

The



Cardinal

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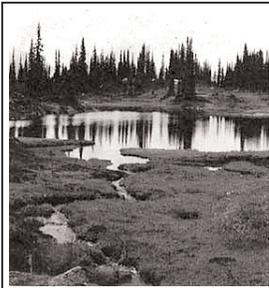
DECEMBER MEMBER MEETING

Wind, Fire, Saws and Climate Change: The Past, Present, and Future of our Northern Forests

with Peter Reich, Professor, U of M Dept
of Forest Resources

December 11, 2008

We rely on our forests for so many things, including water purification, biodiversity conservation, wood and paper products, and recreation. However, climate change is already bringing changes to our forests, and indirect effects such as shifts in fire and windstorm frequency and intensity are coming. Peter Reich draws on scientific work, often conducted by his own research group, to make the case that we need to become better at understanding and predicting such change and managing our forests.



Northern Minnesota is a focal point because it sits at the transition between the boreal and temperate forest zones. Reich will examine the conventional wisdom that says deciduous trees will replace the spruce, fir and birch that will move northward as the climate warms. Is this true, or will we end up with 'scrub' forests that will endure for centuries?

Rich is one of the world's leading scientists in the area of global environmental change and terrestrial ecosystems. He is a Distinguished McKnight University professor, a Regents Professor, and holds a chair in Forest Ecology and Tree Physiology.

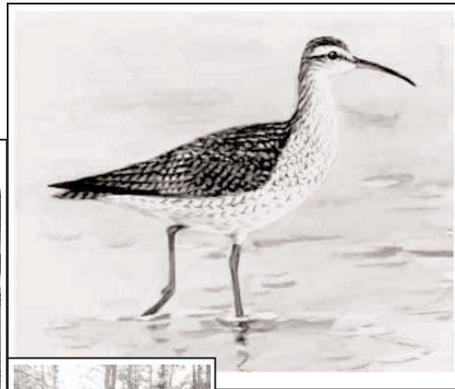
JANUARY MEMBER MEETING

The Search for the Eskimo Curlew: from New Brunswick's Bogs to Argentine Pampas

with Bob Russell, Wetland Bird Biologist
for the US Fish & Wildlife Service

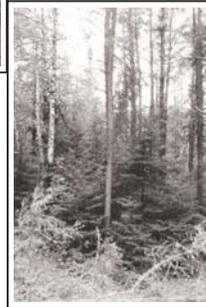
January 8, 2009

One of the great mysteries in the world of birds is the lack of attention paid to a dwindling species, the Eskimo Curlew. At one time it was one of the most numerous birds in North America, now it hovers on the brink of extinction. In fact, many treat its extinction as inevitable,



pointing to the few sightings since the 1960s.

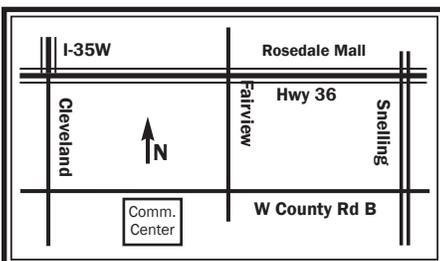
But Bob Russell and others think there's room for hope. Some believe the Eskimo Curlew still could persist in the vastness of the Argentine pampas and North American arctic.



Russell led two expeditions to eastern Canada's Maritimes areas in search of the curlew, and has surveyed habitat in Argentina. He will describe the bird's history and decline due to market hunting in the 1800s. He'll discuss the curlew's far-flung migration route, discuss sightings and searches as well as the bird's former stopover and wintering sites. "I'll also note the top 10 sites to look for this species, should anyone wish to mount their own search," Russell adds.

Relevant website:

www.npwr.usgs.gov/resource/birds/curlew/index.htm#contents



Our meetings begin at 6:45 with social time, 7:00 PM for the program, at the Fairview Community Center, 1910 W. County Road B, in Roseville. Free and open to the public. Free parking available. *Bring a friend!*

Upcoming Member Meetings

February 12

Minnesota's Logging History

March 12

That Fascinatn' Lichen

Election Results Bring Conservation Opportunity and Need for Action

[Paraphrased] remarks from John Flicker following the election of President-elect Obama and the new Congress.

"Voters in this historic election cast their ballots not only for change, but for a new era of hope for our environment, and people, birds, and other wildlife that depend on it. Washington has ignored critical environmental issues for too long. President-elect Barack Obama and a more environmentally aware Congress offer the promise of leadership and fundamental change that could ensure protection for America's great natural heritage, and new leases on life for many species in decline.

"Despite these reasons for optimism, we cannot take conservation gains for granted. Audubon is committed to helping the new Administration and Congress to live up to their great promise; and to make conservation, clean energy and green jobs part of America's path to a brighter tomorrow.

"Through local Chapters, state offices, and national grass roots efforts, Audubon will partner with the environmental community to ensure that our newly-elected leaders take the lead on issues vital to our environment, economy, and the diversity of life on Earth."

Issues demanding attention include:

APPOINTMENTS: President-elect Obama should appoint to key environmental positions those qualified leaders who will defend clean air and water, protect habitat and endangered species, aggressively address global warming, and protect our natural heritage for the future.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY: The Dept of the Interior should systematically review [and reverse] decisions made by the past Administration under the *Endangered Species Act* that were influenced by political considerations; not based on sound science.

President-elect Obama should send a clear signal to his administration to restore and respect scientific integrity in all environmental decisions.

GLOBAL WARMING & RENEWABLE ENERGY: President-elect Obama has said: "We cannot afford more of the same timid politics when the future of our planet is at stake." He's right. Audubon welcomes the opportunity to help him deliver his promised \$150 billion plan for clean energy technologies that will protect our environment and stimulate the economy, creating up to 5 million new green jobs.

Congress should pass legislation providing significant incentives for development of renewable energy such as a strong *Renewables Portfolio Standard* and a long-term extension of the *Production Tax Credit*, and pass significant legislation to address global warming with a comprehensive cap-and-trade program.

