



# MORE FROM LOESS

The Newsletter of the  
**LOESS HILLS AUDUBON  
SOCIETY**     Volume 46: No. 1, September/October 2019

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The **Loess Hills Audubon Society** meets on the **first Thursday** of the month at the  
**Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center**  
4500 Sioux River Road (Highway 12 North)  
Sioux City, IA 51109  
Website <http://lhas.tripod.com/>  
Like us on Facebook: Loess Hills Audubon Society

Mission Statement—The Loess Hills Audubon Society exists to educate individuals and the general public, to enjoy and promote birding, and to support ornithology, and to be an advocate for wild areas and environmental issues.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**By Dave Hoferer**

Last week I had the pleasure of sitting down with three local environmentalists at Coffee Works on Pierce Street in Sioux City. Tina Hall, Carrie Radloff, Jane Hey, and I drank coffee while talking about the proposed development of the hill behind North Middle School that we fought this summer. All four of us spoke of how we have now been unexpectedly thanked by many people for fighting the development of this open space in Sioux City. But, of course, it was an upwelling of the community itself that has, so far, preserved the one loess hill. The four of us were merely part of a movement in our community.

Why did we do this? Why was I, as the current president of the Loess Hills Audubon Society, proud to say that LHAS opposed this development plan? And why preserve just one hill? As in most things, it turned out that the reasons were complex. As we reminisced on the summer, Tina said that there is always a reason to love. There is always a reason to get involved. And that, I think, sums up why we did this. We cared.

The story began earlier in the spring when Tina was informed of a proposed development next to her property that would change the zoning of that adjacent property. Tina lives on 60 acres of land just north of Outer Drive in Sioux City. The development would dig out the hill next to her property, moving over 700,000 cubic yards of soil and permanently removing 480,000 cubic yards of soil. In other words, the

hill would be gone. In its place would be a dirt pit that the developer proposed would eventually become a new housing subdivision. But, in the meantime, Carrie calculated that thousands of loads of soil would need to be transported away by dump trucks. Many water loads of trucks would be needed to wet the exposed loess to minimize wind erosion. And all of these thousands of trucks would need to travel along the road that the middle school and high school students, as well as those who live, work, and shop in the area, travel on every day.

Tina decided to do something about this and contacted her neighbors and other citizens that might help. A group of us met at her house in early summer to consider how to fight the proposal. As we sat in her home, I looked out of the windows and saw a variety of birds. They and unseen others could be heard singing in her trees and grasses. Deer bounded up the hill outside Tina's dining room windows, and Tina told us which deer they were, where they normally were during the day and how long it had been since she last saw them. They weren't just deer. They were particular deer known to her. They were her neighbors. She cared about them. Tina said at our coffee meeting that the top of a Loess Hill is like a little piece of heaven. If development proceeded, she would still have her property and her trees, but where would the wildlife go?

Jane spoke of the uniqueness of the Loess Hills and what they can teach us. We have already learned how remarkable our precious hills are. The Loess Hills extend along a narrow path along western Iowa into northwestern Missouri. Only the Loess Plateau of China has similar landscape features formed by loess, which was blown by wind after the glaciers retreated thousands of years ago. Now the US Geological Survey is studying the Loess Hills, not only putting together a chronology of how they were formed, but also studying how the climate change of that time contributed to their formation and what that might mean for the climate change we are currently experiencing.

Motivated by our concern for the wildlife, the heritage of the hills, and the consequences for students and the people living on the north side of Sioux City, we decided to voice our concerns to our elected and appointed officials. According to Tina, from there, involvement spread organically in the best way possible. All major local news outlets covered the issue multiple times. Teachers got involved over traffic and dust concerns for their students. Carrie started an online petition opposing the development that accumulated more than 1,100 signatures from Sioux city residents and over 400 more signatures from those who live in or have ties to Siouxland. LHAS and the Northwest Iowa Sierra Group of the Sierra Club officially supported the petition. Tina and Carrie said that while some of the more than 100 petition comments showed concern about the erosion, dust, and trucks that would result from the development, a majority were concerned about losing the environmental value of the hill. People from all walks of life care about the environment.

So why preserve just one hill? Because we care. We care about each other, We care about the wildlife, We care about the unique geological heritage entrusted to us. We care about the potential negative consequences of development. We care about the impacts of development on those already living in the area. As we discussed at coffee, who asks the neighbors, once the development is put in, how it has affected them?

