



# PILEATED DRUMMING

*Dubuque Audubon Society*

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## RESIDENT'S CORNER

By Wayne Buchholtz

**P** As I write this column, I am amazed that April is almost over, and, by the time you get the news letter, it will be into May. Where did spring go? The May flowers have in some cases bloomed and died off for the year. Bluebirds are already nesting and it will not be long before young hatch out. A row of young raccoon passed in front of me the other morning as I went to work. I hope you are enjoying the fast pace of spring and what is all offered by nature. May 10 is our next and final program for this season. I hope to see a large crowd at the E. B. Lyons Interpretive Center. We have had good attendance at the programs, but it could always be better. Dubuque Audubon has over 400 members and 20-35 come to programs. If you are not busy on the tenth of May, come in and check out the program. May 12 has two field trips being offered. The Dubuque Audubon is holding their annual Spring Bird Count. This is a good way to learn about some new birds. Experts are on hand to assist and welcome you in learning new species. I promise, there is no pressure to know all the birds. The second opportunity is being put on by the Mines of Spain. They will be banding birds at the canoe launch area. The banding is in recognition of International Migratory Bird Day, another good chance to see some migratory birds up close.

It is the time of year that, as President, I have the greatest task on earth; choosing nominations for the new board to start in July. Most of the current board has said they would stay on and carry the same position and duties. I do want to ask all members to consider being on the board. All officer positions and committee positions will be filled with current board members. You will not be given a specific position unless you request it. I only ask that you consider being on the board and assist how you can. The Dubuque Audubon Society is really a low key, low pressure type of organization. There are no members that expect you to know every bird, every call or their habits. We want you to learn with us. The board is made up with good birders, but they want to assist you in your bird watching activities. If you are interested in a board position, please call me at 563-582-7215 (home), 563-556-0620 (work) or email me at [w.buchholtz@mchsi.com](mailto:w.buchholtz@mchsi.com). I thank you for you for being members of one of the best Audubon Societies around.

I continue to ask you to go for a hike or just get outside. Not only by yourself, but with family, neighbors, other Audubon Members, or someone that needs to get out. I ask you to take your family or kids out simply to get them away from the computer or other indoor activity. (Yes, I am sitting in front of one now, but heading out to go hiking right after I am done, I promise). Oh, it does not count to be outdoors and on the computer; you're still on the computer. I have some quotes that were sent to me from the National Wildlife Federation. It is about dirt and kids – see the article *The Joy of Dirt*. My mom always tells me I would come home dirty and on occasion she accused me of eating the dirt. I tell her I needed more to eat☺. Enjoy the summer and hope to see you on one of the picnics in June, July, or August.

## IN CASE YOU MISSED: APRIL'S PROGRAM – ORCHIDS: MASTERS OF DECEPTION

By Michele Zuercher

Dr. Rasika Mudalige began the presentation with a vast collage of representatives of the orchid flower family. She discussed orchid structure and the intricate fertilization process with colorful diagrams to explain how they have become a very popular flower and interesting to study.

This flower group has 20-30,000 wild species and 60,000 registered hybrids, which have made them a favorite among florists. Native area orchids are the Western White-fringed Prairie orchid, Showy orchid, Putty root and the Yellow Lady's-Slipper. Dr. Mudalige and her team are researching the distribution and genetic diversity of some of these native orchids to propagate and reintroduce them into their natural habitat.

Common pollinators are birds, bees and other insects. When the population of pollinators decline from heavy pesticide use, an orchid decline follows. Most species reproduce by cross-pollination between two different flowers. Sixty percent of these flowers have one or a few specific pollinators. For example, one particular orchid has a very long structure which only is suitable for a particular insect's "tongue" to get its nectar. The insect is rewarded with this food source and the orchid's pollen is carried to the next orchid in hopes of pollination for future flowers.

As the title implies, some orchids are deceptors. For example, they do not offer sweet nectar, but instead smell like rotting material. A fly is attracted and just leaves with the pollen and no food. Other orchids are specialized deceptors in that they look, smell and feel like a female of the visiting insect. Other deceptive tactics, like mimicking other kinds of flowers, are an attempt to continue making more flowers.

If you suspect you have native orchids or have seen them on public land, Dr. Mudalige would like to have it documented and perhaps cultivated. You can contact her at [rmudalig@dbq.edu](mailto:rmudalig@dbq.edu) or 589-3144.

