

In Memoriam: Jerry Lazarczyk

Jerry Lazarczyk was an active member of the Buffalo Ornithological Society and served as a former treasurer and council member of the society. He was also the long time "caretaker" of the Buffalo Ornithological Society Nature Sanctuary on Love Road in Grand Island. He also was active in the New York State Ornithological Association and served on their nominating committee.

Jerry enjoyed collecting things. Sometimes his collections were of material things, like his collection of license plates of the United States and around the world.

More often his collections were of memories. He would keep lists of the lighthouses, covered bridges and other geographical features he had seen, and would often drive hundreds of miles to add another bridge or lighthouse to his list.

In his later years, he most enjoyed listing birds. In 1996, the New York State Ornithological Association started publishing the number of birds that members had observed in the state and in the state's 62 counties. In 2004 Jerry joined in on the fun with his observations of 263 bird species in New York State and 165 birds in Erie County.

In the next decade, Jerry aggressively birded and drove all over the state. By 2013 he had amassed a list of 382 bird species in New York State and a total of 7,157 county birds across the state. His total of 7,157 total county birds is the state record, and it is an average of better than 115 species for every county. He was proud of this accomplishment, but never bragged or even mentioned it. When I would suggest that, since he has the most county birds in New York he must be the best birder in New York State, he would not say anything.

He would just smile. It was one of the few times Jerry was not talking.

Bill Watson, Tonawanda, NY

