



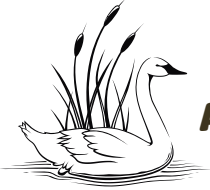
The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

# Trumpeter

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

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Upcoming Chapter Programs

MRVAC will not have any speaker programs this summer. We are putting together next year's schedule now. Highlights for the future include a return of Johanna Whyte from New Zealand in October. This winter we will have Tiffany Kersten, who broke the big year record for the lower 48 states and is an advocate for elevating women birders. Stay tuned for the fall schedule!

*\*For MRVAC sponsored field trips, please 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 either in-person at the refuge and/or virtually via Zoom. Virtual meeting 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.

***There will be no meetings this summer.***

### A Note From Our President

*by Rob Daves, Board President*

At first it was casual. A hawk on a utility pole. A Red-bellied Woodpecker trilling somewhere off the hiking trail. The dawn chorus with mostly unknown singers.

After that it was the spousal observation: "You know, you can spot a hawk on a wire a mile away. You should start keeping a list." Then it was the book – *The Big Year*. It was a quick read. And on New Year's Day came the rumor of a Varied Thrush in a front yard not too far away. It was one of the first birds on the first day of my first list.



That was decades ago. Now, thanks to CDs, Cornell Lab's websites, wonderful birders who have shared their expertise, and many other resources, the members of the neighborhood dawn chorus are familiar, the friends I've grown to cherish when I hear them. And the occasional unfamiliar voice? It's an opportunity to put on a detective's hat and learn.

But it's not just avian friends. When folks discover you're a birder (or even "bird watcher") they often smile and warm to you. Sometimes a question pops up and a conversation starts, creating a new friendship bond. What's that big hawk on the feeder? Is it an eagle? One time a colleague in Maryland who lives in a wooded area sent me a picture. What's this? Cooper's Hawk, I said, probably using your feeders as a cafeteria line.

Now there are friends – fond of birding but fonder of music, golf, or some other passion – who look forward to reminding me that it's time for a trip to Sax-Zim, or almost time to visit the hiking trail along the creek to see early migrants and the pasque flowers. And there are the friends whom I count on for their trips to Hok-Si-La in May, Spring Lake Park in June.

Some special friends are the ones from "Far Off". That's where their birds are different from mine. I go to visit them

and to share their birds. They come to visit me and share our birds.

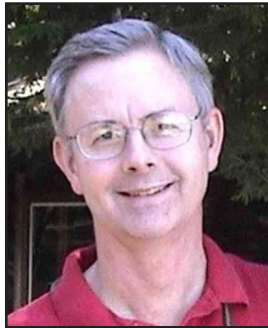
Yes, those wise ones are right in their observations that birding is more than making a list and that we should stop and drink in the indigo shimmer or the flute-like “ee-oh-lay” trill. But there’s more, too. It’s a way to make the human connection, to forge friendships and to share not just in the beauty of feathered sight and sound but to celebrate the warmth of sharing one’s passion with others.

## Remembering Doug Mayo

*Obituary from the Star Tribune*

Doug died May 6, 2023 while residing in Richfield, Minnesota. Previously he was a long-term resident of Edina. While he was born in Minneapolis on February 29, 1944, he was raised in Minneapolis, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

Doug graduated from Edina-Morningside High School in 1962 and received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Minnesota and Ohio University. In late 1967 he began service as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Lesotho. It was there that he began a lifetime of volunteerism. Doug served on several boards for non-profits that provided services that were near and dear to him: most notably 20 years on the Board of Management of YMCA Camp Warren, including three years as board chair; 25 years for Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter, including serving as president, vice-president and treasurer; Audubon Center of the North Woods, director and treasurer; the Edina Housing Foundation, vice-president and secretary/treasurer; and numerous small housing foundations. Doug retired in 2006 after thirty-four years in real estate finance and development.



He married Susan Long, the love of his life, whom he met in Chicago several months after returning from Lesotho. They recently celebrated their fifty-first wedding anniversary. Their son, Sean, was born in 1980.

