



# KINGFISHER



NOV./DEC. 2012

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 61 No. 6

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Please join us for the 113<sup>th</sup> annual National Audubon Christmas Bird Count, beginning birders are welcome. We form teams to count in a specific area – each team is led by an experienced birder. You will enjoy a good time, while being a part of this local and nationally important census of birds.

**DATE: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15th**

**TIME: 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM**

**AT: SPRINGBROOK NATURE CENTER  
100 85<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE N. in FRIDLEY**



**POTLUCK LUNCH AT NOON.**  
Please bring a food item to share.

Directions: from I694: north on East River Rd., east on 85<sup>th</sup> or north on University, west on 85<sup>th</sup>

For more information or questions please contact Siah St. Clair at 763 572-3588 or [stclairs@ci.fridley.mn.us](mailto:stclairs@ci.fridley.mn.us)

## November Issue

**November 13th:**

Craig Mandel, "*Birds of Ecuador*"

**December 4th:**

Sher Curry, "*Birding Close to Home: A Photographer's Journey*"

**February 5th:**

Bill Steiner, "*Original Audubon Prints*"

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.



## CHIMNEY SWIFTS – 2012

For those of us who were lucky enough to know these fast fliers first hand, there is a program in Minnesota to inform all Minnesotans.

This fall, many volunteers have patiently and eagerly sat under chimneys, both natural and artificial, to record the departure of chimney swifts to the Amazon Basin in South America. While it can only be a sampling of this magnificent bird activities as it heads south, it can enrich understanding of its lifestyle and range across the United States and Eastern Canada

For further and more detailed information, visit Minnesota Audubon's web site at [MN.Audubon.org](http://MN.Audubon.org)

How can you help these birds? Call Bob Papke of Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis at 763.545.8072.

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jim Egge

In an economy where debt is destroying some of the value of our dollar, and while it seems that non-profit organizations are able to gather fewer and fewer of them, perhaps the goal of environmentalism will be deciding which things we can't do. Nearly every charitable group has reported a drop in contributions the last few years. It's not likely that help can be expected from a government wallowing in debt. So how might we change our approach from trying to spread our finances thinner around the globe? Our successes may require a wiser focus.

Many conservation groups including Audubon have been in "emergency" mode, feeling the necessity to preserve parts of the natural world before it's too late. There are 64,000 species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's latest "Red List of Threatened Species". 20,000 of them are considered to be hurtling toward extinction. Fully 41% of all amphibian species on the Earth are likely to be extinct in our grandchildren's lifetime. 30% of all conifers and 25% of all mammals will face the same fate. Our current epoch is being considered by some scientists as the world's 6<sup>th</sup> great mass extinction.

Nobody likes to read statistics like this. We want to hear that the millions we've poured into conservation efforts have given us great hope for the next generations. Indeed, as you count our successes around the world they are impressive, but many can be undone by bad economies, population growth, wars, climate change, etc. We tend to want to save the high profile species like the Galapagos Tortoise or Blue Whale, while ignoring the nearly invisible phytoplankton at the base of our food chain. How many excursions have you seen to view microorganisms? They don't support many tourist dollars.

Recent studies have shown that rising temperatures and acidification of the oceans are serious threats to the food chain. If phytoplankton diminish, so will zooplankton which feed on them. Next are the fish that eat the zooplankton, and, well you know the story. So where do scientists decide to put the dollars to maximize their impact. We can't do everything that would be good to do. It will also take some wisdom on our part to support the organizations that are the most effective. We also need leaders who can mobilize larger numbers of people to carry the message to the public.

*Continued on following page*

### Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis - 2012-2013 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		

## **Member Poetry Corner**

### **Leaf Fall**

*Safron leaves of early ash  
are first to drop their downward cache*

*Maples glow in sunset hues  
then decorate the earth anew*

*Birch hang on in winter's blast  
But stately pin oaks hold til last*

*Sheltering next year's leafy splurge,  
Revealing nests of last year's urge.*

### **The Sky Cried**

Last night the January sky cried  
on all things reaching skyward.  
This morning's trees and shrubs are bowed  
in frozen glazeness earthward  
snow-fringed, shimmering, magnificent!  
While two cardinals ravish the treetops.

