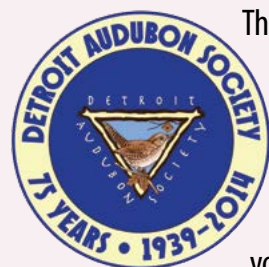




Bird ID Quiz

Do you recognize this bird? Check your answer on page 11. Curt Hofer photo

Detroit Audubon 75th Anniversary



The Detroit Audubon 75th Anniversary dinner and program is Sept. 13th. We have sent invitations, and encourage you to make your reservations soon.

The celebration takes place in the Detroit Yacht Club's Fountain Room, on Belle Isle in Detroit. It begins with a reception for our speaker and award recipients from 4:45 to 5:45, with hors d'oeuvre and open bar.

At 6:15 dinner begins with live music, cash bar and silent auction items available for bidding.

Detroit Audubon President Dr. James Bull will comment on activities and plans for the future, and introduce honored guests and members.

The speaker, Chris Canfield, Vice President, Gulf Coast/Mississippi Flyway, leads and coordinates Audubon programs from Minnesota to Louisiana and along the Gulf of Mexico. Michigan is part of the Mississippi Flyway. He will present the vision of National Audubon and the role Detroit can play in that process.

We will also bestow the first Fred Charbonneau Award for protection, conservation or enhancing the condition of birds.

Please send in your reservation as soon as possible, and we look forward to seeing you at the Detroit Yacht Club on September 13th!



Flyway

a publication of Detroit Audubon • www.detroitaudubon.org

Autumn 2014
Volume 2014, Issue 3

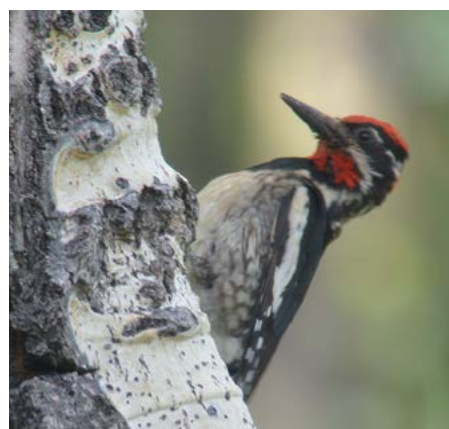
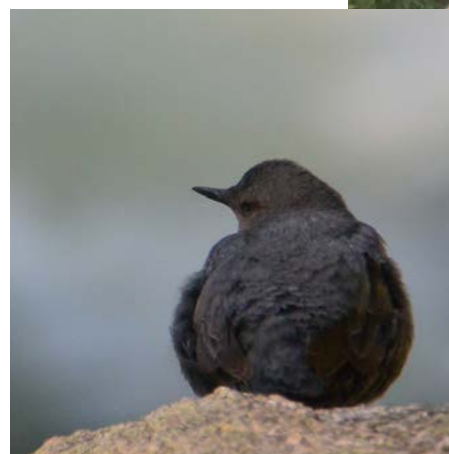
My Camp Colorado experience

By Bridget Stempien

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank the Detroit Audubon Society for giving me the opportunity to go on such an amazing trip. Secondly, I would like to thank Kathy Hofer and Leonard Weber for selecting me as the recipient of this scholarship. This was my first trip to Colorado and I fell in love with the natural beauty. The mountains were one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen.

The first few days I was in Colorado, I spent in Boulder. What an adorable city! After my weekend there, I headed to the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park. There, I met 20 other young birders from all over the country (including two brothers from Ann Arbor, Michigan). During my week at camp, every waking moment was birds, birds, BIRDS! We would get up extremely early and drive out to a different habitat each day, such as the Montane Forest, the Grasslands, the Foothills and the Alpine Tundra. Take it from me, the Alpine Tundra was COLD! After a morning and afternoon filled with birding we would come back to the YMCA and have a little free time to relax. Then we would have an afternoon activity, such as field sketching or bird banding, and then an evening seminar. During one seminar we learned about radar ornithology, which I found fascinating. My favorite seminar, however, was discussing Project Snowstorm (a Snowy Owl tracking study) with counselor David La Puma, who participated in the project.

When we went on various outings, we were able to use some very high tech scopes and binoculars, which made the outings so much more enjoyable. Now I know what



I want for Christmas! Some fascinating and notable birds that we saw were the American Dipper, Northern Goshawk, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Golden Eagle, Mountain Plover, Ferruginous Hawk, and Bald Eagle. I loved seeing all of the huge raptors but I also loved the tiny hummingbirds. We also saw some really fascinating animals, including a Horned Toad, Elk, Prairie Rattlesnakes, Yellow-bellied Marmots, and Pikas. The cutest animal had to be the Pika, which is like a little rabbit without the long ears. Its call is just a tiny squeak!

My favorite camp memory was our crazy experience with the Northern Goshawk. We were walking back to the lodge after lunch when the goshawk swooped down into the field across the street. It was a full-on CHARGE! Everyone was running as fast as they could, fumbling with all of their gear. The goshawk started doing his amazing run. He hunched over and looked quite vicious. We nicknamed him "veloci-gos" because the way he ran reminded us of the velociraptor dinosaur.

There is no question that this camp was a life-changing experience for me. I loved my counselors and all of my new friends, but most of all I loved the birds. Once again I would like to thank the Detroit Audubon Society and Kathy and Leonard for sending me on this trip.

From top: Mountain Bluebird, Clark's Nutcracker; Bridget holding a House Wren, Pine Grosbeak, American Dipper and Red-naped Sapsucker.

Flyway

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Original articles, photos and artwork are welcome.
Email to flyway@detroitaudubon.org.

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Detroit Audubon Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote awareness and protection of the environment through education, research and advocacy.

We support local activities to foster the preservation of birds and the clean air, water, wetlands, grasslands, woodlands and other natural resources they depend upon.

THE PRESIDENT'S BULLY PULPIT

By James N.(Jim) Bull

This organization is for the birds! It is right there in our constitution that was put in place 75 years ago: Detroit Audubon is to provide members (and the public) with opportunities to become acquainted with birds and other forms of wildlife. While birds are what generally bring us to Detroit Audubon, they provide a window to a wider world of nature as well.

If we care about birds, we'd better care about insects, because they are the food for many of the birds we enjoy watching and learning about. If we care about insects—first as bird food, and maybe later as interesting and beautiful parts of nature in their own right—we'd better be concerned about pesticides, GMOs, and other threats to our native insect fauna. I didn't see one Monarch Butterfly last year, and this year I can count the number I've seen on one hand. Why have they declined? Grasslands and meadows with flowers (especially milkweed) are being mowed down and converted to other uses at an astounding rate. There are laws that protect many of our wetlands, but there are no laws protecting grassland, meadows, and prairies. Pesticides, including GMOs, have also led to a general decline in milkweed and in pollinators.

The environmental movement was largely born from the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, which detailed the effect of pesticides. Its very title warned about spring without birdsong. It led to the banning of DDT, which had put the Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Brown Pelican and others on a fast track to extinction. Dr. Walter P. Nickell, one of the early presidents of Detroit Audubon and naturalist at Cranbrook Institute of Science, contributed data on DDT-related songbird mortality to Carson's book. Thanks to the ban on DDT, the Endangered Species Act and a plethora of other laws that the Audubon movement helped put in place, the Bald Eagle, the Peregrine Falcon, and Osprey now have multiple nests in the Detroit River corridor. Songbirds are no longer in peril due to DDT.

John Muir once wrote that "when you tug at anything in nature, you find it hitched to everything else." Detroit Audubon's core interest is birds, but we've branched out from there. Lately Detroit Audubon has been helping protect wolves, and reminding people of the important role predators play in every ecosystem. As I have previously written, Detroit Audubon sponsored a snake exhibit at the Detroit Zoo (coordinated by my father) and has offered programs on frogs, spiders, butterflies and ferns. We helped start the national tuna boycott that led the fishing industry to produce "dolphin-safe" tuna. We also have spoken out against attempts to weaken air pollution standards, joined the Sierra Club in a suit against the Detroit Incinerator, joined Zero Waste Detroit (which promotes recycling) and more recently joined the Detroit Coalition Against Tar Sands. In addition to all the other environmental downsides to Tar Sands, the Boreal Forest, which is being cleared to get at the bitumen underneath them, is also the nesting area for many of the warblers we enjoy seeing during Spring migration. As the Boreal Forest goes, so go the warblers.

