



# The Lake Flyer

## Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

November-December 2012

All programs and activities are open to the public

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Check our website for up-to-date information: [www.winaudubon.org](http://www.winaudubon.org)

## Collaborative Management of the the Winnebago Pool

Thursday, November 15

Social Time: 6:30 pm

Program: 7:00 pm

Evergreen Retirement Community

(see below for directions to new meeting room)

Winnebago Audubon and Wild Ones Fox Valley Area will co-host a presentation on managing the Winnebago Lakes Pool on Thursday, November 15, at Evergreen Retirement Community - Creekview North Neighborhood Center, Oshkosh. Social time begins at 6:30 pm followed by the program at 7:00 pm. It is free and open to the public.

Michael Lizotte, President of the Winnebago Lakes Council, will offer a preview to a new project initiated by county governments to study ways to improve cooperation and collaboration in managing the Winnebago Pool Lakes. The project is starting with a first phase to analyze current plans and information about the ecological, social and economic conditions of the lakes and surrounding communities. A second phase will study possible ways to coordinate management, and work with stakeholders to determine which approaches are politically, socially and environmentally feasible.

Dr. Lizotte is President of Winnebago Lakes Council. He serves as Director of Sustainability at UW Oshkosh and was former Director of the Aquatic Research Laboratory. His professional interest is scientific research in aquatic biology, particularly algal blooms, and environmental education.

**Directions:** Please use the Creekview Center Entrance of Evergreen on N. Eagle St. which can be reached by turning south onto N. Eagle St. from Oshkosh Ave. (Hwy. 21). Eagle St. is the first street east of N. Westfield St. Follow that to the Creekview Center Entrance and parking area. Upon entering, turn right at the Café and follow to the Creekview North Neighborhood Center.

## Birdathon . . .

### A Record Breaking Year!

Birdathon 2012 garnered over \$2,000.00 in contributions from 54 generous contributors. These contributions will be used in the Oshkosh area to bring environmental education to our schools and our community. One of the programs made possible by these contributions is Wisconsin Amphibians, a program that brings live native animals into the schools. The program teaches students about amphibians, their role in the ecosystem and the importance of habitat to their well being.

Thank you to Rick Thiel, Zaiga Freivalds, UW Oshkosh Credit Union, Alan & Diana Lawrence, Will Stahl, Patsy Gavin, Susie Gustke, Leanne Monroe, David Hodge, Dr. J. J. Marsh, Jan Moldenhauer, Gary & Elaine Coll, Lois Eierman, Vernice E. Haase, Sally Mathison, Steve Francour, Victoria Sitmac, Kennon Timm, Dayren Simms, Roger Rose, Richard Hansen, Erica Schlaug, Todd Berens, Jen Frank, Jan Scalpone, Jeanne Shiras, Deb & Pat Ryan, Janet & Rich Carlson, Louise Coumbe, Charles Foote, Jaci & Neil Koeneman, Kenneth Lohry, Evelyn Meuret, Mary Rebman, Michelle Wildgruber, Frank Zuern, Donna Lohry, Pat Nichols, Dave & Chris Misterek, Tom & Chris Binder, Brenda & Curt Reese, Cynthia Huebschen, Pete & Karen Hielsberg, Janet & Steve Wissink, Bettie Harriman, Anita Carpenter, Carla Hansen and matching grants from Kimberly Clark and Goldman Sachs.

Four teams of birdwatchers racked up 107 birds in May. Anita Carpenter led a group of birders at the Big Sit during Birdfest in Menominee Park. Bettie Harriman, Janet Wissink and Anita formed another team. The third team, led by Carla Hansen, consisted of Jan Moldenhauer, Brenda & Curt Reese and Ken Lohry. The final team led by Janet Wissink, included Evelyn Meuret, Carmen Meuret and Mary Rebman. Thanks to their efforts finding birds and finding contributors.

Bettie's team saw the most birds. Carla's team raised the most money with Jan Moldenhauer again being the top fundraiser. Thanks Jan for her efforts! Janet's team had the best bird spot, six Black-necked Stilts at Uihlein Marsh. It was a life bird for Janet and her team!

See page 3 for the bird list.

