



The HERON

Quarterly Newsletter of the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Wisconsin Winter Birds

Wednesday, December 13, 7 pm

MPTC, Room O-104

Bill Volkert, retired DNR Naturalist, will give an introduction to a variety of winter birds, their adaptations to winter, and how to attract a variety of birds to your backyard.



Managing Wildlife Damage in Your Backyard

Wednesday, January 10, 7 pm

MPTC, Room O-104

David Drake, UW-Madison Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist, will share principles of wildlife damage management.



Keeping a Rare Crane Common

Wednesday, February 14, 7 pm

MPTC, Room O-104

Anne Lacy, Crane Research Coordinator for the International Crane Foundation, who is working on the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership project, will share the conservation success story and the challenges of reintroducing the whooping crane in Wisconsin.



Kerry Schloff



Visit Us Online

www.fdlaudubon.org

Bird Seed Sale January 20

Pre-order high quality seed from our website or brochure.

Follow Us on Facebook

Community Shopping Night to Benefit Audubon and Just Fare Market

On Thursday, December 7, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Fond du Lac County Audubon is partnering with Just Fare Market to promote Fair Trade and provide some funding for our local education and conservation projects. Just Fare Market will donate 15% of total sales during those hours to our local Audubon. This is an opportunity for you to find some unique, affordable, and quality holiday gifts, or to stock up on some gourmet items for your pantry while supporting Fond du Lac County Audubon.

Fair Trade is a direct and cooperative business approach that supports farmers and craftspeople in developing countries by paying a living wage and providing safe working conditions. One of the main principles of Fair Trade is that environmentally sustainable practices are used in producing products. That's especially important to those of us who are interested in preserving the world's birds and conservation of natural resources. For example, Fair Trade coffee is grown in the shade. According to one study, shaded coffee farms provide habitat for 184 different bird species, whereas only 8 to 12 species were found on the sunny monoculture farms. Help birds by buying shade-grown coffee at Just Fare Market.

Natural foods for purchase include colorful heirloom rice varieties grown on ancient terraces in the Philippines. Other gourmet items include Divine dark chocolate and quick-and-easy soup mixes.

Just Fare Market stocks some amazing items made from upcycled materials. There are elegant journals made from elephant dung paper, key chains made from string, tablecloths made from recycled saris, and purses made from the pull tops of cans. It's just plain fun to pick up and examine these unique items and marvel at the creative people who turned garbage into useful items.

Have a great evening with Audubon members as you browse through fashionable scarves, select an interesting piece of jewelry, or find an unusual gift to fill a stocking. Bring friends to learn about both Audubon and Just Fare Market, and to support our local Audubon projects. Just Fare Market is located at N7645 N. Peebles Lane in Peebles, on WH just off the 151 bypass. For more info, visit justfare.org.

The Growing Problem of Microfibers

Just a few years ago, a European researcher found widespread microplastic pollution on shorelines and coastal waters all over the world. A major source was from synthetic clothing fibers that were less than one millimeter in size. This problem is also affecting fresh water in our own area. Microfibers were the second major type of debris found in Lake Michigan. A recent study of the Fox, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Milwaukee rivers found that over 70% of the plastic captured was microfiber.

It is estimated that 60% of the clothing in the world is made from polyester, which is a plastic made from fossil fuels. We have all come to appreciate polyester's wicking capability, breathability, and stretching qualities.

The problem arises when the clothing is washed. One study found that a single fleece jacket could release 250,000 microfibers into the wash water. Now multiply that by an estimated 89 million washing machines in just the United States doing an average of nine loads of laundry a week.

These microfibers pass through the water treatment facilities and into the environment. Some fibers are captured in the sewage solids but then may be applied on the land as fertilizer. The rest are released into the waterways.

We now know that these micro plastics are corrupting aquatic life. The small critters at the base of the food chain are ingesting the plastic and ultimately affect the predators higher up the food chain. Microfibers are showing up in shellfish and fish that humans are consuming. The fibers absorb persistent organic pollutants such as PCBs and concentrate them in the animal tissues.