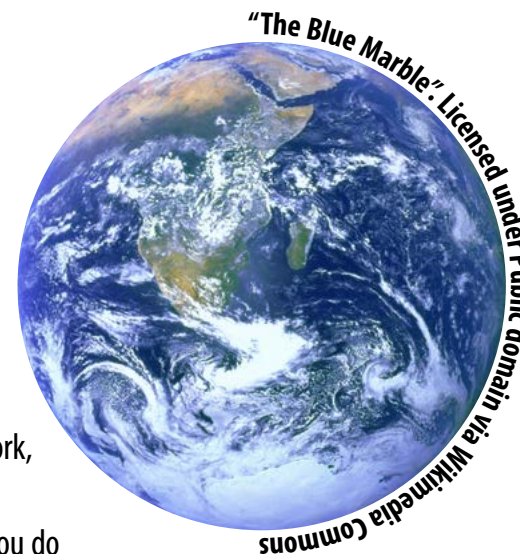
If you are really serious about appreciating and learning about birds, you just can't help but follow the threads of the web of life on which birds and all creatures depend. We start with birds, but as we incubate all we learn about birds, it hatches into concern for the whole biosphere.

Adlai Stevenson once wrote,

"We travel together, passengers on a little spaceship, dependent upon its vulnerable reserves of air and soil, all committed for our safety to its security and peace; preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and, I will say, the love we give our fragile craft."

In what ways do you think Detroit Audubon can do its part, and how can you do your part to care for birds and this fragile "spaceship" we share with them? Let's enjoy the beauty around us, and then do everything we can to make sure it is here for many generations to come to enjoy as well. Maybe we should learn from our Native American friends to think about the seventh generation out with every decision we make.

Meantime, good birding! And good caring too!



Ways YOU Can Support Detroit Audubon

- **Come celebrate** with us at the 75th Anniversary Dinner, September 13, 2014, at the Detroit Yacht Club.
- **Shop at the Detroit Audubon bookstore.** Members receive a 10% discount!
- **Volunteer** to staff our table at conferences (we have events coming up in September), help plan or host events, or assist in the office.
- **Like Detroit Audubon** on your Facebook page.
- **Introduce a friend** to birds and nature at a Detroit Audubon field trip or other event.
- **Use AmazonSmile** when you shop at Amazon.com and designate Detroit Audubon as the charitable organization to receive .5% of the price of qualifying purchases.

For more information about these opportunities to help make a difference with Detroit Audubon, please see the website at www.detroitaudubon.org.



Check out the Audubon Online Bird Guide

This online guide to North American Birds features over 800 species of birds in 22 Orders and 74 families.

The guide covers all of North America's regular breeding birds, as well as non-breeding species that regularly or occasionally visit North America, north of Mexico.

Click [Here](#) to use the Guide.

Black Tern Monitoring on Lake St. Clair, Summer, 2014

The second summer of nesting monitoring on the Lake St. Clair flats offshore of Harsen's Island is nearing its end. This project is part of the Michigan Important Bird Area program coordinated by Caleb Putnam. Randy Kling has been following a twice-weekly schedule of looking for tern nests, marking their location with GPS and checking the eggs for age. He counts the number of adults as well. The nest locations will be compared to last year to look for any correlation. Randy reports many changes in the vegetation available for nest building.

Each time out, Randy began to find eggs hatching and hatchlings off the nest. Randy would wade over to the tiny baby birds and bring them back to the boat to weigh and band them, and record the information on a separate record card for each nest. They would then be taken back to where they were captured. Most nests have three eggs. Several times, however, nests were either missing or the eggs were gone or cracked, victims of predators. Sometimes Randy found a new nest later—possibly built by the earlier pair, but there is virtually no way to know.

Sometimes Randy would trap the adults and band them as well. He uses a hardware trap. First, the eggs are replaced with fake eggs to prevent damage. Then the trap is placed over the nest. With luck, the adult goes into the opening of the trap and is unable to get out. Randy races to the trap to bring the bird back to the boat so that it can be weighed and banded. It is then released, and the live eggs are replaced in the nest.

Detroit Audubon spends over \$4,000 each year supporting Michigan Important Bird Areas. This year volunteers were supplied by the DNR office on Harsen's Island. Also, the curator of birds at the Detroit Zoological Park has sent several of his workers to assist Randy. Thanks to John Darling and Tom Schneider, respectively. Richard Quick of Detroit Audubon and Caleb Putnam with National Audubon have been out in the boat with Randy a couple of times each as well.

Look for a summary of the data collected this summer in a FLYWAY coming later this year.

(L-R) Samantha 'Sam' Pennazoli of the Michigan DNR carries equipment; a juvenile Black Tern; a baby tern; and Randall Kling weighing a baby prior to banding.



For the latest news and views from Detroit Audubon
be sure to frequently visit our website: www.detroitaudubon.org



Pelicans at Pointe Mouillee!

Photos by Mark Wloch

2014 has been a wonderful year so far for bird watchers in southeast Michigan. First, it was the invasion of Snowy Owls, beginning late last fall and lasting through January and February. As the winter wore on, Long-tailed Ducks numbering in the tens of thousands settled in the St. Clair River as ice covered more than 90 percent of Lake Huron, compliments of the polar vortex. Bald Eagles, after a fantastic tally on the Rockwood Christmas Bird Count, gathered by the dozens near a small patch of open water at John Dingell Park in Ecorse as the ice finally began to melt. And, in March, we were treated to higher than usual numbers of Red-necked Grebes, possibly diverted by lingering ice cover on the Great Lakes to inland lakes as well as locations on the Detroit River.

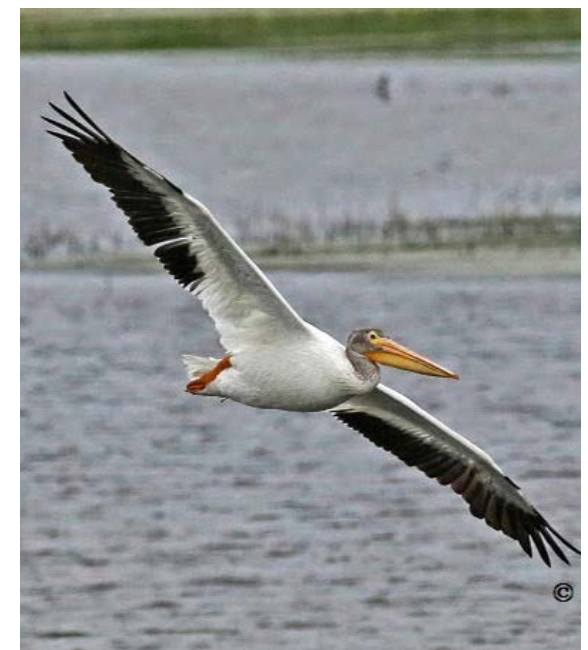
Our latest avian phenomenon: A larger than usual group of American White Pelicans at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area. As many as 80 were seen in early August congregating near the “banana”—the outer rim of dikes that make up the preserve. Pelicans are not that uncommon at Pointe Mouillee; small flocks are usually seen in migration in the spring and stopping over in the late summer. What *is* unusual is the significantly higher number of birds hanging out there this year. Pointe Mouillee State Game Area is located in Monroe County, south of Lake Erie Metropark.

One of the largest birds in North America, the American White Pelican has an incredible 9-foot wingspan and may weigh upwards of 16 pounds. Although somewhat awkward-looking on the ground, they are graceful in flight, soaring high or slowly flapping their wings, often in V formation. Unlike cranes and storks, which fly with outstretched necks, white pelicans fly with their necks folded back. Their big webbed feet make them strong swimmers. Males and females appear identical, while juvenile birds are variably dusky.

American White Pelicans spend their summers in the northern Great Plains (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montana, North Dakota, and Minnesota) and in other locations in the west. They winter along the Pacific and Gulf coasts, including Florida. Most range maps show their migration pathways to lie west of the Mississippi River. The birds at Pointe Mouillee are migrants; typically birds in small numbers are seen there up until early September. It will be interesting to see how large the pelican assembly becomes.

The birds forage for food in shallow marshes, rivers, and lake edges. They do not plunge-dive as the Brown Pelican does; they instead obtain their food by swimming along the surface, dipping their massive bills into the water and scooping up prey in their expandable throat pouches. American White Pelicans often feed cooperatively, swimming together in a line or half-circle and herding fish towards the shore. Two groups will sometimes steer fish towards each other. After filling their pouches, the birds will tip their heads back to drain out the water before swallowing.

