

# madison AUDUBON society

NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON AUDUBON SOCIETY

FALL 2014

## In This Issue:

Change 2

Staff Transitions 3

Summer in the Sanctuaries 4-5

Fall Field Trips / MAS Education Team 6

Donors, April-June / Jewels of Nature 7

Save the Date / Public Programs 8

## Wood Family Prairie Dedicated

The Wood family name has been closely associated with Madison Audubon for decades. This productive connection came full circle with the naming of the Wood Family Prairie at Goose Pond Sanctuary on August 10.

Fifty people gathered across Kampen Road from Browne Prairie at the newly named, 60-acre tract of mesic prairie. Levi and Janet Wood, representing Levi's late siblings, Ken and Amy, and their late parents, Weston and Jane, spoke of their passion for birds, natural habitat, and an organization that has come to represent both. Goose Pond Sanctuary co-managers Sue Foote-Martin and Mark Martin formally dedicated the Wood Family Prairie, and expressed their gratitude for the family's many contributions to Madison Audubon and Goose Pond Sanctuary.

It really is hard to find a Madison Audubon role that hasn't been filled by a Wood family member. Through service on the governing board, as field trip leader, field trip coordinator, office assistant, or donor, the impact of the Woods is found in virtually every aspect of the organization. "Madison Audubon would not be what it is today without the Wood family," said Mark Martin. "Their compassion and commitment to the natural world is unmatched."

Levi Wood spoke of the family's strong ties to Goose Pond and Madison Audubon, and said that dedication of the prairie was very fitting, given all the time and effort that Ken, especially, put in to making the sanctuary what it is today.

The impact of the Wood family continues not only with Levi's ongoing involvement, but will be seen in perpetuity due to the generosity of the family. The Kenneth W. Wood Trust is a significant bequest that will benefit Madison

Audubon sanctuaries in Dane and Columbia counties. This charitable fund is managed by U.S. Bank and will make annual distributions to Madison Audubon.

"This is a transformative gift for the organization," said outgoing executive director, Gary Funk. "Already, distributions from this fund are allowing Madison Audubon to make major renovations to Goose Pond Sanctuary infrastructure, and are enhancing what is already one of Wisconsin's most beloved birding spots."

Board president Roger Packard summed it up, "Generosity like that displayed by the Woods through volunteerism, annual giving, and planned giving is exactly what is needed to sustain an organization like Madison Audubon." Roger added, "Estate gifts like Ken Wood's are particularly important in assuring the growth and perpetual management of our sanctuary lands."

The dedication ended with the unveiling of an informational sign for the Wood Family Prairie and a hike through the prairie. If you would like to visit the Wood Family Prairie and walk its new trail, please park in the Browne Prairie parking lot and walk across Kampen Road to the entrance.



Levi Wood, Sue Foote-Martin and Mark Martin with the new informational sign that will be displayed at the Wood Family Prairie

madison  
AUDUBON  
society

Our mission is to protect and improve habitat for birds and other wildlife through land acquisition and management, education and advocacy.

## Change

It's one of the few certainties in life. It can be good or bad; most often it's a bit of each.

Such is the case with recent staff changes at Madison Audubon detailed on this page and the next. We're losing four stellar employees in rapid succession—a bad thing. But, each has contributed enormously to strengthening Madison Audubon during his or her time with us; each is moving on to exciting new opportunities (including retirement in Karen Etter Hale's case); and at the time of this writing, we have identified outstanding individuals to fill two of the positions, bringing new talent and enthusiasm to the organization—all to the good.

And so we bid a bitter-sweet farewell to Karen as

well as Gary Funk, Matt Weber, and Taylor McCabe-Juhnke. We wish them all the best. At the same time, we welcome Matt Reetz as executive director and Chris Doyle as Faville Grove land steward. We look forward to working with new staff and of course, with our outstanding continuing staff members and volunteers as we continue building the organization and advancing our important mission.

