



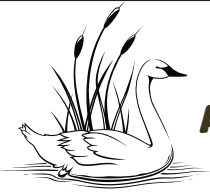
The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

# Trumpeter

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[www.MRVAC.org](http://www.MRVAC.org)

September - October 2023

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Upcoming Chapter Events

**September 28:** Social beginning at 7 p.m. and chapter meeting at 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker Stan Tekiela  
**October 26:** Social beginning at 7 p.m. and chapter meeting at 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker Jordana Whyte  
**MRVAC Sponsored Field Trips:** See page 4

### Trumpeter Subscription & Local Membership

Please help support MRVAC in promoting environmental awareness, education and advocacy action, especially relating to the wildlife and habitats of the Minnesota River Valley! To do this, you can become a local member of MRVAC for \$15 per year. This is not the same as the National Audubon Society membership. Becoming a local member helps the chapter continue to fund crucial environmental projects and cover costs associated with outreach and advocacy, such as printing this Trumpeter newsletter.

### Follow MRVAC On Facebook!

Stay up to date with events, news, and other bird-related content on our Facebook page. Follow us now at [www.facebook.com/MRVAC.MN](http://www.facebook.com/MRVAC.MN)

### MRVAC Program Information

The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter meets most months on the fourth Thursday. Meetings are held in-person at the refuge and simulcast via Zoom, unless otherwise noted. Zoom links will be posted about one week in advance on our website. The refuge visitor center is located at 3815 American Boulevard East in Bloomington and is accessible after a short walk from the METRO blue line. All meetings are free and open to the public.



### September 28, 2023

Social gathering at 7 p.m. with presentation at 7:30 p.m.  
**Stan Tekiela:** Minnesota naturalist and best-selling author

### How To Forage For Mushrooms and Not Die

Learn the fun and enjoyable way to forage for wild mushrooms and not kill yourself. Stan makes this serious topic fun and interesting. You, too, can safely get out and collect wild edible mushrooms without fear. Learn the seven edible mushrooms and how to safely collect, cook and store them.

### October 26, 2023

Social gathering at 7 p.m. with presentation at 7:30 p.m.  
**Jordana Whyte:** Dunedin Wildlife Hospital & Takaraka/Whakahao Team



### Wildlife on the Edge: Conservation in New Zealand

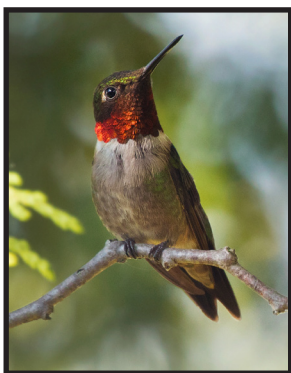
After five years, “Kiwi-sotan” Jordana Whyte is returning from the South Island of New Zealand to visit her family and update us on her work in protecting the birds and animals of New Zealand, home to some of the world’s most unique and endangered wildlife. She will be reporting on her work at the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital — now the busiest facility of its kind in the country — and her summer in the New Zealand subantarctic islands with the hoiho/takaraka (the rare Yellow-Eyed Penguin), and the whakahao (New Zealand Sea Lion).

## A Note From Our President

by Rob Daves, Board President

Fall migration already has begun, even in the northwoods Maine cabin, from where I write this month. One indication? No male hummingbirds at the cabin feeder. They've already started their journey south, some experts say. The blooming jewelweed confirms that it's about that time. Another indication? The National Audubon Society says it's time to turn lights out at night. Find more information about that on MRVAC's Facebook posting.

Speaking of fall migration, there's a lot of good ways to tap into active migration days and sites. Check eBird for where birds are being found and look at the radar sites (e.g., birdcast.info) for current large migration days and hotspot info.



Interested in international birding? Our own Craig Mandel has several trips listed in the Trumpeter that folks might want to consider. He'll be posting future MRVAC-sponsored international trips in the Trumpeter before they open up on the Holbrook Travel website. You'll get a sneak peek!

Closer to home, MRVAC needs additional board members. While we have some dynamite younger members who've joined the board in the past year or so, we need others — both younger and those who are seasoned — who can bring their energy, time, and dedication to birding and conservation. My email is on the MRVAC website; give me a shout if you have interest.

I wanted to extend a thanks to Dani Collier, Matthew Schaut and Bob Williams. They volunteered to staff the MRVAC-sponsored Henderson Hummingbird Hurrah in August.

