



Make a Christmas Bird Count Part of Your Holiday



Northern Cardinal photo by Barb Jablonski

106th Indianapolis CBC

Saturday, December 17

Register to participate by calling John Schaust at (317) 208-4021 or emailing schaust@gmail.com

Whether you are a first-time birdwatcher or an experienced pro, your help is needed during the 117th annual National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count (CBC), scheduled for Saturday, December 17. This will be the 106th anniversary of the Indianapolis CBC, which was first held in December 1910.

Nationwide, more than 2,000 CBCs are conducted during the holiday season. They have contributed enormously to conservation for more than 100 years. National Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation actions. General information about the National Audubon Society and the Annual Christmas Bird Count can be found at www.audubon.org/bird/cbc

The Indianapolis CBC, sponsored by the Amos Butler Audubon Society, takes place within a 15-mile-diameter circle covering the northeast side of Indianapolis, with the center point being in Fort Harrison State Park.

The most exciting news is that CBC is a free program! To participate, please register prior to December 15 so that birding teams and count plans can be made in advance of the count.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. In addition, if your home is within the boundaries of the Count Circle, you can stay home and report the birds that visit your bird feeders.

Eagle Creek Valley CBC

Sunday, December 18, 8 a.m.–noon

Meet at Eagle Creek Park Ornithology Center, 8 a.m.

The Eagle Creek Valley Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by Amos Butler Audubon, takes place within a 15-mile-diameter circle covering the northwest side of Indianapolis, with the center being in Eagle Creek Park.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. In addition, if your home is within the boundaries of the count circle, then you can report the birds that visit your feeder once you have arranged to do so with the Count Compiler.

Plan to meet at the Eagle Creek Park Ornithology Center to pick up an information packet for your assigned area before heading out to bird. The Ornithology Center will open at 8 a.m. A pitch-in lunch for all participants will be held at the Ornithology Center at noon to tally our bird count and to reorganize groups to head back outside to cover additional areas if needed.

To participate in the Eagle Creek Valley Christmas Bird Count, please register prior to December 12 so that birding teams can be formed and count plans made in advance. Reserve your spot by contacting Will Schaust at (317) 327-2473 or emailing him at william.schaust@indy.gov



Golden-crowned Kinglet photo by Barb Jablonski

116th Hamilton County CBC

Saturday, December 31

Cool Creek Nature Center and county-wide
8 a.m.—1 p.m.

Celebrate the holidays by helping the Hamilton County Parks & Recreation Department and the National Audubon Society conduct its annual Christmas Bird Count. Join us for a day of hiking and birding! Lunch for participants will be provided by the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department. Suitable for adults and older children; preregistration is required. To preregister or to receive more details, call the Cool Creek Nature Center at (317) 774-2500 or email amanda.smith@hamiltoncounty.in.gov

Upcoming Audubon Programs and Field Trips

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. Time and place of field trips as noted.

November 15: Vireos and Bombs— Working with Black-capped Vireos



Note: This program is the third Tuesday in November
Speaker: Landon Neumann, former Indiana Young Birder of the Year

This summer Landon worked on a project that has helped manage and protect the endangered Black-capped Vireo on a military base in Oklahoma for more than 25 years. At one point, only 10 vireos remained on the base. The population is now 4000+ throughout its range. Join Landon for a talk about the project and what is being done to protect one of the world's highest densities of nesting Black-capped Vireos.

December 13: Introducing the Children of Indiana Nature Park



Speaker: Melissa Moran, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Nature Conservancy in Indiana

Kids need nature. Children who spend time outside are healthier, better problem solvers, and less stressed! To foster healthy children, ready learners, and the next generation of conservationists, several Indiana organizations are collaborating to connect kids and nature. This presentation will introduce some of the research showing the benefits of getting kids outside. Attendees will then learn about a unique Hoosier project—the Children of Indiana Nature Park—designed to reboot every child's interest in nature. (Hint: Every K–12 student in Indiana is eligible to claim a Nature In-Deed to this park as part of the bicentennial celebration and is invited to learn to love their land!)

Melissa Moran coordinates the Children of Indiana Nature Park. A Purdue Boilermaker and a Texas Longhorn, she worked in environmental engineering on safe drinking water projects before finding her way to The Nature Conservancy. She is a long-time member of the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society and enjoys tending her native gardens to benefit neighborhood wildlife.

