



When the weather outside is frightful, Member Programs are delightful

Don't let the cold get you down. Our programs in January and February are sure to fire up your enthusiasm and warm your senses. Come solo or bring friends and family because our meetings are free and open to the public!

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18:

Pocket Prairies are coming to a median near you!

Trevor Pellerite, writer/attorney/biologist, will share how his nonprofit foundation, Grasslands Unlimited, is changing the landscape of Omaha's medians and roadsides into low-maintenance, nature-friendly habitats.

Grasslands Unlimited is dedicated to restoration and advocacy for grassland ecosystems throughout Nebraska and the Great Plains. Current work in Omaha focuses on restoring ignored property back to native habitat, including at Pacific Preserve, Lamp Park, and Zorinsky Lake.

You may have read about Trevor Pellerite in The Omaha World Herald earlier this year. This program is your opportunity to meet him and learn more about "pocket prairies."

Join us on Thursday, January 18, at DJ's Dugout, 777 N. 114th Street, in the private meeting room. You can order food and drinks during our 6 p.m. social hour. Meet and mingle with others who share an appreciation of our natural world. Then be inspired by Trevor Pellerite at the 7 p.m. presentation!

This program is free and open to the public. Please register at Audubon-Omaha.org.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15:

Backyard Bird Photography is nature-candy for your eyes! Albert Rhea, award-winning painter/sculptor/photographer, will join us to share his tips and tricks for photographing birds in your own backyard. Rhea's home features a pollinator habitat designed to attract birds and butterflies into camera range. You don't have to be a camera buff to enjoy his program. His amazing close-up images of birds will knock your socks off! As Albert explains, "macrophotography, or close-up photography, is magical because it takes us into a smaller universe of vibrant colors, exquisite details and extraordinary patterns that can literally take your breath away."

Join us on Thursday, February 15, for social hour at 6 p.m., followed by Albert Rhea's presentation at 7 p.m. We meet in the private meeting room at DJ's Dugout, 777 N. 114th Street. Register at Omaha-Audubon.org.

DeSoto NWR and Lake Manawa offer winter waterfowl watching

Ready for an ice breaker? Join us for our January 20 field trip to DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge. Meet in the visitor center at 9 a.m. and enjoy the warmth of watching birds through the windows. If you do not have an annual pass, the entrance fee is \$2.50 per person. Please register for the field trip at AudubonOmaha.org

Then get bundled up for a frozen treat at 9 a.m., February 17, at Lake Manawa. Conor Gearin will share his extensive knowledge as he leads us to the best spots to watch waterfowl. Conor recently moved back to Omaha and is eager to get involved with ASO. Conor is the Managing Producer of BirdNote and holds a Master's degree in Science Writing from MIT and an MS in Biology from the University of Nebraska-Omaha. He knows birds! Register early for this educational outing. The best viewing location will be determined prior to the trip and emailed to all registered attendees.

GREEN CORNER: HOW YOU CAN COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Conservation begins at home; each of us can help restore our unique ecosystem.

Plastic-free for January

Have you ever tried to use less plastic? Even for just one month? Most plastic packaging for food items is not recyclable. Look for grocery stores that sell food items in bulk, give buying in bulk a try and skip the plastic packaging.

Free Up February

Winter weather keeping you indoors? Take this time to free up some space and clean out a closet or a pantry or garage. Donate items no longer used or needed to your favorite nonprofit thrift store or a charity rummage sale.

Field notes from the President



By Christine Prescott, President, Audubon Society of Omaha

The Audubon Society of Omaha (ASO) is spreading its wings once again as it resumes in-person monthly meetings at DJ's Dugout, conveniently located off 114th and Dodge. After a period of virtual gatherings, members are excited to come together to share their passion for birds and conservation.

The meetings have been a feathered success, featuring engaging presentations on a variety of topics, from bird feeding and planting for pollinators to insights into the fascinating world of turkeys. Attendees have found these discussions both informative and inspiring.

As ASO looks ahead, the website calendar is a valuable resource for members and enthusiasts alike, providing details on upcoming programs and events. The programs committee is hard at work planning a lineup of captivating presentations for the coming year, promising even more opportunities for learning and connection.

