



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

Volume 52 Issue 2—Bloomington MN
www.MRVAC.org

September & October 2018

Anne Hanley, articles editor
Greg Burnes, field trips editor

Special Presentations Sept 27 & Oct 25 Free & Open to the Public

Time & location details for both events below

September 27 – 7:30 pm
Ben Douglas

How to find the rare and unexpected birds

In 2017 Ben Douglas found 243 species in Washington County, including 3 first and second county records. He will share stories that draw upon previous experience including his 2018 State Park Big Year where he visited all 73 State Parks and Recreation Areas in just 7 months. Ben will explain his process for maximizing his county and year list, finding rarities and show you how you can transform the way you birdwatch. Also, he will share the equipment he uses to easily document his finds.

October 25, 2018 – 7:30 pm

Jordana Whyte-Trustee, NZ Sea Lion Trust Wildlife on the Edge: Conservation in New Zealand

New Zealand is home to some of the world's most unique and endangered wildlife. After relocating several years ago, "Kiwi-sotan" Jordana Whyte threw herself into conservation in her new hometown of Dunedin, known as the Wildlife Capital of New Zealand, on the South Island. She will share some of her conservation experiences and the treasured native species found on the edge of the world, including the rare Yellow-Eyed Penguin."

When: Please join us on the 4th Thursday of the month from **7:00-7:30 pm** to socialize (with treats). 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.

Matthew's Musings

By Matthew Schaut, MRVAC President

One of the pleasures of serving on the MRVAC Board is encountering interesting, kind people. A very recent encounter included meeting with a recently bereaved woman and her son to receive a generous donation in the memory of her husband Tim Leahy who had long valued MRVAC. To everyone's surprise, it turned out that our past Treasurer, Bob Williams, was related to them!

Those married to dedicated birders might be familiar with the kind of behavior Jared Diamond relates about himself in **The World Until Yesterday** while he is floating in the sea off the Indonesian coast with several other unfortunates many miles from shore holding onto the wreckage of a capsized canoe. While aware that he has only an hour or two to be found prior to the abrupt tropical sunset and ensuing darkness ending any probability of surviving, he still finds himself noticing the beauty of the natural scene around him and paying attention to and striving to identify the birds flying around him. Even in dire situations we can still find some joy.

In my last musing, I admitted my despair. Kind people have responded with encouragement to keep fighting and not succumb to despair. That is not a danger for me. I firmly believe it is healthy to be honest about the existential realities of living – we are creatures bounded by time, certain to die, weaving the threads of time and space that constitute being within a process we call evolution which takes no prisoners. At some level, we all know this. The current dire environmental situation brings it to the fore of consciousness where it becomes hard to ignore, and where the appropriate evaluation of our odds does merit despair. Yet we are all still attuned to natural beauty, enjoy our families and have good days.

I went to Isle Royale National Park in June with my son, our first trip to the archipelago. In the trip report I've written for the Geological Society of Minnesota, I write that I have never taken more congruent breaths in my life! John Keats might indicate why:

Continued on page 3



MRVAC Chapter News

Treasurer's Report

By Walt Stull, MRVAC Treasurer

Here are the 2017-2018 fiscal year donations from MRVAC to organizations that support our goals of fostering a love of nature in children, improving bird habitat or supporting bird science.

Audubon Center of the North Woods:

- \$3000 for scholarships for residential K-12 school visits and summer camp

Five Hawks Elementary School:

- \$225 to establish a Chickadee Landing at the elementary school

Refuge Friends Inc., The official citizen support group of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MVNWR):

- \$1500 for Blue Goose busing or support of activities coordinator to work with schools in getting them to the refuge for educational programming, wherever the need is greater.
- \$775 for a sign at Old Cedar Avenue Bridge showing some of the birds that can be found there.

Redheaded Woodpecker Recovery Project

- \$3000.00 for continued research on Red Headed Woodpeckers

Holiday Auction November 15

Please think about what donations you could collect for the fundraising auction Thursday November 15 – or if you can join our auction team.

We could especially use a few larger items like a boat trip, use of a cabin, a homemade dinner or a special adventure.

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 Anne Hanley anne_hanley90@hotmail.com

MRVAC Board of Directors for 2018-19

- President: Matthew Schaut
- Vice President: Steve Weston
- Treasurer: Walt Stull
- Secretary: Rob Daves
- Members at Large: Becky Lystig, Ken Oulman, Monica Rauchwarter, Rita Baden and Bob Williams

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 bring it to a meeting, 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



If you are reading this online, just click on the Give MN icon above.

Treats Needed for Upcoming Meetings

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



Conservation & Habitat & MRVAC News

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Threat

By Lois Norrgard, National Field Organizer
Alaska Wilderness League

An atrocity coming, proposed 3-D seismic exploration in our Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The Bureau of Land Management will soon announce a proposed plan for 3-D seismic exploration across the 1.5 million acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain, with a public comment period to follow.

The initial plan is the polar opposite of what drilling proponents promised when drilling language was passed in the tax bill last year. Instead of a small footprint and a careful process, they want to deploy a small army of industrial vehicles and equipment with a mandate to crisscross every square inch of the Arctic Refuge's biological heart. This scheme will put denning polar bears at risk and leave lasting scars on the fragile tundra and its vegetation, all of this before a single drill rig has been placed or length of pipeline installed. The tracks left in the ground hold water and affect melting.

The Arctic Refuge's coastal plain is the biological heart of America's most iconic wildlife refuge. Birds from all 50 U.S. states raise their young there, alongside other species including caribou, polar bears and muskoxen.

