



Audubon Leaves

A Publication of the South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society

November 2023

Volume 75, Number 8

Serving North-Central Indiana Since 1944

NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

[Bruce Cates](#), Program Chair

Our November membership meeting will take place on Sunday, November 12th at 2:00 p.m. at the Elkhart Conservation Club (ECC), 55515 Riviera Drive, Elkhart, Indiana 46514. Our speakers will be Dennis and Andrea Badke from Foxwood Raptor and Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, located in Bristol, Indiana.

If Dennis and Andrea's names seem familiar, that's because they also presented a program at our April 2023 membership meeting at the ECC. That program was all about owls. A special part of that program were the two live owls that Dennis and Andrea brought as "education ambassadors," birds that could not be returned to the wild due to injuries sustained prior to their arrival at Foxwood. November's program will feature some furry, not feathered, "education ambassadors" that Dennis and Andrea will bring and talk all about.

Foxwood was started in 1979. It specializes in raptors and foxes, but cares for other birds and mammals as well. Dennis and Andrea are the wildlife rehabilitators. Each year they take in over 600 orphaned/injured creatures, focusing on rehabilitation and eventual release back into the wild. Educating the public is also a critical function of Foxwood. Please join us to see what interesting furry creatures Dennis and Andrea will introduce us to!

Remember the big, new sign on Riviera Drive that the ECC put up to help guide visitors to their facility. We hope you can make it!

A NEW SANCTUARY CHAIR, BUT WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!

[Tai Gunter](#), President

I am happy to share that Bradley Waelbroeck has volunteered to fill the position of Sanctuary Chair. He was confirmed to this position at our last board meeting. As Bradley steps into this role, we will continue to rely on our strong network of volunteers at sanctuary workdays and pancake breakfasts. We are grateful for Bradley's willingness to step into this position and appreciative of all volunteers that help make the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society thrive.

We are still recruiting for the position of Red Barn Sale Chair. This position involves coordinating the logistics of our annual "Red Barn" rummage sale. This annual event raises money for the Society through the sale of donations from our membership. Duties include volunteer coordination, overseeing donation management in the lead-up to the sale, and managing the sale's operations on the designated day. If you have any questions about this role or are interested in volunteering, please contact me at tai.gunter@sbeaudubon.org.

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.**

NOVEMBER CALENDAR



- 12 Board Meeting at Elkhart Conservation Club, 1 PM
- 12 Membership Meeting and Program at Elkhart Conservation Club, 2 PM
- 15 December-January *Audubon Leaves* Articles Due

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

FROM THE MINUTES

[John Bentley](#), Secretary

President Tai Gunter called the October 8, 2023 SBEAS Membership Meeting at Rum Village Nature Center to order at 2:05 p.m. Thirty-three (33) members and guests, including two children, were in attendance. Tai welcomed everyone and called for bird sightings. Several people reported having seen juncos. Carol Goodall described the disaster that unfolded in Chicago, where a migration surge down Lake Michigan resulted in widespread building strikes overnight, killing thousands of birds.

Tai reported that he and Melissa Gunter will be attending the Audubon National Leadership Conference in Colorado in early November.

The Society is still seeking a Chairperson for the Red Barn Sale Committee. Most of the effort takes place in April, and this is one of the chapter's biggest fundraisers. Interested parties should contact Tai.

Tai introduced Bradley Waelbroeck as the new Sanctuary Chair.

Treasurer's Report

Martha Kummerer reported that the operating checking account (KeyBank) had a balance of \$29,763.15 as of September 30th, and the endowment checking account (Everwise) held \$11,746.35.

Committee Reports

Conservation. Tai reported for Jen Betz that the South Bend Ecological Advocacy Committee needs additional members from the community, and it would be good to have representation there. The deadline to apply is October 31st, and Garry Harrington of Rum Village Nature Center is the Chair.

Education. Melissa Gunter reported that she had staffed a booth at the Wild Ones Native Plant Sale. She mentioned that Elkhart Soil and Water Conservation District also had a booth there, and displayed a flyer for a tree sale that they will be conducting in 2024.

Field Trips. Carol Goodall mentioned that she led two September field trips at Potato Creek State Park and our wildlife sanctuary. A Sandhill Crane trip to Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area is planned for December 2nd.

Hospitality. Alice Bentley thanked refreshment providers for the meeting, Dee Howard and Kay Easton, and asked for volunteers for future meetings.

Membership. Jude Keltner reported that SBEAS has 724 members at present. She reminded members that their expiration dates are on their copies of the *Audubon Leaves* and asked them to renew early.

