



BENJAMIN F. GOSS BIRD CLUB

THE GOSS HAWK

April 14, 2019

Volume 3, Issue 7

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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.

Events are held at Retzer Nature Center, located west of Waukesha, near the end of Madison Street.

**S14 W28167 Madison St,
Waukesha, WI 53188**

Mamas, don't let your babies grow up to be cowbirds!



**— Bill Thompson III
1962-2019**

Welcoming a young birder pays off for WSO's outreach

By Jack Coulter, WSO Communications Committee

This article was originally published by the WSO in the April 2019 edition of the Badger Birder. Jack has been a member of Goss Bird Club since he was a kid, and recently joined the Communications Committee for the WSO.

My passion for birds and birding came about, as the cliché adage goes, as a by-product of nature and nurture. I went on my first birding trip at the age of 4, when I went to Horicon Marsh with my Aunt Gina, a Florida-based field ornithologist who continues to inspire me to this day, along with her husband and fellow ornithologist, Adam. I still remember watching groups of geese flying overhead and my aunt diving into the reeds to grab a garter snake for me to look at closely! To this day, Horicon Marsh remains a very sentimental and nostalgic birding spot to me.

As I grew up, I attended many youth education programs offered by the Milwaukee County Zoo, which fostered my interest in the animal kingdom even further. I would start calling myself a "birder" around age 11 when I started entering my sightings into eBird and began participating in local Christmas Bird Counts. It was through eBird that I tangentially discovered the Benjamin F. Goss Bird Club in Waukesha, near where I live, and also WSO.

Until the age of 16, my participation in birding events was limited by the willingness of others, namely parents and grandparents, to provide transportation. Needless to say, my involvement in the Wisconsin birding community greatly increased after I got my first car during my senior year of high school!

I'll always remember everything the Wisconsin birding community has done to

welcome a young and eager birder into their midst, and I will be especially grateful to those of you who took the time to nurture my skills and provide mentorship to me.

Today, I am a junior at the University of Wisconsin – Madison pursuing a double major in economics and zoology. After graduation, I would like to attend law school. I do not know what type of attorney I would like to be just yet, but environmental law definitely stands out as an intriguing area of practice that aligns with my personal and academic interests -- especially given the fact that birds, other animals and the environment as a whole are in greater need than ever of passionate legal advocacy.

I joined WSO's Communications Committee to both give back to the Wisconsin birding community and to become more involved in it. My specific role is to curate and distribute relevant messaging content on the organization's Facebook page, generate analytic reports alongside my colleague, Helen Bolgrien, and provide my unique perspective to assist the other committee initiatives.

I am excited to be more involved in the day-to-day operations of the WSO and couldn't be happier to be a part of the new communications team. We've done great work together already, and we've all made new friends along the way. I'll now steal a page from Erin Giese's playbook from February and end this brief introduction to myself with one of my favorite quotes. "Binoculars, and a hawk-like vigilance, reduce the disadvantage of myopic human vision." — J. A. Baker



A Moment from the Archives with Jennifer Tyskiewicz

Spring, Waukesha County 1970

As the Goss Bird Club gears up for our spring field trips and May Count, I thought it might be fun to “go back in time” to see how our club was preparing for the spring season 49 years ago.....in 1970.

Four articles and a 3-picture “photo spread” in the Waukesha Freeman outlined the club’s plan for the migration season that year.

The first article, entitled “Bird Trip Set,” appeared in the newspaper on April 9th, 1970, inviting “inexperienced bird watchers” to participate in a field trip with Goss Club members on Sunday, April 12th. Anyone interested was told to meet at 7:00 AM at the Waukesha Public Library, and to provide their own transportation and binoculars.

The trip was to include Vernon Marsh and other county areas considered to be good territories for migratory birds and waterfowl, and was to conclude at 10:00 AM.

Waukesha Freeman photographer, Doug Green, followed the group around on that trip, relating in a short article with photos, (see one photo with this article), that while birders from the B.F. Goss Bird Club looked for birds in Vernon Marsh, he (Green), “looked for birders”. “Both were successful,” was the comment, with club members spotting “lots of ducks, a Common Snipe, Red-bellied Sapsuckers (what?), cardinals and two species of hawks.”

