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## Nebraska's Species

## Endangered

Ongoing projects across Nebraska are being conducted to conserve endangered species, insure their survival, and bring them back to a safe level. Least Terns, Piping Plovers, Mountain Plovers, the Salt Creek tiger beetle, prairie fringed orchid and other species are included on the endangered list.

At the general meeting Thursday, October 9, Julie Godberson of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission will inform us about these conservation projects. She will also explain the differences between federal and state laws as applied to threatened and endangered species.

Ms. Godberson stressed that the Endangered Species Act is seen by some persons as regulatory, but in actuality it is an educational and conservation statute which encouraged common sense and discovering new methods of helping species survive.

Julie will relate some success stories. One regards the



progress made on population numbers of the Mountain Plover. She will also inform us of the effects of West Nile virus and its impact on some species.

Ms. Godberson has been employed at Nebraska Game and Parks since 2002 as an Environmental Analyst responsible for maintenance of threatened and endangered species. She leads NGPC reviews of any state projects having a potential to impact threatened and endangered species. She is currently working on a Master's degree in Fire Management at UNO under Dr. Tom Bragg. As an undergraduate, she conducted a project at ASO's Heron Haven.

**Join us Thursday, October 9, at Hanscom Park Methodist Church, 4444 Frances (1 block south of 44th & Center), 7:30 P.M.** A short business meeting will follow the program.

The evening will conclude with coffee, cookies and conversation. Visitors are welcome.

# Eyes to the Skies

By Clem Klaphake

The October Audubon Society of Omaha field trip will be held Sunday, October 5, at the Hitchcock Hawk Watch just north of Crescent, Iowa. The hawk and falcon migration should be just about at its peak with some eagles starting to show up.

Due to weather conditions, it is not always easy to determine weeks in advance as to whether the raptors will be flying on a pre-selected date. Many other species (such as White Pelicans, cormorants, gulls, Blue Jays, robins and a variety of sparrows) that can be seen from the Hitchcock overlook may also be migrating through in early October.

We will start the watch at 9:00 A.M. at the lodge in the

Hitchcock Nature Area and provide donuts and other pastries. If you want coffee, tea or juices, bring them with you. If you wish to spend the day, bring a lunch.

If you cannot make it at 9:00 A.M., you may come by and stop in any time later that day.

To reach Hitchcock, either take I-680 across the Mormon bridge east past I-29 to Crescent, IA, on Highway 988; or take I-29 north out of Council Bluffs to Exit 61A and east on 988 to Crescent. Turn left in Crescent onto Hwy 183 for about 5 miles and watch for the Hitchcock Nature Area sign on your left. Follow it into the park where there is a \$2.00 fee for the day.

Come and join us while we keep looking up!

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## Nelli's Notes

By Nelli Falzgraf

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For 30 years the National Audubon Society supported ASO by giving money based on both their and our recruitment of members. Revenues from NAS have decreased, but has National continued to supplement chapters since July 2001 with a safety net amount that will cease July 2004. Unless there are changes, it will be each chapter's responsibility to raise funds for its bills. While this is challenging, it's not unexpected that independent entities be self-supporting.

Lest people dismiss NAS, I want to point

It is our volunteers who have sustained the chapter and provided activities, most of these organized from the comforts of home, and implemented in the Omaha community. Thanks to all volunteers for making ASO a fine organization striving to conserve the natural world.

ASO encompasses many facets, and everyone's talents are needed and welcomed. Please call us and join our efforts to make a difference.

out that they still recruit far more members from the Omaha area for ASO than we do for ourselves— —and that is from their expense and effort. Once recruited, it is the chapter's responsibility to involve the membership.

As Audubon members, those who join both NAS and ASO have benefits of a voice in national, state, and local groups; receive the Audubon magazine and the *Meadowlark*; and are part of a well-known organization with national stature. Combined NAS and ASO new memberships are \$20/year.

## Volunteering with ASO

As an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, all of our activities are planned by volunteers, and funding is from donations and grassroots fundraising.

Volunteers staff the ASO headquarters building by greeting visitors; upgrading and maintaining the premises; cleaning up after floods, leaks, and break-ins; looking after the 10-acre Heron Haven; and creating the beautiful Butterfly Garden.

Our members serve on the Board, providing guidance and direction, documenting proceedings, handling administration matters such as insurance and bylaws, accounting for money, maintaining tax exemption, overseeing ASO invested funds, updating the membership data base, recruiting members, raising funds, and recording activities for a scrapbook.

Our volunteers plan birding and other nature activities; arrange for programs and provide refreshments at monthly meetings; and organize fun events such as banquets, barbecues, and picnics. They write articles for, produce and distribute the *Meadowlark*; publicize and promote ASO via newspaper, website, and special events.

