

THE TRUMPETER: WISCONSIN METRO AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Our mission is to encourage wise environmental practices through education and awareness.

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Wisconsin Metro AUDUBON SOCIETY

WMAS Chapter Updates

Election Results

Congratulations to our new slate of officers and board members. You'll see some familiar names and some new ones. Welcome to Pat Fojut, our new Programs Co-Chair, and to Colleen Resendiz, WMAS mentor, who will be sharing her birding expertise with newcomers.

WMAS Events to return to Wehr Nature Center

Great news! Wehr Nature Center has given us permission to return to LIVE programs in the Gardner Room. Our next event will be on September 15 at 7:00 pm. Save the date!

WMAS Marks World Migratory Bird Day

WMAS board member Bill Holton organized and led a springtime walk on World Migratory Bird Day, Saturday, May 8th at Seminary Woods in St. Francis. Over 20 attendees enjoyed the sights of spring flowers and migrating and resident birds.



Board President Diane Lembck and member Colleen Resendiz installed a colorful and informative bird migration display at the Hales Corners Library. The display was available through the end of May.

Forest Home Cemetery Bird Walk

Our guided walk on Saturday, May 15, had a great turnout! We had a large group, and we managed it well. Many of the folks who attended were grateful to use our binoculars. Best of all was the sighting of a Scarlet Tanager.



Forest Home Walk



Chestnut Sided Warbler Photo by Russ Boushon

Telling bird puns is usually harmless, but when you start mocking birds, things can quickly get unpleasant and hawkward.

Gardening for the Birds, Bees and Butterflies - May Update

■ By Jim Cieslak

Several WMAS members have taken advantage of our new collaboration with Milwaukee Southwest/Wehr Wild Ones, Gardening for the Birds, Bees and Butterflies (GBBB), and you still can participate. . The program is focused on encouraging, educating, and motivating WMAS members to plant native trees, shrubs and flowers to support a more diverse population of insects, pollinators and birds.

Given the importance of habitat restoration for birds, especially in our urban areas, WMAS plans on continuing to offer this advisory service throughout each year. As the next few months roll by, you may notice problems with your gardens, or you may start thinking of what you will want in fall bulbs or seeds. The \$10 program fee will be money well spent. I already have bulbs on order for fall delivery. Gardening has become so popular that you will want to order early.

Don't forget to think about your understory shrubs and small trees. Birds like vireos, thrushes and warblers count on them for food and shelter. June is an ideal time to add or replace shrubs, and be sure to check out the Wild Ones arrangement (40% off) with Johnson's Nursery. I saved more than the membership cost me last year.

I hope you will enjoy all that is happening in your gardens this summer.

For more information on WMAS's Gardening for the Birds, Bees and Butterflies program, contact me at: cieslakjames3@gmail.com. You can also refer to the WMAS Spring Trumpeter for more details.



Mourning Cloak Butterfly



Shooting Stars
Photos by Jim Cieslak



House Wren

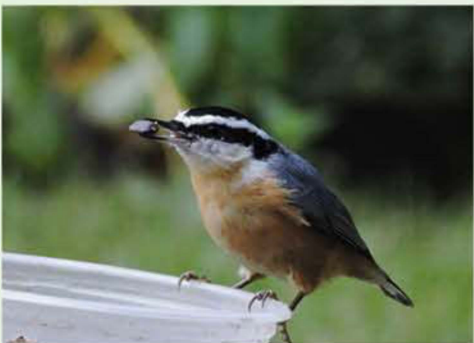
Backyard Birding

■ By Jim Cieslak

It is hard to believe that May is zipping by as I write this. Last month, the Dark-eyed Juncos that kept me company all winter departed for parts unknown. This month, it was the Red-breasted Nuthatches that left. But to take their places, two of my favorite summer residents have returned: Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and House Wrens. If our friend John Gurda has a problem with noisy robins, I sure hope the wrens don't take up residence near him. I find their song one of the most joyful and exuberant, but they do keep it going all day.

The species count in my backyard for April and May is 57, with almost half of May still to go. Probably the two most unusual sightings this spring have been the Red Shouldered Hawk and a Townsend Warbler. The hawk was soaring with some other hawks, on a day after a frontal passage gave us a good southerly wind. All were slowly drifting north, riding a thermal and the light wind. The Townsend Warbler was feeding in one of my spruce trees, along with a few other birds, on a very dreary morning. The black patches behind the eyes and top of the head kept me looking through my guide for quite a while before settling on this rare visitor. Thank goodness for my old trusty Peterson's!

