



# Minnesota BIRDING

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## Conservation Column

### Federal Breeding Bird Survey: A Cornerstone of North American Bird Conservation Efforts

by Lee Pfannmuller

As many others have recounted, it started with a simple question nearly 60 years ago. Having witnessed a decline in the number of robins near her home, a woman sent a letter to a young biologist at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland. "Was the decline," she asked, "more widespread?"

Unfortunately, the seemingly easy question did not have an easy answer. But the biologist who received the note, a keen observer of birds from an early age, could not stop thinking about it. He had participated in studies examining the devastating impacts of DDT spraying on songbirds and understood that the decline that the observer witnessed could be geographically and taxonomically widespread. Testing that premise with data, however, presented an enormous challenge. It would require a statistically robust monitoring program that covered thousands of miles, was repeated every year, and was executed by a small army of skilled volunteers. With limited resources it was not a small task.

The biologist was, of course, the extraordinary Chandler Robbins, author or co-author of over 500 ornithological publications, including *Birds of North America: A Guide to Field Identification*, a popular book that

helped to introduce an entire generation of nature enthusiasts to the enjoyment of bird watching. His unique solution to the predicament of assessing the status of songbird populations was development of the Federal Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), one of the most important bird monitoring programs in the world.

Robbins was not the first ornithologist to ponder the challenge. But an earlier songbird monitoring program was more complicated, time-consuming, and not very popular. Robbins had something simpler in mind. Building on the success of roadside Mourning Dove routes established by wildlife professionals in the 1950s, his proposal was to pair volunteers skilled in bird identification with designated car routes across North America. For statistical rigor, the routes would be randomly placed; but to ensure systematic coverage, at least one route would be placed within each one-degree block of latitude and longitude within the U.S. and southern Canada. In eastern states, where more volunteers resided, more routes per degree block were established; in most western states and Canada, where there were fewer volunteers, only two routes were established per two-degree block. Placed on secondary roads, each route was

24.5 miles long, with stops located every half mile, for a total of 50 sampling points. At each stop a volunteer would stand by the car and record all the birds they heard or saw for exactly three minutes and then drive to the next stop and repeat the process. Routes were to start precisely one-half hour before sunrise and would be surveyed once each year. Since the surveys were to be conducted during the height of the breeding season (late May–early July), selecting a day with little rain or wind was also important.

It was an ambitious venture. Just establishing the routes and soliciting willing and skilled volunteers seemed a daunting task. Even Robbins's wife was skeptical. She thought it unlikely that birders, who can be generally free spirits anxious to seek out new birds in new areas, would willingly get up before dawn to survey the same spots year after year in a very restricted time frame. But her unassuming husband, with his signature flattop haircut and his well-worn, government-issued binoculars, was not deterred.

Following a successful pilot season in 1965, when 50 routes were established and sampled in Maryland and ten routes in Delaware, Robbins worked with colleagues throughout the eastern United States and Canada to identify state and provincial coordinators. These individuals, in turn, were asked to recruit local volunteers to cover additional routes. With remarkable speed the Federal BBS was officially launched in 1966 with 585 routes surveyed in all states east of the Mississippi River and in southeastern Canada. By 1967 and 1968, participants conducted 982 and 1,174 routes, respectively. Every state except Hawaii and every Canadian province except Newfoundland were included. In these early years, when thousands of data points were painstakingly summarized by hand and entered into a computer with punch cards, Robbins's associate, Willet T. Van Velzen, was indispensable. From addressing technical issues to actually conducting BBS routes, serving as a state coordinator, and editing reports, the list of critical tasks was endless. Overall, the program's extraordinary success spoke volumes of Robbins's vision and determination, his wide-ranging contacts, and the enthusiasm of skilled birders to participate in this ground-breaking effort. Preceded only by the Christmas Bird Count, the BBS became—and still is—one of the nation's largest citizen-science initiatives.

Volumes have since been written about the BBS, its contributions, its statistical rigor, and its limitations. For example, although observers inevitably vary in their identification skills and the survey is limited to surveying roadside habitats, more than 50 years later this well-tested, comprehensive tool remains the most important source of population data for hundreds of North American birds, particularly songbirds. Even for many birds that are not effectively surveyed by the BBS (e.g., raptors and owls) or that reside in habitats less accessible by road (e.g., waterbirds and shorebirds), it provides one of the few sources of large-scale population data. Today a total of 4,600 survey routes

established in Canada, the United States, and Mexico are surveyed each year by more than 2,500 volunteers. Unfortunately, natural disasters, such as floods and fires, prevent all routes from being surveyed every year, while some routes are located in remote areas where it is difficult to recruit surveyors. Nevertheless, BBS data have become one of the most critical resources for assessing the conservation status of birds throughout the continent, including federally Endangered and Threatened species, state Endangered and Threatened species, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Species of Conservation Concern, state lists of Species of Greatest Conservation Need, and the U.S. Forest Service Sensitive Species lists.

Essential to the program's success is the outstanding team of biologists who manage the BBS program. Not only does it readily assist avian biologists throughout the western hemisphere, it constantly investigates ways to improve the geographical scope of the program and its statistical rigor. Most recently, for example, expanded analyses for boreal birds in the far northern reaches of Canada and Alaska were made available, while farther south, survey routes were expanded in Mexico.

With more than 50 years of data, the BBS website (<https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs>) has become a treasure trove of data on our avian fauna. Have a question about the status of a familiar species? Check the BBS results. For example, along one of the BBS routes that I survey in northwestern Minnesota, Bobolinks appear to be declining as hayfields and pastures are increasingly converted to croplands. Not only can I easily access an up-to-date trend graph for the route (Figure 1), which confirms my observations, but when I explore the website further, I find that Bobolinks are also declining across Minnesota (Figure 2) and the entire BBS survey region.

This might not be a problem if Bobolinks were really uncommon in Minnesota, but as the BBS distribution map in Figure 3 illustrates, their center of abundance is in the northern Great Plains, including portions of western Minnesota. Indeed, these BBS data are a major reason why the Bobolink has been assigned a high Continental Concern Score by Partners in Flight (14/20), and is designated a Bird of Conservation Concern by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a Species of Greatest Conservation Need by the Minnesota DNR, and a Stewardship Species by Audubon Minnesota.