This particular hill has been farmed, so it is not unique biologically, but it is a loess hill, and it represents open space that we have lost in Iowa over generations. There is precious little undeveloped space left. Eric Wissing told me that as a child growing up in Sioux City, he and his friends used to refer to the hills in Sioux City's northside as the mountains. Now many of them have been cut down and turned into housing developments. I do not want to have to lament to my grandchildren of what we used to have in Siouxland. I don't want to have to recall which birds we used to see, but seldom or never see anymore. Some stories like that are already told among LHAS members. I don't want to have to tell my grandchildren that we failed to preserve what was entrusted to us so that they, too, could enjoy nature. I want them to be able to walk to the top of a loess hill and experience a little piece of heaven.

So we came together this summer to speak for one hill. The City Council said that they heard from more people on this issue than they had heard from before on any other issue. And the development was

stopped—for now. A modified proposal may come back in a few months. An enforceable plan to protect the hills in Sioux City does not yet exist (though we are working on one). We may need another community mobilization to save this hill, and others.

In Jane's words, this is the job of environmental organizations. We need to protect the politically active. It may be uncomfortable, but it is possible that change will not happen unless people are occasionally uncomfortable. LHAS is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, one of the oldest and largest non-profit environmental organizations in America. Do we truly want to be an environmental organization for Siouxland? Last year we wrote a Constitution, revised our By-Laws, approved both, and elected a new Board. What will we do this year? Do you want to see us become more involved in environmental issues in Siouxland? Then we need your help. Come to our meetings. This includes our board meetings, which precede our programs. Everyone is welcome. Do you want us to be a bird club? Contribute your ideas of what that means. Do you want us to report on environmental news in Siouxland? Do you want to see us help to preserve land? Restore species? Reduce and clean up pollution and polluted areas? We have a new, streamlined committee structure of which you can be a part. Like what happened this summer, we can work together for good. Because we care. And then we can go out for coffee and talk about all of the species that we still see in our Loess Hills, rather than what was lost.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### LOESS HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY

**Thursday, September 5—LHAS Monthly meeting** 7:30 pm DPNC. Join us for potluck supper at 6:15 for fun and fellowship. Please bring your own table service. Program: Geoglyphs of Correctionville, Iowa. Kathy Koskovich from Correctionville will discuss the finding of some very rare geoglyphs in the bluffs near Correctionville. The finds have been an exciting event for Native American tribal people, state archaeologists, and the public. They were discovered when surveying for the expansion of Highway 20.. Board meeting 5:15 pm. All are welcome to attend.

**Saturday, September 7—Show and Go Outing** 7:30 am. Meet at the Northwest corner of the Super Walmart parking lot on Singing Hills Blvd. An email will be sent shortly before the 7<sup>th</sup> to advise you of the probable destination and lunch plans. Our web site outings page will also be updated at that time. Contact Jerry VonEhwegen at [jerryvon@cableone.net](mailto:jerryvon@cableone.net) or 276-1546 for more information.

**Thursday, October 3—LHAS Monthly meeting.** DPNC 7:30 pm. Terry Sohl, from Brandon, SD, will regale us with stories and outstanding photos from a recent three week trip to Australia. Australia is an extremely large country with very diverse landscapes and living conditions. Terry's presentation will include the Sydney area, Coffs Harbour, Cairns in the tropical northeastern part of Australia, and the Atherton Tablelands. Board meeting at 6:15 pm. All are welcome to attend.

**Saturday, October 5—Show and Go Outing** 7:30 am. Meet at the Northwest corner of the Super Walmart parking lot on Singing Hills Blvd. An email will be sent shortly before the 5<sup>th</sup> to advise you of the probable destination and lunch plans. Our website outings page will also be updated at that time. Contact Jerry Von Ehwegen at [jerryvon@cableone.net](mailto:jerryvon@cableone.net) or 276-1546 for more information.

### DOROTHY PECAUT NATURE CENTER

Exit 151 I-29, Take State Road 12 North for 4 miles to the Nature Center. To register for events or for more information call 712-258-0838 Or check our website – [www.woodburyparks.org](http://www.woodburyparks.org)

**Tuesday, September 10—Nature Tales** 10:00 am. DPNC. Preschoolers, join us with an adult for this special story time on Monarchs. We'll hike too, weather permitting. Please pre-register by calling 712-258-0838 or email [tkruid@woodburyparks.org](mailto:tkruid@woodburyparks.org).

**Thursday, September 12—Monarch Butterfly Tagging in the Prairie.** 6:00 pm we will search for any migrating monarchs and hope to tag them on their journey to Mexico. Meet at the Talbot Road entrance to the Sioux City Prairie. We will be walking through the tall grass and the terrain is uneven and hilly. Long pants and sturdy closed toe walking shoes are recommended. Free! The prairie is located approximately ½ mile north of the Military Rad and Talbot Road intersection in Sioux City.

