



**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

**APRIL 2019**

**Volume 28 - Issue 4**

**General Meeting and Program — Thursday, April 11, 7:00 p.m., Unitarian Church, 6300 A St, Lincoln**

## Birds, Bees, Butterflies, and You: Habitat Management for Pollinators

by *Mercy Manzanares-Dinwiddie, Wildlife Biologist*

**M**onarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) are Nebraska's most iconic pollinators. They have earned this title because their striking orange and black wings carry them more than 1,500 miles to overwinter in the central Mexican Highlands. However, it is in Nebraska that they breed and lay their eggs on a very special prairie forb, milkweed.



**Mercy Manzanares-Dinwiddie**

Serving as monarch butterflies' host plant, milkweed is essential to their life cycle. This can also be said for an array of arthropods that also rely on milkweed for forage. It is only the monarch, through its mass migration, that we can quantify the losses associated with the disappearance of milkweed. The monarch acts as a sentinel "canary in the coal mine" for North American invertebrates; through the documented 87 percent decline in

their overwintering populations, we can infer it is not just the monarch that is in trouble.

Restoring monarch butterfly populations will require managing habitat, using techniques that increase the abundance of milkweed. In 2016, the Nebraska Monarch and Pollinator Initiative set a goal of 125 million new milkweed stems. To accomplish this objective, it was necessary to evaluate different land management techniques for *Asclepias* abundance and richness. In an extensive two-year study, 337 surveys were conducted on eight types of properties that had distinct land management techniques implemented. With the results of the study, our state hopes to be a pioneer in restoring milkweed habitat, which not only benefits the monarch butterfly but also a diversity of other pollinators and birds. During her talk, our speaker will discuss the results of the study as well as best management practices for tallgrass prairies that benefit pollinators and other winged species of Nebraska.

**Mercy Manzanares-Dinwiddie** is a wildlife biologist with the Nebraska Wildlife Federation and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. She holds a master's degree in biology with an emphasis in entomology and has worked in the United States and Mexico. After focusing on social and edible insects south of the border, Mercy developed a passion for pollinators which brought her back stateside. Since then she has been conducting research on monarchs and other pollinators to improve habitat restoration efforts for those taxa in Nebraska. Her work for the Nebraska Wildlife Federation also focuses on getting diverse urban communities outdoors, so everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the mental and physical benefits of nature.

Join Wachiska Audubon for this program on **Thursday, April 11, 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 mingling while enjoying refreshments after this free program.

### Calendar

#### April

- 1 Education Committee, Wachiska office, 6:00 p.m.
- 8 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:30 p.m.
- 11 General Meeting, Pollinators by Mercy Dinwiddie, Unitarian Church, 6300 A Street, 7:00 p.m.
- 15 Newsletter submission deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 16 Board Meeting, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.
- 20 Field Trip to Osage WMA near Tecumseh, 8:00 a.m. (page 2)
- 25 Legislation Committee, DaVinci's, 11th & G sts., 6:00 p.m.
- 27 EARTH DAY, Lincoln's Union Plaza, 21st & O sts., 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (page 4)



## Field Trip

by John Carlini, Field Trip Chair

### Odyssey to Osage Wildlife Management Area

Who knows what avian surprises reside at Osage Wildlife Management Area (WMA) by Tecumseh? We have no idea but intend to find out. A handful of public areas pepper the hills in that region but appear to languish from low birder visitation as evidenced on eBird's database by the paltry number of checklists that have been entered for Osage WMA. Our April field trip will strive to "fill two birds with one scone" (killing birds with stones is so passé) as we explore an unfamiliar place while simultaneously learning more about its inhabitants. Trails throughout the property will provide access for our hike, but the hills and remote location could harbor unforeseen challenges so sturdy footwear is advised. Also recommended is a water bottle and binoculars if you have them.

We'll meet on **Saturday, April 20**, at **8:00 a.m.** on the south side of the Capitol in Lincoln, on H Street across from the governor's mansion. Participants can either caravan or carpool for the 55-mile trip to our destination. For anyone preferring to join the group in Tecumseh, we'll rendezvous shortly after 9:00 a.m. at Casey's General Store located approximately a half mile south of the intersection of Highway 136 and Road 50. No fee or entry permit will be required, and the public is welcome. If you have questions, call John at 402-475-7275.

