



Chequamegon Chirps

Newsletter of the Chequamegon Bird Club

Medford, Wisconsin

February 2007

Volume 26 Number 2

NEXT MEETING:

Date: Monday, February 19, 2007

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Multi-purpose Building
Taylor County Fairgrounds
Hwy. 13 and 64
Medford

Program: Members Program Night
Everyone (see article on
page 2)

Food: Herrmann, Pledger



Important Announcement to All Members

We will again discuss alternate meeting sites and the necessity of our lunch program at this month's meeting. After discussion, a silent vote will be taken by written ballots so members may choose where they wish to continue holding our meetings. Where we decide to meet may influence whether to keep, discontinue or modify the lunch program, so the voting regarding lunch will be taken separately, following the meeting place vote. I have chosen paper ballots to alleviate any intimidating factors that might otherwise occur if voting takes place by a show of hands.

If you will not be attending the February meeting and still wish to vote, please call me at home anytime through Sunday evening, February 18th. It is easiest to find me at home in the evenings. I will be happy to discuss the options with you via the phone, and take your vote after our discussion.

For the content of our "member's night" meeting, please bring observations, stories, questions, items, or anything of interest to the club regarding or related to birds. Our meeting last year with the same agenda was interesting and thought-provoking. Let's ensure we have a great time in February, too!

See you on the 19th, and in the meantime, happy birding!

Gayle

CBC Checklist Committee Report 2006

This is the third annual report of the CBC checklist project. Eighteen club members submitted reports at some point during 2006. Participation is down from twenty-one last year. A thank you goes out to everyone who took the time to fill out a checklist in 2006.

A total of 248 bird species were reported between the December 2005 meeting and the December 2006 meeting, including reports for all five Grebes and approximately twenty-six Warblers. This is two species more than last year's two hundred forty six, but a little less than the two hundred fifty three species recorded in 2004.

Included were six species listed as rare (eight or fewer yearly records by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (WSO)) They are as follows:

- Ross's Goose - Luepke/Ruhde
- Cackling Goose - Luepke/Ruhde
- Eared Grebe - Ruhde
- Western Grebe – Decker/Kuse/Luepke/Scott



Western Grebe
(Patuxent Wildlife Research Center photo)

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Checklist Report - continued from page 1

- Eurasian Collared Dove – Ruhde
- Black-backed Woodpecker – Ruhde

There were no reports listed as casual by WSO this year.

Two species were reported that are not on the CBC checklist. They are:

- Immature Prairie Falcon found unable to fly by Gayle Davis north of Owen. This bird later died and is an extremely rare sighting for Wisconsin.
- Whooping Crane seen by multiple observers this year. Most of the reports were of the young female that summered in south-western Marathon County. A pair of Whooping Cranes at Necedah Refuge fledged 2 young, one of which later died. These were the first Whooping Cranes to hatch in the wild in Wisconsin in well over 100 years. Great job by the Operation Migration people!

Identification errors have mostly been eliminated, and we wish to thank everyone for their extra effort in this matter. Of course, as always, we encourage anyone not reporting to do so. We feel that there is no better way to improve your birding experiences than to correctly identify by sight and / or sound every bird you encounter.

The order of the checklist has changed somewhat due to re-classification of some groups of birds by the American Ornithologists Union. Now, Geese, Swans, and Ducks are first in order, followed by the upland game birds (pheasants, grouse, turkeys, etc.) The rest remain in their same order. The only new species added to the list is Cackling Goose. This species was formed from the 3 smallest sub-species of the Canada Goose. They are listed in older bird guides as Aleutian, Cackling, and Richardson's form, of which we normally only see the

Richardson's form. Identification is based largely on body size and shape of the bill.

We want to remind you that the committee accepts all reports from anywhere in Wisconsin, but the birds must be seen by club members. Second hand or hearsay reports are not accepted. This very much reduces the chances of errors.

We hope everyone will take a checklist (or several) at each meeting return them the following month full of birds that they've seen that month. Remember that it is easier and more accurate to fill out the lists throughout the month rather than waiting until the end and trying to remember what you've seen. Checklists are also available for download on the CBC web site: www.chequamegonbirdclub.org.

