

The Cardinal

FEBRUARY MARCH 2019 WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG • SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

FEBRUARY MEMBER MEETING

“Illustrating Nature and Science”

with **Vera Ming Wong**

Thursday, February 14, 2019

Vera Ming Wong has earned recognition for her detailed, graceful images of plants, birds, reptiles, insects, and other animals. Her pen-and-ink stipple illustrations first appeared in the book *Minnesota's Endangered Flora and Fauna*. Her full-page black-and-white drawings in Welby Smith's book *Native Orchids of Minnesota* aid in the identification of the 49 species. Other publications with her illustrations, in black-and-white or watercolor, include a guide to north woods habitats, a new book on the North Shore, and many articles in MN DNR's *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine over the years, in pen-and-ink, watercolor, and collage.



Image copyright Vera Ming Wong

Ms. Wong also creates images in 2- and 3-dimensions, by cutting paper. Some works are in white paper; others in layers of colored papers. On her business card, a swooping bobolink is cut into a watercolor.

In 2001, Ms. Wong founded Project Art for Nature (PAN), a coalition of up to 25 artists that focus their work on chosen natural areas in a 3-year cycle. To commemorate the National Park Service centennial, a PAN show traveled to 6 venues in Minnesota and Wisconsin. She shows her own work in two or three exhibits a year in Minnesota and Wisconsin. "Between the Lines," an exhibit of artworks by Vera Ming Wong and Andrea Martin, opens in Mahtomedi this month.

Ms. Wong will illustrate her talk with selected images and describe her study, media, techniques, and sources of inspiration, from the smallest wildflower to entire natural ecosystems. She may bring a few pieces for sale at the meeting.

MARCH MEMBER MEETING

“Minnesota’s Birds: What We Thought We Knew, What We Now Know, and What We Still Don’t Know ”

with **Bob Dunlap, President of the Minnesota Ornithologists’ Union**

Thursday, March 14, 2019

Bob Dunlap has been a birder ever since he received his first field guide to birds at age 5. Birds are both his passion and his career, as he has volunteered countless hours for the MOU over the past 12 years and now works for the DNR as a zoologist and data manager with a focus on birds. In 2014 he obtained his Master’s degree in wildlife ecology from the University of Minnesota; his thesis work focused on grassland birds in western Minnesota and their response to the harvesting of native prairie vegetation for biofuels.

Bob will talk about some of the things we’ve learned about Minnesota’s birds since the turn of the century.

We have increasingly more data, better ways of keeping records, faster means with which to record observations, and an increasing network of observers that have all contributed to a better understanding of Minnesota’s avifauna. Some previous assumptions have proved to be incorrect and others confirmed, yet some questions remain

unanswered and some areas unexplored. This presentation will guide you through some new insights and new frontiers for birding in Minnesota. It will also highlight some of the changes we’ve seen since the year 2000 and may yet see in years to come.



Arrive at 6:45 for social time or 7:00 for the program;
held at Fairview Community Center, 1910 Cty Rd B, Roseville.
Free and open to the public.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Chapter's Board Meetings are held the first Monday of most months 6:30-8:00 PM at the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed Office, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada.

Upcoming: **Monday, February 4**

President's Message

In almost all sports and businesses, teamwork is encouraged. The idea is that working together can achieve more than working alone. Along with the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, we have been working to increase teamwork among Minnesota chapters and Audubon national leadership. Audubon is one of the nation's largest conservation organizations with more than 700 chapters nationwide and well over a million members. We are fortunate to have the Upper Mississippi River office located in Saint Paul serving Minnesota and several other states. In addition Minnesota has 13 local chapters spread across the state. Coordinating these human resources is essential to serve birds, birding and the natural environment in the challenging times ahead.

To achieve this coordination we have sought to strengthen our ties to the national organization, the Minnesota office and other local chapters. Among other things we attended a meeting this fall of Midwest Audubon chapters in Michigan. At the meeting we worked with almost a dozen national Audubon staff specialists dedicated to assisting activities of the local chapters. Although the Minnesota regional office is currently seeking a new executive, we are working with the existing talented communications and legislative staff. Together with the Minneapolis chapter we have prompted regional leadership to host meetings of Minnesota chapter presidents. We have held two

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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ABOUT OUR CHAPTER

Founded in 1945 as the 'St. Paul Bird Club' with twelve members, the Saint Paul Audubon Society now serves the entire East Metro region of the Twin Cities, and has around 2,800 members. Our Member Meetings are held from Sept.-Dec. & Feb.-May on the second Thursday of the month. For more info please contact leaders at left, or visit www.saintpaulaudubon.org

ABOUT THE CARDINAL Published 6 times a year; articles are due on the 5th of January, March, May, July, Sept, and Nov. Submissions may be edited. Send to cardinalstpaul@gmail.com.

