



Audubon Leaves

A Publication of the South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society

April 2024

Volume 76, Number 3

Serving North-Central Indiana Since 1944

APRIL FIELD TRIP

[Carol Goodall](#), *Field Trip Chair*

Join me on April 27th at 7:30 a.m. to see what birds we can find at our Wildlife Sanctuary. A total of 147 species of birds have been recorded at our Wildlife Sanctuary. Here is a link to the Sanctuary's eBird illustrated checklist: <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L551558/media?yr=all&m=>. Dress for the weather. Wear sturdy shoes. Some trails may be muddy, and some trails are hilly.

Our Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 59395 Clover Rd., Mishawaka, Indiana, south of George Wilson Park.

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

[Tai Gunter](#), *President*

At the April membership meeting we will be voting for the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society Executive Board positions and for two Director positions. The Executive Board officers are elected for one year. The Director positions are elected for three years.

Mark Gidley has decided to step into the Treasurer role vacated by Martha Kummerer. We are grateful for Mark's willingness to step into this role and help the Society succeed. As Mark vacates his Director position, we will look to appoint someone who can fulfill the remainder of his term to 2026. If you are interested in serving on our Board in this Director position, please contact me at president@sbeaudubon.org.

The slate of candidates is as follows:

President: Tai Gunter
Vice President: Carol Goodall
Secretary: John Bentley
Treasurer: Mark Gidley

Director to 2027: Jeet Raval
Director to 2027: Bruce Cates

APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

[Bruce Cates](#), *Program Chair*

Our April 2024 membership meeting will be held on Sunday, April 14th at 2:00 p.m. at the Rum Village Park Nature Center in South Bend. Our speaker will be Janet McGowan. She is a well-known local naturalist and former *Audubon Leaves* editor. Her program is titled, "How Native Plants Bring Your Garden (and the Birds) to LIFE!" This is the same program she was scheduled to present at our January 2024 membership meeting, which unfortunately was canceled due to inclement weather. For more details on the specifics of her program, one can review the article about it from the December 2023-January 2024 *Audubon Leaves*.

As always, the general public is welcome to attend our membership meetings. Bring a friend, enjoy some refreshments, view through the center's floor-to-ceiling windows a variety of woodland birds feasting on the park's many feeders, and learn from Ms. McGowan how to incorporate native plants in your landscape to attract more birds. Hope to see you there!

Want to recycle your Styrofoam?

**If you have excess polystyrene
(the kind used in packaging, not for food),
bring it to our meetings so our members can transport
it to a company that will recycle it.**

APRIL CALENDAR

- 6 Field Trip: Woodcock Walk at Potato Creek State Park, 8 PM
- 13 Sanctuary Work Day, 8:30 AM
- 14 Board Meeting at Rum Village Nature Center, 1 PM
- 14 Membership Meeting and Program at Rum Village Nature Center, 2 PM
- 17 May *Audubon Leaves* Articles Due
- 20 Red Barn Sale at St. Patrick's County Park, 8 AM
- 24 Meet the Naturalist at the Sanctuary, 6 PM
- 27 Field Trip at the Sanctuary, 7:30 AM



Check www.sbeaudubon.org and our Facebook page for field trip announcements, updates, and cancelations.

FROM THE MINUTES

[John Bentley](#), *Secretary*

The March 10, 2024 SBEAS Membership Meeting at Elkhart Conservation Club was called to order by President Tai Gunter at 2:00 p.m. Thirty-one (31) members and guests were in attendance. Tai welcomed everyone to the meeting, including first-time attendees Glen and Glenda Moyer and Sherry Kleinman. He called for bird sightings, which included a Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Bluebirds, Wood Ducks, a Woodcock and thousands of Sandhill Cranes migrating past the Indiana Dunes. Tai made available information and application forms for the Vic and Marge Riemenschneider Scholarship, and asked members who knew of likely candidates to inform them, or people with access to high schools to publicize it. Tai also stated that the ballot for the proposed chapter name change will be published in the *Audubon Leaves*, along with instructions on how to submit it.

Treasurer's Report

Martha Kummerer reported that on February 29th the operating account balance (KeyBank) stood at \$25,130.80 and the endowment checking account (Everwise) was at \$20,667.16, of which \$6,495.24 will be transferred to the Dickey Trust CD. Budget items paid out were \$1,000 to the Indiana Dunes Birding Festival and \$1,500 to the Shirley Heinze Land Trust, the latter for Lydick Bog expenditures.

