

LAKELAND AUDUBON SOCIETY



The Chat



September 2026

CHAPTER MEETING

Tuesday, September 22

7:00 PM

Lions Field House

270 Elkhorn Road (Highway 67), Williams Bay, WI

Free and open to the public!

The Great Blue Heron; Its Life History, Research, and Management

By Bill Volkert



Great Blue Heron, Photo provided by Bill Volkert

Bill conducted numerous studies of the great blue heron during more than 20 years of field work. He surveyed nesting colonies across southern Wisconsin and provided management recommendations for several rookery sites. In his travels he has sighted many of the world's species of herons and egrets and this program will explore a variety of the species found throughout the world. We will then delve into the habits and ecology of the great blue heron. This program will explore its nesting habits and demonstrate how surveys of annual nesting success are conducted. Additionally, there will be several examples of rookery management projects that Bill conducted over the years in Wisconsin.

About the Speaker

Bill worked as the naturalist and wildlife educator for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at Horicon Marsh for 27 years, where he conducted more than 3,700 education programs for over 220,000 people. His broad audiences included professional training for 66 delegations of scientists from 43 countries. He has worked professionally in 5 foreign countries and throughout his career has presented well over 4,000 public programs.

Continued on the next page.



In his personal time, he has traveled widely in search of the world's birds and the wild places they inhabit. His adventures have taken him to nearly 50 countries, traveling throughout Central and South America, across the Canadian Arctic, to Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and Mongolia. From September 2014 to April 2015, Bill and his wife Connie took a seven-and-a-half-month around the world birding trip and in 2025 and 2026 they traveled for more than four months to Indonesia, Philippines, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and northeast India to explore remote locations in search of endemic birds.

Bill has been watching and studying birds for over 50 years and in his travels has sighted more than 4,900 species. To facilitate his studies, he is also a federally licensed master bird bander, with the Bird Banding Laboratory of the U.S. Geological Survey.

His work experience includes assisting the Russian Natural Resources Agency (formerly Goscomecologia, Buryatia) and the Russian Academy of Sciences to further protection of Lake Baikal in Siberia, Russia. From 1991 to 2004 he made 8 trips to the Republic of Buryatia to work on various projects in the Lake Baikal area and two trips to Mongolia to focus efforts on the Selenga River watershed, the largest river flowing into Lake Baikal. Since 2002, he has worked with ornithologists and conservationists in Nicaragua to develop a National Bird Conservation Education Plan and establish a national strategy for protecting Nicaragua's threatened and endangered birds. He has made 20 trips to Nicaragua and continues to support various bird conservation projects in the country. He and his wife Connie also lead birding tours to Nicaragua.

Bill and Connie make their home in the northern Kettle Moraine area of east-central Wisconsin. Here they work together to restore and manage a series of native plant communities on their land, including an oak-hickory forest, a planted prairie community and native plant nursery, and manage various types of wetlands. On this land, they have now identified more than 750 species of plants and animals, including 211 species of birds. Bill shares his experiences and understanding of the natural world through lectures, presentations, field trips, and the media. He has been a regular guest on Wisconsin Public Radio for more than 30 years with over 200 appearances as Wisconsin's bird expert. He has written 5 books and published numerous papers and is working on several new writing projects that will give these presentations more permanence and reach an even wider public.

Lakeland Audubon donates a Kestrel Nest Box

Earlier this summer, our organization took another step forward with starting its Kestrel Nest Box Monitoring Program. With the volunteer efforts of chapter president Kevin Dickey and Larry Happ of the Hillmoor Commission, a nest box was installed at Hillmoor Trails Park in Lake Geneva. Thankfully the process of putting up the box went smoothly. A big "Thank You" goes out to the Lake Geneva Parks Department for installing the base post for the tower.



ONE ROTTEN LOG. ONE SMALL HOLE.

She does the rest of the work.

1. FIND THE LOG —
Birch, aspen, willow.

Bark firm, heartwood soft.



2. DRILL ONE
HOLE — 1 1/8 inch.
Two inches from the top.



3. LEAVE THE ROT —
She finishes the cavity herself.



Fresh wood chips below = she moved in.

LAKELAND AUDUBON'S 2026 BIRD SEED SALE

Our chapter's annual fundraiser has begun

Help the birds and support your local audubon chapter!

