

# Audubon Log

Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society, Inc.

October 2009



## Audubon Monthly Gathering

Programs open to the public, followed by refreshments, at Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Estuary Room (downstairs)

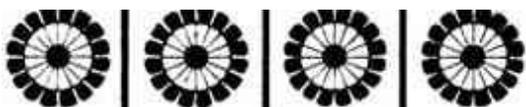
Wed, Nov . 18, 7:00 pm. **"Fox River Cleanup-A Project Operations Overview."** Project representatives will provide an overview of the cleanup process, including its dredging, capping, processing, and transportation aspects.

Wed. Dec. 16, 7:00 pm. **"Lake Studies at Berry Lake."** Brian Ewart will present results of studies done on Berry Lake, Oconto County, including sediment coring and land use. The studies were supported by a grant obtained by NEW Audubon.

Wed. Jan. 20, 7:00 pm. **"The Endangered Karner Blue Butterfly in Wisconsin"** Cathy Carnes of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will present information on the butterfly's life history including its association with wild lupine and ants, where it is found in Wisconsin and efforts to help conserve it.

Wed. Feb. 17, 7:00 pm. **"Student Research on Baird Creek"** Charlie Frisk will present work done by Preble, Luxemborg-Casco, and UWGB students on the Lower Fox River Watershed Research Project.

Wed, Mar 17, 7:00 pm. **"Urban gardening"** by Ned Dorff. City dwellers can create islands of habitat within urban confines. Come and meet a local special education teacher whose students have created a 1000 square foot native landscape on school property in the middle of Green Bay.



## Early Notice

Our annual banquet will be held on May 5, 2010, with Bill Volkert as the main speaker. Watch for details in our spring newsletter.

## Natural History Lectures

Lectures are held at the Neville Public Museum, Green Bay, and co-sponsored with them. For more information, call 448-4460.

Wed. Nov 11, 6:30 pm **"Red Shouldered Hawks"** by John Jacobs. Read a summary of his latest survey on page 4 of this newsletter, then come hear his presentation to learn more about hawk ecology.

Wed. Jan 13, 6:30 pm – **"Tarantulas"** by Ben Klockow

Wed. Feb 10, 6:30 pm – **"Spiders in the Winter"** by Michael Draney

Wed. Mar 10, 6:30 pm – **"Bears Biology 101"** by Scott Anderson of the US Forest Service

Wed. Apr 14, 6:30 pm – **"Ancient Rodents"** by Deb Anderson, SNC



## Outdoor Hikes and Activities

**November 21, 1pm** Christa McAuliffe Park, Green Bay. Learn about glacial formations and the landscape of the past on the **Soils and Geology Hike**.

**December 19, 1pm** Christa McAuliffe Park, Green Bay. Join Dr. Mike Draney for the **Winter Wonderland Hike** and cross your fingers for snow this year!

*"The richness I achieve comes from nature, the source of my inspiration" ---Claude Monet*



## Compost Leaves to Protect Air Quality, Improve Soil Quality

With leaves now falling rapidly across Wisconsin, state

environmental officials continue to remind people that composting leaves can help homeowners save money on fertilizer, save municipalities money on leaf collection, and protect the state's air quality.

Composting is far better for the environment than burning leaves, branches, weeds and other yard materials. Did you know that burning leaves and other debris generates air pollution, is a health hazard to people with asthma and other allergies, and is a fire hazard and a nuisance to neighbors?

Composted yard materials can keep soil healthy and provide nutrients for plants in lawns and gardens, reducing the need for fertilizers and pesticides.

Leaves are rich in carbon, phosphorus, and Potassium. If you can't make use of them, investigate community leaf collection or composting programs so that these valuable materials will be available for others to use.

Don't let leaves accumulate in gutters, storm drains or ditches—they can cause flooding problems during heavy rains and they release nutrients that harm our lakes and streams. These same nutrients will enrich your soil if leaves are mulched in place or composted.

It's best to chop your leaves up with a hoe, shovel, or mower. This will help them decompose more quickly. Create a compost pile or, if they are power mulched, you can leave them in place.



