



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

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www.MRVAC.org

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Holiday Auction & Give to the Max Raises Money for Educational Projects

By Bob Williams, MRVAC Treasurer

We had a fun and successful **Holiday Auction** at the Refuge Visitor Center on November 19. We raised a total of \$2,000 which is about the same as last year. Thanks to spirited auctioneering by Mark Lystig and Scott Clark we raised \$2000 from both member donations and items from these generous companies:

Abdallah Candies
All Seasons Wild Bird Store (Minnetonka)
Aveda
Benda Photography
Bloomington Arts Center, (aka Artistry)
Chanhassen Dinner Theater
Dardis Designs
Eagle Optics
Great Harvest Bread Company,
Jensen's Café (Burnsville)
Lunds/Byerly's
Milio's Sandwich Shops
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Mixed Blood Theater
Natasha Drexler; Wallace Method therapy
Nothing Bundt Cakes, Eden Prairie
Old Log Theater (Excelsior)
Refuge Friends Inc
St. Paul Chamber Orchestra
Valley Natural Foods Coop (Burnsville)

On the Give to the Max Day in November, 26 donors gave \$1,785 to MRVAC. This is about \$500 more than we raised in last year's Give to the Max event.

In past years we have used the money raised in November to help support programs at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, local schools and nature centers that are geared toward environmental education for young children. We plan to do the same with the money raised this year. We thank all of the members who gave their time and/or money for these fundraisers.

Special Presentations Jan 28 and Feb 25 Free and Open to the Public

Time & location details for both events below

January 28 at 7:30 pm

"Sparky" Stensaas – Author & Publisher
Kollath & Stensaas Publishing

Migrate, Hibernate or Deal With It

Winter is a force to be reckoned with in the North. Birds, mammals, amphibians, and even insects not only survive but THRIVE in the winter woods of the boreal forest. Our visiting winter finches are especially adapted to our harsh winters. Learn how they do it through stunning images and HD video of some rarely-seen critters in this interesting and entertaining presentation. Sparky will also be signing his new book, *Winter Finches of North America*, and have the field guides he publishes for sale as well.

February 25 at 7:30 pm

Robert Janssen - Author & Birder
Birds of Minnesota State Parks

Bob Janssen will talk about the 11 years of work he did inventorying birds in the Minnesota State Parks and creating the book **Birds of Minnesota State Parks**. Learn about the 10 best parks for birds in the state and tips for the best birding in local state parks.

Information about both meetings

When: Please join us from 7:00-7:30 pm to socialize over cookies. From 7:30 – 8:45 pm we have a brief business meeting and the featured speaker.

Where: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center 3801 American Blvd E, Bloomington. Hwy 494 to 34th Ave – S to American Blvd; turn left and go 2 blocks. Center will be on your right. Use the staff entrance in the center of the building (not the east door). There is plenty of free parking.

Public Transit: Via light rail, Blue line - exit at American Blvd and walk east about ¼ mile.



MRVAC Chapter News

Chip Notes

By Greg Burnes, MRVAC President

Happy New Year everyone.

Conservation Collaboration:

There is no doubt that we live in a state with some of the most beautiful and diverse natural settings in the world. As birders, this gives us the opportunity to experience a wide variety of habitat and the birds they support. However, this variety of habitat and the size of our state presents a real challenge to mounting sustained and successful conservation efforts.

One of the key missions of Audubon is the passionate conservation of the habitat that supports birds. And as you know, Audubon is not alone in its mission to preserve these habitats, even if other organizations have differing missions. So, in the coming year we will be collaborating with some of these organizations in order to ensure our voice is heard and we can successfully impact the conservation "conversation" in Minnesota.

Of course we will continue to work with National Audubon and a revitalized Audubon MN, but we will also be looking for ways to be involved with the work of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP) and the Minnesota Izaak Walton League (IWL).

Both MEP and the IWL have robust political action organizations. MRVAC has been a long-term member of MEP and has signed on to a number of their communications and press releases. The IWL works closely with the MEP and has additional experts and lobbyists that are working tirelessly at the capitol and with other groups to push a comprehensive conservation agenda.

