



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

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Josh Sweet, Trumpeter Editor
jhsweet0201@gmail.com

Audubon Spotlight: Diana Braithwaite Is Shaping the Next Generation

By Khanh (Kay) Nguyen

Republished from the National Audubon Society

“Years of working with underrepresented communities helps the Audubon On Campus program manager engage people overlooked by conservation.”

Diana Braithwaite has been a familiar face among college students and underserved communities for years. Before she joined the Audubon On Campus team in 2019, Braithwaite developed programs and organized resources that would help students from underrepresented communities, women, and veterans break into the field of digital advertising. More recently, Braithwaite taught students how to organize on their campuses in an effort to register their peers to become potential blood stem cell or bone marrow donors. That effort is particularly important because there's a large discrepancy in the availability of compatible donors across racial backgrounds: African Americans only have a 23 percent chance of finding a bone marrow donor due to lack of a large pool of compatible donors; white Americans have a 77 percent chance of finding a suitable donor.

But while she enjoyed organizing college students, the realities of working on behalf of people with serious illness took a toll. “When you start losing patients who couldn't find a match, it became very, very hard work,” Braithwaite says. As she began thinking about the next step in her career, she reflected on her work at the bone marrow donor registry and realized that she still wanted to directly engage younger people from many different backgrounds and communities. So where would her expertise of working with overlooked communities be best suited?

Braithwaite, knowing that the mainstream conservation and environmental movements had a middling track record in engaging exactly the communities she had experience with, realized that she could make the Audubon On Campus program both successful and more inclusive.

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Upcoming Presentations

Instead of our monthly MRVAC member meetings, virtual presentations will resume on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM on Zoom. Everyone is welcome to attend these virtual talks, but pre-registration will be required. Stay tuned for more details to come via email and on the **MRVAC website** over the next two weeks.

Thursday, September 24, 2020, 7:00 PM
Virtual Presentation on Zoom

“The Pantanal Region of Brazil”
Lee Ann Landstrom, MRVAC Board Member



The Pantanal region of Brazil, like Africa, has savannah grasslands – but they're seasonally flooded ranches! The “Big Five” animals can be seen: jaguars, giant river otters, maned wolves, tapirs, and giant anteater. Discover unique landscapes, wildlife and birds of this lesser-known wildlife haven. Lee Ann Landstrom is a retired nature center director, international traveler, and MRVAC Board Member.

Thursday, October 22, 2020, 7:00 PM
Virtual Presentation on Zoom

**“The Love Lives of Birds:
Courting and Mating Rituals”**
Laura Erickson, Duluth Author



Laura Erickson's new book, *The Love Lives of Birds: Courting and Mating Rituals*, will be coming out on October 27. From the lifelong faithfulness of the American Crow to the Dalliances of the Eastern Bluebird, from the House Wren's Casanova approach to love to Black-capped Chickadees living in a Jane Austen world, courtship, mating, and parenting differ dramatically among birds. Join Laura for a romance-fueled romp through the love lives of 35 species, exploring the diversity of avian approaches to pairing up.



Audubon Spotlight: Diana Braithwaite

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Diana Braithwaite
Photo: Luke Franke

The Audubon On Campus program provides college students with the framework, tools, training, and support to mobilize their peers and communities in environmental activism. By establishing a campus chapter, becoming an Audubon Ambassador to push advocacy efforts on campus, or certifying an existing student club as an Audubon affiliate, students can make meaningful change in their communities. Braithwaite and her colleague Gustavo Figueroa provide

guidance on getting the chapter up and running as well as hosting projects and events such as bird walks or advocacy days. Thanks to the Audubon On Campus team's efforts in redefining the program's place within Audubon and making sure students and chapters receive the support they need from the network, Audubon On Campus now has more than 125 campus chapters and affiliates in 20 states.

"My favorite part of working with college students is connecting them with opportunities they did not know existed as careers," says Braithwaite. "Many college students are unaware of the impact they can make on the world before leaving school. Learning to organize around a cause while also educating your peers to do the same is extremely impactful."

Braithwaite attributes much of the program's success to Audubon's focus on reaching the students traditionally left behind by the conservation movement and the institutions that serve them. Braithwaite specifically engaged students and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), tribal colleges, and minority-serving institutions like Spelman College, Morehouse College, and Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia.

Braithwaite also understands the importance of recognizing students from community colleges, whose work engaging schools and organizations beyond their campuses is overshadowed by similar efforts at big-name universities. "I have found my work with community college students to be some of the most exciting and impactful," says Braithwaite. "Students enrolled in community colleges enjoy raising awareness about causes that are important to them not only with peers but also family, friends, and colleagues."

