



KINGFISHER



JULY/AUGUST 2012

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 61 No. 4

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

CHIMNEY SWIFT SIT

Take part in our annual state-wide Chimney Swift Sit July 20 – 23 and August 31 – September 1 to help us learn more about the sites used by these “flying cigars”. The SIT involves finding chimneys/smokestacks/towers being used by swifts and then counting/estimating the number that go in to roost any night/s during that time period.

For info go to: <http://mn.audubon.org/chimney-swift-conservation-project>

Sunset the first weekend is right at 8:50 p.m. in the metro so try to be at your site from about 8:20 pm until dark. This will maximize the opportunities to watch and count/estimate the number of swifts.

The number of swifts you might see go into a chimney will of course vary from chimney to chimney so at first you may just be counting by ones and twos and for those sites with multiples of swifts going in you may end up counting by 10s and 20s. Remember though that every chimney that is open to swifts is important to document the availability of it to these declining species.

The information collected during this event will be posted on the Audubon Minnesota web site in early September. For questions, contact Ron Windingstad, Audubon Minnesota rwindingstad@audubon.org or 651-739-9332 ext. 14

July Issue

Joint ACM – Ikes Programs This Summer!

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis and the Breckenridge Chapter of the Izaak Walton League (Brooklyn Park) will hold joint program meetings again this summer. Meetings will be the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Breckenridge Chapter House, 8816 West River Road, Brooklyn Park.

The first program is Tuesday, June 26 and features botanist Stephen Saupe speaking about his experiences with edible wild plants including local ones. All program meeting are free and open to the public.

For more information about Dr. Saupe see our website:

<http://audubonchapterofminneapolis.org/programs/>

For more information about the Breckenridge Chapter House, check out their website:

<http://www.breckenridgeikes.org/index.html>

Thank You Mailing Team!!

For six months during the year, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis members receive the *Kingfisher*. This happens because a group of dedicated volunteers give up the 3rd Monday of the month for six months to insert, fold, tape and label the *Kingfishers*, so they can be mailed. I would like to thank the following for this valuable service – Bill Caverly, Donna Bahls, Lois Dick, Bob Dunn, Dave Martin, Virginia May, Malcolm Mitchell, Darlene & Don Olson, Marianna Tiller, Mary Ellen Vetter, Lary Johnson and Jane Wichmann. Also thanks to Bob Papke for making the trip to the Eagan Post Office to make the mailing. When you see them let them know you appreciate their work. **Thank you team!**

Jerry Bahls, Mailing Chair

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jim Egge

Back in 10th grade when you sat in your Biology class, learning about the Earth's biomes, you may remember them fitting into nice neat chapters. But the older I get, the more I distrust those clear-cut categories. Throughout the world there are very few intact biomes left. Most have been destroyed or changed beyond recognition. Minnesota, for example, once had perhaps five defined biomes – boreal forest, hardwood forest, prairie, aspen parkland, and of course, aquatic. These began to succumb to human invasion about 1850. Most boreal and hardwood forests have retreated to small set-aside pockets, outside the BWCA. Prairie has mostly been cultivated, perhaps leaving less than 2 %. Aspen parkland has been the rarest but has survived, albeit changed somewhat. Everyone who fishes knows the precarious nature of our aquatic habitats. Many have been drained, while acid rain, pollution, and exotic species have put them in jeopardy as fisheries.

A previous article in the *Kingfisher* focused on climate as a factor affecting biomes. Thinking back to biology study of food chains, you may recall that species interact with each other, so that if one species increases or decreases, it sets off a chain reaction. For example, if white pine blister rust affects a few pines, the canopy will begin to open allowing seedlings of other trees to get started. The alternate host for rust, gooseberry, will increase accelerating white pine loss. In Minnesota we can now see the effects of temperature rise on the northward movement of boreal forest.

Minnesota researchers have usually been on the vanguard of monitoring lake changes. Minnesota was one of the first to identify lakes affected by acidifies rain, and lakes whose fish contained mercury levels too high to be safe. The DNR has recently undertaken a study where 24 lakes called sentinel lakes, will be monitored for climate change effects, and other factors.

Walleyes in general are not much affected by warming lake water until temperatures reach 82 F. However their food is impacted significantly by temps 80 F and even lower, causing slower annual growth.

I recently heard Will Steger speak on his experience with climate changes. If you haven't gotten new information from the last 2 or 3 years, your knowledge may be obsolete.

