

Audubon Outlook

Newsletter of the Lake County Audubon Society (LCAS)



To contact us:

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Articles:

- What a Treasure!
- Successful Solution Found in Lake County
- Get Ready, the GBBC is Coming
- Gimme Shelter
- Meltdown

General Meetings

Libertyville Village Hall
118 W. Cook Avenue
Second Floor

Monday Feb 4, 7:30 PM
Wildlife Photography

Monday Mar 4, 7:30 PM
Duck ID: Know Your Ducks

Monday Apr 1, 7:30 PM
Learning Warblers by Sight and Sound

Activities

Saturday April 6,
7:30 AM to Noon
Welcome Back, Herons
at Almond Marsh. Bird
books, binoculars, and
refreshments provided.

Our website offers an
up-to-date listing. Go to
www.lakecountyaudubon.org
or scan the QR code below.



General Meeting: **February 4 7:30 PM** Libertyville Village Hall

Wildlife Photography

Speakers: Jim and Joan Sayre

In this month's presentation, Jim and Joan Sayre hope to encourage people to look more closely at the beauty that surrounds us and to preserve and protect our open spaces for future generations. They will describe which photographic equipment to use and give helpful hints and guiding principles for excellent photos. They will address unusual subject matter and give different perspectives of nature in their 234-slide PowerPoint presentation. Among their many categories will be various insects and spiders, reptiles, flowers and mushrooms, and birds.

The Sayres took up digital photography seven years ago when they retired from the pharmaceutical industry. Both are members of the Riverwoods Nature Photographic Society and have had their prints appear in Lake County exhibits and publications. Each year, they donate hundreds of photos to Conserve Lake County and the Lake County Forest Preserves for educational purposes and for use in printed materials. In fact, six of their prints are on permanent display in the Lake County Forest Preserves headquarters.

General Meeting: **March 4 7:30 PM** Libertyville Village Hall

Duck ID: Know Your Ducks

Speaker: Charlie Potter, Sunday Morning Host of WGN's The Great Outdoors

Waterfowl of Lake County and North America once helped to sustain a nation. The wetlands they depended upon were an impediment to urban and agriculture growth and breeding grounds for diseases. From a bounty that darkened the skies in unimagined numbers spring and fall, waterfowl populations have withered and in Lake County are but a fraction of what was once here.

Join us in a journey through time and learn of the cultures that waterfowl sustained, how they helped feed a nation, how their precipitous decline then alarmed a nation and helped launch the conservation movement to where we are today and where we will likely

be in the coming generations. Waterfowl in many ways have been our canary in the coal mine.

Charlie Potter is recognized as a leader in the outdoor recreation industry. He has authored books and numerous magazine articles over the past 20 years. He is currently the CEO of the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation and is the past CEO of the North American Wildlife Foundation (Delta Waterfowl Foundation), and has served on the board of directors of numerous conservation groups. In Illinois, Charlie has chaired the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, and been on the Conservation Advisory Board.

What a Treasure!

The National Audubon Society's website is a gold mine of information. For example, you can visit the link below for John James Audubon's *Birds of America*. It is from an 1840 "First Octavo Edition" of Audubon's complete seven-volume text, and presents Audubon's images and original text descriptions in beautiful color.

This display includes his Bird Image Plates along with anatomically correct detailed drawings, information about Audubon as an artist, and biographical details. Birds are listed alphabetically as well as by family name.

http://web4.audubon.org/bird/BoA/BOA_index.html



Successful Solution Found for Open Fishing Line Receptacles in Lake County! by Diane Rosenberg, LCAS Board Member

In February, 2011, Jack Nowak, our Membership and Web chair, contacted Greg Townsend of the LCFPD about fitting covers over the tops of the PVC fishing line receptacles in Lake County. You may recall an article in last spring's *Audubon Outlook* that mentioned that Cook County had retrofitted their fishing line receptacles after finding that birds, which entered the tubes to collect the fishing line for nest building, became trapped and died.

Townsend, and the mechanical service department, immediately came up with a plan to install the covers before the Spring nesting season. Starting with 3 x 3 heavy-duty truck flaps, five-inch covers were cut out by hand in the field. The covers were attached by a bolt that allows the cover to easily flip up and then swing back down to cover the pipe opening. (See photo). There are approximately 20 covers in place and the covers will become a permanent addition to the receptacles.

The design is simple yet extraordinarily effective. In addition to protecting the birds, Townsend mentioned that another benefit is the cover's help in preventing bees from getting into the receptacles. Lake County Audubon would like to express its thanks and appreciation to Greg, his staff, and the LCFPD for their timely response and creative solution to this problem!

Although no bird fatalities have been reported in Lake County fishing line receptacles, bird nests in Lake County that contain fishing line have been observed. It is ironic that PVC receptacles that were supposed to help protect birds and other wildlife have turned out to be deadly traps for some of them.

In the Western US, another use for open-topped PVC pipes is to mark the boundaries of mining claims. According to Darin Schroeder, American Bird Conservancy (ABC) Vice President of Conservation Advocacy, the 10 to 20 million pipes are "a significant bird mortality threat, likely accounting for a million or more bird deaths each year." Small birds enter the pipes for roosting or nesting and then become trapped. The narrow pipe opening prevents the birds from flying out and they're unable to climb up the smooth pipe walls. The birds die from starvation or dehydration. ABC has asked mining companies to replace these uncapped PVC markers with solid stakes.



Get Ready, the GBBC is Coming

The 16th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will be held **Friday, February 15, through Monday, February 18, 2013**. This four-day event engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of winter bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org.

