



The Audubon Outlook

Newsletter of the Lake County Audubon Society

Vol. 33, No. 4 Audbirds@aol.com 847-362-5134 Nov/Dec 2008
<http://www.lakecountyaudubon.org>

General Meeting: Nov. 3, 2008 **Birds in the Brookfield Zoo Conservation Program**

Presented by
Tim Snyder
Curator of the Bird and Reptile Houses
7:30 PM
Libertyville Village Hall, 118 W. Cook
Second Floor Meeting Room

An exciting evening is planned for November 3rd when Tim Snyder curator of Brookfield Zoo's Bird and Reptile House will speak to us regarding the different species of birds that can be seen at the zoo's bird facility as well as the changes in the collection made in that program.

One of the new programs which he will discuss is the reintroduction of the Trumpeter Swan, a topic which should be of interest to all bird enthusiasts.

A five point power point program will also be shown regarding the conservation efforts the Zoo is working towards here in the US as well as in other countries.

Bird Specimens will also be on display for us to identify.

General Meeting: Dec. 1, 2008 **Holiday Pot Luck Dinner**

Join us for this popular evening of good food, great company. Participants should bring a salad, a casserole, **or** a dessert. The time will be earlier than the regular meeting time of 7:30, and the location will be determined by the size of the response. Details will be given when you RSVP. Email audbirds@aol.com or call 847-362-5134 by Monday, November 24, stating name and dish you will bring.
Volunteers are needed to help with set-up and clean-up.

Upcoming Meetings: Program Schedule for 2008-2009:

November 3 – Birds in the Brookfield Zoo Conservation Program by Tim Snyder

December 1 – Pot Luck Dinner

February 2 – Watershed Planning in Lake County by Mike Prusila and Patty Werner

March 2 – Birding 202: Bird Habits and Habitats by Jeff Sundberg

April 6 – Decline of Wetland-Dependent Birds in the Chicago Region by Brad Semel

May 4 – Dragonflies in Lake County by Craig Stettner

TBA – Possible Bonus Program

Freebies in Your Wallet

Reciprocal admission programs through the American Horticultural Society for free admission are available at participating Arboreta, Gardens and Conservatories by presenting your local membership card (e.g. Chicago Botanic Garden). The list of participating gardens is available at http://www.ahs.org/events/reciprocal_events.htm.

Lifetime Interagency Passes for seniors at all National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands are available for \$10 to citizens age 62 or older. The participating agencies include the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service (and National Wildlife Refuges), Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation. The pass can only be obtained in person at a Federal recreation site. See http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm for details.

Notice: If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically by e-mail or on our website please let us know. We could save paper, printing and postage costs.

Summer Fruit – in the Winter?

From Conservation Alert, Vol. 12, No. 3, July 2008 by Donnie R. Dann

Who can resist the mouth watering sweetness of a perfectly ripe peach, nectarine, or plum in mid-August? Isn't it one of the sad times of autumn when along with cooler temperatures these taste treats have come to an end until the following summer?

Well, you don't have to wait any longer, right? Aren't these foods now available year-round at your local supermarket? Why wait to buy them as U.S. grown produce when Chile, Argentina, and other Latin American countries can grow, pack and ship them and we can dine throughout the year on our 'summer' fruit?

Here are some reasons you may want to rethink putting foreign grown fruit on your winter shopping list:

- Government food inspectors find twice the amount of pesticide residues on imported vs. domestically grown fruit
- Air freight emits more greenhouse gases per food mile than any other mode of transport and importing fruit only adds to our carbon load. For this reason even buying these imports organically clashes with the idea of 'green'
- The EPA reports that chemicals like Iprovalicarb and Tolyfluanid, and Mepanipyrim, which at times are applied to apples, tomatoes, strawberries grapes, and other fruits in some foreign countries, are likely carcinogens, but are not even registered for use in the U.S.
- Pesticide manufacturers are free to export pesticides that are either forbidden or severely restricted in the United States.
- From 1997 to 2000, the most recent period for which the data are available, nearly 65 million pounds of these products went to foreign destinations for application to crops sent to the U.S. and elsewhere
- Central America might be the worst offender in the occupational use of pesticides as the Pan-American Health Organization estimates almost 400,000 pesticide poisonings occur each year in the region
- Harm to humans aside, chemicals like Monocrotophos and Carbofuran are known bird killers. They are at least partially restricted here but can be applied to crops overseas.

