Calendar

**BEGINNER BIRD WALK FIELD TRIPS**
**FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER AT 5595 GRAND DRIVE**
FIRST SATURDAY OF MOST MONTHS
WALK FROM 830 AM TO 10 AM, MEET AT 815 AM
For info contact Amy at birding@forestparkforever.org.

**BIRDING FIELD TRIP**
**BK LEACH MEMORIAL CONSERVATION AREA**
SATURDAY JULY 16TH FROM 7 AM
HTTP://STLOUISAUDUBON.ORG/CALENDAR/INDEX.PHP

**MONARCHS: KING OF THE BUTTERFLIES**
**AUDUBON CENTER AT RIVERLANDS**
SATURDAY JULY 30TH FROM 10 AM TO 1130 AM
HTTP://RIVERLANDS.AUDUBON.ORG/EVENTS/MONARCHS-KING-BUTTERFLIES

**BIRDING BASICS—A BIRD’S EYE View**
**FOREST PARK VISITOR CENTER**
THURSDAY AUGUST 4TH FROM 5 PM TO 630 PM
HTTP://WWW.FORESTPARKFOREVER.ORG/BIRD-WATCHING/

**NATIVE LANDSCAPING OPEN HOUSE—PAGE 6**
**U CITY BIRD GARDEN**
SATURDAY AUGUST 27TH FROM 9 AM TO 12 NOON

**POLINATOR PARTY**
**AUDUBON CENTER AT RIVERLANDS**
SATURDAY AUGUST 27TH FROM 10 AM TO 1130 AM
HTTP://RIVERLANDS.AUDUBON.ORG/EVENTS/POLLINATOR-PARTY

**OPERATION CLEAN STREAM**
VARIOUS LOCATIONS ON THE MERAMEC RIVER
SATURDAY AUGUST 27TH
HTTP://OPENSACESSTL.ORG/SAT-AUGUST-27TH-OPERATION-CLEAN-STREAM/

**SHAW WILDFLOWER MARKET**
**SHAW NATURE RESERVE IN GRAY SUMMIT**
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9TH FROM 4 PM TO 730 PM
SEE THE EVENT CALENDAR AT WWW.MOBOT.ORG

**NATIVE PLANT EXPO—SAVE THE DATE**
**SCHLAFLY BOTTLEWORKS IN MAPLEWOOD**
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH FROM 9 AM TO 2 PM
WATCH OUR WEBSITE, FB PAGE AND THIS NEWSLETTER FOR MORE DETAILS

**BEGINNER BIRD WALKS AT CREVE COEUR PARK**
WILL RETURN ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH AT 8 AM

---

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature Article</th>
<th>1, 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From the Director</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trip Reports</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast in the Garden</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Plant Garden Tour</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GADDY BIRD GARDEN UPDATE**

*By Herb Huebner*

On June 23 Bill Reininger, Tower Grove Park Director, and Andy Berg, Arboriculture Supervisor, met with a team from St. Louis Audubon to review progress and gain our input on the improvements being made to the Gaddy Bird Garden. The bird garden restoration is part of a much larger park effort which includes a savanna and native plantings to the banks of the park’s creeks/drainage ditches. Early this year, a crew removed non-native invasive plants from the Garden. In the spring, Audubon and Webster Groves Nature Study Society volunteers planted a variety of native trees and shrubs; Andy reported that so far these plants were thriving.

The water feature in the garden was also replaced in May, temporarily leaving a very sparse and wide open space around it. Natural cover will be returned this fall with the planting of native flowers, sedges, and shrubs, when the weather is right for planting. Following suggestions from the meeting, the walking path through the area will also be moved further from the water feature to give more room for cover plants and perching spots and hopefully allow the birds more comfort to remain in the area. Signage will ask people to stay on the path.

*Continued on next page*
Gaddy Garden  

The park staff enlisted a contractor familiar with bird gardens to design the bird garden’s features. The water feature uses a recirculating water system that does not require a constant supply of chlorinated tap water used by the older feature. Selected native water plants will be added to this fall. The pool has an excess water system that will direct extra water to the surrounding area. With year-round circulation, it should not freeze in winter.

There is ongoing work in the area surrounding the water feature to remove non-native plants and to add natives like oaks in the future. The team suggested adding some more branches to the water feature to provide added perches for the birds.

