



KINGFISHER



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Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 62 No. 4

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

2013-14 Chapter Officers & Board

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Board elected the following officers for the 2013-2014 fiscal year –

President	Jerry Bahls
Vice-President	John Arthur
Secretary	Martha Allen
Treasurer	Bob Dunn

The following were elected to the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Board at the May Membership meeting – Jim Sharpsteen and Siah St. Claire.

Please welcome the new officers and Board members. The Board still has three vacancies and would welcome anyone interested in serving. Contact Jerry Bahls (763 572-2333) or Bob Papke (763 545-8072).

July Issue

North Metro Summer Joint Programs

Again this summer as part of our outreach to our northern membership, the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis and the Izaak Walton League – Breckenridge Chapter will hold joint meetings over the summer on June 25th, July 23rd and August 27th at 7:30 pm. The meetings will be held at the Breckenridge Chapter House located at – 8816 West River Road in Brooklyn Park. The schedule is –

June 25	Matt Norton, Campaign Director for the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, Process of and Materials Used in Frac-ing
July 23	Mary Spivey, Education Coordinator, Cedar Creek Eco Science Reserve, Education and Research at Cedar Creek including red-headed woodpecker research.
August 27	TBA

Please circle these dates on your calendar. Watch for announcements of other speakers this summer. Tell a friend and bring a friend.

Birding on the River

Experience birding like you never have before - from the middle of the river! Let Three Rivers Park District, in cooperation with the National Park Service, guide you along this little-seen part of the Mississippi River. Join Park Ranger Sharon Stiteler and West Coon Rapids Dam naturalists as we paddle river rafts from West Coon Rapids Dam in search of herons, eagles, and osprey, and stop on islands to look for many other birds that use the river corridor as their home. No paddling experience needed. Reservations are required by June 28.

Location: Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park, 10360 West River Road Brooklyn Park, MN 55444

Date & Time: Tuesday July 2nd 2013 from 7AM—10AM

Restrictions & Fees: Restricted to participants age 16 and older. \$30.00 fee.

Call (763) 694-7790 for more information!

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jerry Bahls

My first task as President will be to thank Jim Egge for serving 4 terms as our President. He has done a great job. He has continued leading in keeping the Chapter on a firm financial footing. He has continued to lead us in working with youth at schools by leading field trips for many school classes as well as giving presentations about birds. Thanks for a job well done!

My next task will be to thank our outgoing Vice-President Susan Tertell for her strong leadership on the Board. She stepped in to lead our Field Trip Program by working with a world leader in International Birding and administering our very popular Tiffany Bottoms trips. She was critical in upgrading our website and administering it. Thanks for you leadership!

In February our longtime Treasurer Ernie Gunderson was forced to resign for health reasons and recently passed away. See our tribute to Ernie in this issue. He was replaced by Bob Dunn who was re-elected by the Board. Thanks Bob for accepting this critical position.

Our Board has one new face, Siah St. Claire, and one returning face, Jim Sharpsteen. See the article about their backgrounds in this issue. Welcome Siah and Jim.

Continued on following page

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

A Tribute to Ernie Gunderson

Ernie Gunderson joined the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis as our Treasurer in 2006. Ernie had been a Project Engineer and brought those skills to us with his meticulous attention to detail. Ernie applied this skill to many things he did. Ernie became an expert canoeist early in his life and enjoyed it his whole life, culminating in his last trip on the Namekagon.

Ernie developed skills as a builder when he built his cabin on the Moose River. He cut all the cabin parts then had to float them to the building site, since there were no roads to it. He then had to assemble it on the site. He enjoyed the solitude and beauty of the river for many years.

Ernie was a published author. He published two books. His last was his mother's memoir. It took courage to take many of his mother's intimate comments and publish them. Some that dealt directly about him. Working on the book took him across the country and over to Denmark. A good tribute to his courageous mother!

Ernie enjoyed the natural world and taught himself to become an expert in identifying trees even without their leaves. He demonstrated his skills while Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis was doing the Tree Survey at Roberts Bird Sanctuary. He was so good we had to assign a recorder for him as he walked quickly through the area naming the tree species as soon as he looked at it.

Ernie applied the same tenacity teaching himself bird songs as well as the chips and calls. At one outdoor Chapter Board meeting, he was able to identify about 25 birds while sitting in his lawn chair. His help in locating red-headed woodpecker nest sites and identifying other species that the DNR had designated as "of interest" was invaluable.

Not only did Ernie have these extraordinary skills, but he was more than willing to teach others the skills he had acquired. He often would stop during the Tree Survey to teach others about a particular tree's characteristics. He did the same with bird calls.

Finally Ernie showed us all about life when after learning about his terminal illness, he used this opportunity to teach us about life. He let us all know that death is an intimate part of what we call life. It is only the end of life! Ernie, have a good journey HOME!

