Chipping Sparrow (Spizella passerina)

Chipping Sparrows mainly eat seeds of a great variety of grasses and herbs. During the breeding season they also hunt for protein-rich insects, and these form a large part of their summer diet. Chipping Sparrows sometimes eat small fruits such as cherries.

Females typically build their nests between 3 and 10 feet off the ground, hidden in foliage at the tip of a branch. They gravitate toward evergreen trees, but also nest in crabapples, honeysuckle tangles, maples, ornamental shrubs, and other deciduous species. Females can be finicky about placement, often beginning to build a nest, then leaving to begin in another spot.

Males guard females as they build nests, but they don’t help build. It takes the female 3 to 4 days to finish her nest, a loose cup of rootlets and dried grasses so flimsy you can often see through it. She lines the nest with animal hair and fine plant fibers. Finished nests measure about 4.5 inches across and 2.2 inches deep.

June - July 2018

ELKHORN CREEK BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 28th, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Join us for a fun, informative family friendly afternoon as we explore the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve for the many butterflies that are found there. From 1-5 p.m. participants may join guided butterfly tours or look on their own for those winged beauties. Tours will begin at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. “Illinois Butterflies and Moths” pocket guides will be distributed at no charge while supplies last. We’ll have a shady rest area with chairs, as well as a restroom, cold beverages, snacks and information about pollinators.

If the weather is questionable, call Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204 before 10 a.m. on July 28. Explorers at previous Butterfly Festivals have found 31 species of butterflies and skippers, among them Buckeye, Red-spotted Purple, Painted Lady, Giant Swallowtail, Great Spangled Fritillary, Silver-spotted Skipper and Monarch. The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forrester in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. This event is free and open to the public. We hope to see you there!
May 30 – First campfire of the year at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve. At 7 p.m. we’ll take a leisurely stroll to observe blooming plants and resident birds. The campfire will start at 8 p.m. S’mores and water will be provided. Bring a lawn chair and flashlight. Carpool from the Staples east lot in Freeport at 6:15.

The preserve is located about 2 miles south of Leaf River (S. Main St. in Leaf River becomes Leaf River Rd.), with parking just off of Leaf River Rd. If weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

June 1 – Field Trip: Chat with the Chats and other great birds, 7 a.m. – noon. See page 3 for details.

June 2 – Preserve Stewardship, Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 4 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 6 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 8 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 9 – 9:00-11:00 AM; Family Bird Watching at Oakdale Nature Preserve See page 4 for details.

June 12 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 12 – 7:00-9:00 PM – “Talking About the Issues” discussion session at the home of Richard Benning, 704 N Davis Street in Davis (815-865-5279)

The topic for the first hour will be the relationship between human food consumption and the needs of other members of the ecosystem. Call Richard for a copy of the article. The second hour will be the customary discussion of whatever issues are brought forth by participants. All are welcome to attend this issues discussion.

Carpool from the Staples parking lot in Freeport at 6:30 or call Richard for directions.

June 14 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 18 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 20 – Freeport Prairie Stewardship, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 21 – Summer Solstice Campfire at our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. At 7:30 p.m. we’ll take a stroll on this longest day of the year to observe nesting birds, blooming plants and hopefully after dark, fireflies. The campfire begins at 8:30, with s’mores and water provided. Bring a lawn chair and a flashlight. Carpool from the Staples lot at 7 p.m.

The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. If weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

June 23 – Field Trip: Volo Bog Natural Area, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. See page 3 for details.

June 25 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

June 27 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 3 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 6 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 7 – Field Trip, Summer Blooms at the Freeport Prairie, 10:30 a.m. – noon. See page 3 for details.

July 9 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 13 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 16 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 18 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 21 – Field Trip: Wishful Acres Farm & Brewery Tour. 11:30 -12:30. See page 4 for details.

July 23 – Preserve Stewardship, Elkhorn Creek, 7-9 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 25 – Preserve Stewardship, Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

July 26 – Almost-a-Full-Moon Campfire at our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. At 7 p.m. we’ll stroll the trails, observing birds and blooming plants. The campfire begins at 8 p.m., with a good chance of hearing Screech Owls after dark. S’mores and water will be provided.

Bring a lawn chair and a flashlight. Carpool from the Freeport Staples lot at 6:30. The preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. If weather is questionable call Mary at 815-938-3204.

July 28 – Annual NIAS Butterfly Festival at our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 1-5 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of fun and learning. See cover page for details.

