

# 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.

May/June 2017  
Volume 46, Issue 3



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

## — ANNUAL BANQUET —

### Writing with a Camera – an Evening with NEBRASKAland Magazine's Jeff Kurrus

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Gorat's Steak House, 4917 Center Street

Cash Bar 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

The guest speaker will be NEBRASKAland Magazine's Jeff Kurrus. He will be presenting on "Writing with a Camera." Jeff Kurrus is the author of the children's books "Have you Seen Mary?" and "The Tale of Jacob Swift." Jeff will sign books (which will also be available to purchase) at the event.

Patron tickets are available for \$50 per person. Tax-deductible amount per patron ticket is \$50 minus cost of the dinner. Conservation and education projects that your donation helps support include an inventory of saw-whet owls in the southern tier of Iowa, a Boy Scout Conservation patch, Audubon Society of Omaha's Youth Birding group and maintenance and inventory of ASO's prairie.

Major donations to conservation organizations from ASO in the last 2 years include the Nebraska Land Trust for conservation easements in western Nebraska and UNO's expansion of Allwine Prairie.

A registration form for the banquet is located on page 6.  
Online reservations can be made at [omahaaudubon.org](http://omahaaudubon.org).

**Reservations must be made by Monday, May 8th.**

**DATES  
ANNOUNCED  
FOR SPRING  
BIRD COUNTS.  
FURTHER  
INFORMATION  
CAN BE FOUND  
ON PAGE 3.**



*"Nothing in the world is quite as adorably lovely as a robin when he shows off – and they are nearly always doing it."*  
— Photo by Eric Scholar

## Field Notes from the President: By Matt Miller

Hello fellow ASO members,

As we march into April and May, exciting times await. Patches of nice weather, spring migration, and summer finds itself right around the corner. As a birder I love the influx of new sounds and sights from our neotropical visitors coming back from their winter hiatuses, showing their vibrant colors and vibrant songs. This time of year also has significant meaning for me in the context in which I now get to see a season's worth of work come full circle.

As a restoration biologist at Fontenelle Forest, focusing on the little things is important to me. Spring brings life back to woodlands and prairies, giving me a chance to see what this past season's fires, thinning, and seeding unveils. This can be especially exciting when you see insects, birds, and other wildlife using these restoration work areas, bringing some observed

satisfaction from a season of hard work.

This early spring interaction got me thinking, how does the average outdoor enthusiast embrace the bounties of spring? I know, and my wife reminds me, that not everyone thinks or looks at the environment the same way I do. I often go on tangents describing the work that is being done at Fontenelle and how great it is. She often agrees but she then reminds me that not everyone understands restoration of native habitats, and if I want to engage a person who isn't in the profession, I need to find common ground to engage that person. I feel this can be the model for a lot of us, whether teacher, investment banker, restoration biologist, or even a birder, our community needs to understand that if we want people to appreciate or even respect the environment, we have to find that common ground.

Spring brings awesome beauty and the revival of dormant life, but I also have found it to bring clarity. This season for me is a chance to try to communicate the importance of native areas restoration in a manner so I can engage even the most disconnected human. My holistic goal as a restoration biologist includes not just bringing back native areas to a healthier state but also to engage the public in these restoration initiatives in a way where even the most non-interested humans finds themselves engaged in the signage, my interaction with them, and more importantly as they hike they can't resist admitting the beauty and importance of keeping places like natural areas protected.

Thanks for your time and I hope all of you find an excuse to get outside!

