



# Big Bluestem Flyer

Newsletter of the Big Bluestem Audubon Society

Volume 37, Number 5

May/June 2002

## Upcoming Programs

**May 16**—*A Photo Essay of Iowa's Wildlife Diversity by Harlan Ratcliff.* Scientists the world over are starting to look at biological diversity as a major resource, and the loss of that biological diversity as a crisis that deserves major attention. In Iowa, very few resources are spent on conservation of biological diversity. Management has been mostly to increase numbers of game animals or game fish.

What do we know about Iowa's biological diversity, and what do we not know? In my slide show, I will discuss what I have been able to find out about the depth (and in some cases, the lack) of our knowledge about Iowa's biological diversity.

I also will exhibit some of my own photographs of Iowa's small things—wild flowers, lichens, mosses, snails, insects, and especially butterflies. You will discover things you never knew about things that are close at hand, including one observation about butterflies that is guaranteed to surprise you, and that you will remember for a long time to come.

**June 1**—*Annual Birder's Brunch* at the Ledges State Park south of Boone. Meet in the upper Ledges at 8:00 am. We'll bird as we hike down the hill and have brunch in the lower Ledges. Please bring a food item to share.

Program meetings are held monthly, September-May (except December) on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m., **Room 2226 [note room change]** Veterinary Medicine Building, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. If you need directions, please see the map on the back of the Events Calendar. If you would like to meet and dine with the speaker and the BBAS Board before the monthly meeting. Please call John Snyder, 515-232-8824, to confirm space and location.

## Shorebird Area Becoming Reality

*Bruce Ehresman*

The proposed Harrier Marsh Shorebird Management and Observation Area is starting to happen. The Iowa DNR Wildlife Diversity Program has identified acquiring land for the purpose of managing for and hosting migrating shorebirds as a major program goal. So this approximately 85-acre parcel, which is adjacent to the public-owned Harrier Marsh complex, fits the bill. Its location is immediately east of Ogden and north of Highway 30. It contains three natural basins, or prairie potholes, which are presently drained by subsurface agricultural tiles and farmed. In the past, this area has been an excellent spot to view shorebirds during wet periods when sheet water filled the basins. With the proper management, these potholes will hold water for a longer period of time and be a shorebird stopover mecca! Doug Harr, Wildlife Diversity Program Coordinator, has already drawn up a proposed management and development plan for this shorebird area. He has included in these plans two observation platforms that will allow good observation of bird life on the nearby wetlands.

Because the Wildlife Diversity Program is still lacking some of the funds to acquire this important tract, a request was made to Big Bluestem Audubon Society to become a funding partner. And BBAS responded kindly. A pledge was made by the BBAS Board of Directors to donate at least \$2000 toward the acquisition (\$1000 now and one-quarter of Birdathon proceeds). On top of that, personal donations from BBAS members are being solicited. Whatever total amount of money is raised could then potentially be used to challenge other Iowa Audubon groups and Chapters to try to match. Since this is the first area in Iowa to be acquired with a primary focus of shorebird management and viewing, it seems appropriate that the people who could be the primary users of the area also become stakeholders in its purchase. On behalf of the Wildlife Diversity Program staff, I wish to thank Big Bluestem Audubon Society members for their commitment to see that this shorebird area becomes a reality!

### In This Issue:

Page 2—*Beyond the Backyard*

Page 3—*Conservation Corner*

Page 4—*Notes From the Field Trips*

—*The View From Wolf's Den*

Page 12—*Field Trips*

## Big Bluestem Audubon Society Officers and Committees

### Officers:

- President: Karl Jungbluth 432-5057  
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- Vice-President: John Pohlman 232-6816  
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- Treasurer: Donna Flanagan 268-0458  
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### Board Members:

- Bruce Ehresman 296-2995 [behresma@opencominc.com](mailto:behresma@opencominc.com)
- Jeff Nichols, 795-4176 [jnichols1961@hotmail.com](mailto:jnichols1961@hotmail.com)
- Al Ravenscroft 268-0294
- Linda Thomas 956-3145 [wbuames@mcleodusa.net](mailto:wbuames@mcleodusa.net)

### Committee Chairs:

- Archivist: Hank Zalatel 382-427 [madowl@nevia.net](mailto:madowl@nevia.net)
- Bird-a-thon Co-chairs: Karl and Carmen Jungbluth
- Conservation Co-chairs: Bruce Ehresman and John Pohlman
- Education Chair: Ida Johnson 233-4831 [iwindj@aol.com](mailto:iwindj@aol.com)
- Field Trip Chair: Jeff Nichols
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### BBAS Web Site:

<http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ia/>

### National Audubon Society Web Site:

<http://www.audubon.org>

### Iowa Audubon State Director:

Iowa Bird Sightings Hotline—319-338-9881

Wildlife Care Clinic—515-294-4900

*The mission of the Big Bluestem Audubon Society is to enjoy the observation and study of birds and natural ecosystems, contribute to their preservation and restoration, and engage in educational activities to benefit humanity, and to gain a broader understanding and deeper appreciation of the world we live in.*



## Beyond the Backyard

Karl Jungbluth,  
President

I'd like to use my last message as President of Big Bluestem Audubon to encourage everyone to support bird conservation, either through action or monetarily. The reasons are simple. Bird conservation ultimately leads to more habitat, and more opportunities to see birds and enjoy nature. This makes Iowa a better place to live—for everybody.

We have a great opportunity RIGHT NOW to build local habitat by supporting the Harrier Marsh shorebird addition in Boone County. I'm very excited about this bird conservation effort, *the first of its kind in Iowa!* First, very little shorebird habitat currently exists in our area, and this project will provide over 80 acres, managed by the DNR. Second, over one third of the area will be designated for "wildlife watching" with no hunting access, providing a refuge for birds and people. Third, this is an opportunity for the birding and wildlife watching community to step up with a show of financial support, just like hunters support habitat that is managed for hunting.

