



# KINGFISHER



Nov/Dec. 2015

Vol. 64 No. 6

## Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

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### Upcoming Programs



### Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Program meetings are held at 7:00 PM at Beth El Synagogue, 5224 W. 26th Street, St. Louis Park 55416 (unless otherwise noted\*).

**Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015** - Sher Curry- "Herons, in the Metro". Sher is a wildlife photographer who has followed the lives of the herons in the aftermath of the storms which disrupted their colonies a few years ago.

**Tuesday, December 1st, 2015** – Jim Egge- "Bird Migration"- Recent research has shed new light on the mechanism by which birds are able to travel long distances and maximize their chances of survival. Jim will follow a number of MN birds and their migration patterns. Jim is a long time board member of Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. He focuses on sharing birding experiences with many local elementary schools, and teaching kids how to bird using binoculars through the Youth Mentorship Program of the MOU.

### Minneapolis Audubon Society

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### Friday, November 13, 2015 12 p.m.

The program features Donna and Jerry Bahls, who will take us "Birding in Cuba."

### Friday, December 11, 2015 1 p.m.

On December 11 Sharon Stiteler will share her experiences Birding in Kazakhstan.



Join the Minneapolis Audubon Society for food and fun 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! For more information call 763-533-8381.

## From the President

Nov/Dec 2015



*This issue of the Kingfisher contains the envelope for our annual Fall Appeal. I will use this opportunity to give our members a brief review of our activities that require us to use the funds that are generously donated to the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis.*

The two items that continue to take the largest use of our financial resources are the Programs and the Kingfisher. We continue to pay an honorarium of \$125 for speakers who are able to accept them. We occasionally need to also pay traveling expenses for a speaker. This last summer the Board authorized an honorarium of \$50/speaker or a total of \$150 for the summer for our speakers at the joint meetings with the Breckenridge Chapter of the Izaak Walton League. The Chapter is always interested in your feedback on the Programs and also in potential speakers, so feel free to send us your comments. Our website now has a convenient "Comment" feature that sends your comments directly to the President of the Chapter, which currently is me.

The Kingfisher is the largest expenditure for the Chapter. Printing (\$5000) and postage (\$4000) costs are the two largest expenditures. Printing costs have gone up slightly each year but postal costs rise at a higher rate each year. This is why the Chapter encourages members to sign up for the electronic Kingfisher because it saves both printing and postal costs as well as a few trees. We currently have only about 150 electronic subscribers. See the Kingfisher for details on how to sign up or simply send an e-mail to me at [jobaud@comcast.net](mailto:jobaud@comcast.net).

The Conservation Committee has spent most of its time and resources on the bird window glass collision issue this past year and anticipates doing so this coming year also. We hope to continue to be the spokes organization for getting new construction in the Minneapolis area to use bird friendly glass. We hope to have legislation in place in the City of Minneapolis requiring all future skyway glass to be bird friendly. We are working with the Walker Art Community to use bird friendly glass in the renovation of the Walker Art Center and Sculpture Garden. Watch for updates on this process. We will be monitoring the new Bell Museum for compliance of bird friendly glass in its new construction. If you hear of any new commercial construction in your area, let us know so that we can get information to the architects about bird friendly glass very early in the planning process, which is critical in getting acceptable action.

The Chapter will continue to use funds committed to the restoration of habitat at Roberts Bird Sanctuary. The Chapter became a Charter member of the Friends of Roberts Bird Sanctuary and will continue to be active in that organization both financially and providing volunteer support. Please join the Friends' organization to help with the continued restoration of Roberts, especially after the Sewer Project completion this last spring.

Finally because of your generosity, past, present and future, we expect to have a sound financial basis for the Chapter. What we always, always need are the backbone of volunteers that can utilize these resources to continue to restore habitat and monitor the environment to continue our efforts to protect birds and other wildlife. Please, please offer to help our Conservation, Education and Field Trip Committees serve our community and the BIRDS!

Jerry Bahls

### Mission Statement

The Mission of the Audubon Chapter is to inform and educate our members and the public about birds and other wildlife and the demands that a large metropolitan center puts on their habitat, to engage in advocacy to preserve, protect and improve existing habitat and to develop and maintain new bird and wildlife sanctuaries, including backyards, to enhance the human experience.

## Fall Appeal, Contacts



### 2015 Fall Appeal



Our Fall Appeal continues to be our only organized fund raiser for the chapter. Our members continue to be generous since we initiated the Appeal. Our goal will be about \$2000. The *Kingfisher* and Programs continue to represent over 80% of our budget. National Audubon Society's (NAS) dues reimbursement will continue to cover these expenses. Our annual budget is stable at about \$13,600. The remaining expenses are covered by a variety of other sources. The sewer work in Roberts has been completed and we have some funds commitment for tree planting. The newly formed Friends of Roberts Bird Sanctuary (Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is a charter member) will take the lead in activities at Roberts. The Viking Stadium glass issue may also require us to commit some funds to continue to urge treatment of the glass. We will be continuing to be a spokes organization for new construction in Minneapolis to use bird friendly glass.

