



# KINGFISHER



JAN/FEB 2012

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 61 No. 1a

*Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County*

## Tiffany Bottoms Field Trip

**Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.**

For the third year, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is sponsoring a train ride and birding trip at Tiffany Bottoms Natural Wildlife Area, 5 miles south of Durand, Wisconsin. People who have been on the trip before know what an excellent opportunity this is to see spring migrants, including many warblers, as well as resident species.

Cost of the trip is \$15, and because this is a popular trip refunds cannot be given for cancellations after April 15. This time we would like to improve the experience for beginning birders by asking 4 or 5 people to act as resources for helping others spot and identify birds. Having a spotting scope is nice but not at all necessary. The first five people willing to act as a leader in this way will receive a discount on the trip. Since the maximum capacity of the train is 75, we will divide into groups of about 12.

The meeting location is about 90 miles from the Twin Cities, and the drive takes approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes.

For more information, or to register, contact Susan Tertell, [stertell@gmail.com](mailto:stertell@gmail.com), or 612-729-1566.

## January Issue

### Upcoming Programs

#### **February 7th:**

*Tom Will, "Destructiveness of Free-Roaming Cats"*

#### **March 6th:**

*Mike Link & Kate Crowley, "Walk Around Lake Superior"*

#### **April 3rd:**

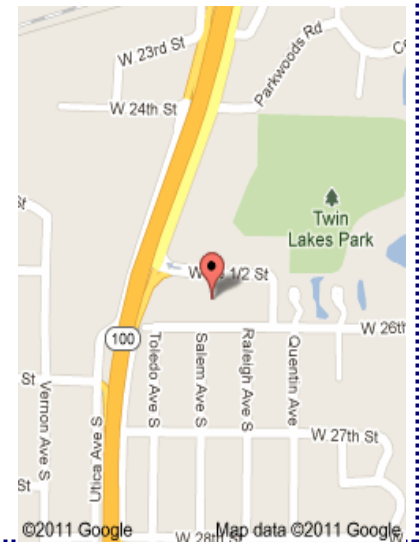
*Laura Erickson, "Twelve Owls"*

#### **May 1st:**

*Carrol Henderson, "Birds of Kuwait"*

All programs are free and open to the public. Programs start at 7 p.m. and end by 9 p.m.

Program meetings are held at Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park. Please note: we are no longer meeting at Mayflower Church.



## Candlelight & Ice New Year's Event at Wood Lake Nature Center

*Saturday December 31st, 6:00PM-9:00PM @ 6710 Lake Shore Drive, Richfield*

Celebrate the New Year with family and friends at Wood Lake Nature Center. Follow hundreds of candles along trails that wind their way through the cattail islands and forests of Wood Lake. Enjoy the quiet of the marsh at night while hiking past hooting owls and sleeping deer. After the walk, come back to the building and warm up near a toasty fire while enjoying roasted marshmallows and hot cocoa. Cost is \$4.00 to attend, free to FOWL members.

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since humans have been living in the natural world for thousands of years, it seems probable that our development is closely aligned with it. Current studies are showing that both animals and humans in nature have less stress, more self-control, more cooperative behavior, quicker illness recovery and other benefits. Recently there has been much written about the need for kids to be raised in an environment that includes exposure to, and understanding of nature.

82 % of Americans now live in cities. 83 % of population growth in the U.S. is attributed to racial and ethnic minorities. 2 out of 5 children in America are from minorities. Only 45 % of those born between 1980 and 2000 believe that all people should be “connected with nature”. However 92 % of Americans surveyed say that kids don’t spend enough time outdoors.

Does viewing flowers, trees, and wildlife affect our attitudes? Are our physical and emotional health changed by our relationship to positive outdoor experiences? The Landscape and Human Health Laboratory at the University of Illinois is trying to find answers to these questions. The Laboratory wants to find objective evidence of the link, and not just intuitive ideas. Researchers are collecting data on blood pressure and heart rates, immune function, and other physiological conditions. For example, prisoners that have views of forests or fields have fewer trips to the infirmary than those looking at barren prison yards. What I found interesting was that there seems to be more benefit from a realistic scenic picture than from an indoor plant.

