

# CAT PRINTS



*Wildcat Audubon Society - Serving the Nebraska Panhandle*

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## Kenitz Corner

By Alice Kenitz

Birding has been a little slow this fall and early winter. Many of us are noticing a lack of birds at our feeders. Just why this is happening is unclear. In spite of the apparent lack of birds, we had a successful Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on December 19. We were also very lucky to have decent weather on that day!! The Scottsbluff CBC is one of over 2000 that is held across the United States, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean each year between December 14 and January 5. This is the 110th CBC to be held nationally and the 56th locally. This year 51 species were identified on count day. The average number of species for the Scottsbluff CBC is 46.9. All data is sent to the National Audubon Society and is widely used by researchers around the world.

Each CBC is held within a 15-mile diameter circle. The local circle is centered near Dome Rock. The ultimate goal of each count is to count each individual bird within the count circle in a 24-hour period. This year the local count tallied 23,340 individual birds. Any species seen during the 3 days before and the 3 days after count day is also reported. This year there were 4 'count week' species including Sharp-shinned Hawk, White-winged Dove, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Western Meadowlark. Species seen in higher than usual numbers include Red-tailed Hawk 29, Rock Pigeon 1046, and Blue Jay 104. Other species include Cackling Goose 17, Canada Goose 15268, Wood Duck 1, Gadwall 9, American Wigeon 14, Mallard 3358, Northern Shoveler 8, Northern Pintail 1, Green-winged Teal 6, Redhead 4, Ring-necked Duck 9, Common Goldeneye 117, Hooded Merganser 1, Ring-necked Pheasant 11, Wild Turkey 50,

Great Blue Heron 1, Osprey 1, Bald Eagle 4, Northern Harrier 2, Rough-legged Hawk 3, Buteo sp. 1, American Kestrel 17, American Coot 1, Eurasian Collared-Dove 129, Great Horned Owl 3, Belted Kingfisher 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Downy Woodpecker 5, Hairy Woodpecker 1, Northern Flicker 22, Northern Shrike 1, Black-billed Magpie 10, American Crow 13, Horned Lark 151, Black-capped Chickadee 12, Red-breasted Nuthatch 5, Townsend's Solitaire 5, American Robin 437, European Starling 1498, American Tree Sparrow 16, Song Sparrow 2, White-crowned Sparrow 35, Dark-eyed Junco 162, Northern Cardinal 2, Red-winged Blackbird 98, House Finch 195, Pine Siskin 79, American Goldfinch 116, and House Sparrow 257.

Last year the first CBC in Antarctica was held. Five species were recorded at that time, including over a quarter million Adelie Penguins. To meet the general requirements of a CBC, a location must host at least one bird species that occurs in North America at other times of the year. The Wilson's Storm-Petrel and South Polar Skua recorded are both regular visitors to North American waters. Another interesting count site is Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. For the last 20 years only one species, Common Raven, has been seen. Last year counters there braved the elements to count 119 ravens.

We'll be planning 2010 summer field trips soon. We will still be working on the Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas II. We've visited some beautiful and interesting places the last few years and 2010 should be a continuation. We hope to get in a few half-day trips that might make it easier for some of you to participate. Plan to join us!!

## Rivers and Wildlife Celebration

### Sandhill Crane Migration Focus of 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration

by Kevin Poague, Audubon Nebraska

The 40<sup>th</sup> annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration will be held March 18-21, 2010, in Kearney, Nebraska. Organized by Audubon Nebraska and the Nebraska Bird Partnership, the conference gathers together nature enthusiasts from across the county to witness the migration of over half a million sandhill cranes and millions of waterfowl and other birds through central Nebraska. Events include guided field trips, workshops, a family fun room, and daily visits to river blinds operated by Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary for up-close views of cranes roosting on the Platte River.

Local and national speakers will present information on a variety of wildlife and conservation topics. Main speakers are Scott Weidensaul, author of more than two dozen natural history books, including *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist; Mike Forsberg, nature photographer and author of *Great Plains: America's Lingering Wild*; Ron Klataske, executive director of Audubon of Kansas; and Chris Wood, eBird Project Leader, Cornell Lab of Ornithology. More than twenty local environmental organizations will have information booths and hands-on activities on Saturday. The celebration is open to the general public. Registration materials can be found at [www.nebraska.audubon.org](http://www.nebraska.audubon.org). Or contact Audubon Nebraska to be put on the mailing list: [Nebraska@audubon.org](mailto:Nebraska@audubon.org); 402/797-2301. Rowe Sanctuary has information about viewing the Sandhill Crane migration, 308/468-5282; [www.rowsanctuary.org](http://www.rowsanctuary.org).

