

# The Lake Flyer

## Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

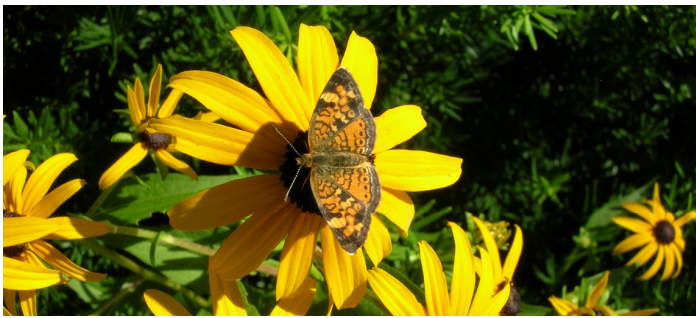
June-July 2019

All programs and activities are open to the public

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Check our website for up-to-date information: [www.winaudubon.org](http://www.winaudubon.org)



### Tour UWO's Sustainable, Eco-friendly Campus

Thursday, June 13 (note date change)

9:00 am

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus covers 70 acres in the heart of Oshkosh. Come and learn what is being done on the grounds to make the campus sustainable and eco-friendly. Join Lisa Mick, Grounds Supervisor, and Anita Carpenter, "Volunteer Prairie Keeper", as we explore the campus. Be prepared to walk!

Park and meet at UWO Alumni Welcome Center, 625 Pearl Ave., Oshkosh, on the corner of Pearl Ave. and Wisconsin Ave. 🐦

### Calendar of Events

Jun 13.....Tour UWO's Sustainable, Eco-friendly Campus (**NOTE DATE CHANGE**)

Jun 29.....Audubon Miller's Bay Cleanup

Jul 13.....Incredible Insects! Family Fun at Sheldon Nature Area

Jul 26-29 ...National Audubon Convention

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.

### Incredible Insects!

Family Fun at Sheldon Nature Area, Oakwood School

Saturday, July 13

9:30 am

Let's explore the diversity of aquatic and terrestrial insects! Join us for a family outing searching for insects in the prairie and the pond. We will be collecting insects and other "creepy crawlies" with sweep and pond nets. Afterwards they can be examined with bug viewers and magnifying lenses. Meet in the parking lot west of Oakwood School. Equipment will be provided. Wading boots or old shoes are recommended.



### From the Quiz Master:

I'm a native perennial plant that sends up a spike of red, asymmetrical flowers, each with 2 upper lobes and 3 lower lobes. I thrive in wet areas. My name is the same as a familiar red bird. Whoooo am I?

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

# Audubon's Adopt-a-Cleanup Morning at Miller's Bay

Sat., June 29

9:00 am—11:00 am

Ames Point, 1925 Oak Trail, Oshkosh

Winnebago Audubon invites you to join us at the Miller's Bay shoreland restoration site near Ames Point which is part of Menominee Park and located on the north end of Miller's Bay. We will be helping the Friends of Menominee Park Shoreland do maintenance work at the site.

We will be removing woody growth, weeding, and picking up litter. Wear close-toed shoes and long pants. Bring gloves if you have them. We do have spare gloves of all sizes, so you can just bring yourself! Many hands make the work go faster plus the more people the more fun. If you are not familiar with the site it will be a great opportunity to see it and learn about it from Michelle Bogden Muetzel, chairwoman of the Friends of Menominee Park Shoreland.

Friends of Menominee Park Shoreland is a group of Oshkosh volunteers working in collaboration with the City of Oshkosh to maintain native plant sites, protecting and restoring the shoreline of Lake Winnebago. The group operates completely on volunteer power and donations.

