

A Bird's Eye View



**Audubon Society of
Omaha
A Chapter of National
Audubon Society**

May 2002 Vol. 31 No. 5

Annual ASO Banquet Thursday, May 9 Ron Cisar and "Earth Music" on Program

Annually Audubon An accomplished Wildlife Federation, celebrates with a send-off songwriter, Ron shares a Omaha JayCees, The banquet for the year just variety of environmental National Science ended. The location this messages through the Foundation, and the year is Johnny's power of lyric and song. Yellowstone Grizzly Steakhouse on L Street with cocktails at 6:00pm, Ron's work and Foundation. dinner at 7:00. \$15 per person. Also on the program for the evening is the presentation of a Service Award to one of our members. Installation of officers and directors will take place.

If you have not made a reservation, there is still time, but please hurry and call Jackie Scholar, 551-5045. Send your check to her (made out to ASO) at 5012 Nicholas Street, Omaha 68132. Absolute deadline is May 6.

Your company at the banquet is important, so contact Jackie today!

For your banquet entertainment, we are pleased to have ASO Past President Ron Cisar present his "Earth Music" program.

In 1982 Ron was chosen Nebraska Junior High Teacher of the Year. In 1984 he won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching by the National Science Foundation, was named a Distinguished Alumni of the College of Education from UNO in 1990. He has also received the Buffett Award, awards from the Nebraska

Entries for the photo contest will be prominently displayed along with prizes awarded. Each person attending may vote for his favorite photo for Best of Show award. Come to enjoy the program and the company of fellow Audubon members.

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Spring Bird

Count Saturday, May 11

Taking a Hike? Join us Sunday Mornings

Birders will be gathering for a hike on Sunday mornings in May at the Wetlands Learning Center, Fontenelle Forest, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

The Center is located at the end of Gifford Road. Warblers and other spring migrants will be in evidence, so join us to see them in their breeding plumage. Bring binoculars. No experience is needed. A Forest entry fee is required.

If you have questions, call Dick Rasmussen at 731-3939.

The DeSoto/Boyer Chute Count will be held Saturday, May 11. (The Sarpy Count will not be held this year.)

Those wishing to join this Count need to contact Mindy Sheets at DeSoto (toll-free), 642-4121, or Jerry Toll, 453-9239, and choose the area they wish to help with.

All are welcome, beginners included. If you are a beginner, this is a fine opportunity to learn from skilled birders.

Statistics from the Count are valuable in tracking the populations of our migrant and resident birds. All participants can be of service while enjoying the beauty of our bird life.

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Scholarly Notes

by Eric Scholar

ASO Wetlands Restoration

As many of you know, the marsh area at • modifications to facilitate long-term

Heron Haven has been filling in over the last few years due to the growth of Asian reed canary grass. Without some action, the area will eventually fill in completely and cease to be a wetland.

The Corps of Engineers has been consulted, and they have drafted a preliminary proposal to remove the grass and restore the wetlands on ASO's property.

The objectives of the Corps plan include:

- restoring open-water area in the historic wetland basin,
- reducing the nonnative vegetation (the reed canary grass),
- increasing wooded vegetation around the pond margin,
- increasing the buffer of wetland from the adjacent road, and
- improving water quality in the pond.

Key components of the plan include

- excavating sediments to create depths and remove invasive vegetation,
- replanting native species, depositing some excavated material around the pond margin to support riparian vegetation, and

Thanks

I want to extend special thanks to Clem Klaphake, who for five years has been Program Chair for ASO.

He has brought in many interesting and enlightening speakers as Chair of this Committee.

Clem will be changing roles, to become Field Trip Chair. Ed Higgins, a former

management techniques to control invasive nonnative species.

Ione Werthman, Garry Mick, and Larry Shackman met with the Corps prior to the drafting of this preliminary plan. At that time I also became involved in the discussions.

The total cost of the project would be approximately \$1.3 million. ASO would be the sponsor of the plan and would have obligations of about one-third of this amount, of which approximately \$73,000 would be in cash and the rest in land values.

