Hello, everyone,

I’m still reflecting on the “new birder” experience I wrote about last month and the role we more experienced birders have as ambassadors for our pastime. When someone shows interest, we have an opportunity. Whether it’s on the trail with a group of birding newbies, at work, or with friends, we can encourage this interest and look for the teaching moments.

I'd like to share one particularly memorable experience I had serving as an ambassador for the joys of birding. This story was originally printed in Drummings in 2008 as one of my President’s Letters. I’ve made a few tweaks but it remains largely the same.

I was participating in an "Executive Speaking Skills" program along with my boss, the president of the small company I worked for, and several other senior executives. After a day of coaching and skill development, we were all given 20 minutes to develop a five-minute presentation on some topic that we knew well, any topic we chose. Our objective was to motivate the audience to take a positive action.

Immediately my colleagues sprang into action, busily scribbling notes and working with their Post-It notes to organize content. Meanwhile, I sat stumped. I needed time to cogitate and think things through. I fretted and chewed my pencil as the clock ticked mercilessly on. Finally I decided: I will do The Top Ten Reasons to Take Up Birding. It was interesting content and I was comfortable with it. I too sprang into action, completing my outline just as the timer rang. Whew!

We all shared our subjects. The president said he was going to talk on “reinventing strategic planning at the company.” Uh-oh. I felt a little queasy. The chief technology officer wanted to "develop a next-generation information architecture." And so they continued, all with their weighty management topics. Holy cripes! I wanted to scream and run away! Desperately I wondered if I could redo my presentation while the others presented. But I was trapped by time and had to go for it. Gamely I took the floor when my turn came. Gulp. Here we go:
My thesis: Birding is a practical and gratifying hobby. Here are ten reasons to dig out that old pair of binoculars in the back of the closet and start seeing the world differently.

1. **Birding is easy.** Unlike many hobbies, the entry threshold is low and anyone can do it! It doesn't take any special physical or mental skills, and you can do it anywhere.

2. **Birding is inexpensive.** All you really need is a decent pair of binoculars. Of course, later comes the gear upgrades and the scope you can't live without. Then there are the birding trips…

3. **Birding provides good exercise.** Well, it can if you multitask like I do and combine it with a long walk on the trail.

4. **Birding provides sensory and mental stimulation.** It sharpens your visual acuity and ability to distinguish fine physical details; your listening skills and ability to discriminate one sound from another; and your reflexes, memory, and analytical skills. And it's usually scenic (unless you're at a sewage pond).

5. **Birding is spiritually restorative and reconnects you to nature.** A quiet walk along a trail listening, watching, just "being" lets you become part of the natural world again. The peace in this immersion provides an escape from our mad, busy, overcharged lives.

6. In a similar way, the focus birding requires helps you live in the moment. When you're on the bird, there's nothing else. What a great way to clear your head of day-to-day concerns.

7. **Birds are beautiful and fascinating creatures in their own right.** They are stunningly gorgeous, their voices rich and fascinating, their behaviors so varied and often complex. One could easily spend a lifetime watching birds and still have more to learn. Talk about eye candy for the soul!

8. **Watching birds provides a perspective on living and surviving.** Birds are the ultimate survivors, descendants of the dinosaurs, after all. Think of the courage of the tiny hummingbird taking flight from the coast of Texas to fly hundreds of miles nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico to its wintering grounds. Of course, it's not courage but genetics that moves the bird. Still, the vigor of that life source awes me, and it is a source of strength and courage to me. If that little bird can do what it does, against such ridiculously stacked odds, then surely I can muster the energy to do what I need to do.

9. **Birding satisfies certain neurotic needs.** Attention all collectors, list makers, shopaholics, and pack rats—birding is a healthy substitute for your affliction! Yes, folks, I was able to (mostly) replace my drive to acquire stuff—clothes, gewgaws, artwork, jewelry—well, not jewelry altogether, but it did have an impact. Building my list of "lifers" pretty much replaces that need to acquire and collect other things (despite my pitiful list-keeping skills).

10. Finally, as any birder will tell you, **birding is fun.** The thrill of the chase, the pleasures of watching these amazing creatures, the constant discovery process, the nice people you meet, and the shared community of experience—these make birding a highly enjoyable activity.

So dig those binoculars out of the back of that closet, folks, and start to see the world through a different lens!

Whew....done. I'm proud to say I withstood the laughs and derisive comments as I took the floor and announced my topic. I rather enjoyed delivering my little speech, as it turns out. I'm also pleased to report all of the group said they'd learned something new, and some were curious enough to maybe, just maybe, dust off their binoculars...

