

NEWS RELEASE

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With Birds in Crisis, Wisconsin Bird Lovers Gather to Share Ideas, Inspiration and Action to Save Birds

“Bringing Birds Back” Conference is March 24-25 in Oshkosh



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OSHKOSH – With birds in crisis in Wisconsin, North America and globally, Wisconsin bird lovers are gathering March 24-25 in Oshkosh to share conservation ideas, inspiration, and action to help reverse steep population declines across hundreds of bird species.

The Bringing Birds Back conference will share the latest research on birds’ perilous situation and what’s being done internationally and here in Wisconsin by conservation groups, communities, and tribal nations to save them. A second full day will focus on what individuals can, and many are already doing, at home and in their communities to help birds.

“Birds are in trouble everywhere and they need our help now,” says Karen Etter Hale, chair of the [Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership](#), a conference host along with [Wisconsin Society for Ornithology](#) and [Bird City Wisconsin](#).

“We hope this conference will be the special spark that gets each of us -- wherever we may live -- to take action to help birds. Together, our collective work as individuals, communities, or organizations will Bring Birds Back.”

Among the continuing bad news for birds in 2022 were reports that 1 in 8 birds globally is threatened with extinction; that North American birds have suffered steep population losses in virtually all habitats since 1970; and that only three nesting pairs of Connecticut Warblers were found in Wisconsin in the last two years, just one example of how both rare and once common species are plummeting.

The conference will be held at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Culver Family Welcome Center, 625 Pearl Ave. [Registration is open through March 6, 2023](#). The fee for the two-day event is \$50 and includes lunch. [Find the full schedule of presenters here](#). Register today as space is limited.

International Bird Expert Headlines Day 1; Bird Collision crusader, local Bird City communities share successes

March 24 keynote speaker Michael Parr is president of the American Bird Conservancy, which works across North, South and Central America conserving birds. Parr co-authored the [landmark 2019 study that found 3 billion birds have vanished from North America since 1970](#), and the [2022 State of the Birds](#) report assessing U.S. bird populations. He’ll discuss report findings and international efforts to conserve birds.

“We’re excited about the amazing speakers we have both for national issues and for what we can do in Wisconsin,” says Jennifer Lazewski, executive director of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. “Birds live in many different habitats and have different needs. It’s important to have that big picture in mind even as you’re observing and learning about the birds in your neighborhood, or where you can drive to.”

(more)

Other March 24 presentations share regional and community conservation efforts in Wisconsin, such as the statewide Important Bird Areas Program to identify and prioritize key bird habitat areas, the Southern Driftless Grasslands Project, Milwaukee County's Natural Areas, and bird conservation efforts by the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory.

Highlights of the afternoon session include conservation success stories from Bird City leaders from Lake Geneva, Wausau, Mequon and Ozaukee County.

"The upcoming conference provides a golden opportunity for Bird City representatives from across the state to come together and hear about successful conservation efforts in other Bird Cities and how those efforts could be re-created back at home," says Bird City Wisconsin Director Chuck Hagner.

Troy Peters, Engagement Manager for Audubon Great Lakes, will talk about "Bringing Previously-Excluded Communities into the Fold of Bird Conservation," including in Milwaukee.

A tour of campus sites that were the part of UW-Oshkosh research to determine and address windows posing a collision threat to birds will round out the day's programming.

Oneida Nation restoration work and how bird lovers can help birds at home the focus of Day 2 programming

Day 2, March 25, opens with a presentation on a collaborative effort to monitor birds responding to environmental restoration of Oneida Nation lands. Presenters will be Tony Kuchma, Oneida wetlands project manager, Language and Cultural Educator Tehahukótha (Randy) Cornelius, and Erin Giese, president of the Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society and acting director of UW-Green Bay Cofrin Center for Biodiversity, both partners in the monitoring project.

The conference then shifts gears to zero in on actions people can take at home, with sessions on landscaping with native plants to provide birds and pollinators food and shelter, and solutions for addressing reflective windows that can be deadly for birds. Typically only one or a few windows at home cause problems, but up to 1 billion birds are estimated to die every year in the U.S. after flying into windows, nearly half of them home windows, [research shows](#).

Bryan Lenz, Bird Collisions Campaign Manager for American Bird Conservancy and a former Bird City Wisconsin director, will talk about why birds collide with windows and how to address problem windows; Brenna Marsicek, Madison Audubon communications director and their Bird Collision Corps coordinator, will demonstrate ways to make home windows safer for birds.