



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

Volume 50 Issue 2—Bloomington MN
www.MRVAC.org

September & October 2016

Anne Hanley, articles editor
Greg Burnes, field trips editor

Special Presentations Sept 22 and Oct 27 *Free & Open to the Public*

Time & location details for both events below

September 22, 2016 - 7:30 pm
Virginia Heinen - U of MN

Social Learning, Signaling, and Deception in Blue Jays

Being in a social group has advantages: by watching others, you can learn where the food is and save time searching for it yourself. But social learning is not always the best option: what if your social partners are wrong, or what if they're trying to deceive you? Research from the Stephens Experimental Ecology Laboratory explores how blue jays balance social and personal information, manage cooperative feeding and what happens when a signaler wants to lie.

October 27, 2016 – 7:30 pm
Clay Christensen – Birdman of Lauderdale

Birds' Nests: HOW do they DO that?

How does a Baltimore Oriole make that graceful hanging nest so high up in the tree? What is a woodpecker cavity nest like inside? What birds nest in tunnels? This talk includes photos of birds at their nests and diagrams showing how nests are made. Clay is the always entertaining author of "The Birdman of Lauderdale" based on the many columns he wrote for the local Park Bugle newspaper. His publisher has made copies of his book available for free to attendees of this program.

When: Please join us on the 4th Thursday of the month from **7:00-7:30 pm** to socialize over cookies. A brief business meeting and the featured speaker begin at **7:30 pm**. The meeting will conclude before 9:00 pm.

Where: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center 3801 American Blvd E, Bloomington. Accessible by Hiawatha Light Rail line, get off at the American Blvd. stop. Driving, take Hwy 494 to 34th Ave – go south to American Blvd; turn left, go 2 blocks. Use the staff entrance in the middle of the building.

Chip Notes

By Greg Burnes, MRVAC President

The MRVAC Board and membership is working to improve our ability to better share our mission, build relationships and have an even stronger influence in 2016/17.

- We are solidifying communications plans to update our website, Facebook page to ensure we can disseminate information more quickly and engage more folks that share our mission and passion.
- We are working on alternate ways to distribute the Trumpeter so we spend more of your donations on education and conservation issues, not paper and postage.
- With a change in Executive Directors at Audubon MN we are rebuilding our relationship with the entire Audubon network. The new Executive Director, Molly Pederson, covers MN, Iowa, and Missouri so we are now directly part of a much larger family. We plan on having Molly join us to talk about Audubon MN's strategic plan and lobbying efforts.
- We will be looking for and will be posting volunteer opportunities on our new website and Facebook page. Please volunteer and get your friends and family to join. Every effort, no matter how small, will have a positive impact on an important habitat issue or environmental mindset of a student, politician, or business leader.
- We have one of our key fund raising events in November, the MRVAC auction. This event is fun and a great way to complete your holiday shopping in one evening. Please donate items or services and plan on attending.
- We will continue to entertain grant requests for organizations that align with our missions and goal. If you know of an organization in our area that is really making a difference please have them drop me a note (gburnes@comcast.net).

If you have any comments or want to share activities you are involved in, please visit and post your stories on the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter (MRVAC) Facebook page or drop me a note.

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society



MRVAC Chapter News

Financial Report for MRVAC

by Bob Williams, Treasurer

Our latest fiscal year ended May 31, 2016 and I am happy to report that we had another successful year.

We exceeded our goals for our 3 main sources of funding: Birdathon, holiday auction and general contributions. These 3 sources totaled well over \$9,000. The other categories that contribute significant income to our organization are memberships, both local and national, and field trips. These brought in over \$5,000 and our total income for the year was just over \$16,000. As of the end of the fiscal year we had over \$36,600 in our checking account and in CD's combined. For the current fiscal year our income goals are pretty much the same as last year.

Our expenses also were in line with our projections. We made grants totaling \$8,500 which is slightly higher than usual. The largest expense for our organization continues to be the printing and mailing of the Trumpeter. Last year we spent about \$4,000 on the newsletter. We are currently exploring options on how to significantly reduce this cost. Our total expenses for the year were slightly over \$16,000.

This year's Birdathon was again a great success. There were 6 members of MRVAC who went birding and collected donations: Craig Mandel, Steve Weston, Dianne Rowse, Bob Janssen, Greg Burnes and Bob Williams. So far we have collected \$2,750 but there is still time for any of you to make a donation either by sending a check to us at P.O. Box 20400, Bloomington, MN or by going to **GiveMN.org** and searching for our website.

The more we raise, the more we can donate to worthy projects that further our mission.

