



Cooper's Talk

Newsletter of the Robert Cooper Audubon Society, serving east central Indiana

Volume 41, No. 1
Jan/Feb 2017



Red Wolf Sanctuary and Raptor Center

Wednesday, January 18, 7 p.m.

The Red Wolf Sanctuary and Raptor Center is a non-profit animal sanctuary located in southeastern Indiana. North American wildlife such as owls, hawks, black bears, red and gray foxes, coyotes, gray wolves, bobcats, minks, and skunks call Red Wolf home and are cared for by Red Wolf Sanctuary head Paul Strasser and his team of dedicated employees and volunteers. With their help, these animals have an opportunity to live out their lives or even return to the wild after being injured or abandoned. Paul will be speaking a little bit about the efforts of Red Wolf Sanctuary, and how RCAS members can get involved.

RCAS programs are held at the Kennedy Branch of the Muncie Public Library. Chapter business and refreshments starts at 7:00 p.m. with the program beginning at 7:15 p.m.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Birds, Bats, and Renewable Energy: Complex Trade-offs
Wednesday, February 15, 7 p.m.

Unfortunately, the use of wind farms and solar energy systems can lead to bird and bat deaths, habitat loss, and avoidance behavior development in wildlife. In this talk, our very own, Annette Rose, will be discussing these negative impacts of positive efforts to reduce CO2 emissions through renewable energy.

Mounds State Park Bird Hike
Sunday, January 29 & February 26, 9 a.m.
Monthly bird hikes will continue in January and February. Meet at the visitor center at 9 a.m. We will provide binoculars and a scope. The hike ends with cookies and a review of which species we recorded. Birders of all skill levels are invited and children are encouraged to join!

WAVE Foundation at Newport Aquarium
Wednesday, March 15, 6 p.m. at Minnetrista

The WAVE Foundation is the outreach program for the Newport Aquarium, serving all ages as they “strive to excite, engage, and educate the community about the wonders of the aquatic life and the importance of conservation.” There are a variety of programs offered, however, specifically for us bird-lovers they will be bringing an African penguin to Minnetrista for our March meeting. This is a unique and awesome opportunity to not only learn about penguins and conservation, but also to have the chance to pet the penguin! Dan Dunlap is the curator of the WAVE Foundation, and will be leading the event. He does a great job of educating everyone, no matter what age or level of experience. Hopefully, everyone can walk away having learned something new, and with a newfound appreciation for the natural world and its inhabitants. This event is free of charge; however, seating is limited. Please call or email Crystal Nichols, program chair, to reserve your seats. Phone: 812-655-1909. Email: ccnichols@bsu.edu RCAS would like to accommodate as many families as possible, please note the change of venue and time.

2015 Youth Conservation Award Winner - Matthias Benko

One year ago, I was graciously awarded the Charles D. Wise Youth Conservation Award by the Robert Cooper Audubon Society. Besides receiving an elegant wooden plaque, I received a grant of \$200 for any conservation project of my choice. For several months, I had the thought in the back of my mind: what was I going to do? Spring came, which meant that a huge influx of birds arrived in Indiana. Sadly, some of these birds strike windows and perish. This can be caused for many reasons, but a major reason for home strikes is that songbirds get spooked by birds of prey and do not realize that they cannot fly through the windows. When this happened at my own house, I realized that I could use the grant to buy window strike prevention stickers. A plan was slowly starting to formulate in my mind.

First, I contacted Wild Birds Unlimited of Greater Indianapolis to see if they would be willing to give me a discount on the stickers. I met with store manager, Gina Jannazzo, to discuss my project. She thought it was a wonderful idea, and was kind enough to give me a fifty percent discount. I was thrilled by this, especially because I could now pass out double the number of stickers I originally thought. Once I obtained the stickers, I contacted parks with larger nature centers where I

could place the stickers and make them available to the public. I chose three in the Indianapolis Metropolitan area: Holliday Park, Eagle Creek Park, and Cool Creek Park. In total, I had 168 stickers to distribute between the three parks. Therefore, each park would get exactly 56 stickers. Then, to make sure people knew what the stickers were for, I printed out an information sheet from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. I stapled one copy to each sticker. It took about three weeks, but I had finally prepared all the stickers for delivery.

