



Flyway

Spring 2015
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Detroit Audubon Young Birder's Report

By Bridget Stempien

Hello everyone! I would first like to say that this has been a very exciting opportunity for me to lead this group and a great way for other young birders in the area to come together.

For our first outing, we all gathered at Kensington Metropark for a morning of birding. We had a lot of fun feeding the Chickadees and Tufted Titmice (Titmouses) that followed us throughout the trail. We were able to see a few White-breasted Nuthatches, a female Downy Woodpecker, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker. A member of our group, Jared Zaporski, even spotted a Bald Eagle! A warm thanks to Leonard Weber for leading our group on our first outing. Also a special thanks to Detroit Audubon President Jim Bull for joining us and providing donuts and hot chocolate for the entire group.

For our second outing, we went to the University of Michigan Natural History Museum in Ann Arbor. We were given a behind the scenes tour of the Zoology Department's Ornithology lab. There, we were able to see how specimens are prepared (stuffed with cotton) and how they are stored. With over 200,000 specimens, the University of Michigan has the largest collection of specimens in the United States, and they are recognized as a top research facility throughout the world! They have rare and exotic bird specimens that are quite colorful, and they have many specimens of extinct species, like the Carolina Parakeet (I'd heard of that species before), a Passenger Pigeon (not stuffed with cotton but had been preserved through taxidermy), and a little flightless bird from Hawaii (there exist World War II videos which show these extinct birds running around the feet of U.S. soldiers). We extend a special thanks to Janet Hinshaw, manager of this incredible species collection, and to her assistant Aspen Ellis, for a wonderful presentation.

Although we did not view it as a group, everyone was encouraged to visit the temporary Passenger Pigeon Exhibit at the museum. It has been 100 years since the last Passenger Pigeon died in captivity. The exhibit explained how the state of Michigan played a large role in the extinction of this bird.

The Young Birders Club is planning more great field trips for the spring. See the schedule below. We hope you can join us!

Photo credit: Mary Stempien. From top: Young birder Luke is thrilled to feed a chickadee! Behind the scenes tour of the ornithology lab at the U-M Museum.



Detroit Audubon Young Birders Club Upcoming Field Trips

International Migratory Bird Day at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, Oak Harbor, Ohio
Saturday, May 9, 2015, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This will be a joint outing with Detroit Audubon at the best time of year at one of the best sites in North America for warblers and other songbird migrants in breeding plumage and full song. We also hope also to see bird banding demonstrations at the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, located at the entrance to Magee Marsh. This is an amazing opportunity for our kids and well worth the drive.

Point Pelee, Ontario
Saturday, May 23, 2015 (Memorial Day Weekend)

This is a "Young Birders Only" outing. We are once again extremely lucky to have Leonard Weber guiding our tour for this very exciting event at a legendary birding hotspot during the peak of spring migration.

For details and to RSVP, email YoungBirders@detroitaudubon.org with the names of the young people coming, your phone number, and email address. We will be sending out reminders with location information and meeting times as each event approaches. For directions and more detailed information, see the complete Detroit Audubon field trip schedule on pages 9-10 or visit our website, www.detroitaudubon.org.

Flyway

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The President's Bully Pulpit

By James N. (Jim) Bull

Imagine a flock of Passenger Pigeons passing overhead, a continuous stream of wings 1.5 miles wide, 240-300 miles long and taking from 14 hours to 3 days to pass, making mid-day look like dusk: a flock estimated at 2.5 to 4 billion birds and possibly the majority of its population. I was inspired to write about this magnificent bird after visiting an exhibit called "A Shadow over the Earth: The Life and Death of the Passenger Pigeon" at the University of Michigan Natural History Museum marking the 100th anniversary of its extinction. Chief Pokagon once remarked of this striking bird with a slate blue back and bright red breast, "It was proverbial with our fathers that if the Great Spirit in His wisdom could have created a more elegant bird in plumage, form, and movement, He never did."

Passenger Pigeons were mercilessly hunted as they flew over or as they rested in massive roosts filling whole groves of trees. The last known nesting flock was near Petoskey, also the site of the last great slaughter. We get the term "stool pigeon" from the individual live birds that were tethered near massive nets to attract the flocks to come down and meet their doom. They were shipped by the barrel to waiting markets in our biggest cities to answer the high demand for their meat. Some conservationists in Michigan and Ohio tried to save them, but their efforts came to naught. A legislative report on a bill to protect the species in Ohio stated, "The passenger pigeon needs no protection. Wonderfully prolific, having the vast forests of the North as its breeding grounds, traveling hundreds of miles in search of food, it is here today and elsewhere tomorrow, and no ordinary destruction can lessen them, or be missed from the myriads that are yearly produced." They were mostly gone from the wild by the mid-1890s, and the very last individual of the species, Martha, died in the Cincinnati Zoo on September 1, 1914. Sadly, few field studies on the Passenger Pigeon were done before its extinction, but one of the few was done in Michigan.



This destruction of an entire species of a superabundant North American bird inspired the passage of the Migratory Bird Act in 1918 and other conservation measures. The great conservationist Aldo Leopold created a monument to the species in Wisconsin. The first local Audubon Societies formed to protect bird species from extinction due to their use not only as food, but also as decorations on women's hats (both feathers and even sometimes whole songbird carcasses were also used). These organizations then banded together to form the national Audubon organization.

We've come a long way and now have many protections for birds and wildlife in place. There are many success stories like Michigan's Kirtland's Warbler, which has roared back from the brink of extinction. However, we must be mindful of what Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., warned, "No conservation victory is ever permanent; constant vigilance is always required."

That is one of the principal roles of an Audubon group, and it is true of Detroit Audubon. We take a two-fold approach, educating youth and the general public about the ecology and enjoyment of birds, and engaging in collective efforts to make sure that those same bird species will be here for future generations to enjoy. I am particularly elated that our Young Birder's Club has gotten off to such a rousing start with field trips to Kensington Metropark and the U-of-M Museum. At Kensington, I witnessed youth enjoying observing birds at feeders, on the lakes, and perched in trees. But they were most thrilled to have Chickadees, nuthatches, and Tufted Titmice come down and feed on seed in their hands! They also hope to do a stewardship project in one of our Metroparks this summer. That's where it all starts. Please join us as we work to expand our efforts to educate about and advocate on behalf of birds, so that, as we reflect about the fate of the Passenger Pigeon, our words and actions say loudly and clearly, "NEVER AGAIN!"

