



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
March 2019

www.breckenridgeikes.org



COMING EVENTS

MARCH 2019

- 10 Daylight Saving Time starts!
- 12 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 26 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm
John Moriarty - *The Field Guide to the Natural World of the Twin Cities*

APRIL 2019

- 9 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 22 Earth Day
- 23 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm

MAY 2019

- 4 Pancake Breakfast & Plant Sale 8 am
- 14 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 27 Memorial Day
- 28 Social/Educational Meeting 7:30 pm

Social/Educational Meeting

Tuesday, March 26, 2019 7:30 p.m.

John Moriarty

A Field Guide to the Natural World of the Twin Cities

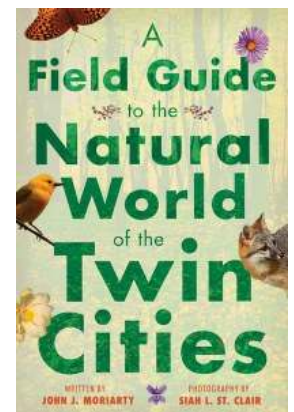
The program will highlight the photos and maps found in John Moriarty's new book, *A Field Guide to the Natural World of the Twin Cities*.

A member of the Breckenridge Chapter, John will introduce various natural areas and

habitats across the Twin Cities and the plants and animals you can find in them.



John is senior manager of wildlife for the Three Rivers Park District where he works on restoring habitats, especially prairies, and a variety of wildlife. He has been a natural resources manager for the park systems of Ramsey and Hennepin counties and has been exploring the Twin City habitats for over 30 years. He is active in local and national natural history organizations and is author of five books on Minnesota natural history, including *Amphibians and Reptiles in Minnesota* (Minnesota, 2014) with Carol D. Hall.



If you can provide light refreshments for our Tuesday meetings, please contact Barbara Franklin 763-657-1907 Or bbfrankli@gmail.com

Mar 26 - Janette Lamber
Apr 23 - Karen Ostenso
May 28 - Judy Arnold



Minutes - Breckenridge Chapter IWLA BOD meeting minutes February 12, 2019

A quorum of board members was not present: Steve, Tim, Joe, John and Dick attended.

Meeting was called to order with recitation of the Ike's member pledge: *To strive for the purity of water, the clarity of air, and the wise stewardship of the land and its resources; to know the beauty and understanding of nature and the value of wildlife, woodlands, and open space; to the preservation of this heritage and to our sharing in it.*

Issues:

We reviewed some positive conservation developments including

- the new Public Lands Bill that protects millions of acres of land and reauthorizes a major conservation program
- the Governor's decision to continue the lawsuit that challenges the PUC's approval of Enbridge Line 3 saying it did not properly evaluate, the kind of long-range oil demand forecast required by law.
- a temporary delay at least until next winter by SAExploration to start seismic testing on the fragile ANWR coastal plain.

Dick updated us on Oxbow Park's North Arm prairie restoration to benefit pollinators (see p.). Members were encouraged to attend the open house at Champlin City Hall to learn more details and to show support. At the initial open house there was widespread concern voiced by adjacent property owners about the placement of a Hennepin County asphalt trail (8-10 ft wide) too close to their backyards. Engineers assured attendees that the map was only trying to show the general route and not exactly where it would end up being.

Joe announced that the meeting date with Brooklyn Park City committee to recommend a plan for allocating funds from the recently passed Park Bond Referendum has been postponed. Jim and Tim have volunteered to attend with Joe when it is rescheduled. Joe sees a good opportunity to attract new members if we offer to hold future meetings at our Chapter House.

The group further discussed last month's controversial draft population resolution of Dell's which among other things, would place a ten year moratorium on all immigration to the USA. Strongly differing views about it were expressed by board members.

Ideas for speakers for April, May and June were solicited by Dick.

John presented Holiday Party financials. Attendance was not as high as expected so the catered dinner caused us a loss of several hundred dollars. Ideas for next year included ordering servings more conservatively and making the dinner fee mandatory, not just a suggested donation. Nevertheless, it was felt the benefits of our Holiday Party and silent auction made it well worthwhile despite the shortfall. An annual summary for 2018 was given to members

Building and Grounds:

- Men's toilet lifted and blockage found to be a piece of the plexi-glass splash-guard broken off the adjacent wall.
- Furnace was inspected after reports of smelling of gas outside Chapter House. No problems were found but we were reminded of 32 year age of the furnace. Suggested replacement soon. Decision made to order Service Plus appliance repair plan from CenterPointEnergy.
- Ice dam problems have been noted on the older section of the building. A consultation with insulation professionals has been requested to advise on where the heat is entering the attic. Large gaps in the ceiling panel joints are visible.

We're Using 100% Green Electricity How about you?

Our Breckenridge Chapter of the Izaak Walton League switched to 100% solar energy in February of this year. We were able to do this because conservation minded citizens of Minnesota elected legislators who enacted laws requiring a gradual conversion of our energy sources from dirty coal-fired generation to clean solar and wind. Many new energy companies saw the good business opportunity and now more than 100 community solar gardens exist in Minnesota.

