



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

# Trumpeter

Volume 50 Issue 1—Bloomington MN  
On the web at MRVAC.org

July & August 2016

Editors: anne\_hanley90@hotmail.com &  
Greg Burnes - gburnes@comcast.net

## Chip Notes

By Greg Burnes, MRVAC President

During May's membership meeting the 2016/17 MRVAC Board of Directors was elected. We have a number of returning members, one that is leaving us, and two new members.

Below are the 2016/17 board members and their roles:

Greg Burnes – President  
Steven Weston – Vice President/Program Chair  
Bob Janssen – President Elect  
Bob Williams – Treasurer  
Mathew Schaut – Secretary  
Becky Lystig – Trumpeter Chair  
Patty Larson – Membership Chair  
Ken Oulman – Member-at-Large  
Rick Magee – Member-at-Large  
Monica Rauchwarter – Member-at-Large

Dianne Rowse is leaving the board. She has made great contributions during her tenure and we will miss her insights and input. Dianne and Nick – good luck on all your retirement adventures and hope to see you soon.

We have two new members, Bob Janssen and Monica Rauchwarter. Bob Janssen is a familiar face to most of us. He has been birding for over 70 years and has authored numerous books, is active in a number of conservation organizations, continues to be a trip leader, educator, and speaker throughout the state, and has lead bird survey activities all over Minnesota. Bob's passion and knowledge of birds and his desire to protect and enhance their habitat will have a profound impact on how MRVAC shapes its conservation focus.

Monica brings fresh eyes and energy to our board. She is an interpretive naturalist at Richardson Nature Center of the Three Rivers Park District. Teaching and learning about the impact of habitat loss and climate change on bird populations has inspired her to take additional steps in conservation and education. She hopes to encourage

people of a variety of ages and backgrounds to notice, care about, and take steps to protect birds and their habitats.

### New Executive Director for Audubon Minnesota

I was privileged to have a small part in the interview process for the new Executive Director at Audubon Minnesota. We interviewed a very strong slate of candidates and I am excited that Molly Pederson was selected.

We all love birds and know that we can only enjoy them if their habitat thrives. Molly brings 15 years of public policy experience to the organization. Most recently, Pederson served as Senior Policy Advisor for Governor Mark Dayton, covering the areas of environment, energy, agriculture, and commerce. Her accomplishments include spearheading Governor Dayton's successful water summit in February and securing passage of the Governor's buffer initiative.

"Molly Pederson has been a tremendous Senior Policy Advisor in our Office," said Governor Mark Dayton. "Her outstanding leadership has advanced the causes of clean water and better environmental stewardship throughout Minnesota. As Vice President and Executive Director of Audubon Minnesota, Molly's vision and dedication will continue to protect and enhance our State's environment for generations to come."

We will be inviting Molly to our fall refuge meeting to welcome her and talk about how MRVAC can work closely with Audubon Minnesota and other chapters to support efforts to preserve birding habitat.

### Education Chair Needed

Each year our chapter puts aside funding to support educational activities in our region. One key activity is our reach out to a variety of schools and outdoor educational organizations offering them free access to the Audubon Adventure educational curriculum. We are looking for a volunteer that would help us find

*Continued on page 3*

## At the Legislature

### Do We Really Love Our Children?

By Don Arnosti Conservation Program Director of the Izaak Walton League of America – Minnesota Division

This time of year I reflect on the “great work of the people” done by the public servants we elect to Saint Paul. Taking a small and narrow focus, you might hear of funding for an early education program you favor, or a tax credit you might receive.

As an environmental advocate, I will tell you that more than \$150 million has been invested in excellent research projects, clean water efforts and habitat through constitutionally-dedicated accounts authorized by ‘We, The People’, in recent years. Hooray for us! And, the legislature (in an election year) refrained from most of their environmental rollbacks, which caused the Governor, at our request, to veto several bills at session-end last year. Whoopee!

But, are you satisfied we’re doing enough? I’m not!

I just returned from five days of R&R in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. I’ve gone at this season most years over the past 25. The mosquitoes and black flies are still there, and I was delighted to see a cow moose and her twin newborns wobble out of the brush on an island just down from my campsite on Winchell Lake.

