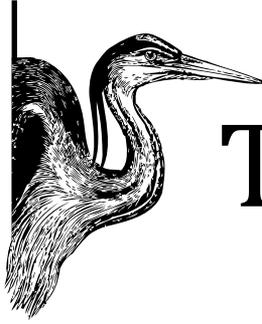


TIPPE TOPICS



SUMMER 2017

ANNUAL PICNIC

07/23

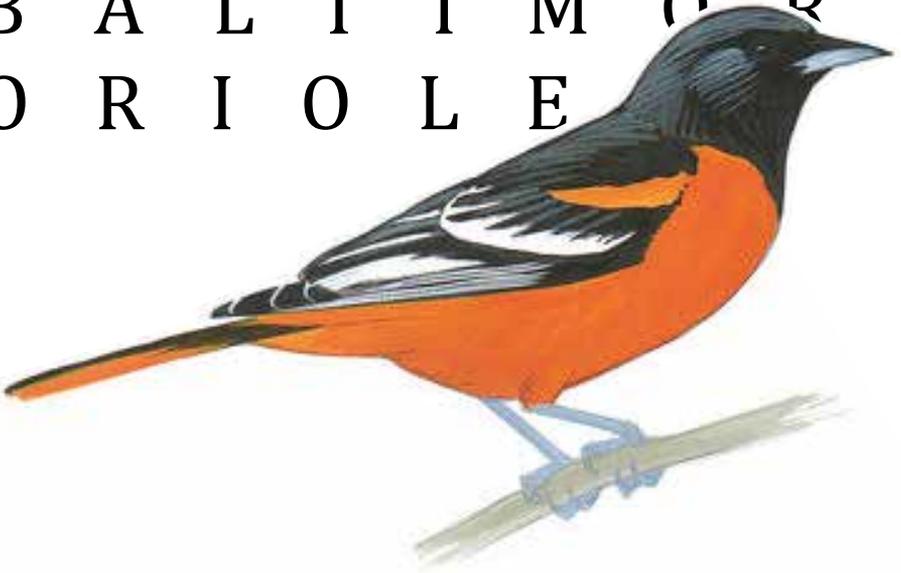
Sunday, July 23rd at 12:00 PM (NOON)
Koinonia Environmental and Retreat Ctr.

We will provide tableware, meat and drinks. Please bring a dish to share. A hike will follow lunch.

Directions: From North Manchester take SR 13 North and turn right (East) on 650 S — two miles North of Sidney. Take your first left (turn North) onto 650 E. The entrance will be on the left (West side of the road) about 1000 feet north of the intersection of 650 S and 650 E. Address is 6147 S 650 E, Pierceton, IN 46562.

Join us for our regularly-scheduled field trips, programs and bird counts.

B A L T I M O R E O R I O L E



BY JENNIFER JONES

One warm spring day while hanging clothes out on the clothes line, I heard a couple of Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) singing a fluty musical song. I stopped to watch them sing and bounce around the tree branches above. They have such beautiful bright orange and black plumage, it was hard to look away. The high-contrast colors — more striking than the rendition in this monochrome representation above — make this bird very easy to spot.

As I watched them flutter between trees, in the opening that was cleared for the house, I couldn't help but wonder if they might be singing to each other or singing to attract others farther away. I am not sure if the stuff they were picking from the branch of the walnut tree was for food or nesting materials.

Baltimore Orioles like to eat caterpillars, other bugs, and nectar from flowers and fruits. They especially like citrus fruits like oranges. I once cut up an orange and set it outside on a plate and the orioles just devoured them! You can buy an

oriole feeder which is brightly colored like an orange and make your own citrus nectar like you would for hummingbirds using sugar water.

I wonder if they used the orange peels as bedding in their nest?

I found that orioles build their nests on a low drooping branch from a tall tree about 20 to 30 feet above the ground. I've been told that they prefer to build their nests in elm trees, but I've seen them in maple trees too. I've seen the orioles build a nest in one of our trees close to our house. Much like their bright plumage, their nests are just as uniquely identifiable when you can spot them.

The female weaves plant fibers in the fork of a branch and starts to build a basket or sock like shape about 3 to 4 inches deep with a small opening at the top that hangs below the branch. She uses grass, vines, wool, twine, hair and other similar materials for the outer parts of the nest and animal fur, or downy feathers for the inner lining of the nest to keep her eggs warm.

