



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

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www.MRVAC.org

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Special Presentation May 23

Open to the Public

Birding Trinidad & Tobago from Asa Wright

by Martyn Kenefick, Asa Wright Nature Center

Home to 482 species of birds, Trinidad & Tobago are an introduction to the natural history of South America. Get a great taste of tropical birding in Trinidad's rain forests, beaches and mangroves, as well as on Tobago's huge protected preserves. The Asa Wright Nature Centre is a jumping off spot for most field trips, itself set in 200 acres of forest and home to more than 170 bird species; more than 40 species can be observed from the verandah before breakfast! The Centre is a not for profit trust, and eco-tourism funds the conservation and education programs. For nearly 40 years of the Centre's 50 plus year existence, Caligo Ventures has been the booking agent for North America. Fully committed to the conservation and education mission of the Centre, Caligo is pleased to sponsor Martyn's visit to celebrate and highlight this bucket-list birding destination.

Martyn Kenefick moved to Trinidad in 1999 and spent the next 15 years working as a bird tour leader for a number of companies, guiding in Trinidad & Tobago and many other countries. In 2007, he became the main author of the Birds of Trinidad & Tobago Field Guide. Martyn joined the Board of Asa Wright Nature Centre in 2015.

When: Please join us Thursday, May 24 from 7:00-7:30 pm to socialize over cookies. A brief business meeting including the board of director' elections 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 3815 American Blvd E, Bloomington. Take Hwy 494 to 34th Ave. Go south to American Blvd; turn left and go 2 blocks. Center will be on your right. Enter through the door 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 Blvd stop.

MRVAC Potluck & Presentation 6/27

Thursday, June 27, 5:30 pm

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
3815 American Blvd E, Bloomington, MN

Please join us for a guided bird walk, a pot-luck picnic, and a great presentation on spiders.

- 5:30 pm = Short guided **bird walk**. Bring your binoculars – some loaner pairs will be available.
- 6:15 pm = **Pot-luck dinner**. Please bring some food to share and your own plate, utensils and glass or cup as we are aiming for a waste-free evening. MRVAC will supply beverages.
- 7:00 pm = Move to the auditorium for the evening's **presentation** by Monica Rauchwarter on the spiders of Minnesota. Much like birds, spiders play many roles in nature. They are builders, predators, prey, and even bio-indicators which help scientists understand the health and stability of an ecosystem. This presentation will review common spiders, where they can be found, and what they can teach us about Minnesota habitats. Monica Rauchwarter is a MRVAC board member, interpretive naturalist and spider enthusiast.

The bird walk, potluck and talk are open to anyone – members, friends, prospective members and everyone who has ever seen a spider.

Elect 2019-2020 Board Members May 23

Please join us at the meeting on Thursday May 23 to vote on the slate of nine candidates for the Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter board of directors. At present, here's the list, but there may be last minute changes;

President: Matthew Schaut

Vice President: Steve Weston

Treasurer: Walt Stull

Secretary: Rob Daves

Members at Large (5): Ken Oulman, Monica Rauchwarter, Bob Williams, **(2) open**

MRVAC Chapter News



Ney Nature Center Receives Grant

by Josh Sweet, Ney Nature Center

Located along the Minnesota River Valley in Henderson, the Ney Nature Center boasts over 400 acres of prairie, freshwater, and forest habitats. The nature center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to inspire appreciation and respect for nature. The organization operates in all four seasons and provides environmental education and outdoor recreation activities to the public.

When heading out for a hike at the Ney Nature Center, visitors have the opportunity to view warblers, waterfowl, shorebirds, sparrows, and raptors. A few notable species that were seen at the nature center last year include a Summer Tanager, Sora, cuckoos, and Blue-winged Warblers.



Juv. Red-shouldered Hawk

To promote birding education and to continue to search for notable species with students of all ages, the Ney Nature Center applied for grant funding from MRVAC. The nature center is proud to announce that it was chosen to receive funding and is thrilled to partner with such an incredible organization. The Ney Nature Center appreciates the support from the Audubon chapter immensely.

