



KINGFISHER



February 2009

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

Vol. 58 No. 1

Representing the National Audubon Society in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

A Note from the President

My recent ranting about a need for a Conservation Chair has paid off! I had two members volunteer to chair the committee. Kit Healy has agreed to be the chair and Maggie Hill will help her in this endeavor. The first meeting of the Conservation Committee occurred on December 16th. We will be publishing information about the Committee's activities in this and future newsletters. We look forward to having many of our members help with the hands-on activities that will be planned.

Unfortunately for you, this success has only encouraged me. The second goal for me during my Presidential regime is to expand our educational activities. Jim Egge has done a fantastic job in this area, but he needs help. We are looking for retired educators, or those with a passion for education, to mentor a school or schools in an area, especially schools with high minority enrollment. We hope to provide programs to a school or schools on a regular basis. A program on birds from a passionate presenter can have a very pronounced effect on an impressionable mind, especially if it is followed up with some kind of field trip or other hands-on experience.

Jim Egge has begun mentoring activities with the Seed Academy/Harvest Preparatory School in Minneapolis. We would like to expand this type of mentoring to other schools in our membership area; again, helping schools with high minority enrollment. We have been collecting field guides and posters as part of this mentoring program and will continue to do this for other schools if we have the volunteers. The Nature Deficit Disorder concept has been my inspiration for these types of activities. If we don't do something, many of the things we hold dear will be lost to future generations, not to mention its importance to everyone's health.

Let me again emphasize the benefits that you, as a volunteer, get from this type of activity. It is a fact that people who are active in their retirement have a more satisfying and healthy retirement. Passing your passions on to the next generation is always rewarding!
For more information contact me or Jim Egge.

—Jerry Bahls

February Program

Nature for All

For the past decade, Kao Thao has served as the park naturalist at Fort Snelling State Park in conjunction with Minnesota DNR's Southeast Asian Outreach Program.

He will talk about the birds and other wildlife found in the park and also discuss the program's efforts to recruit minorities and underserved populations into the great outdoors. Mr. Thao's work is grounded in his understanding that all people, no matter their age, gender or ethnicity, can enjoy and benefit from nature, and should be encouraged to do so.

No park in the Twin Cities metro area can best the combination of historical importance, geographical significance, and natural beauty that is Fort Snelling State Park. Within its nearly five square miles lies the confluence of two of the state's largest rivers, the Mississippi and Minnesota. In the 1820s the state's first major fort was built on the bluff above where the rivers meet. And for hundreds of years before the arrival of Europeans, many generations of Dakota people thrived along the banks of the rivers in what is now the park. Today the park attracts more than 400,000 visitors annually. They come to hike, fish and picnic within the park's riverine forest landscape, rich with wildlife.

At the age of eight, Mr. Thao emigrated to the U.S. from Laos with his Hmong family, settling in St. Paul, where he attended school. Prior to taking his position at Fort Snelling State Park, he received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota, while interning with the DNR.

**Tuesday, February 3rd
7:00 PM
Mayflower Church**

***Bring your mug to the
winter mug club***

***Hot water and an assortment of
instant coffee, tea, and cocoa
provided.***



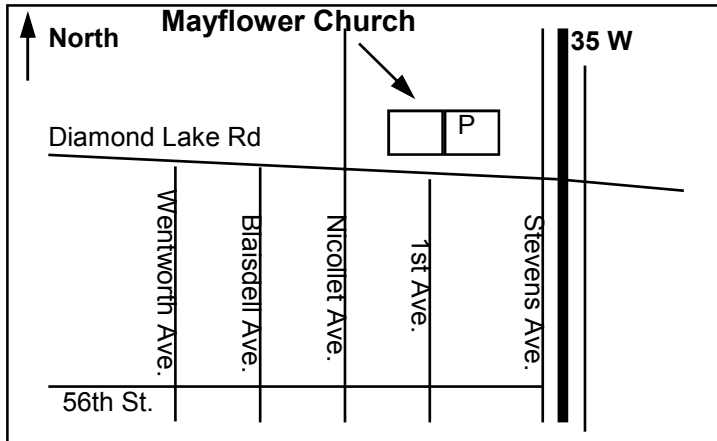
Come to Our Next Program!

