



**Meet our Members!**

Tom and Karen Gavahan



Tom is recently retired with over 30 years as a firefighter/paramedic. Karen has worked as an accountant, stay-at-home mom, and as business manager at her sons' high school. We enjoy hiking, camping, road trips (love winding back roads!), flea markets, and antique shows. Tom is restoring a 1943 Racine fire engine that his dad was assigned to. Karen loves gardening, knitting, crocheting, reading, and collecting vintage home and garden decorations.

We have always enjoyed birds and their songs, but didn't know much about identification beyond the common yard birds. We've been members of Hoy for about 5 years. We like the camaraderie (how members share their knowledge and enthusiasm for birds), fresh air, and the beauty of nature while birding, learning more about bird identification, participation in monitoring bluebirds and purple martins, and Hoy's interesting programs.

Our initial exposure to Hoy was through the warbler walks at Colonial Park—it's close to home. River Bend and the lakefront are also prime local hotspots. Our first Hoy field trip was to Horicon Marsh. We like that area because of the diversity of habitats and birds species. The pontoon excursion is fantastic!

We also enjoy driving along the Mississippi River to see eagles and tundra swans during fall migration. We've been to the Eagle Center in Wabasha, MN, where you can get your picture taken next to an eagle and its handler. We also view eagles at Prairie du Sac and Prairie du Chien during Eagle Days in January. This past winter we also viewed eagles along the Fox River between Menasha and Kaukauna. There's a nature center called 1000 Islands on the river in Kaukauna where 50 or more eagles come in to roost overnight.

We especially like eagles because they are so majestic and awe-inspiring. We took day trips to Decorah, IA, before the famous eagle pair moved their nest out of camera range. We watched over the internet for several years while the parent laid eggs and tended their three eaglets.

*Meet our Members, continued-*

Our son gave us a National Geographic guide for Christmas the first year we started birding. Tom likes the Audubon field guide because it fits in his jacket pocket. We also use the Sibley guide and various specific species guides. We don't have smart phones (yet), but do use an app on our iPad occasionally.

We started out with binoculars—buy the best you can afford! Because we enjoyed birding outings where Hoy members shared their spotting scopes and knowledge, we knew we could pursue this hobby as a couple and invested in our own scope since birding is something we can do together over the rest of our lives. Go birding with people who know more than you do. We always asked "What did we just see?" on all the Hoy outings. We learn more each time we go out. Get off the freeway and take the back roads!

**Make Tracks to Renew  
Your Hoy Membership!**
  
  
**Annual renewals** for Hoy Audubon Society  
 "Chapter Supporter" memberships are due **July 1**,  
 so please renew today, if you haven't already!  
 See the last page for renewal details.

**Hello from the Editor**

Greetings, readers (and presumably birders)—

I'm Kristin Wegner, this year's newsletter Editor. I've been birding for about 4 years now, mostly by myself until I discovered Hoy in Fall of 2011 and realized how enjoyable it could be to bird with others. (Especially when they have better optics than you.) I live in IL but bird WI whenever I can. WI is actually the state where I've seen the most life birds, including this spring's additions of the Piping Plover, Prothonotary Warbler, and Eastern Whip-poor-will.

I'm looking forward to a great year of bird news! As is noted on page 2, we welcome submissions of interesting bird items, so please send in anything you'd like to share.

You may not recognize me at Hoy events since I usually have a camera in front of my face. Case in point, if you remember this banner photo from Hoy's first Big Sit, this is actually me here...



...not that you can tell.

*Kristin*

*Big Sit 2011 Photo by Jenny Wenzel*

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Email addresses of Board members are available at: [www.hoyaudubon.org](http://www.hoyaudubon.org)

**Next Board of Directors Meeting:  
 Thursday, August 22**

All interested members are welcome. (Call for location.) Come and find out what your club is doing!

**Field Trip Coordinators\***  
 Mary Ann Toutant  
 Eric Howe

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

**Newsletter Editors**  
 Kristin Wegner  
 Eric Howe  
 Sharon 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 Newsletter Editor at: Hoy Audubon, P.O. Box 044626, Racine, WI 53404 or email to: [hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoynewsletter@hoyaudubon.org)

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

**Exciting Spring Visitors**

This White-winged Dove was spotted on April 20 by Jym Mooney at the Wind Point Lighthouse in Racine County. Many Wisconsin birders came to the lighthouse to try to spot this rare Wisconsin visitor who only stayed for a few hours! White-winged Doves breed in the southwestern US and southern Texas, but their range has been expanding recently into other parts of the nation.



