



COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

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MAY/JUNE 2004

WORLD CLASS BIRDING TRAILS: SOON A REALITY!

NOT ONE, BUT TWO — THE CHICAGO LAKEFRONT BIRDING TRAIL & THE GREATER CHICAGO BIRDING TRAIL

By Don Darnell

America's foremost "City On The Lake" will be going from zero birding trails to two trails within the next 12 months. One of them, grand in design, will cover several Chicago area counties. The other, a nifty lakefront trail entirely within city limits, should be ready for bird and nature lovers by the time you read this article.

Mary Van Haaften, Natural Areas Manager for the Chicago Park District, explains that it was Chicago's Jim Landing — the "independent" birding institution -- that first came to the Park District about two years ago with the challenge of creating a birding trail along the city's lakefront, a prime flyway for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Landing explains that his original idea was for two separate trails: one on the north side and one on the south. However, the final product is one long trail called, the CHICAGO LAKEFRONT BIRDING TRAIL.

Landing's original concept was for the north side trail -- roughly from Montrose Point (4400 North) to downtown -- to be named in memory of Chicago birding legend William Dreuth who died in 1942. For the south side trail, which would include sites in Jackson Park, he wanted to honor another Chicago birding legend, Doug Anderson, who has been volunteering

his time to conduct regular bird walks at Jackson Park's Wooded Island for thirty years (4000-plus tours).

Landing laughingly relates that the south side trail name was pooh-pooed because Anderson (a past CAS president and current board member) is still conducting those Wooded Isle walks. (Apparently, the logic is that it is best to keep a living saint from growing a big head while still on earth.)

Anyhow, that's how the Lakefront Birding Trail was germinated. But over the last year, it's been the Park District's Ms. Van Haaften that has been propelling the realization of Chicago's first well-thought out bird trail. And a neat one it will be with 26 sites along nearly 20 miles of city lakefront, the trail ending on the south side at Calumet Park and 103rd Street.

There are also several downtown locations such as little Seneca Park in Streeterville (immediately east of the old Water Tower on Michigan Avenue) with its migration trap shrubbery for warblers and thrushes. And there's the Buckingham Fountain area in Grant Park, as well as the beautiful Museum Campus around 12th Street for several species of sparrows and other field birds.

One of the most important elements of the trail project will be the signage for each site. Thankfully, the signs for the Park District's trail are colorful and easy to spot. I stopped-by Montrose

recently for a look-see. Each 18 by 18 inch sign is double-sided and has beautiful color representations of bird species that one can expect to find at the location. One of the Montrose signs -- there are several at this now renowned birding location -- even provides a brief history of the Magic Hedge with its Nike Missile Base and its "concealing" honeysuckle hedge. I noted, too, that the Montrose signs expressly state that visitors are not to ride bicycles and are to remain on the walking paths -- you can lock your bike nearby or walk it through. And, of course, "no dogs" are allowed in the nature area because "birds live here." [Author's note: Now if we can just get signs that read something like: "Men! No loitering!"]

Those familiar with the history of the Magic Hedge and Jackson Park's Wooded Island as pick-up and physical engagement areas for men during the summer months -- after spring bird "listers" have abandoned the site until reverse migration begins in the fall -- will know that I'm only partially kidding with this. No homophobia here. Just, please, stop making new trails and matting down the habitat on this tiny parcel of bird sanctuary where low and ground-nesting migratory birds are trying to make a go of it. Ironically, one can only imagine the public outcry if this tiny but revered birding site was heavily trafficked by heterosexuals for

the same purpose. (By the way, Wooded Island, behind the Museum of Science & Industry -- far and away the best multiple-habitat birding site in the city -- is also on the Park District's Lakefront Trail.)

If all goes according to plan, Landing's lakefront trail will be a reality by International Migratory Bird Day come May 8th of this year. Outside of a generous grant the Park District received from Com Ed, there were a few local bird lovers that volunteered their time to help establish the birding sites and provide species and other bird related data.

A few of the names Van Haaften mentioned were Judy Pollock (past recipient of one of the annual Chicago Audubon Awards), Terry Schilling, Jerry Garden (a CAS past president), the Field Museum's Doug Stotz, Ken Wysocki, and CAS COMPASS Editor, Gail Goldberger, who penned the first draft of the brochure. The Chicago Lakefront Birding Trail brochure (complete with map) will be distributed to area bird clubs and organizations in a matter of weeks. You can pick up a copy at the North Park Village Nature Center and the Chicago Audubon Society office. Or you may want try calling the Park District's info line at 312-742-PLAY and push "0" to have a brochure mailed to you.

