

2009 BIRDING FESTIVAL DETAILS

FRIDAY FESTIVITIES

Welcome Reception 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Participants, presenters, and sponsors are invited to attend this casual Friday evening gathering. The Discovery Center Bird Club is hosting the event and providing free appetizers and beverages, including wine, soft drinks, coffee, and beer.

Birds of the Night 6:00 p.m.

Join Naturalist Troy Walters as you explore the world of birds as day turns to night. Learn about amazing woodcock habits including the predictable sky dance, the incessant namesayer whip-poor-will, the declining nighthawk, and mysterious owls. As we probe further into the lives of these astounding creatures, a better understanding is gained and even further respect is garnered. After the powerpoint presentation, those interested can venture into the woods with Troy in search of the vocal barred owl and other night vocalists.

SATURDAY FESTIVITIES

Sunrise Warbler Walks 6:00 – 7:45 a.m.

Designated by birding level, these walks are led by experienced bird guides and are geared towards your level of expertise (beginner, intermediate, and advanced). View and listen for bird activity along the Discovery Center grounds at the peak hours of the morning. Walks total approximately 1 ½ miles.

Bird Banding 6:00 – 7:45 a.m.

Join Master Bird Bander, Bruce Bacon as he sets mist nets and captures birds for scientific research. In past years, among a number of birds captured and released, participants were fortunate to view the rare Golden-winged Warbler!

Bagel, Fruit, Coffee, and Juice Bar 7:45 – 8:45 a.m.

A delicious and healthful all you can eat breakfast awaits our hungry birders, presenters, and volunteers. Grab a bite to eat, sit back, relax, and take in the day's keynote presentation.

Sponsored by the Village Soda Grill.

KEYNOTE: Counting Wisconsin's Birds: New Opportunities for Wisconsin's Birders 8:00 – 8:45 a.m.

WBCI is coordinating a statewide effort to monitor bird populations and to improve how we utilize that information for conservation delivery. Andy Paulios, coordinator for the Wisconsin Birding Conservation Initiative, will give an overview of the "state" of bird monitoring in Wisconsin and will highlight some new programs that citizen scientists can take advantage of in 2009 and beyond. ***Sponsored by the Manitowish Waters Chamber of Commerce.***

CHOICE OF ONE AM FIELD TRIP 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Powell Marsh Wildlife Area Hike

Join your experienced guides Linda Winn, WNDR Wildlife Biologist, and State Ecologist Colleen Matula for an exploration into one of the true gems of the Northwoods. This hike offers participants insight into the past, present, and future management of the area, as well as providing greater insight into the species of concern that birders may encounter upon their journey through one of the largest marshes in the state. Signature species include Sandhill Cranes, Yellow Rail, LeConte's Sparrow, Northern Harriers, Bald Eagles, Wood Ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, American Bittern, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Semipalmated Plovers, Dunlins, Sharp-tailed Grouse and White-rumped Sandpipers.

Little Turtle Flowage Hike

Join birding enthusiast Amber Roth and key-note speaker Andy Paulios on a hike around the Little Turtle Flowage, which is part of the Little Turtle Waterfowl Management Area. Participants are guided along on an exploration of a hidden treasure and birding hotspot in the Northwoods. The diverse habitat of the flowage promotes a wide variety of migratory and resident wildlife species such as Black Terns, Osprey, Bald Eagles, Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers. Other species include Common Loons, Pied-billed Grebes, Great Blue Herons, Trumpeter Swans, Ring-necked Ducks, Merlins, American Kestrel, Common Snipe, Sora, Yellow Rail, Eastern Kingbird, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, and Song, Lincoln's and Swamp Sparrows.

Presque Isle Rearing Ponds Hike

The Presque Isle Rearing Ponds were traditionally known as the largest Walleye Rearing Ponds in the state. More recently, and with the ponds now back in the hands of the Town of Presque Isle, they have become a locally favored birding spot. Join Bird Club member and former president Guy David and current Bird Club president David Foster for this mile-long walk around the ponds and through a nearby mixed conifer/hardwood forest, this makes for an excellent morning trip. A great variety of migrating waterfowl congregate at the ponds, gathering up small fry to continue their journey north. Northern Harriers, Merlins and Coopers, Sharp-shinned and Red-shouldered Hawks are frequent visitors/residents to the ponds and the nearby wooded areas. As well as a number of shoreline birds, the wooded areas running along the entry water into the pond can bring with it a nice diversity of migrating wood warblers.

Gresham Creek to Middle Gresham Lake Paddle

Troy Walters, avid birder and naturalist at Trees For Tomorrow, leads participants on a paddle of the diverse and less traveled Gresham Creek flowing into Middle Gresham Lake. Surrounded mostly by state land, this gem offers many habitat types allowing for both water and forest birds. Signature species include the Nashville Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, Wood Duck, Common Loon, Eastern Kingbird and Bald Eagle among others. Notable species detected in past trips include the Scarlet Tanager, Golden-winged Warbler, and Yellow-throated Vireo. All canoes, paddles, and personal floatation devices will be available at the launch site for your ease and convenience.

