

The Lake Flyer

Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

January-February-March 2019

All programs and activities are open to the public

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

3 months of activities:

- ▶ ADD these dates to your calendar
- ▶ SAVE this newsletter as a reminder to attend

Winter Birding at Jefferson Park

in Menasha

Sunday, Jan. 20

1:30 pm

Don't let winter's cold keep you from birdwatching. Now is the time to search for birds we only see in winter.

Join us in Jefferson Park in Menasha. The water is usually open so our focus will be on waterfowl and eagles. Depending on our success we may travel to other close-by spots to see what is hanging around.

Directions: Travel I41 north to Main Street exit in Neenah. Continue east to Commercial Ave. Turn left and continue on Commercial Ave across Menasha channel to Main Street in Menasha. Angle right and go east until the curve to the left. (A bridge will come into the curve from your right. There is a traffic signal here.) Once you have rounded the curve, turn right on the first street (Broad St.) and continue to Jefferson Park. We will meet on the road that parallels the water. If you use GPS, enter "Jefferson Park" as your destination. You may get different driving instructions but it will get you there.

Dress for the weather and bring your binoculars if you have them. This field trip is free and open to the public. 🐦

Eagles on the Fox River

in Oshkosh

Saturday, Feb. 16

9:00 am

Open water in winter attracts Bald Eagles and waterfowl. Since the Great Backyard Bird Count runs Fri., Feb. 15 through Mon., Feb. 18, we will also count the birds we see and contribute our data to this international, citizen-science project which is coordinated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon. See article on page 2 for details about the GBBC.

Meet us near what used to be the parking lot of the Lakeshore Municipal Golf Course (2175 Punhoqua Dr., Oshkosh). The road is still open during construction of the new Oshkosh Corp headquarters. We will set up scopes and use binoculars to check open water near the Butte des Morts bridge. We will then work our way back along the river through Rainbow Park.

Please dress for the weather and bring your binoculars if you have them. We will have binoculars to share. This outing is free and open to the public. 🐦



Up Close & Personal with Exotic Animals

Saturday, Mar. 16

1:30 pm

Coughlin Center
625 E. County Rd. Y, Oshkosh

This is your chance to meet some cool exotic animals like a tortoise, lizards, snakes, parrots, sugar sliders and more. Jamie Kozloski from Kingdom Animalia Exotic Animal Rescue will bring several rescue animals for you to see up close. This educational program introduces attendees to each animal, explains why she has them, how they survive in nature, their role in nature, and how the pet trade has affected them.

This fun, educational program is appropriate for all ages. It is free and open to the public.

Kingdom Animalia Exotic Animal Rescue (KAEAR) is a 501c3 nonprofit that was founded in 2006 by Jamie. Their mission is to give educational outreach programs to raise awareness for exotic animal conservation and care. They take the education one step further and give animals refuge by

Continued on page 3

Save the dates for these upcoming events!
 Look for details in our next newsletter in late March, on Facebook, and our website.

- Calendar of Events**
- Jan 20..... Winter Birding at Jefferson Park
(see page 1)
 - Feb 15-18 . Great Backyard Bird Count
(see page 4)
 - Feb 16..... Eagles on the Fox River (see page 1)
 - Mar 16..... Up Close & Personal with Exotic Animals
(see page 1)
 - Apr 13..... Annual Midwest Crane Count
(see page 4)
 - Apr 14..... Annual Meeting: Celebrating our Members and Donors
 - May 4 Oshkosh Bird Fest
 - May 18 Spring Migrants at Waukau Creek
 - Jun 15..... UWO Campus Tour—Birds & Natural Landscaping
 - Jul 13..... Insects: What will we find at Sheldon Nature Area?
 - Jul 26-29... National Audubon Convention in Milwaukee
 - Sep 7 Monarch Tagging
 - Nov 21 Flying Jewels in the Garden
- We have a few more activities in the works, so it looks like a great year to get out in nature with us.

**23rd Annual
 Toward Harmony with Nature
 Saturday, January 19, 2019
 Oshkosh Convention Center**

It's not too late to register. Learn more at
<https://www.TowardHarmonywithNature.org>

Share your talent . . .

Nominations are now being accepted for officers and directors for 2019 elections to be held on April 14. Give Janet a call at 920-216-1172 or send an e-mail to winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com if you would like to know more about how you can volunteer.