Participating in the Federal Breeding Bird Survey for 44 years has been a privilege that I look forward to every summer. My husband Gary Seim and my friend Mary Miller have been my drivers, my recorders, and my disciplinarians, ensuring that I stick with the three-minute sampling period no matter how much I would like to track down an unusual song or call. Over the years we have learned to expect the unexpected: That may be a downpour despite the weatherman's forecast of clear skies, regular encounters with the

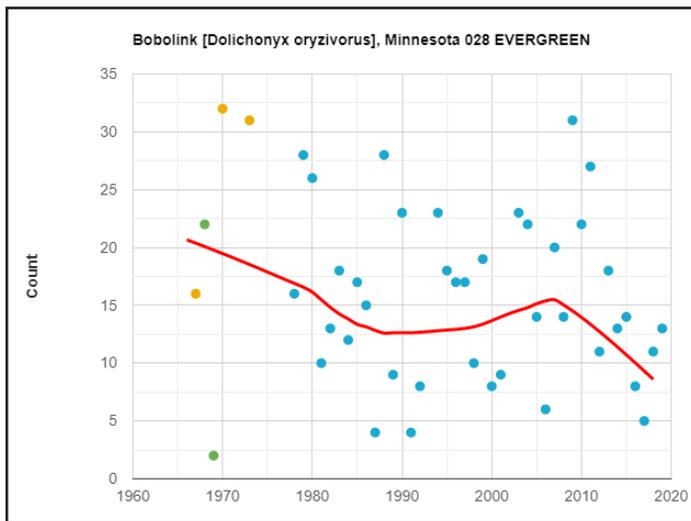


Figure 1. Bobolink BBS Population Trend on MN Route 28 from 1967-2019 (Sauer et al. 2020)

county sheriff explaining that we really are counting birds at 5:00 a.m., or a bird that we have never seen or heard before on the route. Changing habitats inevitably lead to surprises!

Opportunities to participate in the BBS are always available. Among the 84 BBS routes spread across Minnesota, approximately 27 are considered “vacant”—i.e., available for new BBS recruits (A. Hertzler, pers. comm.). Knowledge of bird identification, including both songs and calls, is critical. Given the importance of the data you collect, your work will be contributing to one of the most valuable programs in the world, informing and promoting bird conservation. A map of Minnesota’s routes can be found at <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/RouteMap>. For further information, contact Keith L. Pardieck, the National Coordinator

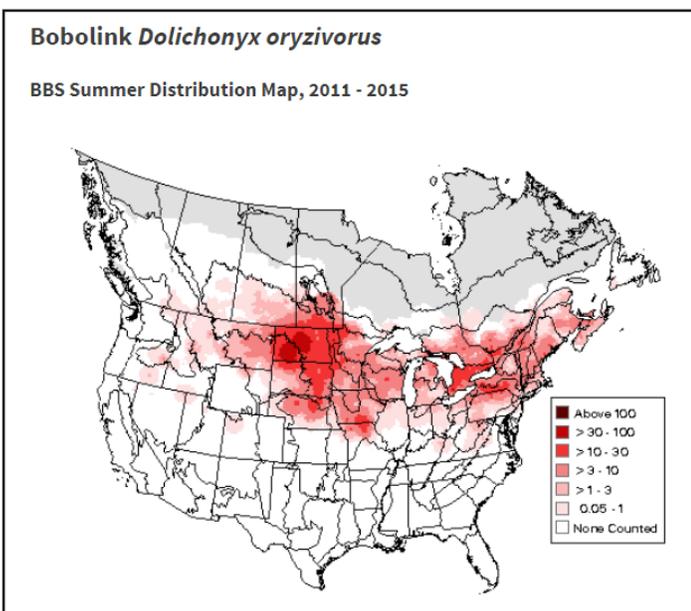


Figure 3. Breeding Distribution of the Bobolink in the BBS Survey Region (2011-2015; Sauer et al. 2020)

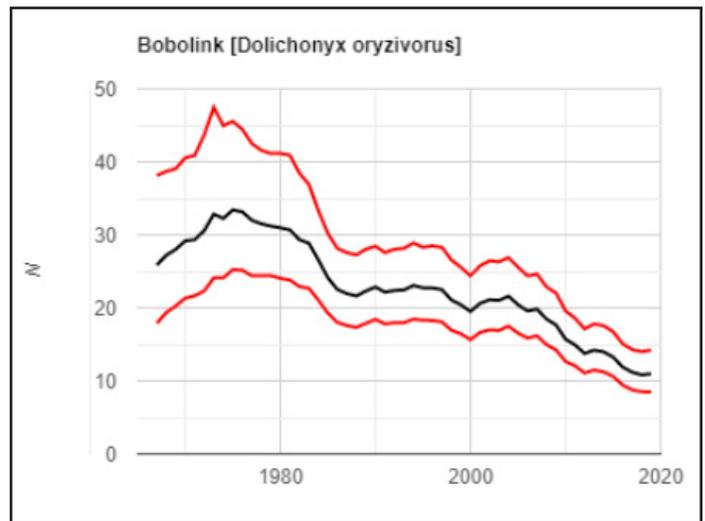


Figure 2. Bobolink BBS Population Trend in MN from 1967-2019 (Sauer et al. 2020)

([kpardieck@usgs.gov](mailto:kpardieck@usgs.gov)). Or go one step further and sign up for a more remote region of the continent!

Oh, and those robins that prompted Robbins to think seriously about monitoring songbirds. Well, they are doing just fine, especially in the Midwest. Although BBS data show that their numbers have declined across the survey region in recent years, they are still doing better than they were when the program began in the mid-1960s.

#### Resources:

“Chandler Robbins: 60 Years of Public Service in Bird Conservation.” ([https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/robbins/usgs\\_news.cfm](https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/robbins/usgs_news.cfm))

“Chandler S. Robbins: Eminent Ornithologist Who Inspired Generations of Scientists and Birders, 1918-2017.” (<https://www.usgs.gov/news/chandler-robbins-inspired-generations-scientists-and-birders-1918-2017>).

“Breeding Bird Survey Takes Birders to the Streets.” (<https://www.nwf.org/Home/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2014/AugSept/Animals/Chandler-Robbins>).

Dave Ziolkowski, Jr., Keith Pardieck and John R. Sauer, “On the Road Again for a Bird Survey that Counts.” *Birding*, July 2010, pp. 32-40.

Sauer, John R., William A. Link, and James E. Hines. 2020. *The North American Breeding Bird Survey, Analysis Results 1966-2019*: U.S. Geological Survey data release, <https://doi.org/10.5066/P96A7675>.

*Lee A. Pfannmuller was an ecologist with the Department of Natural Resources for 30 years and later worked closely with Audubon Minnesota on many ornithological issues, including the Breeding Bird Atlas. She is one of three co-authors of the upcoming book, The Breeding Birds of Minnesota: Their History, Ecology, and Conservation, which will be published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2022.*

# Message from the President

“Turning the corner.” This is an expression we hear often these days in relation to the coronavirus, implying that we have been through the worst and that things are now getting better. The development and wide distribution of vaccines for Covid-19 are a good example of going from an untreatable new disease to prevention of the disease in most people.

Another corner that we have turned is in the way that the many people view nature and the benefits and joys of being outside. The stress and isolation of the pandemic have motivated people to go for a walk in the local park or forest preserve, and many have found that they really enjoy this and find it refreshing. From what I have read, birding has benefited from this, with more people becoming fascinated with birds and their habitat, identification, and conservation. Some families are using birds as a focus for going outside. This presents an opportunity for the birding community to nurture increased participation in activities related to bird watching, investigation, and conservation. This is an important opportunity for the MOU, a wonderful opportunity to spread the joy that we all receive from birding.