Here's what Big Bluestem Audubon is doing, and what I'd like you to do. Our board of directors recently voted to send \$1000 to the DNR to help purchase the Harrier Marsh addition! This is a BIG contribution for our chapter, especially considering that we also want to continue providing the Audubon Adventures education series to local schools, scholarships to Young Naturalists Camp and support other projects during the year. We also pledged to send one quarter of our Birdathon proceeds to the project. So, support Birdathon! Join a team, or pledge generously.

Finally, Carmen and I are making a personal donation, through Audubon, to the Harrier Marsh project. Please consider doing the same. **Can we match or double the \$1000 already donated?** Checks can be made out to Big Bluestem Audubon-Harrier Marsh, and sent to Donna Flanagan, Treasurer, 2511 Aspen Rd., #1, Ames, IA, 50014.

Thank you for considering this bird conservation project, and for your support of our chapter. Together, we can pool our resources and make a sizable contribution toward habitat. There's no better way to say "Birders and wildlife watchers support habitat, too!"



## Conservation Corner

*John Pohlman and Carol Williams*

### Story County Adopt-A-Park Program

This spring, Story County Conservation (SCC) began an Adopt-A-Park Program designed to assist the county conservation board with its mission of enhancing and maintaining the beauty and quality of your parks and natural areas. The Adopt-A-Park Program is designed to supplement SCC's volunteer program.

This first year, the program will be a pilot project designed to help evaluate and refine the program. Interested groups or individuals can "adopt" one of Story County's parks and natural areas and agree to do litter pick-up at least once per month throughout the year. Story County will provide training to the group, and garbage bags and safety equipment. We also put a sign at the area that recognizes the adopting group. SCC asks that each group contact their administrative office 48 hours in advance of the clean-up days so staff can assist with the disposal of the litter.

Groups will sign a contract and may request a park to adopt. The adoptions are handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. A one-year commitment may be extended upon re-evaluation of the program. To find out more about the program, please contact the SCC office at 515-232-2516 or [conservation@storycounty.com](mailto:conservation@storycounty.com).

### Opportunity for Big Bluestem Audubon Members

Big Bluestem Audubon Members, that's the basic program above described by Carol Williams, Special Projects Ranger, Story County Conservation. This program gives us the opportunity to get out there to do some birding and help maintain habitat at the same time. Even better, Big Bluestem Audubon's name is out there to be seen as an organization helping our environment.

Some of the parks have already been adopted, such as Doolittle Prairie and Ketelsen Marsh. McFarland Park has not yet been adopted, but its size might overwhelm a group even of our size. This is why I am suggesting that we, BBAS, adopt Cooper Prairie and Larson Marsh. Both of these parks are small and close to Ames. Plus they are very close to Mike Meetz's new private prairie. They would give us the opportunity to see yellow-headed blackbirds, upland sandpipers and perhaps even a bobolink.

So if you would like to participate in the Story County Conservation Adopt-a-Park program by helping do some maintenance, which will most likely be litter collecting in the parking areas of those two parks, and do some local birding, please let me know.

## Cyber Birding

*Rebecca Shivvers*

Great Cities Have Great Parks  
[www.weaselhead.org](http://www.weaselhead.org)

Weaselhead Glenmore Park Preservation Society has a great website complete with bird pictures, bird calls, and bird songs. Information about the bird is listed, as well as identification marks, where to find the bird, and habitat. For those who enjoy searching for amphibians, there are sounds of various frogs found in the area.

Weaselhead is located in Calgary, Canada. More than 230 bird species have been reported since record-keeping began 40 years ago. There is a birding calendar, which shows the birds commonly found each month in Alberta, Canada.

The *Weaselhead News* discusses new initiatives, such as the Water Quality Committee report. The species news reports on the increase of coyotes in the area. There is also a section for upcoming events. If you plan to visit Canada this summer, this site is a must.



Cerulian Warbler from  
[Audubon.org](http://Audubon.org)

## The View from Wolf's Den

*Wolf Oesterrich*

For the early part of February, the south lake at Ames Quarry was mostly iced-over. Only a small patch of open water was found near the middle of the lake. This is where the waterfowl (Canada Geese and Mallards) were concentrated. By the 19<sup>th</sup>, the lake was still 80% ice-covered. However, by the afternoon of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the lake was 98% ice-free. This allowed more waterfowl to arrive, with the recording of 12 species for the month. Several new early extreme spring dates for Story County may have been set. They include: Greater White-fronted Goose – 23<sup>rd</sup> (old record was 27 Feb. 1984), American Black Duck – 12<sup>th</sup> (old record was 26 Feb. 1984), Canvasback – 24<sup>th</sup> (old record was 26 Feb. 1998), Redhead – 24<sup>th</sup> (old record was 26 Feb. 1984), Lesser Scaup – 19<sup>th</sup> (old record was 25 Feb. 1998), and Common Goldeneye – 22<sup>nd</sup> (old record was 25 Feb. 1985). The Northern Pintail (19<sup>th</sup>) tied the current record set in 1983. Bald Eagles continued to found throughout the month, with 3 (2 adults and 1 immature) on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The greatest gatherings of Ring-necked Pheasants occurred on the 5<sup>th</sup> (38) and 7<sup>th</sup> (36). The first Killdeer was found on the 24<sup>th</sup>. American Crows continued to be a problem. I had 50 in the yard at one time. No need to mention that the feeders were soon emptied. One to two Harris's Sparrows were present throughout the month. I ended up with 37 species for the month. A lone Coyote was seen trotting through the new park on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup>.

