



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 46th Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2019

OCTOBER 2019

Volume 28 - Issue 10

Program and General Meeting — Thursday, October 10, 7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, Lincoln

Climate Change and Emerging Diseases: Grandchildren Demand Action and Grandparents Respond

by Dr. Daniel Brooks

Emerging disease is one of the greatest climate-related threats confronting us today, and it is a crisis a century and a half in the making. Emerging infectious diseases in humans, livestock, and crops currently cost the world \$1 trillion a year in production losses and treatment costs, more than the GDP of all but 15 countries.



Dr. Daniel Brooks

The Stockholm Paradigm links the potential for emerging infectious disease outbreaks directly to climate change, altering geographic distributions, bringing pathogens into contact with susceptible but previously unexposed hosts. Throughout the history of life on this planet climate change has always been the major catalyst for such new opportunities because it disrupts ecosystem structures and allows pathogens and hosts to move.

Human activities during the past 15,000 years, including domestication and agriculture, population growth, conflict and

migration, urbanization, and globalization have all increased the risk. Technological humanity now faces an existential crisis. Earth is a minefield of pathogens with the capacity to infect unexposed hosts, and climate change provides the opportunity for contact. The time is short, the danger is great, and we are largely unprepared, but there is hope for managing the crisis.

Dr. Brooks hopes that high schools having groups following the lead of Greta Thunberg will send students to this program. They need to know that someone cares about their future. Dr. Brooks will explain the emerging coalition between grandparents and grandchildren. He will discuss a proactive action plan about emerging diseases called DAMA (document-assess-monitor-act) Protocol that includes a significant component of citizen science. This talk to Wachiska will be only a little technical and will focus mostly on grassroots actions that can make a difference.

Dr. Daniel Brooks is professor emeritus, University of Toronto, and also senior research fellow, H. W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology, University of Nebraska State Museum. He resides in Ashville, North Carolina. His most recent book, *The Stockholm Paradigm: Climate Change and Emerging Disease* (University of Chicago Press), will be available for purchase and signing before and after this presentation.

Join Daniel and Wachiska on **Thursday, October 10**, at **7:00 p.m.** at Lincoln's Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street. Free parking is available in the church lot with overflow parking in the Pius High School lot across the street to the west. There is easy access to the church with no steps and plenty of space for visiting with the speaker and mingling with friends while enjoying refreshments following the meeting. Invite family, friends, colleagues, and especially students and young people to this free public presentation.



Dr. Brooks will also speak at Morrill Hall on October 16 when his presentation will be of a more technical nature.

Calendar

October

- 7 Education Committee, Wachiska office, 6:00 p.m.
- 10 General Meeting, "Climate Change & Emerging Diseases,"
by Dr. Daniel Brooks, Unitarian Church, 7:00 p.m.
- 10 Deadline for ordering birdseed (pages 3-4)
- 10 Deadline for ordering Audubon calendars (page 8)
- 14 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:30 p.m.
- 15 Newsletter deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 18-19 Fall Birdseed Sale** (pages 3-4)
- 24 Legislation Committee, DaVinci's, 11th & G sts., 6:00 p.m.



Field Trip

by John Carlini, Field Trip Chair

Autumn at the Arboretum with Dr. Richard Sutton

Dr. Richard Sutton is a captivating guide to the wonderful world of horticulture with his obvious enthusiasm for native plants and a level of knowledge that enables him to impart insights to those of us who are lucky enough to share his company. Tree lovers will have that opportunity on our October field trip as Dr. Sutton has graciously agreed to lead a tour of the Maxwell Arboretum on East Campus. Leaf colors should be turning by the latter part of the month so, in addition to the fascinating information offered by our expert guide, our tour could provide a dazzling array of fall colors.

We'll meet at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 19**, in Lincoln at the UNL East Campus Dairy Store located on East Campus Loop and accessed by turning north onto Dairy Store Drive from Holdrege Street between 37th and 38th streets. We'll walk the arboretum until 11:30 a.m. There is no fee and the public is welcome. If you have questions, call John at 402-475-7275.

Achieving a Sustainable Future in a Changing Climate

UNL's Dr. Don Wilhite will be the 2019 Sorensen Lecturer on October 6 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. This world-renowned climate scientist will be accompanied by Professor Clint Rowe as they present "Achieving a Sustainable Future in a Changing Climate." Free and open to the public. Light refreshments and childcare will be provided.

