Preserving, Promoting & Protecting the Sax-Zim Bog for Future Generations of Birds & Birders

Northern Hawk Owl (Surnia ulula)
by Alexa Carson
What a fantastic owl winter! Sax-Zim in winter 2018-19 hosted at least 3 Snowy Owls, a very cooperative Northern Hawk Owl, several visible Barred Owls, and our local Great Grays. Almost every one of our 4,377 visitors who came through the Welcome Center saw at least one owl during their visit. And a big bonus was the influx of Pine Grosbeaks with an astonishing percentage being rosy-red males. A very nice treat! But the birds had to share the spotlight with the mammals this year as no fewer than NINE Bobcats were recorded, and at least 3 different Pine Martens fed at one of the local feeders.

WE BE WEE

Friends of Sax-Zim Bog intends to stay a small, grass-roots organization that gets a lot done with little overhead. The only thing we hope to “grow” is our educational outreach, science & research projects, and most importantly, the number of acres we protect. In pursuit of this goal, our few employees perform multiple job descriptions, we only rent a tiny office in the Duluth Folk School, I do all the graphic designing in-house, we utilize volunteer labor when possible. All these things free up your donation dollars to accomplish our Mission — To Preserve, Promote and Protect the Sax-Zim Bog for Future Generations of Birds and Birders.

BOG BUGGY

I have a fantastic Board! Who else would let me buy an old Ford Econoline “mini bus”? It is a bit rough around the edges, and needs a bit of TLC, but the “buggy” had an unexpected surprise in store for us; the bus became a real social hub. Folks riding between stops on field trips would be chatting away, sharing stories and just enjoying good conversation. It also eliminates the dusty, gas-guzzling field trip car-pools of yore. Board Member Rubin Stenseng and myself have served as the chauffeurs.

SUMMER EXPERIMENT

A goal of Friends of Sax-Zim Bog is to work toward providing year-round education for folks visiting the Bog. One step towards this end was opening the Welcome Center on as many days as possible between mid May and mid July. This is the traditional “second season” of Sax-Zim when folks come to see the amazing variety of warblers, and especially add the Connecticut Warbler to their life list. And once again we were in for a surprise; many of the visitors were not hardcore birders, but folks who had simply heard about Sax-Zim and stopped by to see what was going on.

We recorded “only” 334 visitors during this two-month experiment but did learn some lessons. One is that we probably need to work towards being open much of the summer. But to do that we need to staff the building, and we don’t yet have the budget to do that. Another goal is to create more options and activities for non-winter visitors. Stay tuned!

FUTURE PAVED IN ROUGH-SAUN TAMARACK

The Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk at the Warren Nelson Memorial Bog has been a much bigger success than we could have imagined. Walking this path into the bog, one enters another world that is normally inaccessible without getting wet, lost or injured. I believe that many more boardwalk projects will be coming up.

WWBBWNMB

Not the easiest of abbreviations, but easier to say than the “Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk at the Warren Nelson Memorial Bog”! As I mentioned above, this boardwalk has been incredibly popular to visitors and locals alike. It was made possible by generous donations from our members, the IRRRB Culture & Tourism Grant, Donald Weesner Foundation, and Warren Woessner & Iris Freeman. And this summer, thanks to a donation from Gordon Andersson, we added a 90-foot spur that leads to a platform overlooking a regrowing bog that was logged a decade ago. Volunteer Lonny Gervais built us a bench for a memorial plaque in memory of Priscilla Dean and Peter Getman.

WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY?

To assess the economic impact of your visits to Sax-Zim, we launched a survey to see how much dollars were being spent in the region. This info will be critical when we demonstrate our growing economic importance in the area to county commissioners, legislators and granting agencies. Please complete a survey when you visit the Welcome Center this winter (and get a free sticker!).

GOOD NEIGHBORS

We designed a paper placemat chock full of owl natural history for our friends at the Wilbert Cafe in Cotton (photo below). Owner Sandy Simek has been a supporter of Friends of Sax-Zim Bog for years, and her winter clientele is made up of a fair portion of photographers and birders coming to Sax-Zim from all over the country. We printed 5,000 and donated them to the cafe.

Another good friend of the birders coming to our area is Mary Lou. Her popular feeders draw flocks of winter finches and masses of photographers. With money from our Hoeg Family Good Neighbor Fund I designed and built her a permanent wood photo blind. Placed near her feeders that attract Evening Grosbeaks, it will be ready to go this winter.

