

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 43rd Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2016

DECEMBER 2016

Volume 25 - Issue 12

Annual Holiday Potluck—Thursday, December 8, 6:15 p.m., Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 3825 Wildbriar Ln, Lincoln

## Progress of the Photo Ark

with Joel Sartore

Many of Earth's species, like the Helmeted Hornbill below, are rapidly disappearing. Wachiska member **Joel Sartore** has been capturing intimate portraits of an estimated 12,000 species of birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates with the goal of inspiring people to save those most at risk through the National Geographic Photo Ark.



Helmeted Hornbill

The project is about at the halfway point now. This past summer Joel photographed species #6,000, a proboscis monkey at the Singapore Zoo. The goal is to photograph all 12,000 species in captivity around the world.

Joel Sartore has been sent to every continent by National Geographic magazine. He is a freelance photographer, author, speaker, and teacher who captivates audiences with his funny and inspiring adventures.

Since the last time Joel spoke to Wachiska, he's been all over the world from England to the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Gabon,

Cameroon, and even the Cedar Point Biological Station at our own Lake McConaughy working on the project.

Also in the past year, WGBH TV followed Joel on several of his trips for an upcoming three-part series called "Rare," to air this summer on PBS. There will also be an exhibition of the Photo Ark at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and a new book on the Ark from National Geographic, both debuting this spring.

Check out these websites: [www.photoark.com](http://www.photoark.com) and [www.joelsartore.com](http://www.joelsartore.com).



Joel Sartore

Sartore received Wachiska Audubon's Earthkeeper Award at the chapter's 40th anniversary celebration in September 2013. Joel is a long-time local chapter member, friend, and supporter. As a photographer, he has had several photos published in *Audubon* magazine over the years. His passion for birds, rare and endangered animals, and life itself becomes evident every time one speaks with him.

Come to Wachiska's annual holiday potluck supper and program on **Thursday, December 8**, to hear Sartore's take on what is at stake on the vanishing wildlife species scene. About **6:15 p.m.** we'll gather at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 3825 Wildbriar Lane. This is one block north of the intersection of 40th Street and Old Cheney Road in southwest Lincoln. Bring family and friends along with a dish or two to share and your own table service, including a cup for hot or cold drinks which will be provided by the chapter. There is no cost and reservations are not necessary.

A silent auction will be ongoing throughout the evening, so bring your checkbooks and pick up some fine gifts. Joel will also have some of his works for sale at that time.

### Calendar

#### December

- 5 Education Committee, Wachiska office, 6:00 p.m.
- 6 Board Meeting, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.
- 8 **Annual Holiday Potluck, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 3825 Wildbriar Lane, 6:15 p.m.; on-going silent auction; program by Joel Sartore**
- 9 Newsletter deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
- 16 Membership Committee, Wachiska office, 1:30 p.m.
- 17 Christmas Bird Count (page 2)
- 19 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:30 p.m.
- 22 Legislation Committee, DaVinci's, 11<sup>th</sup> & G, 6:00 p.m.



## Field Trip

### Lincoln Area Christmas Bird Count

by Lauren Dinan

**Calling all birders!** Time is nearing for Audubon's 117<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). This count is an incredible event where birdwatchers from across North America collect bird counts from both the field and yard feeders over a 24-hour period. Each year the Christmas Bird Count is held between December 14 and January 5. Data collected provide a snapshot of the status and distribution of various bird species and provide information that can be used to track long-term trends in bird populations. This data collection is available online and is used by many to better understand population trends of various bird species and to guide conservation efforts.

The CBC has become an annual holiday tradition for thousands of birders; it is easy to participate in and is a fun and rewarding way to contribute to bird conservation annually. Join us this year for the Lincoln area CBC on **Saturday, December 17**, and help us continue the annual holiday tradition of collecting vital bird data. Participants are needed at all birding levels. Arrangements can be made to pair up novice observers with more knowledgeable birders. To participate either as a field or feeder counter, contact Lauren Dinan NOW at [ngpc.nongamebird.temp@nebraska.gov](mailto:ngpc.nongamebird.temp@nebraska.gov).

Note: Any rescheduling due to inclement weather will be communicated via email. The CBC will be this month's field trip.

