

Drummings September 2025

President's Letter



Next Meeting

September 11, 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'm feeling a mix of melancholy and nostalgia these days. Nostalgia for the good days of birding this past summer—the lifers finally captured, that especially great look at a bird I've seen before but had only a glimpse (think Yellow-breasted Chat), or the one captured in an activity (that Bald Eagle that swooped down to catch a fish just 20 feet from where we were having our picnic dinner). You know, those moments in a birder's life that you just can't wait to tell your birding buddies about because no one else would understand.

And melancholy because the weather's going to be cooling down all the way to freezing (and have I mentioned before that I really don't like cold weather?). And that means that so many of our favorite feathered friends will have left the north and we'll be missing their songs and their presence in our yards and in the woods around us.

This combination adds up to an awareness of the temporary nature of so many things in our lives. In many places, areas that one might have birded one year could be gone the next year due to fire or flood, tornado or hurricane. We are fortunate to live in a place where these major disasters are very unusual. But thinking about this makes me all the more grateful for the wonderful experiences I have access to when birding in DuPage County.

And that gratitude extends to so many things in life that we assume will be there forever but may be very temporary or briefly present. So I guess my message today is to say appreciate those things that make your life fulfilling, treasure those special moments, and hold on to the hope that spring will come again.

Make the most of every day!

See you in the woods,

Thelma Hulka, President
scubabird@gmail.com

September 11 Meeting, In Person and Via Zoom: Everything eBird!

Presented by: Robert Perez and Matt Crisler

One of the most requested topics for a club meeting has been how to get the most out of eBird, which has become the go-to digital platform for recording and sharing your birding records. DBC's own Robert Perez and Matt Crisler will walk you through the website and app experiences during the meeting, along with possibly a few other digital birding topics. Be sure to bring your laptops and mobile devices along so you can follow along and try it out for yourself! This meeting will be hybrid; the Zoom registration link can be found below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/Hf2UhmKtCwWzIDuSXerUA>

Birding and Breakfast, the Perfect Combo

It was a good morning for almost 50 DBCers who gathered on a gorgeous late summer day for our annual Birding and Breakfast event. The morning started with a hike up the hill at Blackwell to see a few birds, followed by breakfast noshes and some excellent socializing. We welcomed new members and enjoyed connecting with old pals. The shelter provided a bonus with a late-nesting barn swallow feeding her two hungry babies. Everybody needs a good breakfast to start their day!

Many thanks to organizers Donnalyn Quint, Jim Mateski, and Natalie McFaul, with contributions from other board members.



More Birding and Breakfast Photos



Photos by Diann Bilderback

Auction is Looking Good!

The Auction Planning Committee reports that auction donations are rolling in and planning is in full swing. The DBC Auction, our first since 2019, will be held **October 9 at the DuPage County Historical Museum in Wheaton, 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.** Its purpose is to raise funds for club operations and our grants and donations program—and to provide a fun social event for members and friends of the club.

Auction Highlights

Mark your calendar NOW because you don't want to miss this event. Here's a preview of some of the 60 or so items we will be auctioning:

- Optics by Swarovski, Minolta, Sony, Bushnell, Vanguard, and Tamron
- Nine unique "experiences" to explore regional birding hotspots with expert birders and naturalists
- Bird feeders, handmade bird houses, a rain barrel, and birdbaths
- Numerous memberships and subscriptions plus tickets to regional birding festivals
- Original bird artwork, prints, stamps, and unique antique items
- Birdy gift baskets featuring craft brews, wine, spa items, and more

If You have Items to Donate

The auction features the Birding Bazaar: tables of \$3, \$5, \$10, and \$20 of new or gently used member-donated items, which includes bird-related books, artwork, collectibles, and related items that members want to "rehome." Finally, we run a raffle with additional items. Everyone can go home with a treasure!

If you have bird- or nature-related treasures you're ready to pass on, you have two choices for delivering them to the auction team:

- Bring them to the September 11 meeting, where auction team members will collect them. (However, if you have a large number of heavy books and/or DVDs, we ask that you bring them 5:30-6:00 p.m. on auction night.)