As the nation approaches the first presidential election where climate change is a major issue, Wilhite and Rowe will inform Nebraskans about the reality they face. Audience members will be encouraged to submit questions for the speakers to address.

Wilhite and Rowe will discuss why climate scientists and meteorologists expect that as the effects of climate change intensify, the impacts on agriculture, trade, transportation, and other areas of importance to our state will increase.

Funded by an endowment from the Sorensen family in memory of former Nebraska Attorney General C. A. Sorensen, for over 15 years the Sorensen Lecture Series has been presented by the Unitarian Church of Lincoln to the public to highlight current issues. Past presenters have included author Thomas Frank, Lecia Brooks of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and author and civil rights activist Jen Marlowe.

Over the Last 50 Years, North America Has Lost Three Billion Birds

According to a new study, within one human lifetime, North America has lost more than one-quarter of its birds—three billion in total. The declines are due to varying causes, all of which are the result of human activity. Despite being some of our planet's most plentiful creatures, population loss of this magnitude is nothing short of catastrophic.

The study, published by a joint team of conservation biologists, marks the first time experts have tried to estimate the sheer numbers of avian losses in the Western Hemisphere. By zooming out rather than focusing on one particular habitat, we can see that even the common birds we love like Baltimore orioles and barn swallows are disappearing in astounding numbers.

Learn which birds saw the greatest losses since 1970 and what you can do to help protect birds and the places they need at audubon.org/news/audubon-declares-bird-emergency.

ESA is Under Attack as Never Before

This is new. Although the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has been under fire before, this time is different: Behind this move to weaken it is the administration's full force, and vulnerable birds may not be able to withstand it.

The ESA is our nation's best tool for protecting wildlife, with a stellar record of bringing birds back from the edge of extinction. It has stood strong for decades in the face of repeated attempts to undercut it—chiefly from industries that favor development and drilling.

But this administration's anti-conservation stance changes things. They're gutting the law, killing some of its key provisions:

- Removing guaranteed, basic protections for species newly listed as threatened
- Letting economic costs factor into the listing process
- Ignoring the impact of climate change on wildlife at risk

All of this so that oil and gas companies can plunder more protected land—habitats that are vital to so many struggling species.

This is all new, and it's terribly urgent. In this moment, virtually no conservation gain is safe—and neither are birds or the places they need. They need Audubon like never before. Our unflagging protection depends on friends like you. Write, email, or phone elected officials at all levels of government (contact information on page 7). Support conservation organizations such as National Audubon. Remember that Wachiska's prairie project is always in need of manpower and financial resources.



Wachiska Audubon Fall 2019 Birdseed Sale Order Form

	Bag Size	Bag Code	Price Each	Quantity	Total Cost
ALL PRICES INCLUDE SALES TAX					
FEED MIXES	Standard Audubon Mix	40 lb bag	ST40	\$ 32.00	\$
	Classic Audubon Mix	20 lb bag	CL20	\$ 20.00	\$
		40 lb bag	CL40	\$ 35.00	\$
	Attraction Audubon Mix	35 lb bag	AT35	\$ 45.00	\$
	Woodpecker Gourmet	20 lb bag	WO20	\$ 40.00	\$
	Bushy Tail Treat	20 lb bag	BT20	\$ 34.00	\$
SEEDS	Millet, White (98%)	50 lb bag	MI50	\$ 23.00	\$
	Peanuts, shelled rejects	20 lb bag	PR20	\$ 36.00	\$
		20 lb bag	SA20	\$ 23.00	\$
	Safflower Seed	50 lb bag	SA50	\$ 52.00	\$
		Safflower Seed, Nutra Saff	20 lb bag		\$ 25.00
	Sunflower Hearts, coarse	20 lb bag	HC20	\$ 34.00	\$
		50 lb bag	HC50	\$ 75.00	\$
	Sunflower Hearts, fine	20 lb bag	HF20	\$ 35.00	\$
	Sunflower Seed, black oil	25 lb bag	SB25	\$ 19.00	\$
SUET CAKES	High Energy Treat, 11.75 oz. cake		EN-C	\$ 1.50	\$
	Berry Treat, 11 oz. cake		BT-C	\$ 1.50	\$
Total number of bags and cost (All prices INCLUDE sales tax)					\$
Tax Deductible Donation to support Wachiska's education & conservation activities					\$
Total Enclosed. Make check payable to Wachiska Audubon Society					\$

Name (Print) _____ Email address _____ Phone Number (required) _____

Mailing Address _____

This form and your check must be postmarked by Wednesday, October 10, 2019
 Mail to: Wachiska Audubon Society Birdseed Sale - 4547 Calvert St, Suite 10,
 Lincoln NE 68506-5643

ORDER PICK UP DATES - MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

PLEASE—Plan to pick up your order during one of these times

Friday, October 18

3:00 -6:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 19

9:00 -11:00 a.m.

