



## PROGRAMS

### February 20, 2020 | Eric Williamson | Wildlife Photography—Wild Side of Iowa

Eric's presentation looks at the four seasons and which animals we might find. It also talks a little about photography and field equipment. He will also show some behind-the-scenes action on how the photos were taken.

Eric's interest in photography began at age 16 taking photos of Bald Eagles. He had a point-and-shoot camera and loved going on walks photographing the eagles in action. Over time, he expanded photography to other wildlife. Eric learned the need to know wildlife subjects well in order to take photos without stressing out the animals. Several different conservation organizations have used his photos to enhance their objectives. Some of his work has been in publications, including *Iowa Outdoors*, *Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation*, and *Outdoor Photographer* magazine. Seeing wildlife in its natural habitat is a true privilege!

### March 19, 2020 | Marlene Ehresman & Matt Wetrich | Catio and "Cats Indoors" Program

### April 16, 2020 | Dean Roosa | John J. Audubon Elephant Prints

### May 21, 2020 | Mike Cox & Ted Tedesco | Tedesco Environmental Learning Center

Program meetings take place in the Ames Public Library (515 Douglas Ave.). Meetings begin at 6:30 PM; programs begin at 7:00 PM. Directions available at [bigbluestemaudubon.org](http://bigbluestemaudubon.org).

2	Officers and Committees; President's Corner; Membership Form
3	Naturally Speaking; Carmen Jungbluth Recognized
4	Field Trip Reports
5	50 Years Ago in BBAS
6	Ames CBC
7	Boone CBC
8	Dunbar Slough CBC
9	Saylorville CBC
10	New members

The mission of the Big Bluestem Audubon Society is to enjoy the observation and study of birds and natural ecosystems, contribute to their conservation and restoration, engage in educational activities to benefit humanity, and gain a broader understanding and deeper appreciation of the world in which we live.

## FIELD TRIPS

### February 15, 2020 | Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

For the February field trip, we will venture down to Neal Smith NWR. We will bird our way down, bird the refuge, and then, hopefully, at sunset get a look at the Short-eared Owls that are overwintering there. Meet the group at 12:45 PM at the Ames Lowe's (120 Airport Road) to carpool or caravan down. We plan to be on the road at 1:00 PM sharp. We will most likely need to be there until sunset, so we will probably return around 7:00 PM.



Brown Thrasher at Larry Dau's feeders this January 2020. Common in summer, kind of rare in winter  
Photo by Larry Dau

Monthly field trips are free and open to the public. Unless otherwise stated, field trips generally end between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM, depending on interest and success finding birds. Participants will meet at the field trip site unless an alternate meeting place is announced to facilitate carpooling. Field trips almost always involve some hiking away from hardened surfaces and often in less-than-ideal conditions. Come prepared with appropriate dress and footwear. It is highly recommended that all participants have their own binoculars. If you have any questions please contact Eric Ollie at [uphawkeye@gmail.com](mailto:uphawkeye@gmail.com).

### Notice to New Members of Big Bluestem Audubon Society Only:

We are sending you this printed version of our BBAS newsletter for the first two issues after you have joined the National Audubon Society or become a local member. We have now converted to a mostly electronically-delivered newsletter to save costs and be more green. If you want to receive a printed version, please notify me. Otherwise, you will receive the online version. If you supplied your email address upon joining, we will send you a notice and link for the newsletter each time a new version is available.

Thanks,  
Larry Dau  
1644 Maple View Pl.  
Boone, IA 50036  
[lgdau9@gmail.com](mailto:lgdau9@gmail.com)



Support conservation in Iowa.

**BIG BLUESTEM AUDUBON SOCIETY  
OF CENTRAL IOWA**

**OFFICERS**

**President** | Tim Garner  
timgarner@mediacombb.net

**Vice-President** | Doug Harr  
515-275-4818; dnharr@gmail.com

**Secretary** | Bruce Ehresman  
515-296-2995;  
bruce.ehresman@dnr.iowa.gov

**Treasurer** | Heather Sanders  
hsanders0519@aol.com

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Matt Wetrich  
712-210-4614; go\_tweeting@hotmail.com

Eric Ollie  
515-238-3610; uphawkyeye@gmail.com

Marlene Ehresman  
515-233-1379; 515-249-8138 (cell)  
marlene@iowawildlifecenter.org

**SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS**

**Archivist** | Hank Zaletel  
515-382-5427; madowl@midiowa.net

**Bird-A-Thon** | Barb Krumhardt  
barbara.krumhardt@gmail.com

**Conservation** | Bruce Ehresman  
515-296-2995;  
bruce.ehresman@dnr.iowa.gov

**Field Trips** | Eric Ollie  
515-238-3610; uphawkyeye@gmail.com

**Name Badge Coordinators** | Jon and Joyce  
Bahrenfus  
515-275-3263; jbahren@netins.net

**Newsletter Coordinator and Audubon  
Membership** | Larry Dau  
515-230-3492; lgdau9@gmail.com

**Newsletter Editor** | Stefany Hulsebus  
515-720-9322; stefany\_h@yahoo.com

**Refreshment Coordinator** | Hank Zaletel  
515-382-5427; madowl@midiowa.net

**Schools Liaison** | Jerry Keys  
515-232-2516; jkeys@storycounty.com

**Webmaster** | Karl Jungbluth  
weatherbird58@gmail.com

**PRESIDENT'S CORNER WITH TIM GARNER**

Most of us are familiar with the account of Ben Franklin wanting the wild turkey, rather than the bald eagle, as our national symbol. It is a false story according to the Franklin Institute, a museum in Philadelphia, PA dedicated to Ben Franklin (www.fi.edu). Franklin did not have much good to say about the Bald Eagle, writing to his daughter that "the Bald Eagle is a bird of bad moral character... |who| does not get his living honestly... |he| is too lazy to fish for himself." (Source: Franklin institute) And while he thought the turkey "a little vain and silly," it was "a Bird of Courage." But he never actually advocated that Congress adopt the wild turkey as our national bird. (Source: Franklin Institute)

This interesting factoid prompted me to consider the topic of birds as national symbols. The fact that many nations have adopted birds as their national symbol and that some even have them emblazoned on their flags (e.g., Mexico, Guatemala, Uganda, and Papua New Guinea to name a few) speaks to the power that these beautiful creatures have over our imagination, our identity, and our sense of place. We project certain traits of these birds on to our national character, believing that they reflect values that a nation holds dear.

I came across a wonderful book about this topic on a recent visit to the Ames public library. Entitled "National Birds of the World," by Ron Toft, it offers the reader beautiful photos of the national bird, its conservation status according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and notes about the bird's cultural presence in the country of which it is the national symbol. Here are a few highlights:

|Continued on page 4

**Membership Application Form**

New member of the National Audubon Society. You will receive the *Audubon* magazine, the *Big Bluestem Flyer*, membership card. — \$20  
Please make your check payable to **National Audubon Society** and include "Chapter Code H-57" on the check

Subscribe to the *Big Bluestem Flyer* for one year and participate in some Big Bluestem Society Activities — \$10  
Restrictions are that you will not be a National Audubon Society member or have voting privileges, and you cannot be an officer or committee chair.  
Please make your check payable to *Big Bluestem Audubon Society*.

Send your check and this coupon to:  
Big Bluestem Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 543, Ames IA 50010

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Please do not use this form for renewals  
to the National Audubon Society.*

*For Official Use Only*  
C1ZH570Z

## NATURALLY SPEAKING WITH STEVE LEKWA

---

*Originally published in Ames Tribune*

The annual Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count was held on December 14. The day was sunny in the 20s but felt pretty brisk when out in the open and exposed to a steady northwest wind. Most smaller ponds and lakes had frozen over, leaving waterfowl concentrated on the few remaining areas of open water. Songbirds were more dispersed without snow cover, so natural foods were plentiful and easily accessible. Total numbers may have been down a bit, but 75 species were seen—near the average number in recent years. Feeders concentrate birds in a smaller area where they're easier to see and count, but the trend continued for fewer active feeder stations around our area.

A few species appeared in larger numbers in our area some years due to weather conditions and food availability farther north. Last year was an invasion year for little red-breasted nuthatches, and almost anyone feeding sunflower seed or peanuts had at least a pair. Not many came south this year. We found only one at a friend's feeder. Pine siskins and little brown streaked finches were also plentiful last winter. We found only two this year. Purple finches, a more brightly colored northern cousin to our common house finches, are seldom plentiful. A few heavily streaked females may hang out with our house finches some winters, but the raspberry red males often don't show up until late in the winter, if at all. I was lucky to spot a lone male purple finch at a feeder south of Nevada. Eurasian collared doves continue to increase in number. A flock of more than a hundred was seen near Kelly. A Eurasian tree sparrow, an alien import new to our area, made a repeat showing at an Ames feeder. They're very similar to common house sparrows and have been spreading north and west in recent years. Several birds were sighted that aren't usually around this late in the year. They included a brown thrasher, a hermit thrush, and an orange crowned warbler.

