

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.



November/December 2017
Volume 46, Issue 5

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

November 9th Meeting – Discover Belize

By Alex Wiles

“Join us on November 9th for a presentation from conservation photographer Alex Wiles about his recent travels in Belize. Alex will be leading the upcoming Audubon Society of Omaha tour (see page 4) to Belize and will be sharing some examples of the exciting things in store for participants. Feel free to ask any

questions you may have about what to expect in this amazingly biodiverse country. The meeting will be held at the UNO Dodge Campus in the Weitz Community Engagement Center, Room 201, on Thursday, November 9th at 7 p.m. This is a public event so we encourage you to invite your friends.



Photo by Alex Wiles



Photo by Alex Wiles

GO PAPERLESS

Help us continue to better achieve our mission by going paperless today!

Why make the switch? A large part of ASO's mission is conservation, but over the course of a year, we use more than 12,500 sheets of standard printing paper to mail the newsletter. Not to mention, mailing the newsletter takes money (printing and postage costs) and time (each mailing takes a group of 10 volunteers an hour to prepare).

Each person who receives a newsletter via email saves 15 sheets of paper per year and, best of all, gets the full color effect of The Meadowlark.

Signing up is easy. Simply email audubonomaha@gmail.com with the subject: "I want to go paperless."

For program reminders, follow us on Facebook!

NOVEMBER BIRDING OPPORTUNITY

Be sure to visit the ASO web page for information on a potential field trip on Saturday, November 4th.

omahaaudubon.org

REMINDER – NO PROGRAM IN DECEMBER

True to our tradition, we will not have a program in December. Enjoy the Holidays and we look forward to seeing you in January.

Field Notes from the President: By Matt Miller

Hello, fellow ASO members! I have a quick update on the Hilltop Project that I brought up last November/December in my presidents notes. ASO was gracious enough to allow Fontenelle Forest to use our Audubon Prairie for seed collection to help add some diversity to the seed mix for the Hilltop Savanna seeding. In modern day restoration or reconstruction, high diversity local ecotype seed is valuable in establishing a healthy system that is resilient to invasive species, good for the soil, and beneficial for wildlife. The ASO prairie is an excellent place to collect remnant forbs,



Final product from the ASO prairie harvest



Processed seed ready for planting!

with a variety of blooms all growing season. Fontenelle Forest was very appreciative for the opportunity to partner with ASO and without this partnership the land prep would not have been possible, and with such a fertile seed source the Hilltop Savanna should be a beautiful reconstruction for years to come. If you are interested in helping ASO and Fontenelle Forest with the seeding of Hilltop Savanna look for updates on our calendar online for potential dates in early December.

Some exciting species collected included:

Liatris aspera- Button Blazing Star

Liatris pycnostachya- Prairie Blazing Star

Coreopsis palmate- Prairie Coreopsis

Veronicastrum virginicum- Culvers Root

Asclepias tuberosa- Butterfly Milkweed

Amorpha canescens- Lead Plant

Phlox pilosa- Prairie Phlox

Rosa setigera- Prairie Rose

Brickellia eupatorioides- False Boneset

Yours in conservation,
Matt Miller



ASO prairie remnant hillside with a beautiful butterfly milkweed, lead plant, prairie phlox, prairie coreopsis



Establishing a Bird-Friendly Backyard

By Bob Fuchs

"Many people this time of year are feeding birds, yet it can be dangerous to them if you locate your feeders in the wrong places. As we know, birds can be attracted to windows because they see the reflections and think they can fly through them. So as a first step, identify windows that reflect desirable habitat as ones you want to hang an exterior screen or hang BirdScreen, strings, ribbons or multiple decals, especially those that reflect UV light. Also, hang feeders either within 3 feet of windows so birds don't fly away from feeders at a high speed, or 30 feet away, so they have plenty of room to clear your house. In addition, reduce lighting that is directed upward, which can confuse night-migrating birds, avoid using insecticides on your property (birds will eat poisoned insects) or seed contaminated from the ground), and do not allow cats to roam free on your property. They are the biggest killers of songbirds, and will hide near feeders wherever they can. For more details, go to this link on the internet: <http://www.audubon.org/news/think-you-have-bird-friendly-backyard-think-again>"

Desoto Christmas Bird Count Date Set For Tuesday, December 19th, 2017

The DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge Christmas Bird Count will be meeting at 8 am on Tuesday, December 19th at the designated location by each quadrant captain. We will be scouring the countryside on both sides of the Missouri River for avian life at such great birding locations as DeSoto NWR, Boyer Chute NWR, Neale Woods Nature Center, Hitchcock Nature Center, Wilson Island State Park, N. P. Dodge Park and Hum-

mel Park. **ALL** within the count circle. Then we will meet at the Schmid-Toll house afterwards for soup, warm drinks and count the birds and recount the day.