Here are a few suggestions of ways that you can help reduce this fiber pollution: buy and wear more natural fiber clothing; wash synthetic clothing as infrequently as possible and for shorter wash intervals; use liquid laundry soap (powder is more abrasive); when purchasing a new washer, remember that front load washing machines cause less fiber shedding; use garment filter bags such as Guppy Friend (see guppyfriend.com) for fleeces, or install a washing machine filter.

—Diana Beck



AUDUBON WINTER ACTIVITIES

Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, December 17, Sunrise (or earlier if you are willing to listen for owls) until Sunset (Choose a time period that works for you.)

Since the Christmas Bird Count began over a century ago, it has relied on the dedication and commitment of thousands of volunteers.

The count takes place in an established 15-mile wide diameter circle, and is organized by a count compiler. Volunteers follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile (24-km) diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear. If your home is within the boundaries of a CBC circle, then you can stay at home and report the birds that visit your feeder on count day as long as you have made prior arrangement with the count compiler.

If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join our Audubon group, which will include some experienced birdwatchers. For more information, contact Dave or Kerry Sehloff at 921-2544.

Backyard Bird Count, February 16–19

Participate in this effort to track bird populations across the entire country; the birds in our area will also be included in the count and data. Anyone, from beginner to expert and with access to the internet, can help with the tally. The minimum requirement for counting is 15 minutes on one day, and can be done from the inside of your house. Those who want to contribute more can count for as long as they like on each day of the event. Check out the website at birdcount.org. There is information on how to participate, help for beginners with regional bird lists and identification tips, and the data forms for entering your count results. Be part of the citizen science effort that helps our bird populations!

Snowshoe Saturday at Kiekhaefer Park **Saturday, January 27, 1 pm**

Enjoy a guided winter exploration of the hilly trails at the beautiful and unique Kiekhaefer Park.

Don't have snowshoes? A limited number of participants will be able to reserve snowshoes at no charge, courtesy of Attitude Sports. For trail conditions or to reserve snowshoes, call Diana at 922-7931 or email dianahbeck@gmail.com. From Fond du Lac, take Highway 151 north for three miles to Kiekhaefer Parkway. Turn right on Kiekhaefer Parkway, go to the parking lot on the north side of the road, 4235 Kiekhaefer Parkway.



Snowshoeing at Kiekhaefer Park

Protect Your Pets and Yourself from Neighbors' Lawn Chemicals

If you would like to be informed when professional yard services are applying pesticides to your neighbors' properties, contact Wisconsin Landscape Registry. The website is being redone but will be available on December 6 at datcp.wi.gov. To request a hard copy, call 608-224-4500. Registration deadline is February 1. Being informed allows you to keep your windows closed or not hang out laundry during the scheduled time. Unfortunately, due to wind drift, pesticides can affect adjoining property. Be sure to complain to the yard service if the pesticides are applied on a very windy day.

Diana Beck Returns as President

Amy Sheldon has resigned as president of Audubon. We want to thank her for her time of service to our local chapter. She brought with her some unique opportunities and birding events.

Diana served as president from 2007 through 2014. She is a strong proponent of protecting native habitat and reducing use of pesticides. Diana has agreed to return as president to assure the continuance of the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society. We need to maintain a local environmental group that serves in a larger capacity, promotes education, and offers opportunities for the public to get outdoors and experience nature.

Fond du Lac County
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S O C I E T Y

P.O. Box 84
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Submit articles for the Audubon newsletter
via e-mail to evelyn@mcleancowan.com

THE HERON

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S O C I E T Y
M E M B E R S H I P

- Yes!** I want to become a member or renew my membership to the National Audubon Society, and the Fond du Lac County Chapter. The annual membership dues of \$40 entitle me to six issues of the Audubon magazine, and all local chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- I am only interested in being a member and supporting the programs of the Fond du Lac County Audubon. The annual local membership dues of \$20 entitle me to receive the chapter newsletter and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a check payable to Fond du Lac County Audubon.
- I am a new member.
- Save trees. Please send the newsletter to me via email.

Name

Address Canceled in the event of steady rain.

City State Zip

Phone Email

Mail this form with payment to:
Fond du Lac County Audubon, Membership Services
N5545 Winnvue Court, Fond du Lac, WI 54937

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