

The



Cardinal

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2025 • WWW.SAINTPAULBIRDALLIANCE.ORG • SAINT PAUL BIRD ALLIANCE

Native Spaces, Native Legends Featured at February and March Meetings

Please join us for our February and March chapter meetings. The **February** meeting is **Zoom only** and the **March** meeting is **in-person only**. See the details below and check the [Events](#) page on our website for last-minute updates, zoom links and other details.

Thursday, February 20, 7:00 p.m.: Maggie Lorenz



presents:
“Restoring Honor, Connections, and Land at Wakanj Tipi.” Maggie Lorenz is the executive director of Wakanj Tipi Awanyanjapi (WTA), a native-led environmental nonprofit in Saint Paul. Its mission is to honor and care for our natural places, sacred sites, and cultural values.

The organization’s primary work site is Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, the site of a sacred cave called Wakanj Tipi (dwelling place of the sacred). Her work centers on restoring the honor, ecosystems, and community connection to the land and natural world here as stewards and protectors. Part of this work is engaging community to create and care for bird habitat as part of the Mississippi River Twin Cities Important Bird Area. WTA also engages community in bird monitoring and birding education through public programs in partnership with the Urban Bird Collective.

Maggie Lorenz (Dakota/ Anishinaabe) is an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe and has maternal ties to Spirit Lake Dakota Nation. She has served as executive director for Wakanj Tipi Awanyanjapi for the past 6 years.

*Please note that although our chapter meetings with speakers usually take place on the second Thursday of the month, **February 20 is the third Thursday** of the month. This presentation is Zoom only. Details and the zoom link can be found [here](#).*



March speaker, Hope Flanagan.

Thursday, March 13, 7:00 p.m.: Hope Flanagan will present “Insects and Plants of Ojibwe Legends.” Winter is traditionally storytelling season in our Native communities in Minnesota. Many Ojibwe legends (Aadizookaanag) honor our Insect and Plant relatives, and Hope will share some of her favorites with us.

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 is also an Urban Bird Collective walk leader.

*The March 13 chapter meeting and presentation is **in-person only**. It will be held at our usual meeting place, room 207 of the Anpétu Těča Education Center, 1910 County Road B West, Roseville.*



Photo by Evan Barrientos

SAINT PAUL BIRD ALLIANCE

Welcome!

To the Saint Paul Bird Alliance. 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 all living beings need to thrive.

The Saint Paul Bird Alliance **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.saintpaulbirdalliance.org/volunteer/> for a full list of committees and committee chairs, or get in touch with us on our contact page at <https://www.saintpaulbirdalliance.org/contact/>.

Become a Chapter Member

You are invited to become a Saint Paul Bird Alliance 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.saintpaulbirdalliance.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.saintpaulbirdalliance.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.saintpaulbirdalliance.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.saintpaulbirdalliance.org/contact/>. Your message will be forwarded promptly to the appropriate person.

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Next issue: April / May 2025

Christmas Bird Count Highlights

The Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 14, 2024, set a record for the number of people attending, with 100 participants, up from 62 in 2023. Our count circle (15 miles in diameter, centered on the intersection of County Road B and Dale Avenue in Roseville) was covered thoroughly by our area leaders and their teams from the Urban Bird Collective, the Bell Museum, the Macalester College Bird Club, and other organizations that took part. The species count was 54 (58 last year) and a total count of 14,764 (13,584 last year). Unusual sightings were a Field Sparrow and an Eastern Phoebe. It was also a good year for Merlins, with 4 spotted.



Merlin, photo by Grant Eldridge

Calendar

February 14-17 – 28th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count, a global event! See <https://www.birdcount.org/> for information.

February 18 – Silverwood Park birding series begins. Page 5.

February 18, March 19 - Birds & Beers St. Paul. Back room of Sweeney's Saloon, 96 Dale Street, St. Paul. 6:00-8:00 pm.

February 20 – Zoom only meeting with presentation on Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi. Page 1.

March 13 - In-person only chapter meeting with Ojibwe Legends on insects and plants. Page 1.

May 9-10 - Warbler Weekend 2025. Page 4.



