Calendar

**BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS**
Forest Park Visitor Center at 5595 Grand Drive  
First Saturday of Most Months  
Walk from 8:30 AM to 10 AM, Meet at 8:15 AM  
For info contact Amy birding@forestparkforever.org

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
Baldwin Lake, Illinois  
Saturday February 7th at 9A

**ALASKA PROGRAM—PAGE 4**
Webster Groves Library  
Wednesday February 11th at 7P

**GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT BASICS**
Forest Park Visitor Center  
Thursday February 12th from 5P to 6P

**GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT**
Anywhere you want to bird, www.birdcount.org  
Friday February 13 thru Monday February 16

**BEGINNER BIRD WALKS—PAGE 6**
Several places around the region  
Saturday February 14th from 9A to 11A

**GULL WORKSHOP & FIELD TRIP—PAGE 5**
The Great Rivers Museum  
Saturday February 21st at 8A

**BACKYARD BIRD FESTIVAL—PAGE 7**
Forest Park Visitor Center at 5595 Grand Drive  
Saturday February 21st from 10A to 2P

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
Busch Conservation Area Woodcock/Owl Prowl  
Saturday March 7th at 5P

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
Horseshoe Lake State Park in Illinois  
Saturday March 14th at 8A

**CONFLUENCE TRASH BASH WATERSHED CLEANUP**
Various places around the region  
Saturday March 21st from 9A to 12P

**AFRICA PROGRAM—PAGE 4**
Webster Groves Library  
Thursday March 26th at 7P

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**Eagle Days Thanks**

January 17th and 18th were great days to be outside at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge looking for Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, or anything else, for that matter! The annual Eagle Days event was another great success with over 10,000 visitors recorded over the weekend! St. Louis Audubon was again posted inside the warming tent with our touch table exhibit of the birds of St. Louis. We were joined by our own Education Team on Sunday with a separate exhibit. Thanks to everyone who helped out, especially Dianne Benjamin, Jerry Castillon, Mary Dueren, Ann Earley, Katy Fechter, Martha Ferdinand, Sue Gustafson, Herb Huebner, Mitch Leachman, Karen Meyer, Andrea Schuhmann, Bill Salsgiver, Bob Siemer and Dave Tylka! ♦
Board Meetings
Open to All. 2nd Tuesday of Even Months at 7 pm at the Sunset Hills Community Center at 3915 S. Lindbergh Boulevard.

Board recruitment is an ongoing process and requires your interest and our need. If you have thought of serving in such a way, stop by or call one of us.

Officers
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president@stlouisaudubon.org

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Newsletter
TaleFeathers is published monthly. For submissions, comments or corrections, contact Mitch Leachman as noted above.

Proud Member of the

Loss and Remembrance
The Beauty of Faith & Change
By Karen Byrnes Meyer

On this dark and dreary morning, just before the light rain began again,

My heart was full of these recent events.

I peered out the kitchen window and observed, with calm delight, that something about the pond, though grey, seemed joyous.

Was it that the thin layer of surface ice had recently vanished?

Or had I observed the scene long enough to absorb what heals.

The open water was totally still, its reflection enhancing the tall white pines’ beautifully serene shapes.

But the reflections, real as the trees themselves, soon became fleeting forms. The light rain returned.

I wondered about that place where she’s gone, and imagine it as such.

Glorious, flowing, evolving.

For us, time and seasons will bring new experiences, some marked with sadness, but swallowed by wonder and faith. ♦

In honor of my cousin Gerri Wibbenmeyer
From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

I love our so-called “backyard birds.” White-throated Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos scratching in the leaf litter underneath my plants and among the waste seed below the feeder. Northern Cardinals at the edge of night, cracking just one more seed before calling it quits. Blue Jays swooping down in a feathery explosion or perching nearby and calling with another interesting variation of their large repertoire. No hi-powered binoculars, digital cameras or very often even field guides required.

We celebrate all our birds this month, but most especially our easy-to-spot and rather common species with the Great Backyard Bird Count. The Count itself can be pursued by anyone, anywhere, and as often as you like over the 4-day window from February 13th thru the 16th, www.birdcount.org (for a more in-depth discussion of the Count, consider the GBBC Basics class on February 12th on our calendar). In addition, we have three bird walks on February 14th (see page 6) that will start with a brief overview of the Count and will also contribute to the Count with the observations recorded by each walk’s leader.

