



Chequamegon Bay Birding & Nature Festival

May 19 – 21, 2022

Activity Descriptions

Activities noted in **RED** are **FULL**

Thursday, May 19 – Morning

1. FULL Bibon Swamp Birding (FT-3)

6:30 am – 11:00 am

The Bibon Swamp is one of the area's best places to find Golden-winged Warblers. This trip will walk a very lightly traveled, dead-end dirt road through sedge meadow, alder, ash, and mixed lowland forest while enjoying a few Golden-wings amidst a potpourri of birds in a peaceful setting. Tim Oksiuta, local birding expert, will help participants find and pick out numerous species, including various warblers.

2. FULL Birding Copper Falls State Park (FT-3)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

Ancient lava flows, deep gorges, and spectacular waterfalls make Copper Falls one of Wisconsin's most scenic parks. Brad Gingras, local birder and naturalist, will lead participants of all ages and skill levels along the park's trails to absorb the spectacular scenery and glimpse the many warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other forest birds that call Copper Falls home.

Optional: Meet at Copper Falls State Park at 7:15 am.

**Note:* Expect some stair climbs and uneven terrain on trail.

Additional Cost: \$8-11 parking fee per car

3. FULL Birds & Wildlife of the Moquah Pine Barrens (FT-4)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

The Moquah Pine Barrens offer a dramatic change to the local landscape – dry uplands with rolling hills of openings, pines, oaks and various shrubs. Join U.S. Forest Service biologists to look for birds such as Sharp-tailed Grouse, Vesper Sparrows, Brewer's Blackbirds, Eastern Towhees, and more. Also learn how and where to find unique plants and other wildlife in this interesting landscape, including gray wolves, American badgers and small mammals such as the 13-lined ground squirrel.

4. A Bird in the Hand... (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

In this free activity, any festival registrant can come and go as they please within the listed timeframe to experience the wonders of bird banding from expert researchers.

Marvel at the beauty of warblers, sparrows, finches, and other birds up close and personal – an unforgettable experience for all ages. Learn identification features, natural history, and research techniques as leaders demonstrate the how's and why's of bird banding. If you want to see birds up close, then this is the trip for you!

5. FULL Birding Along Pikes Creek (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

This walk will start at the Les Voigt Fish Hatchery and follow Pikes Creek as it wanders inland for about one mile. Led by local birding expert Neil Howk, the hike will pass through a variety of bird habitats, including holding ponds, a beaver pond, and old growth pines. Possible species include waterfowl, 10-15 species of warblers, Common Ravens, woodpeckers, Bald Eagles, Ruffed Grouse, Winter Wrens, thrushes, and more. *Optional:* Meet at Les Voigt Fish Hatchery at 7:30 am.

6. FULL Birding by the Bay (FT-3)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

WDNR Conservation Biologist Ryan Brady will lead participants to multiple lakeshore points near Ashland and/or Washburn to search for waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Interspersed will be short hikes along shoreline trails to find warblers, orioles, sparrows, and other migrating landbirds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

7. Grassland Birding (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

The northwoods typically don't conjure up thoughts of grassland birds but the rural areas of Ashland feature a variety of open habitats where Bobolinks, Upland Sandpipers, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows, Northern Harriers, and other grassland birds can be found. WDNR Conservation Biologist Nick Anich guides you in search of these open-country species.

Thursday, May 19 – Afternoon

8. Exploring North Pikes Creek Wetlands (FT-4)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

The headwaters of North Pikes Creek are an expansive area comprised of marshes, ponds, shrub thickets, and wetland forests teeming with wildlife. Thanks to a local Friends group, portions can be accessed via boardwalk and community outdoor education area. Join Tracy Hames, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and a Friends group representative, to glimpse a heron rookery, explore beaver-created wetlands, look for migrating warblers, and learn how this 410-acre property became protected in perpetuity. Knee-high waterproof boots or hip waders are highly recommended.

9. FULL Hiking the Jerry Jolly Trail (FT-3)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

The Jerry J. Jolly Trail is an extensive trail system meandering throughout the beautiful woodlands of the Bayfield Peninsula and Pikes Creek. Search for thrushes, warblers, Winter Wrens, and other forest birds on this scenic northwoods excursion with local expert, Neil Howk.

**Note:* Be prepared for short bouts of hilly terrain.

Optional: Meet at Les Voigt Fish Hatchery at 1:00 pm to carpool to trailhead.

10. FULL Spring Discovery Walk at the Lincoln Community Forest (FT-3)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Nearly 400 acres in size, the Lincoln Community Forest is comprised of a wild and scenic forest surrounding two miles of the Marengo River, a 10-acre wetland and lake complex, and 5 miles of nature-based recreation trails, all thanks to a partnership between local citizens, the Friends group, and Landmark Conservancy (formerly Bayfield Regional Conservancy). Explore these habitats and their spring wildflowers, frogs, birds and more with biologists Adrian Wydeven and Pam Dryer. Tips on how to manage your property for wildlife such as songbirds, grouse, and deer will also be discussed.

