

The Cardinal

APRIL MAY 2020

WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG • SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

APRIL MEMBER MEETING

“The Dramatic Evolution of Birds on Madagascar ”

with **Dr. Sushma Reddy**

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Islands are natural laboratories to study how species evolve in novel environments. When species colonize new biogeographic regions, it can expose them to new ecological opportunities and unique selective regimes, which can lead to the evolution of spectacular diversity. Madagascar is a biodiversity hotspot with exceptional species found nowhere else. Here, several lineages of birds have undergone this evolutionary experiment with varying results. Some groups, like the vangas and tetrakas, demonstrate dramatic adaptive radiations of high ecological and morphological diversity similar to classic examples like Darwin’s finches. Other species have persisted for millions of years with little change. Dr. Sushma Reddy will outline her work so far in uncovering the remarkable diversity of birds on Madagascar and investigating the biogeographic mysteries of how they got to this island.

MAY MEMBER MEETING

“Belwin, Bison, and Birds”

with **Lynette Anderson**

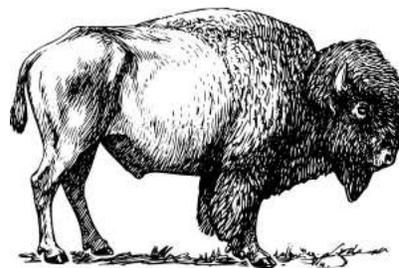
Thursday, May 14, 2020

Belwin Conservancy is a 1,400-acre preserve located just east of the Twin Cities. It contains a wide variety of habitats, most notably prairie and oak savanna. There are public hiking trails, an observatory, plenty of birds and a bison herd! Come and learn about the wonderful mosaic of habitats and partnerships that is Belwin.

Lynette Anderson grew up on a farm in southern Wisconsin, which fed her love of the natural world at an early age. She attended UW-Stevens Point and

Dr. Reddy is currently the Breckenridge Chair of Ornithology at the Bell Museum of Natural History and the University of Minnesota. She received her B.A. in Environmental Sciences from Barnard College and her Ph.D. from Columbia University. Her research investigates biological diversity by using genetic, phenotypic, and geographic data to study the evolutionary history of birds. Her doctoral research on the biogeography of birds in southern Asia was conducted as a resident student at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Subsequently, she spent five years as a postdoctoral fellow at the Field Museum of Natural History, working on the bird tree of life project, and continues to be a Research Associate. Until recently, Sushma was faculty at Loyola University Chicago from 2009 to 2018. Sushma’s research has been funded by the National Science Foundation and other organizations. Her lab has supported several students at the high-school, undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral levels. She collaborates with scientists across the world as she strives to build our knowledge of global biodiversity patterns and aid conservation efforts.



graduated with a degree in Resource Management and Environmental Education. In 1984 she moved to

Minnesota and worked as a seasonal employee at many of the Twin Cities’ nature centers. From 2000 - 2014 she worked for the St. Paul Public Schools at Belwin. In 2008 she was hired by Belwin Conservancy as an Interpretive Naturalist and Restoration Assistant. She continues in this role today. She claims not to be an expert but an enthusiast and observer in all things nature.

**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, April 6**



President's Message

The members of the Saint Paul Audubon Society are proud activists in the birding conservation community. We are passionate about helping birds and in the power of sharing our experiences with the broader community. At its core our work is about making connections and engaging humans to help birds.

We know that in a society increasingly divided by fear and increasingly separated by technology, the act of showing up and being present together can be a profound expression of support for our community. On a typical day the idea of "social distancing" is anathema to our core values and our identity as a birding community. Today, however, is not a typical day.

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*.

Today, in the face of escalating public health crisis, we must take a different approach to caring for the SPAS community and the broader community's health. We must embrace the guidance of public health professionals who tell us that the tactic needed now is to create some intentional physical distance.

Because this crisis is rapidly evolving we are not going to announce a plan or new calendar for the remainder of the year. We will be flexible and responsive to changing conditions. We will try to give as much notice of changes in plans as possible. Please check our website saintpaulaudubon.org for the most current information. We will also send out emails from time to time.

Thank you for your continued

support of the birding and environmental communities. Please stay safe and healthy. I look forward to meeting with you all again soon.

