



Trees We Love 2019

2019 Trees We Love Winners

Tree	Approx. Age	Location & Connections
Black Maple	150 years	<i>Mount Pleasant</i> Steward: Linda DuVall
Red Oak	180 years	<i>Racine</i> Nominator: Bernardine Hoff Stewards: The VandeLeest Family

“Where did you go to, if I may ask?” said Thorin to Gandalf as they rode along.

“To look ahead,” said he.

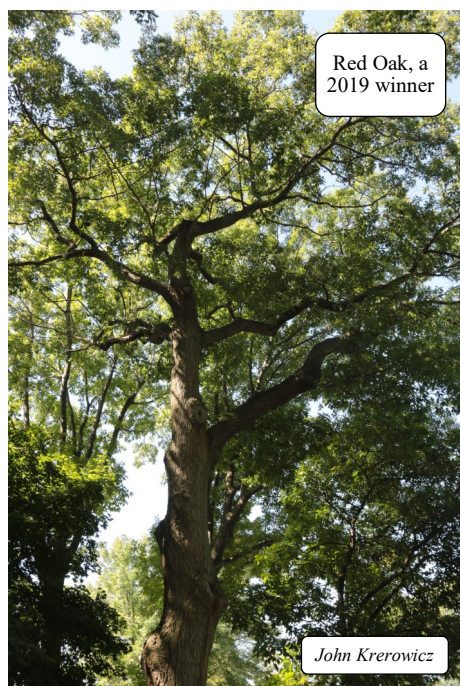
“And what brought you back in the nick of time?”

“Looking behind,” said he.”

— J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit or There and Back Again*

Hard science tells us that the sound of the wind in the trees is not “literally” tree song; trees have no control over the sounds wind causes as it vibrates limbs and rustles leaves. We can’t hear wind, only the sounds it makes as it is blowing through something.

One of the more melodic and appreciated “somethings” is the wind blowing through trees.



I’ve always loved the different songs the trees sing in different seasons. The grindings, crackings and groanings, the sometimes muted and muffled or the startling booming noise of tree limbs rubbing irritably against one another on a frigid winter day. The sleeping tree’s grumbles remind me of a restless night tossing and turning or the annoyance we feel and the complaints we utter when the alarm goes off and we must exit the soft, warm bed and force ourselves to enter another cold, winter day.

Spring’s song is softer, the first murmurs and whispers from the waving catkins and just-emerging leaves; the cold groans and grumbles of winter become mild complaints and quick skirmishes as branches lock or tussle in mock sword play.

Summer tree song – you’ve blinked and trees are in full leaf. The low wind whispers and swirls, the high canopy gales heave the tallest trees and create powerful sounding swooshes in a warm wind you barely feel. The summer rains that require a hard, pounding drench or a long, steady soak to make it thru the dense cover and wet the ground underneath. Many times during the dry months I cross my fingers in hopes that the sounds I am hearing are not wind, but blessed rain. Summer rain song and summer wind song is difficult to distinguish and the two combined can be a godsend as well as downright alarming and awe-inspiring.

The fierce autumn storms; the driving rain and high winds change the rush and swoosh tune of the summer to sweeping rustles and tossing spins. Withered leaves launched can be heard clattering and bouncing as they drift down to add to the layer of crunch underfoot. The obstinate oaks manage to hang on to their stiff leaves in the squalls as the maples let go in gusts of gold and red.

– Excerpts from Awardee Narrative: Sue Schuit

Special thanks to all who have helped make the 4th year of Trees We Love a success, once again!

- ♦ John Krerowicz – photographer extraordinaire
- ♦ Kevin Nolan – on-site viewing, and expert arborist
- ♦ Helen Pugh – on-site viewing
- ♦ Carol Wiechers – photography framing
- ♦ Mary and Phil Hines – generous benefactors and supporters



Get out of the weeds
Shallow roots in the soil
Get into the trees
Reaching up towards the light.
– Sue Schuit

Please go to: hoyaudubon.org/TreesWeLove to view all awards, pictures, and narratives.

