

Chequamegon Chirps



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Summertime is picnic time

Claire and Bob Romanak, in addition to hosting numerous birds will also host club members and guests at their home on Monday, June 18. A bird walk starting at 5:30 will follow mowed trails. You are welcome to come earlier if that works out for you. For those who arrive later or prefer seated bird watching, there are excellent conditions for this also in their yard. They have a deck and covered porch for prime viewing. They even have a small trailer pulled by an ATV if you would prefer to ride on the woods trails. A fire pit will be available in the evening. Claire mentioned there are lots of Hummingbirds, plus nesting or visiting Orioles, Golden-winged Warblers, Ovenbirds, American Redstarts, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Chestnut sided Warblers, Cardinals, Catbirds, Common Yellowthroats, Cedar Waxwings, Tree Swallows and Robins. Bluebirds are numerous with various stages of young around now. This is not a complete list so it should be a fine evening for fellowship in addition to excellent birding.

The club will provide Sloppy Joes and hot dogs with buns. You should bring a side dish to pass if your last name is A through P. If R to Z families bring desserts we should be set for food. Each family needs to bring their own plates, utensils and drink in addition to a chair. Bug spray is suggested, but optional, depending how much you want to feed the local population—including ticks. (More about ticks in a page or so.)

Claire and Bob's home is mostly north and a little east of Athens. Going east on Highway 64, you will turn right on Rinehart Drive (near Goodrich) and turn left on Willow Road at a tee and take the first right onto Nehrbass Road to mailbox 7175. You can't see the house from the road, but Claire guarantees it is there. Also take the right side when you come to a fork in the driveway. Coming from the south, go east on Stetsonville A which becomes F when you enter Marathon County. Three roads past the intersection with Highway 97 go left on Nehrbass Road. Claire's phone number is 715-680-6258 if you need further details. Hope to see you there Monday evening.

May saw the completion of two major public events for the Chequamegon Bird Club. The Youth Expo at the Taylor County Fairgrounds had some 425 5th graders from Taylor

County and adjacent areas attend an exhibit which featured outdoor activities and learning experiences. Connie Decker, Joan Rickert, Claire Romanek and Cam Scott took care of the Chequamegon Bird Club exhibit which included locating various bird pictures around the fair grounds and prizes for those who successfully did so which was a great hit with the students. Door prizes, donated by the club and made by spouses included Blue bird houses, feeders and nesting shelves. In addition books were handed out and in some cases delivered by other bird club members to the appropriate schools. Even the weather cooperated as it was a beautiful late spring day.

Speaking of beautiful weather, that's what was on hand for the International Migration Day celebration at the Perkinstown Winter Sports Area on May. So gorgeous that it may have held down attendance somewhat in addition to some conflicting happenings. About 75 people attended the many activities which included bird and flower walks, bus trip around Miller Dam area, live bird presentations by REGI, and plenty of brochures and educational exhibits and activities in addition to making bird feeders and Bluebird houses. This event had nearly 100% participation by club members who planned, set up, took down, prepared and brought food and pitched in all the details necessary to carry out such an activity. A big thank you to all from the many people who came, some of them from a considerable distance.

Four new members were at the May meeting. We would like to welcome Jeff and Lynn Dodge from Phillips who returned to Wisconsin after living in Arizona. Tim and Missy Chapman now live in Medford after moving from Indiana. Their experiences and interest in birds will add depth to our club knowledge. Be sure to introduce yourself if you haven't already met them.

The main topic of the May meeting was about what had arrived, when and how some of our recent erratic weather may have effected birds. Many observations centered around the freak mid-April blizzard which resulted in record numbers of birds desperately coming to feeders in an effort to survive the extreme conditions. Since then the record cold temperatures of April have been followed by record highs in May which leaves us guessing what the rest of summer and year will be like. Even old timers can't recall such a drastic change in such a short time.

Another sidebar of the meeting included a discussion of ticks which triggered the following article. President Joe Scott recently was blessed, or cursed, with some tick visitations due an unpatched hole in his pants. He offered to show us—which was met with a loud chorus of No! (You can expect a dash of crazy from a former drummer in the

University of Wisconsin marching band—possibly a trait passed down from the maternal side of the family.)

To introduce the information about ticks, there is this groaner told by Andy Larson, a noted biologist who had a penchant for dumb jokes. “How do you avoid ticks in the woods? Wear a digital watch.” Well, I did warn you. To get serious, ticks aren’t insects, they belong to the classification of Arachnida—which includes spiders—and they have been around for 90 million years so don’t expect them to go extinct in our lifetimes. They can’t jump or fly, but with their eight legs, they tend to hang out on grass and glom onto critters such as us when we pass through their territory. They also attach to birds, amphibians and warm blooded animals.

They feed on blood from their hosts and are often described as gross and creepy. There are different kinds of ticks, but the Deer Tick has garnered a lot of publicity in recent years since it transmits of Lyme disease. Originally identified in Lyme, Massachusetts, the disease has spread to Wisconsin and is now a hot spot due to our large deer population which is a factor in its presence within the state.

Deer ticks are the size of a poppy seed before they feed, but like all ticks, there are precautions we can take to keep them off of us or what to do if you discover you might have come in contact with them. The first thing is, don’t panic. You can still spend as much time as you like outdoors. Wearing light colored clothing is helpful because ticks are dark colored and show up better than on dark colors. Tuck your pant legs into your socks (it helps if your clothes don’t have holes in them.) Permethrin treated clothing acts as a repellent. Insecticides with at least a 20% DEET factor also is effective. Here are other things that help in avoiding tick bites. Shower when you come in from an area that you know has ticks. They don’t attach for hours after they get on you and their favorite areas are scalp, belly, armpits, ears, crotch and back of the knees where you skin tends to be thinner.

If you do find an attached tick on yourself or anyone else of the family including pets, use a fine pair of tweezers and pull slowly and firmly on the head until it releases. Don’t yank on it or try to burn it off with a cigarette. You want to remove the head which is the part imbedded in the skin. That reduces the chance you might become infected if it is a deer tick. I underlined that because in most cases it takes 24 to 36 hours before a deer tick will transmit a disease. You may want to save the critter in a plastic baggie for identification. I’ve run out of space, but plenty more info is locally available. There is much more information available on this problem, but stay calm, continue to enjoy birding. Just be on the lookout for ticks. Learn more about them so you can deal with them wisely.

Editor Chequamegon Chirps

3221 Town Hall Road

Abbotsford, WI 54405

CLUB CONTACTS

Website: Chequamegonbirdclub.org

Information: info@chequamegonbirdclub.org

Newsletter: newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org

Bird sightings: connie1@charter.net

June and July happenings: Full moon 6-28 and 7-27

Summer solstice June 21

Enjoy the longest daylight days of the year

Turtles laying eggs along road edges

Second nestings taking place

Earliest migrators heading south

Books for summer reading

[Bird Note: Chirps, Quirks_& Stories of 100 Birds from the popular radio show. By Bird Note Edited by Ellen Blackstone](#)

[The Birds at My Table: Why we Feed Wild Birds and Why It Matters by Daryl Jones](#)