July 30 – 7-9 p.m. “Talking About the Issues” discussion session at the home of John and Anita Nienhuis, 3350 S. Mill Grove Rd., Pearl City, 815-443-2401.

The first hour topic will explore the many reasons for the dramatic population decline of Rusty Blackbirds, a species we observe locally only during migration, how those factors are being addressed and how we can help. For a copy of the article, “Rising From Obscurity, Falling in Numbers,” contact Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204.

August 1 – Preserve Stewardship, Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m. See page 7 for details.

August 7 – Local Foods Tour: Arnolds Farm, Groezinger Produce Farm/Clara Joyce Flowers, and Willow Garlic Growers. 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (approximately). See page 4 for details.
CHATS WITH CHATS and Other Birds of Hanley Savanna

Friday, June 1
7:00 - noon, Hanley Savanna, Hanover, IL

Leader: Laura Dufford; 815-947-2720, 815-541-8958
email: lauradufford@gmail.com

We’ll join the Northwest IL Prairie Enthusiasts (NIPE) for a morning of birding and botany at Hanley Savanna, a 160 acre prairie and savanna restoration with habitats ranging from sand prairie and sand creek to oak woodland. Owned and managed by the Northwest Illinois chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts, this site provides an important link between the Lost Mound Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve. We will begin with a brief presentation by Barb Bernard who conducted a bird survey of Hanley in 2017. We will follow up with a moderate walk which will afford opportunities to see and hear Species of State Conservation Concern Yellow Breasted Chat, as well as Lark Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, Blue-winged Warbler and other migratory and resident birds. We’ll also enjoy an array of early-blooming prairie plants such as Hoary Puccoon, Spiderwort, and Prairie Phlox.

What to bring: Bug spray, water. Carpool from the Staples parking lot in Freeport at 7:00. We will return to Freeport around noon. Please call or email Laura to confirm your attendance. For those driving separately, we will meet at Hanley Savanna at 8:00.

VOLO BOG STATE NATURAL AREA

Saturday, June 23
7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Leader: Laura Dufford; 815-947-2720, 815-541-8958
email: lauradufford@gmail.com

This Natural Area contains the only quaking bog in Illinois. The site in Lake County, offers a floating mat of sphagnum moss, cattails and sedges surrounding an open pool of water in the center of the bog. In addition to the bog, the Natural Area has 1,100 acres of marshes, prairie, restoration areas, woodlands, two other bogs, and scenic trails. We will begin our visit with a guided bog tour which includes time in the visitor center. With luck we’ll see Pitcher plant, Rose Pegonia, and Buckbean, all great bog species. After lunch we’ll have some free time to roam into other areas if we so desire.

What to bring: Bug spray, water, LUNCH (we’ll picnic at the site). There is no food available to purchase at the Visitor Center. Carpool from the Staples parking lot in Freeport at 7:00. We will return to Freeport around 3:00. Please call or email Laura to confirm your attendance. Please let her know if you are available to drive (approximately 190 miles round trip)

SUMMER BLOOMS at the Freeport Prairie

Saturday, July 7
10:30-noon

Leader: Mary Blackmore (815)938-3204

We’ll take a leisurely stroll through the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve to admire and learn about early summer blooming species on this unique site. We’re hoping to see blooming Pale Purple Coneflower, Butterfly Weed, Leadplant, Purple Prairie Clover, Prairie Coreopsis, Prairie Cinquefoil and more. The Freeport Prairie is an Illinois dedicated Nature Preserve owned by the Jane Addamsland Park Foundation.

After our prairie stroll, those interested will gather for lunch at a nearby restaurant. In the event of questionable weather, call the leader. Registration for this trip is not necessary.

The Freeport Prairie is located on the south edge of Freeport, on the west side of Walnut Rd., just south of the intersection of Meadows Dr. and Walnut Rd. We’ll meet in the site’s parking lot.

Field trips continued on page 4

2018 STEPHENSON COUNTY CRANE COUNT

The 2018 Crane Count was held on Saturday, April 14th with Mother Nature providing us with weather that was less than ideal for watching birds. In spite of temperatures in the mid-thirties with drizzle for part of the count, 13 of the 14 sites in Stephenson County were able to count a least 1 crane. A total of 80 cranes were observed this year with one site observing a flock of 34 birds in flight. Two of the 14 sites observed occupied nests with 4 of the sites hearing unison calling.

