

Coulee Birder

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Audubon Society

May/June 2017

Meetings

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

May 17

Have you ever heard of Florence Merriam Bailey? Come learn more about this remarkable woman, often cited as the person to write the first modern style field guide for birding, as Gwyn Calvetti brings her to life again in a first person portrayal. Anecdotes about her birding life and her significant contributions to bird conservation will be woven between a bird folktale or two.

June 21

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 Gun Shelter. 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. If anyone out there wants to gather over a brew to talk birds, post that on the facebook page and see who shows up!



President's Message

By Scott Puchalski

Happy Spring to you all,

As we all know this is the time of year one we look forward to all year. The influx of migrants, both the summer residents and the ones just passing through. This spring has been interesting. With the early warm weather in March, we had an early first push of birds, and then the gates closed with the cooler temps and the winds being mainly out of the north. Due to this, there was a concern that the migrants that just pass through in the spring might jump over us on their way to the breeding grounds. Fortunately that is not the case, as of the 9th there has been a good influx of migrants. The wood warblers have been showing up in force, and if you have not had a chance to get out to look for them, I highly recommend it as soon as you can. We still have a few field trips left for the season, they are listed in this newsletter, and as always I hope to see you on one of them. I enjoy being able to share information with the participants and all that I learn from all of you, and if nothing else it is always enjoyable to be outside in nature.

Enjoy the Outdoors,
Scott

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

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 12-Special Presentation by Dan Jackson at Elmaro Winery “Spring Birds of Trempealeau NWR” 5:30-8:00PM
Social Hour at 5:30, Dan’s presentation begins at 6:30.

May 13 – International Migratory Bird Day event at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge. Another great event with bird-related activities for the entire family. Learn more at: https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/2017_IMBD_Brochure.pdf

May 14 - Wyalusing Field Trip. Dan Jackson 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.

May 16 -Myrick Marsh Bird Walk. Start at 6:30 AM at the EcoPark building parking lot.

May 18 -Hixon Forest Bird Walk. Meet at 6:30AM at the Hixon Forest parking lot.

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, there was a somewhat spontaneous Birds and Beers scheduled. We'd like to try and create our own “Birds and Beers.” If you have an urge to sit somewhere, like maybe Pearl Street Brewery, meet other birders and talk bird smack, post the date, time and place on the facebook page. Pass the word to others who might enjoy this and someone is bound to show up.



Checking out some of Scott Lee's bird skins at the last CAS meeting. One of our small grants helped pay for the protective tubes.

Help Wanted!

Do you enjoy hiking the bluffs and prairies in search of birds? Of course you do, or you wouldn't be receiving this newsletter. Well, Abbie Church, Conservation Director for the Mississippi Valley Conservancy has a great opportunity for you. As you probably know, the MVC owns or protects many lands from Buffalo County all the way down to Grant County. They are hoping to find volunteers willing to go birding....yes, birding!...to report what birds they see and hear on these properties. They're especially interested in state-listed birds, in order to prioritize protection.

You don't need to code anything like "carrying nesting material," "recently fledged young" or anything like that. Simply walk the property and record the birds you find there. This information is invaluable to them in guiding conservation practices for these properties. If you're interested, contact Abbie with your availability...weekends, weekdays or anytime....and where you might be willing to travel. For more information, please contact Abbie at: achurch@mississippivalleyconservancy.org

A Bird on the Move!....Eurasian Collared Dove

About three summers ago, I started hearing a strange sounding dove in the neighborhood. By last summer, I was able to confirm that a pair of these birds had nested in our West Salem yard. We aren't alone in seeing this recently arrived bird in our neighborhoods. From the eBird site, we get this information about their spread...

One of the biggest bird distribution stories in the Americas of recent times is undoubtedly the dramatic expansion of Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). This bird was unknown in North America until the 1970s, when the species was introduced to the Bahamas. From there, it spread to mainland Florida in the early 1980s, and in the following decades throughout the southeastern United States. Since 2000, Eurasian Collared-Doves have spread all over the United States and southern Canada, and more recently have invaded Mexico, Belize, and parts of Costa Rica.

If you haven't seen one already, keep your eyes peeled. They spend a lot of time on the ground and like pine stands, which is where they roost in our yard. If you see a bird that looks like a Mourning Dove on steroids cruise overhead while making a cat-like sound....add it to your list!



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Thanks!