



# WISBIRDN

## WISconsin BIRDing Network

### Welcome and Guidelines



**Welcome** to the Wisconsin Birding Network (WISBIRDN), a privately owned discussion list comprised of persons interested in Wisconsin birds and birding. You received this email because you requested to be added to this discussion list. Receipt of this email indicates that your subscription has begun. If you believe you have received this email in error and did not request to be added to WISBIRDN, contact Peter Fissel the List Administrator at: [pfissel@library.wisc.edu](mailto:pfissel@library.wisc.edu) or Tom Sykes the List Owner at: [sykes@motmot.net](mailto:sykes@motmot.net)

Please take a few minutes to review this email containing WISBIRDN guidelines and rules. It will help you understand just how the list functions and make your stay more enjoyable. WISBIRDN rules and guidelines cannot possibly cover all foreseeable situations and will be amended from time to time as warranted.

Bear in mind that membership on this list is a privilege, not a right. Membership can and will be withdrawn for any violation of list rules or behavior deemed as unacceptable by the list owners. WISBIRDN speaks for no organization and all opinions expressed are those of the subscribers sending email via the list.

Your thoughtful discretion when posting to the list is requested and appreciated. Disagreements and differing opinions are unavoidable, however, please be polite and considerate. Use gentle language. Pretend that all of your posts will be read by your mother. If you find you have a strong disagreement with another subscriber please do so "back channel" (directly to the subscriber and not to the entire list). This also applies to discussions that do not benefit the list as a whole. The list owner or administrator will end ANY discussions they feel are inappropriate.

**Posting Rules:**

All persons must identify themselves in each post sent to WISBIRDN. A Wisconsin resident subscriber's signature block must include their first and last name, and their community and county of residence. For example:

"Mary Smith, Appleton, Outagamie County"

Members living outside of Wisconsin must list their first and last name and their state of residence. For example:

"Mary Smith, Illinois"

Many email programs have preference settings to create a custom signature block for making post signing an automatic process.

Using an alias, or any other means to disguise your identity, is absolutely forbidden.

**List Topics:**

All traffic on WISBIRDN should focus principally on (but is not strictly limited to) Wisconsin birds and birding. Acceptable general topics for discussion include wild birds, birders, and birding.

Unacceptable topics include hunting, feral cats, photography, chain letters, pet/caged/domestic birds, falconry, commercial advertising and political views.

**No Attachments:**

Absolutely NO ATTACHMENTS! Do not attach ANY text or photo files. There are no exceptions to this rule. If you care to share photos, place your photo files on a web site (of your own making or at a free photo hosting site) and provide a link to the web site in the body of your email.

**Plain Text, Please:**

Using HTML, or Microsoft Rich Text Format to format your email message so that it has fancy fonts, colors, etc. must be avoided. Your message may appear as utter gibberish to some readers rendering it useless. Set your email program to send all messages to the list in PLAIN TEXT and non-MIME format. For more background on configuring your email program refer to your email program's Help files or, review several email programs at: <http://www.expita.com/nomime.html>

**No Advertising:**

Commercial messages are absolutely prohibited. A commercial message is one in which a business, individual, or service is advertising with the intent of soliciting customers. If you are in doubt as to whether or not your post will be considered commercial, contact the list owners, privately, back-channel, before posting your message to the list. Be fully aware that the list owners do NOT adhere to the old adage "it is easier to beg forgiveness than permission".

**Members Only, But...**

Occasionally you may find the need to forward an informative email on behalf of a non-subscriber. In this instance the list member doing the forwarding must include a brief reason about why the forward is necessary, along with identifying the origin of the post.

**Copyright:**

The usual cautions and limitations presented by the laws of libel and slander apply. Pay attention to copyright laws. Do not distribute other people's words or works without permission. This includes news articles

posted on news wires, e-magazines, and other web sites.

Instead of posting the entire content of an article, supply a link to the article in your email. Do not forward links to any online articles using a web site's "E-mail to a friend" form and then sending it to the WISBIRDN list address.

### **How does WISBIRDN work?**

WISBIRDN functions like regular e-mail. Messages posted to WISBIRDN via your email program are simultaneously received by all members. Subscribers may also communicate with individual list members ("back channel") one-on-one by using individual e-mail addresses.

Save yourself some embarrassment - get into the habit of regularly checking the "TO:" line of your outgoing email to ensure posts are in fact going to the intended address.

### **To send a message to the list:**

Send posts to WISBIRDN using your email program to:

[wisbirdn@freelists.org](mailto:wisbirdn@freelists.org)

Your messages MUST be sent from the same email account address you submitted when you subscribed to WISBIRDN.

Be sure to correctly identify the topic of your post in the SUBJECT LINE and to sign your post as per list rules.

### **Subscribe and unsubscribe?**

In an effort to keep spammers and mischief-makers off of WISBIRDN, all subscription requests are handled manually through the list administrator.

To subscribe go to:

<http://www.freelists.org/list/wisbirdn>

Type in the email address you wish to have subscribed (this will be the email address you will be using to post to WISBIRDN through your email program). Select "Subscribe" from the pull-down menu (it is the default choice) and then hit the "Go!" button.