When Braithwaite reflects on the success she's had with the Audubon On Campus program, and especially her success working with students at HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions, one major theme emerged: the need to listen and work with what you learn.

"As we start having conversations with these HBCU and minority-serving institutions, I notice that the students and faculty members are so open to learning and collaborating on project ideas that come out of the discussions, which is just really exciting," Braithwaite says. "When you're working with folks that do not yet have a relationship with Audubon, it takes more listening than speaking to keep communication open and frame our work in a way that resonates with their communities."

Editors Note: The closest Audubon on Campus chapter to the Twin Cities is located at Grinnell College in Iowa. There are no campus chapters in Minnesota at this time.

In Memory of Dick Duerre

by Bob Williams, Board Member



Dick Duerre
Photo: Star Tribune

Dick Duerre, longtime environmental advocate, passed away on July 14th, 2020 at the age of 91. He is survived by his loving wife Harriet Duerre, 3 children and 2 grandchildren. He was born in Rochester, MN and grew up in Wabasha, MN. After he graduated from high school he served in the US Army during the Korean War. He then attended and graduated from Hamline University. He worked as a manufacturer's representative for most of his career.

He served as President of the Minnesota Brain Injury Association and actively supported Habitat for Humanity. He was one of the founders of the Burnsville Environmental Council and was instrumental in helping establish the Burnsville Park System. He was a Co-founder of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and was the first to propose the idea to the Minnesota Congressional delegation. He was active in the Bush Lake Izaak Walton League and spent years helping to monitor water quality at Crystal Lake in Burnsville, Black Dog Lake and the Minnesota River. Memorials can be sent to Friends of the Minnesota Valley, PO Box 20697, Bloomington, MN 55420.



Chapter News

Field Trip Update

by Craig Mandel, Field Trip Coordinator

Due to current social distancing guidelines in place, there are no local field trips scheduled for the months of September and October.

Additionally, the November 4-11, 2020 – Ecuador Choco Andes Birding Tour has been cancelled due to the uncertainty of international travel. There are plans to reschedule the tour, but no dates have been set at this time. If you would be interested in joining this or other international tours, please contact me and I will add you to the list of potential participants for these tours.

Please direct any questions about MRVAC field trips to Craig over the phone at (952)-240-7647.

New CBC Coordinators

by Steve Weston, Board Member

The new Bloomington Christmas Bird Count co-coordinators starting with the 2020 count are: Liz Stanley, who will organize the surveyors, and Rick Magee, who will compile the data. Information on how you can join the count on Saturday, December 19, 2020 will be published in the next edition along with contact information for the co-coordinators.

Refuge Specific Information

Republished from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is working with federal, state, and local public health authorities to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic. As an agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is following a three-phased approach to re-opening that is modeled on the *White House Guidelines for Opening Up America Again*.

Currently we are in Phase 1 of re-opening, and some staff are returning to limited field and maintenance work. The lands and waters of the Refuge are open for public enjoyment, *however offices and visitor centers will remain closed*. We anticipate re-opening the Visitor Center during Phase 3, on a timeline that will depend on state and local conditions and may move forward or backward in phases to adapt to current conditions.

We are committed to increasing access to refuge facilities as quickly as possible when risks to the health and safety of our visitors, staff, and volunteers can be safely mitigated. We are looking forward to seeing everyone again in-person as soon as it's safe to do so and wish everyone healthy and enjoyable adventures outdoors!

My Recent Experience with Monarchs & Milkweed

by Anne Hanley

I was checking some of the common milkweed plants in the front yard for monarch eggs, I discovered a tiny monarch caterpillar about 1/3 of an inch long. I've occasionally seen a full grown one, but had never seen tiny ones before. This prompted me to do a little research on the egg-to-caterpillar part of the monarch life cycle. There's a lot more great information about the life cycle and habitat needs if you **click here**.

- Adult females generally lay one egg per plant. This means one monarch will need to find 300-500 milkweed plants to lay all her eggs. We have 35-40 milkweed plants in our yard, which is just 10% of what one monarch requires.
- Eggs hatch within 3-4 days. Caterpillars go through 5 instars where they shed their 'skins' and double in size. This takes 10-14 days. (I didn't realize the stages passed so quickly, but then I didn't have monarchs in my elementary school classrooms.)
- Larval predation in the first couple instars is mostly by insects. They also can die getting gummed up in milkweed sap. Studies suggest that only 3-11% of the first through second instar larvae survive.

