



Coulee Birder

November/December 2015

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held at the Ho-Chunk Building in LaCrosse, and begin at 7:00 PM. They are free and open to the public.

November 17

Bird Banding

Melissa Meier and Kathleen Carlyle will present a program on banding songbirds in the Mississippi River valley and upland forest. They have both been involved in a number of studies that required capture, sampling, data collection and banding of birds in floodplain and upland sites. They will describe the techniques used to capture, band and also the use of some special markers on song birds. A demo mist net and bands and banding equipment will be shared as part of their presentation.

December 19

Our December "meeting" is our annual Christmas Bird Count, which will take place December 19. Look for more information in this newsletter.

Important! Take note!

The group meeting on Wednesdays at the Ho-Chunk building has disbanded. We polled our members at the October meeting and they would prefer to return to our traditional meeting time of the third Wednesday of the month.

Starting in January, we will return to Meeting the third Wednesday of the month.

President's Message



Dan Jackson

During our January meeting, we will hold our annual meeting which will include an election of half of the board of directors. This January, the three positions on the ballot will be the President, Vice-President, and one of the at-large board positions.

Our bylaws specify that board members can serve a maximum of 4 terms on the board. At this point, I have held the position of President for 10 years (5 terms) and am not eligible for re-election. Therefore, the organization will need to elect a new President in January.

At this point, Scott Puchalski has agreed to have his name on the ballot for the position of President. Since he is currently filling the role of Vice-president, that position is currently open on the proposed ballot. Gwyn Calvetti has also agreed to continue in her role as Newsletter Editor and board member and her name is therefore on the proposed ballot for the at-large board position.

Therefore, our organization has a need for someone to step forward to take the Vice-President Role. This position is responsible for the scheduling of programs for the monthly meetings and is also the backup for the President in case that person is not available to lead a board or membership meeting.

If you are willing and able to take on any of these positions and would like to have your name on the ballot in January, please contact me or any of the members of the board. It would be great
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if we can make this transition as smooth as possible and it would also be great to have a real election in January. Thanks for your support!!

Thank you very much for the opportunity to serve as the President of the Coulee Region Audubon Society for the past 10 years! I have really enjoyed that privilege and the opportunity to serve this organization. I do plan to stay active in my "retirement" and will continue to help lead field trips and do presentations on behalf of the organization.

Christmas Bird Count 2015

The 2015 Audubon Christmas Bird Count is getting close and it is time to start to get it organized. This is a big event and we can always use more help!!

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count was originally started to create an alternative to the bird shoots that were traditionally held around Christmas and New Years Day. Luckily, someone had the great idea that it would be better to count birds during the holiday season than to shoot them. After 115 years, it is safe to say that this idea caught on and has been a great success. In fact, this tradition has turned into one of the leading citizen science projects on the North American continent and, with so many years of data it is a valuable tool for scientists!

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is actually made up of hundreds of local Christmas Bird Counts. For each of these local counts, the object is to try to count all of the birds found within a fifteen mile "count circle" on a specific count day which must occur between December 14th and January 5th. On that count day, participants count birds in pre-assigned sections of the circle or at their own feeders (if they are located within the count circle). When the day is done, the count data is tallied and submitted to the National Audubon Society who combines the data from all of the counts and analyzes it to look for trends and interesting events regarding bird populations and distribution.

This year, there will be at least 2 Christmas Bird Counts held in the Coulee Region. The La Crosse Area count will be held on Saturday, December 19th and the Trempealeau count will be held on Sunday, December 20th. If you enjoy counting birds, your help with either or both of these counts would be greatly appreciated!

The La Crosse Area Christmas Bird Count, which is hosted by the Coulee Region Audubon Society, counts all of the birds found inside a count circle that is centered on the La Crosse County courthouse in downtown La Crosse. The limits of the circle are approximately the lower end of Goose Island Park to the south, the southern tip of Brice Prairie to the north, ¼ mile east of County OA to the east, and the far edge of Hokah to the southwest. It includes all of La Crosse, La Crescent, Onalaska, Barre Mills, Hokah, and part of Dakota.

The Trempealeau Christmas Bird Count has a count circle with its center point in the middle of the village of Trempealeau. It is actually a half circle as it only includes the area east of the state line which runs down the main channel of the Mississippi River. The count includes Perrot State Park and a significant part of the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge (northeast to Marshland). It also extends 3 miles north of Centerville and covers Galesville, the Van Loon Wildlife Area, New Amsterdam, and a portion of Brice Prairie.

If you are available on Saturday, December 19th and/or Sunday, December 20th, and would be willing to help out with the La Crosse Area or Trempealeau Christmas Bird Counts, we would really appreciate your help! Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to attend. Whether you are a beginner and would like to help on a team or an experienced birder who would prefer to work on your own, we can really use your help. If you can help with the La Crosse Area count, please contact Dan Jackson (e-mail: DEJackson2256@gmail.com or Phone: (608) 483-2271). To take part in the Trempealeau count, please contact Al Wernecke (e-mail: ajja701@trivest.net or Phone: (608) 534-6330).

Time for some field trips!

Mississippi River Waterfowl Viewing – November 15, 2015.

We will meet at noon on the street behind the Kwik Trip at the stop lights in La Crescent. We will head south and checkout the mudflats below the entrance to the Wildcat Landing in Brownsville and we will also stop at the refuge overlooks just south of there. This is not the date of the US Fish & Wildlife Service viewing event so it won't be as crowded. This is a great opportunity to see thousands of Ducks, Geese and Swans.

Lake Michigan Lakefront Birding. (January 9, 2016?)

We will join the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) field trip along the shore of Lake Michigan. The trip will probably be held on Saturday, January 9th. It starts at the South Shore Yacht Club in Milwaukee at 8:00 AM and goes as far north as Sheboygan. This trip is a great chance to see waterfowl including Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks as well as other specialties including Snowy Owls and rare gulls. We will carpool from La Crosse. Details will be announced via e-mail in December.

Other field trip possibilities:

Northwoods Birding, February ?

We would spend a long day checking out the north woods in WI. We would leave before dawn and return after dark with visits to several locations in the Clam Lake and Gordon areas in search of boreal birds.

It's Annual Renewal Time

For those who aren't members of National Audubon, we are already 2 months into the new program year and therefore it is time to catch up if you haven't renewed your local membership in the Coulee Region Audubon Society for this program year. Although our meetings are open to the public and national membership entitles you to receive our newsletter, the Coulee Region Audubon Society relies on local memberships to pay for speakers and most other chapter expenses.

If you haven't sent in your annual renewal payment already, please consider using the form on the back page of the newsletter to send in your 2015-2016 Coulee Region Audubon Society renewal. Simply complete the form and send it along with your check made out to the Coulee Region Audubon Society to:

Marty Lohman, Treasurer
Coulee Region Audubon Society
PO Box 2573
La Crosse, WI 54602-2573

As always, thank you for your continued support of the Coulee Region Audubon Society!

Some of our members have already renewed. If you are unsure of your membership status, feel free to send an e-mail to Dan Jackson at DEJackson2256@gmail.com.

Coulee Region Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2573
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Thanks!