



ADVERTISEMENT

[Home](#) [Sports](#) [Outdoors](#)

Day by day, a year of birds

Article by: [BOB TIMMONS](#), Star Tribune

Updated: February 20, 2015 - 7:06 AM

A Duluth man decided to photograph birds for a year — and got what he bargained for.

 0 [comments](#)  [resize text](#)  [print](#) [buy reprints](#)

2015 Toyota® Tacoma

buyatoyota.com

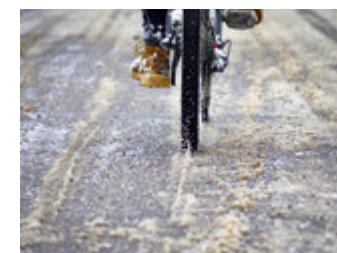
Find Your Local Toyota® Dealer & Check Out the New 2015 Tacoma!

Common merganser chicks, trumpeter swans and ruby-throated hummingbirds. Snowy owls, snow geese and snowy egrets. Rough legged hawks, downy woodpeckers and green-winged t. Even a pigeon.

Day upon day, over a year's time ending in mid- January ch Hoeg of Duluth tracked those birds and more. Or rather, he p ed and photographed them, mainly across northern Minnesota. e end result is what he's called 365 Days of Birds. "I had no ide... that I was getting myself into," he said.

Oddly — or interestingly — Hoeg wasn't so fixated on birds when his

related content



A cyclist's tale: My first winter riding a bike for



ADVERTISEMENT

2015 Toyota® Tacoma

buyatoyota.com

Locate a
Dealer &
Purchase Your
New 2015
Toyota®
Tacoma
Today!

ADVERTISEMENT

“project” began, he said. One needs to go back a year and a half when he retired from his software job at Honeywell. Hoeg turned his self-described “techie” attention on photography — and what to do with his new interest. He took a community education photo class. He perused Flickr feeds. He also researched people who’d stuck with yearlong photo projects.

“If you pick a specific subject that you are interested in, you increase the difficulty quite a bit,” Hoeg said. “I have found that increasing the difficulty in life is a good thing to do because the end result is really beneficial. And so I chose birding.”

4 Heart Attack Signs

ownahealthyheart.com

These 4 Things Happen Right Before a Heart Attack.

He said he has enjoyed birds since childhood, but “it was photography first, birding second.”

He decided to start last year on the birthday of his wife, Molly: Jan. 23.

The hours and miles quickly piled up. Hoeg averaged about 35 miles a day, by wheel and on foot. Pressure became a companion. Even an occasional flash of paranoia. He’d have days of three or four hours trying to find something different.

“Truly as you get deeper into the project, the pressure grows and grows. At least if you are somebody who has self-discipline,” Hoeg said.

At times Hoeg had to stretch his notion of birds to make his daily quota. Remember the baseball All-Star Game last July at Target Field and those roaring Air Force Thunderbirds? Hoeg saw his chance and grabbed it, going to the Duluth Airport, camera at the ready, as the Thunderbirds took off for Minneapolis.

“I was willing to be a little liberal with the bird idea on occasion,”

transportation

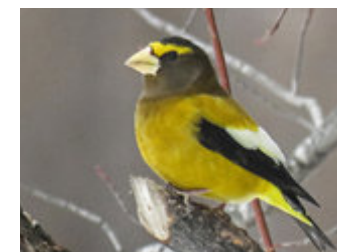
Friday February 20, 2015

She sold her car three years ago to pay for school, spent some time in cities with excellent transit and bike-sharing systems, and since has returned to an ever-more-bike-friendly Minneapolis.

Tips: Photographing birds

Thursday February 19, 2015

How he got the shots From Rich Hoeg’s blog, www.365daysofbirds.com (he used a Canon SX60): Camera settings Birds move fast! This may seem...



Top to bottom, evening grosbeak, northern hawk owl and red-bellied woodpecker.

Courtesy of Rich Hoeg



Courtesy of Rich Hoeg
Northern hawk owl

Hoeg said. "You've got to have some fun with it."

2015 Toyota® Tacoma

buyatoyota.com

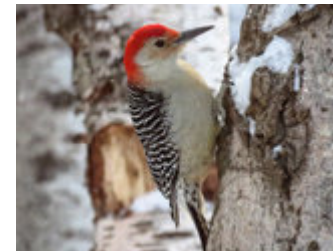
Find Your Local Toyota® Dealer & Check Out the New 2015 Tacoma!

Hoeg had other revelatory moments. His photo skills improved, but the biggest benefit was probably of the human type. Hoeg met people into birding. He met people into photography. And that overlap introduced him to a cross-section of photo groups. He connected with the Great Lakes Aurora Hunters and with them spent desperate, subzero nights on remote roads along the North Shore. Hoeg loved it. He also found some volunteer work at the visitor's center at the Sax-Zim Bog, a birding mecca to the deep north near Meadowlands, Minn.

"I knew I was getting good when I had one of my photographs stolen," Hoeg said. Some of his new photo friends recognized one of his photos — for sale — on another person's website. "So I guess in one sense that is the stamp of approval from people: You have a photograph stolen."

Distilling rare encounters and thousands of miles of journey, Hoeg quickly zeroed in on the photo that gave him the most pride. It happened on Day 161 on Rainy Lake. The subject was a bald eagle. Bobbing in 2-foot waves, Hoeg snapped the regal bird on the move. "It's just a classic photograph. ... I said to myself, 'Man, I've arrived.'"

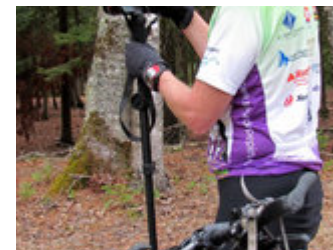
Bob Timmons • 612-673-7899



Courtesy of Rich Hoeg Red-bellied woodpecker



Day 114 herring gullsAt the mouth of the Lester River in Duluth: "Photographers talk about the 'golden hour.' This 'hour' defines a period of perfect light lasting about 90 minutes just before and after sunrise. On this morning I captured the image of these herring gulls in the early morning light."



bird blogSee Rich Hoeg's yearlong bird project at www.365daysofbirds.com.

Why America is Not Normal

newamerica2020.com

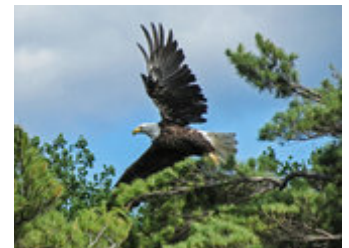
These 8 facts prove the situation in America is not normal right now.



Day 130 wild turkey At French Regional Park on Medicine Lake in Plymouth: "While biking in French Park, I saw a hen turkey and her chicks. I was rewarded with this image when a bald eagle flew overhead and 'mom' took alarm!"



Day 154 American Redstart "One often finds warblers in abundance, including this American redstart, along the Western Waterfront Trail in Duluth."



Day 161 bald eagle "With this photograph I realized I had truly learned how to take good photographs. My platform for

taking this image was extremely difficult — a boat bobbing in 2-foot waves out on Rainy Lake.”

Photos by rich hoeg • Special to the Star Tribune



Day 130 ruby-throated hummingbird
At Hartley Nature Center, Duluth: “This kind of image requires good light and a very fast shutter speed. I managed to get the photograph by hiding down in tall grass.”



Day 53 Great Grey Owl
“There now is a new traffic cop just outside of Duluth.”

more from outdoors

Sergio Bonaldi, Holly Brooks win American Birkebeiner

Anderson: DNR pay sheds light on raises