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The Warren Nelson Memorial Bog

by Pam Perry and Randy Frederickson

On Saturday, October 10, 2015, a group of Warren Nelson's family and friends gathered at the Meadowlands Community Center for the dedication of the 40-acre parcel that had been purchased in his memory. Stories were told with great fondness of the man who loved birds and loved to teach others about birds. His photos were shown on the wall for background as friends talked about being with Warren to see Yellow Rails, Great Gray Owls, and many more Aitkin County specialties. After sharing these remembrances, the group headed out to Blue Spruce Road in Sax-Zim Bog to see the property. A sign on the southeast corner of the property featured an image of a Northern Hawk Owl and the words "Warren Nelson Memorial Bog." Warren loved bogs and the birds that inhabit them.

Warren passed away at the Aicota Care Center in Aitkin on December 30, 2014 — a life cut short at the age of 65. Warren hadn't wanted people to know that he was sick because he didn't want them to worry. As a founding member of the Bee Nay She Council Bird Club, along with Jo and Steve Blanich, Warren was at every meeting and always prepared a bird identification (ID) segment. At the bird club meeting in October 2014, Warren not only gave his ID presentation, but he was the featured speaker, showing his photos and talking about the beauty of nature. He never complained and didn't say anything that night about his health issues. In November 2014, Warren didn't show up for bird club. This was really unusual, so bird club president

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Pam Perry and Randy Frederickson, at the Warren Nelson Memorial Bog.

*Conservation Column,
continued from page 1*

Ken Perry called him. Warren said that he was really sorry to have missed, but he wasn't feeling well; he thought that he had the flu. He didn't have the flu, but rather pancreatic cancer. This was typical Warren, giving of himself, always generous.

In the spring of 2015, Warren's friends were trying to find a way to do something in Warren's memory. One idea was to work with the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, to purchase a piece of property. We didn't know how much money could be raised, but we could try. Sparky Stensaas and the Sax-Zim Friends welcomed the idea. The Friends group was formed four years ago to save prime tracts of mature black spruce-tamarack bog forests within the Sax-Zim Bog Important Bird Area (IBA).

According to information that was compiled for the IBA nomination, Sax-Zim Bog has a bird list of over 240 species, including northern rarities such as the Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Warblers are abundant and include Connecticut, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Cape May, Canada, Blackburnian, and Palm. The Sax-Zim Bog area is known nationally as a top birding destination.

The Sax-Zim Bog IBA in St. Louis County is a mixture of state, county, and private land, which includes the Cloquet Valley and Whiteface River State Forests and the Sax and Zim Wildlife Management Areas. Increased logging of black spruce-tamarack forest occurs when these forests are becoming mature and prime habitat for boreal birds. The Friends group now owns 140 acres of bog tracts which are scattered around the 300 square mile IBA near areas of birding routes. The Warren Nelson Memorial Bog is on Blue Spruce Road, an important birding route. This tall black spruce bog was once surrounded

by more of the same habitat, but some has already been lost to logging. It will take 80 years or more for this habitat to return to a mature condition.

Working with Warren's friends, family, birders from across the state, and the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog, we raised a total of \$37,360 from 213 donations. What a phenomenal and deserving tribute to such a humble man. This was enough to purchase the 40 acres. The land is owned and managed by the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog. The Tamarack Lowlands is a landform that is included in the Sax-Zim Bog area and extends into Aitkin County, Warren's main birding area. This purchase will help conserve bog land, lowland conifers, and the avifauna they support. We like to think that Warren would be pleased. The bog, in his name, is open to foot traffic year round, thus allowing Warren's legacy of appreciation, education, and conservation to be forever perpetuated.

For more information about the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog and their Acres for Owls fundraising efforts, go to www.sax-zim.org.

