



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

Volume 51 Issue 4—Bloomington MN
www.MRVAC.org

January & February 2018

Anne Hanley, articles editor
Greg Burnes, field trips editor

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

By Bob Williams, MRVAC Treasurer

We had a very successful and entertaining Holiday Auction at the Refuge Visitor Center on November 17. We raised \$2753 which is just a bit less than the \$3000 we raised last year.

Our fabulous auctioneers, Mark Lystig and Scott Clark sold at least 100 items donated by members as well as these generous companies:

All Seasons Wild Bird Store - Bloomington
Cornerstone Copy Center, Burnsville
Eagle Optics
Great Harvest Bread Company
Lakewinds Natural Foods - Richfield
Lunds/Byerly's
Nothing Bundt Cakes, Eden Prairie
Valley Natural Foods Co-op (Burnsville)

We also raised about \$630 on Give to the Max Day (\$1400 less than last year).

The chapter has also received \$30 in the mail from the appeal in the Trumpeter and \$325 from my Facebook fundraiser.

We want to thank everyone who donated either at the auction or online.

If you would like to make a donation to support the chapter, we're happy to offer several options:

- Drop off a check at a meeting or mail a check, payable to MRVAC. Our mailing address is MRVAC, PO Box 20400 Bloomington, MN 55420.
- Donate online with a credit card at GiveMN.org: <https://givemn.org/organization/Minnesota-River-Valley-Audubon-Chapter>

Special Presentations Jan 25 and Feb 22

Time & location details for both events below

January 25 at 7:30 pm Katy Shannon – Naturalist Penguins in the Antarctic

During the winter of 2015 - 2016, when the Larsen 3 ice-shelf was still intact on the Antarctic Peninsula, my son and I had the adventure of a lifetime! We went on an expedition to the Falkland Islands, the South Georgia Islands, the Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula. During the voyage we saw seven different types of penguins and many other birds and mammals. I am excited to share our sightings and experiences, and a little info about the region with you.

February 22 at 7:30 pm Christine Herwig – Minnesota DNR Waterbird Use of the N. Ottawa Impoundment

Christine Herwig, Regional Nongame Specialist for Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Nongame Wildlife Program will discuss waterbird use at North Ottawa Impoundment located in Grant County. This impoundment was created to reduce floods along the Red River but has a secondary benefit of providing habitat to birds. Christine will talk about the monitoring efforts and some of the rare and unusual species that have been observed.

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 3815 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

Call for Trumpeter Award Nominations

Each spring for 14 of the past 16 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 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 – on the “About Us” tab.
- 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 Hanley-Skinner
2005 Craig Mandel	2012 Steve Weston
2006 John Rehbein	2013 Bob Williams
2007 Lois Norrgard	2016 Mark & Becky Lystig

Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter Board members:

Here are the 2017/18 board members and their roles:

Matthew Schaut – President
 Steven Weston – Vice President/Program Chair
 Greg Burnes – Past President
 Bob Williams – Treasurer
 Bob Janssen – Member-at-Large
 Becky Lystig – Member-at-Large
 Rick Magee – Member-at-Large
 Ken Oulman – Member-at-Large
 Monica Rauchwarter – Member-at-Large

If one of your new year's resolutions is to get more involved, there are several opportunities for volunteers. Please talk to one of us at a member meeting (4th Thursday) or email Rick Magee at rickvex@live.com.

Matthews Musings

By Matthew Schaut

Happy New Year! I'm glad it's a little bit cold and some places are getting snow. There was snow in Texas and Florida, lake effect snow around the Great Lakes. All that moisture in the sky due to the added heat in energy. Speaking of which, the upper Midwest has seen the largest Winter temperature gains as a result of climate change in the continental USA. Canada – an upper Midwest writ large, has even higher gains (along with its peninsular appendage, Alaska. And that other appendage, Antarctica???)

As I write, the US Congress may pass a particularly grim trickle-down tax “reform” bill. I pray the Senate and the House of Representatives will be unable to reconcile their versions. Patagonia has gone to war against the Trump administration and its Interior Department hatchet men in reaction to the “decision” to shrink Bears Ears and other national monuments to benefit uranium salesmen and fossil fuel speculators. Fossils, native art and artefacts, animals and ecosystems – be damned, all of you. You just don't monetize well.

The oligarchs on the national scene play for big money. The money at the Minnesota State level can't be as good, yet our US Representatives continue to be whittle away at our environmental legacy to benefit Chilean multinationals. I speak of Representatives Nolan and Emmers (different sides of the aisle, but, hey, you know... there's dark money talking) efforts to bring sulfide mining to the Boundary Waters, while at the same time eroding the environmental review process and our rights as citizens to have input.