BOG BUDDIES DONATE TIME AND ENERGY

We could not run the Welcome Center in winter without our fantastic host/naturalists (Heather-Maire Bloom, Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus, Mark Dudek Johnson, Amy Johnson) and awesome volunteers: Ben Yokel, Carol-Ann
and Tom Bloom, Cindy and Chris Edwardson, Craig Simon, Eric Gdula, Julie and Gene Ollila, John Hatcher, Julie Grahn, Kristina Dexter-Nienhaus, Lori Williams, Dave Steininger, Nancy Fisher, Richard Hoeg, Rubin Stenseng, Sheryl Sastarich, and Steph Horner. Employee AND volunteer Mark Dudek Johnson continues to go above and beyond by making the 5-hour round trip to Sax-Zim to help on boardwalk and other projects without compensation.

Huge thanks to Clyde Morse who, without even being asked, plowed out our parking pad at the Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk all winter. We have a talented bunch of members! Thanks to all who created and donated Tiny Bird Art for our January Boreal Wings Gala Silent Auction. Volunteer Lonny Gervais built us not one, but THREE Aldo Leopold benches for the Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk and Gray Jay Way. Retired taxi-driver Frank Klabacek donated two beautiful mounts for the Welcome Center—a Ruffed Grouse and a Barred Owl. And Doreen Shoberg gifted us a cute little Saw-whet Owl mount. The Education Corner is growing!

All our Bog Buddy donors continue to amaze us with their (your!) generosity (listed in middle of this annual report).

WHAT'S NEXT?

I believe the biggest projects and priorities in 2019-2020 will center around big land acquisition projects for the Owls & Warblers Critical Corridor Project. These land deals may take years to complete, but we have put the wheels in motion. Another fun educational project will be the proposed above-ground bog garden/pool at the Welcome Center. New interpretive signage is planned for our boardwalks. More photo blinds may be in our future as well.

Owl research, banding and tracking will begin in 2019-20. Exciting! On the education front, Head Naturalist Clinton is working on a curriculum to accompany my film, “Boreal Wings,” that will go to all the schools in Minnesota.

One project that has begun but will take some time is a comprehensive Sax-Zim Bog Land Preservation Plan. This document will guide us in our use of each parcel of land we own. It will also outline how this land will be preserved for future generations.

…and of course, we have some surprises up our sleeve! Stay tuned via our website, Bog Blog, and Facebook. See you in the Bog!

Sparky Stensaas  
Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 14 Thurs.—Give to the Max Day  
Dec. 7 Sat.—Welcome Center opens for season  
Jan. 3-4 Fri-Sat.—BRRRRdathon  
Jan. 11-12—Boreal Bird Workshop  
Jan. 26 Sun.—Boreal Wings Gala in Mpls.  
Feb. 1-2—Boreal Bird Workshop  
Feb. 14-16—Sax-Zim Winter Bird Festival  
Mar. 7—Northern Owls Workshop  
May 2 Sat.—Things that Go Buzz, Croak, Hoot  
May 6, 13, 27—Warbler Wednesdays  
May 20 Wed.—Waffles & Warblers

 DETAILS AT www.saxzim.org (Events tab)
Friends of Sax-Zim Bog proposes to purchase nearly 1,000 acres of mature Black Spruce-Tamarack wetland bog as Phase II of our Owls & Warblers Critical Corridor Project. Acquisition of the property will preserve and protect habitat for a unique array of boreal birds and mammals, many not found in other parts of the United States, especially the Great Gray Owl and Connecticut Warbler. This acquisition will also provide educational opportunities to increase awareness of boreal birds and their bog habitat. Our goal is to begin linking bog tracts from North to South in Sax-Zim.

Most of the bog habitat in the 300-square mile Sax-Zim Bog is tax-forfeited land subject to logging just when the stand is prime for rare breeding birds such as the Great Gray Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, Canada Jay, Boreal Chickadee, and Connecticut Warbler. Therefore much of the critical mature habitat for these rarely-seen birds is quickly disappearing due to logging. Black Spruce is the second most valuable pulp wood in northern Minnesota.