### Change General Meeting Location?

Wachiska has been invited to hold our monthly general meetings at the Unitarian Church, 6800 A Street. The premises have recently been remodeled. Some of the pros for moving is there are no steps outside or inside. Parking is right outside the meeting area with overflow parking across to the west. Plenty of space is provided for refreshments, conversation, and display tables just outside the main meeting room. Audio/visual equipment is available. There would be a charge for its use; however, the amount might be about the same as the donation the chapter has been giving for the use of the Union College auditorium each year. The same meeting night and time is available if we would want it. The Board decided to table the discussion until the December Board meeting. There seemed to be agreement that, **if** we entertain this idea, a trial period of several months would give members who have regularly attended the meetings a chance to "try out" the location. Watch for updates.

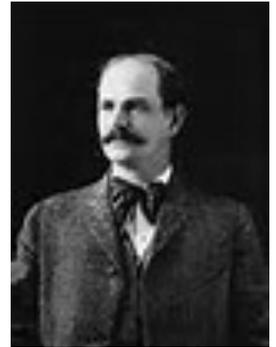
If you have an opinion, get in touch with a Board member, email the office, or leave a message on the answering machine. Remember this is an invitation, and our long-standing agreement with Union College has not changed; we have been satisfied with our arrangement there for almost 30 years. From time to time opinions have been raised that people are no longer able to come due to the parking situation. Also, even with the use of the elevator, the steps in the auditorium pose problems for some people.

## Frank Chapman, Founder of Christmas Bird Count

by Richard Peterson

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count was Frank Chapman's idea and began in 1900, over 116 years ago. The count was an alternative to how birds were being counted up to that time, but more on that a bit later.

Frank Chapman (b 1864 – d 1945) was born in West Englewood, New Jersey, and attended Englewood Academy. For six years following high school, he worked in a bank in New York City.



Frank Chapman

His consuming interest in birds and their natural history led to volunteer work at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. From 1886-1888, he was a member of the museum's collecting trips to Florida. By 1901, he had worked his way up to curator of ornithology and mammalogy; seven years later he was the museum's curator of ornithology. Chapman was imaginative and pioneered the way collections were prepared for viewing, using habitat group exhibits along the lines of our diorama presentations today.

In 1895, Chapman published his first rendering of the *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America*. Other books and articles kept coming. In 1897, Chapman was elected president of the Linnaean Society of New York. At age 33, he had moved up impressively beyond his high school years.

During his tenure at the museum, he also carried out an active field program in Latin America which led to major fauna monographs on the birds of Colombia and Ecuador. He popularized bird studies through his numerous guidebooks and autobiographical field reminiscences. In 1900, he began directing the publication and editing of a new magazine called *Bird-Lore*, which was the beginning of what is now *Audubon* magazine.

Back to the Christmas Bird Count. Prior to 1900, counting birds revolved around the Christmas tradition of "side-hunts" when people competed to see how many birds they could kill, whether beneficial, beautiful, or rare. That first year the Christmas Bird Count had 27 observers who took part in 25 localities, mostly in the northeast, in the U.S., and Canada. The 2012-13 count was made by 70,000 people in nearly 2,400 locations.

In 1911, Chapman was president of the American Ornithological Union. A year later he received the first Linnaean Society Medal. In 1917, he was awarded the Daniel Giraud Elliot Medal from the National Academy of Sciences. Chapman retired from the American Museum of Natural History in 1943. He died in New York City in 1945. Again, not bad for a kid with a high school education.



## From the Board ...

by Colleen Babcock, Chair  
Population/Environment Committee

### Selecting Gifts to Protect the Earth

Gifts are now advertised endlessly. Somewhat heartening is the hope that many gift-givers will consider the social and environmental impact of their choices. Numerous gift options



Colleen Babcock

reinforce respect for our natural environment and connect us with local producers (artists, farmers, service providers). Consider a CSA share, side of beef or pork, local artwork, monthly bus pass, food/feeders for backyard birds, homemade cookies, and the sky is the limit for your imagination.

Recently, I contemplated gifts of memory and

connection. In the book, *Vitamin N*, (highlighted in the June and July issues of *The Babbling Brook*, in Part 1 "The Gift of Memory" suggests giving the gifts of nature and creating new family and friendship rituals. Consider a family "green hour," state park staycation, star-gazing or wild-watching coupons.

