



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
October 2023

www.breckenridgeikes.org



Coming Events

Social Educational Meeting:
Tuesday October 24, 7:30 PM
Melissa Hortman, Minnesota
Representative District 12B

Our Chapter's legislative representative, Melissa Hortman (DFL) District: 34B, will be our speaker October 24, 7:30 PM at the Chapter House (8816 West River Road) for our monthly Social/Education meeting. We have asked Speaker Hortman to focus her remarks on environmental conservation issues which have been and might be addressed in the Minnesota Legislature and upon which the Izaak Walton League has approved resolutions.

Minnesota Division President and 34B constituent, John Rust, will be the emcee. Please stay afterwards for light refreshments and social time.



October 2023

- 10 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 24 Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm
Melissa Hortman, MN Speaker of the House

November 2023

- 14 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 28 Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm

December 2023

- 12 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm

“Tales of a Minnesota Marsh” Scott Sharkey

Our Chapter was lucky to have Scott Sharkey present many of the best photographs he has taken over more than thirty years at the marsh next to our Minnesota Valley Chapter. The marsh consists of about 100 acres and is about three miles around. Scott’s photographs of the wildlife and plants were accompanied by an informative and entertaining narration describing what he has seen there over the years and his part in getting the Fish and Wildlife Service to remove (at a cost of over \$10,000) the century old drain tiles, restoring the marsh to its natural state. Prior to the restoration Scott had cooperated occasionally with Boy Scouts and beavers in temporarily blocking outlets of tile drainage.

The DNR’s *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* published an article in its last issue (if you don’t subscribe to this magazine, you should) called “Waterlogged”. This article on Scott’s photo project

included some of the photos below borrowed from the magazine's website

[Feature: Waterlogged | July–August 2023 | Minnesota Conservation Volunteer | Minnesota DNR \(state.mn.us\)](#)

His photographs of the birds passing through or nesting in this marsh are some of the best we have ever seen and the diversity of the plant and other wildlife documented is stunning. He says he rose at 5 AM in the mornings to catch the best activity from his canoe which he obtained permission to use there. Along the way he lost several cameras to the water and learned not use a tripod in a canoe. Included among the photos, were some of trumpeter swans which have returned there again since our Chapter members' (Carrol Henderson and John Moriarty) successful reintroduction of the species in Minnesota.

Scott says that his photos would have little value to him if he couldn't share them, and in this same spirit, he donated his entire speaker's honorarium back to our Chapter. Let's hope more Minnesotans make similar contributions in conservation causes to share our natural heritage with future generations!



A Green Heron ruffles its feathers



Baby Least Bitterns



Prothonotary Warbler

Opinion: The Loss of Abundant Clean Water Nationally

On Aug.30, 2023 the *Star Tribune* printed a couple of real eye openers, not only for environmentalists, but I hope the entire public pays attention also.

Aquifers in the dryer states that raise much of our staple crops and some aquifers, even in states that normally have plenty of water, are drying up. Many aquifers that benefit cities and country folk are also being heavily polluted, mostly by farm chemicals such as nitrates. Phosphorus also encourages super amounts of weed growth in our lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams.

Irrigation of farmland, new housing construction and commercial development are the main problems. Even in Minnesota there are areas: White Bear Lake area with its growing population and surrounding farms are one example. The sandy soils around Big Lake and St. Cloud are potentially another. The area around Wadena and Park Rapids are also beginning to be affected.

These areas and others nationally produce agricultural products that are sent to other countries in trade, sale or relief for those that cannot feed themselves because of over population. This process of feeding other nations is slowly but surely leading to our own demise as our own population problem will soon suffer the same plight.

Blockbuster No. 2: in the same journal. "E.P.A. Weakens Wetland Rules." The Supreme Court has ruled that "Wetlands not directly connected to larger regulated bodies of water," are not subject to the Clean Water Act and can be drained or filled. Does this not affect the re-charging of groundwater aquifers Does this not affect the well-being of countless forms of wildlife? Not to mention types of recreation?

If citizens have any feeling for the future of farming for benefit of our citizens, the future of wildlife including their habitats and future water resources for our own people; then encourage our politicians to make it more difficult to export agricultural goods. The export of agricultural goods encourages greater use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides which in turn harm many species and will

eventually pollute nearly all our waters above or below ground. Expansion of sales of agricultural goods to other countries has also led to drainage of wetlands, destruction of forests and loss of prairies, and perhaps will continue to do so. The number of agricultural products sold abroad should be curtailed somewhat to assure that we have clean and abundant water for our citizens and wildlife. Overuse and pollution of our waters go hand in hand to affect all life.

Dick Brown

Opinion: A Tragedy of Species

On Tuesday, Sept. 5 *Star Tribune* article reports "Cost of invasive species is 423 billion per year." Globally I presume.

I first became aware of invasive species perhaps in the 50's or 60's. White Pine blister rust in northeast U.S, Cheat Grass in western states and Carp in our waters. There were many I had not been aware of before that.

Today forests, prairies, wetlands, lakes, rivers, ocean estuaries and even our air are permeated with things that should not be there naturally. The balance of Nature has been permanently unbalanced by human trade with other nations and immigration.

Although the article listed some of the detrimental species, both flora and fauna, it left out the most detrimental species of all: the human species.

It all started when Columbus "discovered the New World." Invasions of humans from other continents and the introduction of trade, different religions and customs to continents not disturbed by aliens for thousands of years, are the basics for our invasions of exotics today. White people started it and immigration of all races since has been the real reason native species are in trouble today. Of course, the rapid proliferation of all humans has made the problem even worse. The problem is worldwide. The tragedy now is we can't go back!

Dick Brown

Larry Kennebeck Gallery

Rattlesnake Master

(on keeping young)

To any sense of observation, Rattlesnake Master is a unique plant—at first encounter it is startlingly different from most native plant forms. It also makes an excellent garden specimen as a durable perennial in most soil types with adequate sun. According to the DNR, while Rattlesnake Master does grow in a variety of habitats, in Minnesota—the northern edge of its natural range—it has limited itself to open prairies, which have all but disappeared. It was designated a Special Concern species in 1984.

Some weeks I only walk once in nature and some weeks 4 times. Sometimes that means only 1 ½ hour or so of walking and about the same amount of driving. On bigger day trips that may mean 7 hours of walking and about the same amount of driving. I usually look for the most remote and the wildest places to walk because that is where the good stuff is. It is not on trails or where people are nearby, like in parks. I have a group of friends that I often go with on bigger trips. It is rare that I meet strangers where I walk. On a recent weekend I walked for 11 hours and never met anyone. After requesting they tag along, I have taken social friends walking but they have almost always failed because of bugs, thorns, poison ivy or they lament ‘I hurt’, ‘It is too hot’, ‘It is too hard’, etc. There is no doubt that walking in nature really helps me mentally and physically and it may have allowed me to become a “SuperAger”.



Scholarship Students' Thank Yous

We received thank you notes from two of our scholars who were awarded scholarships this year.

Audrey Kormann was very excited to spend 6 weeks this summer at New Jersey Institute of Technology, which she will attend in the fall as part of their honors program, participating in a biodiversity project to help restore nature in an urban setting and working with the community of Newark to create a pollinator garden on campus.



Annika Hall also expressed her thanks for another year's scholarship to University of Wisconsin – Madison where she is thrilled to continue her studies in Environmental Science and Political Science.

October Haiku

from

*one day and three lines at a time:
a year of nature haiku*

by John Moriarty

Hooded mergansers

Swimming in pairs on the pond

Showing their colors



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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.

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.