

AMES AUDUBON

NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, May 13, at 7:30 p.m. in Ames Public Library Auditorium. Important business meeting and program. Committee reports, resolutions, proposed changes in constitution, and election of new officers for coming year. Program by Steve Hanselmann of Ames Audubon. Illustrated talk on "Nature Trails Down East." See below for more details.

Saturday, May 17 or Sunday, May 18. Post-election outing with meal by members. This will be discussed at the May 13 meeting.

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ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS - TUESDAY, MAY 13

This will be a crucial meeting for Ames Audubon. It will be a time to appraise the events of our first full year and set the course for our future activities. First will come reports of the various committee leaders. Anyone wishing to propose a resolution for consideration is urged to be ready to do so. Amendments to the constitution presented at our April 9 meeting will be discussed and voted on. These concern mainly the lowering of general dues, providing recognition to those contributing larger sums, and altering quorum requirements. Please be prepared to voice your opinion. Then will come the election of new club officers for the coming year. As it looks now, all but 1 directorship (Dr. Miller's) and the 4 offices will be elected. All nominations will be made from the floor with any member eligible. With the installation of the new leaders, a new chapter in the story of Ames Audubon will begin. What course will be taken, only time will tell. But it surely will depend, to a large degree, on the members elected to positions of leadership. And that depends on all the members. Shouldn't each present member make an extra effort to bring along a new or prospective member to participate in Tuesday's meeting? Give someone a call now or soon and then bring him or her along.

Following the business meeting, Steve Hanselmann, a Wildlife Management student at ISU, a key Audubon member, and one of our most knowledgeable naturalists, has graciously agreed to bring along some of his superb slides and present a short program on "Nature Trails Down East". Steve served as naturalist in the Acadia National Park in Maine last summer. We know you will enjoy seeing and hearing about his keen observations on the natural history of that part of the U.S. and Canada. It promises to be a great evening- a fitting climax to our first year and, we hope, the start of an even more eventful and successful new year for Ames Audubon. It all starts at 7:30 p.m. sharp on Tuesday, May 13, at the Ames Public Library Auditorium. See you then. (P.S. The general public is invited to attend, with no obligation, whatsoever.)

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SOME NOTES ON RECENT AMES AUDUBON EVENTS

On Tuesday, April 22, Mr. Harry Harrison, Supt. of Biology for the Iowa Conservation Commission in Des Moines, presented an illustrated talk on the subject, "Developing Iowa's Wildlife Resources". (Contd. p.2)

(continued from page 1) It was one of our most successful meetings in recent months. Over 60 persons were estimated to have attended, including key ISU staff members, Wildlife students, high school students and instructors, and adults from Ames and surrounding areas. Mr. Harrison gave a very interesting talk on certain aspects of his chosen topic, including plans for new wildlife areas. He then invited questions from the audience. The response was a never-ending series of pertinent questions until Dr. W. J. Miller, who ably served as moderator, had to call a halt. Following this, practically everyone stayed for refreshments. Thanks to our lady members, there was plenty of the delicious brownies and pure fruit punch for everyone. All agreed that it was a most successful event.

We were especially happy to heartily welcome Mrs. John A. Sibley, of Ames, as a new member. Several other persons also expressed a sincere interest in our organization.

A most successful recent outing was on Sunday morning, May 4, when several members journeyed to the Ledges State Park near Boone in the hopes of spotting some new migrants from the south. We were not disappointed. Sightings included the Eastern Meadowlark, great crested flycatcher, short billed marsh wren (from a distance of only 6 ft!), field sparrow, Savannah sparrow, chipping sparrow, Henslow's sparrow, Le Conte sparrow, ovenbird, cow bird, Baltimore oriole, field sparrow, yellow throat, phoebe, yellow shafted flicker, bob-o-link, orange crowned warbler, blue winged warbler, brown thrasher, towhee, American redstart, and Louisiana water thrush, plus many more common species normally seen. We need more of such outings, like 1 per week, with a much greater participation by members. Any suggestions?

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A REPORT ON THE NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION

The big event in the Audubon world was the recent National Convention held in St. Louis on April 25-29. This was the 64th annual meeting but only the first in the midwest. Your correspondent and wife were able to attend the 3 main center days. It was a great trip and a memorable convention. Space will permit only a very brief account of some of the highlights. The convention was officially called to order Saturday a.m., April 26, by Mr. Gene Setzer, chairman of the Nat. Aud. Board of Directors, and a real tower of strength. After brief welcoming speeches, we heard 3 major talks before noon. The first was by Carl Noren, Director of the Missouri Conservation Commission. They have one of the most progressive programs in the nation, but he presented essentially nothing new. Senator Henry Jackson, from the state of Washington, then presented an excellent talk. Some highlights were: "Our most important job is to teach man to live in harmony with our natural environment... We no longer have the margin of safety with our natural resources... We must re-examine our national policies and establish new priorities and guidelines for public action... It is the obligation of private conservation groups such as Audubon to alert the public about the critical conditions that exist... We have no assurance that the next "Silent Spring" will be written in time."

