



The **HERON**

Quarterly Newsletter of the Fond du Lac County Audubon Society

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Wild Feast Potluck

Wednesday, September 6, 5 pm

Lakeside Park, Denevue Creek Shelter

Our season kicks off with a potluck. Participants bring a dish made from wild plants, although conventional food is fine, too. Dinner starts at 5:30 pm. See more information on page 3.



Wolves, Bears and Muskoxen, Oh My!

Wednesday, October 11, 7 pm

MPTC, Room O-103

Jerry and Deb Sanders share some of their adventures up in the arctic, where they experienced remote wilderness on the tundra and amazing northern wildlife.



Wildlife in Your Backyard Habitat

A FUN FAMILY PROGRAM!

Saturday, November 11, 10-11 am

Theisen Middle School Auditorium

David Stokes, Naturalist, Humorist, and Educator, will teach about wildlife in our own yards with stories, songs, and LIVE animals! A fun favorite for children. Bring your camera!



Visit Us Online
www.fdlaudubon.org

Bird Seed Sale, October 14
Pre-order high quality seed.
Watch for brochure or
download the order form online.

Community Shopping Night
December 6
Mark your calendars for this
event which benefits both
Audubon and Just Fare Market.

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Understanding West Nile Virus

West Nile virus (WNV), has a fascinating human and avian history. The virus first arrived in North America around 1999. It most likely came from Africa, the Middle East, or Europe. While it can infect many different species, birds serve as its primary reservoir. Monitoring bird infection can be helpful to identify when the virus is most prevalent, and therefore more likely affect humans.

Transmission to humans occurs from infected mosquitos. Therefore anything you do to control your exposure to mosquitos will decrease your opportunity for infection. Currently the only vaccine against the virus is for horses. In birds, transmission can be by mosquitos' bites, and also exposure through eating infected mosquitos or other infected insects/ animals that have eaten the mosquitos. There is also evidence for spread through infected excrement.

Eighty percent of infected people do not realize they have the virus. For 20%, symptoms vary in type and severity. Most common are fever, headache, muscle aches, a rash, and fatigue. Recovery is the norm. However, birds fare less well. The degree of illness appears to depend on the level of virus by which they are infected and their own immune systems' response. The impact of the virus is also species-dependent, with crows, blue jays, magpies, house finches, and common grackles being more susceptible.

Unlike humans, infected birds become sick rapidly with death before symptoms even manifest, probably because any neurologic change that impacts flight/ coordination are by default deadly for birds.

The virus has had a massive impact on North American bird populations. When it first appeared, red-eyed vireo populations plummeted 29%. Now, they have recovered. Some species, like the warbling vireo have not fared so well, with a continued population decline of 8.9% per year. Oddly, although they have been shown to be infected, some species, like robins, house wrens, and black-capped chickadees, have maintained their numbers.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and CDC monitor WNV infection in birds and humans. There is no evidence that you can be infected by a dead bird. If you find a bird whose cause of death is not apparent to you, call the DEAD BIRD HOTLINE

1-800-433-1610. They will direct you on how to proceed. If they are not interested in the bird, you should still handle it with caution. Wear gloves and place them in a plastic bag in your trash.

Understanding complex disease transmission like the WNV, helps us appreciate biodiversity and our role in preserving the health of our wild world.

—Dr. Amy Sheldon

Buckthorn Removal Sessions 2017

We need to adopt wild areas and help remove the invasive plants that threaten the native landscape. Our birds and wildlife are in trouble and loss of habitat is the leading cause.

A big problem plant in our area is European buckthorn. They become so dense that nothing can grow beneath, resulting in bare soil and erosion. The

habitat that buckthorn offers to birds is considered to be of poor quality and nests suffer more predation. The fruit offers little nutrition because of the laxative effect on the birds.

No experience is necessary. This will be a great opportunity to learn to identify the plant and how to control its spread. Wear a long sleeved shirt and pants. Bring work gloves. All equipment will be supplied. **All sessions are from 9–11 am. Cancelled in the event of steady rain.**

Peebles Trail (Kennedy Drive/Prairie Road)

Meet at the west end of Kennedy Drive (off Prairie Road).

Wednesday, October 11 and Friday, October 13

Peebles Trail (Luco Road)

Meet on Luco Road at the junction with the Peebles Trail (just south of Winnebago Drive).

Tuesday, October 17 and Thursday, October 19

Peebles Trail (Prairie Road)

Meet on Prairie Road at the junction with the trail (about 1/4 mile south of Winnebago Drive).