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 our bird friendly glass activities.

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, President

### **Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis - 2014-2015 Contacts**

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Audubon Center of the North Woods	www.audubon-center.org		
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis	www.audubonchapterofminneapolis.org		
Audubon Minnesota	www.audubon.org/chapter/mn		

**MOU Rare Bird Alert: 763-780-8890**

Advocacy



### Residential Bird Collision Window Treatment Study Report

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis initiated a study of window treatments that reduce bird-window collisions on June 1, 2014. First an Administrator was recruited to implement the study. Volunteers were recruited from a list of potential prospects obtained through a questionnaire posted on SurveyMonkey® in the spring of 2014. Three window treatments were selected for the study. They were a perforated film called CollidEscape™, hanging cords designed by Acopian™ and appliqués from WindowAlert™. The design settled for a minimum of 16 homes. A study protocol was devised. Home owners were recruited from survey participants who stated they had more than 3 bird-window collisions/year.

A Data Sheet was provided to each participant for their convenience. Participants were asked to report the bird-window collisions on the treated windows and to also report collisions on adjacent windows that would act as controls. This would provide additional information for a more accurate comparison of the three window treatments.

Below is a summary of the data from the study:

<u>Window Treatment</u>	<u>All Collisions</u>		<u>Ave Collisions/Window</u>		<u>No. Participants</u>
	<u>Treated</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>Treated</u>	<u>Control</u>	
Acopian™	5	9	1.25	1	4
CollidEscape™	0	41	0	5.25	4
WindowAlert™	31	12	7.75	3.67	5
Control		32		2.75	3

Unfortunately the data collected was not able to be statistically analyzed because there were too many variables that were beyond the control of the study sponsors.

In spite of the shortcomings of the data, empirically the values still show a hierarchal ranking of the three window treatments. Clearly the CollidEscape™ is very effective at preventing bird-window collisions. Acopian™ indicates it is a reasonably effective treatment. Unfortunately the data tells us little about WindowAlert™ other than it is not as effective as CollidEscape™ or Acopian™.

## Advocacy

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While the study has shown that there are a couple of effective window treatments that will prevent bird-window collisions, our SurveyMonkey® survey also gave us some insight into home owners' use of window treatments. Only about 5% of respondents would spend more than \$61 on a treatment. CollidEscape™ was by far the most expensive treatment of the 3 studied and falls into the category of costing greater than \$61/ window. The WindowAlert™ was the cheapest and unfortunately little can be said about its effectiveness either pro or con.

A second objection to using a window treatment was the reduction of visibility through the treated window. Over 70% of the respondents cited this as reason not to use a window treatment to reduce bird collisions. The CollidEscape™ version used in our study reduced light by about 50%. This would probably be objectionable to many window treatment users. However CollidEscape™ has other versions that would probably satisfy most users. Both Acopian™ and WindowAlert™ visibility would satisfy most users.

One result was especially gratifying in the study was the number of actual fatalities reported by study participants. There were only 12 reported deaths in the 76 reported bird-window collisions. That is only 16% fatality. Of course there is no data on the survivability of those that flew away. This is a possible future study that may have a big impact on bird-window collisions understanding. Birds that die away from their initial impact are completely lost to nearly all possible studies.

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis would like to thank all the participants in this study. We would also like to thank Jenny Kapp who was our Administrator for this study, without her help, this study could not have been done. We would also like to thank the National Audubon Society for the Collaborative Grant that made this study possible, and to WindowAlert™ for donation of the appliques for the study.

1. To view the survey results go to - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-27X7NHQ2/>

## ACM Christmas Bird Count

The ACM Christmas Bird Count Will be held on December 19, 2015. We will begin the count at 7:30 AM with a pot luck lunch at noon, and completion time planned for 4 PM.

Our meeting place this year, is TBD, as our usual Nature Center is closed due to construction As soon as our location is set, it will be posted on the ACM web site. You can also contact the Count Compiler, Siah St. Clair, for more information at [763-234-6146](tel:763-234-6146), or at [stclairs@comcast.net](mailto:stclairs@comcast.net).

## VIKINGS STADIUM UPDATE

The stadium is nearing completion and more highly reflective, almost mirror-quality glass is being installed every day. At the September MSFA Board meeting, detailed plans for the stadium design were revealed, showing the west side of the building (facing the future park) will be almost entirely glass. At the meeting, Michele Kelm-Helgen, the MSFA Chair, announced that 'they are just waiting for Audubon MN' to move forward with plans for the film tests that were promised at the end of last year – the result of negotiations between the MSFA, Audubon MN, and 3M. It is unclear at this point in time if plans for the study are being developed as we have yet to hear anything from these organizations.

