



Wachiska  
Audubon Society

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

# The Babbling Brook

Our 44th Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2017

MARCH 2017

Volume 26 - Issue 3

General Meeting —Thursday, March 9, 7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, Lincoln

## Monarch Miracles

by Duane Hovorka, Executive Director, Nebraska Wildlife Federation



**M**onarch butterflies migrate several thousand miles from the Great Plains to winter in a mountain forest in the middle of Mexico. In the spring, their offspring begin the long journey back. How do they find their way back to the

same mountain forest in Mexico several generations later?

These amazing creatures captivate children and adults alike, but their future is in peril. Over the past 20 years, the population of monarch butterflies has dropped by some 90 percent. Honey bees, native bees, many butterfly species, and other pollinators are facing the same challenges.

For monarchs, it starts with milkweeds. Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweeds—and *only* milkweeds. The caterpillars

that hatch eat the milkweed leaves, which contain a toxin that puts a bad taste in the mouth of anything that tries to eat them.

Milkweeds are essential, but they aren't the only plant that monarchs and other pollinators need to thrive. Planting nectar-rich native wildflowers that bloom throughout the growing season is the key to keeping your butterflies, bees, and other pollinators happy.

In the spring, Plains coreopsis, prairie phlox, and violets can provide early nectar. Summer-blooming natives like prairie coneflower, brown-eyed Susan, and spiked gayfeather provide nectar through the middle of summer. Prairie aster, sunflowers and Joe-pye weed will carry their blooms late into the fall, providing nectar for the monarchs' long journey south.

With the right mix of food, water, nesting space and cover, and pollinator-friendly practices that avoid pesticides and other chemicals, anyone can have a monarch and pollinator garden. Come to Wachiska's March general meeting to learn why monarchs and other pollinators are in trouble and what each of us can do to make a difference. **Duane Hovorka**, Nebraska Wildlife Federation's executive director, will give you a recipe for creating high-quality habitat for monarchs and other pollinators, even in a small space.

Join Wachiska on **Thursday, March 9, at 7:00 p.m.** for this free public presentation at the Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, in Lincoln. Parking is free in the church parking lot with overflow parking in the Pius High lot across the street to the west. There is easy access to the church with no steps and plenty of space for mingling while enjoying refreshments after the program.

### Calendar

#### March

- 4-5 Birdseed Sale pick up, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. both days, 3500 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street (warehouse on east side of 44<sup>th</sup> Street, between Cornhusker Hwy. and Gladstone Street)
- 6 Education Committee, Wachiska office, 6:00 p.m.
- 9 General Meeting, "Monarch Miracles," by Duane Hovorka, Unitarian Church, 6300 A St, 7:00 p.m.  
**(NOTE location of meeting)**
- 13 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:30 p.m.  
**(NOTE new date from now on)**
- 14 Newsletter deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 21 Board Meeting, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.  
**(NOTE new date from now on)**
- 22 Population/Environment Committee, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.
- 23 Legislation Committee, DaVinci's, 11<sup>th</sup> & G sts, 6:00 p.m.
- 26 Field Trip to Tecumseh to see spring birds, 9:30 a.m.  
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### NEW MEETING LOCATION!

Unitarian Church of Lincoln  
6300 A Street  
(immediately east of Pius High School)



## Field Trip

by John Carlini, Field Trip Chair

### Journey to the Nemaha Ridge

Around 318 million years ago, a ridge of mountains arose in Southeast Nebraska. The Nemaha Ridge, also known as the Nemaha Uplift, was believed to be created by compression forces coincident with the elevations of the Alleghenian orogeny in the East and the Ancestral Rocky Mountains in Colorado. Although the Nemaha is now buried, surface topography still harbors hints of its north-south line from the Omaha area down through Oklahoma. Freshwater seeps emerge from rocky outcrops and cut through the inclines to reveal clues of Nebraska's ancient past such as glacial till from the Pleistocene Epoch. Our March field trip will give us an opportunity to check out the ancient rise on a spring hike to search for birds that call the ridge their home. We'll hike one of several wildlife management areas near Tecumseh to access this hilly terrain that seems to pop out of nowhere.

Meet at **9:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 26**, in the Wachiska office parking lot at 4547 Calvert Street in Lincoln. Participants can either caravan or carpool for the 55-mile drive to our destination. Recommended items include adequate hiking apparel, water bottle, any snacks you may want, and binoculars if you have them. There's no entry fee required and the public is welcome. If you have questions, call John at 402-475-7275.

