



*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 48th Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2021*

**Wachiska**  
Audubon Society

**MARCH 2021**

**Volume 30 - Issue 3**

**Wachiska Program — Thursday, March 11, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom web conference (registration required)**  
**Link to register: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqde6ppz4rGdyFr7wAV6rLksfWx97tA6y1>**

## Changing the Conversation About Native Prairie

by Kay Kottas, Ph.D.

Pasture, grassland, CRP, rangeland, remnant prairie, bird habitat, weeds, hay field, pollinator habitat, hunting land, grass buffer, landscape, meadow, go-back land, ecosystem, real estate—all names for prairie reflecting the view of the beholder.



Kay Kottas, Ph.D.

Tallgrass prairie is the most imperiled ecosystem on our continent; worldwide it is second only to the rainforest in scarcity—and yet our conversations about native plants and prairie are still focused on our own anthropocentric view of the world. Some examples:

- “I just want to get rid of the weeds (wildflowers) that are sucking the moisture out of my pasture.” - local cattleman on a pasture filled with eastern red cedar and very few wildflowers
- “I don’t have much use for native plants.” - horticulture instructor
- “What does it do? What is it good for?” - local producer and rancher looking at yarrow
- “We thought we were doing her a favor.” - aerial applicator who sprayed native prairie with 2,4-D

What do all these statements or questions have in common? The conversation about native prairie has revolved around its place in agrarian society since the early 1800s. “The Great American Desert” is how Major Stephen Long, a government surveyor, described the North American grasslands. It is all in what we value. Native plants as pollinator habitat are the new paradigm that has come into favor of late, but even that can be misguided if we are not careful. Which, if any, view of the prairie will afford it the value necessary to preserve the remaining one or two percent?

**Dr. Kay Kottas** is a prairie ecologist, botanist, horticulturist, and former instructor of North American native plants, horticulture, and botany at UNL and Nebraska Wesleyan University. As president of Prairie Legacy, Inc., Kay travels the state doing environmental surveys and providing restoration consulting. She is the chair of the Nebraska Seed and Plant Producers, an organization created to support and increase knowledge and availability of the local ecotype plant material in Nebraska. In 2010, Kay Kottas purchased the family farm, founded Witt’s End Homestead, and began to transition the 160-year-old traditional farm into local ecotype seed and plant production. Prairie Legacy makes these available online. Today, home is on the prairie, and Kay is helping others to restore, preserve, and understand the prairie in new ways.

Join Dr. Kottas in a discussion titled “Changing the Conversation About Native Prairie” at Wachiska’s next Zoom presentation on **Thursday, March 11, at 7:00 p.m.** This free, public program is available to those who register at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqde6ppz4rGdyFr7wAV6rLksfWx97tA6y1>. Copy and paste this link into your browser or go to Wachiska’s website after March 1 and click on the link directly from the notice to register. You will then receive a confirmation with the meeting number and password. Keep that email and a few minutes before the program is to begin, click on that confirmation and you’ll be invited into the meeting.

### Calendar

#### March

- 8 Conservation Committee via Zoom, 5:30 p.m.  
11 General Meeting via Zoom, “Changing the Conversation About Native Prairie,” by Dr. Kay Kottas, 7:00 p.m.  
**(NOTE required registration)**  
15 Newsletter deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.  
16 Board Meeting via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.  
25 Legislation Committee via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

## 11,000th Species has Joined the Photo Ark

Even amidst a global pandemic, Joel Sartore's work on the Photo Ark continues while masked, socially distanced, and other safety measures



practiced, of course. Along with native birds, mussels, and stream fish, Joel and his crew have photographed hundreds of native insects. At this point they are excited to announce that the 11,000th species has joined the Photo Ark.

The long-toothed dart moth, *Dichagyris longidens*, may look small and brown, but it's actually incredibly special. So mysterious that it had never been photographed alive, it was rediscovered during a Photo Ark expedition along the Pecos River in New Mexico.

### New Exhibits Highlight Regional Birds, Sandhill Cranes

SNR Communications – UNL

Two new exhibits at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Great Plains Art Museum may be of interest to anyone with an appreciation of the region's birds. "The Great Migration: A Celebration of Sandhill Cranes in Nebraska," opened January 19 and continues through June 19.

