



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
June 2025

www.breckenridgeikes.org



Coming Events

June 2025

- 10 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 24 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**
Peter Sorenson PhD (Professor Emeritus U of M Dept of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology)
Shares some of his not yet published data on the topic of roughfish with a review of all of Minnesota's fish and covering all aspects of their exploitation, including bowfishing.

July 2025

- 8 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 22 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**
Diane Hirigoyen
As an ambassador for the The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

August 2025

- 10 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 24 **Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm**
Environmentalist Ron Way: E15 ethanol requirements and subsidies

Jerry tapped on the outside of nest #10 & didn't get a response so we decided to look inside with his camera scope and to our surprise, out flew a mama Black Capped Chickadee. The picture below is what she was sitting on. We won't bother her again.



But there was beautiful wild Lupine. And it looks like there was a raccoon walking on the trail at some point too!

Bluebird Trail Update

Jerry and Wendy visited the trail at Oxbow Creek Park in Champlin last week. Here's their report.

No boxes were occupied by Bluebirds, though several of the nests are occupied by Tree Swallows. One nest is packed to the brim with twigs--surely a Wren but we couldn't see a thing inside, just the twigs. Most likely there is a Wren inside, incubating her eggs.



2025 - 26 Scholarship Recipients

By Jim Arnold

I think you'll enjoy reading about the six talented students who were recently selected recipients of Breckenridge Chapter scholarships. Four of them spoke about their activities at the May meeting and received copies of Darby Nelson's book For Love of Lakes from speaker John Moriarty. The students L-R are Evelyn Ameli, Noah Thelen, Emma Fisher, and Audrey Kormann. Two recipients could not make this meeting: Paige Hebert sent a video and Lucille Hugunin was trying out for the state track meet.



Audrey Kormann, a graduate of Maple Grove High School, is completing her second year at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. She is considering pursuing a PhD in sustainable development, possibly at Columbia University. This coming year Audrey plans to work on publishing a paper on the process of developing a “Green Map” for the city of Newark that maps out the sustainable businesses throughout the city.

Throughout this school year Audrey has served as a sustainability specialist. In order to help students better understand what they can do to promote sustainability she applied for a grant through the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. The \$60,000 grant was used to implement behavior. Audrey is involved with a variety of other environmental events on campus that involves tree planting, trash clean up, clothing swaps, social media campaigns, water fountain testing, and composting,

Noah Thelen, a graduate of Anoka High School, is completing his third year at the University of Minnesota working towards a degree in Fisheries,

Wildlife, and Conservation Biology. He is also considering adding a minor such as Park and Protected Area Management or Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management. Noah is continuing his work at the University with the MN Sea Grant assisting on sustainable aquaculture

projects. This summer he will be interning with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource Fisheries Department conducting lake, stream and river surveys. His career goals are to become a fisheries research biologist with a state or federal agency.

Noah is involved in a number of volunteer activities: Friends of Lake Hiawatha (writing letters, climate research and reports) Anoka Waterfowl for Warriors, maintaining wood duck houses, he recently joined the Lake Superior Steelhead Association.

Paige Hebert, a graduate of Stillwater High School recently completed her freshman year at Arizona State University. Paige writes, “After living in Arizona this past year I’ve seen the true degree of urgency to develop water solutions.” She is majoring in Sustainability and Geographic Information Science working towards a goal of conducting research on climate change. Her goal is to earn both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees within four years. This year she learned to create and analyze maps of climate data to visualize trends

in global warming. Paige feels the new technology will equip her with the knowledge to pursue a career as a climate change analyst or hydrologist.

Paige has become involved in a number of environmental clubs and events at Arizona State. This summer she will be participating abroad in the Botswana study: Sustainability, Wildlife and Conservation in the Okavango Delta. The study will take place at a remote research study in Maun and will work actively in wildlife surveys to create an ecology plan for the local government.