Cornell’s Laboratory of Ornithology states that “according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey, Connecticut Warbler populations declined by about 2% per year between 1966 and 2015, suggesting a cumulative decline of 62% in that period….Partners in Flight includes the species on the Yellow Watch List for declining populations. Connecticut Warblers are vulnerable to some forestry practices that decrease available habitat, including logging…as well as fragmentation of habitat associated with forestry…”

Research projects in Sax-Zim by Smithsonian ornithologist Dr. Michael Hallworth found a very high concentration of Connecticut Warblers in one portion of our proposed parcels. Here he caught 6 Connecticuts in June of 2017 and put geolocators on them. Bird-song expert Dr. Donald Kroodsma studied nocturnal vocalizations of Connecticut Warblers along Owl Avenue in 2015 on another parcel that is included in this Critical Corridor Project. Both sites are currently on St. Louis County land and subject to logging.

You can help by donating to the Acres for Owls land fund. We are well on our way to our goal!
Meet Blue Dasher Bog!

One of Arvella Greenway’s greatest inspirations in conservation is famed author, naturalist, biologist Rachel Carson. So Arvella’s naming rights donation created a new identity for the former “East Stone Lake Bog.” It is now christened the Blue Dasher Bog; Honoring the Vision of Rachel Carson: Biologist, Conservationist, Author, Visionary. The sign was installed this summer, and flagging marks the route of a future hiking trail that will lead to the lake edge.

The inspiration for the name “Blue Dasher” came from a sighting Sparky and his canoe group had during the 2018 Bog BioBlitz on East Stone Lake. They found a Blue Dasher dragonfly (photo right), a rare dragonfly this far north. Other species of interest on this parcel include Black-backed Woodpecker, Canada Jay, Rattlesnake Fern, Spotted and Early Coralroot orchids. Diverse tract of land!

Thanks to Arvella and ALL OUR ONE-ACRE DONORS (map below) we have now paid off this parcel and have money in our Acres for Owls Land Fund for future bog preservation projects! Future plans for this site include hiking trail, interpretive signage, and possibly canoe access to East Stone Lake.
Early rain couldn’t dampen the spirits of over 50 participants who explored Sax-Zim from top to bottom on July 20, 2019. The weather just kept getting better throughout the day and it was hard to come back from the field! But everyone did return and it was so much fun to hear about all the group’s finds and adventures. Preliminary results show that we DOCUMENTED OVER 560 SPECIES of flora and fauna! Amazingly, this is about 1/3 of our entire Master List of species!

Highlights were 76 species of BIRDS including Red and White-winged Crossbills, Black-billed Cuckoo and Long-eared Owl; 23 species of SPIDERS; 75 species of INSECTS; Acadian and Striped Hairstreaks were two of the 29 BUTTERFLY species; 13 species of FUNGI; Dragonhunter and Zebra Clubtail were the stars of the DRAGONFLIES; 9 MAMMALS were found including Silver-haired Bat which was new to our Master List! 200-plus species of FLORA highlighted by Purple Fringed Orchids and a rare underwater-blooming Starwort. The MOTH crew of Kristina & Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus, Jessica Dexter and Ben Yokel stayed up a good chunk of the night to monitor their black light and sheets and identified 104 species including 12 new to our Master List!

We had a drawing for 10 door prizes at the end of the day...and I think we had 10 very happy winners! But everyone was a winner on this awesome day in the field!

HUGE THANKS to all our volunteer Field trip leaders!: fungi (Gene Kremer), aquatic insects (Murphy Steininger), birds (Jim Lind), butterflies (Jerry McCormack), moths (Clinton & Kristina Dexter-Nienhaus), insects and spiders (Sparky Stensaas), flora (Kelly Beaster), aquatic flora (Ethan Perry), insects (Dr. Tim Craig), bumble bees (Tony), flora (Otto Gockman), dragonflies/damselflies (Clinton Dexter-Nienhaus).
We tried something new this winter... The BOREAL BIRDS ADVENTURE WORKSHOP!

The 10 participants were literally from across the country; from Washington to Maryland. We packed a lot into our 12 hour days! Day 1 we birded Sax-Zim all day. We had a fun picnic lunch at the Welcome Center and dinner at the Wilbert Cafe. Day 2 took us to Duluth and up the North Shore to Two Harbors then inland to Isabella and the Superior National Forest. We stopped at Tettegouche’s visitor center and ended the day in Superior Wisconsin. To end the workshop, we had pizza and pop while we watched Sparky’s bog videos. A great time!

