



The HERON

Bimonthly Newsletter of the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Saturday, November 12, 2011

10–11 am, Theisen Middle School Auditorium

A FAMILY PROGRAM

Seed Dispersal – Plants That Walk, Fly, Swim, Explode, Hitchhike, and Burrow

Speaker: Michael Yanny, Plant Propagator at Johnson's Nursery

Come and find out how animals, water, and wind help plant seeds travel.

See how hickory nuts are cracked, and have a taste.

Children will receive some seeds to take home and plant.



Wednesday, December 14, 2011

7 pm, Moraine Park Technical College, Room O-102

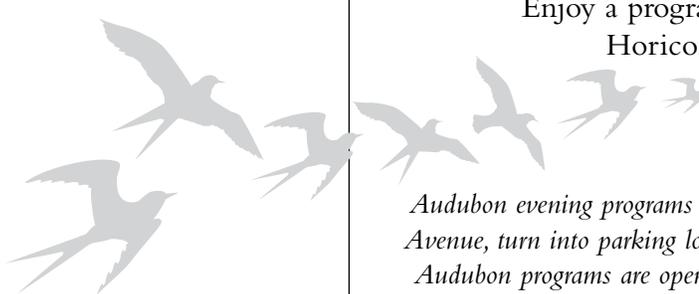
Birding Horicon Marsh

*Speaker: Erin Railsback, Visitor Services Manager
at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge*

Enjoy a program on migratory bird species that use the
Horicon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank You!

Thank you to
Jane Dennis and Diana Beck
for refreshments at the
October meeting.



Audubon evening programs take place at Moraine Park Technical College. From National Avenue, turn into parking lot O. Enter the door labeled O-1. Classrooms are on your left. Audubon programs are open to the public with no admission charge. Adults, families, and young people with an interest in environmental issues are encouraged to attend.

Visit Us On the Web: www.fdlaudubon.org



THE HERON

Ken Fisher Retires as Audubon Treasurer

A Note from Ken Fisher

After thirteen years as Fond du Lac County Audubon's Treasurer, it is time for me to pass this office along. Our Audubon Society is lucky to have a fine person, Mike Sweney, take the job. Because of his efforts, the change has been made very easy and he will be great in this position. I will miss the camaraderie of all the members – that's how it started – as members, then we became friends. Thank you for all your cooperation. I'm resigning as Treasurer but NOT as a member of Audubon. Thank you all.

A Note from Mike Sweney

Hi! I'm Mike Sweney and I have accepted the Board's appointment to help with the Treasurer position until the next election. My strengths – a farm background, about forty years teaching science, and twenty years experience maintaining my property as it transitions to an eleven acre nature preserve (a few tons of bird seed have been scattered). Volunteering with the Fond du Lac Chapter is a great fit as one of my post-retirement activities. I look forward to activities with the Audubon community.

A Final Note from the Audubon Chapter

A special thanks to Ken Fisher for his 15 years of service as Treasurer. Everyone would agree that he did an outstanding job and also ran a great bird seed sale.



Report on Saw-Whet Owl Festival

Audubon members who went to the Saw-Whet Owl festival at Woodland Dunes, Two Rivers, did not see any saw-whets because of strong winds the night before when owls are mist netted. However, they listened to a wildlife rehabilitator from WOW (Wildlife of Wisconsin). The reluctant horned owl was part of that demonstration. (Photo by Amy Sheldon). Those who would like to see a saw-whet banding and release can arrive at Woodland Dunes from daybreak to 8 am during the migration season (October through November 19) on mornings after a calm and rain-free night.



Mike Sweney – our new hardworking Treasurer, helping with buckthorn removal on the Peebles Trail.



Top photo: outgoing Treasurer Ken Fisher with his wife Bev after a canoe outing. Bottom photo: A large visitor landing on Ken's bird feeder at the Fisher cottage.

What is the Christmas Bird Count?