Emma Fischer, a graduate of Wayzata High School, will begin her freshman year at Washington this fall where she will study environmental engineering. She also plans to minor in marine biology to cultivate her interest marine environment. After her undergraduate school Emma hopes to pursue a Master's degree in biotechnology. Her goal would be to foster her interest in both the environment and technology to engineer sustainable, clean sources of energy.

Emma writes that some of her favorite memories growing up have been snorkeling in reef environments. She is very concerned about coral bleaching because of how vital the ocean is to maintaining the earth's health. Last year she attended a Marine Biology summer program where she scuba dived and practiced field work where she learned to assess the biodiversity and coral health of the local ecosystem.

Emma has also been very active in her high school Environmental Club: collecting water samples from a local creek to share with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and helping create a 1,000 sq.ft garden from damaged soil.

Evelyn Ameli, a graduate of Andover High School, will begin her freshman year at Gonzaga University this fall to study engineering. Her interest in engineering is deeply rooted in her passion for environmental conservation. Evelyn writes, "I believe that engineering holds the key to finding solutions to problems like pollution and resource depletion."

Evelyn was introduced to the outdoors at a young age via the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. That

same appreciation for nature led her to get involved with local conservation efforts. Volunteering to help clean up the Rum River after someone had illegally dumped tires there is one example. She is very concerned about how climate change issues impact the Boundary Waters and other natural areas. Evelyn feels that knowing these issues exist doesn't make her feel helpless, it makes her feel more determined to be part of the solution.

Lucille Hugunin, a graduate of Minneapolis Southwest High School will begin her freshman year at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont this fall. She plans to major in Environmental Science with a possible minor in political science or writing and become an environmental scientist.

Within her current community Lucille feels the most significant environmental issue is lack of time outdoors which greatly reduces a personal connection to our planet. If people get outside and appreciate their surroundings she feels we will see major impacts in their environmental value system. Lucille has spent much of her last four summers backpacking on wilderness trips at Camp Widjiwagan. These trips encouraged her to join Widji Leaders, a program dedicated to outdoor service projects. It led her to become president of her high school's outdoor leadership club, her Church's environmental and justice committee and motivated her to conduct research on soil quality effects and clover types.

The Breckenridge Chapter has now awarded 144 scholarships in the 27 years of the program. The main source of funding for these scholarships is an endowment fund established through the generosity of members. The endowment began with an initial donation from the estate of Irene Swanson in the summer of 1999, followed shortly thereafter by sizeable donations from Cynthia Haugland and Walter and Dorothy Breckenridge. The endowment continues to grow, thanks primarily to generous donations each year from Larry Swanson, Tom and Marilyn Breckenridge, Geri Nelson and Hans Nielsen. When earnings from the endowment are not sufficient to cover the scholarships costs, fund raisers (like the annual silent auction) and special donations from other members have been used. Thanks to all those members who have made it possible to support local young people as they study for their environmental careers. If you have questions about the Breckenridge Chapter scholarship program, please contact one of the committee members: Jim Arnold, Judy Arnold, Melissa Sonnenberg or Mary Ellen Vetter.

Historical Minnesota Wildlife Art

By Tim Johnson



Our Chapter's namesake, Walter J. Breckenridge, was not only a naturalist but also an accomplished artist whose subject was the natural world he studied. Two of his works hang on either side of our chapter house fireplace. John Moriarty, a Chapter member who knew him well and collects his and other's art works, gave a talk last month on the art and artists who have depicted Minnesota's wildlife.

An accompanying slide show of various artist's work provided a nice window into this world.

John's career as a naturalist himself and his previous writing and editing of important books on Minnesota's natural history (including Breck's autobiography) made him well suited to give this presentation for which we were all grateful.

A little history presented at the beginning of the talk established the connection of the Minnesota Geological and Natural History Survey (ordered by the legislature in 1872) and the University of Minnesota's General Museum (opened in 1875) as the sources and home of much of the early art. The museum's directors since those early days helped fund and produce much of the State's wildlife art. One of the director's (Thomas Roberts) opus magnum *The Birds of Minnesota* published in 1932, was very important in this regard. It contained full color plates by several artists including two Izaak Walton League chapter's namesakes, Francis Lee

Jaques and Breckenridge. The story behind its publication by T. S. Roberts was interesting to hear. A condensed version of the book was made available in 1934 titled *Bird Portraits in Color*.

