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# *The Meadowlark*

*May 2008*

*Volume 37 Issue 5*

*ASO is a Chapter*

*of the National Audubon  
Society*

*Serving Eastern Nebraska  
and Western Iowa*

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## **Spring Banquet May 8 at Anthony's**

On Thursday, May 8, our Spring Banquet will be held at Anthony's Restaurant, 7220 F Street, 6:00 p.m. for a social gathering/cocktail hour and dinner at 7:00. All members, spouses and friends are invited. A reservation form is included on page 4 of this issue.

**Deadline for reservations is Monday, May 5.**

A highlight of the evening will be a display of the beautiful Photo Contest entries, with awards given. A Service Award will be presented to an ASO member.

The evening's program promises to be interesting for our guests. Our speaker will be Chad Graeve, Natural Resources Specialist at the Hitchcock Nature Center near Crescent, Iowa, a popular site for hiking, the HawkWatch, and enjoying the beauty of the Loess Hills.

Chad began his work at the Center as Park Ranger in 1998, overseeing ecological restoration, visitor services,

law enforcement, facilities development and maintenance, and administration. In 2006 he became Natural Resources Specialist in charge of natural areas management on all county-owned properties and a private lands program.

In keeping with his dedication to conservation, he works to promote projects throughout the region. He has served as Chair and Cochair of the Loess Hills Alliance Stewardship Committee, on the board of the Iowa Prairie Network, and is a Master Woodland Manager.

Chad has a Bachelors degree in Biological Research, attended the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in 2000, and is a certified peace officer.

Please join us! Call Laurine, 451-3647, if you have questions.

## **Bird Counts - DeSoto Saturday, May 3 Sarpy County Saturday, May 10**

**The DeSoto NWR Spring Bird Count** will be held Saturday, May 3, beginning at 7:30 a.m. Participants are asked to meet at the Refuge headquarters just off the highway north entrance. The count covers just the Refuge.

count on Sunday, May 4. I must know at least a week in advance to attempt it.

**The Sarpy County Spring Count** will be held on Saturday, May 10. Anyone who is interested in helping out all day

In recent years, the Refuge has completed extensive wetland restorations and enhancements, creating excellent shorebird and waterfowl habitat. These areas are largely inaccessible at other times. There are extensive riparian woodlands, grasslands for sparrows, and the lake for waterfowl. The spring count is the time to see the Refuge at its best for birds.

Please contact Jerry Toll at geritol48@cox.net or 453-9239 to participate. You won't be turned away if you just show up for the count, but I would like to know who is coming, in order to plan. If a few birders are interested, we can consider doing a Boyer Chute

or part of the day should contact Clem Klaphake at 292-2276 or ckavian@cox.net.

The county is usually divided into 4 sections from Fontenelle Forest (peak warbler season) in the east to a second central sector from the Douglas County line south to the Platte River (includes wooded parks, sandpits and Walnut Creek Lake); a third sector in the southwest (includes Schramm SRA); and fourth, the western sector bordering on the Platte River near Linoma Beach (includes Wehrspann Lake area).

Our total species for the day averages about 132. Come join us!

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## Current Currents

By Elliott Bedows

**Wrapping it up: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.** This is the last time I will be writing a *Meadowlark* editorial as ASO President, because my term of office ends in June. So I thought I'd look back over the past three years and give you my opinion of how the natural world has changed for the better or worse during that time.

**The Good.** The majority of the people of the planet— and their governments— have caught on that global warming and its consequences are in urgent need of attention. This certainly represents a success story.

Even the United States' stubborn refusal to ratify the Kyoto treaty articles will soon be a thing of the past.

In California an encouraging grassroots effort seems to be underway. This is the fight of the State of California and the Environmental Protection Agency to require tougher antipollution laws for motor vehicles than the Federal mandate.

An especially and increasingly difficult issue to deal with is that an ever-growing human population is pressuring the world's ecosystems from all angles. Most attempts to limit population growth in all but the two most populated nations (China and India, both with populations topping one billion people) have failed to gain appreciable momentum.