Volunteers obtained a conservation easement on and manage the 13-acre ASO Prairie. For the benefit of the

## Thanks to a Volunteer

I want to commend one volunteer who has served faithfully for many years in a quiet and unobtrusive manner, but whose services are nonetheless sincerely appreciated. She is **DwanDean Leach**, who recruits volunteers to bring cookies to the general meeting, who makes the coffee and sets out the treats each month.

Thanks, Dwan, from all of us who enjoy your hospitality.

## Enjoying Birds and Helping ASO

While feeding stations are not vital to the survival of wild birds, they do attract birds, allowing us to view and enjoy their energetic antics and cheery calls.

Birds do not migrate south because of cold temperatures. Their fat reserves and insulating feathers serve to retain body heat. But their natural food supply becomes scarce in winter when seeds are mostly eaten or covered in snow or when high-protein arthropods have died or are otherwise unavailable.

We could help birds and ourselves by supplying water; providing shelter of nearby ground cover, bushes, and trees; keeping feeders clean to prevent spread of diseases; and setting out nutritious bird seeds and suet.

ASO has held a Bird Seed Sale for the past two decades each year in October to benefit birds and replenish general funds for programs and environmental projects. Bird

seed can be stored in clean trash cans with tight-fitting lids in basements, garages, or even outdoors (metal ones are more gnaw-proof).

Take advantage of the ASO Bird Seed Sale and restock with fresh bounties of black-oil



membership and public, they provide programs and projects that connect us to nature, such as those given by the Omaha Raptor Team.

and other seeds to bring birds to your neighborhood and brighten the wintry days ahead.

## **The National Audubon Society and ASO**

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### **Iowa Ornithologists Meeting October 10-12 at Hitchcock Nature Area**

We have an opportunity to attend the Fall meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists—nearby—at Hitchcock Nature Area, October 10-12.

Program and field trip details as well as a registration form are available at [www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org).

You need not be a member of IOU to participate. Please feel free to contact Sharon Stilwell, [rsstilwell@att.net](mailto:rsstilwell@att.net), if you have questions.

### **Volunteer Wanted for Pleasant Work**

We are looking for a "greeter" at the general meetings. This person would welcome visitors and new members attending for the first time, introduce them to others, and offer information to visitors and/or new and present members as needed.

If you would like to help with this once-a-month, pleasant task, please Nelli Falzgraf at 292-9687.

### **Rivers & Bluffs Fall Birding Festival November**

**7 - 9**

Explore Mother Nature's Best Kept Secret - the Rivers & Bluffs where three states meet. Discover hidden treasures in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. Chien, Wisconsin, or 35 miles east of Decorah, Iowa.

Peak season for views of thousands of elegant Tundra Swans, even more ducks and geese, numerous Bald Eagles and Hawks. Search for Golden Eagles, other interesting and unusual species. Mississippi River Ecosystem with beautiful bluff overlooks just 40 miles downriver from LaCrosse, Wisconsin; 30 miles upriver from Prairie du Included are two half-day field trips, bird education programs, Mississippi River cruise, live hawks and owls, great hospitality: meals at best local restaurants, door prizes and gift certificates, live music and special fun on Saturday nite. Registration fee: \$5.00. Organized by Ric & Betty Zarwell, Lansing, Iowa. Contact [zarxzar@salamander.com](mailto:zarxzar@salamander.com)

## Earth-Friendly Tip of the Month

This table comes from Environmental Defense, excerpted from a Sustainable Seafood Report published by Environmental Defense and the Collaborative. It lists seafood choices based on sustainability of harvest and pollution-causing fish farming practices. Note that tuna is not on either list, as harvesting practices vary widely. The *University of California Berkeley Wellness Letter* reports that Albacore tuna has the highest levels of mercury because these fish are the largest. It recommends chunk light tuna packed in water.

Note that

### Best to Choose

Anchovies

Bluefish

Channel Catfish

Crab - dungeness and stone

Crawfish

Halibut - Pacific

Herring - Atlantic

Mackerel - Spanish and Atlantic

Mahjimahi (dolphin fish)

Mussels (farmed)\*

Oysters (farmed)\*

Salmon - wild from Alaska

Sardines

Shrimp/prawns - Northern and tra-caught spot prawns

Striped bass (farmed and wild)

Tilapia

\*From producers using racks, nets or lines suspended in the water.