Holiday Auction November 17

Please think about what donations you could collect for the fundraising auction Thursday November 17.

We could especially use a few larger items like a boat trip, use of a cabin, a homemade dinner or a behind the scenes tour.

Please email the committee with your ideas or let us know in advance, ideally by October 1 if possible, about your contributions so we can mention them in our publicity:

Monica Rauchwarter mrauchwarter@gmail.com

or Greg Burnes GBurnes@comcast.net or

Anne Hanley anne_hanley90@hotmail.com

Support your Local Audubon Chapter

We rely on our members and supporters to keep us going. Please make a contribution to help underwrite printing the Trumpeter, provide honoraria for our meeting speakers and fund conservation/outdoor education projects.

While we do receive about \$2500 annually from National Audubon to help support chapter expenses, (about one-eighth of our annual budget) we count on raising at least \$5,000 through this appeal.

Any size donation is appreciated.

Please make your **check** payable to MRVAC and mail it to MRVAC, PO Box 20400, Bloomington MN 55420 or use the enclosed envelope. (See below for donating on line)

Here is my donation to MRVAC of \$ _____

Given on (fill in date) _____

By (Name): _____

Address: _____

☐ Yes, please send me a receipt

MRVAC is a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. If requested, we will mail you a receipt to document your gift.

Or donate online - start on our home page, MRVAC.ORG. Click the link that looks like this:

**Donate to MRVAC and
make a difference**



Treats Needed for Upcoming Meetings

If you can bring a few dozen cookies, bars or some easy-to-eat snack to share at the September 22 or October 27 meetings, please call Robin, the Social Chair, at 612-723-2632 or email to robinkutz13@gmail.com



Refuge News

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Celebrates 40th Anniversary with Public Celebration Oct. 8

Stretching for 72 miles intermittently along the Minnesota River in the Twin Cities area from Fort Snelling to Henderson, the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is an urban oasis for nature and nature lovers alike. The more than 14,000 acres are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which also oversees the Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District that spans another 14 Minnesota counties.

The refuge is celebrating its 40th anniversary on Saturday, Oct. 8, 2016—the same date it was established by Congressional Order in 1976—with a public celebration that coincides with National Wildlife Refuge Week. Events will be held throughout the refuge and at the Bloomington Education and Visitor, 3815 American Blvd. East. The day-long celebration will include family-friendly and hands-on activities such as birding, exploration, fishing, hiking and more.

“Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is one of Minnesota’s best kept secrets. It provides Twin Cities residents access just minutes from their homes to a wilderness area where they can take advantage of free outdoor recreational experiences that include biking, fishing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking, bird watching and hunting,” said Tim Bodeen, Refuge Manager. “Featuring a variety of habitats—including lakes, marshes, prairies, oak savannas and floodplain forests—the refuge offers endless inspiration to artists and nature photographers alike.”

While initially established to provide valuable habitat for migratory birds—including waterbirds, wading birds, waterfowl and passerines—the refuge now serves as a key site in Minnesota for monarch butterfly conservation efforts. It is located less than 10 miles from downtown Minneapolis, making it one of only 17 refuges across the country designated as an Urban Wildlife Refuge. The Bloomington Education and Visitor Center is a one-quarter mile walk from the Metro Blue Line’s American Boulevard 34th Avenue Station and Platform.

The refuge plans to add additional activities to continue the year-long celebration to commemorate its anniversary. To learn more, visit fws.gov/refuge/minnesota_valley/, call 952-854-5900 or find the refuge on social media at @MNvalleyNWR or [facebook.com/MNvalleyNWR](https://www.facebook.com/MNvalleyNWR).

Old Cedar Avenue Updates

*Submitted by Sarah Inouye-Leas
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge*

The projects at the Old Cedar Avenue area are moving along. Here are a few updates:

- * The archaeological investigation was completed and we are awaiting final recommendations from the State Historic Preservation Officer before we proceed with construction and replacement of the refuge parking lot adjacent to the new bridge. We hope to start parking lot work within the next month or two in partnership with the City of Bloomington.

- * Based on feedback we have received, the platform at the end of the new boardwalk extending into Long Meadow Lake will be expanded. Reconstruction of the failing dike and the trail from the parking lot to the boardwalk is nearing completion. This section of trail is being upgraded to be more accessible to all.

- * Within the next couple of months, the refuge is planning to have a contractor begin work on the Hogback Trail. This is the trail between Old Cedar Avenue and the Hwy 77 bridge. This section of trail will be upgraded to be accessible to folks of all abilities.

- * In October, Great River Greening will be holding a restoration event, planting native vegetation and removing invasive plants.

