

# The Meadowlark

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.

January/February 2017  
Volume 46, Issue 1



ASO is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, serving eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

## February 9th Meeting – How to Establish High Quality, Natural Habitat in an Urban Setting

Kyle Johnson, Landscape Maintenance Technician for Joslyn Art Museum, will be our featured



Male American goldfinch eating purple coneflower seeds

speaker in February. Kyle's goal in developing the outside gardens at Joslyn has been to make them safer for people and wildlife. He will discuss how he has incorporated the following elements into the gardens at Joslyn: the importance of native plants, encouraging biodiversity and minimizing fall landscape clean-up to leave food and shelter for birds. He will also discuss the birds his efforts have attracted to the high quality, natural habitat that

he has been responsible for establishing at Joslyn Art Museum.

Kyle's presentation will be held Thursday, February 9th at 7 p.m. – Weitz Community Engagement Center, room 230, on the UNO Dodge Campus.

## Raptor Program Planned for January Meeting

By Alex Wiles

Join us on January 12th as we welcome Fontenelle Forest with some of their live raptor ambassadors. They will briefly present some facts about the rehabilitated raptors in their care, followed by free time for everyone to meet these amazing birds in person. Photographing the raptors during this meet and greet is encouraged. The meeting will be held at the UNO Dodge campus in the Weitz Community Center, Room 230, on January 12th at 7pm. This is a public event, so feel free to invite your friends!



Peregrine Falcon

Alex Wiles

## MIDWINTER BIRD SEED SALE

If you are getting low on bird seed, here is your chance to stock up again. Audubon Omaha will have an Email Bird Seed Sale with pickup delivery date on February 18th, 2017. The pickup site will be Neal Ratzlaff's garage on 84th and Brentwood.

If we don't have your Email address already, you can send us a request at [katcr@cox.net](mailto:katcr@cox.net) or download the order form from the [Audubon-Omaha.org](http://Audubon-Omaha.org) website after January 15th. We will Email an order form in early January to all of our previous customers who have given us an Email address.

## Great Backyard Bird Count is February 17-20

The Great Backyard Bird Count for 2017 is scheduled for Friday, February 17th through Monday, Feb. 20th. This is a four day event that engages birders of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning birders to experts. For further information visit [www.BirdCount.org](http://www.BirdCount.org) Happy Birding!!

## Field Notes from the President: By Matt Miller

Hi fellow ASO members: It's that time again for some president's notes. My direction with this platform in the Meadowlark is to: one, give our members an idea of the stance of the president, and two, educate or remind people about the good things our organization is involved in for the environmental community. With that said, my topic for this Meadowlark is to talk about advocacy in conservation.

Advocacy is defined as public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy. At ASO we support a variety of topics such as climate change, local and national government policy about various other environmental issues, and finally, advocacy in smaller issues such as nature deficit disorder.

For someone wanting to become involved in numerous avenues of environmental advocacy, there are a couple of ways to get involved. There are silent advocates who donate money to cer-

tain causes. For example, some organizations support lobbyists financially so that the lobbyists can give your organization or organizations a voice in local or national government forums.

Volunteerism is a great way to get involved with more of a "hands on" approach. Volunteering is a great example to others because it says that you aren't just talking the talk, but you are actually willing to set boots on the ground and make your presence felt. Park clean ups, helping organizations with land management activities like prairie plantings or hauling brush, or helping hand out brochures or conduct surveys for issues not spoken of by the general media: these things come to mind readily when I think of volunteering.

These past couple years of being a member of ASO have opened my eyes to the opportunities that a nonprofit has to influence local, regional, and national environ-

mental issues. Audubon organizations all over the nation have been active in many types of advocacy, and as a member, you should be encouraged that Audubon Society of Omaha is no different. Our organization supports and has supported other nonprofits in land improvement projects, shown support to a lobbyist to give us a voice in local and national governmental forums, and has been

a partner on various grants to help with environmental causes ranging from land acquisition to nature/environmental education.

