Wachiska Audubon Society’s vision: To share the experience and love of nature—that life may flourish in all its natural diversity.

The Babbling Brook

Our 40th Year of Protecting Nature 1973 - 2013

October 2013

General Meeting—Thursday, October 10, 7:00 p.m., Dick Administration Building, Union College, Lincoln

North American Cranes

with Dr. Paul Johnsgard

by Arlys Reitan

After a completely successful anniversary celebration last month, I thought to myself “What can compare to that event to continue our year-long commemoration?” One speaker always stands out—Paul Johnsgard. Dr. Johnsgard’s programs continue to be among chapter members’ favorites.

So join us this month when Dr. Johnsgard will share with us his vast knowledge on the topic of “North American Cranes.” He will review the biology and populations of the North American cranes (sandhill and whooping) with special attention to the mid-continental flock of sandhills and the Wood Buffalo-Aransas flock of whoopers.

Dr. Johnsgard, Foundation Professor Emeritus of biology at the University of Nebraska, is a world-renowned ornithologist and leader in conservation. The author of over 50 books on ornithology and the natural sciences, he is also a gifted artist and photographer. For decades he has allowed numerous conservation groups free use of his photographs and drawings, allowing them to make the most of limited budgets. A few years ago Johnsgard was awarded the Charles H. Callison Award by the National Audubon Society. The award honors not only Paul’s body of scientific and artistic achievement, but his generosity and commitment to conservation. His nomination was led by Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center with the support of Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, and the local Audubon chapters in Kearney, Lincoln, Omaha, and Scottsbluff.

The Charles H. Callison Award is named after a former executive vice president at Audubon. The award was established in 1994 by the National Audubon Society to give special recognition to an individual or group in recognition of creativity, cooperation, persuasion, patience, and perseverance in promoting the Audubon mission at the local, state, or federal level. Few people in Nebraska could better represent these ideals than Dr. Paul Johnsgard.

Dr. Johnsgard has promised to bring samples of the past three or four books he has written, but there will be no books for sale at this presentation.

Join Wachiska on Thursday, October 10, at 7:00 p.m. for this free public presentation in the Dick Administration auditorium on Union College campus, 3800 South 48th Street, in Lincoln. From 48th and Calvert streets, go one block south to the north end of campus. Due to construction on that end of campus, parking can be found along 48th Street, near the church on Prescott Avenue, or at the campus gym. Look for Audubon signs on the doors of the Dick Building. An on-site ramp and elevator are available. Refreshments will be served following the presentation.

Calendar

October

1  Board Meeting, Wachiska office, 7:00 p.m.
4  Birdseed Sale Distribution, Midwest Roofing, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
6  Birdseed Sale Distribution, Midwest Roofing, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
10 General Meeting, “North American Cranes,” by Dr. Paul Johnsgard, Union College’s Dick Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.
13 Field trip to Morton Arboretum in Nebraska City, 12:30 p.m. (page 2)
15 Newsletter deadline, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.
17 Legislation Committee, DaVinci’s, 11th & G, 6:00 p.m.
21 Conservation Committee, Wachiska office, 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: NO Population/Environment Committee meeting this month

NO Education Committee meeting this month

Wachiska Audubon Office: 402-486-4846  Email: office@wachiskaaudubon.org
Field Trip
by John Carlini, Field Trip Chair

Grand Old Trees
of Arbor Lodge Arboretum

On the first celebration of Arbor Day in 1885, founder J. Sterling Morton said, "Comprehending thus the dependence of animal life upon contemporaneous plant life, it must be conceded that we ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted and consumed." Morton's vision still endures today in the magnificent trees planted on his Nebraska City property. October is an ideal time to walk the grounds of Arbor Lodge Arboretum and see an unusual collection of trees in beautiful fall foliage. Our walk will take us past a number of state champion trees, some trees with historical links, and the oldest trees in the park.

We'll meet **Sunday, October 13**, at 12:30 p.m. in the Wachiska office parking lot in Lincoln, 4547 Calvert Street. Participants can either carpool or caravan for the 50-mile drive. To join the group at Nebraska City, meet outside the Morton mansion around 1:30 p.m. A water bottle is recommended. Before heading back, we'll stop by Arbor Farm to purchase treats from the apple orchard. There is no fee and the public is welcome. If you have questions call John at 402-475-7275.