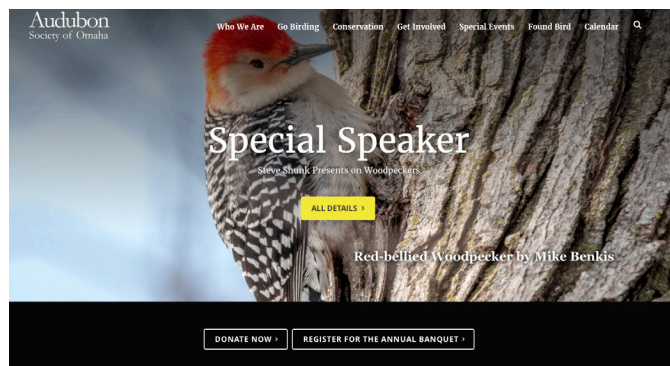
*Yours in conservation,  
Matt Miller*

## New Website Drives New Interest and Delivers New Functionality

by Stacey Coury

One of the main goals of ASO's new website is to increase our visibility within the community. Since its launch on January 1st, we have noticed a definite increase in public inquiries via email. In addition to the typical bird identification and birding "hot spot" questions, we have had groups ask us to help promote local and regional birding events, participate in research projects, and partner with other businesses.

The new website also brings new abilities to analyze website traf-



fic. Since the launch, the website has had over 2,000 unique visitors. The average time spent per visit is about 4 minutes. The top traffic sources include direct (45%), internet searches (36%), social media (10%), and links

from other sites (8%).

Our next big push will be encouraging members to utilize our new website more by signing up to receive The Meadowlark via email and by making donations, renewing memberships, and signing up for events online. ASO will also be working on a communications plan this summer, which will include an email component for upcoming events. If you have not had a chance to visit our new website, please check it out and also stay tuned for more exciting updates!

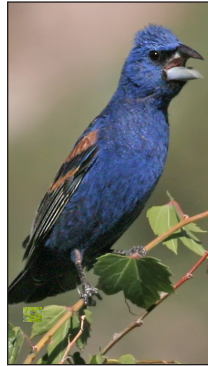
## Sarpy County Bird Count

by Clem Klaphake

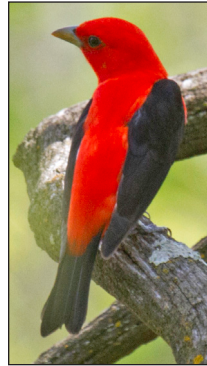
The Annual Sarpy County Bird Count will be held Saturday, May 13th. The county is divided into 4 areas with a captain for each area. Those interested in helping should contact Clem Klaphake, 402-292-2276 or ckavian@cox.net. Clem will direct you to the area that needs help in counting.



Chestnut-sided Warbler



Blue Grosbeak



Scarlet Tanager



Least Tern

## Desoto Spring Bird Count – Saturday, May 6th

By Jerry Toll

The DeSoto Spring Bird Count will be held Saturday, May 6th at 8 a.m. We will meet at the visitors center entrance. We will do a lot of walking on the refuge. Please bring your lunch. Please contact me directly if you can attend – geritol48@cox.net.



Magnolia Warbler

## Science Opportunity

Information provided by Bob Fuchs

Now more than ever, with climate change and habitat loss causing major changes in animal and plant populations, citizen science is crucial to help scientists figure out exactly what is happening. There is a PBS show called Crowd and Cloud about this concept, and you can participate. Go to the website <http://crowdandcloud.org/join-a-project> and you can search for ways to get involved in your location, age group, online or outdoors, plant or animal, just about anything. Many of these projects are national but need observations from our area. You can enter data through a regular computer or, in many cases, a smart-phone. Spring and summer are the best seasons to get involved in these projects.

## BIRD SEED SALE VOLUNTEERS – THANKS!!



Winter Bird Seed Sale morning crew:  
Neal Ratzlaff, Sarah Miller,  
Bob Wells, Mace Hack

Thanks go out to all the volunteers and customers who made our seventh winter bird seed sale a success. We nearly matched the pounds of seed sold last year

and had a wonderful sunny, warm day to visit with all our birding friends. We apologize if we miss anyone but we would really like to recognize our great volunteer staff.

Neal Ratzlaff: Garage master and chief consultant.

Jer Toll: Delivery and distribution, Volunteer coordinator.

Carole and Dick Rasmussen, Betty and John Fullerton, Kathleen Crawford-Rose : Chief paper pushers.

