



Presidents Message

Many birders are attracted to owls; I know I am. I think we're very lucky here in Illinois to have so many species of owls.

Tytonidae—Barn Owls (19 Species World Wide)

American Barn Owl	<i>Tyto furcata</i>	(unfortunately, only in southern Illinois)
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Strigidae—Typical Owls (223 Species World Wide)

Eastern Screech Owl	<i>Megascops asio</i>	
Snowy Owl	<i>Bubo scandiacus</i>	(some winters)
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>	
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	(very few sightings)
Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	

Next Meeting

January 10, 2019
7:00 p.m. Social Time
7:30 p.m. Speaker

Faith Lutheran Church
41 N. Park Blvd. Glen Ellyn
Basement

6:00 p.m. Pre-meeting dinner
Potbelly Sanwich Shop
522 Roosevelt Rd.
Glen Ellyn

Note NEW LOCATION

The Barn, Screech, Barred, and Great Horned Owls are around all year. The Burrowing Owl sightings seem to come at random times of the year. The other owls are winter visitors to Illinois.

Seeing owls can be a problem, because often owl sightings are not reported publicly. Just as birders like to see owls, so do some members of the general public, including nature photographers. Sometimes these people get too close and annoy the owls, interrupt nesting, or have other negative effects. Birders in Kenya, for instance, never report owl locations because many people there consider owls to be bad luck and kill them. Great Gray Owl sightings around Duluth are no longer reported because a person living there would immediately go trap owls that were reported and band them, even though asked not to. Banding the owls might be useful, but it disturbed the Great Grays to the extent that they were never seen in that area again.

Most owls are active only at night unless they are really stressed to find food. So, owling usually consists of going at night to a suitable habitat and playing owl calls. Sometimes, an owl will respond and fly in and perch to see what is going on. A strong flashlight is then used to see the owl. Some experience is required to make this successful, because owls fly very silently and sometimes "ghost call," that is, call softly so that they seem to be much farther away than they are.

Another way to see owls is to know where their day roost is. The roosting sights are known to some and the information is passed word of mouth. Even so, seeing them isn't easy. It is amazing how hard it can be to see even a large owl when it is sitting quietly high in a tree! Also, owls often have several day roosts and rotate between them, so it may take several days to be at the right one.

Short-eared Owls can often be seen flying low over prairies at dusk, hunting for prey, although sometimes it is rather dark when they appear.

The exception to night hunting for owls is Snowy Owls, which hunt by day with their amazing ears. To find out more about this remarkable raptor, come hear famous author Scott Weidensaul's Snowy Owl presentation to our club at our January meeting.

John Baker
President, DuPage Birding Club

January Program

Caught in the SNOWstorm

Scott Weidensaul

The winter of 2013-14 saw the largest invasion of snowy owls into the eastern United States in perhaps a century -- and marked an unprecedented opportunity to learn more about these mysterious Arctic hunters. Author and researcher Scott Weidensaul will share the story of Project SNOWstorm -- how a huge, collaborative research effort focused on snowy owls came together in a few frantic weeks, funded with the help of people from around the world, and how it continues to make discoveries and unexpected insights into the life and ecology of this great white raptor.

Scott Weidensaul is the author of more than two dozen books on natural history, including the Pulitzer Prize finalist "Living on the Wind," about bird migration, "Return to Wild America," and "The First Frontier: The Forgotten History of Struggle, Savagery and Endurance in Early America." His newest book, "The Peterson Reference Guide to Owls of North America and the Caribbean," has just been published. Weidensaul is a contributing editor for Audubon, a columnist for Bird Watcher's Digest and writes for a variety of other publications; he lives in the mountains of eastern Pennsylvania, where he studies the migration of owls and hummingbirds.



In Case You Missed It – November 8, 2018

New Bylaws and Board + Natural Areas Restoration in DuPage County!

New Bylaws, DBC Board

The club's November annual meeting started with unanimous approval of new bylaws and a new DBC Board by meeting attendees. With the bylaws vote, the Past President is now relieved of board duties and a third Director serves on the board instead.

Leading the club in 2019 will be Diann Bilderback, returning as President after serving in 2008. Founding member, Denis Kania will be Vice President, Bonnie Graham serves a second year as Treasurer, and Steve Constantelos will again be Recording Secretary. Glenn Perricone returns to the board as Corresponding Secretary, and Leslie Hayward returns to the board as a Director along with new Directors John Hebert and Kevin Hlava.

Speaker Shannon Burns

The evening's speaker was Shannon Burns, the Education Programs Coordinator at Mayslake Peabody Estate for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC). She spoke on "Natural Area Restoration: What We Manage, Why We Do It and How It's Done."

DuPage County has a million citizens, 26,000 acres of forest preserve land, 145 miles of trails, 60 preserves, 30 Lakes, and 47 miles of rivers and streams: 13% of the county's land is part of the FPDDC! The District's woodlands, savannahs, wetlands, prairies, and wet prairies are host to many native plants and indigenous critters, and the FPDDC's job is to maintain its natural balance and, when they can, restore the lands to pre-settlement conditions to further enhance our land as a wildlife refuge.