Pick up location: 14th & Arapahoe streets (between Van Dorn & Hwy 2)

Are you interested in volunteering for the birdseed pick up Yes (check box)

Wachiska Audubon Fall 2019 Birdseed Sale & Fundraiser

Wachiska's Birdseed Sales are an important part of our fundraising and offer you a great deal on birdseed! **Our prices are very competitive.** The great majority of Wachiska's budget for education and conservation programs comes from donations and fundraising, and our twice-a-year birdseed sales are two of our major fundraisers. If you feed birds regularly, or want to give it a try, please buy from Wachiska. Our new convenient pick up location in SW Lincoln makes it easier than ever to get you birdseed. We depend on your purchases, and so do our feathered friends! Thank you!

FEED MIXES

Standard Audubon Mix – white millet, sunflower seed, cracked corn, peanuts, oat groats

Classic Audubon Mix – sunflower seed and hearts, white millet, cracked corn, safflower seed, peanuts, oat groats

Attraction Audubon Mix – sunflower seed and hearts, safflower seed, peanuts, raisins, protein pellets

Woodpecker Gourmet – 75% nuts (almonds, peanuts, walnuts), pumpkin seed, corn, black oil sunflower seed and hearts, safflower seed

Bushy Tail Treat – peanuts, sunflower seed, whole corn, raisins, pumpkin seed, feed pellets. Treat your favorite backyard squirrels and keep them away from the bird feeders!

SUET CAKES

High Energy Treat – sunflower seeds, millet, cracked corn; enjoyed by most wild birds

NEW! Berry Treat – a wonderful winter treat

SEEDS

White Millet (98%) – popular with cardinals, mourning doves, house finches, juncos, sparrows

Peanuts (shelled) – attractive for woodpeckers and blue jays

Safflower Seed – good for house finches, chickadees, cardinals, wood peckers – NOT FAVORED by squirrels and grackles.



Nutra Saff Seed is without the hard, outer shell.

Sunflower Hearts – highly prized by birds and leave less mess—use coarse hearts for feeders with large openings that might allow fine hearts to drop out

Black Oil Sunflower Seed – favored by most seed-eating birds; high oil content for more energy

Additional copies of this flyer and the order form are available on our website:

www.WachiskaAudubon.org.

ORDER PICK UP DATES - MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

Pick up site is:
N.W. Corner of 14th &
Arapahoe Street
(between Van Dorn &
Hwy 2) in Lincoln.

Look for Signs

Friday, October 18
3:00 -6:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 19
9:00-11:00 a.m.

PLEASE—Plan to pick up your order during one of these times.

Orders that are not picked up cause a lot of extra work for our volunteers whose help we greatly appreciate! If it is totally impossible for you to pick up your seed, please email Arlys at office@wachiskaudubon.org to make alternate pick up arrangements.

If anyone is interested in volunteering to assist, please contact Lana Novak, 402-570-1273.

How One Young Volunteer Became Raptors' Best Friend

by Patty Spitzer and Theresa Pella

On a cloudy August day, we visited with Betsy Finch at her home to talk about how Raptor Recovery began, its growth, and how it has affected her life.



Betsy Finch at the Raptor Center

In the early 1970s, the National Audubon Society was interested in forming chapters. In 1973, the Wachiska Audubon Society was formed in Lincoln. Betsy (then in her twenties and known as Betsy Hancock) along with five or so others became charter members. Betsy served as president in 1974-75 when National Audubon was encouraging chapters to create something positive, a "Bicentennial project," to buffer the doom and gloom stories about such topics as the status of the country's water and air quality and the impact from toxins like DDT on birds and other wildlife.