## THE JOY OF DIRT

From National Wildlife Federation.

Studies have shown that simply having contact with dirt, whether it's through gardening, digging holes, or making pies out of mud, can significantly improve a child's mood and reduce their anxiety and stress. Who knew, right? With antidepressant use in kids on the rise, an increasing number of experts are recognizing the role of nature in enhancing kids' mental health.

Dirt can even improve classroom performance. It's easy to see the effect when you watch children play outside.

### For the Health of It

When we let our kids play in dirt we're not only allowing them to explore the wonders around them, we are also exposing them to healthy bacteria, parasites and viruses that will inevitably create a much stronger immune system! Many kids who live in an ultraclean environment have a greater chance of suffering from allergies, asthma and other autoimmune diseases that we would otherwise be protected from through the simple pleasure of playing with some nice common dirt.

(Dirty) Fun: Get elbow deep in some dirt! Try these activities your children will love!

- Be an Artist
- Be a Chef
- Be a Biologist
- Be a Gardener
- Be a Builder
- Make a Delicious Dirt Dessert



*Miltoniosis Maui Mist*  
Ingrid Taylar

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

**May, 2012**

<b>May 10 – Thurs.</b>	<b>DUB. AUDUBON PROGRAM: TALLGRASS PRAIRIE CONSERVATION</b>	<b>EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm – Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm – Program Stephen Winter from the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge is our speaker. His program is entitled: Tallgrass Prairie Conservation: Are Perspectives and Practices from Western Prairies Applicable to Eastern Prairies?</b>
<b>May 12 – Sat.</b>	<b>SPRING SPECIES COUNT</b>	<b>8:00 am. Meet at the North Entrance to Eagle Point Park. This event is great for beginning bird watchers. Experienced bird watchers will help with locating and identifying resident and migrating birds. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. 6:00 pm Meet at the Swiss Valley Nature Center to tabulate the results and share experiences. Audubon will provide the brats and hot dogs. Bring your own table service, beverage, and a dish to pass.</b>
<b>May 13 – Sun.</b>	<b>DUTCH OVEN DEMONSTRATION</b>	<b>1:00 pm. pm at Hurstville Interpretive Center, 18670 63<sup>rd</sup> St., Maquoketa. Doug Gonner will focus on a “Mountain Man” breakfast and give the basics of dutch oven cooking. Optional: bring your own Dutch Oven and recipe, and Doug will help you add the “WOW” factor. Preregistration appreciated in advance to have enough food. Minimal cost for food sampling, bring your own table service.</b>
<b>June 8 – Fri.</b>	<b>INCREDIBLE BATS</b>	<b>6:00 pm Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Road, Peosta, IA LIVE BATS! Sharon Peterson shares a program about bats, and their habitats, adaptations, and importance.</b>
<b>June 14 – Thurs.</b>	<b>POTLUCK MEETING</b>	<b>5:30 pm Dubuque Arboretum, Marshall Park. Join us for a potluck supper and good conversation. Bring your own table service, beverage, and a dish to share. NOTE: The Dubuque Arboretum now asks for a \$2.00 per person donation for use of the porch area.</b>
<b>June 16 – Sat.</b>	<b>BATS</b>	<b>1:00 pm at EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA See live bats and learn about this wonderful mammal. Ron DeArmond from Pella Wildlife Group.</b>

## OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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

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**Membership: Joe Tollari 563-583-2077**

**Newsletter:**

**Conservation: Charlie Winterwood 563-588-2783**

**Programs: Michele Zuercher 563-557-3021**

**Iowa Audubon Liaison: Joe Tollari 563-583-2077**

**Web Master: Jan Friedman:**

**Janfrdmn@yahoo.com**

**Website: www.audubondubuque.org**

**Editor: James Brown: dtsage@hotmail.com**

## INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

International Migratory Bird Day celebrates and brings attention to one of the most important and spectacular events in the Americas - bird migration. Bird Day is celebrated in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean and now the Mines of Spain Recreation Area. Public awareness and concern are crucial components of migratory bird conservation. You can help by attending the day's events. The more you learn about birds, the more enthusiastic about birds you will become. You will be informed about threats exposed to birds and how you can become involved in addressing those threats. You can make a tremendous contribution to maintaining healthy bird populations. International Migratory Bird Day is Saturday, May 12. A special event is planned at 9:00 thru noon at the Mines of Spain Recreation Area. The event will be held at the canoe launch on Catfish Creek.

