

Meet a Member!

Jim Veltman entertains any excuse to be outside. Joining the Hoy Audubon Society last year afforded him just one more outdoor opportunity! Recently retired from Wausau Insurance where he worked for 35 years, Jim said, "I started looking for hobbies to help fill the amount of available time after I retired." And with his lengthy list of interests, it's doubtful he'll ever be idle.



Jim Veltman

Jim finds several benefits of being a Hoy member. "First of all, the people are very friendly and helpful. I enjoy the monthly meetings from a learning standpoint and have been able to expand my places to bird and *pick the*

brains of the more seasoned birders." And Jim, in his own right, is a serious birder with 169 birds on his Wisconsin list and 188 total U.S. life list in just two years! Colonial Park and Prairie du Chien are great spots for spring warblers, and Bong provides a good environment for overall birding. For migratory birds and waterfowl, Jim frequents Shoop Park.

In addition to joining Hoy and serving on its Board of Directors, Jim is also a member of WSO and the Natural Resource Foundation. "Both will offer me the chance to attend seminars and field trips with other birders." He is also immersed in completing the 'Passport to your National Parks' program sponsored by the National Park Service. "There is a stamp for each park and when you visit you date-stamp the card. Over 220 parks currently participate." He even managed to squeeze in some casual birding while on his recent trip to China with his wife, Jean, and most likely sneaks a peek while on the golf course, hoping to catch a glimpse of one of his favorites—the cedar waxwing. Whether alone or with family and friends, Jim feels the anticipation of finding and identifying a new bird changes a mere walk into an adventure!

He recommends Chris G. Earley's three-book package [The Great Lakes Bird Collection](#) as a terrific field guide since it provides extensive sections on sparrows, finches, hawks and owls. He also subscribes to [Bird Watcher's Digest](#). His tips for novice birders include getting out as often as you can and not being shy about asking for help with identification. "I have been really amazed at how friendly birders are. They are always ready to share their scope and tell you what you are seeing." And, like Jim, he suggests combining bird watching with other hobbies. "I like to walk and travel. It's really easy to do a little research and find a good place to bird."

Eric Howe— 2010 Winner of WSO's Green Passenger Pigeon Special Recognition Award

Hoy members had the honor of applauding Eric Howe's tireless devotion to his numerous environmental and birding activities at the May meeting as he received the WSO's highly-esteemed Green Passenger Pigeon Special Recognition Award. Eric's active involvement reaches a myriad of avenues. His rich history of participation dates back to his college days while attaining his biology degree. It was then, as a member of the University of Wisconsin—Parkside's Environmental Club and Hoy Audubon, that he created a liaison between the two groups through his coordination of Earth Day events. He's worked non-stop since then as an active member of Hoy's Board of Directors, serving as president and treasurer, each for three years, and newsletter editor for five.



Eric Howe

His computer expertise has allowed Hoy's expansion with the development of an informative and well-designed website. Since 1999, he's officiated Hoy's Racine Christmas Bird Count which includes the collecting and reporting of data to the National Audubon Society. Besides all the behind the scenes planning, Eric's inviting demeanor makes him the perfect leader of bird walks and Hoy presentations. His active participation as a volunteer land steward in the restoration of Lulu Lake Preserve, a Board of Directors member with the Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund, and his attendance at monthly Chiwaukee Prairie work parties further prove why WSO chose Eric as the 2010 recipient of this coveted award!

Gulf Response Direct from National Audubon:

Although not everyone can take direct action to save a pelican or an oiled habitat, we can all protect vital flyways and healthy populations to benefit species impacted by the disaster. Together, we can encourage all concerned citizens to respond to the spill by making local contributions that will make a difference while working closer to home.

Make your own backyard bird and wildlife-friendly. Many of the bird species impacted by the BP Oil Spill are migratory. One way to help them is to create a wildlife habitat site in your backyard, school or community. This will help ensure they can always find food, water and a place to rest along their journey. Even if you don't live anywhere near the Gulf, you can have an impact on countless birds and other animals. Though the oil spill is a tragedy, you can be a part of the healing. For more information go to: www.audubon.org, click on Audubon at Home and then 'helping birds and wildlife'.

