

The Making of Eagle Creek Park

By Anne Cecere

An effort to control the devastating flooding that occurred along Eagle Creek in western Marion County in the 1950s led to the creation of Eagle Creek reservoir and park. In 1960, the Indianapolis Board of Flood Control voted to acquire land along Eagle Creek from 38th Street to 69th Street to build a lake for flood control. The Board of Flood Control was authorized to buy land below 800-foot elevation, while the land on higher ground was to be purchased by the Board of Parks and Recreation for the new park.

The engineering plan for the reservoir was completed in 1964, but the work was delayed for funding acquisition and negotiation of land purchases. Senator Hartke began work to obtain up to \$8 million in federal aid for the estimated \$15 million flood control project. The flood control project alone required the purchase of a hundred parcels of land, including 1000 acres donated to Purdue University by J.K. Lilly, Jr.

In 1964, an agreement reached with Purdue required that its entire 3286-acre parcel be sold at once. This left the Board of Parks and Recreation with the task of purchasing and developing the 2286 acres not needed for flood control. After almost two years of appraisals and negotiations, the purchase of the Purdue/Lilly land was completed in February 1966 for a total of about \$3 million. Land purchased by the park department included Eagle Crest Forest Reserve, a J.K. Lilly reforestation project that was started in the 1930s. The mature trees on the east side of the reservoir and some park roads, such as Circle Drive, date back to Lilly's ownership.

On July 18, 1964, the first public hearing was held and attorney Willis K. Kunz spoke on behalf of thirty-four area property owners. By this time, residents whose property was in the path of the upcoming construction had begun to receive notices of eminent domain and dates for hearings. In many cases, it took several years for final settlements to be reached and families to get fair compensation to purchase new homes in a different location.

Beginning on December 1, 1965, bonds were sold to finance the project. A groundbreaking ceremony for the dam took place at 38th Street and Dandy Trail on February 1, 1966, and construction was completed in 1968. Fish in the 215 square mile Eagle Creek Watershed were "eradicated" using a spray made for that purpose. After the removal of "trash fish," restocking of game fish began.

In 1970, the water in the reservoir had reached a level that made it suitable for recreation, so construction on park facilities began. There were limited facilities available in the park and unimproved roads. Temporary boat ramps were made using the old 56th Street on both sides of the causeway. Picnic areas were available around Lilly Lake and at an overlook on the eastern shore, just north of the dam. That summer Lilly Lake was available for bank fishing and the reservoir was opened to fisherman with boats twenty-four hours a day.

By the summer of 1972, gatehouses, shelters, a beach house, and other facilities were completed. At a dedication ceremony on June 10th, a government representative presented a flag for each gatehouse. The Gordon Pipers played, marching up to a bright blue ribbon stretched across the entrance. A speech was given by Mayor Richard Lugar, and the ribbon was cut to officially open one of the largest, most beautiful city parks in America.

For photos and more information see www.facebook.com/eaglecreekhistory



Top: Eagle Creek Park Reservoir Construction Sign.
 Below: Eagle Creek Park Dam & Reservoir in 1970.

Upcoming Audubon Programs, Events, and Field Trips

All are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.



Eurasian Blue Tit

Birds of Great Britain

Tuesday, November 12, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Holliday Park Nature Center
6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, IN

Join Jessica Helmbold, ABAS Education Chair, as she unravels the mystery surrounding birds of Great Britain. How are British birds similar or different from US birds? Hint: it's not their accents! Step into the avian world of our neighbors across the pond.



Daniel Boritt birding in Antarctica

Antarctica Field Research

Tuesday, December 10, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Holliday Park Nature Center
6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, IN

Join Dan Boritt, Holliday Park Manager, for an informative discussion of the time he spent doing field research in Antarctica. Weddell Seals inhabit one of the most inhospitable places on earth. How can they reproduce in such a place? How do people live there? Come and learn how these seals survive, how the researchers survive, and some chance encounters with the few birds that call this land home!

