



Audubon Leaves

A Publication of the South Bend - Elkhart Audubon Society

May 2024

Volume 76, Number 4

Serving North-Central Indiana Since 1944

MAY FIELD TRIP TO ST. MARY'S

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

On May 4th we will bird the St. Mary's Nature Area. The Nature Area trail is a wonderful place to see neotropical migrants in the spring. This will be a lengthy walk, but most of the terrain is flat. The trail along the river can be a little precarious so wear sturdy shoes. Plan to be out most of the morning. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. in the northwest corner of the parking lot at the end of Madeleva Drive. To get there turn west off US-31 on Brother Andre Drive (this is the road to the south of The Inn at St. Mary's). Turn at the first right, which is Madeleva Drive. Madeleva Drive curves around and dead ends near our meetup location. Our meetup place is located here: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/DwXBQWvAHxtdAB7v6>.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars (if you have them), insect repellent, water, and snacks (if you wish).

SBEAS CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

[Tai Gunter](#), *President*

At our April 14th meeting, the membership voted to accept the slate of executive positions and directors for their upcoming terms. These are 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

In addition, we are also welcoming Joel Ralston to the Board to serve in the Director position vacated by Mark Gidley as he moves to Treasurer. Joel's term will run through 2026. Please join me in welcoming Joel to the Board and supporting our existing Board members in their new positions.

MEMORIAL DAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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

It's time for the first pancake breakfast of the year! Come out and join us at the Sanctuary, eat some breakfast, and see some wildlife! From 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on May 27th, we will be serving pancakes (either plain, blueberry, or pecan), along with syrup, butter, coffee, tea, and milk. Remember to bring your own table service (plate, silverware, mug, etc.). Any donations we get help to pay for seed, supplies, and future projects at the Sanctuary. I need some volunteers to help with the event. If you are interested in volunteering send an email to sanctuary@sbeaudubon.org.

MAY FIELD TRIP TO POTATO CREEK

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

On May 11th we will go to Potato Creek State Park on another search for neotropical migrants. We will walk the bike trail from the West Lot to Potato Creek. This is a lengthy, somewhat hilly walk but the trail is paved so it makes the trekking easier. Plan to be out most of the morning. Meet at the West Lot at 7:00 a.m. This is the lot at the west end of the lake near the west Osprey nest. It is located here: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/eYcgqKeVk9UBWvh7A>.

Dress for the weather. Wear comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars (if you have them), insect repellent, water, and snacks (if you wish). There is a gate fee to get into the park.

MAY CALENDAR



- 4 Field Trip to St. Mary's Nature Area, 7:30 AM
- 11 Field Trip to Potato Creek State Park, 7 AM
- 15 Summer *Audubon Leaves* Articles Due
- 16-19 Indiana Dunes Birding Festival
- 22 Meet the Naturalist at the Sanctuary, 6 PM
- 25 Sanctuary Work Day, 8 AM
- 27 Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast 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 April 14, 2024 SBEAS Membership Meeting at Rum Village Nature Center was called to order by President Tai Gunter at 2:00 p.m. Fifty-two (52) members and guests were in attendance. Tai welcomed everyone and called for bird sightings. Eastern Towhees are back, Wild Turkeys are displaying, and an American Woodcock was spotted at the Sanctuary.

Election of Officers

Tai introduced the following slate of nominees:

President: Tai Gunter

Vice President: Carol Goodall

Secretary: John Bentley

Treasurer: Mark Gidley

Director to 2027: Bruce Cates

Director to 2027: Jeet Raval

There were no further nominations, and Tai called for a motion to approve the slate. Jim Fuermeyer so moved, Marie Smith seconding, and the motion carried. Tai reported that Joel Ralston has been appointed to complete the term of Mark Gidley, who resigned his Directorship to accept the Treasurer nomination.

Name Change Voting Procedure

Tai described the processes for collecting ballots for the name change vote. People who send in the ballot that was printed in the *Audubon Leaves* must do so by April 26th, but people who wished to vote at the April membership meeting could do so by submitting the ballot in a sealed envelope with their name on the exterior. All ballots will be kept sealed until the voting period is over, when they will be tabulated.