11. FULL Northwoods Nature Hike at Houghton Falls (FT-2)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

The 76-acre Houghton Falls Nature Preserve north of Washburn is one of the most unique sites in Bayfield County. This trip will hike the mile-long nature trail to view Echo Dells, Houghton Falls, and ultimately a shoreline view of Lake Superior! Along the way, U.S. Forest Service biologist Eric North will help identify various flora and fauna among the beautiful hemlocks, majestic pines, and rock outcrops, including birds, plants, and even land snails!

12. Paddling Lower Chequamegon Bay (FT-3)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Take a kayak trip along Lake Superior's coast to explore Fish Creek and Whittlesey Creek Estuaries with US Fish and Wildlife Service refuge specialist, Mitch Baalman, and WDNR Conservation Biologist Ryan Brady. Look for ducks, shorebirds, and other waterbirds while learning what makes lower Chequamegon Bay special for fish, birds, and other wildlife. **EQUIPMENT NOT PROVIDED:** Participants should have their own equipment and basic paddling skills.

13. Wildflower Walk - Spring Ephemerals (FT-2)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

U.S. Forest Service Botanist and Ecologist Mark Jaunzems leads you on a hike to the Les Voigt Fish Hatchery in Bayfield in search of northwoods spring ephemeral wildflowers. Species that may be seen include Spring Beauty, Trout Lily, Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, Dutchman's Breeches, and Bellwort.

Thursday, May 19 – Evening

14. FULL Owl Prowl & Other Night Sounds (FT-2)

8:00 pm – 10:30 pm

Venture to the Long Lake and Birch Grove areas of the Chequamegon National Forest to listen for Barred and N. Saw-whet Owls, Whip-poor-wills, Common Loons, frogs, coyotes, and other night sounds. The trip will briefly start out near NGLVC to listen for American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, frogs, and perhaps even a Le Conte's Sparrow. Bring a flashlight or headlamp.

Friday, May 20 – Morning

15. FULL Birding by the Bay – Ashland (FT-2)

6:30 am – 11:00 am

WDNR Conservation Biologist Nick Anich will lead participants to multiple lakeshore points near Ashland to search for waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Interspersed may be short hikes along shoreline trails to find warblers, orioles, sparrows, and other migrating landbirds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

16. FULL Birding at Bark Bay (FT-3)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

This two-part trip will feature visits to Bark Bay Slough State Natural Area and nearby Bark Point. Bark Bay Slough SNA is an exceptional coastal wetland hosting a wide variety of birds. Bark Point is a peninsula of land jutting into Lake Superior and can sometimes host spectacular concentrations of migrant landbirds, including a great diversity of warbler species. You never know what you might find here. If time allows, we'll venture to the Herbster or Cornucopia lakefronts for some additional birding.

Optional: Meet at the Bark Bay canoe launch at 7:15 am.

17. Sea Caves Nature Hike (FT-4)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

Retired park ranger Neil Howk will lead participants on this rugged trail at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. Look for warblers, woodpeckers, and other birds amid beautiful birch and fir forests ultimately leading to spectacular views of sandstone cliffs and caves along Lake Superior.

Optional: Meet at the Lakeshore's Meyers Beach parking lot at 7:15 am.

**Note:* 4-5 miles roundtrip with some steep ravines and mud.

Additional Cost: Parking \$5/car

18. FULL Birding by the Bay – Washburn (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

Local birding expert Rick Burkman will lead participants to multiple lakeshore points in and near Washburn to search for waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Interspersed

will be short hikes along shoreline trails to find warblers, orioles, sparrows, and other migrating landbirds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

19. FULL Birding Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge (FT-3)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge welcomes you to a little refuge with a big impact. The refuge hosts many terrestrial species as well as a spawning stream for coaster brook trout and other migratory fish from Lake Superior. Look for migratory birds and learn about their habitats during this guided tour and hike with US Fish and Wildlife Service staff.

20. FULL Discovering Caroline Lake State Natural Area (FT-3)

7:00 am – 11:30 am

Sitting at the headwaters of the Bad River, Caroline Lake is an undeveloped lake with a diverse mix of high-quality plant communities. Matt Dallman, Director of Conservation with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), will share the story behind this important conservation effort and lead you on a beautiful hike in search of loons, eagles, ospreys, warblers, and other northwoods species. Learn about TNC's climate change forestry work and potential impacts of iron mining on this site.

Optional: Meet at Gilman Park in Mellen at 7:30 am.