Bird Highlights were 8 individual owls (Great Gray, Snowy & Hawk Owl), King Eider, 150 Bohemian waxwings at close range, 7 Sharp-tailed Grouse on the lek, Black-backed Woodpecker and flock of White-winged Crossbills at Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk, Boreal Chickadees and many male Pine Grosbeaks. Join us in 2020!

Ten Folks came from Across the Country...Washington, Pennsylvania, Maryland

Boreal Bird Workshops tentatively set for Jan 11-12, & Feb 1-2, 2020

World’s Coldest Birdathon!

BRRRRdathon 2019 maybe better known as “Bird-a-Thaw-n”

The 9th Annual BRRRRdathon in early January was certainly not that cold, but all participants took home warm memories. Temps of 30-41 degrees were very “un-BRRRR-ish” but fantastic for the 6 non-motorized teams on fat bikes! Teams get 1 to 5 points for each species tallied; Rarer species garner more points. The “playing field” is all of NE MN & NW WI, Thanks to all who signed up and participated and especially to John Ellis who raised more than $400 in pledges!

The composite number of species was 61 which is above our low of 55 but well below our high of 73 species in 2017. WINNERS 2-DAY: Team Grousing Twitchers (Dave Benson, Lars Benson, John Ellis) spotted 46 species and tallied 87 points to retain their dominance of winning every BRRRRdathon ever held except one. They birded Sax-Zim Bog, Duluth, Two Harbors and Superior. WINNERS WINTERGREEN NON-MOTORIZED: Competition was fierce in the WinterGreen non-motorized division as six teams vied for birdathon supremacy. Team “Snowy Howls” (Deeana Erickson, Bryan French, Matti Erpestad) edged out Team “Shrikecycles” (Andrew Webster, Mikayla Haines, Tom Beery) by ONE point, 40 to 39.

AVIAN HIGHLIGHTS included King Eider and Pacific Loon on Lake Superior near French River, Tufted Duck near Pier B in harbor, Merlin chasing redpolls, Great Gray, Snowy and Hawk Owls in Sax-Zim, Belted Kingfisher along Tischer Creek, Varied Thrush & Bohemian Waxwings in Two Harbors.

Thanks to our brave participants!: WINTERGREEN NON-MOTORIZED: Team Snowy Howls (Deeana Erickson, Bryan French, Matti Erpestad), The Shrikecycles (Andrew Webster, Tom Beery, Mikayla Haines), Minnesota Fat (Sparky Stensaas), Agate Boys (Tim Bates, Steve Nelson), Chilly Chickapees (Steven Gebhardt, Megan Hogfeldt), Busted (Ken Gilbertson, Pat Kohlin); 2-DAY BRRRRDATHON: Grousing Twitchers (Dave & Lars Benson, John Ellis); 1-DAY BRRRRDATHON: Steve Millard in Otter Tail County.
$100,000
Kathy & James Cargill
EcoTrust

$20,000-$60,000
Mary & Dick Brainerd
To purchase additional 40 acres for
Warren Nelson Memorial Bog
Arruela Greenway

For Blue Dasher Bog, honoring the vision of Rachel Carson
Leuthold Family Foundation

$10,000-$19,999
Gordon Anderson
To purchase additional 20 acres for
Warren Nelson Memorial Bog.
Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation
Warren D. Woessner & Iris C.
Freeman
To support your work in education, construction, & land acquisition

$5,000-$9,999
Michael Hurten
Big Half Year for the Bog
Jeanne Kogl
Ken & Avis Reed
For Fermoy Bog

$1,000-$4,999
Jean Beyer
For Fermoy Bog
Shara & Erik Brockman
For Fermoy Bog
Central Lakes College, Natural
Resources Club
For Fermoy Bog
Bill Faber
For Fermoy Bog
Ed & Linda Hendrickson
For Fermoy Bog
Sue & Bruce Henke
Susan Kennedy
Valerie Kidwell
For Fermoy Bog
Richard & Lois King
For Fermoy Bog
Douglas Mayo & Susan Long
For Fermoy Bog
Heather Miller
Moor's Foundation
Laurel & Lisa Novak
For Fermoy Bog
Myron & Holly Peterson
Carl Racchini
For Fermoy Bog
Scott & Patricia Ray
Sheryl & Jon Sostarich
For Fermoy Bog
Michael Stelfes
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David Alexander
Steve Thompson & Ron Frey
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United Health Group
Randall Wade
Larry & Frankee Weber
For an acre of Fermoy Bog in
memory of Theodore Volker
Scott & Nan Wisherd
Gift membership for Jackie
Pechen & for Fermoy Bog
Ben & Heidi Yokek
For Fermoy Bog & Fermoy Boardwalk

