

## Drummings June 2025

### President's Letter

Hello, DBCers,

Ah, spring in Chicago. That most beautiful time of the year... Right.

I sit writing this on a gray, gloomy day when it's 50 degrees and raining – again. I'm not one of those hardy birders who go out every day of the year no matter the conditions. I wish I was, but my fingers and toes won't cooperate. So I sit here, held prisoner by Mother Nature.

But the warblers, those feathered jewels, are still out there, waiting to be discovered. And on those dry and not too cold days, I'm out as much as I can, working on my warbler neck. This year I had the good fortune to go to Magee Marsh in Ohio and saw many birds I hadn't seen or barely seen in several years. It was thrilling! But they're here too. Some of our local bird walks have yielded up good numbers of the little guys. So don't despair – there's still time to get out and see the aerial show. Once the parade ends, we have to wait a whole year.

What you don't have to wait for is our 40th club birthday party coming up on Saturday June 14 at Blackwell. See more information further down and sign up to join the fun.

Birdly,  
Thelma Hulka, President  
[scubabird@gmail.com](mailto:scubabird@gmail.com)

#### Next Meeting

July 10, 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

### In Case You Missed It: Birds of the Grand Canyon State—South and North

**Margaret Dyekman, Author of *Backyard Birding in Northern Arizona***

Make the most of a visit to northern Arizona with this entertaining journey exploring 45 bird species that are "visitor friendly." Listen to Margaret Dyekman's lively presentation here: [link](#)



## Now Live: Birding Adventures in Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a great country to visit either as a first-time tropical birder or a seasoned tropical veteran. Although it may be a small country, it has a lot to offer in terms of both environmental and species diversity. Presenter Denis Kania shares what he has learned in several trips to this birdy destination. Listen to the video here: [link](#)

## Come Celebrate DBC's 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday June 14!

DBC members, it is time to celebrate! Newest members, founding members, and all the members in between, come and celebrate the DuPage Birding Club's 40th birthday. There will be lunch! There will be cake! And there will be the 40 Birds in 40 Minutes Scavenger Hunt!

**Date:** June 14, 2025

**Time:** 9:30 am - 40 Birds in 40 Minutes Scavenger Hunt

11:30 am - Lunch served

**Place:** Blackwell Forest Preserve, North Shelter

Please RSVP by June 8. [CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)

We will meet at 9:30 am at the Blackwell Forest Preserve's North Shelter for the first ever 40 Birds in 40 Minutes Scavenger Hunt. This will be a fun birding adventure for all levels of birders. Don't forget to bring your binoculars!

We will serve a hot dog lunch at 11:30. If you cannot make the 40 Birds in 40 Minutes Scavenger hunt at 9:30, you are welcome to come just for lunch. Though why would you want to miss a scavenger hunt??

Please come! Wouldn't it be fun if all 350+ DBC members, your fellow birders, came together to celebrate 40 years of field trips, meetings, and the joy of birding?

Any questions contact: Andie Duffy [aduffy99@ameritech.net](mailto:aduffy99@ameritech.net)

### **Directions:**

Use Blackwell FP main entrance on Butterfield Road (about ¼ mile west of Winfield Rd.) To get to the North Shelter take the Main Drive to the north end of Silver Lake (past the boat rental place). The shelter is located just before the campground entrance. [Blackwell FP Webpage](#)

## Field Trip to Magee Marsh Highlights Migrants

*Sherry Courtney, Field Trip Coordinator*

“They call it The Biggest Week in American Birding!” said Joe Kubal when he contacted me last October to ask about planning a DBC trip to Magee Marsh, Ohio. He had heard about the marsh at a DBC Book Club meeting, when Mike and Karen Warner shared about their trip last spring.

Magee Marsh along with Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge occupies the largest area of coastal wetlands in Ohio. The “Magee Boardwalk” winds through seven acres of woodland between Lake Erie and expansive marshes and is a perfect for the migrants to stop on their way north, making it possible to see them up close.



