



In Flight

Newsletter of McHenry County Audubon • Chapter of Illinois Audubon Society



February 2010

Members' Meeting

• Join the Dream: Creating the Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge

Thursday, February 11, 2010 7:00pm Crystal Lake Nature Center (N. Schietzelt)

At the February 11th McHenry County Audubon meeting, members will have the opportunity to learn about a dream that is moving ever closer to reality. This is the dream of having a national wildlife refuge located right here in our county! The proposed Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge is a bi-state effort to protect a regional landscape rich in key biological resources in northern McHenry County and southern Walworth County, Wisconsin. Combining already protected lands with strategic purchases and trail connections will create a reserve of almost 6,000 acres in Illinois and a potential 5,000 acres in Wisconsin, to protect an extraordinary collection of diverse natural communities, grassland bird habitat and a dramatic glacial landscape while also enhancing regional recreational opportunities. The working name "Hack-ma-tack" is derived from the Algonquin Indian word for the American Tamarack tree, which is found in the high quality wetlands on both sides of the Wisconsin/Illinois border. The refuge will provide extensive recreation and education opportunities within a 90 minute drive for residents of the large metropolitan areas of Chicago, Rockford, Milwaukee, and Madison. The refuge concept already has widespread support of state and local government officials and agencies, national, regional and local conservation organizations and local citizens in both states. In fact, our club is one of the Organizational Friends of Hack-ma-tack.



Giving the presentation, Lenore Beyer-Clow and Cindy Skrukud, members of the Friends of Hack-ma-tack Steering Committee, are two former Executive Directors of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County who have now joined forces to work on a really big project for the county. Cindy earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Biochemistry at the University of California in Berkeley. She has served as the Clean Water Advocate for the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club for the past 8 1/2 years where she works to protect the water quality and habitat of rivers, streams, and wetlands throughout Illinois. Lenore earned a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Illinois. She joined Openlands as Director of Policy in May 2005. There she promotes protection of lands of regional significance as well as farmland preservation and she manages projects to protect water quantity and quality.

The meeting will be held at the Crystal Lake Nature Center. Refreshments will be served at 7:00 p.m. with the program following at 7:30 p.m.

Feeder Watch

• Coffee and Feeder Watch at Susan Tauck's Home

Saturday, February 28, 2010 8:00am 1304 Deerpass Road, Marengo, IL

McHenry Audubon member Susan Tauck welcomes fellow feeder watchers to her home to check out her winter visitors! She promises to provide plenty of coffee (bird friendly, of course!) and something to munch on and, hopefully, two resident tufted titmice (mouses?) and a stray flicker! Her regular visitors have been "chickadees, juncos, goldfinches, house finches, blue jays, cardinals, 2 starlings (how did they find me?!), white breasted nuthatches (no sign of a red-breasted one here this winter), downy, hairy and red-breasted woodpeckers, an occasional tree sparrow (haven't had a white-throated one this winter) and an occasional cooper's hawk." Although her half mile single lane driveway may look intimidating from the entry on Deerpass Road, there is plenty of room to park and turn around at the end up by the house. If the weather is really bad or otherwise questionable, please check with Susan before coming out. She can be contacted at 815-568-6755 and by email at zoozan@mc.net. See you there!!



Annual Meeting Report

- **An evening of fun, food and great raffle prizes!**

On Saturday, January 16th, McHenry Audubon members gathered for the Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner. Held at the Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church in Ridgefield, members enjoyed a potluck dinner and a presentation by featured speaker Jeff Hoover, Avian Ecologist at the Illinois Natural History Survey. His presentation, entitled "What Birds Can Tell Us: Conservation Successes in Illinois and New Insights Into Remarkable Bird Behavior" was followed by the annual raffle. This fundraiser generated \$601 according to treasurer Dwight Dalton. Many thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets and donated items for the auction! Also, we wish to thank the following businesses for their generous contributions to our fundraising raffle:

Countryside Flower Shop - Crystal Lake - bird feeder and seed

Farm and Fleet - Woodstock - bird feeder

Farm and Lawn - Woodstock - bird feeder and seed

Wild Bird Center - Fox River Grove - \$50 in Birdy Bucks

Wild Bird Supplies - Crystal Lake - bag of seed



When you have the opportunity, please patronize these stores and let them know that as a McHenry County Audubon member you appreciate their help with our fundraising

And lastly, a special thank you to Nancy Schietzelt and Darlene Fiske for soliciting these donations!