Detroit Audubon thanks Mark Wloch for the use of his photos of these awesome birds, which were taken in mid-July.



YES, DETROIT AUDUBON IS ON FACEBOOK

Be sure to “Like” the Detroit Audubon [page](#) to get reminders of field trips as well as notifications of volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs, and workshops. Help spread the word about ways to help Detroit Audubon protect birds and the environment.

THE FLYWAY HAS GONE GREEN!

Only one issue of the Flyway is printed and mailed annually (in March). For the other three online issues, we need all members’ email addresses.

If you, or members you know, have missed an issue of the Flyway, please contact the office at detas@bignet.net or (248) 354-5804 to provide us with the correct email address. Rest assured that Detroit Audubon will not share or sell your email address to any other person or organization.

Chimney Swift Monitoring Project enters 3rd year

In August and September, Detroit Audubon is again soliciting information on large Chimney Swift roosting sites. Over the past two years, we've received reports or counts of birds at the following roost sites:

Farmington Hills:

Winery chimney at the intersection of Grand River and Orchard Lake Roads
Botsford Commons Senior Community, 21450 Archwood Circle

Ann Arbor:

Burns Park Elementary School, 1414 Wells St.

Slauson Middle School (and other nearby locations), 1019 W. Washington

Midtown Detroit: Garfield Building, Forest Avenue at Woodward

Southgate: Southgate Board of Education Building, Northline at Burns St.

Rochester Hills: Oakland Steiner School, 3976 S. Livernois

Grosse Pointe: Maire School

Dearborn: River Rouge Bird Observatory area

Do you know of a chimney in your area hosting a flock? If you are aware of any roosting sites, or would like to volunteer to monitor any of the above locations, we would love to hear from you. Please let us know the location and, if possible, an estimated number of birds entering the chimneys on two specific weekends: August 15-17 and September 12-14.

Please send the information with your name and contact info to ejsimon765@gmail.com. Thank you!

Chimney Swift Watch August 29, 7:30 p.m.

Join us to observe what we expect will be hundreds of Chimney Swifts circling around and dropping into the historic Burns Park Elementary School chimney in Ann Arbor to roost for the night. The school, whose chimney has hosted flocks of swifts for decades, is one of the sites monitored by Detroit Audubon to learn more about the migration patterns of these unique birds. Chimney Swifts winter in South America and, like many other neotropical migrants, their numbers are declining.

Large chimneys, like the one at Burns Park Elementary, usually house the nonbreeding birds in early summer, to be joined by the breeders and their young in late summer. Smaller residential chimneys, mostly in older homes, serve as breeding sites for one mated pair and possibly a couple of helpers. In late summer, after the breeding season, they congregate in large flocks—sometimes hundreds of individuals—and roost together at night in their selected chimneys. In past years, the Burns chimney has hosted flocks of more than 1,000 individuals.

We'll watch the spectacle of these birds as they prepare for migration right in our own suburban backyard. We hope to see you there!

For directions to the Burns Park Elementary School, see the Field Trip Schedule on page 9.

Chimney Swift © Greg Lavaty

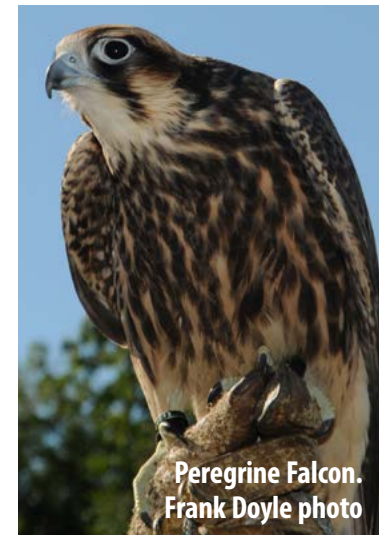


15 Peregrines banded in Southeast Michigan

by Holly Vaughn, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources banded 15 Peregrine Falcon chicks in the Southeast Region this spring. The Southeast Region, extending from the Ohio border to the Thumb, includes Monroe, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Jackson, Washtenaw, Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, Sanilac, Tuscola, Saginaw, Bay and Huron counties.

At about three weeks of age and before they can fly, Peregrine Falcon chicks are given two bands on their legs—one bi-colored band with large numbers that can be read from a distance, and a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Band (usually purple, with a serial number specific to that bird). These bands are placed on young birds so that scientists can monitor and track their dispersal, migration, lifespan, reproductive success, behavior and population growth.



Peregrine Falcon.
Frank Doyle photo

Birds were banded at the following sites this year: the former Lowe Campbell Ewald Building in Warren (one male and two females), the Jackson County Tower Building (one female and two males), the Old Mt. Clemens County Building (three females and one male), the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor (two females and one male), the JR Whiting Power Plant in Erie (one male), and the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron (one male).

Tracking Peregrine Falcons is important as their population recovers. During the 1960s, their numbers declined precipitously. The shells of peregrine eggs became extremely fragile because adult birds had accumulated DDT, a pesticide that interfered with calcium metabolism. By 1968, the entire U.S. Peregrine Falcon population east of the Mississippi was gone. Peregrines are still considered endangered in the state of Michigan, though no longer considered federally endangered.

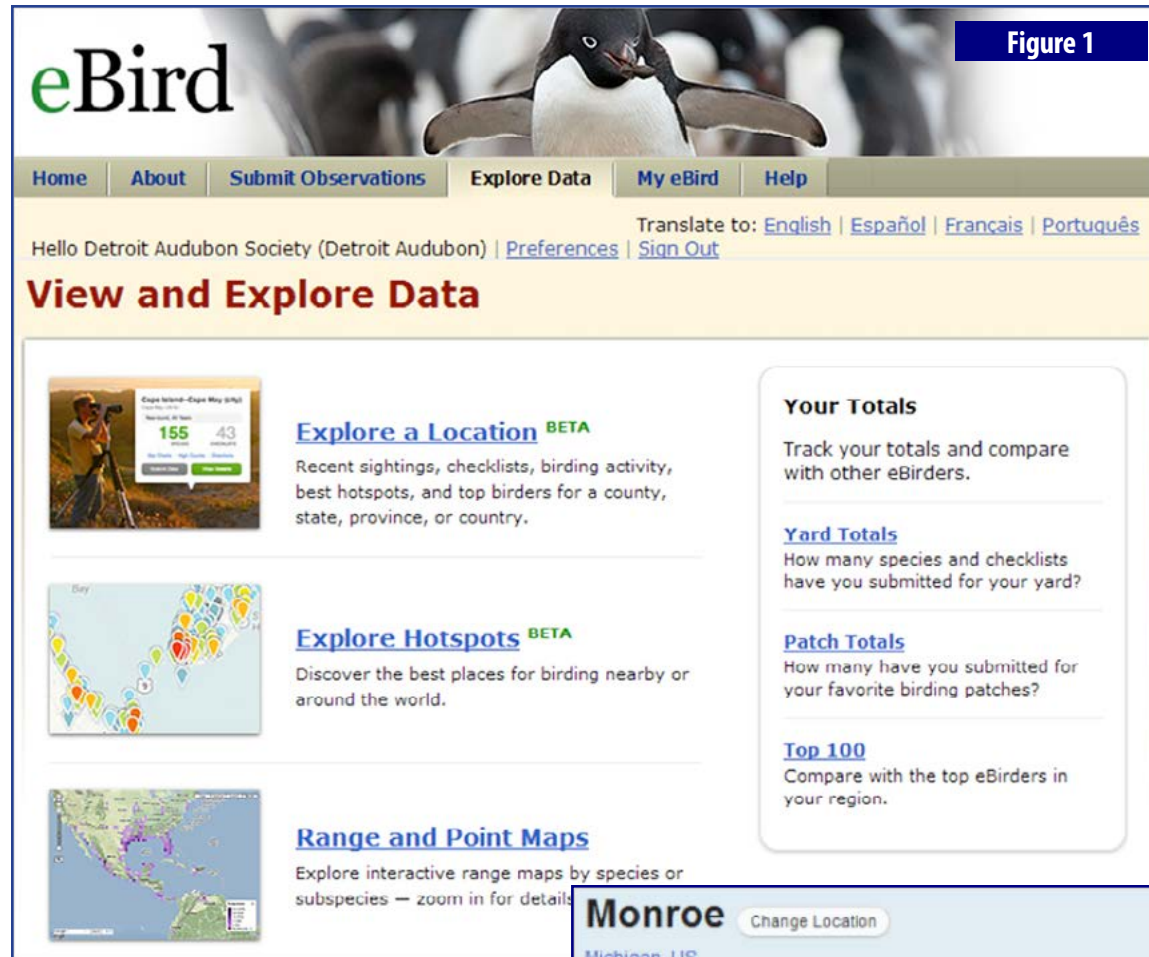
Michigan began peregrine recovery efforts in 1986. In 1993, peregrines in Michigan began reproducing successfully. There are currently 21 known nest sites in southeast Michigan. Ten of the nests successfully hatched chicks, and 23 chicks fledged. In 2013 there were 47 nest sites statewide.