So, on May 7, after months of planning, and talking to members who had been there, 21 DuPage Birding Club members, trip coordinators and leaders all trekked to Ohio for what became a grand four-day adventure.

For our first stop, Joe had arranged an introductory visit to the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, and then we were onto the Estuary Trail at Magee Marsh for a walk with our expert guide, Gautam. Among many others we watched a Prothonotary Warbler pose for us for a full five minutes, the sun illuminating his bright yellow head. (Matt Crisler refers to these as “Sunshine.”) It was only the beginning.



*Prothonotary Warbler. Photo by Helen and Franklin Chow*

The cold and wind of the next day didn’t stop us from finding the group’s most sought-after target bird, the Blackburnian Warbler, as well as a plethora of warblers many of us had never seen.



*Blackburnian Warbler. Photo by Helen and Franklin Chow*



One of the highlights of the trip was when Kristine got an alert that a Kirtland's Warbler happened to land in the marsh on its way from Bermuda to its breeding ground in Michigan. We all felt the excitement of chasing the rare Kirtland's warbler and watching Matt run down the beach to get to the spot where it was sighted. (We followed but did not run!) No luck.

The next day, a group of us went back, and *voila!* Our illusive warbler came very close to the path, offering various poses for the cameras, everyone clicking away like paparazzi, as he made his way to the top of a leafy tree branch, stopped, looked at us all, turned and flew out of sight. The group broke out in applause, and "Bravos!" as he disappeared into the trees. What a performance, and a joyous shared experience for all of us.



*Kirtland's Warbler. Photos by Helen and Franklin Chow*

Another highlight was seeing a Least Bittern and American Bittern at Metzger Marsh. It took a while for some of us to get our eyes on them. Howard Marsh had its own show with Dunlin repeatedly performing a chorus line, a Black-Necked Stilt showing off those **bright** pink legs, and Osprey on the nest.

Over our 4 days there we spotted 119 species. Altogether, we visited Magee Marsh, Howard Marsh, Metzger Marsh, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, and Oak Openings Preserve.

Our special thanks to Matt Crisler, our enthusiastic leader, for making this trip unforgettable. Matt's passion for finding the fun birds was infectious. Thanks to everyone for help spotting birds, and all of the fun, laughs, and camaraderie. What a great group of birding enthusiasts!



*Photos by Lisa Gaylord*



## DBC Helps Celebrate Arbor Day

This year the DBC Outreach Committee was invited by two organizations to help celebrate Arbor Day—and birds!

The first was sponsored by the Warrenville Park District and was held on April 26. Along with 20 other organizations, the DBC hosted a table, where we shared information about birds and the Club. About 75 people stopped by and DBC members Mike Warner and Lisa Gaylord answered questions about feeders, bird seed, DBC Field Trips, and where to go to observe birds.



Mike Warner and Lisa Gaylord at the Warrenville Arbor Day event April 26

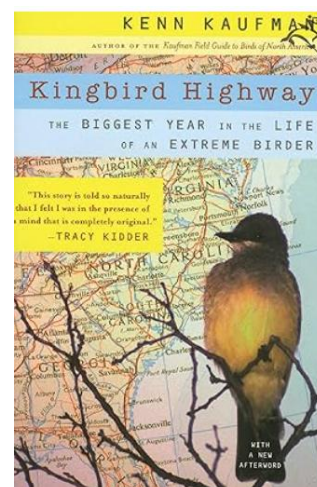
On May 4, the Darien Garden Club held their Arbor Day Celebration at the Indian Prairie Library in Darien. Denis Kania did a presentation to about 30 people called *How To Attract Hummingbirds*. The DBC had a table set up to answer questions about our organization and birds in general. Andie Duffy, Bob Fisher, and Donnalyn Quint were there representing DBC.

Thanks to all the members of the Outreach Committee for meeting the birding needs of our community!

## Kingbird Highway Is DBC Book Club's Current Read

The DBC Book Club's next read is *Kingbird Highway: The Biggest Year in the Life of an Extreme Birder*, the much-praised account by Kenn Kaufman of his yearlong "Big Year" adventure as a teenager exploring America in the '70s. A unique coming of age story, the memoir recounts how the "thrill of the chase" evolved into a quest to connect with nature on a deeper level.

