



The Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter

Trumpeter

Volume 52 Issue 4—Bloomington MN
www.MRVAC.org

November & December 2018

Anne Hanley, articles editor
Greg Burnes, field trips editor

Holiday Auction Thursday Nov 15

Great items available

By Anne Hanley

Where: Our annual fundraising auction will be held at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center: 3815 American Blvd E, Bloomington

When: Thursday November 15, 2018 at 5:30-9:00 pm

5:30 pm Drop off auction donations, check out the items on offer and enjoy refreshments.

6:45 – 8:15 pm Live auction – Scott Clark & Monica Rauchwarter team up. This is a pairing not to be missed!

8:15 – 8:55 pm check out and clean up

Why: Raise money for Refuge needs and other environmental education projects

Who: You and your friends. Please come to the Auction and buy something – we'll have items in every price range.

Get some of your holiday shopping done, have fun and raise money to support a variety of environmental education projects. Come and bid often, bid high and have fun doing it for our environmental education program!

If you can donate auction items or provide refreshments, thank you!!

1. Make plans to drop off your contribution ahead of time. Coordinate with Anne: 952-936-0811(h)
anne_hanley90@hotmail.com
2. Please let Robin Kutz know if you can bring some snacks. Call her at 612-723-2632 or email
robinkutz13@gmail.com
3. If you need to bring your items on Thursday evening, please make every effort to deliver them between 5:30 and 6:15 pm so people can preview your items before the bidding starts.

To tempt you to attend, here are some Auction items we know about so far:

- Bird related
 - All Seasons Wild Bird Store gift card
 - Large bag of sunflower seeds
- Books, original art and prints
- Food/treats
 - Nothing Bundt Cakes
 - Great Harvest
 - Lunds/Byerly's gift certificate
 - Valley Natural Foods gift card
 - David Fong's gift card
 - Wine
 - Cookies
 - Home-cooked dinner
 - Bavarian Mints (Rita Baden)
 - Krumkake (\$10 per dozen) (Cheri Fox)
 - Homemade Bread
- Events and Services:
 - Party assistant for graduation event or other festivity of your choice (up to 4 hours)
 - 4 Tickets to Egypt's Sunken Cities exhibit at Minneapolis Institute of Arts (\$80 value)
 - Tickets to live performances
 - National Eagle Center package: admission for 2, NEC mug & small stuffed eagle
 - Personalized coaching: learn how to shop in the bulk aisle at a nearby co-op

Donate via GiveMN – on Give to the Max Day, November 15 or the Day of Your Choice

You can also support MRVAC's programs by using the GiveMN link on our web page – either on November 15, Give to the Max day – or any day:

<https://www.givemn.org/organization/Minnesota-River-Valley-Audubon-Chapter>

MRVAC Chapter News

Chip Notes

By Matthew Schaut, MRVAC President

The Fall season of MRVAC-sponsored presentations at the Minnesota River Valley National Wildlife Refuge began with an ample and appreciative audience benefiting from Ben Douglas' experience in finding rare birds by his own efforts. Ben's talk was very well organized and his strategies can be used by any motivated birder. One of the things I most appreciate from his talk was his adaptability. Take birding style. Ben likes to put in some miles when he birds, yet he admits that his good friend Mike Nichol's style of remaining in one place and seeing what passes by might often be the better strategy. Study migration trends, weather patterns, landscapes, "find your own hawk ridge" and watch what flies by. Observe a single snag. Get to know a specific area very well, in different seasons, at different times of day, in different weather.

The second thing I most appreciate from his talk is his advice to take any observations, any new behavior seen, any new sound heard, as an opportunity to solve a mystery. By remaining actively curious, but even more, by making active efforts to solve the mystery, we become better, more knowledgeable co-inhabitants of the natural world. I used this attitude on my next walk from my house to the YWCA. This time I didn't just wonder what that leaf was, I looked it up on my iPhone. Pin oak! Finally, I know what a pin oak leaf looks like! Isn't it a bit pitiful that it's taken me this long? Ben advocates that we use the technology at our disposal in the here and now to solve mysteries. I am so used to doing most of my birding in places where there never was and still isn't an internet connection (typically, the western UP of Michigan), that I don't automatically avail myself of the internet tools available to increase my knowing of the world. Wired or not wired, I could always be better at jotting down my questions and observations, and taking active steps to solve them as soon as I am able. I tell the persons I serve in my work all the time that treating ourselves with an attitude of curiosity and our problems as puzzles to be solved is a great antidepressant. And it is! It bypasses the worried-ruminating parts of our brain.

