

## Fall Migration Bird Walks

Bill Davison, Director of Field Trips

The birds are heading south! Fortunately for us, many of these fall migrants will stop in our area for a rest and refuel. If you'd like to see some of these beautiful birds, join us for a bird walk in September and October. Each walk is led by a local expert. Bird walks are appropriate for all ages and all skill levels.

Seriously, there is no pressure to know anything about birds! We can give you some tips, or you can just walk along with us and appreciate us appreciating the birds. We even have 5 pairs of loaner binoculars. If you have questions about accessibility, please email us at [jwpaudubon1@gmail.com](mailto:jwpaudubon1@gmail.com).

Both of these parks are great birding spots with excellent views. Warblers, thrushes, sparrows, finches, raptors, and more are all seen at these locations. Ewing is a larger park and has been designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society. Hidden Creek is smaller and is fully accessible for those with mobility devices. It's also a smaller park with great birding not too far from your parked car. There are also benches throughout, so it's a great birding spot for those who need to take breaks.



### BIRD WALKS

#### SUNDAYS at EWING PARK

1001 Ethell Parkway

SUNDAY, **September 10**, 8:00 a.m.

Leaders Mercy and Bill Davison

SUNDAY, **September 17**, 8:00 a.m.

Leaders Lenore Sobota and Wayne Hochstetler

SUNDAY, **September 24**, 8:00 a.m.

Leaders Pirmin Nietslibach and Michael Retter

SUNDAY, **October 1**, 8:00 a.m. (note location)

Matt Fraker, Fraker Farm, 2226 County Rd 375 N.

Carlock (follow signs at drive entrance)

SUNDAY, **October 15**, 8:00 a.m.

Leaders Dave and Bode Thompson

#### SATURDAYS at HIDDEN CREEK PARK

100 W. Sycamore, Normal

SATURDAY, **September 30**, 8:00 a.m.

Lenore Sobota and Mercy Davison

SATURDAY, **October 7**, 8:00 a.m.

TBD

## Fall Programs

Given Harper, Director of Programs

JWP Audubon and the Illinois Wesleyan University Biology and Environmental Studies programs will sponsor two presentations in the fall, 2023. The presentations will be held in room C101 at the Center for Natural Science (CNS), 201 Beecher Street, Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU), Bloomington. Parking is available in the lot just north of the CNS on Beecher Street.

**On Tuesday, September 12 at 7 p.m. in CNS C101, Mike Avara**, a research scientist in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Science at the University of Illinois, **will give a talk on *Bird Migration and Motus Towers in Illinois***.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to track the movement of birds and animals as small as insects. As of 2022, more than 1,500 receiver stations have been installed in 34 countries, although most are located in the United States and Canada. Mike Avara, who bands migratory birds and monitors the Illinois Motus telemetry network, has studied the Northern Saw-whet Owl, the smallest owl species found in Illinois. He has live-trapped and attached Motus tags to saw-whets at banding stations in central Illinois in an effort to learn more about their fall/winter stopover behavior and fall/spring migration trajectories. Mike will report on some of his research findings and discuss how the Motus network has expanded and transformed bird migration research throughout the state.

**On Monday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. in CNS C101, Dr. Emily Minor**, a Professor of Biology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, **will give a talk on “Noticing nature” or “extinction of experience” – the future of urban biodiversity**

Living in cities can lead to the “extinction of experience,” a feedback loop in which people who have little interaction with nature are less likely to protect it. This cycle could result in a continual erosion of biodiversity over time. Although this concept was first introduced 45 years ago, we still know little about the hypothesized feedback loop, if or how it plays out on the ground, and how it might be reversed. More recently, researchers have hypothesized that an alternate version of this loop may occur that incorporates environmental engagement, or “noticing nature,” leading to better outcomes for biodiversity. In this talk, Dr. Minor will describe the first empirical test of these feedback loops, using ecological and social data collected from residential neighborhoods in the Chicago suburbs. She will describe the connections between suburban residents, their yards, and the birds in their neighborhoods, and talk about how these connections can benefit people and birds alike.

## HONORING VOLUNTEERS

Gretchen Monti, Audubon Gardens Director

One sunny afternoon in late April, a Rivian van pulled up on Angela Drive in south Normal. Five employees joined steward Gretchen Monti at Audubon Garden on Constitution Trail. They were celebrating Earth Day by helping with spring garden prep. They accomplished much: removing last year's tall grasses and floral stems, trimming the dogwood, taming the aggressive Wild Geranium and learning why native plants are important. Let's hope some are adding the natives to their own yards. If you'd like to volunteer contact Gretchen at [gretchenmonti@gmail.com](mailto:gretchenmonti@gmail.com)



## Welcome to the Board

Meet our newest Board Member, Bode Thompson (second from left). He joins the board as Youth Director and is a junior at Normal Community High School.

