



KINGFISHER



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Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 60 No. 1

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

A Note from the President

If there is a book that recounts the history of the environmental movement, I have never seen it, but one should be written. During westward expansion, the wilderness seemed endless, and "Manifest Destiny" meant that it was there for European immigrant taking. There was little outcry as stream banks were destroyed by hydraulic mining techniques. Fashion dictated the near demise of many bird species for plume hats. It wasn't until Teddy Roosevelt's time that forestry included the thought of replanting, and the stories of buffalo slaughter, and waterfowl shoots are legendary. As I stand on Hawk Ridge, and marvel at the raptor flights, seemingly on display for us, I shudder to think that hunters came from far away to use them for target practice. Much of the 20th century saw American and European trophy hunters doing the same thing in Africa.

Great leadership in the 1900's did usher in a new awareness of our need to preserve the environment. Legislation such as the Lacey Act, and the establishment of National Parks and National Forests, put the issues before the public. However decades of heavy use and accelerating development in agriculture and city growth, brought an urgency to protect the dwindling wild areas.

Continued on page 2

January Issue

Looking for a new Conservation Committee Chair!

Chairing the Conservation Committee is a great way to contribute your time and talents on behalf of birds and the environment.

The Committee Chair has the duty of leading at least one committee meeting per month (meetings in the months of June, July, and August are held at the discretion of the chair). The Conservation Committee serves to inform and educate chapter members about conservation issues in the membership area, including issues at the MN Legislature, as well as in the wider community; the committee also supports members who want to become involved in conservation issues of their choosing.

The chair has a great deal of latitude in how this service and support is provided. Some methods the chair may choose to use include: Writing a summary of the committee's activities for the chapter's bi-monthly newsletter; *(continued on page 3)*

Why October Envelope?

Last month there was an envelope in the newsletter. Many of you were probably wondering why it was there! Some used it to send us your membership renewal. It was actually for our Annual Fall Appeal. Due to a mix-up with our new Editor an explanation of the envelope wasn't included in the newsletter. We apologize for that. Please use the envelope to contribute to our Fall Appeal.

If you've misplaced it, you can still send a contribution to: Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, PO Box 3801, Minneapolis, MN 55403.

Thanks and sorry for any misunderstanding!

(President's Note continued)

Individuals and organizations tried to buy up and preserve as much as they could, but saw that they could not set aside, nor control the quality of natural areas to meet the needs of future generations. Shock was what America needed! Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring" pointed to a new awareness and new strategies.

I remember the first Earth Day while teaching at Kellogg High School. A concerned student named Cliff asked me the question "What can we do to help the environment?" What I remember most was that I didn't have a satisfactory answer. I decided that students deserved a good answer. The first priority was to become as knowledgeable about the issues as possible, and to teach students to be open to dialogue.

Throughout the 50's and 60's, environmental groups sprang up and found their niche. Extremism turned some people off, but spurred others to make positive changes. Educating people about what they could do as a citizen, became important, but what we needed most was money. Some groups focused on legislation, while others worked with land-owners for informed land use. Brilliant land acquisition and forceful use of the judicial system made it possible for us today to compete successfully with for-profit businesses.

The future of sustainable nature is bright, but will require new approaches and constant vigilance. We are dealing with a new population of children who haven't grown up with much exposure to nature. As Aldo Leopold said, "they as-

sume that groceries come from a store and heat comes from a furnace". The challenge that Audubon is trying to meet, is to educate young people from many cultures about the need to preserve wildlife and natural places for their children.

ACM has an active program to go into schools and provide education for city kids. If you can see yourself leading a group of 5th graders on a bird walk, or telling some of your experiences to kids who don't have adults with your outdoor knowledge, we have a place for you in our programs. Give us a call at 612-827-7629 or contact any of our board members.

~ Jim Egge

Wood Lake Nature Center Environmental Book Club Winter Reading List

Here is the upcoming schedule, please request, and read books early if there are limited copies.

Both Hennepin and Dakota County libraries usually have multiple copies, and several of the upcoming books are either classics or best-sellers so they should not be hard to find at used book stores.

January 25 - *Of Wolves and Men*, by Barry Lopez

February 22 - *Our Neck of the Woods: Exploring Minnesota's Wild Places*, edited by Daniel J. Philippon

March 22 - *Eating Animals*, by Jonathan Safran Foer

6:30pm-8pm \$5, free for members

For more information contact:

Amy Markle

Naturalist

Wood Lake Nature Center

612-861-9369

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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		

Minnesota Environmental Partnership's 15th Annual Legislative Reception and Forum!

Please join us Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011, for the **15th Annual Legislative Reception and Forum!**

This event is a fun way for you to meet volunteers and staff from our member organizations, discuss our collaborative legislative priorities, and hear from our state legislative and agency leaders about their views on current environmental issues.

