



COMPASS

Navigating the world of birds and nature

VOLUME 20, ISSUE 5

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006

The Chicago Audubon Society's Annual Bird Seed Sale will be held on Saturday, October 28, 2006

This sale is only held once a year so make sure you order plenty of seed to keep you supplied. The seed we sell is of much higher quality than what you can purchase at the grocery store, pet store or discount stores. Forty percent (40%) of your purchase is tax deductible and the proceeds are used to support the educational work of Chicago Audubon.

So how does this work?

First you have to fill out the order form below or print the form off of our website at www.chicagoaudubon.org and make payment before the deadline which is **Wednesday, October 18, 2006**. Multiply the quantities of seed you want to purchase by the price and put the total in the last column on the order form. Remember to total all items on the

Grand Total line. You can mail in your payment or call our office at 773/539-6793 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. We accept checks or credit cards but please do not mail cash. All orders must be paid for ahead of time.

Distribution:

We will be distributing the bird seed at two locations this year. Every year **Hines Lumber yard** has been gracious to let us use their parking lots. One distribution site is **5401 N. Wolcott** in Chicago. The second location is at the Hines Lumber store at 7820 Madison Ave. in River Forest. **Pick-up times are 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 Noon.**

What are we selling?

Listed on the order form are the types

of bird seed we sell, the quantities and the prices. We have made every effort to keep the prices competitive but like everything else, bird seed prices have gone up substantially in the last year.

Volunteers:

We could not do this without volunteers to help organize and distribute bird seed between the hours of 8:00 am and noon. You are welcome to volunteer for all or part of the morning. You can indicate your hours and location on the order form provided or you can call our office (without making a purchase) by Friday, October 13th at 773-539-6793. Someone will get back to you to confirm your volunteer hours and location.

Thank you in advance for your purchase!

The Chicago Audubon Society appreciates all of our customers who have been purchasing bird seed regularly over the years as well as first timers. We have customers who purchase several hundred pounds of bird seed every year and wished they had bought more. Unfortunately, we do not have the space to keep the bird seed stored over the winter. So think about what you need and buy an extra bag! Again, thank you and we look forward to seeing you on Saturday, October 28th! Please fill out the order form below to reserve your birdseed.

CHICAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRD SEED SALE ORDER FORM

QTY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
___	40 lb. Chicago Audubon Premium	\$14.50	_____
___	20 lb. Chicago Audubon Premium	7.75	_____
___	40 lb. Regular Wild Bird Seed	10.25	_____
___	20 lb. Regular Wild Bird Seed	5.75	_____
___	40 lb. Black Sunflower	14.50	_____
___	20 lb. Black Sunflower	7.50	_____
___	25 lb. Cracked Corn	5.00	_____
___	25 lb. White Millet	7.00	_____
___	25 lb. Medium Sunflower Chips	23.50	_____
___	25 lb. Safflower Seed	14.75	_____
___	25 lb. Niger	21.50	_____
___	5/10 lb. Niger Seed	9.00/bag	_____
___	5/10 lb. Niger Seed	45.00/case	_____
___	5/10 lb. Peanut Pieces	10.00/bag	_____
___	5/10 lb. Peanut Pieces	50.00/case	_____
___	High Energy Suet	1.25	_____
___	Case of 12 - High Energy Suet	12.50/case	_____
___	Fruit and Nut Bells	2.75	_____
___	Case of 11 - Fruit and Nut Bells	28.25/case	_____

GRAND TOTAL _____

I WILL PICK UP MY ORDER AT: [] Chicago, 5401 W. Wolcott [] , River Forest, 7820 Madison Ave.

I WILL VOLUNTEER AT: [] Chicago, 5401 W. Wolcott [] , River Forest, 7820 Madison Ave.

Please find my check for \$ _____ enclosed, or charge my credit card:

Credit Card Type: [] Master Card [] VISA

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

CELL PHONE _____

TELEPHONE _____

(We will call you to remind you to pick up your order!)

Mail your order to: Chicago Audubon Society - 5801-C N. Pulaski Road - Chicago, IL 60646 - (773) 539-6793

Orders must be received by Wednesday, October 18th!

Forty (40%) percent of your purchase is tax deductible.

Thank you.

