

BIG BLUESTEM FLYER

Volume 27, No. 6

Newsletter of the Mid-Iowa Chapter of the National Audubon Society

February 1992

MONTHLY MEETING

Story County's Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program Where are we now?

David Webber, Roadside Management Biologist, Story County

Thursday, February 20, 7:30 PM

Room 181, Design Center, I.S.U Campus

For four years Story County has been a leader in managing the plants that grow along our roadsides. We have encouraged and planted native prairie grasses and flowers while controlling noxious weeds and erosion. Come hear what has been accomplished and what the future holds for our county's roadsides.

FIELD TRIPS

Owl Prowl

Boone and Polk County Sites

Saturday, February 15, 7:30 AM.

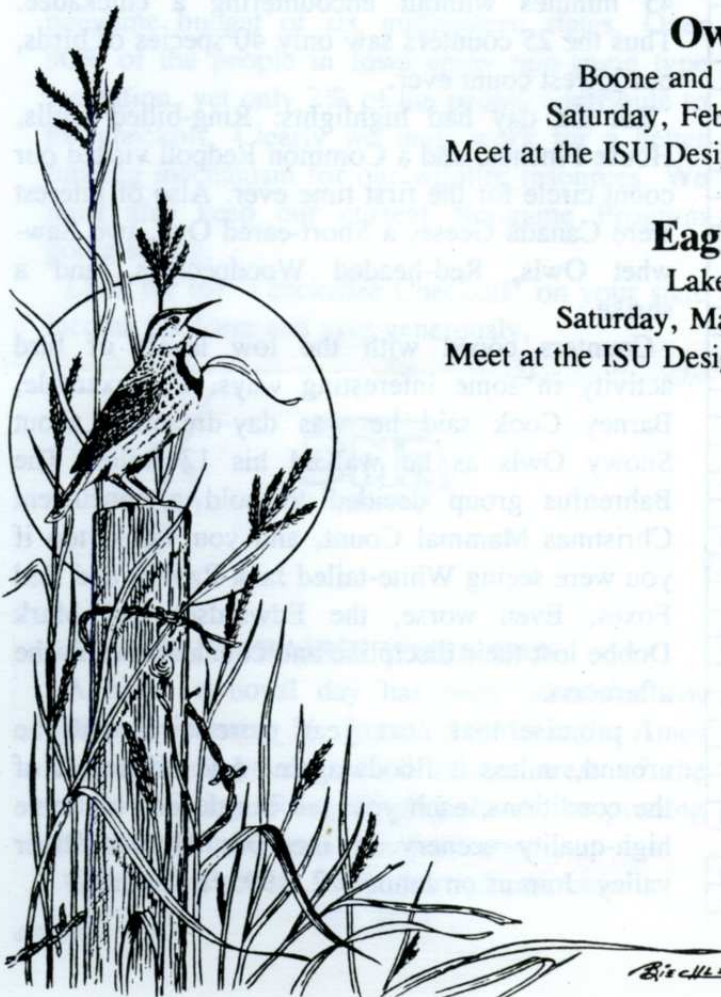
Meet at the ISU Design Center, west parking lot.

Eagle Watch

Lake Red Rock

Saturday, March 14, 7:30 A.M.

Meet at the ISU Design Center, west parking lot.



BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY

1991-1992

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**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS
AMES AND BOONE
DECEMBER 14, 1991 AND JANUARY 1, 1992**

