



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
April 2024

www.breckenridgeikes.org



Coming Events April 2024

- 9 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 23 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**
Emeritus Prof. Peter Sorensen:
Invasive Carp in Minnesota

May 2024

- 5 Pancake Breakfast 8 am-1 pm
- 14 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 28 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**
Andy Willette, Citizen's Climate Lobby

June 2024

- 11 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 25 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**

Social Educational Meeting:
Tuesday, April 23 7:30 pm
Peter Sorensen

**Is Minnesota Running Out of Fish
(Whatever the Heck They Are)?**



Help Wanted! IWL Pancake Breakfast Saturday & Sunday, May 4-5

A reminder that our Chapters biggest and most important fund raiser of the year is scheduled for Sunday, May 5. Please help spread the word.

We need workers for the following tasks:

- Saturday, May 4 9:00 am to noon – Set up & decorate
- Sunday, May 5 first shift (8:00 to 10:30) – Pancakes, Kitchen, beverages/tables, cashier
- Sunday, May 5 second shift (10:30 to 1:00) – Pancakes, Kitchen, beverages/tables, cashier
- Sunday, May 5 clean up (1:00 to 2:30)

Please call or email Jim Arnold (763 560 8972 or jjarnold@Q.com) if you can help – or sign up at the April 28th social/educational meeting. If possible consider working two shifts

“Fish,” commonly defined as vertebrates with fins and gills that swim, are the largest, most abundant and diverse group of vertebrates on our planet. Yet, they are actually a collection of taxonomic groups so the term lacks scientific validity. Managing aquatic species is an enormous challenge, but given their enormous ecological and economic value one would think extraordinary effort would also be made to manage them properly: developing accurate estimates of how many actually exist (and where), and determining how many are born, die or are harvested so they might be conserved. However, this has not been the case.

Dr. Peter Sorensen, professor of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology at the University of Minnesota where he has been for nearly 40 years, will address what fish are, and how his team has now examined fisheries records collected since 1950 and systematically examined them for the first time to discern trends. Bowfishing for rough fish may be the only sector for which catch is increasing, but the data are poor and likely at the expense of other sectors. The trends suggest a strong need for new data-based management approaches rather than bag limits, which have been used almost exclusively throughout this long, steady decline in our valuable native fisheries and that may now be approaching a crisis point.

Izaak Walton League, Breckenridge Chapter
Defenders of Soil, Air, Woods, Waters and Wildlife



**Pancake
Breakfast**



Sunday, May 5, 2024

8 am-1 pm

Adults \$10.00 Children \$5.00

www.breckenridgeikes.org

Raffle \$2

**Breckenridge Chapter House
8816 West River Road
Brooklyn Park, MN 55444**

In Memory

Lorraine Spears

June 16, 1937–March 2, 2024

L to R Rebecca Risler, Lorraine Spears, Vera Brown



We were contacted by her niece to let us know that Lorraine Patricia Spears, age 86, of Champlin, Minnesota passed away on Saturday, March 2, 2024. Lorraine is pictured in the center of this 2001 photo with Becky Risler and Vera Brown. She lived in Champlin and was our Chapter's secretary and then membership director. Lorraine had a stroke just over two years ago but was able to care for herself at home after her recovery. Her family had been suggesting she move into assisted living but she preferred to stay in her own home where she died unexpectedly of natural causes. No plans for a celebration of life have been made as of yet but the family is considering having it in our Chapter House.

Many Chapter members including John Rust and Dick Brown became good friends of hers. Dick remembered that Lorraine participated in several "save the environment" trips such as to the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant, Rum River Park across from the Anoka High School, and "Save Coldwater Spring" down by Ft. Snelling. She was active in our annual Pancake Breakfasts for many years. She served as our Chapter's (then called the North Minneapolis Chapter) delegate to the Minnesota Division several times.

Lorraine was a good IKE!



Champlin Garden Club Spring Plant Sale

Sat. May 11th, 2024
8:00 am - 3:00 pm
**Willy McCoy's Parking
Lot**
Hwy 169 & Hayden Lake Rd

*Annuals/Perennials/Veggies/Herbs and Hanging
Baskets*

***Pollinators love that our plants are from
local reputable nurseries
that do not use neonicotinoids!***

Cash, Checks or Credit Accepted

*Come and support this local group that
plants and maintains the gardens at Doris
Kemp Park, the Champlin cemetery,
Dunning School and provides educational
support to the horticulture programs at both
CBPA and Champlin Park High School.*

***If you are interested in joining our group,
please contact us on our Facebook page.
We would be happy to have you join us!***

Modern Conservation Insights from Ancient Fishes

Presented by Dr. Solomon David

Asst. Prof of Aquatic Ecology at Univ. of Minnesota



Although a late March snowstorm interfered with plans, we were fortunate in being able to reschedule Dr. Solomon David's talk the following week. Our chapter's historic role as the Ike's original sponsor of a resolution and later a petition to the DNR on the subject of conservation of all our native fish made it logical that we continue to present additional education talks on the topic.