The money needed for the project will not come out of our general funds but will come from grants to be obtained. It is possible that the NRD will cosponsor this project with us, but that is still to be determined.

The Board of Directors of ASO approved the preliminary plan at our last meeting. The Corps will now draft a detailed plan with a description of the project. This detailed plan will then be used to apply for grant funds to cover our share.

Ione and Steve Oltmans of NRD and the Corps all feel that obtaining funding for this project will not be difficult. It is hoped that work will begin in early 2004. If you have any comments or questions on this project, please give me a call.

May Events

1 (Wednesday) Board Meeting

**6 (Monday)
Conservation/Legislative Meeting**

9 (Thursday) Banquet

11 (Saturday) DeSoto Bird Count

president of ASO, will be taking over as Program Chair.

June 8, 9- National Audubon Board Meeting

I also thank Dick Rasmussen, resigning Field Trip Chair. For the past year, Dick arranged and led successful outings to keep us anchored to one of our main reasons for joining Audubon—discovering and enjoying birds.

Omaha Raptor Team - A Committee of ASO

- By Alison O'Connor

I'm always glad to see the genesis of yet another spring, my favorite season, as I watch everything come to life. Spring renews the wish to be outdoors, and what better way to get a start than the annual Garden Show at the Regency Fashion Court. Held the weekend of March 22 this year, it again proved to be a great success.

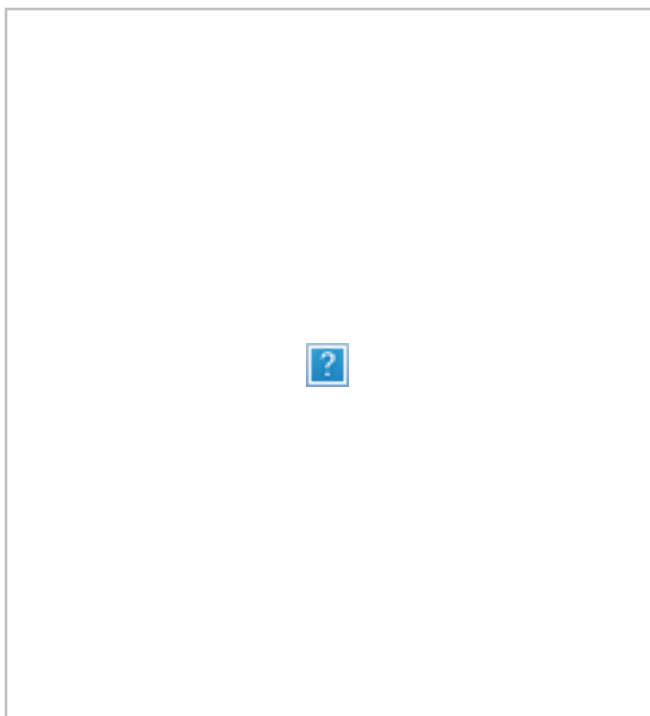
As the photos prove, the Omaha Raptor Team was present with some of our feathered volunteers, who enjoy visiting with the people as much as we do!

Our booth was an eye-pleaser again this year, so much so that we



were awarded "Best Exhibitor of Show for 2002 in Recognition of Most Creative Display."

Above from left: Carol Pirsch, Sherry Seibert, Sandy Seibert, and Karen Rock



Tremendous efforts were put forth by all the volunteers who designed and put this together, and many hours were spent putting the perfect final touches to it all.

A huge Thank You to all those special people who helped make this event a real winner and whose volunteer efforts make Audubon flourish!

Jeff Chungath, Lisa Bough, and Linda Dennis with Spice, the Screech Owl Melody, the Kestrel

National Audubon Board Comes to Lincoln June 8, 9

The National Audubon Society Board of Board members, their spouses, and Directors will hold its quarterly meeting Audubon staff from the National in Lincoln on June 8 and 9. Meetings headquarters will be in town to discuss will take place at the Cornhusker Hotel happenings within the Audubon family. (downtown, 333 South 13th Street) from Meetings are open to the public.

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon Sunday.

