



Meet a Member!

If you were to ask **John Dixon** what his favorite month of the year is, he'd probably say May. That's because he admits, "I enjoy warblers because that's the group of birds I saw and studied the most when I was starting out." Over the last few years he's found shorebirds and gulls equally exciting since they require a discriminate eye, and John welcomes the challenge. Luckily, his job as an inspector at Chrysler for the past 23 years has added to his visual acuity.



John Dixon at Vernon Marsh

John first started watching birds at around age ten and his interest hasn't waned in the least. "I like birding on my Dad's property, the Racine lakefront, Lake Superior at Jaegerfest, and the forests around Eagle River. "The variety of birds in each area makes them unique."

He attributes the identification of many of his 334 Wisconsin Life Birds to some helpful guides including: *Peterson's Field Guide*, *Sibley's Shorebird Guide*, and *The Gulls of North America, Europe and Asia*.

He feels being a Hoy member has allowed him to share his hobby with other bird enthusiasts, and he takes advantage of many of the informative field trips. His advice to novice birders is, "Get out and watch birds as much as possible. Learn the most common birds first and study your field guides in case a rarity does show up!" *Linda Fare Hirsh*



Royal Tern at Sunset, Sebastian Inlet, Brevard County, Florida. The photo was taken in late January with a 300 mm telephoto lens and the use of flash. *Photo by Keith Kennedy*

Hoy Audubon to Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day on May 14

The City of Racine and Hoy Audubon are hosting a celebration for "our" birds on International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD).

We are planning a large, fun event with food, music, beginning birding classes, birding hikes, and a live raptor show. Other environmental groups will have people and information to share on native plantings, invasive plants and controls, rain gardens, and water quality. Don't miss it! Be part



Purple Martin—a migratory bird that spends its summers in the Racine / Kenosha area. *Photo: Keith Kennedy*

of it on May 14th at the REC Center near Downtown Racine on 6th Street at the Root River bridge. Watch our website for more details. *Helen Pugh*

Roger Tory Peterson as a Conservationist

We all know Roger Tory Peterson as the author of field guides aimed at the general public. His *Field Guide to the Birds*, which covered the eastern United States, was first published in 1934, when he was only 25 years old!

Read Elizabeth J. Rosenthal's 2010 biography *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson*, and you will come to know him as a conservationist. In 1948, he published a book that was not a field guide, *Birds Over America*. Rosenthal writes (page 76) that "Roger's foreword began with an acknowledgement of a by-product of birdwatching: interest in conservation...."



One cannot give a large share of his life to this carefree hobby without soberly reflecting on the mechanics of the well-integrated world of nature. One inevitably becomes a fervent conservationist....Such understanding comes slowly, but it does come if one inquires more deeply into the lives of birds and is not satisfied solely with being able to identify them.

At the 1950 International Ornithological Congress, Roger Tory Peterson met James Fisher, a British naturalist who was to become his closest friend in the ornithological world. Three years

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

Next Board of Directors Meeting:

Thursday, April 28, 7:00 PM, 17 Redwing Lane, 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 53404 or email to: hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org

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later the two of them set off together on a birding trip "...from Newfoundland to Alaska via Mexico, hugging the North American coastline as much as possible because of James's fascination with seabirds" (page 106). "Thanks largely to their hundred-day cross-country sojourn, the two men ended 1953 by having what is now called a Big Year, setting a new record. Roger's number was 572; James's, 536. (Neither counted the 65 species they encountered in Mexico.) Birding would never be the same again" (page 111).

Their epic journey was the subject of their 1955 book, *Wild America*. Rosenthal writes (page 112): "A conservationist thread ran throughout the book. Almost every page was a celebration of what America still possessed and needed to preserve. 'The whole thing is about asking the general member of the public in America to look after their birds,' [James's daughter] Clem Fisher posits."

Roger Tory Peterson spent years on the Audubon lecture tour, speaking to standing-room-only crowds. As ornithologist Susan Roney Drennan notes (page 311), "He could have just stood there and showed slides or his own movies—'OK, this is where I've been lately. Look at these birds.'" But instead, "[h]e took those opportunities to really talk about conservation of birds. In the public mind, not only was he the leading birder, but the leading spokesman for birds."

Here is how he worked a conservationist message into his lectures, in his own words (page 310):

I always liked to have dinner with the officers or sponsors before my lecture....And very often I would have a few words to say at the dinner and it might be that I had heard about some local conservation problem....Then when I was on the lecture platform I held forth a little about that, how important it was to save that marsh on the edge of town, how I hope you will do something about this, et cetera.