First Wild Trumpeter Swans to Produce Young in Illinois Since 1847

This past spring, a wild female Trumpeter swan and a male hatched in Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, have hatched two chicks in a 35-acre wetland in Savanna, Illinois.

The Trumpeter swan, at more than four feet tall, is the largest species of waterfowl in North America, and was thought to be gone from the Midwest since the 1890s. However, some Midwestern states have been breeding captive swans and restoring wetlands in hopes of bringing the swan back.

Illinois has never tried a wild

reintroduction program, but state officials said they are confident that as swan populations grow in nearby states, some, like the Savanna pair, will nest here.

Breeding pairs are loyal to nests where they have had luck raising young, returning to the same nest year after year. With an average life span of about 30 years, that means the young swan parents in the Savanna marsh could be nesting there for the next 20 to 25 years.



Backyard Biologists Needed For Monk Parakeet Study

by Christopher Appelt, Ph.D., St. Xavier University, Dept. of Biological Sciences

I am looking for volunteers to help with a study to examine whether or not Monk Parakeets are impacting other resident bird species during the winter. These non-native and very noisy green parakeets have expanded their reach well beyond their stronghold in the Hyde Park area. In fact, they occupy over 50 locations with more than 250 nests. Many locations are within the Chicago city limits, but they have pushed their way into the surrounding suburbs: Addison, Berwyn, Blue Island, Bridgeview, Burbank, Burnham, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Elmhurst, Evergreen Park, Hammond, Hickory Hills, LaGrange, Lansing, Midlothian, Richmond, and Skokie.

These birds are unique among parrots because they are not cavity nesters. Rather, they build large stick nests, often with many separate "apartments." In Chicagoland, these conspicuous nests are often built on cell towers, electrical towers/poles, and

evergreen trees. Furthermore, these birds use their nests year-round. Living in groups and using their nests during the non-breeding season might, in part, explain their ability to withstand Chicago winters.

Despite their rapid expansion in the Chicagoland area and other locations in the United States and the rest of the world, no one has ever examined whether or not Monk Parakeets are having a significant impact on other avian species in the areas they colonize. Work by Stephen Pruett-Jones, Ph.D., of the department of ecology and evolution at the University of Chicago and his students have demonstrated that Monk Parakeets in Hyde Park rely almost exclusively on feeders for food during the winter months (particularly December-February). Therefore, I would like to determine whether the use of feeders by these groups of rather large bodied birds results in the exclusion of other bird species from feeders. To determine this, I would like to collect data from locations both near Monk Parakeet nest sites and those in

similar areas where Monk Parakeets are not found. I would ask volunteers to spend some time each week (when possible) from November through March collecting information about the species (and number of each species) using their feeders during their observations. If volunteers have Monk Parakeets visiting their feeders, I also would be interested in any interactions they observe between Monk Parakeets and other species.

If you are interested in helping me with this study, please contact me by phone at 773/298-3521 or e-mail at appelt@sxu.edu. I can tell you more about the study and give you data sheets you can use for collecting data. In your message, the following information would be extremely helpful: your address, the type of feeders you have, whether you know of Monk Parakeets in the area near your home, and the best way to contact you. I look forward to working together with CAS members to examine what I think is a very important issue.



Chicago Wilderness Appoints Its First Executive Director

Last winter, Chicago Wilderness initiated a search for their first-ever executive director. Chicago Wilderness has grown enormously since its humble beginnings 10 years ago, and has gradually added essential organizational structure to deal with this growth and the resulting increased complexity of operations.

The new executive director is Melinda Pruett-Jones, who will start in this position on September 5, 2006.

Melinda has held a variety of

positions with the Chicago Zoological Society (CZS) at The Brookfield Zoo. She currently serves as Vice President for Applied Research and Technology and as Director of the Behavior Management Program. She is also a lecturer in animal behavior and conservation at the University of Chicago. Previously, she served as Curator of Primates and Marine Mammals and as Chair of the Animal Collection Division at CZS.

Prior to her work with CZS she

served as the Director for Major Gifts and Planning at The Field Museum. She also worked for nearly ten years for California's Natural Reserve System, tracking and coordinating the research, restoration, education and protection activities of the system's network of reserves. She has researched and published on a variety of topics in the fields of animal behavior, behavioral ecology, population ecology, and evolutionary biology.

