

The Lake Flyer

Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

Fall 2020

All programs and activities are open to the public

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Check our website for up-to-date information: www.winaudubon.org

Catch, Tag and Release Migrating Monarchs

Saturday, Sept. 12 (Rain date: Sun., Sept. 13)

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Wearing of masks by each participant is required!

Davis-Foust Prairie, 4946 Broderick Rd, Omro

Winnebago Audubon Society is again hosting the Monarch Tagging event this year at the Davis-Foust prairie located at 4946 Broderick Rd. Take Hwy. 21 west out of Omro. Turn right on to Broderick Rd and watch for the red house on the right side of the road. Parking can be in the driveway or along the road leaving ample room for entering and exiting easily. Please do not park anyone in!

Due to COVID-19, we are requiring everyone to wear a mask while in the presence of others, especially during the orientation and when we tag your monarchs. However, when you are in the prairie catching butterflies with your small family group, wearing of your mask is voluntary but encouraged. Please practice social distancing for the protection of our volunteers, yourselves and other attendees.

In all the world, no butterflies migrate like the Monarchs of North America. They travel up to three thousand miles round trip each year. How Monarchs find their overwintering site each fall when it is the great-great-grandchildren of the butterflies that left the site the previous spring remains an unsolved mystery.

The University of Kansas set up the Monarch Watch (www.monarchwatch.org) program to encourage everyone to participate in the monarch migration each year. They provide the tags and you get to net the monarchs, tag them and release them to fly to the mountains in central Mexico for the winter. Monarchs that we have tagged in the past were found in Mexico.

We will host a short orientation about the migration and demonstration of the tagging process at the beginning of the session. You will then be free to wander the prairie to net the monarchs. Remember to respect the prairie and any wildlife you may encounter. We will have two tagging stations set up to assist you in identifying the gender of your monarchs, recording the data, tagging them and watching you release them to proceed on their journey.



Please respect social distancing while in the prairie and when waiting to tag your monarch. All ages over 5 are encouraged to participate. We all have an inner child who would love to do this.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS: We **require** everyone to wear a mask. If you cannot wear a mask for health reasons, you must social distance yourself and you will not be allowed to approach the tagging station. Please do not attend if you do not feel well. We have a limited number of nets available so if you have your own, please bring it along. We will have disinfectant wipes to wipe off the handles of the nets between users. There will be no restroom available. We strongly recommend that you wear long pants, socks and shoes to prevent scratches and cuts when you are in the prairie. We appreciate your cooperation so that we may all have a safe and fun event.

This event is free and open to the public. We look forward to sharing this experience with you and educating you about monarch butterflies and their unique migration.

If the weather is questionable and you want to check if we are still going to meet, call/text: 920-573-7828. Rain date will be on Sunday, September 13, 2020. 🐦

Soldier beetle, *Chaillignathus pennsylvanicus*

Challenging Times

Winnebago Audubon suspended all of its activities because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We want everyone to be safe and stay healthy rather than risk further transmission of this novel coronavirus.

HOWEVER, we are excited to announce that we will conduct our annual monarch tagging event! See details in this newsletter on page 1.

Our joint program with Wild Ones, Grow Your Bird Feeder with Rob Zimmer, on Nov. 19 is still tentative. We'll keep you posted. Stay in touch on our Facebook page. 🐦

Winnebago Audubon Society

*extends a sincere **thank you** for your support which allows us to continue to provide positive experiences in nature for our community.*

Grant Beckfield

Mary Morelli

Daryl & Lorraine Davis

Jeffrey Smoot

Meet Our New Board Member: Dana Hartel



After Gene Jacobs spoke at a Winnebago Audubon meeting a few years ago and brought his ambassador Great Horned Owl, Sassy, I wished there was a way I could attend one of his workshops. As it turned out, the opportunity came along to participate in a week-long raptor workshop where we learned about, trapped, and banded wild birds of prey. It was amazing! That led me on a journey to be more involved by assisting with the needs of the Peregrine Falcons at UWO, go back to school part time in the Natural Resources program, attend Master Naturalist training, and volunteer with various nature-based organizations, all while continuing to work full time at UWO. I also enjoy nature photography and am able to use it in my volunteer work. I am excited to take an active role in Winnebago Audubon. 🐦

