

Drummings November 2024

President's Letter



Next Meeting

November 14, 2024

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

Faith Lutheran Church
41 N. Park Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Premeeting Dinner

5:30 p.m.
Ellyn's Tap and Grill
940 Roosevelt Rd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Hello, fellow birders! I'm going to try something a little different in this letter. Like it or not, election season is upon us, and as many of you know, I started out my professional career in government. In fact, I have degrees in both political science and history, with those subjects being as near and dear to my heart as birds are—although the birds usually give me the most joy.

If you're planning on voting in DuPage County this November, you'll come across a referendum for the DuPage Forest Preserve District. DBC is a non-political organization, so I cannot endorse the referendum one way or another. With that said, I am hoping to provide some information on the reasons behind the referendum to you. As someone who studied political science, I know all too well that voters tend to overlook most referendums as they can be hard to understand.

As birders, the Forest Preserves in DuPage County are near and dear to our hearts. I would imagine that almost all members visit them during the year, especially in the spring and fall. Covid-19 brought increased visitation to the forest preserves and with that came additional strain on the preserves. Declining populations across DuPage County and Illinois as a whole have led to a decrease in the volume of property taxes citizens pay to the District. These are the main factors driving the District to ask for additional resources to continue their work of conservation, education programming, and restoration projects.

Since the last voter-approved referendum, the Forest Preserve District has added hundreds of additional acres of property and dozens of miles of trail, and it has embarked on numerous projects to restore our forests, rivers, and streams. All of this work costs a lot of money. If the property tax levy remains the same, the District will be forced to make cutbacks, which will inevitably diminish their ability to continue their work.

Unlike the local municipalities we reside in, the Forest Preserve District doesn't have access to additional sources of revenue such as sales tax, income tax, or utility taxes. The District is thus reliant on property taxes to sustain their budgets. Unlike many government entities, some of which I've worked with, the District has maintained proper financial transparency, so citizens can keep track of where and how their money is being spent. The proposed referendum is asking citizens of DuPage County to pay an estimated \$11.67 more per year for every \$100,000 of your property value.

Below are additional resources for you to conduct your own research on this important referendum.

- <https://www.dupageforest.org/referendum2024>
- <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2024/09/27/dupage-county-forest-preserve-district-naperville-property-tax/>

Like it or not, politics is a part of all of our lives. It affects what we can do and how we can live our lives. It also impacts birds. I believe that being a good birder involves being a good steward of the environment and doing what is right for the well-being of birds.

I wish you all the best as we enter the end of this election season and the beginning of our winter birding season.

Robert Perez
President, DuPage Birding Club
robertperez787@gmail.com

November 14 Meeting, In-Person and Via Zoom: A Close Look at Gull Identification

Amar Ayyash, Gull Identification Expert and Author of *The Gull Guide*

DBC is pleased to welcome Amar Ayyash as our November speaker. Amar is both an expert on the gulls of North America and an evangelist for "gull recreation." He coordinates the Illinois Ornithological Society's Annual Gull Frolic on Lake Michigan, hosts the popular website anythinglarus.com, and administers the North American Gulls Facebook group.

Amar is often found speaking at birding events and leading field trips throughout the continent. Much of his free time is dedicated to traveling the world to photograph and study gulls. Amar has published a number of papers and articles on gull identification, distribution, and molt. He is the author of the upcoming book, *The Gull Guide* (October 2024).



Amar's presentation will focus on highlighting key identification field marks for separating our most common gull species. He will touch on often-ignored topics in gull-study such as the aging process, plumage, and molt. Gull identification is often considered the bane of birders' existence. *This is the meeting to come to if you want to learn more about the diverse world of gulls.*

We hope that you can join us for this hybrid meeting on Thursday, November 14, at 7:00 p.m. Amar will be speaking to us in person and will have copies of his new book available for purchase. To register for the virtual meeting, click [here](#).

When: Thursday, November 14th from 7:00-9:00pm

Where: Faith Lutheran Church (41 N Park Blvd, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137)

Doors open at 6:30pm.

Please join us for a premeeting dinner at Ellyn's Tap and Grill (940 Roosevelt Rd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137) from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Come mingle with your fellow birders before the official meeting!