Over the course of two weeks, all of the stickers were dropped off at the parks. To monitor progress, I set up an email account. However, that did not prove to be very effective. So, my mom and I decided that we would check on the stickers two weeks after we dropped them off. Two weeks later, we found almost all of the stickers were gone at Holliday Park, which was quite exciting. The next week, we visited Eagle Creek Park and found that a majority of the stickers there were gone as well. We never made it up to Cool Creek, but I assume that those stickers went quickly as well. I am very thankful to the Robert Cooper Audubon Society for awarding me this grant and to Wild Birds Unlimited of Greater Indianapolis for making this project possible. Hopefully, the stickers saved the lives of several birds.

2016 Conservation Award Winners

Our chapter's annual conservation awards banquet, held on November 14, was a festive evening that included a silent auction (see our website for a complete list of donors), a wonderful dinner prepared by chef Lois Altman, and microbiology students of Dr. John McKillip volunteered.

The highlight of the evening, of course, was hearing about the good work done by the following award-winners:



Living Lightly received the Robert H. and Esther L. (Munro) Cooper Conservation Award, the chapter's highest honor, in recognition of its ten years of dedicated service to "inspiring and educating residents of East Central Indiana about practical ways to live more sustainably" through the Living Lightly Fair and other outreach activities.

John Taylor, Ball State University's Land Manager for the Field Station and Environmental Education Center (FSEEC) for nearly 15 years, was presented with the Clyde W. Hibbs Conservation Education Award for his work in managing 425 acres of BSU properties and educating children, Ball State students, and others on habitat conservation.

Ben Hess, a trained botanist who has been East Central Regional Ecologist with the IDNR's Division of Nature Preserves since June 2014, received the Phyllis Yuhas Wildlife Habitat Preservation Award for his work in managing 1,800 acres of restored wetlands collectively known as the Limberlost Territories (Adams and Jay Counties), as well as properties in a dozen other counties.

Muncie Mission was given the Richard Greene Public Service Award for more than 29 years of service to the ECI community and the environment, by keeping tons of material out of landfills and facilitating reuse of clothing, furniture, appliances, and a wide range of other household goods.

For more details and photos of the evening's events, visit our website, at www.cooperaudubon.org.

2017 Muncie Christmas Bird Count

Icy roads and cold rain hindered participation in this year's Christmas Bird Count, which was held on December 17th, but twelve volunteers persevered to find forty species, comprising 1,210 individual birds.

Notable sightings included the Northern Harrier and Red-shouldered Hawk, which have been observed in only two of our ten most recent counts. Also of interest were Bald Eagle, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Purple Finch.

RCAS thanks all who contributed to the success of this important citizen-science project: Sandy Ho, Taiping Ho, Martha Hunt, Sarah McKillip, Nona Nunnally, Annette Rose, Jim Schowe, Paul Schowe, Barb Stedman, Phil Tuttle, Robert Williams, and Stacy Wright.



Robert Cooper
Audubon Society

P.O. Box 1635
Muncie, IN 47308

Dates for Your Calendar

Jan 18: Red Wolf Sanctuary - Paul Strasser
Jan 29: Mounds SP Bird Hike
Feb 15: Renewable Energy - Annette Rose
Feb 26: Mounds SP Bird Hike
Mar 15: WAVE Foundation - Dan Dunlap

Chapter Website: www.cooperaudubon.org
Find us on Facebook!
Email: admin@cooperaudubon.org

Program meetings are held every month except July, August, and September at Muncie Public Library, Kennedy Branch 1700 W McGalliard Rd, Muncie, IN 7:00 pm: chapter business & refreshments 7:15 pm: scheduled program

Cooper's Talk is published 5 times a year by the Robert Cooper Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Henry, Jay, Madison, and Randolph Counties.

Officers

President:	Sarah McKillip	765-287-8462
Vice-President:	Willy De Smet	260-726-6693
Recording Sec.:	Kim Lee	765-215-0576
Treasurer:	Robert Williams	765-730-8427

Directors

2016-2018:	Annette Rose	765-741-8376
	Kevin Tungesvick	765-354-2775
2015-2017:	Kamal Islam	765-284-9872
	Kim McKenzie	707-535-6946

Committee Chairs

Conservation:	Jon Creek	765-348-4019
Education:	Kim Lee	765-215-0576
Field Trip:	Rose Jeffery	765-716-0299
Hospitality:	Doris Cheney	765-288-0891
Membership:	Sandy Ho	765-215-4361
Program:	Crystal Nichols	812-655-1909
Newsletter Ed:	Micayla Jones	765-635-1320