Changes at the Flyway

With this issue of the Flyway, we say goodbye to Tana Moore. Tana designed the layout for both the print and online versions of Flyway and has done the newsletter editing and layout since early 2013. Later in 2013, Tana assumed responsibility for maintaining the Detroit Audubon website and helped throughout 2014 with the planning and initial design of our revised website (which we hope to launch this year). She also took the lead in administering our Facebook page. The Detroit Audubon Board of Directors wishes to express our sincere appreciation for all Tana has done to move our communications forward. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors, Tana!

We'd like to introduce Amanda Gerrity as our new Flyway layout designer. Amanda is a freelance marketing communications professional with many years' experience working with both corporate and nonprofit clients on their newsletters, websites, and other communications. Through her business, Headdweller Productions (www.headdweller.com), she serves clients nationwide. She lives in Howell with her husband and two daughters. Amanda started birding as a young child in her grandmother's suburban Chicago backyard, and has been hooked ever since. Welcome Amanda!

Detroit Audubon Young Birder Scholarship Camp Avocet - August 1-7, 2015

Detroit Audubon is offering, for a third year, a scholarship opportunity to a young birder aged 13-18 in southeast Michigan. This year's scholarship will be full-paid tuition plus up to \$500 towards the cost of airfare to attend the American Birding Association's Camp Avocet based at the University of Delaware's stunning Virden Retreat Center in historic Lewes, Delaware. Camp Avocet runs from August 1-7, 2015.



American Oystercatcher
Photo courtesy of USFWS by Mike Weimer.

The Program

Our scholarship recipient will have the opportunity to improve his or her birding skills, meet other young birders, and explore careers in birding and ornithology. Delaware boasts an outstanding fall migration of shorebirds with fabulous viewing opportunities at two major National Wildlife Refuges and six ecologically-based birding regions. Camp Avocet will be stacked full of migrants such as dowitchers, Black-necked Stilt, Semipalmated, Western and Least Sandpipers, and of course American Avocets numbering in the hundreds. Over 150 species of birds are often seen and studied during this seven-day camp extravaganza.

As an added bonus via the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, campers will have the opportunity to bird world-famous Cape May, New Jersey, in search of warblers, shorebirds, gulls, terns, and more. Campers will be housed and fed in the modern Virden Retreat Center only moments away from the Atlantic Ocean and the Delaware Bay, where Piping Plovers, Black Skimmers, American Oystercatchers, and Royal Terns can be seen.

Fabulous field trips led by ABA Staff and guest instructors will be punctuated by terrific educational workshops, making Camp Avocet 2015 a truly exceptional experience!

The camp is open to young birders aged 13-18 (but is limited to 20 participants).

The Scholarship

Detroit Audubon will cover the tuition costs, which include all lodging, meals, transportation during camp events, instructional sessions, and shuttle to and from Philadelphia International Airport, for the selected individual. We will also cover up to \$500 for the cost of airfare from Detroit (DTW) to Philadelphia (PHL) and back. Prior scholarship recipients will not be eligible for consideration.

Applications

Detroit Audubon will be accepting applications through April 15, 2015. A small number of finalists will be contacted for personal interviews. The scholarship winner will be selected by May 1. Applications should be submitted electronically to scholarship@detroitaudubon.org. The application form is available on the Detroit Audubon website, www.detroitaudubon.org. The form requests a short written statement describing the applicant's current bird-related activities and skills and a statement of his or her reasons for wanting to attend this program. In addition, the application form requests a statement of permission and support from the applicant's parent or guardian.

Spend a Day Birding for Detroit Audubon! BIRDATHON 2015

The 2015 Detroit Audubon Birdathon will be held from May 4 to May 31.

You are invited to spend a day birding in support of Detroit Audubon!

Enjoy a day in the field at the peak time of the spring migration while raising money in support of Detroit Audubon's efforts to protect wild birds and their habitats, to promote nature experiences, and to provide educational scholarships for young birders.

As in previous years, individuals of all skill levels are invited to organize teams or to volunteer to participate on a team.

Each team is asked to select any date between May 4 and May 31 for their birding day and to choose any location(s) in southeast Michigan.

In advance of the birding date, all team members seek pledges from sponsors. Sponsors can pledge a set amount or per-species seen by the team.

During Birdathon 2013, one team recorded 114 species. For those who like competition, that is the number to try to beat!

Team leaders are asked to register their teams by May 1.

To indicate a desire to participate or to register a team, please contact the Detroit Audubon office at detas@bignet.net.

Safe Passage Great Lakes The Work We Do

Detroit Audubon's Safe Passage Great Lakes Committee has the mission of reducing the terrible carnage inflicted on our birds by man-made obstacles such as buildings, window glass, transmission towers, and wind turbines. The avian death toll is hard to calculate

precisely, but the numbers clearly reach into the billions every year. We meet once a month to plot strategies for getting southeast Michigan's attention and suggesting remedies.

Safe Passage has convinced some major players such as Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, Wayne County, and the State of Michigan to turn off their lights above the fifth floor during the spring and fall migration periods from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. This "Lights Out" program is beneficial because the natural GPS in birds' brains gets

confused by brightly lit buildings, particularly during rainy and foggy nights. As a result, migrant birds often fly into those buildings with usually fatal results. Another hazard to birds is window glass in all buildings, even homes. It is estimated that the typical American home has five bird-window glass collisions a year, again usually with fatal results. Detroit Audubon can provide information about solutions for your own home or business. Or you can go to the Bird Watching Magazine website to check out a selection of products that can help: <http://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/featured-stories/15-products-that-prevent-windows-strikes/>.

The next phase of Safe Passage Great Lakes will be to recruit and train a group of volunteers willing to walk around buildings during migration months and actually collect the bodies of dead or injured birds. This will save some bird lives and provide us with very valuable data on the extent of the problem. We also recruit volunteers to go out occasionally and check to see what building operators are or aren't yet participating in our Lights-Out program. If you have an idea, would like more information, or would like to help out with any of these activities, contact Rob Duchene, Safe Passage chairperson, at (248) 549-6328. It's a huge job and we can always use assistance. How many lives have you saved lately?



