



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

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www.MRVAC.org

August - September 2019

Josh Sweet, Trumpeter Editor
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Special Presentation on September 26

Birding and Seabird Research in Alaska's Bering Sea

presented by Joel Vos

Alaska is home to many incredible seabirds and can be a haven for rare vagrant sightings for any birder. Come hear about the seabird research and incredible birding experiences Joel participated in while working in the Pribilof and Aleutian Islands of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

An enthusiastic birder since his youth, Joel Vos is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Park Ranger at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Before starting at the Minnesota Valley in 2018, Joel previously worked at Savannah Coastal Refuges Complex near Savannah, Georgia, but started his career with the USFWS in 2012 at the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge in Homer, Alaska. Joel graduated from Saint Olaf College with a bachelor's degree (BA) in Environmental Studies, and received a graduate certificate in Environmental Education along with a master's degree in Education (MEd) from the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

When: Please join us on Thursday, September 26 from 7-7:30 PM to socialize over cookies. A brief business meeting followed by the featured speaker will begin at 7:30 PM. The meeting will conclude before 9:00 PM.

Where: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center at 3815 American Boulevard East in Bloomington. Take Highway 494 to 34th Avenue. Go south to American Boulevard; turn left and go two blocks. The Visitor Center will be on your right. Enter through the staff door found at the middle of the building.

Public Transit: Accessible by METRO Blue Line (Hiawatha Light Rail). The Visitor Center is a couple of blocks east of the American Boulevard stop.

Board Members Elected

submitted by the MRVAC Board of Directors

Ten candidates were chosen to serve on the Minnesota Valley Audubon Chapter's Board of Directors at the meeting on Thursday, May 23. The Board now consists of the following people who will serve during the 2019-2020 term.

Matthew Schaut, President
Steve Weston, Vice President
Walt Stull, Treasurer
Rob Daves, Secretary
Rita Baden, Director at Large
Greg Burnes, Director at Large
Lee Ann Landstrom, Director at Large
Ken Oulman, Director at Large
Monica Rauchwarter, Director at Large
Bob Williams, Director at Large

New Editor of The Trumpeter

by Josh Sweet, Trumpeter Editor

It is an honor and my pleasure to become the next newsletter editor of *The Trumpeter*. For those who do not know me, I am a bird enthusiast, MRVAC member, and spend my non-birding hours working for Three Rivers Park District at the Lowry Nature Center. I am a published writer for the *National Park Service Digest*, *The Greenway* of the Student Conservation Association, and *The Mountain Times* of North Carolina. In addition, I recently served as the editor of *The Ney News* of the Ney Nature Center.

Anne Hanley, the previous Trumpeter Editor, has done an exceptional job for almost two decades and I hope to follow in her footsteps as we continue to provide you with news, updates, and events related to wildlife and the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter. Anne deserves a big thank you from the entire MRVAC family.

If you have articles and events to contribute to *The Trumpeter*, please do not hesitate to send me an email at jhsweet0201@gmail.com. I look forward to publishing interesting articles for you to enjoy, to share, and to learn from.



MRVAC Chapter News

Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019

by Walt Stull, Treasurer

As with most years, MRVAC's financials were very positive for fiscal year 2019. We budgeted for \$14,500 in income and \$14,500 in expenses. Our actual income was \$20,437.91 and actual expenses were \$13,733.33. There were three reasons for the almost \$6000 in additional income. One was the receipt of over \$3000 in memorials, most of which was in memory of Jack Mauritz. The second was the receipt of an unexpected grant of \$1600 from the National Audubon Society thanks to Monica Rauchwarter. The third was because of a very successful year of field trips in which we received \$1200 more than we had budgeted for thanks to Craig Mandel. As a non-profit organization we budget to break even, but this year our income minus expenses is a positive \$6704.58.

Some of our greatest expenditures come from what we donate to groups affiliated with MRVAC and grants that we provide in support of several organizations that support our mission. This year we donated a total of \$625 to the American Bird Conservancy, Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary, Minnesota Environmental Partnership, Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, CURE (Clean Up the River Environment), the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, Friends of the Sax Zim Bog, and Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory. Each donation was typically in the \$50 to \$100 range. Grants this year totaled \$8650 and the recipients were the Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends (previously Refuge Friends Inc.), North Woods Audubon Chapter, the Ney Nature Center, MICC (Minnesota Independence College and Community), and the Red Headed Woodpecker Recovery Program. These grants are used by each organization primarily for environmental and educational purposes. The remaining \$4458.33 in expenses was spent on administrative costs, the website, speakers, newsletter, and a stipend for the student intern.