If you are unable to get to the meeting, just send or e-mail your list to Connie within a couple of days.

Thanks again, to all CBC members who participated in the checklist project in 2006 and remember to check out the large checklist that Connie brings to each meeting to find out what's been reported so far for the year.

Have a great birding year!

The Checklist Committee:

Ken Luepke
Greg Scott
Connie Decker

Sad Whooping Crane News but also a Bit of Joy

Seventeen of the eighteen young whooping cranes that were led south from Wisconsin to Florida last fall were killed when storms hit central Florida February 1 and 2. The cranes were being kept in an enclosure at the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge near Crystal River, Florida. The netting that covered the enclosure to keep out predators and adult cranes unfortunately also prevented the young cranes from escaping the storms, and they apparently drowned. The lone survivor, No. 615, was the runt of the group and the one who flew as far as Georgia before refusing to fly further. He finished the journey in a truck. It is not known how he survived.

The tragedy followed a milestone in the Operation Migration effort – for the first time in six years, an entire group of young birds reared at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge had made it to Florida without the loss of any cranes. In previous years some birds had been killed by predators or accidents.



Operation Migration Photo

Bird Reports (December - January 2006)



Checklist observers: *Connie Decker , Ken Luepke , Doug and Willa Pledger, and Greg and Cam Scott*

Total Number of Species Observed this month is: 53

(Note: Only observers for rare or unusual sightings are included below.)

- **Canada Goose
- **Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel
- **Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, American Coot (Scott)
- **Ring-billed Gull
- **Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove
- **Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl (Luepke / Decker), Barred Owl, Short-eared Owl (Luepke / Decker)
- **Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker
- **Northern Shrike
- **Gray Jay (Luepke / Decker), Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven
- **Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet
- **American Robin (Luepke / Decker)
- **European Starling
- **Bohemian Waxwing (Luepke), Cedar Waxwing,
- **American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting, Northern Cardinal
- **Common Grackle (Luepke / Decker)
- **Pine Grosbeak (Luepke / Decker), Purple Finch, House Finch, White-winged Crossbill (Luepke / Decker), Common Redpoll (Luepke / Decker), Pine Siskin (Luepke / Scott), American Goldfinch
- **House Sparrow

Members Program Night

Do you have a favorite bird story? A question about birds? An interesting bird experience? A bird photo you like? The February program will be given by all members. Come ready to share.

"One day when I was walking in the woods, a chickadee sat on ..."



"How do birds find ...?"

Reminders

- ✓ **2007 Dues:** Dues are \$12/mailling address and are payable now. \$\$\$
- ✓ **Aluminum Recycling Fundraiser:** Please bring your aluminum to meetings.





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Club Officers 2006-2007

- President* – Gayle Davis
- Vice-president* – Connie Decker
- Secretary* – Hildegard Kuse
- Treasurer* – Bernice Gokey

Other Club Contacts

- Web site: www.sws-wis.com/cbc
- Email: info@chequamegonbirdclub.org
- Newsletter Email: newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org
- Bird sightings: Connie Decker



February – March Outdoors

- February 16-19 – Great Backyard Bird Count
- Horned larks migrating north
- Snowshoe hares begin mating
- Great-horned owls begin nesting
- March 3 – Full moon
- Maple sap starts flowing
- Bald eagles begin migrating
- Pussy willows begin blossoming



Bird Website

The Patuxent Wildlife Research Center is part of the US Geological Service. Although its research deals with many types of wildlife and other aspects of the environment, birds are a large part of the work that is conducted at and through the center. Much of the work with whooping crane restoration has been based at the center. The center is also administers the National Bird Banding Program. The website, www.pwrc.usgs.gov, includes a great deal of information and is interesting to explore.

There is also a Migratory Bird Research Page: www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov. The page includes a link to the Bird Identification InfoCenter, which has photographs, songs, videos, identification tips, maps, and life history information for North American birds.