The Book Club will meet on June 10. For details on the meeting, contact Mike Warner at [mwarner2543@gmail.com](mailto:mwarner2543@gmail.com)



# Annual Spring Bird Count Results

Joe Suchecki, DuPage County SBC Compiler

The 2025 Spring Bird Count (SBC) was Saturday, May 10 this year, the latest calendar date possible for the annual count. Now in its 53rd year, the SBC has become a much-anticipated spring event for birders throughout the state but particularly here in DuPage County. This year was no exception.

Area: ALL DUPAGE		Spring Bird Count - May 10, 2025		species not on this list must be documented	
2	Snow Goose		217	Black-capped Chickadee	91
1311	Canada Goose	76	23	Tufted Titmouse	98
6	Mute Swan	1	7	Horned Lark	88
173	Wood Duck	20	200	Rough-wing Swallow	746
34	Blue-winged Teal		40	Purple Martin	4788
2	Northern Shoveler		838	Tree Swallow	817
2	Gadwall	430	20	Bank Swallow	650
	American Wigeon		487	Barn Swallow	12
1110	Mallard	1	12	Cliff Swallow	
	Northern Pintail	200	16	Ruby-crwn Kinglet	3
	Green-winged Teal	124	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	54
1	Redhead	45	185	White-breasted Nuthatch	28
1	Ring-necked Duck	1	4	Brown Creeper	7
	Lesser Scaup	126	219	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	43
1	Bufflehead	24	268	House Wren	5
27	Hooded Merganser	3	33	Sedge Wren	286
	Common Merganser	4	37	Marsh Wren	8
2	Red-brstd Merganser	43	19	Carolina Wren	179
2	Ruddy Duck	14	627	Starling	
	Ring-necked Pheasant	3	392	Gray Catbird	
7	Wild Turkey	6	33	Brown Thrasher	525
2	Pied-billed Grebe	111		Northern Mockingbird	1
60	Rock Pigeon	12	123	Eastern Bluebird	96
436	Mourning Dove	15	11	Veery	18
1	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	3	Gray-chkd Thrush	1
2	Black-billed Cuckoo	5	14	Swainson's Thrush	40
1	Common Nighthawk		7	Hermit Thrush	14
381	Chimney Swift	80	25	Wood Thrush	12
22	Ruby-t Hummingbird	404	3313	American Robin	30
10	Virginia Rail	183	39	Cedar Waxwing	346
28	Sora	71	994	House Sparrow	45
1	Common Gallinule	10	8	American Pipit	21
4	American Coot	300	198	House Finch	3
22	Sandhill Crane	11	7	Purple Finch	288
	Black-bellied Plover		2	Pine Siskin	6
	Amer Golden Plover		632	American Goldfinch	573
28	Semipalmated Plover	7	2	Grasshopper sparrow	7
188	Killdeer	1	69	Chipping Sparrow	53
	Dunlin	1	5	Clay-colored Sparrow	2
67	Least Sandpiper	19	109	Field Sparrow	9
	White-rmp Sandpiper	88	1	Dark-eyed Junco	9
5	Pectoral Sandpiper	119	117	White-crowned Sparrow	52
	Semipalm. Sandpiper	155	102	White-throated sparrow	703
	Short-bill Dowitcher	3	2	Vesper Sparrow	304
4	Amer Woodcock	3	101	Savannah Sparrow	318
1	Wilson's Snipe	21	18	Henslow's Sparrow	3
	Wilson's Phalarope	12	655	Song Sparrow	
49	Spotted Sandpiper		9	Lincoln's Sparrow	6
43	Solitary Sandpiper	271	75	Swamp Sparrow	2
2	Greater Yellowlegs	61	85	Eastern Towhee	1
10	Lesser Yellowlegs	757	5	Yellow-breasted Chat	1
		64		Yellow-headed Blackbird	1
38	Species Count	44	Species Count	50	Species Count
4048	Number of Birds	3912	Number of Birds	10409	Number of Birds
343	Party Hours Foot	320	Party Miles Foot		
30	Party Hours Car	482	Party Miles Car		
7	Hours Owling	7	Miles Owling	180	Total Species Count
	Party Hours Other		Party Miles Other	29762	Total Bird Count



