



Bluestem Flyer

Vol. 20, No. 7

March, 1986

Big Bluestem Audubon Society
Ames, Iowa

Jim Murdock, Pres. 233-1199
Dave Edwards, Vice-Pres. 292-3790
Sherry Dragula, Sec. 292-4014
Judy Shearer, Treas. 296-7512
Judy van der Linden, Ed. 232-3450

For membership information,
contact Dave Edwards.

Monthly Meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, March 18, at 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Room 181-1 (Jury Room), College of Design, ISU campus

TOPICS: "Introduction to Outdoor Photography" by Linda Guicciardo, ISU Botany graduate student, and
"Introduction to Outdoor Sketching" by Dean Biechler, vet. med. biological illustrator

(Our program chairman suggests you bring pencil and paper for taking notes and making introductory sketches. Both programs are aimed at beginners or the slightly-experienced artists or photographers among us.)

Refreshments -- Jeanne Edwards, Dianne Mumm

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Crane Field Trip -- Anyone still interested in travelling to Grand Island, Neb., to see migrating Sandhill Cranes on March 14-16, should contact trip leader Bill Horine immediately. Call him at 382-4150 from 7-8 a.m. or during evening hours. Deadline for making a reservation is March 11.

Conservation Committee -- The committee will meet Tuesday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Sherry Dragula's home. Call her at 292-4014 for directions.

April Owl Call -- There will be a field trip to "call in" owls on April 4. See page 2 for details.

Executive Board Meeting -- It will be held Tuesday, March 11 at 8 p.m. at Jim Murdock's home, 309 11th St. Note the change in time and location.



April Owl Call -- Steve Dinsmore will lead this month's trip, an "owl calling" at Ledges State Park. Steve guarantees we will see Common Screech, Barred and Great-horned owls, since these species are readily attracted to tape-recorded calls at this time of year. Meet in the parking lot of the College of Design (as close as possible to the doors of the building), ISU campus, at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 4. In case of poor weather, including very windy conditions, the trip will be rescheduled for Sat., April 5. Call Marianna Loy at 292-0769 with questions or for more information.

"Flyer" Mailing Changes -- For the first time this month, the newsletter has been mailed bulk rate, 3rd class, saving about half our postage costs. But with the savings come some inconveniences. Because 3rd class mail travels slower than 1st class mail, the deadline for newsletter copy has been moved up to the last Wednesday of every month. Also, the postmaster will neither forward nor return 3rd class mail sent to the wrong address, so please inform me or Membership Committee chairman Dave Edwards of any address changes promptly. I will be calling on more of you to help prepare the newsletter for mailing each month, as well. And finally, if you live outside of Ames and are receiving your newsletter fewer than seven days before a meeting, please let me know. (Judy van der Linden, Editor)

A sample of Audubon's color brochure may be borrowed from Judy van der Linden.

March Bird Puzzles and Feb. Answers

Which birds are described by the short phrases below?

1. Very irritated Mr. Buckley
2. Sell in the street at 11 p.m.
3. Red-faced mason
4. Cookie in the apple tree
5. Elevating device of the dunes

The answers to February's puzzles are:

1. A little league outfielder -- Least Flycatcher
2. A conversation -- Chat
3. Murders a game animal -- Killdeer
4. Is like sandpaper -- a Ruff
5. Tie up a chicken -- Moorhen



Regional Meeting Nearby -- The North Midwest Region of the National Audubon Society (NAS), which includes Iowa, will hold its biennial conference on Oct. 10-12, at Camp Sunnyside near Des Moines. New NAS president Peter Berle, the keynote speaker at the conference, will discuss wetlands and other issues pertaining to our region. Mark your calendars now -- we're hoping for a large contingency from the Big Bluestem chapter.

50th Anniversary

Audubon Camps and Ecology Workshops

Come join us in a celebration of nature ...

Field studies range from geology and marine life to birds, mammals, plants, insects, weather, astronomy, and renewable energy. For recreation you may canoe a chain of lakes in Wisconsin, explore a wild island in Maine, go rafting in Wyoming, or roam the lovely, lush, deciduous woods of Connecticut.

