

Amos Butler Audubon at 75

by Don Gorney

On March 18, 1938, a group of people who cherished birds adopted the name of Amos Butler for their organization. Officially, the group was called the Indiana Audubon Society, Central District, Amos W. Butler Chapter. While the organization's title has changed a few times since its founding 75 years ago, Amos Butler has remained part of the group's name. Now, in 2013, as Amos Butler Audubon, we continue to honor this special man.

Amos Butler is considered the father of Indiana ornithology because of his important work, *Birds of Indiana*, published in 1898, and his many articles on Indiana birds published in various journals. He was the first State Ornithologist, holding that title for a few years in the 1890s before spending the next 25 years working as Secretary to the State Board of Charities. Among his many accomplishments, Butler founded the Indiana Academy of Science. He retired in 1923 and remained an active birder until his death in 1937.

Amos Butler Audubon has witnessed numerous changes in habitat and birdlife in Central Indiana during the last 75 years. While the overall changes have not been positive, without Amos Butler Audubon I am confident that today the birds would be in a worse predicament than they are. For 75 years, Amos Butler Audubon has been promoting the enjoyment and stewardship of the birds of Central Indiana, and we will continue to do so well into the future.

During the last few years, our organization has increased its conservation efforts and event offerings. The board of directors



Amos Butler working in his state office, circa 1923

and I hope that you have noticed. We look back on our history with fondness, while at the same time we are focused on plotting a bold future. The birds and the people who enjoy them are counting on Amos Butler Audubon. Our organization can use your help. If you do not pay dues directly to Amos Butler Audubon, please pledge to become a chapter supporter or make a special donation today. If you have extra time or a special skill, please consider volunteering. Feel free to contact me at dongorney@yahoo.com or (317) 501-4212 — I'll help you find a place within this very special organization.

Don Gorney Hired as ABA Director of Bird Conservation and Education

For the first time in the organization's 75 years, Central Indiana's Amos Butler Audubon has hired a full-time staffer. Don Gorney, a volunteer board member since 2008, has been hired as Director of Bird Conservation and Education.

The position was made possible by a grant from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust.

Gorney's primary responsibilities will include leading the Lights Out Indy initiative to prevent the deaths of migratory birds during migration; overseeing the Wings Over Indy project to benefit populations of Chimney Swifts; and advocating for birds and bird conservation. In addition, he will work to engage existing and new audiences

in bird awareness and appreciation through the Indianapolis Birding Trail, which is a partnership with the City of Indianapolis and the Center for Urban Ecology at Butler University. He also will work to develop educational programs that instill a passion for birds and conservation in predominantly minority elementary-age students.

A graduate of Indiana University Bloomington, who has worked as a bank examiner, Gorney joined the organization's board of directors in 2008, and has served as its President since 2009. He is a volunteer with Earth Day Indiana, Friends of Fort Harrison State Park, Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

In order to take the position, he will step down as President of the board. Ted Meyer, who currently serves as Treasurer of the board, will become interim board President.

"This is an exciting step in the evolution of Amos Butler Audubon and we expect a dedicated staff member will help us be even more engaged with outreach and the protection and appreciation of birds in Central Indiana," Meyer said.



Upcoming Audubon Programs

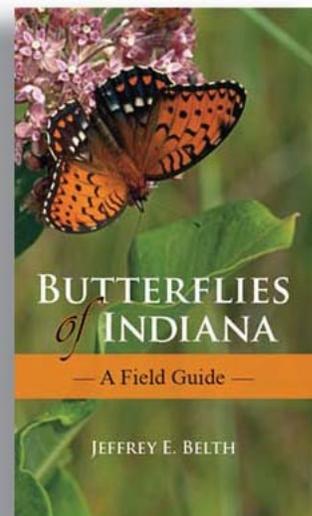
All programs are held at the Holliday Park Nature Center, 6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month unless otherwise noted. They are free and open to the public. Information: Email Brittany Davis Swinford at bluemoosey8@yahoo.com or call (812) 340-0824.