$500-$999
Susan & Gene Bauer
Dave & Pam Benson

$100-$499
Sherry Abts
Laurence Anderson
Paul & Karen Anderson
John Arthur & Pamela Deerwood
Parker Backstrom & Holly Weston
Dave & Rita Baden
Paul Baepler & Melanie Brown
Jan Baker & Jackie Alschuler
Dick & Patti Bartlett
Tom & Paula Bartlett
Laura & Bill Baxley
Sherre Beam & Danna Harris
Donald Beck
Elizabeth & Jonathon Beck
Barbara Becker
Bee Noy She Council Bird Club
Andy & Jill Blei
Erik Berg
Greg & Pat Bluhm
Phyllis Boffering
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Diana Burlison
Julie Calligoure
Brent Cizek
Joel Claus
Judith Ann Collopy
Don Coons
Robert Crabb & Andrea Lambrecht
Maurine Davidson
Joan Day
Amy Simson Doman
Jerry & Carol Dirks
Sara Donaldson
Ben & Miea Douglas
Betsy & Sandy Dugan
Jackie Eastman
Kim Eckert
Proceeds from Birding
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Bob Ekblad
John Ellis
Ken & Carol Ellstrom
Richard & Cheryl Epps
Deborah Fellows
John Finnegan

Jeff & Michelle Fischer
Jim & Nancy Fisher
Randy Fredericksen
Ben Fritchman
Mr & Mrs J. S. Fisher
Mary Gabrys
Judy Gable & Shawn Wenzt
GiveMN.org Two “Look for the
Loons” $100 Giving Cards
donated by Nate Popkin & Lori
Williams
Dr Lyne Grace
Rita Goranson
Stephen Greenfield
Therese Guinn
Green Half Year for the Bog
Bette Halverson
Angie Hames
Anne Hanley
Phil & Helen Hartley
Lois & Bob Heller
Diane & Patrick Herbert
For the birds
Diane Herman
Sally Heuer
Ruth Hiland
In memory of Nancy Jackson
Michael Huber & Susan Fuchs
Barb Huberty
Douglas & Mary Beth Hunt
Jessica Jenner
In memory of Carrolie Jenner
Amy Johnson
Paul Johnson
Sandy Jorgenson
Bobbi & Paul Jung
Amy Kolan
Heidi Korstad
Wes & Deirdre Kramer
Karl Krause
Alice Lauzon
Peter Laurie
Melissa Lee
Al & Kim Loken
David Lith & Ann Inouye
Rob & Kimberly Macey
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Pamela Myers
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Carole Nimlos
Alan & Betsy Norgard
Beth Ann & Brendan O’Halloran
In honor of Lucy Halloran
Gene & Julie Olilla
Daniel Orr
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Gwen Papiernik
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Rodney & Ellen Sallee
Eileen Schantz-Hansen
Theresa Schein
Peter Schoenberger
Meggie Seely
Steve Wilson & Mary Shedd
Heather & Lee Simso

Annie Sloth
Kevin & Cindy Thurly Smith
Paul Spreitzer
Todd Stanich
Barbara Stark
Ruth Steams & Mike Mattson
Carol Stendahl
For purchase of a bench and
plaque in memory of Fay King
Will Stenning
In memory of Karen Kjolhau
Stan & Connie Stenssaa
Rubin Stenseng
Gift membership for Wendy
Grethen & Terry Brown;
& Doug Halden
Ruth & Dennis Stephens
Pamela Stevenson
Matthew Stratmoe
Laurie Strickser
Carolyn Sundquist
Jeane & Steve Tanamachi
Edward Therrien
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Bill Apker
Ruth Axel-Adams & Kieran Schwartz
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Carla Bates & Susan Pollock
Paul & Kathrynne Baumfrog
BD
Jim & Francie Beaster
Sarah & Karl Beaster & family
Corinne & Cory Bedaux
Kyle Belcher
Carol Bender
In memory of Dick Hartman
Pegggy Benson
Frank & Kathleen Bertsan
Carla Bergloff
In honor of Tima Squire
Glydias Berglstedt
Anne Bier
Milt Blomberg
Tom & Carol-Ann Bloom
Stephen Brockhold & Annmarie
Genuis
John Boland
Bill Boles
David Boon
Ron & Sara Borchardt
Linda Born
Becky Borscheim
In memory of Jon Mathson

