

Central Minnesota Audubon
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St. Cloud, MN 56301

Green-Backed Gazette

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Newsletter of the Central Minnesota Audubon Society

* All Meetings held at the St. Cloud Unitarian Fellowship Hall

Volume 42

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March, 2020



President's Letter by Brian Jungels

Nothing Personal... Just Business

Several weeks ago, I read an article in the Star-Tribune concerning the shale oil field in North Dakota. The article pointed out that so far \$1 trillion has been invested in shale oil to produce \$750 billion worth of oil. One analyst pointed out that it was the first boom that never made any money. Evidently shale oil production is not only an environmental disaster but an economic failure as well. If the oil flow is going to continue, we are all going to have to depend on the kindness of strangers (ignorant investors) to keep ponying up.

I bring up this article for several reasons. Why was an article of such significance buried back in the business section? Right now, there are political parties and politicians whose energy platform is to drill and dig more fossil fuel. Obviously, shale production is not going to be an answer. The American public should be made fully and unequivocally aware of this. Maybe some news story has been produced showing the significance of shale oil's failure but I haven't seen it. Too often information like this is only seen to be relevant to the business world-like the business world is a separate unrelated deity from the rest of humanity. And yes, we do treat the business world as a deity.



Raptor Food is Needed Again!!

Linda Peck has been a licensed wildlife rehabber for many years and has rehabilitated injured creatures or raised young animals and birds to the point of being able to be released as "adults". She still has educational birds and needs your trapped (not poisoned) mice and road kill rabbits and squirrels or window killed birds. She has three raptors that are very hungry! A huge **THANK YOU** goes out to Linda for all her work and dedication to those who cannot verbally express their thanks!

Central MN Audubon Society Officers

Brian Jungels, President
John Peck, Vice President
Open Position: Programs; Publicity
Linda Peck, Conservation
Nicki Blake-Bradley, Newsletter

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Dan Kneip, Secretary (H) 320-761-8202
Hank Schreifels, Member at Large
Audubon MN Office 1-651-739-9332

Calendar



7 p.m. Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Audubon Meeting, Unitarian Fellowship Hall*
Speaker: Troy Freihammer
Topic: The Household Hazardous Waste Facility



9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Saturday, March 21, 2020
Habitat Day, Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
Build a bluebird or wood duck nest box for free!



7 p.m. Wednesday, April 15, 2020
Audubon Meeting, Unitarian Fellowship Hall*
Speaker: Steve Saupe
Topic: Nets of Central MN



6:30 p.m. Friday, April 17, 2020
Woodcock Outing
Sand Prairie WMA
(see page 2 for details)



Sunday, May 24, 2020
Noon - whenever
Audubon Picnic at the Pecks' Farm
(see page 2)



Did you know... female European brown hares and Swamp wallabies (from Australia) have two uteruses? This biological phenomenon allows them to get pregnant again before they have given birth! Female Swamp wallabies are nearly continually pregnant during their adult lives.



**Shoreland Restoration Projects
in Stearns County
by Greg Berg**

Greg Berg is a Shoreland Specialist at the Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). His presentation at the February Audubon meeting reviewed the challenges and successes of shoreland restoration projects. Greg assists landowners and others with technical and financial assistance for these projects.

The SWCD provides free assistance in the design, plant selection and maintenance of restoration sites. Complete guidance is provided from start to finish. To qualify for this service:

- A **native** vegetative shoreland buffer is required
- At least **75%** of the property's shoreline must be included in the buffer.
- A "traffic" area up to 25 feet wide may be allowed for stairs, mowed lawn, trails, or other structures.
- The buffer must extend 25 feet landward.
- A **deed restriction** will be recorded with the property to ensure the buffer remains in place permanently. This restriction is in place since public funds are utilized in most projects.
- Technical assistance many times **covers up to 75% of the total project cost.**

Greg works with many federal, state, and non-profit conservation agencies to secure funding to offer cost share opportunities to Stearns County landowners. These landowners voluntarily want to protect and improve our natural resources. Not all Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts offer this assistance or level of expertise.

A number of Greg's projects involved bank stabilization to prevent erosion. At Stearns County Mississippi Park, 600 feet of the river bank was restored using large trees with root balls that were placed at an angle along the waters edge. Additional tree branches were placed on top of the large trees and fill was placed on top of that. Native plants were planted within erosion control blankets to strengthen the soil and stabilize the bank.

The erosion control blankets used specifically contain no plastic. Even the biodegradable plastic only breaks down to smaller plastic parts. Members noted these can be hard to source at garden centers. (Note Brock White is one local supplier of large rolls that can meet specification.)

