



KINGFISHER



May-Summer 2003

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 52 No. 4

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

May Program

Please join the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis for its final program of the season on Tuesday, May 6th at the Mayflower Church. Rick Baker from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will speak to us about the Endangered Species Act. Rick is a knowledgeable and engaging speaker who comes armed with great slides and information. Also, the spring Cookie Social precedes the program at 6:30 pm—come for a treat and stay for the terrific program. See you there!

Come to the Fair

We'll buy your admission ticket if you can help us out! This is a chance to experience the Minnesota State Fair from the other side of the Pronto Pup by helping to spread the Audubon message and offer information to fellow fair-goers at the Minnesota Audubon's fair booth near the DNR building. You don't need to be a bird expert to participate, only a willing "people-person" who enjoys meeting others and spreading the word about Audubon. Past volunteers always report enjoying the range of interaction they encounter at our booth. And you can't beat the people-watching from the vantage point of our location! Dates for our Chapter have yet to be determined but if you are interested, please contact Mary Ellen Vetter (612.561.1761) to reserve your 3-hour shift on the date of your choosing. Thank you!

Great River Birding Festival

May 9-11, 2003

For more info:

jmeschievitz@audubon.org



Cookie Social and Program May 6—bring a plate of cookies to share at 6:30 pm!

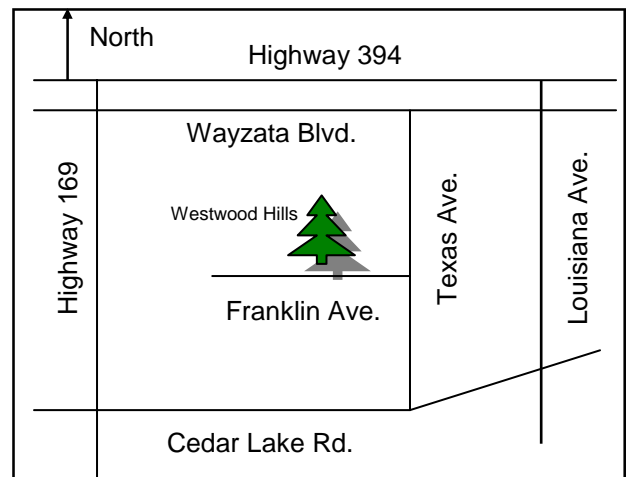
May 10th Birding Class

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is hosting a spring birding class on Saturday, May 10th beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park (directions below).

Terry Brashear, a favorite birder and field trip leader for our Chapter, will be the instructor for the day. After a slide show and discussion, there will be a walk in the woods to apply what we have learned.

Remember to mark Saturday, May 10, from 9:00 a.m. to noon on your calendar and come join us—Terry is a wonderful teacher!

—Louise Cameron



"Thanks" to the Mailing Team!

Let's all greet the following members with a hearty THANKS for their help in mailing the *Kingfisher* each month: Dorothy Brindle, Fran Duritsa, Lois Dick, Jean King, Allan Fagley, Alice Fagley, Marianna Tiller, Darlene Olson, Don Olson, Mary Ellen Vetter, Clara Dahle, Bill Caverly, Jeane Beale, Brenda Reishus, and Trudi Poquette.

This is a remarkable group of hard workers who seem to have a good time doing the mailing each month. Again, THANK YOU!

—Jerry Bahls

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Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/

Audubon Minnesota
www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html

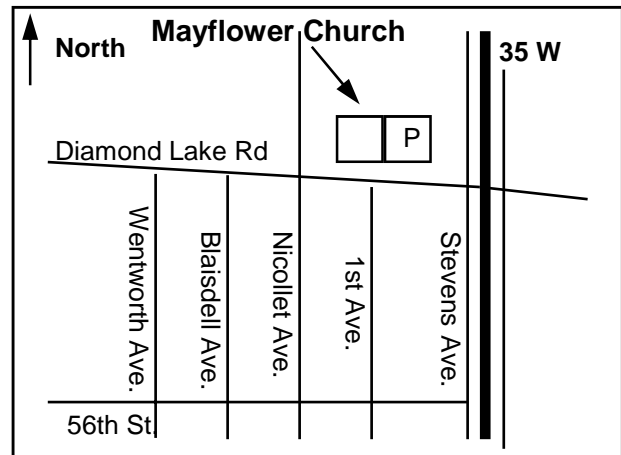
National Audubon Society
www.audubon.org

Come to Our Next Program!

DATE: Tuesday, May 6 "Endangered Species Act"
Rick Baker, MN Dept. of Natural Resources

TIME: Spring Cookies Social begins at 6:30 p.m.
Program begins at 7:30 p.m.

