



Hoy Needs Your Help!

Hoy's annual elections will occur at our May 5 meeting, so if you're interested in helping your fellow birders, please consider joining the board. No prior experience is necessary.

What do board members do?

We attend board meetings (6 a year) where we review our budget and membership status, plan upcoming field trips and programs, suggest ideas for the newsletter, and discuss Hoy's education and conservation efforts. In addition to the standard officer positions (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary), Hoy has directors, who provide support to the officers and vote on meeting items, and committee chairs, who oversee specific aspects of Hoy.

Who's currently interested board positions?

Here's who. If a position has no name listed, then no one has expressed interest in that position yet.

Officers

President: Frank Sharkozy **Treasurer:** Jim Veltman
Vice President: Elizabeth Wheeler **Secretary:**

Directors

John Dixon Rick Fare Eric Howe Kristin Wegner
 Sue Schuit Helen Pugh Jenny Wenzel

Committees & Committee Chairs

Conservation: Sue Schuit **Field Trips:**
Education: Rick Fare **Programs:** Elizabeth Wheeler
Newsletter: Kristin Wegner **Membership:**
Publicity: John Krerowicz

What if I'm interested in a position that looks "taken"?

No positions will be official until Hoy votes at the May 5 meeting, so if you'd like to be considered for ANY position above, please let us know, and we'll add you to the list. We welcome new board members and new ideas!

What if I want to help without being an officer or chair?

Hoy is always looking for committee members to help the committee chairs, so please let us know if you are interested. We can always use help planning field trips, finding newsletter content, managing memberships, and so on. We appreciate any help you can give!

Looking forward to a great 2016-2017 year!

Don't forget—our board meetings are open to all Hoy members, so if you'd like to attend one to see what it's like or to share some ideas, please join us!

Dive In to the WSO Convention!

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) Annual Convention will take place in Kenosha and Racine counties from Friday, May 13—Monday, May 16, 2016.



Hoy Audubon is seeking volunteers as we co-host the Member Appreciation picnic at Petrifying Springs Park in Kenosha on Friday, May 13, from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. We need help with setup ahead of time, and we need people to bring grills, coolers, and baked goods/desserts.

We also need co-leaders for bird walks to highlight our local birding hotspots. If you'd like to help with the picnic or showcase one of your favorite birding spots, contact Jenny Wenzel at 262-752-0887 or via email at jenny.wenzel@hoyaudubon.org



Renew Today!

Annual renewals for Hoy Audubon Society "Chapter Supporter" memberships are due **July 1**. Please note that dues is now \$15 per individual for the 2016-2017 membership year. (See page 6 for renewal details.)

Your dues supports Hoy's marvelous monthly programs, building and maintaining Purple Martin and Bluebird nest boxes, and other Hoy activities.

Thank you for your support!

Hoy Board of Directors

President:

Frank Sharkozy 262-770-2481

Vice-President:

John Krerowicz 262-694-8736

Treasurer:

Jim Veltman 262-886-9374

Secretary:

Karen Gavahan 262-633-7136

Directors:

John Dixon
Rick Fare 262-902-9020
Eric Howe
Helen Pugh 262-637-4359
Sue Schuit
Kristin Wegner
Jenny Wenzel 262-752-0887
Elizabeth Wheeler 262-880-9250

Email addresses of Board members are available at: www.hoyaudubon.org

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, April 14, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive
Mount Pleasant, WI 53406

All members are welcome to attend!

Field Trip Coordinator

Coordinator needed; contact Hoy to help!

If you have suggestions regarding future programs or field trips please contact hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org

Newsletter Editor

Kristin Wegner

Ideas for the newsletter? Send your suggestions, recaps of birding seminars/activities, fun facts, and birding tidbits to the attention of Newsletter Editor at: Hoy Audubon, P.O. Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404 or email to: hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org

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Meet two Members: Joe and Barbara Vass

We are in our 70s. Joe still works as a farrier (horseshoer), and Barbara retired a number of years ago. We especially enjoy the friendly people at Hoy, the interesting monthly programs, and the Facebook page where members post pictures and report sightings. No matter what level of birder you are, someone is always willing to answer a question or help you identify a bird. Joe has been interested in birds forever. Barbara started learning about birds when she met Joe and especially when they moved to their present home in the middle of the woods.



We keep a running list of birds we've seen on our property since 1990 (now over 100 species). We keep a calendar so we know when to look for comings and goings (the Canada geese generally return to the pond between March 10 and March 20, about the time the frogs start to sing). But we don't keep life lists or year lists. Many people enjoy that but "competitive birding" seems like a contradiction to us!