In Case You Missed It: Red-headed Woodpeckers and the Importance of Oak Systems

In October, we heard from Adrianna Yoder, a Ph.D. student at the University of Missouri in St. Louis, who has been studying Red-headed Woodpeckers and their use of tree cavities and the role of acorns in their overwintering behavior in northeastern Illinois. Addy started her ongoing research at DePaul University two years ago. For this research, she was awarded an Illinois Ornithological Society grant funded by the DuPage Birding Club in Spring 2023. Her fascinating project led to many questions from the DBC audience. For the full presentation, click here: <https://youtu.be/u2IgXbjtTRY>

DBC Volunteer Luncheon November 16 at St. James Farm

If you are one of the more than two dozen volunteers who have given of their time and talents to the DBC in the last year, please plan to celebrate your contribution at the DBC Volunteer Luncheon on November 16 at St. James Farm. The event will begin at 10:00 a.m. with a short birding walk followed by a luncheon at 11:30 a.m.

The event is for everyone who has volunteered in any capacity on behalf of the club in the last year. This includes Board Members, Committee members, field trip leaders, outreach volunteers, hospitality teams, newsletter and website contributors, and any others who have helped out in the past year. This is also a great time to socialize with fellow members and possibly win a prize!

Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the St James parking lot off Winfield Rd. for the walk. Lunch will be served at the St. James indoor riding arena meeting space at 11:30 a.m. located in the far- right yellow building when looking from the parking lot (the building where the restrooms are located). If you prefer, you may join us just for the luncheon at 11:30 a.m. ([Link to St. James Farm](#))

Please let us know you will be attending by emailing Natalie McFaul at natcatcher7@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE: Christmas Bird Count on December 14

Join us again for the annual Fermi Christmas Bird Count on December 14. This is your chance to contribute to an important community science opportunity. Data collected provides invaluable insights into winter bird populations plus it's a great opportunity to connect with fellow birders. If you participated last year, you're already on the list and will be contacted in early December regarding your counting areas. If it's been a few years, or you are new to the count and would like to participate, please contact the compiler, Jeff Chapman, at jeffchapman948@gmail.com. Remember you'll be grouped with

a team so no need to be an expert; there will be plenty of them on your team! This year's countdown dinner is TBD at this point.

2025 Slate of Officers

Members will elect a new slate of officers at the November 14 meeting.

President: Thelma Hulka

Thelma has been a member of DBC for the last 20 years or so. She primarily joined to go on field trips and learn more about birds. She's had a long-time interest in birds, dating back to her grammar school days. Since retiring from nursing in 2019, Thelma has dedicated more of her time to birding and hopes to add more to the club by serving on the Board. Thelma has served as Vice President of DBC for the past half year.

Vice President: OPEN

This is a most critical role to ensure the club's continuity as an organization. The VP arranges for interesting speakers at club meetings and becomes President the following year. You don't need to be an expert birder! Please consider volunteering.

Treasurer: Rich Gaul

Rich first became interested in birds during his youth in rural Illinois. He earned the Bird Watching merit badge as a Boy Scout. While serious birding decreased as other interests grew, he still enjoyed seeing new birds (including nearly driving off the interstate in West Virginia the first time he saw a Baltimore Oriole). One of those interests was accounting and he's been a licensed CPA in Illinois for over 35 years. He recently got back into birding and is trying to combine it with his love of photography.

Corresponding Secretary: Donnalyn Quint

I became interested in birds in the late 1990's. Various factors led to my interest in birds such as visits to my grandfather (who did mostly bird taxidermy), colleagues at work who discussed birds, and my husband, who would always tell me about unusual birds he saw. Taking that interest to the next level, I enrolled in an ornithology class at the Morton Arboretum. Some of the classes were out in the field and I was lucky to be out there in various seasons looking for birds. I joined DBC in 2003. Their combination of educational meetings, field trips, and friendly birders drew me in. I served on the Board previously as Recording Secretary and I have served on the Outreach Committee. I am looking forward to learning how to be the Corresponding Secretary for 2025.

Recording Secretary: Mark Freeburg

Mark has always enjoyed being outdoors. While working as a mailcarrier for 34 years, he became interested in all the birds that appeared while walking his route. A little over seven years ago, he joined a DuPage County Forest Preserve Bird Walk during spring migration. After that eye-opening experience, he was on a solid path toward being a fledgling birder. He joined the DBC shortly after and now leads bird walks.