Contact the State Office, 402-797-2301, for details.

Environmental/ Legislative Action By Ione Werthman

We Did It!

The Senate has rejected by a 54-46 vote President Bush's plans for oil drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. (Sixty votes were needed to break the Democratic filibuster of the amendment).

Senator Murkowski (R-AK) said at a press conference on April 19, "What this really boiled down to was the power and influence of America's environmental community."

So is he listening to us? Don't hold your breath. Look for the Senator to try again tomorrow. He will push again and again as the Senate and House must now reconcile the two versions of the Energy Bill. The House said Yes to drilling; the Senate said No.

If drilling in the Arctic doesn't show up in the final energy bill, it will very likely be squeezed in on another one along the way, especially when it comes to any appropriations bill.

him that he work to officially change Earth Day to a day in June. Those who declared Earth Day to be April 22 didn't live in Nebraska. I have concluded, however, that every day should be Earth Day, so look for next year's event to be later. It could rain on our parade, but even so, the weather will be warmer.

Earth Day awards were also presented to Toyota Motor Sales USA for its Prius hybrid car and to the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN), which is now building Nebraska's first and largest wind farm of 13 to 20 turbines in the next year.

New Challenge

Although Nebraska is the sixth windiest of the 50 states, it can yet claim only five wind turbines to date, while our neighboring state of Iowa, the tenth largest wind energy potential state, already has 353 turbines and is powering 80,000 homes.

Governor Johanns has

fired plant in Nebraska City that they claim will meet basic electrical needs in eastern Nebraska in the coming decades?

The plant could generate 600 megawatts, half of which is needed by OPPD's customers. The other half would be marketed to other utilities. The Lincoln Electric System (LES) and MEAN are among seven other Nebraska utilities and two out-of-state utilities that would vie for the right to purchase the excess 300 megawatts the Nebraska City plant would generate.

These utilities would finance the other half of its construction and operations costs. (However, as we know, LES and MEAN are both building new wind turbines for much of their future electricity supply.)

We need to push our local OPPD to follow the example of neighboring electrical suppliers by harnessing the wind. Primary elections are this month. Get to know your candidates for the OPPD Board of Directors, as

I like the quotes made by changed his Wind Energy Senators Lieberman and Task Force to identify the Durbin. Lieberman said, roadblocks that are "Calling drilling in the hampering the Arctic Refuge part of a implementation of wind as strategic energy plan is a significant part of like calling oil a Nebraska's energy beverage." portfolio.

Senator Durbin: "Drilling According to Steven in the Arctic Refuge isn't Clemer of the Union of about energy security, it Concerned Scientists, isn't about energy "Nebraska has a powerful independence. It's about opportunity to become a these oil companies and national leader in wind their right to drill and energy development just make a profit." as it has with ethanol production.

I personally thanked Senator Nelson for his By taking advantage of its vote at the Earth Day 2002 celebration April 20. A Nebraska would be taking thank you from you would an important step towards be a good gesture, too. See reducing its reliance on the back page for his expensive, aging nuclear address. power plants and dirty coal plants that pollute the air and jeopardize the health of all Nebraskans."

Earth Day Omaha 2002

While standing in the rain as Senator Nelson received a special award for his environmental actions in Congress from the Earth Day Coalition, with tongue in cheek I suggested to

Did you know that OPPD is planning to raise rates as much as 15 percent to build a nearly \$1 billion coal-

they will be making the decisions for us on our energy policy. Who are the wind supporters running for the OPPD Board?

If all goes according to schedule, the new plant will be up and running in 2009, said Charles P. Moriarty, Senior Financial Officer for OPPD. Now is the time to make intelligent decisions.