March began with the south lake in a near 100% ice-free situation. However, by the 4<sup>th</sup>, the lake was once again nearly 100% ice-covered. For the next two weeks areas would open up and then refreeze. By the 17<sup>th</sup>, it was once again ice-free. The cold spell in the latter part of the month caused the ice to reform and by the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the lake was about 70% ice-covered. Later that day, most of the ice had disappeared and the lake remained ice-free for the remainder of the month. The first Common Loon and Pied-billed Grebes appeared on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A Double-crested Cormorant was present on the 29<sup>th</sup> and two Turkey Vultures circled the area on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Seventeen waterfowl species were recorded this month. Hundreds were present. The American Black Duck continued to be found throughout the month. The first Green-winged Teal appeared in the latter part of the month. All

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Notes From the Field Trips

*(Reports submitted by trip leaders)*

The Big Bluestem Audubon field trip, **March 23**, led by Hank Zaletel, saw large numbers of ducks and waterfowl on **Hallett's Quarry** in Ames and **Little Wall Lake** in Hamilton County. About 150 White-fronted Geese were seen on the ice at Little Wall Lake. Several large flocks of Snow and Blue Geese were also present at Little Wall. The Sandhill Cranes were seen this morning at 11:00 AM at the usual location in Hamilton County. From I-35 take the Jewell-Ellsworth exit and go west on Hwy. 175. After a mile, cross the Skunk River and a large railroad bridge on the north. Continue one mile further west past a second railroad bridge. Immediately following is a turn-off to a feedlot. Go no further than the railroad tracks, as the land is private property. The birds were seen to the far northwest of the feedlot approximately 200-300 yards. The farmer stated that the birds have been more active. They have actually flown from south of the highway to the north in the feedlot area. Last weekend the birds were not seen but were still present.

Fifteen members and guests participated **April 6** in the field trip to the **Des Moines River Valley gravel pits, Harrier Marsh, Ledges State Park, and the Jungbluth household**. We ended the day with at least 55 species.

Our first stop was at the gravel pits in the Des Moines River Valley. The three main lakes are located on the north side of US-30 and are accessed from two side roads. We found 7 species of waterfowl, including all three mergansers. Two Great Blue Herons, 5 Common Snipe, 1 Franklin's Gull, Tree Swallows, and 1 Northern Rough-winged Swallow were some other highlights. Several waves of American White Pelicans passed by. One group acted as if they were going to land on the largest lake, but changed their mind at the last minute. Two Greater Yellowlegs were amongst 5 Lesser Yellowlegs in an adjacent waterhole. We found 30 species at this location.

Several of the ponds that had gone dry last summer at Harrier Marsh were now full of water. A gaggle of 19 Greater White-fronted Geese weren't far from the road. The way the sun shone on them made them quite striking. Only one male Great-tailed Grackle was found. We did see 2 Northern Harriers, the marsh's namesake. Of the 15 species recorded here, 9 were waterfowl.

Our search for the Eurasian Collared-Dove in Ogden was unsuccessful. Karl Jungbluth showed us the new nesting cavity that the Pileated Woodpeckers were creating at Ledges State Park. After many minutes of patient waiting,

*(Continued on page 5)*

Notes from the . . . (Continued from page 4)

the male arrived and entered the cavity. It wasn't long before we saw him poke his head out of the hole and jettison some chips. This cavity was still a work-in-progress.

Our last stop was at Karl's home where everyone had excellent views of both male and female Purple Finches. He always has some interesting birds at his feeders! I noted that at least 13 species visited the feeders.

**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration, Kearney, NE. March 15-17.** Five Big Bluestem members traveled to Kearney, NE, to observe the annual migration spectacle of Sandhill Cranes, Snow Geese, and other waterfowl. The Cranes and waterfowl, including most of the expected duck species, were present in large numbers throughout the Rainwater Basin area south of Kearney. Northern Pintails were especially abundant. Other notable birds were several raptor species (Cooper's Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, and a Ferruginous Hawk), one shorebird (Greater Yellowlegs), Ross' Geese, Black-billed Magpies, and two Merlins. Wolf and I also unexpectedly found a flock of 12 Greater Prairie-Chickens foraging in the grass near the road. We also enjoyed great food, enjoyable socializing, entertaining speakers, and observed over 60 bird species.

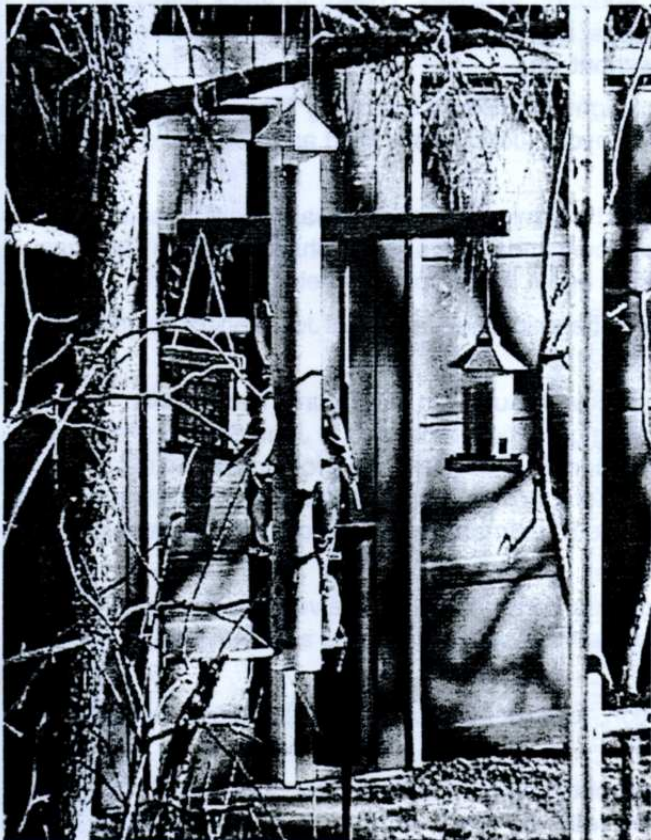


photo from Karl's window

## Birdathon!

### Still Time to Join the Fun

Teams are gearing up right now for our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Birdathon on May 11<sup>th</sup>. There's still time for you to join a team, or make a pledge...all in support of chapter educational and conservation projects.

Birdathon is Big Bluestem Audubon's biggest fundraising event, and it's fun. Like a walkathon, we count birds to raise funds for birds. We'll support Audubon Adventures, scholarships to Young Naturalist's Camp, Audubon Iowa's Important Bird Areas Program, and the Harrier Marsh addition. Our goal is to see hundreds of birds, get outside on a beautiful spring day, and raise over \$5000.

