

BIRD SONGS

Newsletter of the North Lakeland
Discovery Center Bird Club

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Summary of the Bird Club's Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Affiliate Agreement with the North Lakeland Discovery Center

By David Foster on behalf of the Bird Club Board

The Discovery Center noted that it “truly values the ongoing work and educational efforts that the DC Bird Club continues to do, as a mission-consistent affiliate for the North Lakeland Discovery Center.” The BC Board of Directors and the Director of the NL Discovery Center agreed on several issues important to both organizations.

The 2018/2019 Bird Club/NLDC agreement affirms that BC members must also be Discovery Center members, paying dues and membership costs to both. This

decision confirms the long-term relationship between the Bird Club and the Discovery Center that benefits both organizations.

**(see below how to pay both amounts at the same time)*

The NLDC will continue to maintain the Bird Club's bookkeeping including income and expense activity. NLDC will provide the BC quarterly QuickBooks reports. Account reconciliation cannot be completed until mid-month, so reports will reflect the prior month's income and expense activity.

The Bird Club will continue to support the NLDC in significant ways, especially regarding the Northern Bird Festival, including Helping Hands Day, assisting or leading field trips and presentations, food, along with other support as needed.

In recognition of the Bird Club's ongoing support, the NLDC will forward to the Bird Club "\$1400 earnings from one of the 2019 John Bates Arizona Birding Trip tickets," a donation that "will continue in FY19-20 *if* another trip is offered, or the payment will again be re-evaluated."

The Bird Club will support with work and a BC donation of \$500 to the NLDC in creating a "Bird Feature" (possibly a blind and fountain) when sufficient planning makes it feasible.

The BC Board felt that the terms of this Agreement were in the Bird Club's best interest.

* The Discovery Center sends out their annual membership renewal letter in February/March. If you are paying by check, please enclose two checks in your reply to the Discovery Center, one for your NLDC membership and one for your Bird Club Membership. Please put "Bird Club Membership" in the memo section of your check. If you are paying your membership online, head to the Bird Club section of the NLDC website by clicking on "CLUBS" and then selecting "BIRD CLUB." You will find two links on the right-hand side of the screen: "PRINT" for printing a copy of the membership form for mailing your check to the NLDC, and "ONLINE" for paying dues online. The online payment via the Club link will be easily identified as Bird Club dues once the transaction is processed by the NLDC staff.

A WINTER'S WALK

Article and Photos by Mark Westphal

With a blue sky above and the promise of temperatures in the mid-teens, I wiggled the front of my boots into my snowshoe bindings. With still warm, ungloved hands, I managed to secure the rest of the straps and buckles and headed down the trail.

Only a few dozen yards from the house, the trees were bustling with chickadees recently fueled by nearby feeders. As I traveled down the path, the chatter of the little black-capped birds gradually grew more distant. Soon the woods grew silent. The only sound to be heard was the dull crunch of snow as I ventured down a too long neglected snowshoe trail. Even with snowshoes, I sunk ten inches into the white remains of a recent snowstorm.



Black-capped Chickadee

My progress was slow. Although my mind was eager to know what was around the bend, my leg muscles insisted it was time for a break. Leaning on a single hiking pole, I stood in a mixed forest of mature aspen with a scattering of red and white pines. There was still no sound, no signs of life. Several minutes passed. Then off to the right, I heard the tap tap tap of a woodpecker in a nearby dead tree. A downy or hairy I supposed. The little drill master stayed on the far side of the bark stripped trunk, never revealing his or her true identity. Off to my left, I thought I heard the soft chuckle of a nervous ruffed grouse. Moments later a burst of wing beats confirmed my suspicion.



Ruffed Grouse

Far off in the distance ravens exchanged calls as they flew over the tree tops. Closer by, the gentle little beeps of a red-breasted nuthatch could be heard. A blue jay called. A crack of a limb and the sound of snow falling from the branches of a nearby pine caused me to glance skyward. A large grey raptor launched itself. Each stroke

of its graceful wings was strong and deliberate. A cooper's hawk? A northern goshawk?

The woods were not so silent after all. Life was all around me. My leg muscles had recuperated. I stomped the excess snow off my snowshoes and continued down the narrow white trail that would lead me home.



Pileated Woodpecker

Upcoming Events

April 13 – Annual Midwest Crane Count, contact the NLDC or Sarah Besadny (sbesadny@gmail.com) for more information

May 2 (and Thursdays into Oct.) – the Bird Club's first Thursday Bird Walk, weather permitting. Look for an email with details as the date nears.

