



March 2024

President's Corner	1
Green Island Duck Waddle	1
Officers & Board Members	1
Dubuque Audubon Website	2
Iowa Audubon History	2
Calendar of Events	3
Membership & Renewal Form	4

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Ken Kiss

Key West Technology Park Update

We have received approval from the city to post signs with information about the grassland birds at the Technology Park. Our target is to get the signs made and posted by April 30th. The signs will have a link to our webpage giving more information on grassland birds.

History of Dubuque Audubon

Several of us spent time organizing some old records. Joe Tollari discovered some interesting details of our club history. Dubuque Bird Club was organized March 11, 1929. The president was Mrs. R. W. Johnson, and there were 14 charter members who met at her house. That means we are approaching our 95th anniversary. The Dubuque Bird Club became the Dubuque Audubon Society on Jan. 11, 1973, becoming a charter member of the National Audubon Society.

GREEN ISLAND DUCK WADDLE

by Bob Walton

(Spring in the Mississippi Wetlands)

Dubuque Audubon's annual Duck Waddle at the Green Island Marsh will be on March 9, 2024. Participants wishing to carpool, should meet at the Banworth and Udelhoven parking lot at 6 am. Those driving directly to Green Island should be at the start of Fish Lake Road at sunrise. Audubon's first Duck Waddle was on March 17, 1979. In attendance were Audubon members John Miller, Brian Larsen, Sandy and I. The biggest thrill was seeing a Sandhill Crane and three White-fronted Geese for the very first time for all of us. It has been an annual Dubuque Audubon outing since then.

Like most Midwest residents, I felt no remorse when the last patch of icy snow disappeared from our woodland last week. The brutal winds, blinding blizzards and subzero temperatures take a heavy toll on wildlife that are forced to attempt survival with inadequate food and shelter. Our normally overcrowded feeders have been fairly empty with just a few White-throated Sparrows and the normal permanent resident birds. Early today (February 13), we decided to cure our cabin fever by heading to Green Island Marsh in search of some harbingers of spring. The Mississippi River is the "interstate" of bird migration, and the "rest stops" are the backwater marshes within the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Spring always arrives first in the marshes due to the heat from decomposition of abundant plant materials and seepage from underground springs that melt the ice, exposing plant tubers and invertebrates, which are high energy foods on the menu at the "Oasis restaurants" of the marshes. Green Island never disappoints — as the sun inched above the horizon, we could make out a



Green-Winged Teal

OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

- President:** Ken Kiss
Vice President: Marty Corfman
Secretary: Andrea Pellerito
Treasurer: Maggie O'Connell
At-Large Board Members: Craig Kruse, Lynn Schroeder, Joe Tollari, Bob Walton, Sandy Walton
Field Trips: Tony Moline
Membership: Ken Kiss (563-556-0156)
Web Admin, Newsletter: Mary Leigh
Conservation: Chuck Isenhardt
Iowa Audubon Liaison: Bob Walton

Website: www.audubondubuque.org



Email: audubondubuque@gmail.com
 Facebook: [Dubuque Audubon Society](https://www.facebook.com/DubuqueAudubonSociety)



GREEN ISLAND DUCK WADDLE

(Spring in the Mississippi Wetlands)

Continued from Page 1

flock of geese standing on the ice several hundred yards away. Within minutes, the geese lifted off, heading towards a picked corn field, and their “ho-leelek” calls filled the marsh air. The White-fronted Geese are back meaning Spring is near!

For over 50 years, Sandy and I have made numerous late February and early March visits to Green Island, and every trip to Green Island is unique and special, but one of the most memorable was in late March of last year when we encountered an elderly waterfowler near the Fish Lake boat ramp. I recognized him from many earlier springs and struck up a conversation. Over the years, I have learned his marshland vernacular — a kind of second language. After exchanging pleasantries, he set out to list the waterfowl he had seen since sunrise. He told me that he had seen a large flock of “sprigs” (Northern Pintails) accompanied by a few “grays” (Gadwalls), and “baldies” (American Wigeon). He said the most beautiful was a large flock of “whistlers” (Common Goldeneyes) and “sawbills” (Common Mergansers). His only disappointment was that he had not seen many “greenheads” (Mallards) or “red-legs” (Black Ducks). Almost by design, a large flock of ducks arose from the flooded fields north of the Maquoketa. He grabbed his battered binoculars and excitedly yelled, “There they are!” The sky was filled with over 3,500 Mallards and several flocks of Black Ducks flying directly overhead. As he glassed the flock, I am sure he saw more than I could with my modern optics, including visions of earlier years when migrating waterfowl literally darkened the sky, and perhaps a glimpse of the future and wondering how many spring migrations he and our waterfowl have left.

Please take the time to partake in a marsh adventure and be part of one of nature’s greatest spectacles. We all need to be vigilant in preserving these critical “rest stop” areas along our great Mississippi flyway for both the benefit of future generations of waterfowl and people. Thanks to the efforts and contributions by organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and hunting license sales, thousands of acres of wetland refuges have been set aside in the U.S. and Canada, allowing wetland birds to be one of the few groups of birds to thrive in recent years. You can aid in this effort and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Endangered Species Act by purchasing a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, available at your Post Office or any Fish and Wildlife Service office.



