

CAT PRINTS



Wildcat Audubon Society - Serving the Nebraska Panhandle

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Kenitz Corner

By Alice Kenitz

THE bird for this winter in Nebraska has definitely been the Snowy Owl, with about 200 reports from across the state. Several have been reported in Scotts Bluff County from early January to at least mid-February.

Snowy Owls are big birds that are about 23" tall (about an inch taller than our common Great Horned Owls). They also have a longer wing-span than Great Horneds and weigh a little more. These birds nest on the arctic tundra and normally move a little south during the winters. Their main food is lemmings and when the lemming population is low, the owls move farther south in greater numbers. They are active in the daylight as well as at night.

Reports from 2011 indicate that there was a good lemming population. In fact, it was so good that more Snowy Owl chicks were able to fledge.

It looks like the owls were abundant enough that they decimated their food supply and had to move farther south. A number of the birds found in Nebraska and surrounding states have been rather emaciated, and it is thought that many of them have died because of lack of sufficient food.



Photo by Marie Smith

Snowy Owls are basically white birds. The females and young birds have black markings. Birds found this far south are very often young ones. They have a round head with no feather (ear) tufts on their heads. Because they nest on the tundra, they are likely to be found in open areas where they sit on the ground or on fence posts and occasionally on houses.

Those of us who were fortunate to see a Snowy Owl this winter feel very fortunate to have seen this beautiful bird!!!!



Photo by Kathy DeLara

<http://www.wyoneb.net/-delara/WildcatAudubon.htm>

WILDCAT WEEKENDS

The Wildcat Hills Nature Center is pleased to offer Wildcat Weekends! A variety of programs will be offered at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center on the second Saturday of the month. Topics may be subject to change. NE State Park Sticker are required. Please call 308-436-3777 for more information or to register for events.

April 14, 2012 - 9:00am
Earth Day Celebration! - FREE

May 12, 2012 -8:30pm
International Migratory Bird Day/Owl Prowl!
- FREE , Please register by May 4, 2012 for this event at 308-436-3777. Minimum of 10 guests

May 19, 2012 -8:00am-1:00pm
Wildcat Hills Wildlands Event FREE/Free Park Entry Day. Cost to be announced. Please pre-register for the fun run at 308-436-3777.

June 9, 2012 -9:00
Wildflower Walk - FREE

June 9, 2012 11:00am
Lovin' Dutch Oven, \$5/person. Please pre-register by June 1, 2012. Minimum of 10 guests needed

June 11-13, 2012 - 9:00am-11:30 each day
Wildcat Explorers Day Camps. Grades 2-4
Cost of \$25/student, Pre-registration and pre-payment are required, registrations limited

June 18-22,2012 - 8:00am-4:00pm
High Plains Science Adventure Camp Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Riverside Discovery Center and Agate Fossil Beds. Paleontology: Can you Dig it? Grades 4-7. Cost of \$150/student (scholarships available), registrations limited

June 28, 2012 -9:00am to 2:00pm
Outdoor Skills Workshop
Cost of \$30/person. Register by June 15

July 14, 2012—9:00am
Big Horn Sheep Hike – FREE
Please register by July 7

August 11, 2012 at 9:00am FREE
Awesome Amphibians and Rough Reptiles

Friday, August 31, 2012
Moonlight Hike - FREE
Please pre-register by Aug 24, 2012. Minimum of 10 guests needed

September, 15, 2012 9:00am
Birding, the birds that call Wildcat Hills home-
FREE

October 27, 2012 at 1:00pm
Annual Fall Festival with Pumpkin Roll and Carving contests. \$2/person for pumpkin roll \$3/person for pumpkin carving. It is sure to be a spooky good time!

GREEN TIP

How “green” is glass? Is glass really recycled or just crushed and put into landfills? Glass is recycled and about 70% is either made into “new” glass containers or into useful products like fiberglass insulation, beads, tiles, match tips, highway reflectors, and even road aggregate. The biggest problem with recycled glass is there’s not enough of it. Only 25% of the glass in the U.S. is recycled, resulting in a waste of landfill space and energy. States with economic bottle-deposit incentives recycle as much as 63% of their glass, but only 11 states offer such incentives. In states without the incentives, only about 12% of glass is recycled. In the first six months of 2010, an estimated 69 billion cans and bottles were tossed instead of recycled. Our local recycling center accepts clear, brown and green glass and asks that the glass be separated by color if containers for each color are provided. *Information used in this article comes from “Ask Mr. Green,” Sierra Magazine, September and October, 2010*

Calendar of Fall/Winter Events 2011

March 17th

**General Meeting and Program
Regional West Medical Center South Plaza
Meeting Room at 7:30 pm**

Lesley Gaunt from Scottsbluff National Monument will do a presentation on Desert Bighorn Sheep. She will discuss the differences in the Rocky Mountain and Desert Bighorns, how they have adapted to the harsh desert environment, how humans have affected them and what can be done to help them survive today.

March 24th

Waterfowl Field Trip to the local lakes and ponds. Meet at Arby's at 8am, we will have breakfast then carpool to the lakes, we should be back by 1:00

April 21st

**General Meeting and Program
Regional West Medical Center South Plaza
Meeting Room at 7:30 pm**

Rod and Marie Smith will be presenting a program on their birding trips to Panama and Ecuador. The presentation will include pictures and the stories behind locating two of Panama's most sought after birds - the Resplendent Quetzal and the Harpy Eagle. In Ecuador the stories will encompass day trips from the Lowland subtropical rainforest at 1650 feet up to the Andes cloud forest at 6,600 feet and then on to the high barren plains at 14,350 feet altitude.

"The birding was great when it wasn't pouring rain. We saw nearly 40 species of hummingbirds, the Andean condor with it's majestic 11' wingspan and an extremely rare sighting of the...well you'll have to come and find out what it was." "The trip also included a 5.6 earthquake that shook us out of our lodge at 5:45 a.m., a mudslide that closed down the road and knocked out the power to the village we were staying at." Please join us for our slide presentation and more stories including one the world's rarest bird.

May 26th

Scotts Bluff County Spring Bird Count

Meet at the RCI building at 27th and Ave I, Scottsbluff at 6am, we should be back by 1:00. We might go back out in the afternoon

June 16th

Fort Robinson / Crawford Field Trip

Meet at the RCI building at 27th and Ave I, Scottsbluff at 6am. We will have lunch at Ft Robinson

June 30th

Redington Field Trip

Meet at the new Gering grocery store, 10th & M St. in Gering at 6am, bring a sack lunch and drinks

August 19th

Wildcat Audubon Annual Picnic

The picnic will be held at Brad and Connie McKinney's, 412 East 38th St, Scottsbluff at 5pm. Bring a covered dish, table service and a lawn chair

September 8th (tentative date)

Breakfast at Wind Springs Ranch

Meet at RCI, 27th & Ave I at 8am to carpool to Dave and Helen Hughson's ranch in Sioux County

September 22nd

Scotts Bluff County Fall Bird Count

Meet at Arby's at 7am, we should be back by 1:00

October 13th

Fall Crane and Waterfowl Field Trip to local lakes and ponds. Meet at Arby's at 8am, we should be back by 1:00

December 15th

Scottsbluff Christmas Bird Count

Meet at Arby's at 6:30am.

Join the Wildcat Audubon Society

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

Your dollars help pay for CatPrints newsletter, Public Education and other projects through out the year

If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter by mail please send in this form.

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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