

# Annual Report 2020-2021

## Saint Paul Audubon Society

### To members and friends,

I am pleased to report that 2021 has been an active year for the Saint Paul Audubon Society.

- We resumed bird walks. In addition to 21 walks locally, Warbler Weekend was back (somewhat modified) and we sponsored trips to see sandhill cranes, pelicans and tundra swans. Trip leaders included Cathy Croghan, Monica Bryand, Karen Cramer, Chase Davies, Ed Davies, Louise Eidsmoe, Curt Hadland, Pat Hadland, Reenie Lundgren, Kathy Robbins, Kiki Sonnen, Paul Spreitzer, Bill Stjern, Terri Walls and Dorothy Walz.
- We dramatically increased our advocacy for bird habitat with notable efforts at Pigs Eye Lake and a 77-acre grassland near Battle Creek Park.
- Our Society has also begun a habitat restoration project-assisting Saint Paul Parks Department in restoring the Audubon Woods area of Como Park. We expect this project, organized by Rebecca Flood, will be multi-year but initial strides were made in 2021.
- We have made more grants for bird habitat and research. Locally we supported urban habitat projects of St. Paul's Frogtown Green and leadership development of the Urban Bird Collective. Grants were also made to Friends of Sax-Zim Bog, the University of Belize, Osprey Wilds (formerly Audubon of the North Woods), and Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve for the Red-headed Woodpecker project.
- Our financial systems and membership have been strengthened by our Treasurer Jim Stout. Dean Doering, who ran our annual fund drive ably for many years has stepped down and Kenyon Saylor is now filling that role.
- A half century of collecting data on species present in the Lake City Area continued with a modified Warbler Weekend in May.
- Information services to members and friends were enhanced, including our first annual report last year, and a new Facebook group. Martha Douglas leads a team that includes Jackie Bussjaeger, Danielle Theis, and Ben Wilson.

The accomplishments of 2021 occurred despite the COVID-19 pandemic and give us a strong base to build on for future years. See more in this report about upcoming plans! I hope to meet you soon at a membership meeting or on one of our field trips.

In the meantime, happy birding!

**Donn Waage**

President, Saint Paul Audubon Society



## Welcome!

The Saint Paul Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. If you are a member of National Audubon and reside in Ramsey or Washington County, you are part of the Saint Paul Audubon Society.

## To stay in touch

Please check our website, [www.saintpaulaudubon.org](http://www.saintpaulaudubon.org), for information about bird walks, monthly speakers, and other news and updates. On the website you can also subscribe free-of-charge to the Cardinal, our bi-monthly newsletter, which is delivered via email to everyone for whom we have an email address. You can also join the Saint Paul Audubon Society group on Facebook. Go to [facebook.com/groups/saintpaulaudubonsociety](https://facebook.com/groups/saintpaulaudubonsociety) and click on the "Join Group" button at the top of the page.

Everyone is welcome to take part!



# FY21 Financial Overview\*

Our financial position is strong, as shown in the figures below. We have been fortunate to have generous donors and our expenses are down from the previous year. We continue to put these resources to work by assisting more projects in Ramsey and Washington counties and by making grants for the study and support of migratory birds.



FBC PHOTOGRAPHER: NINA HAKANSON

Revenue—Total: **\$29,454**

- ◀ **\$19,074** - Annual fund drive and other gifts
- ◀ **\$6,622** - National support
- ◀ **\$3,738** - Endowment income, interest
- ◀ **\$20** - Other

Expenses—Total: **\$19,642**

- ◀ **\$14,724** - Programs, communications, and outreach
- ◀ **\$1,518** - Operations
- ◀ **\$3,250** - Grants and sponsorships paid out
- ◀ **\$150** - Membership dues to other organizations

\*For the period June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021

## By the Numbers

## Facts and stats about the Saint Paul Audubon Society

**\$10,000**

given in **grants and sponsorships** to 6 partner organizations between May and November, 2021.

**1**

**service project** completed in 2021 in conjunction with Saint Paul Parks. More to come next year!

**4**

additional **Board members** needed—apply today! Contact President Donn Waage.

**21**

**field trips** held once COVID restrictions eased, of the 25 planned for the year.

**242**

species reported to eBird so far this year in **Washington County**.

**355**

people joined our new **Facebook group**.

**251**

species reported to eBird so far this year in **Ramsey County**.

**2475**

people are **registered as members** of the Saint Paul Audubon Society.

**40**

humans outnumbered the **7 pelicans** viewed at our first field trip to Pig's Eye Lake. "Everyone had a blast," said Kiki Sonnen, one of the trip's leaders along with Chase Davies, and 22 species in all were identified.



# Building on our mission

Thanks to the many committed and creative volunteers who are planning and leading activities in spite of pandemic restraints, the Saint Paul Audubon Society has made progress in many areas central to our mission of conservation, education, and advocacy. Here is an overview of ongoing projects and what to expect in the coming year.

## Conservation



### University of Belize Environmental Research Institute

We continue to support research at a MoSI bird banding station at the University of Belize. Biologists are linking birds at their breeding grounds and at their wintering grounds, to learn

more about bird conservation. During the 2020-2021 season, 203 birds from 50 species were banded, and 18 students from nearby communities took part in educational activities.

### Landscape Revival

This much-loved event, which offers gardeners two convenient locations to shop for native Minnesota plants from a variety of growers, returned with some modifications in June 2021 after a forced hiatus in 2020. St. Paul Audubon member Colleen Swedberg is one of many volunteers involved in planning the event, which promotes and provides education about the use of native plants.