A personal gift of memory, imprinted on me in 1972, is the resonant voice of Lorne Green narrating "The Gifts," a documentary commissioned by the Department of the Interior, Federal Water Quality Administration. This resulted when

several federal entities merged to form the Environmental Protection Agency. "The Gifts," nominated for an Oscar, was described as "the most beautiful film on ugliness ever made." It depicts the Mississippi River as "colon of the Midwest."

Lorne Greene's narration begins: "The gifts of the American earth seemed boundless and inexhaustible. Their immensity and mystery were a challenge. . . We chopped and plowed our way. The land was our capital. To feed our brawling growth we tore into the forest, mined the mountains, plowed the western plains, harnessed the rivers. [Now] More than 200 million people. More people. More concrete. More traffic. . .our genius for production and consumption mocks us."

I wonder about the current status of 1970 concerns and possible audience perceptions of over-dramatization. Yet, U.S. population is now over 318 million. World population has doubled since 1970, from 3.7 to 7.4 - 7.5 billion. The film makes one reference to waste heat; no mention of climate change.

Near the closing of Mr. Greene's narration: "The values of natural beauty, wilderness, and open space are not posted in the market place . . . restoring the environment. . .depends on what you and I do. To work. To vote. To spend. To repay our debt to nature . . . Let us begin to look less to quantity and more to the quality of our lives. "

The film reminds us of motivation for 1970s legislation passed by Congress and signed by President Nixon: to restore/protect air and water quality and regulate agricultural chemicals. Mitigating impact of DDT on birds' reproductive success is well recognized and appreciated. In this time of potentially profound change, regulatory efforts serve a purpose and are themselves to be protected. Many things of importance are not governed by the marketplace. It is up to each of us to make our voices heard.

### Recycling Petition Drive in Lincoln's Plans?

by Arlys Reitan

I was excited to read in the Lincoln *Journal Star* on November 22 that there might be a petition drive to put a stronger recycling ordinance on the ballot next spring. This is long overdue. For the 14 years that my neighbor and I have walking in Southwood, I've noticed week after week the mountains of cardboard, boxes of all sizes, and other items that should not be sent to the landfill. An initiative petition would be the first step to ban newspapers, cardboard, and other paper from being tossed in the garbage.

Now what I've been waiting for is a rule whereby homeowners cannot leave usable furniture, lamps, bed frames, strollers, bikes, and other items at the curb for the garbage haulers to crunch up and take to the dump when a call to Habitat for Humanity, Ecostores, Mad Dads (repairs bikes), and other places would result in a second use for items that are still functional— thus keeping them out of the landfill awhile longer.

I'll be ready to circulate that petition if it comes to fruition!

### Dirt Meridian Exhibit

by Doug Campbell

All those who are interested in prairies should visit the impressive exhibit "Dirt Meridian" at the Joslyn Museum. The 42 photos, five feet by four feet, offer striking images of prairies from North Dakota to Texas. Andrew Moore took most of the photos from a small plane flying at low altitude. The Joslyn Museum is located at 2200 Dodge Street in Omaha. More information is available online at Andrew Moore-Dirt Meridian or the Joslyn Museum's website. This exhibit will be shown until January 8. There is an admission of \$10 for non-members.

"To be good, and to do good, is the whole duty of man comprised in a few words."

— Abigail Adams

# The Joy of Sharing Our Love of and Commitment to Tallgrass Prairie

by Elizabeth Nelson, Donor Development Chair

In October, the Wachiska Donor Development Committee hosted our first Prairie Preservation Lunch and Learn. Over 20 chapter members and friends attended, and we had a wonderful discussion about the broad efforts Wachiska takes to preserve and protect our vanishing tallgrass prairies and how our members are supporting this effort.

Paul Johnsgard presented a delightful slide show featuring prairie flowers, wildlife, and information on why prairies are worth protecting. Marilyn McNabb, Linda Brown, and Tim Knott spoke about why they have supported the Prairie Management Fund with their donations. I did my best to explain Wachiska's history of prairie protection, how we have already been taking care of our responsibilities (land improvements, document organization, written easement inspections, financial planning, etc.), and that we are pursuing fundraising with the goal of establishing the Prairie Management Fund endowment, an effort which will assure we are able to meet our responsibilities on the prairies we currently own and to the conservation easements we monitor. We handed out packets about the prairies we protect and on many different ways to give to support this effort.