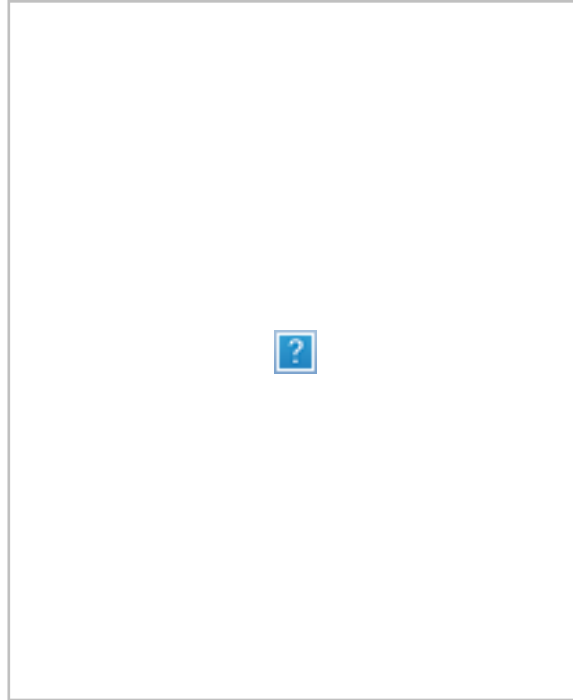
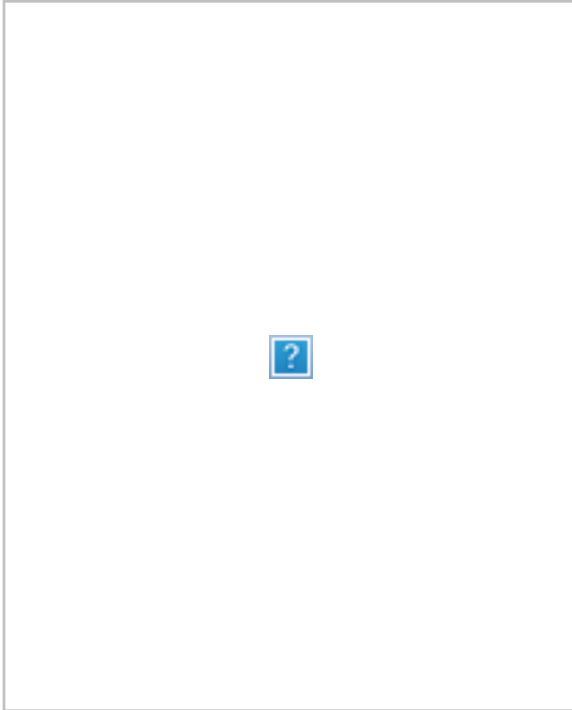
A Test for You

A short time ago I ran across some facts and numbers about our State and Legislature in the Unicameral Update.

1. What is the total number of acres of land in Nebraska?
2. How many of those acres are farmland?

**Continued on
page 5**

Spring Field Trips Bring Out the Birders



Roland Barth, Duane Bright, Neal Ratzlaff & Janis Paseka at Branched Oak Lake

On March 30, Don and Janis Paseka led a group of 21 birders to the Branched Oak Lake area near Malcolm, NE. Our thanks to them and also to Loren and Babs Padelford for leading the February 23 field trip to Riverton, Iowa.

Janis says, "Leading birders is a lot like herding cats," though this herd was quite appreciative!

She reports that our bird species total was 67, including 27 species of ducks, 4 species of geese, 7 species of raptors, a Northern and a Loggerhead Shrike, and a Northern Mockingbird.

It was a pleasant day for an outing, after a rather chilly morning. We met at the Malcolm Cafe for lunch and conversation afterward.

Justin Stolin, Left, & Greg _____(?), Right; Branched Oak Lake

On Saturday, April 20, the birders' destination was Fontenelle Forest, led by Dick Rasmussen and Clem Klaphake.

The spring weather drew a crowd of 17 who were rewarded by sightings of Parula and Yellow-throated Warblers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Towhees, Red-shouldered Hawk, Osprey, and Great Egret, among others. The total tally for the morning was a respectable 47 species. To make the most of spring migration time, we will be meeting at the parking lot at the Wetlands Learning Center each Sunday morning in May at 7:30 a.m. See details on page one, "Taking a Hike?" This has been a popular venture in the past, so join us.

Volunteers Wanted for Breeding Bird Survey Routes

By Loren Padelford

seen or heard within a quarter-mile radius.

