

## Fairview Tower Not a Done Deal

by Dawn Hewitt

I'm sorry, SAS friends. A few months ago here in the *Leaflet*, I delivered the good news that funds for the construction of a Chimney Swift tower to replace Fairview School's chimney had been secured. I was wrong.

SAS members and other individuals chipped in a full one-third of the projected cost of \$11,000. Thanks to all of you who contributed. And Bloomington Mayor Mark Krusan chipped in another third from year-end use-it-or-lose-it money. But the other third, which was promised, was not fully delivered, and so the project is short by about \$2,500. SAS board member Bob Dodd, myself, and several other interested folks are looking into modest grants to fill the gap, but the need remains.

According to the mastermind of this project, City Councilman Chris Sturbaum, the new tower needs to be built this summer. Then next winter, the old chimney will be capped, and then torn down. A year from now, we hope, the swifts that try to use the old chimney will find it blocked, but they'll have an alternative lodging near by, designed especially for them.

I'm sorry to have to ask you again for money, especially since some of you have already given generously to this project. But for those who didn't quite get around to it six months ago, here's your chance! Please write a check in any amount — every dollar helps — made out to Sassafras Audubon Society. Be sure to write Fairview

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## Southern Birds Invade Goose Pond

The weekend of June 13–14 was a busy and exciting time at Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area. Many birders from around the state arrived to see the first-ever-in-Indiana Roseate Spoonbill that Brad Feaster and others had reported in Main Pool West a few days before. As a bonus, they saw the unusual-for-Indiana Fulvous Whistling Duck, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, and possible Mottled Ducks (the jury is still out on the identification of these birds). A Plegadis Ibis also made a brief appearance. All of these birds are mainly found far south of Indiana.

Amy and Noah Kearns made the very exciting identification of three Least Terns, an endangered species and the first ever at Goose Pond FWA. They made their appearance in Beehunter Marsh — not on the recently constructed tern island in



Roseate Spoonbill ("Pinky") seen by many local birders at Goose Pond in mid-June. This is the first Indiana record for this species.

*Photo by Jim Sullivan © 2009*

Goose Pond Main Pool West. Several SAS members were at Goose Pond on June 13 to do a Rapid Assessment Program for Henslow's Sparrows. They found almost 200 individuals of this Indiana-endangered species. But more on this later.

## Two Work Days Planned for Goose Pond FWA

by Jess Gwinn

This summer SAS will be sponsoring two work days at Goose Pond FWA, our adopted Important Bird Area. The first work day will be Aug. 29, when we will be spraying herbicides on the invasive plant phragmites. The second work day will be Sept. 19, when we will either work on the

phragmites again or concentrate on killing some of the woody vegetation that has been creeping into the wetlands.

Work on both days will begin at 8 a.m. and last until about noon. Plan to be at the

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### CAN YOU NAME THAT BIRD



We are going to give you a difficult test this time. This bird has a very similar looking cousin that we asked you to identify a few months ago. Check his size relative to the standard suet cage. You might also take a close look at the bill. Find the answer on page 4.

*Photo by Jeff Hammond*



# Editor's Note: Time to Move On, Help Swifts, IU Sustainability

by Bob Dodd

This fall I will complete my fifth year as *Leaflet* editor and my second term as SAS board member. It is time to move on to other challenges and turn the *Leaflet* editorship over to someone new. I have very much enjoyed the opportunity to serve SAS as editor and perhaps will continue to contribute occasional articles. I also plan to plunge into two boxes of historical materials related to SAS that Cathy Meyer passed along to me some time ago. I would like to write a short history of SAS and organize the old records in a more usable form. This is closely related to one of my "non-bird" passions: local history. I will also be sure to attend as many of the SAS outings as possible and continue to develop my still very amateur birding skills.

Who will be the new *Leaflet* editor? That remains to be seen. We are very much open to volunteers. I became editor by responding

to an invitation in the *Leaflet* in 2004 asking for applicants for the job. It sounded like an interesting challenge and a way I could help support SAS. I took over the job with some misgivings, not knowing any of the SAS leaders or exactly what was expected of me. I soon made several great friends among the board members and gained confidence with each issue. It was in many ways a life-changing experience and all in the most positive way. Now it might be your chance.