"In March and April, Nebraska is a stopover place for about a million sandhill cranes, mostly along the central Platte River," reads the Great Plains Art Museum description of the exhibit. "It is the largest gathering of cranes in the world and one of the most popular of all wildlife migrations. Thousands of people visit Nebraska to see these birds and to reconnect with nature. The exhibition celebrates this annual wildlife spectacle and the unique lives of these elegant birds. The artist, Jude Martindale, interprets her experiences with the cranes in ways that reveal not only their personalities but also her emotional reactions to watching their captivating behaviors."

The exhibition guide is available at <https://www.unl.edu/plains/great-migration-exhibition-guide-12.22.pdf>.

Alongside the "Great Migration" exhibit, visitors to the museum can also view "Avian Observations: Great Plains Birds in Art." This exhibit runs from January 19 through May 8.

"Avian Observations highlights artistic representations of the varied species of birds on the Great Plains," reads the Great Plains Art Museum description of the exhibit. "Featuring artwork from the museum's permanent collection and from Elizabeth

Rubendall Artist in Residence Kirsten Furlong, this exhibition allows us to explore the history, physical characteristics, behaviors, habitats, and conservation of the diverse creatures that are so important to the Great Plains region."

Learn more about the exhibits and the museum's hours and COVID-19 safety policies at the Great Plains Art Museum website at <https://www.unl.edu/plains/great-plains-art-museum>.

### Grazing Practices to Restore Habitat from the National Audubon Society's website

Sacramento, California, February 10, 2021 - In February, a groundbreaking bill was introduced in the California Senate that would offer financial incentives from the California Department of Conservation to ranchers and other private landowners to implement grazing practices that restore grassland habitat, soil health, and biodiversity on some of California's most endangered and sensitive landscapes. Senate Bill 322 would establish the California Conservation Ranching Incentive Program as part of the existing California Farmland Conservancy Program. These agencies would contract with ranchers on lands deemed especially important to preserving grassland birds and other wildlife.

"SB 322 will ensure wise grassland stewardship in partnership with California's ranchers and private landowners," said Senator Laird. "Collaboration is the key to embracing innovative methods of carbon sequestration, allowing for sustainable ranching practices that will also enhance and sustain wildlife habitat."

The program would encourage regenerative agricultural practices similar to those promoted by Audubon's Conservation Ranching initiative (ACR). The program partners with ranchers to adopt techniques including rotation of pastureland and limited use of feeds other than grass itself. The practices allow a variety of native grasses—with their extensive root systems, a potent carbon sink—to grow and thrive by allowing grasslands to rest and recover; that, in turn, provides habitat for imperiled grassland birds whose numbers have declined by 50 percent over the past 100 years. In return, ranchers participating in ACR can brand their meat with Audubon's "grazed on bird-friendly land" seal, earning up to \$2/pound more for their premium, grass-fed products. Nationally, ACR has enrolled 96 ranches covering 2.3 million acres of land, and Audubon California is in the process of enrolling 17 properties on 70,000 acres. The ACR-certified beef is available for sale nationwide online.

"This is an opportunity to work in partnership with private ranchers to help them not only manage their properties better for birds and wildlife, but to contribute to California's climate solutions by sequestering carbon in the soil" said Meghan Hertel, director of land and water conservation for Audubon California.

## Birding with Benefits: How Nature Improves our Mental Mindsets

by Jill U. Adams (*submitted from website*)

Mounting scientific evidence supporting the health benefits of the outdoors is helping shape innovations in medicine, education, and more.

Anyone who birds a favorite park over and over knows intuitively why they keep going back: it just feels good. Being in nature—pausing in it, sitting with it, discovering its wonders—brings a sense of calm and renewal. Now science is backing up our intuition with data and revealing that the benefits run much, much deeper. Of hundreds of published studies, none alone is definitive, but together they offer a growing sense of what's lost as people spend more time than ever indoors.

In England, for example, research revealed that urban green spaces reduced residents' sense of isolation and loneliness. Living a short walk from a park in Los Angeles seemed to offer the same mental-health boost as a two-point decrease in unemployment. In Spain, schoolchildren raised in greener neighborhoods had more neural connections in brain regions tied to working memory and attention.

"The field is starting to build momentum right now," says University of Washington environmental psychologist Gregory Bratman, who led a recent review of findings across social and health sciences. "Evidence is there to support the conclusion that contact with nature benefits our mood, our psychological well-being, our mental health, and our cognitive functioning."