National Audubon has just released their annual report for 2015. For those of you who are members of National you should have received a copy and I would highly recommend you review it. At the state level we will be working with Audubon Minnesota and other MN Audubon Chapters to breathe life into the strategic framework on page 10. Specifically, the MN Chapter Leaders would like to focus on building local action plans around these key areas:

- Saving Important Bird Areas
- Shaping a Healthy Climate and Clean Energy
- Creating Bird-Friendly Communities

In the future we will be looking for ways our membership can be more involved in making our voices heard. We will start by posting relevant action alerts to our Facebook page and bringing key issues to our refuge meetings for

discussion and action. I hope you take a few minutes to "like" the MRVAC Facebook page and review these alerts and take personal action. Your voice is important!

The world is not given by our parents, but Borrowed from our children. Wendell Berry

Digital Trumpeter

I want to again ask for everyone who can get the Trumpeter digitally (on MRVAC.org) to email me (gburnes@comcast.net) with your name and mailing address so we can remove you from the hardcopy mailing list and add you to the email notification. This will NOT impact your National Audubon magazine!! Last month I heard from a number of folks but would like to continue to push to lower our Trumpeter mailing costs by 50% in 2016. The money spent on distributing hard copy Trumpeters (over \$3,500 annually) can be put to better use and we will save 50,000 sheets of paper from having to be recycled or going to the landfills.

Thanks to everyone for your support of MRVAC. We are all looking forward to a great 2016 and to the upcoming 50th anniversary of MRVAC.



Call for Trumpeter Award Nominations

Each spring for 13 of the past 15 years, MRVAC has presented the Trumpeter Award to one of its members for outstanding long-term contributions to MRVAC. We are soliciting nominations from you; tell us of who you think should be our next recipient. Please send in a nomination by Jan. 31. The selection committee, which is composed of the previous years' recipients, will review the nominations and forward their choice to the Board. The award will be presented at a subsequent meeting.

There are two ways to get a nomination form:

- Find the nomination form at www.mrvac.org.
- Call Becky Lystig (651-452-1133) to have a copy mailed to you.

Completed applications can be sent to her at markbeckylystig@comcast.net or mailed to Becky Lystig, 1741 Sartell Ave, Eagan, MN 55122.

Previous Trumpeter Award recipients:

2001 Karol Gresser	2008 Jack Mauritz
2002 Joe White	2009 George Tkach
2003 Pat & Jack Telfer	2010 Bob Leis
2004 Edith Grace Quam	2011 Anne Hanley & George Skinner
2005 Craig Mandel	2012 Steve Weston
2006 John Rehbein	2013 Bob Williams
2007 Lois Norrgard	



Conservation News and Special Events

Old Cedar Parking Lot and Trailhead Have Reopened, May Experience Intermittent Closures

Work on the water control structure and associated levee at the head of the Bluff Trail from Old Cedar Avenue has been partially completed. This partial completion has allowed for the safe reopening of the Old Cedar Avenue parking lot as well as the trailheads from the parking lot to Hogback Ridge and Bluff Trails.

The rebuilding of the boardwalk extending onto Long Meadow Lake will begin sometime in December. To accommodate the delivery of materials and construction of the boardwalk, the Old Cedar Avenue parking lot and head of the Bluff Trail will experience intermittent closures during business hours.

Due to private property encroachment on the Bluff Trail approximately 1/2 mile west of Old Cedar Avenue, a short trail detour has been established. Please respect private property and follow the detour.

The trailhead to Hogback Ridge Trail from the Old Cedar Avenue parking lot has also been reopened as planned work has been temporarily suspended due to winter weather conditions.

Full or partial closures of the trails, trailheads and parking lot at Old Cedar Avenue are likely again in the spring and summer of 2016 as project work is completed in the area.

Golden Eagles Wintering in Minnesota

By The National Eagle Center, Wabasha

Golden Eagles can be found in the bluffs and valleys along the Upper Mississippi River Valley in the winter months. The National Eagle Center in Wabasha MN is part of an on-going effort to better understand the habitat use and needs of these wintering golden eagles. For more information about golden eagles in the bluff lands, see our [Golden Eagle Project](#). You can learn more about Golden Eagles and see them in the wild on a guided tour led by our expert naturalists. (see trips on page 4)

Learn about Bird-Smart Glass!

