

The



Cardinal

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2024 • WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG • SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Native Speakers Featured at February and March Meetings

Viewpoints on science and bird life that some of us might take for granted will be challenged by the speakers at our next two monthly chapter meetings. The February meeting will be via Zoom only, and March will be in-person with a Zoom option. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month. Here are the details.

February 8, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom only: Niiyokami-gaabaw Deondre Smiles presents “Dominant” Science and Indigenous Peoples. Dr. Smiles, assistant professor of Geography at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, will speak on how modes of “dominant” science have historically been used in ways that have negatively affected Indigenous peoples in historical and contemporary contexts. He will then turn to how Indigenous scientists have been able to practice science in a way that is ethical and respectful to Indigenous communities and furthers their resurgence.

Dr. Deondre Smiles is a citizen of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe with a bachelor’s degree in Geography from St. Cloud State University, a master’s degree in Global Indigenous Studies from the University of Minnesota Duluth, and a Ph.D. in Geography from The Ohio State University. Dr. Smiles’ work focuses on how Indigenous communities grapple with climate change, particularly cultural preservation and resurgence.

The Zoom link for this meeting is [here](#).



February speaker, Dr. Deondre Smiles.

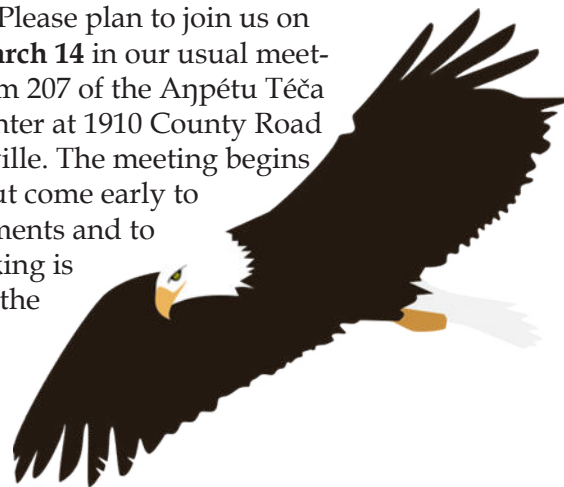


March speaker, Hope Flanagan.

March 14, 7:00 p.m.: Hope Flanagan presents Birds of Ojibwe Legends. Winter is traditionally storytelling season in our Native communities in Minnesota. So many Ojibwe legends (Aadizookaanag) honor our bird relatives. They were here before we were, so they are considered our elders, teachers, and essential food sources. They don’t need us—we need them.

Hope Flanagan is an elder who has taught and worked in the Twin Cities Native Community since the late 1970s. She is a long-time Community Outreach and Cultural Teacher at Dream of Wild Health. Before that, Hope taught in an Ojibwe Immersion classroom for ten years and was a storyteller for Minneapolis Public Schools. She teaches about plants and wild plant gathering, and is also an Urban Bird Collective walk leader.

Location: Please plan to join us on **Thursday, March 14** in our usual meeting place, room 207 of the Anpétu Téča Education Center at 1910 County Road B West, Roseville. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. but come early to enjoy refreshments and to socialize. Parking is in the back of the building. The presentation will also be available [via Zoom](#).



SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Welcome!

To the Saint Paul Audubon Society. We're a chapter of the National Audubon Society. **Our mission** is to engage a diverse community in enjoying, understanding, and protecting birds and the habitats they need to survive.

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/>.

Become a Chapter Member

You are invited to become a Saint Paul Audubon Chapter Member by making a gift of \$25 or more. Your donation goes directly to our chapter's local efforts to educate about, advocate for, and protect our birds. 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. **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. 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."

Contact Us

If you have a comment or question for a board member or the Cardinal editor, please use the contact form on the website at <https://www.saintpaulaudubon.org/contact/>. Your message will be forwarded promptly to the appropriate person.

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Rebecca Flood

Kathy McGill

Next issue: April / May 2024



Chip Notes

A Thank You -- We greatly appreciate your generous financial backing during our annual fundraising/membership drive. Your dollars make our chapter's programs and conservation activities possible and allow us to expand our outreach efforts in the communities we serve.

And a Call for Help -- Financial backing is essential to the health of our chapter, but just as critical is having volunteers who are passionate about birds and want to engage our community. We have many dedicated volunteers and thank them for their work, but we need more of you to get involved.

