

# 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.

September/October, 2015  
Volume 44, Issue 6



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

## A Full-Circle Approach to Prairie Management

By Clem Klaphake

We have all heard about various bird species being threatened for all sorts of reasons. But loss of habitat is a theme we hear over and over as the main threat to many bird families. A major ecosystem near the top of the list for having the most lost habitat is that supporting grassland birds such as Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows, Western and Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Upland Sandpipers, Dickcissels, etc.

Andrew Pierson, our speaker for the September 10th General Meeting, will address this issue and what Audubon Nebraska is doing to help.

In 2012, as part of a regional project, Audubon Nebraska worked with Missouri River Bird Observatory to develop a grassland bird monitoring system designed for ease of use with volunteers. Their surveys measure bird density, abundance, and species' locations within the habitat. This information allows grassland managers to closely examine avian response to such activities as prescribed fire and grazing.

Pierson will talk about this innovative survey protocol and how it will inform management at Audubon Nebraska sites and throughout the Great Plains. He is Director of Conservation at Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary.

Come join us Thursday, September 10, at 7:00 p.m. In the Weitz Community Engagement Center on the UNO campus.

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER MEETINGS TO BE HELD AT WEITZ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER (WEITZ CEC) ON UNO CAMPUS  
Our general meetings on September 10th and October 8th, 7 p.m., will be held at the Weitz CEC. The Center is located on the UNO Dodge campus.

### Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center (CEC)

#### DIRECTIONS

##### If you are coming from the east...

1. Take Dodge past 52nd Street and Happy Hollow until right before the street light that is approximately 60th Street (unmarked).
2. Keep right and get into the "turn lane" on the right that allows you to go left from Dodge into the University entrance at that stop light. (Note the "Turn right to go left" sign right after the pedestrian bridge.)
3. After you go through the intersection and enter the University, take your first right onto University Drive North.
4. You will pass 5 buildings and 1 stop sign.
5. Take a left into Parking Lot E, right before the Criss Library (big, long windows on the top floor).

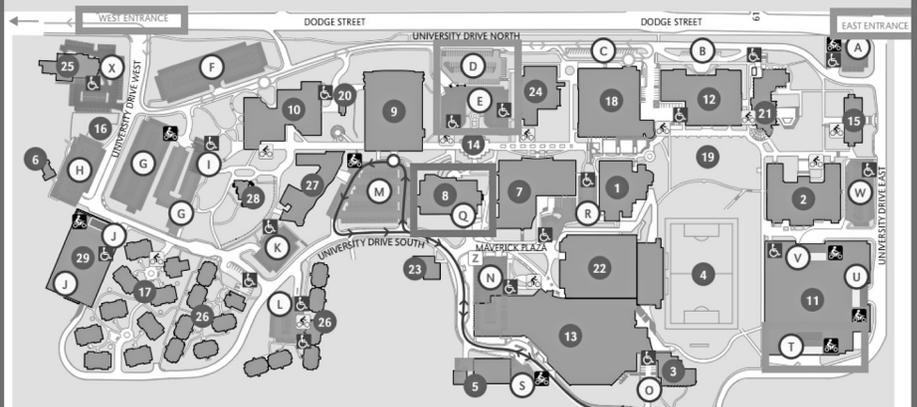
##### If you are coming from the west...

1. Turn right on 67th Street
2. Take your first left onto University Drive North
3. Pass the Durham Science Center and a stop sign
4. After the next building, the Criss Library (big, long windows on the top floor), take a right into Parking Lot E

#### PARKING

Visitors of the CEC are welcome to park in lot E. If a parking stall is unavailable in Lot E the parking attendant will issue a 'Visitor Permit' and guests may park on any surface lot with this special permit. Overflow will also be re-directed to Lot T (East Parking Garage).

Lot D has been designated for overflow parking (when reserved in advance) to be used as needed for special events. Lot D connects to Lot E via a ramp and gate, if available for your use the parking attendant will direct guests to park in this lot.



- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Allvine Hall (AH)                                     | 11. East Parking Garage (EPG)                         | 21. Roskens Hall (RH)                     |
| 2. Arts & Sciences Hall (ASH)                            | 12. Eppley Administration Building (EAB)              | 22. Sopp Fieldhouse (SFH)                 |
| 3. Biomechanics Research Building (BRB)                  | 13. Health, Physical Education & Recreation (HPEER)   | 23. Sculpture & Ceramics Studio (SCS)     |
| 4. Conigle Field (CF)                                    | 14. Henningsen Memorial Composite (HMC) (clock tower) | 24. Sproule Performing Arts Center (SPAC) |
| 5. Central Utilities Plant (CUP)                         | 15. Koyser Hall (KH)                                  | 25. Thompson Alumni Center (TAC)          |
| 6. Child Care Center (CCC)                               | 16. Landscape Services (LS)                           | 26. University Village (UV)               |
| 7. College of Public Affairs & Community Service (CPACS) | 17. Maverick Village (MV)                             | 27. Water Fine Arts Building (WFAAB)      |
| 8. Community Engagement Center (CEC)                     | 18. Mile Boil Student Center (MESC)                   | 28. Welcome Center (WC)                   |
| 9. Criss Library (CL)                                    | 19. Pop Bowl (open space)                             | 29. West Parking Garage (WPG)             |
| 10. Durham Science Center (DSC)                          | 20. Resource Conservation & Recovery Area (RCRA)      |   |

- Z ZIPCARS
- H HANDICAP PARKING
- B BICYCLE RACK
- M MOTORCYCLE PARKING

STUDENT	VISITOR	RESIDENT	CEC VISITOR
FACULTY	MULTIPURPOSE	ALL PERMITS	

CROSSROADS SHUTTLE STOP    PACIFIC CAMPUS SHUTTLE STOP    402-554-2800 | www.unomaha.edu

September Field Trip September 12 • October Field Trip October 24 • Youth Birding Field Trips September 26 & October 31  
Bird Seed Sale October 24 & 25 • See Details on Page 3 | October Program Details on Page 4

## Field Notes from the President: By Tad Leeper

Greetings Audubon Society of Omaha members! I trust you have enjoyed your summer and the abundant natural beauty of the season. This summer was a busy time for ASO. In June, your ASO Board hosted the annual Prairie Festival at our Audubon Prairie Preserve in rural northwest Omaha. I hope you were able to attend the Prairie Fest event. ASO members in attendance were treated to great fellowship, beautiful prairie wildflowers and the singing of resident and migratory songbirds. Our newly-formed Nebraska Youth Birding Club participated in local birding field trips in June and July. The field trips were designed especially to appeal to young birders. (Note: The schedule of September and October young birder field trips is published in this issue of the Meadowlark newsletter.) In July, your ASO Board and Audubon Nebraska partnered to sponsor ASO Director Bob Wells' attendance at the National Audubon Convention in Washington, D.C. Be sure to read Bob's article highlighting his Audubon conference experience in the issue of the Meadowlark.

As we look toward the coming of autumn, I'd like to use this September-October President's column to highlight a few of my Audubon Society of Omaha priorities for the coming year.

First, I think the sustainability and long-term viability of our organization is of paramount importance. To that end we've recently launched the Nebraska Youth Birding Club (see article in the June-July Meadowlark). Let's build on the recent success of this young birders' initiative and continue to explore ways and means to reach out and engage a younger demographic of adults and youth in ASO-re-

lated conservation and birding activities. I welcome your ideas!

I greatly value the synergies that can result from forming strategic partnerships with other like-minded organizations. Let's continue to look for opportunities to forge and strengthen conservation-related partnerships with such organizations as Audubon Nebraska, Fontenelle Forest, Pappio-Missouri NRD, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Nature Conservancy, the Omaha Nebraska Master Naturalist group, and of course our parent organization – the National Audubon Society.

Many of our internal operations (business) processes (e.g., membership renewals, fund raising, newsletter production and mailing, etc.) are currently manual and labor-intensive tasks. This year I plan to appoint a small working group comprised of ASO members to identify and recommend opportunities to automate and streamline our internal manual processes. Such automated tasks might include accepting online credit card payments for membership renewals and donations, online registration for monthly birding field trips, an option to receive either an electronic or paper/printed version of the Meadowlark newsletter via email, etc. Please let me know if you'd like to serve on this manual task-automation working group. Thanks!