- Jerry Bahls

President's Note—continued

That was a summary of the filled positions. Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis still has three openings on the Board and openings for the Chairs of the Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Publicity, Membership, Programs, Social and Living Green Expo Committees. We need to fill these positions to have a smooth running Chapter that provides the activities that our members expect. Please call me at 763 572-2333 or send a message to jobaud@comcast.net if you can help us.

Chickadee

I have been watching them for weeks. This is not the first time I've had chickadees nesting in a gift my sister gave me years ago. It is a wooden and stone structure with the words *Fly Right Inn* posted on the front. It has been hanging on a tall plant hanger for several seasons and I refurbish the boards as necessary when I clean it out in the fall

Each year the female scurries in and out first carrying twigs, and later soft leaves, until she is ready to lay her eggs. Usually, it is mid April, and, since it is normally too cool to sit on the porch, I keep watch through the sliding glass door. Once her eggs are laid and she is keeping them warm, there is not much activity. A few times a day, the male brings her food, usually from the bird feeders. Otherwise, it is quiet.

It isn't difficult to tell when the babies are hatched because both parents are busy flying in and out with food pieces. Last year, my partner was here when one of the young exited the house, flying clumsily from low branch to low branch, but I haven't been so lucky. However, this year, I had a different experience.

For the last few days, I noticed the song of some of the chickadees is not typical and I suspect young chickadees. Because immature birds learn the melody from their parents, I'm hearing young chickadees and they have not yet mimicked their call correctly.

Today, as I step out on the porch, a baby is perched on the brace of my screen door.

"You are so endearing. Thank you for resting on the ledge of my screen door. Don't worry? I won't hurt you. You are completely safe with me."

The black cap was perfectly fashioned and the rest of the coloring was completely formed so the baby was at least a couple of weeks old.

I picked up the camera and took a picture through the screen door; then I quietly walked though the garage and took another on the outside. The baby pooped on the door and then flew, flailing to the bottom of a tree ten yards away. The ill-formed dee-dee-dee resounded from the baby and the parent's dee-dee-dee's seemed to shout encouragement. Their song continues to echo in my mind.

~ Elaine Voboril

~*~ Birds in Music Quiz ~*~

1. What song from the 60's has Hooty Owl, Dove, and Whipporwill in it?
2. In the song "Zippity Doo Da" what bird was sitting on the singer's shoulder?
3. What bird came "bob, bob, bobbin' along" in the 1950's song of the same name?
4. In the nursery rhyme 24 of what bird were baked in a pie?
5. What bird was calling in "My Blue Heaven"?
6. In the religious song, God's eye is on the _____.
7. What bird was the gift on the 6th day of Christmas?
8. In a song now common at weddings we are raised up on what bird's wings?

Answers on page 7!

ENVIRONMENTAL ROUNDUP

Minnesota Public Radio ran a story on Dan Olson's program "Minnesota Sounds and Voices", about Roberts Bird Sanctuary. Sue Leaf, the author of a book on T. S. Roberts, was on the program aired on May 13, 2013. You can hear the MPR program at <http://minnesotapublicradio.org>. Sue will present to Audubon Chapter of Minnesota in November.

There is a Young Birder's Club in Minnesota as a project of the Science Museum of Minnesota and Warner Nature Center. This is open to young people 13-18 in MN and Western Wisconsin.

Youth member application can be found at www.smm.org/static/warner/mnybc-youth.pdf. Another interesting way to get kids involved with nature is at the Silverwood Park in St. Anthony. My own kids went there in the 70's for day camp when it was operated by the Salvation Army. There is a strong focus on art and nature, with programs run by the Three Rivers Park District. Alyssa Baguss leads the volunteer-driven Art and Nature programs, using art to teach science concepts. Teachers and parents alike can avail themselves of this excellent program by visiting www.threeriversparks.org. Also read through the flyer that goes out to families in the Minneapolis area from Three Rivers.

There is a Young Birders Network now available on the internet. Teen birders can connect with other interested birders on the web to explore birding opportunities and information. This site has promoted birding clubs all around the country, while engaging teens and younger in one of the best hobbies with which they can get involved.

On this site you will find articles written by teens as well as professionals. Students can also interact with college and adult birders. There is a directory of young birders clubs, and Facebook groups, as well as resources to enable students to turn their passion into a career. Today's birders incorporate ornithology with art, computer science, and environment in ways not available only a few years ago. The Network was launched by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Ohio's Black Swamp Bird Observatory. This is a highly creative endeavor, capable of igniting a passion in young people that will last a lifetime. Let's promote this site to the kids we contact by getting them on to- www.youngbirdersnetwork.net.

For further info contact Pat Leonard at pel27@cornell.edu

Rochester wildlife isn't just for geese any more. Jacob Ryg, the City Forester has led the establishment of several city prairies right within the city limits of Rochester, MN. To find them, check the Rochester city website.