One-hundred thirty- seven birders started early in the morning to complete this census of spring birds throughout the county with eager anticipation. Those 137 birders spent a total of 380 party hours in the field, walked 320 miles, and drove 482 miles throughout DuPage County in an effort to identify and count as many birds as possible. Some started owling before 4 am, and others were still counting as the sun set. Thanks to all who participated in the count and dedicated their day to the SBC: Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

And, your efforts paid off. You found an above-average number of species on the 2025 SBC – 180 species. You also counted 29,762 birds this year, which also is above the long-term average for the count. This year's totals compare favorably to the 2024 count when we found 170 species and 28,553 birds. The all-time high number of species observed occurred in 2018 when 188 species were reported.

As always, SBC birders record some unusual and rare species on count day. Although we did not find any really rare or out of range birds, some less common spring birds for DuPage County were counted. These include two Trumpeter Swans observed by two different groups at Blackwell and then a little later at Herrick Lake. Two Snow Geese were observed at College of DuPage. Both of these species have only been seen on the SBC two other times in the past 24 years.

Another relatively rare find was a Lark Sparrow, making its appearance for only the fourth time. Other scarce species included a Redhead, Least Bittern, Common Gallinule, Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler, and Blue Grosbeak.

The most commonly recorded birds reported on the SBC for 2025 were the Red-winged Blackbird (4788), followed by American Robin, Canada Goose, Mallard, and Tree Swallow.



*Lark Sparrow. Photo by Stan Barrack*

These species have held the top spots as most abundant for many years.

If you – like me – thought that there were lots of orioles around this spring, you are correct. We identified new high counts of both Orchard Oriole (88) and Baltimore Oriole (746) for the SBC this year. We also recorded new high counts for Hooded Merganser, Eastern Screech Owl, Eastern Phoebe, Warbling Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, and House Sparrow. A couple of those high counts are likely due to the later date for the count this year, and the number of Screech Owls is highly dependent on the number of people who get up really early and go out and try to find them.

You can look through the complete list of birds recorded on the 2025 SBC below or on the DBC website in the near future. In addition, there is a spreadsheet on the website showing count results back to 1973 when the first Spring Bird Count was completed in the County. You can look at that table and see how birds have changed over the last 50 years.

Thanks to all the birders who volunteered to take part in the count this year. DuPage County is consistently second only to Cook County in number of participants throughout the State. Keep up the great work.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Area Captains who do all of the work organizing and assuring coverage of all the birding areas in the county for the Spring Bird Count. They are Dave Hodge, Kyle Wiktor, Nancy Allured, Dave Yeager, Urs Geiser, Diann Bilderback, Glenn Perricone, William Huebler, Dave Spleha, Jerry and Jodi Zamirowski, Susan Kaley, Linda Radtke, Joe Suchecki, Mike Madsen, and Jim Green.

Mark your 2026 calendars NOW. Not too early to plan for next year's count – keep open Saturday May 9 for the 2026 Spring Bird Count.

## June 2025 Field Trips

There are opportunities for all types of birders to participate and enjoy. As always, nonmembers 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.



*Last month's field trip to Montrose Harbor*

**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/>



**Sunday, June 1, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Will County**

Registration required. Limit of 20 participants.

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie is one of the premier grassland birding spots in the area. The area is littered with abandoned munitions bunkers, as well as fantastic grassland species such as Henslow's Sparrow, Bell's Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Blue Grosbeak. This walk will primarily take place on gravel trails but may venture into tall grass. Dress appropriately and bring bug spray and sun protection. We will meet at the Iron Bridge Trailhead on Route 53 in Elwood, Illinois. The entrance to the trailhead parking lot is about a mile south of Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery and the intersection of Hoff Road and Route 53.

