

# BIG BLUESTEM FLYER

Volume 26, No. 6

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

February 1991

## MONTHLY MEETING

### URBAN PESTICIDES & WILDLIFE: A BALANCING ACT

**Jim Pease, ISU Extension Wildlife Biologist**

Thursday, February 21, 7:30 PM,  
at the State Forest Nursery, 2404 S. Duff, Ames  
Please note that this is a change from our regular meeting place.  
You can park on the driveway beyond the parking lot if the lot fills up.

## FIELD TRIPS

### OWLING- Central Iowa Sites

Saturday, February 16, meet at 7:30 AM  
in the west parking lot of the Design Center, ISU

### EAGLE WATCH - Red Rock Reservoir

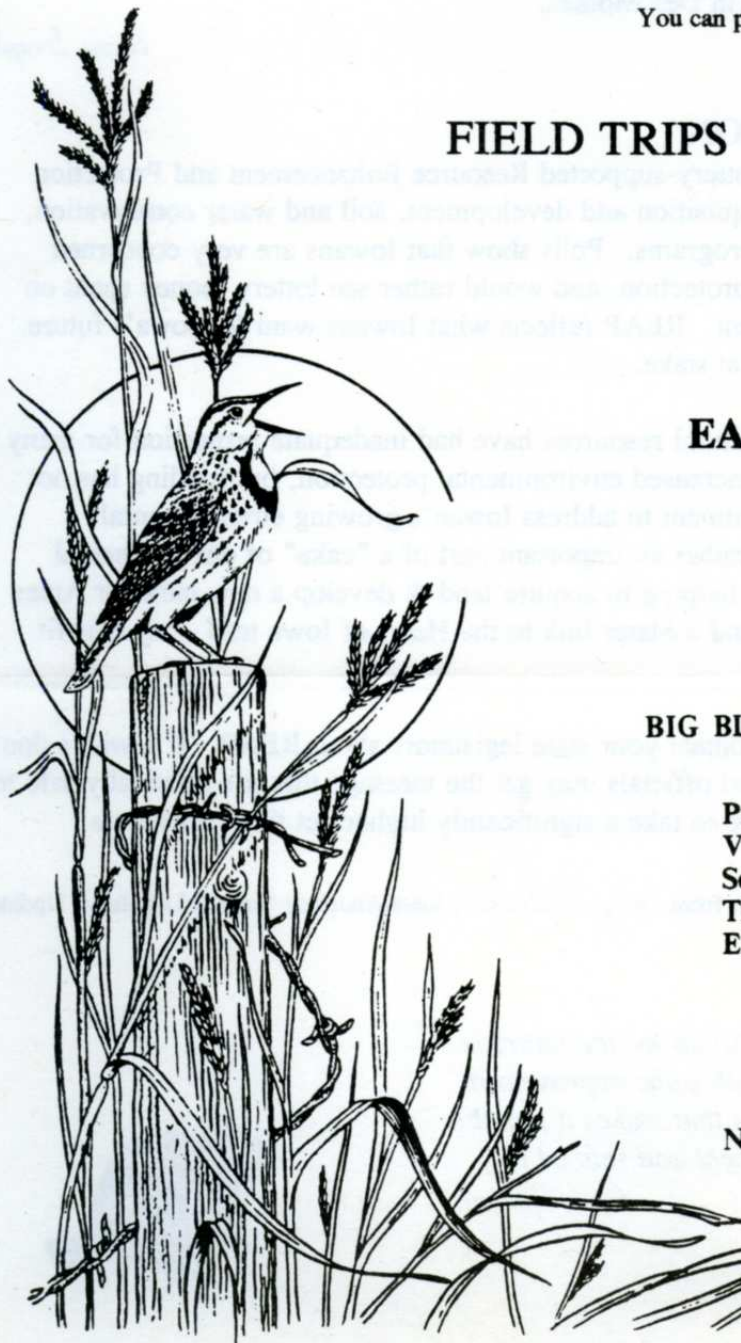
Saturday, March 2, meet at 7:30 AM  
in the west parking lot of the Design Center, ISU  
(see note inside)

### BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS 1990 - 1991

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## WATCHING EAGLES

In addition to our March 2nd Field Trip you will have a chance to see eagles on March 9th & 10th. The Department of Natural Resources is holding "Bald Eagle Appreciation Days" on the 9th & 10th at the Pella Community Center (2 blocks south of the square). An indoor program will be held every hour from 9-4 on Sat, and from 11-4 on Sun. They will have a live peregrine falcon and live eagles at the indoor program. Eagle watching will occur at the iron bridge at Red Rock Reservoir. Since publicity has been out for some time on our March 2nd Eagle Watch we will go ahead with our plans.

*Sherry Dragula*

## CONTRIBUTE TO THE "CHICKADEE CHECKOFF"

The "Chickadee Checkoff" symbol has returned and is perched next to the Fish and Wildlife Fund contribution line on your Iowa Income Tax form. Please remember to contribute to the Chickadee Checkoff. 100 % of your contribution goes to the nongame program and helps wildlife ranging from frogs to peregrine falcons to river otters. 1991 plans include: a frog & toad survey, monitoring heron rookeries, finalizing Breeding Bird Atlas data, and the peregrine project in Des Moines.

*Sherry Dragula*

## R.E.A.P. PROPOSED FOR ELIMINATION

Governor Branstad's budget proposes that the lottery-supported Resource Enhancement and Protection fund be eliminated. REAP monies support land acquisition and development, soil and water conservation, conservation education and other natural resource programs. Polls show that Iowans are very concerned about the environment, support environmental protection, and would rather see lottery money spent on environmental protection than economic development. REAP reflects what Iowans want for Iowa's future. Approximately \$20 million for natural resources is at stake.