By Jim Egge

Book Review by Susan Tertell

***“Feathers: the evolution of a natural miracle,”* by Thor Hanson, Basic Books, 2011.**

This book, recently released in paperback, is an interesting and engaging natural and social history of feathers. Feathers serve many functions for birds, including insulation, waterproofing, and the beauty that allows a male to attract a female. Feathers can allow birds to fly at very high speeds, and can allow them to fly quietly to swoop down on prey. Hanson covers the developing knowledge (and controversy) about the evolution of feathers and how birds attained flight. Are birds related to the theropods, which have been discovered with feathers, particularly in the Yixian formation in China? Or do theropods and birds have an as-yet undiscovered common ancestor? Did flight evolve from creatures gliding from trees to the ground, or from the use of feathers to help launch themselves from below.

Feathers are keratin, which is found in reptiles, amphibians and mammals as well as birds. Hooves are keratin; our hair is keratin. However, feathers are much more complex in structure. How did the feather develop in all its complexity to allow birds to fly?

Feathers have been used by other animals for various purposes – and of course birds use their own feathers for purposes such as lining nests. However humans have been the biggest consumers of feathers. Especially prior to World War I, people slaughtered birds in large quantities to adorn hats, feather boas, and the costumes of Las Vegas chorus girls. In fact, human use of feathers in the past drove many birds to the brink of extinction.

You will not regret the time spent with this delightful book, if only for the interesting facts you will learn about birds and their covering. One of my favorites is the Pitouhi from New Guinea, which has a powerful neurotoxin in its feathers to make it almost impervious to feather lice.



Brooklyn Center Earth Fest

Brooklyn Center Earth Fest is a grass roots environmental movement and a way to support a Brooklyn Center community identity.

The Earth Fest held at the Brooklyn Center High School on April 20th this year attracted the very young as well as more mature citizens.

Shown here are guest Ms. F. Lee and her daughter, with Mary Ellen Vetter. Mary Ellen, past president of ACM, greets visitors at the ACM table and provides information on birds and their habitat needs. All of this is worthy of greater public support.

Tiffany Bottoms Natural Wildlife Area field trip

Sunday, September 8th, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00

Due to the cancellation of the May 5 trip due to bad weather and flooding, we are offering a fall trip this year. The field trip includes a ride on a narrow-gauge train through the Bottoms, with several stops to walk in the area and look for birds, both residents and early fall migrants.

Tiffany Bottoms is located about 5 miles south of Durand, Wisconsin, about 90 miles from the Twin Cities, and the driving time is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes.

The cost is \$20 per person, \$15 for Audubon members, and \$5 for children 12 and under. (Sorry, we are not able to give refunds for this trip after August 15, 2013.) Also, four people per trip are needed to help less experienced birders. If you are willing to help you can get a discount on the trip. A spotting scope is helpful but not necessary.

What to bring: The train is open air, and we go rain or shine, so bring what you need to protect yourself from the elements – hat, rain jacket, sunscreen, bug dope, etc. Also bring water and a snack or lunch, and of course, binoculars and a bird guide.

For **reservations**, contact Susan Tertell at stertell@gmail.com.

Directions to Tiffany Bottoms from the Twin Cities:

Alternative 1: Head east on I-94. Merge onto **US-10 E/US-61 S** via **EXIT 244**. Continue to follow US-10E to Durand, Wisconsin. In Durand, turn right on East Main Street, and take the first left onto 3rd Avenue E., then take the 3rd right onto E Prospect St. Prospect St. turns into Wisconsin Highway 25. Stay on WI-25 for 3 miles. The parking area for the train will be on the left side of the road and there will be someone directing traffic.

Alternative 2: Head east on I-94. Take the **WI-25** exit, **EXIT 41**, toward **Menomonie/Barron**. Take WI-25 for 20 miles to the intersection with US-10. Turn **left** onto **US-10/WI-25**. Continue to follow **US-10 until you reach Durand**. In Durand, turn right on East Main Street, and take the first left onto 3rd Avenue E., then take the 3rd right onto E Prospect St. Prospect St. turns into Wisconsin Highway 25. Stay on WI-25 for 3 miles. The parking area for the train will be on the left side of the road and there will be someone directing traffic.

One of our oldest members of Audubon, Vera Sparkes, has passed away on April 21, 2013, at the age of 100. She was author of the Kingfisher newsletter for many years. Her love of birds was passed on to her niece Holli Martini, and she has had a significant influence on many others in our community. She has been a strong supporter of Audubon and will be greatly missed.

Answers to Birds in Music Quiz

1. Tammy
2. Bluebird
3. Red, Red, Robin
4. Blackbirds
5. Whipporwill
6. Sparrow
7. Geese
8. Eagle

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KINGFISHER
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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
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

June

25: North Metro Summer Joint Program (details on front page)

July

23: North Metro Summer Joint Program (details on front page)

August

27: North Metro Summer Joint Program (details on front page)

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

Electronic Kingfisher

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Contact Jerry Bahls at jobaud@comcast.net