



March/April 2021

Meetings

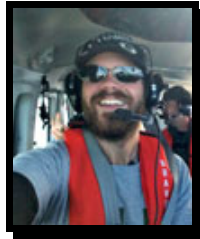
Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month. For now, they are held via Zoom. Links to these Zoom meetings will be posted on the Coulee Region Audubon Sightings Facebook page and sent via email to our membership.

March 17

Karla Bloem is well known to area birders as the director of the Owl Center in Houston, Minnesota. Tonight, via zoom, she will share the stories of Mini-Hooston, a toy owl who travels the world and visits with other owl projects along the way.

April 21

Scott Mehus is another well known name in our area, as director of the National Eagle Center in Wabasha MN. He will be sharing information and research on Golden Eagles, a regular visit to our bluff country during the winter.



President's Message

By Jonathan Ringdahl

Greetings bird lovers!

The spring migration is bringing new birds daily into our beloved Driftless Region. I heard sandhill cranes and red-winged blackbirds for the first time this morning. They were joined by the second pair of trumpeter swans on Lake Marinuka this year. It's an exciting time to be a bird watcher!

Hope is carried on feathered wings. We hope the warmer temperatures that have been a companion to the spring migration have brought joy and a sense of renewal into your life. It's a wonderful time. If you're on Facebook, please join our Coulee Region Audubon Sightings page to share your sightings and see what others are seeing.

We are excited to announce that we have a YouTube page. If you go to YouTube and search "Coulee Region Audubon" you will find our page. Be sure to click the subscribe button to get notified when we post new videos. Our February meeting recording is on there.

Happy bird watching,

Jonathan Ringdahl

Pres. Messa

Christmas Bird Count

The La Crosse Area CBC was held on Saturday, December 19th. We had a record turnout with lots of cancelled Christmas trips. We were able to have 90 participants cover 34-35 sections (1 outstanding) and 35-37 Feeder counts (1-2 outstanding). At this point, with 1 outstanding section count and 1-2 outstanding feeder counts, there were just short of 26,000 birds seen including 76 species. The most unusual species included 2 Killdeer, 1 American White Pelican, 50 Rusty Blackbirds, 1 Northern Saw Whet Owl, 1 Snowy Owl, 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 2 Merlins, 1 Golden Eagle, and a Gray Catbird. We also had a very high count of 10 Carolina Wrens, over 2600 Tundra Swans (big movement over the area), and a high number of duck species despite still water areas being frozen.

The La Crosse Area count is centered on the La Crosse County Courthouse in downtown La Crosse and extends west into MN. A big thanks to all who participated. Dan Jackson

Upcoming Events!

Annual Midwest Crane Count

On Saturday, April 17, 2021, from 5:30 to 7:30 a.m., the International Crane Foundation will sponsor the 45th Annual Midwest Crane Count. Over 1,000 volunteer participants from throughout Wisconsin and portions of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio and Minnesota participate in the spring survey, which gathers information on the abundance and distribution of cranes in the upper Midwest. New volunteers interested in taking part in the survey should contact Jean Ledman, La Crosse County Coordinator for instructions (jledman2@yahoo.com).

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, crane count volunteers should plan on wearing a mask during the count and stay at least six feet from other participants from different households. Participants should also avoid carpooling with participants from outside their household and counting in large groups to limit exposure to COVID-19. The International Crane Foundation sponsors the Annual Midwest Crane Count as a part of its mission to conserve the world's 15 species of cranes and the natural communities on which they depend. Sandhill Cranes once nearly disappeared from Wisconsin, but the species has successfully recovered and is slowly expanding into neighboring states. Observations of Sandhill Cranes can lend insight into threatened crane species, including the endangered Whooping Crane. There are now approximately 80 Whooping Cranes in the reintroduced population in central Wisconsin, and Crane Counters may have a chance of sighting a Whooping Crane during the survey.

For more information on the Annual Midwest Crane Count: Visit www.cranecount.org and contact your county coordinator.

Jean Ledman
La Crosse County Midwest Crane Count Coordinator

International Owl Center

After many months of virtual and limited programming, the Owl Center has re-opened with a limited schedule. Reservations are suggested, as capacity is, as we've come to expect these days, limited as well.

The Center hosted a Virtual Owl Expert series via Zoom this past fall and winter. Experts from around the world shared their particular owl research and experiences, and if you missed them, many are available to view on their youtube channel. One aspect of this whole pandemic has been the opportunity to hear from people around the world, and this series is no exception. To learn more, check this link.

<https://www.internationalowlcenter.org/virtualexpert.html>

Virtual Birding

Another casualty of this pandemic year has been limited travel for birding...at least for your editor, who basically has seen no one other than my spouse this past year, and gone no further than Buffalo City this winter for the purpose of looking at birds. I was really excited to find that Sparky Stensaas, who guides birders in northern Minnesota, has created video "field trips." He has a youtube channel and I'll link to a recent field trip he took to our area. Check out the others...they are very well done and show the scenery and other cool critters along the way.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zQgsihP3xQ&ab_channel=SparkyStensaas

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