Detroit Audubon thanks Holly and the DNR for permission to include this article in the Flyway. As an additional note, the chicks born at U-M Hospital nest were named Mary, Sue, and Coleman, in honor of the university's retiring president. Traditionally cliff-nesting birds, peregrine have become established in downtown areas whose tall buildings and other man-made structures make good nest sites. In addition, the birds that have taken up residence on the Canadian side of the Ambassador Bridge (see the story in the Fall 2013 Flyway) hatched another four chicks this year, which were also banded.

Using eBird to assist in planning your birding adventures by Curt Hofer

eBird offers a number of ways to find out what birds have been reported in various venues. These tools can be used to help plan birding activities. Let's examine how to use the different approaches to plan some birding activities.

All of the tools we will discuss are located on the **Explore Data** tab (see **Figure 1**).



The **Explore a Location** tool may be used to learn more about bird reports in a geographic location (county, state, province, or country). One feature is a list of all the birds that have been seen in the specified area, listing the most recent occurrence of each species. **Figure 2** is a screenshot of a portion of the **Explore a Location** page, after choosing Monroe County as the location.

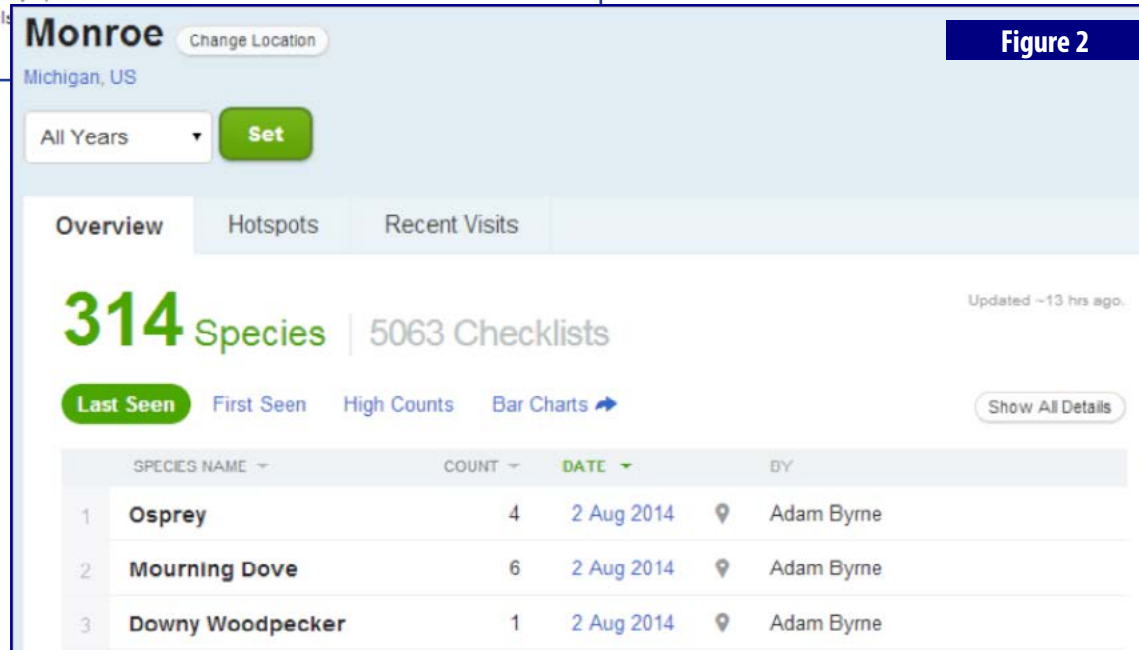
I generally scan the departures list to see what birds have been reported in the last week or so. This time of year (mid-to-late August or early September) I look to see what shorebirds

or migrating warblers are being reported since these would be “new on the scene” and of particular interest for a birding outing.

Another feature in the **Explore a Location** tab is a list of local hotspots, ranked in order of total number of species observed. I find this feature most helpful when I am planning to spend an extended period in a region or want to focus my birding in a specific region. For example, say that I want to spend a day exploring Monroe County. Most local birders are aware of local gem Pointe Mouillee, but outside of that, what other spots in the county might be productive for finding a variety of birds?

Selecting the **Hotspots** tab will show a list of all hotspots in the county (**Figure 3**), ranked in order by total number of species reported. Clicking on a hotspot name will display the species list. This allows me to review the species variety at each hotspot and select a few to visit that have different species mixes. Both this hotspot list feature and the **Explore Hotspots** feature described below can help find hotspots in your area.

Explore Hotspots is a great tool to look for places to bird along the way when travelling. For example, let's consider a hypothetical visit to the Knoxville, Tennessee area in late November. To begin, enter Knoxville, Tennessee into the **Location** box at the top of the page.



The map zooms in to show the general area around Knoxville and now displays the individual Hotspot markers (see **Figure 4**).

The markers are color-coded for total number of species observed. That may be misleading in this case, because most areas have their greatest species diversity in the spring. We are interested only in the best stops in November. Fortunately, we can set the month of interest in the **Date** box. Once we do so, the map refreshes to indicate which Hotspots have the highest species counts, considering only the month of November. We find that, although there are no Hotspots that have 100 or more species for this time of the year, there are a few, shown in light blue, that have between 50 and 100 species observed in November. No locations seem



to stand out, so let's focus on locations closest to the I-75 corridor. When hovering over the markers with the mouse cursor, we see the location name and species count appear. After some trial and error we find that Cove Lake SP (76) and Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery (87) compare favorably to most of the other choices. To learn specifically which species have been reported at each location, we can click on the individual markers. Doing so opens a dialogue box that presents several choices. To see the list of birds reported we choose **View Details**. The complete list of birds reported at the location appears, with the most recent observation

continued

Using eBird to assist in planning your birding adventures continued

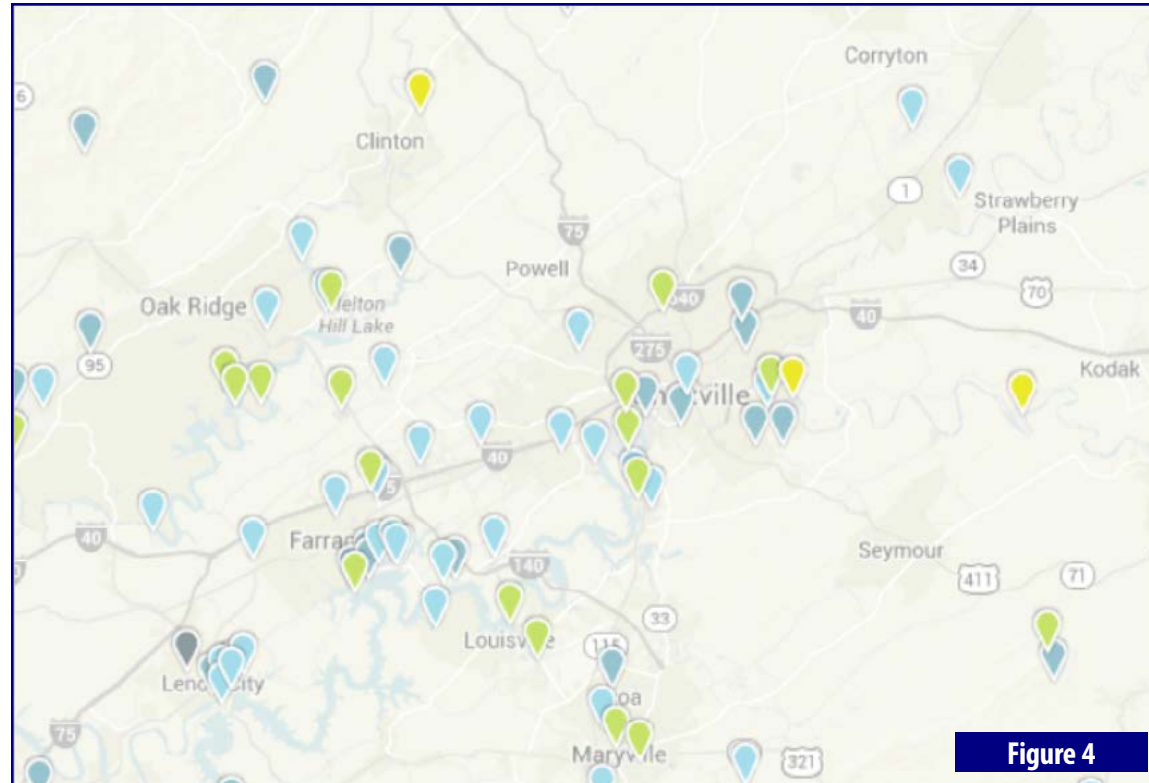


Figure 4

of each species shown. Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery seems particularly interesting, as there is a nice mix of birds present in November including ducks, waders, passerines, hawks, and some shorebirds. This looks like a good location to visit. Now, how do we get there? Conveniently, eBird has built a feature for this into the application. Near the top of the page under the Hotspot name is a link to **Get Directions**. Clicking on this link opens a Google Maps window in which the Hotspot has been preselected as the destination. Simply add a starting point—I usually use my local hotel—and directions are ready for printing.

