



### Trees We Love 2017!

Hoy is delighted to announce the second year of funding for Trees We Love! Our TWL program is a source of celebration, recognition and much-needed positive environmental news; it is a reiteration of the importance of our past, which has produced our present; and it acts as encouragement to preserve our future. We believe it to be a high-impact conservation program with positive, long-term results. 2017 awardees will receive permanent recognition, promoting stewardship for, and appreciation of, our beautiful heritage trees.



*Photo by Sue Schuit*

Such recognition occurred with one of our 2016 awardees, a 110 year old Sycamore owned by the City of Racine. A concrete slab was poured to ensure plaque permanence at the base of the tree, which is in close proximity to Park High School. Before the concrete had hardened, a picture of a heart and tree were carved into the wet base. We believe the artist may well have been a student who heartily approved.

Do you know a tree that deserves recognition? Visit [www.hoyaudubon.org](http://www.hoyaudubon.org) to download a nomination form!

- Sue Schuit



*Photo by John Krowiec*

### Regional Kickoff Workshop Coming To Kenosha: April 29



### Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II

The Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II (WBBAIL) is a comprehensive citizen-science project aimed to record the distribution and abundance of breeding birds statewide between 2015–2019 and to document how various birds' populations have changed since the first atlas (1995–2000). The results will further our understanding of the conservation needs of Wisconsin's breeding birds.

Four WBBAIL Regional Kickoff Workshops are occurring this spring throughout Wisconsin to provide training to new and current volunteers. Highlights include: Atlas results to date, focus areas and goals for 2017, basic training for new atlasers, advanced training for returning atlasers, data-entry instruction, tips from your region's top atlasers and a chance to meet county coordinators, atlas planners, and other atlasers from our area.

A workshop will be held at the **Kenosha Public Library Northside** on **Saturday, April 29 from 11:30 a.m.–5 p.m.** Weather permitting, a field trip surveying for nocturnal species (including owls and marshbirds) will be from 6:30–9:00 p.m. at various Kenosha and Racine County locations.

**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED and the deadline to register is April 15! To register, visit:**  
[wsobirds.org/atlas-2017-regional-kickoff-workshops](http://wsobirds.org/atlas-2017-regional-kickoff-workshops)



### Renew Today!

**Annual renewals** for Hoy Audubon Society "Chapter Supporter" memberships are due **July 1**. Dues is **\$15** per individual for the 2017–2018 membership year. (See page 4 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:

Elizabeth Wheeler 262-880-9250

### Treasurer:

Jim Veltman 262-886-9374

### Secretary:

Karen Gavahan 262-633-7136

### Directors:

John Dixon  
Rick Fare 262-902-9020  
Eric Howe  
John Krerowicz 262-694-8736  
Helen Pugh 262-637-4359  
Wendy Sorenson  
Kristin Wegner  
Jenny Wenzel 262-488-8077

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

### Next Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2017, 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

### 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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## Rusty vs. Brewer's Blackbirds

With spring right around the corner it is now time to think about some of the migrants that will be passing through. Two members of the blackbird family, Rusty and Brewer's Blackbird, pass through at about the same time and can be difficult to tell apart. Here are some hints that might help.

One clue that is often helpful is the habitat the bird is seen in. Normally, Rusty Blackbirds are seen in wooded areas with water nearby, be it a pond, stream, creek, river, or wooded swampy area. Brewer's Blackbirds on the other hand are most often seen in open areas such as sod farms, pastures with short grass, and golf courses. As always, this is not an absolute but can be the first clue to identity. A good place to look for Brewer's Blackbirds is the Wind Lake Sod Farms in August and September (Hoy schedules a fall field trip here). They are also at the sod farms during spring migration. Rusty Blackbirds can be seen in spring and fall migration at Nicholson WA and Tichigan Marsh in Waterford.

The male Rusty Blackbird is a dull blackish seen in poor light with a pale yellow eye. In good light it is iridescent with bluish shades about the head and greenish on the body and wings. They get their Rusty name from their fall plumage which has rusty feathers throughout. Its bill is slightly thinner than a Brewer's with more decurved tip, similar to a Common Grackle's bill but not as heavy or as curved at the tip.



*Male Rusty Blackbird,  
John Dixon*

*Male Brewer's Blackbird,  
Rita Wiskowski*



The male Brewer's Blackbird is very glossy in good light with bright blue about the head and breast and brilliant purplish greenish-blue on the wings, back, and belly. In this light they are stunning birds to see. The male always has a brilliant yellow eye, so bright as being almost white in color. The bill is slightly heavier than a Rusty's and pointier with little curve at the tip.

The female Brewer's is very different from the male in being very dull brownish-gray with no iridescence at all and a dark eye, unlike the male and either of the Rusty Blackbirds. On a rare occasion, the female Brewer's will have a yellow eye but her mousy coloration and accompanying glossy males should help with the ID if that is seen.

The female Rusty is rather dull compared to the male, being grayish with little iridescence and rusty tipped feathers throughout her plumage. She also has a pale yellow eye. In fall the female is mainly rusty and quite striking.

- John Dixon



*Female Rusty Blackbird,  
John Dixon*



## Upcoming Activities: April

Saturday, April 1, 10:00 a.m. golf, noon—4:00 p.m. activities  
**Nature Nonsense FUNdraiser**  
*Brighton Dale Golf Links 830 248th Ave, Kansasville, WI 53139*  
 The Friend's Group at Bong SRA is raising funds to build a one-acre Nature Explore Classroom. If you have questions or want to help out, contact President Tracy Fliess at [topazskies@yahoo.com](mailto:topazskies@yahoo.com) or (262) 206-9017. For project and event details and golf registration, visit [bongnaturalistassociation.org](http://bongnaturalistassociation.org)

Wednesday, April 5, 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 5:30 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.

