



Chequamegon Chirps

Newsletter of the Chequamegon Bird Club

Medford, Wisconsin

March 2008

Volume 27 Number 3

NEXT MEETING:

Date: Monday, March 17, 2008

Time: 7:00 p.m.

**Location: Medford Public Library
400 N. Main St.
Medford**

**Program: Birding the Texas Gulf Coast
*Gordy Ruesch, Cathy Mauer***

Food: Connie Decker & Cam/Greg Scott

Please bring your own cup or mug for beverage.



- Prairie Chicken Festival – April 18-20 - Come to see the Prairie Chicken do its mating dance, to find out what you can do in your backyard to benefit wildlife, see kestrels in their nests or learn from Master Bird banders as they band birds for research. These are just a few of the many activities to take part in the weekend. Seven locations: Buena Vista Marsh, Paul Olson Wildlife Area, Mead Wildlife Area, Historic Point Basse, Sandhill Wildlife Area and Necedo National Wildlife Refuge. Visit www.prairiechickenfestival.org for more information.

“Woody Woodpecker” by Willa Pledger

During recent years, we have been able to attract pileated woodpeckers to a suet feeder in front of our home. We have learned to identify the adult male and adult female because of different coloration of the forehead and stripes on the side of the head. The male is bravest at the feeder while the female immediately flies away if she notices us watching her through a window. Perhaps the pair we observed last winter nested in the area of the outlet stream that empties our lake.

The pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*) is crow-sized and approximately 17" (43 cm) in length. The coloration is black with white neck stripes, white wing linings and a prominent red crest. The call resembles the flicker but is more 'cuk-cuk-cuk-cuk', rising and then falling in pitch.



Despite its size, this elegant woodpecker is adept at keeping out of sight. Obtaining a close view of one usually requires careful stalking. Primarily a forest bird, the "Logcock" has recently adapted to civilization and is relatively numerous on the outskirts of large cities. Its presence is easily detected by its loud, ringing call and large rectangular excavations in trees. Pileated woodpeckers have been observed to move their eggs which have fallen off the nest to another site. This is a rare habit in other birds.



This brassy, raucous bird was the prototype for the Woody Woodpecker motion picture cartoons. Woody was created in 1940 by artist Ben "Bugs" Hardaway who previously laid the groundwork for "screwball" characters Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck in the late 1930s. The animated cartoon character, Woody Woodpecker, appeared in theatrical short films produced by the Walter Lantz animation studio and distributed by Universal Pictures. Woody's character and design would evolve over the years from an insane bird to a more refined looking and acting character. Woody was originally voiced by Mel Blanc who voiced most of the Looney Tunes/Merrie Melodies characters. Woody Woodpecker remained a staple of Universal's release schedule until 1972 when Lantz finally closed down his studio.

Bird Reports (January - February 2008)



Checklist observers: *Gayle Davis, Connie Decker, Hildegard & Loretta Kuse, Ken Luepke, Cathy Mauer, Gordy Ruesch, Doug and Willa Pledger, Larry Ruhde, Claire Romanak, Greg & Cam Scott*

Total Number of Species Observed this month is: 53

- Canada Goose, Mallard, Common Goldeneye,, Hooded Merganser (Ruhde),
- Common Merganser, Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey,
- Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk (Scott),
- Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel,
- Sandhill Crane (Decker / Luepke (probably injured)), Rock Pigeon,
- Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl (Decker), Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl
- Belted Kingfisher (Ruhde), Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker,
- Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Shrike, Blue Jay,
- American Crow, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee,
- Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling,
- Bohemian Waxwing (Decker / Luepke), Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow (Ruhde), Dark-eyed Junco, Snow Bunting,
- Northern Cardinal, Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch, House Finch,
- Red Crossbill(Decker / Luepke), White-winged Crossbill (Decker / Luepke)
- Common Redpoll, Hoary Redpoll ** (Romanak), Pine Siskin (Ruhde),
- American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeak (Davis / Mauer / Ruesch / Scott),
- House Sparrow, American Robin (Kuse) --- END OF REPORT

CBC Checklist Committee Report for 2007

This is the fourth annual report for the CBC checklist project. A total of eighteen club members submitted at least one monthly report in the CBC year, (Dec. '06 meeting until Dec. '07 meeting).