The **Range and Point Maps** tool is the “go to” tool to seek out specific species of interest. Let’s consider the case of locating local areas where the Pileated Woodpecker is likely to be seen. After clicking on **Range and Points Maps**, complete the information at the top of the page. After **Species**: type in Pileated Woodpecker. After **Date**: click on the bottom radio button and enter 2013 to 2014, then click on the **Set Date Range** button. (While our main interest is where the woodpeckers have been seen recently it will add some context to the results if we include reports for the last couple of years.) Finally, in the **Location**: box, enter the general area you would like to explore. For illustration, let’s use Oakland County, MI (once you see Oakland County, MI in the choice list you can select it to auto-fill the box). The map will zoom to an area centered on Oakland County (see **Figure 5**).

Note that the sighting locations within the last 30 days are highlighted in orange so that it wasn’t necessary to limit the search period to a very

short time frame. Clearly a number of local hotspots in Oakland County are good spots to go and look for a Pileated Woodpecker. To get an idea of the frequency of reports at each hotspot, click on the marker for the location you are interested in. By the way, the hotspots are the larger markers with the little flames inside; the smaller markers are called personal locations and indicate bird sightings that occurred outside of official hotspots.

The tools presented here are all great tools for planning your next birding outing. The more you use them, the easier it becomes. Give them a try the next time you are planning a birding trip, whether it is local or to points distant.

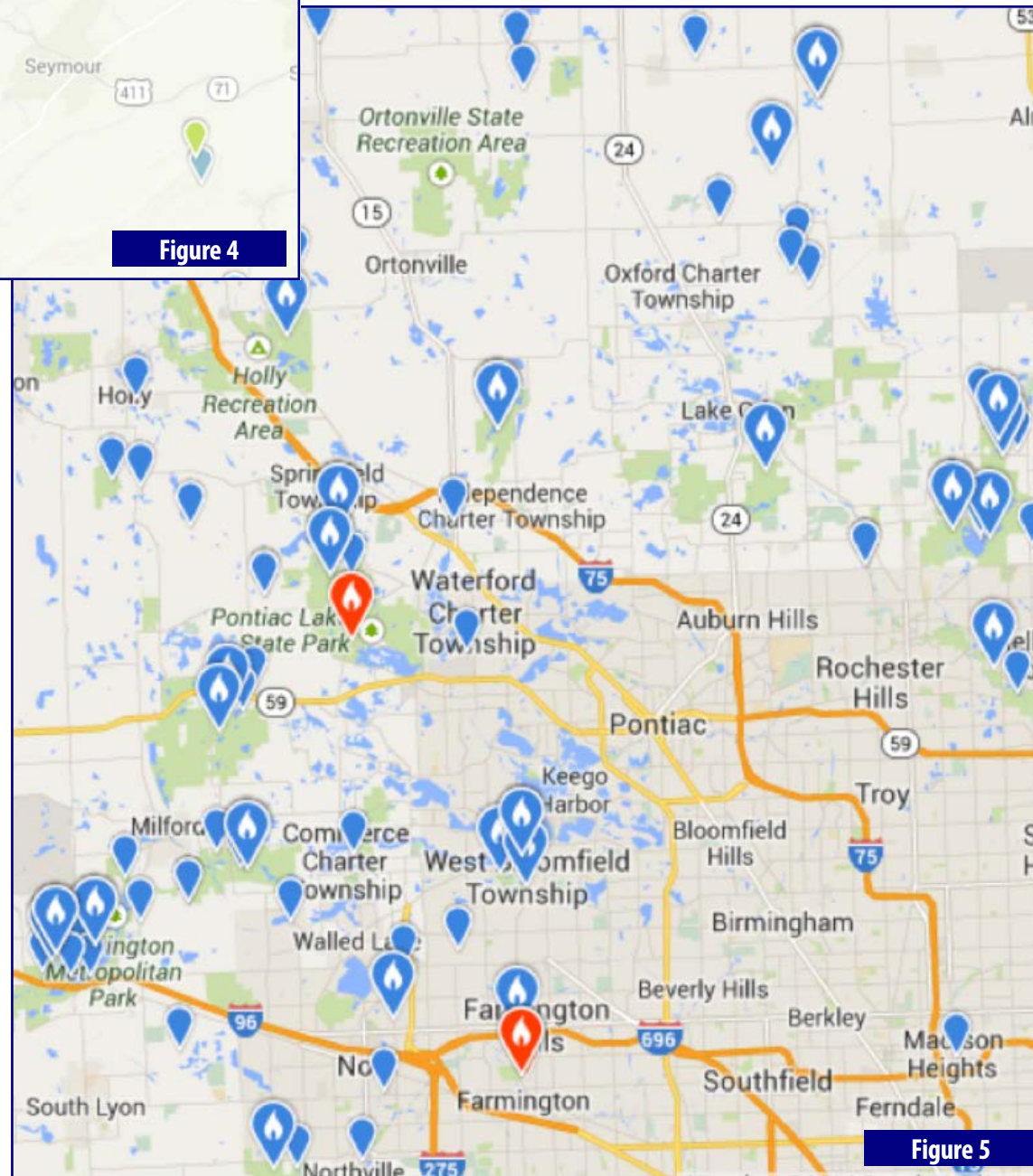


Figure 5

More about Hotspots

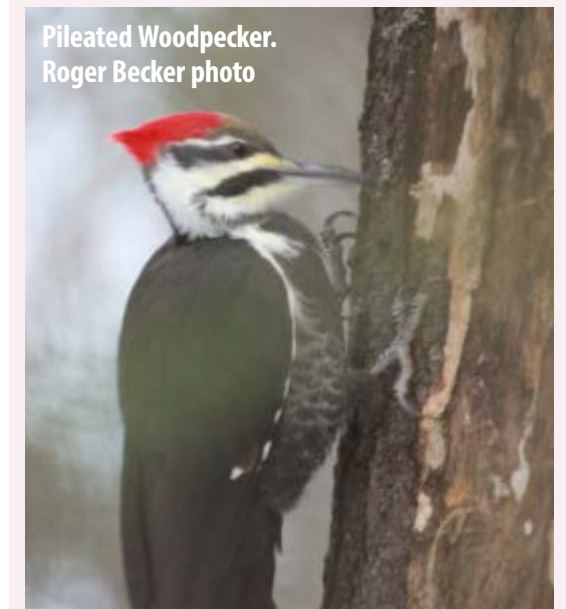
It is worth commenting about the limitations of Hotspots. When Hotspots are created there is no provision for adding descriptive or cautionary information, an oversight that I hope will be remedied in the future.

Useful information would include whether there is an entry fee for the location, whether the access hours or days are restricted, and whether certain times of the day are better for viewing than others.

A case in point is that Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery, mentioned in the main article, is generally closed on the weekends. If you visit on a weekend you won’t be able to get inside the facility, and much of the complex will be out of view. Many water treatment facilities are the same way—they welcome birders when there is staff on hand, but don’t permit visitors when they are closed.

Coastal marshes may be very productive at low tide, but very quiet, bird-wise, at other times. So, consider the possible pitfalls associated with each Hotspot. If you believe a facility might have restricted days or hours, review a few of the checklists to see if they all occur on weekdays or between 8 AM and 5 PM. Also consider checking local Audubon Society websites, as they often have detailed information available about local birding sites.

