



# KINGFISHER



Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 49 No. 8

Representing the National Audubon Society  
in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

November 2000

## President's Message

Hope you were able to enjoy the fall birding, either from your window, or from those lovely, "lazy" walks in field and forest, breathing deeply of the crisp, clear fall air, and enjoying the brilliant leaf color-changing process. On the Old Cedar Ave. field trip, the birds seemed to sense where we were and darted off elsewhere. Still, we saw a variety of birds. How do they know to get between us and the sun so we see mostly silhouette?

It's too bad, but the bird ID game was cancelled. Jerry, Arthur, and all the committee worked long on it. Do try the mini version at the December meeting--have fun, and learn, too.

Each month we/I get "interesting" phone calls. This month, a Boy Scout is looking for a project to fulfill the eagle rank. He must work 6 hours and involve the community. He lives in Edina. Any ideas? Are there bird feeding stations/projects in Edina parks?

Dr. Carolyn Oehler in Nashville has fine insight into our world. "I've learned that the Native American dancers dance on the ground rather than on a stage or an indoor floor. By staying as close to the earth as possible, they seem to draw strength and meaning from the source of all life. As they dance, they are teaching me about my origins and my irrevocable connection to the earth. Our detachment from the earth, both literally and figuratively, is part of our modern disease. Food is refined until it is no longer healthy for our bodies. We weed and feed our lawns with chemicals that pollute our rivers and streams and then use other chemicals to treat these, and other contaminations of our modern life, in our drinking water. Yet it is from and through the natural world that we find our common humanity." Through mapping the genes, scientists are confirming that we are alike, 99% alike. Yet what diversity we have. All of us need to work toward healing our earth for all creatures. "The earth will have its greatest chance for healing when we human beings acknowledge our essential connection to the earth and when we let no one or nothing prevent us from caring for it. Then we will be dancing on the earth in celebration."

As a chapter of Audubon, we want to be known for what we are doing for the earth and its creatures. We have good programs, provide Audubon Adventures for classrooms and youth groups, have a strong Environmental Issues committee, the bluebird recovery program is nationally applauded, and a good conservation committee. All of these committees could do more with more members. If you and I each bring a new member and do at least one thing, we will double our outreach and make a difference to our earth and the birds we love.

—Dorothy Kuether

## Upcoming Program

**Tuesday, November 14**

### **Prairie and Pothole Birds**

Located south of Fergus Falls, the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center lies at the eastern gate to the Prairie Pothole Region. Potholes are depressions in the land that hold rain-fall and snow melt and are important to the life of both wetland and prairie birds. The Center, of 325 acres, includes 38 wetlands, 16 acres of unbroken prairie, and 200 acres of restored grasslands.

From this Center comes our November speaker, Teresa Jaskiewicz, Environmental Educational Specialist (or, she says, Park Ranger). Teresa's program is entitled "Where have all the Meadowlarks Gone!" with slides and information on grassland birds, their decline, and, if anything, what can be done to help them.

With excitement, Teresa reports that the song and sight of 9 nesting pairs of bobolinks was observed in 1999, a non-burning year. That represents an increase from the previous year, a burning year.

As a young man in Kentucky, John J. Audubon found the greater prairie chicken (then called the pinnated grouse) "abundant and looked upon with more abhorrence than crows." They were over-hunted and vanished. Then for a time they were abundant on the midwestern prairie, but again disappeared, this time due to modern agriculture. Restored prairie once again offers this lovely bird a home. The slides include the male during courtship when his feathered neck sacs become inflated and bright gold.

Ms. Jaskiewicz has a B.S. in Conservation and Biology. For 16 years she has been in government with the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (The Wetlands Learning Center is a part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.) She became interested in birds when she worked in the Black Hills and, she says, became a "birder" when she worked in the "Birding Mecca of Arizona," the Chiricahua's.

The meeting starts at 7:30, and is preceded by an EIC committee meeting at 6:00. We meet at the Mayflower Church, located immediately west of Hwy 35W, at the Diamond Lake Road Exit. See you there.