Hooded Merganser



Northern Shoveler

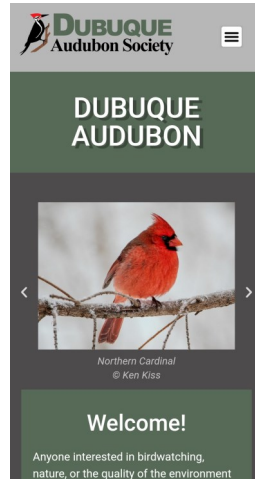
DUBUQUE AUDUBON WEBSITE

by Mary Leigh

As was announced in our December newsletter, we have a redesigned website and hope you will take a look!

Please fill out the Contact Us form if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions!

The HOME page features a slide show of seasonal bird photos taken in the tri-state area, information on our next upcoming event, a link to the latest newsletter, and more. Our BIRDS page has information on area birding and our annual Christmas bird count, with spring bird count results to be added after our May count is complete. Check the RESOURCES page for a summary of the Merlin app and eBird, as well as links to other sites of interest. The ABOUT page provides some information about our organization and has a link to a page on some ongoing projects. The remaining 4 items on the main menu are EVENTS, NEWSLETTERS, CONTACT, and JOIN.



IOWA AUDUBON HISTORY

Doug Harr, president of the Iowa Audubon Society, recently received copies of some pages from *Bird Lore* magazine (an early publication started in 1899 by the original Audubon Society). The pages dated from 1899 to 1917. He shared these historical notes:

- Under the auspices of the Keokuk Woman's Club, the Audubon Society of Iowa was organized April 5, 1898.
- In 1905, state membership was 1,100 adults and 20,142 juniors.
- The oldest bird conservation organization in Iowa was called the Schaller Society (before any Audubon Society). Both groups then worked together to protect more Iowa birds.
- In July of 1906, the Audubon Society of Iowa established its first headquarters in Waterloo, with women all as leaders of the organization.
- Audubon became a part of the larger General Federation of Women's Clubs, which then pledged to stop the use of wild bird feathers.
- Audubon Society of Iowa did not require annual membership payments, but to first become a permanent member, adults could join for 25 cents and youth for 5 cents.



Calendar of Events

Check the [EVENTS](#) page on our website for the latest information and additional details!

<p>March 9, 2024 (Saturday)</p>	<p>Annual Duck Waddle</p>	<p>Join us on our annual trip to Green Island to observe migrating waterfowl! Green Island is one of Iowa’s largest wetland complexes and attracts thousands of ducks, geese, cranes, and other aquatic-based birds each March. Audubon guides will be on hand to help identify the numerous species. Binoculars are recommended. This event is free, and you may come and go as you choose.</p> <p>To carpool from Dubuque, meet at Banworth & Udelhoven Furniture World at 9396 Bellevue Heights Road, Dubuque, at 6:00 AM. Otherwise you can meet the group at Green Island on Fish Lake Road where it intersects Green Island Road between 6:45 and 7:00 AM.</p> <p>Normally the trip lasts most of the morning, and for those that wish, we end by having breakfast/lunch at a restaurant.</p>
<p>March 14, 2024 (Thursday)</p>	<p><i>Dubuque Audubon Program:</i> Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge—The First 100 Years</p>	<p>6 – 7 PM @ EB Lyons Interpretive Center, Dubuque. Ed Britton, manager of the Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, will summarize the history of the refuge, which was created in 1924 and celebrates its 100th Anniversary in 2024.</p>
<p>April 11, 2024 (Thursday)</p>	<p><i>Dubuque Audubon Program:</i> Churchill, Manitoba – Past & Present</p>	<p>6 – 7 PM @ EB Lyons Interpretive Center, Dubuque. Dubuque Audubon board members Maggie O’Connell, Bob Walton, and Sandy Walton will speak about their 1986 and 2019 trips to Churchill, Manitoba.</p>
<p>May 11, 2024 (Saturday)</p>	<p>Annual Spring Species Count</p>	<p>Join us for a fun day of birding for as much or as little time as you like, ending with a potluck picnic.</p>
<p>May 18, 2024 (Saturday)</p>	<p><i>Dubuque Audubon Program:</i> Reintroduction of Whooping Cranes to Wisconsin!</p>	<p>12:30 – 1:30 PM @ EB Lyons Interpretive Center, Dubuque. George Archibald, Co-Founder and Senior Conservationist of the International Crane Foundation and author of <i>My Life with Cranes</i>, will share the amazing story of how Whooping Cranes were reintroduced to Wisconsin.</p> <p>We are very fortunate to have George be the one to share this incredible success story!</p>

Dubuque Audubon Society

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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

If you join the National Audubon Society, you are automatically a member of your local Audubon Society and do not need to sign up separately.

Joining the National Audubon Society or renewing that membership is done directly through the National Audubon Society. Do NOT use this form for that purpose.

National members will receive the award-winning *Audubon* magazine. We recommend noting the month you join, so that you will not be confused by early renewal reminders. The minimum donation to qualify for national membership is \$20 per year.

DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL FORM

If you wish to join or renew membership in the Dubuque Audubon Society *without* joining the National Audubon Society, then please fill out this form. Local chapter dues are \$10 per year, and dues remain with the local chapter. Our membership year runs from July to June.

Members will receive our local chapter newsletter, *Pileated Drummings*.

Name: _____

How receive newsletters?

Address: _____

Email

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Postal Mail

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Make check payable to "Dubuque Audubon Society" and mail to:

Dubuque Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3174
Dubuque, IA 52004-3174