-Donn Waage, SPAS President



FIELD TRIPS

Nerstrand Big Woods' Birds and Blooms

Big Woods State Park, 9700 170th St E, Nerstrand, MN 55053

Saturday, April 18, 8:30 AM-12:00 PM

Our annual walk comes when bright spring flowers carpet bluff-side woodlands, and resident and migrant birds fly and chatter overhead. Come and we'll see what has popped into bloom or is feeding or flying above us along our walk down to Prairie Creek. Usually, but not always, spring ephemeral flowers far outnumber the migrants in this remnant of the Big Woods. Woodpeckers, kinglets, creepers, bluebirds, other migrants... Bloodroot, hepatica, wild ginger, trout lilies... How far we travel along the creek depends, among other things, on the weather, interest, and water levels. SUGGESTIONS Bring a 10-power loupe or borrow one from Chase. Consider either or both flower and bird field guides. Exercise your camera's macro capabilities. Bring water, snacks and/or lunch, and watch bluebirds and red-headed woodpeckers while picnicking after the walk.

DIRECTIONS Take I-35 south from cities to Exit 69, Hwy 19 (east) into Northfield. Turn right (south) onto Hwy 3, go a very short way, then east onto Hwy 246. The road winds and turns a bit, then eventually goes south. Good signs indicate the right turn (west) onto Cty Rd 29 for the entrance to Big Woods State Park.

INSTRUCTIONS Meet in the large parking lot inside the entrance of Big Woods State Park.



FEE AREA Day pass or a MN State Park Annual Pass required.

DIFFICULTY Easy to moderate with leisurely descent to Prairie Creek (includes some stairs) and return.

LEADER Chase Davies, 651-246-9754 RockyBirder@gmail.com, and Ed Davies (email or call only if you need additional information)

Bird ID Basics

Bass Ponds, 2400 E 86th St, Bloomington, MN 55425
Sunday, April 19, 8:00-10:00 AM

Are you truly a new birder? Come to learn and experience the basics to find, describe, and identify birds.

SUGGESTIONS Dress for cool temperatures. Bring a field guide if you can so we have a variety to compare. Chase will have some loaner binoculars available. Call leader if you want to borrow 8x40 binoculars.

DIRECTIONS Take Cedar Avenue south from 494, exit onto Killebrew Drive, go Old Shakopee Road, turn right (south) onto East 86th St, at sign for Bass Ponds bear left and come to parking lot. If lot is full, street park efficiently *on right as you entered*, or in the larger parking lot back near corner 86th and Old Shakopee.

DIFFICULTY Easy

LEADER Chase Davies, 651-246-9754 RockyBirder@gmail.com

Warblers and Waterfowl Along the Minnesota River

Old Cedar Ave Bridge/ MN River Valley NWR trails, Bloomington, MN

Saturday, April 25, 7:30-10:30 AM

One of the very best birding locales in the state; and so close to St. Paul! We'll check the area between Old Cedar Avenue and the Bass Ponds. The Minnesota River flyway makes this a great spot for migrating passerines and waterfowl.

DIRECTIONS Go south from I-494 on Cedar Avenue then Old Cedar Avenue which dead-ends in the parking lot for the Old Cedar Avenue bridge and Minnesota River Valley NWR trails complex

DIFFICULTY Easy to moderate

LEADER Paul Spreitzer, paul.spreitzer@gmail.com 651-808-2147

Woodcock Sky Dance

Rush City Area

Wednesday, May 6, 8:00–9:30 PM on site

Bad Weather Backup Thursday, May 7, 8:00–9:30 PM

The American Woodcock song and sky dance are more than remarkably entertaining. American Woodcock both breed and migrate through this peaceful, prime habitat in the St. Croix River Valley.

The American Woodcock is an incredible woodland shorebird with unique adaptations for seeing, feeding, and courting. They pay little attention to bird watchers as courting males spiral high, then come down, twittering, to land in nearly the same takeoff place. Viewers normally have had their choice of several pairs to approach for closer observation of the Sky Dancers in this easily accessible area. (Of course, there are no guarantees, wild birds being what they are even when so single-minded.) We will discuss the unique qualities of these birds, and what makes this place so special for both resident and migrant populations. Sunset at 7:59 PM; Moonrise at 1:57 PM; Full moon April 19.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS Wear boots or shoes that can get wet; bring an extra jacket for cooling temps.

No facilities. We will all leave together.

REGISTRATION Call to sign up, 651-246-9754

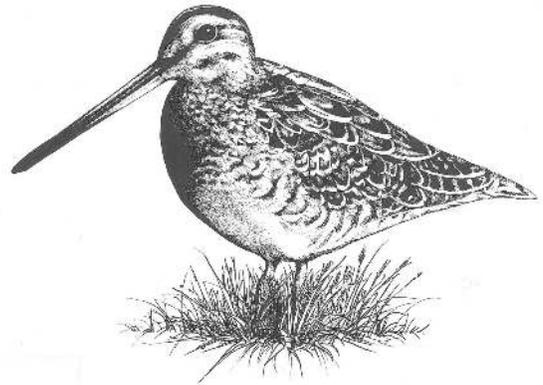
BAD WEATHER Cancellation would occur only with prediction on day before of the high probability of extended strong thunder with lightning storms.