## Kid's Eye View

by Madeline Kneeland

### Chickadees

Chickadees are a very common bird around our area and around the United States. They are the small birds that are usually the first ones at the feeder, flying up, grabbing whatever you have out, whether it is a seed, mealworm, or other food, and going back to a bush or a tree to eat it. They are very tolerant and friendly, often coming to the feeder right after you refill it, making a very good bird to watch, as it does not shy away easily. These birds do not migrate, and instead stay here all winter. Because of this, these birds are adapted to living here, for even though they are small (five inches,) they can survive the cold until spring. Their average lifespan is about 2.5 years, though the oldest known wild chickadee lived to be twelve years old. They have special features that allow them to have an advantage over the other birds during the winter.

Chickadees are very clever when it comes to feeding. They are usually the first birds to start foraging for food, coming to the feeders early in the morning. They are extremely tolerant of food-hogs such as squirrels and sparrows. They are easily attracted to peanuts, suet, and sunflower seed, though they may also eat other foods. In preparation for winter, they molt in fall, so that their feathers are fairly new when it turns cold. When winter does come around, chickadees, like many other birds, fluff up their feathers to keep warm. They have a special cycle for their blood that when their feet get cold, the cold blood coming from their feet is warmed by the blood to their feet, regulating their temperature.

This small bird roams along in flocks of breeding and nonbreeding pairs, though in the night they roost alone in the smallest spaces possible. A full-grown chickadee can fit through spaces as small as a quarter. It is not known why chickadees roost alone at night, as roosting in groups preserves more heat. When roosting, their internal temperature can drop from 103 degrees Fahrenheit to 80 degrees, shivering to keep themselves warm. This drop helps to preserve energy that otherwise would be spent keeping their bodies heated to their average temperature during the day, helping them survive.

*Madeline is an 8th grader at Shattuck Middle School, Neenah.*



## Wisconsin Amphibians Go to School

Choruses of frogs presented their spring concert at Jacob Shapiro and Franklin schools in April. While croaks and peeps rang out from the animals, choruses of joyous sounds came from the students surrounding the oil cloth put on the ground and covered alternatively with true frogs, tree frogs, toads and salamanders.

Thanks to funding from the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, Provident Financial and Winnebago Audubon, over 700 students were able to see, touch and feed these amphibians that are native to Wisconsin. Randy Korb, National Audubon Together Green Hero, brings his live amphibians, recorded sounds and video into the classroom to help students understand the life cycles, habitat, predator/prey relationships and more.

Students, teachers and administrators together enjoy the experience of seeing these animals close up and personal. These are critters that can be seen in their own backyard, in the woods and campgrounds and out at Sullivan's Woods. Many of these students have not had the opportunity to see these animals before. Students leave the program with information about the importance of habitat. Salamanders drink through their skins so polluted water is not good for them. They understand the importance of these animals in the outdoor world, eating insects and bugs and being eaten by snakes, birds and other animals.

This is the sixth year that the Wisconsin Amphibian Program has been in the Oshkosh schools. The program is so well received that we will continue to bring it to the classrooms..



## Sullivan's Woods Celebrates 35th with Video

Winnebago Audubon Society announced the release of a video celebrating the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sullivan's Wood Nature Area.

The video begins with archived views from 1965 featuring Mrs. Shirley Williams conducting a student tour of Maple Lane Dairy Farm. This was part of the Utica Center school pilot program of Environmental Education, and is narrated by Vicki Williams. At that time Oshkosh elementary students (Grade 5) also enjoyed nature studies in nearby McLaren and Shea woods.

In April 1977, the Oshkosh Area School District Board of Education purchased a 40 acre wooded site from Humphrey and Beatrice Sullivan which was located along Hay Rd. in the Town of Utica.

All Oshkosh public elementary schools began nature study classes at Sullivan's Woods in May 1977. An archival Oshkosh Northwestern photo of the Dedication Ceremony, May 1977, is shown in the video. Also in this segment, the Sullivan's three sons, Tom, Jack and Pat, share memories of their experiences at "the woods".

