



Monthly Meetings With Featured Speakers Resume in September

One of the Saint Paul Audubon Society's regular activities is chapter meetings, open to the public, on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. These in-person gatherings are an opportunity to get to know other birders, hear about chapter news, and enjoy presentations by experts on a wide range of topics relating to birds, their habitats, and nature and conservation in general.

Most speakers in the coming season will be in person, while some will present via Zoom. Either way, we will gather at our regular meeting site to socialize (except in January and February), enjoy refreshments, and watch the presentations together. All presentations will be available on YouTube after the meetings.

Monthly meetings are held in room 207 of the Anpétu Téca Education Center at 1910 County Road B West, Roseville. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. but come early to enjoy refreshments and socializing. Complete information about the meetings and speakers can be found on saintpaulaudubon.org.

Sept. 14, 7:00 p.m.: Kao Thao, Minnesota State Park Naturalist, will present "Stories from a POC Environmentalist." Kao believes that Minnesota is fortunate to be one of the best states to have many parks and wildlife spaces, as well as some of the best outdoor practices in terms of usage and protection. In addition to telling stories of his own experiences as a person of color (POC) working as an environmentalist, and in light of our state's population becoming more diverse, he will talk about the need to have everyone's support and input to maintain our environment's protection.

Kao Thao graduated from the University of Minnesota with a combined degree in Computer Graphics and Fisheries/Wildlife. He says that being one of the few POC environmentalists in Minnesota has its rewards and challenges. "I was born in Laos during the Vietnam War and spent my first eight years living and running through the jungles before crossing the Mekong River to Thailand," he says. "The Hmong were one of the few hill tribes recruited by the US CIA to aid with the 'secret war' against North Vietnam. After the US pullout from Southeast Asia, these hill tribes were persecuted by the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao militaries. During my



Kao Thao

very young years there, I remembered seeing how nature provides for our survival and how much we depend on it. Growing up in St. Paul, the only outdoor experience I had was the small local city parks with very limited wildlife. As I became a Park Naturalist in the late '90s, I was the first Southeast Asian Naturalist in Minnesota or even the nation. Now I want all Minnesotans to understand how important it is to protect our planet's limited resources, and I want to recruit more people of color to the outdoors."

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Calendar

Field trips and birding walks: Pages 4 - 7.

September chapter meeting: September 14, 7:00 p.m. Page 1.

October chapter meeting: October 12, 7:00 p.m. Page 2.

Birds and Beers St. Paul: 6-9 p.m. on August 23, September 21, October 24, November 29. Sweetney's Saloon, St. Paul. Page 3.

Grant Application deadline: October 1. Page 8.

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Welcome!

To the Saint Paul Audubon Society. We're a chapter of the National Audubon Society. **Our mission** is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and Earth's biological diversity.

The Saint Paul Audubon Society **welcomes everyone** to become a member or participate in activities as a non-member regardless of their race, color, national origin, religion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or age.

Get Involved

We are a volunteer organization that relies on people willing to donate their time to our shared mission. Please consider getting involved with volunteer opportunities involved with birding walks, conservation efforts, or other activities. Visit <https://www.saintpaulaudubon.org/volunteer/> for a full list of committees and committee chairs, or get in touch with us on our contact page at <https://www.saintpaulaudubon.org/contact/>.

Donate

Please consider donating financially to help with the educational and conservation activities Saint Paul Audubon supports. You can make a gift online at <https://www.saintpaulaudubon.org/get-involved/donate/>.

About our chapter

Founded in 1945 as the St. Paul Bird Club with 12 members, our chapter now serves the entire East Metro region of the Twin Cities and has around 2500 members. **Monthly chapter meetings** are held the second Thursday of the month, September-May, and are open to the public.

About the Cardinal

The *Cardinal* is published 6 times a year and posted on www.saintpaulaudubon.org at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Martha Douglas is the editor and Laurie Wachter is the graphic designer. The *Cardinal* is available for everyone to view on our website. If you would like to receive an email when it is available, go to www.saintpaulaudubon.org, scroll down and click on "Join our email list."

Copy is due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. Inquiries to the editor or suggestions for articles can be made through the "Contact Us" form on the website, at <https://www.saintpaulaudubon.org/contact/> and the editor will follow up with you.

