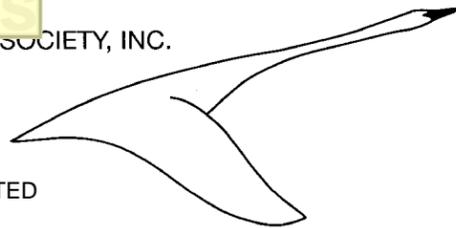


WINNEBAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.
 P.O. BOX 184
 OSHKOSH, WI 54903



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RENEWALS: Your mailing label includes your membership expiration date above your name. If you are a "Chapter Only" member the word CHAPTER will appear after the expiration date. Please renew your chapter membership by filling out the application form below. Thank you for helping us save on the cost of renewal reminders.
 If you are a member of National Audubon, you will receive renewal notices from National or you may renew by using the form below.
TEMPORARILY AWAY? Please notify us of your address change. The post office will not forward your newsletter and we pay for the returned newsletter. Contact Pat Nichols with any questions regarding your subscription: jvnichols@earthlink or 920-426-0261.

Winnebago Audubon Society Mission Statement: Advance the mission of the National Audubon Society to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity through grassroots efforts of community outreach and advocacy.

**AUDUBON SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

YES, I want to become a member at the **chapter level** and receive the Winnebago Audubon newsletter. I've enclosed a \$20.00 check payable to Winnebago Audubon.

YES, I want to become a member of the National Audubon Society, and the Winnebago Audubon Chapter. My membership dues entitle me to *Audubon* magazine, and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a \$20.00 check payable to National Audubon Society.

I do not wish to receive correspondence or solicitations from National Audubon Society.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ Chapter Code: Z12 7XCH

Mail this form with payment to:
 Pat Nichols, Membership Chair
 P.O. Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

*Welcome
New Audubon Members*

The following people have become new members since June. Several of the new members are teachers using Audubon Adventures in their classrooms, an effort supported by donations from a number of our members and the Winnebago Audubon Society (WAS). We hope all of you take advantage of the WAS special events during the coming year.

Erin Dougherty	Jean Rigden
Jon Gumtow Family	Thomas Schry
Greg Kehring	Stacy & Benjamin Skoning
Kathleen Nehm	Paul & Trish Waldheim
Amanda Nelson	Verne Wepneer
Claire Opsteen	Jim Wilson
Kathy Riederer	

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding membership or interest in becoming more involved with the chapter.

Pat Nichols, VP, Membership Chair
(email me at: jvnichols@earthlink.net)

The Lake Flyer

Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

NOVEMBER 2008 VOL. 29, NO. 4
All programs and activities are open to the public

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Check our website for up-to-date information: www.winaudubon.org

Wiouwash Prairies Work Day



Saturday, November 15 — 10:00 am

Prairies and oak savannah spread over hundreds of acres north of Oshkosh at the time the first settlers to the area arrived. What little is left occupies scattered pockets along the Wiouwash Recreation Trail between Oshkosh and Medina Junction. Come help us begin a long term effort to rejuvenate these sites. In the absence of frequent fires these remnants have become quite overgrown with shrubs at the expense of a wide array of prairie grasses and forbs. On November 15th at 10:00 AM, with your help, we'd like to start the process of cutting back as much woody vegetation as we can. Appropriate tools to bring would include loppers, pruning shears, pruning saw, a small bow saw, work gloves, and comfortable clothing. Meet us where the trail crosses County Road GG. We will be working the area north of this point. If you have questions call Tom Underwood at (920) 410-9703.

Winnebago Audubon joint program with Fox Valley Area Chapter of Wild Ones

Thursday, November 20 7:00 pm

Evergreen Retirement Community, 1130 N. Westfield St., Oshkosh

Winter Survival in Small Non-migratory Songbirds

Sheldon Cooper, Assistant Professor at UW Oshkosh, Department of Biology and Microbiology, is an animal ecological physiologist with research interests in animal thermoregulation and energetics. He has worked on projects involving songbirds, kestrels, and American martens. He is particularly interested in thermoregulation in songbirds. Most of his research deals with how small, non-migratory songbirds can survive in winter in cold temperate regions.

Please join us to learn more about this topic and enjoy treats and conversation afterwards.

2009 Audubon calendars will be for sale at the program. These colorful calendars make great Christmas gifts.

Winnebago Audubon Society received a gift of \$800.00 in memory of Katherine Rill from her husband, Russell, and their children, Teresa and Jeffrey. When Katherine died last year the family established a memorial fund in her honor. The money given to Winnebago Audubon came from donations to that memorial fund. The gift of those memorial donations is designated for improving Sullivan's Woods.

Sullivan's Woods is the 20-acre outdoor environmental center owned by the Oshkosh Area School District. Winnebago Audubon members, particularly Frank Zuern, were instrumental in the school's acquisition of this property. Following the acquisition, Katherine was the motivating force in creating trails, teacher guides, trail signs and, in 1989, planting the one-acre prairie. The property is used by the Oshkosh School system for outdoor education. Friends of Sullivan's Woods aids the school by supplying volunteers to help teachers and students learn about the important habitats on the property.

