



Sara Blood &lt;hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org&gt;

## October Currents - News from MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge

1 message

**MN Valley Refuge Friends** <hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org>

Thu, Oct 14, 2021 at 11:23 AM

Reply-To: hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org

To: Sara Blood &lt;hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org&gt;



Bob Brereton spotted these owls snoozing up in the pine trees at the bottom of Hillside Trail near the Bloomington Visitor Center. Send photos taken at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge to be considered for future publication to [hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org](mailto:hello@mnvalleyrefugefriends.org). Photo / Bob Brereton.



### Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends Currents

Issue 3, Volume 3 | Oct. 14, 2021

Dear Friends,

October is a busy month at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Today, Oct. 14, is the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge's 45th birthday! A milestone such as this is a great time to reflect on the staff, volunteers and donors who support this great refuge. Thank you!

October 11 marked Indigenous People's Day. The following is a land acknowledgement that opened the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge community celebration on Oct. 2: "We're standing on the homelands on what is now Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. We honor their history on this land, their sacrifices, and their continued contributions and connections to our region today."

And Oct. 9-16 is National Wildlife Refuge Week, celebrating the great network of lands and waters that conserves and protects Americans' precious wildlife heritage. The Fish & Wildlife Staff at Minnesota are marking this occasion by organizing three self-led 5K options that can be found [here](#).

With the leaves changing and migration of insects, birds and snowbirds in full swing, October is an exciting season in Minnesota. Wherever October takes you, we hope to see you soon at the refuge.

**Sara N. Blood**  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends

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Bursting milkweed pods are a sure sign of the season. **Photo** / Cortney Smith, USFWS

## Refuge happenings

Listed events take place at the Bloomington Education and Visitor Center, [3815 American Blvd. E, Bloomington, MN 55425](#). Exceptions will include location details.

### Visitor centers update

Outdoor information desks will continue to be staffed Fridays-Sundays at the Bloomington and Rapid Lake visitor centers, from 12 to 4 p.m. except on Federal Holidays. Please Recreate Responsibly while visiting, and follow current CDC recommendations for mask wearing. Visit the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife [website](#) for the latest updates, including trail conditions.

## Bird watching walks

Oct. 11, 8-10:30 a.m. at Bass Ponds Trailhead, [2501 86th St. E](#), Bloomington, MN 55425  
To register: <https://signup.com/go/PRqQBeN>

Oct. 16 8-10:30 a.m. at Old Cedar Avenue Bridge  
To register: <https://signup.com/go/oQQmRyk>

Explore two of the best refuge units for bird watching in the fall season. We will spend time on these walks searching for birds only seen on the Refuge during migration. We will study the different species of birds and learn about other locations to search for birds during the fall migration. Join volunteer naturalist and guide for the Minnesota Valley Audubon Chapter, Craig Mandel, for an excursion for birders of all skill levels. If you have them, bring binoculars and a favorite field guide. Dress appropriately for the weather and bring a water bottle. Restrooms are available at both locations.

## Now showing at the Confluence gallery

Date: Now through Nov. 5

The exhibit will be available for online viewing: <https://artistrymn.org/confluence-gallery>.  
See a video segment about this exhibition [here](#).

"A Common Thread," a collection by artist Naomi Hart, will be on display virtually in the Confluence Gallery.

Hart tethers the natural world to her life story and pulls forth a source of strength, healing, and inspiration. She shares these stories — where memories and elusive interactions collide and meld, creating a dream-like "now"— through her ethereal artwork. Full of mystery, and surreal metamorphosis, Hart's etchings and drawings layered with beeswax infuse uniquely human attributes with symbols from the natural world, producing a common thread that connects us all.



Fall colors are about to pop on the Long Meadow Lake Unit. **Photo** / Joann Wu, practicum teaching intern.

## Wildlife watch

by Joann Wu  
Practicum Teaching Intern

As we transition into the fall season, October reveals the natural signs that summer has passed: shorter days, chillier mornings and evenings, flowering plants preparing for dormancy, changing leaf colors and fallen leaves on the ground. The refuge's prairie sites reveal signs of fall: goldenrods and milkweed in the prairie are drooping a little bit or even preparing to seed, and some of the trees have started to change colors and drop their leaves. For the most part though, the habitats and plants are still lively so the refuge can be a great place to witness and admire the seasonal changes that October offers.

October can also be an exciting time to bird watch as migratory birds make their way south. You may be able to see a bald eagle flying high in the open sky at the refuge as well as other raptors like different hawks and falcons. Or year-round residents like black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, and woodpeckers can be seen at the refuge too. Take in a little up-close bird watching at bird feeders at both visitor centers.

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## Before we go

A birthday celebration for the Old Cedar Avenue bridge was held Oct. 2. Check out this video, which highlights the festivities.





Image of brightly colored birthday presents. Photo / Pexels

## Happy Birthday, MN Valley NWR!

Help us celebrate the refuge's 45th birthday with a donation!

Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends works in partnership with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge to support a thriving urban refuge through education, conservation and nature-based activities.

Click [here](#) to make a financial gift to Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends. Whether you volunteer at the refuge, are a member, or leave a legacy through a planned gift, we truly appreciate your gifts of time, talent and treasure supporting the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge!



### Our Contact Information

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### Engaging People with Nature.

Minnesota Valley Refuge Friends is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Contributions are tax-deductible. Thank you for your support!

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