	Boone	Ames
GREAT BLUE HERON		1
CANADA GOOSE	2	7
MALLARD	1	8
BALD EAGLE		1
NORTHERN HARRIER		2
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	1	1
RED-TAILED HAWK	10	17
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	1	2
AMERICAN KESTREL	16	17
GYRFALCON		1
GRAY PARTRIDGE		3
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	12	20
WILD TURKEY	18	
RING-BILLED GULL	2	
COMMON SNIFE		1
ROCK DOVE	228	243
MOURNING DOVE	1	5
GREAT-HORNED OWL	2	4
BARRED OWL	2	1
SHORT-EARED OWL	1	
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	2	
BELTED KINGFISHER	1	3
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	13	8
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	46	53
DOWNY WOODPECKER	43	98
HAIRY WOODPECKER	24	8
NORTHERN FLICKER	4	5
HORNED LARK	7	45
BLUE JAY	79	99
AMERICAN CROW	276	9200
BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	219	245
TUFTED TITMOUSE	16	2
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	1	1
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	84	79
BROWN CREEPER	7	9
shrike sp	1	
CAROLINA WREN		1
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET		1
HERMIT THRUSH		1
CEDAR WAXWING		7
NORTHERN SHRIKE		1
EUROPEAN STARLING	713	2145
NORTHERN CARDINAL	161	135
AMERICAN TREE SPARROW	79	115
SONG SPARROW	2	2
SWAMP SPARROW		1
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW		4
DARK-EYED JUNCO slate form	284	305
Oregon form		
MEADOWLARK SP.		1
COMMON GRACKLE		2
PURPLE FINCH		2
HOUSE FINCH	2	7
COMMON REDPOLL	36	19
PINE SISKIN	7	5
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	91	105
HOUSE SPARROW	804	2288
count totals	3301	15336
species seen	40	51

AMES

The best bird of the Ames count this year was Barney Cook's Gyrfalcon, a new sighting for the records. Overall, the totals were pretty good, somewhat above the average of between 47 and 48. That total of 51 was on somewhat shaky ground, given that 13 names on the list had just one sighting. It could easily have been a disaster.

The crow population is getting larger though the starlings were fewer than in some past counts. Among the birds-not-seen-but-should-have-been were the robin and turkey.

We thank the 35 participants who took to the fields and roads and also the 8 feeder watchers. Three of those single bird counts were at feeders.

Mike Meetz and Dave Edwards

BOONE

Bird numbers were down for this year's Boone County Christmas Bird Count, possibly due to habitat destruction cause by floods. Most of the Des Moines River floodplain was covered with icebergs and mud, and little else. You could walk 45 minutes without encountering a chickadee. Thus the 25 counters saw only 40 species of birds, our lowest count ever.

But the day had highlights: Ring-billed Gulls, House Finches, and a Common Redpoll visited our count circle for the first time ever. Also of interest were Canada Geese, a Short-eared Owl, two Saw-whet Owls, Red-headed Woodpeckers, and a shrike.

Counters coped with the low levels of bird activity in some interesting ways. For example, Barney Cook said he was day-dreaming about Snowy Owls as he walked his 12 miles. The Bahrenfus group decided to hold a concurrent Christmas Mammal Count, and you would too if you were seeing White-tailed Jack Rabbits and Red Foxes. Even worse, the Edwardses and Mark Dobbe lost their discipline and counted trees in the afternoon.

I promise that next year more birds will be around, unless it floods again. And regardless of the conditions, each year we can depend on some high-quality scenery in the Des Moines River valley. Join us on January 2, 1993, a Saturday.

Erik Munson

**SUPPORT IOWA'S NONGAME WILDLIFE
GIVE GENEROUSLY
TO THE CHICKADEE CHECKOFF**

It's tax time again, and time to show your support for Iowa's nongame wildlife which represents more than 80 % of the species in the state. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Nongame Program.

Since 1982, when the Chickadee Checkoff first appeared on Iowa's state income tax form, the program has done research, management and education on a vast variety of wildlife. Types of efforts undertaken include: barn owl, river otter and peregrine falcon re-introductions, research on breeding birds & winter bird surveys, also on butterflies, bats and frogs. Land acquisition is also part of the Nongame Program and educational programs and publications have given Iowan's many opportunities to learn about our diverse wildlife resources.

However, Iowa's Nongame Program is grossly underfunded. It receives no general revenue or other money from the state. The program is funded solely from the checkoff. Iowa has the lowest nongame budget of six midwestern states. Over 90% of the people in Iowa enjoy non-game type recreation, yet only 2% of the people contribute to the checkoff. Clearly we must work for a better funding mechanism for our wildlife resources. We must also keep our current Nongame Program going strong.