Christmas Bird Count for Kids

January 14, 2017, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Zion Nature Center in Zionsville

By Jessica Helmbold

On January 14, 2017, Amos Butler Audubon and Zion Nature Center in Zionsville will host a Christmas Bird Count for Kids (CBCK). Recommended for kids ages 6-15, the event will run from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will include learning how to bird and use binoculars, 1.5 hours of birding, lunch (brown bag), and an awards session. This half-day event will be a fun way to introduce kids to birding. If you know any young people who you would like to introduce to birding, bring them out to the park on January 14. This event is free but requires preregistration at the Zionsville Library web site at www.zionsvillelibrary.org

As your Education Chair, this is my first CBCK with Amos Butler Audubon and my fifth CBCK overall. It's one of my favorite programs, as you can see because I keep coming back to it. Everywhere I go I love to see the spark I have ignited in first-time birders or the sheer joy of a seasoned birder out in the field. I like knowing that the program encourages kids to be active participants by allowing them to share their results at the end of the program and to be recognized, that I am fostering the next generation of official Christmas Bird Counters, and that this is basically their show! Adults help the kids in identification and use of binoculars, but the kids have to be the ultimate decision makers and counters.

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Field Trips

Fall Waterfowl Trip: Universal Mine

Saturday, November 19, 8 a.m.

Meet at Target, 10209 E. US 36, Avon



Tundra Swans and swans and geese photos by Mark Welter.

Join Mark Welter for a driving tour of the reclaimed Universal Strip Mines in search of waterfowl. Located on the Vigo/Vermillion County line north of Terre Haute, Universal is an important stopover for migrating ducks and geese as well as for significant numbers of Tundra and Trumpeter Swans. Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Harrier, and Northern Shrike. Several species of sparrows can also be found here in winter. We will be birding primarily from our vehicles, driving on county roads while scanning the numerous fields and ponds on the property (most of the former Universal Mine is privately owned, and there is no trespassing). We may also look over the "Grand Canyon lake" just across the state line in Edgar County, Illinois; it can host large flocks of waterfowl when the smaller bodies of water on the property are frozen over. Due to the distances that can be involved in surveying this property, a spotting scope is recommended. Additionally, if you have small two-way radios (such as Motorola), bring them because they are handy for communicating among vehicles. If there is interest and if time allows, we may also visit the nearby reclaimed Chinook Mines and the associated Fish & Wildlife Area, located just east of Terre Haute.

We will meet at 8 a.m. in the Target parking lot at 10209 E. US 36 (Rockville Road) in Avon, just west of the Ronald Reagan Parkway. Participants can expect to be back around 3 p.m. Questions: Please email Mark at shooter2_indy@yahoo.com

Goose Pond Area–Raptor Field Trip

Saturday, December 10, 11 a.m.

Meet at Kroger, 1930 East Main Street, Plainfield



Short-eared Owl photo by Scott Enochs

Join Scott Enochs as he leads you to Greene County in search of migrating and wintering raptors. Goose Pond and surrounding areas in Greene County have become a prime wintering area and migratory stop-over for raptors such as Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Golden Eagle, and Short-eared Owl. We will meet at 11 a.m. at the Kroger at 1930 East Main Street, Plainfield, and carpool to Goose Pond. We will stop for lunch at the McDonald's in Linton before we begin searching for birds. During the afternoon and evening we will try to find as many birds of prey as possible and will remain in the area through sunset in hopes of spotting Short-eared Owls emerging from their daytime roosts. Participants can expect to spend a lot of time driving until we find a raptor to study. This trip is free and open to the public. Registration is not required but would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Scott Enochs at (317) 850-4801 or msenochs@comcast.net if you have any questions.

Beers with Birders!

Thursday, December 1, 7-9 p.m.

Metazoa Brewing Company

140 S. College Ave., Indianapolis

Join your fellow Amos Butler Audubon Society members for an evening at Metazoa Brewing Company. We'll meet from 7-9 p.m. to collectively share our birding experiences and adventures at this informal gathering. Please email info@amosbutleraudubon.org if you plan to attend so we can get a rough idea of how many will be attending.

