



### An Extraordinary Sighting!

I'm happy to report that during Hawthorn Hollow's annual Birds and Breakfast event, there was an unexpected sighting in the woods: Love Birds.

John Dixon, Rick Fare, and I were leading a group on a bird walk, a group which included Shanda Hess, a project coordinator with Lakeview Construction Inc., and Bert Holbus, an electrician with Greater Wisconsin Electric. We had just experienced the only warbler wave of the day, when Bert handed his phone to me and asked if I would take some pictures of Shanda and himself.

He proceeded to walk back toward her, holding a glittering ring, and he dropped to one knee and asked Shanda, "Will you marry me?" An excited Shanda extended her ring finger and answered him with an emphatic, "Yes!" Bert placed the ring on her finger, then Shanda went into what I can best describe as an arm-flailing, teary-eyed happy dance which included smothering Bert with hugs and kisses.



In later correspondence, Shanda stated that she and Bert have been dating for over six and a half years. They moved into a new home in Mount Pleasant awhile ago with their Yorkshire Terrier named Itty Bitty. At that time Bert became increasingly involved with feeding and watching birds, a passion which she says he inherited from his grandparents, and a passion that she now shares. Her current favorites include orioles and hummingbirds. Recently the couple decided to expand their hobby beyond their backyard to include bird walks such as Hawthorn Hollow's aforementioned event.

I think I speak for us all when I say, we at Hoy Audubon were excited to play a small part in your special day and we hope to see you at future events!

- Photos and story by Frank Sharkozy

### Congratulations to Shanda & Bert!



### 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

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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, August 17, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

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

### 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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## Atlassing Stories

*An interview with Eric Howe*

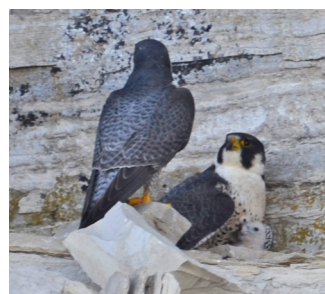


## Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II

2017 is the third year of collecting data for the WBBA II: the second Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. This 5-year project divides the state into 3x3-mile blocks that volunteer "atlassers" patrol in search of breeding birds.

I am one of these atlassers. I'm officially surveying three blocks, one in Franksville, one in Racine, and one in Sturtevant, but I log breeding bird observations everywhere I go. It's been a fascinating experience that has led me to discover some unusual nesters these past few years. I found a pair of Golden-crowned Kinglets nesting in Caledonia, far south of their usual range. At Chiwaukee Prairie, I captured video of a Yellow-breasted Chat with its beak full of grubs on its way to its nest.

There are many different breeding codes that can be assigned to a bird based on your observations. Has a male bird been singing in the same location for 7+ days during that bird's typical breeding period? He gets an "S7" code. We had an interesting "S7" recently up in Door County, where a Carolina Wren (photo at right by Kristin Wegner) made it all the way to Washington Island and sang for at least a week.



A truly great sighting this year was the pair of Peregrine Falcons (photo at left by Kristin Wegner) discovered nesting on a cliff in Door County by atlasser Melody Walsh. It is believed that this pair is the first to nest on a natural cliff in that county since the 1950s; an encouraging discovery! Greg Septon and assistants recently banded the two chicks (both female) from this nest. We wish them well as they enter the world!

Your own yard can be a great place to see nesting birds too. To encourage nesters this spring, we set out some fur shed by our pet rabbits, Bella and Sophie, and we were delighted when the chickadees in our front nest box lined their nest with it (photo at right by Eric). They fledged six chicks. In the backyard, our local House Wren is signing up a storm and gathering sticks.



If you're interested in helping with the WBBA II project, visit <https://wsobirds.org/atlas-quick-Start> for more details. Even if you don't have time to volunteer as an atlasser, you can help by entering your breeding bird sightings into the WBBA II portal in eBird: <http://ebird.org/content/atlaswi/> (Are you seeing birds carrying nesting material or food? Do you have young, fledged birds in your area? This is great data to report, and the WSO's Quick Start guide can help you.)

PS: eBird has a free mobile app for logging your sightings, and you can now enter Breeding Codes in your observation notes. Happy birding!

- Story by Kristin Wegner



### A Big Thank You to the Donors of our New Binoculars!

The board members of Hoy Audubon Society would like to acknowledge the generosity of Richard and Ann Pettibone of Drewco Workholding. Their donation of fifteen new pairs of binoculars will help forward our mission to initiate an appreciation of ornithology by providing optics to individuals who may be attending their first birding event with Hoy, or the many school groups led by our education chairman Rick Fare. Drewco is located in Franksville, WI, and has been supplying solutions to their customers by designing and building custom tooling and work holding fixtures since 1947.

Thank you very much for your donation!

### “White-wing” Strikes Twice!

Anyone who’s spent time birding knows there’s a certain amount of luck involved. You don’t always see the birds you set out to find. A recent sighting might decide to migrate onward *just* before you reach the place it was reported. An unusual bird might visit your neighbor’s feeder but skip yours. Sometimes it gets frustrating.

But on the bright side, sometimes *you’re* the neighbor with the weird bird. In mid-May, Eric and I had a brief sighting of the *second* White-winged Dove to visit our backyard feeders. The bird gobbled up millet, looked around a bit, then, after only four minutes, it disappeared.