*White-winged Dove, Jenny Wenzel*

Many other rare or occasional visitors were found in Racine and Kenosha counties this spring. Some highlights include Piping Plovers and a Eurasian-collared Dove at North Beach; American Avocets, a Nelson’s Sparrow, and Northern Mockingbirds at Myers Park; a Eurasian Tree Sparrow, a Lark Sparrow, and a Bohemian Waxwing at Wind Point; Hudsonian Godwits in a flooded field in Racine county; and a White Ibis at Bong State Recreation Area. May is a great time of year to be on the lookout for migrants, you never know what you may discover!

- Jenny Wenzel

Leg banding revealed that this Piping Plover (one of four found at North Beach in May) hatched in 2012 at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, MI. To learn more about these birds and recent efforts to protect them, visit: <http://www.audubon.org/plover>



*Piping Plover with leg bands, Kristin Wegner*

## Visit Hoy on Flickr

Hoy members have started two Flickr groups to document our sightings:

### Racine and Kenosha County Birds 2013

<http://www.hoyaudubon.org/flickrbirds>

Our goal is to post photos of as many different kinds of birds as we can while having fun in the process. We had nearly 200 birds last year. It's a thrill to be the first to post a new bird!



*Indigo Bunting, Sharon Kennedy*

### Racine and Kenosha County Critters 2013

<http://www.hoyaudubon.org/flickrcritters>

This group contains non-bird photos of interesting animals and insects we've found, such as this beautiful American Lady.



*American Lady, Jerry DeBoer*

You're welcome to join either group and post photos of your own. Remember, this is for fun! The photos don't have to be perfect; they just need to be taken in Racine or Kenosha County.

Don't have a Flickr account? You can still look at everyone's wonderful photos simply by visiting the links above.

*-Kristin Wegner*

*Editor's note: Yes, that's right, it's spelled **Flickr**, not **Flicker**, much to the dismay of bird-loving English-majors like myself!*

## Picnic with the Peregrines



*Photo by Helen Pugh*

Hoy Audubon's Picnic with the Peregrines was enjoyed by a small but well-entertained group of birders. The parents occasionally flew from the courthouse and once returned with lunch (a Blue Jay!) for the two youngsters.

The two young males are almost fully grown but sport brown and tan plumage instead of the gray and white of the adults. They also have a few downy feathers sticking out between the "real" feathers and a

white patch on top of their heads which is rather comical.



*June 12 snapshot from Racine's Falcon Cam*

The two young stayed in the hack box during our observations and alternately napped or screamed for food. One of them was flapping its wings in preparation for the maiden flight. We hope to see that next week!

*- Helen Pugh*

*Update: The hack box was empty as of June 15, so be on the lookout for the two young falcons!*

## How Well Do You Know Poison Ivy?

The website **Bird and Moon**, which presents both humorous and scientifically accurate nature comics, recently added an interactive quiz in which you determine whether or not a plant photo is Poison Ivy—important information to have as we head into summer!

The quiz can be found here: <http://birdandmoon.com/poisonivy/>

But examine the photos carefully; I consider myself fairly Poison-Ivy-savvy but still missed 10 questions!

*- Kristin Wegner*

**Falling Flyers**

Unlike most birds, Chimney Swifts cannot take off from horizontal surfaces; instead they drop from their perch or nest to take flight. They find chimneys a very suitable place to build their nests in the spring and summer months. Chimneys provide shelter from the wind and give them a nice vertical drop to take flight. At the end of summer, they begin their migration back to Peru before the chimneys again come into use for the fall/winter months.



*Chimney Swift, Jerry DeBoer*

The only Swift we have in our area is the Chimney Swift. They are distinctive aerialists that are often referred to as a “flying cigar” due to their shape. Their rapid wing beats and erratic flight are reminiscent of bats. During their migrations, they roost at night in groups in chimneys.

