



### Two Up, Two Down!

I was really excited to write an article about our expanding Purple Martin houses going up this spring. The good news is that we do have two new houses that are standing!

A second house is now at the Coast Guard station in downtown Racine. That location has had one house for over 20 years and has been at 100% occupancy the last two years. The new owners of River's End Marina (formerly known as Pugh Marina) graciously assisted by sinking the new ground socket.

The other house is at a new location, Siena Retreat Center, located along the Lake Michigan shoreline just off Erie Street north of 4-Mile Road. The house has been installed behind their beautiful facility. They have a lovely walking path and prairie area. The nuns' housing has a patio lakeside, and I hope the Martins will fill their days with joy. (An update: As of June 12, there are signs of Martins nesting in the new house!)

Now for the bad news. As you are probably aware, on May 15 at about 7pm, a violent storm ran through Racine. It produced a wind shear right along the lakeshore and toppled over two of the four houses at the Racine Water Dept.— along with many large trees. We lost five birds, and I am unsure as to the long-term effects on rebuilding our most successful colony.



The following Monday, we had a work team onsite to assess the damage and determine how to proceed. The poles were bent right at the ground socket. (Photo above.)

*Martins, continued -*

Fortunately, Tom and Karen Gavahan had brought a floor jack and we were able to lift the bottom of the poles out of the ground sockets. Then, Bill Halliday used his saw to cut off the damaged lower portion – about 2 feet.



I checked with the Purple Martin Conservation

Association, and they assured me that the houses being 2 feet lower would not be a problem.

Jane Raymond and Mike McConnell worked on the doors that were damaged by hitting the ground among other support chores and excellent ideas. We then were able to reinstall the poles!

So, long story short, the Hoy Purple Martin houses are back in business and we only need to replace one of the doors on one of the houses. What a great success and wonderful teamwork! Stay tuned for the fall follow-up.

*—article and photos by Helen Pugh*

### ~ Time to Renew ~

Hoy Audubon Society "Chapter Supporter" membership dues for the 2025-2026 period are due on **July 1**.  
Dues are \$15 per individual.

We accept dues and donations via mail or via PayPal  
[www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/](http://www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/)

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**Next Board of Directors Meeting:**

August 14, 2025  
All members welcome; contact Hoy for more info if you'd like to join in person or via Zoom.

**Renew or Donate Online**

To join Hoy, renew your Chapter Supporter membership, or make a donation, visit [www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/](http://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: [hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org](mailto: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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**Adventures with John:**

**Red-legged Thrush**

Back in 2020, several extremely rare birds showed up in Florida. The first was a Red-legged Thrush at Key West Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden, located on the northeast corner of Key West itself.

I waited a few days to see if the bird was staying in the area, which it did, so I packed up and headed to FL. I pulled into the parking lot in the early afternoon, and although the bird was seen that day I missed it. So I found a motel and stayed the night with high hopes for the next morning.

With the park not opening until 10am, I drove around a bit and I found the resident wild Red Junglefowl roaming the streets. They are wary but I eventually found one that accepted a handout.



I arrived at the park at 10am and heard the bird was seen right outside the parking lot just before I arrived. I and two other birders searched the area with no luck. We exchanged phone numbers and split up in hopes of locating this shy, retiring bird.

After the three of us wandered around for the next several hours, I finally got a text from one of the birders that he had finally found the bird close to its original location.

Having been told where that was by locals, but not knowing the park trails at all, I walked around just long enough for the bird to disappear just before I made it to the location. I left and walked in the direction it had disappeared to, but stayed close in the general area.

Not long afterwards, Larry, a birder from Indianapolis, spotted the bird fly into another frequented spot close by, but well hidden.

I made it in time to get several glimpses of the bird before it finally came out in the open for good, long views and photographs.

*- article & photo by John Dixon, Field Trip Chair*

**More Photos from Purple Martin Box Repair**

*- photos by Helen Pugh*



**Capturing Kenosha Birdathon  
Helps Hoy**

On February 15, 2025, I was contacted by one of the directors for the photography group Capturing Kenosha. The group exists to promote the natural and architectural beauty of Kenosha by featuring the work of local photographers. They were putting together a birding event to take pictures of as many bird species as possible within a ten-day period.