Members may also receive the newsletter by downloading PDF's from our website.

ADDRESS CHANGES Call 1-800-274-4201 or NAS website at www.audubon.org to notify the National Audubon Society of a change of address, to continue to receive *Audubon Magazine* and *The Cardinal*.

such meetings and are planning a third this spring. Following our first meeting we all worked together to have Governor Dayton sign a proclamation making 2018 the Year of the Bird in Minnesota. You may also note that The Cardinal now lists membership meetings of all three metro Audubon chapters (see page 7). These are small steps but we hope to achieve much more in the future. Our goal for the spring chapter's meeting is to identify a common theme that all chapters will support in 2019 to increase our influence.

Conservationists and the birds we



love face great challenges in 2019. We can achieve a great deal if we work together to maximize our impact. We welcome the ideas and input of our members. Each of you is essential to our efforts and as we move ahead we thank you for your past support and will depend upon you in the future.

-Donn Waage, SPAS President

Board Changes Bylaws in Response to Membership Request

Members at the May 2018 Annual Meeting requested minutes no longer be held 12 months for approval by members at the next annual meeting. After reviewing our bylaws, the board, in accordance with current bylaws, adopted the following addition to the SPAS bylaws.

Section 3.10 The Secretary of the Board shall serve as the secretary at all member meetings. If the Secretary is absent, the Chair shall appoint a secretary for the meeting. The Minutes of each meeting of the members shall be approved by the Chair and the secretary of the meeting and shall be retained with Minutes of the Board.

Audubon Calendar: Around the Metro

National Audubon Society members may attend any Audubon chapter meeting. From now on, The Cardinal will list all of the public metro Audubon programs of which we are aware.

Saint Paul Audubon Society:

Feb. 4 Board Meeting

Feb. 14 Member Meeting, "Plant and Animal Illustrations" with Vera Ming Wong

March 4 Board Meeting

March 14 Member Meeting, "MOU State of Minnesota Birds" with Bob Dunlap

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis:

Feb. 5 "Wrens and Friends" with Keith Olstad

March 5 "Adventures on the Oak Savannah (Sherburne NWR) with Mark and Christine Nicolson

Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter:

Feb. 28 "Birding Santa Maria, Columbia" with William Marengo and Paul Egeland

March 28 "Bird Migration" with Bill Egge

A Class on How to Observe and Identify Common Urban Birds

Longtime bird enthusiast Chase Davies (SPAS) and naturalist Konnie Her (MNC) will teach how to observe and identify common urban birds. In Session 1, we will focus on common feeder birds to start learning identification techniques. In later sessions, other common urban birds will be addressed both in class and on the related field trip.

When and Where: This 4-week class will meet Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Maplewood Nature Center, 2659 East Seventh Street, Maplewood, MN 55119 with field trips from 8:00-10:00 a.m. Saturdays at places to be determined by weather and habitat.

Dates: Wednesdays, March 27, April 3, 10, 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday mornings, March 30, April 6, 13, 20, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Fee: \$60 per person for the series – register by March 20, 2019

Registration: is required and is limited to 18. Contact Maplewood Nature Center (MNC) at 651-249-2170, Tuesday-Saturday, or online use the SPAS website: saintpaulaudubon.org

Questions? Contact Chase Davies, 651-633-1663 or ccdavies@aol.com

2019 Biennial Audubon Convention: July 26-28, 2019

Join with other leaders in this convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin: designed to bring together Audubon's vast network of dedicated chapter, state, center, national, and international leaders from across all four flyways. This event will feature an array of inspiring speakers, in-depth workshops and discussions, exciting field trips, and the camaraderie and networking opportunities that only the Audubon Convention can provide.

For general queries, please contact convention@audubon.org. Website with details: www.audubon.org/conservation/2019-convention

Warbler Weekend 2019

St. Paul Audubon Society's 48th annual Warbler Weekend will be held May 10-12 (Mother's Day Weekend) at Hok-Si-La Park in Lake City, Minnesota. This will be our third year at Hok-Si-La after many enjoyable years at Villa Maria Conference Center, located just 6 miles to the north. Hok-Si-La Park in Lake City will be the hub for everything: gathering, socializing, eating, recording, dispersing, and more.