MRVAC grant funding has been used to purchase ten pairs of Vortex Diamondback binoculars and one Vortex Diamondback spotting scope. The equipment will be put to use at public programs and group field trips all year. Spring programs are now available to view at neycenter.org and include birding programs for homeschool classes, scout groups, senior citizens, as well as the general public. In addition, the newly formed **Youth Birding Club** begins at the end of April and gives students ages 8-18 the opportunity to learn more about bird identification techniques with other students who have similar interests. Similar to MRVAC birding programs, beginners are always welcome at all birding programs at the Ney Nature Center.

The Ney Nature Center is also a great place to embark on an unguided bird hike on your own or with your friends and family. Whether you plan to travel down into the ravine to search for herons and thrushes or to the historic homestead to look for sparrows and towhees, the nature center has a variety of avian habitats to explore. The staff and the birds at the Ney Nature Center look forward to greeting you!

Changes Ahead for November Auction

By Monica Rauchwarter, Board Member at Large

The November Holiday Auction fundraiser for the past several years been held at the Refuge Visitor Center. Going forward, the auction will move, probably to Richardson Nature Center in Hyland Park, Bloomington. The MRVAC board is also discussing whether to move the event to a different day and time.

We'd be very interested in any opinions you have regarding a convenient time. Would a morning or an afternoon event on a weekend day be good? What about during the day on a weekday? As traffic gets heavier on 494, it takes longer to reach the Visitor Center during the height of a Thursday evening rush hour. Does that keep you away?

Regarding the date, what about earlier in the year? The traditional date was the 3rd Thursday of November with the idea that people might purchase holiday gifts for friends and family. In several recent Novembers, we have experienced bad weather, which we assume prevents some people from attending. What about moving the auction to October or some other month? Please email any comments or suggestions to

mrauchwarter@gmail.com

anne_hanley90@hotmail.com

Register at neycenter.org for any of these:

Youth Birding Club @ Ney Nature Center

3 Tuesdays from 4-6 pm: April 30, May 7 & May 14
Learn about bird identification techniques and search for different bird species with binoculars and a spotting scope; equipment provided. Ages 8-18. \$9 per member or \$15 per non-member includes all three sessions. Register online by April 28th. Reservations required.

Flowers & Feathers @ Ney Nature Center

Saturday, May 4th 9 -11 am

Explore and identify migratory birds and wildflowers on the same guided hike! All ages. \$3 per member or \$5 per non-member; \$9 per member family of 3+ or \$15 per non-member family of 3+. Register online by May 2nd. Reservations required.

Ney Senior Learning Series: Beginner Birding

Date TBD - Check neycenter.org (507) 357 8580

Designed for adults interested in learning more about wildlife, history, and conservation issues. In May, learn about bird identification techniques and search for different bird species with binoculars and a spotting scope. All equipment provided. Lunch included. Ages 50+. \$10 per member or \$12 per non-member. Reservations required. Please indicate any dietary needs when registering.



Regional Opportunities to Get Outside

Refuge News & Urban Birding Festival

By Joel Voss, MN Valley NWR liaison with MRVAC

Believe it or not, springtime will eventually turn over to summer this year. With the snow melted off, and the river eventually returning to its banks, staff at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge are gearing up for research, habitat restoration, and exciting public programming.

The last few springs, staff at the Bloomington headquarters and visitor center have been fortunate to watch raptors migrating through and hunting in the parking lot prairie habitat! Most recently, a juvenile Red-tailed Hawk has made it a habit to wait out prey from on top of the light posts. With a powerful launch from its perch, to a perfect quiet glide into the grasses, it returns to its favored perch to enjoy a meal.

While these hawks are common for many of us in the metro area (we get so used to seeing them waiting on street lights over our highways, don't we?), so many visitors to the Refuge may have never seen a raptor before. The incredible opportunity to see wildlife right here in the backyard of the Twin Cities is a rare gift for our city-dwelling, human neighbors. It's exciting to have someone come to visit, and then show them the great variety of birds we see right here, just moments away from a busy shopping trip or flight across the globe.

One of those opportunities to share our passion for birds and their habitats is coming right up! Join us **Saturday, May 18** to celebrate the **Urban Birding Festival** with free, family-friendly activities throughout the day. Visit the Bloomington Visitor Center anytime from 9am-4pm to enjoy bird-themed crafts and trivia, learn about bird-friendly practices and bird identification, and observe our feathered friends through binoculars and spotting scopes.

