



November/December 2016

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at the Ho-Chunk Nation Building, 724 Main St. in LaCrosse starting at 7PM. They are free and open to the public.

November 16

Join us to learn more about the Whooping Cranes of Necedah Wildlife Refuge.

December 17

Our “meeting” this month will be the annual Christmas Bird Count. Please see Dan’s article in the newsletter for more information, And please consider joining us. It’s always fun!



President's Message

By Scott Puchalski

Hello All,

The Fall and Winter seasons are upon us. There are rumors out there that the winter finch movement may be very good this year. Redpolls, Crossbills, Pine Siskins, Grosbeaks, and Waxwings may be around in good numbers this year. So keep your feeders full and your eyes peeled, as we don't often have an opportunity to see these birds. If you're fortunate enough to see these birds, let us know. Project Feeder Watch has begun again this year and if you're interested in participating, you can go to <http://feederwatch.org/> and join in.

We are looking for someone to join our local board and take on the Treasurer's responsibilities. Marty Lohman has done a fantastic job for us as Treasurer and is at the end of her term. If you're interested in volunteering, let me know.

Enjoy the Outdoors,
Scott

Your newsletter editor welcomes your submissions. Please send them by December 31 to gwyntells@gmail.com

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Christmas Bird Count

The 2016 Audubon Christmas Bird Count is getting close and it is time to start to get it organized. This is a big event and we can always use more help!!

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count was originally started to create an alternative to the bird shoots that were traditionally held around Christmas and New Years Day. Luckily, someone had the great idea that it would be better to count birds during the holiday season than to shoot them. After 116 years, it is safe to say that this idea caught on and has been a great success. In fact, this tradition has turned into one of the leading citizen science projects on the North American continent and, with so many years of data it is a valuable tool for scientists!

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is actually made up of hundreds of local Christmas Bird Counts. For each of these local counts, the object is to try to count all of the birds found within a fifteen mile “count circle” on a specific count day which must occur between December 14th and January 5th. On that count day, participants count birds in pre-assigned sections of the circle or at their own feeders (if they are located within the count circle). When the day is done, the count data is tallied and submitted to the National Audubon Society who combines the data from all of the counts and analyzes it to look for trends and interesting events regarding bird populations and distribution.

This year, there will be at least 2 Christmas Bird Counts held in the Coulee Region. The La Crosse Area count will be held on Saturday, December 17th and the Trempealeau count will be held on Sunday, December 18th. If you enjoy counting birds, your help with either or both of these counts would be greatly appreciated!

The La Crosse Area Christmas Bird Count, which is hosted by the Coulee Region Audubon Society, counts all of the birds found inside a count circle that is centered on the La Crosse County courthouse in downtown La Crosse. The limits of the circle are approximately the lower end of Goose Island Park to the south, the southern tip of Brice Prairie to the north, 1/4 mile east of County OA to the east, and the far edge of Hokah to the southwest. It includes all of La Crosse, La Crescent, Onalaska, Barre Mills, Hokah, and part of Dakota.

The Trempealeau Christmas Bird Count has a count circle with its center point in the middle of the village of Trempealeau. It is actually a half circle as it only includes the area east of the state line which runs down the main channel of the Mississippi River. The count includes Perrot State Park and a significant part of the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge (northeast to Marshland). It also extends 3 miles north of Centerville and covers Galesville, the Van Loon Wildlife Area, New Amsterdam, and a portion of Brice Prairie.

If you are available on Saturday, December 17th and/or Sunday, December 18th, and would be willing to help out with the La Crosse Area or Trempealeau Christmas Bird Counts, we would really appreciate your help! Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to attend. Whether you are a beginner and would like to help on a team or an experienced birder who would prefer to work on your own, we can really use your help. If you can help with the La Crosse Area count, please contact Dan Jackson (e-mail: DEJackson2256@gmail.com or Phone: (608) 483-2271). To take part in the Trempealeau count, please contact Al Wernecke (e-mail: aaja701@triwest.net or Phone: (608) 534-6330).

Crane Congregations....Viewing opportunity sponsored by the Aldo Leopold Center

With the continued mild fall weather, here is an opportunity not far from home to experience the amazing gathering of Sandhill Cranes along the Wisconsin River. The “Shack” is near the sandbars where they stage each fall, and interested birders can join them to see and hear this spectacle. There are still available slots Wednesday November 16 and Friday December 2. For full details and registration information, visit the Aldo Leopold Foundation at <http://www.aldoleopold.org/Visit/calendar.shtml#cranes>

Upcoming Events!

January 21 – Golden Eagle Survey. The National Eagle Center in Wabasha puts on a Golden Eagle Survey in the Driftless area each January. Check their website at www.nationaleaglecenter.org for more information.

February 17-20 Great Backyard Bird Count Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real time snapshot of where birds are. To learn more and participate in this citizen science project, visit their website at:
<http://gbbc.birdcount.org>

International Festival of Owls, March 3-5 Houston Minnesota

This festival always offers something for the owl lover in all of us, even those who aren't really birders. From a banquet, owl prowls, serious science and many family activities, there's sure to be something this weekend for even the most discerning of folks. Karla Bloem will be on hand with Alice the Great Horned Owl. This international event grew from a small town celebration of Alice's "Hatch Day" into one that grows with each passing year.

In addition, if you'd like to get out and prowl for owls with the experts, they are hosting monthly Owl Prowls.
December 31
January 14
February 11

Shake the late winter doldrums and enjoy all things owl. For more information, Check the website at www.festivalofowls.com.

Coulee Region Audubon Society

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Thanks!