



KINGFISHER



SEPT/OCT 2011

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 60 No. 5

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

A Note from the President

What is the effect of difficult economic times on vulnerable resources? We have a wealth of natural treasures which, if damaged, can never be replaced. Leaders of influential environmental agencies must certainly be smitten with a fearsome sense of urgency when going through economic downturns, trying to do more with less money. This is a time when resource destructive industries are emboldened to pressure Congress or local governments to relax standards, in order to garner short term profits. There is no money shortage for industry lobbyists to roll back EPA enforcement or grease the path to easy mining leases in environmentally sensitive areas.

One way that environmental protection can increase is with the purchase of land to set aside from development, or put it in Park or Wilderness designation. Cheaper land has given agencies an opportunity to acquire land at much less than just 5 years ago. However that same land is also available to developers who see recreational and retirement complexes as still in demand, little affected by a sagging economy. The recession is at best a two-edged sword for conservation. Every environmental agency in America is seeing challenging financial adjustments. Congress has continually tightened purse strings to the Park Service, PCA, Forest Service, and available grants for local projects. However, to some extent, development has also slowed on coastlines, mountain retreats, and even urban sprawl. Demand for fossil fuels has leveled off in the US and elsewhere, giving a temporary relief from mine and drilling expansion.

Continued on page 2

September Issue

Upcoming Programs

We are pleased to announce some information on our upcoming programs! Check our website for more details: <http://audubonchapterofminneapolis.org/>

September 6: Beth El Synagogue

5224 W. 26th St, St Louis Park

Carrol Henderson: Non-game wildlife program supervisor at Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. ** Will also be a drawing for an autographed copy of the *Crossley ID Guide!*

October 4: Beth El Synagogue

5224 W. 26th St, St Louis Park

Don Arnosti: Policy Director for Audubon Minnesota. Previous Executive Director for Audubon Minnesota. His talk will include legislative and environmental issues pertinent to Audubon

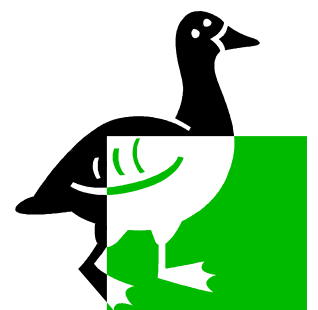
November 8: Location TBD

Stan Tekiela: Naturalist, Wildlife Photographer and writer. Uncommon Facts about Common Birds

This is a fun and entertaining talk presenting fascinating facts and tidbits about some of the birds that people love to hate. Stan will challenge your preconceived ideas about some common birds such as the European Starling, the American Crow and much, much more. You will never look at these birds the same way ever again. This talk wraps up with a strong environmental message of conservation and understanding.

Walks at Roberts Bird Sanctuary this fall!

We'll be leading walks at Roberts Bird Sanctuary during the migration season. All walks are free and open to everyone. Check the ACM website for dates and times: www.AudubonChapterofMinneapolis.org



(President's Note continued)

There will always be those trying to use tough times as a means to their own profit. Some do it out of economic struggles and some to line their own pockets. Poaching doesn't only occur in Africa, but has accelerated in North America as well. Rare plants are disappearing from wild areas and sold to collectors and landscapers, paying little heed to their origin. Examples are Parrots, Star Cactus, Tortoises, Cedar logs, and a host of others. Drilling, mining, and grazing permit applications have increased, along with ease of approval in many areas. In Minnesota, for ex-

ample, the state has worked hard to approve sulfide mining permits, for regions that need jobs and economic uplift.

But to the citizen concerned with preservation of a natural legacy for our progeny, this should be a time of increased action on many fronts. Letting loose of some extra funds to conservation organizations is the quickest way to have impact. I would like to see an increase in volunteerism, especially as it relates to education and training of young people. This should also be a time when energy conservation gets a big push. Whether it's profitable to me or not, I believe that I should put in solar units in my

home, just to save carbon-based fuels. We will never see a return to a 2006 economy in America. I believe we will spend the next decades learning to live with less and still maintain a good standard of living. It will take great visionaries to lead America, without putting millions out of work, borrowing into oblivion, or destroying what we've worked so hard to preserve.