### **FINE WINE**

**Red cranberry clusters bow downward  
Frosted with falling snow of February's grayest day  
Silently aging like fine wine for late winter sipping  
By discerning birds yearning for spring**

*~ All poems written by Carolyn Papke*

## **Upcoming Field Trips!**

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, in cooperation with Partnership for International Birding, will be offering some exciting field trips to add some non-Minnesota birds to your life list.

**Ecuador** birding: October 5 – 14, 2012 and January 19 – 28, 2013. Price \$2,390 including meals, lodging, and guides. Ecuador has been called the "birdiest" country in the world, and this trip will offer you a chance to see over 400 species.

**Texas Rio Grande Valley:** January 27 – February 3, 2013, and February 3 – 9, 2013 (if first trip fills). Price \$1,690 (\$100 discount if booked by September 20th). From 150 to 200 species with 15 to 20 specialties, which will be new to most North American birders.

**Galapagos:** Trip planned for fall, 2013. Many species of birds and other animals found only in the Galapagos.

For more information on any of these trips, visit the Partnership for International Birding website for [Ecuador](#), [South Texas](#), or [Galapagos](#) - or you can call Charles Thornton-Kolbe toll-free at 1-888-203-7464 ext. 912 or directly at 1-720-320-1974, or you can mail him at [charles@pibird.com](mailto:charles@pibird.com).

### *President's Note—continued*

One message I've talked about many times is to show people how to improve their lifestyle with less money spent for material goods. Many of us spent the early part of this century borrowing to finance a consumptive lifestyle. We know what followed. The word that seldom was heard was, "we can't afford that". We can't do everything that would be good to do.

Education is one of the solutions for the long haul, though it's slow and expensive. But a democracy depends on it, since a knowledgeable voter is its foundation. I challenge you to seek information that you might not usually read or even agree with. Here are a couple of websites that you might try:

[Arkive.org](http://Arkive.org)

[endangered-ugly.blogspot.com](http://endangered-ugly.blogspot.com)

[onearth.org/food](http://onearth.org/food)

For more discussion – "Think Again", On Earth, Fall 2012, p26-27

## Information on Upcoming Programs!

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is proud to announce the following programs and speakers for the 2012 - 2013 Season. All Programs will convene at 7:00 pm with the guest speaker beginning about 7:30 pm. *Most Program meetings are held at Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park.* See directions in Programs page 1. A couple of Programs are planned to be held at the Brookdale Library, 6125 Shingle Creek Pkwy, Brooklyn Center to accommodate our northern metro members. Be sure to check our website, [www.AudubonChapterofMinneapolis.org](http://www.AudubonChapterofMinneapolis.org), for up-to-date information.

Tuesday, November 13. Craig Mandel, Birds of Ecuador

Join us for an evening with Craig Mandel, one of Minnesota's topnotch birders. Craig leads 60 birding trips a year as a volunteer bird guide for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter. He also leads birding trips throughout the state for the Minnesota Ornithological Union. He has been featured in the Star Tribune for his expertise and volunteer work. Also, he received the 2005 Trumpeter Award by his Audubon Chapter for the extraordinary amount of volunteer work he has done for them over the years. Craig has traveled to Central America a number of times, including Ecuador. He has video of his trip to Ecuador and will be telling us about the birds, flora, and sights of this beautiful country.

Tuesday, December 4. Sher Curry, Birding Close to Home: A Photographer's Journey

Sher Curry has been into photography since her teenage years. During the past ten years, she has focused on botanical shots, her favorites being water lilies and their reflections. This past year she decided to challenge herself with moving targets and has been focusing on large birds. In addition, Sher is an artist and does watercolor paintings from her photos. Her photo presentation will include wood ducks, hooded mergansers, barred owls, great horned owlets, great blue herons, green herons, egrets, and many more. Her presentation will be shots taken in 2012, starting with the Trumpeter Swans of Monticello in January and then taking us through the Minnesota seasons with shots of our other wonderful birds. She will share with you her favorite spots to take photos and give you suggestions on how to photograph birds in their natural habitat.