Wednesday, November 1

Hobbs Woods

Meet in the parking lot on S. Hickory Street, about 5 miles south of the city.

Saturday, November 4

Lallier Park

Meet at the southern end of Lallier Park on National Avenue.

Monday, November 6

For more information call 920-922-7931 or email dianahbeck@gmail.com



AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

Wild Feast Potluck – September 6

Our annual Wild Feast Potluck will be held on Wednesday, September 6, starting at 5 pm.

Meet at the Denevue Creek shelter in Lakeside Park (east end of Harbor View Drive). We plan to be eating at 5:30 pm. Bring your own plate, cup, bowl, utensils, and beverage. Beer and wine is allowed.

Your contribution of food or drink to the potluck should include some wild ingredients or fresh produce from your garden. This is an opportunity to experiment and try something new. There are many edible weeds in your own yard. However, avoid areas treated with pesticides. Please bring a list of the ingredients or the recipe, so that people can avoid foods to which they may have an allergy.

Entrées from the past have included creamed dandelion greens, savory burdock patties, plantain casserole, daylily bud salad, garlic mustard pesto, venison stew, hickory nut cookies, and elderberry pie.

For more information on the Wild Feast Potluck, call 920-922-7931 or email dianahbeck@gmail.com.

Migration Challenge at Prairie Fest

Audubon demonstrated the perils faced by birds during long distance journeys with a Migration Challenge game. Children enjoyed donning authentic wings and bibs designating one of eight migrating birds before examining a map of migration routes and flying away on a path of hazards and sanctuaries. Like real birds, they faced injury and even death along the 25-station flight path. Wild cards facilitated their journey or allowed visitation to a wildlife hospital. Special thanks to Sue Derge for preparing costumes, and to Amy Sheldon, Kathleen Stetter, and Margie Winter who prepared the game and props.



Margie Winter

Tour of Fond du Lac Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility – October 21

Saturday, October 21, 10 am

Our Audubon chapter is organizing a tour of our local “state-of-the-art” wastewater treatment facility, which has been recently designated as a Utility of the Future. This will be an opportunity to see the facility’s progress toward resource recovery and sustainability.

The tour will begin at 10 am on Saturday, October 21, 2017 at the Doty Street entrance. Much of the tour will take place outside, so please dress accordingly and wear good walking shoes. There is a limit of 25 participants. Reserve a place on the tour with Diana Beck at 920-922-7931 or dianahbeck@gmail.com.



Can We Improve Our Recycling?

Sometimes our recycling efforts are in vain. If there is too much contamination in the materials in our recycle bin, then they have to be landfilled.

Our recycle bins are designed to handle loose materials. If residents place their recycling in large plastic bags, those bags have to be ripped open by hand at the beginning of the process and discarded. This extra step has to be done to protect the equipment from objects that cause problems or can’t be sent through. Other things that are removed at the beginning are loose plastic bags, which are best recycled at grocery stores; wood, which is best reused or repurposed but can’t be recycled; and shredded paper, which ends up contaminating the glass collection. Shredded paper can be recycled but should be contained in a large clear plastic bag, so that it can be handled correctly.

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Fond du Lac County
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P.O. Box 84
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-0084

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

THE HERON

Fond du Lac County
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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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All numbered plastic containers can be collected, because sometimes there is a call for the different types, and technology keeps changing. The recycling center would appreciate all food containers receiving a courtesy rinse. Plastic water bottles should be empty. Small bottle tops can be recycled by leaving them screwed on the bottle. If these small tops are loose, they end up falling through and contaminating the glass collection.

Plastic coated paper can be recycled, if you can rip it by hand. Thermal store receipt paper is a source of BPA and BPS contamination; best to throw in the trash. Cardboard egg cartons can be recycled. No styrofoam is accepted because of its light weight and bulk making it uneconomical to recycle. Books are accepted if hard covers are removed.

Pieces of metal are sorted using magnets and can include sauce and frying pans. Removing the handles would be appreciated.

Here is the big thing to avoid: greasy pizza boxes, soiled food wrappers, and even food in the recycle bin. This can result in entire recycle loads being sent to the landfill. The items in your bin don't have to be sterile, but just free of food particles and grease.

Remember, recycling should be our last resort. Of the three Rs, reduce is the most important, followed by reuse. While recycling helps, it does cost energy and is far from perfect.

—*Diana Beck*