May 6 – Bird Club Program. Presentation by Dr. Robert Rosenfeld, professor at UW – Stevens Point, on the topic of Cooper’s Hawks

May 14 – Helping Hands Day at the NLDC . Help prepare the NLDC grounds for the upcoming Northwoods Birding Festival

May 31 – June 1 – the 15th Annual Northwoods Birding Festival

June 3 – Bird Club Program. Presentation by Carne Andrews and Sarah Besadny, bird club members, on Sparrow ID

July 1 – Bird Club Program. Presentation by Beverly Engstrom, photographer, on Tips for Great Birding Photos

Overview of the Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*)

By Debby Wilson

My interest in Canada Jays (C Jays) was initially sparked by an article in the Winter 2018 issue of Living Bird which described long-term studies of these people-friendly, mischievous birds in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada. I was eager to see them on our Bird Club trip to the Sax-Zim bog, and thanks to our guide Heather Gerth who hung a chunk of frozen peanut butter at one of the feeder stops, we were rewarded with the appearance of 6 of these cute, stocky, white and gray birds.

You may be more familiar with “Gray jay” as the common name of these birds. They were originally named Canada Jay in the early 1900’s, but in 1957 the American Ornithological Union named them Gray Jays. Some Canadians found this unacceptable and eventually in 2018 the American Ornithological Society agreed to restore the original common name. The Canada Jay became the national bird of Canada in 2018. Canada Jays have been called many other names including “Camp Robber” because they are known to brazenly snatch food from picnics and they will even take food from an outstretched hand. The Cree First Nations people called them “Wisakedjak”, “the trickster spirit of the forest”, which has been translated to “Whiskey Jack”.

Despite their social behaviors C Jays prefer remote areas of alpine and boreal coniferous and mixed coniferous-deciduous forests, especially where black spruce and mixed stands of black spruce and tamaracks are found. They inhabit every province in Canada and 14 northern states in the US. In Wisconsin they are most likely to be found in Vilas, Oneida and Forest counties because these counties contain larger areas of the type of forests C Jays prefer.

Canada Jays weigh 2.3-2.7oz (males larger than females), and have soft, fluffy plumage, long tails and broad, rounded wings with span of 18". The face and neck are white with darker shades of gray on the back and wings, lighter shades on the breast and belly and a black patch at the back of the head. The juveniles are more evenly colored and darker gray all over.

A tolerance for very cold temperatures and the feeding habits of these jays and allow them to live in the same area year-round. They do not mate for life but do remain together during the breeding season. They build robust nests which can keep them warm in frigid temperatures as low as -40 F, and are able to breed as early as February and fledge in the early spring. The broods commonly number 2-3 and the hatchlings are totally dependent on the parents for their food. When the young are about 2 months old they fight to be the dominant one to remain with the parents to be taught how to hunt and cache food in their home territory, while the losers must leave the area and fend for themselves. Early fledging allows for a longer amount of time for the young to develop cognitive skills for hunting and hiding food for the winter.



Canada Jay

Photo by Mark Westphal

It is the ability to cache bits of food in late summer and fall that allows Canada Jays to nest and survive in winter. They have large mandibular glands that produce a sticky saliva which, when mixed with food into small morsels called boli, become

waterproof when dry. The food can include seeds, berries, insects and other invertebrates, fungi, small rodents, carrion and campground handouts. They store the boli in bark fissures, lichen, knot holes or tufts of pine needles. In fact, the bark of the black spruce tree may aid in preserving the food. These jays have incredible memory and can hide up to 1000 boli of food daily and up to 100,000 total per season. Then they are able to find most of these caches during the winter for feeding themselves and their young.

The study of Canada Jays in Algonquin Provincial Park, which is 200 miles north of Toronto, has shown some worrisome findings. Because of climate warming, the food that the jays have cached may be rotting or freeze-thawing and the poorer edibility and nutrition of the food seems to be correlating with smaller brood size and nest failure. Breeding Bird Surveys have noted a 19% decline since 1970 in North America, especially from the maritime provinces to the Rocky Mountains at the southern periphery. The Cornell Lab's Project Feeder Watch has found a 50% decline in reports of Canada Jays since 1999. Whether the birds will need to relocate in order to continue their current breeding and feeding habits is not known at this time.

In addition to Living Bird, the above information was obtained from the 2016 edition of the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin.

