

Drummings January 2025

President's Letter



Next Meeting

January 9, 2024

Via Zoom

Well, it's a new year, and I'm taking on a new role in DBC—not without a little bit of anxiety. I'm Thelma Hulka and I've been a member of the Club for probably 20 years or so. I'm excited about this new challenge and look forward to a year of learning and experiencing more.

December is not usually a big birding month for me. I don't do cold. But I did participate in the Christmas Bird Count this year, and while our numbers were down somewhat, we had a few more unusual birds to list. And it was a good time at the dinner afterwards compiling the totals. I'm already looking forward to the Spring Count—my favorite day of the year.

I also hope that I'll have the opportunity to get to know more of you on a face-to-face basis. Just keep in mind that I'm horrible at names and it will take a lot of practice to get it straight. Hey, that's the same challenge as learning birds. I hope to see you on field trips and at meetings so I'll have practice time. Feel free to email me if you have questions or concerns. See you on January 9!

Warm regards,
Thelma Hulka, President
scubabird@gmail.com

Happy 40th Birthday to DBC!

It's a milestone year for the DuPage Birding Club! On January 14, the Club will have been in existence for 40 years! That's pretty impressive longevity for an all-volunteer organization whose members belong simply (and renew their membership each year) because they love watching, hearing, and learning about birds! Kudos to the 21 founding members who saw a need and had a vision, and kudos to the 40 leadership teams who have created programs, field trips and other activities that have kept us interested.

We offer a fond remembrance for those who have passed away or moved to other locales over the years and left the membership roster, and a special shoutout to founding members who continue to be members of the Club:

Marscha Chenoweth
Hal Cohen
Nancy Culp
Denis Kania

Mike Madsen
Pat Newman
Dennis Streicher
Dick Young
Jody and Jerry Zamirowski

January 9, 2025, Meeting Via Zoom:

Dr. Gary Sullivan, Senior Ecologist, and Peter Goodspeed, Restoration Program Director, Sue and Wes Dixon Waterfowl Refuge

The DuPage Birding Club is honored to host Dr. Gary Sullivan and Peter Goodspeed from the Sue and Wes Dixon Waterfowl Refuge as our first speakers in 2025. Even if you haven't had the chance to visit Dixon Waterfowl Refuge, you won't want to miss this presentation! In 2001, The Wetlands Initiative (TWI) began restoring Hennepin & Hopper Lakes in north-central Illinois along the Illinois River, transforming it from drained farmland back to high-quality native ecosystems.

Today, nearly 25 years later, the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge is a 3,000-plus-acre natural treasure containing more than a dozen rare, highly diverse habitat types. The Refuge is designated as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, and its large trail system is open to the public 365 days a year. Named for the hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl that visit the lakes in spring and fall, the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge is a popular birding destination with a checklist of 280 species.

Dr. Gary Sullivan has been Senior Ecologist at TWI since 2001, primarily responsible for designing and managing the implementation of habitat restorations at the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, and the Calumet region across Chicago's Southeast Side and Northwest Indiana. Dr.



Sullivan has worked on aquatic and wetland ecosystems in New York, California, Oregon, and Illinois since 1988. With Dr. Sullivan retiring in early 2025, Peter Goodspeed recently joined TWI as their incoming Restoration Program Director after serving as Director of Natural Resources with the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. Peter and Dr. Sullivan will present on the history and process of ecological restoration at the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge, more-recent land additions and conservation projects at the site, and the rich biodiversity it supports.

The meeting will be held via Zoom. To register for the virtual meeting, click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlvcOmrqTguHd3ltQq-UzRwAtxdrb7yXG-u#/registration>

DBC Sponsors Annual Gull Frolic February 16

DuPage Birding Club will sponsor the 23rd annual Gull Frolic on February 16, 9:30 a.m., at Winthrop Harbor. The marina has been a regular wintering site for a variety of gull species and wintering ducks. Sponsored by the Illinois Ornithological Society (IOS), the Gull Frolic is a great place to hone your gull identification skills with the help of seasoned gull experts like Amar Ayyash by your side. Amar will also speak on the finer points of gull identification in a special session. Admission includes lunch. Register

early because the event typically sells out in early February: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/23rd-ios-gull-frolic-2025-tickets-1018522276547>

IMPORTANT: Renew Your DBC Membership Now!

