

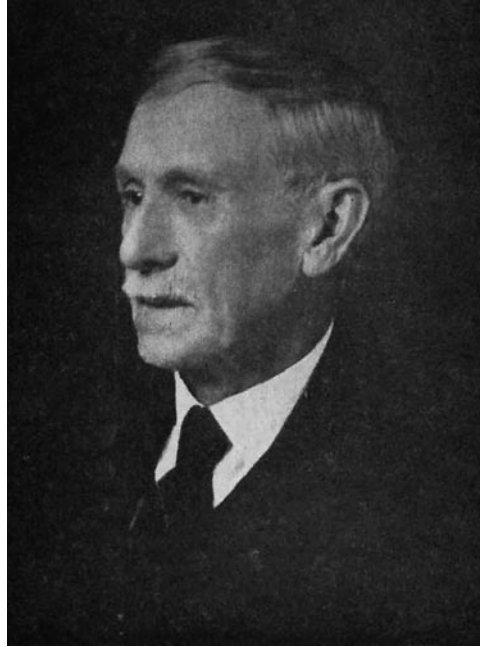
## The Sesquicentennial of the Birth of W.S. Blatchley

by Jeff Belth

Oct. 6 is the sesquicentennial of the birth of Willis Stanley Blatchley, Indiana's first entomologist and one of our greatest naturalists. We hope you will join us for some of the activities we have planned to commemorate this occasion. See the event calendar on page 4 for details.

W.S. Blatchley was born in North Madison, Conn., on Oct. 6, 1859, and immigrated to Indiana with his parents in 1860. Before their marriage, his parents were teachers, but after moving to Indiana, his father worked as a market gardener, and Blatchley grew up on Putnam County farms near Groveland and Bainbridge. He attended public schools, and in the summers he worked with his father in his gardens. At age 17, he earned enough money peddling notions to attend the normal school in Danville and secure a teacher's license, and in 1879 he began teaching in the Putnam County schools.

In 1882, Blatchley married Clara Fordice, and in 1883, their son Raymond was born. After teaching for four winters, in 1883 he enrolled in the preparatory department at Indiana University for a 10-week course. At that time IU consisted of two buildings, the main building with the chapel and numerous classrooms, and Science Hall, which housed



W.S. Blatchley 1859–1940

a museum, the chemical and geology labs, and the library. Blatchley was awed by the great casts of mastodons and mammoths in the museum, the odors emanating from the chemical labs, and the great library; and he resolved to enroll at IU in the fall to obtain a college education. That summer Science Hall burned down, and Blatchley wondered

if he should still enroll at IU, but in the end, he "made the best decision of his life" and moved his family to Bloomington so he could attend IU.


While in Bloomington, he studied under David Starr Jordan, the famous ichthyologist, and John C. Branner.

In 1885, his second son, Ralph, was born in Bloomington, and his first scientific papers—three articles on fishes—were published in the Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. However, he was dissatisfied with his studies of fish, and he asked Jordan for advice. Jordan suggested he pursue a career in entomology, and Blatchley resolved to make it his life's

*continued on page 5*

## Student Talks Planned for Fall

by Stephen Friesen

Sassafras Audubon will resume its graduate-student-research presentation series this fall, beginning in October. Our spring 2009 series was well attended and very interesting. Thanks to those of you who participated; we expect you'll find the fall lineup just as engaging. In keeping with our emphasis on conservation, we will feature more student presentations directly related to conservation and/or ecological issues. This will provide a great opportunity to place our natural history interests in a larger context. Our first program, by Jennifer Miller, is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 7 (see notice in calendar). The second talk, by Jonathan Bauer, is scheduled for Nov. 10. See you there! 



### CAN YOU NAME THAT BIRD

In all the candidates for Name That Bird, how did we miss this one? This is one of the most common customers at backyard feeders year round. He loves sunflower seeds and is also partial to suet. He is one of the first birds to start singing in mid-winter to announce the coming of spring. Find the answer on page 6.

Photo by Jeff Hammond

# President's Note — The Final Word

by Jeff Riegel

It's a pretty rare occasion when I get the final word and when it does happen, it's usually a simple "Yes, dear." But here, today, I finally get the final word, the final word of my stint as president of the Sassafras Audubon Society.

My term, just like those of all before me, was two years long, and in that time, a lot happened. Most notably was the plunge of the nation's economy, a plunge that brought many to their knees (a good position for begging for help from the government). And when you are the head of a nonprofit organization during the worst recession our country has experienced since the Great Depression, a rocky term would be considered good. Unless, of course, you are president of the Sassafras Audubon Society.