The energy at this event was wonderful! People were talking together, sharing their stories of why prairies are important to them. It really confirmed how much our members care about protecting the precious resource that is tallgrass prairie. Many thanks to everyone on the committee who helped plan and make this happen, and especially to Linda Brown who was the main host, organizer, and chef extraordinaire. I am so proud of everyone involved with Wachiska.

## Your current gifts help us plan for the future

In late 2015, Wachiska established the Prairie Management Fund at the Lincoln Community Foundation. As of November 15, we have raised over \$130,000 on the way to our \$1 million goal. When fully funded, the interest from the fund could be used to supplement our volunteer efforts by paying for a part-time prairie manager, grant writer, or volunteer coordinator.

## Knowing of future bequests helps act today

Knowing about gifts that may come to us in the future greatly aids our ability to make good decisions today. Tim Knott has spoken about new prairie protection opportunities we have not been able to commit to because we are unsure of our financial foundation (see the November 2016 *Babbling Brook* for more on this). If you have planned, or are considering leaving a bequest to Wachiska, please let us know by returning the form below.

As 2016 comes to a close, we ask you to please consider making a gift to the Wachiska Audubon Society Prairie Management Fund. You can support this effort with current gifts or pledge a future gift. Being aware of this intention could empower hiring staff sooner. A substantial donation from your current assets can help meet this goal and perhaps allow Wachiska to consider acquiring virgin prairies in Southeast Nebraska that still need protection. Every year that we are "on-hold" means we forego opportunities that may never come again. We need to be actively pursuing the few tallgrass properties that still exist.

**To find out more or to make a current or future gift, return the form below. Thank you!**

## Gift Pledge Form —————cut on line and return using the inserted envelope—————

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send me more information on Wachiska's Prairie Protection efforts and ways to support these efforts.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am giving \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Wachiska Audubon Prairie Management Fund. My check is enclosed. Make your check payable to the **Wachiska Audubon Prairie Management Fund #710146**.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Wachiska Audubon Society, 4547 Calvert Street, Suite 10, Lincoln NE 68506 or to the Lincoln Community Foundation, 215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 100, Lincoln NE 68508.

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I **pledge** to give \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month/quarter/year for the next three years.\*

\*If you select one of the pledge options, we will contact you to arrange the details.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **pledge** a bequest from my estate.\* This is easy to arrange, will not alter your current financial situation, and can be changed at any time.

*Your gift is tax deductible and you will receive a letter confirming your gift. Wachiska Audubon Society was chartered in 1973 as an independent chapter of the National Audubon Society. Wachiska is a qualified 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization, TIN 51-0229888.*

# Climate Change Update

by Marilyn McNabb

The national-level effects of the election on climate change policy are too fluid to report on as this newsletter deadline arrives, but we can say something about the ballot initiative to create a carbon tax in Washington State. The purpose of a carbon tax is to raise the price of fossil fuel industry products that emit greenhouse gases and raise global temperatures. The Washington initiative, I-732, was designed to be “revenue neutral” meaning collections would balance spending.

I-732 got 42 percent of the vote. The loss may have resulted as much from confusion as opposition. *Inside Climate News* reports that polls showed the number of undecideds increased from one-fifth of the voters in Washington State at the beginning of October to nearly one-third of voters by the end of the month.

Audubon Washington’s website notes that television ads bought by the petrochemical industry and their friends in the last two weeks of the campaign hammered on the threat of increased energy costs. But it’s hard to know which had greater effect, the petrochemical industry or the environmental and social organizations who actively opposed the initiative.

Audubon Washington worked hard for passage of I-732, the only major national environmental group to do so. Audubon was extremely successful in fundraising and running two attention-catching TV ads. The state executive director of Audubon, Gail Gattton, said she was disappointed, but “we have awakened a sleeping giant, and we look forward to continuing the fight for common sense climate solutions for birds and for people.”