New Members
by Joyce Vannier, Membership Chair

Due to space limitations the last couple of months, we haven’t reported new members. Below are the names of folks who have joined since July. If you recognize a name, give them a call or shoot them an email to welcome them.

**Joining through National Audubon:**

Ingrid Anderson
Pam Baker
Nancy Barrett
Larry Busch
Jennifer Conway
Tom Davies
Jan DeVriendt
Sara Dietzman
Tom Duey
Teresa Durrant
Bernice Eriksen
Edward Fisher
Shirley Flynn
Amy Garwood
Anne Garwood
Susan Garwood
Sondra Germer
Renee Hartman
Marcella Hedges
Tari Hendrickson

Mr. & Mrs. Don Hinds
Mildred Hladky
Barbara Howe
Donna Keil
Mary Kenna
Arnold Kreifels
Keli Martin
N. G. Mason
Mr. & Mrs. Michael McNeil
Joyce Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Moulton
Erica Peterson
Brenda Rayburn
Jan Rogers
Claudette Smith
Sherry Talbitzer
Henry Trauernicht
Norma Veskerna
Glady's Wiedebein
Robert Zentner

The following week Dieken Prairie hosted 42 fourth graders from Syracuse Elementary. Shown above are students participating in a butterfly exercise.

**New Members**
(continued)

New Friends of Wachiska joining at the local level:

Geraldine Meyer
John & Karen Radway

Transferring into Wachiska from another chapter:

Maggi Sliwinski
Julie Thomas
2013 Earthkeeper Award
Presented at the 40th Anniversary Celebration September 8

In 1985, Wachiska Audubon realized a need to recognize individuals and organizations exhibiting “tireless efforts toward a significant environmental issue over an extended period of time.” The recipient of this year’s Earthkeeper Award has attained tremendous accomplishments to qualify to the fullest extent of this requirement.

Joel Sartore is a native Nebraskan who has an enviable job. For almost a quarter century he has been sent to every continent as a photographer for the world-renowned magazine, National Geographic, covering assignments in remote parts of the world that most of us will never witness—places like the Amazon rain forest, the Atacama Desert, Madidi in Bolivia, the aftermath of a deadly hurricane, the jungles of Bioko Island off the coast of West Africa, and many other remote or exotic places. He has worked on the global amphibian decline, the turtle and tortoise crisis, and American endangered species. While we were discussing this presentation, Joel was emailing from Australia. Besides National Geographic, Joel’s assignments have included Time, Life, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated, and Audubon magazines among others. In addition, he has contributed to many book projects. He has won awards and honors for many of his photographs.

Joel is passionate about his work and the current state of the planet when it comes to degradation and the human ruination of nature. There are Sartore stories about animal migrations across North America and experiences all over the world. The news is not all bad, but with human populations surpassing seven billion, there’s no time to lose. In his words, “It is folly to think we can destroy one species and ecosystem after another and not affect humanity. When we save species, we’re actually saving ourselves.”

Loyal Wachiskans have heard Sartore’s presentations and experienced the vivid photos he has shared in his talks to our chapter over the years. Since he last spoke to our group, he has become a fellow of the National Geographic Society for his work on The Photo Ark which now has nearly 3,000 species. The goal is to get every captive species on Earth. Joel laments, “I’ll never get there, but I will get a good cross section of what life on Earth was like at this time, before we squandered everything.”

For faithful National Geographic readers, (and there are many in this group), Joel has had several stories in the publication since his last program: “Koala Rescue” in May 2012, “Gorongosha National Park,” written by Dr. E. O. Wilson, in June of this year, and coming up in next month’s issue will be “Building the Ark, the Story of Zoos.”

With the examples above and for many other reasons, it is an honor to recognize Joel Sartore as Wachiska’s 2013 Earthkeeper. Thank you and congratulations, Joel!

President’s Award to Sue Guild
Surprise announcement at September 8 dinner

Wachiska Audubon’s President’s Award is the only recognition given where we attempt to keep the recipient’s identity a secret until it is announced at the presentation. While we never know for sure if this attempt has been accomplished, we think we have succeeded today.

