



# The Chat

February 2025

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## CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, February 25

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:

### ***Birding Horicon Marsh***

By Jeff Bahls

In this talk, Jeff will go over what makes Horicon Marsh so unique and birding there so special. He will cover such things as: the history, geology and the best locations to see birds.

#### About the Speaker



The view, on a beautiful day at Horicon Marsh.

Jeff put out his first bird house when he was about 7 years old. He has 40 years of experience with the Horicon Marsh where he works part-time for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Jeff has been a member of Horicon Marsh Bird club for the past 20+ years and is the current President. He currently sits on the board of the Wood Duck Society, a nationwide organization devoted to placement, and care of Wood Duck nest boxes and the life cycle of the Wood Duck.

Jeff was a member of Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2007 search team, for Ivory Billed Woodpecker in Arkansas. In 2018 Jeff was awarded the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology bronze Passenger Pigeon award for outstanding contributions in local and state areas for study and enjoyment of birds. Jeff also enjoys looking for birds in his kayak along Wisconsin's wonderful wetlands.

# Lake Geneva Christmas Bird Count Report

This past year's count yielded some interesting finds.

**By Kyle Cudworth**

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in our local Lake Geneva circle was held Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024. Our count circle of 7.5 miles radius is centered near the southwest corner of Lake Como. Weather on count day was sunny in the morning and partly cloudy in the afternoon, with temperatures in the teens. We had a few inches snow on the ground and considerable open water on our larger lakes. This year about 21 local birders spent some or all of the day driving and hiking their assigned areas keeping careful track of how many birds of which species were seen, while 8 birders watched their feeders and yards. Some did feeder watches as well as covering an area. Cumulatively, we spent about 100 hours birding, driving about 490 miles and hiking about 20 miles, counting nearly 8000 birds. In all, 53 species were found on count day. Both the number of birds and the number of species were slightly lower than some recent years.

As often happens, we counted more Canada Geese than any other species with 2604 this year. Dark-eyed Juncos were the next most common with 721 logged. We saw 5 Bald Eagles, which is fairly typical of recent years. We counted 6 Pileated Woodpeckers, tying the record for our count circle. Most notably, a Double-Crested Cormorant was seen on Williams Bay, confirmed by photos. Audubon's website seems to say this is the first time this species has appeared in our counts! The northern birds such as Red-Breasted Nuthatch, Common Redpoll, and Purple Finch often show up in small numbers in our counts, but none of these were seen, and only 3 Pine Siskins were counted.

Lisa Granbur organized things before the count and Kyle Cudworth compiled the data and submitted it to Audubon. Counters included Janice Bain, Wayne Rohde, Jim Black, Jim Killian, the Brockmans, Pat Parsons, Lisa Granbur, Beth Rendall, the Haases, the Tyksisskis, and Nick Mimier; as well as Kevin Dickey, Joe Jacyna, Beth Goeppinger, the Martins, Doug Mohr, and the Cudworth/Albrecht team. I humbly apologize to anyone I left off this list or whose name I spelled wrong. Participation in the CBC was a good day of birding and we would love to have some additional birders join the fun next year.

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## 2025 Audubon Photography Awards

Premier contest for nature photographers now in its sixteenth year.

### About the Contest

One of the most respected nature photography competitions in the world, the Audubon Photography Awards celebrates the beauty and diversity of birds by honoring the best photos and videos of birdlife. The winning images, chosen from thousands of entries, capture a dazzling array of bird species and behaviors. They also illustrate the essential relationship between birds and the habitats they need to thrive.

This year, the Audubon Photography Awards will offer new sets of prizes for entrants on two continents—spanning, just as birds do, vibrant cultures and vital ecosystems across the Western Hemisphere. Entrants from the United States and Canada, and from Chile and Colombia, will each be eligible for cash prizes and a chance to have their images featured in Audubon magazine. Explore the information below to learn about the contest for U.S. and Canada residents. With the addition of Birds Without Borders and Conservation Prizes, we're showcasing not only how birds connect us, but also how photography inspires action to protect them. [Click Here](#) for more info regarding rules and how to enter.

### Entry Period

The contest is open to photography and video submissions until March 5, 2025 at 11:00 AM CST.

### Entry Fee

The entry fee is \$15 per image or video for individuals in the U.S. and Canada (excluding Quebec). No payment is required for submissions to the Youth division for entrants who are 13 to 17 years of age.

### The 2025 [contest prizes](#) are:

- Grand Prize: \$5,000 USD
- Video Prize: \$2,500 USD
- Female Bird Prize: \$1,500 USD
- Plants for Birds Prize: \$1,500 USD
- Birds Without Borders Prize: \$1,500 USD
- Birds in Landscapes Prize: \$1,500 USD
- Conservation Prize: \$1,500 USD
- Youth Prize: Six days at Hog Island Audubon Camp for Teens during the 2026 season

# Winter Birding is a Real Thing

By Janice Bain



Napping Mallards with a Common Goldeneye.

Birding doesn't have to be just a warm weather activity. Bundle-up and search for the varied ducks that love our open lakes. Winter birding in Wisconsin is not complete without a trip to Lake Michigan. Cities on the shores of Lake Michigan like Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Port Washington and Sheboygan are chock full of ducks all winter long.

Here is a smattering of photos taken after an hour spent at the Kenosha beach this January. Our target duck was the harlequin, sadly, we were a bit early for its daytime return and also missed the ruddy ducks that have been frequenting the area.



Redhead (Male and Female)



Greater Scaup (Male)



Red-breasted Merganser (Male)



Red-breasted Merganser (Female)



Bufflehead (Female)

# Field Trip

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Noon)

Conference Point – 300 Conference Point Road, Williams Bay, WI

Free and open to the public!

Join us on a visit to Geneva Lake as we search for wintering Waterfowl. We will walk the shore path to Conference Point from Edgewater Park on E Geneva Street. Meet at the park just prior to 9:00 AM.

Locate this birding hotspot by clicking/taping the link below.

[\*\*Conference Point - Geneva Lake\*\*](#)

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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### **Field Trips**

(Volunteer Needed)

### **Publicity**

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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.