**Leader: Robert Perez, [robertperez787@gmail.com](mailto:robertperez787@gmail.com)**

**Tuesday, June 3, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, St James Farm Forest Preserve, Warrenville**

Registration with the leader is required.

We will search for migratory and breeding birds in the former domain of the McCormick family. Our targets include Acadian Flycatcher, Summer Tanager and Hooded Warbler. The 600-acre preserve has one of the oldest presettlement forests in the district. Trails can be wet and muddy here. Meet at the "horse statue" in the main parking lot.

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

**Thursday, June 5, 7:00 am - 10:00 am, McKee Marsh, Warrenville**

Registration is not required.

Join us for a walk around one of DuPage county's premier birding hotspots to look for resident birds, waterfowl and spring migrants. This approximately three-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.

**Leaders: Steve and Kathy Mineck, cell for same day questions: 630-254-4077**

**Thursday, June 5, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm, After work Birding at Danada Forest Preserve (East), Wheaton**

Registration is not required. Please email the leader if you plan to attend to receive updates.

Start the weekend off with a casual evening of birding. This trip is planned with the after-work/school crowd in mind, but anyone interested is welcome! We will stick to well-maintained gravel trails and walk approximately two miles. Danada East (Danada House) is located at 3S501 Naperville Road, on the east side of the road, south of Butterfield Rd. and north of 1-88. Plan to meet at the north end of the parking lot near the entry kiosk with the benches and bike racks. This trip may be cancelled due to weather.

**Leader: William Pixler, [pillwixler@gmail.com](mailto:pillwixler@gmail.com)**

**Sunday, June 8, 7:00 am - 9:30 am, Springbrook Prairie Forest Preserve, Naperville**

Registration with the leader is required, limit 10 participants.

This trip will focus on finding and identifying the grassland birds that nest at Springbrook Prairie including such species as Henslow's, Savannah, and Grasshopper Sparrows; Bobolinks, Sedge Wren, and Dickcissel. Some shrubland birds such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Bell's Vireo, and marsh nesting birds are also possible.

Meet the leader at the main parking lot for Springbrook Prairie on 83<sup>rd</sup> St., west of Book Rd. The main lot is across from the Springbrook Golf Course. The trip will go off-trail and the vegetation may be wet, so please wear appropriate footwear. Ticks are an issue, so please bring and use insect repellent.

**Leader:** Joe Suchecki, [dbcsec2020@gmail.com](mailto:dbcsec2020@gmail.com)

**Monday, June 9, 8:00 am - 11:00 am, Centennial Trail, Lemont**

Registration with the leader is required, limit 15 participants.

On this field trip we will be exploring swampy river bottom and marsh habitats in hopes of finding unique breeding birds such as the Prothonotary Warbler, among others. Finding this spot can be a little tricky, but if you put "TruckParking247" into Google Maps it should take you to the right spot. Park along the side of the end of Canal Bank Road. Ask Henry if you have additional questions.

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

**Tuesday, June 10, 7:30 am - 10:00 am, Bike and Bird Herrick Lake, Wheaton**

Registration with the leader is required, limit 10 participants.

Bird the eight miles of trails by bike. We will cover most of Herrick Lake Forest Preserve with stops in different habitats along the way. Bring your bike, helmet and binoculars. You must be able to bike a minimum of eight miles. We will cover grassland, woodland, savannah, and scrub habitats looking for a wide variety of migrants. Meet in the parking lot off Herrick Road on the west side of the preserve.

**Leader:** Nancy Allured, [nallured@gmail.com](mailto:nallured@gmail.com)

**Saturday, June 14, 9:30 am / 11:30 am, DBC 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party**

**Blackwell Forest Preserve North Shelter, Warrenville**

Please RSVP by June 8. [CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)

Join club members to celebrate DBC's 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday. We will meet at 9:30 am at the Blackwell Forest Preserve's North Shelter for the first ever 40 Birds in 40 Minutes Scavenger Hunt. A hot dog lunch will be served at 11:30. Come for one or both!

