



Big Bluestem Audubon Society
Ames, Iowa

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Bluestem Flyer

Volume 21, No. 6 February, 1987

Monthly Meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, February 17 at 7:30 p.m.

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

WHO: Dr. Erwin Klaas, Assistant Leader of the Wildlife Unit & Professor of Animal Ecology at ISU

TOPIC: "Behavior of Fall & Wintering Snow Geese"

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Owl Field Trip -- Erik Munson will lead a field trip on Saturday, February 21 to the Ledges State Park area to look for Northern Saw-whet and Long-eared owls. Meet in the parking lot directly south of C.Y. Stephens at 8:30 a.m. for the morning trip. Call Erik for more information at 292-1712.

Board Meeting -- The society's executive board will meet March 3 at 7:30 p.m. at the Home of Dave Edwards, 2308 State Street.

Iowa on TV -- Iowa Public Television presents a 4-part series on Iowa's natural resources, "The Land Between Two Rivers", Mondays at 8 p.m. beginning February 9. The series will be repeated Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. Topics, in order, are woodlands, prairies, wetlands, and hills.

News and Notes

Bird Count Results/Boone -- Participants in the Boone County Christmas Bird Count on January 1 saw 49 species of birds -- including Eastern Screech Owl and Long-eared Owl. Cooper's Hawk and Bald Eagle were also among species seen by the 35 field observers and 16 feeder watchers who participated. Mark Widrlechner of near Ames organized the count and compiled results for the second year.

In addition to those named above, other species seen were Accipiter Sp., Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Common Snipe, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Short-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker and Northern Flicker.

Also Horned Lark, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow and Harris' Sparrow.

Also Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow and Northern Saw-whet Owl. Birds seen during count week but not on count day included Sharp-shinned Hawk, Rufous-sided Towhee, Lapland Longspur and Brown-headed Cowbird.

Participants were Mark Ankeny, LaVonne Arendsee, Jon & Joyce Bahrenfus, Cliff Bergman, Barb Bettis, Joe & Burdene Borich, Barney Cook, William Cunningham, Steve Dinsmore, Sherry Dragula, Tom & Lisa Earles, Dave & Jeanne Edwards and Bruce Ehresman.

Also Kay Gibson, Neil Goepfinger, Walter Goepfinger, Edward Goodman, Darrell & Jane Hanel, Leonora Hasstedt, Rex Heer, Sue Kemmerer, Juanita King, Thomas & Beverly Klamm, Paul Martsching, Kim McDermott, Diane Mumm, Erik Munson, and Woodrow & Betty Lou Myers.

Also Steve Richards, Bill & Donna Ryan, David Sauke, Pat Schlarbaum, Judy Shearer, Larry Sidmore, Sue Sidmore, Jim Sinclair, Sharon Thompson, Marilyn Vaughan, Darryl & Sue Wilson, Hank Zaletel and Edwin Zonderholm.

Several birds were inadvertently omitted from the list of species seen during the Ames-area Christmas Bird Count as reported in last month's Flyer. They were Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Common Bobwhite, and Ring-necked Pheasant.

Brigham Dies -- We were sad to learn of the death December 22 of Edward Brigham III, former vice-president of Audubon's North Midwest Region. Ed died of a heart attack at his home in Minnesota. He headed our region during a difficult period for Audubon, and eventually resigned, but remained a dedicated conservationist. Cards may be addressed to his family at 7400 Oak Park Village Drive, Apartment 2, St. Louis Park, MN 55426.

February Bird Puzzles -- Try to determine which bird's name is described by each of the short phrases below. Answers at the February meeting.

1. What the stone did in the water
2. Sycamore stoop
3. Chinese Boat, Inc.
4. Small Bill
5. Gillete invoice

Answers To January's Puzzles Are:

1. Party Game -- Pintail
2. Lunch time -- Sandwich Tern
3. Woodcutter's Spin -- Forster's Tern
4. Robert on the golf course -- Bobolink
6. Slow mover -- Creeper

NAS 1987 Convention -- National Audubon Society invites all members to make plans to attend a national convention August 24-29 at Bellingham, Washington, located on Puget Sound between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. The program will highlight the Pacific Northwest and its "Ancient Forests", but will also be national and international in scope. More information and registration forms will be available in the coming months.

Birder's Notes

Thursday, January 29 -- This relatively mild, snow-less winter may be great for heating bills, but it's tough on most birdwatchers. Except for our usual winter residents, there just hasn't been much visible bird activity. There have been two Snowy Owls spotted about 2½ miles north and 2 miles east of Whitten, Iowa. For more information about their whereabouts, call Mark Proescholdt (496-5219).

