

Amos Butler Audubon Society and American Bird Conservancy: An Outstanding Partnership

By Mary Ellen Gadski

One evening in February 2000, Birdathon subcommittee members charged with finding a new international project sat around my dining room table to consider a number of options. Inveterate birder Sue Owen (now deceased) had come prepared to suggest that we consider a project with the American Bird Conservancy (ABC). We all knew the outstanding field guide that ABC had published in the mid-90s, but only Sue was a member and knew about its mission in the Americas. ABC was looking for a funding partner for a tract in Panama called El Chorogo. Everything about it sounded intriguing, and after some due diligence, we decided to ally with ABC. Seventeen years later, we realize it was one of the best decisions we ever made.

George Fenwick founded the American Bird Conservancy in 1994 after 15 years with The Nature Conservancy in many roles, including its Director of Science. He received his Ph.D. in pathobiology from Johns Hopkins University, where he studied the effects of alien species on native birds. He had in mind a small organization devoted exclusively to birds that could respond more quickly and agilely to threats (hence the hummingbird logo). From the initial two employees—he and his wife Rita, who served as development director—the organization grew to its current number, an impressive 78 people!

Birdathon supporters had the chance to hear George give an informal talk to Amos Butler Audubon Society (ABAS) members in April 2014. He came to Indianapolis on short notice for other business and offered to speak to a group in the evening. We met in a suburban clubhouse, sitting in comfy chairs, and enjoyed learning more about ABC's endeavors. One statistic that embedded in my brain is that over a billion birds are killed by cats each year. ABC initiated a "Cats Indoors" program to bring attention to the wildlife lost to cats, as well as the measures that can prevent these deaths.

George told us that ABAS has been the longest-standing, continual donor in ABC history, and that ABC staff often talk about us as the model partner. (As of our latest Birdathon contribution in July, our support to ABC has totaled \$240,766.) Very early on in our relationship, we learned that once we sent our check to ABC, we didn't have to worry about whether it was being used for the intended purpose. From ABC's vetting of local partners to the many steps taken to evaluate project performance, we came to trust the ABC staff to have the best interests of conservation always in mind. Twice they have guided us to move on to new projects with immediate needs after our current project was winding down.

(Right) Ovenbird
 (below) Wood Thrush.
 Photos courtesy of ABC.



(Above) Cerulean Warbler,
 photo courtesy of ABC.
 (Left) Blackburnian Warbler,
 photo by Donna McCarty.

A few of the many species of neotropical migrants that have benefitted from our partnership with ABC.

Birdathon supporters can be proud that ABAS was the primary financial supporter in creating the El Chorogo Reserve, a 400-acre lowland forest in a remote part of western Panama on the Costa Rican border. When land prices in that area escalated, the Panama Audubon Society (our local partner), ABC and ABAS made a mutual decision to suspend land purchases.

In 2008, ABC brought our attention to a project in Colombia that needed immediate support: the Cerulean Warbler Corridor, a nine-mile agricultural area connecting two reserves. Working with local partner ProAves, we funded the establishment of conservation easements to protect surviving forest as well as a plant nursery to continue reforestation efforts.

Since 2016, we have supported the Caribbean Biological Corridor in Guatemala. It is an extremely important migratory flyway that provides high-quality habitat for wintering migratory birds as well as stopover habitat for at least 40 species of neotropical migrants. We have been quite impressed with the conservation work accomplished in this area over the past 20 years by local partner Fundación

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Upcoming Audubon Programs, Events, and Workshops

All programs are held at the Holliday Park Nature Center, 6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to the public. Time and place of field trips as noted.

September 12: Meet Indiana Raptor Center's Education Ambassadors

Presenter: Indiana Raptor Center



Who doesn't love raptors? And, who doesn't love learning more about them? Join us as we host the Indiana Raptor Center alongside some of their Education Ambassadors — raptors! The presentation will introduce you to the world of raptors along with some of the current projects of the Center including a report on lead testing and the new Barn Owl enclosure supported by an ABAS Birdathon grant.

October 10: Naughty by Nature

Presenter: Amanda Smith

Join Amanda Smith, Superintendent of Natural Resources & Education of Hamilton County Parks, for our October program — “Naughty by Nature.”

Out in the elements, birders and outdoorsy folks often encounter some of the not-so-wonderful aspects of nature such as poison ivy, nettles, snakes, chiggers, and spiders. More often than not, myths and falsities abound. The fears and misconceptions about these “perceived” naughty natural things keep people from getting outside or making the right decisions about how to manage them, but just an ounce of knowledge can help fight fear of the unknown.

