

The Meadowlark

September
2002



Volume 31 Issue 7

ASO is a Chapter of the National Audubon Society
serving Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa

Wildlife and Scenery in Kenya

New Plumage for Meadowlark

Pack your luggage and be ready to fly to Africa for a real learning experience about Nairobi and other animals, famous surrounding areas of Kenya. Our "pilot" for this trip will be Ed Bockman, retired U.S. Corps of Engineers employee.

By Ed Higgins

Our buildings and scenery in the area. His photographic expertise will be evident in the slides he will present.

Before the Gulf War broke out in the early nineties, Ed was in charge of building air fields and troop support facilities in Saudi Arabia.

In order to overcome his fear of flying, Ed and his family took many adventurous trips from Saudi Arabia to Africa and other countries most U.S. citizens will probably never have a chance to visit.

While on these trips, he documented with his camera flowers, birds and

Quite a few in Audubon know Ed, as he is a social person. Everywhere I go with Ed, someone seems to know him. We hope to have a large crowd on Thursday, September 12, for an enjoyable program and evening.

We were fortunate to have graphic artist Diane Buick, daughter of Eric and Jackie Scholar, design the new logo. We thank her for giving her services in creating this fine and beautiful image for ASO.

After the program and a short business meeting, we will have a social hour with coffee and cookies.

The meeting will be held at the Hanscom Park Methodist Church, 4444 Frances (1 block south of 45th & Center), 7:30 p.m. Visitors are welcome.

Ferguson, whose bird drawings and cartoons were known to and fondly regarded by many in ASO.

Former editor Marian Leach says that at her request, Ferguson would draw a cartoon specially for an issue of the *Bird's Eye View*.

Migrant Birds,

Butterflies and Dragonflies

Clem Klaphake will be leading a field trip to Waubonsie State Park and Riverton Wildlife Refuge in southwest Iowa on Saturday, September 14.

September is a month when not only birds are migrating south, but so are dragonflies and butterflies. This trip will be a "see all you can see" of these various fall migrants. With this year's drought and hot temperatures, who knows what we may stir up.



We will meet to car pool at the south end of the Southroads Shopping Center (southeast of the Penney's store) at 8:00 a.m. Bring a lunch with you because there aren't many sizable restaurants in the area. Bring usual birding equipment.

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Scholarly Notes

By Eric Scholar

Start of a New Year

September means beginning a new year of activities for ASO, and I would like to welcome all of you back from vacations and other activities.

Several exciting events occurred over the summer, some of which led us in new directions.

• ASO awarded its first scholarship to a college student. Erin McIntyre, a UNO student (pictured below), was the recipient. I believe this was especially important as a means of helping us recruit new and younger people to our organization.

• We had a successful birdathon, thanks to Bechara Embaid. This was a second major fundraising effort in 2001-2002, the first being the bird seed sale. The birdathon will be an annual event, and next year it will be expanded.

• We conducted our third annual potluck picnic, which we plan to repeat each summer. This is becoming an annual

attractive Butterfly Garden.

• The self-guided Wetland Walk was originated by Nelli Falzgraf. She created flyers containing a map and text to guide visitors from the butterfly garden and on through the property, identifying flowers, shrubs, and animals likely to be found on a walk through the wetland. Thank you, Nelli, for initiating and developing this project.

We hope to continue these projects and begin new ones. If you have any ideas, please let me know.

Some new projects have been initiated.

• A third fundraiser, a habitat or garden walk, is being planned for next summer.

• The Corps of Engineers is in the planning stages for the wetlands dredging and restoration.

Also, we have several new board members this year, hopefully with new ideas and energy.

event and is providing a good way for members to get together during the three-month summer gap in regular meetings.

The picnic took place on August 17 and attracted over 60 members and their guests for an informal and enjoyable social event. After the dinner, many took a Wetland Walk—a self-guided tour of the wetland and butterfly garden.

Many thanks to Nelli Falzgraf for organizing a successful picnic and to Eunice Levisay for the upkeep of the

ASO's First Scholarship Winner

Erin McIntyre, winner of ASO's first annual scholarship, is shown, right, accepting the award from President Eric Scholar.