*However*, the forest was very thinly populated with birdsong, even compared to recent years past. There was a White-throated Sparrow, and there another, but it was easy to pick out individuals singing in widely separated territories. One Barred Owl called to me. A few Yellow-rumps and a handful of other warblers were visible or audible. Eagles and vultures soared overhead, and loons were visible on the lakes. What was missing was not individual species, but the *abundance of individuals*.

Scientists can and will debate the ultimate causes, but we know that wetlands have been drained, water polluted, tropical forests decimated, and we continue to pump heat-retaining gasses into the atmosphere at a rate that is super-charging our changing climate.

Is this the legacy we want for our children and grandchildren?

Join me in demanding more from our natural resource agencies with a narrow vision locked on their budget. Join me in demanding more from our elected officials with a laser vision locked on the eyes of the special interest delivering a campaign check.\* Join me in saying, I’m sick and tired of a complacent America that does not even love its own children and grandchildren.

*We must demand clean water, restored and protected habitats and a fossil fuel-free energy system to provide our children and grandchildren the chance to enjoy this*

*earth in the manner to which we’ve become accustomed.*

\*PS I can tell you true stories of special interests (Koch Refining, Keetac mining, the NRA, Big Tobacco) getting their way in the Minnesota legislature. This year.

### 2016 Minnesota Legislative Results Good and Bad

- Voluntary guidelines for habitat in “pollinator friendly” solar gardens authorized.
- Better management of thousands of miles of public road rights of way for pollinators (less mowing and spraying) **fails to pass** in the face of rural opposition. (Unpermitted use of road rights of way to run manure spreading hoses, **passed**, however.)
- Over \$150 million in excellent research, clean water and habitat protection and restoration grants awarded.
- Keetac mining gets **law passed invalidating water quality standard** in their existing water discharge permit. This is illegal under the Clean Water Act. Signed into law by Governor Dayton, May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Effort by NRA and Federal Cartridge to block current DNR rulemaking process to ban use of lead shot on public Wildlife Management Areas in western Minnesota blocked. The DNR rulemaking will proceed.
- Conservation partnership with federal government to permanently protect up to 100,000 acres of stream buffers, wetlands and drinking water supplies an initial \$30 million investment to match at least \$60 million in federal funds: **fails with failure of legislature to pass a bonding bill**.
- Provided \$200,000 to the DNR to evaluate School Trust Land containing over 60,000 acres of native prairie, old growth forest, peatland scientific and natural areas and more than 200 boat launches – for future sale to DNR. (Relieving the land from the necessity of generating income.)
- Passed a \$35,000,000 **tax break for cigarettes**.
- Provided \$1 million in funding to the University of Minnesota to continue research into “cover crops” which will keep living plants on fields used to grow crops for most of the year, reducing sediment and nutrient pollution.
- **Prohibited the DNR from expanding elk herds** in Minnesota until farmer’s crop and fence damage from elk (which are compensated by the taxpayer) are reduced two years running.

All in all, as the Millennials say, “Meh!”

printed on recycled paper with soy ink

## MRVAC Chapter News

### Chip Notes Continued

educational programs that could successfully leverage these materials in their classrooms. If you are truly interested in supporting environmental education, please contact Greg Burnes @ 612-205-3071.

**About Audubon Adventures:** Across the country this material has been used to introduce young people (grades 3 – 8), their families, and their teachers to the fundamental principles by which the natural world functions. **Audubon Adventures** lessons offer an exciting, science-based exploration of those principles at work anchored in nonfiction reading and outdoor and classroom activities that help kids to care for the planet by helping birds and other wildlife. They integrate easily into the existing curriculum areas of science, social studies, mathematics, language arts and creative arts. **Audubon Adventures** has been used in classrooms, home schools, after-school programs, camp programs, ESL classes and more.

### First Annual Grandparent / Grandchild Birdathon Recap



The day was cool and a little blustery, but the first annual Grandparent/ Grandchild Birdathon was a great success. We were able to bird in and around Richardson Nature Center (RNC) with grandkids ranging in age from 9

months to 3 years old (we won't publish the ages of the grandparents). We found 31 species during our morning walks and observations from the car and RNC viewing area. Highlights were a dozen Caspian Terns at Bush Lake, Turkeys (up close and personal), a dozen baby Hooded Mergansers and Henslow's Sparrows. Of course, playing inside RNC is always a blast and the real highlight for the grandkids may have been the snakes and turtles in the aquariums. Thanks everyone who supported this event.