The area is considered sacred by the Gwich'in people, who have relied on the Porcupine Caribou Herd for their food, and their culture, for thousands of years. Despite all the evidence that the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain has incomparable value for its wilderness, wildlife and subsistence resources, the plan fails to reference or say it would conduct **any scientific study on the impacts.**

In the plan it calls for two massive teams of 150-160 workers, living in mobile camps that would be moved up to two miles every few days throughout the coastal plain by giant sleds, long-haul fuel tractors, fuelers, loaders and trucks. Working continuously in two 12-hour shifts every day from this December through May, these teams would cross the coastal plain in multiple 90,000-pound trucks that would send vibrations into the ground to map out oil and gas resources. That is 10,000 pounds heavier than the 18-wheeler trucks that traverse America's highways.

Seismic exploration does not belong in America's largest and wildest refuge any more than development belongs in Yellowstone Park or the Grand Canyon. Please stay informed about this issue – and watch for the official public comment period to open. We all need to raise our voices against this atrocious idea! For more information email lois@alaskawild.org

Matthew's Musings *continued from page 1*

Song

I had a dove and the sweet dove died;
And I have thought it died of grieving.
O, what could it grieve for? It's feet were tied,
With a silken thread of my own hand's weaving.
Sweet little red feet! Why would you die –
Why should you leave me, sweet bird! Why?
You lived alone on the forest-tree,
Why, pretty thing, could you not live with me?
I kissed you oft and gave you white peas;
Why not live sweetly, as in the green trees?

On Isle Royale the habitat was congruent with what our ancestors experienced during the long duration of hominid evolution. Only in modern times have our feet been tied by a silken thread; civilization's delicacies have entailed the loss of the forest green. It matters. To the dove inside each one of us, and to the birds and other creatures still trying to survive in a denuded and rapidly altered world.

I will keep up the fight, even with incongruent breath. My current priorities are preserving the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act. Please join me!

Tim Leahy Passed Away this Spring

by Bob Clarkson

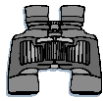
MRVAC lost a great friend and mentor for many birders with the recent death of Tim Leahy. Tim was an accomplished birder who, though he birded throughout the country and world, had a special fondness for the Minnesota River Valley, so close to his home in



Bloomington. Many of you may have met him during field trip outings down at the Old Cedar Bridge or at the Bass Ponds; Tim was an incessant birder and never shy. Anyone who would be around him would be sure to be told what it was that he was seeing out there, and he never hesitated to

ask others who seemed to have their scopes or binoculars trained on a particular location what it was that they were seeing. Birding was always a community activity when it came to Tim, and he never considered his latest outing complete unless he could talk to people about what he had seen.

Tim's first birding teacher was his mother and since he has passed on his love of birding as well as his passion for making bird lists to many including his grandson, Justin. The birding community will miss him.



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



Minnesota River Valley
Audubon Chapter
PO Box 20400
Bloomington MN 55420

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

September Bird Walks on the Refuge

Join us for a bird walk on one of the many refuge units and learn about some of the 220 bird species that stop at the refuge during their migration south. 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.

Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center

15865 Rapids Lake Rd. (was Carver Highlands Dr.)
Carver, MN 55315

Saturday, September 29 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Monday, October 8 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Bass Ponds

2501 86th St. East, Bloomington, MN 55425

Sunday, September 9 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Monday, September 17 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, September 25 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 6 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, October 14 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 27 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Monday, October 29 from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Central Minnesota Birding Days

Thursday & Friday, September 13-14, 2018, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

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

We will focus on McLeod and Meeker counties. Possible birding locations include Piepenburg Park & Lake, Stahl Lake, Lake Marion and Lake Ripley County parks, lakes Washington and Ripley, plus a few WMA's and water treatment ponds. Please contact Craig to register.

Ney Nature Center

Saturday, September 15, 2018, 8:30 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

On this walk we will explore the trails at the Ney Nature Center; expect to observe a nice variety of resident and migrant song birds. Please contact Craig to register.

Birding for Kids-Roberts Bird Sanctuary

Saturday, September 15, 2018, 10:00 am

Wes Nutgeren from Dodge Nature Preschool

One of the best times to hear and see birds is during fall migration. Join Wes Nutgeren, an experienced educator at Dodge Nature Preschool, on a guided bird walk especially for young people. Meet in the shelter next to the Peace Garden parking lot. Note: Some people park on Lake Harriet Parkway as a free alternative to this pay lot. This event is free and open to the public. People of all ages are welcome, including children accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Binoculars are not required, but if possible, bring your own!

Sherburne County Birding day

Thursday, September 27, 2018, 8:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

Much of our day will be spent exploring the Sherburne NWR, but there are also some other fun spots to bird in the county as well. These include Big and Fremont Lakes which may offer some interesting diving ducks, plus a couple other smaller parks and WMA's. For information or to register, please contact Craig.

Western Minnesota Birding Days

Thursday, Friday, October 11, 12, 2018, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

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

We will be birding in Lincoln and Lyon counties. Possible locations include Camden State Park, Garvin, Hole-in-the-Mountain county parks, some WPAs and WMAs. We will be searching for migrant waterfowl, sparrows and others. Please contact Craig to register.

Ney Nature Center & Sibley County Birding day

Thursday, October 25, 2018, 8:30 am

Craig Mandel 952-240-7647

We will start the morning with a walk at the Ney Nature Center, then cross in to Sibley County. Some of the locations we may check include High Island Creek County Park, Rush River County Park, Washington Titlow, High Island Lake, plus a number of WMAs and maybe even a sewage pond. Contact Craig to register.