



# Chequamegon Chirps

Newsletter of the Chequamegon Bird Club

Medford, Wisconsin

September 2013

Volume 32 Number 9

## NEXT MEETING:

Date: **Monday, September 16, 2013**

Time: **6:00 p.m. Pre-meeting Bird Walk**  
(meet in front of Library)

**7:00 p.m. Meeting**

Location: **Medford Public Library**  
400 N. Main St, Medford

Program: **Bird Identification**  
*Everyone*

## September Program

Everyone enjoyed and was challenged by the bird identification program we did earlier this year, so we are going to practice our identification skills again. We will be looking at photos of birds on the internet. Those who were at our earlier meeting will recall that some birds were easy to identify and some entailed a lot of discussion. As we look at a photo of a bird, everyone will have a chance to talk about what bird they think it might be and why they think so. Bring your field guides. If we have time, we will also explore a few other bird internet sites.



## ~~~~~ Annual Banquet ~~~~~ **Time to make your reservation!**

WHEN: **Monday, October 21**

TIME: **5:00 p.m. Bird and Nature Walk**  
**6:00 p.m. Pre-Dinner Visiting**  
**6:15 p.m. Dinner**

WHERE: **Maryilyn's Catering**  
**157 S Whelen Ave, Medford**

MENU:

- ~ Baked Salmon in Creamy Spinach Butter Sauce
- ~ Chicken Breasts in White Wine & Mushroom Sauce
- ~ Wild Rice Blend
- ~ Vegetables ~ Pasta Salad
- ~ Dessert
- ~ Coffee, Milk

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER:

**John Bates**

*"Winter Bird Ecology"* (see p.2)

COST: **\$15.00**

**\$10.00 for children 14 and younger**

Bring payment to September meeting or mail payment to:  
Cam Scott  
N3566 Grover Drive  
Withee WI 54498

Make check payable to:  
*Chequamegon Bird Club*

**RESERVATION MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, October 11.**

phone: 715-785-7614

e-mail: [cam@sws-wis.com](mailto:cam@sws-wis.com)

## Banquet

We are delighted to have John Bates returning as a banquet speaker. He gave a great presentation when he was here some years ago.

As we sit snugly in our homes when it is 0° outside, many of us may wonder how the birds outside manage to cope. After John's presentation on "winter bird ecology", we are likely to know at least part of the answer. We will find out how birds interact with their winter environment, with each other, and with other creatures. And I suspect we will be entertained at the same time.

John is the author of several books about nature in the northwoods including two *A Northwoods Companion* books (*Spring and Summer* and *Fall and Winter*), *Graced by the Seasons* (also two seasonal books), *River Life*, and *Trailside Botany* and a contributor to other books. John also provides trail guide and naturalist services in the northern part of Wisconsin and teaches natural history classes. He blogs at <http://www.manitowishriver.blogspot.com/>.

## Good News for Birds and Other Wildlife

The U.S. military has announced that it will begin using a non-lead version of their 7.62 millimeter bullet. In 2010 they changed to a non-lead version of their 5.56 mm bullet, which meant 2,000 fewer tons of lead going into the environment. The new transition will mean an additional 4,000 fewer tons of lead. As ammunition manufacturers change to making non-lead bullets for the military, it is hoped that acceptance of this type of ammunition will increase among hunters and also that the cost will drop as manufacturing methods are improved.

Many species of birds and wildlife are affected by lead in the environment, but California Condors are among those that cause special concern due to their very low numbers and because they eat carrion that may contain lead. A bill now in the California legislature would ban lead from all ammunition sold in California. If that passes, it could influence other states, too. It's unfortunate that the NRA, many of whose members claim to be conservationists, is among those opposing such legislation.

Lead sinkers, especially smaller ones, have been banned in several states and/or on some waterbodies, especially those with breeding loon populations. And once again, it is supposed sportsmen who are in opposition to controlling lead poisoning.

## Bird Brains?

When someone is called a "bird brain", it usually is not taken as a compliment. But maybe we should rethink that. Among several articles that Ron Shiffler gave me, was one about the ability of crows to recognize faces. While the corvids, which include crows, ravens, and jays, are considered some of the smarter birds, we probably do not yet realize how smart they are. Although other researchers had already discovered that some species of birds are able to recognize individual people's faces and voices, the reported study added information about the extent of this ability. Researchers wore rubber human masks when banding crows, an activity that is annoying to the crows. When researchers returned to the banding area several days later wearing a variety of masks, the crows scolded the people wearing the mask worn when banding and ignored other masks. Even more surprising, when researchers wore the banding masks seven years later, the birds still scolded and harangued the bad people, and it appears that new crows also learned this from the older crows.

## Migration – Perils Abound

Staying in the cold north may not be the easiest life for birds, but neither is migration. Migrants face numerous challenges as they head to more southern areas. Weather is one of the major obstacles. Strong headwinds, especially if they catch migrants over large water bodies, are especially dangerous for tired birds may not be able to make it to land and fall into the water and drown.

