



Birds to Live By – The Newsletter of the Northeast Wisconsin Bird Club

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May/ June 2010: Volume 9 Issue 3

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❖ Meeting Notes

Our most recent meeting was held on May 1st at the Rural, WI “Crystal River B& B “. Robert, a gracious host, gave the 13 club members in attendance a tour. A few species of birds were added to the property list and a number of members marked the first Baltimore oriole of their season. Overall, not many species were seen perhaps due to the early May date. The property owners are in the midst of positive landscape updates that will add more variety to their wildlife habitat. Some members returned later in the month and were fortunate to see Vesper sparrows in the process of nest building.

❖ It's not that we don't like Mosquito Hill Nature Center...

It's just fun to meet at other locations sometimes! The June meeting, will be held on **June 5th**, at another special location: **Wild Ones Nature Center**. From Highway 41, exit at Prospect Ave/ Cty Rd. BB and head east. Turn right/south onto Northern Road, and travel to Stroebe Road. Turn left/east onto Stroebe Road (between the two Great Northern Corp. buildings). After crossing the railroad tracks, turn right/ south onto W. Butte des Morts Beach Road. It's the first house on the left (#2285). For the technologically-inclined, you can plug The WILD Center's address of 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Road, Neenah into your GPS system. The Plan: bird watching starting at 7:00 am and official meeting at 10:00 am at the building.

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NOTE! We have **no July meeting**. But we will be having a group outing. See the field trip section for more information on our July 17th trip!

August again takes us to a new location...a mobile one! Birding by Beer adds another B to it this year. We will be **Birding by Beer by Boat** on the *Lady of the Lakes*, a custom-built 54' yacht that cruises 11 lakes on the Waupaca chain o'lakes (go to www.clearwaterharbor.com for more information). We meet at Clear Water Harbor boat dock, N2757 Cty. Hwy. QQ, in King (which is also Waupaca) at 10:45am. Boarding the yacht starts at 11am and we'll cruise the lakes until 2pm. Free parking is in parking Lot #2, directly across the street from Clear Water Harbor, and Lot #3 located two blocks east. **Please do NOT park in the restaurant parking lot, Lot #1, as there is an extra charge if you do.**

Directions to Clear Water Harbor: Take Hwy. 10 to Waupaca and exit at the last Waupaca exit, Hwy. 54 West. Turn left/west and at the one and only stop light, turn left on QQ. Drive until you get to Clear Water Harbor on the right and Lot #2 on the left. As always, this is a pot-luck and BYOB. Cold foods will be best as there is no source of electricity for us on the yacht. The cost per person will be around \$20. We will divide the total cost among the attendees. To cut your costs, bring a couple of friends. The boat is costing us \$450 rental and \$50 for food set-up plus tax. Don't be fooled! As fantastic as the *Lady of the Lakes* is, even she cannot access the Upper Chain; You will need to come on the July 17 field trip to do that!

The off-site meeting pattern continues in September when we'll meet at **Cabin on the Creek in Fremont on Sept. 11**. (NOTE! Meeting will be held on the second weekend in the month due to the Labor Day holiday.)

❖ Upcoming NWBC Field Trips

June – CANCELLED. We'll try again next year to tour the Kaytee Factory.

July 17th - We will paddle the Upper Chain outside Waupaca. Three of the lakes are part of Hartman Creek State Park, therefore, not developed on all sides. We will meet at the entrance to Hartman Creek State Park at 8am and drive together over to the Knight Lake access to put in. If you don't have a state park entrance sticker, you can stop before you reach the entrance and we'll pick you up. Call Carol when you get there at 715-281-5566. At

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Whispering Pines, we can get out of our canoe/kayak to swim, use the restroom or just enjoy the sunshine. After we finish paddling, we can find lunch in several different special spots in King.

Directions to the park: Take Hwy. 10 to Waupaca, exit at Hwy. 54 West (the last Waupaca exit). Turn left at the bottom of the ramp; drive about 6 miles and watch for the sign indicating Hartman Creek State Park. Turn left on Hartman Creek Road, drive until you reach the park entrance.

❖ **Field Trip Reports**

Baraboo Hills and the International Crane Foundation – What a fun day! The weather tried to scare us away but to no avail. We saw all 15 species of the world's cranes, though some tried to play shy. Other's just wanted to dance (with Todd!). After the Crane Foundation, our group of 4 cars and 9 people drove to Baxter's Hollow. Not many species sighted but it was neat to see their rebuilding progress after last year's washout. Most members continued over to Milwaukee and the County Zoo for an evening speaker.

❖ **Birding Festivals, WSO Convention Reports**

Horicon Marsh Bird Festival May 7-10: The Horicon Marsh Bird Festival was a success despite the cold and blustery weather that befell Horicon, WI over Mother's Day weekend 2010. Featured speaker, Stan Tekiela humored the gathered birders by discussing the odd things he ponders and how we need to appreciate even our most common birds. For example, we really should put our welcoming arms around our equally native avian brothers –the House Sparrow and European starling! And really, aren't grackles some of the smartest birds? – They are only looking for the best quality seeds when they clear out your bird feeder (to the elated squirrel below!). Horicon Marsh biologist Bill Volkert, presented informative sessions on shorebird and wood warbler identification. He was also able to band near 100 birds on the cold and damp Saturday morning. Many unusual species were spotted on the marsh including whooping cranes, glossy ibis, and assorted warblers and sparrows.