In case the “holiday” put you behind on renewing your membership in the Club, there’s still time. **Your annual membership dues for 2025 were 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.

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Results for the 49th Fermi-Batavia Circle

On December 14, 2024, 85 birders and 2 feeder watchers counted every bird they could see and hear within the 15-mile circle during the 49th Fermi-Batavia CBC. Seventy-nine species were observed in the count, below our 10-year average. We had high counts for Ring-necked Duck (50) and Lesser Scaup (7).

Everyone gathered for dinner and cheered the exciting countdown “reveal” of the results led by compiler Jeff Chapman. Thank you to all the area captains and counters in making this year another successful count!



2024 Fermilab-Batavia Christmas Bird Count Results

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Cackling Goose | 41 | Northern Flicker |
| 10,554 | Canada Goose | 11 | American Kestrel |
| 2 | Wood Duck | 1 | Merlin |
| 6 | Gadwall | 2 | Northern Shrike |
| 3,756 | Mallard | 197 | Blue Jay |
| 26 | American Black Duck | 78 | American Crow |
| 1 | Northern Pintail | 370 | Black-capped Chickadee |
| 3 | Canvasback | 4 | Tufted Titmouse |
| 1 | Redhead | 29 | Horned Lark |
| 7 | Lesser Scaup – HIGH COUNT | 7 | Golden-crowned Kinglet |
| 50 | Ring-necked Duck – HIGH COUNT | 5 | Red-breasted Nuthatch |
| 101 | Common Goldeneye | 226 | White-breasted Nuthatch |
| 3 | Bufflehead – TIED RECORD HIGH | 37 | Brown Creeper |
| 4 | Hooded Merganser | 5 | Winter Wren |
| 24 | Common Merganser | 10 | Carolina Wren – TIED RECORD HIGH |
| 4 | Ruddy Duck | 2,160 | European Starling |
| 1 | Ring-necked Pheasant | 57 | Eastern Bluebird |
| 3 | Wild Turkey | 2 | Hermit Thrush |
| 271 | Rock Pigeon | 1,223 | American Robin |
| 803 | Mourning Dove | 36 | Cedar Waxwing |
| 2 | Killdeer | 1,013 | House Sparrow |
| 4 | American Coot | 283 | House Finch |
| 35 | Ring-billed Gull | 20 | Purple Finch |
| 31 | Herring Gull | 1 | Pine Siskin |
| 1 | Glaucous Gull – TIED HIGH COUNT | 317 | American Goldfinch |
| 26 | Great Blue Heron | 540 | American Tree Sparrow |
| 9 | Northern Harrier | 1 | Field Sparrow |
| 2 | Sharp-shinned Hawk | 16 | Fox Sparrow |
| 17 | Cooper's Hawk | 898 | Dark-eyed Junco |
| 19 | Bald Eagle | 20 | White-crowned Sparrow |
| 91 | Red-tailed Hawk | 132 | White-throated Sparrow |
| 4 | Eastern Screech-owl | 40 | Song Sparrow |
| 10 | Great Horned Owl | 7 | Swamp Sparrow |
| 3 | Barred Owl | 19 | Red-winged Blackbird |
| 2 | Long-eared Owl | 8 | Yellow-rumped Warbler |
| 2 | Short-eared Owl | 509 | Northern Cardinal |
| 13 | Belted Kingfisher | | |
| 2 | Red-headed Woodpecker | | |
| 3 | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | | |
| 281 | Red-bellied Woodpecker | | |

