



A chapter of the National Audubon Society

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS BIRD AND NATURE ALLIANCE



FEBRUARY – MARCH 2026

The Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance celebrates diversity in nature and among the people and communities with whom we work. We are dedicated to providing an inclusive, welcoming, and judgement-free atmosphere where people of all experience levels, abilities, identity groups, and cultural backgrounds are actively encouraged to participate.

Scan QR to visit



nwilbirdnaturealliance.org

NIBNA MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Most programs are held the first Tuesday of the month (September through May) at St. John United Church of Christ, 1010 Park Blvd., Freeport and begin at 7:00 p.m., followed by refreshments. All programs and events are open to the public. The building is fully accessible.

Check the current newsletter or our website for specific monthly details, special events or any changes to the usual time and place.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Please note: schedule and location of programs are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Please see newsletter and website for up-to-date information.

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER:

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47th Annual Birdathon
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Feature Bird Photo by: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Mdf
Information from allaboutbirds.org

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quisculus* | Common Grackles are familiar inhabitants of wet, open woodland and marshes as well as in suburbs, parks, and agricultural fields. A good way to find them is to scan large flocks of blackbirds and starlings. The tallest, longest-tailed blackbirds you see will most likely be Common Grackles.

FISHES OF THE CHICAGO REGION

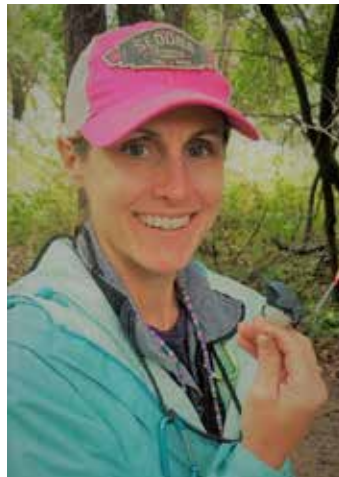
Presenter Phillip Willink

Tuesday, February 10 | 7:00 pm

(NOTE: CHANGE FROM REGULAR MEETING NIGHT)

St John United Church of Christ
1010 S. Park Blvd. | Freeport, IL

(Continued on page 5)



CITIZEN SCIENCE AND BIRD CONSERVATION:

How utilizing birders can help inform policy and benefit birds on a much larger scale.

Presenter Tara Beveroth

Tuesday, March 3 | 7:00 pm

St John United Church of Christ
1010 S. Park Blvd. | Freeport, IL

(Continued on page 5)

43RD ANNUAL BANQUET

Botanical Humor:

You Never Knew Plants Were So Funny

Presented by Christopher Benda

Tuesday, March 31

Highland Community College | Freeport, IL

(Continued on page 5)



CALENDAR



WOODCOCK WATCHES

Saturday, March 14, 7:00 p.m.

Coordinator: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204 or 779-302-7281

Friday, March 20, 7:00 p.m.

Happy Equinox!
Coordinator: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204 or 779-302-7281

Thursday, March 26, 7:00 p.m.

Coordinator: Mary Blackmore
815-938-3204 or 779-302-7281

Join us for any or all of these evening outings to watch and listen for American Woodcocks performing their amazing courtship displays. Most years we are treated to both flight and ground displays which are fantastic!

The woodcock's "Sky Dance" itself is part ground-strutting and part zig-zagging flight, barely visible in the early evening sky. More fascinating perhaps are the variety of sounds that go with it, the repetitious vocal "peent!" followed by the twittering and chirping sounds made when air rushes through primary flight feathers during the bird's flight. On a quiet evening it is pure audio magic.

In the past we have had 3-6 woodcocks performing their twilight displays for about 3-4 weeks. When and if this begins is an educated guess, so be sure to call the listed leader to register in advance and to receive confirmation that the birds have returned and that the weather is suitable.

Our Elkhorn Creek Biodiversity Preserve is located about 3 miles southwest of Forreton in the southeast corner of West Grove and Freeport Roads. The parking lot is off of West Grove Rd. We do some walking so be aware that the ground is uneven in some areas. Bring a flashlight.

Make time to experience this unique avian harbinger of spring. The joy will be all yours.