Use Blackwell FP main entrance on Butterfield Road (about ¼ mile west of Winfield Rd.). To get to the North Shelter take the Main Drive to the north end of Silver Lake (past the boat rentals). The shelter is located just before the campground entrance. [Blackwell FP Webpage](#)

Any questions contact: Andie Duffy  
[aduffy99@ameritech.net](mailto:aduffy99@ameritech.net)



*May's field trip to Seager Park in Naperville. Photo by Steve Constantelos*

**Monday, June 16, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, Greene Valley Forest Preserve, Woodridge**

Registration with the leader is required, limit 20 participants.

This morning trip will be more oriented towards new birders, but experienced birders are welcome. We will walk at a leisurely pace to allow everyone to see all the birds. We will search for late migratory birds

and summer residents. Meet at the Thunderbird Youth Camp Parking Lot. Go west on 79<sup>th</sup> about ½ mile, the entrance in on the south side of 79<sup>th</sup> Street, west of Greene Road.

**Leader: Bonnie Graham, [coye72112@gmail.com](mailto:coye72112@gmail.com)**

**Friday, June 20, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm, After work Birding at Danada Forest Preserve (east), Wheaton**

Registration is not required. Please email the leader if you plan to attend to receive updates.

Start the weekend off with a casual evening of birding. This trip is planned with the after-work/school crowd in mind, but anyone interested is welcome! We will stick to well-maintained gravel trails and walk approximately two miles. Danada East (Danada House) is located at 3S501 Naperville Road, on the east side of the road, south of Butterfield Rd. and north of 1-88. Plan to meet at the north end of the parking lot near the entry kiosk with the benches and bike racks. This trip may be cancelled due to weather.

**Leader: William Pixler, [pillwixler@gmail.com](mailto:pillwixler@gmail.com)**

**Wednesday, June 25, 7:30 am - 10:30 am McKee Marsh, Warrenville**

Registration is not required.

Join us for a morning walk at one of DuPage County's premier birding hotspots to look for resident and breeding species. The walk will be approximately three miles on limestone and earthen trails; wear appropriate shoes and clothing. Meet at the visitor parking lot on the north side of Mack Road, located east of Rt. 59, and west of Winfield Road.

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

**Additional birding opportunities:**

Accessible Bird Walks at Cantigny are open to birders of all levels and abilities. If you enjoy a leisurely walk on beautiful grounds, there is plenty of capacity! Check the Cantigny calendar every month for dates at <https://cantigny.org/events/>. A parking fee of \$6.00 will apply; no fee for the walk itself.

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)

## Welcome, New Members

Jyothish Atluri	Warrenville	Staci Glon	Naperville
Matthew and Heather Bartmes	Elmhurst	Dave Pinella	Naperville
Andrew Eck	Naperville	Ruth Rehayem	Lisle
Chris Edwardsen	Naperville	Rick VanSeters	Glen Ellyn



## Member Musings on Birding and Nature, Part 3

We're pleased to present part 3 of Member Musings stimulated by the March Book Club read, *The Comfort of Crows* by Judith Renkl. We hope you've enjoyed these thoughtful contributions from DBC Book Club members.

### **Pat Carl: My Private World**

I open my car door and am greeted with a chorus of birdsong that makes my heart sing. I grab my binoculars and enter my private world that belongs to only me and the birds I see and hear in my present sphere of existence. A border of mature trees separates the parking lot and the road from the field across the street and the industrial buildings to the east. I focus in on a Red-eyed Vireo straddling a thin branch among the fresh spring leaves. I wander across the parking lot towards a glint of water I spy glistening through the trees on what turns out to be the bank of a small inland harbor. Through the trees, I can see tree swallows darting in and out along the edge of the water and the sandy shore. A small gust of wind distracts me and draws my attention to the upper reaches of the taller trees along the path. The winds calm, but a flutter of leaves brings my bins up to my eyes and I spot my first Blackburnian Warbler of the season. The stark contrast of his intense black mask against that fresh brilliant orange plumage never ceases to take my breath away. My eyes stay glued to the gift of the presence of this tiny four-inch magnificent winged creature until it quickly tires of pausing on its journey and flies off.

