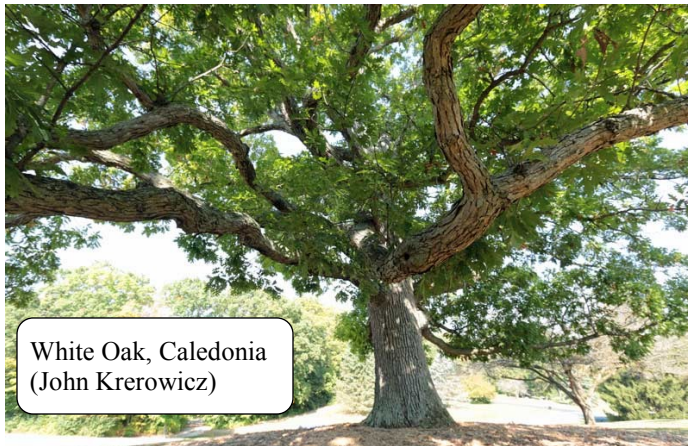




2017 Trees (and People!) We Love

It is difficult to realize how great a part of all that is cheerful and delightful in the recollections of our own life is associated with trees. ~Wilson Flagg

As I sit here at my desk on this beautiful, mild December day pondering what points are important, what to exclude, what do I say about this year's Trees We Love program, I came across the above quotation and found it to be the perfect launching point. This eloquent quote states precisely my feelings regarding my choice to spend so many hours of my personal time in the past two years "out of the weeds and into the trees".



White Oak, Caledonia
(John Krerowicz)

Hoy's Trees We Love 2017 program has recently (and quite successfully!) concluded. It has been a real labor of love on the part of many.

To the Trees We Love committee and volunteers I extend a heartfelt and deeply sincere THANK YOU! This program kicks off in early spring and culminates in late fall and every single volunteer is a vital, important piece of the TWL puzzle. Who at Hoy does not know the kind, cheerful, patient Rick Fare; in so many ways, the "voice" of Hoy? What would Hoy do without long-time Hoy member Helen Pugh, whom has had a part in every single aspect of our chapter? From organizational participation and creation, boots-on-the-ground volunteerism, expert bird advice and deep passion for birding? John Krerowicz, Hoy Publicity Chair, currently living a life many of us aspire to; recently retired and travelling the country, bird-watching, sharing stunning bird photography (and tree photography for this program); Fran Brinkman, Hoy member and passionate tree-lover, sharing her expert knowledge of trees with the rest of us, while also taking on the task of official tree "picture framer"; Kevin Nolan and Matt Koepnick, (Cassity Tree Service arborist and City of Racine Forester respectively), tree nominator site visitors and advisers to the committee. Trees We Love would not be the successful program it has become without each and every one of you!

While, I, Sue Schuit, may have implemented the program, apply for the grants for funding and write the tree narratives, these tasks are simply an extension of my love of reading and writing, my penchant for solitude, nature and history and my long career in non-profit management and finance.

Over the last two years we have received occasional comments expressing surprise regarding Hoy's involvement with Trees We Love as Hoy is a "birding club." I reply with Hoy's mission statement which revolves around conservation and the promotion thereof. Really, how would birds (and all other living things) exist without trees? Trees are our very breath of life, our inspiration in so many ways; culturally, historically, artistically and creatively. I am thrilled to have met so many who agree.

Trees We Love 2017 received an outpouring of support this year. Runzheimer Foundation, Wisconsin Electric Foundation, Pugh Foundation, Audubon and Ketterhagen Memorials have all provided funding this year – allowing for 6 Trees We Love awards!

Without further ado, the 2017, Trees We Love Awardees:

Tree	Approx. Age	Proud Stewards
Shagbark Hickory (The Tall, Silent Type)	182 years	Phil & Mary Hines, 5015 Crystal Spring, Caledonia
White Oak (King of the Hill)	190 years	The Brown Family, 6837 Brook Rd, Caledonia
Camperdownii Elm (Scottish Nobilitree), believed to be a Civil War Memorial	152 years	Nicholas & Ann-Marie Baldukas, 3609 Waterbury Ln, Mt. Pleasant
White Oak (What's My Point?), believed to be an Indian Pointer Tree	190 years	Pringle Nature Ctr., 9800 160th Ave., Bristol
Bur Oak (Foak Lore)	220 years	Seno/ KRLT Conservancy, 3606 Dyer Lake Rd., Burlington
Larch (The Song of the Larch)	87 years	Lynne & Thomas Fiser, 216 N. Vincennes, North Bay

Please visit Hoy's website: www.hoyaudubon.org
for all Trees We Love 2017 awardee pictures and narratives.

