



# Northwest Illinois Audubon Society

*The Cardinal is a colorful visitor to feeders during the winter.*

Dec. 2010 - Jan. 2011 Newsletter  
[www.nwilaudubon.org](http://www.nwilaudubon.org)

## The Chocolate Story

NIAS Monthly Meeting — St. John United Church of Christ  
December 7, 2010  
7:00 p.m.

This presentation, by Della Moen, is about the process of growing cocoa bean, how cocoa beans affect their surrounding environment, and how they are related to fair trade.

Her slide presentation will feature images from the book "Harvest of Hope" written and photographed by Phil Grout.



## NIAS Monthly Meetings:

- Held on the 1st Tuesday of the month.
- Oct.-Mar., location is St. John United Church of Christ, 1010 S. Park Blvd., Freeport; 7 p.m. for announcements and reports. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. followed by refreshments.
- April, May & Sept. special mtg. times/place.



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## Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

NIAS Monthly Meeting — St. John United Church of Christ  
January 4, 2011  
7:00 p.m.

The presenter for the evening is Christie Trifone, Director of Development at the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation. Christie will speak about the different kinds of projects the JDCF is involved in, the work that they do, and she will highlight the partnerships held between the JDCF and the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society.



## Calendar Considerations

**Dec. 8—"Talking About the Issues"** monthly discussion session, 7-9 p.m. at the home of Violet and Lauren Frederick, 3170 Sandy Pointe Drive, Freeport (815-235-1418). Everyone is welcome at these informal discussions of various environmental issues. Call the Frederick's for directions.

**Dec. 18—Annual Christmas Bird Count.** All are welcome to join in this fun day of bird watching. See page 3 for details.

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

**Jan. 8—Field Trip** hosted by Keith and Mary Blackmore. We will drive to historic prairie areas south and east of Freeport and possibly Shannon, time permitting. Most viewing will be from our vehicles. We hope to see Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings and Horned Larks. Carpoolers meet at Staples in Freeport at 7:45 a.m. After viewing, the group may have lunch in Shannon or Freeport. Be sure to call Blackmores at 815-938-3204 if there are weather issues. Alternate bad weather date is Jan. 15th.

**Jan. 11—NIAS Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m., St. John United Church of Christ**

**Jan. 15—Field Trip alternate date for weather cancellation...see Jan. 8th item.**

**Jan. 19—"Talking About the Issues"** monthly discussion session, 7-9 p.m. at the home of Dick Luthin, 1712 W. Parkview Drive, Freeport (815-232-8624). Everyone is welcome at these informal discussions of various environmental issues. Call Dick for directions.

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



The public is welcome at all chapter activities.

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## BIRDSEED/COFFEE SALE SUCCESS

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The northwest Illinois bird-feeding community has once again strongly supported Audubon's principal fundraiser. This year, folks purchased more than 20,000 lbs. of bird food and a very significant quantity of our 100% shade-grown, organically-grown coffee.

Special thanks go to our "Coffee Lady," Norene Caliva, and to the Birdseed Committee: Chris Kruger, John Walt, Tim Smith and Keith Blackmore. Chris Kruger deserves special mention for rounding up over \$620 in orders, serving as Dakota drop-site, and taking a day off of work to assist with deliveries. Others who helped with deliveries were Mary Blackmore, Melody Farringer, Judy and Wendall Kurr, John Day, Jeremy Dixon, Rick Weber and Tim Last.

The yearly success of our sale is only possible because of the fine cooperation of the O'Mara Transport Co. and the remote drop-sites at the homes of John Day, Harold White, Anne Straight, Lyle Sykora, Greg Ryan and Chris Kruger.

Jim's Ear Corn was again graciously provided by the Joe Akins family. A large thank-you goes to them. Harvest of the corn was done by Anne Straight, Larry Seffrood, and Blackmores. Thanks to all for helping in this effort to feed the squirrels.

Thanks also go to all who helped to fill orders on the sale days: Dan Barron, Dave Derwent, Tom and Chris Hartung, Dan and Diana Nye, John Nienhuis and Carol Redmore.