Unfortunately for the orioles — but, fortunately for me — I've had the chance to see an oriole nest up close (photo to the right) when the elm tree, where the nest was built, fell in a storm. It was then that the orioles rebuilt their nest in the nearby maple tree. I imagined that it was too much trouble to find an elm nearby so they chose the next closest tree and decided that'd do.



ORIOLE NEST

The female oriole will normally have a clutch size of about 3 to 7 eggs. These pale grayish or blueish brown spotted eggs normally hatch within 11 to 14 days. I hope to one day see young orioles fledge from the nests that we've found surrounding our house.

— more at www.tippeaudubon.org —

FIELD TRIP

08/20 | **Sunday, August 20th at 1:30 PM**
Bock Nature Preserve (NEAR AKRON)

This ACRES site features both young and mature woodland, a forest pond and a restored prairie, which should have a good display of late-summer flowers.

The preserve is located on the east side of SR 14, about 1.3 miles north of Akron, and just south of the point where SR 14 makes a right-angle turn from north/south to east/west. The street address is 11630 S State Road 14, Akron, Indiana, 46910, or see <https://www.acreslandtrust.org/preserve/bock-nature-preserve/>.

For more information, please contact Dave Hicks at (260) 982-2471 or djhicks@manchester.edu

2017 BIG MAY DAY BIRD COUNT RESULTS

BY WILSON B. LUTZ

Every year the Tippecanoe Audubon society conducts two bird counts. One occurs in the spring and another takes place in late December or early January. All TAS members are invited to join. The count ends with a group session wherein the participants pool their results. One thing that our birding teams have noticed is that wherever there are active bird feeders, there will usually be more birds. The purpose of this article is to urge Audubon members to replenish the seeds [or suet] in their feeders as often as possible during the winter months. This will help the birds get through the rigors of winter and also give our birding groups more birds to count. They find it disappointing when they pass feeder after feeder totally devoid of seeds or suet. To help your local birds get through the winter we urge careful attention to keeping your feeders stocked.

May 13, 2017

41ST ANNUAL SPRING BIRD COUNT

Canada Goose	288
Mute Swan	42
Wood Duck	43
Gadwall	1
Mallard	85
Blue-winged Teal	3
Green-winged Teal	1
Hooded Merganser	1
Red-breasted Merganser	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	3
Wild Turkey	24
Common Loon	2
Pied-billed Grebe	2
Double-crested Cormorant	82
Am. White Pelican*	3
Great Blue Heron	44
Green Heron	3
Black Vulture*	5
Turkey Vulture	111
Bald Eagle	6
Cooper's Hawk	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	17
American Kestrel	4
Common Moorhen*	1
American Coot	2
Sandhill Crane*	11
Semipalmated Plover	4
Killdeer	56
Spotted Sandpiper	6
Solitary Sandpiper	7
Lesser Yellowlegs	1
American Woodcock	4
Ring-billed Gull	7
Black Tern	3
Common Tern	11
Rock Pigeon	53
Mourning Dove	128
Black-billed Cuckoo	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	1
Great Horned Owl	1
Barred Owl	7
Common Nighthawk	1
Chimney Swift	34
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	6
Belted Kingfisher	2
Red-headed Woodpecker	11
Red-bellied Woodpecker	69

144 SPECIES

7096 INDIVIDUALS

Downy Woodpecker	46
Hairy Woodpecker	11
Northern Flicker	25
Pileated Woodpecker	7
Eastern Wood-Pewee	26
Acadian Flycatcher	19
Alder Flycatcher	1
Willow Flycatcher	6
Least Flycatcher	11
Eastern Phoebe	40
Great Crested Flycatcher	63
Eastern Kingbird	26
White-eyed Vireo	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	37
Blue-headed Vireo	3
Warbling Vireo	69
Red-eyed Vireo	60
Blue Jay	225
American Crow	134
Horned Lark	24
Purple Martin	111
Tree Swallow	86
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	41
Bank Swallow	43
Barn Swallow	221
Carolina Chickadee*	16
Black-capped Chickadee*	50
Tufted Titmouse	63
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	66
Brown Creeper	1
Carolina Wren	8
House Wren	137
Sedge Wren	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	69
Eastern Bluebird	36
Veery	3
Swainson's Thrush	11
Hermit Thrush	1
Wood Thrush	49
American Robin	532
Gray Catbird	137
Northern Mockingbird	1
Brown Thrasher	9
European Starling	410
Blue-winged Warbler	4
Tennessee Warbler	7