Compost improves soil structure, holds in moisture and plant nutrients, and promotes strong, healthy root systems for plant growth. It can be mixed into garden soil or lawn soil before planting or seeding.

You can also use leaves and chipped branches as mulch. Spread them over your garden and around the bases of bushes, trees, and perennials. During

the winter, leaves used as mulch minimize the alternate freezing and thawing of the soil which often damages plant roots.

In more natural settings, yard brush and branches can be reused to form a brush pile for wildlife. Brush piles provide shelter, nesting and den sites for chipmunks, woodchucks, weasels, skunks, red fox, numerous bird species, garter snakes, salamanders and more.

Using yard debris at home saves the tax dollars spent to collect and process leaves, cuttings and clippings while reusing natural materials to beautify one's yard.



## Rain Doesn't Dampen Field Trip Fun

There were cloudy skies on both our fall field trips at Crossroads in Sturgeon Bay. Even so, a couple dozen spider lovers enjoyed Prof. Mike Draney's presentation on spiders. We learned about the different ways spiders catch their prey and neat facts. Spiders that walk on water! Spiders that mimic ants! Most of the spider species in WI probably haven't been identified yet, so any one of us could be the first to find a new species!

Even though skies were cloudy, we still went outside and brushed trees, beat bushes, and sifted litter to find spiders. Prof. Draney looked at all our finds and identified them for us.

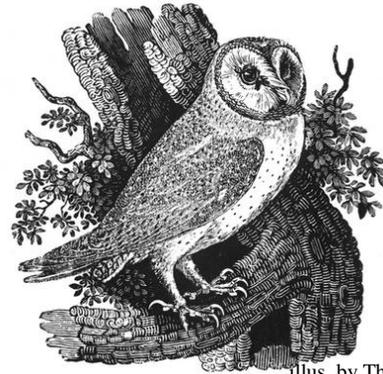
Just as many butterfly lovers came to Ann Shebesta's monarch tagging workshop. That day it didn't stop raining, but she was well prepared with a slide show and caged butterflies. She told us how she reared them and answered all our questions about the monarch life cycle. Mrs. Shebesta's enthusiasm kept all of us interested and glad we came.

## Bubolz Beckons Kids to Ponds

Our spring frog hunt at Bubolz Nature Center brought a bevy of youngsters out to pounce on the shore edges and scoop nets in the ponds in search of the evasive frog. Cindy Mueller helped us search out the best frog spots and taught us different frog calls. We even found dragonfly nymphs!



## Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest -- An Endangered National Forest?



Illus. by Thomas Bewick

I am the heat of the hearth on the cold winter nights, the friendly shade screening you from the summer sun, and my fruits are refreshing draughts quenching your thirst as you journey on.

I am the beam that holds your house, the board of the table, the bed on which you lie, and the timber that builds your boat.

I am the handle of your hoe, the door of your homestead, the wood of your cradle, and the shell of your coffin.

I am the bread of kindness and the floor of beauty. Ye who pass by, listen to my prayer; harm me not.

*The Prayer of the Woods has been used in Portuguese Forest Reservations for more than 1000 years.*



The Environmental Law & Policy Center of the Midwest (ELPC) is working to ensure that the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) with its 1.5 million acres of land, 1,225 miles of trout streams and 2,020 lakes, continues to be managed for multiple uses. There is concern that timber harvest has occurred at too fast a pace in recent years and will continue so with proposed timber sales.

In 2002 the CNNF was identified by a coalition of more than 130 forest advocacy organizations as one of America's "Ten Most Endangered National Forests." In that year, it was the most heavily logged forest in the entire National Forest System.

The ELPC is advocating forest management done in a responsible, sustainable way based on the best available science. Several agreements have been negotiated with the Forest Service that limit logging in the most important places for clean water, wildlife habitat and recreation, while still allowing environmentally-responsible use.

The ELPC, the Madison-based Habitat Education Center and a blue-ribbon team of scientists from Wisconsin's academic community recommend that the Forest Service 1) take serious steps to reduce landscape fragmentation, 2) do more to ensure viable populations of native and desired non-native plant and animal species and 3) take climate change into account in forest planning.