#### Chapter Contacts:

President: Greg Burnes 612-205-3071 or  
[gburnes@comcast.net](mailto:gburnes@comcast.net)

Membership: Patti Larson 952-934-0792 or  
[pattilarson@comcast.net](mailto:pattilarson@comcast.net)

### Trumpeter Award for 2015-16

Mark and Becky Lystig have been awarded the Trumpeter Award for 2015-16 because of their contributions to the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter in three categories: leadership, fundraising and outreach.

In the leadership category, Becky has served on the MRVAC Board for 15 years including 7 years as



Secretary. In the fundraising category, Mark and Becky have participated in most of the last two decades of Birdathons and have been very successful at collecting pledges. In addition Mark serves ably as the chapter's auctioneer at the holiday auctions as far back as I can remember and Becky regularly contributes baked goods or crafts to the auction.

In the outreach category, since the mid 90's, Mark has been leading a popular November field trip along the Mississippi which focuses both on migrating swans and sampling the edible delicacies of southern Minnesota. In addition, Becky and Mark gave a fascinating talk on their trip to Antarctica at one of our membership meetings. The final aspect of outreach has to do with the Trumpeter newsletter. Becky has been involved with the Trumpeter mailing since the late 1980's and for many years has been coordinating the mailings which includes keeping up with postal regulations, hosting events to assemble and attach labels plus delivering over 1000 copies every other month to the bulk mailing facility. Besides mailing, Becky has proofread the last 11 years' worth of Trumpeters and Mark has contributed a number of book reviews.

### Hummingbird Hurrah Aug 20

Henderson Hummingbird Hurrah, a celebration of the ruby-throated hummingbird sponsored by Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter, offers opportunities to learn about the amazing little birds, watch banding, tour gardens & listen to speakers. Kids' activities too, all held on Saturday, August 20th, 2016 ~ 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Bender Park, 200 North Third Street, Henderson, Minnesota. Visit us on Facebook or Website:  
[www.hendersonhummingbirdhurrah.com](http://www.hendersonhummingbirdhurrah.com)

## News from the Region

### Successful Native Plant Market

*By Caleb Ashling, City of Burnsville*

The second ever Burnsville Native Plant Market was held on Saturday, May 21 and was a big success. Just under 700 people attended the event and more than 5,000 native plants were sent out into the local community. Native plants provide an important food source for local birds, bees and butterflies. Thanks to all who attended for supporting wildlife friendly landscaping! This event will be held again in 2017.

### Salt Lake Weekend Birding Recap

*By Ken Larson*

The last full weekend in April, over 100 birders from around the state searched the lakes, wetlands, woods and prairies of Lac Qui Parle, Big Stone and Yellow Medicine counties, finding 126 species of birds.

On Saturday temperatures in the upper 70's, high winds and low numbers of shorebirds resulted in lots of miles being driven for 117 species, a lower total than in recent years. The best birds found were two American Avocet, one White-faced Ibis and one Willet at Meidd Lake in Yellow Medicine (thanks to Garrett Wee), a Great-tailed Grackle and a Ferruginous Hawk found by Steve Broste and the Mattsons.

On Friday the only Broad-winged Hawk was seen.

Luckily an influx of migrating birds on Sunday added eight new species to make a weekend total 126. Lincoln's Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow and a single late Pine Siskin were found at Prairie Marsh Farm, the latter being unique in my records for the Salt Lake Bird count. Bart Anderson added a Chestnut-collared Longspur in Big Stone County. Later, as the winds died down, we found a flock of 300 shorebirds at Salt Lake including Pectoral and Least Sandpiper, 21 Long-billed Dowitcher, 200 Lesser and 20 Greater Yellowlegs and 5 Willet. A Franklin's Gull was also present.

All the birders involved extend a hearty thanks to the City of Marietta and the American Legion Women's Auxiliary for breakfast and lunch and to the City of Madison and the Sons of Norway for dinner. Anyone wishing a complete list of birds seen can email me directly [prairiemarshfarm@COMCAST.NET](mailto:prairiemarshfarm@COMCAST.NET) or go to <http://moumn.org/saltlake/> and click on Salt Lake Bird Count 2016 link.

