

The Cardinal

DECEMBER 2019 JANUARY 2020 WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG • SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

“Minnesota Water: Trends, Tales, and Tips for Making a Difference”

with **Angie Hong**

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Every year, Minnesotans spend millions of dollars in local, state and private funding to protect and restore water resources. What do we have to show for our efforts?

During this presentation, Angie Hong will talk about clean water work in the Twin Cities Metro and St. Croix Basin and share some of the surprising results. She'll also discuss local programs designed to engage area residents in keeping our water clean.

Get tips on planting for clean water at your home and learn about simple actions everyone can take to help keep our water clean.

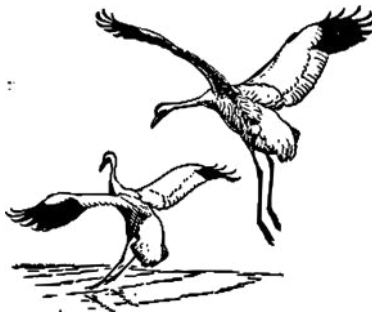
Angie Hong coordinates the East Metro Water Resource Education Program, a local government partnership hosted by the Washington Conservation District with 24 city, county and watershed partners. She holds a M.S. degree in Natural Resources Science and Management with an emphasis on Environmental Education (UM Twin Cities, 2004) and a B.S. in Zoology (UW Madison, 2000). Prior to this position, she worked as a naturalist in the Twin Cities area. In her free time, she enjoys spending time outdoors and competing in triathlons. She is also the mom of a nature-loving seven-year old boy. Read her tips and tales about keeping water clean at www.eastmetrowater.org.

Arrive at 6:45 for social time or 7:00 for the program;
held at Fairview Community Center, 1910 Cty Rd B, Roseville.
Free and open to the public.

2019 Crex Crane Caravan Comments

A unique gathering assembled at Crex Meadows Wildlife refuge and game reserve at Grantsburg, Wisconsin. On October 22, 16 members and friends of SPAS braved the cool, windy, day and evening to witness the 'coming to roost' of 2,000-2,500 Greater Sandhill Cranes (GSC). More could be heard out of sight, and probably an equal number went to roost at nearby Fish Lake Refuge. GSC gather for an extended stay here, and at other staging areas, as they migrate from their dispersed nest sites in the upper Midwest and southern Canada. They then head for wintering locations from southern Indiana, through or in Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia and northern Florida. Their speed and final destination is up to the family, young (colts) learn as they travel with their parents. A group may travel a few miles or a few hundred miles in a day depending on a lot of things, including wind, weather, and wetland habitat with easily obtained food, shelter, and water.

While watching the cranes come from S and SE of our observation place, we birders were happy to have the wind from our back, making the cars great wind-shields and warming huts. Cranes approached the roost area in strings of a few to thirty birds, a mix of adults, with red unfeath-



ered caps on their heads and haunting melodious calls, and juveniles, with gray feathered caps and high whistling calls. It was difficult to see the red, or lack of red, under cloudy skies.

We also were entertained with activities of two adult bald eagles using a human-provided osprey nest platform to watch over the marsh. At times they flew off, alone or together, returning independently to the platform. The GSC showed no reaction to their presence or movements. Eventually, one of the eagles departed the area flying about 30 feet high right over us and our cars! Whether we examined her more or less than she examined us is unknown. With their great eyesight, I wonder what the eagles thought of our bundled forms and variety of shapes.

All or just a few SPAS individuals also saw and/or heard: Trumpeter Swan, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Canada Goose, Coot, Crow, Harrier, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Prairie Horned Lark, Eastern Meadowlark, Snow Bunting, deer, beaver, muskrat, and a handful of other Human Craniacs.

While fall is the better time to observe gatherings of GSC, spring is the time to observe the more massive migration of Lesser Sandhill Cranes (LSC) as they gather in late February and March, along part of the Platte River in Nebraska. If you are interested, I can send you information about when and where to go for the LSC spectacle, including observation blinds and events.

-Chase Davies
rockybirder@gmail.com

BOARD MEETINGS

The Chapter's Board Meetings are held the first Monday of most months 6:30-8:00 P.M. at the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed Office, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada.