Programs. Bruce reported that in November Dennis and Andrea Badke will bring furry creatures for their presentation. He then introduced meeting speakers Linda and Gene Matzat.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

[Jude Keltner](#), Membership Chair

We welcome the following new and returning members:

Debra Baker, Carol Beihold, Carl Blount, Melanie Brassell, Mary Cenkush, Barbara Coleman, Jean Deal, Pete Demauro, Elizabeth Hrutkay, Gordon L. Hug, Diana Loveless, Peter W. Miller, Glenn Moyer, Larry Neiswender, Ruth Nifong, Roslyn E Ricker, Martin Rollinger, Eric Roper, Alison Taplin, Paul Tincher, George Zaderej, and Laura Zimmerman.

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

*** REMINDER *** For your convenience, your membership expiration date is printed above the mailing address on the mailed *Audubon Leaves*. If you receive your newsletter by email, the notification email includes the following: "Your membership will expire on mm/dd/yy." To save SBEAS the expense and effort of sending renewal notices, please be mindful of this date and renew promptly.

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.

**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/](https://www.facebook.com/SouthBendElkhartAudubon/)**

**For those of you on Facebook
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Follow us on Instagram [@sbeaudubon](https://www.instagram.com/sbeaudubon).

THE SOUTH BEND-ELKHART AUDUBON SOCIETY NAME

Tai Gunter, President

In recent months, Audubon societies across the country have been grappling with the controversial legacy of John James Audubon, the organization's namesake. Audubon was a prolific artist and naturalist who helped to popularize birdwatching in America, but he was also a slave owner with a history of racist comments and actions. In March, the National Audubon Society decided to keep its name, but to acknowledge and address Audubon's racism. However, many local chapters have chosen to change their names, arguing that the Audubon name is too closely associated with racism and exclusion. Audubon owned and sold enslaved people and dismissed the abolitionist movement. His writings include many racist remarks that we cannot tolerate as an organization.

The Board of the South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society is committed to thoughtful discussion, conversation, and ultimately a decision on the future of our name. As a Board, one of our goals is to increase the diversity of our membership and provide a welcoming space for anyone interested in conservation and birds. It is important that our name reflects our values of inclusivity and doesn't discourage anyone from joining us in our mission.

Changing the name would have a negative impact on our brand recognition and recognition within our community. The South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society has been a fixture in north-central Indiana for nearly 80 years, anchoring the conservation movement here in our area. Our name brings credibility, history, and trustworthiness. To change our name would require regaining this notoriety within our region; this may impact our ability to fulfill our mission of protecting birds and our natural spaces. Administratively, this would require major changes to our constitution, bylaws, branding, marketing, mailings, properties, and legal filings.

This is not a decision that the Board takes lightly, nor one that we will rush into. If the membership of our chapter feels that we should consider such a change, a committee will be formed to review the process and better understand our options. A new name that is more representative of our mission and goals would have to be selected. We are still a long way off from this decision but want to take this time to solicit your feedback as a chapter. Your opinions are valuable and we want to hear them. If you have thoughts to share on this please visit sbeaudubon.org/namechange to submit your comments. This is an anonymous form and will help drive the decisions of the Board. We will keep the membership updated as our Board continues to work through this decision.

DECEMBER BIRDING FIELD TRIP TO JASPER-PULASKI FISH & WILDLIFE AREA

Carol Goodall, Field Trip Chair

The Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area (JPFWA) field trip has normally been our November field trip, but the peak Sandhill Crane count has been a couple weeks later for the last couple of years. On December 2, 2023 we will be traveling to JPFWA to witness the gathering of thousands of Sandhill Cranes. This is one of Indiana's greatest natural spectacles. Approximately an hour before sunset large flocks of Sandhill Cranes kite into JPFWA's Goose Pasture to gab and socialize.

We will start our afternoon at Kiwani Marsh in Kankakee Fish & Wildlife Area to look for waterfowl. From there it is approximately 30 minutes to JPFWA. We may make a brief stop along the way to look for a Golden Eagle.

After viewing the Sandhills we will possibly head for dinner and socializing in North Judson. You may join us for all or any part of our trip. Dress for the weather (layers are best) and bring your binoculars. It is often cold and windy on the Sandhill Crane viewing stand. You may also wish to pack a lunch or snacks. It is a moderate walk from the parking area to the Sandhill Crane viewing area. There is also limited handicapped parking closer to the viewing stand and the viewing stand is handicapped accessible.

Here is our itinerary (all times are EST):

12:30 p.m. – Meet at the north end of Kohl's parking lot on Ireland and Miami in South Bend for carpooling or to caravan.

1:45 p.m. – Arrive at Kankakee Fish & Wildlife Area Kiwani Marsh, 4320 Toto Rd., North Judson, IN. Here is a pindrop for Kiwani Marsh (41°15'36.0"N 86°47'24.7"W):

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/rQVSNUuDGTrLfomj8>

3:00-3:15 p.m. – Leave Kiwani Marsh for approximately 30-minute drive to JPFWA Sandhill Crane Viewing Area.