After brainstorming options, the chapter settled on raptor recovery. They thought it would be doable and, most importantly, affordable. Thus, Nebraska's first Raptor Recovery Program was born. The program officially began in October 1976 after Betsy obtained all the necessary licenses, established a food source and housing for the birds, enlisted the help of veterinarians, and gained invaluable experience learning how to handle raptors—the training provided by volunteer falconers. This process took 9-10 months to complete. Betsy says she attended many training sessions and conferences and participated in workshops to learn all she could; she still does. Betsy recalls the first bird to arrive that October was a great horned owl, followed quickly by many other birds of prey. Three months later, the projected budget for the year was gone. Thanks to Wachiska and its members, the program stayed afloat.

In 1984, the Raptor Recovery program separated from Wachiska and became known as Raptor Recovery Nebraska. With the continued help of dedicated volunteers (especially Betsy who worked a full-time job in addition to the many hours she spent caring for raptors), veterinarians, and the generosity of Raptor Recovery Nebraska member donors the program grew. In 1999, a Nebraska Environmental Trust grant allowed for the addition of a large flight cage. Birds found injured or ill have been and continue to be transported by dedicated volunteers across the state to Raptor Recovery for rehabilitation. The numbers keep climbing. Raptor Recovery is the only group in Nebraska permitted by the state and federal government to rehabilitate orphaned or injured raptors. Staff and volunteers work with private citizens, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, law enforcement, animal control agencies, and utility companies to find, capture, and deliver injured or orphaned birds to the

rehabilitation center. Food (primarily mice) is provided several times a day to the many different birds based on their individual needs. We accompanied Betsy as she fed and medicated (as needed) vultures, eagles, hawks, and kestrels. It was awesome to witness the respect and care she offered to each bird, some of which literally ate out of her hand!

In 2013, Fontenelle Forest became interested in supporting the work of Raptor Recovery Nebraska. Through a partnership, the program was renamed Fontenelle Forest Raptor Recovery. Betsy was hired to continue with the work she had been doing on a volunteer basis for decades; she was finally getting paid to do what she loved. The mission remains the same: to rehabilitate birds of prey, provide education, research, and ongoing support for raptors. Injured and orphaned birds continue to be housed and treated by Betsy and a host of dedicated volunteers.

In addition to the daily work of caring for sick and injured birds, the program has 40-plus years of statistics providing a valuable resource for scientists and researchers. Betsy states the most significant impact on birds she has witnessed over the years is the changing climate. Changes in temperature and increasing extreme weather directly affect birds' habitat and food sources, as well as migration patterns and reproduction cycles.

Betsy describes her involvement with the program as her life's passion. She finds great personal satisfaction working with birds of prey, states it is a privilege and an honor to be a good steward in this way. She has learned quite a lot about the birds, herself, and others through her work with Raptor Recovery. Once quite shy, she now leads workshops and trainings, speaks to numerous groups to educate, promote understanding and a sense of responsibility for ill or injured birds of prey and, ultimately, to inspire others to do the same. She is currently mentoring a young professional with a passion for raptors. You could call her the ultimate citizen scientist or an accidental entrepreneur, but without a doubt she has created, nurtured, and grown a highly respected and critical program for raptors. Thank you, Betsy!

To Help Birds this Winter, Go Easy on Fall Yard Work

If you want to help birds this autumn, try doing as little as possible! To turn your yard into a place where birds can safely shelter in winter, all it takes is a laid-back approach—and not minding a bit of a mess.

To find out why birds and bugs thrive in less manicured landscapes, and what you can *not* do this fall to create a haven for winter birds, go to audubon.org/news/to-help-birds-winter-go-easy-fall-yard-work.

ANNOUNCEMENT—READ AND REMEMBER

The November *Babbling Brook* newsletter will be several days later in arriving next month. It should still be delivered in time to remind everyone of the month's upcoming activities.

Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

My contribution this month is to offer a short report about two National Audubon projects in our region. The first is a new study, the "North American Grasslands and Birds Report." You can find the 57-page report on the Web under its title. Below I have pulled out some quotes from the executive summary. The loss of the Great Plains' hundreds of grasses, wildflowers, and sedges and their support of insects, songbirds, and mammals "actually dwarfs what we're seeing in the rainforest in the sheer scale, size, and intensity of the crisis," says Marshall Johnson, executive director of Audubon Dakota.

The second is the Conservation Ranching Program that National Audubon has launched in the Great Plains. It has much to say to the dialogue underway among climate activists about eating meat. You can find more about this work on the Web under "Conservation Ranching."

