



Farm Bill works for both landowners and many birds, new report concludes

‘State of the Birds 2017’ identifies benefits for agriculture, forestry, conservation

By JENNIFER HOWARD

American Bird Conservancy,

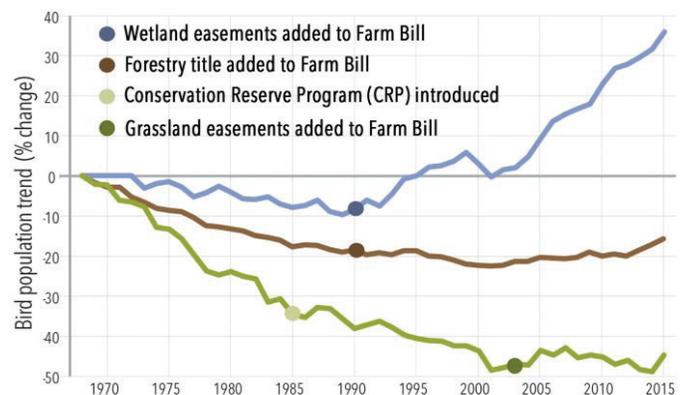
Washington, D.C.—Thirty-seven million. That’s the increase in the number of waterfowl in the Prairie Pothole Region over the past quarter-century, thanks to the Farm Bill.

The “State of the Birds 2017” report released in August by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), documents the many benefits the Farm Bill -- America’s single largest source of conservation funding for private lands — has delivered to birds, farmers and rural communities.

For more than three decades, the Farm Bill has been an effective tool for wildlife conservation, sustaining essential habitat for more than 100 species. For farmers, ranchers and forest owners, the bill provides a safety net that helps keep working lands from being developed. As the 2018 Farm Bill is debated for reauthorization in Congress, the report calls attention to the benefits of investing in conservation on private lands, which make up nearly 70% of the land area in the contiguous United States.

“For more than 20 years, the Farm Bill has provided widespread conservation benefits for our nation’s farmers, ranchers, sportsmen and all who enjoy clean drinking water, flood protection and healthy wildlife populations,” said Ducks Unlimited Chief Scientist Tom Moorman.

“Millions of acres of working lands are conserved through Farm Bill conservation programs that ensure long-term sustainability and productivity of the land that supports waterfowl and many other



Meadowlarks depend on grassland habitat, which exist mainly on private land that receives support from the Farm Bill.

species of fish and wildlife.”

It’s a striking record of success. Before 1990, for instance, wetland birds and waterfowl were on the decline, trending downward by 10% a year. Since wetland easements were added to the Farm Bill, those populations have soared 51%.

Grasslands and forest birds have benefited as well. “There’s no

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WSO to host fall party to celebrate Honey Creek expansion

All members of WSO are cordially invited to an autumn party, Saturday Sept. 30, from 11 am to 3pm at our Honey Creek Preserve to celebrate the Gerhard and Rose Dischler Addition.

The Board of Directors is inviting the entire WSO membership, along with friends from Sauk County and the Wisconsin birding community, to an event honoring those who supported the Society’s acquisition and protection of 104 additional acres for its Harold and Carla Kruse Honey Creek Nature Preserve.

A great deal of work went into the suc-

cessful campaign to raise the more than half-a-million dollars it took to acquire this extraordinary property, and the Board of Directors and the team working on the Dischler acquisition want to use this opportunity to gather at this special place and congratulate those who made this purchase possible.

It’s also your opportunity to come see what makes this place so special.

If you have never been to Honey Creek, but have heard about the unique birds and natural beauty of this place, then plan to join friends and fellow WSO members for lunch,

hikes, music and the unveiling of the Honey Creek Preserve donor sign.

Each May, WSO stages a birdathon/ bandathon to raise funds for land management at Honey Creek. If you have not been able to attend in the spring, then mark your calendar for this one-time event. This is not a fundraiser. This is a celebration!

Guided hikes, ranging from moderate in length to a stroll along the road, will begin at 11 a.m. Lunch, catered by the Blue Spoon Café, will be served at 1 p.m., followed up by

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The Badger BIRDER



WISCONSIN
SOCIETY for
ORNITHOLOGY

The newsletter of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology is published 11 times per year. Contributions are welcome! E-mail your articles, photos, event dates and information, comments and suggestions to the editor.

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WSO discontinues youth oriole count

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology has long believed that it's important to introduce birds to young people.

For that reason, it launched the Wisconsin Oriole Count in 2014. Originally part of the Great Wisconsin Birdathon campaign to raise funds for the Bird Protection Fund of the Natural Resources Foundation, it was re-launched as a WSO-led educational program under the auspices of the Woodland Dunes Nature Center in Two Rivers.

Its goal was to provide schools and other organizations with information and tools to attract migrating orioles and a framework for documenting their observations.

Baltimore and Orchard Orioles are both charismatic Neotropical migrants, and WSO had hoped both to foster a greater aware-

ness of these birds that breed here over the summer, while giving students a chance to participate in a simple but meaningful citizen-science activity that they could be proud of and learn from.

Participants were offered a free oriole feeder designed to hold both oranges and jelly, and each was entered into a drawing for prizes, donated by Eagle Optics.

In 2016, there were four prize packages: two of five pairs of binoculars, a third of three pairs and a fourth prize of two pairs.

Despite enthusiasm from those who participated, overall interest waned, with few teachers willing or able to fit the idea into their already crowded curricula. As a result, the WSO Board of Directors voted at its July meeting to discontinue the project.

KATE'S QUOTES

Naturalist **KATE REDMOND** offers us a monthly selection of quotes on, nature, conservation and life around us:



"When the country goes temporarily to the dogs, cats must learn to be circumspect, walk on fences, sleep in trees, and have faith that all this woofing is not the last word. What is the last word, then? Gentleness is everywhere in daily life, a sign that faith rules through ordinary things: through cooking and small talk, through storytelling, making love, fishing, tending animals and sweet corn and flowers, through sports, music and books, raising kids — all the places where the gravy soaks in and grace shines through. Even in a time of elephantine vanity and greed, one never has to look far to see the campfires of gentle people."

-- **GARRISON KEILLOR**, author and creator of "A Prairie Home Companion"

"I pray to the birds. I pray to the birds because I believe they will carry the messages of my heart upwards I pray to them because I believe in their existence, the way their songs begin and end each day -- the invocations and benedictions of earth I pray to the birds because they remind me of what I love rather than what I fear And at the end of my prayers they teach me how to listen."

-- **TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS**, American author, conservationist and activist

Bird Protection Fund expands its priority projects list

By **DIANE PACKETT**

Great Wisconsin Birdathon Coordinator

The Natural Resources Foundation, Wisconsin DNR and Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative have chosen the 2018 Priority Projects that will receive funding through the Bird Protection Fund. The success of this year's Great Wisconsin Birdathon allowed expansion of the program to fund 10 worthy projects for the coming year.

Funding amounts for 2018 will be determined in December, after year-end fund-raising efforts have been completed and approval from the foundation's Board of Directors. The Bird Protection Fund allocations come from the Great Wisconsin Birdathon, special fund-raising field trips run by the NRF, and direct contributions to the Bird Protection Fund through the NRF.

For the second year in a row, the Great Wisconsin Birdathon exceeded its fundraising goal. Forty-nine teams of birders, 796 donors from 35 states and 29 birding field trips together raised more than \$90,000. Under the NRF's leadership, and working with the statement "We believe that birds are valuable and need our help," the birdathon has raised more than \$300,000 since 2012.

The 10 priority projects included three

that were new to the list:

Lake Michigan Waterbird Research: To monitor migratory waterbirds and waterfowl both on and off the shores of Lake Michigan by the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory.

Amazon Conservation Association Bird Conservation Program: To collect data on bird populations in Peru, one of the ecologically rich areas on Earth and wintering destination for many Wisconsin birds, with the goal of prioritizing habitat protection efforts.

Conservation of Colonial Waterbirds in East-Central Wisconsin: To conduct complete nesting surveys of terns, Great Egrets and Red-necked Grebes.

Seven other programs are holdovers on the priority list, although their focus may have evolved:

Bird City Wisconsin: To support the program, which now includes 103 communities, in its efforts to implement bird conservation projects in cities, villages, towns and counties throughout Wisconsin.

Kirtland's Warbler Conservation: To monitor nests of new populations of Kirtland's Warblers in Bayfield and Marinette Counties.

Wisconsin Bird Monitoring Program:

To support bird monitoring efforts in Wisconsin, including specialized owl, nightjar and marshbird surveys

Wisconsin Stopover Initiative: To support expansion of the program to include Mississippi River Valley stopover areas.

Reintroduction of Migratory Whooping Cranes in Eastern North America: To continue Whooping Crane monitoring and recovery efforts after adoption of new protocols for chick rearing and release.

Making Conservation Friends for Migratory Birds in the Osa: To provide support for the Aula Verde educational programs for schoolchildren and development of a visitor and education center at the Yellow-billed Cotinga Sanctuary in the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica.

Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II: To support the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology in hiring atlasers to survey uncovered blocks in the 4th field year of the Atlas project.

To make an additional tax-deductible gift to help fund these projects, visit <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/Wisconsinconservation> and choose "Bird Protection Fund" as your gift designation.

Registration opens for first-ever SE Wisconsin summit on biodiversity, conservation

Port Washington - Registration is now open for the first-ever Southeastern Wisconsin Conservation Summit.

The Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory is the host of the two-day summit. The event will take place Nov. 3-4, 2017, at beautiful Forest Beach Migratory Preserve, in Ozaukee County, the Observatory's headquarters.



Complete details, registration materials, directions, and links to local lodging and dining options are available on the Observatory's website <https://wglbbo.org/swcs>

According to William Mueller, the Observatory's director, the conference is designed "to foster regional collaboration by providing an introduction to the people who are conducting excellent ecological work in southeastern Wisconsin."

A major focus, he says, will be biodiversity and conservation in the Milwaukee Estuary. The region includes severely polluted portions of the Milwaukee, Menominee and Kinnickinnic Rivers, as well as Milwaukee's inner and outer harbor and the near-shore waters of Lake Michigan. The estuary was named a federal Area of Concern in a 1987 agreement between the United States and Canada.

Steps taken to restore the river basin since 1987 have included the removal of Milwaukee's North Avenue Dam in 1997, dredging of the Kinnickinnic River in 2009 and the ongoing cleanup of Lincoln Creek and the Milwaukee River.

Speakers at the November summit will add to the restoration story, describing the status and health of the area's mussels and burrowing crayfish, dragonflies and damselflies, mammals (especially bats), and breeding and migratory birds.

