

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

August-September 2009 Newsletter

Calendar Considerations

AUGUST 11 – Perseids Meteor Shower Campfire at Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Prairie walk at 7 p.m.; campfire begins at 8 p.m. S'mores and water will be provided. Bring a lawn chair and flashlight. Carpool from the Staples lot just off of HWY 26 in Freeport at 6:30. The Preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Rds. Parking is off of West Grove Rd.

AUGUST 13 – Freeport Prairie Workday, 7-9 a.m., with breakfast afterwards at a nearby restaurant. Tools, gloves and water provided. Wear long sleeves and long pants and shoes or boots that you don't mind getting wet from dew. If weather is questionable, call Blackmores at 815-938-3204.

AUGUST 19 – "Talking About the Issues" monthly discussion session, 7-9 p.m. at Lauren and Violet Frederick's, 3170 Sandy Pointe Dr., Freeport (815) 235-1418
Directions: Drive north on Greenfield Dr. off of Stephenson St. Turn left on Sioux Dr., left on Country Ct., right on Farmdale Lane, right on Countryside Lane, then left on Sandy Pointe Dr. Everyone is welcome at these informal discussions of various environmental issues.

AUGUST 20 – Freeport Prairie Workday, 7-9 a.m.
Details as above.

AUGUST 27 – The NIAS Conservation Committee and all other interested individuals will meet at Amigos Restaurant, 306 N. Galena Ave. in downtown Freeport at 5:30 p.m. Join us for fine food and a stimulating discussion. We wrap it up before 7:30.

AUGUST 29 – Butterfly Festival at Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 1-5 p.m. See page 2 for details.

SEPTEMBER 1 – First monthly meeting of the 2009-2010 year. We hope you can join us for our fall potluck and

program at the Oakdale Lodge, 3 miles south of Freeport off of Baileyville Rd. Back by popular demand, birdman Mark Spreyer, Director of the Stillman Nature Center, will introduce us to the wonderful world of owls. Mark's favorite family of birds is sure to amaze you as he discusses the behavior, biology and beauty of owls. He'll have several live birds to assist in illustrating his points. The whole family will enjoy an evening with the fascinating birds. Our potluck begins at 6 p.m. Bring a dish to pass and complete table service. Beverages will be provided. Chapter reports and announcements will begin at 7 p.m. followed by the program.

SEPTEMBER 8 – NIAS board meeting 7 - 9 p.m.
Location to be announced.

SEPTEMBER 11 – "Talking About the Issues" monthly discussion session at Judy and Harlan Corrie's in Cedarville (815-563-4932), 7-9 p.m. Everyone is welcome at these informal discussions of various environmental issues. Carpool from the Staples lot in Freeport at 6:30 or call Corries for directions.

SEPTEMBER 18-20 – 5th Upper Midwest Regional Audubon Conference at Chestnut Mountain Lodge near Galena. See page 2 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 22 – Autumnal Equinox Campfire at the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. Prairie walk begins at 6 p.m. and campfire starts at 7 p.m. Other details same as August 11 campfire (see above).

SEPTEMBER 24 – The NIAS Conservation Committee and all other interested individuals will meet at Amigos Restaurant, 306 N. Galena Ave. in downtown Freeport at 5:30 p.m. Join us for fine food and a stimulating discussion. We wrap it up before 7:30.

Calendar Considerations continues on next page

The public is welcome at all chapter activities

SEPTEMBER 26 – Green Fair in Elizabeth. The theme this year is: **“Going Green is Mainstream.”** Location: Highland Community College West in Elizabeth, Illinois. Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Admission: \$5.00 adult (18 years and older). See this page for details.

OCTOBER 4 – Seed Collecting at the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, 2-4 p.m. See page 2 for more information. Carpool from the Staples lot in Freeport at 1:30.

Elkhorn Creek Butterfly Festival – August 29

Join us and our Prairie Society friends for a fun informative afternoon as we explore the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve for the many butterflies that are found there. From 1-5 p.m. we'll be looking for Meadow Fritillary, Monarch, Common Wood Nymph, Buckeye, Milbert's Tortoiseshell and many more. Butterfly I.D. excursions will depart from the parking lot on the hour starting at 1:00. Free “Butterflies and Moths” pocket guides will be distributed at no charge while supplies last. We'll also have available: a shady rest area with chairs, restroom, water and snacks. If weather is questionable, call Blackmores at 815-938-3204 before noon on 8/29. The Preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreston in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Roads. Parking is off of West Grove Rd. which intersects HWY 26 just south of Forreston. This will be a great nature activity for the whole family – hope to see you there!

Facts, Food, Fellowship and Fun!

