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 at birding@forestparkforever.org.

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
RIVERLANDS MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7TH AT 8 AM

**HONEYSUCKLE REMOVAL PROJECT**
FOREST PARK—KENNEDY FOREST
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7TH FROM 9 A TO 12 P
HTTP://WWW.FORESTPARKFOREVER.ORG/HONEYSUCKLE/

**100TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER & AUCTION**
RANDALL GALLERY AT 999 N. 13TH STREET
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20TH FROM 6:30 PM
TICKETS $75, INCLUDING A $20 DONATION
WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.EVENTBRITE.COM

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
RIVERLANDS MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21ST AT 8 AM

**BEGINNER BIRD WALK—PAGE 3**
MALLARD LAKE AT CREVE COEUR PARK
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21ST AT 8 AM

**BLACK FRIDAY OPT OUTSIDE**
ANYWHERE OUTSIDE YOU WANT TO PLAY!
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27TH, ALL DAY LONG
HTTP://OPTOUTSIDE.REI.COM/

**GIVING TUESDAY**
USE THE DAY TO GIVE BACK
TUESDAY DECEMBER 1ST
HTTP://WWW.GIVINGTUESDAY.ORG/

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP—PAGE 3**
RIVERLANDS MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY
SATURDAY DECEMBER 12TH AT 8 AM

**OTHER ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS**
AUDUBON CENTER AT RIVERLANDS
HTTP://RIVERLANDS.AUDUBON.ORG/EVENTS

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**Inside This Issue**

- Fall Workday Recap
- From the Director
- Field Trip Listing
- Lillian Ernst Profile
- Bird Nest Box Report
- Brentwood BCH Resolution
- Field Trip Report

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**Friday, November 20th from 6:30 pm**
Randall Gallery at 999 N. 13th Street

**Emcee:**
Ms. Randi Naughton, Fox 2 News

**Distinguished Speakers:**
Dr. Peter Raven, Missouri Botanical Garden
Mr. Chris Canfield, National Audubon Society

Tickets are $75 and include a $20 donation
Space is limited!
RSVP by November 15th!
WWW.STLOUISAUDUBON.EVENTBRITE.COM
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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(314) 495–3063
president@stlouisaudubon.org

Lisa Nansteel, VP Education
(636) 391–4898

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Karen Meyer, Treasurer
(314) 602–7318
kb2bird@sbcglobal.net

Mitch Leachman, Executive Director
(314) 599–7390
mitch@stlouisaudubon.org

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

Fall Stewardship Workdays

Our fall schedule was light this year with just four projects. Yet, as usual our volunteers showed up, stepped up and made a huge impact on the Creve Coeur Park Important Bird Area and some surrounding areas. They cleared invasive bush honeysuckle from nearly 1 acre, performed invasive plant “maintenance” on another 8.5 acres, and planted 200 native trees and shrubs.

The volunteers represented Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, Missouri Master Naturalists, Parkway North and Rosati–Kain High Schools, SIU–Edwardsville and more. Our partners included Forest ReLeaf, Greenway Network, Maryland Heights Parks Dept, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Wild Ones – St. Louis Chapter and of course St. Louis County Parks.

Finally, funding was provided by Great Rivers Greenway, the Missouri Dept of Conservation and the National Environmental Education Foundation. ◆
From the Director

On September 22, 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced it would not list the Greater Sage-Grouse under the Endangered Species Act. The decision plots a new, brighter future—not only for the sage-grouse, but for the American West. It is the result of significant levels of collaboration and it reflects a conservation plan of unprecedented scope and scale. The National Audubon Society was a major part of this remarkable achievement. https://www.audubon.org/conservation/issues/greater-sage-grouse

This is an achievement that will benefit many at-risk species and should be celebrated. Yet, many other challenges remain at all levels of our society. Just this past legislative session in Missouri, there were at least a dozen bills proposed that would have dramatically reduced the funding for our Missouri Dept of Conservation, prevented groups like Audubon from working directly with the Department, injected politics into the Conservation Commission and a host of other measures.