Many of the organizations opposing I-732, for example, the Sierra Club, did so because they believed funds collected by the carbon tax should be spent on alternative energy, energy efficiency, mass transit, and similar infrastructure projects that generate jobs. I-732 did offer rebates to some low-income families, but its main cushion to them was with a one percent cut in the state’s sales tax, the only source of state revenue. Washington has no property tax. Revenues are very tight—the state is under court order to properly fund its public schools.

At the same time Washington voters rejected I-732, they re-elected Governor Jay Inslee, an outspoken advocate for climate action. Inslee is preparing to implement a new rule in January to cap carbon emissions of the state’s largest polluters.

Winning is always better, but there are smaller successes for which the I-732 campaign deserves full credit: grassroots action to get 360,000 signatures putting I-732 on the ballot, a million phone calls to voters, significant bi-partisan support. Yoram Bauman, the economist who designed Initiative 732, told Audubon that for state-level initiatives, “There’s the whole ‘laboratories of democracy’ idea. . . . We tried something here with I-732 and it didn’t work, and other folks can try other things, and hopefully one or more things will succeed and eventually filter up to the federal level . . . .”

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

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

### End-of-year Donations

With the holidays approaching, many people consider the work of their favorite charities with donations. It is gifts such as these that enable Wachiska to continue our work day in and day out in the areas of conservation education in Southeast Nebraska. If you are intending to give an end-of-year contribution to be credited to 2016, please be sure your checks are in the office as soon as possible so they can be timely processed. Thank you to all for your generosity throughout the year.

### Father’s Day Not that Far Away . . .

Wachiska’s Backyard Garden Tour committee has been working to organize the 28th annual tour on Father’s Day 2017. They are still looking for one or two gardens in the southwest part of town. After this many years of highlighting Lincoln’s terrific gardens, it takes ingenuity and creativity to come up with ideas to capture the public’s attention and enthusiasm. If you can think of a garden (yours or someone else’s) that is a best-kept secret or that people regularly enjoy, please call or email Anne or Lynn Senkbeil who are again chairing this committee. You can reach them at 402-423-6524 or [asenkbe@lps.org](mailto:asenkbe@lps.org). They would also like to have suggestions for gardens to be featured in 2018 in the south part of the city. It is never too early for this enthusiastic group to get started!

### Wild Bird Habitat Store’s Grand Re-opening & Open House

Stop by the Wild Bird Habitat Store in the Alamo Plaza, 56th and Highway 2, on Saturday, December 3, between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. as they celebrate 24 years of serving area bird enthusiasts in their expanded south Lincoln location. There will be live raptors from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Register to win a bird feeding system, a granite bird bath, or free bird feed for the entire winter. Call the store or check their website for details.

### Christmas Open House on December 11

The Nebraska Environmental Trust will host a holiday open house at the historic Ferguson House (office of the Nebraska Environmental Trust) on Sunday, December 11. The public is invited to visit and tour the 105-year-old Renaissance Revival home from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Also open will be the neighboring Kennard House. There is no charge to experience these historic treasures decorated for the holiday season.

### Next Birdseed Sale

Wachiska’s Spring 2017 Birdseed Sale will take place in February. More info and order forms later. Tell your birds to hang in there a little longer!

# Will Future Policies Affect Disappearing Habitat?

by Chuck Francis, Population/Environment Committee

There is no question about threats to wildlife from disappearance of the crucial habitat that different species need for food, shelter, protection, reproduction, and migration. According to recent World Wildlife Fund reports, there has been a global reduction of 58 percent of all vertebrates over the past 40 years with potential for another mass extinction if current losses are not reduced or reversed. The current rate is two percent loss per year. The loss of freshwater species has been even more pronounced, up to 81 percent or four percent per year. Such data do not give us much hope for the future of the natural ecosystem.

National Wildlife Federation (NWF) observes that agriculture is one of the major factors, as monocrop fields replace diverse crop and livestock farms that include forage crops and perennials in the rotation. Areas with continuous plant cover provide habitat for many species for nesting and feeding when nearby fields are planted to corn, soybeans, and wheat. But other economic pursuits also contribute to loss of natural areas including exploration for oil and gas, commercial development that paves over the prairie, and water diversion for a whole list of human needs.