A couple of our members got interested in protecting habitat for Chimney Swifts when one of their main roost locations in Monroe

County was to be destroyed when a new school was built. A deal was worked out whereby Sassafras Audubon would solicit their members to come up with a third of the cost of using parts of the old chimney to erect a new one, not only for the birds, but complete with educational benefits for the children attending the new school. That money came quite easily without much work from many of us on the board. Then the bottom fell out of that deal as well, and if the tower were ever to be built, SAS would have to come up with another third. As I write this today, we have basically reached our goal (see the article by Dawn Hewitt). When you consider the overall state of our economy, that is nothing short of remarkable.

The economy didn't stop our work at Goose Pond either. Goose Pond, SAS's adopted Important Bird Area, has continued to be on the front burner throughout all this time  
*(continued on page 3)*

## JOIN SAS

Support Sassafras Audubon Society local educational programs, outings, and conservation projects by being a Friend of SAS. Friends receive membership in SAS, the Leaflet bimonthly newsletter, and a 10 percent discount on selected items at the Bloomington Wild Birds Unlimited and Bloomington Hardware stores. Support national conservation efforts through the National Audubon Society and receive Audubon magazine along with automatic chapter membership in SAS. But, because NAS dues primarily support national projects, we encourage you to also become a Friend of SAS. As a Friend, you will have the satisfaction of supporting your local chapter and its local projects!

### Sassafras Audubon Society Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Friend of the Sassafras Audubon Society \$20/year x \_\_\_ year(s) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Includes chapter membership in SAS
  - National Audubon Society Membership \$20 for first year \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Special introductory offer (regularly \$35/year)  
(Renewals go through National Audubon Society)
  - Additional Contribution to SAS \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your completed application along with your check to: Sassafras Audubon Society, Attention Membership Coordinator, P.O. Box 85, Bloomington, IN 47402.

*Thank you for supporting Sassafras Audubon Society!*

For more information about membership, e-mail us at [SAS@sassafrasaudubon.org](mailto:SAS@sassafrasaudubon.org).



## Sassafras Audubon Society

### Board of Directors

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Tom Platt ([tgplatt@indiana.edu](mailto:tgplatt@indiana.edu))

Keegan Ramey ([keramey@indiana.edu](mailto:keramey@indiana.edu))

### Committee Chairs

The committees welcome help from volunteers.

*Conservation Chair*

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*Database Manager/Membership Chair*

Ann Maxwell

*Education Chair*

Tom Platt

*Field Trip Chair*

Jim Mitchell

*Fundraising Chair*

Bob Kissel (812) 336-2907

*Program Chair*

David Daniels

*Publicity Chair*

John Lawrence

The board normally meets on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. All SAS members are welcome to attend. Contact the president or another board member to learn more details and meeting locations, or e-mail SAS@[sassafrasaudubon.org](mailto:sassafrasaudubon.org).

### SAS Website

[www.sassafrasaudubon.org](http://www.sassafrasaudubon.org)

*Webmaster*

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Direct address changes and requests for single issues to: Ann Maxwell, Database Manager; P.O. Box 85; Bloomington, IN 47402.

We invite readers to submit material for consideration for publication. Contact the editor at [dodd@indiana.edu](mailto:dodd@indiana.edu) or (812) 339-2976.

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# SAS Calendar

## September/October 2009

All SAS-sponsored outings and programs are free and open to nonmembers. Watch our website ([www.sassafrasaudubon.org](http://www.sassafrasaudubon.org)) and the *Bloomington Birds* e-mail list for announcements about other upcoming events. For more information about the outings, contact Jim Mitchell at [jl Mitchell33@comcast.net](mailto:jl Mitchell33@comcast.net) (812-824-8198).

### Saturday, Sept. 12, 7:30 a.m.: Early Fall Migrants

Don Whitehead will lead us to some local hot spots looking for migrating waterfowl, raptors, etc. Meet in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7:30 a.m. We will return before midday.

### Saturday, Sept. 19, 8 a.m.: Goose Pond Work Day

We plan to spray the invasive plant phragmites or to concentrate on killing some of the woody vegetation that has been creeping into the wetlands. The day will begin at 8 a.m. and end about noon. Plan to be at the Goose Pond office on SR 59 south of Linton at 8 a.m. for a short orientation. If you have a sprayer, you may want to bring it, as we have limited numbers of sprayers, especially for the phragmites work. For woody eradication, some volunteers will be needed to cut the stem while others will spray the stump to retard re-sprouting. If you have questions, contact Jess Gwinn at [jagmo@bluemarble.net](mailto:jagmo@bluemarble.net).