Chequamegon Birding and Nature Fest May 21-23: from the perspective of Todd Ward. The Chequamegon Bay Bird and Nature Festival

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was very enjoyable and I personally will attend it again. There were a total of 20 NWBC members who partook in the nearly 120 field trips and activities that were offered. The heart of the event was the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center and Headquarters. Some of the locations we visited were the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Copper Falls State Park, and the Chequamegon National Forest. As a group, 148 species of birds were sighted with highlights including an American avocet, Hudsonian godwit, Bonapart gulls, broad-winged hawks, 15 sandpiper species and 22 warbler species including black-throated blue, blackpoll, Canada and pine. There were also sightings from our group of black bears and a bobcat! Many frog species were heard and sometimes seen and the area was full of Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterflies and many dragonflies. There were too many good birding locations to see in one weekend. If you plan to visit the next Bird and Nature Festival there is a fee to attend but it's worth every penny if you want to learn the area. In the greater Ashland area there are many opportunities for lodging and /or camping locations. Be prepared to drive some long distances and wear your good hiking shoes.

WSO Convention May 20-23: Held at the Crossroads at Big Creek Nature Center in Sturgeon Bay, a number of speakers and field trips were available to birders from around the state. Friday evening kicked off with two speakers: Kathleen Harris and Bill Mueller. After the Saturday morning field trip, four speakers filled the afternoon. Alex Stark, a recent UW-Platteville graduate, presented his work on the foraging habits of horned larks, Lapland longspurs, and snow buntings in southwestern Wisconsin. Coggin Heeringa, educator at the host nature center, shared how they have successfully exposed school children to birds, a difficult task considering the reduced accessibility of hands-on birds. Next, Mike Grimm of the Nature Conservancy, talked about the Mink River habitat of Door County. Lastly, Andy Paulios of the Wisconsin DNR urged full life-cycle conservation of our migratory birds not only in Wisconsin but also in their wintering grounds of central/south America. The evening awards banquet and program was kicked off by Carl Schwartz who informed all attendees of the Bird City Wisconsin program. Tom Schultz, of Green Lake, was announced as the next president. The final seminar of the

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convention was given by Roy and Charlotte Lukas. They made a pictorial presentation of the great birds of Door County. The convention concluded on Sunday with more optional field trips.

❖ **Bird City Wisconsin Project**

Together with the City of New London, Mosquito Hill naturalists are compiling an application to the **Bird City Wisconsin Program**. Championed by WI Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI), the WI Ornithological Society (WSO), the Natural Resource Foundation of WI, the WI Audubon Council, and the Madison and Milwaukee Audubon Societies this program is similar to the Tree City program yet with an avian focus. Being on the shores of the Wolf River and as a 17-year “Tree City”, New London is a prime candidate to become a bird city. The Club and Mosquito Hill Nature Center will be resources to the City as this designation comes to fruition. To learn more about this program and our future activities as a Bird City, check out the website www.birdcitywisconsin.org.

❖ **Schedule of Future Meetings, Events and Field Trips**

June 5th – **Birding at The Wild Center** 7:00 am; **NWBC Meeting** 10:00 am

June 5th – WI Society for Ornithology Field Trip. Bird the **Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest**. Meet at 6:30 am at the Mauthe Lake Recreation Area in the first large parking area, beyond the ticket booth, on the main road to the beach/picnic area. Please note that there is a **state park entrance fee**. Bring good walking shoes, because there will quite a lot of hiking, though leisurely. Most trails are well groomed. This trip often nears 100 species for the day. Bring a bag lunch.

June 19th – NWBC Field Trip – Ledgeview Nature Center and Kaytee Factory Tour-- **CANCELLED!**

July 4th – 2:00 – 5:00pm. Concert: “Lil’ Rev” at the Crystal River B & B Granary.

July 17th – NWBC Field Trip – **Hartman Creek Canoe/Kayak Trip**. See article above. This is an awesome chance to get up close and person with the Upper

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Chain O'Lakes. You must bring your own boat. Trip Leader: Carol (elvink@waupacaonline.net) or call her at 715-281-5566.

August 7th – NWBC Floating Meeting – *Lady of the Lakes* yacht. See article above. Meet at 10:45 am at the Clear Water harbor dock (N2757 Cty. Hwy. QQ, King). This is a BYOB and cold food potluck. We'll cruise until 2pm. Cost is expected to be ~\$20.00 (but depends on the number of attendees) .

August 22nd – WSO Field Trip to **Horicon Marsh Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge**. Meet at 8:00 am along Hwy. 49, on the north end of Horicon Marsh. Bird the areas around the marsh that harbor some of the best birds or have the most variety of birds during this time of year. You can expect to find a variety of shorebirds and water birds, as well as resident and early migrant passerines.