If you have an hour a month or more, you could contribute to a committee advocating for bird safety issues, support our grants program that serves small non-profits in our community, help plan and schedule our program speakers, enhance our social media efforts, assist in planning and representing our chapter at events throughout the year, or add your input to the board's strategic planning process. If you are interested in joining our wonderful group of volunteers, please get in touch with us at general@saintpaulaudubon.org, and let's discuss how we can work together to support the birds.

Special Note -- Jim Stout is retiring in May after serving on the board for seven years and doing an incredible

job as treasurer. We are looking for a person to fill this critical board position. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Looking to the Future -- The board has embarked on an organizational planning process that will allow us to lead in a way that best serves our chapter's purpose and ensures we engage our entire community. We will honor our chapter's past accomplishments and current successes and ask for your input on how we can improve, as we seek to engage a broader and more diverse coalition of people and partners in our mission.

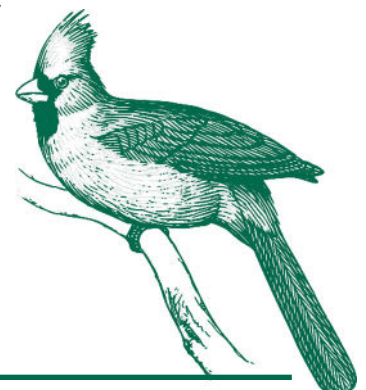
The board is leveraging an external consultant to challenge our paradigms and ensure we create a sustainable, long-term, and executable plan. It will take all of us to make the future better for birds and people. We hope you will be part of weighing options, making choices, and implementing change. We are stronger together!

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



FIELD TRIPS

Announcing a New Field Trip Series for Beginning Birders and Everyone Else!

Birding through the Months at Silverwood Park

Silverwood Park is a beautiful urban park on the shores of Silver Lake. The variety of habitats in the park--oak forest, marsh, grassland, and lakefront--make it a great birding destination, with over 180 different species sighted in the park.

In this new series, we will bird in the park over several months, providing a great way to get into birding. During this series of four field trips, participants will get to know the park and watch for different birds each month as the seasons change. In addition to getting to know the birds of Silverwood, participants will also be introduced to basic birding techniques and tools, including digital resources. Participants are encouraged to bring their own binoculars, although a few extra pairs will be available.

LOCATION Silverwood Park, 2500 County Road E, Saint Anthony, MN 55421

DIRECTIONS Meet at the doors leading into the Visitor Center from the parking lot.

REGISTRATION No registration necessary. Come for any of the sessions--attending all is not required.

DIFFICULTY Most paths are paved, but may be icy in the winter. Walks will range from 1-1.5 miles.

LEADERS Jen Miller birdingjen@gmail.com and Liz Richards

Wednesday, February 21: 2-4 PM

Birding in the winter is a great way to get comfortable with the species who live in the park year-round--plus, there are no leaves on the trees to get in the way of seeing birds! This month, we'll look for common Minnesota winter birds like chickadees and nuthatches, along with several different woodpecker species. We might even get lucky and see the park's resident great horned owls as they start nesting.



Wednesday, March 20: 2-4 PM

During March, we will start to see some early migrants returning to the park--some waterfowl, and maybe even robins and red-winged blackbirds. We'll also notice an increase in bird songs that we will learn to identify.

Wednesday, April 17: 2-4 PM

April showers melt the ice on Silver Lake, which brings more waterfowl, along with sparrows, swallows, and maybe even some early warblers or phoebes. With some luck, we might catch a glimpse of a migrating shorebird along the lakeshore, or see the fluffy head of an owlet.



Wednesday, May 15: 2-4 PM

May brings warblers, warblers, and more warblers! We'll also begin to see some of the beautiful summer residents of the park, including orioles, rose-breasted grosbeaks, and bluebirds. While the leaves returning to the trees makes seeing birds more challenging, the variety of species in the park in May makes this one of the most exciting times of year for birding.