Finally, Steve Weston is lining up some terrific programs for this fall and winter. Stan Tekiela will speak at the September program about foraging — finding food in the forest. October is an exclusive MRVAC presentation with speaker Jordana Whyte discussing her work with bird conservation in New Zealand. But, here's one gathering that should be on your calendar: The MRVAC auction returns Thursday, November 16, to coincide with Give To The Max Day. It'll be in-person, just as it was pre-pandemic. MRVAC meetings are usually on the fourth Thursday, but that's Turkey Day so we'll gather a week earlier to raise money for MRVAC's conservation and education grants. It's a great way to share our mathoms (that's a hobbit/J.R.R. Tolkien reference — look it up). We've already got some of the details ironed out and more pieces will be falling into place after Labor Day.

Good birding to all!

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## Minnesota Legislative Session 2023: Big Wins For The Environment

Summary taken from Audubon Minnesota

The Minnesota Legislative Session wrapped up at the end of May with the passing of some groundbreaking environmental actions. Minnesota is set to spend historic sums on the environment after lawmakers agreed to a package of policy changes and programs to safeguard air and water, plant trees and renovate crumbling outdoor infrastructure such as fish hatcheries and boat ramps.

The deal imposes one of the broadest bans on PFAS, the so-called “forever chemicals,” and gives the state more power to punish irrigators who deplete groundwater. Some measures, such as a ban on lead fishing tackle and a wolf hunt ban, did not survive. Most of the \$1 billion in new spending comes from the state's general fund surplus but there are other sources too, such as the \$11 million the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will generate from fee hikes — primarily boat registration fees that haven't been raised since about 2006.

This bill will statutorily create the “Lawns to Legumes” program at the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and provide an annual appropriation for the program. The bill requires BWSR to establish a program to provide grants or payments to plant residential lawns with native vegetation and pollinator-friendly forbs and legumes to protect a diversity of pollinators. Lawns to Legumes has existed since 2019, but with this appropriation it will be included in the base budget and be more likely to continue to receive funding in future bienniums. MRVAC co-signed a written testimony in support of this initiative, along with Audubon Minnesota and many other state chapters.

Here are some other wins for the birds that were passed during this legislative session:

An allocation of \$340,000 to Audubon Minnesota for Mapping Migratory Bird Pitstops in Minnesota.

Use of certain insecticides will be prohibited in a wildlife management area (WMA), state park, state forest, aquatic management area (AMA), or a scientific and natural area (SNA) if the insecticide is from the neonicotinoid class of insecticides or it contains chlorpyrifos.

Allocation of \$1.304 million to Audubon Minnesota for Restoring and Enhancing Minnesota's Important Bird Areas in the St. Croix River Valley.

The cash bill, HF670, and the bonding bill, HF669, represent an agreement among House and Senate leaders to pass a bonding bill for the first time since 2020. This includes \$2.5 million for the National Loon Center, \$381.1 million to the Public Facilities Authority for 47 water and wastewater projects across the state,

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\$233.1 million to the Department of Natural Resources, and \$10.7 million for the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program. RIM will acquire conservation easements from landowners to preserve, restore, create, and enhance wetlands and associated uplands of prairie and grasslands, and to restore and enhance rivers and streams, riparian lands, and associated uplands of prairie and grasslands, in order to protect soil and water quality, support fish and wildlife habitat, reduce flood damage, and provide other public benefits.

This expansive bill has a tremendous amount to celebrate for our beloved birds and the environment as a whole. We only have highlighted a few key points. Stay tuned for more information!

## Visit The Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge This Fall!

*By Sue Hix, Friends of Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge Board Member*

Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge is located in Zimmerman, Minnesota and is a beautiful place to visit, especially now as autumn approaches and temperatures begin to cool. Blooming plants continue to add color to the landscape, many birds are visible along the wildlife drive, and Sandhill Cranes are becoming more active as they prepare for migration.

Late October and early November are prime times for visitors to view the cranes staging for migration at the refuge. These prehistoric-looking birds fly in by the hundreds and thousands to rest safely overnight in refuge pools and then leave around dawn to feed in nearby fields. It's worth the hour or so drive from the Twin Cities to experience this spectacle! Make sure to sign up for the annual Sandhill Crane tours on the refuge website. In 2022, a record number of cranes—nearly 30,000—were counted in one day on the refuge!