Fall Birding at Muscatatuck NWF

Saturday, November 16, 7:30 am to 3:30 pm

12985 East US Highway 50, Seymour, IN 47274

Join ABAS Education Chair, Jessica Helmbold, for a day of celebrating the best of fall. Enjoy southern Indiana fall colors, fall waterfowl migration, and delicious hot fall beverages along with snacks and lunch at the picturesque Stream Cliff Farm Farm Winery in Commiskey, Indiana.

Dress for the weather and prepare for a good amount of walking. Bring your binoculars and a scope if you have one.

Registration is requested by emailing Jessica at jh_beagle@hotmail.com. Please indicate if you plan to join us for lunch so we can make reservations at the restaurant. There is no fee for this trip, just the cost of your lunch.

For those interested in carpooling, we will be meeting at 7:30 am at the Wal-Mart at County Line and Emerson. It's exit 101 off I-65. If you'd like to meet us at the refuge we'll be there between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.

Beers with Birders!

Thursday, December 12, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

METAZOA



Metazoa Brewing Company
140 South College Avenue
Indianapolis, IN

Join ABAS for an evening at Metazoa Brewing Company. We will meet from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm to collectively share our birding experiences and adventures at this informal gathering. This event is open to the public. Please email info@amosbutleraudubon.org if you plan to join us so we can be aware of how many will be attending.

Volunteer Training Series: Bird Walk Leader

Wednesday, November 20, 9:30 am to 11:00 am

Holliday Park Nature Center
6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, IN

ABAS is making it even easier to volunteer with our Volunteer Training Program! Each session will focus on a different topic designed to provide volunteers with hands-on opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed to help with chapter programs and events. No experience needed, open to individual's ages 16+.

These sessions are free and are open to the public. Register by emailing Abarnes@HollidayPark.org.

This session's topic is: Leading a bird walk isn't just about knowing the birds. Learn tips and tricks for being a bird walk leader with Holliday Park Manager, Dan Boritt.



Upcoming Christmas Bird Counts

109th Indianapolis CBC

Saturday, December 14, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm
Pre-register to determine meeting location

Whether you are a first-time birdwatcher or an experienced pro, your help is needed during the 120th annual National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count (CBC), scheduled for Saturday, December 14, 2019. This will be the 109th anniversary of the Indianapolis CBC, which was first held in December 1910.

Nationwide, more than 2,000 CBCs are conducted during the holiday season. The National Audubon Society and other organizations use the data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation actions. General information about the National Audubon Society and the Annual Christmas Bird Count can be found at www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count.

The Indianapolis CBC, sponsored by ABAS, takes place within a 15-mile-diameter circle covering the northeast side of Indianapolis, with the center point being in Fort Harrison State Park.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. In addition, if your home is within the boundaries of the count circle, you can stay home and report the birds that visit your bird feeders by making prior arrangements with the count compiler.

The exciting news is that CBC is a free program. To participate, please register by December 11 so that birding team assignments can be made in advance of count day. Register to participate by calling John Schaust at (317) 208-4021 or emailing schaust@gmail.com.

Eagle Creek Valley CBC

Sunday, December 15, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Meet at the Eagle Creek Ornithology Center
6515 Delong Road, Indianapolis, IN

The Eagle Creek Valley Christmas Bird Count (CBC), sponsored by ABAS, takes place within a 15-mile-diameter circle covering the northwest side of Indianapolis, with the center being in Eagle Creek Park.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. In addition, if your home is within the boundaries of the count circle, you can report the birds that visit your feeder once you have arranged to do so with the count compiler.

Meet at the Ornithology Center to pick up an information packet for your assigned area before heading out to bird. The Ornithology Center will open at 8:00 am. A pitch-in lunch for all participants will be held at the Ornithology Center at noon to tally our bird count and to reorganize groups to head back outside to cover additional areas if needed.

To participate please register prior to December 9 so birding teams can be formed and count plans made in advance. Reserve your spot by contacting Will Schaust at (317) 327-2473, or emailing him at william.schaust@indy.gov.



