

Central Minnesota Audubon  
212 17th Ave. S  
ColdSpring, MN 56320-4700

# Green-Backed Gazette

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## NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL MINNESOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

### Volume 44

### Summer 2022



#### President's Letter... by Dan Kneip Birding as a Family Tradition

I came to be a birder by family tradition; my father loved birds as do my siblings. We had several Purple Martin houses on the farm and fed the birds in winter with ground corn, oats, breadcrumbs, and suet from our own butchered livestock. Family gatherings and phone calls between siblings always include discussion of sightings and bird activity. An important milestone in my birding history was my first bluebird house. Our fourth-grade teacher told us we could make a bluebird house using a Hi-C orange juice can. I followed the instructions, using a tin snips to cut a 1.5-inch square about halfway down the side of the can. I only cut three sides, bending at the bottom as a platform for the entrance. Then, using re-furbished nails, I nailed the house on top of a split oak fence post in the large garden along the pasture. Father was skeptical, until the day we were planting potatoes and discovered a Bluebird was exploring the tin can house on the post. After that, Dad placed tin-can bird houses along all the pasture fences. Most were utilized by Tree Swallows, but Bluebirds were still quite abundant. The tin cans were replaced by wooden houses within a few years and were kept up by my brother and his sons after they took over the family farm.

I was not sure that I had passed on my love of birds to my sons until several days ago. My younger son called to ask about a bird that was quite common in Central Brasil, where we had lived until he was sixteen years old. The bird he was asking about was a Great Kiskadee or "Bem Te Vi," which is quite common in Brasil especially in city parks. My son had been watching a golf tournament filmed in Mexico and the noted that the birds were very loud and putting on a show. You can appreciate birds even if you do not consider yourself an avid birder. I have no doubt that my grandkids will be birders and naturalists. They already know more than I do about almost everything, thanks to "Wild Kratts" and other shows.

It is very good to be able to start meeting in person again for our CMAS chapter meetings. We plan to resume monthly public meetings with speakers starting in September 2022. We also plan to set up an e-mail distribution program for quicker communication. The newsletters will continue to be sent in hardcopy by mail for the present. In the future, we will offer an option for e-mail distribution only, after all the kinks are worked out. If you already are receiving e-mails from the National Audubon Society, we should already have your e-mail information from the national roster. For those who are local members only, we will add your e-mail address to our mailing list. Please provide same to [dakneip@yahoo.com](mailto:dakneip@yahoo.com). In addition, we will be establishing a Facebook page for the chapter in the future. None of us on the board are experts in social media, but even dinosaurs did learn to fly.

Every day presents every one of us with the opportunity to create positive effects.  
~Horst Rechelbacher

#### Central MN Audubon Society Officers

Dan Kneip, President (H) 320-761-8202  
Hank Schreifels, Vice President  
Open Position: Programs/Publicity  
Linda Peck, Conservation (H) 320-685-3365  
Nicki Blake-Bradley, Newsletter (H) 320-259-5524

Open Position, Membership  
Kathy Doyle, Treasurer (H) 320-470-0942  
John Peck, Member At Large (H) 320-685-3365  
Brian Jungels, Member At Large (H) 320-469-0876  
Audubon MN Office 1-651-739-9332



### Calendar



September 21, 2022  
CMAS Audubon Meeting  
7 p.m.  
St. Cloud Library  
Speaker: Michael Rogers  
Topic: Stearns County Household Hazardous Waste Facility



Bird Vernacular: Siblicide... the act of one sibling acting to ensure its survival by killing another sibling. This typically happens when there is not enough food being brought to the nest by the parents. Unfortunately, we have seen this in action this summer at the DNR Eagle Cam. Harry had stopped coming to the nest with food so the older of the two eaglets pushed its smaller sibling from the nest. It's expected that Harry is deceased.

DNR staff were informed immediately of the younger eaglet being pushed out and worked to collect the eaglet and take it to the Raptor Center. Sadly, it sustained enough physical damage that it had to be humanely euthanized.