What's harder to pinpoint is precisely why this relationship exists. One leading theory is that nature can restore our attention and counter the mental fatigue that today's urban and sensory-filled environments cause. A second is that it can reduce stress; blood pressure, heart rate, and stress hormones all drop with time in nature, studies show. Both factors—cognitive function and stress response—have been linked to conditions such as depression.

More investigations are now delving into complex practical questions that doctors, therapists, educators, and public health experts want to understand. What elements of an outdoor setting are most important and for how long? How do our individual traits, preferences, and backgrounds influence how we respond? Answering these questions isn't easy, since it can be tricky to design experiments that isolate nature's diffuse effects. Bratman calls this a "next huge frontier" to explore.

Doctors will be key partners in this effort. Nooshin Razani, director of the Center for Nature and Health at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in Oakland, works with low-income patients to "prescribe" regular park visits. In two small early trials, she's found these excursions increased children's resilience and reduced parental stress and loneliness. Whether the adults visited a park independently or in a group didn't affect the

results—a finding that could help inform other programs. "I really felt like we needed experimental data," she says.

But Razani also believes in simply talking with patients and listening to their experiences. "I think we really need to take a moment to understand why depression and anxiety are increasing," she says. With that knowledge will come more tools for addressing the public health challenge. "I absolutely think being outside is part of the solution to that."

## First Black-footed Ferret Cloned in U.S.

AP release on the Web February 19, 2021



**Black-footed Ferret, Elizabeth Ann**

The slinky predator named Elizabeth Ann, born December 10 and announced the end of February, is cute as a button. But watch out—unlike the domestic ferret foster mom who carried her into the world, she's wild at heart.

"You might have been handling a black-footed ferret kit and then it tries to take your finger off the next day," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service black-footed ferret recovery coordinator Pete Gober said Thursday. "She's holding her own."

Elizabeth Ann was born and is being raised at a Fish and Wildlife Service black-footed ferret breeding facility in Fort Collins, Colorado. She's a genetic copy of a ferret named Willa who died in 1988 and whose remains were frozen in the early days of DNA technology.

Cloning eventually could bring back extinct species such as the passenger pigeon. For now, the technique holds promise for helping endangered species including a Mongolian wild horse that was cloned and last summer born at a Texas facility.

"Biotechnology and genomic data can really make a difference on the ground with conservation efforts," said Ben Novak, lead scientist with Revive & Restore, a biotechnology-focused conservation nonprofit that coordinated the ferret and horse clonings.

—————  
*"Keep close to Nature's heart . . . and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean."*

— John Muir

## Birdwatching Is a Bright Spot in a Pandemic-stricken Economy

by Neel Dhanesha, Editorial Fellow,  
Audubon Magazine, August 6, 2020  
edited for brevity and updates

Sales are through the roof for seed suppliers, birdhouse builders, and small businesses helping people connect with nature in their backyards.

As a result of the pandemic, the country's economy shrank by 9.5 percent from April to June last year, by far the worst quarter on record. Mom and pop businesses are getting hit particularly hard. Nearly 7.5 million of the nation's 30 million small businesses are at risk of closing permanently, according to Main Street America.

But even as the country slides further into recession, backyard birding is doing better than ever before. The lockdowns have drawn people to watch their backyards for entertainment while they are stuck at home. Sales of birdseed and various birdwatching accessories have increased by about 50 percent compared to last year. It's been hard for retailers to keep stock on the shelves after they have finally been able to get it from suppliers.

"May 2020 was our busiest month ever in 16 years of being in business," says Derek Lovitch, who co-owns a bird feeding supply store in Maine with his wife, Jeannette. "I still have bare shelves all around my store." The shop's birdbath sales are up 80 percent over last year, and Lovitch has been routinely running out of birdhouses, hummingbird feeders, and even bird-themed face masks. "As soon as we open a box they're half gone."

A few factors have fed the sales spike. For starters, birding-supply companies are considered essential in most parts of the country, which has allowed them to stay open when other businesses have had to close. Then there's the most obvious factor: People have been stuck at home, and they're realizing that birding is easy to do while staying socially distant. Long-time backyard birdwatchers have been filling their feeders more regularly, while people who are just discovering birds are buying their first feeder sets, binoculars, and field guides.

The weather may have helped, too. A relatively mild winter last year probably allowed more birds to survive into spring, resulting in more visitors to backyards. In Maine, for example, Lovitch thinks an early drought drove more birds to feeders in the state. "People were home wanting to look at stuff and there was a lot of stuff to look at."