Editor's Note: This is the second installment of a new feature in our newsletter. The author gets to write-up an overview of a species that interests them. Might you be interested in writing a species overview for our June newsletter? If so, please contact me at sbesadny@gmail.com

Arizona Rarity

By Guy David

Whenever we go out birding, we are pleased to be able to find multiple numbers of species of birds that are familiar to us. We sincerely appreciate the beauty and wonder of every bird that we encounter during this endeavor. We count these experiences among the fun things that we do with our lives.

In addition to the fun aspects of observing our familiar birds, on occasion we encounter a bird that we are not familiar with and that inspires a sense of wonder. The experience transforms from fun to excitement!

For some that means that is far as it goes, fun to see but not curious enough to follow-up. For others that means trying to observe as many things about the bird as possible and then hitting field guides in an effort to identify the bird. For most of those occasions, the result is successfully identifying the bird and learning identifiers so that when the species is encountered again it can be recognized as a

bird that would be expected to be in a given place at a given time. For others it means sharing the record with the international birding community via eBird and/or a birding listserv or two.

On uncommon occasions we go through the process of identifying a species and discovering that the species may be expected to rarely appear and thus is regarded in the birding community as uncommon or rare. Heighten the excitement factor! During our bird club outings over the years our members have shared a good number of times when we found one of these species. One great example was the time that we recorded a Lark Sparrow, a western species, in Thunder Marsh. Maybe only 2 or 3 are reported each year in Wisconsin. I have had a couple of such experiences in Wisconsin when I recorded a Lark Bunting in Powell Marsh and a Spotted Towhee at my feeders in Lac du Flambeau. These species have been rarely recorded in Wisconsin but none of them were species reported for the first time ever in Wisconsin.

So how would it feel to be the first person to ever successfully document a new species that had never been seen in the state before? Most of us will never know...but it happens. It happened this winter, nearby, in southeast Arizona. The discoverer observed the bird in Madera Canyon, a world-renowned birding hotspot near Green Valley, AZ where skilled birders roam about every day. The discoverer managed to get great photos of the bird to document the species, and posted her discovery on eBird and another well known birding list-serve. The bird species was a White-throated Thrush, normally an inhabitant only as far north as central Mexico. This species had been recorded in extreme southern Texas only a few times before, never anywhere else in the United States.



White-throated Thrush

Photo by Guy David

One of the wonderful things about this discovery and report is that the bird settled into an easy to find area on one of the commonly used trails in lower Madera Canyon. It developed an affinity for a fairly small area where it found the environment to its liking, especially Hackberry Trees that were laden with fruit. It enjoyed the company of American Robins and Hermit Thrushes that also remained at length in the area.



White-throated Thrush

Photo by Guy David

I began watching the rare bird reports for Madera Canyon and from the day of the first sighting there were multiple reports of this bird every day for the next 7 weeks or so. Almost anyone who endeavored to see the bird was able to do so. All one had to do is go to a nearby parking lot and walk an accessible trail until one encountered a group of people with cameras and binoculars. I know, I did that a few times, first to observe the bird myself and then to help friends locate the bird too. That's one bird with many hundreds of observations over several weeks. Rarities are hardly ever so cooperative.

Seeing the bird was not an automatic success, of course. The first time I tried for the bird I knew the general area where it had been reported. There were other birders wandering about asking each other, "did you see the thrush?" as we passed by. The second time I decided to be the early birder and was among the first on the trail in the morning. There were two other birders when I got to the parking lot and they headed up trail ahead of me. Soon, I came upon the same 2 guys who were very intent on a particular area along the trail by a stream. They stopped me and graciously pointed it out. Success! The bird was perched in a Juniper Tree and I doubt I would have spotted it myself. The 3 of us waited quietly until eventually the bird flew out of hiding to feed in the Hackberry Trees. All of us got our photos and were elated. The bird stayed in the area and we were able to point the bird out for others to enjoy. When I left about an hour later, there was a crowd!

Rare birds draw a crowd!

Photo by Guy David



I can't claim to have been a discoverer of the White-throated Thrush in Arizona but, thanks to the person who shared her discovery, myself and many others have been able to enjoy a new life time bird. Maybe someone else saw that bird before the lady did but didn't know what it was or didn't bother to report having seen it. Thankfully, she did! She even sent an email to the contact list of our local birding group. Not only that, but others who followed continued to report the bird which enabled many others to receive detailed instructions on where the bird could be found. Then, on the trail, there were so many generous birders who helped all seekers to locate and enjoy the bird too.