Mr. Flicker on The Election, continued on p.11

CHAPTER INFO & VOLUNTEER OPS

Dateline: 2008, Tuesday, November 4TH, 10:43 PM

National networks clamber to announce results of Presidential Election. Each of us, regardless of party or affiliation, will have a new President in January, 2009. We also celebrate the fact that Minnesotan's voted for dedicated funding for conservation and culture – two strong components of the high quality of life in Minnesota.

But in the midst of attention to national and state issues, there is also change afoot right here in St. Paul. With less fanfare but with great significance, the leadership of the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Dept is about to change as well. When the current Director, **Bob Bierscheid**, leaves at the end of 2008, he will be

replaced by **Mike Hahm**, currently the Director of Como Park Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory.

We in Audubon who care about birds and their habitat, and about providing opportunities for people of all ages to engage in birding and resource stewardship, are very fortunate. The St. Paul Parks and Recreation Dept operates more than 170 parks and more than 100 miles of trails. We use them all and many are the destinations for Chapter Field Trips and Educational Programs.

Add in the nine County Parks and the six Regional Parks operated by and in Ramsey County to the above, and we have some 10,000 acres of habitat that we enjoy and the birds

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ABOUT OUR CHAPTER

Founded in 1945 as the 'St. Paul Bird Club' with around 12 members, Saint Paul Audubon Society now serves the entire East Metro region of the Twin Cities area, and has around 2,000 members. We hold 9 Member Meetings a year. Feel free to contact anyone listed for more information, or write to Saint Paul Audubon Society at PO Box 7275, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 55107-7275 or visit our website at **www.saintpaulaudubon.net**

ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

The Cardinal is published 6 times. Copy is due on the **5TH of January, March, May, July, Sept, and Nov.** Send copy to **hpbirdscouter@msn.com** All submissions are subject to editing or revision.

If you are an Audubon member and don't live in the Saint Paul area, but would like to receive *The Cardinal*, send \$15 for a year's subscription to **Bob Sherman**, 14129-30TH Street, Stillwater, MN 55082

Please call **1-800-274-4201** to change your address for National Audubon Society mailings, including *Audubon Magazine* and *The Cardinal*, or to sign up for Audubon's **paper-free renewal program.**

National Audubon Society
www.audubon.org

CHAPTER ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

call home. That does not even count the state and national lands managed for recreation and conservation in the East Metro area. (*I will say more about them in a future column.*)

So “hats off” to an outstanding leader as he retires and a hearty “welcome” to a longstanding friend soon to be at the helm. Saint Paul Audubon Society is fortunate to be among the partners who can call them friends and allies in our mutual efforts to take care of the places we love in St. Paul and East Metro area.

Dan McGuinness, President

BOARD MEETINGS

Saint Paul Audubon Board Meetings are held at the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District Office at 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada. Exit 35-E at Little Canada Rd., go east to Noel, across from City Hall. For more information or regrets, call **Dan McGuinness** at 651-260-6260 or send email to dan@dmcguinness.com

Winter meetings are **December 1, January 5, February 2.**

Audubon Applause

Change is inevitable... This time we applaud loudly for **Bob Sherman**, who has served so capably as our **Membership Chair** for the past few years. With this issue of *The Cardinal*, Bob turns the computer mouse over to **John O'Connell**. Currently the Membership process goes something like this: John receives electronic mailing list from National and prints it to labels. He also manages the “local members” database and creates labels for that as well. He delivers the labels to **Jane Schuler** (this month’s “Jane” is **Barb Burleigh**.) They all deserve a warm, hearty thank you!

Annual Fund Drive: A Chance to Build on our Success!

This is it! — The *only* time we will for your support for the great work that the Saint Paul Audubon Society does and for the many tangible benefits that this work provides for both birds, other wildlife and their habitat, and people.

It’s time for Saint Paul Audubon’s Annual Fund Drive. We sincerely hope that you will make a generous contribution. We are a volunteer-driven organization. We do amazing things and there are expenses that must be covered. This Annual Fund Drive is our largest source of income.

How do we spend it? Some of the results are obvious. We produce and mail—and you receive—*The Cardinal* newsletter. Each issue is chock-full of information about Member Meetings and Programs, Field Trips, the latest birding news, and often contains stories from and about our members. Our Programs involve speaker honoraria and meeting space rental fees. We maintain a dedicated phone line to help answer your questions. There are mailing costs. Expenses related to a vast array of educational programs for people of all ages. This year your chapter’s Board is making a concerted effort to vastly enhance our chapter’s Website; and offer an even greater array of Educational Field Trips and expanded Volunteer Opportunities.

Our mission is two-fold: to keep common birds common, and to protect species that are in decline. That mission is especially important in an era when development regularly destroys bird habitat and climate change threatens the very existence of birds and other species on our planet. Think about what Saint Paul Audubon has done this year to promote our mission and pledge your support for our continuing effort in the year to come.

With our Fund Drive, there are no phone calls to disrupt your dinner and no annoying computer pop-ups. All you do is submit a check for your contribution in the remittance envelope provided with this issue of *The Cardinal*. (*If there is no envelope, please use the box below.*) It’s that easy. Again, please contribute generously. The birds will reward you with familiar refrains throughout the year ahead! Those humans who hold volunteer positions also **Thank You**.

FUND DRIVE CHAIRS

KEN HARRIS, 651-407-7238
FARBLONDJET2000@YAHOO.COM

LAUREL STIEBLER, 651-276-1328
GOAT_WRANGLER@HOTMAIL.COM

Saint Paul Audubon Society

Annual Fund Drive Donation

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution for the Saint Paul Audubon Society to be used for:

\$_____ for Annual Operating Fund

\$_____ for Endowment Fund

\$_____ wherever needed

This gift is given:

___ in memory of _____

___ in honor of _____

*Thank You Very Much
for Your Support*

Donor Name _____

Address _____

Phone/Email _____

If your contribution was given in memory of or in honor of someone, we will send an acknowledgement card.