- Drop them off at the home of Jeff Reiter (Glen Ellyn) or Denis Kania (Naperville) by September 20. You can contact Jeff and Denis for address details at jreiter@wordsonbirds.com or djkan36@gmail.com.

For any donated items, we need the following information: your name and contact info, name and contact info of third party who might have donated the item (if applicable), short description, estimated value.

Our Donors Rock!

A big thank you to the 20 organizations who have already donated items—and a reminder to frequent their businesses to show your thanks:

American Bird Conservancy	Ellyn's Tap and Grill
American Birding Association	Erva Tool and Manufacturing
Barn Owl Garden Center	Fermilab Natural Areas
Boomers Baseball League	Field Guides, Inc.
Buteo Books	Illinois Audubon Society
BWD (formerly Bird Watcher's Digest)	Indiana Audubon Society
Chicago Bird Alliance	International Crane Foundation
Conservation Foundation	Morton Arboretum
Cornell Lab of Ornithology	Red Hill Birding
DuPage Forest Preserve	Wild Birds Unlimited (Lisle)

Auction Planning Team

Thanks also to the volunteers who are leading the planning of this special event: Diann Bilderback, Jeff Reiter, Denis Kania, John Baker, Jim Mateski, Lindsay Vacek, and Steve Mineck. Feel free to contact any member with questions.

Nominating Committee Seeks Volunteers for Leadership Roles

Do you have a few hours a month to devote to DBC's governance? The Nominating Committee is actively looking for new volunteers to fill important roles on the leadership team. This is a great opportunity to join a collegial group who makes it happen at the DuPage Birding Club. Contact Thelma Hulka at scubabird@gmail.com if any of the open roles interest you:

Vice President—serve as #2 on the Executive Committee, with primary duty to arrange speakers for member meetings and coordinate with COD for our meeting space. The VP will step in to lead if the President is unavailable and will actively participate in monthly Board meetings. The VP becomes President the following year, meaning this is essentially a two-year commitment.

Director—represent the interests of all DBC members as an active member of the Executive Committee. Directors often take on other roles like Outreach or Hospitality to round out their contributions. This is a one-year term.

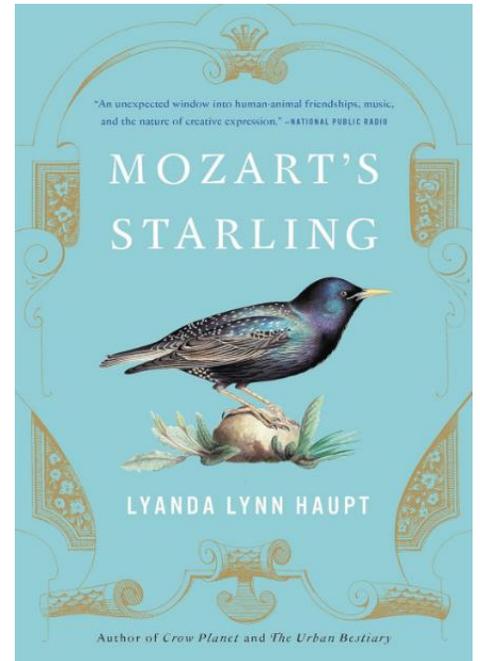
Communications—participate as a member of the Communications team responsible for the newsletter, website, and social media channels. Duties tailored to the individual's skillset and interests.

DBC Book Club Meets September 4

The DBC Book Club's next read is *Mozart's Starling* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt.

In 1784, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart encountered a caged starling who sang an improvised version of the theme from his Piano Concerto no. 17 in G major. Captivated, Mozart purchased the bird and for the next three years, the starling lived with him. *Mozart's Starling* explores the fascinating and unlikely bond between one of the world's great composers and this commonest of birds. Writer Lyanda Haupt intertwines her own experience with a rescued baby starling to explore the human-animal bond, the secret world of starlings, the nature of creative inspiration, and our place in the world.