Birds have been facing bad weather since they first started migrating, but man-made obstacles are relatively new. Collisions with tall buildings, towers, and lighthouses result in the death of thousands of birds each year. Lights on these structures compound the problem because birds seem to be attracted to the lights. The popularity of massive expanses of glass, which reflect the sky, also has been an increasing hazard. Fortunately work awareness has increased about this issue and some cities and/or buildings are reducing their lighting at night during migration and new types of lighting have been used on towers.

When we think of making the long journey that many of our birds make, we would expect to be exhausted. However, so long as they don't face major storms, exhaustion does not appear to be a problem for most migrating birds, who are able to make quite efficient use of their fat stores as they make trips we find almost unimaginable.



## Bird Reports (July 14 – August 19, 2013)

Checklist observers: *Gayle Davis, Connie Decker, Ken Luepke, Claire Romanak, Cam Scott*

Total number of species observed this month: 145

*(Only names of observers for rare or unusual sightings are included in the list below.)*

- Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser (Romanak)
- Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey
- Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant
- American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Black-Crowned Night Heron (Luepke)
- Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk (Davis), Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin (Luepke)
- Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Whooping Crane (Luepke)
- Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Snipe, Wilson's Phalarope
- Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Black Tern
- Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Black-billed Cuckoo
- Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl
- Whip-poor-will, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher
- Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker
- Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird
- Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo
- Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Horned Lark
- Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow
- Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper
- House Wren, Winter Wren, Sedge Wren, Marsh Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin
- Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing
- Golden-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler (Romanak), Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Pine Warbler, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager
- Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow (Luepke), Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow
- Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel
- Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Oriole
- Purple Finch, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow

**Articles, Stories, Reviews, and Photos Wanted:** The *Chirps* does not create itself and everyone's input is welcome and wanted. You can contribute a review of a bird book that you like or dislike, a story about a bird that has visited your yard, an article about a bird species that you find interesting, a photo that you took, or any other bird-related item. Articles and photos can be emailed to [newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org) or can be handwritten or typed and given or mailed to me (Cathy Mauer). Other ideas: bird-related websites that you find useful or fascinating, birding apps that you like, bird poems that you enjoy or have written, newspaper or magazine articles that you have read, ....

**Walk on the Wild Side:** The September Walk on the Wild Side will be held Saturday, September 28 at 9:00 a.m. at the Campus Woods in Medford. Ron Shiffler will share his knowledge of mushrooms and help us learn to identify some of them. We will also watch for birds and other critters and plants. Children are welcome. Call Cathy (715-748-3160) for more information.



**Editor, Chequamegon Chirps**  
**N4416 Crane Dr**  
**Medford WI 54451-9376**

«FIRST\_NAME» «LAST\_NAME»  
 «STREET\_ADDRESS»  
 «CITY» «STATE» «ZIP\_CODE»

**Club Officers**

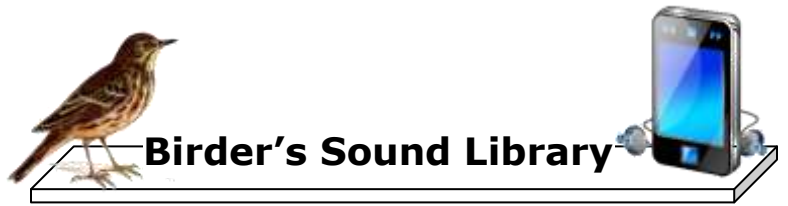
*President* – Claire Romanak  
*Vice-president* – Connie Decker  
*Secretary* – Gayle Davis  
*Treasurer* – Cam Scott

**Other Club Contacts**

*Web site:* [www.chequamegonbirdclub.org](http://www.chequamegonbirdclub.org)  
*Email:* [info@chequamegonbirdclub.org](mailto:info@chequamegonbirdclub.org)  
*Newsletter Email:* [newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org)  
 (Cathy Mauer, editor)  
*Bird sightings:* Connie Decker

**September – October Outdoors**

- September 19, October 18 – Full moon
- September 22 – Fall equinox
- October 12 – International Observe the Moon Night – Look up!
- Trumpeter Swan cygnets are learning to fly
- Whooping Cranes begin migrating
- Leaves turn color – that amazing spectacle
- Little brown bats depart
- Dark-eyed Juncos arrive
- White-tailed deer make scrapes and rubs
- Frogs begin burrowing into mud
- Last Eastern Phoebe heads south



**Birder’s Sound Library**

**Cornell Guides to Bird Sounds**

The Macaulay Sound Library now has two different sets of bird sounds available for download or purchase on a flash drive. The Essential Set (\$12.99 if downloaded, \$24.99 on a flash drive; 812 MB) has more than 1,300 tracks with the most commonly heard sounds of 727 species. The Master Set (\$49.99 if downloaded, \$64.99 on a flash drive; 4.71 GB) has almost 5,000 tracks featuring the entire known vocal repertoire of 735 species. Downloads are done through the iTunes store but must be downloaded to a computer before being synced to a portable device such as an MP3 player or a smart phone. There are also photos of the birds.

For more information go to the Macaulay Library:  
<http://macaulaylibrary.org/>