Pat Lueders has been monitoring electronic bird data for the area, and so far, the bird count has remained stable. This is viewed as a good sign that the birds are not made uncomfortable with the changes.

There is a new savanna being constructed in a field next to the bird garden. Perennial flowers were planted this past spring, and the prairie grass planting will follow in the fall.

Future plans for the park include a smart-phone app that would provide detailed info about the trees and other habitat features. Pat Lueders and Margy Terpstra will be assisting with that project. If you’re interested in helping with the fall planting or other future aspects of the project, contact Cindy Anich at (314) 771-4454 or piperph@towegrovepark.org.
From the Director

By Mitch Leachman

Upon returning from vacation in late May, my wife Mervis and I were touring our home garden spaces to see just what had happened while we were gone. We were focused on flowers and hoping for some bees, birds and butterflies when we found this young Black Rat snake some 4 feet up a Pokeweed plant.

Now, I just love all sorts of wildlife, but Mervis wasn’t quite so thrilled. Having grown up in Singapore in SE Asia, she had some not-so-nice encounters with snakes. Yet, I listened to her describe the encounter several times over the next week, not once in a fearful or scared manner. She was simply sharing with friends the latest experience with interesting creatures in our yard, all very matter-of-fact.

While we are not equally fascinated by the same things in our little nature sanctuary, we both understand the interdependence of those things. Predators need prey; plants need pollinators; herbivores need plants; birds need insects to feed their young and so on. The more of such “interactions” a given landscape can support, the greater its biodiversity and its value as habitat, and the more excitement to share with your friends and family (just ask my Facebook friends about the snake…).

That item about birds feeding insects to their young is unfortunately a best-kept secret of our backyards, parks and anywhere birds may be found. We put out sugar water feeders for hummingbirds, seed feeders for sparrows, finches, cardinals and such, and suet feeders for woodpeckers. It’s real easy to believe that same food is taken back to the nest for the young. Trouble is, with the exception of some suet, nearly all bird food is nearly all carbohydrates—little to no protein, and protein is essential to any developing animal to build muscle and bone. Sugar water won’t help a baby hummer grow into an adult.

That’s where the insects come in—neat little protein packages that fit easily into the mouths of even the smallest of baby birds. In fact, all of the songbirds in Missouri and Illinois feed insects to their young, such as cardinals, sparrows, blue jays, hummingbirds, wrens, and so on. Further, 98% of all land birds in North America need insects for some part of their life cycle. Now, don’t put away your feeders; that carb-rich food works just fine for the adults. It keeps them fueled while they search for insects for their nestlings.

Hopefully, you’re all fired up now to help provide insects for our resident and migrating birds. Great! All you need are native plants…plants that evolved in this region, are adapted to our climate, and have long-established relationships with our native insects and other organisms. Standard non-native nursery plants won’t do. Dr. Douglas Tallamy and his students at the University of Delaware have compiled data from across the country on the use of plants by the caterpillars of butterflies and moths, which are favorite targets of birds for their young. A very small sample of that data is shown here, with the numbers representing how many species have been observed on each type of plant.

You may like birds or butterflies or frogs or snakes. Whatever your preference, the single best thing you can do is to start a native plant garden. The insects will find them, and you will have stories to share! For help: www.stlouisaudubon.org/BCH.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Use by Native Butterflies &amp; Moths</th>
<th>Native Plants</th>
<th>Non–Native Plants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oaks</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>Crape Myrtle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogwoods</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>Boxwoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asters</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>Gingko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violets</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Monkey Grass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data compiled by Doug Tallamy, et al.
Field Trip Report—Riverlands & Columbia Bottom

By Bill Rowe

St. Louis Audubon's all-day field trip yesterday was quite successful despite a wet start. Sixteen of us met at Columbia Bottom CA but proceeded on to Riverlands first as a better site for birding in the rain—which, however, was light and didn't prevent us from getting close studies of a small flock of late-migrating shorebirds, 11 Semipalmated Sandpipers and one White-rumped Sandpiper, along the margin of Ellis Bay. Also present in the area were a minimum of 3 Least Terns, a single Ring-billed Gull, and the ever-present American White Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants.

We then covered the Audubon Center area, the west end of Ellis Island, Lincoln-Shields, Wise Road, and the back side of Heron Pond from Orton Road, picking up new species at each site and getting some fine scope views of such birds as the two oriole species, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, and of course Dickcissel (I just realized that this bird sings the word "in-CESS-ant"). We also picked up a few bonuses: two Snowy Egrets, two Black-crowned Night-Herons, and two drake Northern Pintails.