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BIRDATHON! 2004

Fifth Annual Dr. William Beecher Birdathon Cup Challenge

By Joe Lill

Birdathon Coordinator

Happy New Year!

Well, not according to the calendar, but for birders spring certainly feels like the start of the year. Along with spring comes one of the highlights of the season, BIRDATHON! 2004: the 5th annual Dr. William S. Beecher Birdathon Cup Challenge!

For those of you new to Birdathon!, Chicago Audubon Society's competition is named after the late Dr. William Beecher, Director Emeritus of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, and one of the pioneering birders in the Chicago area. It was Dr. Beecher who first brought media attention to the problem of birds colliding into buildings. Because of him, the John Hancock Center was the first tall building in Chicago to start dimming its lights during migration seasons. The Chicago Audubon Society is honored that he consented to the use of his name for our competition.

The winners of Birdathon! 2003, the team from Lake Forest College (Caleb Gordon, Ben Goluboff, Jeff Sundberg & Kris Sundberg), retained control of the coveted Beecher Cup (and, yes, continued bragging rights) by identifying 138 species in a single day! Following closely behind were the BudBirders, with 132 species. Four other teams, the Steel Belted Kingfishers, the President's Posse, the Relaxed Village People and the Fledglings, also competed. The six teams, the most that we've ever had enter, were comprised of a record 30 birders and raised just under \$4,000.00 for the programs of the Chicago Audubon Society.

We'd love to add even more teams this year, and get even more birders, or soon-to-be birders, involved.

How can you get involved?

- If you have your own group of birders who'd like to compete, great!
- If you're a "loner" who'd like to join a team, we can help with that too.
- Not very experienced? Don't worry, Birdathon is a great way to

discover the joys of birding.

- Junior teams are now eligible to compete. If you know a school group or organization (Scouts, youth groups) that would like to compete, contact me.

Again this year, all funds raised through Birdathon pledges will go toward CAS programs. With cuts in funding from National Audubon, it has become more important than ever that each local chapter, such as Chicago Audubon, raise more of their operating expenses on their own. Our programs in education, preservation, restoration and advocacy have continued to be well-received, and our newest program, Chicago Audubon Early Birds, which provides seminars and walks to new birders of all ages, is off to a great start!

You will be receiving or have already received a pledge form and letter with a number of pledging options. You can pledge a flat amount (as many have done in the past), pledge an amount per species identified by your favorite team, or pledge an amount based on the total species count

of all teams, which, last year, was 161 species (also a Birdathon! record). Please feel free to contact me with any questions, and start forming your teams!

Here are the rules:

- 1) Each team must have 3 to 6 members. (Junior teams may have more participants.)
- 2) Birding must take place on any one day between May 12 and May 18, 2002.
- 3) All birds must be seen or heard by at least 2 team members.
- 4) All birds must be seen or heard in Cook County, IL.
- 5) Your team must bring in at least \$100.00 in pledges. (This is not required of Junior teams.)

The team that gets the most species will gain possession (for one year) of the coveted Beecher Cup! Prospective teams should contact me at (773) 631-3154 or trptjoe@aol.com before May 10th.

See you at Birdathon! 2004

A Literary Tidbit

By Barbara Kingsolver

"In the slender shoulders of the myrtle tree outside my kitchen window, a hummingbird built her nest. It was in April, the sexiest month, season of budburst and courtship displays, though I was at the sink washing breakfast dishes and missing the party, or so you might think. Then my eye caught a flicker of motion outside, and there she was, hovering uncertainly. She held in the tip of her beak a wisp of wadded spiderweb so tiny I wasn't even sure it was there, until she carefully smooched it onto the branch. She vanished then, but in less than a minute she was back with another tiny white tuft that she stuck on top of the first. For more than



an hour she returned again and again, increasingly confident of her mission, building up by infinitesimal degrees a whitish lump on the branch—and leaving me plumb in awe of the supply of spider webbing on the face of the land.

