

AUDUBON SOCIETY -  
MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS CHAPTER

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We're on the WEB!!  
www.spearheadMHAS.org

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Our mission is to foster personal connections  
to and stewardship of our natural world.

## Upcoming Events

**Nov 15<sup>th</sup>** *Birds at Risk of Extinction*  
2 - 3pm Headwaters Science Center  
(see details page 1)

**Dec 29<sup>th</sup>** *Snow Sparkles*  
12 - 5pm Neilson Spearhead Center

Join Naturalist **Dan Bera** at Neilson Spearhead Center for a very special post-Christmas treat on **Monday December 29** from Noon to 5:00 pm. Enjoy a toasty bonfire, hot chocolate, and snowflakes, snowsnakes, animal tracks...and a walk on the frozen lake. Second grade and older are welcome! Dress warmly; bring an extra pair of snowpants and mittens, gorp ingredients and leftover Christmas cookies to share. **Limited to 15 participants!**

Rate: \$10 per person  
Special rate: \$15 for two friends / siblings.

Register by December 26 by calling George-Ann  
at 218-586-3414.

## MHAS Annual Meeting a Hit!

On a perfect summer evening, the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society held its annual meeting on the shores of Spearhead Lake. Social hour, brats and sweet corn, followed by a tour through prehistory delivered by archaeologist **Andrea LeVasseur**. Thank you to the meeting committee and everyone who contributed food, chef skills, set up and clean up. Congratulations to the 2014 officers! Special thanks to Lee Patten –our master griller.

See photos on The Neilson Spearhead Center Facebook page.

*Our apologies ...on the late printing of our summer newsletter and to anyone who missed the meeting due to the late notice. We have spoken to our printer and it shouldn't happen again. If you'd like to ensure you receive timely updates, please sign-up for our email list found on our website under 'Events'. Or you can 'Like' the Neilson Spearhead Center on Facebook.*

⌘ MHAS Board of Directors



Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society

# The Source

Volume 38, Issue 4

October, 2014

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### WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

**Dina Janke** (*Board member at large*) is a graduate student in Biology at BSU. She has a wealth of knowledge from outside of the biology field (human resources and business management). She recently attended the Audubon Climate Initiative in Minneapolis and is anxious to start spreading the word on climate change.

**Cassie Novak** (*Board member at large*) is a MN Master Naturalist and volunteered on short notice to help in the Young Naturalist Program this summer. She lives in Akeley and represents the southern-most portion of our chapter area!

**Becky Peak** (*Volunteer*) is new to the Bemidji area...fresh from Texas where she worked with Golden-Cheeked Warblers at Ft. Hood. She's also a new employee of the MN DNR in the shallow lakes program on waterfowl research.

## Half of North America's Birds at Risk from Global Warming by Dina Janke

As you may have already heard, on September 9<sup>th</sup>, the National Audubon Society released new science regarding global warming and how it threatens North America's birds.

Here in Minnesota, some of the birds threatened by global warming include the Common Loon, the Bohemian Waxwing, the Ruffed Grouse, the Nashville Warbler, and the American Eagle. And there are many more.

Of 588 bird species examined in the study, 314 are at risk. Of those, 126 species are at risk of severe declines by 2050; another 188 species face the same fate by 2080. Numerous extinctions are possible if global warming is allowed to erase the havens birds occupy today.

Forty years of historical North American climate data was analyzed along with millions of historical bird records from

the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. This new study offers an invaluable new way for Audubon to address global warming by bringing the issue into backyards and neighborhoods across America. It reveals areas that are likely to remain stable for birds even as climate changes, enabling Audubon to identify 'stronghold' areas that birds will need to survive in the future.