### Young, Active Wachiskan Departs this Earth

by Arlys Reitan

On February 15, long-time Wachiska member Shannon Moncure passed away from stage 4 cancer after a brave battle of nearly a year. She was only 46 years old. At her Celebration of Life held at Pioneers Park Nature Center last weekend, a room filled with family, friends, and colleagues recalled wonderful memories of this dear, accomplished person. Led by Chuck Francis, with help from Jim King on guitar and a montage of photos blending in and out on a large screen, many people paid tribute to Shannon.



Shannon Moncure reorganized Wachiska's hospitality committee years ago along with her mother, Cheryl Moncure. Shannon chaired the committee until she went back to school for her PhD, at which time Cheryl took over. Between the two of them, with assistance from others, they have seen to it that we always have refreshments at general meetings. Wachiska's current president, Gary Fehr, is the husband of Shannon.

Gary and Cheryl and other family members have designated Wachiska Audubon as one of the recipients of memorial gifts.

## News from Audubon in Nebraska

by Kevin Poague, Audubon Nebraska

### Cranes, Cranes, and More Cranes

The spectacular Sandhill Crane migration is in full swing in central Nebraska. Here are some activities you can take part in to witness one of the great wildlife occurrences on Earth:

Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival, March 16-19, Kearney – Hundreds of wildlife enthusiasts from around the country will enjoy field trips, a wide range of educational speakers, and lots more during this exciting weekend. Main speakers this year are Tony award-winning actress and author Jane Alexander; Iliana Pena, director of conservation from Audubon Texas; and Matt Anderson, Audubon's vice president of climate change. See the festival website for more information: <http://ne.audubon.org/birds/crane-festival>.

Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary events – In March, Rowe Sanctuary has lots of activities to help people enjoy the crane migration. See their website for details on crane behavior classes, Platte River crane viewing blind trips, habitat tours, and Rowe's Crane Carnival: <http://rowe.audubon.org/events>.

### Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center News

As part of its Salon Series of adult workshops, Spring Creek Prairie is presenting "Bring Birds to Your Backyard," a two-part program about enticing birds to your yard. On Tuesday, April 4, from 7:00-8:30 p.m., Benjamin Vogt from Monarch Gardens will talk on native plants and landscaping for birds. The following Tuesday, April 11, same times, Dave Titterington from the Wild Bird Habitat Stores will present on bird feeders, seed, suet, and more. Also that evening, Birdnerd buddies Jason St. Sauver and Deb Hauswald will demonstrate cooking for birds. The cost is \$20/person for both sessions. Check out this website <http://springcreekprairie.audubon.org/events> for details; call 402-797-2301 or email [scp@audubon.org](mailto:scp@audubon.org) to register.

### Join the Meeting Posse!

by Linda Brown

We are looking for a couple dozen people to help for a "Meeting Posse." If you would be willing to assist with hospitality and clean-up for the general meetings on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, email Linda Brown, [lindar1brown@gmail.com](mailto:lindar1brown@gmail.com).

We need two people to come at 6:20 p.m. to help Cheryl with coffee set-up and two to three people to help with clean-up after the meeting. A member of the Unitarian Church's Green Sanctuary Committee will always be present to facilitate. This would be an easy way to support your chapter and become involved with members while serving in a useful capacity.



## From the Board ...

by Richard Peterson, Director at Large

### Mabel Osgood Wright

Mabel was an author, photographer, and gardener. She felt deeply about helping people (especially children) appreciate the natural world. She was instrumental in reviving the struggling Audubon movement in the late 1800s.

Mabel Osgood (b 1859 – d 1934) was born in New York City where she attended private schools, then considered entering Cornell Medical School. Her father objected, not that he thought women shouldn't be educated, but that Mabel was suited for other things. He introduced her to artists and writers and encouraged her intellectual potential.

The family country home was in Fairfield, Connecticut, and on that large tract of land is where Mabel learned to appreciate the outdoors and to develop her observational skills. In 1884, she married British art and rare books dealer James Osborne Wright. In 1893, she published her first nature essay, "A New England May" in the New York *Evening Post*.



Her nature-writing career took off in the 1890s. Her first book was *The Friendship of Nature* (1894), soon followed by *Birdcraft: A Fieldbook of Two Hundred Song, Game, and Water Birds* (1895). The latter was a prototype of the modern field guide featuring color reproductions from John James Audubon and others. Frank Chapman described it as "one of the first and most successful bird manuals." As things progressed, her writing began to blend social commentary and fiction.

