



THE GOSS HAWK

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Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club

The Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club was founded to increase knowledge and appreciation of birds through education, research, preservation and conservation, and to provide public awareness of birds and their role in the environment - all of which remains our goal and purpose to this day.

Unless otherwise noted, events are held Retzer Nature Center, located about 4 miles west of Waukesha, near the end of Madison Street.

514 W28167 Madison St, Waukesha, WI



Last spring, our club took to the trail to raise funds for bird and habitat protection. Our birdathon effort was to Walk the Wauk along the Ice Age Trail and find all the birds we could, documenting them along the way. In the end we raised over \$1,300, half of which went to the Bird Protection fund with the other half coming back to the club for our own projects. And we couldn't have done it without the volunteers in the Ice Age Trail Alliance. The folks who build and maintain the Ice Age Trail truly do the rest of us a service. It's hard work, but very rewarding. And they're always looking for more help, so if you feel so inclined, check their calendar for work party events and join the crew!



Volunteers framing the boardwalk in the Eagle Segment near Low Prairie SNA and Brady's Rocks

THE YEAR OF THE BOARDWALKS with the Waukesha/Milwaukee Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance

This article from the Waukesha County Chapter of the IATA summarizes a weekend of work that took place on the Eagle Segment to replace aged and rotting boardwalks, improve foot paths, and improve the overall conditions.



Volunteers at Hartland showing off their completed work!

Trail Coordinator Pat Witkowski led the chapter to an eventful year in trail improvement. A total of 1,474 volunteer hours from 97 volunteers resulted in the creation of seven boardwalks this year in Waukesha County, culminating with the Mini Mobile Skills Crew Project October 26, 27, and 28. That project focused on three boardwalks; a 110' structure between Maple and Cottonwood Avenue in Hartland, and two in the Scuppernong Prairie in the Eagle Segment: a 197' structure and a 332' structure, all replacing dangerous, decaying boardwalks and puncheons and on the longest boardwalk, adding a flare out section midway through to meet American Disability Act standards. The Hartland project used frames and decking pre-constructed by the Arrowhead High School Manufacturing class. The Eagle project used frames build by the chapter earlier in the year and oak decking donated by Goehner Industries. In addition, two 110' boardwalks were installed between Wilton Road and N in May, and two Eagle Scout Projects resulted in a 36' boardwalk north of Wilton Road and a 71' structure in Evergreen Grove at Lapham Peak. Other Eagle Scout projects included two small bridges and boardwalk repairs and extensions in the

Hartland Marsh Loop. The high attendance at the MSC project also allowed us to tackle a few other jobs in the Brady's Rocks area. Extensive clearing created some amazing new views of the escarpment and skilled rock-work sculpted steps inviting hikers to this iconic area. Tread work was improved and 12 new signage posts were installed.

Chapter volunteers were instrumental in the functioning of base camp at Pinewoods, with help in the kitchen and additional support, along with plenty of baked goods for the crews. These projects were possible thanks to a summer's worth of prep work by Monday Mudders and Blazing Babes, clearing the most inhospitable hillside imaginable in Hartland, sculpting sustainable tread in a 45 degree cross slope and additional clearing in Eagle. Additional help was incurred from volunteers from REI, who took on the huge job of disassembling and removing two old puncheons, and from Dunlop-Walker Inc. and Kohl's Corporation, each of whom held small workdays to help in the effort.

Upcoming Club Events:

4/15 - Club Meeting

Presenter - Bill Volkert
Warbler Identification!

5/12- May Count

See the insert in this edition for the 2018 spring field trip schedule!



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Facebook

www.facebook.com/gossbirdclub

Take Five ... With Mary Korkor!



Mary has recently taken on the role of Program Director for our club. She's sure to do a great job, because she is thoughtful and has great passion for learning. She's fun loving and always up for an intense owling session or a relaxing sit down for a tasty beverage and a burger. Recently she took the time to answer a few questions about her birding life so we can get to know her even better.



What was your "spark" bird, and what about it caused the "spark"?

The Bluebird. I always loved birds and my grandmother encouraged me to put up houses as soon as we moved to this farm. She was walking with me as I installed them and as we walked away from the box we turned to see a pair of Bluebirds exploring it. I was hooked! Whenever I see a Bluebird I think of her.

What's the craziest bird you've found? Was it out of season or range, or doing something odd?

One of my favorite birds is the Three Wattled Bellbird in Central America. That bird is nuts! Not particularly colorful, but the wattles and the call are other worldly! Google it!

How did you come to join the Goss Bird Club?

I met Anne Moretti at Wild Birds Unlimited and she told me about it. I will be eternally grateful to Anne for opening up this world to me and mentoring me.

What is your most enjoyable birding memory?

The first time I saw a Pileated Woodpecker. I was visiting family in Florida and looked up a reserve where they were seen regularly. I remember holding my daughter's hand when I heard them. I didn't know to study their call, but instinctively knew it was the bird. I was so excited, I squeezed her hand hard and we ran in that direction. We still laugh at how hard I squeezed and how thrilled we were to see such a creature.