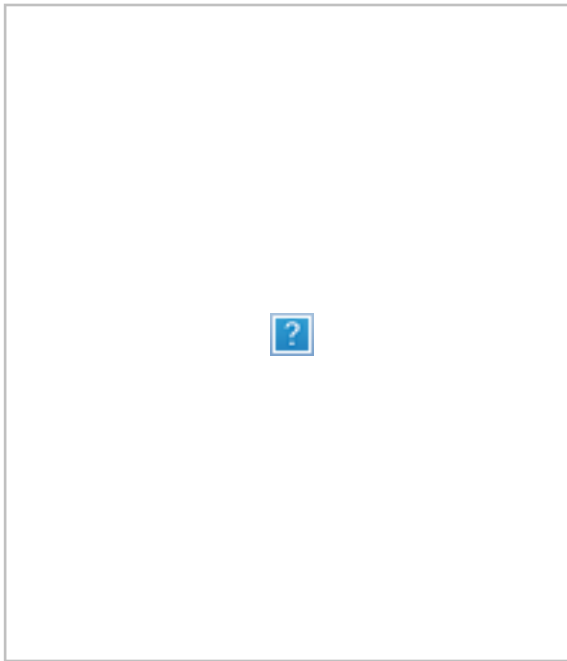
The \$1,000 scholarship is offered to a student in a four-year area college who is enrolled in environmentally related studies.

Ms. McIntyre was selected for her outstanding performance in the environmental sciences at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and at Bellevue University and on the basis of an essay submitted with her application. Ms. McIntyre is beginning her senior year.

Members will have a chance to meet her at the September 12 general meeting, where she will be introduced.

Special thanks: I want to pay special tribute to a person who often labors in obscurity. She is Laurine Blankenau. For many years she has been putting together our newsletter, and that takes many hours of work. She edits it, does the layout, writes articles, and deserves a lot of credit. Thank you so much, Laurine. (I hope she doesn't edit this out.)

Editor's Note: I restrained my impulse to remove it, Eric. As I've said before, you're the Prez.



October 3 Study of Raptors - Top Predators

Mother Nature has designed raptors as top guns of the bird world. To sense what's out there, eagles, hawks, swallows and many shorebirds have a central area or streak across each retina with a fovea (concentration of sensory cells) at each end, allowing for better

By Nelli Falzgraf

To learn about raptors through slides and a video, please join Clem Klaphake at 7:00 P.M. Thursday, October 3,

scanning and a wider visual field.

To pinpoint shifty prey, many eagles, hawks and owls have eyes larger than humans', giving them larger and sharper images. For vertical lift, buteos and falcons have wings long in relation to width. For airborne stability, many raptors are large.

To minimize energy needs of sustained flight, raptors have large wing areas in relation to body weight. To better catch a budgie meal, the broad tails of eagles and hawks engage for rapid aerial turns.

To maximize power, all birds, from hummingbirds to albatrosses, have a combination of high, steady body temperatures for rapid maneuvers; fast heart rates and blood circulation with high oxygen-carrying capacity hemoglobins for energy; and a respiratory system that synchronizes breathing with flight movements for efficiency.

It's not one design that thrusts raptors atop the food chain, but many features, coupled with learned hunting skills of predators intent on their next meal.

at Fontenelle's Camp Brewster, 1313 N. Bellevue Boulevard. Clem is ASO's Nature Activities chair and an official Hawkwatch counter.

For questions about the joint Naturestudy/Birding Club program, call me at 292-9687 or Howard Mattix, 896-0352.

To apply what we've learned

and to view raptors, Clem will lead a Hawkwatch field trip on Saturday, October 5, 8:30 A.M, at Hitchcock Nature Center in Iowa's Loess Hills.

The center is located just north of Crescent, Iowa. The deck features tree top views of the area and benches suitable for a sack lunch; also, there are hiking trails.

HNC asks for \$2 per visit or \$10 per person for a season pass. Questions? 292-9687 or 292-2276.

Editor's Note: Please see item, page 7, on this fall's ongoing Hawkwatch at Hitchcock Nature Center.



Loren "Bub" Blake
Cooper's Hawk

If you are Now or Have Been

a Bluebird Monitor, Please Read This

Another bluebird breeding season has ended, and it is time for monitors to report the results of their labors. Because some monitors have not been reporting, questions arise about whether trails are still being monitored or are abandoned.

If you are still monitoring your trail, it is important that you return report forms to Bluebirds Across Nebraska.

If you are not a BAN member, please call Jim McLochlin

at 933-4638 so that he can send your results to BAN.

If you are no longer monitoring your trail or you know of another trail that is no longer monitored, it is necessary to find someone else to monitor the trail or to remove the boxes. If the boxes remain, House Sparrows or other species harmful to bluebirds will take over the site.

If help is needed finding another monitor or to remove the boxes, please call Jim at the above number.

Bird Seed Sale October 26-27

Calendar

Each year at this time preparations are made for the annual bird seed sale, and this year is no exception.

We will be asking you for help with the numerous tasks, some requiring strong muscles, others not. The bags need to be unloaded at home sites, staffers need to be on hand on the dates of the sale for loading and paper work.

