

THE WARBLER
DES MOINES AUDUBON SOCIETY
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EDITOR: JANE R. CLARK



Saturday, November 10 Field Trip

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Saylorville Lake Visitor's Center on Saturday, November 10th. From there we'll venture to various habitats around the lake and in the surrounding area, looking for waterfowl, loons, grebes, gulls and other migrating species. Kinglets, White-throated Sparrows and juncos are busy flitting among the trees and falling leaves. Bring binoculars, a snack and beverage and dress for the conditions. All levels of bird watchers are encouraged to attend! Contact field trip leader, Dennis Thompson at cnthomps@gmail.com or 515-254-0837 or for more information.

Tuesday, November 20: The Bears of Katmai **By Craig Meyers**

The Bears of Katmai - Come along on a visit to one of the premier wildlife viewing experiences in the world. The bears of Katmai National Park, Alaska allow an up close and personal view of one of the world's great predators. See how it's possible to walk among these great bears and live to tell about it.

Craig Meyers - Craig is a central Iowa wildlife photographer who has been taking photographs for more than 40 years and has used his retirement to travel to areas both in the U.S. and elsewhere to photograph wildlife in its natural habitat.

Katmai National Park and Preserve is an American national park and preserve in southern Alaska, notable for the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes and for its brown bears. Most of the national park is a designated wilderness area where all hunting is banned. The park is named after Mount Katmai, its centerpiece stratovolcano. The park is located on the Alaska Peninsula, across from Kodiak Island. The area was first designated a national monument in 1918 to protect the area around the major 1912 volcanic eruption of Novarupta. Katmai was expanded over the years by four additional proclamations, then enlarged and re-designated a National Park and Preserve by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980. The ANILCA states that Katmai National Park and Preserve is to be managed for the following purposes, among others: to protect habitats for, and populations of, fish and wildlife, including, but not limited to, high concentrations of brown/grizzly bears and their denning areas; to maintain unimpaired the water habitat for significant salmon populations; and to protect scenic, geological, cultural, and recreational features.

Des Moines Audubon meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are held in the lunchroom of the Northwest Community Center, which is located at 51st and Franklin Avenue in Des Moines. The Center is just west of Franklin Library. There is ample parking and the building is accessible. If you have questions about this meeting place, please contact Jane Clark at 515-223-5047.

Migration Time: Ducks and Geese
Enormous Honking Flocks Move through Iowa
From Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Of the nearly 400 different species of birds that can be found in Iowa, whether common or rare, a number of them can only be seen when they are migrating between their summer breeding grounds and their wintering grounds. Even though Canada geese can be seen all year round in Iowa, their classic V-formation flights often seem to signal the changing of the seasons and the migratory period for a wide number of birds. Whether you are a birdwatcher, a hunter or a casual naturalist, watching waterfowl in Iowa during fall is an amazing experience!

Reminder--no program meeting in December

Des Moines Audubon Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, December 22, 2018

Des Moines Audubon Society's 2018 Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 22 beginning at 8:00 a.m. The annual Christmas Bird Count will take the place of our regular field trip in December—plan for a day or part of a day of counting birds in the Des Moines count circle. We'll meet at the Des Moines Art Center parking lot, but please contact Denny Thompson at 515-254-0837 or cndthomps@gmail.com ahead of time if you plan to participate. We'll be dividing into teams to check various Des Moines areas. *Dress warmly and appropriately.* Bring food and beverage for the day and plan to stay as long as possible. If you wish to remain at home but still want to be a part of this count, you may do so by keeping track of the birds visiting your neighborhood, in your backyard and at your feeders. Keep track of how many of each species you see during the day and at the end of the day, report to Denny. The Des Moines 15-mile diameter is centered at 63rd and University and it runs from Saylorville Dam to Lake Colchester (north of Norwalk) and the I-80 rest stop to the fairgrounds. The Des Moines CBC has been held since 1948.

***Please note there will be no December field trip other than the Christmas Bird Count**



Dallas County Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, December 15

Come join Dallas County Conservation Board and Raccoon River Watershed Association for a day of birding with a purpose. Each year local bird clubs gather around the Christmas holiday to take a snapshot of what birds are in their area. This information is sent to National Audubon Society which has used that information to look at the long-term health of bird populations over the last 100 years. Participants are divided into groups, each with an experienced birder in a different location in the county. We usually hike in the morning and drive the area in the afternoon. It does not matter if you are a beginner or experienced birder; the day is filled with beauty and opportunities for learning. Registration is required for this free program.