Next came a fine talk by Dr. Barry Commoner of St. Louis' Washington University. Key passages include "The supposed success of our technology in conquering nature is an illusion... The preservation of wildlife species is ecologically and morally sound... Rachel Carson predicted that insecticides would not control insects. We now know that she was right.

(Report on the National Audubon Convention-cont'd from p. 2) ...The time has come to forge a new alliance between scientists, conservationists, and the public as a whole on the environmental questions." After Commoner's speech, President Starr commented, "Our aim is not only to join but to lead such an alliance."

Saturday afternoon featured talks by 3 Audubon education leaders on "Environmental Education in Urban America." One of the central themes they developed was that soon, if not already, urban America may have an overwhelming control over public policies concerning the environment. It is vital that that segment of the population be made aware of the need for a sane approach to our natural environment and resources if they are to be protected for the benefit of all, now and in the future. An interesting question-and-answer session followed. Sunday was field trip day. About 400 persons participated, leaving about 7:45 a.m. in a shower. We visited a fine arboretum and a large state wildlife refuge. Each bus of 40 persons had 2 guides. At the end of the trip-at about 5 p.m.- a count was taken and those in our bus had sighted 74 species of birds. Not bad for occasional showers. (We just went along for the ride and walk!) The pink and white dogwood was in full bloom. The evening program featured an illustrated report on the status of the Bald Eagle-summarizing a 6-year Audubon study. The conclusion, backed by indisputable scientific evidence, was that DDT and related pesticides were the main culprits in the present serious threat to our national bird.

On Monday morning, we heard first from Dr. Charles Wurster, a leader in the national fight against DDT. He reviewed in some detail the scientific evidence against DDT and also discussed the present status of the court battle in Wisconsin on DDT. Next, we heard from Dr. John Gottschalk, Director of the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife. He said recent problems center on state vs. federal control of wildlife in Fed. wildlife refuges. Dr. W. M. Lawrence of the N.Y. Conservation Comm. then told us that New York has set up a program to study and enhance non-game wildlife species. They have 1 biologist working on the program, a first in the nation. A question-and-answer session followed into the p.m., moderated by Dr. Roland Clement, Nat. Aud. V.-Pres. and Biologist. His comments were a highlight of the session. For example, he contended our job now is to get rid of DDT. Also, his view was that man must act as responsible custodians of wildlife. (We agree) On Monday evening, we heard 2 talks. Russell Train, new Undersecretary of the Interior, presented a fine talk but really said nothing new.

The highlight of the Monday evening session, and perhaps of the whole convention, was the speech by Dr. Elvis Starr, National Audubon Pres. Before assuming his duties last fall, Dr. Starr had a distinguished public career as a Rhodes scholar, Dean of a University Law School, Sect. of the Navy under Eisenhower, and President of Indiana University. Space permits only a few highlights to be noted here. His central theme was that "Man is the only species which has achieved the power to destroy himself and all other life... And he is steadily engaged in doing it... His impact on the natural environment of this little planet, which he shares with so many other forms of life, has already been tremendous... He is now altering that environment at a rate of acceleration that is staggering... And yet man possesses the intelligence and the means to solve every one of these environmental problems... Only an aroused public which is willing not only to accept but even to demand some very bold decisions, seems likely to turn us around or even slow us up (contd p. 4)

(cont'd from page 3) in our lemming-like rush to make a hell on earth. How many crises, how many man-made catastrophes, how much irretrievable loss, must be suffered before this arousal becomes real? What must those who already do understand the problems, and the perils, do, in addition, to educate and activate a broader public? National Audubon is even now developing projects and programs to these ends... More and more of our fellow Americans are sensing there are things terribly wrong in the way man is treating nature and the environment. People are looking to conservation organizations for leadership in making the world a fit place to live in... The National Audubon Soc. is determined to help provide that leadership... Eighteen months ago we had about 50,000 National memberships; now we have about 80,000. Our goal in 5 years is over 200,000. Eighteen months ago we had 125 chapters (in addition to the several hundred affiliates, such as Ames Audubon). Now we have about 150. Our goal is for 500 chapters by 1974. We want these in every state and in every major community in those states. Eighteen months ago we had only 2 regional representatives; now there are 7; our goal is 15 by 1974. Also, we hope to encourage many more effective statewide Audubon organizations—state councils built up from the local groups and closely tied to our regional and national centers. We want a truly effective grass-roots organization, ready to take on and win local conservation battles, backed by information and expertise from the National office, and ready to back state, regional, and national battles with a groundswell of unselfish public pressure that can make our voice heard and our creed respected at every level of decision-making...." It was a truly inspiring message and the close to 1200 registered delegates gave Dr. Starr a prolonged standing ovation, as he well deserved. We were certainly proud of our Audubon membership at that moment. We still feel that way. The question now is, "What role will Ames Audubon play in this great and important movement in the weeks and months to come? How will our local people respond? Our May 13 meeting will provide the first clue.

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