Christine Custer, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, will present results of her testing of Tree Swallows that nest throughout the estuary. The familiar blue and white bird's preferred food, aquatic insects, allow contaminants to move from river sediment into terrestrial food chains.

Other speakers will address restoration work in Milwaukee's Grant Park; historical changes in populations of Black Terns; preservation of the Root-Pike and Nippersink Creek Watersheds; the mapping of oak ecosystems in southeastern Wisconsin; birds' use of Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area; the extraordinary dragonflies of Forest Beach Migratory Preserve; and other topics.

Information about research, monitoring, ecological restoration, and conservation will also be presented during a poster session.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Conservation Summit is open to the public.

Sponsors include the James E. Dutton Foundation, Inc., with co-sponsorship by Milwaukee County Parks, Ozaukee County Planning and Parks, the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust, the Urban Ecology Center and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Thanks to the Dutton Foundation's generosity, the cost of registering is only \$20. The registration fee includes morning coffee, afternoon refreshments, and lunch on both days, as well as access to all oral presentations and the poster session.

The Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory is a research, education, and conservation advocacy organization. The Observatory studies bird and bat populations in the Western Great Lakes region, with the goal of supporting actions that sustain their long-term conservation. Forest Beach Migratory Preserve, at 4970 Country Club Rd., Port Washington, is a property of the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust.

FOUND IN OUR ARCHIVES

A special treasure a mother left for her children

WSO Historian **NANCY NABAK** maintains the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's archives, housed at the Corrin Center for Biodiversity at UW-Green Bay, and offers us a frequent look at something Found in Our Archives.

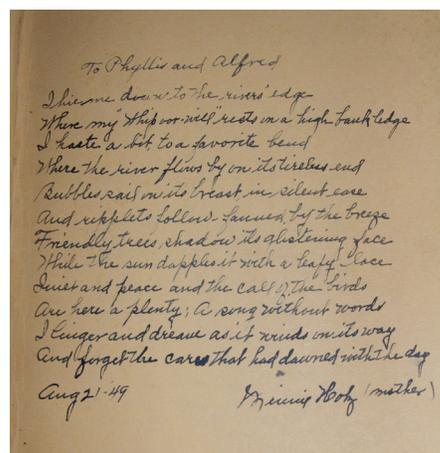
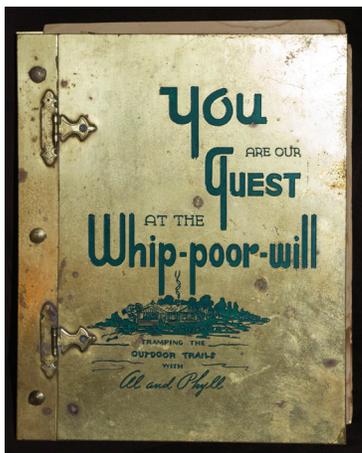
The mere sound of a whip-poor-will seems to lighten everyone's disposition, taking them to an easier time. I don't know why this bird has such nostalgia attached to it, but it does.

The gorgeous notebook pictured here – "You Are Our Guest at the Whip-poor-will: Tramping the Outdoor Trails with Al and Phyll" -- was given to Phyllis and Alfred Holz by their mother Minnie and is on loan to the WSO Archives from Tom Erdman, curator of the Richter Museum of Natural History at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Alfred and Phyllis Holz received Silver Passenger Pigeon Awards from WSO in 1967 for their distinguished service to the Society. This is one of those treasures-of-all-treasures that you would hope to find in archival storage. This notebook, some seven decades old, contains carefully taped poems, bird club programs and nature articles written by Clara Hussong for the Green Bay Press Gazette, including one titled, "Whippoorwill Better Known By Voice Than By His Looks."

There's so much here that I may have to double-dip for another article down the road; the contents are so sweet that we should all share in the taste.

Something touching I found is a personal inscription to Phyllis and Alfred by Minnie when she gave this book to them on Aug. 21, 1949. I doubt this poem was ever made public, so I'd like to share it now.



*"I lie me down the river's edge
Where my "Whippoorwill" rests on a high bank ledge
I haste a bit, to a favorite bend
Where the river flows by on its tireless end
Bubbles sail on its breast, in silent ease
And ripples follow fanned by the breeze
Friendly trees shadow its glistening face
While the sun dapples it with a leafy lace
Quiet and peace and the call of the birds
Are here aplenty; A song without words
I linger and dream as it winds on its way
And forget the cares that had dawned with the day."*

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2017 Federal Duck Stamp Contest



September 15 - 16, 2017
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

The eyes of the waterfowl world will be on Stevens Point Sept. 15-16 as UW-Stevens Point hosts the 2017 Federal Duck Stamp Art Competition and other activities, including the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association Decoy Carving Contest.

Formally known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, the Federal Duck Stamp is a required purchase for waterfowl hunters age 16 and older.

Since first issued in 1934, funds raised through sales of the stamp have helped to protect 6.5 million acres of wetlands in the National Wildlife

Refuge System.

As the longest-running, single-themed U.S. postal stamp, it is valued as a collector's item. Many birders and other outdoors enthusiasts also buy the stamps as a way to support wildlife conservation.

The contest moves around the country to generate interest in wetlands and waterfowl. The 2017 contest will be the first time it has been held in Wisconsin.

Various activities are being planned in Stevens Point before and during the contest, including: the first WWA duck decoy carving contest and exhibition and a learn to hunt program.

Stamp judging will take place on Sept. 16 at UWSP's Noel Fine Arts Center in Michelsen Hall, 1800 Portage St., Stevens Point.

Admission is free. For more information, call (703) 358-2145 or www.uwsp.edu/cnr

--Paul Smith
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Making a difference for the remarkable Chimney Swift

By **NANCY NABAK**

I've been listening from my desk to Chimney Swifts chittering and rattling in the Woodland Dunes Nature Center chimney since the beginning of May.

They've successfully nested in the chimney and raised babies in their tiny stick nests. This chitter (food-begging) has become a constant companion, and like hearing the din of your kids at home, I'll miss them when they go — migrating to South America for the winter.

This is the time of year when swifts start communally roosting at night, sometimes gathering in large groups numbering in the hundreds or thousands. At dusk, they will dive into the chimney and stay until morning.

In cases where there are immense numbers, it's like watching a funnel of birds pouring into the chimney. Once you've experienced this natural phenomenon, you'll never forget it. Examples of this can be seen online by visiting the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group site <http://www.wisswifts.org/>

Unfortunately, this unique bird is on the decline. We're not sure why, but some possible reasons are loss of habitat. Chimneys are being torn down and no longer being built with changes in technology). The widespread use of pesticides also is believed to play a role. More research is needed.

In light of this, there is a national movement called "Swift Night Out" where people can watch chimneys where swifts roost for the night. They count the number of swifts that go in and report their findings to eBird or their local coordinator. Green Bay has been doing this for six years and it's even gotten Tiletown Brewing to create a Swifts' Night Ale in honor of the swift.

Kim Grveles, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources assistant ornithologist and a member of the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group, says:

"Chimney swifts are an important species in Wisconsin because they help keep flying insect populations in check. We need citizens' help in counting the birds near them. In reporting that information to us, we can better understand and take steps to hopefully reverse the decline of Chimney Swifts."

Swifts have slender bodies, very long, narrow, curved wings and short, tapered tails. They fly rapidly, with nearly constant wing beats, often twisting from side to side and banking erratically. They often give a distinctive, high-pitched chittering call while they are in flight, said Bill Mueller, director of the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory and an advisor to the working group.

"A lot of folks see and hear them in the evening and don't realize they're birds," he

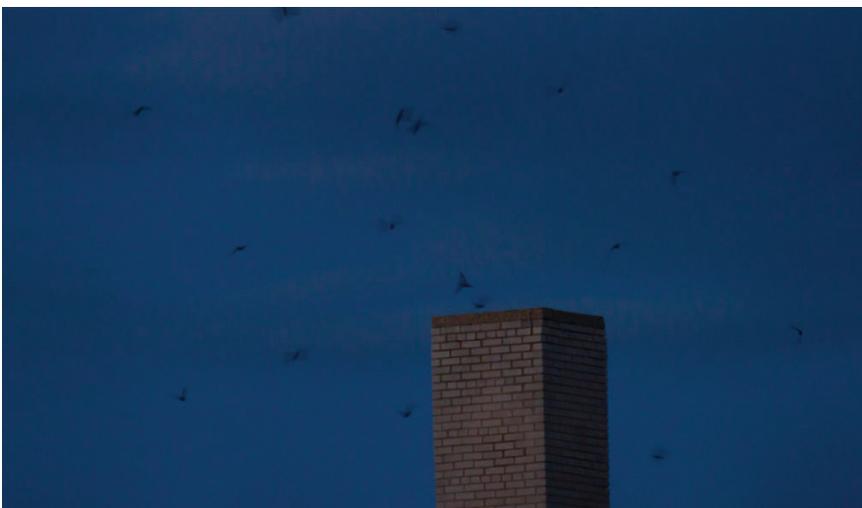


Photo by Nancy Nabak

A swift perched on the inside wall of a chimney (top). Chimney Swifts swarming at dusk before entering an old brick chimney.

said. "They think they're bats."

Because Chimney Swifts congregate in communal roosts before migrating in late summer/fall, it's relatively easy to count them. Here's how:

-- **Look for tall brick chimneys that are uncapped.** Watch to see where swifts are feeding and congregating. Pick one or more nights from early August in northern Wisconsin through mid- to late September in southern Wisconsin.

Observe the roost starting about 30 minutes before sunset until 10 minutes after the last swift enters the chimney. Count (or estimate) the number of swifts as they enter the chimney. It's useful to count in groups of five or 10 birds at a time when many birds pour into the chimney in a short period of time.

-- **Send in data one of two quick and easy ways:**

Enter the data on eBird (preferred). Go to the eBird-quick-start-guide. When prompted for location, map your

roost site to an exact address or point. Include, in the "Chimney Swift" comments section, general weather conditions, time when the first and last swifts entered the roost and type of building — residence, school, church, business, etc.

-- **Or send the same information** as above along with your name, address, email address, date and exact time of your survey at the roost to Sandy Schwab, 105 S. Marietta St., Verona, WI 53593 or sschwab49@gmail.com (You can request a report form by emailing sschwab49@gmail.com)

For more information you can contact Schwab at (608) 658-4139 or contact me for a monitoring form and to turn in results at nancyn@woodlanddunes.org or (920)793-4007.

It's easy, and you'll help make a difference for this remarkable bird.

NANCY NABAK is communication coordinator at Woodland Dunes Nature Center and Preserve.

