

# Drummings March 2025

## President's Letter



### Next Meeting

March 13, 2025

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

College of DuPage  
Health Science Ctr, Rm 1234  
425 Fawell Drive  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

### Premeeting Dinner

5:30 p.m.

Ellyn's Tap and Grill

940 Roosevelt Rd.

Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Hello DBCers,

I just returned from Arizona where I was visiting friends and family and of course doing some birding. While there I had the opportunity to attend a meeting of the local chapter of the National Audubon Society.

The speaker that night was Krissy Kondrat from Arizona Fish and Wildlife and she spoke about the Motus wildlife tracking system, something that was new to me. Motus is an international network of researchers who use radio telemetry to track birds in their travels. It can also be used to track bats and dragonflies. A very tiny transmitter is fastened to the subject and emits radio signals when it flies within an 11-mile range of a reception tower.

These towers are erected along migration routes either as a freestanding tower in an open area or attached to a building. The device gathers information from the passerby, which can then be downloaded to see which individual has been located, allowing the researcher to gain data on the subject. More information is gained this way than through conventional banding which relies on a bird being recaptured. It was news to me that there are seven radio towers in the Great Lakes area of Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio as well as some downstate. One tower is located as close as the Chicago Botanic Garden. Towers in the Great Lakes Area have detected Kirtland's Warblers, Eastern Whip-poor-wills, Black Terns, Common Nighthawks, and others.

I thought this was a very interesting new method of learning about birds' migration patterns and another step forward in conservation efforts to try to make life easier for our feathered friends. (They may also be looking for more volunteers.)

To change the subject, we're looking forward to our Members' Night meeting on March 13 and the chance to see what some of our people have been up to. Our meeting will be held at the College of DuPage in the Health Science Center, Room 1234. Enter through the main door on the first floor and proceed just past the stairs on the right. I hope to see you there. Members' Night is always better in person!

Birdly,

Thelma Hulka, President

scubabird@gmail.com

## Members' Night March 13 In-Person and Via Zoom



*Pink Cockatoo. Photo by Diann Bilderback.*

The annual DuPage Birding Club Members' Night will be Thursday, March 13 at 7:00 p.m. As a reminder, this will be our first meeting at College of DuPage (see sidebar above for further details). We have an exciting lineup of bird pictures and stories from all over the world, including Australia, Europe, and the Americas. You won't want to miss hearing about all of the exciting adventures our presenters have gone on!

This meeting will be held with both an in-person and Zoom option. Register for the Zoom session here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/uOCqPZtKQomcFKFdSRrBYA>. If attending in person, we will be meeting at College of DuPage in the [Health Science Center](#), room HSC1234. We're looking forward to seeing you all there!

## LAST CALL: 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, 2024.** 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.

## Avian Flu Impacting the Chicago Region's Birds

*Reprinted from the April 2025 Bird Conservation Network (BCN) News. Story by Annette Prince of BCN affiliate Chicago Bird Collision Monitors.*

Avian influenza (H5N1 bird flu) is posing a serious threat to birdlife in the Chicago region this winter. Since mid-December, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors and local wildlife centers have received hundreds of calls regarding birds displaying symptoms of avian flu from across an eight-county area.

Initially, most cases of H5N1 bird flu were found in waterfowl—with reports that ranged from one to 50 sick or dead geese—but as dead birds were not removed from the environment, species preying on the remains had a greater chance of being exposed to the virus. [Hawks, owls, and eagles are now also being recovered](#) with the signs most often associated with H5N1 bird flu. These symptoms include weakness, lack of balance, tremors, diarrhea, closed or clouded eyes, and respiratory problems.

Given the poor prognosis for a bird to survive avian influenza and the serious risk of this highly contagious virus spreading to other birds in a rehabilitation setting, birds demonstrating flu symptoms can only be humanely euthanized. Many centers are not even admitting these birds for euthanasia out of an abundance of caution to prevent exposure to other bird patients and humans. We do not know when this current outbreak will end, but the virus does not survive well in warmer temperatures, which we will reach this spring.