Look for the "Chickadee Checkoff" on your state income tax form and give generously.

Sherry Dragula



AMES HIGH PRAIRIE WORK DAY

A brush removal day has been scheduled for Sunday, February 16, from 1-4 PM, at the Ames High School prairie which is just west of the school building. Bring lopping shears, or pruning shears or a chain saw if you have one.

Call Dave Brenner for further information:
292-3114.

**STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
EVENTS**

Forum: **Status and Management of Iowa's
White-tailed Deer Population**

Thursday, February 13, 7:30 -9 PM

At the Story County Conservation Center

**Uncle Ikes for young children: Nongame
Wildlife**

Saturday, February 15, 10-12 Noon

At the Story County Conservation Center

(Registration requested; no fee)

Winter Tracking

Sunday, February 23, 2 PM

At the YMCA Outdoor Center,

Bluebird Workshop

Sunday, March 1st, 2-4 PM

At the Story County Conservation Center

NATIONAL AUDUBON'S CONVENTION

June 13-19, 1992 will be the dates for a National Audubon Convention titled "Act for Wildlife in '92". It will focus on endangered species. To be held at the American University in Washington, D.C. it will feature field trips to Chesapeake Bay, and other natural areas, workshops and group lobbying, a Congressional reception, lots of helpful information on protecting wildlife, habitat and especially endangered species.

Learn from and teach other Auduboners. If you want a registration form please send your name, address, and phone by April 1, 1992 to:

Audubon Convention Office
4150 Darley Ave. #5
Boulder, CO 80303

**AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL UNION
OF NORTH AMERICA
ANNUAL MEETING
AMES, IOWA, JUNE 24-27**

We have been asked by the AOU planning committee to provide volunteer help. People will be needed to staff a sales booth, serve as shuttle drivers, run slide projectors, and work on local field trips.

This is a great opportunity to meet other birders from across the continent. Our local chapter will receive some of the proceeds generated from this meeting. Of course you are interested in helping, so if you cannot get to our chapter meetings, please call Sherry Dragula or Mike Meetz.

BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY EVENTS - 1992

February 15	Saturday, 7:30 a.m., Owl Prowl
February 20	Thursday, 7:30 PM - Meeting, Dr. Richard Schultz, "Local Forestation Project on land treated with sludge"
February 29-March 1	Saylorville Eagle Watch - Corps of Engineers and Dallas County Conservation Board
March 14	Saturday - Field Trip to watch eagles at Red Rock
March 19	Thursday, 7:30 PM - Meeting, Malvin Moe "Prairie Chickens in Southern Iowa"
March 21	Saturday - Field trip to Watch Waterfowl
April 16	Thursday, 7:30 PM - Meeting, Laura Jackson, DNR Nongame Biologist "Birding Costa Rica"
April 18	Saturday - Field Trip to Tieg's Marsh, Shorebirds & Waterfowl
April 25	Saturday - Field Trip to local marshes
May 2	Saturday - Field Trip to McFarland Park to see Warblers & Wildflowers
May 9	Saturday - Field Trip to Brookside Park to see Warblers & Wildflowers
May 21	Thursday, 7:30 PM - Meeting, Tom Rosburg "Iowa's Loess Hills"
May 29-31	Friday-Sunday, Loess Hills Seminar and Field Trip
June 6	Saturday - Birder's Breakfast and Hike, Ledges State Park
June 13-19	National Audubon Society Convention, Washington, D.C.
June 24-27	American Ornithological Union Annual Meeting, Ames, Iowa

Our regular meeting place is Room 181, Design Center, ISU campus. Meeting place and Field Trips are subject to change. Field Trip starting times and meeting place will be printed in the monthly newsletter and announced at monthly meetings. For further information call Sherry Dragula, President at 292-4014 or Mike Meetz, Field Trip Chair at 382-2534.

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RENEW