Dr Frances E. Kuo who helped start the lab 18 years ago, says that workers should try to get outside during the day to improve their mood. Unstructured time outside seems important for developing children’s learn-risk management. Other studies have linked nature access with better concentration and fewer ADHD-like symptoms. Dr Kuo believes that urban environments containing green spaces such as tree-lined streets and parks may actually provide more benefits than suburban sprawl. She also believes that people should focus on their environment outdoors, rather than using that time to make phone calls or emails.

I believe that getting young people exposed to nature also makes them more likely to preserve “green” resources. Audubon’s focus on outdoor education comes at a crucial time, when many green spaces are succumbing to “development”. We would like to have one or more individuals who have an interest in going to schools to promote bird-watching to elementary students. Come along with us to inner-city or suburban grade schools, beginning in March, and help kids learn to enjoy what we find so interesting. You don’t need any particular skills, just basic knowledge and enthusiasm for birds. Audubon members who have given a little time in the past have found the experience very rewarding. The kids are so appreciative that I can guarantee that you will want to go again.

Call Jim Egge at 612-827-7629.

Some information for this article is taken from an interview in “Wilderness” magazine 2011-2012.

“*Nature Conservancy*” magazine, issue 2, 2011

### Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis - 2011-2012 Contacts

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Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis	Www.audubonchapterofminneapolis.org		<b>MOU Rare Bird Alert: 763-780-8890</b>
Audubon Minnesota	Www.audubon.org/chapter/mn		

## Fall Appeal Thanks!

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis would like to thank the donors to our annual 2011 Fall Appeal. We had a very successful appeal, receiving \$7141.50. The Board of the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis would like to recognize those that contributed. Thanks to the following contributors –

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### ~\*~ QUICK NATURE FACTS ~\*~

Colorado has put together 4 ranches to protect 48,000 acres of grasslands. The properties will preserve habitat for the declining Lesser Prairie Chicken. Most of the bird's range is now fragmented and each separate population has to overcome its local challenges.

The largest native North American snake is the Eastern Indigo. Its scales are deep blue and can reach lengths of more than 8 feet. Its home, the longleaf pine forest is diminishing, and so is the Indigo.

A 358 acre island between Duluth and Wisconsin on the St. Louis River estuary, has been preserved by the Nature Conservancy. This is prime breeding habitat for juvenile fish before they move into Lake Superior.

If John James Audubon is the father of American ornithology, William Bartram is the grandfather. He traveled in the coastal Southeast in the 1700's, studying flora and fauna. His notes contain some of the earliest information on birds in America. It is unfortunate that no bird has been named after him to honor his pioneer work.

- Jim Egge

## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

On February 17 - 20, 2012, Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are having their 15th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). You will be a citizen scientist! You don't need to do anything to advance register. Just select a site (probably your backyard), time period and count the number of birds you see. Note each species and the largest number you see at any one time. Then at the end of the day report your results via the internet at the GBBC website. For more information, go to the GBBC website at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> for detailed information on participation. We will report results, if you don't have access to the internet.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is planning on having a couple of ways you can participate. *On Saturday, February 18, we have four choices for you! From 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 at the Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley, from Noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park, from 10:00 to 11:00 at Wood Lake Nature Center in Richfield and from 10 - 11 at Eastman Nature Center in Dayton. There will be Audubon members there to help with I.D. Come, learn, have fun, and bring friends. Host a party for the birds! Enter the GBBC Photo Contest, see the GBBC website for details. For more information call Jerry Bahls at 763-572-2333 or anyone on the contact list (page 2) or e-mail [jobaud@comcast.net](mailto:jobaud@comcast.net).*

## A PEAK AT PEEPS

### SANDPIPERS LESS THAN 8 INCHES

Sandpipers - Western, Semipalmated, Bairds, White-rumped, Least, Spotted Sanderling, Dunlin

Some shorebirds migrate up to 15,000 miles in a year. Some fly at altitudes of 10,000 feet and cruise at speeds of 50 mph. Sandpipers are powerful migrants. Their large breast muscles make them excellent flyers. Sanderlings for example, nest in the Arctic, in fall migrate south along the east coast, and in spring go north in western U.S.