Sept 4 (Wed) Board Meeting

Sept 9 (Mon) Conservation Meeting/Video

Sept 12 (Thur) General Meeting

Sept 14 (Sat) Field Trip

Oct 3 (Thur) Nature Study

Oct 5 (Sat) Field Trip

Oct 26-27 Bird Seed Sale

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Conservation/Legislative Action

**By Ione
Werthman**

We've lost big time

The Governor and State Legislature broke faith with the Nebraska citizens this past month when they raided the Environmental Trust Fund in the special legislative session to help pay for the state budget shortage, and most likely dealt a death blow to the whole Fund process.

Taking a \$2.8 million (\$4.8 million originally brought to the floor) out of the Fund this year and scheduling to take \$5 million out to help in the 2003-2004 budget year leaves little for conservation projects to help preserve our natural resources.

Our natural resource programs have been underfunded for years and make up less than 2% of the General Fund spending, but the fund now seems to be an easy target to raid for political reasons.

Remember that the constitutional amendment to establish the lottery in Nebraska was approved in 1992 by 65%

stirred up the prairie by rounding up prairie dogs to aid to his ranch, undertaking a new endeavor at improving biodiversity, not only for the prairie dogs but also for the Burrowing Owl, hawks, and other critters essential in the prairie ecosystem and to help in the return of the endangered black-footed ferret, which dines on prairie dogs.

I truly believe that Nebraska has the greatest ecosystem yet available in the United States to become an eco-tourism mecca for wildlife viewing. It is a known fact that almost half of the bird species in the lower 48 states have visited or nested in Nebraska.

I believe that by adding prairie dogs, Burrowing Owls, black-footed ferrets, turtles, Prairie Chicken leks, and others, to the scene, people will come to Nebraska for more than the Sandhill Cranes.

If the habitat is there, the birds (and people) will come. Did you know that

of the electorate, but only if the funds were to be used for education and betterment of our natural resources.

To date, the Trust has funded more than \$54 million in projects throughout the state. Even we of ASO, Wachiska Audubon Society, Rowe Sanctuary, and Spring Creek Prairie have received a good share of the funds.

The rationale given by the Governor and Legislature for using Trust funds was that paying lawyers to fight the suit between Kansas and Nebraska on Republican River water was classified as a conservation issue.

We are inclined to believe the lawsuit is about politics and should have been settled long ago to cut our losses. Kansas, downstream on the Republican River, is using the same argument in its suit against Nebraska as "downstream Nebraska" used in its suit against Wyoming on the North Platte River. Wyoming lost!

Colorado lost to Kansas in a similar lawsuit on the Arkansas River in Kansas which forced Colorado to send more water to Kansas on that river.

While the issue to take \$5 million out of the Trust this coming year seems cut and dried, keep watching. A grassroots effort to thwart the decision might be in the making.

Prairie Dog Not Lost Yet

Even though the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission cannot yet see their obligation as the official protector and manager of all of Nebraska's wildlife, and failed to list the black-tailed prairie dog as a Nebraska animal in need of management, all is not lost...yet. Not to be outfoxed, or should I say "out-dogged," Ted Turner has again

economically speaking, birding has already proven to be the #2 recreational hobby in America? #1? Not golf, hunting, fishing or sport games, but gardening.

I also want to thank those members who traveled to Lincoln on our bus to the Game & Parks hearing in July, and who donated generously to help pay for the bus: Joan Lang, Jim Kovanda, Jose Pihlar, Kuba Travnicek, Deborah Wigton, Linda Dennis, Martha Elias, Carole Larson, Barney & Helen Rees, Clyde Anderson, Marie Buxton, Danny Seibold, Mike Shively, Sheryl Spain, Mark Welch, Carol Ralph, Garry Mick, Betty Allen, Loren & Babs Padelford.

Endangered Species Note

Word from my long-time friend Brock Evans, Executive Director of the Endangered Species Act Coalition, is that the Defense Authorization Bill passed the House by a vote of 215-202.

This Bill would exempt the Department of Defense from compliance with the Environmental Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Clean Water Act and the Superfund. Thankfully, the Senate version of the Bill did not include the exemptions. The Bill is now in conference committee to resolve the difference between the two versions.

"Needless to say," wrote Brock, "these exemptions strike at the heart of our whole concept of civil society and our social compact: that no one is above the law and must obey it equally."