March 12: Wild Nature at Our Urban Doorstep

Tom Swinford, Regional Ecologist, Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

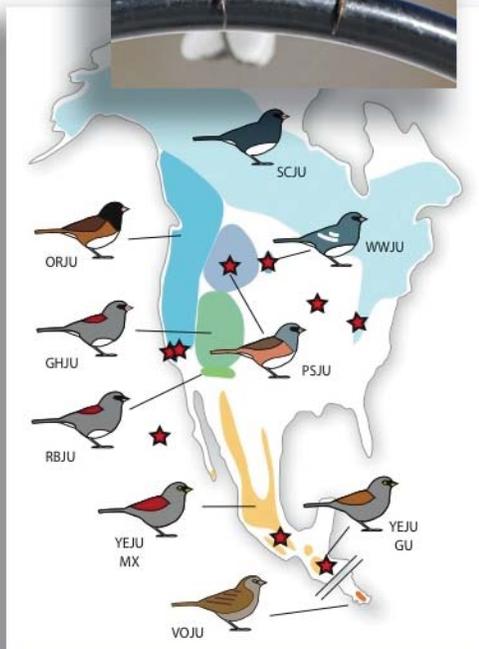
Tom Swinford, longtime ecologist for IDNR-Nature Preserves, will present on the natural history of Marion County. Highlighted will be the eight state nature preserves in Marion County — the highest quality natural areas remaining within Indianapolis city limits. This includes the sizable preserves of Ft. Harrison and Eagle Creek, which form the core of two of Indiana's designated Important Bird Areas. Tom is recognized as an authority on the landscapes, flora, and fauna of Central Indiana. Join us as we learn the story of Marion County and the future prospects for the fascinating and rare animals that call it home.



April 9: The Ordinary Extraordinary Junco

Jonathan Atwell

Jonathan Atwell, Biologist with Indiana University, will present on the new documentary, *The Ordinary Extraordinary Junco*, produced and directed by Jonathan Atwell, Ellen Ketterson, and Steve Burns. The film explores the behavior, ecology, and evolution of the junco. Atwell will show us excerpts from the film and give us insight to the research, production, and ah-ha moments encountered during this incredible endeavor. The film was released in January, and the response has been great in the academic community and among conservation groups and the general public. Excerpts from the film can be viewed on the project's website at www.juncoproject.org.



May 14: Butterflies of Indiana

Jeff and Sandy Belth

Jeff Belth, author of *Butterflies of Indiana*, and Sandy Belth, naturalist with Monroe County Parks, will present on the natural history, identification, and conservation of our native butterfly species. After studying and photographing butterflies for more than 25 years, Jeff has a great knowledge of these jewels of the sky. His new field guide features 149 species of butterflies and their close relatives, the skippers. Copies of the new field guide will be available for purchase at the presentation. Jeff will be glad to autograph purchased copies.

Audubon Field Trip

Woodcock Watch

Sunday, March 17, 7-8:30 p.m.
Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve
10410 Hague Road, Fishers

Just like the early pioneers, people today continue to be mesmerized by the aerial flight and sounds of male American Woodcocks as they ascend and descend over prairie areas in hopes of impressing nearby females. We will briefly bird the prairie area and nearby woods until shortly before dusk. The woodcocks will begin calling at dusk and then take flight. Bring a flashlight to help you get back to your car. Questions: Contact Marty Williams at martburger@mac.com.



Regularly Scheduled Bird Hikes

Eagle Creek Park Ornithology Center
6515 Delong Road, Indianapolis
Every Sunday year-round, 9 a.m.

Meet at the Ornithology Center. Information: (317) 327-2473

Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab
at Marian University
3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis
Every Wednesday, 8 a.m.

Leader: David Benson (dbenson@marion.edu)
Meet at the St. Francis Colonnade.

Fort Harrison State Park
5753 Glenn Road, Indianapolis
Each Sunday in April and May

Leader: Don Gorney (don@amosbutleraudubon.org)
Meet at 8 a.m. at the Delaware Lake parking lot.

Cool Creek Park
2000 East 151st Street, Carmel
Wednesday and every other Sunday
8:30-10 a.m.

March 3, 13, 17, 20, 27; April 7, 10, 17, 21, 24;
May 5, 8, 15, 19, 22, 29; June 2, 12, 16, 19, 26, 30

Meet in the north parking lot of Cool Creek Park, past the Nature Center. Information: (317) 774-2500

Strawtown Koteewi Park
Taylor Center of Natural History
12308 Strawtown Avenue, Noblesville
8:30-10 a.m., March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5

Meet at the Taylor Center of Natural History. Information: (317) 984-5556

Programs and Activities

Learning Spring Warblers

Saturday, March 16, 10-11:30 a.m.
Eagle Creek Park Ornithology Center
6515 Delong Road, Indianapolis

Warblers will be winging their way back to Indiana in mid-March, so this is a great time to hone your warbler identification skills. The class, led by Don Gorney, will present both visual and auditory techniques for identifying warblers in the field. More details will be posted on the Amos Butler Audubon website closer to the event. Registration is required — call the Eagle Creek Park Ornithology Center at (317) 327-2473. Free for Amos Butler Audubon members, \$5 for non-members.