P February 10 – Monthly Program, 7:00 p.m., St John United Church of Christ. Fishes of The Chicago Region, Presenter Phillip Willink. **NOTE: CHANGE FROM REGULAR MEETING NIGHT** (see cover for details)

S February 13 – **RESCHEDULED FROM NOVEMBER!** NIBNA Preserves Reflections and Potluck Lunch for Elkhorn Creek and Silver Creek preserves volunteers at 10:30 a.m. We'll gather at the home of Randy and Nancy Ocken (815-440-5768), 3445 N. Union Rd., Polo. Bring a dish to pass; beverages, table service and soup will be provided. We'll discuss 2025 preserves stewardship and consider ideas for 2026 before we have lunch. All preserves volunteers from stewardship or educational activities are welcome to participate. Please RSVP to Ockens if you plan to attend.

O February 14 – Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count! (see page 6 for more details)

F February 17 – Nicholas Conservatory Field Trip (see page 3 for details)

E February 18 – NLI event with Dexter Patterson, Rockford, 5:00 p.m. (see page 3 for details)

E February 18 – Climate Change Speaker Series at Freeport Public Library at 6:30 p.m. (see page 4 for details)

P March 3 – Monthly Program, 7:00 p.m., St John United Church of Christ. Citizen Science and Bird Conservation: How utilizing birders can help inform policy and benefit birds on a much larger scale. Presenter Tara Beveroth (see cover for details)

E March 6 – Discussing the Issues, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Freeport Public Library (one of the meeting rooms) (see page 3 for details)

O March 10 – NIBNA Board meeting at St John United Church of Christ 7:00 p.m.

O March 14 – Woodcock Watch, 7:00 p.m. (see adjacent for details)

E March 18 – Climate Change Speaker Series at Freeport Public Library at 6:30 p.m. (see page 4 for details)

O March 20 – Woodcock Watch, 7:00 p.m. (see adjacent for details)

O March 21 – Deadline for registering for the Annual Spring Banquet

O March 26 – Woodcock Watch, 7:00 p.m. (see adjacent for details)

E March 31 – Annual Banquet at Highland Community College at 5:30 p.m. (see cover for details)

F March 28 – Field Trip to Nygren Wetland, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (see page 4 for details)

E April 8 – Climate Change Speaker Series at Freeport Public Library at 6:30 p.m. (see page 4 for details)

O April 18 – 2026 Midwest Crane Count (see page 7 for details)

O May 9 – Save the Date for the Stephenson County Spring Bird Count.



VIEW OUR CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS AT:

nwilbirdnaturealliance.org/news/calendar/

M Meeting

F Field Trip

S Stewardship

P Program

E Event

O Other



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Dayona Smith – Dixon
Francis Dres – Dixon
Tim Cloutier – Dixon
Ken and Julie Beach – Freeport
Barbara Kitz – Freeport
Lois Ondracek – Rock Falls

FIELD TRIPS, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



FIELD TRIP: NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

1354 N 2nd Street, Rockford, IL

Tuesday, February 17
10–11:30 a.m. | Carpool 9:15 a.m.

Coordinator:
Chris Kruger 815-238-9259

Take a break from winter! Join us for a tour of Illinois' third largest conservatory. Located on the Rock River in Rockford, the facility offers tropical plants, water features, sculptures, and seating areas. The annual orchid exhibit includes hundreds of tropical orchids creatively arranged throughout.

Admission on Tropical Tuesdays is \$5. Please bring cash so we can pay as a group. Carpool from Harbor Freight in Freeport at 9:15 am or meet us at the conservatory at 10 am. Expected return time approx 12:15 pm. Optional lunch, some of us will be going to a local restaurant when we return to Freeport.

Call Chris Kruger at 815-238-9259 to sign up by February 10th. We will need 10-12 people for a guided tour.



DEXTER PATTERSON MEET & GREET

BOOK SIGNING AND PROGRAM

RPL Nordlof Center
118 N. Main St. (downtown), Rockford

Wednesday, February 18
3:00–7:00 p.m.

Free for General Admission
\$50 for VIP reception/seat

NIBNA is happy to be a supporter of this event and sharing this to our membership. The Natural Land Institute is excited to bring author Dexter Patterson to the Rockford community to share his passion and experiences of birding and writing his new book, *Birds of the Great Lakes*, published in October of 2025. Self-titled "Bird Nerd" and co-founder of the BIPOC Birding Club of Wisconsin, Patterson, will share his enthusiasm for birding with the audience, inspiring them to look for and learn about birds while spending time in nature.