Even abundant species could be in trouble since they rely on important stopover points to refuel. If these places are not preserved, entire species are vulnerable.

- 1 - Which of these sandpipers breeds in Minnesota?
- 2 - Breeding plumage includes a rusty red head.
- 3 - Straight tubular bill. Plump looking bird. In fall has pale breast.
- 4 - Darkest chest in fall of the 8 species.
- 5 - Longest bill. Gray-brown upper chest in fall.
- 6 - Rare in Minnesota. Usually longer drooping bill..
- 7 - Scaly back especially in juvenile. Wing tips protrude past tail.
- 8 - Winter birds have a hooded appearance and white feathers on lower back.

*Answers on page 7!*

## **Ecuador Trip—Update!**



Partnership for International Birding and the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis are offering a trip to Ecuador and the east slope from October 5 to 14, 2012. Known to some birders as the “birdiest” country in the world, this trip will be led by Lelis Navarrete, one of the top South American birding guides. For the first time Ecuadorian birder, each day can bring 30 to 80 life birds, with short drives between birding sites. Total trip species list should top 400 species, including nearly 40 hummingbird species and over 80 tanager species.

You will stay in comfortable lodges with great food. The price of \$2,290 per person, double occupancy, includes lodging, meals, access fees, guides, internal transportation and other supplies. There is a \$250 single supplement. Airfare is not included, but typically ranges from \$620 to \$900 at this time.

Optional extensions to Sani Lodge in the Amazonian rainforest and/or the Galapagos are also available.

For further information, go to the website for the Partnership for International Birding at [www.pibird.com](http://www.pibird.com), or call Charles Thornton-Kolbe at 888-203-7464 or direct at 720-320-1974. Charles is more than happy to answer any questions you may have. You can also email Charles at [charles@pibird.com](mailto:charles@pibird.com)

A detailed itinerary can be found at <http://www.pibird.com/EcuadorNWPlusBitEast-Main-1.html>

*Photo Credit: Sword-billed hummingbird, by John Drummond.*

## **Make your home safer for birds**

Millions of birds are killed each year by hitting window glass. This mortality is in addition to other deaths from collisions with other man-made structures such as communication towers, power lines, automobiles, and wind turbines. Worldwide, new buildings are made with more glass to capitalize on natural lighting, but often with disastrous consequences for birds of many species both common and rare.

Many of us have heard a thud on the window only to go outside to find a lifeless bird lying on the ground. Occasionally, the bird is just stunned and might revive, if kept warm and protected. More typically, the bird is dead. Multiply this scenario by all the homes in our region, such fatalities can quickly add up to serious numbers. Spring and fall migration times are especially deadly, but window strikes can happen anytime.

Glass is an invisible killer. Birds do not see or understand windows and reflections. When flying, birds focus on distant objects and are misled into flying into what they perceive to be sky and trees. Some of the most deadly situations are windows with clear views into the inside and picture windows or glass doors with large plants inside. Birds like Dark-eyed Juncos and White Throated Sparrows seem especially vulnerable because when alarmed they tend to fly into shrubbery. The homeowner should go outside and look back at the window to see what the birds actually see. Invariably, it is the reflection of sky, clouds, and nearby vegetation. Some windows are more deadly than others, due to building construction and nearby vegetation. Pay attention to which windows birds hit and take actions suggested below to help reduce collisions. One or two hawk silhouettes pasted on a picture window do not work! Birds do not see these as predators and will fly around them, still hitting the window. More effective solutions include:

- Closing blinds and curtains to mute reflections; white blinds seem to reduce reflections better.
- Placing bird feeders no more than 2 feet from the side of your house so birds will not build up enough speed to hurt themselves if they fly off alarmed.
- Moving indoor house plants away from windows
- Hanging wind chimes, flashing tape and UV decals (sold at bird feed stores or on line) on the OUTSIDE of the windows; one can get creative: some people hang old cds or sun catchers.
- Hanging bright window art, flags or banners to overpower the reflections; weather resistant banners are often sold at bird feed stores.
- Installing external window screens that mute reflections and cushion strikes; bird screens are available over the internet.
- Installing CollidEscape film also available over the internet

It is hard for us as individuals to make an impact on such major issues as the clear cutting of rain forests (but please join with organizations that are working on such key issues). However, each of us can make a difference right where we live and work in preventing unnecessary death and injury to birds.