American Tree Sparrow courtesy of Amy Hodson

Greenfield Birders 3rd Annual CBC

Date TBD

Meet at 7:00 am at Jack's Donuts on Highway 9 in Greenfield, IN

Join the Greenfield Birders for a day birding in and around Greenfield. We are participating in the 119th National Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in which we will tally every individual bird we find within our assigned region. Don't worry if you can only come for a couple of hours, or even just watch your feeders from home. All levels of involvement and skill are welcome. There will be driving and hiking involved if you participate in the field, so dress for the weather.

We will meet at 7:00 a.m. at Jack's Donuts on Highway 9 in Greenfield where breakfast will be provided. Here we will split up into groups to cover more ground and ensure our teams are prepared. If you have questions or wish to sign-up to be part of the Greenfield Birders CBC, please contact Adam Wilson at NikonBirdHunter@gmail.com or contact Adam on Facebook.

119th Hamilton County CBC

Date and Time TBD

Cool Creek Nature Center

2000 East 151st Street, Carmel, IN

Celebrate the holidays by helping the National Audubon Society conduct the 119th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Join other bird-watchers for a morning of hiking and birding. Lunch for participants will be provided by the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department at the Cool Creek Nature Center. Registration is required. To register or receive more details, call the Cool Creek Nature Center at (317) 774-2500, or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov.

Meet at the Cool Creek Nature Center or go directly to your assigned area.

Jamestown CBC

Date TBD. Meet at 8:30 am

McCloud Park Nature Center

8518 Hughes Road, North Salem, IN

For this Christmas Bird Count meet at McCloud Nature Park, located southwest of North Salem in Hendricks County, at 8:30 am. A link with map to the park is at <http://www.hendrickscounty.parks.org/our-parks/mccloud-nature-park/>.

The group will meet for lunch in North Salem, and whoever wishes to continue after lunch is welcome to join Roger in the afternoon.

There is no need to register in advance. If you have questions, contact Roger Hedge at (317) 473-3222 (cell) or rhedge@dnr.in.gov.



*Barred Owl
courtesy of
Amy Hodson*

Bird Photography Walk at Eagle Creek Park

Friday, December 20, 9:00 am to 10:30 am
6515 Delong Road, Indianapolis, IN

Join Amy Hodson, ABAS Communication Chair, on a walk at Eagle Creek Park to photograph birds. All levels of photography are welcome, especially beginners! Don't have camera gear quite yet, but still want to learn? This will be a great opportunity to learn about the basics of bird photography.

The group will meet at the Ornithology Center to practice shooting at the feeders. We will then head into the park to see what migrants and resident birds we can find!

Registration is required. Please RSVP for this event by emailing info@amosbutleraudubon.org. Although there is no fee for this walk, park entrance fees apply.

Special Donations

*In memory of Edward "Pete" Drum
by Robert & Carol Scott*

State Employees who sign up to have payroll deductions contributed to ABAS

All who contribute through AmazonSmile by naming Amos Butler Audubon Society as their charity

Local Bird Hikes

Eagle Creek Park

6515 Delong Road, Indianapolis, IN
Every Sunday, 9:00 am to 11:00 am
November 3, 10, 17, 24
December 1, 8, 15 (CBC 8:00 am), 22, 29

Meet in front of the Ornithology Center.

Holliday Park

6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, IN
Third Tuesday of each month
Start times vary during the year
November 19, 8:30 am to 10:00 am
December 17, 8:30 am to 10:00 am

Meet in front of the Holliday Park Nature Center.

Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab

3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis, IN
Most Wednesdays in November, 8:00 am to 10:00 am
November 6, 13, 20

Meet at the St. Francis statue just west of the Allison Mansion on the Marian campus

Newfields Bird Hike

1550 West 38th Street, Indianapolis, IN
Saturday, December 7, 8:30 am to 10:30 am

Meet at Lake Terrace in the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres for these quarterly hikes. There is free parking at the loop just ¼ mile west of the 38th Street entrance to Newfields.

