

## Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding Enters its Tenth Year!

by Ross Brittain

The tenth 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 (YSF) in Brown County to study the fall migration patterns of these secretive nocturnal predators as they arrive in southern Indiana from breeding grounds in the boreal forests of Canada and the upper Great Lakes region. The YSF station is run by Ross Brittain, Vicky Meretsky, Jeff Riegel, Jim & Susan Hengeveld, Gary Miller and Phil Kelly. A second station in Newark, Greene County, is run by Jess Gwinn and Maureen Forrest in their backyard. The results of our previous years' hard work have been published by the *Journal of Raptor Research* in the September 2009 issue.

We average around 70 saw-whet owls per station during each fall migration period. Over the years we have consistently captured about 80% female and only about 6% male saw-whets, and about 55% hatch year (young of year) owls on average. The last two years, 2009 and 2010, were very slow compared to the average with only 9 and 23 owls captured at YSF, respectively,

as well as 26 and 42 owls at Newark, respectively. This year should be a minor irruption of saw-whet owls according to their usual four-year cycle. Time will tell us how many owls make it to southern Indiana this year.



Photo by Jeff Hammond ©

As always, we like to have the help of volunteers at the YSF station, but Jess and Maureen limit visitors to their home in Newark. If you would like to volunteer to

help band Northern Saw-whet Owls, please contact the coordinator, Ross Brittain, via email at [rabritta@indiana.edu](mailto:rabritta@indiana.edu). Banding runs as many nights as possible 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.

(Editor's note: If you cannot help with the banding at the site you can always help by adopting an owl. See the form in this issue of the *Leaflet*.) 🦉

### Sassafras Audubon Annual Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 28, 7 p.m.  
in the Monroe County Public Library Auditorium

IU biology professors Jim and Susan Hengeveld will give a presentation on the birds and butterflies of Ecuador. 🦉

### CAN YOU NAME THAT BIRD

This summer resident of our area gets its name from its distinctive call. You won't find him at your feeder. But you may see him in a brushy area in your neighborhood. You don't have a bushy area? Why not let a patch in your back yard return to natural vegetation and you might attract this and other birds that stay away from mowed lawns. Answer is on page 3.



Photo by Robert Barber ©

## Editor's Note: *Leaflet* Editor Needed

We are seeking a new editor (or co-editors) for the SAS *Leaflet*.

The editor is responsible for seeking out, collecting, and reviewing articles and pictures for publication in the *Leaflet*. Then when they have an interesting and timely mix of articles, they create a master file of the text and pass this along with the pictures to the layout person with comments on placement of articles.

If you are interested, please contact a board member. For more details about editing contact Jim Mitchell at [jl Mitchell@bluemarble.net](mailto:jl Mitchell@bluemarble.net) or (812) 824-8198. 🍂



## Sassafras Audubon Society

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The committees welcome help from volunteers.

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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:SAS@sassafrasaudubon.org).

### SAS Web Site

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

#### Webmaster

Susan Hengeveld ([shengeve@indiana.edu](mailto:shengeve@indiana.edu))

### Leaflet Staff

Editor.....

Designer .....Jim Mitchell

Mailing .....Julia Ferguson

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

We invite readers to submit material for consideration for publication. Contact the editors at [eakin@indiana.edu](mailto:eakin@indiana.edu) and [jl Mitchell33@comcast.net](mailto:jl Mitchell33@comcast.net).

The SAS Leaflet is printed by Fine Print on tree-free paper. The *Leaflet* is published six times a year by the Sassafras Audubon Society on approximately the first of January, March, May, July, September and November.

## JOIN SAS

*Support Sassafras Audubon Society local educational programs, outings, and conservation projects by being a Chapter Member. Members receive membership in SAS and a 10 percent discount on selected items at Bloomington Hardware. Support national conservation efforts through the National Audubon Society and receive Audubon magazine along with automatic membership in SAS. But, because NAS dues primarily support national priorities, we encourage you to also become a Chapter Member. As a Chapter Member, 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: \_\_\_\_\_

- |                          |  |                         |          |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chapter Membership in SAS                        | \$25/year x ___ year(s) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Student Membership in SAS                        | \$15/year x ___ year(s) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | National Audubon Society Membership              | \$20 for first year     | \$ _____ |
|                          | Special introductory offer (regularly \$35/year) |                         |          |
|                          | (Renewals go through National Audubon Society)   |                         |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 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).





# SAS Calendar

## September/October 2011

All SAS-sponsored outings and programs are free and open to nonmembers. For announcements about other upcoming events watch our Web site (<http://www.sassafrasaudubon.org>) and the Bloomington Birds e-mail list.

### Saturday, Sept. 10: Early Migrants

Meet at the northeast corner of the Kmart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7:30 a.m. We will carpool to local areas in search of early migrants. For more information, contact Don Allen at [donandchar2@gmail.com](mailto:donandchar2@gmail.com).