I also add my plea to that of Dawn Hewitt for contributions to the Fairview Chimney Swift tower fund. We are embarrassed to be returning to you again so soon, but some of the expected funding has not materialized. It will be a great tribute to SAS and the community to take this positive step in preserving habitat for this wonderful bird.

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## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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).



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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 Website

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

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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

## July/August 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, July 11, Goose Pond FWA Butterfly Count

See article at right on this page.

### Saturday, July 25, 7 a.m.: Summer Residents

Mike Clarke will lead us to some local hot spots looking for summer residents. Meet in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7 a.m. We will return before midday.

### Sunday, Aug. 9, 7 a.m.: Local Hot Spots

Dave Daniels will lead us to some local hot spots looking for summer residents and early migrants. Meet in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7 a.m. We will return before midday.

### Saturday, Aug. 15, 7 a.m.: Early Migrants

Join us as we head to some local hot spots looking for early migrating shorebirds and late summer residents. Meet in the northeast corner of the K-Mart parking lot (near Bloomingfoods) on East Third Street in Bloomington at 7 a.m. We will carpool to the lake areas and return before midday.

### Saturday, Aug. 29, 8 a.m.: Goose Pond FWA Work Day — Volunteers Needed

See article on page 1 of this issue of the *Leaflet*.

### 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. 🐦

 **NOTE — No Wednesday evening programs are scheduled for July or August.**

## Goose Pond Butterfly Count Scheduled for July 11



by Jess Gwinn

On July 11, SAS will sponsor the annual Goose Pond butterfly count. Last year's inaugural count turned up 40 species and almost 3,000 individual butterflies, a good tally considering the major flooding just a month prior to the count. Besides Goose Pond and Beehunter Marsh, the count circle contains Greene Sullivan State Forest, the Dugger Unit of GSSF, much of Hillenbrand FWA, the Linton Conservation Club, and part of Minnehaha FWA. This means there is plenty of good habitat for folks to get out and explore while looking for our little lepidopterid friends. With the ongoing restoration of Goose Pond, this count will provide useful data on how the improving habitat affects butterfly diversity and populations. If you are interested in participating, contact Jess Gwinn at [jagmo@bluemarble.net](mailto:jagmo@bluemarble.net). 🐦



Great Spangled Fritillary. Photo by Jeffrey Belth © 2001

## Spring Feeder Cleaning Nets \$721

by David Daniels

The annual spring feeder cleaning was a success. Thanks to the generous support of the people who brought in their feeders for cleaning, SAS earned \$721. The proceeds will be used for SAS conservation programs and educational activities. 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. We had help from Bob Dodd, Nancy Martin (who also contributed her power washer and tent), Jim Mitchell, Tom Platt, Jeff Riegel, Marta Somers, and myself. Thanks also to Vickie Davison and her staff at Bloomington Hardware for hosting the event. 🐦

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

A few SAS members attended our monthly Wednesday evening program in May and heard a very informative presentation by Bill Brown, the new director of sustainability for IU. Bill is a dynamic, articulate person with great ideas about promoting conservation on the IU campus — and beyond. Most of his job involves communicating — putting the right people together to get things done. He mentioned a number of programs that are either in place or planned that will help

with energy saving. Perhaps you noticed articles in the newspaper this spring about competition between housing units and fraternities and sororities to see who could save the most energy. An intern working through his office organized that program. He has plans to expand that program to include academic departments. Also in the works is a loan program to encourage departments to purchase more energy-efficient but also more costly equipment. We were encouraged to learn the reduced mowing on some IU property such as the cross-country course is likely to continue. 🐦

# 2009 Greene County Big May Day Count Records 174 Species

by Lee Sterrenburg

The 2009 Greene County Big May Day Count took place in windy conditions on Saturday, May 9. Sassafras Audubon Society sponsored the count and Jess Gwinn organized it. We had eight parties in the field and two feeder watchers. We tallied 174 species on the day.