The third thing I want to note is that when one uses all of Ben's strategies, rare birds remain rare birds. Take owls. He shared his tips for finding owls – check evergreen, especially cedar, groves, especially groves along edges of field and prairies. Check EVERY tree. Stare at the tree. Walk slowly. Check again. Put time in over hours, days, months, years... Ben shared that he has indeed found rare owls. Then he showed his chart. If I remember correctly, seven rare owls between 2013 and 2018! Rare owls remain rare owls! Finding them is a hoot, but the real

joy is the opportunity of (in Ben's case) daily immersion in the natural world.

The last thing I want to say is that coming to MRVAC Refuge presentations can have consequences! Ben shared stories of the Minnesota State Parks Big Year he did this year. The seeds of this effort were planted when he listened to Bob Janssen's talk on the birds of Minnesota's State Parks a couple of years ago. So be careful if you plan to come to our next talk – you might find yourself making plans to see every kiwi in New Zealand, or something absurd like that...

Finally, a congratulations to the Ney Nature Center. Their grant proposal for binoculars and a spotting scope to allow the youth they serve to be able to view in fine detail the birds they see on birding walks was approved by the MRVAC Board at our September meeting. Have a worthy grant idea!

Know someone who serves our target population (youth, particularly underserved youth) in and around the Minnesota River watershed)? If so, do submit your proposals.

Enjoy a splendid Fall!

Matthew Schaut

Chapter & National Audubon Contacts

President: Matthew Schaut 612-756-2349
mschaut22@yahoo.com

MRVAC Membership: Greg Burnes 612-205-3071
gburnes@comcast.net

Trumpeter editor: Anne Hanley 952-936-0811
anne_hanley90@hotmail.com

National Audubon member services:
 1-844-428-3826
audubon@emailcustomerservice.com
 Contact National Audubon about your membership (renewing, extending, or updating your information), magazine subscriptions, National mailings, premiums (calendars, tote bags, etc.), address changes for National mailings and requests for removals from mailing lists

Christmas Bird Count & Other Events

Metro Area Christmas Bird Counts

You are invited to join us for the 119th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. All levels of experience are welcome. Young birders with good eyes and ears are especially appreciated as an addition to a team of more experienced birders. Come help us count the birds! Three counts are associated with MRVAC:

Bloomington CBC - Saturday 12/15 – Contact: Greg Burnes, 612-205-3071 gburnes@comcast.net

Excelsior CBC - Saturday 12/15 – Contact: Howard Towle at towle001@umn.edu or 612-710-1451 no later than December 8.

Cedar Creek Bog CBC - Sunday 12/16– Contact: Steve Weston at sweston2@comcast.net

Soup Supper: On Saturday 12/15, gather between 4:30 and 5 pm to help set up for a potluck soup supper at the Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, 5760 Portland Ave 55417. Juice and coffee will be available from 5 to 5:30 and the meal begins at 5:30 pm. Please bring soup, veggies, fruit, bread or dessert. Please contact Robin at 612-723-2632 or robinkutz13@gmail.com if you have soup-supper questions. You are welcome at the supper whether you counted with the Bloomington CBC or not.

The Bloomington CBC (Saturday, Dec. 15) is centered on the Black Dog Power Plant on the Minnesota River and includes parts of Bloomington, Burnsville, Richfield, Eagan, Apple Valley, and smaller parts of other cities. If you would like to help count in this area, contact Greg Burnes (see above).

The Excelsior CBC (Saturday, Dec. 15) is centered on the intersection of Hwys 5 and 101 in Eden Prairie and includes parts of Minnetonka, Eden Prairie, Excelsior, Chanhassen, Chaska and Shakopee. If you'd like to help count in the SW Metro area, please contact Howard Towle no later than December 8 as it is hard to rearrange the groups at the last minute.

Alternatively, you can participate in the Excelsior count by helping to cover a portion of Carver Park. Please contact Kirk Mona (the naturalist at the Lowry Nature Center) no later than December 8 if you would like to arrange to bird a specific portion of the park: Kirk Mona, Naturalist, Lowry Nature Center at 763-694-7650 or

Kirk.mona@threeriversparks.org.

There are about 80 Christmas Bird Counts being held throughout Minnesota. For more information and to participate in other counts go to:

http://moumn.org/CBC/locations_map.php

Year-End Dinner at the Lake - Dec 29

Celebrate the year-end at the Audubon Center of the North Woods with a special evening, Saturday, December 29 starting at 6:00 pm. Following a wonderful banquet dinner, enjoy a fantastic presentation by award-winning nature photographer Craig Blacklock. He will show segments of the video that accompanies his new book, *ST. CROIX & NAMEKAGON RIVERS — The Enduring Gift*, and talk about the creation of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway 50 years ago. Craig will have copies of his books for sale, and will be happy to personalize them. To learn more about the book and this extensive project, go to stcroixphotography.com

Cost: Adults: \$35; Children ages from 5-12 years: \$17. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Location: 54165 Audubon Drive, Sandstone, MN 55072
Phone: 1-888-404-7743 or 320-245-ACNW

Want to extend the evening? Overnight lodging is available. Learn more and reserve online at audubon-center.org/calendar or call 888-404-7743.

