

AMES AUDUBON

NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 4, Holiday Inn, South Duff St., Ames. Ames Audubon will host the initial meeting of various Audubon and similar groups in Iowa to organize an Iowa Audubon Council. Activities start with a noon luncheon followed by a talk at 1:15 p.m. by Mr. Otto Knauth of the Des Moines Register, in the Hurricane room at the Inn. More details elsewhere this issue.

Wednesday, April 15, 8 p.m., Great Hall, I.S.U. Memorial Union. Audubon Wildlife Film, "Village Beneath the Sea", on undersea life in the Bahama Islands. Narrated in person by Mr. Harry Pederson, eminent undersea photographer. More details elsewhere this issue.

Friday, April 17, 8 p.m., room 120, Kildee Hall, I.S.U. Ames Audubon Executive Board meeting to get financial report and other business. All members are welcome and are urged to attend.

Thursday, April 30, 8 p.m., Auditorium of Ames Public Library. Dr. and Mrs. Barton Morgan, 1970 "Conservationists of the Year" in Ames and Story County, will present their all-new full-color slide program on "Birds of the Southwest". This will feature the usual highest calibre photography of birds these fine folks have observed in and around Arizona these past several years. Plan now to attend.

Thursday, May 14, 8 p.m., Auditorium of the Ames Public Library. Mr. Bob Pinneke, popular and able young Director of the Story County Conservation Board, will present a timely and interesting program on alternate plans for development of the Skunk River area north of Ames, with or without the proposed Ames Reservoir. You won't want to miss it.

Friday, May 22, 6 p.m., Inez Grove Park Shelterhouse, East 24th St., Ames. Pot-luck picnic and Annual meeting of the Ames Audubon Society to elect officers for the coming year and other vital business. **PLEASE NOTE:** this event has been shifted to a new date so that more members and their families can attend. This is THE big event of the year for Ames Audubon, so please mark this date down and plan to attend.

Birding Trips: The big spring migration is now starting in this area, with waterfowl first and other species to follow. Jim Rod goes out regularly and indicated he would be happy to have members come along when they can. Call his no., 232-4869, for information. Jim also is working on plans for a special bird count during the peak migration period in a few weeks for the area of the proposed Ames Reservoir. More on this later.

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Iowa State Environmental Teach-In

Ames Audubon fully supports this project by Iowa State University students and their advisors and we urge that you attend when possible. Watch the Ames Daily Tribune for exact time and place of upcoming programs. Two programs merit special mention here - On Monday, April 20, "Pesticides in the Environment", and Thursday, April 23, "The Population Bomb", with famed ecologist, Dr. Paul Ehrlich. Time, place to be announ.

Dr. and Mrs. Barton Morgan Selected as "Conservationists of the Year"

The big news from the Ames Audubon Society is the selection of Dr. and Mrs. Barton Morgan as 1970 "Conservationists of the Year" in the Ames-Story County area. They were voted this honor at our special meeting on Monday night, March 30, in recognition of their long and dedicated service in conservation education. Mrs. Lotus Miller, head of the nominating committee, presented an excellent report on the different nominees offered to the club. She had researched the field well, with the help of Gerald Robinson and Dave Hoffman, other committee members. The choice was very popular with those present. We predict it also will be equally well-received by the general public when the news is published.

The award, our 2nd annual, was a joint one in recognition of the close team work of the couple in all their conservation efforts. Dr. Morgan, now 81 years young, has specialized in nature photography since his retirement, 16 years ago, as head of the Dept. of Education at ISU. He has invested in the finest photographic equipment available, including a 1000 mm. telescopic lens, in order to obtain superior quality photos of his nature subjects in the wild. As proof of his skill, Dr. Morgan has had about 20 of his works selected for international competition, with several winning top awards.

His first love has been photographing wild birds, and he has travelled throughout the country and beyond in search of subjects. Here in Ames, they have maintained several feeding stations, including at the Izaak Walton League Park and in River Valley Park to attract subjects. They have spent countless hours at these sites patiently waiting for the right view of particular birds and other wildlife. They have spent several recent winters in Arizona where they have continued their ceaseless efforts.