I stayed at my post, washing everything I could find, while my friend did her own housework out there. When the lump had grown big enough—she stopped gathering and sat down on her little tuffet, wagging her wings and tiny rounded underbelly to shape the blob into a cup that would easily have fit inside my cupped hand. Then she hovered up to inspect it from this side and that, settled and waddled with greater fervor, hovered and

appraised some more, and dashed off again. She began now to return with fine filaments of shredded bark, which she wove into the webbing along with some dry leaflets and a slap-dab or two of lichen pressed onto the outside for curb appeal.

When she had made of all this a perfect, symmetrical cup, she did the most surprising thing of all: She sat on it, stretched herself forward, extended the unbelievable length of her tongue, and licked her new nest in a long upward stroke from bottom to rim. Then she rotated herself a minute degree, leaned forward, and licked again. I watched her go all the way around, licking the entire nest in a slow rotation that took ten minutes to complete and ended precisely back at her starting point. Then suddenly that was that. Her busy urgency vanished, and she settled in for the long stillness of laying and incubating."

From "A Fist in the Eye of God" in *Small Wonder* by Barbara Kingsolver (HarperCollins, 2002)

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Chicago Audubon Society
North Park Village
5801-C N. Pulaski Road
Chicago, IL 60646-6057
www.chicagoaudubon.org



Editor: Gail Goldberger
Layout Artist: Noël Maguigad

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Audubon info hotline: (847) 299-3505
Report sightings to: (847) 265-2117
Rare bird alert: (847) 265-2118
Activity line: (773) 539-6793, press 1
Web page: www.chicagoaudubon.org
Audubon office: (773) 539-6793, fax (773) 539-6830, chicago_audubon@juno.com.
Office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

OFFICERS
President: Christine Lee, (708) 485-8197, stephenc@interaccess.com
Treasurer: Jerry Garden, (773) 545-4632, jerrygarden@sprynet.com
Secretary: Barbara Kratochvil, (708) 485-3678, bkratochvil@ahss.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Hotline: Doris Johanson, (847) 827-5930.
Awards: Alan Anderson (see Nominating below)
Birdathon: Joe Lill, (773) 631-3154, trptjoe@aol.com
Bird Seed Savings Day: Kathleen Radcliffe, (773) 777-3863, krad215@aol.com
Field Trips: Doris Johanson, (847) 827-5930
Stewardship: Jerry Garden, (773) 545-4632, jerrygarden@sprynet.com
Nominating: Alan Anderson, (847) 390-7437, casresearch@comcast.net
Editorial/Advertising: Gail Goldberger, (773) 743-2457, gailgoldberger@earthlink.net
Noël Maguigad, (847) 836-6346
noel@chicagoaudubon.org
Publicity: Bill Schwaber, (847) 475-4986, formulae@mcs.net



NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN : : CHICAGO AUDUBON : : .

Established in 1971, the Chicago Audubon Society operates as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with 3,800 members in the metropolitan area. The National Audubon Society is a separate 501(c)(3) organization, and the 4 issues of Audubon Magazine accrue only to this membership.

CAS MEMBER ACTIVITIES AND BENEFITS:

- Educational programs (six times per year)
- Field trips year round
- Bird walks led by trained guides
- Biennial Birding America Conference
- Bird Habitat Surveys
- Birdathon!
- Christmas Bird Counts
- Student Scholarship Awards
- CAS Early Birds program
- Newsletter, The COMPASS, (6 per year if you are a CAS member, 4 per year if you are an NAS member.)

TO JOIN:

Complete the application form below and mail it with your check (payable to "Chicago Audubon Society") to:

Chicago Audubon Society
5801-C North Pulaski Road
Chicago, IL 60646-6057

Or by Phone: (773) 539-6793 with a VISA or MASTERCARD

CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM


Please enroll me as a member of the Chicago Audubon Society.
Enclosed is my check for \$20.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____



NOTICE: The Endangered Species Protection Board has approved the reclassification of the peregrine falcon to threatened. It will take a few months to become official.

**SEEKING NEW
BOARD
MEMBERS**

The Chicago Audubon Society is looking for new Board Members. If you are a conservation-minded individual who is willing to attend one meeting a month, and participate in events as a volunteer and/or leader, we would love to hear from you. If you know of someone who would like to be considered for the Board, or are interested yourself, please call Christine Lee at (708) 485-8197.

**CORRECTION TO THE
MARCH/APRIL COMPASS**

Regarding the placement of **bird feeders** in relation to windows, in order to help birds avoid collisions, **we recommend that they be placed within 3 feet of a window.** This reduces the risk that the bird will have enough speed to do itself harm if it does hit the window.