### Volunteer to Lead/Co-lead Bird Walks

*By Cheri Fox*

We'd love to have a few more field trip leaders. If you have been thinking about leading a walk but are a little unsure about it, you may set up a field trip with a co-leader. You need not be an expert, you just need to be welcoming to your participants and have some experience with the trip location. For example, it's very helpful if you have birded there before, know the park features (restrooms, optional trails back to the parking lot) - and where at least a few birds are likely to be found.

Where do you like to bird when you are birding alone or with a few friends? Birding by bike or canoe might be fun! Pick your favorite park or trail and contact me, Cheri Fox, about adding an outing to next year's schedule. I can be reached by phone at 612-590-1261 or email at [cherifoxj@gmail.com](mailto:cherifoxj@gmail.com)

### Audubon Center of the North Woods Volunteer Work Weekend

July 29 @ 7:00 pm - July 31 @ 1:00 pm  
ACNW, 54165 Audubon Dr. Sandstone, MN 55072

Volunteer Work Weekend - Enjoy an incredibly affordable summer weekend at the Audubon Center of the North Woods - in exchange for some volunteer help on a variety of service projects on the Center's grounds and buildings.

Just \$25/person - ages 12 years and up only please... includes two nights lodging in our Crosby Lodge and all meals. Service projects may include weeding, invasive species removal, painting, beautification of Center grounds, fixing fences, general organizing, etc. Arrive by 7:00 pm Friday for welcome, orientation and assignments.

To register: Call us at 888-404-7743 or online at <http://audubon-center.org/event/>

### Refuge Events

Check the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge calendar of events here:  
[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Minnesota\\_Valley/Events.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Minnesota_Valley/Events.html)

## Book Reviews

### Listening to a Continent Sing

Birdsong by Bicycle from the Atlantic to the Pacific  
by Donald Kroodsma  
Published by Princeton University Press

*Book review by Anne Hanley*

July can be a slow month for birdsong in Minnesota but you can be surrounded by singing birds from eastern, central and western states. Listening to a Continent Sing offers a multimedia approach. You can experience spring song across the Appalachians, the Great Plains, the Rockies and the Oregon desert by reading about it as well as playing clips of the birds he recorded along the way by using your iPhone or reading near your computer.

As a person who dreams of eventually doing some long-distance bicycling and who is very interested in birding by ear, I found this book very enjoyable and I learned a lot about bird song. The travel aspects of the book were appealing and I appreciated the chance for an armchair view of a 10 week, 10 state trip from Yorktown, Virginia to the Oregon coast. Donald Kroodsma manages to give a flavor of the different states and, as a bonus, introduces some of the geology along the route. (We often drive with a copy of *Roadside Geology of [insert state name here]*, so it seems completely reasonable to launch into descriptions of tectonic plates or basin and range in the middle of any journey.)

The other 50% of the book is about the birds he hears. Since he's an ornithologist specializing in birdsong, you get considerably more than just a list of the birds singing along the way. He works in lots of interesting information about whether this bird learns its song by listening to his neighbors and how many different songs a particular species is likely to know.

If you are interested in bird song, you should read this book and listen to at least some of the recordings. Even though he did not travel across Minnesota, many of the eastern birds he hears also can be found singing here.

### The Meaning of Wilderness

By Sigurd F. Olson, edited by David Backes  
Published by the University of Minnesota Press

*Book Review by Anne Hanley*

This book, originally published in 2001 and now in paperback, collects many of Sigurd Olson's magazine articles and speeches. The introduction to each piece frames it in the context of Olson's career or the evolution of his wilderness philosophy. If you are a fan of Olson's writing or of wilderness preservation in general, you will find much to enjoy here.

### Better Birding

Tips, Tools and Concepts for the Field  
By George L Armistead & Brian L Sullivan  
Published by Princeton University Press

*Book review by Anne Hanley*

Was that a Cooper's hawk or a Sharp-shinned hawk that just flew by? Have you been thinking about brushing up on your birding skills? This new book, *Better Birding*, can help you get better at knowing what to look for. When faced with an unfamiliar bird, you can take note of all kinds of field marks, but they have to be the right ones. I can remember in Mexico noting several features of a bird and then realizing that every bird on that page of the field guide has all those same features. This book can help you get better at paying attention to the right things.

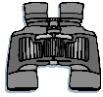
The book is heavily illustrated with lots of great photographs and tips in the text are accompanied by a helpful photo. Another helpful feature is the large double-page spread of birds seen from a similar perspective, flying next to each other. For example, Sharp-shinned Hawks and Cooper's Hawks side-by-side from above and below, juveniles and adults. If you have used one of the Crossley Guides, you have seen the same photo-montage technique used to good effect.

