

**A Message from our President
August, 2020**

“Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others.” So wrote the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero. In these challenging times, I am reminded of the wisdom of that statement, uttered more than 2,000 years ago. So I begin my column by expressing thanks. Thanks to Roger Maddux and Cindy Hildebrand for their generous gift to the Big Bluestem Audubon Society. Thanks to Brekke’s Town and Country and Wild Birds Unlimited, who donate to our organization when customers purchase bird items and mention Big Bluestem Audubon Society at the time of the purchase. Thanks to Doug Harr, a member who has worked tirelessly for the Bird Friendly Iowa initiative, and whose efforts have led to Ames being the most recent community to adopt this set of bird-friendly practices. Thanks to Eric Ollie, who has taken the lead in establishing a relationship between the Big Bluestem Audubon Society and the Story County Conservation Board in adopting the Crooked Bend Park and improving its trails. Thanks to Larry Dau for his tireless efforts in putting together the newsletter. And thanks to all of you for all that you do to support this organization. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

As you undoubtedly know, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted our organization. We had to cancel our March, April, and May meetings. Our September meeting has likewise been cancelled; we hope that we will be able to have an in-person meetings in October at the Ames Public Library, but that will depend on public health recommendations regarding in-person gatherings.

Birdathon has also been cancelled for 2020. The event is our principal fundraiser, but BBAS will be able to get by financially until 2021. We look forward to your participation next spring.

The spectacle of the fall migration will soon be here. I hope it gives you the same sense of awe and wonder that it gives me. We could all use a little less stress in our lives, and getting outside to pursue our hobby (or in some cases passion) for birdwatching is a welcome relief.

Be well, and good birding to you all.

Yours truly,

Tim Garner
President, BBAS

Birdathon and Cy-Hawk Big Day

The rescheduled Big Bluestem Audubon Society 2020 Birdathon was to have occurred on Sunday, September 6th of Labor Day weekend in conjunction with our CY-HAWK Big Day. However, due to low participation, the Birdathon portion has been cancelled until May of 2021. Birdathon is a big fund raiser for BBAS, so please gear up for May of 2021.

The good news is that we will still be holding the 2020 Cy-Hawk Big Day on the September 6th!!! Cy-Hawk Big Day is our annual competition against our friends and Hawkeye rivals of the Iowa City Bird Club.

The **Birdathon and Cy-Hawk Big Day continued on next page**

Birdathon and Cy-Hawk continued

If you can remember last year's results, ICBC won in an absolute blowout, 125 species to our 102 species! OUCH! That still hurts... ICBC made a very coordinated effort last year, sending teams of birders all around the state. I would like BBAS to do something very similar to that this year. If anyone wants to make a bit of a road trip to somewhere like Shimek SF, Yellow River SF, Hawkeye Wildlife Area, etc, please do! Let me know!

If you are participating in CY-Hawk:

- Send me, Eric Ollie, an email. My email address is uphawkeye@gmail.com. Just let me know who you are, what your team name is, who your teammates are, and where you would be willing to go to (or if you want to stay close to home), to make coordinating BBAS Cy-Hawk game plan easier. If you just have a couple of hours, an hour, even 15 minutes in your back yard, WE WILL GLADLY TAKE IT!!! You DO NOT need to be a BBAS member.
- Plan your game day strategy for September 6th! Decide what time you need to be in what habitat, where the good places to go to are, how to minimize travel time through non-productive habitat, etc. Make a plan for your team to use the day the most efficiently, or just go out and have fun if you prefer.
- GO BIRDING ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH!!! (YEA!!!!)
- Record all of the bird species that your team identifies between 12:00 AM and 11:59 PM within the state of Iowa on 9/6/20. You can bird all alone. Two people do not need to verify identifications.
- Send your team's bird list to me (uphawkeye@gmail.com) as soon as it is possible/convenient. It's not a huge hurry to get it in, but people will be anxious to know who won. If you could put the list in taxonomic order, that would help me out tremendously, but it is not necessary.
- Bask in the birding glory!

So, there you go! Fun stuff! I sincerely hope that you will defeating our Hawkeye ICBC friends. I hope to hear from you!

Cancellations:

All Big Bluestem Audubon Society birding field trips are cancelled until further notice.

The Iowa Ornithologist's Union fall meeting, scheduled for late September, is also cancelled.

We are currently hopeful that we will be able to hold a meeting on Thursday, October 15th, with Marlene Ehresman and Matt Wetrich giving a presentation on the hazards of unattended outdoor cats and the benefits of catios, but we will have to wait to see what the conditions are nearer the time to make that official.

Upland Sandpiper near Snake Creek Marsh, Greene Co.



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Osprey Near Minong, Wisconsin



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Common Loon and Chick Near Minong, WI



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