Upcoming: **Thursday, Feb. 13**

Cardinal will move online, don't forget to sign up

Beginning with the February/ March 2020 edition, The Cardinal will be available online only. Please sign up to receive the email newsletter by clicking the green button on the home page of the Saint Paul Audubon website, www.saintpaulaudubon.org.

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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ABOUT OUR CHAPTER

Founded in 1945 as the 'St. Paul Bird Club' with twelve members, the Saint Paul Audubon Society now serves the entire East Metro region of the Twin Cities, and has around 2,800 members. Our Member Meetings are held from Sept.-Dec. & Feb.-May on the second Thursday of the month. For more info please contact leaders at left, or visit www.saintpaulaudubon.org

ABOUT THE CARDINAL Published 6 times a year; articles are due on the 5th of January, March, May, July, Sept, and Nov. Submissions may be edited. Send to cardinalstpaul@gmail.com.

Members may also receive the newsletter by downloading PDF's from our website.

ADDRESS CHANGES Call 1-800-274-4201 or NAS website at www.audubon.org to notify the National Audubon Society of a change of address, to continue to receive *Audubon Magazine* and *The Cardinal*.

WANTED: SPAS Birders to Feed MOU Birders

DAY: Saturday December 7, 2019

TIME: Choose a shift from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. or 12-4 p.m.

TASKS: Arrange finger food, monitor food and coffee lines, and clean up after the morning and afternoon breaks.

WHERE: The Ball Room of the Student Union on the University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus.

Pay Parking available in the Gortner parking ramp, a five-minute walk from the Union.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: Easy!

SPAS freely supports designated metro and state bird organizations, including the MOU.** Every third year SPAS procures and serves refreshments during MOU's annual Paper Session. SPAS rotates this service with MRVAC and the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis annually on the first Saturday in December. MOU pays all costs. Please help SPAS support this state birding organization, which has maintained all state birding records for many years, recognizes long-time leaders, supports re-

search, and produces quarterly reports of the highest quality. This year Chase Davies is joined by SPAS's "Coordinator in Training," Jane Dickerson. Contact either of us by phone, text, or email.

Chase Davies: RockyBirder@gmail.com & 651-246-9754

Jane Dickerson: jdickerson55108@icloud.com & 612-481-3147

** "The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is an organization of both professionals and amateurs interested in birds. We foster the study of birds. We aim to create and increase public interest in birds. And we promote the preservation of bird life and its natural habitat."

Annually, the first Saturday in December, the MOU holds an all-day "Paper Session" where significant bird research, observations, and recognitions are presented.

Learn more at www.moumn.org.

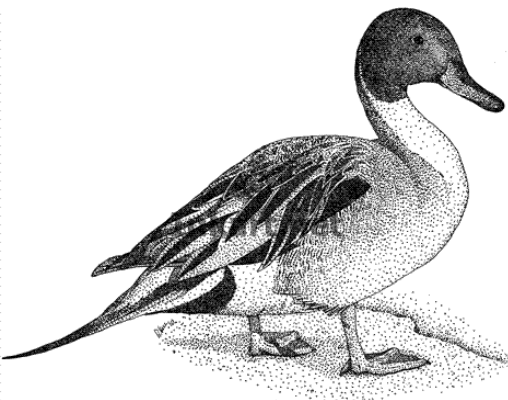
SPAS Annual Fund Drive

Hello! Time for the annual fund drive! This is the one and only time of year that we seek your support for the great work done by the Saint Paul Audubon Society. You will not receive either a phone call or a separate request in the mail. And you will NOT receive another request for a donation with your Thank You note. All you need to do is submit a check for your contribution in the remittance envelope provided with this issue of The Cardinal. If the envelope is missing then please use the box on this page. If you prefer, you may also donate online at www.saintpaulaudubon.org.

SPAS is an all-volunteer organization. None of the board members, field trip leaders, or committee members are paid, but there are still expenses that must be covered and this Annual Fund Drive is our largest source of income. Our expenses include producing the online version of The Cardinal newsletter, speaker honoraria, and meeting space rental fees.

We maintain a website to help answer your questions. There are also expenses related to an array of educational programs for people of all ages.