### Sandhill Cranes Came Late to the Party

by Shari Schwartz and John Carlini

Mid-March is typically the time cranes start nearing peak numbers in Central Nebraska, but this year both cranes and crane-watchers on Wachiska's March field trip experienced something out of the ordinary.

Nebraska's rivers were swollen that weekend from a hefty accumulation of ice and snow left in the wake of a relentless winter, and the Platte River roost site was flowing too fast and too high to accommodate all of the cranes in the area even though there were far fewer than in normal years. At sundown the sky held an uncharacteristically meager number of cranes and, instead of



**Immature Sandhill Crane**  
photo by John Carlini

thronging towards the river from every direction, we observed a continuous trickle of small flocks arriving in a flooded field fairly near the river where they appeared to be gathering to spend the night. A few miles away, we encountered an even larger congregation in another flooded field, with numbers great enough to create the cacophonous chorus that's usually only heard on their river roost; but on this occasion, we could hear that wonderful sound right from the road while sitting in our cars. Suddenly some unseen culprit flushed a large contingency from the field bringing to mind how stressful it must be for the cranes to not have the protection of the river at night.

On our way home we stopped at the Alda Bridge to check if any cranes were using the river and, although it was too dark for a visual assessment, we could hear some calling from their customary spot on the far side of the river albeit with a chorus that was noticeably sparser-sounding than usual. A volunteer at Rowe Sanctuary confirmed that many of the cranes had overnighted in flooded fields while the river was too deep due to their preference for ~6 inches of water for roosting. Just a couple days later the river levels had already dropped sufficiently for Rowe to report cranes had resumed their traditional massive slumber parties on the Platte River.

### How to Make Hummingbird Nectar

from National Audubon's website

Hummingbirds are some of the smallest birds in the world. Flapping away at up to 90 beats/second burns up calories fast. To satisfy their speedy metabolisms, these busy birds consume half their body weight in bugs and nectar, feeding every 10-15 minutes and visiting 1,000 - 2,000 flowers/day.

You can help these hardworking foragers get their needed nutrients by providing them with their favorite post-workout meal—nectar. This hummingbird sweet treat can be made with two ingredients. By filling your feeder with this do-it-yourself delight, you can complement nectar-rich plants and watch these beautiful little birds feed and flutter all day.

#### Materials:

1/4 Cup refined white table sugar

1 Cup boiling water

Bowl

Spoon

There's no need for red dye. The chemicals could prove harmful.

#### Steps:

1. Mix sugar and boiling water until sugar is dissolved.
2. Cool and fill feeder.
3. Hang up your feeder outside and wait for hummers to come.

(Do NOT use honey which can promote dangerous fungal growth. Organic, natural, and raw sugars contain levels of iron that could be harmful to the birds. Plain white table sugar is sucrose which, when mixed with water, very closely mimics the chemical composition of natural nectar.)

## April Introduces our 31st Birdathon

by Tim Knott, Birdathon Committee



Beginning in April, Wachiska's largest fundraiser gets underway with the hope of accomplishing the things we want to do each year.

Around April 1, you should receive our annual Birdathon

letter explaining how Wachiska makes use of your gifts. When you get your letter, please make a decision to contribute. Many of our members participate each year, knowing how necessary their support is to the success of our chapter. We hope you will contribute, too, during our 31<sup>st</sup> Birdathon.

The Birdathon makes our education activities such as Prairie Discovery Day possible. It allows Wachiska to have an active role in protecting wildlife and habitat at the state legislature. Gifts from Birdathon help maintain our office, equipment, and part-time office manager. Wachiska's computers are about 10 years old, and we will be needing new ones soon.

You can contribute to Wachiska Audubon when you receive your Birdathon letter in April. You can donate online during Give to Lincoln Day on May 30. If you want to see birds you may never have seen before or visit some exceptional birding areas, plan to join in our Birdathon hikes on Birdathon weekend, May 11 - 12. Watch for more information next month. Thank you for thinking of Wachiska with your support.

## THANK YOU!!

by Lana Novak, Birdseed Sale Committee

Thanks to all who helped with the Spring Birdseed Sale in mid-March. We hope the birds are appreciating our efforts! Those helping this time around were Cathy Shaner, Elizabeth Nelson, Linda Sullivan, Barb Beall, Carol Stewart, Jeff Meyer, Rachel and Alex Lehmann, Troy Kash-Brown, and Lana Novak. We cannot forget to thank all those customers who purchased birdseed for this semi-annual fundraiser.

