



THE BLUEBIRD

The voice of MBS since 1934

**September 2022
Volume 89, No. 3**



***The Missouri Birding Society
Missouri's Ornithological Society Since 1901***

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Deadlines for submission of material for publication in *The Bluebird*

Manuscripts for *The Bluebird*—to the editor by:

Feb. 1 for March issue; May 1 for June issue;

Aug. 1 for Sept. issue; Nov. 1 for Dec. issue

Manuscripts submitted for peer review may be published in a subsequent issue.

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Winter (Dec. 1-Feb. 28)—to Pete Monacell by Mar. 10

Spring (Mar. 1-May 31)—to Lisa Berger by June 10

Summer (June 1-July. 31)—to Allen Gathman by Aug 10

Fall (Aug. 1-Nov. 30)—to Mary Nemecek by Dec. 10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

September 2022

Volume 89, No. 3

112	President's corner — Edge Wade
114	We welcome our new members!
115	Subscribe to the MOBIRDS listserv!
116	In memoriam: Kirbee Goslee — David Easterla
118	Fall meeting announcement — Edge Wade
120	CACHE/SPARKS sites 2022-2023 — Edge Wade
122	We so deeply need each other — Chrissy McClarren
133	Highlights of the 2022 Birdathon — Diane Bricmont
138	An irruption of Limpkins — Allen Gathman
141	Book Review: A World on the Wing — Allen Gathman
143	Winter 2021-2022 Seasonal Report — Pete Monacell
153	Birders' Guide: Bollinger Mill SHS — Mark Haas
156	Birders' Guide: Old Plantation Access — Allen Gathman
159	Birders' Guide: Reifsneider State Forest — Carol Thompson

Front Cover—

Varied Thrush, St Charles Co, 3 Jan 2022. Photo David Rudder.

Peer-reviewed articles in The Bluebird are noted by a header.

Species mentioned in articles not so designated may not have been subject to review.

THE BLUEBIRD is published quarterly by The Missouri Birding Society. The submission of articles, photographs, and artwork is welcomed and encouraged. The views and opinions expressed in this journal are those of each contributing writer and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of The Missouri Birding Society or its officers, Board of Directors, or editors. Send address corrections to MBS, 2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122, Columbia, MO 65203-1261.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER—EDGE WADE



Registration is underway for the MBS 2022 Fall Meeting, September 23-25 in Columbia, with events at the Poehlmann Center, Bradford Farm. Presenters include author/talespinner Julie Zickefoose, videographer Carl Gerhardt, and Dusty Walter, director of the Central Missouri Research, Extension and Education Center. Field trips scheduled to a broad array of central Missouri sites and catered meals arranged with socializing time are sure to provide great experiences. If you haven't registered, go to the MBS home page, <https://mobirds.org/>

and click on the blue "Details" button in the Birding Events section.

As I write, I'm coming out of jet lag fog from a 55-hour five flights homeward journey from three weeks in western Australia. The lush green of Missouri is a welcome sight after the rocks, endless varieties of eucalyptus, spinifex (a plant version of porcupine), and tropical woodland savannah of recent days. Lorikeets, parrots, honeyeaters, and fairywrens are memories; titmice, cardinals, hummingbirds, and chickadees are gobbling at the feeders.

The contrasts are stark, but there are many constants. Perhaps strongest among the constants is the pleasure of sharing experiences with other birders. The Australia trip birders were from England, Maine, Washington, New Mexico, Arkansas, Michigan, and Louisiana. It took only a day to get one another's names straight and learn individuals' styles and comfort zones, then it was like birding with old friends.

Our vibrant Missouri birding community, with its long history of mentoring and sharing information and the joys of birding prepares us well for seeking and appreciating birds and for enjoying the company of other birders. We are so fortunate!

Take some time to reflect on the many special moments you've had in birding, and on the pleasures of the company of Missouri birders. The next time you meet in the field, let them know you are genuinely pleased to see them. Tell them—the ones seen weekly and those encountered only rarely, how much they are appreciated as fellow seekers.

Yesterday, on a daylong attempt to see the Limpkin at Lake Springfield, I was compensated with the company of Paul McKenzie and of seeing and visiting with Greg Swick of Ozark, and, briefly, with Connie Alwood of Ferguson. Sharing some time with them was a form of solace at the absence of the Limpkin in an experience otherwise rewarded with the simple pleasure of a fine summer day spent in the presence of Missouri breeding and resident birds. Who can complain about watching Prothonotary Warblers and Green Herons, or titmice gleaning busily?

Be sure to thank the mentors who helped you learn the spring warbler songs, how to identify vireos, where and when to look for Winter Wrens, and how to observe and listen to empids (maybe without swearing in frustration).

I take advantage of this space to give some personal thanks to Susan Hazelwood, Tim Barksdale, Jim Wallace, Paul McKenzie, Bill Clark, Jo Ann Eldridge, Bill Rowe, and Larry Lade. You probably thought I'd never get it right—and maybe I haven't, but thank you for sticking with it.

And to you “newer” birders: Stick with it! Bug the “old timers” for tips in vocalizations, where and when to find what, and the nuances of eclipse plumages. Go on field trips. Thank your mentors by passing along the information and the skills. Be kind to one another as you share a lifestyle of perpetual learning.

Come share the joys of companion birding at the MBS Fall Meeting September 23-25. See you there!

Subscribe to the MOBIRDS Listserv!

If you are curious about what birds are being seen around Missouri, have a question about a bird, enjoy sharing your birding experiences, want to know what field trips are coming up, want to meet other birders online, the MBS sponsored MOBIRDS listserv is for you.

Join the active Missouri birding community by subscribing.

Subscribe here:

<https://po.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=MOBIRDS-L&A=1>

Please note that MBS members are NOT automatically subscribed to the listserv. You must subscribe yourself by going to the link above.

Also, all listserv posts are retained in a searchable archive:

<https://po.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=MOBIRDS-L>



Barn Swallow, Creve Coeur Lake, St Louis
6 June 2021 Photo Julie Morgan

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MBS MEMBERS!

Greg Leonard

Remember, new members are our future. If a new member lives near you, say, “Howdy and welcome to MBS.” In addition, recruit another new member. **Welcome to these 24 new MBS members in the 3rd quarter of 2022!**

**Carol Jepsen
Katie Balella
Scott Walden
Tanya Petkus
Karen Fieser
Tina Cheung
Benjamin Black
Kim Beerman
Dustin Ford
Debbie Stauffer
Kirk Suedmeyer
Kathleen Cramer
Jane Waller
Lesa Beamer
James Bynum
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Jennifer Palmer
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Kansas City, MO
Cowgill, MO
Parkville, MO
Columbia, MO
Maryland Heights, MO
Saint Ann, MO
Gower, MO
Florissant, MO
Festus, MO
Hannibal, MO
Kansas City, MO
Kansas City, MO
Maplewood, MO
Kansas City, MO**

In Memoriam: Kirbee Goslee

David Easterla

On April 20, 2022, the Missouri Birding Society lost a devoted member. Kirby Goslee of Skidmore, MO, was a hardcore birder in northwest Missouri and was responsible for a number of significant avian records.

Several records immediately come to mind, such as his possession of a car-injured male Common Poorwill, given to him by B. Shields from Holt County, and positively identified and photographed by Kirby and me on November 22, 2009. I was also privileged to share with Kirby a state record for the Black-throated Sparrow in 1993, west of Skidmore, Atchison County (Easterla and Goslee, 1994. First Record of the Black-throated Sparrow for Missouri. *The Bluebird* 61: 106-108).

Snow Buntings are always a treat to find, even a single bird. However, Kirby and I were shocked to observe a flock of some 81 Snow Buntings west of Skidmore in January, 1993, casually flitting across a snow and ice-covered field, where the birds were picking off seed from a few projecting foxtail stalks. What a sight! Kirby said it reminded him of large flakes blowing across a field in a snowstorm. Kirby was also one of the most dependable observers for Northern Shrike, Saw-whet Owl, and Long-eared Owl in Missouri, as I am sure some other birders remember.

It was usually Kirby who would suddenly stop during a field trip to photograph some strange flower, beetle, or butterfly. In fact, I first met Kirby during the 1970s when he called me wanting to meet and show me an insect for identification.

During the 1970s through 1990s, each year Kirby, Jack Hilsabeck, and I always conducted a Big Day bird count in Holt County during peak migration in early May. During those years we had many memorable birding experiences that I will always cherish. These trips only ended because Jack and Kirby developed medical issues. Kirby was, as noted, a hardcore birder. He, Jack, Leo Galloway, and I often chased birds throughout Missouri for our state lists, and it was usually Kirby who drove. Kirby, Jack and Leo took one winter trip in 1999 to Riverlands to see a female Harlequin Duck. They

found the bird, and Kirby crawled a great distance on the ice, camera in hand, to get photographs. Only then, after returning to the car, did he proclaim it a successful trip. However, after returning to Skidmore, he discovered that there had been no film in the camera! His embarrassment over that trip provided many laughs in later years for all of us.

Kirby had many interests and talents besides birding. He was a huge sports fan, especially for the Kansas City Chiefs and Royals, and also for the University of Missouri basketball Tigers. He grew up on the family farm in Skidmore, and graduated from Maryville High School. He was a football and basketball standout, setting several high school records, and went to Mizzou on a full basketball scholarship. After college he farmed with his father for many years. After he retired he became something of a Skidmore movie star, featuring prominently in the Sundance TV miniseries “No One Saw a Thing,” the true crime case of the murder of Ken McElroy in Skidmore.

Once Kirby began participating in the Maryville Christmas Bird Count, he was hooked to the end. In fact, he was always assigned the count circle’s area that included his family farm. He was always the one who succeeded in calling in and recording owls for the count. The last couple of years were very difficult for Kirby, due to medical problems that led to amputation of his right leg at the knee. Despite this major setback, Kirby still showed up and participated in the 2021 Maryville CBC. Yes, he was tough and hardcore. We will miss Kirby for many reasons, and I am sure he’ll be wondering from the clouds above, who will be covering his family farm in the 2022 Christmas Count?

MBS Fall Meeting September 23-25, Columbia, MO

Edge Wade

A highlight of the MBS Fall Meeting will be Julie Zickefoose, birder, illustrator, talespinner sharing experiences and lessons forged in an intense relationship with Jemima, the hard-luck jay, in her keynote presentation Saturday evening, September 24.

The 2022 Fall Meeting will be headquartered at the Poehlmann Education Center at Bradford Farm, east of Columbia at 4968 S Rangeline Rd, Columbia, MO 65201, September 23-25. There is no designated “host hotel”. Participants will be responsible for obtaining their own lodging.

Registration on the MBS website opened August 13, and will be closed as of midnight, September 9 to provide numbers to caterers. Registrants will be asked to select field trip choices as an indicator for meeting planners only. Actual field trip sign up will be done on arrival at Bradford Farm.