**Saturday, September 21—Nature Calls** 6:00-10:00 pm. Sioux City Convention Center. Fundraiser featuring beer and wine tasting, nature art, and charity auction to raise funds for the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. Call 712-258-0838 for tickets or purchase online at <http://woodburyparks.org/>

**September 21-29—Loess Hills and Heritage Week**

**Tuesday, October 1—Siouxland Big Give.** [www.siouxlandbiggive.org](http://www.siouxlandbiggive.org). Siouxland Big Give is a 24 hour time of giving where Siouxland area supporters are invited to give back to their favorite local charities and help them earn valuable matching funds. Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center is one of the agencies featured in which you can contribute funds. Help us raise funds for our live animal exhibits, the turtles, snakes, fish, hawk and owl!

**Saturday, October 5—Zen in Nature** 7:00-9:00 am DPNC. We'll gather early in the morning. We'll sit. We'll walk in the woods (called "kinhin"), We'll do qigong. We'll sit some more. Fabulous way to start the day with a full dose of Zen in nature! No experience required. For more information, contact Dan Pecaut at 712-252-3268 or [dpecaut@gmail.com](mailto:dpecaut@gmail.com).

**Saturday, October 5—Broken Toe Run** Stone State Park. Sponsored by Friends of Stone Park. For more information contact Friends of Stone Park at [friendsofstonepark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofstonepark@gmail.com) or check their Facebook page for updates.

**Sunday, October 6—Pheasants Forever Youth Day** 11:00 am – 2:00 pm Little Sioux Park, 2 mi SW of Correctionville. All youth up to age 18 are welcome to participate in air rifle shoot, 22 rifle shoot, and clay pigeon shoot. Lunch provided and there will be a special youth gun raffle. Contact Scott at 712-277-2263 for more details and pre-register at [www.woodburycountypf.org](http://www.woodburycountypf.org). Must provide own shotgun and shells and children over 12 must provide valid hunters safety ID to shoot clay pigeons.

**Tuesday, October 8—Nature Tales** 10:00 am DPNC. Preschoolers, join us with an adult for this special story time on squirrels. We'll hike too, weather permitting. Please pre-register by calling 712-258-0838 or email [tkruid@woodburyparks.org](mailto:tkruid@woodburyparks.org).

**Saturday, October 12—Wildlife Photography How To Program** 1:00-3:00 pm. DPNC. Local Sioux City Camera Club members Michael Greiner and Douglas Conrad will present examples of their work and discuss techniques, composition and equipment used in making the images. The session will cover bird and animal subjects with emphasis on what can be found locally. Program is geared for beginners (minimum age 10) and advanced photographers alike. Program is free. Pre-registration is requested. Minimum # needed to have program is 15. For more information contact Michael Greiner at [mpgreiner@hotmail.com](mailto:mpgreiner@hotmail.com) or 712-251-0040.

## **ADAMS HOMESTEAD AND NATURE PRESERVE**

Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve is located 1 mile west and ½ mile south of I-29, Exit 4 in South Dakota. For information and pre-registration, call (605) 232-0873 or e-mail [jody.moats@state.sd.us](mailto:jody.moats@state.sd.us)

**Wednesday, September 18—Ladies Archery Night** 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm. What a great time to learn a new skill and hang out with your friends., Our instructor, Norb Ruhland, will teach you the basics and safety of archery. We will practice our new skills at the brand new archery range at Adams Homestead.

**Wednesday, September 25—Monarch Tagging** 6:00 pm. Monarchs take an incredible journey **down to Mexico to hang out in the winter**. Join us for a neat project that helps scientists study the migration pattern of this super **butterfly**.

**Friday, October 18—Little Naturalist Program** 10:00 am. The Little Naturalist program is for toddlers ages 2-4 years old and their parent or guardian. Kids learn about the outdoors through games, crafts, activities, and stories.

**PLYMOUTH COUNTY PARKS** Hillview Park is located west of Hinton, Iowa at 25601 C60. For information and registration call Victoria at 712-947-4270 or e-mail [ddowhower@plymouthcountyparks.com](mailto:ddowhower@plymouthcountyparks.com) or visit us on Facebook at Plymouth County Conservation or our website at [plymouthcountyparks.com](http://plymouthcountyparks.com)

**Thursday, September 12—Butterfly Tagging at O'Brien Prairie** 6-7 pm Take an active role in a huge, nationwide citizen science project at O'Brien Prairie. Help catch and tag monarch butterflies as they are enroute to their wintering grounds in Mexico. Learn more about the prairie and the insects that utilize it in the late summer. Pre-register by noon on September 11. Minimum 6 and maximum 50 people Long pants and a water bottle would be good choices for participants on this hike.