Since 1992, Wachiska has given this annual award for “exemplary achievement in volunteer work to our chapter.” Sometimes the award has been for overall work in many areas; at other times it’s been for a specific project or activity over time.

Sue Guild has been working on behalf of Wachiska for birds, other wildlife, and nature education for over 30 years.

When Wachiska’s education committee developed Prairie Discovery Days to be held on prairies under the chapter’s protection, Sue was there to pitch in. The elementary teacher in her kicks in whenever there are kids nearby! The same was true for helping with our Platte River crane trip for kids each March. Sue sold merchandise at River Conferences in the early days. She served on the Board as recording secretary and field trip chair in the 1980s when we met in homes before we had an office. More recently she keeps bird feeders filled at branch libraries as a result of the successful bird enCOUNTer project. Sue and Tom purchased materials and constructed bluebird houses at Pioneers Park Nature Center (PPNC). She is a volunteer at the Lincoln Children’s Zoo where she taught classes to children. Sue maintains bluebird trails on their acreage, at Oak Glen, and on the Oak Creek Trail. This spring Sue led a class for 20 children learning about birds.

Sue is a member of the sustainability committee at her church and serves as chair of their gardening committee. When she is not traveling with the Sierra Club to Alaska or planning the next adventure to the Galapagos, Sue and Tom are at home on 40 acres of virgin prairie west of Lincoln.

Serving other nature organizations, Sue served on the Friends of PPNC board including two years as president. Since 2006, she has led many outdoor nature activities for kids of all ages. Quips Nancy Furman of the Nature Center: “Sue’s quiet manner still gets the nature point across. I think of the quality of her classes, her organization and preparedness.”

It seems long overdue that Wachiska is honoring Sue Guild and publicly recognizing her for the numerous tasks and projects she has accomplished for our chapter and the public over the years. Many thanks and congratulations, Sue, for being Wachiska’s recipient of the 2013 President’s Award!
A sold-out crowd of over 230 people listened raptly as National Audubon President David Yarnold reviewed past successes and future plans for Audubon focusing on two key themes—the importance of grassroots involvement and the national flyways. Yarnold explained how the flyways traveled by migratory birds inspire Audubon’s model for organizational alignment and how that results in a renewed focus on local chapters.

His talk is summed up by this quote from the current Audubon strategic plan: “By connecting the work of the Audubon network—Chapters, Centers, national and state staff, volunteers, partners, and other supporters—along each of the flyways of the Americas, Audubon can weave a seamless web of conservation for both migratory and non-migratory species. By working toward common flyway conservation goals, we can have a greater impact, and by coordinating resources and expertise, we can increase our efficiency across the network.”

Yarnold also emphasized the tremendous strength and impact of the Audubon network as a conservation and political force. He provided several examples from 2012 alone:

- Audubon helped publish the first set of guidelines for vertical wind power so it does the least amount of damage to birds and wildlife.
- Audubon, with two other NGOs, helped pass the Restore Act which will send up to $20 billion of BP penalties to the Gulf States most affected.
- After 20 years, the Interior Department finalized its decision to preserve 11 million acres in Alaska’s National Petroleum Preserve, one of the world’s premier bird nurseries.

Yarnold noted, “The only entities that were in common in each of these conservation victories were the Department of Interior and the National Audubon Society.” He went on to attribute a great deal of NAS’s success to chapters which have the ability to mobilize Audubon’s network of 400,000 members.

At the end of the evening, Yarnold was commissioned into the Great Navy of Nebraska, and Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler presented him with the Mayor’s Medallion.

Wachiska’s 40 years of accomplishments include:

- A tribute to our founders, Walter Bagley and Betsy Finch
- Thanks to our past presidents of which nearly 70 percent were in attendance
- A salute to our many prairie partners who have made possible the protection, preservation, and improvement of over 900 acres of native or restored prairie in about 30 locations, half of which are owned by Wachiska through bequests or purchases, the remainder protected by conservation easements in Wachiska’s name
- Recognition of our many Audubon partners in Nebraska, including Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center which is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year
- Review of some of the many Wachiska accomplishments such as the Save the Platte and Save the Niobrara efforts
- Acknowledgement of the organizations spun off from Wachiska including Raptor Recovery Nebraska, Bluebirds Across Nebraska, and Friends of Wilderness Park
- Recognition of our many community partners

We extend our sincere thanks to our corporate sponsor, the Wild Bird Habitat Store and owners Dave and Linda Titterington, who not only sponsored our event and donated auction items, but also paid for 15 of their employees to attend.