Officials are telling the public not to handle birds displaying signs of avian influenza and to avoid contact between their pets and wild birds. You can learn more from the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) and this [Illinois Department of Public Health news release](#). People should also contact their [IDNR District Wildlife Biologist](#) if they see more than five dead birds.

To receive the quarterly BCN News, go to <https://www.bcnbirds.org/news/>

## March 2025 Field Trips

Spring is just around the corner. This month's trips target wintertime resident birds as well as early spring migrants, and waterfowl. We also have our Mississippi River trip this month. It's a good time to get outside and go birding!

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](http://www.dupagebirding.org).

**NOTE: When possible last-minute changes are posted on [www.dupagebirding.org/field-trips](http://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/>

**Tuesday, March 4, 9:00 am – 11:00 am, The DuPage Greenway Trail, Bolingbrook**

Pre-registration required by text or email.

We'll explore riverside habitat looking for resident birds and migrating waterfowl. New birders welcome. The DuPage Greenway Trail is a paved trail in Bolingbrook that runs alongside the East Branch of the DuPage River. The trailhead is on Royce Rd just west of Rt. 53. It is about a mile and a half walk to Whalon Lake.

**Leader: Mark Freeburg, [freebs59@sbcglobal.net](mailto:freebs59@sbcglobal.net) or call or text 630-661-1521**

**Saturday, March 8, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, West Branch Forest Preserve, West Chicago**

Pre-registration is preferred. Limit of 20 people.

West Branch Forest Preserve in West Chicago is a great spot for waterfowl and grassland birds. On this field trip, we'll focus our attention on migrating waterfowl but will venture into the grassland portions of the preserve. Please dress appropriately, as we will plan to go off trail. We will meet in the north parking lot, off Army Trail Road.

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

**Saturday, March 15, 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm, 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. We will conclude the trip with a brief search for the resident Great Horned Owls around and after sunset. Dress warmly as we may be stationary at times. A red flashlight or headlamp is recommended.

**Leader: Matt Crisler, [crislermj@gmail.com](mailto:crislermj@gmail.com)**

**Sunday, March 23, Time to be announced at registration. Mississippi River - Waterfowl Trip**

Pre-registration with the leader is required, limit 12 participants.

Waterfowl, cranes, eagles, and pelicans will be sought on this all-day trip exploring spots along the Mississippi, both in Illinois and Iowa. In addition to the river, Lost Mound National Wildlife Refuge will be visited to search for Western Meadowlark and Northern Mockingbird. Please contact the leader for meeting time and location. We will caravan from the western suburbs.

**Leader: Jeff Chapman, [jeffchapman948@gmail.com](mailto:jeffchapman948@gmail.com)**

**Sunday, March 23, 8:00 am - 11:00 am, Centennial Trail, Lemont**

Pre-registration with the leader is required, limit 12 participants.

On this field trip our main targets will be early returning spring migrants. Northern Shovelers and Redheads, along with a large array of waterfowl are all possible. We will also be on the lookout for songbirds such as Rusty Blackbirds, Eastern Towhees, and many more, on the wooded side of the trail. 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](#). Feel free to ask questions on how to get there after you RSVP.

**Leader: Henry Meade, [henrymm21@icloud.com](mailto:henrymm21@icloud.com)**

**Monday, March 24, 8:00 am - 10:30 am, Morton Arboretum, West Side**

Pre-registration with the leader is required.

We will meet at Thornhill parking lot, P21 and walk on wood chip paths for about 2 miles. We will be looking for early migrants and usual winter birds. Info on the arboretum is at: <https://mortonarb.org/visit-the-arboretum/>. If you don't have an arboretum membership contact us and we can arrange for you to enter with a member for \$10.00.

**Leaders:** Mike and Karen Warner, [mwarner2543@gmail.com](mailto:mwarner2543@gmail.com), 630-640-2450

**Monday, March 31, 8:00 am - 10:30 pm, McKee Marsh, Warrenville**

Registration not necessary.