Indiana State Museum:

Behind the Scenes

650 W. Washington St., Indianapolis
Monday, March 18, 7-8:30 p.m.

Celebrate Amos Butler Audubon's 75th anniversary by going behind the scenes at the Indiana State Museum. Damon Lowe, Curator of Biology, will lead us through various collections that the public rarely gets to see. This is your opportunity to experience the museum in a new way. This event is open only to Amos Butler Audubon members (chapter members or National Audubon members assigned to the chapter) and their immediate families. Registration is required by contacting Brittany Davis-Swinford at brittany.davis@indy.gov or (812) 340-0824 by March 10. Registered participants will be informed about the meeting location and any updated details approximately one week before the event. There is no charge for this event.

Earth Day at the JCC

Jewish Community Center

6701 Hoover Road, Indianapolis
Sunday, April 21, 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join Amos Butler Audubon and many other activity providers for the JCC's second Earth Day celebration. This will be a very entertaining event for children. Follow signs for parking. This event is free.

Earth Day Indiana

White River State Park

801 W. Washington St., Indianapolis
Saturday, April 27, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Join Amos Butler Audubon and over 125 other sponsors at the state's largest Earth Day celebration. There will be many activities for children, including decorating a T-shirt, seeing live animals up close, building a bird feeder, planting a seed, and singing fun songs. Bring the whole family, including the dog, for this fun event. See www.earthdayindiana.org for additional details.

Audubon May Bird Count

Saturday, May 11, 8 a.m.

Eagle Creek Park and throughout Marion Co.

Help Amos Butler Audubon count the birds in Marion County to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day. Birders of all levels are welcome. Newer birders will be paired with more experienced ones. To allow us to organize the count and teams, pre-registration is required — contact Don Gorney at (317) 501-4212 or email don@amosbutler-audubon.org. Be sure to let Don know if you want to bird a particular location or part of the county.

ABA Volunteer Days

The purpose of the Volunteer Days program is to restore habitat for birds and other wildlife and to promote bird/environmental education. If you are interested in volunteering for one of the events below or in being included on our volunteer e-mail list, please contact Don Gorney at don@amosbutleraudubon.org.

Cold Spring School Workday **3650 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis** **Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Numerous projects can be tackled at this terrific 39-acre environmental magnet elementary school. We will have tasks ranging from easy to labor-intensive. Children are welcome if supervised by parents. Gloves, work tools, water, and snacks will be provided. Check the website under Events or our Facebook page for final details about the workday. Follow the signs at the site for parking and sign-in. This event is co-sponsored by the Friends of Cold Spring School.

Eagle Creek Park Workday **Eagle Creek Park, Indianapolis** **Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Final details are yet to be determined. Check the website or Facebook for updated information closer to the event, which is being co-sponsored by Indy Parks. We expect the workday to take place on the park's west side. Projects will include removal of non-native shrubs, trees, and plants and removal of litter and other material. Gloves, work tools, water, and snacks will be provided.

Nina Mason Pulliam EcoLab at Marion University

Owl Prowl and Woodcock Walk **Saturday, March 2, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

We'll start in the Nina Mason Pulliam Nature Center to learn a bit about woodcock and owls and dissect owl pellets to discover what they eat. Then we'll take a walk in the EcoLab looking for dancing and displaying woodcock and listening for owls. Meet on the Marian University campus at the St. Francis Colonnade just west of Allison Mansion. Bring flashlight, binoculars, and warm clothing.

Cool Creek Nature Center Bird Programs

2000 East 151st Street, Carmel

(317) 774-2500, cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Beginning Bird Hikes

Birds are fascinating, and watching them can be an awe-inspiring experience. Catching a glimpse of these gorgeous creatures, however, can be frustrating, and learning how to identify all of them can be overwhelming. Join our naturalist staff and other guest leaders Sunday and Wednesday mornings, and we will learn together. This will be a great opportunity for birdwatchers of all levels. You may begin anytime during the season and come as often as you like. Pre-registration is not required. Don't forget your binoculars!

Spring Migration Bird Hikes

Saturdays, April 20 and 27; May 4, 18, 25, 8-10 a.m.

Meet in the north parking lot of Cool Creek Park.

Catch a glimpse at some beautiful birds as they return this spring. These hikes are led by well known birder Keith Starling. Hurry, some birds will not stay around long! After the hike, stop by the Nature Center's Wildlife Viewing Area for coffee and doughnuts. Don't forget your binoculars!

American Woodcock Walk

Saturday, March 9: Indoor program 6 p.m.

outdoor program 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 24: Indoor program 7:15 p.m.

outdoor program 7:45 p.m.