There are other MOU corners that are coming up. I have been President since December 2019, making me the ‘pandemic president’ by default. I have missed the personal contact and interaction with members, particularly during the lock-down and the (virtual) Paper Session of 2020. The MOU is a wonderful volunteer organization, and it has been an honor and delight to serve as Vice President and then President. Thank you to everyone who has helped keep the MOU active and interesting. Michelle Terrell will be an excellent President, and everyone should be thankful that she will be in this position for the next two years. Please give her your support.

Although perhaps not turning the corner in the same sense, there are additional changes coming to the MOU that should excite the members. We have had the luxury of a database and website designed and maintained by David Cahlander and others, and we are thankful for the many hours of time and energy they have devoted to providing this means of keeping track of our data, records, and activities. There have been important software developments in recent years, and Liz Carpenter is now in the process of using these to rebuild the website and database. Nothing will be lost; all data will be retained. And we will all benefit from these changes.

We want the MOU to be current in its governance so we can attract and welcome new members. Ann Kessen has been chairing a committee working at revising the MOU By-Laws, and the updated version should be ready for members to review soon. One of the goals of the revised By-Laws is to simplify and clarify the descriptions of the

various committees and positions, thus making them more accessible. We hope that this will encourage greater participation by our members. Please consider volunteering for any of the committees that interests you.

One final corner we are turning in getting back to in-person meeting the annual MOU Paper Session. The 2021 meeting will be held in the North Star Ballroom in the Student Center on the University of Minnesota St Paul campus. As outlined elsewhere in this newsletter, we have an outstanding roster of presenters; they represent some of the best Minnesota has to offer in ornithology and related areas. This live meeting will give the members the opportunity to mix and socialize once again with birders from throughout the state, something that has been lacking since the start of the pandemic. It should be noted, though, that the university requires mask wearing while in the building, except when eating. Box lunches, water, and coffee will be available. It should be an excellent meeting, and I hope you will attend.

– *Richard King, President*

*Trumpeter Swans, by Les Gunderson*



# My Favorite Home Patch: Talcot Lake WMA in Cottonwood County

by Luke Hollander

*Note from the editor: Do you have a favorite local spot for birding? I'd like to hear about it, and I'm sure other birders would too. Please send me a note at [newsletter@moumn.org](mailto:newsletter@moumn.org) if you would like to write about your favorite local patch for this column. GH*

I am just finishing up my first Minnesota big year. It has brought me to many corners of the state. I dropped plans to chase unique year birds, visited hot spots I have never been to, and, most enjoyably, reconnected with and met some of the best people—Minnesota birders. Now I am tired and am looking forward to visiting some of my local patches more often again.

Patch birding has to be one of the best ways to bird. As I see it, here are a few of the main reasons:

- It makes you more attentive to your surroundings. Like many others, I have been inspired by Aldo Leopold's seminal work, *A Sand County Almanac*, to become a naturalist and to pay closer attention to the biota around me. I have attempted to mimic his monthly essays, recording everything that I saw, heard, smelled, and felt in one location for several weeks. As I familiarized myself with my non-human neighbors, I started feeling more connected to the natural world and couldn't deny the spiritual aspect of nature. So, in spite of my year chasing around the state, my preference is for patch birding.
- This style of birding teaches you more about the birds than any other. You begin to learn the details of the local songs and call notes better and you observe the unique behaviors and habitats of each species, and this prepares you for when something "different" shows up.
- Local patch birding doesn't come with the green guilt of driving hundreds of miles and contributing to one's carbon footprint.

Now, on to my favorite "local" patch. Although I currently reside in Rochester, I lived in Cottonwood County from 2017-2018, when I initially became a Minnesota birder. I lived onsite at the retreat center that I co-directed, which meant I often needed to get away in order to leave the busyness and never-ending lists behind, even if just for a moment. Talcot Lake WMA quickly became one of the places I retreated to.

This WMA is comprised of 4,676 acres. It includes Talcot Lake, a shallow, damned, 873-acre lake on the west branch of the Des Moines River, wonderful mixed grassland and marshes, some cropland, and pockets of woods

and bottomlands surrounding the lake. In a county where there aren't many traditional "big woods," it provides a nice migrant trap, where it feels like just about anything could show up.

Talcot Lake WMA has been historically important for migrating waterfowl, and therefore it has multiple controlled hunt zones. It is worth noting that it offers wheelchair-accessible blinds for deer hunting and goose hunting, which I find neat. The boundaries are clearly posted, and there are several areas that are identified as wildlife sanctuary.

The obvious: Since Talcot Lake a shallow lake, this WMA offers excellent habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds (especially when the water level is low), and other species that associate with water and marshes. Most regular ducks come through, and all five regular geese can be found frequently. I've even had American Black Duck. And I've found some great shorebirds there—American Avocet, Hudsonian Godwit, and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, to name a few. Most regular marsh birds can be heard right off the highway on the east side. An American Bittern greeted me with its booming song most times I drove in throughout the spring and summer.

*Luke (left) out birding with John Hockema and Kim Emerson, by Jerry Pruett*



One spring morning, I decided to go for a drive in an effort to get my one-year-old daughter to take a nap. Not having much luck with the nap, I decided to head to Talcot. I drove along the east shore, as I often did, pulling over and scanning the lake regularly. One duck stood out among the others—a medium-sized reddish-brown duck. I was sure I had a Cinnamon Teal, but it was just too far away for me to rule out a hybrid. Unfortunately, I didn't have my scope or a camera with me, so I quickly drove home to retrieve them. After about two hours of searching, though, I could not relocate the bird, and to this day Cinnamon Teal remains my Minnesota nemesis bird. (I did find a CITE/BWTE hybrid this spring in Winona County).

Cottonwood County doesn't have many good woodlands. Beyond Pat's Grove and a few small parks, there isn't much. This makes the woods around Talcot Lake an excellent migrant trap in the spring and fall, almost a little oasis, especially on the north side of the WMA off CR15. There is a parking area located next to some mixed coniferous trees, with deciduous trees, brush, prairie and marsh all within a couple hundred yards.

I learned how good this could be during my first spring in the area—on May 16, 2018. I hadn't been sleeping well, so I got up early and made a trip to the WMA. Within three hours I had tallied nearly 100 birds, including a new-to-me Minnesota bird. I was tracking a small flock of mixed warblers and vireos, when a flash of red streaked across in my peripheral vision. Cardinals are uncommon in the area, so I paused to lock it down. After a couple of minutes, I relocated the bird in a pine. It was a stunning male Summer Tanager! The image of the brilliant red and the massive tanager bill is still clear in my mind. The last one I had seen was also in an oasis, though in a much different setting—the Arizona desert. I believe this was a second Cottonwood County record for Scarlet Tanager at the time.