Word of the Day: Falcon
 Various birds of prey or hawks in the family Falconidae having long, pointed, powerful wings adapted for swift flight.

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.

Anonymous
 Anonymous
 Grant Beckfield
 Joe & Kim Bednarowski
 Todd & Betty Berens
In Honor of Tom & Wendy Schultz
 Charles & Marian Beyer
 Connie Borrmann
 Anita & Gerald Carpenter
 Louise Coumbe
 Kathy Karkula
 Mark Kasuboski
 Linda Kelly
 Joanne Kitzman
 Nancy Ledding
 Ken & Ann Lohry
 Dave Misterek
In Memory of Katherine & Russ Rill
 Robert & Carol Niendorf Fund
 of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation
 Lee Otis
 Doris & Mike Pierzchalski
 Arlene Prickett
 Rommelfanger Family Fund
 of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation
 Terry Seifert
 Mary Slavik
 Tom Sullivan
In Memory of Humphrey & Beatrice Sullivan
 Doris Thomas
 Donna & John VanBuecken
In Memory of Katherine Rill
 Val Williams
 Janet & Steve Wissink
 Jean Yost
 William Zimar & Susan Nietzel

Snowy Owl Etiquette Can Be Applied to Watching Any Bird

How to be a good observer:

Keep your distance.

This is the first and most important rule. Just because the owl may tolerate a fairly close approach doesn't mean you should push the envelope. If the owl is visibly reacting to your presence — fidgeting, repeatedly staring at you, head-bobbing or changing position — you're too close, and need to back off immediately.

Needless to say, if you've flushed the owl you were much too close — and should reconsider your behavior next time.

Fortunately, a vehicle makes a terrific blind, so stay in your car whenever possible. (It's also a lot warmer on a frigid day.) Use a spotting scope and a telephoto lens, and be content to watch from a safe distance. Be patient, and if you can time your visit late in the day, when the owl typically will become more active, it may approach you, especially if you're positioned near a favorite perch.

And watching from a distance — when you're not interfering with the owl's natural behavior — has its own particular rewards. Researchers spend countless hours watching owls, picking up clues to the surroundings from the owl's behavior. Is it staring off in one direction consistently? Perhaps there is a red-tailed hawk, bald eagle or another snowy owl hidden over a rise in that direction. Has it raised itself up almost vertically, and is focused with laser intensity on one place? Get ready for it to make a lightning attack on prey.

Respect private property.

Many landowners who host snowy owls report problems with visitors ignoring common courtesy (and sometimes even obvious "No Trespassing" signs) to get close to owls. Do not cross private property without



Photo by Randy Wolfgram

permission. And in coastal environments, snowy owls often roost in fragile dune habitat that is generally closed to foot traffic. Obey all closure or off-limits signs.

Do not feed an owl, ever.

One of the most damaging things anyone can do (usually to attract the bird for a close-up photo, but sometimes out of a misplaced belief that the owl is starving) is to feed a snowy owl. Because they have little innate fear of humans, snowy owls can very quickly become very habituated to people tossing them mice. Once they associate people with food, the owls are drawn into dangerous situations, such as swooping close to roads. They may also approach people who may harm them, either from fear and ignorance, or from malice. 🦉

Reprinted from Project SNOWSTORM website:
<https://www.projectsnowstorm.org/snowy-owl-etiquette/>

Exotic Animals *Continued from page 1*

rescuing and rehabilitating sick, injured, or unwanted exotic pets. Animals are then adopted out to families or facilities.

KAEAR originated in Ashwaubenon and is currently operating in Suring. Jamie plans on relocating the rescue back down to the Ashwaubenon area within the next year for a permanent location. With backgrounds in biology, animal control, zookeeping, rehabilitation and rescue, and teaching at a college, the final location will be based on education and naturalistic, walk-through enclosures.