Fortunately at the state level, we have the Conservation Federation of Missouri. If you’re not familiar with them, I encourage you to checkout their website at www.confedmo.org. They are the Missouri affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. St. Louis Audubon is an affiliate of CFM, along with 70 other groups. And CFM has a very effective presence in Jefferson City, at the statehouse. Largely due to the efforts of CFM, not a single one of those bills in Missouri made it into law!

To help with their efforts, on behalf of our natural heritage across Missouri, I urge everyone to sign up with their Legislative Action Center, http://confedmo.org/lac/. It’s free. Does not require membership in CFM. And your voice will join with thousands of others to help protect our show-me state.

At the federal level, National Audubon has an office in Washington D.C. and a similar online tool to allow you to help influence our senators and representatives, www.audubon.org/takeaction. Again, membership is not required.

We need to celebrate our successes; it’s healthy and keeps us motivated. That motivation is critical to help us keep fighting the next battle, for the next bird, the next watershed and the next community! ♦

Field Trips, Etc.

**Nov 7th to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary:** This half day trip will start at 8:00 am. Take Hwy 367 north from I-270. Turn right on the last road before the Alton Bridge (at the gas station). Turn right on the next road to the Teal Pond lot.

**Nov 21st Beginner Walk at Mallard Lake:** This easy walk starts at 8:00 am from the south parking lot at the Creve Coeur Lakehouse, 2160 Creve Coeur Mill Rd. Bring your binoculars, if you have them; loaners are available. We should finish about 10. Watch our FaceBook page for last-minute updates.

**Nov 21st to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary:** This half day trip will start at 8:00 am. Follow the directions for the Nov 7th trip.

**Dec 12th to Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary:** Mike Thelen leads this half day trip that will start at 8:00 am. Follow the directions for the Nov 7th trip.

All field trips are FREE. Reservations not required, unless noted—consult our website for details. For questions, contact Mike Grant at mikecurlew@att.net.
The Early Years of the St. Louis Audubon Society

_Lillie R. Ernst_

I have had the privilege recently of learning about the history of St. Louis Audubon Society. As I have done so, I find myself meeting new people in the material I read. Each encounter has left me amazed and taught me something about St. Louis Audubon history, how birding has and has not changed with time, and how individuals can make a difference in our world. Learning about the life of Lillie Ernst led me to better understand my own love of nature and birds. Those individuals, like Lillie, who connect others to nature through education and mentorship, insure a future for birds and their habitats through the next generations.

Lillie R. Ernst was born in St. Louis on September 14, 1870. Her education was completed in St. Louis where she attended Central High School and, afterwards, Washington University. She received an honorary Master’s Degree in 1907 from the same institution and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Her career in education came at a time when independent and unmarried women advancing in any career path could be considered unusual.

She started her education career as a botany teacher at Central High School. She later advanced to become principal of Cote Brilliante, Mark Twain and Blewett High schools. Despite opposition to her nomination to Assistant Superintendent of Instruction of the St. Louis public school system from male colleagues, she became the first woman to hold that position in 1920. Lillie’s contributions were not limited to the St. Louis Bird Club, as she was a board member of the St. Louis Children’s Hospital and the St. Louis Urban League and served as president of the Washington University Alumnae Association. Her additional club memberships included the Humanity club, the Wednesday Club and the League of Women Voters. She was also selected as one of St. Louis’ ten leading women.

Despite what had to be a challenging schedule and an already very full life, Lillie served as president of the St. Louis Bird Club. Our current archives do not give the exact dates, but we know through Jim Holsen’s history of the St. Louis Audubon Society (April 2006) that she recruited Wayne Short to become president. After her death on December 6th, 1943 at the age of 73, Wayne Short delivered a memorial tribute on October 24th of 1944, which was captured in print and of which we have a copy. The memorial tribute gives us greater insight into Lillie’s personality. “Miss Ernst was a woman who loved the out-of-doors. She recommended the world of nature and the study of bird life, particularly, as a means of making life richer and more abundant. Her warmth of feeling towards people young and old inspired many of us to do better things. She gave me my first bird book. She gave many people their first bird books. She gave many people an education.”