Bohn Farms Habitat Restoration Area – 2020 Surveying Update

By Kelli Bahls

The weather was almost balmy on that early March day when I made my first outing to the property. My dad and I parked in the west lot and scanned off to the east. Large patches of snow and ice lay melting, scattered across the flat, muddy terrain. We set off toward the woods with binoculars at the ready. RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS soared overhead. KILLDEER skittered along the edges of puddles as SANDHILL CRANES called nearby. As we neared an intersection of woods, field, and prairie, a flash of blue caught our attention. More flashes of blue drew us into the oak-filled woods and left us speechless. No fewer than six EASTERN BLUEBIRDS foraged in the leaf litter. All I could think was "Wow."



Bohn Farms Habitat Restoration Area is an 80-acre site located west of Winneconne and south of Lake Poygan. Acquired by the Wisconsin DNR in 2018, the DNR-managed property is open to the public for recreational activities such as wildlife viewing, hiking, and hunting. The site includes a variety of habitat types, including sedge meadow, forested wetland, prairie, and

ephemeral pond. The transitional areas between these different types of habitat, called ecotones, are excellent places to search for wildlife. With a ten-year wetland restoration plan in place, Stantec Consulting and the DNR hope to dramatically improve the quality of habitat at the site. To assist with measuring the effects of the restoration efforts, Winnebago Audubon volunteered to survey the site for birds and amphibians.

At the time I'm writing this article, a total of 75 different bird species have been sighted on or adjacent to the Bohn Farms property. The most species sighted in one outing was 34, with the average outing yielding between 12 and 17 species. The record for the greatest number of a single species counted in one outing goes to the CANADA GOOSE (142 birds). The runners-up include LEAST SANDPIPER (62 birds) and TREE SWALLOW (50 birds). Observers noted a minimum of six species nesting or accompanying fledged young on site, including WILD TURKEY, SANDHILL CRANE, and SWAMP SPARROW.

One of the most notable sightings of the 2020 survey period includes 2 migrating BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER reported by volunteer Dana Hartel. While sightings of this large shorebird are not unusual for Wisconsin, limited amounts of shorebird habitat in Winnebago County result in relatively few sightings. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird database, BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER are rarely reported in Winnebago County more than once a year.

When the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, Winnebago Audubon plans to schedule field trips to the Bohn Farms property for those interested in surveying and exploring the area. In the meantime, don't forget to check your backyard and local hotspots. Fall migration is just around the corner.

Eastern Bluebird photo by Kelli Bahls. 🐦



One Day in My Yard

It's not a big yard. It's in an older section of Oshkosh where chemical use on lawns and houses is NOT the norm. It's where creeping-Charlie, plantain, dandelions, moss and violets compete with sparse grass. It's rough around the edges. I like to call my yard shaggy. Perhaps that is why nature's critters seem attracted to it.

One day in my yard begins when I rescue an insect crawling across the sidewalk. I recognize it immediately as the last nymphal stage of a cicada. It has recently emerged after, who knows how many, years of feeding and maturing underground. I place it on the ground next to a lilac stem where it promptly crawls three inches up the stem and stops.

Three hours later, I check on the insect. To my astonishment, a fully extended dog-day cicada is next to its shed nymphal case. I hadn't expected such a fast emergence. Almost two hours later, I check again and the

insect is gone. Wow, that was fast!

As I look through the lilac to see if I can find the cicada, I discover the work of leaf-cutter bees which always excites me. Leaf-cutter bees are solitary bees meaning that they do not live in colonies or hives. When nesting, a female leaf-cutter bee excavates a tube-shaped hole in the soil. She chews perfect 1/4" diameter circles from young tender leaves which, in this case, happens to be lilac leaves. After she stuffs a few circular leaves in the bottom of the tube, she then places oblong-shaped leaf cuts inside and around the tube walls. Next she gathers pollen, puts it in the tube and lays an egg on the pollen. She seals the tube with more leaf circles. Her responsibility is completed for this one tube. How many holes does she excavate? I don't know. I also don't know where her nests are nor have I ever witnessed bees cutting leaves but it is exciting to know they live in my yard.