Card to be sent to:

Name _____

Address _____

SEND TO: Laurel Stiebler, 4291 Fisher Lane, White Bear Lake, MN 55110

FIELD TRIPS • NEWS • HAPPENINGS

Wintering Raptors at Carlos Avery WMA

December • January

(Date TBD as Winter Advances)

I will keep track of raptor reports at Carlos Avery WMA since I live close-by. I will alert our Field Trip Chair when they begin to appear, then send an E-Note announcing this Field Trip. We will use our cars as blinds. There will be time for stops to use binoculars and scopes. **Mid-afternoon to early evening** is the best time to



view these wintering raptors. We'll be looking for Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, maybe even a late No. Harrier, all three accipiters are possible; Short-eared, Long-eared, Great Grey, No. Saw-whet, Great Horned and Barred Owls, Co. Ravens, perhaps even an eagle or two, and songbirds such as winter finches, Tree Sparrows, and Snow Buntings.

Difficulty Easy

Carpool I-35 Exit 129 Park & Ride
(park in NW quadrant, across from BP gas station)

Leader Holly Peirson, 651-464-6743
hpbirdscouter@msn.com

St. Paul Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 20TH, 2008



Don't miss the highlight of the winter birding season — National Audubon Society's 109TH annual Christmas Bird Count. This longest-running "citizen science" study provides valuable data on winter bird populations, and fun for the people doing it.

You don't have to be an expert birder to participate (but we always need more experts). We can assign you to a team with an experienced leader. Each team counts the birds in its assigned section of our 15-mile-diameter count circle. You can go for part or all of the day, or even start listening for owls before dawn. We also need many volunteers to watch feeders (within 7.5 miles of the intersection of County Road B and Dale Street).

At the end of the day, we'll gather for a pot-luck supper and swap stories about the day's highlights as we tally the species. There is a \$6 fee per field participant to help pay the costs of this massive data gathering effort — \$5 to National Audubon and \$1 to cover our chapter expenses (this is a \$1 reduction from recent years). There is no fee for feeder-watchers or for field participants 18 or younger.

Please email or call Julian Sellers by Thursday, December 11TH. Email is preferred, and sooner is better than later. Give your name, telephone number, email address, and U.S. Postal mailing address, and say whether you'd like to lead, follow, or watch your feeders. Please rank your birding skill level (beginner, intermediate, or experienced) and state your preferred birding style (relaxed, focused, or intense!)

Compiler: **Julian Sellers**
651-698-5737
juliansellers@msn.com

EXPLORERS!

Outdoor Family Walks

Bring a youngster of 10 years and older and come explore with Chase Davies the out of doors during two-hour field-walks! *There is always something going on outside!* The goal is to see, hear, smell, touch, and talk about those happenings. Please contact Chase to register youths over 10 and accompanying adults. No fee, just need to know numbers attending. Remember to dress with an extra layer of clothing and really warm, sturdy footwear.

Saturday, February 7, 1:00 PM
Harriet Alexander Nature Center

2520 Dale Street N, Roseville (E. side of Dale between Hwy 36 and Cty Rd C). If there is sufficient snow we will rent snowshoes at \$2 per pair, or bring your own. *RSVP ages of youth who will attend*, to help the center with correct sizes for our use. If little snow, then we'll be on foot.

Saturday, March 21, 1:00 PM
Tamarack Nature Center

5287 Otter lake Road, White Bear Lake. Otter Lake Road is just east of 35E, go 2 miles north of Hwy 96 to Tamarack, left side. You might choose to remain after the walk to experience maple syruping activities.

Field Trips Meeting Location

Leave Valuables at home, not in your car. If no reservations are required, please do not call Trip Leader unless you need more info.

**Upcoming Field Trips
with Saint Paul Audubon**

Dec 20: SPAS Christmas Bird Count
Jan 4
Explorers! Outdoor Life, Central Pk, Roseville

Date TBD: Wintering Raptors
at Carlos Avery WMA
Feb 1
Explorers! Outdoor Life at Ft. Snelling St. Park

Feb 21
Wintering Eagles on Mississippi River

CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Sunday, April 19, 8:00 AM Reservoir Woods, Roseville

Parking lot is on north side of Larpenteur Avenue between Rice and Dale, with sign that says "Woodview County Open Space." Bring binoculars or borrow some from Chase for this walk.

In May there will be no Family Walk. You are all encouraged to help youth participate in the **YOUTH BIRDING FESTIVAL, MAY 4, AT LOWRY NATURE CENTER** OR some of the many offerings of the **RAMSEY CO. URBAN BIRD FEST, MAY 15-17, 2009.**

Saturday, June 20, 8:00 AM Snail Lake Reg'l Park, Shoreview

From 694, go north on Victoria Street to the stop sign at Snail Lake Blvd (an extension of County Road F). Turn east onto Snail Lake Blvd and follow it around until you can see the lake. Meet in the parking lot at lake level, at beach near boat ramp.

Difficulty Easy

Leader Chase Davies, 651-633-1663
ccdavies@aol.com

MOU Paper Session

December 6TH, 9:00 - 4:30

Bell Museum of Natural History, U of Minnesota, 10 Church St., corner of Church and University Ave, Minneapolis. \$4 if registering by mail, \$5 at the door; \$9 for boxed lunch if you order ahead; or get lunch on campus. For a registration form go to <http://moumn.org>

Papers may include: *The Raptor Center's* Bald Eagle lead poisoning study; Northwestern Minnesota Trumpeter Swan nesting ecology; Marsh Lake's American White Pelicans; An Introduction of the Breeding Bird Atlas; Memorial of Bud Tordhoff; Peregrine Falcon recovery update; Watchable Wildlife initiatives in Northwestern Minnesota; Light's Out Birdsafe Project update; Great Horned Owl vocalization study.

There is a **Used Bird and Nature Book Sale** during the paper session!!