### Saturday, Sept. 26, 8 a.m.: Fall Migrants

SAS President Jeff Riegel will lead us to some local hot spots looking for migrating waterfowl, raptors, etc. Meet in the northeast corner of

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## President's Note *continued from page 2*

as well. Financial assistance and donations of time and labor from many of our members have kept things going there.

Our Outing and Program coordinators have kept busy over the past two years also. Numerous outings every couple of weeks (sometimes week after week after week) have brought new members into our group and strengthened ties between old members, those of us who have been around a while. Our usual monthly programs were enhanced last spring when Conservation Chair Stephen Friesen came up with the idea of having students who are actively involved in avian research present their findings to the public. Stephen picked up the ball and ran with it, producing three great presentations from three students who all will be fantastic additions to the field of ornithology. More presentations are scheduled for this fall. If you didn't attend any programs last spring, try your best not to miss them this time around.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. I could go on and on about the accomplishments of the Sassafras Audubon Society. The bottom may have fallen out of the economy, but the cream rose to the top of SAS. I would love to be able to sit back as president and take all the credit. But the truth of the matter is that it is not the president or the board of directors that makes the organization; it is the members, each and every one of them, each and every one of you.

Thank you for a great term as president of this great organization ... and that *is* the final word. 🐦

the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7:30 a.m. We will return before midday.

### Thursday, Oct. 1, Armin Moczek Beetle Lecture and SAS Annual Meeting

See articles elsewhere in this *Leaflet* for details.

### Saturday–Sunday, Oct. 3–4, W.S. Blatchley Weekend

See separate calendar on page 4 of this *Leaflet* for details.

### Wednesday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m.: Student Presentation

Jennifer Miller from the Animal Behavior Farm at IU will present a talk titled “Brown-headed Cowbirds and Their Unique Lifestyle: It’s Not What You Think.” Brown-headed Cowbirds are parasitic; females lay their eggs in another individual’s nest who then raises the young to independence. From a developmental view, many researchers ascribed cowbirds to learn fairly little due to their parasitic nature. However, research over the past 30 years has shown that males not only need to learn their song, but also need to learn how to use their song to be reproductively successful. Because cowbirds are a gregarious species, they learn from both females and males. While females do not sing, they respond to male song using non-vocal behavior that can influence the males’ vocal repertoire. Miller presents research that examines how different kinds of female social behavior can lead to different song-learning strategies. She also presents findings using social network analyses that provide more insight into the complex female social behavior influencing male song use during the breeding season. The program will be held in Room 1-B of the Monroe County Public Library.

### Saturday, Oct. 17, 7:30 a.m.: Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

David Crouch will lead us around the wildlife refuge looking for migrating waterfowl, raptors, etc. Meet in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7:30 a.m. We will carpool to Muscatatuck and return in the afternoon. This trip will coincide with the Muscatatuck Myers Log Cabin Day celebration. There will be pioneer crafts, old time music, various demonstrations, and food available. The normally closed sanctuary area will be open to visitors.

### Sunday, Oct. 25, 8:30 a.m.: Griffy Lake and Trails Fall Migrants

David Daniels will lead us along the Griffy Lake trails looking for migrating waterfowl and forest birds, etc. Meet in the Griffy Lake parking lot at 8:30 a.m. We will return before midday.

### Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m.: Program TBA

Check the SAS website and the media for the program, which will be held in Room 1-B of the Monroe County Public Library. Light refreshments will be served.

### Saturday–Sunday, Nov 14–15: Northwest Indiana

Join Don Whitehead for a one-day trip to Willough Slough and Jasper–Pulaski FWA with a possible option to do the lakefront on Sunday. We will leave very early on Saturday morning and carpool to WS and then JP with an intermediate stop at Kankakee Sands. For info and reservations, contact Whitehead at (812) 339-1782 or [whitehea@indiana.edu](mailto:whitehea@indiana.edu). 🐦

# W.S. Blatchley 150th Birthday Celebration Events

## Thursday, Oct. 1: An Introduction to Indiana Beetles

Join us as we kick off a weekend of activities commemorating the 150th birthday of Indiana's greatest naturalist, Willis Stanley Blatchley, with an evening devoted to beetles, the most diverse group of animals on the planet. Armin Moczek, associate professor of biology at Indiana University, will show us how beetles have adapted to live in their world, introduce us to some common beetles of Indiana, and discuss his groundbreaking research into the origin and diversification of complex novel traits, such as the amazing horns of horned beetles or the light organs of fireflies. Meet at 6:30 p.m. in Room 1B of the Monroe County Public Library. (Note: a short annual meeting of SAS to elect board members and officers will precede this event.)

