



DECEMBER 2012 EDITION

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Wayne Buchholtz



Hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and enjoyed all the food that was prepared. The weather has changed and winter is now setting in. Cold and blustery days will keep many indoors, but you can enjoy nature from your favorite seat in the house or from any seat in the house. Set up bird feeders in strategically located areas around the house. By strategically placed, I mean so you can see them while sitting in that favorite chair. There is no better place than to sit and watch the birds coming to your feeder while sipping on a hot cup of coffee, or your favorite drink. If you know someone who does not have a feeder in their yard, make it your goal to get them to put one up. Purchase one for them if that is what it will take. Bird feeders make great

Christmas gifts. Everyone needs to have feeders up to watch the birds to make the winter go just a little bit faster. I recently was asked why kids seem so different than kids from years ago and why we don't see kids out much. Part of the problem is that adults need to get out as well. Take time to go outdoors when you can, take a child with you and encourage other friends and family to do the same. If you can't get out on a specific day, then those feeders come in handy - anything to keep from sitting in front of the TV or a computer.

Winter for Dubuque Audubon means two events. First there is the Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 29, 2012, and then the Dubuque Bald Eagle Watch on Saturday, January 19, 2013. You can participate in either event. The Christmas Bird Count will start at 8:00 am with participants driving and walking specific routes in and around Dubuque. The goal is to count every bird you see or hear. The data is then collected from all the routes and provided to the National Audubon Society to add



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to the data that has been collected for decades. Actually, the first bird count was December 25, 1900. The data collected help science determine which species are doing well and which are not. This in turn causes us to look at why. Sometimes habitat destruction is the reason and sometimes it is for various reasons that bird populations suffer.

You can help out with counting by signing up and being a part of history. No need to be an expert. You will be paired up with experienced birders and put into teams. There is no better time to learn the winter birds.

The Bald Eagle Watch will be celebrating its 25th year. This event will be held at the Grand River Center in Dubuque on January 19, 2013. The Illinois Raptor Center will use live birds to teach about locally common raptors. Some birds will be allowed to fly around the room. This is truly a family event. David Stokes will entertain nature lovers of all ages as he tells about the animals that share the Bald Eagle's habitat. There will be programming for everyone throughout the day. Kids' activities will be set up for children to engage in activities such as building an eagle nest while adults are shopping with our vendors. A shuttle will be available to take you to the lock and dam area to observe free flying eagles in the wild. Both the Christmas Bird Count and Bald Eagle Watch are excellent opportunities to get outdoors and enjoy some of nature's finest.

Board Meeting is at 5:30 on December 13, 2012, at the EB Lyons Center.

Birding is Great Anywhere



SRI LANKA BIRDING TRIP

By Joe Tollari and Lalith Jayawickrama

Dubuque Audubon Society member and University of Dubuque instructor Lalith Jayawickrama has offered to lead a bird watching expedition to his native country Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a tropical island which offers several different



ecosystems each with its own flora and fauna. Sri Lanka has a rich history. Each culture has left its mark on the island nation from the original inhabitant (the Veddahs) through the Portuguese, Dutch and British occupations to independence in 1948. Many Europeans still travel to Sri Lanka not only for the warm sandy beaches but also for the abundant bird life. We are looking at 2 weeks in country with a day on either end for travel. We will travel from the capital of Colombo on the west coast of Sri Lanka, down the coast and around the south coast to the southeast where we will turn north to the internal part of the country and back to Colombo. (We will have a more detailed itinerary in the next newsletter.) We will visit national parks and reserves along the way. In addition to birds, we will encounter other animals, especially leopards and elephants, and experience the rich cultural history of Sri Lanka. We plan on traveling in July. Sri Lanka is 7 degrees north latitude so the weather is tropical year round. At this point, we are **estimating** the cost at about \$3,600. Think about joining us. It will be a fascinating trip. We will plan a question and answer period after the meeting on January 10, 2013. We hope to have a PowerPoint presentation on the website (www.audubondubuque.org) later this month.



DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER - 2012

<p>December 13th Thursday</p>	<p>DUB. AUDUBON PROGRAM: THE MAHASKA COUNTY MAMMOTH SITE</p>	<p>EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Program: Sarah Horgen, Education & Outreach Coordinator, UI Museum of Natural History, will present a program entitled "The Mahaska County Mammoth Site: Excavation, Research, and Public Outreach"</p>
<p>December 29th Saturday</p>	<p>CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT</p>	<p>8:00 am E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center. Meet to divide up into routes. 4:00 pm Meet at E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center to tally results and enjoy a chili supper while recounting the highlights of the days events.</p>
<p>January 10th Thursday</p>	<p>DUBUQUE AUDUBON PROGRAM: LET'S GO eBIRDING</p>	<p>EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Program: Dave Shealer, Associate Professor of Biology, will present "Let's Go eBirding!"</p>
<p>January 19th Saturday</p>	<p>BALD EAGLE WATCH</p>	<p>Grand River Center, Port of Dubuque. Doors open at 9:00 am. Exhibitors, vendors, and children's' activities all day. Illinois Raptor Center at 9:30am, 12:15pm, and 3:00pm. David Stokes at 11:00am and 1:45pm 9:00am - 4:00pm Eagle viewing at Lock and Dam #11</p>
<p>January 20th Sunday</p>	<p>WHITETAILED: TREASURE, TROPHY, OR TROUBLE</p>	<p>1:00pm at Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd., Peosta. Although Iowa's original deer herd vanished in the face of white settlement, the animals rebounded during the 20th century to the point of over-population. Adapted from a 2003 book written for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Whitetail" traces that history. It's a story with broad appeal to farmers, hunters, motorists, and wildlife watchers - anyone whose life has been affected by Iowa deer.</p>
<p>February 14th Thursday</p>	<p>DUBUQUE AUDUBON PROGRAM: IN SEARCH OF THE ABYSSINIAN ROLLER</p>	<p>EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA. 5:30 pm - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Program: In Search of the Abyssinian Roller By Richard Fischer</p>



JOHN DEERE WETLAND RENOVATION

By Craig Kruse

From about the time I learned to drive, I have always enjoyed spending time along the Mississippi behind John Deere. I don't know that I've ever heard a name for the area. We always just called it "The Pump House" in our youthful way of thinking because the area we enjoyed sat alongside what we figured was the building that was used to pump water from the river to the John Deere plant. During my teenage years, my cousin Jay and I would spend countless hours sitting along that bank by "The Pump House" with our fishing poles in the water and playing cards. If the fish weren't biting, we would walk the dirt road that ran from the parking lot out to the channel until we found a fishable spot and try our luck again. We watched the muskrats swimming through the muddy water and the Mallards float on by. As time passed and my interests switched from fishing to photography I explored that dirt road further and all it had to offer. I've seen a Soft Shell Turtle lay her eggs in a hole she recently dug and a flock of Pelicans fly off into the setting sun. The "Pump House" was always a place I could go to see



something and to relax for a bit.

Now, nearly 25 years later, I still hike there once or twice a month birding with my daughter. In the roughly 2 miles of trail you go from marshland to the Mississippi River channel and around to the

