



# Chequamegon Chirps

## Newsletter of the Chequamegon Bird Club

Medford, Wisconsin

July 2007

Volume 26 Number 7

### **NEXT MEETING:**

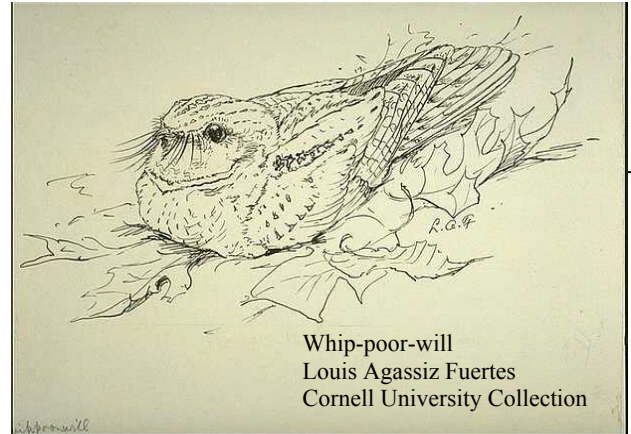
**Date:** Monday, July 16, 2007

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Medford Public Library

**Program:** Birds of Wetlands and Woodlands  
Greg Scott and Gayle Davis

**Food:** Rhoda Barber, Sue Koffarnus, and  
Annabelle Neitzel



Whip-poor-will  
Louis Agassiz Fuytes  
Cornell University Collection

## Notes from Gayle

As fate would have it, in our time of severe drought, we were deluged with significant rain and hail storms the afternoon of the CBC summer picnic on June 18th. A fearless group of seven members met at Ken's home at 3 pm for a pre-picnic birding adventure, and we discussed our birding possibilities as the rain poured down. Upon the rain stopping, we walked to Ken's marsh lookout point and watched the Whooping Crane female for a while as she mingled with over a hundred Sandhill Cranes and a few Mallards. The decision was then made to drive to McMillan Marsh and attempt some birding, although the weather continued to appear very threatening. Sure enough, we arrived at McMillan and the skies opened up again with torrents of rain. Ken spotted something fly by, so we landed A bird for the trip! It was nearing time to leave for Cherokee Park so we gave up the attempts at birding as the rain continued, and drove to Cherokee for the picnic.

The turnout for the picnic was relatively small as apparently even the enticement of wonderful food was not enough to bring members out in the rain. About fifteen of us enjoyed terrific food contributions of side dishes, desserts and salads which complimented two BBQ dishes prepared by Cam and Connie, both of which were delicious. Harvey surprised us with a beautifully roasted turkey which he took a day off from work to prepare as he stationed himself over the grill at Cherokee in the early afternoon. The turkey was a big hit and we thank you, Harvey! The large pavilion provided ample shelter from the rain, which ended early into our evening. A fire was a'blazin' in the large stone fireplace, and all was right with the world as we enjoyed good food, good company, and even some good birds. The meal portion of the evening was concluded with a delightful round of s'mores, thoughtfully provided by Connie. I think for more than one of us, the s'mores brought back fond memories of times past.

A short but sweet business meeting was conducted after supper concluded. One of the items considered was the possibility of having another picnic in August to give members another opportunity to enjoy the outdoors with the accompaniment of friends and food. The library is not available in August, nor is a program planned at this time, and subsequently, folks present at the June picnic thought a picnic sounded great. Discussion will take place at our July meeting as to where to have the August picnic, and at what time. We may consider another field trip prior to the picnic if there is enough interest in conducting one. Please bring ideas for a picnic location to the July meeting. Areas being considered are: the northwest end of Chequamegon Waters (north of Miller Dam), Black River County Park on Highway 29 near Owen-Withee, Perkinstown, the Medford School Forest east of Medford, or Cherokee Park again. Prerequisites to consider for whatever site is chosen are a pavilion or building in case of rain, a fireplace if it is under a pavilion, and, ideally, birding habitat.

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Speaking of birding habitat, an impromptu trip took place Saturday, July 7th. The eleven-hour trip was thrown together at the last minute by our activities director, Connie, who had a hankerin' to hear some goatsuckers. Chuck-will's-widows had been reported down in Jackson County again, and yours truly jumped at the chance to hear what would be a lifer. Ken, Connie, Greg, Cam, Gordy, Cathy and I tackled the 95 degree, 90% humidity day and headed on down south, fearful of stopping and succumbing to the heat, and complaining all the way as we melted. Those of us in the lead car were obligated to have car windows down to listen for any birds along the way, while folks in the second car enjoyed air conditioning and merely waited for us to inform them of what birds were about the area as we traveled. (I shall not name who was in which car as it might cast a bad light on the constitution of those to the rear - hee hee - but I WILL say: YOU BIG BABIES!)

We continued to endure relentless heat all afternoon and well into the evening while spotting and listening to a variety of birds. One of our stops, in a Jack Pine area, had us hoping beyond hope for the appearance of a Kirtland's Warbler, an event that would have created an atmosphere of ecstasy for most of us. In case you have not heard, several Kirtland's Warblers have been discovered nesting in Wisconsin this year. This is nothing short of historic as the bird is highly endangered and since the 1940s had been found nesting only in the Michigan. Sadly, no Kirtland's appeared.