**Saturday, October 12—Halloween at Hillview** 6-8 pm Campers will hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. Reservations for campsites may be made on September 3 after 8 am by phone. Trick-or-treaters can park on either the north or south side of the park. Spooky hikes start at 8 pm. Meet at picnic shelter. Check out the Festival Market from 4-6 pm at the Center for Outdoor Learning before trick-or-treating.

**Knee High Naturalists—September 21: Monarchs on the Move, October 19: Fall in the Forest** Program for 2-5 year old children and their caretakers held at Hillview Park in the Center for Outdoor Learning at 10 am. Cost is \$3 per child. Please register by noon the day prior to the program. Outdoor activities will be modified if weather conditions are not favorable. Dress appropriately for the weather.

## **LHAS OUTINGS**

by Jerry VonEhwegen

**Saturday, April 27--** Bob & Phyllis N., Rex R., Paul R., Gary H., Jan N., and Jerry V. participated in our April outing. It was a nasty morning with steady rain, strong winds, temps in the low 40's which dropped to the mid 30's as the morning progressed! We decided to bird sheltered areas as much as possible due to

the wind, rain, and probable poor road conditions, although, we did make one quick stop at New Lake. We started at Crystal Cove and then tried New Lake which had a few waterfowl bobbing up and down in the waves. We then made stops at Bacon Creek, Floyd and Logan Cemeteries, with a final stop at Stone Park where the rain let up and we found quieter conditions and some good birds in Pammel Valley. A couple cars checked a few other areas before heading home. The rest of us found a nice lunch at downtown Perkins.

Considering the weather conditions, we did find a respectable total of 56 species for the day. Highlights included several Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Waterthrush, Palm Warbler, Balck & White Warbler, Belted Kingfisher, Osprey, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and swarms of Tree and Northern Rough-winged Swallows foraging over Turtle Lake. Thanks to all the hardy birders who participated!

**Freiday, May 10 through Monday, May 13** Our May outing was our annual Birdathon. 12 teams of 31 birders found a total of 65 species. A summary of the Birdathon and a listing of the species seen can be found on our web site on the Birdathon Page.

**Saturday, June 8** Bob & Phyllis N., Rex R., Paul R., Chuck J., Donna P., James B., Bill & Dotty Z., Anne S., Jan N., Jerry V., and newcomers Dave & Terri Sage participated in our June outing. It was a beautiful morning at 70 degrees, with clear skies and a light breeze. Temps hit the low 90's later in the day. We made stops at Dairy Ponds South, 280<sup>th</sup> Square, Owego Wetlands, and Fowler Forest Preserve before lunch at the Crossroads Pub in Smithland. One car checked out the Oak Ridge Conservation Area on the way home. We recorded a total of 82 species for the day with a few of the species being seen at participant's homes before and after the outing.

Highlights included: Yellow-headed Blackbird, Redhead, Orchard Oriole, Blue Grosbeak, Wood Thrush, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Snow goose, Purple Martin, 3 Upland Sandpipers entertaining us at 280<sup>th</sup> Square on the road and then 2 of them putting on a flying display as they circled over our cars, a large young Bald Eagle on a nest south of Owego with 2 adults nearby in a tree, and 4 good birds reported from the Zales home—Black-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Eastern Whip-poor-will, and Summer Tanager. Another interesting sighting was a Luna Moth at Fowler Preserve. It is in the Giant Silk Moth family and gets its name from its moon-like spots. It has lime-green colored wings and a white body. They are not rare, but are rarely seen due to their very brief (7-10 day) adult lives and nocturnal flying time. The entire species listing can be found on the Outings Highlights Page on our web site at: <http://lhas.tripod.com/> Thanks to all who participated and it was great to have Dave and Terri Sage as first time participants

**Saturday, July 18** Bob & Phyllis N., Bill & Dotty Z., Dave & Terri S., Rex R., Donna P., Chuck J., Gary H., Brian H., Jan N., Jerry V., and first timer Debbie Lewison along with Zales Family members Amy-Maggie-Millie Marincic participated in our July outing. Early morning rain showers moved out of the area just in time as we met at the Zales' parairie home near the Broken Kettle Grasslands. The roads were a little soft from the rain, but a nice breeze with cloudy skies and temps in the 70/s made for some good birding conditions during most of the morning. We headed north on North Ridge Road where there were some nice large grassland areas at the northern end of that road where we found 3 target birds—

Loggerhead Shrike, Bobolink, and Blue Grosbeak. After a break at Casey's in Akron, we birded other areas of the Broken Kettle Grasslands before gathering at the Zales' home for lunch.

