



Photo by Mo Hansen at the June 30 Arden Hills Butterfly Census

Audubon Minnesota News

July 12, 2007

It's Time to Nominate Issues for Audubon Minnesota's 2008 Legislative Agenda

Audubon Minnesota is a member-based organization. Since you're a member and civic-



mindful, you have an opportunity to nominate an issue for our 2008 state legislative priority list. Members and the state board select and prioritize state legislative issues for the following spring's legislative session. This process is a longstanding tradition in Minnesota. In 1979, Audubon chapters created the state office primarily for the purpose of consolidating advocacy efforts at the State Capitol. Audubon's influence at the state legislature depends on our members' willingness to participate in grassroots activities and influence policy outcomes.

Audubon's typical legislative agenda consists of two to three issues, with the caveat that priority issues in previous years will be again prioritized if under attack.

Issue descriptions should be about a paragraph in length and include the nominator's name and contact information.

Nominations are due on Wednesday, August 29th and can be e-mailed to me at ssolterman@audubon.org or sent to Audubon Minnesota, attn: Susan, 2357 Ventura Dr. #106, St. Paul, MN 55125.

Please keep in mind that nominated issues must adhere to Audubon's mission statement: *Working with others 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.*

In addition, issues must address one or more of the following points:

- Presents a law or policy change that has a reasonable chance of legislative or administrative success and will achieve measurable conservation results
- Protects and restores essential sites, especially Important Bird Areas, for vulnerable species
- Stabilizes and increases populations of at-risk species of birds
- Prevents declines in numbers or range area in common native birds
- Improves and protects the health of landscapes that support or could support native birds.

Please Thank Senator Amy Klobuchar for her Leadership on Global Warming!

Scientists agree that unless we reduce global warming pollution significantly in the next 50 years, the predicted rise in average global temperatures by the end of the century will cause unstable and unexpected weather patterns--droughts in some areas, flooding in others, more heat waves, air pollution, wildfires, rising sea levels, melting tundra, outbreaks of disease, and widespread loss of wildlife and their habitats.

Audubon Minnesota commends Senator Klobuchar for signing onto Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Senator Bernie Sander's (D-VT) Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act ([S.309](#)). The Act requires an 80 percent reduction in global warming emissions by 2050, establishes a renewable electricity standard, reduces pollution from cars and trucks by 30 percent by 2016 and improves energy efficiency. The bill also offers a "cap and trade" program that provides flexibility for companies meeting global warming pollution reduction goals.

Senator Klobuchar can be reached at senator.klobuchar@senate.gov or 612-727-5220 or 202-224-3244

Audubon Minnesota – State of the Birds in Minnesota

On June 14, the National Audubon Society released Common Birds in Decline, an unprecedented analysis—which was also published in Audubon magazine—revealing the startling decline of some of America's best known and beloved bird species. Mark Martell, Audubon Minnesota's Bird Conservation Director, has also written a brief report on Minnesota's declining bird species.

Species on Audubon's list of 20 Common Birds in Decline have seen their populations plummet at least 54 percent since 1967. The dramatic declines are attributed to the loss of grasslands, healthy forests and wetlands, and other critical habitats from multiple environmental threats such as sprawl, energy development, and the spread of industrialized agriculture. The list stems from the first-ever analysis combining annual sighting data from Audubon's century-old Christmas Bird Count program with results of the annual Breeding Bird Survey conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

For copy of the Minnesota report, [click here](#).

To read the coverage from state news sources: [Pioneer Press](#), [Star Tribune](#), [Associated Press](#), [Winona Daily News](#), [Kare 11](#), [MPR](#).

Plus, [read about](#) Minnesota's latest Important Bird Area along the St. Croix near Stillwater.

Let's Save the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge - Rally at 11:30 am on Saturday, July 14

On July 14th, Audubon joins Representative Ann Lenczewski (DFL-Bloomington) and others to show the Minnesota Legislature that we really want the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge in Bloomington replaced so that we can have better access to the Long Meadow Lake Unit of the MN Valley NWR.

Representative Ann Lenczewski has worked hard on this issue since the old bridge was closed. She believes that there is a good chance that funding for a new bridge can be included in the bonding bill that will be passed in the next legislative session.

She has arranged to have key legislators visit the site on July 14th around noon. Please be there before NOON - we will be there to greet the legislators.

We need to be there to show that there is strong popular support for this project. Birders need to be well represented so that we can be at the table when the new bridge is designed and built. I suggest that you bring your binoculars so that it is clear that you are a birder. Please take an hour or two out of your day on the 14th to help with this important effort.

To reach the rally, take Cedar Avenue (Highway 77) to the Old Shakopee Rd. exit and turn west on Old Shakopee Rd. Travel a short distance to the

first light and turn left (south) on Old Cedar Avenue. The parking lot at the bottom of the hill will likely fill up very quickly so be prepared to park in the area and walk down the hill. If anyone is willing to help out with the event, let Bob Williams know at bxwilliams@cbburnet.com

Grand Opening Celebration of the Bruce Vento Regional Trail Extension – 10:30 am to 1 pm, Saturday, July 14

The new Bruce Vento Regional Trail extension is transforming a former "no man's land" east of downtown Saint Paul into a three-way trail hub linking the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, Swede Hollow Park and Mounds Park to each other and to Saint Paul's Lowertown District. The trail features great views, including an overlook from a former railroad bridge over Fourth Street, and passes next to the historic Trout Brook Canal.