The prairie is to be dedicated to Katherine and Russell Rill. A sign will recognize their efforts to preserve and protect this unique habitat for the education of future generations. Several new trail signs in the prairie as well as prairie maintenance will be completed. We plan to hire a consultant who will help develop a long-term management plan and assist Winnebago Audubon in its implementation. An important maintenance tool, burning of the prairie, will be done as well as efforts to eliminate woody species and invasive plants that are encroaching. There are still many wonderful prairie plants that can spread and flourish with proper maintenance.

Winnebago Audubon is pleased to accept this money to continue work at Sullivan's Woods in memory of the woman who was instrumental in forming the Winnebago Audubon Society Chapter in 1982. She and her husband Russ were an important part of this chapter, contributing time, talent, money and ideas that benefited the organization, the community and the environment. Winnebago Audubon has established the Rill Fund with this donation. The fund is designated for use at Sullivan's Woods, particularly the Rill Prairie. If you are interested in contributing to the Rill Fund, please send your check made payable to: Winnebago Audubon, PO Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903. Designate "Rill Fund" in the memo portion of the check. All donations are tax-deductible.

Thank you to Katherine's family for the catalyst to keep the prairie alive!

A Kid's Eye-View by Carmen Meuret

National parks are a great representative of America and Earth's biological and natural wonders. From Yellowstone's gas pools to Arches' sandy bridges, there is no better way of saving a wonder on our Earth, than to establish it as a national park.

The idea of establishing national parks was thought of by an artist, George Catlin, in 1832. He wanted the west to have national parks because he liked the west and wanted to preserve it. Many of you might think it was Theodore Roosevelt's idea to establish the national parks system, but he did agree with the idea and sign it the papers to establish them.

The first national park was Yellowstone in Wyoming. The second one was Yosemite, in California. Both are in the western region of the United States.

Our national parks have been will kept but still today some are losing their glory. Some parks, like the Grand Canyon, are being littered with hiker's garbage. It was decided to make a law that if you litter at the Grand Canyon, you have to pay a high fine and you will be suspended from your privilege to enjoy the park in the future.

The wildfires popping up in California are also damaging our west coast parks. It has been reported that on some heavy days of a wildfire, the smoke can be seen from some Utah national parks.

Alaska's national parks might be in for a rude surprise if oil drilling is allowed in places like Denali. To just think about that, is like thinking about us taking all our beautiful wonders, and destroying them so we can have oil and gas for our cars, boats, ATVs and much more. I enjoy riding an ATV and getting a ride to school, but if we all could cut down on our usage of natural resources, the world would be a healthier, cleaner and better place for generations to come.

I wrote a poem about national parks and the way I think the world should be.

(Carmen is a sixth grader at Webster Stanley Middle School.)

A Picture

*If I could paint a picture,
A picture for you and me,
It'd be long and wide
and as far as the sky,
Something so meaningful to thee.*

*It'd have long, deep valleys,
Mountain tops covered with snow,
Birds and bees, snakes and trees,
And any flower claimed to be known.*

*With rushing water on the coast,
Or even a trickling stream
The wind may gust or even howl
I could add a bright lava beam.*

*I think I'll put some people,
Hikers and naturalists in the know,
I'll have them standing on a cliff,
But no hunters with a bow.*

*I'll paint a fluffy snowfall,
The flakes landing on sheep and deer
I can't forget about a mouse
Something so sweet and mere.*

*There will be no cities
Just parks and refuges too
Some boardwalks, some boats
Some centers, but just a few.*

*The nature that we have left
That great big giant picture
May not be in the minds of everyone
But it'll be within me and you.*

Volunteers at Sullivan's Woods

Another terrific fall at Sullivan's Woods has ended with over 600 5th grade students from the Oshkosh Area School District experiencing the environment up close. From Sept. 18th through Oct. 10th classes came out for an exciting and educational day.

Winnebago Audubon members have for years volunteered their time and experience to guide student groups through Sullivan's Woods. Thanks to all those who helped this year: Judy Anderson, Carolyn Blassingame, Larry Carpenter, Louise Coumbe, Lorraine Eberle, Lorna Edwards, Zaiga Freivalds, Dave Hanke, Carla Hansen, Pam & Larry Lang, Karen Lohry, Mike and Joanne McAleer, Jan Moldenhauer, Dave Moon, Pat Pensis, Phil Resto, Jan Scalpone, Jeanne Shiras, Barb Urbrock, Val and Tom Williams, Wendell Williams and Frank Zuern.

Badger Tracks by Anita Carpenter



AS THE WORLD TERNS

I became weary of noisy traffic speeding by me so I altered and extended my walking route to work. I now have silence and solitude and new things to observe as I stride along the shore and adjacent fields of Miller's Bay on Lake Winnebago.

Since last fall, I've watched the lake freeze and thaw. I witnessed the autumn departure and spring arrival of ducks, grebes, coots and gulls. Muskrats dove at my approach. Eastern kingbirds nested in the park's flowering crab trees. Special days yielded cackling geese and snow geese among the many Canadas. One spring day several spotted sandpipers probed along the shore and the next day they were gone. On a warm autumn day, a big swarm of common green darner dragonflies flew by headed south. White pelicans that floated on water or soared gracefully overhead were a continual summer joy.

