

## Big Walnut Bird Club (BWBC)- Tentative 2025 Schedule of Events

- Further details or changes will be provided via email as the event date approaches. You must be on our “BWBC email list” to receive emails (contact [rodwilson96@gmail.com](mailto:rodwilson96@gmail.com) to be added).
- RSVP appreciated for all events you plan to attend (reply to [rodwilson96@gmail.com](mailto:rodwilson96@gmail.com)).
- Note: Events are informal gatherings where anyone interested in birds and nature can join others with similar interests to share time together observing and learning about birds, wildlife and the habitats around us. All hikes are led by a member of the BWBC who is experienced and knowledgeable in birdwatching. All ages and experience levels welcome. Binoculars are available for those who may need to borrow a pair.
- Additional local birding hikes/opportunities may be offered on short notice via email.

**Feb 14-17** (Fri-Mon)- **Great Backyard Bird Count** (will email info). Put on by the *Cornell Lab of Ornithology* and *National Audubon Society*. You can contribute from your own backyard.

**Feb 16** (Sun 3pm) **Indoor presentation**- ? Informal review of bird pictures and trips from local club members, such as Southeast Arizona and New Mexico birds (More info to be emailed).

**Feb 22** (Sat 8-11am) **Heritage Lake and trail**. Meet at launch ramp parking lot. We will scope the lake for waterfowl on the lake and drive to couple additional lake view spots. We'll finish with a shorter mile or so hike at a trail near the dam of the lake. There could be a variety of waterfowl on the lake in addition to overwintering woodland birds such as kinglets, woodpeckers, yellow-rumped warblers, etc. on the trail. For anyone interested, we may conclude with brunch at Sahm's Restaurant on Heritage Lake.

**Mar 9** (Sun 6:45-8pm evening)- **Wilson's house/Big Walnut Nature Preserve**- Woodcocks and Wine 😊. We hope to observe American Woodcocks performing their courtship flights as the sun sets. Meet at the Wilson house where we'll initially talk about the woodcocks and for those interested, enjoy a glass of wine. Depending on where the woodcocks are active, we may sit on the deck behind the house and watch or take a short hike (1/4 mile) with lawn chairs. Bring your best ear and eyeglasses, as the woodcocks should be a flying, but they are sometimes easier heard than seen after the sun sets. This is weather dependent, so the date could change based on conditions.

**Mar 15** (Sat 8am-3pm) **Putnam Garden Show**- stop by the bird clubs table at Putnam 4H fairgrounds.

**Mar 23** (Sun 2pm?) Indoor presentation-? TBD

**Apr 5** (Sat 8-11am) **Lye Creek preserve** (Montgomery County) and **Lake Tannenbaum** (Parke Co). We'll initially meet at Lye Creek trailhead (carpooling an option), and drive to Lake Tannenbaum afterwards. Lye Creek includes rare wetland/wet prairie habitat, whereas Lake Tannenbaum provides additional rare shallow water/mudflats habitat used as a stopover/resting area for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. We'll be looking for the common and unusual sparrows, early migrating birds, and late migrating waterfowl. Rare birds are a possibility at both locations. Possible group lunch afterwards at The Ranch.

**Apr 25 (Fri 8-11am) Deer Creek FWA & Stewart/Schroer woods** (meet @ Deer Creek pond on N CR 200W). Early warblers will surely be on the menu as will plenty of wildflowers and fauna. A variety of habitats should yield a high number of bird species, including returning local birds and those migrating through. We will hike Deer Creek spots first, then mobilize to Stewart's/Schroer's for a hike on a groomed trail around their private property. Possible group lunch afterwards.

**Apr 29 (Tues 8-10am)- Owl trail/Glen Flint Lake** (meet at Owl Trail trailhead off CR 375N). Continue witnessing the migration of thrush, warblers, vireos, flycatchers and many others, while keeping an eye out for more rare birds. We'll hike 2 plus miles through mostly woods and shrub habitat, inspect a small pond, and scope Glen Flint lake.

**May 3 (Sat 9am-Noon)-Wilson's Cabin/Big Walnut Nature Preserve.** Explore private property for spring migrants including returning nesting warblers such as Cerulean, Kentucky, Yellow-throated and Hooded Warblers. We'll hike to the covered bridge as we have in the past. For anyone not up for hiking, there is good birdwatching while just sitting on the cabin deck overlooking Big Walnut Creek valley. Pitch-in lunch after hiking.