In the City of Avon, Greg worked with a group of private landowners to install rain gardens in a housing development along Middle Spunk Lake. Rain gardens reduce stormwater from entering the lake which reduces sedimentation.

Greg discussed the benefits of utilizing native plantings. Native trees, shrubs, grasses, and flowers that grow naturally and/or historically in the area provide:

- Beautiful landscapes
- Shoreland bank stabilization
- Clean Water
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Protection against nuisance geese
- Low maintenance



For more information or how you can improve and protect our natural resources through the SWCD contact:

Greg Berg at 320-251-7800 ext 3 or greg.berg@mn.nacdnet.net



Woodcock Outing, Sand Prairie WMA

Join fellow Auduboners on April 17th for a bird outing to Sand Prairie Wildlife Management Area (WMA). (south of St. Cloud on Hwy 10). Plan on meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the entrance kiosk at Sand Prairie WMA. From the kiosk, we will hike to a wetland with an observation deck where we will observe waterfowl and other early migrants. On the hike to the wetland, we will try to observe some prairie birds like Eastern Meadowlarks. For those who wish to wait until dark, we will try to observe the American Woodcock doing their territorial display. This occurs at dusk.

Prepare for this outing by bringing binoculars, field guides, and maybe a flashlight. A spotting scope will be supplied. Be prepared to wear warm clothing. The exposed observation deck can be quite cold this time of year. I have some spare binoculars for people to use. It is about a half mile hike to the wetland.

Sand Prairie WMA is located south of St. Cloud on Hwy 10. The entrance is located on the east side of the highway near the St. Cloud Reformatory. Look for the dark brown sign. If you have any questions, call Brian at 320-469-0876

Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.
~Martin Luther

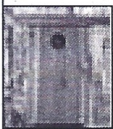


CMAS Picnic. May 24th at the Pecks!

We'll eat at noon but please come a little earlier. Bring something edible to share. Coffee and juice will be provided. Please bring your own plates, cups and utensils. Lawn chairs might be helpful. After lunch activities could include hay wagon rides to and from Eagle park, prairie walks, eagle nest viewing, river dipping, swinging in the hayloft, etc.

Rockville County Park and Nature Preserve has several miles of trails, educational signs, a high overlook into Eagle Park and a board walk into the tamarack bog. As in the past we'll share this picnic with members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Directions from St. Cloud/Waite Park: Travel west on Hwy 23 for four miles past the I-94 Intersection. Look for a green sign "Downtown Rockville" and turn right onto Broadway Street proceeding into Rockville. At Rockville Gas and Bait turn right (north) on County Rd. 139. Cross the Sauk River and then STAY LEFT onto Sauk River Rd. Pecks are at 12299 Sauk River Road, about one mile west of the bridge.



FREE EVENT!!

Habitat Day - Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
March 21, 2020 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Central MN Audubon supports Habitat Day with a donation each year for supplies to build wood duck boxes or bluebird houses. No carpentry skills are necessary; tools and instruction are provided and it's inside a building! The event and nest boxes are free (food has a fee).

There are other activities if you're not interested in building a box. It's a great family friendly event... teaching kids about building and conservation. If you don't have space to put up the nest boxes, you could always donate them. Many parks (including Rockville County Park) have plenty of space! Come join us!

Getting There . . .
Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge is located in Central Minnesota, approximately 30 miles north of St. Cloud and 6 miles southeast of Little Falls.

From St. Cloud, take State Highway 10 north approximately 25 miles to County Highway 35 East. Travel approximately 4.5 miles to the Platte River Bridge and, after crossing the bridge, take the first left to the Platte River Trailhead and refuge headquarters.

From Little Falls, follow State Highway 10 south approximately 2 miles and prepare for a left lane exit to County Highway 35 East. Travel approximately 4.5 miles to the Platte River Bridge and, after crossing the bridge, take the first left to the Platte River Trailhead and refuge headquarters.
Hope to see you there!



Looking for Ways to Make a Difference?

Donations are welcome for our fund to assist with continuing to bring quality speakers to the meetings. Any donation amount would be most welcome and appreciated! If you choose to help out, please make out a check to Central MN Audubon Society (CMAS), and either deliver to our Treasurer, Kathy Doyle or bring to a meeting. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!!**

Technology savvy people take note... a new Facebook group has been created called "MN Heartland Birding+" which you can join and note sightings in the area as well as possibly post a picture or two!

Local Membership Available: Some CMAS members may wish to only belong to and support our local Audubon Society, without belonging to National Audubon and receiving Audubon magazine. This option is available at only \$20 per year and local members **do** receive our Green-Backed Gazette.