They come, they go; hope you have time to enjoy the show!



Red-breasted Nuthatch Photos by Jim Cieslak

Know Your Raptors?

Test your knowledge of these raptors in flight. Hint: Only 12 species are pictured. Some are pictured more than once. Answers are on page 7



What are you doing keeping a sick bird in your house? Don't you know that's ill eagle?

Birds and Art: Unique Depictions of Wisconsin Raptors

Inspired by Audubon Magazine's feature "The Illustrated Aviary", local artists share their interpretations of Wisconsin raptors.



BALD EAGLE

Oil painter Carol Brown's lifelong goal was to learn how to paint in oil. She states "Birds fascinated me. When I retired, I found an incredible mentor, James Hempel. I enjoy painting many subjects but always return to birds."



AMERICAN KESTREL ON BIRCHBARK

Artist Davne Stahley adds to her three-dimensional art practice using watercolor and natural items. Her eclectic art also includes collage, button art, acrylics and found objects.



PERI

Carol Glaser works with the color and texture of cut paper to bring this Peregrine Falcon to life: Over 100 hand-cut feathers brought the depth and movement to allow his regal nature to emerge.

All works are for sale. To reach the artists, contact *The Trumpeter* editor at marshasb@wi.rr.com

Raptor Banding Project Continues

In response to the Spring 2021 *Trumpeter* article by wildlife biologist Bill Stout, WMAS President Diane Lembck was invited to observe the banding process. Diane says she was able to hold an owlet and put her ear against its chest to listen to its heart beat!

Bill is undertaking a 10-year project to band and color code 150 Red-tailed Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Great Horned Owl, and Osprey nestlings. The banding is conducted through federal permits.

We can help Bill by looking for banded species and documenting their locations in the metropolitan Milwaukee area. For information on Bill's research go to https://www.researchgate.net/profile/William_Stout2/research

Contact Information:
William E. Stout
W2364 Heather Street
Oconomowoc, WI 53066-9577
stoutw@hotmail.com



Preparing to Weigh the Great Horned Owl Nestling
Photo by Diane Lembck

Ethical Birding and Playback

■ By Tom Petri

I have checked several sources in regards to ethical birding in relation to the use of playback, which is the use of recordings to attract birds. I have included the descriptions and sources below.

I personally do not use recordings to attract birds, although I have been on several field trips where the guide would use playback to help find birds in order to create an enjoyable field trip experience for the participants. Since I benefited from the use of playback during field trips, I can't claim to be totally against it.



My research indicates that playback can be used as a tool to attract birds as long as the user shows due diligence and follows the guidelines listed below. One of the rules states playback should never be used at a known location of a rare bird, and unfortunately, song birds are becoming rarer every day. Playback should also not be used in a heavy-birded area, which I think applies to the Wehr Nature Center Creek Corridor. Lack of birds at this location this year may be in part to the heavy use the area receives. The general consensus believes playback shouldn't be used during the breeding season, but there is no conclusive research on this point. However, I think if you see a bird leave a nest or stop feeding during playback, common sense would have you stop.

I think the golden rule of birding sums up this discussion. More research is needed on the impact of playback on birds, but in the meantime, being respectful and courteous to the birds and your fellow birders should avoid potential conflicts and allow us to enjoy the birds with minimal impact.

Comments from the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology

Limit the use of playback in heavily birded areas, or in known locations of rare species. The Wehr Nature Center Creek Corridor would qualify as a heavy birder area.

FREEBIE ALERT!

Download Audubon's handy Audubon Bird Guide App to start learning over 800 North American species and their songs today. <https://www.audubon.org/app>

Comments from conversations on Wisconsin Bird Net (wisbirdn@freelists.org)

Playback gets its best reaction during breeding and this is when most harm can be done. There are stories but no research about birds abandoning their nest and territories due to a repeated phantom bird intruder. Most national parks forbid the use playback because of numerous visitors at the parks. Use of playback during non-breeding season is ok but is generally ineffective.