Donations to help raise funds for this building can be mailed to:

KAEAR
8888 County Road V
Suring, WI 54174

For more info, contact Jamie at: jamie.kozloski@gmail.com or 920-609-3529

Website: www.KAEAR.org
Facebook: Kingdom Animalia Exotic
Animal Rescue

There will be a donation box at the event.
Winnebago Audubon is donating \$120.00 to KAEAR. 🦉

National Audubon Convention

July 26-28, 2019 | Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Join us in Milwaukee for Audubon's biennial convention designed to bring together Audubon's vast network of dedicated chapter, state, center, national, and international leaders from across all four flyways. This can't-miss event will feature an array of inspiring speakers, in-depth workshops and discussions, exciting field trips, and the camaraderie and networking opportunities that only the Audubon Convention can provide. Situated on Lake Michigan, Milwaukee is a beautiful and historic place to gather, learn, and network. The Wisconsin Audubon Council, Milwaukee Audubon Society, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, and the Audubon Great Lakes team are excited to welcome the whole Audubon network to Milwaukee.

Stay tuned for more event details coming soon! Here's the link to the National Audubon website:

<https://www.audubon.org/conservation/2019-convention>

Save the date and join us in Milwaukee next summer! 🦉

Great Backyard Bird Count

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time.

Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

We invite you to participate! For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, **February 15-18, 2019**, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish!

If you're new to the count, or have not participated since before the 2013 merger with eBird, you must [create a free online account](#) to enter your checklists. If you already have an account, just use the same login name and password. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login information, too.

[Click here for more info on how to get started.](#)

In 2018, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted more than 6,400 species of birds on more than 180,000 checklists!

During the count, you can explore what others are seeing in your area or around the world. Share your bird photos by entering the photo contest, or enjoy images pouring in from across the globe. You can even add photos and sounds to your checklist. [Read more.](#)

Your help is needed every year to make the GBBC successful!

Then [keep counting throughout the year with eBird](#), which uses the same system as the Great Backyard Bird Count to collect, store, and display data any time.



Why count birds?

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document and understand the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time.

Scientists use information from the Great Backyard Bird Count, along with observations from other citizen-science projects, such as the [Christmas Bird Count](#), [Project FeederWatch](#), and [eBird](#), to get the "big picture" about what is happening to bird populations. The longer these data are collected, the more meaningful they become in helping scientists investigate far-reaching questions.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with Bird Studies Canada and many international partners. The Great Backyard Bird Count is powered by [eBird](#). The count is made possible in part by founding sponsor [Wild Birds Unlimited](#). 🐦



Photo by Carrie Hildebrand

Save the Date Annual Midwest Crane Count Saturday, April 13, 2019

In 2017, Winnebago County volunteers counted more cranes than any other participating county! The numbers are not available for 2018, but you may remember THE blizzard we had that weekend which limited the number of people who were able to count. Let's hope this year will bring us great weather.

The Annual Midwest Crane Count is a citizen science tradition created by the International Crane Foundation (ICF) of Baraboo, WI, to monitor the general population trend of sandhill cranes in the Upper Midwest, as well as to promote awareness of cranes and wetland conservation throughout the count area. We invite you to help gather this valuable data to further ICF research.

Winnebago Audubon is once again coordinating the count efforts in Winnebago County. If you would like to count on April 13, please contact Shannon Davis-Foust at agalinus3@gmail.com or call 920-420-7426. Emails will also be sent out in March to past participants. If you do not hear from her, do not hesitate to contact her. We can assign you to one of the 45 established sites.

It's easy, fun, and only takes two hours of your day (5:30 am-7:30 am). Enjoy the beauty of a sunrise as the birds welcome a new day in the wetland.

To learn more about the Annual Midwest Crane Count visit the International Crane Foundation website:

<https://www.savingcranes.org/education/annual-midwest-crane-count/> 🐦

From the Quiz Master:

I'm the smallest falcon at 10.5 inches in Wisconsin. I have a russet back and tail and double black stripes on my white face. I hover over meadows in search of small mammals and insects. Whoooo am I?

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



Drama In The Sky

“Kochee-kochee-kochee” drifts down from the airspace above me. Loud, rapid, high-pitched, irritated-sounding calls tell me that a bird is really upset. I step out from the protection of the building and look up to discover three peregrine falcons. Two same-sized falcons are circling overhead while a larger third bird is perched on the corner of the neighboring high-rise.

I’m on the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus at the base of the ten-story Gruenhagen Hall. Atop this building is a peregrine nesting box placed here in 2010. Peregrine falcons, *Falco peregrinus*, have successfully nested here each year raising from one to four youngsters annually.