Landscaping Seminar

- **18th Annual Natural Landscaping Seminar**

February 27, 2010

McHenry County College

Crystal Lake, IL

(Nancy Gonsiorek)

Lorraine Johnson, referred to as "the punk rock earth mother" is not your typical garden writer. In the more than fifteen years that Lorraine has been writing books and articles, she has become known for her unconventional outlook on the world of gardening. Advocating for organics in the days when synthetic chemicals ruled, writing about native plants before most people had heard the term, promoting community gardening when politicians were wary of involving people in parks, Lorraine has always written about marginal subjects on their way to becoming mainstream.

Lorraine will be presenting her program, "Tending the Earth," at McHenry County College on **Saturday, February 27th, 2010**, for the 18th Annual Natural Landscaping Seminar. Also speaking will be Kelsay Shaw, Possibility Place Nursery, on native understory trees and shrubs; IDNR District Heritage Biologist Brad Semel, on fen restoration; and McHenry County Water Resources Manager Cassandra McKinney with The WPPC Rain Garden Task Force on Water, Gardening, and how homeowners can make a difference. Plus a special bonus event: *Realizing a Dream: The Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge*.

The seminar is all day at the MCC Conference Center. Admission: \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door includes a delicious lunch. Vendors will purvey books, objects d'art, and products and information to fulfill all your natural landscaping needs during breaks.

Sponsored by **The Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee of McHenry County**, A non-profit organization dedicated to promoting native species through preservation, propagation, and education.

For registration or more information, contact Nancy at 815.455-9462 or visit www.TheWPPC.org



2010 Membership Dues

- **A Message From MCA Treasurer: 2010 Dues are Due**

If you have not paid, send your ten dollar dues to:
Dwight Dalton, Membership, 573 Tamarisk Lane, Crystal Lake, IL 60014

This year's raffle held during the Annual Meeting netted \$601 for our organization. That was higher than the \$550 last year but not a record. The 2007 raffle earned \$746. Raffle money and generous donations sent in with dues each year allow us to offer regular, quality newsletters, host a web site (www.McHenryAudubon.org) and hold programs throughout the year.

Questions? Contact Dwight Dalton at dalton@joltmail.net or at 815-459-6069



Bird Count Report

• Annual Christmas Bird Count Held in McHenry County Another year of good fellowship, fresh air, and great birds!

On Saturday, December 19th, 2009, volunteer observers participated in one of our most important yearly traditions - the 110th Christmas Bird Count. McHenry County birders joined with efforts of birders nationwide to provide a "snapshot" of the status and health of birdlife throughout our country.

This year, the McHenry County census was conducted by 34 observers divided into 15 teams over a 15 mile diameter circle, centered in Bull Valley. The groups walked a total of 36.75 miles and drove 587.5 miles in their efforts. This year 61 species were seen up from last year's results of 56. The count was assisted by the report of an amazing number of duck species by the Crystal Lake team. "Good" birds included two bald eagles, a screech owl, a Northern shrike, 2 snow geese, a golden crowned kinglet, 2 pine siskin, and one lost Eastern meadowlark.

At the end of a long day counting birds, members met at the home of Walt Dembos for food and refreshments while they combined their results and shared their experiences of the day. Dwight Dalton compiles the data and then Rob Gough sends it on to National Audubon. This information is then combined with other data from similar counts all over the world. This data has provided a valuable catalyst for conservation efforts of many types.



Don't Forget!

See last month's *In Flight* for more details on these upcoming bird events!

• **Take a Mid-Winter Nature Break With the Great Backyard Bird Count!** February 12-15, 2010
National Audubon Society & Cornell Lab of Ornithology For information visit the website www.birdsource.org.