Warm temperatures and humid, foggy air greeted us during the early morning hours. One group heard singing Common Yellowthroats, Grasshopper Sparrows, and numerous Henslow's Sparrows while doing a damp grasslands hike starting at 2:20 a.m. Before sunrise a strong windy cool front blew in from the west, markedly curtailing bird song activity. Brisk winds persisted throughout much of the day.

Greene County has numerous and diverse public properties. Areas covered included Goose Pond FWA, Hillenbrand FWA, Greene-Sullivan SF, Shakamak SP, the Combs Unit of Martin SF, various agricultural lands, and private properties near Solsberry and Owensburg. This landscape features extensive shallow-water wetlands, fire-managed grasslands, reverting fields, agricultural fields, riparian corridors, and hardwood forests of various ages.

Wading birds and marsh birds scored very well. We recorded an impressive 10 American Bitterns, two Least Bitterns, 108 Great Blue Herons, 41 Great Egrets, three Snowy Egrets, 30 Cattle Egrets, 15 Green Herons, nine Black-Crowned Night-Herons, three King Rails, three Virginia Rails, nine Soras, and one Common Moorhen. The 12 species of diurnal raptors included one Osprey, six Bald Eagles, six Northern Harriers, both Accipiters, one Broad-winged Hawk, 15 Red-shouldered Hawks, and two Merlins. One Peregrine Falcon patrolled the shorebird flats at Goose Pond FWA. The Northern Bobwhite total of 62 was encouraging.

Waterfowl diversity was relatively slim, though we managed to eek out two Green-winged Teal, four Greater Scaup, and two Hooded

Mergansers. Gulls and terns put on a minimum showing with one Caspian Tern and eight Forster's Terns. Greene-Sullivan SF came through again with three Chuck-will's Widows. Countywide we heard 17 Whip-poor-wills.

Shorebird diversity was decent given the very high water at Goose Pond FWA. We tallied 15 species of shorebirds. The handsomest was probably 1 dapper Black-bellied Plover in full alternate plumage. The 151 Lesser Yellowlegs and 40 Dunlins were nice, and so were 15 American Woodcocks for this juncture in May. One Semipalmated Sandpiper and one Short-billed Dowitcher saved the day on those two species.

We managed to find all seven vireo species, including 18 Bell's, two Philadelphia, and 61 White-eyed. We tallied all the seasonal thrushes, highlighted by a knockout count of 133 Swainson's Thrushes, 77 of those by the Hengeveld and Kissel party. Warblers clocked in with 31 species that did not include any rare ones. Some numbers of note were 29 Blackpoll Warblers, 40 Kentucky Warblers, and a hefty 66 Yellow-breasted Chats. The 11 species of sparrows included 142 Field Sparrows and a gratifying 95 state-endangered Henslow's Sparrows. Twenty-one Blue Grosbeaks brightened up the day. The lingering Purple Finch and 37 Pine Siskins were species one cannot always count on finding by the second weekend in May. We located only two Sedge Wrens and no Marsh Wrens. The biggest glaring miss was Bobolink.

One could imagine getting 180 species on this Big May Day Count. For that to happen, we'd probably need to hold onto what we have and also hit a very good duck, shorebird, and/or gull and tern day at Goose Pond FWA.

A huge thanks to all who participated and scouted ahead of time: Don Allen, Jeff Belth, Sandy Belth, Jim Brown, Fred Churchill, Mike Clarke, Bob Dodd, Jerry Downs, Steve Dunbar, Scott Evans, Marilyn Flanders, Maureen Forrest, Jess Gwinn, Donald Hall, Jim Hengeveld, Susan Hengeveld, Bill Holladay, Joan ten Hoor, Marsue Jackson, Bob Kissel, Lee Sterrenburg, Betsy Whitehead, and Don Whitehead. 🐦

## Save the date!

### Oct. 2-4, 2009

A special weekend of outings and activities to commemorate the 150th birthday of Indiana's greatest naturalist

**Willis Stanley Blatchley**  
1859-1940

Full details in the next issue of the *Leaflet*



## Work Day *continued from page 1*

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 day. For the woody eradication day, some volunteers will be needed to cut the stem while others will spray the stump to retard re-sprouting.