Director: Rob Thomas

Rob Thomas is a lifelong birder ever since age 8 or so when his dad would boost him up a tree with a nest in it so Rob could report what was in the nest. He had a burst of birding when his parents moved

from Berwyn to Westchester between his Freshman and Sophomore years. Because of the move, he didn't have any friends so he spent his spare time in nearby Brezina Woods with a beginner Golden Bird Book. He joined DBC around 1992 at Hal Cohen's invitation (Hal was teaching birding ID classes at COD). Karen and Bob Fisher were very helpful at honing his birding skills. Karen sneakily recruited him to take over scheduling field trips. Mike Marlow and Rob are proud of being the first to schedule week-day trips and trips to Magee Marsh as well as to Michigan to see the Kirkland's Warbler. Rob is also a winter member of five birding clubs in Southern California so he can go on their field trips. Rob says that they are all quite good, but DBC is the best! Rob is proud to serve on the Board once again and give something back.

Director: Steve Mineck

Steve Mineck's interest in all things outdoors started at an early age with family camping trips. He was an avid collector of the Bachman Birds of the World models (does anyone remember those?), but his primary interest at that time was more towards six-legged creatures. His real interest in birding began in 1979 in Miami when he and Kathy were awakened in the wee hours every night by a bird singing at the moon, which after much deliberation and the purchase of binos and bird books, it was determined to be the ubiquitous mockingbird. Their interest in birding evolved with a move to Chicago and since that time he has volunteered with the Chicago Bird Collision Monitors downtown, has served on city park cleanup teams along Lake Michigan, and is quite active on a national level with the NRDC. His birding expertise is a work in progress but given his recent retirement, the outlook is positive for continuous improvement on that front.

Director: Jim Mateski

I've been a member of DBC for almost 12 years. Although I grew up in DuPage, I didn't start birding until I was in Utah working at Hill Air Force Base, where I was a member of the Wasatch Audubon. Outside of birding, I volunteer at the Illinois Aviation Museum using my experience as a USAF jet and helicopter pilot. I am also a member of a local fishing club.

If you would like to volunteer for one of these positions or want more information, please email Robert at robertperez787@gmail.com. DBC cannot function without the help of volunteers serving in leadership positions. Your organization needs you!

Annual Membership Renewal Time

It's time to renew your dues for next year! Your annual membership dues for 2025 are due by December 31, 2025. Dues remain \$20 for individuals, \$30 for families and \$10 for students. Please note that any new member joining on or after September 1 is automatically registered for the following year. Your dues fund our annual operations and support a broad range of activities, including field trips, interesting speakers, research grants, and proactive community outreach. Help us stay strong! Your 2025 dues may now be paid in any of the following ways:

1. On-line through our website using PayPal or credit card, at this link:

<https://dupagebirding.org/renew/>

2. By mailing a check to: DuPage Birding Club P.O. Box 3381 Glen Ellyn, IL 60138
3. Giving cash or a check in person to a board member Thank you for your support and membership.

Words on Birds Gives Tips on How to Be a Better Birder

DBC's very own Jeff Reiter, columnist for the *Daily Herald* (and DBC past president), covers Chicagoland birding from many angles in his monthly column *Words on Birds*. This month's column is especially helpful for any of you working on getting your birding chops up. From studying the birds in your backyard and connecting with DBC and other local birding organizations to tapping into the many digital and print resources, this column is packed with practical advice to improve your birding skills and appreciation for our avian friends. Read the full story [here](#).

November 2024 Field Trips

This is the month where migration wraps up and early winter birds are seen.

There are opportunities for all types of birders to participate and enjoy. As always, non-members are welcome. There are no fees for birding trips.

Please remember that the weather can be variable, so dress accordingly. We expect everyone to enjoy birding in a safe manner by being careful and prudent. Field trip information is also found at: www.dupagebirding.org.

Participants are welcome to contact the leader if they have any questions. Our field trip leaders can help you find the trip's starting location if you need additional directions.

NOTE: For trips with a participant limit, registration with the trip leader is required. In those cases, you are NOT registered until you receive a confirmation from the trip leader.

Trips will observe a few guidelines to ensure that birding is safe and comfortable for all:

- Anyone not feeling well should stay home.
- Attendees of DBC field trips and other events under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- All field trip attendees should be aware of and follow the <https://dupagebirding.org/aba-code-of-ethics/>

NOTE: When possible last-minute changes are posted on www.dupagebirding.org/field-trips.

Thursday, November 7, 8:00 am – 10:00 am, Centennial Trail, Lemont

Pre-registration with the leader is required, limit 15 participants.