Alison Bouchter
Shelley Bowman
Heather Bradford
Tom Branlund
Robert & Tassie Brautigam
Christine Bremer
In memory of Karl Bremer
Peggy Brennan
Judd Brink
Erica Brolin
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George & Lilie Harper
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Therese & Ed Cacek
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Tony Ernst
Karen Fairweather
Carol Falamakes
Susan Finnla
Carl Fischer
Bill Flahave
Martha Fleck & Eric Twito
John Fleming
Thomas Flynn
Forester John
Proceeds from Sax-Zim Bog
essential oil sales
Sax-Zim bird guide Gregg Severson did a Big Green Year in 2019, only birding under his own power. His efforts raised $561 for Friends of Sax-Zim Bog!

**SUSTAINED GIVING HELPS US BUDGET**
1. monthly via credit card
2. your Required Minimum Distribution from IRA

**info@saxzim.org**

*You can now donate stock! Click on the “Donate” tab at saxzim.org*

Give to the Max Day is coming up on November 14th. In 2018, bog buddy Nate Popkin of Duluth found us a “GTMD Loon” and earned us an extra $100. Thanks Nate!
For the last three seasons, my position was shared between Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory and Friends of Sax-Zim Bog. This season, my position is full time with FOSZB! This is a really exciting development, as I will be able to focus on Bog education, outreach, and citizen science. What else was accomplished in Year Four?

Education programming was expanded this year, with my certification to teach Master Naturalist courses. The Minnesota Master Naturalist program was started in 2015 with the intention to educate folks about our state’s major biomes and to engage a volunteer base for organizations. Anyone who has interest can become a Master Naturalist, regardless of educational background. More information can be found at www.minnesotamasternaturalist.org. This season, I have been able to teach 5 Advanced Training Courses, covering Winter Ecology, Tracks and Tracking, and even Ferns and Clubmoss Identification. I am looking forward to teaching further Master Naturalist Advanced Training Courses.

We acquired much needed field gear this year with a generous donation from Jeff Fischer that enabled us to purchase dragonfly nets, aquatic dip nets and hand lenses. Many thanks to Jeff for his donation and support of education in the Sax-Zim Bog! I had the opportunity to create educational props from owls that had been turned in to us. The real owl feet, wings, and skulls have been a great hands-on addition to my outreach programs.

This season saw an increase in outreach events. I was able to speak at the Northwoods Birding Festival in Manitowish Waters, WI, the Eveleth Phenology series, Springbrook Nature Center’s Spring Migration Celebration, and lead a field trip for the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations Small Scale Forestry Conference, which was held in Duluth this past June. I am always thrilled to share about Sax-Zim’s “bogdiversity”!

I would be remiss not to add that the Sax-Zim Master Species List is now over 1700 species. Talk about bogdiversity! I hope to see you in the Bog!
George Archibald of International Crane Foundation Highlights Gala

We managed to wedge the 2019 Boreal Wings Gala in-between bitter cold (Minus 32 when we left Duluth in early a.m.) and heavy snow (snow in Mpls held off until after the event), and over 100 of our loyal “Bog Buddies” attended! Once again we held the event at Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley, MN.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. George Archibald, founder and Director of the International Crane Foundation, delighted the crowd with a fascinating talk on the worldwide status of all 15 crane species. He gave special attention to the Sandhill Crane which is thriving in Sax-Zim and all over its breeding range. With George’s breadth of knowledge on this topic, he could have spoken for six hours straight...and we all would have been rapt.

The World Premiere of a new Clinton’s Critters on how Great Gray Owls hunt was a big hit. You may view this fascinating video on YouTube and our website under the “Natural History” tab. Sparky also updated members on the previous year’s successful ventures and exciting new projects including songbird and owl tracking research in the Bog in cooperation with the Natural Resources Research Institute.

The Tiny Bird Art Silent Auction included many fascinating pieces...All original works of art! Our Board Chair Lori also put together four baskets with the themes: Air, Fire, Earth & Water. Folk art bird ceramics by 90-year old Duluthian Ray Naddy also went for big bucks. Sparky and Clinton donated half day field trips. Thanks to all who donated pieces this year. What a creative bunch! The auction alone raised over $3,500!