Keeping ahead of these invasive plants early on in the restoration will go a long way toward maintaining a high-quality wetland in the long run. If you have questions, contact Jess Gwinn at [jagmo@bluemarble.net](mailto:jagmo@bluemarble.net). 🐦



Answer to Name That Bird:  
**Hairy Woodpecker**

## All Things Reconsidered: A Book Review

by Bob Dodd

During the last 12 years of his life, Roger Tory Peterson contributed a column to *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Editor Bill Thompson III has selected 42 of those articles to reprint in a book titled *All Things Reconsidered*, the title of Peterson's bi-monthly column. Many are autobiographical, recounting current and past experiences. Some of those adventures will be familiar if you read the recently published Peterson biography, *Birdwatcher*, by Elizabeth Rosenthal. Some are recollections of past birding friends, many of them giants in the field of ornithology and nature study. Other articles concern a variety of topics of interest to those who love birds. All are well written and entertaining.

As Thompson observes in his introduction, Peterson was not only a great bird artist and leader of the conservation movement, but he also was an outstanding writer. He conveys the excitement and suspense of a struggle to row a boat against the wind from an offshore island to the coast of Patagonia and, late in his life, the capsizing of his boat in cold, New England waters. Peterson recounts in exciting detail his most memorable birding experience, being one of the last people (in 1942) to see not one but two Ivory-Billed Woodpeckers in the forests of Louisiana.

Do you think you have difficulty in identifying warblers? You are not alone. Peterson himself does not admit to having problems, but he points out that John James Audubon did. Audubon's *Birds of America* contains illustrations of at least 10 new warbler species that were actually female or immature individuals of established species. To Audubon's credit, he corrected many of these errors in his later octavo edition. One species, the Carbonated Warbler, remains a mystery. It does not appear to be assignable to any other species but has not been described since. Perhaps it was a species then near extinction that is no longer with us.

Especially later in life Peterson devoted considerable time to painting artistic views of birds in their natural setting. He clearly wanted to be remembered as something more than just an illustrator for field guides. Only time will tell how seriously his artistic efforts are taken, but to untrained eyes such as mine, artist should be added to his long list of outstanding accomplishments.

If you like reading about birds and adventures in the chase, you will enjoy this collection. I was sorry to come to the last chapter in the book, an article that appeared in the September/October 1992 issue, just after Peterson's death in July 1992.

I still wanted to read more of his intriguing stories and insightful thoughts and wished his long productive life could have been extended even more. ↴



## Birding for Bill ...



On May 31 five birders (from left, Stephen Friesen, Ann Maxwell, Jim Mitchell, Jeff Riegel, and Jim Eagleman) participated in an informal outing they called "Birding for Bill". The outing was to let Bill Zimmerman, who has been in poor health, know that we are thinking of him. The group identified 35 species near the Nature Center in Brown County State Park.

## Birdathon Tallies 159 Species

by Cathy Meyer

The 19th Annual Monroe County Birdathon took place May 2 under calm and sunny skies. The four teams, composed of 19 birders, located a total of 159 species. The Wandering Tabulators (Don Allen, David Crouch, Bob Dodd, John Eakin, Jim Mitchell, and Don Whitehead) found 140 species this year, followed closely by the Prothonotary Wanderers (Jerry Downs, Jim Hengeveld, Susan Hengeveld, and Jeff Riegel) with 138. Other teams included Fish and Wildlife Partners (Amy Kearns, Noah Kearns, Jeff Kiefer, and Gary Langell) and the Mudhens (Jim Brown, Jess Gwinn, Jo Hargesheimer, Marsue McCalla, and Cathy Meyer).

There were 106 species recorded by all teams and 12 species found by only one team. Some of the highlights included: Red-breasted Merganser, American Bittern, Least Bittern, Great Egret, Virginia Rail, Sora, Chuck-will's-widow, Common Nighthawk, Least Flycatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Veery, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Golden-winged Warbler (along with 31 other warbler species), Vesper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel, and Pine Siskin.