The group was formed by Oshkosh community members in 2011 after the 2010 City of Oshkosh Aquatic Management Plan found the Miller's Bay shore of Lake Winnebago to be "*incredibly poor and provides no aesthetic, habitat, or buffering value to the bay. Turf maintenance along the bay's shoreline leads to increased runoff of nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants to Lake Winnebago, while providing appealing loafing grounds to nuisance levels of Canada geese.*"

Since the first planting along Miller's Bay in September 2011, Friends of Menominee Park Shoreland has added a restoration site behind the pump house in Menominee Park, as well as a small prairie behind an Oshkosh Housing Authority apartment complex on Nicolet Avenue. Several local groups come out every season to learn and help our shoreland thrive.

The continuation of these projects was unanimously supported in November 2017 by the Parks Advisory Board to continue through the year 2020. 🐦

## SCHEDULE: Adopt-a-Cleanup Date

For more info, contact Michelle at [michelle.bogden@gmail.com](mailto:michelle.bogden@gmail.com). Dates & times subject to change because of weather or conflicts. Anyone may join us for any day, for as long they like.

June 19	Pump House Site	3:30-5:30 pm
June 29	Ames Pt. Site	9:00-11:00 am
July 3	Pump House Site	3:30-5:30 pm
July 20	Ames Pt. Site	9:00-11:00 am
July 31	Pump House Site	3:30-5:30 pm
Aug 24	Ames Pt. Site	9:00-11:00 am
Sept 14	Ames Pt. & Pump House Site	9:00-11:00 am
Oct 2	Pump House Site	3:30-5:30 pm

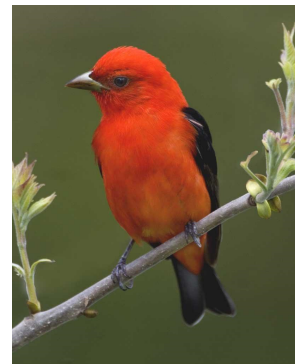
# Field Trip Report: Spring Migrants at Waukau Creek

By Kelli Bahls

On Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, the Spring Migrants at Waukau Creek Nature Preserve field trip took place under cold and cloudy skies, with a consistent east wind and the temperature hovering around 45 degrees.

By 7:00 a.m. a group of nine participants assembled in the parking area. We offered introductions and made our way toward the woods. Just beyond the trailhead, our first sightings included INDIGO BUNTING, BLACKPOLL WARBLER, and CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER.

Our route continued along the Elderberry Trail, where BALTIMORE ORIOLES and ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS made several appearances. At the first bridge crossing, male and female AMERICAN REDSTARTS zipped after insects along the embankment as a flock of five AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS soared briefly overhead.



As we followed the bottom of the ridge, BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS, a BAY-BREASTED WARBLER, and a YELLOW-THROATED VIREO could be seen in the forest canopy to the west.

From there we hiked a short but arduous climb to the top of the ridge. We soon encountered a RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH and BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER within several feet of one another in the treetops. Our excitement over this sighting, however, was soon upstaged by two male SCARLET TANAGERS, which presented excellent views to all in attendance.

The trails on the north side of the preserve were less muddy, but the cold east wind became much more apparent as sightings grew less frequent. Here we heard SANDHILL CRANES calling in the distance while a nearby WILD TURKEY gobbled at regular intervals.

As we began our descent down the ridge toward the last bridge we'd cross for the day, I had hopes of sighting a few more species. We were just in luck—before we could cross the bridge, we sighted one of the elusive WOOD THRUSH that we'd been hearing for most of the morning, in addition to an EASTERN PHOEBE and a pair of BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS.

The outing concluded around 9:00 a.m. with a final tally of 38 species—not bad for a cold and cloudy morning during spring migration! The weather may not have been ideal, but it quickly became an afterthought while birding with a great group and spotting some stellar species.

As spring migration transitions to the summer breeding season, consider checking your local and area hotspots for common and unusual flora and fauna. Take a friend along and bring your binoculars—you never know what you might find. 🐦

Photo: Rob Curtis / VIREO



## A Puerto Rican Treat

It's late March, but early morning as I make my way to the hotel's private beach located on the Atlantic Ocean in Puerto Rico.