DATE: Tuesday, February 3, 2009

"Nature for All" with Kao Thao

TIME: Program at 7:00 PM

AT: Mayflower Church, Minneapolis
35W & Diamond Lake (road map below)



Diamond Lake Road Exit from 35W to Diamond Lake Road is now open. It will now be easy for you to attend our meetings!

The 39th Annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration

March 20-22, 2009
Kearney, Nebraska

500,000 Sandhill Cranes
Pete Dunne – Author, renowned birder
Joel Sartore – *National Geographic* photographer

For complete schedule and registration:
www.nebraska.audubon.org
402-797-2301

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis - 2008-2009 Contacts

President	Jerry Bahls	763 572 2333	jobaud@comcast.net
Vice President	Amy Carlson		alc5628@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Ernie Gunderson	612-721-9103	
<i>Kingfisher</i> Editor	Marcia Marshall	612-871-6611	marciamarshall@comcast.net
<i>Kingfisher</i> Editor	Kim Halek	763-427-8656	mnvogelfrau05@visi.com
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis	www.geocities.com/audubon.geo		
Audubon Minnesota	www.audubon.org/chapter/mn		

**MOU Rare Bird Alert:
763-780-8890**

OUR FIELD TRIPS Great Backyard Bird Count

On February 13-16, Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is having their 12th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. This is citizen science! You don't need to do anything to advance register, just select a site (probably your backyard) and count the number of birds you see. Note each species and the largest number you see at any one time. At the end of the day, report your results via the internet on the GBBC website. For more information, go to the GBBC website at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> for detailed information on participation. We can report results if you don't have access to the internet. Call the phone number below for details.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis is planning a couple of ways you can participate. On Saturday, February 14, we have four choices for you! From 10:00 until 11:00 AM at the Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley; from noon to 1:00 PM at the Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park; from 10:00 to 11:00 AM at Wood Lake Nature Center in Richfield; and from 10:00 to 11:00 AM at Eastman Nature Center in Dayton. There will be Audubon members there to help with I.D. Come, learn, have fun, and bring friends. Host a party for the birds! For more information call Jerry Bahls at 763-572-2333.



All Welcome to ACM Membership Committee Meeting

The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis Membership Committee has begun meetings to discuss ways to increase interest in being Chapter leaders and to recruit members to the Chapter. Susan Anderson, Membership Chair, is leading the discussions. They meet the 3rd Friday of the month at 9:00 AM at the Cupcake Café, 3338 University Ave., west of Hwy 280 on University Ave. in St. Paul, across from KSTP.

Please e-mail Susan (susan331@mac.com) or Jerry Bahls (jobaud@comcast.net) to confirm date and time.

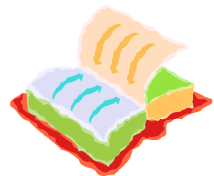
Audubon Mailings (or Not!)

Some of you may be receiving your *Kingfisher* for the first time even though you joined National Audubon over six months ago. I offer my sincere apology—this type of service is unacceptable. The Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis has been frustrated by National Audubon's recent major changes to their membership lists. During the period that they have been making this change, we have been unable to make any changes to the lists and consequently all the address changes that we have received in the last *nine* months have not been made until recently. This has put a very large burden on us because we have had to manually make all these changes. In the past, we have requested that the post office send us all address changes that they have in their system twice a year (starting in November the postal requirement to do this will increase to four times a year) and this is usually at least 30 changes. This has also meant that many of you who moved have not received the Audubon Magazine because we have been unable make these changes in National Audubon's lists.