As you know, our Chapter House is under a canopy of large burr oaks that block the sun, ruling out rooftop solar installation. So we took advantage of one of Clean Choice Energy's plans that allow you to "simply make the switch, and *they* make sure all the energy you use is replenished on the grid with 100% clean wind and solar power". In our case, we were connected with a solar farm that was turned on in February. Xcel Energy still handles billing and we hope to save up to 5% on your utility bills.

MPR News last week, in a piece titled "Minnesota's solar capacity jumped almost 50 percent last year", said "the state's total solar capacity is now about 882 megawatts — enough to power over 100,000 homes...allowing renewable energy to bypass nuclear to become the state's second-largest electricity source."

Another way to advance our world's switch to carbon-free energy is to take advantage of one of the new generation of all electric vehicles. As battery technology has improved, driving range has been extended significantly (to over 200 miles). Range is still not where it ideally needs to be, especially in our cold climate, but it is more than adequate for one vehicle in a two car family in urban settings like the Twin Cities with average daily commutes that are less than 50 miles each way. Our legislature is considering spending more money this year to help build more charging stations across Minnesota.

Something we might think about for our Chapter would be providing a charging station in our parking area. Right now, Hy-Vee supermarket provides free charging in the parking lot outside their Brooklyn Park location.

Written by Tim Johnson, Chapter Energy Representative



Desalination and the Environment

Desalination is gradually being used more and more to meet demands for water useful for human consumption and irrigation. It is the only known source of fresh water that is not dependent on rainfall. The need is increasing due to population growth, limited availability of surface water, poor resource management, water quality deterioration and supply depletion. The majority of the plants are on the coasts of the Arabian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, China, Australia, California and Florida. Seventeen percent of the world population uses desalinated water. Kuwait gets all of its water from salty water.

Several processes have been developed. Reverse osmosis and distillation, i.e. heating and then condensing, seem to be the most commonly used. Reverse osmosis forces seawater through thin membranes that do not allow salt to pass through them. The membranes need to be cleaned frequently, using chemicals such as chlorine. All methods require lots of power; they all need to extract water from the ocean; and they all discharge lots of brine which then needs to be disposed of.

There are environmental ramifications at every stage. Drawing in seawater kills marine life and disrupts the biodiversity of species in that area. The processes use energy generally derived from fossil fuels, so all of the effects of power plants are involved. The power plants and the desalination plants are usually in densely populated areas, so noise and air pollution impact people and wild life.

The cleaning of the membranes in reverse osmosis uses cleaning chemicals and heavy metals. Furthermore, the temperature of the discharged water has been reported to be 7.8°C higher than the ambient water temperature, decreasing the dissolved oxygen in the water.

The most worrisome issue is the disposal of the briny effluent. In many cases, it is pumped back into the ocean. The output of reverse osmosis is 42 percent freshwater and 50 percent brine. The brine is made of concentrated salt, heavy metals, cleaning chemicals, and heat. Brine is heavier than seawater so it sinks and suffocates plankton and kills fish eggs and larvae. Some organisms do not adapt

readily to the heat or the increased salinity. Biodiversity diminishes. The Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea are all getting saltier already. Therefore, more energy is required to desalinate it and the effluent is even more briny.

Some improvements are being made in production of fresh water, energy use, and brine disposal. In general, the reverse osmosis process is more efficient than distillation methods. Solar energy is being explored as a means to decrease fossil fuel usage.

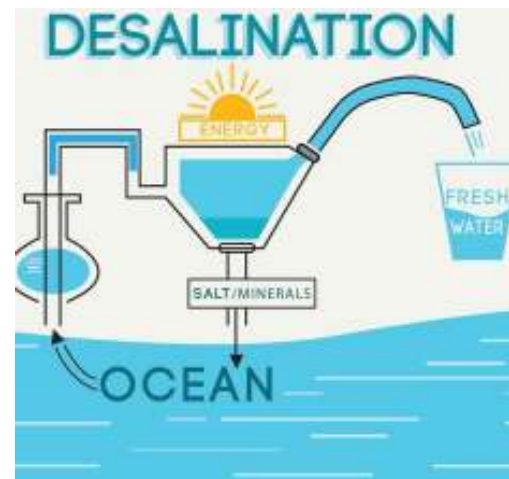
Other than discharging brine back into the ocean, it can be disposed on land, put into evaporation ponds, evaporated by thermal or mechanical means, or put into wastewater treatment plants. It can be diluted or piped farther from shore. A chemist in Qatar developed a process to convert it into sodium bicarbonate, decreasing brine disposal almost entirely.

Desalination is recommended to be the "last resort" to deal with fresh water shortage because of its high cost, intensive use of energy, and ecological footprint. Aggressive conservation measures and recycling of fresh water can lead to decreased need for desalination.

