



Wachiska
Audubon Society

Wachiska Audubon Society's vision: To share the experience and love of nature—that life may sustainably flourish in all its natural diversity

The Babbling Brook

Our 50th Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2023

NOVEMBER 2023

Volume 32 - Issue 11

Wachiska Program and Annual Meeting — Thursday, November 9, 7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, and also via YouTube link: <https://youtube.com/live/Hquh1wQxo-4?feature=share>

Drought and Groundwater: The Basic Hydrology and Current Research

by Jonathan Cronk

This presentation will strive to explain and understand the relationship of drought to contaminants in well (drinking) water.

About 85 percent of Nebraskans use groundwater from a well as drinking water. Some wells in our state show higher nitrate levels during drought. Nitrate converts to nitrite in the body and reduces the ability of blood to carry oxygen. A person with high levels of nitrate may appear blue or gray, have an accelerated heartbeat, feel weak, tired, and dizzy. High levels of nitrate have been linked to thyroid disease and cancer. For babies, high levels of nitrate can cause birth defects and blue-baby syndrome, leading to death.



Jonathan Cronk, a hydrology master's student, is developing models of these wells to share with well owners and find solutions. In this presentation, he will cover the many ways that groundwater is important to Nebraska. To better understand this valuable resource, there will be a brief explanation of the science behind the movement of groundwater and the complications involved. With this understanding, he will discuss the relationship and trends of groundwater quantity and quality. Finally, Jonathan will present his research into *how drought may affect drinking water*, which will include a description of the area being studied, an explanation of the model being used to answer this question, his findings, and what conclusions we can make.

Jonathan earned a bachelor's degree from UNL's Biological Systems Engineering Department where he now studies to complete his master's degree in water resources management. He was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, and has a love for Kansas City BBQ. In his short career, Jonathan has been a trainee for Region 7 EPA and now works as a part of the National Science Foundation National Research Traineeship (NRT) Program.

Join Wachiska on **Thursday, November 9, at 7:00 p.m.** at Lincoln's Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, for this program preceded by the annual meeting of election of Board members. This free, public, in-person talk will also be live-streamed on YouTube at <https://youtube.com/live/Hquh1wQxo-4?feature=share>. Copy this link into your browser before the program begins. No registration is needed. The program can also be viewed at a later time. Check Wachiska's website for links to past programs.

Calendar

November

- 2-5 National Audubon Leadership Conference, Estes Park, CO
- 4 Advocacy Workshop, First-Plymouth Church, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. (page 2)
- 6 Education Committee via Zoom, 6:00 p.m.
- 9 Annual Meeting/General Meeting, "Drought and Groundwater," by Jonathan Cronk, 7:00 p.m., in-person meeting at the Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, and also live-streamed; no registration needed (see link above)
- 10 Nine-Mile Prairie film, Hardin Hall, East Campus, 7:00 p.m. (page 4)
- 13 Conservation Committee via Zoom, 6:30 p.m.
- 15 Newsletter submission deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 21 Board Meeting via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

Register SOON for Wachiska's 50th anniversary celebration lunch and speaker. See page 4 for celebration details and QR code to register.

Executive Director's Message

by Mark Brohman

It is hard to believe it is already November. October was filled with activities like Nature Night at Brainard Elementary School and seed collecting at Dieken and Vinduska prairies. We have one more Nature Night on November 8 at Holmes Elementary School and potentially another seed-collecting effort.



Members attending our monthly general meeting on October 12 were treated to some wonderful photos of wildlife in and around the Missouri River. Alex Wiles is a filmmaker, photographer, and storyteller who showed some photos and shared his difficulties in getting those images. Close-up photos of pallid sturgeon and paddlefish were among the images. You forget that the Missouri River is called the "Big Muddy" for a reason, and it makes photography difficult in the cloudy waters.

I'm happy to report that the new penitentiary will not be built directly across the street from Prairie Pines, and we are working with the mayor and staff to create a buffer with green space on a portion of this site. We also continue to look for ways to buffer Nine-Mile Prairie and hope landowners and interested organizations can find solutions to the rapid development that is occurring in northwest Lincoln around the prairie.