Hoy Board of Directors

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 - Eric Howe 262-594-5853
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 - Jim Veltman 262-886-9374

Email addresses of Board members are available at: www.hoyaudubon.org

Next Board of Directors Meeting:
Thursday, August 19, 7:00 PM, 810 Indiana St, Racine. All interested members are welcome. Come and find out what your club is doing!

Monthly Program Coordinator*
Dana Garrigan 262-652-1737

Field Trip Coordinator*
Bob McFall 262-697-5167

* If you have suggestions regarding future programs or field trips please contact the coordinators directly.

Newsletter Editors
Linda Fare Hirsch
Keith Kennedy

Ideas for the newsletter? We welcome your suggestions, recaps of birding seminars/activities, fun facts and birding tidbits for use in future newsletters. Please mail to the attention of Linda Hirsch at: Hoy Audubon, P.O. Box 044626, Racine, WI 53402 or email to: hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org

The Hoy Honker is the newsletter of the Hoy Audubon Society, Inc. PO Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404.

Hoy Activity Reports—A brief recap of some of our recent events for members.

Memorial Day Weekend Field Trip to Wyalusing State Park.

Seven Hoy members migrated west to Wyalusing State Park along the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers this past Memorial Day. With optimum birding weather and cooperative migrants, members captured close looks and photos of the park's specialties. These included the yellow-throated, Kentucky, cerulean and prothonotary warblers, and an Acadian flycatcher. Buzzing hummingbirds welcomed birders at the park's entrance and barred owls provided the evening's entertainment.



Hoy Audubon - Wyalusing 2010

A side trip to the Spring Green Preserve the following day offered lark and grasshopper sparrows and orchard orioles. The group enjoyed an added performance as a mockingbird displayed his repertoire of bird imitations which included northern cardinal, American robin, gray catbird, and blue jay calls.

Hoy members moved on to Governor Dodge State Park where they spied a Bell's vireo as they hiked through a ravine graced with a beautiful waterfall. Then, a final trip to Baxter's Hollow rewarded them with a Louisiana waterthrush and a tufted titmouse. What a great ending to a birder's migratory May!



Keith Kennedy

Yellow-throated warbler, Wyalusing State Park (Keith Kennedy photo)

Vernon Marsh Field Trip. Ten members of Hoy Audubon spent the morning of June 12 on a field trip to Vernon Marsh. Our first stop was Frog Alley Dike. A willow flycatcher was perched on the "no parking" sign at the start of the trail, and we saw a couple more farther along on the trail. Thanks no doubt to an iPod (loaded with bird calls), we got really good looks at a least bittern puffing up his chest and stretching his neck and at a marsh wren singing and raising his tail.

A black tern was flying over the marsh. On the walk back we saw a common yellowthroat and a yellow warbler. There were two sandhill cranes in a field near the road. A black-billed cuckoo, in a tree near the parking lot, posed for the camera. A cliff swallow was gathering mud for nest-building at a mud puddle in the parking lot, and a few more were flying around. Then we moved on to the inner and outer Ducks Unlimited ponds. Two yellow-throated vireos were together in a tree at the beginning of the trail. Three great egrets were in a dead tree, and three great blues and a black-



Least bittern, Vernon Marsh (Keith Kennedy photo)

River Bend Nature Center: the location for our August 5th Meeting. Note that we will have our August regular meeting (1st Thursday) at River Bend Nature Center, 3600 N. Green Bay Rd., Racine, WI 53404. 262-639-0930

Vernon Marsh continued...

crowned night-heron flew over. Six black terns were flying over the pond where pied-billed grebes (adults and babies) were swimming. A common moorhen was in the reeds. We saw a female redhead and a female hooded merganser sitting on her nest box across the pond. Six beautiful yellow-headed black-birds were in the reeds, much too far away for photos. (*Sharon Kennedy*)



Hoy Audubon members at Vernon Marsh

Hoy Audubon 2010-2011 Federal Duck Stamp Order. On July 1, a new Federal Duck Stamp became available at post offices, national wildlife refuges, some national retail chain stores, and various sporting-goods stores nationwide. Proceeds from the \$15 stamp go into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, used to purchase valuable wetlands for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Hoy Audubon Society is asking our members if they would like to participate in this worthy cause. Please sign up/pay at the next monthly meeting or email Jenny Wenzel at jenny.wenzel@hoyaudubon.org if you would like Hoy to order a Duck stamp for you and indicate if you would like just the stamp (\$15) or the stamp with a protective plastic holder that easily can be displayed on your binoculars (\$17) for all of your birding buddies to see! They will be distributed at the next monthly meeting after they are received. (*Jenny Wenzel*)