This year's total of 256 reported species is the highest so far. The other years' totals were: (253) 2004, (246) 2005, and (248) 2006.

Included were seven species listed as rare (eight or fewer yearly records) by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. They were: Ross's Goose - Luepke , Cackling Goose - Decker, Luepke, Scott, Buff-breasted Sandpiper - Luepke , Parasitic Jaeger - Ruhde , Bell's Vireo - Ruhde, and Summer Tanager - Scott.

There were two species listed as casual (one record every three to five years) reported in 2007. They were: Chuck-will's-widow in Jackson Co.- Davis, Decker, Luepke, Mauer, Ruesch, and Scotts, and Hoary Redpoll in Marathon Co. - Romanak .

In addition, there were three species reported that are not on the W.S.O. checklist. They were: Whooping Crane - multiple observers, most sightings were of the bird that summered near Spencer for the second straight year. A Green-breasted Mango was reported by Romanak. This Hummingbird was at a feeder near Beloit. This was a first record for the entire mid-west and for a great share of North America. The bird possibly originated from Mexico, the closest part of its large tropical range. It was viewed by many hundreds of people from across the U.S. The third species is the European Goldfinch present at the feeder of Dwight Offord near Lublin for a day or so and seen there by Cam and Greg Scott.

Other highlights were the reports of all three Goatsuckers, twenty-nine Warbler species, twenty Sparrow species, all eleven of the Blackbird family and all ten of the Finches.

Report errors have once again declined, thanks to everyone for their cooperation in this matter.

We again encourage everyone to participate in the checklist project. The only requirements are that the birds were seen in Wisconsin and were seen by a club member. Second hand reports are not accepted. As always you can turn in your lists at the monthly meeting or mail them to Connie within a couple of days after the meeting. Blank checklists are available at the meeting as well as on the CBC website www.chequamegonbirdclub.org.

Thanks to all who participated in 2007 and we look forward to 2008.

Have a great birding year!

The checklist committee: Ken Luepke, Greg Scott, Connie Decker

A Fundamental Aspect of Birding

By Gayle Davis

Birdwatching has become the fastest growing outdoor activity in our country. I refer to birding as one of the “silent sports” as it offers a wonderful communion with nature while we seek out birds in their diverse habitats. Birds can be found everywhere on the planet. Their resilience and adaptations to the harshest of environmental conditions are awe-inspiring, and the excitement they stir within us as we pull them in to view through our binoculars can make our day.

So what is one to do when not a bird appears to be found? While the time of day, temperature, wind, precipitation, and location can all be factors in whether or not birds can be scouted up for viewing, one useful technique is often sure to get you some birds. Leave your pride at the door and learn to pish out the birds.

A publication written by world-class, World Series birder and author Pete Dunne, titled “The Art of Pishing”, shares ideas on learning when, where and how to use pishing while birding. I hope you will enjoy excerpts from Mr. Dunnes book.

On defining pishing: “Pishing is an onomatopoeic term applied to a variety of orally produced noises that, in general, mimic the scolding calls of birds. If this is not the definition you had in mind, then you were confusing pishing with something else.” Pishing is accomplished by forcing a constant stream of air past your lips while at the same time repeatedly forming your lips as if you were saying the word “we”.

On why pishing works: “Put yourself in the place of a bird. Except when birds are nesting—busy engaging mates, defending territories, feeding and defending young—they have pretty boring lives. All they have to do over the course of the day is forage (usually relegated to the morning and evening hours), tend to a little toiletry, and try not to get eaten (which for most birds means staying quiet, still, and under cover). This is a lot of time when birds are doing nothing, and it must be pretty tedious. Then somebody starts raising a ruckus. You, the bird, don't know what's going on. It might be something important, and not knowing what it is might even be risky. So you go over to have a look. Maybe even get in on the action. Test your reflexes. See whether you've still got the right stuff.”

On when NOT to pish (while conducting a Christmas Count with a friend): “It was early Sunday morning...I felt confident that my very discrete pishing would never be heard by any of the residents still snug in their beds. We didn't count on the dog—in fact, we never even heard the yappy little thing until a gentleman wearing boxer briefs and a frown opened the side door to his home and made a genuine and convincing effort to appear both put out and formidable. 'Christmas Bird Count,' I explained. 'Audubon Society,' I added, invoking my diplomatic credentials. But the gentleman was now both unamused and unappeased, and apparently never signed an agreement according diplomatic immunity to Audubon Society representatives. 'You will cease this activity,' he suggested, 'or I will invoke my full rights as a citizen. Do I make myself *abundantly* clear?'.’”

