



Upcoming Goss Club Special Events

Following our November club meeting, we will take a break from our normal routine and host a couple special events that focus on comradery and fellowship.

On December 14th we will conduct the Waukesha Christmas Bird Count. For over 100 years, birders in North America have conducted CBCs during the holiday season, and this tradition continues as we head back to our 15 mile diameter circle. Our bird sightings are added to the decades of data already gathered. By conducting our survey year after year in the same circle, we can see trends in bird populations, migration, and distributions. It's also a great opportunity to spend several hours, or even a full day with birding friends. Nothing helps to bond a friendship like bouncing from birding hotspot to birding hotspot in a car, planning the next move, and maybe finding a rare bird!

If you are new to the hobby or have never been part of a CBC before, please feel free to ask around to see if any groups have space in their vehicle or would like an extra set of eyes to join them. This event is an excellent opportunity to learn bird ID, to learn which birds actually stick around for the winter, and how to find them in this desolate season.

On January 19th we'll forego the traditional club meeting and will host a Goss Bird Club potluck. At many of our meetings, members and guests barely have time to say hi. The potluck will be an opportunity to catch up with old friends or make new ones, swap birding stories, and have some great food. Ann Ferrell has a few notes below regarding the potluck. We hope to see you there!

- If you're helping with setup, please be to Retzer at 6:15 PM. If you're bringing coffee, please get there a little early and make it there in your own pot, & bring enough for a second pot. If you want tea, BYO tea bag(s). Tablecloths, utensils, plates, and hot & cold cups will be provided.

- We'd like to have 4 each of ^Amain dish, ^Bsalad, and ^Cdessert. A sign up sheet was passed around at the November meeting, so check with Ann to see what folks are bringing. Otherwise, surprise us!

- Questions? Email Ann Ferrell at ahf.1967@outlook.com or landline 262 548 9630 (leave a message)



Inside this issue:

Goss Winter Events	1
Take Five With... Jasonn Weber	2
Waukesha Christmas Bird Counts of the 1960s	3
Great Birding on a Great Lake	4

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 at Retzer Nature Center, located about 4 miles west of Waukesha, near the end of Madison Street.
**S14 W28167 Madison St,
Waukesha, WI 53188**

Christmas Bird Count Section Leaders

<u>#</u>	<u>GROUP LEADER</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	Paula Stich	262-844-9848	paulabirder@gmail.com	Waukesha/Fox River
2	Jasonn Weber	414-940-4820	jasonnweber@wi.rr.com	Phantom Lake/ SE Waukesha
4	Spence Stehno	414-940-2020	pensacola634@gmail.com	Vernon Marsh
7	Jennifer Tyskiewicz	262-786-0172	mtyskiewicz@wi.rr.com	North Prairie/Genesee Depot/Wales
8	Anne Moretti	262-337-2837	amoretti@wi.rr.com	South Kettle Moraine
10	Ann Soderman	608-218-0274	annsoderman2@gmail.com	Retzer Nature Center
13	Mary Korkor	262-442-7530	marekor@aol.com	Nagawicka Lake/Pewaukee Lake Area
14	Bev Dunk	262-439-9363	rbdunk@att.net	Dousman Area/Nelson's Woods

Take Five with Jasonn Weber

It's long overdue for this column to feature our friend Jasonn Weber. In years past, Jasonn, has served as vice president and program director for the Bird Club. He has owned section 2 in the Waukesha CBC since taking over from Vern Aune. Jasonn has been known to start bird counts with a shot of Killepitsch, he knows all the good birding spots in Germany, and if you hang around with him enough, he's sure to invite you to go birding there with him!

You've been a contributing member in the Goss Bird Club for several years. Why do you enjoy being a part of the state's oldest birding organization?

I think it's important to be a member of professional organizations that represent your values, whether they have to do with your career or passions.

What was your "spark" bird, and how did it cause the "spark"?

I remember being more curious about birds and spending time during the winter ID'ing everything that came to our bird feeder. That following spring I saw a male Blackburnian Warbler in an ash tree from my back deck and I thought wow! That was the spark.