2009 Beginning Bird Identification Classes

Bonnie Sample and Chase Davies have arranged for Saint Paul Audubon (SPAS) to partner with Maplewood Nature Center (MNC) to offer a **Beginning Bird Identification Class** in 2009. Students will learn how to really see and then identify feather-covered creatures. We will begin using common feeder birds to learn identification techniques then practice those techniques on other wintering birds. Subsequent sessions will focus on other groups of species as birds migrate through or settle into their summer nesting habitat.

Each session includes a classroom workshop from 6:30-8:30 on Tuesday evenings at MNC and the following Saturday, an 8-10:00 AM field trip.

Field trip locations will be determined by bird activity and weather. There will be no field trip with the last class; however, students in the last class not already an Audubon member will receive a one-year membership to National Audubon. If the student is already a member, the Audubon membership may be given to a person of their choosing.

There is a fee for each session. Fees pay for instruction, space, materials, and contributions to MNC and SPAS. Sessions 1A and 1B must be taken as a pair for \$20. Sessions 2-5 may be taken

individually at \$10 each. All six classes are offered as a \$50 package. Refunds will only be offered if you find another person to take your place. Registration is open to SPAS members only through December 22, after which time it will be promoted and open to MNC newsletter recipients and the general public. Maplewood Nature Center will accept pre-paid reservations on a first-come, first-served basis. Mail or deliver your reservation with a check made payable to Maplewood Nature Center at 2659 East Seventh Street, Maplewood MN 55119. (MNC's hrs are Tues-Sat 8:30-4:30.)

Primary instructors for these classes are Chase and Bonnie.

Sessions	Dates	Topics
Session 1A	2/10 workshop 2/14 observations	Feeder Birds
Session 1B	2/17 workshop 2/21 field trip	Winter Birds
Session 2	3/17 workshop 3/21 field trip	Waterfowl
Session 3	3/31 workshop 4/4 field trip	Early Migrants (no warblers)
Session 4	4/14 workshop 4/18 field trip	More Migrants (warbler basics)
Session 5	4/28 workshop SPAS membership	Late Migrants (more warblers)

Who-who-who-who knows who else might get involved! Contact Bonnie at basample@visi.com; or Chase, 651-633-1663, or send email to ccdavies@aol.com for questions or further information.

To donate books about birds and nature, contact Barbara or Denny Martin at 952-474-4371 or email to dbmartin@skypoint.com to arrange for pick-up or delivery.

Thank your Friends and Family for voting YES! for The Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Act on November 4!!

“PROJECT ACT”

Saint Paul Audubon Takes Action

Greetings to all of you who have been itching to contribute more to the well-being of our native birds.

This year, SPAS wants to provide more opportunities for on-the-ground involvement by those interested in planting plants, removing invasives, counting birds, or documenting bird habitat.

To improve habitat, you might maintain a rain garden, plant flowering shrubs and/or remove an aliens like buckthorn. We will also make it easier to participate in *Citizen Science Projects* that increase our knowledge of the birds in our neighborhoods—and beyond. Examples of species-specific projects that will need your help during the year include finding Chimney Swift roosts, counting Sandhill Cranes and documenting Red-headed Woodpecker habitat.

Other events and programs will emerge as we go along—and your ideas are welcome! Upcoming events will be listed on the website at www.stpaulaudubon.org and in *The Cardinal*. We would love to have you join us by contributing your ideas for these or other events or join us as a participant. There is plenty of fun to go around.

Interested? Contact Bonnie Sample: basample@visi.com or Val Cunningham: writers2@comcast.net

WE'RE CALLING IT PROJECT ACT and we're planning to offer a bi-monthly roster of a survey project (some sponsored by Audubon, some by other organizations) and a habitat improvement project. You may choose to participate in any or all of them. Project Act's first citizen science project is the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch**.



The next **GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT (GBBC)** takes place February 13-16, 2009. The National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are calling on everyone to “Count for Fun, Count for the Future!” Participants did just that in record numbers for the 2008 count, submitting more than 85,000 checklists and ID'ing 635 species. Let's break more records this year!

Go to www.birdsource.org/gbbc to sign up.

Project FeederWatch

A fun and easy survey of winter birds that visit participants' feeders. You use standardized reporting guidelines to help scientists monitor the species and number of birds throughout North America. People with any level of bird identification skills are encouraged to participate. A side benefit: you will improve your birding skills and learn a lot about local birds. When you join, you will receive a great project kit with instructions, a handbook, posters and tally sheets.

Dates November 3 (or as soon as you can start) to April 3

Time Your commitment is flexible, some time on two consecutive days during each reporting period

Skills Novice to Expert

Cost \$15 (\$12 for members of Cornell Lab — Fee is used for participant materials, website, data management and analysis)

For more info or to join the project, either go online to www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw or call 1-800-843-BIRD (2473)

Habitat Improvement

Build a backyard brush pile to provide shelter for birds in winter. Birds seek out such piles to provide cover from wind and cold and from predators. A brush pile can be either a loose collection of twigs and branches or a more formal structure with a log foundation. There are directions in “*The Audubon Society Guide to Attracting Birds, 2nd Edition*,” by Stephen W. Kress. A Website with super tips is at: www.birdwatching.com/tips/brushpile.html

Each year we build a brush pile near the bird feeders (but far enough away to foil the squirrels) and it's a very popular spot on winter days. Ground-feeding birds seem to have a special affinity for brush piles.

Try these in your backyard, and let us know how it's going when you see us at a Member Meeting!

BY BONNIE SAMPLE AND VAL CUNNINGHAM

GBBC Ambassadors Needed

As always, we rely on volunteer ambassadors to help spread the word about the GBBC and engage more people in their communities. Your contribution could be as simple as hanging up a few flyers or as ambitious as pitching the event on local radio and TV stations. You can use the new GBBC news release posted on the website. You'll also find an updated version of the slide show for use in GBBC workshops and other events.

For more ideas on how to promote the GBBC, check out *Get Involved* on the GBBC website. You can fill out the online ambassador sign-up form and specify the kinds of activities you'd like to do.

SPAS GRANT PROJECTS

Here are two stories about the projects of recent SPAS grant recipients. Very Interesting!

