

Central Minnesota Audubon
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Green-Backed Gazette

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NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL MINNESOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 44

Spring 2022



President's Letter... by Brian Jungels

Anecdotes and Epiphanies

One morning last summer on the drive to work, I experienced something I have never witnessed before. The air was filled with smoke from fires. I believe the news report said the fires were located in Canada. A vehicle in front of me was going slow, probably because of the smoke, and I decided to pass it. I got in the lane to pass and realized I could not see far enough ahead to pass safely. Reluctantly, I continued to follow the vehicle.

If I had not already understood the scientific merits of human made climate change, this moment could have been described as an epiphany. Being trained as a scientist, I realize my experience was only anecdotal. Statistically, my experience may not have anything to do with human induced climate change. One thing anecdotes are good for is they can pique further thoughtful investigation of a subject. Maybe my experience WAS out of the ordinary. Hopefully most of us don't have to be hit over the head with a 2-by-4 in order to have an epiphany.

p.s. The irony that I was driving a fossil fuel burner during my experience did not escape me!

CMAS Board Elections

It's that time again when we need to elect our board for the local chapter. The election will be held at the in person meeting. We have the current slate, but nominations are open and anyone can throw their hat in the ring (figuratively) for a position:



President: Dan Kneip
Vice President: Hank Schreifels
Secretary: Nicola Blake-Bradley
Treasurer: Kathy Doyle
At Large: John Peck



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is in Minnesota! Report the following to local DNR wildlife staff or the DNR information center at 888-646-6367:
Five or more dead wild birds of any kind found in one location during the same timeframe;
One or more raptors or waterfowl alive but exhibiting signs of sickness; or
One or more raptors or waterfowl with no apparent cause of death.
DNR will submit birds suspected of potentially carrying HPAI to the National Wildlife Health Center or the Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for testing. More information can be found at the DNR Avian Influenza page (<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ai>)

Central MN Audubon Society Officers

Brian Jungels, President (H) 320-469-0876
John Peck, Vice President (H) 320-685-3365
Open Position: Programs/Publicity
Linda Peck, Conservation (H) 320-685-3365
Nicki Blake-Bradley, Newsletter (H) 320-259-5524

Calendar *NOTICE: We are meeting in person in April! See below



Saturday, April 16, 2022
Woodcock Outing, Sand Prairie WMA... see pg 2



Wednesday, April 20, 2022
7 p.m. CMAS Meeting
St. Cloud Public Library, Bremer Room
Speaker: Steve Saupe
Topic: Let's Go Nuts! Hazelnuts and other local nut crops
Dr. Steve Saupe will discuss native nut bearing trees and shrubs of Minnesota for our return to meetings in person!



Saturday, April 23, 2022
Time: All day Location: Any MN State Park
Event: FREE ADMISSION (for everyone)!



Saturday, May 14, 2022
8:30 a.m. Shorebird Outing, Albany (see below)



Sunday, May 29, 2022
Time: Noon Location: John and Linda Peck's
(12299 Sauk River Road, St. Cloud, MN 56301)
Event: CMAS Picnic - Please bring something to share!

Saturday, June 11, 2022
Time: All day Location: Any MN State Park
Event: FREE ADMISSION (for everyone)!



Shorebird Outing to Albany Sewage Ponds



Have you ever wondered why birdwatchers have a fascination with sewage ponds? Well you will have a chance to understand on Saturday, May 14th.
The plan is to meet at the park located in downtown Albany at 8:30 AM (morning) on Saturday May 14th. From there we will caravan to the Albany sewage ponds about 2 miles away.
We will survey the ponds from the adjacent road. A spotting scope will be available. Hopefully we will find abundant shorebirds, waterfowl and other migrating birds. We could also later drive to a nearby wetland (Getchel lake) which is also a good place for shorebirds.





Past Christmas Bird Count Tallies

In the last two years, we added three species (Redhead duck, Townsend’s solitaire, Fox sparrow) to our count’s composite list. Someone also found a Snowy owl during count week.



	2020	2021		2020	2021
Canada Goose	1935	1091	Mallard	1988	1330
Trumpeter Swan	233	76	Turkey	106	182
Wood Duck	-	3	Bald eagle	14	18
Am. Black Duck	-	1	Barred owl	4	1
Redhead duck	1	-	Snowy owl	-	cw
Common Goldeneye	-	8	Blue jay	109	68
Common merganser	8	4	Rock pigeon	310	42
Red-necked pheasant	1	10	Belted kingfisher	1	-
Sharp-shinned hawk	-	1	Brown creeper	2	2
Red-tailed hawk	11	7	Caroline wren	1	-
Rough-legged hawk	-	4	American robin	2	1
Ring-billed gull	22	-	Cedar waxwing	37	1
Mourinning dove	1	5	Am. tree sparrow	20	3
Great horned owl	5	1	Dark eyed junco	88	200
Red-bellied woodpecker	32	32	House finch	48	97
Downy woodpecker	55	37	Purple finch	1	2
Hairy woodpecker	23	16	Northern cardinal	44	45
Northern flicker	3	-	Peregrine falcon	1	-
Pileated woodpecker	8	11	Northern shrike	5	4
White-throated sparrow	-	1	Common raven	1	-
Black-capped chickadee	329	223	Pine siskin	3	4
Red-breasted nuthatch	9	1	Am. goldfinch	23	28
White-breasted nuthatch	111	64	Fox sparrow	-	1
Townsend's solitaire	-	1	House sparrow	106	82
European starling	243	190	Common redpoll	43	40
White-winged crossbill	1	-	American crow	238	229