Black Tern Project at St. Clair Flats: The Second Year

by Caleb Putnam, Michigan Important Bird Area (IBA) Coordinator, Audubon

In 2013, National Audubon Society and Detroit Audubon initiated a study of the breeding success of Black Tern (Michigan Species of Special Concern) and Forster's Tern (Michigan Threatened Species) at St. Clair Flats and Harsens Island. The study's goal was to decipher the potential causes of large scale declines in both species in Michigan and to determine whether productivity was limited by any factors at this site.

Several important results stemmed from the first year's work. First, these sites were shown to be the largest remaining colony in Michigan for either species. Second, fecundity appeared to be relatively high during 2013, reinforcing the importance of this site to these species. Third, no major nest predators were discovered, but intense thunderstorms did cause at least two large losses of nests.

The focus in 2014 was on Black Terns rather than Forster's Terns, in large part because their nests are more concentrated, allowing for easy study, but also because it is the primary species from a conservation standpoint. In addition, Forster's Terns begin breeding much earlier than Black Terns.

Nests were geo-referenced with a handheld GPS unit and numbered. Every egg in each nest was observed until hatching or predation/loss, whichever occurred first. We measured all eggs for mass, length, and breadth. All chicks handled were banded and measured for mass, and all adults trapped were measured (mass, culmen, bill breadth, bill tip to nape, and wing chord) and banded.

As in 2013, we estimated the number of pairs of nesting Black Terns by counting/estimating the number of birds at every colony during each visit and summing the totals. However, this process is rough as the number and location of individual birds changes weekly as nests fail and re-nest attempts are made, and adults often fly far from the colony for foraging, especially during brooding. In 2014, Randy Kling made a significant effort to find all of the colonies on St. Clair Flats, through weekly forays south into Big Muscamoot Bay and north into Scotten Bay in addition to the core colonies.

Results

Numbers of adults and nests

A total of 68 Black Tern nests were found during 2014. The cumulative total of adult pairs distributed among the 5 colonies was approximately 145-170 pairs. Randy's impression was that there was little difference in overall Black Tern abundance from 2013.

Nest enclosures

We installed 14 nest enclosures between May and late June. In each case nest visits occurred around the time of hatching, based on estimates of hatching date. The first 2 enclosures were installed on nests that had an incomplete clutch (only 1 egg laid, thus incubation had not yet begun). In both cases the adults deserted these nests immediately. For all remaining enclosures, visits were delayed until the nest was already under incubation before installation. Birds seemed more likely to stay the more time and energy they had committed to the nest.

Hatching success

Forty of 53 nests had 3 eggs, 11 had 2 eggs (though some or all of these may have been incomplete clutches or have lost one of the eggs to depredation), and no nests had 1 egg or more than 3. The remainder of the nests were not classifiable because the young were already hatched before discovery of the nest.

Of the 14 enclosed nests, 10 hatched successfully (from 1 to 3 of the 3 eggs), 2 failed (all 3 eggs turned up missing before hatching was possible), and 2 were deserted before completion of egg laying. From this we derive a hatching success of 71.4% (if all 14 enclosures are counted) or 83.3% (if the 2 prematurely enclosed nests are omitted). Of

the 54 remaining nests that were not enclosed, 29 successfully hatched at least one chick, 17 had unknown fates, and 8 definitely failed. This yields a hatching success of at least 53.7%. The aggregate estimate of hatching success for 2014 is thus between 53.7% and 83.3%.

Banding

The goal was to band up to 60 adults. Results fell far short of this goal; we captured only 12 adults despite intense effort, particularly during the visits in July, when most effort was spent. The adults were far less willing to enter the traps than during 2013, for reasons that are unclear. Sixty-seven Black Tern chicks were banded, compared with 32 during 2013. As expected, no bands were recaptured in 2014, as this species does not normally return to breed until birds reach 2 full years of age.

Discussion

Black Tern numbers and colony locations

Black Terns appeared to be present in similar numbers to 2013, holding steady at about 200-400 pairs. Early in the season it appeared that fewer birds than normal were present, but by mid-June the numbers returned to the normal levels following a cold, late spring. The colony continues to be Michigan's largest. Colony locations and nest placement within the colonies appears to vary by year. Birds appear to search the Flats for the best available floating mats and are flexible in using what is available to them regardless of location. This pattern is typical for the species.

Hatching success of Black Terns at St. Clair Flats appears to be high. In 2013 we estimated a hatching success of between 51% and 89.8%, and during 2014 this number was similar: approximately 71.4%-81.3%. Such ranges strongly suggest that productivity (i.e., fledging success) on St. Clair Flats is relatively high. Thirty nests were found to have failed, but only in six cases were missing eggs presumed to have been predated.

Nest predation does not appear to be a limiting factor on St. Clair Flats. The primary factors limiting nests are weather events, specifically strong thunderstorms and associated high winds, which create wave action and redistribute the floating bulrush masses. Cold weather events early in the nesting season are an additional threat, but most Black Terns seem to wait until after this window before initiating nesting.

Conclusions

The goals set forth for this project were successfully accomplished: estimating colony size, productivity, and the distribution of active nests on St. Clair Flats for two years. Productivity appears to be high, though continued monitoring would strengthen this conclusion. In order to understand why Black Tern continues to decline in Michigan and regionally, we must begin to understand source/sink dynamics. If St. Clair Flats can be shown to be a source colony, it becomes important to assure that nesting success remains high. An IBA adoption group could monitor the site for nest predators or other threats, and abate them as needed. If St. Clair Flats is shown not to be a source colony, the site may not merit additional work. The relative importance of this site could also be assessed by measuring site fidelity and adult survivorship, but this requires a long term dataset and banding of adults. Such work is recommended as the next step but may not be feasible without turning the project over to a graduate student or researcher who can devote several years of intense effort to the data collection and banding of most of the adults in the colony.

Detroit Audubon has been a major financial supporter of the IBA Program in Michigan.

YES, Detroit Audubon Is On Facebook



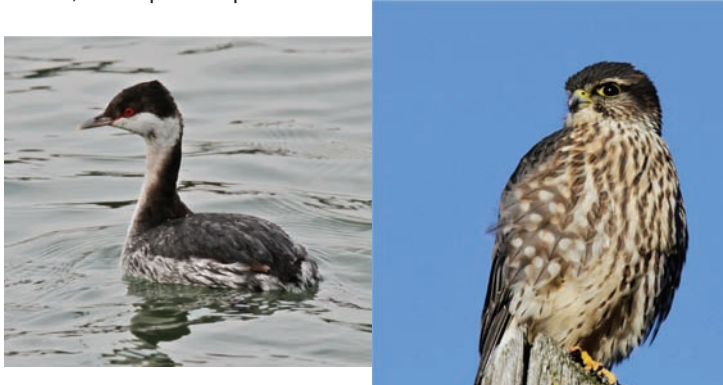
Be sure to "Like" the Detroit Audubon page to get reminders of field trips as well as notifications of volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs, and workshops. Help spread the word about ways to help Detroit Audubon protect birds and the environment.