*Pam Perry is retired from the
Department of Natural Resources
Nongame Wildlife Program.*

*Randy Frederickson is science
teacher and birder from Willmar.*

Birding Is Awesome

*by Reece Woollen,
Burroughs Birders Bird Club,
Burroughs Community School*

Western Tanager. Steller's Jay. Magnolia Warbler. Pileated Woodpecker. I hadn't ever heard of these birds before I joined Bird Club at school. But now I know about these and many other birds and I'm glad that I do.

Birding may sound boring, but I can guarantee that it's not boring at all. It's one of the most awesome activities you can do.

Birding is very fun and it is important to know about these creatures and their environment.

Before the first session of Bird Club, when I walked around and saw a bird, it just seemed like an ordinary bird. But now when I see a bird, it pulls my attention away from everything else to identify it. I can't wait to see other birds I haven't yet seen.

*Editor's note: The Burroughs Birders
Bird Club is led by Amy Simso Dean,
one of MOU's youth mentors.*



A Northern Cardinal, photo by Steve Maanum

Low-Income Seniors Meet MN Birds

by Valerie Klemz, *Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners Grant Specialist*

Thanks to the Savaloja Grants Program, low-income seniors living in Plymouth are learning about local birds and working to create bird-friendly habitat in their neighborhood. Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners (IOCP) applied for the grant to fund activities that help seniors stay active and engaged with their neighbors. Many participants are immigrants, and learning more about Minnesota birds creates a meaningful connection to their new home.

With activities that include bird feeder construction, habitat planning, special presentations onsite and a field trip to Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, more than 40 seniors are expanding their knowledge of Minnesota's birds and building a community of enthusiasts. This "community" of engaged neighbors reduces the growing risk of social isolation among these older adults, for whom limited resources make overcoming isolation more challenging. Isolation can lead to serious health and wellbeing consequences. IOCP works to thwart those effects,



investing in the social fabric of these neighborhoods through activities such as the new birding club.

Property management at Currents Apartments in Plymouth is working with residents to create habitat that is both bird-friendly and accessible to seniors. Feeders have been installed,

modified plantings and new seating are anticipated in the spring, with a grand opening celebration planned for July. Older adults are working with neighborhood children to make winter feeders, creating connections across generations, and helping develop the next wave of enthusiasts.

Savaloja Grant Applications Sought

by Steve Wilson, *Chair, MOU Savaloja Committee*

The MOU supports bird-related projects through Savaloja Grants. A record \$15,000 is available for projects beginning in 2016 that increase our understanding of birds, promote preservation of birds and their natural habitats, or increase public interest in birds, including in populations currently underrepresented in Minnesota's birding community.

Last year \$12,800 was awarded through eight grants ranging from

\$400 to \$2,700. Projects included scholarships to Flying Wild workshops for educators working in urban low-income and minority areas, an owl-banding program at a nature center, binoculars for two urban nature centers, a nature center's educational big birding day, a study of bird immune system defenses against nest parasites, a pilot program encouraging seniors in a low-income neighborhood to become involved in birding activi-

ties, and a program that uses birds as an integrating theme in teaching disparate subjects to elementary school students.

Application information may be obtained by going to <http://moumn.org/grants.html>. The deadline for receipt of grant applications is January 31, 2016. Grant recipients will be notified by April 1, 2016.

MOU Calendar



January / February 2016

BELL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Through January 3: Peregrine Falcon: From Endangered Species to Urban Bird

Details: Museum hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, noon-5 p.m. Information: www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/peregrine or 612-626-9660.

CARPENTER ST. CROIX VALLEY NATURE CENTER

Information at www.CarpenterNatureCenter.org.
RSVP for all programs at 651-437-4359.

January 16 & February 13: WI Campus Bird Hikes

Details: 8 a.m. Cost: \$6 or free for 'Friends of CNC.'

January 22 & February 26: Bird Banding Program at Minnesota Campus

Details: 8:30 a.m.-noon. Donations of birdseed or suet appreciated.

January 29: Owl Prowl, Minnesota Campus

February 12: Owl Prowl, Wisconsin Campus

Details: 7-9 p.m. Cost: \$6 or \$4 for 'Friends of CNC.'

MINNEAPOLIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

January 8: Birds of Bhutan

Details: Presented by David Cahlander. 1 p.m. Open to the public. Bryant Square Park Building, at the corner of Bryant Avenue South and 31st Street in Minneapolis.

February 12: The Marvelous Marsh

Details: Presented by Dr. Scott Sharkey. 1 p.m. Open to the public. Bryant Square Park Building, corner of Bryant Avenue South and 31st Street, Minneapolis.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

January 9: Live Golden Eagle Program

Details: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Scott Mehus, National Eagle Center Education Director and Golden Eagle Project Co-coordinator, will share his 19 years of experience observing golden eagles in southeast Minnesota and Wisconsin. Whitewater State Park. For more information, please call 507-932-3007.

January 9: Golden Eagle Survey Training

Details: 12-3 p.m. Scott Mehus of the National Eagle Center will prepare volunteers for the January 16 Wintering Golden Eagle Survey. Sign up for this training by email at sara.holger@state.mn.us or by phone at 507-932-3007 ext 226. Information: call 507-932-3007.

THREE RIVERS PARKS

Information: www.threeriversparks.org

January 16: Bird Banding

Details: 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Lowry Nature Center, 7025 Victoria Drive, Victoria, MN.

January 23: Bird Banding

Details: 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Eastman Nature Center, 13351 Elm Creek Road, Dayton, MN

February 20: Bird Banding

Details: 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Lowry Nature Center, 7025 Victoria Drive, Victoria, MN.

ZUMBRO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Unless otherwise noted, events start at Quarry Hill Nature Center, 701 Silver Creek Road NE, Rochester, MN.
<http://www.zumbrovalleyaudubon.org/programs.html>

January 2: Monthly Bird Walk

Details: 9 a.m. Leaders: Terry & Joyce Grier.

January 26: Monthly Program - The Zumbro in Words and Pictures

Details: 7-8 p.m. Presented by Post Bulletin outdoors writer John Weiss.

February 6: Monthly Bird Walk

Details: 9 a.m. Leaders: Terry & Joyce Grier.

February 23: Monthly Program - The Birds of Cuba

Details: 7-8 p.m. Presented by Carrol Henderson.

ADVANCE NOTICE

April 23: Hastings Area Bird Festival

Details: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Includes youth "Big Day" birding competition, bird banding demonstrations, live raptor program, beginner birding class and field trip, field trips to area hot spots. Visit www.carpenternaturecenter.org.

Phenology Corner:

Overwintering Non-Winter Birds

by *Bob Dunlap*

When we think of winter birding in Minnesota, we think of Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes, and Common Redpolls. Crossbills come to mind, as do Snow Buntings and Northern Hawk Owls. Birds like Great Blue Herons, Marsh Wrens, and Eastern Towhees are in the back of our minds, because they've flown south...correct? The answer is yes* (notice the asterisk).

The asterisk, or caveat, here is this: winter in Minnesota isn't just for our winter visitors. On the contrary; some of the birds that we assumed left back in October and November are still here! You just have to know where to find them. So while you're out and about looking for some of those Snowy Owls and Red Crossbills, you might be surprised to find a few birds that you hadn't expected to see for another few months.

Open water is an excellent place to start. Even in the coldest of winters, some water bodies never freeze over, including lakes and ponds near power plants and segments of our larger rivers. For birds, this means that access to fish and aquatic invertebrates and plants (their food during the warmer months) remains available. In addition to the myriad of waterfowl attracted to these areas (nearly all of our regular species of ducks, geese, and swans have overwintered in the state), patient scrutiny might reveal a Pied-billed or Horned grebe among the flocks. Along the shorelines, keep an eye out for Great Blue Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons that might be stalking the shallows, or a Belted Kingfisher perched in a tree near the water's edge. Nearby marshy areas can even harbor a lingering Virginia Rail, Marsh Wren, or Swamp



Sparrow, and Northern Harriers often patrol these same habitats.

