

Wisconsin Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are sites that provide essential habitat to one or more species of birds at any stage in their life cycle (breeding, feeding, wintering, or migration). Sites may vary in size but are usually discrete and distinguishable in character, habitat, or ornithological importance from surrounding areas. They may include public or private land. In general, an IBA should exist as an actual or potential protected area, with or without buffer zones, or should have the potential to be managed in some way for birds and general nature conservation. An IBA, whenever possible, should be large enough to supply all or most of the requirements of the bird(s) during the season for which it is important. Although the program places special emphasis on birds, the designation of a site as an IBA can also benefit many other species that share the same habitat. The Ozaukee County IBAs are **Harrington Beach** and **Ozaukee-Bight Lakeshore Migration Corridors**, as well as the **Cedarburg Bog State Natural Area**. A full-color book featuring detailed descriptions and photographs of 86 Wisconsin Important Bird Areas can be purchased through the IBA Coordinator, yoyi.steele@wisconsin.gov, 608/266-8169.

Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) – 98 cents out of every dollar generated from the sale of the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) goes directly to purchase or lease wetland and upland habitat critical to waterfowl and other wildlife. These lands, called Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs), are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Besides serving as a hunting license and a conservation tool, a current year's Federal Duck Stamp also serves as an entrance pass for National Wildlife Refuges where admission is normally charged. Ozaukee County has four WPAs that are managed by the Leopold Management District of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

*“There is symbolic
as well as actual beauty
in the migration of birds...”*

*There is something
infinitely healing in
the repeated refrains
of nature—
the assurance that
dawn comes after night,
and spring after winter.”*

-Rachel Carson

How to Help Birds

At Home

- Help migrants find safe winter homes by waking up with shade grown coffee
- Conserve water and electricity
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Recycle plastic six-pack rings and plastic bags
- Hang bird silhouettes in large windows
- Buy “green” paper and wood products from forests that were harvested sustainably
- Learn about the native flora and fauna in your region
- Keep your cat indoors and spay or neuter

Create Backyard Habitat

- Provide food with native plants and feeders
- Remove invasive plant species
- Furnish clean water
- Leave tree snags and brush piles for shelter
- Supply nest sites and boxes

Think before you spray

- Exercise prevention first
- Use non-chemical controls such as weeding and mulching
- Use low-impact pesticides

In Your Community

- Make gas mileage and low emissions important criteria in buying a car
- Buy a duck stamp to support habitat conservation
- Participate in citizen science
- Support conservation organizations
- Donate old binoculars and field guides
- Volunteer at a refuge or park
- Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day
- Get involved in community land use planning
- Take political action
- Think about the many ways that birds have enriched your life and share them with others

From *101 Ways to Help Birds*, by Laura Erickson



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