

## LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY



# The Chat

May 2023

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## CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, May 23  
7:00 PM

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

Free and open to the public.

Featuring the following educational talk:

### ***"Woodland Wildflowers – Spring Ephemerals"***

By Beth Goeppinger

The speaker will talk about many of the Woodland wildflowers that bloom during the Spring. These plants, also known as Spring Ephemerals, grace the floors of our more naturally wooded areas. They are admired for their elegance and subtle beauty. Regarded as a sign of ecological health and balance, their presence should always be appreciated. With a rather short window to enjoy them, one should take time to see: The Charms of Spring.

### **About the Speaker**

Beth is a retired naturalist who worked for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at Richard Bong State Recreation Area for over 20 years. She grew up in Minnesota and began her fascination with nature at an early age. Attended UW-Stevens Point and graduated with a degree in forestry recreation and environmental education. After working in the field a few years, she received a master's in science from Northern Illinois University in Outdoor Teacher Education. Prior to her time at Bong, she worked for several years in Illinois as assistant director of an environmental education facility. Her natural specialties are birds, bugs and botany, but she is still fascinated by it all, spending as much time outdoors as possible!



Virginia Bluebells - Photo By Beth Goeppinger

# LEARNING TO SOAR

By Carol Zimmermann

***"When I grow up, I'm going to be an ornithologist."***

This is probably not something that you often hear from a twelve-year-old. However, this is what I heard from a Learning to Soar student. As a bird-lover and educator, it was music to my ears – and probably to yours as well.

Learning to Soar is an educational program that the Avian Committee of the City of Lake Geneva created to help fulfill one of our key missions - to equip the next generation to protect our birds. We approached a talented and creative teacher, Jill Lorenzi, at the St. Francis de Sales Parish School, and she agreed to join us to pilot the program in 2019. This twelve-week interdisciplinary program focuses on birds and is mapped to fifth grade standards in areas such as biology, math, and English.

The first classes use experiential learning to teach critical thinking skills and use of the scientific method to identify birds, use virtual bird guides, and enter information into eBird. Equipped with field notebooks and bird seed, students head outdoors to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. In 2023, Learning to Soar students entered sightings of 157 birds during the GBBC. This kind of experiential learning continues as students explore bird biology, bird habitat, and critical resources like water, food, and shelter.

Students then study migration and play the Bird Migration Game. Students are grouped into "flocks" and compete to win the game by successfully migrating from South America (one end of the gym) to North America (the other end of the gym). Students must answer questions correctly to earn a progress card with information on a situation that will make their migration journey easier - such as a clean lake or a helpful person with a bird friendly yard – or something that makes the journey more difficult – such as a cat or a nasty storm. Volunteers act out some of the threats, such as spraying the folks with water or wind when they encounter a storm. Because the students have experienced threats and ways people can help migratory birds, we find students understand and better retain these critical facts.

The capstone of the curriculum is a research project. In 2021, 2022, and now in 2023, the final project has been a Storybook Trail at Four Seasons Nature Preserve. The Learning to Soar students create nine trail signs to inspire beginning readers (and their families) to walk a trail at the preserve and learn about the birds which migrate there and the habitat that supports them. Each sign must contain one page of an original story, an amazing bird fact, and an activity, and feature original illustrations.



## Learning to Soar (Continued)

Helping the students conduct their research are a host of committed local conservationists and scientists. Kevin Dickey, President of Lakeland Audubon has been a consistent mentor. He has been joined by Jon Foster and his fellow Lake Geneva Arborists Morgan Sheppard and Gera Mendoza, along with Kristen Freytag, Kiera Theys and Tai Thompson from the Geneva Lake Conservancy, who all served as experts on a site visit, helping students identify birds and key aspects of bird habitat at Four Seasons. Local artist Nikki Marsicano teaches bird drawing, with incredible results. The stories have been "The Journey," about Bluebird family and "The Martins Find a Home," a tale of a housing search for a Purple Martin family. This year the main characters are Tree Swallows and will be unveiled in late May so we can all walk the trail and enjoy the students' work.

