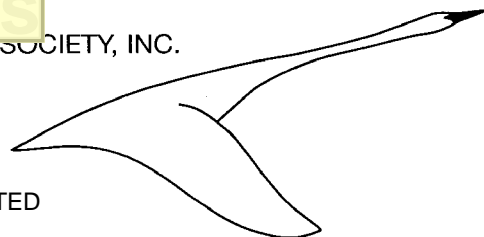


WINNEBAGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.
 P.O. BOX 184
 OSHKOSH, WI 54903



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RENEWALS: Your mailing label includes your membership expiration date above your name. If you are a "Chapter Only" member the word CHAPTER will appear after the expiration date. Please renew your chapter membership by filling out the application form below. Thank you for helping us save on the cost of renewal reminders.
 If you are a member of National Audubon, you will receive renewal notices from National or you may renew by using the form below.
TEMPORARILY AWAY? Please notify us of your address change. The post office will not forward your newsletter and we pay for the returned newsletter. Contact Pat Nichols with any questions regarding your subscription: jvnichols@earthlink or 920-426-0261.

Winnebago Audubon Society Mission Statement: Advance the mission of the National Audubon Society to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity through grassroots efforts of community outreach and advocacy.

**AUDUBON SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

YES, I want to become a member at the **chapter level** and receive the Winnebago Audubon newsletter. I've enclosed a \$20.00 check payable to Winnebago Audubon.
 YES, I want to become a member of the National Audubon Society, and the Winnebago Audubon Chapter. My membership dues entitle me to *Audubon* magazine, and all chapter benefits. I am enclosing a \$20.00 check payable to National Audubon Society.
 I do not wish to receive correspondence or solicitations from National Audubon Society.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____ Chapter Code: Z12 7XCH

Mail this form with payment to:
 Pat Nichols, Membership Chair
 P.O. Box 184, Oshkosh, WI 54903

Welcome New Audubon Members

Frances Barndt	Dorothy Frohn
Joyce Frohn	Steve & Tami Goodwin
Wendy Olson	Cheryl Rosenthal

We welcome you to take part in Winnebago Audubon Society events. As a member of National Audubon you receive membership in the local chapter. We hope that you find new opportunities for supporting the environment through your membership. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding membership or interest in becoming more involved with the chapter.

Pat Nichols, VP, Membership Chair
 (email me at: jvnichols@earthlink.net)

Audubon's Animals of North America
 Exhibit at the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, April 13-June 8
 165 N. Park Ave., Neenah www.paperweightmuseum.com

Seventy original hand-colored lithographs from John James Audubon's magnum opus, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America* are the finest images of North American animals ever made. Audubon's Animals of North America is a unique opportunity to view Audubon's lithographic works and to appreciate his skills as an artist, observer, and interpreter of nature.

The Lake Flyer

Winnebago Audubon Society, Inc.

MAY 2008

All programs and activities are open to the public

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Check our website for up-to-date information: www.winaudubon.org

Family Outdoor Fun at Waukau Creek



Saturday, May 10

8:00 am to Noon at Waukau Creek Nature Preserve
 (2987 Delhi Rd., north of Waukau off County Rd. K, 10 miles west of Oshkosh)

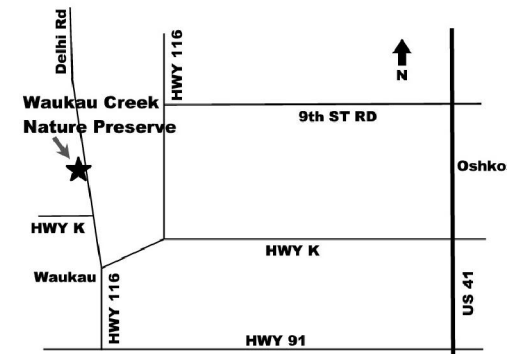
Winnebago Audubon is hosting a half-day community event for families and others on Saturday, May 10, 2008 at Waukau Creek Nature Preserve from 8:00 am to noon. Adults are invited to join us for "bird & wildflower" walks at 8:00 am and 9:30 am. Then at 9:00 am and 10:30 am, families are encouraged to come along for an exploration of the natural world at the preserve with Carol Thomas, naturalist from Schlitz Audubon Nature Center. (Schlitz Audubon Nature Center is a 185-acre stretch of untouched land along the shore of Lake Michigan just 15 minutes north of downtown Milwaukee.)