Grassland and Birds Report - ". . . only 11 percent of the tallgrass prairie, 24 percent of the mixed grass prairie, and 54 percent of the shortgrass prairie that once covered much of the continent remains. Furthermore, grassland conversion continues at a rate of millions of acres per year. . . . grassland birds are among the most vulnerable in North America. Total populations have declined more than 40 percent since 1966.

"Audubon also assessed the vulnerability of representative grassland birds and their habitat to warming global temperatures. Our findings make it clear that in addition to

protecting remaining grasslands, we must also advance solutions that reduce carbon emissions . . ." (my emphasis).

Audubon's scientists have built climate models incorporating temperature, precipitation, vegetation, and other characteristics of the habitats that grassland bird species occupy. They found that 16 species will likely see most of their current range become uninhabitable if Earth's temperature rises by three degrees Celsius; if we limit warming to 1.5 degrees, the number facing this threat drops to just three.

The data points to "strongholds" that will provide crucial habitat for grassland birds through the coming changes—if those lands are managed optimally. With more than 80 percent of U.S. grasslands privately owned, ranchers are key to protecting those critical areas. "Grazing is probably the most important tool for manipulating good grassland-bird habitat," says Chris Wilson, director of Audubon's Conservation Ranching Program.

Today, 65 ranches encompassing nearly two million acres (in seven states, not yet Nebraska) are participating in Audubon's Conservation Ranching Initiative. ". . . By adopting bird-friendly ranching practices, they can raise cattle in a way that both minimizes environmental impacts and supports premium pricing for their beef. This initiative is gaining momentum. . . . These practices have the added benefit of sequestering carbon which may create additional market-based incentives. . ." Audubon is also promoting related Farm Bill incentives to conservation.

Audubon certifies habitat to ensure benefits to grassland birds. Beef products are marketed with the Audubon certification seal (but not yet in Nebraska). Key to the health of the grasses, sedges, insects, mammals, and birds are prescribed burns and rotational grazing.

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Arlys Reitan, Office Administrator, 09/20/2019

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Lincoln City Council

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E-mail: council@lincoln.ne.gov

Lincoln Journal Star

Letters to the editor, 926 P 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 _____

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

___ **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.



American Goldfinch Family

2020 Audubon Calendars Available

For the past dozen years, Wachiskans, their families, and friends have looked forward to ordering Audubon's gorgeous calendars (check last month's newsletter or the website for the various themes and sizes). High-quality paper and fabulous colors make for perfect gifts.

This is a small fundraiser for Wachiska every year. After checking out the styles available this year, contact Arlys in the Wachiska office to place your order. All sales tax, postage, and handling are included in the prices shown.

Order deadline is October 10 with payment due at time of pick up from the Wachiska office. You'll be notified when the calendars are in, which should be in mid-November.



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Fall Birdseed Sale
Order Form Inside

WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2019

OFFICERS

President.....	*Stu Luttich (Geneva).....	402-759-3597
Vice President.....	*Theresa Pella.....	512-585-1511
Recording Secretary	*Cathy Shaner.....	402-421-1652
Treasurer	*Mary Rogge.....	402-488-1342
Immediate Past President.....	*Gary Fehr.....	402-570-4382

STANDING COMMITTEES/POSITIONS

Director at Large.....	*vacant	
Director at Large.....	*Terry Stentz	402-202-8819
Director at Large.....	*Melinda Varley	402-416-4111
Conservation.....	*Ross Scott (Roca)	402-202-1523
Education	*Tim Knott	402-483-5656
Field Trips	John Carlini	402-475-7275
	*Lana Novak	402-475-8693
Hospitality.....	Cheryl Moncure.....	402-488-0036
Legislation.....	*Bruce Kennedy (Malcolm)	402-796-2114
	*vacant	
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	*Mary King	402-570-3295
Publicity/Public Relations.....	Arlys Reitan	WAS office 402-486-4846

*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
Executive Director Audubon Nebraska.....	*Kristal Stoner	402-797-2301
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Director	Meghan Sittler	402-797-2301
Webmaster	Roxanne Smith	402-477-1319
Wachiska Computer Issues/Questions	Linda Sullivan.....	402-580-8515
Bookkeeper.....	Nancy Hamer.....	402-499-1306

Remember Wachiska Audubon When Shopping Online

Every time you order from Amazon, please consider logging into smile.amazon.com. Make Wachiska Audubon Society your permanent designee for a five percent discount on whatever you purchase 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**.