Sign-in will begin at 3:00 p.m. Friday, September 23 at the Poehlmann Education Center. Attendees are encouraged to share recent birding experiences with one another between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. over a buffet meal.

After welcoming remarks at 7:00 p.m. by MBS president Edge Wade, Dusty Walter, director of the Central Missouri Research, Extension and Education Center, will speak about the University’s agriculture research centers around the state. Carl Gerhardt, MU Curators’ Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Biological Science, will then whet our birding appetite with a high-definition video presentation featuring migrant birds we seek in Missouri.

Saturday field trips will depart from various points convenient for parking and appropriate for routes to destinations. Trip descriptions will feature departure point information.

Buffet service for the Saturday evening banquet at the Poehlmann Center will begin at 6:00 p.m. “Birder casual” is appropriate attire. The annual general business meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. will include a brief overview of the year’s MBS Board actions followed by election of Board members and officers.

Julie Zickefoose’s presentation will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday morning field trips will be followed by a noon catered picnic lunch at the Bonnie View Nature Area pavilion, adjacent to the Columbia Audubon Nature Sanctuary with its beautiful restored prairie. A bird tally session will conclude the weekend events.

Registration and details are on the MBS website <https://mobirds.org/>.



Red-tailed Hawk, New Hamburg, Scott Co. 29 Jan 2021.
Photo Mark Haas

CACHE/SPARKS Sites 2022-2023

Edge Wade

CACHE/SPARKS is a combination of acronyms (**C**onservation **A**rea **C**hecklists and **S**tate **P**ARKS) for agreements that began in late 2005 between the Missouri Birding Society and the Missouri Department of Conservation, and a few years later, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks. Under these agreements, our members collect and report bird sighting data, produce checklists, write birding site descriptions, and make them publicly available.

These agreements were the brainchild of Brad Jacobs. Compensation MBS receives for these services is used to fund our participation in partnership projects for habitat assessment, development, and improvement, and for conservation related education, especially for young people—just as Brad envisioned.

The agreements stipulate sites for special attention; that is, sites that we birders are encouraged to bird as often as possible and submit checklists on eBird. The goal is to have a robust dataset of bird occurrence for these sites as aids in making decisions about management and practices.

The agreement focus sites for the new agreement period beginning July 1, 2022 are:

Apple Creek CA, Cape Girardeau Co.
Arrow Rock SHS, Saline Co.
Bilby Ranch CA, Nodaway Co.
Black Island CA (all units), Pemiscot Co.
Buford Mountain CA, Iron Co.
Castor River CA, Bollinger Co.
Crowder SP, Grundy Co.
Daniel Boone CA, Warren Co.
Danville CA, Montgomery Co.
Dark Hollow NA, Sullivan Co.
Donaldson Point CA, New Madrid Co.
Fiery Fork CA, Camden Co.

Friendly Prairie CA, Pettis Co.
Grandfather Prairie CA, Pettis Co.
Hawn SP, Ste. Genevieve CO
Harry S. Truman (Lake and) SP, Benton Co.
Huzzah CA, Crawford Co.
McGee Family CA, Clinton Co.
Meramec CA, Franklin Co.
Meramec SP, Franklin Co.
Mora CA, Benton Co.
Morris Prairie CA, Putnam Co.
Mule Shoe CA, Hickory Co.
Onondaga Cave SP, Crawford Co.
Poague (Haysler A.) CA, Henry Co.
Pomme de Terre (Lake and) SP, Hickory Co.
Robertsville SP, Franklin Co.
Seven Island CA, Mississippi Co.
Shawnee Trail CA, Barton Co.
Shoemaker CA, Adair Co.
Stockton (Lake and) SP, Cedar Co.
Sugar Creek CA, Adair Co.
Ten Mile Pond CA, Mississippi Co.
Thousand Hills SP, Adair Co.
Union Ridge CA, Sullivan Co.
Van Meter (Annie & Abel) SP, Saline Co.
Wallace SP, Clinton Co.

If you have one or more of these close to home, consider “adopting” it with a personal pledge to bird it at least quarterly, or perhaps even monthly. Take a look at the bar graph in eBird for an area. The gray fields indicate weeks there have been no eBird checklists filed. Plan a trip to fill in a gray field.

Several sites are remote, but often in a cluster. A fun, productive trip can be planned to bird these places, filling in blank weeks and simultaneously introducing yourself to new areas or finding a surprise in a seasonal first visit.

Explore and discover bodacious birding beyond your well-worn rut!

We So Deeply Need Each Other

Chrissy McClarren

Every spring migration since 2009, each migrating bird species has brought special rituals into my life in Missouri, but none so fraught with angst this year as the Least Tern. Each spring since 2009, I have stood upon the banks of the Mississippi River with my life partner, Andy Reago, and listened for the return of the familiar banter of the tiniest tern species in the world, and when I'd heard that first high-pitched squeaky 'zeep' reach my midwestern ear, I'd felt both immediate relief and intense joy as I'd wriggled up and down and gushed "Least Tern!" to Andy. I'd follow the direction of their call and look for their gray and white bodies zipping by. Homing in on one with my binoculars, I'd first look for that jet-black crown that drapes over their head and down to their nape, but it was only when I discerned that distinctive sweet spot, the white triangle breaking up the black above their slender corn yellow bill, that I knew for certain they were arriving back from their winter sojourn in the Caribbean, or perhaps Central or South America.

As more Least Terns would arrive in the days that followed our first spring sightings, we'd rejoice as courtship began in earnest, with males making valiant attempts to offer little fish delights to standoffish females. Once a female deigned to take the nuptial offering, eggs were soon laid colonial-style alongside other nesting terns, and babies were hatched around three weeks later. During the twenty days after hatching, we were sometimes privy to the wee ones evolving into teenagers, ready to take flight.

Of course, this was all dependent on everything going well with the two cleverly crafted sand-covered barges the terns in our area had come to rely on as nesting sites at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in West Alton, Missouri. These floating barges, meant to imitate the terns' natural habitat, isolated sandbars along wide river channels, were the genius of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineering (USACE or the Corps). First placed in Ellis Bay in 2010, they were moved to Teal Pond in 2016; many tweaks later, the Corps began to have numerous successes, despite the setbacks of predation by raccoons and herons. In 2019, they counted forty-seven

nests, seventy-four eggs, sixty chicks and even the first documented return of a banded tern, but this year there were no barges.



Adult Interior Least Tern, Riverlands, 2022

Andy and I saw our first Least Terns arriving back this spring in early May, but by the end of May, we noticed that the last remaining barge (the other had sprung a leak a few years prior, had been removed and never replaced) had also sprung a leak and was partially sunk and grounded along the shoreline of Teal Pond. On the afternoon of May 28, we counted fifty-six Least Terns flying together and hunting in a group near the Melvin Price Lock & Dam, not far from Teal Pond, as well as some flying back and forth along Ellis Bay, but the barge had not been fixed and was still marooned. Where were they going to nest? Although two of the three populations of Least Terns in the United States, (sometimes the three are considered subspecies) the Least Terns of California and the Coastal Least Terns of the Atlantic Coast, appear to be doing well, our area's particular population of Least Terns, called the Interior Least Tern due to their proclivity for nesting along the river systems in the interior of the United States, was in a more precarious position. They have made a spectacular comeback since

they were first added to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1985 when their numbers dropped below 2000, placing them on the brink of extinction; by 2021 they were removed from the ESA list, as their numbers were thought to be close to 18,000. Despite this, some of us were still worried, as their numbers seemed to be plummeting again.



“Teenage” Least Tern that had been banded
after being raised on the barge at Riverlands in 2019

Due to a sudden debilitating injury that sent Andy to the ER on Memorial Day, we weren’t able to return to Riverlands to check on the terns until June 24th, when, to our surprise, we discovered something unexpected and wonderful, even if not ideal. We’d hoped to see a repaired barge out in the middle of Teal Pond full of nesting terns, but were at first downcast to see the damaged barge, bereft of terns, still floundering like a beached whale just off the parking lot. Scanning the area, still hoping somehow that a new barge might have been placed out in the pond, we found nothing, when suddenly, a pair of Least Terns flew by, carrying on in an excited manner and heading toward the two jetties that extended out into the pond,

where many more terns were flying about. *What was going on?* Getting out our spotting scope, we took a gander at fourteen adult terns sitting on shallow depressions atop the gravel of the far jetty, three of them with chicks running about and at least twenty-three more adults flying up from the rock walls and hunting. The terns had found a solution to their nesting dilemma! We felt like soaring. Reality checks quickly crept in as I worried about the ease with which predators had access to this jetty, but I let go of that concern when a more pressing one came to my attention.

I noticed a fisherman was walking out on the jetty, right through the nesting areas, flushing the birds, scattering the chicks and potentially stepping on eggs! Outraged and distressed, Andy and I began debating about what to do. We finally decided to walk the levee trail out to the jetty and politely inform the fisherman about the birds and ask if he might fish somewhere else. Even if the fisherman became disgruntled, we figured we had to try. Looking out at the trail along the levee, I could see it was covered with grass, and that I'd have to walk through the grass for about a quarter mile to get to him. I balked. I get strong allergic reactions to chigger bites, but I knew if I didn't go, Andy wouldn't. He's an introvert, while I'm the extrovert — and Andy hates confrontation. Pacing the parking lot, I knew I could not leave the terns in the lurch. Seeing a hint of a stone path through the grass, I faced my fears and gingerly began walking the levee, bolstering myself with some good old-fashioned denial. *I won't get bit. I won't get bit. I won't get bit.*

Finally arriving at the jetty, I pondered how to best address this fisherman. I wanted to get this right and maximize my chances of arousing this fisherman's sympathy to the terns' plight. Andy stood about twenty feet to my side, taking photos of the terns. Still antsy about what to say, the wisdom of my best friend popped into my head. She had advised me some years back on how best to approach a situation like this, one where you are upset at someone and tempted to be reactive. I had been upset with the way some nursing home staff were treating my uncle Will, and had been about to send a very damning email, when I decided to call and talk to her about it first. She'd said, "You have to think of what's best for your uncle. He's dependent on these people. If you anger them, they could take it out on him, so be cautious. How you treat them will affect him,

not you, so don't react. Think about Will. For instance, when I've been angry at teachers for the way they've treated my sons, I've had to remember that those teachers have a dramatic impact on my son's wellbeing – and so I do my utmost to be compassionate and thoughtful and kind in my communication with them, no matter how upset I am." Heeding that advice, I thought of what was best for the terns, regained some composure, and kept all hint of frustration out of my voice as I spoke to the fisherman.

