



## President's Message

Hello fellow birders. Spring keeps trying to make an appearance in my backyard as our late spring snowfalls become fewer and farther between. I have been eagerly looking out my window each morning to see what has moved in. My worldly view has changed so much in a short period of time from White-handed Gibbons and White-gorgeted Flycatcher in Thailand...



### Next Meeting

TBD

7:00 p.m. Social Time

7:30 p.m. Speaker

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

5:15 p.m. Pre-meeting dinner  
Ellyn's Tap and Grill  
940 Roosevelt Rd. Glen Ellyn

... to our local flora and fauna of Naperville.

My backyard photo is four times larger as that is where my focus is these days.

I'm seeing so much more in my yard. I'm not sure if that is because I am home staring at it that much more, or if it is because of all of the effort

I have put into turning my tiny backyard into a naturalized playground for the exhausted traveler. I like to think that it is the latter.

I have a typical small, postage stamp-sized suburban backyard but with the right plantings it has become a great stop for migrants in need of a little rest or refueling. Most recently, there have been appearances by Eastern Towhee, Brown Thrasher and White-throated Sparrows.



Others showing up regularly include Fox Sparrow, both kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Brown Creepers. A couple of these are first time visitors. They may have been here before but I was probably somewhere else.

I think that converting most of the turf in both my front yard and backyard was one of the smartest things I could have done for my yard. I've planted a lot of shorter woodland sedges as a base and sprinkled in various spring ephemerals among them. My goal in naturalizing was to get rid of my lawn. That was number one! I wanted to make sure that I was providing structure that could be used for shelter so I added shrubs. These shrubs also provide flowers for our native pollinators, and fruits for the birds and other animals in later seasons. They needed to be planted in clusters tightly packed together. A simple line of shrubs doesn't provide much protection. We already had plenty of trees which is why my lawn struggled so much. The basswood in the backyard provides plenty of seeds which is exactly what that towhee was foraging for among the sedges. I have a hackberry in the front yard which also provides plenty of seeds. Trees are a major source of food. It's not just the fruits, but also the insects that they harbor. Just ask those Brown Creepers what they have been up to.

There are some small prairie sections in my yard as well and in the fall the birds are loving the coneflower and little bluestem seeds. Diversification is the key. Even in a small yard a little of this and that goes a long way. Looking closer, even the insect diversity in my yard has increased considerably, and I have way more lightning bugs than anyone else on the block. Skip the pesticides typically used for grub control. Unless you're planning to golf on it, you don't need a perfect lawn! Most pesticides that we use are not selective, and they do way more harm than good.

Rather than doing the normal fall cleanup of gardens I chose to let plant stems and leaves accumulate in the sedges and flower beds. All of the wintering American Robins, Northern Cardinals and Dark-eyed Juncos appreciated the lack of effort on my part and the additional food resources hidden away under the layers.

Now I'm receiving the dividends for all of that thoughtful landscaping with nature in mind.

Happy Birding!

## **Annual Dues Renewal Pushed to Next January**

Annual DBC membership dues normally renewed in July will now be due next January. This effectively gives all current members an extra six months of membership and resets the time of year when dues will be up for renewal. The Board felt this was a reasonable action given that important member benefits like meetings and field trips can't be enjoyed right now. It's also a practical move and may make it easier for people to remember when their dues renew.

## **May Meeting is Canceled Along with Field Trips through June 12**

As announced, the DBC Board has decided to cancel the May meeting as well as all field trips through June 12 in order to comply with state-mandated shelter in place guidelines and protect the health and well-being of our members.

Your Board has elected to use an approach of rolling cancellations so that when the Covid-19 restrictions are finally lifted we will have field trips in place and ready for your participation. We will also be making every effort to reschedule speakers so that our club members do not miss out on these insightful presentations.

The good news is that the Illinois Spring Bird Count is still scheduled to run on May 9. Some of the areas that we typically count in will be closed unfortunately. Joe Suchecki, our county compiler, is sharing guidelines that everyone should follow in order to make this a safe experience for all that choose to participate.

Beyond count day, we hope that members will continue to make their own choices regarding birdwatching as a pastime. Please continue to use common sense when out in preserves where you might run into other birders. Be safe! We will resume regular field trips as soon as we feel that it is appropriate.