The Wandering Tabulators' name will be placed on the Don Whitehead Excellence in Birding plaque, and Wild Birds Unlimited will be supplying a cash prize in the form of a donation to the team's selected charity. Thanks to WBU for their generosity and also to the Dodds for hosting this year's tally dinner.

If you have not participated in the birdathon before, consider forming a team of three to six people for next year's event, which will take place May 1. Put your birding skills to the test and have a lot of fun. ↴

# In My Backyard

by Bob Dodd

Did you have any Baltimore Orioles come to your feeders this spring? Few birds are more spectacular for close-up viewing than Baltimore Orioles — well, Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks are a close second. Last year in late April, we saw an oriole checking our hummingbird feeder. We made a fast trip to Wild Birds Unlimited and bought an oriole feeder. It has a triple threat approach with places for an orange half, sugar water, and jelly (they advise grape). Sure enough, the orioles came in almost as soon as we put up the feeder. They paid regular visits for a week or two and that was the last we saw of them. This year we put the feeder out again in late April and the oriole visitors soon arrived. We had as many as three around for about two weeks and that was it. Don Whitehead reports that Gray Catbirds come to his oriole feeder to sample the grape jelly and continue to come after the orioles lose interest. We plan to put up our feeder later this summer (without the orange and jelly) when the waves of hummingbirds arrive to give them an added source of nourishment.



Cerulean Warbler. Photo by Ed Furia

Ed Furia recently told me about an interesting avian visitor to his house. A Cerulean Warbler apparently hit a window and fell stunned to the ground. Ed reports, “He was in pretty good shape. He hopped around for a bit, then started flying short distances. He went from the ground to a fallen branch. Then he flew into one of our mock orange bushes. When he flew up into the maple, we knew he would be fine.” While the warbler was regaining his composure, Ed managed to take a photograph. Not many people have a Cerulean Warbler on their yard list, let alone get an up close and personal portrait.



House Finch nest disaster.  
Photo by John and Ingrid Russell

John and Ingrid Russell had a bird story with a less happy ending. They recently discovered that House Finches had decided to make a nest behind a metal sculpture piece near their front door. “We were delighted and tried not to disturb them as they built the nest and settled in for the hatching process. This morning, about 7:15, Ingrid and I were in the kitchen. I asked her if she had seen any activity in the nest. She said she had, last evening. I opened the door to pick up the Sunday newspaper and was confronted by chaos over the doormat and entry deck: something had attacked the nest, strewing parts of it and broken egg shells over the deck below its original location.” The Russells would like to know who the culprit was. I suggested House Wrens, although pretty, perky little birds, are known to be destructive of other nests. House Sparrows certainly destroy other nests when they decide it is a suitable building site for them. Blue Jays are also suspects, although the location would seem to make a jay attack difficult. Unfortunately, nature does not always operate in the way we would like. 🐦

## Inaugural Brown County State Park Bioblitz Includes 83 Bird Species

by Jim Eagleman

Friday through Sunday, June 5, 6, and 7, 2009, was a busy time at nearby Brown County State Park, in Nashville, Ind., as many people, including members of Sassafras Audubon Society, showed up to help with the park’s inaugural “bioblitz.” Bioblitz? What’s that? A bioblitz is a timed (and sometimes competitive) event to account for and tally all living things in a natural area. At a 16,000-acre state park — the state’s largest — it can be a monumental task! SAS bioblitz members, with Jeff Riegel as team leader, amassed a total of 83 bird species. The Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Kingbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Prothonotary Warbler were species expected but not recorded in their three-day count.

Volunteers, academics, Friends of Brown County State Park, citizen scientists, and the public made it happen. “It was an amazing event,” says Jim Eagleman, the property’s interpretive naturalist.

