



Schedule of Events

May 1 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Bluegrass Fish & Wildlife Area** (7:30 a.m.) Meet at Bluegrass F&WA, directions provided upon registration. Free. Note: There are no restrooms available during this hike! Join Evansville Audubon Society Member Evan Speck for a hike through this reclaimed mine habitat. Bluegrass is an excellent place for observing grassland and water birds. Wading birds are often encountered here, and a good representation of common waterfowl is usually present. The habitat afforded here provides breeding opportunities for several endangered and threatened species in Indiana. *Evan Speck is an anesthesiologist by profession and grew up in a birding family in Wilmington, Delaware, and has birded extensively in Delaware, upper New York State, and of course, here in the Tri-State.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org to register.

May 1 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "History and Impact of John James Audubon on Ornithology and Bird Conservation"** (7 to 8 p.m.) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park in Henderson, Kentucky. Free. John James Audubon is considered by many to be America's first painter of international acclaim. Not only was he an accomplished artist but also a talented writer who faithfully recorded his wildlife observations and studies as well as the changing face of the young nation. Audubon's 435 life-size paintings that compose his *Birds of America* folio not only changed the tradition of natural history illustration, but revolutionized America's and the world's view of birds and subsequently sparked the wildlife conservation movement. Alan Gehret, Curator of the John James Audubon Museum, will look at Audubon's life and work and its impact on birds and birding today. *In*

1985 Alan Gehret accepted a position at Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon. Over the next 20 years, Alan became an expert on the life, travels, and art of this truly American icon. He now looks after the Audubon Museum collection, arranges new acquisitions, organizes park festivals, and creates museum exhibits. Contact Alan Gehret at (270) 827-1893 or alan.gehret@ky.gov for additional information.

May 1 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Introduction to Photographing Birds** (7 to 8 p.m.) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Do you enjoy taking photos of birds, but would like to improve your skills? Interested in upgrading your camera to something more, but not sure what that is? Join local photographer Greg Roeder for this class on basic bird photography. Learn how to improve your pictures through both composition and technique. This seminar is applicable for all levels of amateur photographers. *Greg Roeder is an avid photographer who considers his photography to be a lifetime adventure. He also teaches art at Thompkins Middle School.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 2 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Day Trip to Patoka River NWR & Cane Ridge WMA; Duke Energy lake; Saunders Woods** (6 a.m. to 3 p.m.) Trip departs from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. \$20 per person. Transportation and box lunch provided. A rare opportunity for a full day of quality birding led by area birders. Trip includes visits to the following:

- **Saunders Woods** – Remnant bottomlands hardwood forest. Expect to see warblers and woodpeckers
- **Duke Energy power plant** – Large cooling lake and ash settlement ponds. Expect to see shorebirds and late migrating waterfowl. Many extraordinarily rare bird species as "first sightings" in Indiana have been here.
- **Cane Ridge WMA** – Wetlands restoration using moist soil units and Least Tern nesting area. Although Least Terns are not anticipated, expect to see shorebirds, herons, and other wetland birds.
- **Patoka River NWR** – Bottomland forested wetland, river oxbows, and Snakey Point Marsh. Expect to see wetland birds as well as warblers and other migratory songbirds.

Trips will be led by the following:

- **Chuck Mills** – *Mr. Mills has been a serious birder for 40 years and has observed 318 species in Gibson County alone. He has also monitored an interior least tern colony for several years for Indiana DNR.*
- **Richard and Sue Vernier** – *The Verniers are long-time members of the Evansville Audubon Society and avid birders.*
- **Bill McCoy** – *Mr. McCoy is the Refuge Manager of Patoka River NWR & Cane Ridge WMA.*

Registration is limited and will close on April 29th. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org to register.

May 2 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Howell Wetlands with Stan Tekiela** (7 a.m.) Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave. \$5 per person. Join nationally renowned birder and author Stan Tekiela for a birding walk through this 35 acre urban wetland. *Stan Tekiela is a writer and photographer of over forty state-by-state field guides and other books on nature.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org to register.