The accompanying article to the above-reference was entitled, “Watch the Birdie,” and went on to explain that this was the first time that the club had invited the general public for “a guided bird walk.” The writer mentioned that “about a dozen came despite the early Sunday morning hour,” concluding with the thought that birds were easier to find in the morning because that is “when they sing.”

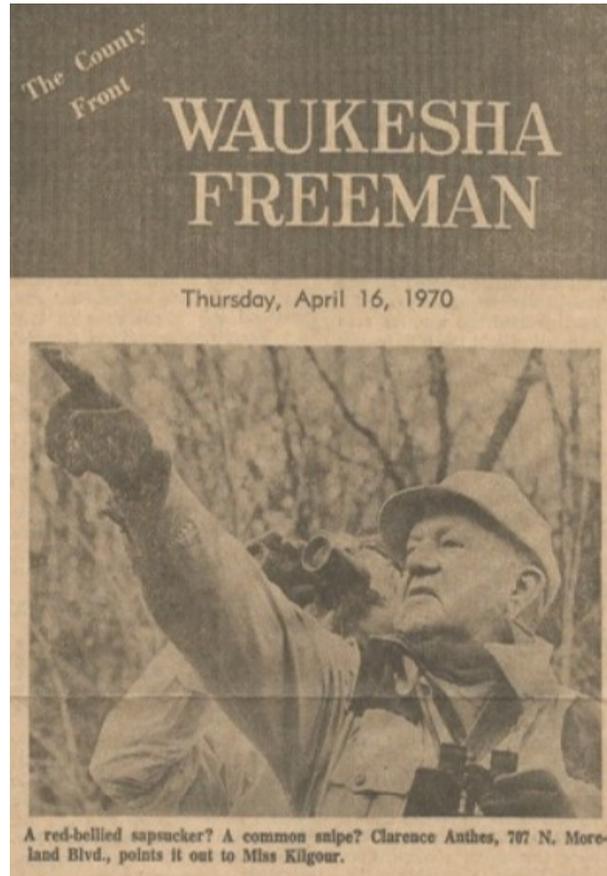
Two articles, one published on May 7th and the other on May 14th of 1970, alerted the public that they could “follow the members on their annual county bird count” on Sunday, May 17th. The meeting time for this was 5:00 AM, again at the Waukesha Public Library, with a mention that “the survey will be all over the county.”

At noon, the club was to gather for lunch at the Kiwanis Campground on Highway G, and those wishing to join

them “should bring their own utensils and a dish to pass.”

The article concluded by noting that the club usually spots about 100 species, and “is a good opportunity for inexperienced bird watchers to come along with experts and learn the ropes.”

Unfortunately, although the archives contain Christmas Count results from the very early years of the club. Formal May Count statistics were not compiled until the early 2000’s, so we have no record of how well they did that day!



Clarence Anthes was a club member and artist who created linoleum block carvings of birds that were used to make club meeting reminder postcards in the 1960’s and 1970’s, some of which are now housed in the Waukesha County Historical Museum. Clarence also did bird carvings on the wooden-covered scrapbook that is also housed at the museum.



At Corkscrew Swamp , Naples, FL

Take Five with.....

Mike & Jennifer Tyskiewicz

Mike and Jennifer Tyskiewicz have been B.F. Goss Club members since 1987.

How did you get started birding? We started birding rather late in life....in our late 30's. Mike was teaching at New Berlin West High School, where two of his colleagues were none other than Harry Leeman and Vern Aune, longtime club members, now deceased. Harry and Vern would "talk birds" at lunch, and Mike soon became interested enough to start putting seeds out to see what we could attract to our yard.

Harry and Vern invited us to accompany them on the Christmas Count, which fueled our interest after a day in the field. We attended the next club meeting, and found that the presentation was "Mushrooms,"... not quite what we expected at a bird club meeting!

Soon, however, we were enjoying the birding camaraderie with our new friends, who had opened up our eyes to so many species that we had never noticed! We only knew a few birds when we started!

Early Club Experiences We did a lot of canoeing during our early years of birding, so several of our presentations involved the birds we would see along various rivers and on and around lakes. We also did a program on the small group of crows that have come to our yard to eat for 30 years, as well as a presentation on Kestrels, and one on habitat fragmentation. (In our early years with the club, members were required to give presentations or find someone to do it for them, as a condition of membership).