Due to the generosity of our many donors and guests who bid on items, the silent auction raised over $5,000 for our prairie preservation projects. Auction donors included:

- Anne Vidaver
- Beth Imig
- Bob Henrickson
- Brad Kreiger
- Bruce Wendorff
- Chris Helzer – The Nature Conservancy Eastern Nebraska Program
- Des Moines Feed
- Earl May Nursery & Garden Center
- Ed Zimmer
- Elizabeth & Daniel Nelson
- Eloise Kloefkorn
- Finke Gardens
- Frames for You
- Glacial Till Winery
- Hinrichs Dentistry
- James Arthur Vineyard
- JoAnn Stransky
- Joel Sartore
- Jon Farrar
- Keith Jacobshagen
- Lana Novak
- Lied Lodge & Conference Center at Arbor Day Farm
- Lincoln Children’s Museum
- Lincoln Children’s Zoo
- Linda Trone
- Lyle Vannier
- Mark Brohman
- Michael Forsberg
- Michelle Angle Farrar
- Monarch Gardens - Ben Vogt, owner
- Nebraska Environmental Trust
- Nebraska Statewide Arboretum
- Oak Creek Plants
- Open Harvest Natural Foods Cooperative Grocery
- Paul Johnsgard
- Rowe Sanctuary
- Roxanne Smith
- Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
- Stock Seed Farm
- Ted Kooser
- Telesis, Inc.
- The Nature Conservancy, Omaha office
- Walter Bagley
- Wild Bird Habitat Store
- Zipline Brewing Company
Wachiska’s Past Presidents

President David Yarnold
National Audubon Society

Mayor Chris Beutler and Nate Donovan

Arnold and Agnes Mendenhall, Judy Beutler

Linda and Dave Tillerington

Arlys Reitan and Don Peppert

Jan Burch

Moni Usasz, Kevin Poague, Marilyn McNabb, Lynn Darling
Some Interesting Prairie Wildlife
by Ernie Rousek

Last June five members of the conservation committee were checking several prairie sites for possible easement additions. During the outing, we stopped at Dieken Prairie to look over the prairie growth when we came to a sudden stop at the sight of a huge larva on a plant of New Jersey tea. A few feet away was another larva even larger. Heidi Hillhouse photographed the specimen and took it to the UNL entomology department where it was identified as the larva of the cecropia moth (Hyalophora cecropia). With a wingspan of five or more inches, it is the largest moth in North America.

These creatures begin as eggs laid in mid-spring by the female moth which, with no mouth parts or digestive system, live for only a week or ten days. The eggs are usually laid on tree leaves. It is quite unusual for this larva to be found on low-growing prairie plants such as New Jersey tea. As the larvae mature, they outgrow their skins which are shed four times as instars. The larva pictured in the first column was a greenish blue with blue and orange tubercles and most likely in its latest instar and about ready to spin a cocoon around itself where it will spend the winter. Next spring upon emerging from their cocoons, the females will release pheromones which will enable them to attract males from a mile or more away. After mating, the females lay about 100 eggs and die shortly thereafter. These huge moths (above) are active only at night so are seldom seen although they are attracted by lights. The larvae are not considered as pests as so many are consumed by predators.

Keeping Membership Records Updated

National Audubon members should use this e-address, audubon@emailcustomerservice.com, to make address and name changes directly for their Audubon magazine subscriptions. This will not be automatically handled from the Wachiska office. Wachiska’s membership committee will, of course, continue to make these changes for The Babbling Brook.
**Public Officials**

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Capitol Hill Switchboard  
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State Senator _______  
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Lancaster County Commissioners  
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Mayor Chris Beutler  
County-City Bldg, 555 S 10th St Rm 208, Lincoln NE 68508-2828  
Phone: 402-441-7511 Fax: 402-441-7120  
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Lincoln City Council  
402-441-7515  
E-mail: council@lincollne.gov

Lincoln Journal Star  
Letters to the editor, 926 P St, Lincoln NE 68508  
E-mail: oped@journalstar.com

**Membership**

Wachiska offers two choices of membership. Local membership, called Friends of Wachiska, includes receiving *The Babbling Brook*, our chapter’s monthly newsletter. It also includes voting privileges and attendance at monthly meetings, programs, and field trips. All membership dues from a local membership stay with Wachiska to support chapter activities such as prairie preservation and education.

