



KINGFISHER



September 2005

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 54 No. 5

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

A Note from the President

This summer has flown by again. I managed to finish my summer project, but it took its toll on my recreation opportunities. However, I have had the opportunity to observe the bird life around me. It always starts with the return of the wood ducks. We again hosted the "jump" of ducklings. Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed the experience. My 3 wood duck boxes this year produced 30 ducklings. That is down from previous years, but not too bad. I had the latest hatch ever when 7 hatched on July 6.



This year again a starling took over a hole artfully crafted by a red-bellied woodpecker. It prompted me to sit up and take notice at the annual Bluebird Conference during a talk on flicker boxes about how to build starling traps. Next year there will be

fewer starlings around to compete with my woodpeckers' efforts.

Soon after the wood ducks began their nesting efforts the chickadees began their biological efforts to reproduce their species. However they ran to a traditional enemy in the bird world—the house wren! Within a week of laying their eggs, I discovered the chickadee eggs lying on the ground at the base of the house. It was clear that a newly-returned wren had been up to no good, since my box had been fitted with a hole only very small birds could use. Another box had three chickadee eggs in it when I found that one of the eggs had been "tossed" out of the box. I then took action to apply a hole cover to protect the remaining eggs. It appeared that it was working because the chickadee laid another egg. However, about a week later I found the box abandoned. A third box was also occupied by chickadees; there were five eggs. I again attached the hole cover and monitored it closely to see if they had wren problems. Fortunately, they didn't and subsequently fledged five young.

A wren, in spite of me diligently removing the sticks from the boxes that the wrens were trying to nest in, managed to lay three eggs and fledged all three. This was the same box that the chickadees had lost earlier and then had success defending it from a bluebird while they were nest-building. However, a bluebird did build a nest in a new box we put up this spring and successfully fledged four young.

While I actively provide nesting sites for cavity-nesting birds, I noticed that other birds were also reproducing in my immediate area. (continued on page 3...)

September Program

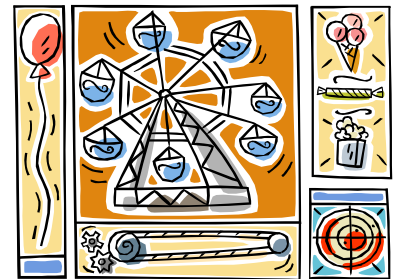
Traveling to and in Cuba

Travel to Cuba with George Skinner and his wife, Ann Hanley, on Tuesday September 6. George, a veteran birder of 25 years, is the field trip coordinator for the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter. Ann is the MRVAC president and will be assisting in the presentation.

Cuba is a very important point in the migration routes for many birds, but is, because of restrictions, an under-birded location. Large tracts of high quality habitat, including many endemics, still exist on the island. When George traveled to Cuba in December 2002 and March 2004, he photographed and recorded some of the calls of selected Cuban birds. Those calls, as well as the culture, the architecture, the political history and the future challenges facing Cuba will be a part of the Power Point presentation.

George will explain how the trip to Cuba was arranged and will provide background information on the current U.S. trade embargo and the current travel restrictions. Samples of resources available at local libraries for trip planning, as well as handouts from the Cuba Bird Study Program, will be available.

Tuesday, September 6
7:00 p.m.
Mayflower Church



Volunteers Needed for State Fair

Volunteers are needed to help at the Audubon Minnesota booth at the State Fair. Tickets to the State Fair are provided free to volunteers for the day that they sign up. The volunteer shifts are for 3 hours (9:00–noon, noon–3:00, 3:00–6:00 pm and 6:00–9:00) on August 26th, 27th, 29th and September 2nd. After your shift you are welcome to visit the rest of the fair. Please call Trudi at [612.824.4866](tel:612.824.4866) now to sign up for the open times! Take advantage of this opportunity to attend the Fair for free!

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Minnesota Audubon 651-739-9332

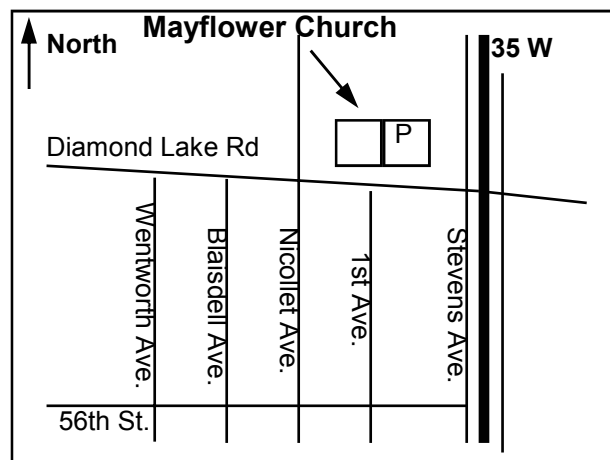
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Come to Our Next Program!