What if you don't have a yard? You could grow annual plants like lantana, verbena, zinnia, cosmos and Mexican sunflower in containers. These will provide nectar for adult monarchs.



Monarch Caterpillar; Photo: Anne Hanley



The Green Scene

Native Plant Notes

by Anne Hanley

I spent a lot more time doing yard work this spring while we were staying home. I suppose it's obvious, but when I spend more time in the yard, I see more: a tiny painted turtle just out of a nest, spiders carrying egg sacks around, bees digging nest holes.

I was pleased to find some native plants hidden amongst the non-native groundcover I was removing. I started by removing a patch of the non-native groundcover around each native plant, so the natives don't get smothered. As I get more time and energy, I'll continue to remove more of the (bad) groundcover. When weeding the native plant gardens, I also found child/volunteer wild petunia, hoary vervain, golden alexander and yellow coneflower that started from seed or rhizomes which I was able to transplant to fill in blank spots. It doesn't help my yard's diversity, but I can move these plants that are getting crowded out by neighbors so they will be more likely to bloom and thrive. No trip to the nursery needed.

If you are thinking about adding more plants to your yard fill in or to add some early bloomers, fall is the perfect time to add dormant bare root plants, so use the fall to add bare root plants, start seeds or make plans for what plants you want to purchase in the spring.

Environmental Impact of Clothing & Textiles

and Why You Should Embrace Mending

by Anne Hanley

You may have read articles about the environmental and human impacts of fashion, especially "fast fashion", referring to clothing designed to be inexpensive and worn for just a short time. These impacts include poorly paid workers, the carbon footprint of increased use of fossil fuels to make synthetic fabrics - which also shed microfibers into the water - as well as the often dangerous chemicals used in dyeing and applying fabric treatments like no-iron and stain resistance. Clothing is also very water intensive. What can you do about all this? Quite a bit, actually:

- Mend, repair and refashion your own clothing and home goods to keep textiles out of the waste stream.
- Be conscious of your purchases. Buy fewer items that will last longer, purchase pre-owned clothing.
- Advocate for better working conditions, environmentally friendly and safer manufacturing. FashionRevolution.org has much more on this.

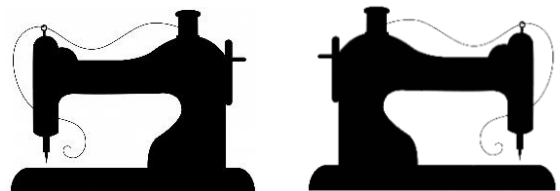
You can keep using your own clothing and household textiles longer by mending or restyling. A sewing machine is helpful but not necessary (for hand sewing, it helps to be patient). How do you gain expertise in mending? Read a book, watch someone in person or on YouTube. One book you might try is **Wear, Repair, Repurpose: A Maker's Guide to Mending and Upcycling Clothes** by Lily Fulop. Her book more often features visible mending, where a patch or darning is in a different color from the garment, but of course you can do the mending or patching in a matching color for something less conspicuous.

Some easy things to start with – fixing a seam that has come open, darning a hole or weak spot in a kitchen towel, binding the frayed edges of bath towels. I've done all these with a needle and thread, but the bath towel project takes quite a while by hand. You will want to listen to a good podcast, audio book, radio show or a movie you can watch with just one eye.

Wear, Repair, Repurpose shows two good techniques for fixing knitted garments. I've successfully mended a hole in a sweater with her Swiss Darning method but I have to admit I've not done much with darning socks yet. Give mending try, you have nothing to lose.

On the purchasing side, vote with your dollars. Think of your purchase as a vote to make another one of whatever you just bought. Purchase well made, classic styles that will last and that will still look good over time. Can I wear this with several other garments and my existing shoes? Consider working toward a capsule wardrobe. Look at where the cloth was made and the garment sewn. The non-profit Fashion Revolution is one place to start reading more in depth about manufacturers and supply chain transparency. This organization is working toward "a global fashion industry that conserves and restores the environment and values people over growth and profit." Purchase secondhand clothes, there are lots of great resale options in the Twin Cities. Swap, share, rent.

In that same vein, in the store, ask yourself do I really need this or am I indulging in retail therapy? As an example of what not to do, I purchased a beautiful silk ankle-length floral print skirt on sale – but I have no tops that go well with it, it's slightly too big and I attend almost no occasions where it would be appropriate, so I've only worn it a few times.





