

BIG BLUESTEM FLYER

Volume 27, No. 8

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

April 1992

MONTHLY MEETING

BIRDING COSTA RICA

Laura & DeWaine Jackson, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Thursday, April 16, 7:30 PM

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

DeWaine Jackson is the Forest Game Biologist for the Iowa D.N.R., a position he has had since 1984. He studied waterfowl for his masters degree and studied bobcats for his Ph.D. He has a keen interest in wildlife photography. Since 1985, Laura Jackson has been the Nongame Biologist for the Iowa D.N.R. She studied bobcats at Colorado State University for her masters degree. As the Nongame Biologist she has worked on the Peregrine Falcon reintroduction, on Bald Eagle Appreciation and a host of other programs. When she's not working on her wildlife projects she likes to compete in bi-athalons and tri-athalons. DeWaine and Laura will share their slides of a trip they took to bird in Costa Rica.

4 FIELD TRIPS

Shorebirds & Waterfowl

Tieg's Marsh and north Story County

Saturday, April 18, 7:30 AM

Colo Pond's and south Story County

Saturday, April 25, 7:30 AM

Meet at the ISU Design Center, west parking lot

Warblers & Wildflowers

McFarland Park, north of Ames

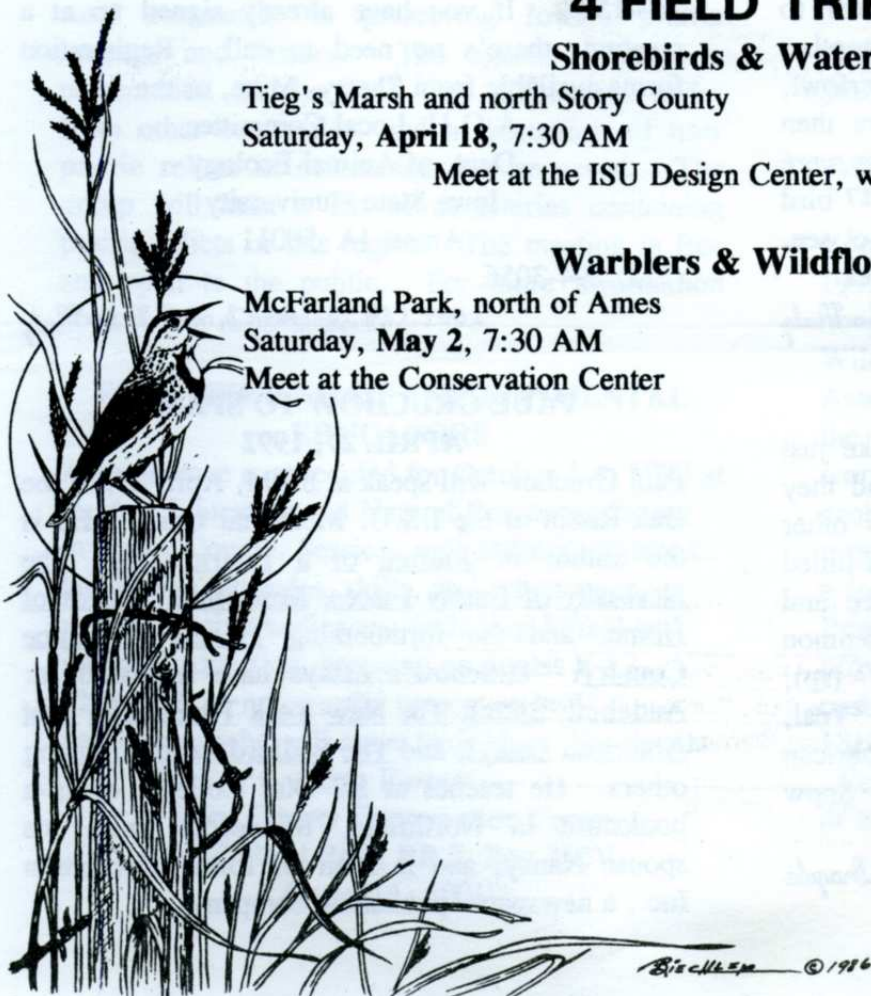
Saturday, May 2, 7:30 AM

Meet at the Conservation Center

Brookside Park, Ames

Saturday, May 9, 7:30 AM

Meet at the north parking lot



BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY

1991-1992

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Newsletter Editor and Membership Chair

