

Big Bluestem Audubon Society  
Ames, Iowa

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# Bluestem Flyer

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## Monthly Meeting

- WHEN:** Tuesday, Dec. 11, at 7:30 p.m.
- WHERE:** Iowa Conservation Commission Nursery building  
(State Forest Nursery) at 2404 South Duff  
across from Airport Road.
- WHAT:** Big Bluestem Audubon Society Christmas Party
- BRING:** Holiday goodies (drinks will be provided). Also  
bring slides for the Unknown Bird Identification  
Contest and for general viewing -- vacations, outdoor  
scenes, etc.

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

Board Meeting -- The Society's executive board will meet  
Wednesday, Jan. 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Mary Owings,  
410 9th St. in Ames. Anyone interested may attend.

Conservation Committee -- There will be no December meeting  
due to the holidays. The next meeting will be on Monday, Jan.  
28 at 7 p.m. in Room 411, ISU College of Design.

Newsletter Deadline -- Deadline for submitting articles  
or artwork for the January newsletter will be Tuesday, Jan. 1,  
at 5 p.m. Send all items to Judy van der Linden, 610 9th St.,  
Ames.

Christmas Bird Count -- Anyone who wants to help with the  
count on Saturday, Dec. 15, should contact Hank Zalatel at  
239-1200 or 377-2889. Each participant will be assigned to a  
group leader who will provide a packet of information.

The participation fee, which covers the cost of processing  
count data, is \$3, but people who only want to report bird  
feeder sightings don't have to pay. Bird feeder reports are  
being encouraged. Dave and Jeanne Edwards have generously  
offered to host the traditional end-of-the-day tally at their  
home. For more information, call Hank.

AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING ...

A motion was passed to have the Society send a letter to the Ames Tribune regarding the Ames Little League proposal to build four ball diamonds in Ames' East River Valley Park. The letter suggested that the City of Ames support League efforts to find another site, but keep East River Valley Park as a greenbelt area, particularly since it is the last undeveloped park in the city. (The letter was published Nov. 20.)

Motions were passed to spend \$20 to stock bird feeders at the Willson Elder Service Center in Ames and to spend not more than \$50 for a new eyepiece for the Society spotting scope. Judy Shearer reported that there is \$1,049 in the treasury.

OTHER MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Conservation Committee --

The Ames Little League proposal was discussed at the committee meeting on Nov. 26 (see above). Also discussed was the Ames Lake workshop (see announcements). The conservation committee will present a statement at the workshop encouraging the Corps to study several specific nonstructural alternatives to the proposed Skunk River dam. For more information, contact Sherry Dragula.

Executive Board -- At the board meeting on Nov. 7, it was agreed that Jim Murdock will file papers for tax-exempt status for the Society. Jim also proposed that fact sheets on specific issues be made available at monthly meetings to assist people in letter-writing. The conservation committee will work on the fact sheets.

Tom Davis is interested in short slide shows to follow the monthly programs occasionally. Officers and some committee chairs now have North Midwest Regional Directories. The Ames Little League proposal was discussed and a budget subcommittee was appointed (see this page).

Field Trip -- Several Big Bluestem members enjoyed a weekend field trip in western Iowa on Nov. 2-3. Don and Luella Reese, long-time residents of Turin, provided information on the Loess Hills. Don led a hike through a wildlife management area in the Hills which contained a variety of prairie plants.

The following day was spent at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge with thousands of snow geese. One flock was estimated at 46,000 birds. Among the other species seen were a Bald Eagle, Common Goldeneyes, American Wigeons, Canvasbacks, and Double-crested Cormorants.

Field trip participants were Jim Murdock, who made the arrangements, Tim Grotheer, Janet Graver, Sherry Dragula, Mark Widrlechner, Barb Anderson, Cindy Hildebrand, Roger Maddux, and John Stampe.

Budget Subcommittee -- A subcommittee has been set up to prepare a tentative budget for the Society for 1985-86. The subcommittee will be meeting in late January or February.