Ebird bar charts. Hoy Audubon's field trip to Horicon, specifically the Dike Road, is scheduled for August 21. If you're wondering what birds you might see there during the third week of August, a bar chart for Horicon Marsh from eBird will give you a pretty good idea. Go to our website www.hoyaudubon.org and click on Horicon ebird bar chart. Our field trip coincides with fall shorebird migration. You can see from the bar chart which shorebirds are the most abundant (and, therefore, the ones we're most likely to see) and which are rare. (*Sharon Kennedy*)

"A Swift Night Out" As summer draws to a close and the chimney swifts have finished raising their young, these fascinating aerial acrobats begin to congregate in communal roosts prior to their migration in the fall. Some roosts may consist of an extended family group of a half a dozen birds or so, but the larger sites can host hundreds or even thousands of swifts! We encourage you to be involved in this exhilarating spectacle.

Here is how it works: Keep your eyes to the skies at dusk and watch for areas where swifts are feeding. Look for a tall shaft, chimney or similar structure to locate where chimney swifts go to roost in your area. On one night over the weekends of August 6, 7, 8 and Sept. 10, 11, 12 observe the roost starting about 30 minutes before dusk and estimate the number of swifts that enter. That's all there is to it! When you have your number, call Helen Pugh at 262-637-4359 or email her through Hoy's website at www.hoyaudubon.org. Special Note: join our Hoy Audubon group to count swifts in downtown Racine—see below for details. (*Helen Pugh*)

Upcoming Activities

Thursday, August 5, 7:00 PM. Changes in bird populations by Bill Mueller, Ornithologist/Conservation Biologist, Cedarburg Science LLC. The program is at River Bend Nature Center, Racine.

Saturday, August 7 and Sunday, September 12. Swift Night Out. Join the Hoy Audubon group to count chimney swifts in downtown Racine. Meet at 6:45 PM at the corner of Water St. and College Ave. We have had chimney swifts to count for the past six years. Come and help find their roosts.

Saturday, August 21, Horicon Marsh field trip. Meet at park and ride at Ryan Road, 7:30 AM. We will go to Dike Road and other places along the east side of Horicon marsh on Saturday (Aug 21); on Sunday (Aug 22), we will bird Highway 49 and other spots on the north side with the WSO group. Join us for one or both days.

Saturday, August 28, Safari Saturday at the Racine Zoo, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Hoy Audubon will be there to lead bird walks and answer all your birding questions.

Thursday, September 2, 7:00 PM: Hoy Audubon Monthly program. At this time, our September program has not been finalized. Please check our website in mid-August for details of the speaker and topic. The program will be held at River Bend Nature Center, Racine.

Saturday, September 11, Turtle Valley Field Trip. Meet at Park and Ride on Highway 20 at 7:15 AM. Directions: west on Highway 11 to Delavan; north on Highway O to Honey Creek Road; west to highway P and north about 1/4 mile to parking area on the RIGHT. Across the road from where we parked last year.

Saturday, September 18, Illinois Beach State Park Hawk Watch. Meet at Mondragon Law Office on Main Street at 8:00 AM. Directions: Sheridan Road through Kenosha to 17th Street in Winthrop Harbor. East to the north unit of Illinois Beach SP. Follow the signs to hawk watch.

HOY AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 044626
RACINE, WI 53404
www.hoyaudubon.org



Photos from the Hoy Audubon Vernon Marsh Field Trip (June 12).



Marsh Wren, Vernon Marsh (Keith Kennedy photo)

Don't forget to renew your Hoy Audubon Chapter Membership for 2010/2011. Renewals for our new year are due by July 1 but we will take them anytime ☺.

Annual renewals for Hoy Audubon Society "Chapter Supporter" memberships are due on July 1 of each calendar year. Please send a check payable to Hoy Audubon Society.

Chapter Supporter Dues: \$12 Total amount enclosed: _____

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Remember...you can see the Hoy Honker "In Living Color." There are two ways to see our newsletter in color: view it on the Hoy website at www.hoyaudubon.org or get on the e-mail newsletter distribution list by sending an e-mail to keith.kennedy@hoyaudubon.org and ask to be put on the electronic mailing list.