Our own good governor Dayton, of late, has raised his voice in favor of “some kind of sulfide mining” which is a position I can't fathom. Dayton had seemed a friend to Minnesota's waters after his efforts to establish standards for buffers along waterways. Now he appears willing to risk the Boundary Waters and the Great Lakes. Attrition may be at work, and the socialization of the wealthy wherein manliness is established by “making deals.” We don't joust or duel anymore, we make deals. Early socialization is hard to overcome. It also matters who we spend our time with.

Corporate (and oligarchic) attrition is relentless, as corrosive force as powerful as water. The wealthy can afford to continually scratch at a door until a “no” becomes the “yes” they want to hear. To maintain a no is difficult. Obama seems to me to have been a master at avoiding the hard “no”, since that then becomes

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Conservation I

Matthew's Musing,

continued from page 2

ammunition for manufactured media outrage. Yet a hard no is justified to prevent sulfide mining in Minnesota or a Line 3 pipeline "expansion." The soft "no" enables endless cajoling by oligarchs with bottomless reservoirs of wealth – even more corrosive in our current dark money post-Citizens United environment – until eventually, enough decision-makers – lawmakers, executives, judges, -- are turned and a project moves forward to its inevitably disastrous consequences. But who cares about that, the oligarchs have already left town before the clean-up starts, and their pockets seem to have gone empty!

We must stand strong against these corrosive attempts to destroy our environment. It might already be too late to prevent our dying in the currently accelerating climate change catastrophe. That is a just comeuppance to our complicity in creating the mass extinction event currently decimating the world's flora and fauna.

Or, maybe, just maybe, we'll have converted to solar and wind power and have absolutely no need for any more fossil fuel and water destroying nonsense. We can't let what remains of our environmental rights and natural world be destroyed in a last, absurd, corrupt feeding frenzy at the dying of the fossil fuel age? It's a shame we can't count on our local representation to protect our neck of the woods. A hard "NO" would be kind of refreshing, like cold and snow in winter.

Breeding Bird Atlas Web Site is Live

Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas was just published on-line and is available at <https://mnbirdatlas.org/>. Besides seeing where various birds were observed during the breeding season, there is a tab showing the conservation status of each species. There is lots of great information on the site; check it out!

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas Website was a collaborative project led by Audubon Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, Natural Resources Research Institute. Major funding was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).

You Can Help Keep Road Salt from Polluting Local Waters

1. Use as little salt as possible on your own property. Scrape. Try a little sand.
2. If you see a pile of salt in your local street, and if you can do it safely, sweep up the extra salt as best you can. This will help prevent it from running into your local holding pond (wood duck habitat in our neighborhood) or into one of our creeks, rivers or lakes.

According to a Minnesota Public Radio news story from Dec 6, 2017:

Just a teaspoon of road salt pollutes 5 gallons of water — forever.

And each winter, Minnesota dumps some 730 million pounds of salt on roadways. That's probably far more salt than we need to keep our roads safe.

Once snow melts, salt flows into lakes and streams. Once salt is in a body of water, it's nearly impossible to remove.

For more about salt use and reduction, see <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2017/12/06/road-salt-water-pollution>

View Snowy Owls Responsibly

See Karla's full post at the International Owl Center site: <https://www.internationalowlcenter.org/blog/how-to-view-snowy-owls-responsibly>

Here's an abbreviated version of her post:

1. Give them space! If the bird is staring at you, you're too close.
2. Let them find their own food. Do not offer mice or other prey for them to eat.
3. Respect private property, fences, and signs
4. Think about if it's safe to share the location of a Snowy Owl publicly.
5. Avoid flash photography and flashlights as it gets darker.
6. Leave your dog at home. Owls do not like dogs.
7. Move at a slower than normal pace and keep your voice down when you are close.
8. When safe to do so, view the owl from inside your car, using the car as a blind.
9. Be respectful of other people
10. Use traps instead of poison to control rodents

Conservation II

Thoughts and Updates on Environmental Challenges

By Bob Williams, MRVAC Treasurer

There are a number of challenges for those who are working to protect our environment for future generations of wildlife and wildlife enthusiasts.