### Best to Avoid

Chilean seabass (toothfish)

Cod (Atlantic)

Grouper

Halibut - Atlantic

Monkfish

Orange roughy

Rockfish - Pacific (red snapper)

Salmon - Atlantic (farmed)

Shark

Shrimp/prawns (farmed and most wild)

Skate

Snapper

Swordfish

### October Events

5 (Sun) Field Trip to Hitchcock Nature Area

6 (Mon) Conservation Meeting

8 (Wed) Board Meeting

9 (Thur) General Meeting

10-12 (Fri-Sun) IOU Meeting at Hitchcock

25-26 (Sat-Sun) Bird Seed Sale

## Conservation/Legislative Action

### Oh To be Four Again!

I related immediately with Luann in the Sunday, September 20, *Omaha World-Herald* comics when she wanted to forget all the turmoil of her world and go back to her childhood. How many times do we, in our turmoil -

.. still need to call our senators to tell them we don't want drilling for oil in the Arctic NWR?

.. still need to remind OPPD that Nebraska has great opportunities for wind power and not to strap us with an \$850 million bill for a coal-powered plant near Nebraska City giving us twice as much power as we will ever need?

.. have to tell General Motors to stop producing gas guzzlers and Hummers in order to curb global warming?

.. need to remind city officials that the best use of Loess Hills soil does not include dumping it on the floor of the new convention center for the River City Roundup? Oh to be a "carefree four" again.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to the cadre of landowners and prairie lovers who are now participating in the torturous work of returning some of the Loess Hills to its native prairie. They have received a \$170,000 federal grant to help fuel the Loess Hills Stewardship initiative, a public-private partnership. This grant to the Loess Hills is part of the \$12.9 million in Interior Department cost-share grants being funded for more than 256 projects across the country. The Loess Hills grant will be administered by the DeSoto Wildlife Refuge.

By Ione Werthman

As of 2002, the U.S. Corps of Engineers had acquired 25,177 acres of the 29,000 acres authorized for acquisition in 1986. Approximately 5,000 acres of the floodplain have been reconnected to the river, and 50 existing river structures have been modified to enhance shallow water habitat. It's a start!

For the record: in Missouri, one mitigation site of 1,687 acres is located 20 miles west of Columbia, MO, at river miles 188 to 185. Dike structures in the river have been modified to create shallow water habitat opportunities for native big river fish. The site is managed by the USFWS as part of the Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge.

### Free Trade or Fair Trade?

According to NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, if our domestic policies and environmental regulations pose an impediment to the trade of a foreign nation or company within the agreement, they can challenge our laws—federal, state, or local. For over 10 years, not only has there been a steady stream of jobs going south, but some serious challenges to our environmental laws and regulations have taken place. A Canadian chemical company has sued U.S. taxpayers for \$1 billion in order to overturn the California Clean Water Law—the law that banned the use of the gasoline additive MTBE because they found it had polluted California's water.

At the World Trade Organization talks in Cancun recently, it was noted that there needs to be a comprehensive reexamination of the impact of global trade policy on food security, farmers'

## **Increase of Mitigation Funds**

### **for the Missouri River**

It's been long in coming. But thanks to the past efforts of former Senator Bob Kerrey, on June 12, 2003, Brigadier General David A. Fastabend of the Corps of Engineers, signed the Record of Decision for mitigation funds, allowing the Corps to acquire land along the lower Missouri from Sioux City to St. Louis.

This project's purpose is to restore fisheries and wildlife habitat lost due to channelization of the river. The U.S. Congress originally authorized funding for the Mitigation Project in 1986 for a total of 48,100 acres of land to be acquired from willing private landowners or through easements on public land. In 1999, the Mitigation Project was readdressed, and an additional 118,650 acres was authorized. However, funding for the project caused the delay. (Authorization for a project is always the easy part; allocation of money is the real stickler.)

livelihoods, and local, sustainable food production. A Bill of Rights, signed by over 31 attending organizations, included support for trade policies that ensure family farmers and ranchers around the world a fair price for their products. It also ensures that policies be implemented that will safeguard their capacity to produce food without environmental degradation both locally and abroad.

Because more and more consumers are checking to see where, how and by whom their food is produced, farmers who sell grain to cooperatives of "naturally grown" products must now sign affidavits stating they don't plant "genetically modified" crops, a big issue with farmers in Europe. The European Union, which requires special certification that livestock are free of growth hormones, has not approved any new biotech plants in five years.

American farmers have a big stake in Europe's crop production because of global trade policies. However, because much of America's corn, cotton and soybeans are now

**Continued on page 5**

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## **Omaha Raptor Team - A Committee of ASO**

**- By Alison O'Connor**

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### **Earth-Friendly Tip of the Month**

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tuna is not on either list, as harvesting practices vary widely. The *University of California Berkeley Wellness Letter* reports that Albacore tuna has the highest levels of mercury because these fish are the largest. It recommends chunk light tuna packed in water.