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Greg Burnes, 612-205-3071

Vice President

Kiki Sonnen, 651-331-9560

Vice President, Communications

Martha Douglas, 651-366-2345

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For more **information**, please visit www.saintpaulaudubon.org or contact the board members listed here.

Next issue: October / November 2023

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Oct. 12, 7:00 p.m.: Wildlife Ecologist Michael Joyce will present "Distribution and Ecology of Fishers in Southern Minnesota." Fishers are cryptic forest carnivores in the weasel family native to Minnesota. They have expanded their range in Minnesota over the last two decades, moving into southern Minnesota, including the greater Twin Cities Metro area. Michael will discuss a general history of fishers in Minnesota, summarize recent sightings, and discuss preliminary results from a new study to learn about fisher ecology and population status in southern Minnesota.



Photo by Alex Kramarevsky

Michael Joyce is a wildlife ecologist at the Natural Resources Research Institute in Duluth. He has been studying wildlife in northern Minnesota over the last 12 years. His research focuses broadly on wildlife ecology, conservation, and management, emphasizing understanding human activities' effects on wildlife populations and communities.

Help Wanted: Technical Assistance for Chapter Meetings

One of the key offerings of Saint Paul Audubon is our monthly chapter meetings. A major challenge for these meetings is to have smooth-running technology that provides optimum sound and visuals for both an in-person and a simultaneous Zoom experience – hybrid meetings. We seek one or more volunteers with experience facilitating hybrid Zoom meetings, setting up and using sound equipment, and editing and posting Zoom recordings to YouTube. We can supply an orientation on the current setup and are open to suggestions on improving our attendees' experience. If interested, please contact Greg Burnes at 612-205-3071 or gburnes@comcast.net.





Chip Notes

I hope you are having a wonderful summer. With the abundant sunshine, I've had a chance to enjoy the outdoors more than usual, though we could use some rain as I am spending way too much time watering our yard's new plantings.

This summer has been filled with fantastic field trips led by our incredible volunteers. I've had an opportunity to join several of these trips and have found many new and now favorite places to revisit. I hope you can join one of these trips and take advantage of the various green spaces in and around Ramsey and Washington Counties. I also experienced my first Landscape Revival and had the chance to meet and talk with current and future Saint Paul Audubon supporters. Thank you for your insights and kind words about the organization and our chapter's dedicated people.

We have compiled a robust list of presenters for our upcoming chapter meetings. Some will be hybrid (in person and Zoom) and some will be Zoom only. We plan to broadcast and record all these meetings and have them available on YouTube. If you can, we encourage you to attend in person. Even when we have a remote (Zoom) speaker, we will be holding a "Viewing Party" at the community center (except for January and February) so you can catch up with friends and enjoy some treats. See page 1 and watch the event calendar and email notifications for more details.

We have launched two new pages on our website. The "[Volunteer](#)" page lists many opportunities to donate your time and experience. Some openings are for committees to help guide the organization's activities; others call for individuals and groups to roll up their sleeves

and work on critical conservation, technology, or community science projects. Please join us if you are able.

The "[Grants in Action](#)" page highlights the many non-profit organizations that have received Saint Paul Audubon grant dollars and how those dollars positively impact our community. Information about how your donation dollars are invested through grant-giving will also be provided at chapter meetings.

This month, the Bird City programs across the Americas have a new, shared platform called the [Bird City Network](#). The bird city program provides a means for cities to plan and take actions that ensure the long-term well-being of birds by enhancing their habitats, safeguarding the migratory routes, reducing threats to their survival, and educating youth and adults. These steps create healthy communities for birds and people.

The regional Audubon office will continue coordinating our state's Bird City initiative. Two cities in our chapter's territory have earned the Bird City designation: [Stillwater](#) and Saint Paul. Since the mission of this initiative aligns with ours, we will explore ways to support these programs and see how we might encourage other cities to get involved. If you think your city would be interested, drop us an email.

Please be careful and kind, and if we meet on one of the many field trips or at other Saint Paul Audubon-sponsored events, please say hi.

