

# The Lake Flyer

## Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

JANUARY 2007

*All programs and activities are free and open to the public*

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www.winaudubon.org

## Backyard Birdwatching Workshop

Saturday, February 3 – 10:00 am–Noon  
Oshkosh Senior Center, 200 N. Campbell Rd., Oshkosh

Adults and children, accompanied by an adult, are invited to attend this birdwatching workshop. We'll discuss bird identification, guide books, binoculars, bird feeding and bird seed, habitat and the upcoming Great Backyard Bird Count. All ages and skill levels are welcome. The workshop is free and open to everyone.

Pre-registration is not necessary, but would be helpful in planning handouts. To register, or for more information, contact Janet Wissink, 920-589-2602 or wiss@centurytel.net



### Upcoming AUDUBON Activities

Thursday, March 15: Ice Cream Social and  
Members Show & Tell

Tuesday, April 3: Annual Meeting / Elections plus  
Crane Count Orientation and packet pick up

Saturday, April 14: Annual Sandhill Crane Count

Thursday, April 19: Annual Potluck and  
Special Program by "John James Audubon"

Early May: Birds and Wildflowers Picnic  
at Waukau Creek Nature Preserve

June 1-3: Birds & Wildflowers on  
Washington Island

WATCH FOR DETAILS IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS.

## GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT February 16-19

Count for the birds during the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Great Backyard Bird Count. Everyone should get in on this event to help assess the status of bird populations in the United States. If you like birds and want to help them, this is your chance. To find out more about the GBBC come to our workshop at the Senior Center on February 3, 10:00-noon. (See above.)

If you don't have access to a computer to send in your bird counts between February 16 and 19, give Pat Nichols a call (426-0261) and she'll send your results in. You'll need to count total number of each species you see at one time (with the location) and the date. Only count each bird once. Jot the info down and give Pat a call. Also, visit the Cornell Lab website at [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) for downloadable checklists and instructions.

Participation in the GBBC is open to everyone. You do not need to preregister and there is no fee required. Count anywhere – in your backyard, balcony, schoolyard, park, or refuge. All ages and skill levels welcome.

## YES, WINNEBAGO AUDUBON HAS A WEBSITE!

Winnebago Audubon is pleased to announce that we have our own website at last! Thanks to Dave Moon for making it happen! We'd also like to thank Joy Schwarz for her expertise and patience. Please check out [www.winaudubon.org](http://www.winaudubon.org), where you will find information about all of our activities, newsletters, contact information and more.

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

How can you make a difference in our community? How can you influence the way a child looks at a bird, a bug, a flower, a tree? What can you do that will have a positive effect on our environment in the Fox River Valley?

You could take an active role in Winnebago Audubon by being part of its board of directors. It is your chance to make a difference and get involved. You can share your ideas and plan fun activities in the out of doors for families.

If you think this is something you would like to be a part of, please contact one of our board members. We would love to hear from you. We want this chapter to be what you want it to be, but we need to hear from you. Please consider taking an active role.

### WISH LIST

Winnebago Audubon is wishing for:

- an LCD projector; new, used or loaner
- people interested in serving on our board; no experience necessary
- crane count coordinator; will train

Contact any of our board members for more information (see back page with names and numbers).

## 11th ANNUAL NATURAL LANDSCAPING CONFERENCE IN OSHKOSH

On Saturday, January 20, Wild Ones Native Landscapers will hold its 11th annual "Toward Harmony with Nature" Natural Landscaping Conference. Enjoy a full day of informative sessions that cover prairie restoration, building a rain garden, designing a native landscape in your yard, birdscaping, soil and its critters, and a school environmental education project.

The conference will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Oshkosh. The pre-registration cost is only \$18.00 for members, \$25.00 for non-members. At the door, it is \$25.00 (members) and \$35.00 (non-members).

You can register online at [www.for-wild.org/chapters/foxvalley](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/foxvalley). Or call Karen Syverson at 920-987-5587 for more information.