EVENT TIMELINE:

- 3:00 p.m. – VIP Reception, Limited \$50 tickets available
- 4:00 p.m. – Lobby opens - information tables, refreshments, book sales, kids' activities
- 5:30 p.m. – Dexter Patterson begins program on stage of Sullivan Theatre
- 6:30 p.m. – Book sales and signing after the program

More information and how to register for the event is found on the following website: naturalland.org/event/dexter-patterson-meet-greet-book-signing-and-program/ or call the NLI office at 815-964-6666.

DISCUSSING THE ISSUES

Freeport Public Library (meeting room)

Friday, March 6 | 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

How can Planet Earth provide adequate nutrition for a predicted ten billion humans without seriously degrading its ecological integrity? A chart in a past issue of National Geographic magazine depicts how a group of scientists think this can be accomplished. We will discuss this chart and perhaps other food related issues.

Copies of the chart can be obtained at the February and March meetings, or by calling Richard Benning (815-865-5279).

FIELD TRIP: NYGREN WETLAND

Saturday, March 28 | 9:30-11:30 a.m.

March is a time for waterfowl migration, and Nygren Wetland, located just west of Rockton, is a much used stopover place. An observation deck there at 3714 W Rockton Road can provide good looks at ducks, geese, herons, pelicans and more. Other observation spots are located around the perimeter of the wetland area which we may also walk to. At the conclusion participants can decide whether or not to go to a local eatery for lunch.

Those interested can carpool from the Harbor Freight parking lot at 8:30.

Call Richard Benning (815-865-5279) to register.



November 12th Trip to Severson Dells | photo by Leanne Konkell Briggs

SPEAKER SERIES AT FREEPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE COST OF LIVING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE IN NORTHWEST ILLINOIS



The Environmental Study Group is excited to announce a lecture series to discuss the impact of climate change on our daily lives. The series is offered as a way to share information and stories about how climate change has impacted people in Northwest Illinois and how climate change may affect our lives in the future. The series will be held at the Freeport Public Library, located at 100 E Douglas Street in Freeport, and is offered in partnership with the Northwest Illinois Trails Foundation, the University of Illinois Extension, the Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance, Illinois Sierra Club, and the City of Freeport.

The series is free and open to the public. The sessions include a dynamic group of speakers from January through May.

January 20

Kicking the series off on Tuesday, January 20th will be Dr. Don Wuebbles, the Harry E. Preble Emeritus Professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Illinois who will provide an overview and update on the science and risks of climate change and getting to solutions.

February 18

On Wednesday, February 18th Dr. Jack Herrmann, Professor Emeritus from the Center for One Health and the School of Public Health, University of Illinois, will discuss the health impacts of climate change.

March 18

On Wednesday, March 18th Dr. Trent Ford, our Illinois State Climatologist, will

present on the climate change impacts in Illinois from farms to forests.

April 8th

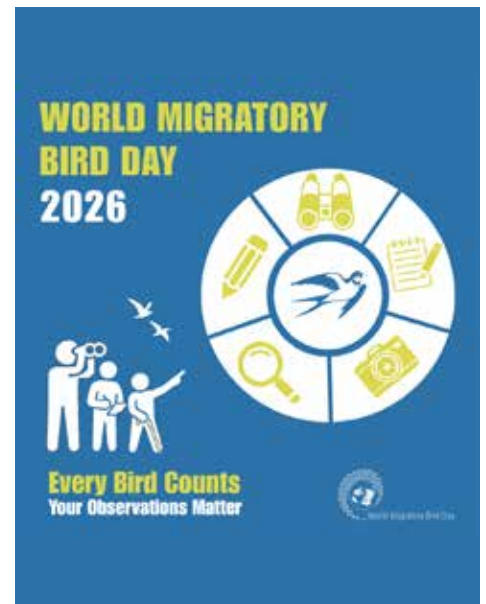
On Wednesday, April 8th Jen Walling, Executive Director of the Illinois Environmental Council will present information on state and local policies that affect climate change and their financial implications for citizens.

May 6

To wrap up the series, on Wednesday, May 6th Dr. Jessica Rudnick, State Climate Specialist with the University of Illinois Extension will be joined by City of Freeport leadership and staff to discuss climate risks and resilience at the local and state levels.