The District does not take its role lightly, with a painstaking process to be sure things are done correctly. Once a restoration project is decided upon, it takes 6 to 12 years to get it going, including land assessments, securing funding sources, obtaining permits (up to 8 years and costing as much as a million bucks), making interagency agreements, developing and vetting detailed plans, and notifying the public!

The lion's share of restoration the District does is wetlands restoration and mitigation—look for signs onsite or check out the [website](#) for more information. Projects have included drain tile removal as part of the West Branch Mega Project and stream enhancements, including stream bank plantings and restoring the natural curves of channelized waterways. An interesting practice Shannon shared was "root wad revetment" where root balls and trunks of removed trees are used in stream bank restorations to prevent erosion, encouraging quick re-settlement by fish and insects.

The FPDDC also does seed collection of native plants for use in plantings, invasive species management, and carefully-timed prescribed burns to maintain prairie land health. Pop-up tours of recent burns are coming in 2019 at Mayslake.

There's targeted critter management too, with an eye on keeping relations between humans and animals conflict-free and making sure populations are not out of whack to the detriment of other species. The FPDDC is proud that their deer management program deer has resulted in one of the lowest car crash rates in the country. With bears, mountain lions, and even wolves now being reported in the state, who knows what challenges may lie ahead.

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The District is also devoted to endangered species recovery. They have created two new colonies of [Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly](#), a species that makes its home only among turtlehead plants. The [Hine's Emerald Dragonfly](#) needs streamlets where Devil Crayfish burrow to lay eggs, and the District has stepped in rearing the dragonflies off-site and creating habitat that could raise Devil Crayfish and Hine's Emerald populations. Finally, for the [Blanding's Turtle](#), the District has created a "head-start" program. They find pregnant ones in the wild, induce labor at a special section at Willowbrook, and raise the young there. When released into the preserves, turtles are tracked with Subaru devices. Since its inception in 1996, the District has hatched nearly 3,300 Blanding's turtles from wild and head-start mothers under the program. You can even sponsor a Blanding's, which allow you to name the turtle and be updated on its activities.

Shannon ended by encouraging everyone to come to tell a neighbor what's going on the preserves, and to landscape with native plants. And she assured us that the forest preserve has a lot of science and expertise behind what they do—and they want us to know what they're up to. [Drop them a line](#) any time. Here's Shannon's email address: sburns@dupageforest.org. If you're interested in volunteering (including bird monitoring), check out this programs page: <http://fpdcc.com/volunteer/>.

—[Steve Constantelos](#), DBC Recording Secretary

Update on the Auction Funds Project

Last year, DBC members voted on using auction funds to benefit a local bird-related project. The original winner was a viewing platform at Fermilab, but recently the DBC Board learned that this project has been canceled due to permitting issues. The board has decided to re-allocate the \$2,500 to the project that ran a pretty close second in the voting: wetland habitat enhancement at Springbrook Prairie. Here is a description:

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County plans to improve about 36 acres of wetland habitat at Springbrook Prairie, a dedicated Illinois Nature Preserve in Naperville, by removing aggressive cattails and controlling other invasive plant species. The work is expected to benefit imperiled wetland birds like the King Rail, Marsh Wren, and Pied-billed Grebe by establishing a diverse, resilient wetland plant community. Funds would support hiring contractors to selectively herbicide the cattails and conduct other invasive management work. The donation would be awarded to the Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, their nonprofit fundraising arm.

We're excited to be helping that haven of grassland birds, and popular DBC field trip destination, Springbrook Prairie!

December 2018 Field Trips

NOTE: Check DuPageBirding.org for any trip changes, additions or cancellations.

This month is the time to see late fall and early winter birds. Some species are only seen this time of year. The Christmas Bird Count is a major event for DBC Birders; participants of all skills are invited. There are opportunities for all types of birders to participate and enjoy the season.

Situations sometimes change. Check our DBC website (DuPage Birding Club) for the latest status information. Participants are welcome to contact the trip leader if they have questions. Our field trip leaders can help you find the trip's starting location if you need additional directions.

Interested in being a field trip leader? It's easy! Let us know your favorite birding spot and a time when you can lead and we will add it to the list. You do not have to be a birding expert, you just need to be comfortable at a specific site. Contact dbcfieldtrips@dupagebirding.org for more information.

Saturday, December 1, 8:00 am-9:00 am (optional nearby stops 9-11 am) Heritage Quarries Recreational Area, Lemont (Pre-registration required)

We are looking for waterfowl, raptors and gulls at "Lemont Quarries," with additional optional stops at Sag Quarries, Saganashkee Slough, Bergman Slough, Long John Slough and Maple Lake, depending on what has been seen and on ice conditions. Take Lemont Road south past Bluff Road over Des Plaines River and I and M Canal, turn left onto Illinois Street, two very short blocks to a left at stop sign (Stephens), one block to a right at light (Main) and drive three blocks east to TurnAbout Pizza—take driveway on your left (becomes Dan Fielding Drive) over train tracks, bear right in front of Singer Landing condos— and drive to parking lot on your right just before canal and after crossing a second, ungated train crossing.