DATE: Tuesday, September 6
"Traveling to and in Cuba"
with George and Ann Skinner

TIME: Program at 7:00 pm

AT: Mayflower Church, map below



Electronic Kingfisher

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER
ELECTRONICALLY!
Contact Jerry Bahls at
bahls001@tc.umn.edu

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
www.geocities.com/audubon.geo
Minnesota Audubon
www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html
National Audubon Society
www.audubon.org

September Field Trips

SEPTEMBER 10

CEDAR CREEK NATURAL HISTORY AREA

East Bethel 8:30 am. Join U of MN Naturalist Dale Krueger to explore Cedar Bog Lake and Beckman Lake for floating mats of sphagnum moss and bog plants; visit ecology experiments to learn about research being conducted at Cedar Creek.

Directions: Highway 65 north to 237th Ave. (Co.Rd.24), right on 237th Ave. to a "T", left at "T" (still Co. Rd. 24), ¾ mile to mailbox 2660 Fawn Lake Drive. Parking at Lawrence Laboratory. If inclement weather, an indoor program will be presented.

To register: contact Mary Ellen 763.561.16716 or rmevetter@mninter.net

SEPTEMBER 14

EARLY BIRD WALK

8:00-11:00 am. Look for migrating waterfowl at East Coon Rapids Dam Park, Brooklyn Park; then hike at Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley for migrating songbirds.

Directions: I-94 north to Hwy 252, 252 to Hwy 610 West, west to Noble Parkway, north on Noble to 97th Ave., east on 97th to Russell Ave., north on Russell to Park entrance. Springbrook is on 85th Ave. N between East River Rd. and University Ave. in Fridley.

To register: contact Sylvia Winkelman 763.533.8381 or sparrowssister1@att.net

SEPTEMBER 17

SIXTH ANNUAL MN RIVER VALLEY BIRD COUNT

Teams will conduct counts in specific locations along the MN River Valley. A count tally and reception for metro area counters will be held from 2 to 4 pm at Memorial Park in Shakopee. To join a team at a count location, please contact Bob Williams 612.728.2232 or bxwilliams@cbburnet.com. Last year, birders identified 186 species. Join us to demonstrate the significance of the River Valley for migrating birds.

SEPTEMBER 23-25

HAWK WATCH WEEKEND DULUTH

Friday, Sept. 23: Registration 7:00 pm, UMD Chemistry 200. Evening speaker at 8:00 pm is Dr. Mark Fuller.

The morning birding locations will be announced and will also be posted on the Ridge.

Saturday, Sept 24: Birding Trips 7:00 am. All day activities on the Ridge—hawk watching, interpretive programs, demonstrations, displays, sales and refreshments.

Evening program in UMD Kirby Ballroom 6:30 pm. Social & Refreshments, silent auction, birding checklists. Evening speaker at 7:45 pm is Al Batt.

Sunday, Sept. 25: Birding trips 7:00 am, locations posted on the Ridge. All day activities on the Ridge same as Saturday.

October Field Trips

OCTOBER 8

CEDAR CREEK NATURAL HISTORY AREA,

East Bethel 8:30 am

Explore northern portions of Cedar Creek's varied plant communities which straddle a junction of three North America ecological landscapes. Modern ecology was born at Cedar Creek in 1942 and is now a premier research site where northern evergreens, eastern broadleaf and western tall grass prairie meet. All arrangements same as September 10.

For more field trip information, contact Mary Ellen Vetter at 763.561.1761 or mevetter@mninter.net

Raptor Release

SEPTEMBER 24

See the annual Fall Raptor Release 10:00 am—3:00 pm at Lake Rebecca Park Reserve in Rockford.

Co-sponsored by Three Rivers Park District and The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota, the Fall Raptor Release will feature releases at 11:30 am and 2:00 pm.

A few lucky participants will have an opportunity to actually release a raptor themselves. Special events include meeting and photographing the Raptor Center's resident ambassador eagles, falcons, hawks, and owls up close and personal.

