

Chequamegon Chirps



April 19, 2021 Volume 40 Number 4

Wow, April, and it is nearly 1/2 over already as I dribble along with this newsletter. The weather is dribbling, too, on a cloudy, kind of cool day which will still help the inevitable progression of spring. Early flowers are in bloom and vibrant green grass is so welcome as our days and seasons zoom along. Speaking of zooming, 7:00 p.m. is our next general meeting on Monday April 19. Dial 982-349-0312 to join the group. One of the business items will be an election for the 21-22 offices. The voting will take place during the meeting. A ballot is on page three if you would prefer to vote that way. In addition to any additional business and What's Around, there will be a presentation about warbler identification.

Just a thought or two here. How much longer before we start getting together in person? How many have received Covid-19 shots? Would the summer picnic be a reasonable time? I don't know about the rest of you, but after teetering on the sharp edge of total insanity for over a year, normalness sounds pretty darn extraordinary. Be on the lookout for random hugs when we have this Covid-19 business behind us. Just warning you.

The impacts of climate change on the annual cycles of birds

The following is information presented by Cynthia Carey of the Department of Integrative Physiology, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO. careyc@colorado.edu

"Organisms living today are descended from ancestors that experienced considerable climate change in the past. However, they are currently presented with many new, man-made challenges, including rapid climate change. Migration and reproduction of many avian species are controlled by endogenous mechanisms that have been under intense selection over time to ensure that arrival to and departure from breeding grounds is synchronized with moderate temperatures, peak food availability and availability of nesting sites. The timing of egg laying is determined, usually by both endogenous clocks and local factors, so that food availability is near optimal for raising young. Climate change is causing mismatches in food supplies, snow cover and other factors that could severely impact successful migration and reproduction of avian populations unless they are able to adjust to new conditions. Resident (non-migratory) birds also face challenges if precipitation and/or temperature patterns vary in ways that result in mismatches of food and breeding. Predictions that many existing

climates will disappear and novel climates will appear in the future suggests that communities will be dramatically restructured by extinctions and change in range distributions. Species that persist into future climates may be able to do so in part owing to the genetic heritage passed down from ancestors who survived climate changes in the past.”

“Living organisms are confronted with many man-made challenges, including climate change, habitat destruction, introduction of novel chemicals and exotic species into the environment, emergence of novel pathogens from or transport of pathogens into areas into which they have not formerly occurred and synergistic effects of these and other factors.”

This information and various studies can make the outlook for us and birds in particular look pretty grim. Yes, we are experiencing faster climate change accentuated by man’s influence, but “Analysis of deep-sea sediment cores indicates that the global climate has undergone almost continual change over the last 65 million years.”

Extinction happens. “It is estimated that approximately 99 per cent of the species that have lived on earth are now extinct.” “The number of relatively undisturbed ecosystems in the world is decreasing rapidly. By the year 2050, 15-37 % of existing plant and animal species on Earth are expected to become extinct and half of all species on Earth may be experiencing extinction by 2100.” “It is estimated that human activities have so altered the world’s environments that extinction rates of species are now about 1000-fold the rate in the fossil record.”

I, as a dairy farmer, I contributed to those numbers. I remember my father and neighbors starting to cut hay on July 4th. When I cut first crop hay, it was done about three weeks earlier to take advantage of a higher protein, less fibrous product to increase milk production. Now, earliest hay harvesting takes place another week or two sooner and repeat cuttings take place every four weeks to get maximum quality and production of feed fed to cows so they can produce maximum quantities of milk so consumers can have cheaper priced dairy products available at our local grocery stores. In this particular instance, grassland birds are the losers. Their nests are destroyed or cover removed before young can hatch or fledge. In addition to that, fields are getting larger, fence rows disappearing, different chemicals and fertilizers used in mono-culture crops. All of these changes are done to make our lives easier, more convenient, more affordable. Mankind’s gains are losses for many species while some increase and prosper. Our decisions have consequences. We are remarkably connected to everything else in the world if we want to be or not. What will life be like for our grandchildren’s grandchildren? Mankind is by far the most invasive species ever. How can we do better? Something to think about on a beautiful spring day.

2021 Ballot for Chequamegon Bird Club Officers

Only dues paying members in good standing may vote. Each member may vote ONLY ONCE. If you plan on voting online during the April 19th meeting, DO NOT mail in a ballot.

Choose ONLY 1 candidate for each office.

President –

_____ - Joe Scott (incumbent)

_____ - (write-in) _____

Vice-President –

_____ - Ron Draeger (incumbent)

_____ - (write-in) _____

Secretary –

_____ - Scott Stalheim

_____ - (write-in) _____

Treasurer –

_____ - Cam Scott (incumbent)

_____ - (write-in) _____

Ballots must be received by April 26th. Mail ballots to:

Judy Rau – Secretary
W6580 Apple Ave.
Medford, WI 54451

Editor Chequamegon Chirps

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Abbotsford, WI 54405

Club contacts

Website: chequamegonbirdclub.org

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Newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org

April and May Events

Highly variable weather continues.

Plant growth and insect numbers explode.

Familiar species returning to their summer homes,

establishing territories, mate selection and

nest building make best use of extended daylight.

Green returns as the most common color.

Birds, butterflies, blooms and flowers delight the eye.

Stay healthy !



NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD "Listen to the mockingbird..." goes the song, and the mockingbird (9 in.) is, indeed, worth hearing. Its song imitates other birds' songs perfectly, with original phrases added. Mockingbirds nest around homes, perch on chimneys and television antennas. White patches on wings and tail are conspicuous in flight. The Loggerhead Shrike (7 in., page 93), which also perches on wires and fences, is chunkier, with a thick bill and black mask.