The U.S. Geological Survey sponsors the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), an annual event that surveys breeding bird

It works better when two people can do the route, one to be the observer and the

populations throughout North America. Nebraska has 46 BBS routes, of which several are available and in need of an observer.

The survey route takes only about four hours to complete and is run once, any day in the month of June, beginning 30 minutes before sunrise.

The route is 24.5 miles long with a stop every half mile. At each three-minute stop, the observer counts all birds

other to be the timekeeper and record the birds seen at each stop.

Observers should be able to identify birds by sight and recognize common birds by song. Expenses associated with running the routes are tax deductible.

If you are interested or know someone who may be interested, please contact Loren Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue NE 68005, 292-5556, lpdlfrd@juno.com

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Encounter with Dogs, Does and Deliberations

By Jerry Toll

It was a scene straight out of the African Serengeti. One early morning in March, not long after the ice opened, I went to Nathan's Lake to see if there were any new ducks on the lake. As I drove up to the lake, I could see that a doe was standing in the middle of the lake.

With the doe were two dogs, one a Rottweiler, the other a Newfoundland. They just stood there, the doe with her left front leg bent at the knee. I knew what was going on, but in that instant was helpless to change the course of events.

As I watched, the

She was having more problems maneuvering than the dogs.

The owner of the dogs arrived at the scene shortly after I did. He was trying to call the dogs away from the doe. He told me he had just let the dogs out about a half hour ago. During the course of our terse conversation, he said in anger, "I oughta go get my 30-30 and drop both those dogs." I said, "I'll leave you to it."

I was angry too. As I left, he was still calling his dogs over to him. I returned later that

We live in a country where fewer and fewer people live in and make their living from the country. (And no, the suburbs don't count.) As a nation, we are disaffected from the land. We prefer to filter our nature experiences through the eyes of Walt Disney, because, well, it's just so much nicer that way. You don't need to touch any icky stuff!

I hope the doe made it. That she will persist through many more Winters and grow fat during Summer. In truth, I think her wounds were too

Rottweiler began circling the doe. When it got to the flank, it attacked the hamstring, trying to cripple and bring the doe down. The doe bellowed in pain. The only sound I had ever heard coming from a deer before was the snort they make when threatened.

I wondered how the Rottweiler knew to go for the hamstring. Was it instinctive or had it brought down deer before? The Newfoundland just watched. Neither dog looked particularly excited or vicious. It was more like curiosity.

It was an old scenario, these three standing in the middle of a shallow pond. I know why the dogs were there, but I don't know why the doe decided to go into the pond. Perhaps the doe was unable to outrun the dogs and saw the pond as a refuge, a way to gain some time.

She may have thought the water was deep and she could get through it faster than the dogs. Or she may have been drinking at the water's edge when surprised by the dogs, and that was her only avenue of escape.

In either case, it was a bad decision because the pond was less than a foot deep in the middle, with a silt bottom.

morning. The doe was gone. There were no signs of what had occurred earlier.

My gut response was one of abhorrence. If not for the intervention of the dog owner, I knew the doe faced a prolonged and painful death. My intellect fought back. This was validation of the predator-prey relationship.

I know that white-tailed deer have experienced a population explosion throughout much of their range. For deer, the arrival of European settlement has meant better habitat, less competition for resources, and a diminished predator list.

Dogs are still wild creatures in certain circumstances. In this situation, substitute Rottweiler for wolf (he certainly seemed to know how to bring down a deer). All dogs are capable of killing. Their predatory instinct is usually held in check by their pack loyalty to their human family's wishes. Take them out of that context and they quickly respond to their genetic predisposition, regardless of hunger.

Besides, only humans die of old age, and even that is a privilege of wealth, either of the individual or of country. It's the natural order of things to die as prey, whether it is by

severe. I've been told that deer, when under extreme stress, will just drop dead. Perhaps that is just an urban myth.

Chapter-only Memberships

This is a reminder about the availability of chapter-only memberships, which President Eric Scholar informed us of last month and which cost \$15 a year.

