



KINGFISHER



March 2007

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 56 No. 2

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

A Note from the President

Indicators

"Indicator Species." How many times have we heard that phrase? Usually the term is used with the health of a natural area. Caddis Fly larva in a river or stream, certain species of dragonfly or brook trout, indicators of healthy waters. Pasque flowers, Big Bluestem and Meadow Blazing star, indicators of a quality prairie. Pitcher Plants, Sundews and Bladder Worts would indicate a fine bog. Indicators come in many forms. Clear water, rare plants, predator and prey, all can be indicators of healthy environments. Think of how easy that area could disappear to a bulldozer or some other form of development.

Healthy environments are often the result of an area being set aside for preservation. State Parks, Scientific and Natural Areas as well as some areas too remote for development. There are even examples of areas being restored to a pre-settlement state. Pioneer Park in Blaine is a prime example of a restoration in progress. As the invasive species are being removed, native plants are returning to the site including the rare plant, Twisted Yellow-Eyed Grass (*Xyris torta*) discovered by Jason Husveth in 1997.

There are many indicators of a quality habitat. Indicators can also be found for degraded and disturbed habitat. Glossy and Common Buckthorn, Tartarian Honeysuckle and few other species of tree or shrub would indicate a degraded woodland. Purple Loosetrife, Reed Canary Grass and too much runoff from the roads and nearby parking lots and a once vital wetland is a shadow of its former self. Too many examples of degraded habitats to describe in this article. We can all probably think of a few or probably too many examples of degradation.

What are the indicators of a healthy Audubon Chapter? Send me your thoughts via e-mail to jarthur@visi.com

—John Arthur

March Program

A Birding Tour of Minnesota

Jim Williams has been birding for almost sixty years and has traveled to some of the best spots on earth to enjoy birds not to be seen in Minnesota. Yet, he has lost none of his enthusiasm for bird watching in his own back yard and throughout the state. For our March program he will take us on "A Birding Tour of Minnesota" in words and photos so we can share in some of his favorite experiences from a lifetime of birding in the North Star state.

Jim has also had a rich career in writing about birds and bird-watching. He is the former editor of *Minnesota Birding*, and former associate editor of *Birding*, the American Birding Association magazine. He currently writes a birding column that appears in the Home and Garden section of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. He has been photographing birds for four years.

Tuesday, March 6

at 7:00 p.m.

Mayflower Church

Springbrook Dinner & Auction

The Springbrook Nature Center Foundation is holding its Dinner/Auction fundraising event Saturday evening, March 24, 2007, at the North Air Event Center (formerly K of C hall) 6831 Hwy 65 NE, Fridley.

Tickets are \$35 per person. Come to meet old friends and make new friends, bid on items you want, and support a great facility. This year there will be live entertainment by Elvis!! Tickets can be purchased at Springbrook Nature center or by sending a check to Springbrook Nature Center Foundation, PO Box 32722, Fridley, MN 55432. Be sure to include your name and address and state that the check is for Dinner/auction tickets.

To purchase tickets online, go to www.springbrooknaturecenter.org. All proceeds benefit Springbrook Nature Center.

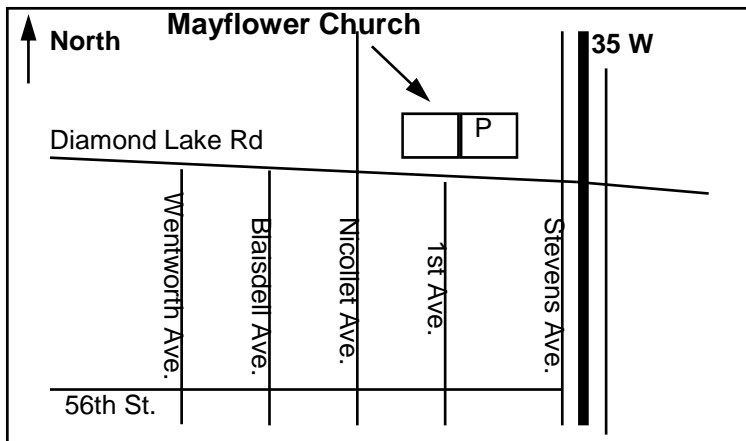
Come to Our Next Program!

DATE: Tuesday, March 6, 2007

"A Birding Tour of Minnesota" by Jim Williams

TIME: Program at 7:00 p.m.

AT: Mayflower Church, 35W & Diamond Lake Road—map below



Upcoming Programs

Mark your calendars

April 3 – Cynde Randall, Minneapolis artist and artistic director for the innovative bird-inspired art exhibit known as “Bird by Bird,” will describe in words and pictures the ongoing arts program.

May 1 – Siah St. Claire, Director of Springbrook Nature Center, will inspire **us all** to take better care of ourselves with his presentation “Nature and Your Health.”

Electronic Kingfisher

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER
ELECTRONICALLY!

Contact Jerry Bahls at bahls001@tc.umn.edu

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Audubon Minnesota	www.audubon.org/chapter/mn		
National Audubon Society	www.audubon.org		

Recycling for Raptors

Reminder: Our friends at The Raptor Center continue their environmental fund-raiser. Please save your empty inkjet printer cartridges and send them to The Raptor Center (postage paid) in mailers they will supply. Just ask, at: 612-624-6945 or trcink@umn.edu.