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

Ontario Niagara River Trip December 5-7, 2014

By Sharon Korte

The Detroit Audubon Ontario Niagara River trip, led by Karl Overman and Al Wormington, took our group of five participants through southern Ontario, stopping at Lake Erie lakeshore parks, marinas, and fields before reaching the Niagara River area and Lake Ontario. This outing was rich in bird sightings, which included Long-tailed Duck, Harlequin Duck, Mallard, American Black and Ruddy ducks, Buffleheads, Scoters, Coots, and Cackling, Canada, Ross's and Blue goose (blue morph Snow goose). We also tallied a juvenile Common Loon, Pied-billed and Horned Grebes, Snowy Owls in farmer's fields, and Sandhill Cranes dancing. Gulls included Herring, Ring-billed, Glaucous, Iceland and Black-backed. We found several rarities: Black Vultures on a roof across the river in New York state, a Eurasian Tree Sparrow among a flock of sparrows by a feeder in a front yard, a Northern Mockingbird on a wire, and warblers—Tennessee Nashville and Yellow Rumps—in a wooded park in Oakville, Ontario. Kinglets were there also. We found a Merlin watching from a post in a marina and Trumpeter Swans near sunset. This trip was fantastic, and I hope I can repeat it soon.



All photos by Sharon Korte. Clockwise from top left: Horned Grebe, Merlin, Eurasian House Sparrow, Trumpeter Swan, Snow Goose.



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 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.

Time to Start Thinking Spring! Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away: Friday May 22-Monday May 25, 2015 Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center Hale, Michigan

It's not too soon to think about the plaintive calls of loons echoing over the lake, owls hooting deep in the woods, wildflowers along the trails, and colorful singing warblers! We will be back at Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center again this year for another great Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away! Join us for our jam-packed 3-night holiday weekend, where you can:

- Take birding field trips led by knowledgeable birders to the breeding area of the endangered Kirtland's Warbler, Tawas Point State Park (renowned migration hot spot), Lumberman's Monument and other Au Sable River overlooks, and the Rifle River State Recreation Area
- Enjoy family-friendly educational programs, nature walks, and campfires with s'mores and sing-alongs
- Explore the natural surroundings on hikes or by canoe, kayak, or paddleboat on picturesque Loon Lake
- Look for owls on the evening Owl Prowl
- Search for Sora and Virginia Rail along the marsh boardwalk
- Visit the Homer Roberts Nature Center
- Try out the camp's challenge course

You will experience the retreat's beautiful north woods setting at the height of spring migration, the absolute best time to see migrants in brilliant colors and full song. Birds commonly seen around the camp include Barred Owls, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Pileated Woodpeckers, Pine Warblers, nesting Common Loons, Bald Eagles, Eastern Phoebe, Sora, Virginia Rails, and Swamp Sparrows. Families of fox and beavers have also been spotted near the camp. Ninety-plus bird species have been tallied over the weekend in past years.

The Nature Get-Away includes 3 nights' lodging at the camp, a snack on Friday evening, all meals from Saturday breakfast

through Monday lunch, and all field trips and activities (extra charge for the challenge course). You can also make your own lodging arrangements off site for a lower fee. Hale, Michigan, is on M-65, about three hours north of Detroit.

Come and be a part of Detroit Audubon's 35-year Memorial Day tradition of camaraderie, fun, and great birds at Loon Lake. See the Detroit Audubon website at www.detroitaudubon.org under PROGRAMS AND EVENTS/Weekend Nature Getaway for information on fees and downloadable registration forms. Questions? Contact Jim Bull at (313) 928-2950 or daspres@detroitaudubon.org. Registration deadline is May 14, 2015.



Campers getting ready for the evening program (and s'mores) at the campfire. Photo credit: Jim Bull



Everyone enjoys a hearty meal in the Retreat Center dining hall. Photo credit: Jim Bull

Natural Resources Management at the Huron-Clinton Metroparks

by Ryan J. Colliton, Stewardship Coordinator, Huron-Clinton Metroparks

Natural resources management has always been part of the operations at the Huron-Clinton Metroparks. However, it was not until 2006 that the Metroparks established the Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Department. Since that time, the department has made great progress in implementing best practices in natural resources management with the goal of protecting and restoring significant elements of natural diversity and balancing ecological stewardship with compatible recreational uses.

With 25,000 acres in 13 parks and five counties, the task of managing the Metroparks' natural resources offers both great opportunities and great challenges. To address these issues, the Natural Resources Department began an effort to identify and systematically evaluate high-quality natural areas. High-quality natural areas within the Metroparks are defined by some or all of the following criteria:

Photo courtesy of HCMS. Prescribed fire to remove Phragmites at Stony Creek Metropark.



1. Floristic community is representative of Michigan's native biodiversity
2. Proximity of other ecosystems that are also representative of Michigan's native biodiversity
3. Proximity of wetlands or bodies of water
4. Adequate size to support viable populations of native flora and fauna
5. Invasive species coverage
6. Community rarity in Michigan
7. Presence of a viable population or populations of protected species, species of concern, or rare/declining species
8. Wetland community

The information collected based on these criteria and others allows the Metroparks to prioritize management areas and set measurable and achievable goals. The Natural Resources Department continually monitors progress toward these goals and adapts its management strategies based on successes, failures, or new information gathered during the management process. When restored, high-quality habitats should require minimal effort to maintain, and resources can be used to address the next priority. This systematic approach allows the Metroparks to ensure the long-term viability of natural resources management.