**The Ugly.** Emerging countries, particularly China, refuse to adhere to established guidelines designed to limit toxicity-tainted exports. And excessive levels of carbon dioxide are being released into the atmosphere as a result of China's extremely aggressive coal-burning plant initiative.

Overcrowding in large metropolitan areas such as those in eastern Asia are also out of control. In countries such as Japan where there is no longer room to bury garbage, shiploads of waste are being dumped into the world's oceans. As it is taken out to sea, it causes an immense plastic pollution problem that threatens albatross colonies as far away

Also, Congress overrode a Presidential veto this year requiring that the average fuel efficiency of U.S. automobiles reach at least 35 mpg by the year 2020.

Additionally, industries are leading the way in this massive effort. Power plants across the country are lowering their carbon dioxide emissions and developing carbon capture technologies. Admittedly these are still in their infancy, but nonetheless they are being considered and acted upon.

A special 15-page report in the June 2, 2007 issue of *The Economist* magazine directly addressed this matter, not singling out the power industry, but showing how a wide range of notorious industry polluters are now cleaning up their respective acts.

Further, the realization that the Earth's resources are limited has increased the amount of recycling of more materials ranging from aluminum and paper to plastic grocery bags.

**The Bad.** Unfortunately, the above stated efforts currently must move along slowly as the world's economy lags. And the resistance that bureaucracy in general and special interest groups in particular bring to the table would likely slow these united efforts to a near grinding halt, even with a healthy world economy.

For example, the last time I checked, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration still could not decide on the number of portions of fish—actually the acceptable levels of mercury in the fish—a pregnant mom should eat each week.

as Midway Island. In Thailand, space is so precious that almost all of its garbage gets burned, causing air pollution and increased carbon emissions into the atmosphere. So what is a poor environmentalist to do?

In essence, I defer to the wisdom of E.B. White, who said, "I arise in the morning torn between the desire to improve the world and the desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day."

## Backyard Bird Count Surges to New Record

The word is that another record was broken with more than 85,000 checklists, a record 635 species, and thousands of stunning bird images submitted.

First-time reports were a Masked Duck (a tropical species) in Texas, Arctic Loon in California (rarely seen outside Alaska), and an Ivory Gull (a high Arctic species) in South Dakota. More information can be found on [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) for maps, photos, prize-drawing winners, and much more.

Help is requested to track the Rusty Blackbird that has declined by 98% since the 1960's. You may help by reporting your sightings to [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) where you may also track your life list and explore reports from other parts of North America, Mexico and the Caribbean.

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## Art Contest Attracts Record Entries

On Saturday, March 29, the Audubon Society of Omaha held an awards ceremony at Bellevue University for the 2008 Student Art Contest. Omaha held

an awards ceremony at Bellevue University for the 2008 Student Art Contest. All entries were displayed with award ribbons attached. The public attended for viewing the entries and for the 2:00 p.m. ceremony emceed by Jackie Scholar, Chair of the event.

Teachers, students, parents and other family members were present. Prizes of bird-related and other items were presented to the winners who were warmly acknowledged by the crowd of approximately 150 persons. Activities were provided before and after the ceremony for the children. Those arriving early to enjoy the display were treated to the presentation of a live Screech Owl by Brandy Lively and Deborah Woracek of Fontenelle Forest.

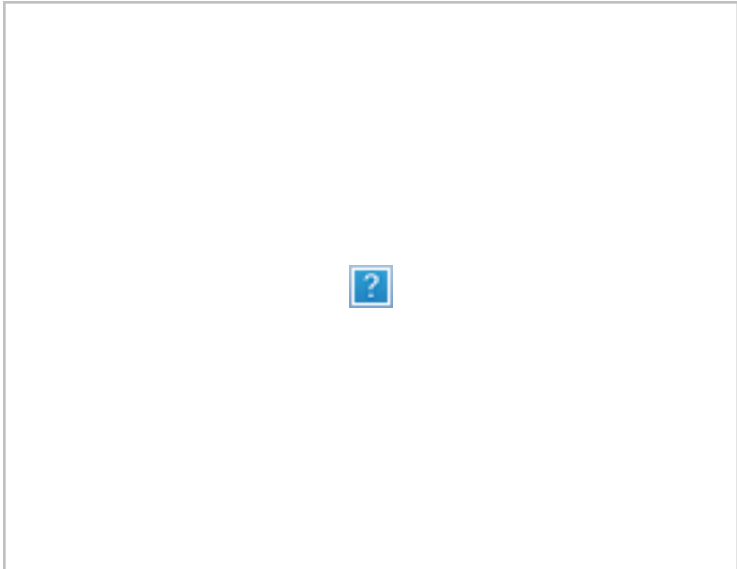
Audubon thanks Jackie Scholar for organizing the contest, including arranging for use of the Bellevue University facilities, judging, notices to art teachers, web site information, drop-off and pickup of the entries. Other volunteers were Jo Bartikoski, Pauline Dickey, Karlene Kingery, Nelli Falzgraf, Kathy Schwery, Jerry Toll, Ruth Demarest, Laurine Blankenau. Jim McLochlin managed the web site.