~ Jim Egge

Thank You for E-King Response

In the last *Kingfisher*, an appeal was made to sign up more members to receive the *Kingfisher* electronically, especially "snowbirds". The response was great! One member even donated the sum it cost us to cover these expenses. Please keep the electronic requests coming! We know everyone can't or doesn't want an electronic version, but many of you are willing to receive the *Kingfisher* electronically, you just haven't requested it. Please do so, by sending an e-mail to Jerry Bahls (jobaud@comcast.net). Remember the cost to the Chapter is about \$0.80/returned *Kingfisher*.



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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		

Eastern and Western Meadowlarks

In 1844, when Audubon described and named the Western Meadowlark, he thought the task had been overlooked, hence the scientific name *Sturnella neglecta*. It was at one point considered a subspecies of the Eastern Meadowlark, however even where ranges overlap in the Central U. S. they remain reproductively isolated. (There is extensive overlap of the two species in eastern Minnesota.)

Meadowlarks received their name not because they are larks, but because they reminded the New England settlers of the English Skylark. They are in fact in the family Icteridae, which includes New World blackbirds such as the Red-winged Blackbird and the Common Grackle.

Because the two species are very similar in appearance, distinguishing the two in the field is a matter of range, song, and call. Both species use a variety of open grassland habitats, but in areas of overlap, Eastern Meadowlarks are more generally found in wet, low grassland areas while the Western prefers drier uplands.

The difference in songs is striking, however field identification by song can lead a birder astray, since the song of a male meadowlark is learned; thus there is a chance the male may be singing the “wrong” song. In fact, a male may occasionally sing both songs.

The call note, however, is innate, so learning the call notes for both species allows for the most accurate field identification.

Excerpted from: “When East meets West”, by Silka L. F. Kempema, South Dakota Conservation Digest, July/August, 2011, pp. 28-29.



FAMOUS BIRDERS’ LEGACY

How would you like to be considered such a stalwart in the birding world as to have a bird named after yourself? Here are 14 people who have achieved just that level of avian immortality. I think there should also be a Peterson’s Warbler or a Muir’s Dove. Can you identify the birds named after the following birders? Future issues will have biographies of some of these individuals. See list to the right, and answers are on page 6!

Alexander Wilson	5 birds	William McGillivray	1
John Cassin	4	George Stellar	3
William Merriwether Lewis	1	William Swainson	3
George Rogers Clark	2	John K. Townsend	2
Thomas Brewer	2	Sir John Franklin	1
Elliot Coues	1	Charles Lucien Bonaparte	1
Thomas Nuttall	1	Spencer Fullerton Baird	2

Buckthorn pulls this fall!

Several pulls are scheduled for Roberts Bird Sanctuary and William Berry Woods, both located near Lake Harriet in Minneapolis. Everyone is welcome (children under the age of 12 must be supervised by a parent/guardian).

More information and any additional pulls are posted on the ACM website: www.AudubonChapterofMinneapolis.org



Pulls at Roberts Bird Sanctuary

Saturday October 1: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 9: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 22: 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 5: 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Pulls at William Berry Woods

Saturday, October 15: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 30: 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.



GROUND-NESTING BIRDS and PREDATORS

It's always seemed to me that birds nesting on the ground are at a disadvantage since roaming skunks and fox are likely to stumble onto a nest quite often. Do predators with a keen sense of smell detect the female or the young in the nest? Some of the answers showed up in an article in *Outdoor News*, June 17, 2011 issue. We know that the young such as Ovenbirds get rid of waste in a sack so as not to befoul a nest. The parent then removes the sack and takes it some distance from the nest. Uneaten food scraps also would attract a predator. Does the female and/or young give off odors enough to be picked up by foxes, etc?

Birds all (not just waterfowl) have oils that they distribute on their feathers to keep from getting soaked in the rain. Without waterproofing this way birds would get water-logged or simply cold and die from it. These oils have enough odor to attract unwelcome visitors searching for a meal. The oil scent is very faint and is sometimes used to cover other odors, as well as water protection. Imagine a nest on the ground with odor wafting upward and drifting with the wind. The scents thus produced form a cone shape that extends along the ground, or at an angle upward from the nest. Predators must enter that cone and be able to follow it back to the nest. Each nesting female (or male as in some species such as Phalaropes) seems to know that she needs to find a site with the right wind pattern to disperse the odor without detection.