There's still time to register for the Upper Midwest Regional Audubon Conference taking place at Chestnut Mountain Resort near Galena September 18-20. The conference fee is \$75 if you register before August 1 and \$85 after that date. Chestnut Mountain rates are discounted for the conference if you make your reservation before August 18.

The conference will include informative concurrent sessions, a wonderful selection of field trips and great keynote speakers: wildlife photographer David Olson, noted author Scott Russell Sanders, avian scientist Jim Herkert, and National Audubon Society president John Flicker. Additionally, we'll have a silent auction, Saturday evening campfire, and Friday evening reception that will feature local foods.

To obtain a brochure, contact conference co-chair Kara Gallup at 815-871-8014 or karagallup@msn.com.

“Going Green is Mainstream”

Green Fair 2009 in Northwest Illinois, provides opportunities for people of all ages. The Green Fair offers over 50 vendors exhibiting ‘green’ products, services and information, dozens of presentations on sustainability throughout the day, wine tastings from local wineries, local art displays, cooking demonstration using local foods, kids activities and more. This year's theme is Going Green is Mainstream. Please join us September: 26, 2009. Location: Highland Community College West in Elizabeth, IL. Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 26. Admission: \$5.00 adult (18 years and older)

Fall Prairie Seed Collecting

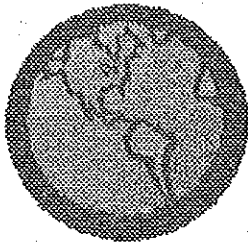
While our only long-range scheduled seed collecting outing at the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve is on Sunday afternoon, October 4 (see calendar), we will be collecting on many more days, on shorter notice as weather permits. To get on the “call list” for these other seed collecting outings, sign up at the September meeting or call Anne at (815) 938-3263. When called you may join us if you are available, or if not, we will catch you another time. We typically gather seeds for about two hours at a time during afternoons.

Seed collecting is an easy leisurely task. Novices are very welcome. There will always be a leader to point out which plants to pick seed from. Water and equipment will be provided. Wear long pants and long sleeves. It's a fun way to spend a couple of hours on nice fall afternoons. We hope you can join us!



Toward a Cooler Planet

This is the 13th in a series of articles looking at the many things that each of us can do to help with global warming.



Mealtime on Planet Earth

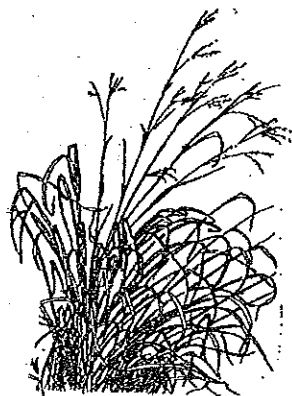
As we have noted in previous articles in this series, virtually everything we do affects the climate. Some of the effects are major, some minor, some may be positive and some are clearly negative. One of the things we all do is eat. What we eat, where our food comes from, how it was produced, how it was shipped and how and when we prepare the food can vary the impact of our diet on the planet. John Muir warned us that when we try to study any one thing in nature we find it hitched to everything else. This is certainly true when it comes to thinking about our food.

According to a 2007 study at the University of Chicago, some 3,774 calories are produced, processed and delivered to supermarkets per person per day. We don't actually eat all of that as much is wasted at various steps from the farm to the table. The average American diet is thought to be 72% plant-based, 14% meat based, and 14% eggs/dairy.

Switching totally from this average diet to a vegetarian diet would reduce global warming equivalent gases by 5000 lbs./year. Having one meatless day per week can save about 700 lbs. of CO₂ production each year.

Even within the meat option, better choices can be made. Among fishes for example, anchovies, sardines and mackerel are better choices than tuna or swordfish. Chicken is roughly two times better than pork, which is nearly two times better than beef. Each of these, and veggies also, are better for the planet if they are produced organically and locally.

Keith Blackmore



Help Kids Learn Environmental Awareness through Audubon Adventures

Audubon Adventures environmental education kits help teachers provide quality instruction about natural ecosystems to their middle school students. You can help this worthwhile program by donating a kit to a local classroom.

Audubon Adventures theme for this year is "Action for Planet Earth" and the units will focus on the water cycle, energy flow, habitats, and species. Each segment will emphasize community action and helping birds.

AA newspapers contain fun activities, high interest content, and hopeful messages. Additional features will include "Guide to a Healthy Schoolyard" and "Nature Journaling for Everyone".