In an uncharacteristically deferential manner, I asked, "Sir? Could I talk with you for just a minute?" "Sure," was his immediate friendly response. *Ah, a good sign.* I felt a little calmer saying in the gentlest of tones, "I just wanted to make you aware of something. Those birds out there?" I pointed toward them. "They're called Least Terns. They're an endangered bird - and the ones you see squatting on the gravel? They're nesting - sitting on eggs. Some already have little chicks running around. I don't know if you can see them. They're very tiny." He interrupted me, "Oh, wow. That makes sense. When I walked out there, they were all dive-bombing me. I could swear one dive-pooed me." I laughed, "I don't doubt it. They can be fierce in defense of their young. We came out to document them and to ask you a favor, if you don't mind." "Sure," he responded again with unexpected kindness and attentiveness. I continued, "You have every right to fish here, but if you wouldn't mind fishing perhaps on the other jetty for now, that would be so great." That was the best compromise I could come up with in the moment, even though a few terns seemed to be using the other jetty as well. "Oh, no problem. I had no idea. I love nature," he graciously offered and then began gathering his things as we continued to talk.

After he left, and we walked back to the parking lot, we realized the entire trail to the jetties needed to be cordoned off immediately, or others would be out there disturbing them. Besides fishermen, we'd often seen folks walk their dogs out there. Since this was the jurisdiction of the Corps, we knew we had to contact them. But since it was late on a Sunday night and they were all gone for the day, we didn't know how. I called two birders I knew would know what to do, and wound up leaving a message for Pat Lueders, and talking to Dave Becher. Dave immediately called the Corps and left

a message, as well as alerted the entire birding community on the Missouri Birding Society's listserv. Pat called the Corps that night as well. The next day, still worried, I found the number for the Corps and talked to Ryan Swearingen, the wildlife biologist in charge of the Least Tern Project, and asked about the possibility of cordoning off the entire trail. He seemed leery at first. Even though he'd received the other calls alerting him to their presence, he wanted to send out a biologist to assess things before taking action. He expressed concern that folks could be misinformed. The Corps needed to document that Least Terns were indeed nesting there, not Killdeer, for example. I explained I wasn't a crackpot (I didn't use that exact word) and had been observing the Least Terns and the Corps' efforts for years - and was sure about what I saw, explaining that I had both video footage and photos documenting numerous terns sitting on eggs as well as three sets of parents with chicks. He asked me to email all that to him, which I hurriedly did, frantic, as each minute that ticked by put the nesting colony at risk. A few minutes later, he responded, thanking me, and said the area was going to be cordoned off within the hour – and it was. His responsiveness was the most uplifting piece of good news I'd had in a long time. As the news got out to others, I think I heard the roar



Hurray! Cordoned-off trail.

of cheers around the state, if not the country.

There was only one response to our efforts to cordon off the area that nagged at me in the days that followed. Someone on the Missouri Birding Society Listserv asked, “Is it worth it?” in response to the Least Tern Project. Aghast, my initial response was one of reactive anger, but she got me thinking. Was it worth it? Would it really do any good? Was the whole Least Tern Project a drop in a bucket with a leak in it? In our age of rampant hopelessness, we do tend to ask such questions. I do. My answer to her is the same I give myself. Maybe we don’t need to know if it is worth it. Maybe we don’t need success. Maybe we don’t need hope, not in the sense most of us think about hope. As Vaclav Havel, the Czech poet-playwright, wrote about hope, “It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out.” In other words, do what feels right. Trust yourself. Practice the unexpected.

Taking a lesson from the Least Terns, who nest in colonies in order to help each other deter predators, it seems not just important to do what feels right, but to do it together, to learn to deter the ‘predators’ together. What might those ‘predators’ be for humans? Might they be whatever gets in our way of celebrating each other and our lovely hearts? Might they be whatever gets in our way of rejoicing when a human being finds love for the wild rising up in themselves, finds a passionate desire to respond to the plight of another species and musters their creative resources to act in some way, whatever way they feel moved, no matter the outcome? Much as the terns have been endangered, can we see this love as the rising up of something so imperiled in us humans that, if we let ourselves, we might feel a tremendous desire to fall to our knees and weep with gratitude when we encounter it? We humans have become paralyzed as we feel tugged ever tighter and tighter by the war in ourselves between our despair over the world and the desire to escape those feelings. Perhaps together, remembering this love, our goodness, we could relax enough to free ourselves from this struggle? We might wake up in the morning and remember to be patient with ourselves, decide not to abuse ourselves anymore, stop feeling bad about ourselves, and find a way back to loving not just ourselves, but the entirety of this marvelous and wicked cosmos,

holding and tending the whole of the chaos together, returning home to each other? The Least Terns found a way to deal with their predicament. Maybe we can? Martin Luther King said, “Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted.”

The day after our last check in on how the Least Terns were faring after having their nesting area cordoned off (to our delight, chicks, and even a young teenager, were running amok on the jetty), Andy and I found ourselves in the ER again, facing a predicament similar to the terns – a radical alteration to our life plans. To our shock, after twenty-four hours of one test after another by the ER team, interspersed with playing our own unruly version of do-it-yourself Pictionary in my sketchbook journal where we each drew birds or movies for the other to guess in order to alleviate the nerve-racking suspense of what each test result might reveal, Andy needed an emergency surgery. Another twenty-four hours passed before they were able to find a free operating room. Fortunately, I’d upped the distraction level and brought our magnetic chess game from home. He won nine out of ten games – no, I did not let him win, but he did cheat on castling at one point, moving his King three spaces over, instead of two. At one point, when nothing seemed to quell his fears and distract him from his hunger (he had not eaten for forty-eight hours), I looked around the room for something inane to remark upon and landed on the saline bag dripping into his IV. “It says here that dextrose is in this bag. You’re getting sugar with your saline? Interesting.” Surprising me with a sudden whimsical retort, Andy said, “I’m a Hummingbird.”(* See the “special aside” note at the end of this article.) It took me a minute to get it. “Ah, sugar water. Hummingbirds feed on sugar water! You splendid man,” I drawled and kissed him. Finally, they came to transport him to the pre-operative surgical bay. After waiting with him for an hour, I was asked to leave. They were ready to take him in. I returned to his room on the 17th floor of Barnes Hospital to wait. Alone, even the hilarious debut novel by Bonnie Garmus, *Lessons in Chemistry*, could not distract me from my anguish. The powerlessness I had felt seeing the terror in his eyes haunted me. Pulling out a tiny Blue Jay plushy toy from my backpack and making antics with it in pre-op had made him smile a smidgen, but I knew how fleeting the distraction had been. Gazing out the huge

glass window at the view from his room, a multitude of high-rise buildings in various stages of construction or decay were all I could see. Only a hint of Forest Park could be seen in the green swath of trees way off in the distance. Even so, I looked out, desperate to see bird. A few pigeons flew by. A sparrow. A chimney swift. I tried



Peregrine Falcon

reading my book again. I paced. I waited. Anxious. Then I heard them. I wouldn't let myself believe my own ears at first. It was only when I saw a young Peregrine Falcon, followed by two parents, soar past the window, only thirty feet out, that I believed.

Running to the window, I gasped in astonishment as the youngster, hollering in what seemed agitation at his own ineffectualness, chased clumsily after a pigeon. Transfixed, I had a difficult time pulling myself away until they seemed to disappear for a few minutes, giving me time to drag one of the hospital chairs over to the window to keep vigil for their return. In the meantime, I furiously texted my family and friends, updating them on Andy and the presence of the falcons, a presence so profound, they'd hit me like spiritual lightning. I was awed and humbled - and literally gasping every time they flew by. My sister texted me back about

their symbolism, which resonated uncannily: “The Peregrine Falcon is a symbol of aspiration, ambition, power, speed and freedom. They offer protection to you as a spirit animal, especially during transitional periods. Those who have the Peregrine Falcon as their spirit animal are attentive, perceptive and have a strong sense of purpose.” I imagined the falcons overseeing Andy’s care, I saw his surgeon and the surgical team as the adult Peregrine Falcons with keen powers and skills, and Andy as the juvenile, gaining strength and speed for his recovery. My dear friend Ky dressed up in her Peregrine Falcon t-shirt that said, “SO FLY” and texted me a picture of herself in it. Then I got the call. It was his surgeon. “He did great! He’ll be up in a few hours.” *Whew.* As Andy was being discharged the next day to return home for weeks of needed healing, the falcons flew by just in time for him to see them, too. He was honored, as he always is by the birds in his life. For him, there is no greater gift. Being held by both my family and the falcons through that trying time moved me to realize that as we were there for the terns, the falcons were there for us. Humans and birds. We so deeply need each other.

***Special aside.** As I was busy attempting to finish this piece and typing away on our laptop, Andy walked into the living room and nonchalantly and very quietly said, “I found a hummingbird nest.” I thought he was joking. I’d been trying to find one for years, to no avail, and, since he’d been trying to get me to take a break for two hours by going outside and stretching my legs with him, but nothing had worked, I was sure this was a ploy. At this point in his recovery, he’s not allowed much exercise yet, but he’s encouraged to take walks. I asked, “With a hummingbird on it?” “Yes,” was his very understated response. “For real?” I asked as I began to surface from my writing trance and entertain the notion that he might be telling the truth about this possibly surreal and wondrous occurrence. “Yes. Come on. I’ll show you.” Still skeptical, I followed him outside into the 102 degrees heat of our sweltering city. Eventually, after first making me walk to the mailbox to drop off some mail, the tease finally pointed to a small tree and said to check near the tip of the lowest branch. After careful searching, I found her. The tiny marvel was indeed sitting on a nest, her own

handmade (billmade) crafted treasure box, just a few doors down from our house. That saline 'sugar' drip had certainly worked its magic on Andy.



Nesting Ruby-throated Hummingbird

All photos for this article by Andy Reago and Chrissy McClarren

Highlights of the 2022 Birdathon

Diane Bricmont

The St. Louis Audubon Society Birdathon is a month-long fundraising event, in which supporters pledge donations per species seen by teams of participants. Donations are used to fund conservation, research, and education activities. I saw some amazing birds during the Birdathon month of May, so I wanted to provide a little recap and cover some of the highlights.

Simply put, birders love lousy weather. Lousy weather brings good birds, especially in spring. May 2nd was one of those days when conditions were ripe for a "fallout". Fallouts occur when birds traveling along a migratory corridor (in this case, the Mississippi River) racing towards their breeding grounds, encounter weather severe enough to cause them to "fall out" of the sky. They drop down, looking for suitable habitat, where they can refuel while seeking shelter from the storm. Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary is just one of those spots. I met my friend Jonah there after work and saw my state lifer Whimbrel, (did I mention that birders love fallouts?) and one of my all-time favorite birds, the Upland Sandpiper.