Tim Knott, Bruce Kennedy, and I recently attended a retirement celebration for Ron Klataske held just outside Manhattan, Kansas. Many of you may not have had the privilege of working with Ron, but he did so much for Wachiska, Audubon and all of Nebraska. He was a main player in stopping the Norden Dam and protecting the Niobrara River. Ron also worked tirelessly promoting the Central Flyway and the Platte River. He was an original organizer of the annual Crane Festival celebrating the sandhill and whooping cranes in Kearney. Another legacy of Ron's is the 5,000-acre Hutton Ranch along the Niobrara National Scenic River near Bassett, a working ranch and wildlife sanctuary owned by Audubon of Kansas.

Thanks to those who ordered birdseed or Audubon calendars. Proceeds from those events help us fund the many wonderful things Wachiska does. I also want to thank everyone who has helped us gather prairie seeds this year. Those seeds help us on some of our prairies as well as generate some revenue. Next year we will continue our efforts and hopefully you can join us at one or more of the seed-gathering events.

Our 50th anniversary luncheon and Doug Tallamy presentation will be here before you know it. Events will take place on December 3 at Innovation Campus (the old state fairgrounds). You can register at our website or our Facebook page for the

1:00 p.m. \$40 luncheon and/or the free 3:00 p.m. Tallamy presentation. We hope to see many of you there.

I'm getting conflicting reports on how severe this winter is going to be. The old Farmer's Almanac is predicting a frigid and snowy winter for much of the nation. For the Midwest, it predicts that snow is expected to arrive beginning in November, with storms, showers, and flurries continuing through the start of spring. The wild sunflowers seem to be very tall this year, and the old timers claim that that means the snow will be deep. The tall plants put the seed heads above the snow, allowing the birds to feast on them. I have seen several posts of the woolly bear caterpillars with their black and orange bands, and they seem to be indicating a bad start, mild middle and end of winter. AccuWeather predicts milder with less snow for the Midwest but warns El Nino could have an impact. The persimmon seeds are shaped like a spoon this year, indicating it will be a snowy winter. So, there you have it, take your pick. But as they say in Nebraska, if you don't like the weather, wait five minutes.

Advocacy: Action That Leads to Hope

submitted by Lorrie Benson,
First-Plymouth Climate Action Team

Taking action on issues you care about is an evidence-based way to increase feelings of hope. Learn how you can make a difference in our society at a free advocacy workshop. You'll learn the basics of advocacy, hear a brief overview of the hunger and environmental aspects of the Farm Bill, and practice active hope by writing a note to an elected official on whatever issues matter to you.

The workshop, titled "Advocacy: Action That Leads to Hope," will be held at 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 4, at First-Plymouth Church. Enter the building through the west doors and follow directions to Pilgrim Hall.

Speakers include former Nebraska State Senator Patty Pansing Brooks; Eric Gerrard, American Communications Group, Inc; Michaella Kumke, president and CEO, Food Bank of Lincoln; and John Hansen, president of Nebraska Farmers Union.

Coffee and a snack will be provided. No registration is required. This event is organized by the First-Plymouth Climate Action Team and Bread for the World Team and Nebraska Interfaith Power & Light. Co-sponsors are Green@Heart at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bethany Christian Church Green Chalice, Saint Paul United Methodist Church Climate Justice Team, Green Sanctuary Committee of the Unitarian Church of Lincoln, First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln Citizens Climate Lobby, and Wachiska Audubon Society.

"Nature is full of genius, full of divinity; so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand."

-- Henry David Thoreau

Wachiska Audubon's 2024 Board Nominees

Per the bylaws revisions approved by Wachiska's membership in November 2022, this year's election is focused on the secretary, treasurer, and five director-at-large positions. On November 9, Wachiska members and Friends will be asked to approve the nominating committee's 2024 slate of candidates. Article 6, Section 1 of the bylaws states "... Members in attendance may nominate additional candidates at that [annual] meeting if so desired. Any candidate must be an active Friend or National member and have agreed to be nominated."