## Saturday, Oct. 3, 8 a.m.: Birds of Monroe and Surrounding Counties

Join Don Whitehead, IU professor emeritus of biology, for a half-day birding trip to some local birding hotspots. Meet at 8 a.m. in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington. We will return by noon.

## Saturday, Oct. 3, 10 a.m.: Botany of Cedar Bluffs Nature Preserve

Ellen Jacquart, director of stewardship, Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, will conduct this two-part program: first, during a two-hour walk, learn about the native plants growing at Cedar Bluffs Nature Preserve and discover some of the invasive, non-native plants endangering the preserve. After the walk, practice what you have learned by cutting invasive Japanese Knotweed stems. Meet at 10 a.m. in the north end of the Kroger parking lot (between Subway and Wendy's) on South Walnut Street in Bloomington. Bring work gloves and a snack or sack lunch if you want to help cut Japanese Knotweed after the walk.

## Saturday, Oct. 3, 1 p.m.: Karst Geology of Leonard Springs Nature Park

Join Kriste Lindberg, education specialist, Bloomington Parks and Recreation, for a presentation about karst geology, including a karst/groundwater flow model demonstration. After the half-hour presentation, we will visit nearby Leonard Springs Nature Park for a one-mile walk over rugged terrain to see karst geology up close. Meet in Karst Farm Park at The Commons building at 1 p.m. The Commons building is just inside the main entrance of the park, on Bloomington's west side, off of Endright Road. Due to limited parking at Leonard Springs Nature Park, a shuttle will be available to take us to and from the site. We will return to Karst Park at 3:30 p.m.

## Saturday, Oct. 3, 2 p.m.: Macroinvertebrates of McCormick's Creek State Park

Sandy Belth, assistant naturalist, Monroe County Parks and Recreation, will lead us into the waters of McCormick's Creek to look for caddisfly larvae, dragonfly, damselfly, and stonefly nymphs, and other aquatic macroinvertebrates. The entrance to McCormick's Creek State Park is 14 miles northwest of Bloomington on State Road 46. Meet at 2 p.m. in the Nature Center parking lot and dress for wading in the creek (no flip-flops). This event is free, but there is a \$5 entrance fee to the park.



White Ibis. *Photo by Jerry Downs* (Note: Juvenile White Ibis, normally a southern bird, have been seen at Goose Pond FWA this summer.)

## Saturday, Oct. 3, 6 p.m.: Social Gathering & Potluck Dinner, Karst Farm Park Commons

Sandy and Jeff Belth will host a gathering for Blatchley weekend participants. Bring a covered dish to share, meet other participants, and relive your adventures of the day. Meet in Karst Farm Park at The Commons building at 6 p.m.

## Sunday, Oct. 4, 7 a.m.: Birds of Goose Pond FWA

Join Jim and Susan Hengeveld, IU assistant professors of biology, for an all-day birding trip to Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area, in Greene County just south of Linton. Goose Pond has been designated an Indiana Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society and is rapidly becoming the premier wetland birding location in the state. Meet at 7 a.m. in the northeast corner of the Super Walmart parking lot (near the gas station) on the west side of Bloomington on West Second Street (State Road 45) to carpool. Bring a sack lunch and dress for muddy conditions. We will return to Bloomington by 5 p.m.

## Sunday, Oct. 4, 8 a.m.: Geology Field Trip

Donald E. Hattin, IU professor emeritus of geology, will lead us on an all-day tour of some geological features of southwestern Indiana. Highlights will include visits to Wesley Chapel Gulf, railroad cuts southwest of French Lick, and Jug Rock near Shoals. We will depart Bloomington at 8 a.m., stop for lunch at West Baden, and return by 5:30 p.m. This trip is limited to 15 participants, and advance reservations are required. For reservations, contact Jeff Belth at (812) 825-8353 or [jeffreybelth@aol.com](mailto:jeffreybelth@aol.com).

