

LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY



The Chat



November 2022

CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, November 22
7:00 PM

Lions Field House - 270 Elkhorn Road (Hwy 67), Williams Bay, WI

The event is free and open to the public.

Winter Birds and Birding

By Wayne Rohde

This program will not only feature the various categories and types of birds which frequent southern Wisconsin during the winter months, whether at our feeders or elsewhere, but will also incorporate tips for identifying difficult to distinguish species, suggestions for maximizing our joy of winter birding, observations about changes in winter bird populations and distribution, and reflections on the importance of Christmas Bird Counts in monitoring the status of birds – and thus, promoting their conservation.



Bald Eagle - Photo by Wayne Rohde

Wayne has been an avid birder for over 55 years, and an avid bird photographer for the past 15 years – during which he has captured images of over 270 species of Wisconsin birds. He has also served as newsletter editor for Lakeland Audubon's "The Chat" and Beloit's Ned Hollister Bird Club's "The Flyer," as well as Bird Reports Coordinator for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.



Snowy Owl - Photo by Wayne Rohde

TRAIL REPORT

By Jim Killian

Birding update for Kishwauketo Nature Conservancy, as of November 10, 2022:

- Birding is slowing down at Kishwauketo Nature Conservancy now with the recent turn of the weather.
- On our last warm 76-degree day, 11/10, I did spot a pair of Bluebirds.
- The Juncos are back in large numbers.
- While I did not see any, there have been reports of Bald Eagle sightings recently on the north portion of Kishwauketo circling above and near the woodlands.
- It appears that the plentiful Turkey Vultures have now departed.

Let's FeederWatch!

Long running citizen science project now in its 35th season.

By Kevin Dickey

Do you feed wild birds or simply like to watch them through a window on cold winter's day? If so, then Project FeederWatch is for you. This citizen science project, that runs from November to April annually, is run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Birds Canada. Your participation helps ornithologists better understand and track the movements, abundance and behaviors of wild birds. The invaluable data that is collected and then submitted online through the project's website, lets researchers know what species, how many and how often birds are visiting your feeders.

In fact, you really don't need to have a bird feeder to participate in the project. If you have native plantings in your yard that provide food, such as seeds, nuts and berries or a source of water, like a birdbath, then you are ready to get started.

Sound good? Go to: [Project Overview - FeederWatch](#) for more information.

A DAY IN THE FIELD

By Kevin Dickey

Here's some pictures from the field trip to the Adam Birding Conservancy. It was a seasonably cold and snowy day, but it was a good outing overall. We saw lots of Tree Sparrows, a couple of Gulls, one Northern Harrier and some other songbirds. A special thanks goes out to Dave Adam for giving us a guided tour of the property.



Planting for Wildlife

Native Plant Spotlight

By Mariette Nowak

Red-Osier Dogwood

Cornus sericea (*C. alba*; *C. stolonifera*)

This is common shrub in wetlands, but it is widely planted in gardens for its bright red stems from fall to early spring, especially stunning against winter snows and conifers. In summer, this and other dogwoods provide a wonderful selection of insect food for birds. Most important are the 15 species of butterfly and moth caterpillars, rich in protein for birds, that munch on dogwood leaves. Among these caterpillars is the dainty spring/summer azure butterfly, as well as our beloved and beautiful cecropia moth. Caterpillars are the prime food for nestling birds, which can starve without them and other essential foods. A study found that 70% native plants, which best support native insects, are needed to insure nestling survival.

By late summer, dogwood's branches are laden with white to pale blue berries, which are as irresistible to birds as chocolate to us. Nearly 50 species of birds have been observed feeding on dogwood berries. The berries are about a quarter inch in diameter, a perfect size for the beaks of most birds. They are also very nutritious and high in fat making the especially important for migrating birds who feast on the fruit to help fuel their long journeys south each autumn. Dogwood berries are preferred by the American robin, cedar waxwing, downy woodpecker, eastern bluebird, eastern kingbird, gray catbird, northern bobwhite, northern cardinal, northern flicker, pine grosbeak, Swainson's thrush, and wild turkey. Flocks of robins, and grackles feed on as many as 50 berries in one visit!

Red-osier dogwood grows best in full to part sun and prefers moist conditions. making it an excellent choice for rain gardens. But it is quite tolerant and grows well in medium moisture levels and tolerates a wide variety of soil types. It's a beautiful shrub in all seasons and invaluable one for birds.



Red-Osier Dogwood used as a foundation shrub.



Red-Osier Dogwood in bloom and with fruit.

Chapter Field Trip

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

10:00 AM - Noon

Library Park - 900 Block of Main Street, Lake Geneva, WI

Free (paid parking is required in front of the library)

Join us as we visit Library Park (also known as Elm Park) in Lake Geneva. This field trip will be held in a somewhat stationary location but will consist of a fair amount of standing or sitting outdoors. Waterfowl on Geneva Lake will be the focus. We will meet in front of the Lake Geneva Library shortly before 10:00 AM. If you are interested in going, please contact us.

[Contact - Lakeland Audubon Society](#) - Call or Text: (262) 729-9702

Bird Walks

Saturdays

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Big Foot Beach State Park

N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

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Meet in the main parking area to the right of the entrance station a little before 11:00 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.

Please contact us to let us know you are interested in attending a walk.

<https://lakelandaudubon.com/contact>

Call or Text: (262) 729-9702



American Tree Sparrow - Photo by Wayne Rohde

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.