April Stevenson – Secretary (2-year term)

April was elected to the Board for a 1-year term as secretary in 2022. In addition to preparing Board meeting minutes, she has been integral to planning efforts for Wachiska's 50th anniversary celebration and the "Tour the Wild Side" event, using her many talents to create necessary documents. April also helped update the Wachiska flyer now used for public events. She is a lifelong resident of Lincoln but only a recent birder. She retired last year and keeps busy with Lincoln Friends of Chamber Music, Coro di Flauti, and Lincoln Civic Orchestra. April has served on many boards, including the Lincoln Library Board, Open Harvest, University Place Art Center, and the Foundation for Lincoln City Libraries.

Treasurer (2-year term) Open

Ann Briggs – Director (2-year term)

Ann was elected to the Board as a director for a 1-year term in 2022. Her experience and knowledge helped with technology needs for the 50th anniversary celebration. As she's becoming more familiar with Wachiska, Ann's talents can be utilized to increase the reach of Wachiska's work. As a native Nebraskan, she has a deep appreciation of our unique prairie ecosystems. She holds a BS in fisheries and wildlife and an MS in human dimensions of natural resources, both from UNL. Ann is the public relations and engagement coordinator at the Nebraska Water Center, focusing on communicating research and projects through digital and traditional media and coordinating events and outreach opportunities.

Kris Powers – Director (2-year term)

Kris was elected to the Board as a director for a 1-year term in 2022. Her technical background brings depth to Board discussions as opportunities and challenges come to light. Kris graduated from Purdue University with a BSc in Biology and spent most of her career as a laboratory technologist. Now semi-retired, she works as the natural areas field coordinator for the nematology group in the Department of Plant Pathology at UNL. The field work allows her the opportunity to explore many protected grassland parcels in Nebraska and neighboring states. The effect of climate change on and the nuances of habitat management for wildlife of these prairie parcels are of particular interest. It has been quite a learning experience to see from inside the organization how professionalized Wachiska has become.

Stu Luttich – Director (2-year term)

In his years as a Board member, Stu's focus has been on the chapter's prairie project. He is a valued member of the conservation committee, tracking the committee's finances. In addition, Stu served as chapter president 2019 - 2020. Born and reared on a farm between Ohio and Strang, Nebraska, Stu graduated from Utah State University-Logan with a BSc degree in wildlife management. He earned an MSc in wildlife ecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Before his retirement, Stu was a wildlife research and management biologist-Labrador for the Newfoundland-Labrador government, studying the ecology and population dynamics of the Labrador/ Ungava and George River caribou populations.

Doug Campbell – Director (2-year term)

Doug was elected to the Board as a director for a 1-year term in 2022. During the past year, he has tracked federal actions of potential negative impact to lands that include Wachiska's 17-county area. Doug grew up in Omaha and graduated from Washington University in St. Louis. He served in Germany with the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Doug worked in Chicago with Centers for Disease Control before coming to Lincoln to become a bureau director with the State Department of Health. Doug is a volunteer and past board member of both Wachiska Audubon and Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. Before his retirement, he served on numerous boards in the Lincoln area. He believes Wachiska is comprised of talented and knowledgeable individuals and hopes more members get involved.

Tom Lynch – Director (1-year term)

Tom Lynch is a recently retired English professor from UNL. His areas of specialization included nature writing and regional literature. He served on Wachiska's Board 2007-2009, during which time he organized Wachiskafest, six literary reading events with guest speakers. Tom also organized a Wachiska-sponsored "Nature Notes" column in the monthly paper, *Prairie Fire*. Many of these columns were later published in the collection *Natural Treasures of the Great Plains: An Ecological Perspective*, which he co-edited with Paul Johnsgard and Jack Phillips. Recently, Tom has been closely involved with the Otoe-Missouria Day events in Lincoln, including the visits to the Wachiska prairies with an Otoe-Missouria delegation. He would like to continue to work on those efforts, linking the Otoe-Missouria people with their ancestral landscapes.