While appreciating the easily-recognized handiwork of leaf-cutter bees, a big, yellow eastern tiger swallowtail flits through the yard. Red (male) and golden (female) meadowhawk dragonflies perch on exposed twigs. A dog-day cicada in the background. In the damp coolness under my ground-level bird bath, ground beetles and sow bugs gather.

Later in the midday heat, a mother gray squirrel sprawls on a branch of a very tall spruce. With her are two young squirrels. They are tustling with each other, nuzzling with mom and jumping about nearby branches as they explore their widening world. They are in constant motion. Mom tolerates their rambunctiousness as she appears to be sleeping. I often see young squirrels playing and chasing each other. This is the first time I witness mom and two little ones together. It is heartwarming.

Sadness comes later when I discover a dead young white-breasted nuthatch who hadn't lived long in this world. Is this the youngster that has been coming to my sunflower feeder?

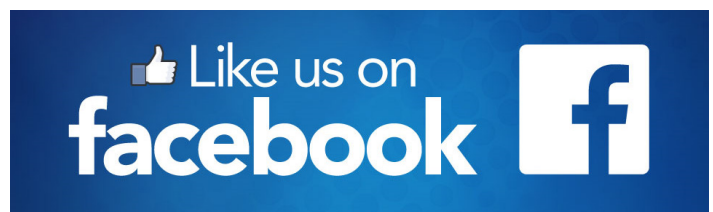
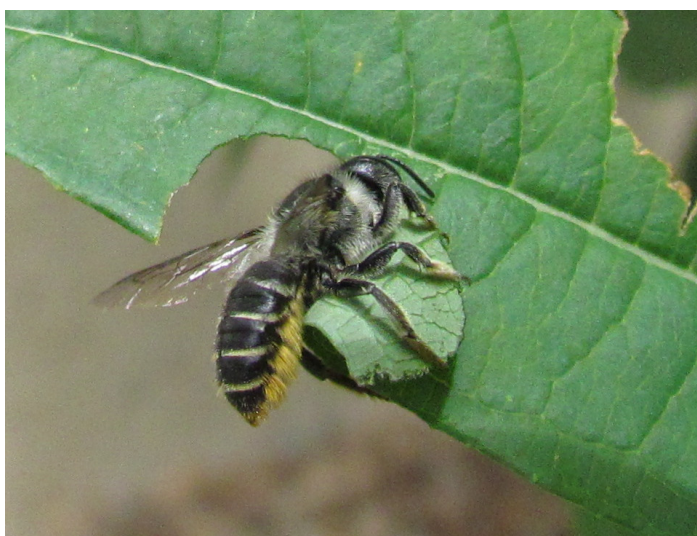
Day slips into evening. I never see fireflies in my yard but tonight one appears. With brief bursts of green light, I can follow his path as he drifts about the yard. What a thrill and the final exclamation point on an interesting day in my small, chemical-free urban yard.

Tomorrow is another day. I wonder what new surprises await me? 🐾



*Above: Dog-day cicada.
Photo courtesy of UW Milwaukee Field Station.*

*Below: Leaf-cutter bee.
Photo courtesy of Christy Stewart/UW Extension.*



WSO Presents Special Recognition Award To Project SOAR

Excerpted/ revised from "The Badger Birder", April 2020

One of Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's crown jewels is our annual recognition of outstanding individuals and organizations that have done amazing work on behalf of birds. Whether furthering the advancement of bird conservation, promoting the field of ornithology or contributing time or talent to the society itself, every January the Board of Directors selects from a list of worthy nominations their slate of Passenger Pigeon Award recipients.

In any ordinary year, in addition to sharing the list of award recipients, we would be sharing exciting details about the Award Ceremony and Reception, an important part of what would have been our 81st Annual Convention. Unfortunately, this is no ordinary year and the convention has been cancelled.

The good news is that WSO Board will be looking at options to further honor a record 13 outstanding recipients. Here is a list of the 2020 WSO Award Recipients:

Golden Passenger Pigeon Award: George Archibald and Sumner Matteson.

Silver Passenger Pigeon Award: Levi Wood.

Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award: Michelle Voss and Ryan Brady.

Noel J. Cutright Conservation Award: John and Gene Jacobs, Ken Lange and Mike Mossman.