Chip Notes

I want to thank everyone who participated in our 2024 Christmas Bird Count (CBC). We can't control the weather (which was rather sketchy) or the number of birds that choose to appear and be counted. However, we can influence the number and diversity of those joining us. In 2024, we celebrated a record year with 100 people taking part, compared with 62 in 2023. Ages ranged from 5 to, well, we didn't check everyone's age; we had groups from the Urban Bird Collective, the Bell Museum, the Macalester College Bird Club, and other organizations; and these teams were able to cover the entire count circle thoroughly. Thank you to our area leaders and participants who worked hard to make this an exceptional year! (See p. 2 for more details.)

The CBC is one example of our commitment to engaging a more diverse array of communities, including those of various ages, races, gender identities, income levels, and birding experiences, in our mission to protect birds and their habitats. Another example is scheduling more field trips in urban locations--11 in 2024. We also provided grants totaling over \$19,000 to support eight neighborhood habitats, educational projects, and groups reaching out to diverse communities. We've expanded our speaker series to include differing perspectives and ideas, and

we will continue our commitment to supporting the Big and Wild River Journeys, which engage over a thousand 4th or 5th graders in learning about the importance of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers.

Watch for more ways to enjoy, understand, and protect birds and habitats in the coming year as we harness the enthusiasm and ideas of new and diverse groups.

Do you have any ideas for speakers? Each year, we invite nine speakers to share insights about birds, nature, habitats, and scientific research. We are always on the lookout for identifying new people to invite and would greatly appreciate your assistance. If you hear an exceptional speaker, come across an interesting book or article, or know someone who could offer valuable information, please let us know at [contact](#). FYI - If you missed January's fascinating presentation on Golden Eagles by Scott Mehus (National Eagle Center), you can find a recording on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Thank you, everyone -

Greg Burnes

President,

Saint Paul Bird Alliance



Photo by Luke Frank

Seeking New Field Trip Coordinator

At the February 2024 Board Meeting, Field Trip Coordinator Cathy Croghan announced she planned to step back from Field Trip Coordination at the end of May 2025. Would you, or do you know someone who might enjoy this terrific volunteer position? It would be a good fit for a detail oriented, people-person with some minimal tech skills (e.g., Excel, email, etc.). Duties could be split by two people. Contact Cathy to learn more about this position: croghancathy@gmail.com

January Birds and Beers

We had a great time at Birds & Beers at Sweeney's Wednesday, January 22. We talked about the first bird we saw this year. The Crow was the one most saw. Jim Rogers gave a reading of his ode to the Crow calling out the bird's Resiliency, Fortitude, and penchant for scavenging. We had several newcomers who all had great bird stories to share. Join us next time Tuesday February 18 at 6 pm at Sweeney's, 96 N. Dale, St Paul.





Black and White Warbler, photo by Matthew Pimm

Enjoy Spring Migration at Warbler Weekend 2025!

Details are coming together for Saint Paul Audubon Society's 54th annual Warbler Weekend, May 9-10 (Mother's Day weekend) at Hok-Si-La Park in Lake City, MN. 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 registration instructions coming soon. Registration will be required and will be limited to 150 people. The deadline for registration is April 20.

We hope to see you there!



Northern Parula

Photo by Patrick Carney

Warbler Weekend 2025 Essentials

Here are the details to date for Warbler Weekend 2025. We will send out more information as it becomes available on <https://saintpaulbirdalliance.org/upcoming-events/> 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. Registration will be online only this year. It opens on April 1 and closes April 20.

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. We always announce changes and other important information during meals so please "hang around" in the dining room after eating. The Warbler Weekend count will be tallied after Saturday supper.

SCHEDULE

Friday May 9

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

7:00 p.m. Naturalist, photographer and writer Stan Tekiela will present "Bird Migration"

Saturday May 10

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.

3:45-5:00 p.m. bird on your own

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 promptly 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 11

Enjoy birding on your own!



Pine Grosbeak, photo by John Alexander Kay

FIELD TRIPS

Bird Winter into Spring! A great way to start the New Year 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.

Birding in a single location over several months can be a great way to get into birding. This series of four field trips will repeat popular excursions from last year, giving participants the chance 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; a few extra pairs will be available.