By May 7th my Birdathon count was 87 species, largely the result of birding my yard every morning before work - my native oaks are full of the caterpillars that migrating birds rely on for fuel - and a few hours at Riverlands. Then I joined Bill, Josh, Matt and Tom for a Big Day - birding from 4 AM to 9 PM - trying to see as many species as we could in a single, joyous, exhausting day. I can't really pick a favorite from 17 hours of birding, but I really love sparrows, and the Clay-colored Sparrow is one of my favorites.

Honorable mention goes to a singing Hooded Warbler, and something we decided to call the Swainson's Flush: seeing a Swainson's Thrush (an expected migrant), a Swainson's Hawk (an eastern MO rarity) and a Swainson's Warbler (another eastern MO rarity) all in one day. William Swainson was a British naturalist and illustrator. Nine birds bear his name, but only three are found in North America, and we saw all three in one day, something none of us had ever done before. By the end of our Big Day, my Birdathon



Swainson's Hawk, Buchanan Co. 11 Sep 2020.
Photo Tom Nagel

count was at 156 birds. We ended the day with a beautiful sunset at Riverlands, marveling as an immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron flew over our heads as we were enveloped by the darkness.

By the second week of May, I was definitely in the Birdathon groove. I kept a small cooler in the car (carrot sticks and hummus, anyone?) just in case a rare bird was spotted in the region and I wouldn't make it home in time for dinner. I led a few beginner bird walks at Faust Park, and found a Blackpoll Warbler, a life bird for most of my beginners.

The Blackpoll is simply an amazing bird. In spring, it migrates north across much of the eastern half of the US. In fall, it makes the longest over water journey of any songbird, migrating 1,800 miles nonstop over the Atlantic Ocean to its wintering grounds in South America. Flying for three days. Nonstop. This, from a bird weighing 12 grams. For comparison, a Northern Cardinal weighs 45 grams. Amazing, right?

May 14th brought a chance to do another Big Day. We decided to sleep in a bit, so I didn't meet Randy until 5:30 AM. He had good intel on a pair of Western Kingbirds in St. Louis County, and after finding them we headed into St. Charles County looking for shorebirds. Shorebirds? In a state without any coastline? Yep, plenty of shorebirds migrate up the Mississippi flyway when traveling from their wintering grounds in South or Central America on their way to their nesting grounds in Canada and the Arctic. We had American Golden-Plovers at three locations in St. Charles County. This is just

one of the sharpest shorebirds around.

The plan was to end the day at Young Conservation Area, hoping to hear Eastern Whip-poor-will sing at dusk, a bird I had missed on my previous Big Day. We were sitting on a couple of the large boulders that line the parking lot, when a Mourning Dove raced past us and seemed to crash into a thicket. A plump bird with a long beak came flying out and landed just 5 feet from us - an American Woodcock. It took one long look at us before it flew off, and the Whips started to sing just a few minutes later. Bird 179.

The third week of Birdathon was a lot like the first two: bird, work, bird, sleep, bird, work, bird, sleep....except it was getting harder to find new birds. I was scheduled to lead a St. Louis Audubon Field Trip to Busch Conservation Area on May 21st, but I made the decision to cancel around 5:00 AM, as the lightning and thunderstorms intensified in the area. After the worst of the storm passed, I met my friends Ryan and Amanda at Riverlands. Why Riverlands? Because bad weather brings good birds. Ryan and Amanda are new to shorebirds, and it was a lot of fun watching them see their lifer Stilt Sandpipers and Black-bellied Plovers. The Black Terns flying low over the fluddle on Barwise Road are something we won't soon forget.

The next morning, my friend Gail and I walked our 3.5 mile BirdSafeSTL route downtown, looking for migrating birds that collided with buildings overnight. During each spring and fall migration, St. Louis Audubon volunteers complete collision surveys three mornings each week, using the iNaturalist app to document each collision. We're not alone in this endeavor - there are projects similar to BirdSafeSTL completed by volunteers in major cities across the country - all to document the hazards that migrating birds face as they move back and forth between their wintering grounds and their nesting grounds. As a result of our surveys, the Gateway Arch National Park, the St. Louis Public Library and several other buildings agreed to dim their lights during migration, making the St. Louis sky a little safer for migrating birds. After our survey we had just enough time to search for a Connecticut Warbler that had been reported in Tower Grove Park, but the skulker had quit singing. We had to leave for work, knowing we had just missed seeing the Connecticut Warbler. Our consolation prize? Taking a drive down Darst Bottom Road after work, watching a beautiful

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher hanging out in a field with 19 Eastern Kingbirds. This is one of the few areas in eastern Missouri where Scissor-tails nest, so they are always a joy to see.

The next day I was back at Tower Grove Park by 6:00 AM, because who can sleep when there's a chance to start your day with a Connecticut Warbler? This time he was singing, and it was a pure adrenaline rush. This is a really good bird. Sibley describes the Connecticut Warbler as "uncommon, secretive and difficult to spot". Yep, that says it all. The Connecticut made bird 193, tying my 2021 record!



Connecticut Warbler, Caldwell Mem WA, Franklin Co. 13 May 2021.
Photo Josh Uffman

The last week of Birdathon was a caffeine fueled blur. On May 28th I was a co-leader on a St. Louis Audubon Field Trip at Riverlands, and my friend Bill found two (record late) Lesser Black-backed Gulls (195) We had a lot of beginning birders on our field trip, and they all got great looks at Baltimore Orioles, Cedar Waxwings and a Yellow Warbler on a nest. Gail and I enjoyed a Black-billed Cuckoo flyby at Marais Temps Clair (200) and Randy and I finally saw a calling

King Rail when it briefly stepped out of the reeds at BK Leach (202). Bill had a Neotropic Cormorant already lined up in his scope when I got to Horseshoe Lake (204) and David was with me to celebrate the Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at Willmore Park (205). I had looked for the Whistling Ducks at two different locations on six other days during Birdathon with no success (almost pushing them into NEMESIS BIRD category), so the seventh time was definitely the charm. The grand finale of Birdathon 2022? A Louisiana Waterthrush, 206.

Some probably consider the Louisiana Waterthrush to be a drab little bird, but it's one of the first Warblers to return in spring. It feeds on streambed invertebrates, and is a great indicator of the quality of our streams. Its arrival in mid-March is always a little bittersweet, because it's a reminder that our winter Ducks, Gulls and Sparrows are about to move on. This sighting was really special, as I got to watch one carrying food back to its nest along the bank of Hamilton Creek. A Wood Thrush - one of nature's finest songsters - provided backup vocals.



Louisiana Waterthrush, Seventy-six CA, Perry Co. 3 Jul 2017. Photo Allen Gathman

Thanks to everyone for supporting my efforts to raise much needed funds for conservation here in the St. Louis area. I'm already looking forward to Birdathon 2023!

An Irruption of Limpkins

Allen Gathman

When I was a teenager in south Florida, I rode my bike to school, and I usually made a small detour to go past a lake so I could see a Limpkin almost every day. Limpkins were then limited almost entirely to peninsular Florida, where their distribution was closely tied to that of their favorite food, the Florida Apple Snail, *Pomacea paludosa*. For the last thirty-five years or so I've lived in Missouri, and of course I had no expectation of seeing a Limpkin here. Until this year, none had ever been reported in the state.

So, when Josh Uffman reported on the MOBIRDS listserv that Bob Estes had seen a Limpkin at Schell-Osage Conservation area this May, I was excited, along with most other Missouri birders. Unfortunately the bird didn't stick around, and nobody else got to see it. But then another Limpkin report came up on the listserv two days later, from Tim Kavan, relaying Ben Lambert's report of a Limpkin at Mingo, over 200 miles away from the first one as the ... Limpkin flies. Could there really be two Missouri Limpkins in one year? By the time Alex Marine posted excellent photos of one in Lawrence County on May 23, it was no longer entirely a surprise. Another was reported near Clinton, MO (with photo) by Tanya Snedden on May 24th. And then on June 8, I had the opportunity to see a Limpkin in Ste. Genevieve County, over 50 miles from the nearest other sighting at Mingo. As of this writing, I think we're up to nine sightings, and the species is going to jump right over "accidental" status (1-4 records) to "casual" (5-15 records) in a single year.

It's not just Missouri. Vagrant Limpkin records have been increasing in recent years in numerous states. The first eBird records of Limpkin in Louisiana and Oklahoma were in 2017; in Illinois and Ohio in 2019; in West Virginia, Arkansas, and Minnesota, of all places, in 2021; in Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska in 2022. While most of these records are single wandering individuals, Limpkins have also been reported breeding outside Florida in recent years, in Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, and possibly Alabama.

What could be causing this increase in the range of the Limpkin?

Their preferred food, the native Florida Apple Snail, is limited to its home state, but the invasive South Americana *Pomacea maculata* snails have spread along the Gulf Coast since about 2000. USGS ornithologist Robert Dobbs and his colleagues recently published evidence that records of Limpkin breeding outside Florida are linked to the spread of these invasive snails. Could invasive apple snails be luring Limpkins into Missouri? To answer this question, I got in touch with Steve McMurray, mollusk biologist for the MDC. He



Limpkin eating Pond Mussel in Oklahoma. Photo Kendell Loyd

dashed that hypothesis: “We have no known records of *Pomacea* in Missouri and have long lived under the (hopefully not mistaken) belief that they could not survive winter in Missouri.” He does note that we have another large invasive snail, the Chinese Mystery Snail, *Cipangopaludina chinensis malleata*. Limpkins are known to eat mollusks other than Apple Snails at times, although I don’t know of any direct observation of them consuming Chinese Mystery Snails.

Of course, we don’t have evidence of Limpkins breeding in Missouri, and individual vagrant birds may be making do with mussels and crustaceans, in the absence of large snails. Kendell Loyd reports seeing Limpkins in Oklahoma and Missouri eating Pond Mussels, *Ligumia nasuta*. I asked Robert Dobbs for his view about the

recent spate of Limpkin sightings, and he said “to my knowledge, vagrant Limpkins in this recent unprecedented period of wandering have done what vagrant Limpkins have always done, which is show up, linger a while eating various mollusks, and then disappear. I would expect the same for your Limpkins in MO.”

So the reasons for the recent increase in vagrant Limpkins are still mysterious. Is it just a by-product of the expansion of their breeding range and the associated increase in numbers? Are changing environmental conditions either pushing them out of their native range, or making it possible for them to explore new areas? Are they branching out to new food sources? Will we see reports of breeding in the coming years? It certainly has made me look closely when I see a wading bird. If we can get more eyes on the wetlands in the southern part of the state, we may find more surprises. Snail Kites, perhaps?

Reference:

Dobbs RC, Carter J, Schulz JL. 2019. Limpkin, *Aramus guarauna* (L., 1766) (Gruiformes, Aramidae), extralimital breeding in Louisiana is associated with availability of the invasive Giant Apple Snail, *Pomacea maculata* Perry, 1810 (Caenogastropoda, Amullariidae). Check List 15 (3): 497-507.

