

Chequamegon Chirps



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The May meeting will be another zoom session at 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 17. The connect number is 982-349-0317. This month should have an extensive list of first of year birds for What's Around. Contact Connie if you have had extra interesting sightings if you can't participate in the meeting. Ron Draeger has a timely program about warbler identification. Hope to see you there and we can discuss more details about a June gathering/meeting.

Rib Lake's Osprey Nest

For I don't know how many years now, ospreys have nested on one of the light poles of the Rib Lake ball field that is across Highway 102 from the lake and behind the Camp 28 Restaurant. They used to nest on a pole along the first base side, but now have moved to the third base line. This is a very visible nest and the birds must be accustomed to lights for night games, vehicles and people. My biggest question is do they act as umpires for fair or foul balls? Or would those be fowl balls? Does anyone have more information about when they started nesting there? Was a platform built to encourage nesting?

"Ospreys are one of the best studied raptors in the world. They were once on the brink of extinction before DDT was banned in 1972. Only 10 percent of the Atlantic Coast population remained in North America. Now a symbol of conservation success, most states no longer monitor species numbers. OspreyTrax, a migration research project run by Bob Bierregaard, a world-renowned raptor scientist, who has developed and attached GPS tracking devices on the backs of migrating Ospreys in several areas of the U.S. and Canada. His real-time GPS tracking maps can be viewed at www.ospreytrax.com.

"Data from tracking studies revealed that adult females head south up to a month before males, that Osprey adhere to certain migration flyways, but not specific routes, and that migrating pairs don't migrate or overwinter together. And adults do not migrate with their offspring. The wintering range extends from Texas and Florida through the Caribbean and Central America south to central Chile and Argentina." Info from Bird Watching Daily.

Bluebird Nest Boxes

Quite a few members have bluebird boxes in their yards and/or monitor bluebird trails. These boxes, in addition to the hoped for bluebirds, can house other species that use these boxes. Tree swallows, house sparrows, wrens, and chickadees all are apt to use these boxes, too. Has anyone had other occupants of these boxes? Bees, wasps, mice and snakes can also enjoy the rent free housing, but are there any other species that anyone has come across?

A Corvid Tale

The following was part of the 2020 Leigh Yawkey Bird's In Art show. A beautiful raven sculpture had this unusual tale as a part of the exhibit. I have lost the artist's name and the following story may not be exactly, word for word correct, but it is close.

Raven, cleverest of all creatures was proud when she invented the wheel. She wondered, "Which creature will use it best?" To squirrel she says, "I've invented the wheel, you may have it." Squirrel says, "I can climb trees, why would I need it? Raven goes to raccoon, "I've invented the wheel, I'd like you to have it." Raccoon replies, "I'm smartest animal in the forest. I don't need it." Raven offers the wheel to the deer who laughs. "I'm the fastest animal in the forest, why would I need a wheel?" Only man was left who raven knew was the neediest and greediest. Man took the wheel and invented the car that kills squirrels, raccoons and deer. Raven never went hungry again.

Bird Club News

Ron Shiffler has been a great source for Chirps stories. I admire the quantity and variety of material he has passed on to me including the first newsletter of Bird Club News, Volume 1, Number 1 before it became the Chirps. This following was part of that first issue produced by Sam Robbins.

"The Robbins' 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 on 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. "It would not be quite accurate to call it the Medford area since the attenders came from Rib Lake, Abbotsford, Stetsonville, Withee, Owen and Willard, and interest has been expressed by people in Westboro, Gilman, Dorchester and Colby."