New Local Hike at McCloud Nature Park

8518 Hughes Rd, North Salem, IN
Thursday, November 21, 9:00 am to 10:30 am

Join Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Naturalists for an easy and informal walk to spot birds. Learn clues for identifying by sight and sound while also enjoying the beauty of McCloud Nature Park in the fall. All levels of birding experience are welcome, from beginner to expert.

This is an opportunity to explore and learn together. Dress for the weather and prepare to walk about 1 mile over moderate surfaces. They have a few binoculars available to share, but bring your own if you have them.

Free to attend, all ages, no registration required. For weather-related concerns, call the Weather Hotline at (317) 718-6111.

McCloud Nature Park Sign



Upcoming Events with the Central Indiana Land Trust

White Owl Conservation Area Volunteer Day

8487 Union Chapel Road, Indianapolis, IN
Wednesday, November 13, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Join Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) in restoring this urban nature preserve along the White River on the north side of Indianapolis. Volunteers will work to remove invasive honeysuckle from the preserve.

Bring work gloves if you have them, and wear boots and long pants. If you don't have gloves, CILTI will provide some. Please dress for the weather as we will work rain or shine. No experience needed.

This preserve is located behind Fleming's Steakhouse along the White River. Parking is available on the north side of the restaurant. CILTI staff will meet participants in the lot at 10:00 am.

Registration is required. Register at CILTI's event page. Contact CILTI's Traci Willis at twillis@conservingindiana.org for any questions.

Burnett Woods Volunteer Day

8264 East County Road 100 South, Avon, IN
Wednesday, November 20, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Join Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) for a morning of invasive species control at this nature preserve in Avon. Volunteers will work to remove invasive honeysuckle from the preserve.

Bring work gloves if you have them, and wear boots and long pants. If you don't have gloves, CILTI will provide some. Please dress for the weather as we will work rain or shine. No experience needed.

Directions to Burnett Woods from US-36 in Avon — head south on Dan Jones Rd (CR 800 East). At the roundabout at CR 100 South, turn left. You can park in the back row of the Light and Life Methodist Church. CILTI staff will meet participants in the lot at 10:00 am.

Registration is required. Register at CILTI's event page. Contact CILTI's Traci Willis at twillis@conservingindiana.org for any questions.

Portland Arch Hike

1332-1598 W Scout Camp Rd, Covington, IN
Friday, November 29, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Walk off your turkey and stuffing with Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) as Executive Director Cliff Chapman leads us on a Black Friday hike through this stunning Fountain County nature preserve.

Owned and managed by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves, Portland Arch features a dramatic sandstone gorge, a lovely creek, and several different habitats: forest, open prairie, spring-seep wetlands, and savannas.

This is a rugged hike with some challenging terrain. Participants should wear sturdy shoes for hiking. Conditions may be muddy or wet.

Space is limited for this hike, so please register. Register at CILTI's event page. Contact CILTI at info@conservingindiana.org for any questions, or to be put on the waiting list if spaces are full.

Meltzer Woods Hike

1522 South County Road 600 East, Shelbyville, IN
Sunday, December 15, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Join the Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) for a guided hike through the always compelling Meltzer Woods. CILTI's Executive Director, Cliff Chapman, will lead us in exploring winter ecology in this beautiful old-growth forest.

Meltzer Woods is located near Shelbyville and is a short 45-minute drive from Indianapolis.

Space is limited for this hike, so please register. Register at CILTI's event page. Contact CILTI at info@conservingindiana.org for any questions, or to be put on the waiting list if spaces are full.



Great Gray Owl
photo courtesy of
Amy Hodson

Did You Hear the News? 3 Billion Birds Gone...

As you may have seen in the news, the National Audubon Society recently released a study which determined that North America has lost more than 1 in 4 birds in the last 50 years. The documented loss of the planet's most plentiful creatures is astounding, heartbreaking and cataclysmic. If you are interested in learning more, visit the National Audubon webpage to read details about the study and how you can help at <https://www.audubon.org/>.

Support ABAS using AmazonSmile

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To shop at AmazonSmile, simply go to [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and enter Amos W. Butler Audubon Society in the search bar. You can use your existing Amazon account on AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, wish list, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings remain the same.