Twenty-six NIAS volunteers participated as part of the multi-state Annual Midwest Crane Count sponsored by the International Crane Foundation. Without the help of our many volunteer counters, the Crane Count would not be possible. Big thanks go out to all the volunteers that got out early on a cold damp spring day to count cranes. Volunteers include: Mary Blackmore, Paul Hasenour, Jesse Akins, Alice Akins, Isaac Akins, Isaiah Akins, Bethany Akins, Jeremy Dixon, Perry Stevens, Richard Benning, Mark Keister, Phil Swalve, Glenn Hagemann, Gary Gordon, Bernard Lischwe, Judy and Harlan Corrie, T eresa Smith, Katelyn McWethy, Rex Sides, Anne Straight, Karen Lund, KarlaToelke, Sherrie Shoemaker and Colleen Wilson. Additional thanks go to Teresa Smith for coordinating our count.

Illustrations by Carol Litus
FIELD TRIPS CONTINUED

LOCAL FOODS TOUR:
Wishful Acres Farm & Brewery Tour

Saturday, July 21
11:30 am

4679 N Flansburg Rd, Lena IL (near Freeport & Lena, IL)
Cost: $5 per person and reservations are required for the tour
(must be received by July 14th) Leader: Heidi Thorp 815-369-5141

Wishful Acres Farm & Brewery is an organic farm combined with an artisan craft brewery! They grow hundreds of varieties of vegetables, herbs, fruits, and hops. In addition, they brew unique beers on-site in their renovated barn brewery, and many of their beers are made with hops & more grown right at their farm. They feature an on-site tap room & bar, serving their homemade craft beers and homemade root beer, making them family friendly!

The tours are guided by the owners themselves, Nate Peterson (owner/brewer) and Penny Peterson (owner/farmer). Tour includes a guided walking tour of their organic farm (hops, greenhouse, vegetable gardens) as well as their brewery! Each tour participant will receive a souvenir pint glass to take home. The tap room will be open after our tour for you to purchase some of their beers.

Join the carpool at the Staples east lot in Freeport at 11:00 a.m. Please dress appropriately as you will be walking around outside on a working farm. Reservations must be received by July 14th. Mail to: Heidi Thorp, 2273 N. Schlegel Rd., Lena, IL 61048 - Please include your name, phone number, email and number attending along with $5/person.

LOCAL FOODS TOUR:
Arnolds Farm, Groezinger Produce Farm/Clara Joyce flowers, and Willow Garlic Growers

Tuesday, August 7
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (approximately)

Leader: Laura Dufford; 815-947-2720, 815-541-8958
email: lauradufford@gmail.com

We’ll begin our tour of local Jo Daviess County food and flower producers with a stop at Arnold’s Farm near Elizabeth. Tom Arnold will show us his pastured turkey operation along with his chicken pasturing set-up. NIAS uses Tom’s turkeys for our banquet each spring. Tom will also have some hogs/piglets for viewing and will discuss his marketing process and explain why he farms/markets as he does. Tom does have meat available and suggests you order before the date from his website: www.arnoldsfarm.com. He can have your order ready so it will save time the day of the tour. Remember to bring a cooler!

After the visit to Arnolds Farm we will lunch in Stockton at Stella’s. When finished eating, we will head to Groezinger Produce Farm and Clara Joyce Flowers, south of Stockton. Drew is attending UW Platteville while running his farming operation. He began his operation in 2009 supplying fresh produce to local farmers markets, restaurants, and through his Community Supported Agriculture program serving Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties. In 2016 he began Clara Joyce Flowers, a fresh cut flower farm growing specialty blooms for local florists, a national floral wholesale company, and through his own wedding and event designs. Drew did not think he would have produce available for sale the day of our tour, but there is a possibility…

After visiting with Drew we will head down the road to Willow Garlic Growers. This farm is run by Dan Metzger and family. Dan grows 20 varieties of organic garlic on 2 acres. He sells his garlic and garlic products locally and at Logan Square Farmer’s Market in Chicago. He will have freshly harvested garlic for sale.

Carpool from Staples parking lot in Freeport at 9:00 a.m. We will return to Freeport around 3:30. Please confirm your attendance with Laura. Arrangements will be made with Stella’s to feed our group.

KIDS & FAMILIES

FAMILY BIRD WATCHING
at Oakdale Nature Preserve

Saturday, June 9
9:00-11:00 AM

This event is for novice bird watchers and families. The basics of bird watching, such as how to become a better observer and selection of equipment, will be covered. We will meet at the shelter in the Newell area of the Oakdale Nature Preserve.