In the final segment, George Curtis of "It's Your Environment", and Frank Zuern, Winnebago Audubon Society, recap the story of the legacy of Humphrey and Beatrice Sullivan. We are grateful to the Sullivan's for their vision in setting aside a precious part of Earth for all generations to love and enjoy.

This video is available for check-out at the Oshkosh Public Library or can be viewed at any Oshkosh public elementary school. You can also watch it at youtube.com – search on "Sullivan's Woods". Winnebago Audubon Society wishes to extend a sincere thank you to George Curtis for financing this video and to Ron Bullock for the excellent video photography and production.

# Badger Tracks by Anita Carpenter



## Of Grass and Bears

I'm hiking up to Iceberg Lake through a thinning evergreen forest, over meltwater trickles, onto an alpine meadow and over snowfields in Glacier National Park. It is uncharacteristically hot for July with ninety plus degree weather. This is my first trip to Glacier. There is so much to observe, from jagged mountains, glaciers, waterfalls, always-flying butterflies, singing Swainson's thrushes and white-crowned sparrows, to interesting plants. I don't know whether to look up or down. I do know that I can't pause long in any one spot for there is always the thought that a bear or mountain lion may be lurking nearby. It's a bit unnerving at first. Instead of walking quietly like I usually do, I now talk loudly and clap my hands.

As I climb steadily upward, I can't stop admiring the colorful flowers. Each is beautiful in its own way with glorious names like glacier lily, purple monkey-flower, mariposa lily and beargrass. I'm attracted to the beargrass. Perhaps it's because I can study it while standing upright.

When not blooming, beargrass looks like a tuft of grass which blends in with all the other ground-hugging sub-alpine plants. It is easily overlooked. Its blue-green leaves grow in a large, dense clump, rising from a 1-2 cm thick rhizome—not a bulb. Quarter-inch wide leaves are tough, wiry and rough to the touch. Using a hand lens, I can see the minute barbs along the edges. The parallel-veined leaves may grow to be a meter long and remain green throughout the long winter.

When the plant flowers, it sends up a 4-5 foot tall flowering stem which is topped with a beautiful white spike. Beargrass towers over all the other plants and can't be missed. It is now you realize that the plant you thought is a grass is not a grass at all but is, in fact, a lily.

From a distance, the bulb-shaped bloom looks like one giant flower but it really is composed of as many as 200 little, tightly-bunched, creamy-white flowers. The lowest flowers bloom first, creating a top-knot appearance of

tightly packed buds at the summit. When fully open, the spike can be an impressive 18 inches tall.

After pollination by insects, each flower develops into a three-lobed, 5-7 mm long, hard brown capsule. Inside each lobe are from two to six long, wrinkly brown seeds. The capsule dries and splits open to release the seeds. Beargrass also reproduces by sending out new shoots from its rhizome.

Each beargrass plant flowers only once, taking from five to seven years to do so. After it flowers, the stem dies and with it the surrounding leaves also perish. However, the underground rhizome lives on and sends up more offshoots. Because of the delayed flowering cycle, some years only a few plants bloom while other years, the entire meadow may be white with spikes. I was fortunate to witness a spectacular floral display.

Beargrass, *Xerophyllum tenax*, is such an interesting plant with its delayed and single flowering, its spectacular flower spike and its ability to thrive in the harsh, cold climate of sub-alpine to low alpine meadows. This plant has also intrigued others in the past. They have given it colorful names such as elkgrass because mule deer and elk like to munch on the flowers. I witnessed many beargrass plants with missing spikes. Because beargrass is fire resistant and is one of the first plants to regenerate after a fire, it has been called fire lily. Native peoples called it basketgrass because they dried and bleached the leaves for use in weaving baskets. Why the name beargrass? It's not a grass and bears don't like it for there are no underground bulbs to eat. Its tough, wiry leaves would seem to be difficult to eat but then again, I'm not a bear and I didn't see one to ask. Thankfully.