Perhaps the most critical aspect of our mission involves working to mitigate an ongoing change that has no up-side: climate change. In September, National Audubon plans to release the results of

a major study of the projected effects of global warming on bird habitats and ranges throughout the Americas. It's safe to say that some bird species will fare better than others, but if we don't change our ways, the overall effect on birds, as on our planetary ecosystem and our civilization, will be catastrophically destabilizing.

In conjunction with the release of the national study, Madison Audubon will host a presentation by a National Audubon scientist on the UW-Madison campus in November (see page 8). Throughout the fall, we will highlight our local efforts to address climate change, from our work to protect life's stabilizing diversity at our local sanctuaries, to our efforts to bring the motivating wonder of birds and the natural world to people of all ages, to our direct efforts to advocate for the protection of the natural world, of which our civilization is an integral part.

Of course, my column wouldn't be complete without a bit of that advocacy, so I'll close by suggesting that we make this fall's elections a referendum on the single most important issue of our time. Ask the candidates at all levels of government what they will do if elected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Then get out to vote, and get everyone you know out to vote for candidates who understand the dire threat posed by global warming, who fully appreciate the essential role that a strong government must play in addressing the problem, and who themselves are vocal advocates for an immediate change of course.

*That* is a change that unquestionably would be good for birds and for those who watch them.



**Roger Packard**, president  
[rpackard@uwalumni.com](mailto:rpackard@uwalumni.com)

## Karen Etter Hale's Work for Birds to Continue

Karen Etter Hale, long-time employee and respected bird conservation advocate, has announced her retirement from Madison Audubon, but her efforts to protect birds will continue.

Since 1990, Karen has served in a variety of capacities with the organization—in fact, for many years as executive secretary she practically *was* Madison Audubon, managing the office, spearheading advocacy efforts, serving as liaison with other conservation groups and the Department of Natural Resources, and doing anything and everything needed to keep the organization running.

Recently she has served as partnerships facilitator and citizen science coordinator. In connection with those roles, Karen serves as chair of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, and she supports the work of the Great Wisconsin Birdathon and the Wisconsin Audubon Council (Karen helped develop its terrific new website: [wisconsinaudubon.org](http://wisconsinaudubon.org)), positions that she intends to continue as a volunteer. She also plans to continue her service on several other committees: Bird City Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group, and starting next year, the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas 2.



Yellow coneflowers in a summer breeze

### *Thanks, as always...*

... to our terrific continuing staff:

- Tony Abate  
Goose Pond Sanctuary land steward
- Brianna Duran  
conservation education coordinator
- Mark Martin and Sue Foote-Martin  
Goose Pond Sanctuary  
resident managers
- John Minnich  
financial assistant
- Rebecca Ressler  
education resource specialist

... and to all of our helpful volunteers,  
 too numerous to mention.

## Executive Director Transition

### Farewell Gary Funk

Madison Audubon's first executive director, Gary Funk, is leaving September 15 to coordinate a new multi-state coalition of rural advocates dedicated to school-centered community development.

Over the nearly two years of Gary's tenure, Madison Audubon has made tremendous strides. With Gary's leadership, we have:

- Greatly expanded our bird-centered conservation education programs, with particular emphases on reaching underserved children and utilizing our sanctuary lands as outdoor classrooms.
- Improved Madison Audubon's online visibility and strengthened organizational communications.
- Added staff, improved office operations, and moved offices to accommodate expanded operations.
- Increased funding from individuals and foundations and improved financial management, enabling MAS to take on these new initiatives in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Completed a new strategic plan and developed and implemented annual work plans to guide our organizational efforts.

Thanks to Gary's efforts, Madison Audubon is much stronger organizationally, and we are strategically positioned to continue expanding our efforts to protect birds and their habitat.

