

May 2003

ASO is a Chapter

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of the National Audubon
Society

Serving Eastern Nebraska
and Western Iowa



By Jackie Scholar

Noted Scholar and Author Dr. Paul Johnsgard to Speak

at Spring Banquet

ASO will close the 2002-2003 year with the annual Spring Banquet and photo contest on May 8 at Johnny's Steakhouse on L Street. The banquet will begin with a social hour at 6:00 P.M. followed by the buffet dinner at 7:00. The featured speaker is Dr. Paul Johnsgard, Foundation Professor Emeritus of Biological Sciences at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

Dr. Johnsgard is a specialist in avian behavior and taxonomy and has been recognized locally and nationally for both his scientific and humanistic writings. He has written numerous world monographs on avian groups including the cranes, grouse, partridges, pheasants, trogons, bustards, pelicans, and cormorants.

Dr. Johnsgard has also written widely on regional biology and natural history topics, including that of the Grand Teton region, Great Plains avifauna, the history and ecology of the Platte River, Nebraska Sandhills, and the biodiversity of Nebraska.

Among the many awards Dr. Johnsgard has received are the Loren Eiseley Award from Omaha's Clarkson Hospi

Sarpy County Bird Count

tal, the Mari Sandoz Award from the Nebraska Library Association, and the Fred Thomas Nebraska Steward Award from the National Audubon Society.

In 1989 Nebraska Public Television produced a half-hour film on Johnsgard, titled "A Passion for Birds." His book "Those of the Gray Wind: The Sandhill Cranes," was made into a documentary film. His 43rd book was published in 2002 and several more are in press or preparation. He is by far the most prolific writer of nonfiction in Nebraska's history.

He will speak to dinner guests on the topic of "Grassland Grouse of North America."

Photo contest entries will be displayed for your perusal and judging prior to the dinner. Duane Bright is in charge of the contest.

As in the past, awards will be presented and new and returning ASO officers will be installed. The cost of the dinner is \$16.00. If you have not yet made a reservation, you must phone Jackie Scholar, 551-5045, by Monday, May 5.

**Sunday Morning Birding at
Fontenelle**

A reminder: the Sarpy County Spring Bird Count will be held Sunday, May 11.

If you are interested in helping, contact Clem Klaphake, 292-2276, or ckavian@aol.com for information. It is best to have counters distributed somewhat evenly in each of the four quadrants dividing the County.

The birds are coming in and our leader, Clem Klaphake, knows where to locate them at Fontenelle Forest. Enjoy a spring morning with warblers, vireos, flycatchers, orioles, and towhees.

We meet in the parking lot off Gifford Road across from the Wetlands Center at 7:30 A.M. We will continue through Sunday, May 18.

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Scholarly Notes

By Eric Scholar

It doesn't seem that three years have passed since I became president of ASO, but it's true. At times things seem to go quickly, and other times they move very slowly. It probably depends on whether or not there are problems. In any case, it is time for someone else to take over and lead ASO into the future. I believe several good things occurred during my years as president.

For one, we now have new members on the board who can help ASO progress significantly. As usual, though, we could use additional people.

The second is a first for ASO—: the conferring of a scholarship last year upon a university student pursuing environmental studies. I believe this and other efforts of this kind in the future can help recruit younger members into our organization. Securing more persons to volunteer their time and efforts is one of the most important ongoing works of the upcoming years.

Our recent strategic planning session pointed out some of the strengths of our chapter, as well as some of our deficiencies. We need to make the most of the strengths and work to correct the

at our general meetings. These successes need to be carefully and continually nurtured and maintained.

We also have glaring weaknesses, among them inadequate fundraising, an insufficient number of volunteers, a divided board, and too much control by a few people. The board must decide how to correct these deficiencies. We have been working on some of these issues. However, but they are not easy to address.

Decisions must be made by the board about what they wish ASO to become. Some wish to expand the headquarters into a full-blown nature center. Others are content with maintaining it as it is.

For my final farewell, I would be remiss not to thank all who have helped with ASO during my term as president. Without them, little would have been accomplished. Rather than name all of the individuals who have contributed, I will express my gratitude by mentioning the work for which those persons involved, and all of us, can be justly proud. These are our monthly programs, the Raptor Team, field trips, nature study

deficiencies in the years ahead.

Some strengths deserve mention here. These include our headquarters building, the Omaha Raptor Team, the Audubon Prairie Preserve, our newsletter, and the programs

programs, our newsletter, bird seed sale, Heron Haven maintenance, the Prairie, student art contest, and our spring banquet. These do much to define ASO as a vibrant, active chapter of Audubon.

Thank you all and keep up the excellent work!

