusko County. Three other Titmouse species occur in the West, the Bridled Titmouse, *Baeolophus wollweberi*, the Oak Titmouse, *Baeolophus inornatus*, and the Juniper Titmouse, *Baeolophus ridgewayi*. Three other North American Chickadees species are the Mountain Chickadee, *Poecile gambeli*, the Boreal Chickadee, *Poecile hudsonicus*, and the Mexican Chickadee, *Poecile sclateri*.