Are you new to birding? Looking to join others on a Birdathon team? Do you want to go solo, but don't know where to start? Are you looking to make a pledge to a team or the chapter? Great! Just contact the Birdathon Coordinators, Karl & Carmen Jungbluth at 515-432-5057 and they'll get you started.

See our March/April newsletter for more Birdathon information.



*The View . . . (Continued from page 4)*

three merganser species were recorded, with the Common Mergansers appearing to be, by far, the most numerous. By the 27<sup>th</sup>, the number of waterfowl was reduced by 70%. Six Bald Eagles (3 adults and 3 immatures) were on the ice on the 11<sup>th</sup>. At least one eagle was found on seven other days. A female Merlin was noted on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Ring-necked Pheasants continued to use the old soybean field. However, my highest count was only 20 birds on the 8<sup>th</sup>. American Coots were first noted on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Ring-billed and Herring Gulls had also returned. One to 3 Harris' Sparrows were still being found in the yard. For me, spring is not the arrival of American Robins, but the return of Red-winged Blackbirds. Their numbers kept increasing from a few individuals to hundreds. A total of 52 species were recorded this month. A single beaver was observed swimming, with a twig in its mouth, near the north shore of the south lake.

As of the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, I had already recorded 58 species. Two Common Loons have been seen almost everyday, with a third one on the 6<sup>th</sup>. All of them have been in breeding plumage. Ross' Geese (6<sup>th</sup>), Blue-winged Teal (6<sup>th</sup>), and Ruddy Ducks (2<sup>nd</sup>) joined the other 16 waterfowl species recorded this month. The Ross' Geese were amongst a group of approximately 125 Snow Geese and weren't much bigger than the Ring-billed Gulls that swam past them. Common and Red-breasted Mergansers appeared to be the most numerous. The first Bonaparte's Gull was found on the 6<sup>th</sup>, as were the first Tree Swallows. A single Purple Martin was seen on the 9<sup>th</sup>. An Eastern Phoebe visited the yard on the 7<sup>th</sup>. (My first Eastern Phoebe was seen in January in California; a wayward soul.) The warm, southerly winds of the 10<sup>th</sup> emptied the lake of waterfowl. Only a few Common and Red-breasted Mergansers remained. Perhaps more will show up in the coming days.

## Thank You!

*Karl Jungbluth*

As we wind up another year of Big Bluestem Audubon activities, I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to our educational and conservation activities, and supported the organizational side of things during my term as President. We couldn't do it all without you.

Thanks to those "stepping down" (but not out of sight) like Board Secretary Mary Doud and Board Members Al Ravenscroft, Kathy Andersen and John Snyder (John briefly filled an open board term, but continues as Program Chair).

Thanks to those yet to step up, because we still need a nomination for one board position, and several committee positions for next year. Thanks to board members and officers John Pohlman, Donna Flanagan, Bruce Ehresman and Linda Thomas for agreeing to run again in the upcoming election.

Thanks to Mark Widrechner for many years as Membership Chair, and to Al Johnson for volunteering to follow Mark.

Thanks to Education Chair Ida Johnson for her work with Audubon Adventures classrooms. Thanks to Jeff Nichols (Field Trip Chair) for coordinating great field trips, and to John Snyder (Program Chair) for planning great programs. Thanks to Linda Thomas (Publicity Chair) for increasing our chapter's visibility through several events at the WBU store, and to Joyce Barhenfus for updating the chapter brochure. Thanks to Conservation Chairs Bruce Ehresman and John Pohlman, for keeping our eyes on the big picture.

Thanks to all Birdathoners and all Birdathon sponsors! With your help, we've got cash on hand to make a difference. Thanks to my Birdathon co-chair, Carmen, who contributes a lot behind the scenes.

Thanks to everyone else, too numerous to mention, for making countless contributions that really add up. You are the foundation to build upon.

And finally, a special thanks to Rebecca Shivers, outgoing Newsletter Editor, for making our newsletter, the *Big Bluestem Flyer*, an attractive "must read" for many years.



# Audubon

## Guide for a Healthy Yard and Beyond

More Native Plants! Less Lawn!



# 10 Commandments for a Healthy Yard

Think, plan and plant around the 10 Commandments. Choosing strong native trees, shrubs, and grasses is your best defense against pests and weeds. Test your soil before planting. Adjust nutrients and pH accordingly. Post a sign designating your property a Wildlife Sanctuary.

## 1 Go Organic

- Just say NO or limit exposure to toxic chemicals.
- Nourish with "brown gold" (compost), slow release organic rock fertilizers or limestone.

## 2 Make Your Turf Tough

- Use grass varieties developed for your area.
- Use sharp blades to mow 3 to 4 inches high. Short clippings decompose fast to add nitrogen instead of thatch.
- Water deeply only when needed and aerate for dense, deep roots.

## 3 Go Native!

- Native plants mean less care, less time, less expense.
- The more native plants in your yard, the more healthy habitats for birds and other wildlife.
- Challenge—REDUCE LAWN AREA by 25% this season.

## 4 Know Your Enemies

- Get a field guide to identify insects.
- Match control to pest.
- Use control only if a high number of insects exist.
- Learn life cycles so that you do not treat unnecessarily.

## 5 Treat Only When Necessary

- Use nontoxic methods first.
- Pick off and dispose of insects, vacuum, prune out infestations, or hose off garden plants.

## 6 Pick Your Pesticides

- Not all chemicals are created equal.
- "Shotgun" killers harm beneficial insects.
- Ask your lawn-care service to list pesticides used.
- Look for EPA toxicity ratings: caution (least toxic), warning, poison (most toxic).

## 7 Use Biological Controls or Biopesticides

- Most have very little environmental impact.
- Most decompose quickly and affect only the target pest.

## What is the Stuff on Your Shelves?

Be safe. DO AN INVENTORY NOW, before you tackle pests and weeds in your yard! Pesticides create risks for birds and other wildlife. Your CHILDREN AND PETS are exposed similarly. The more commonly used pesticides listed below carry the EPA toxicity rating of caution or warning. Why risk pesticide exposure when you can try safer alternatives?