My Farewell

Spring/Summer Calendar of Events

Garage Sale June 5, 6, 7

May 5 (Mon) Conserv/Legisl. Meeting

at Heron Haven

May 8 (Thur) Spring Banquet

We need your help!

May 10 (Sat) Earth Day Celebration

We want your extra "treasures" to sell.

May 11 (Sun) Sarpy Bird Count

(No clothing, please).

May 17 (Sat) Heron Haven Cleanup

Call 445-4138 to make arrangements

June 2 (Mon) Conserv/Legisl. Meeting

for delivery of merchandise during May to the

June 5-7 Garage Sale

ASO Office, 11809 Old Maple Road.

July 7 (Mon) Conserv/Legisl Meeting

We would appreciate your support!

July 13 (Sun) Garden Walk

July 19 (Sat) Picnic

Aug 4 (Mon) Conserv/Legisl Meeting

More Info on the Audubon Summer Garden Walk

Set aside Sunday, July 13, for the first Audubon-sponsored garden walk. Jackie Scholar planned, located between Center and Maple Streets. The and is organizing this Butterfly garden at sites are in the Bellevue area, four are in Central Omaha - Dundee and east of 114th Street between Center and Maple Streets. The Butterfly garden at

event.

The walk will feature city gardens both small and large, interesting and charming. The gardens have been developed and maintained strictly by the owners and emphasize native plantings as well as wildlife habitat.

The gardens will be on view from noon until 5:00 P.M. Two of the

Heron Haven will also be featured.

The rain date will be July 27. More information will be provided about the walk in the July newsletter.

If you are willing to help at one of the gardens on the day of the event, please call Jackie Scholar, 551-5045.

Heron Haven Cleanup Followed by a Barbecue- Potluck —Saturday, May 17

By Pauline Dickey

A unique spring cleanup at Heron Haven will be held Saturday, May 17, from 10 A.M. to 1:00 P.M., followed by a barbecue-potluck. All members and friends of ASO are invited and encouraged to participate in this work-barbecue-social event.

The focus of the cleanup will be picking up trash along Old Maple Road, Manderson Street, and West Maple Road on both sides of the fences. Other areas of Heron Haven will be cleaned up as time and number of volunteers permit.

Volunteers with physical difficulties or attitudes about picking up trash are invited to participate in the food and social time starting around 1:00 P.M.

Keep Omaha Beautiful will be providing trash bags and safety vests. Paul Kardell has volunteered to haul all trash to the dump.

ASO will supply hamburger and soy patties, hot dogs, buns, condiments, ice, and paper products.

Please bring items for the potluck according to the first initial of your last

ASO Picnic Planned for Saturday, July 19

A tentative date has been set for our annual summer picnic: Saturday, July 19. A confirmation date will be provided in the Summer Newsletter of July 1.

The food will be pot luck, with drinks and service provided. A pleasant evening hike in the wetland is a bonus for the event, with dragonflies and birds to enjoy.

More information will be provided in the Summer Issue of the newsletter, which will be mailed around July 1.

Please keep this enjoyable event in mind. It is strictly entertainment and draws a fine group of our members.

two experienced volunteers will be needed to grill burgers and hot dogs starting 12:30-1:00 P.M. We will also need one good grill.

As in other areas of the city, Heron

name:

A-F chips or other finger foods

G-M salads

N-Z desserts

Or if you'd prefer to bring drinks rather than food, any bottled or canned drinks would be appreciated. One or

Haven and its boundaries are constant targets of littering. Please come to the cleanup and offer your time, effort, and ideas on reducing litter. Dress for the weather and bring your gardening gloves.

Questions or suggestions: Call Pauline, 932-8205.

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Conservation/Legislative Action

By Ione Werthman

Organic Food Labeling - Are you a watchdog? I hope so, because at times we citizens need to read the fine print in some Congressional (and State) bills and remind Congress of new laws that negate and undercut the good that had been enacted earlier.

Case in point: In 1990, Congress passed legislation requiring that organic foods be certified as having been produced and handled according to uniform national standards. The USDA final rules went into effect this past October, and USDA organic labels are now being placed on certified organic foods.

However, in the FY 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Resolution (the \$80 billion war spending bill) signed by the President on February 21, Rep. Nathan Deal (R-GA) successfully slipped language into Section 771, without debate, providing that in some geographic areas where organic foodstuffs cost more than twice that of conventionally produced feed, livestock

Drilling in the Arctic - It's time again for Round Three (or is it 25?) of drilling in the Arctic as the House passed its pro-drilling Energy Bill by a vote of 228-197 (10 not voting). It is interesting to that the House again agreed to the limit of 2,000 acres (to equal 1,500 football fields) that could be open to drilling in the Refuge. However, because the acres need not be contiguous, they could be spread like an industrial spider web across more than 30 drilling sites through the coastal plain.