Raptors, birds of prey, are more easily seen this time of year. Our resident nesting bald eagles, red tailed hawks, and Cooper's hawks have to share their hunting with a number of other species that spend the winter here, or at least pass through on their southern migration.

| Continued on page 5



Barred Owl near Ledges State Park in Boone County | Photo by Larry Dau



American White Pelicans below Saylorville Dam in Polk County  
Photo by Larry Dau



Male House Finch in rural Boone County  
Photo by Larry Dau

## CARMEN JUNGBLUTH RECOGNIZED FOR VOLUNTEERISM BY LARRY DAU

---

We all know how much time and effort both Carmen and Karl Jungbluth have devoted to our BBAS chapter. Carmen Jungbluth was recognized by Youth Standing Strong (YSS) on Thursday, December 12 for her outstanding volunteerism. She was nominated for this reward to recognize her leadership at Augustana's Clothes Closet. The Clothes Closet provides gently-used clothing at no cost to anyone needing clothing in our community. This service has been a very valuable resource for our community. The annual event was held at the Gateway Conference Center in Ames.

Congratulations Carmen!

## PHOTOS AND CONTENT FOR NEWSLETTER BY LARRY DAU

---

Please send any photos you have of events, birds, wildlife, habitat or BBAS members in the field that you would like to see in the newsletter. We are also looking for short content items and announcements to include. Stefany Hulsebus edits all content and creates the layout of the BBAS Newsletter. We appreciate her expertise and help.

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2 PRESIDENT’S CORNER WITH TIM GARNER**

Israel has been one of the most recent nations to adopt a national bird, doing so in 2008. After a public vote, the Eurasian Hoopoe was given the honors. Because this bird is not considered kosher (according to a passage from Leviticus), it may not be eaten by Jews, who observe their faith’s dietary laws. “Ethiopian Jews called the hoopoe the Moses bird, believing that one day it would convey them to the holy city of Jerusalem.” (Toft, p. 100)

The common bulbul, or pepper bird, of Liberia has a loud song that can awaken anyone from a night’s slumber. Toft writes that “according to legend, at dawn the pepper bird perches on Old Father Night’s shoulder and urges him to return African children who have been lost in his safe and dreamy embrace to Father Day.” (Toft, p. 107)

And while the United Kingdom has never officially adopted a national bird, the European robin has become that nation’s “unofficial avian emblem” after a national survey in the early 1960s in the *Times* newspaper. (Toft, p. 184). The bird has factored heavily in the folklore of Great Britain, associated with charity and piety during Shakespeare’s time, and it is the mascot for 5 English football (soccer) clubs. (Toft, p. 186-187).

All these stories remind us of something that we already knew—that birds have long held a special place in people’s hearts, their religion, and their culture. Where would we be without them?

**FIELD TRIP REPORTS ERIC OLLIE**

**November 23, 2019 | Saylorville Reservoir Area**

Birders: 5, Species: 27

Canada Goose, Mallard, Ruddy Duck, Ring-billed Gull, Common Loon, American White Pelican, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Northern Shrike, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, American Goldfinch, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Northern Cardinal

Buying from the businesses listed on this page not only benefits the birds but also helps our local economy and provides funding for BBAS. Donations fund various habitat restoration and educational projects. Present the coupons at the time of your purchase and a donation will be given to BBAS.

**Donate \$5 of your next purchase\* of \$25 or more at WBU to BBAS**



**Big Bluestem Audubon Society**



\*Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. One coupon per purchase. May not be combined with any other offer. Valid only at Wild Birds Unlimited of Ames.

**Valid through June 30, 2020**

213 Duff Ave. Ames, IA 50010 (515) 956-3145  
Monday-Friday 9:30-5:30 Saturday 9-5 Sunday 12-4  
www.ames.wbu.com

**BIRDSEED • FEEDERS • BIRDBATHS • OPTICS • NATURE GIFTS**

**Brekke’s Town & Country Store, Inc.**

1 1/2 miles east of I-35 on new U.S. 30 and 1/4 mile north

Hours: 8-6 M-F, 8-4 Sat. (515) 232-7906

<u>Purchase</u>	<u>Donation</u>
Up to \$15	\$1.50
\$15 and over	\$3.00
\$35 and over	\$5.00
Over \$70	\$7.50

Brekke’s offers Big Bluestem Audubon Society a donation when bird seed or other bird products are purchased.