During 2014, this process resulted in the successful completion of over 1000 acres of restoration and management of native ecosystems within the Metroparks. Some exemplary projects include the planting of 38 acres of native lake plain prairie at Lake Erie Metropark. The lake plain prairie ecosystem was once common around the Saginaw Bay Area, the St. Clair River, and Lake Erie Metropark. Today, it is estimated that the ecosystem covers less than one percent of its historic area. This ecosystem is utilized by rare birds, amphibians, and reptiles and provides important stop-over habitat for birds migrating the Mississippi Flyway. Similar projects include the restoration of Great Lakes coastal marshes at both Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie Metroparks. Totalling over 700 hundred acres, these projects will provide much of the same benefits as the lake plain restoration. The majority of this work focused on the control of the invasive

species *Phragmites australis* (phragmites). This species was monitored and treated in 2014 at both locations, an effort that has been ongoing since 2010. With most of the phragmites eliminated from these areas, we will use prescribed fire to remove dead standing vegetation and restore historic vegetative structure to the marshes. Wildlife populations will continue to be monitored, and resprouts of phragmites will be treated using techniques appropriate for wetlands.

The larger-scale projects listed above are important for the successful management of the Metroparks' natural resources. However, it is only part of the story. In addition to large-scale restoration projects, the Natural Resources Department spends a significant portion of its time doing a lot of work to maintain intact systems. Examples include the removal of the invasive *Alliaria petiolata* (garlic mustard) from many dry-mesic and mesic forest throughout the Metroparks. Two highlights of garlic mustard management are the achievement of 100 percent control of second-year, seed-producing plants at Dexter-Huron Metropark in an area known as the Main Park Woods. This woodlot is small relative to other Metropark forests; however, it contains one of the healthiest and most diverse displays of spring ephemerals in the Metropark system. Also, in the Kensington Nature Area, we continue to build on past success and expand garlic-mustard-free areas beyond the borders of high-quality habitats. At Stony Creek Metropark, several prescribed fires were conducted to promote native prairie vegetation and set back invasive shrub species such as *Elaeagnus umbellata* (autumn olive). The Metroparks would also like to thank the more than 600 dedicated volunteers who spent 2500+ hours in the field assisting with these projects in 2014. Because of the dedication of these individuals and corporate groups, the Metroparks is able to make much greater progress than employees could on their own.

The process of prioritization and work described above offers only a small glimpse into the true breadth and complexity of natural resources management at the Huron-Clinton Metroparks. It is my hope that it will prompt you to learn more about natural resources management and the Metroparks as a whole. If you are interested in helping assist with the management of natural resources, you can contact me or visit our website for volunteer opportunities at the following address: <http://www.metroparks.com/Natural-Resources-Opportunities>. The Metroparks looks forward to continuing to pursue collaborative opportunities for the benefit of your natural resources with organizations such as Detroit Audubon.

Ryan Colliton has over a decade of experience in on-the-ground natural resources management. Born and raised in southeast Michigan, he is honored to have the opportunity to manage the forest, fields, and waters he has explored and enjoyed his entire life. If you have any questions for Ryan, please feel free to contact him via phone at 810-494-6019 or via e-mail at ryan.colliton@metroparks.com.

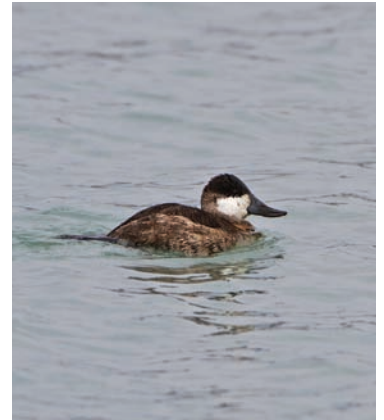
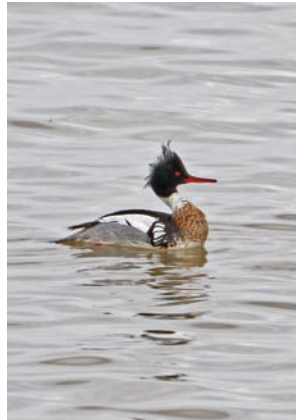
Detroit Audubon will be sponsoring stewardship activities with the Huron-Clinton Metroparks this year for both general members and for our Young Birder's Club. Watch the website and our Facebook page for future announcements.



Photo courtesy of HCMS. Volunteers work on invasive shrub removal in a remnant oak savanna ecosystem at Kensington.

Wonderful Waterfowl

The Detroit River region is located at the intersection of the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways, which makes it a strategic hub of bird migration and an excellent location for birding. Over 300 species of birds live in or regularly migrate through the area, including 30 species of waterfowl, 17 species of raptors, 31 species of shorebirds, and 160 species of songbirds. The region is a particularly good place to see wintering and migrating ducks. Some of the best places for viewing include Pointe Mouillee SGA (both the headquarters and the massive marsh), Lake Erie Metropark, John Dingell Park in Ecorse, and Belle Isle (see our field trip schedule for the dates of our two field trips). Lake St. Clair Metropark and the St. Clair River all the way up to Port Huron and the Blue Water Bridge also offer great viewing opportunities. Detroit Audubon thanks Jan Palland for the use of these photos, which illustrate how fortunate we in the Detroit area are to host this incredible diversity of waterfowl.



Photos by Jan Palland. Clockwise from top left: Blue-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Northern Shoveler, Red-breasted Merganser (left), Ruddy Duck (right), Common Merganser, Canvasback, Ring-necked Ducks, Common Goldeneye.



Detroit Audubon Donors - 2014

Detroit Audubon sincerely thanks its members and friends for their many financial contributions this past year. Your support of our spring and fall appeals and our annual Birdathon, as well as memorial donations and workplace contributions through Earthshare and the Combined Federal Campaign, make our work possible and are greatly appreciated.