“It took a lot of people to do this; we’re still listing the people who stepped up to help.” Eagleman is quick to point out it was Friends of the park, his staff and volunteers, park employees, and others who volunteered equipment, laptops, food, and their time for this “first time ever” project. “Let me particularly recognize staff member and interpretive naturalist Brittany Davis, who did the lion’s share of the work with website design during the winter, a massive correspondence with participants and overall organization of the event; she is a wonderful asset to Brown County State Park!” Eagleman said.

Nine taxa teams began their inventory work on Friday; many stayed through Sunday afternoon. Team leaders had earlier applied for and were granted a DNR state park and reservoir “Rapid Assessment” permit that allowed for collecting and photographing the species

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# Conservation Corner: Urban Experimentation — A Role for SAS?

by Stephen Friesen, Conservation Chair

The urban environment is an important unit of conservation awareness and intervention, and during the present stage of human-environment interaction, this premise is not easily overstated. Ecological entities and processes do not occur only “out there,” in “the wild,” but also “in here” in our cities and suburbs. Many of these entities and processes have been destroyed or transformed by the encroachment of the modern cityscape. Urban conservation affords the possibility that some of these ecological components can be remade. In other cases, the city is properly understood as a natural habitation in its own right — suggesting that the cityscape can also represent a place of ecological creativity.

But enough abstraction: let’s talk particulars. Indiana University’s Office of Sustainability has commissioned a task force to systematically address issues related to the sustainability and environmental integrity of the IU campus — an especially lovely component of Bloomington’s urban environment. The task force, assembled from academic faculty and community members, has addressed several aspects of campus form and function, including energy efficiency, resource use and recycling, food quality/integrity, and others. I was especially interested in what the report characterized as “environmental quality/land use.” Environmental quality represents IU’s commitment to “research and explore alternatives in the environmental/land use realm that will lead to greater sustainability for the Bloomington campus and to the surrounding community.” In talking with Bill Brown, the director of the IU Office of Sustainability, I learned that some of this research is aimed at improving and creating “natural” areas on campus — such as the Jordan River system. Already an effort is under way to create a more ecological sound wetland

along certain points of the stream. Other parts of campus are also under consideration for an ecological tune-up, such as the Hilltop Gardens and the cross-country running course. This is a terrific idea ... and I think *Sassafras Audubon* can collaborate with the Office of Sustainability to make it better still.

I think we should design and organize a public experiment, of sorts. I propose that we survey the presence and activity of birds on the IU campus throughout the year (e.g., for the CBC; a breeding bird survey; perhaps some migratory bird data?), as a contribution to the research and exploration by the task force. Data such as this may provide both guidance and motivation for managing these natural areas; further management may result in changes in the bird inventory from year to year, as various habitats on campus are improved, expanded, or created. Campus bird surveys could be our contribution to a growing understanding of the campus “ecology.” (By the way, a campus tree inventory is already under way. This may be a helpful tool for planning a bird survey.) Making a public event of these surveys would also allow SAS to forge an important link between the Office of Sustainability and the local community.

I would encourage readers to peruse the IUB campus sustainability report for themselves (<https://www.indiana.edu/~sustain/sustainabilityiu/report/>). Also let us know whether you would like to be involved. If this is something our membership believes worth pursuing, our conservation committee will begin compiling a core list of volunteers and proceed to generate a survey strategy for our campus in collaboration with Bill Brown and his task force. To enlist, or make recommendations to our committee, contact me at [sfriesen@indiana.edu](mailto:sfriesen@indiana.edu). 🐦

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## Bioblitz *continued from page 6*

inventoried. GPS coordinates were entered on field sheets that specifically marked specie locations and were later entered into data sets on laptops by volunteers. The online permit will allow easier application for future bioblitzes at more DNR properties.

“This will go far in helping our property resource management efforts,” Davis said. “We now can determine the exact site for several plant and animal communities.”

Tours for the public to inventory property sites occurred simultaneous to the staff’s “wildlife showcase,” public programs held in the large tent near the nature center. “We wanted the visitor to see what happens during a scientist’s inventory; wild animal talks of species found on the property, of course, were the main attraction,” Eagleman said. “It was especially great to have members of the Hoosier Herpetological Society talk about the snakes they found when conducting their inventory,” Davis added.