Committee Reports

Red Barn Sale. Martha stated that the sale will take place on April 20th at St. Patrick's County Park and announced several sale policies. She asked for volunteers, and described the variety of jobs that need to be done. Alice Bentley asked for donations of baked goods for the accompanying bake sale. Cookies, brownies and quickbreads are big sellers.

Education. Melissa Gunter reported that she has committed to 14 presentations in the upcoming year, and would like to have volunteers to assist her.

Field Trips. Carol Goodall announced that on April 6th there will be a Woodcock Walk at Potato Creek State Park, and on April 24th another Meet the Naturalist event.

Sanctuary. Bradley Waelbroeck thanked the attendees of the March Sanctuary work day. They focused on bluebird and other nest box cleaning and tractor repairs. Bradley's future plans include holding bonfire nights, trying to get a power source onsite, and recruiting a team of trail trimmers so that it doesn't have to be restricted to work days.

Hospitality. Alice thanked Jan Stutz, Zita Kohut, and Pat Frank for bringing refreshments for the meeting.

Publicity. Carol has reactivated an Instagram account, with a page for Sanctuary photographs. She will put Red Barn Sale announcements on our Facebook page, which has considerable viewership.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

MEET THE NATURALIST

[Carol Goodall](#), *Field Trip Chair*

Join me for a relaxing mid-week nature break at the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society Wildlife Sanctuary on April 24th at 6:00 p.m. We will take a stroll to see what interesting things we can find. We may see some spring migrants. Spring ephemerals should be blooming. Wear sturdy shoes. The trails may be muddy. Dress for the weather. Our Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 59395 Clover Rd., Mishawaka, Indiana.



SANCTUARY REPORT

[Bradley Waelbroeck](#), *Sanctuary Chair*

Spring is in the air! We had our first successful work day of the year in March. All of the nest boxes have been cleaned out and re-bedded with fresh straw and the Eastern Bluebirds are already out shopping for real estate. Now is the time to start watching for invasive species and remove them so that our native plants can grow and thrive.

I am creating a committee for trail upkeep at the Sanctuary and am looking for volunteers. We just need someone that likes to walk the grounds and wouldn't mind carrying a pair of loppers or pruning shears. The committee is going to be called TrailMasters. All you need to have is a key to the Sanctuary. Those can be acquired from our Membership Chair for a small fee of \$5.

Do you have any ideas, thoughts, or suggestions for the Sanctuary? Email me at sanctuary@sbeaudubon.org if you have anything you would like to see at the Sanctuary or to join TrailMasters. I look forward to seeing you all out at the Sanctuary this year.

BIG RED BARN RUMMAGE SALE

Martha Kummerer, *Red Barn Rummage Sale Chair*

What: Red Barn Rummage Sale

When: Saturday, April 20th – 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Where: St. Patrick's County Park, Laurel Road, in the Big Red Barn

Who: Everybody – the sale is open to the public

Why: (1) Funds raised support our operations; (2) We're helping reuse, repurpose, and recycle; (3) Volunteers have a great time meeting and renewing acquaintances; (4) Bargains, bargains, bargains; (5) You have a good reason to spring-clean and/or downsize.

Consider Volunteering: You can help with the sale in many ways. During setup on Wednesday (April 17th), Thursday (April 18th), and Friday (April 19th) (8:00-6:00 all days), we need people to help donors unload their cars. We need pricers to tag items with good guesstimates. If you'd like to get your 10,000 steps in (or even just 1,000), we can use your help to take priced items to the appropriate tables. On Saturday, we need people at the sale to add up the customers' items. We need a cashier who can make change without the help of a cash register. We need bakers to supply items for the bake sale. Any amount of time is helpful. We have put together a guide for volunteering for this event. Pick up one at the April 14th membership meeting or email treasurer@sbeaudubon.org to get a copy.

Consider Donating Items: Our sales in the past have seen almost everything; we always are surprised. We have tables assigned for about every category: dishes, glassware, pans, home décor, small appliances, holiday decorations, craft supplies, fabric, linens, toys, books, CDs, DVDs, vinyl records, games, puzzles, sports equipment, yard décor, office supplies, pet items, bird items, candles, framed pictures, luggage, tote bags, shoes, boots, adult clothing, child and baby clothing and equipment, jewelry, clocks, lamps, tools, and more. Many rummage sale shoppers are particularly interested in vintage items; currently, that is anything older than the 1980s.