The Beauty of Birdbanding at the SWAMP

by Peggy Hormann

This year I decided to volunteer one morning for the SWAMP Birdbanding Project. Professor Caleb Gordon and some of his Lake Forest College students open the mist nets at the Skokie River Nature Preserve at 5:00 a.m. The nets are checked each hour, from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Each hour the captured birds are banded, weighed, and wing length is measured. They are evaluated for fat by blowing on the abdominal feathers looking for the yellow color of fat under the skin. The sex, age, feather wear, feather molting and evidence of mites are documented. Then the birds are released.

All volunteers are encouraged to assist in all these procedures. The thought of handling such tiny, fragile

creatures is a little scary at first, but Caleb and his experienced helpers guide each new volunteer through each step. Children age 9 and up are given special attention so they have an enriching experience.

I found it truly exciting to see the beauty of these birds up really close. Thanks to the opportunity provided by the SWAMP project I had the privilege of experiencing first hand the wonder of holding a Swainson's Thrush, feeling its pulse and touching the softness of its body.

CAS members should consider volunteering for birdbanding next spring. I know you will learn a lot and be touched by beauty as well.

COMPASS

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Rare bird alert: (847) 265-2118

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Birding Field Trip: Indiana Dunes and Sandhill Cranes

Saturday, November 6

Journey to the Indiana Dunes, and the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area in the wetlands of Indiana, famous for the thousands of Sandhill cranes and Canada geese that stop to rest there each autumn. Take a close look at these beautiful birds and other fall migrants during a full day of bird watching.

In the morning, we'll visit a few

places in the Indiana Dunes for migrant waterfowl, sparrows, hawks and other birds. In the afternoon, we'll observe the thousands of Sandhill cranes that stop at the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area in the fall. As evening approaches, the cranes return from feeding in surrounding farmlands to congregate on this land.

Bring a lunch and snacks, binoculars and a field guide, and dress for the

weather (layered clothes are best). Transportation is by coach bus. The lower fee is for Chicago Botanic Garden and Chicago Audubon Society members.

The trip will take place on Saturday, November 6. Meet at the Chicago Botanic Gardens at 9:00 a.m. at the Gateway Visitor Center. We will return at 8:30 p.m. The price is \$79 for members of the Chicago Audubon

Society or the Chicago Botanic Gardens, and \$99 for non-members.

Leader: Alan Anderson, Research Committee Chairman, Chicago Audubon Society

Register by calling the Chicago Botanic Gardens at 847/835-8261, or register online at www.chicagobotanic.org/continuinged/registration_methods.html.

Don't Miss Our New CAS Event: Birdwalk for Singles

by Marci Buettgen

Birds are colorful, lively and fascinating---and so are the people who watch them. No wonder birding is the fastest growing outdoor activity in America.

For singles who would like to get out, enjoy the fall weather, and meet other like-minded birders, the Chicago Audubon Society offers a special event, Birdwalk for Singles, on Saturday, September 23, from 9:00 a.m. to Noon in Lincoln Park Zoo.

The leisurely walk will start off at the Caldwell Lily Pool, a hidden garden recently restored to its lush Prairie School landscape from the 1930's, then wind around North Pond where over 160 bird species have been observed. After the walk, the group will head over to a neighborhood cafe for snacks and informal conversation.

During the birdwalk, Chicago Audubon guides will help spot and identify birds.

According to birdwalk leader and CAS Board Member Gail Gammel,

"We'll pay special attention to migrating birds passing through Chicago on their return to Central and South America, such as the Green-winged Teal, White-throated Sparrow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Cooper's Hawk, Ovenbird, and Double-crested Cormorant."

Participants will receive a copy of the CAS Birds of Greater Chicago Area Checklist plus a Chicago Region Birding Trail Guide, published by the City of Chicago, detailing seventy premier birding sites in northeast

Illinois and northwest Indiana.

Cost: CAS members, free; non-members, \$10 donation or a new CAS membership for \$20.

Space is limited so advance registration is required. New birders and long-time birders are both welcome. Binoculars and field guides may be checked out for the morning at no charge. To register, contact Gail Gammel: e-mail, ibird@mindspring.com, or call the CAS office at 773/539-6793.