—Fran Duritsa



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### Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

[www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/](http://www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/)

### MN Audubon Council

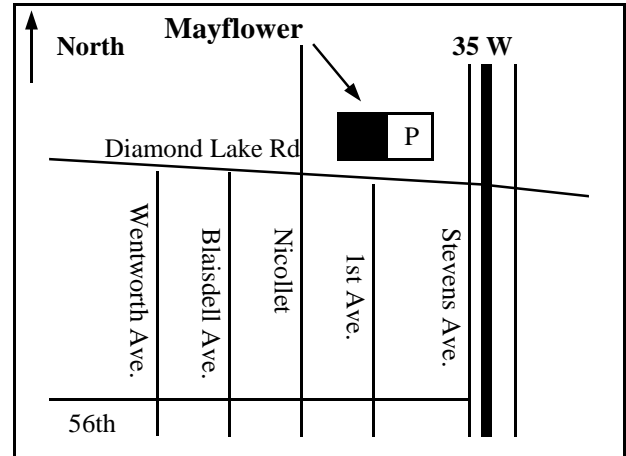
[www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html-ssi](http://www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html-ssi)

### National Audubon Society

[www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

## Come to Our Next Program!

**DATE:** Tuesday, November 14, 2000  
**TIME:** 7:30 p.m. **"Pothole and Grassland Birds"**  
**AT:** Mayflower Church (Lower Level)  
 109 E. Diamond Lake Road, Minneapolis  
 (35W & East Diamond Lake Road)



## Try Electronic Kingfisher

About a year and a half ago, we launched the electronic Kingfisher for those of you who are online. We now have 31 Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis members who have opted to receive the Kingfisher electronically rather than receive the paper version and 6 others who either were members and transferred or are members of another chapter that wanted to receive the Kingfisher. One member has decided to go back to receiving it by regular mail. Two members have changed their e-mail address and not sent their new address. Our goal by the end of the year is to have 100 members signed up. If you are online but are apprehensive about signing up, you can go to the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis website and try it out. The internet address is [www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/](http://www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/). You will need Adobe Reader to open it. Many computers have this already installed, but if you don't have it, or if you have a very old version, you can download it free from Adobe at <http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>. Once at the ACM site simply click on the banner for obtaining the Kingfisher (in full color!) and either read it or download it for later reading and printing if you so desire. You can also check out all of the last year's Kingfishers. After you've tried it and are comfortable with it, send an e-mail to [bahls001@tc.umn.edu](mailto:bahls001@tc.umn.edu), and say you want to sign up. Help us reach our goal of 100, save a little money on postage and more trees.

—Jerry Bahls



## A PERFECT DAY AT THE RIDGE

Hawk Ridge in Duluth can be the most wonderful place to be during fall migration and it can be the most frustrating place to be. And, it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with how many birds are flying. I have been at the ridge when the Broad-wing Hawks have come through by the tens of thousands and almost cried with frustration because the birds were so high they were only black specks against the white clouds. I have frozen to death standing on the cliff overlooking to death and I have been there on beautiful days when there was nary a bird in sight.

On September 28<sup>th</sup> I had the experience of a perfect day at the ridge. My friend Maggie and I set out in the morning with very low expectations. The temperature at 9:30 in the morning was already in the sixties, the wind was from the south and it seemed to us we had mistimed our excursion once again. After we got there, however, we realized that we were in for a glorious day. Having planned to stay only a couple of hours, we had to find a place to buy a takeout lunch because we ended up staying for almost the whole day. Lunch had to be takeout because we did not want to miss one minute.

Because the day was warm and sunny, it was very comfortable sitting around on the rocks. Because there were very few people, we had a good opportunity to talk to and learn from Frank Nicolletti, the official counter. And most wonderful of all the hawks were flying at eye level and in onesies and twosies so that you could spend time looking at each one. Although there were not the high numbers, there was a good variety. We saw, Northern Goshawks, Rough-legged Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, American Kestrels, Cooper's Hawks and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Bald Eagles and a record number of Turkey Vultures for that date. Although not a record, the number of Peregrines was rewarding. They seem to have come back from the brink of extinction.

Some of the flight brought concerns about the forthcoming winter. The numbers of both the Northern Goshawks and the Rough-legged Hawks were surprising for this early date. Also, a Boreal Owl had been found dead the previous night. Perhaps, there is a food shortage in the far north that is driving the birds south.