Ongoing family activities include face painting, making raptor masks, measuring your wingspan and playing a migration game to see what it's like to be a bird. Musician Michael Monroe will perform 30 minutes before each release.

Lake Rebecca Park Reserve is one of the sites for the trumpeter swan restoration program. Several overlooks along hiking trails provide glimpses of these swans, the world's largest waterfowl.

For more information, call 612.624.4745 or visit www.ThreeRiversParkDistrict.org.



A Note from the President (continued from page 1)

The feature bird was the oriole. I was able to locate 2 nests in our cottonwood trees and young orioles are now frequenting our sugar water feeder.

In addition to the orioles, robins, blue jays, song sparrows, chipping sparrows and grackles have nested in my area and have used my backyard to help raise their young.

Maybe because I was captive here this summer, but it seemed like this was a good year for the birds.

—Jerry Bahls, President

SEPTEMBER BIRD OF THE MONTH:
THE EAGLE
PRESENTED BY

DOROTHY KUETHER

LEARN ABOUT OUR NATIONAL SYMBOL
AT OUR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 6

BOOKS FOR SALE

Did you know, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis sells books and other merchandise at its program meetings?

We offer many of the most popular Field Guides for sale!
We have Bluebird Recovery items for sale!

We offer Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis patches and pins as well as National Audubon Society pins.

All items are at *discount* prices.

This month's featured book is:

Wild About Birds Feeding Guide
By DNR's Carrol Henderson

**AUDUBON CENTER OF THE NORTH WOODS
IN SANDSTONE, MN**

**FALL OPEN HOUSE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY FAIR
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2005**

Join us for a full day of FUN activities, tour the NEW alternative energy systems recently completed at the Center and enjoy the blazing color of autumn oaks, aspens and maples.

There will be a display and preview of artwork focusing on birds. BIRD X BIRD is a charitable organization linking art and science through exhibitions and programs that benefit wildlife and the environment. Nearly 100 notable regional artists will be making art in response to data collected at the Audubon Center and at the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary in Theodore Wirth Park. Their art will be exhibited in the Fine Arts Building on the Minnesota State Fair Grounds with an auction of the work on Tuesday, October 5, 2005. Proceeds will benefit bird-banding and wildlife rehabilitation at North Woods and at Eloise Butler Gardens.

**Audubon Minnesota Announces
2005 Bird Seed Sale**

Bird-lovers are invited to stock up for winter feeding while supporting Audubon's conservation work in Minnesota. All popular seed varieties are offered at competitive prices, including sunflower, niger, suet cakes, and the special Audubon Minnesota Mix.

100% of the purchase price goes to support Audubon programs in Minnesota. The annual birdseed sale is made possible through the generous contribution of Performance Seed in St. Cloud.



**Seed orders must be
placed and prepaid
by October 1**

**Pick up orders on
Saturday, October 15,
9 am to 2 pm**

Seed pick-up sites:

Bloomington: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge,
3815 American Blvd. East

Saint Paul (north): Tamarack Nature Center, 5287 Otter
Lake Road, White Bear Lake just east of 35-E on 96

Saint Paul (east): Woodbury site to be determined, map
will be sent before pick up date

Lake Nokomis: Mother Earth Gardens, 3738-S 42nd Ave.

Plymouth: 11410 – 49th Place North (private home)

Roseville: 2949 Farrington Street (private home)

Seed may also be picked up at the Audubon office during
business hours (9:00 am to 4:00 pm), October 17-21.

To receive an order form and more information, contact
Jenny Vitale at the Audubon Minnesota office,
651.739.9332, or e-mail her at jvitale@audubon.org. Maps
and directions to the pick-up sites will be mailed one week
before the sale.

Volunteers are needed to help at the pick-up sites. Anyone
interested can call Jenny Vitale at 651.739.9332.



Three Hawk Morning Or Birding by Bus by John Arthur



What is "Birding by Bus?" It is the activity of bird-watching while commuting or just using public transportation. While not a complete substitute for traveling to an exotic location to find that errant brown-spotted whatchamacallit or the three-toed whatnot, the activity can make a daily trip much more enjoyable.