When you first look at some of the chapters you may think this book is only for people who travel beyond the borders of Minnesota as you see sections on pelagic birds like boobies, tropical terns, petrels and Pacific cormorants. Many other chapters, however, discuss at least one Minnesota bird versus others in the same genus; loons for example. While most of us have seen a Common Loon in Minnesota, we know other loons are seen occasionally in the area. By spending some time with the *Waterbirds – Loons* section, you can increase your comfort level with knowing if you really are looking at a rarity. As a bonus you will be reminded of the field marks and behavior common to Common Loons.

Certainly the swan section is timely; many of us can use a reminder of the subtle differences between Tundra Swans and Trumpeter Swans.

The White Heron chapter will help you hone your skills in separating the Great Egret, expected in Minnesota, versus the less-common but possible Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret or Little Blue Heron.

Use this book to prepare yourself for those interesting rarities or for a trip to areas where "our" birds overlap with similar birds' ranges.



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



Minnesota River Valley  
Audubon Chapter  
P.O. Box 20400  
Bloomington, MN 55420

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES, MN  
PERMIT NO. 90227

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bass Ponds**

Sunday, July 3, 2016 8:00 – 10:00 am, Bass Ponds  
2501 86th St. E., Bloomington

Join us as we walk the Long Meadow Lake unit and search for some of the over 100 species of birds that have been observed nesting at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Bald Eagle, Yellow Warbler, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Cliff and Barn Swallow are just a sample of what we might see. Bring along your binoculars and favorite field guide. Craig Mandel

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Louisville Swamp**

Saturday, July 9, 8:30 am  
3801 145th St. W., Shakopee

George Skinner & Anne Hanley 952-936-0811  
We'll look for resident birds in this oak savanna and riparian habitat near the Renaissance Festival Grounds, just off Highway 169, south of Shakopee on 145<sup>th</sup> St. Plan on walking 2-3 miles and bring a snack and water. Long sleeves, long pants and a hat are recommended as it can be warm and/or buggy. We'll have a scope and some extra binoculars. We should be back to the cars around noon. Note, there are no restrooms.

**Central Minnesota Birding Days**

Thursday-Friday, July 21 - 22, 2016, 6:00 am  
Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members  
We will be spending time birding Todd and Douglas counties. Some of the locations we may explore include Lake Osakis and a number of WMAs and water treatment plants. With luck, we may see some of the first fall migrants in addition to the birds that nest in the area. Please contact Craig to register.

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bass Ponds**

Sunday, July 24, 2016, 8:00 – 10:00 am  
2501 86th St. E., Bloomington  
See July 3

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Rapids Lake**

Saturday, Aug 6, 2016, 8:30 am  
George Skinner & Anne Hanley 952-936-0811  
15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver

We'll bird around the Visitor / Education Center building and walk along the Minnesota River to check out for swallows over the river and Bald Eagles above. The last part of the morning we'll drive to the upland parking lots to look for prairie birds. We'll bring extra binoculars and a scope. There is a restroom available at the Education Center.

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bass Ponds**

Monday, August 8, 2016 8:00 – 10:00 am  
See July 3 (2501 86th St. E., Bloomington)

**Central Minnesota Birding Days Part 2**

Thursday, Friday, August 11 - 12, 2016, 6:00 am  
Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members  
We will be birding in Kanabec and Pine counties. Some of the locations we may explore include, Ann Lake WMA, Lake Mora & Knife Lake, St Croix State Park and a few Water treatment plants. We should be able to find some returning Shorebirds and resident birds of the area. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

**Cannon River Bottoms**

Sunday, August 21, 2016, 8:00 am  
Steve Weston 612-978-3993

We will be hiking a productive, but little known state forest trail near Redwing. Target birds (that we have found along this trail) include Acadian Flycatcher, Scarlet Tanager, Cerulean Warbler, Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Call Steve for more information.

**MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bloomington Ferry**

11255 Bloomington Ferry Rd, Bloomington  
Monday, August 29, 2016, 8:00 am  
Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

Join us for a walk along the Minnesota River in search of early fall migrants and nesting birds in the nearby marsh. Please contact Craig Mandel with any questions or to register for this walk.