Capturing Kenosha is a non-profit group and was willing to raise money to give to another non-profit group. They chose to partner with Hoy, and any money raised would be used for any of our conservation projects. They asked if I could supply a list of birds and assign point values to each species based on their scarcity.

I downloaded a list of birds possible to be seen in our area and assigned point values ranging from 1-5, with 5 being the most difficult.

The event was named “Capturing Kenosha Birdathon” and money was raised in various ways. All photos had to be taken in Kenosha County, and only one of each species was allowed.

The event was held from May 2 to May 11 and had ten participants. The winner was an 11-year-old girl named Charley who took photos of 51 species for a total of 98 points. \$507.64 was raised which will be used to acquire boxes for Hoy’s Cavity Nesting bird trail project. I will later send pictures to them of some of the birds nesting in them.

*- article by Rick Fare*



**Nature Books Needed!**

If you have extra bird / nature books to donate, please bring them to one of Hoy’s Little Nature Libraries at the Wind Point Lighthouse or the DeKoven Center. We are always in need of more books!

**Upcoming Activities**

If you have questions or need directions to field trip locations, contact [hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org).

Thursday, July 17, 5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

**Hoy Audubon’s Annual Summer Gathering**

*Petrifying Springs Park, meet at Biergarten  
5555 7th St Pavilion #1, Kenosha, WI 53144*

Meet up with fellow Hoy members. We’ll eat at the Biergarten instead of having a potluck. For available food and beverages, see: [petrifyingspringsbiergarten.com/menu](http://petrifyingspringsbiergarten.com/menu). (Non-alcoholic beverages are also for sale there. Note that alcohol cannot be carried into the park.) We’ll meet at parking area #2 prior to walking to the Biergarten. We look forward to seeing you!

Saturday, August 16, 7:00 a.m.

**Hoy Field Trip: International Crane Foundation**

*Meet at the Highway 20 Park and Ride at 7; depart 7:15am*

**Reservations are required to hold your spot. Please email**

[hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org) to sign up. We’ll visit the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo! If you would like to carpool or caravan, meet at the Hwy 20 Park and Ride in Racine County by 7:00a.m. We will be leaving promptly at 7:15a.m. In addition to food and cold drinks, bring binoculars, a bird book, sunscreen, insect repellent, a hat or a visor, and a rain jacket just in case. If you have questions, need directions, contact us for questions.

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

**Hoy Meeting, Program: Bumblebees**

**Location TBD—Watch Hoy’s website for details**

Dawn Williams has been a volunteer with WI DNR’s Bumble Bee Brigade since 2019 and began serving as a Xerces Society Ambassador in 2024. Dawn will provide an overview of the society and describe identifying and monitoring WI’s bumblebee species.

Thursday, September 11, 5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

**Hoy Field Trip: Petrifying Springs**

*Petrifying Springs Park, Area 2  
5555 7th Street, Kenosha, WI*

Meet at the area 2, where the feeders are, for a bird walk.

Saturday, September 13, 7:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

**The Big Sit**

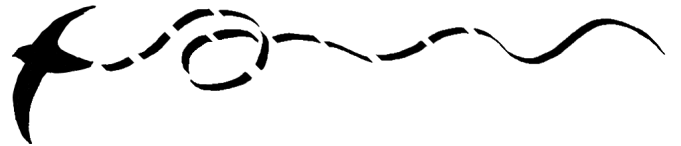
*Samuel Myers Park, Racine*

Hoy’s annual Big Sit is a FREE EVENT and open to EVERYONE! It is an easy activity for those with limited mobility, as birders watch from a stationary location. Bring binoculars, sunscreen, water, snacks, and a folding chair.

*Keep an eye out  
for Chimney Swifts!*

Toward the end of summer, as they prepare for their fall migration, chimney swifts can gather in large numbers, especially when they have found a large structure in which to roost. If you know of any uncapped chimneys in your area, you may wish to watch them. It is recommended to check possible roosts on the second weekend of August and/or September, about 30 minutes before sunset.

Visit [chimneyswifts.org](http://chimneyswifts.org) for information about these amazing little birds, where to look for them, and how to have your own Swift Night Out!



- ◆ Visit Hoy on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety](https://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/](http://www.hoyaudubon.org/donate/). To join or renew by mail, complete this form and send with a check payable to **Hoy Audubon Society**.

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