Present this coupon with your purchase and a donation will be given to BBAS.

**Offer good until June 30, 2020**

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3 NATURALLY SPEAKING WITH STEVE LEKWA

---

A small pinewoods falcon called a Merlin was spotted here in Nevada at almost the same spot where one was seen last year. It could even have been the same bird returning to a favorite wintering area. Northern harriers used to nest in Central Iowa when there was more grassland but are now seen only during migration. One was seen in our Nevada count area and may hang around as long as lack of snow allows easy hunting. Crows tipped off a counter near Ames to the presence of a red shouldered hawk, an eastern woodland resident that is seldom seen in our area. American kestrels nest in boxes or hollow trees in our area each summer. These small, colorful falcons sometimes stay for the winter, but winter birds could also be kestrels that have migrated here from farther north.

It wasn't that long ago that seeing Canada geese was a special treat as they passed through during their migrations. We're now used to seeing thousands of them wintering on our larger bodies of water where their sheer numbers prevent some areas from freezing in all but the very coldest weather. They were joined by a flock of 76 wintering trumpeter swans on Ada Hayden Lake on the north side of Ames. A short walk from the small parking lot at the lake's southeast corner allowed viewing these impressive birds. It's even better if you can catch them returning to the lake from a feeding flight when they're pretty talkative. The sound is unforgettable, leaving no doubt how they earned their name. Careful glassing with binoculars or a spotting scope may reveal a variety of ducks swimming among the geese. Mallards will be the most common, but divers like red heads and scaup were seen along with common mergansers.

The Audubon Christmas Count has been going on for many years. The species and numbers of birds seen in any given year are interesting but may not be scientifically significant. Comparing the annual data over longer periods of time, however, allows scientists to document population trends all across North America.



Bald Eagle near Iowa Arboretum in Boone County | Photo by Larry Dau

## 50 YEARS AGO IN BBAS BY HANK ZALETEL

---

The first Ames Audubon Newsletter was published in June 1968. In the January 1970 issue, it was announced that Audubon would hold a public forum in Kildee Hall on the 16th to discuss dove hunting in Iowa. Five panelists gave a variety of views on the topic; 125 people attended. The Christmas Bird Count was held on December 22 with 7 participants; 30 species were reported notably with 7 Red-Headed Woodpeckers and 11 Tufted Titmouse. Lloyd Kurtz, a former Ames city park board member, was named Audubon Conservationist of the year. A winter workshop entitled, "Winter Tree and Shrub Identification" by Lois Tiffany was held on the 18th in Bessey Hall.

February's program was held on Wednesday, February 12 at the Ames Public Library featuring Dr. C. Philip Cox, who spoke on the "English Rural Scene." An outing was planned for the 16th at Brookside Park featuring a wiener roast, tree identification, and bird observation. The National Audubon film "The Vanishing Sea" narrated by Robert W. Dawson was shown at Kildee Hall on the 20th; adults paid \$1.25, students \$0.75.

Jim Rod and John Faaborg presented "Birding Techniques and Field Identification" for the Ames, Story County areas for the March 13 program at the Ames Public Library. Dr. John Baker presented "Penguins of Antarctica" on the 24th at the EE Auditorium at ISU. A field trip was planned for the 22nd to the site of the proposed Ames Reservoir. A special business meeting was to be held on the 30th at the Ames Public Library to discuss: 1) the selection of the Ames Audubon 1970 "Conservationist of the Year" in the Ames, Story County areas, 2) the plans for a meeting at the Holiday Inn on April 4 for the forming of an Iowa Audubon Council, and 3) the two Audubon films programs held to date and the proposed April film.