Each year, the Morgans have presented dozens of slide and lecture programs on birds and conservation to schools, civic organizations, and church groups throughout the state and elsewhere. Their message has always been to awaken in the audience a keen sense of appreciation of our natural world that will lead people to enjoy and protect wildlife and our natural environment the rest of their lives. Dr. Morgan also has given sets of bird slides to universities and other schools, and has written several pamphlets sharing his philosophy and skills.

Mrs. Morgan is a past president of the ISU Faculty Womens Nature Division and long has been active in their projects. She also has a Ph D degree, in Nutrition, from ISU.

Perhaps the most significant facet of their lives is the fact that, instead of retiring at 65 to a life of leisure, Dr. Morgan and his wife, Margaret, embarked on an entire new career in the interests of conservation education and in the enrichment of the lives of their fellow man. Such individuals are very few and far between in our self-centered world. For these noble efforts, far above and beyond the commonplace, these folks certainly merit their selection as "Conservationists of the Year". We are indeed proud and happy to have been a party to this most deserved recognition.

By coincident (or was it, really?) the Morgans live directly across the street from the worthy recipient of our 1969 "Conservationist of the Year" award, Mr. Lloyd Kurtz. Also, plan to attend the program, "Birds of the Southwest", to be presented by Dr. and Mrs. Morgan on Thursday, April 30, at 8 p.m. in the Ames Library, and meet them.

Otto Knauth of the Des Moines Register to Address Iowa Audubon Council

As announced in our March Newsletter, a preliminary organizational meeting of the new Iowa Audubon Council will be held on Saturday, Apr. 4, at the Holiday Inn in Ames. A good turnout of representatives of Audubon and similar interested groups from throughout Iowa is expected, according to Ed Brigham, Upper Midwest representative of the National Audubon Society. Activities will start with a noon luncheon. This will be followed at 1:15 p.m., in the Hurricane Room at the Inn, by a talk by Mr. Otto Knauth, well-known natural science writer for the Des Moines Register, on "Conservation Issues in Iowa". The public is invited to hear Mr. Knauth's speech. Following this, the delegates will hold a business meeting to organize an Iowa Audubon Council. Ames Audubon will serve as host for the event.

A state council organized on the right lines will mean that, for the first time in Iowa, the Audubon voice for a constructive and progressive conservation philosophy will soon be heard at the state, as well as at the local and national levels. Such an organization would in no way compete with our local club nor with the Iowa Ornithologists Union.

We will be represented at the sessions and a report will be given at our Annual meeting on May 22 for the consideration of all members as concerns affiliation, etc. Please attend if possible and join other concerned and public-spirited private citizens in efforts to move from CONVERSATION to CONSERVATION, as so aptly put recently by Dr. Keith McNurlen, Director of the Iowa Conservation Commission.

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"VILLAGE BENEATH THE SEA"

As the above intriguing title suggests, our final Audubon Wildlife Film program, with Mr. Harry Pederson, will concern the fascinating but little known world beneath the surface of the seas. Marine biologists have catalogued the contents of most of the oceans and can name what creatures are expected in most any spot. But, when it comes to knowing how these animals behave, what friends they have, what enemies, how they cooperate with one another, solve their various problems, the knowledge of the biologists is very skimpy indeed. Harry Pederson has produced this extraordinary film to bring to man a wider appreciation of undersea life and their unique habitats in the Bahama Islands. His aim is that man will cease despoiling and polluting this last great frontier on earth for all to enjoy and which, in turn, can sustain man himself.

Mr. Peterson has been internationally acclaimed for his many undersea productions. These include several full-length features and footage for the film version of *The Sea Around Us*, by Rachel Carson, Walt Disney productions, *Animal World*, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, and others. He also has published articles on underwater photography and fish behavior. He will narrate the 90-minute full-color motion picture program in person at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15, in Great Hall of the Memorial Union at ISU. Tickets are \$1.25 for adults and 75¢ for students. The Betany Club is again working with us on the program. This fine group has informed us that they plan to donate their share of any net receipts to the Nature Conservancy, a most worthy cause. Please plan to attend this rare opportunity for Ames residents to learn more about the mysterious world of the deep. Invite your friends and children, too, to this fully professional program of family entertainment.

