



Wild River Audubon *Current*

Vol. 30 No. 6

February 2010

President's Column

I was a wide-eyed 21 year old the first time I heard writer Sigurd Olson speak. Sig was in his 70s, with silver hair and a lined face, and he dressed in khakis, a wool shirt and moccasins, requisite garb for a legendary outdoorsman.

His message to the college students gathered at his feet that evening was to be vigilant in protection of wilderness, and specifically, the beloved Boundary Waters, because there will always be people who do not value it, and are ready to sacrifice it for short-term gain.

It was known at that time that there were copper (and nickel) deposits near the Boundary Waters, but there was not yet a serious attempt to mine them. I believe that Olson was consciously planting the seed that night in the future generation, preparing us to get ready. In 2010, in the midst of a profound economic recession, that day has come. Now it is our turn to protect the Boundary Waters.

At our March 9th meeting, we will show a 27 minute film detailing the threat that copper mining poses to the wilderness area, the largest one in the eastern United States. A member of the Friends of the Boundary Waters Canoe

Millions of people have spent time in the BWCAW and experienced its beauty. Its protection was not procured without a fight and its pristine quality is not guaranteed. Please attend, get informed and make your views known about the new threat to its existence.

Sue



Upcoming Events

February 9th– Ron Windingstad speaks on Chimney Swift Restoration Project 7:00 p.m. Community Room at the Chisago Lakes Area Library.

March 9th– Friends of the Boundary Waters Film 7:00 p.m. Community Room Chisago Lakes Area Library.

April 13th– Bob Holtz on Bird Identification 7:00 p.m. Community Room at the Chisago Lakes Area Library.

About our Speaker

Ron Windingstad is a retired wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology at Augsburg College. After serving as an Air Force pilot Ron received his Master's Degree in wildlife management at UW- Steven's Point.

Currently, he serves at Audubon-at-Home Coordinator with Audubon Minnesota and coordinates the Audubon Minnesota Chimney Swift Conservation Project.

He will be speaking about the decline of Chimney Swifts and what can be done to help them.



Good-bye, John Curry! Hello

Don Arnosti!

Don Arnosti, a name that is familiar to many Wild River Auduboners, has agreed to take the post of Policy Director for Audubon Minnesota on a part-time, contractual basis for the 2010 legislative session. That post was left open by the sudden departure of John Curry on January 15th, when he was recruited by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to fill the position of Assistant Director of the Central Planning Region for the NFWF.

Arnosti will be working on two projects for the state office: first, he will work closely with the Environmental Issues Committee (the EIC) to promote Audubon's interests at the state capitol. These Audubon activists will seek funding for environmental proposals in the bonding bill, promote legislation regulating Off Highway Vehicle activity on state land, and on mining in northern Minnesota, and will work with interested parties on the regulation of lead shot in hunting. Arnosti will also become the point person on the Mississippi River National Program

Wild River Audubon members are welcome to join the EIC to participate in their efforts at the capitol. They meet every other Friday morning from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at 550 Rice St. North in St. Paul, or if you can't get to a meeting, there is a call-in-number to participate over the phone. Contact the state office at 651 739-9332 for this number. This is an energetic, upbeat group of people who will be capably tutored by the articulate and knowledgeable Arnosti.

WRA's executive board met with John Curry this fall and were impressed with his expertise—he will be sadly missed. In his departure letter, Curry emphasized that he had not sought the new position, but that it was too great an opportunity to turn down. His replacement by Don Arnosti, who is a former Director of Audubon



Support a Classroom with Audubon Adventures

Every year your Wild River Audubon chapter participates in Audubon Adventures, an educational program for students in grades 3 to 6. This program provides planned lessons for teachers as well as several editions of a newspaper-format publication presented around a particular theme. This year's theme is Action for Planet Earth which helps kids learn the science behind the challenges we face with energy, water, and habitat. It also helps them understand the role citizens can play in protecting our resources. Hands-on exercises let students understand how we need to balance human needs with ecosystem health.

The chapter purchases the kits at a cost of \$45.00 per classroom with each kit serving up to 32 students in addition to an extensive Classroom Resource Manual. This year finds the chapter in need of members and others to financially support this fine educational effort. Therefore we are asking you to support a classroom with a donation of \$45.00. We would recognize your donation to the class which also shows the children that individuals do indeed make a difference. You can make a check out to Wild River Audubon and send it to: Sue Leaf 31450 Oasis Rd. Center City, MN 55012

Pinfeathers

If you're finding that your newsletter isn't getting to you on time, be sure to check the website (www.wildriveraudubon.org). Craig Roberts, webmaster, keeps it up to date. You can also get on an e mail list to receive meeting notices before events.

The Executive Board voted at its May meeting to support the Chisago Lake Middle School's drive to install eight solar collectors on its roof with a \$50 donation, to be paid in the fall, when our membership check from National Audubon arrives.



Wild River Audubon Society

Officers

President: Sue Leaf 651 257-6044

Vice President: Dann Adair 651 257-5627

Secretary: Sue Mahler 651 464-7890

Treasurer: Kim Pittsley 651 257-6740

Board of Directors

Dayle DeClercq '11 651257-5045

Tom Anderson '11 651 462-7353

Joe Sausen '11 651 674-8119

Jeremy Kalin '11 257-9861

Ken Reine '11 763 552-2455

Craig Roberts '11 651 257-0786

Jocelyn Warholm '11 651 257-9231

Newsletter Mailer

Jackie Lallier 651 213-0909

Audubon Adventures

Dann Adair

Newsletter Editor

Bonnie DeClercq 651 257-5045

Membership

Ken Reine

Christmas Bird Count

WRA awarded grant money for Chimney Swift Towers

Wild River Audubon has been awarded a small grant to construct several chimney swift towers that will provide artificial nest sites for the beleaguered species.

Our chapter had sought the grant at the end of December from the collaborative funding initiative offer by National Audubon. The proposal was a request for \$500, but the granting committee awarded \$1500, enough to build several towers for Chisago County.

At present, the boy scout troop meeting at Chisago Lake Lutheran Church will construct one of the towers and place it near the church, where chimney swifts have been seen to roost in the building's unused smoke stacks.

The location of the other two towers has not yet been decided. Members knowing of roosts of chimney swifts and interested in placing a tower nearby should contact Sue Leaf at leafhous@frontiernet.net.

We need to build these towers and erect them before the breeding season. Joe Sausen has offered the use of his heated garage for construction. If anyone is interested in providing carpentry skills or other aid, please notify Joe or Sue.

www.wildriveraudubon.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
North Branch,
MN 55056
Permit No. 50

Wild River Audubon
C/O Ken Reine
3330 Ten Oaks St
Cambridge, MN 55008-3810