Here is the list of our 58 species at Riverlands, subject to correction if anyone sends me an email to let me know I left something out: http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S30079082

After a long pause for lunch, we reassembled at Columbia Bottom and spent 2.5 hours there. The area was almost entirely dried out, while the Mississippi was too high to show a sandbar—so no shorebirds except Killdeer and a single Semipalmed Sandpiper. We found a number of additional summertime species, however, like Cooper's Hawk, Mississippi Kite (2), Blue Grosbeak, American Redstart, and a singing first-summer male Rose-breasted Grosbeak in the scope. Columbia Bottom seems to have Rose-breasts regularly in summer; we are near the southern limit of the species' breeding range. Here’s our list of 50 species:

http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S30079243

Thanks to all who came out on a doubtful-looking morning. It turned out well. ♦

Photos by Al Smith
Field Trip Report—Weldon Spring

By Mike Grant

Fourteen birders met at the early hour of 5:45 on June 11th for the grand finale to the 2015–2016 STL Audubon birding season. Several Bell’s vireo’s were heard along the trail. A few people got brief looks at a female Blue Grosbeak (photo taken) and at a Rose–breasted Grosbeak. Field Sparrows, Chats, Towhees, Thrashers and Catbirds seemed to be everywhere, or at least made enough noise that they seemed to be everywhere. A few Henslow’s Sparrows were heard but never seen. Mike Thelen found two perched Red–tailed Hawks at extreme distance to the northeast then another one to the southwest. A Cooper’s Hawk soared by at the far end of the trail. My eBird list at: http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30174078

The area near Busch HQ and the Fallen Oak Trail had typical breeding birds. Those with better hearing (Pat L and Mary Anne A. for two) heard Pine Warblers, I did not. But as we left Mike Thelen heard a Prairie Warbler in the field right at the gate at Hwy. D, (which I did hear) and, if I remember correctly, a Yellow–throated Warbler. http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30175131

Ten of the group made it to the Lost Valley Trail. The Red–shouldered Hawk chicks have fledged the nest and were seen and heard begging for food from various trees. I probably under–counted Redstarts at 8. Mike Thelen found a Redstart nest and I counted 3 chicks in it. Kentucky Warblers and Northern Parulas were heard and briefly seen along the length of the trail. It wasn’t until we turned right and went up hill a ways did we finally hear a Cerulean Warbler. Mike found it high in a Sycamore and most got to see it. Then on the way back we had one low and close to the trail and then a third one called near the low–water bridge. We heard Ovenbirds but I don’t think that anybody got to see one.

http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S30177639

My thanks to the SLAS leader team for another successful year of walks in the St. Louis area. We can’t do it without you. ◆
Breakfast in the Garden
9 a.m. to 12 noon
Saturday, August 27th
University City Centennial Commons
7210 Olive in University City

U City in Bloom and St. Louis Audubon’s Bring Conservation Home program invite you to a Native Plant Landscaping Open House in the Bird Garden behind Centennial Commons.

This event is free and open to the public. Donations will be greatly appreciated!

- Stroll through the garden with coffee, juice or a light breakfast.
- Engage one of our native plant experts on how to improve your own landscape for the benefit of birds, bees and butterflies and your own enjoyment.
- See many attractive native flowers, shrubs, trees and grasses in a variety of combinations, sizes and garden conditions.

Representatives from Bring Conservation Home, U City in Bloom and a variety of partner organizations will be available with information for you to use in creating your own native plant gardens.
Nearly 300 people attended the 2016 St. Louis Native Plant Garden Tour on Saturday, June 18th. This was just our second tour collaboration with the Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter, and it returned over $4,000 to help fund both group’s native plant education and outreach activities in the region. If you missed it, watch our calendar and this newsletter next spring for details on the 2017 Tour. Also, you might stop by the U City Bird Garden on August 27th for the open house (details on previous page). Many thanks to the tour hosts, our sponsors and partners, all our volunteers and the Tour Committee! For more pics, see our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/bringconservationhomeSTL/photos/?tab=album&album_id=583013831876944
Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

E-Mail or Phone (if desired):

Make checks payable to:
St. Louis Audubon Society

Mail Checks to:
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