I am writing this article on February 28, 2019. The last time the thrush has been reported was February 24, 2019. We had a winter storm in the area last weekend and a lot of snow was deposited in the mountains and even in our own yard in the valley. Since then birding reports indicate that thrush hasn't been seen and that the American Robin and Hermit Thrush presence were greatly reduced as well. Conditions have changed and birds have wings. Time will tell if the thrush will be rediscovered in that area but, even if it isn't, birders from near and far have had a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a true rarity. Most of them, including myself, added a lifer too!

Enjoy the photos that I included for this article and dream of the next time that you may encounter a rarity and think about what you will do about it if that were to happen.



Discovery Center Birders in South Texas

By Donna Roche

Yes, the sombrero hatted women in the photo above ARE three Discovery Center birders in a non-birding moment! OK, we were just having fun! Here's our story...

About this photo: While birding on the first day of our 3-day marathon to visit a number of south Texas 'hot spots', Denise Hertzberg, a friend of hers from California, Carne Andrews and Donna Roche took a lunch break. We dined at Nana's Taqueria, a popular lunch and supper choice in Weslaco. The weather was lovely and we ate outside in the garden with its colorful décor and costumes for photo opportunities. The other two days we brought bagged lunches as serious birders do.

The back story: For several years, Denise had mentioned how great it would be to join Carne and Donna during a time when they both were in the Rio Grande Valley area of south Texas and go birding together. This was the year she accomplished that goal. We set an itinerary of 5 major 'hot spots' and several other lesser known stops along our routes. We were fortunate to have great birding weather for our three days since this winter has been a rollercoaster of temperatures and a lot more rainy days than usual.

The actual story in five paragraphs: On our first morning, we only travelled a couple of miles to the front entrance to Estero Llano Grande State Park. Birding started

right away in the parking area after greeting hugs and introducing Mookie Fudenberg, who was a first-time birder to Texas with a sharp eye and a determined birding attitude. She was as much fun as her name might suggest and we all had a great time together! Donna was particularly pleased that her personal favorite Texas birding venue and the next-door neighbor to the RV park where she stays for two months a winter, totaled 57 species of birds during our almost 5 hour outing. A few birds that were highlight species of our outing were Common Pauraque, Green Jay, Altamira Oriole, Clay-colored Thrush and Cinnamon Teal. Estero has diverse habitats in a small area that include grasslands, shallow pools, a tropical plant area and a levee/dike with resaca/small river below. One can see many species of birds wading in the resaca including the **Black-bellied Whistling Duck**.

After lunch, we went to Valley Nature Center where we found Plain Chachalaca and Buff-bellied Hummingbird. Unfortunately we missed the Golden-crowned Warbler that Donna saw some time ago. However with all these places, there are a lot of other new sights to enjoy with plants, flowers, butterflies, mammals and reptiles. Our DC birders always appreciate 'botanizing', etc. on our bird outings!

On our second day, we traveled to Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge which is located right along the Rio Grande River and is at serious risk of being diminished in size and purpose by any barrier, be it THE wall or fence. We found 35 great species of birds including the Great Kiskadee, **Golden-fronted Woodpecker**, Couch's Kingbird, Hooded Oriole, and the Least Grebe. We saw a number of hawks and falcons and climbed the tower for a great view of the refuge. The gift shop is pretty nice, too. We ate our bagged lunches at a small lagoon. That's the way to do it!

Along the way to our afternoon venue, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, we all got views of first-of-the year Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. The afternoon was really warm and it must have been siesta time for many birds since we only saw 15 species of birds. However, we did have a beautiful first view and several others of a 'lifer' for us all of a tiny, young male, Calliope Hummingbird.