In closing, I hope that as members you are happy with your membership, and if at any point you feel there is some cause that our board should be educated on or should be pursuing, please us know. Thank you, ASO members, for all your support and I hope you have happy holidays.

Yours in conservation,

*Matt Miller, ASO President*

## New Website Going Live

Audubon Society of Omaha is excited to announce the launch of a new website by the New Year!

Modeled after national and state Audubon, this state of the art website features online membership renewals, a place to register for field trips, links to area places to bird, information about ASO's current conservation projects, and more!

This mission-critical ASO website launch has been a great team effort - and an amazing journey that would not have been possible without the website design team: Tad Leeper, Bob Wells, Jayne Hutton, Galyn Langer, and Stacey Coury.

Finally, the visually stunning photos that ASO was given permission to use were provided by Phil Swanson, Mike Benkis, Ryan Johnson, Alex Wiles, Joe Burns, and Peter Carbonell.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make this project possible, and we hope you enjoy the visual appeal and new functionality of the ASO website.

Find ASO on social media:



@AudubonOmaha

### Audubon Society of Omaha International Natural History Tours



### COSTA RICA | 2017

Join the Audubon Society of Omaha on a natural history tour of beautiful and ecologically rich Costa Rica. We will travel throughout the country to experience some of the natural wonders that make it so spectacular. Volcanoes, wildlife sanctuaries, cloud forests, beaches, a wildlife rescue center, a coffee plantation, and hot springs are just a few of the exciting destinations in store for the journey. Of course, we will always keep our eyes peeled for birds and other amazing wildlife along the way!



8 DAYS  
MAY 27 - JUNE 3

\$2100/PERSON  
(DOUBLE OCCUPANCY)  
(DOES NOT INCLUDE AIRFARE)

A deposit of \$600 is  
required to reserve a spot  
and full amount due by  
March 10

HOTELS, MEALS, GROUND  
TRANSPORTATION, AND  
TRAVEL INSURANCE ARE  
INCLUDED

MEET OTHER LOCAL  
WILDLIFE ENTHUSIASTS  
AND SUPPORT THE  
CONSERVATION EFFORTS  
OF YOUR LOCAL AUDUBON  
SOCIETY

PLEASE CONTACT:

Alex Wiles

audubonomaha@gmail.com

audubon-omaha.org

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

January 28th – Backyard Birding • February 25th – Carter Lake and Beyond

by Clem Klaphake

On Saturday January 28th we will be checking out a couple of local backyards and bird feeders. We will meet at Fontenelle Forest Nature Center on Bellevue Boulevard at 8:30 a.m. We will check the feeders there and then caravan to Bob and Kathleen Rose's house (always a treat for a good variety of winter feeder birds here and good coffee and cider). From there we will drive to Duane and Kathy Schwery's house just across the Platte River in Cass County. The Schwery's always have great up-close birds on their back deck and great munchies and drinks. From there we may go to the Schilling WMA (depends on weather and road conditions). Come join us for a few hours of

winter bird watching and social camaraderie. Everyone is welcome.

The February field trip will be held on Saturday February 25th. We will meet on the north side of Carter Lake next to the Omaha Airport on Carter Drive at 8:30 a.m. There is a place to park just to the north of where there usually is open

water. From there we will check out a few cemeteries and/or the flood plain at Neale Woods. We may also check out Boyer Chute. February can be very unpredictable in terms of what birds may be present or what the weather will be like on this day. Watch for the second mailing from the Audubon Society of Omaha for activities in February.

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**Omaha Youth Birding Group – Save the Date! RSVP to 402-885-0990  
Free Field Trips guided by Audubon's Bob Wells and Tisha Johnson  
Saturday January 14th 2pm-4pm • Sunday February 12th 2pm-4pm**

As always we want to give you a substantive experience, weather plays a large role this time of year, so closer to the Field Trip dates we

will know what has landed where or some new tidbit of information that will direct our search.