Our favorite birding spot is our kitchen window, which overlooks the woods, the seasonal pond, bird houses, and bird feeders behind the house. We've worked to improve habitat – whacking buckthorn, planting native shrubs, creating brush piles, making a prairie planting in front of the house. The birds are really our neighbors. Some live here year round, some come just for the summer or the winter, some drop in once and we never see them again.

The peregrine falcon is Joe's favorite bird. His volunteer work with hawks, eagles, and falcons at the Budapest zoo when he was a teenager sparked a lifelong fascination with these birds. Barbara is especially interested in crows, their intelligence and their strong family structure.

We have a mix of guides for identification, but use the Sibley book most often. The *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* is interesting for in-depth descriptions of life cycles.

When Barbara started birding, she was overwhelmed trying to juggle all the variations of color, size, and shape at once. More experienced birders gave her good advice:

1. Focus on the beak (seed-eater or insect-eater is a great first sort in woodland birds)
2. Note where the bird is and what it is doing ("My dear, it may have a shape similar to a loon, but you do not normally find a loon in a busy waterway." It was a cormorant.) Note to self: Pay attention when an 80-year-old who's been birding for 60 years starts "My dear." You are about to get a lesson!
3. Every once in a while, turn around and look behind you (you may see things most other people miss).

Song Sparrow vs. Savannah Sparrow

Spring will be here again soon and it will provide the opportunity to see many of the sparrows that migrate through. Two sparrows in particular are rather similar, those being the Song Sparrow and Savannah Sparrow. Here are a few tips that will hopefully help you make the ID:

The Song Sparrow (shown at right) is a medium sized sparrow that is reddish-brown in color. The Savannah Sparrow (shown below) is similar in size and overall appearance but is generally more of a grayish-brown with a sometimes almost golden hue.

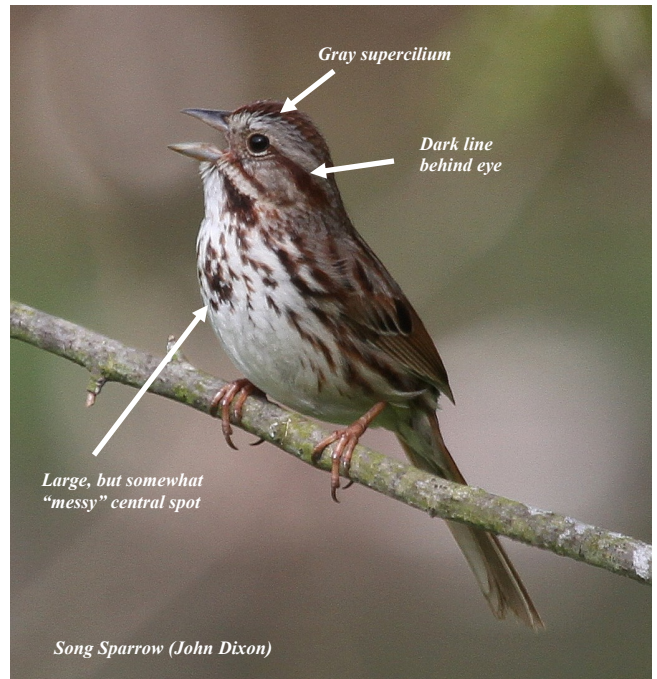
A key difference between the birds is the supercilium. The Song Sparrow has a gray supercilium, but the Savannah Sparrow has a yellow spot above and in front of the eye while the rest of the supercilium is whitish. However, a Savannah can also have a broad yellow supercilium like the one in the photo below; this field mark is variable in its appearance.



Song Sparrows have a dark line behind the eye, where as the Savannah has a thinner brownish line behind the eye. The typical Song Sparrow has a broad, brown lateral throat stripe, where as the Savannah's is usually not as broad and is blackish in color.

Song Sparrows have a heavily streaked breast with the wide streaks being reddish-brown in color. The streaks meet in the middle and form a large central spot on the breast. Savannah Sparrows are streaked on the breast also, but their streaks are finer and blackish colored. They also have a central breast spot but is usually more neatly shaped than a Song Sparrow's is.

- John Dixon



Food for Thought....

Did you notice in the photo at left that this Savannah Sparrow is carrying assorted larvae? If you see an adult bird carrying food to its young during its breeding season, log the sighting in eBird using the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II portal ebird.org/content/atlaswi/

The WBBA II portal should be used only to log checklists that contain at least one breeding code.