## GOT BIRDSEED?

We still have limited quantities of Our Own Mix, black-oil sunflower, niger seed, ear corn and suet cakes. If you would like to purchase any of these, call Dan Barron at 815-541-3261. The extras are stored at Freeport Press, 1031 W. Empire in Freeport.

*Our thanks go to Lois Stevens* for the very many years that her garage served as storage for our extra seed.

# CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

This year is the 111th Christmas Bird Count and our chapter will be a participant. Our count circle is centered in Freeport and on the day of the count we will be tallying as many birds as possible. We invite interested persons to help by either being a feeder counter (if you reside within the count circle) or a field counter (traveling throughout the count circle). Our count will be held on Saturday, December 18, 2010.

Feeder counters may call Keith Blackmore (815-938-3204) to check if you are within the count circle. The form to use for feeder counters appears below. The deadline for submitting your feeder count to Keith is December 30.

Field counters will meet for a "Dutch-treat" breakfast at the Spring Grove Family Restaurant (1521 S. West Ave. in Freeport) at 6:30 a.m. on the date of the count. We will leave around 7:30 a.m. to start our morning count. Cars should be left at the Staples parking lot if you are not driving. We usually count birds all day until close to sundown. However, you may help just during the morning or afternoon if this fits your schedule better.

We will meet at 12:00 noon at the Stephenson County Convention and Visitors Bureau east of Freeport on HWY 20 to regroup and eat a sack lunch so those helping only during the afternoon may join us there.

Really early birders may join us for Owling at 5:00 a.m. on the day of the count. Those braving those early hours should meet us in the parking lot at Staples (1722 S. West Ave., Freeport).

For more information, contact Keith Blackmore at 815-938-3204.

## Christmas Bird Count Feeder Count Portion



Participating in a CBC Feeder Count is easy and fun! First, be sure that your feeders are in the official count circle, a 15-mile diameter circle with Read Park in Freeport as the center. If you aren't sure if you are in the circle, call Keith Blackmore (815-938-3204) to check. On the count day, Saturday, December 18, simply watch your bird feeder(s) for at least 4 hours and record the largest number of each species present at any one moment. For example, don't add together the 8 juncos seen at 10 a.m. and the 10 juncos seen at 11:30. The final number should be 10, that is, the most seen at any one time. You don't have to be glued to the window either, watching every bird for every minute. Just check your feeder often during the hours you are counting. Then complete the form below and mail as indicated by Dec. 30. Thanks!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Mourning Dove

\_\_\_ Tufted Titmouse

\_\_\_ House Finch

\_\_\_ Common Flicker

\_\_\_ White-breasted Nuthatch

\_\_\_ Pine Siskin

\_\_\_ Red-bellied Woodpecker

\_\_\_ Red-breasted Nuthatch

\_\_\_ American Goldfinch

\_\_\_ Red-headed Woodpecker

\_\_\_ Brown Creeper

\_\_\_ Dark-eyed Junco

\_\_\_ Hairy Woodpecker

\_\_\_ Carolina Wren

\_\_\_ Tree Sparrow

\_\_\_ Downy Woodpecker

\_\_\_ European Starling

\_\_\_ White-throated Sparrow

\_\_\_ Blue Jay

\_\_\_ House Sparrow

\_\_\_ Song Sparrow

\_\_\_ American Crow

\_\_\_ Northern Cardinal

\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Black-capped Chickadee

\_\_\_ Purple Finch

(other)

Mail to: Keith Blackmore, 9024 W.  
West Grove Rd., Forrester, IL  
61030

# ELKHORN CREEK VOLUNTEERS PUMP UP A STORM!



"Deeper strokes are better."

"The holes just keep comin' don't they?"

"Look at Willem go with those long legs of his!"

Were these comments that Elkhorn Creek volunteers made during a work day? Were the volunteers trying out a new tool? Actually...they were taking turns pumping a player piano at the recent Elkhorn Creek volunteer potluck!

During the evening, volunteers enjoyed a wonderful potluck and great conversation as they celebrated another successful year of activities at the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve. In addition, time was made to exchange ideas about both the summer work schedule and special Preserve events like the Butterfly Festival. Our thanks go to Mary and Keith Blackmore who hosted this gathering.