May 2 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Lecture by Author Stan Tekiela** (7 p.m.) Location to be announced. Free. Join nationally renowned birder Stan Tekiela for a fascinating look at the world of birds. Sponsored by Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited store. *Stan Tekiela is a writer and photographer of over forty state-by-state field guides and other books on nature.* Call 812-476-2473 for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Howell Wetlands** (7 a.m.) Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave. Free. Join Wild Birds Unlimited co-owner Tim Griffith for a birding walk through this 35 acre urban wetland. *Tim Griffith and his wife Margi are co-owners of Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited, the premier store for everything related to birds.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Audubon's Bird Migration Walks** (7:30 to 9 a.m.) Program departs from Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. \$2.00 per person. Come join us in a celebration of the spring season migration as we hike Audubon State Park! Bring your binoculars, field guide, and notebook to identify new birds for your life list. Led by Ted Hitch. *Ted Hitch is an avid birder as well as a long-time member and past president of the Evansville Audubon Society.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve** (7:30 a.m.) Depart from the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Evansville Audubon Society President Steve Heeger for a birding hike through this 200 acre old growth lowland forest. *Steve Heeger is an avid birder and current President of the Evansville Audubon Society.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Audubon's Bird Migration Walks** (8:30 to 10 a.m.) Program departs from Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. \$2.00 per person. Come join us in a celebration of the spring season migration as we hike Audubon State Park! Bring your binoculars, field guide and notebook to identify new birds for your life list. Led by Carol Gehret. *Carol Gehret has been an avid birder for much of her life, having discovered the joy of birds while studying in England. She served as education chair person and president of the South Mountain Audubon Society in Gettysburg, PA where she also lead birding trips, coordinated the annual Christmas Bird Count and was regional coordinator for the first state wide Breeding Bird Census. Carol met her husband, Alan, while he was conducting a study on Barn Owls for the state of PA. After marrying and moving from the Gettysburg area she served on the board of directors of the Valley Forge*

Audubon Society, Valley Forge, PA. Together they have lead field trips and bird walks, taught beginning birding classes, worked on various bird counts and conducted bird banding studies. In 2004 she was one of the guest leaders for bird tours at the Festival of the Cranes at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico. Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov for more information.

May 3 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Family Birding Hike at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve (8:30 a.m.) Depart from the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Evansville Audubon Society member Evan Speck for a hike through this 200 acre old growth lowland forest. This hike is suitable for families with children. *Evan Speck is an anesthesiologist by profession and grew up in a birding family in Wilmington, Delaware, and has birded extensively in Delaware, upper New York State, and of course, here in the Tri-State.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Making a Birdhouse from Gourds (9 to 10 a.m.) At the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Debbie Goedde teaches how to turn gourds into fabulous and functional homes for birds. This is an instructional lecture, not a workshop so no supplies are needed. *Debbie Goedde is a Master Gardener and local artisan.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Hands-on Spring Bird Banding Workshop (9 to 10:30 a.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Come and help with an ongoing bird banding project as we catch, identify, band and release birds from the Nature Preserve. This is a great opportunity for spotting early spring migratory birds, so bring a camera! *Scott Kramer is a Certified Interpretive Naturalist and Program Director at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve.* Contact Scott Kramer at 812-479-0771, ext. 102 or skramer@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Drawing Bluebirds" (9:30 to 10:25 a.m.) at the Audubon Museum at Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. \$5.00 per person. Ages 10—adults. Come and enjoy the step-by-step class of learning to draw birds. Beginners welcome. *Kim has served as an art instructor and festival coordinator for the last 16 years at the Henderson County Elementary schools, Henderson Community College and several tri-state schools. For the past six years, Kim has enjoyed her work as the J. J. Audubon Museum's Arts Administrator.* Pre-registration is required. Contact Kim McGrew (270) 827-1893 or kim.mcgreg@ky.gov for more information.

May 3 Ohio Valley Birding Festival Family Day! (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Bring the kids out for a full day of birding fun as participants learn about birds and their habitats! Over a dozen stations offering free birding crafts and activities for kids of all ages to enjoy. Presented by the Evansville Audubon Society and Southwestern Indiana Master Naturalist Association Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Choosing and Using Binoculars** (10 a.m.) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join representatives of the Eagle Optics Company as they introduce participants to the proper way to use binoculars. Sample different models and learn what to look for when purchasing binoculars. Call Tim Griffith at Wild Birds Unlimited (812-476-2473) for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "A Walk with Bluebirds"** (10:30 to 11:30 a.m.) at the Sycamore Shelter at Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. Free. Discover the lives and nesting habits of Eastern Bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Bob and Judy Peak will introduce visitors to their ongoing nesting research conducted at numerous parks including Audubon State Park. Attendees may have an opportunity to see eggs and nestlings inside nesting boxes. This walking tour is moderate in difficulty and mostly on concrete. Wheelchairs can likely be accommodated by use of a vehicle. *Henderson residents Bob and Judy Peak are retired teachers who have monitored and managed bluebird nest boxes in western Kentucky/Tennessee for nearly 20 years. During their tenure, over 18,000 baby bluebirds (and over 1,300 baby birds from six other species) have fledged from their nest boxes.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov for further information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Owl Pellets: The Exciting World of Owl Puke!"** (11 a.m. to noon) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Master Naturalist Gena Garrett for a fascinating look at owl pellets! Participants will learn about native owls, their hunting habits and physiology. Then each participant will dissect a sterilized owl pellet to see what exciting remnants it contains! You won't want to miss this hands-on science discovery workshop! *Gena Garrett is an Indiana Master Naturalist and the Science Educator at the Evansville Museum of Arts, History and Science.* Participation is limited, pre-registration is required Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org to register.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Explore Raptors"** (12:30 to 1:30 p.m.) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park in Henderson, KY. Free. Using live birds, Park Naturalist Julie McDonald will teach the characteristics of birds of prey, their role in the ecosystem, and how interactions with humans have impacted these majestic creatures. *Julie McDonald is the Park Naturalist at John James Audubon State Park. She has worked in the environmental education / environmental interpretation field for 10 years. Julie is a Project WILD, Flying WILD, Project WET and Project Learning Tree training facilitator.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov for more information.