On our third day, we were a group of five with Donna's friend, Chris Glor of Kiel, WI. We drove south to Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge where we had reservations for a mini-bus, bird-oriented tour of a refuge area that is closed to other kinds of public use. Chris and Donna had done this tour before, but this time we went to a new area, the Bahia Grande Unit of this huge refuge. It was a perfectly beautiful day with lush green vegetation that was so different than for the last number of drought years. We saw 32 species of birds including Chihuahuan Ravens, **Crested Caracara** and our 'target' bird, the **Applomado Falcon**. Denise could now go home happy with this bird finally on her life list! We were surprised to find so much water in this area and to see lots of water birds that came over from the nearby Gulf of Mexico. Meadowlarks and even Bobwhites were a treat in the grasslands. In the afternoon, we drove the relatively short distance onto the island...South Padre Island that is and specifically to the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, the fifth and last of our 'hot spots'. Here, you look onto the

Laguna Madre side of this narrow island. The tide has been very high lately and many species of ducks have moved on but we were very happy to get 36 species of birds here. A good number of those were birds we hadn't seen at other places. We saw Roseate Spoonbills, American Oystercatcher and Black Skimmers. We were delighted to observe a **Green Heron**, a bird that we can see at home, building her nest in a tree along a small waterway. Wow! It was time to go and we hadn't even gone to the beach. Oh well, it will have to be another time and another year.

The end of the story: We gathered together one last time for supper at a great Italian Restaurant, Cortino's in Weslaco. This time we were seven with Chris' husband, Skip, and Donna's husband, Lee. The guys did get a word in once in a while, but the five gals had lots to reminisce about and to enjoy once again.

The highlighted bird species names in the story: **The following photos were taken by Carne** with her new camera. She did a fantastic job with these photos and they really enhance my story. Thanks Carne!



Green Heron building nest



Black-bellied Whistling Ducks



Aplomado Falcon



Golden-fronted Woodpecker

Crested Caracara in a
field of Texas
Bluebonnets





Pine Grosbeaks



Common Redpolls

Visitors from Canada

Article and Photos Above by David Foster

As northwoods birders turned their calendars over to February 2019, some regular winter visitors had been scarce. In the first week of February, however, these guests arrived at our feeders in Natural Lakes. We saw a dozen common redpolls jostling each other for a place at our thistle feeder, which they're still doing. At the same time, a male and female pine grosbeak appeared at our sunflower seed feeder, and like the redpolls they've stayed over for an extended visit. Both species breed in northern Canada, the redpolls in tundra and subarctic forests, the pine grosbeaks in coniferous forests. Unfortunately--with the record deep-freeze in the Wisconsin northwoods--our spruces and other coniferous trees are laden with heavy snow, leaving our Canadian visitors dependent on our feeders. We welcome them!

A Sign of Spring

Article and Photos by Mark Westphal

One of my first signs of Spring ,and I use the term loosely, is the arrival of trumpeter swans on a particular stretch of the Manitowish River near Boulder Junction. I first learned of their arrival this year when the temperatures were still in the mid teens and almost three feet of snow was still on the ground. I must admit that I waited several days until the temperatures climbed into the 20s before venturing out with my camera. Deep snow limited my mobility and the swans for the most part kept their distance. Never the less, the swans provided me with several hours of peaceful viewing along with the glimpse of an otter, and the site of a deer making a chilly crossing of the Manitowish River.

Thanks to the swans and thanks to my friend for giving me a heads up about this "Spring" viewing opportunity and giving me a place to warm up after spending hours sitting in a snow bank waiting for the swans to come " just a little closer".

Trumpeter Swans spend a significant part of their day preening. Although preening contributes to their regal appearance, the true purpose of this activity is more important. Swans use their bill to spread oil on their feathers from a gland located near the base of their tail. The oil helps the feathers maintain their waterproof, insulating properties. Along with feeding, preening is an important part of their daily survival routine.



After a preening session, the swan will often do a " wing flap", showing off those beautiful, powerful wings.

Occasionally you might see a trumpeter swan with a neck band. The band color, numbers, and letters help scientists track the individual bird's behavior, movement's and survival rate. What story does 68J tell? 68J was banded on 8-29-05 in the St Germain area by a Wisconsin DNR employee before it could fly. It's gender is unknown For more information about trumpeter swans and banding check out www.trumpeterswansociety.org



Life List Quarterly

By Guy David

Preparation for writing this column usually begins with reviewing the bird club's eBird records to refresh my knowledge of the status of the club's life list as well as to review our success during the previous year.

As noted in my December column, there were 3 species added to the club's life list during our 2018 birding year which means that the club's list of life time species stands at 271 species. There were no other new lifers added as the club completed 2018.

I believe that I wrote my column for December, 2018 in October after the club enjoyed a trip to the Ashland area. Since that time the club also conducted field trips to the Willow Flowage where we added the Least Sandpiper, having seen several birds of this species below the Willow Dam. There also was our annual trip to the Wausau area for birding and Birds in Art but there were no new species added for the year during that trip. I can happily report that club eBirders reported two new species for the year on December 6, 2018 during the trip to Minnesota which included Ring-necked Pheasant and Sharp-tailed Grouse. During the Minocqua Christmas Bird Count one group added the Golden-crowned Kinglet on December 20, 2018, the last new species for the year. That means that the club's 2018 annual list includes 163 species in total.