Citizen science in action will take place with the 112th Christmas Bird Count from December 14 through January 5. Tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. Families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides and checklists go out on an annual mission. For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house.

Each of the citizen scientists who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations – and to help guide conservation action.

From feeder-watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition – and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.

The data collected by observers over the past century allow researchers, conservation biologists, and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years.

The long term perspective informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues. For example, local trends in bird populations can indicate habitat fragmentation or signal an immediate environmental threat, such as groundwater contamination or poisoning from improper use of pesticides.

There is a specific methodology to the CBC, but everyone can participate. The count takes place within "Count Circles," which focus on specific geographical areas. Each circle is led by a Count Compiler. Therefore, if you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher.

Contact Dave Sehloff to participate: 602-1649.

Info from <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>

AUDUBON FIELD TRIP

Winter Adventure at Shaginappi

Saturday, December 17, 10 am – 1 pm

Shaginappi Park

Snow shoe, ski, or hike at this beautiful park just north of Fond du Lac. You can join in the Christmas bird count if interested. Enjoy hot chocolate in front of the Shaginappi Lodge fireplace afterwards.

At 10 am, meet at the Park 'n Ride at the junction of 151 and WH to form a car pool/caravan to the Shaginappi north parking lot off Velvet Beach Road. The parking lot is small, so there may not be room for many cars. Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars, and cameras. No need to sign up; just show up.

Fond du Lac County Audubon has been working on invasive species control at Shaginappi Park, and this is a chance to enjoy the park without pulling garlic mustard! Bring a camera in case the wind and ice have formed some fantastic sculptures along the peninsula that juts out into Lake Winnebago. See <http://www.fdlco.wi.gov/Index.aspx?page=397> for a description of Shaginappi County Park and a map of the 100 acres of wetlands, woods, prairie, and lakeshore. Facilitator: Diana Beck.

Help Stop Window-Strike Bird Deaths

When a bird strikes a window, it is usually fatal. The stunned bird is easy prey for predators. Many birds that fly away, have suffered head injuries that result in death a short time later. Decals and silhouettes on the glass, help but lack movement.

Carl Scholz reports that he has "developed a method of stringing feathers with monofilament line across windows or glass doors. . . . Only wild game or domestic fowl feathers should be used. The feathers flutter with very little air movement. Wildlife react to movement, shifting their focus from the distance they see through the window to the surface where the feather is moving."

Invitation to Audubon Board Meeting

The Audubon Board will meet on Wednesday, November 2, at 7 pm in the cafeteria at Moraine Park Technical College. The Board meetings are open for all members to attend.

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Fond du Lac, WI 54936-0084

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Submit articles for the Audubon newsletter
via e-mail to evelyn@mcleancowan.com

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

THE HERON

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M E M B E R S H I P

- Yes!** I want to become a member or renew my membership to the National Audubon Society, and the Fond du Lac County Chapter. The annual membership dues of \$40 entitle me to six issues of the Audubon magazine, and all local chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- I am only interested in being a member and supporting the programs of the Fond du Lac County Audubon. The annual local membership dues of \$20 entitle me to receive the chapter newsletter and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- I am a new member.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone Email

Mail this form with payment to:
Fond du Lac County Audubon, Membership Services
W4148 Kiekhaefer Parkway, Fond du Lac, WI 54937

Renew Your Audubon Membership

Support the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society by renewing through our local chapter. Please use the form at the left.

Help Remove Invasive Buckthorn

Buckthorn is one of the most invasive non-native plants in our area. It shades and crowds out native plants, creating a dense, dull monoculture with barren erosive soil beneath. Fall is the best time to target buckthorn for removal. Join the work parties to help restore the habitat along the Peebles Trail, 9 to 11 am on the following days: Saturday, November 5 and Friday, November 11. Meet by the trail bridge east of Prairie Road. Bring gardening gloves. Cancelled if raining. For more information, call 922-7931 or email dbeck7931@charter.net.