We are planning to scope out owl and eagle nests in February, then bird the neighboring lakes. Lake Wanahoo has been considered too, it is a 25-35 minute drive out west. As the time nears, we will have more information and details.

For those of you new to Audubon, this group is composed of youth ranging in age from 8 to 19. Younger youth must be accompanied by their parent or grandparent. There is no formality or annual time requirement to enjoy this group experience. Drop in, come give it a try, it's a fun bonding experience for you and your favorite youth(s).

### BIRD IDENTIFICATION CLASS 2017

8:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

**\$25.00 for all 3 classes must be paid before the start of the first class**

**Part 1 – MARCH 11th • Fontenelle Forest Nature Center**

**Part 2 – APRIL 15th • Wetland Learning Center**

**Part 3 – MAY 6th • Fontenelle Forest Nature Center**

With over 50 million 'birders' in the US, bird watching is the fastest growing outdoor activity today. Led by Clem Klaphake and Justin Rink, past presidents of the Audubon Society of Omaha, this class includes local field trips/walks designed to teach you how to identify the birds in your backyard or any other location you might encounter them, use of field guides and use of binoculars. No prior knowledge of bird identification is needed. If you are interested contact Clem Klaphake at 402-292-2276 or ckavian@cox.net to register. For ages 12 and up. The class is limited to 15 people.

### Bird Seed Sale Volunteers – Thanks!!

Our 36th annual bird seed sale is over and it was truly a group effort from start to finish. When all the bills are paid and the checks counted, we should clear approximately \$4,600.00. Thanks go out to all the volunteers and customers who make this sale a success each year. We apologize if we miss anyone but we would really like to recognize the workers who made this sale a success.

Head-of-it-all. Neal Ratzlaff

Chief assistants: Carole and Dick

Rasmussen, Jerry Toll, Betty Fullerton, & Kathleen Crawford-Rose

Computer Backup & Labels:  
Duane Schwery

Web Master: Jim McLochlin

Mailing: Jo Bartikowski, Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Nelli Falzgraff, John and Betty Fullerton, Sue Gentes, Carole & Dick Rasmussen, Kathy Schwery and Don Westing.

Garages : Neal and Deb Ratzlaff, and Bob and Kathleen Rose, John and Betty Fullerton

Distribution crew. Jerry Toll, Crew Chief

Unloading seed: Mark Cave, Matt Miller, Jer Toll, and Bob Wells.

Loading the seed: Elliott Bedows, Mark Cave, Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Betty and John Fullerton, Mace Hack, Clem Klaphake, Tad Leeper, Jim McLochlin, Matt and Sarah Miller, Loren & Babs Padelford, John Pollock, Neal and Deb Ratzlaff, Bob Rose, Al Reyer, Duane Schwery, Eric Scholar, Jer Toll, and Bob Wells.



# Audubon Student Art Contest and Show April 8, 2017

by Virginia Stauffer

The Audubon Society of Omaha Student Art Show - 2017 will take place on Saturday, April 8 at a NEW LOCATION at Bellevue University:

John B. Muller  
Administration Building

Symposium Room (lower level)

1000 Galvin Rd. South  
Bellevue, NE

The artwork of all students entering the contest (grades K through 12) will be on display from 12:00 noon until 3:30 pm that day. An awards ceremony will occur at 2:00 pm.

The artwork features student drawings of birds found in the Midwest or of endangered birds throughout the world. The artwork is judged for Excellence or Merit in 3 categories - Realism, Graphic



Design, or Cartooning.

This event draws a large number of entries and we need volunteers to help with the collection, judging, and hanging of entries, as well as help with greeting students and their families and friends on the day of the show. If you are free and would like to help it would be greatly appreciated.