On my bus route this spring, I had many of the riders actively watching a family of great-horned owls that were nesting in a tree near the intersection of Hwy 100 and Hwy 7. As we passed under the bridge, most of the eyes in the back of the bus were trained on the tree. One could almost feel the bus lean a little to that side as we passed. During the early spring, the nest was clearly visible before the leaves obscured the view. Back then, the owl was a fuzzy lump with "ears." As spring moved slowly toward summer, the owls became harder to spot, but they were also more likely to sit higher in the nest. Some of the bus riders actually took the time to visit the location by car for a longer look. A 55-mile-per-hour drive-by does not always afford the best looks. One rider even reported back that they had returned to the nest site with their children. On other days, we have been treated to sightings of a peregrine falcon that is nesting on the Colonnade Building near Hwy 100 and I-394.

Birding by bus should not be limited to the bus ride itself, but in my case, also included the walk to the bus stop. On my daily walk to the bus stop, nesting house finches would greet me with their calls and robins would announce their presence. Under the eaves and awnings of the shops on Main Street I would watch the young finches and sparrows growing up. Other mornings, I would enjoy the music created by the echoes of Canada geese from within the man-made canyon we call Main Street. Sometimes the chorus would include blue jays, the occasional catbird and some crows to add a raucous quality to the symphony.

The variety of birds on a typical ride to work might not come up to the level of what one might see on a trip to some hot birding area like Crex Meadows, but there are always surprises. Events such as crows alerting the rest of the community to the owl in the tree, a great egret's sudden strike to catch a small fish at the edge of the creek, and the pied-billed grebe ducking from sight in a small pond, can work together to create a memorable ride.

Public transportation is also another way to get to some of the birding areas in the Twin Cities. Roberts Bird Sanctuary near Lake Harriet is a prime example. The Headquarters for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is only a 12 minute walk from the Bloomington Central Station on the Hiawatha Light Rail Line (thanks to Anne Hanley of MRVAC for that bit of information). The Bass Ponds Unit of the same refuge is about the same distance from the Mall of America Station on the same line. Minnehaha Falls is even closer to the light rail station. Theodore Wirth Park is covered by no less than 3 bus lines. Looking for the green-colored sections on an area map and then cross-referencing to a Metro Transit map could reveal even more birding opportunities. The Metro Transit map can be found online at: www.metrotransit.org, at one of the many Metro Transit Stores or one of the 150 Transit Outlet stores.

A "Three Hawk Morning" unlike a "Three Dog Night" (made famous in Australian legend and a 60's rock group) is a good day of birding by bus. A morning in late July was just such a morning. I saw a Coopers hawk chasing some starlings while on my walk to the bus stop. Later, I observed another Coopers hawk near Hwy. 100 in flight. The high point of this memorable commute, was watching a red-tailed hawk flying up into a tree with a medium-sized rodent clutched in its talons.

Fall Fund Appeal in October

When the Finance Committee of the chapter determined the budget for fiscal year 2005-2006, we sought to maintain our current level of services. That means we'll still publish 8 Kingfishers and have 8 programs during the year. These two items represent almost 90% of our budget. National Audubon Society's (NAS) dues reimbursement will cover most of these expenses. The rest are covered by a variety of other sources. NAS is dropping their incentives program, which returned the first year dues to the chapter for new members recruited by the chapter. Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) received almost \$300 from this program. The loss of this revenue put our program of supplying "Audubon Adventures" to classrooms in our chapter area in jeopardy. Therefore it was decided to replace this revenue by having a Fall Appeal. Members will receive an envelope in the October issue of their Kingfisher to use to make a donation to ACM to cover expenses associated with supplying "Audubon Adventures" and other education-related programs. This would include providing scholarships to Audubon Center of the Northwoods and Hunt Hill for youth camps, which last year were dropped from our budget. These scholarships are not in the FY2005-2006 budget either, but it is hoped that donations will be large enough to reinstate them.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
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KINGFISHER
September 2005



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
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: **M02**
7XCHA

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Chapter Program
- 10 Cedar Bog Lake
- 14 Early Bird Walk
- 17 MN River Valley Bird Count
- 23-25 Hawk Watch Weekend
- 24 Fall Raptor Release

OCTOBER

- 1 Renewable Energy Fair
- Last day to order bird seed

Field trips are led by expert birders to some of Minnesota's finest natural habitats. Please see details inside this issue or call Mary Ellen 763.561.1761.

Board meetings are held every month on the 2nd Tuesday at 7:15 pm at the Lund's store on Lake Street just west of Hennepin-except in July. All are welcome to programs, trips and board meetings. Call President Jerry Bahls for details!