ALASKA:

On the national level Congress appears to have reconciled the House and Senate versions of the tax reform bill. Included in this bill is a provision that would allow for the sale of oil and gas leases in a portion of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge known as "Section 1002". The original legislation that protected ANWR was passed in 1980 but it reserved the right to open "Section 1002", about 2,300 square miles on the North Slope, to future development. If the tax bill passes in its current form, this would pave the way for that development to move forward. For the most current information about this I would suggest visiting the Alaska Wilderness League web site at <http://www.alaskawild.org/> or contacting Lois Norrgard with the Alaska Wilderness League at [lois\(at\)alaskawild.org](mailto:lois(at)alaskawild.org).

MINNESOTA-Sulfide Ore Copper Mining:

[An Adventure Journal article by Abbie Baronnian is the source for this section.]

Rep. Tom Emmer (R-Minn.) has introduced a bill in Congress that would overturn core tenets of federal public lands protection to expedite drilling in the Boundary Waters watershed in Minnesota. Twin Metals, a subsidiary of a Chilean company Antofagasta, has been trying to establish a sulfide-ore copper mine just outside the Boundary Waters, near the Kawishiwi River, which runs into the wilderness.

In December 2016, the director of the U.S. Forest Service denied renewal to its mining leases in the area, calling for a two-year moratorium on mining in nearly 250,000 acres while an extensive environmental review was conducted. Polls show that nearly eight in ten Minnesotans support the environmental review.

Emmer's bill was introduced on October 2, 2017 and passed out of the House Committee on Natural Resources earlier this month. HR 3905, dubbed the MINER act, prohibits U.S. Forest Service from making decisions about mining on national forest land, granting

that power to Congress. Effectively, it takes the decision about mining in wild places away from scientists and gives it to politicians. It makes it easier to grant mining rights without a completed environmental assessment.

The idea, allegedly, is that the environmental review can and should happen after the mining company's interests have been secured. An amendment passed September 7 and co-sponsored by Emmer and Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.), would defund the current environmental review. Some concerned locals have banded together against mining in the region, forming the nonprofit Save the Boundary Waters and demanding that no new mines be opened in the area.

<https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/>

The proposed mine would be below-ground, calling for miles of blasted tunnels and creating massive amounts of waste rock and tailings—all of which need to be stored somewhere, since they leach sulfuric acid, heavy metals, and sulfates when exposed to air or water. Sulfide-ore copper mines are notorious for contaminating ground water. Twin Metals claims half would be used for underground backfill, and that the remainder would be placed in a lined storage shelter, but locals aren't convinced they can adequately control the risk. Most of Minnesota's mining to date has been in taconite mines, which are notably less toxic than sulfide-ore copper mines.

MINNESOTA-Copper Nickel Mining & Enbridge Pipeline PolyMet Mining released their updated application for a permit to mine on December 13th, 2017. The permit to mine is one of the most important of the roughly 20 state and federal permits that PolyMet needs to obtain. It includes a \$544 million package of financial assurances to serve as an insurance policy to protect taxpayers from potentially having to cover the costs of closing and cleaning up a controversial copper-nickel mine it wants to build in northeastern Minnesota. Mine opponents are demanding that the state ask for \$934 million from the company. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources said that it will review the revised application. If the department determines the application meets all legal requirements, it will schedule a public comment period.

Meanwhile, Enbridge said recently that its Line 3 replacement pipeline should come online by Nov. 1, 2019, but that will depend on how the ongoing Minnesota Regulatory process plays out.

Conservation III

Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project: Research Team Final Report for MRVAC for 2017 Summer Research Season By Keith Olstad

November 25, 2017

Last December, our Red-headed Woodpecker (RHWO) Recovery research team submitted a grant application to the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Club. Our primary request was for funds to defray expenses for increased volunteer and professional field-work to begin to answer these questions:

- 1) What factors govern RHWO nest productivity and survival of juveniles into the next year?
- 2) What "internal" factors (e.g., sex, body condition, etc.) and/or "external" factors (e.g., food availability, weather, population density) drive RHWO to overwinter at Cedar Creek ecosystem Science Reserve (CCESR) or migrate?
- 3) Where do RHWO go when they migrate? Do they migrate to the same place each year?

We were deeply gratified to receive a \$3,000 grant from the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Club. We express a small part of our gratitude with this report on the application of these funds to critical research done this past summer, and offer to do a program for MRVAC detailing our work to date.

With support from a variety of funding sources (as reported in our initial grant proposal), we were able to hire a post-doctoral research coordinator, Dr. Elena West, to coordinate the work of our field research team. Dr. West worked half-time through the summer, and will continue to work this fall through December to analyze our data and formulate our research field work for 2018. Working with Dr. West at the Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve (CCESR) were two full time seasonal research assistants, Candace Stenzel and Jesse Beck. Resources provided by MRVAC defrayed expenses for field work done at CCESR by this team and by about thirty-six volunteer "citizen scientists", and helped with laboratory expenses for data analysis.