REAP was established in part because Iowa's natural resources have had inadequate protection for many years. Iowa laws and federal laws have asked for increased environmental protection, but funding has not kept pace. REAP represents a much-needed commitment to address Iowan's growing environmental concerns. REAP is not "frosting on the cake" but rather an important part of a "cake" of environmental protection that is still too small. Locally, REAP is helping to acquire land & develop a new park for Ames and for Huxley. Doolittle and Kelly area prairies and a Slater link to the Heart of Iowa trail may benefit from REAP funding.

Please take a few minutes in the next week to contact your state legislators about REAP. If Iowan's don't respond strongly to the "wipe-out" of REAP, elected officials may get the message that it's politically safe to gut environmental spending. REAP should not have to take a significantly higher cut than other state programs, and it should not be wiped out.

(excerpted by *Sherry Dragula* from *Cindy Hildebrand's* Iowa Audubon Council Legislative Update)

*The best we can do for the future is  
to maintain with some improvement  
the environment that makes it possible  
to have a decent and refined life.*

*D. C. Edwards*



## REAP FUNDING CUTS AHEAD

The Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) is one of Iowa's major environmental programs. It was designed to provide much-needed protection of Iowa's present and future resources. This involved land acquisition and development of natural areas, soil and water conservation and conservation education programs.

REAP was established because Iowa's natural resources have had inadequate protection for too many years. REAP is supported by funds generated by the state lottery, is separate from other environmental programs, and shouldn't be confused with other programs.

As a requirement of the REAP program, each county was required to submit a 5 year plan and a 1 year expenditure plan. County committees are composed of many volunteers who have spent many hours and much effort to develop these plans. The number of proposals submitted for funding consideration far outnumber the amounts of money available. This is direct evidence supporting the need for REAP and provides proof that the REAP program is underfunded.

We need to maintain and expand REAP as soon as possible. Iowa clearly faces a budget crisis, and if REAP has to take a cut, its cut percentage should not be any greater than any of the other state programs. REAP must remain intact as a program. Write and call your state senator and representative today!

*Mike Meatz*

## BOONE BIRD COUNT

Over 40 birders scoured the hills surrounding Boone on January first in the Sixth Annual Boone County Christmas Bird Count. Winds were light, the sky was sunny, and temperatures soared to nearly 30 degrees on the count day, a considerable improvement over the previous week. Highlights were 65 Red-headed Woodpecker, 1 Fox Sparrow, 77 Red-tailed Hawk, 6 Northern Saw-whet Owl, 5 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 13 Northern Bobwhite, 7 Common Grackle, 23 Snow Bunting, and 23 Eastern Bluebird. Also noteworthy were the low numbers of some species. One 186 Song Sparrows were seen, no Pine Siskin, 1 Brown Creeper, and no Golden-crowned Kinglet.

In all it was a fun time. Each year it is interesting to watch the results as the birders report their unusual stories. Kay Niyo's group watched a pair of sharpies chase a flock of "Squawking" House Sparrows. Steve Dinsmore put on his waders and sloshed through some mud in search of Swamp Sparrows [*Where did he find mud in that cold? Ed.*] The Edwards's recorded "a zillion" Red-headed Woodpeckers, which were "everywhere" in Ledges State Park [*Really, there were. Ed.*] Count Day is January first next year, and we hope to see you there.

*Erik Munson*

## GOOD GRIEF! WHAT NEXT?

Environmentally speaking, according to research chemist Martin Hocking in a recent *Science* article, Styrofoam cups take less energy and are easier to recycle than a paper cup. Paper takes 12 times as much steam, 36 times as much electricity and twice as much cooling water, plus the foam cup takes only 3 percent of the inorganic chemicals used in making a paper cup. The adhesive resins in paper cups make them impossible to recycle; foam can be recycled into other insulation and packaging products. Of course, as he notes, there is still a need to look at glass, hard plastic, and china cups for their economics of manufacture and the resources and pollutants in the washing process. Maybe we should just stop drinking?

## AUDUBON 1991 CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS

**J**oin one of Audubon's 1991 workshops and do some on-site learning! Workshops last from 6 days to 2 weeks and take place in the United States and in foreign countries. For a full-color brochure, write: Audubon Ecology Camps & Workshops, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Rd., Greenwich, Conn. 06831.

### Big Bend National Park, Texas

This Audubon workshop is designed both to explore the park's landscape and to discuss the conservation issues that will influence its future. Coupled with unparalleled biological and geological diversity (it has the highest number of bird species--430--of any U.S. national park), Big Bend is a super area for wildlife and wildlife habitat investigation. Dates: April 6-13.

## HOPE FOR THE TROPICS

**H**ope for the Tropics, Audubon's next Television Special, focuses on the rain forests of Costa Rica. Hosted by actress Lauren Bacall, the program examines possible forestry alternatives to help save Central America's prized tropics. Meet seven people from around the world who are making a difference in Costa Rica's conservation policy, including: Field biologists taking inventory of species found in Braulio Carrillo National Park; an American forestry expert discussing alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture; a wood-products manufacturer working to protect rain forests; and a German zoologist heading an iguana reintroduction project with a hidden bonus.

*Hope for the Tropics* will air on TBS SuperStation on Sunday, February 24, at 10:00 p.m. (EST); February 25, TBA; March 2 at 9:05 a.m.(EST); and March 3, TBA.

## BIRDERS' HOTLINE

319/338-9881 for state-wide sightings.  
712/262-5958 for northwest Iowa sightings.

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