Interested in **volunteering** with us? We could use your help with events, staffing the information desk, trail rangers, biological research, habitat restoration, and education programs. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Innoye-Leas at 952-858-0724, or email MinnesotaValley@fws.gov.

Spring Warbler Watching in BWCA

Recommended by Mary & Michael Vanderford

We're spreading the word about spring birding at Kawishiwi Lodge at the end of Fernburg Rd. We had a wonderful time there last year; it's quiet, trees are not fully leafed out in late May and the screened porches are perfect for watching loons, eagles and warblers in the nearby brush. www.elycanoerentals.com 218-365-5487

The Nature Conservancy Bird Blitz

The Nature Conservancy's Minnesota-North Dakota-South Dakota chapter is participating in an organization-wide "Birding Challenge." The goal is to count as many species of birds as possible May 17 on lands and waters protected by the Conservancy. We invite all interested birders to help us document the bird species on our chapter's preserves. The count occurs over a 24-hour period and participation can occur at any point and for any length of time on **May 17, 2019**.

To participate in the event please contact the Conservancy's Marissa Ahlering via email at mahlering@tnc.org.

To determine where you'd like to bird for this challenge, check out our preserves in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota

Audubon Center of the North Woods' 50th Anniversary Celebration!

Join us to help commemorate the Audubon Center of the North Woods' first half century during the June 14-16 weekend of reunion, remembrance, reflection and recreation in Sandstone MN, on Grindstone Lake!

June 14-16 - For ACNW alumni and donors, we've planned a special weekend that kicks off with socializing on Friday night and ends after breakfast on Sunday morning. Lodging and camping packages are available (that include all meals, including Saturday's dinner), as well as a la carte meals for purchase for campers. Registration required.

June 15 - an 'Open House' day free for everyone, filled with activities such as High Ropes Course, Canoeing, Archery, Climbing Wall, Campus Tours, Forestry Hikes, and Open Barn. Lunch is available for purchase.

Evening of June 15 - a special 50th Anniversary Dinner at the Lake. Reservations required.

Visit www.audubon-center.org/50th for more information or call 320-245-2648, ext. 101

Raptor Center Tours

Saturdays/Sundays -- Raptors of Minnesota program, every weekend day at 1pm. At this hour-long program, you will see several raptors up close and out of their enclosures and receive a tour of The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota, 1920 Fitch Avenue, St. Paul, 55108



Conservation

Burnsville Native Plant Market



Help birds, butterflies and bees by growing native plants! Native wildflowers, ferns and grasses will be on sale from multiple vendors at this farmer's market style event. Some vendors only accept cash or

checks. Event held rain or shine. Learn more at www.burnsvillemn.gov/nativeplants.

Date: Saturday, **May 18** from 9 am – noon

Location: Parking lot across the street from City Hall (100 Civic Center Pkwy.)

Who: Open to everyone (Burnsville and non-Burnsville residents).

Hennepin Country Green Notes

Adopt-a-Drain Program Launches in the Twin Cities

Residents in the metro area can help protect area lakes, rivers, and wetlands by adopting a local storm drain and committing to keep it clear of leaves, grass clippings, trash, and other debris through the changing seasons. The simple act of sweeping up around storm drains protects local lakes and rivers by preventing pollution from entering our shared waterways.

The program is coordinated by Clean Water MN, a coalition of local agencies and organizations that Hennepin County is a member of working together to inspire people to take action to protect water.

Sign up to adopt a storm drain at adopt-a-drain.org. Simply create an account with your name and address to claim your storm drain. Once you've signed up, you'll receive tips on how to clean up safely.

Fix-It Clinics

Instead of tossing broken household items, get them repaired at a Fix-It Clinic! Bring in small household appliances, clothing, electronics, mobile devices and more and receive free guided assistance from volunteers with repair skills to disassemble, troubleshoot and fix their items.

Upcoming Fix-It Clinics are scheduled for:

Saturday, **May 11** from noon to 4 p.m. at The Works Museum, 9740 Grand Avenue South, Bloomington

Saturday, **June 8** from 1 to 5 p.m. at Utepils Brewing Company, 225 Thomas Avenue North 700, Minneapolis

<https://www.hennepin.us/fixitclinic>

Holistic Design with Native Plants

Wild Ones monthly meeting Wednesday **May 8**, 2019

After a brief introduction to how to design with native plants, Nathalie Shanstrom will use a range of case studies to illustrate by example how to design with native plants to:

- maximize sustainability and ecological function
- draw out the beauty of regional landscapes,
- create functional spaces that foster healthy, invigorating, meaningful connections between people and their environment.