Owl Prowls in November & December

Expert-led Owl Prowls at the International Owl Center
126 E Cedar St. Houston, MN 55943

Cost is \$10 for non-members or \$7 for members

November 24, 2018, 6:30-9:30 PM

December 31, 2018, 6:30-9:30 PM

Pre-register by sending an email to

karla@internationalowlcenter.org

Roberts Bird Sanctuary - Nov 3

Learn about the natural history of the land that became Roberts Bird Sanctuary. On **Saturday, November 3, at 1 p.m.** Wes Nutgeren, naturalist and educator at Dodge Nature Preschool, will lead a guided walk observing plants and animals and how the land has evolved. The Sanctuary is located at 4124 Roseway Road, Minneapolis, 55409,

Bluebird Monitors Wanted

Wanted – Monitors to check a southwest metro Bluebird trail starting spring of 2019. Two golf courses are available: Interlochen Golf Course in Edina and Bent Creek Golf Course in Eden Prairie. Golf carts are available (free) if you prefer not to walk.

Please call Jack Hauser at 952-831-8132 or email at jgshauser@gmail.com if interested.



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

Beginning birders are welcome on all field trips:

MN Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Bird Watching

These walks focus on migrating waterfowl, raptors and other species that are part of the late fall migration or overwintering. All level of experience welcome. Please bring binoculars, a field guide, and dress for the weather. Registration is not required for these refuge tours. All hikes are from 8:00-10:30 am and led by Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647.

Bass Ponds Trailhead

2501 86th St. E., Bloomington
Saturday, November 10 - 8:00-10:30 am
Sunday, November 18 - 8:00-10:30 am
Saturday, December 1 - 8:00-10:30 am
Saturday, December 8 - 8:00-10:30 am

Wilkie Unit, Trailhead

7701 County Road 101 E, Shakopee
Monday, November 12 - 8:00-10:30 am
Monday, December 10 - 8:00-10:30 am

Carver County Birding Day

Thursday, Nov. 8, @7:00 am
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647
Lake Waconia, Goose Lake, Lippert Lake and Swede Lake are a few of the lakes we will check for waterfowl. We should also have time for some birding at Carver Park Reserve, Baylor County Park and maybe a stop at the Rapids Lake Unit of the MVNWR. Please contact Craig for more information.

MRVAC Holiday Auction - see page 1

Thursday, November 15, 2018 - 6:45 pm
MVNWR Visitor Center 3815 American Blvd. E.
Plan to attend our fall fundraiser at the Refuge Visitor Center in Bloomington. If you have something to donate or are willing to contact companies or organizations who might make an in-kind contribution, please contact Anne Hanley at 952-936-0811.

Swans on the Mississippi

Dave and Rita Baden - 952-445-4353
Saturday, November 17, 2018, 9:00 am
Join us on a trip along the Mississippi looking for Bald Eagles, ducks, gulls, shorebirds & Tundra Swans. Stops include Colville Park, just outside Red Wing, and Alma WI and the viewing platform at Rieck's Lake Park. We may disperse around noon or continue together to look for more birds on the way back north. For more info (times and meeting spots) and/or to register, call Dave

MN Ornithologists Union Paper Session

Saturday December 1, 2018, 8:30 am-4:30 pm
U of M St. Paul campus Student Center, Northstar Ballroom 2017 Buford Ave. For more info check <http://moumn.org>

Washington County Birding Day

Thursday, Dec. 6, @8:00 am
Craig Mandel - 952-240-7647
We will check out Carpenter Nature Center, Grey Cloud Dunes, St. Croix Bluffs Regional and Point Douglas Park. We will search for waterfowl, winter finches and other unusual species. Please contact Craig for more information.

Christmas Bird Count – see details on page 3

Northern Minnesota - Sax/Zim Birding Days

Thursday, Friday, January 17, 18, 2019, 7:00 am
Craig Mandel 952-240-7647
\$35/non-MRVAC members; \$25/MRVAC members
We will search for Great Gray and Northern Hawk Owls along with many other birds. This trip should get your 2019 birding checklist off to a great start. Please contact Craig to register.