• **Second Annual Rusty Blackbird Blitz** February 12 - 15, 2010
Information and instructions available on Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's e-Bird site: ebird.org.



• **Illinois Ornithological Society's 9th Annual Gull Frolic** Saturday, February 20, 2010 8:00am
Winthrop Harbor Yacht Club, Chicago Go to www.illinoisbirds.org for more information.

• **Project FeederWatch Ends April 9, 2010** Viisit the Project FeederWatch website at www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw.

Bird Walk Report

• **McHenry Dam** Saturday, January 2, 2010 (Karen Lund)

With the temperature a chilling -5°, not surprisingly no one showed up and only the leader Karen Lund was present. After 45 minutes, the following listed birds were seen. The payoff was an adult bald eagle that flew in as she was leaving. He swooped back and forth over the river for a couple minutes and finally perched on the west side. (Photo by Karen Lund)

1 bald eagle	150+ canada geese (still roosting on the shore & covered with frost)
2 common goldeneye (fly-by)	1 cooper's hawk
25+ mallards	house sparrows (heard only)
3 chickadees	1 white-breasted nuthatch
1 cardinal	1 song sparrow
4 crows	1 downy woodpecker
1 red-bellied woodpecker	





Thank you to
all contributors!

Monday, January 18, 2010 - Martin Luther King Day

On the Fox River in East Dundee by the gazebo at Tim McNamee Park on Washington Street (just past Otto Engineering) I saw a mute swan and 100 goldeneyes!!! My friend, Sally Rocuskie, was with me and we spotted them on the river. We stopped the car and we counted and recounted. They were **Barrow's goldeneyes** with the white crescent shaped marking, the purplish/blue hue to their heads and some with the brownish-red heads and some darker. What a surprise!! We waited and scanned with binoculars and all of a sudden they took flight right in front of us and headed south down the river. We checked every book we had and figured they were definitely barrow's goldeneyes!!! My question—Where did they come from and where were they going??



Kay Preshlock

Sunday, January 10, 2010 - McHenry, IL.

While we were driving northbound on Riverside Drive near Washington Street, around 12:00 noon, we saw a large black bird come up over the house tops from the river. It turned slightly and came right toward us. Sure enough that's when we saw it's white head, it was a **bald eagle**!! It landed in a tree on the west side of Riverside Drive just north of the intersection at Washington. This intersection is a three way stop, so we were able to sit for a short time and watch the Eagle.

Bruce and Barb Harmel



December 29th, 2009

I saw 4 large white birds flying overhead. They were coming from the northeast over the Black Crown Marsh and heading south west toward Moraine Hills Park, McHenry. In checking my book I ID'd them as **tundra swans**. They were all white with Black bills. At first I thought snow geese but then I see that snow geese have yellow bills.

Lori Valus



January 2, 2010, Milwaukee, WI

I was in Milwaukee at the art museum and on the lake as we looked out from the museum were many **buffleheads**! We counted about 20. We spotted several pairs, some of them diving. I have never seen this many in one place! Again, my question - Was the bitter cold weather driving them in near that shore?? Or is this a common occurrence this time of year?



Kay Preshlock

I still see my **redtailed hawks** on the watertower near Bard Road Fire station.. sometimes one sometimes two together.

Kay Preshlock



A **brown thrasher** was in my yard January 16th & 17th. The **Carolina wren** is spending the 5th consecutive winter here. He usually arrives in October and departs in February. Maybe this will be the year he finds a mate and nests here. (Photos by Karen Lund)

Karen Lund, Genoa, DeKalb County

McHenry Audubon Board of Directors

- **President** - Randy Schietzelt 815-356-1710 BurOak@owc.net
- **Vice President** - Walt Dembos 815-338-6831
- **Membership/Treasurer** - Dwight Dalton 815-459-6069
- **Recording Secretary** - Myrna Nelson 847-639-3425
- **Members** - Darlene Fiske 815-338-0592
- Dave Frey 815-338-4866
- Dan Wilson 815-648-2389
- Doug Crane 815-338-0046
- Nancy Loomis