Education and outreach activities remain a critical component of St. Louis Audubon Society.
Ernst was the living embodiment of that mission. On a personal level, Lillie touches me for her evident love of nature and the outdoors and how she expressed that in her life by sharing it so generously with others. When I immerse myself in nature, I find all my senses are employed in enjoying the birds and the world around me, and I think Lillie would understand my feelings. Her own words, as quoted by Wayne Short in the memorial tribute, are very revealing of what she loved about birds and nature. “Let no one turn you away from becoming a ‘birder’ by calling you a sentimentalist or a slow sport. I know of nothing that will quicken the senses so keenly, nothing that demands greater alertness, or calls for prompter analysis of observed data. It keeps the head up, the eye clear, and the ear quick to catch the lightest sounds. Like all work in observing activities of living things, every hour holds potentially new knowledge and new understanding of the relation of life to its surroundings.”

2015 Nesting Report for Creve Coeur Park

By Karen Meyer

From our monitoring data we concluded that 12 Eastern Bluebirds fledged this season from 4 of our 10 boxes on the Bird Box Trail in the western side of Creve Coeur Memorial Park. We also had second broods in 4 boxes. Unfortunately however, none of the bluebird babies in the second nests survived. Each of those boxes began having some ant issues, which we tried our best to deal with. This was the first year we’ve encountered this situation. Sometimes the parents will abandon the nests when ants are present. We’re not sure if that was a factor in the nestlings’ demise or if something else happened to the parents. A Red-Shouldered Hawk was in the general vicinity most days when I monitored, but we don’t know for sure what really happened.

It was an exciting day in March when male Purple Martin scouts appeared at our houses near Mallard Lake. Some pairs began to lay eggs by the end of April. Though all 32 units had nesting pairs of martins and eggs, it was a tough time for incubating and raising the babies because of the unseasonably cool, wet weather. We estimated a total of 56 young Purple Martins fledged, which was half the number that fledged the previous year. It was heartbreaking each time we found baby birds that had died. But it was a lesson about how the weather can affect the availability of insects and the birds’ survival, and why the martins need our continued help in providing good nesting options.

Thanks to Anne Rankin Horton, Glenn Meyer and Stacey Ludlum who helped monitor and maintain the martin and bluebird houses. It’s interesting to note that in 1916 our club received a donation of bird houses that were installed at Forest Park, and they promoted installation in other park areas as well. In our 100th year, it’s good to know St. Louis Audubon Society is carrying on this tradition.
Brentwood Becomes Latest BCH Municipal Partner

The following resolution, No. 1042, was adopted unanimously by the Brentwood, Missouri Board of Alderman on Monday, November 2nd and supported by the Mayor, City Administrator and Parks Director.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BRENTWOOD, MISSOURI, TO SUPPORT THE ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY’S BRING CONSERVATION HOME PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Landscaping with native plants to restore habitat is essential for our native birds, butterflies and each other and we believe that a variety of landscapes add diversity and value to the quality of life in the City of Brentwood; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that landowners’ are interested in having managed native and non–native landscapes and encourages the preservation, restoration, and management of native plant communities and wildlife habitats within City limits; and

WHEREAS, the City acknowledges the need to enjoy and benefit from the variety, beauty and practical values of natural landscapes as viable and desirable alternatives to other conventional modes of landscaping that are created and sustained in condition of ecological stability in good health and vigor in compliance with Brentwood Municipal Codes, as opposed to one of impairment and decline. It is not the City’s intent to allow vegetated areas to be unmanaged or overgrown in ways that may adversely affect human health or safety; and

