



Myers Beach Cleanup

On Saturday, August 25, several Hoyers and friends gathered at Samuel Myers Park in Racine for a beach cleanup. While we did haul in quite a bit of trash, the beach did seem cleaner than in years past, so that's good news. (And the nice walkways and native plantings are really transforming the park!) What proved most tricky to pick up were the tiny bits of plastic that had broken off from larger pieces after the plastic had degraded in the sun. Itty-bitty plastic and Styrofoam flecks floated in the water, just out of reach. (A note for next year: bring fine-meshed nets.)

Many thanks to those who left the beach a cleaner place!



Special thanks to three volunteers who aren't pictured: Debra Kruk, who was taking this photo, and Joe Vass and Helen Pugh, who were still cleaning the beach so diligently that they missed being in the photo!

PS: Keep an eye out for trash on your own beach walks; every piece of garbage you collect is one less piece birds or other wildlife could mistake for food.

Knot Your Average September

As of mid-September, Racine's North Beach has hosted not one but two Red Knots. Drew Goldberg found this lovely adult still in breeding plumage on September 8:



Drew Goldberg

Then on September 10, Rick Fare found an immature Red Knot at North Beach as well. Note the scaling on the feathers, as detailed in this photo:



John Dixon

Both birds gave nice looks to the birders who flocked to the beach. Good luck, travelers!

Christmas Bird Counts

Save the dates and watch Hoy's website and Facebook page for details and updates.

Date TBA

Burlington CBC

To sign up, contact Nick Mimier at nickmimier@yahoo.com.

Saturday, December 15

Racine CBC

To sign up, contact Eric Howe at cbc@hoyaudubon.org or 262-498-3355.

Friday, December 21

Kenosha CBC

To sign up, contact Valerie Mann at naturalist@princlenc.org or kenoshacbc@gmail.com or 262-857-8008.

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, October 18, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Festival Foods meeting room,
6000 31st Street, Kenosha, WI 53144

All members are welcome to attend!

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

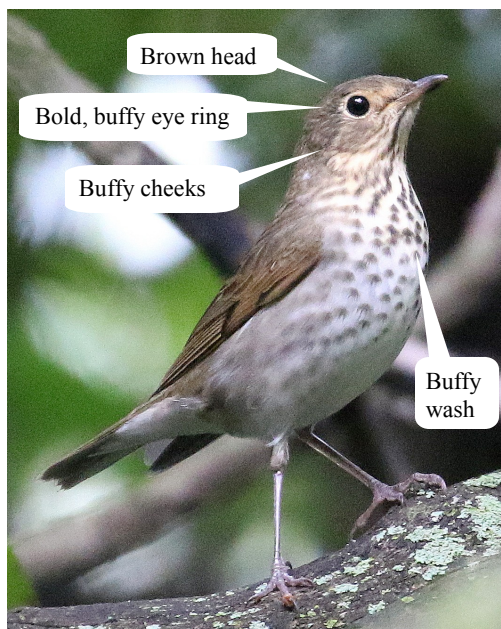
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Swainson's vs. Gray-Cheeked Thrush

Now that the fall season is approaching, many migrants are headed south through the area. Two of them that are quite often seen and can be confusing are the Swainson's Thrush and Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Both of these thrushes are close to the same size but there are field marks to help separate them. Here are a few hints that should help with their identification.



Let's start with the Swainson's Thrush, shown at the left. It has an olive-brown to almost very light tan head, back, wings and tail.

The breast is rather boldly spotted with blackish spots, with the spots going down one third to one half of the front and sides of the breast and belly. The upper breast has a buffy wash.

The best and most obvious field mark is the bold buffy eye ring and buffy cheeks. These light feathers really make the large, dark eye stand out.

By comparison, the Gray-cheeked Thrush, shown at the right, has a rather cold gray head, back, wings, and tail.

The breast is also speckled rather boldly with blackish spots, but the upper breast does not have the buffy wash that the Swainson's Thrush has.

The cheek is also cold gray in color with a slight grayish white eye ring compared to the buffy plumage of the Swainson's Thrush in these two areas.

Each bird has a slight variation in these plumage characteristics and sometimes are not as bold as in the pictures here or in a field guide, but the majority are very well marked in the areas of the cheek and eye ring. Even the less boldly marked individuals normally are marked well enough to make an ID. So if you get a good look at these two thrushes, it is the difference in the facial field marks that is what most easily separates them.



- article and photos by John Dixon

Purple Martin Report

The Hoy Audubon Purple Martin Conservation Initiative did very well this year! Overall, 194 chicks were fledged; 179 in Racine, and 12 in Kenosha. A short breakdown:



The Racine Water Department is now hosting four houses—each with 14 nest boxes—with an average nest occupancy ratio of nearly 70%. That is quite an impressively high percentage as the fourth house was just added this spring. The colony was started in 2006 with one box, and has always been productive. It is quite an active colony, and can be cheerfully noisy from May through mid-July. (You can view it from the park adjacent to the Racine Yacht Club.) This location fledged 117.

