

2018 SAVALOJA GRANT – FINAL REPORT

BRainerd LAKES AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY

FOR SPRING BIRD HIKE ADVERTISING

Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society (BLAAS) was very grateful to receive a Savaloja Grant in 2018 to assist us with advertising our Spring Bird Hike series.

Our Spring Bird Hikes were conducted Thursdays May 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 7 AM and also on Saturdays May 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 8 AM. We had 6 knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteer leaders as well as 5 tally assistance help over the course of these 8 walks. We were fortunate to utilize the Northland Arboretum (The Arb) Important Bird Area for these hikes. The Arb has a rich mosaic of habitats, including grasslands, jack pine forest, cattail marsh, and mixed lowland forest, perfect for a wide variety of breeding and migrating birds.

BLAAS accomplished our goal of increasing knowledge of the avifauna present at this site during migration as well as expanding Minnesota's birding community by introducing people to the activity in an easy and friendly event. We had binoculars and field guides to loan to participants as well as checklists of the birds expected at the Arb.

Attendance at the hikes averaged 12 to 13 people, with a total of 7 youth and 96 adults participating over the 8 dates. We were especially pleased to have two intrepid women from the nearby senior living facility, both with walkers, join us one Saturday. The leader was able to accommodate them by utilizing the paved fitness trail and get great views of some sparrows and typical open woodland species.

Our species tally this year was a respectable 93 species, with an average of 39 species heard or seen per event. The highest count of 46 was on Thursday, May 10 but May 19 may have brought the most colorful variety with 13 warbler species spotted. Highlights included 8 species of sparrows; flyovers by Sandhill Cranes, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Common Loon and Trumpeter Swan; and unique sightings of Indigo Bunting, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Solitary Sandpiper and Scarlet Tanager.

Although this was our 7th year hosting these hikes, we continue to reach new people each year and help introduce others to birding and the wonderful places to bird in the Brainerd Lakes Area. By

advertising these events weekly in the local newspaper's Dining and Entertainment section, BLAAS feels we are most effective in informing the general public about these free, guided hikes.

The grant request was for \$456. The entire amount was used to place advertisements in the Brainerd Dispatch's Thursday edition on April 26, May 3, 10 and 17, 2018. We acknowledged the MOU's generous support in the ad as well as on our Facebook page, announcements at our March and April 2018 programs and at each hike.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lorrene Maroney, BLAAS President and Project Administrator

lgstoby@hotmail.com; 218-545-2407

PO Box 521, Brainerd, MN 56401



Birders on the Whiskey Creek Trail (above), and overlooking Monet Pond (below)- Northland Arboretum
Photo by LeAnn Plinske



Come Birding with BLAAS!

Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society

Who: Open to young and old, expert and beginner.

What: Get out and enjoy spring, enjoy an early morning hike and enjoy learning about birds! All hikes will be led by an experienced birder. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

When: Thursday and Saturday mornings between May 3 to May 26. Thursday hikes begin at 7:00am and Saturday hikes begin at 8:00am. Hikes will last about an hour.

Where: The Northland Arboretum, a designated Important Bird Area.

Cost: FREE!

SPONSORED BY... Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society, and Northland Arboretum

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