**INSECTICIDES** cause death by acting on the nervous system of insects. But they also poison birds, fish, and beneficial insects. Residues are left in soil, grass, air, water, and on fruits and vegetables.

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	PRODUCT and USES	ALTERNATIVES
Acephate	Orthene for aphids, leafminers, caterpillars, sawflies, thrips	Mail order lacewings and ladybugs for aphids. Hose down plants. Use insecticidal soaps, superior or summer oils, or yellow sticky traps.
Bendiocarb	Ficam for mosquitoes, flies, fleas, ants, cockroaches, ticks, silverfish, snails, slugs, wasps	Use pyrethrum for flying insects, boric acid for fleas and cockroaches, parasitic nematodes for fleas, ground level plates with beer, or lettuce leaves picked up in the heat of the day for snails and slugs.
*Chlorpyrifos	Dursban, Dragon, Ortho-Klor for ants, crickets, armyworms, ticks, mites, chinch bugs, roaches, fleas, earwigs, cutworms, grasshoppers, millipedes, sowbugs, white grubs, turf weevils	Use bait stations with diflubenzuron (Siren Termite Bait) or hexaflumeron (Sentricom) for termites, bifentazate (Floramite) for spider mites, milky spore disease for Japanese beetle grubs, <i>Beauveria bassiana</i> fungus for chinch bugs, parasitic nematodes for grubs, beetles and grasshoppers.
*Diazinon	Bonide Soil Granules, Knox-Out, Real-Kill for aphids, bagworms, carpenter ants, lacebugs, scale, whiteflies, fire ants, grubs, cockroaches, fleas, termites	See Chlorpyrifos above. Use insecticidal soap for aphids, whiteflies, and mealybugs.
Dimethoate	Cygon for caterpillars, mites, aphids, thrips, plant hoppers and whiteflies	Use superior or summer oils for mites, aphids, thrips, and whiteflies. Use <i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i> (Bt) on caterpillars (can kill beneficial insects) and pyrethrum for insects.

\* Products being phased-out and eventually eliminated for household use.

**RODENTICIDES** kill rats and mice by hindering blood clotting so that internal bleeding leads to death over several days. Brodifacoum can last more than four months and is toxic to wildlife.

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	PRODUCT and USES	ALTERNATIVES
Brodifacoum	d-CON, Talon-G for rats and mice	Rodent proof your house. Place cotton over peanut butter on traps.

**HERBICIDES** such as 2,4-D kill broadleaf plants. Contested studies have linked 2,4-D to cancer. It is moderately toxic to birds and highly toxic to fish and aquatic plants. GLYPHOSATE causes cell death in virtually any plant. Use carefully since toxicity varies depending on formulation and exposure.

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	PRODUCT and USES	ALTERNATIVES
Glyphosate	Roundup for killing virtually anything green	Use better mowing techniques, mulching, hand weeding.
2,4-D	Scotts Turf Builder Plus 2, Weed-B-Gone for control of many broadleaf weeds	Maintain a healthy lawn by using grasses developed for your area, hand weeding, dethatching, aerating. Add native plants and reduce lawn.

## 8 Follow Directions and Protect Yourself

- Read labels before you buy or use a product.
- Always wear protective clothing while mixing and applying.
- Never use more than recommended. Remember—LESS IS BEST for survival of beneficial insects!
- Do not apply pesticides in windy conditions, near water sources, people, pets or wildlife habitat.
- Learn signs of pesticide poisoning.

## 9 Respect Your Neighbor's "Right to Know"

- Notify your neighbor before using pesticides that could drift, remain active on lawn areas, or settle in water. Children and pets are easily exposed and can take residues into homes.
- Ask neighbors and lawn services to do the same.
- Contact local municipalities to learn what, where, and when chemicals are used.
- Ask decision makers to consider safer alternatives.

## 10 Teach Tolerance and Be Tolerant

- Create natural yards with a variety of pests, predators, weeds, wildlife and native plant species.
- Plant bird and wildlife habitat.
- Enjoy controlled untidiness, not time-consuming lawn maintenance.
- Show by doing.
- Encourage neighbors to build continuous habitat from yard to yard.


## Important Phone Numbers:

Cooperative Extension for safe disposal sites:

Poison Control Center:

Wildlife Rehabilitator:

Native plant retailer:

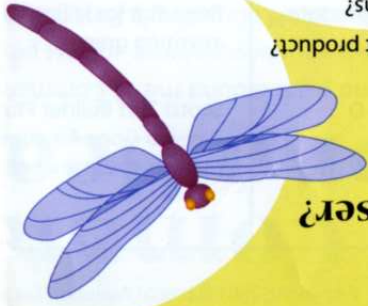
 Audubon



## Are YOU a responsible user?

Answer honestly and find out:

- Do pests even exist?
- Do you try non-toxic solutions first?
- Do you use the least amount of the correct product?
- Do you read and follow all label instructions?
- Do you protect yourself, family, neighbors, and pets?
- Do you understand the dangers to pregnant women and young children?
- Do you understand the connection between applying pesticides and contaminating air, soil or water?
- Do you know where to dispose of unused pesticides safely?
- Do you know the signs of pesticide poisoning?
- Do you know when and where others use pesticides?



## Learn more about pesticides

- "The Audubon Guide To Home Pesticides" ([www.audubon.org/bird/pesticides/index.html](http://www.audubon.org/bird/pesticides/index.html))
- The "Citizen's Guide to Pest Control and Pesticide Safety," EPA Office of Pesticide Programs, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Mailbox 7506c, Washington DC 20460, call 703-305-5017 ([www.epa.gov/pesticides](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides))
- National Coalition Against Misuse of Pesticides ([www.beyondpesticides.org/](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/))
- The Extension Toxicology Network is science-based pesticide information written for the non-expert. ([www.ace.orst.edu/info/extoxnet](http://www.ace.orst.edu/info/extoxnet))
- The National Pesticides Telecommunications Network, call 800-858-7378 for information, safety practices and incident investigation. ([ace.orst.edu/info/nptn/index.html](http://ace.orst.edu/info/nptn/index.html))

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# Audubon



## It's unbelievable that...

67 million lbs. of pesticides are applied annually to home lawns; add school and golf turf and the amount rises to 73 million lbs. That equals 0.26 pounds of pesticide for every man, woman, and child in the U.S. or 8 pounds per acre. That is three times more pesticide than farmers use per acre!