## Sunday, Oct. 4, 2 p.m.: Fishes of McCormick's Creek State Park

Join Brant Fisher, non-game aquatic biologist for the Wildlife Diversity Section of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, as he leads us into McCormick's Creek to see some of our native fish up close. Methods for sampling and studying fish populations will also be demonstrated. The entrance to McCormick's Creek State Park is 14 miles northwest of Bloomington on State Road 46. Meet at 2 p.m. in the Nature Center parking lot and dress for wading in the creek (no flip-flops). This event is free, but there is a \$5 entrance fee to the park.

## In My Neighborhood — The Summer Doldrums *by Bernie Sloan (bgsloan2@yahoo.com)*

It's early August as I'm writing this article ... the summer birding doldrums. There are a few encouraging signs of fall: the low was 52 degrees last night, some of the sassafras and sumac leaves have started to turn reddish orange, and the walnut tree is shedding a few yellow leaflets in the stiff breeze. As we wait for fall migration to pick up in earnest, it's a good time to reflect on the slow summer season.

While my neighborhood doesn't have the glamorous birds like Goose Pond's Roseate Spoonbill and White Ibises, I have had some highlights this season. I walk four to five miles daily through the neighborhood and at the Indiana University cross country (XC) course and surrounding woodlands. In the course of walking a couple of hours a day, I have come across some interesting birds over the summer. Here are a few of the highlights.

The best highlights of the summer involved gallinaceous birds. I saw my first-ever Ruffed Grouse in mid-June. I was quietly standing on an unused gravel road northeast of the XC course, watching an Indigo Bunting, when the grouse walked out onto the edge of the gravel road and began picking at something. After a short while, it walked back into the brush. That was quite a treat! About a week later, I ran across a flock of approximately 20 Wild Turkeys. They were moving from south to north, crossing a gravel road just to the northwest of IU's Service Building, and maybe 100 yards north of the Fountain Park Apartments. I didn't see the entire flock, as some of them had already crossed the road and entered the woods when I first encountered them. I saw 14 young turkeys and three adult hens. I'm estimating I missed maybe three to five birds at the head of the flock. I think it's pretty cool to have a successful breeding flock of Wild Turkeys less than a quarter of a mile from my front door and within the Bloomington city limits.

The next highlight involves seeing common birds at an uncommon time of year. A couple of days before my turkey sighting, I spotted a Dark-eyed Junco foraging beneath honeysuckle bushes on the IU XC course. I watched the bird for about a minute before it flew off to the north. According to Ken Brock's "Birds of Indiana" CD, this is a full week past the record late date for juncos in the southern tier of Indiana (June 10, 1984). But my summer junco was still several days shy of the all-time record late date for the state: June 21 (1971). In addition to the juncos, I've seen a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak several times this summer at the north end of the IU XC course. The Brock CD says that Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are rare summer visitors in the southern tier of Indiana.

Another highlight involves a second successful breeding year for Eastern Meadowlarks on the XC course. Prior to 2008, meadowlarks were uncommon on the XC course, as attempts at nesting were thwarted by regular mowing. IU changed its mowing policy in spring 2008, and the birds have become common fixtures on the XC course. It's rewarding to see meadowlarks become established in a place where they had been only occasional spring visitors. IU deserves our thanks for adopting more bird-friendly mowing policies on the XC course.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't close with a couple of interesting neighborhood mammal highlights. Earlier this season, I was standing quietly, deciphering birdcalls, when a bobcat walked across a clearing in front of me! I don't think the bobcat knew I was there. I watched for 10 seconds. This is only the second time I've seen a bobcat in four to five years of walking the XC course. On another occasion I surprised a large coyote on the XC course. It was only 75 feet away. We stared at each other for 30 seconds before the coyote melted into the brush. It felt like I'd made eye contact with something very wild, intelligent, and wolfish. 🐾

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## Sesquicentennial *continued from page 1*

work. He was awarded the AB degree in 1887 after completing his thesis, "The Flora of Monroe County, Indiana." In 1891, he received an AM degree from IU for his master's thesis, "A Catalogue of the Butterflies Known to Occur in Indiana," the first checklist of Indiana butterflies. It was published in the *17th Annual Report of the Indiana Department of Geology and Natural Resources* in 1892.

After graduation he taught chemistry, botany, zoology, and physiology at Wiley High School in Terre Haute. In 1894, Blatchley was elected director of the Indiana Department of Geology and Natural Resources, and he was re-elected three times, holding the position until 1910. As editor of the department's annual report, he was involved in publishing many important early works on Indiana natural history, including Amos W. Butler's *The Birds of Indiana* (1898), E.B. Williamson's *The Dragonflies of Indiana* (1900), Stanley Coulter's *A Catalogue of the Flowering Plants and of the Ferns and their Allies Indigenous to Indiana* (1900), and Walter L. Hahn's *The Mammals of Indiana* (1909). He also published several important papers of his own in these reports, including *Indiana Caves and Their Fauna* (1897) and *Orthoptera of Indiana* (1903).