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting:
Thursday, February 13, 7:00 p.m.
 Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive
 Mount Pleasant, WI 53406

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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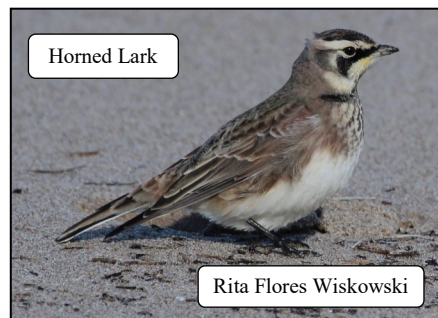
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Horned Lark vs. Lapland Longspur vs. Snow Bunting

With the change of season, it is now time to focus on birds that spend the winter in our area. Three of them, Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting, are really not similar in plumage but are often found together along roadways gritting (eating gravel to aid in digestion) and in open fields, often ones that have just had manure spread on them. Here are some ID marks to focus on when birds are seen alone or in mixed flocks.

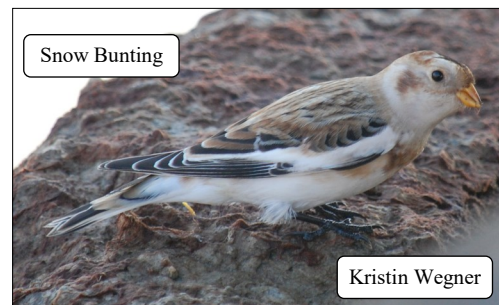
Let's start with Horned Lark, normally the most often seen of the three. They are slender birds, about seven inches in length. As their name implies, they have two tiny black horns on their head which can sometimes be seen in the field. There is a white supercilium, a black mask through the eye, a rather short, thin black beak, pale to bright yellow throat, a black crescent of feathers on the upper breast, and a whitish belly.

The nape is a rather pale pinkish-rust, while the back is a dull gray. The tail in flight is black with pale central feathers and pale outer feathers. This is a description of the male with the female being similar, but paler.



Let's now go to the Lapland Longspur. It is just a little over six inches in length, maybe a little chunkier than the Horned Lark. In winter plumage which is the plumage, most often seen here, it is rather large headed with a short, pale, conical beak, a pale rusty supercilium and auricular patch surrounded by black feathering, a whitish throat, and a blackish breast band. Their belly is white with rather heavy black streaking along the flank. The back is dark gray with heavy rusty and black streaking, almost obscuring the gray coloring. The greater coverts and primaries are a bright rusty color. The tail is dark but shows one white outer feather in flight. This is a description of the male, with the female and first winter birds being similar in color and pattern but paler.

The third bird of our winter trio is Snow Bunting. They are similar in habits and size to the lark and longspur, but they walk with a rather shuffling gait and have quite distinctive plumage. In winter plumage, which is what is seen here, is quite striking. The male has tawny markings on the crown, face, and upper breast with a short, conical, pinkish bill. With back is also tawny in color with narrow blackish streaking. The belly is bright white as is the lower edge of the wing. In flight the wing shows a large white patch with bold black wing tips. The tail is white with a black crescent shape of feathers in the middle. While in flight, male birds may appear to be mostly white. Females and first winter birds are similar to males in pattern, but have more tawny feathering on the face and upper breast, and less white in the wing and tail.



- article by John Dixon

At Long Last, the Atlas Field Work is Done!



Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II

2019 marked the fifth and final year of the Wisconsin Breeding Birds Atlas II. Huge thanks to all the dedicated birders who went out and completed survey blocks! A statewide season summary can be found at:

ebird.org/atlaswi/news/fifth-and-final-season-summary

Work now continues by the state team to compile the final results for publication in the next couple years.



Yellow-breasted Chat carrying food for young — Eric Howe

Highlights from Racine and Kenosha counties during the atlas period:

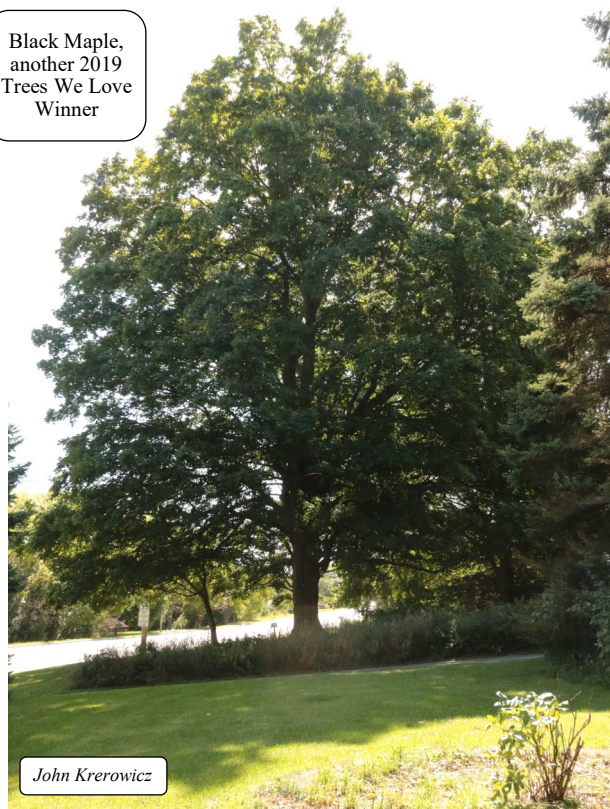
Racine County: 93 species confirmed breeding out of ~135