Book Review
A World on the Wing:
The global odyssey of migratory birds
By Scott Weidensaul
Allen Gathman

Scott Weidensaul, a self-described “lifelong birder,” started working with ornithologists banding birds in the 1980s, and has made a career combining research with writing for popular audiences. Over twenty years ago his book Living on the Wind was a Pulitzer finalist; in his latest book, Weidensaul returns to the topic of bird migration.

The feats of migratory birds are certainly worthy of a whole library of books. For example, using miniaturized satellite transmitters, researchers have found that the Alaskan population of Bar-tailed Godwits fly over 7200 miles diagonally across the Pacific to New Zealand – the longest nonstop migratory flight known for a land bird. To do this, they have to profoundly remodel their bodies, gorging on invertebrates on Alaskan tidal flats until they double their weight. By the time they’re ready to fly, their digestive organs have atrophied, and their heart and pectoral muscles have doubled in mass. When a suitable tailwind rises, they fly for eight or nine days straight, land, and regrow their digestive system again.

The return part of their journey takes them to China, where they, along with eight million other migratory birds, rely on fertile mudflats on the shores of the Yellow Sea. These mudflats are an example of the threats faced by bird populations, as over two-thirds of the area of this habitat has been “reclaimed” by dredging and filling for use in industry and agriculture.

The journey of the Bar-tailed Godwit is an example of the stories that have come to light in recent years due to rapid advances in technology. Miniaturization of transmitters is allowing ornithologists to explore the movements of birds as never before. One application is the MOTUS system, which uses tiny VHF radio transmitters, small enough to put on a hummingbird or even a large insect. The transmitters send out signals that can be picked up by MOTUS towers, and researchers are working in collaboration with conservation organizations to build a worldwide network of such

towers to monitor migrations of myriad species.

The flood of data coming from such devices is changing the way we think about migratory birds. An early focus of conservation efforts was on the tropical rainforests where many passerines in the Americas spend the non-breeding season, while later efforts responded to the threat from fragmentation of North American breeding habitat. Now we know that in many cases, the greatest threat may be in the lack of “way-station” habitat in places like the Yellow Sea mud flats and the American Gulf Coast. Then there’s the example of Prothonotary Warblers, which breed all across the southeastern US – a 2019 tracking study showed that almost all of them spend the non-breeding season in a single small inland area on the Magdalena River in Colombia, which had never before been targeted for conservation.

Another stream in this torrent of new information comes from the burgeoning use of eBird. As Bluebird readers probably know, eBird is an online database of bird sightings maintained by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Over 700,000 people now have eBird accounts, to which they submit millions of observations each month. Their collective data set is a valuable tool for researchers and conservationists. Weidensaul gives the example of the Central Valley of California, home to important and imperiled wetland bird habitat. The value of the land for agriculture precludes converting much of it to permanent wetland. Managers at the Nature Conservancy looked at eBird data and found that much land was used intensively by migratory waterfowl and shorebirds for only a few weeks a year. They were able to pay farmers to flood fields for avian use during crucial periods during fall and spring when migrants need the habitat most. This pop-up wetlands program includes over 50,000 acres of farmland now, at a tiny fraction of the cost of purchasing the land for year-round preservation.

A World on the Wing is an engaging read, written in a lively style and filled with anecdotes from Weidensaul’s own travels and work with researchers around the world. The book can be sobering, as he details the diverse threats to birds’ life cycles posed by human activity, from netting of songbirds for the table to climate change’s disruption of seasonal timing. Still, he holds out hope for the future, as conservationists work to alleviate these threats, and he shows some of the ways that birders like us and organizations like ours are participating in that work.

Winter 2021-2022 Seasonal Report

Pete Monacell

Missouri's winter of 2021-22 was tumultuous. Although December featured generally mild temperatures, it also contained two extreme weather events: a multi-state December 10-11 tornado outbreak, and a multi-state December 15 derecho, during which winds from the west extended for more than 250 miles and exceeded speeds of 58 mph. This major wind event may have contributed to the appearance of several western rarities in its immediate aftermath, including two **Varied Thrushes**, a **Say's Phoebe**, a **Townsend's Solitaire**, and multiple **Golden Eagles**. January contained no such extreme events and alternated drastically between mild weather and much colder temperatures. The beginning of the month saw moderate snowfall in the north, and the middle of the month brought heavier snowfall statewide. Similarly, February contained drastic fluctuations in temperature, and all regions of the state experienced multiple snowfall events, with portions of northwest and central Missouri receiving more than 20 inches.

Especially notable occurrences during the season include the first December and February records of **Long-billed Curlew** (likely the same bird continuing through winter); the fourth winter record of **Baird's Sandpiper**; the first December record of **Least Bittern**; the fourth state record of **Sage Thrasher**; the second winter record of **Grasshopper Sparrow**; the second winter record of **Northern Parula**; and the first winter record of **Pine Warbler** in the north.

The season was notable for several occurrence trends as well. **Snowy Owls** experienced an irruption during the winter, and Missouri saw records of this species in eight counties. In addition, **Rough-legged Hawks** were significantly more numerous than in recent winters. Whereas **Pine Siskins** were relatively scarce, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** and **Purple Finches** were encountered frequently, and **Common Redpolls** occurred in thirteen counties.

eBird data and seasonal reports submitted from observers around the state remain the primary source for this report. Missouri birdwatchers are encouraged to submit their observations through

eBird and are equally encouraged to submit notes to the seasonal editors, as these can often provide more information and perspective than eBird checklists. Please note that this winter report spans December 1 - February 28. The Missouri Bird Records Committee defines the winter residency period as December 14 - February 20. The author is grateful to Mary Nemecek, Josh Uffman, and Allen Gathman for reviewing this document. Their comments enhanced the quality of the report.

Note: Records marked with an asterisk (*) require documentation, but no documentation has yet been received by the Missouri Bird Records Committee (MBRC). Observers involved with such sightings are encouraged to submit documentation. The MBRC has received documentation of those records marked with a dagger (†), and those marked (acc.) have been accepted.

WATERFOWL

Ross's Geese were reported in 42 counties; this season's high of 2000 was estimated 26 Feb at LBNWR (Jacob C. Cooper, Eugene Huryn, Rebecca Johnson). This season's high of 58 **Cackling Geese** occurred 5 Dec off of Platte Purchase Dr, *Platte* (Steve Bingham). The annual high of 2628 **Trumpeter Swans** was estimated 29 Dec at LBNWR (ph. Chris Barrigar, Brenda Morris); the annual high at RMBS was 750 on 11 Jan (Pat Lueders). **Tundra Swans** were reported in 14 counties, with an annual high of 35 at RMBS 24 Jan (Tom Parmeter, Bill Rowe). Large numbers of **Wood Ducks** remained at FP throughout the season, with peaks of 55 on 10 Jan and 56 on 14 Feb (Matt Schamberger). **Blue-winged Teal** in numbers from 2-4 occurred in 4 counties. Chris Barrigar photographed a female **Northern Shoveler x Mallard hybrid** 29 Jan at Binder Lake, *Cole*. **American Black Ducks** were in 21 counties, with this season's high of 9 at CCNWR 16 Dec (Henry Gorski, Oliver Gorski, Theo Bockhurst). This year's seasonal high of 8000 **Northern Pintails** was reported 16 Dec at CCNWR (Theo Bockhorst, Raymond Van Buskirk, Henry Gorski, Oliver Gorski). **Canvasback** in numbers ranging from 6000-9000 were reported 3-4 Jan on the Miss. R. near WD (Henry Gorski, Oliver Gorski, Jerry Hemmersmeyer, Raymond Van Buskirk). **Greater Scaup** occurred in 16 counties, with this season's high of 21 at RMBS 6-8 Jan (Diane Bricmont, Bill Rowe). The season contained 2 records of single **Surf Scoters**: 20-30 Dec at Spring Valley Lake, *Cape Girardeau* (ph. Bill Eddleman, ph. Leon Book, m.ob); and 7 Dec at Sequiota Park, *Greene* (Ron Campbell, Debbie Martin, Steve Martin). In addition, the season contained 3 records of single **White-Winged Scoters**: 7 Dec at Lamar City Park, *Barton* (ph. Alex Marine); 25-

30 Jan, visible from CBCA and Confluence SP, *St. Charles* (ph. Mike Thelen, m.ob); and 28 Feb continuing into the spring, at Perry Community Lake, *Perry* (Danny Brown). **Long-tailed Ducks** occurred in 4 instances: one continuing at RMBS from the fall to 1 Dec (Cornelius Alwood, Rad Widmer, m.ob); another at Wildwood Lake, *Jackson*, 26-27 Dec (ph. Mike Stoakes, m.ob); one at StLa 19 Feb continuing into the spring (Kendell Loyd, Tim Barksdale, m.ob); and 3 at SL 24 Feb (ph. Doug Willis). **Red-breasted Mergansers** were sighted in 16 counties, with this season's high of 18 at Holden City Lake, *Johnson*, 23 Feb (Dan Cowell).

GREBES THROUGH GULLS

The season's only **Eared Grebe** was at Binder Lake, *Cole*, 5 Dec-1 Jan (ph. Chris Barrigar, Brenda Morris, ph. Paul McKenzie, ph. Pete Monacell, m.ob). Two **Western Grebes** were reported 12 Dec at SL (Brian Vorhees, m.ob). The season's only **White-winged Dove** away from expected locales in the extreme SE of the state was one at Jefferson Barracks Park, *St. Louis*, 10 Dec (ph. Kyle Hawley). Up to 4 **Virginia Rails** (acc.) occurred at Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery, *Taney*, 25 Dec-7 Jan (aud., †Alex Marine, m.ob). This location has become a regular wintering site for the species over the past three years, similar to wetlands near McBaine, *Boone*, where on 18 Dec four individuals were detected at Wetland Cell #2 (Paul McKenzie) and two individuals were detected at Wetland Cell #3 (Pete Monacell). Single **Soras** occurred *15 Dec at Little River CA, *Pemiscot* (Timothy Jones) and 16 Dec at LBNWR (acc., †Kendell Loyd). **Sandhill Cranes** were present in 11 counties, with an extraordinary high of 56 birds flying over Ten Mile Pond CA, *Mississippi*, 14 Jan (ph. Jeremy Capps). A **Long-billed Curlew** (acc.), likely the same long-staying bird detected in the fall at Steele Municipal Airport, *Pemiscot*, as late as 1 Dec (ph. Timothy Jones), was observed 23-26 Feb in the South Dunklin Rice Fields, *Dunklin* (ph. Timothy Jones, ph. Kent S. Freeman). Two records of **Dunlin** were reported outside of the extreme SE corner of the state, where they are more expected in winter: one at Lake Contrary, *Buchanan*, 2 Dec (ph. Tom Nagel); and 4 were at HFRCA 14 Dec (Rick Hostetler, Pete Monacell, Paul McKenzie, m.ob). In addition, Cory Gregory counted a seasonal high of 89 individuals of this species in the South Dunklin Rice Fields, *Dunklin*, 3 Dec. **Least Sandpiper** occurred in six counties, with up to 45 birds reported 9 Dec-26 Feb at WD. A Baird's Sandpiper (acc.) continued at WD 6 Jan-16 Feb (ph. Carol Thompson, ph. †Bill Rowe, m.ob). This season's only report of **Long-billed Dowitcher** was 2 birds 14 Dec at HFRCA (Rick Hostetler, ph. Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell, m.ob). The highest number of **Wilson's Snipe** found this season was 80 on 17 Dec off of Hwy VV, *Mississippi* (Bill Eddleman); in addition, up to 71 individuals of this species occurred 9 Dec-31 Jan at WD (m.ob). Birders found **Spotted Sandpipers** in two instances: *9 Jan at LvL (ph. Aaron Mitchell, Shawna Mitchell); and 20 Jan (acc.) at a



