

Big Bluestem Audubon Society, Ames, Iowa

May, 1984

v. 18, no. 8

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



Bluestem Flyer

Monthly Meeting

WHEN: Tuesday, May 8 at 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Room 205 Bessey Hall, ISU campus
WHO: Jim Kienzler, wildlife biologist, Iowa Conservation Commission
TOPIC: "Steel Shot -- The Iowa Perspective," a videotape-slide presentation. The videotape, describing the effectiveness of steel shot in the field, is taken from one withdrawn by the U.S. Interior Department, apparently because it portrayed steel shot too favorably. The slides deal with the issue in Iowa. (The raptor program originally scheduled for May will be presented next fall.)

Upcoming Meetings and Events

June Meeting -- Our society will hold a regular meeting and program in June instead of the traditional potluck, which seems to get rained out frequently, anyway. The meeting will be June 12 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 210 Bessey Hall, featuring a program on Alaskan Bald Eagles.

May Field Trips -- Spring bird-watching trips will be taken May 12 to the Kate Shelly Bridge Trail near Boone and May 19 to McFarland Park. Birders should meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot south of C. Y. Stephens Auditorium. Both trips should be over by noon. Contact Jim Murdock (233-3185) for more information. (The field trip originally planned for May 5 was rescheduled for May 12 to avoid conflicting with ISU's Veishea.)

IOU Meeting -- Contact Hank Zaletel (377-2889) if you still need information about the May 4-5 meeting of the Iowa Ornithologist's Union at Indianola.

Board Meeting -- the Bluestem society's executive board will meet Wednesday, June 6, at 7:30 p.m. in room 210 Bessey Hall. Anyone may attend.

Newsletter Deadline -- Deadline for submitting items for the June newsletter will be May 31 at 5 p.m. Send stories or artwork to Judy van der Linden, 610 9th St., Ames.

CONSERVATION/THE ENVIRONMENT

Legislative Outcome -- The 1984 session of the Iowa Legislature resulted in the passage of several environmental bills, and the (perhaps temporary) deaths of several others. The Right-to-Know and Superfund bills were signed by the governor and will provide new means of keeping track of and cleaning up toxic substances. Hunting and fishing license increases will provide needed revenue for the Iowa Conservation Commission. The Protected Waters Bill, which creates a defined process for the protection of Iowa's lakes, rivers and marshes, awaits Governor Branstad's signature as of this writing.

The park user fee did not pass, and the drainage district bill, which would have allowed drainage districts to drain wetlands and channelize streams without state control, was sent to an interim study committee. For more information on state bills, contact Pete van der Linden or Cindy Hildebrand.

Steel Shot Update -- On April 25, the Administrative Rules Review Committee of the Iowa Legislature decided not to expand steel shot zones for waterfowl hunting in 1984. Instead they indicated their support for a statewide ban on lead shot for the 1985 hunting season. Committee members expressed concern about a piecemeal approach to banning lead shot.

The Bluestem society has gone on record in support of expanded steel shot zones and a statewide steel shot requirement! More public hearings will be held this summer and any interested members are encouraged to contact Sherry Dragula (292-4014) or Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807).

1985 Garrison Vote -- The Garrison Diversion Project will come up again for funding within the next two months. National Audubon is encouraging members to write their congressmen and senators to urge them to vote against any funding for Garrison in the fiscal year 1985 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill. The Committee to Save North Dakota, an organization of North Dakota residents and farmers working to stop the massive irrigation project, pointed out in a March mailing that the National Taxpayer's Association and several other groups will also be targeting Garrison's appropriation. The Senate is most crucial this year. For more information, contact Cindy Hildebrand.

BLUESTEM ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Bluestem society's annual election of officers will be held during the business meeting May 8. The following slate of candidates has been proposed by the society's nominations committee to fill vacancies arising in 1984-85. The positions of president and secretary and two to three positions on the executive board will be vacant. Proposed candidates are:

President -- Jim Murdock
Secretary -- Sherry Dragula
Board -- David Edwards, Janet Graver and Mary Owings

The third board position will become vacant if Jim Murdock, a current board member, is elected president. Nominations of other candidates will be accepted from the floor before the election. Officers elected will begin serving their terms next September.

Thoughts Afield by Tom Davis

That One Extra Step

Sometimes solitude does the trick. Sitting alone on a warm, fresh, April hillside watching Pintails and Wood Ducks cup their wings and settle gently to the glassy surface of a lake can be an enlightening experience. Suddenly I think about how neat these animals are. Their presence and beauty means something to me. I realize I would like to learn more about them, their habitat, their requirements for life. Somehow I need to take one more step, not only to learn about these animals, but to learn about myself.

Sometimes sharing an outdoor experience with a friend ignites

the flame. Feeling the friend's excitement as he first witnesses the spectacular dive of an Osprey feeding along a glisten-

ing river may provoke some extra thought. Or showing him the flashy orange and black of the spring's first Blackburnian Warbler among the popping buds of the silver maple may encourage me to see more, learn more, try a little harder to understand the happenings of nature.

Sometimes going with a group can throw a spark that may catch

fire. By listening and sharing the experiences of other people we may begin to understand the decline of the showy ladyslipper and its dwindling habitat or to see why small tracts of prairie need to be preserved as pieces of the original "pre-plow" Iowa.

The purpose of this column has been to relate some of my experiences and discoveries in the outdoors to bring you a little closer to taking that first step in your quest to experience nature. My hope was to entice a little, to encourage you to take that extra step, to go out and enjoy and learn what birds and the environment mean to you. I hope that each of us can continue to take a little time to explore -- to find that first Blackburnian Warbler or elusive ladyslipper and, not only appreciate it for its beauty, but go one step further by evaluating our feelings about the thing or place we have discovered and learning more about how we fit into the natural world. Like a recent magazine advertisement states; "You won't know unless you go."



Have you noticed the mailing label on your newsletter? The publications committee wants to thank Sherry Dragula for typing master copies for the nearly 200 newsletter mailing labels. Until last month, the editor and a helper hand-addressed each newsletter each month.

Please also take note of the numbers in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label. They indicate the month and year your membership in the society will expire, according to our latest information from National Audubon Society. If you have questions about your membership status or cor-

rections to be made on the label, contact Judy van der Linden.

PLACES TO GO, BIRDS TO SEE

The spring warblers have begun to move through Ames. Yellow-rumped Warblers have been at Brookside Park since April 11 and a Black and White Warbler was seen in town on April 25. Others will soon return. Brookside Park, located on Sixth Street east of Iowa State University about one-half mile, is the best place in Story County to see warblers. Each year there are several days in the first three weeks of May when 15 species can be seen in an hour. Warblers tend to arrive in "waves," so there are also occasional days during this time when relatively few are seen. For information about or directions to any of the birding spots listed below, contact Paul Martsching (232-0472).

Date sighted -- Location -- Birds seen -- Contact for latest information

1. April -- Brookside Park -- a pair of nesting Great Horned Owls -- Paul (PM)
2. April 20-24 -- Brookside Park -- Broad-winged Hawk -- PM
3. April 23 -- Larsons Marsh -- Short-eared Owl -- PM
4. April 25 -- Coopers Marsh and Larson Marsh -- one Willet each -- PM
5. April 25 -- Brookside Park -- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher -- PM



BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX # 1843
AMES, IOWA 50010



* S. Dragula/M. Widrlechner
4409 Toronto #1
Ames, Ia. 50010