The reception begins at 6 p.m. at the Town & Country Club* in Saint Paul. Enjoy an appetizer buffet and a cash bar. Bring your staff, spouse and friends – all are welcome! Program begins at 7 p.m.

* Address for Town & Country Club

300 North Mississippi River Boulevard

Saint Paul, MN 55104-4927

Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

Register online at: http://www.mepartnership.org/mep_calendar.asp?cal_id=3395 or mail payment along with name(s) of attendees to:

Minnesota Environmental Partnership

546 Rice Street, Suite 100

Saint Paul, MN 55103

For more information, please contact Andrew Spaeth at the MEP office,

Phone: 651.290.0154

Email: andrewspaeth@mepartnership.org

(Conservation Committee Chair continued from page 1) giving a five minute update at the chapter's monthly program meetings; arranging with the editor of the newsletter to write longer pieces for the *Kingfisher*; posting committee and conservation information on the chapter website; representing the chapter at various community events; and attending Audubon Minnesota's Environmental Issues Committee meetings and events.

The committee is working on a long-term project, the Roberts Bird Sanctuary Revitalization Project. The outgoing chair will remain involved with this project. The incoming chair is welcome to work on this project as well or to champion a project of his or her choosing.

The chair does not need to be an experienced birder. Minimum of four hours/month but the required hours really will depend on the chair's level of involvement.

For questions about the position or to apply, contact Kit Healy at heal0055@umn.edu

ACM: Past, Present & Future!

Did you know that The Minneapolis Public Library organized seven science clubs for citizens interested in various aspects of the natural environment in 1939, which is where the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis first started?

The ACM now has about 2,500 members, of which 200 are directly involved in a variety of activities that are aimed at conservation and educational efforts throughout the metro area and state.

We are always looking for new members so tell your friends, family, and co-workers about the amazing work the ACM organization does! Refer to our Chapter application on the last page of this newsletter to join!

Volunteer Opportunities!

We welcome volunteers from everywhere. Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Send us an e-mail message or call the numbers listed below to get further details on meeting times and places.

Volunteer Opportunities currently open:

Field Trip Leaders (3-9 hrs/mon.) - Lead from 1-3 trips/month (actually leading only one trip would be greatly appreciated).

Education Committee Chair (4 hrs/mon.) - Chair Education Committee and develop programs for in-school visits and adult environmental education.

Education Committee members—Assist the Education Chair in carrying out the education programs. Advise the Education chair on education issues.

Conservation Committee members (2 hrs/mon.) - Assist Conservation Committee Chair in carrying out programs and offer advice on environmental matters.

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) Nomination writer (10-20 hrs/yr.) - Write up nominations for IBAs in the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis membership area.

Birdathon Coordinator (10 hrs/yr.) - Coordinate the annual Birdathon Fundraiser each year. It is usually held sometime during the spring migration.

MORE INFORMATION: Jerry Bahls (763) 572-2333, jobaud@comcast.net or John Arthur (952) 931-0819, jarthur@visi.com