Those of you who read last year’s July-September issue may recall the tale of “Baldy,” the Mourning Dove who survived some nasty injuries, recuperated, and found himself a mate. Guess who was none too pleased to see our rare Southern visitor perched on his favorite feeder?



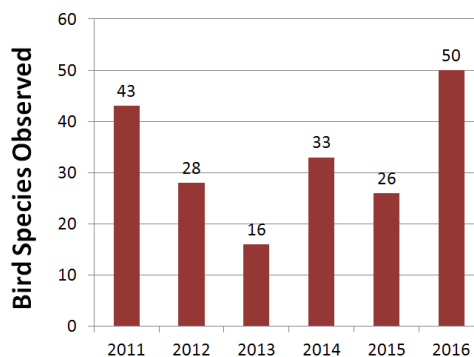
- Story and photo by Kristin Wegner

### Looking Back to The Big Sit

Last September 24, Hoy held its sixth annual Big Sit at Samuel Myers Park to celebrate its ongoing restoration. Wind Point had been a great location, providing us a lakeshore view with a few peeks toward trees and shrubs, but Myers offered even more habitat variety, so we decided to give it a try. How would this affect the birds we saw?

As you can see from the graph below, we had a record-high number of different species! Some were birds we were accustomed to seeing at Wind Point (for the fifth year in a row, we had a Sanderling), but others were new: a Belted Kingfisher, a Blue-headed Vireo, and a nice assortment of warblers: Common Yellowthroat, Palm, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Blackpoll, American Redstart, Nashville, and Wilson’s. But the variety wasn’t the only exciting thing . . .

### Hoy Audubon’s Big Sit Results



Peregrine Falcons had been in the area all morning, one even perching on a nearby roof to devour a captured Flicker, so we weren’t surprised when we saw another falcon zip by. But then John Dixon took a closer look and saw some very interesting characteristics . . . and then we examined photos on Eric Howe’s camera. Lo and behold—a Prairie Falcon!

Several of us left the Sit and drove south down the lakefront to see if we could catch up. We were in luck; a squirrel hopping across the open lawn of the water treatment plant was too tempting a target for the falcon to ignore. It swooped over the squirrel several times, never quite catching it but allowing us to get a few quick ID shots for posterity. (See above; this rapid raptor was difficult to photograph!) The falcon soon gave up on the wily squirrel and continued southward.



What will this year’s Big Sit have in store? Come and see!

- Story and photo by Kristin Wegner

## Hoy's Upcoming Activities

Thursday, July 13, 5:30 p.m.

### **Hoy Audubon's Annual Summer Picnic**

*Petrified Springs Park*

*716 Green Bay Road, Kenosha, WI 53144*

We look forward to seeing you! Bring your own beverage, a dish to pass, a plate, and flatware. We'll meet at picnic area four; if four is unavailable, we'll meet at area five or six further north. After we picnic, we'll look for birds and play bocce ball.

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

### **Hoy Meeting, Program: Root-Pike WIN**

*Kenosha Northside Public Library*

*1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140*

The Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) is a dedicated to restoring, protecting, and sustaining the Root-Pike basin watersheds through funding and facilitation of a regional network of locally initiated projects. Executive Director Dave Giordano will discuss the Root River, Oak Creek, Wind Point, Pike River and the Pike Creek. Join us to learn about watersheds and how important it is to protect them.

Saturday, August 19, 9:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Horicon Marsh**

We will meet at the Auto Loop Trail parking area off of Hwy 49 at 9:00 a.m. If you have questions, need directions, or are interesting in carpooling, contact [hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org).

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

### **Hoy Meeting, Program: Monarch Butterfly Habitat**

*Kenosha Northside Public Library*

*1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140*

Join us for a fun evening with Judy Grasser, who has a great passion for the Monarch Butterfly. She will share her wealth of information on the importance of preserving habitat for future generations to enjoy. Judy will talk about how to create a Monarch Butterfly Way Station. You will learn about host and nectar plants for your backyard habitat and how to attract Monarch Butterflies and aid in their great migration.

Saturday, September 2, 7:00 a.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Wind Lake Sod Farms**

*Meet at the Highway 20/I-94 Park & Ride*

We'll carpool to the sod farms and, from the roadside, look for Buff-breasted Sandpipers, American Golden-Plovers, Brewer's Blackbirds and other fall migrants.

Thursday, September 14, 5:30 p.m.

### **Hoy Field Trip: Bird Walk, Petrifying Springs**

*761 Green Bay Rd Kenosha, WI Meet at lot 3*

Meet at lot 3; Rick Fare will lead, looking for fall migrants.

Saturday, September 16, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### **The Big Sit**

*Samuel Myers Park, Racine*

Hoy's sixth Big Sit is a FREE EVENT and open to EVERYONE! It is an easy activity for those with limited mobility, as birders watch from a stationary location. Bring binoculars, sunscreen, water, snacks, and a folding chair. Our experts will have spotting scopes set up for the public and will be happy to talk about birds with you and your family. We'll be meeting at Samuel Myers again this year—can we top our numbers from last year? Join us to see!

*Pelican Party at Horicon (Kristin Wegner)*



**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.

Summer can be hot, so be sure to take water with you on your journeys outdoors, and don't forget your sun protection!

- ◆ 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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  
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