Throughout the morning we will have activities for children that include creating a bird feeder to take home to your backyard; making a pair of "binoculars"; and folding your very own flying origami crane.

Bring along a pair of binoculars and a sense of adventure. Be prepared for the possibility of wet or muddy trails. We will have several pairs of binoculars available for use for beginning birders from our "birding kit".

This event is free to Audubon members. The cost for non-members is \$5.00/family, \$2.00/adults, \$1.00/child.

For additional information contact Janet Wissink at 920-589-2602 or wiss@centurytel.net



"Calling All Frogs!" A Night Hike - Saturday, May 24 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Save the date! This was a hit with the kids and adults alike last year!

Winnebago Audubon will repeat last year's popular night hike led by Randy Korb on Saturday evening May 24 from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm in the Oshkosh area. The meeting place has not been determined yet, so please check our website, look for an announcement in the mail, and an article in the newspaper.

An indoor orientation to Wisconsin Frogs will begin at 7:30 pm. Participants will get to know the calls of our 12 species. Children may hold and feed frogs, toads and salamanders during the orientation. Once we're familiar with frogs we'll venture out at dusk to hear them. The eastern gray tree frog is in peak breeding in late May and we expect a lusty chorus. Other local callers at this time are American toads, spring peepers, and green frogs.

This event is free for Winnebago Audubon members and no pre-registration is required. The fee for non-members is \$5 adults and \$3 per child under 17. Non-members may join Audubon at the door. Participants should bring flashlights and old tennis shoes, boots or hip boots for possible wading into shallow water.



CRANES Eye-view by Carmen Meuret

Hello, I'm Carmen and I have been with the Winnebago Audubon Society for two years and counting. My mother was just elected to the board of directors so she and I will be very active in this group.

As you may know, the Annual Midwest Crane Count was just held April 19, 2008. It was my mother's and my second year of doing the count. I find the count a very helpful and neat experience. The feeling is spectacular to go out at 5:30 am and hear the calls of birds, frogs and best of all the wonders of nature. There is no better way to really experience a crane, than to help the International Crane Foundation (ICF) know where they are and their population. I feel as if I'm doing a most valuable, caring thing to help our bird population and I hope that you too, will participate in next year's count. And hey, do your parents really want to get up early? Well, my mom didn't at first but I told her what it could do to help our environment and she changed her mind. I hope you can do the same. For more information about the count, go to www.cranecount.org.

My Crane Count Results for 2008

(Other bird sightings included):

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 4 breeding pairs Sandhill Cranes | 1 Chickadee |
| 2 individual Sandhill Cranes | 10 Ring-billed Gulls |
| 2 Bald Eagles | 30 Ruddy Ducks |
| 2 Northern Shovelers | 1 Hooded Merganser |
| 6 Mallards | 1 Purple Martin |
| 20 Blackbirds | 2 Cardinals |
| 3 Mourning Doves | 1 Robin |
| 1 Tree Swallow | 1 Common Goldeneye |
| 2 Double-crested Cormorants | 2 Common Terns |
| 2 House Finches | 3 Barn Swallows |
| 1 Northern Flicker | 1 American Kestrel |
| 9 Sandhill Cranes (On the way to the Fin n' Feather) | |
| 19 American White Pelicans | 2 Canada Geese |
| 1 Bufflehead | |

Howl, to the moon. If you went to the, What's all the Woof About Wolves, then you know what I'm talking about. I went to the wolf talk on Sunday, April 13, 2008. I thought Cindy Mueller did a really nice job talking about wolves and telling us what to do if one comes near us. She rated the program PG-13 and I thought that was very nice. I wouldn't want to see pictures of wolves that may have blood on them by surprise, so I was very happy she did that.