LOCATION 2500 County Road E, Saint Anthony, MN 55421

DIRECTIONS Meet at the doors leading into the Visitor Center from the parking lot. Field trips will be conducted in most weather, with the exception of heavy rain. 45.046808, -93.224715

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 and Liz Richards; email birdingjen@gmail.com with any questions

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

Tuesday, February 18: 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.

Tuesday, March 18: 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.



Eastern Phoebe, photo by Kent Fiala

Tuesday, April 15: 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.

Tuesday, May 13: 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 the year for birding.



Northern Shrike, photo by John Alexander Kay



Photo by Sydney Walsh

2024 Field Trip Committee Report

By Cathy Croghan, Field Trip Committee Chair

Season Recap

- In 2024, **693 people** attended **44 trips at 37 sites** led by an outstanding team of **24 volunteer Field Trip Leaders (FTL)**. Two additional trips were scheduled but later cancelled due to weather and leader availability.

- **GPS Coordinates:** GPS coordinates are now included in all trip descriptions. They are just one more tool to help everyone arrive safely. We will continue to provide traditional driving directions (e.g., “go 1.7 miles and turn left”).

- **Trip Difficulty Description:** We finished the transition, begun in 2023, from a single word trip difficulty description (i.e., easy, moderate, hard) to something more objective (distance, surface type, elevation, facilities). This change makes our trips more accessible - By providing a better description, the reader can draw their own conclusion about difficulty.

- **Grow Community Collaborations:** This year Saint Paul Bird Alliance offered **11 trips** in collaboration with other community groups. These relationships extend our reach and ability to meet our mission. This year we added the *Friends of Maplewood Nature* to the list of collaborators and continued our work with *Friends of Swede Hollow*, *Friends of St. Paul and Ramsey County Parks and Trails*, *Frogtown Green*, *Pigs Eye Park Friends*, *St. Paul Public Library*, and the *Urban Bird Collective*.

- **Beginning Birder Opportunities:** While beginners are welcome at all Saint Paul Bird Alliance trips, the 2024 calendar featured **10 trips** specifically designed to welcome beginners and build birder skills. We plan to continue offering these trips in 2025. (Speaking of beginners, see page 5 for the monthly birding basics four-session field trip series. It begins with February winter birding and ends with spring migration.)

- **Bird-sits:** Bird-sits, hosted by Kiki Sonnen, were incorporated into both the spring and fall migration Swede Hollow field trips. Sits are a great way to bird and increase participation potential for folks who may not be able, or care, to walk the birding trip route. We hope to add more bird-sit opportunities to the 2025 field trip calendar.

Thank You

The Saint Paul Bird Alliance field trip season’s success is directly tied to an outstanding team of **24 volunteer field trip leaders**. They are the lifeblood of the program. Without them there would be no season. They carve out time on their calendars to share their expertise and enthusiasm. The 2024 leaders* included:

Jane Braun	Monica Bryand
Greg Burnes	Cathy Croghan
Chase Davies	Ed Davies
Bob Dunlap	Louise Eidsmoe
Mark Gilbert	Sherry Gray
Curt Hadland	Pat Hadland
Sally Heuer	Kathy Janis
Jen Miller	Liz Richards
Kathy Robbins	Kathy Sidles
Kiki Sonnen	Paul Spreitzer
Bill Stjern	Terri Walls
Linda Whyte	John Zakelj

*This list does not include the many folks who volunteered “on the spot” to lead trips at the 2024 Warbler Weekend.

Watch for new collaborative activities at AHATS in 2025!

Trips include a winter owl prowl, spring migration, and summer nesting season. Look for details at <https://saintpaulbirdalliance.org/upcoming-events/> Coming soon!



Great Grey Owl

Photo by Jesse Larson

Outdoors – Together

Nearly three dozen people from Saint Paul Bird Alliance, the Land of Lakes Bird Alliance, and the Urban Bird Collective braved extreme cold on January 19 to come together at Harriet Island for a time of community, care, and renewal in nature. It was too cold for outdoor birding or walking but the board-game, puzzle, and craft tables were lively with conversations about birds and people getting to know each other. A fireplace, warm beverages, and sweet treats added to the camaraderie. Folks said they'd like to have the event again next year!