During the course of the summer, the field research team "processed" sixty-six RHWO at CCESR, fifty adults and sixteen nestlings/fledglings. ("Processed" refers to capturing, banding, taking measurements, drawing blood samples and feather samples for DNA analysis, and possible use of location devices, listed below.) Thirty-nine RHWO were newly banded, and twenty-two nests were monitored. Twenty adults were outfitted with geo-GPS backpacks, of which eight were recovered in late summer and early fall,

meaning that CPS and/or geo-locator data were gathered from these birds. Fifteen juveniles were "marked" with radio backpacks, allowing their movement to be tracked. In all, seventy-two birds were captured.

Parallel to the work of the field research technicians, thirty-six citizen science volunteers contributed 1,550 hours to the 2017 summer RHWO research season.

They worked on five specific projects:

1. RHWO nest location;
2. RHWO parental effort in feeding nestlings;
3. Food use identification;
4. Oak tree tagging; and
5. Nest cavity porthole installation.

Data collected to date will be analyzed for preliminary results during late fall and early winter of 2017. Blood samples taken from summer RHWO captures will receive lab analysis over the 2017-18 winter. Spring 2018 recaptures of transmitter birds will allow downloading data regarding winter locations of these RHWOs.

In addition to the research conducted on RHWO, over the summer fifteen guided hikes and programs about this project, led by RHWO Recovery Project volunteers, provided rich educational opportunities to over 200 people at CCESR.

The research team of the RHWO Recovery Project created a partnership with Dr. Henry Streby at the University of Toledo, who is initiating similar research in Ohio and other states. This partnership will make it possible to compare different population's genetic patterns and adult and juvenile activities on a broader geographic scale for more conclusive research results.

A new round of grant requests will be issued in the coming months to support and expand our exciting research.

Please feel free to contact me with further questions or concerns about our project's use of your grant, and to explore setting up a program for MRVAC detailing our work and our vision for future work. And thank you once again for your most generous contribution to the recovery of this splendid bird.

Contacts: Keith Olstad, Convener, Research Team, RHWO Recovery Project (612) 940-1534

Chet Meyers, chair of the Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project (612) 374-5581

Birders and Birding

By Bob Janssen

The older I get the more I like birders, the younger ones especially. Yes, we older birders are OK, even with our faults and some of us, who are really old, with our ignorance of the digital age. I would like to ask your indulgence while I do my best to relate a story of a recent bird trip made up of young birders and one old guy.

In early September I was leading a bird class for North House Folk School at the end of the Gunflint Trail. Josh Watson of Grand Marais was my very able and experienced "young" assistant. Josh did a great job in finding birds like a Golden-crowned Kinglet which I can no longer hear because of their high pitched song. A few weeks after the class my phone rang and it was Josh saying "let's plan an October trip to Cass County to get your list for the county up to 225", I replied "That would be just great". The phone call ended with Josh saying, "I will get the guys (John and Chris Hockema, and Shawn Conrad) together and we will go to Cass County at the end of October and get you three species". I didn't have a single scoter species for Cass County so they would be the target birds for our trip. Our plans were to go to Cass County on October 26, 27 and 28.

October 26 came and it was snowing but that did not stop our heading north. I picked up Josh at his grand-mothers house in Ham Lake and we headed for our motel in Pine River, Cass County and the meeting with Shawn Conrad. The three of us headed for Walker and the sewage ponds to look for the reported Harlequin Duck, a really "choice" bird for Cass County. It didn't take long for us to find the Harlequin Duck, # 223 for Cass County. A Harlequin Duck, a good dinner in Walker and a sound night's sleep in Pine River really were a good start for the trip.

Early the next morning we were joined by John and Chris Hockema and to my surprise we were joined by Becca Engdahl and her friend, Alex Burchard, two young, up-and-coming and enthusiastic Minnesota birders. Our first stop was the Walker Sewage Ponds to look for the Harlequin Duck which Chris needed for his list. A long search proved futile, we could not find the bird, our first disappointment.