Other highlights included Grasshopper Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Bell's Vireo, Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Black-billed Cuckoo, and 2 Eastern Kingbirds harassing a Red-tailed Hawk with one hitching a ride on the Hawk's back! We enjoyed a great lunch at Zales' guest house with venison brats, hot dogs, melon, strawberries, salad, etc. and Chuck's birthday cake topped with Bill's home-made soft ice cream. We recorded a total of 62 species for the day. The entire species listing can be found on the Outings Highlights Page on our web site at <http://lhas.tripod.com/>. Thanks to all who participated and many thanks to the Zales for hosting us for a great lunch at their beautiful prairie home. And it was great to have Debbie L. and 3 of the Zales' family visiting from Nevada as 1<sup>st</sup> time participants.

**Saturday, August 3** Bob & Phyllis N., Anne S., Paul R., Rex & Maria R., Jerry P., John & Sharon P., Jeanette H., Pat J., Bill & Dotty Z., Chuck J., Donna P., Jan N., and Jerry V. participated in our August outing. The morning was mostly cloudy with calm conditions and 68 degrees. We made our first stop at the Sandhill Lake area where we found a good number of shorebirds to test our ID skills and several species were recorded. After a pit stop in Sloan, we continued on to the 280<sup>th</sup> Square area north of Owego Wetlands. One of the highlights there were 3 Green Herons perched on a irrigator which is not currently in use since a large portion of the area is in some type of conservation program and many species of birds are now nesting in the area. On the visible water we found broods of American Coots, Pied-billed Grebes, and Redheads. Other nesters likely include Grasshopper Sparrows, Meadowlarks, Upland Sandpipers, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds to name a few. (if you build it, they will come.)

After a good morning of birding, we gathered at Chuck and Donna's home in Sioux City for a delicious lunch of salads, sandwiches, chips, cookies, ice cream, etc. Their many flowers and bushes were alive with lots of busy butterflies. We recorded a total of 75 species for the day. Other highlights included Marsh Wren, Sedge Wren, Blue Grosbeak, Western Kingbird, Upland Sandpiper, Purple Martin, and Grasshopper Sparrow. The entire species listing can be found on the Outings Highlights Page on our web site at <http://lhas.tripod.com/>. Thanks to all who participated and a special thanks to Chuck and Donna for hosting us for lunch!

#### LHAS CHAPTER Executives

President	David Hoferer	847-660-0650	dhoferer@uwalumni.com
Vice President	Paul Roisen	712-301-2817	roisenp1950@gmail.com
Secretary	Randy Williams	712-259-4705	randy.vickie.williams@gmail.com
Treasurer	Jeri Watkins	712-389-6342	jkbwatkins@aol.com
Board Members			
1.	Jerry VonEhwegen	712-276-1546	jerryvon@cableone.net
2.	Donna Popp	712-174-1979	dpopp@cableone.net
3.	Anne Shaner	712-252-2182	shanerga@msn.com
4.	Rex Rundquist	712-251-0345	rrundquist@aol.com
5.	Dotty Zales	712-540-0952	zales66@hotmail.com

## LOESS HILL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

By Donna Popp

Loess Hills Audubon Society Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Option 1: All monies go to directly to the Chapter for LOCAL use.

**“Chapter Only” membership: Loess Hills Audubon Society.** (See below for membership levels)

Student to age 24--\$12/00

Family--\$20.00

Bluebird \$35.00

Great Egret \* \$50.00

Osprey\* \$100.00

Bald Eagle\* \$250.00

Peregrine\* \$500.00 \*Certificate of Honor for these levels.

Make check payable to **Loess Hills Audubon Society**

Send application and check to Donna Popp, 630 Surrey Lane, Sioux City, IA, 51106

Option 2: Monies go only to National organization—it includes dual membership

**First Time National Audubon membership** \$20 and up.

Entire amount of the “First Time” National Audubon membership is returned to the local chapter for our use. Make check payable to: **National Audubon Society**

Send application and check to Donna Popp, 630 Surrey Lane, Sioux City, IA 51106

**National Audubon Society RENEWALS** \$20 and up

Send check to National Audubon Society (H52)

P.O Box 97194

Washington DC 20090-7194

Renew online at: [audubon.org/renew](http://audubon.org/renew) (copy and paste in browser if necessary)

Questions? Contact Donna Popp at: 712-274-1979 or [dpopp@cablone.net](mailto:dpopp@cablone.net)