In addition, birds such as grouse or quail need to mosey off the nest with time to cover it in vegetation to be invisible. When humans with dogs, or ATV's, surprise a female, the nest becomes vulnerable. In most states there are policies against running or training dogs during nesting season for this reason. But there are currently no laws against ATV use during this time. Even whitetail deer have been seen eating grouse eggs. With so much stacked against them, one wonders how any birds can have a successful hatch.

~ Jim Egge

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, Judy Dupre, Dave Martin, Malcolm Mitchell, Darlene & Don Olson, Marianna Tiller, Mary Ellen Vetter, Lynn Johnson, Lary Johnson and Virginia May. When you see them let them know you appreciate their work. **Thank you team!**

~ Jerry Bahls, Mailing Chair

Birding in the Pacific Northwest with the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

The weather in the Pacific Northwest tends to be milder than winter in Minnesota with most days reaching into the 50s. As it is much warmer, winter brings many of the Arctic-breeding birds to the shores, bays and beaches of Oregon and Washington.

With six excellent days of bird watching in the field, we should see twenty-five waterfowl species (including a number of Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon, Harlequin Duck, White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, Brant and perhaps Emperor Goose), a number of fantastic alcids (Rhinceros Auklet, Ancient

Murrelet, Marbled Murrelet and more). We will likely find as many as a dozen gull species (including Bonaparte's Gull, Mew Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Gull, Glaucous Gull, and Black-legged Kittiwake). For most birders, a chance to see the shorebird highlights of Wandering Tattler, Black Turnstone, and Surfbird is a big draw as well. A number of other west coast or northwestern specialties include Red-breasted Sapsucker, Varied Thrush, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Wrentit and Hutton's Vireo. Many of these species are unknown, difficult to find, or just rare outside of California, Oregon and Washington.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) and Partnership for International Birding are putting together a trip for ACM's members for a nice birding break in the winter time. The first trip is planned for January 29 to February 3 in 2012. A second trip is planned for February 12 to 17. The cost is only \$1,290 for five nights and six days of birding. Please check out our website at

<http://www.pibird.com/PacNorthwest-2010-1.html>

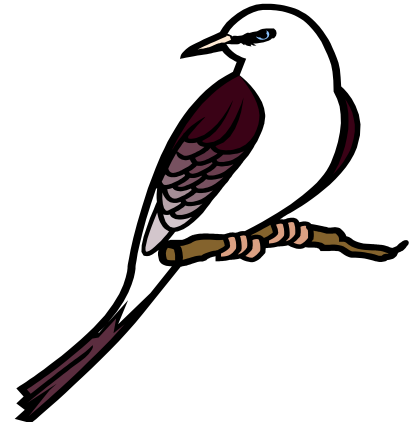
To learn more and/or to book the trip, please contact Charles Thornton-Kolbe at the PIB by email at charles@pibird.com or at 888-203-7464 ext. 912 or direct at 720-320-1974. Also, feel free to call Susan Tertell at 612-729-1566. Please remind us that you are a member of the ACM to get this special pricing.



FLYCATCHER CALLS

Match the letter of the call with the flycatcher. If you want to hear the actual calls, go to the Cornell Ornithology site and look for the bird guide. (Reprinted from last month's issue—answer key now included below!)

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----|--|
| Willow flycatcher | ___ | A) Pee-yer-eee 2 nd note lower |
| Yellow-bellied FC | ___ | B) Wheep or prrreet |
| Acadian FC | ___ | C) Pee-wee emphasis 1 st syllable |
| Olive-sided FC | ___ | D) Quick-three beers 2 nd note higher |
| Phoebe | ___ | E) Peet (soft) - peet-sa (louder) |
| Eastern wood pewee | ___ | F) Fee-beo falling, buzzy |
| Alder FC | ___ | G) A sneezy fitz-bew |
| Least FC | ___ | H) Che-bek |
| Great-crested FC | ___ | I) Per-wee rising slightly |



Answers – 1-G,2-I,3-E,4-D,5-C,6-A,7-F,8-H,9-B

Answers to "Famous Birders" on page 3!