## AMES CBC BY SHANE PATTERSON

The weather remained surprisingly uneventful for December in Iowa; our dedicated Ames CBC crews compiled a species list (76) that looked quite similar to other record-setting counts of recent years: 76 in 2015, 78 in 2016, 79 in 2017, and 72 in 2018. Part of this trend can be attributed to the presence of deep-water bodies at Hallett's Quarry (southeast Ames) and Ada Hayden Heritage Park (AHHP). Without these locations, it is highly unlikely we would have found such a wide range of lingering waterfowl, including Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Gadwall, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Piedbilled Grebe, and American Coot, along with the usual wintering ducks and geese. These assemblages were highlighted by a gathering of over 100 Trumpeter Swans, who provided us a memorable spectacle. For several weeks at AHHP, wildlife enthusiasts took daily delight in watching these majestic swans arrive from the west and vociferously descend to roost on the ice and open water that persisted into January. Terrestrial discoveries ranged from charismatic hunters like Northern Shrike and Long-eared Owl to a very long list of granivores and insectivores skulking in the woodlands, fields, roadsides, and backyards. Among these were a Savannah Sparrow on count day and an Orange-crowned Warbler visiting a feeder during count week. Both were new additions to our all-time CBC list.

To cap off the day, we recharged with an excellent potluck dinner hosted by Gina McAndrews and coordinated by Marlene Ehresman. The anticipation of a hearty meal always puts an extra spring in our step as we complete our Christmas Bird Count journey. Thanks again to everyone, and I'll see you all in 2020!

Greater White-fronted Goose	6	Rock Pigeon	244	American Robin	18
Snow Goose	1	Eurasian Collared-Dove	122	Brown Thrasher	1
Cackling Goose	148	Mourning Dove	45	European Starling	1351
Canada Goose	9345	Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Cedar Waxwing	194
Trumpeter Swan	106	Great Horned Owl	8	Lapland Longspur	58
Tundra Swan	cw	Barred Owl	12	Orange-crowned Warbler	cw
Gadwall	1	Long-eared Owl	1	American Tree Sparrow	167
American Black Duck	cw	Belted Kingfisher	3	Fox Sparrow	1
Mallard	491	Red-bellied Woodpecker	185	Song Sparrow	27
Green-winged Teal	cw	Downy Woodpecker	181	Swamp Sparrow	1
Redhead	1	Hairy Woodpecker	54	White-throated Sparrow	26
Ring-necked Duck	2	Northern Flicker	12	Savannah Sparrow	1
Lesser Scaup	2	American Kestrel	10	Harris's Sparrow	4
Common Goldeneye	18	Merlin	2	Dark-eyed Junco	639
Common Merganser	4	Northern Shrike	3	Northern Cardinal	324
Ruddy Duck	2	Blue Jay	161	Red-winged Blackbird	5
Gray Partridge	4	American Crow	7100	Rusty Blackbird	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	56	Horned Lark	54	Brown-headed Cowbird	78
Wild Turkey	7	Black-capped Chickadee	274	Purple Finch	7
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Tufted Titmouse	2	House Finch	245
Bald Eagle	32	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	Pine Siskin	46
Northern Harrier	5	White-breasted Nuthatch	182	American Goldfinch	94
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Brown Creeper	22	House Sparrow	883
Cooper's Hawk	9	Carolina Wren	1	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Winter Wren	2		
Red-tailed Hawk	59	Golden-crowned Kinglet	2	<b>76 species identified</b>	
Rough-legged Hawk	2	Eastern Bluebird	14	<b>(4 additional during count week)</b>	
American Coot	1	Hermit Thrush	2	<b>23,179 total individual birds</b>	

## BOONE CBC BY ALEX KRETZINGER

Despite the fog and rain this year, 24 volunteers walked and drove around Boone County to make the most of the Christmas Bird count. The weather on December 28, the day of the count, hovered around 42 degrees at the warmest point. The warm weather, mixed with intermittent showers, created increasingly foggy conditions. Though visibility was poor, the volunteer birders did great work covering Boone County. As a whole, the count registered 56 species, down from 60 in 2018. This drop is likely due to weather conditions and the temperate winter. There were several highlights from across the county. Near the Iowa Arboretum on the Des Moines River a team got a great look at 3 Short-Eared Owls! Near Ogden a team added a Eurasian Tree Sparrow (with photographic proof), which was unexpected, though not unwelcome. A couple notable trends in this year's count were the increase in Belted Kingfishers, likely due to warm weather keeping the river open, and a drop in Dark Eyed Juncos from the record high of 1,247 in 2018. Despite the difficult conditions and a slight decrease in the number of participating birders, we managed to get close to past count's species total and finished with just under 4,000 total birds counted.