You're invited to join a lively discussion of this book at our next meeting, which will be **Thursday, September 4**. For details on the meeting, contact Mike Warner at mwarner2543@gmail.com



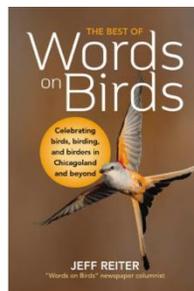
The Best of Words on Birds Now Available

DBC member Jeff Reiter has just released *The Best of Words on Birds*, a selection of his favorite columns from 30 years of publishing *Words on Birds* monthly in The Daily Herald. Columns focus on individual



Photo by Glenn Kaupert

species, birding tips and know-how for beginners, interesting people or books in the field, and Jeff's own personal experiences as a birder. Few people have done more to evangelize the pleasure of engaging with birds than Jeff. If birding is "having a moment," Jeff is one of the people who importantly nurtured the interest of new birders and bird nerds alike. Check out this Q&A with Jeff and the editor at Eckhartz: [Q&A](#).



Jeff will give a talk and sign books on September 4 at 6:30 p.m. at Cantigny Park. The event is free with paid parking (\$5).

<https://cantigny.org/event/book-talk-birds/>

Alternatively, you can order your copy of *The Best of Words on Birds* through Eckhartz Press: [The Best of Words on Birds | Eckhartz Press](#). Congratulations, Jeff, on this huge accomplishment!

A Passion for Hummingbirds

The August 13, 2025, edition of The Daily Herald featured a story on DBC member Denis Kania and his quest to see as many of the world's hummingbirds as possible. The feature was authored by DBC member Jeff Reiter in his monthly *Words on Birds* column.

Hummingbirds exist only in the Western hemisphere so you won't find them in Africa, Europe, Australia, or Asia. Denis has traveled extensively within the region including destinations like Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, and recently Cuba to see 237 species of the 367 that exist worldwide. Captivated by their beauty, incredible aerodynamics, and interesting behavior, Denis wants to see as many of these "flying jewels" as he can. Few birders (if any) will have seen more hummingbird species than Denis!

To read the full story and see stunning images of some of the hummingbirds Denis has seen, click here: ['Flying jewels': Naperville man has seen 237 species of hummingbirds](#)



Photo by Diann Bilderback



Coppery-headed Emerald. Photo by Mike Warner

DISCORD: An Important Resource for Birding News

A reminder from the Bird Conservation Network (DBC is a member of this regional coalition): if you want stay abreast of what is happening in the birding community within the Chicago region, the Birding Illinois Discord app is the place for conservation updates, news, and events. This online community, currently with 1,800 members, has about 30 channels with topics that vary from Rare Bird Alerts and bird sightings in various counties to ID questions and general discussion of birding. You'll find BCN updates on the conservation community and events channels.

You can sign up for Discord on a mobile phone by downloading the app from the App store. Once you have an account, join the flock on Birding Illinois by visiting [Birding Illinois Discord invite](#). See you there!

September 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.

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, September 3, 7:30 am - 10:30 am, Lyman Woods Nature Center, Downers Grove

Registration with the leader is required.

After meeting in the parking lot, we will explore the varied habitats of Lyman Woods. We will be looking for migrants and end of the summer birds. Lyman's trails are known for being very muddy. If a rainy spell occurs prior to the date, be prepared with appropriate footwear. Meet at the parking lot on 31st Street. 901 31st St, Downers Grove, IL

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

Thursday, September 4, 7:00 am - 10:00 am, Springbrook Prairie Forest Preserve, Naperville

Registration with the leader is required.

Springbrook Prairie is a great place to look for early fall migrants. Dress for the weather and wear long pants and hiking boots in case we go off trail. Use insect repellent for ticks and mosquitoes. Meet in the gravel lot on the east side of Plainfield-Naperville Road at 7:00 am.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/hpb5Q9WPwojvrApj6>

Leader: Joe Suchecki, dbcsec2020@gmail.com, (630) 842-4921

Saturday, September 6, 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Wood Dale Reservoir, Wood Dale

Registration with the leader is required, limit 15 participants.

