

The Lake Flyer

Newsletter of Winnebago Audubon

Jan-Feb-Mar 2024

All programs and activities are open to the public.

Vol. 45, No. 4

P.O. Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903 • Published five times a year
Editor: Janet Wissink • 920-216-1172 • winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com

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



White-breasted Nuthatch.
Photo by Matt Saunders.

WINTER BIRD WALKS

New Year's Day Birding at Sawyer Creek Nature Trail / Evergreen Retirement Community

Mon., Jan. 1, 2024 1:00-3:00 pm

Join us at the Evergreen Retirement Community and the Sawyer Creek Nature Trail to start the new year right by watching birds. We will be walking around the Evergreen buildings checking bird feeders and on the nature trail in search of winter birds. Time and weather permitting we may also visit nearby open water for waterfowl and gulls.

Directions: From the intersection of Hwy 41 and Hwy 21, go east on Oshkosh Ave. (Hwy 21) to the first stoplight. At the stoplight turn right on Westfield St. and continue a short distance to the Evergreen parking area on your left. We will meet in the front of the parking area near the sidewalk.

Address for GPS lookup: 1130 N. Westfield St., Oshkosh, WI 54902. 🐦

Owl Prowl at Shady Lane

Sat., Jan. 20, 2024 4:00-6:00 pm

Join us at the Rat River Wildlife Area on this evening owl prowling. We will watch for Short-eared Owls along Shady Lane and then listen nearby for possible Great Horned, Barred, and Screech Owls. We may drive a short distance in searching of calling owls. Successful sightings will be strongly dependent on cooperative weather conditions. This outing requires minimal to no hiking. Dress warmly and bring binoculars.

Directions: Shady Lane is a county road north of Hwy 10 that crosses Hwy 76. From the intersection of Hwy 76 and Hwy 10 go north on Hwy 76 for about 0.7 mile. Turn left/west on Shady Lane. Go straight at the stop sign at Center Road. Look for parked vehicles along the marshy area of Shady Lane. 🐦

Great Backyard Bird Count at Kimberly Point & Wilderness Park

Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024 9:00 am-11:00 pm

Interested in participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count but not sure where to start? Join us at Kimberly Point and Wilderness Park in Neenah as we search for birds, count species totals, and report sightings to eBird. We will start at Kimberly Point at 9:00 a.m. to look for ducks, mergansers, and eagles. Then we will drive to Wilderness Park to search for finches, woodpeckers, and other winter birds.

Directions to Kimberly Point: from Highway 41, take exit 132 east for Main Street Neenah. Go over the bridge and continue straight to stay on Main Street/Wisconsin Ave. Follow Wisconsin Ave all the way to Lakeshore Ave. Turn left on Lakeshore Ave and proceed to park near the lighthouse. **Address for GPS lookup:** 290 Lakeshore Ave, Neenah, WI 54956.

Directions to Wilderness Park from Kimberly Point: Lakeshore Ave turns into Park Ave when you go around the bend past the lighthouse. At the stop sign, turn left on Wisconsin Ave and then turn right onto S Park Ave. Follow S Park Ave for half a mile. Wilderness Park will be on your left. Please park along the east side of the road parallel to the park. **Address for GPS lookup:** 940 S Park Ave, Neenah, WI 54956. 🐦

March Waterfowl Madness Location TBD

Sat., Mar. 23, 2024 9:00 am-12:00 pm

Join us in search of early spring migrants, especially waterfowl. Large numbers and a variety of waterfowl are possible, including swans, five species of geese, dabbling ducks, many diving ducks and mergansers, and other spring migrants.

Sightings will depend on the status of migration,

continued on page 3


Meet Our Board Member: Dave Moon

Growing up on a farm just outside of Oshkosh I always enjoyed exploring outside and participating in sports. These interests led me to achieving a double major in biology and physical education at UW Oshkosh. I taught high school biology for over thirty years and coached football and wrestling.

My interest in physical fitness and environmental fitness resulted in running 7 marathons including "Boston". And, I took a dozen groups of high school students to the Bahamas to study marine biology. Both endeavors were memorable and inspiring.