It should be noted that chapter-only memberships generate more income for us and ease our fundraising burdens. (The total sum of the \$15 per year cost remains with our chapter.)

The membership form on the back page of the newsletter may be used, as in the past, for new memberships or to change to chapter-only memberships. If you have questions, please call the Audubon Office at 445-4138.

Birdline

For an update on the sightings in the state, call 292-5325.

Report your sightings after listening to the tape.

superior force, disease, or some other combination of factors.

May Bird Calendar

By Babs Padelford

Legislative/Conserv.
Action,

Continued from
page 4

May brings the Neotropical migrants in their colorful breeding plumage into the midlands. Good places to see warblers and other migrant passerines are Fontenelle Forest in Bellevue, Hummel Park, Dodge Park and Neale Woods in northeast Omaha, plus Schramm State Park in Sarpy County.

Call the Nebraska Birdline at 292-5325 to learn of new arrivals and to report your sightings. The Birdline is also available on the Internet from Bird Central. Following is a partial list of birds and the approximate time of arrival in the area.

Early:

Broad-winged Hawk: Migrant

Rails: Migrants: Virginia, Sora

Shorebirds: Migrant-Solitary Sandpiper; Summer resident: Upland Sandpiper

Flycatchers: Migrant: Least; Summer residents: Great Crested, Eastern Kingbird

Swallows: Summer residents: Bank, Cliff

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Summer resident

Warblers: Migrants: Nashville, Palm, Black and White, Northern Waterthrush

3. What is the approximate number of people in Nebraska?

4. What is the approximate number of people in a single legislative district?

5. How many counties are there in Nebraska?

6. In what year did we initiate the Unicameral?


7. How many legislators are there in the Unicameral?

8. How many female senators currently serve in the Legislature?

9. How many bills were introduced in the Unicameral the first year?

10. How many bills were introduced in the 2001-2002 session of the Unicameral? Answers below.

Join us for our

Summer residents: Yellow, Common Yellowthroat	Legislative/Conservation meetings May 6, June 3, July 1 and August 5 at the Audubon office, 11809 Old Maple Road.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Summer resident	Answers:
Orioles: Summer residents: Orchard, Baltimore	1. 49,200,000 acres
Sparrows: Migrants : Clay-colored, LeConte's	2. 45,530,000 acres
Mid:	3. 1, 711,262 people
Shorebirds: Migrants: Black-bellied Plover, White-rumped Sandpiper, Dunlin, Stilt Sandpiper	4. 34, 924 people
Terns: Migrants: Black, Caspian; Summer resident: Least	5. 93 counties
Cuckoos: Migrant: Black-billed; Summer resident: Yellow-billed	6. 1937 (65 years ago)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Summer resident	7. 49
Flycatchers: Summer residents: Eastern Wood Pewee, Willow, Western Kingbird:	8. 10
Thrushes: Migrants: Gray-cheeked, Swainson's, Veery; Summer Resident: Wood Thrush	9. 192 bills
Vireos: Migrants: Solitary, Philadelphia; Summer residents: Bell's, Yellow-throated, Warbling, Red-eyed	10. 1,312 bills
Warblers: Migrants: Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Wilson's; Summer residents: American Redstart, Prothonotary, Ovenbird, Kentucky	If you find an injured bird of prey, please contact a Raptor Recovery Center volunteer at 402-734-6817 or 402-731-9869.
Tanagers: Summer residents: Summer, Scarlet	
Indigo Bunting: Summer resident	
Late:	
Shorebirds: Migrants: Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling	
Flycatchers: Migrants: Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, Alder	
Warblers: Migrants: Connecticut, Mourning, Canada; Summer resident: Cerulean	
Blue Grosbeak: Summer resident	

Audubon Society

Membership Application

The *Audubon Magazine**(see below, chapter-only membership) and your membership card will be sent to this address:

Name_____

Street_____

City_____ State_____

Zip Code_____ Phone:_____

Email:_____

Introductory Membership

National Audubon & Local Chapter

(1st & 2nd Year) \$20 -

Renewals - 3rd Year - \$25

4th Year & thereafter - \$30

*Chapter-only Membership: \$15

Memorials

The Audubon Society of Omaha greatly appreciates the memorials it receives.