Please bear in mind that ideally, bird feeders should be placed 30 feet or more from windows to completely reduce the risk of window collisions.

BIRDING TRAILS

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NOW, if the Park District's Trail is stretched-out in a tidy line along the lakefront, then the GREATER CHICAGO BIRDING TRAIL, anticipated to be ready by the spring of 2005, will be a vast sea of some fifty top birding sites spread throughout Chicago's collar counties, including the Indiana Dunes. The north end of this birding trail will go almost to the Wisconsin border with its Illinois Beach State Park site in Zion, Illinois. To the southwest there are sites as far out as the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve in Will County and the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie near Morris. This will be a birding trail for the nature-loving tourist or local with access to an automobile -- unless he or she is staying at a downtown hotel and simply wants to catch a couple of the nearby lakefront sites.

Randi Doeker, a Hyde Park bird lover and Bird Conservation Network activist, is one of the volunteers working diligently on this "Greater" trail. She explained that most of the birding sites were selected on the basis of parking accessibility, so, not every hardcore site might be on the trail list.

But the best sites are there, including Lake Calumet!

If a dedicated volunteer like Ms. Doeker is one of the spark plugs on this volunteer-driven project, then Highland Park's Donald Dann is the rest of the engine. Dann, a tireless servant to local and national conservation issues -- is on the board of any number of local conservation and wildlife-oriented committees and is the current president of the Bird Conservation Network. He first broached the idea of a Greater Chicago Trail to the city's Bird Treaty



Committee about 18 months ago.

This trail -- now incorporating the help of the Chicago Department of Environment -- is to be a birding trail to rival that of other world class birding trails -- a kind of scaled-down Greater Texas Coastal Trail. The Greater Chicago Birding Trail will cover some half-dozen Chicago collar counties (the Texas Trail stretches through 43 counties). Dann relates, "We want to

raise the public's awareness of how important it is to protect birds and habitat," and, at the same time, "let people know how special Chicago is."

Right now the project is waiting on funding to cover the costs of what we are told to be beautifully designed brochures. The brochures (with fold-out maps) will be distributed to area hotels as well as traditional tourists outlets and offices. Hopefully, funding will come through and the brochures will be ready for distribution as early as November, with the spring of 2005 as a backup ready date.

According to Doeker, some of the other local bird-loving volunteers who contributed their time and experience for the "Greater" trail (selecting sites, providing species data, etc) are the following: Bob Fisher; Jeff & Melinda Chapman; Wayne Svoboda; Dave Johnson, Don Darnell; Bob Andriani.

Local authors contracted to work on the final GCBT brochure copy and maps are Buffalo Grove's Joel Greenberg *A Natural History of the Chicago Region* and Evanston's Libby Hill *The Chicago River—A Natural & Unnatural History*.

The metropolis that rose up out of the Lake Michigan mud under one of the world's great bird migration routes will finally have a well-designed and well mapped-out birding trail. In fact, we'll have two of them! About time, eh?

16th Annual CAS Cook County Owl Count March 5,6,7, 2004

By Christine Lee

(It's NOT location -- It's TIMING)

"What a difference a day makes, 24 little hours," is the first line to a song which could have been the theme of this year's owl count. If you didn't go out on Friday night or Saturday morning, you probably struck out in getting owls.

The wind factor played a major role. The count for many participants was a bust because the gusty winds on Sunday kept the owls quiet. The best time seemed to be Saturday morning. Thatcher Woods at 3:00 a.m. was fantastic. Twelve screech owls in three hours and three of them seen by all members of the group. Another group did not get any screech but got two great-horned owls.

Wannetta Elliott took a group from Thorn Creek Audubon owling on Saturday and found eight long-eared and two nesting great-horned owls. The next day she went out and saw five long-eared and two short-eared owls. Stan Stec managed to get one great-horned and one long-eared owl at Paul Douglas Forest Preserve.

Conrad and Carol Fialkowski and their party have owled the bike path near Brookfield Zoo for over 15 years and have consistently gotten owls. This year was no exception; they saw two screech owls. Joseph Dlugo managed to summon a barred owl to answer his call on the same Saturday night in Palos. Maybe this owl will stay until May so we can count it for Birdathon. Would be nice!