Member Poetry Corner



DESCENT OF THE GEESE	defying levitation, they wangled wings in uni- son- breaking over the cresting waves	nothing of man mattered, only encumbered rest was real no expectation, no disap- pointments
<i>By,</i> <i>James Marshall Goff</i>	as sundown beckoned lone- liness war, starvation, hypocrisy,	secure together, rest, as- sured

~~~~~TEST YOUR WREN IQ!~~~~~

- 1) Which wren migrates through, but does not nest in the Twin Cities?
- 2) What is the largest wren?
- 3) Which wren was formerly the Short-billed Marsh Wren?
- 4) Which two wrens are rare but found regularly in Minnesota?
- 5) Which wren has a beautiful descending “tew, tew, tew...”?
- 6) The “brown-throated wren”, found in Arizona, is a subspecies of what wren?
- 7) How many wrens commonly nest in Minnesota?
- 8) Most wrens are _____ nesters, which means they find holes to nest. House wrens are in the genus “troglodytes”, meaning cave dweller. Nests are mostly built of sticks, and the male often starts 2 nests so the female can choose. Wrens will destroy eggs in nearby nests, and can be devastating to Bluebirds.

Answers are listed on page 6!

Great Backyard Bird Count!

On February 18 - 21, Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are having their 14th annual Great Backyard Bird Count. This is citizen science! You don't need to do anything to advance register. Just select a site (probably your backyard) 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. Call the phone number below for details.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is planning on having a couple of ways you can participate.

On Saturday, February 19, 2011 we have four choices for you!

From 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the *Springbrook Nature Center* in Fridley

From 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the *Westwood Hills Nature Center* in St. Louis Park

From 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at *Wood Lake Nature Center* in Richfield

From 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. 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! For more information call Jerry Bahls at 763-572-2333 or anyone on the contact list (page 2).

Update on Roberts Bird Sanctuary Revitalization Project

On November 16, 2010 we met with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), and representatives from the Environment Committee of the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council (LHiNC) and the Parks, Environment and Schools Committee of the East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association (EHFNA) to talk about the Roberts Revitalization Project (RRP). The meeting went well.

Ahead of the November 16 meeting, we gave the MPRB a white paper with our priorities and recommendations regarding the long-term management of Roberts Bird Sanctuary (RSB). We identified three important areas to revitalizing the Sanctuary: conservation, recreation, and education and prioritized our recommended actions for each area. The white paper was well received.

At present, the MPRB is working on drafting the

long-term management plan. There will be a public comment period on the draft sometime next spring. The final version will be presented to the MPRB Board of Commissioners sometime next fall.

ACM and its partners, LHiNC and EHFNA, will continue with volunteer activities while the MPRB drafts the management plan. These activities will include bird walks, a tree inventory, invasive species removal events, plantings, educational activities and other activities to be defined in an expanded version of the ACM's Adopt-a-Park agreement. Educational activities in the near future will include updating and expanding the information in the existing display at the Visitors Shelter and creating materials such as maps and bird lists for use by visitors to the Sanctuary.

For updates on these activities, please go the ACM website: www.audubonchapterofminneapolis.org If you're interested in helping with any of these activities, please email Kit Healy at heal0055@umn.edu.

North America's Penguin ~ Jim Egge

Today, if you want to see wild penguins, you must take an expensive trip to the Antarctic. Few people realize that the original penguin lived in North America. The Great Auk was known in Europe, but had disappeared in England by 1760, but managed to hang on in Newfoundland until 1852. The Auk was 2 1/2 feet tall and was widely distributed in the North Atlantic. The birds were swift in the water like southern penguins, but were clumsy on land. Its breeding colonies were offshore and made it easy for seamen to decimate their populations. They are said to have walked them on the gangplank onto the ship.

Auks were alcids, which actually made them more closely related to Murres than to southern Penguins. The meat was used for food and they used the chicks for fish bait. The same cold weather that wiped out the Greenland Viking settlements, probably also put pressure on Auk nesting sites, about 1300. Ice surrounded these sites and likely reduced access to fish. Egg collections added to their struggles, and as humans increased in the New World, the Great Auks decreased.

Taken from "The Birders Handbook", 1988, Ehrlich, Dobkin, and Wheye.

Environmental Changes in the Quetico-Superior Region

Dr. Lee Frelich, a prominent scientist, has found compelling evidence that the BWCAW and the Quetico Provincial Park will change from southern boreal forest to savanna. The shift is already underway, and will not cycle back to forest. The question is "How messy will the transition be?" I found this disturbing. I have always hoped and perhaps assumed that our children would do as I did, paddling from lake to lake, surrounded by giant White Pines. Years of fire suppression have destroyed the health of the boreal forest, making it vulnerable to weather, soil, and temperature changes.

The prairie/forest borders are not permanent. Very small changes in climate have resulted in major

shifts in the past. "This time, change is coming like a freight train" says Rob Kesselring, writer for "Wilderness News". "so fast that the thin strip of hardwood forest that separates the prairie from the boreal forest will likely be skipped or amalgamated into the predominate savanna." Climate is not the only factor accelerating change. People have carelessly dumped fishing earthworms into the forests. Worms eliminate the buffering duff layer, raising soil temperatures that dry and stress trees. Insects that were held in check by -40 degrees are now able to thrive and attack boreal trees. Deer also are increasing and disrupting boreal succession.

Frelich believes that "Superior National Savanna" could be an oak savanna. There may be grass-