Say's Phoebe, Cole Co 20 Dec 2021. Photo Paul McKenzie

private wetland in *New Madrid* (†Tim Kavan). **Greater Yellowlegs** occurred on four occasions away from the extreme SE of the state, where they are more expected: 4 at Hedeman Lake/England Pond, *Dade*, 9 Dec (ph. Ryan Steffens); 28 at HFRCA 14 Dec (Rick Hostetler, ph. Paul McKenzie, ph. Pete Monacell, m.ob); 2 at Hedeman Lake/England Pond, *Dade*, 24 Dec (ph. David Blevins, Barbara Blevins); and 2 more at Webb City, *Jasper*, 14-23 Dec (ph. A. Wild, ph. Madison Rodriguez). At least 600 **Bonaparte's Gulls** still remained in the northeast at Mark Twain Lake, *Monroe*, 10 Dec (Joshua Uffman). A basic-plumaged **Franklin's Gull** was at LBL 12 and 15 Dec (ph. Joshua Uffman, ph. Cory Gregory). A single **California Gull** (acc.) occurred at SL 11-14 Jan (ph. †Doug Willis, ph. Mary Nemecek), and a subsequent observation at SL on 16 Feb (ph. Mary Nemecek) likely represents the same bird. Another *individual of this species occurred 29 Jan-3 Feb at LvL (Sherry Leonardo, ph. Eric Walters). Single **Iceland Gulls** of the Thayer's group occurred in four counties, with

a high of 2 at LBL 30 Dec (Pete Monacell, Paul McKenzie); single birds of the Kumlien's group also occurred in four counties; Iceland Gulls unassigned to subspecies were reported in four counties, with the most being 2 at SL 11 and 20 Jan (ph. Doug Willis).

Lesser Black-backed Gulls occurred in numbers ranging from 1-3 in 10 counties, with a high of 4 observed 31 Jan at Clarksville Lock and Dam 24, *Ralls* (ph. Cory Gregory). Single **Glaucous Gulls** occurred at three locations: CBCA 31 Dec (ph. Theo Bockhurst, Charles McGrath, Jonah Eckels); Lock and Dam 22, *Ralls*, 31 Jan (ph. Cory Gregory); and SL 16 Feb continuing into the spring (ph. Mary Nemecek, m.ob). The season's only **Great Black-backed Gull** was an imm. 10-11 Feb at RMBS (ph. David Becher, ph. Bill Rowe, ph. Pete Monacell, m.ob).



Townsend's Solitaire, Weston Bend SP,
Platte Co. 27 Dec 2021.

Photo Paul McKenzie

LOONS THROUGH CROWS

Casual in winter, single **Red-throated Loons** (acc.) were observed 27 Dec-3 Jan at SL (ph. †Doug Willis, m.ob) and 19-28 Feb at StLa (†Kendell Loyd, Tim Barksdale, ph. †Steven Romo, m.ob). A **Pacific Loon**, also casual in winter, was reported 20 Feb at StLa (ph. †Alex Marine). An annual high of 143 **Common Loons** occurred 19 Feb at StLa (Tim Barksdale, Kendell Loyd). The year's seasonal high of **Double-crested Cormorants** was 502 at StLa 26 Feb (Barbara Blevins, David Blevins). The season's only report of an **American Bittern** was 22 Dec off of State Supplemental Rte. TT, *Dunklin* (ph. Timothy Jones). The state's first December record of **Least Bittern** occurred 6 Dec at WD (†Henry Gorski, ph. Oliver Gorski). Up to two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** remained at FP throughout the season (Matt Schamberger, m.ob). Marking a strong difference from recent winter seasons, the only occurrence of **Great Egret** was one in Warsaw, *Benton*, 27 Dec (ph. Joel Jorgensen). Two **Glossy/White-faced Ibises** were at B.K. Leach CA, *Lincoln*, 16 Dec (ph. Pat Lueders, Shelly Colatskie, Richard Palmer). A single **Turkey Vulture** (acc.) was documented 31 Jan in

Daviess, far north of the species' typical winter range (ph. †Terry McNeely, Steve Kinder, Ivan Miller). A very late **Osprey** repeatedly flew over the residence hosting a long-staying Varied Thrush in *St. Charles* 19 Dec (Dave Haenni, Doug Hommert, ph. Sam Belley, Grace Belley, Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell). Single **Golden Eagles** were recorded in ten counties in Dec and Jan. Appearances of this species in the week following the 15 Dec derecho include an imm. 16 Dec at a residence in *Texas* (ph. Kristie Nelson); an apparent ad. 16 Dec on the Katy Trail in *St. Charles* (Carol Thompson); and an imm. 22 Dec at Black Island CA, *Pemiscot* (ph. Kyle Bess). High counts for **Bald Eagles** during this season ranged from 400-458 at LBNWR 24 Dec -3 Jan. **Rough-legged Hawks** were especially widespread during the season, with birds detected in 51 counties and a high of 9 at LBNWR 20 Feb (Terry McNeely). This season's only ***Ferruginous Hawk** was an imm. light morph photographed by Timothy Jones 19 Feb at Hornersville Swamp CA, *Dunklin*. **Snowy Owls** experienced a seasonal irruption and were detected in 8 counties. A winter roost of multiple **Northern Saw-whet Owls** was discovered in *Barton*, with the birds staying at that location from the fall until at least 10 Feb (aud. Alex Marine, m.ob). The year's high count of 188 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** was recorded at HFRCA 14 Dec (Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell). Single **Prairie Falcons** were reported in six western counties over the course of the season. A **Say's Phoebe** stayed for more than two weeks at a cattle feedlot on West Cole Junction Road, *Cole* 18 Dec-4 Jan (ph. Tim Barksdale, m.ob). Another individual of this species occurred at Golden Prairie, *Barton*, 11-21 Feb (ph. Debbie Martin, Steve Martin, m.ob). Individual **Northern Shrikes** were reported in nine counties; this season's southernmost records of Northern Shrike occurred at Prairie SP, *Barton*, continuing from the fall through at least 11 Jan (ph. Alex Marine), and Bushwhacker Prairie, *Vernon*, 22 Dec (ph. Alex Marine). **Fish Crows** (acc.), casual in winter outside of the extreme southeast, occurred in two instances: 2 at Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery, *Taney*, 21 Jan (aud. †Marcia Balesti, Bob Balesti) and 2 others at Table Rock Lake, *Taney*, 20 Feb (†Steve Martin, Debbie Martin).

WAXWINGS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

Over 800 **Cedar Waxwings** were tallied in the northeast 10 Dec, including a single flock of at least 550 (Joshua Uffman). **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, widespread during the season, were detected in 42 counties, with this season's high of 6 at BCA 10 Jan (ph. Lisa Saffell). **Winter Wrens** were found in 44 counties, with this season's high of 8 at OSCA 7 Dec (Mark Hahn). **Sedge Wrens** were recorded in five southern counties, with this season's high of 2 at HFRCA 14 Dec (Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell). **Marsh Wrens** occurred in seven counties, with this season's high of 2 at HFRCA 14 Dec (Kendell Loyd, ph. Mark Robbins). Single **Gray Catbirds** were recorded in 7 counties, with the northernmost records occurring on 22 Dec at SL (Mary Nemecek) and 19 Feb at Mark Youngdahl Urban CA,



Sage Thrasher, Dallas Co, 14 Feb 2022. Photo Doug Hommert

Buchanan (Ben Limle). The state's fourth record of **Sage Thrasher** was found at a residence in *Dallas* 30 Jan-19 Feb (Caleb Wenger, Zane Hostetler, ph. †Kendell Loyd, ph. †Paul McKenzie, ph. †Lisa Berger, †Edge Wade, m.ob). Many birders observed a **Townsend's Solitaire** at Weston Bend SP, *Platte*, 23-31 Dec (ph. Barry Jones, m.ob). Many birders also observed a long-staying **Varied Thrush** at a residence in Foristell, *St. Charles*, 17 Dec-30 Jan (ph. Gary Greer, m.ob). Another individual of this species was reported 19 Dec at BCA (Tom Parmeter). **Eurasian Tree Sparrows** were observed outside of their expected range in 7 instances: 15 Dec at McCredie Farm Lake, *Callaway* (Bill Clark, Bob Schrieber, Edge Wade); *17 Dec at a residence in *Jackson* (ph. Linda Sullivan); 20 Dec (acc.) at Church Farm CA, *Cole* (ph. †Pete Monacell, Paul McKenzie); *2 Feb at Pembroke Estates, *Clay* (ph. M. Bridge); 10 Feb at a residence in *Franklin* (Becky Lutz, Jack Foreman, Shirley Foreman), and 12 Feb (acc.) at a residence in *Clay* (†Michele Bridgeforth); finally, up to 51 birds (acc.) were counted at a residence in *Shelby* 21-26 Feb (Marilyn Simpson, ph. †Chris Barrigar, Brenda Morris). Detected in 52 counties, **Purple Finches** were widespread during the season, with this season's high of 55 at a residence in *Iron* 12 Feb (Russell Myers). **Common Redpolls**, rare in winter, occurred in 13 counties, with this season's high of 6 at Shady Oaks Sanctuary, *St. Louis*, 29 Jan (ph. Margy Terpstra). **Pine Siskins** were reported in 28 counties in numbers far reduced from the 2020-21 winter season. **Lapland Longspurs** occurred in 41 counties, with this season's high of 695 at HFRCA 14 Dec (ph. Paul McKenzie, ph. Pete Monacell). Two **Smith's Longspurs** were detected at Shawnee Trail CA, *Barton*, 12 Jan-9 Feb (Alex Marine); up to 9 individuals of this species were reported at Pennsylvania Prairie, *Dade*, 4-30 Dec (ph. Cory Gregory, Ben Caruthers, m.ob). Single **Snow Buntings** were found on Portage Des Sioux Rd, *St. Charles*, 17 Jan (David Becher); at WD 5-6 Feb (David Becher, m.ob); and off of Red School/Cora Island Rds, *St. Charles*, 5-6 Feb (ph. Cornelius Alwood, Jonah Eckels). †Paul McKenzie photographed the second winter record of **Grasshopper Sparrow** (acc.) 18 Jan at Buck and Katy Pools, *Boone*. **Chipping Sparrows**, rare in winter, occurred in twelve counties, with this season's northernmost observation at a residence in *St. Louis* 19 Feb (ph. Mark Paradise), and this season's high of 14 at a residence in *Cape Girardeau* 2 Feb (ph. Mark Haas). Single **Harris's Sparrows** occurred away from their expected range in two instances: 5 Jan, County Rd 330, *Butler* (ph. Ethan Hoggard); and 9 Feb, Confluence SP, *St. Charles* (Cornelius Alwood, David Dean, ph. Doug Hommert). **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were at locations in four counties, including Kennett CA, *Platte*, where the species is rare, 18 Dec (Doug Willis); and on a farm in *Jefferson*, where the species is casual, 18 Feb (acc., †Brock Wagoner). **Rusty Blackbirds** occurred in 43 counties, with this season's high of 430 at SL 18 Dec (Kristi Mayo, ph. Mary Nemecek). **Brewer's Blackbirds** occurred in 15 counties, primarily in the south and west of the state, with this season's high of 250 occurring at Prairie SP, *Barton*, 13 Dec (Paul McKenzie, Pete Monacell). One observation outside of this species' expected range occurred during a CBC, for such records must be reviewed by the MBRC: 8