Times for Bringing Donations to the Red Barn South Door:

Wednesday: April 17th, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday: April 18th, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Friday: April 19th, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. NOTE THIS CHANGE: We will close off donations at 1:00 p.m. Friday to allow workers to finish the setup on time.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Jude Keltner, *Membership Chair*

We welcome the following new and returning members:

Audubon Woods Society, Jeffrey Baer, Mary Bodenhorn, Lori Checkley, Jamie Diller, John DiTillo, Stephen Dobrzykowski, Alexander Ferguson, Mary Froning, Lisa Harris, Gregory Leyes, Donna Miller, Marva Netherland, Pamela S O'Rourke, Catherine R. Osborne, Phillip Rice, Rose Rose, Edward M Sitar, Elizabeth Strantz, Joel M Studt, Carol Thie, Warren Vanosdal, Julli Wirt, and Leah Zimmer.

We look forward to seeing you at an activity soon. See the calendar in this newsletter and check our Facebook page for updates.

Should you have any questions about your membership, please email us at membership@sbeaudubon.org. If you would like to renew your South Bend-Elkhart Audubon membership online, you can do so at www.sbeaudubon.org.

CALLING ALL (FORMER, CURRENT, OR FUTURE) EDUCATORS AND BIRD LOVERS!

Melissa Gunter, Education Chair

Do you love sharing your passion for birds with others? If so, consider helping me with upcoming educational events throughout the year! Our organization is experiencing a major uptick in demand from the community, and there is no way I can continue to say yes to all the requests without additional help.

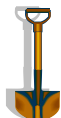
I'm seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help me engage with our community to help inspire the next generation of birders and conservationists. This is an excellent opportunity for current (or former) teachers, librarians, and parents/grandparents, or current college students looking to fill volunteer hours and gain firsthand experience in education. Or, if you simply love birds, and want to convince others that birds are cool and worth caring about, this might be a great fit for you.

There are three common types of events we are typically asked to do: bird lectures (libraries, schools, or assisted living facilities), guided bird walks, and hosting fun and educational bird activities at a booth for local environmental festivals (such as Science Alive! and Envirofest).

Ready to make a difference? If so, please email me at education@sbeaudubon.org to introduce yourself. If you send me an email, I will add you to my Education Volunteer Email Alert List that I use to send notifications about upcoming events. In my emails, I always include details about programs like the date, time, location, age group, type of event, etc., allowing you to choose opportunities that fit your interests and schedule. There is no obligation to volunteer, but I appreciate your consideration.

Today, it's more important than ever to engage with the public about the importance of bird conservation. Sharing our love for birds has always been a cornerstone of our mission – please consider helping us to spread this message.

REMINDER: **SANCTUARY WORK DAY**



**SATURDAY,
APRIL 13, 2024,
8:30 A.M.**



THE VIC AND MARGE RIEMENSCHNEIDER SCHOLARSHIP

Tai Gunter, President

The South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society is pleased to announce that we have established the annual Vic and Marge Riemenschneider Scholarship. This \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to one student each year who will be attending college in the fall, with a field of study that relates to the mission of the Society. These degree programs may include, but are not limited to, ornithology, forestry, wildlife, ecology and environmental sciences or engineering, natural resources, insect biology, and sustainable agriculture.

The scholarship honors Vic and Marge Riemenschneider, who have each had an enormous impact on the Society and have helped the Society grow into what it is today. Education has always been a cornerstone of our chapter's mission and we can think of no better way to continue that goal than with a scholarship. We hope to empower more young people to study the fields that are most important to the conservation of birds and wildlife.

If you or someone you know is interested in applying for the scholarship, please visit www.sbeaudubon.org/scholarship. If you are in a position to advertise for the scholarship, please reach out to me for PDF copies of the information at president@sbeaudubon.org.



Marge Riemenschneider (left, © St. Joseph County Parks) and Vic Riemenschneider (below, © Mark Blassage)



Please use the form below to submit your vote for the name change of the South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society.

As a reminder, the Board of Directors voted at their January board meeting to recommend that the Society change its name, in an effort to realign our name with our mission of bird conservation. This decision now comes before the membership for a vote to modify our constitution and officially change our name.