Another ramification of this is that those of you who have requested to be removed from National Audubon's lists may not have been until recently. For this we also apologize. We have tried to communicate your desires to them, but do not know if it happened. We will be reviewing their lists to see if it has now been done.

Finally, for all of you who are not in the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis' area as designated by National Audubon (memberships are designated to chapters by zip code area, ours is primarily those of you who live in the 553XX and 554XX areas and St Paul Audubon Society's areas are the 550XX and 551XX areas): in the past, we have had many members from the 551XX area request to be Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis members. National Audubon has dropped all of you from our membership list and assigned you to the St. Paul Chapter. This is fine, except that if you still desire to be in our chapter they will not take our word that you want to remain in our chapter. They are requiring *you* to send them a message that you want to be in our chapter or any other chapter of your choosing. Again, we apologize for this.

If you are a member of Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis and you have NOT been getting your *Kingfisher*, please contact us. Also, if you notice any errors in your membership, please send a note to us and we will attempt to get it corrected. Thanks for your patience.



Field Guides for Schools

There is still time to drop off extra field guides at the February meeting for use by students at the Harvest Academy in conjunction with the ongoing Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis program.

SUET FEEDERS

The birds may need you in winter to help them get through the worst weather. Cold, windy days with snow cover can be brutal on woodpeckers, nuthatches, and chickadees. They often can't feed as many hours of the day. Almost anything suffices for a suet feeder as long as it's small with holes.

Tomato mesh bags, hardware cloth (1/4" holes), or even a small tube made from chicken wire, will work just fine. Hang it on a wire in the shade, not too close to the house.

Birds need insects to get through the winter, so suet partially fills that need. They will search for ant eggs under the bark or even find dormant insects, but by February they find it harder to eat enough. Some expert birders will put mealworms on a feeding platform all winter for the birds.

Get the kids involved in helping prepare suet and filling the feeder. Hardened fat from cooking beef or pork can be rolled in crushed peanuts or birdseed, or just use a blob of peanut butter. Using uncooked suet is okay, but it may spoil. Use small pieces in a flat-shaped feeder for best results.

Don't forget, squirrels also have similar needs and can destroy the suet feeder. If birds won't come in but the squirrels do, you may have to visit your bird seed store and get some fancier equipment or rendered suet cakes. Your effort can be a rewarding experience.



Winter Speaker Series at Wood Lake Nature Center

Global Climate Change in Minnesota Forests

Dr. Lee Fredlich, Professor of Forest Ecology from the University of Minnesota, will share his up-to-date knowledge of Minnesota forests' extreme sensitivity to global warming and will discuss the roles of fire, severe windstorms, invasive species and deer overpopulation in our forests.

Thursday, January 29 at Wood Lake Nature Center
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. FREE; donations are accepted.

Monarch Butterfly: Biology and Conservation

A guest speaker from the University of Minnesota's Monarch Lab will discuss the life cycle of the monarch butterfly from egg to migration and back. Learn about the process of tagging and tracking monarchs on their way to overwinter in Mexico, then find out about the illegal logging at these overwintering sites and current conservation efforts there.

Tuesday, February 17 at Wood Lake Nature Center
7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. FREE; donations are accepted.

For more information contact:
Wood Lake Nature Center
6710 Lake Shore Drive
Richfield 612-861-9365

Christmas Bird Count Was a Success

Over 20 bird enthusiasts showed up at Springbrook Nature Center on December 20th to participate in Audubon's 109th Annual Christmas Bird Count. Despite heavy snowfall throughout the day, this hearty group managed to spot and count birds of 43 species. The count area includes a 7.5 mile radius circle around the Coon Rapids Dam. Some of the participants were skilled, experienced birders, but all skill levels were welcome. Five-year old Josh O'Connell spotted a red-tailed hawk for his group.



Birders Enjoying the Potluck Luncheon

After a morning in the field, the group returned to SNC for a potluck lunch and then out again in the afternoon. More mallards were seen than any other bird species; a very large group was spotted on the Rum River. The rarest bird sighted was a winter wren, seen at Manomin County Park in Fridley. Other noteworthy birds were a wood duck, bluebirds, pine siskins, and common redpolls. Of course, lots of chickadees, cedar waxwings, Canada geese, cardinals, and other regular winter residents were counted too. Join us next year!