-Sue Schuit

Hoy Board of Directors

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, February 8, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive

Mount Pleasant, WI 53406

All members are welcome to attend!

Open board positions:

- ♦ Vice President
- ♦ Program Chair

Contact Hoy to help!

Newsletter Editor

Kristin Wegner

Ideas for the newsletter?

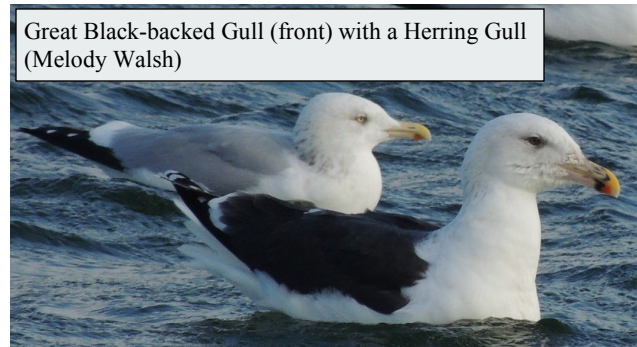
Send your suggestions, recaps of birding seminars/activities, fun facts, and birding tidbits to the Newsletter Editor at:
Hoy Audubon, PO Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404 or email to:
hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org

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

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Great Black-backed Gull vs. Lesser Black-backed Gull

Separating the Great Black-backed Gull (GBBG) from the Lesser Black-backed Gull (LBBG) can be tricky. When seen together, it gets easier, as the GBBG is much larger than the LBBG. (Compare their relative sizes to the more common Herring Gull in the photos below.) One of the frustrating things about gulls is their variability in plumage, especially the juveniles, but these tips should enable you to more easily identify typical adult birds.



Great Black-backed Gull (front) with a Herring Gull (Melody Walsh)

One thing to look for is the shade of the mantle. The GBBG is very dark, almost jet black in color, whereas the LBBG is lighter and more of a charcoal gray. (Some are a bit darker, but not as dark as a GBBG.)

The leg color is also very important as they are very different. An adult GBBG has long, pale pink legs while the adult LBBG's legs are shorter and bright yellow in color. (See photo below.)

The larger GBBG also has a large, blocky head with a massive bill and normally a very noticeable gonydeal angle on the lower mandible while the LBBG has a more petite, slender, fairly long bright yellow bill with not much, if any, gonydeal angle.



Lesser Black-backed (left), Herring (center), and Ring-billed (right) Gulls (John Dixon)



LBBG with streaking (John Dixon)

Another thing to look for is the very limited or non-existent streaking on the head and neck of the GBBG in all seasons, while in non-breeding season, the LBBG has dark, heavy streaking on the head and neck, very often concentrating around the eye giving it a somewhat masked appearance. (In the spring through early fall, both of these gulls have heads and necks with no streaking, but the other aforementioned field marks should apply to adult birds.)

In flight the GBBG is massive looking with rather ponderous, slow, heavy wingbeats. There is one large white spot at the tip of primary number ten (the outermost primary). The primaries are jet black and slightly darker than the wings and mantle. The LBBG in flight is noticeably slimmer and more agile with one small white spot at the tip of primary ten. The primaries are also jet black, thus being quite a bit darker than the wings and mantle. In the last few years these gulls have been seen in the Kenosha /Racine areas at all times of the year, so keep an eye out.

- Article by John Dixon

Hoy's 2017 Fledglings

Here are the 2017 fledgling totals from Hoy members' monitoring: 347 nest boxes (down from 379 last year) produced:

- ◆ 620 Eastern Bluebirds (close to last year's 623)
- ◆ 870 Tree Swallows (down from last year's 949)
- ◆ 95 House Wrens (down from last year's 113)
- ◆ 9 Black-capped Chickadees (down from last year's 21)

Purple Martins had a good year, increasing from 2016's 183 fledglings to 193 in 2017.

Many thanks to all the box and trail monitors for their help and dedication, to Helen Pugh and Karen Gavahan for monitoring martin houses, and to Stan Rosenstiel for coordinating all the data. A special thanks to Bob Stocks who again donated his time to construct and repair the boxes, as he has for many years. If you are interested in becoming a monitor, please contact Stan Rosenstiel at 262-694-2206.



White Oak,
Pringle Nature Center
(John Krerowicz)

Advice for 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.**

Volunteer Opportunities

Calling all Hoy Members: We have some upcoming volunteer opportunities in 2018:

Sundays: Jan 14 / Feb 4 / Mar 4, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Great Lakes Farmers Market @ Milaeger's
4838 Douglas Avenue, Racine, WI

We're looking for members who would like to join us in extolling the virtues of birding with Hoy Audubon Society at our table at the Farmers Market. Come talk birds with us!