Lots of organizing goes into even a small event: preparing order forms and announcements and getting them into the newsletter, ordering the seed from the supplier, lining up volunteers to unload bags off the truck, finding workers to lift all that seed into customers' vehicles, carting remaining seed back to the Wachiska office if someone forgot to pick it up or was out of town, putting out signs, obtaining permission to again use the garage space, and making sure all receipts get deposited and the invoice is paid in time for our discount.

We hope EVERYONE has a chance to volunteer for at least one of our activities throughout the year. It's one way to get to know each other better.

## 2019 National Audubon Convention

July 26 - 28 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Early Bird registration for Audubon's biennial convention continues through April 14. This event will feature an array of inspiring speakers, in-depth workshops and discussions, exciting field trips, and the camaraderie and networking opportunities that only the Audubon Convention can provide. Situated on Lake Michigan, Milwaukee is a beautiful and historic place to gather, learn, and network. Hear from inspiring speakers.

- Join conservation, science, and outreach workshops and training sessions led by a variety of experts and Audubon leaders.
- Enjoy exciting field trips and birding adventures where 437 bird species have been recorded in Wisconsin!

For more information and to register online, go to <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/2019-convention>.

## April Programs at Spring Creek Prairie

by Kevin Poague

Third Tuesday Bird Walk – Tuesday, April 16, 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.  
Join us for a leisurely stroll through the prairie, looking for some early migrant birds. Tuesdays are always free admission!  
Registration preferred.

Noah Strycker – Birding Without Borders: An Epic World Big Year  
Thursday, April 25, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

In 2015, bird nerd Noah Strycker became the first human to see more than half of the planet's bird species in a single, year-long, round-the-world birding trip.

Birding on seven continents and carrying only a pack on his back, Strycker enlisted the enthusiastic support of local birders to see more than 6,000 species! He shared the adventure in real time



Noah Strycker

on his daily blog, and now he reveals the humorous and inspiring inside story. Noah's book will be available for purchase, and he'll sign them this evening.

Check full details of these and other SCPAC programs at [springcreekprairie.audubon.org](http://springcreekprairie.audubon.org). Register at 402-797-2301; [scp@audubon.org](mailto:scp@audubon.org).

## Your Editor Appreciates Your Efforts

I am appreciative to those who regularly contribute to our monthly newsletter: John Carlini and Shari Schwartz, Marilyn McNabb, Richard Peterson, SCPAC staff, and others. An extra-special thanks goes to Chuck Francis and Paul Johnsgard who came to the ready a few months ago when two articles were needed before the end of the day! THANKS LOTS to everyone who submits articles and announcements. — Arlys Reitan, Ed.

## Homeowners Should Avoid Neonics

by Richard Peterson

Believe it or not, the insects and other pollinators perpetuating the everyday plants we depend upon and help sustain a lifestyle we are all accustomed to are in decline. From honeybees to bumblebees, from butterflies to hummingbirds, their numbers have declined from years past. This is not speculation on my part—I'm afraid it is true. How many of you have noticed a decrease in their numbers? Some common sense questions, and I hope the answers, may clarify what has gone wrong.

The monarch butterfly, as an example, depends on the milkweed to survive. It lays its eggs on the plant, the larva feeds on the plant, and completes its life cycle on milkweed. It is a pollinator and has been part of our world since most of us can remember.

When asked, "When was the last time you saw a monarch larva on a milkweed?" the answer was, "... so long ago I can't remember." Although unscientific, the survey I made was conducted of people who enjoy gardening and having milkweed (the common variety as well as the other species) on their property. Others asked were those folks who enjoy walking and observing the goings-on in the country or in a native prairie habitat. My own observations are that the milkweed is there, the monarchs are not.

Although monarch numbers are down overall from years past, I believe the lack of monarchs and our other pollinators is because they are dying from causes other than habitat destruction: logging in Mexico (where the monarch overwinters), spraying ditches along our roads, climate change, and predation; specifically, whether they are dying or unable to function normally after ingesting nectar or coming into contact with pollen from plants and spray drift from fields treated with neonicotinoid insecticides.