Tips from Sibleyguides.com

Arguments in favor of playback

Reduces need to physically enter a bird's habitat
Targets bird without disturbing other species
Allows more people to enjoy the birds

Arguments against playback

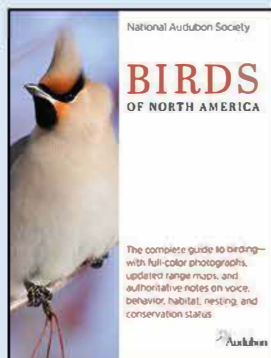
Causes unnatural stress when territorial male wastes energy chasing phantom male
Lures birds into the open, exposing them to predators
Distracts birds from foraging
Prevents birders from developing their identification skills
Many birders see it as cheating

Show respect for birds if using playback

Plan carefully; understand your targeted species and where it is likely to be
Choose your spot and set the stage
Begin by playing quietly – for just a few seconds
Use short snippets – if any response, try very short snippets (15 seconds) of at half the normal song
Watch for response; if none after 30 to 60 seconds, play another 15 -30 seconds of song
Observe; the bird may approach silently
NEVER play recording continuously at high volume

Show respect for birders

Courtesy will avoid conflicts and allow us to enjoy birds with minimal impact



NEW FROM AUDUBON!

Fully updated 2021 edition of the Birds of North America field guide. More than 800 species and 3,500 color photos. Available at <https://audubon.org> or from your bookseller.

AUDUBON AND OTHER SUMMER EVENTS

Events may be virtual or require fees or preregistration

Ongoing, Summer 2021

Monday – Thursday 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM

Friday – Sunday, 9:00 AM-- 5:00 PM

In-person: Raptor Exhibit

Schlitz Audubon Center. View a live bird of prey daily from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Admission fees apply. Contact 414- 352-2880 or <https://www.schlitzaudubon.org/>

Tuesdays, July and August 2021

In-person: Weekly Guided Nature Walks

Fond du Lac County Audubon Society. Explore trails in Fond du Lac County and City with members of Audubon. All walks begin at 6:30 PM. Contact dianahbeck@gmail.com, call 920-922-7931, or go to <https://fdlaudubon.org/about/field-trips-events/>

July 08, 2021 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Central

Online Event: Overseas Birding & Research: Sri Lanka, Bermuda, and Belize

Audubon Society of Central Arkansas. Dr. Ragupathy Kannan presents on Sri Lankan and Indian Ocean natural habitat. Discussion includes nesting Bermuda petrels and forest birds in <https://ar.audubon.org/events>

August 5, 2021 Registration 5:30 PM; Program 6:00 PM

In-person Event: Bird and Beer- Birds & Bands

Going "Up North"? Visit Rice Lake, have a cold one, and learn about bird banding at Beaver Creek and fun facts about the birds they have caught. \$15 fee, Preregistration required.

<http://hunthill.org/event/birds-beer-bird-banding/>

August 07, 2021 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Online Event: How Do Birds Beat the Texas Heat?

From year round residents to migratory species that nest in Texas, birds have adapted to survive in some harsh conditions! <https://www.audubon.org/events/how-do-birds-beat-texas-heat>

August 14, 2021 10:00 AM -2:00 PM

Identifying Raptors in Fall Migration in Wisconsin Online, Synchronous Workshop from UWM Field Station

Instructor: William Mueller, Director Emeritus, Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory. Learn to identify and monitor raptors in flight during migration. Focus is on identifying raptors in flight. Workshop fee: \$35.

<https://uwm.edu/field-station/raptor-identification/>

WMAS PROGRAMS SUMMER 2021

Wehr Nature Center has welcomed us back for in-person programs! Programs are held on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM at Wehr Nature Center, 9701 W. College Avenue unless otherwise noted. If you need more information, contact WMAS President Diane Lembck at 414-425-9616 or email lembck6492@wi.rr.com.

Sept. 15, 2021 7:00 PM

IN PERSON!!! Results of BioBlitz 2021 at Wehr Nature Center

Presented by: Julia Colby, Vertebrate & Invertebrate Collections Manager, Milwaukee Public Museum

A BioBlitz brings together scientists in a race against time to see how many species they can count on a property during a 24-hour biological survey. The Milwaukee Public Museum's BioBlitz program, now in its 5th year, is an annual event that is part contest, part festival, part educational event, and part scientific endeavor designed to increase the public's awareness of the variety of living things in their neighborhood and the services these various species provide to improve the quality of life.

