



# The Lake Flyer

## Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

March-April 2018

All programs and activities are open to the public

Vol. 39, No. 5

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

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

### Birding Terrell's Island Waterfowl & Spring Migrants

Sunday, April 8  
1:00 pm

Terrell's Island (Lake Butte des Morts Wildlife Area) is a 265-acre wetland restoration project of the Butte des Morts Conservation Club and the DNR, situated in the west end of Lake Butte des Morts near the mouth of the upper Fox River. Learn more about this unique project as we walk the 4 mile loop trail along the breakwall while looking for waterfowl and spring migrants. This area has become an excellent birdwatching spot. You may walk the entire loop or turn around at any point.

Bring binoculars, if you have them. We will have extras to share. Dress for the weather – we will be out in the open for most of the walk. The beginning and end of the trail could be a little muddy, but it is usually in good shape. This field trip is free and open to the public.

**Directions:** Take Hwy. 21 west from Oshkosh to Rivermoor Road. Turn right (north) on Rivermoor Rd. and follow to Schubert Road. Turn east (right) on Schubert and follow signs to "Terrell's Island" and the parking lot.

### Calendar of Events

Visit [www.winaudubon.org](http://www.winaudubon.org) for details.

Apr 8	Birding at Terrell's Island
Apr 14	Midwest Crane Count
Apr 15	Spring Banquet
May	Bird-for-Fun
May 5	Oshkosh Bird Fest
May 19	South Woods: Birds & Flowers
June 16	Explore Uihlein Marsh



You're Invited to our . . .

## Spring Banquet

Sunday, April 15

Primo Restaurant - 2605 Jackson St., Oshkosh

5:00 pm . . . Social

6:00 pm . . . Dinner

A brief business meeting will be followed by our program:

### "Whooping Crane Conservation Efforts at the International Crane Foundation"

(See page 2 for article)

**\$25.00 per person - RSVP by April 8**

*Make your reservations early, seating is limited.*

Your dinner order will be taken when we are seated at 6:00 pm.

You will have a choice of several entrees from a special menu.

#### To make your reservation

please complete the form below, enclose your check made payable to

Winnebago Audubon and mail to:

Winnebago Audubon, PO Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

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### DINNER RESERVATION FORM

Name(s) of those attending:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

Total Enclosed for Dinner: \$25.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# “Whooping Crane Conservation Efforts at ICF”

## Program at Spring Banquet

Make your dinner reservations to join us on April 15!

The story of Whooping Crane conservation is dramatic. In this talk Lizzie Condon, Whooping Crane Outreach Coordinator at the International Crane Foundation, will give a brief overview of the history of Whooping Crane populations and human efforts to bring this species back from the brink of extinction. This will include an update on the Eastern Migratory Population reintroduction project, which has gone through many changes in recent years. She will also talk about the International Crane Foundation’s ongoing research efforts and how the International Crane Foundation applies scientific knowledge to provide working conservation solutions.

Although Whooping Cranes have come a long way from their brush with extinction, they still face many threats. The survival of Whooping Cranes depends on the actions of



people—people protecting the ecosystems where Whooping Cranes live and people living in harmony with the birds. Lizzie is working to create communities that give a whoop about Whooping Cranes through using social marketing tactics to raise awareness and pride

in these beautiful birds. Lizzie will explain the tactics used for this campaign, which she worked on for two years in Alabama. The campaign is now expanding to Indiana. Lizzie will talk to you about how Winnebago Audubon Society can continue helping with this effort.

## From the Quiz Master:

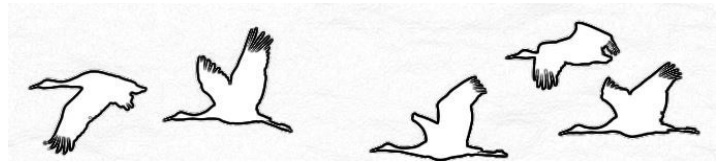
I’m an 18.5” diving duck with a blackish head and white breast and underparts. I’ve been hanging around all winter where lake ice meets open water. I have a big white spot on each side of my face. My wings whistle when I fly. Whooo am I?