Give Chase your name, cell phone, and email address by April 11 to be notified on April 15 of cancellation.

DIRECTIONS Drive time from the northern junction of 35W/35E to the site is 40 minutes at the speed limit. Drive north on I-35 to exit 159 for Rush City. Turn right (east) onto 4TH Street/MN 361. Travel through Rush City to the only stop sign, turn left (north) onto Bremer, which soon becomes Forest Blvd. Travel 2.25 mi., then turn right (east) onto 530TH street aka Cty. 361, drive 3 mi. on Cty. 361 to road park at the meeting place.

DIFFICULTY Short easy walk

LEADERS Chase Davies, 651-246-975
RockyBirder@gmail.com



Tweets and Treats

Afton State Park, 6959 Peller Avenue S, Hastings, MN 55033

Sunday, May 3, 8:00–11:00 AM

Join the Saint Paul Audubon Society and the St. Croix River Association (SCRA) for *Tweets and Treats* at the Afton State Park Visitor Center. Enjoy locally roasted coffee and treats from 8:00–8:30 AM and then let the birding begin! Saint Paul Audubon trip leaders will guide small groups of participants on the beautiful state park trails. They will share their knowledge of birding and offer tips and advice while observing bird activities in the field. *Extra binoculars will be available for participant use.*

INSTRUCTIONS Meet at the Afton State Park Visitor Center

COST Free event. However, use your annual State Park sticker or purchase a \$7 day use fee upon entry (Donations will be accepted at the event)

REGISTRATION At SCRA webpage <https://www.stcroixriverassociation.org/event/tweets-and-treats/>

DIFFICULTY Easy to moderate. This will be a slow hike and an excellent opportunity for beginning birders.

LEADERS Monica Bryand, mjrbryand@gmail.com, 651-246-5522

IMPORTANT REMINDER If this event is canceled due to inclement weather, notification will be posted on SCRA's Facebook page. Be sure to leave active contact information when you register.

SPECIAL DIRECTIONS Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes for hiking and comfortable clothing and layers appropriate for the weather. Use sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen. Bring water bottle, insect repellent, field guide, and binoculars.

Birds, Bogs, Bees and Bantams,

15280 Pilar Rd, Scandia, MN 55073

Saturday, May 16, 7:30-10:00 AM

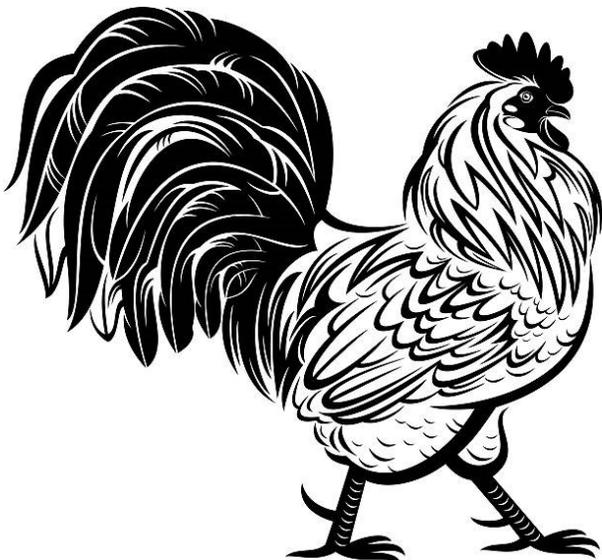
This is Saint Paul Audubon's first visit to this private 20-acre homestead located just north of Scandia. The site includes a terrific variety of habitat (hardwood, prairie, wetland, open water, bog) as well as bird feeders that are bound to run up the day's bird count. For those who are interested, our hosts will top off the field trip with a demonstration of their hobby beekeeping and bantam chicken operations. It should be a fun and productive morning.

SUGGESTIONS Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes for hiking and comfortable clothing and layers appropriate for the weather. Use sun protection. Bring water bottle, insect repellent, field guide and binoculars.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS Drive time from Rosedale Shopping Center 45 minutes at the speed limit. Drive north on I-35 to exit 129 for MN97. Follow MN97 through Forest Lake. Continue east on MN97 to Scandia (approximately 11 miles from I-35). Turn left (north) onto Olinda Trail N. Travel 1.9 miles to Pilar Rd. N. Turn right. Travel 0.2 miles. Driveway on left (this is the first house on the left (north) side of the street). Turn around in the driveway and park along the northside of Pilar Rd. Short walk along the driveway to the house.