Nashville Warbler	33
Northern Parula	24
Yellow Warbler	208
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10
Magnolia Warbler	8
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	13
Black-throated Green Warbler	17
Blackburnian Warbler	2
Yellow-throated Warbler	5
Pine Warbler	1
Palm Warbler	6
Cerulean Warbler	3
Black-and-white Warbler	10
American Redstart	59
Prothonotary Warbler	1
Ovenbird	7
Northern Waterthrush	4
Louisiana Waterthrush	2
Common Yellowthroat	118
Hooded Warbler	2
Yellow-breasted Chat	4
Eastern Towhee	19
American Tree Sparrow	4
Chipping Sparrow	119
Field Sparrow	40
Vesper Sparrow	3
Savannah Sparrow	14
Grasshopper Sparrow	5
Song Sparrow	111
Swamp Sparrow	3
White-throated Sparrow	25
White-crowned Sparrow	42
Summer Tanager	1
Scarlet Tanager	21
Northern Cardinal	230
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	71
Indigo Bunting	73
Bobolink	22
Red-winged Blackbird	687
Eastern Meadowlark	40
Common Grackle	223
Brown-headed Cowbird	122
Orchard Oriole	4
Baltimore Oriole	116
House Finch	34
American Goldfinch	117
House Sparrow	260

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VISIT US ON THE WEB AT tippeaudubon.org

Eagle Marsh Field Trip Report *(March 25, 2017)*

Attendance was low, probably due to the threatening weather forecast. However, the rain held off and this turned out to be a good day to visit this wetland restoration site near the intersection of US 24 and I-69. The marsh connects the Great Lakes and Mississippi watersheds, and is a possible spot for invasive carp to move into the Great Lakes. We looked at the recently constructed berm which should keep this from occurring.

We were greeted by a Bald Eagle that posed for over 30 minutes in some bare trees not far from the parking area. We got great looks at this bird through a spotting scope. It made a Red-Tailed Hawk in the background look rather small.

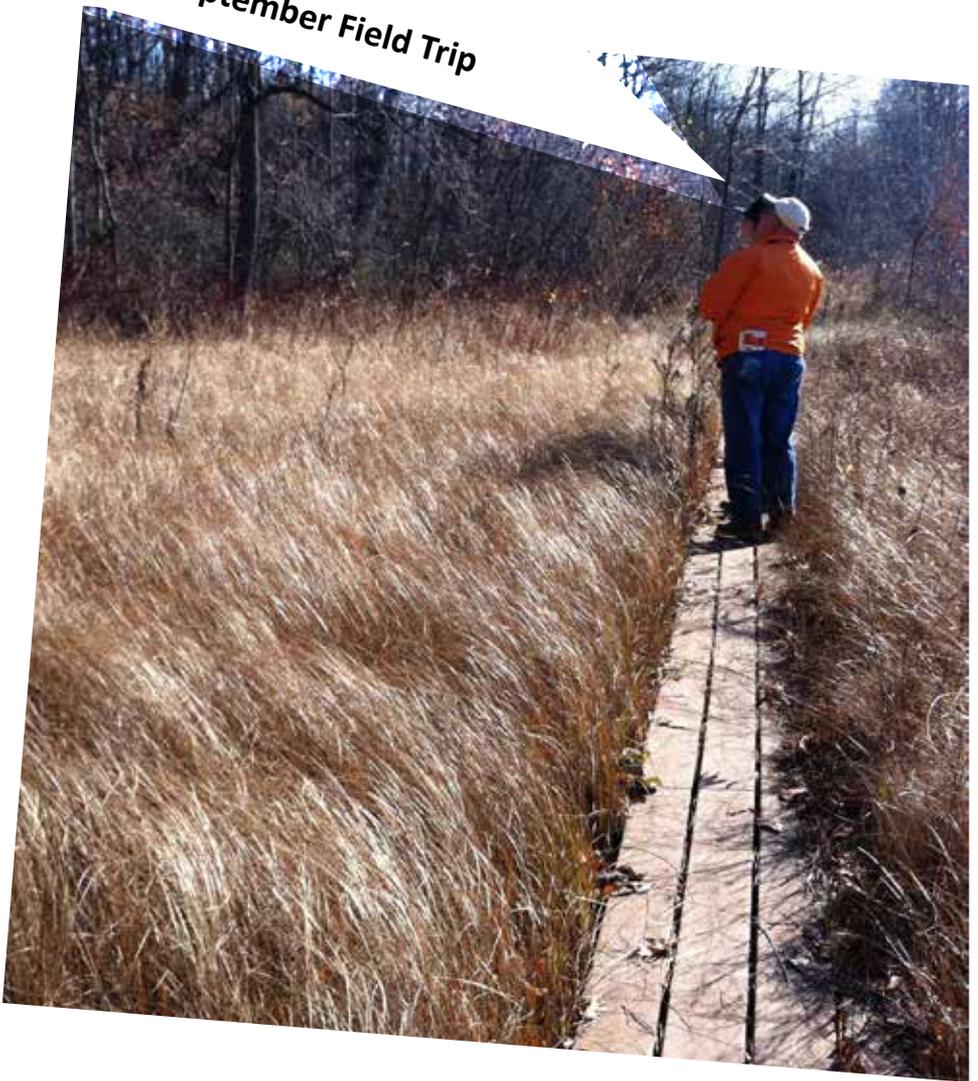
Eagle Marsh at the end of March is a good spot for migrating water birds, and this year was no exception. We saw three Horned Grebes as well as a Pied-Billed Grebe. Two of the Horned Grebes were males in plumage transitional from the winter to the breeding pattern. They were following a single female, who didn't seem very interested.