Wooded ravines and river valleys are also hotspots for finding overwintering birds. American Robins have especially become more numerous in recent years, and flocks sometimes numbering into the thousands can be found noisily feeding among buckthorn and other berries in these areas. Eastern Bluebirds and Hermit Thrushes are present annually but in much smaller numbers in many of these same areas, and even Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers have been found taking advantage of bumper crops of berries in winter. Northern Flickers are often present among the more resident woodpeckers in addition to—if you're especially lucky—a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker that decided to tough it out. The high-pitched whistles of Brown Creepers and Golden-crowned Kinglets can often be heard in the denser, taller stands of forest in these areas—these two species can usually be found together and in mixed flocks with chickadees and nuthatches. If there's an open creek running through the wooded ravine, be sure to check for

a cryptically-colored Wilson's Snipe probing for bugs in the shallow water or the sprite-like flit of a Winter Wren along the creek's edge and nearby downed logs.

Any place near birdfeeders can be a good place to find overwintering sparrows among the hoards of Dark-eyed Juncos and American Tree Sparrows. Song, Fox, and White-throated sparrows tend to be the most likely culprits among these flocks, but Harris's Sparrows, White-crowned sparrows, and Eastern Towhees occasionally overwinter as well, and there are even recent records of Chipping and Field sparrows and the rare Spotted Towhee doing the same. Mourning Doves and some blackbirds—including Red-winged, Rusty, and Yellow-headed, plus Brown-headed Cowbirds and Common Grackles—are also attracted to winter feeding stations, sometimes in impressive numbers.

Finally, if your search takes you out into the open country, be on the lookout for a rare overwintering Western Meadowlark among the flocks of Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, and Horned Larks that you flush as you drive by. But starting around mid-February, there is another caveat to consider; some of these Horned Larks are actually the first spring migrants returning to Minnesota! Behavior is the key to telling apart the new arrivals from our winter residents; if the birds are actively chasing each other around, singing, and splitting off into pairs, it's likely that they are migrants. If not, then they're just a few more birds that toughed out another Minnesota winter like the rest of us* (some snowbirds will be returning from Arizona, Texas, or Florida...you know who you are).

Mouse Traps Are Good for Owls

by *Karla Bloem, Executive Director of the International Owl Center*

Raise your hand if you've never had a mouse in your house or out-buildings. Yep. That's what I thought. Almost everyone has faced this issue at one time or another.

If you have a box of mouse or rat poison lying around, I encourage you to read what it says even if it does bear the trusty "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval." It is not intended to be used anyplace accessible to children or pets (I think that's just about any place if you have kids or pets), nor is it to be used outdoors.

Note that the package tells you the first dead mice will appear 4–5 days after placing the poison. The mice have several days to munch away on the poison as they slowly begin to bleed internally. This makes them thirsty, so they seek out water, often trying to get back outside. This makes them easy targets for owls and other raptors.

One poisoned mouse won't kill a large owl. But the poison will stay in the owl's body for over a year. And one poisoned mouse brought by Mom or Dad back to a nest may kill an owl.

We know of course that rodenticides are outright killing some individual owls. But how many owls out there have sub-lethal levels in their systems? Several researchers have been working to answer that question in Canada, the United States, and Europe. The answer is shocking.

Most studies found 60–80% of the raptors sampled were carrying measurable levels of rodenticides in their bodies. The raptors most often sampled were Great Horned Owls and Red-tailed Hawks. One study checked all raptors of certain species admitted to a rehab facility. Another checked raptors of certain species found dead



*A Northern Saw-whet Owl says thank you for not using rodenticides!
Photo by Alyssa DeRubeis.*

for any reason. Another captured free living owls in a city and sampled their blood. Despite the differing methodologies, they were all getting similar results.

Thankfully this is a problem that all of us can help to fix. The next time you have rodents to control, use traps instead of poison. You can choose from snap traps, zap traps (they instantly electrocute the rodents using battery power), live traps, or various homemade traps. Please avoid glue traps since all kinds of non-target wildlife can wind up in them and they do not provide a quick, humane death.