**Swift Night Out** is a national gathering of data on Swifts. That’s where you come in! Try to locate one of their roosts! Begin about half an hour before sunset looking for Swifts. Watch to see if they swoop by a particular chimney; they may check out several in an area. Then watch the chimney and count the number of Swifts that drop into it!

Further information is available at [www.chimneyswifts.org](http://www.chimneyswifts.org).

Both Racine and Kenosha will host Swift Nights Out; see **Upcoming Activities** for more details!

*-Helen Pugh*

**Tropical Milkweed Warning**

The May 2013 issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine encourages readers in their “garden/nature” news to grow *A. curassavica*, or tropical milkweed. However, the May/June/July 2013 issue of the *Wild Ones Journal* article “Can Milkweed Hurt Monarchs?” (page 11) specifically discourages people from growing this plant because it does more harm than good for the migrating monarchs.

*-Released in the Wild Ones Executive Director Update, June 2013*

Editor’s note: If you’d like to read more, the complete article by Candy Sarikonda can be found here: <http://www.wildones.org/download/Journal/2013Vol126No3%20Journal.pdf>



**Hummingbirds at Home: A New Audubon Citizen Science project!**

As flowers bloom earlier because of warming temperatures, the impact on hummingbirds which rely on nectar could be severe. The National Audubon Society has launched a new citizen science project to document hummingbird sightings across the country, using a free mobile app that identifies bird species as well as the plants that feed them. The project joins Audubon’s Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count as part of a plan to grow citizen science programs year-round and entice young people and non-birders to become stewards for nature.

Participants can get involved year-round by making recommended changes to their local hummingbird habitats, plus taking steps to stem the impact of climate change. This is a fun, family-friendly citizen science project that works in the classroom or in the kitchen!

At our monthly June meeting, over 50 people enjoyed the screening of the film *Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air* along with a short discussion of this project.

**Important Feeder Facts:**

- The nectar mix is 4 parts water to 1 part sugar.
- Feeders need **thorough cleaning every 3-5 days**, more often when it’s warm.

For tips on creating a healthy backyard and more information on hummingbird feeders, visit [www.hummingbirdsathome.org](http://www.hummingbirdsathome.org)

*-Helen Pugh*



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Kristin Wegner*

**Hummingbird Facts:**

- 🌸 There are about 340 species of hummingbirds in the world.
- 🌸 A newly hatched hummingbird is about the size of a honeybee.
- 🌸 Hummingbirds are the only birds that can truly fly backwards.
- 🌸 A Ruby-throated Hummingbird’s escape speed can reach 50mph.
- 🌸 Hummingbird body temperature ranges from 105°F to 108°F.

## Horicon Marsh Field Trip

This is the fifth year that we'll be going as a group to Horicon, one of Wisconsin's premiere birding hotspots. You can expect to see Northern Harriers, Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Green Herons, Black-crowned Night-Herons, American White Pelicans, Coots, Pied-billed Grebes, Belted Kingfishers, Eastern Kingbirds, and of course, a variety of shorebirds.

In addition to food and cold drinks, bring binoculars, a bird book, a spotting scope if you have one (don't worry if you don't!), sunscreen, insect repellent, a hat or a visor, and a rain jacket just in case.

Horicon is an incredibly beautiful place, and it is really fun to look at birds, especially birds that we don't get to see everyday, with people who know what they're looking at!

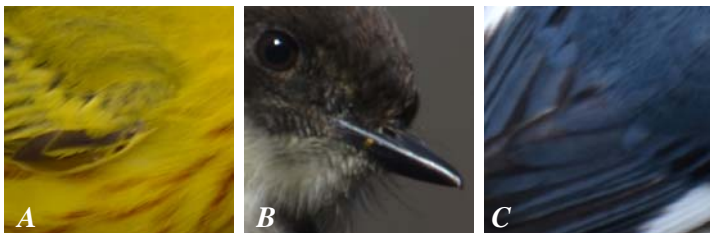
See **Upcoming Activities** for carpooling details.



Great Egret, Kristin Wegner

Some members may be interested in spending the night at a local hotel, such as the Audubon Inn in Mayville, in order to meet up with the WSO (Wisconsin Society of Ornithology) Horicon field trip Sunday morning at 8:00 A.M. along Hwy. 49.