A fledgling Audubon organization had been established in 1886 but had all but disbanded by 1896. Mabel was involved in its revival at the state level and helped organize the Connecticut Audubon Society, serving as its first president in 1898. Mabel Wright was a director of the National Association of Audubon Societies. She became an associate member of the American Ornithological Union in 1895, and was one of the first three women (along with Florence Merriam Bailey and Olive Thorne Miller) to be raised to elective membership in 1901.

In 1914, on the grounds of Connecticut Audubon Society property near her home in Fairfield, Mabel was instrumental in creating the Birdcraft Sanctuary. The refuge is today the oldest private songbird sanctuary in the United States. The Birdcraft Museum and Sanctuary was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1993.

Mabel was a frequent contributor to *Bird-Lore*, Frank Chapman's new magazine to rejuvenate the new Audubon awareness. She was a co-editor of the magazine for over 30 years until shortly before her death in Fairfield in 1934. She is buried in that town's Oaklawn Cemetery.

## W.A.R.B.L.E.R

(Wachiska Audubon Readers' Bulletins, Letters, and Environmental Reports)

### Report from the Wachiska Office

Here are statistics from recent Wachiska general meetings:

In January, 81 people attended the first meeting to be held at the Unitarian Church, a surprisingly high number for that time of year. We sold the last three bags of Nyjer thistle on hand along with eight canvas tote bags. One membership was taken in.

February's meeting with Dr. Johnsgard brought 119 attendees who purchased 14 tote bags and 19 suet cakes. Another new member signed up and two renewals were received along with two birdseed orders. Order forms were on hand.

Over 100 new 2017 nature-related wall calendars were collected from people who had received more than they could use, and Betty Dasenbrock has delivered them to residents at Lancaster Manor. More than 120 old calendars were turned in for "second-time-around recycling." Then Linda Brown saw to it that a local community center got them upon request for use with their arts and craft projects.

So far, all comments about the chapter's new meeting location at the Unitarian Church have been positive. It would be helpful to know what more of you think about this change; after almost 30 years in the same location, we want to be sure we will be serving the greatest needs of our members before a final decision to make the move is made.

While you are making decisions, check out the updated logo on the front page of this issue. There are definite changes that required tweaking. Let Arlys know what you think.

### Cranes, Ducks, and Prairie Chickens

You are invited to an evening with conservation biologists and birds from the UNL Madson Collection on Tuesday, March 7, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in Hardin Hall, 3310 Holdrege Street, on UNL's East Campus. This open house will feature three galleries with birds, biologists, and artists. Short, informational talks bridging biology, conservation, and art will be presented. Sponsors will be the School of Natural Resources, UNL State Museum, the Lied Center, Michael Forsberg Photography, Platte Basin Timelapse, and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. No admission; free parking. For more information, call 402-472-9608.

### Eagle Live Cam Site

Check out [www.dceaglecam.org/](http://www.dceaglecam.org/). An eagle egg has been laid and more are expected very shortly.

## Nebraska Legislative Update on Climate

by Ken Winston

**LB 646**, Senator Pansing Brooks' bill to create a **plan to address extreme weather**, failed to advance from the Executive Board last week. The vote was 4 to 4; Scheer did not vote. The bill is still alive, in spite of a newspaper article implying that it had been killed. Constituent contacts with Executive Board members to encourage advancement of the bill would likely be helpful. Senator Kuehn is a co-sponsor of the bill, so his opposition to advancing it is inconsistent with his previous action.

Here are some points that can be made in recommending advancement of the bill:

LB 646 has widespread support. There were 24 people testifying in favor of it at the hearing, with no opponents. Supporters included The Nature Conservancy, Nebraska Sierra Club, Bold Alliance, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Nebraska Interfaith Power and Light, League of Women Voters, CCL, and Nebraska Farmers Union. These represent thousands of Nebraskans from all walks of life and all across the state.

Supporting LB 646 is consistent with the views of Nebraskans; opposing it is out of step with them. The most recent rural poll found that 61 percent of rural Nebraskans believe the state should create a climate action plan.

Continuing upward temperature trends support action on climate as new temperature records are being set month after month and year after year. The recent hot spell in February is yet another manifestation of the impacts of climate change.

