



KINGFISHER

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis



Vol. 50 No. 5

Representing the National Audubon Society
in Greater Minneapolis and Hennepin County

July/Aug. 2001

President's Message



First, a big THANKS to all the committee chairs and members who have worked this year so that we are a chapter that is making a difference.

The bluebird recovery program under Dorene Scriven is strong (when I pick up the mail, most of it is for that, and I really appreciate how much work went into starting it and keeping it going). Conservation under Tom Rice has planted over 200 trees in Cedar Lake Parkway (and that means also watering them until they get a strong hold).

Education under Mary Ellen Vetter brings Audubon Adventures to 4th grade classrooms, with scholarship help from members. Good, varied field trips are had with Terry Brashear, Tom Mahan, and Don Wanschura (we can always use more trip leaders). And the Kingfisher editors, Wina Mortenson and Paul Kinzer -so much appreciation for keeping people informed and in touch (and next year they will have help from their baby). When it comes to thanks, there is Jerry Bahls who chairs Membership, mailing of Kingfisher, legislative matters--how does he do it all and still have other interests and doings? Bill Sipe has gotten us publicity and attended several environmental affairs, representing and presenting the good work of Audubon. Fran Duritsa and others have been able to help him. Jim Sharpsteen and Jean Kelly have gotten us such a fine supply of books. Thanks to Vija Kelly for her Kingfisher articles and the lovely photographic cards she sells at meetings. Do you know that all the profits are donated to the chapter? (We should all remember to thank her at meetings.) And the less seen work of our treasurer, Kim Halek, and our secretary, Orell Jensen - Thank you ALL so very much. And next year will be great too--start planning how you can help. What more we should be doing?

Summer is still a quieter time - Now that the spring freeway bird traffic has passed, there is the joy of standing quietly in one spot, watching, listening. Last week, standing near Old Cedar Bridge, warblers were flitting from one locust tree to another, nibbling, flying within 3 feet of me. How I enjoyed their hustling and conversations, their "normal" actions with no "awareness" of me--always a special joy to me. Wishing you many quiet moments with birds!

See you at the State Fair, and our next meeting in September.

—Dorothy Kuether

Come to the Fair!

We will buy your admission ticket if you can help us out! We also offer an interesting experience meeting, greeting, and providing Audubon information to visitors to our Minnesota Audubon fair booth. Our past volunteers always report enjoying the range of interaction at our booth.

The dates that our chapter is responsible for staffing the booth are: Friday, August 31; Saturday, September 1; Sunday, September 2; and Monday, September 3 (Labor Day). The shift times for each day are: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; 12:00-3:00 p.m.; and 6:00-9:00 p.m. Two people are needed for each shift.

If you cannot volunteer for our assigned days or times, you can also help out on another fair day. State Fair dates this year are Thursday, August 23 through Monday, September 3 (Labor Day). The shift times are the same as above.

New volunteers (and past volunteers who have never attended,) should come to the volunteer training session held at the State Office, 25 East Exchange Street, St. Paul. The meeting will be held one evening in August, date to be determined.

Don't miss this opportunity to help spread the Audubon message and to see all of the Minnesota State Fair, considered to be one of the best in the country. Please call me soon (763-561-1761) to ensure getting your first choice of day and time.

—Mary Ellen Vetter



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Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

www.geocities.com/audubon.geo/

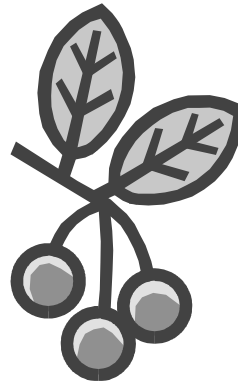
Minnesota Audubon

www.audubon.org/chapter/mn/mn/index.html

National Audubon Society

www.audubon.org

Watch Them Grow! Berry Bush Planting at Cedar Lake Park



It's Monday, April 23, and the weather looks nasty. But this is a 'rain or shine' project. Fourteen dozen perishable bare root plants, the Park work permit, and the tight schedules of ten Minneapolis Audubon volunteers define our window of opportunity. So we go for it, and are rewarded with skies that begin to clear shortly after assembling for our trek into the Northeast sector of Cedar Lake Park. Our mission is to plant Glossy Black Chokeberry and American Highbush Cranberry, a donation by Dorene Scriven supplemented by the

Chapter.