WHEREAS, the City supports the Bring Conservation Home Program, which is an urban land habitat restoration assistance and certification program coordinated by the St. Louis Audubon Society. The Certification Program supports the restoration of native plant and animal habitat on urban properties by encouraging sustainable plantings, removal of invasive plant species and promotion of healthy habitat for birds, pollinators, and native wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the City supports the goal of the Bring Conservation Home Certification Program to address native and non–native invasive plants, water conservation and stewardship practices for the benefit of birds, butterflies, and other animals and people; and

WHEREAS, the City understands that the program is voluntary, property owner paid–for certification program for small, private landowners in the St. Louis area; and

WHEREAS, there are no costs to the City of Brentwood and Brentwood residents voluntarily participating in the program will receive the service for 50% off the regular fee (currently $50). The fee covers the landowner’s participation and a one year membership in the St. Louis Audubon Society. The fee includes one initial site assessment and consultation visit plus one optional follow-up certification visit; and

WHEREAS, the City will publicize the program to Brentwood residents through the website, city newsletters, and other media outlets as space allows.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the St. Louis Audubon Society’s Bring Conservation Home Program be endorsed through this resolution by the City of Brentwood, Missouri, with the understanding that this endorsement commits the City of Brentwood to take responsibly for marketing the availability of the Bring Conservation Home to its residents. In addition, Brentwood landowners within city limits will be eligible to participate in the program for a reduced fee. ☑
Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge Trip Report

The 18 participants on the October 10 field trip of St. Louis Audubon, to the Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge and Stump Lake, encountered very fine weather and a fair variety of birds, for a total of 70 species.

All species we noted except House Sparrow were found on one of the three main areas we visited. I'm providing the links to those eBird lists, which contain comments on a few species. Most of the comments were prompted by eBird's filters, requesting details.

Two Rivers NWR, Gilbert Lake (Jersey County): [ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25374182](http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25374182)

Stump Lake Fish and Wildlife Management Area: [ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25375012](http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25375012)

Two Rivers, Swan Lake and HQ (Calhoun County): [ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25383130](http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25383130)

On the third list, participants will note that Baird’s Sandpiper does not appear, while White-rumped Sandpiper does. This was my error. The two species are basically identical in size and shape, and those are the only features I was paying attention to, given the poor lighting and the fact that White-rumped is a rarity in fall. On the way back, however, we encountered a lot more of those middle-sized long-winged sandpipers in better light, and it became obvious that they were White-rumps. Please see the list for more details about their plumage (including gray color, streaks on sides, and white uppertail coverts) and the estimated number (25).

This was the one unusual species we found. Normally, White-rumped Sandpiper is common here in late spring, as they migrate north through the central U.S.; in fall, most of the population swings eastward toward the Atlantic states, so that they become rare in the midwest -- in fact listed as casual in Missouri and requiring documentation. This fall, however, there has been an extraordinary number of reports across Illinois, with large numbers being found on shorebird habitat around the state. Chances are they here in Missouri too.

Thanks to all for coming on the field trip. It was good to be with you.

◆

Hawk Watch Report

Seventeen people gathered at SNR for three hours of searching for migrating raptors. We set up at the tepee frame next to the sod house which provided an almost 270 degree view to the north. We did not keep track of the Turkey Vultures, and despite his best efforts, Al Smith did not find his Black Vulture.

In addition to the 26 raptors listed below, we had one flock of 20 cormorants we watched climb a thermal, reform their vee, and rapidly glide off to the south. The majority of the raptors we observed passed either far to the east or west. This made it a challenge both to direct other people to the barely visible dot in the clear blue sky and to determine positive identifications.

Bald Eagle: 5
Broad-winged Hawk: 4
Cooper’s Hawk: 1
Red-tailed Hawk: 2
Red-shouldered Hawk: 3
Unidentified Accipiter: 3
Unidentified Buteo: 4
Unidentified Raptor: 3

Not huge numbers, but it was a beautiful day to be out on the prairie and in the lulls between raptor fly-by's the sparrows, woodpeckers, and bluebirds kept us entertained.

◆
St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
St. Louis, MO 63122–0227

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!