A range of examples of varying scales, context, and site uses will be included to show how the design process can vary from site to site.

The meeting will be held at the Eden Prairie Community Center –

16700 Valley View Road, Eden Prairie, MN 55346.

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

7 pm social time, 7:20 pm program

All meetings free and open to the public



*International Owl Center
Events in Houston MN*

Breakfast with the Owls

Saturday, **June 29**, 8:30 – 11:30 AM, Houston, MN

Enjoy a locally sourced artisan breakfast, select a piece of outstanding artwork from our international children's owl art contest to take home with you, and bid on a great selection of auction items at this annual capital fundraiser for the International Owl Center. Funds raised will be used to continue site acquisition for the future home of the International Owl Center. \$75/person. Go to www.InternationalOwlCenter.org to register.

Owology 401 at Intn'l Owl Center

Thursday, **July 4**, 12:30 – 4:30 PM, Houston, MN

You won't find another opportunity like this anywhere else! Explore the intricate details of owl anatomy while dissecting an owl in a small group. Each participant will dissect a different species, creating a rare opportunity to see the significant differences between owl species side-by-side. Species dissected will likely include Snowy, Great Gray, Great Horned, Barred, Eastern Screech-, Long-eared, and Northern Saw-whet Owls, but could also include Ferruginous Pygmy Owl. Cost is \$100 for non-members and \$75 for members. Limit 6 participants. Register at www.InternationalOwlCenter.org.



Bird-a-Thon Challenge

By Walt Stull, MRVAC Treasurer

Who: You, with a group or alone

What: Birding to raise money for MRVAC to fund grants

When: Any day between May 1, 2019 and May 15, 2019

Where: Anywhere in the world (this could be an opportunity for that birding trip you always wanted to take)

How: Sign up sponsors. Choose a day. Bird any time between 12:01am and 11:59pm. Bird alone, in a group, or both. Submit all donations to Walt Stull by June 1, 2019.

Some Helpful Tips:

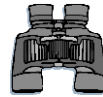
1. Don't be afraid to ask! Most people are reluctant to ask for donations, but it is surprising how many people are willing to help. This is especially true when they understand how the money will be used. Let potential sponsors know that they can pledge a flat rate, or to make it more of a challenge, encourage them to pledge on a per bird species basis.
2. Plan your route! Pay attention to the latest reports on MOU, e-bird, and Facebook. The best results are achieved if you can visit a variety of habitats on a nice day.
3. When you collect your pledges, share your birding day with your sponsors! Most will enjoy hearing about your day, especially any highlights. Making them part of your experience will help in asking for repeat sponsorships in future years.
4. Be certain to use a 2019 Birdathon Sponsor Pledge Form which will help you track who your donors are and how much they have pledged.

Forms can be obtained from our website <https://mrvac.org/?s=bird-a-thon> or by contacting Walt Stull at 612-889-3550 or mathemagicland@Q.com.

All donations that you collect should be submitted to Walt Stull by June 1, 2019. It is best to give the donations directly to Walt at the general meeting (4th Thursday – May 23rd). If that is not possible, mail them to MRVAC at PO Box 20400, Bloomington, MN 55420.

*Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Field trip locations & addresses

Bloomington Visitor Center,
3815 American Blvd. E., Bloomington,
Bass Ponds,
2501 86th St. E., Bloomington
Rapids Lake Education and Visitor Center,
15865 Rapids Lake Rd, Carver,
(formerly Carver Highlands Dr.),



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

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

All the Refuge trips are immediately below, followed by field trips to other locations, in chronological order

Refuge Bird Watching Treks: May-July 2019

Sun, May 5, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Tues, May 7, 8:00-10:30 am, Rapids Lake Educ & VC
Sun, May 12, 8:00-10:30 am, Bloomington Visitor C
Sun, May 19, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Sat, Jun 1, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Mon, Jun 10, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Sat, June 29, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Sat, July 6, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Mon, July 15, 8:00-10:30 am, Bass Ponds
Sat, July 27, 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. *See addresses below, left.

