

SCHEDULE & FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

2024 Illinois Audubon Society Gathering
Schedule and Information
May 10-11, 2024
Savanna, Illinois

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 19, 2024



Friday, May 10

6-9:00 p.m. Evening field trip guided by Red Hill Birding at Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, May 11

6:00 -11:30 a.m. Field Trips guided by Red Hill Birding

Noon Lunch (TBA)

3:30-4:30 p.m. Natural History 480: PDQ Presentations—Five presentations, eight minutes each, 480 seconds of pretty-darn-quick science from five prestigious field ecologists, from Regal Fritillaries to Sandhill Crane Genetics, we will cover many things related to the birds and the bees, and the flowers and the trees.*

4:30 p.m. Cash Bar and Trivia Contest—grab a team and participate in 30 minutes of fun competition.*

6:00 p.m. Program — Loon Lessons: Uncommon Encounters with the Great Northern Diver*

7:00 p.m. Dinner—herbed chicken breasts, cheese tortellini, green beans, corn, salad and dessert*

* Saturday afternoon and evening events will take place at the Savanna Museum, 406 Main Street, Savanna, Illinois 61074

LODGING INFORMATION—Savanna Inn & Suites

815.273.2288

A block of rooms will be available until May 9. Mention "Illinois Audubon Society" when booking
101 Valley View Road, Savanna, Illinois 61074

King (\$163 + tax/night) and 2-Queen (\$173+tax/night) Cost of room includes breakfast



Saturday Banquet Program

Loon Lessons: Uncommon Encounters with the Great Northern Diver
Presented by Dr. James D Paruk, St. Joseph's College of Maine

2024 Annual Gathering Registration Options

Option #1: Friday Night Field Trip, Saturday Field Trip and Saturday Banquet

Friday May, 10, 6 - 9:00 p.m.

Evening birding at Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge and choice of Saturday Field Trip A, B or C

Cost: \$140, includes guided field trips, lunch, water, snacks and Saturday night banquet

Friday Night: We will meet at the Lost Mound Visitor Center and divide into smaller groups to slowly tour the grounds. Everyone will converge at the Mississippi River viewpoint to enjoy light snacks, a sunset and to listen for--and hopefully see--Whip-poor Wills.

Option #2: Saturday Field Trip and Saturday Banquet

Saturday, May 11, 6 -11:30 a.m.

All trips originate and end at the Savanna Inn and Suites

Cost: \$110, includes guided field trip, lunch, water, snacks and Saturday night banquet

Option #3: Saturday Afternoon Activities, Program and Banquet

Cost: \$30

Field Trip Descriptions

Saturday Field Trip A: Start at Lost Mound, then go to Mississippi Palisades

The group will meet at the Lost Mounds Visitors Center and set out from there to explore the refuge's prairies and woods. This is a great place to find grassland birds that are uncommon in Illinois, like Western Meadowlark, Blue Grosbeak, Lark Sparrow, and Bell's Vireo. More common birds include Orchard Oriole, Grasshopper Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and Eastern Meadowlark. The woods along the Mississippi River bluffs can be excellent for migrants given the right conditions, so we will visit that area as well to look for migrant warblers, thrushes, vireos, and others.

By about 9:30 we will be ready to move on and will head to Mississippi Palisades State Park for the remainder of the morning. Although the early morning birdsong will have subsided, breeding species will still be singing, giving us a chance to look for Cerulean and Kentucky Warbler, among others. And of course, we could still encounter roving groups of migrants.

Roadside birding with minimal walking at Lost Mound. Any walking will be short distances, no more than a couple hundred yards, on flat roads. Roadside birding with similar distance short walks at Mississippi Palisades, though the terrain is hillier. We may also walk around picnic areas, which are flat and grassy. We don't have any plans to walk on trails.

Saturday Field Trip B: Start at Mississippi Palisades, then go to Lost Mound

Setting out from the hotel, we will start the morning in the beautiful forest of Mississippi Palisades State Park. The early morning birdsong will greet our ears, and in addition to migrants passing through, could include breeding species like Cerulean, Kentucky and Yellow-throated Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, Wood Thrush, and many others. We could find other breeding birds like Pileated Woodpecker, Broad-winged Hawk, Summer Tanager, Hooded Warbler, and with a bit of luck we will encounter some groups of migrants as well.

By about 9:30 we will be ready to move on and will head to Lost Mound for the remainder of the morning. We will focus on finding prairie birds that don't occur in Mississippi Palisades, like Western Meadowlark, Blue Grosbeak, Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows, and Bell's Vireo.

Roadside birding with minimal walking at Lost Mound. Any walking will be short distances, no more than a couple hundred yards, on flat roads. Roadside birding with similar distance short walks at Mississippi Palisades, though the terrain is hillier. We may also walk around picnic areas, which are flat and grassy. We don't have any plans to walk on trails.

Field Trip Descriptions (contd.)

○ Saturday Field Trip C: Mississippi Palisades, Ayres Sand Prairie, and Lock & Dam 13

Setting out from the hotel, we will start the morning in the beautiful forest of Mississippi Palisades State Park. We will spend a couple of hours here before looking for breeding species like Cerulean, Kentucky, and Yellow-throated Warblers, and hopefully finding some migrants as well. After a couple of hours, we will start making our way south along the river. We will stop at Ayres Sand Prairie and the adjacent Tri-Township Airport to look for Loggerhead Shrike, one of the few places where the species hangs on in northern Illinois. From there, we will visit Lock & Dam 13, where migrant ducks sometimes linger into May, migrant terns forage over the wetlands, Common Gallinule and Sandhill Crane breed, and Eurasian Tree Sparrows are resident.

Roadside birding with short distance walks, a few hundred yards at a time at most, at Mississippi Palisades, where the terrain is hilly. We may also walk around picnic areas there, which are flat and grassy. We don't have any plans to walk on trails. Ayres Sand Prairie and Lock & Dam 13 birding will be entirely on flat roads, with minimal walking, though we may climb a few steps to a viewing area if we end the trip watching the locks. If we stop at Spring Lake on this trip, we may walk a few hundred yards on a flat, wide, gravel trail.