Canada Goose	196	Black-capped Chickadee	190	<b># of birds</b>	<b>3903</b>
Tundra Swan	2	Tufted Titmouse	33	<b># of species (count day)</b>	<b>56</b>
Trumpeter Swan	4	Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	<b># of species (count week)</b>	<b>56</b>
Mallard	43	White-breasted Nuthatch	109		
Ring-necked Pheasant	19	Brown Creeper	8		
Wild Turkey	40	Carolina Wren	2		
Bald Eagle	8	Golden-crowned Kinglet	2		
Bald Eagle Imm.	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Eastern Bluebird	9		
Cooper's Hawk	2	American Robin	7		
Red-tailed Hawk	21	European Starling	517		
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Cedar Waxwing	64		
American Kestrel	3	Yellow-rumped Warbler	26		
Hawk species	1	Eastern Towhee	1		
Rock Pigeon	247	American Tree Sparrow	162		
Eurasian Collared-Dove	33	Song Sparrow	59		
Mourning Dove	2	Swamp Sparrow	13		
Eastern Screech-Owl	8	White-throated Sparrow	18		
Great Horned Owl	11	White-crowned Sparrow	2		
Barred Owl	6	Dark-eyed Junco	512		
Short-eared Owl	3	Oregon Junco	3		
Belted Kingfisher	6	Northern Cardinal	105		
Red-headed Woodpecker	27	Red-winged Blackbird	64		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	89	Purple Finch	4		
Downy Woodpecker	105	House Finch	36		
Hairy Woodpecker	41	Pine Siskin	1		
Northern Flicker	13	American Goldfinch	108		
Pileated Woodpecker	4	House Sparrow	565		
Blue Jay	224	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	1		
American Crow	95				
Horned Lark	19				

## DUNBAR SLOUGH CBC BY ERIC OLLIE

---

The inaugural Dunbar Slough Christmas Bird Count was held on Wednesday, January 1, 2020. Seven birders participated on a very beautiful, sunny, low-to-mid forties day. All involved had a wonderful time. Highlights include: 12 Trumpeter Swans; 2 Wild Turkeys, roosting in a tree at sunrise; 358 Eurasian Collared-Doves, all found within the limits of Scranton, IA; Northern Harrier; 18 Bald Eagles; Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk; Great Horned Owl, nesting pair; Barred Owl; Long-eared Owl, heard in the dark while owl-ing; 6 woodpecker species, including 5+ Red-headed and Pileated Woodpecker; Merlin, returning to the Jefferson Cemetery to roost at sunset; PRAIRIE FALCON, on the county line road at Dunbar Slough; Eastern Bluebirds; Hermit Thrush; 150 Cedar Waxwings; Harris's Sparrow; 3 Swamp Sparrows; Western Meadowlark; 250 Red-winged Blackbird, flock at Dunbar Slough;

Our biggest misses were: Mallard - only 2 species of waterfowl found (CANG, TRUS); Rough-legged Hawk - usually a given most winters; Eastern Screech-Owl - we've had them in the past and were expected; Short-eared Owl, As reliable as SEOW can be, they have been sighted in recent years; Northern Shrike, I saw 2 shrikes at Dunbar earlier, and one was seen count week; Lapland Longspur, not a huge surprise with the lack of snow cover; No cowbirds, grackles, or other blackbirds

Canada Goose	56	Dark-eyed Junco	145
Trumpeter Swan	12	Harris's Sparrow	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	10	White-throated Sparrow	4
Wild Turkey	2	Song Sparrow	10
Rock Pigeon	5	Swamp Sparrow	3
Eurasian Collared-Dove	364	Western Meadowlark	1
Mourning Dove	5	Red-winged Blackbird	140
Northern Harrier	3	Northern Cardinal	17
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1		
Cooper's Hawk	1		
Bald Eagle	18		
Red-tailed Hawk	15 (1 Harlan's)	<b># of birders</b>	<b>7</b>
Great Horned Owl	2	<b># of species</b>	<b>47</b>
Barred Owl	1	<b># of birds</b>	<b>2,761</b>
Long-eared Owl	1		
Red-headed Woodpecker	5		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	15		
Downy Woodpecker	11		
Hairy Woodpecker	8		
Pileated Woodpecker	1		
Northern Flicker	2		
American Kestrel	5		
Merlin	1		
Prairie Falcon	1		
Blue Jay	51		
American Crow	180		
Black-capped Chickadee	28		
Horned Lark	124		
White-breasted Nuthatch	15		
Brown Creeper	5		
European Starling	644		
Eastern Bluebird	4		
Hermit Thrush	1		
American Robin	6		
Cedar Waxwing	242		
House Sparrow	271		
House Finch	23		
American Goldfinch	25		
American Tree Sparrow	276		