Audubon Adventures gives teachers a series of mini-curricula in ecology and environmental science, complete with materials to use in their classroom. The curricula teach reading, writing, science, and math skills and are designed to meet state and national education standards. The materials are for 3rd through 5th graders

NIAS has sponsored quite a few local classrooms in the past, and we continue to need people who can help with this program by donating the \$45.65 needed to supply a kit. Donations in any amount are accepted and you may designate and classroom or school if you wish. We also are looking for teachers interested participating. Please send donations using the form below and sending it to: NIAS Education Chairman Lucas Bradley, 4205 Beach St. Apt. 203, Rockford, 61108.

Yes! I'd like to sponsor an AUDUBON ADVENTURES classroom!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address _____

1st choice town _____

2nd choice town _____

(Note: if you have no town preference, we will use your donation where the support is most needed.)

Make your check for \$45.65 payable to NIAS and mail with this form to NIAS Education Chairman Lucas Bradley, 4205 Beach St. Apt. 203, Rockford, 61108. Thanks for your donation!

Living the Audubon Spirit

By Audubon member Carole Redmore

Doris Last is not a member of Audubon, but her life surely embodies the Audubon spirit. Many can identify with her story of growing up on a farm and so her story belongs to many, but she is a particularly articulate storyteller about those days. Doris and her three sisters helped their father with the farming; they had a brother, but he did not get the workout they did as he was much younger—and by the time he was old enough to help, their father was ready to retire (rather to the girls' disgust).

Seventy years ago when Doris and her sisters were taking their 50 to 60 cows to pasture or down to the

Pesticides? Forget it. They dug out Canadian thistle and put rock salt in the holes. Potato bugs were disposed of by dropping them into kerosene.

timber, life was so different that we can hardly imagine it, even though at the same time some of us feel it was just yesterday—so close and yet so remote. Doris, a small woman, thinks nothing today of carrying heavy loads and is scornful of those who want to help her; after all, she was used to carrying 10-gallon milk cans and balancing 5 gallon pails of water, which would be 60 pounds each, across her shoulders. They farmed with horses and mules and used a 6-horsepower gas engine to run the milkers.

Needless to say, there was neither electricity nor plumbing. In the summer when it was very hot, she and her sisters and brother slept on the front lawn. When they ran to the outhouse, they had to hurry before the wasps, which had a nest in the half moon on the outhouse door, would get them. The old joke of the Sears catalog was no joke to them, just reality, along with the Montgomery Ward catalog. You had to be sure to use the black-and-white pages though, Doris said; there were some colored pages but the black-and-white ones, when scrunched up, were much softer.

They made their own laundry soap and had a 1-horse engine for the washing machine, the old wringer type—they had to be careful not to catch a body part in the wringer. Rain water from the roof was collected in cisterns, dumped out into vats and heated for the washing machine or the Saturday night bath. The soap was made in 10-gallon crocks, made into bars and then shaved into the water in the washer.

Of course all vegetables and even beef were canned, with some jelly and preserve making thrown in. The

women made all the clothes, of course, often from the valued feed sacks; they would beg their father to get 2 or 3 of the same color or print of the feedsacks, and of course Doris and her sisters had to help with all of this as well as with the farming—had they been boys, they would have been spared the washing and sewing and cooking and mending and ironing and baking and -- it takes one's breath away to think of it.

When it was hay-making time, they made hay by day and did the oats and wheat at night.

The corn stalks were cut up and used for bedding.

On weekends there were barns to be cleaned, mucked out and lime put down. Every day, of course, there was milking, feeding the chickens and hogs, doing all the chores. The hogs were fed from 55 pound barrels of ground corn and water to make the slop, and the trick, Doris says, was to sneak in and get the slop into the troughs without waking the hogs in order to avoid being splashed by the eager gluttons.

When chores were done, each child made her own lunch and walked a mile and a half to the one-room school.

When it was time for combining, there was no time for school for Doris and her sisters; they pitched in to pick the corn; the horses went through the fields with the pickers leaning out to pick, then shovel it by hand.

The old-time stories of threshing we hear about—and which many lived—are all true, and then there would be 15 or more men at the table for dinner.

Pesticides? Forget it. They dug out Canadian thistle and put rock salt in the holes. Potato bugs were disposed of by dropping them into kerosene. Weeding was a part of everyday life.

In spite of all that work, almost everyone was in church

In spite of all that work, almost everyone was in church on Sunday morning and again on Wednesday evening. A chance for rest - it's a wonder they didn't all soon lapse into snoring and fall out of the pews.

on Sunday morning and again on Wednesday evening. A chance for rest - it's a wonder they didn't all soon lapse into snoring and fall out of the pews.

Many lived this life; others of us have heard it in stories, read it in books, seen it in movies countless times. But what do we make of it all today?