The City of Maastricht in The Netherlands stopped using rodenticides a few years ago. They found that the raptor population *increased* and the rodent population *decreased*. Owls

and hawks are excellent at controlling rodent populations.

I recently gave a visitor to the Owl Center a gold star. She and her husband were using zap traps to control rodents and she had gone so far as to give her boss a zap trap for Christmas to deal with the rodent problem he had told her about. Now *that's* spreading the message.



Great Gray Owl, by Sparky Stensaas

Minnesota Birder Bio: Jim Lind



Jim Lind, photo by Sharon Lind

Born: Two Harbors, MN

Currently living: Two Harbors, MN

Occupation: Hospital lab manager

Serious about birding since: 1986

Favorite bird or bird family: northern owls

Favorite places to bird in Minnesota: North Shore, Lake County Road 2, Park Point

Favorite place to bird outside of Minnesota: Gulf coast of Texas and Louisiana

Birding style (i.e. by yourself, with others, etc): Most of my birding is on my own, but I often need to get a “fix” of birding with others, so then I usually head to Duluth.

Best advice on how to be a better birder: Pay close attention to the details of distribution and typical arrival/departure dates in your area. Oftentimes a

difference of 10 days or 10 miles can change the chances of seeing a particular species.

The main attraction or joy of birding for you: My favorite kind of birding is nest-searching, but the nesting season never seems to last long enough. That said, I do like the seasonality of the birding calendar in northern Minnesota. Every month brings something different, even in the middle of winter.

Interests/hobbies when you're not birding: Dragonflies, bow-hunting, reading books (I can't say no to a zombie book)

What new bird you would like to see the most: I've never been on a pelagic trip and it would be fun to see a storm-petrel or shearwater or an albatross.

Birding in the BWCA A Canoe Camping Adventure

Join Wilderness Canoe Guide Rob Kesselring and Naturalist Sue Plankis on the 5th annual canoe trip where we focus on birding. We explore by canoe the waterways and portages of the BWCAW seeking breeding birds of this beautiful wilderness area. Birds we have listed in previous years: many warbler species including Black-throated Blue Warbler and Northern Waterthrush; Great-Horned, Barred and Northern Saw-Whet Owls; Common Loon; Black-backed Woodpecker; Winter Wren; Veery; Merlin and Bald Eagles.

- Campfire chats about birds, habitats, behaviors, identification and song
- Day trip outings for bird sightings and explorations of various habitats
- Learn by experience how to do a BWCA canoe trip
- Ultralight canoes, deluxe tents and wholesome meals

Dates: Wednesday May 25 - Saturday May 28, 2016

Fee: \$595, all inclusive; canoes and canoeing equipment, tents, meals, BWCA permits

Contact: Rob Kesselring: rob@robkesselring.com (952) 432-8884

Sue Plankis: splankis@gmail.com (952) 201-6062



photo courtesy of Amber Burnette

This is an intermediate trip. Participants will be walking portages of rocky, undulating terrain, and be getting in and out of a canoe.

Rob has led 18 Arctic canoe expeditions, 64 BWCAW/Quetico trips, has paddled 100 rivers worldwide and is a USFS Licensed Wilderness Guide. Sue has been a Canadian Style and Freestyle Canoe instructor, is an avid birder, has a good ear for bird songs and assists in bird banding.

For more information of trip offerings visit: www.robkesselring.com

MOU December 4, 2015

Board of Directors Meeting

The MOU quarterly Board meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. on December 4, 2015 at Bob Bossert's office and was attended by President Roy Zimmerman, Vice-President Bob Bossert, Treasurer Mark Lystig, Membership Secretary Cindy Smith, Bob Dunlap, Bob Janssen, Steve Wilson, Kim Eckert, Jen Vieth, Diana Rankin, Kevin Smith, Tom Bell, and Susan Barnes Elliott (standing in as Recording Secretary for Tammy Holmer).