Each session will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will include a lecture as well as time for questions and discussion on the topics presented. Refreshments will be provided.

For further information, refer to:
freeportpubliclibrary.librarymarket.com
or contact Jack Herrmann at
jackherrmann15@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE! ANNUAL WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY EVENT

**"EVERY BIRD COUNTS – YOUR
OBSERVATIONS MATTER"**

Saturday, May 9
Oakdale Nature Preserve

See our April/May newsletter for more
details soon!

A great night of storytellers!

*Amazing sloth storytellers from the
December 2nd program: Carol Beatty,
Richard Benning, Mary Blackmore, Judi
Deszcz, Kara Gallup, and Teresa Smith
Photo by Juliet Moderow*



Continued...

Tuesday, March 3 Program

There are too few scientists to accomplish what an organized and dedicated group of citizen scientists can. In Illinois, we have a long-standing birding community that is multigenerational. While many birders participate in multiple citizen science programs, some may be underutilized due to a lack of awareness regarding the impact they can have. Come learn about some citizen science programs in Illinois and beyond, and how these programs can assist in informing science policy whilst providing support for future investigations.

Tara Beveroth is an Avian Ecologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey. In addition to having worked on many research projects over the last 20+ years with INHS she also coordinates or co-coordinates multiple citizen science programs including the Illinois Spring Bird Count and more recently the Illinois Breeding Bird Survey. In 2019, she also started a local migratory bird banding station that she operates with the assistance of fellow U of I staff, graduate students, and at times undergraduate students. •

**CHRISTMAS BIRD
COUNT SUMMARY
IN THE NEXT
NEWSLETTER**



As of the newsletter deadline time, all of the data for the Freeport circle Christmas Bird Count has not been received by the compiler. Expect a summary and analysis of the data in the next NIBNA Newsletter.

Freeport Circle CBC Compiler

– Richard Benning

Continued...

Tuesday, February 10 Program

Phillip Willink is one of the authors of this new book and will present on the “Fishes of the Chicago Region.” Encompassing southern Lake Michigan, northeastern Illinois, and adjacent areas of Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, the Chicago Region is home to rare habitats supporting diverse fish populations. From small creeks to large rivers and from small ponds to one of the world’s largest freshwater ecosystems, Lake Michigan, these systems are home to some 164 fish species representing 31 families. We invite you to come out and learn about these unique and special animals in our backyard waters. “Fishes of the Chicago Region will be a sought-after item among biologists, teaching institutions, anglers, and naturalists not only in Chicagoland but in other areas as well. This book will be an invaluable resource for those passionate about fishes.” — Jeremy Tiemann, associate aquatic ecologist, Prairie Research Institute

Philip Willink is an aquatic scientist that received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, then worked at The Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, and Illinois Natural History Survey. He has also served on numerous boards and committees related to aquatic conservation. His primary specialty is fishes, more specifically, how fish communities change over time and whether these changes are in response to natural or anthropogenic factors. His professional focus has evolved into taking scientific research and making the leap to actionable conservation and management initiatives and policy. •

Continued...

Tuesday, March 31 Banquet

Spring is the perfect time for humor and we will have plenty of it on Tuesday, March 31st (the day before April Fool’s Day). Our annual spring banquet will be held on Tuesday, March 31st at Highland Community College and we are delighted to have Christopher Benda (a.k.a. Illinois Botanizer) presenting our program this year. Chris has been teaching about plants for over 12 years and during that time has developed a unique teaching style that includes lots of puns, jokes, and whimsical pop culture references.

The program is sure to keep you entertained and equipped with fun ways to learn about plants and teach others about plants. Join us for a great meal with locally raised turkey from Hollyhock Hill Farms in Sterling and sweetcorn from Drake’s Farm in Baileyville and a program that is sure to add some light humor to your day! Not to mention you will be all set for April Fools Day!

The deadline for reserving your meal for this event is March 21st, however reservations are not necessary to attend the program (no meal) which starts at 7:30 p.m. Further details about the banquet can be found at nwilbirdnaturealliance.org or by calling Tim at 815-835-5109. The cost for the program only is \$5 for adults with no charge for children and students.

Registration forms will be mailed late in February. Check our website or your mailbox for future information regarding our spring banquet. •

PARTICIPATE IN THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT!