## SAYLORVILLE CBC BY STEVE DINSMORE

Cackling Goose	73	Great Horned Owl	17	Fox Sparrow	1
Canada Goose	5285	Barred Owl	15	Song Sparrow	72
Trumpeter Swan	209	Long-eared Owl	12	Swamp Sparrow	29
Gadwall	2	Short-eared Owl	3	White-throated Sparrow	55
American Black Duck	3	Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Harris' Sparrow	1
Mallard	1200	Belted Kingfisher	2	White-crowned Sparrow	1
Northern Pintail	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	5	Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco	1197
Ring-necked Duck	3	Red-bellied Woodpecker	130	Red-winged Blackbird	217
Lesser Scaup	8	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Brown-headed Cowbird	20
White-winged Scoter	1	Downy Woodpecker	131	Rusty Blackbird	30
Long-tailed Duck	1	Hairy Woodpecker	30	Common Grackle	16
Bufflehead	1	Northern Flicker	61	Yellow-rumped Warbler	7
Common Goldeneye	304	Pileated Woodpecker	3	Northern Cardinal	312
Common Merganser	4751	American Kestrel	10		
Red-breasted Merganser	1	Merlin	1	<b>Species</b>	<b>86</b>
Ruddy Duck	18	Northern Shrike	5	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>18674</b>
Ring-necked Pheasant	13	Blue Jay	327	<b>Observers</b>	<b>22</b>
Wild Turkey	13	American Crow	147	<b>Owling hours</b>	<b>7</b>
Rock Pigeon	415	Horned Lark	12	<b>Owling miles</b>	<b>55</b>
Eurasian Collared-Dove	181	Black-capped Chickadee	182	<b>Foot hours</b>	<b>33</b>
Mourning Dove	33	Tufted Titmouse	5	<b>Foot miles</b>	<b>30</b>
American Coot	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	5	<b>Car hours</b>	<b>40</b>
Sandhill Crane	3	White-breasted Nuthatch	118	<b>Car miles</b>	<b>547</b>
Ring-billed Gull	7	Brown Creeper	15		
Herring Gull	38	Carolina Wren	1		
Iceland Gull	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet	6		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	Eastern Bluebird	60		
American White Pelican	2	Hermit Thrush	2		
Northern Harrier	3	American Robin	46		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	European Starling	490		
Cooper's Hawk	7	Cedar Waxwing	390		
Accipiter sp.	1	House Sparrow	498		
Bald Eagle: Adult	83	House Finch	50		
Bald Eagle: Immature	61	Purple Finch	4		
Bald Eagle: Unknown	11	Pine Siskin	2		
Red-tailed Hawk	80	American Goldfinch	161		
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Lapland Longspur	130		
Eastern Screech-Owl	10	American Tree Sparrow	810		

# NEW MEMBERS OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

**Ames**

Kristina August, Wade Dismukes, Kathy Ferris, Craig Fulton, Jay Hinkhouse, L. Odonell, Chris Perrin, Barbara Peterson, Joshua Rosenbloom, Teresa Rosenburg, Wallace Sanders, Ruth Thompson, Kelly Tobin, Jo Dee Townsend, Maureen Wilt

**Lovilla**

Logan Hatfield

**Jewell**

Janeen Smith

**Slater**

Wayne Cline

**Story City**

Sara Anderson, Terry Britton

**Grand Junction**

Debbie Shaw

**Ogden**

Janice Caputo

**State Center**

L. Carlson

**Webster City**

Lynne Flagg, Norma Jaacks



Eastern Screech Owl living in a Wood Duck house in Larry Dau's front yard  
Photo by Larry Dau

**NEWSLETTER** Volume 55 | Number 3 | January/February/March 2020

<http://bigbluestemaudubon.org/>



If you have an "X" after  
 your name on your mail-  
 ing label,  
 this will be your last  
 issue of the Flyer unless  
 you renew.

*We welcome new members!*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Big Bluestem Flyer**  
 Tim Garner, President  
 Big Bluestem Audubon Society  
 PO Box 543  
 Ames, IA 50010-0543