To make a long story short, we spent the rest of the morning touring Leech Lake, Cass Lake, and the Cass Lake Sewage Ponds in hopes of finding any species of Scoter, no luck. Shawn knew of some bogs in the area where we might find a Boreal Chickadee. Beautiful Pine Grosbeaks and Gray Jays were present but no Boreal Chickadees. The day wore on and my list stayed at 223. We were all concerned that our target species, scoters, had all but disappeared or were just not here as we had hoped. Shawn said "let's try Lake Winnibigoshish, I know

some good spots where there should be scoters". On the way to "Winnie" we traveled through some beautiful wooded evergreen areas, all of us were thinking Black-backed Woodpecker. Mile after mile no luck, all of a sudden Shawn said "STOP". I wondered why, I hadn't seen or heard a thing. We stopped and we were all quiet when we heard the tap of a Black-backed Woodpecker stripping bark from a tree. We had difficulty pin-pointing the sound but finally we saw the bird on a downed log, # 224 for Cass County. It was a life-bird for Becca and she crept within 15 feet of the bird, and took wonderful photos and she said it was one of the most rewarding birding experiences she had ever had. Her experience with the woodpecker was a real treat for all of us.

Then Shawn said once again "Let's go to Winnie, there have to be ducks on there". We searched the bays and shoreline for over an hour without finding a single duck. Finally our luck changed and we found a bay full of water birds, grebes, both Red-necked and Horned plus a few Pied-billed Grebes and a few Long-tailed Ducks and Lesser Scaup. All of a sudden Josh hollered "there is a scoter", all scopes went to that spot and there was a White-winged Scoter, #225 for Cass County. This turned out to be the only scoter we saw on the trip but it was a "big" one.

The light was fading but we still had time to check further on "Winnie" but to no avail. There just were not any more waterfowl to be found. We had a great meal together in Walker that evening, a few bottles of beer, lots of bird talk and then a great night's sleep in spite of Chris's snoring which shook the whole motel at times.

The next morning we tried the Walker Sewage Ponds again but the Harlequin had disappeared. Birding strategy was discussed and it was decided that we would go over to Lake Superior and look for the reported Red Phalarope in Lake County and the Pacific Loon in Cook County. We failed on the Red Phalarope and then we decided to split up, the young birders would go north for the Pacific Loon and I would head south for home. They got the Pacific Loon and I stopped in Two Harbors where I spotted a small group of birders looking through scopes. They were looking at a Mountain Bluebird which was a new Lake County bird for me. I drove back home a very happy birder, 225 for Cass County and a new county bird for Lake County!

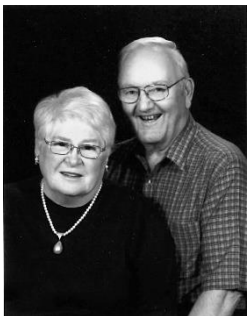
Driving home from Two Harbors I was thinking about how fortunate I was to have young birding friends who were great companions and most helpful with their enthusiasm about finding and enjoying birding, it was a good ride home!

News from Audubon Center of the North Woods (Pine County)

ACNW Receives Century Farm

By Bryan Wood, Audubon Center of the North Woods

Once in a while, an act of generosity leaves you humbled by its magnitude. You can't help but take a step back, astounded by the goodness of people and their desire to want to leave the world a better place. You marvel at the kindness individuals can show through an organization transformational gift and during these times saying thank you to them simply isn't adequate. They deserve much more as you try and adequately express your profound gratitude. Roger and Ruby Trapp are those people. With



the substantial help of Audubon Center of the North Woods Board Member Susan VanGorden, Mr. and Mrs. Trapp this summer completed a land transfer of their 101-acre century farm to the Audubon Center of the North Woods. This land, which marks the north boundary of ACNW's property, has been in Roger's family since his grandfather Alfred

McKay purchased it in 1900. Roger was born there and grew up on the farm that produced flowers, produce, pick-your-own raspberries, chickens, turkeys and cattle. The farm is still in operation today, producing corn.

Of the 101 acre tract the Trapps gifted to ACNW, 48 acres is tilled farmland, with the remaining 53 acres a mix of beautiful hardwood and conifer stands. This land gift would be met with great enthusiasm at any time, but is especially exciting now as it fits into ACNW's larger plan to have a working educational farm in the future. Food in many aspects is where we each have the largest impact on our planet. Indeed, 70% of all human land use is for food production and the current food system is heavily reliant on fossil fuels for fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, production and distribution. The average item on an American's plate has traveled 2,000 miles. With our population expected to reach over 9 billion by 2050 and climate change threatening to reduce crop yields by 25%, our ability to feed the world, while caring for our planet is of paramount importance. A United Nations study concluded that the only way to sustainably do that is through local, polyculture farms that are more resistant to disease and less energy intensive.