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

## Friends of Sullivan’s Woods

Last fall the Oshkosh schools’ 4<sup>th</sup> graders returned as 5<sup>th</sup> graders to observe the changes summer brought to Sullivan’s Woods. They explored the various habitats and learned about its’ wildlife. The teachers appreciate the Friends that assist by guiding the students on the trails and assisting with their assignments. A big thank you to the following people who donated their time and knowledge: Carolyn Blassingame, Rebecca Eyer, Shannon Davis-Foust, Linda Loker, Mim McCann, Jaci Mueller, Grace Oliver, Karen Scheuermann, Val Williams, and Kathy Zillges.

This spring a new group of 4<sup>th</sup> graders will be introduced to the Woods. Volunteers interested in becoming “Friends” are always welcome. Teaching experience is not required as you can learn by shadowing a veteran guide. For more information, contact Zaiga Freivalds at 233-5914 or zaigam@charter.net.



## Time to Count, Sign-up Now! Annual Midwest Crane Count Saturday, April 14, 2018

In 2017, Winnebago County volunteers counted MORE CRANES THAN ANY OTHER COUNTY IN WISCONSIN AND THE NATION! We need your help to defend our title and stay #1 and keep bragging rights when we are out with friends. It’s two fun hours and then you go out for breakfast.

To get a map and have a site assigned to you, contact Tom Morley at [tcmorleybirds@gmail.com](mailto:tcmorleybirds@gmail.com).

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.

## “Bird for Fun” 2018

Spring migration is almost upon us (really), and we look forward to the wonderful birding that spring will bring. During the month of May we will “Bird for Fun”, which brings us together to bird together, learn from each other about great birding spots, birds and enjoy all that spring has to offer us.

Join up with an existing “team” or consider starting your own team. Let’s have fun, count birds, and win a prize for most species counted. We’re working out the details yet, but the most important thing is to participate with friends.

To participate contact Janet at: [winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com) or 920-216-1172.

## Eagles on the Fox

Brisk winds and cold temperatures didn’t deter 18 hardy birdwatchers from joining Winnebago Audubon for a morning of bald eagle watching along the Fox River in Oshkosh. Although the river was mostly frozen, a few slivers of open water were present. We watched an eagle catch a fish, then dine on it on the ice while a few herring gulls and crows came in to snatch a morsel. Three eagles were observed.

More open water existed just south of the Oshkosh Avenue bridge where a raft of 50 male common goldeneyes floated along with a beautiful male red-breasted merganser and numerous mallards. The number of species seen was not great but the views were excellent. Sightings were submitted as part of the Great Backyard Bird Count. Lunch at Fox River Tap Room with laughter and good conversation followed the outing.

Quiz Answer: Common Goldeneye, *Bucephala clangula*

## 2018-19 SLATE OF OFFICERS AND PROPOSED BUDGET

The Winnebago Audubon Society will hold its annual meeting for the election of officers and board members and to approve the proposed budget for 2018-19 on April 15 at the Spring Banquet.

The board presents the following **slate of officers** for 2018-19:

*President:* Jnaet Wissink  
*Vice President:* OPEN  
*Secretary:* Zaiga Freivalds  
*Treasurer:* Mike Brandel  
*Board of Directors:* Emily Berger  
 Daniel Fiser  
 Dave Moon

Kelli Bahls, Anita Carpenter, Pat Nichols, and Evelyn Meuret have another year to serve of their two year terms as Directors.

If you would like to nominate someone, or know of someone who might be interested in serving on the board, please contact Janet at winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com or 920-216-1172. We would very much like to have more members take an active role in our chapter.

The following budget has been approved by the WAS Board. Please take this opportunity to review it. If you have questions, contact Mike (233-5914 or mikebrandel@rocketmail.com) PRIOR to the April 2 annual meeting. The membership will be asked to approve this budget at the Spring Banquet on April 15.