Bode started birding during COVID-19, and quickly became immersed in the birding world, traveling extensively to see and photograph birds (often rare birds), and learning from many experts in the field. He is one of the most active birders in McLean County and one of the best young birders in the State of Illinois. His current life list is nearly 800 birds, having birded in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, Kentucky, Colorado, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Texas, Massachusetts, Maine, Florida, and Costa Rica.

When Bode is not birding, he plays club and high school soccer, and enjoys fishing with family and friends. He looks forward to encouraging and supporting other young birders in Central Illinois. You can meet Bode on Sunday, October 15 at 8:00 a.m. as he leads one of the fall bird walks at Ewing Park. See page 1.

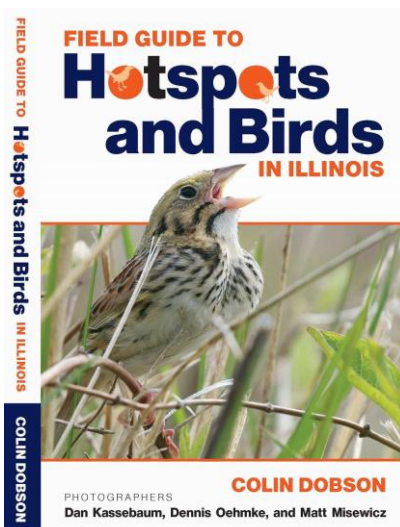
Patricia Carlson, Editor



**Meet the 2023-24 JWP Board: Left to Right: Given Harper, Bode Thompson, Christina Schulz, Angelo Capparella, Bill Davison, Mercy Davison, Patricia Carlson, Wayne Hochstetler**

**Nicor Grant** -- We are very excited to announce that JWP Audubon received a \$5,000 Environmental Stewardship grant from Nicor in support of our conservation initiatives. Our award was one of only 21 statewide! We plan to spend these funds on native plants and seeds at public parks in Bloomington and Normal, most likely Ewing and Underwood. This will help us improve and expand bird habitat in high-visibility areas, and we hope it will inspire the parks departments to continue on the path toward natural areas restoration.

## DRUM ROLL! for



## Colin Dobson's new book

A field guide to the "hottest" of hotspots to look for birds in Illinois along with over 325 species of birds found regularly in the State. Also includes sections explaining how to get into birdwatching, what birds to look for in each season and where, 325 primary and 30 rare species that can be seen in the state, a glossary with various bird terms, bird field marks, pictures with different types of habitats, a checklist, and much more!

## ISU – Green Screen Film Series

Normal Theater Uptown - **FREE**

Tuesday, August 29, 7:00 p.m.

**ALL THAT BREATHES**

Tuesday, September 19, 7:00 p.m.

**THE HUMAN SCALE**

Tuesday, October 17, 7:00 p.m.

**THE SACRIFICE ZONE**

Tuesday, November 14, 7:00 p.m.

**THE STORY OF PLASTIC**

**JOHN WESLEY POWELL AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
P.O. BOX 142  
NORMAL, IL 61761

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**Off'icers 2023-2024**  
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Christina Schulz

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Patricia Carlson

**Treasurer**

Wayne Hochstetler



JWP Audubon Society is a Chapter  
of National Audubon Society, Inc.

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**Youth Director**

Bode Thompson

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Fran Lewis  
Tania Barreiro

**Letter from the Steering Committee:**

Hello, Birders!

We as a Steering Committee are excited to engage our members and friends in some important work that will move our Chapter forward this fall, including:

- Member engagement: We look forward to expanding interest in our Chapter, from attending walks and learning events to volunteering and fundraising. Stay tuned(!).
- Name-change: This is a critical time to pay attention to how other Audubon Societies across America are reconciling our past, current reputation, and the future mark we want to have on inclusion and conservation. We're happy to share that Board member Wayne Hochstetler will represent our Chapter in ongoing meetings with Chicago Audubon Society and other regional Audubon chapters to discuss further.
- Good news: The efforts JWP put toward securing a \$75,000 grant from State Farm in 2022 will come to fruition in the coming months, when the Town of Normal Town Council will use the funds to construct a bird-friendly water feature and install native plants adjacent to the Constitution Trail next to the Connie Link Amphitheater.

Sincerely, Mercy Davison, Bill Davison, Christina Schulz

JWP Audubon board meetings are held from August to May, with the exception of December. There are many volunteer opportunities and members are always welcome and encouraged to join in a variety of committees – whatever amount of time you can give. To find out how to become more involved in your chapter contact any of the officers listed at the left of this page at [jwpaudubon1@gmail.com](mailto:jwpaudubon1@gmail.com)