



Purple Martin Report for 2021

Hoy’s Purple Martin colonies were very successful with the Racine Water Department again producing the bulk of fledglings...198! All four boxes are filled to capacity. The Racine Coast Guard Station box is also at 100% occupancy and produced 62 fledglings. The Gateway box had 5 nests (an increase of 1 nest), but only produced 17 chicks that fledged. Kenosha’s Water Department fledged 4. We fell 7 birds shy of last year’s record number of 289.

The good news is that we have enlarged our team of monitors! With their help, we may be able to once again expand conservation efforts for this species.

Many thanks go to the new Racine and Kenosha monitors Annie Shace, Terry Ansel, Lorrie Boomsma, Debby Eisel, and Marianne Giannis.

Thanks to our long-standing monitors Karen and Tom Gavahan and Stan Rosenstiel.

All of these folks go above and beyond in the interest of these birds.



Tom and Karen explain aging and record keeping to new monitors Annie and Terry.

Purple Martins, continued



Annie and Lorrie help transfer the chicks from the holding bucket to the new nest during nest changes.

The gourd system installed at Gateway last year had shown promise early in the season with two gourds having partial nests. Unfortunately, they were abandoned as nest building began in earnest in the old house. We have installed decoys on the gourds and will report next year. We wish all our birds a safe migration and will hope for their return next April.

- article and photos by Helen Pugh

Christmas Bird Counts
Save the dates and watch Hoy’s website and Facebook page for details and updates.

<p>Tuesday, Dec 14 (backup Dec 15) Burlington CBC To sign up, contact Nick Mimier at nickmimier@yahoo.com or 262-363-8856.</p>	<p>Saturday, Dec 18 (backup Dec 19) Racine CBC To sign up, contact Eric Howe at cbc@hoyaudubon.org or 262-498-3355.</p>	<p>Tuesday, Dec 21 (backup Dec 22) Kenosha CBC To sign up, contact Valerie Mann at kenoshacbc@gmail.com or 219-477-0006.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Hoy Board of Directors

- President:**
 Jenny Wenzel 262-488-8077
- Vice-President:**
 Frank Sharkozy 262-770-2481
- Treasurer:**
 Sue Schuit 262-752-5955
- Secretary:**
 Karen Gavahan 262-633-7136
- Directors:**
- John Dixon
 - Rick Fare 262-902-9020
 - Eric Howe
 - John Krerowicz 262-694-8736
 - Helen Pugh 262-308-6419
 - Kristin Wegner

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting:

October 14, 2021. We will continue to meet via phone for now.

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@hoysaudubon.org

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

Copyright © 2021 Hoy Audubon Society. Copyright © of each work belongs to the author or creator of the work.

Purple Finch vs. House Finch

Our “bird vs. bird” writer John Dixon is taking a break for some quality birding time, so please enjoy one of his first articles! (photos by Kristin Wegner)

It’s the time of year to get ready for winter finches. One of them is the Purple Finch, which is quite similar to the House Finch, a year-round resident of southeastern Wisconsin. Both finches will readily visit a bird feeder for sunflower and other seeds. Seeing the two together at a feeder is helpful as then the differences are readily apparent. Here are some hints to tell them apart:

A male Purple Finch is rather purplish-red on the head, nape, back, rump, and breast with purplish-red streaking on his sides. His thin wing bars are also purplish-red. He has a white undertail without streaks. His bill is heavy, conical, and straight.



Purple Finch

The male House Finch has red coloring restricted to the forehead, upper breast, and rump. His back is brownish with some light streaking. His sides and undertail are white with brown streaking, and his two thin wing bars are whitish. His bill is less heavy and has a curved culmen (upper mandible).



House Finch



Purple Finch

The female Purple Finch is a rather dark brown bird with a dark brown crown, a bold white eyebrow stripe, dark cheeks, and a bold brown moustache stripe. Her breast and belly are whitish with bold, short, dark streaks. The back is dark with distinct streaking. She shows two faint wing bars. Her bill is heavy, conical, and straight.



House Finch

The female House Finch is more of a soft mousy brownish-gray color with a plain head without any bold markings. Her breast and belly are also light brownish-gray with blurry grayish streaks. Her back is light brownish with indistinct streaking. The wings have two rather distinct whitish wing bars. Her bill is less heavy and has a curved culmen.

Picnic with the Peregrines

Hoy Audubon has had “picnics with the peregrines” for years. The event started shortly after they began nesting in the hack box, but let me back up for a bit of history. In 1990, Greg Septon was beginning his Falcon Recovery Program. Our club helped to purchase four falcon chicks. I remember that they cost about \$2000 each. So, that year they were placed in the hack box and released. They flew away.... for a long time! Finally, twelve years later, falcons returned to begin breeding atop our County Courthouse. Several pairs of adults successfully raised chicks almost every year.



