

Central Minnesota Audubon
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NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL MINNESOTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 46

September 2023



President's Letter... by Dan Kneip

With September in the air, I always get this feeling of turning a page and starting something new. This is probably ingrained in me from childhood with going back to school, meeting with friends that we hadn't seen much in summer, meeting a new teacher, and receiving new books. But we can also see and feel the difference in nature. The Blue jays have a different call, leaves are turning, acorns falling, and other fruits are ripening. Birding opportunities improve with the Fall migration.

Hank and I attended the Audubon Minnesota Chapter's gathering in early August. The turnout was good with almost all the Minnesota Chapters represented at the gathering. The Audubon Minnesota team shared a summary of this year's legislative session and the work that Audubon MN had done with our support letters. Many of Audubon's legislative goals were passed.

We also discussed Chapter partnerships and highlights. Hank gave a short explanation of the "No Mow May" project and its success. There are many projects on-going with Minnesota Audubon Chapters. Some are supporting local Nature Centers; some are promoting partnerships with other conservation organizations for their projects and at least one has developed a partnership in Guatemala to erect a transmission tower for bird migration studies. Our friends from Prairie Lake Audubon are asking for a more data-based approach to fish and bird (double-breasted cormorant) management goals at Pelican Lake near Ashby.

Audubon Minnesota has several on-going projects including a study of Migratory Pitstops in Minnesota utilizing e-bird data as well as doppler radar and nano tagging of four focal species: Henslow's Sparrow, Bobolink, Chimney Swift, and Golden-winged Warbler. Read more about the project on-line at https://www.lccmr.mn.gov/proposals/2023/originals/proposal_2023-072_and_map.pdf

This past August we were very pleased to see an initiative by the Sherburne County Parks promoting weekly Bird walks at different county Parks. Doris and I joined in the Friday morning walk at Grams Park in Zimmerman and had a very good outing, seeing lots of late August birds. Congratulations to intern Calvin and Sherburne County for the initiative.

CMAS could certainly promote more birding outings. We are open to suggestions and volunteers to plan and participate in monthly birding outings.

CMAS could also use volunteers from our members for committee activity. In addition to outings, we are looking for help in planning our programs and speakers. We can also use help in promoting our support of Audubon Adventures for grades three to five by contacting schools and teachers. We need help in upkeep of our Face Book page and setting up a webpage for CMAS. We also need to decide on what is our next step after our successful "No Mow May"; Do we promote pollinator and bee gardens? native plantings? Bird friendly cities? We need suggestions and comments from our membership.

At our September meeting we will be trying out the hybrid approach with both in-person and Zoom access. This is new technology for me and I preemptively apologize for any issues we will encounter. The access to Zoom will require registering for the event so if you want to participate in our September meeting via Zoom, send an e-mail requesting the access link to centralmnaudubon@gmail.com.



Calendar

September 15 & 16, 2023

St. John's Outdoor U Spider Walk (see page 2)

September 18, 2023

St. John's Outdoor U Chapel Trail Guided Hike, 3-5 p.m.
(see page 2)

September 20, 2023

St. John's Outdoor U Boardwalk Loop Guided Hike, Sept 20, 4-5:30 p.m. (see page 2)



September 20, 2023

CMAS Meeting
7 p.m.



Sep 20, 2023 Location: Unitarian Universalist Church
Speaker: Mikhail "Misha" Blinnikov
Topic: Birding in the Russian and Mongolian Altai

September 30, 2023

SNWR 28th Annual Wildlife Festival
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Sherburne Wildlife Refuge, Oak Savannah Learning Ctr

October 18, 2023

CMAS Meeting
7 p.m.



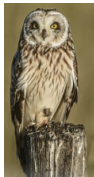
Location: Unitarian Universalist Church
Speaker: To Be Determined

October 21, 2023

Buckthorn Busting at Avon Hills SNA (see page 2)



October 23-27, 2023
World Owl Conference
LaCrosse, WI



This is the first time that there has been a World Owl Conference in the USA, and these conferences only happen every 3 - 10 years. The event will include research presentations from around the world with heavy emphasis on North America and Europe and quite a few presentations on Short-eared Owls, Snowy Owls, and Burrowing Owls. Anyone can register to attend and there are single-day and virtual registration options. Check out the conference website.

Central MN Audubon Society Officers

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Jeanne Dirksen, Member At Large
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Minnesota DNR Seeks Applications for Advisory Committees*

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is recruiting new members to serve on key advisory groups related to Minnesota’s natural heritage, aquatic invasive species, outdoor recreation, and Lake Superior Coastal Program. Interested people can learn more or apply on the Engage with DNR website.

The Minnesota DNR strives for each committee membership to include a diverse mix of backgrounds, perspectives, locations and lived experiences so that we can benefit from the breadth of knowledge and insight that such diversity brings, and so that our advisory committees are reflective of all Minnesotans.



