



**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

**JANUARY 2019**

**Volume 28 - Issue 1**

**General Meeting and Program — Thursday, January 10, 7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 6300 A St, Lincoln**

## The Beauty and Diversity of One Square Meter of Prairie

by Chris Helzer, Ecologist and Land Manager, The Nature Conservancy

Chris Helzer has spent much of his career with The Nature Conservancy trying to convince people that prairies are interesting. As an ecologist and land manager, he spends a lot of time developing and testing prairie restoration and management strategies that promote biological diversity. After all, it's critically important that we manage our remaining prairies effectively. However, ensuring the survival of those last grassland remnants also depends upon the public's appreciation and support of prairie conservation. Chris's book, *The Ecology and Management of Prairies*, and his blog, "The Prairie Ecologist," are two examples of how he uses photography and writing to showcase and advocate for prairies.



**Chris Helzer**

Chris recently embarked upon a new project in the hopes of engaging a broader audience—a year-long effort to photograph all the beauty and diversity he could find within a single square meter of prairie. That tiny plot is located in a narrow strip of restored grassland at Lincoln Creek Prairie in Aurora, Nebraska.

While he primarily started the project as a way to help others discover prairies and their beauty, he also ended up being

profoundly affected himself. Chris has always been drawn to photographing flowers, bugs, and other tiny creatures, but he usually does so while wandering broadly through prairies, looking for subjects that draw his attention. Despite more than 25 years of studying and exploring prairies, the process of sitting down and focusing his eyes and camera within a tiny square space turned out to be truly inspirational.

Chris amassed hundreds of striking photographs during nearly 50 visits to his plot in 2018. Those photos featured a total of 110 species of plants and animals, all within that single square meter of prairie. In addition to astonishing species diversity, he chronicled the life, activity, and beauty of a prairie microcosm throughout an entire year. During this presentation, Chris will share photographic highlights from his year-long effort, as well as engaging natural history stories about many of the species featured in those images. If you have friends who don't quite understand what you see in prairies, this would be a great program to bring them to!

Chris Helzer shares a house in Aurora with his wife, kids, dogs, bunny, fish, and an unknown small mammal that keeps eating the squash in the basement. He earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from UNL in the mid-1990s. After much begging and pleading, he was hired by The Nature Conservancy as a land steward in 1997, and has managed to keep himself engaged in prescribed fire, grazing, and prairie restoration ever since. In addition, though, he has become active in research and evaluation work, especially the testing of new restoration and management techniques. Much of his job also involves outreach. Chris shares lessons learned from TNC's land stewardship through his prairie management book and his blog, numerous presentations, and other vehicles.

Join Wachiska **Thursday, January 10, at 7:00 p.m.** for this free public program 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 mingling while enjoying refreshments after the meeting.

### Calendar

#### January

- 10 General Meeting, "The Beauty and Diversity of One Square Meter of Prairie," by Chris Helzer, TNC
- 14 Newsletter submission deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 14 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:30 p.m.
- 15 Board Meeting, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.
- 19 Winter Raptors Field Trip, 1:30 p.m. (page 2)
- 24 Legislation Committee, DaVinci's, 11th & G sts., 6:00 p.m.

**NO** Education Committee this month



## Field Trip

by John Carlini, Field Trip Chair

### Winter Raptors

The frozen silent Nebraska landscape often appears unoccupied in the winter but stealthy avian hunters can be lurking in the marshlands as they seek out a winter supply of voles and mice. Resident owls and hawks are sometimes joined on local prairie wetlands by additional visiting raptors from further north. January's field trip will be an auto tour at the edge of the Rainwater Basin west of Lincoln to scout for wintering predators such as rough-legged hawks, Harlan's hawks, northern harriers, great horned owls, and short-eared owls. We will be using our vehicles as blinds and little to no walking will be required.

We'll meet on **Saturday, January 19**, at **1:30 p.m.** in Lincoln on the south side of the State Capitol across the street from the governor's mansion. Participants can caravan or carpool for the 40-mile drive to our destination. Winter weather won't affect our plans unless roads are slick or impassable. There is no fee for this outing, and the public is welcome. Call John at 402-475-7275 if you have questions.

