

KVAS Summer 2010



Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society, a chapter of Illinois Audubon Society

Volume 15, issue 2

Letter from Our President:

Summer is certainly a busy time of year for most of us. I hope most of you will be able to attend the 3rd KAVANA Fest (Kaskaskia Valley Nature Festival) on Saturday, July 24th. Chapter volunteers will be starting around 7 am setting up tents, displays, etc. If you plan to attend and can loan a pedestal fan and/or an extension cord, please bring those with you; have your name on the item(s) and drop off at one of the large pavillions. We will see what weather conditions prevail for that day, but we, of course, expect hot conditions. Some new things that we will have this year are: a nature photography class and a panel discussion about the Kaskaskia River, reflecting various perspectives on natural resources in the Valley.

During the June planning meeting about 20 members enjoyed a great day at the farm of Ralph and Karen Buettner, including a hayride to see rare, glad habitat and prairie plots, a fun picnic with food shared by the Olson's and many others, and a long discussion about programs for the upcoming year, as well as current issues. Thank you, Ralph and Karen! The group deliberated quite a bit about how KVAS can help with recovery from the Gulf oil disaster. The chapter has already donated \$100 to the American Birding Association to support volunteers helping animals injured by B.P.'s leaking oil. We generally agreed that we will carefully watch the proceedings and wait to see if another donation can be helpful. We want to make sure the money actually helps animals and habitat recover. One thing we can all do to help, right now, today, is to drive our vehicles less. We can also use the most fuel-efficient vehicles we can afford to and properly maintain them to ensure we use as little fuel as possible. Our collective action of using less fuel in our daily lives will reduce demand for deep sea drilling.

As usual, those attending the June meeting proposed many excellent ideas for programs and ways KVAS can get people involved in conservation activities during the upcoming year.

Tim Dever, KVAS President

Membership Directory

This year's planning meeting included the discussion of having a membership directory available to all members for private use only. KVAS would include members' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email. If for whatever reason you DO NOT want to be included in this directory then you can simply contact

Susan Harbaugh and let know what not to include. Contact info on back page!



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Officers:

- *President: Tim Dever 475-2366*
- *Vice-president: Debbie Newman*
- *Treasurer: Ken Young*
- *Secretary: OPEN*
- *IAS Liaison: Tom May*
- *Board Members at Large: Carol Dougherty, Ralph Buettner, Krista Olson*
- *Past President: Susan Harbaugh*

Committee Chairs:

- *Programs: Debbie Newman 684-4799*
- *Field Trips: Marty Kemper 345-4444*
- *Newsletter & website: Krista Olson 473-3229 kmo6978@yahoo.com*
- *Membership: Susan Harbaugh 282-2914*

We Nurture Nature

HELP KVAS RAISE FUNDS



ONLINE:

Please use www.goodsearch.com

SHOPPING: Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society (KVAS) continues to reap the benefits of the eScrip program. The Schnucks eScrip Community Card Program simply requires a shopper to register a card and then to present it to the cashier each time when checking out at the store. Schnucks in turn

makes a donation to

KVAS. If you would like to participate in this program or know of a relative or friend you could pass a card to, contact Tim Dever. Or simply pick up some cards at the service counter next time you are at Schnucks. Card activation is as easy as calling 1-800-931-6258 or by visiting www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp. Our group ID is 500006097.

Long-eared Owls Visit Washington County — Tom May

In early March, Roger Weber called to say that he had two Long-eared owls in an American hemlock tree next to his house. Roger lives in Washington County near Oakdale. I went over to his house just to see the owls and called Merle and Jeanne Schmierbach to meet me there. While we were standing there watching, Merle walked over to the tree to pick up one of the many pellets visible on the ground to see what they were eating. One of the owls flew out of the tree and swooped down to about three feet off the ground, I think to gain speed and then it flew up into a nearby pine tree.

I thought if I put up a mist net at about the low part of his flight, I could catch it as it came out of the tree. I did just that for the next three nights and found the owls were watching me put up the net and left out the back way. On the fourth night, I put up another net at a right angle to the first and waited for it to get dark. The owls usually left for the night at about 7:10 to

7:30 every night so we made our first net check at about 7:15 and found one owl in the middle lower portion of the second net. That owl was banded, weighed, measured, photographed and released. As I was busy putting my equipment away in my truck the word came back, from Jeanne, that we had caught the second owl in the very same spot. We processed that owl the same way.