Solomon recently moved to Minnesota, inheriting the research labs of our Chapter member, Dr. Peter Sorensen, who, we should note, will also be a speaker in April (on the subject of invasive carp in Minnesota). Even before moving to Minnesota, Solomon was collaborating with our legislators (Rep. Becker-Finn and Rep. Rick Hansen) in the advancement of the 2021 bill requiring the DNR to set a possession limit for gar. That limit was set at ten until further research is completed. Some bowfishers, spearfishers and anglers used to think wrongly (and some still do) that killing native rough fish was beneficial and would increase the number of game fish. They still kill them in large numbers in contests and only avoid being charged with wanton waste by dumping them as "fertilizer" on farm fields.

Solomon also supported this year's "No Junk Fish" bill authored by Rep. Sydney Jordan on the House side which has passed through committee without opposition and been included in an omnibus environment bill. Asked about his recommendation for limits on other fish species, he said staff at the DNR such as Shannon Fisher and John Hansen as well as elected officials are committed to conserving our native fish and with pressure from stakeholder groups like ours he is confident that rule-making to establish limits will occur soon.

Minnesota's ancient fish species (some call them living fossils) bowfin, shortnosed and longnosed gar, were identified (by the 2023 DNR report mandated by the legislature) as the top three

priorities for research. Gar have changed little in appearance from 157 million years ago in the Jurassic period when they lived alongside dinosaurs. They have the ability to gulp air enabling them to live in oxygen depleted waters. Their eggs are toxic to birds and mammals but not to other fish. Alligator gar in the lower Mississippi drainage can live for over 100 years and Minnesota gar have

been found by another Breck Chapter member, Dr. Alec Lackmann, to live for over 50 years.

But even though comprising only a small subset of the 36,000 or so known fish species (over half of them being found in the 0.3% of waters which are fresh) Solomon thinks the study of ancient fishes and its methodology can serve as tools for understanding ecology, evolution and natural resource management of other native species like bigmouth buffalo. He has shown through literature reviews that we are way behind (maybe a century) the research already done on game fish and he feels with financial support from State agencies, the legislature and grassroots support from organizations like ours, we can start to fill the gap in our knowledge. The legislature's funding of a full-time expert in the DNR for study of native rough fish and the DNR's stated plan to coordinate with David's lab on assessment of inland gar populations are good steps in the right direction.

Since populations of species, not individuals, are "what gets things done" in terms of ecosystem services and aquatic biodiversity, that is where his research will be centered. When we understand and communicate the importance of each fish species for biodiversity of our waters, people will begin to put aside the beliefs they may have grown up with that rough fish are "trash fish".

Gar evolved slower (than any jawed vertebrates) due, probably, to efficient DNA repair mechanism. If we can identify the genes responsible for repair it may have medical implications. Dr. David will be collaborating with specialists in genetic labs across the country on this. It's an irony, he said, that study of hated "trash fish" may help not only in improving ecosystem services but also in improving human health care.

Solomon remembered his first inkling of the existence of gar came in reading an issue of "Ranger Rick" in his childhood. After later finding his professional life was centering around the study of gar, he tried to find a copy of that issue. He tried for over twenty years to obtain a copy before the publishers contacted him to say they found one hard copy which they gave him and which is now framed in his office. He was asked to write another article on gar for "Ranger Rick" and noted that its

circulation of a quarter million exceeded that of all the scientific journals he has published in. He ended by emphasizing that we need to talk with many other groups, kids, magazines like Field and Stream and National Geographic, and programs like Science Friday to communicate the need for conservation of our native fish. He also thanked the Izaak Walton League for sending its letter of support to the LCCMR for funding of his research work.

Recommended reading:

Fishing through the Apocalypse by Matt Miller
World's Forgotten Fishes by WWF (take a look online)

Reported by Tim Johnson

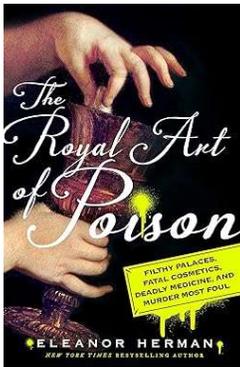
Bluebird Trail

Jerry and Wendy Steele have volunteered to take over the Oxbow Bluebird Trail monitoring from Tim Johnson. This photo was taken on that trail last year.



Speaking of Lead.....

Book review by Karen Ostenso



Lead has an interesting history, some of which is documented in a book called *The Royal Art of Poison*. The author reviews intentional and accidental deaths caused by not only lead, but mercury, arsenic and hemlock, focusing on royalty in the 1600s, 1700s, and 1800s.