In retirement, Doug became an avid birder, a hobby that took him throughout North America and elsewhere in the world. He also indulged in gardening, his other pastime. Susan and Doug claimed that their gardens were a gift to their neighbors. He continued his interest in international affairs through the Minnesota International Center’s Great Decisions discussion group and travel throughout the world, with Mexico, Ecuador, Spain and South Africa being among his favorite adventures. Doug frequently expressed that his life had been wonderful, but that he would miss

the beauty of both nature and love. A gathering of friends and family is planned for Sunday, July 9 from 4 to 7 p.m. to share memories and stories. This will be held as an open house at City Bella Community Room (6600 Lyndale Avenue S., Richfield, MN 55423). Guests can dial 092 on the resident index in the lobby to gain access to the second floor where the celebration will be held.

Doug was a president of MRVAC and a long time board member. The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter extends its deepest sympathies to one of our longest and most beloved volunteers and his family. Doug will be greatly missed by members of MRVAC and the Minnesota birding community.

## World Owl Conference Comes To Minnesota

*Karla Bloem, International Owl Center Executive Director*

For the first time ever, a World Owl Conference is being held in the United States. Lucky for us it’s just across the state line in La Crosse, Wisconsin, October 23-27, 2023. These events are held irregularly, sometimes with 10 years between each conference.



World owl conferences are gatherings of owl researchers from around the world to present their recent research in a series of 20-minute scientific presentations. The presentations are geared toward other scientists and often include statistics and some complex scientific ideas. If you watched the International Owl Center’s Virtual Owl Expert Speaker Series, many of those speakers will be attending and presenting at the upcoming conference, but in a more in-depth fashion.

Denver Holt, founder and president of the Owl Research Institute in Charlo, Montana, will be the keynote speaker at the banquet. The banquet will also feature a hooting contest for any attendees of the conference.

Pre-conference workshops include a comparative owl anatomy dissection led by Arnold van den Burg and Kas Koenraads of the Zoological Museum Netherlands. There will also be an owl vocal monitoring and analysis workshop led by Wildlife Acoustics. There are post-conference field trips to Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge/Elmaro Vineyard, the Luther College hawk banding station/Hoslett Museum of Natural History, and the International Owl Center to hear Jennifer Ackerman speak in person about her new book, “What an Owl Knows.” There will likely be a separate presentation by Jennifer to the public at the Owl Center that day also. For more information and to register for the World Owl Conference, please visit [www.worldowlconference.com](http://www.worldowlconference.com)

## 'Devastating' Supreme Court Decision Leaves Wetlands Unprotected

By *Andy McGlashen, Senior Editor of Audubon Magazine*

*Reprinted from the National Audubon Society.*

*Original published date of May 26, 2023.*

The majority of the nation's wetlands where many birds raise their young, congregate in winter, and rest during migration—and which filter out pollutants and buffer communities from flooding and storm surges—lost legal protections on Thursday in a Supreme Court ruling that significantly curtails the reach of the Clean Water Act.

That 1972 law made it illegal to drain, fill, or pollute “waters of the United States” without a permit. The case, *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, involved defining which water bodies that phrase applies to. Disagreement has prevailed for decades, with environmentalists arguing for broad protections to safeguard water quality and ecosystems, while builders, manufacturers, and others contend that including more streams and wetlands drives up project costs and infringes on property rights.

In the 5-4 majority opinion, conservative Justice Samuel Alito wrote that wetlands are covered by the law only if they have a “continuous surface connection” to larger water bodies that are clearly regulated by the Clean Water Act. That interpretation upholds a test established by the late Justice Antonin Scalia in a 2006 case, *Rapanos v. United States*. The ramifications of the decision are profound: It strips protections from more water bodies than the Trump administration's interpretation, which left about 51 percent of the nation's wetlands open to development or degradation.

The decision also throws into disarray the Biden administration's effort to define “waters of the United States.” The EPA issued a rule in December that was seen as a compromise between a more expansive Obama definition and the narrow Trump policy, but federal courts have put it on hold in more than half the country. Biden's rule, like those issued by previous Republican and Democratic administrations, relied on a different legal test established by then-Justice Anthony Kennedy in *Rapanos*. Kennedy's test says the law applies to waters with a “significant nexus” to a navigable waterway. With that foundation for its rule now invalidated by the court's “continuous surface connection” ruling, the Biden EPA must go back to the drawing board.

Reaction from environmental groups was scathing. “The Supreme Court ripped the heart out of the law we depend on to protect American waters and wetlands,” said Manish Bapna, president and CEO of the Natural Resources Defense Council, in a statement. “This decision will cause incalculable harm. Communities across the country will pay the price.”