To my knowledge there were only four Long-eared owls reported in Illinois this winter. That may change as more reports come in. The owls were at Roger's house every night from February 19 to March 19 and they were banded on March 11, 2010.

Illinois Birding History by Tom May

While cleaning out a corner of my garage the other day, I found a box with some old bird literature in it, and decided I needed a rest. So I started going through some of it. One piece of material was the "Seasonal Report No. 32 for the Winter Season of 1981/82" by Vernon Kleen for the Natural Heritage Section of IDNR. I naturally started looking at the reports for hawks and owls. When I made it to the listing of the American Kestrel this interesting report caught my eye.

American Kestrel -- Excellent numbers: One arrived at a Bensenville feeder on 21 Dec. and made daily visits throughout January. It killed a starling that was inside a birdhouse, but could not extricate the bird. K. Westfall, the

owner of the bird house, removed the dead starling and placed it on the garage roof where the kestrel ate it. Beginning 11 Feb. , the kestrel came to a backyard elm tree and responded to the daily whistle when ground beef, chicken gizzards and livers were made available.

As for owls it was reported both for Long-eared and Short-eared owls; "Good season", with fifty-one Long-eared and fifty-eight Short-eared owls reported throughout the state. There were also eight Snowy owls reported in Illinois that season. Oddly though, there were no reports of any Great-horned owls and as expected no reports of Barn Owls.

Your Greener Life...Our Greener Planet!

Practical Ideas for Eco-Living By: Debbie Newman



Think you've cut your energy use as much as possible? If so, please read on...Ha! As a writer who thinks she has (me), I'm always amazed to learn something else to lower my carbon footprint and save money. In fact, I've made it a game, occasionally sleuthing around the house to see if I have missed anything. My next favorite thing is doing an "audit" for friends to see how much they could cut their energy use. I love to see the facial expressions or reactions: "Are you crazy??!", or preferably "Great idea, I never thought of that!"

Now as for KV Auduboners, I consider us a pretty green bunch. So an energy audit might not be the same if I did it at one of your homes. But still, there is usually something even the most diehard conservationist can discover. With that said...I hope you find the below useful.

Let's start with the lights. Ok, now you're saying "yes I already know, replace incandescent with compact fluorescent light bulbs. Many of you, like me, probably started replacing some years ago. You may also have been hindered by obstacles such as price, type, and size. Today, however, all that has changed. For example you can now buy CFLs for can lights that dim, and while the price is still higher than regular CFLs, they're now in the affordable category. Subsidy programs have brought the price of CFLs way down. I recently purchased a CFL 3-pak at a home improvement store for \$4.00! And don't feel bad about throwing out the incandescent bulbs; the urgency of CO2 emission reductions eclipses the waste factor. Just don't forget, in 7-10 years when the CFLs burn out, make sure and

recycle them to keep mercury out of our environment. (1800Lamprecycle, Home Depot, health departments, hazardous waste pickup days are a few recycling outlets).

Amazing CO2 savings come from a simple device and habit. TVs, computers, stereos, and other devices use standby power even when switched off. Plug these into power strips and simply shut off the strip when the devices are not in use. Toasters, cell phone chargers, etc. unplug 'em when not in use!

According to recent studies, standby power accounts for 5-10% of household electric use! As an example: a DVD or VCR machine consumes about 44 kWh (kilowatt-hours) per year turned off, boxes for cable or satellite TV approximately 157 kWh per year, tube TVs 26 kWh, and computers 140 (laptop) to 500 (desktop) kWh a year. At 10c per kWh, this would add up to \$36-72. And that's just if you have ONE of each of these in your house. Plus, of course, there are other electronics and appliances I haven't mentioned here. For more info go to <http://standby.lbl.gov/>.

Electric hot water heaters keep water hot all night while we're sleeping. Consider installing a timer to switch yours off during nighttime hours. For \$10-20, a water heater blanket will also save energy on older models.

Going on vacation or just a short weekend trip? Unplug everything! Alarm clocks, hot water heaters, microwaves with clocks, TVs, and so forth. If we'd spend the time to clip coupons, or go out of our way to get a bargain price on a pair of shoes, why wouldn't we spend the time to save our money, right in our own house?