Samuel D. Robbins Lifetime Achievement Award: Robert Domagalski.

Special Recognition Award:

Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's **Special Recognition Award** was created to recognize the collective efforts of a far-reaching project or partnership that increases the public's awareness and appreciation for birds, their habitats or the need for conservation.

This year the award goes to **Project SOAR** and team members Erin Giese, Janet Wissink and Frank Ujazdowski.

Project SOAR (Snowy Owl Airport Rescue) was the brainchild of falconer Ujazdowski and two leaders of local Audubon chapters, Wissink of Winnebago Audubon and Giese of Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon.

In 2018, after Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh shot a Snowy Owl it considered a hazard for planes, Ujazdowski wondered if he could put his expertise to work saving owls.

He contacted Wissink and asked if she could set up a meeting with airport managers. At that meeting, he offered to trap and relocate Snowy Owls and other raptors so there would be no need to shoot them. SOAR was born.

His work caught the attention of Austin Straubel International Airport in Green Bay, which approached Giese and asked her to work with Ujazdowski to do the same at their facility.

Since then, SOAR has relocated many Snowy Owls, Great Horned Owls, Red-tailed Hawks, a Cooper's Hawk and an American Kestrel. 🦉

*We at Project SOAR are honored to receive this award!
Erin, Frank and Janet*



Bird Counts Are Fun; Plan Now, Save the Dates

The May Bird Count took place on May 9, 2020. Tom Ziebell of the Oshkosh Bird Club coordinated the count for Winnebago County. The next count is Sept. 12 and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count is Dec. 19, 2020.

On these annual bird counts observers record all birds seen or heard in Winnebago County on one day (24 hour period) in May, September and December. The May bird count has been conducted every year since 1966 and the September count since 1995. The final results are submitted to the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. The Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) began over a century ago and has been conducted every year since 1964 in Winnebago County.

Anyone may participate in the counts. The amount of time that you wish to commit is up to you. You may watch your feeders/yard for an hour or all day. You may walk, bike, or boat a certain area. For the more dedicated birder, surveying one of 30 areas is also an option. Make plans

with family or friends. Enjoy the outdoors. Be safe.

As a volunteer you will be required to record the number of each species seen or heard; time spent watching; distance travelled and document unusual species and numbers.

If you are interested in participating PLEASE contact Tom Ziebell for more information and to discuss the area you intend to cover to reduce duplication of birds counted: ctiebell@new.rr.com or 920-312-1976.

Thank you to our May observers who included: Bruce Abraham, Dawn Abraham, Mary Albrecht*, Brad Bahls, Kelli Bahls, Judy Bahls, Dawn Bernier, Paul Bruce, Anita Carpenter, Brenna Glas, Bettie Harriman, Holly Hoytink, Cathy Kaspar*, Memuna Khan, James Kinderman*, Rachel Krubsack, Mary Beth Petesch*, Connie Phelps, Stephanie Phelps, James Rudolph, Burt Schmidt*, Penny Schmidt*, Joy Schwarz, Dar Tiede, Janet Wissink, Char Ziebell*, Tom Ziebell. (*Feeder/yard watchers).

Field Parties: 13. **Hours:** 03:00 to 21:30. **Total Party Hours:** 167.0 (58.0 car, 37.5 foot, 2.0 owling, 69.5 feeder/yard). **Total Party Miles:** 582.0 (551.0 car, 30.0 foot, 1.0 owling). **Total Individuals:** 14,914. **Total Species:** 151. 🦉



10th Big Sit But No Oshkosh Bird Fest

By Anita Carpenter

In this time of pandemic pandemonium with safer-at-home orders and social distancing, many activities have been cancelled. Oshkosh Bird Fest, which has been a “first-weekend-in-May” event since 2011, succumbed to the same fate.

However, as my friend and fest organizer Bettie Harriman said, even though Oshkosh Bird Fest was cancelled, Anita has not been cancelled!

As part of the yearly event, I’ve hosted and enjoyed the Big Sit for nine years. We’d begin at 6 a.m. in Menominee Park on Lake Winnebago and continue until noon. This year marked our 10th anniversary. I said I’d still like to do the Big Sit even if no one else is present, because I have nine uninterrupted years of data. Besides, Big Sits are fun.