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		

**Member
Poetry Corner**

BARRED OWL

Swoops into the crest
of the big cottonwood
by the creek,
but can't escape the
mob
of crows at his heels.
So sits tight
like a fat banker –
tongue-tied, twisting
to watch all ways at
once
while the James Gang
tugs his watch chain,
turns his pockets inside
out.

- Warren D.
Woessner

**Come Next
Spring**

Milkweed pods
dry and crack.
Fall seed
parachutes
launch.
Windblown plant
dust
scatters to
unseen
places.
Claiming secret
places
to sprout and
take root.

-
Clem J. Nagel

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 26th, July 24th and August 28th 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 26

Stephen Saupe, botanist: “Edible Wild Plants”. Stephen G. Saupe is a professor in the joint biology department of the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University, where he has taught for more than 30 years. He is a plant biologist who was inspired to become a botanist by Euell Gibbons, author of *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*. Steve continues to experiment with edible plants, especially wild fruits, and his presentation will feature some of the edible plants in our area.

July 24

Tim Schlagenhaft, DNR Mississippi River Planning Director - Lake City, “Asian Carp: The Problem & The Solution?” He currently co-chairs Minnesota’s Asian Carp Task Force and coordinates Asian carp activities within the DNR.

August 28

TBA

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

President’s Note—continued

For the last 400,000 years, which is the time frame that many scientists feel they understand with some accuracy, CO2 levels have cycled between 270 and 340 parts per million. The optimum levels are about 285-300 ppm. At 350 ppm unsustainable changes begin to occur. The current worldwide concentration is now 394 ppm, and has been above 350 for about 30 years. Scientists now seldom talk about reducing this number, but instead are studying ways to live with elevated CO2 for 100 years.

We have seen some bird species returning to Northern Minnesota as much as 2 weeks earlier than just 30 years ago. A few species don’t go as far south, or stay throughout the winter. Think of the effect that temperatures have had on goose populations. I saw my first Canada goose in the Twin Cities in the early 1970’s. Now most don’t even migrate due to human impact. We haven’t had many mosquitoes in Minneapolis proper the last five years. That may be why I haven’t seen many of those wonderful warbler waves in my yard.

Biologists have determined that we may be seeing dozens of new exotic plants and animals imported each year. Many of these can cause major ecosystem disruption. Amid the many environmental lessons we haven’t learned, I hope one lesson we can learn is resilience.

Mississippi River Rafting: Birding Along the River

Watch the birds along the Mississippi River - from the middle of the river! We'll paddle family-friendly rafts from the Coon Rapids Dam in Brooklyn Park to the Camden Bridge in Minneapolis. Bird-loving naturalists will help to search for Herons, Orioles and Osprey. We'll stop on islands to look for many other birds that use the river corridor as their home, play a little bird bingo, and do other fun activities. Shuttle, beverages and snacks provided. Bring binoculars, water bottles and a lunch. Wear shoes that can get wet. No paddling experience needed. Reservations required by Aug. 13.

WHERE: Coon Rapids Regional Dam Park

WHEN: Saturday August 18th, 2012 from 9:30AM—4:00PM

COST: CRD Public Programs = \$45.00 (\$1.00 optional donation to Wonder Fund)

Restricted to participants age 10 and older.

Next Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Program

Speaker: Al Batt; *Bird Stories*

We all have stories. So do birds. Al Batt of rural Hartland, Minnesota, is a writer, speaker, storyteller and humorist. Al writes four weekly humor and nature columns for many newspapers, and does a show about nature three times a week on a number of radio stations. He writes popular cartoon strips that are syndicated nationally. He has written for a number of magazines and books, including the Chicken Soup For the Soul series. He is a columnist for Bird Watcher's Digest and has written for the movies. He speaks at various festivals, conferences and conventions all over the United States and Canada. He has received a number of prestigious awards, including Birder of the Year from WildBird magazine, the Hero Award from the National Eagle Center, and the T. S. Roberts Award from the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union. September 4th @ Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

BIRD FLIGHT

Most birds fly in the 20-30 mph range. Eider Ducks cruise at a migration speed locked at 47 mph. But ducks can fly at flight speeds of 60+ mph. In diving speeds, the fastest is reportedly the Prairie Falcon typically around 100, although 150-200 mph is possible. Size is not a good determiner of flight speed. Geese and Hummingbirds have about the same maximum speeds. High speeds are not efficient speeds. Birds tend to fly at slower speeds which maximize distance per energy use. Raptors, for example maximize endurance, and therefore, soar much of the time, making good use of wind currents.

