



The Audubon Outlook

Newsletter of the Lake County Audubon Society

Vol. 32, No. 1 Audbirds@aol.com 847-362-5134 Feb/Mar2007

<http://w.w.w.lakecountyaudubon.org>

General Meeting: Feb. 5, 2007

Birds of Hawaii

Presented by

Darlene Fiske

7:30 pm

**Libertyville Village Hall
Second Floor Meeting Room
118 W. Cook**

The presentation will relate Darlene and husband Ken's 28 years of bird census work and will mainly center on the birds /common and unusual/ of Hawaii and where they're found. She was vice president of Illinois Audubon Society for 12 years, founder of the McHenry County Chapter of the IAS and served for 10 years as a member of the state Endangered Species Protection Board. She is a life member of Illinois Audubon Society, Hawaii Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy. Ken and Darlene worked as volunteers for the Nature Conservancy and the Fish & Wildlife Service in Hawaii. In 1987 they were chosen Volunteers of the Year by Nature Conservancy of Hawaii for their work there.

General Meeting: March 5, 2007

Sharpen Your Birding Skills with

Tips from an Expert

Presented by

Donald Dann

Bird Conservation Network

Donald Dann will give a talk and slide show geared toward those who are interested in learning how to participate in one of the nation's top outdoor activities, bird watching. He will cover such subjects as identifying birds by shape, field mark, and call. Tips will apply to beginners as well as those seeking to sharpen their skills. Mr. Dann has a wide range of experience as a naturalist, educator, and bird walk leader and has served on the boards of a variety of

environmental organizations such as the Bird Conservation Network, American Birding Association, Bird Conservation Network, and the Birders' Exchange.

Upcoming Meetings: Program

Schedule for 2007

April 2 – Migratory Bird Rescue and Protection with Annette Prince, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors

May 7 – Volo Bog with Stacey Iwanicki, Naturalist, Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources

The Tenth Annual Great Backyard Bird Count, February 16-19, 2007.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all levels in counting birds and reporting their results to create a mid-winter snapshot of the numbers, kinds, and distribution of birds across the continent. Participants count birds for as little or as long as they wish during the four-day period and tally the highest number of birds of each species that they see at any one time. At the Great Backyard Bird Count web site (<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>), they fill out an online checklist to submit their counts. The Great Backyard Bird Count is managed by the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology** and **Audubon**, with sponsorship from **Wild Birds Unlimited**. In 2005, participants sent in 51,926 checklists with a total tally of 6,546,606 birds of 613 species. Information and the data form are also available on the LCAS website at <http://www.lakecountyaudubon.org/>.

How to Participate

* **Count the birds** in your backyard, local park, or other natural area on one or all four count days. You can count in as many different locations as you wish, just make sure to keep separate records and fill out a checklist for each area.

* **Watch the birds** for at least 15 minutes on each day that you participate. We recommend watching for a half-hour or more, so that you'll have a good sense of what birds are in your area.

* **How to count:** Your data will be used by scientists to analyze bird populations, so it is very important that everyone count their birds in exactly the same way

* For each kind (species) of bird that you see, keep track of the *highest number of individuals* that you observe at any one time. Be careful not to count the same bird over and over! If you record only the highest number of individual birds that you see in view at one time, you're sure to never count the same bird more than once!

* At the end of the day go to "**Submit your bird checklist**" on the GBBC web site. Fill out the questions about your location, local habitat, and count duration. Then enter your high counts for each species sighted on that day and location. You can submit one bird checklist for each day that you count or for each new area that you count in.

* **Problems getting access to the Internet?** Many libraries, schools, bird clubs (including LCAS), and other community-based groups will be helping, too.

* If you are unable to access the Internet, you can download a data form and send it into the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

* **Finally**, after you've submitted your data, explore the birdsource.org/gbbc web site. Check our results section to see other reports from your community, and watch as data come in from other areas. Have a look through our other pages, and find out other ways you can help birds. Enjoy!

Nest Box Cleaning

Question Box by Kevin Cook, Bird Watchers Digest, Vol. 28, No. 5, January/February 2006

Many cavity nesters will reuse nests in the same breeding season but insist on making new nests in the following breeding seasons. Other cavity nesters use the same nest cavities in successive years. European starlings and house sparrows use old nests, sometimes by adding new material to the old, sometimes by building whole new nests and sometimes by removing unwanted material to free up

enough space to build anew. Both tree and violet-green swallows will use the same cavities for several successive years. Some open nesters- brown-capped rosy finches, house finches- will roost through winter nights inside nest boxes.

Conventional wisdom recommends removing old nests to minimize problems associated with parasitic insects and mites that thrive in soiled nesting material. Parallel wisdom suggests leaving used nests through the winter as roosting cover, then removing them before nesting activity commences in spring. If you don't clean the nest box, it will accumulate enough materials to discourage further use by all but the wasps, spiders and elm leaf beetles.

ASK AUDUBON

(Audubon Newswire, National Audubon Society, Vol. 4, No. 14, 9/14/06)

"Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury -- is this something we need to be concerned about?"

There is a small amount of mercury in compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). It is a concern because mercury is a persistent bioaccumulative toxin (PBT) that does not break down and remains in the environment indefinitely. Should we still use CFLs? Yes. Studies have shown that the amount of mercury contained in a CFL is less than the amount of mercury released by coal burning power plants when powering an incandescent light bulb. CFLs last from 8 to 10 times longer, use about 75 percent less energy, and produce 90 percent less heat while delivering more light per watt. An important aspect of the lower power requirements of CFLs is less use of fossil fuel. Replacing a single incandescent bulb with a CFL will keep at least a half-ton of CO₂ out of the atmosphere over the life of the bulb (two to three years), which will help to slow global warming. In addition to doing something positive for the environment, you will save money on your electric bill.