## SOARING BIRDS

by Jim Egge

Some large birds such as hawks and vultures can stay aloft for long periods without wing beats. Making use of updrafts requires some particular skills and features. You may want to get out your guidebook as you read this article.

Vultures can soar in tight circles, staying within the thermals. They have wings tilted upward in a "V" shape and have a notch near wing primaries. This allows the birds to fly slower without stalling. They also have what is called "low aspect ratio". This means a shorter wing compared to its width, which gives them better take-off. Birds with low aspect ratio have better lift but also increased drag. When vultures soar, they separate their primaries creating slots between them. This reduces wing tip turbulence, much like the upward angled wing tip on an airplane.

Albatrosses can also soar long distances, but using different physics. They have "high aspect ratio" due to their long wings (about 10 feet). They actually use the upward drafts created by winds lifting on the side of a wave. It seems that birds have been harnessing wind power since before humans could sharpen stones.

*Reference- "The Birder's Handbook", Ehrlich, Dobkin, and Wheye*

## 2012 Chimney Swift Sit Results

Audubon Minnesota

October 1, 2012

### Thank you Ron!

First, a big **Thank You** to Ron Windingstad for organizing the 2012 Chimney Swift Sit! Ron retired from Audubon Minnesota on September 7<sup>th</sup> after leading Audubon Minnesota's **Audubon at Home** program for six years. During this time he focused conservation attention on the plight of the Chimney Swift and engaged hundreds of youth in the Twin Cities and out state in conservation education and management. Together, these young adults constructed nearly 100 chimney swift towers throughout the state! Ron will now be checking up on those swifts during migration as they pass through Mexico and Centro America! We (and the swifts) wish him well!



### 2012 Results

Our annual Chimney Swift Sit in 2012 included two official count periods:

July 20<sup>th</sup>-July 23<sup>rd</sup>; and

August 31-September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In addition to these two count periods, many volunteers counted at sites on days between the two count periods as well as one day after (September 4<sup>th</sup>). The total number of volunteers engaged from July 20<sup>th</sup> through September 4<sup>th</sup> was 299; the total number of sites monitored was 91. A total of 11,793 chimney swifts were counted. Below, we report on the total number of observers, sites, and chimney swifts that were counted within the two official count periods.

#### First Official Count Period: July 20<sup>th</sup>-July 23<sup>rd</sup>

Sixty-six volunteers counted chimney swifts at 33 buildings during the first official count period in late July. A total of 2,313 chimney swifts were counted. Sites that were monitored included businesses, churches, schools, artificial towers and apartment buildings. Figure 1 illustrates the types of buildings that were monitored and used; Figure 2 illustrates the number of swifts by building type. During the first count period nearly 68% of all the swifts observed were at chimneys at schools.

#### Second Official Count Period: August 31st-September 3rd

One hundred nineteen volunteers counted chimney swifts at 51 buildings during the second official count period in late August-early September. A total of 4,317 chimney swifts were counted. Sites that were monitored included businesses, churches, schools, artificial towers, apartment buildings and home residences. Figure 3 illustrates the types of buildings that were monitored and used; Figure 4 illustrates the number of swifts by building type. During the second count period 44% of all the swifts observed were at chimneys at apartments; over 81% of the swifts observed were at apartments and schools.

*For a full copy of the report, please check out our website!*

## Fall Fund Appeal Begins!

Our Fall Appeal continues to be our only organized fund raiser for the chapter. Our members have been generous ever since we initiated the Appeal. Our goal again will be about \$2500, which will allow us to continue at the same level of activity. We'll continue to publish only 6 Kingfishers and have 8 programs during the year. The Kingfishers and Programs continue to represent over 80% of our budget. National Audubon Society's (NAS) dues reimbursement will cover most of these expenses. The remaining expenses are covered by a variety of other sources. Roberts Bird Sanctuary restoration again is a high priority commitment. We are hopeful that the Roberts Management Plan can soon be completed with the Minneapolis Park Board. This commitment might require us to dip into our reserves, but feel this continues to be a very important long term project.

An envelope in this issue of the Kingfisher can be used to make a donation to ACM to cover expenses associated with our Meeting Programs and other education related projects, including Roberts.