Great Gray Owl

*Floating,
moth-like flight.
Then a glide—
a plunge
into the snow.
Curved beak and talons
deceptively hidden
among soft feathers.
She emerges with a small rodent
extracted from its secure tunnel.
Betrayed by sound.*

-Clem J. Nagel

The Boreal Owl Murder

Jan Dunlap

North Star Press of St. Cloud, 2008

Murder mysteries can be cozy or hard-boiled. *The Boreal Owl Murder* falls into the category of cozy mysteries. It is a very nice book to curl up with on a winter evening. It is an easy read with a plot that isn't too complicated, but will keep you interested. The author clearly is a birder—why else would the main character go to the sewage ponds? The plot moves from the Twin Cities to Duluth, visiting hot birding spots along the way. You will probably recognize some of the birder types that are part of the story and they will give you a few chuckles. There is a stereotypical assistant principal and University departmental politics to complicate things and to add interest. In summary: not a classic, but a fun and easy read.

Bird Species Nomenclature

by Jim Egge

Test your knowledge of changes in bird names. Below is the **old** name for bird species. Can you identify the current species name for each bird?



1. Sparrow Hawk
 2. Rufous-sided Towhee-Western
 3. Rivoli's Hummingbird
 4. Traill's Flycatcher
 5. Beardless Flycatcher
 6. Mexican Jay (tough)
 7. Chihuahuan Raven
 8. Short-billed Marsh Wren
 9. Myrtle Warbler
 10. Upland Plover
- (Answers on page 5)



Minneapolis Audubon Society

Bryant Square (31st & Bryant Avenue S.)

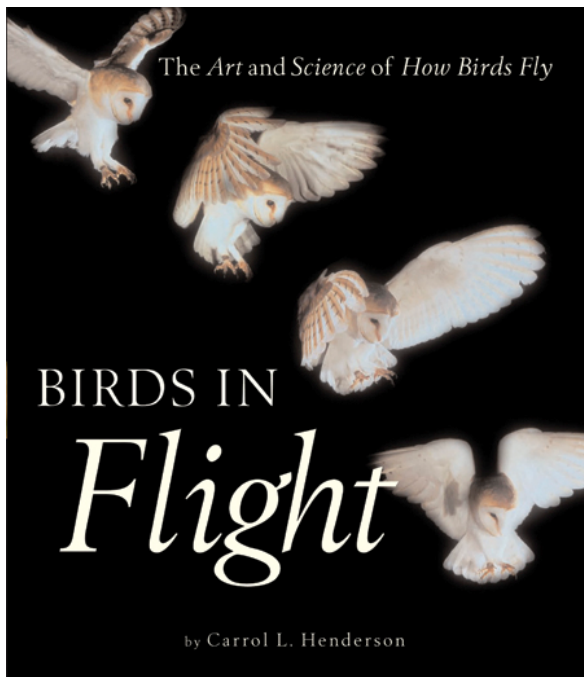
Friday, February 13, 2009, 1:00 PM

Dr. Scott Sharkey will share his often breathtaking "Images from the Wilds of Minnesota."

Friday, March 13, 2009, 1:00 PM

Lyall Schwartzkopf will present "Romania: History and Geography."

Please join us for the programs and refreshments. All are welcome.



Environmental Roundup

In the Winter edition of *On Earth* magazine from the Natural Resources Defense Council, there is an article about the environmental impact of a pair of jeans. Many manufacturers are now ordering eco-jeans with dyes, fibers, and hardware from less resource-exhaustive production systems. Check onearth.org for an interview with Linda Greer about trends.