Other McHenry County Audubon Contacts

- **Bird Count Coordinator** - Rob Gough 815-385-2996
- Alternate** - Dwight Dalton 815-459-6069
- **Crane Count Coordinator** - Danny Wilson 815-648-4184 danwill26@aol.com
- **Field Trip Coordinator** - Doug Crane 815-338-0046
- **Historian** - Stacy Iwanicki 815-236-2423 boglady@wonderwave.net
- **Hospitality Chairs** - Vince & LuAnn LaSusa 815-356-8625
- **Illinois Audubon Representative** * POSITION OPEN *
- **Newsletter Editor** - Tami Zuck 847-922-6746 tamizuck@comcast.net
- **Program Coordinator** - Nancy Schietzelt 815-356-1710 BurOak@owc.net



Audubon Contacts

- **McHenry County** www.McHenryAudubon.org
- **Illinois Audubon** 217-544-BIRD www.illinoisaudubon.org
- **National Audubon Society** www.audubon.org



Public Lands

- **McHenry County Conservation District** 815-479-5779 815-338-6223 www.mccdDistrict.org
- **Moraine Hills State Park** 815-385-1624
- **Volo Bog Sate Natural Area** 815-344-1294 (To register for MHSP Bird Walks)

McHenry County Audubon

McHenry County Audubon

is a Member-Chapter of Illinois Audubon Society
 Mailing address:
 P.O. Box 67
 Woodstock, IL 60098

Annual Meeting

Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church
 8505 Church Street
 Ridgefield (Crystal Lake), Illinois 60012
 Third Saturday of January at 5:30pm

General Meetings

Crystal Lake Nature Center
 330 North Main Street (at N. Main Street & Terra Cotta Ave. (Route 176)),
 Crystal Lake, Illinois 60014
 Second Thursday of October, November, February, March and April
 Meeting starts at 7:30pm • Refreshments served starting at 7:00pm

Local and Regional Field Trips

are held throughout the year

Weekend Bird Walks

at Moraine Hills Sate Park in McHenry, Illinois &
 Volo Bog State Natural Area in Ingleside, Illinois

McHenry County Audubon Website

www.McHenryAudubon.org

We coordinate both the McHenry County **Spring Bird Count** and **Christmas Bird Count**

Please send submissions to In Flight editor Tami Zuck at tamizuck@comcast.net.

- Proper punctuation is appreciated! • Electronically sent original photos always welcome!
- Submission deadline for each newsletter is the 20th of the month before

Changes of address (postal and/or email)?

Please inform Membership Chair Dwight Dalton - 815-459-6069



2010 McHenry County Audubon Calendar of Events


Watch your newsletter for details! This calendar is updated with each issue of the MCA newsletter. Members' meetings are held at the Crystal Lake Nature Center unless noted otherwise. Reservations must be made with the field trip leader so he/she can notify you of any last-minute changes, cancellations, etc. See list of contacts below. Field trips are co-sponsored by Illinois Audubon Society. * See inside this issue for details

Date	Day	Event	Contact **
February 11	Thursday	Members' Meeting - Crystal Lake Nature Center - 7:00pm*	N. Schietzelt
February 28	Sunday	Coffee and Feeder Watch at Susan Tauck's Home - 8:00am *	Susan Tauck
March 11	Thursday	Members' Meeting - Crystal Lake Nature Center - 7:00pm	N. Schietzelt
March 12-13	Fri./Sat.	Illinois Audubon Society Prairie Chicken Tour - (Info. 217-787-3515)	Vern Kleen
April 8	Thursday	Members' Meeting - Crystal Lake Nature Center - 7:00pm	N. Schietzelt
April 17	Saturday	Crane Count	Dan Wilson
April 25	Sunday	Willowbrook Wildlife Rehab. (behind the scenes) Tour/Bird Hike	LuAnn LaSusa

* See inside this issue for details. ** Contact information also inside this issue on "Contacts" page.

• Submission Deadline for the March 2010 Newsletter is Saturday, February 20 , 2010 •

**Next Members'
Meeting is Thursday
February 11th!**



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 Address correction requested

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