Thoughts of winter, though, were rather far away as I managed to get sunburned turning my face to the sky to watch the birds. Maggie adopted a Northern Goshawk. This is a method of supporting the Hawk Ridge count. It provides you with a picture of yourself with the bird and the number of the band that was placed on the bird. Any further recorded history of the bird is shared with the adopter. I just developed the pictures of Maggie and "her bird". She looked like a very happy woman, indeed! And why not—A perfect day, a beautiful bird and an opportunity to further our research into autumn migration and to support the preservation of an ideal place to be on a sunny day in September.

—Vija Kelly

## October Program Review

This month's Program started with a Bird Identifying activity, led by Terry Brashear. Unfortunately, I was late to the meeting and missed it! But Terry assured me that it was excellent, and I have no reason to doubt him.

Our speaker was Adam Sokolski, formerly of the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness. He came to give us an update on the aftermath of the blowdown that took place on July 4th, 1999. Adam and the Friends have spent years working to protect and preserve the BWCA, and he was just outside the Wilderness when the storm struck last year.

The BWCA is the largest designated Wilderness east of the Rockies, at 1.1 million acres, and contains 1,100 lakes. It is also the most popular in the nation, with over 200,000 visitors per year. Nearly half of the BWCA (450,000 acres) was impacted by the blowdown, and 120,000 acres were severely damaged. Surprisingly, no one was killed.

Since the blowdown, the US Forest Service has cleared nearly all trails, portages, and campsites. They plan, along with the DNR, to use prescribed burning, primarily along the natural lines of lakes and streams, to lessen the chance of large forest fires. It was feared that wildfires could have started already this year, but conditions were too wet. Right now (late September through October) is considered one of the best times for prescribed burns because of the prevailing winds, moisture conditions, and the potential of oncoming winter to put out any problem burns.

As far as the ecological future of the affected areas is concerned, Adam explained that fire is a natural, and even necessary, part of a forest's life. Jack Pine, for example, needs the heat of fire to open its cones and release its seeds. Much of this particular forest was quite old. 60% of the BWCA was never logged, and much of the land has been protected since the 1920s. Blowdowns happen, and they are particularly destructive to older, taller, less flexible trees. Fires also happen, and they leave behind better soil, open skies, and germinating seeds.

Of particular interest to members of Audubon, Adam told us that the jury is still out on how destructive the blowdown was to birds. Most experts agree that it was fortunate for nesting that it happened in July, rather than June. Land-based wildlife seems to have come through with little trouble.

The Science Museum of Minnesota currently has a display about the blowdown, if people are interested in learning more. You can also go to the website of the Friends of the Boundary Waters at [www.friends-bwca.org](http://www.friends-bwca.org).

—Paul Kinzer



## Bird ID Contest Fundraiser Postponed!



The Bird ID Contest planned for November 4th had to be postponed. We hope this doesn't inconvenience any of you who were planning to attend. We were very disappointed that this had to be done, but we "lost our lease" at Maple Grove Junior High School. A school event took precedence over our community event. For those of you who were planning to attend, we will be giving a brief preview of the contest on December 5th after the Holiday Potluck, and before the regular meeting. Be prepared to answer a couple of toss-ups and run the board. Let's PLAY!  
—Jerry Bahls

## Chapter Funds Provide Environmental Materials to Area Students

Our Chapter annually budgets \$500, along with the proceeds from our spring Birdathon, to provide the National Audubon environmental education materials to area schools. This year 16 teachers have received the AUDUBON ADVENTURES KIT, a comprehensive approach to classroom natural science content and activities. These nationally acclaimed materials are widely used throughout the country.

We would like to thank our Chapter members, Mrs. Grace Curry and Mr. Michael Nichols, for their donations supporting two classroom subscriptions.

Schools receiving AUDUBON ADVENTURES this year are located in Anoka, Brooklyn Park, Champlin, Dayton, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Osseo, Plymouth, and St. Louis Park.

—Brenda Reishus  
Education Committee

P.S. Brenda is 'taking over' the Audubon Adventures part of the Education Committee...I am still in the background...

—Mary Ellen Vetter

## Audubon Lending Library

With the help of Fran Duritsa and Dorene Scriven, the list of bird picture books and field guides available for loan to chapter members has been updated.