Because of my success at this location, I knew this would be the ideal place to be for the dawn chorus when John Hockema reached out to me in 2019 in hopes of doing a Cottonwood County Big Day on May 18, 2019. It didn't disappoint! We were rewarded with over 15 species of warblers—a challenge in a single location in Cottonwood—including Mourning and Connecticut—the only record for the latter outside of historical records predating 1990. We saw most of the flycatchers and vireos, and a wonderful variety of other species, which helped launch us to a new county record of 153 species for the day, beating the previous Big Day record by 18 species.

This magical patch has all sorts of nooks and crannies that would take days to explore completely. A canoe would take you to hidden branches of the Des Moines River and Talcot Lake, finding who knows what marsh birds. A winter trip carefully searching the cedars and spruces that are all over the WMA might turn up an owl or two. And a thorough walk of the grasslands during the summer would

certainly turn up Grasshopper Sparrows, and maybe even a Henslow's. The possibilities are endless!

I would be remiss to leave out two other birds that have been observed at Talcot WMA, although the first I did not see myself. Kimberly Emerson, the top lister in the county, discovered a Sabine's Gull in Murray County. Then, she and John Hockema discovered it again that night roosting on Talcot Lake; that was a first Cottonwood County record for the bird. The other bird is Short-eared Owl. This location might be one of the best Short-eared Owl spots in the state. I have observed them there in the fall and spring, and even overwintering. One January 1<sup>st</sup>, I observed one avoiding a pair of Rough-legged Hawks for over an hour. It was an incredible experience to watch as it floated above the hawks with its unique flight pattern.

Lake Talcot WMA is certainly worth the trip whenever you can get out there!

*Luke Hollander is a birder, outdoorsman, and Lutheran Pastor in Rochester, MN.*

## MOU Book Sale

If you have bird books that you no longer use, please consider donating them to the MOU for the annual MOU Book Sale. The sale will be held at the Paper Session on December 7. All proceeds from the Book Sale go toward the MOU's Savaloja Grants Program, which provides funding to bird research, conservation, and education in Minnesota. To donate, you may either bring your books directly to the Paper Session or email Alex Sundvall ([asgreenplanet4077@gmail.com](mailto:asgreenplanet4077@gmail.com)) to schedule a pickup prior to the event.

**NB: Due to quantity, we are only accepting books about birds. We cannot accept journals or magazines.**



# \$5000 Savaloja Fund Challenge

Anonymous donors have generously pledged to match up to \$5,000 donated to the Savaloja Fund between now and the Paper Session on December 4. This means that we have the opportunity to add \$10,000 in donations to the Savaloja Fund this fall!

Named in honor of longtime Minnesota birder and Roberts Award recipient Terry Savaloja, who passed away in 1992, our Savaloja Grants provide financial support for research, educational opportunities, and other projects in Minnesota benefitting birds and those who enjoy them. Just this year, eight projects received funding for a total of \$13,475 in Savaloja Grants.

Although many projects receive funding each year, we're not able to fund them all, and our resources to do so are finite. Help us continue to provide these important grants by donating today at <https://givemn.org/story/Savaloja>.

If you'd rather donate by sending a check, please make it out to Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, include "Savaloja" in the memo line, and mail it to:

Minnesota Ornithologists' Union  
Carpenter Nature Center  
12805 Saint Croix Trail South  
Hastings, MN 55033

Whether you've been donating to the fund for many years or are a first-time donor, any donation, small or large, is most appreciated. We're currently more than halfway to our goal, so let's keep the momentum going! Be sure to check on the progress of this fundraising challenge by clicking the above link, and stay tuned for updates on MOU-net, as well as our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Thanks for your continued support.

## Savaloja Grant Applications and Donations Sought

*by Steve Wilson, Chair, MOU Savaloja Committee*

The MOU will award grants for bird-related projects to be funded from the Savaloja Memorial Fund in 2021. Grants can be awarded for projects that increase our understanding of birds, promote preservation of birds and their natural habitats, or increase public interest in birds. Proposals that include those currently underrepresented in Minnesota's birding community are welcome as a means of broadening public support for birds and their habitat.

Awards typically range from a few hundred dollars up to as much as \$4000. In 2021, eight grants, totaling \$13,475, were awarded for education, public appreciation, research and community outreach. For further details on these, as well as descriptions of past projects and application information, see <https://moumn.org/grants.php>. We anticipate that at least \$12,000 will be available for grants in 2022. The deadline for receipt of grant applications is **January 20, 2022**. Grant recipients will be notified by April 1, 2022. If your organization has an idea for a great project, please consider applying.

Thanks to you, the MOU was able to support a diverse array of worthy projects last year. Unfortunately, each year we are unable to support all the great projects seek-

ing grants, because there isn't enough money to go around. You can help MOU make sure fewer worthy projects go unfunded next year by upgrading your membership when you next renew, or just **donate now and have your contribution matched** through December 4. Go to <https://www.givemn.org/story/Savaloja> and donate whatever you can. Minnesota's birds will appreciate it!

*Nelson's Sparrow, by Kimberly A Emerson*



# Savaloja Grant Report:

## Using High-resolution Telemetry to Describe the Winter Ecology of Northern Hawk Owls (*Surnia ulula*)

by Hannah Toutonghi, University of Minnesota, Duluth



*Hannah with Northern Hawk Owl*



*Examining the wing of a Northern Hawk Owl*

Every winter, Northern Hawk Owls (*Surnia ulula*) descend into the southern edge of the boreal forest in northern Minnesota. During some winters, only a handful are documented while other years there can be hundreds. Hawk owls are an irruptive species, which means there are large annual fluctuations in the number of individuals that move farther south, usually in search of prey and suitable habitat. These irruptions are well-documented in Minnesota; the last major event occurred in the winter of 2004-2005. It is thought that hawk owl populations vary on a four-year cycle that mirrors red-backed vole populations. However, it has been well over four years since the last irruption happened in Minnesota, which brings up questions of how hawk owls might be affected by changing winter conditions and climate change.

Many knowledge gaps exist for this species, especially during the winter months, when virtually nothing is known about their range, movements, and activities. My master's research at the University of Minnesota Duluth, in collaboration with the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog and Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, aims to answer many of the unknown questions regarding the winter range, movement, habitat preference, and prey diversity of hawk owls in Minnesota.

The objective of this project is to use telemetry methods to track individual hawk owls to determine their winter range, movements, micro-habitat selection, and prey di-

versity in northern Minnesota. Supplementary to telemetry data, we will create a species distribution model with historical banding and eBird records to predict where hawk owls are likely to be found based on habitat, weather, and other factors.

Like many boreal forest species, the year-round range of hawk owls is predicted to shrink dramatically as northern forests recede in response to a warming climate and deforestation. It is important to think about how this species will be affected as their range moves farther north, and if suitable habitat will be available in locations where tundra-like habitat is currently present.