This evening program will include an interactive presentation to engage the audience with myth-busting, and will include opportunities to share experiences and solutions.

November 14: Banding Saw-whet Owls in the Indiana Dunes!

Presenter: Brad Bumgardner



The Indiana Dunes began banding owls as part of Project OwlNet in 2009, and has served as a gateway for migrating owls traveling along the shores of Lake Michigan and into the rest of Indiana. Since inception, the volunteers

and staff have banded hundreds of migrating saw-whet owls, but more impressively Indiana Dunes serves as one of the largest sites for public education and viewing of the banding station due to the facilities near the banding sites. Learn about the secretive migration and opportunities to view saw-whet owls in the Indiana Dunes during this 45 minute presentation.

Brad Bumgardner is the Executive Director for the Indiana Audubon Society, having served as an interpretive naturalist for the Indiana State Parks previously.

Swift Night at Red Key Tavern

Tuesday, September 5, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Who likes birds and brews? Join ABAS president Rob Ripma and treasurer Ted Meyer for a Suds & Swifts event in South Broad Ripple at Red Key Tavern, located at 5170 N. College Avenue. This is our second year at Red Key, which is a cash-only restaurant. RSVP via Facebook or email info@amosbutleraudubon.org.

Fall Warbler Identification

Saturday, September 23, 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.
Holliday Park Nature Center

Join Scott Enochs, warbler identification enthusiast and field trip chair for Amos Butler Audubon Society, for a crash course in fall warbler identification. The talk will run about an hour to an hour and a half, followed by optional birding in the park.

If you have questions or would like to register, please contact education chair Jessica Helmbold at jessica.helmbold@indy.gov. You can also RSVP via our Facebook event. Registration is not required, but it does help us plan.

Beers with Birders

Thursday, September 14, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Indiana City Brewing Co.

We had a great turnout to Metazoa Brewing Co. on Thursday, June 8 with around 30 people. Metazoa donated \$92 to ABAS. Our next “Beers with Birders” event will be held at Indiana City Brewing Co. located at 24 Shelby St. in downtown Indianapolis.

Regularly Scheduled Bird Hikes

Cool Creek Park

2000 East 151st Street, Carmel

Meet in the parking lot at the bottom of the road by Cool Creek, past the Nature Center. For more information, call 317-774-2500 or visit myhamiltoncountyparks.com.

Beginning Bird Hikes

2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. and every other Sunday at 8:00 a.m.

September 3, 13, 17, 20, 27; October 1, 11, 15, 18, 25, 29

Fall Migration Bird Hikes led by Keith Starling
Saturdays, 8:00 a.m.

September 9, 16, 23, 30

Eagle Creek Park

6519 Delong Road, Indianapolis

Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

September 3, 10, 17, 24; October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Meet at the Ornithology Center. For more information, call 317-327-2473.

Ft. Harrison State Park

6000 N. Post Road, Indianapolis

Sundays, 8:00 a.m.

September 3, 10, 17, 24; October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Meet in the northeast corner of Delaware Lake parking lot.

Join Don Gorney for his 18th year of leading fall bird walks at Ft. Harrison. Fall migration is lively and full of warblers, raptors, sparrows, and other songbirds. During the walk Don will point out birds seen and heard and provide details on how to identify cryptic fall warblers, drab flycatchers, and LBJs (Little Brown Jobs, also known as sparrows). Walks are approximately two hours on relatively even terrain. There is no fee for the walk but standard gate admission applies. For more information, contact Don at dongorney@yahoo.com.

Greenfield Bird Hikes

Second and fourth Saturdays of each month, 8–10 a.m.

Join the Greenfield Birders for a bird hike! Beginners are welcome. These walks will be opportunities to meet other birders, hopefully see new birds, have new experiences, and learn from each other. Stay up to date with any changes, rescheduling, or local bird happenings at [facebook.com/groups/GreenfieldBirders](https://www.facebook.com/groups/GreenfieldBirders). For more information, contact Adam Wilson at NikonBirdHunter@gmail.com.

Thornwood Nature Preserve

1670 Morristown Pike, Greenfield

September 9

Beckenholdt Family Park

2770 N. Franklin Street, Greenfield

September 23, October 28

Brandywine Park

900 E. Davis Road, Greenfield

October 14

Holliday Park

6363 Spring Mill Rd, Indianapolis

Third Tuesday of the month, 7:30 a.m.

September 19, October 17

Meet in front of the nature center. For more information, call 317-327-7180.

Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab

6363 Spring Mill Rd, Indianapolis

Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m.

September 6, 13, 20, 27; October 4, 11, 18, 25

Meet at the St. Francis statue next to Allison Mansion on the north end of campus. For more information, contact David Benson at dbenson@marian.edu.

The Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab is a wonderful place to bird watch, with over 165 different species sightings being recorded since 2002. No experience is necessary, and the hike will be led by one of our very own bird experts at Marian. The only things that are necessary are binoculars and a little bit of patience! Bring water to drink and wear comfortable shoes. No reservation is required.

Southeastway Park

5624 South Carroll Road, New Palestine

Every Monday, 9:10 a.m.

September 3, 10, 17, 24; October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Meet at the Nature Center at Southeastway Park. For more information, call 317-327-2473.

Are you looking for a way to jump-start your mental and physical well-being when school starts this year? If so, join Theresa Wilson every Monday beginning August 7 for a nature walk! Drop your kids off at school or bring them with you! This is a family friendly, beginner to intermediate nature walk. We will explore the local birds, enjoy migrating birds, and meet weekly until the weather is no longer amenable. All you need to do is grab your binoculars, bug spray, and sunblock and join Theresa for some exploring.

Strawtown Koteewi Park

12308 Strawtown Avenue, Noblesville

First Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.

September 6, October 4

Meet at the Taylor Center of Natural History. For more information, call 317-774-2574 or visit myhamiltoncountyparks.com.

A Holding Pattern for Crown Hill Forest

By Mary Ellen Gadski

Most everyone is aware of the well-publicized good news in early May when the Veterans Administration announced it had signed a memorandum of understanding with Crown Hill Cemetery to work out a land swap, thereby saving the old-growth forest from the columbaria development. The new site will be the open land at the corner of 42nd Street and Clarendon Road. The two parties are now in the midst of legal negotiations prior to construction, which could start as early as this fall.

While most headlines in May declared “Crown Hill Woods Preserved,” in fact they are not. The coalition of groups that organized to stop the destruction of the woods—including Amos Butler Audubon Society—is now quietly trying to persuade the trustees of Crown Hill to entertain the Hare Trust’s offer to purchase 34 acres of woodland. We would like cemetery officials to realize all the positive elements of this transfer, from their financial gain to improved public relations and an end to controversy. Since they do not need this land for in-ground burials for at least 200 years, they are trading a management liability for much-needed operational resources if they agree to sell the land to the Trust.

We understand that Indy Parks is interested in this tract for a nature park with passive recreation, including trail walks, nature study, and birdwatching. You may recall Mayor Hogsett’s important statement in March, when he spoke out against the woods going down: “My dream would be for these Woods to become part of the City’s park system.” We hope the logistics will be worked out so that a park enhances the cemetery and is a true asset. This could positively raise Crown Hill’s profile while preserving a significant old-growth forest in the midst of a large urban area, accessible to so many citizens.

Since public opinion so strongly opposed the destruction of the woods, a new commercial development on the site, such as the housing and strip mall proposed in 2006-07, seems unlikely. However, until the land changes hands and includes conservation covenants to preserve the woods for future generations, uncertainty remains about this important surviving element of Indiana’s natural heritage. Stay tuned for further developments!



Top photo: New site for VA columbarium. Inset; IFA director Jeff Stant stands amidst the former site. Photos courtesy of the Indiana Forest Alliance.

2017 May Regional Big Day Recap

By Scott Enochs, Field Trip Chair

On a given day, do you ever wonder which birds are passing through Amos Butler Audubon Society’s service region? I think about this question a lot. On May 20, sixteen parties set out to answer that question through a collaborative regional “Big Day” of birding. We counted species and individuals encountered while birding Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Marion, Hancock, Johnson, and northern Morgan counties. Some chose to spend the day chasing as many species as they could while others relaxed and counted the birds visiting their feeders.

The results of these efforts are 127 species of birds, totaling 2,875 individuals. We found 10 shorebird species with 24 Ruddy Turnstones found in Hancock County being the most unusual, or unexpected. We found all expected flycatchers and swallows, and hit all expected vireos with the exception of Blue-headed. We found all expected woodpeckers with the exception of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The groups located

27 warbler species with American Redstart being the most common warbler at 51 individuals. (For comparison, we tallied 45 Chipping Sparrows). We found more Connecticut Warblers (5) than Kentucky Warblers (4), and an astonishing amount of Canada Warblers (23) on the day, equaling the number of Yellow Warblers located – a common breeder in Central Indiana. The bird reported in the highest number was American Robin. There were several misses, of course, like Peregrine Falcon, Blue-winged Warbler, Osprey, American Kestrel, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, and Grasshopper Sparrow to name a few.