Oops! Top 10 Atlas coding errors and how to fix them

By **NICHOLAS ANICH**
WBBA II Project Director

As the season starts to slow down and we all begin to review our checklists collected during 2017, the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas team thought it would be informative to share with everyone the results of its review of 2015 and 2016 data.

In general, we're seeing lots of good information rolling in, but there are a few common pitfalls that everyone should be aware of.

1. VOCALIZATIONS DO NOT ALWAYS INDICATE BREEDING

Yes, those Cedar Waxwings and Blue Jays were calling. But that's the call they make all winter too. Those sounds do not signify that they are holding a territory, such as when a Song Sparrow is singing repeatedly from the same area.

How do you know if a vocalization warrants a code (S, S7, M) or is not codeable? Check out our Acceptable Breeding Codes Chart.

2. DD (DISTRACTION DISPLAY) IS A RARE CODE

Based on comments, we're realizing some of the observations coded DD are better coded A or T.

DD codes involve either feigning injury or a physical attack on you:

- Killdeer doing its broken wing display
- A grouse flapping around trying to attract your attention
- A Red-winged Blackbird aggressively attacking you
- A Northern Harrier dive-bombing you

A codes involve clearly agitated birds, but don't involve an attack or specific injury-feigning display:

- A Song Sparrow scolding you

- A Red-winged Blackbird flying around scolding you, quite mad but it falls short of directly attacking you

T codes involve a physical altercation within a species, or a physical driving away of another species (In the rare instance a predator is actually trying to raid a nest, this could be DD):

- Two American Robins in a physical fight
- A Northern Cardinal fighting its reflection in a window
- An Eastern Kingbird chasing a Red-tailed Hawk

3. SIMPLE TYPOS

Did you mean PE or P? Did you mean Red-headed Woodpecker or Red-bellied Woodpecker? After a flagged record, did you enter comments?

A quick skim of your checklist after you submit it can help with typos. As can periodically scanning the list of species and codes for your block to make sure everything got in there correctly (available through Explore a Region, and be aware that it may take 24 hours to update).

4. FOR WIDE-RANGING BIRDS, CODE CAREFULLY

If you hear a Red-eyed Vireo in your block in June, chances are it breeds in that block. But if you see a Turkey Vulture, maybe it's soaring on thermals and is miles away from its nest. Birds like vultures, Bald Eagle, and especially colonial waterbirds like herons, gulls, terns and American White Pelicans are notorious for roaming far from breeding sites even during June and July. Just seeing these species in June and July is not a slam dunk H, and codes like P, FY, and FL should be used with caution.

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New process for fixing those breeding code errors

So now that we've identified some common errors, what are we doing about these situations?

In cases where we can reasonably make an assumption that the code needs to be adjusted, (for example, you can't S7 Cedar Waxwing or use CF for Mallard or you can't code Black-capped Chickadee in December or Common Goldeneye in March), we are working with eBird to adjust things on the back end.

What that means for right now is that we will be changing the category of the record (that is, Observed/Possible/Probable/Confirmed) but not the specific code. So if you had an Indigo Bunting chipping angrily at you and coded it DD, but we felt it was more appropriately A, we could downgrade that record to Probable.

You'll know if a record was reinterpreted because it will look like the screen-grab shown here. Clicking the question mark will provide more information on why the code was reinterpreted. The updated category will then be the one that displays on atlas species maps and block tables.

Having DD and Probable is a bit counter-intuitive, because DD is a Confirmed Code and what we've really done is reinterpreted

that behavior as an A - Agitated Probable Code and changed it from Confirmed to Probable right now.

If, after reading this article, you remember a couple checklists where you want to edit the codes yourself, feel free to do that.

Also, if you think your code was adjusted in error, email atlas@wsobirds.org and let us know.

While it's not currently feasible to contact all atlasers regarding the records that have been reinterpreted, this process is really just a midway point in development.

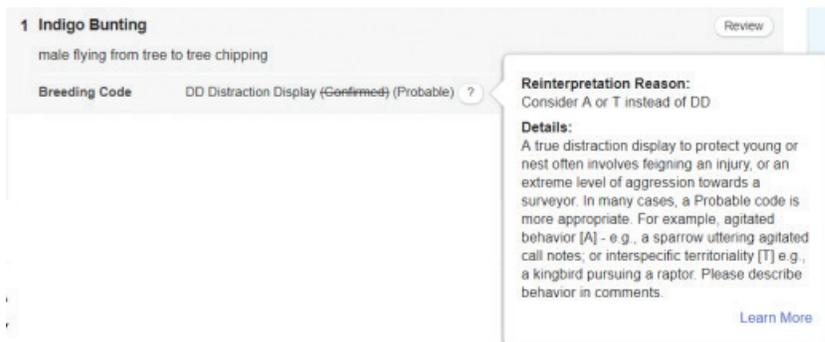
In the next two years, we will be working with eBird to allow for these records to show original and reinterpreted codes (not just Possible/Probable/Confirmed categories), as well as developing a system for easily communicating to you about which if any of your records were reinterpreted.

Furthermore, please don't feel bad if you notice a few of your breeding codes were reinterpreted. Almost everyone in this project had a few records flagged.

Here are a few stats on code reinterpretation on the 2015 and 2016 data:

- 6,824 records downgraded
- 4,894 records upgraded
- 3,923 records moved within category (e.g., CN to NB within Confirmed)
- Net loss of 311 confirmations

Overall 15,641 records reinterpreted (out of 759,000 records), which is a 2.1% error rate.



ATLASER SPOTLIGHT

Douglas Kibbe: 'Those still hesitant ... should team with an experienced Atlas worker and join the fun.'

The Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II is a volunteer-driven effort to survey the distribution and abundance of our state's breeding birds. Since the project started in 2015, our volunteer team has grown to include at least 1,429 atlasers who have submitted some 88,000 checklists.

The Atlas couldn't happen without its volunteers. This series turns the spotlight on a few of the many dedicated men and women who have helped the Atlas achieve such tremendous success to date.

This dedicated crew hails from across the state, and a handful of birders, including this month's spotlight, Douglas Kibbe, even travel cross-country to pitch in.

NAME: Douglas Kibbe

HOMETOWN:

Originally Vermont, but now Littleton, Colo.

AGE: 71

NUMBER OF YEARS BIRDING: ~50

OTHER CITIZEN SCIENCE EXPERIENCE:

Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas, advisor, co-editor and co-author

New York Breeding Bird Atlas, regional coordinator

New Jersey Breeding Bird Atlas

Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas

Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas

Tennessee Breeding Bird Atlas

Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, regional coordinator, co-author

Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas

Pawnee National Grassland Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl and

raptor nest surveys, 2009 to present

Instructor for Denver Audubon Master Birder Program

FAVORITE BIRD:

The next new one I see

MOTIVATION TO ATLAS:

I was the *American Birds* regional editor when the Vermont Institute of Natural Science began an atlas in 1975. At their request, I served



Douglas Kibbe says: "My decision to assist in the Wisconsin atlas was motivated by my past association with Noel Cutright, who was a friend and fellow graduate student at Cornell.... When he passed away just before the second atlas commenced, I decided that a fitting memorial would be.... to contribute our time and effort towards the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas."

as advisor and co-editor of the Vermont atlas, which was the first one completed and published in North America.

In 1981, I co-organized the Northeastern Breeding Bird Atlas Conference, and in 1982, I co-authored a paper in *American Birds* entitled "Atlasing the distribution of the breeding birds of North America."

After completing the Vermont atlas I assisted several other states on their atlas projects. While working on the Colorado atlas, my partner, Mackenzie Goldthwait, and I completed 125 atlas blocks. In Colorado,

I have been referred to as the "atlas junkie" (although "atlas addict" is my preferred term). At loose ends when the Colorado atlas ended, we decided to assist on the Minnesota atlas, then in its final year.

My decision to assist in the Wisconsin atlas was motivated by my past association with Noel Cutright, who was a friend and fellow graduate student at Cornell.

I had encouraged Noel when he initiated the first Wisconsin atlas, and when he passed away just before the second atlas commenced, I decided that a fitting memorial would be for Mackenzie and me to contribute our time and effort towards the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas.

PRIMARY ATLASING LOCATION:

Thus far we have worked in over 20 blocks in at least four counties.

MOST REWARDING PART OF ATLASING:

I find atlasing to be a challenging, rewarding and educational endeavor. It forces the observer to watch carefully and interpret bird behavior and habitat relationships. Consequently, atlasers consistently tell me that they learned more in a day of atlasing than they had in years of simple listing.

ADVICE IF "ON THE FENCE" ABOUT PARTICIPATING:

All those still hesitant about their ability to contribute should team with an experienced Atlas worker and join the fun. The benefits are many, both to the participant and to future generations who will view the atlas.

DNR citizen monitoring program awards Atlas \$5,000

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, acting in support of the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II, will receive \$5,000 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to help monitor breeding birds throughout the state. WBBA II was among 21 projects selected for assistance by the 2017-'18 Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Partnership Program.

"We're very excited to be partnering with so many excellent groups of volunteers," said Eva Lewandowski, who coordinates the CBMP Program for the DNR.

"The projects that are receiving contract awards will contribute high priority information about Wisconsin's natural resources

across the state and stretch state dollars further by providing matching funds and in-kind volunteer hours."

Through the CBMP Program, the DNR works with community and school groups, conservation organizations and other agencies to gather critical information on plants, animals, water and other natural resources.

Projects are selected through a competitive review process with projects eligible to receive up to \$5,000 in funding per year.

The 2017-'18 grant is titled "Training Volunteers for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II" and will support six workshops with a special focus on nocturnal atlasing

and eBird training. The Atlas was awarded a similar grant in 2016 titled "Engaging Birders and the Public in the Wisconsin."

That funding helped sponsor a series of six workshops statewide designed to recruit new volunteer atlasers and train returning atlasers in specialized techniques. They attracted 183 participants.

Since it started in 2004, the DNR's partnership program has helped fund 261 high priority natural resource monitoring projects statewide.

More information on the Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network is available at <http://wiatr.net/cbm/>

Fewer than 30 species available for those wishing to support Atlas

Fewer than 30 Wisconsin breeding species remain to be claimed through the Sponsor-a-Species program, a major source of support for the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. While some 210 species already have found sponsors, key species remain, and each sponsorship helps support the study of every bird on the list. Data already collected during the first three years of Atlas field work already is guiding key conservation efforts aimed at meeting the goals of Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative:

- * Manage communities of birds at a regional and landscape level.
- * Keep common birds common.
- * Conserve and restore endangered, threatened and rare bird species and their habitats.
- * Identify and prioritize management opportunities and needs for birds and their habitats in Wisconsin.
- * Coordinate existing bird conservation initiatives in Wisconsin.