I joined Winnebago Audubon in the 1980's enjoying the programs, field trips and the camaraderie of like minded people. For a number of years I coordinated field trips and a program called Audubon Adventures. I also was the treasurer and vice president for a period of time. Today I help out with programs like monarch butterfly tagging. A few years ago I organized a small group from Winnebago Audubon to go to Mexico to see where the monarchs spend their winter. At that time at the El Rosario sanctuary it was estimated to have between 35-38 million roosting in the trees.

I have also helped guide 4th and 5th graders from the Oshkosh Area School District through Sullivan's Woods which is a 40 acre site west of Oshkosh. And I wrote and produced audio/visual presentations for the schools to use prior to coming out to the woods for their field trips. To help maintain the woods I've organized students from UW Oshkosh to help clear buckthorn and willow from over taking the woods and prairie.

Exploring and enjoying the outdoor environment and keeping fit continue to be my passions as well as passing my passions on to the next generation. 



Annual Midwest Crane Count

Saturday, April 13, 2024 - 5:30-7:30 am

Pre-count Meeting: Thurs., April 4 - 6-7:30 pm

Winnebago Audubon is looking for counters to cover the 45 designated sites in Winnebago County for the 48th Annual Midwest Crane Count. More than 1,800 volunteer participants from throughout Wisconsin and portions of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio and Minnesota participate in the spring survey, which gathers information on the abundance and distribution of cranes in the upper Midwest.

The International Crane Foundation sponsors the Count as part of its mission to conserve the world's 15 species of cranes and the natural communities on which they depend. Sandhill cranes once nearly disappeared from Wisconsin, but the species has successfully recovered and is slowly expanding into neighboring states.

Observations of sandhill cranes can lend insight into threatened crane species, including the endangered whooping crane. There are now approximately 75 whooping cranes in the reintroduced population in central Wisconsin, and crane counters may have a chance of sighting a whooper during the survey, just like last year!

Best reasons to be a crane counter:

1. Doing something a little crazy is fun.
2. You can do something good for the environment once a year without becoming a bird-nut.
3. If you are a student, it counts as volunteer hours.
4. You'll learn to speak crane-ese.
5. It's a good excuse to watch a sunrise once per year.
6. Bring your binoculars and camera. You'll be surprised by what other wildlife you see that early in the morning.
7. If the weather is nasty, you can count from inside the car with the heater on.
8. Winnebago County is a great place to survey because we rank high in the number of crane sightings.

9. When finished you still have the whole day ahead of you


Signing up is easy! Go to the International Crane Foundation website: savingcranes.org where you will find the site maps for Winnebago County. Select a site that you would like to survey, then contact our Winnebago County Coordinator, Evelyn Meuret, to check availability and secure your site. You may contact Evelyn for assistance. **She will save sites for folks who counted in 2023 until the end of March. If you are not able to count this year, please let her know that your site is available.**



You will also find the data sheet and more information at the savingcranes.org website.

We are hosting an in-person meeting before the crane count on Thursday, April 4 from 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm at the Oshkosh Food Co-op, 155 Jackson St., Suite 1. You may choose a site that night, meet other counters, and ask questions. We will review crane call identification and data entry. This meeting is optional but you may find it helpful if you are a new counter. Please share with friends and family who might be interested in volunteering.

We invite all counters to meet for breakfast after the count to share your experience at the Delta Restaurant, 515 N. Sawyer St., Oshkosh. Dutch treat.

Please contact Evelyn directly about your interest in participating in this year's Annual Midwest Crane Count: evelynmeuret57@att.net or 920-573-7828. 



Flower of the Snow

Winter has arrived. I rejoice for winter is my favorite season. I love being outside experiencing its many moods. It may be a gently falling snow from a snow globe-like shower to my favorite, a howling blizzard with strong northwest winds.

I admire the beauty and peacefulness of a fresh snowfall with its many snow diamonds sparkling on a sunny day under a clear blue sky.

As a tribute to winter, I think about Wisconsin's organisms that are blessed to have "snow" in their names.

The arrival of snowy owls and snow buntings from the frozen north enliven the cold months while the few snow geese that we may have seen in autumn have long departed for the warm, sunny south.

Snow fleas, tiny jumping black specks, are easily overlooked on the cold, white landscape but they are apparent to those curious about moving black specks. Snowshoe hares are larger jumpers whose unique snow tracks reveal their meanderings.