SUMMER BIRD COUNT BRIEF: Altogether we counted 163 species, our second best SBC total. Our highest was 168 several years ago.

Highlights included: Black duck, stilt sandpiper, willets, nesting bald eagle, osprey, wilson's phalarope by Dennis Jacobsen & Tish Turner; Worm eating warbler by Deb-

bie Newman; Yellow-crowned night heron, american and least bittern and many warbler species by the Daubach's; 14 great blue heron nests by Krista, Trish and Tom; blue grosbeaks by Paul Feldker & Daubach's; yellow-bellied sapsucker by Paul Feldker

Thanks to all for your participation. May 7, 2011 -- save the date.

KVAS 2010 Program Calendar

All meetings will be held at 7pm at Southwestern Illinois College, Redbud Campus in the auditorium. For More Information contact Program Chairman, Debbie Newman at 618-684-4799 or skink@globaleyes.net.

September 16 –KVAS member, Hugh Gilbert will present **Snakes: Facts and Myths**, including live specimens! Hugh first became interested in snakes at the age of 12, and the ‘magic’ never disappeared. Hugh has two Associate degrees in Arts and Sciences, and once worked as a Zookeeper in St. Louis. Over the years he has contributed much knowledge to biologists in our area about local snake populations, including valuable records on threatened and endangered snake species. Be sure to bring/invite children you know to this hands-on program...they may become the next Hugh Gilberts of the world, advocating for one of nature’s important group of animals. Join the speaker for pizza/pasta at DiCarlos at 5:30. G-Judy M, T-Newmans and Susan H

October 21 –Dr. Walter Sundberg, retired mycologist from SIUC’s Dept. of Plant Biology, will give us a program on **Mushrooms are More Than What Comes in a Can**. Don’t miss this informative and entertaining talk about mushroom diversity and biology. In 2011, we’ll have a field trip with Dr. Sundberg, so this will be a good introduction to Illinois fungi! Dr. Sundberg taught for 32 years at SIU, and is currently the Chief Mycologist (Scientific Advisor) to the Missouri Mycological Society. G-Roger W, T-Jack N and Tim D

November 18 – Merle Schmierbach will present a program on **Conservation and Natural History of the Barn Owl**. Trained as a field biologist with a MS from the University of Illinois, Merle also worked as the University's naturalist managing all of their natural areas in Central Illinois. Since that time he has worked primarily in the educational field. In 2008, Merle and his wife had a pair of barn owls nest in the old oak tree in their front yard in St. Clair County. Merle is on a mission to help this state-endangered bird, doing programs and projects such as building and installing nest boxes for the owls. Join the speaker for pizza/pasta at DiCarlos at 5:30. G-Tim D; T-Annika O and Tom M

December – Christmas Party

Thank you all for your generosity. We will try to have the SWIC staff get the coffee maker and hot water going (BYOTB--bring your own tea bags).

2010 Field Trips

Saturday, July 24, 2010: 3rd Annual Nature Fest Hanft Park, New Athens, IL

September 25 – 10am. Learn more about solar power and other energy measures at KVAS members Debbie and Barry Newman’s house. In 2009, the Newman’s installed a 2 Kilowatt photovoltaic system, reducing their energy consumption by about 40%. Come view the installation and join in the discussion about alternative energy. If you’d like to stay for a hike, bring a sack lunch and we’ll continue our discussions in the woods afterwards. (Newman’s will provide drinks). Directions: come through Ava on State Route 4, towards Oraville. You’ll pass Sato Road on the left, you’ll go up a hill and see a driveway to your right, go down and back up a second hill and our driveway is the next one (right before the mailboxes, it’s the 2nd driveway after Sato Road.) You can't see the house from the road, but you’ll know you're at the right place if it says 6420 on the house.

December 18 — Christmas Bird Count

Warbler counts—Tim Dever

.During early Spring 2010 Tom May, Krista Olson, and Tim Dever decided to try to help increase prothonotary warbler populations along the Kaskaskia River, by taking researcher Jeff Hoover's lead. During the early 90's Jeff pioneered the use of waxed, paperboard milk cartons taped to bottomland forest trees in the Cache River valley

to give this species more nesting opportunities (this bright yellow swamp-dwelling warbler requires a cavity for nesting). After installing several hundred such nest boxes, he recorded increased nesting activity and nest success for the species in his study area. Our three chapter members have set up nearly 30 such boxes in areas near New Athens in

Monroe and St. Clair counties. They have checked on a few and so far have no takers, but the spring counts were up in the area. Perhaps having them up in proper habitat (which by the way is quite the mosquito haven) for a number of years will eventually draw some nesting prothonotaries.