In the winter of 2020-2021 very few hawk owls were observed in northern Minnesota. However, we were able to sample two Northern Hawk Owls for dietary analysis and we expect this coming winter will greatly increase our sample size. Thanks to the funding support of MOU's Savaloja Grants program, we were able to purchase a cellular transmitter to contribute to the project. Also, thanks to all the generous supporters, donors, and MOU members for participating in my fundraiser and other funding efforts to purchase the remaining transmitters needed for the project! We were able to raise over \$8,500 and in conjunction with funding from the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog, we have purchased 10 transmitters slated for deployment this winter.

On behalf of myself and the researchers at UMD, Friends of Sax-Zim Bog, and Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, we are very excited to share this groundbreaking, novel research on Northern Hawk Owls in Minnesota. We hope to share much more information next year after the winter field season. Stay tuned!

# MOU Calendar

## November / December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>NOVEMBER 1</b>	2 "Navigating Uncertainty in Conservation Science: Galapagos Story" Aud. Ch. of Mpls	3	4	5	6 CNC MN Campus Bird Hike North Shore Duck Trip. Duluth Audubon ZVAS Monthly Bird Walk Chisago Co. Sea Duck Search, MOU Field Trips Morning Bird Walk, Mississippi Gateway Pk. 3RPD
7 Superior Entry Gull Watch, Duluth Audubon	8	9	10	11 Victoria Hall from the Raptor Center. St. Paul Audubon	12	13 CNC WI Campus Bird Hike Field Trip to Brownsville. St. Paul Audubon
14 Superior Entry Gull Watch. Duluth Audubon	15	16	17	18 "Attu," MRVAC	19	20 ZVAS Tundra Swan Field Trip Bird Banding, Eastman NC. 3RPD Beginning Bird Walk, Old Cedar Ave, MRVAC
21 Raptors Up Close, Lowry NC. 3RPD Superior Entry Gull Watch. Duluth Audubon Bird Walk, Bass Ponds, MRVAC	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Superior Entry Gull Watch. Duluth Audubon	29 Bird Walk, Wilkie Unit, MRVAC	30	<b>DECEMBER 1</b>	2	3 CNC WI Campus Owl Prowl	4 MOU Paper Session CNC MN Campus Bird Hike ZVAS Monthly Bird Walk
5 Bird Walk, Wilkie Unit, MRVAC	6	7	8	9 Grolla, Ojibwe Bird Stories. St. Paul Audubon	10	11 CNC WI Campus Bird Hike Winter Raptor Field Trip. FOSZB Bird Walk, Bass Ponds, MRVAC
12 Beginning Bird Walk, Old Cedar Ave, MRVAC	13	14	15	16	17	18 ZVAS Christmas Bird Count
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



# MOU Calendar

## September / October 2021

**Note:** Readers are advised to check the web sites of the respective organizations before going.

*American Kestrel  
by Thomas Burns*



### AUDUBON CHAPTER OF MINNEAPOLIS

#### Nov. 2: Navigating Uncertainty in Conservation Science: A Galapagos Story

7 – 8:30 pm. Virtual, via Zoom. Join Dr Irene Bueno for an evening exploring how scientists are taking on one of the most concerning threats to Galápagos bird populations, including some critically endangered species- the invasive parasitic fly *Philornis downsi*. Register via link on Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis website.

### CARPENTER NATURE CENTER

#### Minnesota Campus:

12806 St. Croix Trail S., Hastings MN

#### Wisconsin Campus:

300 East Cove Road, Hudson, WI

#### Nov. 6: Minnesota Campus Bird Hike

9–11:00 am. Join an expert birder on a morning hike. Learn to identify birds by sight and sound. Field guides and binoculars are available to use or bring your own. Program fee: \$5.00 or free for “Friends of CNC,” Hastings Environmental Protectors, Hastings High School students, and St. Croix Valley Bird Club members. Pre-registration is required. Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

#### Nov. 13: Wisconsin Campus Bird Hike

9–11:00 am. Hike various trails on our Wisconsin campus and learn to identify birds with local experts from the St. Croix Valley Bird Club. Facemasks requested during check-in and when participants are closer than 6 feet. Meet at 300 East Cove Road, Hudson, WI. Program fee: \$5 per participant or free for SCVBC members and ‘Friends of CNC. Pre-registration is required. Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

#### Dec. 3: Wisconsin Camus Owl Prowl

6–8:00 pm. This time of the year, many of the Midwest’s 12 owl species are vocalizing to attract mates. Explore CNC’s Wisconsin Campus on a guided night hike to look and listen for these owls. Program Fee: \$6.00 per person or \$4.00 for “Friends of CNC.” Pre-registration is required. Call 651-437-4359 to reserve your spot.

#### Dec. 4: Minnesota Campus Bird Hike

9–11:00 am. See Nov. 6 description above.

#### Dec. 11: Wisconsin Campus Bird Hike

9–11:00 am. See Nov. 13 description above.

### DULUTH AUDUBON

#### Nov. 6: North Shore Duck Trip

A full day, starting in Duluth and ending in Hovland, with the intent of searching for sea ducks, scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Harlequin Duck, and other winter rarities along the north shore of Lake Superior. Registration information can be found at [duluthaudubon.org/events](http://duluthaudubon.org/events) or by contacting Duluth Audubon Vice President and Field Trip Coordinator Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus at [xanthomn@gmail.com](mailto:xanthomn@gmail.com).

#### Nov. 7: Superior Entry Gull Watch

A great opportunity to dig into gull ID! The month of November sees a lot of turnover with gulls in the Duluth area. Possible species: Iceland (Thayer’s and Kumlein’s), Glaucous, Herring, with chances at Great Black-backed, Lesser Black-backed, or rarities like California Gull. Information and registration for this ID-focused trip can be found at [duluthadudubon.org/events](http://duluthadudubon.org/events) or by contacting Duluth Audubon Vice President and Field Trip Coordinator Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus at [xanthomn@gmail.com](mailto:xanthomn@gmail.com).

#### Nov. 14: Superior Entry Gull Watch

See Nov. 7 description above.

#### Nov. 21: Superior Entry Gull Watch

See Nov. 7 description above.

#### Nov. 28: Superior Entry Gull Watch

See Nov. 7 description above.

## FRIENDS of SAX-ZIM BOG

### Dec. 11: Winter Raptor Field Trip

This field trip is focused on raptors in the Sax-Zim Bog, an important part of the migration path of Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy Owls, and honorary raptor: Northern Shrikes! Further information and registration for this field trip can be found at [saxzim.org/events](http://saxzim.org/events) or by contacting Head Naturalist Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus at [naturalist@saxzim.org](mailto:naturalist@saxzim.org).