Through Sponsor-a-Species <https://wsobirds.org/sponsor-a-species> one can sponsor a species for 1 to 5 years and do it all online.

When a species is sponsored for the entire 5-year period (starting at \$500), the name of the sponsor or someone a sponsor wishes to honor will be listed with that

species in the final print and web versions of the Atlas.

The Atlas Development Committee has established a goal of securing sponsors for every species by Jan. 1, 2018. For questions or assistance in sponsoring a species, please contact committee member Carl Schwartz at cschwartz3@wi.rr.com or 414-416-3272.

Although the Atlas effort is primarily undertaken by volunteers, it is vitally important that seasonal professionals are engaged to ensure statewide coverage. Funding generated from the Sponsor-a-Species campaign is used for two main purposes: 1) to hire seasonal ornithologists to survey remote and hard-to-access priority blocks where there are few volunteers, and 2) to conduct a special point count survey that will provide rigorous models of relative abundance and information on statewide population size for many species. The cost of these hires totaled nearly \$85,000 in 2017 alone!

SPECIES STILL AVAILABLE

Tier 3 (\$500/year)

Ring-necked Pheasant
Sharp-tailed Grouse
American White Pelican
Yellow-headed Blackbird

Tier 4 (\$200/year)

Redhead
Canvasback
Common Goldeneye
Yellow Rail
Wilson's Phalarope
Common Tern
Forster's Tern
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Boreal Chickadee
Worm-eating Warbler
Nelson's Sparrow
Summer Tanager

Tier 5 (\$100 per year)

Waterbirds

Mute Swan
American Black Duck
Ring-necked Duck
Red-breasted Merganser
Horned Grebe

Others

Rock Pigeon
N. Rough-winged Swallow
Bank Swallow
Brewer's Blackbird
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
House Finch

Here are some tips on how to avoid errors in atlas entries

From Page 6

5. UN (USED NEST) DOESN'T MEAN NEST IS CURRENTLY BEING USED

UN is a special code for a nest that was used earlier but is now empty. Because nests without occupants can be quite challenging to identify, use this code with caution (see the Acceptable Breeding Codes Chart for guidance). The correct code for a currently occupied nest (e.g., an Osprey sitting on a nest) is ON, Occupied Nest.

6. CORRECT CODE FOR BABY WATERFOWL IS FL (FLEDGED YOUNG)

We are getting a lot of FY (Feeding Young) codes with broods of Mallards and Canada Geese, but the young actually feed themselves. The proper code here is FL (Fledged Young), as these birds have left the nest.

7. CAREFUL WITH CF (CARRYING FOOD) FOR LARGER BIRDS

So you saw an Osprey with a fish – is that a confirmation? Not automatically. Osprey (as well as eagles, hawks, corvids and other large birds) often end up carrying their food elsewhere to consume it. If you see a bird repeatedly carrying food in a direction, then CF is more likely.

With songbirds, this code is useful the majority of the time; generally songbirds consume their own food quickly, but when they are foraging for nestlings or young, they end up hopping around with a morsel (or more) in their mouth for an extended period of time.

8. BE AWARE BREEDING TIMING DIFFERS AMONG SPECIES

In general, our resident species are among the first birds to get started each year, followed by early migrants (Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Mourning Dove, Canada Goose, Eastern Phoebe) and then lastly the neotropical migrants (warblers, vireos, thrushes).

But some species are surprising Pine Siskin can have young by early May, but American Goldfinches are a very late nester, and most shouldn't be coded before June. In most species, things are shutting down by mid August, but some species like Cedar Waxwing, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, and Rock Pigeon can go into September and in some cases later.

It's a lot to keep track of, which is why we've prepared the Breeding Guideline Bar Chart to help guide you.

9. DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE C CODE

In some species, C (Courtship display and copulation) is actually used quite frequently, and it's an instant Probable-level code. We're thinking primarily about birds that advertise their territory through display rather than song, particularly: Ruffed Grouse, Wilson's Snipe, Wild Turkey and American Woodcock.

10. KNOW DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ATLAS eBIRD AND WISCONSIN eBIRD

Remember, anytime you have a breeding code, the full checklist should go into atlas eBird. Anytime you do not have a breeding code, the full checklist should go into Wisconsin eBird.

Beware if you have your phone defaulting to one portal or the other, you may have to change that using the Change Portal button on the lower left when you submit a checklist.

Banding Purple Martins at an Amish community

By ERIN MANLICK

Bird enthusiasts in Wisconsin have a long history with the Purple Martin, a species that has become reliant on humans for nesting throughout the country. The Purple Martin is a cavity nester, but over the years, natural tree snags have become increasingly uncommon throughout the Midwest. For hundreds of years, Purple Martin supporters have constructed nest boxes to house these charming birds each summer. In recent decades, martin populations have been in decline for reasons that are not yet fully understood.



I am a graduate student from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and was fortunate to be awarded a WSO Steenbock Award. I am working with the Madison Audubon Society to study Purple Martin nesting and the factors that contribute to successful colonies throughout south central Wisconsin.

Colony success throughout the area is thought to be mainly attributed to the regular cleaning, maintenance and management of nest boxes with large cavities, conducted each year by Purple Martin "landlords." In Columbia County, Purple Martin colonies are a rare sight, with one major exception – Amish farms.

Amish landlords in the Dalton/Kingston area, near the junction of Columbia, Green Lake and Marquette Counties, are a prime example of how proper management and stewardship can make all the difference for the success of this species.

Amish communities throughout the country have strong cultural ties to the Purple Martin, with many establishing gourds and nest boxes simply because their families have hosted martins for generations. In mid-July a team of Purple Martin enthusiasts, including Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary managers Mark Martin and Sue Foote-Martin, Goose Pond land steward Maddie Dumas, volunteers, interns, WSO President Michael John Jaeger and myself set out to census and band martin chicks.

Leading this endeavor was retired Wisconsin DNR wildlife biologist Dick Nikolai, who now spends much of his time traveling throughout the state banding Purple Martins on behalf of the Wisconsin Purple Martin Association. Nikolai has been involved in Purple Martin conservation for more than 30 years and has banded more than 20,000 martins. He also is providing guidance to my study.

About 35 Amish farms and businesses in the Dalton/Kingston area have at least one Purple Martin house, with some families erecting as many as seven, each offering 14 cavities for pairs to build their nests (commonly referred to as a T-14). One Amish family makes and sells T-14 houses and poles. Some families also hang hollowed-out gourds for nesting, which were historically used by Native Americans before European settlement.

The T-14 was designed by Andrew Troyer, the Purple Martin Conservation Association's 1993 "Purple Martin Landlord of the Year." These wooden houses are considered good for northern landlords and have good insulation capabilities, retaining warmth in early spring cold snaps and staying cooler in hot weather.

Over the course of two days, at just six colony locations, our Purple Martin team was able to band 838 chicks, as well as one female adult. Such large colonies, some with over 60 pairs of martins, are likely the result of the strong relationship that the Amish families have with their birds. Many families take pride in their large colonies and consider it a family affair to check their nests weekly, providing suitable nesting materials, removing invasive house sparrow nests, and cleaning out excess waste.

The Amish children often take particular interest in monitoring the nest progression and can provide plenty of details on the status of each nest box. Each family visited by the team was more than happy to allow, and often assist, the banding efforts. As one Amish landlord remarked, "We love the Purple Martins and the Purple Martins love us!"



Photos by Arlene Koziol

Amish landlords near the junction of Columbia, Green Lake and Marquette Counties are an example of how good stewardship can make all the difference for the success of Purple Martins. A team from Madison Audubon, with banded Dick Nikolai, was able to band 838 chicks over two days at just six colony locations.

BIRDING CLUBS IN WISCONSIN: #7

Wausau Bird Club founded 25 years ago to educate birders and promote conservation



The Badger Birder is offering a regular focus on birding groups in Wisconsin. In the seventh part of this series, Sarah and Shawn Sabatke provide a look at the Wausau Bird Club, a large and active group they belong to in north-central Wisconsin that has been around for a quarter of a century.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR CLUB?

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, the Wausau Bird Club has a mission statement that reads:

"The club shall be dedicated to the conservation of the bird life in Marathon County and the greater Wausau area. It shall accomplish this by increasing its members' knowledge and appreciation of birding in all its phases, encouraging others in their efforts to acquire bird lore, and assisting in the preservation of the avian population and habitat in the local area."

TELL US ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES:

The nearly 50 WBC members actively engage in the Christmas Bird Count, Spring Bird Count and several field trips, which include 9-Mile County Forest, Mead Wildlife Area, Bluegill Park and Fern Island.

The "Wausau Bird Nerds," a small group of club members, also participate in the Great Wisconsin Birdathon, helping to raise funds for various projects and club activities as well as the statewide conservation efforts of the Natural Resources Foundation's Bird Protection Fund.

With the club's extensive help, Wausau achieved recognition in 2012 as a Bird City Wisconsin community and then achieved "High Flyer" status in 2013.

Examples of WBC participation towards this honor include several monitoring activities, construction of a Chimney Swift tower inside Robert W. Monk Gardens, the purchase of two Wood Duck boxes in the Eau Claire River Conservancy and hosting the 2015 Wisconsin Society for Ornithology convention.

The club also has erected a pair of Purple Martin houses at D.C. Everest Park and a 10-house Eastern Bluebird trail at the Eastbay Sports Complex.

Club members also participate in bird-



related projects with the Boys and Girls Club and are enthusiastic supporters of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum's annual "Birds in Art" festivities.

IF FOLKS ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING MEETINGS OR JOINING THE CLUB HOW DO THEY LEARN MORE?

Becoming a member of the Wausau Bird Club is as simple as paying a membership fee of \$12 Single/\$15 Family and having a love for birds.

The club meets on the first Monday of every month from September through May at the Universalist/Unitarian Church at 504 S. Grant St. in Wausau from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Meetings in June, July and August are held in local parks and include a bird walk.

The club is a great place to meet people, to learn about various bird species, appreciate nature and offers an opportunity to develop new and lasting friendships.

Interested parties can visit www.wausaubirdclub.com to find information on past and upcoming events, how to join, a news section, and a photo gallery assembled by club members. There is also a Facebook group: "Wausau Area Birders and Bird Watchers" that includes sightings, photos and information on upcoming events.



A Wausau Bird Club work crew puts up a Chimney Swift tower at Monk Gardens. It required masonry, carpentry and siding installation skills -- plus a lot of elbow grease -- to get it done. Club members also erected a 10-house Bluebird trail at the Eastbay Sports Complex.



Burning bush



Barberry



Honeysuckle

KEEP LOOKING UP

Fall is a great time to kill plants!