Neonicotinoids ("neonics") include the insecticides *acetamiprid*, *clothianidin*, *imidacloprid*, *nitenpyram*, *nithiazine*, *thiacloprid*, and *thiamethoxam*. Of these, *imidacloprid* is the most widely used insecticide in the world. Some of the companies that produce or distribute products with these chemicals are Syngenta, Bayer, Sumimoto, Mitsui, Nippon Soda, and Ortho. In the U.S., neonicotinoids have been used on about 95 percent of corn and canola crops, the majority of cotton, sorghum, sugar beets, and half of all soybeans. They are used on the majority of fruits and vegetables, including apples, peaches, oranges, cherries, berries, leafy greens, tomatoes, potatoes, cereal grains, rice, nuts, and wine grapes.

These chemicals are systemic in that they are taken up by the plant as it grows and are transported throughout the plant, including making its way and contaminating the pollen and nectar. They are very efficient at killing insects. For example, one product by Ortho that contains *acetamiprid* according to the product label, "kills over 100 listed garden and landscape

insects . . ." Unfortunately, they also have an adverse effect of a wide range of beneficial insects. This class of insecticide has been linked as a key contributor to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in honeybees.

The neonics are sold under a variety of easier to remember names: Advocate, Confidor, Gaucho, Admire, Actara, Platinum, Cruiser, Calypso, Capstar, Guardian, Assail, Dantop, and others with which the homeowner should become acquainted. They can be purchased literally by the gallon at many home and garden centers. Germany, France, Italy, and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have over the years suspended, banned, or otherwise restricted the use of the neonicotinoids.

One use of these neonic compounds is as a seed treatment for plants grown in nurseries and then sold to homeowners every spring. The places where every spring we buy our flowers and vegetable seedlings and plugs, as well as trees, sprout up everywhere. They are in the parking lots in front of grocery stores (Russ's Market, SuperSaver, etc.), national stores (Walmart, Menards, Lowe's, Home Depot, and ACE Hardware) as well as area nurseries such as Earl May, Finke, Bluebird, and Campbell's. Don't go to your favorite vendor and assume their plants are free of chemicals that can potentially harm our beneficial pollinators.

Tainted plants are planted by the millions in our backyards, entryways, porches, parkings, along sidewalks, around our mailboxes, and hung from our decks all across the country. Yes, there are nurseries that do not treat the seed used to grow your marigolds, petunias, asters, violets, sunflowers, etc., but the stores are few and far between. When you ask a vendor if their plants have been treated with neonics, you frequently get a quizzical look or perhaps a not-so-honest answer.

We as individuals will never be able to eliminate the neonics from use in our corn and soybean fields. We do, however, have a say about what we buy and plant around our homes. Gardeners and homeowners can do their part by buying only plants grown from neonic-free seed.

*Richard Peterson is a professor emeritus from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.*

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## Earth Day to be Celebrated April 27

by the Population and Environment Committee

Once again the population and environment committee will participate in Earth Day to be celebrated at Union Plaza, 21<sup>st</sup> and O sts., in Lincoln on Saturday, April 27, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The theme this year will be bird migration through Nebraska and the challenges that migrating birds face. Volunteers are needed to help out as the committee continues to work on activity ideas and to carry them out on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Contact Theresa at [pella\\_t@yahoo.com](mailto:pella_t@yahoo.com) or the Wachiska office if you can help in any way for this free public event.

## Challenges Facing Wachiska's Prairie Preservation Efforts

by Elizabeth Nelson

March 27 was the first meeting of the Prairie Conservation Review Committee (PCRC), tasked with determining the best way to meet Wachiska's growing obligations for the long-term care of the prairies we own and the conservation easements held by the chapter. While this article had to be written before that meeting, following is some of the information we shared with the committee on the volume of work that goes into our prairie protection efforts.