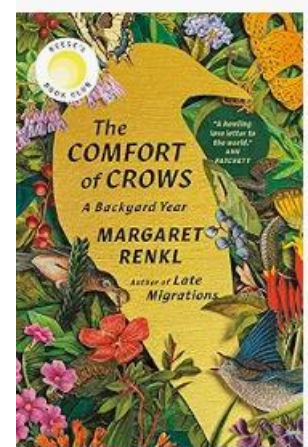
| | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 229 | Downy Woodpecker | | |
| 76 | Hairy Woodpecker | | |
| 3 | Pileated Woodpecker – TIED HIGH COUNT | | |

Welcome, New Members!

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Scott Harris | Western Springs |
| Abid Mohammad and Rakshi Rais | Aurora |
| Jean Ruth | Elmhurst |
| Lauren and Robert Vacek | Hinsdale |

The Comfort of Crows is DBC Book Club's Next Read

Join fellow DBC members on Tuesday evening, March 11, to share insights from *The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year*. Written by Margaret Renkl, the book's 52 chapters follow the creatures and plants in the author's backyard over the course of a year. Reviewers call it "a luminous book" that celebrates the natural world. Each chapter is beautifully illustrated with original color artwork. For details on the meeting, contact Mike Warner at mwarner2543@gmail.com.



January 2025 Field Trips

Happy New Year!

Although overall there are fewer birds around in the winter months, it is still fun to go out and see what we can find. Waterfowl such as mergansers, goldeneye, Bufflehead, swans, and others that winter here may be found in some of the unfrozen lakes or rivers. We also may see raptors, winter songbirds and some of the northern boreal forest birds such as crossbills, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskins. So, why not join us for a January field trip?

We would also like to give a **BIG THANKS** to all the field trip leaders who volunteer their time, even in the winter.

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.

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

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/>

Wednesday, January 1, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Annual New Year's Day Birding at the Morton Arboretum, Lisle

There is no limit to the number of participants, but please email us to let us know you are coming and for any updates.

The bird club has a tradition of New Year's Day birding, so come one, come all to the Morton Arboretum to start the new year right! We will gather at parking lot P13, Big Rock on the east side, <https://mortonarb.org/visit-the-arboretum/maps-guides/>. We will walk about two miles on mulched paths. Non-members (aka, guests) are not able to enter the Arb until 9:00 am, so we will start gathering at 9:00 am and begin birding at about 9:15. Non-members will need to pay an entrance fee. If you want to follow us in and pay the guest fee of \$5.00, please let us know when you email. Here is a link for reserving an entry pass: <https://buy.acmeticketing.com/events/480/list>

Leader: Karen and Mike Warner, mwarner2543@gmail.com

Saturday, January 4, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Fermilab, Warrenville

Pre-registration is required, limit 10 participants.

Please note that Fermilab is a government research facility and has strict access requirements: All participants aged 18 and over must have a REAL-ID compliant state ID or passport to enter the site. When on site, participants must remain in public areas at all times and leave the same way they came in. When arriving at Fermilab, present your ID and let the security guard know you are here for bird watching. Full details on public access to Fermilab can be found [HERE](#).

We will meet at the 'Red Barn Area' located at the end of Sauk Cir [Google Map Link](#) (If needed, Fermilab security can provide a site map and directions to this area when you arrive) for a short trip through the Sparrow Hedge before heading to a different part of the lab to look for winter resident Short-eared Owls and other raptors which are typically active in this area around sunset. The trip leader will provide registered participants with more detailed information closer to the date of the trip.