Check out www.hoksilapark.org to learn more about this location which has for many years welcomed SPAS birders.

The registration fee for Warbler Weekend remains at \$5 per person. Great and reasonably priced meals are available on Saturday thanks to Lake City Kiwanis International. Gluten free and vegetarian options are also available. Numerous motel/hotel options are in the Lake City/Redwing area. Camping is available at Frontenac State Park and at Hok-Si-La Park.

All levels of birders are welcome! Some Saturday leader-led walks might focus on a particular habitat, basic

birding skills, bird songs, walking distance, or a favorite place such as the several trails at Hok-Si-La Park, Sand Point, the town cemetery, Villa Maria grounds (if open), Old Frontenac, and Frontenac State Park. For the first time this year we will have a "Birding by Ear" trip and a "Birding by Car" trip

Saturday afternoon. All of these trips and sites offer wonderful opportunities for birders as the migrants travel the Mississippi Flyway toward northern breeding grounds as they have done for thousands of years. We and the birds will be rewarded with all the hospitality this area has to offer us. And happily, SPAS can continue to document spring bird migration along this particular stretch of bluff lands and lowlands of the Wells Creek area of the Mississippi River. Note that this year the number of registrants is limited to 150, so be sure to send in your registration form by April 25.



Birding Lake Pepin

Known as the "warbler capital" of Minnesota, Lake Pepin is the place to be (and bird) in early May, and actually any time of the year. Designated as an Important Birding Area (IBA) by Audubon, it is described as the "best bird habitat in the State of Minnesota, especially for migrant birds." According to Audubon, "Frontenac State Park regularly records between 20 and 30 species of migrant warblers and the total number of species recorded there is 263, the second highest for a Minnesota State Park." Audubon also lists Hok-Si-La Park as an important migratory stopover for songbirds in both spring and fall. Our tally for the weekend is usually 135-145 species.

To prepare for Warbler Weekend, you should check out these resources available online. Just Google "birding Lake Pepin" and a whole wealth of information becomes available.

Lake City publishes a really awesome birding brochure available at www.lakecitymn.org/what-to-do/ birdwatching. It provides maps to a whole slew of good birding spots in the area. You can also fill out a form and one will be mailed to you. Heckuva deal!

Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources provides

specific information on Frontenac State Park including a downloadable bird list. Go to www.dnr.mn.us to access information about all of Minnesota State Parks.

Robert B. Janssen, author of *Birds of Minnesota State Parks*, wrote a nice article for *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* titled "The Warbler Capital: Bird surveys of all state parks proved what birders have seen for decades: This place is tops for warblers." It is available online at www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/issues/2015/may-jun/frontenac-state-park-birding.html. It is good reading and whets your appetite for Warbler Weekend.

The evening program on Friday night with Bill Stjern will focus on visual warbler identification for new birders or those new to Warbler Weekend along with interesting facts and background for more experienced folks. Included will be an overview of migration and the challenges in the future for these remarkable creatures. It should send everyone out on Saturday with an appreciation for and an eager desire to find and learn more about warblers. In 47 years of Warbler Weekend, we have seen 250 species of birds and all of the regular warbler species ever seen in the state. This is the best place in the state, and arguably in the Upper Midwest, to learn about and see these beautiful birds.



Warbler Weekend Overview

Accommodations: Birders staying overnight need to make their own reservations soon. Lake City and Red Wing are closest. Cell phone numbers for information or help before and during the weekend are 651-350-3487 (Richard) or 651-955-2086 (JoAnn).

Advance Reservations: Required for all meals including requests for gluten free and/or vegetarian food. Registration and meal reservations close April 25.

Information Boards: The usual Bird Board, Schedule, and Notices will be posted in prominent places.

Evaluation Forms: We want your input! All birders will be asked to fill out an evaluation form so that we can continue to improve Warbler Weekend!

Friday, May 10

Daytime: bird on your own

Evening:

6:30 p.m. Dining Hall open for coffee, cookies and socializing

7:00 p.m. Warbler 101 presentation – Bill Stjern

Help with visual ID for beginning birders

Interesting facts and background for those with experience

Celebration and wonder of migration

Future of the warbler family in a changing world

Owling will follow if weather permits

Saturday, May 11

Meals: prepared and served by Lake City Kiwanis in Riverside Dining Hall.