Riverwatch Program—Tim Dever

The Riverwatch program employs over 200 specially-trained volunteer monitors to assess the habitat quality in Illinois' streams. The program began in 1995 and has garnered an extensive collection of stream quality assessments that are being studied as trend data on the health of the streams. New volunteers are always welcomed, appreciated, and needed; contact Vera Bojic, program coordinator at Lewis and Clark Community College, Godfrey, IL., VBojic@lc.edu. This is a fun, educational way to learn

about human influence on ecosystems (i.e.that siltation from rainwater run-off is a major problem). One of our chapter members has completed the monitoring on Mud, Richland, and 9-Mile creeks for nearly 15 of those years and observed habitat quality to vary quite a bit. for 2010 the Mud Creek site (Washington Co.) scored 5.16, Richland (downtown Belleville location)--6.1, and the 9-Mile creek site--5.5. A score between 5.01 and 5.7 indicates a stream with "fair" quality, whereas one between 5.71 and 6.25points to a "poor"

stream habitat quality. Clearly there is room for improvement. Landowners leaving a 50-100 feet (or more) woodland border along all sizes of streams, use of no-till planting, and all pollution and erosion-control efforts could help improve stream habitat quality for all participants in the ecosystem--from dragonfly and caddisfly larvae up to we humans (who will always need a clear, clean water supply). Please never deposit trash or chemicals of any kind into Illinois waterways.

Future Generations — Tim Dever

With help from Doug Despain, teacher Sarah Lanham, Colton and Tim Dever, and the Garden Design landscaping firm (owned by New Athens resident Craig Weber), the 6th through 8th grade students at St. Agatha Catholic school in New Athens, learned how to stratify prairie plant seeds last Winter and planted about 100 native prairie grasses and forbs (18 species thus far) in a 10 x 40 foot plot in an under-utilized part of the school yard. They completed planting just before school ended in May and have included Indian

grass, Illinois mimosa, senna, round-headed bush clover, New Jersey tea (yes, it's native to Illinois prairies), prairie bergamot, and red milkweed plants, just to name a few. This is an ongoing project in which students will continue to plant, remove weeds, learn about plant-insect associations, and increase appreciation for a habitat that has nearly disappeared from the state. We have less than 1/10th of 1% of good quality original prairie left! You are welcome to visit the student project; just let principal Charlotte Newbold know of your intentions.

Scissor Tailed Flycatcher in Area

Local birders had spread the news like wild fire. The Scissor Tailed Flycatcher had been found in Belleville, IL. And, has only been seen in the county 3 times. It is believed that the pair is nesting at the intersection of Rt 15 and Frank Scott Parkway, across from the Walgreen's. Many birders from the state have made a trip to see these special birds. Reports are pouring in on the web group, IBET.

STFC are common in open country such as grass-

lands in Texas and Oklahoma. Adults are distinctively more colorful than immature. There are rare hybrids of the fly-

catcher species, but several records do exist of STFC and Western Kingbird hybrids.

Flycatchers are sit-

and-wait predators of insects. They will wait for the insects to be out in the open and use a "hawking" maneuver to fly out and grab the insect in the air. The strikingly long tails of the Scissor Tailed are longer in males who also perform an aerial courtship display both used to impress a mate. Mating pairs are usually monogamous for the breeding season. Once a nest has been established, STFC are able to defend against brood parasitism of cowbirds by removing the eggs.

Take some time to enjoy these rare visitors.