Thursday, April 6, 7:00 p.m.  
**Hoy Meeting, Program: Citizens' Climate Lobby Group**  
*River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI*  
 This non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots advocacy organization is focused on national policies to address climate change. Their consistent, respectful, non-partisan approach to climate education is designed to create a broad, sustainable foundation for climate action across all geographic regions and political inclinations.

Wednesday, April 12, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Woodcock Walk: Bong SRA**  
*Bong State Recreation Area, Kenosha*  
 Meet at the Visitor's Center then we'll walk out to look for birds.

Wednesday, April 19, 6:00 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Woodcock Walk: Pike River**  
*Pike River Pathway, Mount Pleasant, Racine County*  
 This section of the Pike River Pathway Park in Mount Pleasant is located north of Hwy 11. We'll walk the trail north from the parking area in search of early spring migrants. As dusk falls, we'll await the display of the American Woodcock.

Saturday, April 22, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.  
**Celebrate Earth Day**  
*Gateway Kenosha Campus: 3520 30th Ave. Kenosha*  
 Join Hoy as Gateway celebrates Earth Day with displays, workshops, hands-on activities for people of all ages, and other environment-related activities. For a complete list of this year's exciting events, visit [www.gtc.edu/celebrate-earth-day](http://www.gtc.edu/celebrate-earth-day).

Thursday, April 27, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk 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.

Friday, April 28, 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.

Saturday, April 29, 11:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
**WBBA II Regional Kickoff Workshop**  
*Kenosha Northside Public Library*  
 1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140  
 See event details on page 1. **Registration required by April 15!**

## Upcoming Activities: May

Wednesday, May 3, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walks at Colonial Park**  
*Colonial Park, Racine, WI*  
 Experience the progression of spring migrants and birds that summer here. We'll walk if there is light rain, but not a downpour.

Thursday, May 4, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow**  
*Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI*

Thursday, May 4, 7:00 p.m.  
**Hoy Meeting, Program: Samuel Myers Park Update**  
*River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI*  
 Hoy's annual Board elections, then our speaker Adrian Koski from the Racine Public Health Department will update us about Myers Park and Racine's recognition for rehabilitating this shoreline.

Friday, May 5, 8:00 a.m.  
**Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend**  
*River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI*

Saturday, May 6, 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 10, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park**  
*Colonial Park, Racine, WI*

Thursday, May 11, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow**  
*Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI*

Friday, May 12, 8:00 a.m.  
**Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend**  
*River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI*

Wednesday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park**  
*Colonial Park, Racine, WI*

Thursday, May 18, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Bird Walk at Hawthorn Hollow**  
*Meet at Nature Center, 880 Green Bay Rd, Kenosha, WI*

Friday, May 19, 8:00 a.m.  
**Field Trip: Morning Bird Walk at River Bend**  
*River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI*

Wednesday, May 24, 5:30 p.m.  
**Field Trip: Evening Warbler Walk at Colonial Park**  
*Colonial Park, Racine, WI*



Celebrations of International Migratory Bird Day usually take place in May. Racine's plans are still pending, so watch Hoy's website for details!

**Upcoming Activities: June**

Thursday, June 1, 7:00 p.m.

**Hoy Meeting, Program: Nest Box Treasures**

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

While we erect nest boxes hoping to provide a home to Wood Ducks or beautiful bluebirds, there are many non-target species that take up occupancy. Jeff Bahls, president of the Horicon Marsh Bird Club, will share what “other things” are found in nest boxes.

Tuesday, June 6, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 10, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

**Field Trips: Picnic with the Peregrines!**

*Racine County Courthouse, 730 Wisconsin Ave, Racine, WI*

Enjoy watching the young Peregrine Falcons beg food from their parents and practice flying.

**Hoy Needs Your Help!**

Hoy’s annual elections will occur at our **May 4** 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.

**What positions are on the board?**

The table below lists who is currently running. If you’d like to run for any position or join a committee, contact Hoy!

**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	Wendy Sorenson

**Committees & Committee Chairs**

<b>Conservation:</b> Sue Schuit	<b>Field Trips:</b>
<b>Education:</b> Rick Fare	<b>Programs:</b> Elizabeth Wheeler
<b>Newsletter:</b> Kristin Wegner	<b>Membership:</b> Helen Pugh, Wendy Sorenson
<b>Publicity:</b> John Krerowicz	

**What if I want to help without joining the board?**

Hoy can always use help planning field trips, finding newsletter content, managing memberships, and so on. We appreciate any help you can give!

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!

**Attracting Bluebirds**

Hoy member Rick Fare will host a program on Eastern Bluebirds at Hawthorn Hollow. In addition to how to attract bluebirds, you’ll learn tips for placing, protecting, maintaining, and monitoring nest boxes. The program will be followed by a short walk on Hawthorn Hollow’s bluebird trail. To register, visit:

[www.hawthornhollow.org/classes/bird-lover-series-2/#bluebirds](http://www.hawthornhollow.org/classes/bird-lover-series-2/#bluebirds)

Date: Saturday, April 29th

Time: 10am-12:30pm

Fees: \$4 (Members), \$9 (Non-Members)

**Weather Advisory:** Spring weather can be unpredictable, so jackets, gloves, and waterproof footwear are advised when birding.

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.

- ◆ 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)

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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**