## LEOPOLD BENCHES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

The great writer and naturalist Aldo Leopold promoted conservation of natural resources and an ethical relationship between people and the land. His simple, sturdy bench design reflects these ideals. Audubon member, Dave Hanke, was



generous of his time and produced for us 30 cedar bench kits to sell. The kits are complete with instructions, hardware and predrilled holes, making them easy to put together. The cost is \$65.00. We are also offering assembled benches for \$75.00. If you

would like to purchase one of our Leopold benches, please contact Dave Moon at 920-235-4429 or [djmoon@northnet.net](mailto:djmoon@northnet.net). They will be available for purchase at the Wild Ones "Toward Harmony with Nature" Natural Landscaping Conference on January 20 (see previous article).

## ASK AUDUBON

"I try to recycle by re-using, such as the Chinese delivery plastic soup tubs, the plastic tupperware like containers some deli meat comes in, and recently learned I shouldn't microwave them. Is it ok to wash them in a dishwasher repeatedly or will they eventually "go bad" from the pressure and heat?" - Submitted by Kim C. of New York, NY.

You're certainly doing the right thing by reusing as much as you can, but you are wise to have health concerns about plastic. Hot liquid and scrubbing can cause the plastic surface to degrade, with possible health implications. There are several types of plastic, each the subject of environmental and/or health issues.

Plastics are organized into six general categories. A triangle enclosed number from 1 to 7 can be found on the bottom of many plastic containers. Types 1, 2, 4 and 5 are generally considered to be the safer plastics. Plastic type 3, PVC, contains phthalates, ingredients which make the plastic flexible, but are known to be carcinogenic. Styrene, a suspected endocrine disruptor as well as a possible carcinogen, is a component of type 6, polystyrene. Plastic type 7 contains the hormone disrupter bisphenol A.

Hot foods or liquids can cause plastics to leach or give off bits of component materials. Scrubbing vigorously or scraping the food from a plastic container with a utensil can cause particles to leach. Since plastic is a pliant material, small scrapes and indentations occur easily and can become a breeding ground for bacteria from embedded food or liquid. Much as I hate to see more plastic added to the waste stream, many experts recommend that you err on the side of caution and not reuse these items. Recycle what is allowable under your local regulations. Glass or ceramic containers are a better alternative for food storage, lasting indefinitely and posing no health threats. Glass is readily recyclable, which is not the case with many types of plastic.

- Reprinted from Audubon Newswire



# Badger Tracks

By Anita Carpenter



## PLATES AND NUTS

Deciduous trees stand like tall, dark skeletons on the winter-white landscape. Having shed their leaves, these trees are now more challenging to identify. Yet some tree species are so characteristic in their shape or features that despite the absence of leaves, they are fairly easy to identify. Shagbark hickory is one of these trees. Upon seeing this tree, you can't help but notice its shaggy, peeling bark and, just like that, you've identified the tree. All you need do is put "hickory" after shagbark and the tree is no longer a mystery.

One of my favorite trees, shagbark hickory is a native tree whose northernmost range reaches into southern Wisconsin. Here it grows in consort with another of my favorite trees, the bur oak. This forest type is often referred to as oak-hickory woodlands.

Shagbark hickories are slow-growing, long-lived trees. Life for a new shagbark begins when a hickory nut, perhaps cached by a gray squirrel, sprouts. The young plant sends down a long taproot which makes transplanting hickories difficult. If the tree sprouts in a shady woods, the somewhat shade-tolerant sapling bides its time and waits until something opens up the canopy. Then it flourishes in the sunlight and grows straight and tall, reaching up to 100 feet. If the tree is allowed to grow, it could live for more than 300 years.

As a young tree, the bark is smooth and gray until the tree diameter reaches about four inches. Then the bark begins to exfoliate or peel. The thick, six to twelve inch-long plates peel from both ends curling away from the trunk but they are still attached in the middle. Spiders and insects could find ideal hiding spots beneath the peeled back bark.

Another prominent feature of overwintering shagbarks are the fat, dark-brown, unusually large, inch-long terminal buds. These fuzzy buds hold next year's new leaves. From April into May, the buds open. The three to four bud scales gracefully arch back and clusters of new, upright leaves burst forth – no limp leaves here. Gazing upon this tree from a distance, I'm always fooled into thinking that it is adorned with beautiful, light-green upright flowers. At this moment in the tree's yearly cycle, shagbark hickories are picturesque with the freshness of youth.