Credit: Montana Becky

Continue from Page 1

### Birdathon Bird List:

Canada Goose  
Blue-winged Teal  
Lesser Scaup  
Mallard  
Northern Shoveler  
Ruddy Duck  
Wood Duck  
Ring-necked Pheasant  
Wild Turkey  
Pied-bill Grebe  
American White Pelican  
Double-crested Cormorant  
American Bittern  
Least Bittern  
Black Crowned Night Heron  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Green Heron  
Turkey Vulture  
Bald Eagle  
Cooper's Hawk

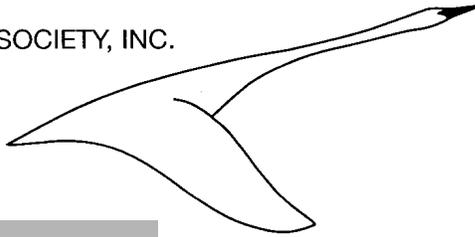
Northern Harrier  
Osprey  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Sora Rail  
American Coot  
Sand Hill Crane  
Kildeer  
Greater Yellowlegs  
Lesser Yellowlegs  
Pectoral Sandpiper  
Spotted Sandpiper  
Bonaparte's Gull  
Herring Gull  
Ring-billed Gull  
Black Tern  
Caspian Tern  
Common Tern  
Forster's Tern  
Mourning Dove  
Rock Pigeon  
Black-billed Cuckoo  
Chimney Swift  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Belted Kingfisher  
Downy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Alder Flycatcher  
Eastern Kingbird  
Eastern Phoebe  
Eastern Wood Peewee  
Great Crested Flycatcher  
Least Flycatcher  
Willow Flycatcher  
Red eyed Vireo  
Warbling Vireo  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Horned Lark  
Bank Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow  
Purple Martin  
Tree Swallow  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Whitebreasted Nuthatch  
Brown Creeper  
Marsh Wren

House Wren  
Sedge Wren  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
American Robin  
Eastern Bluebird  
Veery  
Wood Thrush  
Gray Catbird  
European Starling  
Cedar Waxwing  
American Redstart  
Black-and-white Warbler  
Blackburian Warbler  
Blackpoll Warbler  
Blackthroated Green Warbler  
Cape May Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Golden-winged Warbled  
Nashville Warbler  
Northern Parula  
Northern Waterthrush  
Ovenbird  
Palm Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler

Yellow Warbler  
American Tree Sparrow  
Chipping Sparrow  
Clay-colored Sparrow  
Savannah Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
White Crowned Sparrow  
White Throated Sparrow  
Indigo Bunting  
Northern Cardinal  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Bobolink  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Common Grackle  
Eastern Meadowlark  
Baltimore Oriole  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Yellow-headed Blackbird  
American Goldfinch  
House Finch  
Purple Finch  
House Sparrow  
Black-necked Stilt  
Northern Mockingbird

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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, NATL will appear after the expiration date. You will receive renewal notices from National or you may renew by using the form below.  
If you are receiving a complimentary newsletter, COMP will appear with an expiration date. Please consider joining our chapter by using the application 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**

**Chapter Only Membership:** Your \$20.00 stays in our chapter and you receive the Winnebago Audubon chapter newsletter and all chapter benefits. Make \$20.00 check payable to **Winnebago Audubon**.

**OR**

**National Audubon Membership:** Your \$20.00 includes chapter membership and all chapter benefits, PLUS *Audubon* magazine and all national benefits. Make \$20.00 check payable to **National Audubon Society**.

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

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

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

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Chapter Code: **CZZZ120Z**

Mail this form with payment to:  
Pat Nichols, Membership, PO Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

*Winnebago Audubon Society extends  
a sincere thank you for your recent contribution.*

Anonymous                      Terry Rill Kennedy

*Welcome to Winnebago Audubon*

Welcome to new members and those who  
are rejoining after being away:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Steven Barnowske | Jenni Morse    |
| Kenneth Clauson  | James Roberts  |
| Thomas Fadner    | Angel Santiago |
| Deborah Goeser   | Rosemary Shade |
| James Hynes      | Mary Yancy     |
| Pat Johnson      |                |

A special thank you to all those who are renewing again this year as well. You are invited to participate in activities of your local Winnebago Audubon chapter. It's a great way to meet like-minded people and to enjoy what nature has to offer.

*If you are a new member of National or the Chapter  
and haven't seen your name here in the last couple  
of months, please contact*

**Pat Nichols, Membership Chair**  
(email me at: patnichols@earthlink.net)