I thought the fact that she had experience and got all her information by her studies, that she really knew what she was talking about. Cindy answered questions very confidently and was very informative.

I thought that learning about wolves was very fun. I'm glad that now I know what to do if I see, hear or even encounter a wolf.

If you go to the Bubolz Nature Preserve in Appleton you might see Cindy there. She is the Executive Director. Thank you Cindy Mueller and I hope you will be back to talk to us again.
(Carmen is a fifth grader at Emmeline Cook Elementary School.)

May is Time for Annual Birdathon

The first two weeks of May are the perfect time for bird watching during the spring migration. And so it is a great time for the Winnebago Audubon Birdathon. We're counting on you to help us count. Give us a call if you want to join one of our bird watching teams.

The Birdathon would not be a success without the generous contributions of our members and friends. If you haven't signed up on one of our pledge sheets, please give us a call and pledge a per bird amount or a fixed dollar amount. Your contributions allow us to put on the great programs you enjoy. You'll get a list of the birds that were seen and the satisfaction of contributing to a good cause. - *Carla, 233-1129 or carlajhansen@sbcglobal.net*

Thank You and Welcome

I would like to express my gratitude to the people who made things happen this past year in our chapter—officers and board members: Pat Nichols, Dave Moon, Zaiga Freivalds, Carla Hansen and Tom Underwood. And I would like to welcome two new board members: Dave Hanke and Evelyn Meuret. I look forward to working with all of them during the upcoming year.

There are three people I would like to especially thank. Louise Coumbe has been chair person of Friends of Sullivan's Woods for so many years I've lost count. Anita Carpenter has contributed articles to every newsletter for at least 20 years, if not 25. And John Pagel at Mail List Processing, my employer, allows me to print the newsletter and other materials at work, saving us a lot of money. Thank you all so much. - *Janet Wissink*

Toads, Frogs and Salamanders Visit Oshkosh Schools



How many kinds of frogs are there in the world? How many kinds of frogs are there in Wisconsin? Want to know the answer to those questions and learn more about amphibians? Just ask one of the 400 students at Webster Stanley or Oaklawn elementary schools. On April 23 and 24 they got up close and personal with the frogs, toads and salamanders of Wisconsin.

Randy Korb, environmental educator, www.wisconsinwildlife.org, came to these schools and brought his friends, Snappy, Little Snappy, Granny, Junior and their friends to visit with the students. Children looked at, touched, fed, listened to and learned about frogs, toads and salamanders. Every child who wanted to, had the opportunity to hold one of the creatures.

The programs, which were jointly sponsored by a grant from National Audubon Society and funding from Winnebago Audubon Society, brought nature into the classroom. Korb was quoted as saying, "The future of frogs and other wildlife is these kids. When I was a kid, they (frogs and critters) were right outside the door. Kids these days don't get that much exposure."

Teachers recognized the value of bringing this program to the schools. "The frog program was fantastic! It was so 'hands on' for the kids. This gave them the opportunity to learn and experience frogs in a very meaningful way. Thanks so much to the Audubon Society for this amazing experience for kids and adults!" *Renee Larson; Kindergarten*

Winnebago Audubon hopes to secure additional grants to bring Randy Korb back to the classroom so more children can personally meet the frogs, toads and salamanders that travel with Randy. - *Carla Hanson*



FEELING CHIPPER TODAY

It's spring! Yes, finally, it's spring! Cardinals "cheer" from tree tops. Crocus sprout. Maples drip sap on the sidewalks. Robins sing passionately. Silver maples flower. Downy woodpeckers drum enthusiastically. Goldfinches turn yellow. Warm rains turn the grass green.

And then the delightful, little chipping sparrows return. Under cover of darkness, these perky sprites arrive and somehow distribute themselves about the city. Next morning chipping sparrow trills fill the air where yesterday there was no sparrow song. I pause on my morning walk to listen, for it's been many months since I've heard it. After what must have been a long night of flight, they seem excited to be back and eager to announce their arrival while perched atop the tallest trees.

