

# ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

## 2023 SPRING GATHERING Field Trips



### SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS (7–11:30 a.m.) Select one.

Participants will meet at selected destination on their own. Lunch is included and will be served at Volo Bog State Natural Area followed by a program and guided hike on the trails. Participants may explore on their own if desired.

#### **Moraine Hills & McHenry Dam**

Nestled in on the Fox River, Moraine Hills can be an exciting location for spring migrants and breeders. McHenry Dam itself can hold migrant waterfowl and the passing osprey, but we will especially be on the lookout for migrants like olive-sided flycatcher, Philadelphia vireo, and bay-breasted warbler. We will also be looking for specialized breeders like prothonotary warbler. If shorebird habitat is present, migrants like least and semipalmated sandpiper could be around, as well as more difficult species like stilt sandpiper. We will be birding on well-graded trails and relatively flat terrain. If there is recent rain, some trails could be muddy. Expect around two miles of hiking at a leisurely, birder's pace, as well as some driving between birding locations.

#### **Glacial Park Conservation Area**

Glacial Park is one of the premier birding locations in McHenry County with a great diversity of habitat including wetland, oak savanna and woodland. We will be looking for some of our favorite migrants including alder flycatcher, Wilson's warbler and many others. If shorebird habitat is present, it can be outstanding with species like short-billed dowitcher, pectoral sandpiper, and lesser yellowlegs being present. This area is also great for breeding birds. In the marshes, we can listen for Virginia rail and sora, and in the cattails, yellow-headed blackbird can be present. The restored prairie habitat hosts breeding Henslow's sparrows, as well. All walking will be done on well-maintained trails without many difficulties. There are some trails with hills. If there is recent rain, some trails could be muddy. Expect around two miles of hiking at a leisurely, birder's pace.

#### **Pleasant Valley Conservation Area**

Located in western McHenry County, the area is a large park comprised of prairie, wetland, and open woodland. This diversity of habitat has made it a favorite birding location. We will be on the lookout for migrants like yellow-bellied flycatcher, gray-cheeked thrush and blackpoll warbler. We will also search for breeding birds like red-headed woodpecker, sedge wren, grasshopper sparrow and bobolink. All walking will be done on well-maintained trails without many difficulties. If there is recent rain, some trails could be muddy. Expect at least two miles of hiking at a leisurely, birder's pace.

### SATURDAY AFTERNOON FIELD TRIP AT LUREC (2–3:30 p.m.)

The LUREC (Loyola University Restoration & Ecology Center) is a converted monastery. This 98-acre retreat center is within rolling oak woods and wetlands. It includes Parker Fen, one of the highest quality natural areas in McHenry County. Students are leading an ongoing restoration effort. More than 150 bird species have been sighted including many spring migrants and a resident pair of pileated woodpeckers. As habitat improves more and more species keep turning up. The local Audubon chapter is always thrilled to hike the grounds during migration, expecting delight. Hike the grounds with Saturday night's guest speaker, Rev. Stephen Mitten.

### SUNDAY FIELD TRIPS (7–11:00 a.m.)

Two separate trips will be available on Sunday morning, guided by McHenry County Audubon. Select one.

#### **Goose Lake Conservation Area**

Goose Lake Conservation Area is one of the premier wetlands in McHenry County. It hosts a great variety of wetland birds including rails, bitterns, terns, waterfowl, shorebirds, cranes and one of the largest remaining breeding populations of yellow-headed blackbirds in Illinois. The grasslands surrounding the marsh also support birds like vesper sparrow, bobolink and American kestrel. Hike is approximately 2 miles on the Hebron Trail (flat, crushed gravel path) into the marsh from the parking lot.

#### **Coral Woods Conservation Area**

Coral Woods Conservation Area is home to a vibrant woodland dominated by Sugar Maple. It is a prime location for warblers coming through in spring with 34 warbler species documented at the site. It also attracts a variety of flycatchers, thrushes, vireos and other woodland species. Hike is approximately 2 miles with some hills and a mix of mowed and rugged trails.

**REGISTER ONLINE AT [ILLINOISAUDUBON.ORG](http://ILLINOISAUDUBON.ORG)  
DEADLINE IS APRIL 4, 2023**