

Chequamegon Chirps



Medford, Wisconsin

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BIRD WALK AT 6 PM, MEET IN FRONT OF LIBRARY

PROGRAM AT 7 pm

Bluebirds: Past, Present and Future by Claire Romanak

The Eastern Bluebird is a small thrush with a big, rounded head, large eye, plump body and alert posture. Their wings are long, but the legs and tail fairly short. The bill is short and straight. A favorite early spring arrival, the male's vivid red and blue colors brighten any day. This specie has serious nest competition from starlings and house sparrows. Eastern Bluebirds live in meadows and openings surrounded by trees that offer suitable nest holes or boxes. Nest boxes and bluebird trails have greatly helped them and their numbers have increased and given their helpers and observers the pleasure and satisfaction of seeing, "The bird with the sun on his breast and the sky on his back."

Claire is an active participant in Bluebird activities both on the local and state level. Her experiences of mealworm feeding and information from personal experiences and contact with other "Bluebirders" from around the state and her southern travels should provide interesting information for everyone.

SECRET LOVE LIFE OF BIRDS

It is that time of year again. Here are six ways birds build bonds with their partners according to Lori Schubring, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop in Rib Mountain. Preening, Singing, Displays, Feeding, Dancing and Nest building. Most noticeable now is the singing phase which is so pleasing to our ears and helps to establish specie boundaries while attracting a mate. For some species only the male will sing while in others the pair may create a duet as a part of the ritual.

Species recorded by members January through March 2016

==GEESE Greater White-fronted, Snow, Ross's, Cackling, Canada.== SWANS Mute, Trumpeter, Tundra.==DUCKS Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Widgeon American Black Duck, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser.==Ring-neck Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Greater Prairie Chicken, Wild Turkey.==Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron. ==Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel.==CRANES Sandhill, Whooping. Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock. Ring-billed Gull. ==DOVES Rock Pigeon, Mourning. ==OWLS Eastern Screech, Great Horned, Barred. ==WOODPECKERS==Red-headed, Red-bellied, Downy, Hairy, Northern Flicker, Pileated. Northern Shrike. ==CORVIDS Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven. ==Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet. ==Thrushes Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Varied Thrush. European Starling. ==WAXWINGS Bohemian, Cedar. ==SPARROWS American Tree, Song, Harris's, Dark-eyed Junco, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting. Northern Cardinal. ==BLACKBIRDS Red-winged, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird. ==FINCHES Purple Finch, House Finch, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeak. House Sparrow.

What I did was list the birds in order as they appeared on the laminated sheet that gets passed around at the monthly meetings. My understanding is these are birds which were identified by sight or sound by Chequamegon Bird Club members themselves within Wisconsin. Ninety seven species were listed—including the Gray Partridge and Gray-crowned Rosy-finch. These two species must have a good story to go with their finding and identification. I'm not too satisfied with how this list is presented here. I'll consider any suggestions for improvement in the future. The next presentation of new species will be in the July Chirps.

Immediate upcoming events

Three significant events are going to occur in the next few days. This Saturday is the **International Migratory Bird Day** at Perkinstown Winter Sports area. Bird walks will start at 6 a.m. and follow at 7:30 and 9:30 a.m. Live hawks and a vulture will be on display from 11a.m. - noon. There will be a three hour free bus tour around Chequamegon waters in the afternoon. To get more information or to volunteer to help in whatever way, contact 715-748-3160.

Outdoor Youth Festival will be May 20th at the Taylor County Fair Grounds. All Taylor County 4th graders plus the Spencer School District will there to participate in a wide variety of outdoor educational activities. It is a fun and lively event. Call Connie at 715654-5819 if you would like to get involved.

There is still time to sign up for the **Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival** which will center at the Great Lakes Visitor Center located a few miles west of Ashland. Registering can be done by going to www.birdandnaturefest.com or calling 1-800-284-9484. A three day pass is \$54 for an individual three day pass or \$27 for a single day. Family passes are \$106 and \$54 respectively. There will several catalogs at the meeting Monday night to provide more detailed information about the organization and variety of programs offered as well as available housing.

A couple personal family tidbits:

Jim, my son-in law, and his daughters, recently rescued a newly hatched Sandhill colt who was trapped between railroad rails. He described it as "all fuzz and legs" even though they weren't long enough to get over the rails. The parents were nearby and protested loudly as he moved the newly hatched bird out of danger.

Honorary grandson John recently saw an Osprey carrying a fish as it flew over my house when two Bald Eagles attacked/harassed it into dropping it in a field so they could recover it.

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May Happenings

Full moon May 21

Schools are starting to close for the summer. A great time to spend time with your children or grandchildren. A time to drive extra carefully

Many birds are or soon will be hatching. A time to be extra observant as you drive or walk or bike.