



## **Camps with Meaning 24th Annual Birding Retreat**

May 21 – 24, 2026 (with 2-day option)

Camp Koinonia

### **Experience the Wonder of Birding in Community!**

Join us for the 24th Annual Camps with Meaning Birding Retreat, a special opportunity to experience the beauty of God's creation alongside fellow birding enthusiasts. Whether you're a seasoned birder or just beginning, this retreat is designed to inspire, educate, and connect you with nature in a meaningful way.

### **No Experience Needed!**

A warm invitation is extended to students and novice birders of all ages. New to birding? No problem! We'll pair beginners with experienced birders for guided outings, ensuring a supportive and fun learning experience.

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### **Birding Destinations**

This year, there are two options, a 3-day retreat and a 2-day retreat. The 3-day retreat will meet at Camp Koinonia on the evening of May 21 and spend the day Friday touring the SW Manitoba Birding Trail. A bus will leave CMU at 5:00 P.M. Thursday to take people to the camp.

The 2-day retreat will join the early birders Friday evening at Camp Koinonia.

Friday Adventure: SW Manitoba is a great birding sport. There are MB species that are only found in this area. We'll explore several prime birding hotspots, including (depending on time)

- Broomhill
- Gerald W. Malaher WMA\*
- Pierson WMA
- Gainsborough Creek
- Coulter Park\*
- Souris Valley

Friday adventure participants should *bring their own bag lunch, drinks and snacks* for the day. We will stop in Pierson\* over lunch. The Coop grocery store there has pre-made sandwiches, snacks and drinks, but we want to spend only 30 minutes there so we can explore other areas. We will stop in Melita\* or Boissevain\* for supper.

\*Bathrooms available

Saturday Excursion: We will spend Saturday morning exploring the Whitewater Lake area. There are a number of water and marsh birds that can be found along the shores, marshes and surrounding farmland of this lake.

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## Meet Our Guest Speaker

We are thrilled to welcome **Meredith Stoesz**. Meredith is a birder and naturalist with over a decade of experience educating the public about the natural world. She is a bird bander with Delta Marsh Bird Observatory during fall migration and has been banding birds since 2016. Throughout the year she works at a bird feeding hobby shop and she is a Bioacoustic Transcriber. Her passion is getting people excited about nature and conservation!



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## Registration & Pricing

Register online at: [Camps With Meaning - Birding Retreat](#) (Click on the link and scroll down to sign in or create an account to begin the registration process.)

Registration costs: Thursday evening to Sunday noon

- Early Bird (before April 8, 2025): \$230
- Regular Rate (from April 9 until May 9, 2025): \$250
- Full-Time Student: \$125
- Children Under 12: FREE

Registration costs: Friday evening to Sunday noon

- Early Bird (before April 8, 2025): \$190
- Regular Rate (from April 9 until May 9, 2025): \$210
- Full-Time Student: \$105
- Children Under 12: FREE

Bus Transportation (includes Friday & Saturday tours): \$120 per person

Leaving CMU at 5:00 PM Thursday, May 21.

Carpooling: If traveling by car, we recommend sharing fuel costs at \$0.15/km. If you have room in your car, please let us know how many extra people you can take, when you plan on leaving, and from where.

If you are coming Friday evening, please let us know if you need a ride and we will see if we can find room in a car.

Meals Included: From Friday night snack through Sunday lunch.

Accommodations: If you require a private room for health or comfort reasons, we will do our best to accommodate based on availability.

Need Financial Assistance? If cost is a concern, please reach out to a committee member— we'd love to help!

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### **Bus travel & departure times**

- Thursday, May 21, 5:00 PM – Departure from Canadian Mennonite University (south parking lot)
  - Sunday, May 25, 12:00 PM – Return bus departs from Camp Koinonia, birding along the way, arriving at CMU by 5:00 PM
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### **What to Bring**

Breakfast and lunch for Friday tour  
Binoculars & field guides  
Sleeping bag & pillow  
Towel & personal items  
Outdoor clothing (hat, boots, sunscreen)  
Reusable water bottle & portable coffee/tea mug  
Indoor shoes/slippers  
Spotting scopes  
Bug repellent or mosquito netting

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### **Keep in touch**



Join our WhatsApp group. If you wish to be part of this online community of birders for the weekend, send a request to Dieter at 204-230-1253.

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### **Contact Us**

For more details or questions, feel free to contact any of our planning committee members:

- Karis Penner | KarisPenner@gmail.com | (204) 380-2808
  - Walker Giesbrecht | Walkerkele@icloud.com | (204) 797-3352
  - Richard Boyd | raboyd@hotmail.com | (204) 451-0980
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We can't wait to welcome you to a weekend of discovery, fellowship, and awe-inspiring birdwatching! Register and reserve your spot at the retreat today!