Now, let's return for a moment to the subject of the long-term sustainability of our organization. As you know, ASO operates as an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. As a result, those committed volunteers who help with ASO's many operational tasks and public events are by necessity very 'hands-on.' Operational tasks comprise such activities as Meadowlark

newsletter publication/ mailing, Board committees, membership logistics, fundraising, etc. ASO public events include the Prairie Festival, Children's Art Contest/Show, Earth Day booth, monthly programs, birding field trips, and others. This situation creates the potential for volunteer fatigue and 'burn-out' since a relatively small, yet mighty group of ASO volunteers do much of the 'heavy-lifting' regarding our organization's work. This state of affairs runs counter to the long-term sustainability of ASO. We are an organization with more than 1,200 members. I'd like to see the work of ASO spread more equitably across our organization. Many of ASO's internal and public activities, while labor-intensive are of short duration. I invite you to add your name to a newly-created ASO Volunteer List. ASO members on the Volunteer List will be contacted to help out when the ASO Board identifies emergent, short-term needs for extra assistance. The ASO manual task-automation working group mentioned earlier in this article is a case in point. Other such needs might include helping with special/public events, coordinating or assisting with fundraisers, assisting with the newsletter, etc. I invite you to contact any ASO Board member to add your name to the ASO Volunteer List. Much appreciated!

Finally, the Audubon Society of Omaha is blessed with a great deal of talent, experience, wisdom, and insight. As you reflect on my comments above regarding my ASO priorities, I invite and welcome your ideas, suggestions and questions with the goal of continuing to move our fine conservation organization forward in the coming year. Thank you!

## September Field Trip to Platte River State Park

By Clem Klaphake

Come join us for our first fall field trip of the season on Saturday September 12th. We will be meeting at 8:30 a.m. at the Stone Creek parking lot (turn

## Youth Birding Field Trips Sept. 26 & Oct. 31

By Tisha Johnson

Audubon's Omaha Youth Bird Group is excited to announce two more dates for fall field trips! September 26th, 9:00 am at Hitchcock Nature Center and October 31st, 8:45 at Lake Manawa. If you have youth in mind that would enjoy this type of outdoor treasure hunting that we all relish, now is your chance to accompany them and share a fun experience, and one moving forward that together could be your special thing.

Please RSVP your commitment to attend either or both of these field trips to Tisha Johnson at [tisha@alumni.duke.edu](mailto:tisha@alumni.duke.edu). With that RSVP, let me know whether you and/or your 8-12yr old youth would like to be on our group mailing list which includes detailed directions to the sites we are visiting.

We really appreciate your assistance in growing our new field trips program, because outreach to the younger demographic is imperative to sustain America's interest in birding, and strengthen our Omaha Audubon chapter today and into the future.

left at the entrance to the park and take the first right into the parking lot) in Platte River State Park (PRSP). We will be looking at and for birds, butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies and any other insects. That time of year should be good for migrating birds and insects that are trying to beat the onset of colder weather. Anyone is welcome to come and join us. For those who want to bring a lunch for after the morning walk, there are picnic tables for our use. If anyone is interested in pursuing more birds and insects in the afternoon, some of us may head over to Schramm SRA across the river from the park.

A Nebraska Game and Parks sticker is required on your vehicle for entry into the park. Depending on where you live, the most direct route to PRSP from the metro area is to take Hwy 50 to 1 mile south of Louisville and turn right onto Hwy 66 and follow it to the PRSP sign on the highway.

## October Field Trip

By Clem Klaphake

Plans have not been finalized for the October 24th field trip, so please check our web site and/or facebook page by late September or early October for further information. As of now we will meet in the Papio-Missouri River NRD headquarters building parking lot at 8901 So. 154th St., Omaha (northwest corner of Wehrspann Lake) at 8:00 a.m. Where we go will depend on what and where birds are being seen at that time. We will also be mailing a brief notice about the field trip plans and other information. We hope you can join us for this trip.

## Bird Seed Sale October 24 & 25

It is not too soon to be thinking about your bird seed order for this fall. Our supplier, Des Moines Feed, gives us their estimated fall prices the last week of August and you will receive your order blank in mid September. Please consider ordering some Audubon Seed Products as the profits from this sale are used to fund many of our educational programs. If you have friends or neighbors who might be interested, call or Email Kathleen Crawford-Rose (402-292-8912 or [katcr@cox.net](mailto:katcr@cox.net)) with their names and addresses.