Sunday, March 18, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Sugarin' Off Pancake Breakfast
River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd
Racine, WI

On numerous occasions, River Bend has graciously allowed Hoy the use of their facilities as a meeting space. You may also be aware of their *Sugarin' Off Pancake Breakfasts*, open to the public on Sundays throughout March. In the interest of returning their kindness and maintaining a beneficial relationship with RBNC, Hoy has offered our services to work one of the breakfasts. Hoy's president, Frank Sharkozy, is enthusiastic about this opportunity, "In the past my daughter and I have enjoyed volunteering at many of the breakfasts and thought of them as one of the harbingers of spring. I look forward to volunteering again, and I hope you will consider joining me and other fellow birders in showing River Bend our appreciation."

If you're available to volunteer for an hour or two (or more) at any of these events, please contact Frank Sharkozy at frank.sharkozy@hoyaudubon.org or 262-770-2481.

Help Sponsor the WBBA II

To help raise funds for the Wisconsin Breeding Birds Atlas II, Hoy Audubon is sponsoring the European Goldfinch, a non-native but showy species that has been confirmed breeding in state. Hoy will donate \$200.00 per year over the 5-year atlassing period to sponsor this bird for the atlas. If you would like to help contribute to Hoy's sponsorship, please contact Jenny Wenzel at jenny.wenzel@hoyaudubon.org.



European Goldfinch
(John Dixon)

Hoy's Upcoming Activities

Thursday, January 4, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting, Program: Winter Birds

Kenosha Northside Public Library

1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140

Rick Fare will discuss how birds survive winter, explain how we can help them, and show photos of birds that spend winter with us.

Sunday, January 14, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunity: Great Lakes Farmers Market

Milaeger's, 4838 Douglas Avenue, Racine, WI

Hoy will have a table at the Farmers Market; see page 3 for details.

Saturday, January 20, 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!

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

Hoy Meeting, Program: Owls and Short-eared Owls

Kenosha Northside Public Library

1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140

Beth Goepfinger, Naturalist at Bong State Recreational Area, will talk about owls, with emphasis on the Short-eared Owl. Hoy will follow up with a field trip to Bong on February 3!

Saturday, February 3, 4:30 p.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Owl Prowl at Bong State Recreational Area

Meet at Visitor's Center

We'll watch for Short-eared Owls as the sun sets, then we'll listen for other owl species. WI State Parks vehicle admission sticker required to park within Bong.

Sundays, February 4, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunity: Great Lakes Farmers Market

Milaeger's, 4838 Douglas Avenue, Racine, WI

Hoy will have a table at the Farmers Market; see page 3 for details.

Friday, February 16 through Monday, February 19

The Great Backyard Bird Count!

A world-wide, joint effort by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society, and Bird Studies Canada—open to all. Visit gbbc.birdcount.org for more information.

Saturday, February 17, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Waterfowl and Gulls on the Racine Lakefront

Myers Park, Racine

We'll begin at Myers Park then make our way northward to the Racine Harbor. Bring your binoculars (and spotting scope if possible) and dress for the weather!

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

Hoy Meeting: Seeing the World Through the Eyes of Birds

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

Animals in general and birds in particular “see” the world in ways that are different from humans. Dennis Miller, Volunteer Naturalist at Wehr Nature Center, will explain the many characteristics of bird vision and contrast them with the vision capabilities of humans. While it's not possible to actually “see” through the eyes of birds, our technology can be used to gain some understanding of what birds and other animals see that humans do not.

Activities, continued

Sunday, March 4, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunity: Great Lakes Farmers Market

Milaeger's, 4838 Douglas Avenue, Racine, WI

Hoy will have a table at the Farmers Market; see page 3 for details.

Sunday, March 18, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunity: Sugarin' Off Pancake Breakfast

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

Hoy needs volunteers to help serve breakfast at RBNC; see page 3 for details.

Saturday, March 24, 8:30 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Eagle Lake Waterfowl

Meet at Eagle Lake Park (north side of lake)

We'll meet at Eagle Lake Park (north side of the lake, south of Church Rd.) to bird the lake, then we'll check the wetlands west and north of the intersection of Hwy 11 and 75 on the way back.

Check our website prior to the trip; if the lake is still frozen by late March, we may go birding elsewhere.

- ◆ View the Hoy Honker in full color at www.hoyaudubon.org
- ◆ Visit Hoy on Facebook at 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 _____

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**