That's my tale of a special outreach situation. The next time you find yourself in the role of ambassador for the birds or need to explain why you like birding, remember my Top Ten list, add a few of your own, and go for it!

Cheers, Diann
July Program

Thursday, July 11, 2019 - 7:30 pm

A Rare Peek at Rails, Secretive Marsh Birds of the Great Lakes

Rails are a group of bird species that are facing steep declines in the Great Lakes region. However, since they tend to be secretive and difficult to monitor, their population trends and habits are poorly understood.

Stephanie Beilke, Conservation Science Associate with Audubon Great Lakes, will discuss what we do know about this diverse species group and how Audubon Great Lakes is formulating habitat management for these birds around the Chicago area and beyond.


Call for Photos

We know many of our members are accomplished photographers, and we’d like to build a library of photos that we could use in the Drumming’s, website, and marketing materials. We’re interested in birds you’ve photographed within Illinois and especially within DuPage county. Of course, all photos will be attributed to the photographer! Images should be high resolution JPG or PNG. Please take advantage of this opportunity to showcase your work.

Send your photos to dbilderback@dupagebirding.org.
It’s Membership Renewal Time!

Just a reminder that July is membership renewal month for the DBC. Your annual dues of $20 ($30 family, $10 student) are the major source of annual funding for our speaker program, grants and donations, and operating expenses. They ensure that the club continues to serve your interests and supports the birding community. Do do your dues!

You can renew one of three ways:

1. Online using PayPal or credit card—visit [www.dupagebirdingclub.org/membership](http://www.dupagebirdingclub.org/membership) and click on the PayPal button. Easy!

2. Via mail—fill out the form online at the above url, print it, and mail it and a check for your dues to the address on the form. Please do not mail cash. Your canceled check is your receipt.

3. In person at a club meeting—fill out the form online, print it and bring it to a club meeting with cash or check. Treasurer Bonnie Graham will collect your dues and give you a receipt.

Please note that DBC does not rent, sell, or share your personal information, and the personal information you share with DBC is not stored on the DBC website or the host server.

Save the Date

Birding and Breakfast August 18!

One of life’s great pleasures is birding. Another is eating. Put them together and you have a perfect start to your day, Birding and Breakfast! AND it is a great opportunity to socialize and get to know your fellow birders! Please join us for a bird walk and casual breakfast at Hidden Lake Forest Preserve, Sunday, August 18. We will begin at 7:30 with a walk through the woods and around the lake. Then at 9:00 breakfast will be served in the picnic shelter. The club will provide bananas, bagels, donuts, juice and coffee. No need to bring anything. If, however, you love to cook and want to bring something to share, feel free to do so. All birders and potential birders are welcome!

This is an activity the club has done it the past that has always been a pleasant morning. As the summer comes to an end it is a great time to get together and share highlights of summer birding experiences with others who share your interest in birding and the outdoors. Hidden Lake has a variety of habitats so you might just be able to pick up one more bird for your summer list, spot a new dragonfly or see a butterfly or two.

Hidden Lake is located at the south east corner of HWY 56 (Butterfield Rd) and HWY 53, just north of the Morton Arboretum. The entrance is on the east side of HWY 53, less than a 1/4 mile south of Butterfield Rd across the street from the Walmart. Meet in the parking lot near the shelter.
9 Ways to Spread the Word about the DBC

1) Tag your bird- and club-related posts and pictures with #dupagebirdingclub on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media. By the way, we’re always looking for photos of club members and birds for the website, so email a board member if you have field trip or event images you’d like to share.

2) Be welcoming. If you see someone you don’t know before a meeting or on a field trip, walk up and introduce yourself. Before a meeting last year, a visitor introduced herself and soon after I noticed a club member went to sit by her. I’m not sure if they knew each other not, or if I was imagining the whole thing, but it seemed like a great gesture to me!

3) Volunteer to help John and Kathy Hebert on the Outreach/Youth Education committee.

4) Hand a DBC brochure or bird checklist to an interested person. Or tack one to a bulletin board at a local business, library, nature center, church, etc. These items are on the field trips table at the meetings, and John Hebert and Diann Bilderback have more of them in their possession! We’re also getting some more DBC “business cards” printed up.

5) Mention the DuPage Birding Club in the comments section of your eBird checklists. If you led or participated in a DBC field trip, share it with our eBird account, DupageBC. If you went on a non-field trip outing with other members, mention the DBC in the comments section of your checklist—someone may spot it and become interested!