wooded banks of the Maquoketa river. During the right time of year, you'll see plenty of shore birds, finches, eagles, warblers and woodpeckers. The list of what one can see seems endless. The area surrounding the "Pump House" looks very different now than it did when I was younger. John Deere had been leasing the land from the Army Corps of Engineers for a long time now and when the lease was up they declined to renew it. Part of Deere's contract was that when they were done with the land they had to restore it to what it was before they had first touched it. Last summer with the guidance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service they did just so. I talked with Clyde Male, the Assistant District Manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a few weeks ago and he filled me in on what they've been doing out there. Gone is the building that housed pumps for John Deere and most of the "Human" elements surrounding it. All of the overgrowth surrounding the area has been removed or trimmed back to allow for better viewing of the area and its inhabitants. The dirt road traveling down to the channel has been replaced by a suitable road for hiking and biking. About halfway down the road, you'll notice the ground has been brought down to water level and large amounts of rock are lined up on either side of the road. This was built for a system that is going to allow the river to flood the marsh in the spring. The flood waters will be trapped back in the marsh to provide habitat for the wildlife that visits the area. Water levels for the rest of the year will depend on the amount of precipitation we get and will change from year to year. In a normal year use of the main trail from the parking lot is expected to be temporarily blocked by high water but you will still be able to get out to the channel of the Mississippi from the trail that extends along the Maquoketa River. As a matter of fact sometime before next summer a branch of the Heritage Trail should be extended to meet that trail so bikers can ride out to the channel of the Mississippi. All of the changes I've seen out there seem to have been done to benefit the wildlife in the area and allow us go out there and still be able to take it all in and enjoy what it has to offer from a distance.



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So if you have a free hour or two, call someone you know and ask them to meet you out behind John Deere. You don't need much, maybe some walking shoes and a pair of binoculars or just a fishing pole and a deck of cards. Walk slowly and take it all in. The area is open all year round and with the snow and the ice the Golden Eye and the Bufflehead should be coming to visit the area soon. And if you see a guy and his daughter trying to tell what kind of duck is what or couple of teen age kids sitting on the bank of the river where the Pump House used to be playing cards and not catching any fish make sure you tell them "Hi."

OLIVIA'S BIG BIRD YEAR

By Olivia Kruse

Hi, you might remember me. I'm Olivia Kruse the eleven year old girl who likes birds so much that I decided to do a big year. Over all we saw 156 birds and my dad and I were very picky because if we could not identify a bird we did not count it even if we thought we knew what it was. Some of my favorite birds that I saw on my big year were the woodcocks, the Red Shouldered Hawk, the wood duck, the Pileated Woodpecker, the Sand Hill Crane, and my absolute favorite bird the Black-Capped Chickadee. Joining the Dubuque Audubon Society has improved my birding skills by a lot and it is fun to be involved in a special group like this. I am also lucky because I got to meet some new friends, who helped along my journey like Bob and Sandy Walton, Charlie, Gretel, Jenny, Joe, Wayne, and if I keep going we will be here for a while so I will just say a lot of kind people helped me. I do have to mention how much fun it is when my grandpa goes with us. Some of the awesome places I've been were EB Lyons, Mines of Spain, White Water Canyon, Green Island, behind John Deere, Maus Park and many more. There have also been a lot of unforgettable

adventures such as the time we got stuck in a ditch and we had a tracker pull us out, and then the time when we saw an owl that actually was not a real owl but that is a whole other story. Doing a big year is a challenge but also a LOT of fun and I'm looking forward to starting again in January! In my opinion this was one of the best years in my life!



Olivia and her dad on the day they reached 150 birds in one year!

A GOOD YEAR FOR THE BIRDS

By David Yarnould

NAS President



Happy Thanksgiving. Together we achieved some remarkable things this year. I'm thankful to you—bird lovers and Audubon supporters—for making them happen.

- You joined with fellow conservationists to submit more than 400,000 public comments in favor of protecting Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve, and we are now just weeks away from protecting 11

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million acres of critical bird habitat, including the vital Teshekpuk Lake area.

- You called your representatives and supported our lobbying efforts as we worked to achieve passage of the RESTORE Act, a victory that will send billions of dollars in BP penalties to Gulf Coast restoration.
- Your generous contributions made it possible for us to be a voice for birds on key issues like wind energy, helping ensure safer guidelines were passed to minimize bird strikes while decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels.

It's been a good year for birds, but next year needs to be an even better one. Rising temperatures are already causing birds to shift their winter ranges, throwing entire ecosystems out of balance.

Together we've been speaking up for birds—and for ecosystems—for more than a century.