Please make your fully tax deductible donation to help Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis continue our work to help the birds and other wildlife! Please make out the check to Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. Thank you.

- Jerry Bahls

## Thrush Review

The fall of the year brings 5 different thrushes through Minnesota. Since they aren't singing, they must be identified by their markings. Which thrush matches the correct description?

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1) Brown back, strong breast spots             | A) Veery               |
| 2) Brown back, pale breast spots, buffy throat | B) Gray-cheeked Thrush |
| 3) Brown tail, eye ring                        | C) Wood Thrush         |
| 4) Gray-brown back, eye ring, buffy throat     | D) Swainson's Thrush   |
| 5) Gray-brown back, weak eye ring              | E) Hermit Thrush       |

*Answers on the next page!!*



## Minneapolis Audubon Meeting

**Friday, December 14, 2012 1 p.m.**

John Arthur will speak on Dragons and Damselies. Please join us for the program and refreshments at the Bryant Square Neighborhood Center, 31st & Bryant Avenue S, just one block south of Lake Street, easily accessible via the #4 bus, which runs every 15 minutes! All are welcome. For more information call 952-926-4205.

CONTACT: Barbara Franklin

Minneapolis Audubon Society

763-657-1907

[bbfrankli@gmail.com](mailto:bbfrankli@gmail.com)

## Three Rivers Park District—Bird Banding

Close encounters with wild birds! See wild songbirds being safely trapped, studied and tagged with numbered rings. Learn how to identify birds in the hand. You may get a chance to hear a bird's heartbeat and help release it. Drop in anytime.

**Saturday October 20th, 9:00AM—12:00PM & Saturday November 17th, 9:00AM—12:00PM**

*Lowry Nature Center, 7025 Victoria Drive Victoria, MN 55386 (Phone: 763.694.7650)*

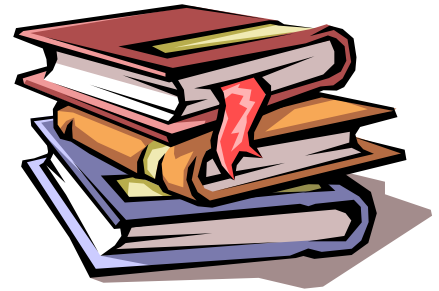
*Answers to Thrush Quiz:*

*Veery 2; Gray-cheeked 5; Hermit 3; Wood 1; Swainson's 4*

## Wood Lake Nature Center Events!

### Environmental Book Club

Join other adults to discuss some wonderful environmental and outdoor recreation based books. Refreshments will be provided. All are welcome! Books are available at local libraries and/or are available for the lowest price through [ad-dall.com](http://addall.com)



October 23rd: *Wild Season* by Allan Eckert

November 13th: *Bottled and Sold* by Peter Gleick

December 11th: *Wildlife Heroes* by Julie Scardina and Jeff Flocken

Please call to register [612-861-9365](tel:612-861-9365)

6:30pm-8pm, \$5/person, Free for members

### Half Haunted Halloween—Wood Lake Nature Center's Annual Non-Scary Event



Wood Lake Nature Center's Half Haunted Halloween will be a roaring good time at this year's Prehistoric Party. This family-friendly, non-scary Halloween event is full of activities, including an interactive trick-or-treat trail, magic show, all-ages dance, games, face painting, hot cocoa and cookies. Trail, games, dance, and snacks are ongoing; magic show repeats every 25 minutes. Space is limited. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the Nature Center. Any remaining tickets will be available at the event.

Saturday October 20th, 3:00PM—7:30PM

\$4 in advance; \$5 at door; Free for Friends of Wood Lake Members

6710 Lake Shore Drive, Richfield, 55423

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis  
PO Box 3801  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

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KINGFISHER  
November/December 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**

October

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

November

13: Program: Craig Mandel, "*Birds of Ecuador*" 7-9PM @ Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

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

December

4: Program: Sher Curry, *Birding Close to Home, A Photographer's Journey*, 7-9PM @ Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park

*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)*

**Electronic Kingfisher**

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER ELECTRONICALLY!

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