Wisconsin
Breeding
Bird
Atlas II

For this sparrow, you would enter code "CF" for Carrying Food. Note that birds may carry food for other reasons, such as during courtship or to cache it and eat it later (you may have seen Blue Jays or Crows do this). Code "CF" should only be used if the bird is carrying food to its young. Refer to the very informative WBBA II Handbook for descriptions of breeding codes and guidelines for using them:

wsobirds.org/images/atlas/WBBA_II_Handbook.pdf

Not sure when a bird's breeding season is? Check out this great chart from the WSO: wsobirds.org/images/atlas/BreedingGuidelineBarChart_PDF.pdf

Mike Reese and Bill Mueller will present more information about the WBBA II at Hoy's May 5 meeting!

Rick's Got Class!

In addition to plentiful bird hikes (see page 5), Hoy member Rick Fare will be leading several bird classes this spring!

Monday, April 11, 7:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.

Birding for Beginners

Fee: Free!

*Kenosha Northside Public Library,
1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140*

Rick will share his bird identification expertise, information about migration patterns and bird lifecycles, and tips for finding the best binoculars for bird watching.

Saturday, April 16, 10:00a.m. to 12:30p.m.

Attracting Bluebirds

*Hawthorn Hollow Nature Sanctuary & Arboretum
880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI*

Fee: \$24 (Members), \$29 (Non-Members)

Rick will discuss the life cycle of the Eastern Bluebird and how to attract them to your yard. A short walk on Hawthorn Hollow's bluebird trail will follow, and each participant will receive a handmade Bluebird house kit to bring home (fee includes the kit).

Thursday, April 21, 6:30p.m. to 8:00p.m.

Birding for Beginners

Kenosha Public Museum

5500 1st Ave, Kenosha, WI 53140

Fee: \$25, contact 262-653-4140 to register.

Rick will share his bird identification expertise, information about migration patterns and bird lifecycles, and tips for finding the best binoculars for bird watching.

Saturday, April 23 10:00a.m. to 12:00p.m.

Attracting Bluebirds

Salem Library

24615 89th Street, Salem, WI 53168

Fee: Free! Contact 262-843-3348 to register.

Rick will discuss the life cycle of the Eastern Bluebird, how to attract them to your yard, proper nest box placement, predator control, and how to become a good bluebird trail monitor.

Saturday, April 30, 9:00a.m. to 11:00a.m.

Birding for Beginners

Eco-Justice Center (Racine)

7133 Michna Road, Racine, WI 53402

Fee: \$5

What birds are common in our area? When are birds most active? Participants will explore the basics of birding and search for and identify birds at the EJC and in Cliffside Park.

Petrifying Springs Park

and Hawthorn Hollow Arboretum

These two adjoining areas lie adjacent to the UW-Parkside campus and together form a regionally large and diverse tract of field, deciduous forest, and conifer plantings all accentuated by the beautiful and meandering Pikes Creek. The park setting also provides ample and diverse non-native plantings, which provide a food source capable of attracting and holding unusual birds.

The river corridor is the migrant bird magnet and cuts through both Petrifying Springs and Hawthorn Hollow. Park in any of the numerous parking spots within the park and hike along the river. Passerine numbers can be very impressive in spring from early April to late May.



Solitary Sandpiper @ Petrifying Springs (Kristin Wegner)

Feeders maintained at Hawthorn Hollow attract good numbers of White-crowned and White-throated Sparrows during migration, and in May they are an excellent place to see good numbers of Indigo Buntings and Baltimore Orioles with the occasional Orchard Oriole mixed in.

To get to this area take Cty E east from Hwy 31. To the northeast of this intersection lies the UW-Parkside Cross Country Course and an excellent stand of pines. Go north on Hwy 31. Cty JR to the east has parking areas and divides the UW-Parkside property to the south from Petrifying Springs is found continuing east on Cty JR, or another entrance can be found further north on Hwy 31. The entrance to Hawthorn Hollow Arboretum is on the west side of Hwy 31, just a short ways north of Cty JR.

-Jerry DeBoer, *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*

Published by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

Available here: wsobirds.org/support/shop-the-bookstore

Petrifying Springs Park will be the site of the WSO Convention Member Appreciation picnic on Friday, May 13 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. Please see the front page for volunteer opportunities!

Volunteer Opportunity, Saturday, June 18, 2016

The Sealed Air YMCA has been a wonderful meeting location that has provided their room to us at no cost. We have been asked to help provide volunteers during their Lighthouse Run. Any help will be appreciated! Contact Jenny Wenzel: 262-488-8077.

Watch Hoy's website and Facebook page for details!

Hoy's Upcoming Activities

Wednesday, April 6, 7:00 p.m. (or 5:30 p.m.)