*Greg Burnes
President,
Saint Paul
Audubon Society*



The Joy of Birds

Do you like to talk about birds? Do you like to hear about birds? Can't get enough about learning about birds? Well, you just might like Birds & Beers - St. Paul. We gather monthly to talk together about Birds, Birds, Birds.

Everyone is welcome - whether you are just getting into birds or being a birder your whole life. We meet monthly at 6-9 pm at Sweeney's Saloon, 96 N. Dale, St. Paul. We gather in the Ashland Room to visit over a meal & beverages. As we introduce ourselves we hear about a great bird seen, or a bird people are looking for, announcements about bird events, or upcoming bird trips.

Mark your calendars now to join in on the fun at upcoming Birds & Beers gatherings:

- Wednesday, August 23, Sweeney's, 6 pm

- Thursday, September 21, Sweeney's, 6 pm
- Tuesday, October 24, Sweeney's, 6 pm
- Wednesday, November 29, Sweeney's, 6 pm



A recent Birds and Beers St. Paul at Sweeney's Saloon



BIRDING WALKS AND FIELD TRIPS

Urban Trees and Birds, Frogtown Park and Farm

946 Minnehaha Ave. W., St. Paul, MN 55104

Saturday, August 5, 8:30-10 AM

Join us for a visit to this unique urban farm site to observe and identify birds and trees, and to consider their interactions. You'll learn some basic tree identification tips, the importance of our urban tree canopy and what [Frogtown Green](#) is doing to add trees to their neighborhood.

DIRECTIONS Meet at the parking lot next to the greenhouse on the top of the hill.

INFORMATION Bring binoculars, bird guide and tree guide if you have them.

REGISTRATION None.

DIFFICULTY Easy - Mostly

paved, less than .5 mile

LEADERS Kathy Robbins 651-636-6475
Krobbins@umn.edu and Cathy Croghan

Bruce Vento Trail and Bird Walk

1301 Arlington Ave. E., St. Paul, MN 55106

Sunday, August 13, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

St. Paul Audubon Society joins with [Friends of Swede Hollow](#) and [Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County](#) to offer this opportunity to stroll along a portion [Bruce Vento Regional Trail](#). Learn the history of the land, the Trail, and current activities to save this important corridor from transit development. Along the way we'll look for some summer birds. Beginners are most welcome.

SUGGESTIONS Bring binoculars if you have them. A limited number of binoculars can be borrowed from the leader. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. Water and bug dope advised.

REGISTRATION None.

DIRECTIONS Meet at the **Bergeron Pass Marker** (44.9849102, -93.0455361) on the corner of English St. And Arlington Ave. Street parking available along the east side of English St.

DIFFICULTY Level pathway both paved and natural area. Route approximately 1.5 miles.

LEADER Kathy Sidles 651-233-6804 Kesid@aol.com

Beginning Birding at Crosby Farm Park

2595 Crosby Farm Rd, St. Paul, MN 55116

Saturday August 26, 8:30 - 11:00 AM

St. Paul Audubon is once again partnering with the St. Paul Library to offer a beginning birding field trip. Come and learn about birding, including how to use binoculars and a field guide. Mostly come to have some late summer fun outdoors.

DIRECTIONS Southwest of downtown St. Paul off Shepard Rd. Meet in the parking lot.

INFORMATION Dress for the weather and wear closed-toe shoes. Bring a brimmed hat, water, sunblock and a field guide with maps or a smart phone with an app already installed. Indicate at registration if you would like to use a pair of loaner binoculars.

REGISTRATION Required registration and limited to 15 participants. Registration link is available on our website after August 1.

DIFFICULTY Variety of natural surfaces, generally level terrain, approximately 2 miles

LEADERS Linda Whyte 651-815-7045 and Cathy Croghan

Beginning Birding at Oakdale Nature Center

444 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale, MN 55128

Saturday, September 2, 9-10:30 AM

This family-friendly walk is in one of the most beautiful urban parks in Washington County. We will meet at the Visitors Center, check the bird feeders and walk the winding paved trails. There are usually songbirds along the path, and we will make our way out to a lake where we might see swans, ducks, and eagles. We will also be listening to birds. If you would like, download the *Merlin* app on your phone (it's free) and we can experiment with learning bird songs together.