It was a fun day of birding! I want to thank each individual who participated in this fun experiment. Who knows what next year’s results will look like and how our efforts will change. I do know I’m looking forward to the “challenge” and the excitement of spending another day in the field with all of you!

Thirty Years of Birding for Bucks



2017 Birdathon fundraising champs, the Noddy Little Gulls (left to right) Laurie Voss, Lou Anne Barriger, Kathy Feldman, and April Sterling.

By Donna McCarty, Birdathon Chair

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Amos Butler Audubon Society (ABAS) Birdathon, the most successful fundraising event in the history of the chapter. With this year's donations of \$25,670 plus carryover funds, we have raised a grand total of \$720,675 since 1987. It would not be possible to continue such an endeavor without the generous support of our donors who have shown a remarkable commitment to our mission to promote the stewardship and enjoyment of the birds of central Indiana.

This year, a Birdathon grant has extended our project with the American Bird Conservancy to purchase a parcel of land in Guatemala critical to the protection of an important biological corridor and migratory bird flyway. This wintering and stopover habitat is vital to at least 40 species of neotropical birds — the very ones we value so highly because they come to North America to breed.

Our grants to Purdue and Ball State Universities have enabled important research on these breeding birds, resulting in data that will be used to institute better management practices to ensure their survival. Ball State University's Kamal Islam, a biology professor, provided six publications representing a culmination of the research that his graduate students undertook through the financial support of ABAS. He wrote, "I am very grateful for the support that my students and I have received from your organization for our work with Cerulean Warblers."

By supporting nature-oriented summer camps, wild bird rehabilitation facilities, educational outreach projects and hands-on local habitat restoration, many more people will come to understand the importance of birds.

This year, we lost our longest-running team and one of our top fundraisers, the DNR team. After a stellar 20-year run, DNR members decided it was time to retire. However, a non-birding offspring of one of the team members decided to have a special Big Sit event to carry on the tradition. The Noddy Little Gulls team took top honors as the fundraising champs, followed by Bud & Carl's Legacy team. Our cycling team, Carbon Neutral, placed third. The highest species count turned in by any team was 177 by the Horned Grebes.

We are already looking forward to carrying on the tradition in 2018!

Meet the Board: President Rob Ripma

By Amy Hodson, Communications Chair

Rob Ripma is the creator of NuttyBirder.com ("the place to go find birds"), co-owner/operator of Sabrewing Nature Tours, President of Amos Butler Audubon Society (ABAS), and Secretary of Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO). In addition, Rob is the primary bird blogger for Birds & Blooms Magazine.

Prior to joining the ABAS and BSBO boards, Rob served for three years on the executive board of the Indiana Audubon Society as treasurer and vice president. He is co-founder of the Indiana Young Birders Club, and speaks at a variety of organizations and schools about birds and birding to share his knowledge and experiences in the field. Rob loves working with new and experienced birders of all ages, and believes that teaching people about birds will not only increase interest in birding, but also help them better understand why we must work to protect birds and their habitats.

A lifetime Indiana resident, Rob has traveled and birded extensively all around the Americas. He graduated in 2008 with a B.S. in marketing from IU's Kelley School of Business, and lives in Carmel with his wife, Stephanie.

An Outstanding Partnership

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Ecológica (FUNDAECO), and we expect to continue with this project in 2018.

This past June, George and Rita Fenwick retired. The ABC board chose long-time ABC staff member Mike Parr, previously Chief Conservation Officer, to be president. Some ABAS members may recall that during the early years of our collaboration with ABC, Mike came to Indy to give a program to the chapter about ABC's work. The first thing that surprised our members was his British accent. Then we were in awe of his photos and his command of the incredible number of projects that he worked on simultaneously. I am so happy that ABC promoted from within. Mike will be an outstanding leader, continuing ABC's best traditions.

When ABC was still a small organization, Donna McCarty and I were invited to a field trip on the Delaware Bay led by ABC staff. Through this birding adventure and our meals together, we had the chance to get to know the Fenwicks, George Wallace, and Mike Parr early on and have enjoyed having a personal connection. Staff member Erin Lebbin has been my contact at ABC for many years, promptly answering questions that arise and serving as liaison with other staff members. Her husband Dan is vice president of international programs.

May our relationship with ABC continue to grow as they help us fulfill our mission for Indiana birds!