Friday, May 20 – Afternoon

21. FULL Birding by the Bay – Washburn (FT-2)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Local birding expert David Bratley will lead participants to multiple lakeshore points in and near Washburn to search for waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Interspersed will be short hikes along shoreline trails to find warblers, orioles, sparrows, and other migrating landbirds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

22. FULL Paddling Bibon Swamp (FT-3)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

The Bibon Swamp is a 10,000-acre State Natural Area bisected by the White River and hosting coniferous bogs, hardwood swamp, alder thickets, and other wetland habitats. Experience this remote, magical wetland via canoe/kayak with Tracy Hames, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and naturalist Bill Heart, to appreciate the many plants, birds, and animals that call the Bibon home. EQUIPMENT NOT PROVIDED: Participants should have their own equipment and basic paddling skills.

23. FULL Nature Hike to Lost Creek Falls (FT-4)

12:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Venture through meandering woodland trails lined with aspen, fir, and towering pine en route to the remote, serene, and scenic Lost Creek Falls near Cornucopia. Enjoy birds, flowers, and other jewels of nature in one of the region's most beautiful settings.

**Note:* Round trip hike around 3 miles; sturdy, waterproof footwear for rugged terrain recommended.

Optional: Meet at Lost Creek Falls parking lot at the end of Trail Road at 1:00 pm.

24. FULL Birding by the Bay – Ashland (FT-2)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Local birding expert will lead participants to multiple lakeshore points near Ashland to search for waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Interspersed may be short hikes along shoreline trails to find warblers, orioles, sparrows, and other migrating landbirds. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

25. Plants of Bogs & Barrens (FT-3)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Geology drives ecology and understanding that will help us understand the plants that grow in bogs and barrens, sometimes side-by-side and yet in very different habitats. Join Vilas Cty LWD Conservation Specialist Quita Sheehan in exploring the geology and ecology of the pitted outwash dominated Moquah Pine Barrens. We'll look at the formation of the kettles and potholes in the area and identify some of the hard-working plants that make a living in such difficult environments. Knee-high water-proof boots are recommended but not required.

26. Wildflower Walk - Spring Ephemerals (FT-3)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Steven Spickerman, US Forest Service Plant Ecologist, leads you on a hike in search of spring ephemeral wildflowers among a northern hardwood forest en route to Morgan Falls. Species that may be seen include Spring Beauty, Large-flowered Trillium, Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, Dutchman's Breeches, and Bellwort.

Optional: Meet at Morgan Falls parking lot at 1:30 pm.

Friday, May 20 – Evening

27. FULL Woodcock Walk (FT-2)

8:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Venture on a nocturnal foray in search of American Woodcock performing their spring courtship flights along the NGLVC's boardwalk trail. There's also potential to hear Wilson's Snipe, Ruffed Grouse, Great Horned Owl, and several frog species. Bring a flashlight or headlamp to help guide the way.

Saturday, May 21 – Morning

28. FULL Birds of Morgan Falls & St. Peter's Dome (FT-4)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

Hike through beautiful northern hardwood forest to the lush, scenic cascades of Morgan Falls with DNR Forest Ecologist Colleen Matula. Watch for Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Mourning, and other warblers, as well as vireos, thrushes, flycatchers, and other forest species. If time allows, we'll continue farther on trail toward St. Peter's Dome, yielding a 4-mile round trip hike. Also expect a diverse plant community including wildflowers such as Spring Beauty, Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, Dutchman's Breeches, and more.

Optional: Meet leader at Morgan Falls parking lot at 7:00 am.

29. FULL Birding the Porcupine Lake Wilderness Area (FT-3)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

"Simplicity in all things is the secret of the wilderness and one of its most valuable lessons." – Sigurd Olson. It's been over 50 years since the signing of the 1964 Wilderness Act. Leave the gadgets behind and absorb the serenity of our local Porcupine Lake Wilderness Area with local birding expert Brian McCaffery. Black-throated Blue Warbler and Swainson's Thrush are possibilities, along with a suite of other northwoods bird and wildlife species.

Optional: Meet leader at Grand View general store at 7:00 am.

30. FULL Wetland & Woodland Birds of Iron River (FT-4)

6:30 am – 11:30 am

WDNR Conservation Biologist Ryan Brady guides you in search of woodland and wetland birds around the Iron River area. The trip will first seek out American Bittern, Sora, and Virginia Rail, then turn to landbirds such as Golden-winged Warbler, Sedge Wren, and more. Finish up with a trail hike at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery where migrating warblers and a few grassland species are possible.

31. A Bird in the Hand... (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

In this free activity, any festival registrant can come and go as they please within the listed timeframe to experience the wonders of bird banding from expert researchers. Marvel at the beauty of warblers, sparrows, finches, and other birds up close and personal – an unforgettable experience for all ages. Learn identification features, natural history, and research techniques as leaders demonstrate the how's and why's of bird banding. If you want to see birds up close, then this is the trip for you!