5 billion pounds of pesticides are applied annually worldwide, 20% of them in the United States. 672 million birds are exposed annually; 67 million birds die. This is a conservative estimate.

50 pesticide active ingredients currently used in the U.S. have caused documented bird kills.

The EPA registers 890 active ingredients as pesticides, but this does not mean that they are safe or that they were tested in combinations.

103,046 cases of human pesticide exposure were reported in U.S. certified regional poison control centers in 1998. But these centers serve less than half the population and many cases are not reported since symptoms mimic flu.

## Learn more about how to reduce the use of pesticides, find alternatives, and create a healthy backyard

- Pesticide and garden tips ([www.birdsource.org/GBBC/spring/garden.html](http://www.birdsource.org/GBBC/spring/garden.html))
- The Environmental Protection Agency's Biopesticides site ([www.epa.gov/pesticides/biopesticides](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/biopesticides))
- Backyard Conservation 1-888-LANDCARE ([www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/Backyard.html](http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/Backyard.html))
- Landscaping with native plants ([www.epa.gov/greenacres](http://www.epa.gov/greenacres))
- Native plants and gardening links ([plants.usda.gov/plants/links.html](http://plants.usda.gov/plants/links.html))
- Native plant societies by region ([www.nanps.org/associations/frame.shtml](http://www.nanps.org/associations/frame.shtml))

Hang this chart near your garden supplies as a reminder to make kinder choices.



## WETLANDS WORKSHOP PLANNED FOR MAY 18

*Come and Develop the Skills You Need to Protect*

*One of Iowa's Most Important and Most Threatened Resources— Wetlands!*

Iowa was once a state rich with productive wetlands. In 1780 Iowa had 4 million acres of wetlands. In 1990 it was estimated that number had dwindled to just 400,000 acres. Iowa is one of the nation's leaders in wetlands destruction—89% of Iowa's wetlands state-wide have been destroyed and that number jumps to 99% if only the prairie potholes are considered.

Come join Iowans from throughout the state for a wetlands workshop and help save our last remaining wetlands! National wetlands experts will conduct a workshop on the basics of reading and commenting on proposed permits for wetlands destruction, the basics of wetlands law and regulation, the basics of Iowa state legislation regarding isolated wetlands and other waters, and how to use the media to get across your message and save your wetland. Please reserve Saturday, May 18 for this essential and exciting training opportunity. The meeting will be held next to Carney Marsh area at the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities building, 1735 N.E. 70th Avenue between Ankeny and Des Moines. A registration fee of \$15 will be charged to cover a light breakfast and lunch. Please register by May 10 by filling out the registration form below and returning it to Jane Clark. Contact Jane Clark at [jrclark@radiks.net](mailto:jrclark@radiks.net) or 515-223-5047 for more information to register.

The Iowa wetlands workshop is being funded by the Clean Water Network and will be presented by Julie Sibbing of the National Wildlife Federation and Daniel Rosenberg of the Natural Resources Defense Council, co-chairs of the Clean Water Network Wetlands Workgroup.

### REGISTRATION FORM

#### Iowa Wetlands Workshop

Return by May 10

If you are interested in attending the Iowa wetlands workshop, please return this form as soon as possible, but no later than May 10, 2002. Please note that there is a \$15 registration fee to cover breakfast and lunch. Please fill out this registration form and return it to Jane Clark at [jrclark@radiks.net](mailto:jrclark@radiks.net) or mail it to Jane at 9871 Lincoln Ave., Des Moines, IA 50325. Jane is at 515-223-5047.

Name:

Organization:

Address:

City: State: ZIP:

Phone:

Email:

YES, I plan to attend the Iowa wetlands workshop on May 18 at the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities building, 1735 N.E. 70th Avenue, Ankeny, Iowa, just outside of Des Moines.

YES, I have included my \$15 registration fee made out to "Jane Clark."

NO, I have not included my registration fee but will pay it at the workshop.

#### Meals

I will be at breakfast.

I will be at lunch.

Please let us know if you are a vegetarian or vegan or have other special dietary requirements. Describe:

\*Thanks to the Iowa Wildlife Federation, Audubon Iowa, Sierra Club, the Clean Water Network, the National Wildlife Federation and Natural Resources Defense Council for making this event possible!\*

# Audubon Membership

*Karl Jungbluth*

A task force has been working within Audubon to maximize the effectiveness of the National Audubon Society, and its chapters. The goal is to build the strongest possible membership base nationwide. It is recognized that local Audubon memberships, similar to our newsletter subscription, can be effective. The policy on this will be changing, summarized below, requiring a change to our Chapter Bylaws. Come to our May meeting to see the changes, and vote on their adoption.

Audubon Membership will consist of two categories of members: National Members and Chapter Members. In short, the term "Chapter Member" will refer to a member who belongs to a Chapter only, while "National Member" refers to a member who belongs to both National and their local Chapter (if there is one). Both will be "Audubon members".

For purposes of internal administration, such as allocating revenue, voting for officers and directors, renewal, servicing, financial solicitation, benefits, minimum contribution levels, and data management, the following guidelines will apply:

## **NATIONAL MEMBERS**

*Any person who contributes \$20 or more to the National Audubon Society in a given year is a National Member (this includes Birdathon or any contribution to an Audubon program). Chapters are encouraged to recruit National members. The following guidelines apply to National Members:*

- National Members may vote for directors and officers of the National Audubon Society, as well as for directors and officers of their Chapter according to Chapter bylaws.
- National Members will receive Audubon Magazine.
- National Member names in Chapter territories will be shared with Chapters on a regular basis.
- National Members may opt out of receiving solicitations or mailings, by notifying either National or the Chapter.
- National Audubon Society will renew and service National Members, and determine what benefits apply to National Members.