Thank you to Lois and Richard King who protected another acre of Fermoy Bog with their generous donation, and an interested couple approached us about our next owl tracking research project. All told we raised over $7,300. Thank you to all our Bog Buddies!

Attendees sampled some creative bird-themed appetizers, caught up with old friends and made some new acquaintances. Lots of chatter and laughter going on! Hope you can join us in January 2020 for the next Boreal Wings Gala!

Over 100 “bog buddies” enjoyed keynote speaker George Archibald, themed baskets and tiny bird art were popular in the Silent Auction, and Gordon Andersson bought two; Olive & cream cheese Penguins; Jeffrey Saffle’s amazing wood marquetry Blackburnian Warbler; Folks enjoy the silent auction; George signs copies of his book, My Life with Cranes (top photo).

Shop the Sax-Zimporium!

2020 Bog Wild Calendar and Much More Under the “Shop” Tab on Our Website

Our popular calendar is hot off the press!
Over 90 stunning photos and all taken in the Bog in the last 12 months!

Calendar Only....$15
Calendar + Membership....$40
**Visitors to the Welcome Center in the winter of 2018-19**

4,377

...from 45 states & 5 foreign countries
Spain, Haiti, Canada, Denmark & England

After Minnesota, most visitors came from Illinois, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas, Iowa and Colorado

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**2018**

Thanks to a wonderful matching grant of $10,000 from Warren Woessner & Iris Freeman, you helped us raise a good portion of our operating expenses during Give to the Max Day 2018. **216 donors**

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**2018**

$34,689 given in 24 hours by...

---

**$323,693** donated by all of you to...

---

**Acres for Owls** since we began the program in 2013 —Thank You!

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**1733** Sax-Zim Bog species recorded

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**1176** Species with photos entered into our iNaturalist database

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*Go to www.inaturalist.org & search “Sax-Zim Bog” to see all the photos*

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**By the Numbers**

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**Educational Outreach**

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**2,014** participants attended Clinton’s programs and interacted with us at our table at events

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**12%** Visitors from Iron Range

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**57%** Visitors from Twin Cities

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Home locations for the 980 Minnesota visitors to the Welcome Center in the winter of 2018-19

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**19%** Visitors from Duluth

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**12%** Visitors from Greater MN

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Number of species recorded in our Sax-Zim Bog Master List database
Volunteer Bruce Knutsen donated his handmade chip-carved birder for the 2020 Gala.

Brady was a huge help at the Gala. He’s modeling our “Bogdiversity shirt.”

Visitors photograph warblers along the Warren Woessner Bog Boardwalk.

Sparky working on the new photo blind at Mary Lou’s feeders.

Our new “Bog Buggy” worked out very well for our Warbler Wednesday field trips.

Volunteer Carol-Ann Bloom hauling frozen deer rib cages for the birds...and she’s smiling!

Rubin Stenseng and Bob MacNeal cutting up bog boardwalk Tamarack decking.

John Latimer gave the board a tour of the SPRUCE bog climate change study in Itasca County.

Sarah Beaster, Ben Yokel and Carol-Ann Bloom get ready for the Boreal Wings Gala.

Head Naturalist Clinton sharing his knowledge of raptors with a Welcome Center visitor.

Welcome Center host/naturalist Mark Johnson fills the feeders.

Our Adopt-a-Highway Clean up crew. Thanks!

Getting the feeders ready for the birdies.

Taxidermist extraordinaire Frank Klaboeck donated a Barred Owl & Ruffed Grouse to the Welcome Center.
My favorite bog plant has to be Few-flowered Sedge, which I found in the Blue Dasher Bog this fall. However, my favorite find this fall was Lingonberry (Vaccinium vitis-idaea). I have never found Lingonberry before this fall, and I found it in several of the Sax-Zim Bog parcels. I am terrible at identifying birds, but I would be blown away if I saw a Snowy Owl or a Boreal Owl.

I am so appreciative of the Friends of Sax-Zim Bog for protecting these spruce bogs and other unique habitats. Much of our state is creating habitat for game animals like deer and grouse, while leaving other animals and plant communities behind. FOSZB puts power into the hands of all of us, pooling our resources to protect these properties for the foreseeable future.

I am a proud “Great Gray Groupie” and love getting to see a Great Gray each winter. However, Canada Jays and Boreal Chickadees both come in a close second as my favorite Bog birds. Now I’d really like to see an American (Pine) Marten. The Bog is my favorite winter birding HOTSPOT!