With so many people turning to birds for solace and diversion, the coronavirus has put significant strain on the supply chain. Some manufacturers have had to deal with the pandemic's global impact on top of what's happening in this country. It's extremely hard still to keep up with the demand.

And then there's the backyard birder's age-old nemesis. People are learning what squirrels will do to their bird feeders. Those first-time birdwatchers, eager to keep their feeders squirrel-free, are snapping up products like squirrel baffles and squirrel-proof feeders. It seems spending more time in the backyard is convincing some people that small mammals are fascinating in their own right. Squirrel feeder sales are up as well.

Lovitch says he thinks the main reason people are so interested in bringing birds to their backyard nowadays is pretty simple: "We've certainly had a lot of people come in and thank us for helping them keep their sanity," he says. "I think a lot of people are finding that, hey, the birds are normal right now. So, birds seem pretty cool because nothing else is normal right now."

## Climate Action Plan Supported by Wachiska Audubon

by Marilyn McNabb, Vice President

The Wachiska Board made this statement to the Lincoln Planning Commission at its meeting on February 17:

Chair Corr and members of the Commission:

The Wachiska chapter of Audubon supports the adoption of the six-year Climate Action Plan into the city's Comprehensive Plan for 2040.

The National Audubon Society did its own study of the effects of climate change on North American birds. The peer-reviewed study found that climate change puts 384 bird species on the brink of extinction. Climate change forces birds to change their range. They may not survive that relocation.

Items 99 through 105 [of the City's Climate Action Plan] that encourage the use of native plants and trees are especially beneficial to birds.

## Do You Know the Carolina Wren?

Carolina wrens are primarily insect and spider eaters. They glean insects from the ground, tree trunks, and branches. With their bill they will probe into cracks, turn over leaf litter and vegetation searching for insects and spiders. They will dismember a large insect by hammering it with its bill and shaking it until small pieces break off. Occasionally, Carolina wrens may eat small lizards or tree frogs. During winter months they eat seeds, berries, and other small fruits. They forage for shards of seeds left by other birds at the feeder and might even be seen at suet feeders. Chopped nuts on a feeder can be attractive to them. Even in winter one can observe them rustling through dead leaves, foraging for wintering insects and larvae unless the snow gets too deep.

## **Wachiska Meets Partners**

by Linda R. Brown, Board Member

During the strategic planning process last year, Wachiska invited 50 people from partner conservation organizations to participate in a listening session with our consultant. Feedback from that session showed that these partners value the work of Wachiska and that further opportunities for collaboration were suggested. Secondly, we sent surveys to 800 people connected with Wachiska; of these, 200 responded. We asked people to help create an agenda for the work of Wachiska. Advocacy took the most points. Two survey questions relating to advocacy for natural environment/habitat and the climate took highest priority. Caring for tallgrass prairies was a close second.

In the last three weeks, the Wachiska Board has learned more about two of our conservation partners, Citizens' Climate Lobby and the Nebraska Land Trust.

**1. Citizens' Climate Lobby** - Becky Seth from Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) led 13 people in a morning workshop. We learned that CCL is a nonprofit, non-partisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change. CCL is focused on a national carbon fee. The group is optimistic, believing that people are good, and democracy works. Members take a generous approach to other people with appreciation, gratitude, and respect. People in CCL say, "We use our voices to be heard. We believe this simple act transforms us from spectators to engaged citizens." During the workshop, we learned about the Energy Innovation Carbon Dividend Act, H.R. 763, a bipartisan bill, which will likely be reintroduced in the current House of Representatives. This bill is supported by CCL. The fees collected on carbon emissions would be allocated to all Americans. I think of it as a tax refund. In other words, the money utilities pay for each ton of carbon dioxide put into the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels would be returned to the people. During the workshop, we practiced writing "letters-to-the editor." We planned and conducted a mock interview with our congressperson. We invite you to learn more about this organization at [citizensclimatelobby.org](http://citizensclimatelobby.org).