It's a nice chance to keep the plastic out of landfills and help The Raptor Center.

Note: Since September 2003, they've facilitated the recycling of 52,500 cartridges, amounting to over five tons of material!

Thanks...

Minnesota River Valley

Field Trips

February 26-27

6:30 am, Duluth Birding Tour, Craig Mandel 952-546-3407

March 3

3:00 pm, Waterfowl Identification, MVNWR Visitors Center.
Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407

March 6

7:00 am, Wright County Birding Day,
Minnetonka.
Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407



March 10

7:00 pm, Winter Owls, Dakota County, location TBA.
Steve Weston, 612-978-3993

March 10

2:00 pm, Beginning Bird Watching, Chaska Comm. Ctr.
George Skinner, 952-936-0811

March 17

2:00 pm, Beginning Bird Watching, MVNWR Visitors Ctr.
George Skinner, 952-936-0811

March 24

3:00 pm, Old Cedar Avenue Bridge, Bloomington.
Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407

Mar. 25-27

6:00 pm, Southwestern Minnesota, Worthington.
Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407

March 31

2:00 pm, Waterfowl Identification, Trip from Cliff Glen Park,
Worthington. Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407

April 3

6:00 am, Isanti/Anoka Counties Birding Day, Minnetonka.
Craig Mandel, 952-546-3407

Please contact the trip leader for further information.

Beginning Birding Classes

Where: Westwood Hills Nature Center,
8300 West Franklin Avenue, St. Louis Park,
When: Thursday, April 12th 7:00 – 8:30 pm and
Saturday April 14th at 9:00 am
Fee: \$5, one child free with paying adult

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis will be offering a two - session Beginning Birding Class this Spring at the Westwood Hills Nature Center. Parents, bring your children! This is a lifelong activity that you can enjoy with them. The class is a comprehensive guide for people who are interested in learning how to identify birds. The class will provide a basic knowledge of birds. It will also provide the students with a method for observing a bird and help them identify it with the aid of a field guide.

Basic instructions on the use of binoculars and field guides will be included. At the end of the class, it will be expected that the student will be able to identify 10 easily recognized birds. They will also be well on their way with a little study to be able to identify 25 common Minnesota birds. Finally they will have the tools and knowledge on how to identify many of the migratory birds that pass through the area. The class will include a field trip on Saturday to apply what has been learned in the classroom. Students are asked to bring a field guide and their binoculars to both sessions. A limited number of binoculars and field guides will be supplied. Prepare for the weather because the field trip will be held rain or shine! Anyone over the age of eight is encouraged to sign up for the class. The fee for this class is \$5.00. One child between the ages 8 and 18 attending with a registered adult is free. Please send your name, phone number and address along with your registration fee to Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, P.O. Box 3801, Minneapolis, MN 55403. Deadline for mail-in registration is April 2nd. Call 763 572-2333 or e-mail bahls001@tc.umn.edu for more information or late registration. This class will be limited to 25 students, so please register early!



**March Bird
of the Month:
Red-headed
Woodpecker**

**Presented by -
Jerry Bahls**

**Learn about this declining species and
what you can do to reverse the trend.**

AUDUBON GLEANINGS

COFFEE

Next to petroleum, what is the most traded commodity in the world? I would have guessed wheat or lumber, but an article I just read claims it is coffee. Coffee is grown in two ways. It's grown in cleared forests, or it's grown in the forest in the shade. Clearing forests of course doesn't help wildlife and intensifies erosion and fertilizer use.

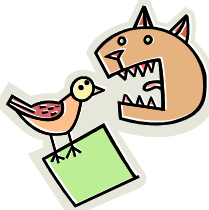
There are 94-97% fewer bird species in sun-grown plantations. Coffee grown in the shade of canopy trees preserves habitat and promotes carbon sequestering that we hear about with climate change.

For the most part, sun-grown coffee comes from large plantations and, I have found, easily turns bitter. Shade coffee is mellow and, I believe, richer. It can be reheated without losing much flavor. In addition, coffee fields in the sun will damage the soil and may not be sustainable. Shade coffee tends to be grown on small, farmer-owned farms, preserving rural communities. The farmers are paid more for coffee, and farms are monitored for growing conditions. This comes in the form of certification for quality and conditions which are less damaging to water and soils.

Some coffees labeled organic are not shade-grown, so watch the label. Most natural food stores carry shade-grown coffee, along with many coffee shops and cafes. Ask for it when you buy coffee, and shops will brew it for you. One type is called Peace coffee and part of the cost goes to promote certification.

CATS

If you see a cat wandering around your neighborhood, what should you do? It may be a family pet, lost and scared. Try to coax the cat to let you get close and check for a collar. If not, check with other neighbors to try to ascertain where the cat belongs, and ultimately get the cat home or to a shelter. This may be difficult since most cats are out in the evening and are wary.



