

# **New Avian Observatory Located within the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary!**

August 27 2013 5:05 PM



**West Alton, MO; August 27, 2013**

**New Avian Observatory** As a part of The Audubon Center at Riverlands' mission to connect people to the beauty and significance of nature, the Center is pleased to announce the opening of a new avian observatory located within the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary on the south end of Heron Pond.

The Heron Pond avian observatory was built as a partnership and made possible by generous gifts of funding, time and talent from Washington University School of Architecture, The Audubon Center at Riverlands, Paul Bauer and the Rivers Project Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This new structure was designed and constructed by students of the WUSTL School of Architecture for a class that their professor, Andrew Colopy, titled, "Studio Confluence." The purpose of the class was to design, fabricate, and build an avian observatory at Riverlands in collaboration with The Audubon Center at Riverlands and the Rivers Project Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

There will be a grand opening ceremony and celebration on Wednesday, August 28, 2013 from 4:30-7:00pm. Students and faculty from WUSTL as well as members and supporters of the Center and Corps will be present to celebrate the opening.

### **About the Habitat**

Riverlands provides 3,700 acres of protected prairie marsh and forest at a critical juncture along the Mississippi Migratory Flyway. Home or stopover to more than 325 species of songbirds and waterfowl, visitors convene from around the globe to experience this unique migratory ecosystem stretching from Patagonia to the Arctic. The surrounding region is also home to a rich local history of agrarian and industrial activities along the rivers. This cultural and environmental interaction presents a unique opportunity for education, recreation, outreach, and conservation.

### **About the Students and *Studio Confluence***

*Studio Confluence* refers both to Riverlands site, at the convergence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, and the studio's collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Audubon Society. The Army Corps of Engineers, with 38,000 civilian and military personnel, is the largest public engineering, design and construction management agency in the world. The National Audubon Society was established as a non-profit organization in 1905 and is one of the world's oldest groups dedicated to environmental conservation. The society is named for noted naturalist, John James Audubon.

*Studio Confluence* was awarded a grant from the Gephardt Institute at Washington University to engage in a positive process of community-based teaching and learning. In addition, the Audubon Center at Riverlands provided funding for the building's construction, and the Rivers Project Office of the Corps provided materials and concrete work for the structure's siting and visitor access. This studio experience provided students an opportunity to enhance their educational experience through engagement with a real-world project in service to the local community, and meaningful interaction among student designers and community partners.

Students' design research focused on camouflage for enhanced bird viewing as well as innovative, earth-friendly building concepts. It is an incredibly unique structure for

viewing birds and will become an attraction on its own to those who appreciate innovative design!

## About The Audubon Center at Riverlands

The Audubon Center at Riverlands serves as the Visitors Center for the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary and is less than 30 minutes from downtown St. Louis. Open seven days a week from 8am-4pm, this is the perfect place to see migrating pelicans, ducks and other birds. The sanctuary, maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is 3,700 acres of wetland, native prairie and bottomland forest, overlooking the Mississippi River. The Audubon Center at Riverlands offers educational and recreation opportunities, including the upcoming ***Working Wildfowl*** original exhibition and VIP reception on October 4, 2013. Please visit the website at [www.riverlands.audubon.org](http://www.riverlands.audubon.org) for more details.

The Audubon Center at Riverlands is a division of Audubon Missouri, and part of the National Audubon Society's network of centers throughout the United States.

\* Information provided by the National Audubon Society

*Now in its second century, Audubon is dedicated to protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitat that supports them. Our national network of community-based nature centers and chapters, scientific and educational programs, and advocacy on behalf of areas sustaining important bird populations, engage millions of people of all ages and backgrounds in conservation. [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)*

#

Contact Information: Patricia Hagen, PhD, Executive Director

The Audubon Center at Riverlands

636-899-0090 (office)

314-223-1350 (mobile)

[phagen@audubon.org](mailto:phagen@audubon.org)