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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Craig Kruse

The sun wasn't even up September 12th when I loaded my gear on my back and toted a cooler behind me down the trail to the Julien Dubuque Monument. I had to use a flashlight just to make sure I stayed on the walkway. Soon, I would be joined by



Photo by C. Kruse

a lot of my friends and some of the best birders that I know. It was the day of Dubuque Audubon's first ever "Big Sit" and I wanted to get an early start.

A Big Sit is a birding event where you spend the day birding within a 17-foot circle. The circle can be anywhere, and you can have as many participants in the circle as you want, but someone must always be inside the circle. All of the reported birds must be observed or heard from within the circle. If you hear a bird

that you can't identify or see one that you are unsure, a participant may go outside of the circle for a closer look as long as someone stays behind in the circle. Any birds observed for the first time outside the circle cannot be counted.

Our big sit was on Saturday September 12th and ran from 5:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m -- a whopping 14 ½ hours! In that time we identified 57 species of birds including: 6 types of Woodpeckers, 3 types of Vireos, 4 types of Swallows and 13 types of Warblers. All of this was seen from the sidewalk around the Julien Dubuque Monument. Throughout the day we had 65 people stop to visit us, including a gentleman from Bellevue and one group that came all the way from Madison, Wisconsin. Not only was it a Big Sit, but it was a big day!



'Bald Eagle (immature) photo by C. Kruse

A list of birds we saw during our "BIG SIT" is provided on the following page.





Here is the list of birds that we saw on our **BIG SIT**:

Canada Goose
Mallard
Double-crested Cormorant
American White Pelican
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Turkey Vulture
Bald Eagle
Red-tailed Hawk
Ring-billed Gull
Rock Pigeon
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Common Nighthawk
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Yellow-throated Vireo
Philadelphia Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Tree Swallow
Bank Swallow
Barn Swallow

**RESULTS...**

Black-capped Chickadee
White-breasted Nuthatch
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher
Swainson's Thrush
American Robin
Grey Catbird
Cedar Waxwing
Ovenbird
Black-and-white Warbler
Tennessee Warbler
Mourning Warbler
American Redstart
Cape May Warbler
Northern Parula
Magnolia Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Pine Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Summer Tanager
Scarlet Tanager
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
American Goldfinch

FIVE FRESH IDEAS FOR FINDING BIRDS THIS FALL

From allaboutbirds.org

Sure, the shiny bells and whistles of the bird world—those bright and cheery warblers—have mostly winged their way south to wintering grounds by now. But it's still fall and migration's not over yet! There are still plenty of birds to see, with new arrivals every day. Late fall means you have to venture out from those wooded warbler hot spots and into new habitats to find sparrows, waterfowl, and shorebirds. Here are a few places that could be hopping right through Thanksgiving.

Weedy Fields for Sparrows

Overgrown pastures, abandoned lots, fields gone fallow—all are havens for the next big wave of migrants to arrive after warblers: sparrows. Looking for sparrows along grassy trails cut in fields can be fun because your birds will flush as you walk and hopefully land on a branch just ahead of you in clear view.

Keep an eye out for White-throated Sparrows in the East, Golden-crowned Sparrows in the West, Eastern Towhees in the South, and White-crowned Sparrows and American Tree Sparrows all over.

Mudflats and Marshes for Dabbling Ducks

Late fall is to ducks what September is to warblers—prime migration time. Dabblers are ducks that skim the surface of the water for seeds, aquatic vegetation, and invertebrates, so look for them in shallower waters. This group includes some handsome ducks: the Green-winged Teal with its iridescent green face mask, the Northern Pintail with its elegant tail plume, and the dashing Wood Duck. Females and young of these species tend to migrate earlier and move farther south, while males only move when the cold weather hits.

Bigger Lakes and Reservoirs for Diving Ducks

Divers are ducks that plunge underwater and paddle with their large feet to reach mollusks, invertebrates, fish, and submerged aquatic vegetation. Accordingly, diving ducks such as Common Goldeneyes and Common Mergansers favor deeper waters. The gales of November bring a bluebill wind out of the North, as rafts of Lesser and Greater Scaup sweep out of Canada. Hardy divers are pushed south by Old Man Winter; they migrate as their northern waters freeze over.