Please review the following notes and procedures regarding the process of the vote and tabulation:

- For mailed *Audubon Leaves* recipients, please cut the ballot out from this page. For emailed *Audubon Leaves* recipients, please print out this page.
- Fill out the ballot completely and mail it to:

South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society
Attn: Name Vote
PO Box 581
Mishawaka, IN 46546

- **Important** - You must include a return address. During the tabulation process, each submitted ballot will be verified against our membership roster to ensure that each member only votes once.

The ballots will then be removed from the envelopes so that the counting process is anonymous.

We will also accept ballots at our April membership meeting on April 14.

Ballots must be received by April 26. Tabulation will then take place and be completed by May 3. The final tally and result will be published in the Summer issue of the *Audubon Leaves*.

- You must be a member in good standing to vote, with a currently active and paid membership on April 14, 2024.

Should the South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society change its legal and official name, effective August 1, 2024?

No, the name should remain South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society.

Yes, the name should be changed to:

Northern Indiana Bird Alliance

North Central Indiana Bird Alliance

Michiana Bird Alliance

Other _____



WOODCOCK WALK

[Carol Goodall](#), Field Trip Chair

Woodcock Walk, Timberdoodle Trek, Bogsucker Bonanza! This fascinating shorebird has several names, and on Saturday April 6th at 8:00 p.m. we will meet at Potato Creek State Park to observe its mating display. The American Woodcock's mating display is called a "sky dance." The male walks around the ground emitting a nasal "peent" call then rises 250 to 300 feet in the air, descending in a spiral while making a twittering sound with his wings.

Where to meet:

After entering Potato Creek State Park, turn left at the fork past the gate house then take the first right off the main road at the sign for Deer Meadows. Continue straight past the restroom (do not turn) to where the road dead ends. We will park in the lot that is west of the playground. For those of you using Google Maps, here is a pin drop for the parking location:

41.543924, -86.363847

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/DqC48XGtDzLrKaEg7>

There may be a gate fee to get into the park. Dress for the weather because you never know what kind of weather we may have in April. The short walk we take may be muddy. Any questions, contact Carol Goodall at fieldtrips@sbeaudubon.org.

For those of you not on Facebook,

to view pictures of our recent events, you may visit our Facebook page via the internet at

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthBendElkhartAudubon/>.

For those of you on Facebook please like our page:

South Bend Elkhart Audubon.

Follow us on Instagram [@sbeaudubon](#).

MORE BIRDERS NEEDED FOR CLIMATE WATCH

[Laura Fuderer](#), *Climate Watch Coordinator*

As the devastating effects of climate change increase, National Audubon's scientists are projecting that some 314 bird species will eventually be at risk (about half the species in North America). Their future ranges are expected to either expand, shift, or contract, as species become "climate stable," "climate threatened," or "climate endangered."

We Audubon members can reduce our carbon footprints by many of the choices we make as individual consumers; and we can urge officials to promote policies and legislation that collectively reduce our carbon emissions. A third way for birders to respond to climate change is to participate in National Audubon's Climate Watch Project.

Our chapter has participated in the Climate Watch Project for several years, but recently a few individuals have had to bow out. I am looking for more members either to replace them or to expand the coverage of our region, which includes the counties of Elkhart and St. Joseph, and portions of Berrien, Cass, and LaPorte counties.

Participants conduct what is called a point count, which means driving to 12 spots with suitable habitat for our target species and spending five minutes at each spot recording the presence of those species. Each group of 12 sites is located within a six-by-six mile block taken from a grid that covers the whole country. The target species in our region are White- and Red-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, American Goldfinch, and Eastern Towhee. (FYI, the White-breasted Nuthatch is already considered "climate endangered.") The counts are only conducted twice a year from January 15th to February 15th and from May 15th to June 15th. Within those time periods participants choose the day when they want to do their count. It typically takes about three hours to drive from point to point, plus around an hour to submit the lists online. Training will be provided, including how to identify the target species if they're not familiar to you. In some blocks it's just a matter of continuing a route that's already been laid out. For blocks that have yet to be claimed by someone, we would explore the area and determine the points together.

If you're interested in this relatively easy bird survey, please contact me at lfuderer@nd.edu.