Westwood Hills Nature Center

Westwood Hills Nature Center has become the new home to a red-tailed hawk. The hawk is blind in one eye and cannot be released into the wild. She was originally brought to the Raptor Center in 2001 after being hit by a car in Ramsey. She suffered a broken coracoid (a bone in the chest that provides support during flight), which healed, and a severed optic nerve which left her blind in her right eye.

She spent the next seven years in Bemidji with Pat Oldham; doing educational programs. Pat has now retired from raptor education and rehabilitation; which is how Westwood gained such an extraordinary bird. We would like to thank Pat Oldham for allowing Westwood to be her new home.

We'd also like to thank the St. Paul Audubon Society for their grant donation of \$653. This generous donation covered the cost of materials and a portion of labor fees needed to expand her mew.

Our hawk has settled into her new home nicely, after having moved twice since arriving. The first mew was based on the assumption that we were acquiring a non-flighted bird; so it was too small. Alternate plans were set into action to expand the mew after we learned that we were getting a flighted bird. The expanded mew suits her much better. It has more flying space, and more perches to choose from. She loves to bask in the sun and watch visitors from her oak limb perch. When it is feeding time, she loves to fly to her rope perch and inch closer and closer to her meal. Staff also like this mew better because it is easier to clean, more secluded from the public (for privacy and comfort) and in general safer.

She is doing remarkably well; given the changes that have occurred in her life. New handlers, a major move, and then housing changes. She has proven to be an even-tempered and easier-than-expected bird to handle.

BY GRANTEE KERRY WILCOX

Are Earthworms Harming Migrant Songbirds in the Northwoods?

Most people are familiar with the proverb "the early bird catches the worm," and we have all seen robins feeding on earthworms freshly plucked from the ground. Therefore, it is not surprising that many people, including some bird enthusiasts, respond with incredulity to the statement that "earthworms could be harmful to some birds." While earthworms may constitute a beneficial food source for some common birds, recent evidence suggests a harmful effect of earthworms to songbirds in forests of northern Minnesota and Wisconsin. Non-native earthworms are currently invading these previously earthworm-free forests and causing detrimental changes to the soil, forest floor, and herbaceous plant community. These dramatic impacts may extend to songbirds that depend upon the forest floor habitat for foraging and nest concealment.

Supported in part by a St. Paul Audubon Society grant, I initiated research during summer 2008 in the Chequamegon National Forest (Wisconsin) to investigate whether forest songbirds are negatively affected by earthworm invasion. This research is the first to explicitly address whether earthworms have a harmful impact to birds. The project is also part of a Ph.D. degree at the University of Minnesota, where I am a student in the Conservation Biology Graduate Program. I conducted bird surveys on study sites that had been previously found to represent a gradient of earthworm infestation, from earthworm-free to heavily-infested. I also measured vegetation and leaf litter to quantify habitat for ground-nesting birds. Lastly, I sampled earthworms in order to allow an updated estimate of earthworm infestation intensity.

Preliminary findings from this first season of research provide intriguing evidence that ground-nesting and ground-foraging birds, such as Ovenbirds and Hermit Thrushes, may indeed be experiencing negative impacts due to non-native earthworms. For example, density of Ovenbirds, the most common ground-nester in the Chequamegon, was significantly higher in earthworm-free forests than those that were heavily invaded. The same pattern was noticed when considering abundance of all ground-nesting species combined. To identify the underlying link between earthworm infestation and bird abundance, I will broaden the scale of research over the next two years to address whether nest predation rates, nest success, and food availability differ for ground-nesting birds in areas with and without earthworms. This research has the potential to further clarify the diversity of threats facing imperiled migrant songbirds.

BY GRANTEE SCOTT LOSS

Take the Healthy Yard Pledge!

While you're getting ready to feed and count birds this winter, make sure you're maintaining healthy bird habitat in your yard by taking the *Audubon Healthy Yard Pledge*.

The *Healthy Yard Pledge* is part of *Audubon At Home*, which focuses on managing backyards and other natural areas to help birds and other wildlife. Visit the website to learn about **16 Key Elements** that make up a healthy backyard habitat — how many can be found in your yard?

To learn more about the *Audubon at Home* program and take the *Healthy Yard Pledge*, visit <http://audubonathome.org/pledge>

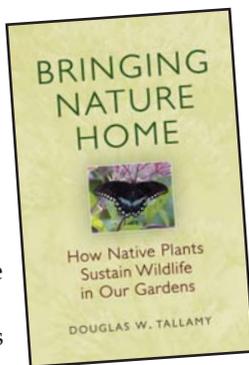
Thank you for all you do to help the birds!

GIFTS FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY

Gardens can Save the World

Gardeners may just be the salvation of birds and other wildlife as humans disrupt more and more of the natural world. Bulldozing and building to meet the demands of our ever-expanding population, we're dramatically shrinking the space available for wildlife. Birds, insects, mammals, reptiles and amphibians are losing places to live and breed at an alarming rate, and their food sources are shrinking. If more and more of us filled our yards and

gardens with native plants, we'd help sustain the biodiversity that all life forms, including our own, need. That's the message of Doug Tallamy's important book, *"Bringing Nature Home, How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens"* Timber Press, \$27.95



An entomologist and college professor, Tallamy clearly makes the case for natives and against aliens. He shows how imported plants are nearly invisible to native insects and other wildlife: if they haven't evolved with it, they can't use it. In this way we lose strands in the web of life, a scenario occurring all over the world.

"We help decide which animals will make it and which will not every time we plant or remove something from our yards," Tallamy says.

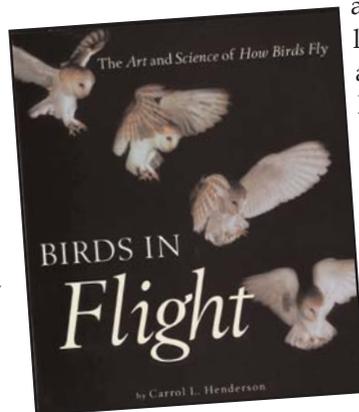
Please read this book—you will gain a new appreciation for the natural world, and how much birds and other wildlife need gardens that mimic the wild.