On this field trip our main target will be looking for waterfowl and fall and early winter residents. We will meet in the gravel parking lot at the end of Canal Bank Road. Coming off of Lemont Road, this turnoff is called Old Lemont Road, and is unmarked, so turn at this pin: 41,683840, -88.003541. Google Map link. Please call if you have any problems with directions.

Leader: Mark Freeburg, freebs59@sbcglobal.net or call or text 630-661-1521

Sunday, November 10, 8:00 am – 10:30 am, Danada Forest Preserve (west side), Wheaton

Pre-registration with the leader is required, limit 15 participants.

On this trip we will be exploring the western part of Danada Forest Preserve searching for passerine migrants such as some of the more uncommon sparrows that can be found in DuPage County. We will also check several different ponds to look for migrant waterfowl. Please meet on the west side of the Forest Preserve HQ parking lot at 8am.

Leader: Henry Meade, henrymm21@icloud.com

Friday, November 15, 7:30 am – 10:30 am, McKee Marsh, Warrenville

Registration not required.

Join us on another walk around one of DuPage County's premier birding hotspots. We will be looking for wintering species and late fall migrants. The walk will be approximately 3 miles on limestone & earthen trails. Meet at the visitor parking lot on the north side of Mack Rd. between Winfield Rd. & Route 59.

Leader: Kyle Wiktor, cell: 708-506-5186

Sunday, November 17, 8:00 am – 10:00 am, Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve, Hampshire

Pre-registration is preferred, limit 20 participants.

Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve is fast becoming one of the most promising birding sites in Kane County. Formerly farmland, Muirhead has undergone quite a transformation in the past few years, hosting a wide range of grassland birds. Winter sparrows, waterfowl, as well as Pipits, Longspurs, and Snow Buntings will be the main targets of this trip. If you haven't been to Muirhead yet, this is a great opportunity to do so. New birders are always welcome to join. The parking lot entrance is on Bahr Road, off Plank Road. Please note that we may trek through tall grass, so dress appropriately. L

Leader: Robert Perez, robertperez787@gmail.com (text or call with any questions regarding directions on the day of: 630-724-7534)

Sunday, November 24, 8:00 am – noon, Southeast DuPage and Southwest Cook Waterfowl Search

Pre-registration with the leader is required, limit 20 participants.

We'll look for waterfowl, gulls, and others at the Centennial Trail Borrow Pit and ponds, Lemont Quarries, and Saganashkee Slough. Depending on conditions and sightings, other stops may include Sag Quarries, Long John Slough, and Maple Lake. Please bring a scope if you have one, though the leader will have a scope for everyone to share. Meet at the Lemont Rd. parking lot of Waterfall Glen (at the portable toilet). We will then caravan to the Borrow Pit. The trip will be canceled if waterfowl are scarce or the weather is poor. Directions to Waterfall Glen: drive south on Lemont Rd., past I-55 to 101st St, and turn left at the stoplight into the parking lot. (Google Maps Waterfall Glen Parking Lot #3.)

Leader: Vicky Sroczynski, VSroczynski@comcast.net

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday & Saturday, November 15 & 16, Nygren Wetland Preserve, Rockton, IL.

This trip is full.

Additional birding opportunities:

Cantigny Park in Wheaton posts Accessible Birding walks and related events several months in advance on the calendar pages of [Events | Cantigny](#). For that reason, the events are often at capacity by the time DBC publishes its monthly calendar. To ensure your spot on a Cantigny walk, check the park's website and follow the sign-up instructions.

Area Forest Preserves may have birding opportunities. Check out the DuPage and Cook County forest preserves: <https://www.dupageforest.org/calendar-of-events>, www.fpdcc.com/events.

Questions/Comments: Email us if you have questions, would like to lead a trip, or have an idea for a trip. Leaders do not have to be birding experts, just familiar with the location.

Field Trip Coordinators:

Sherry Courtney, sherrycourtney10@gmail.com

Karen Warner, k_warner@comcast.net

Welcome, New Members!

Lynn and Mark Berndt

Rose and Ted Fisk

Richard Hardy

Laurie Goodey and Lance Royce

Steve Leopoldo and Oleaya Ignatenko

Emma Robinson

Lombard

Naperville

Glen Ellyn

Oak Park

Downers Grove

Westmont

DBC's Fall '24 Photo Contest Runs Through November 30

The DBC is looking for pictures of birds taken between September 1, 2024, and November 30, 2024. All photos are welcome: amateur, funny, imperfect, high-quality. The "story behind the shot" is taken into account when judging. The judges want this to be a fun contest; no categories have been predefined for award winners so every entry has a chance to win!