While still juggling his responsibilities as state geologist and the politics within state government, Blatchley began working on the first of his authoritative manuals on insects, the books for which he is best known and which remain highly useful today. *An Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of the Coleoptera or Beetles (exclusive of the Rhynchophora) Known to Occur in Indiana* was published in 1910, just prior to his departure from the office of state geologist. After leaving office Blatchley split his time between Indiana and Florida, where he eventually built a home near Dunedin. He published *The Indiana Weed Book* (1912) and three more insect manuals, *Rhynchophora or Weevils of North Eastern America* (1916), *Orthoptera of Northeastern America* (1920), and *Heteroptera or True Bugs of Eastern North America* (1926). In addition to his insect manuals, he wrote several books about his natural history experiences, including *Gleanings from Nature* (1899), *Boulder Reveries* (1906), and *Woodland Idylls* (1912). Two years before his death, he completed his final scientific work, *The Fishes of Indiana* (1938).

W.S. Blatchley died on May 28, 1940, leaving behind an unparalleled legacy of writings devoted to Indiana natural history. We are proud to honor this legacy by commemorating the sesquicentennial of his birth. 🐾

# Davis, Drutt, Eakin Nominated as New Members of SAS Board

by Bob Dodd

The SAS board has nominated Brittany Davis, David Drutt, and John Eakin as new board members for election at the annual meeting of SAS, which will precede the Oct. 1 SAS program in room 1B of the Monroe County Public Library. Current members Laura Hammond, Tom Platt, Jeff Riegel, and Bernie Sloan will be seeking reelection to the board. The board is also nominating the following candidates as officers: President — Bernie Sloan, Vice-president — Don Allen, Secretary — Tom Platt. Any SAS member can make additional nominations at the annual meeting. Be sure to have the consent of the person if you plan to make a nomination from the floor. Current board members David Daniels, Bob Dodd, Jim Mitchell, and John Lawrence are completing their terms on the board and will not be seeking re-election. We thank them for their many years of service.

Below are brief statements about our new board nominees.

**Brittany Davis** says that she is very excited to be on the board and to serve as program coordinator (the position the board has asked her to fill if elected). “I hope this also includes refreshment host. I am looking forward to feeding the group knowledge and snacks! I have great speakers in mind for the monthly meetings but will welcome all suggestions. Currently, I am an interpretive naturalist at Brown County State Park. I have worked for the DNR for the past five years. My first year, I assisted Jeff Riegel at Monroe Reservoir. I am serving on the board for the Hoosier Herpetological Society, Return to the Wild (raptor rehabilitation center), and the Purdue HEE Education Committee. I enjoy keeping busy; when not working, I love camping, photography, caving, and researching snakes.”

**David Drutt** was born in New York City but moved to Indiana as a toddler. David was indoctrinated as a nature lover at an early age. “My dad was always into wildlife, which kind of seems unusual for him growing up in NYC. But, as long as I can remember, we would watch wildlife shows on TV and go to the Indy Zoo. We always had bird feeders in our yard too.” Dave is a chef at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Bloomington. He became seriously interested in birding a few years ago and is an avid “backyard birder.” Aside from liking birdwatching, he also likes to cook, watch sports, and volunteer with Special Olympics.

**John Eakin** grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, was educated in New England, and joined the English Department at IU in 1966, where he taught (with timeouts for stints in Paris — twice — and Athens) until his retirement in 2002. Trained as an Americanist, he discovered his true vocation in the field of autobiography and life writing. He continues to write and lecture on this subject, most recently in his book *Living Autobiographically: How We Create Identity in Narrative* (2008). Birding was always in the background — his mother was an ornithologist and licensed bird-bander, but it came into focus when Don Whitehead, his neighbor across the street, became his guide and friend. When not looking at birds, John likes to look at buildings — in another life, he might have been an architectural historian. 🐦



Answer to Name That Bird:  
**Tufted Titmouse**

## Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding Station Continues for Another Year

by Ross Brittain

The eighth year of SAS’s Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) banding station begins this October. Each year since 2002, a team of owl banders heads out to Yellowwood State Forest in Brown County to study the fall migration patterns of these secretive nocturnal predators as they arrive in southern Indiana



Northern Saw-whet Owl.  
Photo by Jeff Hammond

from breeding grounds in the boreal forests of Canada and the upper Great Lakes region. A second station in Greene County is run by Jess Gwinn in his backyard. Ross Brittain, Jeff Hammond, Jim and Susan Hengeveld, Vicky Meretsky, Gary Miller, and Jeff Riegel run the YSF station. The results of our hard work have been accepted in a manuscript that is being published in the September (2009) issue of the *Journal of Raptor Research*. Be sure to check it out.

