Thank you for another banner year!

After having a record-breaking effort in 2021 for donations — $32,518 from January 1 to June 30 — we figured we’d be hard pressed to come anywhere near that total in 2022. Thanks to loyal and generous donors like you, combined with outstanding efforts by our team members and volunteers, we came darned close. While not eclipsing last year’s record, Birdathon 2022 very nearly matched it with $32,151 in donations during the same period.

We had an ambitious goal of funding $38,556 in grant requests. With your donations and a substantial carryover, we will fully fund all 10 grants. American Bird Conservancy will be able to continue its tradition of championing the Central Andes Birdscape in Colombia. Marian University and Keep Indianapolis Beautiful will add more bird-friendly habitat in Central Indiana. We are supporting research on why some birds are better than others in responding to climate change as well as the value of native versus cultivated plants for bird species.

With our grant to Central Indiana Land Trust, you will be able to watch a Bald Eagle nest online via a camera in Oliver’s Woods. A custom-made table at Newfields’ Ruth Lilly Visitors’ Pavilion will enhance your birdwatching experiences. Thanks to the binoculars and scope available at Marott Woods and other local birding sites, more individuals will begin birdwatching. This summer, youngsters at Camp Utopia enjoyed another nature-focused, weeklong day camp.

The Noddy Little Gulls claimed top honors as both Fundraising Champs and Species Count Champs. Bud & Carl’s Legacy team placed second in both categories. Be sure to read the tales of their Big Day events as well as those of our other 10 teams.

A sincere thank you to all of our Birdathon donors from Donna McCarty, Birdathon Chair, members of the Birdathon Committee, and the Board of Directors of the Amos Butler Audubon Society.
**2nd-Place Fundraising Champs:**
**Bud & Carl’s Legacy Team**

Team members: (l-r): Fred Wooley, Janet Tuten, Marty Williams, Patty Steffen, Matthew K., Keith Starling and Amanda Smith

**The Best and Worst of Times**
*by Janet Tuten*

It was the best of times (shorebirds), it was the worst of times (warblers). Isn't that always the way it works out? We added some fresh faces to our team this year — some with experience, some young eyes/ears, and some help trying to keep our Facebook page up to date. Since additional people present more schedule conflicts, we went out a tad later than we usually do. We headed north to catch all those warblers that had already come through Central Indiana. I guess they made good time because they just kept going to Michigan and we missed a lot of them.

We spotted the Monk Parakeet this year! First we stopped where they were supposed to be, but no parakeets were to be found. We were already behind schedule but you still have to eat. So, while we were fixing sandwiches to eat in the car, we had a parakeet flyover. Can't beat that! Oh wait, we can. We managed to add Virginia Rail and Sora at that same location because, thankfully, Fred likes to tromp through any marshy, reedy ditch he can find.

There were lots of shorebirds at Kankakee Sands this year. It was hard to tear ourselves away. Matthew really shined. I asked him how he got so good at shorebirds so quickly. He answered: "I watch eBird and go to all the puddles." Thank you to our generous donors and families and to the ABAS Birdathon Committee. Your support makes this event enjoyable and worthwhile. We'll see you at the puddles!

**3rd-Place Fundraising Champs:**
**EcoLab Team**

Team members: (l-r) Randy Patrick, Deb Patrick, Chandler Roberts, and Dave Benson

**Morning Birding Saves the Day**
*by David Benson*

Team EcoLab, consisting of Chandler Roberts, Deb and Randy Patrick, and me, did its Big Day on Marian University's Indianapolis campus. We started the hot afternoon of May 9 hoping for migrant species but had little success. Deb Patrick achieved the best sighting of the day: a diurnal beaver that was patrolling the Jens Jensen pond.

The next morning, birding started slowly but steadily picked up pace as we sighted one warbler after another. We enjoyed Cape May, Wilson's, and Blackburnian warblers, plus a surprise Yellow-billed Cuckoo. And of course, our logo bird, the Green Heron, was a highlight. We capped off the day with a great view of a Cooper's Hawk, ending with 83 species. Not bad for a small property in the middle of the big city! Thanks to our donors for their support.

“We headed north to catch all those warblers that had already come through Central Indiana. I guess they made good time because they just kept going to Michigan and we missed a lot of them.”

Bud & Carl’s Legacy Team
Las Aguilas Harpias Traveling from Afar To Bird Locally
by Jeanette Frazier

Having just returned from South Africa, we wanted to get out to see some Indiana birds and spring migration activity. Staying local, we visited Eagle Creek Park where we managed only a few warblers, though we enjoyed our familiar stomping grounds. It was especially rewarding to listen to a singing Kentucky Warbler on the North Loop Trail.

We enjoyed a delicious lunch at The Loft before working our way home to Hendricks County.

The Birdquesters Kristina’s Two-Lifer Day
by Logan Lakins

The Birdquesters continued their run as a two-person team to end with their highest personal total to date, 131 species. Starting at Cane Ridge, Kristina and I hoped to find a Piping Plover that had recently been seen. There was no Piping Plover, though we did add an unexpected Willet to our list. Our next stop was at Goose Pond, where we spent the evening watching Black Terns and Least Terns fly over our heads. Later that night after the storms passed, we were treated to a singing Chuck-will’s-widow and a Barn Owl, which was a lifer for both of us. The last portion of our day was spent at Eagle Creek Park and Sodalis Nature Park where we searched for as many warblers and forest species as we could find. Big thanks to Scott Enochs who got us on a singing Connecticut Warbler, which was Kristina’s second lifer of our trip. Once again, thank you to all our family and friends who donated and a bigger thanks to the rest of the teams that continue to raise money for Indiana birds.