In June, the Board will take another hard look at where we are regarding the Covid-19 virus in our community. At that time, we will make an announcement regarding the July 9 club meeting as well as field trips scheduled beyond June 12.

## **Spring Bird Count—Still on for May 9**

### **Covid-19 Health and Safety Provisions to be Implemented**

The following is a letter from Joe Suchecki, DuPage County Compiler, regarding the annual Spring Bird Count (SBC).

The annual Spring Bird Count in Illinois and DuPage County will be held on Saturday, May 9. The State compilers decided to go ahead with the count this year, albeit with certain changes due to the Governor's Covid-19 Order, the need to practice social distancing and the closure of some key birding areas throughout the county. The DBC Board supports holding the count in DuPage County based on the State's recommendation and the understanding that the SBC can be conducted safely and in compliance with the Governor's order.

We know that many DuPage birders look forward to, and really enjoy, participating in the SBC every year.

Consequently, we are moving ahead with a modified count in DuPage County. We are making some necessary changes to the SBC this year due to the Covid-19 situation, the fact that several major birding areas including Fermi Lab, The Morton Arboretum, and certain forest preserves are closed, and the need to assure the health and safety of all participants. The recommendations indicated below will help protect all participants while still allowing birders to get out and enjoy counting birds during the peak of spring migration.

Anyone who has participated in a past SBC in DuPage should have received an email from me about the count, including your Area assignment and information on the Captain for your area. The Captain will contact you about your specific count area for May 9. If you have not participated before or have not received an email and want to participate in the SBC this year, please contact me at [DuPageSBC@gmail.com](mailto:DuPageSBC@gmail.com).

For this year, the State has added an alternative participation option that allows and encourages people to conduct counts from their yards/neighborhoods. We have added a new "line" item to the data form, species list, and final species list for "miles walked and hours spent birding from House/Nearby." The State will use the data as an interesting comparison for future years. This option is available as long as you live in DuPage County. Let your Captain know if you would like to participate in this alternate SBC activity. Or, if you don't have an Area assignment, you can contact me directly.

**The following are important changes and restrictions that should be followed by all participants to ensure the safety of all involved as well as compliance with current Covid-19 state and local directives.**

1. Obviously, your participation is totally voluntary. If you do not feel comfortable participating this year, DON'T. This year, SAFETY is our most important consideration. Staying safe and keeping others safe should be a priority of all while counting birds this year.
2. All participants should maintain social distancing standards. For the count, this means that there should be no large groups of birders assigned to any area. I am asking Area Captains to limit birding parties to **no more than two people per area at one time**. When out birding, everyone should maintain the 6-foot distance requirement as much as possible and should also wear facial coverings while birding in areas where the 6-ft distance requirement with others might not be met (e.g., busy trails). If two birders are covering an area and do not reside together, they should drive separate cars to all birding locations.
3. Some natural areas, forest preserves, and birding locations are closed (for example, The Morton Arboretum, Willowbrook Forest Preserve, Fermi Lab). Everyone needs to respect the closures. You should not enter or bird in any closed areas. Also, do not enter any forest preserve before it is officially open or remain in forest preserves after sunset. Birders who are District Natural Resource volunteers should not use their keys to open any parking lots that are closed.
4. All Forest Preserve restrooms and many public restrooms are closed. Plan your birding activity accordingly.

5. Avoid touching communal surfaces. Wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizers.

By adhering to the above recommendations and restrictions, we believe that we can go ahead with the SBC in DuPage County in a safe manner and still get out and do some fun birding. Certainly, the results will be different this year compared to previous years. There always will be an asterisk associated with the 2020 SBC data, but I am sure that we all will remember what it was like to bird during the year of the 2020 Covid-19 epidemic.

If anyone has any questions about the SBC, please do not hesitate to contact me at [DuPageSBC@gmail.com](mailto:DuPageSBC@gmail.com). Thanks for your consideration and participation.