Membership in the National Audubon Society also includes membership in our local chapter, Wachiska. You will receive *Audubon* magazine from National Audubon along with *The Babbling Brook*.

**Friends of Wachiska (local membership)**

| Name ________________________________ | Address ________________________________ | City __________________ State ___ Zip________ |
|____________________________________|_______________________________________|________________________________________|
| Phone___________________________ Recruited by__________________________ | E-mail______________________________ |

- $20 Individual/Friend
- $30 Families
- $50 Sustainer
- $100 Patron

Make checks payable to **Wachiska Audubon Society**. All funds remain with our local chapter. Mail to:

Wachiska Audubon Society  
Attention: Membership Committee  
4547 Calvert St Ste 10  
Lincoln NE 68506-5643

As a conservation organization, our goal is to use our natural resources wisely. Materials and postage are considerable, and we do not want to waste them. When your address changes or if you are receiving *The Babbling Brook* and would rather not get it, please notify us at office@wachiskaudubon.org or 402-486-4846.

**National Membership in National Audubon Society**

Dues from new (introductory) memberships and for first-time gifts will be returned to Wachiska if this coupon is used:

| Name ________________________________ | Address ________________________________ | City __________________ State ___ Zip________ |
|____________________________________|_______________________________________|________________________________________|
| Phone___________________________ Recruited by__________________________ | E-mail______________________________ |

Enclose introductory membership fee of $20.

Make checks payable to **National Audubon Society** and mail to:

Wachiska Audubon Society  
Attention: Membership Committee  
4547 Calvert St Ste 10  
Lincoln NE 68506-5643  
C3ZP040Z

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The Babbling Brook  
October 2013  
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**The Online Guide to North American Birds**

This Online Guide to North American Birds features over 800 species of birds in 22 orders and 74 families. The guide covers all of North America's regular breeding birds as well as non-breeding species that regularly or occasionally visit North America, north of Mexico.

Start identifying birds now at:

http://www.audubonbirds.org/

Identify birds in your PC, I-phone, I-pad, Android, Kindle Fire, or NOOK color.

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**WACHISKA AUDUBON LEADERS - 2013**

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Vice-President ........................................... *Jessi Umerberger 402-580-3057
Recording Secretary ................................. *Bob Boyce .................. 402-770-6865
Corresponding Secretary ............................ *Elizabeth Nelson .......... 402-423-2936
Treasurer .................................................. *Gary Fehr .................. 402-570-4382
Immediate Past President ............................ *Anne Vidaver ............. 402-435-0832

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Director at Large ........................................ *Benjamin Vogt .......... 402-499-5851
Director at Large ........................................ *vacant
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Education .................................................... vacant
Field Trips .............................................. John Carlino ............. 402-475-7275
Field Trips .............................................. *Ken Reitan ............... 402-423-3540
Fundraising ............................................... vacant
Hospitality ................................................ Cheryl Moncure .......... 402-488-0036
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Program Coordinator .................................. Tim Knott ................. 402-483-5656
Publicity/Public Relations ............................ Jeanne Kern ............... 402-423-0428

*Denotes Board member

**OTHER ASSOCIATES**

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NAS Regional Board Member .......................... vacant
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Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center Director .... Kristofer Johnson ...... 402-797-2301
Webmaster ............................................... Dan Staehr ................. 402-440-5869

**Fall Birdseed Sale**

**PICK-UP TIMES**

Friday, October 4  4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 6  1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

See pages 3 and 4 for order form and seed descriptions.

Orders must be postmarked by the Monday, October 23 DEADLINE.

**Wachiska Audubon Society's financial records are available for examination in the office.**

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**A Gift to the Future**

A bequest to Wachiska Audubon Society is a gift to future generations enabling our natural heritage to continue. For wills, trusts, and gifts, our legal name is *Wachiska Audubon Society*. Our Federal Tax ID number is 51-0229888.