Since 2020, Learning to Soar has expanded to include other experiences including badge workshops for a local Junior Girl Scout troop and even the development of a "Bird Buddy" badge for the Brownie troop. With support from Karen Yancy and the Geneva Lake Conservancy, as well as Lakeland Audubon, we have taken students to the biannual Bird Festival and presented a Beautiful Birds workshop at the Helen Rohner Fishing Park.

Will Learning to Soar make a difference for our birds? Our pre-and-post testing shows that students are learning. According to our master teacher, Jill Lorenzi, her students "...are excited about birds and I know their story will inspire other children to learn to enjoy and protect birds. They are phenomenal." If excitement and engagement are any indication, we are equipping a new generation of bird conservationists. As I ended a class with our young citizen scientists, I lauded them saying, "You did a great job!" After a brief pause, one of the students looked at me and earnestly said, "You did too!" This fills me with great love for our young scientists and gratitude to all our mentors and uplifted by the promise of a bright future for our birds.

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## A Day in the Field

By Kevin Dickey



# Planting for Wildlife

## Native Plant Spotlight

By Mariette Nowak

### LARGE-FLOWERED TRILLIUM

*Trillium grandiflorum*

The Large-flowered Trillium is one of the largest, showiest flowers to be found in spring. It grows in rich woodlands with dappled sun and loamy moist soil. The name trillium comes from the Latin word, tri, which means “three” - fitting name for a plant that has three leaves, three petals and three sepals. The flower also has 2 sets of stamens, each in a whorl of 3. The female part is in the center of the flower and has 3 lobes.

Bees visit the flowers for nectar and pollen. When they go to the next flower, some of the pollen from the first flower brushes off on the female part (stigma) of that plant. The plant is then pollinated and the seeds will begin to form. Later in midsummer when the seeds have matured, ants come to visit. They take the seeds to their underground nests where they feed on a part of the seed – the whitish elaiosome (ee-lay-oh-som). After eating, they take the rest of the seed to their dump where the seeds are fertilized with their feces. These trillium seeds are likely to sprout in the spot the next year. Aided by ants in this way, trilliums can spread throughout woodlands.

Unfortunately, deer are especially fond of trilliums and can devastate a stand of trilliums. An overpopulation of deer harms other plants and agricultural crops as well. The best ways to control deer numbers is through regulated hunting and sharp-shooting (usually done in more urbanized areas).



Large-Flowered Trillium (recent bloom)



Large-Flowered Trillium (aged bloom)

**Mariette Nowak** is an avid native plant gardener and current President of the Kettle Moraine Wild Ones Chapter. She has a Master's degree in Botany and Zoology. Was also the Director of Wehr Nature Center for many years; former WSO Education Chair; former Editor of Lakeland Audubon's newsletter and author of *Birdscaping in the Midwest: A Guide to Gardening with Native Plants to Attract Birds*.

# Birding at Big Foot

Enjoy some images that were taken while out on the trails in Big Foot Beach State Park



Baby Racoons



Jack-in-the-pulpit



Eastern Wood-Pewee



Broad-winged Hawk



Eastern Redbud

Baby Racoons, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Broad-winged Hawk and Eastern Redbud photos by Janice Bain. Eastern Wood-Pewee photo by Kevin Dickey

## Native Plant Sale

**Let's dig in and help the birds, bees and other wildlife!**

- Do you want to help the birds, bees and other wildlife thrive in your own yard?
- Would you like to promote biodiversity right outside your door?
- Are you interested in the prospect of reducing your carbon footprint?

If so, then we urge you to add some native plants to your landscape this spring. Our plant sale makes finding these beneficial, native plants easy. Thirteen different varieties are offered each year. This way, you can build upon your efforts every planting season, making your yard increasingly more biodiverse and inviting to wildlife.

Orders are due by May 26 and the order pick-up is June 6 at the Lions Field House in Williams Bay. Please see the order form on the next page for more details. [Click Here for an order form!](#)



**LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
A chapter of the National Audubon Society  
serving Walworth County, Wisconsin and the  
surrounding areas.

LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

# Native Plant Sale

2023 Chapter Fundraiser

## Order Form

Order date:

Orders are due by May 26, 2023  
(Payment must be included)

### Customer Information

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone number:

Email:



### Quantity of Plants

### Plant Species

	Pasque Flower
	False Aster
	Sweet Flag
	Whorled Milkweed
	Tall Coreopsis
	Shorts Aster
	Pale Purple Coneflower
	Mist Flower
	Early Sunflower
	Elm-Leaved Goldenrod
	Wild Senna
	Bottlebrush Grass
	Praire Dropseed

**Total Number of Plants (minimum of 4)**

**"Buy 8 and get 2 for free"**

Total Amount Due

X 5.00 = \$

+Donation of: \$

= \$

**Order Pick-up:**

Orders need to be picked up at the Lions Field House (270 Elkhorn Road, Williams Bay, WI) on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 between 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM. "No Exceptions"

# Upcoming Events

## SPRING WILDFLOWER WALK

Saturday, May 27

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Noon)

Hackmatack NWR – Goose Pond Corridor (Turner Tract) – N541 County Road H, Genoa City, WI

Free and open to the public!

Join members of our chapter as we hike through the natural habitats of Turner Tract in search of spring blooming wildflowers. The property, which is part of the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge, is known for both its spring ephemerals and prairie wildflowers. Kelley Happ of the Lake Geneva Avian Committee will be leading the walk. Kelley is a long-time wildflower enthusiast that loves to share her knowledge about these beautiful plants.

We will meet in the parking lot/entrance that is just off County Road H about a mile North of Genoa City. Parking is limited, so car-pooling is recommended. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact us.

[Contact – Lakeland Audubon Society](#) Call or Text: +1 (262) 729-9702

## BIRDING TOUR AT OLD WORLD WISCONSIN

Sunday, June 4

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Old World Wisconsin – W372 S9727 WI-67, Eagle, WI

Free and open to the public! (THIS TOUR ONLY)

Come join us for a special event at the Old World Wisconsin State Historical Site. We will look for birds and other forms of wildlife as we receive a guided tour through the more natural areas of the property. Attendees will have the opportunity to gain insight regarding the use, history and management of the bird habitats that exist at the site. Richard Will – Head of Trail Maintenance, will be leading the tour. Meet in the main parking lot by the entrance gate prior to 8:00 AM.

For more information about Old World Wisconsin, please visit their website:

<https://oldworldwisconsin.wisconsinhistory.org/>

If you are interested in going, please contact us.

[Contact – Lakeland Audubon Society](#) Call or Text: +1 (262) 729-9702



# Field Trip

Tuesday, May 30

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Adam Birding Conservancy – 1636 Findlay Road, Whitewater, WI

Free to attend!

Join us as we visit the Adam Birding Conservancy. This field trip will consist of a fair amount of walking, standing and sitting outdoors. We will meet in the main parking lot on the Southwest corner of the property before 9:00 AM. For information about the property, please visit the ABC's website by clicking or tapping the following link: <https://adamconservancy.com/index.html>

Please contact us and let us know if you are interested in attending this field trip.

<https://lakelandaudubon.com/contact> Call or Text: +1 (262) 729-9702

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## LAKELAND AUDUBON Board of Directors

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### **Field Trips**

(Volunteer Needed)

### **Publicity**

(Volunteer Needed)

## Bird Walks

### **Saturdays**

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Big Foot Beach State Park

N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

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.

### **Sundays**

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

White River County Park

6503 Sheridan Springs Road, Lyons, WI

Get out and enjoy one of the best parks Walworth County has to offer. We'll walk the trails and be on the lookout for birds and other critters. We'll also watch for plant blooms and other interesting elements of nature. Meet at the kiosk by the parking lot a little before 11:00 AM.

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

<https://lakelandaudubon.com/contact>

Call or Text: +1 (262) 729-9702

**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.