Leader: William Pixler, pillwixler@gmail.com

Thursday, January 9, 4:10 pm – 5:00 pm, Springbrook Prairie, Naperville

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

Join Joe Suchecki at Springbrook Prairie in Naperville to look for Short-eared Owls. Short-eared Owls frequently winter at Springbrook Prairie and can be seen as they come out to hunt over the preserve at dusk. Meet at the Model Aircraft Field Parking Lot on Plainfield-Naperville Rd, south of 75th St. in

Naperville. We will walk a short distance off-trail to wait for the owls to appear. Dress very warmly since we will be standing in one place as the sun goes down. Note that the owls are generally pretty far away and often appear just as the light is failing, so this trip does not offer a photo-op. The trip will last about 30-40 min. The owls do not always winter at Springbrook and the trip will be canceled if they are not around or in the event of inclement weather.

Leader: Joe Suchecki. Register via email: dbcsec2020@gmail.com. Phone: 630-369-5570.

Saturday, January 11, 2:00 pm – sunset, 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 other winter residents. Spotting scopes can be useful here, trip leader will have one. We will meet at the bike trailhead on the east end of Canal Bank Road. If using navigation, search for 15112 Canal Bank Rd, Lemont. Feel free to ask questions on how to get there after you RSVP.

Leader: Matt Crisler, crislermj@gmail.com

Saturday, January 25, 2:30 pm – sunset, Lyman Woods, Downers Grove

Pre-registration with the leader is required by email, limit 10 participants

We will be looking for common woodland wintertime residents. Meet at the parking lot on 31st Street. While the trip will wrap up at sunset, for those who would like, we can do a shorter walk after sunset to see if there's any owl activity. If you want to do this, a red flashlight/headlamp is recommended.

Leader: Matt Crisler, crislermj@gmail.com

Tuesday, January 28, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm, McKee Marsh, Warrenville

Registration not necessary.

Join us for a morning walk around one of DuPage County's premier birding hotspots. This trip will be about three miles long on limestone and earthen trails. This site often has a good selection of wintering species including the Northern Shrike, American Black Duck and other waterfowl, various raptors, and other birds. Meet at the visitor parking lot located on the north side of Mack Road, east of Route 59, and west of Winfield Road.

Leader: Kyle Wiktor. 708-506-5186 (text or call if you have questions regarding weather cancellation).

SAVE THE DATE!

DBC Members Magee Marsh, Ohio Field Trip, Wednesday May 7, 2025 – Sunday, May 11, 2025.

Joe Kubal and Sherry Courtney are organizing a Spring migration field trip around "The Biggest Week in American Birding." <https://www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com/>

We are excited that Matt Crisler has volunteered to lead one of our groups on this field trip. We are hoping to accommodate two groups of 10 members each, if we have a second leader step up to volunteer. If you are interested, please contact Joe or Sherry.

Magee Marsh is a 4 ½ hour drive from Naperville and is one of the best locations in the country to see a wide variety of warblers. In the surrounding areas, we are also likely to see terns, eagles, swallows, waterfowl and shorebirds, and perhaps Lapland Longspurs, Black-necked Stilts, American Pipits, Orchard Orioles, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wrens, and many more.

This trip will include four nights, each morning beginning on the Boardwalk at Magee Marsh, where we will be able to see a variety of birds up close, followed by day trips to nearby birding areas which will include: Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Metzger Marsh, Howards Marsh, East Harbor State Park, along with some off the beaten path places and stops.

Our special thanks to Denis Kania for helping us plan this trip.

NOTICE:

We plan to open registration in early February. Keep an eye out for a special email notification to DBC members for the date and time when registration begins. The first 20 members to email Joe Kubal at that time will be registered for this trip.

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
Stephanie Cullerton, stephcullert@yahoo.com

Announcing DBC's Fall '24 Photo Contest Winners!

The winners of DBC's Fall 2024 photo contest have been finalized! The entries were judged by Andie Duffy, Steve Constantelos, Natalie McFaul, Thelma Hulka, and Mike Warner. Because of the variety and quality of the submissions, the committee once again had a very tough time deciding on which pictures to recognize; the committee would like to thank all the photographers for their entries.