Distance Learning Opportunities



Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
3815 American Blvd. E., Bloomington, MN 55425

Enjoying the Outdoors at Home

Check out these distance learning activity packets for outdoor exploration at home, at the refuge or a neighborhood park. Each lesson is geared towards a specific grade level and can be accessed on our website by clicking **here**. Free.

Forests are More than Trees (Grades K-2)

Nature Through the Seasons (Grades K-2)

Pond Insect Investigation (Grades 2-3)

Wetland Connections (Grades 3-5)

Pond Science (Grades 4-6)

Young Angler (Grade 5)



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

Digital Programs

Experience The Raptor Center from the comfort of your own home or office! Our exciting digital programming allows all groups and ages to see raptors up close and personal in a variety of unique online programs. Each online program has a description listed on our website and can be accessed by clicking **here**. Fees apply.

Raptor Zoomies

Raptor Flight Demonstration

Raptors of the Midwest Online



Deep Portage Learning Center
2197 Nature Center Dr., Hackensack, MN 56452

Renewable Energy Resources

Deep Portage is committed to creating a healthier world for both planet and people, and our campus is no exception. Since 2009, we have installed multiple solar, wind, and biomass systems to help our campus align with our goal of a sustainable future. These systems have saved us hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy costs, and the renewable energy that we generate on site – combined with certified green energy that we purchase from Crow Wing Power – makes the Deep Portage campus 100% carbon-neutral.

Our experimentation with a variety of renewable energy systems also makes us a superb resource for those who are curious about how they can take similar steps. Learn more about what Deep Portage is doing to create a cleaner, greener world by accessing our Renewable Energy Resource page by clicking **here**. Free.



Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center
54165 Audubon Dr., Sandstone, MN 55072

Storytime Tuesdays

Tune in to Facebook at 10:00 AM on Tuesdays to hear children's stories read aloud by our educators. Each program can be accessed on our Facebook page by clicking **here**. Free.



International Owl Center
126 E. Cedar St., Houston, MN 55943

Interactive Online Programs

For those of you too far away to visit in person or have us come to you, we now offer interactive online programs. All of our programs and the standards they meet are listed on the Center for Interactive Learning and Communication (CILC) website. Each online program has a description listed on our website and can be accessed by clicking **here**. Fees apply.

Great Horned Owl Soap Opera

Owls Through the Ages

Owl Encounters: Game Show Showdown

Build an Owl with our Magic Owl Box



Three Rivers Park District
Metro-wide

Free Digital Learning

We're bringing the outdoors to you, no matter where you are. Tune in to explore nature, meet farm animals, try new art projects and more. See the full line-up of programs, including when and where to watch, on our website by clicking **here**. Free.

*The Wandering Naturalist Podcast (Episodes **here**.)*

Storytime in the Barn

Activities to Try

Kits & Cubs

Make It Monday

Skill Builder

E-co Art for Kids

Stump the Naturalist

Farm-to-Table Cooking with Kids

Campfire Cooking

Storytime with Richardson

Farm Fridays

Lowry at Home



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 a check, made payable to MRVAC, for at least \$15 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 and other updates via email.
- I would like to receive a printed copy of the *Trumpeter* newsletter by USPS mail.

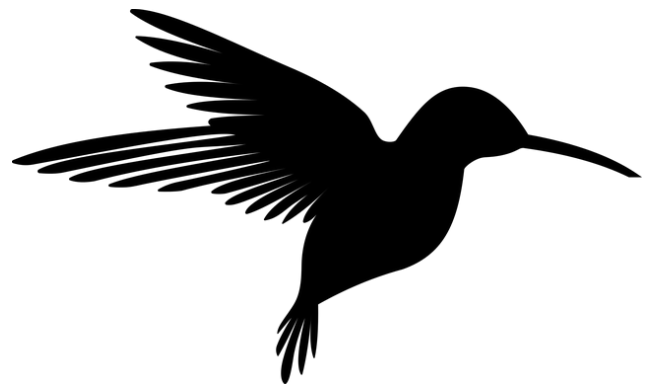
Volunteering (optional):

- 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!



Bird Strike Info Now Online

by Lee Ann Landstrom, Education & Action Chair

I suspect that you, as a MRVAC member and a known birder, are asked by friends, family, and neighbors what to do when birds hit windows. I compiled a list of many actions that homeowners can take to remedy the situation. Look for the article on the newly-designed MRVAC website. In short, a person needs to interrupt the reflection by hanging things in front of the window, marking or sticking things onto the glass, or using screening. These multiple fixes can be DIY or commercially purchased. Check out the article and keep it in mind if you get asked about bird window strikes. **Click here to read the full article.**