Wood Dale Reservoir offers great viewing opportunities for several species of migrating shorebirds. Spotting scopes can be useful here; trip leader will have one. Shorebird IDs can be difficult at times – Trip leader will be happy to help people who may be new to it, but it will help to review field guides, eBird/Merlin, and/or some of the DBC YouTube content (Yellowlegs and Similar Waders, Peeps) ahead of time. We will meet at the parking lot at the end of School Street.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/gzcz9vDcy4ypAJbM8>

Leader: Matt Crisler, crislermj@gmail.com.

Monday, September 8, 7:30 am - 10:00 am, Elsen's Hill, West DuPage Woods Forest Preserve, Winfield

Registration with the leader is requested in case of cancellation due to weather.

Elsen's Hill is well-known as one of the best places to witness fall passerine migration in DuPage County. We'll be out in the morning in the peak of migration season looking for warblers, vireos, sparrows and other fall migrants stopping to refuel on their journeys south. We'll also stay on the lookout for resident preserve specialties, such as titmice, Pileated Woodpeckers, and raptors. The grass and/or dirt trails we will be taking are maximum 1.5-2 miles long. Elsen's Hill can be very muddy, so you may want to bring boots.

Meet at the "West DuPage Woods Forest Preserve - Elsen's Hill Area" parking lot.

(<https://maps.app.goo.gl/KYHzHmL5osNTVZin8>)

This walk will be canceled in the event of inclement weather. Participants will be notified of any changes or cancellations via email.

Leader: Hazem Alkhan, hazemdsf@gmail.com

Friday, September 12, 7:30 am - 10:30 am, St. James Farm Forest Preserve, Warrenville

Registration with the leader is required, limit 8 participants.

St. James Farm provides a variety of restored prairies, woodlands, and wetlands where over 300 species of native plants and animals thrive. Let's see how many fall migrants we can find. We'll walk about 2 miles on crushed gravel and dirt deer paths if they're not too overgrown. Bring bug/tick spray in case. Meet by the horse statue.

(<https://maps.app.goo.gl/d2ut1D88rMQa23tE8>)

Leader: Elena Nelson, ladylena76@gmail.com.

Tuesday, September 16, 7:30 am - 10:00 am, Springbrook Prairie Forest Preserve, Naperville

Registration with the leader is required, limit 12 participants.

Field trip for fall migrants at Springbrook Prairie Forest Preserve. Trip will start by looking for waterbirds, including rails at the marsh, and then move on to migrant bird locations on east side of Plainfield-Naperville Road. Trip will concentrate on fall warblers. Dress for weather and wear appropriate hiking boots in case we go off trail. Wear insect repellent for ticks and mosquitoes. Meet at the Model Aircraft Field Parking Lot on the west side of Plainfield-Naperville Road at 7:30 am.

(<https://maps.app.goo.gl/WqXt8t2ibR1Sizty6>)

Leader: Joe Suchecki, dbcsec2020@gmail.com, (630) 842-4921.

Saturday, September 20, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, Wood Dale Reservoir, Wood Dale

Registration with the leader is required, limit 12 participants.

On this trip with Henry we will explore the best shorebirding hotspot in DuPage County. We have the chance to see some uncommon/rare shorebirds along with warblers and other passerine migrants during the portion of this walk that will take us near Salt Creek. Paved surfaces. Meet at the lot at the end of School Street at 8am sharp.

(<https://maps.app.goo.gl/vftaZZZEx2fHg9yw9>)

Leader: Henry Meade, meadehenry21@gmail.com, (224) 319-4377.

Sunday, September 21, 7:30 am - 12:00 pm, Lyman Woods, Downers Grove

Registration with the leader is required, limit 10 participants.