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Senator Larson just introduced **LR 46** which **calls for a committee of legislators creating a climate plan**. It hasn't been set for hearing yet. The good thing about it is it directly refers to climate change rather than "extreme weather" as LB 646 does. The fact that Larson introduced it may increase the likelihood of buy-in from more conservative senators. However, there are a number of concerns about LR 46, including:

Why didn't Senator Larson work with Senator Pansing Brooks on her bill, rather than introducing his own approach?

There are few details about how the committee would work.

The Legislature has little expertise on this subject. Would they hire outside consultants? How much would it cost?

There is no mention of the University of Nebraska which has a great deal of information and expertise on climate change in Nebraska.

LR 46 mentions the Nebraska Environmental Trust as a funding source but does not state how that would be achieved. There is ongoing concern about legislators raiding the Trust for their pet projects; therefore, concern that something of this nature would start the ball rolling in that direction.

## Why We Should Care About Canada's Boreal Forest

(summarized from February 2, 2017 article in newsletter of the *Wild Bird Habitat Stores*)

During spring migration, up to three billion birds fly through the U.S. to their breeding grounds in the Canadian Boreal Forest. Up to five billion birds (adults and offspring) fly south from the Boreal each fall; 60 percent of these migrants spend the winter in the U.S., making it the largest wintering grounds for boreal birds such as Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-crowned Sparrows, Rusty Blackbirds, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets.

The responsibility of the Boreal in sustaining some bird populations is startling. Many of these birds winter in the U.S. or pass through the country during migration.

- 80 percent of the waterfowl species of North America, 63 percent of the finch species, and 53 percent of warbler species breed in the Boreal.
- For nearly 100 species, 50 percent or more of their entire breeding populations occur in the Boreal.
- Over 80 percent of the North American populations of 35 species occur in the Boreal.

Modern conservation science tells us that at least 50 percent of our large, natural areas should be placed off-limits to development in order to maintain the full complement of species, communities, and ecosystem services provided by large wilderness areas such as the Boreal Forest. From billions of birds and a variety of other impressive wildlife to ecosystem services such as carbon storage and water filtration, there is no shortage of reasons as to why we need to protect at least half of the Boreal Forest from development.

Check out more at Boreal Bird Blog and [www.borealbirds.org](http://www.borealbirds.org).

## Flat Places, Deep Identities: Mapping Nebraska and the Great Plains

The Center for Great Plains Studies' 2017 symposium is set for March 30-31, at UNL's Innovation Campus. Registration closes March 10. Fees are \$45 for adults; \$20 for students. The entire schedule with registration information is posted on the website [www.unl.edu/plains/2017-symposium](http://www.unl.edu/plains/2017-symposium) along with presentation titles. For more information, email Lisa at [lmaupin2@unl.edu](mailto:lmaupin2@unl.edu).

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Quotes below by Mabel Osgood Wright (see article on page 3)

*Nature, when undisturbed, is never monotonous, you know. Even when using green, the most frequent color on her palette, she throws in contrasting tints by way of expression. You will seldom see two sides of a leaf of the same hue, and the leaf stem frequently gives a good dash of bronze or purple.*

*Neither a garden nor a gardener can be made in one year, nor in one generation even.*

# Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

Want to hear some recent good news? Yes, there really is some. All of it occurred at the state level in the month after the national election and reduced carbon pollution that causes climate change. All of it represented bipartisan compromise.

Let's start with Ohio, where Audubon activists testified, wrote letters, and worked to defend the state's renewable energy standards. Audubon was part of a broad range of allies, including the Ohio Conservative Energy Forum. The original law setting clean energy standards was passed with strong bipartisan support in 2008. It required power companies to obtain 12.5 percent of their electricity from renewables by 2025. By 2013, Ohio led the country in wind manufacturing facilities and came in second in solar manufacturing—a huge success! Currently, 90,000 Ohioans are employed in clean energy. ([www.CleanJobsOhio.org](http://www.CleanJobsOhio.org))

Nevertheless, under pressure from a few large energy companies, the Legislature froze the standards in 2014 through the end of 2016, and then in 2016 passed a bill to extend the freeze for another two years. By December, the bill for a second two-year delay went to the governor. On December 28, John Kasich, Republican governor of Ohio, vetoed the bill.