Solutions will include personal choices to conserve energy and create backyard bird habitat, local action to create community climate actions plans, state-based work to increase rooftop solar and energy efficiency, and our work in Important Bird Areas and other efforts to protect and expand bird habitats. How will you be part of the solution? For more information, visit: <http://Audubon.org/Climate>

**The Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society has formed a small working committee on climate change. We plan to host fun events for all ages, incorporating birds and climate change. If you'd like to get involved contact Dina Janke at: [Dina.Janke@live.bemidjistate.edu](mailto:Dina.Janke@live.bemidjistate.edu)**

## Audubon MN to visit Headwaters Science Center!

**Saturday Science • November 15<sup>th</sup> • 2 – 3pm**  
***Birds at Risk of Extinction***

Join **Audubon MN Executive Director, Matthew Anderson** for Saturday Science from 2 to 3pm at the Headwaters Science Center (HSC). Mr. Anderson will present the Audubon Birds and Climate Change report and discuss the future of birds in North America and Minnesota, including the loon, American white pelican and sharp-tailed grouse. Saturday Science is FREE for members or FREE with paid admission to the exhibit floor. See you there!

Contact: Susan Joy (218) 444-4472 or [director@hscbemidji.org](mailto:director@hscbemidji.org)



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**The trickster Ground Spider... by Erin Maxson**

This ant-mimicking ground spider (*Micaria* sp.) is a common sight on the forest trails and main road of the Neilson Spearhead Center. From a distance, this fast-moving, black and red spider looks just like a thatch ant. Thatch ants are notorious for swarming, biting, and spraying acrid chemicals on anyone near their nest. Few predators will go after such noxious prey, so looking just like an ant increases the spider's odds of survival. Imitating an unpalatable model to avoid predation is a form of defensive mimicry.

**Species Spotlight**

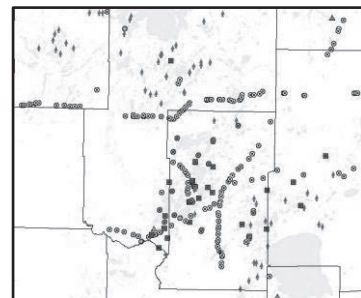
Known for impressive dives in lakes and rivers, **ospreys**, also known as 'fish hawks', eat a diet almost entirely of fish. Historically, ospreys nested in tree tops or on dead trees within a few miles of water. Today, a significant percentage of ospreys also nest on power poles, communication towers, or other man-made structures. If thinking like an osprey, in many ways these structures are better for nesting, because they are: less likely to blow down, readily available, have less risk of predation by raccoons and other predators, often taller than surrounding trees for good visibility, and provide nesting habitat where natural structures are unavailable. Nesting on man-made structures also has down sides: nests may cause interruptions in electric or communication service and these structures may pose shock hazards or other dangers to birds.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources issues permits to power and communication companies to remove nests outside of the nesting season (from October until April) to prevent interruptions in service and to allow for regular maintenance. Emergency maintenance is allowed during the nesting season after receiving a permit from the DNR. The DNR does not require platforms for those nests that are removed at this time, but we encourage companies to offer alternatives when nests are removed both to provide a location for displaced birds and to reduce the need for repeated maintenance at a site. Many companies in this state provide platforms when nests are removed.

Ospreys are a conservation success story. From huge declines in the 1950's and 1960's, to the 1972 ban on the pesticide DDT that was causing egg shell thinning and nest failures, to today, where in Minnesota and much of the U.S. ospreys are doing pretty well.

**Some neat facts about osprey:**

- They have a reversible outer toe for grasping fish.
- Osprey carry fish head first for aerodynamics.
- They can be found on all continents except Antarctica.



All points are nest locations on this map of central Minnesota. Note the linear features; those are nests on powerlines.

**Christine Herwig**, Regional Nongame Specialist  
Bemidji – 218-308-2641  
[Christine.herwig@state.mn.us](mailto:Christine.herwig@state.mn.us)



Photo credit: WI DNR



**Ospreys can nest a bit easier in future!**

Permits to remove a nest following last nesting season were given to Great River Energy for the highly visible nesting Ospreys along Hwy 34 near Park Rapids. When the pair rebuilt and nested again in a trouble-some location, some concerned Park Rapids citizens contacted us to prevent the nest from being removed again.