What other nature organizations do you belong to? Tell us a bit about them!

I currently serve as the Chair of Development for the WSO. It is such an important and vital organization in our state and community. The work that is done by the WSO is so under appreciated and acknowledged. I would love to open the eyes of all the birders in the state to the significant conservation, research and advocacy work the WSO does to protect birds and birders in Wisconsin.



*** REMINDER ***

MONDAY APRIL 9TH IS THE SPRING HEARING FOR THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS



In Wisconsin, we all have a say in how our natural resources are managed. Our voices can be heard this spring on **April 9th** when the Wisconsin Conservation Congress holds its annual spring hearings. While the WCC has a non-binding relationship with the DNR, citizens can vote on a variety of topics affecting our natural resources to make our voices heard. And as usually is the case, a few questions may pique the interest of birders.

Many nature lovers will give special attention to **question #45** on the survey. This question covers the topic of banning neonicotinoid insecticides on state agricultural and forest lands, and establish guidelines for commercial and private usage of these chemicals. These lethal insecticides are used to reduce pests on crops. The chemicals remain in the environment for a long time, however, and do not discriminate, having an effect all insects. This then affects birds and the ecosystem at large.

Other questions cover topics such as the use of climate research in decision making, increasing oversight for sensitive geological formations, and regulations for hunting and fishing. Citizens can even pose their own questions through an official process.

Regardless of your topic of choice, this is a great opportunity to make your voice heard on issues important to all nature lovers. The hearing in Waukesha County is at West High School, and it starts **promptly at 7:00!** Voters will not be admitted after that time, so get there early!

A Moment from the Archives with Goss Bird Club Historian Jennifer Tyskiewicz

1976... More Than Just the Country's Bicentennial Year for B.F. Goss Bird Club Members!

1976 was a special bicentennial year for our country, and an especially exciting year for our club members, as the annual Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's Convention was hosted in Waukesha from May 21-23 by our club!

Headquarters for the 3-day event was Carroll College, where attendees could stay right on campus in a dormitory, Kilgour Hall, for \$7.50 per person per night, with linens provided!

If dormitory lodging didn't meet your needs, there was a list provided in the mailing, suggesting 9 area motels and 5 campgrounds, touted to be within 20 minutes of the convention site. Most of the motels don't exist anymore, but older members may recall such intriguing names as The Airliner, The Algiers, Harold's Leilani, or Trails Inn Motel, with prices from a low of \$7.00 per night to a high of \$22.00 per night, double-occupancy!

Campgrounds listed were the county parks within the Waukesha County Park System, with a specific note that only tents would be allowed at Minooka Park, with no "campers or trailers permitted."

Included on the back side of the motel/campground list was a hand-drawn map showing how to get to Carroll College from the major highways of I-94, 18, 59 and County Roads F & A, (now Highway 164 and Les Paul Parkway), and a more specific map detailing the streets in the immediate area of the Carroll College District. No Google Maps (or any Google at all) in those days!

The invitation to attend the WSO convention was mailed out on April 3rd, and recipients were advised that, "this will be the only correspondence you will receive." The pre-registration form was to be mailed to the late Vern Aune, who was the chair of the B.F. Goss Bird Club Convention Committee.

The whole event kicked off on the evening of Friday, May 21 in the Shattuck Auditorium from 4:30-10:00 PM. Attendees were to register, feel free to browse the book store, and attend a coffee hour.

This was followed by a photographic tour by club members, Paul and Em Hoffman entitled, *National Wildlife Refuges*. The evening culminated with a film *Marsh Blackbirds* courtesy of Dr. Robert Nero, a Minnesota Wildlife Ecologist, and a former student of Aldo Leopold's.



Program pamphlet and bird house table decorations made by Goss Club members, and stamped with our club's name on the roof.

Field trips were scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, and were advertised as "covering all the habitats of southeastern Wisconsin":

- *Milwaukee beaches and the Schlitz Audubon Center
- *Stever's Golden Lake Woods, where Acadian Flycatchers and Cerulean Warblers could be found
- *Kettle Moraine State Forest for possible Brewster's and Hooded Warblers
- *Areas of original prairie and oak openings
- *Marshes including Vernon, Scuppernong, Beaver Dam, and Rome for Rails and Yellow-headed Blackbirds

For those conventioners not wishing to participate in the field trips, two work-

shops were offered: *Identification of Small Flycatchers by Sight, Sound, and Habitat* and *Care of Sick or Injured Birds*.

As if this wasn't enough already, "paper sessions" were scheduled for Saturday morning and evening! Paper sessions were prepared talks by various attendees, followed by a question and answer period. Topics included, *The Computerization of WSO Records*, *The Kirtland's Warbler in Wisconsin*, *Avian Sex: Questions You Dared Not Ask*, (members must have been a frisky bunch back then!) and *Recycling House Sparrows*. (Yikes! Not sure what that "paper" was about!) The Annual WSO Business Meeting followed the paper sessions.