Dress for the weather and bring binoculars if you have them. Audubon has a few binoculars for those who don’t have them. If you have questions about this event call Richard Benning (815-865-5279).

Visit our Kids and Families section on our webpage at: nwilaudubon.org/kids-families.asp
As we enter May, I have to reflect back to the month of April. April was filled with many transitions and changes. We patiently awaited spring migrants, developing buds, and emerging plants and said bye to our wintering birds. We had those few wintry spells that our poor bird friends and plants had to either endure or suffer. But as we approach May, we can look forward to more pleasant weather, bird walks, stewardship days, and our annual birdathon.

A first big change for me is becoming president of the chapter this month, which I honestly did not predict. I can think back to all of the times many years ago when Keith Blackmore kept asking me each time he saw me, “when are you going to attend one of our monthly meetings?” As a new Freeport resident, I remember receiving newsletters, but never attended any meetings. It wasn’t until a certain year where I attended the annual banquet with presenter Sandy Komito, the “Big Year” birder. After that I became more active with the chapter and eventually was invited to be a board member and now president. I’m excited to serve in this capacity and look forward to working with the other board members.

Finally, another personal change for me is the birth of our spring arrival (Baby Willow) who will be the newest and youngest Audubon member. As NIAS continues to focus on resource protection, habitat and wildlife preservation, and connecting people with nature, I will be thinking of her and other young people. I hope that we can continue to educate others and protect the planet for the future generations and I hope you can join us in this commitment.

Juliet Moderow

Thank you to all the people who volunteered at the banquet in April. The banquet is a delightful event due to help from numerous volunteers including: Lynn and Sandy Feaver, Laura Dufford, Bernie and Deb Lischwe, Mary Blackmore, Kara Gallop, Chris Krueger, Richard Benning, Candy Colby, Judy Corrie, Tim and Teresa Smith, Juliet Moderow and Steve Simpson. Thank you for all your help with the preparation before the event, during the event and the clean up after the banquet.

Thank you to the following people for providing delicious desserts for the banquet meal: Mary Blackmore, Linda Black, Pam Richards, Allison Gush, Mark Keister, Sandy Feaver, Deb Barron, Judy Corrie, Anita Nienhuis, Leah Dixon, and Merry Blake.

Thank you to the following folks who donated items to the silent auction or purchased items at the auction: Blake, Merle Benning, Sharon Shaw Estate, Allison & John Gush, Dave Derwent, Keri Penticoff, Ken Van Horn, Betty Mickel, Linda Black, Shery Lowman, Gary Gordon, Juliet Moderow, Mary Blackmore, Kara Gallup, John & Anita Nienhuis, Grace Storch, Alice Akins, Linnea Koch, Susan Walt, Fran & Jack Blask, Peggy Isaac, Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, Ed Derwent, Laura Welti, Nancy Ocken, Molly Doolittle, and Dick Luthin. We raised $1050.50 at the silent auction this year.

Thank you to the following retiring board members who have served on the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society Board for the past year: Nancy Ocken, Tim Smith, Betty Mickel, and Steve Simpson.

New board members replacing the people who are retiring include Lynn Feaver as Secretary, Deb Lischwe as Public Relations Chair, and Pam Richard, Jim Richards and Shey Lowman as Board Members at-large. Thank you to the new board members for being willing to step up and share their time and talents with Northwest Illinois Audubon. Welcome new board members!

Board members who will be continuing to serve in 2018-2019 include:
Juliet Moderow – President
Fred Redmore – Vice-President
Mary Blackmore – Treasurer
Candy Colby – Conservation Chairman
Gay Broocks – Membership Chairman
Teresa Smith – Program Chairman
Laura Dufford – Field Trip Chairman
Richard Benning – Education Chairman
Board members At-Large:
Linda Black, Mark Keister, Henry Simpson
Past President – Rex Sides

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society has a strong presence in northwest Illinois because of the dedication of the wonderful board members. Thank YOU!

I would also like to recognize Dan Barron for all the time he spends on our newsletter. We are so lucky to have someone to make our newsletter look professional.

Rex Sides
EARTH DAY 2018

On Saturday, April 21, we celebrated Earth Day at Krape Park in Freeport. There were many interesting and worthwhile exhibits, including the University of Illinois Extension's pollinator display, the Freeport Art Museum's hands-on art project, a fascinating demonstration of energy conservation, e-bikes and solar ovens by Josef Appell and a very nice display on vermicomposting by Laurie Gungel. Unfortunately, the weather was rather chilly, limiting the number of people in the park that day. However, we got good coverage by the local newspaper and a fine turnout, including many kids, for the live bird demonstration by Hoo Haven. (The tortoise was also a big favorite!)