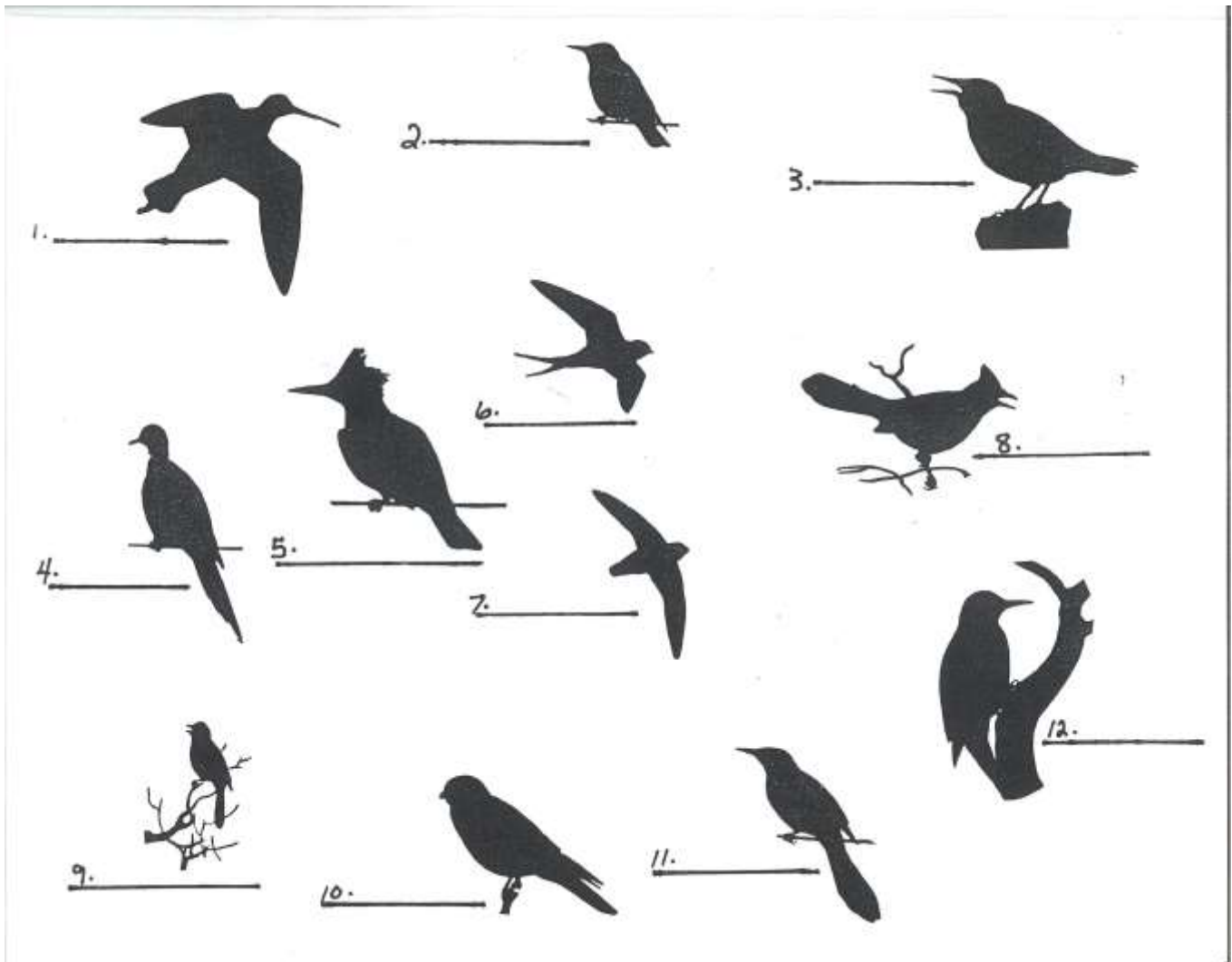
“ Those present favored a club that would meet monthly in the evening (the third Monday of the month was the first choice) with occasional field trips as they could be worked in. It was near unanimous that the organization should focus on birds, but with at least touching on other phases of nature. We surely have a strong nucleus for a fine club.”

World Migratory Bird Day

The birding challenge from May1-31 is attracting attention. Several people have mentioned to me seeing the notice and are participating in the challenge. Jenny Jochimsen, librarian of the Abbotsford Library has set up an attractive display with information about our club as well as area birding hotspots in addition to an impressive display of 25 plus bird books for all ages.

IDs from Silhouettes

Light conditions often produce bird views that are only silhouettes that can challenge IDs. Answers are on page 4.



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May and June Events

Full moons May 25 and June 24

Silhouettes answers

1-Snipe, 2-Starling, 3-Meado Lark

4-Mourning Dove, 5-Kingfisher

6-Barn Swallow, 7-Chimney Swift

8-Blue Jay, 9-Song Sparrow, 10-Kestrel

11-Grackle, 12-Flicker



OSPREY The Osprey or Fish Hawk (22 in.) occurs around the world. It is smaller and slimmer than the eagles, and has a large black spot under the "elbow" of the wing. No other large hawk has as much white below. It flies with a characteristic backward bend at the "elbow." Its huge nest may be placed on an isolated tree, a tower, a channel marker, or a duck blind. The birds wheel and soar over lakes, bays, and oceans, plunging feet foremost after fish. Young are similar to adults.