Habitat loss can be classified as that due to *destruction* in the case of paved parking lots and shopping malls, *fragmentation* as leapfrog development creates small homeowner acreages and highways cut across wildlife migration routes, and *degradation* as water quality is lost because of toxic chemical pesticides and fertilizers entering the aquatic ecosystem. So are there any positive signs?

One hope comes from increasing awareness that all this destruction is happening and realizing that most is a direct result of human decisions. If we recognize the problem and can clearly understand the causes, there is potential for making deliberate changes in our behavior. This also opens the door to modifications of policy—both incentives or carrots and regulations or penalties—that will induce people to change their decisions regarding further loss of habitat.

An emerging challenge is climate change, still a controversial issue in some circles in spite of overwhelming scientific evidence. As reported by the NWF, “Global warming is making the protection of endangered species increasingly challenging. Climate change not only affects our plants and animals directly through changes in temperature and precipitation but can worsen the impact on endangered species of traditional threats, such as invasive species, wildfires, and diseases.”

In agricultural extension, we often discuss the process as involving “three A words.” First is *Awareness* of the challenge, and this can be influenced by education and direct exposure to the survival problems many endangered species face. The second is *Attitude* toward the problem—the question of “So what?” This is an ethical and moral decision and one that may be influenced by rational thinking about what habitat destruction and wildlife loss means to me, personally, and what the implications are for the future. The third factor is *Action*. So we are aware, so we are concerned, now do we have the personal and political will to take action to reverse the current loss of vital habitat?

Fortunately, there are many examples of positive action observed in our own individual behaviors and immediate landscapes, as well as on a larger scale. We find that children who learn about recycling in school have taken this behavior home to their parents, and the result is a reduction in use of primary resources that in many situations can reduce the destruction of natural areas. People who plant habitat in their own yards, with a welcoming array of plants producing food and providing protection for birds, are contributing to solutions right at home. Living in Lincoln we see the priority given to parks and open space, with over 100 designated areas within the city limits, and new management decisions to leave some areas “wild” along the watercourses and not to mow and manicure every square meter. We are fortunate to have within biking distance such areas as Nine-Mile Prairie in the northwest (UNL), Spring Creek Prairie in the southwest (Audubon), and the newly designated Prairie Pines at 112<sup>th</sup> and Adams streets where Walt and Virginia Bagley donated their 145 acres to the University of Nebraska Foundation to create a natural conservation area in perpetuity. These areas are used for education, resource and habitat conservation, and, in the case of Prairie Pines, for a highly diverse organic farming activity that is part of Community Crops. We need a similar initiative in the southeast quadrant of Lincoln. Such examples of *Action* are supported by many in the local community.

In the U.S., the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program of NRCS provides support for landowners to preserve critical areas that harbor wildlife, a clear mandate from the federal government that this is an important direction for the future of the biosphere. National wildlife reserves provide another protection against development of key habitat areas in our country.

In the global arena, there are key examples of habitat conservation. In Costa Rica more than 25 percent of the country is in national parks, protected from development. In Namibia, a national policy puts ownership of wildlife under control of local villages where the people most closely involved protect game animals from poachers and carefully control hunting to enhance their communities and manage animal populations at sustainable levels. Wildlife Asia has proactive initiatives called “Racing Extinction” and “A Crisis Unfolding” that describe poaching in biodiversity sanctuaries. The Maya Bioreserve created in 1990 in Guatemala is one section of an ambitious plan to create an international wildlife corridor from southern Mexico to the Choco in northwest Colombia, an effort that will take political will and popular support from every country in the region.

These spectacular examples focus on larger and showier vertebrates which are clear indicators of ecosystem health. But we should be equally concerned about biodiversity in the insects, plant species, and soil biological communities that provide the foundation for sustainable ecosystems. With adequate awareness through education, an attitude that considers the future and not short-term economic gains, and responsible action to cause meaningful change, we can assure a livable environment with the ecosystem services needed for survival of humans and other species. In the words of Wendell Berry: “We don’t know what we are doing because we don’t know what we are undoing,” is often the case. We certainly owe our children a sustainable future.