### Sunday, Sept. 25: Monroe Reservoir Refuge Hike

Meet at the northeast corner of the Kmart Parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7 a.m. We will carpool to the North Fork Waterfowl Refuge (which is closed from Oct. 1 to Apr. 15) for a 3 to 5 mile hike in search of migrating birds, returning in early afternoon. Long pants are recommended. For more information, contact Don Allen at [donandchar2@gmail.com](mailto:donandchar2@gmail.com).

### Saturday, Oct. 1: Migrating Birds

Meet at the northeast corner of the Kmart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7:15 a.m. We will carpool to local areas in search of migrating birds, returning in early afternoon. For more information, contact Susan Hengeveld at [shengev@indiana.edu](mailto:shengev@indiana.edu).

### Saturday, Oct. 8: Muscatatuck NWR

Meet at the northeast corner of the Kmart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 6:45 a.m. We will carpool to Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge (East of Seymour), returning in early afternoon. For more information, contact Dave Crouch at [david@PROGRADE.NET](mailto:david@PROGRADE.NET).

### Saturday, Oct. 15: Goose Pond

Meet at the northeast corner of the Super Walmart parking lot on Bloomfield Road (near the gas station). We will leave at 7 a.m. and carpool to Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area, returning in early afternoon. For information contact Don Allen at [donandchar2@gmail.com](mailto:donandchar2@gmail.com).

### Saturday, Oct. 22: Fall Feeder Cleaning

SAS will hold the Fall Feeder Cleaning at the back of Bloomington Hardware on Saturday, Oct. 22. Volunteers should contact Jim Mitchell at [jlmitchell@bluemarble.net](mailto:jlmitchell@bluemarble.net).

### Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 5-6: 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 to JP with an intermediate stop at Kankakee Sands. For information and reservations, contact Don Whitehead at [whitehea@indiana.edu](mailto:whitehea@indiana.edu) or (812) 339-1782.

### Saturday, Nov. 12: Hawthorn Mine Area

Meet at the northeast corner of the Super Walmart parking lot on Bloomfield Road (near the gas station). We will leave at 7 a.m. and carpool to the Hawthorn Mine Area (west of Linton). The actual area to visit will be determined by access since this is now an active mine. We will return in early afternoon. For more information, contact Don Allen at [donandchar2@gmail.com](mailto:donandchar2@gmail.com).



## DON'T FORGET

### SAS Annual Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 28, 7 p.m. in the Monroe County Public Library Auditorium

## Birding Guide Still Available



The *Birding Guide to South-Central Indiana* provides detailed information on where to find birds in our part of Indiana, including helpful hints such as GPS coordinates and what species one might expect to see during different seasons.

Proceeds from sale of the guide go to projects at Goose Pond FWA, SAS's adopted Important Bird Area. Booklets cost \$10, \$8 for members. To purchase copies, contact SAS at: Sassafras Audubon Society, P.O. Box 85, Bloomington, IN 47402.

## Feeder Cleaning on October 22

The Sassafras Audubon Society's Fall Feeder Cleaning on Saturday, October 22, is the perfect opportunity to rid your bird feeders of the dirt, grime and gunk that accumulated over the summer. Drop off your feeders at Bloomington Hardware on South College Mall Road 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 take hummingbird feeders or suet feeders. Proceeds go toward SAS conservation and educational programs. Volunteers are needed for a few hours. If you would like to help, please contact Jim Mitchell at (812) 824-8198 or [jlmitchell@bluemarble.net](mailto:jlmitchell@bluemarble.net) or Nancy Martin at [nmartin@mccsc.edu](mailto:nmartin@mccsc.edu) to get on the schedule.

Thanks to the generous support of the people who brought in their feeders for cleaning during the spring feeder cleaning, SAS earned \$862. The spring feeder cleaning would not be possible without the time and effort put in by the volunteers who gave up part of a beautiful spring Saturday. Thank you. Thanks also to Vicki Davison and her staff at Bloomington Hardware for hosting the event.



Answer to Name That Bird:  
Gray Catbird



Northern Saw-whet Owl by Jeff Hammond ©

## Sassafras Audubon Society's Saw-whet Owl Adoption Program

Supporting research on the migration patterns of the Northern Saw-whet Owl in southern Indiana.

- Yes, I would like to support Northern Saw-whet Owl research!

Send a check with \$30 for each adopted owl, payable to: Sassafras Audubon Society, P.O. Box 85, Bloomington, IN 47402

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

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

You will receive a detailed letter and certificate about your adopted owl. Contact Ross Brittain at (812) 340-9994 or [rabbritta@indiana.edu](mailto:rabbritta@indiana.edu) for details.

DISCOUNT COUPON

Show this coupon with your address label to receive a 10% discount on items in the bird department at [Bloomington Hardware](#). Please keep the coupon for future purchases. Coupon expires October 31, 2011.



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