

**BENJAMIN F. GOSS
BIRD CLUB**

The Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club was founded to increase knowledge and appreciation of birds through education, research, preservation and conservation, and to provide public awareness of birds and their role in the environment - all of which remains our goal and purpose to this day.

Unless otherwise noted, events are held Retzer Nature Center, 514 W28167 Madison Street, Waukesha, WI 53188

Retzer Nature Center is located about 4 miles west of Waukesha, near the end of Madison Street.

**UP-COMING
EVENTS**

- February 19th
Tom Schultz - Bird ID
- March 19—Jeff Bahls
“A Boy Gone Fowl”

For a full schedule, see the club's website.

THE GOSS HAWK

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4 JANUARY 8, 2017

The Story of Peter, Charles, Tom & Fred

(based on the reminiscences of Peter G. Weber)

A Moment from the Archives from Club Historian Jennifer Tyskiewicz

....continued from the Nov. 20th edition:

We are lying on our backs on the lawn of the Carroll College Library in Waukesha on a summer evening in the early 1950's....me (Peter) and my best birding buddy, Chuck.

Our quest that evening was to watch the Nighthawks booming overhead in the dusky sky. Were they nesting on the flat roof of the Library? We suspected that they were.

Chuck and I became friends way back in the 5th grade, when we discovered that we both had a mutual fascination with birds. Chuck lived on McCall Street, just one block away from me. So, we ended up walking to school together every day. My family lived in faculty housing in the Werra House, right on the Carroll College Campus on N. East Avenue. My dad was a music professor at Carroll College.



So, Chuck and I regularly birded the area bounded by N. East Avenue, McCall Street, N. Charles Street, and Wright Street. We called this area “our backyard,” and it consisted of many brushy areas, several yards with gardens and trees, and a central field, where all of us boys played baseball in nice weather.

(“Four Boys” continues on page 3)

WBBA II Season 2 is in the books!



First Documented Mississippi Kite Nest in Wisconsin

One of the most exciting finds yet

For the first time ever, Mississippi Kites have been found breeding in Wisconsin (Rock County). This represents one of the northernmost breeding records in the raptor's range and perhaps the most exciting find of Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II so far. Known for their graceful, swooping aerial maneuvers, they often take prey like dragonflies and cicadas.

After Two Seasons

Let's take a look at the numbers

1,100 volunteers
54,000 checklists
239 bird species
3 million birds

Season Two Updates

Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II

2015-2019



Be on the Lookout

Confirmed for Atlas I, but not Atlas II

Le Conte's Sparrow
 American Wigeon
 White-winged Crossbill



Merlin Expands Range

Atlas II reveals interesting change

Merlin populations continue to increase since DDT was banned in 1970. This small falcon, once mainly nesting in northern conifer forests, is now finding suitable nesting habitat further south, including urban areas rich with avian prey.



11 New Species

Not confirmed during the first atlas

■ 2015 ■ 2016

Blue Grosbeak
 Canvasback
 Mississippi Kite
 Bufflehead
 Eurasian Collared-Dove
 White-eyed Vireo

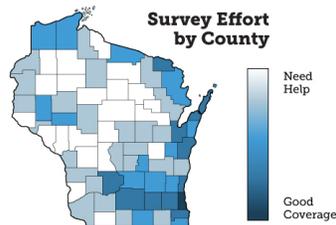
Great Tit
 Kirtland's Warbler
 Yellow-throated Warbler
 Whooping Crane
 European Goldfinch

We Need Your Help

Not an expert? Not a problem. Every sighting counts

We have had great coverage in some counties, but there are still blocks that need coverage in every area of the state. Get involved in this historic bird survey by going to

wsobirds.org/atlas



Birds on the Rise

Increase in confirmations from Atlas I

1. Peregrine Falcon **300%**
2. Bald Eagle **233%**
3. Trumpeter Swan **233%**
4. Orchard Oriole **230%**
5. Tufted Titmouse **217%**
6. Lark Sparrow **139%**
7. Canada Goose **132%**
8. Sandhill Crane **129%**
9. Black-crowned Night-Heron **127%**
10. Wild Turkey **120%**

