

## 2014 Savaloja Grant Report

The Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery (RhWR) a special committee of Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis received a grant from the Minnesota Ornithologists Union (MOU) for \$1200. This grant was pooled with grants from the Patagonia Foundation, St. Paul Audubon Society, Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter and the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis giving a total of \$6500 in grants that were used to pay stipends to Brittney Yohannes and Laura Jaskiewicz to monitor red-headed woodpecker (RHWO) nests at Cedar Creek Eco Science Reserve (CCESR). CCESR also contributed about \$3000 of in-kind funds. An agreement was signed to have CCESR administer the \$6500 stipends. As was envisioned, Brittney Yohannes, a Master of Science candidate, will continue the monitoring as part of her MS research program in 2015.

**Grant Goal:** To monitor with the aid of a camera, capable of taking photos of the interior of the nest with sufficient clarity to count eggs and young, a minimum of 20 red-headed woodpecker nests at least 3 times a week from when they lay their first egg until all the young fledge.

With the aid of a camera that is designed to easily fit into a RHWO nest hole, Brittney Yohannes and Laura Jaskiewicz took over 3,200 photos of over 60 potential nesting cavities using the nest camera. With the aid of having color banded 20 RHWO's in 2014 and another 26 birds that had already been banded in 2012 and 2013, they were able to identify individual birds in their study. They found that during the summer of 2014, 27 of 31 pairs (87%) succeeded in fledging at least one young. Helped by the nest camera data a count of how many fledglings to expect from each nest, they accurately counted 59 fledglings produced at CCESR. An average of 2.18 fledglings was produced per successful pair. These results were better than those found in 2012 or 2013. This summer they found the first brood of four fledglings. In past years there were never more than three fledglings found in a brood. They were able to confirm that RHWOs lay an average of about 5 eggs but fledge only about 2 young per nesting. This loss of productivity could be a major factor in the population decline of the birds.

With the data gathered by Brittney and Laura the RhWR now have some data on philopatry. Most of the Red-headed Woodpeckers at CCESR used the same breeding territories from one year to the next. A few moved up to four breeding territories from a previous year. Females appear to move farther than males, the usual situation in birds.

The RhWR is looking forward to continuing this study in 2015 & possibly 2016 with the aid of funding sources from the University of Minnesota. The RhWR thanks the MOU for providing bridge funding so that the 2014 study could continue the research began in 2012.