8:00 - 8:30 a.m. Full, hot breakfast with announcements at 8:45 a.m.

12:00 - 12:30 p.m. Sandwiches with fruit and dessert; announcements at 12:45 p.m.

6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Spaghetti, bread and salad supper with tally and Sunday plans to follow

Special sightings, identification of Saturday leaders, and places to bird will be on a handout available Friday evening and Saturday with changes announced during meals. The Warbler Weekend Count will be tallied after the Saturday supper.

Saturday Birding Walks: (Coffee at 6:00 a.m. in Dining Hall)

Morning: 6:30 a.m.-8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Afternoon: 1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Gather on the grass at the parking lot around appropriate signs to form groups for each scheduled leader-led walk. NOTE that the trips depart at the times listed, so please be on time. Some of the possible places from the list below will depend on weather, trail conditions and number of available leaders.

- Frontenac State Park trips: Prairie walk, Sand Point trail, and overlook
- Hok-Si-La north and south
- Old Methodist Camp area
- Frontenac Town Cemetery and town walk
- Beginning birder walk (Chase Davies, Saturday at 3:30 p.m.)
- Birding by Car (JoAnn Schultz, Saturday at 3:30 p.m. only)
- Birding by Ear (TBA)

Sunday, May 12 (Coffee at 6:00 a.m. at reception desk)

6:30 a.m. at Hok-Si-La parking lot to bird with leaders.

Please report any additions from the Saturday birding to Bill Stjern (norskestar@comcast.net) for inclusion in the final count.

Warbler Weekend 2019 Registration Form (submit before April 25)

	Number of persons	Total
Friday night	_____ (no charge)	
Registration	_____ x \$ 5 = \$ _____	
Saturday breakfast, 8-8:30	_____ x \$ 8 = \$ _____	
Saturday lunch 12-12:30	_____ x \$12 = \$ _____	
Saturday dinner, 6-6:30	_____ x \$13 = \$ _____	

Total \$ _____

_____ Number birding Sunday morning

_____ Number Vegetarians

_____ Number Gluten Free

Make check payable to St. Paul Audubon Society, or register online at saintpaulaudubon.org/events/warbler-weekend

Send check and this registration form to:

Saint Paul Audubon Society

c/o Richard Newmark, 810 Woodduck Dr.

Woodbury, MN 55125

No refunds after April 25, 2018

All prices are per person; no refunds for missed meals.

Please print clearly

Registrant's Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Names of all guests registering on this form:

For more information, call 651-340-3487 or, preferably, send email to ranemark@gmail.com

Strategic Planning

At the December member meeting and online, we asked SPAS members to give the Board input on a number of questions related to strategic planning and our new mission



and vision. Thanks to all who provided ideas! We wanted to start letting members see the results. The “word cloud” provided shows the responses to the question, “What five key words would you use to describe SPAS’s purpose?”

The word cloud indicates visually rather than numerically how often certain words came up. The larger the word, the more times it was mentioned in the survey. A few words certainly stood out! For those of you who do better with numbers than pictures, here’s a little more info: There were 87 submissions, with a total of 111 words. (Some people did separate single words, and some phrases). For one example, the word “conservation” was submitted 12 times in the 87 responses.

We will be using this information, along with the results from the other questions, to guide our strategic planning and focus areas for the years ahead.

A Western Perspective

Although I’ve been the editor of The Cardinal newsletter for nearly two years, I’m afraid members of SPAS might find me a bit reclusive. That’s especially true now, since I began my first semester of graduate school at the University of Montana in August.

Since most of The Cardinal newsletter design happens on computers, I’ve been able to work remotely from my home in Missoula while I pursue a Master’s degree in environmental studies.

When I’m not slogging through class readings and grading undergraduate essays, I’ve enjoyed opportunities to explore the wild spaces all around the city. Some of the most common birds here would be exciting and unusual back home in Minnesota. Black-billed magpies and red-shafted flickers are regulars in the tree outside my apartment. Townsend’s solitaires perch in thickets on the mountainside just minutes’ walk from my door. I even caught a flock of pygmy nuthatches in a stand of ponderosas on my walk home from campus the other day.