Dallas County Conservation Board
515-465-3577
conservation@dallascountyiowa.gov



Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge Christmas Bird Count, Saturday, January 5

The Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge Christmas Bird Count will be held Saturday, January 5 beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Visitor Center. Lunch will be provided. Please register by January 3 by contacting Karen at karen_vistesparkman@fws.gov or 515-994-3400.

October Field Trip Report By Tom Dougherty

The October field trip ventured to Jasper County's premier birding location, the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. A dozen folks, including one new field trip participant, met in Pleasant Hill and carpoled to the Refuge. The group entered the park at the west entrance where a couple of bull elk made an appearance along with a herd of bison that meandered across the road in front of us. The drive through the bison area didn't produce a lot of bird species although a Western Meadowlark was heard near the entrance to the refuge.

The next stop was the Oak Savanna trail and it turned out to be a birdy spot that morning with a Ruby-crowned Kinglet catching our attention in the goldenrod. Several sparrow species were spotted including Song, Savannah, White-throated, Fox and a Lincoln's. We also counted several Eastern Bluebirds, American Robins and American Goldfinches along with Cedar Waxwings. A nice find for the second weekend of October was a Brown Creeper. The only warbler species the group managed to find was as an Orange-Crowned Warbler. One other notable find was a singing Eastern Towhee. The group checked some of the other areas of the Refuge and came across a Sedge Wren and some raptors including a couple of American Kestrels, a Red-tailed Hawk and a Northern Harrier.

At the end of the day, we finished at the Visitor's Center where we had a chance to meet a few of the volunteers from a Girl Scout troop that were collecting seeds from prairie flowers for planting next spring. For more information about the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge or the various volunteer opportunities at the Refuge, check out their website at: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Neal_Smith/ or the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge's Facebook page.

"...the quiet insect-like brown creeper is "busy as a bee." It is curious to note how many times the creeper is seen and heard in days of light rain or mist. He seems to be in the best of spirits on such days."

.....Selden Lincoln Whitcomb describing birds around Grinnell, Iowa in 1885

To Help Birds This Winter, Go Easy on Fall Yard Work Excerpted From National Audubon By Andy McGlashen, October 06, 2017

A manicured lawn might look nice, but messy is better for birds and bugs.

There's a certain satisfaction in autumn chores. But if you want to make your backyard a welcoming winter haven for birds, some fall tasks call for a laissez-faire approach. "Messy is definitely good to provide food and shelter for birds during the cold winter months," says Tod Winston, Audubon's Plants for Birds program manager. So let someone else keep up with the neighbors. Sleep in, linger a little longer with your morning coffee, and follow these tips for a bird-friendly yard you can be proud of.

Save the seeds. The seed heads of coneflowers, black-eyed Susans, and other native wildflowers provide a helpful food cache for birds.

Leave the leaves. You can help birds and other wildlife by skipping the leaf raking. "Those leaves are important because they rot and enrich the soil, and also provide places for bugs and birds to forage for food," Winston says.

Leaf litter isn't just free fertilizer—it's also a pretty happening patch of habitat for a variety of critters.

Build a brush pile. Rather than hauling them away, you can use fallen branches to build a brush pile that will shelter birds from lousy weather and predators.

Skip the chemicals. In most cases, grass clippings and mulched leaf litter provide plenty of plant nutrition, and using store-bought fertilizers only encourages more non-native plants to grow. Generally speaking, native grasses, shrubs, trees, and flowering plants don't need chemical inputs. Save a few bucks and keep your yard healthy for bugs and birds.

**Des Moines Audubon Society membership is for one year, from July to June.
Dues should be mailed to: Jane Clark, 9871 Lincoln Avenue, Clive, IA 50325.**

If you are unsure of the status of your membership please call 515-223-5047.

Please make checks payable to "Des Moines Audubon Society"

Membership Levels and Dues:

Student (under 18).....\$1.00
Individual Adult..... \$10.00
Family.....\$15.00
Life.....\$125.00

*Additional Contribution for Conservation Projects _____

*Additional Contribution for Bird Feeding Projects _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

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