On why the birds don't respond: "You're too far away from perches for birds to land on, or the forest where the birds feel comfortable, or you are just too far away from the bird itself...Or you're wearing a bright, obvious, and intimidating color. Or it's too windy and the birds can't hear you...Or it's raining hard...or it's too cold and the birds have their minds set on feeding or it's too hot and the birds are just too listless to deal with you. Or they're too tired because they were migrating all night and will be in the air again in a few hours.

One very common reason that birds do not respond to pishing is that they're too smart. These are birds that reside in heavily birded areas. They've heard it all and can probably identify every top pisher in North America by call in two seconds or less...After a bird falls for the ol' pishing ruse a few times...they wise up. They stop responding, or they stop responding enthusiastically. You can test this yourself. Say you've got a territorial Prothonotary Warbler—a bird that normally responds well to pishing. You pish it up and get a great in-your-face response. The bird eventually loses interest and wanders off. If you wait a few minutes and try again, the bird might well respond again...The third time you try it, the bird may call but not approach, and if you try it a fourth time, chances are your efforts will be about as effective as pishing into the wind."

Be smart, and always use your pisher appropriately, not at the expense of the birds. Good luck pishing, and happy birding!

CHECK LIST RESULTS FROM 2007:

Wisconsin Birds Field Checklist

Name: Total 2007

Date: 256 species

If you are unable to attend and turn in this checklist at the meeting, please mail it within 4 days to:

Connie Decker
411 N. Third St.
Dorchester, WI 54425
or e-mail: cdecker@dwavenet

Birds with an asterisk (or any species not on the list) as well as those out of their normal seasonal range, will need to be discussed.



Field Checklist committee:

- Ken Luepke
- Connie Decker
- Greg Scott

GEESE	Gr. White-fronted	✓	Spruce *	✓	Red-shouldered	✓	Baird's	✓
	Snow	✓	Gr. Prairie-Chicken	✓	Broad-winged	✓	Pectoral	✓
	Ross's *	✓	TURKEY	✓	Swainson's **	✓	Purple	✓
	Brant **	✓	Wild	✓	Red-tailed	✓	Dunlin	✓
	Cackling*	✓	BOBWHITE	✓	Rough-legged	✓	Stilt	✓
	Canada	✓	Northern	✓	Golden Eagle	✓	Buff-breasted *	✓
	SWANS	✓	LOONS	✓	Am. Kestrel	✓	Ruff **	✓
	Mute	✓	Red-throated	✓	Merlin	✓	Short-b. Dowitcher	✓
	Trumpeter	✓	Pacific **	✓	Gyrfalcon **	✓	Long-b. Dowitcher	✓
	Tundra	✓	Common	✓	Peregrine Falcon	✓	Wilson's Snipe	✓
	DUCKS	✓	GREBES	✓	RAILS	✓	Am. Woodcock	✓
	Wood Duck	✓	Pied-billed	✓	Yellow Rail*	✓	Wilson's Phalarope	✓
	Gadwall	✓	Horned	✓	King Rail*	✓	Red-n. Phalarope	✓
	Eur. Wigeon **	✓	Red-necked	✓	Virginia Rail	✓	Red Phalarope **	✓
	Am. Wigeon	✓	Eared *	✓	Sora	✓	JAEGERS	✓
	Am. Black Duck	✓	Western *	✓	GALLINULES	✓	Pomarine **	✓
	Mallard	✓	PELICAN	✓	Com. Moorhen	✓	Parasitic *	✓
	Blue-winged Teal	✓	Am. White	✓	Am. Coot	✓	Long-tailed **	✓
	Cinnamon Teal **	✓	CORMORANT	✓	CRANES	✓	GULLS	✓
	No. Shoveler	✓	Double-crested	✓	Sandhill	✓	Laughing *	✓
	No. Pintail	✓	BITTERN	✓	Whooping *	✓	Franklin's	✓
	Green-winged Teal	✓	Am. Bittern	✓	PTOVERS	✓	Little *	✓
	Canvasback	✓	Least Bittern	✓	Black-bellied	✓	Black-headed **	✓
	Redhead	✓	HERONS	✓	Am. Golden	✓	Bonaparte's	✓
	Ring-necked	✓	Great Blue	✓	Semipalmated	✓	Mew **	✓
	Greater Scaup	✓	Great Egret	✓	Piping *	✓	Ring-billed	✓
	Lesser Scaup	✓	Snowy Egret *	✓	Killdeer	✓	California **	✓
	King Eider **	✓	Little Blue *	✓	STILT	✓	Herring	✓
	Harlequin *	✓	Tricolored **	✓	Black-necked **	✓	Thayer's	✓
	Surf Scoter	✓	Cattle Egret	✓	AVOCET	✓	Iceland *	✓
	White-w. Scoter	✓	Green	✓	American *	✓	Lesser Black-backed *	✓
	Black Scoter	✓	Black-cr. Night	✓	SANDPIPERS	✓	Glaucous	✓
	Long-tailed Duck	✓	Yellow-cr. Night*	✓	Spotted	✓	Gr. Black-backed	✓
	Bufflehead	✓	IBISES	✓	Solitary	✓	Sabine's *	✓
	Com. Goldeneye	✓	Glossy **	✓	Greater Yellowlegs	✓	Black-leg Kittiwake **	✓
	Bar. Goldeneye **	✓	White-faced **	✓	Willet	✓	Ivory **	✓
	Hooded Merganser	✓	VULTURE	✓	Lesser Yellowlegs	✓	TERNs	✓
	Com. Merganser	✓	Turkey	✓	Upland	✓	Least **	✓
	Red-br. Merganser	✓	HAWKS	✓	Whimbrel	✓	Caspian	✓
	Ruddy	✓	Osprey	✓	Hudsonian Godwit	✓	Black	✓
	PARTRIDGE	✓	Mississippi Kite **	✓	Marbled Godwit	✓	Common	✓
	Gray	✓	Bald Eagle	✓	Ruddy Turnstone	✓	Arctic **	✓
	PHEASANT	✓	No. Harrier	✓	Red Knot	✓	Forster's	✓
	Ring-necked	✓	Sharp-shinned	✓	Sanderling	✓	DOVES	✓
	GROUSE	✓	Cooper's	✓	Semipalmated	✓	Rock Pigeon	✓
	Ruffed	✓	No. Goshawk	✓	Western **	✓	Eur. Collared-Dove *	✓
		✓		✓	Least	✓	Mourning	✓
		✓		✓	White-rumped	✓		✓