Coastal Beaches for Shorebirds

The waning days of autumn are too cold for sunbathing or building sandcastles, but if you're a shorebird it's the perfect time to snag invertebrates from piles of seaweed washed up on the beach. Large numbers of Sanderlings and Willets settle into their wintering grounds along seacoast beaches in November and early December. Likewise, huge congregations of Dunlins can be found in estuaries and muddy bays. Along the East Coast, it's the perfect time to add the stout little Purple Sandpiper to your life list, but don't be fooled—they're not purple, more gray and white. On the West Coast, look for Black Turnstones and Surfbirds that spend their days foraging on rocky coastlines.

Need Some Help Finding Nearby Hotspots?

eBird contains a Google Maps-like tool for timely birding. Just visit ebird's Hotspot Explorer, enter your location, and you'll find a map with pinpoints of hot birding locations. You can narrow the results by date, too, if you like. Click through the pinpoints to see up-to-date lists of what local birders are seeing at these locations right now. Here's more on [how to use Hotspot Explorer](#) (link for electronic newsletter only).



DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR OF EVENTS



SUNDAY October 4th	Dubuque Audubon Society Hawk Watch	10:00 am Meet at the Balltown Ridge overlook in Balltown, IA. Bring binoculars, a hat, sunscreen, and water. This is your chance to see locally rare hawks like the Red-shouldered and Broad-winged as they pass through our area on their annual fall migration to southern wintering grounds. Members of the Dubuque Audubon Society will help identify birds and provide insight about hawk habits.
THURSDAY October 8th	Dubuque Audubon Program: Cerulean Warblers and Red-shouldered Hawks	EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Jon Stravers will present and update on his research on Cerulean Warblers & Red-shouldered Hawks in Northeast Iowa.
FRIDAY October 23rd	Halloween Hike	6:00 pm. Swiss Valley Nature Center, 13606 Swiss Valley Rd., Peosta. "Gone but Not Forgotten" is our non-scary Halloween hike theme. Come to meet our extinct critters along the trail and hear their unique story. Dress up if you like! Must call to pre-register.
Thursday November 12th	Dubuque Audubon Program: Return of the Long Wings. Long may they fly.	EB Lyons Interpretive Center, 8991 Bellevue Hts, Dubuque, IA 5:30 pm - Dubuque Audubon Society Board Meeting 7:00 pm - Pat Schlarbaum, Iowa DNR, will speak on the return of the Peregrine Falcon to the Dubuque area.

Saturday
October
31st



OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS


If you have any questions or comments, please contact us!

- President: Craig Kruse 563-582-7215
- V-Pres.: Nick Courtney
- Secretary: Nick Courtney
- Treasurer: Maggie O'Connell 563-923-4308
- At-Large Board Members:
- Jenny Ammon Lalith Jayawickrama Gretel Winterwood
- Terri Stanton Ruth Scharnau Michele Zuercher
- Field Trips: Terri Stanton
- Membership: Joe Tollari 563-583-2077
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The mission of Dubuque Audubon Society is to provide educational opportunities to the people of the tri-state area and to preserve the natural habitat of birds and other wildlife.

DUBUQUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically a member of the local Audubon Society and do not need to sign-up separately.

Do NOT use this form to renew a membership in National Audubon Society. Use the form mailed to you by the National Audubon. There are two categories of memberships in the Dubuque Audubon Society

CATEGORY A: This category includes membership in National Audubon Society and the local chapter. You will receive 6 issues of Audubon Magazine and 9 issues of the local chapter newsletter, Pileated Drummings.

National Audubon Society Free Membership **INTRODUCTORY ONLY – FIRST TIME MEMBERS ONLY**

CATEGORY B: This category of membership is local chapter only. You will receive 9 issues of the local chapter newsletter, Pileated Drummings. All funds will remain with the local chapter. Membership year is from July to June.

Local Chapter Dues \$10.00

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

STREET _____ E-mail _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CODE: C5ZH500Z

Mail check payable to Dubuque Audubon Society. Mail to:

**Dubuque Audubon Society
PO Box 3174
Dubuque, IA 52004-3174**