## Faville Grove Land Steward Transition

### Matt Weber is Back to School

We knew it would happen, but it's sad for MAS nonetheless: Matt Weber's break from school is over and he's off for the University of California, Davis to pursue a master's degree in hydrologic sciences. Matt served on the Faville Grove intern crew in summer 2009, and we hired him on as land steward after he received his B.S. in civil and environmental engineering from UW-Madison in May 2012. Matt jumped into the position with both feet, quickly expanding his botanical knowledge and his knowledge of ecological restoration techniques, reaching out to volunteers through newsy emails and articles in this newsletter, supervising interns, helping with education programs, and generally doing his utmost to help make Faville Grove Sanctuary the gem that it is today.

### Welcome Chris Doyle

Chris Doyle graduated in 2013 from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a B.S. in fisheries and

### Welcome Matthew Reetz

Matt Reetz brings to Madison Audubon two decades of experience and a deep enthusiasm for conservation of birds and their habitats. He has demonstrated leadership in conservation, non-profit land protection, partnership-building, fund-raising and management. In addition, he has experience in and a passion for environmental education and outreach.

Matt holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in wildlife ecology and conservation from the University of Florida, Gainesville, and a B.S. in ethology and evolution from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

He joins Madison Audubon on September 1 from UW-Madison where, as a researcher, he worked with natural resource agencies and local stakeholders in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan to develop and implement action plans for the conservation of birds listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Matt has also worked with Gathering Waters Conservancy as land trust program coordinator, facilitating the development and operation of Wisconsin land trusts, and assisting land trusts in achieving national accreditation. Earlier in his career, Matt taught at Franklin College in Indiana and worked with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Join us in welcoming Matt—at the September 16 public program (see page 8), if not before.

wildlife, and spent the next 15 months doing what recent natural resources majors do best—working temporary jobs. But Chris impressed his supervisors at the Wisconsin DNR, the Schlitz Audubon Center and the U.S. Forest Service in Nicolet National Forest as a quick study, a hard worker, and a personable volunteer leader—all traits that will serve him well at Faville Grove Sanctuary. Welcome, Chris!

## Taylor is Moving On

Taylor McCabe-Juhnke is moving to Madison-based EPIC as a project manager. Taylor came to Madison Audubon through the Mennonite Voluntary Service program and was subsequently hired as full-time communications and outreach coordinator to launch our very successful social media portfolio. Taylor has also assisted with volunteer recruitment and has been a big help in many ways at the Madison Audubon office.

## Special Thanks from Gary

I would like to thank everyone associated with Madison Audubon for their kindness and support during the last two years. I especially want to thank my colleagues and our board of directors for their diligence and hard work. Together, their efforts have secured a bright future for this organization.

I have been most impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of our members and the birding community of southern Wisconsin. Greater Madison is a region with great intellectual capital, and this strength has been collectively utilized to create beautiful sanctuaries and a thoughtful and integrated approach to bird conservation. People should not take any of this for granted; it is not like this everywhere.

There are two specific organizational accomplishments I want to mention—the formal establishment of the Madison Audubon Endowment and its companion Legacy Society. The Wealth in Wisconsin Study estimates that over the next decade Madison Audubon's 8-county region will experience a \$15.2 billion intergenerational transfer of wealth. We must do all we can to garner a share of these resources for bird habitat protection, conservation education, and environmental advocacy. Our Endowment and the Legacy Society are dedicated to this end, and the strength of these two initiatives will determine how much influence Madison Audubon will have in the years to come.

My wife, Jana, and I are joining the Legacy Society because of our strong belief in Madison Audubon's mission. We hope that you, too, will consider making a planned giving commitment to this wonderful organization.



## Summer 2014 at Faville Grove

Clockwise from center:

- Female widow skimmer dragonfly
- Fawn in the early summer prairie
- A hard-working intern crew: Sandra Kinzer, Andrew Ibach, Nate Durgin and Kevin Seng with spiderwort seed
- Summer burn to control sweet clover in preparation for a future prairie planting
- Michigan lilies bloomed in many wet-mesic prairie restorations this year; here growing with elderberries
- Female Blandings turtle looking for a nest site
- Black-eyed Susans light up a second-year prairie planting. The entire green field beyond—and more—is slated for planting this fall, so read on, and come on out...