Join us for a walk around one of DuPage county's premier birding hotspots to look for resident birds and early spring migrants. Hopefully, some waterfowl should be around. This approximately 3-mile walk will be on crushed limestone and earthen trails; wear appropriate shoes and clothing. Meet at the visitor parking lot on the north side of Mack Rd., located between Winfield Rd. and Rt. 59 in Warrenville.

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

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The DBC Members Magee Marsh, Ohio Field Trip, May 7, 2025 –May 11, is **FULL**. Thanks to all who have registered.

**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](http://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](mailto:sherrycourtney10@gmail.com)

Stephanie Cullerton, [stephcullert@yahoo.com](mailto:stephcullert@yahoo.com)

## Accepting Winter '24-'25 Photo Contest Submissions through March 7

The Winter '24-'25 photo contest has closed, but submissions will be accepted through March 7. If you have that special photograph taken between December 1 and February 28, there are two ways to enter your images:

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](mailto: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.

## News from the Forest Preserve: A Little History Lesson

Scott Kobal recently presented a history of plant studies in DuPage, an interesting look back at how our knowledge of plant communities has evolved over the decades.



The story began with Dave Johnson who was director at the District from 1962-1993. At the beginning of Johnson's tenure, there were about 1,300 acres of property. His goal was to bring a preserve to within 10 minutes of their homes for all residents. He raised the number of acres in the Forest Preserve System to 30,000. Dr. Robert Betz of Northeastern IL University was a pioneer for saving remnant prairies such



as Belmont in Hinsdale, Stevens Cemetery, and the re-creation of the prairie at Fermi Lab. He is one of the first to suggest documenting species present in a given area.

The movement continued with Floyd Swink and Ray Schulenberg from the Morton Arboretum, who were instrumental in looking at inventories of plants in a geographic area. Wayne Lampa was the one who started the collection of data with inventory and monitoring at Fullersburg Woods in 1971.

In 1973 a classification system was originated using the DNR and Dept of Conservation for mapping what was present in the District. Air photos and windshield assessments were some of the original methods implemented for searching plant communities. Gradually they gave way for a three-letter code for the various plant communities. All this data collection was done by hand and documented on paper maps.

In the 1990s, inventories in earnest were undertaken with the help of a computer program designed by staff at the arboretum. Topography was added and there are 1100 ecosystems identified in the 60 preserves. GIS data is available after decades of work on preserve communities.

Dr. Gerald Wilhelm worked to establish monitoring programs and categorizing species. Wilhelm came up with the Natural Areas Rating systems which he initiated in Kane County. There are four classes of land considering management and use. Inventory is one step in determining land classification. Consistent monitoring for changes impacting the plant communities is another. For example, in one-acre woodland plots are studied considering the forest floor, light, tree mortality, and new tree growth. All are recorded to track changes and the area's resilience.

In open areas, "Herbaceous Monitoring Transects" are square frames set in straight lines through an area. The District studies ecosystems in 20 preserves using this method. In addition, staff are working with other agencies such as the Chicago Botanic Garden, the US Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and the IDNR on Federally-identified endangered or threatened local plants and their location in Forest Preserves. Now rare plants are also being reintroduced in appropriate preserves. The District is truly the Caretaker of our County's natural heritage.

## DBC Book Club Meets March 11

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. Reviewer's 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](mailto:mwarner2543@gmail.com).



## Welcome, New Members!

Karen Beckelman	Glendale Heights	Theodore Gray	Darien
Kathryn & John Meade	Lombard	Judith Mullen	Wheaton
Wendy & Bill Nystrom	Downers Grove	Jill & Brent Richardson	Warrenville
Deanna Swauger	Naperville	Kristine Wiltjer	Darien



## 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

## 2025 Meeting Schedule

January 9	July 10
March 13	September 11
April 10	October 9
May 15*	November 13

\*Date change