individuals (acc.) near CR 740, *New Madrid*, 17 Dec (†Rhonda Rothrock, Vicki-Lang Mendenhall). The season saw large numbers of **Great-tailed Grackles** reported at Lake Contrary, Buchanan, with a high of 750 on 18 Dec (ph. Tom Nagel, Ryan Evans). The easternmost occurrence of this species was 2-14 off of Iffing Rd, *St. Charles*, 1 Jan-23 Feb. (m.ob). Single **Orange-crowned Warblers** were found in 9 counties; reports of two birds together occurred 26 Dec at FP (Rad Widmer) and 15 Jan at OSCA (Ethan Hoggard). A very late **Nashville Warbler** occurred at a residence in *St. Louis City* 7 Dec (ph. Rachel Caballero, Kyle Wells). **Common Yellowthroats**, rare in winter, were in five counties, with a high of 3 at HFRCA 14 Dec (Kendell Loyd, Mark Robbins). The state's second December record of **Northern Parula** (acc.) was found 14 Dec at Duck Creek CA, *Wayne* (†Allen Gathman, Mark Haas). **Palm Warblers** occurred on five occasions: one at a residence in *Christian* 3 Dec. (Cindy Bridges); 3 at Creve Coeur Memorial Park, *St. Louis*, 12 Dec (ph. Mike Thelen); one at Crain's Island Bottoms, *Perry*, 31 Dec (Bill Eddleman); 3 off of Hwy 102, *Mississippi*, 30 Jan (Tim Kavan); and one at OSCA 10 Feb (Micaiah Seydlitz). A **Pine Warbler** was found 7-19 Dec at Miriam Cemetery, *Nodaway*, far north of its expected winter range (ph. † Mark Robbins, David Easterla). An ad. female **Summer Tanager** (acc.), casual in winter, was photographed at a residence in *St. Louis* 24 Jan-3 Feb (ph. †Frank Grady, ph. Kel Halley). Casual in winter, a female-type **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** (acc.) was observed at Ten Mile Pond CA, *Mississippi*, 17 Dec (†Bill Eddleman).

Key

* = Documentation needed for MBRC review but not yet received

† = Documentation received by MBRC

acc. = Record accepted by MBRC

Abbreviations

ad.-adult

aud.-audio by

CA-Conservation Area

CBC-Christmas Bird Count

imm.- immature

m.ob- multiple observations

MBRC-Missouri Bird Records Committee

NWR- National Wildlife Refuge

ph.- photographed by

R.- River

SP-State Park

Location Abbreviations

BCA-Busch Conservation Area, *St. Charles County*

CBCA-Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, *St. Louis County*

CCNWR-Clarence Cannon National Wildlife Refuge, *Pike County*

FP-Forest Park, *St. Louis City*

HFRCA-Horton-Four Rivers Conservation Area, *Vernon County*

LBNWR- Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge, *Holt*

LBL-Long Branch Lake, *Macon County*

LvL- Longview Lake, *Jackson County*

OSCA-Otter Slough Conservation Area, *Stoddard County*

RMBS-Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, *St. Charles County*

SL-Smithville Lake, *Clay County*

StLa-Stockton Lake, *Cedar County*

WD-Winfield Dam/Sandy Chute, *Lincoln County*

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Birders' Guide:

Bollinger Mill State Historic Site

Mark Haas

44 acres, Cape Girardeau Co., DeLorme 58, F2
GPS: 37.3669, -89.8022
DNR owned. For information, call 573-243-4591

Directions: From Jackson, take Highway 34 west 6.5 miles to Highway HH. Turn left (south) and go 0.4 miles to the site.

ADA Information: Birding by vehicle is quite limited on this small site. Woodland birds might be seen and heard in the single gravel parking lot located in a riparian zone. There is one accessible vault toilet.

When to visit/species to expect: This site is named for George Bollinger, who built the mill and dam on Whitewater River in the early 1800s. Unfortunately, the mill pond is bordered by private land and difficult to access. There is a quarter mile of DNR-owned riverbank on both sides downstream of the dam. Still, few of the 140 species reported here are waterfowl or shorebirds. This is a birding site mainly for woodland birds.

Expect most of the resident woodpeckers year-round and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in winter. Also in winter, look for Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creeper, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Field Sparrow are among the winter sparrows you might see—in the few odd corners with brushy habitat. Of the 27 warblers seen here, most have been reported during spring migration. The same is true for migrant thrushes and vireos.

In summer, expect Wood Thrush, Summer Tanager, and all of the common woodland vireos and flycatchers. Also, you'll have a good chance for Northern Parula, Kentucky Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Yellow-throated Warbler. Among the year-round residents are Eastern Phoebe and Red-shouldered Hawk.

The riverbanks often grow lush with giant ragweed. You may see double-digit numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks feeding there

during fall migration, late September to early October.

Features of interest to birders: Be sure to walk across the Civil War-era Burfordville Covered Bridge, the oldest and largest of the four remaining covered bridges in the state. Then walk a short distance on CR 360 to the site boundary, turn right, and walk the border between the private ag field and the brushy/wooded DNR land down to the river. This is a good spot for Fox Sparrow on one side and open-land birds and raptors on the other.

Back on the other side of the river, search the tall trees around the picnic and parking area. Walk to the narrow point of land where a small stream empties into the Whitewater and scan for kingfishers, Great Blue Herons, and Wood Ducks. No vehicles are allowed beyond the bridge that crosses the small creek, but continue walking on the service road. It takes you a short distance through prime riparian woods before ending at a gate for private land. The other good option after crossing the bridge is to veer right into a small clearing in the woods. This spot is often “warbler central” in spring. Continue across the clearing to a short trail (steep and rough) that takes you through the best woodland on the historic site and up to a ridge-top cemetery where many of the Bollinger family are buried.

From the parking lot and privy, another good option is to follow the small creek to a wooded field edge. Stop to check the scattered trees. Then go around that edge into a rectangular grassy field bordered by woods on three sides. You may often get a surprise on that route, such as a Winter Wren in season. From there, continue across Hwy HH to the DNR maintenance buildings, where you can walk behind to the site boundary and view pasture and hay fields for more open-land birds like Northern Harrier or Eastern Kingbird. Birding behind the area headquarters may also occasionally yield an unexpected bird. Be sure to respect private land near DNR buildings.

If you want to divert yourself into some history, the mill is often open to the public for self-guided tours and displays with artifacts of the milling operation.

Picnic Areas: One.

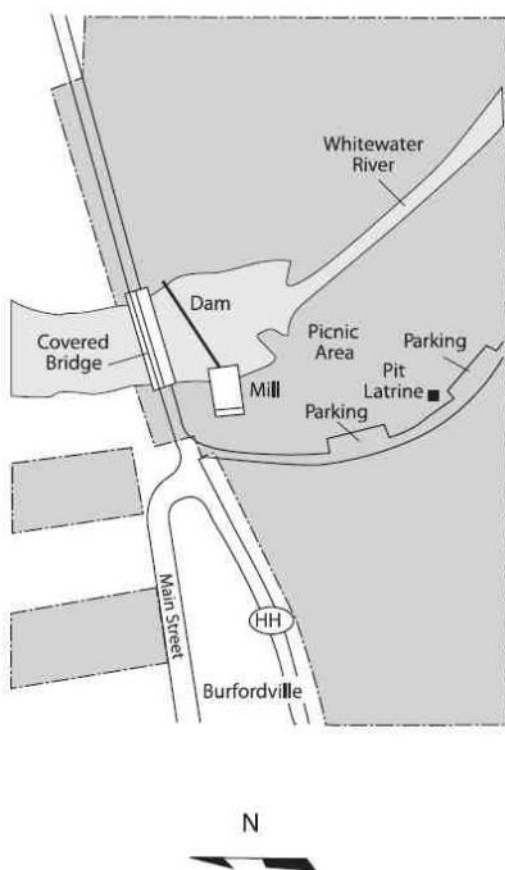
Toilets: One accessible vault toilet near the picnic area.

Camping: Prohibited.

Hazards/Limitations: Private land and homes are mixed with DNR property, so be considerate of neighbors and careful to avoid trespass.

Nearby Birding Sites: Lake Girardeau CA, Maintz Wildlife Preserve, Old Plantation Access, Block Hole Access.

BOLLINGER MILL STATE HISTORIC SITE



Birders' Guide:

Old Plantation Access

Allen Gathman

70 acres. Cape Girardeau County. DeLorme 58, E-1

GPS: -89.85, 37.47

Owned by MDC. For additional information call (573) 290-5730 or see <https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places/old-plantation-access>

Directions:

From Jackson, take Highway 72 west through Millersville, then County Road 485 north to the conservation area.

ADA Information:

Almost all of this area can be birded from the road and parking lots. No specifically ADA-designated features.

When to Visit/Species to Expect:

This is a small conservation area with limited habitat diversity; probably not a destination birding site. However, if you're in the area, it's worth a stop at any time of the year, as the eBird hotspot records over 100 species. Typical resident woodland and meadow birds can be expected. A fair number of migrant warblers have been reported, and Louisiana Waterthrush is likely all summer. American Woodcock is likely to be displaying at dawn and dusk in the spring.