Cats who are well-fed still kill wildlife, since the hunting urge is not hunger-dependent. Cats often kill robins and cardinals, since these birds nest close to houses and the fledglings spend time on the ground. Fences make it easy for cats to corner them and once caught, few birds survive. The cat's teeth and claws can cause infection. Adding bells to a cat's collar helps very little. While stalking, the bells don't ring, and the young bird's instinct is to hide, not flee. For good information, visit www.abcbirds.org/cats/.

—Jim Egge

National Renewable Energy Vote in the House: Thank Your Congressman (or Not)

On January 18, the House passed "The Clean Energy Act of 2007," H.R. 6, by a vote of 264 to 163. If the bill becomes law, it would end more than \$14 billion in giveaways to the oil and gas industry and would redirect the money into a new fund to support investments in clean energy such as energy efficient technologies and renewable power.

If we are going to reduce our dependence on oil and protect the environment, we cannot afford to continue to squander billions in taxpayer handouts to Big Oil. According to a recent report by Friends of the Earth, "oil and gas companies continue to benefit from billions in handouts courtesy of American taxpayers. Between tax incentives, royalty relief, research and development subsidies, these companies will receive more than \$31.6 billion from the federal government over the next five years." H.R. 6 ensures that oil companies awarded drilling leases in 1998 and 1999 pay their fair share in royalties. In addition, the bill creates a Strategic Renewable Energy Reserve to invest in clean, renewable energy resources, promoting new emerging technologies, developing greater efficiency and improving energy conservation.

In addition to demonstrating a commitment to increased investments in clean energy, the bill fixes problems from previous energy legislation, including problems specifically and unfairly targeting Alaska. The bill eliminates royalty relief for Western Arctic oil development and repealed a clause allowing oil companies to lock up undeveloped public land in the Western Arctic for 30 years. If made law, these provisions would help counter the Bush administration's efforts to drill 100 percent of the Western Arctic at all costs.

Here are the votes:

Let's thank Congressional members who voted for this bill and are helping to change the energy course of this coun-

Walz	Yes	Ellison	Yes
Bachman	No	Kline	No
Ramstad	Yes	Peterson	Yes
McCollum	Yes	Oberstar	Yes

try.

Equally as important, we must send a message of disappointment to those members who voted against the bill and encourage them to support the next important piece of energy legislation.

THE AUDUBON CENTER
ANNUAL AUDUBON
BIRDING FESTIVAL

JUNE 8-10, 2007

The Audubon Center of the North Wood's first Audubon Birding Festival was a success! All the evaluations indicated that it was a fun, positive experience for everyone and there was much interest in returning next summer, so mark your calendars now for June 8-10, 2007 when the Audubon Center will host its second annual Birding Festival.

We are happy to report that the excellent field trip leaders who were with us in 2006—Mark Alt, Anne Hanley, George Skinner and Laura Erickson—will be back this year. Minnesota Audubon staff will also be involved in various presentations. Author/photographer Stan Tekiela will be a keynote speaker. We will offer field trips to local hot spots, as well as exhibits and other break out sessions and activities.

To register or receive a brochure, please call 1-888/404-7743 or email audubon1@audubon-center.org. For more information or updates, check our website: www.audubon-center.org.

BBRP Conference

The 2007 Bluebird Recovery Program (BBRP) Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, April 14th from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Elk River High School, 900 School Street in Elk River. Pre-registration is \$4.00 per person before April 4th and \$5.00 after that date. Lunch will cost \$9.50 per person.

This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about attracting bluebirds, establishing a bluebird trail, and other related topics. Conference highlights include speakers Carrol Henderson of the MNDNR Non-Game Division who will provide an update; Keith Radel on beginning a bluebird trail; Roger Strand on Wood Duck management; Loren Murphy on dealing with poorly-placed and improperly mounted nest boxes; Lance Krog on establishing bluebird trails in parks; Darryl Hill on raptors and Hawk Ridge in Duluth; Al Batt with his usual wit; and Jerry Bahls on the new Red-Headed Woodpecker Recovery Program.

Registration forms may be downloaded at www.bbrp.org. For additional information contact:

Jenean Mortenson at 507-332-7003 clmjmm@ll.net or

Keith Radel at 507-210-0961

Lake Superior Snowfall
by Clem Nagel



*Early morning snow—
fresh flakes fall gently,
knitting networks of lace.*

Jewel-fluff blankets.

A slightest puff

would pilfer their

myriad connections.

Afar off,

other snowflakes

melt seamlessly into

the immense, leaden lake.

In the quiet

stillness,

a raven

calls.



Written late in January. So much snow had already fallen. Then, late that night and into the early morning, eight more inches fell ...with no wind! The lake was so gray and still.



Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
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Minneapolis MN 55403

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KINGFISHER
March 2007



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

FEBRUARY

26-27 Duluth Birding Tour

MARCH

3 MRVWR Field Trip
6 Chapter Program
6 Wright County Birding Day
10 Winter Owls
10 Beginning Bird Watching
17 Beginning Bird Watching
24 Old Cedar Ave. Bridge MVNWR
25-27 Southwest MN Birding
31 Waterfowl ID Trip

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 John Arthur or Jerry Bahls for details!