By **STEVE PETZNIK**

Fall is a great time to kill plants! That's right. Early fall is the best time of the year for effective eradication of many invasive trees and shrubs.

It has to do with plants preparing for winter. In fall, plants move foods produced during photosynthesis in the leaves down into the trunk and root system for storage until needed next spring. This process is called translocation.



Steve Petznick

So why I am talking about killing plants in the first place? Many people don't realize there is a state law called the Invasive Species Identification, Classification, and Control Rule (Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter NR 40) that went into effect on Sept. 1, 2009. Often referred to as NR 40, this law **requires** a landowner to control or slow

the spread of *prohibited* plant species growing on their property and **strongly encourages** landowners to control species listed as *restricted*.

The list of prohibited or restricted terrestrial plants is extensive. Many people unknowingly purchase, transplant or share plants on those lists that should be controlled.

If you go to the DNR web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov> and type in the key word **invasive** you can scroll through the listing of both restricted and prohibited plant species. You may be surprised by the number of plants in your yard or on your property that really can and do cause a problem for the state's more natural areas.

Having worked with the Mosquito Hill Nature Center property for over 30 years, I can testify to the ever growing number of invasive species and actual plant numbers becoming established in this natu-

ral setting. Species like Burning Bush and Barberry found growing on top of the hill. How they got there could be an article in itself.

You can help slow the spread of invasive and aggressive plants. Physical removal from the ground gives assurance the plant shouldn't grow back. If this isn't an option, the use of chemicals is an alternative. Whether you spray green leaves, called foliar application, or whether you cut the stem(s) and apply chemicals on the cut area, referred to as cut stump application, you will have a more effective kill in fall due to that downward nutrient flow within the plant.

Perennials such as woody plants have a longer "working" time than annuals but should still be treated before the plants go dormant. Usually if daytime temperatures are above 40 degrees the plants and chemicals will stay active.

It's always wise to read the instructions for any given chemical to understand its proper use: how to apply it, correct application rates, requirements for protective clothing and other important safety precautions.

Annuals and biennials must be removed before seeds disperse. Pulling plants out is best; merely cutting off the seed heads by hand or mowing only delays re-growth. Plants are designed to reproduce and until they release seeds they will grow back. And always bag cut seed heads to prevent accidental dispersal.

If you have questions about whether a plant is invasive, first go to the DNR website and check the listings and images there. Next try your local nature center, DNR Field Station or university herbariums.

Collectively we can make a difference.

*In addition to being a naturalist at Mosquito Hill Nature Center for nearly 30 years, **STEVE PETZNIK** manages the 430-acre county park and has taught numerous public programs on invasive terrestrial plants.*

9th Big Sit! planned by Cutright Bird Club on Oct. 7

The Noel J. Cutright Bird Club will host its ninth annual Big Sit! at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve all day Saturday Oct. 7.

(If you show up for the early morning shift you might even get to sample some incredible pastries.)

The Sit's 17-foot circle is on the perfectly-sized Bill Cowart Memorial Hawk Watch Platform at Forest Beach, north of Port Washington at 4970 Country Club Rd., site of the Old Squires Golf Club.

Big Sit! events took place in at least four locations last fall in Wisconsin, and there were 157 counts in 40 states and 4 international counts.

The Big Sit! is an annual, international, non-competitive birding event held during the second weekend in October hosted by Bird Watcher's

Digest and sponsored by Swarovski Optik. The Big Sit! is like a Big Day or a birdathon in that the object is to tally as many species as can be seen or heard within 24 hours. The difference lies in the area limitation from which you may observe.

Dani Baumann is leading the club's team for 2017. She led last year's team, dubbed the Mighty Merlins. A total of 27 birders spent 10 hours looking for and finding 53 species on Oct. 8, 2016. The record for species seen at this event was set in 2014 when 70 species were tallied.

The late Noel Cutright launched the count in 2009 as a way for the Riveredge Bird Club to support the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory, which has its headquarters at Forest Beach.

41 sets of binoculars, 5 scopes, 6 tripods sent to Birders' Exchange

For more than two decades, Birders' Exchange has been supporting bird research and conservation by providing materials and equipment to a variety of partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.

There are researchers, educators and conservationists striving to protect birds and their habitats, but many are working without the most basic equipment, such as binoculars and field guides.

Now handled by the American Birding Association, the Birders' Exchange program collects donations of new and used equipment and distributes it to our colleagues working to conserve birds and their habitats throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

In mid-August, the Noel J. Cutright Bird Club in Newburg shipped 107 pounds of birding optics to the Exchange after launching a collection effort at its monthly meetings and at the WSO convention in June.

Included were 41 sets of binoculars, 5 spotting scopes, 6 folding tripods, 3 window mounts and 6 binocular harnesses.

For other groups or individuals considering organizing a collection or making their own donation, here is what the Birders' Exchange is seeking:

- Binoculars – especially rubber armored and/or waterproof binoculars
- Digital cameras – especially SLRs and telephoto lenses



- Spotting scopes
- Tripods
- Field guides to Neotropical birds
- Field guides to North American birds – newer editions
- Ornithology texts
- Laptop computers – not more than three years old
- Backpacks – no broken zippers
- iPods or .mp3 players and corresponding microphones

The equipment must be in good working order. For example, binoculars must be in proper alignment, the focus wheel in operation, and the glass without flaws. Waterproof binoculars are preferred due to the adverse conditions in which many recipients work.

For those wishing to ship equipment directly to the ABA, if you are using the U.S. Postal Service, send equipment to:

American Birding Association
c/o Birder's Exchange
P.O. Box 744
Delaware City, DE 19706
For FED EX and UPS send to:
American Birding Association
c/o Birder's Exchange
93 Clinton Street
Suite ABA
Delaware City, DE 19706

Birds to look for in Wisconsin: New species for our checklist?

By **BILL MUELLER**
Director, Western Great Lakes Bird
and Bat Observatory

Not yet on the list of Wisconsin's bird species are these rarities that are being found in other Midwestern and Eastern states. Watch for them.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE: This species is dramatically increasing in its Arctic breeding range. Not all bird population increases are "good" for the species in question, but a side-effect for birders is that many more are being seen in eastern North America.

Be on the lookout for this one in flocks of Greater White-fronted, Snow Geese and Ross's Geese within the next few years. Find it in your Sibley Guide on Page 5, or in the National Geographic Guide on Page 16.

More about the Pink-footed Goose: <http://www.npolar.no/en/species/pink-footed-goose.html>

TUFTED DUCK: We are likely to eventually find this species in Wisconsin. While it isn't increasing in numbers, it has been found in all surrounding states. Look for it in flocks of scaup. Find it in your Sibley Guide on Page 27, and in the National Geographic Guide on Page 36.

More about the Tufted Duck: <http://>

www.birdwatchireland.ie/Irelands-Birds/Ducks/TuftedDuck/tabid/166/Default.aspx

COUCH'S KINGBIRD: This species is a potential vagrant, very similar to the Tropical Kingbird. Earlier this year, in the company of a Western Kingbird,



which is in itself a good bird for Wisconsin, birders found a kingbird that was either a Tropical or Couch's. The bird did not vocalize to confirm its identity. These birds hung out together for an evening in Bayfield County but were gone by the following morning. This is the third state record for this complex, one of which was positively identified as a Tropical last year. See this species in your Sibley Guide on Page 356, and in the National Geographic Guide on Page 342.

More on the Couch's Kingbird: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/crows/king-birdsX.htm>

Switch to the eBirder save money, enjoy color, get delivery first

If you use email but still are getting the snail mail version of *The Badger Birder* you are missing out on a lot.

--- And next year it also will cost you more money. Under the dues restructuring approved at WSO's annual meeting at the June convention, a \$10 surcharge will be implemented for anyone wishing to receive mailed paper copies of *The Badger Birder*, reflecting the additional printing and postage costs involved compared with electronic delivery of the *eBirder*.



The *eBirder* has added many color photos (most of them of birds) and graphics along with the increased content. Printing in color costs a lot, so if you are still getting the newsletter by mail, it remains in black and white; but on the internet we added the color for free.

In addition, the *eBirder* goes out to members almost as soon as it is completed, generally around the 1st of the month, while the snail mail version reaches folks at least a week later by the time it's printed and mailed.

So if you already use email, all it takes is an email request to membership@WSOBirds.org to make the switch now ahead of your membership renewal.

FIELD TRIP



Photos by Tom Schultz

This Solitary Sandpiper (left) and Lesser Yellowlegs were seen as the WSO group hiked along Old Marsh Rd. The juvenile Pied-billed Grebe (below) was seen along Highway 49.

Perfect weather, but limited habitat equals skimpy shorebirds

By **TOM SCHULTZ**
WSO Field Trips Co-chair

We met at our new earlier start time of 7 a.m. along Highway 49, just east of the pump house, on the Dodge County side of the border with Fond du Lac County.

The Aug. 13 weather conditions were perfect, with sunny skies, little or no wind, and temperatures in the 60's. This particular area had provided the area's best shorebird habitat this summer, but the lack of rain in recent weeks had reduced the wet area to a narrow band along the western edge of the pool.

The minimal amount of available shorebird habitat produced a very limited number of birds, with only a few Lesser Yellowlegs, a Stilt Sandpiper and Least and Baird's Sandpipers present – and none of them being especially close to us.

Further back were a few Black-necked Stilts and a Greater Yellowlegs. Also spotted were a couple of Great Egrets, fly-by Black-crowned Night-Herons, and a few ducks and geese.

After about 45 minutes, our group of 17 drove east and south to Ledge Road – and we walked out along the east end of Old Marsh Road. A fairly nice mudflat was present, with the shorebirds much closer than those along 49 – so we were able to get good looks at many of them.

A Greater Yellowlegs flushed as we arrived, but several Lessers provided great opportunities for observation. One of them had a Solitary Sandpiper standing near to it, which gave us an excellent opportunity to compare their sizes and field marks.

Also present were Least (about 20) and Pectoral Sandpipers (perhaps five), and we also had good opportunities for comparing these two similar species.

A Semipalmated Sandpiper had been spotted initially, but unfortunately it couldn't be relocated when we got closer. Killdeer and a couple of Wilson's Snipes also were present.

Other birds observed in this area were Great Egret, Belted Kingfisher, Black-billed Cuckoo, Northern Flicker, Marsh Wren, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp and Song Sparrows, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

(One of our field trip attendees also reported seeing a **KING RAIL** along Ledge Road about this same time! She described a very large rail that crossed the road from one side to the other.)

We left that area about 9:30 and returned to our original location on Highway 49 to check it again. Many of the same birds were still there, although this time there were two Stilt Sandpipers present.



