



PILEATED DRUMMINGS

Dubuque Audubon Society

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Signs of Hope That Spring Will Return! By Pat Fisher

Signs of spring are everywhere, even with snow still covering the ground (who knows, it may even be gone by the time you read this!). Juncos are beginning to sing which marks their upcoming migration back up north. Cardinals and house finches are also starting to serenade their mates. Start listening for woodcocks, which will be back in open fields near woodlands singing their distinctive nasal “peent” at dusk in their quest to lure a mate.

Red-winged blackbird males arrive when the snow melts; females come two weeks later. I can generally count on seeing my first red-wings of the season in Green Island during the Duck Waddle. I found a great little book that I purchased from Larry Stone at the Bald Eagle Watch in Dubuque. This poem from *Zen Birds* by Vanessa Sorensen makes me smile.

“Konk-la-ree”

A flash of scarlet and gold
How can she resist
The paramour of the marsh?

On this field trip we often see and hear sandhill cranes, 3-4 kinds of geese, hawks, woodpeckers, and returning killdeer, sparrows, phoebes, robins, bluebirds and, of course, ducks. I just have to share another poem, this time on the Canada Goose.

Heard from afar
I await
The flutter of your wings

I have a wonderful memory of seeing little fluffball killdeer babies scrambling to run under Mama’s wings in a Green Island field. And with that memory, I have one more poem to share.

Ask the killdeer why
To feast on grubs in gravel
Such fancy attire? (from *Zen Birds* by Vanessa Sorensen)

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Signs of Hope That Spring Will Return!

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If the day is warm, we may hear spring peepers and chorus frogs. And the woodland butterflies are also waking up. Mourning cloaks and commas come out in the sun to feast on tree sap and rotten fruit. Barred owls and red-tailed hawks start to nest during March, a late start compared to the great-horned owls who began nesting in late January (total optimists, those owls!).

The annual fieldtrip to view returning water fowl (and much more), named the Duck Waddle, is on Saturday, March 12. We meet at Banworth & Udelhoven Furniture Store, right off of Hwy. 52 and 61 at 6 a.m. Carpooling to Green Island is available from there. Dress for the weather as it is often colder in the backwaters. We generally gather for breakfast in Bellevue at the Riverview Café after the outing, somewhere around 9 a.m. Come join us for the fun!

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT – 2011

By Joe Tollari

On the weekend of February 12-13, there were plenty of birds at my backyard feeders. In addition to the usual numbers of House Finches and House Sparrows, there were record numbers (for my yard) of Dark-eyed Juncos, American Goldfinches, Downy Woodpeckers, and Northern Cardinals. I was anticipating a great time for the 2011 Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) on February 18-21. Then the melt began. As the snow disappeared, birds found it easier to find food elsewhere, and the number of birds at my feeders declined. What's that saying about best laid plans? The idea of the GBBC is to count the birds at a feeding station and report the highest number of each species observed in a given time period (minimum of 15 minutes). Besides my backyard, I counted birds from the bird observation rooms at Swiss Valley Nature Center and E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center. I soon discovered that the 15 minute minimum is unworkable. It was difficult to resist the temptation of adding additional time to find more birds or more species. In fact, the three

goldfinches I observed at Swiss Valley appeared in the last 5 minutes and the 2 Cedar Waxwings at E.B. Lyons appeared in the last two minutes of the one hour observation period at both sites. My backyard was tame compared to the activity at the two nature centers. Highlights included the American Tree Sparrows and White-throated Sparrows at Swiss Valley and the invasion of 41 American Robins and 31 American Goldfinches at E.B. Lyons. Once the counting is completed, the reporting is simple and user friendly. I encourage you to go to the web site and take a look of the map showing all of the reported sites. You can zoom in on Dubuque. At this point, it appears that I may be the only person reporting from Dubuque, but data can be entered up to March 1. The web site is www.birdsource.org/gbbc/

TASTE OF THE WORLD – March 19, 2011

By Joe Tollari

The Multicultural Family Center (MFC) will host the Second Annual Taste of the World event on Saturday, March 19 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Five Flags Center Ballroom. The event will include displays, children's activities, food samples, and entertainment from individuals representing over 25 countries. Last year this event brought over 800 Dubuque area residents together to celebrate culture and diversity.

The mission of the MFC is to empower all families and community members to reach their potential and build unity out of diversity by offering a variety of programs to families, youth, adults, and senior citizens. Last year, Dubuque Audubon supported the Future Talk program which attempts to acquaint city youth with the local environment through service, work, and education.

The event is free to the public with a suggested donation of \$10 per family.

DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March, 2011

Mar. 10 – Thurs.	DUB. AUDUON PROGRAM: The Turtles of Summer	EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm – Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm – Program: The Turtles of Summer. Casey Arensdorf is from Dubuque and will be graduating this May with a B.S. in Environmental Science and Business from University of Dubuque. During the past two summers, Casey has been monitoring turtle activity in the Mississippi River and will share his findings.
Mar. 12 – Sat.	Duck Waddle	6:00 am – meet at Banworth and Udelhoven Furniture parking lot, junction of US 61/151 and US 52. We will leave promptly at 6:00 am and drive to Green Island Wildlife Area to observe the spring migration of waterfowl. Dress warmly. After our adventure we will have breakfast at the Rivervue Café in Bellevue, IA to compile our list and share stories of bird adventures.
Mar. 20 – Sun	A Salute to Songbirds – Welcome Back Birds	Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd, Peosta, IA Dubuque Audubon Society is sponsoring the Welcome Back Birds and an open house for the Salute to Songbird display at the Swiss Valley Nature Center. 1:00 pm – All ages are welcome for an informative bird program by Bob Walton. 2:30 pm – Bird Hike The open house will run from 1-4 pm, during that time the public may enjoy the Salute to Songbirds display.
Mar. 23 – Wed.	Woodcock Walk	7:00 pm at Whitewater Canyon Wildlife Area Join Jenny Ammon for a hike through the beautiful Whitewater Canyon looking and listening for night-time creatures – bats, owls and woodcocks. Dress for the weather and meet in the parking lot at Whitewater Canyon.
Mar. 27 – Sun.	Bird Banding and Bird Identification	1:00 pm at EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA Dave Shealer, Professor at Loras College will provide a program on Bird Banding and Bird Identification. He will identify, weigh, measure, sex, and determine the health of birds caught in his mist nets at the E. B. Lyons Center.

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

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A SALUTE TO SONGBIRDS

By Jenny Ammon

Dubuque Audubon Society is proud to sponsor an open house at the Swiss Valley Nature Center for the Salute to Songbirds Traveling Display.

The open house will kick off at 1:00 pm on Sunday, March 20, 2011 with a spring bird program featuring Bob Walton. Following the program, the public is welcome to tour the display and join the birding hike at 2:30 pm. Audubon will have Board Members available for your birding questions and serving delicious shade-grown Audubon coffee.

A salute to Songbirds was developed by the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. The exhibit was brought to Iowa by funding from REAP-CEP and Iowa Trust for Local Conservation with the support of the Black Hawk County Conservation Board and The Friends of Harman Reserve.

All ages are welcome and all ages are guaranteed to learn something new about our feathered friends. Be sure to bring some cash to buy Audubon coffee.

If you have question or comments, please call the Swiss Valley Nature Center at 563-556-6745.



PARENTS: 10 REASONS KIDS NEED FRESH AIR

By Kevin Coyle

The National Wildlife Federation's new Be Out There Campaign aims to educate tens of million of U.S. moms and dads on the importance of helping their kids have more time outdoors and providing tools to do so.

10 reasons a parent should care:

Stronger bones and lower cancer

risk: Today's "indoor kids" don't get enough sun and are becoming Vitamin D deficient, causing health risks.

Trimmer and healthier kids: An hour of play a day is what doctors say is a basic tool in the effort to ward off childhood obesity and diabetes.

Improved eyesight: Recent studies find that kids who get outdoor time have less nearsightedness and need for eye glasses.

Less depression and hyperactivity: Outdoor time in natural setting (even tree-lined streets) soothes kids and lowers their need for medications.

Longer attention spans: Children who stare at TV and video games all day have less patience and shorter attention spans.

Better at making friends: Children playing together outdoors relate directly with one another, create games together, choose sides and improve their "people" skills.

More creative: Outdoor kids are more likely to use their own imaginations, inventions and creativity while playing.

Less "acting out" at home and school: Getting kids away from TV violence and video games helps them see that violent behavior does not always solve problems.

Measurably better grades in school: The healthy bodies and minds that come with outdoor play are able to do better in school.

A longer lifespan and healthier adult life: Doctors estimate that sedentary and obese children lose three to five years from their life expectancy.

If none of these practical and important reasons work for you -- consider that a child who spends time outdoors breathes healthier air (than indoors), learns to see the wonders of nature, climbs trees, has more fun and learns a deeper respect for wildlife and natural surroundings.

BAG IT, THE MOVIE – FREE SHOWING MARCH 26 AND APRIL 2

By Sr. Michelle Balek

Mark your calendars and plan to attend one of two FREE showings of the movie ***BAG IT: Is Your Life Too Plastic?*** The film takes an in-depth look at our cultural love affair with plastics, especially plastic bags, asking such questions as: *Are plastic bags really necessary? What are plastic bags made from? What happens to plastic bags after they are discarded?* (See the synopsis below.) It will be shown at Mindframe Theater, 555 JFK Rd. on two consecutive Saturdays, **March 26** and **April 2**. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. with the movie rolling at 10:00 a.m.

ADMISSION is first come, first served, and **FREE** through the generosity of several local co-sponsors: Mindframe Theater; Wahlert High School's SAVE Club (Students Against Violating the Earth); the Inter-Congregational Ecological Working Group; Green Dubuque; the White Pine Group of Sierra Club; Keep Dubuque County Clean & Green; and Dubuque County Conservation Society. Attendance at either of these showings qualifies as an entry in ***Dubuque's Sustainability Challenge Game*** (visit www.dubuque2.org for details).

Synopsis:

Americans use 60,000 plastic bags every five minutes, disposable bags that they throw away without much thought. But where is "away?" Where do the bags and other plastics end up, and at what cost to the environment, marine life and human health? "Bag It" follows "everyman" Jeb Berrier as he navigates our plastic world. Jeb is not a radical environmentalist, but an average American who decides to take a closer look at our cultural love affair with plastics. Jeb's journey in this documentary film starts with simple questions: Are plastic bags really necessary? What are plastic bags



made from? What happens to plastic bags after they are discarded? What he learns quickly grows far beyond plastic bags.

SPRING DELIGHT

By Dave Fisher

A new shipment of Audubon premium, shade-grown coffee has arrived just in time for spring. If you want to order, call Dave Fisher at 563-542-0864.

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Goldfinch
Kyle Carlsen

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 **INTRODUCTORY ONLY**

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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