**2. The Nebraska Land Trust** - Joe Francis and Ross Scott represent Wachiska on the Nebraska Land Trust (NLT) as one of 17 organizations represented. Some of the other groups are the Cattlemen's Association, several Natural Resources Districts, and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Dave Sands and Joe Francis visited our most recent Board meeting to tell us more. The NLT was founded in 2001 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, dedicated to the mission of protecting agricultural, historical, and natural resources on Nebraska land, through education, partnering, and permanent conservation. They use voluntary land preservation agreements known as conservation easements which enable landowners to leave a permanent legacy of protected wildlife habitat, scenic views, clean water, historic sites, and working agriculture on their land. Easements legally protect these resources while being flexible enough to allow for other activities that are compatible with private land stewardship and conservation.

## **Snowy Owl**

by Richard Peterson



Photo by John Carlini

*Bubo scandiacus* (Linnaeus, 1758) is also called the polar owl, snow owl, or Arctic owl. This beautiful bird is native to the Arctic regions of North America and the Palearctic. Adult males tend to have purer white feathers overall while adult females often have added mixed flecks of gray and dark brown. With immatures, it's hard to tell the sexes apart. Snowy owls are almost two feet tall from head to tail—a bit taller than the great horned owl.

Snowies have rounded heads with no ear tufts and have piercing yellow eyes. With a wingspan over four feet and weighing up to four pounds, the snowy owl is an imposing bird.

While most owls sleep during the day, the snowy is often actively hunting, especially during the constant daylight of the Arctic summer. Their breeding is closely tied to the availability of tundra-dwelling lemmings, a small rodent 5-7 inches long that are related to voles and muskrats. Lemmings are known for their periodic population fluctuations.

Snowies typically nests on a mound of ground up to three feet above the surface of the tundra. They are one of the few owls that build their own nest. They often lay from 4-10 eggs, with the laying (usually one egg every 2-3 days) resulting in staggered hatching. They rarely breed at the same location or with the same mate every year; often not breeding at all if lemmings are in short supply.

These are nomadic birds. When not breeding, they search out any available prey like rabbits, hares, voles, ground squirrels, and waterfowl such as ducks, geese, grebes, and even carrion. Many will watch for prey from a perch, like on fence posts, telephone poles, and hay bales. Sometimes they cruise close to the ground or hover above to locate a potential meal. About the only time you will hear snowies vocalizing is when they are trying to attract each other during the breeding season or when they are around the nest. If lemming populations plummet (which they are prone to do) some individuals may wander south during the winter as far as Nebraska, Virginia, and elsewhere. During the winter they can be seen in open country including prairies, farmland, old farmsteads, coastal marshes, and beaches.

The Owl Research Institute's Snowy Owl Research Project began in Barrow, Alaska, in 1992. Researchers are studying the interactions between the owl and the brown lemming. Owl numbers there are declining for reasons not completely understood. This may be due to the changing Arctic climate. Their conservation status is listed as vulnerable in some areas. Once the global population was estimated to be 200,000 individuals; today it's down to 100,000, with less than 25,000 breeding pairs.

# Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

If you have some time to read about the likely effects of climate change on Nebraska and what we can do, here are two suggestions. The first is a collection of excellent reports and videos produced in a UNL journalism class. Find them at [climatechangenebraska.com/2020](http://climatechangenebraska.com/2020). One terrific writing is by Brittini McGuire, "Colorado Construction Cranes May Harm Nebraska's Sandhill Cranes." Brittani writes of the challenge to balance the needs of "the thriving, modern city, the adaptive farmer, and the ancient migratory birds"—challenges that will only accelerate in the coming years" with climate change and population growth. She interviews Dr. Paul Johnsgard and Bill Taddicken at Rowe Sanctuary.

Another particularly good essay is Lindsay Johnson's "A Call for Change: Putting a Price on Carbon" about federal policy. UNL professor Dr. Ursula Kreitmair is quoted: "Carbon pricing is probably one of the best shots we have. It's extremely efficient and allows the market to work . . . to figure out the solutions."

The second reading is the Climate Action Plan for Lincoln, which comes in a 170-page version (October) and a 30-page version (February). Both are at [lincoln.ne.gov/resilient](http://lincoln.ne.gov/resilient). The longer version is a vision looking to Lincoln in 2050 while the shorter version is a plan for the next six years, the term of the city's capital improvement program. The six-year version will go to the Planning Commission and then to the City Council in February and March, respectively. It will be presented as an amendment to the current Lincoln Comprehensive Plan, LP 2040. Items that require funding or authority from the city are identified for later action.