You will also notice another opportunity to celebrate our common birds with the Backyard Bird Festival at Forest Park on February 21st (see page 7). We’re very excited to partner with Forest Park Forever staff and bring back this event most recently held at the Missouri Botanical Garden. We hope you will consider some time for this free and family-friendly event, and like all nature-related things, bring a friend or colleague!

I also draw your attention to our centennial call-out next to our logo for these events. We began year 100 last November, and announced it with our Centennial Kick-off event November 1st. The September and November issues of this newsletter included more info about our anniversary, including a request for personal stories, anecdotes and especially photos that include our history. One of many events being planned for 2015 includes a photo contest that will also highlight some of those historical gems. We’re also working with Missouri State Parks on a fall festival at Babler that will celebrate birds as well as butterflies and other “flyers of the fall.” Keep watch here, on our website and Facebook page for details.

I know it’s winter, but that doesn’t stop the birds! Get outside or at least look outside (☺). Grab a friend or the kids. Stop by an event or walk, and wish us “Happy Anniversary! We hope to see you.◆

Field Trips, Etc.

-Feb 7th to Baldwin Lake, Illinois: All day trip led by Pat Lueders that meets at 9:00 am at the Hwy 270 and Hwy 30 west commuter lot. Caravan and carpool will be arranged there. Site can be reached via Hwy 3 south from I-255 in Illinois to Redbud. Then east on Hwy 154 to Baldwin. Follow signs to Lake Baldwin.

-Mar 14th to Horseshoe Lake State Park: Mike Grant leads this all day trip starts at 8 am and is good for beginners with some light walking. From St. Louis, take I-70 east to Hwy 111 (exit 6) and turn left. Go ~2 miles to Park entrance and meet in first parking lot on right inside Park.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. For questions, contact Mike Grant at mikecurlew@att.net.
Natural History of Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula
February 11th at 7:00 p.m.
Webster Groves Library

The Kenai Peninsula on Alaska’s southern coast is home to vast stretches of untouched forests and wildlife. In summer, long daylight hours create an abundant plankton supply that attracts whales, seals and sea birds. The Peninsula also has a very dynamic geological history that includes glaciers from the most recent ice age and earthquakes.

Richard Thoma will present a talk and slide show of a recent trip. He will examine how glaciers leftover from the last ice age are still having an impact on the life of Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula and its surrounding waters. This is our annual joint program with the Webster Groves Nature Study Society (WGNSS).

Richard is past president of WGNSS. He is a research scientist at Monsanto and an avid amateur naturalist. The library is at 301 E. Lockwood Avenue, Webster Groves, MO 63119. For questions about this event, contact Mitch at (314) 599–7390 or mitch@stlouisaudubon.org.

Adventures in Southern Africa
Thursday, March 26th at 7:00 pm

In September 2014, Susan Eaton and Mike Grant joined several other birders on an adventure in Namibia, Botswana and Zambia. They explored parts of the Namib Desert, Erongo Mountains, Etosha National Park, Chobe National Park and the majestic Victoria Falls from the Zambia side. Susan, in a separate tour with another group, visited Victoria Falls from the Zimbabwe side, as well as Chobe and the Okavango Delta. They saw nearly 30 species of mammals and over 300 species of birds. They will share their adventures at the March meeting!

Susan has become a world traveler since her retirement as a physical therapist, pursuing fun, food, culture and birds. Her Africa trip included life bird #2,400. Mike manages to squeeze birding journeys in between his work obligations as a technology manager for the U.S. Government. He also coordinates the chapter’s field trips.

This is the annual joint program with the Eastern Missouri Group of the Sierra Club, to be held at the St. Louis County Library’s Sachs Branch in Chesterfield. The library is at 16400 Burkhardt Place, just west of the Chesterfield Mall. The program is in the large auditorium. Questions, call (314) 599–7390.
Gull Workshop and Field Trip

By Bill Rowe

WHAT: A WORKSHOP PLUS FIELD TRIP on winter gulls, sponsored by the St. Louis Audubon Society and Greater Ozarks Audubon Society.