Further to the west along 49 (at the so-called "ibis pond") we scanned for birds among the mats and clumps of cattails. Another Black-necked Stilt was found, along with a scattering of shorebirds.

The highlights there were an adult Common Gallinule with a fairly small chick, and a female Yellow-headed Blackbird. A large pond just down the road to the west produced a large family group of Trumpeter Swans.

Our group then headed to the Auto Tour, where we slowly drove around the loop to the parking area near the boardwalk.

This floating walkway had been nearly completely reconstructed this spring and summer, and re-opened in July, but unfortunately the pond had been drawn down so far that masses of weeds were present.

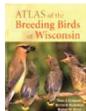
As a result, this area wasn't very productive so we didn't stay long. A few Barn Swallows and Purple Martins were present, but the birds were greatly outnumbered by the Leopard Frogs in a few wet spots along the boardwalk.

We finished up by checking the rest of the Auto Tour, but bird-wise, it was fairly quiet. We had another Hooded Merganser and some Blue-winged Teal in the wet ditch beyond the Red Rock, and we found a group of about eight Black Terns and another Black-crowned Night-Heron on the last pond.

Thanks to Daryl Tessen for helping lead the trip, which ended about 11:30, with the temperature now around 80 and a decent total of about 55 species for the day.

NAME: _____
DATE: _____
PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____
County (WI orders only): _____
Comments: _____

SHIP TO
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ **State:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

WSO BOOKSTORE ORDER FORM		Price/Unit	Quantity	Total
	<i>Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin</i> Covers 214 species in depth. Hardcover, 624 pages. Edited by Cutright, Harriman, and Howe. 2006	\$20.00	_____	\$ _____
	<i>Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts</i> Describes birding hotspots in every Wisconsin County. Spiral bound 556 pages. Compiled, edited by Tessen. 2009	\$15.00	_____	\$ _____
	<i>Wisconsin Birds, Field Checklist</i> Three-panel card. 2016 update. Pack of 25.	\$5.00	_____ # of packs of 25	\$ _____
	<i>Wisconsin Birds: A Checklist with Graphs (Bluebook)</i> Depicts monthly abundance. 19 columns. 36 pages. 2003.	\$0.48	_____	\$ _____
	<i>WSO Passenger Pigeon Visor -- NEW</i> Stone-colored visor with embroidered WSO logo. Adjustable. 2017	\$16.50	_____	\$ _____
	<i>WSO Passenger Pigeon Cap -- NEW</i> Olive-colored cap with embroidered WSO logo. Adjustable. 2017	\$16.50	_____	\$ _____
	<i>WBBA II Scarlet Tanager Cap</i> Stone-colored cap with embroidered Scarlet Tanager Breeding Bird Atlas II logo. Adjustable. 2015	\$16.50	_____	\$ _____
	<i>WSO "We Brake for Birds." Bumper Sticker</i> Blue with white lettering. 3" x 12". 2013	\$2.00	_____	\$ _____
		Item Total		\$ _____
\$2.00 and less = \$1.50, \$2.01-\$20.00=\$5.00, \$20.01-\$40.00=\$6.50 \$40.01-\$55.00=\$8.00, \$55.01-\$70.00=\$9.50, \$70.01-\$85.00=\$11.00 Over \$85.00=call or email for amount		Shipping and Handling (refer to left for \$)		\$ _____
Item Total plus Shipping and Handling Charges = Taxable Subtotal Figure tax (below) based on your county rate on this taxable subtotal.		Taxable subtotal		\$ _____
All counties 5.5% except as follows: Brown, Calumet, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Menominee, Outagamie, and Winnebago=5.0%; Racine and Waukesha=5.1%; Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Washington=5.6%		Sales Tax (refer to left for %)		\$ _____
Include payment made payable to WSO Bookstore and mail with form to: WSO Bookstore, c/o Dar Tiede, 2809 Schaefer Circle, Appleton, WI 54915 Questions? Contact Dar at 920-997-9418 or bookstore@wsobirds.org		TOTAL		\$ _____

Artist/ornithologist offers a look at native birds of his Cuba

If you have not already made plans to attend this year's 42nd annual *Birds in Art* exhibition this fall at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin is helping to provide an extra incentive. Cuban ornithologist Nils Navarro, author of *Endemic Birds of Cuba: a Comprehensive Field Guide*, will be featured in a special presentation at the exhibit on Thursday Sept. 21 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

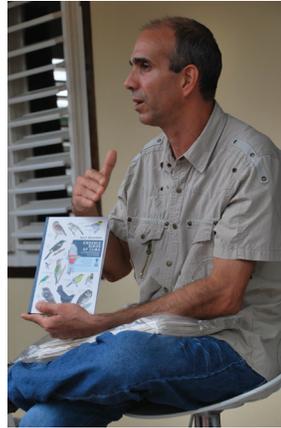
Navarro's presentation will be followed by a reception sponsored by Holbrook Travel and the foundation. The *Birds in Art* exhibition itself is open to the public that day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Navarro offers a window into the colorful and diverse species of birds found on his native island. Ruth Oppedahl, the NRF's executive director, observes:

"Nils is a wonderful artist, writer, ornithologist, and a super nice guy. His visit is a great chance to meet him in person, see/buy the new field guide, and learn about the status and future of Cuban endemic birds."

The BirdsCaribbean conservation network has praised Navarro's guide, saying:

"This is the first field guide focused on Cuban endemic birds. The book is worth owning for the artwork alone. The first thing to note is the large, stunningly beautiful illustrations. Each bird comes to life on the page, thanks to Nils' intimate knowledge of each species from countless hours of careful observation in the field. The author



Cuban ornithologist Nils Navarro with his "Endemic Birds of Cuba: a Comprehensive Field Guide."

also photographed and studied museum specimens to ensure that all details were accurately captured."

The introductory chapter offers tips on how to move around Cuba, essential birding sites, and which plants to avoid in the field. Known as the "Queen of the Caribbean," Cuba has a rich biodiversity and endemism that are described as well as threats to its bird life and efforts to conserve it.

Navarro holds a degree in fine arts with a specialization in painting. He worked for 10 years as taxonomist and curator of the herpetology collection in the Museum of Natural History in Holguín where he described several new species of reptiles and amphibians for Cuba.

He is considered a versatile and internationally recognized wildlife artist and illustrator, and leads the "Working Group for Art and Nature" of BirdsCaribbean.

The internationally renowned *Birds in Art* exhibition itself features new interpretations in original paintings, sculptures and graphics created within the last three years. Opening day is Saturday, Sept. 9, as part of Wausau's Artrageous Weekend, and provides opportunities to interact with more than 60 *Birds in Art* artists visiting from throughout the world.

Backyard Birdscaping with author Mariette Nowak

Thursday, Sept. 28, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Mariette Nowak, author of *Birdscaping in the Midwest*, discusses native plants that attract, shelter and feed birds to enhance backyard birdwatching; she will sign books after the program. For more information: <https://www.lywam.org/upcoming-exhibitions/>



Mariette Nowak

An update on WSO's Web-based membership software

By **KIM KREITINGER**
WSO Membership Chair

Last month, we updated you on the new Web-based membership software system.

Known as Wild Apricot, the new system allows us to integrate membership, development, communications and event management in a single database. It also allows more flexibility to our members to join or renew online, update their own contact information, view a membership directory and read publications online.

WSO membership records have now transitioned from Excel to Wild Apricot. All new members that joined Aug. 1 or later are now on the 365-day renewal cycle and will enjoy a full year of membership benefits no matter when in the year they join. In other words, you will be notified to renew 365 days

after you joined. Existing members will receive renewal notifications beginning Nov. 1.

Beginning Aug. 1, the following membership rates took effect for new members. Current members will renew at these rates during the 2018 membership drive:

STUDENT: \$25
SENIOR: \$25 (no Passenger Pigeon journal)
HOUSEHOLD: \$40
SUSTAINING: \$100
CONSERVATION ADVOCATE: \$200

In addition to these changes, WSO will be instituting a \$10 annual surcharge for all members that subscribe to the paper version of the Badger Birder. If you currently receive the paper Badger Birder and do not wish to pay the additional surcharge, contact me at membership@wsobirds.org to switch to the electronic version.

Santa Ana refuge faces threat from Trump border-wall plan

Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas is under an immediate threat from the Trump administration's border-wall plans. The U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers and its subcontractors have been making preparations to build a huge and intrusive 18-foot border-wall through the north end of the refuge.

Santa Ana NWR represents 2,088 acres of vital borderland habitat along the banks of the Rio Grande. The refuge was created in 1943 to protect migratory birds, and

almost 95% of the property was acquired through Duck-Stamp dollars. Some 400 bird species have been recorded in the refuge, including migratory waterfowl, raptors, warblers, and a suite of "South Texas specialties" that are Mexican in character and barely range into Texas. .

In late July, the U.S. House of Representative passed a \$788 billion defense spending bill that included \$1.6 billion of funding for a U.S.-Mexico border wall.

If you wish to express concern about this issue to Congress, you can access a template letter from the National Wildlife Refuge Association at <http://refugeassociation.org/action/#/87>

This article is from *The Birding Community E-bulletin*.

Federal Duck Stamps = Big Win for Conservation!

Buy them from The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc.

What is a Federal Duck Stamp?

A Federal Duck Stamp, formally known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, is a **revenue stamp** that hunters 16 years of age and older must purchase each year and carry with them to hunt waterfowl. It is also a **conservation stamp** because proceeds from stamp sales help purchase and protect wetland habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System.



2017-2018 Duck Stamp Art – Trio of Canada Geese

Why Buy Federal Duck Stamps?

Conservationists buy Federal Duck Stamps because they know that the stamp is, dollar for dollar, one of the best investments they can make in the future of America’s wetlands. Some 98 percent of the proceeds go to secure wetland and grassland habitat within the system. **Birders and other outdoor enthusiasts** annually buy Duck Stamps to gain free admission to national wildlife refuges. The stamp is valid from **July 1 to June 30**.

How Much Land Has Been Purchased?

Federal Duck Stamp sales have raised over \$800 million since the program began in 1934, and they have helped acquire and protect more than six million acres of wetlands within the National Wildlife Refuge System. Wisconsin refuges funded in part by Federal Duck Stamp sales include:

- Horicon National Wildlife Refuge
- Necedah National Wildlife Refuge
- Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge
- Wisconsin Waterfowl Production Areas, which preserve small natural wetlands and their associated uplands

How Can You Display Your Support for Conservation?

By using WSO’s holder to display a Duck Stamp you can demonstrate that birders contribute voluntarily to habitat preservation.