Continued on page 5

Jim McLochlin Elected to North American

Bluebird Society Board of Directors

Tobacco Sham
I recently read in the August 19, 2002, *Newsweek*, that of the \$246 billion settlement from the 1998 lawsuit with the tobacco companies, only 5% of the \$21 billion paid out in the past two years has gone toward anti-smoking efforts. Would you believe that, in North Carolina, for example, the money has been used to modernize tobacco farms, build new curing bins and more modern tobacco auction houses, and implement tobacco marketing strategies.

The article claimed that New York spent \$700,000 on a new sprinkler system at an upstate public golf course. Alabama used millions to lure new industry to the state, and Nevada used \$2 million to convert public television stations to digital broadcasting. The problem seems to be in the way the 1998 settlement was negotiated. Who would have thought that states and legislatures would use the money irresponsibly?

Congratulations

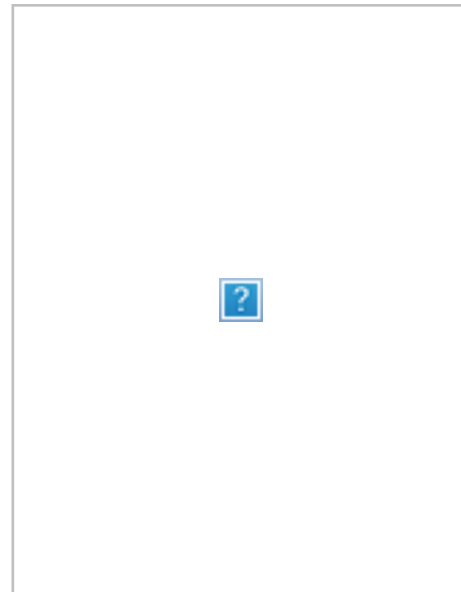
Nebraska's National Resources Districts are celebrating 30 years of their existence this year. In their newsletter, *Spectrum*, the Papio-Missouri NRD listed among their major wildlife habitat accomplishments the Boyer Chute NWR, which they designed with the Corps of Engineers, the opening of the new Lied Platte River Bridge

Our volunteer coordinator for ASO's bluebird trails, Jim McLochlin, was elected to a position on the national board of the North American Bluebird Society. He will serve as Chair of the Transcontinental Bluebird Trail Committee and on the Web Site Committee.

Jim, shown at left, and his wife, Marie, along with 10 other Nebraskans, attended the NABS 2002 convention held in Penticton, British Columbia, June 13 - 16.

Jim reports having a wonderful time in British Columbia, adding a number of western species to his life list, including (no surprise) both Mountain and Western Bluebirds.

For a number of years, Jim has held positions with Bluebirds Across Nebraska. As coordinator of ASO bluebird monitors, he constructs and/or reconstructs trails and serves as our li



aison person with BAN. He manages Audubon's web site, and having more computer savvy than most, comes to our aid with solutions to problems.

Results of Birdathon 2002

The Birdathon was organized this year by Bechara Embaid Memorial Day weekend, with a species count of 101. We owe thanks to the following who made the Birdathon a success.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Betty Allen | Mace Hack | Charlotte Lobaugh | Robert Savage |
| Susan Beveridge | Joan Hackett | Preston Maas | Patsy Schmidt |
| Beverly Byrd | Al Harrison | Shirley Mackie | Patsy Schmidt |

linking Omaha and Lincoln through hike/bike trails, and the Heron Haven wetlands public/private partnership they share with ASO. Let's hope that during the next 30 years we can share many more successful ventures with the Papio-Missouri NRD.

Join us at our next Conservation meeting when a video, "Trading Democracy," a Bill Moyers Report, will be presented. The meeting is Sept. 9, 11809 Old Maple Road, Audubon Office.

Mary Carothers	Julie Hertzler	Joyce Mammel	Cynthia Schneider
Dolan/Joan Collins	Alyce Hicks	Elizabeth Mannlein	Terry Schreiner
Earl Collins	Ed Higgins	Martha Massengale	Julie Schroder
James Commers	Edwin Hiner	Earl/Joan McLean	Margaret Searcy
Viola Cook	Sara Hutfless	Billie McCoy	Larry Shackman
Robert Diers	Lillian Jackson	Garry Mick	Nell Shimek
Lorraine DiMartino	Burton/Eva Jay	Wanda Neaderhiser	Loita Sinderson
Diane Doyle	Joyce Jensen	Ron/Judy Parks	Lyla Thompson
Kathleen Doyle	Sheila Jensen	Foundation	Kuba Travnicek
Martha Elias	Clyde/Emma Johnson	Jean Pisasale	Robin Tyner
Bechara Embaid	Karen Kahle	Jodi/Tyler Porter	Diana Waggoner
Kathryn Ewing	William/Debbie Kee	Kathleen Pyper	Doris Wallace
Thomas Gallagher	Alberta Knowles	Dick Rasmussen	Ione Werthman
Genevieve Golden	Dolores Lane	Neal Ratzlaff	Deborah Wigton
Sam/Essie Grill	Joan Lang	Roger Robinson	Sid/Edith Wilson
Ivan Griswold	Terry Lassek	Bradley/Kathleen	Margaret Wiltse
Kathleen Gross	Ida/J.O. Leister	Rogers	Anna Winans
Betsy Haas		David/Tracey Sands	