The case was brought by Chantell and Michael Sackett, Idaho property owners who argued that they don't need a permit to build a home on their land, which the EPA said contains regulated wetlands. While the justices split over the larger jurisdictional question in the case, they agreed unanimously that, in the *Sackett's* case, no permit is necessary. “Courts now have a clear measuring stick for fairness and consistency by federal regulators,” said Damien Schiff, a senior attorney at Pacific Legal

Foundation who represented the couple, in a statement. As set forth in Alito's opinion, that measuring stick dictates that the Clean Water Act applies to a wetland only if it connects with a river, stream, lake, or ocean such that it is “difficult to determine where the ‘water’ ends and the ‘wetland’ begins.”

The ruling “is devastating for wetlands and the benefits they provide to people,” said Royal Gardner, a wetland law expert at Stetson University College of Law, in an email. Scientific improvements have made it possible to define the boundaries of almost any wetland, Gardner said. By his reckoning, that means that only tidal wetlands and those within a river's typical high-water mark qualify for protections. “The ‘continuous surface water connection’ requirement, which has no basis in science, is bad enough,” he wrote. “But the ‘difficult-to-tell’ requirement is the coup de grâce.”

The majority of wetlands that are now exempt from the Clean Water Act are protected only by state law, if they're protected at all, says University of Virginia water law expert Leon Szeptycki. “The geographic footprint of the Clean Water Act, as it applies to wetlands, has been dramatically shrunken in a way that, if you care at all about hydrology and aquatic ecology, is deeply troubling,” he says. “All these waters are profoundly connected, biologically and hydrologically.”

Even conservative Justice Brett Kavanaugh expressed concerns about the consequences of Alito's limited definition. “By narrowing the Act's coverage of wetlands to only adjoining wetlands, the Court's new test will leave some long-regulated adjacent wetlands no longer covered by the Clean Water Act, with significant repercussions for water quality and flood control throughout the United States,” Kavanaugh wrote, in an opinion joined by the three liberal justices.

More than half of the original wetlands in the contiguous United States have been filled for development, drained for farming, or otherwise destroyed. Wetlands remove pollution from drinking water sources and act as sponges for water and carbon, increasingly important functions as climate change causes worsening floods in many communities. Swamps, marshes, prairie potholes, and other wetland types also are among the most important habitats for many species of birds and other wildlife. “This decision undermines Clean Water Act protections for many types of waterways that birds and people need, all while birds are telling us that more action is needed to protect their future,” said Julie Hill-Gabriel, Audubon's vice president for water conservation, in a press release.

Along with most wetlands, the court's decision also exempts ephemeral streams that flow only during rain or snowmelt, but which scientists say shape the health of downstream waters, according to Betsy Southerland, former science and technology director in the EPA's Office of Water. But Southerland says the ruling, which left her “just heartbroken,” does not answer whether the Clean Water Act applies to intermittent streams, which flow steadily but only for parts of the year. The implications are substantial, particularly in the Southwest, where most streams are ephemeral or intermittent—94 percent of them, in Arizona's case.

The only way to resolve lingering uncertainty, experts say, is for Congress to amend the Clean Water Act to more clearly protect a wider range of water bodies. “If Congress cannot get their act together to do this,” Southerland says, “then the land developers and the miners—those guys are golden.”

## MRVAC & REFUGE BIRDING TRIPS

### Refuge Bird Watching Treks

July 1 (Saturday) - Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 July 15 (Saturday) – Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Trailhead  
 July 23 (Sunday) - Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 August 5 (Saturday) – Old Cedar Avenue Bridge Trailhead  
 August 20 (Sunday) – Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 August 26 (Saturday) – Bass Ponds Trailhead  
 \*Each walk runs from 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Join refuge naturalist Craig Mandel for a bird walk to learn about the birds that nest on the refuge. Learn about the different types of habitats at the refuge that support over 100 species of nesting birds. Some of the species we may see include Trumpeter Swan, Bald Eagle, Wood Duck, Willow Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler. 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.signup.com/go/rLmKfrK](http://www.signup.com/go/rLmKfrK)