“Once you make that connection to Nature,
You see things in a different light,
And once that bond is made,
It can never be broken,
It just grows stronger...”
~ Markus Newman

Woodcock Outing - April 16th

Join fellow Auduboners for the annual search for the peenting American Woodcock at Sand Dunes Wildlife Management Area (WMA), south of St. Cloud on Hwy 10 and east of the St. Cloud Reformatory. Look for the dark brown sign. 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 dressing for the weather, bringing binoculars, field guides, and maybe a flashlight. A spotting scope will be supplied. The exposed observation deck can be quite cold at this time of year. It is about a half mile hike to the wetland observation deck. If you have any questions, please call Brian at 320-469-0876



Potluck Picnic at the Pecks - Sunday, May 29th

We'll eat at noon, but please come a little earlier. Bring something edible to share, as well as your own plates, cups and utensils. Lawn chairs may be helpful. Members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship may attend as well. 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) onto County Road 139. Cross the Sauk River and then STAY LEFT onto Sauk River Road (past Rockville County Park) to 12299 Sauk River Road... approximately 1 mile west of the bridge.

Donations needed for Pollinator Project

What could be better than a project in Central Minnesota that helps pollinators, birds and kids? Being part of that project, of course! Longtime Audubon members Lisa & Hank Schreifels volunteered last summer to teach the first ever Pollinator course at the St. Cloud Roosevelt Boys & Girls Club. The kids were truly amazing! They INSPIRED the staff to create a native planting at the club. Staff members applied for grants and worked with Prairie Restorations Inc. on a plan for installation this Spring.

Even more amazing, the Boys & Girls Club will be expanding the pollinator class curriculum to all three Clubs and 14 Kidstop sites in Summer 2022! Funds are still needed to provide supplies, including insect nets, bug boxes, field guides, etc. If you can help, it would be greatly appreciated. Please make a check payable to BGCCM, write Pollinator Project in the memo line and send to:



Boys & Girls Club of Central MN
Attn: Deb Nebosis
345 30th Ave N
St Cloud MN 56303



If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering with the project call Hank at 320-250-3390. Thank you in advance for your support! Direct supply donations: The Pollinator class is in need of magnifying glasses, small clip boards, and old nature magazines. If you can donate these items contact hank.schreifels@gmail.com or 320-250-3390 to arrange for a pick-up/drop-off.



2021 Pollinator Class students making milkweed seed bombs (courtesy Boys & Girls Clubs of Central MN)



Looking for ways to make a difference?

Donations are welcome for our fund to assist with continuing to bring the newsletter and (when we can return to having "in person" meetings) quality speakers to the meetings. If you choose to help out, please make out a check to Central MN Audubon Society (CMAS) and send it to our Treasurer, Kathy Doyle. THANK YOU SO MUCH!!

Rehabber Reflections by Linda Peck



Three Birds in a Playpen

Scientists estimate that nestling birds receive food from their parents once every twenty minutes throughout the day. For a rehabber that's a tall order. It explains why many rehabbers choose not to rehabilitate birds. Most song bird nestlings are fed mainly insects - high in protein. They also do not drink water and must get it from the food parents provide. Rehabbers provide insects (flies, meal worms, waxworms) and other prepared moist food from scientifically approved recipes. One year I received two nestling barn swallows and onenestling bluebird. Once feathers developed to the point where they could begin flying (fledgling stage), it was time to transfer them to an enclosure where they could exercise. I use a children's play pen for this purpose. The floor of the playpen is lined with newspaper and crushed leaves/grass. Small rocks and flat logs are also placed at various points. A small bowl of water is placed adjacent to the rocks. Netting forms the sides of the play pen and it is easy to cut small branches and suspend them in the netting at various heights. These serve as perches for the birds to land on when they realize they can fly. Another netting is draped over the top of the play pen to prevent escape. Once in the pen, the birds just hopped around exploring - sometimes fluttering. Then, to their surprise, they became airborne and started landing on the perches. At night all three perched together. They were offered live meal worms held on long forceps. It took them some time to stop gaping and take the meal worms off the forceps. Eventually meal worms were placed in a shallow bowl on the floor of the pen - easy to see by the birds. I would tap the worms with the forceps mimicking a parent getting food. Soon the birds flew down and retrieved the worms on their own. The MOST AMAZING thing was that the blue bird actually picked up the worms and fed the swallows. As these species of birds catch insects in flight, I eventually held a live meal worm up off the floor. The blue bird was the first to fly around and take the worm off the forceps. The swallows also gained this skill shortly after. Periodically I'd empty a butterfly net with flies and other insects into the play pen. Once all birds were catching these successfully it was time for release. People often ask rehabbers how they teach the birds? The answer is rehabbers DON'T. Growing song birds instinctively do things. One just needs to give them an opportunity to demonstrate needed survival skills prior to release. After all how would I teach a bird to fly!

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. Please let Kathy know if you want this option. Thank you!