## **CHAPTER MEMBERS**

Chapters may develop their own "Chapter Member" program where a person who makes a minimum contribution to a Chapter is a Chapter Member. The following guidelines apply to Chapter Members:

- Each Chapter will determine the minimum contribution required for Chapter Membership.
- Chapter Members may vote for Chapter directors and officers according to Chapter by-laws.
- Chapters retain all contributions they receive made to the Chapter.
- Chapters will share Chapter Member names with National Audubon Society on a regular basis.
- Each Chapter will renew and service its Chapter Members, and determine what benefits apply to its Chapter Members.
- Chapter Members may opt out of receiving solicitations or mailings from National, by notifying either National or the Chapter. Chapter Members names will not be sold to outside organizations through list rentals.
- Chapter Members will not receive Audubon Magazine unless National Audubon Society elects to provide it at its own expense.

In all cases, the intent of the member must be respected, and all Audubon policies should be aimed at assuring that the wishes of a donor/member are given first priority. Our Board of Directors will be setting dues for Chapter Members at our next board meeting.

## A Big Thanks to Everyone. . .

We have come a long way during the past six years with new computer technologies for desktop publishing constantly vying for our dollars. When I took over the newsletter, it went from a four-page newsletter that Sherry Dragula spent hours cutting, editing, and pasting on blue line paper to submit to a copy center to an 8- to 12-page newsletter constructed with computer desktop publishing.

As we venture into the world of wireless communication, I hope the BBAS considers using its new website [<http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ia/>] more, including a mechanism to distribute the newsletter. The newsletter is very simple to convert into a pdf file for everyone to read very easily on-line, saving lots of money, paper, and you can see the color photos as well. No need to feel guilty throwing the newsletter away or let it lay around taking up space.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for helping with the *Big Bluestem Flyer* over the past six years, especially Joyce Bahrenfus for her editing and proofreading skills. It has been fun. Rebecca

## Spring Birdfeeder Cleaning

Linda Thomas

Keeping your birdfeeders clean helps provide a healthy feeding environment for your birds. And, at Wild birds Unlimited of Ames, we want to help you clean up your feeders and get ready for spring and summer birdfeeding with our spring Birdfeeder Cleaning on Saturday, April 27, 2002, from 9AM-1PM.

Volunteers from the Story County Conservation *Partners* group will be providing the manpower. All proceeds from your \$3.00 donation per feeder will go to Story County Conservation Partners for support of county conservation activities.

So, plan now to drop your feeders off early on the 27<sup>th</sup> at Wild Birds Unlimited, 213 Duff, Ames. You can pick them up later that day all "spruced" up for you and your birds – and you'll be helping to support local conservation efforts.

### Donate \$\$\$ to Your Big Bluestem Audubon Society through Purchases at Wild Birds Unlimited of Ames

Wild Birds Unlimited of Ames will donate 10% of your purchase of birdseed, feeders, birding, and nature related products to Big Bluestem Audubon Society (BBAS).

Present the coupon below at the time of your purchase and a donation will be given to BBAS. Donations will fund the various habitat restoration and educational projects undertaken by BBAS.



**213 DUFF AVE.  
AMES, IA 50010  
(515) 956-3145**  
*Your Backyard Birdfeeding Specialist®*

**Donate 10% of your Next Purchase  
To Big Bluestem Audubon Society  
& Receive 2 lbs. FREE of our Deluxe Blend**

Coupon must be presented at time of purchase  
May not be combined with any other offer  
Not valid on specially-priced merchandise

Monday – Friday 9:30am – 5:30pm  
Saturday 9am – 5pm  
Sunday Noon – 4pm  
Offer Expires: 06/30/02

***We Bring People and Nature Together®***

BIRDSEED • FEEDERS • HOUSES • BIRDBATHS  
HARDWARE • BINOCs • BOOKS • NATURE GIFTS



## Clip and Join

Don't forget gift memberships!

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

New member of the National Audubon Society (receive the *Audubon* magazine, the *Big Bluestem Flyer*, membership card)—\$20. Please make your check payable to: National Audubon Society and include "Chapter Code H-57" on the check.

OR

Subscribe to the *Big Bluestem Flyer* for one year and participate in some Big Bluestem Audubon Society activities—\$5.50. Restrictions are that you will not be a National Audubon Society member or have voting privileges, and you cannot be an officer or committee chair. Please make your check payable to: Big Bluestem Audubon Society.

Send your check and this coupon to Al Johnson, Membership Chair, 3912 Squaw Road, Ames, Iowa 50014.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ fax \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: Please do not use this form for renewals to the National Audubon Society.*

## Letter to the Editor

A new controversial land-use issue is looming on our horizon, and like the Ames Quarry that many of us worked to protect, the outcome of this new concern will have major, long-term impacts on the quality of our water, soil, and wildlife.

A development company located in Tennessee has submitted a letter to the Ames City Council proposing to build a large mall at the northeast corner of the Interstate 35 and 13<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. Ames city staff is currently reviewing this proposal. It is only a matter of time before the Ames Planning and Zoning Commission receives a request for a change in the land use policy plan (LUPP). Land east of I-35 has been designated for industrial development so a change in the LUPP would be required for this area.

The Ames LUPP calls for development of a regional mall but with no mention of a mall developed on the east side of I-35. The LUPP also calls for city growth to occur to the south and southwest. A mall located east of I-35 would not serve residents of the planned growth area. A mall of this scale would promote sprawl east of I-35 where the costs of building infrastructure (sewer, water, electrical, etc.) is more expensive.

The area proposed for the mall development threatens a precious resource. That resource is prime agricultural land rapidly disappearing and often overlooked. It lies adjacent to the south border of the Story County Conservation Board's Kettleon Wildlife Complex and Prairie Marsh.

Why do we assume that another mall 4 times larger than the North Grand Mall is needed at all? How will our existing merchants cope with this threat to their livelihood and how many will suffer the loss of business?

If you feel as I do that this is an issue that needs to be stopped then I urge you to contact the Ames Quality of Life Coalition, a non-profit organization that was formed several years ago to combat poor community planning. Contact Joe Lynch, executive director (292-0117) or Mike Bell, president (292-7856) for more information.