A thank you to the Cook County Forest Preserve District for allowing us admittance to the forest preserves at night and to the following participants who helped this year.

Alan Anderson, Jill Anderson, Renata Denton, Joseph Dlugo, Kelly Dougherty, Wannetta Elliott, Andrew Fialkowski, Carol Fialkowski, Conrad Fialkowski, Sally Gamble, Tim Gamble, Jerry Garden, Pat Jean, Max Klingensmith, Ron Klingensmith, Karen Mansfield, Barbara Kratochvil, Christine Lee, Stephen Lee, Walter Marcisz, Dan Spencer, Stan Stec, Mike Steffen, Rick Steffen

16th Annual Cook County Owl Count -- Chicago Audubon Society

	NW & North	West	South & Southwest
Great-horned	2	2	4
Screech	2	17	1
Long-eared	1	0	13
Short-eared	0	0	2
Barred Owl	0	0	1

Participants: 24
Parties: 12
Party hours: 30



Illustration by Kirsten Munson

Supreme Court Upholds Clean Water Act

Everglades Decision Means Cleaner Water Nationwide

In a case involving pollution in the Everglades, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled today that pollutants cannot be pumped into U.S. waters without a Clean Water Act discharge permit, regardless of whether the pump originates the pollutants or merely conveys pollutants that originate elsewhere. Audubon, which had filed an amicus brief along with seven other environmental groups in support of the defendant, hailed today's ruling a major victory for clean water protections.

The case, South Florida Water Management District v. Miccosukee Tribe, addressed whether the protections of the Clean Water Act apply to the District's practice of pumping stormwater uphill from a collection canal in a developed area into a natural wetland area in the Everglades. But the ruling's impacts go beyond South Florida.

"If the court had failed to support the Clean Water Act, healthy drinking water and restoration projects everywhere-especially in the Everglades-could have been threatened," said Bob Perciasepe, Audubon's chief operating officer. "The Supreme Court recognized this, and refused to allow a harmful loophole in the Act's safeguards."

The ruling could have held broad implications for the jurisdiction or reach of the country's primary water pollution control law, potentially affecting wetlands, lakes, and rivers around the United States. Exempting conveyance of pollutants from permitting would have opened the door to serious degradation of cleaner waterbodies by pollutants pumped or piped into United States waters. For more information: www.audubon.org.

Update on Northerly Island

The coalition of 'green' groups that came together to work with the Chicago Park District on the creation of the park--Northerly Island (formerly known as Meigs Field) has some progress to report. Comprised of the Bird Conservation Network, Sierra Club, Openlands Project, Friends of the Parks, Lake Michigan Federation and the Grant Park Conservancy, this group met last summer with Park District senior staff. Happily, the Mayor's plans were consistent with this group's, and all have been waiting for the environmental remediation work being done by the Aviation Dept to be completed.

This week the coalition met again with park staff, kicking off the official process to design a new park. Throughout 2004 there will be many more meetings--open to the public--to discuss specific ideas. Ground plantings will start as soon as weather permits. All of the work to return the land to a park-like state is being paid by Department of Aviation funds, which put some restrictions on how the funds can be spent. For example, the funds can be used for grass (even prairie grasses), but may not be used for bushes or trees. Northerly Island will be opened as soon as the plantings are stable. Predictions are for some time in June or July. We can look forward to a new migration spot in the fall.



Nature Buffs -- Enjoy a Unique Vacation

No place like it. Haven for nature lovers--look to the outdoors to see or study nature. Very private, lush forest. Virgin pines over 275 years old. Crystal clear lake. Hike, swim, fish. 3 cabins furnished for 4 persons each. 270 miles north of Chicago. Available by the week, Sat. to Sat., Memorial to Labor Day. For details and reservations, write or call private owner: R.R. Roth, 531 Forestview Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068; 847 823 4785.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Stewardship Workdays

At the Skokie Lagoons: May 8 and June 12 at 10:00 a.m.

Chicago Audubon conducts regular monthly workdays at the Skokie Lagoons on the second Saturday of every month. Activities include buckthorn cutting, planting, and other management activities. Meet at the Tower Road parking lot, east of the bridge.

