

The Lake Flyer

Newsletter of Winnebago Audubon

September-October 2023

All programs and activities are open to the public.

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

Catch, Tag & Release Migrating Monarchs

Saturday, Sept. 2, 2023 (Rain Date: Sept. 3)
1:00-3:00 pm

Winnebago Audubon is hosting its popular monarch tagging event on Saturday, September 2 from 1:00-3:00 pm. Shannon Davis-Foust and her family have invited us to tag monarchs in their prairie located west of Omro. This event is free and open to the public.

In all the world, no butterflies migrate like the monarchs of North America. They travel up to two thousand miles in the fall to reach central Mexico. How monarchs find their overwintering site as 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 Mexico. Participating in this long-standing citizen-science project provides vital information to researchers on migration patterns and the health of the monarch population.



Learn about the fascinating life cycle and migration of the regal monarch butterfly. We will discuss why and how to tag a monarch. You will then be free to wander the prairie to net monarchs. We will have a tagging station set up to assist you in identifying the gender of your monarch, record the data, tag it, and watch you release it to proceed on its journey. All ages over 5 are encouraged to participate. We all have an inner child who would love to do this.

We strongly recommend wearing long pants, socks, and shoes. We have a limited number of nets available so if you have your own, please bring it along.

If the weather is questionable, check our Facebook page or call/text: 920-573-7828.

Directions to 4946 Broderick Rd., Omro: Take Hwy. 21 west out of Omro. Turn right on Broderick Rd. In 1.6 miles look for red house on right side of the road. Park in driveway or along road. Please do not park anyone in. 🐿



September Bird Count

Sat., Sept. 16, 2023

This is another great excuse (if you need one) to go birding and challenge yourself to identify birds not only visually but by their songs. Plus, you are contributing to on-going bird research around the world. You can do this by yourself or with family and friends. Make a day of it or plan a little time around your busy schedule.

On this annual bird count, observers record all birds seen or heard in Winnebago County on one day (24 hour period) in September. The September bird count has been conducted every year since 1995.

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

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

- Record the number of each species seen or heard (including Starlings, House Sparrows, etc.)
- Record time spent watching
- Record distance traveled
- Record names of all observers
- Document unusual species and numbers

For more information on the count or if interested in surveying an area in the county, contact Tom Ziebell at ctiebell@new.rr.com or 920-312-1976. 🐿

SEE MORE ACTIVITIES ON PAGE 2

**2 months
of activities!**

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



FALL BIRD WALKS



Wiouwash Trail in Oshkosh

Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023

8:00-10:00 am

Take a walk with us on the Wiouwash Trail to search for fall migrants, including thrushes, flycatchers, vireos, and those challenging-to-ID fall warblers. We will meet at the parking area on Marine Drive and walk south on the trail between the Fox River and Riverside Cemetery.

Directions to 2700-2832 Marine Dr, Oshkosh: from Hwy 41, take exit 120 for US-45 South/Algoma Blvd. Continue on Algoma Blvd for 0.1 miles. At the roundabout, take the 1st exit onto Lake Butte Des Morts Drive. Turn left onto Marine Drive. Proceed to park perpendicular to the road on the righthand side or parallel to the road on the lefthand side.

Address for GPS lookup: 2700 -2832 Marine Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54901. 🐦

Big Day Birding at Sawyer Creek Nature Trail / Evergreen Retirement Community

Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023

8:00-10:00 am

Join us on eBird's October Big Day to count birds and report our observations to eBird. Come be a part of the global birding team counting on Big Day. Everyone is welcome, beginning birders to experienced birders. We will walk the Sawyer Creek Nature Trail and the Evergreen Community grounds in search of resident birds and fall migrants such as kinglets, thrushes, sparrows, and warblers. Come experience the fun and wonder of fall migration.

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

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

Shoreline Habitat in Neenah & Menasha

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023

1:00-3:00 pm

Join us in the "twin cities" of the Fox Valley to scan the shorelines of Little Lake Butte Des Morts and Lake Winnebago for migrating birds. We will start at Arrowhead Park in Neenah on the south end of Little Lake Butte Des Morts. Then we will take a short drive over to Kimberly Point or Jefferson Park on the west shore of Lake Winnebago depending on weather conditions and recent field reports.

Directions to Arrowhead Park: from Hwy 41, take exit 132 for Main Street in Neenah. Turn right (east) onto Main Street. Continue on Main Street for 1 mile. When crossing the bridge, stay in the left lane to continue straight on Main Street. Then turn left (north) on Millview Dr. Proceed to cross the railroad tracks and turn right (east) into the parking area.

Address for GPS lookup: 355 Millview Dr., Neenah, WI 54956. 🐦

Meet Our Board Member: Zaiga Freivalds

I am first generation Latvian-American and I grew up immersed in learning about my parent's heritage and love for their homeland. I spent every summer at a camp with many other children speaking only Latvian, learning songs and dances, doing unique crafts while enjoying the usual camping activities. I've travelled to Latvia many times to visit and reconnect with relatives and have obtained Latvian citizenship.