Bird species come in waves in the spring, and this seemed to be the week for teal. Green-winged Teal were especially common, with substantial numbers of Blue-winged Teal. There were also some Shovelers. Nonmigrants such as Great Blue Heron, Mallards and Canada Geese were also present.

The highlight of the trip came at the end, and was not a bird. We got a great look at an American Mink crossing the trail, swimming through a channel, and pausing to look at us.



September Field Trip



09/16

Saturday, September 16th at 9:30 AM
Crooked Lake Nature Preserve

This IN DNR nature preserve has a trail through forest and along the shore of one of the area's cleanest lakes. There are good views of the lake, with possible sightings of waterfowl, as well as interesting plant communities. See <http://bit.ly/2rEA1Vz> for more information.

From the intersection of SR 9 and US 30 on the north side of Columbia City, go north on SR 9 about 7 miles to the Noble-Whitley County line. Go 0.5 mile west on the county line road to a marked parking lot on the south side of the road.



These **wildflowers** were recently planted in the Flory-Gemmer Marsh as part of the restoration effort.

< Queen-of-the-prairie

< Mountain mint

< Purple prairie clover

< Golden alexander



< Rattlesnake master

< Purple coneflower

< Culver's root

Liatris spicata
(not pictured
here, but it was
also planted)

< Prairie dock

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY AL CRIST

I'm the President of Tippecanoe Audubon Society and I rarely get a chance to actually go birding in the spring! Now that's what I call a fine kettle of fish. The problem is my job. You may know that my wife Beth and I own and operate a wholesale plant nursery. Consequently, in the 36 years I've owned the nursery, I've grown to dread the coming of spring. For us, April and May mean work, worries, more work, lack of sleep, and still more work. Those months are great for the bank account, since they account for about 75 or 80% of our yearly income, but they're not so great for most anything else.

But what about the birds? Beth and I love watching birds. How to get our birding fix in the spring? Well, we've found there are a couple of ways to do just that. We're religious about keeping our feeders filled. The feeders sit just outside our kitchen windows so we get a good view when we're in the kitchen or eating at the breakfast counter. It's great fun to watch as Goldfinch change from their drab winter colors to their bright summer-gold and black. We always look forward to see spring migrants come through, at least those that are attracted to feeders. The first days we see Hummingbirds or Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at the feeders are real "gold star" days for us.

The most fun we have in spring, as far as birds go, is observing their nesting in and around the nursery. We have quite a few hoop-shaped greenhouses in the nursery and birds love to nest in them. Robins like to build nests in the wall framing in the front and end walls. Chipping Sparrows like to pick out a potted shrub or vine that's well camouflaged by other plants to build their nest. When we find a nest in a plant, we put in a sign so the employees

know not to pull that plant, or any of the ones nearby that surround the nest, for an order. We also get the occasional Song Sparrow nesting in the greenhouses.