The pinnately-compound leaves quickly expand. Each foot-long leaf is composed of five and, sometimes, seven somewhat elliptical leaflets. The terminal leaflet is characteristically larger than any of the lateral leaflets.

The real flowers appear shortly after the leaves. The tree is monoecious which means both male and female flowers grow on the same tree. The obvious male or staminate flowers are four-inch long catkins growing in groups of three at the base of each new year's growth. Tiny female or pistillate flowers are difficult to see as they grow singly or in small clusters at the branch ends in the tree top. Wind

carries pollen to receptive female flowers. After the pollen is dispersed, the catkins drop from the tree.

As a member of the walnut plant family, Juglandaceae, shagbark hickories produce nuts. Just what is a nut? A nut is defined as a relatively large, dry indehiscent (does not open at maturity) fruit with a hard wall and usually containing just one seed. A shagbark hickory nut grows and matures protected by a quarter to half-inch-thick green husk. The nearly round, plum-sized fruit turns brown as it ripens and drops from the tree in autumn. As the husk dries out, it cleanly splits open into four pieces exposing the nut inside. The brownish-white nut has a thin but hard shell and is somewhat laterally compressed with two ribs on each side. One edible kernel is inside. As I write this I realized that, although I've handled many hickory nuts, I've been remiss and have never tasted one. Next autumn I shall remedy this and go hickory nutting and compete with the squirrels, white-footed mice and chipmunks for a few nuts and try them.



*Carya ovata*, is the scientific name for shagbark hickory. *Carya* is derived from Greek

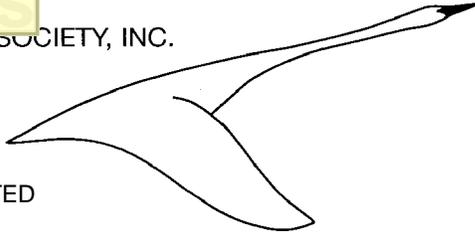


You can see from the photo on the left how the shagbark hickory acquired its name. At right is the prominent overwintering terminal bud.

meaning nut and *ovata* from Latin meaning egg-shaped. Derivation of its common name is straight forward with shagbark coming from the appearance of its peeling, shaggy-looking bark. Hickory has an interesting etymology. Many common names for our native flora and fauna originated in Native American languages. Hickory is one of these, coming from the Algonquin word *pawcohiccora*.

The wood of this remarkable tree is valued for its strength and hardness. Wagon wheels, ax handles, furniture and ladders are a few of its historical uses. Hickory wood has warmed many hearths and smoked and cured ham and bacon. Because of its many uses and its slow-growing nature, I don't see many mature shagbarks. As I travel about, I'm always on the lookout for the gray tree with the peeling bark. I never, ever tire of seeing this beautiful tree no matter what the season.

WINNEBAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.  
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**RENEWALS:** Your mailing label includes your membership expiration date above your name. If you are a "Chapter Only" member the word CHAPTER will appear after the expiration date. Please renew your chapter membership by filling out the application form below. Thank you for helping us save on the cost of renewal reminders.  
If you are a member of National Audubon, you will receive renewal notices from National or you may renew by using the form below.

Winnebago Audubon Society Mission Statement: Advance the mission of the National Audubon Society to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity through grassroots efforts of community outreach and advocacy.

AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

YES, I want to become a member at the chapter level and receive the Winnebago Audubon newsletter. I've enclosed a \$15.00 check payable to Winnebago Audubon.

YES, I want to become a member of the National Audubon Society, and the Winnebago Audubon Chapter. My membership dues entitle me to *Audubon* magazine, and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a \$20.00 check payable to National Audubon Society.

I do not wish to receive correspondence or solicitations from National Audubon Society.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Z12 7XCH

Mail this form with payment to:  
Pat Nichols, Membership Chair  
P.O. Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
and MEMBERS SHOW & TELL  
Thursday, March 15  
7:00 p.m.



Oshkosh Senior Center, 200 N. Campbell Rd.  
This is always fun and interesting. Bring your pictures, slides, or video to share!!!

*Welcome* new members:

William and Judy Big  
Mark Miller  
Donna Mischler  
Gene Schroeder

A big thank you and welcome back for another year, or more, to all those renewing in December and January!