Some things never change, and there will always be a wetland or a woodlot on the edge of a town that needs to be conserved for birds. Conservation is a mission of the National Audubon Society. As the Audubon website says:

For over a century, Audubon has been a leading voice encouraging conservation of precious habitat and wildlife for future generations. Audubon's earliest noted success came in 1900, when members urged Congress to pass legislation making interstate trafficking of illegally killed birds and animals a crime, while prohibiting the importation of non-native and potentially invasive species. Today's environmental challenges are far more profound, and Audubon's collective voice is more essential than ever.

On a lighter note, *Birdwatcher* is worth reading for a tidbit of information in a footnote (page 35): "Roger was that rare birdwatcher who loved sleeping late." It certainly didn't hurt his career! *Sharon Kennedy*



Great Blue Heron. Photo by Keith Kennedy

Locations for our Spring Meetings: Note that the April, May and June meetings will be at **River Bend Nature Center**, 3600 N. Green Bay Road, Racine. For directions check MapQuest or Google Maps.

Notice of Election of Hoy Audubon Officers and Board Members for 2011-2012.

The **Hoy Audubon Society** will hold its annual meeting for the election of officers and board members for 2011-12 at 7:00 PM on Thursday, May 5 at River Bend Nature Center.

The Hoy Audubon nominating committee has developed the following slate of officers and board members for 2011-12:

President:	Helen Pugh
Vice President:	Jenny Wenzel
Secretary:	Karen Gavahan
Treasurer:	Jim Veltman

Board of Directors:

Rick Fare	Dana Garrigan
Eric Howe	Marty Hunt
Ray Palenik	Barbara Vass

Note that nominations (including self-nomination) of people interested in serving on the board may be made from the floor.



Spring is on the way! As of late February, Great Blue Herons are building nests at Viera Wetlands near Melbourne, Florida. Be sure to stop by this little known birding hotspot if you are near Florida's Space Coast. *Photo by Keith Kennedy.*

Upcoming Activities

Thursday, April 7, 7:00 PM. Weed Out! Racine. Restoring Natural Habitats, One Plant at a Time presented by Melissa Warner. River Bend Nature Center, Racine.

April 6-14. Loon Watch at Lake Andrea (Kenosha Co.) Contact Stan Rosenstiel at 262-694-2206 for times/directions.

April 13, Wednesday, Woodcock / Bird Walk:

Racine County: 7:00 PM at Cliffside Park. Come at 5:30 PM for an early bird walk.

Kenosha County: Contact Stan Rosenstiel at 262-694-2206 to sign up and for time/directions to **Chiwaukee Prairie.**

April 20, Wednesday, Woodcock and Bird Walk

Racine County: 7:00 PM at Cliffside Park. Come at 5:30 PM for an early bird walk.

Kenosha County: Contact Stan Rosenstiel at 262-694-2206 to sign up and for time/directions to **Chiwaukee Prairie.**

April 23, Saturday, Earth Day Planting at Myers Park. Hoy Audubon with Racine Rotary: 9:00 AM to 12 noon.

April 27, May 4, 11, 18, & 25: Wednesdays, 5:30 PM. Colonial Park Bird Walks. Meet at the Colonial Park parking area, Racine.

April 21, 28, May 5, 12, & 26: Thursdays, 8:00 AM. River Bend Bird Walks, led by Rick Fare. Meet at the main building, River Bend Nature Center, Racine.

May 5, Thursday, 7:00 PM. Birdscaping in the Midwest. A guide to gardening with native plants to attract birds presented by **Mariette Nowak.** River Bend Nature Center, Racine. Note: prior to the meeting, a **bird and wildflower walk** will be conducted at **5:30 PM** (meet in front of the main building).

May 6, 13, 20: Fridays 8:00 AM. Kenosha Sand Dunes Bird Walk. Led by Stan Rosenstiel. Meet at the north side of dunes (lakeside parking lot east of water treatment plant) Kenosha.

May 14, Saturday. International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) Celebration. REC Center (6th Street, Racine). The schedule of activities will be posted in the next few weeks on the Hoy Audubon website.

May 27-29, Friday-Sunday. Hoy Audubon field trip to Wyalusing State Park. See website for details.

June 2, Thursday, 7:00 PM. Monthly Program--TBD. River Bend Nature Center, Racine. Note: prior to the meeting, a **bird and wildflower walk** will be conducted at **5:30 PM** (meet in front of the main building).

June 4, Saturday. Kettle Moraine State Forest (Southern Unit) field trip. Meet at **7:00 AM** at the Hwy 20 park & ride to carpool.

June 5, Sunday. New Munster Bird Survey (Kenosha Co.). Early morning to 10:00 AM. Contact Eric Howe for more info.

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



Birding at Horicon NWR in August, 2010.

Please take the time to renew your Hoy Audubon Chapter Membership for 2010/2011. 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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Send to: Hoy Audubon Society, P. O. Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404



Checking a bluebird box for eggs!

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.