The most unexpected discovery on my new "long loop" was the presence of Caspian terns throughout the summer. Usually I expect to see Caspian terns along larger bodies of water such as Lake Michigan where they prefer to nest on open, gravelly isolated islands. Even there, Caspian terns, *Hydroprogne caspia*, are not that common. Because of their low numbers and strict, narrow habitat requirements, Caspian terns are listed as a state endangered species. The birds I observed did not appear to be nesting and were probably non-breeders.

Caspian terns are the largest of the four tern species including black, Forster's and common terns which breed in Wisconsin. Averaging 21 inches from tail tip to beak tip, they are larger than ring-billed gulls but smaller than herring gulls. They resemble gulls with their light pearly gray backs and upper wings and snow white bodies. Unlike gulls, Caspian terns sport shiny black crests and thick, blood-red bills. When sitting on their short black legs, Caspian terns look sleek and slender, not chunky like gulls.

In flight, their long pointed wings and forked tails are noticeable but the terns could still be easily mistaken for gulls. When fishing, a Caspian tern behaves more tern-like, slowly flapping while gracefully flying, almost floating about 20 to 30 feet above the water. It scans the water surface with head pointed straight down, giving a sharp, right-angled look to the head. When a fish is spotted, the tern folds its wings and plunges into the water, grabbing the unsuspecting fish. With a few

quick wing flaps, the tern is once again airborne and searching for another fish.

Elegant, graceful, regal, slender, sleek are appropriate adjectives to describe this bird. Then the tern opens its mouth and calls and the image of regality is shattered. What emanates from this lovely bird is a loud, hoarse, raucous "eee-ooow" scream that sounds like the bird is being strangled – a most unelegant sound. But it is a distinctive call that carries well. Often I wouldn't see them as they fished out over the bay, but I heard them and knew they were still around.

Frequently, these Caspian terns spent the night on the athletic fields in the company of ring-billed gulls. Interestingly, the gulls most often slept on the grass while the Caspians almost always rested on the gravelly ball diamond. Their black caps shone like beacons making it easy for me to



count them daily. From an average of a dozen birds in June/July, their numbers increased to about 45 individuals in mid-August, then slowly decreased as they migrated on. Spending winter along the Gulf coast, Caspian terns will challenge birdwatchers to separate them from the similar-looking, salt-water loving and slightly smaller royal terns. Bill color will differentiate the two species as royal terns sport orange bills and Caspian tern bills are red.

I looked for Caspian terns every day. The last tern has left and I miss them. I liked watching them fly and fish and interact. In the tern world, it's not all birdy love, for the Caspians often harassed each other, squawking loudly. I loved listening to their unique calls. On a more emotional level, I like this bird because it is such an interesting dichotomy – so much grace and elegance with a bit of coarseness.

I will watch the lake freeze and thaw. I will witness the autumn departure and spring arrival of ducks, grebes, coots and gulls. In seven months, the Caspian terns will return and I will be ecstatic.

Birdathon Goes Over the Top

Thanks to generous contributors: Brenda and Curt Reese, Jan Scalpone and Fran Brandt the 2008 Birdathon passed the goal of \$1,000.00 with the final tally \$1,119.70. Thanks again to all the contributors and the participants for making this year's Birdathon a success.

Audubon Adventures in the Classroom

Audubon Adventures is an accredited program developed by National Audubon Society that brings environmental education into fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Each student receives four newsletters on different subjects. Teachers receive a teacher's guide and other materials to help them present the lessons to the students.

This year's classroom lessons focus on: On the Go! Animals

that Migrate; Critter Construction: How, What and Why Animals Build; Stink, Bite, Hide, Fight! How Animals Defend Themselves; and Plants Rule!

Teachers using the kits this year are: John Schuttenhelm, Carl Traeger Elementary; Mr. Tracy Krueger, Franklin; Jodi Guido and Amanda Nelson, Green Meadow; Bethany Andersen, Jacob Shapiro, Matt Wiebel and Ruth Jones, Jefferson; Greg Kehring, Lincoln; Jim Wilson, Oaklawn; Erin Dougherty and Susan Meunier, Oakwood; Jody Pinkerton, Read; Thomas Schry, Smith; J Schneider and Kathy Riederer, Webster Stanley; Kim Lawrence, Gertie Juknialis, Erin Nugent and Mary Johnson, Seton Elementary.

Frank Zuern, Jan Scalpone, Doris and Dave Thomas, Dave Moon, Jan Moldenhauer(2), Carla Hansen, Jeanne Shiras, Louise Coumbe, Sandy Schneider and Carolyn Blassingame are sponsors of this year's classrooms. Winnebago Audubon sponsors the classroom that do not have individual sponsors. It costs \$46.00 to sponsor one classroom. If you would like to sponsor one of these classrooms, please call Carla Hansen 233-1129.