When sending your gift, please identify the person you wish to memorialize. Please also give the name and address of the person to be notified.

Bequests

Addresses to Remember

President George W. Bush

The White House,1600
Pennsylvania Ave NW

Washington D.C. 20500-0001

Comments: 202-456-1111; fax:
202-456-2993

Senator Ben Nelson

U.S. Senate, Washington DC
20510; 202-224-6551;

fax 202-228-0012; Lincoln:
402-437-5246

Omaha address: 7602 Pacific
St, #205, 68114

Senator Chuck Hagel

U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.
20510-2705

(No National Audubon Magazine)

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11809 Old Maple Road

Omaha NE 68164

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to those who will
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to secure our
natural heritage.

Phone: (202) 224-4224; Fax:
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Omaha phone: (402) 758-8981

Representative Lee Terry

U.S. House of
Representatives, Washington,
DC 20515

Phone: (202) 225-4155 ; Fax:
(202) 226-5452

Omaha phone: (402) 397-9944

Representative Douglas
Bereuter

U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC 20515

Phone: (202) 225-4806; fax
(202) 225-5686

Lincoln phone: (402) 438-1598

Governor Michael Johanns

Capitol Bldg, Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509

Phone: (402) 471-2244; Fax:
471-6031

Mayor Mike Fahey

Omaha/Douglas Civic Center

1819 Farnam St, Omaha NE
68183

Phone: 444-5000 Hot Line:
444-5555

**Audubon Society of Omaha, 11809 Old Maple Road, Omaha
68164**

Elected Officers:

President Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045

1st Vice President Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Avenue, Bellevue 68005 292-2276

2nd Vice President Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687

Past President Lisa Peterson, 8911 Q St, Apt 212C, Omaha 68127 453-9146

Treasurer Garry Mick, 7045 Glendale Avenue, Omaha 68152 571-4648

Recording Secretary Rosemary Holeman, 5805 Hartman Ave, Omaha 68104 455-9919

Corresponding Secy Kay Strong, 2806 Lynnwood Dr, Bellevue 68123 738-1774

Elected Directors Jackie Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045

Sue Mattix, 11111 "T" Plaz, #206, Omaha 68137 593-7433

Cal Wolf, 13720 Wright St, Omaha 68144 333-8811

Bob Fuchs, 1113 Dillon Dr, Omaha 68132 553-8242

Paul Kardell, 1112 South 218th St, Elkhorn NE 68022 289-9864

Jo Bartikoski, 1614 No. 53rd St Omaha 68104 551-6009

Standing Committee Chairpersons:

Conservation Ione Werthman, 11649 Burt St, #011, Omaha 68154 493-0373

Education Brian Jensen, 12430 Bel Drive, Omaha NE 68144 333-6375

Field Trip Dick Rasmussen, 4503 So 16th St, Omaha 68107 731-3939

Finance Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687

Fund Raising Steve Lamphere, 3101 Washington St, #98, Bellevue 68005 291-9149

Hospitality DwanDean Leach, 3006 Poppleton, Omaha 68105 346-5769

Membership Bechara Embaid, 3218 No. 120th Court Apt. 221, Omaha 68164 965-9598

Natural Areas Mgt Vacant

Omaha Raptor Team Jenny Henricksen, 4845 So 167 Ave 68135 895-5487

Program Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Avenue, Bellevue 68005 292-2276

Publication Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647

Publicity Kathy Schwery, 3616 So 96th St, Omaha 68124 397-7343

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Other Activities:

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Bird Seed Sale Sally Hansen, 2330 Bel Court #12, Omaha 68144 334-2329

Historian Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005 292-8912

**Audubon Nebr Director Dave Sands, P. O. Box 117, Denton NE 68339.....
(402) 797-2301**

NAS Board Member Dave Tylka, tylka@stlcc.cc.mo.us

Audubon Society of Omaha

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