Desalination is both a reaction to, and a contributor to global warming.

*The Curious Reporter
(aka Karen Ostenso)*

Information was gleaned from Wikipedia, Scientific American, Pacific Institute and the International Journal of Environment and Sustainability.





THOMPSON'S TAKE

Vol. 15, No. 3

Feb 17, 2018



I LOVE OWLS!! There I said it and I'm proud! (Grin)

Marilyn and I went up to the Sax-Zim Bog this week. Spent 3 days in that area (though only parts of two days in the bog. S-Z Bog is north and west of Duluth and west of the town of Cotton. It's a fascinating place, well ... for birders. It's an area that was kind-of set aside for farming and logging many years ago. Farming was all but a bust but still goes on in places, probably without great profits. Logging, due to the wetness of the soil is largely efficient only in winter when the ground is frozen, and then, winters of deep snow are restrictive. These days, the boggy areas are dominated by black spruce, and tamarack, and where there is much cleared land the dominant plant is a shrub willow. It provides a nice diversity for birds, especially certain BOREAL birds. Boreal birds are normally found in Canada and places that far north on all continents. The boreal forest is one of pretty cold winters and a dependable amount of snow. Where it hasn't been logged off, most of the boreal forest is north of the continental United States. But some reaches down into northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and elsewhere to the east. Interestingly, many of the birds we see in the "bog," in winter, migrate there from Canada. I guess it's their way of being "winter" Minnesotans, a concept borrowed from the idea of winter-Texans. So, it's an exciting place for those of us who are unlikely to ever get to the Canadian boreal forests, especially in the winter, to see boreal birds.

"Yah! So, what did you see?" you ask. Well, I was getting to that!

But first, this. Being a kind of wary old f**t, I watched the weather to see when we would not get wholloped with a snow-storm while we were there. So I picked snow-free days, according to the weather forecast. I didn't care so much about the temperature because we were mostly in a pretty toasty car. And warm we stayed, unless I had the window rolled down. Wait ... "rolled" down? Windows don't **roll** down ... they're electric!

OK, unless I had the window electric-ed down, so as to get a clearer view, we were toasty. Lots of gravel roads up there lead to lots of dirty windows! Even with the windows down, Marilyn had some "warm" words for me for letting all that "dam' cold air in!" The word is damned. But who says damned unless they are showing off their intellect. And how does cussin' show off intellect?

OK ... she really didn't say that. She is too nice to say that.

Anyway, it was really quite warm up there, on those days I chose. In fact, Tuesday, it was over forty! Way too warm! And, just as you find at your feeders at home, birds are just not very active on nice warm winter days. No need to scurry about for food. Food is fuel for winter bird "furnaces." On warmer days they adjust their metabolism so not as much food is needed.

OK! OK! Get to what you saw!!

Well, again, not as much as we had hoped but we did get some nice peeks at these *boreal* birds ... Evening Grosbeaks, Gray Jays, Ravens, Common and Hoary Redpolls and ... remember my opening line? ... a **Boreal Owl** and a **Great Gray Owl**!! There were other birds but these were special. Except for the redpolls, you have to come up here to see the rest. The nice thing for Marilyn was that the two owls were lifers. She never saw one before in her life. The Boreal Owl was the first boreal bird we saw on this trip! Pretty nice.

I was stunned to see the little Boreal Owl. They are only 10" tall and tend to be quite secretive. But this little rascal blew it's cover and had the audacity to sit right out in the open, right along the road. In fairness, I would have probably missed it had some other people not found it first, and were watching it as we drove up.

We adopted the old adage of ... Wanna see birds? Look for bird-watchers!

Well, alright then ... NFT



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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 last 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.

Report on Oxbow Park

On January 30 and February 17 the Champlin City Council held a public hearing on continuing part of 112th Ave. partially into the North arm of Oxbow Park. Also on the possibility of creating an approximately 3 acre Native Flowering Prairie which the Ikes and the Champlin Garden Club fully support.

Several of us from the Ikes and the Champlin Garden Club were there but there were over 30 people that were against a future proposed trail through their neighborhood. So far the Ikes have remained neutral on the trail. The consensus of most everyone including the City Staff was to favor our quest for the Native Flowering Prairie.

The Trail

We can see how the “neighborhood” would be against the trail as proposed. So close to private properties would aggravate most. We talked to City staff about alternate routes and in the spring these

alternatives could be explored. A trail should not interfere with wetlands, the creek or wildlife. If the trail issue is further pursued we may want to take a stand. The City believes Hennepin County may want to extend a trail from West River Road to 109th Avenue in the school area. We will keep abreast of the situation.

Dick Brown

Chapter House Rental Rates

Non-Members:
(damage deposit: \$300.00; \$200 for previous renters)
Monday through Thursday \$275.00
Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Holidays \$350.00

Members:(damage deposit \$100.00)
Monday through Thursday\$125.00
Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Holidays \$175.00

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

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