Up to 988 million birds are killed each year in the U.S. when they hit windows. Now, everyone can take action to reduce this threat. Visit the Visit the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) web site for consumer and commercial products for every budget. One of the options includes a link to a do-it-yourself directions. <http://abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-smart-glass/>

Audubon Minnesota & MRVAC Support Proposed Lead Shot Ban

In October 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources proposed a rule to require hunters to use only nontoxic shot on wildlife management areas (WMAs) within the farmland zone beginning in 2018. Audubon has worked for decades with a wide range of conservationists, including hunters and wildlife advocates, to ensure the health of birds and ecosystems. We have a vested interest in healthy hunting. Audubon supports the proposed DNR rule change because lead is poison and as conservationists, we should all be working to remove lead from the environment. For more information you can visit MRVAC's Facebook page or <http://mn.audubon.org/>

- Lead is toxic to both birds and people.
- Millions of birds are poisoned every year by lead shot.
- The establishment of nontoxic shot zones has been shown, by scientific research, to radically reduce the number of bird deaths from lead poisoning.

Your Help is Needed for Climate Watch, A New Citizen Science Program

By Audubon Minnesota

Audubon Climate Watch is a new citizen science program that explores how North American Birds are responding to climate change. In 2014, Audubon released the Audubon Birds and Climate Change report highlighting the risks that climate change poses to birds. Now, you can help by observing birds and learning more about how birds are responding to climate change.

MRVAC members are needed to volunteer for a few hours during the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, Jan. 15-18, 2016. This will kick off the pilot phase of Climate Watch. MRVAC will be a key part of the collaborative team that develops materials and resources, including mapping tools, for Climate Watch and will have the opportunity to represent the Audubon chapter network in helping to create this new national program.

The pilot will focus on areas of predicted change for bluebirds and targeted area maps will be provided so volunteers can survey appropriate habitat within the grid cell. At least 10 volunteers are needed. If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact Greg Burnes, gburnes@comcast.net or Ashley Peters, apeters@audubon.org for more information on how to participate.



FIELD TRIPS – join us. All trips are free unless otherwise noted.



Minnesota River Valley
Audubon Chapter
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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bird Watching

Bass Ponds, 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington
Wilkie Unit, 7701 Co. Rd. 101 E., Shakopee

January walks

Saturday, January 9, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds
Monday, January 25, 8:00 am, Bass ponds

February walks

Saturday, February 6, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds
Monday, February 22, 8am, Bass Ponds
Saturday, February 27, Wilkie Unit

Join us for a winter season bird walk. Trumpeter Swans, a mix of ducks, Rough-legged Hawks, Bald Eagles and Northern Shrikes are a few of the species that have overwintered on the Refuge. Dress appropriately for the weather as we search for these and other overwintering species of birds on the refuge. Bring your binoculars and favorite field guide. Craig Mandel 952-240-7647, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

SE Minnesota Birding Days

Thursday & Friday, February 18-19, 2016, 7:00 am
Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members

Join us on a trip to SE Minnesota. We will be searching Houston and possibly another nearby county for some of the overwintering specialties of the area. Weather permitting, we will head out on one of the nights in search of Eastern Screech, Barred and Great Horned Owls. Some of the other species seen on past trips include Tufted Titmouse, Hermit Thrush, Golden Eagle and Eastern Bluebird. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

Winter Family Weekend 2016 – family camp

February 12, 2016 @ 6:00 pm
to February 15, 2016 @ 10:00 am.

Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW)
54165 Audubon Dr. Sandstone, MN 55072

Winter Family Weekend Wonder, adventure and discovery for all at our winter family camp! ACNW invites you and your family to join us for this exciting family adventure! Activities that your family can participate in during your stay at the Center range from active programs such as climbing wall and snow zoo building to educational programs such as Minnesota Mammals and Winter Ways of Native Cultures to winter sports such as cross-country skiing and kick-sledding to quiet activities such as sleigh rides and arts and crafts. For information about fees and to register, call 1-888-404-7743 or visit www.audubon-center.org

Golden Eagle Tours - National Eagle Center

Field trips begin at 1pm with a brief classroom program, followed by a coach bus tour to prime Golden Eagle viewing locations. Participants should dress for the weather and bring binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras. Little walking is required – simply step off the bus for a great view! Field trips return to the Center for light refreshments and conclude by 5pm. Cost is \$25 for NEC members, \$35 for non-members. Trips are offered January 30, February 6 and 20, all at 1:00 pm.

International Festival of Owls

March 4-6, 2016 in Houston Minnesota
Activities for adults and kids, speakers, live owls, banquet. <http://www.festivalofowls.com/>

The 46th annual Audubon Nebraska's

Nebraska Crane Festival

March 17-20, 2016 - Kearney, Neb.
See thousands of Sandhill Cranes. Check the festival website, <http://nebraskacranefestival.org/> for updates and registration information. Call 402-797-2301 or email nebraska@audubon.org if you have questions. On-line registration will begin early January.