Several major heavy industries—cement, iron and steel, chemicals and aluminum, heavy road transportation, shipping and aviation—are responsible for nearly one-third of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Over 400 companies have agreed to work together to decarbonize supply chains to meet the goals of the Paris agreement, a "Mission Possible Partnership." Funding comes from Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates (*Reuters*, 1/27/21).

The transformation in the way we generate electricity is happening much faster than expected. Quoting the CEO of the country's largest electric utility by market value, Jim Robo of Next Era, in January: "There is not a regulated coal plant in this country that is economic today, full period and stop," (*Inside Climate News*, 2/4/21). His company, Next Era, is America's largest generator of wind and solar. It surpassed the market value of Exxon-Mobil in 2020 (*Financial Times*, 2/3/21).

In mid-February oil giant BP won a bid to build two giant windfarms in the Irish Sea. BP's chief executive officer explained that BP is transforming itself into "an integrated energy

company" with 50 GW of renewable energy by 2030 (*The Guardian* 2/13/21).

In the words of billionaire Australian mining magnate Andrew Forrest who recently travelled to 47 countries, "The journey to replace fossil fuels with green energy . . . is violently on the move. You'll see change everywhere. We just can't keep doing things the way we have always done them, otherwise our planet is going to be toast." (*Financial Times*, 2/3/21).

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A leading climate scientist, Michael E. Mann, published a book in January titled *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back Our Planet*. He wrote: "Damaging deadly weather extremes drive home that climate change is no longer theoretical and distant. It's here and now" (p. 226). "The climate crisis is very real. But it is not unsolvable. And it's not too late to act. Every ounce of carbon we don't burn makes things better. There is still time to create a better future . . ." (p. 258).

## Walt Library Project

by Patty Spitzer, Population/Environment Committee

The Population and Environment Committee manages bird feeding stations at four local libraries (Gere, Anderson, Walt, and Eiseley). Feeders have been provided by the Wild Bird Habitat Store and volunteers fill the feeders regularly for the birds and the enjoyment of library patrons. The feeder at Walt is in desperate need of habitat enhancement. Unable to plan for our other yearly activities due to COVID-19, the P&E Committee shifted our focus on how to improve bird habitat at Walt, thus improving the experience for the birds as well as library patrons. We applied for a Public Information and Education grant through the Nebraska Academy of Sciences to enhance the bird feeding station at Walt and were successful in securing grant money for this project.

As you can see, the bird feeder at Walt Library is devoid of habitat. With this grant we will create a pollinator garden consisting of native plants (trees, shrubs, flowers, and sedges) which will provide a much-needed food source and shelter for birds, bees, and other pollinators. Native prairie grasses have already been identified in the area which could provide a backdrop for the pollinator garden. We are collaborating with Lincoln City Libraries, Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, Wild Bird Habitat Store, Prairie Legacy, and are in conversation with others as we plan for the creation of a spectacular bird habitat area. Work will begin this spring, and volunteers will be needed to help with preparing the area and planting. Please contact us at [office@wachiscaaudubon.org](mailto:office@wachiscaaudubon.org) if you are interested in participating or learning more about this exciting project.



Walt Library

## 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 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: 308-633-6333 Fax: 308-633-6335  
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 Leirion Gaylor Baird**

County-City Bldg, 555 S 10<sup>th</sup> St Rm 301, 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 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.

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**During these times, it might lift the spirits to think about the following:**

**"The sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world's joy."**

— Henry Ward Beecher

**"There are always flowers for those who want to see them."**

— Henri Matisse



## **WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2021**

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Recording Secretary .....	*Linda Plock
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Field Trips.....	John Carlini *Lana Novak
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Publicity/Public Relations.....	Arlys Reitan
Donor Development.....	Elizabeth Nelson
Executive Director Audubon Nebraska. .	*Kristal Stoner

**\*Denotes Board member**

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

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## **Sandhill Cranes on the Platte River**

Even though humans have been penned up for the past year, "our" sandhill cranes and Canada geese have still been able to live their normal lives. If you have a hankering to see some normalcy this month, think about going on a private field trip to view the cranes. Check with Rowe Sanctuary for their schedules and recommendations: 308-468-5282 or [rowe.audubon.org](http://rowe.audubon.org). If you can't make it in person, check out the crane cam.

### **Remember Wachiska Audubon When Shopping Online**

Every time you order from Amazon, consider logging into [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). Make Wachiska Audubon Society your permanent designee for a 0.5 percent discount on all purchases at no extra cost to you.

***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**.