



# PERLEATED DRUMMINGS

*Dubuque Audubon Society*

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## Celebrating Eagles!

By Pat Fisher

As I was driving west on Hwy. 20 recently, in western Dubuque County, a Bald Eagle flew right over the road in front of my car. I told my sister in Florida about that, and she was all excited; bald eagles are something she rarely sees in Florida.

I still remember some 20 years ago when my husband and I, living in Milwaukee at the time, took a day off of work to travel to Sac City, WI, so that we could see our first eagles. It was thrilling. Those eagles flying over the Wisconsin River remain a vivid image for me.

**We are fortunate to live in an area that has LOTS of eagles to see. It used to be just in the winter but now it's not unusual to see nesting eagles during the summer.**



The recovery of the bald eagle is a wonderful success story. We celebrate this recovery each winter by helping to host the Bald Eagle Watch. **The 2010 Bald Eagle Watch is on Saturday, January 23, from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the Grand River Center in Dubuque.** The day features live eagles and other raptors, a first-time speaker on bobcat tracking, see live bobcats, children's activities, and various other nature displays and exhibits.

Your Audubon Society has taken a lead role in helping to organize this day. **The Bald Eagle Watch reaches 800 4<sup>th</sup> grade school children on Friday and thousands of people on Saturday.**

This signature event for our organization has grown and flourished over it's 25 year history. This could not have occurred without the support of our membership. **Many thanks in advance for helping to make this day a fun educational experience.**

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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One advantage of having new people join the board is the fresh ideas they bring.. Michele Zurcher is our new program chair and has been taking us around the world with the exciting speakers she has arranged. The October program took us to Nepal, in November we visited Paraguay, and our December program on Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. is taking us to Iceland with professional photographer Barbara Baird from Galena. **Join us in our new meeting place in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church for this exciting program, great Audubon coffee, and an array of Christmas cookies!**

## audubondubuque.org

By Pat Fisher

**Have you checked out the new Audubon website?** Your Audubon Board has been working hard to develop a website that presents the activities and opportunities for birding that are available in the tri-state area.

**Can't remember when the next meeting is? Check the CALENDAR OF EVENTS or the NEWSLETTER pages.**

Have an afternoon to tool around the countryside and look for birds but aren't sure where to go? **Check the website for BIRD LOCATIONS.** Want to buy Audubon coffee but can't remember who to call? **Check the website for COFFEE.**

**Want to take the family to Bald Eagle Watch but can't remember the details? Check the website for CALENDAR OF EVENTS.**

You just saw a rough-legged hawk on Indian Creek Road west of Dickeyville and you want to share the news? **Go to the website, click on "THE LATEST BIRD SIGHTINGS" with the picture of the bird.** There you can click on the email address in the first sentence [birdsighting@gmail.com](mailto:birdsighting@gmail.com) and provide the information listed. Your information will be posted on that webpage. You will also be able to see postings from other local birders. Don't be timid. The more we post bird sightings, the more valuable this site will be for all of us.



## OUTDOOR CHILDREN'S CORNER

Wayne Buchholtz/Conservation

One of the easiest ways to involve your children in nature is backyard **bird watching**.

Start watching at home, in your own backyard. Birds are everywhere— even in urban areas. Begin by pointing out the birds of your backyard or neighborhood. No birds there? Then put out some bird feeders in your back yard. No backyard? Then visit a local park or nature center that has bird-friendly features, such as a feeding station or a pond or other water feature. Point out obvious birds close to home. Focus on big birds that are easy to see.

**Bird Drawing Activity:** Ask the kids to draw a bird they've seen. It can be their favorite bird of the day or the grossest, scariest, prettiest—whatever. This is another sneaky way to help the young birders begin to notice field marks!

**Eat Like a Bird Activity:** Think birds don't eat very much? Try this-- eat like a bird activity and think again. When people say, "You eat like a bird," they often mean you hardly eat anything at all. But modern bird scientists (called "ornithologists") have a different perspective.

They say that although birds do eat tiny mouthfuls of food, they do so hundreds and hundreds of times each day. They have to eat a lot just to keep their energetic, little bodies moving.

### What You'll Need:

- Ordinary meals broken up into about two dozen tiny meals
- One free day

So why not try a bird's eating habits on for size? You might not want to feast on invertebrates (bugs & worms), but you can try to eat your food gradually, one tiny bite at a time.