The 2021 MPM BioBlitz was held at Wehr Nature Center on June 18-19 and Julia Colby, Vertebrate Collections Manager, will present some of the survey's findings as well as highlight how bringing together experts from many taxonomic disciplines, for a short amount of time, can rapidly gather information and help conservationists and resource managers decide on future actions or management decisions.



IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP?

Your renewal date is now printed on the newsletter above your address. Your renewal date is also on the magazine label of the National Audubon magazine.

Renew through WMAS! More of your donation will support local activities and conservation projects. Use the form in our newsletter or on our website, <https://wisconsinmetroaudubonsociety.org/membership/>

Q: Why did the priest buy an owl for his church?

A: Because it's a bird of prey.

I've Got a Bird for That

■ By Diane Lembck

A second advertisement arrived at my door from a lawn service offering to kill mosquitoes, ticks, and spiders in my yard. I thought "I've got a bird for that." The ads concern me though because our numbers of birds are dropping every year. Many birds will eat mosquitoes. The more important among birds that eat mosquitoes are Purple Martins, several varieties of our swallows, Chimney Swifts, waterfowl (geese, ducks), terns, and migrating song birds. Bird predators usually eat both the adult mosquito and aquatic stage of mosquitoes. Fish and amphibians prey on mosquito larva, too. Other flying insects such as dragonflies are notorious mosquito predators.

Some folks ask "Wouldn't it be a good thing to wipe out pesky mosquitoes?" But, without mosquitoes, plant production could be affected. Wiping out mosquitoes would wipe out a whole group of pollinators. Only some feed on the blood of humans and animals, and even in those species, the females are the only ones sucking blood. Of the 3500 species of mosquito, only about 100 go after humans, while most leave humans alone. There are thousands of mosquitoes that live off plant and fruit nectar. Besides

serving as a food source for wildlife, mosquitoes play an ecological role serving as pollinators. Other numbers of pollinators such as bees are dropping too fast.

When I first moved to my neighborhood in 1972, neighbors told me about past practices with city trucks going through the area spraying for mosquitoes. If it was DDT that was used, it biomagnified in the environment and led to the endangerment of our Bald Eagles.

"To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering" is one of my favorite quotes from Aldo Leopold. The famous quote embodies a view of species as parts of a large ecosystem that are worth saving, even if there is little understanding regarding why they are important.

Planting a variety of native shrubs and plants to attract birds helps to keep a balance of nature in our yards. We have had a dry spring which should keep the numbers of pesky mosquitoes down, too. Being a worrier, I do worry about the overuse of pesticides. I hope I will always have a bird for that.

WHAT FIELD GUIDES DO YOU USE?

Diane Lembck: My go-to guide at home is *The Sibley Guide for Birds* in which I have written ID tips from a variety of programs that I've seen. It's too heavy to comfortably tote around so I'll review sections of it for possible species that might be expected to be seen. In the month of April and May, I reviewed the warblers. When I'm out in the field, I rely on certain apps on my phone, like BirdNET which records sounds of birds. If it detects a certain bird from its sound, then you can follow the arrow to a photo of what the bird looks like. Another online guide is <https://www.allaboutbirds.org> by Cornell Lab, which gives you photos, information and the sounds of the birds.



Bill Holton: My go-to guide is also *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, although it's way too heavy to carry. It's good to keep in the car, unless you're the tour leader. Then you just suck it up and carry it. Referencing that book and reading the monthly articles by Allen Sibley in *BirdWatching Magazine* really enhances my enjoyment of birdwatching.

In the field I carry my cell phone with the Audubon Bird Guide app downloaded. The cell phone app is especially useful because it has the bird calls and songs. One has to be careful about that, because even with it on extremely low volume a small songbird can hear it from quite a distance (see **Ethical Birding and Playback** on page 4). I also use eBird's "Explore Species" section.

I have just about every guide because I've birded for so long. They each have their different strengths. But in the field it's all about the phone (Samsung Galaxy Note 9), Audubon app and ebird.

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Volunteers are needed to help Milwaukee Audubon Society
restore Buffalo Speaks Reserve.

It's a special place that looks down from the Niagara escarpment upon the vast expanse of the Horicon Marsh -- where the Prairie meets the Eastern woodlands and where the Savannah and the northern Hardwoods converge. Closer to home, help is needed to maintain the native gardens at the Stahl/Conrad Homestead in Hales Corners. Contact our Conservation Chairman Bill Holton if you can help at either site.