May 20 International Migratory Bird Day at the Eagle Creek Ornithology Center

by Jenna (Nawrocki) McElroy, Assistant Park Manager

Once again, the annual International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) Festival at the Ornithology Center was a hit, thanks to all of the wonderful Audubon and Eagle Creek Park volunteers that dedicate their time to this event. Although the weather was not perfect, we still had a lot of enthusiastic families join us for the festivities!

This year's international theme, "Stopover Sites: Helping Birds Along the Way," was about helping migratory birds by creating and protecting spots where birds can rest and refuel during their long migration journeys.

The festival had many free activities for families throughout the day including: live animal programs presented by Will Schaust and Heidi Shoemaker; a bird banding demonstration by Wild Birds Unlimited's John Schaust; the Great Migration Challenge obstacle course for kids; bird and nature hikes; and activity tables with pellet dissections, suet bird feeders, feathers, pond scooping, mud painting, and more! New this year, we offered two mini "coffee and canvas" sessions where participants created a bird-on-a-wire painting, led by naturalist Mallory Kirby along with park volunteers. We also raised money for the Park Foundation's Bird of Prey Fund by selling popcorn and shade-grown, bird-friendly coffee.

One of the best activities of the day was the "Fill the Bill" game station organized and led by ABAS volunteers. This activity teaches families about the different beak shapes and adaptations of birds, and ABAS had some of the most creative pieces to this game that I have ever seen. Each beak type had its own unique display and activity to demonstrate how the adaptation parallels man-made tools. It was enjoyed by kids and parents alike!

Park volunteer Kevin Trehan was our photographer for the day. His pictures can be found at this link: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/92579431@N06/934R1m>.

Again, thank you for all of the support ABAS has given the Ornithology Center and the IMBD Festival over the years! I can't wait to see what exciting and educational activities we have at next year's festival.



Will Schaust Named Park Manager of Eagle Creek Ornithology Center



Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett with Eagle Creek Ornithology Center manager Will Schaust.

by Brittany Davis-Swinford, Conservation Chair

Will has always known that he wanted to be a naturalist even at a young age. He was inspired early on, watching his father John present programs and work as a naturalist for many different park systems. This desire was further fueled by family vacations that were spent seeking new outdoor venues to explore. He fondly remembers fishing in the Boundary Waters in Minnesota, sitting around the fire in the Sylvania Wilderness Area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and hiking at Turkey Run State Park.

In 2015, Will earned a bachelor's degree in Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Human Ecology from Indiana University. During the summers between semesters, he worked at McCormick's Creek State Park as a seasonal naturalist where he honed his interpretive technique and knowledge. In 2016, he was awarded the Monarch Award for Outstanding Seasonal Naturalist within the DNR.

Will has always had an affinity for birds, especially birds of prey. His 5th grade science fair project focused on the Peregrine Falcon recovery efforts since the ban of DDT. Since then, he has traveled to Maumee Bay for warbler migration, lead hikes at the Indiana Dunes Birding Festival, and presented with his father on the "Secret Love Life of Birds" at numerous professional conferences. Will joined Eagle Creek Park in summer 2016 as the assistant manager, and has since been promoted to park manager in charge of the Ornithology Center.

Join us in congratulating Will in his new position. We all wish him the best.

Introducing Daniel Boritt, New Holliday Park Manager

By Ted Meyer, treasurer

We are very excited to have Dan Boritt as the new Park Manager for Holliday Park. He's a Birder! Earlier this year, Dan took over the reins from Adam Barnes. Adam will continue to be very involved with the park as Executive Director of Friends of Holliday Park.

Dan has ties to the area as his wife, Katie Moreau, grew up only a few miles from Holliday Park. Dan loves being in nature with their two sons Henry (7) and Leo (3).

Dan was born in Concord, Massachusetts and grew up on a 130-acre farm on the outskirts of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. He holds a B.S. in Biology from Davidson College in North Carolina. He has started a master's in Zoological Collection Management. His hobbies include birding, basketball, history, and local or bizarre craft beer and bourbon.

Dan joined Holliday Park after working in a management position at the Indianapolis Zoo, where he launched the Flights of Fancy bird exhibit. Prior to that he spent 10 years at the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington D.C. where he started as an education intern. He moved on to a permanent job as Bird Keeper, was promoted to Biologist, and then to Curator of the Department of Ornithology.

One of Dan's research interests during his zoo life was avian glass strike prevention. He worked with Dr. Chris Sheppard of the American Bird Conservancy to develop a program of window films at the National Zoo. He continued work on this issue after moving to Indianapolis.