AT: Mayflower Church (Lower Level)
109 E. Diamond Lake Road, Minneapolis
(35W & East Diamond Lake Road)



Electronic Kingfisher

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ELECTRONICALLY!
Contact Jerry Bahls at
bahls001@tc.umn.edu

Spring Field Trips

Are you itching to get out of the house to search for our returning feathered friends? Get ready to spend some quality time with a knowledgeable leader and a group of Audubon associates looking for springtime birds. Below are the details for two upcoming May field trips; please contact Tom or Terry with questions and remember that guests are always welcome. Also, note that the previously scheduled field trip on May 10th has been cancelled due to the Chapter-sponsored Birding Class at Westwood Hills Nature Center that same day (see page 1).

Sunday, May 11th: Eloise Butler Garden/Sanctuary

Meet in the parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Come for a walk through the Sanctuary and still have enough time to get back home and make Mom brunch for Mother's Day!

Saturday, May 17th: Woodlake Nature Center

One of the best places in the state to see Least Bittern. The floating walkways allow close observation of water birds such as Sora, Virginia Rail, and Least Bittern. The woods attract an assortment of migrant passerines. Meet in the parking lot of the Center at 7:30 a.m.



International Migratory Bird Day, May 10th, Coon Rapids Dam

Celebrate birds on International Migratory Bird Day, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (ongoing) on Saturday, May 10th at Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park. Join bird hikes and bird banding demonstrations; observe osprey and build a nest or make a unique bird; learn how to feed and attract birds and what to use to get a closer look and great photos of them. Games, prizes and more! The Patron and regular rate is \$5; Group/family rate (4-6 people) is \$15. Parking fee is included. Co-sponsored by All Seasons Wild Bird Store; National Camera Exchange & Video; MN Ornithologists' Union.

Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park is located on the Mississippi River in Brooklyn Park. From the Hennepin County side, take Highway 610 to the Noble Parkway exit, turn north on Noble Parkway, turn east on 97th Avenue then turn north onto county Road 12 (Russell Avenue). Follow County Road 12 north to the park entrance. For personal/family vehicles, the daily parking on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and holidays is \$4; parking is free Monday through Thursday.

Visit Our Web Site: www.ThreeRiversParkDistrict.org

Calling All You New Volunteers!

Membership Chair Needed...The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Membership Committee Chair position is open. The Membership Committee currently has 3 members and it badly needs someone who has leadership skills to lead the chapter in recruiting new members. The current members are willing volunteers who have limited time to do it all; they need someone with the skills to direct a dynamic program of recruiting, maintaining, and retaining members to Audubon. A limited budget is available and depending upon the success of recruiting new members, this budget could be expanded! The chapter faces some difficult cuts in our program if this position continues to remain open, because recruiting new members is tied directly to our financial success due to National Audubon's current reimbursement method. Fiscal year 2003 - 2004 is the last year of the "safety net" reimbursement that National Audubon has in place. In the future, this reimbursement will be heavily dependent upon new member recruitment. Please volunteer to lead the Membership Committee now! Call any member of the board or see them at the next Audubon meeting and tell them you can help. Thanks!

Upcoming Class— "Birdhouses: Building, Placing and Maintaining"

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis will be conducting a class in July on birdhouses for cavity-nesting birds. The class will cover building an appropriate house for your favorite cavity-nesting bird; discussion on who may move in; materials and design features of the houses; actually building the houses; and a discussion follows on where to actually place the house in your yard or favorite bird spot. Lastly, if you don't look after it, don't put it up—maintenance! The class will be led by Jerry Bahls, with material provided by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The class will last about an hour, followed by a short field trip to view occupied birdhouses (weather permitting).

Date: Thursday, July 10th, 7:00 p.m.

**Place: Springbrook Nature Center,
100- 85th Ave. N., Fridley, MN**

This will be the only notice regarding this class, so double-circle your calendar for this informative session. If you would like more information, please call Jerry Bahls at 763.572.2333 or e-mail him at bahls001@tc.umn.edu. This class is free and families are encouraged to attend with their children.



Upper Midwest Permaculture Workshop

WHAT IS PERMACULTURE?

Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture) is an integrative management model guided by principles of designing and maintaining agriculturally productive ecosystems that have the diversity, stability and resilience of natural ecosystems.

Permaculture is a site-specific, observationally-based design system that strives to conserve energy by employing perennial systems, landscape niches, and the interaction of biological species to achieve multiple functions.

Bruce Bacon has developed the Crandall Homestead into a host site for micro-enterprises. Over 25 years of creative design and biodiversity plantings have shaped Garden Farme into a unique space with living and mature examples of permaculture practices including windbreaks, prairie restoration and access paths.