## Fall Seed Collecting

Call us biased, but it doesn't get any better than a Wisconsin prairie on a clear fall day. Young or old, come join the fun. If it's wet outside, come anyway—we will take the fun into the seed barn.

- **Saturdays**  
 September 6 – November 1  
 9:30 a.m. to noon  
 and 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Wednesdays**  
 September 3 – October 29  
 9:30 a.m. to noon
- **Other days by appointment**

Meet at the kiosk on Prairie Lane off of Highway G, north of Lake Mills.

Contact: Chris Doyle  
[faville@madisonaudubon.org](mailto:faville@madisonaudubon.org)  
 262.347.6567



## Northern Harriers Nesting at Goose Pond

Northern Harriers, or marsh hawks, are ground nesting raptors that require several hundred acres of grassland around their nesting site. Due to lack of grassland habitat, harriers probably did not nest at Goose Pond for over 100 years. In the spring of 2009, their aerial courtship display was first seen over what is now known as the Wood Family Prairie. Later that summer, they fledged young from a nest in that three-year-old prairie restoration. In 2010, harriers nested in the Browne Prairie, but did not nest at Goose Pond again until this year.

This spring we observed harriers in courtship display. Harriers are secretive during incubation and it was not until July that Tony and the interns observed where a pair nested at Hopkins Road Prairie. That same day they also found a harrier nest at Erstad Prairie.

Small mammals, especially meadow voles, are a major food source for harriers and migrating short-eared owls. We hope harriers will continue to find abundant prey and nest at our sanctuaries.

## Silphium Borer Moths Thriving at MAS Sanctuaries

The state-endangered Silphium borer moth (*Papaipema silphii*) has found a new home at Goose Pond Sanctuary, where we found the caterpillars on prairie dock leaves on the Wood Family Prairie this June. This is only the seventeenth known population in Wisconsin of this prairie-restricted invertebrate.

Our guess is that Silphium borer moths were present undetected on nearby prairie remnants or roadsides and found their way to our prairie restorations. The Silphium borer moth feeds only on members of the genus *Silphium*, primarily prairie dock and compass plant. This drab colored Noctuidae moth with a two-inch wingspan emerges in September and October. Soon after mating, the female lays eggs on or very close to host plants. When the eggs hatch the following spring, the caterpillars live in the leaf stems before burrowing into the root. In the fall they emerge to start the cycle anew.

Dying and dried Silphium leaves with frass (caterpillar feces) at the base of the stem indicate feeding by the caterpillar. While the host Silphiums are part of the fire-dependent prairie community, moth eggs and young caterpillars can be killed by prairie fires, so it is important to leave unburned habitat when conducting controlled prairie burns.

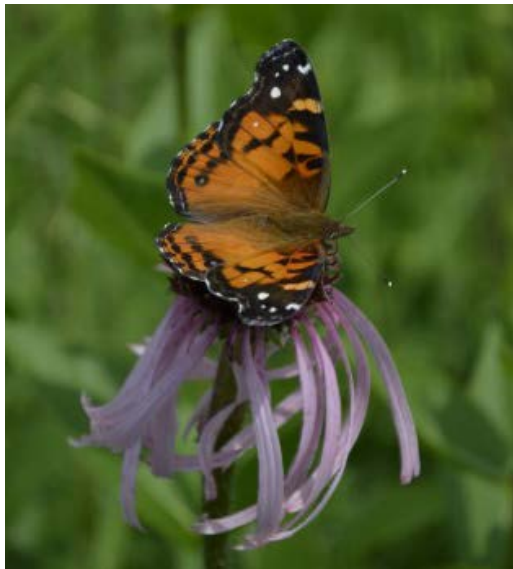
This rare moth is also present at Faville Grove Sanctuary, where it has spread from known populations on Faville and Snapper Prairies to all of Audubon's Faville Grove prairie restorations. In fact, Madison Audubon's upland restorations may have saved the moth from local extinction when the two remnant prairies along the Crawfish River flooded for several weeks in June 2008.