## Guess Who? (answers below right)



## Wind Lake Sod Farms

The sod farms are a substantial area of sod fields southeast of Wind Lake that provide not only an excellent opportunity to see Buff-breasted Sandpipers during their fall migration, but also large numbers of American Golden Plovers. In that late summer, early fall period you may also encounter substantial flocks of Brewer's Blackbirds which nest along the irrigation ditches. Horned Larks are easy to find in season, and Lapland Longspur flocks may occasionally be seen. Lark Bunting and White-faced Ibis are two of the rarities seen here.

- Jerry DeBoer, "Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts"

See **Upcoming Activities** for more information on the September 7 field trip!

## Upcoming Activities

Thursday, July 11, 5:30 p.m.

### Hoy Audubon's Annual Summer Picnic

*Petrified Springs, 761 Green Bay Road, Kenosha, WI 53144*

Bring a dish to share and your own beverage, plate, and flatware.

We look forward to seeing you there! We may meet at parking area 4. If site four is unavailable, we'll meet at area five or further north.

Thursday, August 1, 7:00 p.m.

### Hoy Meeting, Program: Chimney Swifts

*Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406*

William Mueller, Education Chair for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, will present a program on Chimney Swift conservation efforts.

Sunday, August 11, 7:30 p.m.

### Swift Night Out!

*Corner of Water St. and Park Ave. in Racine*

Join us to help count Chimney Swifts!

Saturday, August 17, 7:30 a.m. (to join carpool)

### Hoy Field Trip: Horicon Marsh

For carpooling, meet at the Highway 20/I-94 Park and Ride by 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 17. If you plan to meet up with the Hoy group at Horicon, we will meet at the Auto Loop Trail parking area off of Hwy 49 at 9:00 a.m. For questions (e.g. directions, etc.) on Saturday morning, contact [hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoyfieldtrips@hoyaudubon.org)

Thursday, September 5, 7:00 p.m.

### Hoy Meeting, Program: A Photographic Journey of Wildlife and the Places They Inhabit in Kenosha and Racine Counties

*Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant, WI 53406*

We'll explore the local places where you can go to see various wildlife, including birds, insects, amphibians, and more. Program and photos by the Hoy membership.

Saturday, September 7, 7:00 a.m.

### Hoy Field Trip: Wind Lake Sod Farms

*Meet at the Highway 20/I-94 Park & Ride*

We'll carpool to the sod farms then pull off the road and, from the roadside, look for fall migrants (see article at left). Bring binoculars, a spotting scope if you have one, and a bird book.

Sunday, September 8, 6:30 p.m.

### Swift Night Out!

*Corner of Water St. and Park Ave. in Racine OR*

*NW Corner of 54<sup>th</sup> St. and 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. in Kenosha*

Same date and time for both locations!

Saturday, September 28, 7:00 a.m.–3 p.m. (Tentative Date)

### The Big Sit

*Wind Point Lighthouse*

Hoy's third Big Sit is a FREE EVENT and OPEN to everyone! It is an easy activity for those with limited mobility, as birders watch from a stationary location. Bring binoculars and a folding chair. Our experts will have spotting scopes set up for the public and will be happy to talk about birds with you and your family.

Saturday, October 5, Zion, IL

### Hoy Field Trip: Hawk Watch

*Illinois Beach State Park (North Unit)*

Hawk counters identify and count migrating raptors and Turkey Vultures. Watch Hoy's website for further details.

A: Yellow Warbler; B: Eastern Phoebe; C: Black-throated Blue Warbler

**HOY AUDUBON SOCIETY**

**P.O. BOX 044626**

**RACINE, WI 53404**

[www.hoyaudubon.org](http://www.hoyaudubon.org)



*Caspian Terns, Bonaparte's Gulls, and Common Terns at Samuel Myers Park, May 2013, Kristin Wegner*

**Please take the time to renew your [Hoy Audubon Chapter Membership for 2013/2014](http://www.hoyaudubon.org).**

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 per individual

Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to receive chapter newsletter by email only?

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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](http://www.hoyaudubon.org) or get on the e-mail newsletter distribution list by sending an e-mail to [hoyinfo@hoyaudubon.org](mailto:hoyinfo@hoyaudubon.org) and ask to be put on the electronic mailing list. You can now find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety](http://www.facebook.com/HoyAudubonSociety)