Dan spent time as a stay-at-home dad. He knew he'd work again and was looking for a job that matched his passions of nature, birds, outdoors, and education. He had already fallen in love with Holliday Park since moving to Indianapolis. When this job came up it seemed like a perfect match. As an added bonus, the kids love to visit Dad at work!

His birding interests began in childhood and stem back to his mother and grandmother in Bolton, Massachusetts who kept feeders and decorated their home with bird carvings and Audubon prints. The family farm near Gettysburg provided great birding habitat with forest, hills, a creek, and a pond. In



third grade, he won a month-long birding competition with the longest list and was awarded a copy of "Audubon Birds of Eastern North America," which he owns to this day.

Dan has had some incredible birding experiences. In college he spent his junior year abroad studying in Namibia with the Cheetah Conservation Fund. One of his instructors, Sanjayan Muttulingam – now CEO of Conservation International – challenged him to a one-month birding competition. Dan won by finding a Blue Waxbill, which Sanjayan did not believe until months later when he developed the film and sent Sanjayan a picture.

He lists some favorite experiences as seeing Bali Mynahs in Indonesia, Cape Vultures in Namibia, and banding warblers in Jamaica with Director of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, Pete Marra. Maybe the most exciting is riding snow mobiles in Antarctica and coming upon a group of Emperor Penguins.

Dan would like to make Holliday Park more of a birding destination. There is great habitat and good nesting areas. He'd like to see a bird list by season (and maybe by trail) that could potentially be developed into a companion book or app. He'd like to do breeding bird surveys in the park as well. Installing nest cams, owl boxes, and creating a living bird aviary with rehabbed passerines are all ideas for the future.

Amos Butler Audubon Society leads bird hikes the third Tuesday of each month at Holliday Park. Dan loves to attend these hikes. Meet in front of the Nature Center for a great hike and say hello!

A Note from the President

By Rob Ripma, President

We are looking forward to returning to our normal monthly ABAS programs in September with a wonderful fall lineup of activities. Be sure to come out on September 12 for our first program of the fall to learn all about raptors with the Indiana Raptor Center. There are also many birding outings for you to take part in. Check out the calendar on our new website to find some hikes that might work for you!

We are also excited to announce that we are working with the International Crane Foundation on a new project to protect Whooping Cranes in Indiana. In addition to a monetary donation to the project, we'll be working to promote the initiative once it is underway. Look for an article about the project in our next LifeLines.

ABAS Post-its

What do you love about birding in Indiana?

"Indiana doesn't get much love from the U.S. birding community, but it's where I got my start and I'll always love birding in the state. Indiana has some incredible wild places for birding which many people don't realize. I'm always excited to spend a spring morning at the lakefront or for any visit to Goose Pond."

—Rob Ripma, President

Share your thoughts on Indiana birding or submit a question for Rob at info@amostbutleraudubon.org.

Indy Parks Birding Gems

By Jessica Helmbold, Education Chair

As many of you know, I work for Garfield Park Conservatory, part of the Indy Parks system. The other day I helped my supervisor hang a map of the entire parks system on the wall. After it was hung, I stared at it for a great while, noticing all of these little parks I had never been to. Most of us are familiar with Eagle Creek and Holliday, but what about Glens Valley or Skiles Test? A park doesn't need to be huge to be a birding hotspot. With the right kinds of habitat and perhaps being situated on a waterway, many small parks are great places to bird. Some parks listed here are actually not small at all, but for lack of a nature center and social media presence, people may not be aware of their nature exploration opportunities. Below, I have chronicled six Indy Parks, some of which I have personally been to and others still on my bucket list.

Marrott Park

Marrott Park is 102 acres in the heart of downtown Indianapolis at College and 75th in the Meridian Hills neighborhood. It is also situated next to the Indiana School for the Blind. The park also includes a nature preserve, which is composed of old second-growth mixed deciduous upland forest, as well as floodplain forests and successional fields along Williams Creek and the White River. The park is said to be a migrant trap, a great place to view warblers and vireos. More specifically Prothonotary Warblers have been spotted in the park. The park has plenty of year-round residents as well, including many nesting woodpeckers. This park has a few miles of unpaved trails.

Skiles Test Nature Park

Skiles Test is 80 acres of which most is upland forest. The park also contains 14 acres of restored prairie and seven acres of old field successional growth. The park is situated across I-465/IN-37 from Fort Harrison State Park. Due to the high quality of the habitat the park is home to many species of sparrows and warblers. It also the perfect place to watch the "sky dance" of American Woodcocks during early spring and during fall migration. Barred Owls are also known to nest in the park. The park has two miles of trails, some of which are paved.