## THE LATEST BIRD SIGHTINGS

By David Fisher

Have you seen a bird that you would like to tell everyone about? Please email [birdsighting@gmail.com](mailto:birdsighting@gmail.com), and we will post the information here. Photos are welcome. Please tell us the following information: Date of sighting (e.g. near Hazel Gree on Hwy X), Type of habitat (heavy woods, fence post in meadow, Sunfish Lake on Mississippi River), Name of bird(s) or "Mystery bird" designation with photo and/or description, Photographer or person(s) sighting the bird(s), and any other pertinent information

# **D**UBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**December, 2009 – January, 2010**

<b>Dec. 10 – Thurs.</b>	<b>Iceland – Land of Fire and Ice</b>	Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1755 Delhi, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm – Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm – Program: Iceland – Land of Fire and Ice. Barbara Baird will take us on a photographic journey to this unique island. Cookies: please bring a dozen or two of your favorite Holiday cookie to share with the group.
<b>Dec. 18 – Fri.</b>	<b>Bellevue Area Christmas Bird Count</b>	7:30 am. Meet at Lock and Dam 12 in Bellevue, IA. Birding groups will be formed at that time. For additional information, contact Charlie Winterwood at 563.588.2783.
<b>Jan. 2 – Sat.</b>	<b>Christmas Bird Count</b>	8:00 am. Participants meet at the Audubon Overlook at the 16 <sup>th</sup> Street Retention Basin or at 12:00 pm (noon) at Wendy's on 16 <sup>th</sup> Street. Or contact one of the route leaders listed in the article elsewhere in the newsletter. 4:00 pm Compilation of the day's count and Chili Supper at Dave and Pat Fisher's home, 1920 Loras Boulevard.
<b>Jan. 9 – Sat.</b>	<b>Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey</b>	12:00 pm Meet at the Fairway Food Store parking lot in Dyersville, IA just off Hwy 20.
<b>Jan. 14 – Thurs.</b>	<b>A Design for a Comprehensive Environmental Ethic</b>	Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1755 Delhi, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm – Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm – Program: Richard Van Iten. Cookies: Joe Tollari and ?
<b>Jan. 23 – Sat.</b>	<b>Bald Eagle Day</b>	Grand River Center in the Port of Dubuque, Dubuque, IA. Raptor programs at 9:30 am, 12:15 pm, and 3:00 pm. Owl program at 11:00 am. Bobcat program at 1:45 pm. Lock and Dam # 11: 9:00 am to 3:30 pm for live eagle watching.
<b>Feb 12 – Feb 15</b>	<b>Great Backyard Bird Count</b>	Plan on participating in this fun event which you can do from the warm comfort of your home. We will have more information in the February newsletter, but you can go to <a href="http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/">www.birdsource.org/gbbc/</a> to watch an informational video and learn about the photo contest.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

## DECEMBER PROGRAM

By Michele Zuercher

*Iceland - Land of Fire and Ice* will be presented Thursday, December 10, 2009, 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, downstairs at 1755 Delhi St., Dubuque, Iowa. The Audubon Society will be hosting Barbara Baird who will share information on this extreme northern country. **Everyone is invited!**

Look ahead to January 14<sup>th</sup> when Richard Van Iten's topic will be "A Design for a Comprehensive Environmental Ethic."

## OCTOBER PROGRAM REVIEWED

By Michele Zuercher

Our October speaker was **David Edds from Emporia, Kansas, professor of aquatic ecology. Dr. Edds presented "Nepal: Land of Contrasts".** This presentation was a summary of his experiences and observations during six years of living in Nepal. He spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer with the remaining years spent conducting research on fish communities. He emphasized the differences of this tiny nation between the highlands (the Himalaya Mountains) and the lowlands (the Ganges River plain). He explored cultural differences between the people of the farmland and in Kathmandu. **A highlight of his presentation was a survey of the wildlife: greater one-horned rhinoceros; gharials; many fish species; hornbills and other birds!**

## AUDUBON COFFEE—A GREAT HOLIDAY PRESENT!

By David Fisher

Bird-friendly because it's shade-grown, organic, fairly-traded Audubon coffee makes a great Hannakuh or Christmas present. The attractive packaging only needs a bow to become a welcome hostess gift, stocking stuffer, Secret Santa present or addition to a basket with other goodies.

The price is right at \$8 for regular or \$8.50 for decaf. Coffee is available in whole bean or ground. Choose from Breakfast Blend, French Roast and Rainforest Blend in regular; Breakfast Blend only for decaf.

Audubon Coffee is sold at all Audubon meetings and Audubon events or by calling Dave at 563-542-0864.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BALD EAGLE WATCH

By Nita Wiederaenders

You won't want to miss the Bald Eagle Watch on Jan. 23, 2010, but please consider volunteering an extra couple of hours to make it all work. The event is open for 7 ½ hours, from 9 am to 4:30 pm. We need greeters, helping hands for the Children's Activities area, our Audubon booth, set up and clean up etc.

Please call Nita Wiederaenders, 563-583-0537 if you can help.

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2010

By Joe Ingram

Join us for Dubuque's Christmas Bird Count on Saturday January 2, 2010 (snow date Jan 3, 2010). Whether you are a member of Dubuque Audubon or not you can participate in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Enjoy sightings of birds not usually seen here in winter such as bluebirds, robins, and other migrating birds. You will join experienced and casual birders which will enhance your birding skills. There could be some walking, so dress warmly.