DIRECTIONS Meet in front of Visitors Center.

INFORMATION Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. A limited number of binoculars will be available on a first come first served basis. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes.

REGISTRATION None.

DIFFICULTY 0.5 to 1.0 mile on paved trails with small hills.

LEADER Greg Burnes gburnes@comcast.net
612-205-3071

- • • • •
- Contact Field Trip Committee Chair Cathy Croghan •
- at 651-636-6475 if you have suggestions for new field •
- trip locations. •
- • • • •
- • • • •
- Be sure to check www.saintpaulaudubon.org for •
- more details and field trip changes throughout the •
- season. •
- • • • •

Fall Migrants and Grassland Goldenrod at Battle Creek Park

2301 Lower Afton Rd., Maplewood, MN 55119
Saturday, September 9, 9-11 AM

The first hour is an easy one-mile hike to and along the western edge of the grassland the community is trying to preserve. The second hour is a moderately difficult hike to the northeastern part of the grassland, where we hope to hear and see migrating fall warblers, sparrows and hawks, along with the early fall colors of the grassland.

DIRECTIONS Meet in the South Battle Creek parking lot, 2301 Lower Afton Rd, Maplewood. From McKnight Rd, turn east onto Lower Afton, drive 0.2 mile, turn left into South Battle Creek parking.

INFORMATION [Venue website](#) Warning: Battle Creek Park is quite large and this parking lot is not listed on the website.

DIFFICULTY Moderate (see description above).

LEADER John Zakelj jzakelj@yahoo.com

Pilot Knob/Oheyawahe Open Space and Acadia Park Cemetery – Location, location, location!

2100 Pilot Knob Rd., Mendota Heights, MN 55120
Saturday, September 16, 6:00-7:45 PM

Lots of history, views and, we hope, birds. Autumnal falling temperatures with shortening days bring preparations for big changes to the local bird-life web. Sunset 7:22 PM

DIRECTIONS From I-494, take Pilot Knob Rd. exit, then drive north until the road ends. Park on road near intersection of Acadia Blvd. and Pilot Knob Rd.

REGISTRATION None.

DIFFICULTY Long gradual slope on unpaved pathway. Approximately 2-mile route.

NOTE Oheyawahe is a place of cultural importance to the Dakota Community and of significance in the history of MN statehood. <http://www.pilotknobpreservation.org/Pocket%20Guide%20Interactive.htm>

LEADER Chase Davies 651-246-9754
RockyBirder@gmail.com

Swede Hollow Park – Birding in the Heart of St. Paul

622 Beaumont St, St Paul, MN 55130
Saturday, September 23, 9:00 - 11:00 AM

This is a **BirdUp**, Saint Paul Audubon's new more informal version of birding. Meet up at the site, and everyone will be responsible for finding and identifying the birds. We will provide a convener/s who is familiar with the park and knows which areas to visit, and

who will make sure everyone finds their way back to the parking lot. Birders of all levels welcome. Keep an eye on the Saint Paul Audubon website as we hope to add a few more Bird Ups throughout the autumn season.

DIRECTIONS Meet at the entrance to Drewry Tunnel at Swede Hollow Park across from 622 Beaumont St. East, St. Paul 55130. Park on street or off-street parking available at the Hope Community Academy (located in the old Hamm's Brewery Building) at 720 Payne Ave, St. Paul 55130

DIFFICULTY Easy to moderate, approximately 1.5 miles. Includes both uphill and downhill paved pathway.

CONVENER Kathy Sidles 651-233-6804
kesid@aol.com Contact Kathy if you would like to borrow her extra pair of binoculars.

NOTE [Friends of Swede Hollow](#) joins us in offering this program.

William O'Brien State Park

16821 O'Brien Trail N, Marine on St Croix, MN 55047

Saturday, September 30, 8-10 AM

This walk along the St. Croix River will explore the lower part of William O'Brien State Park, with the hope of catching some fall migrants along the way. The last part of the walk passes Alice Lake, which is usually a good place for viewing waterfowl.