Doris and her family knew how to live sustainably. Doris still does today. We often speak nostalgically of those days and with good reason—they were times of hard work, and sometimes it was a world of devastation when there was drought or flooding, grasshopper or locust or other infestation, when children died of diphtheria or scarlet fever. But it was often a time of deep satisfaction and happiness.

We speak disdainfully, and with good reason, of today's sterile, frantic-paced world, so removed from nature, so efficient, where every convenience is at our fingertips. And yet if put to the test probably few of us would survive a day of Doris's workload in her youth. We probably don't really want to sleep on bedding made of corn stalks or carry 10-gallon milk pails. Even with the suffering many are enduring with job losses, home loss, and loss of other funds, we still are basically affluent; we cannot imagine a world without cell phones, iPods, HDTV and on through endless reams of electronic wonders. Yet our dis-ease with the sleek, swift world of today is real.

We can't go back to farming with horses (some advocate it, but it seems an unlikely development); but

how can we create a new world that is sustainable, meaningful? At the Museum of Science and Industry, a display in the futuristic section envisions a time of "vertical farming." People could ride elevators up to their farms. It seems utterly far-fetched, but then my father, who was born in 1889, says that he never could have dreamed as a child that one



day a man would walk on the moon.

More to the point, perhaps, would be to develop a future world where the natural world is valued, where paying attention is a priority, where we learn to live more gently, respectful of the earth and all earth's creatures.

Whatever may happen, whatever we as humans may choose, whatever we may act upon, whether for good or ill, we do know that the world in which Doris, and many of us, grew up is a heritage to be valued, a heritage one can build on, a heritage that is a treasure..

Welcome New Member!

We welcome the following new member:

Kathy Kautz of Hanover, IL

Audubon Coffee - Ahhhh!

Audubon Premium Shade Grown Coffee is sold at our monthly meetings, as well as our fall birdseed and corree sale. It can also be ordered by phone year-round by calling Norene Caliva at (815) 232-9474, and pickup or delivery can be arranged.

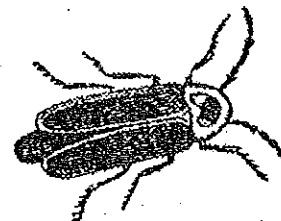
Made exclusively from Arabica beans, our coffee is Rainforest Alliance Certified, 100% organic, habitat friendly, earth friendly, grown in harmony with nature, without pesticides, and with fair treatment and conditions for workers. Blends are available in whole beans or pre-ground. French Roast, Rainforest Blend, Breakfast Blend, and Breakfast Decaf. Your purchase helps with our chapter fundraising efforts as well as National Audubon Society's mission to conserve and restore habitats.

Bird Walks a Success!

Our weekly bird walks produced quite a few exciting sightings and many great views of more common birds as our members explored local areas during april and May. An average of 12 individuals participated each week with the average number of observed species at 41. All sites were in Stephenson County except for the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve, which is in Ogle County.

A summary of sites with favorite sightings are as follows: various Pecatonica River wetlands – American Pipit, many Wilson's Snipe; Jane Addams Trail near Orangeville – Osprey and Great Horned Owl; Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve – Solitary Sandpiper; Krape Park – Northern Waterthrush, Northern Parula Warbler; Jane Addams Trail near Orangeville – Green Heron, Swainson's Thrush; Oakdale Children's Walk – great looks at a Red-tailed Hawk both perched and flying; Oakdale – Western Meadowlark. The most unusual sighting was the Golden-Crowned Sparrow, a bird that normally resides in the far western U.S. For a few days many out-of-area birders descended upon Scioto Mills in hopes of catching a glimpse of this rare (to our area) bird.

Many thanks go to those who led walks: Keith and Mary Blackmore, Somer Bovosky, Laura Dufford, Dick Luthing, Carol Redmore and Anne Straight. We hope you can join us next year when we once again enjoy the beauty and wonder of the spring migration.



Yes, I would like to give a gift membership in the
National Audubon Society/Northwest Illinois Audubon Society to:

Name: _____ Address _____

School (if student) _____

Gift card to _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Membership type:

Individual _____ (\$ 20)

Student _____ (\$9)

Senior citizen _____ (\$15)

Chapter only _____ (\$15)

Make check payable to NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY
and mail to Treasurer, Northwest Illinois Audubon Society

P.O. Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032

Sorry, this discount does not apply to renewals.



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704 N. Davis, St.
Davis, IL, 61019
Home: (815) 865-5279

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Programs - Mary Blackmore
Education - Carol Redmore
Publicity - Lynn Feaver
Membership - Teresa Smith
Field Trips - Steve Simpson

Sustainable Agriculture - Mary Blackmore, Terri Clark, Richard Benning, Laura Dufford, Heidi Thorp, Ken and Pam Rosmann

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