Over the coming years, ACNW plans to turn the 48 acres of farmland into an organic, polyculture farm where produce, permaculture, pollinators, free-range poultry and grass-fed beef intermingle to provide food for our meals served at the Dining Hall. With the farm contiguous to our existing property, it easily allows for myriad educational opportunities with our K-12 schools, summer camps,

post-secondary courses and adult programs. This all will require funds to build up the farm and its infrastructure and efforts will now begin towards securing those funds.

In a way, the Audubon Center of the North Woods is coming full circle. Our existence is due to the generosity of the Schwyzer family donating their farm to become a nature sanctuary and in our first 48 years, environmental education has been taught primarily through nature study. Today, there is increasing interest in society on where our food comes, the impact it has on our land and water, and how we can make more environmentally conscious choices. As we approach our 50th anniversary, we are poised to expand our environmental programs to include agriculture through a working, educational farm that will provide learning opportunities for individuals and empower them to grow or raise more of their own food and make informed choices. And we have Roger and Ruby Trapp to thank for that. Their farm and legacy will live on as it educates and inspires for generations to come. "We believe in getting kids outside, and want others to enjoy the farm as I have." Roger said. We invite you to join us in expressing our deepest gratitude to Roger and Ruby, and to join us on this exciting journey ahead.

ACNW Winter Family Weekend, February 16-19, 2018

Embrace winter over the long President's Day Weekend. Treat your family to 3 nights/4 days of discovery, learning and fun. This exciting family program offers age-specific and all-family program options to choose from. Whether you're looking for snow activities, skiing/snowshoeing, nature learning or quality family time, we have something for the whole family.

Activities you can enjoy during your stay at the Center include: indoor climbing wall, high ropes course, ice climbing, sleigh rides, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, archery, wildlife programs, kicksledding, arts & crafts, astronomy, campfires and much, much more!

Spend some quality time with your family at the Audubon Center of the North Woods, Sandstone MN, this winter, making memories that last a lifetime! 888-404-7743
www.audubon-center.org

ACNW-Maple Syrup Day 2018

March 17, 2018 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm; programs and pancake brunch. Reservations are required.
888-404-7743 www.audubon-center.org



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



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

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bass Ponds (3)

Saturday, January 6, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds

Monday, January 22, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds

Saturday, February 3, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds

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

Craig Mandel - egretcman@msn.com - 952-240-7647

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. Bring your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather as we search for these and other overwintering species of birds on the Refuge. Craig Mandel 952-240-764, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist

Northern Minnesota - Sax/Zim Bog Birding Days

Thursday & Friday, January 18-19, 2018, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel - egretcman@msn.com - 952-240-7647

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

Thursday we will meet in Duluth and travel to one of the best birding spots in the nation – the Sax/Zim Bog. Recent reports of Great Gray and Northern Hawk Owls, along with numerous other species should get your 2018 birding checklist off to a great start. On Friday we will again start in Duluth and possibility bird in Duluth, Two Harbors or make our way up to Lake and/or Aitkin County depending on what is being seen. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.



Bass Ponds – see January 6

Saturday, February 3, 8:00 am, Bass Ponds

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

Winter Family Weekend 2018 – Family Camp

Feb 16 @ 6:00 pm - Feb 19, 2018 @ 10:00 am

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 and arts and crafts.

Sax Zim Bog Birding Festival

February 16, 17, 18, 2018

A warm welcome to all of our birding friends from the members of the Toivola-Meadowlands Development Board, Friends of the Sax-Zim Bog, the residents of Meadowlands and neighboring communities. We hope you will be able to join us this February 16, 17, 18, 2018. The Festival includes a Friday meal & speaker, a Saturday meal & speaker as well as Friday, Saturday and Sunday field trip options. You can register online at <http://www.saxzimbirdingfestival.com>

International Festival of Owls

March 2-4, 2018 in Houston, MN

Immerse yourself in owls at the only annual, full-weekend, all-owl festival in North America. Highlights include live owl programs by the World Bird Sanctuary and Scottish Owl Centre as well as fieldtrips. Each year the International Owl Center presents World Owl Hall of Fame awards to people who are making the world a better place for owls. Special Achievement award winner Jonathan Haw of EcoSolutions in South Africa will be the keynote speaker at the banquet. Californian Lisa Owens-Viani, founder of Raptors Are The Solution (RATS) will speak on Saturday afternoon. Sponsored by the International Owl Center.

www.festivalofowls.com