Pileated Woodpecker.
Roger Becker photo



DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY 2014 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

Detroit Audubon Society field trips offer fantastic year-round birding opportunities. We visit renowned regional hotspots during migration seasons. Other trips focus on the many interesting resident species. All trips are free unless otherwise noted. Everyone is welcome, especially beginning birders. NOTE: Schedule is subject to change. Please contact the Detroit Audubon office at (248) 354-5804 or email the trip leader by 5:00 PM on Friday before each trip so we'll know how many to expect and can notify you of any changes. Leave your name, address, number coming, phone number, and email address. If you can carpool or give rides, let us know. For park maps, see <http://www.Metroparks.com/ParkMaps>

Point Pelee, Ontario August 23, 2014 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Leonard Weber dasfieldlw@detroitaudubon.org

August may seem early for fall migration, but for warblers, the end of August and the first few days of September are the peak time. We may check Hillman Marsh for waterfowl, and stop at Ojibway Park in Windsor as well.

Directions: Cross the Ambassador Bridge and follow Rte. 3 to Leamington. Follow signs to Point Pelee National Park (entrance fee required: about \$8). Meet in Visitor Center parking area. Remember to bring passport for entry into Canada and back into the U.S.

**Chimney Swifts – Burns Park Elementary School, Ann Arbor
August 29, 2014 (Friday) 7:30 p.m.**

Leaders: Leonard Weber and Emily Simon

Join us at dusk to observe what we expect will be hundreds of Chimney Swifts circling and dropping into the historic Burns Park Elementary School chimney to roost for the night. This is one of the sites being monitored by Detroit Audubon to learn more about the migration patterns of these unique birds.

Address: 1414 Wells St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Directions: From I-94: From Exit 177, head north on State Street about 1.5 miles and turn right on Granger. Make a left on Olivia St. Turn right onto Wells St. From US-23: Take Exit 37, Washtenaw Ave West. Go west on Washtenaw for about 2 miles (bear right to avoid veering off on E. Stadium). Turn left on Fair Oaks Parkway. Make an immediate right on Norway, turn left on Ferdon Road, then make a right on Wells St.

Lake St. Clair Metropark

September 7, 2014 (Sunday) 8:00 a.m. Leader: TBA

We hope to see fall migrants aplenty in summerlike temperatures.

Directions: Take I-94 east; exit on Metropolitan Parkway. Drive east into the park and park on the west side of the main parking lot near the Nature Center, where we will meet. Metropark entrance fee or sticker required.

Lake Erie Metropark – Hawkfest (no bird hike)

September 20-21 (Saturday-Sunday) all day: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Bring your children to enjoy the many games, crafts, talks, demonstrations, displays and live hawks and owls at Hawkfest in and around the Marshlands

Museum. Visit the Detroit Audubon display and other vendors, and get down to the boat launch to view the hawk migration and look at the day's tally.

Directions: Take I-75 to Gibraltar Road. Go east toward Gibraltar, turn right on Jefferson and drive south to the park entrance on your left. Metropark entrance fee or sticker required.

Lake Erie Metropark (Gibraltar, MI)

October 11, 2014 (Saturday) 8:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

This is a good time for fall migration of land birds and raptors. We will traverse woodlands, boardwalks and observation platforms looking for warblers, other songbirds and migrating water birds.

Directions: Take I-75 to Gibraltar Road. Go east toward Gibraltar, turn right on Jefferson and drive south to the park entrance on your left. Metropark entrance fee or sticker required.

Sandhill Crane Migration Stopover at Haehnle Sanctuary

October 19, 2014 (Sunday):

3:00 for hike or 5:00 p.m. to observe from hill only

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Join us for a hike through the autumn woods at 3:00. Stay to watch hundreds of Sandhill Cranes fly in to roost in the marsh for the night as they have been doing since the Ice Age. Northern Harrier and a plethora of waterfowl are also possible. Or, just join us on the hillside at 5:00 if you do not want to hike. Dress warmly. A blanket or lawn chair to sit on would come in handy.

Directions: Take I-94 west to Race Road in eastern Jackson County. Go north two miles to Seymour Road at a T-Junction. Go west (left) to the entrance of Haehnle Sanctuary on the north side of the road. Park in the lot and walk east on the trail to the overlook.

Point Edward and Lake Huron Shore, Ontario

November 8, 2014 (Saturday) all day starting at 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

The focus is on water birds and early winter arrivals. This all-day trip historically turns up great birds. We will stop at a restaurant for lunch.

Directions: Take I-94 east to Port Huron and cross the Blue Water Bridge to Sarnia. Take ON-402 E to the Front Street exit toward Point Edward/Sarnia Downtown. Keep right and merge onto Venetian Boulevard W. Meet at the Ontario Travel Information Centre (1455 Venetian Blvd.) on right.

Belle Isle, Detroit November 9, 2014 (Sunday) 9:00 a.m.

Leaders: Steve Santner and Richard Quick

dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

This Detroit gem (now a State Park) is a fine birding location for viewing migrant and wintering waterfowl.

Directions: Take Jefferson to the Belle Isle Bridge. Cross over and drive around the northeast end of the island and park in the Nature Center parking lot. State Park pass or entry fee required.

Owl Prowl—Oakwoods Metropark

November 14, 2014 (Friday) 7:00 p.m.

Leaders: Metropark Naturalist and Jim Bull

We will call for owls and expect to hear them call back, and maybe come in close where we can see them. This program is great for families with children.

Directions: From I-75, exit at West Road and go west to Telegraph (M-24). Turn left on Telegraph, right (west) on Van Horn (which becomes Huron River Drive), then left on Willow Road. Oakwoods Metropark (32901 Willow Road) is on the left. Meet at the Nature Center. Metropark pass required.

Ontario and Niagara River Trip Reservations Required**

December 5 to 7, 2014 (Friday through Sunday)

Leader: Karl Overman

The Niagara region is the place to be in the late fall in the Great Lakes region, with masses of waterfowl and gulls, exciting birding and renowned scenery. Recent trips have turned up Great Cormorant, Gannet, King Eider, Purple Sandpiper, California Gull, Slaty-backed Gull, Kittiwake, Little Gull, Mew Gull, Snowy Owl, Hawk Owl, Rufous Hummingbird, and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Departure from Farmington Hills at 9 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 5th; return Sunday, Dec. 7th at approximately 9 pm. Contact Karl Overman at (248) 473-0484 for directions.

Cost per person: \$380/double or \$480/single includes transportation, two nights lodging. Meals not included. \$75 deposit required by Dec. 1st.

Detroit Christmas Bird Count Reservations Required**

December 14, 2014 (Sunday)

One of the oldest Christmas Bird Counts in North America. Birders spend the entire day covering a 15-mile diameter circle in northern Oakland County to count as many birds as possible, then meet for pizza and count wrap-up.

To participate, contact Tim Nowicki at (734) 525-8630 or tnowick@gmail.com or the DAS office at (248) 354-5804.

Rockwood Christmas Bird Count Reservations Required**

December 27, 2014 (Saturday)

The Detroit Audubon Society co-sponsors this annual count of a 15-mile circle, including Grosse Ile, Lake Erie Metropark, Trenton, Rockwood, South Rockwood, Newport and Oakwoods Metropark. Lunch and dinner provided.

Public hike 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Contact Jim Bull at (313) 928-2950 or daspres@detroitaudubon.org to register for the morning hike.

Feeder Count: If you live in the count area (see above) and have a bird feeder, you can count birds right from the comfort of your own home (the best way to count many songbirds). If you can help with the feeder count, email Jim Bull at daspres@detroitaudubon.org.

All day Rockwood Christmas Bird Count: If you are an experienced birder, many routes need more coverage (some are not covered at all). To participate in the all-day count, contact compiler Tom Carpenter at (734) 728-8733. or tcarpen1980@yahoo.com.

Memorial Day Weekend Nature Getaway

by Jim Bull

It happened again! Almost 50 Detroit Audubon members and friends gathered at the Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, continuing a 30+ year tradition. We keep being told that the retreat center is for sale and will probably close, but that may not happen for some time. When it does, we hope that somebody will purchase it and maintain it as a camp. (There is no protective conservation easement, by the way.) Meanwhile the owners keep it open to generate revenue, and while it is still open we will keep coming back!