Before its meeting, Big Bluestem committee chairpersons are asked to review their budget needs for next year and send a list of them to a subcommittee member (Judy van der Linden, Dave Edwards, or Judy Shearer). Any other member who would like to suggest purchases, improvements, or other budgetary matters should contact Judy, Judy, or Dave. Exact meeting date and time will be announced in the January newsletter.

BIRD  
NOTES



Winter birds have begun to move into our area. White-winged and Red Crossbills have invaded Marshall County and may move west. They should be watched for in pine trees. Pine siskins are appearing at local feeders.

Longspurs have been seen in the Cooper's-Larson's Marsh area for the past month. A Snowy Owl visited Saylorville on Nov. 17, and pelicans and cormorants have also been spotted there. Short-eared and Long-eared Owls are in the usual place at Big Creek, and Short-eared Owls have also been seen east of Cooper's Marsh.

Our most unusual visitor was an immature Black-legged Kittiwake at Saylorville on Nov. 21-22. There have been few previous sightings of this bird in Iowa.

CONSERVATION/THE ENVIRONMENT

For more information on the issues below, contact Sherry Dragula, Conservation Committee chair, at 292-4014.

Ames Little League -- The Ames Parks and Recreation Commission will meet on Thursday, Dec. 13 to decide whether or not to allow ball diamonds to be built in East River Valley Park (see monthly meeting report). The meeting will be held at 4 p.m. in the Ames City Council Chambers. Letters can be written before that date to Commission Chair Donald Woolley at 1816 Bel Air, Ames, 50010. Fact sheets and more information are available from Sherry.

Ames Lake Reevaluation Study -- A public workshop on the study will be held by the Army Corps of Engineers on Wednesday, Dec. 12 (see conservation committee report). The workshop will run from 1 to 3 p.m. and from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Best Western Starlite Village in Ames. Water resource needs to be studied include flood control, low-flow augmentation, water supply, and recreation. Comments are being solicited from the public on all pertinent issues.

Drainage District Issue -- The Iowa Legislature interim committee working on drainage issues met in Humboldt on Nov. 20. Sherry Dragula handed in a statement on behalf of the Big Bluestem Executive Board and Cindy Hildebrand presented a statement on behalf of the Iowa Audubon Council. Both statements expressed concern about the potential environmental consequences of removing state authority from drainage district projects.

At their next meeting on Nov. 28, the committee decided that most current drainage conflicts are being caused by confusion over technical terms and state agency rules. Another committee is being formed to try to resolve the confusion without new legislation. This committee, made up of drainage officials and agency commissioners, will present recommendations to the legislators in June, 1985.

It was the general consensus of environmentalists at the meeting that this is a good idea and a big improvement over earlier proposals. The committee recommendations will be evaluated in June.

ETCETERA --

Regional Workshop -- A Chapter Leadership Workshop is being sponsored by the North Midwest Regional Office of the National Audubon Society on Jan. 26-27. The conference will be held in Albert Lea, Minnesota, and will feature two levels of leadership information; one level for people who have never held an office or are new officers, and another for experienced officers. Conservation, education, field trips, programs, publicity, and other areas will be covered.

The deadline for registration is Jan. 14 (though registration the day of the conference is possible at a slightly higher rate.) A bed and breakfast option (staying with an Albert Lea-area Audubon member) is available. For more information, contact a Big Blue-stem officer.

Print Sale -- The Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards (IACCB) is offering signed, numbered prints of "The Standoff" by James Barker Spring, which shows a Great Horned Owl confronting chickadees and a titmouse. Proceeds from the prints, which cost \$55, will be used for IACCB activities. For more information, contact Judy van der Linden.

Lobbying Workshop -- A free "Iowa Citizens Lobbying Workshop" will be held on Saturday, Dec. 8 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Memorial Union on the ISU campus. Professional and citizen lobbyists will join legislators in conducting workshops and panel discussions for anyone interested in the legislative process. Sponsors are several student and public interest organizations. For more information, contact Cindy Hildebrand (232-3807).



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