Saw Whet Owl Trip thru Illinois and into Wisconsin— October 9-11, 2010

We will pickup participants along the way as we travel north in Illinois. Our first stop will be at the Illinois Audubon headquarters in Margery Adams Sanctuary in Springfield. From there we will continue on to Sand Bluff Bird Observatory in far northern Illinois where we will have our first birding experience. Sand Bluff volunteers will be banding both small passerines at one site and hawks at another. We will split into two groups so that each group will spend time at each site. Our visit coincides with the height of hawk migration for this area. When we leave Sand Bluff, we will go to our first motel stop. The next morning we will travel a short distance to the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, WI. There we will see seventeen species of cranes from all over the world. Our next stop is a docent led tour of the "Birds in Art" at the Leigh-Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, WI. This is an international art exhibit showing birds in all mediums. We will then come

back to our second motel stop and get ready for an evening with the Saw-whets. The banding site, Linwood Springs Research Station, is only six miles from Stevens Point, WI and we will spend enough time there for all of us to get a good owl fix. The next morning we will be on the road at a normal early morning birding hour to take us south to Necedah Wildlife Refuge. There we will walk up the tree story viewing platform, and hopefully we will see the Whooping Cranes training behind the ultra—light aircraft for their trip to Florida. After seeing the Whooping Cranes (there will be some adults in the meadow to view if the class of 2010 is not training) we will begin our journey home.

The cost of this trip is \$280. This includes a donation to IAS Land Acquisition Fund, two nights in motels, (double occupancy), transportation, and entrance fees to the two banding stations and the crane foundation.

Locavore Restaurant Guide — Krista Olson

Eating locally grown produce is a concept that has been around for centuries yet is gaining new momentum. With technology and advancements in shipping we are able to get food products from around the world. This is helpful in many ways such as getting food where there isn't a local source, or variety and flavors from everywhere. But, with these advantages there is a pay off as with anything. While restaurants are able to get a wider variety of food and often times in bulk or out of season, they must pay the toll on the environment to get these food products to their destination. Food is also not as fresh and flavorful. In light of this, some restaurants have started integrating more and more seasonal and local produce. I personally have not eaten at all of them, but would like to encourage our members to patronize such establishments as it is good for the environment, and the freshest ingredients around.

This concept also holds true for your own personal use and I encourage everyone to shop at a local farmer's market whenever possible. It seems like these are popping up more as well. Our area has many opportunities and varieties for selection. Did you know that the Red Bud area alone has some exotic farms with elk and ostrich meat for sale? Get out there and try the spice of Southern Illinois Life.

This is a short list of area restaurants and if anyone would like to add to it please contact me at 473 3229 or kmo6978@yahoo.com All of this information can be found on the LOCAVORE link on our webpage. [Www.e-kvas.org/locavore](http://www.e-kvas.org/locavore)

[J.Fires' Market Bistro](#) — Their big focus is to grow and supply the restaurant with their own tomatoes, bell peppers, herbs (parsley, thyme, rosemary, thai queen basil, blue african basil, sweet leaf basil, purple opal basil, lemon basil, lemon verbena, tangerine sage, pineapple sage, tarragon, curry, sage, oregano), yellow squash, eggplant, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers, turnips, blackberries, apples, pears, lettuce (arugula, red oak, butterbib, romaine, tat soi).

We do fresh squeezed juices and I get all those through Rooster's in Columbia, they offer organic. I also found that Kruse Gardens in Columbia offers Lacinato Kale, peppers, lettuces, escarole, all herbs, beets, all tubers, many many more and local honey!

The first year they had a small garden on premises, this year they will have that and a much larger one off premise. Another project in the making is to start growing micro greens.

Thank you for contacting us. It is one of our main goals to be able to supply fresh local ingredients.

—Jennifer Pensoneau

725 N. Market St. Waterloo, IL 62298 618-939-7233 www.jfires.com

[Dave & Joyce's Country Kitchen](#).— Fresh eggs, meat, vegetables

(618) 282-6663. Red Bud 509 N Main St Red Bud, IL

[Gianfranco's at the Opera House](#) — This brand new restaurant is establishing local ties to get fresh ingredients to serve.

102 South Main Street, Red Bud, IL 62278-1103 (618) 282-9650

[Eur Orleans Bistro](#), 14 South Jackson, Millstadt 618-719-4598, myspace.com/eob_bistro,

[Locavores](#) at 1015 West Main in Belleville, 618-719-6786 locavorescafe@gmail.com.

Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society

611 S. East ST.

New Athens, IL 62264.

Phone: 475-2366

E-mail: coltond98@sbcglobal.net

Please take a look at your address label.

It will read "Individual dues paid thru xxxx" or "Family dues paid thru xxxx"

If your dues are not paid for 2010, please submit them to the KVAS Treasurer by March 31, 2010.