Natural Heritage Advisory Committee

The Natural Heritage Advisory Committee advises the Minnesota DNR on issues relating to sustaining the state’s natural heritage, biological diversity and ecosystem services. NHAC members make recommendations to help protect high quality prairies, forests, wetlands and other native habitats, and the diversity of plants and animals they support.

New member appointments with three-year terms will begin in January 2024 and extend through December 2026. Minnesota residents with interest or expertise in sustaining our state’s natural heritage can apply online until 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 22. Interested applicants can learn more by visiting the committee webpage of the DNR website.



Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee

Aquatic invasive species present one of the state’s most pressing natural resource issues. Preventing the spread of zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, invasive carp, starry stonewort and other invasive plants and animals is of critical environmental, recreational and economic importance. Minnesotans interested in serving on the DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Advisory Committee may apply online until 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 22.

The Minnesota DNR established the advisory committee in 2013 to help guide the agency’s AIS prevention and management activities. The committee comprises 15 members who serve three-year terms. Members provide advice and diverse perspectives on programmatic direction, emerging research needs, communications, and funding strategies. Interested applicants can learn more by visiting the committee webpage of the DNR website.

Minnesota Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee

People with enthusiasm for Minnesota parks and trails can help guide efforts to provide welcoming, engaging, accessible, rewarding and sustainable outdoor recreation experiences for everyone. The partner agencies of the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee include the Metropolitan Council, the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The mission of the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee is to “champion the 25-year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan by providing recommendations to enhance promotion, coordination, and accountability throughout implementation of the plan.”

Terms are two years, with the option of being re-appointed for a maximum of three terms. The committee meets every two months at park and trail facilities around the state, with an online meeting option. Meetings typically include tours of state and regional parks and trails and provide members with the opportunities to experience the impact of projects and programs supported by the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.

Online applications opens in a new browser tab will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 22. More details are available on the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee website opens in a new browser tab.

*Printed directly from DNR gov.delivery



Looking for ways to make a difference?

Donations are welcome for our fund to assist with continuing to print the newsletter and 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!!

College of St. Benedict and St. John’s Outdoor University (St. John’s U) Fall Events*

Multiple events are scheduled for your learning fancy this September! Events are family-friendly and open to the public. Please leave dogs and bikes at home as they’re not allowed in the Abbey Arboretum.

You can... hike the 1.5-mile Boardwalk Loop to learn about spiders and their webs in one of two sessions. Content will be the same at both sessions, but what we see will vary by time of day (spiders are generally more active in the evenings, intact webs are usually more visible in the mornings). Events are Fri, Sept 15 from 7-8 p.m. or Sat, Sept 16 from 8-9 a.m. Pre-registration is preferred.

Or... join Outdoor U staff on an interpretive hike of the Chapel Trail. Meet at the trailhead on the Lake Sagatagan beach.

Or...join a guided hike on the most biodiverse trail in the Abbey Arboretum - prairie, oak savanna, wetlands, deciduous forest, and coniferous forest in one 1.5 mile loop hike. Meet at the prairie kiosk



* printed from SJU’s event web page

Buckthorn Bustin’ Event Near YOU!

Need to get some aggression out? Want a great workout? Just plain bored? Come help bust some buckthorn at Avon Hills SNA on October 21st from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.! For more info or to sign up, contact Kelly Randall at 651-259-5070 or via e-mail at kelly.randall@state.mn.us



Woodcock Outing at Sand Prairie WMA Update

On our re-scheduled Woodcock outing on Friday April 28th, we had a good turnout with 9 brave souls including 2 children.

The walk to the observation deck awarded us with several small birds highlighted by a Palm Warbler. From the observation deck we saw many waterfowl and were even able to see both an otter and a beaver swimming in the ponds. The American Woodcock became active at dusk, and we were able to observe several flights although surprisingly the flattened grass made it more difficult to predict where they would land.

Our list of birds observed in this outing: Canada Goose; Trumpeter Swan; Wood Duck; Blue-winged Teal; Northern Shoveler; Gadwall; American Widgeon. Mallard; Green-winged Teal; Bufflehead; Pied-billed Grebe; American Coot; Sandhill Crane; American Woodcock. Tree Swallow; American Robin; Chipping Sparrow; Dark-eyed Junco; Song Sparrow; Red-winged Blackbird; Palm warbler. Heard but nor seen: Sora, Wilson Snipe, White-throated Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow

Waterfowl and shorebird Outing at Albany WWTP

Although turn-out of CMAS members was low for this Outing, the ponds were crowded with birders from all around the state of Minnesota due to the sighting of a “Ruff” a day earlier that had been reported to e-bird by a well know local birder. This rare shorebird is a migrant visitor and many birders were anxious to add it to their life lists. The Ruff was not seen during the time we were present, but we did identify many ducks including the Ruddy Duck and Ring-necked Ducks and many shore-birds including Wilsons Phalaropes and Least Sandpiper. We also saw several Bobolinks and an Eastern Kingbird as well as Yel-low-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds.

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!