Why? This camp is a beautiful wildlife preserve, the developed part on two bluffs overlooking Loon Lake. There is also a beech/maple/hemlock forest, a meandering stream, swamp and marsh habitat, and even some remnant meadow habitat. There is always a nesting Common Loon family on the lake, Bald Eagles soaring, Pine Warblers

singing around the lodge, and this year the Barred Owl asked us, “Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all” over and over, giving us great views. On the boardwalk into the marsh, Swamp Sparrows and Virginia Rails came quite close. Many scenic and birding areas are nearby, including the nesting area of the endangered Kirtland’s Warbler (whose conservation has been a major Detroit Audubon cause for years) and the Rifle River State Recreation Area, which again produced a nesting Eastern Phoebe. Tawas Point produced more warblers than in any recent year, but we did miss some of the regular shorebirds. One shorebird we did see may have made up for it—nesting endangered Piping Plovers. River Road overlooks include Lumberman’s Monument (featuring exhibits on Michigan’s lumbering era); Largo Springs (a

magical spot, if you brave the 300 steps); Canoer’s Monument; and the Cliff Swallows at Five Channels Dam, with their narrow-necked clay-pot nests. At Tuttle Marsh we saw several more Virginia Rails, nesting Osprey, Blue-winged Teal, and—just as we were about to give up—one Sora Rail came in close to give us a real show. In the fields around Tuttle, we found bluebirds, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolinks, and other grassland birds.

On Saturday night we had our traditional campfire, with corny but educational songs about Michigan wildlife sung to familiar tunes, followed by S’mores. One of the out-of-the nest young adults brought a guitar, and sang on with a few diehards around the embers of the fading fire long after the program formally ended. On Sunday evening many people enjoyed the camp trails or explored the lake in a canoe, rowboat or paddleboat. Our last formal program was a flag-raising ceremony before breakfast on Monday in remembrance of the real meaning of this holiday. After breakfast we packed a lunch and headed out for one more morning of birding, before departing.

Minnesota naturalist Doug Wood wrote a song about wildlife always heading for cover when pursued. The song describes friends huddled ‘round a campfire, reading stories in each other’s eyes: “stories that are older than the telling; older than the full moon on the rise; They warm their hands around a cup of coffee. The city seems so strange and far behind; When they return they’ll take that tiny campfire and tend it somewhere deep inside their minds till they can head for cover one more time.”

That’s what these campers will be doing for the next nine months, until it is time to head for cover again at the Memorial Day Weekend Nature Getaway. We hope you can join us next year!

Birders: The Central Park Effect

2012; directed and produced by Jeffrey Kimball

Review by Emily Simon

If you’ve ever tried to tell a non-birder just what it is about birding that you find so incredibly fascinating/addictive/[fill in your own adjective], this delightful documentary about the birds and birders of New York City’s famous Central Park is for you. The film, which premiered on HBO in 2012, is an amazingly complete and balanced portrayal of the birding world and what it means to be a birder. It is available on Netflix and from other online streaming video providers.

Birders moves through the seasons of the birding year, starting with the arrival of migrating spring songbirds and rarities and moving on through the summer breeding season to the fall migration and annual Christmas Bird Count. Birders young and old talk about why they love birds and what draws them to the park. The discovery of birding’s allure is “one of those rare times in an adult’s life when the world suddenly gets more magical rather than less,” one birder says. Can you relate?

As would be expected, most of the film’s birding action takes place in the spring, when migrating birds (and birders) descend on this iconic place in big numbers. Park regulars remark how approachable the birds seem as a Yellow-throated Warbler hops right up to within about three feet of a birder lying on a sidewalk attempting to photograph it. (Yes, you read that right—a Yellow-throated Warbler!) I found myself calling out the names of birds as though I were out in the field on the second Saturday in May. I got some really good looks, too.

Birders does an admirable job of portraying the activity of birding itself, including the challenges of spotting and identifying birds flitting behind the leaves and birding by ear. We get to follow Starr Saphir, a birding institution who led field trips in the park for more than 40 years and amassed a park list of 259 species before her death in 2013. Her passion for birding was contagious and profound. “Looking at birds makes you forget about yourself,” she said. “That’s good.”

But the real stars of this show are surely the birds themselves. More than 100 species appear. Even the lowly mallard gets time in the limelight as one old-timer proclaims, “If you get tired of looking at the common birds, you might as well just pack it in.” And at more than one point, the narrative completely stops while the screen fills with images of birds, simultaneously illustrating both the diversity of species and the wonder of birding—without a word being spoken. Awesome!

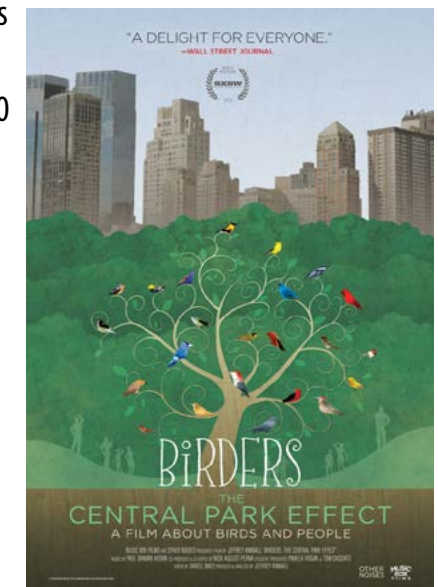
Fortunately, filmmaker Jeffrey Kimball was not content to portray birding as merely a quirky human diversion. He pushes on to educate viewers about the Central Park Effect—the concentration of birds in the park due to migrants having so few places to stop over as they navigate the urban Northeast. Experts tell of the dangers faced by migrating birds, and Central Park birders lament the “unbelievable decrease” in the numbers of birds they are seeing each year. At the park’s Christmas Bird Count tally, former National Audubon Society president John Flicker soberingly reports that CBC data in fact indicate that one quarter of all common American bird species have declined by 50 percent or more over the past 40 years—a powerful call to action if there ever was one.

In all, *Birders: The Central Park Effect* is a very, very enjoyable and respectful celebration of both birders and birds in this spectacular setting—a wonderful way to spend an hour.

Note: Please be advised that the film is slightly marred by the inexplicable use of one gratuitous f-bomb about 10 minutes in, which marketers also included in the film’s trailer. This is the only instance of profanity (or anything objectionable) in the film.



Sora Rail
by Sharon Korte





Safe Passage Great Lakes needs YOU

The volunteer corps that makes up Safe Passage Great Lakes is working hard to reduce needless night lighting, mirror-like windows on buildings, wind turbines and all the other deadly obstacles to birds.

Safe Passage has literature with solutions to some of these problems, and we want to distribute it to places where nature-friendly citizens congregate—nature centers!

Metro Detroit has a wealth of these centers—in Metroparks, county or city parks.

We at Safe Passage want to get our message out, and we could use your help. If you have a favorite nature center, let us know and we will get the literature to you.

If you're up for a fun, easy, family-friendly way to help birds, just call Rob Duchene at 248-549-6328.

Creative types, give us a trill!

Do you like to write, take photos, paint or draw? Put your talent to work for Detroit Audubon.

We welcome your birding articles and images. For the next issue of the Flyway, send your original work to flyway@detroitaudubon.org.



2014 Birdathon—by the numbers

\$1200+ Funds raised for Detroit Audubon scholarships, conservation, and educational programs

167.5 Total hours of birding

137 Total number of bird species seen on three different dates in May 2014

41 Total participants - Jared, Kevin, and Julie Zaporski; Jim Bull, Bruce Szezchowski, and Emily Simon, who were joined by approximately 12 people at the Grosse Ile Nature Conservancy for the Detroit Audubon field trip; and Leonard Weber, Bill Hickey, and Billie Hickey, who were joined at Eliza Howell Park by a 20-member Friends of the Rouge field trip group

7 Fantastic Southeast Michigan birding locations (Belle Isle, Grosse Ile, Pointe Mouillee SGA, Oakwoods Metropark, Rouge River Bird Observatory, Lake St. Clair Metropark, Eliza Howell Park)

Highlights:

From Jared Zaporski's team: "The highlight of the day was when we realized we only needed one more bird to hit 90 and we started listing some possibilities. Jared turned around and put his binoculars up right on a sleeping nighthawk!" Other notable birds they saw included Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Loon, and Cape May Warbler.

According to Leonard Weber, the 61 species seen at the Birdathon at Eliza Howell Park was the highest one-day total recorded for the park. Leonard's field trip to the park was featured in an article on the Rosedale-Grandmont neighborhood website. Check it out [here](#).