David Edwards, 292-3790

Field Trips Chair

Mike Meetz, 382-2534

MARCH 14 FIELD TRIP REPORT

It was supposed to be a trip to see Bald Eagles at Red Rock, but as soon as our group of eight left the big highway, it was apparent that the major event would be the waterfowl. Every farm pond and creek with more than 500 square feet of water had a flotilla of scaup or something. At the highway crossing of the upper end of Red Rock at Runnells and at the overlook nearby, we began to see ducks in great numbers along with some geese and a few eagles. Even a lone Franklin's Gull. We travelled through Pleasantville and then on roads along the north side of Lake Red Rock. The eagle count began to get serious with twos and threes here and there. Most were sitting so we were sure there was no double-counting. A small pond north of the dam had five or six Great Blue Heron on guard. At the DNR eagle watch site we essentially doubled our eagle count by making a careful panoramic scan of the river edges and adjoining trees; 27 were in view there, plus an active Red-tailed Hawk nest.

By then it was growing late and one driver was worried he might miss the ISU basketball game later in the afternoon. We travelled north to Hendricksen's marsh where there was another large concentration of ducks and other waterfowl, plus two more eagles. One car of birders then stopped at Hickory Grove Park where there were more ducks and geese. The final total was 47 bird species. About the only duck that we did not see, but not for lack of trying, was the Wood Duck.

Dave Edwards & Mike Meetz

MARCH 21 FIELD TRIP REPORT

Five lucky birders went to Little Wall Lake just north of Ames on Saturday, March 21, and they observed 20 species of waterfowl and 14 other species of birds. The waterfowl were: Pied-billed and Horned Grebes, Common, Red-breasted and Hooded Mergansers, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Ring-necked Duck, Scaup (sp), Redhead, Canvasback, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Mallard, Canada and Snow Geese, and American Coot.

Sherry Dragula

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION MEETING

The American Ornithologists' Union will meet in Ames June 24-27, 1992. The paper sessions, displays and exhibits will be at the Scheman Center for Continuing Education on the I.S.U. campus. This conference is an excellent way to meet birders and bird professionals from across the continent. Papers will be presented that discuss agricultural changes and the consequences for birds, and research on various species. There will also be exhibits and audio-visual programs. The meeting will include social activities such as a bird calling contest, an Ostrich 5 km run, an icebreaker, Canadian-American softball, a banquet, and local birding trips.

Registrations sent in before May 15 will be \$75 (\$60 for students and \$30 for spouses). After May 15, registration will be \$90 (\$75 for students and \$35 for spouses). One-day only registration will also be available for \$25.

Volunteers are needed to help out during the conference. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Mike Meetz, 382-2534 or Sherry Dragula, 233-1532. If you have already signed up at a meeting, there's no need to call. Registration forms available from Sherry, Mike, or the

A.O.U. Local Committee
Dept. of Animal Ecology
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011

(515) 294-3056.

Sherry Dragula and Mike Meetz

PAUL GRUCHOW TO SPEAK, APRIL 27, 1992

Paul Gruchow will speak at 8 PM, April 27, in the Oak Room of the I.S.U. Memorial Union. He is the author of Journal of a Prairie Year, The Necessity of Empty Places, Minnesota, Images of Home, and the forthcoming Travels in Canoe Country. Gruchow's essays have appeared in: Audubon, Sierra, The New York Times, The Best American Essays, and The Bedford Reader, among others. He teaches at St. Olaf College, owns a bookstore in Northfield, Minnesota, with his spouse Nancy, and is chair of Iowa Information Inc., a newspaper publishing company.

