

BIG BLUESTEM FLYER

Volume 29, No. 3 Newsletter of the Mid-Iowa Chapter of the National Audubon Society November 1993

MONTHLY MEETING

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK: BIRDS AND WILDLIFE

HANK ZALETEL

Thursday, November 18, 7:30 PM

Room 2532, Veterinary Medicine Building, I. S. U., Ames

Hank Zaletel joined Audubon in 1977. He has served our Big Bluestem chapter as Vice-President, field trip leader, Christmas Bird Count compiler and Board member. Hank has been birding since 1975, and is active with the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. He has visited Rocky Mountain National Park every year for the last nine years.



FIELD TRIP

THREE BRIDGES COUNTY PARK MARSHALL COUNTY

Saturday, November 6

Meet at 7:30 AM at the Design Center parking lot, I.S.U. Campus. The focus for this trip will be on fossils and geology. Field trip leader is Mark Widrlechner, 233-1532

AUDUBON ADVENTURES

For the last ^{nine} ~~eight~~ years our chapter has been sponsoring the "Audubon Adventures" learning program in selected ~~third~~ through ⁶ ~~fourth~~ ^{fifth} grade classrooms in Ames and Story county. Each month the selected classrooms receive thirty two student newspapers and a leader's guide on a particular topic. The four page newspaper presents environmental and natural history information in a fun way. This year's topics include: wildflowers, animal communication, songbirds, snakes, and endangered species. It costs our chapter \$30 per classroom. This year we are sponsoring 12 classrooms. Next to the newsletter, this program is the biggest expenditure our chapter makes. We need help funding this worthwhile program. You can make a donation of any amount. Please make checks payable to: Big Bluestem Audubon Society, c/o Barb Bettis, 115 Peach Ln., Ames, IA 50010. Please indicate that your donation is for "Audubon Adventures".

IOWA AND NEBRASKA AUDUBON COUNCILS MEET

The first joint meeting of the Iowa and Nebraska Audubon Councils was held October 9 & 10, in Blair Nebraska. The joint meeting was an opportunity to discuss two issues we have in common: the Missouri River and Agriculture & the Environment. Regarding the Missouri River, we learned from speakers from the Nebraska Natural Resources Department that a revision of the Master Manual for management of the river is in the works. The needs of wildlife are not adequately addressed now. The revision will be done by U.S. Dept. of Interior, E.P.A. and U.S.D.A. Some fifty to one hundred species of fish are declining in the river. Public support is needed for increased wildlife habitat for the Missouri River. A habitat restoration project is underway at Boyer Chute in Nebraska. A possible site for restoration efforts in Iowa is Louisville Bend.

The Iowa Council also discussed legislative priorities. The first priority will be supporting the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP). The second priority will be working for adequate Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources funding in general and non-game program funding in particular. The next meeting of the Iowa Audubon Council will be January 22 in Des Moines.

MEMBER DICK TRUMP FEATURED IN REGISTER

Big Bluestem member Dick Trump's innovative nature photography techniques were featured in an October 10, 1993 article in the Des Moines Register. Dick has been photographing wildlife for over 50 years with setups that are designed to have the animals take their own pictures. By using simple equipment and a lot of ingenuity he has captured on film startled raccoons, squirrels leaping through the air, wrens and blue jays attacking him. The simplest setup involved a trip thread across a trail. A teeter-totter perch for birds would pull a shutter string. For two-shot sequences Dick employed two cameras. A trip-cord sprung a mouse trap, which snapped a spring-loaded shutter on the first camera. At the same time, the trap dislodged a bar that fell to pull a string to trip the shutter on the second camera. Last March, at our Audubon meeting, we were treated to a presentation on woodchucks by Dick. He is currently working on a book about his observations of the natural world.