6) Interact with DBC’s social media presence on Twitter (@DBCBirds) and Facebook. I’m sure Vera, John, and Glenn would love to hear from you on those platforms.

7) Buy (and wear) some colorful DBC apparel.

8) Take a friend, family member, or budding/blossoming romance on a bird walk.

9) Tell people about the DBC, especially if you see them out on the trails!

—Steve Constantelos, DBC Recording Secretary
Celebrate Midewin at City Winery Chicago on July 18th

The Wetlands Initiative and the National Forest Foundation, partners in the restoration effort at the U.S. Forest Service’s Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, are co-hosting “A Night for Midewin” on Thursday, July 18, from 6 pm to 8:30 pm. It will be an exciting evening to celebrate this vast habitat restoration site and well-known birding hotspot in Will County—most famous lately for hosting a vagrant Painted Bunting! The event will be held at a popular downtown venue, City Winery Chicago, and will include Midewin Pub Trivia, great raffle prizes, appetizers, and drinks. Mike Nowak from the Mike Nowak radio show will be the MC!

Tickets are $45 per person or $80 for two. All proceeds will benefit restoration work at Midewin. To register and for more details, visit www.nationalforests.org/anightformidewin.
July 2019 Field Trips

NOTE: All last-minute changes are posted on dupagebirding.org/field-trips Now is the time for birds to nest, raise their young, molt feathers, and prepare for the fall migration. There are opportunities for all types of birders to participate and enjoy the season. Participants, please remember that the weather and trail conditions can be variable. Many times biting insects are present and temperatures are high. Please dress accordingly and bring insect repellent and water. We expect everyone to enjoy birding in a safe manner. This trip list and other club information are on our DBC website at http://www.dupagebirding.org/

Friday, July 12, 6:00 pm
Know Your Neighborhood: Wayne
The 6th of 12 "Know Your Neighborhood" trips, exploring hidden gems, odd and under-birded hot spots in DuPage County, we will be visiting the newest DuPage Forest Preserve; Dunham, an active prairie and wetland restoration site. We will walk 1 mile on earthen trails that may be muddy if a rain event occurs prior to the trip, so wear proper footwear. Bring along insect repellent. We will meet at the Wayne Depot on Army Trail Rd, just west of the downtown railroad crossing. 41.950236, -88.249661 This is west of the intersection of Keil Street and Army Trail Rd
Leader: Glenn Perricone, 630-687-2921, Gperricone@dupagebirding.org

Saturday, July 13, 9:00 am
Swainson’s Hawks, Kane County (Pre-registration required)
This trip will be to look for the Swainson’s Hawks that have traditionally nested in this area. Also, we will look for grassland birds such as Western Meadowlark. Time permitting and if the Mississippi Kites have returned to their "traditional" location, we may head up to Rockford to look for the kites. Please pre-register for directions to meeting spot and/or car-pooling opportunities.
Leader: Bob Fisher 630-985-2956, bfisher928@aol.com

Saturday, July 13, 7:30 am
St. James Farm Forest Preserve, Warrenville
The July Cantigny walk is migrating to adjacent St. James Farm due. Like Cantigny, St. James was once a McCormick family property. Note: Cantigny walks are often attended by 25 or more birders! Meet in the main parking lot of St. James. Enter off Winfield Rd, just north of Butterfield.
Leader: Jeff Reiter, jreiter@wordsonbirds.com

Friday, July 12, 7:30am
McKee Marsh, Warrenville
Join another morning walk to the marsh to check out resident summer birds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Meet at the visitor parking lot on the north side of Mack Rd., located between Winfield Rd. and Rt. 59 in Warrenville. Most of our walk will be on limestone and earthen trails; wear appropriate shoes and warm clothing.
Leader: Kyle Wiktor, 708-506-5186, kwiktor@dupagebirding.org

Friday, July 19, 6:30 pm
Osprey, Fermilab
With three active Osprey nests, Fermilab is a premier breeding location for these fishing birds-of-prey in northern Illinois. Take a guided tour with a site bird monitor in order to view these nests, located in non-public areas of the laboratory. Afterwards, come grab a bite and a brew at Fermilab’s Frontier Pub.
Please pre-register for directions to the meeting location.
Leader: Glenn Perricone, 630-687-2921, Gperricone@dupagebirding.org

For additional birding opportunities check out the Illinois Birding Calendar at http://www.illinoisbirds.org/calendar-2/ 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 and Kathy Mlnek DBCFieldTrips@gmail.com
2019 Meetings

January 10
March 14
April 11
May 9

July 11
September 12
October 10
November 14