Where is your favorite nature spot?

One of my favorite spots in the world is Sequoia National Park. It's like nature's cathedral.

Besides birds, what aspect of nature do you most enjoy?

I like big trees, the smells of the forest, and the quiet.

How did you come to join the Goss Bird Club?

I used to work with Jennifer Tyskiewicz before she retired, and

she let me know about the club.

What is your most enjoyable birding memory?

I have quite a few, but some of my favorites are the memories of traveling all over California with my friend Rob, going from mountains to the desert to the coast on hikes looking for birds and enjoying local breweries in the evening. We've also birded on the east coast, in the UP, and in Canada. Unfortunately he died of a brain aneurysm the day before we were going to book our flights to go birding in the hotspots of Arizona.

If you keep track of such things, how many species have you seen? Do you have any fun stories?

I've been fortunate enough to have seen quite a few birds in quite a few places. I have all kinds of fun stories that are best told over a beer.

What is the regular birding event you like most?

Our own Ben Goss Christmas and May Counts

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

Over the years I've contributed to the Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, Clean Wisconsin, Waukesha County Land Conservancy, Wisconsin Natural Resources Foundation, Friends of Vernon Marsh, Earth Justice, Wilderness Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Parks Conservation Association, and River Alliance of Wisconsin.



Birding amigos Rob & Jasonn on the Maine Coast

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

Rob and I took a hike near 29 Palms, CA, which is desert. We hiked a few miles to an oasis where there were supposed to be a couple species of western orioles. There was maybe a 250 square foot little pond with some reeds around it. While we were studying the palms, a Sora called stunning us both.

That same day we also spent an hour trying to figure out a bird perched on a wire. It was at the same location where the endangered desert pup fish pond is. We just couldn't figure it out and finally after quite some time realized it was an orange variant house finch.

Any birding regrets?

I used to work out of Dutch Harbor, Alaska which is out on the Aleutian Islands. I wasn't a birder then, but I remember seeing a birding group arrive on a ship and tons of people walking around with binoculars everywhere. My friends and I were totally amused and made fun of the crazy bird people. Little did I know I would become one and regret not knowing anything about birds to realize I was in such a unique and rare hotspot for birding.

Christmas Counts of the Mid-1960's

A Moment from the Archives with Historian, Jennifer Tyskiewicz

With our Christmas Bird Count fast approaching, it is interesting to reflect on this ritual that has been occurring in birdwatching groups in the United States every December since 1900, and more specifically, in our Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club since 1928.

A somewhat mid-century look at Waukesha Freeman articles in our archives reveals that our Christmas Bird Counts garnered lots of press and photo spreads in the 1960's.



Caption Reads: **IN PURSUIT** of uncatalogued specimens are Mrs. William G. Laatsch and Mrs. E.R. Rutenber of College Ave.

The 1965 count, held on December 27th, featured a short article, but included seven photos of club members out and about in our circle. (See two photos with this article).

Our members of long ago seemed to have more adventures than we have nowadays! I can't ever remember having to crawl through a fence while counting, and I know

for sure that no one has ever appeared on their porch to bring me a hot cup of coffee! Now, we have to go to Starbucks for that!

The remaining photos are shots of bundled-up people with binoculars glued to their faces and gloved fingers pointing at a faraway tree... so some things never change!

The article describes the event as being a "dawn to dusk effort," which resulted in 51 species and 9,105 individual birds.

Bob Adams, one of our club founders, was quoted as saying that, "every group had at least one member who could identify all species expected to appear in the area."

Only three photos accompanied a somewhat longer article in 1966. The article described the "friendly, but keen, competition" that existed between our club and the S. Paul Jones Bird Club of Oconomowoc.

We again had 51 species, but the Oconomowoc club came up with 53. However, we topped them with individual birds, coming in with 6,731 compared to their paltry 4,821.

The Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club claimed a Belted Kingfisher in the City of Waukesha, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet in Dousman, as their most unusual birds of the day.