### Make Your Own Vegetarian Suet

(borrowed from National Audubon's website)

With this vegetarian version of suet (traditionally made from rendered animal fat) you can provide the perfect winter substitute for birds that normally feast on insects. This lipid-rich treat can help prepare year-round avian residents for the long winter and is quite the attraction for woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, nuthatches, and titmice.

- 1 1/2 Cups shortening (look for palm oil-free options)
- 3/4 Cup nut butter (any kind)
- 3 1/2 Cups wild birdseed
- 1 Cup quick oats
- 1/2 Cup corn meal
- Ice cube tray



**Black-capped chickadee**

Mix birdseed, oats, and corn meal and set aside. Combine nut butter and shortening in a separate bowl and melt. Stir until completely combined. Pour melted mixture into dry ingredients and stir until combined. Spoon mixture into ice cube tray. Freeze for 1 - 2 hours and place in your suet feeder. *Note that this is not recommended for outdoor temperatures above 50 degrees.*

## Highlights of Wachiska's Holiday Party

by Arlys Reitan

Every December Wachiskans look forward to our annual "party" where we fill up on holiday goodies during the potluck, pick up a few auction bargains, and settle in for a delightful, light-hearted presentation. Last month we got the crème de la crème all the way around!

Starting off, there were four tables of all kinds of foods which were enjoyed by 127 members, family, and friends. Continuing throughout the evening, attendees pored over an array of 35 items donated for the silent auction. These included books old and new, puzzles, calendars, homemade jams, hand-knitted mittens with a matching cap, framed photographs, unframed pictures of birds, and more. Of special mention were the two large, framed photos donated by our speaker, Joel Sartore, from his Photo Ark project begun in 2005 for *National Geographic*.

After dinner and announcements, Joel presented a slide show featuring the over 8,700 animals he has photographed to this point. These are species protected in zoos around the world due to the fact they are quickly vanishing in the wild. Words cannot express how spectacular the images and commentary were for this huge endeavor. One cannot top the passion Joel Sartore has for his work—and the accompanying humor is the frosting on the cake. Wachiska is forever grateful to Joel for his continued interest in and support for Wachiska Audubon.

At the end of the evening when silent auction items were picked up, President Gary Fehr and Treasurer Bill Gustafson tallied receipts totaling \$1,007. It was a memorable evening all around. A tremendous thank you to Gary and Bill, Lana Novak, Tim Knott, Melinda Varley, Theresa Pella, Linda Brown, Cheryl Moncure, Ninette Lookabaugh, and Harry Heafer. Without Lana's help, the auction would not have happened!

### Inclement Weather Policy for Wachiska Events

by Arlys Reitan, Office Administrator

Wachiska will continue to follow procedures set forth a few years ago regarding cancellation of chapter events during the winter months. If Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) cancel classes during the day, Wachiska will not hold events that day. The same will be true for our evening meetings and programs. If we have the opportunity, we will try to contact local radio and TV stations, but just remember that, if there is no school, there will be no Wachiska events during the same time period. Of course this will pertain only to weather-related cancellations and not other LPS days off for holidays, vacations, or meetings.



*What bird name contains the name of another bird?*

## Bhutan

by Richard Peterson

Bhutan and its philosophy of Gross National Happiness (instead of Gross National Product) is an intriguing idea to us in the West. Having lived and traveled extensively overseas, writing about my



Taktsang Palphug Monastery, "Tiger's Nest"

impressions of Bhutan was difficult to get from pen to paper. A country with optimism and some contradictions is the best way to describe my experience. Of the other countries I visited on this trip—India and Nepal—Bhutan was the most enlightening.

I was there a week, visiting only the cities of Paro (location of its international airport), Punakaha, Thimphu (capital, pop. 65,000), and the historical and cultural places within a day trip of each. This represented a small part of the western third of Bhutan.

Tucked in the breathtaking foothills and high mountains of the eastern Himalayas, Bhutan is geopolitically in South Asia. It's the region's least populated nation (800,000 in 2016) and is sandwiched between China to the north and India to the south. China has a simmering border dispute with this country along with fears of interference in Bhutan's internal affairs; India is on better terms, with few limits on the movement of people between their countries. This relationship was the result of a strategic partnership driven by the not-so-distant past Chinese experiment with communism.

In South Asia, Bhutan ranks first in economic freedom, ease of doing business, and peace. It is second in per capita income (US\$2,500 in 2012). Bhutan maintains diplomatic relations with the European Union and others and is a member of the United Nations; however, it has no formal ties with the permanent members of the UN Security Council, including the United States.