DIRECTIONS We will meet at the parking lot by the swimming beach. When you enter the park from Hwy. 95 follow the signs to the beach and boat launch (road passes under HWY. 95 and down the hill).

NOTE Annual or Daily MN State Park Pass Required AND Self-pay envelopes are no longer available. See [DNR payment options](#).

REGISTRATION None.

DIFFICULTY Flat wood chip and paved trails. About 1.2 miles. Restrooms at the boat launch area and about halfway at campgrounds.

LEADER Chase Davies 651-246-9754
rockybirder@gmail.com

Sandhill Cranes at Crex Meadows SWA

102 E. Crex Ave., Grantsburg, WI
Tuesday, October 17, 4:00 ~ 8:15 PM

Since historic times, Greater Sandhill Cranes have congregated by the thousands every autumn evening in the marshes and ponds now called Crex Meadows SWA, located on the north side of Grantsburg, WI. People likewise gather to witness the sight of seemingly never-ending strands and haunting sounds as the birds seek and settle in to shelter for the night. Perhaps this is your year to experience anew or again this enduring ritual. Introductory remarks and instructions will begin at 4 p.m. in the parking lot of the Visitor Center at Crex

Meadow State Wildlife Area in Grantsburg WI. Destination(s) chosen will depend on CMSWA staff information, recent main roost areas, numbers of cars in the caravan, and current weather. Most likely either roost sites in Crex Meadows or at Fish Lake will be the general area.

DIRECTIONS Take I-35 North to the Rock Creek/ Grantsburg Exit #165 (Highway 70), approximately 34 miles from Forest Lake. Take exit 165, turn right (EAST) on Highway 70, go 15 miles to the stop light in Grantsburg, WI. Turn left (NORTH) onto Pine Street. Follow the goose signs through town to the Visitor Center, located on the NE corner of the junction of County Road D and County Road F. Park and meet in the parking lot.

INSTRUCTIONS Bring binoculars and a scope if possible. Dress for cooling temperatures during the evening. Consider bug repellent, sunscreen, water, car supper or snack. Group will gather in the parking lot for basic information by the leaders with Q and A. Departure time from the parking lot depends on weather. We will caravan from the parking lot and depart as one group at the end of the evening. If destination is in Crex Meadows SWA, carpooling will be strongly encouraged; if destination is Fish Lake SWA all will drive separately.

NOTE Modern restrooms are located in the Visitors Center (715-463-2896) which has limited hours in October.

REGISTRATION Register with Louise Eidsmoe 651-231-0453 eidsmoel@comcast.net

DIFFICULTY Easy. Viewing can be improved somewhat by walking the road slowly, staying close beside the cars, so as not to spook the cranes.

LEADERS Louise Eidsmoe 651-231-0453 eidsmoel@comcast.net, Chase Davies 651-246-9754 RockyBirder@gmail.com

Pig's Eye Park Bird Sightings

By Kiki Sonnen

We have been seeing good birds at Pig's Eye Park this summer, like this Dickcissel photographed July 2023 by Kathy Sidles, Saint Paul Audubon Conservation Committee member. We have also spotted Orchard Orioles, Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Spotted Sandpipers, American Woodcock, Wild Turkeys, Yellow Warblers, Great Blue Herons, Common Egrets, and Bald Eagles.

All are welcome to come along for excursions to the park at 9:30 am every Tuesday and Saturday.

Letters of support are requested to be sent to City Councilmember Jane Prince

regarding St. Paul Parks Department's STAR Grant Proposal of \$60,000. Email her at Jane.prince@ci.stpaul.mn.us This grant would provide park improvements such as visitor parking spaces, road access improvements, directional signage, trailhead welcoming kiosk, native vegetation landscaping, satellite facilities, and installation of a kestrel box.

In other news, Saint Paul Audubon requested that the DNR assess and correct the decline of the Pig's Eye Rookery at Pig's Eye Island #2 and provide protective status to a satellite rookery that is growing on a new upriver site on Pig's Eye Island #1. So far, the DNR believes there is no cause for concern or change. Since their response, we have learned 3 or 4 other heron-egret colonies have collapsed out-state. If you would like to join with other volunteers to build a coalition to call for a state-wide analysis of how to protect and support our heron rookeries, contact kiki.sonnen@gmail.com.

