



# Audubon Minnesota News Sept. 14, 2006

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.

Photo by Laura Erickson

**Don't Forget! Walkin' Jim Stoltz – 7:30 pm on Friday, September 15 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Minneapolis**

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Audubon Minnesota and other environmental organizations are co-hosting a show that promotes wilderness preservation. Walkin' Jim Stoltz has hiked more than 26,000 miles through America's backcountry. He carries his guitar and camera with him and writes songs and takes photographs along the way. He supports his hiking habit by touring with his songs, stories, and dual-image slides. His show, *Forever Wild*, is a vicarious trip through the wilderness - with all the comforts of home.

This year he is doing a marathon 50-state tour as a series of free shows in an effort to generate 100,000 letters nationwide in support of wilderness preservation. His Minnesota show will be Friday, September 15th, 7:30, at St Joan of Arc Church in Minneapolis. Barb Ryman and Douglas Wood will be joining him. The artists are contributing their performances, and there is no admission charge for attending the show. Since it is a free show, it may be wise to reserve a ticket through the website in order to be assured of a seat at the show.

For tickets or more information, visit the website: [www.foreverwild-mn.org](http://www.foreverwild-mn.org)

**DEBATE POSTPONED – Envision Minnesota's Gubernatorial Debate, Saturday, September 16th  
St. Cloud University**

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(*St. Paul, Minnesota*) The Gubernatorial Debate and Citizens' Convention scheduled for Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> has been postponed. Because we have been unable to finalize participation agreements with all three of the major candidates we will need to reschedule the

event, reports **Jeff Heegaard**, Envision Minnesota spokesperson. We are currently reviewing options and we will do so during the fall campaign if candidate participation is secured. Updates will be posted on the Envision Minnesota website [www.envisionminnesota.org](http://www.envisionminnesota.org)."

"This is an unfortunate development, politicians and campaigns don't always lend themselves to the in-depth discussion of our state's future that we would like" said Jeff Heegaard, an Envision Minnesota organizer, "but the 50 partner organizations and hundreds of participants in Envision Minnesota will work throughout the fall to make sure state and local candidates address the issues of conservation, economic growth, energy security and clean air & water that are critical to our future."

People who have pre-registered for the event will be contacted and their registration fees refunded. They will be notified when the event is rescheduled.

**For further information: contact Jeff Heegaard, 651-312-1000 at [www.envisionminnesota.org](http://www.envisionminnesota.org)**

### **Message from John Flicker on Alaska's Teshekpuk Lake Wetlands**

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**I am pleased to report an important development in our ongoing fight to protect the vital wetland habitat around Alaska's Teshekpuk Lake in the National Petroleum Reserve. Last night, a federal district judge issued a preliminary ruling accepting claims by Audubon, our co-plaintiffs, and EarthJustice counsel that the Bureau of Land Management failed to properly assess potential damage from the proposed sale of oil and gas leases on 1.7 million acres critical to migratory waterfowl and other wildlife.**

**The judge will hear further arguments next week before issuing a final decision. While the outcome is not guaranteed, barring an unexpected change of heart, his ruling would block a planned lease sale scheduled for September 27.**

**Audubon Alaska's Stan Senner moved quickly to comment on the case and is widely quoted in press reports, stating: "The court's preliminary decision gives a reprieve to some of the most sensitive habitat in Alaska. The judge has rightly expressed concern that the Bush Administration's rush to drill does not account for the environmental damage that would happen in the most important wetlands in the Arctic."**

**The preliminary victory—which owes much to the hard work of our Alaska and Policy Offices—has been given prominent placement on Audubon.org and will be the focus of a special alert to our activists. Along with the importance of the decision, both will stress the need for continued activist efforts to resist misguided plans to promote oil and gas development in this very special place. Meanwhile, we can all savor an important acknowledgement that our arguments merit attention and that Teshekpuk Lake deserves better protection than the administration has seen fit to offer.**

**[To learn more about the Teshekpuk wetlands and Audubon's effort to protect them, [click here](#).]**

### **Protect Alaska's Caribou Herd – Send Your Comments to the Bureau of Land Management**

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**The livelihood of Alaska's largest caribou herd could be threatened if action is not taken to stop the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from opening 5 million acres of critical habitat to mining, oil drilling, and gas development.** This kind of development would harm sensitive calving grounds, summer habitat, and even remote wintering grounds for the 500,000 member Western Arctic Caribou herd. In addition to being an environmental issue, protecting this herd is a matter of human rights and subsistence needs for Alaska's Native communities in the northwest.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing a new management plan for Alaska's Kobuk River and Seward Peninsula region. Without strong public support for conservation, the BLM will proceed with a plan that prioritizes new mining, oil, and gas development activities over protection of critical habitat for Alaska's largest and healthiest caribou herd.