Camp sessions for adults run for one or two weeks. College credit is available. There are also sessions for children in Maine and for families in Wisconsin; introductory field ecology for educators in Connecticut; field ornithology in Maine; wilderness research in Wyoming; and nature photography in Wyoming and Wisconsin.

You'll learn to better understand and protect the wild creatures and wild places that we love. As it has done for so many others, this Audubon experience will enrich the rest of your life.

For a free color brochure write:
National Audubon Society
 Audubon Camps and Workshops
 613-B Riversville Road
 Greenwich, Ct 06831



BIRDER'S NOTES

Birding has been notably slow the past month. By this time of year, in both 1984 and 1985, the first migrating ducks or geese had already been reported in central Iowa. However, because of the thick ice that remains on our local ponds and lakes this year, it may be several weeks before the first waterfowl move through. March also can bring the

first returning bluebirds, blackbirds and Killdeer, among others. Keep a look out for these early migrants.

* * * *

One piece of exceptional bird news is the growing number of Saw-whet Owls that are being discovered in the Des Moines River valley. Over a dozen of the tiny owls reportedly have been found in cedar trees on both sides of the river near Ames. Apparently these are birds who return to the same roosting spots year after year, but who were previously unknown to us because nobody ever bothered to look for them before!

CONSERVATION/THE ENVIRONMENT -- Sherry Dragula, 292-4014; Cindy Hildebrand, 232-3807

Iowa Conservation Update -- The state reorganization bill has passed the Senate and is now beginning to move through the House. Good news -- the State Preserves Advisory Board is still in it! But it appears that future governors may be given the power to appoint the director of the new Dept. of Natural Resources -- this would make it doubly important that the Conservation Commission be able to make policy decisions and provide a power balance. If you agree, let your representatives know!

The idea of a small tax on agricultural chemicals to pay for research and projects to stop ag chemical water pollution seems to be temporarily stalled, as does the Superlien bill which would allow the state to recover some money if a company responsible for a toxic waste mess goes bankrupt. Both senators and representatives need your opinions on those issues. Many other conservation-oriented bills are moving -- call Cindy or Sherry for more information. Finally, watch for the latest report on the Army Corps Ames Lake Reevaluation Study, which is due soon, and which should be followed by a public meeting.

Garrison: One Final Effort? -- Garrison opponents and proponents alike have much riding on March 31, 1986. If an agreement on a reauthorized and modified Garrison project has not been reached by that date, then the \$41.3 million appropriated by Congress for Garrison last year cannot be spent.

Right now, conservations are lobbying Congress, trying to amend the present legislation so that Garrison is changed to a municiple-rural water system project, and includes no irrigation development. Please write to your senators and representatives in the next week and help kill this destructive water project in our Audubon region once and for all. Contact Cindy or Sherry for more information.

CONSERVATION/THE ENVIRONMENT (Cont.)

Program Threatens Rivers -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is quietly going ahead with an expensive new program to increase the navigation capacity of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers -- a step that will also increase the rate of environmental destruction on these rivers, according to the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA).

"The Corps plans to spend at least \$300 million under the guise of routine maintenance to add new features and make major renovations on almost every lock and dam -- causing large increases in navigation capacity and the associated habitat destruction," according to Paul Hansen, IWLA representative. The cost will be footed by the U.S. taxpayer.

"While about half of this program is genuinely maintenance, the other half just as clearly is not....Widespread biological harm will occur to this extraordinary river system without either limits to barge traffic or programs to mitigate the environmental damage cause by excessive traffic levels," Hansen said.

The League is considering legal action against the Corps. Contact Sherry for more information and for an address from which a copy of the League's analysis of the Corps' program can be obtained.

Summer Job Opportunities

There are summer job opportunities in a variety of categories at Audubon Camps this year, including: physical environment instructor, head chef, assistant chef, kitchen assistants and lodgekeeper assistant, all at the Audubon Ecology workshop in Connecticut; and botany instructor, animal life instructor, bird life instructor and kitchen assistants, all at the Audubon camp in Wisconsin.

For application form and detailed job description contact; The National Environmental Education Center, National Audubon Society, 613 Riverside Road, Greenwich, CT 06831 (203) 869-2017.

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