During May 22-25, learn new skills, meet interesting people, eat good food, and learn about permaculture from experienced practitioners. *Garden Farme*, the site of the workshops, is 90 acres of prairie, woods, wetland, and gardens located 30 miles northwest of the Twin Cities, on the Anoka Sand Plain.

Workshops include:

- * *Creating Homes & Landscapes in Harmony with Nature*
- * *The Husbandry of Ecological Partnerships*
- * *Permaculture Farming*
- * *Herbal and Medicinal Plant Walks*
- * *Making Herbal Medicine*
- * *Reading the Land: Understanding the Language of Landscape for Site Assessment*
- * *Designing Polycultures and Guilds for Farm and Garden*
- * *Dream of Wild Health Project* and
- * *Shiitake and Blue Oyster Inoculation Workshop*

Speakers are Toby Hemenway, author, instructor, and associate editor of *Permaculture Activist*; Nick Jordan, author and University of MN agroecology instructor; Lisa Wolff, herbalist and instructor; Mark Shepard, owner and manager of New Forest Farms in Viola, WI; Paul Red Elk, son of a Lakota medicine healer; and Ken Honl, instructor.

Dinner, discussion and live music take place in the evenings. For registration information, questions or directions, please contact Paula at 612.870.3467 or e-mail permaculture@hotmail.com and more information is available at www.askhiggins.com

Summer Camp Opportunities for Youth at Hunt Hill Nature Center and Audubon Center of the North Woods

For more information on these sessions and additional advanced skills sessions, please see the Audubon Center's web site at www.audubon-center.org

Hunt Hill Nature Center Summer Camp Scholarships

Our Chapter provides \$250 towards student scholarships at the Hunt Hill Nature Center in Sarona, WI. To apply, contact Marion Borell at 612-866-1266.

Youth Ecology Adventure

Ages: 9-13 *** Date: July 20-25, 2003 *** Cost: \$345
Participate in adventures of exploring and enjoying the 500-acre Audubon sanctuary. Study underwater plants and up-close wildlife, canoe, swim, fish, and go on an overnight camp-out. New adventures each year for returning campers!

Teen River Ecology

Ages: 13-15 *** Date: July 6-11, 2003 *** Cost: \$390
Combine traditional ecology with an exciting week of adventure and challenge! Learn low-impact camping, safe paddling, and outdoor cooking skills before embarking on a 4-5 day canoe trip to explore the ecology of the region.

Audubon Center of the North Woods Scholarships

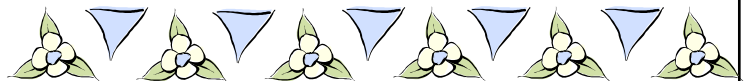
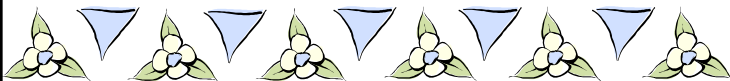
North Woods is near Sandstone, MN and our Chapter sponsors \$500 towards scholarships at this camp. Please contact Bob Nelson at 952-933-7340 to apply. Sessions fill up quickly!

Wild Things: Ecology of the North Woods

Ages: 10-12 *** Date: July 12-18, 2003 *** Cost: \$450
Snakes, turtles, and frogs will be the subjects of your studies as you learn the needs and unique characteristics of our wild neighbors. Nature activities include bird identification and banding, beaver studies, and aquatic studies. Day hikes, crafts, campfires, and an overnight campout are other highlights, as are visits to the Duluth Zoo, Great Lakes Aquarium, and/or the Wildlife Science Center.

Adventures—Rocks, Ropes, and Rapids

Ages: 12-14 *** Dates: July 5-11/July 21-27 *** Cost: \$450
Spend an adventurous week on our skywalk ropes course and climbing wall. Learn to use wilderness navigation and whitewater canoeing skills. Experience the fur trade history of Minnesota and learn outdoor survival skills. Develop camping skills during an overnight canoe trip on a historic fur trade route. These exciting activities will help develop self-confidence and teamwork while exploring the beauty of the North Woods!



Birding Class for Kids



A couple of bird classes for children ages 8-12 will be held at the Martin Luther King Recreation Center in south Minneapolis. The classes will feature basic bird identification, tips on identifying our feathered neighbors, and can build a basis for a future interest in nature by emphasizing what is around us all—there are many birds in the city! The classes will be followed by a field trip on the MLK Recreation Center grounds.

Where: Martin Luther King Recreation Center
4055 Nicollet Avenue S., 612.370.4908

When: May 14, 2003 and August 5, 2003
3:30—5:00 PM 2:30—4:00 PM

Be sure to circle these dates on your child's calendar; bring binoculars and a bird book if you have them. In case of inclement weather, we'll do the field trip from a protected area.