Proud parents R/13 (left) and Beaster (right) on the Racine Falcon Cam in 2012

Last year there was a new female on site. Perhaps due to her youth, the nesting failed. Remember, that was the year of Covid-19, and everything was cancelled! I’m pleased to report that this year they raised three chicks that successfully fledged. Our picnic group was treated to seeing one newly-fledged chick calling from a nearby church, two chicks still in the hack box (one calling on the porch), and adults soaring around and perching nearby here and there. There was a lot of action, and much excitement from our group of bird lovers and photographers. The hack box is empty now as the young learn their way in the world.

The birds are nomads...peregrine literally means, “wanderer.” (They are found on every continent except Antarctica!) You may find them here in the winter—sometimes sitting on the harbor ice having a bit of lunch, or they may be traveling. I hope they will be back next year for another successful season, and that I will see you at the courthouse in mid-June.

- Helen Pugh

A History of Racine’s Courthouse Falcons

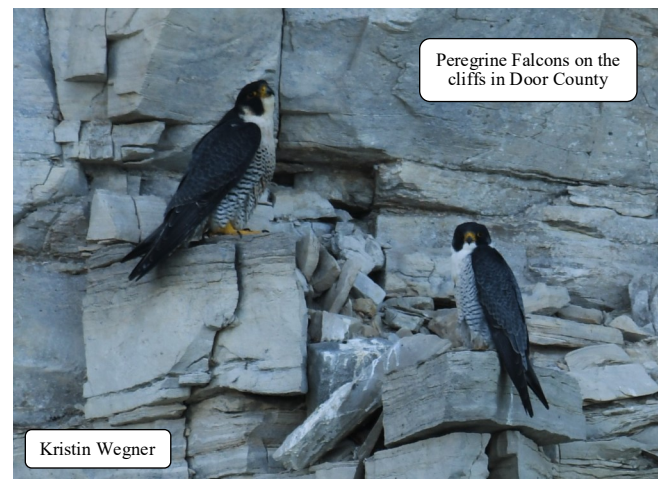
Thanks to Greg Septon’s amazing work and thorough documentation, we have a complete history of peregrines nesting at the Racine County Courthouse:

Year	Female	Male	Fledglings
2002	Lily	unknown	1F
2003	Lily	Scott	1F
2004	Lily	Scott	1F, 1M
2005	Lily	Scott	3M
2006	Lily	unknown	4M
2007	Lily	unknown	2F, 1M
2008	Lily	Beaster	2F, 1M
2009	R/13	Beaster	1M
2010	R/13	Beaster	2F, 1M
2011	R/13	Beaster	3F, 1M
2012	R/13	Beaster	3M
2013	R/13	Beaster	2F
2014	R/13	Beaster	3F
2015	R/13	Beaster	3M
2016	R/13	Beaster	2F, 1M
2017	R/13	Beaster	3F
2018	R/13	Beaster	1M, 2F
2019	R/13	Beaster	2F, 2M
2020*	New, unknown	unknown	-
2021**	unknown	unknown	3

*COVID-19 interrupted the normal monitoring process

**2021 details still pending.

For details about the amazing progress of peregrines in Wisconsin, visit: www.wisconsinfalconwatch.net/WI_FALCONWATCH.html



Peregrine Falcons on the cliffs in Door County

Kristin Wegner

Upcoming Activities

Due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19, Hoy will limit our field trips to activities/locations where we can maintain social distancing.

If you attend our field trips, we ask that you observe the latest CDC guidelines regarding masking and social distancing. Please bring your own water, snacks, and optics (binoculars and spotting scopes) to help minimize contact. We will also not be carpooling to events as we have in the past.

If you have questions or need directions to field trip locations, contact hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org.

Saturday, October 9, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. (backup date: Oct 16)

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 16. Watch Hoy's website and Facebook page for details!

Saturday, November 6, 9:00 a.m.

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

We'll meet at the Shoop parking lot to look for fall migrants. We may walk to the Wind Point lighthouse as well, depending on lake level. Dress for cold & windy weather and wear sturdy walking shoes.

Friday, November 12, 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.) If excessive wind and/or rain is forecasted, this event may be canceled.

Saturday, November 13, 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 20, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Eagle Lake Waterfowl

We'll arrive at Eagle Lake park (north side) at 9:00 a.m. and look for migrating waterfowl. Hoy will keep an eye on the lake leading up to the trip, and if waterfowl levels are low, our backup location will be Shoop Park in Racine. Watch Hoy's website and Facebook page for updates!

Saturday, November 27, 9:00 a.m.

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

We'll meet at the Shoop parking lot to look for fall migrants. We may walk to the Wind Point lighthouse as well, depending on lake level. Dress for cold & windy weather and wear sturdy walking shoes.

Saturday, December 4, 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!

Watch out for weird winter wanderers! John Dixon photographed this Bullock's Oriole last December in Door County!



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

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**