RAPTOR RESEARCH

At our October meeting, Jon Stravers, Director of the Midwest Raptor Research Fund, gave an informative and entertaining presentation on raptors in Iowa and on the Red-shouldered hawk in particular. Red-shoulders are endangered in Iowa and Illinois. The research team was able to locate several new nesting territories along the Mississippi this spring and summer. Unfortunately heavy rains and flooding caused the lowest rate of nesting success in eleven years of monitoring. Protecting flood plain forest habitat is essential for this species. Recently, the Army Corps of Engineers altered a proposed timber harvest to protect a Red-shouldered nesting site in the Milan Bottoms, just down river from Rock Island, IL. Only three nesting sites along the Mississippi between the Quad Cities and Burlington are known. Further monitoring is planned at this site and at sites north of the Quad Cities. If you would like to help research on the Red-shouldered hawk and other Iowa raptors you can send a contribution to: Midwest Raptor Research Fund, P.O. Box 32, Pella, Iowa 50219

ARMCHAIR ACTIVIST

Do you want to "do your part" to protect our natural environment but don't have time for committee meetings, public hearings and tracking down information? If so, then the Armchair Activist "Letter of the Month Club" may be for you. The Armchair Activist is a project of the National Audubon Society produced in cooperation with Audubon Chapters nationwide. Six Iowa chapters, including ours, participate. If you join, every month (except December and August) you will receive a mailing on an environmental issue. This year there are four national issues: the remaining six mailings are on state or local issues. Each mailing will contain background information on the issue plus a sample letter and suggestions of where your letter should be sent. If you would like to join the Armchair Activist program just send your name, address, and phone number to Sherry Dragula, 2121 Burnett, Ames, IA 50010. A check for \$6 made out to Big Bluestem Audubon Society will help defray program costs.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

The Ames Christmas Bird Count will be on Saturday, **December 18, 1993**. Planning by Mike Meetz (382-2534) and Dave Edwards (292-3790, is just beginning). Please call either of us if you have suggestions or concerns. We will try to keep areas and leaders much the same as last year if we can. At the end of the count day we will meet at David and Jeanne Edwards's home (2308 State Avenue) for a tally and chili supper.

The Saylorville Count will be the day after the Ames count: Sunday, **December 19, 1993**. Contact Maridel Jackson at 964-0140 for information about this count.

The Boone County Count will be held on **Saturday, January 1, 1994**. Mark Widrlechner will be the compiler for the count. Mark will try to contact past counters and members in Boone county. If you would like to participate, you can let Mark know by writing him or giving him a call - Mark Widrlechner, 2121 Burnett, Ames, IA 50010, 233-1532.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I'd like to join as a new member of the National Audubon Society and of the Big Bluestem Audubon Society, Chapter H-57. Please send me Audubon magazine, the Big Bluestem Flyer and my membership card. Introductory membership is \$20.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Please make your check payable to: **National Audubon Society** and include chapter code **H-57** on the check.

Send to: Big Bluestem Audubon Society
c/o Mark Widrlechner, Membership Chair
2121 Burnett
Ames, IA 50010.

CURRENTLY PLANNED EVENTS

December 16, Thurs. 7:30 PM	Holiday Meeting at the Story County Conservation Center, Members Slides and Treats
December 18, Sat	Ames Christmas Bird Count
December 19, Sun	Saylorville Christmas Bird Count
January 1, Sat	Boone Christmas Bird Count
January 20, Thurs, 7:30 PM	Meeting "The Landforms of Marshall County", Garry Brandenburg
February 17, Thurs, 7:30 PM	Meeting "Environmental Education Programs", Cele Burnett
March 17, Thurs, 7:30 PM	Meeting Dr. Jim Dinsmore, Ornithologist
April 21, Thurs, 7:30 PM	Meeting "Walnut Creek Wildlife Refuge"(tentative)
May 19, Thurs, 7:30 PM	Meeting "Photographer's View of Trees", Betty Stanley (tentative)
*May 20-22, Fri-Sun	Iowa Ornithologists' Union Meeting, Ames
June 11, Sat	Birder's Breakfast and Hike (plus bluebird trail), Ledges State Park

Unless otherwise specified, the location for meetings is Room 2532, Veterinary Medicine Building, Iowa State University, Ames, IA.

* These are events of interest to Audubon members but are not sponsored by the Big Bluestem Audubon Society



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BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY 1992-1993 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

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November 1993
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