For further information call Jerry Garden at (773)545-4632, or e-mail him at jerrygarden@sprynet.com

Educational Programs

Friday, May 14

“Chicagoland Birding” by Kathy and Bob Andrini

“Chicagoland Birding” is an informative presentation about birds that appear in the Fox River Valley and surrounding areas. Presented through the power of digiscoping, exciting close-up photos of birds will be shown. From common birds to those that appear only briefly during migration, you will get to see birds ‘up close and personal.’ Many of the pictures were taken on the Fox River, others in local forest preserves. The presentation will include some special insights about birds, their adaptations and behaviors.

Weekly Bird Walks

Wednesdays in May/June/July, 7:00 a.m. Saturdays in May/June/July, 8:00 a.m.

Paul H. Douglas Nature Sanctuary

(Wooded Island) Bird Walks. Meet at the Darrow Bridge just south of the Museum of Science and Industry. Your Audubon guide is Doug Anderson. (773) 493-7058.

North Park Village Nature Center Every Saturday in May—8:00 a.m.

Meet in front of the Nature Center at 5801 N. Pulaski. Bring binoculars and field guide. For more information call Don Klimovich (773) 878-4421.

Birdwalks for New Birders

Saturday, May 15 9:00-11:00 a.m.

North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski, Chicago.

The Chicago Audubon Early Birds project offers a no-stress, no-cost way to learn the fundamentals of birding with two bird walks designed for beginners.

Meet in the main classroom of the Nature Center Education Building for

an overview of birding, including how to use binoculars, tips on identifying birds, and recommendations for field guides, websites, and top birding areas around Chicago. Experienced Chicago Audubon volunteer guides will help you spot and identify birds during a leisurely walk around the beautiful meadows, pond and wooded areas where over 200 species have been sighted.

Open to all age groups, youth under 16 should be accompanied by an adult. Field guides and binoculars will be available.

Free parking located in front of the Nature Center.

No fee, but pre-registration is required. Call Chicago Audubon Society, (773) 539-6793 or email chicago_audubon@juno.org.

Bird Walks

Saturday, May 1, 8:00 a.m.

Rosehill Cemetery, 5800 N.

Ravenswood, Chicago

Join Audubon leaders for a morning of warblers, woodpeckers and ducks.

Meet at the east entrance on Ravenswood.

For more info, call walk leaders Carol Nelson (773) 583-8616 or Joe Lill (773) 631-3154.

Saturday, May 1, 7:30 a.m.

Columbus, Douglas, Humboldt and Garfield Parks

A joint Chicago Park District/Chicago Audubon Society/Chicago Ornithological Society sponsored trip to these Chicago parks 7:30 a.m. at Columbus, 9 a.m. at Douglas, etc (and those who don't want to meet at Columbus could certainly join us at Douglas later etc.)

For details, email Alan B. Anderson at casresearch@comcast.net

Saturday, May 2, 8:00 a.m.

Skokie Lagoons Bird Walk

We will be birding the wooded area along the lagoons. This is usually an excellent area for spring migrants, as well as our returning summer residents. Bring binoculars, field guides, and dress for the weather.

Take the Edens Expressway (I-94) north to Willow Road; exit east on Willow.

We will meet in the parking lot on the north side of Willow just east of the expressway. Call Christine or Stephen Lee at (708) 485-8197.

Sunday, May 9, 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Thatcher Woods Mother's Day Bird Walk

A bird walk to look at all the arriving spring migrants along the Des Plaines River Valley. Meet at the Trailside Museum parking lot west of the intersection of Thatcher Rd. and Chicago Ave. (south side) in River Forest. Any questions? Call Christine or Stephen Lee at (708) 485-8197.

Saturday, June 5, 8:30 a.m.

Moraine Hills State Park

Come walk through river backwoods, prairie and wetlands habitat on June 5, 2004. A field trip to Moraine Hills State Park begins at 8:30am in the Dam area parking lot closest to the trail. Plan to walk for two hours. Nesting birds we may observe include: yellow headed blackbird, sandhill crane, pied-billed grebe, prothonotary warbler.

Directions: Moraine Hills State Park is 3 miles south of McHenry, Illinois. The McHenry Dam, on the Fox River, is on the park's western border. To reach this area from Interstate 294, exit at Illinois Highway 176. Go west about 10 miles through the towns of Libertyville, Mundelein, Wauconda, and Island Lake to River Road. Turn north and drive about 2.5 miles to the McHenry Dam road – this will be a left turn. You will pass the main entrance of the park on your right before you get to McHenry Dam Road.