The Oconomowoc club saw a

sandpiper, a robin, 68 hawks and 220 ducks... "due to water not being frozen." (No specifics on type of sandpiper, hawks or ducks!).

The article stated that most areas were done by car, but that each area had "some hiking through underbrush, climbing under fences," (gee... that seems to be a common occurrence in the '60's!), "and tromping through marshes."

One lady mentioned that due to the bright sunshine, "it was very comfortable, even though the temperatures ranged between 3 – 19 degrees."

Do you get the feeling that these members of bygone days were harder than we are??



Caption reads: **TO KILL THE CHILL** of the brisk winter day, club members (left) Mrs. E.R. Rutenber and Mrs. William G. Laatsch stopped for coffee at the home of Mrs. Clarence Henricks, Dousman, who pours it for them

Great Birding on a Great Lake!

Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's 2020 Convention

Wisconsin Society for Ornithology's 81st Annual Convention in May 2020 will take place in Two Rivers, WI. The weekend kicks off on Thursday with a members appreciation picnic held in downtown Two Rivers. Immediately following the picnic will be a stunning performance by the Oneida Nation Smoke Dancers who will appear in handmade Native American regalia accompanied by a master of ceremonies who will explain what each dance represents and the history of how it evolved culturally. He also will describe the ways that Native Americans in general, and the Oneidas in particular, think about and interact with wildlife and the natural world, including birds. To finish the evening,



Oneida Nation Smoke Dancers, sponsored by the Bay Area Bird Club from Green Bay

the WSO Awards ceremony will honor several naturalists who have been great contributors to the WSO, birds, and conservation. The performance and awards ceremony are open to the community. Following the awards reception there will be a Night Hike at Point Beach State Forest to listen for Whip-poor-wills and other nocturnal creatures.

Friday will be full of field trips of varying intensities for birders of all skill

levels. Early risers can join the first car caravan that will reach its first destination before sunrise. A coach bus option is available for an extra fee if you'd rather not drive yourself, and boxed lunches are available for an extra charge. Beginning Birder workshops and guided hikes will be offered throughout the day at the Woodland Dunes Nature Center, and in the afternoon, local expert Chuck Sontag and North American gull expert Amar Ayyash will host a Big Sit at the Manitowoc Impoundment on Lake Michigan. Birders will gather to close the day and swap birding stories at the Waverly Inn during *Bird N Beers* starting at 6:00.

Saturday starts with early morning field trips lead by local birders to various hotspots around east-central Wisconsin. A pancake Bird Breakfast event will be held at Woodland Dunes Nature Center with bird walks and educational presentations. And for a less traditional field trip, guided trips via kayak or bike will also be available. Convention goers can grab lunch at the Lighthouse Inn which is included in the convention registration. Lunch is followed by the WSO Annual Meeting, and the core of the educational portion of the convention begins at 1:00. Presentations will have a decidedly Great Lakes focus, covering topics such as gull identification, invasive species in the lakes, aerial insectivores and water quality, and nature in art featuring local artist Becca Jabs, who designed this year's festival t-shirt. Following will be a research poster presentation featuring university students, and scholarships

will be awarded.

A social hour with a cash bar will start at 5:30 and the convention banquet starts at 6:30. Our keynote speaker for the evening will be Dr. Ben Zuckerberg, associate professor in the Dept of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at the UW-Madison. Zuckerberg, whose UW lab has found overwhelming evidence that wildlife populations are responding to climate change. He will discuss what future actions should be taken based on data gathered from breeding bird atlas work.



Dr. Ben Zuckerberg, UW Madison

On Sunday we will attend "going home field trips" featuring a variety of routes that head in all directions so that birders can go birding on their way home. Beginner Birding workshops will also be held at Woodland Dunes Nature Center.

Stay tuned and check WSO's website wsobirds.org or Facebook page for details. Registration begins in March. Walk-in registration is also available, and you do **NOT** need to be a WSO member to attend.



81ST ANNUAL CONVENTION
TWO RIVERS, WI | MAY 14-17, 2020