The oldest location is a 14-unit house at the Coast Guard Station at the mouth of the Root River in Pugh Marina. It has been an active colony for about 20 years. This year it fledged 42 birds with an occupancy of 71%.

The Gateway house is just off the upper parking lot off 11th street. This 14-unit house has had it's problems—mostly due to House Sparrows—but is now on the upswing. It had 5 nests for 35% occupancy, and managed to fledge 20 young.

Kenosha's Water Department at the mouth of the river had two boxes installed. Disaster struck in the form of a micro burst their second summer with the boxes loaded with eggs and chicks. Both houses were knocked down. It was July 3rd and was heart wrenching. After that disaster, the site had two boxes reinstalled. Sparrows moved in and Purple Martins never returned in their original numbers. This year 12 young fledged.

Hoy has two other Purple Martin houses, but they have never attracted Purple Martins. One is located at Pringle nature center, and the other in North Bay on the Lakefront. The monitors are Stan Rosenstiel in Kenosha, Tom and Karen Gavahan and myself in Racine. If you have an interest in learning more about these fascinating birds, please contact one of the monitors. We would like to train additional monitors to expand this conservation effort. Can we break 200 next year?!

- article and photo by Helen Pugh

Trees We Love: Coming Soon!

Sue Schuit sent us this preview: *We have awarded three trees and are in full swing for this year's TWL program. We also have two honorary awards this year which will have descriptive signs with the goal of information regarding species and protection (a Cottonwood in Burlington and a Hoptree on the east hill just east of the Shoop Golf Course parking lot).*

Looking forward to seeing this year's winners!



Kristin Wegner

Red Knot with Red Pen
(time to clean the beach!)

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.**

Upcoming Activities

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

Hoy Meeting, Program: Climate Change: Global and Local
River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI
 Aszya Summers, Conservation Education Manager at the Racine Zoo, will discuss climate change, including the science of climate change, misconceptions about it, and how the impacts are felt at both a global and a local level.

Saturday, October 6, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. (backup date: Oct 13)

Hoy Field Trip: Hawk Watch at Chiwaukee Prairie
121st St. and 2nd Ave., Pleasant Prairie, WI 53158

Hoy will meet at Chiwaukee to watch for migrating raptors. There is roadside parking in this area, as well as a portable bathroom unit. Bring your binoculars, a chair, water, snacks, and layered clothing in case it's breezy. If migration conditions are poor, we will postpone the trip until October 13. Watch Hoy's website and Facebook page for details!

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

Hoy Meeting, Program: Arizona Birding
Kenosha Northside Public Library

1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53140

John Krerowicz, Hoy Audubon Society's publicity chair, will give a photo and video presentation of the birds he saw during 2016 and 2017 trips to Arizona.

Saturday, November 3, 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).

Saturday, November 10, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding
Shoop Park, Racine

Friday, November 16, 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. (Note that a WI State Parks vehicle admission sticker is required to park within Bong.)

Saturday, November 17, 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!

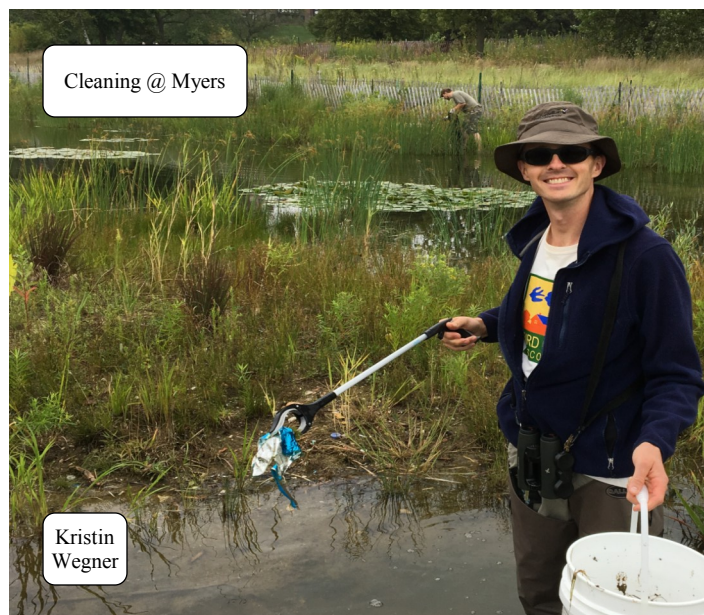
Saturday, November 24, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding
Shoop Park, Racine

Saturday, December 1, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Kenosha Lakefront Birding
7825 First Avenue, Kenosha, WI 53143

Our December holiday plans are still in progress—watch Hoy's website for details!



◆ 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.

Join or renew online at: www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/

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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.

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