- * Work on the Old Cedar Bridge itself is on track and slated to be completed November, 2016.

- * The City of Bloomington will be reconstructing Old Cedar Avenue which is the road leading down to the refuge parking lot and trail heads. Work is projected to be completed on the road in 2017.

Women’s Superior Hiking Trail Weekend Sept 30 – Oct 2, 2016

During this lodge-based weekend sponsored by Audubon Center of the North Woods, experience one of the country’s most popular trails amongst a community of strong, adventurous women in one breathtaking weekend September 30 to October 2, 2016! The Superior Hiking Trail (SHT) offers brilliant vistas while winding through the boreal forests on the ridgeline above Lake Superior. Led by Kate Crowley, Lake Superior naturalist extraordinaire, we will hike picturesque stretches of the SHT, then spend evenings in comfortable accommodations at Cascade Lodge on the lake. Space is limited! For more info, check www.Audubon-center.org or call 888-404-7743.



Conservation and Habitat

Sweating the Details

By Don Arnosti

Summer is upon us and we all revel in getting outdoors to enjoy warm weather, time off and our favorite outdoor pursuits. The cycle of nature that is on full display here in the North is one of the great pleasures of living in Minnesota. Cold/hot. Wet/dry. Bloom/senesce. Our landscape is very complex, every-changing and always interesting.

It is tempting to enjoy our birds and wildlife, spend time with family and not sweat the details. However, someone must mind the store. Details matter.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently released buffer maps proposing to downgrade protections for ditched streams and deep water wetlands in rural areas, by interpreting the Governor's Buffer law very narrowly. Many streams and wetlands are mapped for just a 16.5 foot buffer – or none at all – when they should be receiving 50 feet of vegetative protection.

Do I think this is because the DNR officials don't understand wetland classifications or the law? No. It is apparent to me that the DNR is taking a "political path of least resistance." Thousands of miles of streams in southern and western Minnesota were dredged and straightened years ago to "improve drainage" leaving them legally both a "ditch" and a "public water." DNR expects more complaints from rural interests and certain legislators if they require the full 50 foot buffer on these waters called for in law; they're expecting that we, the citizens, will be "away at the lake."

Conservationists can never sleep! Take a moment to dash off a quick note to the Governor. Ask him to instruct the DNR to interpret his Buffer Law correctly. Demand that "DNR Buffer Maps be changed to require a minimum 50 foot buffer on all public watercourses, even if they've been ditched, and that all public waters wetlands receive the 50 foot buffer, as well."

Governor Mark Dayton
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd #130
St Paul, MN 55155

Write your 5 minute note and get back to enjoying our birds and your family and friends. After all, summer is just too short in Minnesota to *always* sweat the details. Thank you for doing your part to protect nature for future generations!

Two Bluebird Monitor Positions Open

By Jack Hauser

Monitors wanted for next spring at two established Birdbird Recovery Project bluebird trails: Southview Golf Course in West St Paul and TPC Golf Course in Blaine. Training will be provided. In both locations, a golf cart is available for the monitors' use if you would prefer not to walk. For more information, please contact Jack Hauser at 952-831-8132 or email jgshauser@gmail.com

- **Southview Country Club,**
239 Mendota Rd E, **West St. Paul, MN 55118**
- **TPC Twin Cities**
11444 Tournament Players Pkwy, Blaine, MN 55449

Birds of New Guinea – Book Review

by Bruce M. Beehler & Thane K. Pratt.

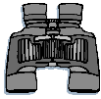
Book review by Mark N. Lystig

One of the (many) delights of amateur birdwatching is the opportunity to learn more about where to find the birds, why you find birds where they are, what are the birds doing in the places where you find them (what are they eating, how are they adapted to eat what they are eating, how do they construct—if they construct—their nests, and how old do they have to be when they are able to nest), and to learn more about the environment in general. But as you can see from this list, the opportunity to learn a little soon turns into a quest to learn a lot.

This book is a checklist of the birds of New Guinea, intended as a supplement to the authors' earlier field guide, *Birds of New Guinea, Second Edition* (Princeton). Whereas you might wish to carry the field guide with you if you go birding in the New Guinea region, you will want to leave this book behind as it is quite heavy

Part I is an introduction to the area studied, but also to the scientific terminology and the difficulty of determining how to identify birds by family, genus, and species or subspecies. There's an explanation why DNA studies may not be the final solution to identification that many may believe it to be, and the authors explain their choices in their treatments of species and subspecies. The interesting introductory section may be reason enough to consult this book (28 pages).