hoysaudubon.org/atlas/racine

Kenosha County: 89 species confirmed breeding out of ~125

hoysaudubon.org/atlas/kenosha

Black Maple,
another 2019
Trees We Love
Winner



John Krerowicz

Hoy's 2019 Nest Box Results

The results are in: This year, nest boxes monitored by dedicated volunteers fledged these birds:

- ◆ Eastern Bluebirds: 619
- ◆ Tree Swallows: 963
- ◆ House Wrens: 56
- ◆ Purple Martins: 236

Also noteworthy: Rick Fare had the opportunity to take a look at an American Kestrel nest box near the Racine landfill in October, and there was some evidence of nesting: dragonfly wings and a bird leg!

Three Cheers (and many Chirps!) for Rick!

Hoy's own Rick Fare was awarded the 2019 BRAW Merit Award from the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin for his outstanding efforts in bluebird conservation.

Rick monitors nest boxes on bluebird trails and has given many educational programs highlighting these birds and the challenges they face.

Congratulations, Rick!

Upcoming May Birding Events in WI

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO) is hosting its 2020 Convention in Two Rivers, WI, from May 14-17, 2020. Visit wsobirds.org/what-we-do/annual-convention for more details!

A bit farther north, the third annual Washington Islands Birding Festival will be held that same weekend. It's a fun opportunity to bird some of the islands off the Door County peninsula. Watch the wianc.org website for details. A couple of Hoy Audubon members will be guides again this year, so if you do attend, be sure to say Hi!

Upcoming Activities

Thursday, January 9, 7:00 p.m. (**2nd** Thursday in January)
Hoy Meeting, Program: Native Plants Improve Water Quality
Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406
 One essential aspect of native plants is the relationship they have with water and how it moves across the land. Most unfortunately, human activity has resulted in highly degraded watersheds throughout the Root-Pike basin. However, with the reintroduction of native plant species, we can begin to ease the burden currently borne by our rivers, lakes and streams. Nan Calvert will discuss the ways in which native plants accomplish this important feat and how we can all be partners in this endeavor.

Saturday, January 18, 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, February 6, 7:00 p.m.
Hoy Meeting, Program: Dragonflies & Damselflies
Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406
 Come experience an image-intensive, up close and personal presentation of the insect order Odonata, a visually splendid group of insects with ancestors dating back over 300 million years to a time when dragonfly-like creatures with two and a half foot wingspans ruled the air. Through macro and micro photography, Marla Garrison, instructor of biology at McHenry County College, will present the captivating Lilliputian world of local dragonfly and damselfly fauna including their anatomy, life history, behaviors and diversity.

Friday, February 14 through Monday, February 17
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 15, 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 5, 7:00 p.m.
Hoy Meeting: Chiwaukee Prairie
Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast's Trefoil Oaks Program Center 3901 1st St, Kenosha, WI 53144
 Pam Holy, President of the [Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund](#), will highlight the history as well as recent preservation and restoration efforts at this southeast Wisconsin "Wetland Gem."

Saturday, March 21, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
EcoFest Racine
Gateway Technical College 1001 S. Main Street, Racine, WI 53403
 Visit Hoy's table (and many other interesting tables!) at EcoFest!

Saturday, March 28, 8:30 a.m. (or 9:00 a.m. at Eagle Lake)
Hoy Field Trip: Eagle Lake Waterfowl
Meet at Hwy 20 Park and Ride at 8:30 a.m. if you're carpooling
 We'll arrive at Eagle Lake park (north side) at 9:00 a.m. We'll bird the lake then check the wetlands near 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.

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.**

- ♦ View the Hoy Honker in full color at hoyaudubon.org
- ♦ Visit Hoy on Facebook at facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety

Join [Hoy Audubon](#) 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: hoyaudubon.org/donate/

Or complete the form below and mail it with a check payable to **Hoy Audubon Society**.

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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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**Send check and information to: Hoy Audubon Society
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