Bookmark [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile. Let your shopping be not just for your family and friends, but also for the birds of Central Indiana, like the Cerulean Warbler.

Travel Tips for Birding Abroad

By Doug Vine

Many of us maintain backyard bird feeders for intimate views of our feathered friends from the comfort of our own homes. The process is self-contained with no worries deciding what “stuff” to bring. If we venture out beyond the backyard, it’s rarely daunting, since all we need to do is load up the car.

A birding outing to the remotest corners of our state, especially when riding shotgun in someone else’s car, certainly requires some preparation. Happily, however, it’s generally manageable with minimal effort.

Traveling to a birding destination further afield, to another country or continent, for multiple days or even weeks, involves a great deal more preparation. The wise traveler understands this and plans accordingly to help ensure a successful trip.

Unsurprisingly, the key to a successful birding trip abroad (read as a smooth, delightful, and no surprises), is in the planning. Here are a few ideas from what I’ve learned from trips I’ve taken to Peru, Costa Rica, South Africa, and Taiwan.

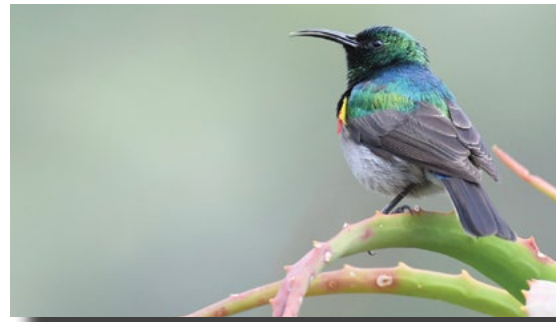
Go Back to School

Not literally. Although it will pay off to study your chosen destination beforehand. You’ll better appreciate everything you see and ask better questions if you’re already informed on local culture and customs (not to mention wildlife). Remember there’s birding knowledge and there’s local knowledge. Get a good birding field guide for the former. Read and study online for the latter. Skimming online gets you generally informed and whets your appetite to learn more. It also gives you a sense of what does and doesn’t appeal to you. That’ll be handy with subsequent searches when you drill down further, and keep you from committing to something you can’t undo.

Learn From Others

When scouring online travel sites, sample both positive and negative reviews. Keep in mind, not everyone is as laid back as Uncle Clem, or as fussy as Aunt Matilda. To help me evaluate possible destinations, I sought out travel company itineraries and read all I could find, since they can vary greatly. It helped me decide what I wanted to do. Sometimes travelers themselves can be the source of an itinerary. Everyone likes to brag about their trips and I found those posts quite helpful as well.

Beyond itineraries, there’s no substitute for speaking with someone who has already been there, so be sure to network with your local birding buddies. You already know that birders love to share.



*Southern Double-collared Sunbird from South Africa
courtesy of Doug Vine*

Once you’ve found the perfect itinerary, all that’s left is to sign up. Or, for the more adventurous, build out your own trip using that itinerary as a guide. This latter approach can be a lot of fun, and be more flexible, but beware, it means more work to arrange as well.

Make a List, or Maybe Two

Take your time here. Remember that generally once en route, you are stuck with what you packed. Start with rough lists then systematically refine them. Some of my separate lists included:

- Contacts — To whom and how are inbound or outbound calls made in an emergency?
- Medications — What, aside from your normal meds, are needed in the area(s) you are visiting?
- Clothing — You can pack for the weather, the season, the elevation, and the pests, but there might be more. For example, I knew the daily temperature range for our South African trip, but did not consider what a cold spring morning in an open vehicle would feel like. A friend told us to watch out for this. We packed an extra layer for warmth and were glad we did.
- Equipment — Are you bringing scopes or cameras? I custom-fit a small carry-on suitcase with pieces cut from a yoga mat to protect my more sensitive and valuable gear. Better and cheaper than the pros!
- Documentation — You need to keep track of what may be many moving parts (travel insurance, flight info, other travel details, passports, etc) with backup copies of each.

