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# The Chat

Lakeland Audubon Society

September 2021

## CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, September 28, 2021  
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Lions Field House – 270 Elkhorn Road (Highway 67) Williams Bay, WI

### *From Point A to Point B; Basics of Bird Migration*

By Steve Betchkal

Bird migration is one of the wonders of the natural world. How birds move across Earth is a magnificently-evolved and precisely-tuned story of one of life's most fascinating – and mysterious – systems. Ornithologist Steve Betchkal discusses the hows, whys, whens, and wheres of migration.

Steve Betchkal (Eau Claire) has hiked/camped/backpacked/traveled 49 U.S. states, 45 National Forests, 78 National Wildlife Refuges, 71 National Parks, & 4 Canadian provinces in pursuit of wild birds. In 2017 he worked in the Galápagos for Lindblad-National Geographic.

Steve is the former president of Gaylord Nelson Audubon, founder of MartinMart and Welcome Back Bird Day, the producer of WSO's Bird TV, and currently the content editor for Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts. In his 30 years as a professional journalist, he produced 11,000 TV stories, and is the only journalist in Chippewa Valley history to win five Emmys and an Edward R. Murrow Award.

He is the author of eight books, including All of This & Robins Too, Make Birds Not War, Wisconsin Birding Trails, Cat Tales, Walk the Walk, Camp the Camp, Bird the Bird, & his latest, 101 Apologus Nights.

#### Event Schedule

7:00 PM – 7:10 PM Introduction & Birding Reports (from attendees)

7:10 PM – 8:30 PM Talk (followed by Q&A session)



Steve Betchkal, birding in Costa Rica



Steve Betchkal, on a mountain summit

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## Fall Bird Gardening

By Janice Bain

Farewell our migrant friends,

Each fall, many of our feathered friends will head south, some traveling thousands of miles. It is important for us to help these migrants in any way that we can. The essentials include water, food and shelter. Bird baths, fountains, bubblers, misters ... are essential to allow resident birds and resting migrants a place to get a drink and bathe.

Keeping your birdbath clean will help the birds remain healthy. If you clean your bird bath regularly, a stiff brush will do the job. If your bird bath is very dirty, Audubon recommends using a vinegar/water mixture in a 9:1 ratio and a stiff brush. Never use detergent to clean your bird bath as it can remove the natural oils of the feathers making the birds vulnerable. As the temperatures plummet, a small water heater can be used to keep ice and snow at bay.

For gardeners, it is often hard to resist "putting our gardens to bed". We pull out all the old vegetation and rake up the leaves. Sadly, we unknowingly destroy habitat for bees, caterpillars and many other bugs. In the fall, many species of bees will burrow into soft-wood or stalks to spend the winter. Old flower heads provide a good seed source for hungry birds. Caterpillars wrap themselves up in the leaf litter until they emerge post winter. A nice layer of leaves helps maintain ground temperature for the caterpillars and other insects that burrow into the ground for the winter. When the leaves get raked up and turned into mulch or burned, we are decimating the caterpillars that will be a food source for next year's birds. Can't resist the garden clean-up? Modify the clean-up. Find an out-of-the-way corner of your yard to make a mini-brush pile. If you have some tree/bush branches, use them to prevent your clippings from blowing away. In the winter, the pile will provide shelter and a place for birds to poke around for food. When spring arrives, birds will often pull plant fibers from old stems and weave them among small sticks to build their nests. Such small changes on our part make such big differences for our friends in nature.