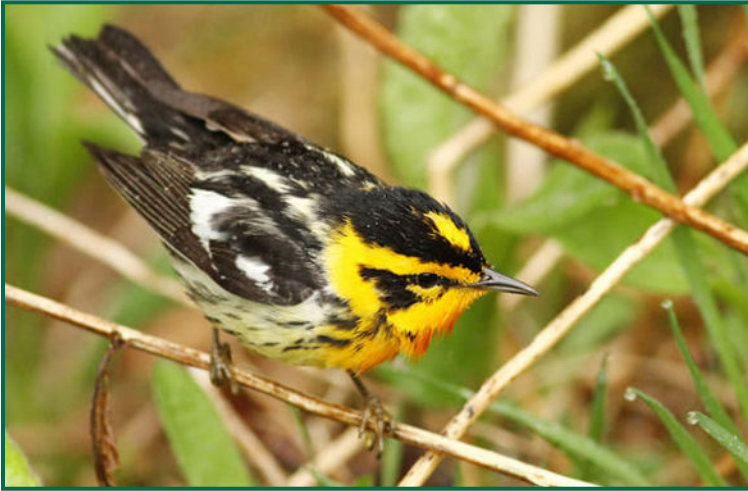
Photos this page:

Left: Northern Flicker. Photo by Sharon Dobben.

Top: Red-Winged Blackbird. Photo by Wink Gaines.

Center: Eastern Phoebes. Photo by Robyn Newman.

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 • Be sure to check <https://saintpaulaudubon.org/up-coming-events/> for more details and field trip changes
 • throughout the season.
 •••••



Male Blackburnian Warbler, photo from abcbirds.org

Enjoy Spring Migration at Warbler Weekend 2024!

Details are coming together for Saint Paul Audubon Society's 53rd annual Warbler Weekend, May 10-12 (Mother's Day weekend) at Hok-Si-La Park in Lake City, MN. The 8th year at this site, the Hok-Si-La Park Dining Hall will be the hub for the weekend's gathering, socializing, eating, recording, dispersing, and more. Visit www.hoksilapark.org to learn more about the location.

All levels of birders are welcome and encouraged to join in the fun and discovery! Warbler Weekend is a wonderful opportunity for new birders to learn from others and get inspired, and for all birders to discover something new. Walks on Saturday might focus on a particular habitat, basic birding skills, bird songs, or a favorite place in the area.

All sites offer opportunities for birders, as the migrants travel the Mississippi Flyway north to their breeding grounds. Every year since 1972, we have kept a record of the species sighted during Warbler Weekend, documenting important information on the spring bird migration along this particular stretch of bluff lands and lowlands of the Wells Creek area of the Mississippi River. The "Essentials" article at right provides more details.

Watch for a registration form and instructions coming soon. Registration will be required and will be limited to 150 people. The deadline for registration is April 18.

We hope to see you there!

Female Blackburnian Warbler, photo from abcbirds.org



Warbler Weekend 2024 Essentials

Here are the details to date for Warbler Weekend 2024. We will send out more information as it becomes available on www.saintpaulaudubon.org and in the next issue of the *Cardinal*.

REGISTRATION Registration for the weekend and reservations for all meals, including requests for gluten-free or vegetarian meals, are required in advance. Watch for further instructions. The registration deadline is April 18.

ACCOMMODATIONS Birders staying overnight need to make their own reservations. Lake City and Red Wing are closest.

LOCATION Hok-Si-La Park Dining Hall is the hub for all activities.

ON-SITE INFORMATION The usual bird boards, schedule, and notices will be posted on information boards in prominent places. Special sightings, identification of Saturday leaders, and places to bird will be on a handout available Friday evening and Saturday, with changes announced during meals. The Warbler Weekend count will be tallied after Saturday supper.

SCHEDULE

Friday May 10

6:30 p.m. Coffee, cookies and socializing

7:00 p.m. Presentation

Saturday May 11

Birding Walks

Morning: 6:45-8:00 a.m. and 9:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Afternoon: 1:45-3:15 p.m. and 3:45-5:00 p.m.

Likely spots include Frontenac State Park's Sand Point Trail and Overlook, Old Methodist Camp area, Frontenac Town Cemetery & Town Walk, Villa Maria Grounds, Beginning Birder walk, and Hok-Si-Lah North and South. Birding by ear will be offered if we are able to line up aurally talented individuals who know our avian denizens and migrants well. Birding by car on your own is always an option as well.

Gather on the grass at the parking lot around appropriate signs to form groups for each scheduled walk. Trips depart at the times listed.

Meals

8:00-9:00 a.m. Breakfast. Announcements at 9:15.

12:15-12:45 p.m. Lunch. Announcements at 1:00.

6:00-6:30 p.m. Dinner. Tally and announcements.

Sunday May 12

Enjoy birding on your own!

EVALUATION FORMS We want your input! All birders will be asked to fill out an evaluation form so that we can continue to improve Warbler Weekend.



Field Trips: Where have we been? Where are we going?