We average around 70 saw-whet owls per station during each fall migration period. Over the years, we have consistently captured approximately 80 percent female and only about 6 percent male saw-whets (the rest indeterminate), and about 55 percent hatch-year (young-of-year) owls on average.

It is our intention to keep this station going as a long-term monitoring station of migratory saw-whet populations for this region of the continent. We are also in the process of negotiating a third station in the Indianapolis area that would allow us to compare the magnitude of saw-whet owl migration through a major urban/industrial landscape with the migration through rural forested areas of southern Indiana.

As always, we like to have the help of volunteers at the YSF station, and possibly the new Indianapolis station. If you would like to volunteer to help band Northern Saw-whet Owls, please contact the coordinator, Ross Brittain, via e-mail at [rabbitta@indiana.edu](mailto:rabbitta@indiana.edu). Banding runs each night from mid-October until around the first of December, as long as the weather is not raining or too windy. We open the station shortly after sunset and keep it open for at least three hours, longer if the bander wants to stay. 🐦

## Seasonal Workers Help with Progress at Goose Pond

by Brad Feaster

As you all are well aware, it has been a remarkable summer for birding at Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area, but there have been other things happening too. For instance, GPFWA was able to bolster its workforce by adding 12 seasonal employees through the Young Hoosier Conservation Corps program. This program is funded by the federal stimulus package. The YHCC crew has been performing a variety of tasks such as fixing up parking lots and levee maintenance, but, mostly, we have kept them busy with controlling woody invasives.

Other developments that aren't readily noticeable include the gutting and pumping out of the livestock barn and the sale of the surplus grain bins to a local farmer who will tear them down and rebuild elsewhere. REMC has started removing the power lines from Black Creek Levee. While removing the power lines, REMC has left one pole and installed an Osprey nesting platform. They will leave one other pole and install another platform at the opposite end of the line. AT&T will start work on relocating the fiber optic cable shortly.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the projects and help we are receiving from SAS and from Friends of Goose Pond. Both organizations have had a busy summer on the property. SAS has done a butterfly count and a Henslow's Sparrow survey, plus the two upcoming workdays in August and September. FoGP has been involved in a wildflower ID, a wildflower walk, and the Coming Home to Roost birding event as well as working on some upcoming projects, including helping to organize the first Annual Greene County Marsh Madness Bird Festival scheduled for March 5 and 6, 2010. The support and assistance from the two organizations is greatly appreciated.

## Goose Pond Survey Yields 192 Henslow's Sparrows

by Lee Sterrenburg

On Saturday morning, June 13, Sassafras Audubon Society did a Rapid Assessment of the Indiana state-endangered Henslow's Sparrow in the grasslands of Goose Pond FWA in Greene County. We tallied 189 Henslow's Sparrows while walking grassland transects, and we then picked up three more while birding in Main Pool West in the afternoon, for a day total of 192 Henslow's Sparrows. The results suggest that GPFWA may have the third-highest concentration of Henslow's Sparrows recently counted in the state, after Big Oaks NWR and TNC Kankakee Sands in Newton County. If we had more people in the field, I assume we could have topped the Kankakee Sands total from 2008.

There were some other notable finds in addition to the Henslow's Sparrow results. Jerry Downs and his party found the first-ever downy young Wilson's Snipe for the GPFWA property. They also found a group of Swamp Sparrows, the first ever in summer on the GPFWA property and well south of the normal breeding range for Indiana.

*Brock's Birds of Indiana* (2006) assigns Swamp Sparrow in the southern tier in summer a ranking of Code 9 Occasional, meaning three to five records in the last 20 years. On the first Breeding Bird Atlas of 1985–2000, there were no detections of Swamp Sparrow at all in Indiana south of northern Warren County. On

## Goose Pond Butterfly Count Yields 35 Species

by Jess Gwinn

The second annual Goose Pond Butterfly Count was held on Saturday, July 11. Considering how dreadful the weather was, we did OK. We ended up with 35 species on the day from four field parties. Most of the parties were only able to manage a few hours of counting due to the weather or time constraints.