Please help us protect these wild public lands in northwest Alaska and defend the caribou that inhabit the area as well as the culture of Alaska's Native communities. Contact the BLM today and ask them to protect Alaska's Kobuk River and Seward Peninsula region from the devastating effects of development. **The deadline for comments is this Friday, September 15, so please get your comments in today.**

Click on "Take Action Now" button on the [Alaska Coalition](#) website and submit your comments to the BLM. Tell the BLM you oppose a plan that would open the Alaska's Kobuk River and the Seward Peninsula to mining, oil drilling, and gas development.

**Thank you for your time and continued support of wild Alaska.**

**Audubon Members! Get on it! NOW is the Time to Nominate Issues for the 2007 Legislative Session!!**

**DEADLINE: Monday, September 25th**

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Folks, I've heard from very few of you so far. If you want your issue to be included on the ballot for the Fall Member's Meeting, you must submit your issue to me SOON.

Remember, nominated issues must address one or more of the following points:

- Presents a law or policy change that has a chance at 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.

Issue descriptions should be about a paragraph in length and include your name and contact information. You can e-mail them to [ssolterman@audubon.org](mailto:ssolterman@audubon.org) or mail them to Audubon Minnesota, attn: Susan, 2357 Ventura Dr. #106, St. Paul, MN 55125

**Audubon Minnesota Announces 2006 Bird Seed Sale –**

**DEADLINE: Thursday, October 25**

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Audubon Minnesota's annual Bird Seed Sale is back this year, and bird-lovers are invited to stock up for winter feeding while supporting Audubon's conservation work in Minnesota. All popular seed varieties are offered at competitive prices, including sunflower, niger, suet cakes, and the special Audubon Minnesota Mix. The seed quality excellent, and thanks to the generous contribution of Performance Seed in St. Cloud, 100% of the purchase price goes to support Audubon programs in Minnesota

To place your order fill out the Order Form, available on our website <http://mn.audubon.org>, and send it to Audubon Minnesota, 2357 Ventura Drive, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55125. Fax it 651-731-1330 or e-mail it to [jvitale@audubon.org](mailto:jvitale@audubon.org) **All orders must be received by October 5, 2006**

**Bell Museum of Natural History – October Calendar of Events**

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## **-Exhibitions-**

### **Touch the Sky: Prairie Photographs by Jim Brandenburg**

"Touch the Sky: Prairie Photographs by Jim Brandenburg" is a tribute to the breathtaking vistas and iconic creatures of the tallgrass prairie. In more than 43 photographs, Jim Brandenburg chronicles the disappearing land that once made up the largest ecosystem in North America. Well known as a wildlife photographer, Brandenburg is also a committed conservationist and founder of the Brandenburg Prairie Foundation. Throughout the run of the exhibit, the museum will offer prairie-related programs and field trips, including guided tours to Minnesota prairies such as the Nature Conservancy's Hole in the Mountain prairie near Lake Benton and Brandenburg's own Touch the Sky prairie near Luverne.

### **Opening reception with Jim Brandenburg**

Featuring light refreshments and a preview of Brandenburg's new film

September 30, 7 p.m. \$25/\$10 members For advance tickets call 612-624-9050

Museum members only: exclusive preview with Jim Brandenburg begins at 6 p.m. September 30 and is included in the ticket price.

### **Dinner with Jim Brandenburg at The Craftsman**

Celebrate the American prairie with a special four-course, prairie-inspired dinner with Jim Brandenburg at The Craftsman Restaurant and Bar on Thursday, September 28 at 7 p.m. A social hour with a cash bar will begin at 6 p.m. Guests will also receive complimentary tickets to the "Touch the Sky" exhibit premiere event on Saturday, September 30 at 7 p.m. at the Bell Museum. Tickets are \$100 per person; \$85 with museum membership. Call 612-626-9603 for tickets and information.