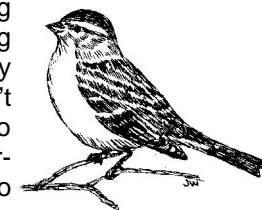
Chipping sparrows, *Spizella passerina*, are slender wisps of birds measuring just 5-1/2 inches long. Atop tall maples they appear not much larger than the swelling buds. But can they sing! They put their whole heart and soul into the performance. Tilting their heads back, they let loose with a series of rapid chip notes all on one pitch—hence the source of their common, "chipping sparrow" name. Their little bodies quake from the effort. The two to three second long unmusical trills carry quite a distance and seem too large to be emanating from such tiny vocalists.

Except for their plain gray undersides, it's difficult to see what chipping sparrows look like when they sing from the tree tops. However, they search for seed on the ground and often place their nests low in evergreens where we can get a closer look. Look at the pattern and colors on the head and breast. A pencil-thin line runs from the base of the conical bill back through the black, beady eye. A white eye brow tops the black eyeline. The head is adorned with a characteristic rusty red cap. Cheeks and nape of the neck are gray and the light gray breast is plain with no streaks or markings. The sparrow's back is the typical sparrow brown color while two subtle white bars highlight each brown wing. The fairly long tail is slightly notched.

Shortly after arriving, nesting begins. Female chipping sparrows build tiny but solid nests with an INSIDE diameter of only 1-7/8 inches and 1-1/2 inches deep. It takes her

three to four days of continuous activity to build a well-concealed nest of dried grasses lined with finer grasses and animal hair. She then lays an average of four pale bluish-green, jelly-bean-sized eggs, each marked with small, dark splotches on the large end. She alone incubates the eggs for 11 to 14 days and is fed by her mate. After hatching, both parents feed the fast-growing youngsters which leave the nest in about ten days. Parental guidance continues for several days until the young are on their own. Then the adults nest a second time.

Visually identifying chipping sparrows is fairly easy but identifying them by their song can be a bit tricky because chipping sparrows aren't the only trillers. From late winter into early spring, before the winter-visiting dark-eyed juncos leave to return north, males begin to sing a soft, one-pitch melodious trill which could be mistaken for that of a chipping sparrow. Often, chipping sparrows have not yet returned but there may be some overlap when both species are here.



A more difficult challenge is separating a chipping sparrow's trill from that of a pine warbler. To me, with my imperfect pitch, they sound the same but the pine warbler's trill is slightly slower—a very subtle difference. A loud trill coming from the upper reaches of white or red pines in northern Wisconsin during breeding season is probably that of a pine warbler. A pine warbler is unlikely to nest in your front shrub. A caution: During spring migration, when warblers are already singing, pine warblers may be found trilling in trees other than pines. So it's best to have your binoculars handy to visually identify the singer. Don't become discouraged. I've been birding for many years and I still ask myself, is that a chipping sparrow or pine warbler calling?

These challenges are coming. For now, enjoy the chipping sparrows and their enthusiastic spring songs. Tune into their trills and listen as you walk or drive with the windows down. You'll be surprised by how many of these small, easily-overlooked chipping sparrows share this beautiful planet with us.

Springtime at Sullivan's Woods

Spring nature hikes at Sullivan's Woods, a nature learning center of the Oshkosh School system, are conducted by The Friends of Sullivan's Woods. This committee of Winnebago Audubon is headed by Louise Coumbe and includes a group of dedicated volunteers who take fourth grade classrooms into the woods and prairie habitats and assist teachers and students, helping them to learn about the wonderful sights, sounds, and smells of springtime in the outdoors. Students return in the fall as fifth graders for another opportunity to see the area in it's fall foliage.

Volunteers met recently to schedule a clean-up day and set the schedule for volunteers to meet with schools. Students come out for a 5 hour classroom in the outdoors. Tammy Kielbasa, Roosevelt School Principal and Oshkosh School System environmental coordinator, stressed the importance of the Friends of Sullivan's Woods when she stated that without the volunteers, there would be no classroom experience at Sullivan's Woods.

Perhaps you are interested in joining the volunteers. For an opportunity to go along on a nature hike to see if you would like to volunteer, call Louise Coumbe at 231-4722