Belle Isle turned up 16 species of warbler. Pointe Mouillee and environs included Cattle Egret and Tricolored Heron. As last year, Grosse Ile in the predawn hours produced an Eastern Screech Owl, but no Great Horned Owl. Species heard at dusk in the fields at Oakwoods Metropark included Eastern Meadowlark, Brown Thrasher, Vesper Sparrow, Willow Flycatcher, Field Sparrow, and American Woodcock.

Detroit Audubon deeply appreciates all the birders and donors who helped to make this year's Birdathon a success. See you next year!

Nine easy ways to help protect Great Lakes water quality

1. Use a mulching mower to fertilize your lawn with grass clippings and fall leaves, rather than using phosphorus-containing fertilizers that run off into storm drains.
2. Safely dispose of toxic household chemicals by taking them to city or county hazardous waste disposal sites:
[Macomb County](#) (includes disposal of pharmaceuticals – see below):
[Oakland County](#)
[Wayne County](#)
3. Avoid buying soaps that contain plastic microbeads. Look for **polyethylene** or **polypropylene** on product labels of exfoliating skin care products. These two ingredients signify that the beads are made out of plastic. In June, Illinois became the first state to ban the manufacture and sale of microbeads, which are now being measured in alarming concentrations in the Great Lakes. Dispose of any unused products at your county/city household hazardous waste collection site.
4. Get your car washed at a carwash instead of doing it yourself. If you do wash your car at home, wash it on the grass. This keeps the suds out of storm drains and your nearby creek.
5. Stop watering and let grass go dormant in August. When cooler fall weather arrives, it will green up again. You'll save both water and money.
6. Check online for take-back programs for unused pharmaceuticals. Some pharmacies partner with counties or cities to accept unused drugs for safe disposal. Wastewater treatment facilities are not equipped to filter drugs and personal care products from the water supply. Do not flush them!
7. Reduce your use of plastics and recycle them wherever possible. Increasing amounts of plastic are making their way into streams, rivers, and oceans, where they harm wildlife that mistake the plastic for food. For more info, visit [Say No to Plastics](#).
8. Plant deep-rooted native plants on your property to filter runoff.
9. Help reduce the salt concentrations in our waterways by choosing an environmentally friendly de-icer on your sidewalks and driveway.

Source: [Alliance of Downriver Watersheds](#)



Lake Erie sunrise at Point Pelee by Roger Becker



Bird ID Quiz

This bird is a Grasshopper Sparrow. It gets its common name from the sound of its song, which is buzzy and insect-like, not dissimilar to some grasshopper notes. Key form characteristics for identification are its compact, chunky shape; a large bill that blends into the fore-crown of a flattened head; and a short tail that has a somewhat disheveled looking tip (as if it were trimmed a bit too short with pinking shears). Note also the horizontal posture when perched, which is characteristic of this species. Plumage cues to look for are a plain, unstriped, buffy breast; a subtle but complete eye-ring; a yellow-orange spot in front of the eye, a rusty orange wash on the cheeks, yellow highlights visible along the front edge of the folded wings; and a mixture of rufous and black spotting on the back. Viewed from the front, a brown crown with a thin white median stripe can be seen.

The Grasshopper Sparrow is found primarily in open grasslands and prairies. It is our only local grassland sparrow with an unstriped breast, so this is key to quick initial field identification in appropriate habitat. Other summer sparrows that show an unstriped breast are Field Sparrows and Chipping Sparrows, but they are unlikely to be found in open grassland. And, they each have other distinguishing characteristics that make them easy to differentiate from the Grasshopper Sparrows. In Michigan the Grasshopper Sparrow is classified as a species of special concern. Habitat loss and fragmentation has played a major role in the population decline of this species and other grassland specialists.

Oak Openings Metropark Field Trip

By Jim Bull

Detroit Audubon hasn't had a field trip to Oak Openings Metropark (a Toledo Metropark) in several years, so as leader I decided to go down on Friday June 20 to refresh my memory of the lay of the land and to scout out places to see some of the specialty birds. There was a light mist the whole time I was there. It was weirdly quiet. I heard an Eastern Phoebe in the parking lot where we would meet, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker, but not much else. It was just as quiet in the grassland areas that are the real reason for coming here. I had hoped to find a naturalist working at the park, but found out that when the last one retired, they retired his position as well. I really didn't have high hopes for Saturday, but I knew the potential was great.

June 21 was a pleasant Saturday morning, with no sign of rain. More and more people—25 in all—waited for me to guide them to the great birds that put this park on every birder's map. We started out on the dune trail through the woods for quite a distance, then into an oak savannah, the "oak openings" of the name. It was pretty quiet. An Eastern Wood Pewee and a Yellow-throated Vireo called. I was not optimistic, but then we met a man from the Toledo Naturalists who told us where he had found some great birds in the last week. We now had an itinerary of new spots to visit.

At the next stop, the lodge, at least eight Red-headed Woodpeckers flitted around a tree laden with berries, gorging themselves and flying in and out of that tree, sometimes landing on a telephone pole, or on the lodge roof. It was hard to draw ourselves away.

Down a bike trail from the lodge parking lot, we found nesting Tufted Titmice—a first for me. Then we came to what they call Tornado Alley. Here we had at least five more Red-headed Woodpeckers, Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Indigo Bunting, Field Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Great-crested Flycatcher, American Goldfinches, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, and the list goes on.

We couldn't reach our next spot because the road was closed. So we headed to the next stop, a little cemetery. There we found several Lark Sparrows, perching on a dead tree, on a fence, and finally in the grass as well. We had been told that Blue Grosbeaks had been seen but didn't find them. We did find several more Red-headed Woodpeckers, Meadowlarks and Field Sparrows, and other field birds as we slowly drove along this road, surveying fields on both sides. We headed out of the park to a nearby parcel near an airport, got out and walked through a field so big, we just could not locate birds from the road. Here we hit paydirt: several Dickcissels singing from atop goldenrod or other herbaceous plants, one Henslow's Sparrow singing from a low shrub, and several Eastern Meadowlarks (we had 10 for the field trip). Those little sparrow-sized Dickcissels with their brown backs, bright yellow breasts, and black V-shaped vests, looked for all the world like miniature meadowlarks with a nose job!

What a great day! I think everybody agreed, this is one field trip Detroit Audubon will have to offer every year from now on. Join us next summer, because I know I plan to lead this trip again.

U-M Museum Hosting Passenger Pigeon Exhibit

This year will mark the 100th anniversary of the extinction of the Passenger Pigeon. Once the most common bird on the continent, the pigeon is the subject of a new exhibit at the University of Michigan Museum of Natural History entitled "A Shadow over the Earth: The Life and Death of the Passenger Pigeon," which will run through January 2015.

The last confirmed sighting of a wild Passenger Pigeon was in 1900; the last captive bird died September 1, 1914, at the Cincinnati Zoo.

The exhibit will feature four of the 32 complete Passenger Pigeon specimens held by the U-M's Museum of Zoology. The display panels created for the exhibition will be shared by more than two dozen institutions in the United States and Canada. The exhibit will contain information about the bird's history in Michigan, accounts of the mass commercial hunting of the bird, and early books and art featuring the bird, among other topics and artifacts. To learn more about the story of the Passenger Pigeon, check out the great resources at Project Passenger Pigeon: www.passengerpigeon.org.

Wolf hunt situation in flux

Pro-wolf-hunt groups have submitted citizen-initiated legislation to the Michigan Legislature that would grant the Natural Resource Commission the authority to designate game species and establish hunts. The legislature can pass the initiative, reject it, or do nothing. If they pass it, it becomes law (and because the measure contains an appropriation, it cannot be subject to voter referendum). If they reject it or do nothing, this proposal will join the two anti-wolf-hunting proposals that have already been approved for the November ballot, and voters will decide whether wolf hunting will become legal in Michigan.

Exciting new way to support Detroit Audubon

If you shop online using Amazon.com, please switch to doing so using AmazonSmile. The AmazonSmile program donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to your choice of charitable organizations. The next time you shop online, sign in using AmazonSmile in order to select Detroit Audubon as your chosen charity organization.

No Pet Coke storage downriver either

On July 17, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) denied the Detroit Bulk Storage Company a permit to allow the open storage of petroleum coke along the Detroit River, this time in the communities of River Rouge and Ecorse. Pet coke, the dusty, possibly toxic byproduct produced during the refinement of tar sands oil, was the subject of major controversy last summer when massive quantities of the material were stored in huge uncovered piles along the downtown Detroit riverfront. After being ordered to remove them, the company applied for permission to store the pet coke downriver. The MDEQ said the company's application did not sufficiently address how it would control dust blowing off the open piles, and denied the permit.