You Can Help Protect Montrose Point and the Magic Hedge

As most birders who visit Montrose Point and the Magic Hedge are aware, ropes and signage have been installed around chunks of habitat particularly susceptible to inadvertent destruction by people. People who enter the roped-off areas are technically trespassing. Because venturing into these areas is an act of trespassing, by law, these trespassers can be fined. Not only do the ropes help prevent people from walking through areas susceptible to damage and degradation, they can help

make Montrose a less attractive spot for male "cruisers." Many birders and nature lovers have long expressed trepidation about visiting Montrose for fear of being solicited or followed. The Park District, the Chicago Police Department and several other organizations banded together to get the ropes installed. Since the ropes have gone up, scores of "cruisers" have been fined. Trespassing into these areas now carries a \$500 fine.

However, the ropes and signage can

only do so much without the help of the public. You can help by phoning the Park District and alerting them to what you have seen.

If you observe an act of vandalism, picnicking, or cruisers, or any other example of inappropriate or destructive behavior, do not allow it to go on. Simply call 312/747-2193. This is a Park District security number (not the Chicago Police Department). Simply tell them what you have seen and where. They will send a Park District

Security truck to the spot (if you choose, you do not have to become involved) and they will arrive pretty quickly. If the number is not available, try 312/742-4412. Birders are the eyes and ears of Montrose Point. You can now become one of its protectors by getting on your cell phone and reporting any unusual behavior that you might see.

Fall Sparrow Identification Workshop Will Feature Top Local Experts

by Marci Buettgen

Jim Landing, moderator for the fall birding seminar, Mysteries of Sparrow ID, has selected four of Chicago's top birding experts to join him for the program on Saturday, September 16, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 North Pulaski Road, Chicago.

In 2002, Landing, a highly respected local birder and birding advocate, established the annual fall birding seminar to explore one birding topic intensively. Typically, the program features a series of slides with commentary from the moderator and panelists. Panel members for this year are: Caleb E. Gordon, Walter Marcisz, Paul Sweet, and Geoffrey Williamson. "We were honored when Dr. Landing asked the Chicago Audubon Society to take on the role of sponsor for his annual fall seminar," says Joe Lill, CAS president. "The combined expertise of Dr. Landing and his panelists is truly impressive. We are grateful to each of them for taking on the challenge of helping demystify sparrow identification."

Caleb E. Gordon is Assistant Professor of Biology at Lake Forest College specializing in Ecology,

Ornithology, and Conservation Biology and holds a Ph.D. in Biology from the University of Arizona.

As manager of S.W.A.M.P., the Shaw Woods Avian Monitoring Project, each day in May, he gathers his team of Lake Forest College students and volunteers from across the metro area to net and release 1,000 migratory birds passing through a bird banding station in the Skokie River Nature Preserve. This collaborative research project generates invaluable data on population trends and the stopover ecology of migrating birds.

Walter Marcisz, past president of the Chicago Ornithological Society (COS) from 1988 to 1991, now represents COS on the Bird Conservation Network of Greater Chicago (BCN). He is a member of the Calumet Ecological Park Association, Chicago Audubon Society, the Illinois Ornithological Society, and Sand Ridge Audubon Society.

He grew up in the Hegewisch neighborhood on the far southeast side of Chicago and has been a Chicago area birder for over 40 years. He was transformed into a full fledged birder after coming across a book by T. Gilbert Pearson, "Birds of America," with paintings by Louis Agassiz

Fuertes whom he still considers one of the very best bird artists. He has led hundreds of field trips, bird identification classes and workshops and authored a vast number of papers and articles about birds, including important studies on the status of the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony at the Lake Calumet wetlands.

Over the past 15 years, Paul Sweet has continued traveling, pursuing birding projects each summer with the high point being an assignment searching for bird nests on the east slope of the Andes in Ecuador. During autumn, he can be found volunteering at the Illinois Beach State Park Hawk Watch. His life list contains over 600 species of North American birds and more than 1,100 species worldwide.

Geoffrey Williamson, co-editor of the Illinois-Indiana regional report for the American Birding Association's journal of ornithological record, "North American Birds," is a past president of the Chicago Ornithological Society (COS) and the Illinois Ornithological Society (IOS), and currently serves as IOS membership secretary. He has led more than 200 bird walks in the Chicago area, compiles the Lisle Arboretum Christmas Bird Count, and

regularly delivers presentations on birds and birding to a variety of organizations. When not birding, he is a professor of electrical engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Check-in for the seminar begins at 10:30 a.m. Seminar participants are invited to come early to join in the fall migration birdwalk offered by CAS at the Nature Center, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Free parking is available. Participants are encouraged to bring along note paper or laptops and field guides. Light refreshments will be provided.