Among the positive events in 2008 due to pressure by wildlife organizations was the government's decision to abandon its proposal to reduce the critical habitat for the marbled murrelet. This rare seabird nests in certain old growth forests. These forests, targeted for their scarce, knot-free, prime lumber, were almost eliminated in the last century. There has also been a ground-breaking collaborative effort by timber, recreation, and conservation organizations to develop "13 Guiding Principles" to direct future forest restoration. Despite recent efforts to undermine the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, no roads were built in roadless national forests.

The smell of plants in the air may be pleasant and make us breathe deeply, which can increase oxygen and lower blood pressure and heart rate. Japanese scientists have found that people who view forest scenery for 20 minutes have a 13% lower blood concentration of the stress hormone cortisol than people viewing city environments. Walking in the forest decreases blood glucose levels in diabetics. Scientists have also reported that walking in forests boosts the activity of natural immune cells that fight cancer, and the effect may last for a month. They attribute this to inhaling phytoncides, which are emitted by some plants. To read more, see "Breathing Trees" by Jennifer Ackerman in *Wilderness* magazine 2008-09.

—Jim Egge

Conservation Committee News

Hello, I'm Kit Healy. I'm the new chair of the Conservation Committee. I've been a member of the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis for a few years but I've not been active until now. I also have a B.S. in Environmental Science that I've not yet used professionally. This fall, I decided to put my educational background to good use by becoming involved with the ACM. I saw an opportunity to do so when I read in the December issue of the *Kingfisher* that the chapter was looking for someone to fill the position of chair of the Conservation Committee. I'm honored the Board accepted my offer to serve.

The committee held its first meeting on December 16. We talked about focusing on projects and issues in the geographic area of the chapter's membership and the benefits of forming partnerships with other organizations concerned about natural habitat conservation. We also discussed the importance of educating the public and elected officials about conservation issues. The committee decided to adopt projects that incorporate all of the above. Possible future projects include monitoring water quality on city lakes and streams and removing invasive species from city parks.

The committee also decided to support an existing project: the restoration of Audubon Park in northeast Minneapolis. The park is located on 29th Avenue NE and Lincoln Street NE. At this time, it looks like a lot of other city parks. The Audubon Neighborhood Association is planning to transform the park into a bird and nature haven in the city. The neighborhood group is working with several other groups, including the Audubon Society, to implement this multi-phase, multi-year project. The ACM is providing some of the funding. The Conservation Committee will provide some of the expertise and volunteer labor. The project is holding a kickoff event on Saturday, April 25. Future newsletters will give more details about both the event and the committee's involvement in the project. For more information about the project, visit <http://audubonneighborhood.org>.

The next Conservation Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 27, from 6:00-7:00 pm at Lunds in Uptown. The ACM Board meets immediately afterwards from 7:00-9:00 pm. The meetings are open to everyone. At this time, the committee hasn't settled on a regular meeting time or place. If you're interested in joining the committee and would like more information or if you want to make any suggestions, please contact me at heal0055@umn.edu. (Please put Audubon in the subject line.)



Bird species answers from page 4

1. Kestrel; 2. Spotted Towhee; 3. Magnificent Hummingbird; 4. Alder/Willow Flycatcher; 5. Beardless Tyrannulet; 6. Gray-breasted Jay; 7. White-necked Raven; 8. Sedge Wren; 9. Yellow-rumped Warbler; 10. Upland Sandpiper.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
PO Box 3801
Minneapolis MN 55403

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KINGFISHER
February 2009



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

JANUARY

- 27 Conservation Committee meeting
- 29 Wood Lake Nature Center program
- 30 Membership Committee meeting

FEBRUARY

- 3 Chapter program 7:00 pm
- 13-16 Great Backyard Bird Count
- 17 Wood Lake Nature Center program

Board meetings are held every month on the 4th Tuesday at 7:00 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 Jerry Bahls for details!

The *Kingfisher* is published monthly September through December and February through May.

Electronic Kingfisher

SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER ELECTRONICALLY!
Contact Jerry Bahls at jobaud@comcast.net