Glens Valley Nature Park

Glens Valley is 30 acres of woodlands and early successional fields. It is located on the southside of Indianapolis in Perry Township at Bluff Road and Stop 11. The park includes a few miles of unpaved trails. Being a Southsider, this is one of my favorite parks to visit. Like all the park's mentioned before it is a natural oasis in the middle of a large urban area. It's very picturesque and in a matter of minutes you feel like you are deep within the woods. Species of note here are Eastern Towhee, Yellow-throated Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Flycatchers, Red-eyed Vireos, woodpeckers, and of course many of the common birds we would expect.

Southwestway Regional Park

Southwestway Park is 10 miles outside of downtown Indianapolis, on the Southwest side, of course, in Decatur township. It runs along Southport and Mann Roads and borders Morgan and Johnson counties. The park is a whopping 587 acres, and actually considered a regional park. It is the second largest park in the Indy Parks system, after Eagle Creek. Southwestway has many amenities including shelters, playgrounds, a golf course, and mountain bike trails, but of course what you are most interested in is the birding. The park has 7.3 miles of trails that wind up and down glacial till. Species seen here include lots of Indigo Buntings, warblers, including Prothonotary, vireos, flycatchers, kingfishers, and owls. You can walk down to the White River and bird along a trail that follows the river. There is also a very large and high quality prairie restoration within the park that provides an opportunity to see unique grassland birds. Both Dickcissels and Sandhill Cranes have been spotted here. And when I say there are lots of Indigo Buntings, there are. You don't even have to look hard to find one. One afternoon, I heard one nearby and used the bird call feature on the Merlin phone app to call it in. It hung out in a tree next to me for several minutes.

Spades Park

Spades Park is a 31-acre park that runs along the Pogue's Run waterway. Approximately 2 acres of the park is a restored high-quality short grass prairie. Species of note at this park include Warbling Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler, Belted Kingfisher, and Carolina Wren. There is also a chance you will see Chimney Swifts if you visit the park near dusk in August or September. Spades Park is also a short distance from Brookside Park, which also offers plenty of nature observation opportunities as well.

Grassy Creek Regional Park

Grassy Creek Park is actually two separate sections that total 152 acres. The northern portion of the park is predominately wet meadow and is a great place to see birds like Great Blue Heron, Sandhill Crane, and shorebird migrants. The park consists of several hiking trails, one of which connects the north and south parcel.

Brown County State Park Migrant Trip Recap

By Amy Hodson, Communications Chair



Brown County State Park is one of the true birding gems of Indiana. On June 3, twenty-nine birders set out to spend a beautiful morning hiking trails and birding the park. Of the 33 species that were seen, the highlights were views of Worm-eating Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Hooded Warbler. Thank you to all of the birders who joined us for a fun trip. We look forward to planning another Brown County State Park trip again soon!

Call for Volunteers: Open Positions within Amos Butler Audubon Society

Amos Butler Audubon Society is looking for energetic and dedicated volunteers to help in three capacities: website maintenance and troubleshooting, web content management, and membership management. If you have experience and/or interest in joining our team, please contact us at info@amosbutler.org, indicating the position you're most excited to undertake. Be sure to include information about your relevant skills, experience, and time availability.

Lights Out Indy Volunteer Opportunities

Get involved with Lights Out Indy (LOI), an initiative of Amos Butler Audubon Society to make Indianapolis a safer place for migrating birds! Volunteers are needed to assist with LOI efforts during prime migration periods: April 1 to May 31 and August 15 to November 15. Preferably, we would like several groups of people to sample each day during the fall and spring periods. You may participate as many days as desired, and mileage will be reimbursed. Contact Austin Broadwater at abroadwater1990@gmail.com to learn more.

Research Volunteer

Skills Needed:

- Basic bird identification
- Available vehicle and living within driving distance of Indianapolis
- Willingness to wake up early (just after dawn)
- Comfortable with seeing/handling dead or living birds

Duties:

- Walking along sides of major buildings or your downtown block in the Indianapolis metro area
- Collecting and identifying specimens, and filling out data sheets
- Sampled from half hour after sunrise for two hours.

