

Chequamegon Chirps



Medford, Wisconsin

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March Program: Jon Zellmer will present a program about “Spring Migrants, Waterfowl and More”. Jon has a strong background in biology including personal research. Expect a top flight program.

Next month will be the official 35th anniversary of the club, which might include a special cake. March 23, 1981 was the first gathering of future members and this article by John Fadness details some of the early events and organization led by Sam.

Farewell to Sam (by John Fadness)

A quoted portion of the Bird Club News, Vol. 1 No. 1, 1981

“The Robbin’s living room was not designed for 37 people. But even though it was not the ultimate in comfort to sit on the floor, the organ bench, or the hall steps, those who attended a March 23 meeting rejoiced that this many people were enthusiastic about the start of a new bird club in this region.....Those present favored a club that would meet monthly in the evening (the third Monday of the month was the first choice) with occasional extra field trips as they could be worked in.”

“The Chequamegon Bird Club has been Sam Robbins gift to you. Sam went on to be our first president. Due to his efforts, the club grew and prospered. During the term of President Sam, our constitution and by-laws came into being. The format of our meetings was set. A monthly newsletter was established. Sam was the editor. Sam named our newsletter. Vol. 1 No. 2 is called Chequamegon Chirps, and except for the masthead, has proudly kept the name since. The club decided on its official name April 20, 1981. We officially adopted the newsletter name.”

“Have you ever wondered where the idea for a Poster Contest came from? The January 1983 Chirps states that flyers for the Poster Contest were circulation in area schools. While Sam was a member, our club hosted the Annual WSO Convention to be held at the Marshfield Campus, May 17-18, 1987. What a feather in our cap to take on such a big project. Sam was very proud of our club during that weekend.”

“Sam was editor of Chirps until April 1987. The May issue announces an Open House Farewell for Sam and Shirley as they prepared to leave Medford and move to Madison to start their next jobs—retirement.”

“So the Robbins moved away, but the club lives on. Sam came back nearly every year. Our club was special to him. It amazes me how a person could keep so busy. Everyone wanted a part of Sam; WSO charter member, pastor, counselor, author, field guide, researcher, WSO records committee, Breeding Bird Survey State Coordinator, regular on Larry Mueller’s talk show. All the counts: BBS, Big Day, Crane Count, Christmas Counts were there more? His records of personal sightings were a thing to behold! All that data—WOW! We are all better people knowing and having had Sam as a personal friend.”

Chequamegon Bird Club Monthly Checklist Report for 2015

This is the year-end report for the 12th year of the checklist project. During the past year (2015) 13 club members submitted at least one monthly checklist. The total number of checklists was 78. The species total for 2015 was 238, 2 species below the previous low of 240 in 2014. The highest species total was 274 in 2010 and the 12 year average is 253.

There were 2 species listed as rare by WSO (Wisconsin Society for Ornithology). They were American Avocet (Luepke) and Buff-breasted Sandpiper (Decker, Luepke).

There were 5 species listed as casual (averaging one record every 3-5 years) by WSO. They were Gyrfalcon in Douglas Co. (Decker, Luepke), Black-necked Stilt at Horicon (Bragg) Northern Hawk-Owl in Eau Claire Co. (Davis, Luepke, Decker), American Three-toed Woodpecker in Taylor Co. (Pledger), and Eurasian Tree Sparrow in Marathon Co. (Luepke).

There were also 2 species not on the WSO checklist. They were Common Eider in Douglas Co. (Decker, Luepke), and Lewis's Woodpecker in Trempeleau Co. (Davis, Decker, Luepke).

Highlights by family were 29 species of waterfowl including Cackling Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Greater Scaup, Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter, and Long-tailed Duck. There were 6 in the Heron family including Least Bittern, and Black-crowned Night Heron. Diurnal raptors had 15 species with Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Golden Eagle, Merlin, Gyrfalcon, and Peregrine Falcon. There were 26 species of shorebirds with American Golden Plover, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Willet, Upland Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Red-necked Phalarope among them. Owls had 6 species with Eastern Screech Owl, Northern Hawk-Owl, and Northern Saw-whet Owl. The warblers had 26 with Black-throated Blue and Prothonotary among them. Sparrows had 18 including Lark Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Other birds of note were Red-necked Grebe, Whooping Crane, Caspian Tern, Lewis's Woodpecker, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Tufted Titmouse, White-winged Crossbill, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

There were 4 new species added to the all-time list. They were Common Eider, Gyrfalcon, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. This brings the 12 year total to 324 species!

Thanks to all who participated in 2015: Jim Bragg, Gayle Davis, Connie Decker, Hildegard and Loretta Kuse, Ken Luepke, Doug and Willa Pledger, Joan and Joe Rickert, Claire Romanak, Cam Scott and Joe Scott.

Here's wishing all happy birding!