## MOU FIELD TRIPS

### Nov. 6: Chisago County Sea Duck Search

9 am–1:30 pm. Join Erik Collins on a search for some of Minnesota's rarest duck species. Referred as "sea ducks," these species commonly inhabit coastal areas but sometimes are found inland. Target species include Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, and Harlequin Duck. Chisago County has a lot of potential for these amazing birds! Equipment needed: binoculars and spotting scope. Don't miss out! To register, contact Garrett Wee at [garrettwee@hotmail.com](mailto:garrettwee@hotmail.com) or text/call 507-829-8187.

## MN RIVER VALLEY AUDUBON CHAPTER

### Nov. 18. Alex Sundvall, "Attu"

7:30 pm. Join us for a virtual visit to this far remote corner of Alaska. Attu Island in the western Aleutian Islands has been a bird watching Mecca that has been inaccessible for years. Closer to Siberia than Alaska, it has a reputation for Eurasian birds that never find their way to the mainland. All MRVAC programs are free and open to the public. A link for the program will be sent to our email list and posted to MOU-NET. To sign up to receive the announcements and links for the programs go to [mrvac.org](http://mrvac.org) and sign up to receive our newsletter.

## Bird Watching Treks at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Explore some of the best Refuge units for bird watching in the Winter Season. We will spend time on these walks searching for birds that overwinter on the refuge or are late migrants. We will study the different species of birds and learn about some other local locations to search for birds during the winter season. Birders of all skill levels are welcome to attend these walks. Bring your binoculars and favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Bird Watching Treks run from 8:00-10:30 a.m. and are led by Craig Mandel

**Bass Ponds Trailhead, 2501 86th St. E., Bloomington**

**Sunday, Nov. 21**

**Saturday, Dec. 11**

**Wilkie Unit, 7701 County Road 101 E, Shakopee**

**Monday, Nov. 29 and Sunday, Dec. 5**

## Beginning Bird Walks at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Join us on a beginning bird walk at the Old Cedar Avenue bridge. You'll have an opportunity to learn about using and choosing optics and field guides for bird watching and about some of the better locations to search for birds at the refuge and other locations around the Twin Cities. Afterward we will take a walk and search for some of the birds that migrate to the refuge during the winter season. Birders of all ages are welcome on this walk. Bring your binoculars and favorite field guide and dress appropriately for the weather. Beginning Bird Walks run from 9:00–10:30 a.m. and are led by Craig Mandel.

**Old Cedar Ave Trailhead, 9551 Old Cedar Ave S, Bloomington**

**Saturday, Nov. 20 and Sunday, Dec. 12**

## MINNESOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS UNION

**Dec. 4: MOU Paper Session, University of Minnesota**

8:30 am–4:00 pm. North Star Ballroom, UMN St. Paul Student Center. See program on p. 13.

## ST. PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

**Nov. 11: Speaker series:**

**Dr. Victoria Hall from the Raptor Center**

7–8:30 pm. Zoom meeting online. Dr. Victoria Hall, new director of the U of M's Raptor Center, will introduce herself and give an update on plans for the Center.



*Hooded Merganser, by Heidi Hermes*



*Least Flycatcher, by David C. Keyes*

### **Nov. 13: Field Trip: Swans and Other Waterfowl, Brownsville**

Swans galore are the norm just south of Brownsville, MN. Fall migration offers birders an opportunity to decide: Trumpeter or Tundra? Swans and dabbling ducks can be seen from one overlook; less than one mile away is a deep water overlook with diving waterfowl. From 2-3 p.m. and again from 4-5 p.m. on November 13, Chase and Ed Davies will be at the Brownsville Overlook to talk about what swans and dabbling ducks are in sight, the life histories of the swans, and management challenges of the constantly changing river. From 3-4 p.m., Chase and Ed will be at the Hwy 26 overlook, a mile south of the Overlook.

### **Nov. 13: Speaker series: Charles Grolla, member of the Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe**

7-8:30 pm. Zoom meeting online. Charles Grolla, a member of the Bois Forte band of Ojibwe, will give a presentation based on his book *Ojibwe Bird Stories*.

## **THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT**

### **Nov. 6: Morning Bird Walk**

#### **Mississippi Gateway Regional Park**

8:30-10:30 am. Summer birds and fall leaves are gone, making this a great time to learn about winter birds. Walk trails and observe a feeding station to get a closer look at these beautiful winter residents. Binoculars and field guides provided. Ages 16+. Fee \$5.00. Reservations required by two days prior. Contact 763-559-6700.

### **Nov. 20: Bird Banding — Eastman Nature Center**

9 am – 12:00 pm. See wild songbirds safely trapped, studied and tagged with numbered rings. Bring a camera. Drop in anytime. Participants ages 13 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult from the same household.

**Nov. 21: Raptors Up Close — Lowry Nature Center**  
3-4:30 pm. Meet the current captive raptors, learn about these amazing birds of prey and how they help teach. This program is entirely outdoors. Drop in anytime. Participants ages 13 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult from the same household. Meet at the Lowry Nature Center backyard. All ages. Free. Contact: Lowry Nature Center at 763-694-7650.

## **ZUMBRO VALLEY AUDUBON**

### **Nov. 6: Monthly Bird Walk**

9-10:30 am. Join leaders Terry and Joyce Grier on a casual walk thru Quarry Hill Park. Meet by the Nature center entrance. Bring binoculars if you have them. Dress for the weather. Stay for any length of time. Free and open to the public; no registration required.

### **Nov. 20: Tundra Swan Field Trip**

8:00 am-mid-afternoon. Meet leaders Joyce and Terry Grier in the east parking lot of the Heintz Center (1936 Collegeview Road East, Rochester) to carpool. We'll travel through La Crescent and down the Mississippi to Brownsville to see thousands of Tundra Swans and other waterfowl. Trip will return early afternoon. Dress for the weather. Bring your own lunch or eat at a Subway sandwich shop before returning to Rochester. Open to anyone. Trip will be cancelled if the roads are icy. <https://zumbrovalleyaudubon.org>

### **Dec. 4: Monthly Bird Walk**

See Nov. 6 description above.

### **Dec. 18: Annual Christmas Bird Count**

7:15 am-5:30 pm. Meet at the west Silver Lake parking lot (near the former fire station). Teams of interested bird-watchers search designated sections of the Rochester area to see what birds can be found. Take a break from noon-1:00 p.m. at Quarry Hill Nature Center for a quick lunch and tally. More counting is done in the afternoon with a final tally held at 4:45 at Quarry Hill. You are invited to participate with one of our teams for part, or all of the day's count. Be prepared for the weather, bring your own binoculars, lunch and beverages. **To participate you must register in advance** and be assigned a section. Contact Clifford Hansen at 507-281-0249 or [clhroch@yahoo.com](mailto:clhroch@yahoo.com) to register.