Contact one of the leaders below to learn the starting point and time for a particular route. Or, meet at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Detention Basis at 8:00 am or Wendy's at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Kerper Blvd. at noon. You can join us for a part of the day or the whole day. We will meet as a group after 4:00 pm at the home of Dave and Pat Fisher (1920 Loras Boulevard) to compile the results. We always share birding adventures during our chili supper.

City/Riverfront – Charlie Winterwood, 588-2783.

Difficulty level: Walking/Driving

Centralia – Pat Fisher, 556-5814. Difficulty level: Driving

Airport – Margreet Ryan, 583-8634. Difficulty level:

Driving  
Mines of Spain – Wayne Buchholtz, 582-7215. Difficulty level: Walking/Driving

Durango/John Deere – Charlie Winterwood, 588-2783.

Difficulty level: Walking/Driving

Swiss Valley – Charlie Winterwood, 588-2783, Difficulty level: Walking/Driving

East Dubuque/Wis. – Joe Ingram. Difficulty level: Walking/Driving

**OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS**

**If you have any questions or comments, please contact us!**

- President: Pat Fisher** 563-556-5814
- V-Pres.:**
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- Treasurer: Maggie O'Connell** 563-923-4308
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  - Wayne Buchholtz**
  - Joe Ingram**
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**W**INTER BIRDING  
By Wayne Buchholtz, Conservation Chair

You might be thinking that winter is not a good time to go outside and look for birds and you would rather watch birds at feeders from the comfort of your home. But, did you know that there are more birds to observe out away from your feeders than you might think. With you only having one habitat, your backyard, you will only get a few seed eating birds to your feeders. Many of the summer resident birds have flown south, the weather is more extreme, and many birds are much quieter overall. Believe it or not, there is a great deal to see and learn from birding during the winter season. Here are some of the many reasons to observe birds in the winter time in the Midwest away from your home.

Species from the north fly down into the areas where winter is a little less harsh. Some of those species may include the Snowy owl, Snow buntings, Lapland longspur, Purple Finch, Brown Creepers, and Dark-eyed junco. Species that we have in lower numbers throughout the year become more abundant during winter, such as the Bald Eagle. Many species like the American Robin, Finches, Chickadees, and Cedar Waxwings group up and can be seen sometimes in

the hundreds. Crows roost together at night in the fall and winter in large numbers.

Many birds look the same year round, but some have different winter plumage. Winter birding gives us the chance to learn how familiar birds look when they're not breeding. Finches, gulls and ducks all have species that remain in some areas year round and have different winter plumage. Some look strikingly different. If you have bird feeders, you may have noticed that heavy snow or extremely cold weather tends to bring a lot of birds. At these times, birds have more difficulty finding enough natural food sources—and many that rely on insects in the warmer months are relying on seeds, fruits and nuts now. Bird feeders are valuable sources of high energy food for them. Look for flocks of winter birds in trees and shrubs where berries still cling, in meadows where grasses and herbs set seed in the fall, and anywhere that grains or nuts are available.

Birding is different in winter. You need to dress warmly. Always plan for it to be colder than what has been forecast. Bird watching next to water usually feels at least 10 degrees colder than in surrounding areas. Remember the wind chill factor; exposed skin is especially at risk. It's always better to have too many clothes on than to have too few. You can take clothing off if you're too hot. Carry a daypack or tote bag to stuff things into that you don't need, or to carry layers to add. Remember to bring binoculars and field guides.

Look for birds in different places. You will find the experience rewarding because of the new things you'll see. You will be able to spot wildlife easier with leaves off the trees. Winter birding is like birding in a new place. You will see something different, I guarantee.

Join Dubuque Audubon Society during the Christmas Bird Count, Bald Eagle Survey and other winter field trips. You will be glad to you did.



**Myth** ---American goldfinches are bright yellow year-round. **Fact**-- American goldfinches lose their bright-yellow plumages before winter, replacing them with feathers that are a dull, brownish-green. Many people don't recognize these birds in winter, even though duller-colored birds are still at the feeders.

Dubuque Audubon Society  
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The mission of Dubuque Audubon Society is to provide educational opportunities to the people of the tri-state area and to preserve the natural habitat of birds and other wildlife.

**DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY  
NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Do NOT use this form to renew a membership in National Audubon Society. Use the form mailed to you by the National Audubon. There are two categories of memberships in the Dubuque Audubon Society

**CATEGORY A:** A free new membership in National Audubon Society which includes membership in the Dubuque Audubon Society. You will receive six issues of Audubon Magazine and nine issues of the local chapter newsletter, *Pileated Drummings*.  
\_\_\_\_\_ National Audubon Society Free Membership

**CATEGORY B:** This category of membership is local chapter only. You will receive 9 issues of the local chapter newsletter, *Pileated Drummings*. All funds will remain with the local chapter. Membership year is from July to June.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Local Chapter Dues      \$10.00

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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