## Mud Lake North American Butterfly Count

The 26<sup>th</sup> annual Mud Lake Butterfly Count, which includes Goose Pond Sanctuary within the count circle, turned up 39 butterfly species and 1,059 individuals—the third highest number of species in the history of the count.

At Goose Pond, we found 19 species and 603 individuals. Our best find was five painted ladies, and 384 clouded sulphurs. Our best site was Sue Ames Prairie, where we found 15 species and 32 monarchs. Overall, the 12 observers counted 92 monarchs, including 68 at Goose Pond. Last year the four observers only found one monarch. Thanks to Janet Flynn, Gary Funk, Caleb Lange, Sandy Stark, Greg Tiedt, and Topf Wells for helping at Goose Pond. Fifteen-year-old Caleb was by far the best netter.

**Mark Martin, Sue-Foote Martin and Tony Abate**  
Goose Pond resident managers and land steward



American lady on a pale purple coneflower

## Volunteer Activities at Goose Pond

### Fall Seed Collecting

This year we will collect a wide variety of species and will also focus on collecting a large amount of milkweed seed to benefit monarch butterflies

- **Saturdays**  
September 20 – November 1  
9:30 a.m. to noon
- **Wednesdays**  
September 3 – November 5  
9:30 a.m. to noon
- **Other days by appointment**

### Monarch Tagging

Help net and tag monarch butterflies.

- **Saturdays**  
September 6 and 13  
9 a.m.
- **Weekdays**  
**September 2 – 12 by appointment**

Meet at W7503 Kampen Road, one mile south of Arlington.

Contact:  
Mark Martin or Sue Foote-Martin  
[goosep@madisonaudubon.org](mailto:goosep@madisonaudubon.org)  
608.333.9645  
or Tony Abate at 715.213.7520



Clouded sulpher butterfly

## Fall Field Trips

- Saturday, August 23: 7 a.m.**  
Warbler Walk at Pheasant Branch
- Saturday, August 23: 10 a.m.**  
Butterflies & Blossoms at Pheasant Branch
- Monday, September 1: 4 p.m.**  
Pleasant Valley Conservancy Tour
- Friday, September 5: 6:30 p.m.**  
Swift Night Out (rain date September 6)
- Wednesday, September 10: 6:30 p.m.**  
Evening at Owen Park
- Thursday, September 11: 7 a.m.**  
Warbler Walk at Pheasant Branch
- Saturday, September 13: 8 a.m.**  
Fall Birding at Lakeshore Preserve
- Saturday, September 13: 10 a.m.**  
Bird Banding at Biocore Prairie
- Sunday, September 14: 9 a.m.**  
Birding at Zeloski Marsh
- Tuesday, September 16: 7 a.m.**  
Warbler Walk at Pheasant Branch
- Wednesday, September 17: 6:30 p.m.**  
Evening at Edna Taylor Conservancy
- Sunday, September 21: 9 a.m.**  
Fall Prairies at Faville Grove Sanctuary
- Saturday, September 27: 8 a.m.**  
Nine Springs/Lake Farm Park
- Sunday, September 28: TBD**  
Ice Age Trail
- Saturday, October 4: 7:15 a.m.**  
Pheasant Branch Sparrows
- Saturday, October 4: 5:30 p.m.**  
Saw-whet Owl Banding (fee)
- Sunday, October 5: 8 a.m.**  
Fall birding at Lakeshore Preserve
- Wednesday, October 15: 5:30 p.m.**  
Evening at Cherokee Marsh – South Unit
- Sunday, October 19: 1:30 p.m.**  
Scope Day, at Goose Pond TBD
- Saturday, October 25: 7:30 a.m.**  
Late Fall Sparrows at Pheasant Branch
- Sunday, November 2: 6:30 a.m.**  
Lake Michigan Birding

## Monthly Field Trips:

- Jefferson-Dodge Bird Walks  
Every third Saturday or Sunday
- Cherokee Marsh Walk  
Every first Sunday: 1:30 p.m.

