



Little Nature Libraries

“Birds fill us with joy and a profound connection to nature. Their beauty, songs, and personalities capture the imaginations of people around the world; their heroic migrations forge tangible connections between distant habitats. Bringing people together to appreciate and understand birds is the first step in inspiring them to take action to protect birds.” – Audubon Society

Hoy members may recall a survey our board sent out several years ago asking for ideas for projects. Hoy has received generous donations during the pandemic, and, as an all-volunteer organization, our overhead is quite small. During the pandemic, expenses declined as meetings were not occurring. Couple that with an increase in donations, and Hoy is financially healthy and in search of projects to engage Hoy members, and share our love of birds and the natural environment with others.

With that in mind we have recently purchased, painted, and installed two Little Nature libraries. This summer, one library was installed on the grounds of the Dekoven Foundation in Racine, and one library was installed on the lighthouse grounds in Wind Point.



Nature Library at Dekoven,
photo by Sue Schuit

Step one was to obtain permission from both Dekoven and Wind Point. After going thru several layers (administrators, grounds committees...), permission for placement was granted, and the libraries were ordered last fall. They were completed (unpainted) and shipped in February. Denise Zingg of Spectrum Gallery was commissioned to paint them in early spring. The painting was completed in May, and both libraries were installed in July.



Little Nature Library painting in progress, photo by Sue Schuit



Sue with the Nature Library at Wind Point,
photo by Helen Pugh

The libraries have proven popular – particularly at the lighthouse. We are running out of books;

Hoy members, we are in need of additional bird and nature books!

Fiction, non-fiction, children’s books, periodicals, bulletins, newsletters...any items with a bird or nature theme are most appreciated.

Stop by either/both locations and share the love. Birds and their environments are at an “all hands on deck” moment. Our hope is shared stories and news will encourage others to join the flock!

“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.” – Cicero

- Sue Schuit

Recent Hoy Conservation Impact Projects

Thanks to a very generous donation from Jane Raymond in honor of her beloved grandfather, Jack Zabrowsky, we have recently purchased 6 winches to update the mechanics of the Purple Martin houses. Thank you, Jane!

We have also recently had 51 high-quality Bluebird boxes made, given a \$500 donation to Riverbend Nature Center as formal appreciation for hosting many of our monthly meetings, and have become a permanently acknowledged sponsor to Hawthorne Hollow’s recent addition of a lookout platform.

Future projects under consideration are purchases of bird collision window deterrent decals to share, free of charge, with member’s as well as the creation of a brochure with illustrations and facts detailing our Trees We Love program.

As always, we welcome feedback, participation and further ideas/suggestions regarding projects, resources, and meeting subjects!

- Sue Schuit

Hoy Board of Directors

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting:

October 26, 2023

We will continue to meet via phone and Zoom for now.

Renew or Donate Online

To join Hoy, renew your Chapter Supporter membership, or make a donation, visit www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/

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: hojnewsletter@hojaudubon.org

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Bird Travels with John:

In Pursuit of the Large-billed Tern

After returning from a birding trip to Alaska in mid-June, I saw on eBird and Facebook that TWO Large-billed Terns were being seen in Florida. With many things to do after returning home from vacation, I was not able to go right away to try and see them.

After a couple of weeks, I was able to get away and try for them as they were both still being seen. After loading my Jeep Grand Cherokee, I headed for one of the spots where one was still being seen east of Fort Myers. Upon arrival, after an all night and good part of the next day drive, I arrived. There were many disgruntled birders there who hadn't spotted the bird all day.



After 10 minutes, a birder yelled, "I have the tern!" He saw the tern in flight, and it disappeared behind a hill of the construction site where it was hanging out. After about 10 minutes of searching, I spotted the juvenile Large-billed Tern in a flooded area of the gravel of the construction site! It put on a great show, feeding, preening, and flying around the area, sometimes being harassed by the many Black-necked Stilts in the area. After several fly arounds, it disappeared to the south east and out of sight. Needless to say, I was ecstatic to see it just after my arrival. As is my ritual after seeing a new bird, I celebrated with a Long Island Iced Tea and ribeye steak at a local Longhorn Steakhouse.



After a well deserved night of sleep, I headed home, happy after seeing an ABA Code 5 bird!

- article and photos by John Dixon, Hoy Field Trip Chairman

Purple Martin Report for 2023

The spring started off cold, and so nesting was delayed a bit. During early nesting, we experienced very smoky skies. Unfortunately, I believe that contributed to a number of lost nests and birds. It appeared there was not enough insect food available for the birds to flourish. Martins will lay the most eggs they think they can successfully raise. If the situation changes, they will remove eggs or chicks – brood reduction.