The Best Birding Bridge in Brownsburg
by Wesley Homoya

After breaking our own record four years running, we knew repeating the feat this year would be tough. When we checked our calendars and discovered we’d have to do our Big Sit on May 21 this year, we were pretty confident we’d struggle to find enough lingering, leftover migrants. Boy, were we right!

Posting a meager 60 on the species checklist, we nevertheless had an awesome time on “The Best Birding Bridge in Brownsburg,” enjoying the birds and showing a few of them to fellow trail users. A caterpillar-feasting Yellow-billed Cuckoo, a local Barred Owl being mobbed by angry corvids, and a particularly boisterous Acadian Flycatcher (all at eye-level or below as is typical at this spot), were a few of our favorite memories. A big thank-you to all of the wonderful people out there supporting the Birdathon with us.

Retracing Our Route
by Stephen Nawrocki

Team Nawrocki (Stephen, Susan, Jenna, and Heather) conducted its 2022 Birdathon on May 16, exactly one week earlier than we had in 2021. Because we saw no migrants last year, we thought we would try an informal experiment: we would re-trace our exact route from 2021 and see how this one-week difference would affect our migrant count. Like last year, our first bird was a Great-horned Owl calling before dawn at our Greenwood home. We then hit Lingle Road in Morgan County, proceeded to McCormick’s Creek State Park, and then to Goose Pond and Green-Sullivan State Forest for the rest of the day and early evening.

The weather was beautiful except for strong and continual winds from the west, which unfortunately served to put down the birds. As a result, we only picked up one migrant warbler,
The remainder of the morning found birding many of the other Eagle Creek hotspots. The Ice Skating Pond was alive with new species and we added four new warblers. By noon, our tally stood at 103 species.

Not a bad morning, and our hopes were high for an equally productive afternoon. But then Mother Nature had other plans. The overcast skies darkened, and torrential rains followed. After a quick run up to a flooded field near Sheridan, which added eight new species, we decided to call it a day.

Despite the weather, our team had a great day and we would like to thank our families for their unquestioned support of our passion for the outdoors. Thank you to all our wonderful donors. We truly appreciate your support for our team and the important projects funded by the Amos Butler Audubon Society Birdathon.

**Mud Creek Creepers**

The Creepers Find a Creeper

By Wesley Homoya

The Mud Creek Creepers scored a “Perfect 50” on our inaugural run. When we realized that the only dates we could do were May 27/28, we knew we would be likely to get mostly a “breeding bird base.” We realized that the only dates we could do were May 27/28, we were looking for a flock of around 40 Hudsonian Godwits at the East Pool. Eventually, we tallying 75 species including 18 warblers along with multiple thrushes, vireos, woodpeckers, and flycatchers.

Community Hospital

20 Warbler Species for the Day

By Doug Sherow

Our 2022 Big Day of Birding got off to a slow start several days after we had originally planned. This was due to a shoulder injury, which occurred the week before. As a result, the members of the Community Hospital Team set out on its trek on Monday, May 9, at less than 100% capacity. With my left arm in a sling, I was unable to hold binoculars. However, I was able to be the scribe for our journey.

Our day began at Eagle Creek Park, finding Purple Martins at the Marina. We also saw a good number of songbirds in the park, including several warbler species, eventually tallying 20 species for the day. From Eagle Creek we headed southwest through Morgan County, where we had lots of passerines, warblers, orioles and even a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. We also spotted a Wild Turkey on this part of our trek.

Further southwest we stopped at a bridge across the White River where we found a large flock of Cliff Swallows. On other parts of White River bottomlands, we did not do so well due to the water levels.

Onward to Goose Pond where we found Bell’s Vireos, Northern Bobwhite, Bobolink, Dickcissels and Black-necked Stilts.

We headed back to Indy, stopping at an Osprey nest on our return to Eagle Creek Park. After our 270+ mile trip we finished around 4:30 pm. Our weather was pleasant all day, but water levels were high everywhere and resulted in fewer shorebirds, as well as waterfowl. Regardless, we all had a great time as usual.

**Wild Birds Unlimited**

Not Bad for a Rainy Day

By John Schaust

You would think a three-person team would have an easy time picking a Birdathon Day, but for Brian, Bob and myself, May 18 was the only day we could all match on our calendars. May rain or shine, we were committed to spending the day combing Central Indiana to build our Big Day List.

The overcast day started around 7:00 am at the Eagle Creek Marina. It would be an understatement to say that the next two hours were nothing short of amazing. The marina lived up to its reputation as we tallied 75 species including 18 warblers along with multiple thrushes, vireos, woodpeckers, and flycatchers.

but we were luckier with shorebirds (seven migrants, including a flock of around 40 Hudsonian Godwits at the East Pool — a lifer for all of us!) We missed the fairly reliable Henslow’s and Grasshopper Sparrows at Goose Pond but saw a migrant Vesper Sparrow and an Alder Flycatcher.

Once again, we finished the day with a Nighthawk circling the lights in Linton, booking our 2022 effort in déjà-vu fashion. Overall, we recorded 108 species, 16 of which were migrants—a better tally than the 97 species and no migrants last year. Thanks to all of our donors!