Additional information on this issue and suggestions for actions to assist the ELPC in their efforts can be obtained from the Environmental Law & Policy Center; 35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 1300; Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 673-6500; [www.elpc.org](http://www.elpc.org).

## Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis

Released July 15 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the report shows that an astounding one of out of every five Americans watches birds. It reveals that birdwatchers contributed \$36 billion to the U.S. economy in 2006 alone, the most recent year for which economic data are available. Total participation in birdwatching is strong at 48 million, and has been a steady 20 percent of the U.S. population since 1996—and 26% of Wisconsin residents.

Twenty-one percent of birdwatchers in our state are non-resident tourists contributing to our economy. This is good news for our communities and for our future. Bird watching can be the first step toward discovering and conserving nature. It is a prime motivator to cultivate stewardship and support of Important Bird Areas.

Bird-watching is often described as the second-fastest growing hobby in the USA, after gardening. Audubon combines the two! The Audubon At Home program has tips on how people can create bird-friendly backyards.



We urge people to join Audubon as a way to learn more about birds, help protect the environment we share, and work with Audubon to diminish climate change.

The report identifies who birders are, where they live, how avid they are, and what kinds of birds they watch. In addition, this report also provides an estimate of how much birders spend on their hobby.

The report is part of the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (available at [http://library.fws.gov/Pubs/birding\\_natsurvey06.pdf](http://library.fws.gov/Pubs/birding_natsurvey06.pdf)) and is the eleventh of surveys conducted about every 5 years. These surveys quantify how enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife contributes to society and promotes a healthy economy.

That's very good news, and birding has no doubt grown since 2006 because a) Baby Boomers and Retirees have continued to grow in numbers, and b) many Americans have chosen not to travel abroad for their vacations this year, but are looking for inexpensive ways to relax.

## Winter And Bird Feeders

*Stephen Kress, vice president for bird conservation at the National Audubon Society, as interviewed by Joe Lamp'l. To hear the interview with Kress, go to show number 004 at [www.growingagreenerworld.com](http://www.growingagreenerworld.com).*

Feeders aren't for the birds: You might be surprised to know that, for the most part, all those backyard bird feeders we so diligently stock throughout the year are doing more for us than the birds. For them, feeders really only serve as a supplement to their primary diet of natural foods, such as insects, seeds and fruit. Moreover, only a few of the many species of birds visit feeders at all. "Contrary to popular opinion, Kress said, "it's a myth that birds depend on a continuously stocked feeder through winter for their survival. Birds are such mobile creatures; they can get what they need from a number of other sources. Only in extreme weather do feeders become an important food source."

Feeder location is very important: It's estimated that 1 billion birds die each year from window strikes. Startled birds will often fly up and smack into a nearby window. If your feeder is going to be near the house, it should be within 3 feet. This way, if a bird is spooked, it typically has not built up enough momentum to cause serious harm. The danger zone, according to Kress, is between 3 and 30 feet.

Keep birdseed and food fresh: It's important to make sure the food in feeders is fresh. Seed and other food can become spoiled and develop mold rather quickly. Rotting food can attract harmful pathogens. so be sure to change it out frequently if necessary.

 Keep feeders clean, too: Over the course of a season, bird feeders can form mold on the bottom and can foster bacteria and other potentially harmful pests. A stiff brush works well to clean them out periodically.

Create natural habitats: One of the most important things we can do to attract and protect birds in our backyards is to create natural landscapes. All birds need food, shelter, water, nesting sites and perches. We can provide those needs through trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers. Native plants are best to create the most natural habitats. In fact, the more complex your habitat is through layers, depth and mixed groundcovers, the more birds you're going to attract to your landscape.

On a related note, Kress offered this: "People that are tidy gardeners are not good bird gardeners." First, all that cleanup is removing precious habitat material for birds. Furthermore, about 7 million birds die each year in people's backyards because of lawn chemicals. If we put chemicals down to kill bugs, we're really killing the birds. If we like birds, we need to create more habitats for bugs and insects, too. The birds will help keep them in check.



