

Coulee Birder

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Audubon Society

May/June 2015

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at the Myrick Park Center, starting at 7PM. They are free and open to the public.

May 20

Mystery program. As of this writing, we can't say what the program will be about. What we CAN say is we know it should be fun and informative.. and there will be cookies!

June 17

Our last meeting before our summer break is the potluck, followed by birding on the trails. We will have the potluck at Myrick Park Center, moving to outdoor tables if so desired. Please bring dishes and of course, a dish to share. We will have the potluck at **6PM** and go birding when we're done eating!

Though scheduled meetings won't resume until September, we hope to try organizing our own version of *Birds and Beers* get-togethers that have been popular in other regions. Watch the website and facebook for more info.

Submissions to the Coulee Birder are always welcome! Deadline for the next issue is September 1. Contact newsletter editor at gwyntells@gmail.com.



President's Message

By Dan Jackson

It is hard to believe that it is May!! This year is really flying by....

Now that it is May, the passerine migration is hitting full stride. If you haven't been out birding, get out there!! There are new species to be seen every day and like the rest of the year so far, this month will go by faster than you might think. Take advantage of the opportunities while they are here!

In addition to great birding, May also means that the butterfly and dragonfly flight seasons will also hit full stride in the next few weeks. So far, I have only seen migrant dragonflies, but I expect that to change in the next couple of days as we see several days with temperatures in the 70s and maybe even into the 80s. When that happens, I will have trouble figuring out which quarry to chase!!

For those who like to bird with others, this month's field trips should offer lots of great opportunities. Check them out and join us!!

The International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) events at both Myrick Park and the Trempealeau refuge are full of activities for people of all ages and I strongly urge everyone to take part. If you haven't seen bird banders in action, both events will give you that opportunity and you might even get the opportunity to release one of your favorite birds!!

Once again, Scott Puchalski and I will be doing our part for the Wisconsin Birdathon. We have a team called the Coulee Birders (so far it is only the two of us) and we would love your support. We will do our Birdathon day on Saturday May 16th while we are leading a group at Wyalusing. Since *President's message con't p. 2*

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that is one of the best birding locations on this side of the state, it makes sense to take advantage of our trip down there to find as many birds as possible. Funds that we raise will be split between Coulee Region Audubon (for use on activities related to the LaCrosse Bird City certification) and the Wisconsin Natural Resources Foundation. If you are willing to help us, our team page is: <http://www.wibirdathon.org/nrfw/teampage.asp?fundid=1895> or simply look for our team on the Wisconsin Birdathon website.

Thanks for your help and enjoy the birds!!

Events, events, events!

Just stepping outside the door this time of year is an event! One never knows what might be seen passing through the area, making for birding that's even more fun than ever. We've been enjoying Baltimore Orioles in our yard the past few days, a nice change of pace from the finches. In keeping with the fever of spring, there are lots of things happening. Here are some of those.

May 9 – International Migratory Bird Day event at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge. Another great event with bird-related activities for the entire family. Check out the brochure for all the details at <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/trempealeau/> Also come join the “Warblers and Wine” event in conjunction with the refuge Friends group’s event on Friday night, May 8 at 5:30PM.

May 22-25 – Wisconsin Society of Ornithology State Convention and field Trips. Field trips all 4 days, convention activities on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon. See the WSOBirds.org website for information.

May 16 -- Wyalusing Field Trip. Dan Jackson and Scott Puchalski will lead a Coulee Region Audubon field trip to Wyalusing State Park starting at 6:30 at the entrance to the park. Wyalusing is the best birding destination in western Wisconsin and is the home to a number of special species of birds. This will also be their Birdathon day, so more eyes are welcome!

May 12 -Myrick Marsh Bird Walks. Start at 6:30 AM at the EcoPark building parking lot.

May 7 and May 14 -Hixon Forest Bird Walks. Meet at 6:30AM at the Hixon Forest parking lot.

One event hosted by the Mississippi Valley Conservancy adds to the birding fun as well.

One of a series of events showcasing the properties protected by the MVC, this one will be a bird hike on the McDowell Family property. Details will be announced soon. Check their website for updates.

<http://www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/GetInvolved/HikesEvents.aspx>

Please RSVP to kfrise@mississippivalleyconservancy.org or call 608-784-3606 ext. 6 and leave name and phone number

Birds and Beers, anyone????

Many other regional birding groups, such as the Twin Cities, Madison and the Green Bay have established more informal gatherings for birders to meet and share stories. The venue changes from meeting to meeting and they are somewhat unscheduled. Sometimes birding might be part of the agenda beforehand, other times it's just a chance to meet others who share your interest. For example, when a Great Grey Owl decided to hang out on the grounds of the Capitol Brewery in Madison last year, there was a somewhat spontaneous Birds and Beers scheduled. We'd like to try and create our own "Birds and Beers," and Mark Webster and Gwyn Calvetti have volunteered to try and kickstart it. Join us at the "Warblers and Wine" event May 8 and we can plan more events over the summer.

Mississippi Valley Conservancy wants YOU!

Mississippi Valley Conservancy needs your HELP! We are seeking volunteers to help determine presence or absence of declining bird species on different sites throughout southwest Wisconsin. Volunteers essentially would go to a site in early morning and make a list of what is seen/heard on MVC nature preserves or land MVC holds conservation easements on. This invaluable information will help to guide our restoration activities and prioritize sites with great populations of state-listed bird species. If interested, email Abbie Church, MVC Conservation Director at achurch@mississippivalleyconservancy.org with your preference for habitat (forest, wetland, grassland); geographical interest (La Crosse County, Monroe County, anywhere, etc) and availability. We're hoping to schedule site visits for late May or early June.



Norwegian Ridge Trail Mothers Day Birding and Pancakes!

Many people see Tom Overlie on KTTC-TV nearly every day. This is a chance to meet and visit with him. He is coming to Spring Grove to cut the ribbon on the newly created 1.34 mile extension of the Norwegian Ridge Birding and Nature Trail at 11:30 on Mother's Day.

"I'm glad to be part of a news team that not only works hard to bring you the news each day, but works just as diligently to be a part of this community. It's an honor and commitment our news team takes very seriously."

It is an honor for our trail committee to have Tom here to inaugurate walking the newest link on a beautiful trail traversing a variety of landscapes. The wildflowers are blooming, birds are singing and nesting, goslings have hatched. It's marvelous.

A shuttle will leave from Red's on Highway 44 at 11:10 for those unable to walk. Another shuttle will run from the ribbon cutting to take non-walkers to the Sugar Shack for a pancake breakfast that is served from noon until 1:30. It's free although donations are gratefully accepted. The entire trail will be open. Walking from the trailhead near Red's to the ribbon-cutting site is about 1.25 miles, and could take up to 40 minutes. A water bottle will be given to the first 50 moms walking. Access birdsongs on your smartphones using QR codes on the 83 information signs. Please go to sgbirdwalk.org for more information.

For additional questions, call 507.450.1373

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