The planting locations were pre-selected a week earlier during a site visit with Keith Prussing, President of CLPA. Our game plan calls for placing the six- to eighteen-inch plants on the edges of the prairie grass space that runs roughly East /West along the North side of the Lake. The plants are too small and vulnerable to risk placing them in the open area, which will be burned periodically, and, we also want to preserve the 'big view'. Placing the bushes at the edge makes them accessible as a supplemental food source for Bluebirds and other species. They also provide habitat and, of course, eye appeal. The total from day one was 130 planted, and by 6:30 PM Tuesday evening, all 170 are in the ground and it's starting to rain again.....timing is everything.

Put Cedar Lake on your schedule and absorb all it has to offer. It's a remarkable example of what can be done by volunteers to reclaim and preserve a beautiful urban landscape. A huge Minneapolis Audubon Conservation Committee thank you to *Dick Eide, Jack Hauser, Sharon, Nora and Martin Parker, Susan Scherer, John Arthur, Mary Krohnke, and Kathy Smith*, for your hard work and enthusiasm. Great job!

—Tom Rice
Conservation Chair

Electronic Kingfisher

SAVE A TREE! SAVE US SOME MONEY!
SUBSCRIBE TO THE KINGFISHER
ELECTRONICALLY.

Contact Jerry Bahls at bahls001@tc.umn.edu today!



Backyard Birdwatching

This year has seen me overwhelmed with work, so chasing birds has been a limited activity. Fortunately, my yard has provided entertainment beyond my expectations.

I have always maintained that it takes three years after bird feeders are first placed out before the interesting birds begin to show up, and this was the third year in our new house. It also helped that last fall I was finally able to put in a garden after my bout with Lyme's disease and the long recovery. The garden was essential for providing color and cover. Sparrows particularly love to skulk around the plants. Besides giving the birds food and cover, I put out a new, ground-level bird bath which has proved popular with the little critters and brought some surprise guests.

First the yard list. As of the end of May, the following birds have put in an appearance in or over the yard: Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Canada Goose, Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, House Wren, Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Blue-headed Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, American Tree Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

More interesting than the sightings has been the activity. I have a Mallard nesting under the peonies. She is barely visible during the cold and rainy weather. She lies almost flat and does not move. A House Finch has been sitting on six or seven eggs in my hanging basket of Impatiens. She will fly off the nest briefly when someone goes in or out of the back door. Blue jays are nesting in one spruce. Cardinals are nesting in another. The Chickadees have taken over the Wren house. I don't know where the Wrens are nesting, but they are around. The Chipping Sparrows are also nesting somewhere, but I don't know where.

It was interesting to watch the Mallard. She laid one egg a day. After laying, she would come and lie down in the bird bath—just like the Sitz bath that they make human mothers use after delivery. I did not catch the frequency of laying for the House finch. I know one day when I watered the Impatiens there was one egg. The next time I watered the plant there were three. The clutch was completed the following day.

Also interesting were the visitors to the oriole feeder. This feeder accommodates sugar water, grape jelly and an orange half. It did not take the orioles long to find it. Mostly they favored the grape jelly and only touched the orange when the rain had washed the jelly away. The orange was, however, the favored food of the Red-bellied Woodpecker. A Ruby-throated

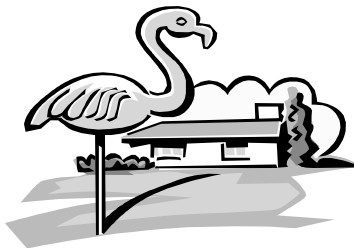
Hummingbird came to drink the sugar water. Other fans of the grape jelly were the Gray Catbird and House Finch.

A lot of excitement was created by the Sharp-shinned hawk. In one quick pass through the yard (which netted it nothing), he was able to clear the entire area of any bird life. I have never seen a vacuum happen so quickly. Not surprisingly, it was the Chickadees who made the first appearance after the danger had passed.