Obviously the idea behind Earth Day is not to celebrate just one day, but to inspire all of us to live more sustainably every day! One of the goals of the 2018 Earth Day was to heighten awareness of the problem of plastic pollution, which, together with climate change, is one of our most serious issues. According to a Chicago Tribune article on April 26, more than 35 million tons of plastic pollution are produced around Earth and about a quarter of that ends up around the water. “For every pound of tuna we’re taking out of the ocean, we putting two pounds of plastic in the ocean,” says ocean scientist Sherry Lippiatt, California regional coordinator for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s marine debris program.

Plastic pollution kills thousands of birds and marine mammals and obviously the health of the ocean is vital to the health of the planet – among other things, ocean phytoplankton is responsible for 70% of the earth’s oxygen production.

To help address the problem we can start by refusing plastic bags when shopping and remembering to take our reusable bags. We can eliminate the use of plastic straws, balloons and single use plastic tableware and utensils and try to buy products in glass, metal or paper containers. We all need to educate ourselves about this problem and advocate for stronger laws to address plastic pollution. For more ideas visit the website “myplasticfreelife.com.”

Submitted by Candy Colby, conservation committee chair

GALENA SOLAR INSTALLATION TOUR

On April 25th members of the Conservation Committee traveled to Galena IL to meet with Mark Moran, City Administrator. He provided an excellent slide show and informational meeting, and then took us on a tour of their solar installation at their Waste Water Treatment Plant, consisting of 1,444 solar panels! We also saw parts of their 125 solar panel installation at City Hall, the two EV Charging Stations, and LED Street Lights. Also in attendance were Hendrica Regez, Chair of the Galena Green Team, and Nick Hyde, Galena attorney.

Submitted by Candy Colby, conservation committee chair
SUMMER STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

Please join us for one or more of the following stewardship sessions scheduled below for either the Elkhorn Creek or Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserves or the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve. Depending upon the site or week, we will be doing a variety of tasks such as removing sweet clover, burdock and wild parsnip, cutting brush, girdling saplings or otherwise reducing the competition to our native prairie, woodland and wetland remnants.

**Times:** Times vary so check the schedule below. Following most sessions, those interested will gather at a local restaurant for breakfast.

**You Supply:** Wear long pants, long sleeves, socks long enough to tuck your pant legs into (for tick avoidance), a hat and footwear that can get wet (earlier is dewier!). Take along insect repellent and sunscreen.

**We Supply:** Tools, gloves, water, snacks and directions about our work always will be provided.

**Carpooling:** The carpool site to Elkhorn Creek and Silver Creek is the east portion of the Staples parking lot in Freeport along HWY 26 on the south edge of town. Departure times vary so check the schedule.

**Questions?** If the weather is questionable or you need more information, contact the listed leader(s).

**Site Directions:** Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve is about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. Parking is off of West Grove Rd.

The Freeport Prairie is just south of the intersection of Meadows Dr. and Walnut Rd. on the south side of Freeport. Parking is off of Walnut Rd.

Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve is about 2 miles south of Leaf River in the southwest corner of the intersection of Leaf River Rd. and West Grove Rd. Parking is off of Leaf River Rd. about ¼ mile south of the intersection (S. Main St. crossing Hwy 72 in Leaf River becomes Leaf River Rd.)

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**June 2** – Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:15. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**June 4** – Elkhorn Creek, Old Joe Seep, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leaders: Nancy and Randy Ocken, 815-440-5768.

**June 6** – Elkhorn Creek, Spiderwort Vista, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leader: Anne Straight, 815-938-3263.

**June 8** – Elkhorn Creek, Swamp Sparrow Wetland, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leader: Juliet Moderow, 201-233-0946.

**June 12** – Elkhorn Creek, Bluestem View, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leader: Kara Gallup, 815-871-8014.

**June 14** – Elkhorn Creek, Fruit Bowl, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leaders: Mary Blackmore and Kara Gallup, 815-871-8014.

**June 18** – Elkhorn Creek, Corner Planting, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**June 20** – Freeport Prairie, 8-10 a.m. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**June 25** – Elkhorn Creek, Black Oak Savanna, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leaders: Pam and Jim Richards, 815-338-4049

**June 27** – Elkhorn Creek, Old Joe Seep, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leaders: Nancy and Randy Ocken, 815-440-5768.