32. FULL Birding Bayfield's Big Ravine (FT-3)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

The 250-acre Big Ravine Preserve is a natural gem in the heart of Bayfield defined by 1.5 miles of a deep ravine and the stream that runs through it. We will follow the Gil Larsen trail a half mile along the stream with views of the Old Iron Bridge, waterfalls, and towering tree covered slopes. We will then climb the Pine Bluff spur trail to the ravine's East Rim and hike along the rim back to the trailhead, along the way looking for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other forest birds.

Optional: Meet at trailhead parking lot in Bayfield on Washington Avenue opposite Broad Street by 7:30 am.

33. Grassland Birding (FT-2)

7:00 am – 11:00 am

The northwoods typically don't conjure up thoughts of grassland birds but the rural areas of Ashland feature a variety of open habitats where Bobolinks, Upland Sandpipers, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows, Northern Harriers, and other grassland birds can be found. Local birding expert Tim Oksiuta guides you in search of these open-country species.

34. FULL Bibon Swamp Birding (FT-3)

7:00 am – 11:30 am

The Bibon Swamp is one of the area's best places to find Golden-winged Warblers. This trip will walk a very lightly traveled, dead-end dirt road through sedge meadow, alder, ash, and mixed lowland forest while enjoying a few Golden-wings amidst a potpourri of birds in a peaceful setting. Brad Gingras, local birder and naturalist, will help participants find and pick out numerous species, including various warblers.

Optional: Meet leader at Grand View general store at 7:30 am.

Saturday, May 21 – Afternoon

35. Fire & the Ecology of the Pine Barrens (FT-3)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

The ecosystems of the sand plains of Northwest Wisconsin have been shaped over the millennia by frequent fires, which many species of plants and the animals depend upon to create the conditions they need to thrive. Certified Wildlife Biologist Scott Posner will lead a tour of sites being restored to the pine barrens ecosystem through prescribed burning and other treatments. Participants will learn about the relationship of fire and birds such as the black-backed woodpecker, clay-colored sparrow, and brown thrasher, as well as the very rare Chryxus Arctic butterfly and numerous other animals and plants. Weather permitting, this trip should yield a good mix of bird, insect, and mammal sightings!

36. Tracking Mammals in the Field (FT-4)

12:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Visit the woodlands and coastline of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore to learn the basics of identifying mammal tracks from wildlife biologists Adrian Wydeven and Andy Edwards. From squirrels to hares and foxes to wolves, they'll share their decades of experience in deciphering the strides, gaits, and patterns of footprints left behind by our furred friends. Finding wolf tracks is a good possibility on this trip!

37. Sea Caves Nature Hike (FT-4)

12:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Peggy Burkman, National Park Service Biologist, will lead participants on this rugged trail at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. Look for warblers, woodpeckers, and other birds amid beautiful birch and fir forests ultimately leading to spectacular views of sandstone cliffs and caves along Lake Superior.

Optional: Meet at the Lakeshore's Meyers Beach parking lot at 1:15 pm.

**Note:* 4-5 miles roundtrip with some steep ravines and mud.

Additional Cost: Parking \$5/car

38. Beginning Birding by Ear (FT-1)

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Bird songs are a grand part of nature's symphony. Step outside with a local birding expert to start putting sights and names to the bird songs you hear. Even if you have never gone "birding" before, this enjoyable walk has the sweet sounds and smells of spring along nearby trails. Learn how to pick out bird sounds and develop clever ways to remember the birds and their songs.

39. FULL Shorebirds Made Simpler (FT-3)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Shorebirds are among the most difficult groups of birds to identify. WDNR Conservation Biologist Nick Anich will point out key identification features while this trip visits shorebird hotspots along Chequamegon Bay. Depending on available habitat, which varies each year, up to 10 species of shorebirds are possible, with potential to spot locally uncommon species such as American Golden-Plover, Willet, Marbled Godwit, American Avocet, and other waterbirds.

40. Wildflower Walk - Spring Ephemerals (FT-2)

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

U.S. Forest Service Botanist Caitlin Hoenig leads you on a hike to the Les Voigt Fish Hatchery in Bayfield in search of northwoods spring ephemeral wildflowers. Species that may be seen include Spring Beauty, Trout Lily, Wild Ginger, Bloodroot, Dutchman's Breeches, and Bellwort.

Optional: Meet at Les Voigt Fish Hatchery at 1:30 pm.

Saturday, May 21 – Evening

41. Sightings of the Day... Virtually! (Zoom-1)

7:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Join us virtually via Zoom to discover the festival's most exciting finds and the stories behind them as we tally a master checklist of birds seen during the festival. A popular, can't-miss event!