Treasurer's Report

Martha Kummerer reported that the operating account stood at \$25,679.19 on March 31st, and the Endowment account at \$21,094.44, of which \$6,495.24 will be transferred to the Dickey account when the CD matures. The Dickey account will fund the Riemenschneider Scholarships. The 2023 Annual Appeal has to date brought in \$8,340 from 129 donors.

Committee Reports

Conservation. Jen Betz reported that she wants an active Conservation Committee, and mentioned that former Conservation Chair Laura Federer has volunteered to serve on the committee. One of the things she would like the committee to do is research data on window kills of birds in downtown South Bend. She also reported that St. Joseph County's Comprehensive Land Use Task Force will receive a report from the consultants on May 14th.

Education. Melissa Gunter reported that she gave a program at Providence Nursing Home on April 10th, and will give one for home-schooled students at the Kroc Center on April 24th. She will need volunteers to staff an Audubon table at upcoming events such as Elkhart Envirofest, Riverfest, and Plant Pride 2024.

Field Trips. Carol Goodall reported that 15 or so people attended the Woodcock Walk and were treated to quite a display. Carol is loading up the schedule over the next month to take advantage of the Spring migration.

Hospitality. Alice Bentley reported that refreshments at the meeting were provided by Margo Shearman-Howard, Dee Howard, and Natasha Iuston. She asked for hospitality volunteers for the 2024-25 season.

Programs. Bruce Cates introduced Jan McGowan, who gave a presentation after the business meeting on the Wild Ones organization and native plantings.

Publicity. Carol mentioned that the Society's Facebook page has 2,500 followers, and that she has reactivated our Instagram account.

Sanctuary. Bradley Waelbroeck reported that the April work day work crew pulled seven bags of garlic mustard, removed a downed tree, and installed two new birdhouses (built by Merilee Britt). Bradley is still fighting with the tractor's electrical system. He and Tai procured a battery and have installed lights in the winter quarters.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR CONSERVATION!

[Jen Betz](#), *Conservation Chair*

If you are passionate about the environment and conservation, please consider spending some time with the newly formed SBEAS Conservation Committee! With increased development in our area, an election year, and increasing impacts of climate change, now is the best time to get involved in shaping the “what and how” of our conservation work. Possibilities include data collection, advocacy, and joining with others in conservation efforts. Please contact me at jen.betz@sbeaudubon.org if you are interested, and know that there are many ways to contribute. No matter how much (or how little) time you have, we would love to have you join! And if you find yourself feeling like you want to “do something” but aren’t sure where to begin, we are just the place for you!

MEET THE NATURALIST

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

Take a mid-week nature break! Join me on May 22nd at 6:00 p.m. for a relaxing walk around our Wildlife Sanctuary. We always hope to see some birds, but you never know what other interesting things we might find. Our Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 59395 Clover Rd., Mishawaka, Indiana.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

[Jude Keltner](#), *Membership Chair*

We welcome the following new and returning members:

Mary Bunch, Welma Craft, Kortney Dibert, Diane & Eren Erdogan, Joshua Ingle, Alyssa Kauffman, David Klink, Madison Lake, Richard Lanphear, Patricia Lundberg, Sharon Mast, Julie Shelton, Anna Speck, and J A Whitmer.

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.

MAY DAYS AT THE SANCTUARY

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

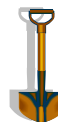
Summer will be here before we know it and the first thing I want to remind you to do is use sun block! The rays from the sun can do great harm to your body including increasing your risk for skin cancer. Use a sun block to block out harmful rays and let the good stuff in. Another thing to think about: as the weather warms up, the bugs will return to us! When coming to the Sanctuary it is a good idea to bring some bug spray.

We had a great amount of help at our April work day and did a number of things including working on the tractor, putting up two new nest boxes that were made by one of our members, pulling a drainage hose, and pulling seven large bags of garlic mustard. Our next work day is the Saturday before Memorial Day. If you are interested in helping out at the Sanctuary at any time reach out to sanctuary@sbeaudubon.org.