Last year was a record year, but for all the issues; we persevered to another successful year. A few fewer fledglings, but not true disasters. The Racine Water Department with 4 boxes fledged 164; Gateway with one box and 8 gourds fledged 23; the Coast Guard box fledged 52, and Kenosha Water Department fledged 12.

The brightest spot of our year is certainly the newly-installed Prairie School box. If you don't know, a new installation will be colonized by second year birds—those that were fledged last year and are returning from their first migration to South America. They arrive a bit later than the older birds. Three weeks after the house was raised this spring, we saw three investigating Martins! Regularly there were 6-7 Martins on site, and these first-time parents successfully raised 9 chicks. During mid August we saw 19 birds sitting on the house and in a nearby tree! I think they were awaiting the 9 chicks to fledge.

More good news about Prairie is that the Science Chair, Jean Weaver, and three of her students participated in monitoring during the school year. Afterward, new monitors Caden Klamut and Chris Glass finished their first season.



Purple Martins, continued

Thanks go to all Purple Martin Monitors: Karen and Tom Gavahan, Terry Ansel, Jane Raymond, Annie Shace, Debby Eisel, and Marianne Giannis. What a great team!



In summation we are wrapping up the season, saying farewell, and wishing safe travels to our Purple Martin parents and fledglings. It will be very quiet until we see them again next April.

- article and photos by Helen Pugh

Eastern Bluebird Report for 2023

Rick Fare provided this summary of Hoy's annual Bluebird monitoring results:

- ◆ Number of Trails: 28
- ◆ Number of Boxes: 404
- ◆ Eastern Bluebirds fledged: 703
- ◆ Tree Swallows fledged: 781
- ◆ House Wrens fledged: 135
- ◆ Black-capped Chickadees fledged: 62



Total birds fledged: 1681

Many thanks to our dedicated trail monitors for another successful season!

(fledged Eastern Bluebird photo by Kristin Wegner)

Upcoming Activities

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

Thursday, October 5, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting, Program: Wetland Restoration at Cliffside River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N Green Bay Rd, Racine, WI
 With less than 10% of wetlands in the Wind Point watershed remaining, “potentially restorable wetlands” within Cliffside Park are one of the last areas available of hope for sustaining coastal endangered species in Racine County. To fill this habitat void, open water wetlands and diverse native vegetation are being added to create the ideal habitat for waterfowl, pollinators, and amphibians. Dave Giordano, Executive Director at Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, will discuss the history of the project, current restoration activities, and future improvements at Cliffside Park.

Saturday, October 7, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. (backup date: Oct 14)

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 14. Watch Hoy’s website and Facebook page for details!

Thursday, November 2, 7:00 p.m.

Hoy Meeting
 Location and topic TBD; Watch Hoy’s website and Facebook page for details!

Friday, November 10, 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 11, 9:00 a.m.

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

Monday, November 13, 6:00 p.m.

Program: Winter Birds
 Kenosha Public Library
 Northside 1500 27th Ave, Kenosha
 Many species of birds can survive our Wisconsin winters. Rick Fare will help you identify them and inform you about the physiological and behavioral adaptations they have evolved to cope with harsh winter conditions. Seed choices, feeder selection, and other ways to attract them will also be discussed.

Saturday, November 18, 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 25, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding
 Shoop Park, Racine
 Meet at the Shoop parking lot to look for fall migrants. Dress for cold & windy weather and wear sturdy walking shoes.

Saturday, December 2, 9:00 a.m.

Hoy Field Trip: Shoop Park/Wind Point Birding
 Shoop Park, Racine
 Meet at the Shoop parking lot to look for fall migrants. Dress for cold & windy weather and wear sturdy walking shoes.

December meeting details TBD; watch Hoy’s website and Facebook for details!

Saturday, December 9, 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!

★ Christmas Bird Counts ★

Watch Hoy’s website and Facebook page for updates!

December 14: Burlington CBC (backup Dec 15)	Contact Nick Mimier at nickmimier@yahoo.com or 262-363-8856.
December 16: Racine CBC (backup Dec 17)	Contact Eric Howe at cbe@hoyaudubon.org
December 21: Kenosha CBC (backup Dec 22)	Contact Valerie Mann at kenoshacbc@gmail.com or 219-477-0006.

◆ 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. To join or renew online, visit www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/. To join or renew by mail, complete this form and send with 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
 P.O. Box 044626
 Racine, WI 53404**