For complete details, visit  
[madisonaudubon.org](http://madisonaudubon.org)  
or call 608.255.2473.

## Fun in the Sun with the Education Team

This summer, Madison Audubon's conservation educators, Rebecca Ressler and Brianna Duran, and a terrific crew of volunteers had a blast leading our conservation education programs. Following last spring's successful pilot projects with AmeriCorps' Partners for After School Success (PASS) program and the Dane County Salvation Army Community Center, Madison Audubon continued these hands-on environmental education collaborations.

At the Lussier Community Education Center, a PASS site, Madison Audubon led bird-related activities for 48 elementary and middle school kids. Two bird-expert volunteers joined us for bird migration obstacle courses, predator and prey survivor tag, bird ID, bird call bingo, bird trivia, and citizen science bird counts.

At the Salvation Army Community Center, Madison Audubon piloted a new curriculum, with the kids exploring a different nearby natural area each week. With the help of volunteers, 29 elementary students experienced a day as a botanist, a soil scientist, a water scientist, and an ornithologist. In addition to using scientific tools like magnifying glasses and binoculars, the kids also enjoyed writing and drawing in their nature journals. Highlights from our adventures include finding a snake at Cherokee Marsh, seeing a great blue heron at Lake Farm County Park, learning from UW-Extension water quality experts at Starkweather Creek, and making leaf rubbings at the UW-Arboretum.

In addition to these two ongoing programs, Madison Audubon presented at local libraries and joined summer camp programs. MAD Youth Volunteer Camp even ventured out to Madison Audubon's Faville Grove Sanctuary to participate in a variety of service learning projects with Matt Weber, land steward, and the Faville Grove summer interns.

In addition to working with kids, Madison Audubon collaborated with Operation Fresh Start, a Dane County non-profit helping disconnected young adults find a path to self-sufficiency. Operation Fresh Start's Conservation Crews assist in local efforts with the City of Madison Parks to restore and repair natural spaces. Madison Audubon's hands-on Conservation Academy introduced the crew participants to experts in the conservation field. At each session, an expert presenter highlighted experiences and education that led them to their career and demonstrated how and why the crews' hard work is significant.

Madison Audubon wishes to thank all our collaborators, participants, and volunteers for their part in making these summer programs a success! If you're interested in making a difference in the community, consider volunteering at one of our upcoming education programs. Contact Rebecca at [rressl@madisonaudubon.org](mailto:rressl@madisonaudubon.org) for more information.

*Madison Audubon Society's conservation education programming is made possible by a generous grant from the Theda & Tamblin Clark Smith Family Foundation. Additional support for our Salvation Army partnership was provided by the Endres Manufacturing Company Foundation. Thank you!*



*Rebecca Ressler and novice birders with a good find*

Many thanks to all contributors!

# Madison Audubon Society Donors: April – June, 2014



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Lussier Family Heritage Center

Join BOTH Madison Audubon and National Audubon

New Membership  
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\$40 Individual Membership  
 \$60 Family Membership  
 \$25 Student Membership  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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Gift in Honor of:  
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 Gift Membership for:  
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 Check to Madison Audubon Society enclosed  
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Please return this form to the address on p. 8 or give online at [madisonaudubon.org](http://madisonaudubon.org)

