



PILEATED DRUMMING

Dubuque Audubon Society

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Don't Take Them For Granted!

By Pat Fisher

We have a myriad of bird guides available to us. In fact, most of the articles we see on bird guides provide reviews of which one is the best to use. We probably all have our favorites. In fact, can you imagine going birding without a guide?

My first field guide was a Peterson. Since I was starting out as a complete no-nothing, Peterson got me off to a great start in learning about birds. The arrows pointing out salient features were invaluable to me in identifying birds.

I remember a few years ago seeing a strange looking bird that I had never seen before. **It was almost as big as a cardinal with a brightly colored red head and breast, bright yellow belly and greenish back and wings.** The Sibley guide showed it to be a first spring male summer tanager. On looking in Peterson's and in Kaufman's guides, I found that they both showed only the adult male and female, which looked nothing like the bird I had just seen. Ah, the value of owning more than one guide hit home.

When Roger Tory Peterson began learning about birds in the 1920's, he used a tiny field guide that was published in 1916 by Chester Reed. There were a few other guides available to him, but none (including Reed's) highlighted the information needed to tell one bird species from another. When Peterson published his first field guide in 1934, he made sure it contained all of the features that would make it possible to confidently identify, and thus name, birds.



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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Bird watching has never been so popular. In fact, it is the fastest growing outdoor activity in the United States with more than 51 million people participating. And one of the reasons for this popularity is the proliferation of useful field guides. As humans, we have this need to name things. And once named, we can form a relationship that can translate into caring and concern for that thing. Whether it be people, birds, or flowers, that ability to name something is crucial. Without field guides, naming the more than 800 species in the U.S. would be impossible.

Field guides here and around the world have awakened countless people to the wonders of birds, the richness of a region's birdlife, enjoyment of the outdoors and awareness of the environment. We are very fortunate to have so many guides available to us; in fact, so many that we can debate their pros and cons. Indeed, we are very fortunate!

BIRDWATCHER-- The Life of Roger Tory Peterson by Elizabeth J. Rosenthal Book Review by Pat Fisher

Roger's love for birds started at age 11 when he joined the Junior Audubon Club at school. This National Audubon Society program was started in order to fight the destruction of birds by educating people about them. Starting with children seemed a good way to ensure a future of conservationist adults. Their mission found a ready student in young Roger.

Roger had a life-long association with National Audubon. When Roger was 26 years old, he was selected to head the association's education department. He went on to write many articles for the Audubon magazine. He remained on their board after his employment with them ended.

Roger published his first Field Guide to the Birds in 1934. His field guide sold out on the day it was released. He had a knack of simplifying the study of birds by doing some unique things. He faced all his birds in the same direction with the female slightly behind the male. He drew the birds in their relative size. He used arrows to point to their distinguishing

features. His descriptions were brief but clear. His guide led to millions more people watching birds.

Throughout his life, whether working as an educator, or mentoring fellow birders on field trips, Roger was always teaching. There are many examples of him sharing his knowledge with others, especially young people.

Roger was trained as a painter, not an ornithologist. His knowledge of the natural world was self-taught and encompassed not only birds but butterflies, wild flowers and all manner of conservation issues. He was involved in the study of DDT and its effect on birds. He was also an avid photographer.

He was a world traveler and was highly respected as a naturalist, impacting conservation issues around the world. He was eager to advance the love of nature wherever he went.



As with many people, passion can evolve into obsession. This obsession led him to be prolific in the work he accomplished. He was illustrating field guides even on the day he died.

His life is fascinating. In reading about Roger, you will also encounter many other familiar people in the birding world. I would highly recommend this book!

FEBRUARY PROGRAM REVIEWED BY Michele Zuercher

Our February speaker was Dr. Dale Easley who presented *Global Warming: A Geologist's Perspective*. Global warming (climate change) is occurring. Nearly all scientists studying the topic are in agreement. The rate at which warming has occurred has increased since the industrial revolution. Models indicate this is most likely due to human influence. How we choose to respond (or not) is an ethical, not scientific issue. Similar issues, such as protecting endangered species, limiting soil loss, and reducing acid rain, have been made on the basis of protecting the rights of the most vulnerable, comparing costs and benefits, or requiring the best currently available technology.

DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March, 2010

Mar. 11 – Thurs.	Landowner Workshop	5:00 pm at Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd. This workshop is focused on providing landowners and the public with conservation practices that will benefit wildlife, production, and our future generations. This year's sessions include: Conservation Incentive Programs, Forest Insects and Disease, Natives, Farm Ponds and Stream Management, Prescribed Fire, Management for Wildlife Diversity, Sale of Timber. We have excellent presenters and we are continuing the tradition of chili supper before the program...Do Not Miss this workshop! Please call to pre-register so we have an idea of how to plan. 563.556.6745
Mar. 11 – Thurs.	Time Flies When You're Atlasing: An Update on Iowa's 2 nd Breeding Bird Atlas	Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1755 Delhi, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm – Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm – Program: Billy Reiter-Marolf, Breeding Bird Atlas Volunteer Coordinator, will focus on the progress being made on the breeding bird atlas in the area between Dubuque and Clinton and will discuss how land policy changes can impact Iowa bird populations.
Mar. 12 – Fri.	Owl Prowl	7:00 pm at Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd. Bring the whole family to this popular program about Owls. We will learn about the owls of the area, their calls and take a hike in the preserve to call owls. This program is free and open to the public. Be sure to dress for the weather.
Mar. 13 – Sat.	Annual Duck Waddle	6:00 am – Leave the parking lot at Banworth and Udelhoven Furniture Store. If you miss our departure, meet us at Green Island. 8:30 am – Breakfast at Rivervue Café in Bellevue, Iowa (Time approximate)
Apr. 11 – Sun.	Waterfowl Observation	1:00 pm at Hurstville Interpretive Center, 18670 63 rd St., Maquoketa, Join Charlie Winterwood and Bob Walton to view waterfowl at Hurstville Nature Center. Scopes will be provided.

Decorah Bald Eagle Camera: Go to www.luther.edu/eaglecam to watch Bald Eagles nesting. Right now they are repairing the nest. There is a color camera for daylight viewing which switches to an infrared camera for night time viewing. Give it a try.

BIRDING AND BIODIVERSITY IN PARAGUAY

By Michele Zuercher and Dave Fisher

Paraguay is called by some "South America's forgotten corner" as it is tucked in between Brazil, Bolivia, and Argentina. However, there is a benefit to being "off the beaten tourist track." Paraguay is among the best places in South America to see birds. Birders have identified 656 species. And, because there are so few birders, each excursion to the major birding areas can bring delightful surprises and additions to a life list without being jostled by crowds.

Paraguay is located in the heart of South America where six major biomes meet. These biomes are large, naturally occurring, communities of flora and fauna occupying six major habitats. One major biome is the Chaco, a dusty, thorny region. Another is the Cerrado, a region of South American savanna. Yet another biome is the endangered Atlantic Forest found at the Mbaracayú Reserve in eastern Paraguay. Along the Paraguay River is the Pantanal, a wetland flood plain system that attracts many migrating birds. **All of these biomes contain their own spectacular bird populations such as the endangered White-winged Nightjar, the White-rumped Tanager, the Curl-crested Jay, the Rufous-capped**



Motmot, and the Red-breasted Toucan.

A birding tour of Paraguay will take travelers through these different biomes in a search for its bird diversity. **The itinerary is from 7 August through 22 August (16 days), broken down as follows:**

- 2 days – travel to Paraguay from Dubuque;
- 4 days – birding in the Chaco region of Paraguay;
- 4 days – birding in the Mbaracayu Forest Biosphere Reserve;
- 3 days – a visit to the Iguasu Falls (Brazil/Argentina border);
- 1 day – in Asuncion, Paraguay (many options here including some birding in Asuncion Bay);
- 2 days – travel from Paraguay to Dubuque.