CUCKOOS	Yellow-billed	W. Kingbird **	GNATCATCHER	Blue-gray	Black-and-white	FINCHES	Pine Grosbeak
Black-billed	E. Kingbird	Scissor-tailed **	THRUSHES	Eastern Bluebird	Am. Redstart	Purple Finch	Purple Finch
OWLS	Barn **	Loggerhead *	Mtn. Bluebird **	Towns. Solitaire*	Worm-eating *	House Finch	House Finch
E. Screech-Owl	Northern	White-eyed *	Very	Gray-cheeked	Ovenbird	Red Crossbill	Red Crossbill
Great Horned	VIREOS	Bells *	Swainson's	Hermit	No. Waterthrush	White-w. Crossbill	White-w. Crossbill
Snowy	Yellow-throated	Blue-headed	Wood	Am. Robin	La. Waterthrush	Common Redpoll **	Common Redpoll **
No. Hawk Owl **	Warbling	Philadelphia	MIMIDS	Varied Thrush	Kentucky	Pine Siskin	Pine Siskin
Burrowing **	Red-eyed	Gray Catbird	Gray Catbird	No. Mockingbird *	Connecticut	Am. Goldfinch	Am. Goldfinch
Barred	Blue Jay	Blue Jay	No. Mockingbird *	Brown Thrasher	Mourning	Eveing Grosbeak	Eveing Grosbeak
Great Gray *	Am. Crow	Com. Raven	STARLING	European	Com. Yellowthroat	OLD WORLD SPARROWS	OLD WORLD SPARROWS
Long-eared	CORVIDS	Horned	PIPIT	American	Hooded	House Sparrow	House Sparrow
Short-eared	Gray Jay	Purple Martin	SWALLOW	Bohemian	Wilson's	Eur. Tree Sparrow **	Eur. Tree Sparrow **
Boreal **	Blue Jay	No. Rough-winged	Purple Martin	Cedar	Canada	<i>Euro Peeg. Goldfinch</i>	<i>Euro Peeg. Goldfinch</i>
No. Saw-whet	Blue Jay	Bank	SWALLOW	WARBLERS	Yellow-br. Chat *	<i>Green-breasted Mango</i>	<i>Green-breasted Mango</i>
GOATSUCKERS	Com. Nighthawk	Cliff	Blue-winged	Golden-winged	TANAGERS		
Com. Nighthawk	Whip-poor-will **	Barn	Orange-crowned	Tennessee	Summer *		
Whip-poor-will **	SWIFT	Black-capped	Nashville	No. Parula	Scarlet		
Chimney	Hummingbirds	Boreal	Yellow	Chestnut-sided	Western *		
Ruby-throated	Rufous **	CHICKADEES	Magnolia	Grasshopper	Green-tailed **		
Rufous **	KINGFISHER	Black-capped	Cape May	Henslow's	Spotted **		
Belted	Red-headed	Boreal	Black-thr. Blue	Le Conte's	Eastern		
Red-headed	Red-bellied	TITMOUSE	Yellow-rumped	Nelson's Sharp-t. *	SPARROWS		
Red-bellied	Yel.-bell. Sapsucker	Tufted	Black-thr. Green	Fox	Am. Tree		
Yel.-bell. Sapsucker	Downy	NUTHATCHES	Blackburnian	Song	Chipping		
Hairy	Hairy	Red-breasted	Pine	Swamp	Clay-colored		
Am. Three-toed **	Black-backed *	White-breasted	Kirtland's **	White-throated	Field		
Black-backed *	No. Flicker	CREEPER	Prairie *	Harris's	Vesper		
No. Flicker	Pileated	Brown	Palm	White-crowned	Lark		
Pileated	FLYCATCHERS	Carolina	Bay-breasted	Dark-eyed Junco	Lark Bunting **		
Olive-sided	E. Wood-Pewee	House	Blackpoll	Snow Bunting	Savannah		
E. Wood-Pewee	Yellow-bellied	Winter	Cerulean		Grasshopper		
Yellow-bellied	Acadian	Sedge			Henslow's		
Acadian	Alder	Marsh			Le Conte's		
Alder	Willow	KINGLETS			Nelson's Sharp-t. *		
Willow	Least	Golden-crowned			Fox		
Least	E. Phoebe	Ruby-crowned			Song		
E. Phoebe	Great Crested				Lincoln's		
Great Crested					Swamp		

Use this space below for keeping notes, details, questions, etc.

Editor, Chequamegon Chirp
N4416 Crane Dr.
Medford WI 54451-9376



«NAME»
«ADDRESS»
«CITY_STATE_ZIP»

Club Officers 2007-2008

President – Gayle Davis

Vice-president – Connie Decker

Secretary – Hildegard Kuse

Treasurer – Bernice Gokey

Other Club Contacts

Web site: www.chequamegonbirdclub.org

Email: info@chequamegonbirdclub.org

Newsletter Email: newsletter@chequamegonbirdclub.org

Bird sightings: Connie Decker

March - April Outdoors

- Butterflies, Bumble bees, Black Flies, Dragonflies & Mosquitoes appear
- Chickadees & Brown Creepers nest building
- Crocus flowering
- Fox pups born
- Red-shouldered Hawks, Great Blue Herons and Killdeer return
- Ruffed Grouse drumming
- Barred Owl incubating eggs
- Ice completely off backyard pond
- Hepatica and Spring Beauty flowering
- Pussy Willows & first thunderstorm

Stamps for Birds

As part of a fund raiser for the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, located in Florida, the Florida Audubon Society collects foreign stamps, all U.S. commemorative stamps, other U.S. stamps with a face value of at least \$1, all mint stamps, duck and migratory bird stamps, and all postcards from anywhere with stamps on them. The stamps are sorted and sold to stamp collectors.

The CBC is once again collecting stamps, as described above, to help support the Center. You may bring stamps to meetings. For more information, please contact Willa Pledger.

Bring You Aluminum Cans

Don't forget to bring in your aluminum cans to the meeting as part of the CBC's ongoing recycling project.