Bhutan was never colonized as was India. It has strong cultural ties with Tibet (now an autonomous region of China). Until recently, it was a Buddhist theocracy. In 2008, Bhutan transitioned from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy and now has a bicameral parliament. The head of state is the King of Bhutan, known as the "Dragon King." The country is 75 percent Buddhist.

Hydroelectricity is the country's major export. The production facilities were built and continue to be maintained by India which receives a share of production. Other exports include cardamon, gypsum, timber, handicrafts, and fruit. Only recently have paved roads been built in Bhutan. Contract laborers from India are helping with the country's building programs and transportation infrastructure. Tourist numbers are controlled, but tourism is a moneymaker; hefty per day entry fees are charged all visitors including the many who visit from China.

With smart phones and the outside world beckoning, young people see different opportunities. Perhaps the country's recent move into the technology sector with green tech and e-commerce will convince them to stay home.

Bhutan prefers to conserve the environment and its rich natural resources rather than exploit both solely for short-term gain. The people have a sort of "we'll-save-them-for-a-rainy-day" outlook. The country aspires to become the first in the world with 100 percent organic farming and has already significantly reduced its use of commercial fertilizers and pesticides.

This country is so remote that defending itself (yes, they do have a small army) from aggression is problematic. How the country survives and maintains its vision of the future and rich Buddhist traditions, wedged between Hindu India and no religious tradition in today's China, remains to be seen. We should all be so optimistic.

## January Programs at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center

by Kevin Poague and Jason St. Sauver

On January 3, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, [CBC4Kids!](#) – Our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids will take place during the holiday break to help get children and their families involved in community science and assist staff in counting the birds of the prairie in the winter. Free hot chocolate for all who attend.

Then on January 5, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m., [Winter Walkabout](#) – Take your first walk on the prairie in 2019 with us and look for tracks in the snow, talk about how wildlife survives the winter, and enjoy the brisk stroll on the Nebraska prairie.

Come out to the prairie on January 26, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, for [Snug-as-a-Bug](#) – Using magnifiers, microscopes, and mindful techniques, adult/child teams will probe through leaf litter and logs to discover a variety of spineless wonders wiling away the winter. Activities include a short hike and indoor investigation. \$10/family. Space is limited, preregistration is required.

Full details at [springcreekprairie.audubon.org](http://springcreekprairie.audubon.org); to register, call 402-797-2301, or write [scp@audubon.org](mailto:scp@audubon.org).



*"Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads."*

—Henry David Thoreau

*"Winter is on my head, but eternal Spring is in my heart."*

—Victor Hugo

# Christmas Bird Counts and Global Warming

by Dr. Paul A. Johnsgard

Even though President Donald Trump can't seem to get his self-described "genius" brain around it, more than 100 species of migratory Great Plains birds have already perceived that climatic warming has occurred in recent decades and have adaptively modified their behavior as a result. Our birds have done this by (1) migrating south later in the fall, (2) migrating north earlier in the spring, (3) wintering farther north and/or in larger numbers, and (4) breeding farther north.



House finch

I have been researching these later fall migration and more northerly wintering trends in recent decades, and have published two books on the subject based in part on the analysis of more than 50 years of local Christmas Bird Counts (Johnsgard, 1998,

2009). In that effort, I have analyzed nearly five decades of counts covering all the Great Plains states from North Dakota south through Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle (Johnsgard, 2009, 2015). The latter analysis involved tabulating the results of nearly 1,000 counts including 210 species, and representing about 20,000 total party-hours of observation throughout all these states over nearly five decades between 1967 and 2014. This task required help in the tabulation and a computer-based analysis by all of my 20 ornithology students at Cedar Point Biological Station one summer. During this survey period, the great majority of species studied exhibited northward distributional changes, with at least five species (Canada goose, mallard, black-capped chickadee, American goldfinch, and house finch) shifting the center of their late December distributions about two states northward; another ten species shifted northward by at least one state. Only one species showed an apparent southward shift.

