

LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY



# ***The Chat***



**May 2024**

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## **CHAPTER MEETING**

Tuesday, May 28

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:

### ***Dragonflies of Wisconsin***

By Beth Goeppinger

Dragonflies have been on the planet for over 250 million years! Discover what adaptations make them amazing predators and survivors. Explore the differences between dragonflies and damselflies. Understand the importance of water in their interesting life cycle and learn about some of Wisconsin's dragonflies.

#### **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!



Cherry-faced Meadowhawk: female  
Photo by Kevin Dickey



Black-shouldered Spinyleg: juvenile male and female  
Photo by Beth Goeppinger

# BRING ON THE **BATS**



## HELPING OUR OTHER WINGED FRIENDS

**Q and A with local Eagle Scout Landon Doeblner**

By Kevin Dickey

It was brought to my attention recently that a young man from the Lake Geneva area had built and installed bat houses on the Duck Lake Nature Trail in the Town of Geneva. Knowing what a benefit it is to have bats around and being an experienced nest box builder myself, I decided to ask him about it. Here's the ten questions I had him answer to get a little insight regarding his endeavor.

### **Why did you choose to build bat houses for your Eagle Scout project?**

One day last summer I was walking the trail and there were tons of mosquitos. I read somewhere that bats eat lots of them, so I thought what can I do to help there be more bats and hopefully less mosquitos on the trail.

### **Are you interested in wildlife conservation? And if so, for how long?**

Yes, I am interested in wildlife conservation. I've been interested for a couple of years and I do go to the Milwaukee or Chicago zoo on occasion. Going to those places has sparked my interest.

### **What benefits do you feel bats provide to the ecosystem?**

Mainly they eat mosquitoes and also ticks. That helps keep their numbers in check.

### **What species of bats do you hope to attract with the houses you have installed?**

Pretty much any that will use them. I think the Brown Bats (Little or Big) would be the most common and also the most likely to use the houses.

### **Why did you choose to put bat houses on the Duck Lake Nature Trail?**

Mostly because it's local and also a location where the bats can have some space away from lots of people.

(continued on the next page)

**The bat houses you installed are not painted black like others I have seen, why?**

I have read that paint can seep into wood and possibly cause problems for the bats due to toxicity levels.

**Where did you find the plan for the design of the bat houses?**

I found it online.

**What was the type of wood used for the houses and why?**

Cedar was my choice because it's rot resistant and will last a long time.

**Would you consider doing a project like this again?**

Yes, I enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun. I would consider doing it for a friend or maybe for myself in my own yard.

**Do you plan on being active with monitoring and maintaining the houses?**

No, it's really not needed. The houses don't need to be cleaned out, because the bats don't build nests and the wood used to build the houses is pretty much maintenance free.

Below are the four species of bats that inhabit Wisconsin and are known to use a man-made bat house.



Landon Doebl enjoying putting up his bat houses.

Landon is 17 years old and will be a senior at Badger High School in the fall. He is an Eagle Scout and did this project to earn a badge. I didn't ask him what his plans are for after high school, but perhaps he will consider something conservation oriented. He certainly has the interest!



Little Brown Bat



Eastern Pipistrelle



Big Brown Bat



Northern Long-eared Bat

# Field Trip

Saturday, June 1 and Saturday, June 8

11:00 AM – 1:30 PM

Big Foot Beach State Park – N1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva, WI

Open to the public!

Wisconsin Metro Audubon Society and Lakeland Audubon Society are planning an early June field trip at Big Foot Beach State Park. The field trip will take place from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM on both Saturday, June 1 and Saturday, June 8 (rain dates on June 2 or June 9, respectively). Participants will meet at the park (1550 S Lakeshore Drive, Lake Geneva); a Wisconsin State Parks admission sticker is required. A Cicada Safari station will be set up to provide local cicada information and suggest park locations to explore.

In 2007, field trip leader and WMAS board member Pat Fojut reports she was lucky enough to visit Big Foot Beach State Park, where more than a thousand cicadas were observed climbing up trees and emerging from the ground (see photo at right). This year Pat is interested in exploring how birds take advantage of this rare food source (available only once every 17 years!). Field trip participants should expect mosquitos and flying insects, wear protective clothing, long sleeves, solid shoes, and a hat, and should bring water. Pat also suggests participants might want to bring ear protection because some of the louder choruses of males can reach 90 decibels!

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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## 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 and let us know that 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.