The Audubon Society of Omaha is also inviting new members to join its flock, with a special call for individuals with a financial background. ASO is actively seeking someone who can be trained to take on the crucial role of treasurer, contributing their skills to support the organization's financial health.

Whether you're a seasoned birdwatcher or a newcomer to the world of avian appreciation, the Audubon Society of Omaha welcomes you to be part of its vibrant community. Join the flock, attend a meeting, and explore the fascinating world of birds and conservation.

LOVE CRANES? HAVE TIME? Rowe Sanctuary is looking for volunteers during Crane Season. There are many fun and satisfying ways to become involved with the community here. No matter what your schedule or your interests, there is something here for you! We can tailor your volunteer experience to fit your individual skills and preferences. Go to rowe.audubon.org/volunteering-0 for more info.

The eyes have it – your photos

We love to see your bird photos! Please email them to photos@audubonomaha.org



Red-headed Woodpecker, by Bob Tooley



Canada Goose (top) and Cackling Goose (bottom), photo by Bill Bossman

ON THE HORIZON January

2024 STUDENT ART CONTEST STARTING JANUARY 2

Know a creative kid? Free to enter and open to the public and lots of prizes. See rules, information and more on the art contest page at audubon-omaha.org

WINTER BIRD SEED SALE STARTING JANUARY 5

Check your email for order form, product selection and prices for the highest quality, freshest bird seed. Or order online at audubon-omaha.org

FIELD TRIP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

What: EZ Does it Urban Birding

New birder? Too busy for an all-day excursion? Virginia Stauffer will lead a birding walk at a leisurely pace.

When: 9-11 a.m.

Where: Towl Park

9310 W. Center Rd., Omaha

How: Meet in the parking lot

Who: Members and the public (free)

MEMBERS PROGRAM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18

What: Pocket Prairies

Trevor Pellerite of Grasslands Unlimited will talk about changing the landscape of Omaha's medians and roadsides into nature-friendly habitats.

When: 6 p.m. social, 7 p.m. program

Where: DJ's Dugout meeting room, 777 N. 114th Street, Omaha

How: register at Audubon-Omaha.org

Who: Members and the public (free)

FIELD TRIP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

What: Winter waterfowl at DeSoto

View waterfowl and more from the comfort of the visitor center

When: 9 a.m.

Where: DeSoto NWR

1434 316th Ln., Missouri Valley, IA

How: Meet in the visitor center

Who: Members and the public (free)

\$2.50 entrance fee for DeSoto NWR

MORE ON THE HORIZON February

FIELD TRIP

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

What: EZ Does it Urban Birding

New birder? Too busy for an all-day excursion? Virginia Stauffer will lead a birding walk at a leisurely pace.

When: 9-11 a.m.

Where: Towl Park

9310 W. Center Rd., Omaha

How: Meet in the parking lot

Who: Members and the public (free)

MEMBERS PROGRAM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

What: Backyard Bird Photography

Albert Rhea, award-winning painter/sculptor/photographer, will join us to share his tips and tricks for photographing birds in your backyard.

When: 6 p.m. social, 7 p.m. program

Where: DJ's Dugout meeting room
777 N. 114th Street, Omaha

How: register at Audubon-Omaha.org

Who: Members and the public (free)

FIELD TRIP

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

What: Waterfowl at Lake Manawa

Conor Gearin will share his extensive knowledge as he leads us to the best spots to watch waterfowl.

When: 9 a.m.

Where: Lake Manawa, Council Bluffs – exact location will be set at later date and emailed to all who have registered

How: register at Audubon-Omaha.org

Who: Members and the public (free)

BIRD SEED ORDER PICKUP

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

What: Your bird seed order is ready

If you ordered bird seed from us, please make plans to pick up your order.

When: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Where: Audubon Society of Omaha
4339 S. 90th St., Omaha

ART CONTEST DEADLINES

FEBRUARY 22, 23 & 24

Where: Audubon Society of Omaha
4339 S. 90th St., Omaha – for more info go to audubon-omaha.org, then Student Art Contest page.

