



SPRINGFIELD AUDUBON SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY



STEWARDS OF ADAMS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

NEWS

SPRINGFIELD AUDUBON SOCIETY PRESIDENT Mike Holinga reports that the prairie habitat at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary underwent extensive maintenance this spring under the supervision of IAS's Land Manager, Kaleb Baker. Last fall, seeds were collected not only from the sanctuary's prairie but also from other prime habitat sites to help increase diversity at Adams. After the seeds were prepared and mixed, it was time to burn the prairie in preparation for seeding. After receiving instructions and safety gear, the volunteer crew under Kaleb's direction burned the 10.25 acres of prairie that exist at the sanctuary.

Fire is used as a management tool in maintaining prairie ecosystems by eliminating weeds and other plants that are not part of this ecosystem and by releasing nutrients. Since two-thirds of prairie plant tissue is located beneath the soil, most are unharmed by fire. We will be watching for new species to take root and provide more complexity to this ecosystem that in turn will supply food and habitat for a greater number of birds and other wildlife. *Photos by J. Fessett, K. Baker, and M. Holinga*



Above: Burn crew in action
Left: Mixing prairie seed; seed spreading day



Watch the action-packed video of the Adams Wildlife Sanctuary prairie burn produced by IAS Director Jo Fessett at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?>



Planting native plants to help our native birds and pollinators

OTHER STEWARD PROJECTS at AWS included mulching trails, mowing, bench maintenance, and installation of a new native plant garden around the IAS headquarters sign. SAS volunteers were fortunate to receive assistance one afternoon from 30 United Way of Central Illinois Community Impact Program volunteers. Under the supervision of sanctuary stewards they washed windows in the bird viewing area, cleaned bird feeders, mulched trails and gardens, pulled garlic mustard, and picked up trash. Thank you to the United Way volunteers! *Photos by Mary Grundel and Mike Holinga*



United Way volunteers assist at the sanctuary

EVENTS

SPRINGFIELD AUDUBON SOCIETY CO-SPONSORED TWO EVENTS in April celebrating our natural world. SAS collaborated with several local conservation groups to host an Earth Day film event at the Illinois State Museum. A crowd of 110 people braved the storms to attend an evening of fellowship and inspiration provided by *Jens Jensen: The Living Green*. Information was available from the various groups, and Carey Lundin, the film's creator, answered questions and spoke to the gathering about how a community came together to create a Jensen-inspired nature play space in an underserved area of Chicago.



SAS also co-sponsored an Arbor Day celebration together with the City of Springfield Urban Forestry Commission and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Illinois. Children helped plant a redbud tree at the Boys and Girls Club following a program that included an Arbor Day proclamation by Springfield's mayor and an address by SAS president Mike Holinga, who spoke about the importance of trees to birds and other wildlife. Bird treats, which were made with instruction from SAS volunteer educators, were hung on trees. *Museum photos: Lindsay Keeney; Arbor Day photo: Mike Holinga*



EDUCATION

THROUGHOUT THE SPRING SEASON, the SAS volunteer educators were busy encouraging students to learn bird names, needs, and challenges. One program focused on beginning bird identification of our common backyard birds, with the students making bird feeders at

Make Your Own Bagel Bird Feeder

1. Put a string through the hole of a small bagel to make a loop. (When bagel falls apart birds can use the string for their nests.)
2. Spread peanut butter on the bagel.
3. Put bird food on a paper plate, then lightly press the bagel into it so the bird food sticks to the peanut butter.
4. Hang feeder on tree branch or shrub.

the conclusion of these sessions using pinecones or bagels, which they could take home. The program for the annual Earth Awareness event held at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in May focused on bird migration and the challenges they may

encounter. During the Bird Migration Game, students "migrated" to 15 stations where they encountered obstacles and beneficial situations that would determine if they survived their trip. Obstacles the students encountered in the game are important for all of us to remember. These include artificial lights that lure birds from their migratory routes, loss of habitat, and pesticides. *Photos by Donna Holinga*



Students at Camp Cilca assemble feeders after learning about backyard bird identification



"Migrating" students learn about some of the challenges birds face

CITIZEN SCIENCE

SAS VOLUNTEERS COMPLETED their 11th season of citizen science with the conclusion of the 2022-2023 FeederWatch season. Twelve volunteers watched the feeders at AWS for three hours every other Wednesday morning from November through April, with twelve sessions in all. The FeederWatchers ended the watch season in style, spotting a Yellow-rumped Warbler and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. This year's tally came to 28 species with an average of 59 birds each morning.

Project FeederWatch is a November-April survey of birds that visit backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locations in North America. The information gathered by our volunteers was sent to Cornell Lab of Ornithology, who operates this project. They state:

"When thousands of FeederWatchers in communities across North America count birds and send their tallies to the FeederWatch database, the result is a treasure trove of numbers, which FeederWatch scientists analyze to draw a picture of winter bird abundance and distribution."



The Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Project FeederWatch



SIGHTINGS AT THE SANCTUARY

From March through May, weekly spring bird hikes were offered for the first time at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary for SAS members and the public. IAS's Matt Hayes acted as guide and is using the knowledge gained on the hikes to assist his study of the sanctuary's bird life.

Matt recorded 96 species during this time, and he expects this number may rise with the arrival of more grassland species to the prairie as well as fall migrants. A highlight of the spring season at the sanctuary was a "fallout," which Matt explained is a large influx

of migrant species arriving all at once and staying for a couple of days. This fallout included several warbler species, including Tennessee Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler.

For hike participants, this was an opportunity to enjoy the sights and sounds of the birds in spring and to follow their cycles. For Matt Hayes and for management of the sanctuary, time spent on the trails provides crucial habitat information. Matt states: "Measuring and estimating diversity is always important for wild lands. Are restored areas fully functioning ecological units? If they aren't, then how do we change management or adapt management so the goals are met?" **We can enjoy and learn more when Matt once again leads bird hikes during fall migration.**

"Measuring and estimating diversity is always important for wild lands."

MATT HAYES / IAS ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



For Springfield Audubon Society Event and Volunteer Opportunity news and updates, follow us on Facebook or check our website at <https://springfieldaudubon.illinoisaudubon.org/>.

Springfield Audubon Society

Adams Wildlife Sanctuary
2315 Clear Lake Avenue
P.O. Box 984
Springfield, IL. 62705



SAS Officers

Mike Holinga	President
Grace Norris	Vice President
Rhetta Jack	Secretary
Mary Grundel	Treasurer

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Rick Lanham
Marilyn Robins
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To contact Springfield Audubon Society, email Mike Holinga at mjholinga@icloud.com

Springfield Wild Birds Unlimited

When purchasing items at Springfield Wild Birds Unlimited, remember to inform the cashier that you are a Springfield Audubon Society member. Our chapter receives a percentage of purchases made by members.

Thank you to Springfield's WBU for continuing to supply all bird feed and feeders for Adams Wildlife Sanctuary.



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 15th, 2023

The World of Our Amazing Fireflies

presented by Allen Yow

7:30 at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary

Children's activities and ice cream in the Council Ring

8:30 "firefly walk" through Adams Wildlife Sanctuary

**Keep hands free of insect repellent if you intend to catch fireflies as it will harm and possibly kill them.*

Coming Soon

Prairie Hikes at Adams Wildlife Sanctuary with the Illinois Audubon Society Land Manager, Kaleb Baker.

Watch our Facebook page or website for upcoming details.

Volunteer!

If you are interested in volunteering to assist Springfield Audubon Society with events, sanctuary maintenance, and/or educational programs, please contact Mike Holinga at mjholinga@icloud.com