WHEN: Saturday, February 21

WHERE: The Great Rivers Museum, on the Alton, IL, side of the river.

National Great Rivers Museum
#2 Locks and Dam Way Alton, IL 62024

STARTING TIME: 8:00 a.m. The museum will open about 7:30.

PLAN FOR THE DAY:
8:00–10:00 a.m.: The workshop will consist of a power point presentation by Joe Eades, Bill Rowe, and Josh Uffman, with time allowed for questions and a break in the middle, and with handouts.
10:00 on: We will break into groups of 10–15 people, each with a leader. Our first studies of gulls and other birds will probably be right there at the dam by the museum.
11:30 or 12:00: Break for lunch; exact time to be determined. This will not be organized for you. All participants are free to bring their own lunches or visit local restaurants.
Afternoon: After an ample lunch period, we will re–convene at the Audubon Center in Riverlands and decide our next destinations.

More details on the itinerary will be provided at the workshop. The birding will focus on gulls, but of course we will also look for everything else, notably the waterfowl and raptors that are usually to be seen around Riverlands and adjacent areas. The trips may continue until as late as 5:00, but of course anyone is free to leave at any time.

CONDITIONS: Please dress appropriately for whatever weather is predicted. This far out, it is impossible to predict the temperatures, the wind, the possibility of precipitation, or the presence of any specific gulls or other bird species. Study of your field guides will of course be of great help.

COST: FREE.

WHO AND HOW: Register by emailing Mike Grant, SLAS field trip coordinator, at mikecurlew@att.net.
Please provide names of all registrants. There is an upper limit of 70 participants.

PREREQUISITES: None except a strong interest in learning about the identification of gulls of the Missouri/Illinois area, both common and rare, focused on those that occur primarily in the winter.
Celebrating the Great Backyard Bird Count and enjoying one of three fun, free, and family-friendly walks to observe St. Louis area birds of winter.

Saturday, February 14 from 9 am to 11 am

**Busch Memorial Conservation Area**
2360 Highway D, St. Charles, MO 63304
Meet in front of the office, inside main entrance ~1.5 miles west of Hwy 94.

**Carondelet Park**
3900 Holly Hills Dr, St. Louis, MO 63116
Meet in SW corner of park near Leona & Loughborough Drives.

**Queeney Park**
1675 S Mason Rd, St. Louis, MO 63131
Meet at the corporate picnic site just downhill from the Dog Museum.

Dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars if you have them. If not, we will have loaners available.

Registration for the walks is not required.
If you have questions contact Mitch at (314) 599-7390 or mitch@stlouisaudubon.org.

Visit [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) for info about the Count.
FOREST PARK FOREVER

Backyard Bird Festival

SATURDAY | FEBRUARY 21 | 10 A.M. – 2 P.M.
Dennis & Judith Jones Visitor and Education Center in Forest Park

SCHEDULE

WALKS
8:30 and 11:00 A.M.

KIDS ACTIVITIES  (Trolley Room)
10 A.M. – 2 P.M.

WORKSHOPS  (Voyager Room)
9 - 9:45 A.M.  Birding 101
10 - 10:45 A.M.  Owls of Forest Park
11 - 11:45 A.M.  Introduction to Optics
12 - 12:45 P.M.  Hazards for Urban Birds
1 - 1:45 P.M.  Landscaping for Birds
St. Louis Audubon Society

Chapter-Supporting Membership Form

Mission: to create a community connection to nature through education and conservation.

Your Chapter-Supporting membership runs concurrently with your National Audubon membership, if you choose to maintain the latter. To continue to receive the Audubon magazine, you must maintain your National membership.

[ ] $20  [ ] $30  [ ] $50**  [ ] $100  [ ] Other_______

** Memberships of $50 or more may choose from four gifts:

- Bringing Nature Home by Douglas W. Tallamy
- Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People by Dave Tylka
- Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Eastern & Central North America

Please indicate your choice.

100% of your dues stay in St. Louis supporting our local efforts. Thank you very much!

Memberships are Tax Deductible

Less the $15 Cost of the Gift

If already a Chapter-Supporting member, you need do nothing but accept our thanks!