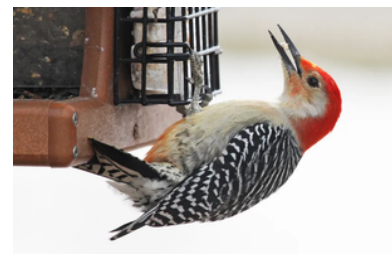
Accepting orders until Thursday, October 15, 2026

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

We ask for your generosity and support at this time. Your patronage will certainly be appreciated. The birds will thank you and so will we. Please see the order form for more details. To download a copy, just click or tap on the following link: [BIRD SEED SALE ORDER FORM \(2026\)](#)

(If you mail your order form prior to 10/15/2026 we will receive it on time)

New this year: "Place your order online"
It's quick, easy, and you save on postage!
Click on the button to the right to get started.



LAKELAND AUDUBON BIRD SEED SALE

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, bluejays, 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.

NYJER

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 SHELLED PEANUTS

A high-protein, oil-rich food for birds and other wildlife. Bluejays, 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 24th
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

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

2026 ORDER FORM

PLEASE SEND ORDERS BY: Thursday, October 15th

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

# Bags	Item	Size	Price	Total
	LAKELAND AUDUBON MIX	50 lbs.	\$30.00	
	LAKELAND AUDUBON MIX	25 lbs.	\$17.00	
	BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER	50 lbs.	\$40.00	
	BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER	25 lbs.	\$22.00	
	STRIPED SUNFLOWER	40 lbs.	\$34.00	
	STRIPED SUNFLOWER	20 lbs.	\$17.00	
	SUNFLOWER MEATS	25 lbs.	\$43.00	
	SUNFLOWER MEATS	10 lbs.	\$18.00	
	NYJER (Thistle)	20 lbs.	\$38.00	
	NYJER (Thistle)	10 lbs.	\$20.00	
	WHITE MILLET	50 lbs.	\$28.00	
	SUET CAKES (High Energy)	12 Pack	\$18.00	
	CRACKED CORN	50 lbs.	\$17.00	
	SAFFLOWER	50 lbs.	\$70.00	
	SHELLED PEANUTS	50 lbs.	\$72.00	
	SHELLED PEANUTS	10 lbs.	\$18.00	
	IN-SHELL PEANUTS	25 lbs.	\$45.00	
	DONATION	ANY	\$	

TOTAL _____

Make checks payable to:

Lakeland Audubon Society

(Orders are due by October 15th)

Mail To: Lakeland Audubon Society

P.O. Box 473

Elkhorn, WI 53121

The background image shows a robin on the left, holding a large earthworm in its beak. To its right, two dead birds are lying on the ground. In the upper left corner, a white spray bottle with a red trigger is visible. The scene is set outdoors on a patch of dirt and grass.

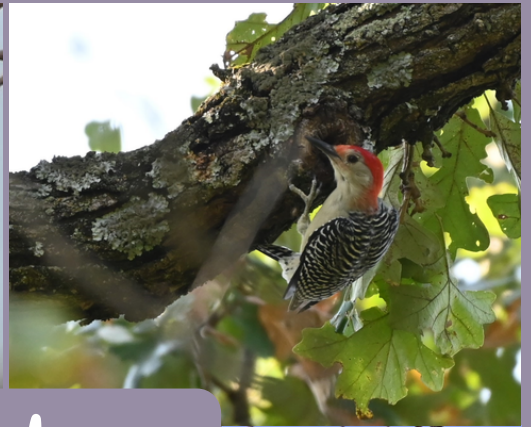
DID YOU KNOW?

Pesticides don't just kill pests...
they move through the food chain.

cultivatinggreenspaces

A worm eats it.
A bird eats the worm.
And the damage continues.

 **Use less. Choose safer. Let nature work.**
Your yard isn't just yours... it's their home too.



Nature Through a Lens

Photos by Janis Bain





Hackberry

Strawberry Bush

Florida Dogwood

Winterberry

American Bittersweet

Nannyberry

Pokeweed

Viburnum

Inkberry

Serviceberry

Chokeberry

Sweet Crabapple

Elderberry

American Beautyberry

Native Buckthorn

American Holly

Thank You for Native Berries

They help the birds get through the winter.

Field Trip

Tuesday, October 13, 2026

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Richard Bong State Recreation Area – 26313 Burlington Road, Kansasville, WI

Open to the public! (State Park Sticker Required)



Join us for an afternoon of birding at **Bong SRA**. We will go hiking and conduct stationary bird scanning at one of the state's top bird-watching locations. Situated in the northwest corner of Kenosha County, the property has an interesting history and is a major destination for outdoor recreation. It has been officially recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by both the Audubon Society and the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership. For more information about this, visit the following website: [Wisconsinbirds/IBA](https://wisconsinbirds.org/IBA). Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center parking lot. From there, we will proceed to various birding hotspots throughout the property.

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)

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Aleata Evans

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.