Fall is also a good time to plant native bushes and trees. As they mature, these bushes and trees will become a safe place for birds to nest and raise their young. Consider bushes that are hosts for caterpillars and other insects. These bugs are essential for most birds, especially for those raising a brood of chicks. Bushes that provide seeds or berries are very attractive to birds. If you are able to plant multiple bushes, be sure to choose bushes that have berries that ripen at different times of the summer. Some berries, such as on the black chokeberry, are not attractive to the birds until they have frozen and thawed a few times. These fruits are especially important for the spring migrants because in the spring, food is often scarce. Both Audubon and the National Wildlife Federation have native plant finders to help you find flowers, bushes and trees that are native to your area (you provide a zip code) and will provide information about the quantity of caterpillars the plant hosts. Some of my favorites are New Jersey Tea, Dogwoods, Viburnums and Elderberries. The most productive trees include the Oaks and the Prunus family (Black Cherry, Plums, Choke Cherries etc). The most productive native flowers include the goldenrods, asters and sunflowers. Planting in the fall allows enough time for the root systems to develop and the plant will be in the ground for the April showers.

Migrating birds, pollinators and other insects need our help. By making a few modifications to how we garden and the plants we choose to put in our yards, we can provide the help they so desperately need.



## BIRD SEED SALE

OUR BIRD SEED SALE IS GOING ON NOW!

Accepting orders until Friday, October 15, 2021

Our chapter's annual bird seed sale is the primary fundraiser that supports all activities. This includes our educational programs that we have at our monthly meetings. This also includes our educational outreach efforts that go beyond our meetings and strives to reach our local youth to inspire and encourage future generations to engage in bird conservation activities.

We ask for your generosity and support in these uncertain and challenging times. One thing is for certain: your patronage will be appreciated. The birds will thank you and so will we. Please see the order form for more details.

## LAKELAND AUDUBON BIRD SEED SALE

## 2021 ORDER FORM

PLEASE SEND ORDERS BY: Friday, October 15th

**LAKELAND AUDUBON MIX**  
This is our specially mixed blend of 1/3 each sunflower, cracked corn, and millet. Birds love the variety, and it contains none of the fillers that are found in commercially packaged wild mixes.

### **SUNFLOWER SEEDS-BLACK OIL OR STRIPED**

The favorite of most seed-eating birds. Cardinals, blue jays, grosbeaks, chickadees, nuthatches, finches, and many other species enjoy its flavor and nutrition.

### **SUNFLOWER MEATS**

All of the benefits, none of the mess of shells in your feeding area.

### **SAFFLOWER**

Great for Cardinals, Grosbeaks and other hard seed eaters.

### **NY JER**

These small, black seeds really bring finches, Redpolls, and Pine Siskins flocking. Excellent source of fat and protein.

### **CRACKED CORN**

Universally liked by birds, corn is a source of high energy.

### **WHITE MILLET**

Favorite food of juncos, mourning doves, and varieties of sparrows. A nutritious seed for spreading on the ground.

### **IN SHELL and SHELLIED PEANUTS**

A high-protein, oil-rich food for birds and other wildlife. Blue Jays, Woodpeckers and Nuthatches absolutely love them.

### **SUET CAKES**

These high-quality suet treats come individually packaged in a 12 pack case. A high-fat food source that is sought after by many species of birds.

### **PICK-UP SCHEDULE**

Pesche's Greenhouse  
W4080 Highway 50  
Lake Geneva, WI  
Saturday, October 30th  
9:00 AM — Noon

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

All orders must be picked up from Pesche's Greenhouse on the scheduled pick-up date or sometime thereafter.

Make checks payable to:

**Lakeland Audubon Society**  
(Orders Due by October 15th)

**Mail to:** Lakeland Audubon Society

P.O. Box 473  
Elkhorn, WI 53121

LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.  
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## Bird Walks

**September 22:** Big Foot Beach State Park  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

**September 29:** Big Foot Beach State Park  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

**October 6:** Big Foot Beach State Park  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

Meet in the main parking area to the right of the entrance station a little before 9:00 AM. A state park sticker (\$28, \$13 if age 65 or older) or daily pass (\$8, \$3 if age 65 or older) is required to enter Big Foot Beach State Park.

<https://lakelandaudubon.com/contact/>



**Common Yellowthroat** (Photo By Kevin Dickey)

**The Chat** is the newsletter of the Lakeland Audubon Chapter of the National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 473, Elkhorn, WI 53121. Subscription is \$15 per year for printed copies sent by US mail.