In high school I enjoyed my biology classes and entered the University of Michigan to pursue a degree in Zoology. The summer between my sophomore and junior year, I had a wonderful opportunity to work at the Biological Station in northern Michigan. That summer spent among students, faculty, and researchers opened my eyes to the natural world. The following summer I enrolled in two classes and while completing my research project (chipmunks) I started birdwatching and bought my first Peterson bird guide. After graduation I worked in medical research and can proudly say that I contributed to researching naloxone (Narcan), which has become so vital these days.

Once I arrived in Oshkosh, I began attending our chapter programs and going on field trips. Eventually, I was elected secretary in 1995 and have served on the board in some capacity ever since. I enjoy the camaraderie and believe in and support our mission. After settling in my new home, two prairies were established. The woods were restored by removing buckthorn and replanted with native wildflowers. Over the last 30 years they have spread throughout the woods and are gorgeous! This led to joining the "Wild Ones" organization and becoming a charter member of the Fox Vally Area chapter.

My involvement with environmental education began in 1994 when the "Friends of Sullivan's Woods" was formed. I guided school groups and eventually took on the leadership role. In 2006, through AmeriCorps, I became involved with the Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve. Over the years I served as the school program coordinator several times and still am a volunteer teacher/naturalist. 🐦





Mud Daubers

A rain-filled, vehicle-caused rut is adjacent to a sidewalk on the UW-Oshkosh campus. When the water drains and/or evaporates, thick, gooey mud is exposed. From late July to early August, I noticed wasps gathering on the mud. Eventually, I take a closer look and soon I'm mesmerized by their behavior and sit down to watch.

These common wasps are black and yellow mud daubers, *Sceliphron caementarium*. Measuring 1 to 1-1/4 inches long, each is identified by its black head, thorax and abdomen, brownish wings and black and yellow bands on its legs. These wasps are members of the insect family Sphecidae or the thread-waisted wasps. They are so named because of the very slender stalk called a petiole by which the abdomen is attached to the thorax. This anatomical feature is very obvious.

These wasps are solitary nesters with each female constructing her own mud nest. That is why these female mud daubers are attracted to this spot—to collect available mud. Today, an average of 15 females are here at any one time with continuous arrivals and departures.

Some wasps are drinking while most are walking about the mud. Each is searching for the perfect muddy spot with just the right mud consistency—not too dry and not too wet. When the perfect spot is selected, she scrapes and rolls up a tiny mud ball using her mandibles. Sometimes she walks backward with jerky movements trying to extract the mud. Other times she seems to be standing on her head to get the mud. Each mud ball is about the size of a seed bead and takes about 5 seconds to collect. She immediately flies off to a destination unknown to me. Individual wasps fly off in all directions. Remember, these are solitary nesters with each female choosing her own nest site.

If you examine the spot from which she departed, you may be able to see a small scrape mark left in the mud. If you look even closer, you can see the tiniest of pinpoint holes in the mud which are her footprints.

So where is she going with the mud? Often the mud nest is attached to a wall under an overhang. She first constructs several parallel cylindrical cells, one at a time, which measures 1.5 inches (4cm) and 15 mm wide. Each cell is then provisioned with paralyzed spiders which she has collected before she lays one egg on one of the spiders in each cell and seals the cell.

When the few cells, perhaps as many as 15 or so, are completed, her job is still unfinished. She then covers all the cells with a layer of mud, much like a muddy blanket, which dries, protects and seals in the precious eggs.

The egg hatches and the young larva feeds on the paralyzed spiders. When the larva reaches maturity, it



spins a cocoon within its mud chamber. In spring, it pupates, becomes an adult and chews its way out through the mud blanket and is a free-flying adult. Exit holes in the mud outer layer reveal that the next generation of mud daubers has emerged.

When I discovered this busy puddle, I checked it daily. Watching this fascinating little drama raises many unanswerable questions. How many different wasps did I really witness with all their constant comings and goings? How many trips does one wasp make to this mud hole or how many mud balls are required to complete a nest? How many miles has she flown back and forth? What is the time frame from start to nest completion? One month? Three months?

It is really amazing to think what one insect undertakes and accomplishes when each mud ball is so tiny.

As I studied these fascinating wasps, I often wondered what people thought when seeing me sitting on the sidewalk and staring into a mud hole? Such is the life of a naturalist! 🐝



◀Jane Kelly with a barn owl at our annual meeting. ▲Taking a closer look on a field trip.

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

Daryl & Rainy Davis
First Congregational Church Benevolence Ministry Group
Oshkosh Bird Club
Mary Troudt
Tom Ziebell



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

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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

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.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Marie Beede | Kate Klumb |
| Melody Carrick | Greydon Kuhn |
| Jill Edwards | Phyllis Morrison |
| Charles Finder | Angela Nickel |
| Esther Fischer | Mary Ochalla |
| Michael Hackbarth | Donald Schroeder |
| Lynn Hawley | Seth Veith |
| Robert Hendee | Paul Wagner |
| Margaret Hunt-Wilson | Katherine Wieland |
| Stacey Imhof | Amanda Wolff |
| Mark Kasuboski | Julie Wright |

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