Cindy Smith presented the End of Year Membership Report which showed that membership is stable but not growing. The Board discussed a number of ideas to increase membership, as reflected throughout this meeting summary.

Mark Lystig presented the Treasurer's Report for End of Fiscal Year October 31, 2015 Total assets are up and investment accounts are stable. The Board then discussed ways to increase funds. Among the ideas are (1) sending out an appeal/fund-raising letter; (2) limiting the access of non-MOU members to certain portions of the MOU website, thereby hopefully increasing membership; (3) participating in next year's Give to the Max Day; (4) hiring a fund-raiser or working through fund-raising organizations; and (5) increasing participation at the MOU State Fair Booth by offering to pay admission for MOU volunteers.

The Board then heard MOU Committee Reports. Bob Janssen, head of the *Avian Information/Resource Management Committee*, announced his retirement after 58 years of monitoring MOU mail and overseeing MOU archives at the Bell Museum. The archives need to be reviewed and culled before the Museum moves. The Board voted to approve an Archive Review Committee consisting of Bob Dun-

lap, Roy Zimmerman, Bob Bossert, Cindy Smith, and Anthony Hertzler. As to Resource Management, the primary responsibility is to input birding records onto the MOU website, which requires significant birding skills. The Board will continue to discuss who should take over this responsibility. The Board thanked Bob for his amazing dedication and hard work over the last 58 years!

Kim Eckert, head of the *Awards Committee*, showed the Board the newly designed Awards Plaques. Congratulations to the 2015 MOU Awards recipients: *Thomas S. Roberts Award*: Dr. Merrill Frydendall; *Brother Theodore Voelker Award*: Bruce Fall; *Young Birder Award*: Noah Kuck. The Award presentations can be found on the MOU website under "Other Online Resources".

The Board then reviewed Pam Perry's *Conservation Committee* report. Tom Bell is MOU's representative on the Minnesota Environmental Partnership. On MOU's behalf, Tom (along with representatives of more than 70 respected environmental-type organizations) supports legislation that improves habitat or helps birds in other ways.

Jen Vieth, head of the *Education/Public Relations* committee, reported that the State fair was big success; that the MOU Facebook administrator Pete Nichols is doing a great job and that the Board should consider ways to increase knowledge of and support of MOU through the Facebook page, such as posting birding-related opportunities (MBW Weeks and Weekends; Paper Session, etc.). The MOU's original Facebook page will be deleted to avoid public confusion and Bob Dunlap will be added as the second administrator to the current Facebook page. The

Board also discussed whether MOU should get an Instagram account and whether MOU should offer a membership discount to the Minnesota Birding Facebook Group (now 3,000+ group members, all of whom are — by definition — interested in Minnesota birding). Kevin Smith gave the MOU *Youth Mentor* report for 2015 and he plans to follow up on mentorship kits that are currently not being used (kits include 15 pairs of binoculars, a spotting scope, and field guides).

The Board next discussed whether to retain the *Field Trips* Committee, in light of the fact that there are many well-known field trip opportunities provided by organizations such as Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter (MRVAC), Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and MBW Weeks and Weekends. The Board will continue to discuss whether there is a need for this committee. Kim Eckert reported on the MBW Birding Weekends and Weeks, which has operated for 31 years. MOU receives \$1 per registration, or approximately \$300 annually, in exchange for advertising on the website and in the Newsletter. All participants in the MBW program must be MOU members. The Board concluded that MOU receives a large benefit from this program because it brings much public awareness to the MOU.

Steve Wilson, head of the *Savaloja Grants* Committee, reported that the deadline for submitting proposals is January 31, 2016. At present, one proposal has been submitted and Steve is aware of two expressions of interest. The Board discussed posting grant recipient reports on the MOU website and concluded that well done reports should be posted.