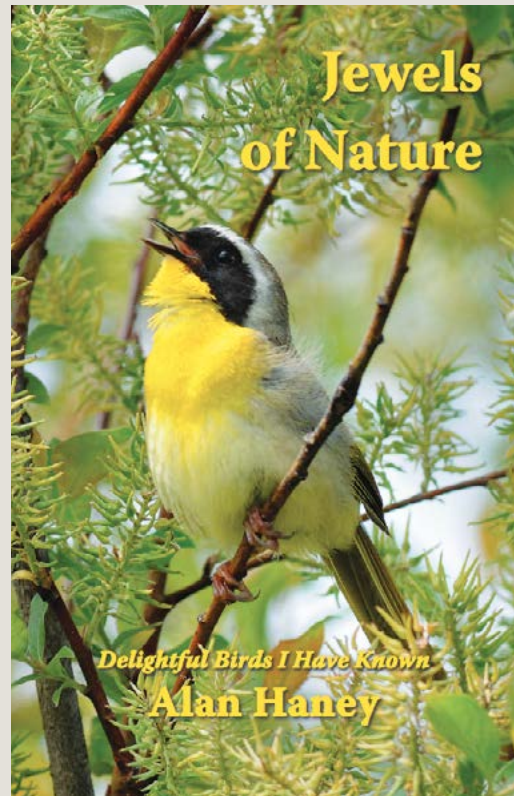
## Jewels of Nature

The Aldo Leopold Audubon Society in central Wisconsin has just published *Jewels of Nature: Delightful Birds I Have Known*, by Alan Haney. Alan is a forest ecologist and emeritus dean of the College of Natural Resources at UW–Stevens Point with over 40 years of ornithological and ecological field experience.

We are pleased to make this book available to Madison Audubon Society members and friends for \$21.95, plus shipping and sales tax, with all profits benefiting the two Audubon chapters.

The book covers 90 bird species of the Midwest, providing insight into what makes each species special. His personal stories highlight first sightings, humorous observations, unusual behavior, and ecologically important characteristics that elevate these birds from dull descriptions to living creatures that share and enrich our world.

For order information, visit [madisonaudubon.org](http://madisonaudubon.org) or call the MAS office at 608.255.2473.



Madison Audubon Society and National Audubon Society are tax-exempt, not-for-profit organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. When you join, you will receive subscriptions to both the Madison Audubon newsletter, published four times per year, and to AUDUBON magazine, published six times per year. (Please allow six to eight weeks to receive your first issue.) Your membership and gifts to Audubon are tax-deductible except for \$7.50 allocated to AUDUBON magazine for a one year membership.

## Save the Date!

Chad Wilsey, ecologist with National Audubon, will present the results of Audubon's soon-to-be-released climate change report, detailing projected changes in bird ranges under various climate scenarios. This special presentation, presented jointly with the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, will be held on **Monday, November 17, 7:30 p.m.** at the new Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery on the UW-Madison campus.

Stay tuned for details!

**Return Service Requested**

Printed with soy ink on recycled paper

## Public Programs at Capitol Lakes

333 West Main Street, Madison  
Main Ballroom

Programs begin at 7 p.m.  
Refreshments to follow

Free parking in the ramp  
across West Main Street.

### Hackmatack — A Dream Realized

Tuesday, September 16

Steven Byers of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge will discuss the fledgling refuge in northeastern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin. The Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge will conserve the area's unique natural landscapes, plants and wildlife, link existing open spaces, create recreational and educational opportunities, and provide long-term economic benefits. Carl Sandburg wrote, "Nothing happens unless first a dream." Learn how the Friends of Hackmatack realized their dream, garnering the support of the public, as well as local, state, and federal decision-makers, and working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish the refuge. Steven will share his hopes for the future of the refuge, and what this refuge will mean for birds.

### Discovering the Penokees

Tuesday, October 21

Photographer and author Joel Austin will highlight the incredible natural beauty of the Penokee Hills of northern Wisconsin and their importance to the Lake Superior watershed. Joel has traveled throughout these hills, which are remnants of a 1.8 billion year-old mountain range, and will share his stunning photos of this area. In addition, he will discuss the economic and environmental impact that the proposed open-pit mine would have on the local communities and on the watershed's rivers, forests and associated wetlands.



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