SPAS has also provided grants to organizations which support our mission, such as purchasing binoculars for field trips at nature centers, wood for birdhouses, and education programs for youth. Our Conservation Committee is active in restoration activities, kestrel nest box monitoring, partnering with the city on its "Bird City" designation, and joint ventures with the St. Croix River Association. All of these activities fit perfectly with their mission statement: "To generate community interest and concern for the conservation, restoration, and protection of birds and their habitat." St. Paul Audubon also sponsors numerous birding trips in the metro area.



Our goal is to keep common birds common, and to protect species that are in decline. That goal is especially important in an era when development regularly destroys bird habi-

Saint Paul Audubon Society

Annual Fund Drive Donation

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to the Saint Paul Audubon Society, to be used for:

\$ _____ Annual Operating Fund

\$ _____ Endowment Fund

\$ _____ Habitat Protection

\$ _____ Wherever Needed

This gift is given:

___ in memory of _____

___ in honor of _____

Thank You Very Much for Your Support

Donor Name _____

Address _____

Phone/Email _____

If your contribution is given in memory of or in honor of someone, we will gladly send an acknowledgement card:

Name _____

Address _____

PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK TO: Dean Doering, 1901 North Victoria Street, Roseville, MN 55113, or, you may go to the SPAS Website at www.saintpaulaudubon.org > "Support Us"

tat and climate change threatens unknowable consequences. When you consider what Saint Paul Audubon has done this year to promote our mission I am confident that you will pledge your support for our continuing effort in the year to come.

Donors (unless they wish to remain anonymous) are recognized annually in an issue of the Cardinal at the Egret (under \$50), Bluebird (\$50-\$99), or Cardinal (\$100 and above) levels.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I sincerely thank you for your support. THANK YOU once again.

-Annual Fund Drive Chair Dean Doering

SAINT PAUL AUDUBON SOCIETY

PO Box 7275, St Paul, MN 55107-7275

WWW.SAINTPAULAUDUBON.ORG

Next issue: Dec. 2019/Jan. 2020

Deadline Feb./5/2020

Welcome...

To the Saint Paul Audubon Society.

We're a chapter of the
National Audubon Society.

Our mission is to promote the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of birds and other wildlife by engaging people of the East Metro in birding, education, and conservation.

*Please check our website at
www.saintpaulaudubon.org
for calendar updates!*

CALENDAR

December

Board Meeting 2
MOU Paper Session 7
Member Meeting: Angie Hong 12

February

Board Meeting 3
Member Meeting 13

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 3795
Twin Cities, Minnesota

Kestrel Nest Box Project—2019 Results

We had eight nest boxes in place for the 2019 nesting season: two at Lake Elmo Park Reserve, two at The Belwin Conservancy, and one each at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary, Rice Creek North, and Afton State Park.

At Lake Elmo Park Reserve (LEPR), kestrels have nested in the box we call LEPR02 in each of its five years of existence. In 2019 the kestrel pair raised five young. They fledged (left the nest) on about June 20.

The other LEPR nest box, LEPR01A, was occupied in 2019 for the second time in its two-year existence. On June 10, five young were present in the nest box. I estimated their age at about seven days, which means they should have been ready to fledge on about July 1. I made several visits to the area at about that time. I saw chicks looking out of the nest box, and the mom was very much in evidence, but I did not see the dad. I believe the dad did not survive through the nesting season. The mom managed to fledge at least three young. I could not confirm more than that.

The third occupied box in 2019 was AFTON01, which

also has had successful nesting in both years of its existence. The Afton pair laid five eggs, but only four hatched. The young fledged on about June 24.

Our five additional nest boxes were not occupied in 2019.

It appears that our three kestrel pairs sent 12 young on their way in the 2019 nesting season. That brings the total number of kestrels fledged to 49 in the eight years of this project.

For the 2020 nesting season, we hope to place a new nest box in northern Ramsey County. And at The Belwin Conservancy, we will move the two existing boxes to new locations that we think will be more attractive to kestrels.

A big "thank-you" to our team of nest box monitors: Monica Bryand, Gordon Andersson, Linda Kellar, Lynn Swift, Lynette Anderson, Janet Kortuem, Kathy Sidles, Larry Sirvio, Val Cunningham, and Gerry and Kendall Fuller. Thanks also to Gus Koutsouvas for his work inspecting and cleaning the nest boxes.

*-Julian Sellers
Kestrel Nest Box Project Manager*