The grand finale was, of course, the Saturday evening banquet. Recognizable names appeared on the program: Rev. Sam D. Robbins gave the Invocation, and special awards were presented by Dr. Fred Hamerstrom. The keynote speaker was the aforementioned Dr. Robert Nero, who spoke on *The Great Gray Owl*. See accompanying photo of the program pamphlet and table settings provided by club members.

The banquet menu was chilled tomato juice with lemon wedge, tossed salad, tenderloin tips over rice, broccoli-hollandaise, rolls and butter, apple pie, milk, tea or coffee....and there didn't appear to be any vegetarian or gluten-free offerings available!

The Badger Birder recently published a list of the sites of all WSO Conventions starting in 1939. I learned that our club hosted the conventions in Waukesha in 1948 and 1961, as well as the one in 1988 that our archives contain a lot of information about. Who knows what future "hostings" will take place in Waukesha, Wisconsin?

 Don't forget this year's convention takes place May 18-21 in Green Lake, WI. Registration is open now and lodging accommodations are going fast, so make your reservations today! This multi-day event is a great opportunity to mingle with like-minded folks and take in some of the states true birding gems. You don't want to miss it!

Visit www.wsobirds.org/annual-convention for details.

2018 marks an important juncture in the state wide avian survey project known as the **Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II**. Planned as a 5 year survey, the atlas is entering it's 4th year, and that means it's CRUNCH TIME. While one might think that since three out of five years are passed, there should be about 60% of the surveys complete, but that is far from true. We have not received nearly the amount of help we anticipated, so at this point in the project, we are well behind schedule, so we need YOUR HELP!

Our most crucial need this summer is for atlasers to deliberately bird in priority blocks that have not yet been covered. The best thing YOU can do is to take on a needy block, and bird that block until it meets completion criteria. What does this entail? Check with your county coordinator for the basic info. Tim Hahn is the coordinator in Waukesha. If you don't know who your coordinator is, he can point you to them. Email Tim at thahnbirder@gmail.com

You may feel you're not qualified or don't have time to join the project, but we can easily put your concerns at rest.

- **"I'm not qualified to submit sightings for a project of this scope."**
 - Yes you are! Everyone is qualified. Observe the birds you know and report your findings. All records are important.
- **"I'm not familiar with all of the warblers/shorebirds/gulls so I shouldn't participate."**
 - No need to panic - most shorebirds and gulls don't nest in Wisconsin. In most blocks, all birders will know enough species to be helpful. If you can document 5, 10, or 20 species, then more advanced birders can search out other species that are difficult to ID.
- **"I don't have time to atlas. It's a major commitment."**
 - While completing an atlas block does take some time (approx. 20+ hrs), any amount of time birding/surveying is helpful and counts towards reaching our goals. Five minutes here and 30 minutes there eventually add up to real time spent in the block!
- **"I don't use eBird, and data entry is boring."**
 - No worries. If you're not familiar with eBird, there are plenty of patient folks anxious to help out. And if you'd rather not enter the data at all, that's ok. Getting the data is the most important part. We can find folks to enter it later.
- **"The incomplete blocks are far away. I can't spend time traveling that far for birding."**
 - There are still blocks within a short drive that need help! Washington, Dodge, Jefferson, Racine, and Walworth Counties all have needy blocks. Send a message to a county coordinator (Tim Hahn is willing!) and they will point you to a place where you can help.
- **"It's too hot and buggy to go birding!"**
 - No it's not! Ok yes it is hot, but you can take shower when you get home. And mosquito bites are temporary and build character!
- **"I've never heard of this atlas project. I would help if I knew more."**
 - Where have you been?!? Just kidding... Check in with Tim Hahn or anyone else from the WBBA II team for information on how you can help. Or visit www.wsobirds.org/atlas for more info. But don't wait too long! Baby birds will be hopping out of their nests before you know it, and you don't want to miss out on the action!

IMPORTANT DATES FOR WBBA II

SEE TIM HAHN FOR DETAILS

- **APRIL 14 & 21 - ATLAS KICKOFF EVENTS IN WABASHA, MN & STURGEON BAY, WI**

EXPERIENCED BIOLOGISTS AND EXPERT ATLASERS WILL BE ON HAND TO GET YOU UP TO SPEED ON THE PROJECT AND POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

- **JUNE 22-24: BLOCK BUSTING IN MARINETTE COUNTY**

JOIN FELLOW BIRDERS IN MARINETTE COUNTY TO ADD TO THE DATA AND HELP COMPLETE BLOCKS. THERE ARE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO SEE BIRDS BREEDING THAT WE USUALLY ONLY SEE MIGRATING IN SOUTHERN WI.

- **JULY 6-8: BLOCK BUSTING IN MARINETTE COUNTY**

JULY IS "BABY BIRD TIME!" WE'LL CONTINUE ADDING TO DATA IN MARINETTE TO GET CLOSER TO COMPLETING THE COUNTY.



Join the "flock" and you'll find great surprises like this gem! Placed carelessly in the middle of a trail, a pair of Ovenbirds built this nest in Vernon SWA in the *Genesee CE* block south of Waukesha. Can you see the "oven" nest constructed of grasses that hides the 4 eggs?