Enter the 2024 Student Art Contest



2023 Best of Show winner, Realism category winner, Dakota S., 10th grade

We invite students K-12 to participate in our annual Student Art Contest held/hosted/organized by Audubon Society of Omaha. Our goal is to introduce young people to birds and promote the importance of wildlife in our community. It is our hope that young people will recognize the birds they create and foster an enjoyment of nature. This contest is free to enter and open to the public.

WHO: All K-12 students, even if their school does not participate

WHAT: Original student artwork featuring birds. Many prizes will be awarded in these categories: Realism, Graphic Design, Cartooning, and Recycled.

HOW AND WHERE: Starting January 2, look for rules, entry forms and more at audubon-omaha.org under the Special Events tab.

ENTRY DEADLINES: Submit entries at the Audubon Society of Omaha office, 4339 S. 90th Street, on:

- Thursday, Feb. 22, 3 - 6 p.m.
- Friday, Feb. 23, 3 - 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

ART SHOW AND AWARDS:

Saturday, April 20, from noon until 3 p.m. The Student Art Show gives

attendees an opportunity to view every work of art submitted, but be sure to be there before 2 p.m. The Awards ceremony for grades K-4 starts at 1 p.m., for grades 5-8 at 2 p.m., and for grades 9-12 at 3 p.m. After each Awards Ceremony, student artists will take their art home.

WHY: It's long been known that drawing something helps a person remember it. A new study shows that drawing is superior to activities such as reading or writing because it forces the person to process information in multiple ways: visually, kinesthetically, and semantically. A focus on birds provides teachers, parents and students an opportunity to discuss the conservation and protection of our environment, therefore helping birds and all wildlife.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Please consider volunteering to:

- Collect and organize art
- Wrap and package prizes
- Hang student artwork for the Show
- Help with hosting the Art Show

To volunteer please contact Julia Rawsley at jrawnsley@audubonomaha.org. If you have questions, contact Virginia at vstauffer@yahoo.com.

Connect with others who share your passion for nature *by Anne Maguire*

Looking to make a difference? Audubon Society of Omaha has a wide variety of opportunities for you to get involved. If you want a fulfilling way to support our natural environment, learn and share ideas, enjoy the outdoors, meet others who share your enthusiasm, and experience the satisfaction of helping protect birds and their habitat, we're looking for you!

Consider joining our board of directors. We are all volunteers of different ages and backgrounds with one thing in common – we care about nature. Board members meet monthly to plan and carry out the business of birding, conservation, education, fundraising and finance, marketing and communication, and natural areas stewardship.

Our fiscal year runs from July 1 - June 30. Nominations for the 2024/2025 board are open now and are due by March 1. You can nominate yourself or someone you know by emailing amaguire@audubonomaha.org. If you have questions, please call or text Anne Maguire at 402-960-0507.

DO YOU HAVE A KNACK FOR NUMBERS? We'd love for you to solve this problem: **Audubon Society of Omaha needs a treasurer.**

The term of our current treasurer expires on June 30, 2024. As we seek to fill this vital board position, please take a minute to review the treasurer's responsibilities and see if you or someone you know may fit into this equation.

The treasurer is a member of the executive committee of the board of directors of Audubon Society of Omaha. Our executive committee and directors are all volunteers. The treasurer position is responsible for all financial transactions and for coordinating with the Certified Public Accountant on items such as monthly sales tax, 990 filing and investment tracking.

SPECIFIC DUTIES INCLUDE:

- Paying property taxes and filing for exemptions as appropriate;
- Managing accounts payable and receivable;
- Supervising bird seed sales reconciliation/tracking;
- Monitoring bulk mail account and mailbox, key control;
- Ensuring that the lease for the building is upheld (repairs, HVAC service, etc.);
- Serving as chairperson of the finance committee;
- And assuming any other typical duties of a treasurer.

ESTIMATED TIME COMMITMENT

depends upon a person's familiarity or comfort with Quickbooks and accounting work. Our current treasurer, who is not a finance professional, spends about eight hours a month on reconciliation/bill paying, plus an extra three hours on three Finance Committee meetings, and another three hours for budget preparation. The average total time our treasurer invests in ASO varies between 12-15 hours a month, up to 20 hours during busy months.

SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE/QUALITIES:

Basic accounting/bookkeeping principles, base knowledge of Quickbooks desired, desire to support and jointly make decisions for the organization. A commitment of two years in the position is optimal.

ASO's two previous treasurers will be available to answer questions and provide support. There is a calendar of dates of specific activities and a pretty good write-up of procedures.

Help us find the solution. If you or someone you know would like to learn more, please call or email Anne Maguire at 402-960-0507 or amaguire@audubonomaha.org

ASO in action



TURKEY TALK PROGRAM ASO's November meeting welcomed some new faces as we "gobbled" food watching the fascinating PBS documentary, "My Life as a Turkey."

Our guest speaker, Dr. Mark Vrtiska, Wildlife Management Specialist, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, shared updates on the first year of the three-year \$4-million study of Nebraska's wild turkey population, which has decreased 45% since 2009. Sixty turkeys are being trapped each year in two geographic locations. Blood samples are taken and GPS trackers attached to assess their health and track their movement. The goals of the study, which includes genome testing, are to understand the factors contributing to the decline and to restore the wild turkey population.



HAWKWATCH FIELDTRIP

Nine brave birders climbed the tower at Hitchcock Nature Center for our November Hawk Watch field trip. It was sunny, but the cold temps and wind chased the birders inside after Bob Wells, past ASO president, pointed out several hawks. Warming up inside, they learned how to access the Hawk Watch website data.

Let's get you up to 'seed' *by Betty Fullerton*

If you're seeing more chubby Chickadees and sprightly Sparrows in your neck of the woods, give yourself a big pat on the back. Your semiannual seed orders not only keep our feathered friends flourishing, they fund Audubon Society of Omaha's educational programs and conservation activities and are our largest fundraisers.

Here's a look ahead at our 2024 Winter Seed Sale and a look back at our 2023 Fall Bird Seed Sale. Watch your email inbox in early January for information about our 2024 Winter Bird Seed Sale. And remember, we sell the freshest "gourmet" seed!

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR INBOX FOR WINTER SEED SALE UPDATES!

Running low on bird seed? Then be sure to keep your backyard buddies and seasonal sojourners well-fed and flying high throughout the upcoming spring migration!

STARTING JANUARY 5, ORDER SEED ONLINE during ASO's Winter Bird Seed Sale. Here's the scoop: If you have purchased bird seed in the past — and have provided your email address — we will email you an order form. (As usual, we don't mail order forms for the Winter Sale.)

YOU CAN ORDER TWO WAYS:

1. Mail your completed order form (available on the website) with a check.
2. Order online at audubon-omaha.org using a credit or debit card.

ORDERS ARE DUE FEBRUARY 8. Your order will be ready for pickup on **Saturday, February 17, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.** at ASO's office and warehouse at 4339 South 90th Street in Omaha.

If you have questions, OR would like to volunteer for this important fundraiser, call John or Betty Fullerton at 402-493-4362 or 402-957-5901. If you need them to email an order form to you, please email efullerton00@gmail.com.

THANKS A TON (NEARLY 23 TONS, ACTUALLY) FOR MAKING OUR ALL SEED SALE A SUCCESS! Thanks to 293 ASO customers, we sold 45,880 pounds of quality bird seed, generating \$57,450 in sales. We raised more than \$17,500 to support local conservation efforts and education. We gained 36 new customers. Thank you for your donations, as well, which totaled \$1,879!

Our 33 amazing, dedicated volunteers are the lifeblood of our semiannual bird seed sales. They helped by assembling the mailing, unloading the semi-trailer of bird seed, loading our customers' orders, making deliveries and/or providing food. Thanks to: Bennett Amdor; Jo Bartikoski; Ruth Bentzinger; Roger Carroll; Mark Cave; Jim Commers; Kathleen Crawford-Rose; Alistair Cullum; Ken Czyz; Linda Dennis; Kyle Finley; Michelle Foss; Christine Fullerton; Steve Geddes; Mace Hack; Marilou Jasnoch; Joe Jacobsen; Kayla Johnson; Tim Kautzman; Jeff Kleve; P.J. McDonnell; Andy Miller; Jenna Miller; Christine Prescott; Julia Rawnley; Duane & Kathy Schwery; Michael Schaffer; Katy Simmons; Melissa Sitze; Virginia Stauffer; Bob Wells; and Don Westling.



