



Wild River Audubon Current

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President's Column

Spring is all about migration. This morning, I heard a newly-arrived song sparrow singing along the driveway. My bear-ravaged bird feeders host large flocks of redpolls and juncos each day, birds making their way northward to breed. Pioneer Lake opened up on April Fool's Day; within hours, I spotted a cormorant on its waters, no doubt feasting on bullheads.

Spring is also about planning and planting gardens. There can be an intersection between this satisfying domestic activity and the wild phenomenon of migration. I encourage all gardeners out there to make room in your gardens and yard for plantings that feed migrating birds. Berry-bearing shrubs are a good choice—choke cherry, high-bush cranberry, june berry, nanny berry are all natives that feed the migrators in the fall. Or, consider a wild patch that harbors common milkweed, various species of goldenrod (blooming at different times), coneflowers and other prairie blooms. Far into the fall, I see both birds and butterflies frequenting the "meadow" we have planted in our south yard. These are species that won't come to a feeder, but find their repast in wild plants.

Spring is a joyous time! We have weathered a difficult winter! Join Audubon at our April meeting for a really great speaker, Carrol Henderson and plan to take in one of our bird walks in May. See you there!

Sue



About the Speaker

Carrol Henderson will speak on "Birds in Flight: the art and science of how birds fly." We will also see a power point presentation on Birds from Minnesota, South America, Africa, and New Zealand. **Tuesday, April 14th at 7:00 p.m.** in the Community Room at the Chisago Lakes Area Library.

Henderson, author, photographer and wildlife manager has been the Non-game Wildlife Program supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources since 1977. He has developed a statewide program for the conservation of Minnesota's non-game wildlife species and has had responsibility for planning and developing projects to help bring back endangered wildlife.

He wrote *Woodworking for Wildlife*, *Wild About Birds* and the very popular book, *Landscaping for Wildlife*. His newest book is *Oology and Ralph's Talking Egg*.

If you go to www.exploreminnesota.com you will find his list of favorite birds watching spots in Minnesota.

WRA Co-sponsoring Scholars Under Fire

The Women's Environmental Institute, WEI will be hosting two lectures this month and Wild River Audubon has agreed to cosponsor them. As part of WEI's Scholar Under Fire (see www.w-e-i.org for more info), hydrologist and engineer Paul Wotzka will be give a lecture entitled, "Atrazine, Nitrates, and Corn-Based Ethanol- Implications for Minnesota's Water Resources". **Sunday, April 26th at 6PM** Paul will be speaking at the North Branch Area Library's community room and on **Saturday, April 25th at 1PM** he will be speaking at the Taylor's Falls Community Center.

According to the WEI web site "Paul Wotzka is a scientist who leveled a whistleblower lawsuit against the state regarding his research on Atrazine, a common pesticide used by farmers in Minnesota. As a hydrologist, Paul had logged 16 years monitoring water quality for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture before moving to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency last year. During the 2007 legislative session, he received a call from Representative Ken Tschumper, a dairy farmer who advocates banning Atrazine from use in Minnesota. He had read an article in a DNR magazine where Paul was quoted as saying we have observed some increasing concentrations of Atrazine in trout streams in southeastern Minnesota. Tschumper, the author of several bills aimed at tightening regulation of Atrazine, asked Wotzka to appear at a hearing planned for the next day and sent a request to testify to his supervisors which was denied. Wotzka persisted, provided the testimony, and was put on investigatory leave and six weeks later fired from his job."

www.wildriveraudubon.org

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