This is nature in action, folks. The strongest will survive. If the mother could not supply enough food for them, both eaglets could die.

#### Outgoing President's Letter by Brian Jungels Foaming at the typewriter

Writer Ed Abbey would sometimes write about the anger he felt when writing about his defense of wild American lands and landscapes. He called it "foaming at the typewriter." Whenever the bad mood overtook him he would describe opening another beer to help stabilize his mood. (He may or may not actually have reached for another beer, there is a good chance he did). He knew his writing often fell on deaf ears, especially in his adopted American West homeland.

I too have felt frustrated with the progress the Environmentalists and Conservationists have made recently. From conversations I have with people I get the feeling people do genuinely like nature and wildlife but I'm not sure they often understand how their and their neighbors lifestyle is working to the detriment of nature and wildlife. To change attitudes, laws and policies is a soul draining slog with gains sporadic and often reversible. But to paraphrase Abbey's good friend Wendell Berry "Be hopeful even though you've considered the facts." When anger and frustration kicks in, rather than reaching for a beer maybe go for a hike, visit a park, or look for some birds. These activities were Abbey's most fruitful remedies for anger and despair.

P.S. Thank you to my readers for putting up with me. I tried to be nuanced in my arguments. I hope I was successful some of the time.

Let's Go Nuts: Hazelnuts & Some Other Minnesota Nut Crops Presentation by Stephen Saupe, PhD



Hazelnuts, black walnuts and butternuts are among the nut producing trees and shrubs that grow in Central Mn. There are two definitions for what constitutes a nut. Easiest to understand is the culinary definition: an edible kernal surrounded by a hard shell. More difficult is the botanical definition: dry, indehiscent, single-seeded fruit with a hardened or bony pericarp I.E. a nut with a hard or papery shell that can not split open and release the seed. There are many nut crops: hazelnuts (filberts), black walnuts, butternuts, hickory, pecan, beachnut, acorn, chestnut, pine nut, ginkgo, coconut.

After this introduction, Steve concentrated specifically on Hazelnuts. Pollen evidence from bogs reveal that hazelnuts were early colonizers as glaciers receded. They were an important food source early on, and today the primary nut in commerce. They are nutritious - high in protein and fat content. Native to Europe and Asia is the shrub-like Turkish filbert. Turkey produces 70% of hazelnuts worldwide. They are not hardy in MN but 95% of a tree-like form is grown in Oregon. Hazelnuts are tasty to eat either fresh or roasted. They produce a valuable oil when ground up. Shells and residue are a fuel source. Many consumers enjoy products using hazelnuts: Nutella, Ferrero Rocher, Frangel co, Praline.

There are two species of hazelnuts in Minnesota: the Beaked Hazelnut (Cornus cornata) and the American Hazelnut (C. americana). Both are monoecious shrubs that produce male flowers (catkins) and female flowers on the same shrub. Cross pollination is required for successful nut production. Around the fertilized flower, enclosing the nut, is a pair of modified leaves (the involucre). These leaves on the American Hazel produce sticky hairs that are not present on the Beaked Hazel. Pests of hazelnuts include Japanese beetles, big bug mites, weevils and, of course, birds and rodents. Successful production of hazelnuts commercially is very complex from propagation to processing. Hybrid hazels (Turkish Hazel crossed with American) yield a larger nut with good flavor and a thinner shell. One problem, however, is that these hybrids do not breed true.

Other nut crops Steve touched on: Walnuts and Butternuts. Black walnuts have a stronger flavor, a round shape shell rich in tannin, and are allopathic (roots pass a chemical in the soil around the tree that deters other plants from occupying that space). Butternuts are better for eating and have an almond shaped nut shell. These trees are being threatened by a fungus and we may lose them in Minnesota. To identify which tree is which one must look at the leaf scars. The butternut will have what looks like a fuzzy mustache at the top of the scar which is absent from the walnut.

Acorns, produced by the red and white oak species are rich in tannin. One must go through a process to remove the tannin from the nut prior to consumption. The major pest of acorns is the weevil. Pine Nuts have two seeds that are produced in each conifer cone scale. Those in Minnesota have winged seeds.