Other happenings at Pig's Eye Park include news that the Water Department has decided to drop their plans for a new soil sludge site at the NW site of the park. This decision was triggered by Minnesota Pollution Control Agency requiring the sludge soil test results, and no construction or earth moving at the site. The PCA restrictions are requirements for managing land use on top of a Super Fund site. The Water Department has dropped its proposed dump site and continues to de-commission its existing dump site on parkland by the trailheads.

Meanwhile, the Wood Chipper advised Ramsey County haulers to dump the county woodchips on the NW parkland because there was not space in their yard for the County chips. This parcel of land was being used by nesting sandpipers and killdeer. Swallows also used the shallow pools of remnant wetland to catch insects on the wing. When we complained and asked for city and county help to protect the environment and to protect the birds, we were told, in essence, that the woodchips have higher priority than migratory birds and natural resources. Let's just say this issue is not over. If you would like to help strategize, research, and report on this issue, you can contact kiki.sonnen@gmail.com.



Egrets, Photo by Kathy Sidles



Dickcissel

BIKE AND BIRD

Sherry Gray is the leader of all Bike and bird field trips. Registration is required for all trips and is limited to 8 participants. Contact sherry at sherrygray@yahoo.com to register. Participants will be asked to sign a liability release form at the start of the trip.

Bike & Bird along the Mississippi River Levee on the Robert Piram Trail

Sunday, August 6, 8:00 AM to Noon

Discover the fun of birding from a bicycle along a flat, paved trail along the Mississippi River, from Harriet Island and the Saint Paul Airport past the Pigs Eye Island SNA Heron Rookery to Kaposia Landing (2.6 miles one way), the Rock Island Swing Bridge (7.8 mi, one way), and also connecting to Dakota County trails that lead to Lilydale or Thompson Parks or Simon's Ravine, all of which are prime birding locations for Ramsey and Dakota Counties. Landscape is mostly river-side, with option to visit small urban woods, a ravine, and/or riverine wetlands.

LOCATION [Map](#)

DIRECTIONS We will start at either Harriet Island or the Saint Paul Airport (south side).

GEAR Bring bicycle, helmet, binoculars, sunscreen, snacks and water. Scope is optional, but could be useful for locating birds on Pigs Eye Island across the river. Leader will bring a scope and first aid kit.

REGISTRATION Required (see above).

DIFFICULTY Some side trails might have hills, but route is mostly river levee flat. Route to Swing Bridge might include a few blocks of on-street riding. As group will hear and see many birds, riding pace is relaxed. Birders and bicyclists of all levels, including newbies, are most welcome to join. See distance description above.

Bike & Bird Carlos Avery WMA

9067-7801 205th Ave NE, Wyoming, MN 55092

Sunday, August 20, 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Discover the fun of birding from a bicycle on several miles of level gravel roads that connect varied habitat in this large WMA near Wyoming, MN. Carlos Avery is a prime birding location for Anoka and Chisago counties (top hotspot on eBird for Anoka). Landscape includes lakes, small woods, wetlands, and open grassland. A hybrid or street bike that can handle gravel roads, or a mountain bike, is recommended (racing style, skinny tires probably not best here).

LOCATION [WMA map](#)

DIRECTIONS Meet in the Carlos Avery North Loop Parking Area. This is where 205th Ave NE meets Wyoming Road. 45.341380434033844, -93.0717141694866.

GEAR Bring a bicycle, helmet, binoculars, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, and water. Scope optional, but could be useful. Leader will bring scope and first aid kit.

REGISTRATION Required (see above)

DIFFICULTY Several miles. Terrain is mostly flat and area uncrowded, but roads are gravel and can be rutted or muddy. As group will hear and see many birds, riding pace is relaxed and stops frequent. Birders and bicyclists of all levels, including newbies, are most welcome to join.



Landscape Revival Events Draw Crowds

Landscape Revival, the combination of native plant market and information expo, had great attendance at its two events this year, with 775 people at the Oakdale event on June 3 and about 700 in Shoreview on June 10. Attendees shopped for native plants and other items for sale by seven vendors, and about half also visited the information exhibits to learn more about the benefits of growing native plants. The Saint Paul Audubon Society hosted exhibits at both events and shared information about our activities and how to attract birds using native plants.