The two circling falcons are obviously agitated with the perched bird. One dives at the perched falcon missing its head by about two feet. Up it glides, banks and returns for a second dive. After the third dive, the perched bird had enough of this harassment and flies directly to the nest box. I’m standing under the box and can hear wings hitting the sides of the entrance as the bird quickly and clumsily flies in.

The two falcons continue to circle overhead but seem less agitated. The third falcon emerges from the box and sits on the building’s edge. A few moments later, one of the two falcons lazily flies off in the direction of Lake Winnebago and disappears from view. Shortly thereafter, the second peregrine follows in the same direction and disappears. Meanwhile, the sitting falcon, which is dark in color and heavily streaked on its front, moves onto the perch in front of the nest box.

I linger a few minutes scanning the sky, wondering if this little show is over. Then from the direction of the lake, a peregrine comes zooming in, its wings are tucked in for aerodynamic speed. This is a flight with purpose for this bird is really moving. I realize this falcon is in a “stoop” which is the same high-speed flight used for pursuing and capturing airborne prey.

A peregrine falcon is the fastest creature on earth. When in a “stoop”, it can reach a speed up to 200 mph. I estimate this bird is traveling at least 100 mph, streaking across the sky and clearing the airspace in front of me in about two seconds. Amazing! What an exhilarating display of speed and power.

Just as surprisingly, it pulls out of this high-speed flight just feet from the corner of the building and gently and gracefully lands. From top speed to zero in a few feet was spectacular to witness.

I now have two perched birds which seem to be at peace with each other. The show is over. I know what I saw but what really transpired here? The more I ponder this question, the more questions and uncertainty come to mind.

Were the two flying peregrines the resident pair at this

nest site? A pair is loyal to its chosen nest site and will defend its nesting territory from intruders. However, both birds were the same size which suggests either two males or two females and therefore not a pair. (Females are generally larger than males.) Perhaps these birds weren’t residents but two peregrines just wandering through.

Which bird or birds uttered the aggressive “kochee” calls? Was it the two falcons discovering a perched bird or the perched bird reacting to the circling falcons or were all birds calling? I didn’t see the birds when they were calling.

The larger, darker bird is probably a juvenile peregrine fledged this year. Was it a bird raised in this box and still hanging around or a wandering juvenile that happened to find this site?

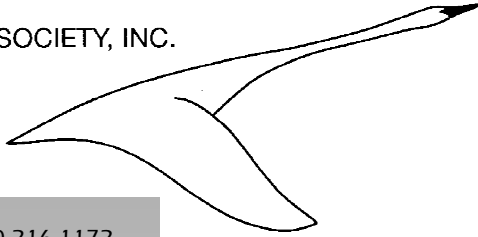
I witnessed two peregrines departing and one incoming. Was the “stooping” falcon one of these two flying peregrines or was it a fourth bird, perhaps a resident, arriving to claim and defend its territory. I really don’t know.

So after much thought I conclude that I cannot definitively answer these questions and therefore have no explanation for what I witnessed. I’m just thankful that I was in the right place at the right time. I heard these unique, unforgettable “kochee” calls which I hadn’t heard before. I witnessed a stoop with its incredible speed, power and grace which I hadn’t seen before. And best of all, I observed these interesting behaviors all coming together to create an unforgettable little “Drama in the Sky”.



One of the UWO peregrines perched in front of the nest box.
(Courtesy of UWO Falcon Cam)

WINNEBAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.
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OSHKOSH, WI 54903



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Important Note: TEMPORARILY AWAY? Please notify us if you will be temporarily away. The post office will not forward your newsletter. If you want to receive your newsletter while at your temporary address, please notify us at winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com.

RENEWALS: Your mailing label includes your membership expiration date above your name. If you are a "Chapter Only" member the word CHAPTER will appear with the expiration date. Please renew your Chapter membership by filling out the application form below. Thank you for helping us save on the cost of renewal reminders.

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.

GO GREEN by opting to receive your newsletter via e-mail. E-mail request to winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com

Winnebago Audubon Society Mission Statement: Advance the mission of the National Audubon Society to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity through grassroots efforts of community outreach and advocacy.

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: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail _____

Chapter Code: **C9ZZ12OZ**

Mail this form with payment to:
Audubon Membership, PO Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

Quiz Answer: American Kestrel, *Falco sparverius*

*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.

Holly Hoytink

Mary Kettner

Marcia Leslie

Becky Metz

William Selwitschka

Glenn Zamzow

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