Bird Rescue Volunteer

Skills Needed:

- Basic bird identification
- Available vehicle and living within driving distance of Indianapolis
- Comfortability with seeing/handling dead or living birds

Duties:

- Transport injured birds to certified wildlife rehabilitators
- Be frequently available if the situation arises that you would be called to drive downtown or significant distance to obtain birds

Outreach Volunteer Opportunities

ABAS Education Chair Jessica Helmbold is looking for volunteers to set-up our outreach display and talk with visitors at two upcoming events in Indianapolis. If you enjoy interacting with the public and sharing your love of birding, contact Jessica at jessica.helmbold@indy.gov to sign up and indicate the event(s) you are interested in.

TURN Festival

Saturday, September 30

12:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Paramount School of Excellence

TURN Festival is a free, fun-filled day celebrating farm, food, health, and the environment with over 50 hands-on demonstrations, exhibits, children's activities, music and food. Kimbal Musk, co-founder of The Kitchen, will deliver the Keynote Presentation at 1 p.m.

- The event starts at noon, but volunteers should plan to arrive at 11 a.m. for set-up and finish just after 6 p.m.
- Volunteers can choose to work in shifts (11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or 2:30 to 6:00 p.m.) or work the whole event.
- Volunteers may be asked to discuss our organization's mission; our meeting dates, times, and topics; current conservation projects; upcoming programs and events; general questions about birds and bird identification and talking about birds with kids.

Owl Festival

Saturday, October 28

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Eagle Creek Ornithology Center

Owl Festival is a fun-filled day of activities all about owls. There will be live animal programs, guided hikes, crafts, and other fun fall activities taking place throughout the day. All ages are welcome.

- Volunteers can choose to work in shifts (9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or 12:30 to 4:00 p.m.) or work the whole event.
- Volunteers may be asked to discuss our organization's mission; our meeting dates, times, and topics; current conservation projects; upcoming programs and events; general questions about birds and bird identification and talking about birds with kids.
- There will also be an opportunity for volunteers to show the public how to complete the Migration Challenge activity in front of the Ornithology Center. The Migration Challenge is a life-size obstacle course for kids to teach them about bird migration.

Donations

*Tom & Em Sylvester in memory of
Ron Scott*

*Mary Ellen Gadski in memory of
Jean Barnett*

Call for Photos

Amos Butler Audubon Society is looking for great images of Indiana birds and regional birding adventures to share on our Instagram and Facebook feeds. Break out those hard drives and submit your photos to info@amosbutleraudubon.org for a chance at exposure!

Amos Butler Audubon Society Chapter Supporter Membership

Membership benefits:

- 100% of your dues support local Audubon educational programs and urban conservation projects
- *Audubon LifeLines*, the chapter newsletter
- Workshops and entertaining monthly program meetings

One-year individual membership \$25

Two-year individual membership \$45

One-year household membership \$40

Two-year household membership \$75

Lifetime individual membership \$500

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail (please include) _____

Make checks payable to: Amos Butler Audubon Society

Mail to: ABAS Membership Chair

P.O. Box 80024

Indianapolis, IN 46280

e-mail questions to: info@amosbutleraudubon.org

Amos Butler Audubon Society

Officers:

Rob Ripma; *President, Executive Committee*

Ted Meyer; *Treasurer, Past President,
Executive Committee*

Joanna Woodruff; *Recording Secretary,
Executive Committee*

Board Members:

Adam Barnes

Liz Booth

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Scott Enochs, *Field Trip Chair*

Jessica Helmbold, *Education Chair*

Amy Hodson, *Communications Chair*

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Brittany Swinford, *Conservation Chair*

Chad Williams, *Program Chair*

Committee Chairs:

Austin Broadwater, *Lights Out Indy Chair*

Donna McCarty, *Birdathon Chair*

Whitney Yoerger, *Newsletter Editor*

Visit our website:

www.amosbutleraudubon.org

Sign up for the online LifeLines at
info@amosbutleraudubon.org

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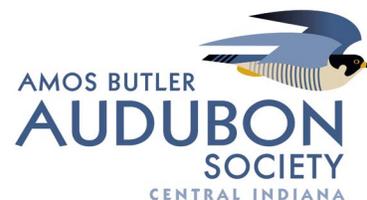
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AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support ABAS every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as on Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to ABAS.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You will want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile so that all your purchases can benefit the birds of Central Indiana.

You can use your existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile! Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings remain the same.

Go to smile.amazon.com, enter Amos W Butler Audubon Society in the search bar, and let your shopping be not just for your family and friends but also for birds like the Cerulean Warbler.



*Our mission: To promote the enjoyment and
stewardship of the birds of Central Indiana*

Amos Butler Audubon Society

P.O. Box 80024

Indianapolis, IN 46280