### **Alice Smeed: A Child's Memories of the Natural World**

Margaret Renkl mentioned that the cemetery was her playground as a child. My earliest memories of nature were the wooded areas that surrounded my grandparents' house in Crab Orchard, West Virginia. How large the property was, I'm not sure; at the time it seemed immense. They had a large garden at the back of the house and a chicken coop.

One morning I was the first one up and I went outside to play. To my delight I saw a box under an arbor in my grandmother's rose garden. In the box was a cat surround by six tiny kittens. Of course, I went over and picked one up. Fortunately, the mom didn't seem to mind. The kittens were so tiny and soft and their eyes were not yet open. They were meowing and moving around and over each other, and I was so fascinated I stayed and watched them for a long time before I went back to tell my brother of my discovery.

To my brother and me the wooded areas seem like an immense forest. We had a lot of places to explore and it seemed so mysterious. The trees were large and some of the areas were very shaded with lots of places to hide. We could let our imaginations go wild!

### **Andie Duffy: Nature at Work**

I am sitting at the breakfast table looking out at the yard when a blur of movement swoops from the right and catches my attention. Birds at the feeders and squirrels underneath scatter! The next thing I see is a Cooper's Hawk grabbing a fleeing squirrel in its talons and flying up to a power line on the side of the yard. This was not a pleasant sight! After observing for a few heartbeats, I decided that I

probably didn't want to see what happens next, so I walked away, but to this day I still remember the event and, maybe irrationally, I feel sorry for that unfortunate squirrel. Yes, this is nature at work; I get that it's the food chain in action. Still, it was tough to watch.

## Forest Preserve's Master Plan Delivers Exciting Results!

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has been busy executing against their Master Plan, which is showing exciting results for our natural areas. Check out some of these improved jewels in our county and be happy you voted for the referendums supporting our green spaces.

- **Hickory Grove:** These 31 acres were a class 4 parcel in Lisle when purchased. It has thousands of Hickory Trees with many Shagbark Hickory. The District has 100% completed the removal of undesirable shrubs and trees to reveal millions of exploding forest floor plants to emerge to utter delight across the preserve. Fields of shooting stars and wild geraniums are prevalent. Work required two years from 2022 to the winter of 2024 and revealed a lovely area in Lisle near Hobson Woods.
- **Egermann Woods:** This 187-acre area has also been 100% completed with initial removal of undesirable plants like honeysuckle and buckthorn. Bluebells and buttercups along with dozens of other plants are revealed and thriving because of more light reaching the forest floor. Additional funds are available for maintenance of the above two areas.
- **Fischer Woods:** A wet ephemeral woodland in the Addison/Bensenville area is 50% complete with removal of invasives. This is a wet area with woodland ponds. May apples, red trilliums, and wild leeks are already in bloom.
- **West Chicago Prairie:** This is the largest, most diverse prairie in DuPage. It is also an IL State Nature Preserve. West Chicago Prairie is 75% remnant, having never been under agriculture. The current restoration project is 50% complete. Swallowtails, monarchs, wildflowers, and forbs including endangered species are all found here in abundance.
- **Herrick Lake:** This is the largest project undertaken and is now 100% complete. Located in Warrenville, it is 575 acres. To uninformed observers this project looked highly disturbed before the plants emerged to create the original natural ecosystem. Heavy equipment was needed to remove the dense growth to later reveal the beauty of native plants.

Upcoming projects include Hidden Lake, Fullersburg area, Danada/Rice Lake, Waterfall Glen Savanna, Kline Creek, and Timber Ridge stream meandering and stream bank stabilization, and Springbrook Prairie.



## 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,  
Jim Green, 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  
Photo Contest: Mike Warner  
Spring Bird Count: 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 (Auction)
May 15	November 13