Poisoning of enemies and supposed enemies was frequent among royalty, including family members. All foods had to be taste tested by servants before being served.

A less well-known source of poisoning was in cosmetics and hair applications. The fashion in the 1500s was that women have pale, unblemished skin. It was partly due to fashion, but also because facial blemishes were signs of heavenly displeasure. Smallpox was still prevalent so pitted skin was not unusual.

One way to cover imperfect skin was to apply a tincture of white lead ore mixed with other ingredients. The lead absorbed through the skin causing various medical and mental maladies. Further problems included the inability of sunlight to penetrate through the layers of toxic materials, thereby causing rickets.

Hair treatments did not escape from lead's toxicity. Washing hair with a potion including lead, gold and silver was recommended for covering up gray hair.

Long ago medical preparations also were made of lead and other heavy metals. In 1585 physicians recommended curing skin ulcers by applying a mixture of lead and quicksilver, i.e., two toxins. For ringworm mixing lead and mercury was suggested. Lead was one of many treatments for syphilis.

The book is not only about lead and various poisonous plants, but the frequent use of bloodletting, and avoidance of bathing. It certainly underlines the huge danger of lead, a currently much discussed topic.

Boulevard Plantings

Last fall the city detected a leak in the water main in front of our property on River Road. The excavation and repair destroyed the native pollinator flower planting we accomplished a few years back north of the driveway. It also brought up some brick-hard clay to the surface which will be a challenge to cultivate. We have just planted some "No Mow" fescue grass seed which may be starting to emerge when we have our upcoming pancake breakfast. The flowers we've ordered to replace the old ones were species that were doing well before in the spot and should arrive any day. They include:

Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed)
Echinacea pallida (Pale Purple Coneflower)
Penstemon digitalis (Foxglove Beardtongue)
Verbena stricta (Hoary Vervain)
Agastache foeniculum (Anise Hyssop)
Liatris aspera (Button Blazing Star)



Opinion:
**Protecting the Integrity of the
Wilderness Act of 1964**

by Dick Brown

Sixty years ago President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into US Law. Due to population increase and all the problems accompanying it, there have been many infringements and attempts to weaken the Act. Some of these infringements have been successful. Of all the conservation groups that have defended the Act to some extent, the only one I know of that is most adamant defending the original integrity of the law is Wilderness Watch, headquartered in Missoula, MT.

Threats to the Act include:

The use of ATVs, off-road vehicles, motor bikes, motor boats, air landing fields, timbering, livestock grazing, etc.

Some conservation organizations have compromised on restrictions in order to appease some of their members.

Wilderness areas encompass vast areas from Eastern states, Southwestern states,, the Rocky Mountain states and much of Alaska. Even MN has the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Sometimes Wilderness Watch becomes involved with National Parks and Wildlife Refuge Systems. Although our wilderness areas cover great acreages in the US and Alaska, they are quite minor compared to our agricultural, urban, and other developed and semi developed areas. Wilderness areas are the heart of protection of endangered and threatened species from avian to terrestrial and aquatic species in much of the US, Canada and Latin America.

As population and development of all kinds continues to escalate, it will be more important than ever for the likes of Wilderness Watch to be active in congress and state legislatures.

Of the approximately 30 environmental conservation groups I have belonged to the last 50 years, I find Wilderness Watch the most dedicated environmental conservation preservation organization. I encourage members to join it, and guess what? Our Breckenridge Chapter member Kevin Prescholdt is their Conservation Issues chair! Kevin has presented programs at our Chapter three times in the past during his many years as a member. Let's preserve the integrity of the Wilderness Preservation Act!

Chapter House Rental Rates

Non-Members: (damage deposit: \$300.00;
\$200 for previous renters)

Monday through Thursday.....\$300.00
Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Holidays.....\$400.00

Members: (damage deposit \$100.00)

Monday through Thursday\$150.00
Friday, Saturday Sunday & Holidays.....\$200.00

Scouts: (damage deposit \$50.00)
Overnights.....\$50.00

*Rates and terms subject to change without notice; please contact the Chapter for special circumstances.

The Rental Agreement and Renters Checkout List are available on our website.

For availability, please contact Tim Johnson by email
johns860@mac.com.

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America
8816 West River Road
Brooklyn Park MN 55444



If you would like to submit an article for the Timberlines, please send it to
Barbara Franklin at: bbfrankli@gmail.com
Deadline is the First Day of each month.

All articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of the Breckenridge
Board of Directors. The Editor reserves the right to edit material as necessary.

April Haiku

From:
*one day and three lines at a time:
a year of nature haiku*
by John Moriarty

A new egg per day
The hen turkey lays each one
Nest hidden in leaves



Haiku
by Wendy Steele

Look at my yellow
Now bursting through the dryness
In the dawn of Spring.