*Front row:
Bennett Amdor,
Mark Cave,
Jeff Kleve*

*Back row:
Betty Fullerton,
P.J. Mc Donnell,
Jenna Miller,
Marilou Jasnoch,
Kathleen Crawford-Rose,
Christine Prescott*

RESOURCES & INFO:

HOW TO JOIN/RENEW/UPDATE

Join or renew your membership online at audubon-omaha.org and select "Get Involved." Save paper and avoid confusion. Your membership with National Audubon automatically makes you a member of Audubon Society of Omaha.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Please call National Audubon toll-free at 1-844-428-3826, or send an email to audubon@emailcustomerservice.com

STAY CONNECTED

Join our email list at Audubon-Omaha.org under "Get Involved."

BEQUESTS & GIFTS

A bequest to Audubon Society of Omaha is a gift to those who will succeed us and secure our natural heritage. Want to honor a loved one and help ASO's local conservation and education efforts? You can make a donation anytime at Audubon-Omaha.org OR you can mail your check along with the name and address of the person to be notified to:

Audubon Society of Omaha
P.O. Box 3542, Omaha, NE 68103

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Can you lift as much as 50 pounds without hurting yourself? The ASO birdseed sale needs volunteers for four-hour shifts on three different days. Please contact John Fullerton at 402-493-4362 (h), 402-957-5901 (c) or efullerton00@gmail.com if you can help with this major fundraiser. We can't do it without help from our members and fellow bird feeders.

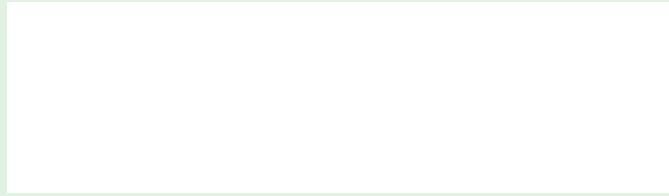
TAKE ACTION Big things are happening, so communicate with your elected officials. Go to audubon-omaha.org for links to contact info for each.

INJURED BIRD?

Raptors: Call 866-888-7261 to speak to a Raptor Conservation Alliance volunteer. Non-raptor: Call Nebraska Wildlife Rehab at 402-234-2473.

Audubon
Society of Omaha
P.O. Box 3542
Omaha, NE 68103
audubon-omaha.org

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STEWARDSHIP OF THE EARTH AND ITS CREATURES

the Meadowlark

JAN/FEB 2024
VOL 53 ISSUE 1



*2023 Student Art Contest
Best of Show winner, Ava S., 12th grade*



The Audubon Society of Omaha is dedicated to the active promotion of environmental awareness to our community through education, conservation, and enjoyment of our natural heritage, especially birds.

CONTACT US AT:

P.O. Box 3542
Omaha, NE 68103-3542
402-445-4138
website: audubon-omaha.org
email: audubonomaha@audubonomaha.org



Find us on Facebook
and Instagram.

ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Christine Prescott
Past President: Bob Wells
1st Vice President: Kayla Johnson
2nd Vice President: Anne Maguire
Treasurer: Michelle Foss
Secretary: Katy Simmons

ELECTED DIRECTORS

Bennett Amdor
Amy Campagna
Kyle Finley
Betty Fullerton
Steve Geddes
Melissa Sitze
Virginia Stauffer
Vacancy- Open

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Art Contest: Virginia Stauffer
DEIB: Bennet Amdor
Education: Amy Campagna
Finance: Michelle Foss
Fundraising and Bird Seed Sale:
Elizabeth and John Fullerton
Legislative Affairs: Christine Prescott
Marketing and Outreach: Anne Maguire
Membership: Kathy Schwery
Natural Areas Stewardship: Kayla Johnson
Nominating: Anne Maguire
Program: Amy Campagna
ASO Administrator: Julia Rawnsley
Executive Director, Audubon Great Plains:
Kristal Stoner