Now is the time for the club to be planning our 2019 birding season. I am sincerely hoping that elsewhere in this newsletter there will be some announcements regarding another wonderful season of weekly outings and hopefully, a few field trips! To begin with, following is a record of the number of species recorded by the club going back to 2010.

Year	# Species
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2018	163
2017	159
2016	171
2015	147
2014	175
2013	184
2012	191
2011	173
2010	186

Since the beginning of the club I dreamed of the year when the club would record 200 species of birds in a single year. We haven't made that goal yet but we made a good run at it during 2012. I attribute that unusually successful season to an exceptional number of great field trips to areas outside our normal home range. That's what it takes.

A question one could ask is, if the club solely relied on birding outings in what I describe as our home range, would it be possible to record 200 or more species in one year? The answer lies in eBird records. My answer is, I think so, but it would take an incredible effort.

Starting with Vilas County records, there have been 265 species recorded for all-time (8,728 eBird records). During this period, 214 species were recorded in Powell Marsh! During 2018, the top 100 eBirders in Vilas County recorded 200 species! Bear in mind that this total was accomplished by 96 different eBirders reporting their checklists. That represents a lot of time in the field at many locations throughout the county. No single eBirder got close to 200 on his/her own. The top eBirder in Vilas County for 2018 was Mike Peczynski who recorded 136 species via 194 complete checklists. Second place goes to myself as I recorded 131 species via 52 complete checklists. Going further down the list I am elated to note that several club members are included in the top 20 for 2018 in Vilas County. These include Sarah Besadny (120 species / 147 checklists), Carne Andrews (112 / 36), Mary Jenks (103 / 34), Elizabeth Stone (103 / 128), Donna Roche (79 / 7), and Cynthia Krakowski (75 / 8).

The club also spends some time in Oneida County. A review of those records shows that there have been 269 species recorded for all-time (7,195 eBird records). During 2018, the top 100 eBirders in Oneida County recorded 205 species. Since Oneida County is further from most of our homes, none of our club members made the top ten list for the county. The top eBirder recorded 127 species via 100 checklists. Yours truly made number 11 on the top 100 list with 89 species via 21 checklists. Club members also making the top 20 includes Sarah Besadny (80

species / 9 checklists), Vanessa Haese-Lehman (78 / 15), Carne Andrews (76 / 11), and Donna Roche (74 / 11).

The club annually hosts outings in Iron County so I decided to include this data too. Iron County has a lower density of eBirders so there are not as many records, but there are enough to give a good idea of available species. The all-time eBird record reveals that 239 species have been recorded via 2,141 checklists. When I checked the top 100 eBirders I learned that there were only 75 on the list. During 2018, the top eBirder in Iron County was Bruce Bacon who recorded 104 species via 40 checklists. John Bates and Mary Burns were in the fourth slot with 87 species via 12 checklists. Guy David is number 7 and I recorded 69 species via 10 checklists. In eighth place is Donna Roche who recorded 68 species with 6 checklists. Carne Andrews is the ninth top eBirder with 67 species via 7 checklists.

In summary, the eBird data from the 3 primary counties that the bird club frequents during our outings show the potential to yield well over 200 species over time. During any given year, though, even the most active eBirders in these counties do not approach such an outcome during one year, assuming that their productivity has been no better during any given year prior to 2018. The top eBirders in any of these counties even have a hard time finding more than 200 species all-time! There are only 3 listed for Vilas County, 2 for Oneida County, and 0 for Iron County!

In conclusion, theoretically, it would be possible to record 200 species in the club's home range in one year but it is very highly unlikely. The available data reinforces the notion that maximizing the club's annual list requires traveling to other areas outside Vilas, Oneida, and Iron Counties where different varieties of bird species may be more easily found.

All of this regional eBirding data is well and good, but another thing that I have learned is that our club members are perfectly happy to go birding in our area, joining in club outings now and then, and just getting out on a regular basis to see what we can see! I can hardly wait for the outings to begin! Fourteen years of wonderful birding experiences together and our fifteenth will soon be under way. The great news is, through our club, we have learned about many great birding places to go and we enjoy each other's company along the way!