The park’s nature center auditorium was bioblitz headquarters; food, maps, and field guides were available; “data drops,” times to hand in inventory lists, occurred at noon and 4 p.m. on Saturday, but many teams chose to stay out because nice weather prevailed.

Inventories could not have happened if participation were minimal. Hoping to make it an event for more participation, gate and camping

fees were waived, and the Friends of Brown County State Park offered a wonderful evening meal for all in attendance.

“We’re happy to provide these small offerings to all bioblitz participants,” said Doug Baird, park property manager.

Lists of species encountered at the bioblitz will be added to the park’s database. Talks and plans are already happening for next year’s Brown County State Park bioblitz. “We hope to have the *Sassafras Audubon Society* in attendance again!” Eagleman said. 🐦

## Fairview Tower *continued from page 1*

Chimney Swift Tower on the check’s memo line. Send it to SAS, P.O. Box 85, Bloomington, IN, 47402-0085.

Here is your chance to give the kids at Fairview School something no other school in Indiana has. Imagine a swift-cam, with live photos on the Web. What a great environmental education project that we can all enjoy.

I hope in the next *Leaflet*, I’ll be able to tell you that the full \$11,000 has been secured and construction of the new tower is under way. But that won’t happen unless and until we have the money to pay for it. 🐦

# Big Green Big Year 2009: It's All About Location, Location, Location

by Bernie Sloan (bgsloan2@yahoo.com)

Several Bloomington-area birders are halfway through their 2009 Big Green Big Year (BIGBY — see [www.sparroworks.ca/bigby](http://www.sparroworks.ca/bigby) for more information on BIGBYing). As with real estate, the key to a good BIGBY experience is location, location, location. Jim and Susan Hengeveld have a great location at the east end of Lake Lemon, within walking distance of Yellowwood State Forest. The Hengevelds have 170 BIGBY species at the midpoint of 2009, including Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Golden Eagle, Willet, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Henslow's Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting.

I am doing well with my BIGBY. With the year just halfway over, I've recorded 161 species from the grasslands of the Indiana University cross-country course and the two square miles of forested hills just to the north. Those 161 BIGBY species match my grand total for all of 2008! My personal highlight is 35 warbler species, including a Connecticut Warbler as a first-ever life bird. Of course, I have no grand delusions of keeping up this pace and recording 300 species for the year. I started out the year BIGBYing more intensively than last year, especially during spring migration. I've been stalled at 161 for three weeks, and I'd consider myself fortunate to end the year with 170 species.

Eve Cusack, who lives near Bloomington's Clear Creek Trail, recently recorded her 105th BIGBY species for 2009 (a Great

Crested Flycatcher). She notes: "What I have enjoyed the most about the BIGBY is refocusing my energy on birding locally. For the last decade, going birding has always meant driving or flying to a birding destination and listing as many species as I can in a day or weekend. This has added a totally different element to birding because each time I find myself with a free morning, I grab my binoculars and hit the Clear Creek Trail."

Don Wiesler has recorded 69 species so far this year, which highlights the importance of location to BIGBYing. He lives in an urban area with habitat less conducive to birding than the other folks I've profiled here. He has nine species this year that were not on his 2008 list, including Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, and Red-shouldered Hawk.

In addition to walking BIGBYs, I've added a new wrinkle this year: the audio BIGBY. What is an audio BIGBY? It's a count of those species I've identified by ear while conducting my walking BIGBY. It's added a new dimension to my birding experience and made me even more aware of my surroundings. My 2009 audio BIGBY count stands at a surprising 104 species.

I'd appreciate hearing from other Bloomington-area birders who may be doing BIGBYs this year. You can contact me via e-mail at [bgsloan2@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsloan2@yahoo.com). 

Show this coupon with your address label to receive a 10% discount on purchases (excluding books and optical equipment) from the **Wild Birds Unlimited Store in Bloomington, Indiana**, or for a 10% discount on items in the bird department at **Bloomington Hardware**. Please keep the coupon for future purchases. Coupon expires August 31, 2009.

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