

Chequamegon Chirps



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Chequamegon Bird Club

Annual Banquet

Monday, October 16

6 p.m. Socialize~6:30 Dinner

American Legion Hall, Stetsonville

The Legion Hall is located a couple blocks east of Highway 13 on Highway A.

Chicken, ham mashed potatoes, corn, rolls with dessert.

Steve Betchkal will present 101 Ways to Add More Birds to Your Life.

Steve will have his latest book for sale *Make Birds Not War*.

He spoke at a banquet several years ago and received excellent reviews.

Ticket prices are \$15 which can be ordered from Cam Scott at 715-785-7614

Do this immediately because numbers should be firm by October 6th for ordering food.

If this newsletter doesn't reach you by the 6th, let Cam know your intentions anyway. Hope to see you there to join friends with fine food, fellowship and an interesting evening.

The September meeting was held at Scott and Peggy Stalheim's place which included a rain shortened walk of their patch of Tall grass Prairie. The weather kept bird sightings to a minimum, but their house was a comfortable place for the 15 members present to conduct the meeting and discuss recent bird events. Peggy had tasty treats laid out to sample. A meeting or gathering is always more hospitable when a friendly dog wanders among people to say hello and receive some petting. Maybe not so much if you would have a dog allergy and/or a dog phobia, but I didn't notice any signs of that.

Speaking of phobias, I recently talked to a fellow who said he is afraid of birds thanks to an older sister who would catch chickens and put them on his head when he was a little kid which would scare the daylights out of him. Now he doesn't even want to have a House Sparrow around and definitely doesn't have a bird feeder out in his yard.

One of the topics mentioned at the September meeting was the recent spotting and photographs of a Magnificent frigatebird at Blue Gill Bay in Wausau. This was only the fourth record of this remarkable bird in Wisconsin. It is theorized it was blown up this way from the Gulf Coast by one of the recent hurricanes.

This relative of Pelicans, Boobies and Cormorants can be mistaken for no other bird. Sail-like wings with a spread of 7 to 8 feet allow them to sail effortlessly. They catch fish off of the surface of the water or harass other seabirds to drop their catches which they retrieve in mid-air. Their wings are in the shape of an M which makes identification easy.

“Creative license gone mad” is the way one ornithologist described the enormous scarlet throat sac, or gular pouch, of the male Frigatebird. For most of the year the pouch is only visible as a strip of pink skin running down the throat. But for three or four weeks at the beginning of the breeding season, it becomes a fantastic flag to attract a mate. With the pouch blown up like a balloon—a process that takes 20 to 30 minutes—the male waits for a female. When one appears, the undersides of his wings are turned upward, their silvery surface flashing in the sunlight. Wings trembling, the male throws his head back to expose the full size of his pouch and utters a high falsetto warble. Males are sometimes seen in flight with their pouches inflated—as is shown in the following photograph. The resulting pair nests closely with others and they jointly hatch the one egg in about 50 or more days, then feed the chick for some five months with flying starting at this time to another month or more. They are 5 to 7 years old before they breed.



Bird Migration Trivia

By Melissa Mayntz

**The word migration comes from the Latin *migrates* that means “to change” and refers to how birds change their geographic locations seasonally. There are many different types of bird migration, but all involve some sort of geographic change in a bird species’ range.

**Migration peaks in spring and fall, but in reality, there are birds migrating 365 days a year. The actual dates of when birds migrate depends on many factors, including bird species, overall migration distance, travel speed, climate and more.

**Before migrating, many birds enter a stage of hyperphagia, where hormone levels compel them to drastically increase their body weight to store fat to use as energy while traveling. Some bird species may as much as double their body weight in the weeks leading up to migration. This time period is when extra food sources, such as backyard feeders, are especially critical to help birds build up this reserve fuel.

**The time it takes a single bird to complete its one way migration can range from a few days, weeks or up to four months, depending on the total distance, flight speed, route and stopovers. Birds migrating late in the season typically travel faster than earlier migrants of the same species, even along the same general routes.

**Birds may fly 15 to 600 miles or more per day during migration, depending on when they are migrating, how far they have to go and the conditions they face along the route. Suitable stopovers and abundant food, water and shelter also affect how far birds may travel in a single day.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbirds migrate from the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico to the southeastern United States every spring. This journey of 500 to 600 miles over the Caribbean Sea takes 24 hours without these tiny birds getting a break.

**Hawks, Swifts, Swallows and waterfowl migrate primarily during the day, while many songbirds migrate at night, in part to avoid the attention of migrating predators such as raptors. The cooler, calmer air at night also makes migration more efficient for many species. Birds that migrate during the day most often take advantage of solar-heated thermal currents for easy soaring so they can fly further using less energy.

**Migrating birds face many threats along their journeys, including window collisions, confusing lights that disrupt navigation, hunting, habitat loss and predation. Juvenile birds are at greater risk because of their lack of experience.

Editor Chequamegon Chirps

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CLUB CONTACTS

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October and November events

Birds in Art exhibit open until November 26th

Ken Luepke hosting a Crane watch Saturday October 7th

One mile north of Spencer, 1 ½ east

Gather by 4 p.m. to look for a Whooping Crane or 5:30 p.m. to see the arrival of 500+ Sandhill Cranes. Call Ken if you have questions. 715-659-3910. There will be a campfire, please bring chairs.