Distribution crew: Elliott Bedows, Mark Cave, Mace Hack, Sarah Miller, Bob Wells, Neal and Deb Ratzlaff, and Jer Toll.

*“I believe the world is incomprehensibly beautiful – an endless prospect of magic and wonder.”*

– Ansel Adams

# 2017 STUDENT ART CONTEST & SHOW

by Virginia Stauffer

Approximately 300 people attended the 2017 Audubon Society of Omaha Student Art Contest & Show at Bellevue University on Saturday, April 8. This year there were 210 entries (from Kindergarten through 12th grade) representing 28 different public, home and private schools in the greater Omaha area. All students who entered the contest had their artwork displayed for viewing. It was a very festive and rewarding day for all those involved.

Students and their families were excited to see their artwork exhibited and to receive the awards in the new location, the Muller Administration Building conference center. They also enjoyed seeing and learning about a live screech owl from Fontenelle Forest. Prior to the awards ceremony, attendees were able to watch a Pixar cartoon, "For the Birds" and a slide show of excellence award-winning artwork from students this year.

The artwork was of very high quality and included watercolors, wood-block prints, acrylic paintings, cut-paper collage, oil pastels, and crayon drawings. The categories for judging included Realism, Graphic Design and Cartooning. Cardinals, blue jays, meadowlarks, hummingbirds, and eagles were popular subjects along with some unique endangered birds such as the California condor.

Students and their families were greeted by ASO members. Tisha Johnson, Jackie Scholar and



Virginia Stauffer presented prizes and ribbons during the awards ceremony. Awards of Excellence and Merit in the various categories were presented to students in each grade level at the ceremony. Best of Show awards were also presented to the following:

## Grades 9-12

### Best of Show for Realism went to:

Morgan Duncan of Boys Town High School; Caleb Mantanona of Bellevue East High School; Margaret Smith of Smith Home-school

### Best of Show for Graphic Design went to:

Elizabeth Turner of Bellevue East High School

### Best of Show for Cartooning went to:

Taylor Marshall of Fort Calhoun Community Schools

## Grades 5-8

### Best of Show for Realism went to:

Bridget McGill of St. Wenceslaus; Natalie McNamara of Bellevue Elementary; Delaney Moffitt of St. Robert Bellarmine

### Best of Show for Graphic Design went to:

Madison J. Eisert of Bellevue Elementary

### Best of Show for Cartooning went to:

Abigail Hooke of Liberty Middle School

## Grades K-4

### Best of Show for Realism went to:

Izzy DiMari of St. Robert Bellarmine

### Best of Show for Graphic Design went to:

Adele Tompsett of St. Vincent De Paul Elementary

### Best of Show for Cartooning went to:

Anastasia Manhart of St. Margaret Mary Elementary

### NEW for 2017, The Meadowlark Award went to:

Tanner Erickson of St. Cecilia Elementary

The Audubon Society of Omaha is grateful to the wonderful volunteers and establishments for their time, support, enthusiasm and talents in making this show a great success. Thank you, all.

### Collection and hanging of artwork:

Laurine Blankenau, Charlie Callison, Kathleen Crawford-Rose, Nelli Falzgraf, Dennis and Karlene Kingery, Loren and Babs Paddleford, Kathy Schwery, Eric Scholar, Jackie Scholar, Lynn Stauffer, and Virginia Stauffer

### Greeting the Public & Awards Ceremony:

Charlie Callison, Stacey Coury, Shannon Engberg, Nelli Falzgraf, Tisha Johnson, Jackie Scholar, and Virginia Stauffer.