### 2018-19 PROPOSED BUDGET

#### INCOME:

Banquet .....	900.00
Chapter Memberships .....	500.00
Donations .....	4,000.00
National Dues Share .....	771.00
National New Memberships .....	100.00
Program Admissions .....	334.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME .....</b>	<b>\$ 6,605.00</b>

#### EXPENSE:

Activities .....	\$ 2,300.00
Annual Report .....	10.00
Banquet .....	900.00
Donations .....	1,250.00
Dues and Memberships .....	75.00
Fundraisers-Annual Appeal.....	175.00
Liability Insurance.....	260.00
Newsletter .....	800.00
Postage .....	400.00
P.O. Box Rental.....	135.00
Supplies/Mileage .....	100.00
Website .....	200.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE .....</b>	<b>\$ 6,605.00</b>

# Oshkosh Bird Fest

**Saturday, May 5**

**MENOMINEE PARK, 6am-2pm**

Big Sit, 6am-12pm

Bird Banding, 7am-10:30pm

Presentations by **Rob Zimmer** at

9:00 am **Winnebago Wild**

11:30am **Wings in the Garden**

**Children's Activities**, 10am-2pm in the Zoo

**Live Birds of Prey**, 10am-2pm

with presentations at 10:15 & 12:45

**Educational Exhibits**, 8am-2pm

**Native Plant Sale**, 8am-2pm

**Concessions**, 8am-2pm

**OSHKOSH GALLERY WALK, 6pm-9pm**

**Student Bird Art Exhibit & Live Birds**

at Oshkosh Masonic Center

**Bird Fest Under the Dome 2018**

exhibit at Oshkosh Public Library

Browse participating downtown shops.

**www.oshkoshbirdfest.com**

Participate in our bird quiz on Facebook in April.



**You can help us make Oshkosh Bird Fest  
a huge success!**

Put an Oshkosh Bird Fest **yard sign** in your front yard.

**Volunteer** an hour or two —  
since you will be there anyway.

**Purchase** a beautiful Bird City  
Wisconsin mini-poster . . . \$20



Oshkosh Bird Fest is a city event organized by volunteers from Oshkosh Bird Club, Oshkosh Sustainability Advisory Board, Oshkosh Zoological Society, Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter, Winnebago Audubon, and Wisconsin DNR. It is entirely funded by donations. Oshkosh was awarded recognition as a Bird City Wisconsin in 2010, and recertified in 2017 as a "high flyer", because Oshkosh is a bird friendly community and is committed to implementing sound conservation practices and educating its residents to play an increased role in making our community healthy for birds ... and people.

**Contact Janet at**

**oshkoshbirdfest@gmail.com or 920-216-1172**

Major Sponsors:





## Rings and Feathers

March is duck month in Winnebago County. Temperatures are on the upswing. Ice is retreating from area lakes and rivers. Now is the time to brave still chilly March winds and temperatures to scan open water for returning waterfowl. The mouth of the Fox River in Oshkosh and Miller's Bay in Menominee Park are excellent locations to view these temporary visitors before they continue on their migratory journeys to northern nesting grounds. With many ducks of several species co-mingling in these icy waters, the reward is worth the effort. Scan the flocks for today's featured duck—the ring-necked duck, *Aythya collaris*.

If you know what characteristics to look for, the 17" ring-necked duck is any easy duck to identify but, at first glance, it could be confused with two similar-looking ducks: lesser scaup and greater scaup. All three species are diving ducks with black heads, necks, and breast and gray flanks. Take a closer look at the flanks. A conspicuous white, vertical crescent separates the ring-necked's black breast from his gray flank. Prominently visible from quite a distance, this bright white crescent is the field mark I always look for to correctly ID a ring-necked duck. Both scaup species lack this white mark.



Head shape and profile provide other clues to separating the species. The two scaup show rounded heads at a distance whereas the ring-necked duck sports a distinctive puffy, peaked head that appears almost triangular in profile. The ring-necked also holds its neck and head more upright. That, to me, presents a proud, regal, "look-at-me" image.

If a ring-necked duck bobs along at close range, look at its bill which provides another good field mark. The bill tip is black. Directly behind the black tip is a wide white ring that encircles the grayish bill. At the base of the bill and sharply contrasting with the black head is a narrow, second white ring. These rings, especially the one closest to its head, are visible at a distance. Both scaup have uniformly gray bills with no white rings.