More than 40 people volunteered at Elkhorn Creek this year, participating in controlled burns, weed removal, wood cutting, seed collecting and seed planting. We invite you to join us in our efforts in 2011. You'll be sure to learn a lot and have a great time! Watch future newsletters for specific volunteer opportunities!!!

## AUDUBON ADVENTURES — NIAS STILL NEEDS YOUR HELP

*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 "Wildlife on the Move" and will focus on migrating animals.

*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 standards. The materials are for 3rd through 5th graders.

NIAS **continues 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 a classroom or school if you wish**. We are also looking for teachers interested in participating. Please make your check for **\$45.65 payable to NIAS** and mail with the form below to: **NIAS Education Chair (Laura Dufford), 8957 S. Fitzsimmons Rd., Stockton 61085**. Thanks for your donation!

Yes, I'd like to sponsor an Audubon Adventures classroom!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1st choice town: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd choice town: \_\_\_\_\_

# Toward a Cooler Planet

20th in a series

## Ghost Dancers

Henry David Thoreau said, "the fate of the country does not depend on how you vote at the polls - the worst man is as strong as the best at that game; it does not depend on what kind of paper you drop into a ballot-box once a year, but on what kind of man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning." I really, really hope he was right.

When President Obama was swept into office in 2008, I dared to hope that we would finally begin to move in a positive direction at a rate necessary to avoid calamity. For a variety of reasons, I suppose, it didn't happen.

In Blue Highways, William Least Heat Moon writes about "...ceremonies of the 1890's in which the Plains Indians, wearing cloth shirts they believed rendered them indestructible, danced for the return of warriors, bison, and the fervor of the old life that would sweep away the new. Ghost dances, desperate resurrection rituals, were the dying rattles of a people whose last defense was delusion - about all that remained to them in their futility." Was this last election just such a dance?

Mahatma Gandhi said that "we must be the change that we hope for." For the time being, it seems that our choice is between believing that we can somehow safely and happily recapture the wasteful, planet-ravaging past, or choosing to not wait for legislation to force appropriate climate action and instead be the change we hope for. Shall we dance or be?



Keith Blackmore

## THANK YOU TO ...

👉 Fall prairie seed collectors at the Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve: Harlan and Judy Corrie, John and Anita Nienhuis, Lynn Feaver, Rick Weber, Mary and Keith Blackmore, Willem and Claudia Dijstelbergen, Melody Farringer, Dan Barron, Eve Wilczewski, Helen and Lyle Sykora, Larry and Phyllis Seffrood, Norene Caliva, Fred and Carol Redmore, Anne Straight, Dan and Diana Nye, Sandy and Dave Davis, Tom and Chris Hartung and Lucas Bradley.

👉 Volunteers at our fall Wild Parsnip removal work session and seed collecting: John and Anita Nienhuis, Mary Blackmore, Tom and Chris Hartung, Melody Farringer, Jacob St. Ores, Kara Gallup, Nancy Ocken and Anne Straight.

👉 Dave Derwent for helping at the July Butterfly Festival and for all the work he does at the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve.

👉 Mary and Keith Blackmore for monitoring the Bluebird Trail at Elkhorn Creek. Of nine boxes, 1 had no activity, 1 had House Wrens, 4 had Tree Swallows and 3 had Eastern Bluebirds, resulting in 4 broods of swallows and 5 broods of bluebirds.



*Seed collectors take a well-earned break!*

# FALL FOOD FOR THOUGHT FANTASTIC

Approximately 70 participants at the November 6 Food For Thought Workshop enjoyed delicious local food, heard great presentations, and had opportunities to exchange ideas about how ordinary people can positively influence the direction of agriculture. An oft-repeated phrase throughout the day was "Vote with your fork!" What you choose to buy and eat drives the direction of agriculture.

Many people contributed to the success of this workshop. Our thanks go to the following individuals: **Speakers**—Terra Brockman, Michelle Princer, John Eisbach, Mary Blackmore, Lenae Weichel, Kevin Holdmann, Tom Eickman, Lindsey White, Andy Hazzard and Lisa Bardell; **Cooks and Bakers**—Richard Benning, Laura Dufford, Heidi Thorp and Mary Blackmore; **Volunteers** who registered participants, provided A-V support, moved tables and chairs, loaned equipment, and helped with set-up, clean-up, food preparation and food serving — Kathy and Rick Weber, Tim and Teresa Smith, Terri Clark, Anita Nienhuis, Keith Blackmore, Melody Farringer, Dan Barron, Eve Wilczewski, Judy Kurr, and Chris Kruger; and the **Freeport Park District**—provided a reduced rental rate for the facilities.