Approval usually will occur within 24 hours if not sooner, however, if the list owner is on vacation it may take days so please be patient. Once your request has been approved you will receive a confirmation email and a welcome email containing WISBIRDN guidelines and rules (just like the one you are presently reading).

To unsubscribe go to:

<http://www.freelists.org/list/wisbirdn>

Type in the email address you wish to have unsubscribed (it must be the exact email address you used to join WISBIRDN). Select "Unsubscribe" from the pull-down menu and click the "Go!" button. You will receive an automated response email asking you to reply. When you reply - you need not add anything to the reply message - you'll be removed without any further action by you or the List Administrator.

If you do not receive an automated response or are otherwise unable to unsubscribe, contact Peter Fissel the List Administrator at:

[pfissel@library.wisc.edu](mailto:pfissel@library.wisc.edu)

### **Additional Guidelines and Tips:**

- WISBIRDN suggests that all subscribers act within the guidelines found in the American Birding Association Code of Ethics in the "About ABA" section at:

<http://www.aba.org/>

- An extensive F.A.Q. covering in more detail how WISBIRDN functions, along with a downloadable PDF copy of the Welcome message that you received when you joined WISBIRDN (in case you need a replacement copy), are available at:

[www.portalscards.com/wisbirdn/faq.html](http://www.portalscards.com/wisbirdn/faq.html)

- A searchable archive of messages posted to WISBIRDN is located at:

<http://www.freelists.org/archives/wisbirdn>

- All new members of WISBIRDN are encouraged to make an initial introductory post. Explain whom you are, where you live, where you bird, and anything else you consider pertinent.

If you are unfamiliar with birding discussion groups or how lists function in general, it is strongly encouraged, as a new member, to "lurk" and "listen" for a few days before posting.

- Please share your bird sightings. Assume that everyone else wants to know what it is you are seeing, particularly unusual sightings. Be sure to include species descriptions, accurate location information, and the date/time of your observation.

- Subject Line attention-getting prefaces to help clearly state your topic include:

RBA's (Rare Bird Alerts) are typically prefaced with the word "ALERT:" followed by the species of bird and county location (all in caps). For example:

ALERT: VARIED THRUSH, OUTAGAMIE COUNTY

Requests for information are usually prefaced with "RFI:" For example:

RFI: Birding Colorado Information

An off-topic subject typically not related to birds but information nevertheless that might be of interest to the rest of the list (provided it doesn't extend into a lengthy off-topic discussion) use "OFF-TOPIC:" For example:

OFF-TOPIC: Unusual butterfly identification

- WISBIRDN is comprised of birders of all levels. Novice birders need encouragement and thoughtful consideration so that they may learn from their mistakes. Expert birders will be wise to remember that they were once novices and that they don't know everything.

- You certainly need not limit your contributions to only reports of unusual bird finds. Success of this list will depend on constant and varied conversations about birds and birding in general.

- Be prepared to share directions to interesting bird sightings. BUT PLEASE: If the bird you mention is being seen on private property, DO NOT share directions until after you have permission from the landowner to do so! Sharing sightings of rare or endangered species – please use discretion in giving precise directions to a bird location (specially a nesting site) if unwarranted human intrusion is a concern.

- Consider sharing reports of bird trips you take, in Wisconsin and elsewhere.

- Much of the traffic on the list will consist of questions and comments about Wisconsin birds and birding, places to bird, places to stay, places to eat, birding books, bird ID's, birding equipment, etc. Please be as helpful as you can. The list is about sharing information!

- Remember: The nature or topic (or “thread”) of your post should be made clear in the SUBJECT LINE of your post. Subsequent posts that deal with the same topic, need to remain clear in the SUBJECT LINE of your email. If a topic changes the SUBJECT LINE must reflect that change. Otherwise it becomes difficult for subscribers to know where one thread begins and another leaves off.

#### • **Not everyone’s cup of tea?**

Not all topics posted on WISBIRDN will appeal to everyone all the time. That’s why your computer keyboard has a “Delete” key. Feel free to use it at will.

#### **NEED HELP?**

Tom Sykes is the List Owner. Peter Fissel is the List Administrator. Both will field technical or non-technical questions, suggestions, notions, and ideas, about WISBIRDN. Please be mindful that the list is run on a volunteer basis so if an answer is not immediately forthcoming (we do not have “operators standing by 24/7”) please be patient.

A wealth of information about birding in Wisconsin may be found at the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology web site located at:

<http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/>

Recent postings to Wisbirdn may also be read at the following web sites:

<http://birdingonthe.net/maillinglists/WISC.html>

[www.surfbirds.com/phorum/list.php?f=87](http://www.surfbirds.com/phorum/list.php?f=87)

Neither of the above web sites is affiliated with WISBIRDN. If there are problems with either of the web sites please contact their respective web masters directly.

Thank you for reading these guidelines (which you have already safely copied and saved, right?). Welcome and good birding!

Peter Fissel, Madison, Wisconsin

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Tom Sykes, Box Elder, South Dakota

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