Participate in one of the largest citizen science bird-counting opportunities! The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was launched in 1998 and is now an inter-organizational effort between the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society, and Birds Canada. The GBBC is held in a particular weekend every February with this year falling between February 13 – 16. Participation in the GBBC began in North America, but has now expanded to many individuals participating all around the world!

You can participate with us or on your own in one of the following ways:

1) Join Education Chair Juliet Moderow on Saturday, February 14 at 1:00 p.m. at Krape Park. Meet outside at the Krape Community Building and from there we will count birds for about an hour. Please dress appropriately for the weather. We will combine stationary birding as well as observing along accessible paths. This

event is open to all ages and inclusive to all abilities! Bring your family along for a nice outdoor activity. Please bring binoculars if you have them but I will also provide binoculars to borrow.

Please call Juliet at 201-233-0946 or contact by email at nwilbirdnaturealliance@gmail.com to sign up in case she needs to contact you for any cancellations. (I would cancel for heavy snow or ice, but otherwise, this would be an all-weather event!)

2) Participate at home anytime during the dates of February 13-16. This could be a great activity to do with friends, students, colleagues, or family! First, choose your location, watch birds for 15 minutes or more at least once over these four days, identify all of the birds you see or hear, and then most importantly, enter your data on the GBBC site. birdcount.org/ (Contact Juliet if you need help with this)

Please share any photos and/or lists by email for us to include in the next newsletter as well!



Birdathon

Your money goes where the birds go



WANTED: BIRDATHON BIRDERS!

If you enjoy watching birds during spring migration, we invite you to join our 2026 Birdathon fundraiser on Sunday, May 3!

Participating as a Birdathon birder is not only fun, but it is also rewarding! Your efforts result in funds being raised for several organizations involved in bird conservation work along the Mississippi Flyway and in Central America, the winter home to many of “our” birds.

Last year's Birdathon raised over \$3,600 that was distributed to National Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative, Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, Stewards of the

Upper Mississippi River Refuge, the Belize Audubon Society, and our organization, the Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance. All of the groups work to improve habitat along the migration routes of our feathered friends, and to provide educational opportunities for the public.

Birdathon participation is easy: get pledges, go birdwatching on Birdathon Day and collect pledges.

• **GET PLEDGES** – Names of Birdathon birders (including yours!) will appear on a pledge form in our next newsletter and on pledge forms at our April banquet. You also may ask anyone you choose – friends, relatives, co-workers – to make a pledge per species that you will see. A 10 cents per species pledge is common,

but donors can pledge any amount or simply make a flat donation regardless of how many species you see.

- **BIRDING** – Have a blast on May 3! You can bird alone, with a friend or family member, or join a team (teams vie for the coveted Cardinal-on-a-Stick trophy!). You can bird for a few hours or all day. You can bird in your yard, at a park, or at a series of sites, in or out-of-state.
- **COLLECT PLEDGES** – Let your sponsors know how many species you saw and how much they owe you, then send your pledge checks to the Alliance treasurer. That's it!

Birdathon participation is easy, fun and rewarding. We hope you can join us! If you would like to participate or would like more information, contact Kara Gallup at karagallup@msn.com or Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204 or 779-302-7281

ILLINOIS PASSES MAJOR CLEAN ENERGY LEGISLATION

Good news everyone! In late October at the end of the legislature's veto session, Illinois passed the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA), an important legislative victory that will help keep Illinois on the path to 100% renewable energy by midcentury.

This is a major win for those who are deeply concerned about climate change and its many dire effects on bird species and ecosystems around the globe. For many people it's also a pocketbook issue that is gaining increasing attention. Of course, there are many reasons for rising utility bills – the increased cost of replacing aging infrastructure and updating the power grid, the lengthy and labyrinthine process of permitting, the current administration's cancelling of clean energy projects, and so on. Another major issue is the very high price for the capacity market, essentially the price utilities pay for standby power plants in case of a surge in power demand, such as during heat waves or extreme cold weather events. These plants are mostly powered by expensive, polluting fossil fuels. As noted below, CRGA addresses many of these problems. It is a 900 page bill that was passed pretty much intact and is a big win for environmentalists and consumer advocates alike.

CRGA KEY PROVISIONS:

Renewable Portfolio Standard

CRGA updates the renewable portfolio standard to build out more wind and solar. It calls for 10.8 gigawatts of wind and solar by 2035.