Acknowledging that our record-keeping tends to understate the actual work put in (many volunteer hours go unrecorded), following are the yearly averages for recorded time and mileage for volunteer work based on records from 2016 to 2018:

- Weed control: 128 hours, 1,399 miles
- Ecological inspections: 90 hours, 1,416 miles
- Seed harvesting: 117 hours, 875 miles
- Prescribed burning: 44 hours, 2,391 miles (2018 only)
- Education: 34 hours, 762 miles
- Donated use of volunteer-owned equipment: ATVs 100 hours, sprayers 93 hours, shredders 6 hours, trailer 1,500 miles
- Donated use of volunteer-owned pickup for on-prairie work
- Legal services: 24 hours (3-year total, varies substantially by year)
- Office administration: 89 hours (2018 only)
- Undesignated activities (volunteer hours recorded with no specifics): 150 hours, 3,853 miles

While this summary shows we put at least 700 hours and over 10,000 miles into our prairie preservation efforts each year, it also highlights an extremely inefficient system, with many volunteers driving a large number of miles for relatively short work efforts; while the work hours are volunteer, miles are reimbursed to regular volunteers at \$.58 per mile. Considering that the average age of our most active volunteers is over 65, it becomes obvious this is not a sustainable solution.

The conservation committee has also prepared a preliminary list of duties and responsibilities for a prairie property and conservation easement land manager in the event it is determined that hiring such a person is in Wachiska's best interest. This part-time position is estimated to include 770 hours of time, 5,000 miles of travel, at an estimated cost of \$30,000/year including employment taxes and insurance. At this point, Wachiska cannot sustainably fund such a position.

These are the challenges the Prairie Conservation Review Committee will be reviewing over the coming months to determine the best way to move forward with Wachiska's prairie preservation efforts.

If you did not attend the March 27 meeting but would like to participate on the PCRC, please send your name and contact information to Elizabeth Nelson, [enelson555@gmail.com](mailto:enelson555@gmail.com).

## Bird EnCOUNTER 2019

by the Population and Environment Committee

Undeterred by chilly temperatures and snowy roads, the 6th annual population and environment committee's Bird EnCOUNTER brought an enthusiastic group to Eiseley Library on February 16 for a variety of bird-related, family-friendly activities. While the three raptors from Fontenelle Forest Raptor Recovery and their knowledgeable handlers were the



**Tim Knott demonstrating bird identification**

stars, participants also enjoyed a scavenger hunt, identifying bird songs, learning how to draw birds with an expert, and singing bird-themed songs. The Eiseley bird feeder lured some juncos and young people, with small-sized binoculars provided by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. There were 11 activities in all with over 15 Wachiska volunteers helping attendees explore while library staff facilitated logistics.



**Dr. Johnsgard teaching bird drawing to a young girl**

Bird EnCOUNTER began in 2012 (we missed one year!) as a collaboration between Wachiska, Lincoln City Libraries, Wild Bird Habitat Stores, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. During the first two years, bird feeders were placed at four libraries—Anderson, Eiseley, Gere, and Walt—and have become a central focus

of Bird EnCOUNTER as youngsters use binoculars to find birds, some for the first time. These feeders, still kept full today by Wachiska volunteers, have become a part of each library community, a subtle comingling of the love for books and nature. Birdseed expenses are paid out of the committee's annual budget or donated by committee members. Please keep in mind as you consider donating to Birdathon and Give to Lincoln Day this year that expenses such as birdseed may seem trivial, but go a long way in achieving Wachiska's vision of sharing the experience of nature!

## Random Act of Kindness

Recently Irene Marcussen, Fran O'Leary, and 17 friends (many of them retired teachers) chose Wachiska Audubon to receive their monthly support from their Random Act of Kindness group. Irene's husband, Wachiska member Paul Marcussen, hand delivered a check for \$330, reporting that this was the first time the group had chosen an environmental organization to receive their donation. A grateful thank you to all those ladies and to Paul, too, from our entire Wachiska membership!

# Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

Mayor Chris Beutler has signed up—with 260 other U.S. mayors—declaring “We Are Still In” the Paris Agreement and pledging to take action to reduce the dangers of climate change. The bipartisan coalition formed in June 2017 as a statement to the world that Americans would not give up on the fight to reduce greenhouse gases and to stabilize climate.

Currently, “We Are Still In” represents organizations in all 50 states, from large and small businesses, colleges and universities, faith leaders, tribal governments, and cultural institutions. The governors of California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington are in. Signatory cities and states represent a constituency of more than half of all Americans and an economy bigger than any nation other than the U.S. or China.

Lincoln’s commitments are here: <https://www.wearestillin.com/organization/city-lincoln-nebraska>. Included are plans to replace city fleet vehicles and buses that run on fossil fuels with vehicles that run on electricity and to adopt policies that accelerate the transition to personal electric vehicles and commercial fleets. Energy efficiency improvements in government buildings, street lighting, and the wastewater plant are pledged. Also, the city plans to work with energy utilities to increase renewable energy provided to residents and businesses.