Mike & Jennifer helped Bob Adams and John Bielefeldt establish the "Hot Spots" list that is found in the blue count folders. The object, at the time, was to establish count sections that could be called either "walking" or "driving" sections, so that club members could pick their sections based on if they were able to and wanted to walk during the counts. Some of the interior borders of the sections were adjusted at that time to accommodate the walking or driving designation, and are what we still use today on the maps in the count folders.

More Recent Experiences Mike has become very adept at bird photography, and this has opened up a much closer and more-detailed look at birds for us. We don't feel that we've really seen a life bird or a hard-to-find bird until we have photos of it. One of Mike's favorite bird subjects is the very photogenic Green Heron.

Some years ago, we decided that we really needed to work on our duck identification. We spent many early spring days perusing the county's lakes and ponds, until we finally were able to identify the various duck species. It was a somewhat magical experience to be able to binocular flocks of ducks bobbing in the water, and be successful at picking out colors, shapes and behavior. Jennifer became smitten with Ring-necked Ducks, liking their prim and elegant profile, and thinking that they always have an "intellectual" look to them. Mike's favorite is the Northern Pintail.

Favorite Birding Spots In the area, we enjoy Benson Road in Vernon Marsh, the old Rainbow Springs Golf Course, and Retzer, all of which include many different habitats. In Florida, some of our favorite spots include the many boardwalks and beaches of the Great Florida Birding Trail in the Naples and Marco Island areas. Our most recent presentation to the club was "Birding in Southwest Florida."

Service to Our Club Both Mike and Jennifer have served as President of our club and worked on various committees, with Jennifer also serving as VP, Secretary, Treasurer and Historian.

Canoeing and birding,
Sylvania Wilderness Area
near Watersmeet, MI



SUMMER BIRDING 2019

If you find yourself feeling empty after spring migration, and need to scratch that birding itch until the birds come back in fall, check out some of these great opportunities.



Join Team Goss Hawks in fundraising for habitat restoration in the Waukesha County Parks. Money we raise through the birdathon will help to buy trees and create more habitat for birds and wildlife.

Similar to a walk-a-thon, we will be putting boots on the ground by documenting birds in the county parks from April 15 to June 15. You can sign up to cover a section at a club meeting, or contact Tim Hahn at thahnbirder@gmail.com.

To donate, visit the following link. Half of the proceeds to go to the Bird Protection Fund that is managed by the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. This supports endangered species, breeding bird research, and various other endeavors. The other half goes directly to the reforestation of our local parks.

www.wibirdathon.dojiggy.com/gosshawks



The WBBA II is in its final year, and there is still much ground to be covered. Email atlas@wsobirds.org if you can help out.

Be an atlas "Night Owl". Many blocks still require nocturnal effort. If you enjoy birding at night, you can provide vital assistance in lagging blocks.

Be an atlas "Ninja". Some blocks will inevitably be lagging even in mid summer. Atlas "ninjas" are birders who can be sent to a lagging block with little notice to add species to a list or get crucial breeding confirmations.

Local efforts are still ongoing. Blocks near Elkhorn and in Kenosha County will be covered by group efforts. Keep your eyes peeled for notices as to when these group events will take place!



Waukesha County Parks has begun a citizen science project that anyone with an interest in nature will find enjoyable. From birds to herps, pollinators to mammals, citizens finding and reporting all of these critters will help conservation biologists create their management plans in the parks.

Upcoming Training Sessions:

May 8 - Reptile Conservation Program

June 5 - Bat Conservation Program

June 16 - Dragonfly & Damselfly Monitoring

June 19 - Mammal Conservation Program

June 29 - Pollinator Conservation Program

July 27 - Bumble Bee Conservation Program

www.waukeshacounty.gov/conservationintheparks

GOSS BIRD CLUB FIELD TRIPS

Fridays April– June: Bird Walks at Retzer

April 20 - Lakes and Ducks

April 27 - Paradise Valley

May 4 - Crow How (Monches Woods)

May 11 - May Count

May 18 - Lulu Lake

June 1 - Muskego Park

June 8 - Glacial Drumlin Trail

www.gossbirdclub.org/fieldtrips