If there is one theme of my lifelong commitment to conservation, it is to do my utmost to not only instill the practice of conservation in my natural resource students, but also to teach them to “give back” to Mother Nature for all she gives us. For me the best way is to donate funds toward land stewardship through acquisition and preservation... and that is one of the strong attributes of Friends of Sax-Zim Bog.

Kelly is a Duluthian and is our “on-call botanist.” She recently completed surveys of most FOSZB bog parcels.

Dr. Bill Faber brings his students to the Bog each year. He and the club each “purchased” an acre of Fermoy Bog this year.
The Great Gray Owl is my favorite Bog bird, and still ranks in my top 3 all-time birds. There is no other bird experience I've had that matches the time I spend with one of them.

While I've had a brief glimpse of an Ermine (Short-tailed Weasel in its winter white coat), I have yet to photograph one. That's on my bucket list for this winter.

Every time I visit the bog, I find something to enrich my life. Some days it's the frost-covered willows, some days it's a flock of warblers, and on my luckiest days, it's an encounter with a Great Gray Owl. I want to be able to share this experience with others, and supporting the Friends, both with my time and my money, is an easy way to do exactly that.

My favorite Sax-Zim birds are the Bobolinks in the fields. Their bubbly song is just the best! Sandhill Cranes are a close second. I've never seen a Pine Marten in the Bog and would really like to. Of course a wolf or a moose would be a real treat as well.

It's important to support FOSZB in their efforts to preserve the habitat that supports all the plants and animals that we enjoy so much. Their efforts will make it possible for future generations to see Great Gray Owls, Pine Warblers and Purple Fringed Orchids and all the other wonderful creatures that call this place home. Equally important, I think, is the role FOSZB plays in educating everyone that visits so that we all understand and appreciate just how special the Bog is. As a volunteer at the Sax-Zim Bog I'm always learning something new - and it's a lot of fun.
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Fiscal Year 2018-2019
April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECEIPTS</th>
<th>FY 15-16</th>
<th>FY 16-17</th>
<th>FY 17-18</th>
<th>FY 18-19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$150,396</td>
<td>$86,997</td>
<td>$93,075</td>
<td>$379,892</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events &amp; Programs</td>
<td>$3,817</td>
<td>$7,903</td>
<td>$12,345</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Merchandise Sales</td>
<td>$10,407</td>
<td>$14,103</td>
<td>$22,616</td>
<td>$22,389</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Kind Donations (Goods, etc)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>$12,782</td>
<td>$2,544</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$228,373</td>
<td>$159,003</td>
<td>$256,768</td>
<td>$499,487</td>
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| DISBURSEMENTS  |            |          |          |          |
| Payroll        | $63,173    | $74,981  | $81,165  | $89,491  |
| Operations Expenses | $30,064  | $50,876  | $145,034 | $149,807 |
| Misc Expenses  | $2,436     | $702     | –        | –        |
| TOTAL          | $214,393   | $126,555 | $226,199 | $239,298 |

| SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) |            |          |          |          |
| TOTAL            | $13,980    | $32,447  | $30,569  | $260,189 |

**BALANCE SHEET**

March 31, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>3-31-2016</th>
<th>3-31-2017</th>
<th>3-31-2018</th>
<th>3-31-2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash (incl. liquid assets)</td>
<td>$58,579</td>
<td>$73,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other/Savings</td>
<td>$3,031</td>
<td>$3,034</td>
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<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td>$362,658</td>
<td>$384,086</td>
<td>$453,754</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$424,268</td>
<td>$460,278</td>
<td>$582,742</td>
<td>$872,617</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LIABILITIES & EQUITY |            |          |          |          |
| Liabilities        | $53,540    | $80,412   | $46,252   | $20,719   |
| Restricted Net Assets | $18,433  | $80,408   | $179,922  | $411,492  |
| Unrestricted Net Assets | $352,295 | $299,458  | $356,568  | $461,125  |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | $424,268  | $460,278  | $582,742  | $872,617  |

These people get serious work done! They are diligent and hard-working, cohesive and responsible. A terrific team.

All of us share a deep concern for this special place and its inhabitants. We will continue to uphold our mission as we move forward to Preserve, Promote and Protect the Sax-Zim Bog.

—Lori Williams, Board Chair