Monarch butterfly.  
Photo by Jerry Downs

The Goose Pond team was completely rained out. Our team at Greene Sullivan SF started a little late in the morning but actually didn't start officially counting until 2:30 p.m. We had already headed home and stopped at a farm stand in Switz City when the sun peeked out a bit and we decided to head back to our area. Even with a lack of sun, the leps started moving some and we were able to tally more than 20 species in three hours. Red-spotted Purples were everywhere in the forest. We also found some large populations of Silver-spotted Skippers. Good species on the day included Southern Dogface, Little Yellow, Bronze Copper, Gray Hairstreak, Variegated Fritillary, American Lady, and Common Buckeye. Skippers were hard to come by except for Least and Silver-spotted — just not enough sun.

Next year's count is tentatively scheduled for July 10. We hope the weather will be more cooperative. Thank you to all of the hardy participants for roughing it on a bleak day. 🐦

the current Breeding Bird Atlas of 2005–2010, there appear to be three detections in the southern tier, as per data reviewed through December 2008. Both the Wilson's Snipe and the Swamp Sparrows were very significant finds.

Participants on the survey were Andrew Brown, Jim Brown, Dave Crouch, Sally Crouch, Bob Dodd, Jerry Downs, Don Gorney, Allan Faircloth, Brad Feaster, Jim Hengeveld, Susan Hengeveld, Jim Mitchell, Adam O'Sullivan, and Lee Sterrenburg. 🐦

## Fall Feeder Cleaning Set for Oct. 24

by David Daniels

The cool days of fall are just around the corner, and the SAS annual Fall Feeder Cleaning is the perfect opportunity to rid your bird feeders of the dirt, grime, and gunk that accumulated over the summer. Get your feeders fresh and clean for the coming winter months, when the birds most need the seed that you put out for them.

The Fall Feeder Cleaning will take place on Saturday, Oct. 24, at Bloomington Hardware, located on South College Mall Road. Drop off your feeders between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., and pick them up between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Sorry, but we can't accept hummingbird feeders or suet feeders. The cost is \$4 for small feeders and \$6 for large feeders. Proceeds will go toward SAS conservation and educational programs. Volunteers are needed. If you would like to help clean feeders, contact David Daniels at (812) 333-2121. 🐦

# Contributions Close Gap in Funding — Fairview Swift Tower a ‘Go’

by Dawn Hewitt


Thank you, bird lovers, and thanks to you, SAS has \$9,505 in an account earmarked for construction of a tower to house Chimney Swifts when the existing chimney at Fairview Elementary School is torn down. Some folks gave as much as \$500. Some folks gave generously, and then gave generously again. Each donation was a commitment to wildlife protection right here in our community.

Add to SAS’s total \$400 in contributions for the project sent to the Foundation of Monroe County Schools, plus the \$500 grant to FMCS from the Bloomington Board of Realtors, plus a \$1,000 grant from the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Zone, and we’ve got \$11,405 ready to invest in protecting urban bird habitat. The Raymond Family Foundation has pledged to close whatever gap in funding remains, and we’re hoping to use some funds from that benefactor to pay for a tower cam and the technology to bring photos of what is going on inside the tower into classrooms at Fairview and anywhere else that sees the vast educational potential of this project.

Toward that end, several SAS members met with Fairview Assistant Principal Trudy Litz to discuss the tower and what it means for the school and to offer help developing curricula, providing instruction, and being available to help teachers and kids learn from this unique facility on their school grounds.

The original estimate for the tower was \$11,500, but a few changes to the design were required, and as of Aug. 10, Bloomington City Councilman Chris Sturbaum said, “We are still awaiting an estimate from the school’s contractor.” While we originally hoped to have the new tower built before classes resumed at the old Fairview School, that didn’t happen. But there’s really no rush, as long as the new tower is built before the old one is demolished. Sturbaum said he’d like to see the new tower completed by the end of the year. Then the old chimney would be capped until it is torn down next summer. Swifts returning in the spring might find their old, familiar roost inaccessible, but would see a smaller but similar version — designed especially to be accommodating to chimney swifts — a stone’s throw away.

Soon it will be time for Chimney Swifts to mass in our area, fattening up on mosquitoes as they prepare for their long flight to South America. After many decades of hosting countless thousands of Chimney Swifts, this will be the last time Fairview School’s old smokestack will provide shelter for the birds. But in the spring, all systems are “go” for a brand-new tower to be awaiting their return.

Again, thanks to all who donated for making this project fly! 

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