The MOU's new business included

the following: The Board discussed the *Proposed 2015–2016 Fiscal Year Budget* prepared by Mark Lystig. Digitalizing the Minnesota Birding Newsletter has freed up funds. The Board congratulated Diana Rankin and Alyssa DeRubeis on a job very well done on the last issue of *Minnesota Birding*. This year MOU allocated \$1,000 for State Fair admission fees and for book marks and the Board is considering increasing this amount to cover admissions for all volunteers. Mark received a request from a person who would like to sell MOU bookmarks at Toby's in Hinckley. The Board agreed that this would be a great way to increase MOU's visibility and that the bookmarks should be sold (rather than given away). Steve Wilson told the Board that he and his wife Mary are donating \$5,000 to the Savaloja Fund, which will bring available funds to \$15,000 for 2016. The Board thanked Steve and Mary for their ongoing generosity.

The Board then discussed how to ensure that all MOU members receive access to the *Minnesota Birding Newsletter*. Currently, email notice only

goes to MOU-net subscribers, and MOU doesn't have email addresses for all members. The Board discussed sending out a one-time postcard to all members notifying them how to access the newsletter and including the website link.

The Board continued to discuss the need for fee-based (membership) access to portions of the MOU website and other necessary website improvements (some links need updating, etc.). The Board also discussed the idea of hiring someone to assist with upgrading the website.

Finally, the Board discussed and agreed to submit the following proposed slate of officers to the MOU membership at the December 5, 2015 Paper Session: President: Bob Bossert; Vice-President: Bob Dunlap; Treasurer: Mark Lystig; Membership Secretary: Cindy Smith; Recording Secretary: Susan Barnes Elliott.

The next MOU Board Meeting will take place on March 20, 2016 at 1 pm, location to be determined. MOU Board meetings are public and MOU members are encouraged to attend.

New MOU Members

Jessica Brown, *Wayzata, MN*
Monica Bryand, *St. Paul*
James Buckingham, *Eagan, MN*
William Cunningham, *St. Paul, MN*
Alex Franzen, *Hastings, MN*
Richard Gotz, *Plymouth, MN*
Nola Halverson and
Bob Saaranen, *Stillwater, MN*
J. Michael Heneghan, *St. Cloud, MN*
Noel Kelly, *Broomall, PA*
Jeff Kitterman, *Sandstone, MN*
Sarah Malick-Wahls, *Ely, MN*
Stephen Meyers, *Little Canada, MN*
Laurie Pohlman, *Minneapolis, MN*
Virginia Powers-Blair, *Minneapolis*
Linda Radimecky, *Brooklyn Center, MN*
Kathy Rygh, *St. Louis Park, MN*
Gregg Severson, *Minneapolis, MN*
Stan Tekiela, *Victoria, MN*
Michelle Terrell, *Shafer, MN*
Carol Trosset, *Northfield, MN*

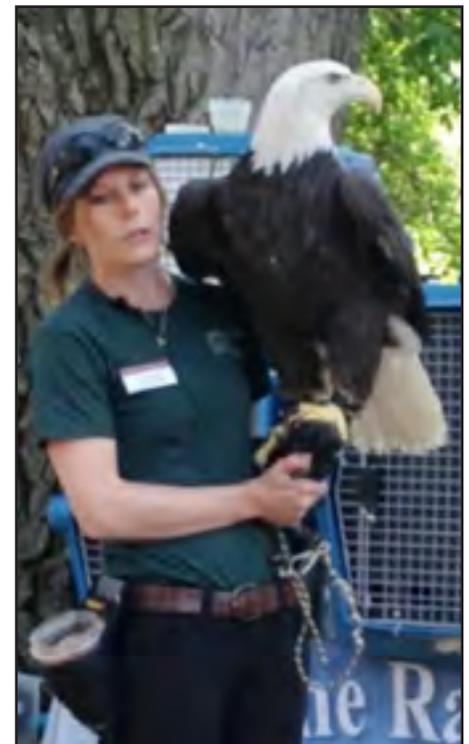
2015 Wood Lake Big Day Birdathon Raptor Show