**Collection of Artwork in the  
ASO office Friday, Feb. 24  
3:00 pm – 6:00 pm**

Saturday, Feb. 25  
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Hanging of artwork at  
Bellevue University John Muller  
Administration Building

Friday, April 7  
9:30 am till noon

Help with hosting the show  
Saturday, April 8  
12:00 pm till 2:00 pm

Help with take down and  
take away Saturday, April 8  
3:00 pm till 4:00 pm

Entry forms, rules and more information will be posted in January 2017 on [www.audubon-omaha.org](http://www.audubon-omaha.org)

Please contact Virginia Stauffer at [vsstauffer1@yahoo.com](mailto:vsstauffer1@yahoo.com) or 214-676-6289 or Jackie Scholar at [jbscholar@cox.net](mailto:jbscholar@cox.net) if you can help.

## BETTY GRENON REMEMBERED

*The Audubon Society of Omaha offers its sincerest sympathy to the family of Betty Grenon on her recent passing.*

*In addition to being an avid birder, Betty was the first female CMA in Nebraska. She was a member and officer in the National Association of Accountants, of Mensa, and became a Nebraska Master Naturalist. She also was a painter, crafter and voracious reader. The following information was posted on NEbirds by Betty's son Alan following her passing on November 11th.*

Betty Grenon started feeding birds when we lived in Missouri, took an ornithology class for fun when she went to college (accounting) after her kids were half grown, and subsequently got a lot of people interested in birds and nature (including me). We moved to Nebraska in 1974, and quickly discovered Fontenelle Forest. I had my first job there, and after I left for college,

Mom got increasingly involved as a volunteer, board member, and sometime staff, when their financial department needed her. (It took her about three tries to actually retire.) She took on leading the Omaha Christmas Bird Count (and the spring count) for decades, continuing the traditional chili potluck compilation at the day's end. (I compiled for a couple years while she was in Houston.) Betty got training and permits and initiated a long term MAPS station, using bird banding to investigate bird productivity and survival, and also in education programs. She was active in the Inland Bird Banding Association, as an officer or meeting organizer at times. Many of you know her from her decades of involvement in the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, serving for recent decades as N. O. U.'s meticulous treasurer and sometime meeting organizer. She enjoyed the Fontenelle Forest Bird Club, including trips around the coun-

try. She travelled with friends and family, birding around the U. S. and Canada, and in Peru, India, Australia, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, the Netherlands, Germany, France, the U. K., Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Belize, and Panama. She loved her view of the woods at home near Fontenelle Forest, witnessing the historic return of Wild Turkeys, nesting Cooper's Hawks, and Pileated Woodpeckers (and the return of Carolina Wrens) from her living room, as well as all the birds she coddled at the feeders. In her last days of activity at home before telling us it was time to move to hospice, Mom spent her time getting N. O. U.'s finances in tidy shape to hand off to the next treasurer. She was devoted to others, and better organized and adjusted to this last move than the rest of us. Go look at some birds. That one you're looking at was her favorite.

12 November, 2016  
Alan Grenon, Visiting from Seattle

## Addresses to Remember

**President Donald Trump**, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20500-0001, Comments: 202-456-1111

**Senator Deb Fischer**, U.S. Senate, Washington DC 20510; Phone: 202-224-6551; Fax: 202-228-1325; Lincoln Phone: 402-441-4600; Omaha Phone: 402-391-3411; Omaha Address: 11819 Miracle Drive 68154

**Senator Ben Sasse**, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510; Phone: 202-224-4224; Lincoln Phone: 402-476-1400

**Representative Don Bacon**, U. S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; Washington Capital Switchboard: 202-225-3121

**Representative Jeff Fortenberry**, House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515, Phone: 202-225-4806; Lincoln Phone: 402-438-1598

**Governor Pete Ricketts**, Capitol Bldg, Lincoln, NE 68509; Phone: 402-471-2244

**Mayor Jean Stothert**, Omaha/Douglas Civic Center 1819 Farnam St., Omaha NE 68183, Phone: 402-444-5000 Hot Line: 402-444-5555