In wintertime when you are tempted by that luscious looking "product of a foreign country" fruit, consider instead crispy-sweet Washington State apples, juicy Florida oranges, or red-ripe strawberries from Southern California. For more information, see "What's Fresh Near You" at www.NRDC.org. You'll be acting to reduce global warming, combating pesticide related illnesses in Latin America, helping our songbirds, and your family will be eating more healthfully

Let There be (UV) Light

Zoo Views, Chicago Zoological Society, Brookfield Zoo, Spring 2008

Most mammals, including humans, can see only in the well-known rainbow spectrum from violet to orange, but some species of birds are thought to use the ultraviolet (UV) spectrum- just below our visible range- to help navigate, forage for food and select a mate. In zoos and other housing situations, standard conditions may exclude light in the UV spectrum. At the Brookfield Zoo, scientists and bird caregivers are looking for ways to provide a better environment for birds. A new study may clarify how the turquoise tanagers in particular use light to their advantage.

For several months, zoo personnel took daily light readings from 27 locations in the tanager's off-exhibit area, creating a "light map". Next, the birds were exposed to light with and without a UV component in five-week intervals. Staff compared the light map readings to the bird behavior to look for patterns, such as if turquoise tanagers perform specific behaviors under specific types of light. Staff are analyzing data, and results should show how turquoise tanagers behave under different lighting conditions, including choosing a mate and finding food. Many zoos install UV bulbs without knowing the specifics of how these tanagers use the light in that range. This study should lead the way in helping others and ourselves learn more about care for these birds.

Forest Preserves Seek Voter Approval to Grow

Ballot question will NOT raise taxes

A rare opportunity to expand and improve Lake County's award-winning forest preserves is now available. The forest preserve district seeks voter approval on November 4 for a \$185 million bond referendum for new land purchases, new trails, more public access and more wildlife habitat restoration.

No tax increase is associated with this request because old bonds are about to be retired and new bonds would simply replace them. If the measure fails, property taxes will decline by about \$24 a year for a \$200,000 home and \$48 a year for a \$400,000 home, but land purchases would halt and improvement projects would stagnate.

This is an unprecedented opportunity, coming at a time when Lake County's remaining open space is disappearing at the rate of four acres per day. As the county population continues to rise, open space plays an increasingly vital role in preserving economic and social health. It provides places to play and relax while also serving as refuge for some of the state's rarest species and ecosystems. It reduces flooding, cleanses water and purifies air. By strengthening the quality of life here, this prized collection of clean, safe and popular preserves boosts property values and strengthens our business climate.

Highly regarded nationally, the forest preserve district's track record is exceptional. Just 3% of property taxes countywide support these lands, and the tax rate has dropped for the past six years. **Vote YES on November 4.** For more information on your Forest Preserves visit www.lcfd.org.

Wild Bird Center Offers 10% Discount to Audubon Members

Here's a reminder from owner Mike Schudrowitz that Audubon Members are entitled to a 10% discount on seed and suet. "All you have to do is mention your membership," he said recently. His Wild Bird Centers are located in Libertyville in Red Top Center, 1322 S. Milwaukee Avenue and in Fox River Grove at 934 Route 22 at Route 14.

Take Note!

information adapted from <http://www.catalogchoice.org>

Catalog Choice is a free service that allows you to decide what gets in your mailbox. Use it to reduce your mailbox clutter, while helping save natural resources. Catalog Choice is a sponsored project of the Ecology Center. It is endorsed by the National Wildlife Federation the Natural Resources Defense Council, and funded by the Overbrook Foundation, the Merck Family Fund, and the Kendeda Fund.

The mission of Catalog Choice is to reduce the number of repeat and unsolicited catalog mailings, and to promote the adoption of sustainable industry best practices. The aim is to accomplish this by freely providing the Catalog Choice services to both consumers and businesses. Consumers can indicate which catalogs they no longer wish to receive, and businesses can receive a list of consumers no longer wanting to receive their catalogs.