Southern Minnesota Birding Days

Albert Lea Thur-Fri, May 2-3, 2019, 7:00 am

Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647

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

We will visit a variety of habitats within Faribault and Freeborn Counties. Some of the locations we will likely visit include Geneva Lake, Myre Big Island State Park, White Woods & Phi's County Parks, Walnut Lake and a few other WMA's. Please contact Craig to register.

Crex Meadows State Wildlife Area

Saturday, May 4, 2019, 9 am – 3 pm

Minit Mart 639 State Rd 70 Grantsburg, WI

Bart Anderson - 612-719-6103

Please join us for birding at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area, the largest wildlife sanctuary in Wisconsin. Carpool from Panera Bread in Burnsville at 6:30am, or meet at the Grantsburg Minit Mart 639 State Road 70 at 9 am. Participants can either bring food and beverages or purchase them at the Minit Mart. Note - besides the Refuge headquarters, there are restrooms on the north end of the Refuge.

Hok-Si-La Warbler Watching

Saturday, May 11, 2019 7:30 am

2500 U.S. Hwy 61, Lake City

Steve Weston - 612-978-3993

Join us for this traditional field trip (30+ years). We never know what we will find. Meet at Hok-Si-La Park north of Lake City. Bring a lunch, if you want to stay for the afternoon's birds. Moderate effort – some walking on trails. No reservations needed.



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

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

See page 5 for the May, June & July field trips on the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and more regional May bird walks.

Carver Park Reserve

Monday, May 13, 2019, 7:00 am
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647

Carver Park reserve is an excellent birding location, with a nice variety of habitats. Join us for this early morning walk at the peak of spring migration. On past spring trips to Carver Park reserve, we have observed over 140 species of birds, including 14 species of sparrows and 23 species of warblers. Each year is a little different, so join us to find out what surprises are in store this year. Contact Craig to register for this trip.

Central Minnesota Birding Days

Thurs-Fri, May 16-17, 2019, 6:00 am Wadena
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647

\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members
On this trip we will spend time birding in Wadena and Todd counties. Some of the locations we may explore include, Blueberry Lake, Old Wadena County Park, Sunnybrook Park, Twin Lakes Public Boat Access, Dower Lake Park, Staples WMA and a couple water treatment plants. Waterfowl, shorebirds, sparrows and warblers are all possible in these areas at this time of year. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

Dakota County Prairie Birds-Schaar's Bluff

Sunday, June 2, 2012, 7am
Schaar's Bluff Picnic Area-8395 127th St. E Hastings
Steve Weston – 612-978-3993

After a short hike of Scaar's Bluff Picnic Area, we will drive the "prairies" of Dakota County in search of grassland and other species. Except for walking in the picnic area, the effort level will be easy, birding at road side stops. Just show up. No reservations needed. Bring a lunch if you want to continue into the afternoon.

NE Minnesota Birding Days-Moose Lake

Thurs-Fri, June 6-7, 2019, 6:00 am
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647
\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members

On this trip, we will be birding in Carlton and Pine Counties. Some of the locations we may explore include Moose Lake, Banning and St. Croix State Parks, the Nemadji & Fond Du Lac State Forests and maybe a couple of sewage ponds. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

Miesville Ravine Dakota County Park

Sunday, June 9, 2019, 7:30 am
27970 Orlando Trail, Cannon Falls (north parking lot)
Steve Weston - 612-978-3993

Join us to explore Dakota County's least known county park. Target birds include Cerulean Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher, Scarlet Tanager, and Yellow Billed Cuckoo. Bring a lunch if you want to stay for the afternoon's birds. Moderate effort – walking on trails. No reservations needed.

Central Minnesota Birding Days-Litchfield

Thurs-Fri, July 11-12, 2019, 6:00 am
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647
\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members.

On this Litchfield-based trip, we will be birding in Kandiyohi and Meeker Counties. Some of the locations we may explore include the Litchfield Nature Center, Lake Ripley and Lake Washington, Sibley State Park and the Dassel & Darwin city parks. On this trip we'll be searching for birds that nested in the area and some early fall migrants. Please contact Craig for more information & to register