Christmas Bird Counts in Lincoln were started in 1909, but it wasn't until 1947 that an unbroken yearly series of counts was begun. The second-longest series of continuous counts in Nebraska has been held at Scottsbluff where the series began in 1949, the third-longest has been in Omaha, continuous since 1962. My study of the counts from Lincoln terminated in 1997 (Johnsgard, 1998). These were not analyzed by party-hour but do show interesting changes in species' relative occurrence over time, and especially a gradual increase in both number and abundance of water-dependent species, e.g., geese and ducks.

I later performed a more detailed analysis (Johnsgard, 2009) of Lincoln Christmas Counts, covering the years 1977–2005, the period when global warming was starting to become increasingly evident. Although increased total numbers of birds seen per yearly count can be expected to have increased over time as the number and competence of participants has increased, in many species the increases have been spectacular.

The species with the greatest increases in average annual count totals have been (in descending order): Canada goose, mallard, ring-billed gull, American robin, dark-eyed junco, rock pigeon, and red-winged blackbird. Of these, only the robin, junco, and pigeon are not directly dependent on water. In contrast, the species with the greatest decreases in average annual count totals have been (in descending order): European starling, house sparrow, Lapland longspur, and horned lark. The reasons for the reductions in the starling and sparrow numbers remain unclear to me, but the decreases in the horned lark and Lapland longspur probably have resulted from their more northerly wintering in recent years.



European starling

Water-dependent birds seen for the first time on counts between 1998 and 2005 include three ducks and three sandpipers, plus the western grebe and marsh wren. Other water-dependent species that have increased markedly since 1988 include 12 ducks, three geese, two gulls, great blue heron, bald eagle, American coot, and red-winged blackbird. During the 2017 count there was a total of 18 species of waterfowl seen, plus three species of gulls, killdeer, American coot, and great blue heron, or 24 total water-dependent species; by comparison between 1946 and 1955 the only species of waterfowl appearing on any of the ten counts was the mallard!

It will be interesting to see what further evidence of global warming might be suggested when we receive the results of the 2018 counts! (*Editor: Watch for the February Babbling Brook article covering the count results from this Christmas Bird Count. All photos in this article were taken by Johnsgard.*)

## References

- P. A. Johnsgard. 1998. *A half-century of winter bird surveys at Lincoln and Scottsbluff, Nebraska*. *Nebraska Bird Review* 66:74-84.
- P. A. Johnsgard. 2009. *Recent changes in winter bird numbers at Lincoln, Nebraska*. *Nebraska Bird Review* 74:66-22.
- P. A. Johnsgard. 2009. *Four Decades of Christmas Bird Counts in the Great Plains: Ornithological Evidence of a Changing Climate*. Univ. of Nebraska Digital Commons. 334 pp.
- P. A. Johnsgard. 2015. *Global Warming and Population Responses among Great Plains Birds*. Univ. of Nebraska Digital Commons. 384 pp.



Mourning doves

# Human Population Really Does Matter

by Dr. Chuck Francis

*Population & Environment Committee*

Rocket science is not required to connect the dots among human population growth, food supply, environment, and future prospects for wildlife. Our global population is projected to level in this century, yet many say we are already beyond the planet's carrying capacity. More people need more food, and better distribution is essential as there are more obese people today than those severely undernourished. With major cereal crop yields already at their yield plateau, it's unlikely that small improvements in farming will produce needed food on the same available lands. Increasing chemical pesticide and fertilizer applications to sustain crop yields on degraded soils contributes to pollution in our lakes, waterways, and oceans. Pressure to put marginal lands into production forces wildlife into ever-narrowing habitats, complicated even more by global warming. These four elements obviously interact, and we must envision specific actions that can change the disastrous course that is accelerating with current focus of our government on short-term planning, sustaining business profits at the expense of people and wildlife, and neglecting environmental priorities.

In 1900, there were 1.6 billion people on Earth; in a mere 100 years this number was 6.1 billion. In the last 18 years, our species has multiplied to 7.7 billion people, and is projected to reach 9.6 billion by mid-century. Challenges generated by increased numbers are many. We will need to increase available food by 70 percent over the next three decades to provide an adequate diet for everyone, and we need to produce more on present fertile lands since most arable soils are already under cultivation. The Green Revolution with improved genetic varieties, increased irrigation, and more chemical fertilizer and pesticide use improved production, incomes, and diets for people who lived in the most favored areas, for those with available infrastructure and credit. Yet nearly a billion people were left behind. The United Nations millennium goals of feeding everyone now appear impossible to achieve.