To learn more, visit the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service website: www.fws.gov/duckstamps

WSO’s Program

Stamps are available from WSO beginning late in June and ending December 25. **NO ORDERS WILL BE ACCEPTED BETWEEN DECEMBER 25 AND MAY 31.** In a consignment program, WSO purchases Duck Stamps and sells them at the price offered by other outlets (WSO does not make a profit on these sales).

WSO also offers a reusable clear-plastic key-ring-type holder for the Duck Stamp (shown at right) that you can attach to your binocular strap, pack, etc., so everyone can see that you support this worthwhile conservation effort. Stamps and holders are available from WSO on a prepaid basis only.



- If you want **only stamps**, send a check for **\$25 for each stamp**, plus **one self-addressed stamped envelope**, to the address below.
OR
- If you want **stamps and reusable plastic holders**, send a check for **\$28 for each stamp and holder**, plus **the form below**.

Make checks payable to WSO and send your request to: WSO Duck Stamps
c/o Christine Zimmerman
2708 Eisner Ave
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Questions: 920.980.8083 or
jeff.chris@att.net

If you are ordering stamps and holders, include your name and address on the following form – this form will be taped to a mailing envelope; **if you are ordering stamps only, do not use this form.**

Name _____

Address _____

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Double-crested Cormorant: *Phalacrocorax auritus*

By **DIANA HIERLMEIER**

The Double-crested Cormorant is a prehistoric-looking bird, appearing to be a combination of a goose and loon. They are actually relatives of frigatebirds and boobies. They are solid, heavy-boned experts at diving to catch small fish. The



Diana Hierlmeier

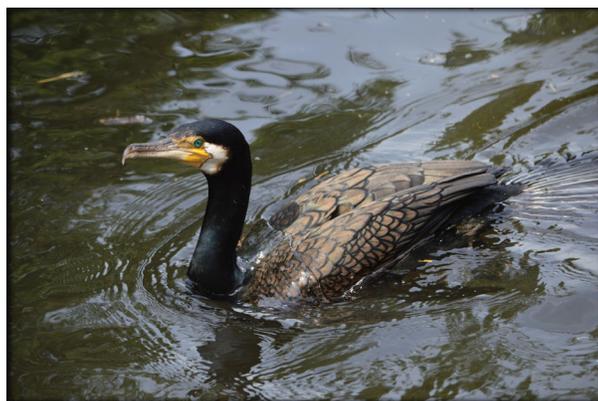
average length of this species is 27.6 to 35.4 inches, with a wing-span that ranges from 44.9 to 48.4 inches and weight varying from 42.3 to 88.2 ounces.

Adult birds are brown-black with a small patch of yellow-orange skin on their face and throat. They have aquamarine eyes and a mouth that is bright blue inside. They are large water birds with thin, strongly hooked bills roughly the length of their head. In the breeding season, adults develop a small double crest of stringy black or white feathers. They have a medium-sized tail and webbed feet. Immature birds are browner overall, palest on the neck and breast.

These colonial waterbirds seek bodies of water large enough to support their mostly fish diet. They may roost and form breeding colonies on smaller lagoons or ponds and fly up to 40 miles to a feeding area. In addition to fishing waters, Double-crested Cormorants need perching areas for the considerable amount of time they spend resting each day. Since their plumage is not waterproof, these birds spend long periods with wings outstretched drying after they have been diving and feeding.

Cormorants dive and chase fish underwater; using their feet for propulsion they are able to dive to a depth of 27 feet for 30 to 70 seconds. The majority of their diet is comprised of fish but depending on location they have been known to feed on a few insects, crustaceans or amphibians, crabs, shrimp, crayfish, frogs, salamanders, eels, as well as sometimes snakes, mollusks and plant material. Records indicate cormorants consume over 250 different species of fish.

Their conservation status has a varied past. The population had experienced a long-term decline due to persecution at nesting colonies until about the 1920s, then saw gradual increases until the 1950s. Numbers dropped again through the 1960s, probably due to the effects of persistent pesticides. Listed as state endangered, populations began increasing again after DDT was banned in 1972. Between 1973 and 1997, the state's breeding population grew at an



annual rate of 16%, from 66 nests at three sites to 10,546 nests at 23 sites as the state erected 1,269 artificial nesting platforms.

By 2008 more than 13,700 active nests had been documented in Wisconsin, with nearly 90% of the breeding population inhabiting Lake Michigan shores along Green Bay. Isolated islands off the Door Peninsula had about 10,000 pairs nesting in four distinct colonies.

In 2006, Gov. Jim Doyle signed legislation directing the DNR to develop and direct a program to control cormorant populations where it appears habitat loss and predation may become significant issues.

These gregarious colonial waterbirds do not nest until they are three years old. The male selects the nest site and then attracts a female to it. Both sexes work on the nest, with males bringing in the material and females doing most of the construction.

The nest is built of finger-sized sticks with some seaweed and flotsam and lined with grass. Nests can also contain found materials such as rope, fishnet and plastic debris. In addition to ground nests, cormorants construct nests on rocks or reefs without any vegetation as well as atop trees.

In colonies, nests are constructed in the center of trees and expand outward on branches. Nests are typically 1.5 to 3 feet in diameter, 4 to 17 inches high. Ground nests tend to be wider than tree nests, while tree nests tend to have deeper interiors. Breeding cormorants readily steal nesting materials from a nearby, unguarded nest.

Females lay 2 to 7 eggs and both parents incubate for about a month. Both parents feed and take care of the chicks, and the chicks fledge in 35 to 42 days. The young are able to fly after five to six weeks and may be independent at 9 to 10 weeks. Often cormorant nests are exposed to direct sun. Adults shade the chicks and bring them water, pouring it from their mouths into the chicks. In breeding colonies where the nests are placed on the ground, young cormorants

leave their nests and congregate into groups with other youngsters known as "crèches." The young return to their own nests to be fed.

The oldest known Double-crested Cormorant was at least 22 years, six months old. It was banded in Ontario in 1984 and found in Louisiana in 2006.

The Double-crested Cormorant makes deep guttural grunts; adults at colonies make croaks and gargling vocalizations while nestlings make a more grating call.

Double-crested Cormorants are found throughout North America with some north-south migration movement. To find this bird, look near lakes and coastlines for perched black waterbirds, smaller with shorter legs than a heron, and a distinctive S-shaped crook neck. Flocks of cormorants fly in irregularly shaped lines or sloppy Vs; their wing beats are slow and appear labored.

TO DIG MORE DEEPLY:

Bent, Arthur C., *Life Histories of North American Petrels, Pelicans and Their Allies*. Dover, New York, N.Y., 1964.

Dunn, John L. and Jonathan Alderfer, *National Geographic Field Guide of Birds of North America*, National Geographic Society, Sixth Edition.

Matteson, Sumner W., Paul W. Rasmussen, Kenneth L. Stromborg, Thomas I. Meier, Julie Van Stappen and Eric C. Nelson, *Changes in the Status, Distribution and Management of the Double-crested Cormorants in Wisconsin*, 1997. https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/nwrc/symposia/cormorant_symposium/pdfs/corsym5_nogfx.pdf

Tekiela, Stan, *Birds of Wisconsin, Field Guide*. Adventure Publishing, Cambridge, Minn., 1999.

National Audubon Society, *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* (illustrated by David Sibley), Alfred A. Knopf, New York, N.Y., 2001.

Terres, John K., *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, N.Y., 1980.

Welty, Joseph Carl, *The Life of Birds*, Saunders College Publishing, New York, N.Y., 1982.

Diana Hierlmeier, her husband, two dogs and an indoor cat enjoy an acre of farmland in Random Lake that is a certified Wildlife Habitat and an Advanced Bird Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation.

You're invited to an autumn celebration at Honey Creek!

From Page 1

music brought to you by Woodland Dunes Nature Center director and WSO board member Jim Knickelbine, along with WSO friend and Honey Creek neighbor Mike Mossman and his band, Wrannock.

So bring a lawn chair and sit back, enjoy the music and get to know someone new from WSO!

You are requested to send in your RSVP by Saturday Sept. 23 so that there is plenty of food and drink for all. Indicate your Lunch Selection: Veggie Wrap or Blue Ribbon Chicken Salad Wrap

RSVP or send your questions to: Mary Korkor at development@wsobirds.org

The Honey Creek Nature Preserve can be reached by going west out of Prairie du Sac on Highway PF approximately 15 miles to Skyview Drive (Lins Road on older maps). Go left about 3/4 mile to Alder Drive and turn left to the Cox Nature Center.

The Preserve had its inception on a WSO field trip in June 1956. WSO members established a nature



sanctuary in 1958, and purchased the first 30-acre parcel in 1960. This was quickly followed by the acquisition of a 65-acre parcel containing bog and marsh, and a 40-acre parcel containing upland hardwood forest and a sandstone cliff. The Nature Conservancy also began buying land surrounding WSO parcels around this time.

In 1964, WSO received a donation to purchase 85 acres of upland hardwood forest and a hemlock cliff along the northern boundary of the property. WSO acquired several additional parcels of land from 1964 to 1974, and most recently the Dischler Addition added 104+ acres in 2016 and 2017.

WSO's total holdings are about 372 acres. The Harold and Carla Kruse Honey Creek Nature Preserve was desig-

Photo by Tom Schultz

Mike Mossman -- WSO member, retired DNR biologist and Honey Creek neighbor -- helps inspect the 104+-acre addition to the Honey Creek Nature Preserve.

Farm Bill helps stabilize Midwestern bird populations

From Page 1

doubt that the Farm Bill's conservation provisions have helped to stabilize populations of grassland birds, which had suffered a nearly 50% drop before grassland easements were introduced in 2003," said Kenneth V. Rosenberg of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and the report's team leader. "Since that time, we've seen an encouraging 3% increase in numbers."

The report documents a similar turnaround in forest bird populations, which had dropped 19% before the Farm Bill's Forestry Title was introduced in 1990.

"State of the Birds" is a regular report published by NABCI's U.S. Committee, a coalition of 28 state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and bird-focused partnerships.

Scientists, government agencies and bird conservation groups use the report as a resource in decision-making about conservation research, policies and programs. Last year, NABCI's "State of North America's Birds Report" found that more than one-third of North America's bird species require urgent conservation action.

Farm Bill programs support many kinds of partnerships with private landowners. As documented in the 2017 report, that approach pays off in many ways. Here are a few examples of what the Farm Bill gets done:

It keeps birds off the Endangered Species List. Voluntary, incentive-based habitat-restoration projects funded by the Farm Bill made it possible to avoid listing the Greater Sage-Grouse as endangered in 2015.

It promotes public-private partner-

ships and supports restoration vital to

forest birds. In the South, Farm Bill Forestry programs have increased longleaf pine forests by 50%, providing valuable habitat and keeping forests from being converted to other uses.