If you come out to visit, make sure to stop by the Oak Savanna Learning Center. This facility has accessible trails that offer a great venue for visits by students, scouts, hikers, birders, photographers, and dog-walkers. The Friends of Sherburne are also currently running their *Go Wild!* fundraising campaign to build an outdoor amphitheater on the hillside adjacent to the learning center. The amphitheater, which will overlook a wetland pool and oak savanna, will provide an ideal location for wildlife and other nature-related presentations. It will also offer visitors a place to meet up, plan their hike or birding route, have a snack, or just sit to relax and take in the natural beauty around them. You can learn more at our website listed below.

Visitors may also shop at the Eagle's Nest Nature Store at the learning center, which is open Thursdays and Saturdays

from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m..

So put on your hiking shoes, pack your binoculars, and have your Merlin app ready to go. Then come to Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge for a late-summer or fall adventure! Learn more at [www.exploresherburne.org](http://www.exploresherburne.org)

## October Big Day: A Worldwide Day of Birding on October 14

*Reprinted from ebird.org*

Mark your calendars for October Big Day — October 14, 2023! Like Global Big Day, October Big Day is an opportunity to unite around our shared love of birds. Last October nearly 35,000 people from 185 countries submitted 80,000 checklists with eBird, demonstrating the power of birds to bring people together.

Wherever you are on October 14, take a few minutes to join in this global celebration. Participate from anywhere—even from home! By taking part in October Big Day you're also celebrating Global Bird Weekend and World Migratory Bird Day. Be a part of the global team and help set a new record for October birding.

Here is how to participate in October Big Day:

*Get an eBird account:* eBird is a worldwide bird checklist program used by millions of birders. It's what allows us to compile everyone's contributions into a single massive October Big Day list—while at the same time gathering data to help scientists better understand birds. Sign up here. It's 100% free from start to finish.

*Watch birds on October 14:* It's that simple. You don't need to be a bird expert or go out all day long, even 10 minutes of birding from home counts. October Big Day runs from midnight to midnight in your local time zone. You can report what you find from anywhere in the world.

*Enter what you see and hear in eBird:* You can enter your observations via our website or download the free eBird Mobile app to make submitting lists even easier. Please enter your checklists no later than 17 Oct to be included in the results announcement.

*Watch the results roll in:* During the day, follow along with bird reports from more than 180 countries in real-time on our October Big Day page.

No matter where you go birding on October 14, have fun, enjoy the birds you find, and share your observations with eBird. Your checklists will help us better understand global bird populations. For more information, visit [www.ebird.org/news/october-big-day-2023](http://www.ebird.org/news/october-big-day-2023)



## MRVAC & REFUGE BIRDING TRIPS

### Refuge Bird Watching Treks

September 9 (Saturday) — Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 September 10 (Sunday) — Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Trailhead  
 September 23 (Saturday) — Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 October 15 (Sunday) — Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Trailhead  
 October 21 (Saturday) — Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 October 23 (Monday) — Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Trailhead  
*Each walk runs from 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m.*

Explore some of the best refuge units for bird watching during the fall season. We will take the time to study the key field marks of these birds and learn where they are headed next. Birders of all skill levels are welcome to attend these walks. Bring along your binoculars, favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. For weather cancellations or other questions about these walks, please contact Craig at 952-240-7647.

Registration for refuge walks is available on the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge website. Please indicate in your registration if you would like to receive a birding summary and species list from the walk. Registration is required online at the following link:  
[www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley/events](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley/events)

### Refuge Field Trip Locations & Addresses

Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington, MN 55425

Old Cedar Avenue Trailhead  
 9551 Old Cedar Ave. S., Bloomington, MN

**Click here for refuge trail maps** or visit [www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley/visit-us](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley/visit-us)

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### Mower County Birding Days

Thursday-Friday, September 7-8, 7 a.m.  
 Craig Mandel — 952-240-7647  
 \$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members

On this trip we will be spending time birding in Mower County. Some of the locations we may explore include Hormel Nature Center, Wildwood Park, Ault and Penkava Marsh, Adams Park and Lake Louise State Park. This trip should be timed well for fall migrants, with a chance to see a number of warblers. With some luck we will be able to turn up some shorebirds as well. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

### International Tours

The tours below are arranged through Holbrook Travel, in partnership with MRVAC. Holbrook helps with the arrangement of lodging, travel, and local guiding in the countries we are visiting. For more information on these tours, please email Craig Mandel at [EgretCMan@msn.com](mailto:EgretCMan@msn.com). Additional information can also be found on the Holbrook website at [www.holbrooktravel.com](http://www.holbrooktravel.com).

