

Next Meeting

Date: **Monday, June 19, 2006**

Time: **7:00 p.m.**

Place: **The Train Museum near Rib Lake, Wisconsin**

Directions: N4950 Maple Rd, Rib Lake, WI - Hwy 13 north from Medford approximately 5 miles to EASTBOUND Cty Hwy M - turn right onto Cty M and go east about 8-1/2 miles to Maple Rd - turn right on Maple Rd and go south a short bit to the end of the road, which is Don Warner's barn. (He mentioned that as you go east on M you will cross Hwy C, then Forest Rd, and Maple is the next road. If you hit Joe Martin Rd, you have just missed Maple, which goes south only from M). Mr Warner's phone # is 748-2754 if anyone gets lost.

Food: Neitzel and Sue Koffarnus

Program: **Museum of Train History and Museum**
Don Warner

During the club's "brainstorming" meeting several months ago, a majority of members requested a meeting be held at the train museum south of the Rib Lake area. An appointment has been arranged for our June meeting, June 19th, to be held at the train museum owned and operated by Don Warner. Mr Warner has compiled a museum of train history and antiques, and is very proud of the construction of 500 ft of old gauge railroad with a fully operational railroad. He welcomes cameras and visitors. Mr Warner does not require an admission fee, but does accept "freewill donations."

Within Mr Warner's complex is a dining hall and we have been invited to have our usual lunch in the hall. - *Gayle Davis, CBC President*

Whooping Crane at Ken Luepke's Pond

There is a Whooping Crane at Ken's in Spencer. If you aren't familiar, Ken's is 1 mile north of Spencer then a mile or so east on EauPleine, on the north side of the road. (see image at right taken on Ken's pond by Jon Zellmer)

If it isn't at the wetland by his home, check all the hayfields anywhere in the area. Sometimes she's just a mile or so to the north. Circle the sections. She's hanging out with a big flock of Sandhills and has been coming in at night to roost at Ken's at dusk (and sometimes show up earlier in the afternoon). They all head out to feed again in the morning at about 5:15.

On sending her band colors in, we now know she's a bird from last year, but not one led by the ultra-lights. She was raised and put out to migrate with other adult Whooping Cranes and Sandhills. They made the migration trip to Florida and back on their own. Still, an awesome breakthrough !



To check out more on these birds, go to www.operationmigration.org it's an awesome website. From there you can follow the daily progress and field notes.

A Note from Connie: Coming soon : Operation Migration

As some of you know, we have a jar for contributions set out at each meeting for this very important project. There have been great strides made in increasing the numbers of whooping cranes... many led on their first migration south by an ultra-light plane. There is the possibility that the lead pilot may honor us by coming to one of our meetings and telling us first hand of the work they are doing to save the Whooping Crane – a bird that is on the brink of extinction. This is a world wide major project/accomplishment and it is happening in our own backyard - Necedah, Wi.

If this all falls in place we hope to turn it into a community event to help provide additional funding. From there you can follow the daily progress and field notes.

Watch for updates in the next few Chirps.....

Unusual Migrant

Western Grebe on Medford Mill Pond



Thanks to the sharp eyes of the Kuse Sisters, it was discovered that we had a Western Grebe visiting the Mill Pond in Medford for about a week or so. On the day that I observed it, in addition to the fare that it caught in its usual diving/hunting manner, it also caught and ate numerous dragonflies that seemed to want to perch on it.

The **Western Grebe**, (*Aechmophorus occidentalis* †), is a member of the grebe family of water birds.

This is the largest North American grebe 56-74 cm (22"-29") long. It is black-and-white, with a long, slender, swan-like neck and red eyes. The Western Grebe has black around the eyes and a straight greenish-yellow bill whereas the Clark's Grebe (with which it is easily confused) has white around the eyes and an up-turned bright yellow bill. The downy young of Western are grey, Clark's downy young are white.

Western Grebes nest in colonies of hundreds on large inland lakes, sometimes using coastal marshes, in western North America. It has a spectacular courtship displays; two birds will rear up and patter across the water's surface. Northern birds migrate west to coastal ocean in winter; birds in the southwest and Mexico may be permanent residents.

This bird dines by diving for carp, herring, mollusks, crabs, and salamanders

Bird Reports (2006 Mid-March to Mid-May)

Contributors: Rhoda Barber , Charlotte Bolz , Gayle Davis , Connie Decker , Mary Guenther , Hildegard and Loretta Kuse , Dennis Larson , Ken Luepke , Doug and Willa Pledger , Larry Ruhde, Greg and Cam Scott.

183 Species were reported for this time period!

Note: Only observers for rare or unusual sightings are included.

Species: Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, American Bittern, Least Bittern (Ruhde), Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan (Davis (late)), Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Black Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk (Ruhde /Scott), Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle (Davis (late)), American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Wild Turkey, Virginia Rail, Sora, American Coot, Sandhill Crane, Whooping Crane (Decker / Luepke), Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Willet (Luepke), Spotted Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, Wilson's Phalarope, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl (Bolz), Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl (Decker / Luepke (late)), Short-eared Owl (Ruhde), Northern Saw-whet Owl, Whip-poor-will, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House Wren, Winter Wren, Sedge Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, American Pipit, Cedar Waxwing, Blue-winged Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Pine Warbler, Palm Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart, Prothonotary Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, American Tree Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow (Luepke), White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Lapland Longspur, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird (Ruhde (late)), Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Oriole, Purple Finch, House Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeak (Scott), House Sparrow

Schieffelin - (taken from "Teach The Starlings" a program of Education and Intervention)

In 1890 and 1891, Schieffelin, a theater aficionado, released about 100 starlings in New York's Central Park, reasoning **badly** that every species of bird mentioned in the plays of Shakespeare should be represented in American skies. He tried to establish various bullfinches, nightingale, and skylarks in Manhattan, all of which failed to multiply, but his freed starlings set about nesting, mating and colonizing the continent as if they had just paid cash for it. Within a century, they had spread across the entirety of the United States, through most of Canada and Mexico, and they're currently eyeing Central America and a few Caribbean Islands as well. Their population in the Western Hemisphere is estimated to be upwards of 200 million birds.

Not only are starlings adaptive, they are clever birds that can be taught to mimic sounds, including small vocabularies of human speech. One artist, Brian D. Collier, has begun to solicit volunteers, who he urges to shout the name "Schieffelin!" any time they encounter a starling or better yet a flock of them. He hopes that the birds who hear and learn the name will in turn teach other starlings to say it as well. For Brian, altering the call of the European starling to a shrieking "Schieffelin!" would serve as a ubiquitous reminder that even seemingly innocuous acts of human intervention can have devastating consequences on biodiversity and whole ecosystems.

He has named his project "Teach the Starlings". For all its formal complexity and conceptual brilliance, the wonder of "Teach the Starlings" derives not from what Schieffelin or the other birds might learn, but from what Brian is teaching us. Shrewdly, it is our behavior that he is conditioning more than that of any starling – awakening us in an environmental awareness so that each time we call out "Schieffelin!" we remember why we're doing it.