These are available from other members for you to use when traveling to: Argentina, Australia, Britain and Europe, the Caribbean, India, Israel, Italy, Japan and Taiwan, Mexico, New Zealand, plus many U.S. States and regions. Arrangements are made between the lender and the borrower.

If (1) you have books you are willing to lend fellow chapter members, or (2) would like to borrow specific books, contact:  
Dorene Scriven  
612-922-4586

## Fall Fun And a Chance to Make a Difference

### Minnesota Audubon's Fall Membership Meeting Saturday, November 18th, 2000 Legislative Issues Selection for 2001 *Everyone Welcome*

Join with Audubon members from around the state at the Fall Membership Meeting Saturday, November 18th at Silver Lake Camp in northeast Minneapolis (2950 West County Road E). Learn about conservation issues facing our state and help determine which issues Audubon will champion during the 2001 session of the Minnesota Legislature. We will begin around 9 a.m. and take a vote at 4 p.m.

**JUST ADDED:** In light of the recent changes proposed for the dues share reimbursement from National Audubon Society (NAS) to chapters, many chapter leaders are discussing how a potential revenue change will affect their chapter programs. After the membership meeting dinner, we will have a brief presentation on the new membership dues share plan, and an opportunity to share membership recruitment ideas. Our Regional Representative to the NAS Board has been invited to attend.

To register, contact Suzanne Plass at 651-225-1830 or [splash@audubon.org](mailto:splash@audubon.org), or go to:

[www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn](http://www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn).

## Support Audubon Through Workplace Giving

The Minnesota Audubon office was established by Minnesota chapters who wanted an effective state legislative presence on conservation issues. Over the years the combined education and advocacy efforts of chapters working together as Minnesota Audubon have helped conserve habitat for Minnesota wildlife.

Minnesota Audubon is one of 17 organizations that participate in the Minnesota Environmental Fund. This coalition of environmental nonprofits is supported through workplace or employee giving campaigns. You can help by donating to Minnesota Audubon through the Environmental Fund, or by volunteering to help workers and companies in your area learn more about this unique coalition. If you are interested in volunteering for the Minnesota Environmental Fund on behalf of Minnesota Audubon, please call Cynthia Malmrose at 651-225-1830 or write her at [cmalmrose@audubon.org](mailto:cmalmrose@audubon.org).





## Birds Killed

On September 14 the Minneapolis Star Tribune (AP) reported that an 80 year old farmer from Mascoutah, Illinois pleaded guilty in June to illegally taking migratory birds and misusing a pesticide. He was fined \$5000 and placed on 3 years probation. The state has also sued him to recoup \$1 million it says is needed to repair and repopulate the habitat.

Dead were 20,094 red-winged blackbirds, 5970 brown-headed cowbirds, 887 common grackles and 10 horned larks, all protected under federal law.

The man had spread 4 gallons of wheat laced with pesticide across his son's field hoping to kill birds that were damaging his family's crops.

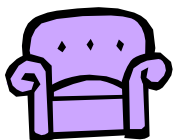
## Join Armchair Activists!



Many members of Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) would like to be able to do something to help preserve and restore our environment, but find the demands of work, physical limitations, or just plain procrastination, prevent them from doing what they know they should. National Audubon has an activity that is designed just for these individuals. It is called the Armchair Activist. The simple concept is that you receive a letter informing you that this month's issue is ----. You are asked to write a letter (from your Armchair) to the appropriate official on the issue. Sample letters are provided, so you don't even have to compose your own letter, although it is best if you do. There are usually 5 national, 3 state and 2 local issues that are sent to the Armchair Activist. There are two free months. Think of the impact this has on an issue when the appropriate authority receives these letters. If only 10% of our members enrolled, Governor Ventura could receive over a 200 letters on an issue. This sort of action does have an influence. Former Minnesota Audubon Director Don Arnosti has stated many times that the reason Minnesota Audubon and National Audubon are so influential is that we can mobilize our members to act. The Armchair Activists are an important link in this mobilization.