Features of interest to birders:

The conservation area is a strip of property along 1.1 miles of County Road 485. On entering, it is usually best to drive slowly with windows down all the way to the northernmost parking lot first; traffic is light, so it's easy to just stop along the side of the gravel road when you see or hear birds.

From the north parking lot, a short trail leads to the Whitewater River. Along the path, warblers, woodpeckers, and other woodland birds may be found. The river often hosts swallows, occasional herons or egrets, and Belted Kingfisher. If the weather is hot and you're daring, there's a rope swing.

From the parking lot, walk north along the county road to the low-water bridge at the edge of the conservation area. Large trees here provide more woodland habitat, and under them, native plants such as Virginia Bluebell and both species of Jewelweed (spotted and pale) abound. There is an informal trail or ATV track to the river here.

Driving back south, make a stop at the other parking area in the middle of the conservation area. There is a good view here of crop and meadow fields with birds expected in such habitat, and open sky to look for flyover raptors. It is possible to walk along the field edges east to the river from here, but no formal path exists. You can walk either direction along the county road from here; again, there is little traffic, and birding along the road is often productive.

Toilets: None

Camping: None

Hazards/Limitations: Ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, gnats as are typical in summer in southeast Missouri. Turkey hunting (firearms and archery) and deer hunting (archery only) in season; check the MDC site for dates.

Nearby Birding sites: Maintz Wildlife Preserve, Bollinger Mill State Historic Site

OLD PLANTATION ACCESS

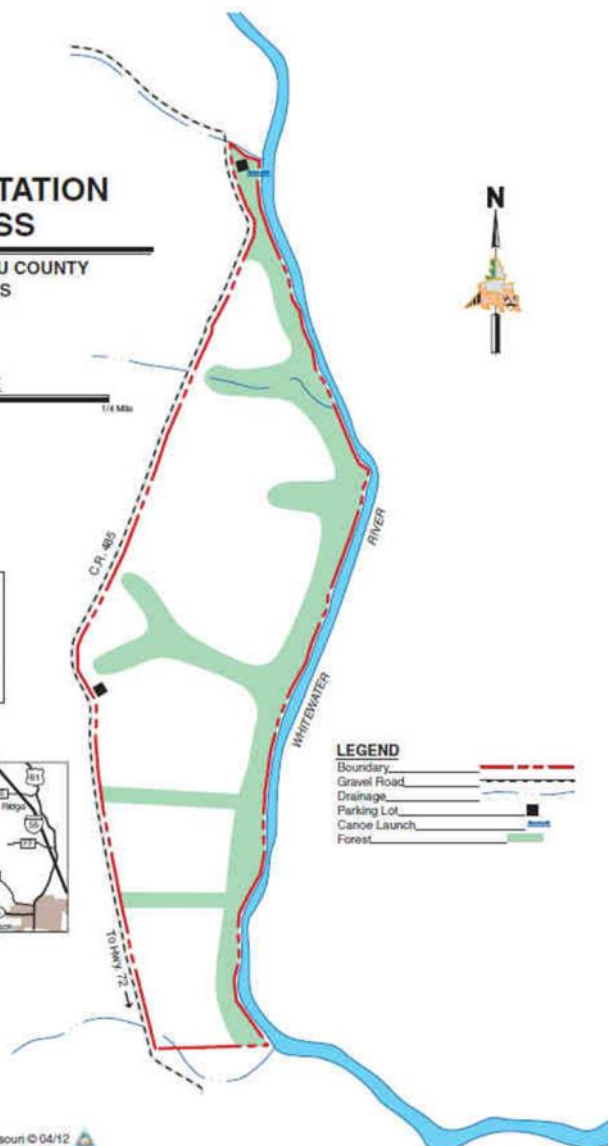
CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY
70 ACRES

SCALE

0 3/16 1/8 1/4 Mile



VICINITY MAP



Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri © 04/12

Birders' Guide:
Reifsneider
(Frank, Emma, Elizabeth, and Edna)
State Forest
Carol Thompson

1389 acres Warren Co. DeLorme 39, 10-D

GPS:38.769849, -91.091077

MDC owned; for information call (636) 456-3368

Map:<https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places/frank-emma-elizabeth-edna-reifsneider-state-forest>

Directions: From I-70 west, Exit 193 (Warrenton). South on MO 47 to Hwy. M (0.7 mi), east on M to Schuetzenground Rd (2.7 mi), south to entrance (2.8 mi).

From I-70 east, Exit 199 (Wright City), go south on Hwy. H to Hwy. M (about 2.7 miles), west on M to Schuetzenground Rd (about 2 miles), south to entrance (2.7 mi)

When to Visit/Species to Expect: All seasons will produce resident populations of typical east-central Missouri woodland. Twenty plus species of warblers, Winter Wren, both kinglets, American Woodcock during spring migration.

Breeding warblers include Louisiana Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Northern Parula, Blue-winged, Worm-eating, Kentucky and Hooded. Other breeders are Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Yellow-breasted Chat, Eastern Towhee, Summer and Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeak and Baltimore Oriole.

The area is under-birded, especially considering that it is in the 50-mile St. Louis "circle".

Features of interest to birders: Mostly oak-hickory forest with upland, steep hills, and riparian areas. There is a brushy, more open area near the back (northwest) portion. North Fork of Charrette Creek runs through the area, a lovely limestone stream. During less rainy periods one can easily walk along/in the creek. There is a small lake near the middle of the area, which is apparently of no interest to waterfowl.

The road is 2.2 miles long from the entrance to the back of the area; walking the road is often the best birding. Alternately, stop at any of the pull-outs and walk. From the entrance parking to the stream is often very good birding. There is a 1.3-mile nature trail as well as a number of access trails. The nature trail crosses the stream several times, is not always well-marked and may not always be doable especially after big rains. The access trails are not maintained outside of hunting seasons.

Toilets: One privy near lake

Camping: Primitive sites at some parking areas.

Hazards/Limitations: To access most of the area, you must drive across an unpaved, at grade stream crossing (0.5 mi. from entrance), doable most of the time in a moderate-clearance vehicle. The road (steep in places) is often closed if there is snow or ice. There is a heavily used shooting range present (in an old clay pit), the noise from which is unavoidable in most of the area. The shooting range is closed for maintenance on Monday mornings till noon. The area has rugged terrain, about 220 feet of elevation change along the road. It is a popular hunting destination, especially for deer and turkey.

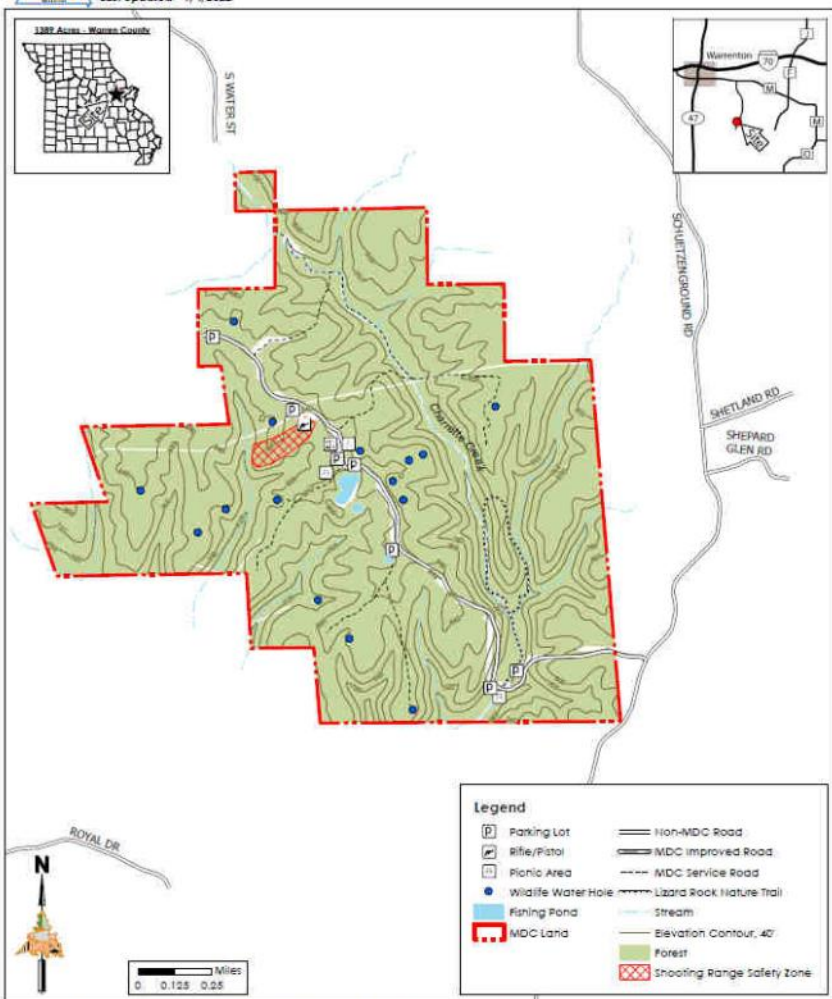
Nearby Birding Sites: Little Lost Creek CA, Daniel Boone CA. For the more adventurous, you can drive south on Schuetzengrund/Charrette Creek Road which follows the stream along a deep wooded canyon and dumps out at Highway 47, just north of Marthasville. It is well worth the drive.



Reifsnider (Frank, Emma Elizabeth and Edna) State Forest

Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri ©

Last Updated - 1/4/2022



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THE BLUEBIRD

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Voting Members: Lisa Berger, Cory Gregory, Kristi Mayo, Pete Monacell, Mary Nemecek, Mark Robbins, Josh Uffman

ADDRESS CHANGES

If you move to a new address or you register a temporary address with the post office, please let MBS know. For an address change, just send me an email with your new address, or mail me a note. If it is a temporary address, do the same thing, but also let me know the date of your return and whether you want THE BLUEBIRD sent to your temporary address or held and sent after you return home. You can also change your address anytime on your own by logging into your profile at MOBIRDS.ORG. Thank you!

Greg Leonard

MBS Membership Chair

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Go to www.mobirds.org and pay using PayPal, or by mail:
Application for MBS Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

_____ Do NOT Publish My Phone Number in the MBS Membership Directory

_____ Do NOT Publish ANY of My Information in the MBS Membership Directory

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\*\*Indicate whether this is a NEW membership or a RENEWAL\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ New      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

\*\*Please check the Membership Category that applies and your BLUEBIRD choice\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual—\$20.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Contributing—\$50.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family—\$25.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor—\$150.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Student—\$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Mail paper BLUEBIRD—\$12.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ I'll read the BLUEBIRD online at MOBIRDS.ORG—FREE!

\$\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Enclosed**

Send checks (payable to Missouri Birding Society) to:

**The Missouri Birding Society**  
**2101 W. Broadway, PMB 122**  
**Columbia, MO 65203-1261**

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