Researchers use Doppler Radar to clock speeds much like traffic cops do. Anemometers are used to estimate air speeds for birds flying into or with the wind. Birds usually fly much higher during migration. This appears to be to prevent dehydration at warmer surface air temperatures. Most migrations over distance are at around 10,000 feet, although 20,000 feet is not uncommon. A flock of Whooper Swans was observed by an airline pilot in Northern Ireland at 29,000 feet.

The first airplane brought down by a bird was a Wright biplane in 1912, when gulls got entangled in the wing wires. Jet windshields must now be reinforced against bird collisions, otherwise a duck at 60 meeting a jet at 560 mph would go through the windshield and likely kill someone. Most plane-bird collisions occur at slower speeds however, causing power failure in engines. In 1960, a propjet taking off from Boston pulled six Starlings into a jet. The plane crashed killing all 62 people on board, although this is rare. Research has found that closing dumps near airports discourages Gulls, which are the most frequently hit birds.

By Jim Egge (Some info taken from "The Birder's Handbook", 1988, Ehrlich, Dobkin, and Wheye)

Galapagos: Birding and Wildlife with Minneapolis Audubon October 24 to November 4, 2013

Galapagos is a lifetime destination for most every naturalist and birder. This trip focuses on studying all aspects of Galapagos natural history, Galapagos wildlife and nearly all endemic bird species. This trip offers opportunities for birders to find these endemic species and an opportunity to enjoy the bounty of unique, rare, and extraordinarily tame wildlife. The islands host fascinating seabirds, endemic land birds, Iguanas, Giant Tortoises, Galapagos Sea Lions and a flora all their own. Xavier Munoz, one of Ecuador's most experienced bird guides, shares guiding with a local Galapagos naturalist to help you find and learn to identify Galapagos wildlife. This trip is priced at \$4,290 for 10 days or \$4,490 for 11 days. Total tour package is 20% less than our nearest competitor.

To learn more about this trip of the lifetime, call Charles at the Partnership for International Birding at 720-320-1974 or try our website at www.pibird.com. Also, feel free to contact Sue Tertell at 612-729-1566.



Planting Native Plants at Roberts Bird Sanctuary

In 2010, our chapter adopted Roberts Bird Sanctuary through the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's (MPRB) Park Stewards program and began working with the MPRB and the organizations that represent the neighborhoods on either side of the Sanctuary to enhance the habitat for birds and other wildlife. To this end, we've been leading volunteer buckthorn pulls every fall and garlic mustard pulls every spring. Thanks to the removal efforts, this spring we had our first opportunity to take an important step in the enhancement process: planting.

On Saturday, April 28 volunteers from the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis (MGCM) and the ACM planted native plants suited to the conditions at Roberts. The event was the MGCM's 2012 Arbor Day planting. One planting site was inside the Sanctuary by the bench off the main trail where ACM members and community volunteers previously had removed invasive honeysuckle, buckthorn and garlic mustard. On this site, MGCM members planted trees, shrubs, ferns and wildflowers. The other site was just outside the Visitors Shelter. On this site, where bare wood chips were being overrun with weeds, two Youth Conservation Corps crews helped ACM members weed and then plant wildflowers, grasses and ferns.

As of early June, the new plants appear to be doing well. ACM members will be keeping an eye on them through the summer and watering and weeding as needed. Although the April 28 planting was not a public volunteer event, we expect many future plantings will be. We plan to expand the plantings to other sites and we'll be asking for volunteers for these events.

The April 28 planting could not have happened without a lot of help. Robert Kean and Kristina Hughes were the MGCM leaders and did a wonderful job. The following organizations donated funds to purchase plants: People for Parks, East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association, Linden Hills Neighborhood Council, MGCM and ACM. Outback Nursery in Hastings sold the plants at wholesale prices and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board staff helped set up the event. Thank you, all! We look forward to working with everyone again. To see more of the MGCM's quality gardening, check out the Trial Garden on the east side of the Peace Garden & across the street from the Rose Garden at Lake Harriet. The MGCM is open to women and men regardless of where they live. For more information about the group, visit their website at <http://www.minneapolisgardeningclub.org/MGCM/Welcome.html>

Pleasant Tropical Texas in Winter: Top Birding in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas January 27 to February 2, 2013 (with second trip from February 3 to 9, 2013)