## **Best to Avoid**

Chilean seabass (toothfish)

Cod (Atlantic)

Grouper

Halibut - Atlantic

Monkfish

Orange roughy

Rockfish - Pacific (red snapper)

Salmon - Atlantic (farmed)

Shark

Shrimp/prawns (farmed and most wild)

Skate

Snapper

Swordfish

## **Birders Get Insiders' View**

In a recent issue of *The Oregonian*, Richard Yost, a zoologist, is reported as selling birdhouses with equipment allowing one to see what goes on inside from a TV set.

The device is Birdhouse Spy Cam. "It allows birdwatchers to view in color and real time the life-and-death dramas inside the birdhouses in their own yards.

"Just turn on the TV set. It is all there: home invasions, heated rivalries, live births, even murder. The stars of the show can include Screech Owls, nuthatches, squirrels and bats."

Yost is selling his birdhouses across the Internet. His web site, [www.birdhousespycam.com](http://www.birdhousespycam.com), features clips starring some of the birds and squirrels inhabiting Yost's forested back yard.



"You get quite an education in wildlife,"  
Yost said. "Nature can seem pretty cruel  
sometimes...It's a harsh world out there."

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**Addresses to Remember**

President George W. Bush  
The White House, 1600  
Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington D.C. 20500-0001

Comments: 202-456-1111;  
fax: 202-456-2993

Senator Ben Nelson

U.S. Senate, Washington DC  
20510; 202-224-6551; fax  
202-228-0012; Lincoln: 402-  
437-5246; Omaha 391-3411;  
Omaha address: 7602 Pacific  
St, #205, 68114

Senator Chuck Hagel

U.S. Senate, Washington,  
D.C. 20510-2705

Phone: (202) 224-4224; Fax:  
(202) 224-5213

Omaha phone: (402) 758-  
8981

Representative Lee Terry

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Representatives, Washington,  
DC 20515

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68183

Phone: 444-5000 Hot Line:  
444-5555

## Bequests

A bequest to Audubon is a gift to those who will succeed us; a gift to secure our natural heritage.



If you find an injured bird of prey, please contact a Raptor Recovery Center volunteer at 402-731-9869.

## Conservation/Legislative Action

### Continued from page 4

genetically modified for greater pest resistance, the U.S. this year filed a complaint against the European Union through the World Trade Organization—another example of global free trade or fair trade? Are we in America just as guilty?

Join us for our environmental and legislative action discussions at our meetings at the Audubon Office in the coming months — October 6, November 3, December 1 at 7:30 P.M. Become an armchair activist.

## Memorials

The Audubon Society of Omaha greatly appreciates the memorials it receives.

When sending your gift, please identify the person you wish to memorialize. Please also give the name and address of the person to be notified.

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**Audubon Society of Omaha, 11809 Old Maple Road, Omaha 68164**

**Phone: 445-4138 - <http://audubon-omaha.org>**

**Elected Officers:**

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**1st Vice President Elliott Bedows, 309 Greenbrier Ct, Bellevue 68005 292-5017**

**2nd Vice President Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647**

**Treasurer Justin Stolen, 2607 N. 123rd Circle, Omaha 68164 493-6082**

**Past President Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Recording Secretary Linda Dennis, 1011 Homer St, Omaha 68107 733-6548**

**Elected Directors Jackie Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Mace Hack, 1735 So. 87th St, Omaha 68124 934-5040**

**Mark Armstrong, 12741 Forestdale Dr, Omaha 68123 292-9770**

**Bob Fuchs, 1113 Dillon Dr, Omaha 68132 553-8242**

**Sharon Draper, 6220 Kansas Ave, Omaha 68104 572-4026**

**Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276**

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

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**Education Brian Jensen, 12430 Bel Drive, Omaha NE 68144 333-6375**

**Field Trip Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276**

**Finance Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687**

**Fund Raising Pauline Dickey, 2534 Benson Gardens Blvd, Omaha 68134 932-8205**

**Hospitality DwanDean Leach, 3006 Poppleton, Omaha 68105 346-5769**

**Membership Bechara Embaid, 3218 No. 120th Court Apt. 221, Omaha 68164 965-9598**

**Natural Areas Mgt Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Omaha Raptor Team Jenny Henricksen, 4845 So 167 Ave 68135 895-5487**

**Program Ed Higgins, 3717 No 93rd St, Omaha 68134 572-1957**

**Publication Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647**

**Publicity Kathy Schwery, 3616 So 96th St, Omaha 68124 397-7343**

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**Naturestudy Vacant**

**Bird Seed Sale Co-Chairs Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005  
292- 8912**

**Carol Rasmussen, 4503 So. 16th St, Omaha 68107 731-3939**

**Historian Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005 292-8912**

**Audubon Nebr Director Don Helmuth, P. O. Box 117, Denton NE 68339.....  
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**NAS Board Member Dave Tylka, tylka@stlcc.cc.mo.us**

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