REPORT on RECENT ACTIVITIES"What's That Bird?" with Jim Rod and John Faaborg

About 75-80 Ames area residents were treated to an information-packed and most interesting program on birdwatching by two of the best young local ornithologists, Jim Rod and John Faaborg, on Friday, March 13, at the Ames Library. The featured speakers came well prepared with a large number of fine color slides of many of the birds to be seen in the central Iowa area, record and tape-recordings of bird calls and songs, and stacks of books and field guides on the subjects of birds and birdwatching. At the start, each person was given a set of 3 handouts of great value: (1) A check list of birds in Story County and adjacent areas, with notes on their occurrence; (2) Average arrival dates for the various species in this area; (3) A description of major birding areas easily accessible to Ames area residents. These were prepared by the speakers for this program and represent the most complete such information available here. The speakers took turn in explaining the slides-what to look for, when and where, use of field guides, binoculars, etc. A quiz on 25 birds was the final feature. Joe Brown of Des Moines and Ames Audubon Societies placed first, followed closely by Mrs. Severson, of Ames Audubon. It was a most stimulating program thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by all. Our thanks to Jim and John for their fine efforts.

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Tour of Proposed Ames Reservoir, with Dr. and Mrs. Austin Getz

Despite the far-from-ideal weather, 26 carloads of Ames area residents took part in a tour of the site of the proposed Ames Reservoir on Sunday afternoon, March 22. They came for another look with Dr. Austin and Mrs. Loya Getz as guides. An estimated 75-80 persons attended. Half the cars went with Dr. Getz and the others were led by Mrs. Getz. We visited most of the major areas, including Story City, stopping repeatedly as the knowledgeable guides explained the significance of each site. It was strictly an information tour, but there was a free exchange of ideas in response to questions. Unfortunately, individual maps of the site were not available for the participants. However, the event apparently was enjoyed by all, as no car dropouts were noted. Evidently there still is a lot of interest, and, we might add, confusion, on the project. Just because Ames Audubon sponsored the tour does not mean our club has taken a stand on the reservoir. Hopefully, after more information is available, we will be ready to take a stand, one way or the other. On the other hand, surely the reservoir is not a "sacred cow" that shouldn't be touched. We see no wrong in objectively studying all facets of this project which will so greatly affect so many people in one way or another. Another program on it is scheduled for May 14 with Bob Pinneke. See the Calendar on page 1. Also, a possible bird count led by Jim Rod may be held soon.

The Ames Daily Tribune printed a report on the tour after it was held. Neither we nor Mrs. Getz asked for it. She informed us that a Tribune staff member phoned her about it. But we are indeed happy about their interest.

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"The Adelie Penguins of Antarctica" with Dr. John R. Baker, of ISU

Due to scheduling difficulties, we are sorry we had to present our program on penguins on the Wednesday before Easter, March 25, a bad nite for many persons to attend. The weather also was bad. (go to p.5)

(Penguin program-cont'd from page 4) But, an estimated 250-300 persons attended and thoroughly enjoyed Dr. Baker's interesting presentation on life near the bottom of the world. Featured were 3 slides shown simultaneously on the 3 screens in the auditorium. Especially interesting were the motion picture sequences on the nesting and general behavior of the penguins. These had been studied by Dr. Baker's research team the past 3 years in the Antarctic. Dirk Derksen, one of Dr. Baker's graduate students, assisted in the presentation. His operation of the 3 slide projectors and motion picture projector was out of this world. We certainly appreciate the efforts of all who helped out and Dr. Baker and his group. Ken Russell, of Ames Audubon and a wildlife research biologist at ISU, deserves special mention for his excellent job of introducing the program and featured speaker.