Note: the judges ask that you limit the number of photos entered to five or less. They usually do not give out more than one award to the same author if they submit multiple images.

If you would like to look at past DBC Photo Contest winners [CLICK HERE](#).

The contest is open to DBC members only. Photos may be taken anywhere (not just DuPage/Illinois). If a picture includes people, the submitter must have permission from those people to publish their image on the DBC website. Photographs will be judged by a small team of DBC members.

There are two ways to enter your bird photographs:

1. If you have a Google Account (you have one if you use Gmail) click the link below:

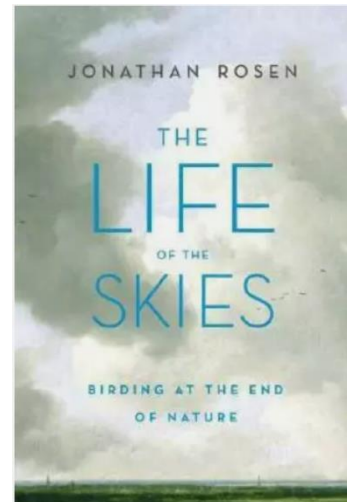
[DBC Photo Contest Entry Form](#)

2. If you do not have a Google Account, email your image as an email attachment to dupagebirdingclub@gmail.com. In the body of your email include:
 - a) Your name.
 - b) The species of the bird(s).
 - c) Where the picture was taken.
 - d) A Catchy Caption – Enter a caption or title you would like displayed with your pictures. (Optional)
 - e) Narrative – Tell us about your picture – what’s the story behind the shot? Include any information the judges might need to fully appreciate your shot.

Good luck! Winners will be announced in the January 2025 Drumming.

DBC Book Club Meets December 3

Attention, readers! The DBC Book Club will next be reading *Life of the Skies* by noted author Jonathan Rosen. Described as part birding history, part travelogue, and part exploration of man’s relationship to nature, this much-acclaimed book is sure to delight, stimulate your thinking, and give you much to ponder. Join fellow DBC members on Tuesday evening, December 3, to share some holiday cheer and talk about the book. For details on the meeting, contact Mike Warner at mwarner2543@gmail.com.



News from the Forest Preserve

The proposed pedestrian bridge over Rt. 83 in Cricket Creek Forest Preserve is now in Phase 2 design with construction beginning the winter of 2025 and completion anticipated for 2026. This bridge will improve nonmotorized access across Rt. 83. It will be a 10-foot-wide path with 3-foot grass connecting residents to Berens Park and the Salt Creek Greenway. Funding sources included the City of Elmhurst with grant funding from state and federal sources.



2024 Meeting Schedule

January 11 July 11
March 14 September 12
April 11 October 10
May 9 November 14

2024 DBC Executive Committee Members

President: Robert Perez
Vice President: Thelma Hulka
Treasurer: Jane Barnett
Recording Secretary: Mark Freeburg
Corresponding Secretary: Natalie McFaul
Director: Rob Thomas
Director: Steve Mineck
Director: Pamela Martyn-Nemeth

2024 Committee Chairs

Audio-Visual Coordinator: **OPEN**
Bird Conservation Network: Glenn Gabanski, Donna Kubik, Diann Bilderback, Glenn Perricone
Christmas Count Coordinator: Jeff Chapman
Communications: Diann Bilderback, Steve Constantelos
DBC Apparel: Steve Constantelos
DBC Book Club: Mike Warner
Drummings Newsletter: Diann Bilderback
Email Distribution: Bob Fisher
Facebook: John Cebula
Field Trips: Karen Warner, Sherry Courtney

Flickr: Urs Geiser
Forest Preserve Liaison: Dennis Streicher
Grants and Donations: Vera Miller
Hospitality: Bonnie Graham
Instagram: Henry Meade
Lending Library: Jeff Smith
Membership Directory: Susan Kaley
Outreach/Youth Education: **OPEN**
Spring Count Coordinator: Joe Suchecki
Twitter: Vera Miller
Webmasters: Barb Dougan, Nancy Allured
YouTube Ed Channel: Denis Kania, Steve Constantelos