There are positive steps available. Enough food is produced for an adequate diet for all seven billion people, but we currently don't use all that we raise due to food loss in the field and food waste in the system. Allocation of grain to produce biofuels and inefficient protein production with ruminant livestock could be changed to provide food for people instead. Vegetable sources of protein already dominate diets in some cultures. A serious move in this direction would solve much of the hunger challenge. In countries where war and civil unrest disrupt economies and resources go into weapons rather than food, there is often wide malnutrition. But the defense industry in our country and others is sustained by feeding these conflicts. All these problems can be solved by serious diplomacy and working together toward common goals. Isolationism and "me first" attitudes do not lead to solutions.

As incomes rise in many parts of the world, people seek improved diets, and overall demand is accentuated by increasing

population. Many in the Third World look to successful economies in the North as viable models for development. Population has already leveled in many places, especially in Europe, and today only increases due to immigration. Education, modern medicine, appropriate agricultural technologies, and fertile lands have helped us achieve this goal, but there are many inequities in food and resource availability in developed economies. The current growing divide between rich and poor, between those with power and those without, is not a sustainable model or one to be copied by others. Social and economic solutions could lead to more equitable societies: adjusting tax structure, placing caps on executive salaries, assuring basic and livable minimum wages or guaranteed incomes, and providing food assistance to those in need are specific steps we could take to move toward a viable and sustainable future.

Intensified food production is essential, but mainstream agriculture aims to achieve this with more chemical fertilizers which are costly in energy. Protecting crops from insects, plant pathogens, and weeds often follows a conventional strategy with higher doses of pesticides or increasingly expensive new products to kill evolving pests. The yield plateau or maximum production already reached in rice, corn, and wheat is a concern for plant breeders. Switching research to other crops with untapped genetic potential opens new opportunities through a diverse range of food crops to alleviate hunger. Emerging genetic resistance in weeds to all known herbicide modes of action is serious, but one that can be overcome through crop rotations, cover crops and other ways to suppress weeds, and more diverse species instead of monocultures. This technology is known, and only needs to be applied.

Changes in climate with global warming, locally modified rainfall patterns, and more extreme weather events all contribute to disruptions in food production. Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, limiting fossil fuel use by conservation, and living on foods produced locally with sustainable practices can all contribute to a more stable climate and weather patterns. These are global issues not easily solved by single countries. There are many feasible changes that can lead us in the right direction.

Population, food production, and climate change all contribute to change or loss in habitat for wildlife. Only when we recognize these connections and create a societal will to modify our diets and consumption can there be measured improvement in hopes for wildlife in the future.

The first step is recognizing that changes are needed by building awareness of what we can do now at the local level to help solve seemingly intractable challenges. The second step is developing an attitude receptive to change and creating a shared responsibility for making things better for all, not just a favored few. The decisive step is action, starting at the local level and moving to the larger sphere. Now it is time to follow these steps to create a better and more equitable tomorrow. We owe this to our children and future generations across the planet.

# Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

Lancaster County may be moving into the clean energy future we need by the time you read this. If the County Board accepts a change in zoning rules as recommended by the Health Department and the Planning Commission, we may see wind turbines in the south side of the county. Also, a project under consideration could locate a very, very large solar project on our east side. It would be good to be able to see right here manifestations of the changes needed worldwide.

The dispute about the zoning rules concern the sound of wind machines, the possible health effects of annoyance (sleep disturbance, stress, etc.), and whether it is ethical to set different standards for “nonparticipating” and “participating” landowners. Those participating allow the turbines on their land or otherwise support the project. Studies showed that even at levels over 45 decibels, participating landowners report little to no annoyance at all from wind turbine sound. No surprise—the wind company makes payments to participating landowners. (For more on the science, go to the Planning Commission under the Lancaster County Planning Department, then find the agenda for November 28, the last item, for the Health Department’s submission. Blue Prairie Wind’s expert’s submission is under the “full agenda.”)

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“Democrats and Republicans Want to Tax Pollution—and Give the Money Back to You” is the *Miami Herald* headline announcing HR7173, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. The headline is an accurate summary of the bill with Republican and Democratic House members signing on, introduced in late November and to be reintroduced with the new Congress in January. The proposal is “revenue neutral,” meaning that all money collected is sent out monthly as “dividends” to American households. Monthly checks going to a family of four would total \$3,456 for the year. Most people, except for big energy users, will receive more in carbon dividends than they pay in increased costs for gas, electricity, and other products.