“Audubon has long supported the reinstatement of Ohio's clean energy standards,” said Marnie Urso, Audubon's senior program manager in Ohio. “Energy efficiency and renewable energy are vital components to protecting Ohio's birds, wildlife, and people from the threats of pollution and climate change. Ohio has been a leader on renewable energy, and Governor Kasich has ensured that Ohio will keep moving forward.”

In Michigan, there was a similar legislative move to roll back that state's clean energy goals—again, despite the fact that they had proven a success. According to the Michigan Public Service Commission, the renewable standards brought in close to \$3 million in investment and created more than 87,000 jobs.

A bipartisan group, mostly Republican led, offered substitute legislation that actually increases the renewable energy portfolio standard from 10 to 15 percent and supports greater efficiency. That bill was supported and signed by Republican Governor Rick Snyder. Michigan Audubon was represented by the broad-based Michigan Environmental Council. (<http://michiganlcv.org/news/the-latest-energy-policy-in-michigan/>)

And then there's Illinois where, with a lot of Republican support, the Democratic-controlled Legislature passed the Future Energy Jobs bill. Republican Governor Bruce Rauner not only signed it but intervened at the end to save the bill by working out some difficult disagreements. Much of the reporting on the bill focused only on the nuclear bailout. I am relying on energy expert David Roberts' account. (<http://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2016/12/8/13852856/illinois-energy-bill>)

Exelon owns nuclear plants in Clinton and Quad Cities that had lost about \$800 million in the past seven years and were scheduled to close. Exelon wanted, and got, a bailout for the two plants. But of the funding generated in the bill, only about 30 percent is going to the nuclear plants, and 70 percent will be going to clean energy and energy efficiency. More than \$750 million will be invested in programs for low-income communities because of strong advocacy by environmental justice organizations; included are assistance for community and rooftop solar and solar job training.

The law, David Roberts wrote, “is small-d democratic politics . . . heterogeneous interests and opposing political parties, negotiating to forge a compromise in which nobody gets everything they want, but everyone gets something, and the mutual goals are advanced. . . . Non-zero-sum, democratic politics can still work. Let's celebrate it when it happens.” In the next few years, our celebrations may be mostly for advances at the state level. That is the opinion of David Yarnold, president and CEO of the National Audubon Society. He added that “Audubon is a durable, respected, trusted conservation network and we're located everywhere. With . . . a membership of one million that's almost evenly divided between Ds and Rs, we're authentic messengers for birds in every state in the U.S.”

Postscript – Two more hopeful signs: First, an initiative at the federal level has been launched by some respected wise men of the Republican Party, headed by James Baker, George Schultz, and Henry Paulson—all former secretaries of the treasury. In mid-February, they proposed a plan to put a tax or fee on coal, gas, and oil which would be collected and redistributed quarterly to all U.S. households by the Social Security Administration. For specifics, go to <https://www.clcouncil.org/>. The second hopeful sign is that the new congressman from Omaha, Don Bacon, has joined the Climate Solutions Caucus in the House, a bipartisan effort to consider what action Congress should take on climate. Membership is now at 24 members.

## ATTENTION

If you ordered birdseed from Wachiska's Spring Birdseed Sale, be sure to pick it up on Saturday or Sunday, March 4-5, between 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. either day. The pick up site this time is different, so come to 3500 North 44th Street, a warehouse on the east side of 44th Street between Cornhusker Highway and Gladstone Street. There will be several extra bags of the most popular seeds/mixes and suet cakes. If you have questions, call Cathy at 402-421-1652 or leave a message at the Wachiska office. Hopefully, no one will forget this commitment this time, so no orders will need to be lugged back to the office, up the stairs, and become another task for our volunteers and office manager.

We appreciate your support and cooperation of this biannual fundraiser on which several chapter functions depend. Thanks!

## Prairie Citizen Online

by Tom Lynch

Wachiska Audubon members no doubt remember the monthly newspaper, *Prairie Fire: The Progressive Voice of the Great Plains*, which stopped publishing a few years ago. *Prairie Fire* published many articles on nature issues in our area, including those by numerous Wachiska members. Its loss left a big hole in our community.

A small group of activists, writers, academics, and nature lovers (Paul Johnsgard, Cris Trautner, Aaron Vacin, Jack Phillips, Tom Lynch, and Robert Smith) have formed an editing and publishing collective with the goal of creating a new online forum inspired by *Prairie Fire*. It will be called *Prairie Citizen*. With any luck, the publication should be available online by the end of March.