## Public Officials

### **President Barack Obama**

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**

100 Centennial Mall N Rm 287, 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 Brad Ashford (2<sup>nd</sup> District)**

7126 Pacific St, Omaha NE 68106  
Omaha phone: 402-916-5678  
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-4155 Fax: 202-226-5452  
E-mail at website: <http://ashford.house.gov>

### **Congressman Adrian Smith (3<sup>rd</sup> District)**

416 Valley View Dr Ste 600, Scottsbluff NE 69361  
Scottsbluff phone: 308-632-3333 Fax: 308-635-3049  
Wash. DC phone: 202-225-6435 Fax: 202-225-0207  
E-mail at website: <http://adriansmith.house.gov>

### **Capitol Hill Switchboard**

888-436-8427 or 202-224-3121

### **Governor Pete Ricketts**

Capitol Bldg, PO Box 94848, Lincoln NE 68509-4848  
Phone: 402-471-2244 Fax: 402-471-6031  
E-mail at website: <http://governor.nebraska.gov>

### **State Senator \_\_\_\_\_**

District \_\_\_ State Capitol, PO Box 94604, Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

### **State Capitol Switchboard**

402-471-2311

### **Lancaster County Commissioners**

County-City Bldg, 555 S 10<sup>th</sup> St Rm 110, Lincoln NE 68508  
Phone: 402-441-7447 Fax: 402-441-6301  
E-mail: [commish@lancaster.ne.gov](mailto:commish@lancaster.ne.gov)

### **Mayor Chris Beutler**

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

### **Lincoln City Council**

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

### **Lincoln Journal Star**

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

## **Join now! Become a Friend of Wachiska Audubon Society!**

This local chapter membership provides you with voting privileges and access to all our events, programs, and committees, **plus 100 percent of your membership donation goes directly to the Wachiska chapter. In addition, Friend members receive our monthly newsletter, *The Babbling Brook*, in their choice of print or electronic form.**

### **Friends of Wachiska (local membership)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Select the level of support that is right for you and make your check payable to **Wachiska Audubon Society**. All funds remain with our local chapter and are tax deductible. Mail to:

Wachiska Audubon Society  
Attention: Membership Committee  
4547 Calvert St Ste 10  
Lincoln NE 68506-5643

\_\_\_ **I prefer to receive my newsletter by email.**

Please note: If you are already a member of National Audubon Society (NAS) you automatically become a member of Wachiska, but not a Wachiska Friend member. Only Wachiska Friends receive the printed monthly newsletter each month. If you wish to join NAS or receive *Audubon* magazine, please contact National Audubon Society directly.



**American Goldfinch family**

## Members Recycle Cans for Wachiska

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

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

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

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



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



**Wachiska Audubon Society**  
**4547 Calvert St Ste 10**  
**Lincoln NE 68506-5643**  
402-486-4846  
Office@WachiskaAudubon.org  
www.WachiskaAudubon.org

## WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2016

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President .....	*Jessi Umberger (Otoe).....	402-580-3057
Vice President .....	*Gary Fehr.....	402-570-4382
Recording Secretary .....	*Rachel Simpson.....	402-742-7991
Treasurer (acting) .....	*Arnold Mendenhall (Hickman).....	402-525-4884
Immediate Past President .....	*Elizabeth Nelson.....	402-770-3485

### STANDING COMMITTEES/POSITIONS

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Director at Large.....	*Roxanne Smith .....	402-477-1319
Director at Large.....	*vacant .....	
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Newsletter Editor .....	Arlys Reitan .....	WAS office 402-486-4846
Population/Environment .....	*Colleen Babcock.....	308-850-0445
Publicity/Public Relations .....	Jeanne Kern.....	402-423-0428

\*Denotes Board member

### OTHER ASSOCIATES

Bird Questions.....	Kevin Poague.....	402-797-2301
Facebook Coordinator .....	Benjamin Vogt.....	402-499-5851
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Executive Director Audubon Nebraska.....	Marian Langan .....	402-797-2301
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Director.....	Glynnis Collins.....	402-797-2301
Webmaster.....	Dan Staehr .....	402-440-5869

## NEBirds Website

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

***Wachiska Audubon Society's financial records are available for examination in the office.***

## A Gift to the Future

A bequest to Wachiska Audubon Society is a gift to future generations enabling our natural heritage to continue. For wills, trusts, and gifts, our legal name is **Wachiska Audubon Society**. Our Federal Tax ID number is **51-0229888**.