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Southern Wildlife-Low Country Impressions

This was the title of the slide program presented by Jim and Doug Rod on Monday evening, March 30, to Ames Audubon members and guests at the Ames Library. It featured some spectacular slides of birds, other wildlife, insects, and scenery from their long journey thru southern U.S. and into Mexico and Guatemala last summer. A taped musical background added color to the presentation as Jim and Doug took turns describing the slides from the trip. Doug took time out from his busy furlough schedule to assist Jim. In addition, they showed their fine display of butterflies and other insects collected on the trip. All present agreed that these skilled young naturalist-photographers are well on their way to most distinguished careers in their chosen work. The program followed a special business meeting of Ames Audubon.

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Mississippi River Eagle Count, from a report by Jim Rod

What's the best way to count bald eagles along 250 miles of the Mississippi river? From a plane, of course. By 8 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 22, Pete Peterson (of Davenport) and I were climbing over Davenport in a Cessna 150 piloted by a local dentist who has flown the eagle count for Pete the past 7 years. It was a beautiful clear day as we flew north along the Iowa shore at about 600 ft. At first, the eagles were still roosting in trees close to the frozen river. We stayed over land so adults, with their white heads and dark bodies, and immatures that are all dark, showed up against the ice. There was no snow cover and while adults were easy to spot against the dark background, immatures were hard to see when roosting away from the river. Birds came slowly at first until we neared Bellvue. There and around the open water at the locks and dams, we began to get eagles in numbers. We turned around at Bellvue and as we approached the Ordnance Depot on the Illinois side, we really began to see birds, counting over 30 in just a few miles. Soon we passed near Davenport again, on the Illinois side and headed for Keokuk where we saw fair numbers of diving ducks in open water of the Keokuk pool. We turned around south of the lock and dam at Keokuk, picked up 6 eagles there and came back north on the Iowa side of the river, picking up birds regularly. By now the eagles began to fly and one pair soared by only 100 feet over the plane. We returned to Davenport at 1 p.m. and had tallied 180 bald eagles, 155 adults and only 25 immatures. This is not a good ratio but we're sure we missed several immatures against the dark ground. A few more may have been added by ground observers. Birding from the air was a new experience for me. I recommend it.

The Decline and Fall of the Bald Eagle

The dangerous decline of the bald eagle in North America is quite well known. Stories have appeared in most news media recently. Most of the blame is put on the persistent pesticides such as DDT and diel-drin. These evidently disrupt the reproductive processes mainly thru the calcium mechanism, causing egg shells to be so thin they are easily broken during nesting. Other causes of the decline are destruction of nesting habitat and shooting of eagles by hunters, altho against the law. Intensive new efforts by the U.S. Interior Dept., some state agencies, and private organizations are being expanded to try and save this great bird. The survey by Jim Rod and Pete Peterson(see page 5) is one example of these efforts. The National Audubon Society has been doing significant work on the eagle for about 9 years now, in various states. A 1969 study in Minnesota indicated that of 117 nests observed in the Chippewa National Forest there, only 60 (51%) were classed as active (with at least one adult). of these 60, only 29 (48%) produced any surviving young, with an average of 1.5 per nest. Considerable variation in the size of the eaglets was noted, indicating that laying and/or hatching was delayed for some pairs. The decline in eagles should be of concern for their own sake, of course. The situation also indicates that something is seriously wrong with man's environment, too, and it's only a matter of time that some effects will show on him, too.

Good News for Conservationists: Timber Supply Bill Defeated

According to the recent Audubon Leader's Guide, the U.S. House recently defeated by a big margin (228 to 150) H.R. 12025 which would have made lumber factories out of the National Forests, rather than have them managed as multi-use areas, as at present. This defeat was credited to a coalition of national conservation organizations, including National Audubon, which urged a letter-writing campaign by its members to their congressmen. So don't underestimate the power of the individual citizen when aroused to the danger to his heritage. But, eternal vigilance must be maintained.

If you are concerned about crabgrass control, and not soil insects and worms, please don't use chlordane as a pre-emergence treatment. That is, if you don't want to kill the birds. Use one of the herbicides such as Tupersh, Dacthal, or Betasan for pre-emergence control. So says the ISU weed control section. Chlordane is no good for post-emergence control, either. Read the label carefully when you buy.

A NOTE TO NON-MEMBERS OF THE AMES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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