I hadn't walked more than 30 meters when a colorful, flitting warbler-sized bird grabs my attention. At my eye level, this active sprite flies into a grapefruit-sized, spherical nest which is woven around the end of a drooping tree branch. A marvel of construction, the nest is woven of fine grasses and has a quarter-size entrance hole near the bottom.

As I watch the nest, the bird emerges and quickly disappears from view. It continues to elude me as it darts here and there. I am perplexed. The bird looks and acts like a warbler but warblers build cup nests, not spherical nests. What am I observing?



Later that day, just before sunset, I'm sitting in the hotel's ocean-view outdoor patio. Before me is an unique tree called the shaving brush tree, *Bombax ellipticum*. It is a jumble of sprawling, angular branches with very few leaves. On each of a few branch ends stands a 6-inch, upright structure that looks like a brown taper candle. As I sit here, I notice these candle-like structures beginning to open, thus revealing bright pink filaments.

Then out of nowhere, the warbler-sized sprite appears and lands on and clings to the "candle" - not on top but at the base where it attaches to the branch. I now notice his short, decurved black bill which he uses to quickly pierce the base of the flower bud. This bird is "stealing" the blossom's nectar! I am totally fascinated by this behavior.

He wasn't the only creature to make repeated visits to these unique flowers. A hummingbird, tanager, house sparrow and various bees and other insects including butterflies also dined on the pilfered nectar.

As each blossom continues to open, the outer covering splits into five sections and curls back onto itself. Sweet fragrance fills the still air. When fully open, each beautiful hot pink flower resembles an old-fashioned shaving brush with four-inch bristles. Pollination must come quickly for each "candle" blooms for just one night and falls from the tree by noon of the following day.

While watching this show, I jotted down field marks of my mysterious warbler-sized bird: black head, dark gray throat, bright yellow belly, white mark on black wings, bold white eye line and small red spot at the base of the bill. I could finally identify this energetic bird as a Bananaquit, *Coereba flaveola*, a member of the honeycreeper family. Honeycreepers are small songbirds restricted to Tropical America (not United States). Using their specially adapted decurved bills, honeycreepers typically pierce the hearts of flowers to get nectar, bypassing a role in pollination.

Bananaquits utter a high-pitched, insect-like trill. Once you tune into this almost inaudible song, you realize how common this little bird is even if you can't locate it. It is the most abundant bird in Puerto Rico.

I was thrilled to make the acquaintance of these colorful Bananaquits. They were always a delight to see and I love their name. I was also entertained by watching the flowering shaving brush tree throughout the week. So much bird and insect activity surrounded this magnificent tree yet most people walked under it oblivious to the wonderful natural entertainment happening just above their heads.

It pays to stay attuned to the environment that surrounds you for you'll never know when and where nature's secrets will be revealed. 🐾

Photo: Camilla Cerea / Audubon

Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*

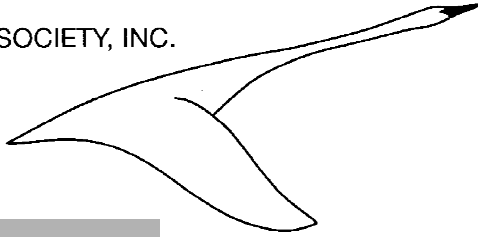
**Winnebago Audubon Society**  
extends a sincere **thank you** for your support  
which allows us to continue to provide positive  
experiences in nature for our community.

Gary & Elaine Coll  
In Memory of Jan Moldenhauer

Kristin Kauth  
Jan Scalpone  
Karla Zimmerman



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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.

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Code: **C9ZZ12OZ**

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

**Word of the Day: Frugivorous**

Creature that eats fruit.

*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.

*Due to issues with the membership roster at National Audubon, an updated membership list and list of new members is not available at this time.*

*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*