### Certificates of Appreciation:

Nelli Falzgraf

### Raptor Presentation:

Chinook, Eastern Screech-Owl

### Photography: Stacey Coury

### Fontenelle Forest

### Bellevue University Staff, Maintenance

### ASO Art Contest website:

Stacey Coury

### Judges: Marlene McCann,

Kit Murrin, Jackie Scholar

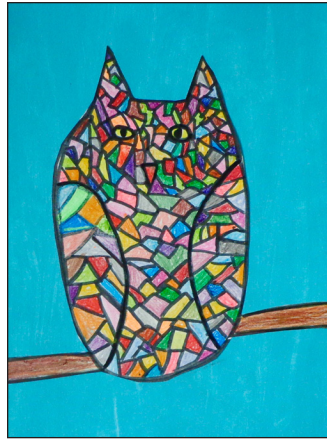
### Participating Art Teachers and Classroom Teachers

### Parents of the participating students





Abigail Hooke



Adele Tompsett



Bridget McGill



Madison Eisert



Anastasia Manhart



Caleb Mantanona



Delaney Moffitt



Margaret Smith



Morgan Duncan



Tanner Erickson



Taylor Marshall



Elizabeth Turner



Izzy DiMari



Natalie McNamara

**Photos of children's artwork by Virginia Stauffer**

# POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

The Pottawattamie County Conservation is having a series of speakers featuring experts in the field of conservation. The series is sponsored by Humanities Iowa. Each event starts at 4 p.m. at the Lodge at Hitchcock Nature Center. Registration and entrance fee to the nature center are required. More information can be found at [www.pottcoconservation.com](http://www.pottcoconservation.com)

## UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

**Saturday, May 13th:** Ron Cisar – “Aldo Leopold”

**Saturday, June 10th:** Danuta Hutchins – “Prairie Flowers”

**Saturday, July 8th:** Benjamin Vogt – “A New Garden Ethic”

**Saturday, August 12th:** Thomas Dean – “Land Ethics”

**Saturday, September 9th:** Keith Summerville – “Lessons Learned from Prairie Restoration”

**Saturday, October 14th:** Kelly Kindscher – “Wild Edibles”



On Wednesday, May 24, 2017, the Omaha Community Foundation will sponsor Omaha Gives!, a 24-hour, online fundraising event to raise support nonprofits in Douglas, Sarpy, and Pottawattamie Counties. It is a community-wide event in its 5th year to raise awareness about local nonprofits, and to celebrate the collective effort it takes to make

this city great. In 2016 nearly 19,000 participants contributed over \$8.9 million for 789 local nonprofits. There are no fees and you do not need an Omaha Community Foundation account to participate. You can donate to any organization registered on [omahagives.org](http://omahagives.org).

Last year, 31 donors gave a total of \$1,842 to Audubon Society of Omaha for its local conservation efforts. If you were a donor to 2015 or 2016 Omaha Gives!, we sincerely thank you for your contribution and hope that you will participate again this year.

Donate a minimum of \$10 by credit card on-line at Omaha Community Foundation's secure website: <https://www.omahagives24.org> on May 24, from midnight to midnight. **Or, you can schedule advance donations starting May 1st**, which will be processed on May 24. Audubon Society of Omaha is a 501(c)(3) organization and your donation is fully tax deductible. Once your credit card donation has been processed, you will receive an email from the Omaha Community Foundation confirming your charitable deduction(s).

## BANQUET RESERVATION

Gorat's Steak House • 4917 Center Street • Omaha, NE 68106  
Wednesday, May 17, 2017 • Cash Bar 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address and zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please choose from the following entrees:

\_\_\_ \$29 Sirloin (10 oz.)    \_\_\_ \$24 Chicken Piccata    \_\_\_ \$21 Cheese Ravioli

Patron ticket(s) \_\_\_ \$50 (Tax Deductible amount is \$50 minus price of dinner)

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ person(s).

Make check payable to Audubon Society of Omaha.  
Mail to Helen Bartee, 521 Beverly Drive, Omaha, NE 68114  
Online reservations can be made at [omahaaudubon.org](http://omahaaudubon.org)

**Reservations must be received by Monday, May 8.**

## 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; 13906 Gold Circle, Suite 101 Omaha, NE 68144, 402-938-0300

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

**Governor Dave Heineman**, Capitol Bldg., Box 94848 Lincoln, NE 68509, Phone: 402-471-2244; Fax: 402-471-  
**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)

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_



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

Find ASO on social media:



@AudubonOmaha

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 – 214-676-6289  
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.