

N. W. Corner  
Hendrickson Marsh  
Loggerh.  
Shrike

Big Bluestem Audubon Society, Ames, Iowa  
January, 1984  
v. 17, no. 5

John Stampe, Pres. 294-3370  
Tom Davis, Vice-Pres. 292-1869  
Laura Marek, Sec. 292-9762  
Judy Shearer, Treas. 292-4430  
Judy van der Linden, Ed. 232-3450

Judy's - Newslet. - Signed up -  
1-2 hr. per issue 1/10/84  
almost 200 now

31 Bluestem Flyer  
Feb. 1 next Bd. meetg. → 7:30 - Here

Bd. → Power to handle issues which come \$40 once, \$40 fee - tot. \$80  
up quickly → Act as the Bd.  
Black's prairie - occas. gets sprayed

JANUARY MEETING

WHEN: Tuesday, January 10, at 7:30 p.m.  
WHERE: Room 210, Bessey Hall, ISU campus. (Please note -- because class is not in session at ISU, the doors of Bessey Hall will be locked. For our meeting, doors at the northwest corner of the building will be open from 7:15-7:45 only! Please be prompt!)  
WHO: Steve Lekwa, conservation unit ranger for the Story County Conservation Board  
TOPIC: The Prairie Resource in Iowa

Story City - Doolittle prairie

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

January Field Trip -- A trip to the Des Moines Botanical Center will be held Saturday, Jan. 14. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking area south of C.Y. Stevens Auditorium. It is possible that part of the group may eat lunch and birdwatch on the way back to Ames. Admission fee to the center is \$.50.

Publicity Committee -- Anyone interested in helping with publicity for the society is encouraged to attend a Publicity Committee meeting, Wednesday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m. at Cindy Hildebrand's house, 3323 Harcourt, Ames. We will discuss projects for the year, including help with the Chickadee Checkoff. If you have questions or can't come that night please call Cindy at 232-3807.

Education Committee -- The scheduled January meeting of the Education Committee has been postponed from Jan. 5 to Jan. 26 to accommodate committee members' schedules. It will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Judy van der Linden's home, 610 9th, Ames.

Effectiveness Workshop -- An Audubon chapter effectiveness workshop will be held Feb. 18-19 at Dubuque. Contact John Stampe after Jan. 15 for more information.  
Cindy or John

Bird Feeder Survey -- The orange form enclosed in this month's newsletter enables you to participate in a bird feeder survey, Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 28-29, sponsored by the Iowa Ornithologists Union and the Iowa Conservation Commission. Follow instructions on the form carefully for recording birds and sending your results. Contact Hank Zaletel (Ames--work, 239-1379) or Colo--home, 377-2889) with questions.

Feb. → Next Conserv. Comm. \* Meetg. \*

On Dec. 16, Sherry Dragula and Cindy Hildebrand represented the Bluestem society at an Iowa Conservation Commission public hearing on a proposal to add six



Ames high prairie burn

BBAS we are members of the Nat. Conserv.

1/25 Sierra Club Meetg.

more areas to a list of Iowa sites where steel shot is required for waterfowl hunting. We spoke in favor of a statewide ban on lead shot and presented our reasons: the large number of waterfowl and other wildlife poisoned by lead shot every year, and the effectiveness of steel shot as an alternative to lead.

Cindy also spoke as an individual against another Commission proposal to designate the snapping turtle, garter snake and timber rattlesnake as "nuisance" species. Final action on both these proposals will be taken during Commission meetings on Jan. 3rd and 4th, which Sherry hopes to attend. For more information, come to the January meeting or contact Cindy (232-3807) or Sherry (292-4014).

\* \* \*

Thirty brave souls participated in the Audubon society's Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 17 in bone-chilling cold. Forty-five species of birds were identified (see enclosed table), including Gray Partridges, seen for the first time on an Ames-area count. Other unusual sightings included-- Canada Geese, Cooper's Hawk, Common Snipe, Long-eared Owl, Brown Thrasher and Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

\* \* \*

Income tax time is rapidly approaching. Remember this year you again have the opportunity to donate part or all of your state income tax return to programs supporting non-game wildlife. Enter the amount you wish to donate on the line entitled "Fish and Wildlife Protection Fund Contribution" at the bottom of the Iowa tax form. Contributions will be used to purchase habitat, restore declining species, do research and educate the public. Bluestem members may wish to help publicize the fund by distributing information about it to tax offices and other locations. Dave Newhouse will let us know when material becomes available from the Conservation Commission.

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THOUGHTS AFIELD -- a column by Tom Davis

"New Year's Resolutions for the Environment" -- The following bit of new-year, personal evaluation may involve a short stroll through your backyard or around your house. It may involve a few excursions and a little of your hard-earned money. I offer here a few items to ponder for the upcoming year. They require taking a little more time, a bit more thought or a bit more personal involvement to help each of us define our personal values on wildlife, environmental problems and environmental awareness. Consider the following: 1) This year, how can I improve my yard, woodlot or farm to better accommodate or attract wildlife? Can it be done with more plantings, less mowing, different specialized bird seed, more or specialized feeders, several brush piles, wind breaks, or more birdhouses or erosion control? Planning now for a couple of improvements will make the process easier in the spring.