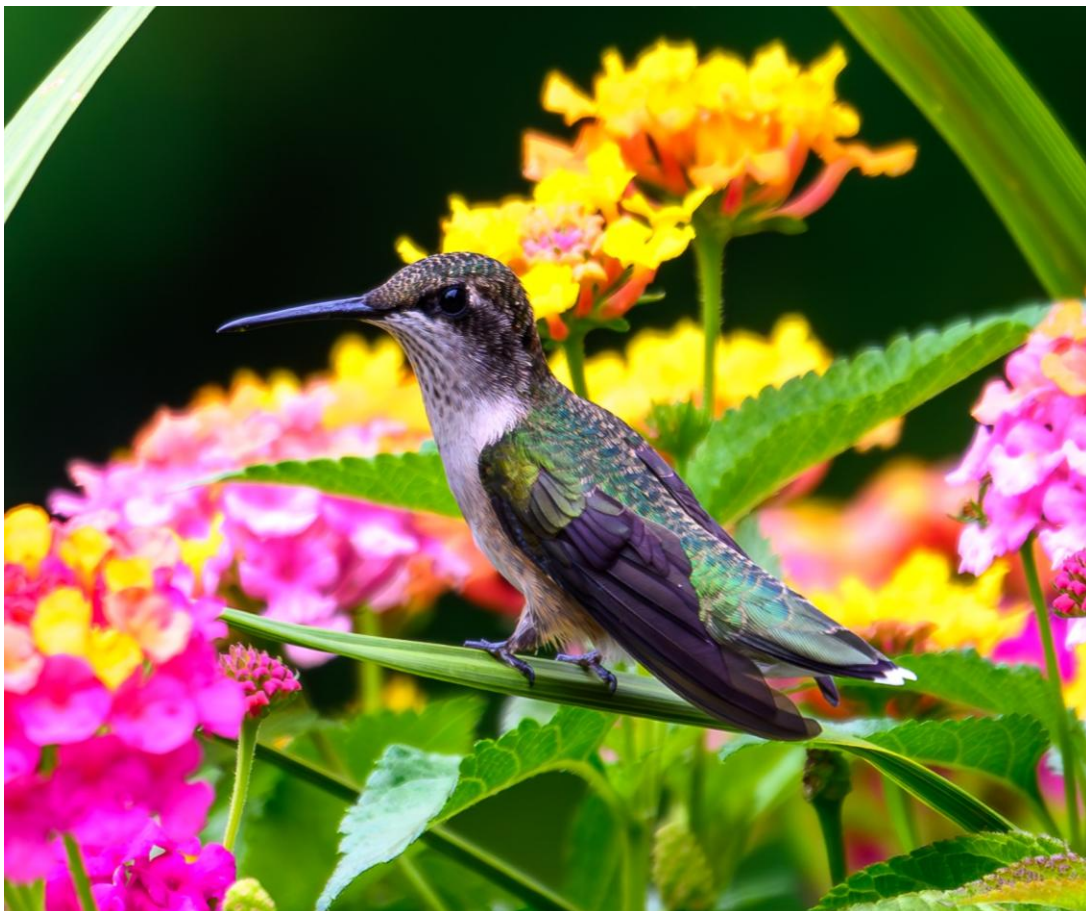
Best of Show

Photographer: Tim Duitsman

Species of Bird: Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Location: Tim's Backyard

Narrative: The hummingbird was darting around our backyard, sipping from feeders, feeding on flowers, and skillfully avoiding wasps. I tried to capture a good shot by following it all over the yard but had little success. Eventually, I gave up and sat down in a chair on the patio. A few minutes later, the hummingbird flew over and landed just seven feet away in a pot, posing for a picture. It seemed like it was looking for the perfect backdrop to showcase its stunning colors.



Bird Watching Birdwatcher Award

Photographer: Rich Roche

Species of Bird: Barred Owl

Location: Morton Arboretum, Lisle

Narrative: I was walking south on the trail along the east side of Sterling Pond, looking for warblers, when I saw movement in the trees to my right. I found several small songbirds, a Magnolia Warbler and an American Redstart. After they disappeared, I turned around just to look back and found this calm Barred Owl at my eye level about 15 feet away. He had had a very good look at me, so he granted me the same.