Email Bill at WHolton@wi.rr.com or call him at 414-333-5316.

Know your Raptors? ANSWERS

1. Sharp-shinned Hawk, immature: Note short, stocky wings and body, long slim tail that is short for an accipiter, and small head. Plumage is difficult to see on distant birds, but 1st-years lack a rufous tone underneath.

2. Bald Eagle: Very distinct white heads and tails and dark overall. Very large with long, broad wings and yellow legs and bill.

3. American Kestrel: Note pale underside with orangey chest, black spots on belly two black "sideburns" on head, and blue upperwing coverts, orange tail with black tip.

4. Northern Harrier: Very distinct brilliant white underside with a black border on flight feathers. Note long, slim wings and tail, and small head.

5. American Kestrel: Note pale underside with orangey chest, black spots on belly two black "sideburns" on head, and blue upperwing coverts, orange tail with black tip.

6. Turkey Vulture: Blackish overall; reddish head can be difficult to see at a distance but white bill usually glows. Note long, broad, squared-off wings, broad tail, and modified dihedral when gliding.

7. Sharp-shinned Hawk, adult: Note short, stocky wings and body, long slim tail that is short for an accipiter, and small head.

8. Broad-winged Hawk, immature:

Stocky pointed wings, large head, and short, narrow tail. Pale underside with dark streaking on sides of breast, and indistinct tail pattern with darker tip denote 1st-year. Some (like this bird) have streaks on belly similar to red-tailed.

9. Red-shouldered Hawk, adult: Note somewhat stocky squared-off wings with translucent "commas" along the primaries. Adults have bold black and white bands on wings and tail and a warm reddish underside.

10. Red-shouldered Hawk, immature: Note somewhat stocky squared-off wings with translucent "commas" along the primaries. Pale underside with buffy underwing coverts, and dark, evenly spaced streaking on body denote 1st-year.

11. Northern Harrier: Very distinct brilliant white underside with a black border on flight feathers. Note long, slim wings and tail, and small head.

12. Merlin, adult: Merlin has stockier, more sharply pointed wings, broader, shorter tail, and is "chesty" compared with kestrel. Juvenile and adult female are pale below with heavy, dark streaking, heavily "checkered" underwings, and distinct tail bands.

13. Northern Harrier, immature: Pale underneath mostly brown flight feathers. Note long, narrow wings and tail (showing bands when spread). Head is small with owl-like facial disc.

14. Red-tailed Hawk: Quintessential broad-winged, short-tailed buteo shape. Plumage is pale underneath with dark patagial bars and bellyband.

15. Cooper's Hawk, immature: Pale underneath with dark streaks throughout underbody, and brown head denote 1st-year. Note long wings for an accipiter, large head, and long tail with white tip.

16. Cooper's Hawk, immature: Pale underneath with dark streaks throughout underbody, and brown head denote 1st-year. Note long wings for an accipiter, large head, and long tail with white tip.

17. Peregrine Falcon, adult: Pale underneath with heavily streaked body, heavily "checkered" underwings, and dark head. Note very long, pointed wings, heavy body, and broad tail and head. Wingtips are less sharply pointed in a full soar.

18. Osprey: Note the dark stripe through the eye, long, dark brown wings, white underside, and a black bill with sharp hook.

19. Sharp-shinned Hawk, adult: Note short, stocky wings and body, long slim tail that is short for an accipiter, and small head.

<https://www.audubon.org/news/identify-raptorsflight>
Accessed 6-13-2021



WMAS Member Joanne Jarocki



Jarocki Home Photos by Jim Cieslak

Member Highlight

■ By Jim Cieslak

One of our long-time members, Joanne Jarocki, is not only an active birder but a native plant gardener as well. Joanne also is participating in our GBBB collaboration with the Wild Ones. If you have ever driven down 92nd Street, near Oakwood Road in Franklin – well, her property should be called Oak Wood Haven! The footprint of the home seems to be nestled into a grove of old oaks that run from the road all the way to the woods behind the yard. When you enter the yard, the woodpeckers, nuthatches and other local birds seem to ignore your presence. With the canopy from the oaks, it is like entering a magical place of filtered sunlight. You will notice some fencing around her gardens; the deer love it there too. Thanks for giving us a peek, Joanne.

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