It's free, fun, and easy! Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](http://www.cornell.edu/ornithology) and the [National Audubon Society](http://www.nationalaudubon.org) learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year, participants turned in more than 104,000 online checklists, creating the continent's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

On the web site, participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during the count. All participants are entered in a drawing for prizes that include bird feeders, binoculars, books, CDs, and many other great products. Find more information by visiting www.birdcount.org.

In Fond Memory

I am sorry to share the news that Ralph Frese passed on 12/10/12. Audubon was fortunate to have had him as a speaker last year and have the opportunity to meet him. He was certainly an accomplished canoe builder and historian and leaves quite a legacy. If you want to know more about Ralph just search on his name or Chicagoland Canoe Base. Chicago Wilderness also did a comprehensive history on him a few years back. (<http://www.chicagolandcanoebase.com/ralphfrese.html>)

Thanks to Glen Moss, I had the chance to spend some time with Ralph a year or so ago. A wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm! If they don't have canoes in heaven I bet there is one being started today!

-Expressed by Don Wilson, LCAS Board Member



Gimme Shelter by Glen Moss, LCAS Board Member

The Rolling Stones probably best spoke for the birds in winter when they came out with their album title in 1969. As the temperature drops and the winds pick up birds staying in our latitudes use a great deal of energy during the day finding food. At night they slow down, but expend calories keeping warm. During extreme weather the balance between calories gathered and calories burned is often unbalanced. Shelters are a way for birds to use less energy at night and reserve energy for next day's food gathering.

Basically there are two ways to provide shelters for birds. The first way is free and uses the natural materials of the location. Planting hedges and evergreens as part of your landscaping plans provides shelters. Put off trimming bushes and hedges in the fall leaving more close branches to perch and block wind during the winter. Leaving piles of branches and twigs on the ground provides spaces for birds to hide from the elements. If you have an old outbuilding you can use it for shelter by cutting entrance holes in the upper areas and putting articles for perches inside. Hanging up loose materials like the lint from dryers provides a source for birds to put in cavities and boxes.

Buying or making shelters is another way to protect birds. Often wood duck houses will shelter screech owls in the winter. Bluebird boxes can provide shelter by

adapting them for winter. Remove the front panel and put it upside down so the birds will enter from the bottom. Then put perches inside. One quick way is to make a ladder out of dowel rods and side wood. Birds can perch on the rungs and the heat from their bodies will rise up but not escape quickly. Other nesting boxes can be left up after cleaning them out and even putting in some materials like lint to provide insulation. Be sure to mount boxes out of the wind and as predator proof as possible.

Below are some Internet sites which describe how to build a winter roost box on your own, but remember that the bluebird nest boxes we sell at our meetings (for \$15) will cost you half of those you might find online and can easily be converted into a winter roosting box by turning the door upside down and adding dowel rods for roosting (see photo at right).



Other sites are:

<http://www.nwf.org/news-and-magazines/national-wildlife/birds/archives/2010/winter-roosts-for-birds.aspx>
http://www.shawcreekbirdsupply.com/plans_roost_box.htm
http://mdc4.mdc.mo.gov/tv/hints/roost_bx.pdf

MELTDOWN — Arctic Sea Ice is Melting Faster than Climate Models Predicted

For decades, climatologists have watched the steady shrinking of Arctic sea ice. But what they saw last summer wasn't steady; it was catastrophic.

In July, scientists discovered that all but 3 percent of Greenland's massive ice sheet had thawed at the surface. That was nearly double the usual summer melt, with much of it happening over the space of just four days.

Sea ice followed suit: On September 16, the point of maximum melt, there was more open water in the Arctic than had ever been recorded. The amount surpassed the previous record by 18 percent, or an area the size of Texas.

Every summer for the past ten years has seen far less ice than the 1979-2000 average, leaving the remaining ice thinner and less resilient. But 2012's massive, record-shattering melt is a particularly ominous sign of things to come, says Michael E. Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State. The last record melt, in 2007, Mann says, "was outside the range of what climate models predicted," and some climatologists regarded it as a fluke. "The 2012 melt caused [climate] modelers to step back and say, 'Maybe nature really is proceeding much faster than our models predicted.'"

The pace may get faster yet, given the triggering of "feedback loops." Ice reflects heat, and dark, ice-free water absorbs it. Melting permafrost is emitting the powerful greenhouse gas methane, also at a faster rate than scientists initially predicted. Oil companies are rushing to take advantage of the ice-free waters for new drilling, which will further feed carbon emissions.

Because changes in the Arctic affect the jet stream, they can have major impacts on weather far away: Scientists are drawing connections to the slow-moving, persistent storms of recent winters and to last summer's extreme drought and wildfires. "There's a tendency to overemphasize the melting Arctic environment and polar bears at the expense of talking about impacts that are every bit as real, right where we live," Mann says. "This melting should be seen as something much larger: as truly fundamental change to our planet."

Brooke Jarvis, "Meltdown: Arctic Sea Ice is Melting Faster than Climate Models Predicted," *Sierra*, Jan/Feb 2013, <http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/201301/grapple-arctic-ice-melting-303.aspx>.

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**Lake County
 Audubon Society**

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Barnswallow — A Wild Bird Concern

For those of you who saw Linda Breuer's program on bird rehabilitation at our October meeting, perhaps you were as inspired as I have always been by Linda's enthusiasm, passion, engaging stories and the extraordinary work that she does. If you would like to know how you can help, please follow this link and donate in any way that you can.
<http://barnswallow.net/Just%20Dreaming.htm>

—Vic Taylor, LCAS Board Member