**May 9 (Friday 9am-4pm) Kankakee Sands/Willow Slough.** We will meet at the Nature Conservancy office parking lot at 3294 N US41, Morocco (carpooling is an option for anyone attending). This is a large area including restored prairies and wetlands. We will drive to different trailheads for short hikes birding, including some birding by car. We'll likely do a group lunch and continue birding in the early afternoon for those interested. Grasshopper and Henslow's sparrows, Sedge Wrens and other prairie birds should be present. Migrating shorebirds can also be abundant around flooded fields and ponds.

**May 10 (Sat)- Global Big Day.** Sponsored by *Cornell Lab of Ornithology*. More info to be provided.

**June 7 (Sat)- ? TBD?** possible hike on local trail?

**July 12 (Sat 9am)-** We will join **Putnam Parks & Pathways** for their 7th hike of the year (Sunflowers and Sunshine Walk) at **Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area**. Members of the Putnam County Bird Club will help lead the hike. We will visit several birding spots. Several pairs of binoculars will be available to use. The Hike will also visit the Sunflower plantings which should be in full bloom. Quail Forever is working with the Wildlife Staff to add several new Pollinator areas. Check Putnam Parks & Pathways website for the location to meet at 9am.

**Aug 9 (Sat 8-10am)- Big Walnut Nature Preserve- Rayfield Trail.** We'll meet at the trailhead off CR 550 E just north of CR 900 N. Hike this partially out-and-back trail to the Big Walnut Creek, through overgrown fields and mature forests. We'll be looking for summer resident birds and early fall migrants, pointing out the differing characteristics between juvenile and adult birds, and the changes in plumage from spring to fall.

**Aug 23 (Sat 8-10am) Owl Trail/Glenn Flint Lake-** Fall migration will be picking up. This habitat is a great stopover for thrush, warblers, vireos, flycatchers, raptors and others as they head south, many to on their way to Central and South America. We'll meet at the Owl Trail trailhead (trailhead off CR 375N), hike 2 plus miles through mostly woods and shrub habitat, inspect a small pond, and scope out Glen Flint lake.

**Sep 6** (Sat 9am-noon)- **Depauw Nature Park** and meeting and pitch-in lunch. We'll meet at the lower (north) parking lot accessed from west Walnut Street. Depauw Nature Park attracts a high number of bird species with its varied habitat, including riparian, pond, scrub and mature woodlands. We'll hike a couple miles of the well-groomed trails looking for both resident and migrating birds. A brief meeting and pitch-in lunch is planned afterwards.

**Sep 13** (Sat 9am-noon)- **Celery Bog Nature Preserve** (Lafayette)- Participants will drive/carpool and meet at the preserve's parking lot. We'll hike the easy trails here and scope out the lakes. This unique nature preserve attracts a variety of common and uncommon birds and waterfowl. Fall migration should be in full swing, so who knows what we may encounter. A screech owl is often seen perched in its roost. We may conclude with a group lunch afterwards.

**Sep 27** (Sat 9am-Noon)- **Portland Mills/Raccoon Reservoir**- A repeat of last year's approximately 2 hour kayaking/canoe trip, only this year's date is a little earlier, so hopefully a few more migrating wading birds are still present. Canoes and kayaks may be available to borrow if needed. Great Egrets, Green Herons, Eagles, Ospreys, Northern waterthrush, sandpipers, wood ducks, and more are possible. A Snowy egret was observed here last year.

**Nov 1** (Sat 9am-Noon) **Lieber State Park/Cataract Lake**- Similar to previous hikes here, we will start out at the beach scoping for gulls, shorebirds, loons, eagles and waterfowl. We'll then hike a moderate trail through woodland and scrub habitat out to a rocky point for another lake view, looking for late migrants, sparrows, and waterfowl. We may meet for lunch at Lou's Diner after.

**Dec 5** (Fri 4-6pm)- **Heritage Lake**- Waterfowl and eagle activity should be heated up at this large lake that seems to be a magnet for migrating and over-winter waterfowl. Meet at launch ramp parking lot. We will scope for waterfowl, gulls, eagles, loons and more on the lake and possibly drive to couple additional lake view spots. For anyone interested, we may have a drink or dinner at Sahm's Restaurant afterwards.

**Dec 14** ? (Sun 8:00am-Noon) **Christmas Bird Count (Putnam Co)**. Organized by Carl Huffman, more information will be provided as we approach the date. Participants must sign up ahead of time.