# Conservation

## Major Victory For Eagles In Federal Court Ruling On 'Take' Permits



Immature Bald Eagle, Menno Schaefer/Shutterstock

By Libby Sander August 12, 2015

A federal judge in California **has ruled in favor of American Bird Conservancy** in a lawsuit over a federal rule that would have allowed wind energy and some other companies to harm or kill Bald and Golden Eagles for up to 30 years.

Eagles are at risk of **colliding with the fast-spinning blades of wind turbines**. More than 2,000 Golden Eagles have perished at one facility alone: **the Altamont Wind Energy Project in California**. Like most birds in the United States, however, eagles are protected under federal law. Incidental “take” permits exempt companies from prosecution if the birds are harmed.

In a **46-page decision** issued Tuesday by U.S. District Judge Lucy H. Koh of the Northern District of California in San Jose, the court ruled that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the U.S. Department of the Interior violated the National Environmental Policy Act by expanding the maximum duration for “programmatic” eagle take permits six-fold without first assessing the impact those rules would have on eagles, which often collide with fast-spinning wind turbines.

In a major victory for Bald and Golden Eagles, the court granted ABC's request to set aside the 30-year rule, handing it back to FWS for further consideration.

“We are pleased that the courts agreed with us that improper shortcuts were taken in the development of this rule,” said Dr. Michael Hutchins, Director of ABC's **Bird Smart Wind Energy Program**.

“The court found that important laws meant to protect our nation's wildlife were not properly followed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, putting Bald and Golden Eagles at greater risk.

A previous rule for eagle-take permits, in place since 2009, had limited their duration to five years. But in 2012, with wind energy on the rise, FWS proposed a new rule that would increase the duration to 30 years. The National Environmental Policy Act ensures that federal agencies take a hard look at the environmental consequences of their actions.



Altamont Pass wind facility, Terrance Emerson Shutterstock

The federal law requires agencies — in this case, FWS — to prepare a detailed environmental impact statement, or a less-rigorous environmental assessment, for new or revised rules, regulations, or other policies.

In the case of the 30-year rule, FWS did neither, claiming that the new rule was merely administrative in nature, the court said.

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## Conservation

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As a result, ABC and fellow plaintiffs Debra Shearwater, Stephen A. Thal, Dr. Carolyn Crockett, Michael Dee, and Robert M. Ferris **sued the federal agencies in June 2014**, a few months after the new rule took effect. In their lawsuit, the plaintiffs contended that the Department of the Interior did not offer a strong legal or scientific justification for increasing the duration of the permits.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is one of ABC's most important partners, said ABC President George Fenwick. "We collaborate frequently, share many goals, and have enjoyed many successes together," Fenwick said. "However, FWS is encountering unprecedented financial constraints that lead to shortcuts and poor decisions. We hope that this court decision shines a light on the need for the Service to be fully empowered to do the job it is mandated to do. Our nation's wildlife — and the agency appointed to protect it — deserve nothing less."

*Libby Sander is Senior Writer and Editor at American Bird Conservancy. As a journalist, she has written news stories and award-winning features for The New York Times, the Washington Post, and The Chronicle of Higher Education.*

### **SAN DIEGO ZOO BIRD-SAFE FILM STUDY, by Elise Morton—ACM Conservation chair**

The San Diego Zoo led film study directed by postdoctoral research associate, Dr. Paquita Hoeck, is now underway on several University of Minnesota buildings. The sites that were chosen for this study were identified as being particularly deadly for birds based on several years of collision data collected by Stephanie Beard. The study includes testing of UV-reflective film (visible to birds but not to humans) using thump detectors connected to cameras, which sense any impact to the windows and signal capture of the relevant video footage. The goals of this study are (1) develop improved methodology for assessing bird-window collisions in the wild, (2) assess the effectiveness of this particular product, and (3) gain information about how the number of bird-window collisions compares to the number of dead birds found next to buildings. There is substantial anecdotal evidence that many birds that collide with windows, don't drop dead immediately and would thus be missed from these count data. Instead, many birds are stunned for a short period but manage to fly away (likely left weakened and much more vulnerable to predators due to their injuries), or they fly away and die hours later.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable help from many people with the Facilities Maintenance Team at the University of Minnesota, for without their time and assistance, this study would not be possible. In particular, we would like to thank Shannon Mitchell, who has gone above and beyond to help with this project. In addition, Paul Kelsey, Matt Welter, and Kim Clauson have been so kind as to volunteer their time on their lunch breaks to help the birds by installing ABC bird tape on portions of the Washington Ave. Bridge. Stephanie Beard, Daniel Knapp, Rob Tunnel, Vivek Mishra, and Meghna Mankalale have also been crucial in getting this project up and going.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis  
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KINGFISHER  
Nov/Dec, 2015

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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**

Nov. 24th Board Meeting – 6:00 pm

Dec 29th Board Meeting– 6:00 pm

*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.*

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

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