



Bird School Syllabus

Thursday-Saturday, June 7th-9th

Hosted by Beaver Creek Reserve and Gaylord Nelson Audubon Society

Welcome to “Bird School”! We hope this class will be a fun and memorable experience in which you will have the opportunity to interact with a great group of knowledgeable teachers as well as other beginning birders just like you. The class is a combination of classroom learning and high-quality field experiences that will leave you with a lasting curiosity about birds.

Class Schedule

Thursday June 7th: Wise Nature Center (south side of County Highway K)

3:30pm:	Arrive/Registration
4:00pm:	Presentation: “Tools of the Trade: How to use binoculars and field guides” <i>Jeanette Kelly</i>
5:00pm:	Presentation: “Bird Identification for Beginners” <i>Bill Hogseth</i>
6:00pm:	Dinner (provided) + Group Discussions
7:00pm:	Presentation: “The world of birds” <i>Brandon Polzin</i>
7:30pm:	Presentation: “Birding by Ear” <i>Steve Betchkal</i>

Friday June 8th: Wise Nature Center (south side of County Highway K)

6:00-8:00am:	Outdoor Field Trip: Augusta Wildlife Area
9:30-10:30am:	Group Discussions
10:30-11:00am:	Bird Jeopardy
11:00am-12:00pm:	Keynote Presentation: “Wisconsin Waterfowl: Identification, Ecology, and Behavior” <i>Bill Volkert</i>
12:00-12:30pm:	Lunch (Bring your own)
12:30-1:10pm:	Presentation: “From Jamaica to Wisconsin: A year in the life of a neotropical migrant” <i>Bill Hogseth</i>
1:20-1:40pm:	Presentation: “Up close and person with an American Kestrel” <i>Ruth Forsgren</i>
1:40-2:00pm:	Presentation: “Winter Birds of Wisconsin” <i>Bill Volkert</i>
2:00-2:30pm:	Discussion: Lingerin g questions
2:30-3:30pm:	Optional: Outdoor Field Trip: Beaver Creek Reserve

Saturday June 9th: Wise Nature Center (south side of County Highway K)

6:30-7:30am:	Optional: Outdoor Field Trip: Beaver Creek Reserve
8:00-9:00am:	Presentation: “Introduction to Citizen Science” <i>Jeanette Kelly</i>
9:10-11:00am:	<u>Breakout Sessions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bird Banding Demonstration• eBird 101: Birdwatching in the 21st century• Using Citizen Science to Understand Wisconsin’s Breeding Birds
11:10am-12:00pm:	Final discussion: “Why do birds matter?”

Locations

Locations: Classroom activities will be at the Wise Nature Center at Beaver Creek Reserve (S1 County Hwy K, Fall Creek, WI 54742). An outdoor field trip will be held at the Augusta Wildlife Area (see below for directions and maps).

Student Survey

Before the course begins, please complete the following survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MJCKB7G>

Keynote Presentation

Keynote speaker Bill Volkert will present “Wisconsin Waterfowl: Identification, Ecology, and Behavior”. Bill worked as the naturalist and wildlife educator for Wisconsin DNR at Horicon Marsh, one of the most extensive freshwater marshes in the United States that boasts the largest nesting population of redhead ducks east of the Mississippi. Drawing on his experience from Horicon Marsh, Bill will use real specimens of mounted waterfowl to compare field marks, size, and shape of different species. While doing so, he will share background about waterfowl migration, foraging, nesting, and conservation.

Food

A full catered dinner will be provided on Thursday night. Students should provide their own lunches on Friday. Snacks and drinks will be provided Friday and Saturday.

Class Homework

You will receive details about a simple homework assignment (if you did not receive them, please let us know). Please have the homework project finished and completed before the course. The homework is important as it provides a foundation for group discussions during the class. Be prepared to share what you have learned.

Recommended Text

The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America: Second Edition, Sibley, David. Knopf, 2nd edition. 2016.

Lodging

If you are traveling and require overnight accommodations, there are several options to choose from. Travel time to Beaver Creek Reserve is shown in parentheses for each option.

