



Bluestem Flyer

Vol. 21, No. 2 October, 1986

Big Bluestem Audubon Society Ames, Iowa

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Monthly Meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, October 21, at 7:30 p.m.

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

WHO: Dr. Sue Barrows, clinician in charge of the wildlife program and wildlife rehabilitation clinic at the ISU Veterinary Clinic; and Marlene Ehresman, a founder and current president of the Wildlife Re-habitator's Association in Iowa.

TOPIC: "Wildlife Rehabilitation and You" a program about wildlife rehabilitation in Iowa and how each of us can contribute.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

October Field Trip -- There will be a field trip Saturday, Oct. 11, to the Big Creek/Saylorville area to see sparrows and waterfowl, according to organizer Eric Munson. Meet in the parking lot behind C.Y. Stephens at 8 a.m., and plan to return to Ames about lunchtime.

Audubon Conference -- You may still plan to attend the National Audubon Society's Regional Conference Oct. 10-12 at Camp Sunnyside, Des Moines. Registration at the door is \$25 for events all three days, or \$10/day for persons able to attend only one day. Contact a chapter officer for more details.

Raptor Rehabilitation Workshop -- There will be a workshop in Ames on October 18 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on handling, caring for and first aid for raptors. Contact Mike Meetz (382-2534) for more information on registration.

Upcoming Meetings and Events cont.,

Fall IAC Meeting -- The fall meeting of the Iowa Audubon Council will be held Sunday, October 12 at 12:15 a.m. at Camp Sunnyside, Des Moines, in conjunction with the Audubon regional conference. Persons wishing to attend this meeting only may arrive at noon and bring \$2 for lunch -- no conference registration fee will be charged. Contact Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807) for more details.

November Field Trip -- A tour of Saylorville Reservoir's geological features and fossils will be held Saturday, November 1 at 9:30 a.m. at the visitor center. Participants may meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot behind C.Y. Stephens and carpool to the center. Danielle Wirth will lead the trip, which will involve some hiking but should be over by lunchtime. A rain date of Saturday, November 15, has been arranged.

Hawk Watch -- Biologists will be on hand to help identify hawks at this event on October 18-19 at Effigy Mounds National Monument (north of Marquette, Iowa), from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Contact Judy van der Linden for more information.



News and Notes

September Field Trips -- Eleven birders participated in the September 27th field trip to the Saylorville Reservoir area. Great Blue Heron, Great Egret and American White Pelican were seen, but the high point of the trip came at Oak Grove beach, where everyone was able to closely study Black-bellied Plover, Franklin's Gull, Caspian Tern and Forster's Tern. Along the way, a "kettle" of migrating Broad-winged Hawk was also seen. A total of 49 species was seen. About 10 people went on a field trip to Ledges State Park on September 13. Most of the time was spent in the lower canyon. Among the more interesting birds seen were Broad-winged Hawk, Eastern Bluebird (many), Solitary and Yellow-throated vireos, and Black-Throated Green, Bay-breasted, Black-poll and Wilson's warblers.

Newsletter Deadline -- The deadline for submitting articles for the "Bluestem Flyer" will be the last Tuesday of every month. All contributions are welcome. Send articles or artwork to Judy van der Linden, 610 9th Street, Ames. The editor reserves the right to edit articles as necessary.



New Booklet -- Basic bird-watching information is included in the National Audubon Society's new booklet -- "A Beginner's Guide to Birdwatching." Copies of this colorful booklet may be purchased for 50 cents apiece from: Information Services Department, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, New York, 10022.

Legislative News -- A new coalition of environmental/conservation/sportsmen/farm groups is attempting to raise more money for conservation work in Iowa. The group is still in the beginning stages and has no name yet, however the members hope to identify important conservation projects in Iowa and then find state money to do them. Contact Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807) for more information about the coalition.

Winter Camping -- Northwoods Audubon Society in Minnesota is offering two opportunities to get out of the house this winter: "Winter Camping and Snowshoeing in the BWCA," December 30-January 3, for anyone who might enjoy winter camping; "Winter Camping and Moose and Deer Ecology Study in Superior National Forest," January 7-26, a chance to be involved in an ongoing study on moose and deer. Contact Judy van der Linden for more information.

This Month's Birding 'Hot Spot'

This new, regular column will feature a timely "hot spot," where birdwatchers can go and have a good chance of seeing the birds named.