While there is no charge for this seminar, advance registration is required to guarantee seating. To register, phone Marci Buettgen: 773/878-4421, or, e-mail: mbchgo@comcast.net.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Birdwalk for Singles

Saturday, September 23, 9:00 a.m. to Noon at Lincoln Park Zoo. For singles who would like to get out, enjoy the fall weather, and meet other like-minded birders. The walk includes the Caldwell Lily Pool and North Pond plus a social hour afterward at a neighborhood cafe. Free to CAS members; non-members, \$10 donation or a new CAS membership for \$20. Binoculars and field guides available at no charge. Advance registration required. Contact Gail Gammel, e-mail: ibird@mindspring.com or leave a message at the CAS office, 773-539-6793.

Fall Birding Seminar: Mysteries of Sparrow ID

Saturday, September 16, 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 North Pulaski Road, Chicago

Solve the many mysteries of sparrow ID with top birding experts, moderator Jim Landing, and panelists, Caleb E. Gordon, Walter Marcisz, Paul Sweet, and Geoffrey Williamson. Free, but advance registration is required. Phone: 773/878-4421, or, e-mail: mdbchgo@comcast.net.

The Chicago Audubon Society Presents: A Visit to Kennicott's Grove

Thursday, October 19 at the North Park Village Nature Center

Refreshments/social at 7:00 p.m. The program will start at 7:30p.m.

Speaker: Dave Bills, The Grove Programmer and Garden Program Head

Mr. Bills will present a program about "The Grove" in Glenview, a National Historical Landmark. He

will talk about the important history of The Grove, settled in 1836 by Dr. John Kennicott, a horticulturist, and whose son, Robert Kennicott, became known as Illinois' first naturalist, and made many important observations and collections of the flora and fauna of our area. Also, we will see what can be found at The Grove today - historical buildings, important natural history collections, diverse prairie garden, forest and wetland, and of course birds (a Red-shouldered Hawk often has nested on the property too).

Trip to Kennicott's Grove, Beck Lake, Axehead Lake & Bigbend Lake

Friday November 10. Leader: Alan Anderson. To register for this trip, call Alan at 847/631-3154, or e-mail casresearch@comcast.net

Birding Field Trip: Indiana Dunes and Sandhill Cranes

Saturday, November 6

A full day of birdwatching at the Indiana Dunes, and the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area in the wetlands of Indiana, famous its Sandhill cranes. The trip will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. Meet at the Chicago Botanic Gardens at the Gateway Visitor Center. \$79 for members of the Chicago Audubon Society or the Chicago Botanic Gardens, \$99 for non-members.

Leader: Alan Anderson, Research Committee Chairman, Chicago Audubon Society

Register by calling the Chicago Botanic Gardens at 847/835-8261, or register online at www.chicagobotanic.org/continuinged/registration_methods.html

Wooded Isle Walks

These walks will be held every Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

Bring binoculars and field guides and dress for the weather. Meet at Clarence Darrow Bridge, just south of the Museum of Science and Industry. If you have any questions, please call Doug Anderson at 773/493-7058.

Montrose Point and the Magic Hedge Stewardship Workdays

Montrose Point home of the Magic Hedge needs your help. We are conducting monthly workdays through November. The last Montrose Point workday for the season will be Saturday, September 16. This is a unique opportunity to garden on the lakefront as we work on establishing native vegetation and removing invasive species like blackthorn and burdock. Our goals are to create an environment that will enhance the health and well-being of birds that use the point during migration and during nesting season, to enhance opportunities for bird watchers, and provide opportunities for the public to learn about natural areas and the importance and beauty of native landscape.

This past April, twenty-five new shrubs were added to the Magic Hedge, with more to be planted in the fall.

Directions: Meet at the "Magic Hedge" located on Montrose Ave., east of Lake Shore Drive. Drive east on Montrose Ave. towards the Lake and as the road turns north take the first right by the bait shop. Continue to the nature area on the left, just before the harbor parking lot as the road starts to curve right around the harbor.