IOWA KESTREL BOX PROGRAM

Iowa originated the idea of a Kestrel nest box program along its Interstate Highway System. Word of its success has spread and many other states have adopted this program. This research, sponsored in part by the Iowa Ornithological Union and performed by member Dan Varland, is summarized in a beautifully illustrated eight-page booklet *Establishing a Nest Box Program for American Kestrels Along an Interstate Highway*. It is available at no cost while supplies last from:

Office of Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

CENTRAL IOWA PRAIRIE NETWORK MEETING

The next meeting of the Central Iowa Prairie Network will be held on Sat. April 11, at 12:30 PM, at the DNR State Forest Nursery, Ames. The topic will be: "Forgotten but not gone" - the role of rural cemeteries in preserving Iowa's prairie heritage and history. The agenda includes a presentation on the Polk City Cemetery, slides from other cemeteries, and a discussion of how prairie relicts in cemeteries can be saved. The group will start a list of cemeteries containing prairie relicts in this region. The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information contact Jean Cormack, 232-7593.

FALL MEETING OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATORS

A conference is scheduled for October 1-4, 1992 at the 4-H Education and Natural Resources Center in Boone County. Sessions will address awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and action steps, as well as specific audiences, including formal and informal education, focusing on grades K-12. There will be noteworthy presenters and participants who will share their ideas. For details

Cele Burnett
Story County Conservation Center
McFarland Park, RR 2, Box 272V
Ames, IA 50010

STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD EVENTS

April 11, Saturday, 10 AM - Noon, Indian Creek Ikes, Tree-planting Service Project (Uncle Ikes), (Registration requested).

April 23, Thursday, 4:30 - 5:30 PM, Conservation Center, Kids for Saving Earth, environmental club for kids (Registration required; fee charged)

April 26, Sunday, 2 PM, YMCA Interpretive Center, Blooming Wildflowers Walk. (Located at Scholl Road off Ontario Street in west Ames). Meet at the parking lot.

May 2, Saturday, 9:30 PM, Conservation Center/Observatory Star Party: Grand Tour of the Galaxies.

May 5, Tuesday, 11 AM - 1 PM, Conservation Center, Senior Citizens Program: Butterfly Gardening (Registration Required; fee charged for lunch)

May 11, Monday, 7:30 PM, Conservation Center, Story County Conservation Board meeting.

WORKSHOP ON FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR NONGAME RESOURCES

You are invited to spend a day, Saturday, May 2, 1992, exploring ideas about funding Iowa's nongame programs. Sponsored jointly by the Iowa Wildlife Society, Iowa Wildlife Federation, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, this workshop will address the political and financial problems in maintaining and enhancing such programs. The goal of the workshop is to establish a long-term funding mechanism for the Nongame Program in Iowa. Speakers from other states will provide some resources. A nominal fee will cover costs of the meeting at the Best Western Motel at 1810 Army Post Road in Des Moines.

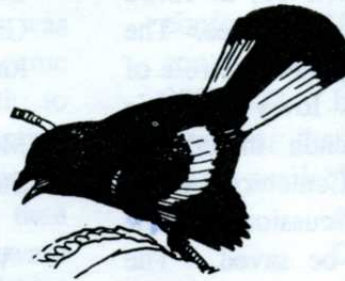
Contact Laura Jackson at our meeting this month or at 2311 Pecan Drive, Madrid, IA 50156.

BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY EVENTS - 1992

April 16	Thursday, 7:30 PM - Meeting, Laura & DeWaine Jackson, DNR Biologists "Birding Costa Rica"
April 18	Saturday - Field Trip to Tieg's Marsh, and north Story County, Shorebirds & Waterfowl
April 25	Saturday - Field Trip to south Story County marshes, Shorebirds & Waterfowl
May 2	Saturday - Field Trip to McFarland Park, Warblers & Wildflowers
May 9	Saturday - Field Trip to Brookside Park, 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 233-1532 or Mike Meetz, Field Trip Chair at 382-2534.

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