We ended the year with \$26,279.40 in our checking account and \$20,648.17 in four certificates of deposit for a total of \$46,927.57 in assets. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at mathemagicland@Q.com or (612) 889 3550.

MRVAC Intern, Tate Gregor

by Monica Rauchwarter, Director at Large



Tate Gregor, MRVAC Intern, was hired as part of the Audubon's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative. The goal was for underrepresented groups to play a role in engaging members of their communities in the appreciation and conservation of birds and their habitats.

Tate worked with the youth leaders from Bloomington Public School Office of Educational Equity. He shared his enthusiasm for songbirds and raptors with families in the Bloomington, Richfield, Coon Rapids, and Brooklyn Park communities at programs, festivals, and interpretive centers. Tate especially enjoyed helping children and their families learn to use binoculars and find out their "wingspan" in comparison to Minnesota raptors.



Want more from the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter?





Book Reviews by Mark Lystig

Monarchs and Milkweed

A Migrating Butterfly, a Poisonous Plant, and Their Remarkable Story of Coevolution.

By Anurag Agrawal

We may not be familiar with or pay attention to the many species of butterflies in North America, but most of us are probably familiar with Monarch butterflies, designated Minnesota's State Butterfly in 2000. We may also be familiar with milkweed, the plant which Monarchs eat. However, we may not know much more about the butterfly, the weed, or much about how their relationship came about.

Cornell biologist, Anurag Agrawal, teaches us how the weed and the butterfly have evolved over time – not in a symbiotic relationship beneficial to both – but in a war. The Monarch caterpillar eats only milkweed, and thus needs the plant to survive. Yet the butterfly does not pollinate or otherwise contribute to the plant. So the plant produces poisons to try to keep from being eaten by the caterpillar and other creatures. The poisonous latex produced by the plant may succeed in killing some of its attackers including Monarch caterpillars, but a successful Monarch caterpillar ingests and uses the same poisonous chemicals to protect itself from being eaten by other predators.

While the author explains much about the Monarch lifecycle from egg to caterpillar to pupa to chrysalis to butterfly, and from birth on a milkweed leaf through an epic migration to and from highlands in Mexico, the book is more than a treatise on a single butterfly and a single plant. This is also an introduction to evolutionary biology and an introduction to the scientific method. Agrawal is an interesting scientist and entertaining writer. A textbook, yes, but also a good read.

A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America

Second Edition

By Jeffrey Glassberg

This is a photographic field guide to the butterflies that you might see in North America. Jeffrey Glassberg is an adjunct Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Rice University and also a leader of butterfly tours throughout the Americas.

The pictures are beautiful. Even those of us who do not concentrate on butterflies might marvel at the diversity of shapes and colors, much like birding. There is a brief

introductory section about the book and butterfly identification, variations, and a description of the four life stages that butterflies go through (egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and adult). Also included are initial sections on flight periods, behavior, sources of the names of butterflies and plants, how the wing areas and body parts are identified, and explanations of the color codes of the book. These color codes go beyond the North American range maps to show where else the species might be found.

There are lines below the pictures to indicate the size of the butterfly. Most of the pictures are not to scale but they are large enough to help with identification. The book is divided into types of butterflies including swallowtails, whites and yellows, gossamerwings, metalmarks, brushfoots (e.g. Monarchs), and skippers (subdivided further to grass-skippers). Each description includes a photo with field marks, identification of the type of plant favored by the caterpillar of the butterfly, usual habitat where it might be found, the abundance during the year, and range maps. There is even an incomplete photographic index.

This is an identification guide. It is probably all you would need to identify a butterfly in the wild, but you will have to consult another of the author's books if you want to study further about each individual butterfly.

International Birding Excursions

with the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Costa Rica

February 6-16, 2020

San Jose, Costa Rica

Tour price with 10 participants: \$2825 + airfare
Highlight Birds: Sunbittern, Great Green Macaw, Umbrellabirds, and Resplendent Quetzal

Ecuador – Choco-Andes Region

November 4-13, 2020

Quito, Ecuador

Tour price with 7 participants: \$3175 + airfare
Highlight Birds: 30 species of hummingbirds and the rare Moss-backed Tanager

To learn more about a tour or to register, visit www.HolbrookTravel.com. Click on 'Join a Trip,' enter the location and dates above, and scroll to see trips that mention MRVAC in the title.

