

**Audubon Society of Omaha**  
**July 1, 2025 Board Meeting**  
**UPDATED 8/5/2025**

**ATTENDING:**

Conor Gearin  
Bill Bossman  
Shelia Glencer  
Sarah Shepherd  
Roger Carroll  
Melissa Seitz  
Betty Fullerton  
Mark Harberg  
Glenn Pollock

Anne Maguire  
Virginia Stauffer  
Derek Comba  
Bennett Amdor

**NOT ATTENDING:**

Katy Simmons  
Kyle Finley

BEFORE meeting was called to order, Conor provided direction to the board on working together:

*Conor thanked us all of our leadership – and stressed that being humble is important. We have experts in bookkeeping, conservation, science, marketing, birding and more. Be polite and assume that board members know what they are talking about. Treat each other with respect and assume the best. If you need help - just ask. If task can't be done, we can find someone who can assist or take care of. Don't over do it and get burned out. Watch out for people that are elderly, impaired, otherwise, keep them safe. Our board needs to balance leadership and team work. There may be meetings that Conor cannot attend due to expected new arrival.*

**Meeting called to order at 7:10pm**

**AGENDA**

Minutes for June are approved. Roger moved to approve and Mark seconded.

**Upcoming Programs – Anne Maguire**

July 12 - Bird Friendly Backyard Tour will feature 4 backyards. She needs volunteers to help.  
August 14 - Bluebirds and Chimney Swifts program limited to 24 people and will be held at Vincenzo's Restaurant.  
September 11 – Turtles/Tortoises at Glacier creek, then explore prairie

Anne also proposed we start a Young Birders Club and possible meet at For the Wild Birds. Owner is interested in working with ASO on program, education, etc.

*Note: Glenn knows River City bluegrass band and can provide contact info.*

**EZ Birding and Intermediate/Advanced Birding – Conor and Virginia**

EZ birding held at Towl Park has been fairly popular, but is meant for beginners in general. Virginia can't lead EZ Birding June, July, August due to heat-related sensitivity. So, will someone lead EZ birding during these months?

Occasionally advanced birders participate in EZ birding and have expressed interest in more EXPERT-LEAD BIRDING field trips in and around Omaha, CB and more.

We think there is a real need to beginning regular or monthly Intermediate Birding and look to new board members who can help with this.

*(FYI before Amy became field trip chair, ASO usually had one birding field trip per month lead by advanced birders)*

### **Upcoming Field Trips – Shelia Glencer**

AUGUST – Cell phone photo walk

SEPTEMBER - Homestead National Park, presentation by staff, then birding, bring lunch

**October 4** - Hawk Watch at Hitchcock, \$5

NOVEMBER - Boyer Chute prairie hike (2-3 miles) with focus on Prairie Grasses

DECEMBER - Loess Bluffs NWR Eagle Days (or week before or after depending on crowd)

JANUARY - Filmstreams possible special screening w films about birds or conservation and discussion afterwards

FEBRUARY - DeSoto Bend family day or wetland tour? Or snow geese. Or Blue bird box tour.

MARCH - Heron Haven photography club presentation

APRIL - Expand birding walks to include OPPD and other local parks

MAY – Marsh Wren wetlands tour limited to 20 vehicles, view saltwort, salt creek tiger beetle and shore birds

JUNE –

JULY – Bird Friendly Backyard Tour?

*Please note that Shelia indicated program's timing may change and switch with another...*

### **FALL BIRD SEED SALE – Betty Fullerton**

Fall 2024 recap:

Sales and profits down from 2 prior years

- Fewer customers overall

- New customers included 8 ASO members and 9 civilians

- Shorter pick up window worked out just fine

- 29 volunteers, 20 deliveries and 100% board participation (yay)

- Only 4 mix-ups out of 1100 bags of seed

Fall 2025 Sale starts 1<sup>st</sup> week in September.

Orders are due October 8

Customer pick up will be Oct. 18 and 19

Betty gave us an overview of the sale and how much overall prices will increase. We discussed whether or not to still offer deliveries for donations. Will bring up again at August Board Meeting.

### **Legislative Updates: - Bennet and Mark and Glenn**

*- Notes below were written by Mark H.*

The final 2025 budget diverts \$8M from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to the Water Sustainability Fund over the next 2 years: \$2M each of the next 2 years to the Soil and Water Conservation Fund and \$3M to the Water Resources Cash Fund.

LR158- will conduct an interim study to determine the feasibility of the State of Nebraska assuming the administration of the designated Wild and Scenic River stretch of the Niobrara River (Valentine to Newport, Nebraska).

**LB36 (Omnibus Bill)**- Includes a provision that creates the Safe Battery Collection and Recycling Act which requires Battery Stewardship Organizations to provide for the collection of all covered batteries on a free, continuous, convenient, visible, and accessible basis. Also includes provisions of LB344 to modify groundwater allocations for municipalities in fully or over appropriated areas. LB36 also includes amended provisions of LB590 authorizing the state Department of Transportation to establish a mitigation bank or in-lieu-fee program to offset the environmental effects of transportation projects, including impacts to threatened or endangered species.

**LB260**- reappropriates funds including lowering the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's General Fund (used for administration and operation) budget by \$5M.

**LB317**- merged the Department of Natural Resources with the Department of Environment and Energy to form the Department of Water, Energy, and Environment. The director of the Department of

Environment and Energy would lead the new agency. The Department of Natural Resources director would become the Chief Water Officer, who would head the new Division of Water and report directly to the DWEE director.

Melissa question: Does Great Plains Audubon issue statements about legislation. Do they provide form letters for members to use to send to lawmakers about issues. Legislature records the number of letters they receive about a bill. Mark from Wachiska goes to many of legislative hearing  
Glenn comment: when session opens they already have many bills ready to vote on.

#### **LAND management – Glenn Pollock**

- Cuming City needs sumac mowed and he will get estimate
- Pollock prairie needs to be sprayed for brome, herbicide for grasses only. Brome taking over
- Took garden club on a tour of Pollock prairie
- Another MOTUS station at Girl Scout camp and next will be Indian Cave State Park, the Niobrara, and more. Grants help pay biologists to tag birds. If you see an Iowa state park truck say hi!
- Lake Zorinski not being managed correctly, owned by Corps of Engineers. Mark might have contact at the CoE.

#### **Marketing/ Outreach - Conor**

Request from OPP August 12 at 11:30 - needs a speaker to give general talk about birds. Any volunteers?

Planning meadowlark next week

- Legislative affairs
- Bird seed sale article

#### **Meeting adjourned at 8:15**

*Minutes prepared by Virginia Stauffer since Katy Simmons was not able to attend*