To right, from top to bottom: White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, American Goldfinch, Eastern Towhee.
Photos © Carol Goodall.

PHOTO QUIZ!

There were three correct responses to the March photo quiz. The winner was Karen LaChance, who correctly identified the bird in the March *Audubon Leaves* as a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Karen was awarded a \$20 gift card to the South Bend Farmer's Market. Congratulations, Karen! Read about the Sharp-shinned Hawk in the article to the right.



© Syd Phillips

The April *Audubon Leaves* Photo Quiz is shown above. All correct answers will be entered in a drawing, and the winner will receive a \$20 gift card. Send responses along with your mailing address to Leaves@sbeaudubon.org with PHOTO QUIZ in the subject line. You can also send a response in the mail to:

Lindsay and Scott Namestnik
26568 SR 4
North Liberty, Indiana 46554

Good luck!

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*ACCIPITER STRIATUS*)

[Lindsay Grossmann](#)

Sharp-shinned Hawks (or “Sharpies”) are the less common of the two typically seen *Accipiter* hawks in northern Indiana, the more common being Cooper’s Hawks (or “Coops”). Being able to identify between the two can be rather difficult for new birders, but is possible with increased study of their life history, behaviors, and overall shape, in addition to a few key field marks.

Both are members of the *Accipiter* genus of hawks, characterized by their aerial-ambush style of hunting, where their shorter wings and longer tail help them zip through the trees at high speeds. In color, adults both have a dark blue-gray back, an orange chest, and a barred black and gray tail.

Sharpies tend to prefer dense forest, although they may frequent the edges of large tracts, especially in the non-breeding season. They typically target smaller birds, thus earning their nickname of “Sparrow Hawk.” Cooper’s, on the other hand, are frequently seen in more open-woods habitat and they eat slightly larger prey, such as Blue Jays and woodpeckers, earning them the moniker “Chicken Hawk.” Depending on your neighborhood dynamics, you may have one or both species nearby.

Sharpies are generally smaller than Coops, but size isn’t reliable as a field mark. Sharpies differ in appearance with a relatively smaller head (which in turn makes their eyes appear larger), thinner legs, and a squared off tail (think “S” = Sharpie, Small, and Squared Tail). Coops, by comparison, have larger heads and longer necks, as well as thicker legs. The top of their head tends to also be dark, or “capped” and their tails are more round or “curved” (“C” = Coop, Cap, and Curved Tail). Try these tricks out with the next *Accipiter* you see!

Source:

Cornell University, All About Birds, accessed online 11 March 2024.
https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Sharp-shinned_Hawk/.

NEW OR RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY OR CHAPTER ONLY

(For a renewal, only include your address if it has changed)

NAME: _____
FULL ADDRESS: _____

____ I want to join or renew my membership in National Audubon Society. I will receive the AUDUBON magazine plus membership in the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society. Make check payable to National Audubon Society for \$20.00.

____ I want to join or renew my membership in the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society only. Make check payable to South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society for \$20.00 (all the money goes to our local Society). I will not receive the AUDUBON magazine.

All memberships will receive the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society newsletter, *Audubon Leaves*. Please send the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society newsletter by:
____ mail _____ email _____ email address _____

Can we contact you via email when necessary (such as to notify you of meeting cancellations)? _____ yes _____ no

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO: SBEAS MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, PO BOX 581, MISHAWAKA, IN 46546.

Audubon Leaves

South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society
Membership Chair - Jude Keltner
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Mishawaka, Indiana 46546

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South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Officers

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(574) 453-6475

Vice President: Carol Goodall

(574) 276-7249

Editor: Lindsay and Scott Namestnik

(574) 656-3511

Membership: Jude Keltner

(574) 276-6348

The South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society publishes the *Audubon Leaves*

nine times a year: February, March, April, May, Summer, September, October, November, and December-January.

Comments and members' articles are welcome; deadline for the May issue is **April 17th**. Send comments or articles to:

Lindsay and Scott Namestnik
26568 State Road 4

North Liberty, Indiana 46554;

or email to: Leaves@sbeaudubon.org.

GO PAPERLESS!

E-subscribe to the *Audubon Leaves* at

Leaves@sbeaudubon.org.

Include your present mailing address,
and put "Leaves" in the subject line.

We'll do the rest!

The South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society is on the web at www.sbeaudubon.org



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