But coming before these artists, Moriarty noted, were some talented ones including Clarence Herrick who wrote the first *Mammals of Minnesota* in the in the 1800's. He did some of his own illustrations, intending originally to do them in full color, but having to drop that dream due to budget cuts.

We heard a little about more obscure but successful artists from those early days like Kako Morita from Japan, who was hired by the Natural History Survey to paint birds and fish. He was only at the U of M between 1904-06 before moving on. Most of his work for the University was never published and remains in the archives. The first of Morita's Minnesota bird illustrations to be published, a painting of an evening grosbeak, was the front-piece of "The Winter Birdlife of Minnesota" (Roberts, 1916).

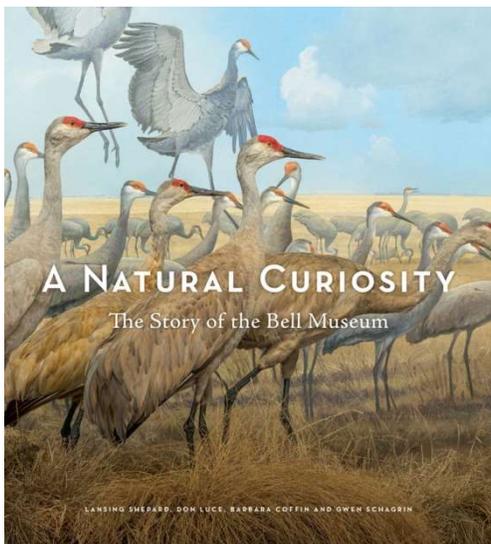
John went on with very interesting stories and facts about the production of the wonderful dioramas in the old zoology building and the much larger ones which followed in the dedicated stand-alone museum. While being the leading diorama artist of the museum, Jaques also won the 1940 duck stamp contest to add to his resume.



Breckenridge's hunt for the moose to mount in his diorama was just one of stories that brought these artists back to life.



Don Luce gave our Chapter a presentation awhile back about the amazing move of those dioramas to the new Bell Museum building on the St Paul campus. Three years ago, Don and his co-authors published *A Natural Curiosity: The Story of the Bell Museum* which records the names of many of the wildlife artists associated with these splendid dioramas. It has two chapters on Breckenridge.



Before an interesting Q&A, we were told about some of the recent artists in this genre, including of course Don Luce. Another one mentioned was sculptor Ian Dudley who cast in bronze "The Encounter" of three wolves, a moose and now ravens standing outside the Bell Museum. John recommends all to visit the "new-new" Bell Museum but advised going early Sunday morning or after school is out when the children aren't all crowded around the dioramas.

Opinion: Foraging done wrong

This letter to the Editor by Breckenridge Chapter member Tom Casey was accepted in the Strib on May 20

The article "[A mushroom hunting novice hunts for the elusive morel](#)" (May 20) mentions foraging groups' laudable goal "to create a task force to outline clearer rules for harvesting on state properties." Unfortunately, a bill (SF 2077) that would appropriate \$327,000 to establish a "Sustainable Foraging Task Force" contains four fundamental flaws:

1. It allows unsustainable foraging — until the data says otherwise. Instead, the Legislature should adopt the precautionary principle: to allow foraging activities only when supported by the data.
2. It hamstring the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources from adopting any rule pertaining to foraging until July 1, 2027.
3. It does not exempt Minnesota's 170 Scientific and Natural Areas, within which foraging is presently illegal per Minnesota statutes.
4. As stated by the DNR, "The Foraging Task Force language in the bill gives a majority voice to consumptive users of public lands while excluding the voices of those who use public lands for non-consumptive purposes."

Thomas E. Casey, Mound

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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*

Current Members who are in good standing only
(damage deposit: \$200.00; \$100 for previous renters)

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 by clicking
here.

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