■ Possible/Probable
 ■ Confirmed
 ■ Surveyed, no Merlin

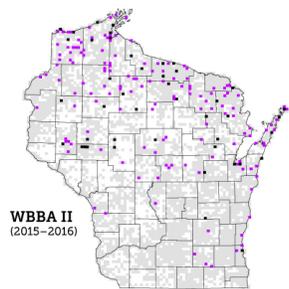
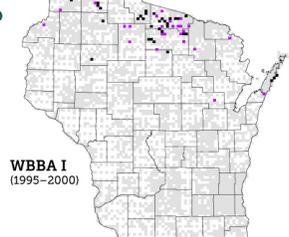


Photo credits: Merlin by Tom Prestby; Blue Grosbeak by Laurie Smaglick Johnson; Mississippi Kite by Scott Weberpal; Le Conte's Sparrow by Nick Anich. For more information contact Nick Anich, nicholas.anich@wisconsin.gov

Waukesha County Notables

- Grasshopper Sparrows were confirmed as breeding by Andrea Szymczak in Eagle CW block. These birds were also seen by many Goss Club members while on a WSO field trip in the Southern Kettle Moraine!
- Louisiana Waterthrush was confirmed as breeding by John Winze in the Merton CW block. Two males have been singing along the Little Oconomowoc River for at least two years. Unfortunately this year's nest was likely disturbed by a predator.
- Red-shouldered Hawks were confirmed by Maia Persche & Amanda Navine in the Merton CW block. A juvenile bird was seen begging from its parents.

When I did the first Atlas, I thought "this is impossible!" but it gets easier and easier with each trip to the field.

- Daryl Christensen, top atlas surveyor

“Four Boys” continued from page 1 ...

Chuck and I birded all the time....and birding in the Waukesha of the 1950's was REALLY GOOD, especially for spring warblers and sparrows.

We developed what we called “A List for the Backyard,” and for 1953, Chuck and I recorded 107 species! (Narrator’s Note: a copy of their list is in the archives, complete with typewriter typos and youthful misspellings, if you are interested!).

You might wonder how we spotted bitterns, herons, and ducks in the middle of the City of Waukesha! Those kinds of species were mostly observed flying over our central baseball field.

When Chuck and I weren't birding, we were spending hours drawing birds, scrutinizing field guides, and even making bird flash cards. Our main guide at the time was Chester A. Reed's Bird Guide, which was published in 1909! We didn't know anything about Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds for many years after that!

Follow along in the February issue of The Goss Hawk, in which Peter and Chuck meet Tom and Fred....Tom being two years older and having a driver's license....making him invaluable in the realm of birding for young boys. Soon.....they will all meet one Mr. S. Paul Jones, for whom the Oconomowoc Bird Club would one day be named.....but who before that, was one of the founders, along with Bob Adams, of our own B.F Goss Bird Club!



Peter G. Weber was a natural artist, without any formal training, even as a young boy. According to the Carroll College Echo of October 12th, 1962, Peter's “deep interest in nature” led him to scrutinize, read about, and carefully observe color, structure and plumage, to learn about bird species and put that knowledge into drawings. This Black-capped Chickadee and the American Tree Sparrow on page one are two examples of Peter's drawings that are from the time period of the story.



In Memoriam...

Vern Aune, a member of the B.F. Goss Bird Club since the 1970's, passed away at age 83 on Thursday night, December 8th, 2016. Vern held officerships for the club, and along with wife, Judy, kept the records for the Waukesha County Bird List for our club for many years. He was an extremely knowledgeable birder, with a keen eye and ear, and generally had a funny quip to go along with many of his observations. His wisdom will be missed.

As birders, we supporting ethical behavior when interacting with birds and humans.
These ethics apply to all nature lovers, whether they're looking through binoculars, a camera, or just using their eyes.

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- A. Support the protection of important bird habitat.
- B. To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
 - Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.
 - Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.
 - Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- C. Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private landowners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
- D. Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise, keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

- A. Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- B. Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- C. Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

- A. Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- B. Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- C. If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

- Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member:
- A. Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
 - B. If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation and intervene if you think it prudent. When intervening, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours]:

- A. Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- B. Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- C. Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
- D. Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no audio playback allowed).
- E. Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.