We will also be asking members for help with the numerous tasks involved with this sale. In Sept. we will need volunteers to help with the mailing and on the delivery days we need volunteers for loading seed and paper work. Please put these dates on your calendar and give Jerry Toll an Email [geritol48@cox.net](mailto:geritol48@cox.net) or phone call (402-453-9239) to let him know that you are available to assist with this major fund raiser



## NOTICE OF SPECIAL ASO BOARD ELECTION

A special election to fill a vacant Audubon Society of Omaha Board Director position will be conducted at the September 10 monthly ASO general membership meeting. The ASO Bylaws require all Board member vacancies to be filled by a general membership election. In accordance with the Bylaws, the ASO Board recommends that the name of Matt Miller be placed in nomination at the September 10 general meeting as a candidate for the vacant Director position. Matt is employed as a restoration biologist at Fontenelle Forest. He has extensive experience in prairie and woodland management and would add great value to our organization as an ASO Board member. Contact ASO President Tad Leeper if you have questions about the upcoming special election.



## Voyage To The Bottom of the World

*by Ty Smedes*

Join Iowa author and photographer Ty Smedes for this amazing slide presentation and lecture, as he takes you aboard the ice-breaker *Ortelius*, a Russian expedition-ship that will visit the Falkland

Islands, South Georgia Island, and the Antarctic Peninsula.

This journey will place you among the nesting albatross and countless water-birds of the Falklands, and the incredible penguin colonies of

South Georgia, numbering into the hundreds of thousands. See and learn about the fur seals and gigantic elephant seals that rule the beaches.

The expedition's final destination will place you

among the colorful and astoundingly beautiful ice formations of the Antarctic Peninsula as the author and crew make their way through seemingly endless fields of icebergs, via small zodiac landing craft. A true adventure to the bottom of the world!

Join us at 7:00 pm, October 8, at the UNO Weitz Center for this special presentation. We hope to see you there.



# AUDUBON NATIONAL CONVENTION 2015

A call from Laurine Blanke-nau in the middle of June posed this interesting question. "Would you be interested in attending the National Audubon Convention as a Nebraska representative?" As an incoming Audubon Society of Omaha board member I must admit that request came out of the blue. A quick mental scan of my impending summer I realized I didn't have a good excuse as to why I couldn't attend. So a little over a month later I was off to suburban Washington D.C. to represent Nebraska Audubon chapters at the 2015 Audubon National Convention.

I had an excellent guide to the convention. Although I had never met her in person, I quickly realized that Marian Langan the Nebraska State Executive Director was sitting in the seat in front of me on the flight into Washington. Marian was extremely helpful in laying out the roles of National and State Audubon groups and their relationship to the local Audubon Chapters around the country. I went over my personal goals for the convention and set about finalizing my schedule for session attendance.

As a new ASO board member, one of my primary goals was to attend a couple of sessions focusing on Audubon Chapter governance and see presentations by other Audubon Chapters on their strategies for success. I had also registered for a presentation by a Kansas City area chapter of their very successful annual Youth Birding Festival. Other sessions includ-

ed Audubon's recommendations for website upgrades and membership management and strategies for using the internet to increase membership participation.

Large sessions included an address by the National Audubon President, David Yarnold, regarding Audubon's ongoing efforts to develop national priorities for 2016-2020. Topics put forth by the National Audubon president included organizational moves to increase Audubon's diversity and outreach, concentration on efforts to address the 64 bird species and 118 acres of habitat identified as threatened. Another large keynote was a presentation by a national known climate scientist, Katherine Hayhoe. An associate professor of Atmospheric Science at Texas Tech, Dr. Hayhoe, an evangelical Christian, talked about finding consensus on climate change with disparate groups by emphasizing common ground and the necessity for action.

The 14 state Central Flyway held a breakout meeting on Saturday evening. Marian Langan and I were able to attend this meeting as Nebraska representatives. Each state director gave a presentation of their important projects and successes. The Flyway Director, Brian Trusty, discussed the development of priorities for the group including grasslands conservation, building leadership in the Central Flyways, developing partners within the geographic areas and capacity funding. Marilyn McNabb from the Lincoln, NE Wachiska Audubon

Society was announced as the winner of the William Dutcher Award for leadership within the Central Flyway, I was asked to accept the award for her and Marian will present the award to Marilyn in Lincoln.



*Brian Trusty, Bob Wells and Marian Langan accepting the William Dutcher Award for Marilynn Kutcher of the Wachiska Audubon Society of Lincoln*

On Sunday July 12 a session discussed non profit website development and maintenance. This was anticipated because it was rumored the National Audubon organization was developing templates that were based on the new National website to the chapters for their use. The fact is that a limited number of local chapters were given website software to beta test for their own website development. Participants in the session were told that if they were contemplating development on their own to do so as the website

***continued on page 6***

## National Convention from page 5

software from the National organization would not be generally available for at least a couple of years. While disappointing to those chapters seeking to revise and improve their websites at least these chapters know they need to go another direction.

