



# KINGFISHER



Feb. 2004

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 53 No. 1

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

## Want to Make a Difference?

Have you ever wanted to make a difference in an organization that is meaningful to you? Or simply spend some time and have fun with like-minded people? This is your chance! Our chapter is looking for people like you.

Our current volunteer opportunities are listed below. If you do not see something that exactly matches your interests, give us a call and we can talk about how you can participate in chapter activities. Each position takes about 2-4 hours per month, and even less during the summer months (bird-watching time!) If you cannot contribute this much time, give us a call anyway and we can talk about what will work for you.

- ◆ **Board Member:** Help guide the chapter's decision-making process.
- ◆ **Conservation Committee Member:** Help your chapter monitor conservation issues and guide the board and membership on action items.
- ◆ **Fundraising Committee Member:** Help your chapter find ways to raise funds to support chapter activities.
- ◆ **Membership Committee Member:** Help your chapter find ways to recruit and welcome new members.
- ◆ **Programs Committee Member:** Help with scheduling monthly programs.
- ◆ **Secretary:** Take meeting minutes at the monthly board meetings and distribute them to board members.

Any help is greatly appreciated. If you would like to help, please call Tom Mahan at 763-588-5440.

## Wood Ducks, Part 5...

**The Final Happenings:** This is fifth in a series about wood ducks—the last article was in the May 2003 issue.

The inside of WD1 is alive with movement, followed by periods of quiet. It is great viewing via the video camera. The jump usually occurs the next day, so I was curious to see what would happen. The next morning (May 20th), the new mother returned from breakfast about the usual time at 6:54 a.m..

The quiet black balls become active when she returns. Mom allows them to run around for a while, then gathers them under her for a nap. This scene is repeated several times. She jumps up to the entrance to survey the area. She returns back into the box, waits several minutes and is back in the entrance looking about for potential danger. Again she retreats.

Then another very unusual thing happens: another female lands on the box. She surveys the area, looks into the box, pulls back; "thinks" about it. Finally she takes the short flight and enters the box!

The new mother is not happy to have a visitor. The two adults struggle. Ducklings are running about in a haphazard fashion. After 5 minutes of chaos, the unwanted guest leaves. Mom gathers the brood about her and they take a well-deserved nap.

Mother again jumps up to the entrance and scouts the surroundings for raccoons, cats, and dogs; she often checks the sky for hawks. After about 20 minutes, she flies to the ground. There is an immediate clamor to climb to the hole to jump.

After the initial flurry, the ducklings appear to be queuing up to leave. It is amazing how well they can climb up the box to get to the opening. Some make the jump with reckless abandon, others are somewhat cautious, and some actually need a push. Some "fly" down to the ground and land with a "plop" while others somersault and surprisingly are not killed. All manage to get to the ground seemingly unhurt. What happened next surprised me: they didn't immediately take off for the river. They sat there for a couple of minutes and then cautiously headed down to the water, never to be seen again (well, maybe later in the year as adults, I hope!)

Twelve new bundles of energy emerged into this inhospitable world, and three eggs remained unhatched. While all of this was happening, I had two video cameras on the scene—one inside and one outside—documenting the events. I also tried to take photos with our 35-mm camera, but got caught up in the activities and only shot a few fair quality pictures.

This was another very satisfying day. Twelve more wood ducks to share with the world!

—Jerry Bahls

*Final thoughts and notes next month...*

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis will again participate in the annual **Great Backyard Bird Count**. You can join in the event at the Wood Lake, and Springbrook Nature Centers from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. **Bring your Valentine!**

See [www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org) for national event information.



## Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis 2004 Contacts

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Board Member	Trudi Poquette	612-824-4866
Board Member	Jean Kelley	763-862-1421
Board Member	<open>	
Board Member	Lisa McDonald	612-721-2672
Board Member	Dorothy Kuether	952-926-4205
Board Member	Mary Ellen Vetter	763-561-1761
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**Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis**  
www.geocities.com/audubon.geo

**Minnesota Audubon**  
www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html

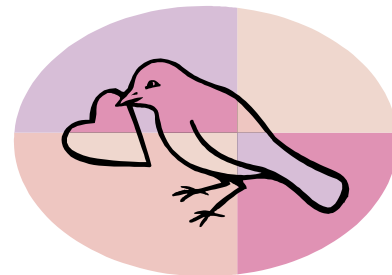
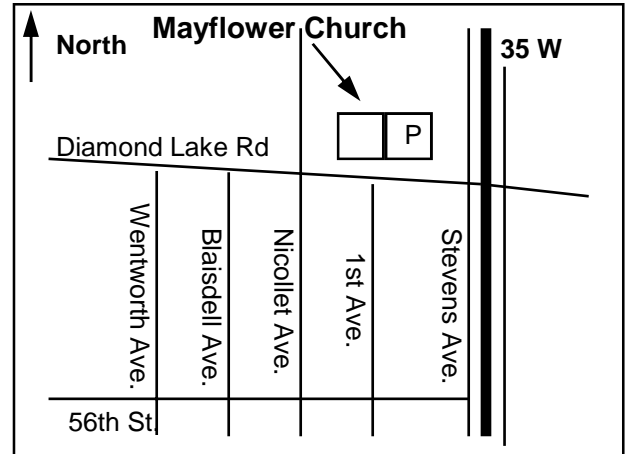
**National Audubon Society**  
www.audubon.org

## Come to Our Next Program!

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Program topic/speaker yet to be determined at  
time of newsletter printing...