From Illinois Highway 53 north to Lake-Cook Road, west to Illinois Highway 12 – north on Highway 12 to Illinois 176, west on Illinois Highway 176 through Island Lake to River Road. Turn right on River Road go about 2.5 miles to McHenry Dam Road.

Please contact Barb Kratochvil, 708-485-3678 for more information.

Saturday, June 19, 8:30 am.

Crabtree Nature Center—Nesting Birds

Join us for a trip to an area we have not birded in a while to look for local nesting birds. Meet at the main parking lot near the Nature Center. From Chicago take the Northwest Tollway, I-90 to the Barrington Rd. exit. North on Barrington Rd. to Palatine Rd. West on Palatine one mile to the entrance to Crabtree Nature Center.

Call Christine or Stephen Lee at (708) 485-8197.

Saturday, July 24, 8:00 a.m.

Walking the Prairie at Wolf Road Prairie

A trip to Wolf Road Prairie, the corner of Wolf Road and 31st Street in

Westchester, Illinois is planned for Saturday, July 24th at 8am. Wetland and prairie habitat are located in this area across the street from Bemis Woods Forest Preserve. We will see birds, butterflies and a variety of plants.

Please contact Barb Kratochvil, 708-485-3678 for more information.

Sunday, August 29, 8:00 a.m.

Lake Calumet Wetland Birds

Leader: Walter Marcisz 773/646-3034 or wjmarcisz@aol.com

Walters annual August shorebird trip has been a favorite of Chicago Audubon members for many years. Since conditions change every year, the locations for this years trip will be determined in August.

Directions: Meet at O'Brien Lock & Dam. Take I-94 to 130th St. Exit east on 130th and turn right just before the steel bridge into the drive for O'Brien Lock & Dam. Turn left after the railroad underpass and proceed along the river to the car park.

Field Trips

Friday, May 21—Sunday, May 23, 2004. Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Crane Creek and Magee Marsh in NW Ohio.

For shorebirds, migrant passerines and nesting bald eagles. Sunday we visit the Black Swamp Bird Observatory banding station for up-close views of warblers and other migrants.

This is an exclusive Chicago Audubon trip this year. Drive on your own, or we'll try to arrange car/van pooling. We have special rates at a Port Clinton hotel with a great bird-viewing beach.

Estimated cost of \$130 per single, or \$150 for two, includes two nights lodging, complimentary breakfasts, special slide show on Saturday night, birding on Saturday and Sunday, bird-banding demonstration, and small contribution to CAS and BSBO.

For more information, contact Alan Anderson at casresearch@comcast.net

Other Important Events

May 8

Cook County Spring Bird Count

Call Duane Heaton (847) 358-5856

2004! Birdathon

Wednesday, May 12-Tuesday, May 18

Call Joe Lill (773) 631-3154 to sign up your team or join a team, or email him at trptjoe@aol.com

Tell Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois General Assembly to increase funding for the Open Land Trust Program!

PROBLEM:

The Open Land Trust program—a major funding source for open space land acquisitions by local communities, counties, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources statewide—will have its funding cut by \$35 million (over 87%) unless the Governor or the General Assembly amend the FY 2004 budget proposal!

The Open Land Trust is part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources agency budget. The Governor's proposed budget for the IDNR, including a mere \$5 million for the Open Land Trust fund, is now being

reviewed by the state legislature (the Illinois General Assembly). Openlands Project has submitted testimony at the House and Senate appropriations hearings advocating for more funding for the Open Land Trust, but we need your help!

SPEAKING POINTS & FACTS ABOUT THE OPEN LAND TRUST:

The \$5 million proposed FY 2004 budget for the Open Land Trust buys very little land in northeastern Illinois, where open space is most scarce—only about 225 total acres when divided

equally between the region's five collar counties (although this is a statewide fund!)

In only three years, the Open Land Trust Program has been very successful, facilitating about 8,700 acres of open space acquisition for local governments through matching grants, and providing funds for the protection of over 41,200 acres of natural lands by the IDNR.

All of our region's forest preserve and conservation districts—Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will—as well as the City of Chicago, have acquired significant

additions of quality open space with the help of Open Land Trust funds.

ACTION NEEDED:

Call or write your Illinois State Senator, Representative, and Governor Blagojevich immediately to request increased funding for the Open Land Trust. Even a modest increase over the \$5 million in the proposed budget for the program would be extremely significant for this relatively young—and highly effective—statewide land acquisition program.