



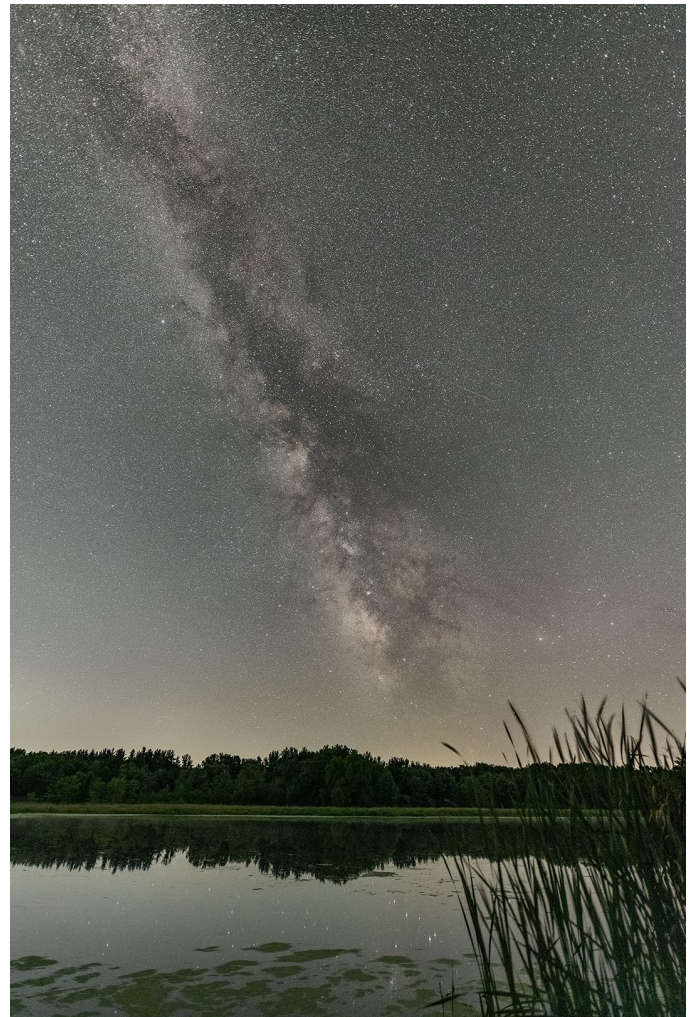
Autumn 2025



BIRDSONG CHAPTER

Calendar

Sept. 3 - **Stewardship Workday**
Sept. 5, 6, 7 – **Scouts/Gremel**
Sept. 13 – **Saturday Workday**
Sept. 17 – **Stewardship Workday**
Sept. 20 – **IAS Board Mtg.**
Sept. 24 – **Stewardship Workday**
Sept. 26, 27, 28 **BIG SIT !!**
Oct. 1 – **Stewardship Workday**
Oct. 8 – **Stewardship Workday**
Oct. 15 – **Stewardship Workday**
Oct. 25 – **Saturday Workday**
Oct. 29 – **Stewardship Workday**
Nov. 2 – **Photo Party/Pizza**
Nov. 5 – **Stewardship Workday**
Nov. 15 – **Saturday Workday**
Nov. 18 – **Budget Summit**
Nov. 19 - **Stewardship Workday**
Dec. - **Christmas Bird Count!**



Milky Way over Main Pond

Gremel Nature Preserve

(Don't miss the reflections of the stars in the water!) Photo by Steve Gillam

From reading the calendar on the first page, you may think all we do is WORK! But workdays are really filled with birdwatching, plant identification, discussions and great fellowship! Email

amboymarsh@illinoisaudubon.org

for details on how you can
HELP and have FUN.

Some members (Cheryl) love to pull weeds on Workdays so much that they even pull weeds when on Vacation!

Photo by Bob Chinn



The August meeting of the IAS Birdsong Chapter was attended by these turkeys – but they contributed nothing to our discussions! LOL. The group toured via golfcart the newest acquisition – the 60-acre Sinadinos property. And then toured the Queen of the Prairie parcel (136 acres) adjacent. We now have lots of open space for grassland birds.

Photo by Steve Gillam

Did you notice the **BIG SIT** on the calendar? This is a new event for us and it will be great! You, and friends, measure a 17 ft diameter circle, and you sit in the circle and count every bird you can see or hear! You must register at illinoisaudubon.org. Birdsong member Dave Brewer is doing a BIG SIT at Gremel Nature Preserve (Just Winging It) and members Deb Carey, Cassandra Rodgers and Cheryl Newlan are doing a BIG SIT at Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve (Birdsong Brood).

PAST EVENTS Spring/Summer 2025

The 2025 warm season began with a whoop – actually two whooping cranes circling Big Marsh at Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve, and ended with a holler from IAS Board member Isaac Stewart as he netted a new species of bumble bee at the IAS Diversity Field Trip in August.

The summer has been filled with volunteers accomplishing tasks, both big and small, on the 1,017 acres of the GRLP. Bill Rogers, Jim Hampson, John McCrosky, Deb Doyle, Steve Gillam, Cheryl Newlan, Mike Gallagher, Tim Smith, Alice Toppings, Connie Dickison, Dave Brewer, Amy Brewer, Bob Chinn, Teresa Smith, Randy Singleton, Deb Carey and many others spend time and energy assisting in the restoration and care of the sanctuaries.