Special thanks go to the members of the NIAS Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Pam Rosmann, Richard Benning, Heidi Thorp, and Mary Blackmore, for their hard work, planning and food donations.

## Change of Scenery at the Freeport Prairie

If you drove by the Freeport Prairie Nature Preserve this summer, you may have noticed quite a few changes. Most of the woody vegetation has been removed and new fencing and a new sign are in place.

Dedicated funding from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) was available for use by John Nelson, the local INPC Natural Areas Preservation Specialist for those projects. With consent from the Preserve's owner, the Jane Addamsland Park Foundation, Mr. Nelson contracted out that work and plans to conduct a fall, 2010 or spring, 2011 controlled burn at the prairie.

With that in mind, Mr. Nelson requested that our chapter do some seed collection this fall for the purpose of overseeding degraded areas after the burn. We were able to collect quite a bit of Indian Grass, Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem and Northern Dropseed. Thanks go to those who helped gather this seed: Anne Straight, Melody Farringer, Mary and Keith Blackmore, Montevian Ishmon, Larry Seffrood, Tom and Chris Hartung, Dave Derwent and Norene Caliva.

## Cats, Birds and You

This fall our chapter donated 150 "Cats, Birds and You" brochures to Freeports' Friends Forever Humane Society for distribution with each cat adoption. The brochures outline the dangers that cats face when outdoors, as well as the hazard that outdoor cats pose for birds and other wildlife. The brochure also includes many helpful suggestions to transition your free-roaming pet into a contented indoor cat, and how to help reduce cat overpopulation. The brochures are produced by the American Bird Conservancy.

Our chapter plans to contact other local humane societies and pet shelters to see if they would be interested in distributing these brochures. The brochures are available at all monthly Audubon meetings or can be requested by calling Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204.







**Board Members:**

**President**—Lucas Bradley

4205 Beach St. #203  
Rockford, IL 61108  
Home: (815) 238-7120

**Vice President**—Lynn Feaver

**Secretary**—Anita Nienhuis

**Treasurer**—Judy Kurr

**At large**—Steve Simpson,  
John Nienhuis, Tony Gra-  
hame, Tim Smith, Sharon  
Shaw and Willem Dijstel-  
bergen

**Committee Chairs:**

**Conservation** —Keith Blackmore

**Programs**—Eve Wilczewski

**Education**—Laura Dufford

**Publicity**—Dan Barron

**Membership**—Teresa Smith

**Field Trips**—Rick Weber

**Sustainable Agriculture**—

Dick Benning, Mary Black-  
more, Laura Dufford, Pam  
Rosmann, and Heidi Thorp

**Newsletter Editor:**

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Boynton Beach, FL 33435  
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**Regular Contributors**

Keith Blackmore  
Carol Redmore

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

**X Sorry, this discount does not apply to renewals**

**ADDRESSES OF YOUR LEGISLATORS**

**Federal**

Senator Richard Durbin  
Kluczynski Building 38th Floor  
230 S. Dearborn  
Chicago, IL 60604

Senator Mark Kirk  
Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

(16th District)  
Rep. Don Manzullo  
415 S. Mulford Rd.  
Rockford, IL 61108

(17th District)  
Rep. Phil Hare  
1535 47th Ave., Suite 5  
Moline, IL 61265

**State**

Sen. Tim Bivins  
State House  
Springfield, IL 62706 (45th District)

Sen. Mike Jacobs  
State House  
Springfield, IL 62706 (36th District)

Rep. Jim Sacia  
State House  
Springfield, IL 62706 (89th District)

Rep. Jerry Mitchell  
State House  
Springfield, IL 62706 (90th District)

Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121  
State House Switchboard (217) 782-2000  
(When using either switchboard, simply ask to be  
connected to the legislator's office.)

Sketch by  
Erick  
Sohlberg



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