by Amy Markle, *Naturalist*

The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU) was so generous to award Wood Lake Nature Center a Savaloja Grant in the amount of \$400. The monies were put towards the 2015 Friends of Wood Lake Big Day Birdathon Live Raptor Show, which was held on May 9th. We invited the Raptor Center of Minnesota to come and present; approximately 100 people enjoyed the show. An American Kestrel, Great Horned Owl, and Bald Eagle were part of the show. Other

event activities included three guided bird hikes, bird feeder building, a live bird-banding presentation, prize giveaways, breakfast, and snacks. We had 43 birders registered and 107 species observed, including 19 warbler species and 11 sparrow species, which is a new record for the event.

Environmental Educator Emma Richtman from the Raptor Center of MN presents a Bald Eagle at the 2015 Wood Lake Big Day Birdathon.



Awards Presented at the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Paper Session

by *Kim Eckert*

Three awards were presented at the MOU Paper Session on December 5, 2015. Below is information about each award and the person recognized with the award in 2015. The text of the presentations on December 5 and names of award recipients in recent years can be found on the MOU website under "Other Online Resources."

Thomas S. Roberts Memorial Award: Merrill J. Frydendall

The purpose of the Thomas S. Roberts Memorial Award is for the MOU to celebrate the lifetime achievements of one of its members. As stated on the plaque, this award is "For Outstanding Contributions to Minnesota Ornithology and Birding." Merrill J. Frydendall received the 2015 award. He has been a lifetime member of MOU since about 1968 and served as MOU First Vice President in 1981–82 and as MOU president in 1983–84. Merrill is retired from 32 years of teaching in the Biology Department at Minnesota State University, Mankato, including an ornithology class. He organized the first Mankato Christmas Bird Count in 1978 and is coordinating the 37th count this year. Then in 1980 he launched the Mankato Bird Club which erected a 50-box Bluebird Trail in Minneopa State Park in 1982. Chad Heins noted in his presentation of the award that "his impact on the MOU and Minnesota birding may be larger than any of us can imagine and we would be hard-pressed to find a better role model for all of us."

Brother Theodore Voelker Award: Bruce Fall

The Brother Theodore Voelker Award is presented "For Special Achievement in Field Ornithology" during the past 12 months. Bruce Fall, the 2015 awardee, is a member of the MOU Records Committee and serves as editor and compiler of the state's eBird reports. While he has docu-



Merrill Jrydendall

mented many sightings in Minnesota, this year's award is for his discovery of a Tropical Kingbird in the vicinity of Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve. Beginning on June 24, 2015 and over a period of 10 days, Bruce spent 17 hours confirming the bird's identity, listening for and recording its call, observing its behavior, and studying its molt pattern. This is the first-ever confirmed record of this species in Minnesota.

Young Birder Award: Noah Kuck

The Young Birder Award is given to someone under 25 years old

for contributing to knowledge of Minnesota birds or to the MOU. Fifteen-year-old Noah Kuck began birding at the age of 9 years. His supportive father and informal teachers and mentors, including Bill and Ann Hiemenz, owners of the Wild About Birds store in Waite Park; Jan Bergstrom, owner of the Wild Bird Center in St. Cloud; and birders Erik Bruhnke, Judd Brink, and Keith Corliss have helped him attain a life list of 218 birds. Noah has also gained knowledge by feeding birds and managing nest boxes for Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, and House Wrens. And on his 15th birthday, he joined Erik Bruhnke for a 12-hour birding marathon at the Sax-Zim Bog. Carrol Henderson, who presented the award to Noah, remarked "Keep your eyes on him. He will go far!"



*Carrol Henderson presents the
Young Birder Award to Noah Kuck*



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The Mission of the M.O.U.

We foster the study and conservation of birds by amateurs and professionals. We promote the conservation of birds and their natural habitats. We support these aims primarily by publishing and sharing information, by serving as a repository for records, by conducting field trips, by awarding grants for research, and by supporting programs that educate members and the public about birds.

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