The 2024 nominating committee members are Carol Hinkle, Andrea Faas, and Theresa Pella. Executive Director Mark Brohman also participated in the group's discussions.

The annual meeting is held in conjunction with the November general meeting. Nominees will be introduced after which a voice vote will be taken before resuming with the regular monthly speaker. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."
-- Margaret Mead

Tickets Now Available Celebrating 50 Years of Birds, Prairies, and People *by Theresa Pella, President*

Registration for Wachiska's 50th anniversary celebration is now open through the website homepage at wachiskaaudubon.org. Luncheon tickets are \$40/person and include admission for Doug Tallamy's keynote talk. The lunch caterer is Premier, and the buffet includes chicken breast lasagna, spinach alfredo, rosemary potatoes, green beans, salads, rolls, and drink. Tickets to the talk-only are free, but because of limited seating, registration is necessary. If you prefer payment by check, contact Mark or Arlys in the Wachiska office. Early registration for one or both events is encouraged!

The University of Nebraska's Innovation Campus, 2021 Transformation Drive in Lincoln, is the site for the event. Landmarks are the intersection of Antelope Valley Drive and Salt Creek Roadway (just east of the Devaney Sports Center). Parking in the paved-surface parking lot A (north of the buildings) is free; however, meter parking on the streets is not free.

Local independent bookstore Francie & Finch (F&F) will be assisting Tallamy during the dessert reception with book sales and signings. F&F are also selling books now in-store and online at <https://francieandfinch.indielite.org/search/site/douglas%20tallamy>. Note that 10 percent of the proceeds from each Tallamy book sale will be donated to Wachiska Audubon. If ordering online, put "Wachiska Audubon" in the comments.

Framed photos by local, widely well-known, and respected photographers Joel Sartore and Michael Forsberg will be raffled off during the luncheon.

In addition to Francie & Finch, Sartore, and Forsberg, event sponsors include Wild Bird Habitat Store, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Lower Platte South NRD, Pepperl family, Marilyn McNabb, Scarlet Hotel, Stock Seed Farms, Midwest Natives Nursery, Aldersgate Gardens, the Unitarian Church's Green Sanctuary Committee, LES Pollinator Program, Craddock Productions, and Green at Heart - Westminster Presbyterian Church. Many thanks to all for their support and belief in Wachiska's mission!

Nine-Mile Prairie Film

Wachiska Board member Ethan Freese recently produced a 16-minute film on Nine-Mile Prairie. A free showing will be held on Friday, November 10, at 7:00 p.m. in the Hardin Hall auditorium, 33rd and Holdrege streets, on East Campus. A portion of the film, "Salt Valley Greenways: Nature's Network," produced by Carlee Moates, will also be shown. Free parking will be available on the north side of the building. Wachiska is co-sponsoring the event.



North American Grassland Birds in Peril

*by Tammy Webber, August 25, 2023,
as reported in UNL's IANR online newsletter
and summarized by Wachiska*

North America's grassland birds are deeply in trouble 50 years after adoption of the Endangered Species Act, with numbers plunging as habitat loss, land degradation, and climate change threaten what remains of a once-vast ecosystem.

Over half the grassland bird population has been lost since 1970—more than any other type of bird. Some species have declined 75 percent or more, and a quarter are in extreme peril.

The 38 percent (293,000 square miles) of historic North American grasslands that remain are threatened by intensive farming and urbanization. Trees once held at bay by periodic fires spread rapidly, consuming vital rangeland and grassland bird habitat. Biologists, conservation groups, government agencies, farmers, and ranchers are teaming up to reverse losses.

Scientists are sharing survey and monitoring data and using sophisticated computer modeling to determine the biggest threats. They're intensifying efforts to tag birds and install radio telemetry towers to track their whereabouts. They are working with farmers and ranchers to implement best practices that ensure survival of both their livelihoods and the native birds, both dependent on a healthy ecosystem.

"Birds are the canary in the coal mine," says Amanda Rodewald, senior director of the Center for Avian Population Studies at Cornell's ornithology lab. "They're an early warning of environmental changes that also can affect us."