<u>Up to \$25</u>	Rodney Guest	Ida Sorscher	William & Donna Hacker	Dennis Sawinska	Greg Mischenko
Marcia Abramson	Leslie Gutschwager	Roberta Stimac	Sylvia Heggen	Joyce Schack	Janet Morosco
Doris Adler	Joan Hall	Joseph Strumia	John Heidtke	Jeanie Schultz	Emily Nietering
Alec & Judy Allen	Phyllis Hamrick	Tracy Thompson	Virginia Hieber	Katherine Scott	Andy & Catherine Ogawa
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Patricia Andring	Virginia Horvath	Larry Urbanski	Elizabeth Hill	Pamela Shaw	Connie Perrine
Lorraine Armstrong	Mary Beth Howath	Seetha Uthappa	Diane Holderness	Amber Sitko	Sally Petrella
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Margaret Barylski	Kathryn Koreleski	Milton 'Jim' Williams	Gordon Judd	Roberta Urbani	Rhonda Thede
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Jocelyn Bennett	Julie Kraus	Dorothy Zaporski	Karla Kerber	Richard Viinikainen	James & Diane Beutel Wild Birds
John Bieda	Peggy Lavis	<u>Up to \$50</u>	Emily Kerley	Stewart Warren	Unlimited
John Bieganowski	Barbara Leaper	John Adamo	Lynda Klemmer	Sanford Waxer	<u>Up To \$200</u>
Pam & Phil Biske	Cecilie Lindgren	Thomas Addison	Patricia Klos	Steve Weis	Bob & Cathy Anthony
George Blum	Leslie Littell	Joel Ager	Maureen Kneisel	Paul Winder	Wanda Antosz
Audrey Bolton	Walter Littman	Lisa Anneberg	Sharon Korte	Ann Wondero	Doris Applebaum
Ron Booms	Mary Mangiaracina	Bruce and Susie Auten	Judy Koths	Sue Workman	Barbara Bommarito
Ruth Bradford	Robert Manning	Carolyn Bailey	Sally Krause	Rudy Ziehl	Bernadette Carrothers
Don Budden	Alexander McKeen	Alice Bancroft	Bruce Lessien MD	<u>Up to \$100</u>	Nesta Douglas
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Roger Corpolongo	James O'Connor, Jr	Jim Bull	Dorothy McLeer	Teri Carrier	Debbe Saperstein
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Calvin Devitt	Patricia Petrone	Cheryl Chase	Tana Moore	Diana Constance	Phillip Walton
Teresa Dickie	William Powers	Ellen Chase	Barbara Moorhouse	Phillip Crookshank	<u>Up to \$500</u>
Dickie Family	Jonathan Rea	Beatrice Chasteen	Cynthia Motzenbecker	Patricia Dobosenki	Joanne Cantoni
William Dillon	Betty Richards	Richard Cobb	Henry Murawski	Carol Fletcher	Fred & Dotte Charbonneau
Ellen Dluski	Thomas Robertson	George & Win Covintree	Jan Nagalski	Herb Gabehart	Community Foundation for SE MI
Collen Doyle	Larry & Sandra Rod	John Davis	Mary Nebel	Beth Gilford	Carol & Thomas Cracchiolo
David Eberhart	Rosalind Rossi	Diane Dawson	Holly Nieuwendijk	Marianne Hasper	Foundation
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Mike & Susan Fitzpatrick	Saperstein	Joanna Fowler	Helle Peegel	Morris Hoffman	Emily Simon
Henry Fleming	Sonja Schafan	Anthony Fritz	Susan Penner	Franklin Hull	<u>Up to \$1000</u>
Kim Fletcher	Cheri Segel	Daniel Frohardt-Lane	Dawn Pornthanomwong	Joachim Janecke	Josephine & John Altstetter
Marilyn Florek	Kim Sfreddo	Barbara Garbutt	Judy Porte	Peter Jofitis	Richard Quick
Matthew Franzen	Stanley Shabowich	Mark Germaine	Mike & Susan Raymond	Mary Joscelyn	<u>Up to \$2000</u>
Candace Friedman	Ken Shively	Sherry Goussey	Jim Renouf	Grant Kitchen	Cheryl Schwartz
Walter Geist	Ken Shulak	Judith Graham	Suzanne Robinson	Lisa Klionsky	Leonard Weber
David Golomb	Jackie Sibley	Maria & Frank Grimminger	Dietrich Roloff	Barbara Levantrosser	
Bill Grams	Charles Smith	Agustin Guzman	Matthew Rybinski	Barbara Michniewicz	
M/M Charles Greening	Virginia Smith	Jerrine Habsburg	Holly Sarawat	Ron Miller	

Detroit Audubon 2015 Field Trip Schedule

Detroit Audubon 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 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>

Woodcock Watch, Oakwoods Metropark

April 3, 2015 (Friday) 7:30 p.m.

Leaders: Park Naturalist and Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Right at dusk, this sandpiper with a long beak and huge comical eyes does its spectacular aerial courtship display in open areas. 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 to Oakwoods Metropark (32901 Willow Road, New Boston) on the left. Meet at the Nature Center. Annual Metropark sticker or daily pass required.

Frog Symphony, West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve

April 10, 2015 (Friday) 7:30 p.m.

Leaders: Sally Petrella (Friends of the Rouge), West Bloomfield Naturalist Lauren Azoury, and Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Join us for an evening of listening to, and searching for, frogs. We often see salamanders, Wood Ducks, herons and owls. Co-sponsored by Detroit Audubon and Friends of the Rouge, this program is especially good for children.

Directions: From Telegraph Road, go west on Long Lake Road to where it dead-ends at Orchard Lake. Turn left. At the next traffic light turn right onto Pontiac Trail and look for the sign "West Bloomfield Nature Preserve" at Arrowhead Road. Follow signs to the preserve parking lot.

Point Pelee, Ontario

April 25, 2015 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Richard Quick dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

Pelee in the spring! It does not get better for a birder. We will be there for the beginning of migration but there is plenty to see, including shorebirds in the Hillman Marsh area north of the park.

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 the Visitor Center parking area. Be prepared for chilly temps and bring a lunch. Bring passport for entry into Canada and back into the U.S.

Lake St. Clair Metropark

May 3, 2015 (Sunday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Cathy Carroll dasfieldcc@detroitaudubon.org

This Metropark is a justly famous migrant trap. A good list of warblers, as well as many other nesting and migrant birds, will be seen.

Directions: Take I-94 east and exit on Metropolitan Parkway. Drive east into the park (entrance fee) and park on west side of the main parking lot. Meet at the Nature Center.

Suburban Park Hop

May 6, 2015 (Wednesday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Richard Quick dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

This is a chance to explore close to home, with the prospect of interesting birds in unlikely locations. We will visit a series of parks in Southfield, Farmington Hills and Commerce Township.

Directions: Meet at the parking lot of Carpenter Lake Park on 10 Mile Road about a quarter mile east of Inkster Road, Southfield.

Magee Marsh Wildlife Area (Oregon, OH)

May 9, 2015 (Saturday) 7 a.m.-4 p.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

This is THE biggest weekend in birding at one of THE best sites in North America to see warblers and other songbird migrants—sometimes up close and personal. In recent years we have also had nesting Bald Eagles, Woodcock, Common Night Hawk, and Screech Owls. Meet at the

beginning of the Birding boardwalk trail on the deck with the warbler display (West end of the parking lot). Get there early or you may have to park far away.