### Refuge Field Trip Locations & Addresses

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

Louisville Swamp Unit Trailhead  
 3801 W 145th St, Shakopee, MN 55379

**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)

### Nobles & Murray County Birding Days

Thursday-Friday, August 10-11, 6:30 a.m.  
 Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647  
 \$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members

On this trip we will be spending time birding in Nobles and Murray counties. Some of the locations we may explore include Lake Bella, Hawkeye & Maka-Oicu and Fury’s Island County parks. We will also visit a few wildlife management areas (WMAs). Friday’s birding will take us up to Murray County. Some of the locations of interest in Murray County include Lake Shetek State Park, lots of WMAs, and some wildlife protection areas (WPAs) to search. With luck we’ll be able to turn up some shorebirds and a few species that nest in Southwestern Minnesota. Please contact Craig to register for this trip.

### Miesville Ravine Park – Dakota County

Sunday, August 20, 7:30 a.m.  
 Steve Weston - [sweston2g@gmail.com](mailto:sweston2g@gmail.com)  
 This trip is free and open to the public.

We’ll start out on the upper trail looking for early fall warbler migrants and cuckoos. Bring lunch if you want to stay for the afternoon. This trip will be moderate effort. No reservations are needed. Meet in the north parking lot at 27970 Orlando Trail in Cannon Falls, MN. This trip is open to the public.

### 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  
*Tentative dates for next year.*

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 not yet available.*

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



International Owl Center  
Houston, MN

### Bird Banding

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
July 15 | 9 a.m. - noon  
August 19 | 9 a.m. - noon

See wild songbirds safely trapped, studied and banded with numbered rings. Discuss what scientists learn from these banded birds. This program is entirely outdoors.

### Raptors Up Close

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
July 16 | 3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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

### Listening to Birds

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park in Brooklyn Park  
July 29 | 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  
July 30 | 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Birds have so much to say! Create a sound map with a naturalist as we listen for alarm calls, singing and maybe even baby birds. Learn to interpret bird sounds and patterns through your observations. Reservations required by two days prior.

### Intro to Bird Photography

Lowry Nature Center in Victoria  
August 26 | 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Join a naturalist and photographer on a bird photo hike. Learn some tips and tricks for getting a sharp shot and see what species are in the park. Perfect for beginner and experienced photographers. A camera with a zoom or telephoto lens is recommended. Everyone attending this program must register and pay. The program fee is \$6.



### Lunch for the Owls

July 8 | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Come learn how to identify our local owls by size, shape, silhouette and sound. Following the indoor portion of the program, participants will carvan in their own vehicles to three or four known owl territories. We will be in and around Houston to call and listen for Eastern Screech-Owls, Barred Owls, and Great Horned Owls. Expect to return to the Owl Center roughly two to three hours after program start time.

The cost for this event is \$75 per person. Find more information at [www.internationalowlcenter.org/lunchfortheowls](http://www.internationalowlcenter.org/lunchfortheowls)

### International Owl Awareness Day

August 4 | 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Let's celebrate owls together! We'll have free admission to the International Owl Center with programs every hour and door prizes. More information will be available at [www.internationalowlcenter.org/owlawarenessday](http://www.internationalowlcenter.org/owlawarenessday)



Deep Portage Learning Center  
Hackensack, MN

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer Events

August 10 | Utepils Brewing Company, Minneapolis

Join us for some summer fun with food, Deep Portage trivia, and door prizes at a brewery. We are excited to host these special gatherings to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with teachers, chaperones, staff alums and everyone who has supported us over the years! \$1 for every beer sold goes to support programming at Deep Portage! Find more information at [www.deep-portage.org](http://www.deep-portage.org)



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!**

### SWAINSON'S WARBLER AT ARDEN PARK

I jump into my heavy shoes and grab  
my trekking pole and in ten minutes  
I'm out the door and begging the Talking Lady  
to guide me to the spot, which she does  
flawlessly, for once, so I can see a gaggle  
Of birders by the newly thawed creek—  
big lenses and high-end binoculars focusing  
downward to glimpse an "LBJ" picking  
through brown leaves for the first spring bugs  
for breakfast and maybe just maybe  
its compass will thaw and point the way home  
to Texas where it should be singing to a mate  
in a sticky swamp and just be,  
just not so rare.

*Poem by Warren Woessner  
([woessner@slwip.com](mailto:woessner@slwip.com))*