Hoot 'n' Howl at Spring Creek Prairie

by Patty Spitzer

Hoot 'n' Howl was held October 7 during a beautiful fall evening at Spring Creek Prairie. It was a spooktacular event attended by just under 300 families, many of whom stopped by the Wachiska table to make "bat hats" and talk all things bats. Melinda Varley and I had fun putting bat hats together for the kids to decorate and then watching them run around the prairie with bat wings flapping! We were surrounded by native tallgrass prairie and many diverse groups in our community promoting nature education.



Ding Darling

by Richard Peterson

Jay Norwood Darling was born in 1876 in Norwood, Michigan. In 1886, he moved with his parents to Sioux City, Iowa, where he



developed his appreciation of nature and the importance of conservation. He began his studies at Yankton College in South Dakota, then moved to Beloit College in Wisconsin to major in pre-medicine. While at Beloit, he became art editor of the yearbook and signed his work D'ling. In 1900, Ding started as a reporter for the *Sioux City Journal*. His first political cartoon, which depicted Teddy Roosevelt shooting holes in the policies of William Jennings Bryan, appeared in 1900. Married in 1906, Darling began working at the *Des Moines Register and Leader*. Between 1911 and 1919, he worked in New York with the *New York Globe* and *New York Herald Tribune* before returning to Des Moines to continue his career as an editorial cartoonist. Included in his works were a number of conservation cartoons that drew people's attention. Ding Darling would be instrumental in founding the National Wildlife Federation.

In 1934, Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace appointed Darling chief of the U.S. Biological Survey, forerunner of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Frustrated by the lack of funding to preserve and re-establish wildlife, he resigned. He asked President Franklin Roosevelt to convene a North American Wildlife Conference for the purpose of uniting individuals, organizations, and agencies interested in the conservation of wildlife resources.

At the conference, Darling criticized people who considered themselves conservationists but limited those actions by hanging a bird feeder or subscribing to an outdoors magazine. He encouraged people to vote against those who refused to help the environment. The outcome of the conference, which convened in 1936, was the creation of the General Wildlife Federation (GWF), and they elected Darling as its first president. The first annual meeting of the GWF was in 1937 in St. Louis, Missouri, with 1,200 delegates. The week was devoted to establishing government responsibility for the restoration and conservation of wildlife. Specific goals were to establish standing environmental committees in both the U.S. House and Senate, to secure adequate funding for various programs, to establish cooperative research projects funded by excise taxes that were already being paid by hunters and fishermen, to establish government jurisdiction over preventing pollution and the misuse of waterways, and finally to enforce federal and state laws that protect wildlife. In 1938, the GWF changed its name to the National Wildlife Federation.

Darling won two Pulitzer Prizes for Editorial Cartooning while at the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*. They were "In Good Old USA" (1924) and "What a Place for a Waste Paper Salvage Campaign" (1943). He initiated the Federal Duck Stamp program and designed the first duck stamp in 1935. In 1960, the National Audubon Society awarded him the Audubon Medal for his

conservation achievements. Darling died in 1962 in Des Moines and was buried in Logan Park Cemetery in Sioux City, Iowa.

(Editor's Note: The J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in southwest Florida is named after him, as is the Lake Darling State Park in Iowa, dedicated in 1950. Lake Darling, a 9,600-acre lake at the Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge is also named in his honor. More recently a lodge at the National Conservation Training Center near Shepherdstown, West Virginia, was named in his honor. Research reveals that Darling was a close friend of Walt Disney.)

In the Past Half Century

by Arlys Reitan

In the 50 years since Wachiska Audubon was founded in February 1973, the chapter has been engaged in dozens of activities, programs, committees, and conferences by hundreds of members, volunteers, and public and private individuals all centering around conservation, education, ecological issues, advocacy, goodwill, and communication. But none of them has matched the time, dedication, enthusiasm, and effort as much as Wachiska's conservation committee and the prairie protection project that began in the spring of 1994.