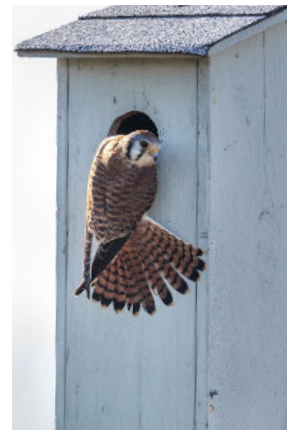
### Urban Bird Collective

Founded by Conservation Committee co-chair Monica Bryand, this group focuses on BIPOC (black, Indigenous, and people of

color) and the LBGT community, and supports birders of different skill levels, communities and backgrounds by creating safe experiences exploring birds and nature close to home. A major focus has been to empower individuals to lead others by providing opportunities for new leaders to serve as guides and by participating in activities such as the Christmas Bird Count. The Collective is also partnering with the Lower Phalen Creek Project to lead a walk every month and collect data on birds in the area. The Saint Paul Audubon Society board recently approved a grant to pay for additional skill development for the 16 people in the leadership program.

### Kestrel Nest Box Project

The American Kestrel nest box project, initiated by the St. Paul Audubon Conservation Committee in response to the alarming decline of kestrels in Minnesota, had another active spring and summer in 2021. Eight nest boxes were in place for the season, the same number and locations as in 2020. Kestrels occupied 3 of the boxes, each fledging 5 young, almost as good as the previous year when 4 boxes produced 16 young. Successful locations were at Lake Elmo Park Reserve, the Belwin Conservancy, and Afton State Park. Julian Sellers manages this project.

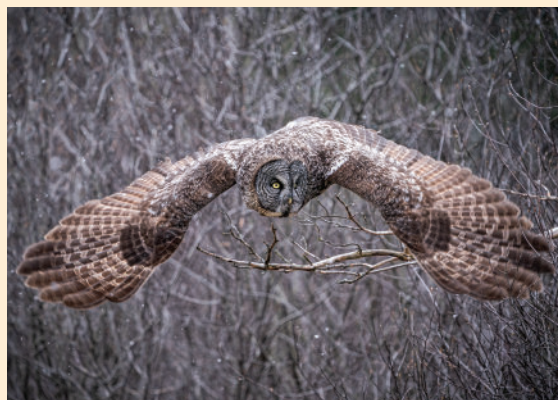


## Facebook Photo Contest Entries

Many of the photos in this report are entries from our first-ever bird photography contest held on the Saint Paul Audubon Society Facebook group site in June. They are identified by FBC and the photographer's name.



FBC PHOTOGRAPHER: TERRY MORTIER



FBC PHOTOGRAPHER: JILL BAUER



FBC PHOTOGRAPHER: MARK GILBERT

# Education

## Wild River Journey

Fourth-graders from the Stillwater school district will have the opportunity to learn about the flora and fauna of the St. Croix River valley from the deck of a paddleboat, thanks to two grants awarded to the Wild River Conservancy, which runs the Wild River Journey program. On hiatus last year, the field trip will be offered five times this coming May. Volunteers from Saint Paul Audubon will host the birding station, a favorite stop on the cruise.

## Monthly Speaker Series

Members of the Program Committee, led by Stewart Corn, continue to recruit guest speakers for the monthly chapter meetings, held via Zoom since fall 2020. These presentations have featured a wide range of experts in areas related to birds and their habitats. We are looking forward to once again meeting in person in 2022, with the re-opening of the Fairview Community Center, now named the **Anpétu Téča Education Center.**

## Metro partnerships

Saint Paul Audubon will serve as an active partner in the Three Rivers Park District's 2022 Big Year of the Birds, which provides many learning opportunities for beginning-to-experienced birders, including the World Migratory Bird Day at Eastman Nature Center. Three Rivers will spread the word about our events, supporting our goal of engaging more people in the joy of birding.



# Advocacy

## Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park

Board secretary Kiki Sonnen is leading efforts to draw attention to the environmental harm sustained over decades by St. Paul's largest park and lake, and to work with the city to begin enforcing zoning codes and review standards, to protect it from further damage. Friends of the park lead weekly tours at Pig's Eye to increase the public's awareness of the park's wild beauty, and they stay in regular contact with the officials who have influence on decisions affecting the park.

## Battle Creek Grassland

Since late 2020 St. Paul Audubon has been working with other environmental organizations to try to save a 77-acre grassland adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park that is a nesting site for an amazing array of rare and declining grassland bird species (see [tinyurl.com/BCgrassland](http://tinyurl.com/BCgrassland)). The tract is within the city of Maplewood, but owned by Ramsey County, and the county is eyeing it for housing. There are signs of hope: the county received no response to its Request for Developer Interest, and Maplewood officials have expressed a

preference for saving the property. We would like to see it declared an Environmental Natural Area within Battle Creek Regional Park.

## Volunteers Always Welcome!

To conduct our activities, we depend on volunteers with a variety of skills. If you are interested, please contact our volunteer coordinator Barbara Lindeke at 651-489-0318 or Donn Waage at 612-735-4085 ([donnw@yahoo.com](mailto:donnw@yahoo.com)).

## Board of Directors

Louise Eidsmoe  
Rebecca Flood

Barbara Lindeke  
Nancy Uppgren

## Officers

Donn Waage, President  
Jane Braun, Vice President  
Martha Douglas, Vice President, Communications  
Kiki Sonnen, Secretary  
Jim Stout, Treasurer



Saint Paul  
Audubon  
Society

ST. PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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The 2020-2021 Annual Report of the Saint Paul Audubon Society was published by the Board of Directors in November 2021.

The editor and primary writer was Martha Douglas.

Saint Paul Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, Inc.