Saylorville Reservoir -- Probably one of the best areas to view migrating water birds in central Iowa is Saylorville Reservoir. Fall is the best time to visit this area -- October and November are the best months. Possibly the best place to see water-birds is directly above the Saylorville dam. Park in one of the pulloffs on top of the dam. A spotting scope is a necessity here. Look for Common Loon, Horned and Western grebes, numerous ducks and Franklin's and Bonaparte's gulls. Tundra Swans are also regularly here in mid-November. Next, check the ponds directly below the dam. This is a good place to see Double-crested Cormorants and various gulls up close. The spillway below the dam is also a good place to look for gulls.

Next, check the beach at Oak Grove Recreation Area, located off Hwy 415 on the east side of the reservoir. This is a good place for Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, and Caspian and Common terns. Leave the beach and continue north on Hwy 415 to the 4-way stop in Polk City. Turn left here (you are still on Hwy 415), drive about 2 mi., and turn left on NW 125 Ave. Continue to the T-intersection, turn right (north) and follow the road to the parking lot at the end. Park here and follow the trail which heads west toward Saylorville lake. This can be an excellent spot to see herons, American White Pelican, ducks, Caspian Tern and hundreds of shorebirds when water levels are low. Shorebirds to look for are Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Baird's Sandpiper and many of the commoner species. The Hwy 17 bridge where it crosses the northwest corner of the reservoir is another good place for waterbirds. This area is a little out of the way, but worth checking. You can see pelican, Great Egret and many shorebirds if water levels are low.

This concludes your "tour" of Saylorville Reservoir, I've tried to list the most productive stops, although there are many others that could be checked out. --*Steve Dinsmore*

Birder's Notes

October 1 -- Persistent rains in central Iowa continue to attract many migrating shorebirds to the Colo "ponds", located off old Highway 30 just east of Colo. During the past week, there have been ten species seen, including Golden and Semi-palmated plovers, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Killdeer, dowitchers and semi-palmated, Least, Pectoral and Solitary sandpipers. Migrating warblers continue to move through Ames sporatically.

Hundreds of Canada Geese have flown over Ames this week, but the duck and goose migration shouldn't start in earnest until late October. Waterfowl may be seen north of Ames at Little Wall Lake, but watch out for hunters there as well. The refuge area at Saylorville Reservoir provides protection from hunters for both birds and birdwatchers.

Some of the best birdwatching now can be done at Saylorville Reservoir (see "Hot Spots" and September field trip reports elsewhere in this issue), where migrating gulls and terns will be arriving in increasing numbers shortly.

Don't forget to put out bird feeders soon (see feeding article on next page)!



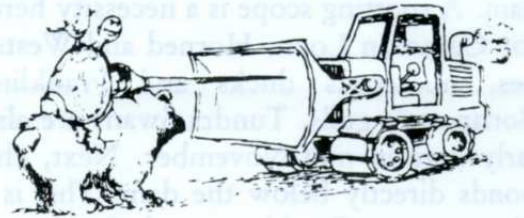
Bird Feeding Fundamentals

These tips were provided by Iowa's Rolling Hills Audubon Society and the Massachusetts Audubon Society:

1. Begin feeding in late October or early November, winter birds start to locate reliable food supplies at this time.
2. Place your feeder so it faces southeast, if possible. This will give the birds morning sun and protect them from north winds.
3. Some nearby cover (shrubs, brush, evergreen trees, etc.) encourages feeder use.
4. Start with a tray or platform feeder. It should have a roof to protect seed; a raised edge to keep seed from blowing away, and a hopper to reduce the chore of refilling the feeder.
5. Most birds are specific in their food requirements. To attract a wide variety of birds, use a wide variety of foods.
6. Water is excellent for attracting birds. This is true in all seasons. In general, they prefer water on or very near the ground.
7. Try to make your feeder squirrel-proof. You can purchase baffles for feeders mounted on poles that will keep squirrels from climbing onto the platform. A baffle may also work for hanging feeders; or try hanging the feeder from a "bendable" tree to prevent heavier squirrels from tight-rope walking to it.
8. Some of the best foods are sunflower seeds, niger thistle and corn. To limit the number of undesirable sparrows, use shelled or on-the-cob whole kernel corn.

Big Bluestem Audubon Society
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KEEP UP THE CRUSADE!



Pick up your lance and stay with those crusading to protect wildlife and the environment. Audubon Action (NAS newsjournal) has been replaced by our new national newsletter, the *Audubon Activist*, to give you all the information you need to slay the dragons. Sign up for the "Activist" corps today. Use the subscription envelope enclosed in the June (final) issue of NAS newsjournal or send six dollars (for one year) to the *Audubon Activist*, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

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