#### What is eBird?

eBird is a free, online checklist program from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. You can:

- \* Enter bird sightings anywhere, anytime
- \* Track your observations over time
- \* Learn what other eBirders are reporting
- \* Discover trends in your own backyard, state, or across the continent using simple charts and graphs. By sharing your sightings with others through eBird, you'll help conservationists gain a better understanding of birds and the habitats they require. For more information or to enter your birds go to <http://ebird.org>

## Membership

### All membership dues are due in January

Membership information is on the back of the newsletter. The current newsletter and previous ones are available on our website at

[www.wyoneb.net/delara/  
WildcatAudubon.htm](http://www.wyoneb.net/delara/WildcatAudubon.htm)

If you would like your newsletter mailed to you please send in the form on the back. Please consider receiving your newsletter by email, just send an email to [renosmom@charter.net](mailto:renosmom@charter.net) with CatPrints Newsletter in the subject line.

If you would like to be added to our email reminder list for meetings or fieldtrips use the above email and put Wildcat Audubon in the subject line.

**New and renewed members**  
since the last newsletter;

Luke Hamilton, Walter Johns, Steve & Jeannie Knode, Rick Meyers, Larry Snyder, Jon and Kate Sherwood, Helen Hughson, Mark Soper, Lee and Alice Kenitz, Kathy DeLara, Michelle Hoff and Gwen & Alan Smith

**Thanks for your support**

#### RECYCLE

Bring your aluminum cans to any Wildcat Audubon event or meeting. Please bring your ink jet cartridges to the meetings, we will no longer be paid for the ones sent in the envelopes, but they will still be recycled by the company. Proceeds from recycling are used for community education.

## The Trumpeter Swan Society

The Trumpeter Swan Society would like to hear of any Trumpeter Swan (or unidentified Tundra/Trumpeter type swan) this winter. There are some very interesting sightings along the Mississippi River away from the western population that we'd like to track closely.

I am working on a Citizen Science project to track occurrence of wintering Trumpeter Swans in states south of the 40th parallel. I've followed some of the state Listserv discussions on Trumpeter Swan records with keen interest.

I'm hoping that Trumpeters may appear in the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts and also I am hoping to attract a few dedicated birders to our program that can keep us posted throughout the winter.

The Trumpeter Watch is a program of The Trumpeter Swan Society and this link <http://www.trumpeterswansociety.org/csp-trumpeter-watch.html>

Please feel free to share this information with fellow birders. If someone comes to mind that might help our program, I'd be happy to follow up on any email (or phone) contacts you want to relay.

Peg Abbott

The Trumpeter Swan Society  
[peg@trumpeterswansociety.org](mailto:peg@trumpeterswansociety.org)

## RESOLVE TO BE GREEN

The new year is a time for resolutions and new beginnings. This year resolve to take one positive action to better the environment. If you don't think making just one lifestyle change can make a difference, consider the following facts:

- Replacing one regular light bulb with a CFL saves 150 lbs. of carbon dioxide a year.
- Cutting down your garbage 10% saves 1,200 lbs. of carbon dioxide a year.
- Re-cycling half of your household waste saves 2,400 lbs. of carbon dioxide a year.
- Washing clothes in warm or cold water saves 500 lbs. of carbon dioxide a year.
- Lowering the thermostat 2 degrees in winter saves about 2000 lbs. of carbon dioxide.
- Unplugging electronic devices not in use saves 1000s of lbs. of carbon dioxide/year.
- Idling your car less keeps 20 lbs. of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere for every gallon of gas saved.

• Resolve this year to make a difference; together we can make an impact on global warming.

## Great Backyard Bird Count February 12-15th

Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from novice bird watchers to experts. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org)

“The GBBC is a perfect first step toward the sort of intensive monitoring needed to discover how birds are responding to environmental change,” said Janis Dickinson, director of Citizen Science at the Cornell Lab. “Winter is such a vulnerable period for birds, so winter bird distributions are likely to be very sensitive to change. There is only one way—citizen science—to gather data on private lands where people live and doing this across the continent over many years. GBBC has enormous potential both as an early warning system and in capturing and engaging people in more intensive sampling of birds across the landscape.”

On the website, participants can explore realtime maps and charts that show what others are reporting during the count. For more information about the GBBC, visit the website at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

# Calendar of

## *January 16th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm.

Gordon Warrick will give a program featuring the beauty and habitat management of Spring Creek Prairie near Denton NE and also talk about Rowe Sanctuary near Gibbon NE.

## *February 12th—15th*

### **Great Backyard Bird Count (see page 3)**

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in the 13th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb. 12, through Feb.15, 2010. Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience to count birds in their own backyards, local parks or wildlife refuges. **The Scotts Bluff National Monument** will conduct counts at 8:00 am on Saturday and Sunday that are open to the public.

## *February 20th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm

Allan Maybee will be presenting a program "From Sea to Shining Sea". Starting in the Gulf of Mexico, Allan Maybee, owner of the Barn Anew Bread and Breakfast in Scottsbluff, and Roger Melton, a college professor, climbed aboard two powerful Polaris jet skis and fought their way across the treacherous gulf in the middle of Hurricane Allison. They went 1000 miles on the Mississippi to St. Louis, then 3000 miles up the Missouri to Three Forks, Montana, portaging over Lolo Pass. They re-launched their jet skis into the Clearwater, which led them into the Snake River and the Columbia. They reached the Pacific Ocean on July 23, after traveling over 6,000 river miles and in the process set a number of world records.