The Grand Opening Celebration for the new trail connection will include:

- Interpreted biking and walking events in the morning (see below)
- Program and ribbon cutting: 10:30 am
- Tours of the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and rain gardens: 11am-1pm

The program and ribbon cutting will take place on Fourth Street adjacent to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. You can also enjoy the music of local Irish band, Barra, and visit displays on environmental education, the Mississippi River, local history, health and fitness and the future of the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.

Walk or bike to the celebration through one of these free interpreted events:

- "The Path of a Tributary" bike ride from Phalen Park, with information on water quality and efforts to restore local lakes and streams. Start time: 9:00 am, Meeting Place: Phalen Park Picnic Pavilion, ride length: 4.75 miles. Ride contact: Denny Thompson, 651.261.7372, d.l.thompson@comcast.net
- "Migration Celebration," bike ride from Henry Park, where you can learn about plans to restore Henry Park as well as area bird watching opportunities. Start time: 9a.m., Meeting Place: Skyway Drive/Highwood Avenue entrance of Henry Park, ride length: 6.5 miles. Ride contact: Dan McGuinness, 651.260.6260, dmcguinness@audubon.org
- "Walk the Bluff" hike from Mounds Park, with information on Dayton's Bluff history and local fitness efforts. Start time: 9:45 a.m., Meeting Place: Mounds Park Pavilion at Mounds Blvd and Earl St., walk length: 1.25 miles. Walk contact: Garry Fay, 651.772.2075, garry@daytonsbluff.org
- "History on the Mississippi" hike from downtown Saint Paul, with information on our local national park and the historic structures in the area. Start time: 9:30a.m., Meeting Place: Mississippi River Visitor's Center in the lobby of the Science Museum of Minnesota (120 West Kellogg Blvd), walk length: 2.3 miles. Walk contact: Paul Singh, 651.222.3049, psingh@historicsaintpaul.org

For a map showing the walking and riding events as well as the celebration location, [click here](#).

Please note: there will be very little parking available near the program site, and a portion of East Fourth Street will be closed to motorized traffic. If you are not taking part in one of the interpreted walks or bike rides, consider parking near the Farmer's Market (and walking the trail

link starting at Broadway and Fifth Street) at the Mounds Park Overlook (and walking the trail link down Commercial Street) or near the Payne Avenue and East Seventh Street trailhead. Directions to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary are provided in the "Vento Sanctuary" section of this website. For additional information, contact Sarah Clark at 651.290.0002, sclarkmmc@comcast.net.

Save the Date!

Audubon Upper Midwest Regional Conference: Declining Species, Declining Habitat: Reversing the Trend

Friday, October 12 through Sunday October 14th

Anyone and everyone who cares about birds—Audubon members and friends, other conservationists, birders, naturalists and nature lovers—is invited to attend this informative regional meeting.

Declining Species, Declining Habitat features a unique gathering of experts, researchers and policy makers who study birds and their habitats, including forests, prairies and wetlands. The three-day conference features experts who care passionately about their fields and are eager to share their knowledge and expertise with others. Program details to be posted soon.

How are prairies and grasslands faring in the Midwest and what is the effect on nesting bird populations? Are wetlands in the Midwest continuing to be lost and what is being done for their preservation? Look into invasive plants, their impact on birds and efforts to control them. Learn about the multi-state partnership in managing the important Driftless Area that is shared by MN, WI, IA, and IL. What's happening in the Midwest's forests and how do forest changes affect birds? A great deal of effort is going into shorebird and water bird conservation, but is this turning the tide? Get the latest update on Colonial nesting birds in the Great lakes.

On Friday, spend the day on the Mississippi River, America's Flyway. We'll focus on birds, bird research, habitat restoration and key legislation pending in Congress, as well as the latest news about Audubon's Mississippi River—Headwaters to Gulf—initiative. Top off the day with a three-hour sternwheeler trip up the mighty Mississippi.

Saturday morning will be devoted to special topics related to birds and their habitat concerns. Saturday afternoon join in on one of the field trips offered: Como Park's Tropical Encounters takes guests on an adventure through a Central and South American rainforest; get a behind the scenes look at The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine which specializes in the medical care, rehabilitation, conservation, and study of eagles, hawks, owls, and falcons; take a guided tour of the Bell Museum of Natural History dioramas that illustrate what Minnesota was like before the ax and plow; choose from one of three birding field trips at the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge; Bass Ponds, Old Cedar Avenue Bridge, Long Meadow Lake.

On Saturday night, hear a presentation by Dr. Bridget Stutchbury, an authority on migratory songbirds and author of the fascinating *Silence of the Songbirds*. Dr. Stutchbury will describe some of the daunting challenges birds face but also point to solutions. She will be available for book signing Saturday evening!

On Sunday morning, Audubon's President, John Flicker and University of Minnesota climate expert Dr. Mark Seeley discuss the scientific evidence for global warming and what we, as individuals, can do to combat it.

[Register now](#) for Declining Species, Declining Habitat, Reversing the Trend, a “don't miss” event for all of us who share the wonder of birds.

Save this Date, too! Audubon's Annual Fall Members Meeting – Saturday, November 10, 2007

Each fall, on the second Saturday in November (November 10), Audubon members from all over the state gather to socialize with one another and set the course for Audubon advocacy activities at the State Capitol. Mark your calendars and watch for further information on the agenda and guest speakers! We will meet at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Bloomington, Minnesota again this year with birdwatching trips either in the morning or evening. Cost is \$12 and covers the cost of materials and lunch!

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Audubon Mission: Working with others to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats,

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