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Hooked on Hummers"** (2 to 3 p.m.) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park in Henderson, KY. Free. Hummingbirds, those glittering jewels of the air, zip through summertime yards lapping up nectar. But did you know their primary diet is insects and that spraying insecticides destroys their food source? See photos illustrating where and how hummers nest and raise young, what they eat, where they winter, and how to attract them to your backyard—everything extraordinary about these tiny creatures that travel thousands of miles to summer here.

Presented by Evansville Courier and Press columnist Sharon Sorenson. *Sharon and Charles Sorenson combine their interest in photography with their life-long pursuit of knowledge about birds to provide educational programs for the public. Practicing what they preach, they have transformed their once-agricultural property into a wildlife habitat that has, to date, attracted 147 bird species as well as butterflies, mammals, and reptiles. The Evansville Courier and Press publishes Sharon's bi-weekly "For the Birds" columns. Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov for more information.*

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Birding Basics"** (2 to 3 p.m.) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve.. Free. Join seasoned birder John Schaust to learn simple backyard bird identification for beginning birders. *John Schaust conducts and reviews scientific research on the natural history of birds, bird feeding, and bird population trends and develops education materials for Wild Bird Unlimited stores throughout the United States and Canada. He spent the first 25 years of his career as an interpretive naturalist with federal, state and local agencies, specializing in interpretive and environmental education, nature center operations and natural resources management. An avid bird watcher, he has been federally licensed bird bander for more than 25 years. Schaust received the Master of Interpretive Management Award - NAI National Award in 2000 and Region IV Award in the same year. (source – Ball State University) Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.*

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Live Raptor Program!** (3 to 4 p.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Raptor Program Manager Lauren Preske as she introduces you to Wesselman Nature Society's fascinating resident raptors. Learn what adaptations equip raptors to be some of the most efficient predators on earth and learn why they are dependent upon us for survival. *Lauren Preske is a Certified Interpretive Guide and the Program Manager for Wesselman Nature Society's Howell Wetlands and Raptor Programs. Contact Lauren Preske at 812-499-2952, or lpreske@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.*

May 3 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Family Birding Hike at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve** (4 p.m.) at Wesselman Woods. Free. Join Evansville Audubon Society member Ted Hitch for a late afternoon hike through this 200 acre old growth lowland forest. This hike is suitable for families with children. *Ted Hitch is an avid birder as well as a long-time member and past president of the Evansville Audubon Society. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.*

May 4 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Hands-on Spring Bird Banding Workshop** (9 to 10:30 a.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Come and help with an ongoing bird banding project as we catch, identify, band and release birds from the Nature Preserve. This is a great opportunity for spotting early spring migratory birds, so bring a camera! *Scott Kramer is a Certified Interpretive Guide, and the Program Director at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Contact Scott Kramer at 812-479-0771, ext. 102 or skramer@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.*

May 4 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Twin Swamps Nature Preserve** (7:30 a.m.) Meet at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. \$10 per person. Transportation to Twin Swamps provided. Join Evansville Audubon Society President Steve Heeger for a hike through one of the few existing remnants of cottonwood-bald cypress swamp which once occurred over large portions of the Ohio and Wabash River Valleys. Twin Swamps is home to many bird species normally associated with this type of habitat, such as the blue-gray gnatcatcher and the brilliantly colored prothonotary warbler. *Steve Heeger is an avid birder and current President of the Evansville Audubon Society* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org to register.

May 4 **Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Eagle Slough** (1 p.m.) at Eagle Slough Natural Area. Free. Join Wild Birds Unlimited co-owner Tim Griffith for a birding walk through this 127 acre urban wetland area. Eagle Slough is one of the most recent local areas to be returned to conservation. Be one of the first to come out and see what it has to offer. Meet at the entrance to Eagle Slough located on Waterworks Road, just north of Ellis Park. *Tim Griffith and his wife Margi are co-owners of Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited, the premier store for everything related to birds.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or info@wesselmannaturesociety.org for more information.