It protects vital prairie grasslands and wetlands and sustains North American waterfowl. Thirty-four percent of duck food energy on private lands in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley comes from Farm Bill wetlands, a critical food source for waterfowl species such as Northern Pintail, Mallard, and Wood Duck.

It creates eco-benefits for the entire farm and delivers a return on investment in clean water and birds. Farm Bill grasslands programs improve soil health and natural pest control, provide flood control and water purification, and recharge groundwater supplies.

"State of the Birds 2017" also identifies four top conservation priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill, representing the unified voice of NABCI's broad coalition:

Increase funding for the voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs that support farmers and ranchers financially while also supporting our natural infrastructure of grasslands and wetlands.

Improve the impact of Farm Bill conservation programs on priority wildlife species, drawing on input from individual states.

Enhance Farm Bill public-private partnerships. Partner biologist positions hold the key to matching landowners with conservation programs that best fit the landowners' wildlife and land-use goals.

Support the use of science, includ-

ing monitoring and evaluation of Farm Bill conservation programs over time, to maximize the bill's effectiveness and return on investment.

"Farm Bill conservation programs, such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, get on-the-ground work done for species of greatest concern such as Golden-winged Warbler and Northern Bobwhite," said Steve Holmer, vice president of policy at the American Bird Conservancy. "The 2018 Farm Bill will hopefully build on this success by fully supporting these conservation programs."

Dr. Judith Scarl, NABCI coordinator, added:

"It is now up to us-- especially our NGO partners-- to pick up the mantle and plan how each of us can help with outreach -- contacting our Congresspeople, scheduling field trips for representatives, and helping the birding public understand how the Farm Bill connects to bird conservation."

The full report can be downloaded at <http://www.stateofthebirds.org/2017/state-of-the-birds-2017-pdf-download/> The U.S. Committee of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) is a coalition of 28 federal and state agencies, nonprofit organizations and bird-focused partnerships that advance biological, social and scientific priorities for North American bird conservation.

It can be found online at <http://nabci-us.org/> its state counterpart is the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year and is online at <http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/>

BIRD DIGEST

WSO elects new awards chair

At its July meeting, the WSO Board of Directors elected **WENDY SCHULTZ** of Green Lake to succeed DNR biologist **ANDY PAULIOS** as chair of its Awards Committee. Schultz also serves as WSO's BIGBY Birding Coordinator and, along with husband **TOM**, three years ago organized the Green Lake Bird and Nature Club, which will help host the 2018 WSO convention. Wendy also was elected to the WSO Board, joining Tom, who is a past-president of WSO and has served on the board for more than three decades as co-chair (along with **JEFF BAUGHMAN**) of its Field Trip Committee.



Wendy Schultz

The WSO board also accepted the resignation of **ANDY CASSINI** as chair of its Conservation Committee. No immediate successor was named, but WSO President **MICHAEL JOHN JAEGER** indicated that he would step into that role at least temporarily.

Cassini, a science teacher at Kettle Moraine High School who for the past two summers has led an intern training program for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II, also served one term as vice president of WSO but declined to seek re-election in 2017.

Get those BBS results filed

Please make sure to submit the results from this summer's Breeding Bird Survey routes if you haven't already done so. Online data submission is preferred but if that is not possible please email to **MARK KORDUCKI** korducki@earthlink.net as soon as you can.

Mark, who serves as state BBS coordinator for WSO, says he has two open routes for next season due to the retirement of a few observers. These open routes are:

- Wisconsin Rapids
- Clintonville

Please let Mark know if you would like to take on either of these routes next year.

Mark, who also writes the monthly rare birds report for the *Birder*, is skipping filing a report for August, saying: "There is just so little to report."

2 openings on Thailand birding tour

TOM and **CAROL SYKES**, owners of the WISBIRDN list-serve, working in conjunction with Tropical Birding, are assembling a custom birding tour to Thailand for February 2018.

"Thailand: Mystical Asia" includes stops at Pak Thale, Kaeng Krachan National Park, Khao Yai National Park, Bueng Boraphet (Thailand's largest freshwater lake), Doi National Park, Doi Chiang Dao, Doi Ang Khang, Doi Lang and Chiang Saen. A Thai Peninsula extension includes Krabi, Khao Nor Chuchi, Krung Ching and Sala.

The main tour (Feb 2-18) is \$4,800 per person (single supplement \$500) with an optional 7-day extension to the Thai Peninsula for \$1,600 to \$1,890 depending on the number of participants. (single supplement \$320).

The tour is limited to 12 people, and two openings remain. For more information contact Tom or Carol at sykes@motmot.net or 920-810-1370.

Duck numbers remain historically high

Under generally good conditions for waterfowl, wildlife officials reported 47.3 million ducks this spring in North America, the fifth-highest total on record. The estimate is 2% below 2016 but 34% above the long-term average.

Among geese, the two major Canada goose populations in the Mississippi Flyway both showed increases of at least 10%.

The information is contained in the [2017 Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey](#), a joint project of the U.S. Fish and THE BADGER BIRDER

Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service.

From a historical perspective, the last decade has seen consistently high duck and goose numbers, including a record 49.5 million ducks in 2015.

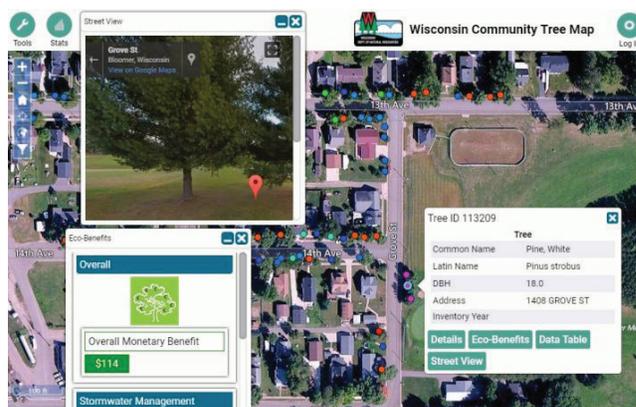
Whooping Crane propagation effort ends

Established in the 1930s, the Patuxent Research Refuge is the nation's only National Wildlife Refuge established to support wildlife research. Most of the research conducted there by the U.S. Geological Survey is likely to suffer drastic budget cuts in the years ahead.

One of the first casualties will be the Whooping Crane Propagation Program, an effort that began in 1966 with the arrival at Patuxent of an injured juvenile Whooping Crane. Since then, the program has grown to produce hundreds of captive-breeding crane eggs and young. Last summer, the associated Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership crafted a new five-year plan to use these captive chicks to boost the experimental Wisconsin Whooping Crane population.

Nevertheless, the Whooping Crane Propagation Program at Patuxent will close in Fiscal Year 2018 and the approximately 75 cranes at Patuxent will be moved to other institutions. Those in charge of Patuxent admit that "there likely will be a disruption of reproduction in those birds for the 2018 season and beyond."

This article is from *The Birding Community E-bulletin*. You can access an archive of past E-bulletins at <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>



A DNR interactive mapping tool provides a new way of learning about urban forests.

State Community Tree Map launched

The Wisconsin DNR's Urban Forestry program has unveiled an interactive map that provides a new way of learning about urban forests in the state. The [Wisconsin Community Tree Map](#) plots individual trees according to species, diameter, health condition and other attributes for participating communities statewide.

"This new tool will help explain the value of urban forests and their ability to improve air quality, reduce energy use, increase property values and control storm water," said Jeff Roe, DNR urban forestry team leader.

"This will help communities make data driven decisions for their urban forest management strategies."

There are currently tree inventories from 38 communities incorporated into the Wisconsin Community Tree Map, totaling over 350,000 trees, which includes the recently inventoried State Capitol Park grounds. Tree inventories are records kept by organizations, typically municipalities, to identify trees and track management activities in the urban forest.

Communities that want to upload or update their inventories, or are interested in creating one, are encouraged to contact DNRUrbanForestryAssessment@wisconsin.gov

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc.
P.O. Box 3024
Madison, WI 53704-3024

DATED MATERIAL PLEASE EXPEDITE

WSO CALENDAR

Field Trips

Sept. 9 (Saturday) Bay Beach Fall

Warblers --Meet at 7 a.m. at Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary in Green Bay. It can be reached off I-43, Exit-187 (Webster Ave.) to East Shore Drive. *Use the first parking area on the right, just after entering the sanctuary.* Wear good walking shoes because there will be some hiking, though leisurely. We may tour other nearby areas, including Cat Island if arrangements can be made.

Sept. 22 (Friday) to Sept. 24

Jaegerfest! - Wisconsin Point

This is one of the highlights of the birding year! Pomarine, Parasitic and Long-tailed Jaegers have been seen on this trip. Other potential highlights include Sabine's

Gull, Arctic Tern, Pacific Loon and Harris's Sparrow. Bring layers of clothing, rain gear and plenty of snacks. Participants also may want to bring old bread, popcorn, beef suet, etc. to "chum" for gulls. If you are staying in a motel, book your reservations now!

Meet at 7 a.m. each morning at the first beach parking area along Moccasin Mike Rd., which leads to Wisconsin Point.

Oct. 1 or Oct. 8 (Sunday)

Harrington Beach: Hawk Watch

Harrington Beach State Park in Ozaukee County has more than a mile of beach habitat along Lake Michigan. It is here that we will watch for hawks migrating along the lakeshore corridor. Potential highlights include Swainson's Hawk, Golden Eagle and numerous migrating waterfowl. We also will venture south to the Western Great Lakes

Bird & Bat Observatory at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve north of Port Washington and check for additional species there.

Meet at 8 a.m. in lower beach parking area. Turn east from I-43 onto Highway D in Ozaukee County, north of Port Washington. Please note that there is a state park entrance fee. Bring a bag lunch or cooler.

We want to optimize our birding during these migration periods. Oct. 1 is the planned date, but if it is determined that the second date may be better, we will notify participants via the WSO website <http://wsobirds.org> and the Wisbirdn Listserv.

WSO Board of Directors

Oct. 22 (Sunday) 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Quarterly meeting at Horicon Education and Visitor's Center, Hwy 28 just north of City of Horicon. Members always welcome; bring a lunch.

WSO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
E-Mail _____

PLEASE CIRCLE APPROPRIATE MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

Student/\$25
Senior/\$25 (No Passenger Pigeon)
Household/\$40
Sustaining/\$100
Conservation Advocate/\$200

(Include a \$10 surcharge in all categories if you want mail delivery of The Badger Birder)

Make check payable to WSO and send with form to: **WSO Membership / P.O. Box 3024 / Madison, WI 53704-3024**