2020 HIGHLIGHTS
FROM THE ANNUAL GREAT WISCONSIN BIRDATHON FUNDRAISER

BREAKING RECORDS
We had an incredible record-breaking year raising over $100,000 for priority bird conservation efforts in Wisconsin, and beyond! We received donations from 43 states, 4 countries, 12 sponsors, and over 1,000 individuals.

$104,035 RAISED
Trumpeter Swans by Mark Westphal of the Up North Hammerheads

CONNECTING FOR CONSERVATION
Backyard birding, birding relays, virtual birding, solo birding . . . our 2020 Birdathon-ers rose to the challenge of participating during COVID-19 with unique strategies to stay connected while staying safe!

BIRDS OF A FEATHER
From classrooms to co-workers, we had over 250 participants, 38 new teams, and 5 top fundraising teams who led the flock:

1. Cutright’s Old Coots - $13,546.50
2. Lake Superior eBirders - $7,425.00
3. Jen’s Wehr Warblers - $6,020.00
4. Finch Gang - $5,836.00
5. River Raptors - $5,509.00

Photo by Marilyn Bontly and Michael Wanger of the Cutright’s Old Coots

Photo by Amy Alstad of Adaptive Wren Tern Jay Fun LLC

65 TEAMS
Photo by Amy Alstad of Adaptive Wren Tern Jay Fun LLC
For several years, I’ve donated to the Birdathon. This year, I joined a team for the first time and I’m so glad I did! It gave me a chance to meet some new fellow birders in my area, and to extend my support beyond my own personal donation. The best thing is knowing that I am helping to support Wisconsin’s birds and also Wehr Nature Center.

SARAH STOKES, JEN’S WEHR WARBLERS TEAM

To limit traveling due to COVID-19 teams found creative ways to bird close to home, like the Windsor Waxwings, a 4th grade classroom team who birded in local parks and backyards with family.

Participants birded by foot, bike, car, boat, kayak, canoe, and horse, finding an impressive 237 bird species (including 4 endangered, 6 threatened species and 30 species of special concern). They also took part in a Backyard Birding Challenge, spotting an incredible 187 species in their own backyards!
The "Bird of the Year" featured on our Birdathon t-shirt and mug was the state endangered Kirtland’s Warbler, a rare songbird making a comeback in Wisconsin. We sold 206 products, raising $1,540 #ForTheBirds!

Your efforts received coverage in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the Wisconsin State Journal, and the New York Daily News! We also received support from the Badger Birder, Wisconsin eBird, and Dan Small Outdoors Radio.

In 2020 we also saw a movement take shape that calls for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in the outdoors. One new initiative is Black Birders Week, an online campaign created to highlight Black nature enthusiasts and to increase the visibility of Black birders.

We stand in solidarity with these efforts and humbly acknowledge that we have work to do. We are committed to taking action to ensure our organization includes and supports the diverse communities of our society.
Did you know? This new endowment fund was created in 2019 by Karen Etter Hale, a longtime bird enthusiast, captain of the Finch Gang Team, and member of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, to provide permanent funding to support the Bird Protection Fund.

Thanks to your efforts, Birdathon funds will support these priority bird conservation projects in 2021:

- Advancing Bird Conservation within Wisconsin’s Important Bird Area System - Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership
- Kirtland’s Warbler Conservation - WDNR
- Neighborhood Habitat Improvement Project Pilot - Western Great Lakes Bird & Bat Observatory
- Neotropical Flyways Project - Cornell Lab of Ornithology & SELVA
- Piping Plover Recovery - WDNR
- Reintroduction of Migratory Whooping Cranes - International Crane Foundation
- Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II - Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

Learn more and donate at WisConservation.org/grants/bird-protection-fund

Thank you to our 2020 sponsors:

WIBIRDATHON.ORG | WISCONSERVATION.ORG