MRVAC Contact: Craig Mandel
(952) 240 7647 · EgretCMan@msn.com



Regional Events of Interest



International Owl Center
Held at the Houston Elementary School:
310 S. Sherman St. Houston, MN 55943

International Owl

Awareness Day Celebration

Saturday, August 3, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Meet six different species of live owls throughout the day during a variety of special programs. Besides the Owl Center's red morph Eastern Screech Owl, American Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl and Eurasian Eagle Owl, Quarry Hill Nature Center will bring a Northern Saw-whet Owl for a special morning program and Oxbow Park will bring a Barred Owl and gray morph Eastern Screech Owl for a special afternoon program. Enjoy vendors, owl-themed treats, and the Parade of Owls public art tour featuring 12 owl sculptures located throughout town. You can also buy a commemorative shirt featuring artwork by 9 year-old Muhammed Reza Kazemi from Iran while supplies last! Shirts may also be purchased on the Center's website. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$4 for ages 4-17, and free for ages 3 and under and IOC members. For more information, visit www.InternationalOwlCenter.org.



Lowry Nature Center
7025 Victoria Dr. Victoria, MN 55386

Raptors Up Close

Sunday, September 15, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Meet captive raptors and learn about amazing birds of prey. Cameras welcome. Drop in anytime. Free. All ages. www.ThreeRiversParks.org



Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory
3980 E. Skyline Pkwy. Duluth, MN 55804

Hawk Weekend Festival

Friday, September 20 – Sunday, September 22

Hawk Weekend is the annual festival held by 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 at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve. There will be a variety of field trips, hikes, programs, and activities for all ages! We're also excited to announce our Saturday evening guest speaker will be John W. Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. He will present "How Birds (including hawks!) Can Save the World"! www.HawkRidge.org



Lowry Nature Center
7025 Victoria Dr. Victoria, MN 55386

Bird Banding

Saturday, September 21, 9:00 AM – NOON

See wild songbirds safely trapped, studied, and tagged with numbered rings as part of international research. Please call (763) 694 7650 in advance if you are bringing 10+ people. Free. All ages. www.ThreeRiversParks.org



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

Dinner at the Lake

Life in the Middle of Nowhere
with Artic Explorer Lonnie Dupre
Saturday, September 21, 6:00 PM

After a wonderful dinner, Lonnie Dupre, Artic Explorer and mountaineer, will give us an overview of his life doing expeditions and "Living Simply". We'll learn about the challenges of climbing Denali, North America's highest peak solo and in winter, as well as expeditions around Greenland and to the North Pole. Join Lonnie as he shares life on the trail with special emphasis placed on setting and achieving goals, teamwork, overcoming obstacles and climate change. Breathtaking images, along with video, Artic gear and a variety of other props complement his presentation. Overnight lodging is available – call (320) 245 2648 to inquire. Adults: \$35; Children ages 5-12 years old: \$17. Reservations are required. Learn more and reserve online at www.Audubon-Center.org/calendar.



The Raptor Center
1920 Fitch Ave. Saint Paul, MN 55108

Fall Raptor Release

Saturday, September 28, 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Takes place at the Carpenter-St. Croix Valley Nature Center in Hastings, MN. See rehabilitated raptors released back to the wild and meet some of The Raptor Center's winged ambassadors. Children's activities and educational booths. Free. www.Raptor.umn.edu



MRVAC Programs and Events



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

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips.

All of the Refuge field trips are listed below, followed by Refuge addresses, and field trips to other locations in chronological order.

Refuge Bird Watching Treks (August-Sept.)

Saturday, Aug. 3, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds
 Monday, Aug. 5, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds
 Sunday, Aug. 11, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds
 Saturday, Aug. 24, 8:00-10:30 AM, Rapids Lake
 Sunday, Aug. 25, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds
 Saturday, Sept. 7, 8:00-10:30 AM, Rapids Lake
 Sunday, Sept. 8, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds
 Monday, Sept. 16, 8:00-10:30 AM, Rapids Lake
 Sunday, Sept. 29, 8:00-10:30 AM, Bass Ponds

Join us for a bird walk on one of the Refuge's many units. Learn which species of birds use the Refuge as a migratory stop and those that call the Refuge home for the summer nesting season. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, your favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Craig Mandel, Volunteer Refuge Naturalist.