3:45-4:00 p.m. – Arrive at JPFWA, 5353 County Road 1650 W., Medaryville, IN.

We will stay at JPFWA until dusk. Sunset is approximately 5:30 p.m. We will then depart for North Judson for possible dinner. Dinner arrangements will be decided the day of the field trip.

Any questions, call, text (text is best), or email me, Carol Goodall, at (574) 276-7249 or fieldtrips@sbeaudubon.org.

28TH ANNUAL ELKHART COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

[Ronda DeCaire](#), *Elkhart County CBC Compiler*

The South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society and the Elkhart County Parks are calling upon volunteers for the annual Elkhart County Christmas Bird Count, which will be held on Saturday, December 30, 2023.

Volunteer bird counters can participate two ways:

Field Observers will be assigned an area and given maps to count birds within a designated part of Elkhart County. Teams will bird by car and foot from dawn to dusk. Participants should dress for the weather and bring binoculars and field guides. Field observers will meet at Ox Bow House Shelter in Ox Bow County Park on Saturday, December 30th at 7:30 a.m. Ox Bow County Park is located at 23033 County Road 45 in Dunlap. Field sections can also be assigned prior to the date.

Feeder Counters can count birds in their yards. Participants must count the highest number of each species seen at once in their yard on that day. Feeder counts can take place during any amount of time and counters are welcome to count all birds seen from their yard, especially along waterways.

The Elkhart County count circle extends from the state line on the north end to Waterford Mills on the south end, and includes the towns of Bristol, Middlebury, Goshen, and the eastern portion of Elkhart. The center of the 7.5-mile radius for the count circle is the intersection of County Roads 18 and 23.

Bird watchers are encouraged to contact Ronda DeCaire with the Elkhart County Parks at (574) 535-6458 or rdecaire@elkhartcounty.com to register their name, address, phone number, and email to receive further directions for the bird count.

SOUTH BEND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - DECEMBER 16, 2023

[Lindsay Grossmann](#), *South Bend CBC Compiler*

Help wanted! We need both feeder counters and field observers for the South Bend Christmas Bird Count, to be held on Saturday, December 16th. This circle is centered on downtown South Bend and extends out 7.5 miles in each direction covering a variety of habitat. Please contact Lindsay Grossmann at lindsay.grossmann@sbeaudubon.org or (574) 807-4443 to sign up! Volunteers of all ages and skill levels are encouraged to take part in this traditional event.



Northern Cardinal.
Pamela Underhill karaz/Audubon Photography Awards

Christmas Bird Count 2023
Come out and help us this year!

See articles for more info.

Photo provided by Carol Goodall.

South Bend Circle: Saturday, December 16th Contact Lindsay Grossmann lindsay.grossmann@sbeaudubon.org	Elkhart County Circle: Saturday, December 30th Contact Ronda DeCaire rdecaire@elkhartcounty.com
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PHOTO QUIZ!

There were three correct responses to the October photo quiz. The winner was Elizabeth Hohman, who correctly identified the bird in the October *Audubon Leaves* as a Blue-headed Vireo (formerly known as the Solitary Vireo). Elizabeth was awarded a \$20 gift card to the South Bend Farmer's Market. Congratulations, Elizabeth! Read about the Blue-headed Vireo in the article to the right.



© Patrick Randall

The November *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!

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*VIREO SOLITARIUS*)

[Lindsay Grossmann](#)

Arguably one of our more spectacularly colored vireos, the Blue-headed Vireo sports an olive-green back, a greenish-yellow side, mostly white belly and throat, and the namesake (grayish) blue head. Their white spectacles (complete eye ring forward to the bill) give them quite the distinguished look. They have the typical thick bill look that the vireo family is known for. They like both coniferous and deciduous habitats.

Look for them during migration mid-level in mature trees, foraging for invertebrates, moving slow and methodically amongst the branches (as compared to the quick action of warblers and even quicker movement of kinglets). Blue-headed Vireos nest in Southeast Canada and New England and also in the Appalachian Mountains. They typically migrate through north-central Indiana in May and October. Data indicates their populations are increasing throughout much of the range, so they are a fairly common bird to see during that time frame. They winter in the southeastern United States and Mexico. An interesting note: the Latin name of this bird points to the fact that it was formerly called the Solitary Vireo, but that species was split into three different species in 1997.

Source:

Cornell University, All About Birds, accessed online 11 October 2023. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Blue-headed_Vireo/.

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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South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Officers

President: Tai Gunter

(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 December-January issue is **November 15th**. 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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