**July 3** – Elkhorn Creek, Upper Planting, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**July 6** – Elkhorn Creek, Sandy Slope, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leaders: John and Anita Nienhuis, 815-443-2401.

**July 9** – Elkhorn Creek, Jim’s Hill, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leader: Lynn Feaver, 815-235-9530.

**July 13** – Elkhorn Creek, Swamp Sparrow Wetland, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leader: Juliet Moderow, 201-233-0946.

**July 16** – Elkhorn Creek, Elkhorn Riparian Strip, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:30. Leader: Jeremy Dixon, 815-821-3921.

**July 18** – Elkhorn Creek, Blazing Star Saddles, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30. Leaders: Chris Kruger and Bernard Lischwe, 815-275-9200.

**July 23** – Elkhorn Creek, Fruit Bowl and Trail Trimming for Butterfly Festival, 7-9 a.m., carpool 6:30, Kara Gallup and Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**July 25** – Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:15. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

**August 1** – Silver Creek, 8-10 a.m., carpool 7:15. Leader: Mary Blackmore, 815-938-3204.

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*Photos by Pam Richards from May 1st ECBP workday - Nancy Ocken and Anita Neihaus in a bed of garlic mustard, then a break for treats of course.*
**Whitefish Point Spectacular**

The 11 participants of this year’s extended bird trip decided to ignore the possibilities of a lot of snow and ice in Michigan’s U.P. and went with our usual field trip motto: “We’ll see something!” And did we ever! Just a few highlights:

- The biggest raptor flight the Point experienced in over a decade, including 1800 Broad-winged Hawks, 900 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 13 other raptors;
- a Snowy Owl perched on a huge pile of ice;
- many Common Loons;
- nesting and feeding Osprey and;
- Snowy Egret, Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, & Black-Crowned Night Herons on the way home at Horicon Marsh.

Many thanks go to co-leaders Richard Benning, Mary Blackmore, and Laura Dufford for a great trip!

Photos by Laura Dufford

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**NEWS FLASH:**

*Harlan’s Harem* retains the “Cardinal on a Stick” trophy, with a team total of 138 species in the 2018 NIAS Birdathon.

(A team photo was not available at the time of this publication going to press.)

Your money indeed goes where the birds go! All BIRDATHON proceeds are shared by organizations that do a tremendous job of:

- protecting and improving bird habitat on wintering grounds, migration corridors and nesting sites,
- connecting people with nature,
- providing education opportunities for the public, and
- collecting scientific data through bird counts and banding.

**Those organizations are:**

- Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
- National Audubon’s Mississippi River Initiative
- Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin
- Stewards of the Upper Mississippi Sand Bluff Bird Observatory
- Belize Audubon Society

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THANK YOU so much for your support of birds and our BIRDATHON!
Would you like to join Audubon as a NEW Member or give a GIFT membership?

Two types of membership are available:

1. Northwest Illinois Audubon Society and National Membership
   includes this local newsletter, local mailings and the national "Audubon" magazine.
   ____ National Membership $20
   All renewals for national memberships need to use the national membership form.

2. Northwest Illinois Audubon Society Local only Membership
   includes this newsletter and other mailings from our local chapter.  ____ Local Only $15

Name of new member or gift recipient ____________________________________________
Phone ___________________________ Email __________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ______ Zip Code _____________

If this is a gift membership, please indicate the name of the person providing the gift membership:
Name _______________________________________________________________________

Make check payable to NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail to:  
Treasurer, Northwest Illinois Audubon Society, P.O. Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032

THANK YOU!

- Preserves stewardship volunteers through April 23: Jim and Pam Richards, Judy and Harlan Corrie, John and Anita Nienhuis, Mary Blackmore, Nancy Ocken, and Paul Brown.
- Recent field trip and birdwalk leaders: Anne Straight, Mary Blackmore, Laura Dufford and Richard Benning.
- Jack and Debbie Barron of Freeport Press for donating the printing of our 2018 Local Foods Brochure and the annual banquet beverage information table tents.
- Laura Dufford and Dick Luthin for their donations to our chapter in memory of Richard Stevens.
- Lynn Feaver and Jim Richards for clearing downed trees off of trails at our preserves.
- Candy Colby for all of her work in planning and coordinating the very successful Earth Day event at Krape Park.
- Mary Blackmore for her 23 years of coordinating the Crane Count and to Teresa Smith for her willingness to be the new coordinator.
- Bob Remer for his recent donation.
- Jim Richards for repairing benches and a stool at ECBP.
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