American Woodcock, Bryant Park, New York, New York, Vincent Iadevaia/ Audubon Photography Awards

REMINDER: **SANCTUARY WORK DAY**



**SATURDAY,
MAY 25, 2024,
8:00 A.M.**



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SUMMER EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Melissa Gunter, Education Chair

This summer is full of educational events, and I need your help to cover them! If you are interested in helping with any of the following dates, please email me at education@sbeaudubon.org. Even if you can only volunteer one or two hours of your time, I would still greatly appreciate it! The volunteer duties at all of these events will be similar in nature. We will have a booth with informational materials about birds and our organization as well as a bird related activity for the kids to do. Your job is to simply talk to people that visit our booth about birds!

- Natural Resources Day: July 2nd, 1 p.m. – 6 p.m. @ St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds, 5117 S. Ironwood Dr., South Bend, IN 46614
- Plant Pride: July 20th, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. @ 909 Portage Ave., South Bend, IN 46616
- Envirofest: August 10th, 3 p.m. – 8 p.m. @ Island Park, 200 E. Sycamore St., Elkhart, IN 46516
- Riverfest: August 24th, 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. @ Riverbend Park, 511 E. Warren St., Middlebury, IN 46540

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A BABY BIRD

From Project Feederwatch

As the nesting season ramps up, so do encounters with baby birds. If you find a baby bird, the first thing to do is to determine if it is a nestling or a fledgling. If the bird is fully feathered and alert, it is probably a fledgling and should be left alone. Most baby birds people find are fledglings that have left the nest but haven't quite gotten the hang of flying yet and are still under their parents' care. Move away from the bird, and if you wish, watch from a distance to see that an adult is in the vicinity and caring for the bird.

If you find a bird that is unable to hop or walk and has areas of bare skin, it could be a nestling, in which case you can try to find a nest in the vicinity. If you can find the nest, you can place the bird back into the nest and then move away to watch from a distance.

When in doubt, your best course of action is to contact a wildlife rehabilitator. The Humane Society of the United States has a website that lists wildlife rehabilitators by state. In North America, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act prohibits handling or possessing most wild birds without a federal permit, so do not keep or attempt to raise any wild birds that you find. Learn more about the best way to respond to a baby bird on the Cornell Lab's NestWatch website.



Killdeer chick. Danny Brown/Audubon Photography Awards

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](https://www.instagram.com/sbeaudubon).

PHOTO QUIZ!

There were three correct responses to the April photo quiz. The winner was Charles Kiefer, who correctly identified the bird in the April *Audubon Leaves* as a Pied-billed Grebe. Charles was awarded a \$20 gift card to the South Bend Farmer's Market. Congratulations, Charles! Read about the Pied-billed Grebe in the article to the right.



© Scott Bowers

The May *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!

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*PODILYMBUS PODICEPS*)

[Lindsay Grossmann](#)

A small, chunky water bird, the Pied-billed Grebe is the most common grebe seen locally. Overall, they are brown with a silver bill on which is a vertical black stripe during breeding season. This bicolor is what gives them the “pied” part of their name. Males and females look alike, but nonbreeding plumage birds lack the colorful bill and are just brown all over.

You will most likely find this bird in a marsh, pond, or lake, where its head will look disproportionately large compared to its small body. Although they may superficially resemble a duck, they are in fact more closely related to flamingos than ducks. They have large, lobed feet (not webbed like ducks), which are far at the back of their bodies. This makes them superb swimmers, but not so good at walking on land. Hence, they spend the majority of their time on the water, even setting their nests on floating vegetation, typically in tall vegetation. They dive underwater to feed on aquatic life such as insects, crayfish, and small fish.

Finally, a fun fact: they are like little submarines in that they can dive very quickly and submerge themselves at various levels by trapping water in their feathers. With high maneuverability, they can use this to both escape predators and catch food.

Source:

Cornell University, All About Birds, accessed online 17 April 2024. https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Pied-billed_Grebe/

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

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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 Summer issue is **May 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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