And research projects abound as Tara Beveroth, Illinois Natural History Survey continues her breeding bird surveys at Amboy Marsh and Gremel nature preserves. Botanist Bill Handel, Head Fire Consulting, searches every nook and cranny for new and unusual plant species plus rejoices at the faithful everyday bloomers that provide sustenance for insects (and thus birds and herps too). One of the most interesting species at Amboy Marsh is *Monotropa hypopitys*, a chlorophyll-free parasite that feeds on fungi. *M. hypopitys* ranks number 10 on the Swink and Wilhelm chart (with 10 being the highest quality). David Mauger and Tom Anton completed a herp survey of several of the parcels, Stewart continues his insect studies, and citizen scientists Dave and Amy Brewer and Bob Chinn listened to a lot of frog species at Amboy Marsh and Gremel nature preserves. The frog call research was part of a larger state-wide project. Jim Hampson also continues his nesting box survey. With 13 bluebird houses, there were 29 baby bluebirds and 44 baby tree swallows. In 16 gourds at AMNP there were 58 baby martins. There were no martins nesting in 4 gourds at GNP.

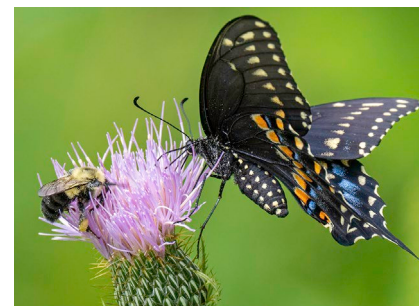
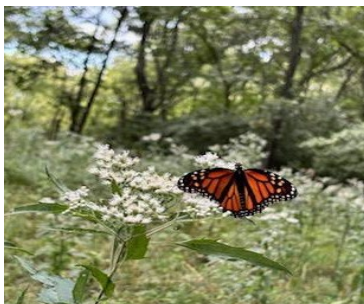
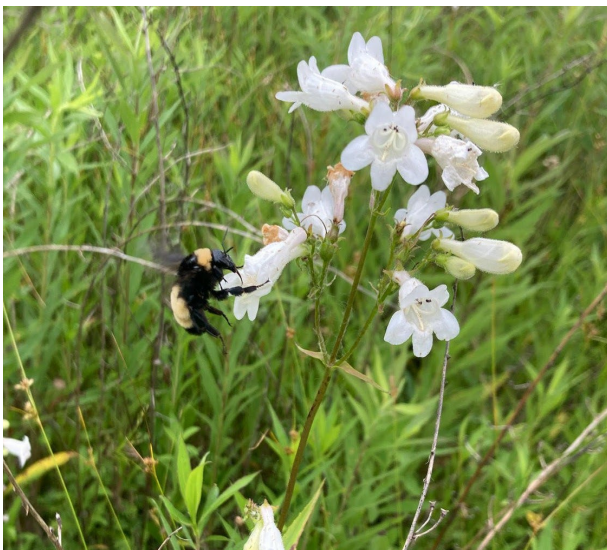
An Eagle Scout project netted our sanctuaries six sturdy Aldo Leopold-style benches. The scout who headed this project is in the late Russ Gremel's troop. Everyone enjoys a place to rest and watch wildlife.



Photo by Deb Doyle



A first for us! We hosted a summer intern from the BEST Job Training Program and were fortunate to have Cole Kleckner spend 10 weeks. Cole quickly learned to identify invasive weeds (and pulled BAGS of them), he was great at catching snakes, installing boundary signs and absorbing minutiae about our sanctuaries.



An American Bumble Bee was documented at Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve by Isaac Stewart. Brilliant yellow *Aureolaria grandiflora* flowers. Monarch butterfly on late boneset by Cheryl Newlan. Newly-discovered purple milkweed by Bill Rogers. Bumble Bee and Black Swallowtail by Steve Gillam.



Volunteers
are the
lifeblood of
our
sanctuaries!



Blast from
the PAST!
Muddy but
happy
volunteer
John
McKee in
2013.

Bill Rogers
on the John
Deere in
2025.



Shane Coers unloading a
new wildlife viewing
blind! The blind is
portable and is currently
situated at Willow
Wetland at Amboy Marsh
Nature Preserve. Use it!

Mark your calendar for Sunday Nov. 2 at 2 pm. Members and friends will meet to share photos and pizza! To be included in the Photo Show, send 1-20 Jpeg photos of your favorite flora & fauna of the Marsh to Deb Doyle at djdesigns9@gmail.com by October 17th. She will create an array of images for us to enjoy. Enjoy her photo of a male scarlet tanager below!



**Christmas
Bird Count
is right
around the
corner.**

**We thank
Diana Rod
for her
work with
our
counts!**

Lobelia cardenalis at Gremel



Birdsong Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society was hatched in 2012 in response to the purchase of the 272-acre Amboy Marsh by the Illinois Audubon Society.

13 years later we have 1,017 acres including Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve, Gremel Nature Preserve, Grigalauski, Sinadinos, Ryback, Hatch, and Queen of the Prairie parcels – all together called the **Green River Lowlands Preserve**.

Contact us at amboymarsh@illinoisaudubon.org

Website is <https://amboymarsh.wixsite.com/amboymarsh>

Chapter Officers:

Treasurer: John McCrosky

Co-secretary: Cassandra Rodgers and Jan Williams

Vice - President : Diana Rod

President: Deb Carey