Directions: Take I-75 to Toledo; go south on I-280 to Highway 2. Follow Hwy 2 east about 18 miles and turn north at the Magee Marsh entrance. Follow signs to the preserve parking lot. Drive to the west end of the beach parking lot at the beginning of Birding Trail.

Wetzel State Recreation Area, Macomb County

May 16, 2015 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Richard Quick dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

This trip offers a nice mixture of habitat. Breeding birds regularly observed include: Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Harriers, Forster's and Caspian Terns, Clay-colored, Savannah, Song and Grasshopper Sparrows, Bobolink, Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Blue-winged Warbler, and Willow Flycatchers, Ruddy Ducks, Redheads and Pied-billed Grebes. This 4-hour trip will require walking 3 to 4 miles. Be prepared for wet trails.

Directions: Take I-94 east to Exit 247 (M-19/New Haven Rd.). Take M-19 north to 27 Mile Road. Go west on 27 Mile past Werderman Rd. Meet in the parking lot at the end of 27 Mile Road.

Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

May 17, 2015 (Sunday) 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

See this natural gem of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge in spring.

Directions: Take Grosse Ile Parkway across the bridge (just north of Van Horn Road and Jefferson). Go right on Meridian Road until it ends. Turn left on Groh Road, then right on East River Road. The entrance is about 1.5 miles down on the right past the airport at 28820 East River Road, Grosse Ile, MI 48183. Meet in the parking lot.

Detroit Audubon Memorial Weekend Nature Get-Away

May 22-25, 2015 (Friday through Monday)

Coordinator: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Don't miss this weekend with wonderful people and fine birds at the Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, and areas nearby like the Kirtland's Warbler Management Area and Tawas Point. See article on page 5 for more info, and the website for registration form.

Breeding Birds at Kensington Metropark

May 31, 2015 (Sunday) 8 a.m.

Leaders: Curt and Kathy Hofer curthofer@earthlink.net

Kensington Metropark is known for the long-standing Great Blue Heron Rookery in Wildwing Lake, roaming Sandhill Cranes, and nesting Ospreys. Other species likely to be observed are Acadian Flycatcher, Great-crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Hooded Warbler, Wood Thrush, and all of our local swallows. Also seen occasionally are Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Henslow's Sparrow.

We will meet in the Nature Center parking lot. Some of the trails can be soggy, depending upon the recent weather, so wear appropriate footwear. The trip will last about four hours.

Directions: Take I-96 west toward Lansing to Exit 151, Kensington Road. Proceed across Kensington Road into the Metropark on Highridge Drive. Follow Highridge Drive to the Nature Center, about 1/2 mile past the tollbooth. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot. Metropark pass or entry fee required.

Eliza Howell Park

June 6, 2015 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m.

Leader: Leonard Weber dasfieldlw@detroitaudubon.org

Join us on this trip to see over 30 species of songbirds in Eliza Howell Park at the peak of their breeding season. We will look for nests of Baltimore Orioles, Eastern Bluebirds, Barn Swallows, and others. We can expect to watch birds feeding their young.

Directions: Eliza Howell Park is on Fenkell (Five Mile Road) in Detroit, about one block east of Telegraph Rd. Enter the park and drive about 1/2 mile around the loop and park near the nature trail.

Oak Openings Metropark, Toledo

June 20, 2015 (Saturday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Famous for its rare oak savannas and prairies, this Toledo area Metropark is a mecca for specialty breeding birds. Often seen here are Lark Sparrows, Blue Grosbeak, Summer Tanager, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Red-headed Woodpecker, Alder Flycatcher, and Henslow's Sparrow.

We had such a great day last year, our first time here in many years, that we had to come back!!

Directions: From I-75, merge onto I-475 W (Exit 204) toward US-23/Maumee/Ann Arbor, then left onto US-23 S/I-475 S toward Maumee/Dayton. Merge onto Airport Hwy/OH-2 W (Exit 8B) toward Airport/Swanton. Turn left onto Girdham Rd. until it dead-ends into Oak Openings Parkway. Turn left (east) onto Oak Openings Parkway and proceed about a half to three quarters of a mile. The turnoff for the Buehner Center will be on the left. Meet in parking lot.

Pointe Mouillee Reservations Required**

August 9, 2015 (Sunday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Jim Fowler

This is one of the premier shore birding areas in the interior of the continent when water levels are favorable. Only 4 vehicles can be accommodated on the dikes. This means we can probably only accept about 25 people. You must call the Detroit Audubon office by Thursday, August 6, to reserve a spot.

Directions: Take I-75 to Exit 26 and drive east on south Huron Rd to U.S. Turnpike. Turn south and look for Sigler Road. Turn east and drive to the parking lot at the end. This will be a caravan into the dikes with ride-sharing required.

Ojibway Park, Windsor, Ontario (NEW)

August 22, 2015 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.

Leaders: Leonard Weber and Richard Quick dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

We will explore this natural area to see what early fall migrants are coming through in this new field trip. The Ojibway Prairie Complex is a collection of five closely situated natural areas within a 10-minute drive from downtown Windsor. The Department of Parks & Recreation's Ojibway Nature Centre administers three of these areas, Ojibway Park, Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park, and Black Oak Heritage Park, for a total of approximately 315 acres. See more at <http://www.ojibway.ca/complex.htm>.

Directions: Cross the Ambassador Bridge and follow Rt. 3 to the E.C. Row Expressway (about 1.5 miles). Go right and take the Matchette Road exit. Go left 1.5 miles. Meet in the Ojibway Nature Center parking area. Remember to bring passport for entry into Canada and back into the U.S.

Lake St. Clair Metropark

September 13, 2015 (Sunday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Cathy Carroll dasfieldcc@detroitaudubon.org

Hopefully fall migrants aplenty with summer temperatures still a reasonable expectation.

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

Lake Erie Metropark – Hawkfest (no bird hike)

September 19 and 20, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)

All day: 10 am to 4 pm.

Bring your children and enjoy the many games, crafts, talks, demonstrations, displays and live hawks and owls at Hawkfest in and around the Marshlands Museum. Be sure to visit the Detroit Audubon display and bookstore as well as 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

October 10, 2015 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Meet at Marshlands Museum parking lot at Lake Erie Metropark (just a few miles south on Jefferson). We will traverse woodlands, boardwalks and observation platforms looking for warblers, other songbirds and migrating water birds. We will also go down to the boat launch to observe the hawk migration for awhile. Some years the number of hawks can be spectacular!