The fest committee couldn’t announce the Big Sit to the general public, but planning committee members were

invited to participate. Eight individuals showed up with many remarking that this was the first year they could participate instead of being responsible for other activities.

We had to relax one major restriction. To accommodate all of us, a 17-foot diameter circle did not allow for 6-foot distancing, so we had a “Big Sit Ellipse”. We felt that under these extreme pandemic conditions, we would be forgiven.

The first weekend in May is a bit early for the last major wave of neotropical migrants to arrive in Oshkosh. Together with this year’s cold weather, I wasn’t expecting much, but the forecast was for sunny skies with temperatures in the 50s and southerly winds. There was hope.

Our 6 a.m. bird was a Northern Cardinal. By 7 we had tallied 30 species, including an unexpected Eastern Bluebird and Blue-winged Teal. By 8 we had added nine more species including Forster’s and Caspian Tern, Warbling Vireo, Baltimore Oriole and Osprey.

As in the past, the first two hours were the best. By 9 a.m., we had recorded seven additional species including a Palm Warbler, the one and only warbler we saw, plus an Eastern Phoebe and a Great-crested Flycatcher.

We ended the Big Sit at 9 a.m., earlier than expected, because the park’s restrooms were locked due to the coronavirus!

Our grand three-hour total was 46 species. The yearly average is 48 species ranging from 32 in 2019 to 70 in 2012—when we set up two circles.

I was ecstatic with the results. Even though we didn’t see big numbers of each species, we all had a wonderful time.

Being with friends, sharing a few good laughs and doing what we all love to do, was a pleasant respite from the worries and uncertainty of the future. 🐦

What’s in your backyard?

These native Turk’s Cap lilies are one of my favorite backyard plants. Send me a photo of an insect, bird, animal or plant you found in your back yard and I will share. Email: winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com



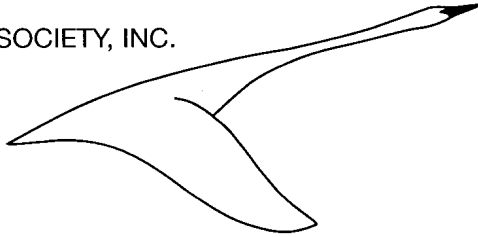
From the Quiz Master:

I’m a common late summer beetle with mustard colored wings highlighted with a black, oblong spot on each wing. I’m frequently found on goldenrod flowers. Whoooo am I?

(Look closely to find the answer in this newsletter.)



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If you are a member of National Audubon which automatically makes you a member of our local Chapter, NATL will appear with the expiration date. You will receive renewal notices from National or you may renew by using the form below.
If you are receiving a complimentary newsletter, COMP will appear with an expiration date. Please consider joining our Chapter or National (Dual) by using the application below.

Our Mission:

Winnebago Audubon encourages people to enjoy and protect birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through recreation, education, conservation, and restoration of the natural environment.

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please choose one:

- \$20.00 — Local Winnebago Audubon Chapter Membership.** You receive the Winnebago Audubon Chapter newsletter.
- \$35.00 — Dual Membership (Local Winnebago Audubon Chapter AND National Audubon Membership)** You receive Winnebago Audubon Chapter newsletter and National Audubon magazine.

Make check payable to Winnebago Audubon.

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Chapter Code: **Z12**

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Word of the Day: Hymenoptera

Insect order to which bees, wasps, sawflies and ants belong.

Welcome to Winnebago Audubon

You are invited to participate in activities of your local Winnebago Audubon chapter. It's a great way to meet like-minded people and to enjoy what nature has to offer. A special thank you to all those who are renewing again this year as well.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Victoria & Dale Bahr | S Nitzke |
| Debra Butch | Mary Petzold |
| Sean Cook | Jessica Riley |
| Larry & Ellen Ellenbecker | Marian Sage |
| Dennis Geier | Gail Steinhilber |
| Buffi Kremers | Wilbur Vandersee |
| Adam Meszaros | Marilyn Vollmer |

If you are a new member of National or the Chapter and haven't seen your name here in the last couple of issues, please contact **Membership Chair** at winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com or 920-216-1172