SPAS MEMBER VAL CUNNINGHAM

Understanding Flight

Birds make flying look effortless but there's a great deal going on behind the scenes as they maneuver through the air. Ultra-light bones and a variety of feathers are the building blocks of flight, and the shape of wings and tail dictate a bird's flying style. But how birds actually rise in the air, sweep across the sky and come in for flawless landings has always been a bit challenging to understand—until now.

Carrol Henderson's new book, *Birds in Flight, The Art and Science of How Birds Fly* (Voyageur Press, \$25), clearly explains the miracle of flight, demystifying the complex inter-

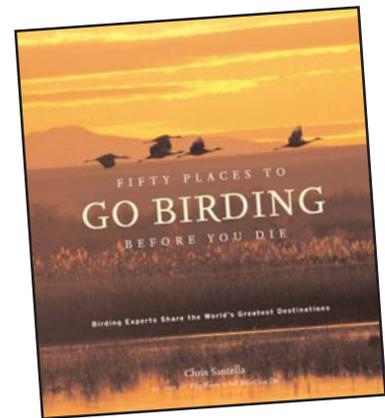


actions of lift, thrust and drag. Flight principles apply equally to the tiny hummingbird and the giant condor, as well as the diving falcon and the energetic swallow. A dedicated naturalist and photographer, Henderson has assembled a career's worth of photos, some taken locally, some on the global adventures he leads, to illustrate avian aerodynamics.

If you've ever wondered how a hummingbird can hover or an egret land without injury, the answers are here. Freeze-frame shots of an African goshawk and a Costa Rican tern drive home the power in a bird's forward wing stroke. And an astonishing shot, one that surprised even Henderson when it came back from the photo lab, shows a purple martin flying upside down in pursuit of a dragonfly.

Well-written and beautifully photographed, *Birds in Flight* is a treasure, sure to please all the birders

on your gift list. Henderson, the driving force behind the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Nongame Wildlife Program, is an accomplished author and photographer, known for his classics *Landscaping for Wildlife*, *Oology and Ralph's Talking Eggs*, and the *Field Guide to the Wildlife of Costa Rica*, among others.



Fifty Places to Go Birding Before You Die

There are so many wonderful places in the world to go see birds, so Chris Santella recruited 50 top birders to write about their favorites. There's Sheri Williamson on Belize, Phil Eager on Point Reyes National Seashore, Kenn Kaufman on Ecuador's Tandayapa-Mindo region and Scott Weidensaul on Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Other birders extol magical spots in Borneo, Venezuela, the Andaman Islands, Papua, New York City and Wisconsin.

Part of the fun of a "listy" book like this one is to check off the spots one has already visited, then "armchair travel" to many of the others. The photography is spectacular—from Madagascar's breathtaking blue-billed Helmet Vanga to the mist-filled forests of El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve in Mexico. The hummingbirds of Jamaica are calling, as is Iceland with its soaring gyrfalcons, and Hungary, home to Dotterels and Great Bustards.

CONSERVATION!!

The 50 places were chosen for the rarity or concentrations of birds they host, incredible scenery or valuable ecosystem—or a combination of these. Santella includes information on how to get to each spot, best time to visit and how to find a guide. True, some of the pieces were written by tour leaders, but then again, these people know their areas well.

Santella, author of previous *50 Places* books on sailing, fly-fishing and golf, has hit on a successful formula to tempt aficionados.

(Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2007, \$24.95)

Last of the Curlews

This book begins with a forward that tells the story of how this book was rediscovered and reprinted 50 years after the original was written, so that I could find it in a rare and used book store... It tells of how he found this little book on a well-used bookshelf in a friend's library. The title was intriguing, so he picked it up and then could not put it down! He let it fall open... and began reading a passage about birds on migration that brought goose bumps. The same thing happened to me in that book store. Half an hour later, I took my "find" to the front and paid more than I usually do. It has been a purchase that I will never regret. The story of this male curlew begins on the tundra as he waits in vain for one of his own kind to come. She must come, someday...

As summer wanes, he moves east across Canada, leading and following other shorebirds. He falls in with a small flock of Golden Plovers, the only species that is suited to his flight style, though they cannot go as fast as he can. They spend weeks on the coast of Labrador, eating crowberries "until their legs and bills and plumage were stained purple with the juice." At last it's time, frost is in the air and on the waves as they set out on that cold and clear night,

flying above the vacant sea for a night, a dawn, on and on for another night and another dawn. The story of their journey from the coast of Labrador to the jungles of Venezuela is as gripping a story as I've read anywhere. I almost burned dinner one night as I read and stirred...

Shorter passages called "The Gauntlet" tell of the curlews' demise, shot from the sky by the hundred for market hunters in the 1800's. The forward by W. S. Merwin for the 1995 reprint of Fred Bosworth's 1955 classic is very good reading in itself. Mr. Bosworth's epilogue leaves space for some hope in my rapidly beating chest—and the afterward by Murray Gell-Mann is as good a treatise on the need for conservation as I've ever read, anywhere.

And we now have our very own "curlew hunter," USFWS shorebird and wetland specialist Bob Russell, hot on the trail; he will tell us more about Eskimo Curlews at our January Member Meeting, see p. 1.

(Purchased used. Counterpoint Press, ISBN 1-887178-00-7.)

HOLLY PEIRSON

CONSERVATION

Fore! Birds

On a beautiful sunny morning in August, a dozen SPAS members toured an award winning wildlife-friendly golf course right in our own backyard. Ramsey County's Keller public golf course was recently certified by Audubon's *International Sanctuary Program*. This program recognizes golf courses that manage to reduce pesticides, provide wildlife habitat, and educate golfers about course habitat and management practices. Our tour was conducted by Paul Diegneu, Superintendent and enthusiastic naturalist. Highlights from the tour include restored prairie patches, a restored wetland, and a butterfly garden. Paul maintains a

bluebird trail and fledged 133 bluebirds last year. SPAS member Jane Wicklund has done bird surveys here for many years. As we waited for the tour to begin, purple martins flew overhead — a hopeful sign; a new martin house was installed the previous week.