## Doubling renewable-energy use

by John Flicker, Audubon president, and Jim Robo

Despite its dramatic growth over the past decade, renewable energy still accounts for less than 2 percent of America's electricity generation. If the United States harbors any hope of breaking its dependence on foreign energy and averting the worst effects of global climate change, that must change. The federal government should do what 30 states have done and enact legislation requiring the country to get a significant percentage of its electricity from renewable sources.

We need to enact a federal renewable electricity standard (RES) this year. Here's why:

- An RES is essential to address the threat of climate change. That threat is not just environmental. It is economic. Those who say the cost of addressing climate change is too high often assume that the alternative — doing nothing — is free.
- An RES will help create a clean-energy economy. We can't afford to remain on the sidelines while the renewables industry and jobs are created elsewhere.
- An RES will give the renewables industry certainty and will give utility decision-makers a sense of urgency.
- An RES will drive down the cost of renewables.
- An RES will have a positive effect on the price of fossil fuels as well. Every kilowatt-hour of electricity generated by renewables is a kilowatt-hour not generated from coal and natural gas.
- Investing in renewable energy makes sense for America. It will clean the air. It will conserve water resources. It will strengthen our energy security in a volatile world. It will keep us competitive in the race to build a clean-energy economy. And it will result in a dramatic reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, which is the only way to prevent climate change from destroying wildlife habitat.



illus. by Thomas Bewick

## Support NEW Audubon

Your direct support annually enables us to offer more programs and services. NEW Audubon Society has 501(c)(3) status; your donations are tax deductible to the extent the IRS allows you.

Renewing your national Audubon membership through us keeps more of your funds in this local area. **Check Your Mailing Label to see if your membership has expired**

Your chapter membership number and expiration are printed above your address, followed by your national membership number and expiration. If your membership is about to expire, please consider renewing now. If you haven't paid local dues in the last 2 years, your expiration date is listed as 00/00 or is blank.

### Membership Form

Mail to: NEW Audubon, PO Box 1  
Green Bay, WI 54305-0001

- Renew local NEW Audubon chapter & National Audubon Society: Special offer on joint membership \*\*\*\*\*\$35
- New or renewed NEW Audubon chapter \$25
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**(\$7.50 of national membership is for the Audubon Magazine and is not tax-deductible)**

#### NEW Audubon Board

Board meetings are held 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays monthly at 5:30, followed by member programs. We meet at Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, 1660 East Shore Drive, Green Bay.

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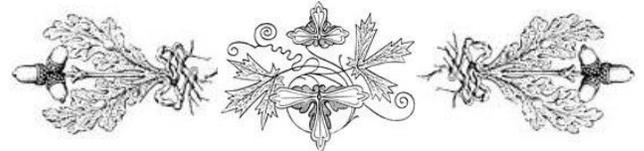
The Audubon Log is published intermittently by the Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society Inc, PO Box 1, Green Bay, WI 54305. There is no subscription fee; issues are sent to members as a membership benefit.

### Red Shouldered Hawk Report

This year Red-shoulder reproduction was again low but not as low as in some years (2005 and 2007), and as in most years, Central Wisconsin's reproduction was higher than NNF or NE Wisconsin. It is hard to believe a hawk population can maintain itself with only 1 in 3 nesting attempts producing young to the fledging stage. Red-shoulders remain in a somewhat precarious situation due to the low reproduction and should remain on the state threatened species list.

### Visit our website

Check [www.newaudubon.org](http://www.newaudubon.org) for latest information on field trips and events. Updates may take a couple of weeks, so for notification of events as soon as they are planned, send your e-mail address to [newaudubon@live.com](mailto:newaudubon@live.com) and request to be put on our field trip mailing list.



	Nicolet Nat'l Forest	Northeast WI	Central WI	WI Total
# OF RS sites checked	52	10	43	105
# occupied sites	25	5	32	62
# active nests found	12	5	22	39
# successful nests	3	2	9	14
% of active nests that are successful	25%	40%	41%	36%
# of young at banding	6	4	22	32
<b>Young/Active nest</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.04</b>	0.82
Young/Successful nest (brood size)	2	2	2.75	2.28