For more information contact the MLK Center or Jerry Bahls at 763.572.2333 or e-mail bahls001@tc.umn.edu.

...And Teachers for those Kids?

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is experimenting with a couple of trial children's bird classes which will be taught at the MLK Recreation Center in Minneapolis (see announcement above). It is our goal to expand these classes in the future and are seeking volunteers to teach these classes.

While teachers for these first two classes have been arranged, they would be happy to have assistants or co-leader teachers. Materials for the classes are being developed and will be available for future sessions.

This is an excellent opportunity for someone who is retired and interested in passing on their passion for birds to the next generation.

As an organization, we desperately need to establish programs such as this for the youth of our area. Without reaching these youth, the progress we have made in the past to save the birds we so dearly love will have been in vain.

Please help us with this program! Call Jerry Bahls at 763.572.2333 or e-mail bahls001@tc.umn.edu to volunteer.

Too Many Ducks...Part 4 of a Series

Last February while browsing on the internet, one of those very annoying pop-up ads appeared; however, it changed my spring and summer. The ad was for a very small surveillance camera. I gave in to impulse and bought one "at the unbelievably low, unheard-of, inventory reduc-

tion, one-time-only price" (which I've seen at least 10 times since). However it worked and I placed it in the top right-hand corner of my wood duck box. It worked well when the sun was shining but not at all in dim light. I could now spy on the actions in that box! On April 5th, I observed the first female duck entering the box; on April 9th, the first egg. It was disappointing not to see the actual time the egg was laid. In order to not miss any action that occurred in the nest, I began taping the events in the box beginning at about 6:00 am. On April 12th, I had my first surprise: after 3 days of the female entering the box—staying for 36, 40 and 62 minutes each time (Isn't tape wonderful? You don't miss anything!)—she entered at 7:53 (not about 8:00, but 7:53—precision!) and after 51 minutes a second female entered the box! Later, I checked the box and found 5 eggs.

On subsequent days, I again had 2 ducks in the box at the same time. In fact I had *three* ducks in the box on the 17th. When there were 2 ducks in the box at the same time, the second duck acted only in a defensive manner—never aggressively. The first duck did everything in her power to expel the second duck. She pecked, bit, pushed, hissed and pulled her "hair." In a couple of the cases, there was a wet egg in the nest after the second duck left. It appeared that the second duck only had a mission of laying the egg and leaving. In each case, the sitting duck calmly tucked the egg beneath her. I calculated that the hatch should occur sometime between May 17th and 21st, depending on the weather. In the meantime, the box on the river had a lot of action. I had checked it and found 6 eggs. The female there must have begun laying about a day earlier. Unfortunately, it was too far away to monitor as closely as the one in my backyard. Due to the many comings and goings, I determined I had a critical housing shortage. I spent the next day putting together another box for my ducks - WD3 (WD2 is down on the river). The new box was about 25 feet from my bedroom window, so whenever I got up in the morning I would ease a peek at the box, hoping to see a duck sitting on it.

Meanwhile back at WD1, I had checked the number of eggs on the 18th and had counted 12; on the 19th, there were 13. It got very cold that night, down to about 30° F. On the 21st it snowed all day, but began to warm up on the 23rd. I was concerned the eggs may have gotten too cold during this period, but the female was coming and going on a regular basis. Everything was going smoothly, setting up for the May 17th hatch.

On April 30th I checked out WD2 on the river and was able to count 17 eggs. Obviously, it was being visited by more than one female. This was further evidence of a housing shortage that I had hopefully helped to ease. Nothing seemed to be happening in the white house (WD3). On May 1st I awoke and gave my usual glance at the box and there on the box stood a duck. I froze! If she sees me she'll probably be frightened off and, alas, she is! However the next morning she's there again. Over the course of a few days, she seems to reject the box, but when I check it out, I opened the box and to my great surprise - there were six eggs in it! We're now up to a total of 23 eggs!

To be continued in the next issue...

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KINGFISHER
May 2003



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National Audubon Society Chapter Membership

- 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

May

- 6** Cookie Social, 6:30 p.m.
Chapter program, 7:30 p.m.
"Endangered Species Act" by Rick Baker, MN DNR
- 10** Bird Class, Westwood Hills Nature Center, 9:00 a.m.
Field trip: cancelled
- 11** *Field trip:* Eloise Butler Flower Garden and Sanctuary, parking lot at 7:30 a.m.
- 13** Chapter Board meeting, 7:15 p.m.
- 17** *Field trip:* Woodlake Nature Center, parking lot at 7:30 a.m.

August

State Fair, contact Mary Ellen Vetter

See you on the birding trails!

All are welcome to programs, trips, and Board meetings! Call President Tom Mahan for details on Board meetings and field trips...