Due to effective management practices, pesticide use is down 70% from 8 years ago. Well-designed signage throughout the course delivers educational information about course habitat. A woodland



area between fairways provides a delightful walk. A micro-habitat monitoring system results in reduced water use; a bio-remediation system organically cleans oil and pesticide residue from the wash water of maintenance equipment, resulting in clean water returned to the system.

Dorothy Waltz, who has been active in Audubon and soil and water conservation projects for twenty years, was truly impressed by the outstanding prairie restorations, the shoreline plantings around the wetlands and ponds, and the beautiful butterfly gardens. "Golf courses generally have a bad reputation among conservationists for their sterile landscapes and high use of chemicals," she commented, "but Paul's staff are doing everything possible to make Keller a haven for wildlife. Their efforts to minimize chemical and water use are commendable!"

If you are a birder/golfer (or golfer/birder) check out this course next season. It's beautiful, challenging, and provides safe habitat in a very urban setting.

BONNIE SAMPLE, WITH PHOTOS
BY PAUL DIEGNEU AND FRED WALTZ

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Project Update

Youth groups help with "Burdock Bust" at Como Woodland

Thank you one and all! The Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom (CWOC) project site had 33 participants at our August 5TH Burdock Pull, and 25 participants at our May 28TH Garlic Mustard Pull. However, we are far from eradicating either one of these tenacious exotic species from the CWOC project site.

The tough labor: pulling, cutting, and hauling out so many invasive weeds from this small woods often feels like a Herculean task beyond our moral strengths. Keeping at it over time is our only option, and it wouldn't be possible without the help of youth crews like **Youth Job Corps** and **YouthCare**, the dedicated St. Paul Park & Rec Dept. staff from Environmental Services, and all the hardworking volunteers.

We hope the kids who helped remove burdock this year will come back in the future to see a healthy woodland of native plants with the knowledge that they helped make it possible. But we aren't there yet...

To RSVP or for further info: email dmrobinson@bitstream or visit www.comowoodland.org

DEB ROBINSON, SPAS MEMBER AND COMO WOODLAND VOLUNTEER

BIRDING FESTIVALS

Sax-Zim Bog Festival
February 13-15, 2009

Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds May 14-17, 2009

Youth Birding Festival
May 4, Lowry Nature Cntr

Ramsey County Urban Bird Fest May 15-17, 2009

Owling '08

In May, my birding buddy Bill and I led an owling trip at the Villa Maria, south of Red Wing, near Frontenac, Minnesota. We headed out with flashlights and a digital recording of owls, trying to get a response from an owl and maybe even be lucky enough to see one.

Some of us have had mixed results calling owls by imitating their calls with our own voices. The memory aid for the Barred Owl call is "Who cooks for you?" Sometimes they respond; often they don't. Maybe it's the way I say it.

The technology of calling for owls has changed a lot over the years. When I began some twenty years ago, I used a bulky tape recorder to play owl calls. It required a fast-forward search till the meter number was reached, then a rewind after every time it was played.

Years later, I could use a portable CD player with separate external speakers. That was handier for finding the right owl call track, but the whole apparatus was still rather bulky, not a one hand operation.

Then I got a digital recorder, small, pocket-sized, and relatively easy to find the desired track. Mine didn't have a lighted screen (at least I've never figured out how to use it if it does), so I usually had a flashlight gripped in my mouth while I picked out the sound track I wanted.

And now, having been dragged kicking and screaming into the 21ST century, I've got an iPod with lighted screen, huge capacity, great ease of use. I still need an external speaker, but I've found one that opens like a butterfly and can be easily handled with one hand. So—we were armed with the latest (for me) technology.

My other birding buddy Bill had seen a Barred Owl in the middle of the day as he was hiking along the

woods on the back edge of the Villa's property. He said it was just sitting there looking at him as he walked by. After dark, we went in that direction hoping to hear from it. There were about two dozen of us in the group.

We stopped in an open field along the way and tried the recorded call from there. And we did hear a response from farther up the road... and it was in the right direction for Bill's owl.

We headed for those woods that Bill had been in earlier in the day, but as we stepped out of the dark, I headed for a yard light that I thought was illuminating the trail.

Instead, we wound up in the front yard of a cabin. We swung left, in a more northerly direction and found ourselves bushwhacking along a deer trail. I had missed the broad road-like path and now 24 of us were stumbling through the brush. It was pitch dark.

We finally got back to the road and found the woods. I played the Barred Owl call again and got a very loud response from a field sparrow! They're supposed to be sleeping at 9:30 at night. We must have startled it awake. It was one loud descending call and then silence.

One of our group suggested the bird's wife had grabbed him by the beak and whispered, "Shut up, you fool! You'll get us both killed!"

We got no response from the Barred Owl. It's likely that it was suspicious that any self-respecting owl would have heard all that crashing through the woods and still be calling, looking for a friend.

And now that we'd eventually found the road, we had an easy walk back to the Villa. We'd at least heard a Barred Owl. For our group, that was a success.

CLAY CHRISTENSEN WRITES THE BIRDMAN OF LAUDERDALE COLUMN IN THE ST. ANTHONY PARK BUGLE

REACHING OUR LEADERS

Mr. Flicker on The Election, continued from p. 2

The new Administration and Congress must lead a transformation in American energy production and use through investments in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies. This can minimize the fluctuation of gas prices while protecting our beaches, coastal ecosystems and Alaskan landscape from the threats of oil and gas drilling.

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION: We'll work with the Administration to secure reversal of the recent weakening of the *Endangered Species Act*, such as the controversial decision to allow agencies to self-consult regarding the impacts of federally-approved projects on endangered species.

Congress should pass new tax incentives to encourage private landowners to work toward recovery of endangered species.