*NOTE: This information could change depending on the COVID situation at the time.*

# MOU Paper Session 2021 Program



North Star Ballroom, University of Minnesota St. Paul Student Center

## **Dark Morph Red-tailed Hawks in Minnesota: Phylogenetic & Geographic Origins**

Alexandra Pesano, Graduate Student, University of Minnesota–Duluth

## **Improving Our Knowledge of Natal Origins and Dispersal Patterns for Raptors Banded at Hawk Ridge**

Emily Pavlovic, Graduate Student, University of Minnesota–Duluth

## **Avian Responses to Rush Hour Traffic in Park Reserves Northwest of the Twin Cities**

Erika Swanson, Undergraduate Student, Bethel University

## **Using Technology to Understand the Post-breeding Ecology of American Woodcock**

Josh Bednar, Senior Research Staff Scientist, Avian Ecologist, NRRI, University of Minnesota–Duluth

## **Global Diversification of the Wrens, Gnatcatchers, and Allies (superfamily *Certhioidea*)**

Keith Barker, PhD, Associate Professor, Ecology, Evolution & Behavior, Curator of Genetic Resources, Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota

Tyler Imfeld, PhD, Assistant Professor, Biology, Regis University, Denver

## **The Dramatic Evolution of Birds in Madagascar**

Sushma Reddy, PhD, Associate Professor, Curator of Birds, Bell Museum of Natural History, U. of Minnesota

## **The Raptor Center: Where We Are Today and Plans for Tomorrow**

Victoria Hall, Executive Director, The Raptor Center, University of Minnesota

## **Survey and Monitoring of Insects in Minnesota**

Jessica Peterson, PhD, Invertebrate Ecologist, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

## **Bell Museum Seeing Birds Exhibition**

Kevin Curran, Associate Development Officer, Bell Museum of Natural History

## **Migration Partners Program: Connecting Community of Birders from Honduras to Minnesota**

Wilmer Fernandez, Board Member, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis

## **Flying Under the Radar: Barn Owls in Minnesota**

Karla Bloem, Executive Director, International Owl Center, Houston, Minnesota

*\*Northern Harrier  
by Richard Gotz*

# Fifth Annual Carpenter Nature Center and MOU Hawk Watch

by *Ben Douglas*

On September 26, Carpenter Nature Center hosted its Fifth Annual CNC and MOU Hawk Watch on its Minnesota campus on the St. Croix River. Counters for this program included MOU members Bob Dunlap, Peter Nichols, and Benjamin Douglas. Logistics and public greeting were provided by Carpenter Executive Director and MOU board member Jennifer Vieth, and Carpenter staff member Abbey Holden brought out the resident Barred Owl during the program to meet guests.

This program has been a welcome bright spot in the waning days of fall migration in Washington County, often providing an echo or hint of the bonanza that occurs at Hawk Ridge in Duluth. The Carpenter property provides a peaceful and beautiful space for all to relax in the grass and shade while watching migration along the St. Croix River. Counters began arriving at 7 a.m., in advance of the official program, which ran from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. As the sun crested the Wisconsin horizon, three White-Crowned Sparrows pecked around the count area. Although it would be several hours before any raptors began moving through, many passerines were actively on the move.

Year after year this event records hundreds of Blue Jays moving south along the river, just barely cresting the tree tops as they migrate. This year we counted 876 of them on the day, as groups up to 50 in size steadily worked against the light southern breeze.

As the day progressed, small flocks of American Goldfinch, Cedar Waxing, and American Robin all moved south through the area. Individual birds like Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Yellow-Rumped Warbler, Eastern Phoebe, Horned Lark, and even a Purple Finch all made appearances on their journey south and filled out the 57 total species identified during the effort.

The morning eventually passed and with it some of the thick cloud cover, bringing just enough afternoon sun and heat to encourage raptors to try picking up some thermals along the river bluffs. Turkey Vultures finally took wing; we soon spotted 28 of them in just a few hours tipping back and forth while soaring overhead. Our raptor count included a steady flow of Sharp-shinned Hawks (13), Bald Eagles (13), Broad-winged Hawks (3), Red-tailed Hawks (21), and a single Merlin.

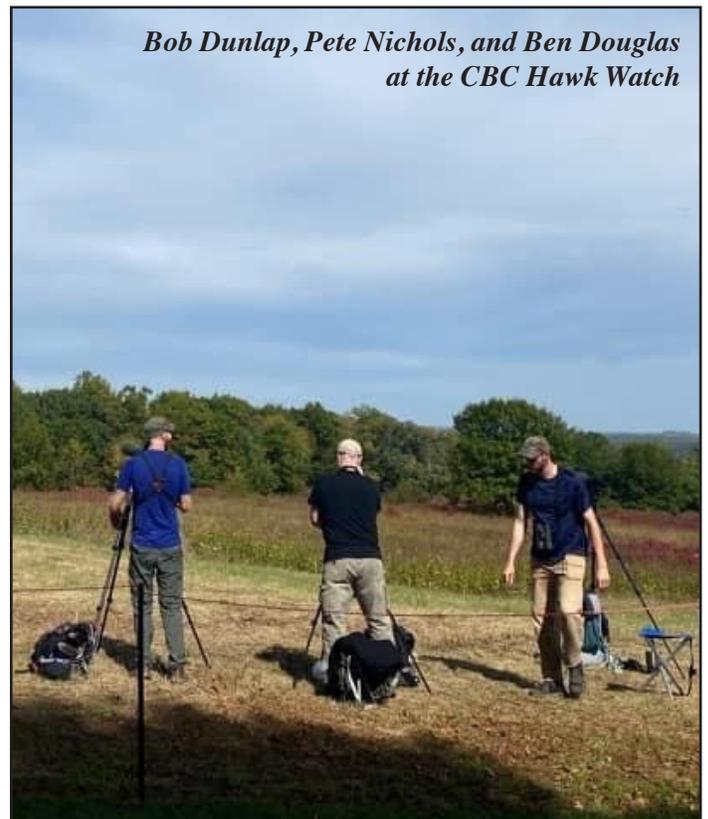
A highlight bird for the day though was a juvenile Red-headed Woodpecker, which perched on a snag along the river allowing everyone a solid look. These are always a treat

for Washington County, which doesn't typically feature any breeding birds of this species.

What perhaps ended up being the greatest value for this year's program was the opportunity to spend time birding with Carpenter and MOU guests. We shared stories of days gone by, answered questions from those eager to understand migration in Minnesota, and reveled in the beauty of birds. This program provides an excellent opportunity each year to learn more about the natural world while connecting with friends and other birders. The intimate atmosphere and beautiful landscape at Carpenter Nature Center create a unique experience for all to enjoy.

Thanks again to the guests who attended, our count team, and the support staff at Carpenter for making this year another excellent chapter in our book of hawk watching and migration counts along the St. Croix River.