Population and Environment Conference

Bechara Embaid and I joined four Wachiska Audubon chapter leaders

By Ione Werthman

from Lincoln and 30 other Audubon chapter leaders from across the United States in late June for a National Audubon Population and Environment Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Nebraska group met by appointment with Senator Hagel, Senator Nelson's aide, and Congressmen Bereuter and Terry, spending one-half hour in each office.

Also, four Nebraskans attended the Nebraska Breakfast, which is held once a week for visitors from our State. Guests are informed about Congress' voting agenda for the day and other issues of concern to Nebraska citizens. We were told of plans for the expansion at StratCom.

A major purpose of the National Audubon conference was to persuade the President to release \$34 million Congress allocated for the United Nations Population Fund.

For Audubon members there is an obvious reason for concern about population, that of the stresses on the environment.

John Carlini of Wachiska Audubon Society, Lincoln, wrote: "As we view our dwindling prairies in Nebraska, so too the world's forest, rivers, oceans and wild creatures are perishing under the pressures of human encroachment."

Carlini quoted from sources predicting that world population will

Photo taken in Senator Hagel's office. Back row, L to R: John Carlini, Chris Sommerich, Mark Brohman, Bechara Embaid. Front row, L to R: Ione Werthman, Senator Chuck Hagel, Glenda Peterson and Desiree Sorenson-Groves, National Audubon Regional Representative

these areas want smaller ing teams reported that no families but do not have U.S. dollars were being access to, or cannot afford spent on abortions in basic family planning China, but the President services most Americans hasn't released the funds. take for granted.. These Instead the funds were families may decide to released for other have a child every third humanitarian purposes.

year instead of every year, thereby providing better care for existing offspring and less stress on existing resources."

Because of concerns by an anti-abortion group, President Bush has frozen the \$34 million Congress allocated to the U.N. fund. One main concern was forced abortions in China and whether or not the fund would be contributing to these. Two fact find

Birdline

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

Report your sightings after listening to the tape.

double by 2050."That's a lot of folks who are guilty of nothing more than wanting to provide for their families. . Human population growth is about more than wildlife, of course. It's also about dizzying rates of infant and maternal mortality, rising rates of unemployment, and escalating social and economic instability in the developing world. I learned that most people in

Sizzling Summertime Picnic

If you missed this one, you must join us next year! Over 60 picnickers gathered at the ASO building Saturday, August 17. Guests included Kevin Poague, Chris, Vicki and 14-month-old Eli Sommerich from Spring Creek Prairie; and Ken & Arlys Reitan of Wachiska Audubon Society.

Cool company and delectable dishes and, new at ASO, a self-guided Wetland Walk, filled out a summer evening of hearty conversation.

Nelli Falzgraf's flyer with map and information gave guests an enjoyable experience strolling the wetland and admiring Eunice Levisay's beautiful butterfly garden. Thanks to Eunice for her guidance on the walk and to Don

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 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

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chapter-only membership) and your
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11809 Old Maple Road

Omaha NE 68164

and Jan Paseka for identifying dragonflies.
Omaha phone: (402) 758-8981

PO 3

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Please stop by the ASO building sometime for a self-guided Wetland Walk. You will find the flyers in the office or at the kiosk behind the building.

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, DC 20515

Phone: (202) 225-4806; fax
(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

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

Hitchcock Hawk Watch

September 1 - December 20

By Jerry Toll

The Hawkwatch at Hitchcock Nature Area, located 7 miles north of tify hawks in flight with experienced persons who can point out those subtle

Crescent, Iowa, has differences.

resumed as of September

1. Early possible migrants in September include Mississippi Kite and Osprey.

Everyone is encouraged to come to Hitchcock for an hour or a day.

Experienced hawkwatchers will be present all weekend and intermittently on weekdays.

This is a great way to learn to iden

In typical years the peak numbers of hawks flying by is in late September and again in mid-October. The Hawkwatch will continue until December 20.

If you wish to volunteer on a regular basis or have further questions, you may call Jerry Toll @453-9239 or email jertol@radiks.net.

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:

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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

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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

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Field Trip Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue NE 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

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

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

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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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