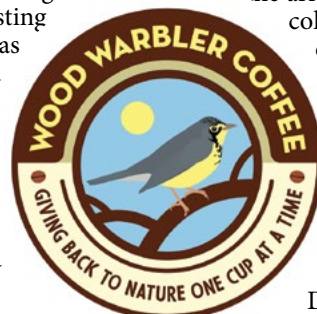
Finally, your glorious trip will end. You’ll have many great memories and photos too. Take time while it’s fresh to revisit your lists to add or subtract anything you missed, or found you didn’t need. Then curl up to savor those photos and memories and maybe share them with your local birding chapter.

A Passion for Birds and Excellent Coffee

By Jeff Canada - Owner & Coffee Roaster at Wood Warbler Coffee

As birders, we often get asked how we got into birding. As a coffee roaster, I am asked how I got into roasting almost daily. One day in the late spring of 2017, I was driving home from birding with friends when I heard the host on the Sirius XM Grateful Dead Channel mention that he had been roasting his own coffee for several years. He went on to give very few details, but enough that it really made me curious. That night, I found myself on Google. Much like what happened when I first searched for the birds I saw at my backyard feeders in 2008, a whole new world appeared before me.

I purchased a \$25 popcorn popper and 4 lbs. of green coffee. I tossed some beans in the popcorn popper and did what I had seen others do in Youtube videos while anxiously awaiting



the arrival of my new “roaster.” I watched the beans change colors and get larger and then snap! I heard the sounds of the “first crack” and it was music to my ears. When they finished roasting, I immediately took them to the grinder and brewed a cup. It was incredible. It was the taste we had been seeking since 2013 when we went to Jamaica and had fresh roasted and ground coffee. I was immediately hooked.

In the summer of 2018, after learning the craft for a year, I purchased a low volume commercial coffee roaster. As a side gig to raise money for the IN DNR non-game fund, I started selling freshly roasted coffee. In the late spring of 2019, I decided to approach the IN DNR to see if they’d be interested in partnering with me to raise even more money. They embraced the idea and we are

currently working on a partnership to get our bird-friendly coffee in the State Park Inn gift shops. From those conversations, I realized that many nonprofit conservation organizations could use extra fundraising help. Wood Warbler Coffee was born.

Smithsonian certified bird-friendly coffee is a great way to make people aware of conservation organizations, while raising funds with a bird-friendly product, certified by a world-class organization. As of this writing, we have five conservation partners in Indiana, and we added our first partner from another state, Michigan Audubon, at the beginning of October. We will add more partners as we move forward and also expand into other states.

While starting a business of any kind is an anxiety-filled roller coaster with lots of uncertainty, I feel incredibly blessed that I can combine my two biggest passions, birds and coffee, and make them into a business. Okay, three biggest passions, some of our coffee may be named after Grateful Dead songs.

After I began roasting coffee, I took notice of the coffee being served everywhere I went. I have had some really good coffee in different cities around the U.S. One brand of coffee that attracted my attention, though not particularly good, was a company that strictly sells Smithsonian certified bird-friendly coffee. I soon found myself researching the meaning of this certification and learned that it benefits many of the migratory bird species that we see each year in Indiana and surrounding states. Coffee farms that earn the Smithsonian bird-friendly certification support over 240 migratory bird species.

We are proud to offer several Smithsonian certified coffees along with Rainforest Alliance and Fair Trade Certified coffees. When freshly roasted, these coffee are excellent.

I'd like to thank the ABAS Board of Directors for agreeing to be the very first Wood Warbler Coffee Conservation Partner. And to all of you for such incredible support, thank you!

www.woodwarblercoffee.com

The Results Are In!