Judges were Don Westling, John Prouty, Clark Pflanz, and Susan Anderson. All art students in the Greater Omaha and Council Bluffs area schools from K-12 as well as home schooled and privately taught students were eligible to enter. A record number of art works were entered. Prizes of bird-related and other items were presented to the winners who were warmly acknowledged by the crowd of approximately 150 persons.

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## **ASO Staffs Booth at Earth Day Celebration**

At Elmwood Park on Saturday, April 19, at the Earth Day Celebration, a large crowd came and went; over 60 booths and displays kept visitors informed and entertained.

Organizer of our ASO booth was Jackie Scholar. Volunteer assistants were Nelli Falzgraf, Pauline Dickey, Jerry Toll, Laurine Blankenau and Joe Mette. Joe provided a new flair for our presence, bringing his guitar, and playing and singing inspiring songs with earth-friendly themes—some his own compositions. Thanks to everyone who helped!

### **Loess Hills Prairie Seminar**

When: Friday, May 30 to Sunday, June 1.

What: Programs about birds, plants, geology, and history. For people of all ages, including children.

Where: Indoor programs in Onawa, Iowa; outdoor programs at the Loess Hills Wildlife Area, Castana, Iowa.

To see a full program, visit  
[www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/upcoming\\_events/loess\\_hills\\_seminiar/](http://www.nwaea.k12.ia.us/en/upcoming_events/loess_hills_seminiar/)

For a brochure or information about registration and events, contact Gloria Kistner, 800-352-9040, Ext 6080 (within Iowa) or 712-222-6080. Or [gkistner@nwaea.k12.ia.us](mailto:gkistner@nwaea.k12.ia.us).

## **"Together Green"**

By Kathy Schwery

In an exciting new development which was announced in March, the National Audubon Society has joined forces with the Toyota Corporation to promote conservation and train environmental leaders.

Named "Together Green," the alliance between

will have their conservation skills built and strengthened through training and project development opportunities.

•• Volunteer days to be offered at Audubon Centers and other locations nationwide,

two leading names from the conservation and corporate worlds will be a 5-year program. Using a \$20 million grant from Toyota, the largest Audubon has ever received, conservation projects will be funded, environmental leaders will be trained, and volunteers will be offered opportunities to significantly benefit the environment. This new partnership will give the Audubon Society a tremendous opportunity to expand its internationally known conservation programs.

Together Green will include three core program components:

• Innovation grants to fund dozens of projects each year that engage diverse communities in conserving land, water, energy and wildlife. Audubon will join with environmental and community partners in conservation efforts that promote innovation and encourage broader participation.

• Conservation fellowships to train up to 200 promising environmental leaders who can serve as role models, guides and organizers for engaging new audiences in conservation action. These new leaders

providing hands-on opportunities to address environmental problems and take part in restoration activities.

An interactive website, TogetherGreen.org, is scheduled to become active later this spring. Website visitors will find lists of individual conservation actions which they can take, as well as ways to get friends involved in conservation. The website will follow the evolving conservation efforts and achievements of Together Green projects.

The Toyota Corporation plans to involve its 36,000 employees in Together Green projects and will invite its business partners to join with others as conservation volunteers. So much individual effort should add up to significant conservation results.