The Monday after the conference ended I took advantage of a post conference field trip to the Smithsonian to take a behind the scenes tour of the Institution's birding assets. This was an amazing tour. We started out in the specimen's section. The director had a large table which showed several of the Smithsonian's incredible examples from their 680,000 bird skins. Included were one of the three Ivory-billed Woodpecker specimens next to a Piliated Woodpecker specimen for comparison, three Passenger pidgeon specimens including George and Martha, the last two surviving Passenger Pigeons from the 1910s. An extinct Great Auk specimen and a collection of J. J. Audubon collected specimens. Included in this part of the Smithsonian was the division that investigates aircraft crashes related to bird strikes. The scientists had set up the received evidence from the American Airlines crash landing on the Hudson River in New York City. Pilot, Sully Sullenberger, managed to land the plane without any loss of life. Through DNA matching the scientists determined that three separate Canada Geese stalled two jet engines. The last step on the tour was the rare book section. Several rare birding books were laid out. In-

cluded were Audubon Double Elephant Folio reproductions from the 1960s and the 1980s. It should be noted that until very recently the Smithsonian curated an original Audubon Double Elephant Folio owned by



the National Audubon which was sold for an estimated \$10+ million dollars. An Audubon Octo (smaller) Folio was displayed that was inscribed to a director of the Smithsonian by Audubon.

I would like to thank the NE State Audubon organization, Marian Langan and the ASO for their support which allowed me attend the convention. The experience was valuable for my board term and to network with many people who will be helpful for future projects.

*"Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps  
a songbird will come."*

*— Chinese Proverb*



*Eric Scholar*

Pictured above are hikers at Audubon Prairie at our June 28 Prairie Festival. The public is welcome to visit the prairie any time without pre-arrangement.

**Directions:** Go to 72nd & Bennington Road - 1/2 mile north of Hwy 36 (also known as McKinley Hwy). Turn right (east), stay on gravel road and go east about 1/2 mile. The gate is off the road to the left. The grasses are at their height in late summer, for the enjoyment of visitors and for wildlife.

## Addresses to Remember

**President Barack Obama**, 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 Brad Ashford**, U. S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; Phone: 202-225-4155

**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

## Memberships

*We offer two choices of membership:*

1. Includes membership in National Audubon as well as in our local chapter. It includes receiving the *Audubon Magazine* and our newsletter, *The Meadowlark*. A portion of your dues is returned to our local chapter.
2. Is a local membership that includes receiving *The Meadowlark* and participation in all of our local activities. All dues go to our chapter.

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### Membership in the National Audubon Society and in the Audubon Society of Omaha

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Introductory Membership (1st & 2 year) \$20 Make check payable to: National Audubon Society.** Mail to: Audubon Membership Data Center, P.O. Box 422248, Palm Coast, FL 32142-6718

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### Membership in Audubon Society of Omaha only

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check for \$20 payable to: Audubon Society of Omaha.** Mail to: Audubon Society of Omaha, 19612 Ridgeway Road, Plattsmouth, NE 68048

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

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P.O. Box 3542  
Omaha NE 68103-3542

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Phone: 451-3647 - <http://audubon-omaha.org>  
Office: 1941 S. 42nd St., Omaha NE 68105

**Elected Officers:**

President Tad Leeper – 670-5919  
1st Vice President Eric Scholar – 551-5045  
2nd Vice President Tisha Johnson – 885-0990  
Past President Laurine Blankenau – 451-3647  
Treasurer Betty Fullerton – 493-4362  
Recording Sec’y Linda Dennis – 733-6548  
Corres. Sec’y Kathleen Rose – 292-8912

Elected Directors:

Jonas Grundman – 216-5413  
Bob Wells – 393-4683  
Bob Fuchs – 553-8242  
Helen Bartee – 657-3845  
Gary Peterson – 553-3597

Standing Committee Chairpersons:

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

Program Jerry Toll – 453-9239  
Publication Laurine Blankenau – 451-3647  
Publicity Jackie Scholar – 551-5045

Other Activities:

Bird Seed Sale Chairs  
Kathleen Rose – 292-8912  
Carol Rasmussen – 731-3939  
Speakers Bureau – Eunice Levisay – 393-0545  
Historian -- Eric Scholar – 551-5045  
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,  
<http://audubon-omaha.org>

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