Eagle Creek Park: 2019 Breeding Bird Survey

By Aidan Rominger

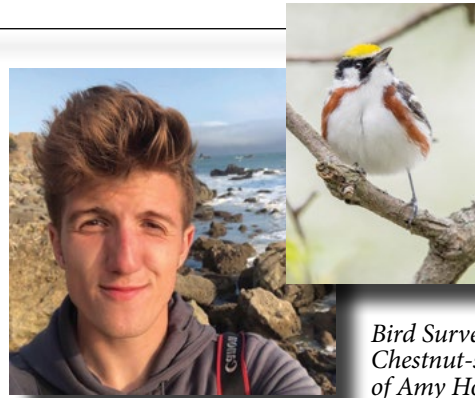
This summer, I was asked by ABAS to conduct breeding bird surveys for Eagle Creek Park. Having helped with this research in 2014, I was interested in examining the species diversity over time in the park. My results yielded extremely unexpected species such as Chestnut-sided Warbler, Veery, Blue Grosbeak, and multiple Fish Crows. Throughout this writeup, I will discuss these rarities along with the basic trends I found to be particularly fascinating when comparing data from past years.

I began by conducting surveys on the west side of the park. I surveyed all of the areas from the 56th street bridge, all the way up to the Scott Starling Nature Preserve. The west side of the park exhibits unique topographic features that many southern hardwood species need in order to successfully breed. Due to the property's unique topography, I targeted many of the southern hardwood forest species. This not only helps to better understand what species breed on the property, but allows for continued studies of the trends in populations over time. Species of particular interest included Ovenbird, Summer Tanager, Black-and-white Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, and Cerulean Warbler. All of the following species have historically nested on the west side of Eagle Creek in past years. However, I was saddened to find a drastic decrease in many of my targets, despite being in a seemingly perfect habitat.

Throughout surveys on both sides of the park, I never recorded a single Ovenbird. Ovenbirds have historically bred on both sides of the park for years. This came as a huge shock, as I had experienced many individuals in these areas in the past. This could be the result of a potentially poor breeding year for this species, leaving less potential for nesters in central Indiana. In addition to the low Ovenbird numbers, I recorded only a single Cerulean Warbler, along with a single Black-and-white Warbler throughout both sides of the park.

With that being said, many of the usual southern breeders such as Summer Tanager, Louisiana Waterthrush, Yellow-throated Vireo, Prothonotary Warbler, and Yellow-throated Warbler seemed to be in normal supply this year. Rob Ripma heard a Worm-eating Warbler near Eagle's Crest a couple weeks prior to the surveys being conducted. This suggests the possibility of a male on territory, although I did not personally note that species during the course of the surveys.

While mostly covered by forest, the west side of Eagle Creek is also made up of clear cut habitat. This early successional habitat



Bird Surveyor Aidan Rominger. Chestnut-sided Warbler courtesy of Amy Hodson.

attracts many species such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Prairie Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Field Sparrow, and Blue Grosbeak. I found that many of those species were present in normal abundance, with the exception of Blue-winged Warbler. Despite having gone to known breeding locations for this species, I was unable to find a single individual. However, I was pleasantly surprised to stumble upon a female Blue Grosbeak in the fields bordering Raceway Road.

While the West side of the park was lacking in species diversity, the East side of the park proved to be the complete opposite. With a healthy mix of fields and wet forest habitat, I had a different target list of species to look out for. Some of those species included, Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Wood Thrush.

I found many of those species to be in above-average numbers when comparing it to previous years on the East side of the park. I logged a total of 8 Red-headed Woodpeckers for the east side, which is a potential high count for the surveys. Also of note were two male Hooded Warblers seemingly on territory in areas where they have not been previously recorded as breeding.

The most shocking find of the surveys was a singing male Chestnut-sided Warbler, recorded on June 14th near "Warbler Alley." Since I could not find a female present, breeding for this species in the park is not confirmed. However, it does suggest that there was a male singing on territory during the breeding season.

To my amazement, I also found a singing male Veery towards the 56th street entrance. This is the first potential breeding record for the park that I am aware of. Lastly, throughout my time surveying the east side, I logged a total of 4 individual Fish Crows flying over the park. Breeding of this species in the area is unknown. Although due to the small population that has been established for the past couple of years in this area, this sighting is not completely unexpected.

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

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Chuck Anderson, *Field Trip Chair*

Additional Committee Chairs:

Donna McCarty, *Birdathon Chair*



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

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