Please register with the leader by Friday, November 30 to make sure the trip is a "go," as it will be canceled if weather is poor or waterfowl scarce.

Leader: Jessica Becker, 708-642-7240, Jbecker@dupagebirding.org

Saturday, December 1, 8:00 am Illinois River/Hennepin/Goose Lake Prairie (Pre-registration required)

We will carpool from Bolingbrook to Hennepin and bird the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge and other local spots. We will stop for lunch along the way. Birding our way back with a planned stop at Goose Lake Prairie at sunset for Short-eared Owls. This is an all day trip. Hope to be back to Bolingbrook by 6:00 pm. Please register in advance.

Leader: Jeff Smith cell 331-481-3362, JSmith@dupagebirding.org

Sunday December 9, 7:30 am

McKee Marsh, Winfield

This site remains one of DuPage County's premier birding spots. Walk around the marsh with us to check out winter birds, as well as possible late migrants. Northern Shrike and Northern Harriers have been fairly reliable the last few years. Meet at the visitor parking lot on the north side of Mack Road (Mack is south of Roosevelt and north of Butterfield), located between Winfield Road and Rte. 59 in Warrenville. Be sure to dress for the weather!

Leader: Kyle Wiktor, 708-506-5186, Kwiktor@dupagebirding.org

**Saturday, December 15, All Day Event
Fermilab Circle Christmas Bird Count**

Sub-teams assigned to various locations

The DuPage Birding Club sponsors this Christmas Bird Count. Thousands of birds and over 100 species have been logged in previous Bird Counts. This opportunity to join almost 100 other birders is open to those of all skill levels. If you did not count last year, please contact the compiler to be assigned to a location and area captain.

Contact: Jeff Chapman for details or to volunteer, JChapman@dupagebirding.org

**Sunday, December 16, All Day Event
Lisle-Arboretum Circle Christmas Bird Count**

Sub-teams assigned to various locations

Birders of all skill levels are welcome on the Lisle-Arboretum CBC. The Chicago Ornithological Society (www.chicagobirder.org) sponsors this count. Complete information is at the count website <http://geoffwilliamson.info/lislecbc/>. There is no cost to participate in the count, but there is a charge to attend the post-count dinner. Even if you cannot go out in the field, there is another way to contribute; DBC members who live in the count circle can participate as a "feederwatcher." For details and signup:

Contact: Carl Giometti, chicagiometti@gmail.com

Other Birding Opportunities For additional birding opportunities check out the **Illinois Birding Calendar** at <http://www.illinoisbirds.org/calendar/>

Call us if you have questions about the trips or if you would like to lead a trip. Leaders do not have to be birding experts, just familiar with the location. There is no need to register for trips **unless otherwise indicated**. Visitors are always welcome. We do not charge fees for birding trips. Field trip information is also found at: www.dupagebirding.org

Field Trip Coordinators

Jessica Becker

Kathy Mineck

DBCFieldTrips@gmail.com

Chicago Wilderness Grassland Bird Report

There's a brand new State of the Grasslands Report by The Chicago Wilderness Grassland Bird Task Force. It includes species profiles of birds of concern and discussions of land management, data collection, modeling, climate change, and more. Here's the link: <http://gl.audubon.org/landinggrasslands/state-grasslands>

News from the Wacky World of the Web

Scientists Discover A Rare Bird That's A Hybrid Of Three Different Species

About a male Burket's Warbler, a first-of-its-kind triple-species hybrid. Its mother was a Brewster's (hybrid) Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* X *Vermivora cyanoptera* and its father was a Chestnut-sided Warbler, *Setophaga pensylvanica*.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/grrlscientist/2018/11/09/rare-three-species-hybrid-bird-discovered/#4d5999d47889>

These birds are one of the rare animals that hide to mate

National Geographic

Besides humans, few species hide sexual activity. Arabian babblers are one such species; keeping mating private may preserve the peace. [Read the full story](#)

Some hummingbirds hit notes so high, only a dog could hear them

Popular Science

Some can hit notes so high, they go ultrasonic. But based on everything we know about birds, the hummingbirds shouldn't be able to hear notes that high. [Read the full story](#)

DuPage Birding Club

The club exists to provide fun and camaraderie between birders of all skill levels and ages while enjoying some serious birding experiences.

Member Benefits include:

- Meetings featuring regional and national speakers • Field Trips throughout the year
 - Informative Club Website
 - Illinois Spring Bird Count
- Christmas Bird Count
 - DuPage County Checklist
 - Lending Library of bird-related videos & books • Biennial Auction of birding items

Contact Us at:

President: John Baker JBaker@DuPageBirding.org

Send your articles and photos to chipnotes2013@gmail.com for inclusion in **DRUMMINGS**.

DuPage Birding Club
P.O. Box 3381
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

First Class



2019 Meetings

January 10

March TBD

April TBD

July TBD

September TBD

October TBD

November TBD