## **New DBC Education Channel Hits a Home Run**

As of this newsletter's publication, more than 100 people have subscribed to the DBC Education Channel, launched less than a month ago. The first four videos have been viewed more than 1,000 times! This new resource is a great way to sharpen your bird identification skills while we shelter in place. Going forward, these mini-tutorials will be available any time you need a refresher! Our repository now contains mini-tutorials on five topics:

- Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes
- Early Flycatchers (Least, Pewee, Phoebe)
- Female Yellow Warblers (Yellow, Hooded, Wilson's)
- Bird Topography
- Spotted Thrushes

Club President Denis Kania stresses that we're in this for the long haul, and our commitment is to build a robust library of informational videos. In fact, Denis and several others have teed up more than two dozen tutorials that they are busy developing. Every Wednesday for the near future, we will release a new video. Coming soon are tutorials on the following topics:

- Separating Chipping, Clay-colored and Brewer's Sparrows
- Pine Warbler vs. Yellow-Throated Vireo
- Comparing Female Connecticut and Mourning Warblers
- Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers

If YOU have topics you'd like to see covered, please contact Denis at [dkania@dupagebirding.org](mailto:dkania@dupagebirding.org). In the meantime, join the fun--visit the DBC Education Channel today at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEilyuewO86Cds5CoA7-GcQ>

## **Outreach Finds a Leader**

DBC Director Donna Kubik has agreed to take on the additional role of Outreach Coordinator, a committee post that helps the club fulfill its mission to serve the community through research and education, creating good birding opportunities, and sharing knowledge with others—“Birding with a Purpose.”

While Donna will take the lead, she still needs a team of additional volunteers to respond to requests from the community to share our birding knowledge. This might include classroom visits to talk about birds, leading a field trip for a special group, or community activities. Outreach also represents the club at special events, such as the Gull Frolic, Wild Things, and Forest Preserve events.

If you have a few extra hours, consider joining the Outreach team. We anticipate just a few Outreach activities in 2020, most in the last half of the year. To learn more, contact [dkubik@dupagebirding.org](mailto:dkubik@dupagebirding.org)

## **Welcome, New Members!**

Lindsay Vacek, Hinsdale

Karin Mueller, Naperville

Pat Stare, Roselle

Dawn Pittman, Lisle

Vanessa Baie, Chicago

Billy Harding, Willowbrook



# DuPage Birding Club

## 2020 DBC Executive Committee Members

President, Denis Kania, [dkania@dupagebirding.org](mailto:dkania@dupagebirding.org)

Vice President, Stephen Constantelos,  
[sconstantelos@dupagebirding.org](mailto:sconstantelos@dupagebirding.org)

Treasurer, John Hebert, [jhebert@dupagebirding.org](mailto:jhebert@dupagebirding.org)

Recording Secretary, Andrea Duffy, [aduffy@dupagebirding.org](mailto:aduffy@dupagebirding.org)

Corresponding Secretary, Diann Bilderback,  
[dbilderback@dupagebirding.org](mailto:dbilderback@dupagebirding.org)

Kate Hopkins, Director, [khopkins@dupagebirding.org](mailto:khopkins@dupagebirding.org)

Natalie McFaul, Director, [nmcfaul@dupagebirding.org](mailto:nmcfaul@dupagebirding.org)

Donna Kubik, [dkubik@dupagebirding.org](mailto:dkubik@dupagebirding.org)

## 2020 DBC Committee Chairs

Outreach/Youth Education: Donna Kubik

Bird Conservation Network Reps: Glenn Gabanski,  
Tom Mulcahy, Glenn Perricone

Forest Preserve Liaison: Pat Eggleston

Grants and Donations: Vera Miller

Spring Count Coordinator: Joe Suchecki

Christmas Count Coordinator: Jeff Chapman

Stewardship: Diann Bilderback

Field Trips: Kathy Mineck and Bonnie Graham

Webmaster: Nancy Allured

Membership Directory: Bob Spitzer

Drummings Newsletter: Jeff Smith

Email Distribution: Bob Fisher

Twitter: Vera Miller

Facebook: Glenn Perricone and John Cebula

Flickr: Urs Geiser

Hospitality: Geralyn Hoffman

Audio-Visual Coordinator: Kate Hopkins

DBC Apparel: Steve Constantelos

Lending Library: Jeff Smith

## 2020 Meetings

January 9

March **cancelled**

April **cancelled**

May **cancelled**

July 9

September 10

October 15

November 12