



# Bluestem Flyer

Vol. 21, No. 1 September, 1986

Big Bluestem Audubon Society  
Ames, Iowa

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## Monthly Meeting

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 16, at 7:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Room 181 (Jury Room), College of Design, ISU Campus, Ames

**WHO:** Robert Moorman, professor of animal ecology, ISU

**TOPIC:** Dr. Moorman will describe some of the many problems with birds and other wildlife he's encountered over the years doing extension work at ISU.

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## Upcoming Meetings and Events

**September Field Trips** -- There are **three** field trips scheduled this month -- September 13, 20 and 27 -- so take your pick! See details of the trips on page 2.

**Audubon Regional Conference** -- The North Midwest region of National Audubon Society (NAS) will hold its annual conference October 10-12 at Camp Sunnyside near Des Moines. Bluestem members may be needed to help! See page 2 for details.

**Leopold Celebration** -- The nation's first Aldo Leopold centennial celebration will be held October 5-9 at Iowa State University, and is open to the public and free. Leopold was born in Iowa in 1887 and became an influential spokesman for conservation and environmental quality. For more information on the day-to-day schedule, contact Dr. Thomas Tanner (294-7253). The Bluestem chapter wants to participate in this event in a special way. See details on page 2.

## News and Notes

**1986 Program Schedule** -- The Big Bluestem Audubon Society, a chapter of National Audubon Society, meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. for a business meeting, program and social time. Meetings are held in Room 181, College of Design, ISU campus, unless otherwise noted. Following are the programs scheduled for meetings through December:

- Sept. 16 -- Robert Moorman, on his personal encounters with "problem" wildlife  
 Oct. 21 -- Sue Barrows and Marlene Ehresman, on central Iowa's new wildlife rehabilitation program  
 Nov. 18 -- George Thomson, "The Prairie Grove Revisited"  
 Dec. 16 -- Annual Christmas party and slide show at the State Nursery, 2404 S. Duff Ave., Ames

**September Field Trips** -- Try to take advantage of at least one of these field trips this month:

Sat., Sept. 13, to Ledges State Park to see migrating warblers and hawks. Hank Zaletel and Steve Dinsmore will lead participants. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot south of C.Y. Stephens at the ISU Center, Ames.

Sat., Sept. 20, a demonstration by Dr. Jim Dinsmore, ISU professor of ornithology, of mist-netting, a capture technique used in bird research. If the birds are moving, this should be a great opportunity to see warblers and other migrating songbirds up close. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the north parking lot (by the fire engine) at Brookside Park, Ames.

Sat., Sept. 27, to Saylorville Reservoir and environs, to see pelicans, cormorants, herons, egrets, terns and gulls. Hank Zaletel and Steve Dinsmore will again lead. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot south of C.Y. Stephens.

**Regional Conference** -- All Audubon members and interested persons are invited to this year's regional Audubon conference at Camp Sunnyside near Des Moines, Oct. 10-12. Because ours is the closest Audubon chapter, Bluestem members may be needed to help man registration desks, hand out name tags or meal tickets, or perform other such duties. Persons interested in volunteering will be able to do so at the September meeting, or may call Dave Edwards.

Wetlands is the theme of the conference, which includes field trips, numerous speakers and workshops, an address by NAS president Peter Berle and a concert Saturday night by an Iowa folksinger of PBS's "Prairie Home Companion" fame, Greg Brown.

A variety of lodging and meal plans is available. Registration fee is \$20 per person, before Oct. 1. Registration after Oct. 1 or at the door will be \$25. A daily fee of \$10 per person may be paid by individuals able to attend only one day of the conference. Contact a chapter officer for more information or for a registration form.

**Leopold Centennial** -- Our Audubon Society is considering hosting a potluck supper for some speakers and honored guest attending the Aldo Leopold celebration here Oct. 5-9. Bluestem members will be polled at the September meeting to determine how many are interested in this idea. The tentative date and place for the meal are Tuesday, Oct. 7 at the Izaak Walton League meeting room off Stagecoach Road.

**Rain Helps Trees** -- An estimated 95% - 100% of the trees planted by Bluestem members along Highway 30 last spring have survived the summer, according to Hank Zaletel. Abundant, timely rain fall and careful mowing of the area by the Department of Transportation have kept nearly all of the trees alive and looking healthy, Hank reports.

**Ames Lakes Meetings** -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers met Aug. 11 with state and Ames officials to seek support for its recently completed reevaluation of a proposed dam and lake north of Ames. The Corps study indicated a smaller impoundment at the same site was the only feasible alternative now to the original Ames Lake plan. A group opposing the Ames Lake was scheduled to hold an information session Aug. 26 at Meeker Elementary School for concerned residents.

**Name Omitted** -- Paul Martsching's name was inadvertently omitted from a list of newsletter contributors that was published last June to recognize these person's help. Paul submitted reports for the "Birder's Notes" feature for several issues during the year.



## Birder's Notes

Aug. 21 -- Shorebirds and warblers have begun their fall migration south and are now passing through Iowa. Watch along the edges of flooded farm fields (in the mud flats left by receding water) to see shorebirds. The Colo "ponds", two miles east of Colo on the north side of old Highway 30, were visited this week by yellow-legs, Pectoral, Solitary and Least sandpipers, Semi-palmated Plovers and Killdeer, among others. In addition, pelicans and seven species of herons and egrets were seen this week on mud flats near the Highway 17 bridge at Saylorville Reservoir.

A wave of warblers passed through Brookside Park in Ames the weekend of Aug. 16 -- about 10 species were seen. Fall warblers will continue moving through the area during September and early October. Brookside is a fairly good place to see them. The migration of hawks should be underway the middle of September. You may want to tag along on the chapter's Sept. 13 field trip to see both migrating warblers and hawks.

Unusual sightings of birds over the summer included a Mountain Plover at Colo "ponds" on July 9-10, which may have been blown into Iowa by a storm. This species was reported only once before from Iowa, in the 1960's. The bird was in the company of three Golden Plovers, which although not unusual migrants, were unexpectedly early. July 19 was the earliest previous fall migration record for this species in Iowa. In addition, a Western Sandpiper was identified at the "ponds" on July 14. This species is both unusual for central Iowa and difficult to identify.

**Deaths** -- Clarence Morrison, 81, a long-time Ames resident and member of the Audubon society, died June 4 in Ames. Survivors include his wife, Marjorie, of Ames.



## Otters Arrive --

Iowa's Nongame newsletter notes that another 60 otters have been released in Iowa in an attempt to reestablish the animals in the wild here. Ten males and 10 females were released at each of three sites this year, Otter Creek Marsh, Springbrook State Park and Stratford. Next year another 60 otters will be released at three more sites, making a total of 136 otters in the state. Otters are traded by other states for turkeys trapped in Iowa.





## Backyard Wildlife

A new color booklet "Attracting Backyard Wildlife," has just been published by the Iowa Conservation Commission. It includes tips on planning your yard, wildlife needs, plants that are attractive to wildlife and butterfly gardening. To obtain a copy, write the commission at Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or call 515/281-8666. The booklet is free -- just remember to "check off" funds for the commission's use at tax time!

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