### Southern Ecuador

September 28, 2023 — October 9, 2023  
*Trip is full but a waiting list is available*

September 26, 2024 — October 7, 2024  
*Registration is now available for this tour. Contact Craig to receive a registration link for this tour.*

This tour begins and ends in the Ecuadorian city of Guayaquil and covers some of Southern Ecuador’s better birding locations. Some of the locations that we will visit are the Manglares Churute Ecological Reserve, Buenaventura, Jorupe Reserve, Tapichalaca Reserve, the Loja-Zamora Road, Podocarpus National Park and Cajas National Park. A few of the species of birds that we will search for include the El Oro Parakeet, El Oro Tapaculo, Long-wattled Umbrellabird, Jocoto, and Rufous and Chestnut-crowned Antpittas. Plus, there will be a nice mix of hummingbirds, tanagers and other tropical bird species.

### Costa Rica: An Introduction to Neotropical Birding

March 1, 2024 — March 9, 2024  
*Registration is now available for this tour. Contact Craig to receive a registration link for this tour.*

This tour will begin in the city of San Jose. From there we head to Selva Verde Lodge for a three-night stay. We will bird the grounds and travel to the Tirimbina Biological Reserve and La Selva Biological Station. Next we travel to the Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. Some of the locations nearby that we will stop at include the Nectar and Pollen Reserve, Batsu Garden and the upper trails at the lodge, accessed via 4x4 vehicles. Target bird species include the Resplendent Quetzal, Great Green Macaw, Sunbittern, Snowcap, Talamanca Hummingbird, Volcano Hummingbird and Scintillant Hummingbird.

## REGIONAL PROGRAMS OF INTEREST



Three Rivers Park District  
Various Locations

### Bird Banding

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
September 16 | 9 a.m. - noon

See wild songbirds safely trapped, studied and banded with numbered rings. Discuss what scientists learn from these banded birds. Drop in anytime for this free program.

### Raptors Up Close

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
September 17 | 3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Meet captive raptors, learn about these amazing birds of prey. Drop in anytime. All ages. Free.

### Mondays Are For The Birds

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
September 11 | 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.  
September 25 | 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Join naturalist Kirk to look for birds. All levels of birders welcome. Binoculars are available to borrow. This is a great opportunity to learn the trails and find out where various species are seen in the park. We will try to cover different trails and habitats at each session. Ages 10+. Free.



Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge  
Zimmerman, MN

### Sandhill Crane Tour

October 12, 14, 19, 21, & 25 | 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Join us for a free, behind-the-gates tour with the potential to see thousands of staging sandhill cranes flying overhead as they leave roost sites on refuge pools. Registration is required. This program is partially held outdoors, please dress appropriately for the weather. Spotting scope and binoculars are available to borrow.

Registration opens on Monday, September 11th at 8 a.m. and is required. Each tour is limited to 40 participants. To register for this program, please call 763-389-3323 or email sherburne@fws.gov.



International Owl Center  
Houston, MN

### World Owl Conference

Stoney Creek Hotel, Onalaska, WI  
October 23-27

This is the first time a world owl conference has been held in the USA, and these conferences are held very infrequently. It will consist of 20-minute scientific presentations from researchers around the world, scientific posters, pre-conference workshops and post-conference field trips. Proceedings will be published as an occasional paper of the MOU. Find more information and registration details at [www.worldowlconference.com](http://www.worldowlconference.com)

### “What an Owl Knows” with Jennifer Ackerman

International Owl Center, Houston, MN  
October 27 | 2 p.m.

New York Times best-selling author Jennifer Ackerman wrote the book the world has needed about owls: a functionally peer-reviewed book highlighting the latest research and correcting all kinds of old misconceptions and overgeneralizations.

This program is in-person only at the International Owl Center. The cost for this event is \$10 per member and \$15 per non-member. Registration is required at [www.internationalowlcenter.org/specialprograms](http://www.internationalowlcenter.org/specialprograms)

### Wildlife Festival

September 30 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Join us for our free, family-friendly 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildlife Festival on September 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Oak Savanna Learning Center! The festival will include many booths set along the packed granite trails at the Oak Savanna Learning Center. Two local food trucks will be on-site to serve a variety of food at a reasonable cost. A silent auction and the Eagle's Nest Nature Store will be available for perusing inside the Oak Savanna Learning Center. Registration is not required.



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**

You can also join MRVAC online at [www.mrvac.org](http://www.mrvac.org).

**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
  - Join the Board
  - Other:

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