At the end of the lifespan of the CFL, proper disposal is important. The Solid Waste Agency of Lake

County conducts regular household chemical waste collections at locations around Lake County. In addition to accepting a variety of hazardous materials from residents' homes, they collect all types of fluorescent bulbs...4ft, 8ft, U-Shape and the new CFL's....but only from residential sources! Consult their website for materials accepted, dates, times, and locations: <http://www.swalco.org>

LCAS Board Members Promote Environmental Leadership

On Tuesday, December 5, board members of the Lake County Audubon Society visited with Congressman Mark Kirk's environmental liaison, Ed Kelly, to express to the congressman the following interests and concerns:

- 1) Thanked the Congressman for his environmental leadership this year and particularly for helping to secure funding for the Waukegan Harbor cleanup and acting as primary co-sponsor of the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act into law, a bill for funding conservation and restoration of fish and wildlife habitats in the Great Lakes.
- 2) Expressed concerns that EPA funds for completing the second fish barricade in the Illinois River have been delayed. This is relevant because there is a great potential for and danger of the Asian carp finding entry into Lake Michigan and destroying its existing food chains with its voracious appetite.
- 3) We have continued safety and environmental concerns regarding the establishment of Coast Guard target practice zones in the Great Lakes.
- 4) We are investigating the establishment in Lake County of additional IBA's (Important Bird Areas) for the protection of bird habitat and restoration.

Those attending the meeting were: Paul & Chris Geiselhart, Frank Underbrink, Diane Rosenberg and Karen Orenstein, National Outreach Coordinator, National Audubon Society, Washington, D.C.

Upper Midwest Audubon 2006 Conference

“No Bird Left behind” was the theme of the first day of the conference held October 13-15, 2006 at the Ho-Chunk Conference Center at the Wisconsin Dells. The purpose of these conference sessions was to create awareness and increase knowledge of the problems migratory birds face from tall structures such as buildings, communication towers, wind energy generators and electric lines. The excellent panels, power point presentations and illustrated lectures provided understanding of restrictions on the owners and operators of such structures which threaten birds, especially during their migrations, to bring interested parties together to discuss the problems and to open lines of communication and foster cooperation to help alleviate the problems.

Noel Cutright from the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology and the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, gave a presentation entitled “A Bird’s-eye View of Hazards of Migration, dealing with the different migration strategies used by birds and why they were used was of particular interest. All tall structures put up by man will kill some birds but communication towers, power lines and tall buildings now rank with feral cats, trucks and windows as top killers of migratory birds. The long wires anchoring TV towers to the ground are especially fatal to birds. At one such site in Wisconsin 400 birds were killed in just one night.

At present, 1/3 of all bird species have declining, increasing or stable populations. But global warming and climate changes are having great impact upon the U.S. ecosystems along with the loss of and fragmentation of bird habitats. Grassland birds with their nests on the ground are especially in decline.

Numerous workshops dealt with other problems and especially opportunities for local chapters and their members to become involved with various programs to help bird populations. John Flicker, President of the National Audubon Society, encouraged chapters to get members to write articles for local newspapers on a regular basis as a very important stem in focusing people’s attention on environmental issues and what needs to be done as well as attracting new members to our chapters. Minnesota will host the next Upper Midwest Audubon Conference in the fall of 2007.

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Welcome New Members! (Sep-Oct) 45

Arabella Amdulski	Eric Tetens
Ben+Jeanette Beavers	Barbara Wiggins
Laurene Becker	G. Wilkening
Michael Biddle	Sarah and Phil Anderson
Leida Bougeois	Eileen Johnson
John Cameron	Linnea Anderson
Phyllis Carlson	Nicholas Ingleby
Harry Davis	Ruth Larkin
Kathryn Engelstad	Kathy Miller
Jack Fillipp	Kathleen Reilly
Betsy Ginsburg	Harrold Richman
Peter Heitman	Joyce Sween
G.D. Hollenhorst	Harvey Wales
Joyce Jessen	Dorien Zaricor
Helen Kolar	
Seymour Lieberman	
Jennifer Luhmann	
Marjorie Marcysiak	
Ruth McCullough	
Adrienne Michaels	
Gary Morris	TRANSFERS
Zoran Penter	Phillip Hanson
Deanne Stacey	Adrian Lorentson
Doreen Stodola	Edalin Michael
Gay and Robert Sven	Sheila Quinn
Ray Tasker	Jerome Wieland

9 Ways to Become a Better Birder

excerpted from Pete Dunne, Birder's World, Oct. 2006

1. Don't just go birding. Learn the birds.
2. Use good equipment. If you want to enjoy empathetic accord with your field guides, you want to be able to see in the field what the artists and authors illustrate and describe.
3. To be a good birder you have to go birding a lot.
4. Get to know what good is. Bird with better birders.
5. But go birding by yourself too. Don't just let the expert do the birding for you.
6. Learn from your mistakes. When you misidentify a bird, learn the reason why.
7. Start young.
8. Read everything. A good birder is an informed birder.
9. Have fun. The best birders have never lost the sense of fun and joy they experienced the first time they watched birds.