DIFFICULTY Easy to moderate; walking sticks welcome; lots of benches along the pathway.

LEADERS Curt and Pat Hadland, 651-433-4314 chions@frontier.com (email or call only if you need additional information)



Woodland Birds

Lebanon Hills Regional Park, Eagan, MN 55123

Saturday, May 23, 7:30-11:00 AM

Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan is a terrific place for migrant and resident songbirds! Join friendly birders seeking the sounds and colors of springtime in a section of this beautiful 2,000-acre regional park. We will walk maintained woodland, meadow, and lakeside trails. 2018 sightings included Canada and Mourning Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, and Wood Thrush.

INSTRUCTIONS Meet at the Holland Lake entrance of the Park at 7:30.

DIRECTIONS From St. Paul, take 35E south. Exit at Cliff Rd/Cty Rd 32, go east approx. 2 miles. The park entrance is on the north boundary, just west of Holland Lake.

DIFFICULTY Strenuous due to distance and hilly terrain

LEADER Paul Spreitzer,
paul.spreitzer@gmail.com 651-808-2147

Warblers and More

Maplewood Nature Center, 2659 E. 7th Street, Maplewood, 55119

Saturday, May 30, 8:00 – 10:00 AM

Wooded land and water deep within the metro area are prized by migrants and residents alike. This is an opportunity to walk the trails and see the sights and hear the sounds of Ramsey County's Maplewood Nature Center.

DIRECTIONS On Century Avenue, look for the Nature Center sign, and turn west onto East 7th St.

DIFFICULTY Easy

LEADERS Ellen Lowery, ellen.lowery@gmail.com and Chase Davies, 651-246-9754

Be sure to check www.saintpaulaudubon.org for field trip changes throughout the season

Elements of a Successful Bird Walk

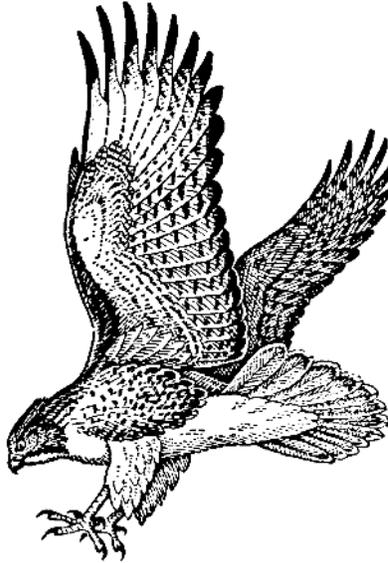
What goes into a successful bird walk? Most birders have attended many walks. In fact, this is how we often learn to bird. Come join one or more of these conversations with Chase Davies to do some birding and to reflect on the elements of a good walk.

If you have ever considered becoming a field trip leader, or just want to know how it all comes together, these conversations are for you. However, joining a conversation does not mean you are committing to leading. It just means you will have a better understanding of how bird walks work.

Chase invites you to join her at one or more of these morning/evening events:

Saturday, May 16, 6-8:30 PM, Maplewood Nature Center, 2659 E 7th St, Maplewood (west of Century Ave.).

Tuesday, June 16, 7-9:30 AM, Reservoir Woods, Meet at the Wooddale Off Leash dog area in



Roseville between Victoria and Dale Streets on Larpenteur Ave. Park snugly in the small parking lot or street park on Mackubin St. across Larpenteur from the parking lot.

Tuesday, July 7, 6-8:30 PM, Silverwood Park, 2500 County Rd E, St. Anthony (just west of Silver Lake Rd).

Saturday, August 8, 8-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds on the Minnesota River, 2400 E 86th St, Bloomington. Take Cedar Avenue south from 494, exit onto Killebrew Dr, go to Old Shakopee Rd, turn right (south) onto East 86th St, at sign for Bass Ponds bear left and come to parking lot. If lot is full, street park on right as you enter or in the larg-

er parking lot back near corner of 86th and Old Shakopee.

Questions? Contact Chase Davies at RockyBird-er@gmail.com, 651-246-9754

TUESDAY MORNING WALKS

All Tuesday Walks are from 7:00 to 9:00 AM unless noted. All are easy unless noted. No registration needed. Meet at the sites. Bring water, insect repellent and field guide. Contact leaders only if you need additional information.

May 5: Crosby Farm Regional Park, 2595 Crosby Farm Rd, St. Paul, MN 55116

Early warblers and other passerine migrants.

