



### Good News for Plover Lovers

Piping Plovers successfully nested in Green Bay, WI, for the first time in 75 years. (For more details, we recommend this excellent article from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: [www.fws.gov/midwest/news/848.html](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/news/848.html))

Local birders were treated to a visit from one of this year's stars when it stopped over at Racine's Samuel Myers Park for several days in August. The young Piping Plover, first reported by Kathy Solie, had a green band on its left leg and an orange band on its right. Using this information, the Great Lakes Piping Plover Conservation Team identified the bird as one of the three chicks that hatched in Green Bay!



Visitors like this one highlight the importance of Myers as a stopover for migratory birds to rest and refuel as they make their way to and from their breeding grounds.

Let's do our part: Maintain a respectful distance as you observe and photograph birds. (Those observing the plover recently did an exemplary job of giving it space.)

If you see a scrap of trash, stop and pick it up.

And drive carefully if you're near Myers—at one point, we saw the young Piping Plover foraging in the parking lot and running up the middle of the street!

*-Kristin Wegner*

PS—Other notable Myers sightings:

August: Baird's Sandpiper (several reports); Lark Sparrow, spotted by Rita Wiskowski (This appears to be only the fourth Lark Sparrow ever reported in Racine County, according to eBird data.)

September: Kentucky Warbler, spotted by Hoy member Helen Pugh

### Congratulations, Rick!

This year at the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) annual convention, Hoy member Rick Fare was awarded the Bronze Passenger Pigeon for his outstanding contributions to promoting the field of ornithology. Way to go, Rick!



*Andy Paulios (left) and Rick Fare (right), photo by Jenny Wenzel*

### Christmas Bird Counts SAVE THE DATES!

Watch Hoy's website for details/updates.

**Saturday, December 17—Racine CBC**  
To sign up, contact Eric Howe at  
[cbc@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:cbc@hoyaudubon.org) or 262-498-3355.

**Wednesday, December 21—Kenosha CBC**  
To sign up, contact Valerie Mann at  
[naturalist@pringlenc.org](mailto:naturalist@pringlenc.org) or 262-857-8008.

**Burlington CBC Date TBA**

## Hoy Board of Directors

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Email addresses of Board members are available at: [www.hoyaudubon.org](http://www.hoyaudubon.org)

**Next Board of Directors Meeting:  
Thursday, October 13, 2016, 7:00 p.m.**

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

All members are welcome to attend!

**Open committee positions:**

Field Trip Chair  
Conservation Chair

**Contact Hoy to help!**
**Newsletter Editor**

Kristin Wegner

**Ideas for the newsletter?**

Send your suggestions, recaps of birding seminars/activities, fun facts, and birding tidbits to the Newsletter Editor at:  
Hoy Audubon, PO Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404 or email to:  
[hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org)

**The Hoy Honker** is the newsletter of the Hoy Audubon Society, Inc. PO Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404.

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## Purple Finch vs. House Finch

It's the time of year to get ready for winter finches. One of them is the Purple Finch, which is quite similar to the House Finch, a year-round resident of southeastern Wisconsin. Both finches will readily visit a bird feeder for sunflower and other seeds. Seeing the two together at a feeder is helpful as then the differences are readily apparent. Here are some hints to tell them apart:

A male Purple Finch is rather purplish-red on the head, nape, back, rump, and breast with purplish-red streaking on his sides. His thin wing bars are also purplish-red. He has a white undertail without streaks. His bill is heavy, conical, and straight.



*Purple Finch*

The male House Finch has red coloring restricted to the forehead, upper breast, and rump. His back is brownish with some light streaking. His sides and undertail are white with brown streaking, and his two thin wing bars are whitish. His bill is less heavy and has a curved culmen (upper mandible).



*House Finch*



*Purple Finch*

The female Purple Finch is a rather dark brown bird with a dark brown crown, a bold white eyebrow stripe, dark cheeks, and a bold brown moustache stripe. Her breast and belly are whitish with bold, short, dark streaks. The back is dark with distinct streaking. She shows two faint wing bars. Her bill is heavy, conical, and straight.



*House Finch*

The female House Finch is more of a soft mousy brownish-gray color with a plain head without any bold markings. Her breast and belly are also light brownish-gray with blurry grayish streaks. Her back is light brownish with indistinct streaking. The wings have two rather distinct whitish wing bars. Her bill is less heavy and has a curved culmen.

*-John Dixon,  
photos by Kristin Wegner*



## Upcoming Activities

Thursday, October 6, 7:00 p.m.

### **Hoy Meeting, Program: Falconry**

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

Join us for a fun evening with Master falconers Ed Foster and Dr. Meg Robinson from the Wisconsin Falconers Association. Ed and Meg will bring their expertise and live birds to teach us about the world of falconry.

Saturday, October 29, 9:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding**

*Shoop Park, Racine*

We'll meet at the Shoop parking lot and walk north along the lakeshore trail to the Wind Point Lighthouse to look for fall migrants. Dress for cold & windy weather and wear sturdy walking shoes (it's 0.6 miles one way, and the trail may be overgrown). We'll also bird here every Saturday morning in November!