Battery Storage

Adds 3 gigawatts (GW) of battery storage to the system by 2030. This is needed to finally take gas plants offline. It will also help reduce electricity price volatility. It also creates a "Storage for All" program to bring the benefits of battery storage to income-eligible households, nonprofit organizations, and public facilities. Battery storage is key in the effort to address climate change, as energy provided by renewable sources, such as wind and solar, can be stored during times of peak energy production and then fed back into the grid as needed when energy production drops.

PROVISIONS TO BUILD OUT AND MODERNIZE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE:

Expands Energy Efficiency

Increases access to programs helping households cut energy waste, with particular focus on ensuring that lower-income families can benefit. With the passage of CRGA, Illinois will be second only to California in terms of energy efficiency standards.

Virtual Power Plant Program

Creates a virtual power plant program through which consumers can aggregate their customer-sited resources, like batteries or solar panels, to provide grid services and get paid to do it. There are provisions related to grid-enhancing technology to make the grid more efficient as well.

Other Key Provisions

- Gives regulators more explicit authority to protect solar customers from misleading marketing and fraud. Solar is a way to bring down energy bills for individual homeowners who install panels—and to cut overall energy demand and prices for everyone. Plus, it's become more accessible for consumers thanks to programs like Illinois Solar For All. But there are some bad actors out there, and this provision will help hold installers that peddle bad deals accountable.
- Mandates that electric utilities offer optional "time of use," or TOU, pricing. The Illinois Commerce Commission has created such an option for ComEd customers, and the CRGA Act codifies the option, ensuring that both Ameren Illinois and Commonwealth Edison offer predictable time-variant rates that enable residential customers to save money by using less energy when demand is high. TOU rates can help delay or avoid altogether the need to build more pricey power plants or replace or upgrade electric grid equipment.
- Funds pilot programs for geothermal energy networks. These networks use

water-filled pipes and highly efficient geothermal heat pumps to heat and cool multiple homes and buildings. Instead of burning fuel, these systems draw steady heat from local sources, like the ground, wastewater, or other buildings. They also cool by pumping heat out of homes back into the network. CUB has written about the efficacy of geothermal energy networks and their potential to provide entire neighborhoods with efficient heating and cooling.

- Repeals the existing moratorium on new large-scale nuclear construction. Though the removal of the moratorium does not guarantee that new nuclear power plants will be built, it is now possible to explore such a possibility in Illinois.

Candy Colby

Conservation Committee

2026 MIDWEST CRANE COUNT

THE 2026 MIDWEST CRANE COUNT WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, APRIL 18TH.

Throughout the year our chapter offers several opportunities for citizen science. One of those opportunities is the Midwest Crane Count. Anyone can participate in the count. Experience is not needed. If you are an inexperienced counter and want to learn more about cranes, we can partner you with someone who has more experience.

The count starts at 5:30 a.m. and concludes at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast with the group offered for those who want to share stories about their morning immersed with nature.

If you would like to participate in the Midwest Crane Count on April 18th or you would like more details contact Teresa Smith at 815-238-3963.

NEW SPECIES AT OUR PRESERVES

New species continue to be observed at our preserves. Many thanks to everyone who helped to locate and identify these additions. For a complete species list for each preserve, consult our website or call Mary at 815-938-3204 or 779-302-7281.



ELKHORN CREEK

Plants:

- Common Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)

SILVER CREEK

Insects:

- **Butterflies:** Eastern Tailed Blue
- **Dragonflies:** Meadowhawk, sp.

Plants:

- Black Medic (*Medicago lupulina*)
- Climbing False Buckwheat (*Fallopia scandens*)
- Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) | pictured below ▼
- Purpletop (*Tridens flavus*)



November 17th burn at Silver Creek Biodiveristy Preserve

Volunteers were Tim Smith, Mary Blackmore, Jim Richards, Richard Benning, Nancy and Randy Ocken, Pam Richards. | Photos/caption by Pam Richards



“Mary always shares treats she makes or other volunteers bring.

In November we Silver Creek stewards were thrilled to enjoy Mary’s home baked apple pie she brought in honor of Bromus, her goat that passed. I can honestly say it was the best apple pie ever eaten. Her mom’s recipe.”

— Photo/caption by Pam Richards



Would you like to become a NEW Member or give a GIFT membership? Two types of membership are available:

1. Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance and National Membership includes this local newsletter, local mailings and the national "Audubon" magazine.