DIRECTIONS Southwest of downtown St. Paul off Shepard Rd. Meet in the parking lot.

LEADER Linda Whyte, 651-815-7045

May 12: Snail Lake Regional Park, 4191 Snail Lake Blvd, Shoreview, MN 55126

Wetlands and woodlands with lots of edges make this a good birding site.

DIRECTIONS Enter from Snail Lake Blvd at lake

level, go straight ahead to park and meet.

LEADERS Louise Eidsmoe, 651-231-0453 and Terri Walls

May 19: Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve, 15501 Murphy Lake Blvd, Savage, MN 55378

One of the best birding areas in T. C Metro! Focus is on songs/calls of nesting birds in a hardwood forest as well as spring migrants. Hooded Warbler a target species.

DIRECTIONS Take 35E or W to Co 42, go west ~ 2 mi, then south ~ 2 miles on Burnsville Parkway which becomes Hanrehan Lake Blvd. At Highway 75 aka Murphy Lake Rd, turn left and immediately into the parking lot on the left.

DIFFICULTY Wide natural trails. Medium to strenuous

LEADER Bill Stjern, norskestar@comcast.net 651-458-1542

May 26: Silverwood Regional Park, 2500 Cty Rd. E, St. Anthony, MN 55421

Passerine migrants, wetlands.

DIRECTIONS From 35W, take Cty Rd D/37TH Ave. west, turn north (rt) onto Silver Lake, or, from I-694, take Silver Lake exit, go south. Finally, go west on Cty Rd E for ~1,000 ft, entrance on left. Meet at the large main parking lot. Paved trails. Restrooms available. Bring a field guide and water.

LEADERS Reenie Lundgren, 612-965-1232, and Chase Davies, 651-246-9754

June 2: Rachel Lilly Preserve, a part of Dodge Nature Center, 680 MN-110, Mendota Heights, MN 55118

Don't miss this gem! Many possible sightings await you at this

little-known preserve. Distance up to 2 miles.

DIRECTIONS Enter from Hwy 110 - bear left to park by the barn or right to park in the church parking lot. Meet by the red barn.

LEADER Linda Whyte, 651-815-7045

June 9: Battle Creek Park, 2350 Upper Afton Rd, Maplewood, MN 55119

Terrific late spring birding opportunity.

DIRECTIONS From McKnight Rd turn east onto Upper Afton Rd., drive 0.2 mi, turn right, destination will be on the right. Meet at the parking lot next to the off-leash dog park.

LEADER Monica Bryand, mjrbryand@gmail.com 651-246-5522

Conservation Committee: Urban Bird Collective

The Urban Bird Collective was founded in 2018 to support birdwatchers of all different skill levels in leading walks in our own neighborhoods. We are working to create safe and welcoming spaces for all communities to come out and explore birding and the outdoors.

These communities include Indigenous People, People of Color, immigrants, the LGBT communities and more. We want all communities to feel the benefits of being out in natural green spaces in our various Twin City neighborhoods and beyond. We are passionate about birdwatching and the protection of the environment. We are here to support you in developing your birding skills while we continue to improve our own.

Our vision is to empower those individuals who are already immersed in their neighborhoods, have a strong connection to the people and the place and an interest in the natural world, to lead others in exploring birds and nature close to home. Through this shared experience they will build community connections, increase awareness and stewardship of birds and nature and facilitate ongoing multi-generational participation in outdoor recreation – for the health of people and birds.

Currently We have 16 people that were invested in something that was going to grow and last. Our Leaders come from diverse communities and backgrounds. We have non-profit leaders, social workers, organizers, artists, teachers, naturalists and more. They all brought their gifts to the organization and their willingness to share with each other and the broader community. 15 of the 16 identify as Indigenous or People of Color.

Our Approach was to continue to stay intentionally informal and outdoors as much as possible, while expanding our connections to other resources and networks. We still explored the question “What do you need to feel comfortable



leading birding outings in your community?”

Leaders want:

- to become better birders
- to learn where to go and how to access and use existing resources
- to develop skills in leading others exploring birds and birding
- to create a safe and welcoming community to learn and grow with, to inspire and be inspired by others
- to get to know each other better and develop new friendships
- to learn more about plants, trees, insects and much more
- to explore more Twin City birding spots and greater MN hot spots

We are incredibly thankful for the support given to our group by both the Savalajo Fund and the Saint Paul Conservation Committee. In 2020 we will be hosting our first Annual Urban Collective Gathering.

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

PO Box 7275, St Paul, MN 55107-7275

WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG

Next issue: June/July 2020

Deadline 5/5/2020

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!*

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Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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