

Anderson Park

Irving & John Anderson County Park – 27201 Furman St NE, Stacy

Snow Buntings have been seen at the park!

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Lori Angeli, Editor

A large flock of Snow Buntings has been seen swirling over the snowy fields in the park. These songbirds are easy to distinguish in flight with their flashing white wing patches (see photo below).

If you see a group of Snow Buntings look closely as they often have a few Horned Larks traveling with them.

You will often find the birds in flocks in fields, prairies, roadsides, and shorelines.

Snow Buntings are very rugged birds and cold temperatures don't bother them. They breed in northern Alaska, Quebec and northern British Columbia, moving south in the winter to Southern Canada, and the Northern and Central United States (gives new meaning to Snowbird!).

The Snow Bunting normally feeds on the ground and almost wholly on seeds, but sometimes on insects. One of their favorite feeding areas is the

upper parts of beaches and sand dunes. In winter they feed on the seeds of taller plants that jut out above the snow. This is what they have been doing in the park.

When a snow storm comes Snow Buntings look for cover. When strong snow storms hit, they often feed at backyard feeders just before, during, or directly after the storm. Usually they only stay for a day, so make sure you spend some time enjoying them while they are there!

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Read more at Suite101:

[Snow Bunting](#)

<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/birding/35286#ixzz0cRsxPKM1>



This photo was taken on January 13th at Anderson Park by Steve Kingsbury. These beautiful birds have been seen frequently near the picnic shelter footings.

Where did all of the animals go?

You may have noticed as the weather got colder that some of our furry and feathered friends all but disappeared. Many of the birds we enjoyed during the warm months have flown south where there is an ample food supply. Bears, chipmunks, and skunks have gone into hibernation for all or part of the winter.

During hibernation, an animal's body temperature drops, and its heartbeat and breathing slow down into a deep sleep. This deep sleep allows them to conserve energy and survive the winter with little or no food.

True hibernators go into such a deep sleep that they are difficult to wake and may even appear to be dead. Their body temperature drops and breathing and heart beat slows down significantly. A hibernating woodchuck's heart rate slows from 80 to 4 beats per minute, and its temperature drops from 98 F to as low as 38 F. If its temperature falls too low, it will awaken slightly and shiver to warm up a bit.

Skunks, raccoons and some chipmunks are light sleepers, easily awakened. They may sleep during the most severe weather and wake to roam and eat during milder weather. Bears, the largest hibernators, do not eat, drink, or excrete at all while hibernating as long as six months.

Cold-blooded animals like fish, frogs, snakes and turtles have no way to keep warm during the winter. Snakes and many other reptiles find shelter in holes or burrows, and spend the winter inactive, or dormant - similar to hibernation.

Frogs, turtles and many fish hide under rocks, logs or fallen leaves. Some may even bury themselves in the mud. Cold water holds more oxygen than warm water, and frogs and turtles can breathe by absorbing the oxygen through their skin. Insects look for winter shelter in holes in the ground, under the bark of trees, deep inside rotting logs or in any small crack they can find.

Winter activities at the park

- Cross-country skiing - no groomed trails this season
- Snow shoeing
- Hiking
- Ice Fishing
- Horseback riding
- Bird watching
- Following deer trails and looking for antler sheds
- Identifying animal tracks in the snow



Remember, as always, there are no motorized vehicles permitted in the park

Another Successful Workday

Beautiful weather greeted volunteers at Anderson Park on October 24th. It was a successful work day and a lot of fun. Check out the new split rail fence, park sign and Spruce trees at the park entrance. We created a new trail through the woods, removed Buckthorn, and dug footings for the picnic shelter.

Special thanks to:

- ♦ **Rob Jutz** for his expertise and many volunteer hours of work designing and planning the picnic shelter;
- ♦ **Dave Vigstol** for volunteering himself and his brothers to help build the structure;
- ♦ **Barry Wendorf**, Parks Director, for guidance through the approval and contractual process and keeping everyone on track, and
- ♦ **Marlene Yenish** for taking outstanding photos at Park events (like these three!).



Winter Birding

Winter is a prime time to feed birds in your yard. Try increasing the numbers and species by selecting a variety of foods and offering them at different heights above the ground. Don't forget a bird bath (they need water all year long). Be patient and they will show up to entertain you.

It is easy to plan for winter bird feeding. There are three main choices of food: large seeds, small seeds, and suet. Large seeds include black-oil sunflower, striped sunflower, safflower, peanuts, shelled corn, ear corn and cardinal mixes that contain sunflower, safflower and peanuts. Peanuts provide a nutritious diet for birds, including Black-capped chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and Blue jays. Even Northern cardinals will come to a peanut feeder. Birds also love suet, especially woodpeckers.

The list of birds that favor sunflower seeds is long: Northern cardinals, Blue jays, Black-capped chickadees (pictured below), House and Purple finches, American goldfinches, Evening grosbeaks, White and Red-breasted nuthatches, and more.

First birds back in the spring:

- American kestrel
- Bluebird
- Eastern phoebe
- Horned lark (January)
- Red-winged blackbird
- Robin



Irving & John Anderson
County Park

27201 Furman St NE, Stacy

E-mail: andersonparkfriends@
frontiernet.net



Our mission is to preserve the natural beauty and primitive nature of Anderson Park and to assist with the planning, development, and management of its facilities.

We're on the Web!

<http://andersonparkfriends-isanti.org>

Become a member of Friends of Anderson Park now!

All donations are tax deductible and 100% of the donations will go toward the development of Anderson Park

- Individual Friend - \$25 /year
- Family Friend - \$50/year
- Business Friend - \$50/year
- Add an additional \$10 and be a member of MN Parks & Trails

Make check payable to: Parks and Trails Council of MN (write "Anderson Park" in the memo line)

Mail to: Friends of Anderson Park

C/o Diana Horrigan

27440 Vassar St. NE

Stacy, MN 55079

The park is located in the southeast corner of Isanti County in Minnesota. It lies on both sides of County Road 18, a quarter mile north of County Road 9 and two miles south of County Road 5

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events and check the website for additional details (www.andersonparkfriends-isanti.org)

- **Winter Event** – Stay tuned! We hope to schedule a chili dinner with fun family activities soon. Watch your mail for a flyer.
- **Spring Workday at the Park – April 17th**. WE NEED YOU! Come out, enjoy the weather, get to know your neighbors and get the park ready for the summer. Volunteers are needed to install trail gates and interpretive signs, clean up trails and roadsides, place new benches, provide wood duck and blue bird house maintenance, and bulletin board and picnic table construction.
- **Annual Bird Walk – May 15th at 8 a.m.** Join Joe Sausen from the Audubon Society for the Friends of Anderson Park's second annual bird walk. Last year over 35 different bird species were seen or heard including a golden winged warbler. Come out and enjoy the morning air and see how many birds we can identify this year.
- **Picnic shelter roof raising and park kiosk installation – July 5th through 7th**. The Vigstol family and other Friends of Anderson Park members will be putting the final touches on the picnic shelter over the Independence Day weekend.
- **Anderson Park Grand Opening – September 25th**. A celebration on National Public Lands Day that will officially open Anderson Park.