Van Vliet Old Growth Hike

Join Discovery Center Naturalist Zach Wilson as he leads you around this beautiful, rolling site that is being considered for designation as a Scientific and Natural Area, and with good reason. It houses the now uncommon hardwood-hemlock forest, and provides gorgeous hiking and great birding opportunities. A great variety of summer birds are found here, including Alder Flycatcher, Barred Owls, Veery, Wood and Hermit Thrush, Black-and-white, Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Palm and Pine Warblers; not to mention the other migrants we're bound to encounter as they stop over on their way to breeding locales further north.

Turtle-Flambeau Flowage Pontoon

Participants will hop aboard a pontoon and spend the morning on the picturesque Turtle-Flambeau Flowage. This Scenic Waters Area is an area rich in diversity of wildlife habitats, providing important migratory and breeding habitat for many species of birds, and offering the highest number of nesting loons, eagles, and osprey in the state.

Lunch and Announcements 12:15 – 1:00 p.m.

Your boxed lunch will include choice of sandwich/wrap, snack-able veggies, snack mix, and water. Relax indoors, or box your lunch up and take it outdoors, enjoying the gorgeous lake views our lakeside benches and outdoor amphitheater provides. *Sponsored by LaPorte's Market.*

ONGOING AFTERNOON EVENTS

Birds Up Close – Banding Demo 12:30 – 3:15 p.m.

In case you missed the morning session... Join Master Bird Bander, Bruce Bacon, and Discovery Center Naturalist and Bird Bander, Zach Wilson, as they set mist nets and capture birds for scientific research. Last year, among a number of birds captured and released, participants were fortunate to view the rare Golden-winged Warbler!

“Build Your Own” Bird Feeder 12:30 – 3:15 p.m.

Join Bird Club members and Discovery Center staff for this fun activity! Quality pre-cut wood pieces assist participants in building a bird feeder to take home. Simply stop by, select the wood cuts, and piece your feeder together. All tools, materials provided by *Pukall Lumber* and guided supervision provided. Take with you a homemade festival souvenir, adding to your backyard bird habitat.

CHOICE OF AFTERNOON PROGRAMS 1:15 – 2:10 p.m. & 2:20-3:15 p.m.

Oriole Odyssey: From feeder to jungle and back again 1:15-2:10 p.m.

Andy Paulios will give an overview of WBCI's efforts to conserve migrant birds that nest in Wisconsin but spend most of their lives in the forests of central and south America. Neotropical or long-distance migrants are under increasing threats from human population increases and subsequent resource demands at along all stages of their annual life-cycle. This story will be told through the lens of a single Baltimore Oriole, a species that we can all appreciate whether it's in our backyards, found singing in the park, or seen while visiting Costa Rica in January!

Loons: Creatures of Habitat 1:15-2:10 p.m

The spirit of the Northwoods is captured in the haunting calls of common loon. Join Sandy Gillum, local ecologist and author, to learn about what this handsome species is teaching us about the lakes we love. Are they our "canary in the coal mine?" Sandy is also the author of Loon Summer, an amazing account of loon parenting for adults and children to share. Following her program, books and book signing will be available.

Balancing Birds and Bioenergy 1:15-2:10 p.m

Green energy has blossomed under the national spotlight. With growing interest and small-scale use of forest waste and biomass for electricity generation and cellulosic ethanol for automotive fuels, it is important that we understand the demands and management tradeoffs this requires of our northern forests. In particular, can we find a balance between biomass extraction for bioenergy and the habitat needs of forest birds? Join Amber Roth, PhD candidate from the School of Forest Resources & Environmental Science at Michigan Tech University as she shares her experience and knowledge on this issue.

Raptors 2:20-3:15 p.m.

Join our friends from the Northwoods Wildlife Center, a wildlife rehabilitation and education center located in Minocqua, Wisconsin as they share their knowledge on these amazing birds of prey. Unique adaptations help these special birds hunt and survive will be discussed. You will also get a chance to meet some of their resident birds up close and personal.

Birding By Ear... and remembering it next year 2:20-3:15 p.m.

Have you ever wondered what kind of bird was creating that wonderful song from deep in the forest or from the top of trees? How about that bird that wakes you up at the wee hours of the morning? Well, here's your chance to learn about 20 common and not so common bird songs of the Northwoods. Join naturalist Zach Wilson as he shares his secrets for remembering these incredible singers.

Spruce Grouse 2:20-3:15 p.m.

The spruce grouse is a state-threatened bird located in the northern forests of Wisconsin. Join DNR Wildlife Research Technician Mike Worland to learn more about why these birds are known as "a canary of Northwoods change" and the interesting surveys and studies he has been a part of.

CONCLUDING EVENTS

Dessert Social 3:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Splurge a little! Delicious desserts, provided by *Michael's Parlor of Manitowish Waters*, provides a perfect end to the day. Grab a dessert, socialize and mingle with fellow birders, view the board with the final and tallied sightings for the day, and see if you are a winner of one of our several raffle items! Local artist and author, Mary Burns, will end our day with an inspirational bird related reading.