David Shealer and Dan Wenny from Loras College will be on hand to provide information on migratory birds that come to the area for the summer to nest or make the park a stopover to rest and then continue north. Dan will conduct a hike on the Catfish Creek Trail in search of some of the migrants or local birds.

Dave will be monitoring the mist nets set up along the trail in hopes of capturing migratory birds. These birds will be available for you to view during and at the end of the hike. When the hike is complete, Dan and Dave will be banding and gathering data about each bird. Bring binoculars for the hike. The hike will be approximately one and half miles in length. The Catfish Creek trail follows Catfish Creek through bottom land forest and returns thru upland forest providing excellent habitat for a variety of birds. For more information about this program or about the Mines of Spain, call the E. B. Lyons Interpretive Center at 563-556-0620. To learn about upcoming programs, visit the Park's website at [www.minesofspain.org](http://www.minesofspain.org).



*Chipping Sparrow*

Terry Sohl

## MAY PROGRAM

Stephen Winter, from the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge will present "Tallgrass Prairie Conservation: Are Perspectives and Practices from Western Prairies Applicable to Eastern Prairies?"

While the flora and fauna found in western tallgrass prairies (Nebraska, Kansas Oklahoma) is similar to that found in eastern tallgrass prairies (Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota), accepted management practices aren't always similar. This presentation will be from the perspective of a person with a long history of managing, restoring and researching grasslands in the Great Plains who now finds himself at the eastern edge of the tallgrass prairie region.



## OLIVIA'S BIG BIRD YEAR

By Olivia Kruse

Hi, my name is Olivia Kruse. I am an 11 year old who is a member of the Dubuque Audubon society. My dad and I have been back yard birders for a long time. Because of this my dad took me to the movies last September to see the movie *The Big Year*. I enjoyed the movie so much that I decided to do my own big year. I told my dad my idea and he said that we do not have a lot of time to go traveling because I'm in school and he's at work, so he thought up an idea that we do our big year of Iowa. I thought it was a great idea so my dad and I started our Iowa big year back in November. It's been so much fun, and we get to go to great places like White Water Canyon, The Mines of Spain, Green Island and Swiss Valley. We also get to spend time birding with our friends and relatives who enjoy it. Going to all the Audubon meetings we can is also fun because we get to learn so much and everyone is so nice and friendly. Being a member has also helped us in our count. Like during the Christmas Bird Count helped us see 7 new species and the Duck Waddle helped us see 15 more species! Now even though we don't get to get out as much as we'd like, we're up to 75 species! Oops make that 76, we just had a Chipping Sparrow out on our deck. I hope everyone has as much fun as I do birding.



*American Kestrel*  
Terry Sohl



*Gadwall*  
Rob Whitney

## SPRING BIRD COUNT

By Charlie Winterwood

Join Dubuque Audubon Society for our annual spring bird count on Saturday May 12, 2012. Every year we count the different kinds of migrating and resident birds in the Tri-states. We typically see more than a hundred different kinds of birds. All you need is a pair of binoculars to join. Meet at the North entrance (tennis courts) of Eagle Point Park at 8AM. This is an all day event, but you can stay as long as you want. We start at Eagle Point but continue to other habitats like the marsh behind John Deere. Each habitat has its own unique population of birds: warblers at Eagle Point Park, shore birds and water fowl at John Deere Marsh. We will tabulate our results at 6PM at the Swiss Valley Nature Center. Audubon will provide the brats and hot dogs, and you provide your tableware, drinks and a dish to pass. If you are new to bird watching, this is an excellent opportunity to learn more about birds. We want you to succeed in seeing new birds. Some of these birds we only see once a year so we still get excited by their presence, and we take great pleasure in seeing them for the first time through your eyes. Come share the excitement. See you there!

Dubuque Audubon Society  
James Brown, Editor  
PO Box 3174  
Dubuque IA 52004-3174

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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 **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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Mail check payable to Dubuque Audubon Society. Mail to:

Dubuque Audubon Society  
PO Box 3174  
Dubuque, IA 52004-3174