



Zumbro Valley Audubon



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

Vol. 40 No. 1 Rochester, MN

Sept / Oct 2015

Upcoming Audubon Programs Tuesdays, 7 PM, Quarry Hill Nature Center

Sept 22 - Al Batt, Storyteller



You're invited to an evening of hilarious and heart-warming stories as told by Al Batt of rural Hartland, MN. Al writes humor and nature columns for many newspapers and does regular radio shows about nature. He is author

of the book, "A Life Gone to the Birds", a columnist for "Bird Watcher's Digest", writes a number of nationally syndicated cartoon strips, and has written for magazines and books, including the *Chicken Soup For the Soul* series. He received the Izaak Walton League Conservation Media Award, was named birder of the year by Wild Bird magazine, honored with the National Eagle Center's Hero Award, and has received numerous other awards. He is the Official Staff Ornithologist for the St. Paul Pioneer Press, was honored by Modern Woodman for conscientious and dedicated community service, serves on the board of the Environment for the Americas, and was given the Thomas Sadler Roberts Award by the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union.

Al speaks to anyone who will listen. His mother thinks he is special.

Photo credit: albatt.com

Oct 27 — Jan Dunlap, author

Have you read any of the "Birder Murder" Mystery series?

If not, you're missing a lot of fun! Jan Dunlap is the Minnesota-based author of the Bob White Birder Murder Mysteries (five of which have been nominated for the annual Minnesota Book Awards) that follow the adventures of a really nice guy who finds dead bodies when he's out birding. With readers across America and Europe, Jan's brand of humorous storytelling has earned her accolades from critics and readers alike of all ages. Her characters are sketched from real life and real people. Jan is the mother of five children and lives in Chaska, Minnesota, with her husband Tom and their dog Gracie.

"My books are more driven by the characters (and the birds!) than the plot - one of my booksellers calls them 'mystery lite,' which is exactly what I was aiming for. I want readers to have fun when they read my novels and come away being more interested in –and knowledgeable about – the birds they see." she says.

Photo jandunlap.com



ZVAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPT / OCT 2015

September 5, Saturday – The Chickadee Bird Walk, Quarry Hill Nature Center 9 AM
Led by Terry & Joyce Grier

September 26, Saturday – Fall Sparrow Field Trip 7:30 AM

Late September is a great time to look for migrating sparrows. We should see White-crowned, Lincolns, White-throated, Savannah, Vesper sparrows and with a little luck we may pick up Nelson's Sharp-tailed, LeContes and Harris's sparrows as well.

We'll meet in the parking lot on the east side of the Kalmar Reservoir (East Landfill Reservoir) just off of 19 ST NW and Valleyview CT. about 2 miles west of the Rochester Athletic Club. Bring water-proof footwear as the grass will probably be quite wet.

Led by Jerry Pruett and John Hockema.

October 3, Saturday – The Red Tail Hawk Bird Walk, Quarry Hill Nature Center 9 AM
Led by Terry & Joyce Grier

Many Audubon members are older. Some of us won't be around much longer. Who will be here to care about birds and nature? The reason we have had summer programs the past few years is that I wanted to reach out to families with children. I feel that having hands-on direct experience in nature is the best way for people come to care about nature.

Richard Louv, in his book Last Child in the Woods, coined the term 'Nature Deficit Disorder' to describe the problems associated with our modern lack of connection with nature. Problems include obesity, attention disorders, stress, and a lack of concern for nature. Our modern fixation with protecting our children, and fascination with electronic devices, keeps our children from benefiting by experiencing the wonders of nature. Yes, there are Quarry Hill classes. But often missing in children's lives are two important things: frequent intimate experiences in nature, and mentorship by adults close to the children.

Our summer programs addressed this to some extent. But this summer I tried a different approach – rather than asking people to come to us at Quarry Hill or Chester Woods, I went to their neighborhood park – a place that parents and children can visit every week, without driving.

We purchased equipment with a grant from People's Energy Co-op Operation Round-Up program. We paid for an intern for Chester Woods, who also helped me with programs. Kutsy Park neighbors worked with me, to hold sessions for listening to birds, catching insects, exploring stream creatures, and looking at the variety of leaves.

A child's nature experience does not have to be exotic. But it should be intimate, interesting, and something that they can do on their own.

Mentoring requires enthusiasm, patience, and willingness to let the child explore and learn by hands-on experience. Knowledge of nature is a plus, but is not required. Just listen, encourage, and help them find resources for whatever interests your child.

The goals of "Nature in your Neighborhood" are: to help parents and children, together, see the wonders of everyday nature right in your neighborhood; to help parents learn how to encourage children experience the marvels of everyday life around them; and eventually to help both come to appreciate nature, benefit from nature, and support conservation.

We plan to do much more next summer. Why not help us – by donating to support the effort, or volunteering time at an event, or helping us connect with more neighborhood, church, or other groups? Contact me at jdunnette@gmail.com.

We Will Move to Email Only Delivery Jan 1, 2016!

Due to the increasing cost of printing and mailing the Newsletter, ZVAS will become an electronic only newsletter starting Jan 1, 2016. You will be able to receive the newsletter directly by email, or access it later on our website. This will allow ZVAS to put more local articles of interest in the newsletter and send program reminders (if you request them). Another benefit is that more of your donations will go toward high quality programs.

And you will receive the newsletter in full-color. Until then, we will limit our newsletter to bimonthly notices of programs and field trips to cut costs. We promise not to share your e-mail address without your consent, and to send you only rare, but important notes relevant to our chapter activities.

If you wish to sign up for the email newsletter, please send your name and email address to: wmbruins@gmail.com, with the subject line: ZVAS.

Conversely, if you do not use email but wish to continue to receive the newsletter, let us know by calling Bill Bruins at 281-1607.

Thank you!

Visit us at: www.zumbrovalleyaudubon.org

To bring environmental awareness, appreciation and advocacy to the community by:
• supporting environmental education of our youth.
• developing an appreciation and awareness by the public of the natural world.
• advocating efforts of individuals and community leaders to pursue environmental positive activities and policies.
• encouraging members to participate in decision-making processes concerning environmental issues.

Our Mission

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