If interested in raising nuts, contact the Norther Nut Growers Association - <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nutgrowing.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cnicola.blake-bradley%40state.mn.us%7C-bc30a328965f4600c91008da2871d261%7Ceb14b04624c445198f26b89c2159828c%7C0%7C0%7C637866767908762854%-7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlloiMC4wL-jAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ikh1aWwiLCJX-VCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2EqB2rejZ3x-Ur2vwOW%2FP5W2xRUYWSrgFD%2F6ZFwG9WtE%3D&reserved=0>.



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



A Tale of Three Tails

Minnesota has 4 different kinds of squirrels. The largest is the fox squirrel which is recognized by its rusty orange tail and orange sides. Next in size is the gray squirrel - very common in cities. There is a black phase (morph) which is quite striking. The feistiest is the red squirrel and this squirrel is fond of seeds in conifer cones. This tale is about the fourth kind of squirrel.

The flying squirrel is quite unique in a variety of ways. First it is truly nocturnal which explains the very large round eyes it has. Although called the flying squirrel it does not fly but is able to glide from one tree to another. This is due to a large flap of skin (patagium) attached to its front and hind legs along the sides of its body. When perched it looks like the squirrel has a cloak on. The last feature is a flat tail which acts like a rudder and adds additional lift when it glides. Believe it or not the flying squirrel is the most common of our squirrels and also the most carnivorous. It feasts on small mice, carrion, baby birds and bird eggs. If your sunflower seeds disappear from your feeders at night, chances are a flying squirrel chowed down.

I got three flying squirrels one summer to rehabilitate. They were close to the weaning stage (5-7 weeks old). As they are hard to handle I was glad they were ready to eat the seeds, nuts and mushrooms I could offer them. Housing, however, proved difficult. They are able to squeeze through small openings, and out of their cage were difficult to catch. As it happened they all got out one night, and I couldn't find them on my porch. I just had to put out their food in the evening and hope they found it. Luck was with me as the food kept disappearing. It was time to release them BUT where were they hiding on the porch during the day? It took several days to find them. I had a jacket hanging on a hook on the porch. Finally I noticed that the cuff of the jacket wasn't part of the jacket at all. It actually was the three tails of the squirrels hanging down from the sleeve. That provided me with a great release idea. I simply took the jacket with the squirrels sleeping in the sleeve out to the deciduous woods west of my barn. This woods has great habitat for flying squirrels -- lots of different trees: cherries elm, boxelder, ash, wild plum, oak and lots of fungi.

I hung the jacket on a branch by the trunk of a tree and spread peanut butter on the trunk embedded with walnuts. The next day I returned and the food was gone. I noticed the three tails were still hanging from the jacket so I replenished the food. I left a pile of sunflower seeds under the jacket also. It only took two days for them to leave the jacket. Success! Even though I could no longer see them I kept providing food for a few days. And that is my Tale of Three Tails.

CMAS Board Elections

Elections were held at the April, 2022 meeting for our board of directors. Thanks go to Linda Peck for stepping up for the role of Secretary and congratulations to Dan and Hank for landing the President and Vice President positions! We know you'll be GREAT!

President: Dan Kneip	Vice President: Hank Schreifels
Secretary: Linda Peck	Treasurer: Kathy Doyle
At Large: John Peck and Brian Jungels	

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>)

Woodcock Outing Update

Seven adults and two teens attended 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 on April 16th. It was a chilly evening, but the birds were active on the wetland. Multiple species were heard but not seen and a couple even stumped our experts, but it was a successful event. A total of 18 bird species were identified, with the American Woodcock being our final bird of the evening The full moon rising over the wetland and prairie was breathtaking!

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. ~Winston Churchill

Special thanks to the following people for donations to CMAS: Robin DeLong; Marilyn and Larry Grover; John Engstrom; Dick and Annette Schoenberger, and Kenneth Bachofer and Linda Marie!!!

**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!