During a two-day strategic planning session at Platte River State Park the previous year, it had been decided that our dream would be to preserve and protect one prairie remnant in each of our 17-county membership areas (or at least in as many as possible). The initial purpose of such an undertaking was the hope that native and migrating birds would have natural prairie areas to stop, feed, nest, and raise young due to fragmentation as a result of development. Protecting Southeast Nebraska's birds and native prairies ranked #1 at the end of this planning process.

But how could we carry out this dream? Our small, local, nonprofit organization didn't have millions of dollars to work with or a full-time staff to carry out the tasks. Could a few volunteers hope to handle all that was necessary to secure and maintain such tracts?

This is where those "few volunteers" came forward. Risking leaving someone out, records show those attending that planning session and continued with this idea included Jan Burch, Mort Stelling, Linda Schrock, Gene Sengstake, Ernie Rousek, Tim Knott, Carolyn Hall, Ken & Arlys Reitan.

In April 1994, Wulf Prairie was targeted as the flagship prairie. New to everyone, including our small legal team, conservation easements were studied, written, and rewritten. We relied heavily on Ernie Rousek's past experience with Nine-Mile Prairie. Don Pepperl soon became interested and later took on the duties of legal counsel for the entire project, providing invaluable pro bono knowledge, experience, and time. Over the past 30 years, much has been written about this undertaking, which now involves over 1,000 acres at 32 locations and counting. Stay tuned as updates continue.

Climate Change Update

by Chuck Francis, Education and Environment Committee

Can Climate Change Lead to an Economic Crisis?

What will it take for people in the U.S. to take climate change seriously? Reading about ice-free winters in the Arctic region, receding glaciers in Greenland, and collapsing ice shelves in Antarctica, we learn these will cause global sea level rises that virtually obliterate Pacific island nations. Models predict that a warming gulf stream could mean alterations that would lead to another ice age in Norway and the U.K. These will drastically impact countries' economies.

Warmer climatic conditions already moving north in the Americas cause changes in rainfall patterns, bringing fewer, less predictable storms that could drastically change agriculture. These conditions affect yields of current crops in the Midwest, impacting local uses in feedlots and ethanol plants. These effects will likely impact crop prices and consumer food products. Migration patterns of surviving bird populations may be altered, depriving them of habitat needed for food and reproduction.

Back to economics, an increase in storm damages to houses and businesses pushes higher property insurance for costs of repair and recovery. This is already happening in gulf states in the southeast U.S. with large storm events causing home policies to be re-written; some complain that insurance costs will force them from homes and businesses.

We know that bridges and highways are in dire need of repair, costs that have been deferred for years as we've enjoyed relatively benign climate. Midwest community water supplies are threatened by nitrate and chemical contamination from agricultural overuse, requiring expensive filtering to maintain potable water. These costs will be borne by communities, with help from state/federal sources.

With lack of foresight, we have accumulated a debt that will have to be paid to maintain a healthy standard of living. It is unfair to pass this debt on to future generations, and according to reports, the situation is getting worse.

Stepping back to evaluate these challenges, we could speculate that our preoccupation with creature comforts we take for granted blinds us to larger challenges facing us today. We operate as a society with a crisis mentality that suggests we do not fix anything before it is almost ready to break . . . or after. Our reaction at the individual level reflects the attitude of many in the business world, where companies base earnings and reputations on quarterly success in

finances, externalizing large costs of pollution to other places or to the future. No wonder we have an accumulated environmental debt and an ecosystem that grows ever more costly to restore to maintain the pleasures we currently enjoy. As Pete Seeger asks in "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," in the final line of each verse, "When Will They [We] Ever Learn"? We had all better learn and act fast. As the *Lincoln Journal Star* stated in an editorial (10/11/23) comparing quickly rising temperatures to slowly awakening public attitudes, "the heat shows we're approaching a point of no return" and action "can't be put off for much longer."

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Upcoming Programs

Wingspan Wingding

Sunday, November 12 – 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Join fellow board game enthusiasts to play Wingspan when participants will test their bird trivia knowledge between rounds. Free admission, but there is a suggested \$10/family donation. Snacks will be provided.