As you studied the ring-necked duck, did you ask yourself, why is this duck name the ring-necked duck and not the ring-billed duck? The answer is not so obvious. During breeding season, the male has a faint brownish ring separating its neck from his breast. The duck's genus name, *collaris*, refers to this feature. This field mark is not readily visible—certainly not at a distance. In fact, I've never seen it.

A ring-necked female is brown with a grayish face. She has a somewhat peaked head but it is not as pronounced as her partner's. A very faint white crescent decorates her brown flank. Her black-tipped bill has a narrow white ring behind it. Although identifying female ducks can be challenging if they are not with an attendant male, a solitary ring-necked female can be positively identified if

you look at her eye which has a characteristic white eyering and a white eyeline that arches back from her eye.

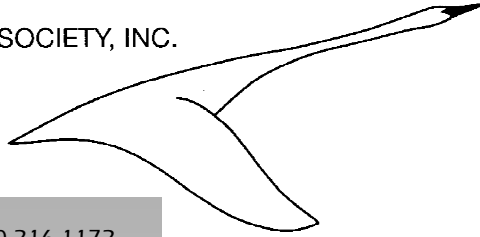
Ring-necked ducks are diving ducks which means they dive underwater for their food rather than tipping over on the surface and reaching for food as puddle ducks, such as mallards, do. One might expect ring-necks to nest near deeper water habitats but they really prefer shallower freshwater marshes and woodland ponds for nesting. They do nest in Wisconsin. They place their bulky nest of marsh reeds just above the water line in dense emergent vegetation. An average of 8 to 10 greenish-buff eggs are laid and hatch about 4 weeks later. The female solely incubates and cares for the young which can fly in about 45 days. Ring-necks feed mostly on aquatic plants and organisms (not fish).

Overwintering along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, ring-necked ducks return north in the warmth of spring. Look for ring-necks throughout summer in freshwater marshes as they swim in and out of the cattails. Although this is a diving duck, I was surprised to discover my first sighting in a shallow, postage stamp-sized pond adjacent to Highway 91 on the way to Waukau. I still recall the moment every time I pass this little isolated wetland and I'm pleased that it still exists.

*Ring-necked Duck Photo by Tom Reichner*

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 \* **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. \*  
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 \* Dennis Arnold \*  
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 \* **In Memory of Bea & Humphrey Sullivan** \*  
 \* Mary Grace Langenfeld \*  
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WINNEBAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 184  
OSHKOSH, WI 54903



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winnebagoaudubon@gmail.com

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mbrandel49@gmail.com

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Pat Nichols  
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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 your newsletter is returned to us, we remove you from our mailing list. Please contact Pat Nichols at patnichols@earthlink.net or 920-426-0261 with any questions.

**RENEWALS:** Your mailing label includes your membership expiration date above your name. If you are a "Chapter Only" member the word CHAPTER will appear after 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, NATL will appear after 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 by using the application below.

**GO GREEN** by opting to receive your newsletter via e-mail. Contact Pat Nichols at patnichols@earthlink.net

**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 SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**Chapter Only Membership:** Your \$20.00 stays in our chapter and you receive the Winnebago Audubon chapter newsletter and all chapter benefits. Make \$20.00 check payable to **Winnebago Audubon**.

**OR**

**National Audubon Membership:** Your \$20.00 includes chapter membership and all chapter benefits, PLUS *Audubon* magazine and all national benefits. Make \$20.00 check payable to **National Audubon Society**.

I do not wish to receive solicitations from National Audubon Society.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Chapter Code: **C8ZZ120Z**

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

**Word of the Day: Rectrices**

Scientific name for a bird's tail feathers.

*Welcome to Winnebago Audubon*

A special thank you to all those who are renewing again this year as well. 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.

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Connie Borrmann     | Nancy D Ledding     |
| John Enking         | S Loker             |
| Wally Elmer         | Warren McRae        |
| Sara France         | Rose Robl           |
| William Hower       | John Sandberg       |
| Jennifer Davis      | Cindy Vander Galien |
| Shannon Davis-Foust | Marilyn Vollmer     |
| Abby Frucht         | John Wilson         |

*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*

**Pat Nichols, Membership Chair**  
(email me at: patnichols@earthlink.net)