Thursday, November 3, 7:00 p.m.

### **Hoy Meeting, Program: Scuppernong River Habitat Area**

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

Welcome speaker Maureen Gross for an informative talk on the Scuppernong River Habitat Area, a wonderful botanical and wildlife haven in the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

Saturday, November 5, 9:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding**

*Shoop Park, Racine*

Saturday, November 5, 10:00 a.m.—noon

### **Hawthorn Hollow Bird Program: Winter Birds**

Fee: \$24 (Hawthorn Hollow Members), \$29 (Non-Members)  
*Racine 880 Green Bay Road Kenosha, WI 53144*

Hoy member Rick Fare will present a program about identifying winter birds and how they cope with the cold. Program includes building a cedar platform bird feeder to take home!

Friday, November 11, 7:00 p.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Owl Prowl at Bong State Recreational Area**

*Meet at DNR parking lot on north side of Hwy BB (7th Street)  
We will drive near and within the park to listen for owls. WI State Parks vehicle admission sticker required to park within Bong.*

Saturday, November 12, 19, and 26, 9:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding**

*Shoop Park, Racine*

Thursday, December 1, 5:30 p.m. Setup; 6:00 p.m. Dinner

### **Annual Holiday Potluck and Program**

*Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406*  
Hoy's annual Holiday Potluck. Bring a dish to pass along with your own dinnerware and utensils. Hoy will provide coffee and napkins. We'll discuss bird sightings and upcoming events.

Saturday, December 3, 9:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Kenosha Lakefront Birding**

*7825 First Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53143*

We'll meet at the Southport Park parking area (just north of the Kenosha Sand Dunes). Dress warmly!

## Horicon Highlights

Hoy's August 13, 2016, trip to Horicon Marsh started overcast but this kept us cool as we birded highway 49.



*Hwy 49, Eric Howe*

Highlights include six Wilson's Phalaropes, several Black-necked Stilts, up to seventeen Stilt Sandpipers, and an astounding **forty** Cattle Egrets.



*Great Black Wasp, Kristin Wegner*

Several Hoyers have been studying butterflies and bugs, so they were able to identify non-avian visitors like the Fiery Skipper, the Black Swallowtail, and the enormous Great Black Wasp, feasting on Swamp Milkweed.

Join us next year!

## Advice for Fall and Winter Birding

**What to Wear:** Weather can be unpredictable, so warm layers are advised. Comfortable, waterproof footwear is a must, as are a warm coat, hat, and gloves. Hand warmers are highly recommended.

**Finding Your Field Trip:** Visit Hoy's website for driving directions and maps (when available).

**Watch the Weather:** Heavy snow, icy roadways, poor visibility, or other potentially hazardous conditions may cause a field trip to be cancelled. We post cancellations on Hoy's website and the Hoy Facebook page/group whenever it is possible to do so ahead of time. **If you are unsure whether a field trip will take place, please use good judgment when deciding whether to attend.**

### Hoy's 2016 Bluebird Batch

On one of my many visits to Hawthorn Hollow this year, someone told me there was a beautiful blue bird near the river. I walked over to the area expecting to see an Indigo Bunting, and was surprised to find an Eastern Bluebird because I don't see them in the shade very often. As promised, it was stunning. It seemed to glow. I watched for a long time. I hope you got to enjoy a bluebird sighting this year as well.

Results for our Kenosha and Racine trails were somewhat disappointing this year. It seemed that Wisconsin in general had great conditions for bluebird nesting. Unfortunately, we had average conditions. With 379 boxes reporting, we fledged 623 bluebirds, 949 tree swallows, 113 house wrens and 14 black capped chickadees. Last year, with 368 boxes reporting, we had 712 eastern bluebirds, 974 tree swallows, 172 house wrens and 21 black capped chickadees. Our peak year was 2012 when we neared 1000 bluebirds fledged.

Thanks to all the trail monitors for their help and dedication. If you are interested in becoming a monitor, please contact me at 262-694-2206. – Stan Rosenstiel

### A Good Year for Purple Martins

The occupancy percentage is growing in all colonies. The total of 183 (171 in Racine and 12 in Kenosha) compares favorably to 2015's 162! Good job and thanks to monitors Stan Rosenstiel in Kenosha and Racine's Tom and Karen Gavahan, Mary Schroeder, and Helen Pugh. We wish these birds a safe journey to South America and will be waiting for them next April!

- ◆ View the Hoy Honker in full color at [www.hoyaudubon.org](http://www.hoyaudubon.org)
- ◆ Visit Hoy on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety](https://www.facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety)



*Eastern Bluebird, John Krerowicz*

### Join [Hoy Audubon](http://www.hoyaudubon.org) or renew your 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Hoy distributes newsletters and field trip announcements by email. Please enter your email address below to be added to this distribution.

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Send check and information to: Hoy Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 044626  
Racine, WI 53404**

### Numbers of Fledged Birds from boxes monitored by Hoy

- Eastern Bluebirds
- ▲ Tree Swallows
- \* House Wrens
- ◆ Purple Martins