On cold nights, we close the doors to the greenhouses and make sure the heaters are working. The nesting birds seem to wait patiently in the morning for us to re-open the houses after the outside temperature rises above freezing. That's a pretty good deal for them — heated nesting areas.

This year we also had Bluebirds build a nest in a compartment in an outside box where we keep plant labels. Killdeers always nest somewhere in the graveled outside growing areas. Watching them and they're chicks after they hatch is a real blast. We always anxiously await the arrival of our Barn Swallows. Watching them build their nests, sit on their eggs, and then seeing the tiny chicks with their oversized beaks be fed by their parents is wonderful. It's a great show the day the chicks fledge from the nest.

A few years ago, we mounted a Kestrel nesting box on the side of one of our barns. They've nested in it for the last few years but this year was really special. We watched as the parents would bring food to the chicks that would perch on the entrance hole waiting to be fed. We didn't actually see either chick leave the nest box for their first flight, but did watch as the parents supervised their clumsy efforts of flight the first days out of the nest. The parents kept them fed for the first day or two away from the nest box and then chicks and parents were off and away. We'll see them perched on the power lines along the road, but the nest box will stay deserted until late next winter.

And, this spring for the first time, I made the time to do the TAS Spring Bird Count. A whole day away from the nursery — what fun!

INDIAN PIPE, A FASCINATING FLOWER

BY SHERRY GIGOUS, INDIANA MASTER NATURALIST STUDENT

Indian pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*) is a fascinating flower. Yes, it is a flower! True, it has no chlorophyll, grows in dark fungi laden environments and has many characteristics more mushroom-like than floral. Perhaps even more fascinating, it is related to the blueberry as a member of the Ericaceae family. While not resembling anything remotely “berry” in its presentation, it is in fact edible (though mildly toxic) and a natural supplier of salicylic acid, more commonly recognized as the main ingredient in aspirin. It is used often in natural healing as an anti-inflammatory. Using it in a rosewater rinse has reportedly been helpful in treating inflamed eyes. It is also a powerful nervine and may ease seizure disorders, convulsions, insomnia, mental disorders and chronic muscle spasms. Its flower essence is considered a particularly helpful balancing agent by natural health practitioners.



The ghost plant, as Indian Pipe is often called, has a stalk similar to an asparagus plant, with scales rather than leaves — as it does not photosynthesize — topped by a bell shaped flower that appears between late spring and fall. It can appear pinkish-white in color or even slightly purple or yellow. Small bumblebees are attracted to pollinate its blooms. Once pollinated, the bloom forms a seed capsule that releases very small seeds onto the wind.

But to explain the nature in which this flower manages to feed itself, we have to explore an entirely different plant-to-nature relationship. Some plants are mycorrhizal. This means a plant, often a tree, will form a special symbiotic relationship with a nearby occurring fungus. These fungi will broaden the supply of nutrients and moisture available to the tree’s roots. In turn, the tree, with its large sunlight capturing ability, will use this energy combined with the extra absorbed water to create sugars and other carbohydrates the fungi can enjoy in their growth.

However, Indian Pipe, for all its wonderful help to humans, is not actually so symbiotic. In what is called an epiparasitic relationship, it actually sends its seedling roots curling around the mycelia of the particular mycorrhizal fungi group known as Russula, stealing its precious carbs for its own survival!

It is not known why the photosynthetic plant and mycorrhizal fungus allow this parasitic relationship. As of now, science has yet to find any evidence Indian pipe gives any benefit to its host. Formally known as *Monotropa uniflora*, perhaps its spooky lifestyle gives more meaning to its other common names, corpse plant and ice plant!

“A Plant With a Way.” www.curiousnature.info. Web. 23 May 2017.

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Kuo, Michael. “Indian Pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*).” www.mushroomexperts.com. Web. 23 May 2017.

Pace, Mathew. “Hidden Partners: Mycorrhizal Fungi and Plant.” www.sciweb.nybg.org. Web. 23 May 2017.

“Tom Volk’s Fungus of the Month for October2002.” botit.botany.wisc.edu. Web. 23 May 2017.

“What Are Indian Pipes.” www.mushroomappreciation.com. Web. 23 May 2017.

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