Mike Meetz

## Rick's Fool-Proof Hummingbird Feeder Anti-Ant Device [RFPHAAD]

*Richard Hollis*

It has to be fool-proof if I can do it. Take a heavy bottle lid, about the size of a salad dressing lid, more or less 30 mm diameter x 15-20 mm deep. Drill a hole through the middle of the bottom. The hole needs to be large enough to allow passage of a 4-6-inch piece of stiff wire. Pass the wire through the hole. I use household electric wire. Glue the wire in place with half above and half below the bottle. Hot glue works wonderful. I bend a hook in the top and bottom of the wire. Hang your RFPHAAD where you hang your feeder. Fill the RFPHAAD nearly full with salad/cooking oil. Hang your feeder from the bottom hook. *NOTE:* Only a few ants will get through, as long as there is oil in the cap. If ants start to show up in numbers, your oil is probably low. The feeder will get a bit oily if it is windy or a big oriole lands on the feeder.

## Iowa NatureMapping Program

*Jason O'Brien, Coordinator*

The Iowa NatureMapping Program is holding a Level I basic training workshop on May 4th, from 9am to 4pm at the Story County Conservation Board's McFarland Park. The workshop is \$10.00, plus an additional \$5.00 if you would like lunch. To register, please visit the web site at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/naturemapping>, click on "how to get involved" and follow the links from there. Or, you may contact McFarland Park at 515/232-2516 to sign up. The birds and other wildlife that you see while birding with Big Bluestem Audubon or on your own, can be contributed to a statewide database through NatureMapping. Please consider joining the NatureMapping efforts in Iowa and begin NatureMapping in your community!

## Why Birds Fly in V Formation

[Reuters—dsc.discovery.com/news/reu/20011015/geese.html]

French scientists have exposed the long-held bird secret of why birds fly in a V formation, a pattern often used for long migrations. Writing in the journal *Nature*, the scientists said that birds flying in the formation have lower pulse rates and wing beat frequencies than birds flying alone, saving them lots of energy. "Our results provide empirical evidence that, compared with solo flight, formation flight confers a significant aerodynamic advantage which allows birds to reduce their energy expenditure while flying at a similar speed," Henri Weimerskirch, of the National Center for Scientific Research in Villiers en Bois, said.

In a separate study in the magazine, researchers at Lund University in Sweden wrote that migratory birds can travel great distances without stopping by overeating, and also by flying in a V formation. The researchers, who measured the effect and the amount of food on metabolism, found that birds fly more efficiently when they are carrying large food stores. Birds sometimes double their body mass before a long-haul flight, but rather than weighing them down, it makes them fly better and longer. "The most likely explanation is that the efficiency with which metabolic power input is converted into mechanical output by flight muscles increases with fuel load," Anders Kvist said.

### Slate of Nominees for the BBAS Officers and Board

President - John Pohlman  
Vice President - Linda Thomas  
Secretary - Vacant  
Treasurer - Donna Flanagan  
Board Members:

1. Bruce Ehresman
2. Jeff Nichols
3. Wolf Oesterreich
4. Matt Wetrich
5. Vacant

We are looking for volunteers to fill the vacant positions and can also take nominees from the floor at the May meeting. Contacts for questions are Mary Doud at 795-4176 or John Pohlman at 232-6816

### Welcome New Members!

Karen Anglin, Stephen Bishop, Robert Boeke, Jack Dodd, Louise Dengler, Duane Enger, Wayne Gregoire, Marissa Hammer, Bob Hartzler, Daryl Johnson, Les Jordan, Margaret Knott, S. Lundt, Alice Slavbaugh, Ross Talbot, Jeff Trom, Stephen Wilson, Heather Yorek

### Audubon Watchlist

Short Eared Owl



#### Threats:

- Loss of open grassland habitat due to agriculture, grazing, housing and resort development.
- Reforestation of grassland habitats following abandonment of farming.
- Vulnerable to predation by skunks, feral cats and dogs, especially during nesting.

#### Habitat:

Open grasslands, dunes, marshes, meadows, and tundra.

(taken from Audubon.org)

# Field Trips

Field trips meet at the Ames Wild Birds Unlimited (WBU) at 8:00 am unless otherwise indicated. Contact Jeff Nichols (515-296-2178, [jnichols1961@hotmail.com](mailto:jnichols1961@hotmail.com)) for additional information.

## May

- 11 **Birdathon!** Join Audubon's all-day birding and fundraising event. Prizes will be awarded. Contact Karl Jungbluth for more information (515-432-5057).
- 12 **Mother's Day Warbler Walk** at McFarland Park.
- 17-18 Road trip to **Sweet Marsh**, northeast of Waverly. Several thousand acres of wetland, prairie and woodland. Travel to Waverly area Friday night; meet at 0700 in the Waverly Super8 lobby to carpool to the marsh. Contact Jeff Nichols (515-795-4176) for details.
- 25 Waterfowl and shorebirds at **Colo Ponds and Hendrickson Marsh**. Meet at the cannon in the parking lot at the Nevada courthouse at 8:00 am. Trip Leader: Hank Zaletel (515-382-5427).

## June

- 1 **Annual Birder's Brunch** at the Ledges State Park south of Boone. Meet in the upper Ledges at 8:00 am. We'll bird as we hike down the hill and have brunch in the lower Ledges. Please bring a food item to share.
- 10-16 **FYI American Birding Assoc. Annual Convention**, Duluth, MN. Prime birding habitats including boreal forests to the north, grasslands and marshes to the west, and mixed deciduous woodlands to the southwest. Field trips coordinated by Kim Eckert, author of *A Birder's Guide to Minnesota*. Evening programs, artists, authors, exhibits, sales. Contact Jeff Nichols (515-795-4176) for more info.



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*Big Bluestem Flyer*  
Rebecca A. Shivvers, Editor  
*Big Bluestem Audubon Society*  
2380 220th Street  
Boone, Iowa 50036

*We welcome new members!*



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