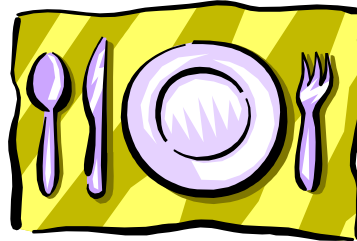
How can you sign up? Just drop us a note to Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, % Armchair Activist Coordinator, Box 3801, Minneapolis, MN 55403 or send an e-mail to bahls001@tc.umn.edu. ACM absorbs the mailing costs. If you can receive the information via e-mail there is no cost. If you would like to simply try it without totally committing, we can put you on a temporary list and you can see how it goes.

This is a chapter-run activity and we currently have 23 Activists, about halfway to our goal of 50. We are looking for more to sign up, because many issues are in your backyard and local letters have a greater impact. So all you Couch Potatoes, upgrade yourselves to Armchair Activists!



—Jerry Bahls

## Annual Potluck Dinner Tuesday, December 5, at 6:00



Come one, come all, to the annual potluck supper to celebrate the holiday season! Join your fellow Audubon members in some good food and conversation.

Bring along a food item to share: salads, hot dishes, desserts, etc. Beverages will be provided by the chapter - coffee, tea, and apple cider, as well as a meat platter. We will also provide plates, forks and cups, but you can help save on plastic and paper by bringing your own.

Following the potluck supper will be our mini version of the Bird ID Contest. At 7:30 we will hear a presentation by Dr. John Pastor on global warming.

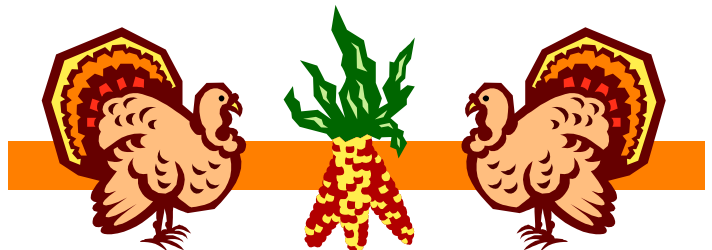
We look forward to seeing you there!

—Phyllis Mahan

## Conservation Projects on the Horizon

A recent conversation with the Volunteer Project Coordinator at Wood Lake Nature Center turned up several areas for participation by our membership. First, as a reminder, Wood Lake is a prime birding area located adjacent to I-35 W near 66th Street, in Richfield. Conservation projects exist virtually year round, and they are always looking for good adult volunteers. Some of the upcoming projects include placement and refurbishment of Wood Duck houses in February (YES, it's cold out, but what else do you have planned at that time of year?) Wood Lake has a growing Wood Duck population; expansion of the Bluebird trail; and spring planting of native plants and grasses to restore habitat lost to over browsing by deer. Near term, Wood Lake has an immediate need for volunteers to help in the removal of invasive species such as Buckthorn. This is hard but rewarding work! Also, it's a great opportunity to learn how invasives degrade the habitat, the mechanics of their removal, how to prevent their re-growth and, finally, how to prepare the way for the re-establishment of native species. Please call me at 612-866-6158 (home) or 612-887-3547 (office) if you want to join one of the work parties. Watch for notices on other projects in future editions of the Kingfisher and at chapter meetings.

—Tom Rice  
Conservation Chair



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**KINGFISHER**  
November 2000



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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.
- 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: **CM02**  
**9M99**

## Calendar of Events

### November

- 11 Field Trip, Weaver Bottoms
- 14 Chapter Program, 7:30 p.m.  
"Pothole and Grassland Birds"  
Mayflower Church
- 18 Field Trip, Chain of Lakes
- 21 Chapter Board Meeting, 6:45 p.m.

### December

- 5 Holiday Potluck, 6:00 p.m.  
Mini Bird ID Contest, around 7:00 p.m.  
Chapter Program, 7:30 p.m.  
"Global Warming – Yes, It's Real"
- 12 Chapter Board Meeting, 6:45 p.m.
- 23 Christmas Bird Count  
Springbrook Nature Center

**Field trips usually begin at 7:30 a.m.,  
call the Field Trips Chair for details.**

All are welcome to the Chapter Board Meetings!  
Board Meetings are held at North Regional Library  
1315 Lowry Ave. N. in Minneapolis  
Call the president for details.