If you've already seen the owls, there are a few other things to do these gray February days. An annual raptor survey is now being conducted throughout Iowa to learn which raptors live here in winter. This is the tenth year of the survey. If you wish to participate and you are able to identify hawks and other raptors, call Hank Zaletel at 377-2889 as soon as possible. Also, now is the time to clean out and repair bluebird houses. They should be put up by March 1st so that the earliest returning bluebirds will find them. Purple Martin houses should be cleaned out and opened up by March 15.

Finally, those of you who participated in the statewide feeder survey the weekend of January 22-25 should remember to mail your completed forms.

Conservation News

Local -- The Iowa Legislature is back in session and many conservation issue bills have been or will be introduced. Among the more important issues likely to come up are groundwater quality, leaking underground storage tanks and funding for the Resource Enhancement Program. Contact Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807), Legislative Chair for the Iowa Audubon Council, for more information on these and other issues.

You can have a tremendous influence on the outcome of legislation (at both the local and national levels) by writing to or telephoning your representatives. Write as an individual, concerned citizen and be specific, brief, knowledgeable and explain why you support or oppose a bill. On the telephone, identify yourself, the bill number and issue, and briefly explain

your position. Letters on local issues should be addressed to: The Honorable (Full Name); State Senator or Representative; State Capitol; Des Moines, Iowa 50319. Switch board telephone numbers for legislators are: House of Representative members, 515-281-3221; Senators, 515-281-3371.

National -- For up-to-date information on national legislation call The Congressional Reference Service at (202)225-1772, and give them the bill's number or official title, if possible. The NAS Hotline telephone number is (202)547-9017, for information on bills that NAS is following.

Some federal issues likely to come up this session include: **Clean Water Act**, now awaiting the president's signature; **Acid Rain**, in what may be an important year for this legislation, since last year's bills to substantially reduce air pollutants enjoyed unprecedented support by congressmen; **Endangered Species Act**, which easily passed the House last year but got stuck in the Senate. Audubon supports increased protection of plants, repeal of an exemption permitting profitable sale of peregrine falcons, and more money for species recovery; Superfund implementation, to clean up toxic substances.

Get pens and paper ready to write your congressmen about these and other issues. More information will be available as each issue is addressed.

—Sherry Dragula, 292-4014

Just For Fun

Northwoods Winter Fun -- The Northwoods Audubon Center at Sandstone, Minnesota is offering 1 day cross-country ski trips on February 21 and 22, a North Shore ski trip, February 27-March 1, and a ski weekend, March 14-15. Hiking and exploring trips to Helen Allison Savanna and Black Dog Preserve are April 22 and May 27, respectively. One-day canoe trips are scheduled on Minnesota rivers for March 28, April 26 and June 6. For more information, call Judy van der Linden at 232-3450 or contact the center directly (Route 1, Sandstone, MN 55072; (612)245-2648.

Thursday, January 29 - This relatively mild winter may be great for nesting birds but a rough on most birdwatchers. The eggs for our usual winter residents, their just have their first visible bird activity. There have been two Snows (Oule) reported about 20-30 miles from Ames.

Funds could come from several sources, and the program would cost each Iowan less money per year than a tank of gas. The biggest need is support; please contact your legislators in February and ask them to support the REP program. There will be a special effort by REP supporters to visit their legislators during the week of February 23-27. If you can visit the Capitol then, or want more information, please contact Cindy Hildebrand at 232-3807-- brochures, information and possibly lodging are available.

And now is the time to start your birding. Don't miss it. This should be a good year for birding. The weather is just what you need. Don't miss it. This should be a good year for birding. The weather is just what you need. Don't miss it. This should be a good year for birding. The weather is just what you need.

Construction Notes
The first construction in Iowa to be completed in 1990 was the new Ames Airport. The new airport is a major improvement over the old one. It is a major improvement over the old one. It is a major improvement over the old one.

Local underground storage tanks (USTs) are being replaced. The new tanks are more secure and less likely to leak. The new tanks are more secure and less likely to leak. The new tanks are more secure and less likely to leak.

Help The Iowa REP

Iowa's natural resources need REP, and REP needs your help. REP is the Iowa **Resource Enhancement Program**, developed by an alliance of groups concerned with natural resources (including the Iowa Audubon Council.) It would provide additional money for water quality, soil conservation, natural areas, outdoor recreation facilities, and conservation education and research. It is designed to fill unmet needs in Iowa and help protect and enhance Iowa's natural resource heritage for the 21st century.

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