

Letter from the Editor

Helping Birds ...

You never know what will happen when you meet a birding friend at an IOS function. Often, for me, my mind gets opened or I learn something new.

In fact, a conversation with Chicago Bird Collision Monitors director Annette Prince at the Gull Frolic in February led me to write a story for the Chicago Tribune. (URL: <http://tinyurl.com/3uqbumo>)

Annette mentioned that buildings earning LEED (Leader in Energy and Environmental Design) status aren't necessarily bird-friendly. I convinced the Chicago Tribune editors that the story was a worthy one, and soon I was reporting on this sad, but true tale – lots of glass can help a building get certified as a leader in green design because the practice can help with energy costs. But as we all know, birds cannot perceive glass as an obstruction and often fly into it, dying or getting injured.

The story relayed how one person at the FBI building encouraged her superiors to add netting to the LEED-certified structure during bird migration. An indoor atrium was drawing the birds into the glass windows, thinking they had found a place to rest after their overnight migration.

Placing the netting in front of the glass greatly reduced the number of birds ramming into windows and getting killed or injured.

What I was reminded most from talking with Annette and working on the story is that when it comes to energy savings, Americans sometimes overlook how what they do can affect wildlife. Wind turbines, for example, could help us become less dependent on oil, but they also, in some instances, kill birds. In my opinion, we can't just think of saving energy and saving wildlife as two separate causes.

I'm also reminded that people like Annette Prince are making a huge difference, and I need to help in whatever way I can.

Tell me what you're doing for the birds and I'll print your replies in a future issue of *Meadowlark*.

Email me at sheryl.devore@comcast.net.

Sheryl DeVore

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About Our Cover:

Nandu Dubey, 13, created the cover drawing of a Mountain Plover with American Golden-Plovers. Nandu, who lives in Grayslake, has drawn more than 125 Illinois birds. His drawing of a King Eider was chosen as the 1st place winner in the Illinois 4-6th grade category of the 2010 Federal Junior Duck Stamp competition.

Nandu has displayed his work in an art exhibit at the Volo Bog State Natural Area as well as at the Lake County Discovery Museum. He recently won the Gold Medal in Ornithology at the 2011 Illinois State Science Olympiad held at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Nandu is a founding charter member of the Illinois Young Birders Club and regularly contributes his illustrations to the club newsletter.

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