Hotels

- GrandStay Residential Suites, 5310 Prill Rd, Eau Claire, WI, 54701, 800-491-6126 (15 minutes)
- Fairfield Inn & Suites, 1666 Princeton Crossing, Eau Claire, WI, 54703, 855-239-9483 (13 minutes)
- Hampton Inn & Suites, 12707 30th Avenue, Chippewa Falls, WI, 54729, 855-238-1591 (18 minutes)

Camping

- Beaver Creek Reserve (tent camping only): contact Jeanette Kelly: csc@beavercreekreserve.org (0 minutes)
- Coon Fork County Campground: <https://www.eccountyparks.com/parks/camping/> (28 minutes)
- Harstad County Park: <https://www.eccountyparks.com/parks/camping/> (16 minutes)

What to bring

Please bring binoculars and a field guide (unless you requested to borrow one) for all portions of the class, including indoor presentations. For the field trip, please bring extra water, snacks, sunscreen, and bug repellent.

Parking

When parking at Beaver Creek Reserve, use the north campus parking lot near the Citizen Science Center on the north side of Highway K. Once parked, walk through the tunnel to the Wise Nature Center. See map below.

Friday Field Trip

Friday morning’s field trip will start at 6:30am sharp, so we suggest arriving 10 minutes early (travel time from Eau Claire is approximately 35 minutes). We recommend getting a good night sleep on Thursday night so that you are fresh for Friday’s activities. The trip will go rain or shine, so please dress appropriately for the weather (including rain gear if necessary). After the field trip, we’ll transition right into presentations and group activities.

Directions to the Augusta Wildlife Area from Fall Creek, WI (Saturday field trip)

The field trip will be in the Augusta Wildlife Area. Proceed east on Highway 12 for 5.5 miles. Turn east (left) on County Highway V; proceed for 2.5 miles. Turn north (left) on Highway 27; proceed for 1.2 miles. Turn east (right) on Highway GG. After one mile, continue straight onto Highway G (do not turn!); proceed for 1.5 miles. Turn south (right) onto Kelly Road; proceed for one mile. Turn west (right) onto Wildlife Road; proceed for 1.5 miles. We will meet at the dead end of Wildlife Road where the road terminates at a parking lot. GPS Coordinates for our meeting location: 44.726939, -91.092348. See map below.

Directions to Beaver Creek Reserve from Augusta Wildlife Area (16 miles)

Depart from the wildlife area by traveling east on Wildlife Road. Turn north (left) on Kelly Road; proceed for one mile. Turn west (left) on County Highway G; proceed for 2 miles until you reach Highway 27. Turn north (right) on Highway 27; proceed 2 miles. Turn west (left) on County Highway N; proceed 5.5 miles. Continue straight onto County Highway D for 0.5 miles. Turn west (right) on S 140th Ave; proceed for 2.5 miles. Turn left on Rossman Drive; proceed for one mile. Turn left on County Highway K (aka N 130th Ave) and Beaver Creek Reserve will be on your left.

Cell Phones

We ask that cell phones be silenced during presentations.

Photo Release

We are planning to take photographs during the class. As such, we may take a picture of you! The photo could appear on our website, social media, or in our newsletter. If you are interested in staying anonymous or not being photographed at all, please let us know.

Membership

This class was brought to you by Gaylord Nelson Audubon Society and Beaver Creek Reserve. If you enjoy the class, please consider becoming a member. Membership forms will be available during the class or online at <http://www.gaylordnelsonaudubon.org> or <https://www.beavercreekreserve.org/>

Meet the Teachers

Bill Volkert: Bill worked as the naturalist and wildlife educator for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at Horicon Marsh for 27 years. He has been watching and studying birds for over 40 years and in his travels has sighted more than 3,600 species. He is also a federally licensed master bird bander. He has extensive experience traveling in search of birds including throughout Central and South America, across the Canadian Arctic, to Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Borneo, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and Mongolia.

Steve Betchkal: Steve is the current President of Gaylord Nelson Audubon Society. An amateur ornithologist and master birder, Steve is the originator of the Martin Mart initiative, a program that monitors purple martin colonies in northwest Wisconsin. He is a veteran of four USGS Breeding Bird Surveys. He lives in Eau Claire.

Jeanette Kelly: Jeanette is the Director of Citizen Science at Beaver Creek Reserve. She has a degree in wildlife ecology from UW-Madison and a master's in environmental education from Lesley University. Jeanette has 20 years of experience surveying and banding birds across the country on topics including lead poisoning in swans, raptor migration routes, grassland birds and their relationships to prairie dogs, Spotted Owl nest success, and monitoring the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. She oversees the bird banding program at Beaver Creek Reserve.