The collective positive impact that the Catalog Choice community has on the environment is directly related to the number of people using the service. You can help spread the word. See <http://www.catalogchoice.org>

Freecycle

adapted from Northwest Illinois Audubon Society newsletter

We can keep some of our unwanted stuff out of our landfills through Freecycle; it's free and easy to do. All you need is an e-mail address. Check it out at freecycle.org. If you want to join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/xxxFreecycle> (where xxx is the town that you want to join) and click on "Join the Group." You can get or give just about anything away; things that you might think that nobody would ever want. You will be contacted via a Yahoo e-mail address when someone is interested in an item; thus your phone number and private e-mail are not public. The person wanting the item must then come to your home and have means to transport the goods; similarly you can contact others and go to pick up whatever you want.

Anything that goes on Freecycle is free. After you join the group, you will receive a list of the terms for use such as, "Merchandise must be free, legal and appropriate for all ages". The list will also provide for how to arrange for exchanges.

Ask Audubon

(Audubon Newswire, National Audubon Society Vol. 5, No. 5, March 1, 2007)

"In the winter, is it safe to use salt to melt icy sidewalks and driveways?"

This is a tough question - icy roads and sidewalks are clearly dangerous, but the salt used to keep them safe for walking and driving pose environmental dangers. The amount of salt poured into our ecosystem is staggering. According to the National Research Council (NRC), between 8 and 12 million tons of road-salt is used in the United States per year.

Salt on roads, sidewalks and driveways can enter air, soil, groundwater, and surface water from snowmelt runoff, release from surface soils, and wind-spray. Trees and plants are damaged by road salt, even when salt is applied as far away as 600 feet from the road. Studies have shown salt sensitivity in 50.8% of woody plant species in Canada; many of these have disappeared from Canadian roadsides. Salt can interfere with the flowering, seed germination, roots, and stems of roadside plant species. Birds can mistake salt particles for food, resulting in fatality. In 2000, Environment Canada had 12 reports of bird deaths due to roadside salt, two of them reporting the deaths of over 1,000 birds each.

Salt carries risks for human health as well. In rural areas, wells are easily contaminated by salty runoff or seepage into groundwater. Elevated sodium concentrations in drinking water can pose a health risk to those with high blood pressure. Some states monitor the salt levels in drinking water, but there is no federal legislation requiring universal monitoring. The chlorine in salt has a corrosive effect on automobile parts, another safety consideration. Sand or kitty litter, sometimes also used as alternatives, create other hazards in the environment, as they do not break down and can clog storm drains.

One good alternative is calcium magnesium acetate (CMA), which is less harmful to the environment. Unfortunately CMA is more costly than salt, but the initial outlay of money can prevent the later costs associated with repairing the environment. Some municipalities use a combination of salt and CMA in an effort to mitigate environmental damage as well as contain costs. A Department of Public Works study concluded that every additional dollar spent on the use of a 4 to 1 mixture of sodium chloride and a salt alternative will result in a savings of at least two dollars in environmental costs. In addition, simply reducing the amount of salt you add to the environment by using only as much salt as you really need to keep your driveway and walkway clear will also help.

Up Your Alley

Lay of the Land, Sierra Magazine, March/April 2008

Chicago's 2,000 miles of alleys are being repaved with porous materials to allow rain to seep into the soil and restore the underground water table. The new pavement, made of recycled materials, also reflects heat rather than absorbing it, helping reduce energy costs during Chicago's hot summers.

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Welcome New Members!

There were 5 new G64 chapter members reported by National Audubon in June.

We hope to see you soon at a general meeting so come on down! If you attend a meeting and introduce yourself, you will be offered a 50% discount on either a bird house or bird feeder for your yard.

Bird House and Feeder Kits

Houses to accommodate Bluebirds and Wrens and feeders will be available at each meeting of LCAS. The price is \$7 for members and \$10 non-members for houses and \$8 for members and \$11 for non-members for feeders.

National Audubon Membership

New memberships only...sorry not for renewal.
Join or give a gift subscription today at the special
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Make checks payable to National Audubon Society.
Dues include \$15 for AUDUBON magazine. Please allow 4-6 weeks from receipt of payment to receive your first issue of AUDUBON.

____The National Audubon Society occasionally makes its membership list available to carefully selected organizations whose mailings you might find of interest. To have your name omitted from this list, please check here.

Chapter Code G64 (Lake County Audubon)
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