Third Tuesday Bird Outing

Tuesday, November 21 – 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Join a knowledgeable bird guide on an outing along the prairie trails. Meet fellow birders and learn the birds of the prairie. Free admission. Binoculars will be available.

More information on these and other programs can be found on our website at <https://springcreek.audubon.org/events>. Questions to 402-797-2301; scp@audubon.org.

Excellent Programming

Thanks for the information about the Wachiska presentations. We watched both the floodplain and Jason's presentation and loved them. The programming you are doing is quite excellent, and we are enjoying these little "hits" of Nebraska. Who would have known that so many fascinating creatures are living in the muddy Missouri River?

And anything Jason St. Sauver at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center does is perfect. He is an excellent teacher, and I love his bird calls and tips on birding.

Yesterday we drove north of Seattle to enjoy the Skagit Valley. It reminds us of the Nebraska countryside with its flat fields. It is fantastic birding area with all the wetlands and open water. The trumpeter swans and snow geese are now migrating, and the fields were filled with white birds. You could always tell when the swans flew by—the noise was very loud; several shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds were also around.

Thanks again for your email with all the program information.

Barbara Wright and Dwight Gee
Seattle, Washington

Public Officials

President Joe Biden

1600 Pennsylvania Av NW, Washington DC 20500-0001
Comment line: 202-456-1111
Phone: 202-456-1414 Fax: 202-456-2461
E-mail at website: <http://whitehouse.gov/contact>

Senator Deb Fischer

1248 O St Ste 1111, Lincoln NE 68508
Lincoln phone: 402-441-4600 Fax: 402-476-8753
Wash. DC phone: 202-224-6551 Fax: 202-228-0012
E-mail at website: <http://fischer.senate.gov>

Senator Pete Ricketts

139 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510
Wash. DC phone: 202-224-4224 Fax: 202-224-5213
E-mail at website: <http://ricketts.senate.gov>

Congressman Mike Flood

301 S 13th St Ste 100, Lincoln NE 68508 (1st District)
Lincoln phone: 402-438-1598
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-4806 Fax: 202-225-5686
E-mail at website: <http://flood.house.gov>

Congressman Don Bacon (2nd District)

13906 Gold Cir Ste 101, Omaha NE 68144
Omaha phone: 888-221-7452
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-4155 Fax: 202-226-5452
E-mail at website: <https://bacon.house.gov>

Congressman Adrian Smith (3rd District)

416 Valley View Dr Ste 600, Scottsbluff NE 69361
Scottsbluff phone: 308-633-6333 Fax: 308-633-6333
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-6435 Fax: 202-225-0207
E-mail at website: <http://adriansmith.house.gov>

Capitol Hill Switchboard

888-436-8427 or 202-224-3121

Governor Jim Pillen

Capitol Bldg, PO Box 94848, Lincoln NE 68509-4848
Phone: 402-471-2244 Fax: 402-471-6031
E-mail at website: <http://governor.nebraska.gov>

State Senator _____

District ____ State Capitol, PO Box 94604, Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

State Capitol Switchboard

402-471-2311

Lancaster County Commissioners

County-City Bldg, 555 S 10th St Rm 110, Lincoln NE 68508
Phone: 402-441-7447 Fax: 402-441-6301
E-mail: commish@lancaster.ne.gov

Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird

County-City Bldg, 555 S 10th St Rm 301, Lincoln NE 68508-2828
Phone: 402-441-7511 Fax: 402-441-7120
E-mail: mayor@lincoln.ne.gov

Lincoln City Council

402-441-7515
E-mail: councilpacket@lincoln.ne.gov

Lincoln Journal Star

Letters to the editor, 21st and N St, Lincoln NE 68508
E-mail: oped@journalstar.com

Join now! Become a Friend of Wachiska Audubon Society!