Snowy tree crickets chirp to us in summer but cricket music is now silent. Creeping snowberry, a diminutive evergreen plant, survives winter's harshness under an insulating snow blanket.

Over the years, I've discovered, studied, and enjoyed these snow-named organisms. However, one rare "snow" organism has eluded me. It's a small, easily overlooked plant called the snow trillium or dwarf trillium, whose scientific name is *Trillium nivale*. The trillium name is derived from Latin, "tri" meaning three and liliu for "lily", the plant family to which all trillium species belong. Nivale is Latin meaning "of the snow".

Five trillium species grace Wisconsin with 26 species found in North America. In general, trilliums are erect perennials. Three is an important number in the taxonomy or classification of trilliums. An individual trillium plant has a whorl of 3 leaves, 1 terminal flower with 3 petals, 3 sepals, 6 stamens and 3 stigmas. Species differ in height, leaf shape and venation, color (not all trilliums have white flowers), habitat preferences and flowering period.

Snow trillium is the smallest and shortest trillium



reaching an awe-inspiring height of 3 to 6 inches. It sports a whorl of 3 small, oval, blunt leaves atop its stem. A one-inch wide, small, 3-petaled white flower is atop a 1/2" to 1-1/8" stalk arising from the top of the stem.

Snow trillium is Wisconsin's earliest blooming trillium appearing from March into April - about the same time as the early-flowering skunk cabbage. Snow trillium often blooms when snow is still on the ground - hence its name. It prefers to grow in rich moist woods in limy rich soil which is associated with the Niagara (limestone) escarpment along Wisconsin's eastern border.

Snow trilliums have long ceased flowering when our most common trillium, the large-flowered trillium, *Trillium grandiflorum*, commands our attention. From May into June it carpets rich woodlands statewide with its large showy white blossoms.

Snow trillium is a Wisconsin threatened species so perhaps it is beneficial for the species' survival to be small, short, and easily overlooked.

Even with the challenge of finding this rare, small plant, I hope someday, I will have the distinct pleasure of observing it in the wild. 🐾

WINTER BIRD WALKS *continued*

March Waterfowl Madness *continued from page 1*

location, and weather conditions. Spotting scopes are helpful, but not required.

We will meet at the Green Valley Road Park & Ride (Hwy's 41 & 76). From here we will drive to a birding location that offers the best chance to see waterfowl and other early migrants.

Directions: Meet at the Hwy 41 and Hwy 76, Green Valley Road Park and Ride. From here we will drive to the birding location. 🐾

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

Grace Beam

Robert & Carol Niendorf

Louise Coumbe

Joy Perry

John Hoffman

Thomas Perzentka

In Memory of Carla Hansen

Tim Raupp

Jacquelyn Mueller

Richard & Mary Slavik

Bill Zimar/Sue Neitzel



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
OSHKOSH WI
PERMIT NO 90

Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.
PO Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

OFFICERS

President : Janet Wissink, 920-216-1172
winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com
Vice President: Carmen Meuret
920-573-7832 / cjmeuret@gmail.com
Secretary: Zaiga Freivalds
920-233-5914 / zaigam@charter.net
Treasurer: Mike Brandel
920-233-5914 / mbrandel49@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

Kelli Bahls
920-573-2121 / kabahls@outlook.com
Anita Carpenter, 920-233-6677
Dana Hartel
920-410-7659 / raptorssp2016@gmail.com
Evelyn Meuret
920-573-7828 / evelynmeuret57@att.net
Dave Moon
920-235-4429 / djmoon@northnet.net
MaryBeth Petesch
920-203-8547 / mbp.lux2023@gmail.com
Tom Ziebell
920-312-1976/thomasjziebell@gmail.com

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.

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 or online at winnebagoaudubon.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail _____

Chapter Code: **Z12**

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

GO GREEN !

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

*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.

Kristen & Ruby Anklam	Diane Matsche
Tara Fischer	Kyle Ruedinger
Linda Gumhold	Jerry Schaefer
Jane Hardel	Nikki Selenka
S Loker	Brad Spanbauer
Jennifer Martin	Jeanne Stacey

Membership questions?
Please contact **Membership Chair** at
winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com or 920-216-1172