lands mixed with Burr Oak, hardwoods, and species such as Kentucky Coffee Tree. Moose and spruce will be gone. He believes it is no longer a choice, since governments cannot move fast enough to mitigate change, and much of Northern Minnesota will be similar to Iowa today. Instead of native species moving in, likely buckthorn and European thistles will dominate. Nature may need help if the area becomes something appealing. The regulations may have to change to facilitate a natural American savanna.

The full article comes from "Wilderness News" summer 2010 by Rob Kesselring.

www.queticosuperior.org
~ Jim Egge

Attention Snowbirds!



If you are migrating south for the winter, please let us know so we can hold your newsletter for that time. **The Post Office will not forward bulk mail** and it costs us 1st class postage for every undelivered newsletter. Last mailing that cost us \$8.36. Better yet, subscribe to our electronic version and get full color!

Contact Jerry Bahls at jobaud@comcast.net to sign up.

Wren IQ Answers!

- 1) Winter wren
- 2) Cactus wren
- 3) Sedge wren
- 4) Carolina, Rock wrens
- 5) Canyon wren
- 6) House wren
- 7) Two – House and Winter wrens
- 8) Cavity

Mystery Stories

For the birder who also has a passion for mystery stories, here is the way to merge the two passions. A new book by Digby MacLaughlin is available from Bantry Books. It's a birder's murder mystery entitled "Foul Murder at Corkscrew". This title is added to MacLaughlin's previous books "Waiting for Godwits" and "A Bird to Die For". These can be downloaded at Amazon's Kindle Store for as little as \$4.99.

Upcoming Programs!

February 1, 2011

The Majestic Eagle – Stan Tekiela (based on Stan’s book Majestic Eagles)

Stan always says that it’s hard to take a bad picture of the Bald Eagle and in this presentation you will see what he means. These birds are not only our national symbol but they are amazing subjects to photograph. Filled with hundreds of Stan’s best eagle images, this PowerPoint talk is fun and informative. Sure to leave you wanting to hear more about this majestic bird.

March 8, 2011 (Location to be determined)

The Crossley ID Guide – Richard Crossley

A story of past lessons learned from days growing up in the wild British birding scene, from travels around the world to living in Cape May, Richard now creates books and media that bring birding into the 21st century. The story is told in a Yorkshire brogue through a camera lens that loves color and art. But what of birding in the future - perhaps this will change your thoughts!

Come and hear Richard Crossley discuss his new book, *The Crossley ID Guide: Eastern Birds*, which will be released in the spring of 2011. This stunningly illustrated book from acclaimed birder and photographer Richard Crossley revolutionizes birding by providing the first real-life approach to identification. Whether you are a beginner, expert, or anywhere in between, *The Crossley ID Guide* will vastly improve your ability to identify birds.

Unlike other guides, which provide isolated individual photographs or illustrations, this is the first book to feature large, lifelike scenes for each species. These scenes--640 in all--are composed from more than 10,000 of the author's images showing birds in a wide range of views--near and far, from different angles, in vari-

ous plumages and behaviors, including flight, and in the habitat in which they live. These beautiful compositions show how a bird's appearance changes with distance, and give equal emphasis to characteristics experts use to identify birds: size, structure and shape, behavior, probability, and color. This is the first book to convey all of these features visually--in a single image--and to reinforce them with accurate, concise text. Each scene provides a wealth of detailed visual information that invites and rewards careful study, but the most important identification features can be grasped instantly by anyone.

By making identification easier, more accurate, and more fun than ever before, *The Crossley ID Guide* will completely redefine how its users look at birds. Essential for all birders, it also promises to make new birders of many people who have despaired of using traditional guides.

April 5, 2011

Birds and Wildlife of India—Gopi Sundar

Gopi Sundar is a staff member of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, WI. He is working on his PhD at the U of M in Conservation Biology. Mr. Sundar has spent time in the Chambal River Valley in India, home to a crocodile reserve. His presentation will feature pictures of birds and other wildlife in this unique valley with great biodiversity.

May 3, 2011 To be determined!

Programs are held at the Mayflower Church at 35W and Diamond Lake Road in Minneapolis. The programs run from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

A Letter from “Mr. Osprey”

[Editor’s Note: We always welcome letters to the Editor, be it from readers or our bird friends. Please enjoy this one from our good friend, Mr. Osprey!]

To the Editor:

I hope you are all enjoying the weather as you read this. As I write this, the warm breeze is coming off the ocean lightly and flowing along the top of the trees in the rainforest. The trip wasn’t that bad. Fishing in the gulf went pretty well, but there were strange dark balls along the beaches for some strange reason. I haven’t ever seen them before.

I hope all is well with my honey and that her trip went well also. Oh, I should tell you some gulls helped me find a whole school of fish just a little off the beach in the salty

water. Stayed there a little longer than I should have, but those fish were something else!

When I left, the nest looked fine. Make sure you keep an eye on it while I am gone. I will see you next spring. I will be taking advantage of those southerly winds for the return trip. Gee I sure miss those Koi. Can’t wait to be back. I will get there early as usual, in case the place needs any fixing up, you understand. Keep enjoying that weather, I know I am!

Your loving osprey!

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KINGFISHER
January/February 2011



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

25: Conservation Committee Meeting @ Uptown Lunds, 6-7PM

25: ACM Board Meeting @ Uptown Lunds, 7-9PM

February

1: Program: "The Majestic Eagle"—Stan Tekiela @ Mayflower Church, 7-9PM

22: ACM Board Meeting @ Uptown Lunds, 7-9PM

March

8: Program: "The Crossley ID Guide" - Richard Crossley, location TBD

22: ACM Board Meeting @ Uptown Lunds, 7-9PM

April

5: Program: "Birds & Wildlife of India" - Gopi Sundar @ Mayflower Church, 7-9PM

26: ACM Board Meeting @ Uptown Lunds, 7-9PM

May

8: Field trip to Tiffany Bottoms, WI—more information in next newsletter!

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