This local chapter membership provides you with voting privileges and access to all our events, programs, and committees, **plus 100 percent of your membership donation goes directly to the Wachiska chapter. In addition, Friend members receive our monthly newsletter, *The Babbling Brook*, in their choice of print or electronic form.**

Friends of Wachiska (local membership)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- ___ \$25 Individual/Friend
- ___ \$35 Family Friend
- ___ \$50 Black-capped Chickadee Friend
- ___ \$100 Northern Cardinal Friend
- ___ \$250 Western Meadowlark Friend
- ___ \$500 Bald Eagle Friend
- ___ \$1,000 Peregrine Falcon Friend

Select the level of support that is right for you and make your check payable to **Wachiska Audubon Society**. All funds will remain with our local chapter and are tax deductible. Mail to:

Wachiska Audubon Society
Attention: Membership Committee
4547 Calvert St Ste 10
Lincoln NE 68506-5643



American Goldfinches

___ **I prefer to receive my newsletter by email.**

Please note: If you are already a member of National Audubon Society (NAS) you automatically become a member of Wachiska, but not a Wachiska Friend member. Only Wachiska Friends receive the printed newsletter each month. If you wish to join NAS or receive *Audubon* magazine, please contact the National Audubon Society directly.

The Babbling Brook (ISSN #1068-2104) is published monthly by Wachiska Audubon Society. The known office of publication is 4547 Calvert St Ste 10, Lincoln NE 68506-5643. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, Nebraska.

Send address changes to *The Babbling Brook*
Wachiska Audubon Society, 4547 Calvert St Ste 10
Lincoln NE 68506-5643



The Babbling Brook is printed on recycled and recyclable paper.

Things to Remember in November

- ◆ Register ASAP for Wachiska's 50th anniversary celebration. See page 4 for details.
- ◆ Attend the November 9 annual meeting to vote for 2024 Board members just before the monthly program.
- ◆ Stop by the Wachiska office with your extra 2024 calendars to be redistributed to others.
- ◆ Call the office to make arrangements to pick up your Audubon Gift Calendars if you placed an order.
- ◆ Enjoy the Thanksgiving Holiday in your own way.

WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2023

Executive Director..... Mark Brohman
Office Administrator Arlys Reitan

OFFICERS

President *Theresa Pella
Vice President..... *Andrea Faas
Secretary *April Stevenson
Treasurer *Dylan Aufdenkamp

STANDING COMMITTEES/POSITIONS

Director at Large *Dakota Altman
Director at Large *Ann Briggs
Director at Large *Doug Campbell
Director at Large *Ethan Freese
Director at Large *Stu Luttich
Director at Large *Mercy Manzanares
Director at Large *Kris Powers
Conservation..... *Ross Scott
Education/Outreach *Tim Knott

*Denotes voting Board member

For contact information of officers and committee chairs, call the Wachiska office at 402-486-4846.

Mission Statement of the Wachiska Audubon Society

The mission of the Wachiska Audubon Society is to bring people together to preserve and restore tallgrass prairies and other natural ecosystems, promote birding, support native wildlife, provide nature education, and advocate for the sustainability of our natural community.

Wachiska Audubon Society
4547 Calvert St Ste 10
Lincoln NE 68506-5643
402-486-4846
office@WachiskaAudubon.org
www.WachiskaAudubon.org

If you missed a monthly program or want to view one again, Wachiska Audubon's monthly programs are available on YouTube via the homepage at www.WachiskaAudubon.org.

Wachiska is participating with Give Nebraska. Through a payroll deduction system, your donations will be automatically withdrawn from your paycheck. There are 75 nonprofit agencies that are beneficiaries, and more than 100 worksites participate. You can give a little bit each paycheck, and your contributions can add up. Your donations through Give Nebraska are tax deductible. Check with your employer to see if they are part of Give Nebraska.

Wachiska Audubon Society's financial records are available for examination in the office.

A Gift to the Future

A bequest to Wachiska Audubon Society is a gift to future generations, enabling our natural heritage to continue. For wills, trusts, and gifts, our legal name is **Wachiska Audubon Society**. Our Federal Tax ID number is **51-0229888**.