However, my recent trip to Minnesota for the winter holidays showed me just how special some of the birds back home in Minnesota are. During the first week of this semester, I expressed to a fellow teaching assistant how excited I was to find Barrow’s goldeneyes cruising casually down a river near town. I told him how my walks in the woods at home had yielded only common birds such as chickadees and blue jays – hardly exciting stuff. But he didn’t have the reaction I expected.

To him, walking into the woods and finding a blue jay, or a cardinal, was a big deal! There aren’t many of them in Montana. In fact, at least one Montana birder photographed one and asked for help with identification!

Living out west has not only given me an appreciation for the many new species I’m seeing for the first time, but also for the “common” birds back home in Minnesota. When a fellow student told me that the white-throated sparrow I photographed north of town was rare for this region, I felt a stab of pride at encountering this tiny ambassador, who I know so well from my home state.

-Jackie Bussjaeger, Cardinal Editor



Take Part in Citizen Science

Do you feel overwhelmed by the frequent discourse on loss of habitat, threatened species, invasive species and other environmental challenges? Do you feel powerless to make a significant contribution to alter the direction our environment is headed? You're not alone.

Individuals, young and old, concerned for the environment, are providing useful information to scientific research through participation in citizen science projects. Citizen science may be defined as research projects designed to offer non-scientists ways to meaningfully contribute to a body of knowledge.

Citizen science is not new. A well-known example is the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, now in its 118th consecutive year. Through the endeavors of lay people in the community and through the use of connective technology, researchers have greatly expanded the scope and geographical capabilities of their data collection.

Well-designed research and consistent volunteer training can avoid potential criticism of questionable data collected by non-scientists. Projects such as The Cornell Lab of Ornithology eBird, supported by thousands of lay bird observers, have shared critical information to governmental bodies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to evaluate land management practices for the protection of threatened bird species.

The professional scientific community is not the only beneficiary of citizen involvement in their endeavors.

Citizen science participants have reported positive feelings about their experiences, increased awareness of specific scientific issues and greater interest in scientific inquiry.

If you enjoy learning and wish to contribute to better understanding of the environment, to do something worthwhile, to teach the next generation to care, consider participating in a citizen science project. There are projects for people of all skill levels, physical capabilities and ages. Here are some resources to help you get started in your search. Enjoy the experience; share the learning.

-Lynn Swift, Conservation Committee

scistarter.com - Find projects on many topics

iNaturalist - Record what you see in nature. Collective data of observations provides a record of what is happening in the natural world.

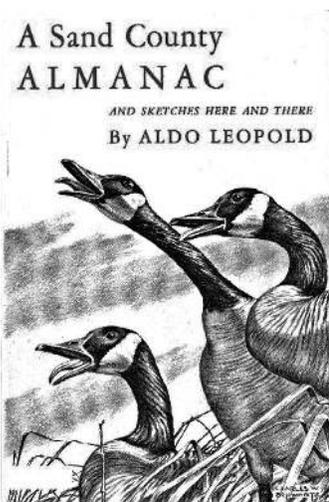
iSeeChange - People contributing observations of weather and climate in their local community.

zooniverse.org - A wide variety of research topics of active projects.

eBird - The Cornell Lab of Ornithology database of bird observations throughout the year. A good site for keeping a personal bird list.

gbbc.birdcount.org - Information on the Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb. 15-18, 2019.

citizenscience.umn.edu - Projects listed at the U of MN and Bell Museum.



Naturalist and writer Aldo Leopold was a well-known proponent of citizen science. In his 1949 book *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold wrote: "The amateur can, if he has imagination and persistence, select and solve actual scientific natural-history problems as virgin as the sun."

He referenced the stories of a professional chemist who became an expert on the extinction of the passenger pigeon, and an Ohio woman who conducted her own long-term study on the behaviors of local song sparrows. Both were recognized by the scientific community, but Leopold emphasized that citizen science isn't about fame.

"They achieved personal satisfactions which are more important than fame, and hundreds of other amateurs are receiving these satisfactions," Leopold wrote. With that in mind, Leopold criticized the inability of educational curricula of the time to teach not just facts and figures, but an interrelated understanding of each element of the natural world, and its role in a unified ecosystem.

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG

Next issue: April/May 2019

Deadline 3/5/2019

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
Earth's biological diversity.

*Please check our website at
www.saintpaulaudubon.org
for calendar updates!*

CALENDAR

February

Board Meeting 4
Member Meeting, Vera Ming Wong14

March

Board Meeting 4
Member Meeting Bob Dunlap.....14

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