Strawtown Koteewi Park

Taylor Center of Natural History

12308 Strawtown Ave., Noblesville, IN

Unusual, weird, romantic, and unique are all words used to describe the American Woodcock. Come experience this bird for yourself at Strawtown Koteewi Park as male Woodcocks perform their aerial courtship displays for the females in the prairie at dusk. An indoor presentation will be held inside the Taylor Center for those interested in Learning more about the life history of this species. Those interested only in seeing the aerial display should meet the group inside the Taylor Center and will be led outside by a naturalist.

Audubon May Bird Count

Saturday, May 11, 8 a.m.

Cool Creek Park and throughout Hamilton Co.

Volunteer to help the HCP&R and the Indiana Audubon Society as we count birds throughout our county. This annual count takes place on International Migratory Bird Day. The results are a valuable tool in tracking bird populations throughout the U.S. Birdwatchers of different skill levels will be paired together and assigned to various areas of the county. After the morning festivities, an optional lunch will be provided in the Cool Creek Nature Center.

Pre-registration required: Call (317) 748-4140 or email robert.ripma@nuttybirder.com

Rookery Preserve

25440 Scherer Ave., Arcadia, IN

Thursday, March 7 at 4 p.m., Wednesday, March 20 at 3 p.m., Saturday, March 23 at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Tuesday, April 2 at 1 p.m., Saturday, April 13 at 3:30 p.m., Monday, April 22 at 7:45 p.m., Sunday, April 28 at 4 p.m., Saturday, May 4 at 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 8 at 3:30 p.m., Saturday, May 25 at 4 p.m., Tuesday, May 28 at 3 p.m., Friday, June 14 at 11 a.m.

Join a naturalist on site at our newest Hamilton County Park! This park hosts the largest Great Blue Heron rookery in Hamilton County. We will meet and stay at the Stoops Observation Deck and discuss details about the park. We will spend the majority of the time watching and talking about the Great Blue Herons, which should be busily courting and tending their nests. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, and photography equipment if you'd like. Some equipment will be available to borrow.

Pre-registration preferred: Call (317) 774-2500 or email cool.naturecenter@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

2012-2013 Amos Butler Audubon Board, Officers, and Committee Chairs

Officers:

Ted Meyer, *Interim President*

Amanda Smith, *Recording Secretary*

Directors:

Terry Ballenger

Cliff Chapman, *Conservation Chair*

Brittany Davis, *Program Chair*

Martyn Roberts, *Membership Chair*

John Schaust

Bradley Shoger

Marty Williams, *Field Trip Chair*

Committee Chair:

Donna McCarty, *Birdathon*

Staff:

Don Gorney

Director of Bird Conservation and Education

Amos Butler Audubon Chapter Supporter Membership

Membership benefits:

■ 100% of your dues support Amos Butler Audubon educational programs and urban conservation projects

■ *Audubon LifeLines*, the chapter newsletter

■ Workshops and entertaining monthly program meetings

One-year chapter supporter \$20

Two-year chapter supporter \$35

One-year student memberships are free. Chapter supporter can be combined with National Audubon membership for a total of \$40.

National Audubon Society Membership Introductory Offer \$20 for first-time members only. Includes *Audubon* magazine

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

E-mail (please include)

Make checks payable to: Mail to: Martyn Roberts, Membership Chair
Amos Butler Audubon Amos Butler Audubon

E-mail questions to: 5945 Ralston Ave.
info@amosbutleraudubon.org Indianapolis, IN 46220

I do do not want Amos Butler Audubon to share my name with the National Audubon Society. Your gift is tax deductible to the extent provided by law. C3ZH000Z

E-Mail Address, Anyone?

Join with hundreds of other members who have who have gone green by signing up for the electronic *LifeLines* newsletter and meeting reminders. Send your request, including your name, to Martyn Roberts at info@amosbutleraudubon.org. This shift towards electronic communication continues to save Amos Butler Audubon hundreds of dollars in printing and mailing costs annually.

Are You a Chapter Supporter?

The expiration date of your Chapter Supporter membership is printed on the mailing label on the paper copy of your *Lifelines*, to the right of your name; "N/A" denotes that you have not paid Chapter Supporter dues. To determine the expiration date of your National Audubon Society membership, refer to the address label on your *Audubon* magazine.

If you receive *LifeLines* electronically or if you have any other membership questions, please contact Martyn Roberts at info@amosbutleraudubon.org or call (317) 251-2908.



Woodcock photos in this issue of *LifeLines* by Kevin Carlsen.



Our mission: To promote the enjoyment and stewardship of the birds of central Indiana
Visit our website: www.amosbutleraudubon.org
e-mail: info@amosbutleraudubon.org

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