The mission statement reads as follows:

*Prairie Citizen* is a forum of ideas about nature, community, and life in the grasslands. Our mission is to foster a bio-regionally attuned and socially just civic and cultural life on the North American prairies. We seek to increase awareness of the ecological, social, and cultural issues that affect our many communities—plant, animal, and human. We seek to share information and opinions by experts and thinkers who bring context to what is often simplified and who inform without underestimating. We hope to deepen our community's understanding of the complex interrelations between ourselves and the natural environment in which we and millions of other species live, as well as among ourselves as members of a diverse human community.

The publishers intend *Prairie Citizen* to be eclectic, high-quality, progressive, well-informed, and provocative. It will address environmental, political, social, and cultural issues that face us here on the prairies and plains. While based in Lincoln, Nebraska, *Prairie Citizen* casts its net widely and welcomes contributions (and readers) from anywhere in the plains and prairies, broadly conceived as the grassland bio-regions of North America. It will also include creative work as well as visual art and photography.

*Prairie Citizen* hopes to serve as an advocate for the community of nature in which we reside and also for the many members of the human community, especially those marginalized and minority members whose voices are too rarely heard in the mainstream media.

If you would like to contribute to *Prairie Citizen*, you can check out the details at this website:  
<https://prairiecitizen.submittable.com/submit>.

Soon you should be able to read the first issue at <http://prairiecitizen.org/>. Watch for it.

## Enjoying Nature in our Winter Climate

(Editor's Note: Included in the January newsletter were ideas for winter enjoyment of nature. Readers were asked to share thoughts on how they enjoy nature this time of year. Here are a couple of replies. Keep sending them!)

I'm writing about "Enjoying Nature in our Winter Climate." We always provide heated water in winter and depend on the



Downy Woodpecker

habitat we've planted for birds to feed them year-round. Last year we got a suet feeder for woodpeckers and hung it from a high bar on our deck, so it's visible from where we are in the house most of the time.

Wild Bird Habitat Stores told us to get plain suet, without added seeds, etc., to avoid squirrels and others eating it all up. It's been a huge success. Today, we've had two female and two male Downy Woodpeckers which keep coming back. We've had an occasional Red-bellied and Hairy; but the "Downys" keep it busy. We plan to photograph them in order to identify one individual from another but haven't got to it yet. It's much fun!

— Judy Gibson and Barbara DiBernard

I go walking most early mornings for my 30 minutes of daily exercise. I look and listen for birds and anything else I might see.

Usually I see or hear blue jays, cardinals, robins, and sparrows. Occasionally a flicker, mourning dove, an owl, geese, grackles, a woodpecker. And always, squirrels.



Red Fox

I see kids on their way to school and one or two people out walking their dogs. Before long, I'll see flowers starting to bloom, and some rabbits, maybe. No real surprises there.

But THIS morning I saw a fox!!!!!! Three blocks from home, right in the middle of the city, a fox! He (or she) was nosing around in the leaves in front of a large older home where no one currently lives. (We think the owners are working on fixing it up.)

The fox startled a mouse—which leaped—and the fox hopped after it! Another leap, another hop! And another! And then, I think, the fox got it for breakfast! What fun! Well, not for the mouse! But exciting!

We're having nice warm weather—up into the 70s! I washed out the bird bath and put in fresh water today and put out a new suet cake for the birds. The level of birdseed in the new feeder (a Christmas present) seems to be going down, and we've seen a squirrel eating at it, but no birds as yet. Wonder why?

— Bob Boyce

## Public Officials

### **President Donald Trump**

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 Ben Sasse**

1128 Lincoln Mall Ste 305, Lincoln NE 68508  
Lincoln phone: 402-476-1400 Fax: 402-476-0605  
Wash. DC phone: 202-224-4224 Fax: 202-224-5213  
E-mail at website: <http://sasse.senate.gov>

### **Senator Deb Fischer**

440 N 8<sup>th</sup> St Ste 120, 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>

### **Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (1<sup>st</sup> District)**

301 S 13<sup>th</sup> St Ste 100, Lincoln NE 68508-2537  
Lincoln phone: 402-438-1598  
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-4806 Fax: 202-225-5686  
E-mail at website: <http://fortenberry.house.gov>

### **Congressman Don Bacon (2<sup>nd</sup> 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> District)**

416 Valley View Dr Ste 600, Scottsbluff NE 69361  
Scottsbluff phone: 308-632-3333 Fax: 308-635-3049  
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 Pete Ricketts**