Interested participants should contact tour leader Gerry Zuercher (pyscatman@hotmail.com) for additional information. Commitments are needed by March 12.

MARCH PROGRAM

By Michele Zuercher

On Thursday, March 11, 2010, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, downstairs, 1755 Delhi St., Dubuque, Iowa, Billy Reiter-Marolf will present a program entitled *Time Flies When You're Atlasing: An update on Iowa's 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas*. Billy will discuss what particular kinds of birds are located throughout the state. As we better understand these species and their nesting areas, we can see how land policy changes can impact Iowa's birds. Everyone is invited!

APRIL AND MAY PROGRAMS

By Michele Zuercher

April 8, 2010 Jon Stravers (with Driftless Area Project Coordinator, Iowa)

May 13, 2010 Darrel Mills (with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation)



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

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WINTER TIME GIVING YOU THE BLUES?

By Wayne Buchholtz

Winter will soon be over, but there are activities that you can share with you children, grand children or kids on the block. These are two simple activities that you can do on a weekend day and will later allow for hours of bird watching in your back yard. For adults, you will enjoy watching your kids enjoy the birds.

PINE CONE BIRD FEEDERS

Materials:

- Pine cones (one for each feeder)
- 1/4 cup peanut butter (per pinecone)
- Popsicle sticks or butter knife
- 2 cups bird seed (mixed variety)
- String or yarn cut into 4-foot strips

Directions:

1. Take a walk outside with your child to collect an assortment of pine cones. Talk about the different kinds of pine cones you find and the kinds of trees they come from.
2. Using a popsicle stick or butter knife, spread peanut butter all over each pine cone. Make sure to cover the surface completely.
3. Spread out birdseed on top of the newspapers. Roll each pine cone in the birdseed until it's completely coated, and no peanut butter is visible.
4. Tie a piece of string around the top of each pine cone.
5. You or another adult can now hang the pine cones from tree branches in your yard, or wherever you can watch the birds.
6. Each day, watch your birdfeeder. Keep a record of the kinds of birds that visit.

BIRDHOUSE

What You Need:

- Juice carton
- Stapler and staples
- Masking tape
- A soft cloth, rag or chamois
- Brown shoe polish
- Scissors or a knife
- Twine

What You Do:

1. Clean and dry the juice carton thoroughly.
2. Staple the top of the carton shut.
3. Tear off small pieces of masking tape and cover the entire carton with the pieces of tape.
4. Using a soft cloth, rub brown shoe polish all over the tape. This will give the carton a rough, bark-like finish.
5. Cut a hole (WITH ADULT ASSISTANCE) about 4" above the bottom of the carton. The hole should be approximately 1" to 1 1/2" in diameter. This hole is for the birds to get in and out of the house.
6. Poke a few drainage holes in the bottom of the carton and two ventilation holes in the top of the carton.
7. Poke a hole through the top of the feeder, string a piece of twine through the hole, and hang your feeder on a tree.

IOWA AND ARKANSAS: 2010 WINTER TRUMPETER RELEASE

From: The Trumpeter Swan Society
<pabbott@vtc.net>

Ron Andrews coordinates Iowa's Trumpeter Swan Restoration Program. He also serves on The Trumpeter Swan Society's Board of Directors.



Photograph by Lowell Washburn Iowa

With characteristic enthusiasm, on February 10th, Andrews led a parade of cars from the Visitor's Center at Arkansas' Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge to a release site near the Arkansas River on the refuge. He looked pretty fresh, considering that he and Dave Hoffman, DNR Wildlife Technician, had chauffeured a rowdy crowd of 1st-year Trumpeters down the Interstate Highways the previous day from Iowa. Sixteen teenagers of any sort exude energy - can you imagine the trumpeting on this parade?