For more information, contact

David Painter at Dvdpaint@yahoo.com or 773/935-1387.

Skokie Lagoons Workdays

Upcoming Skokie Lagoons Workdays: Saturday, September 9; Saturday, October 14; Saturday, November 11.

The Chicago Audubon Society conducts regular monthly workdays at the Skokie Lagoons every second Saturday of every month. Activities include buckthorn cutting, brush pile burning and other management activities. Meet at the Tower Road parking lot, east of the lagoon bridge. For further information, call Jerry Garden at 773/545-4362 or e-mail him at jerrygarden@sprynet.com.

Fall Migration Birdwalks

Saturdays in September and October at 8:00 a.m. North Park Village Nature Center

5801 North Pulaski Road, Chicago. Meet in front of the Nature Center. Bring binoculars or check out a pair of ours. Call: 773/878-4421.

Flint Creek Wildlife Fundraiser

On August 12, Flint Creek Wildlife started a raffle to raise money for its services and to support Flint Creek. The raffle prize is a 2007 Ford Escape Hybrid from Wickstrom Ford in Barrington along with cash prizes. Go to www.flintcreekwildlife.org for more information and to enter the raffle.

Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds, a book review by Chris van Wassenhove

With today's high gas prices, how would you like to get the equivalent of 720,000 miles to the gallon? Well, it would help if you were a Blackpoll warbler. On its thirty-six hour flight over the Atlantic Ocean during fall migration from the coast of the United States to South America, the Blackpoll burns fat at a remarkably efficient rate.

This is just one of the many interesting facts to be found in a new book by Miyoko Chu titled *Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds*. Ms. Chu is an ornithologist and staff science writer at the internationally recognized Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. She is editor of the Lab's *Birdscope* newsletter and assistant editor of *Living Bird* magazine.

There are still many unknown facts regarding the secret lives of migrating songbirds. Ms. Chu presents what is known today as a result of several scientific studies. The book outlines all facets of migration, from how songbirds navigate via magnetic fields, polarized light patterns and the stars, to hints for predicting migration based on the weather forecast.

One study cited in the book was conducted by Richard Graber and involved attaching tiny radio transmitters to the backs of migrating Gray-cheeked thrushes. Graber followed by airplane one such thrush, which took off from Urbana, Illinois on its

way to its breeding grounds in Canada. Before the plane was forced to land due to heavy fog and the effects of a severe thunderstorm, the bird had been tracked over Lake Michigan on an unerringly straight path, covering four hundred miles in eight hours of overnight flight, never stopping to eat, drink, rest, or seek shelter from the storm.

The book chronicles the lives of various songbirds in each of the four seasons and how the state of their environment and changes in food supplies from year to year affect the breeding success and overall health of the population. Wally, a remarkable male Yellow warbler weighing in at less than half an ounce, was observed for nine years in a row on its breeding territory at the Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario, Canada. Wally should have played the lottery, because the odds are about fifty-fifty that an adult Yellow warbler will die somewhere along its annual journey from its winter home in Central America to its summer breeding grounds all across North America.

After building a nest in the fork of a willow branch, anchored by spider silk and lined with the fluff of dandelion seeds and shed deer and rabbit fur, the female Yellow warbler will typically lay four to five eggs over a similar number of days. After brooding for eleven days, the chicks will hatch. On the strength of

up to 2,400 visits from mom and dad with insect morsels at the ready, the chicks grow from hatchling to fledgling in just eight to ten days. And you thought your kids grew up fast!

The book also lists hot spots for spring and fall migrations throughout the U.S., as well as wintering area hot spots, including websites and phone numbers for additional information and recommended reading; and hints on how to find and monitor bird nests during summer. A listing of citizen-science programs is also included. Anyone who is interested is able to contribute to the scientific knowledge base regarding songbirds through a variety of methods, including Christmas Bird Counts, Project FeederWatch or by listing bird sightings on eBird, an on-line checklist sponsored by the Cornell Lab and Audubon.

Ms. Chu's book is a fascinating chronicle of songbird life for both the beginning birder and those with more experience. Wally and his friends are waiting to entertain and educate. Enjoy!

(Approximately 625 words.)

Book is 277 pages. Retail for \$23. First published 2006.