For more information, visit [www.mnaudubon.org](http://www.mnaudubon.org), [www.flap.org](http://www.flap.org) and [www.birdsandbuildings.org](http://www.birdsandbuildings.org)

*Thanks to Madeleine Linck for this article!*

### **Minneapolis Audubon February 2012 Program**

**Friday, February 10, 2012 1 p.m.**

Dr. Scott Sharkey will share outstanding photography from his Minnesota River world in "Scenes from a Bloomington Marsh." The Bryant Square Neighborhood Center, just one block south of Lake Street, is easily accessible via the #4 bus, which runs every 15 minutes. Please join the Minneapolis Audubon Society at 31<sup>st</sup> & Bryant Avenue S for the program and refreshments! For more information call 952-926-4205.

## Tree survey at the Thomas Sadler Roberts Bird Sanctuary

A project to revitalize the Thomas Sadler Roberts Bird Sanctuary in Lyndale Park is underway. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, East Harriet-Farmstead Neighborhood Association, and Linden Hills Neighborhood Council have formed a partnership to revitalize the Sanctuary and preserve its legacy. The Roberts Bird Sanctuary revitalization project includes: developing a management plan, identifying and implementing volunteer stewardship projects and educational opportunities.



Located adjacent to the Lyndale Park Peace Garden and just north of Lake Harriet, the Bird Sanctuary consists of 31 acres of woodlands and wetlands. The area was designated as a Bird Sanctuary in 1936, and in 1947, at the request of the Twin City Bird Club, the Sanctuary was renamed to the Thomas Sadler Roberts Bird Sanctuary. This action was to honor Dr. Roberts who was a University of Minnesota professor of ornithology and Director of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota. Additionally, the Roberts Bird Sanctuary has been designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.

Over the years, the sanctuary has been altered by exotic and invasive species. Fortunately some of the native plants community, its trees, shrubs and wildflowers remain. The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is currently undertaking a tree survey to identify trees and shrubs that exist in order to decide how best to remove invasives and encourage desirable plants.

The tree inventory protocol was set up using iTree, a computer program developed by the USDA Forest Service. 30 plots, each .1 acre in size, were randomly selected throughout the sanctuary. Each plot is surveyed for ground cover and shrubs, and each tree with a diameter of 1" or more has extensive data collection done. So far, eight of the 30 plots have been completed, measuring 309 trees, and an additional ten plots have had their perimeters staked and the ground cover noted and shrubs identified. A total of 18 tree species have been identified, and nine shrub species that are not a tree species. It is expected that this project will be completed in 2012.

Answers from page 4:

1 – Spotted

2 – Sanderling

3 – Semi-palmated

4 – Least

5 – Dunlin

6 – Western

7 – Bairds

8 – White-rumped

*Thanks to Jim Egge for this!*

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KINGFISHER  
January/February 2012



**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  
P.O. Box 422250  
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250



**LOCAL CHAPTER**

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

PO BOX 3801

Minneapolis, MN 55403

Incentive Code:

**C9ZM020Z**



**Calendar of Events**

**January**

24: Board Meeting, 7-8:45PM @ Roosevelt High School, 4029 28th Ave S, Mpls

**February**

7: Program: Tom Will, 7-9PM @ Beth-El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

28: Board Meeting, 7-8:45PM @ Roosevelt High School, 4029 28th Ave S, Mpls

**March**

6: Program: Mike Link & Kate Crowley, 7-9PM @ Beth-El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

27: Board Meeting, 7-8:45PM @ Roosevelt High School, 4029 28th Ave S, Mpls

*The Kingfisher is published every other month beginning with the January issue. All are welcome to programs, trips and board meetings! For more information on upcoming events please check out our website at : [www.audubonchapterofminneapolis.org](http://www.audubonchapterofminneapolis.org)*

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Contact Jerry Bahls at [jobaud@comcast.net](mailto:jobaud@comcast.net)