Functionally, this is more or less a “Big Morning” trip – our targets will primarily be southbound warblers, but we’ll be exploring Lyman in detail and trying to find as much as possible in the heart of fall migration. Expect a longer walk than typical. Lyman’s trails are almost always muddy regardless of weather. If rain occurs ahead of the trip, expect areas with standing water. Be prepared with appropriate footwear and bring bug/tick spray. Meet at the parking lot on 31st Street.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/NtYkLrUroVB2wUk87>

Leader: Matt Crisler, crislermj@gmail.com.

Sunday, September 21, 8:00 am - 10:00 am, Take a Hike! Challenge Bird Walk, St. James Farm Forest Preserve, Warrenville

- **If you’re interested in participating in this bird walk, please reach out to the field trip leader via email. Leader: Robert Perez, robertperez787@gmail.com**

DuPage Birding Club will be partnering with the Conservation Foundation to lead a bird walk as part of the Take a Hike! Challenge. The walk will be held at St. James Farm Forest Preserve in Warrenville. We will meet in the parking lot off Winfield Road and will traverse St. James Farm’s limestone trails at a leisurely pace, taking our time to identify tricky fall migrants. The walk will cover a couple of miles over relatively flat terrain. Our targets will include fall warblers and other migrant species. New and experienced birders are always welcome.

- *The Conservation Foundation and Endeavor Health have partnered to create the Take a Hike! Challenge. For eight weeks, from Sept. 2 to Oct. 28, people of all ages are encouraged to rediscover the health benefits of being active and spending time outdoors.*

People interested in participating in the free challenge can follow the directions below to sign up.

1) Sign up online at theconservationfoundation.org/take-a-hike/

2) Get out and hike from Sept. 2 to Oct. 28!

3) Turn in the Take a Hike! Tracker with 6 completed hikes to earn the Take a Hike! Trail Blaze Award (commemorative pin or medallion. First time participants can earn a hiking stick + medallion).*

**Must register individually to be eligible. Supplies are limited. Offer is valid while supplies last.*

To learn more and sign up, visit theconservationfoundation.org/take-a-hike/.

- **If you’re interested in participating in this bird walk, please reach out to the field trip leader via email.**

Leader: Robert Perez, robertperez787@gmail.com.

Wednesday, September 24, 7:30 am - 10:30 am, McKee Marsh, Warrenville

Registration with the leader is not required.

This site remains one of DuPage County’s premier birding spots. Walk around the marsh with us, approximately 3.25 miles, to check out resident species and fall migrants. Most of our walk will be on

the preserve 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.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/Jg3GqKUyYp1RtrYW7>

Leader: Kyle Wiktor, (708) 506-5186.

Thursday, September 25, 7:30 am - 11:00 am, Morton Arboretum – West Side, Lisle

Registration with the leader is required, limit 8 participants.

Arboretum membership is required We'll meet at P19 and do a 3-mile loop to the prairie and back on wood chip, grass and gravel trails looking for fall migrants.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/A3E5CygtfZLK3qnz8>

Leader: Elena Nelson, ladylena76@gmail.com.

Saturday, September 27, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Hawkwatch, Greene Valley Overlook, Naperville

Registration with the leader is required for update on weather conditions, and hawk ID handouts.

Bring a chair, lunch, and hat to the Greene Valley Hawkwatch, where we will quickly review how to ID hawks in flight and then join the team counting migrating raptors. Walk a hundred feet on limestone path from parking lot (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/LFgVdFWzG8L26NE58>) to the watch site—you will see a car and people—then we'll be sitting on a grass lawn. If winds are good, we can see many migrating Broad-winged Hawks in late September.

It is a good idea to bring a hoodie or jacket as it can be colder up top than at ground level. Watch the Greene Valley Hawkwatch and Hawk ID talks on the club's YouTube channel to fully prepare for this experience.

Leader: Vicky Sroczyński, vsroczyński@comcast.net, (630) 297-9512.

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.

Will County Forest Preserves District offers birding events: <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/>

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



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 6 (note date change)