Weekly Bird Hikes

Eagle Creek Park

6519 DeLong Road
Every Sunday, 9 a.m.
Meet at the Ornithology Center
For more information call (317) 327-2473

Marian University EcoLab

3200 Cold Spring Road
Wednesdays through November (except Thanksgiving week), resuming in March
Meet at the collonade
For more information contact Dave Benson
dbenson@marian.edu

Cool Creek Park

2000 East 151st Street, Carmel
Sundays (November 6 and 20, December 4 and 18
Wednesdays (November 9, 16, 23, and 30; December 7, 14, 21, and 28), 9 a.m.
Meet in the north parking lot, past the Nature Center

Join our Naturalist staff and other guest leaders (when available) on Sunday and Wednesday mornings. 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. Preregistration is not required. Don't forget your binoculars! For more information, email Amanda Smith at amanda.smith@hamiltoncounty.in.gov or call (317) 774-2500.

Strawtown Koteewi Park

Taylor Center of Natural History
Strawtown Koteewi Park
12308 Strawtown Ave., Noblesville
Wednesdays (November 2 and December 7, 9) 10 a.m.

Adults welcome, no preregistration required. Questions? Call (317) 774-2574 or email www.myhamiltoncountyparks.com

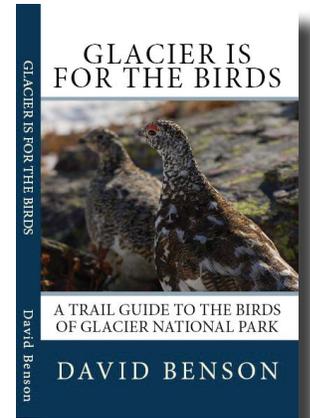
Trail Guide: *Glacier Is for the Birds*

by David Benson

A BAS past president David Benson started birding in Glacier National Park in 1995 while doing his Ph.D. research on White-tailed Ptarmigan at Logan Pass, the highest point along the Going-to-the-Sun Road. He received his Ph.D. in Zoology from Washington State University in 1999 with an emphasis on birds and behavior. That summer David got a job as Ranger-naturalist in the Many Glacier area of Glacier National Park. He has been there every summer since, leading hikes and doing bird walks, campfire talks, and a bird slide show program.

During the winter he is a tenured Professor of Biology at Marian University in Indianapolis, a position he has held since 1999, and is the founding director the Marian University EcoLab, which provides environmental education opportunities for kindergarten – 12th grade inner city youth and others.

After 21 years of birding in Glacier and about three years of blood, sweat, and swearing, *Glacier is for the Birds; a Trail Guide to the Birds of Glacier National Park* is finally here. It is a trail guide covering 48 trails, roads, or other locations with details on what you will find along the way. It focuses on birds first and foremost, with descriptions of where to find over 170 species. It also covers plants, geology, mammals, basic ecology, and provides recommendations for what to do, where to do it, and when. It's written conversationally because it's meant to be a substitute for when you can't just have Dave walk along the trails with you. It's meant for people who like (or think they might like) birds, but it can also take the place of a more universal trail guide because of all the other good non-avian formation it contains, not to mention the 55 maps.



Christmas Bird Count for Kids

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So how did this program get started? It was the brainchild of the Sonoma Valley [California] Birding Group. In 2006, 14 kids had shown up at a local Christmas Bird Count only to be turned away but with the promise that next year they would have their own event. As promised, in 2007 the first CBCK was held. I learned about the CBCK in 2010 from a birding friend, and I decided I wanted in. Four events and six years later, I still love it. So help me establish a new tradition of CBCKs with Amos Butler Audubon by volunteering or bringing your kids to participate. Volunteers can assist kids with birding, teach kids how to use binoculars in the classroom, or help with event logistics or promotion. If you are interested in volunteering, contact me at jh_beagle@hotmail.com or call me at (443) 449-8512. I am looking forward to your help to make this program a success!

Amos Butler Audubon Society Chapter Supporter Membership

Membership benefits:

- 100% of your dues support local Audubon educational programs and urban conservation projects
- Audubon LifeLines, the chapter newsletter
- Workshops and entertaining monthly program meetings

One-year individual membership \$25

Two-year individual membership \$45

One-year household membership \$40

Two-year household membership \$75

Lifetime individual membership \$500

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail (please include) _____

Make checks payable to: Amos Butler Audubon Society

Mail to: Susan Leo, ABAS Membership Chair

P.O. Box 80024

Indianapolis, IN 46280

e-mail questions to: info@amosbutleraudubon.org

Amos Butler Audubon Society

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www.amosbutleraudubon.org

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*Our mission: To promote the enjoyment and
stewardship of the birds of Central Indiana*

Amos Butler Audubon Society

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