By Cathy Croghan, Field Trip Committee Chair

Spring will be here before we know it, and Saint Paul Audubon volunteers are busy planning the 2024 field trip schedule. Meanwhile, here are some highlights of last year and a look at what's to come.

2023 Recap

- In 2023, more than **600** people attended **35** trips at **30** sites.
- We continue to **foster field trip collaborations with community organizations**. Collaborations are a way to extend Saint Paul Audubon's reach and ability to meet our mission to engage a diverse community in the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of birds and the habitat they need to thrive. Current collaborators include Friends of Swede Hollow, St. Paul Public Library, Pigs Eye Park Friends, FrogTown Green, Friends of St. Paul and Ramsey County Parks and Trails, and the Urban Bird Collective.
- This year, we started to transition from a single-word trip "**difficulty**" description (easy, moderate, hard) to something more descriptive (distance, surface type, elevation, facilities). We plan to complete this transition in 2024 and, in doing so, make our trips more accessible. Our goal is to describe the trip better and let the reader draw their conclusion about the difficulty. As Jane Braun pointed out, "Your easy maybe my hard." I thank her for suggesting we make this transition.

2024 Goals

- **Increase the number of trips** with a special focus in St. Paul and Washington County.
- Continue to **foster field trip collaborations** with community organizations.

- Offer more **opportunities to build beginning birder skills**. While beginners are welcome at all trips, 2024 will add more trips specifically designed for building beginner-birder skills. (See page 3 for the new monthly birding basics four-session field trip series. It begins with February winter birding and ends with spring migration.)

Thank You

Our field trip season's success is directly tied to an outstanding team of **21 volunteer field trip leaders**. They are our lifeblood. Without them, there would be no season. They carve out time on their calendars to share their expertise and enthusiasm. The 2023 leaders* included:

Jane Braun
 Greg Burnes
 Chase Davies
 Bob Dunlap
 Mark Gilbert
 Curt Hadland
 Sally Heuer
 Kathy Sidles
 Paul Spreitzer
 Terri Walls
 John Zakelj

Monica Bryand
 Cathy Croghan
 Ed Davies
 Louise Eidsmoe
 Sherry Gray
 Pat Hadland
 Kathy Robbins
 Kiki Sonnen
 Bill Stjern
 Linda Whyte

*This list does not include the many folks who volunteered "on the spot" to lead trips at the 2023 Warbler Weekend.

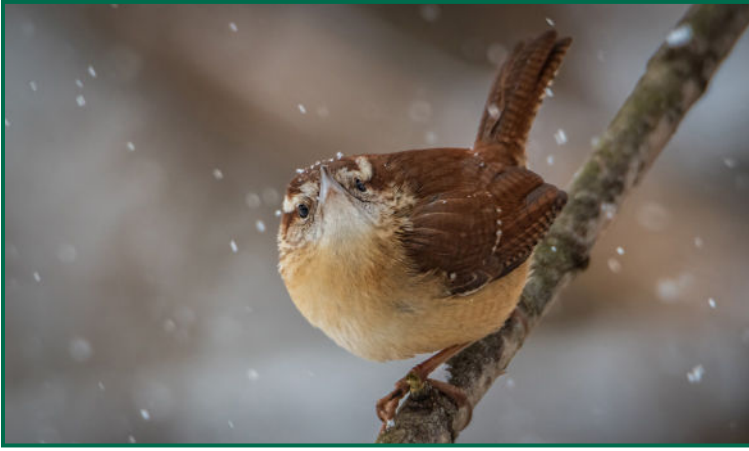
MYBirdClub Winter and Spring Outings

MYBirdClub, a metro-area youth birdwatching group supported with a grant from Saint Paul Audubon, has outings planned through Spring, including outings in St. Paul in March and May. MYBirdClub offers birdwatching adventures that connect youth and their families to birds and birding. All levels of knowledge and ability are welcome.

Complete information, including a required registration form, can be found on their website at <https://www.mybirdclub.org/>.