All of this interest and excitement was observed while

getting cups of coffee or food between slaving at the computer. Isn't bird watching great?

—Vija Kelly



May Program Review

The Program on the evening of first of May had a healthy turnout of about 65 people. We started out with some Chapter business: electing members to the Board. Lisa McDonald, Jerry Bahls, and Fran Duritsa were all elected.

We then listened to a presentation on bird's nests by Christine Turnbull from Audubon's Hunt Hill Camp near Spooner, Wisconsin. It was a multimedia affair, as Christine spoke, showed slides, and brought many examples of real nests for us to take a close look at. She also brought eggs, but these were not real: they were "replicas", meant to last much longer than the real thing. By the way, it is illegal to collect bird nests without a special permit.

We heard many interesting things about nests: for one thing, identifying the type of bird that used a particular nest can be very difficult since, first, two different nests built by the same species can look very different; and, second, some species build nests that are very similar to those of other species. Christine said the only way to be quite sure is to actually see the bird using it!

However, there are clues that will help in identification. First, it is a safe bet to say that almost any nest you find will have been built by one kind of bird: a female. Males typically have little to do with the actual construction.

Christine talked about the nests of several particular species, including the robin and barn swallow (easy birds to watch while they build their very different types of nest), phoebes (use moss and mud), hummingbirds (lichen and spiderwebs), orioles (which use milkweed in theirs), yellow warblers (look in an upright fork in a tree near water), chipping sparrows (which like hair), ovenbirds (which get their name from their oven shaped nests that they build on the ground).

These are just some of the strategies birds use to protect, support, camouflage, and help incubate their eggs.

—Paul Kinzer



Audubon Adventures

Audubon Adventures is the National Audubon Society's interdisciplinary environmental education curriculum for grades 3-6. Each year our Chapter sponsors the program in 12 schools in our Chapter area. A subscription packet costs \$40.95 and includes resources and activity materials for one classroom. Six nature-study topics are covered during the year.

We invite our Chapter members to help us reach more children by funding a gift subscription. Your child or grandchild would be excited to share this gift with their classmates. Or you can choose a teacher or a school that is special to you, or you can let us choose.

Adventures is also excellent for Home School or youth groups such as Scouts or Campfire (the packet can be sent directly to the leader's home.) The enrollment deadline for the coming school year is Sept. 15, 2001. For more information, please call Brenda Reishus, 763 420-2814.

YES, I would like to help our chapter support *Audubon Adventures*! Enclosed is \$40.95 to support Adventures in the following school. (Please copy form if you would like to support more than one classroom.)

Name: _____ (circle one) Student Teacher School Other

School Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to: Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

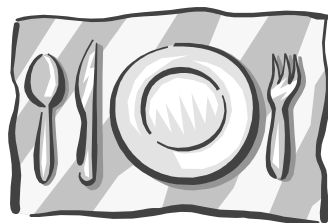
Mail to: Audubon Adventures, c/o Brenda Reishus, 9478 Minnesota Lane N., Maple Grove, MN 55369



Potluck Supper!

Tuesday, September 4 at 6 p.m.

Come one, come all to the annual potluck supper to kick off the new season of chapter meetings and events! Join your fellow Audubon members in some good food and conversation.



Bring along a food item to share: salads, hot dishes, bread, cheese & cold cuts, dessert . . . Beverages will be provided by the chapter - coffee, tea,

and lemonade.

Following the potluck supper is our first program of the year. We look forward to seeing you there!

Chapter Secretary Wanted

Would you be interested in spending 4 hours a month helping our Chapter? We are looking to fill the officer position of Secretary. The term runs from September 2001 to May 2002.

What's involved? Our Board of Directors meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7-9 p.m., from September to May. Duties include documenting the meeting minutes and participating in the Chapter's decision making process. The position can take as much or as little time as you would like to contribute. If you are interested, please call Dorothy Kuether at (612) 926-4205.