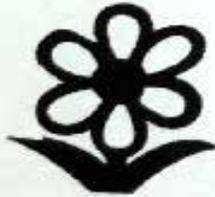
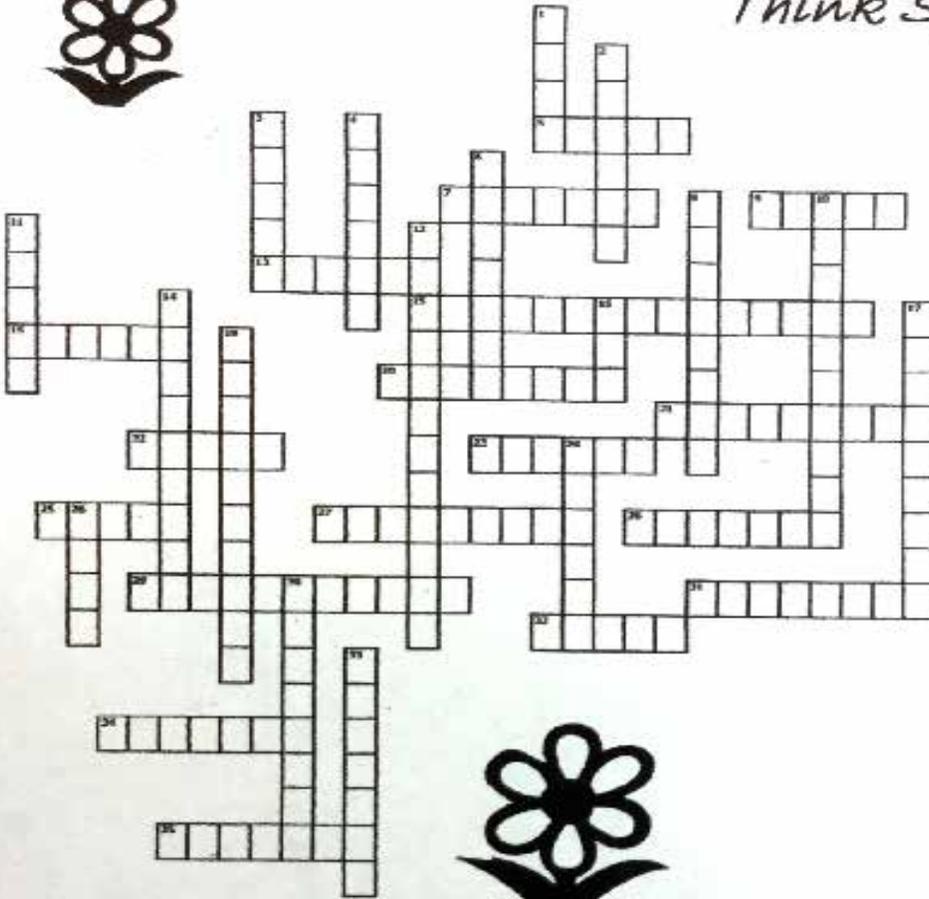
The checklist committee: Ken Luepke, Connie Decker and Cam Scott.

p.s. At this point in time, the monthly checklist project is completed. Its original purpose was to help club members familiarize themselves with correct identification, bird names, and proper seasonal occurrences.

PS by Jim--Different people have contributed to this informative project. Special thanks to Ken Luepke who took the initiative to establish this informative listing and all the hours he put both in the field and compiling the information with able assistance from Connie and Cam.



Think Spring!



Across

- 5. Moving with great speed.
- 7. Male duck with black tail coverts.
- 9. Some proclaim the harbinger of spring.
- 13. He's under the bridge and saying his name.
- 20. Peenter.
- 21. Hooded or Common.
- 22. A duck with a blue bill and cocked up tail.
- 23. A singer who doesn't know the words.
- 25. Opposite of white duck.
- 27. One who trumpets.
- 28. A bird with a feline voice.
- 29. Buteo with a thin, shrill, whistle.
- 31. Higher than a bishop.
- 32. To shoot from a concealed position.
- 34. The muscular organ that is part of the digestive system.
- 35. A blinking candle.

Down

- 1. Of the Strigidae family
- 2. Grapejelly eater.
- 3. Is it greater or lesser?
- 4. the iridescent throat patch on Hummingbirds
- 10. Of the Teal variety.
- 11. Squeaky door blackbird.
- 12. The first warbler to arrive in Spring.
- 14. Who did that line of holes in my tree?
- 16. Territory where males gather to display.
- 17. Helpless and dependant at hatching.
- 19. Eastern or western?
- 24. Declining Swallow.
- 26. Symbol of the northwoods.
- 30. The most colorful male of our waterfowl.
- 33. Bovine blackbird.

This crossword was put together by Connie, but has had a mind of its own as I've tried to move it around from one place to another. This included assistance from who are computer competent. If it is unreadable by you—just consider the source. All I will say is I tried. At least the fowl (couldn't pass that up) language associated with repeated attempts won't come through.

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March Happenings:

Full moon March 8 and April 7

Bald Eagles start nesting

Most Pine Siskins and Redpolls leave for nesting sites more north

Canada Geese begin laying eggs

Salamanders, snakes and turtles emerge

Woodcocks return and start peenting

Skunk cabbage starts blooming

Black bears leave dens

Wolf pups born

Ruffed Grouse begin drumming

Great Horned Owls hatch

(All subject to March weather)