



Big Bluestem Audubon Society
Ames, Iowa

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For membership information,
contact Janet Graver, 1468
Breckinridge Ct., Ames.

Bluestem Flyer

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WHEN: Tuesday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m.

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

WHO: Bill Horine of Nevada

TOPIC: "The Wings of Spring in Nebraska" -- a photographic tour through the wildlife areas of central Nebraska and the bird life found there as spring returns! Bill invites others who have slides from the society's March field trip to Nebraska to bring them along for viewing, in a slide carousel, if possible.

Waterfowl Migration Field Trip -- Saturday, April 6 at 9 a.m., co-sponsored by the Story County Conservation Board and Big Bluestem Audubon Society. Meet in the parking lot south of C. Y. Stephens Auditorium at 9 a.m., or drive directly to Hendrickson's Marsh (take Hwy. 65 south of Hwy. 30 at Colo for eight miles, then watch for marsh signs at Collins and take county road E63 about four miles to the marsh). Meet at the southwest corner of the marsh.

Audubon Trail Work Day -- Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., organized by the Education Committee, Tom Davis, chairman (292-1869), to help commemorate J. J. Audubon's birthday. Meet at the trail's entrance in Brookside Park. Tom wants to put in 15 more nature trail marker posts, paint numbers on them and do some general trail cleanup. He suggests a warbler watching session at 8 a.m. so everyone can concentrate on work later! All work equipment will be provided. Rain date is Ap. 20.

Iowa Audubon Council Meeting -- Saturday, April 13 at Grinnell College's Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA) near Kellogg. All Audubon members are invited. The meeting includes a movie on problems of the Colorado River and a talk on the economics of acid rain. For more information, contact Judy van der Linden or Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807).

(cont. on p. 4.)

AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING

A budget of \$1450 for 1985-86 was adopted. Janet Graver announced she can no longer serve as membership committee chair. Anyone interested in the position should contact Sherry Dragula or Cindy Hildebrand. Iowa's "Earth Care Week," May 5-11, was also announced and briefly discussed. Members also discussed the possible coordination of meeting times and activities of the Sierra Club, Story County Conservation Board and Audubon. Pete van der Linden gave the Bird of the Month report on nothatches, and Tom Davis gave the program on bird eggs.

BLUESTEM ELECTIONS

The society's annual election of officers and board members will be held at the May meeting. There will be one vacancy on the executive board (two other board members whose terms expire, Cindy Hildebrand and Judy van der Linden, are willing to serve again) and the office of vice president will be vacant. Anyone interested in either position should contact Sherry Dragula or Cindy Hildebrand. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the time of the election.

AUDUBON'S 200TH BIRTHDAY -- APRIL 26

April 26, 1985, marks the bicentennial anniversary of John James Audubon's birthday. Who was this man whose name is attached to our well-known environmental organization?

John James Audubon was restless, headstrong and sometimes irresponsible. He was a continuous concern to his parents, a disappointment to his in-laws, and, on more than one occasion, he neglected his wife and children. He was a romantic, a wanderer and at times, a teller of tall tales.

Audubon is remembered today primarily for his paintings. He was both a self-taught artist and naturalist. For the first time, his works showed birds drawn as they appeared in their habitat, interacting with their surroundings and with each other. Each of the prints in The Birds of America (1827-1838) combines a scientist's attention to detail with the romance, flair and emotion of an artist. Audubon also wrote the accompanying five-volume text; Ornithological Biography (1831-1839), which provides technical descriptions of the birds and their habits.

(Excerpted from "John James Audubon -- The Birds of America," National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)



BIRD ATLAS PROJECT -- The Iowa Conservation Commission and the Iowa Ornithologists' Union are starting a 5-year project this spring to map the distribution of Iowa's nesting birds. To produce this bird atlas, about 1,000 3x3-mile blocks have been established across Iowa. Volunteers select blocks and attempt to determine which bird species nest in each block. Ideally, this will involve finding a bird's nest, but other information (eg. a singing male or an adult carrying food to a nest) is also useful. It is hoped that this will give us baseline information for future comparisons as well as a better understanding of bird distribution in Iowa now. Jim Dinsmore is coordinating efforts in Story and Boone counties. Contact him (292-3152) for more information.





BIRD NOTES

The spring waterfowl migration through Iowa continues, but it appears to be strung out this year, with no large concentration of birds at any one time. Thus, birders should not expect to see too much at lakes or marshes.

There have been hundreds of

Canada, Snow and White-fronted geese at Hendrickson's Marsh the past three weeks, according to Hank Zaletel of Colo. This month's best sighting was a Snowy Egret at Hendrickson's Marsh. They are seen only rarely in Iowa.

An American Egret was spotted at Goose Lake in Hamilton County this month also.

* * *

Reminder -- Owners of Martin houses should get them ready -- the Martins will be returning soon!

CONSERVATION/THE ENVIRONMENT

(Sherry Dragula, 292-4014; Cindy Hildebrand, 232-3807)

LOCAL ISSUES

Park Proposal and Petition -- A proposal to keep East River Valley Park in its natural state was presented by representatives of our society, the Sierra Club and the Izaak Walton League to the Ames Parks and Recreation Commission at their March meeting. Commission members will now review the proposal and make comments. A petition drive has also begun to keep the park undeveloped. If you would like to sign or circulate a petition, call Sherry.

Tree Planting -- The Conservation Committee is tentatively planning to conduct the annual tree planting along Hwy. 30 sometime between May 4 and May 12. It would then coincide with Iowa's first "Earth Care Week." We need help planning and doing the tree planting. Contact Sherry.

STATE ISSUES

Drainage Rules Problems -- The Water, Air and Waste Management Commission has tentatively approved a new set of drainage rules which would seriously threaten natural streams and wetlands within drainage districts. Iowa conservationists are being asked to contact Commission members to express concern. If you want to help with this issue, come to the April meeting or contact Cindy.

NATIONAL ISSUES

Superfund Petition -- National Audubon Society (NAS) would like our help with a petition campaign for a strong Superfund bill. Superfund provides for the cleanup of hazardous waste across the country. NAS has sent petitions and supporting information on Superfund legislation. Contact Sherry for more information.

Endangered Species -- The Endangered Species Act is up for reauthorization. Our congressmen need to receive letters now asking that the act be strengthened. Two of its weaknesses are: Endangered plants are not now protected; Administrators of the act face a backlog of 1,000 candidates for endangered status, and need more resources to catch up on the workload.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS (cont. from p. 1)

Groundwater Conference -- April 16-17 at Midway Motor Lodge, La Crosse, Wis. This is a conference dealing with problems of groundwater contamination in Karst areas (regions of limestone bedrock overlain by a thin soil layer) in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Contact Judy van der Linden for details.

National Audubon Society Convention -- June 16-21 at Silver Bay, New York. Judy van der Linden has more information.

Newsletter Deadline -- Tuesday, April 30. Send articles or artwork for May's issue to Judy van der Linden, 610 9th St., Ames.

Bird Walk -- Saturday, May 11 at 8 a.m. at McFarland Park, to see migrating warblers and other birds.

FIELD BIOLOGY COURSE

Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) is offering a 1-credit field biology course this spring that will be taught at the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in northern Wisconsin. The course, Investigations in Field Biology, will be held May 9-13 and will introduce students to the plant life, wildlife and habitat types found in northern ecosystems. Check DMACC's summer session tabloid or call Gary Nelson (964-6531) for more information.

A special "thank you" to Cindy Hildebrand for taking time out during her busy days with legislators to lay out and type up the March newsletter.



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