Judy Schwarzmeier: Judy has a master's degree in Zoology from UW-Madison and was a science writer of technical environmental literature for 28 years before retiring. She volunteers with citizen science projects of all kinds, but primarily with Beaver Creek Reserve's bird banding program. She holds a banding permit and has assisted with Ruby-Throated Hummingbird banding in Costa Rica.

Karen Mittag: Karen is a retired middle school English teacher who lives in the country near Fall Creek and volunteers at various local non-profits including Beaver Creek Reserve. She loves being outdoors and is active year-around: camping, hiking, biking, snowshoeing, bird watching, traveling, star gazing, and gardening. Karen has been banding birds for the last fifteen years and is excited when folks learn about bird banding.

Bill Hogseth: Bill is a wildlife biologist at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He performs breeding bird surveys for the DNR and the USGS. He is a county coordinator for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas. He also manages 6,000 acres of habitat on DNR-owned wildlife areas. Formerly, Bill was the stewardship manager of West Wisconsin Land Trust, a wilderness technician for the US Forest Service in northern Minnesota, and a board member of The Prairie Enthusiasts. He studied ecological restoration at Northland College in Ashland, WI. He lives in Elk Mound, WI.

Contact Information

Questions? Needs? More information? You can contact Bill Hogseth at billhogseth@gmail.com or Jeanette Kelly at csc@beavercreekreserve.org

Web Links

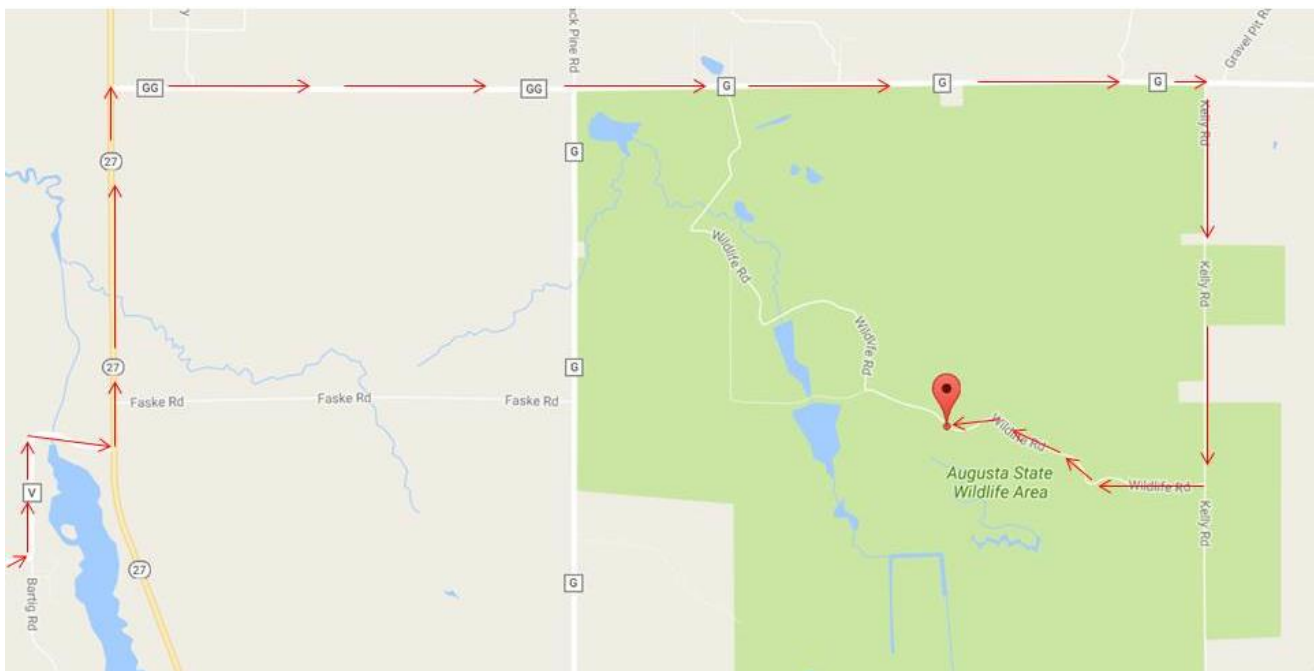
Augusta Wildlife Area: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/wildlifeareas/augusta.html>

Beaver Creek Reserve: <https://www.beavercreekreserve.org>

Gaylord Nelson Audubon Society: <http://www.gaylordnelsonaudubon.org>

Maps

Augusta Wildlife Area (Friday Morning Field Trip)



Beaver Creek Campus Map

