

BIRDSONG CHAPTER

Vol. 5 | Issue 4 | Winter 2023

Birdsong Chapter 2023/24 Schedule

Meetings are held at
2:00 pm at

Amboy Marsh
1701 Mormon Rd.
Amboy, IL 61310

unless otherwise noted.

Dec 9 - Photo Sharing
Party - 2pm

Dec. 20th-Christmas Bird
Count-contact us to join
2024

March 10 -IAS Annual
Meeting

May 10,11,12 - IAS
Spring Gathering -

Mississippi River
May Bird Count

July 14 - Bird and
mammal videos from
Game Cameras on our
sites - 2pm

August 3- IAS Field Trip -
Register online through
IAS

October 13 - Climate
Change presentation
2pm

Nov 10 - photos and
pizza 2pm

ICECF Grant Update

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Stewardship grant is moving forward at a perfect pace. This is a grant that funds removal and control of invasive woody and herbaceous species at Gremel Nature Preserve; specifically in the area of the high quality sedge meadow. As of November, volunteers logged over 200 hours of stewardship (we need 400 total). We've achieved 49 hours of media work, and we need 100. The grant ends in April 2024, so Volunteer Leader Deb Walens is busy scheduling work days through March.

WE NEED YOU! Lots of jobs available - chainsaw work (if you have completed training), hand-lopping smaller stems, applying approved herbicide (if you have completed training), dragging, loading, unloading, burning. Photos and video work would also help. Something for everyone!

The sedge meadow is a diverse area with many species of wetland vegetation - turtlehead, gentians, ferns, and of course sedges of many varieties. Woody invasive shrubs compete for water, and obscure sunlight - so they need to go. Please help us if you can!



Research at the Preserves

Scientific research for the year is winding down at Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve and Gremel Nature Preserve. Completed and on-going projects include:

Avian Surveys - Tara Beveroth

Herps -(turtles, snakes, racerunners, newts, salamanders)-David Mauger, Dr.Richard King, Tom Anton

Ondatra (muskrats) - Dr. Bo Dziadyk

Insects - Isaac Stewart, Professor at Blackhawk East College

Flora - Bill Handel

Martins, Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and More - Jim Hampson

Recording of Natural Sounds - Dick Todd

Volunteers

A new volunteer recently commented “I used to think a “work day” would be too hard for me, but it turns out there is work everyone can do and I really enjoy it!” Volunteers make all of the work at Amboy Marsh and Gremel happen. We supply tools and training. You could assist with invasive plant removal (using hand snips or more), maintenance (helping clean and more), and other general stewardship tasks. This winter we will work following schedule. Please email to let John know you are coming in case weather causes changes in the plans.

December- Tues 5th, Wed.6th and Sat.16th

January - Wed. 3rd,10th,17th,24th,31st
Sat. 20th,27th

February - Wed. 7th,14th,28th Sat.3rd,17th

No experience is necessary. We can find a job that fits for you. Interested?

Please contact John McCrosky@
johncmccrosky@gmail.com



Volunteers at a fall workday.
We hope you can join us soon!

More Grant Work

The Natural Areas Stewardship grant is located at the same site as the ICECF grant work. Removal of sandbar willow, buckthorn and other woody invasives is the goal.

NAWCA Grant Update

The North American Wetland grant is wrapping up. Shane's Tree Care and Pizzo, Inc are the two contractors completing removal of woody invasives. This grant is at Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve adjacent to Big Marsh on the east and west sides. This is a multi-year grant but it ends in late winter 2024. This grant funded restoration to open the landscape and link several wetlands.



Winter is tracking time
photo by Amy Brewer



Hatch Pond - photo by Amy Brewer

Sightings

Two whooping cranes, a federally-endangered species, visited Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve in November. They chose Big Marsh as a good place to forage during their migration from Wisconsin to Florida. They arrived, spent the day, settled safely on the floating peat mat for the night, and continued on their journey the next morning about 7 am. We are honored they visited!

Birdsong Chapter was hatched in 2012. The chapter was created in response to the purchase by IAS of Amboy Marsh Nature Preserve, 1701 Mormon Road, Amboy. Four years later, IAS purchased Gremel Wildlife Sanctuary at 1881 Lewis Road, Amboy. The sanctuaries total about 750 acres, and the daily management is the privilege of the volunteer members of the Birdsong Chapter.



Limpkin - photo by Alyssa Rod

Another interesting bird visited Amboy Marsh this fall. A limpkin, usually found in Florida, may have been blown off course by the hurricane, and ended up in Willow Wetland. Wow! Volunteer Bill Rogers discovered both the cranes and the limpkin. Lifer birds for many of us!

Birdsong Chapter Officers

President-Deb Carey

Vice President-Diana Rod

Secretary - Cassandra Rodgers

Treasurer-John McCrosky

Websites:

amboymarsh@illinoisaudubon.org

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

FaceBook-Birdsong Chapter-Stewards of Amboy Marsh/Gremel

Contact us-amboymarsh@illinoisaudubon.org