Dear friends,

Let’s face it – it was a long winter! But spring is finally springing, and in the weeks ahead millions of birds will return to Wisconsin, including some of our beloved favorites like orioles, grosbeaks, hummingbirds, warblers, and more. The magic of May is underway, and with it comes the joy of seeing old friends, hearing a melodious dawn chorus, and escaping the troubles of everyday life.

Unfortunately, the migratory journey for many of these species, like the above Connecticut Warbler, gets more difficult every year. Challenged by habitat loss, depredation by outdoor cats, collisions with windows & towers, pesticide use, and even unregulated harvest on tropical wintering grounds, birds face year-round threats that if left unmitigated will lead to fewer feathered friends at our feeders, silencing of the songs that enrich our lives, and a great reduction in the valuable services birds provide, like pollination, insect control, and seed dispersal. Simply put, birds need our help.

This is exactly why I’m again leading the Lake Superior eBirders in the 2019 Great Wisconsin Birdathon, a walkathon-style fundraiser for the protection of Wisconsin’s birds. This year the Birdathon aims to raise at least $90,000 for the conservation of Wisconsin’s birds. In years past you graciously supported our team, and now, as the conservation challenges continue to grow, we ask for your support again this year. Your donation will make possible key projects on Kirtland’s Warblers, Piping Plovers, and Whooping Cranes, the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, Bird City Wisconsin, stopover habitat in Central America, and much more.

Donate by check or credit today!

About three weeks from today myself, Nick Anich, and Erik Bruhnke will rise at 2am and set out to find as many species as possible in a single day. Last year we tallied 163 species, second only to our record-setting 2017 effort that yielded 171 species, all within a 20-mile radius circle spanning only two Lake Superior counties. Check out our recaps of those 2017 and 2018 big days, and expect more of the same strategy, surprises, and fun this year!

Regardless of how the birding plays out the true measure of our success will be in dollars raised. So please help us reach our goal, and ensure that future generations have opportunity to enjoy the birds that mean so much to us today.

Thank you!

Ryan Brady

On behalf of the Lake Superior eBirders (and birds everywhere...)