As evening approached, we decided to find a spot to picnic as we had all packed sack lunches. We pulled in to a parking area where a tall observation tower loomed to the west, overlooking a vast expanse of wetland/grass habitat. We swatted at the deer flies, which had plagued us all afternoon and were relentless in their quest for blood. We shared fruits and dip and chips, and ate our sandwiches (after I gleefully traded Ken a ham salad sandwich for his egg salad) while discussing the birds spotted thus far. Connie once again treated us to a delicious dessert of a strawberry torte kind of thing, and I thanked her appropriately by dumping a small quantity of water on her as she had wished all day to be cooled down. After eating we ventured out to the tower and climbed to the top where the breeze kept the deer flies at bay. We enjoyed the peacefulness of it and the gradual cooling as the evening progressed.

We then headed back to the appointed site for the goatsuckers where we ran across three more birders parked at the spot for the same purpose. Dusk was falling, and the deer flies were replaced by what can only be described as hordes, armies perhaps, of mosquitoes. There was so much buzzing and swatting we feared we would not hear the birds we came to hear. The Common Nighthawks were already in the area hunting their share of bugs, and, as it



Kirtland's Warbler  
US Fish & Wildlife Service

grew dark, the first Whip-poor-will began to sing. Then another. Suddenly, a Chuck-Will's-Widow was heard to the west. We hustled down the road on foot to track the bird down. We reveled in its call and while doing so, a second began calling. The heat, the humidity, the deer flies, the mosquitoes, all became worth it as we listened to steady calls of Nighthawks, Whip-poor-wills, and the Chuck-will's-widows. THIS is what bird watching was all about for me. Hearing a new bird, listening to all of the birds in their habitat, joined by comrades who also enjoyed the beauty of it all. I remembered again, as I do a thousand times a day, why I moved my life back to Wisconsin.

A list was made of birds heard and/or observed for the day, and I share it with you now: Purple Martins, Sandhill Cranes, Rock Doves, Red-winged Blackbirds, Robins, Canada Geese, Mourning Doves, Killdeer, Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows, House Sparrows (arg), Starlings, Kestrels, Turkeys, Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Crows, Goldfinches, Cedar Waxwings, Common Yellowthroats, Sedge Wrens, Chipping Sparrows, Turkey Vultures, Swamp Sparrows, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-eyed Vireos, Chickadees, Indigo Buntings, Brown Thrashers (later observed "dusting", a fun behavior to see), Field Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, Catbirds, White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Blue Jays, Clay-colored Sparrows, Great Blue Herons, Eastern Kingbirds, Vesper Sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Common Nighthawks, Hermit Thrushes, Common Flicker, Wood Ducks, Green Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, Raven, Harrier, Eastern Phoebe, Pheasant, Great-crested Flycatcher, Barred Owl, Pine Warbler (who gave us a great view of himself), Scarlet Tanager, and, the highlight of the day, the Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widows. We all arrived home at the hour of midnight, and I believe I can speak for all when I say we slept like logs.

To wrap things up for y'all, may I say that I hope to see you at the July 16th meeting at the library in Medford. Greg Scott has compiled a wonderful program of his photos of local birds, and I will be narrating his program as I did for the Land Stewardship Conference in April. See you Monday!

Gayle

## Bird Sightings (May – June 2007)

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*Check list participants:* Gayle Davis , Connie Decker , Hildegard and Loretta Kuse , Ken Luepke , Doug and Willa Pledger , Greg and Cam Scott .

Total Number of Species Observed this month is: 159

- Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser (Kuse), Red-breasted Merganser (Davis)
- Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse (Davis/Scott), Greater Prairie-Chicken, Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite (Luepke/Scott)
- Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, American Bittern, Least Bittern (Luepke), Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron
- Turkey Vulture
- Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel
- Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Whooping Crane (Davis/Decker/Luepke/Scott), Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Hudsonian Godwit (Luepke), Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher
- Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock
- Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern (Luepke), Black Tern
- Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo
- Eastern Screech-Owl (Davis/Decker/Luepke/Scott), Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl (Scott)
- Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher
- Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker
- Olive-sided Flycatcher (Davis), Eastern Wood-Pewee, Alder Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher (Luepke), Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird
- Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo
- Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven
- Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow
- Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper
- House Wren, Winter Wren, Sedge Wren, Marsh Wren
- Golden-crowned Kinglet (Scott)
- Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin
- Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing
- Blue-winged Warbler (Davis / Scott), Golden-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler (Scott), Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler (Davis), Pine Warbler, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Canada Warbler
- Summer Tanager \* (Scott), Scarlet Tanager
- Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow
- Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Bobolink
- Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Oriole
- Purple Finch, House Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow



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## July – August Outdoors

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- Second nestings taking place
- Deer antlers reach full size
- Blueberries at their peak; blackberries ripen
- Cicadas singing
- Prairie flowers blooming
- Two invasive plants - purple loosestrife and wild parsnip are blossoming and control efforts should be undertaken. Caution: contact with wild parsnip can cause burns.
- July 29 – Full moon



## Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendar!

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**Second Picnic:** Due to the rain during the June picnic, the August 20 meeting will be another picnic. Location and other details to be announced.

**Operation Migration:** We will again be co-hosting Joe Duff for a presentation on the whooping crane ultralight-guided migration.

**DATE:** Sunday, Sept. 23rd, 2007

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m

**LOCATION:** Red/ White Theater  
Medford Senior High  
(same location as last year)