New Reimbursement Policy in Effect

On July 1st, National Audubon Society's new chapter reimbursement policy will become effective. Basically it is that all local chapters will keep 100% of the first year's dues (\$20/member) of each locally recruited member. Each subsequent year of membership the local chapter will be reimbursed the net dues. Net dues are the membership dues minus the cost of recruiting new members by National Audubon and the cost of producing the Audubon magazine.

Unfortunately we don't know what this will be. The last estimate that I have seen is about \$2.60/member. If the member was recruited by National Audubon, the local chapter will receive nothing the first year and then it will share the net dues (50:50) with the state office. All members on June 30th will be considered to be locally recruited members, so the local chapter will receive the full net dues for them.

The net effect of this policy is that National Audubon wants the local chapters to recruit their own members, which is probably a good policy. But the economic impact on the local chapters is severe for nationally recruited members, however it is significantly beneficial for locally recruited members. National Audubon has put in a safety net the first three years. Local chapters will receive the greater of 75% of last year's membership dues share, or the amount they are entitled to receive under the new policy during the first year of this policy. The next two years this drops to 50% of last year's dues share.

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) has enough cash reserves to easily handle the first year without being adversely affected, if our local recruiting stays as it has been in the past. The second year could get tight and the third year we would need to drop some of our programs in order to balance the books.

So, we have about two years to develop a viable plan to increase our locally recruited members so that we can continue to operate at the current level. The Board of ACM is working on plans for recruiting members locally. Look for special announcements on this in the future. If anyone has any ideas, please forward them to any member of the Board. A big contribution to any plan will be members telling their friends to join National Audubon by sending in the membership application that is located in the Kingfisher Newsletter, instead of using the application they may receive in the mail from National Audubon. Thus it will be vital that all of you share your Kingfishers with friends and neighbors after you have finished with them.

Tell them about the current month's programs and pass on last month's issues to them "for their enjoyment". We can turn this into a very positive change, if we all help recruit new members.

—Jerry Bahls
Membership Chair



Conservation Projects—

Year to Date



As we approach the end of the year it is appropriate to reflect on some of our accomplishments over the past few months and, most importantly, thank the dozens of Audubon volunteers who helped with commitments of their time, energy, enthusiasm, wit, intellect and generosity. Our goal this year was to offer a 'pallet' of projects that would appeal to the wide range of interests represented by our 2,500 plus person Chapter. One measure of our success will be feedback, comments and suggestions, received from you, the membership. But we should all feel proud knowing that the responses we have been getting from Wood Lake Nature Center, Hennepin Conservation District and Cedar Lake Park Association, have been highly appreciative of the Minneapolis Audubon Chapter efforts.

We began our project season on a frosty morning in late December, with a winter bird census at Cedar Lake Park. There have been suggestions that this become an annual event...that our year to year findings will help measure the impact of current, and future, habitat improvement work. We returned to CLP on April 23/24, and planted 200 Glossy Black Chokeberry and American Highbush Cranberry seedlings. A few years down the road, they will provide cover and a supplemental food source for several species of birds as well as great eye appeal.

Over at Wood Lake Nature Center, Audubon cleaned and prepped twenty Wood Duck nest boxes on January 13th. Currently, Audubon's Dick Eide is watching over the Blue Bird trail, and Susan Scherer, Kathleen Connelly and Amy Carlson have volunteered to plant Hackberry, Black Walnut, Gray Dogwood, Hazelnut and False Indigo.

Work is ongoing with two Hennepin Conservation District projects. The Wetland Health Evaluation Program macroinvertebrate training is proceeding in advance of fieldwork to collect and identify samples in June and July. *YOU* can still get involved by calling me at 612-866-6158. Several Audubon volunteers are also working on a 'guide' to the conservation gems of Hennepin County. More on these two projects in future editions of the *Kingfisher*.

Where do you fit in? What kind of projects should we be focusing on? How can we make a positive contribution in our communities? I would like to hear *YOUR* views.

—Tom Rice
Conservation Chair



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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.
- 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
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PO BOX 3801
Minneapolis, MN 55403
Chapter Code: **M02**
7XCHA

Calendar of Events

July

4 Independence Day

August

23 – September 3 Minnesota State Fair

31 Volunteers needed to staff Audubon booth at the Fair (see page 1).