National Audubon President John Flicker said it well in his announcement about this new alliance: "Together Green is about giving people the knowledge, the support and the opportunities they need to truly make a difference. We will engage people of all ages, from every community and all walks of life to help shape a healthier future."

## **Banquet Reservation**

**Anthony's Restaurant, 7220 F Street**

**Thursday, May 8. Cash Bar 6:00 pm. Dinner 7:00 p.m.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number & Street City Zip

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ persons.

The cost is \$22.00 each. Make check payable to ASO.

**Make reservations by Monday, May 5, and mail to Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha NE 68112.**

## Addresses to Remember

President George W. Bush

The White House, 1600  
Pennsylvania Ave NW

Washington D.C. 20500-0001

Comments: 202-456-1111; fax:  
202-456-2993

Senator Ben Nelson

U.S. Senate, Washington DC  
20510; 202-224-6551; fax 202-228-  
0012; Lincoln: 402-437-5246;  
Omaha 391-3411; Omaha address:  
7602 Pacific St, #205, 68114

Senator Chuck Hagel

U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.  
20510-2705

Omaha Address: 9900 Nicholas St,  
Suite 325,

Omaha 68114

Phone: (202) 224-4224; Fax: (202)  
224-5213

Omaha phone: (402) 758-8981

Representative Lee Terry

U.S. House of  
Representatives, Washington, DC  
20515

Phone: (202) 225-4155 ; Fax: (202)  
226-5452

Omaha Address: 11717 Burt St,  
Omaha 68154

Omaha phone: (402) 397-9944

Representative Jeff Fortenberry

U.S. House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC 20515 Phone:  
(202) 225-4806

Lincoln phone: (402) 438-1598

Lincoln Address:

Governor Dave Heineman

Capitol Bldg, Box 94848 Lincoln,  
NE 68509

## Audubon Society

Membership Application

The *Audubon Magazine* and your membership card will be sent  
to this address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introductory Membership**

**National Audubon & Local Chapter**

**(1st & 2nd Year \$20)**

**Make check payable to National Audubon Society**

**Mail to Audubon Society of Omaha**

**19612 Ridgeway Road**

**Plattsmouth NE 68048**

**PO 3  
7XCH**

## Memorials

The Audubon Society of Omaha greatly appreciates  
the memorials it receives.

When sending your 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 68103-0542



Phone: (402) 471-2244, Fax: 471-6031

Mayor Mike Fahey

Omaha/Douglas Civic Center

1819 Farnam St, Omaha NE 68183

Phone: 444-5000 Hot Line: 444-5555

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



## Bequests

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

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**Audubon Society of Omaha, Mailing Address: P. O. Box 3542, Omaha 68103-0542**

**Phone: 451-3647 - <http://audubon-omaha.org>**

### Elected Officers:

**President Elliott Bedows.... 292-5017**

**1st Vice President Jackie Scholar..... 551-5045**

**2nd Vice President Nelli Falzgraf..... 292-9687**

**Past President Nelli Falzgraf..... 292-9687**

**Treasurer Fritz Davis..... 391-4945**

**Recording Sec'y Urban Lehner..... 330-3888**

**Corresponding Sec'y Pauline Dickey... 932-8205**

**Elected Directors Urban Lehner.....330-3888**

**Nancy Leonard... 330-3888 Eric Scholar.....551-5045**

*The Meadowlark* is published monthly September through May, plus a summer issue. The newsletter may be accessed on our web site, <http://audubon-omaha.org>

Send address changes to Kathy Schwery, 19612 Ridgeway Road, Plattsmouth NE 68048.

**Nancy Williams. 291-8580**

**Jerry Toll..... 453-9239**

**Patty Albright.... 323-1966**

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

**Conservation Education Clem**

**Klaphake.....292-2276**

**Field Trip Elliott Bedows.....292-5017**

**Finance Nelli Falzgraf..... 292-9687**

**Fund Raising**

**Membership Kathy Schwery..... 296-4788**

**Natural Areas Mgt. Eric Scholar.....  
330-3888**

**Publication Laurine Blankenau.451-3647**

**Publicity Jackie Scholar..... 551-5045**

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