South Texas in the early part of the year is warm and pleasant (usually in the 70s and into the 80s), and each birding day is filled with 2 to 4 new life birds for most everyone on the trip. The local species in tropical Texas can more easily be found here than in any other part of the United States, including species like Green Jay, Audubon's Oriole, Altamira Oriole, Buff-breasted Hummingbird, Plain Chachalaca, Ringed Kingfisher, Olive Sparrow, Tropical Parula and many more. Then you add great birds just coming over the Rio Grande Valley from Mexico, and you might pick up some real rarities, like Crimson-collared Grosbeak, Rose-throated Becard, and usually a few others. These 15 to 25 local specialties, combined with a few rarities from Mexico, makes for a trip with 15 to 30 lifers for most every birder. The mammals (such as Armadillo and Ocelot) and butterflies (such as Mexican Bluewing and Red-border Pixie) also add more natural beauty to the trip. The trips covers a variety of habitats, included palm forests, others forested areas, coast lines, lakes, rivers, arid scrub and more. Some of the sites include Santa Anna National Wildlife Refuge, Falcon State Park, Bentsen State Park, and Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge. We also hit a good combination of local sites based upon what rare birds are being reported, including Quinta Mazatlan, Frontera Audubon, Sabal Palm and Salineño. Other local sites bring species like Green Parakeet and Red-crowned Parrot. Every corner of this trip seems to offer fun birding, pleasant weather, and friendly and helpful local birders.

The trip price is \$1,590 for 8 days of birding.

Please check out our website at <http://www.pibird.com/Texas-RioGVal-2012-1.html> for more details.

For more information, contact Charles Thornton-Kolbe at the Partnership for International Birding at 720-320-1974 or toll free at 888-203-7464, ext. 912. Also, feel free to contact Sue Tertell at 612-729-1566.

Volunteer Gardeners Wanted: No Experience Necessary!

Come garden with Wild Ones at the Lake Nokomis Naturescape in Minneapolis or the Horton Park Native Plant Gardens in St. Paul. Wild Ones is an organization whose mission is "educating the public about the benefits of preserving and restoring biodiversity of our native plant communities, beginning in our own yards and gardens." The Twin Cities chapter helps maintain native plant gardens on city parkland in Minneapolis and St. Paul and is always looking for volunteers to help with planting, weeding, watering and mulching. Experienced and beginning gardeners are always welcome. This is a great opportunity to learn about native plants and gain hands-on experience alongside Wild Ones members.

Nokomis Naturescape at East Lake Nokomis Parkway & East 50th Street in Minneapolis

Tuesdays: May through September, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Join us whenever you can; just show up! For more information call Vicki Bonk from Wild Ones at 612-727-3562 or Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) at 612-724-5652. For more information about the Naturescape, visit <http://www.nokomiseast.org/association/etf/naturescape.html>

Horton Park Native Plant Gardens at W. Minnehaha Ave & Hamline Ave N in St. Paul

Native oak savanna, shade, and prairie gardens planted by volunteers with the support of Wild Ones and the St. Paul Parks Department. Volunteer gardening dates for 2012 had not been set as of press time. Call Hannah at 651-644-6790 for more information or visit the Wild Ones Twin Cities chapter website and click on "Volunteer" <http://www.wildonestwincities.org/>

Bird Art Display For September Program!

For the September program at Beth El Synagogue, it would be interesting to have a Bird Art display. Bring your bird art items for all to see- original paintings, framed prints, wood carvings, stained glass, bird plates, etc. I might suggest that you bring them in about 6:30-6:40. We'll have extra tables so everyone can peruse them, and have a social time until about 7:15. There will be no "Bird of the Month" in September. Don't forget to bring your own mugs for coffee, tea, etc. at the monthly programs.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
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KINGFISHER
July/August 2012

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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 _____

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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

26: Program, 7:30PM @ Breckenridge Chapter House, 8816 West River Road, Brooklyn Park

July

24: Board Meeting, 7 to 8:45 pm @ Roosevelt High School at 4029 28th Av S in Minneapolis

August

28: Board Meeting, 7 to 8:45 pm @ Roosevelt High School at 4029 28th Av S in Minneapolis

September

4: Program: Al Batt, *Bird Stories*, 7-9PM @ Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

25: Board Meeting, 7 to 8:45 pm @ Roosevelt High School at 4029 28th Av S in Minneapolis

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