MHAS sent a letter urging Great River to consider the benefits of nesting platforms. In response, they pledged to erect a platform for Hwy 34 pair AND with the MN DNR to annually review nests - erecting platforms at mutually-agreed locations.

Thank you **Great River Energy** for your commitment to conservation.

Keep an eye out for nesting platforms in your area!

**No Support for Bird-safe Glass for Vikings Stadium from Star Tribune!**

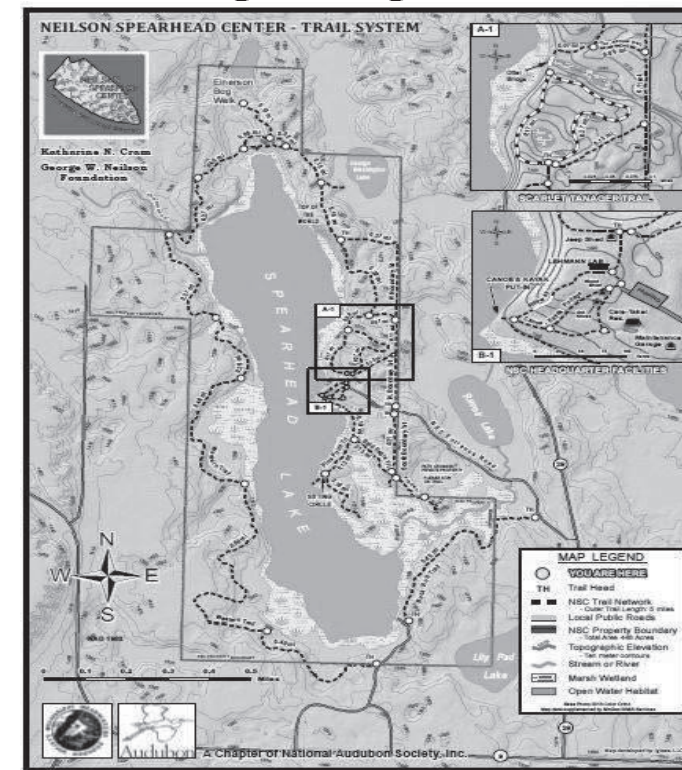
MHAS has been actively pushing for a bird-friendly Stadium. We've written letters to Rep. John Persell, the Bemidji Pioneer, and called the Governor's Office to encourage birds-safe-glass for the Vikings Stadium. Yet on October 18, 2014 the *Star Tribune* published an editorial 'Keep bird deaths in perspective', down-playing the potential impacts of the stadium to birds. The article drew heavy criticism from readers posting online. Join MHAS, MN Audubon and National Audubon as they continue to work toward an acceptable solution. Get involved with the Call to Action outlined on MN Audubon website: <http://mn.audubon.org/change-glass-save-birds>

**MHAS Moonlight Paddle**

Members of the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society, along with their families, spent a Saturday evening in September on a moonlight paddle on beautiful Spearhead Lake. The weather was perfect as they set off from the landing, immediately spotting a majestic bald eagle resting in a dead pine. After the paddle they enjoyed s'mores, hot apple cider, and good conversation at the Neilson Spearhead Center. More of these kinds of events will be held in the future, so if you'd like to attend, please visit the MHAS website at [www.spearheadmhas.org](http://www.spearheadmhas.org).



**New Map for Spearhead!**



Checkout our new trail map, courtesy of **Brick Fevold at Igises, LLC!** Find the full resolution map on our website or on our kiosks located throughout our trail system.

**MHAS Board Members**

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**Brick Fevold**  
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**Dina Janke**

**Cassie Novak**

**NSC Caretakers: Lee & Julie Patten**  
NSC phone: 218-444-8672

**Naturalist: Dan Bera**