To each and every one of you who has read our emails, sent a message to your elected officials, donated to our campaigns, liked us on Facebook, signed the American Eagle Compact, or gone birding this year—thank you.

Iowa in early 2012 to request assistance in further excavation when it became clear that there were many more bones located at the site. Since April of this year, the UI Museum of Natural History has been coordinating the excavation and research efforts at the site, with many UI departments collaborating on the project and many participants from schools and groups across Iowa.

UI researchers will present on the importance of this discovery and what the associated research may tell us about Iowa during the Ice Age, as well as the educational and outreach impact of this project for Iowans.

THANK YOU

By Jenny Ammon

Thank you to Kevin Schwendinger and Lynn Keffler for the HON file cabinet. It will be put to good use at Swiss Valley Nature Center holding past notes and other Audubon related items.

DECEMBER PROGRAM

Sarah Horgen, Education & Outreach Coordinator of the UI Museum of Natural History Museum, will present a program entitled "The Mahaska County Mammoth Site: Excavation, Research, and Public Outreach."

Researchers at the University of Iowa are currently overseeing the excavation and associated research of two mammoths in rural Mahaska County, Iowa. Bones were first uncovered at the site in 2010 by the landowner, who approached the University of

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

By Joe Tollari

Dubuque Audubon Society will offer the newsletter in two electronic forms for those who are interested. We currently send out about 500 copies of the newsletter each month. Environmentally, we should be concerned about the amount of paper we are consuming in publishing the newsletter. In addition, the mailing costs continue to rise. So like many other non-profit organizations, we are prepared





to offer you one of three options:

- **Option 1:** you can continue to receive a print copy through the mail.
- **Option 2:** you can receive an electronic copy through e-mail.
- **Option 3:** you can go to the website and read the newsletter there. We can send you an e-mail prompt to let you know when the newsletter is on-line. Go to our website (www.audubondubuque.org) to check out the full color version of the newsletter.

Responses are coming in. Thank you to those who have responded. We will initiate the electronic newsletter with the first newsletter of 2013 in February. We are working on establishing an e-mail account for the Dubuque Audubon Society and hope to try a test run in January, 2013. Let us know your preference. If you choose option 1, do nothing, and we will continue to send you the newsletter in the mail. If you prefer option 2 or 3, send me a message at jtollari@mchsi.com with your option choice. I'll capture your e-mail address at that time. We hope to have the system in place for the first issue of 2013. So far, option 3 seems to be the more popular choice.



SHADE GROWN COFFEE FOR CHRISTMAS



Audubon Premium Shade Grown Coffee

saves both the birds and the trees. Coffee trees are grown underneath the forest canopy creating a slower growing more flavorful cup of coffee. The process also saves the trees and the birds that live in them. Audubon Premium Shade Grown Coffee is fairly traded and is 100 % organically grown making it the wisest choice for those coffee lovers who value conservation and economic development! You can buy a bag at regular Audubon meetings (and sample a cup). Or you can call Kristine Thielen at 563-584-0079 to place an order. Coffee is sold as whole bean or ground, regular (\$9.00) or decaf (\$9.50). **Makes a great Christmas gift.**



Audubon Coffee

- good for people,



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT - SAFARI EXCURSION IN BOTSWANA

By Michele Zuercher

Chelsie Cruise and Betsy Bainbridge shared their adventures of Botswana, which has only about two million people within the land area near the size of Texas. They learned about the geology, culture, and ecology in this southern Africa country. It is home to the largest number of elephants in Africa and destinations such as the Okavango Delta, the Salt Pans, the Kalahari Desert, and Chobe National Park. During their visit to the Okavango Delta, local villagers guided them through the marsh using shallow dugout canoes. Wildlife and birds that they saw there include the African Openbill Stork, Grey Heron, Pied Kingfisher, along with the plains zebra, elephant, and hippopotamus. After leaving the Delta, they visited a region known for baobab trees. These trees can be thousands-year-old and are sacred and protected. They then bush-camped near a natural watering hole. They were joined by several herds of elephants, hyenas, and reticulated giraffes. At the Elephant Sands area, many other animals were visible including the African Red-eyed Bulbul, Village Weaver, and the Black-faced Waxbill. Chobe National Park has kudu, Nile crocodile, impala, the Secretary Bird, and the Lilac-breasted Roller. While the Rhino Sanctuary has both endangered black and white rhinos, the springbok, Bennett's Woodpecker, and the Southern Pied Babbler can also be seen there.