Change in Purchasing State Park Passes Announced

Please note that there has been a change in how to purchase the required annual or daily vehicle passes in Minnesota State Parks. The self-pay envelopes that were introduced during the pandemic are no longer available. For current information on how to purchase passes, see [DNR payment options](#).



Ed Davies Taking Over Kestrel Nest Box Project

After 12 productive years of launching and managing a project designed to increase the American Kestrel population in Ramsey and Washington Counties, Julian Sellers is transferring project management to Ed Davies. The project involves placing Kestrel nest boxes in habitats that Kestrels are known to favor and monitoring the nests to document numbers of mating pairs and fledglings. Since the project's launch in 2012, 100 young kestrels have fledged, with another 19 expected to emerge from 4 nest boxes this year! Julian has recruited a team of up to 10 volunteers who monitor the boxes using cameras on poles, clean the boxes in the fall, and remove and add boxes as needed. They currently have 8 nest boxes.

Julian recently recounted how the project got started. "The Conservation Committee, under the leadership of co-chairs Val Cunningham and Susan Solterman, brainstormed for a project the committee could undertake that would benefit birds in our area," he said. "We thought the American Kestrel, a cavity-nesting bird that was (and still is) declining rapidly in North America and, especially, in Minnesota, might benefit from placement of nest boxes in appropriate habitat. We looked into the requirements of such a project and decided it was feasible if park managers would provide poles for the nest boxes. Collaboration by the natural resource managers of Ramsey and Washington Counties, The Belwin Conservancy, and Afton State Park has made the project possible."

"On behalf of myself, the board, and Saint Paul Audubon, I want to thank Julian for his incredible work on the American Kestrel Nest Box Monitoring project,"



Julian Sellers (right) officially handed over management of the Kestrel Nest Box project to Ed Davies (left) at a recent gathering in his backyard.

said Saint Paul Audubon President Greg Burnes. "The work Julian, along with the many project volunteers, do is an excellent example of our members' dedication to understanding and protecting birds and the habitat they need to thrive. And many thanks to Ed Davies for volunteering to lead the project going forward. Please consider volunteering your time and donating to this incredible project."

It's Time Now to Apply for a Grant!

The Saint Paul Audubon Society financially supports organizations whose work aligns with our mission of promoting the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of birds and other wildlife by engaging people of the East Metro in birding, education, and conservation. This happens through our Grants Program, in which organizations submit applications and the Board of Directors decides which programs to fund. Applications are reviewed twice a year and the current round's deadline is **October 1**. Please visit www.saintpaulaudubon.org/Grants for complete information and the application form.

Grants are typically for \$500-\$2000, supporting efforts that further our focus areas of education, conservation, and policy/advocacy. Preference is given to activities in Ramsey and Washington Counties.

Recipients in the last round included MYBirdClub, Creative Enterprise Zone, Metro Blooms, Cedar Creek Education, Friends of Swede Hollow, Red-Headed Woodpecker Recovery project, Carpenter Nature Center, Como Community Council, Osprey Wilds, and University of Belize Environmental Research Institute. Multi-year grant applications are welcome for ongoing projects.

New applications, due October 1, will be reviewed at the November board meeting.

MYBirdClub Activities Continue Through Fall

MYBirdClub, a metro-area youth birdwatching group supported by Saint Paul Audubon, now has outings planned through October. MYBirdClub offers birdwatching adventures that connect youth (and their families) to birds and birding. You can contact them at MYBirdClubInfo@gmail.com or on Facebook @MYBirdClub

All levels of knowledge and ability are welcome. Use the links below to register and learn more.

[Aug 12, 8:30-10:00 @ Swede Hollow](#)

Indoor Games! [Aug 22, 6:00 pm @ Highland Park Library](#)

[Aug 26, 8:30 am @ Crosby Farm](#)

[Sep 10, 8:30 am @ Wood Lake Nature Center](#)

[Sep 17, 8:30 am @ Veterans Park](#)

Halloween Costume Party! [Oct 14, 11:00-1:00 @ Highland Park Library](#)