BIRD AND HABITAT CONSERVATION: The Administration and the Congress should reinvest in the National Wildlife Refuge System and address the unacceptable \$3.5 billion maintenance backlog crippling this critical tool for conservation.

Congress should pass legislation to conserve neotropical migratory birds and address the steep declines in America's common birds that are disappearing from parks, farms, and backyards across the country.

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION: The Administration and the Congress should fund significant new restoration projects to improve the status of America's great natural ecosystems: the **Mississippi River, the Everglades, Long Island Sound, and the Great Lakes.**



Reaching Our Leaders

Washington, D.C.

President	The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Washington, D.C. 20500, 202-456-1111 president@whitehouse.gov
US Senator	Amy Klobuchar DC 202-224-3244, MN 612-727-5220 http://klobuchar.senate.gov/emailamy.cfm Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington DC 20510 MN: Federal Building, #298, Ft Snelling, MN 55111
US Senator	Norm Coleman 202-224-5641, MN 651-645-0323 320 Hart Sen. Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20510 2550 University Ave W, #110-N, Saint Paul, 55114 http://coleman.senate.gov
US Rep	4TH Betty McCollum DC 202-225-6631, 1029 Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20515; MN 651-224-9191, 165 Western Avenue N, #17, Saint Paul, MN 55102; Internet email: www.house.gov/mccollum/contact.html
US Rep	5TH Keith Ellison DC 202-225-4755, MN 612-664-8000 1130 Longworth House Office Bldg, DC 20515 250 Marquette Avenue #225, MPLS, MN 55401 http://ellison.house.gov
US Rep	6TH Michelle Bachmann DC 202-225-2331, MN 651-731-5400, 412 Cannon House Office Bldg, Wash, DC 20515 MN: 6043 Hudson Rd #330, Woodbury, MN 55125 http://bachmann.house.gov/Email_zip.htm

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MN Senators	To find your senator, call the Secretary of State 651-296-0504, or go to www.senate.leg.state.mn.us
MN Reps	To find your representative, call the MN House at 651-296-2146, or go to www.house.leg.state.mn.us



Electronic Resources

"you gotta bookmark these sites!"

Saint Paul Audubon's website is at:

www.saintpaulaudubon.net (Member Meetings, Field Trips, Conservation, Education, "Cardinal" archives)

Audubon Minnesota is at **www.mn.audubon.org**

National Audubon Society is at: **www.audubon.org** (birds & science, issues & action, education, Audubon at home, state centers & chapters, environmental news)

Minnesota DNR is at **www.dnr.state.mn.us** or call 651-296-6157 or 888-MINNDNR (Info on State Parks, State Forests, Wildlife Mgmt Areas, Scientific & Natural Areas, bird lists, wildlife info)

National Wildlife Refuges in MN can be found at **www.fws.gov/midwest** (click on "Minnesota")

National Parks in USA & MN can be found at **www.nps.gov** (w/clickable map)

Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is at **www.mou.mn.org** (birding listserves, migration and nesting occurrence maps, State Park bird lists, RBA (Rare Bird Alert) reports, all 87 county bird lists, seasonal reports, etc.)

Minnesota's Rare Bird Hotlines are:

Metro/Statewide 763-780-8890

Duluth/No. Shore 218-728-5030

Northwestern MN 1-800-433-1888

Ramsey County & Saint Paul Audubon have collaborated to publish "A Guide to Birding Ramsey County." Find it online at:

<http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/parks/NaturalResources/BirdingInRamseyCounty.htm>

Northwest MN's *Pine to Prairie Birding Trail* website is at **www.mnbirdtrail.com**

The *Minnesota River Valley Birding Trail* is at **www.birdingtrail.org**

Mississippi River from Itasca to Iowa, the *Great River Birding Trail*, is at **www.greatriverbirding.org**

MNBirdNet Statewide Electronic Bird Club, is at: **mnbird-request@linux2.winona.msus.edu**

Bob Ekblad's great list of events and MN Bird Checklist is at: **<http://home.rconnect.com/~ekblad/MN-Event.htm>**

Get Involved in saving/restoring habitat: Buy Duck Stamps! **<http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.htm>**

SPAS E-Notes

If you have email, sign up today for our online notification system! You'll receive announcements about upcoming events, information about current legislative happenings, and other Saint Paul Audubon happenings between issues of *The Cardinal*. When you *change your email address*, notify list manager Chase Davies of your new address. She is at **ccdavies@aol.com** You may unsubscribe at any time.

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December 2008 January 2009

Feb Mar 09 Deadline 1/5/2009

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Welcome...to the Saint Paul Audubon Society. We're a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our Mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity.

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Board Mtg: 1
Member Mtg: BWCAW Forests11
Christmas Bird Count & Potluck20

JANUARY

Board Mtg: 5
Explore Outdoors! Central Park, Roseville 4
Member Mtg: Eskimo Curlew Search . . .8

FEBRUARY

Explore Outdoors! Fort Snelling1
Board Mtg: 2
Member Mtg: Logging in MN12

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Time Dated Material

Consider what good karma, your year-end, tax-deductible gift would mean for Saint Paul Audubon. You'll feel good, too! See p. 3 to learn more about it.

Contributors

Thank You very much to those who contributed to this issue of *The Cardinal*: **Clay Christensen, Val Cunningham, Chase Davies, John Flicker, Ken Harris, Scott Loss, Dan McGuinness, John O'Connell, Holly Peirson, Deb Robinson, Bonnie Sample, Julian Sellers, Laurel Stiebler, and Kerry Wilcox.**

To submit an article, send your text via Email to the Editor at hpbirdscouter@msn.com

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Yes! I want to be a sponsor of my local chapter, Saint Paul Audubon, by donating \$15, for which I will receive *The Cardinal* newsletter and other online news. Please fill in the personal information, make a check for \$15 out to **Saint Paul Audubon Society**, and send it to the address below. *Thank You Very Much!*

- I'm a NEW member! Please send my Welcome Packet right away!
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Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center, P.O. Box 51001, Boulder, CO 80322
(Write on envelope: "Attention: New Membership, please process immediately.")