Star Of The Season Award

Photographer: John Obenland

Species of Bird: Sage Thrasher

Location: Hidden Lake Forest Preserve

Narrative: The key to attracting more attention than any other bird migrating through the DuPage area is to be 1,000 miles off course! That is a sure way to make a great impression and draw a huge crowd of admirers. Well, the plan worked on yours truly and a half dozen other birders that afternoon! After taking a few pictures of "the star" foraging on the ground, this guy/gal took a break on a shrub branch and made sure that the lighting was perfect and waited for me to take "the shot." By the gleam in his/her eye, I think we were both very happy with the result!



Cutie-Pie Award

Photographer: Nicole LaFevre

Species of Bird: White-breasted Nuthatch

Location: Glendale Heights, IL

Narrative: When the cold weather arrives and I'm not going outside as often anymore, one of my greatest joys is putting up a feeder and seeing what birds come by. This year for the first time I have a nuthatch visiting daily. I shot this photo through my window and thought the angle caused the nuthatch to look particularly cute.



Best Exotic Foreign Travel Award

Photographer: Joe Suchecki

Species of Bird: Spinifex Pigeon

Location: Near Alice Springs, Australia

Narrative: Limited-range desert bird in Australia was a key pick-up in the Alice Springs area.



Yes Virginia, There Are Cuckoos In DuPage County

Photographer: Kent Jager

Species of Bird: Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Location: Morton Arboretum

Narrative: It's always fun to see a bird pop out of the woods when you least expect it.



Best Portrait-Pose Award

Photographer: James Goldsmith

Species of Bird: Tree Sparrow

Location: Muirhead Springs Nature Preserve, Hampshire, Illinois

Narrative: On “Black Friday” (a very cold and windy November 29th), I decided to avoid the bargain hunters and went instead to the Muirhead Springs Forest Preserve, where Tundra Swans had been reported. Unfortunately, there were no swans on view during my visit (though I did see some a little later at Nelson Lake), but I did run across a lot of hardy American Tree Sparrows. One in particular was kind enough to pause long enough for me to get this picture.



Backyard Photo Award

Photographer: Cindy Duranceau

Species of Bird: Northern Cardinal

Location: Naperville, IL

Narrative: I was delighted to have 12 Northern Cardinals spend the day in our yard after the big cold weather chill blew in. I counted 8 males and 4 females (not all shown in this photo.) 11/29/24.



Flying Flicker Award

Photographer: Kent Jager

Species of Bird: Northern Flicker

Location: Morton Arboretum

Narrative: I saw this bird coming at me and was lucky enough to get a quick shot of him.



You can see all pictures posted to the DBC Website, including past Photo Contest Winners, by [CLICKING HERE](#).

DuPage Birding Club's Winter '24-'25 Photo Contest Now Open!

The DBC is looking for pictures of birds taken between December 1, 2024, and February 28, 2025. 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:

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

[DBC Photo Contest Entry Form](#)

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 April Drummings.



2025 Meeting Schedule

January 9 July 10
March 13 September 11
April 10 October 9
May 8 November 13

2025 DBC Executive Committee Members

President: Thelma Hulka
Vice President: Matt Crisler
Treasurer: Rich Gaul
Recording Secretary: Mark Freeburg
Corresponding Secretary: Donnalyn Quint
Director: Rob Thomas
Director: Lindsay Vacek
Director: Jim Mateski



2025 Committee Chairs

Audio-Visual Coordinator: Robert Perez
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: Sherry Courtney, Stephanie Cullerton

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: Mike Warner
Spring Count Coordinator: Joe Suchecki
Twitter: Vera Miller
Webmasters: Barb Dougan, Nancy Allured
YouTube Ed Channel: Denis Kania, Steve Constantelos