**TIME:** 7:30 p.m. program

**AT:** Mayflower Church (Lower Level)  
109 E. Diamond Lake Road, Minneapolis  
(35W & East Diamond Lake Road)



## Electronic Kingfisher

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER  
ELECTRONICALLY!  
Contact Jerry Bahls at  
bahls001@tc.umn.edu

## Invasive Exotic Plants: Buyer Beware!

The discovery of Big-Head carp in Lake Pepin this fall has focused attention on invasive exotic species. In the past, species were brought to North America with no thought or understanding of long term consequences. More recently, species such as the Asian beetle were introduced to "solve" a specific problem, or to provide an economic opportunity.

One continuing route for introduction of invasive exotic species is the home garden. Purple loosestrife and buckthorn are two well know examples of garden cultivars gone out of control. You might think that with the easy availability of information on the internet that this is no longer a problem—you would be wrong!

Last summer I purchased a yellow flag iris (*Iris Pseudacorus*) from a major Twin Cities garden store. This plant was described as "*A vigorous, hardy bog plant with yellow flowers and sturdy variegated foliage. Creates a strong vertical presence wherever it is placed. Very attractive near pond edges.*"

Later, I learned that yellow flag iris is listed on the Minnesota DNR website as an invasive, harmful exotic species that is proposed to become a regulated exotic species in Minnesota.

I have called a couple of garden stores asking for their corporate policy on invasive exotics. I used yellow flag iris and amur maple as examples. Some of the responses I got included:

- "This iris is intended for sale for home gardens."
- "What's invasive in my yard might not be invasive in your yard."
- "Iris pseudacorus spreads vegetatively through rhizomes, and therefore is safe in closed ponds."
- "They [individual supervisors] try to keep up on these issues."
- "They [management] try to keep track of such issues through the Nursery Owners Association."
- "They [management] are planning a meeting this spring with the DNR and expect to learn more at that meeting."
- "When selling a suspect species such as amur maple, they try to direct the customer to another variety, but they do not directly address the issues with the amur maple."
- "Amur maples aren't really that hardy in this area, and therefore aren't that invasive."
- "They are planning to improve their signage next year. They might, for instance, label a plant as 'Invasive'."
- "They believe that it is the responsibility of the consumer to know what they are buying."



The bottom line is that gardeners must use their own resources to sort out what is appropriate, and what isn't.

I would also encourage everyone to contact the management of your local garden center if you see an invasive, exotic plant for sale without clear labeling.

Here are some good websites:

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/terrestrialplants/](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/terrestrialplants/)  
[www.uwex.edu/ces/ipaw/index.html](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ipaw/index.html)

—Donna Bahls

## Wilderness Skills Workshop

"Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons. It is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the earth."

*Walt Whitman*

Back by popular demand, the Lee and Rose Warner Nature Center will sponsor a full day "Wilderness Skills Workshop" on Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Whether you are involved in Scouts, enjoy hiking or canoeing into remote backcountry or might be considering a stint on the popular "Survivor" show, the assembled experts and teachers can teach skills making wilderness excursions comfortable.

The instructors for this event represent thousands of wilderness miles, scores of years of experience and a passion for teaching others some of the skills they have learned.

The all-day workshop will include sessions on the following:

- \* Setting up a Whelen tarp using the "seminal seven" knots
- \* Camp cooking secrets
- \* Tools of survival and survival training

Workshop presenters include Chris Heeter, founder and executive director of the WILD Institute; Cliff Jacobson, author and wilderness guide; Mors Kochanski, author and wilderness skills educator; and "Wild and Woolly" Dick Persen, wilderness advocate, outfitter, and guide.

Cost is \$45/person, \$35 Science Museum and Friends of Warner Members (cost includes: hand-outs, continental breakfast, and lunch).

Registration is limited so call the Nature Center soon at (651) 433-2427.

Tom Anderson, Director  
Warner Nature Center  
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[www.smm.org](http://www.smm.org)



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### National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

- Yes, I'd like to join!* Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local chapter at the special introductory rate of \$20! Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.
- Yes, I'd like to join!* As a senior citizen or student, I am able to join for only \$15!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Send this application and make check payable to:**

National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
PO Box 51001  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001



**LOCAL CHAPTER**  
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis  
PO BOX 3801  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
Chapter Code: **M02**  
**7XCHA**

### Calendar of Events

#### February

- 3** Chapter Program 7:30 p.m.
- 10** Chapter Board Meeting
- 13-16** 7th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

#### March

- 2** Chapter Program, 7:30 p.m.
- 9** Chapter Board Meeting
- 20** Warner Wilderness Skills Workshop
- 27** Beginning Bird Class, Westwood Hills Nature Center, St. Louis Park, 9:00 a.m. to noon (details in March issue)

Field trips are led by expert birders to some of Minnesota's finest natural habitats. Please check our website or call Mary Ellen (763-561-1761) for more details...

See you on the birding trails—  
guests are *always* welcome!