A note of thanks to Mayor Beutler for this action can help reinforce this direction. See this newsletter’s “Public Officials” list on page 7 for contact information.

Like the turning of a large ship, sometimes what may look at first like a small movement is important because of what it signals for the future. Many observers believe that is the case for the decision in March by Norway’s sovereign wealth fund, the biggest such fund, to divest from pure oil and gas exploration companies. It will sell its stakes in 134 companies which is about 1.2 percent of its equity holdings. After the announcement, share prices of those companies fell.

One Norwegian official quoted by the *Financial Times* said, “If I were an oil major reading this decision, I would make sure my plan for investment in renewables was in order.” Founder of the charity SolarAid, Jeremy Leggett, pointed out that “The fact that the big oil companies were not included in this divestment because they have renewable energy assets in a way only emphasizes the direction of travel.”

Restrictions on investment in new coal plants began in 2013 with the World Bank. A recent report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis identifies over 100 global financial institutions, each with more than \$10 billion in assets under management, which have put restrictions on coal’s access

to capital markets. The result is difficulty for coal companies to access insurance and capital for growth.

Data projections for the next five years from the International Energy Agency reported by Amy Harder for *Axios* show that wind and solar will be the fastest growing electricity sources in the world, with Denmark and three Midwestern states leading the way: Kansas, Iowa, and Oklahoma. Not Nebraska. Not yet.



## Parasitic Jaeger

by Richard Peterson

Straight up, this is the common name of a bird, and we are not talking about a bird of prey in the strictest sense.

The parasitic jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*), also known as the Arctic skua, is our title character. They look very similar and are relatives of the gulls, one of the birds upon which they prey. They spend their non-breeding time over open water where these swift and agile fliers either singly or in groups gang up on their victims. They are one of the few birds that rely on kleptoparasitic behavior.

Kleptoparasitism, or parasitism by theft, although relatively uncommon in birds, is practiced by skuas, jaegers, and frigate birds. Raptors, gulls, terns, coots, ducks, and shorebirds will also behave this way only in a pinch or when the opportunity arises.

The parasitic jaeger (pronounced “YAH-grr,”) forces other birds to drop or disgorge their food in flight, then swiftly swoop down, retrieve, and eat. If really pressed for a meal they will also feed on fish from the water’s surface.

These birds only come to land to nest in northern Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Scandinavia, and northern Russia. During their annual migration to the Southern Hemisphere they are kleptoparasites. Some feed off colonial seabirds, including puffins, while feeding their young—even waiting for the puffins to return to the nest with food. They often accompany and harass migrating terns. These avians are casual fall migrants to the Great Lakes during their migration south along both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. They winter in the warm waters off the Carolinas, from California to Mexico, the West Indies, and areas further south.

When nesting on the tundra or rock barrens in summer, these birds are notoriously aggressive and defend large territories, hunting for birds, mammals, insects, berries, offal, carrion, and bird eggs. They are the most important predator of small birds in the Arctic and one of the three most important enemies of bird eggs. They do not require the dense populations of lemmings for successful reproduction as do two closely related species, the long-tailed jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) and the pomarine jaeger (*S. pomarinus*).

The parasitic jaeger is not an endangered species.

## 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
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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**

## Note Change in April Schedules

Wachiska’s Board decided not to hold the annual award’s banquet usually taking place in April, along with the associated potluck supper and silent auction. We will still hold our regular monthly meeting on Thursday, April 11 (see article on page 1).

In addition, the April technology recycling event in the planning stages since last fall, was canceled by the recycling company at the eleventh hour. Our apologies to our members and friends who were planning to bring their equipment for recycling.



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## 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 .....	*vacant.....	
Immediate Past President.....	*Gary Fehr.....	402-570-4382

### STANDING COMMITTEES/POSITIONS

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Director at Large.....	*Terry Stentz.....	402-202-8819
Director at Large.....	*Melinda Varley.....	402-416-4111
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	*Lana Novak .....	402-475-8693
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	*Sam Truax .....	402-325-9012
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Newsletter Editor .....	Arlys Reitan .....	WAS office 402-486-4846
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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
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***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**.