2) Take a few minutes next time you cross the Des Moines River to enjoy the view. West of Ames, one can compare the wandering river valley and wooded hills with a dredged, B-line canal or a white-capped, windswept reservoir that has changed the diverse habitat of the river bottom. Think about the economical, financial and environmental advantages of a dam or large-scale irrigation project. How would a hypothetical dam or irrigation project on the Skunk River or Squaw Creek, for example, proposed for next year, affect my life? What is my inner reaction to such a proposal? Why do I feel this way? Maybe on my next business trip or next Sunday afternoon I can take a little side trip to a site that is creating controversy or view watershed management practices in the surrounding area and make my own conclusions.

3) What are my thoughts about no-till farming; tiling and filling of wetlands; preservation and limited use of a tract of public land versus conservation and applied management of that land; reintroduction of various wildlife species into new areas of the state; national, municipal and personal use of water resources; the level of awareness of environmental problems by the general public?

If asked about these topics, can I briefly express how I feel and why? If not, consider choosing one topic and reading a little about alternatives and disadvantages.

I am asking only for a little armchair thought at first, similar to the process used to make other new year's resolutions. Then a short stroll, a short exploratory trip to the library or around the countryside or a letter and a \$10 check to just one environmental group that you think supports your ideas. I guess all it takes is a small spark to start an initial fire of concern; then a few minutes to logically clarify why you feel like you do. I hope each of us can add to our fire of concern this year and become a little more aware and active about the state of the environment around us. Several seemingly small individual new year's resolutions may help all of us together to make 1984 a good year.

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DECISIONS, DECISIONS

Bluestem society members should come prepared on Jan. 10 to make decisions on three items:

1) Whether to help sponsor financially an "Earthlore" presentation in Ames, featuring Dennis Olson, a dramatist/naturalist from Minnesota. Ames area Project Eco teacher Nancy Kurrle is asking area conservation groups to each donate \$50-100, if possible, to help cover the cost of Olson's planned Feb. 20-22 visit. One evening show for the general public (which may be Olson's depiction of Professor Avian Guano, complete with bird calls) and other presentations for junior high and upper elementary pupils are tentatively scheduled. Olson dons a costume for each of his depictions and combines his ability as an actor and his knowledge of nature into an hour-long show that Kurrle highly recommends.

2) Whether you, as members, can donate part of one or two Saturday afternoons per year to help compile the newsletter. The publications committee wants to apply for a bulk mail permit that will save considerably in postage; however, meeting permit regulations will require more manpower per mailing. A pool of 6-8 volunteers will be needed -- a different two persons will help the newsletter editor each month. The permit will cost \$40 per year, but will mean mailing costs per issue of the Bluestem Flyer will drop from \$40 to about \$12, a savings of approximately \$280 per year.

3) How to address the concerns of regional Audubon members who feel the society's fight against the Garrison Diversion project in North Dakota needs more attention. Bluestem chapter members have been asked to state whether they feel a) there should be an office in North Dakota to organize grassroots opposition to the project (certain Audubon members believe trying to fight the project from the society's regional office in Minneapolis or from the national office in New York will be futile without the support of North Dakotans); b) the office should be sponsored by the National Audubon Society, another environmental group or a coalition of these groups, and c) the Bluestem chapter will be able to contribute money to help support such an office.

The executive board of the Bluestem chapter has voted to support the idea of a coalition manning an office in Jamestown, N.D., to fight Garrison. Board members said they would be willing to support the office financially, but did not decide how much to recommend donating.

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MORE TIPS

Following are six more tips that can increase the effectiveness of letters you write to congressmen. The tips are adapted from the book How You Can Influence Congress: The Complete Handbook for the Citizen Lobbyist by G. Alderson and E. Sentman.

*Support  
concept  
of  
N. Dak  
off.  
1/10/84*

1. Don't mention your membership in a citizen's organization. The individual's letter is more influential than an organization-inspired letter.
2. Remember that a form letter has less than one-tenth the impact of one you write yourself. Your own words are more effective than slogans and phrases taken from other sources.
3. Don't send carbons or Xeroxed copies.
4. Be firm, but don't use wisecracks, show anger, or make derogatory remarks. Instead of threatening to vote against the legislator, offer to provide further information on the issue.
5. Try not to write to a given legislator more than once a month on the same issue. Your extra energy would be better spent convincing friends to write or sign letters you've written, or in organizing other people on the issue.
6. When appropriate, thank or praise your legislator or those from other states. Praise will encourage them to become leaders on the issue, and can help compensate for the loss of industrial lobby dollars.

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