Coal, oil, and gas will be taxed upstream, at the mine or refinery, starting low and growing predictably over time. In ten years, U.S. carbon emissions are projected to be reduced by 33 percent below 2015 levels and by 90 percent by 2050—three times greater than Clean Power Plan reductions. U.S. manufacturers would be protected by a carbon border fee adjustment; imported fuels and carbon intensive goods would be covered by an equalization tariff. HR7173 doesn’t guarantee us a stable climate, but it moves us pretty quickly in the right direction with a market-based method that both parties can support.

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The Fourth National Climate Assessment says about our region, the Northern Plains, that the current conversion rates of grasslands to wheat, corn, and soybeans “have not been seen in

the Corn Belt since the rapid mechanization of U.S. agriculture in the 1920s and 1930s.” The report anticipates degradation of wetlands of the Prairie Pothole region, with negative effects on the nearly 120 bird species, including ducks and shorebirds, which use it for nesting and migratory habitat. The Assessment notes that “grassland nesting bird populations are declining faster than any other group of birds in North America.”

## “Reluctant Radical,” a Documentary Film

by Linda R. Brown

This film vividly portrays Ken Ward, a deeply committed climate activist. Lindsey Grayzel, the filmmaker, skillfully slips us into Ward’s life and mind. We start to see how Ward’s depth of understanding of what greenhouse gases are doing to our world leave him little choice in the actions he takes to stop the oil companies and wake us up. I am in awe of Ken Ward and the other activists who share their stories in this film which I saw last summer in Kansas City. I am happy we have the opportunity to see it here in Lincoln on Saturday, January 26, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Lincoln’s Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street. There will be a question/answer session with Ken Ward via zoom at 8:30 p.m. There will be no admission; a free-will offering will be taken.

## National Audubon Convention in Wisconsin

by Jason St. Sauver, Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center

We want to ensure that all Wachiskans are aware of the Audubon convention next summer in Milwaukee! We hope to be sending a bunch from Audubon Nebraska as well as Nebraska chapter representatives and hope some folks from Wachiska may be able to join in the fun during July 26 - 28. Two years ago we had a thrilling time in Utah. We will consider coordinating a bus to share if we get enough interest. For a peek at the agenda, visit <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/2019-convention>. Talk to your friends who might be interested and stay tuned!

## Nature Center Offering Spring Birding Trips

Pioneers Park Nature Center invites the public to take part in two upcoming birding trips. February 8 is the deadline for registering for the March 8 and March 9 outings to view sandhill cranes at Audubon’s Rowe Sanctuary near Gibbon. The fee includes transportation, a meal, and the cost of the viewing blind. Participants must be able to walk on uneven trails in low light and in possibly less-than-ideal weather.

On April 26, a trip to see prairie-chickens and sharp-tailed grouse will leave Lincoln and return April 28. Participants will go to the Switzer Ranch near Burwell in the Sandhills.

For registration details, including costs, contact the nature center at 402-441-7895 or [naturecenter@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:naturecenter@lincoln.ne.gov).

## 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: 308-633-6333 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 Chris Beutler**

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

\_\_\_ **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**

## Collecting Calendars NOW

Now is the time to come to the aid of Wachiska Audubon if you have been inundated with 2019 calendars as well as old ones from years past. Bring them to the January 10 general meeting or drop them by the Wachiska office, 4547 Calvert Street by January 10. The next day we will be distributing 2019 calendars to area retirement centers or nursing homes. Teachers will be able to use the old ones for science and art projects.

Thank you ahead of time for helping to recycle and reuse in this way.

**NOTE:** Details of technology equipment recycling to be announced in February or March.



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**4547 Calvert St Ste 10**  
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402-486-4846  
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## WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2019

### OFFICERS

President.....	*Stu Lutlich (Geneva).....	402-759-3597
Vice President.....	*Theresa Pella.....	512-585-1511
Recording Secretary.....	*Cathy Shaner.....	402-421-1652
Treasurer.....	*Jerry Wiggle.....	402-429-0824
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.....	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
	*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.....	*Mary King.....	402-570-3295
Publicity/Public Relations.....	Judith Gibson.....	402-466-0117

\*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

## 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**.