Photo by
 Amy Simso Dean



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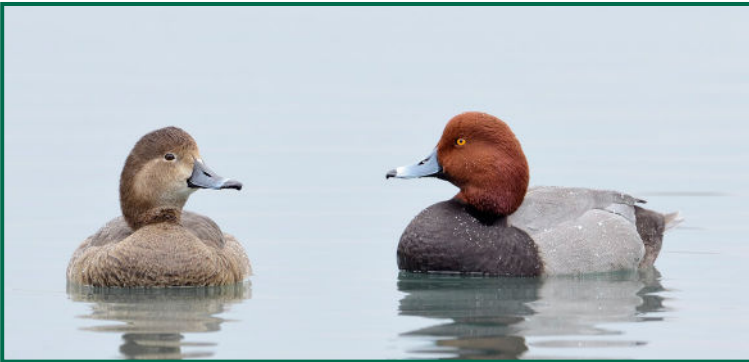
Top: Carolina Wren. Photo by James Monfils.

Center: Redhead. Photo by Bill Dix.

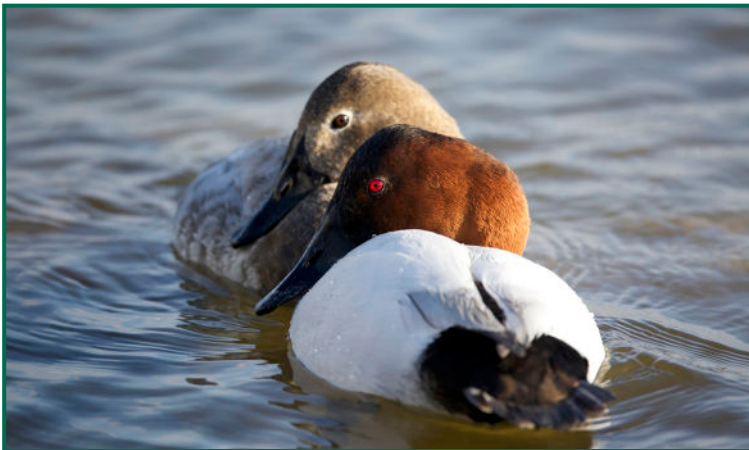
Bottom: Canvasback. Photo by Chandler Wiegand.

Christmas Bird Count Highlights

The Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 16, 2023, was a great success! Our count circle is 15 miles in diameter and is centered on the intersection of County Road B and Dale Avenue in Roseville. The warm weather meant there was no snow cover and lots of open water,



so many areas reported many more waterfowl than in a typical year. This year, we had over 65 participants, including the Macalester Bird Club and feeder watchers at the Bell Museum. Species of note for our circle included a Baltimore Oriole, Townsend's Solitaire, Gray Catbird, Carolina Wren, Chipping Sparrow, Redhead, and Canvasback.

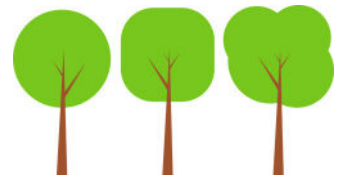


Calendar

The calendar of current and upcoming birding activities includes a wide range of events that are open to everyone. Visit our online events calendar at <https://saintpaulaudubon.org/upcoming-events/> for complete information.

- **February chapter meeting and speaker series:** February 8, 7:00 p.m., Zoom only. See page 1.
- **Silverwood birding series:** February 21, March 20, April 17, May 15. See page 3.
- **Birds and Beers St. Paul:** 6-9 p.m. on February 21, March 20. Sweeney's Saloon, 96 Dale St.
- **March chapter meeting and speaker series:** March 14, 7:00 p.m., in person and Zoom. See page 1.
- **Warbler Weekend 2024:** May 10-12. See page 4.
- **Landscape Revival expo and market:** June 1 at Rockpoint Church, Lake Elmo.

Frogtown Green Builds Urban Bird Habitat



Frogtown Green, a neighborhood-scale environmental organization in St. Paul's Frogtown neighborhood, recently reported on their progress toward goals supported through a grant from St. Paul Audubon. Founded in 2009, the organization has recently created programs focused on developing public awareness of birds and increasing bird habitat and food in the neighborhood. Now two years into the three-year grant from St. Paul Audubon, results include:

- Expanding their existing environmental education activities with programs to teach and engage youth about birds and critical issues affecting them.
- Hosting birding tours to generate enthusiasm and interest in birding among Frogtown residents.
- Hosting presentations about creating bird habitat at the community's Climate Carnival event.
- Adding 5,000+ square feet of pollinator-friendly plantings to existing native gardens, with educational signage.
- Planting nearly 250 trees that provide food and habitat to migrating birds, including many on private properties.

"The work of Frogtown Green strongly supports our mission of protecting birds and their habitats," says St. Paul Audubon President Greg Burnes. "We thank them for their work and hope to continue our partnership well into the future."