

SPRINGFIELD AUDUBON SOCIETY

Summer/Fall 2021

President's Message

It is time for us to begin our year of Springfield Audubon Society Activities. We are assuming that we can meet inside the building if we are all masked. We will not have refreshments to start due to COVID restrictions. Please feel free to bring your own. All of the activities listed in this article will follow the current CDC guidelines.

We are starting off our programs with the Forest Park Owls: Hiding in Plain Sight on September 16 at 6 PM. The program is presented by Mark H. X. Glenshaw. He will speak about his observations of the Great Horned Owl. He has closely observed and documented the behavior of Great Horned Owls in Forest Park in St. Louis since December of 2005.

On September 18 Springfield Audubon will present A Breakfast And the Prairie program. It starts at 8:00AM with a continental breakfast inside at Adams where Vern Lagesse and Charlene Falco will present a program about the history of the Adams Prairie. Following this presentation We will walk to the prairie where Charlene will lead a tour. Reservations are required for this program. Please email Mike Holinga at mjholinga@icloud.com. If you need assistance getting to the prairie please let me know in your reservation. Reservations are due by Wednesday, September 15.

On October 9 we will have one of our fundraisers with a Feeder Wash at Wild Birds Unlimited in Springfield. We will need volunteers to make the event a success. Please put the date on your calendar.

On October 21st we will have the Owl Prowl starring the staff and owls from the Raptor Center. Details are still being finalized but online reservations will be required. This event always sells out so watch for the details in later communications.

On November 18th our regular program will feature Kathy Andrews Wright, Editor-in-Chief of the Illinois Audubon Society Magazine.

On December 16 Wade Kammin owner of Wild Birds Unlimited will speak about feeding birds. Wild Birds Unlimited provides all of the food and feeders at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions. We still hope to have at least one or two field trips and we are still putting together programs for next year.

REPORTS OF INSECT POPULATION DECLINE AND WHAT MAY RESULT

A few studies of insect populations have been published in the last many years that show sharp declines in insect populations especially flying insects. This came as no surprise to me as I like bugs. I helped my daughter collect insects for her high school zoology assignment in the '90's. It was easy to get a good variety of insects across several orders. But it was not nearly as easy as when I got my collection together in the '60's for my high school biology assignment. So, it has been clear to me that insects- especially flying insects- have been decreasing for quite a while. I don't think I have seen a lacewing in this century. When is the last time you saw a bug deflector? Various studies from Stanford University, the Zoological society of London, and Germany have found population decreases of between 45% and 80% over three to four decades.

Why should we be concerned as many of the human populations consider insects to be a nuisance. Canadian biologists found in 2010 that among perching birds those that feed on and feed their young flying insects had experienced a steep decline in population while the perching birds that primarily feed on seeds declined in population but not nearly to the degree of insect eaters. Researcher Francisco Sanchez-Bayo of the University of Sydney, "There is reason to worry. If we don't stop it, entire ecosystems will collapse due to starvation."

Entomologists feel that there are several reasons for the population decline. Climate change is one. Of course, there are more reasons than insect decline that require us to mitigate the change in our climate. Another is the movement from family farms to corporate farms with modern farming methods with huge monoculture fields-animals have no where to live. Gone are fence rows, hedges, and pastures. Maybe the main cause of the population decline is the ubiquitous use of pesticides- residentially and agriculturally. The pesticide class most prominently indicted is neonicotinoids. These have been indicated as one of the main reasons for Honeybee Colony Collapse and there is no reason to think they are not causing the decline in other flying insects.

David Bohlen of the Illinois State Museum makes available monthly his birding observations and usually includes a few comments about the conditions for that month. Here are some recent quotes. "Insects were in low numbers." "I noted several places that I have worked other summers, and many species seem to be missing. At this point EVERY NATIVE BIRD COUNTS." "There has to be fewer birds, and many seemed to be having trouble getting North this spring. I missed more birds this spring than ever before- we need to cherish, protect, and defend those birds remaining on this planet."

Use pesticides and herbicides rarely. Plant native species. Keep your cats inside. Use mitigation methods to decrease window strikes.

Birds of Interest May thru August

Lake Springfield

Snowy Egret

Willet

Laughing Gull

Franklin's Gull

Snow Goose

KOA Road

Little Blue Heron

plus > 30 Great Egrets

Riverside Park

Fish Crow possible nest

Sanchris

Greater White Fronted Goose

Washington Park

Eastern Whip-poor-will

Further afield

Limpkin

Dixon waterfowl Refuge

Wood Stork

Mermet Lake

Roseate Spoonbill

Williamson County



Snowy Egret



Willet



Little Blue Heron

Springfield Birds Unlimited Purchases

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Remember, when purchasing items at Springfield Wild Birds Unlimited, inform cashier that you are a Springfield Audubon member. Our chapter receives a percentage of purchases by members. During shelter in place orders can be place by phone or online and picked up.



Laughing Gull

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