_____ National Membership \$20

All renewals for national memberships need to use the national membership form.

2. Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance Local only Membership includes this newsletter and other mailings from our local chapter.

_____ Local Only \$15

Name of new member or gift recipient _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

If this is a gift membership, please indicate the name of the person providing the gift membership:

Name _____

Make check payable to **Northwest Illinois Bird and Nature Alliance** and mail to:
Treasurer, NIBNA, P.O. Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032

BOARD MEMBERS

- President** | Teresa Smith
- Vice-President** | Chris Kruger
- Secretary** | Carol Beatty
- Treasurer** | Tim Smith

Board members At-Large:

Kara Gallup, Bernard Lischwe, Anita Nienhuis, Jeremy Dixon, Kee Henze

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- Membership** | Gay Broocks
- Programs** | Don Miller
- Conservation** | Laura Dufford
- Education** | Juliet Moderow
- Publicity** | Sarah Barron
- Field Trips** | Richard Benning
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (ad hoc)**
Juliet Moderow and Gary Gordon
- Newsletter Layout** | Dan Barron
815-541-3261 | dan@driftlessflora.com

nwilbirdnaturealliance@gmail.com

rev 5/25

THANK YOU!

- Barbara Kitz for your recent financial donation.
- Volunteers who helped process prairie seeds: Pam and Jim Richards, Kara Gallup, Laura Dufford, Anne Straight, Judy Corrie, Bernard Lischwe, Leanne Konkel-Briggs, Dave and Anita Nienhuis, Paul Brown, Nancy Ocken, Claudia and Willem Dijstelbergen, Annette Happ, and Mary Blackmore.
- Richard Benning for doing such a great job as our Christmas Bird Count compiler.
- Shey Lowman for updating species lists for both preserves.
- Elizabeth Boettner and Mary Blackmore for contacting volunteers for preserves stewardship.
- Teresa Smith, Laura Dufford and Mary Blackmore for serving as the Alliance nominating committee, and to everyone who agreed to take a turn on our board.
- November seed collecting and stewardship at our preserves: Pam and Jim Richards, Judy Corrie, Mary Blackmore, Kara Gallup, Anne Straight and Tim Smith.
- Volunteers at the November 17 Silver Creek burn: Richard Benning, Randy and Nancy Ocken, Pam and Jim Richards, Mary Blackmore and Tim Smith. Special thanks go to Tim for bossing the burn.
- Tim Smith for mowing firebreaks at Elkhorn Creek.
- Jim Richards for completing the application for our burn permit renewal to the Illinois EPA.
- Volunteers who provided treats for break time at all stewardship events at our preserves in 2025: Anne Straight, Bernard and Deb Lischwe, Juliet Moderow, Nancy Ocken, Pam Richards, Teresa Smith, Kara Gallup, Mary Blackmore, Anita Nienhuis and Judy Corrie.



**NORTHWEST ILLINOIS
BIRD AND NATURE ALLIANCE**

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Freeport, IL 61032-0771

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ADDRESSES/EMAILS OF YOUR LEGISLATORS

Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121 • State House Switchboard (217) 782-2000

*When using the state switchboard simply ask to be connected to the legislators office.
When using the capitol switchboard follow the series of prompts.*

rev 3/25

FEDERAL

Senator Richard Durbin
230 S. Dearborn, Suite 3892
Chicago, IL 60604
309-786-5173 | durbin.senate.gov/contact/

Senator Tammy Duckworth
230 S Dearborn Suite 3900
Chicago, IL 60604
312-886-3506
duckworth.senate.gov/connect/

16th District Rep. Darin LaHood
527 Colman Center Drive
Rockford, IL 61108
779-238-4785 | lahood.house.gov/

17th District Rep. Eric Sorenson
2401 4th Ave., Rock Island IL 61201
779-513-4960 | sorensen.house.gov/

STATE

45th District Sen. Andrew Chesney
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815-232-0774 | senatorchesney.com

34th District Sen. Steve Stadelman
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37th District Sen Li Arellano
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779-251-5003 | senatorli.com

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89th District Rep. Tony McCombie
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74th District Rep. Brad Fritts
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67th District Rep. Maurice West
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Note that many elected officials no longer have an email address (with an @ sign) but instead prefer to be contacted via their website listed and using the "Contact Us" option.