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| A) Plover, Warbler, Phalarope, Storm Petrel, Snipe | I) Jay, Eider, Sea Eagle |
| B) Finch, Kingbird, Sparrow, Vireo | J) Hawk, Thrush, Warbler |
| C) Woodpecker | K) Gull |
| D) Grebe, Nutcracker | L) Gull |
| E) Blackbird, Sparrow | M) Sparrow, Sandpiper |
| F) Flycatcher | |
| G) Woodpecker | |
| H) Warbler | |

Thanks to Jim Egge for this piece!

Kingfisher Mailing Team Volunteers Needed

The last time I requested help with mailing the *Kingfisher* newsletter was in November 2006. We are again at that point where the critical number of potential volunteers has fallen below the number we need to have available to conveniently mail the Kingfisher to our membership. This time it is not that we have lost mailing team members, but an increase in steps required by the Postal Service to complete our mailing. We meet the 3rd Monday every other month beginning in December (followed by February, April, June, August and October) at about 9:00 am at Jerry Bahls' house in Fridley. Coffee and cookies are served. Also available is great conversation! If interested please call Jerry Bahls at 763-572-2333 or e-mail at jobaud@comcast.net.

Birding in Ecuador with Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis: An Incredible 350 Bird Species

The Audubon Chapter of Minnesota (ACM) and the Partnership for International Birding are working together to offer another bird watching tour opportunity. These trips will be in October 2012 and will cover both northwest Ecuador and several key sites on the east slope of the Andes.

This trip is designed for the first time South American birder, who will likely find 350 bird species over this 10 day trip. Nearly 40 hummingbird species will be found, as well as over 70 stunning tanager species. Besides several toucan species, we usually find 6 trogon species, including Golden-headed Quetzal. The last night of the trip will likely show everyone an owl species, which has yet to be described by science.

The trip includes the world famous Paz de las Aves, which many consider to be one of the top 10 birding sites in the world. A recent trip there found 4 Antpitta species in a single day. Other key sites include Tandayapa Valley, Rio Silanche, Milpe, Pappallachta Pass, Guango Lodge and Reserve and San Isidro.

Our clients keep telling us how they appreciate the short drive times with productive birding throughout the trip. Birding in Ecuador is productive and fun.

Lelis Navarrete, who many consider to be the top birding guide in South America, will be the guide for this trip. With over 30 years experience as a bird guide throughout South America, Lelis' expertise on all South American bird songs (over 8,000 vocalizations from 2,400 species) and on bird species identification is often sought out. He found (along with Robert Ridgely) a new bird to science, the Jocotoco Antpitta from southern Ecuador. He continues to work on a number of bird conservation projects in Ecuador.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) and Partnership for International Birding have set two dates for this trip: October 5 to 14 in 2012 and October 13 to 22 in 2012. The cost is only \$2,290 for nine nights for a 10 day birding tour (the first and last days of the ten day trip are arrival and departure days). Please check out our website at <http://www.pibird.com/EcuadorNWPlusBitEast-Main-1.html>

To learn more and/or to book the trip, please contact Charles Thornton-Kolbe at the PIB by email at charles@pibird.com or at 888-203-7464 ext. 912 or direct at 720-320-1974. Also, feel free to call Susan Tertell at 612-729-1566. Please remind us that you are a member of the ASM to get this special pricing.



Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
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Minneapolis, MN 55403

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KINGFISHER
September/October 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

September

6: Program: Carrol Henderson @ Beth El Synagogue, 7PM

27: Board Meeting @ Roosevelt H.S., 4029 28th Avenue S, Minneapolis, 7PM

October

4: Program: Don Arnosti @ Beth El Synagogue, 7PM

25: Board Meeting @ Roosevelt H.S., 4029 28th Avenue S, Minneapolis, 7PM

November

8: Program: Stan Tekiela, location TBD

22: Board Meeting @ Roosevelt H.S., 4029 28th Avenue S, Minneapolis, 7PM

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

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER ELECTRONICALLY!

Contact Jerry Bahls at jobaud@comcast.net