**Lincoln Capitol Switchboard:** 402-471-2311

**Washington Capitol Switchboard**

**Senate:** 202-224-3121; **House:** 202-225-3121

## Bequests

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

## Memorials

The Audubon Society of Omaha greatly appreciates the memorials it receives. When sending a gift, please identify the person you wish to memorialize, and the name and address of the person to be notified. Mail to Audubon Society of Omaha, P.O. Box 3542, Omaha NE

### DONATE DIRECTLY FROM IRA, TAX-FREE

IRA owners age 70-1/2 or older are able to make a direct transfer of a distribution from their IRA trustee to a qualified charity, up to 100,000 annually. This amount is not taxable and may be excluded from the IRA owner's taxable income. If this is done, no additional tax deduction is available for these funds. Contact 402-505-9494 for more information. (Be sure to discuss with your professional tax preparer)



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

## Memberships

For membership in the National Audubon Society (which automatically includes membership in the Audubon Society of Omaha), go to Audubon.org and select "Join." The drop down menu will allow you to choose "Become a member" or "Renew." The membership fee is \$20. You will receive the Audubon magazine and our local newsletter, the Meadowlark.

If you do not wish to belong to the National Audubon Society but would like to join only our local chapter, please fill out the information below and send it, along with a check for \$20 made out to the Audubon Society of Omaha, to the following address:

**Audubon Society of Omaha**  
**19612 Ridgeway Road**  
**Plattsmouth, NE 68048**

With membership in the Audubon Society of Omaha, you will receive our local newsletter, *The Meadowlark*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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Audubon Society of Omaha, Mailing Address: P. O. Box 3542, Omaha 68103-3542  
Phone: 402-445-4138 – omahaaudubon.org  
Office: 1941 S. 42nd St., Omaha NE 68105

**Elected Officers:**

President Matt Miller – 402-681-4625  
1st Vice President Laurine Blankenau – 402-451-3647  
2nd Vice President Tisha Johnson – 402-885-0990  
Past President Tad Leeper – 402-670-5919  
Treasurer Betty Fullerton – 402-493-4362  
Recording Sec'y Linda Dennis – 402-218-5447  
Corres. Sec'y Kathleen Crawford-Rose – 402-292-8912

Elected Directors:

Bob Wells – 402-393-4683  
Helen Bartee – 402-657-3845  
Sarah Miller – 402-980-9678  
Alex Wiles – 559-349-7359  
Shannon Engberg – 402-598-2127  
Galyn Langer – 402-595-8543

Standing Committee Chairpersons:

Conservation Bob Fuchs – 402-553-8242  
Education Clem Klaphake – 402-292-2276  
Field Trip Clem Klaphake – 402-292-2276  
Finance Nelli Falzgraf – 402-292-9687  
Membership Kathy Schwery – 402-296-4788  
Natural Areas Management Glenn Pollock – 402-571-6230

Program – Alex Wiles 559-349-7359  
Publication Helen Bartee – 402-657-3845  
Publicity Jackie Scholar – 402-551-5045

Other Activities:

Bird Seed Sale Chairs  
Kathleen Crawford-Rose – 402-292-8912  
Carol Rasmussen – 402-731-3939  
Art Contest Chairs  
Jackie Scholar – 402-551-5045  
Virginia Stauffer – 402-933-6063  
Historian – Eric Scholar – 402-551-5045  
Exec. Dir., Audubon Nebr. – Marian Langan – 402-797-2301  
ASO Administrator – Stacey Coury – 402-445-4138  
NAS Board Member – Michele Crist – 208-863-1918  
Pan-Flyway Director – Karim al-Khafaji

Six issues of *The Meadowlark* are published annually:  
January - February, March - April, May - June, July -  
August, September - October, November - December.  
The newsletter may be accessed on our website,  
omahaaudubon.org  
Send address changes to: Kathy Schwery, 19612  
Ridgeway Road, Plattsmouth NE 68048, or  
email: djschw@windstream.net.