Part II is the bulk of the book, and contains the accounts of each family, genus, species, and subspecies the authors have identified (485 pages). There are brief general family and genus descriptions, then more specific species and subspecies descriptions for making distinctions. A comprehensive introduction to the birds of New Guinea, this may be more than you need to know.



FIELD TRIPS – join us. All trips are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

Rapids Lake Bird Walk

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2016, 8–10:30 am

Rapids Lake Unit 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver
Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Bass Ponds Bird Walk

Monday, Sept. 12, 2016, 8–10:30 am, Bass Ponds

Bass Ponds Unit 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington
Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Southern Minnesota Birding Days Trip 1

Thurs-Fri, September 15 - 16, 2016, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members
Join us in search of fall migrants in Murray and Nobles counties. We should see warblers and shorebirds and maybe the first migrant waterfowl of the season. Some of the locations we may check include Lake Shetek State Park, Fury Island County Park, Lake Belle WMA and Okabena Lake. Please contact Craig to register.

Hawk Weekend Festival

Friday-Sunday, September 16-18, 2016

<http://www.hawkridge.org/event/862/>

Come and celebrate the fall bird migration with us! Hawk Weekend is the annual festival held by the Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory in Duluth, MN. It is a wonderful opportunity to showcase one of North America's best places to experience the fall bird migration through field trips, workshops, presentations, social gatherings, and more. See web site above or call 218-428-6209

Nine Mile Creek Bloomington

Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016 8 – 10:30 am,

Harrison Park 1701 W. 100th Street

Nine Mile Creek offers one of the finest urban trails in the Twin Cities and always holds some surprises. Contact Greg Burnes 612-205-3071 or Brianne Keehan 920-216-8505 for more details.

Wright County Birding Day (Part 1)

Friday, September 23, 2016, 6:30 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

We will explore the parks and wetlands of Wright County. We should find waterfowl, late warblers and a good number of sparrows. Locations could include Lake Maria State Park, Stanley Eddie, Montissippi, Marcus Zumbrunnen and others. Please contact Craig to register.

Bass Ponds Bird Walk

Saturday, Sept. 24, 2016, 8–10:30am

Bass Ponds Unit 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Audubon Center of the North Woods Open House

September 24 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

54165 Audubon Dr., Sandstone, MN 55072

Enjoy the beautiful changing colors of fall and learn about the Audubon Center of the North Woods at a free, fun day filled with activities and programs for all ages!

Rapids Lake Bird Walk

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016, 8–10:30am

Rapids Lake Unit 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Bass Ponds Bird Walk

Sunday, Oct. 2, 2016, 8-10:30 am

Bass Ponds Unit 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Rapids Lake Bird Walk

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2016, 8-10:30 am

Rapids Lake Unit 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver

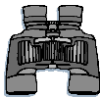
Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

See more field trips on page 6



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

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FIELD TRIPS – join us. All trips are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

See more field trips on page 5.

If you would like to view this newsletter online rather than on paper, please send an email to gurnes@comcast.net and we'll add you to our email distribution list.

Central Minnesota Birding Days Trip 2

Thurs-Fri, October 6-7, 2016, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

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

We will be birding in Stearns and Todd counties. We may explore Lake Osakis, Grey Eagle WTP, Albany & Paynesville WTPs, Warner Lake County parks, a number of WMA's and St. John's University. We'll be searching for sparrows, blackbirds, waterfowl and lingering warblers. Please contact Craig to register.

Bass Ponds Bird Walk

Monday, Oct. 10, 2016, 8-10:30 am

Bass Ponds Unit 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647

Hyland Park, Bloomington

Thursday, Oct. 13, 2016, 8 – 10:30 am,

Richardson Nature Center, Hyland Park

8737 E Bush Lake Rd, Bloomington

Hyland Park around Richardson Nature Center should be active with fall migrants. Take a morning break and join us in exploring another Bloomington hot spot for birds. Contact Greg Burnes 612-205-3071 or Brianne Keehan 920-216-8505 for more details.

Rapids Lake Bird Walk

Saturday, Oct. 15, 2016, 8-10:30 am

Rapids Lake Unit 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647



Wright County Birding Day (Part 2)

Friday, October 28, 2016, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

We will be exploring the parks and wetlands of Wright County. We should still see a nice mix of waterfowl and with luck will find some late warblers and a good number of sparrows. Locations could include Lake Maria State Park, Stanley Eddie, Montissippi, Marcus Zumbrunnen and others.. For more information or to register, please contact Craig.

Bass Ponds Bird Walk

Saturday, Oct. 29, 2016, 8-10:30 am

Bass Ponds Unit 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about the birds that visit the Refuge during fall migration. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist, 952-240-7647