JANUARY PROGRAM

Dave Shealer, Associate Professor of Biology, will present "Let's Go eBirding!"

eBird (www.ebird.org) is a real-time, online global bird checklist program launched in 2002 by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. The goal of eBird is to consolidate, into one global database, observations made by amateur and professional birdwatchers. By contributing your bird sightings to the eBird database, you

are adding pieces of a puzzle to solve the mysteries of bird distribution, abundance, and migration. eBird also keeps track of your personal sightings and organizes them into a life list which can be subdivided by month, year, favorite birding locations, etc. Want to know where to find the nearest Snowy Owl? Want to know when the first Cerulean Warbler is likely to show up at Mines of Spain? Want to know how long Chimney Swifts remain in Dubuque in autumn? Answers to these questions and many others are just a click away!

Dave's presentation will take you through the basics of using eBird, from registration (it's free!) to accessing information about birds in your area or elsewhere, to entering your sightings into the database. If you have a laptop and a checklist from a recent birding trip, bring them with you and start using eBird immediately. Warning: use of eBird may become addictive!

VISITORS FROM THE NORTH

By Matthew T. Wetrich
Carroll County Naturalist

It's shaping up to be a FUN fall and winter for interesting birds showing up around here! Just like the crop here in Iowa suffered from the drought, it is believed that the cone crop of the boreal regions felt a similar fate, sending seed-loving birds our way. Bird feeders could be extra busy this winter with some distant "cousins" joining the mix. Black oil sunflower seeds are always a great and beloved choice for feeders, as you all know. Here is a list of some of those "cousins" we might see: Pine Siskins, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, Red Crossbill, White-winged Crossbill, Snowy Owl, and Evening Grosbeak. Pine Siskins, Red Crossbill, and Snowy Owl have all ready been seen in Dubuque and Jackson counties. Regarding Snowy Owls, I have been anticipating a smaller echo eruption from last year's record breaking event. So far it seems we will again see above average numbers. To my knowledge there have been 5 sightings already. Iowa naturalists will play a huge role in helping document this event again.



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

By Charlie Winterwood

Join us and over 1700 other birding groups throughout the Americas for Audubon's 112th annual Christmas Bird Count. We will attempt to count every bird within a 15 mile diameter circle around Dubuque on Saturday, December 29. Participants of all levels from beginner to experienced are welcome. Most routes have both walking portions and car portions. Come for either part of the day or for the whole day. See the list below of route leaders that you can contact to participate or show up at 8:00 AM at EB Lyons Interpretive Center.

We will meet at 4:00 PM at EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Heights, Dubuque, IA, to share a chili supper, compile results, and share the experiences of the day.

- Durango - Dave Shealer: [557-7519](tel:557-7519) david.shealer@loras.edu
- Dubuque - Charlie Winterwood: [588-2783](tel:588-2783) cwinterwood@netscape.com
- E Dubuque/WI - Ted Harms: [563-590-5959](tel:563-590-5959)
- Centralia - Joe Tollari: [583-2077](tel:583-2077)
- Airport - Terri Stanton: [852-5263](tel:852-5263)
- Swiss Valley - Jenny Ammon: [556-6745](tel:556-6745)
- Mines Of Spain - Wayne Buchholtz [556-0620](tel:556-0620) wayne.buchholtz@dnr.ia.gov



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

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Dubuque Audubon Society

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Non-Profit Organization

US Postage Paid

Dubuque, IA 52001

Permit # 459

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 – FIRST TIME MEMBERS 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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