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Field Trip Locations & Addresses

MVNWR Bloomington Visitor Center
 3815 American Blvd. E., Bloomington, MN

Bass Ponds Trailhead
 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington, MN

Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center
 15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver, MN
 (formerly Carver Highlands Dr.)

Miesville Ravine, Dakota County Park

Sunday, August 18, 2019, 8:00 AM
 Steve Weston – (612) 978 3993

The group will hike some of the trails at this rarely visited Dakota County Park. Birds that have been seen include Cerulean Warbler, Wood Thrush, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Scarlet Tanager and Louisiana Waterthrush. Please contact Steve for more information.

Southern Minnesota Birding Days

Thursday-Friday, September 12-13, 2019, 7:00 AM
 Craig Mandel – (952) 240 7647

\$25 per MRVAC member; \$35 per non-member

This trip will be based out of Rochester and will cover birding locations in Olmstead and Fillmore counties. Here are some of the locations that we may have time to visit: Izaak Walton Wetlands, Quarry Hill Nature Center, Oxbow Park, Geothetic WMA, Forestville-Mystery Cave SP, Kappers Ponds and the Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center. This should be a good time of year to search for migrants in these areas. Please contact Craig to register.

Chisago County Birding Day

Thursday, September 26, 2019, 8:00 AM
 Craig Mandel – (952) 240 7647

Wild River and Interstate State Parks, Carlos Avery WMA and Allemansratt Wilderness Park are a few of the locations we will spend time at on the single day trip to Chisago County. With luck, there will be some late migrant song birds and some early waterfowl. With the variety of habitats we will cover there should be a diverse mix of birds to observe. Please contact Craig to register.

Central Minnesota Birding Days

Thursday-Friday, October 3-4, 2019, 7:00 AM
 Craig Mandel – (952) 240 7647

\$25 per MRVAC member; \$35 per non-member

On this trip we will spend time birding in Hubbard and Cass Counties. Some of the locations we may explore include Deep Portage Learning Center, Walker WTP, Federal Dam, Cass and Leech Lakes, Paul Bunyan State Forest and the Lake Alice Bog. In early October there are a lot of possibilities for sparrows, waterfowl and some later shorebirds. Please contact Craig to register.

MRVAC Meeting & Special Presentation

Thursday, October 24, 2019, 7:00 PM
 MVNWR Bloomington Visitor Center

**“Tales from the Bird Chick”
 with Sharon Stiteler, National Park Ranger**

Come hear the latest rambunctious tales from the Bird Chick. You would never guess the improbable bird she encountered in Minnesota. But, even better is what she wore so to not stand out in her quest for another bird. Rated PG-13.



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

Minnesota River Valley
Audubon Chapter
Membership Form

To join the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter (MRVAC), please complete this form and mail it with your \$15 check (made payable to MRVAC) to:

Membership Coordinator
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter
PO Box 20400
Bloomington, MN 55420

Yes! Please enroll me as a member of the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter. I will receive the *Trumpeter*, MRVAC's newsletter, along with notifications of chapter meetings and field trips. (Memberships are renewable annually.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Check one:

- I would like to receive the *Trumpeter* newsletter via email instead of by USPS mail.
- I would like to receive a printed copy of the *Trumpeter* newsletter by USPS mail.

Volunteering (optional):

- I am interested in volunteering for MRVAC. Please contact me.

Areas of Interest:

- Field Trips
- Conservation and Environmental Action
- Habitat Restoration Work
- Activities with Children
- Chapter Administration
- Other: _____

The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Thank you for joining!

Checklists for Print

courtesy of Bob Ekblad

The Checklist of the Birds of Minnesota, which many of us use in the field and at home, is now available to download and print online. The checklists will continue to be compiled by Olmsted County birding guru, Bob Ekblad. The simple change comes in the form of how you can now obtain your updated checklists.

Previous checklists were made available by sending a payment through the mail that would cover the costs of printing and mailing. To avoid these costs, you can now download and print the file in PDF format from your own computer, tablet, or smartphone.

There is no fee for using the design which Bob will continue to create. The checklist will include the latest names and taxonomic order established annually by the AOS (American Ornithological Society) and the ABA (American Birding Association). The list will also continue to include the regular, casual, and accidental species assignments as identified by the MOURC (Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee) that are assigned every five years.

You can find the link to download a checklist on Bob's website, www.Birding-Minnesota.com. For those who may not be technologically savvy, Bob has also provided helpful suggestions on how to print and fold your checklists. In Bob's own words, "enjoy the checklists and good birding."