QUADRANT LEADERS

DeSoto NWR

Don and Janis Paseka
paseka76@gmail.com
402-727-9229

Hitchcock Nature Center

To Be Announced

Boyer Chute NWR

Jerry Toll
geritol48@cox.net
402-312-1635

Fort Calhoun

Suzanne Gucciardo
sg31012@abbnebraska.com
402-468-5848

Desoto Nwr Cbc Coordinator

Peter Rea
712-388-4800

*Don't know where to go?
Ask Jerry Toll!*



Red Bellied Woodpecker Mike Benkis



Dark Eyed Junco Mike Benkis

Omaha Youth Birding Group

by Tisha Johnson

I was at Wehrspann Lake the other day walking my dog and birding. I see a Red-Tailed Hawk cruising over the treeline real slow. Then flying at a lower altitude moving diagonal and closer to the hawk was a Bald Eagle. So as soon as the hawk sees the eagle, it dives down towards it. The Bald Eagle must not see the hawk approaching because in no time it's right on top of him. Then just as a Top Gun pilot avoids enemy fire, the eagle tips its left wing down, and the whole body and wingspan completes a 360 rollover maneuver. It rights itself again and keeps flying, not changing its course one bit. The hawk flew on too as if nothing ever happened, and I'm left in a state of awe. All this action at 35 feet off the ground and 100 feet in front of me. This, my friends, is why we bird and watch wildlife.

Field Trips! Save the dates:

November 12th, 3:00pm
Lake Manawa or
Offutt Base Lake – Bellevue

December 16th, 9:00am
Fontenelle Forest – Bellevue

In November we will bring out the heavy weaponry - the scopes. We will be meeting at either Lake Manawa or Offutt Base Lake; there will be updates on both our Facebook page and the Audubon website detailing directions. Last time we were at Manawa, we observed a Merlin eating its lunch. This year we're hoping to see several species of waterfowl migrating through.

December marks the 118th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Groups are asked to census both the species and numbers of birds on their assigned trails or roads in and around Bellevue. Last year the light was gray and made seeing the birds difficult, so our listening and birding by ear was essential. Our group was excited to hear and then spot an elusive Pileated Woodpecker. This year it's your chance to help us complete the mission.

Omaha Area Audubon Christmas Bird Count

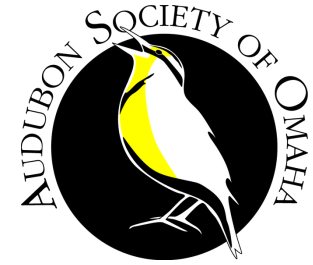
The 118th running of the Omaha national/international Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 16, 2017. It is held in Bellevue, NE / Glenwood, IA within a 15 mile diameter circle centered on the Base Lake east of Offutt AFB. The circle is divided into quadrants, two on the Nebraska side and two on the Iowa side. There are four quadrant captains and as many volunteers as possible to give a good coverage of the area. Birders of all levels are welcome. New birders will be put with experienced counters.

Please consider joining this year's CBC. You can count a half or full day with vigorous or gentle hiking, or mostly car birding. The count begins between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. depending on quadrant assignment. A compilation potluck will be held at 5 p.m. at ASO's office in the Center Street Mall (1941 S 42nd St).

If you wish to volunteer to help with the count, please contact Rick Schmid at schmid_r@msn.com. For questions about the potluck, please email audubonomaha@gmail.com.

DISCOVER BELIZE 2018

March 3 - March 11
(9 days)



ACCOMODATIONS,
GROUND
TRANSPORTATION,
AND MEALS ARE
INCLUDED!

Daily birding and wildlife
watching opportunities

Bird banding and bat
mist-netting workshops

Cultural and culinary
learning opportunities

Snorkel the Belize
Barrier Reef

Join the Audubon Society of Omaha as we travel throughout Belize, exploring the amazing biodiversity and culture of this Central American jewel.

**\$1,885
PER PERSON**
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

Save \$100
(if registered before December 1st)



To learn more and reserve your place, please visit:
www.audubon-omaha.org

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 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)

Memberships

For membership in the National Audubon Society (which automatically includes membership in the Audubon Society of Omaha), go to omahaaudubon.org and select "Get Involved." 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 join the National Audubon Society, you may opt to join our local chapter (ASO) only. This can be done online by following the steps given above and selecting Join/Renew ASO. Local memberships can also be obtained by filling out the form below and sending 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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Omaha, Nebraska
PERMIT NO. 79

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 Bob Wells – 402-393-4683

2nd Vice President Tisha Johnson – 402-885-0990

Corresponding and Recording Secretary

Kathleen Crawford-Rose – 402-292-8912

Elected Directors:

Alex Wiles – 559-349-7359

Galyn Langar – 402-595-8543

Jackie Scholar – 402-551-5045

Sarah Miller – 402-980-9678

Shannon Engberg – 402-598-2127

Virginia Stauffer – 402-933-6063

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 Chair

Virginia Stauffer – 214-676-6289

Historian – Eric Scholar – 402-551-5045

Interim Exec. Dir. Audubon NE – Bill Taddicken – 308-465-5282

ASO Administrator – Stacey Coury – 402-445-4138

ASO Accountant – Betty Fullerton – 402-493-4362

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.