Field Trip: Evening Woodcock Walk: Pike River

Pike River Pathway, Mount Pleasant, Racine County

Meet at the Wendi Court parking lot. At 6:00 p.m. we'll look for early spring migrants. At 7:30 p.m. we'll walk a portion of the pathway and await the display of the American Woodcock.

Thursday, April 7, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting, Program: Biking Across America

Kenosha Northside Public Library,

1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140

Hoy Member Stan Rosenstiel will share adventures from his cross-country biking trip in 2015. Stan biked 3,000 miles in 51 days, beginning in San Diego, CA, and ending in St. Augustine, FL.

Wednesday, April 20, 7:00 p.m. (or 5:30 p.m.)

Field Trip: Evening Woodcock Walk: Cliffside

Picnic Area #2 at Cliffside Park, Racine County

Meet at 6:00 p.m. to look for early spring migrants. At 7:30 p.m. we'll walk the trail to the north and await the display of the American Woodcock. Waterproof footwear advised.

Friday, April 29, 8:00 a.m.

Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

Rick Fare will lead the bird walk. Birdwatchers of all experience levels are welcome. Bring your binoculars and your bird book.

Friday, April 29, time TBA—Watch Hoy's website for details!

Documentary: The Messenger

The Golden Rondelle Theater

525 Howe St, Racine, WI 53403

Hoy Audubon and Sierra Club are partnering to present the documentary *The Messenger*, a film that explores the problems birds face as they migrate through our changing world.

Wednesday, May 4, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walks at Colonial Park

Colonial Park, Racine, WI

Our Wednesday evening hikes are a great way to experience the progression of spring migrants as well as those birds that summer here. We will walk in light rain but not if there's a downpour.

Thursday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Bird Walks at Hawthorn Hollow

Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI

Rick Fare will lead the bird walk. Birdwatchers of all experience levels are welcome. Bring your binoculars and your bird book.

Thursday, May 5, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting, Program: Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

Mike Reese and Bill Mueller will tell us about the results of the first year of WBBATII (Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas) and new things coming up next in Year 2. They will also answer questions from your experiences in the field and working with data in Year 1, share some information about eBird data entry for the atlas, and talk about working in blocks a little farther away from home.

Friday, May 6, 8:00 a.m.

Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

(See April 29 description for details.)

Activities, continued

Saturday, May 7, 8:00 a.m.

Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at Trout Ponds

Caledonia Conservancy's Trout Ponds/Prairie (just west of Hwy 31 and 4 Mile Rd, Caledonia) - Rick Fare will lead the walk.

Wednesday, May 11, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park

Colonial Park, Racine, WI

(See May 4 description for details.)

Thursday, May 12, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow

Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI

(See May 5 description for details.)

Friday, May 13, 8:00 a.m.

Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

(See April 29 description for details.)

Wednesday, May 18, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park

Colonial Park, Racine, WI

(See May 4 description for details.)

Thursday, May 19, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow

Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI

(See May 5 description for details.)

Friday May, 20, 8:00 a.m.

Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

(See April 29 description for details.)

Wednesday, May 25, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park

Colonial Park, Racine, WI

(See May 4 description for details.)

Thursday, May 26, 5:30 p.m.

Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow

Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI

(See May 5 description for details.)

Thursday, June 2, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting, Program: Samuel Myers Park Progress

River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI

Join us for an informative update on the restoration of Racine's Samuel Myers Park. Adrian Koski from the Racine Public Health Department will speak about the different project phases and volunteer opportunities that are available to support this local park.

Friday, June 17, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Field Trip: Picnic with the Peregrines!

Racine County Courthouse, 730 Wisconsin Ave, Racine, WI

Bring lunch and enjoy watching the young Peregrine Falcons beg food from their parents and practice flying.

Weather Advisory: We post field trip cancellations on Hoy's website and Hoy's Facebook page/group whenever it is possible to do so ahead of time. If you are unsure whether a trip will take place, please use good judgment when deciding whether to attend.

HOY AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 044626

RACINE, WI 53404

www.hoyaudubon.org

Caspian Terns & Virginia Rail @ Samuel Myers Park (Kristin Wegner)



Join [Hoy Audubon](http://www.hoyaudubon.org) or renew your 2016/2017 Membership!

Renewals for Hoy Audubon Society "Chapter Supporter" memberships are due on July 1 of each calendar year. Chapter Supporter dues are \$15 per individual. Please send a check payable to **Hoy Audubon Society**.

Total amount enclosed: _____

Do you wish to receive chapter newsletters by email only? circle Yes or No

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Send to: Hoy Audubon Society, P.O. Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404

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