### **Holiday Gift Shop**

A select number of prairie-related gifts—featuring prints of Jim Brandenburg's photographs—will be for sale in the Bell Museum's front lobby October 1–December 31.

### **Exhibit Walkabouts**

These informal tours of the "Touch the Sky" exhibit aim to spark conversation on the art of photography and the subject of prairie ecology. Scientists and artists will share their own insights and answer questions. Free with museum admission.

### **Wednesday, October 11, noon–1 p.m.** Photographer Jan Estep and ecologist John Tester.

Estep is a University of Minnesota art professor who is deeply interested in the environment and whose work spans many media. John Tester is a very popular U of M professor, a noted ecologist, and author of Minnesota's Natural Heritage: An Ecological Perspective.

### **Sunday, November 5, 2–3 p.m.**

with photographer Jan Estep and ecologist Ed Cushing

Estep is a University of Minnesota art professor who is deeply interested in the environment and whose work spans many media. Noted Ecologist Ed Cushing says that the joy he finds in his research is matched only by that he finds in stimulating curiosity about nature in others.

### **Sunday, December 3, 2–3 p.m.**

with photographer Chris Faust and ecologist John Tester

Chris Faust is a nationally recognized photographer known for his documentation of Minnesota landscapes. John Tester is a very popular U of M professor, a noted ecologist, and author of Minnesota's Natural Heritage: An Ecological Perspective.

## **—Field Trips—**

### **Knowing and Growing Prairie Plants**

Saturday, September 30, 8–10 a.m.

\$10/\$8 members

Register by September 22

Join botanist/ecologist Dan Tix and learn to identify many common native prairie plants that are found in small restoration areas on the University's St. Paul campus. Learn to plant native prairie species in your yard, and take home seeds that are ready to grow.

### **Schaefer Prairie with Ed Cushing**

Sunday, October 15, 2– 4 p.m.

\$15/\$10 members

Register by October 9

Schaefer Prairie is one of the last and best examples of the tallgrass prairie that once covered millions of acres of Minnesota. This rare habitat is home to a rich and varied community of native species. Ed Cushing is renowned for his ecological research and is one of the University of Minnesota's most popular professors because of his skill and enthusiasm for helping others understand nature.

### **—Special Events—**

#### **Film Preview and Concert by Peter Ostroushko**

Saturday, October 14, 7 p.m.

\$20/\$10 members and students/ \$15 tpt members

Register by October 10

Peter Ostroushko will perform songs from the soundtrack of the Emmy-award winning TV series Minnesota: A History of the Land, followed by a 10-minute preview of Episode V: The Northern Forest, which premieres October 18 on public television. A reception with light fare and a wine bar will follow.

### **—Café Scientifique—**

A monthly forum for science and culture held at the Varsity Theater in Dinkytown. Come early for a good seat and enjoy happy-hour specials and the sounds of science from our own Café Scientifique DJ. Doors for the event open at 5p.m. \$5 suggested donation

#### **Avian Flu**

Tuesday, October 10, 6 p.m.

This month's café will go behind the headlines, examining the complexities of avian influenza (bird flu) from the perspective of wildlife biologists as well as human health. Who is monitoring wild bird populations, and are we prepared for the impact of a possible influenza epidemic?

#### **Genetically Modified Organisms**

Tuesday, November 14, 6 p.m.

Genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, are increasingly common and controversial. Recent reports that genetically modified crops have again found their way into the American food supply have revived the debate over the control and regulation of GMOs. Find out how and why researchers are exploring the benefits and possible risks of GMOs.

### **—Workshops—**

#### **Digital Landscape Photography**

Wednesday, October 25, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

\$45/\$35 members

Register by October 18

Learn about the tools and techniques used to capture beautiful landscape photos. The workshop covers camera operation, filters, composition equipment, metering, exposure modes, and depth of field, and focuses on using digital SLR cameras (not point and shoot). Novice and experienced participants will learn valuable skills. Instructor Jade Straus is Training Manager and Director of Classes for National Camera Exchange.

**Prairie Pocket Dioramas**

Saturday, November 18, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

\$15/\$10 members

Take a tour to learn how the Bell Museum's renowned wildlife dioramas were built. Then, use some of these techniques to create a pair of pocket-sized dioramas using tin boxes and layered images. Materials for extra dioramas will be available at an additional cost.

For more information, visit the museum website at [Bell Museum of Natural History](http://Bell Museum of Natural History)

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