

The Goss Hawk

WSO Convention Wrap Up



A big thank you to all members who helped with the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology Convention in May. The WSO partnered with the Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club to hold the 2023 convention on May 19-21 in

Waukesha. This was the first convention since 2019, and the first in Waukesha in decades, and it was very well received.

We were excited to see almost 150 registrants for the convention this year from throughout Wisconsin and outside of the state. Countless hours were spent by Goss Club members and WSO representatives to organize the event, but Christine Reel deserves special mention as the

local convention chair. Without her leadership, the event would not have happened.



Top - Friday Awards banquet; Right - field trip registration;
Bottom - Keynote Tammah Watts & her book *Keep Looking Up*

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Upcoming Goss Club Events

- Oct 7 - Big Sit at Retzer
- Oct 15 - Club Meeting
- Oct 21 - Field Trip - Waterbirds
- Nov 19 - Club Meeting
- Dec 16 - Christmas Bird Count

Friday May 19

Welcome Picnic and Awards Ceremony - Following the member picnic, the awards banquet was kicked off by WSO President Sunil Gopalan, followed by a ceremony hosted by Wendy Schultz to celebrate the 2023 awardees and award recipients from 2020-2022 who could not be recognized in person during those years.

Saturday May 20

Field Trips - Saturday morning field trips were a highlight for many attendees. The South Kettle Moraine field trip was the most popular, but attendees also enjoyed visiting Vernon Marsh, Paradise Valley, Crow How at Monches Woods, and various other hotspots that Waukesha birders know and love.

Indoor Events - As is customary, we hosted presentations that both educate and inspire. Tom Schultz presented *Identifying Warblers of Wisconsin*, and Sunil Gopalan showed us *Birds of the World: A Photographic Journey*. After a social hour and delicious banquet, the keynote presentation was given by Tammah Watts licensed therapist and author from San Diego, CA. She resented on *The Healing Power of Birds* based on her book *Keep Looking Up: Your Guide to the Powerful Healing of Birdwatching*.

Sunday May 21

Field Trips - The final day of convention was for "going home" field trips. Attendees selected locations such as Horicon Marsh, Lake Michigan and Zeloski Marsh based on their path home. When all was said and done, 169 species were seen on the 12 convention field trips.

Special thanks are due to all the volunteers and leaders from the WSO and Goss Bird Club without whom this event would not have been possible. We hope to see you May 2024 in Two Rivers!



Hooded Warbler painting by Lynn Barber (Wausau, WI) featured on convention t-shirts

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, meetings are held at Retzer Nature Center, located about 4 miles west of Waukesha, near the end of Madison Street.

Goss Bird Club 2023-2024 Schedule

Monthly meetings for the Goss Bird Club are held at Retzer Nature Center on the third Sunday of each month, September through April, with the exception of December, when we hold our Christmas Bird Count in lieu of a meeting.

We will once again host The Big Sit event at Retzer Nature Center. Details can be found in the article below. We are also planning a mid-October field trip for ducks and other waterbirds.

Our annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be December 16th, after which club members, whether they participated or not, can gather for a post-count dinner at Spring City Restaurant in Waukesha. If you have any questions about the CBC or dinner, contact Jason Weber at jasonweber@gmail.com.

In May, we'll hold a similar count on May 11, after which we will also have a club dinner.

- October 7 - The Big Sit at Retzer
- October 15 - Club Meets at Retzer
- October 21 - Ducks, Geese, Grebes & Loons Field Trip
- November 19- Club Meets at Retzer
- December 16 - Christmas Bird Count with post-count dinner at Spring City Restaurant.
- January 21 - Club Meets at Retzer
- February 18 - Club Meets at Retzer
- March 17 - Club Meets at Retzer
- April 21 - Club Meets at Retzer
- May 11 - Waukesha May Count with post-count dinner at Spring City Restaurant.



Anne Moretti and Tim Hahn at the 2016 Big Sit.

The Big Sit - October 7th at Retzer Nature Center

On Saturday, October 7 Goss Bird Club will once again host The Big Sit at Retzer Nature Center. The Big Sit is an annual fall event in which participants from around the world spend a 24-hour period counting as many species as they can see from a single location.

Often called a "tailgate party for birders", the rules are simple: find a good spot for bird watching, set up your 17" diameter circle, and sit. That's it! Participants are allowed to come and go from the circle - especially to bring food back into the circle - but birds only count if seen from inside the circle.

Our Big Sit will take place on the accessible patio area west of the main nature center building. Early risers can arrive before dawn to listen for owls and other nocturnal species such as Ameri-

can Woodcock. A flurry of activity will take place around sunrise as robins, bluebirds and waxwings scour for breakfast. Throughout the morning the tally quickly climbs as we see new birds pass near the circle often. Late morning is excellent for hawks and vultures who take advantage of the mid-day thermals. Activity slows down around lunch time, and most birders end their day by 3:00 pm.

And as much as The Big Sit is about birds, a full day of birding provides ample time for socialization with birders in our group and people visiting the nature center.

We hope to see you there! If by chance there is nasty weather, we may use Sunday 10/8 as a rain date, so keep your eyes out for updates.

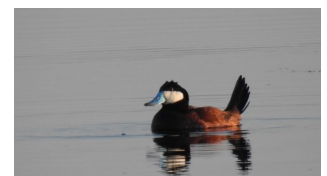


Duck, Duck, Goose And Grebes and Loons - October 21

Join the Goss Bird Club on October 21 as we check local lakes for migrating waterbirds. Mid-fall is when duck, coot, grebe, geese and loon numbers are at their peak on area lakes, and we will do our best to visit as many lakes as we can to see them all. Coot flocks can number in the thousands, and rafts of 100-500 diving ducks are not uncommon. Grebes are usually present, and loons can be found most days in fall. If we're lucky, eagles and other raptors may be flying as it's peak migration for them as well. And yes, we'll look at the gulls too, if they're around. Bonaparte's Gulls are a fairly reliable "interesting gull" in fall.

Distances can pose a challenge for identification, but with a scope it becomes much easier, and we will have a scope or two on hand to share with those who don't have their own.

We will begin the day at 8:00 am at the east end of Pewaukee Lake, gathering at the Brewers Two Cafe on Wisconsin Avenue in Pewaukee, directly across from Pewaukee Lake. We hope to see you there!



Ruddy Duck - Mike Ellery