## *March 18-21*

### **Audubon's Rivers and Wildlife Celebration**

see article on page 2

## *March 20th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm.

Chuck and Donna Davey will give a presentation on what they learned during their recent trip to Russia. For the program, "Three cities in Russia--a pictorial view." they will show pictures of renovated historical buildings and touch on how government changes have affected the country, and city people of Russia and what the country looks like now.

## *March 27th*

**Waterfowl Field Trip**, meet at Arby's at 8:00am. We will check out the local lakes and ponds for migrating waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes. We should be back around 1:00

## *April 17th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm.

Leigh Anne LaGarry will give a presentation on the Hudson Meng Bison Kill Site located north-west of Crawford in the Oglala National Grasslands. She will talk about the history and archeology of the bone bed as well as the flora and fauna of the area.

## *April 29th—May 2nd*

### **Eastern Nebraska Field Trip**

This trip is still in the planning stages but we are planning to bird at Spring Creek Prairie, [www.springcreekprairie.org/](http://www.springcreekprairie.org/) Fontenelle Forest, [www.fontenelleforest.org/](http://www.fontenelleforest.org/) and maybe some other eastern birding destinations as time allows. Please let us know if you are interested in going on this trip so you can be included in the planning meeting.

Contact Alice Kenitz, [akenitz@prairieweb.com](mailto:akenitz@prairieweb.com) 308-436-2959 or Kathy DeLara, [renosmom@charter.net](mailto:renosmom@charter.net) for more information or to sign up for the trip.

If you would like to be added to our email reminder list for meetings or field trips send an email to [renosmom@charter.net](mailto:renosmom@charter.net) , put **Wildcat Audubon** in the subject line and mention which list you would like to be included on.

# Events 2010

## *May 14th-16th*

**Nebraska Ornithologists Spring Meeting** will be held at Camp Norwesca adjacent to Chadron State Park south of Chadron NE. There will be fieldtrips to great birding areas such as Sowbelly Canyon, Gilbert-Baker WMA and others.

Evening programs and meals will be at the lodge at the camp. You do not have to be a member to attend the events. More information will be available later.

## *May 22nd*

### **Scottsbluff County Spring Bird Count**

Meet at the RCI parking lot on 27th St and Ave I at 6:00am. We will be conducting our annual spring bird count and should be back in town about 1:00

*We do not have general meetings May through August or in December*

## Nebraska Breeding Bird Atlas Field Trips

### *June 5th, State Line Island #S408*

This block is located in the north-west corner of Scottsbluff Co. and was a new block in 2009. Meet at the RCI parking lot (27th St & Ave I) at 6:00 am

### *June 12th, Wright's Gap # B104 and Wildcat Hills #B103*

Meet at the old Gering SunMart parking lot at 6:00 am

### *June 19th, Morrill County # M103*

This block is along the river in eastern Morrill Co., we might also do the adjacent block in Garden County if we have time. Meet at the old Gering SunMart parking lot at 6:00 am. Bring a sack lunch

### *June 26th, Wildcat Hills # S401*

Meet at the old Gering SunMart parking lot at 6:00 am

## *August 15th*

**Annual Picnic** will be held at Dave & Ann Duey's, 90152 Enterprise Dr. Scottsbluff at 5:00 pm. Bring a covered dish and table service, drinks will be provided.

## *September 11th*

### **Breakfast at Wind Springs Ranch**

David and Helen Hughson will be our hosts for breakfast and birding at the ranch. Meet at the RCI parking lot (27th St & Ave I) at 7:00 am to join the carpool.

## *September 18th or 25th*

### **Scotts Bluff County Fall Bird Count**

Meet at Arby's at 7:00 am

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm.

## *September 18th or 25th*

### **Fall NOU at McCook Nebraska**

## *October 16th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm, program T.B.A.

## *October 23rd*

### **Fall Waterfowl Field Trip**

Meet at Arby's at 7:00 am. We will be birding the local lakes and ponds for waterfowl and other birds. We should be back by 1:00

## *November 20th*

**General Meeting** at the RWMC South Plaza meeting room, 7:30 pm, program T.B.A.

## *December 18th*

### **Scottsbluff Christmas Bird Count**

Meet at Arby's at 6:00 am

*All of our meetings, field trips and other events are free and open to the public. For more information contact a board member listed on the front page of the newsletter*

## *Join the Wildcat Audubon Society*

**Membership dues are only \$5.00 per year and due in January**

Your dollars help pay for Audubon Adventures in local schools, CatPrints newsletter,  
Public Education and other projects through out the year

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If you want to have it sent to you by email, send an email with "CatPrints Newsletter"  
in subject line to Kathy DeLara at renosmom@charter.net**



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If you would like to become a local member send \$5.00 to  
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170188 Spring Creek Rd, Mitchell, NE 69357

NL-0110



### **Wildcat Audubon Society**

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