*Ben Douglas is a member of the MOU Social Media Committee, the MOU Awards Committee, a volunteer guide, and a speaker on birding.*



*Bob Dunlap, Pete Nichols, and Ben Douglas  
at the CBC Hawk Watch*

# Birder Bio: Brad Abendroth



*Tell us about yourself.*

I moved to Columbia Heights, Minnesota from Ames, Iowa in 1992 to attend a technical school. I am presently employed as a Technical Support Engineer for a motor and drive company. I have been living in Savage for the last 22 years with my wife for the same number of years. I also recently turned 50 years old in April.

*When did you start birding and what first sparked your interest?*

I became interested in birding after the purchase of our home in Savage. Like some others, I was strictly a backyard birder for many years. It started of course by putting up my first bird feeder and watching what I could attract. What really got the interest going was my trigger bird, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. I had no idea what it was, so I had to go page by page in my Sibley guide until I finally found what I was looking for. So, for many years, I spent a lot of free time looking out windows for any new visitors and hoping to snap a picture to add to my backyard album.

*How did your interest expand after that first experience?*

After a bit of time of strictly backyard birding, I started looking outside of that radius. I probably went first to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and obviously saw many birds that I could not see at home.

*What is the main attraction of birding for you?*

Nowadays, since I keep county lists, of course my goals are to scavenger hunt as many species as I can for all 87 counties. I completed all counties over the 100 plateau earlier this spring. My ultimate goal is 150 for all 87 (for now anyway). Many know me as the Scott County guy. I currently have 277 species and am always looking for more. I have also fallen down the slippery slope of daylisting, since

all those are options for things to do on the MOU web site. And, of course, it's always fun to find a county first record, or a find a casual or accidental species.

*How did you originally become acquainted with the MOU?*

I think my first experience meeting other birders was at an American Woodcock event at Lebanon Hills in Eagan. That was where I met George Lahr. We discovered that we both lived in the same neighborhood, so we often went birding together. He showed me the features of the MOU website, introduced me to many other people in the birding community, and also got me into county listing, since all of that is kept on the MOU web site.

*Favorite places to bird inside or outside Minnesota?*

I rarely travel out of state, so I would not have a favorite outside of Minnesota. As far as inside Minnesota goes, I would be remiss not to mention Murphy-Hanrahan. Being within five miles of my house, it's an easy trip to potentially see a lot of great birds. I also like to bird Cleary Lake Park, as well as the underbirded Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area near Jordan.

*Favorite birding style?*

I like a little bit of everything, so I cannot just pick one. I sometimes like birding with a large group since many eyes have a better chance of seeing a bird that may go undetected otherwise. I also like birding with a small group of friends, as well as birding alone. I guess I like all types of birding.

*What's your favorite bird or bird family?*

It is tough to pick just one. I have always been a fan of Blue Jays. They seem to have so much personality. I also love catbirds. When you hear one mewling close by, it seems like they are saying "Hi" to you. I also cannot forget the two cuckoo species we have in Minnesota. I don't have any tattoos, but if I did, I think I might choose the cuckoo.



*Any advice on being a better birder?*

It's easy to fall into the same routines, such as going to the same places to bird. I can be guilty of that as well. Don't be afraid to try new sites. You never know what you may find. That new site may soon be one of your favorite places to bird.

If you ever look at bird sightings lists from events such as big sits or a hawk watch, you will soon notice that one spot can result in many species. A particular bird or birds may not be at a stopping point while you are walking a trail, but they may soon be noticed if you wait for a bit.

*Ever had an unusual experience while birding?*

Besides totaling my vehicle? I don't think this can be considered unusual, but the thing that keeps coming back to me is the time I was slow-rolling my vehicle in Eyota in Olmsted County looking and listening for Eurasian Collared-Doves to add to my county list. I ended up spotting a Northern Mockingbird hopping in someone's front yard. Murphy's law then took over, since my camera was in the trunk. The mockingbird eventually flew into the homeowner's backyard. I was hoping it would return so I could snap a photo of it, since I knew it would come up as rare on eBird. So, with the camera now ready, I waited. I was there for at most ten minutes when I noticed a kid pounding his hands on the glass slider of the neighbor next door. The assumed mom then came over, and I was seeing camera flash bulbs going off taking pictures of my car. Yep, it was time to leave.

## New MOU Members

NB: Please remember to notify the MOU Membership Secretary ([membership@moumn.org](mailto:membership@moumn.org)) when you change your address or email. If you are renewing for more than one year, please indicate that on your check.

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Hannah Toutonghi, *Duluth, MN*  
John Wheatley, *Stillwater, MN*

*What new bird would you most like to see?*

Being a state lister, a county lister (Scott County specifically), and a backyard birding lister, I will give three answers. For the state, I'd have to pick my current nemesis bird, which is the California Gull. I have a current streak of five dips chasing this species. For Scott County, where a California Gull actually showed up two years ago, I'd have to go with a Western Tanager. For my backyard, I'd have to go with a Varied Thrush.

# The CBC Needs Your Help!

*by Cindy Thury Smith and Steve Weston*

The last 19 months of the Covid pandemic have taught us all many things, not the least of which is how valuable volunteer efforts are to our society. Whether it be working at election stations, or volunteering at our schools, libraries, and social organizations, we have all seen how citizen input benefits our whole society.

The 122<sup>nd</sup> Audubon Christmas Bird Count begins on Dec. 14, 2021 and runs through Jan. 5, 2022. Last year, participation in the Christmas Bird Count was down due to the pandemic. If you can spare a day, or a half-day, contributing to this citizen science effort, in which approximately 60,000 people across the U.S. report in their sightings, it will make an impact. If you cannot physically go out, you can participate by doing a feeder watch.

There are 80+ counts around the state. Dates are just beginning to come in. Local Christmas Bird Counts are expected to happen on schedule, but operations may be modified due to Covid-19 as mandated by future Audubon guidelines.

Last year birding by car occurred only within family/household groups or existing familiar social pods, with no new counters assigned to groups. Existing teams were expected to bird in separate cars. With vaccines widely used by birders, it is expected that most restrictions will be relaxed. For more details, check the website <https://moumn.org/CBC/index.php>. Contact Steve Weston with any questions.

To find more information on how you can help, go to [www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count](http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count). Whether you live in the Twin Cities or in outstate Minnesota (where many count circles are short of volunteers), there is a count that needs you.



# Minnesota Ornithologists' Union

Carpenter Nature Center  
12805 Saint Croix Trail South  
Hastings, MN 55033

## Minnesota Ornithologists' Union

Carpenter Nature Center  
12805 Saint Croix Trail South  
Hastings, MN 55033  
Email: [mou@moumn.org](mailto:mou@moumn.org)  
Web: <http://moumn.org>

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**Editor:** Gerald Hoekstra

**Designer:** Thomas Benjamin Hertzell

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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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|---|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (under 18)           | \$15.00      |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Life, joint                | \$750.00     |

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### Please make a contribution to the Savaloja Grants

The Savaloja Grants supports research and other projects selected by the MOU for special attention. Your contributions help fund a better future for birds in Minnesota. You can add a contribution to your membership check.

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_