



April/May/June 2024

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at The Nature Place, 789 Myrick Park Drive in LaCrosse starting at 7PM. They are free and open to the public.

April 17

Rob Tyser, MVC Board Member, will be sharing a program on grassland birds, which are facing many challenges.

May 15

Heather Mishefske, a volunteer Bat Ambassador, will present a program on these amazing flying mammals. She will have acoustic monitors that will allow us to head out after her presentation to detect bats.

June 19

This is our traditional program year-end potluck and bird walk. Bring a dish to pass and your table ware and when we're all done eating, we'll head out to look for birds.

President's Message

By Mark Webster

Happy Spring fellow birders! Yes, maybe it just might feel like spring now. As we all know, we have to be very patient in the upper Midwest, waiting for spring to really arrive in its full glory! But in the meantime it's been interesting watching some of the early spring migrants in their search for accessible food as the latest spring snow arrived. Even watching a ginormous flock of hundreds of European Starlings feeding in the grass in a city park near us - and all simultaneously taking flight in a huge dark cloud - was pretty amazing.

As the days become more favorable for the arrival of the Neotropical Songbirds from Central and South America, we can all look forward to such birding opportunities such as the upcoming Myrick Marsh and Hixon Forest bird hikes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, respectively, from late April to mid May, as well as World Migratory Bird Day events and bird hikes in May.

Happy Birding!
Mark Webster

Upcoming Events!

It's the best time of year for birders, and this is a short list of the many chances to get out there and see what's happening in the forests, fields, rivers and bluffs.

April 13 - Annual Midwest Crane Count - 5:30 a.m.-7:30 a.m. The Annual Midwest Crane Count is one of the largest citizen-based wildlife surveys in the world. One of the primary purposes of the Crane Count is to monitor the abundance and distribution of cranes in the Upper Midwest. Each year, the Crane Count involves over 3,000 volunteers spread over 100 counties in six states. The Crane Count is organized by county in Wisconsin and portions of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Minnesota.

If you can help, please contact your county coordinator. The list is at:

<https://savingcranes.org/learn/annual-midwest-crane-count/annual-midwest-crane-count-county-coordinators/>

May 10- World Migratory Bird Day Kickoff at Elmaro Vineyard

Stan Tekiela, renowned wildlife photographer, author, and naturalist, will present his entertaining program filled with amazing photos and fun facts about bird nests. Few creatures can craft such brilliant and involved homes!

*This event is sponsored by the Friends of Trempealeau Refuge.

*No registration is required for this event.

*Social hour: 5:30-6:30p.m.

*Program: 6:30p.m.

May 11 – World Migratory Bird Day event at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.

Another great event with bird-related activities for the entire family.

<https://www.fws.gov/event/2024-world-migratory-bird-day-festival>

Two bird events from the Mississippi Valley Conservancy

May 11- Sugar Creek Bluff bird hike near Ferryville, WI. 7-9am. Part of activities for World Migratory Bird Day.

June 15- Nesting Birds of the Lower Kickapoo River Valley IBA. June 15 8:30-10:30am.

May 18 - 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.

April 30, May 7 and May 14 -

Myrick Marsh Bird Walks. Start at 6:30 AM at the Myrick Park Center building parking lot.

May 2, 9 and May 16 -

Hixon Forest Bird Walks. Meet at 6:30 at the Hixon Forest parking lot.

International Owl Center Houston Minnesota

Our friends across the river at the Owl Center are ready to embark on their “next big thing,” which is the creation of a world class owl center and educational facility. They are calling it “Project Hoot.” They have created a plan for the center and now of course, it's time to help raise the money to build it. You can view their plans and vision and look for ways to help this dream become a reality for Uhu, Bea, Piper, JR and all the owls who help visitors from all over learn more about this bird seen by many as mystical. Read more at: <https://www.internationalowlcenter.org/future.html>

Chimney Swift Roost Counts

Chimney Swifts will be arriving from their South American wintering range very soon! As of today, they have been spotted as far north as Toledo and Cleveland on Lake Erie.

As part of a program of the [Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group](#), **I am looking for swift enthusiasts to help monitor roosting sites** in La Crosse and the nearby Driftless area. You don't have to be a birder to participate in this fun citizen science effort!

These fascinating aerial birds have taken to depend on human-made vertical hollow structures (chimneys and air vents) to roost communally during both spring and fall migration, and even during the summer nesting season.

Please consider becoming a **Volunteer Swift Roost Counter this year!** It is fun and this is how it works:

- We will attempt simultaneous roost counts at known locations in the City of La Crosse on suitable nights between May and August.
- A count takes about 50 minutes to an hour, starting 20 minutes or earlier before sunset, and ending about 30 minutes after sunset.
- You work in small teams to record only the number of swifts entering the roost, not those in the air, and share your results with the group and/or on eBird.
- No need to be a birder, no binoculars needed.
- More details and training counts will be provided in late April.

Your participation will help to get a more detailed picture of shifting roost use by both migrating and nesting populations. Contact Stefan Gleissberg if you are interested at stefan_gleissberg@me.com

Coulee Region Audubon Society

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