The House-Senate Conference Committee must again hammer out the differences between both bills to come up with a final version. If you will recall, in 2002, Conference Committee members could not reach a final agreement because of the Arctic issue, and the measure ultimately failed. This time around, however, pro-drilling allies in the House and Senate are making promises to members of Congress claiming that Arctic revenues will be directed to causes and organizations near

and dairy producers could avoid meeting the National Organic Program standards while using the organic labels.

This had nothing to do with the war spending issues but very effectively defeated the value of the National Organic Food Program. Fortunately, some environmental watchdogs caught the provision as written and email messages went out across the country to other citizen watchdogs. They, in turn, notified their senators and representatives.

As a result, Senator Leahy, who had introduced the original legislation for organic labeling, and Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) reintroduced legislation in their respective houses to remove the provision from the Appropriations Bill. Rep. Bereuter, in a letter to me, said that he disapproved of the action by Rep. Deal and that very few members of the House were aware of the existence of the language in the Appropriations Bill.

In the Good News Department, the *Omaha World-Herald*, April 17, 2003, reported that President Bush signed the repeal of the organic food loophole, which had been cosponsored by 70 senators and more than 100 representatives. The Organic Food Program is gaining respect.

and dear to those lawmakers. Pork barrel at its worst!

Bird and Wildlife Conservation -

Congress is moving closer to setting funding levels for a number of programs coordinated through the U.S. Department of the Interior, including the State Wildlife Grant Program. This Program provides states with the resources they critically need for effective bird and wildlife conservation and restoration efforts. The funds are used to help stop the decline of species. They may be used to identify Important Bird Areas, which is a top priority and initiative of National Audubon.

Our Audubon Nebraska Board of Directors has voted to set up the process of identifying Important Bird Areas in Nebraska. Now they need a grant from the State Wildlife Grant program to carry it out.

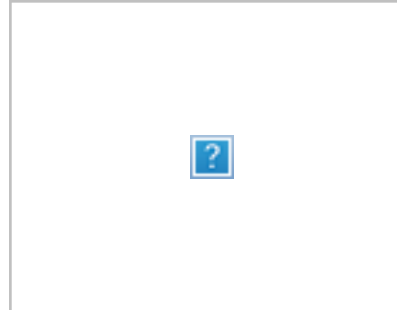
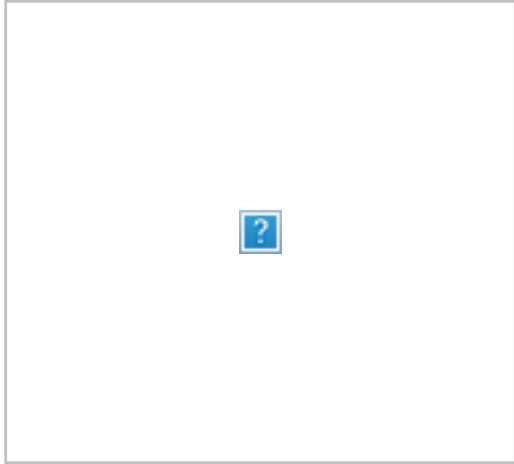
A letter, phone call or email to our U.S. Senators and Representatives asking them to convince Congress to fund the State Wildlife Grant Program at the needed level of \$125 million for fiscal year 2004 would be very helpful. Funding this program now will save taxpayers dollars later if the species has to be put on the endangered list. See addresses and phone numbers on page 7 of this newsletter to send your response. Help promote new, good and positive legislation.

Continued on page 5

Omaha Raptor Team - A Committee of ASO

- By Alison O'Connor

Art Contest Awards Given at Ceremony



Pictured, Clockwise, are Deborah Ward and Student, Student and Eunice Levisay, Two at the Exhibit; Eunice and Student

The 2003 ASO Student Art Contest awards ceremony was held Sunday, March 30, at the Westroads Mall, Von Maur Court. Deborah Ward of KM3 acted as emcee.

An enthusiastic audience was present to acknowledge the recipients and enjoy viewing the winning entries. The contest's theme was "Birds of the Midwest."

Special thanks are owed **Deborah Ward** for lending her professional services; **John Eveleth** of Wild Bird Haven, 8323 North 30th Street, for making prizes available to

ASO; and **Jim McLochlin** for creating the web site, the main source of information for the contest.

Co-chairs Nelli Falzgraf and Laurine Blankenau also thank **Eunice Levisay**, Assistant Presenter; **Kathleen Rose**, Photographer; **Kathy Schwery, Jackie Scholar**, and all ASO members who staffed the exhibit.