Sixteen Trumpeter Swans met 16 citizens willing to help with this third release of Trumpeters as part of a migration experiment. Joe Neal reports he arrived to snow on the ground, and forgetting his coat, had to stuff a blanket under his shirt. When Karen Rowe of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission handed him a 25-pound Trumpeter, he welcomed its pleasant warmth. He describes it this way: "*You first must hold their feet tightly - web feet the size of my hands. You firmly hug 'em to keep that 8-foot wing span closed. Then*

there is the famous trumpet, a very, very long neck with an anxious, intelligent dark-eyed creature winding it around your neck, over your head, serpent-like, watching all, honking and hissing, way, way ready for release. Even standing in the snow and coatless, I was quite warm and fully employed hanging on to my swan!"

Biologists hope that these young swans got their compass bearings while in Iowa. Now released in Arkansas' milder winter terrain, it is hoped they will imprint on this area as well, before spring restlessness leads them off to wing their way north. We hope these members of a growing Interior Population of Trumpeters will establish a migration between Iowa and Arkansas.



Many Trumpeter Swans have no experience migrating. Knowledge of routes, potential safe resting areas along the way, and wintering areas are learned from parents. Restoration flocks don't have this traditional information. Managers hope this experiment will result in new migration traditions. Andrews feels that Iowa's population is on the verge of being self-sustaining, citing 40 nesting pair in 2009! The potential option of wintering in Arkansas helps secure their future.

ANNUAL DUCK WADDLE

By Pat Fisher

If the ducks are coming back, it must be spring!
Dubuque Audubon Society's Annual Duck Waddle will be held on Saturday, March 13, 2010.



Wood ducks

Meet at 6:00 am at Banworth and Udelhoven parking lot in Dubuque to carpool down to Green Island. Dress for the weather! Boots and layers of warm clothing are recommended. Bring binoculars and a bird book. Scopes will be available for all to use.

It's an early to rise morning, but always worth it. After seeing all there is to see out on the dikes, we stop for breakfast in Bellevue.



Canvasback

Everyone is welcome! This is a great way to identify ducks with some knowledgeable people. And you just never know what else you'll see!

If you can't join us for this fieldtrip, be sure to drive down to Eagle Point Road, leading to O'Leary's Lake. This is the road in Wisconsin across from Dubuque's Lock and Dam #11. Drive your car right up on the dike and you can observe many waterfowl right from your car. You will need binoculars and an identification book. Make this a regular viewing spot during March and April and you'll see many different species of waterfowl as they migrate through our area.

AUDUBON COFFEE

By Dave Fisher

Audubon Premium Shade Grown Coffee will be available at our next Audubon meeting on March 11, or you can order by calling Dave on his cell phone: [563-542-0864](tel:563-542-0864). Regular is \$8 and Decaf is \$8.50. What a bargain! Of course, freshly brewed Audubon Premium Shade Grown Coffee is served at DAS monthly meetings. So enjoy a steamy mug, notice the difference, and purchase some really good coffee.

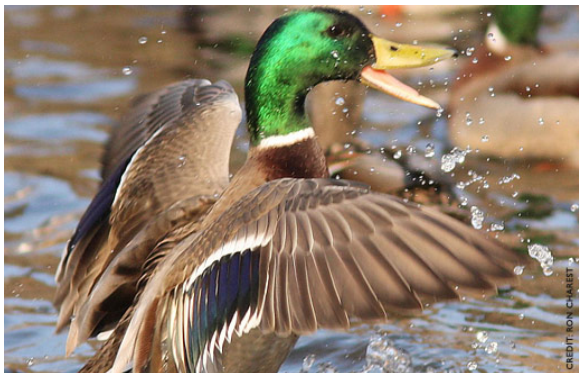
WANTED: NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dubuque Audubon Society is looking for a person to edit the *Pileated Drummings* newsletter. There are nine issues each year. All work is done through e-mail. Articles are submitted as Word documents. The editor is responsible for layout and selection of graphics. The completed newsletter is sent to the printer by e-mail. Fee is negotiable. Contact Pat Fisher at elkrun2@gmail.com or 563-556-5814.

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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: This category includes membership in National Audubon Society and the local chapter. You will receive 6 issues of Audubon Magazine and 9 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

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