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 10<sup>th</sup> St Rm 110, Lincoln NE 68508  
Phone: 402-441-7447 Fax: 402-441-6301  
E-mail: [commish@lancaster.ne.gov](mailto:commish@lancaster.ne.gov)

### **Mayor Chris Beutler**

County-City Bldg, 555 S 10<sup>th</sup> St Rm 208, Lincoln NE 68508-2828  
Phone: 402-441-7511 Fax: 402-441-7120  
E-mail: [mayor@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:mayor@lincoln.ne.gov)

### **Lincoln City Council**

402-441-7515  
E-mail: [council@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:council@lincoln.ne.gov)

### **Lincoln Journal Star**

Letters to the editor, 926 P St, Lincoln NE 68508  
E-mail: [oped@journalstar.com](mailto: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 \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_ \$25 Individual/Friend
- \_\_\_ \$35 Family Friend
- \_\_\_ \$50 Black-capped Chickadee Friend
- \_\_\_ \$100 Northern Cardinal Friend
- \_\_\_ \$250 Western Meadowlark Friend
- \_\_\_ \$500 Bald Eagle Friend
- \_\_\_ \$1000 Peregrine Falcon Friend

Select the level of support that is right for you and make your check payable to **Wachiska Audubon Society**. All funds 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

\_\_\_ **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 monthly newsletter each month. If you wish to join NAS or receive *Audubon* magazine, please contact National Audubon Society directly.



**American Goldfinch family**

## Members Recycle Cans for Wachiska

Thanks to all members and friends who are recycling aluminum cans at A-Can Recycling Center, 3255 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, in Lincoln.

The new owners have set up an account for Wachiska whereby anyone can bring in their cans and specify that the proceeds should be credited to the Wachiska Audubon account.

Stop in Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please call the Wachiska office at 402-486-4846 if you have questions.

Recycling aluminum cans saves 95 percent of the energy used to make them from virgin material.



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Lincoln NE 68506-5643



*The Babbling Brook* is printed on recycled and recyclable paper.



**Wachiska Audubon Society**  
**4547 Calvert St Ste 10**  
**Lincoln NE 68506-5643**  
402-486-4846

Office@WachiskaAudubon.org  
www.WachiskaAudubon.org

**Birdseed Pick up — March 4-5**  
**Noon-2:00 p.m.**

## WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2017

### OFFICERS

President.....	*Gary Fehr.....	402-570-4382
Vice President.....	*Stu Luttich (Geneva).....	402-759-3597
Recording Secretary .....	*Rachel Simpson.....	402-742-7991
Treasurer .....	*Bill Gustafson.....	402-488-1585
Immediate Past President.....	*Jessi Umberger (Otoe).....	402-580-3057

### STANDING COMMITTEES/POSITIONS

Director at Large.....	*Lana Novak .....	402-475-8693
Director at Large.....	*Richard Peterson .....	402-489-2996
Director at Large.....	*Roxanne Smith .....	402-477-1319
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	*Tim Knott.....	402-483-5656
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	*Ken Reitan .....	402-423-3540
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	*Sam Truax .....	402-325-9012
Membership .....	*Jami Nelson .....	402-488-1598
Monthly Programs/General Meetings .....	Arlys Reitan .....	WAS office 402-486-4846
Newsletter Editor.....	Arlys Reitan .....	WAS office 402-486-4846
Population/Environment.....	*Colleen Babcock .....	308-850-0445
Publicity/Public Relations.....	Jeanne Kern .....	402-423-0428

\*Denotes Board member

### OTHER ASSOCIATES

Bird Questions .....	Kevin Poague .....	402-797-2301
Facebook Coordinator .....	Benjamin Vogt .....	402-499-5851
Raptor Recovery .....	Betsy Finch (Elmwood).....	402-994-2009
Interim Executive Director Audubon Nebraska .....	Bill Taddicken .....	308-468-5282
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Director .....	Glynnis Collins .....	402-797-2301
Webmaster .....	Dan Staehr .....	402-440-5869

## NEBirds Website

Check out the email discussion at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NEBirds> to learn of the latest sightings and interesting tales of Nebraska's most avid birders and those interested in Nebraska birds and their ecology. Posts change daily—and even more often when excitement arises. Offerings of recent sightings, questions, and new photos are all welcome.

***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**.