Conservation/Legislative Action,

Continued from p. 4

Platte River Back on Endangered List - The American Rivers Advocacy Group has again placed the Platte River on its endangered list. The Platte, which flows all the way across Nebraska after leaving Wyoming and Colorado, has been listed by the group as endangered since 1986. (It probably should have been listed earlier and more often.) My scrapbook is overflowing with age-yellowed news clippings on issues pertaining to the Platte.

One would hope that some day soon we would get our act together in Nebraska to preserve this world-class valuable resource. After struggling to stop the Two Forks Dam project in Colorado, which was scheduled to divert water from the South Platte, we worked almost 15 years to put in

We helped to establish an instream flow policy for parts of the River, and now, because of drought conditions, we must address problems of well drilling along the River. Pumpkin Creek, a tributary to the North Platte, last summer went dry because of the drilling going on along the Creek. The American Rivers report faulted Nebraska for allowing unrestricted drilling of irrigation wells in much of the Platte watershed. Later this year, the U.S. Department of the Interior will release a plan to manage the River, which will trigger an extensive public comment period. Your comments will be needed.

Join us for our Legislative/Conservation meetings in the upcoming months. The

environmental safeguards to the relicensing of Kingsley Dam and helped stop several water diversion projects along the way.

next meeting will be Monday, May 5, 7:30-9:00 P.M. at the Audubon Office, 11809 Old Maple Road. Summer meetings are Mondays June 2, July 1, and August 5. Same time, same location.

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

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 phone: (402) 397-
9944

Representative Douglas
Bereuter

U.S. House of
Representatives, Washington,

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Membership Application
The *Audubon Magazine** (see below,
chapter-only membership) and your
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(202) 225-5686

Lincoln phone: (402) 438-
1598

Governor Michael Johanns

Capitol Bldg, Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

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

Memorials

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

When sending your gift,
please identify the person
you wish to memorialize.
Please also give the name
and address of the person
to be notified.

Bequests

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

Birdline

For an update on the sightings in the
state, call 292-5325.



Report your sightings after listening
to the tape.



If you find an injured bird of
prey, please contact a Raptor
Recovery Center volunteer at
402-734-6817 or 402-731-
9869.

**Audubon Society
of Omaha, 11809
Old Maple Road,
Omaha 68164**

**Phone: 445-4138
- <http://audubon-omaha.org>**

Elected Officers:

President Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045

1st Vice President Elliott Bedows, 309 Greenbrier Ct, Bellevue 68005 292-5017

2nd Vice President Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687

Past President Lisa Peterson, 8911 Q St, Apt 212C, Omaha 68127 453-9146

Treasurer Sharon Draper, 6220 Kansas Ave, Omaha 68104 572-4026

Recording & Corresponding

Secretary Martha Massengale, 11667 Fowler Ave, Omaha 68164 493-5062

Elected Directors Jackie Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045

Sue Mattix, 11111 "T" Plaz, #206, Omaha 68137 593-7433

Mark Armstrong, 12741 Forestdale Dr, Omaha 68123 292-9770

Bob Fuchs, 1113 Dillon Dr, Omaha 68132 553-8242

Paul Kardell, 1112 South 218th St, Elkhorn NE 68022 289-9864

Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276

Standing Committee Chairpersons:

Conservation Ione Werthman, 11649 Burt St, #011, Omaha 68154 493-0373

Education Brian Jensen, 12430 Bel Drive, Omaha NE 68144 333-6375

Field Trip Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276

Finance Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687

Fund Raising Steve Lamphere, 3101 Washington St, #98, Bellevue 68005 291-9149

Hospitality DwanDean Leach, 3006 Poppleton, Omaha 68105 346-5769

Membership Bechara Embaid, 3218 No. 120th Court Apt. 221, Omaha 68164 965-9598

Natural Areas Mgt

Omaha Raptor Team Jenny Henricksen, 4845 So 167 Ave 68135 895-5487

Program Ed Higgins, 3717 No 93rd St, Omaha 68134 572-1957

Publication Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647

Publicity Kathy Schwery, 3616 So 96th St, Omaha 68124 397-7343

Other Activities:

Speakers Bureau Ione Werthman, 11649 Burt St, #011, Omaha 68154 493-0373

Naturestudy Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr. Bellevue 68005 292-9687

Bird Seed Sale Sally Hansen, 2330 Bel Court #12, Omaha 68144 334-2329

Historian Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005 292-8912

**Audubon Nebr Director Dave Sands, P. O. Box 117, Denton NE 68339.....
(402) 797-2301**

NAS Board Member Dave Tylka, tylka@stlcc.cc.mo.us

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