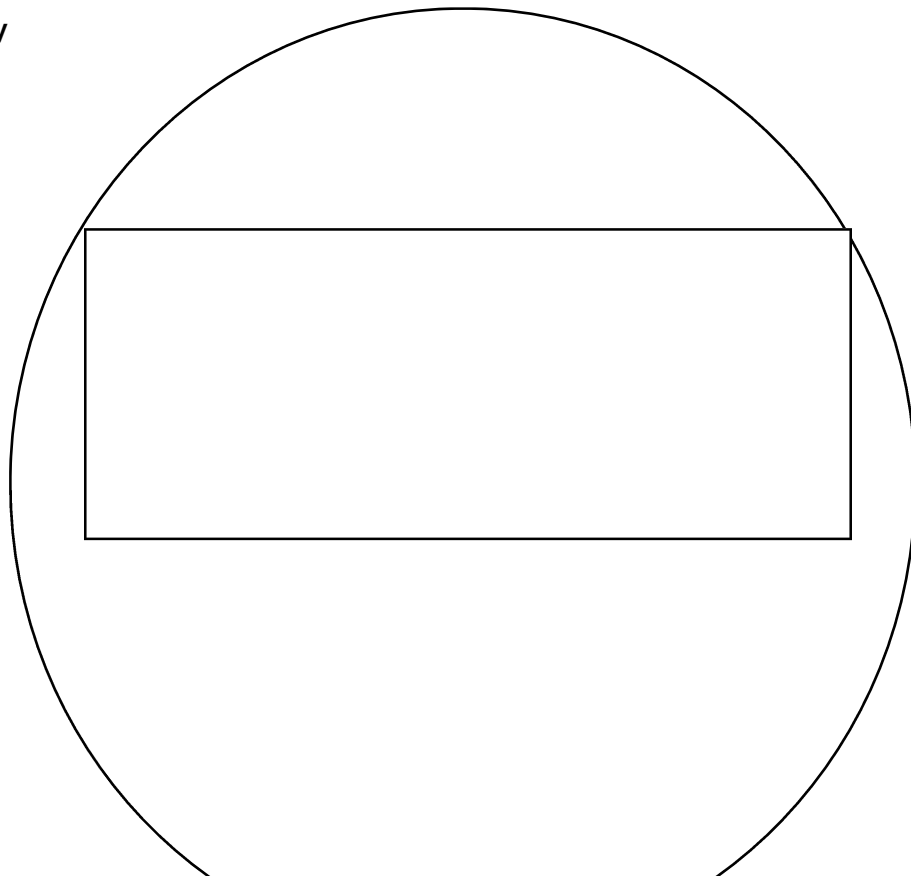
Send to: Ken Young, 637 White Oak, Chester, IL 62233

As of April 1, 2010, anyone in arrears for two years, will be dropped from our membership roster.

It is not the intention of KVAS to remove anyone from the membership roll who genuinely wants to be a member. But we must stay in good standing with the Illinois Audubon Society regarding a percentage of members in both our organization and IAS. It is important we remain eligible for IAS insurance coverage for our events and outings.

Susan Harbaugh is the Membership Chair and is maintaining the list, so if you have a discrepancy or change with your label, please report it to her.

You can reach her via e-mail (harbaugh@htc.net) or by phone (282-2914).



Mission: To promote appreciation and increase knowledge of wild bird life, plants, animals and other living organisms, and of the environment that supports them, and to further conservation of natural resources.

Meetings: Held at 7pm, 3rd Thursday of each month, SWIC Campus at Red Bud, 500 W. South 4th St. or as announced.

Membership Application

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

(information is not for publication)

Membership Class

Student: _____ \$6

Individual: _____ \$8

Family: _____ \$10

We are members of IAS at the _____ level.

Maintenance of chapter status within Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) requires that a minimum of 51% of our membership also be IAS members, with a minimum of 25 IAS members in our chapter. We encourage members to join IAS as well as KVAS. Membership in the IAS, at the family or above level, fulfills 2 memberships towards our IAS requirements.

Please fill out the application to the left and send it, with a check made out to:

Ken Young

KVAS Treasurer

637 White Oak

Chester, IL 62233



To become an IAS member check out their website at:

www.illinoisaudubon.org

Or Call:(217)544-BIRD