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 18, 2015 (Sunday): 3:30 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 3:30. 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. Or

just join us on the hillside at 5:00 if you do not want to hike. Northern Harrier and a plethora of waterfowl are also possible. Dress warmly as it can be cold. 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 7, 2015 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

The focus will be on water birds and early winter arrivals. This is historically a trip that turns up great birds.

Directions: Take I-94 east to Port Huron and take the Blue Water Bridge to Sarnia. Meet at the Ontario tourist information center in Sarnia. Passport or enhanced driver's license required for entry into Canada and back into the U.S.

Belle Isle, Detroit

November 8, 2015 (Sunday) at 9:00 a.m.

Leader: Richard Quick dasfieldrq@detroitaudubon.org

This gem of Detroit's park system (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 to the east end of the island and park in the Nature Center parking lot. State park pass or daily use fee required.

Owl Prowl, Oakwoods Metropark

November 13, 2015 (Friday) 7:00 p.m.

Leaders: Kevin Arnold and Jim Bull daspres@detroitaudubon.org

We will call for owls and expect to hear them call back, and maybe call them in close where we can see them. This program is especially good 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 to Oakwoods Metropark (32901 Willow Road, New Boston) on the left. Meet at the Nature Center. Annual Metropark sticker or daily pass required.

Ontario and Niagara River Trip Reservations Required**

December 4 to 6, 2015 (Friday thru 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 that leads to exciting birding and renowned scenery. Trips in recent years have turned up such notable birds as 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. You won't regret going on this trip!!

Directions: Departure will be at 9 a.m. on Friday, December 4 and returning Sunday December 6 at approximately 9 p.m. Location of departure will be in Farmington Hills. Contact Karl Overman at (248) 473-0484 for directions.

Costs per person are \$380 for a double room and \$480 for a single room. The price includes all transportation and 2 nights' lodging. Meals are not included. A \$75 deposit is required to reserve a spot and is due by Dec. 1.

Detroit Christmas Bird Count Reservations Required**

December 20, 2015 (Sunday)

This is one of the oldest Christmas Bird Counts. Birders spend the entire day covering a 15-mile diameter circle in parts of northern Oakland Co. to count as many birds as possible. The count is part of counts all over North America used to study bird populations. Meet for pizza and count wrap-up at day's end. To participate, call the Detroit Audubon office or Tim Nowicki at (734) 525-8630.

Rockwood Christmas Bird Count Reservations Required**

December 26, 2015 (Saturday)

Public hike: 9 am to 11 a.m. Call Jim Bull at (313) 928-2950 to register for the morning hike. A chili lunch is provided.

Christmas Bird Count: All day. Detroit Audubon cosponsors this annual count of the 15 mile diameter circle which includes Grosse Ile, Lake Erie Metropark, Trenton, Rockwood, South Rockwood, Newport, and Oakwoods Metropark. A chili dinner will be provided. If you want to participate in the all-day count, contact count compiler Tom Carpenter at tcarpen1980@yahoo.com or at (734) 728-8733.

HELP WANTED - WEBMASTER

Detroit Audubon is in immediate need of a volunteer to maintain our website, www.detroitaudubon.org. If you have experience with websites and with Dreamweaver software, we could really use your help. We need someone to update basic information and field trip schedules, add event notifications and registrations, and post the Flyway, articles, photos, links, and other information. We estimate the time commitment to be about 5 hours per month total. If you are interested or would like additional information, please send an email to publicity@detroitaudubon.org.

Ways You Can Support Detroit Audubon

- Dedicate a day of your May birding to Detroit Audubon by participating in the 2015 Birdathon (see page 3 for info).
- Shop at the Detroit Audubon bookstore. Members receive a 10% discount!
- Join one of our committees: fundraising, finance, communications, education, or Safe Passage Great Lakes.
- Volunteer to staff our table at conferences or help plan or host events.
- Like Detroit Audubon on your Facebook page.
- Introduce a friend to birds and nature at a Detroit Audubon field trip or other event. Spring is the best time of year to bird!
- Designate Detroit Audubon as the Community Rewards recipient for your Kroger card. Kroger will donate up to \$300 per household per quarter. [Please note: you must redesignate Detroit Audubon as your rewards recipient each year in April.]

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

SHADOW OVER THE EARTH

by Jim Bull

Passengers
in the darkened skies
colorful, feathered travelers
resting by the thousands in groves of trees,
now travel only in antiquity and imaginations,
passengers on a trip to oblivion—and unfortunately they have arrived.
Let us be better passengers on this spaceship called earth,
Traveling lighter and smarter, with more love and care
for our fellow passengers,
so that the feathered, furred, finned, and all other creatures
that share this fragile craft
can keep traveling safely, and thriving.
NEVER AGAIN!

Annual Spring Pelee Campout

Calling all birders! Detroit Audubon will be holding its annual spring tent campout at Pt. Pelee National Park, Ontario, May 14-17 (three nights).

This is tent camping only at a group campground within the park during the peak of spring migration. Amenities include warm showers, sinks, flush toilets, covered eating area, and a group fire pit for evening camaraderie. Cost is \$18 per person, per night.

Make checks out to Michael Fitzpatrick, and mail to 56 Hubbard St, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043.

Please indicate which nights you want and the names of the other campers, and include a phone number or email address for confirmation. Group size is limited to 20 campers per night, so don't delay.

Governor Vetoes SB 78 "Anti-Biodiversity Bill"

On January 15, 2015, Governor Rick Snyder vetoed Senate Bill 78. Passage of this bill would have prohibited biodiversity issues from being considered by government departments when making land management decisions. Senate Bill 78 bill targeted the scientifically proven and widely accepted principle of biodiversity, which demonstrates that ecosystems with a wide variety of plants and animals are healthier and more sustainable. By greatly restricting the DNR from considering biodiversity as part of its comprehensive land use policy, the legislation endangered Michigan's forests, lakes, rivers, native plants, and animals. Michigan also stood to lose two national certifications for sustainable forestry, jeopardizing the state's ability to sell its forest products to places like Home Depot, which has pledged to sell only sustainably harvested lumber. In 2013, more than 100 scientists signed on to a letter in opposition to the bill when it passed the state senate, calling it a "significant setback for the scientific management of state lands."

The governor noted in his veto letter to the Michigan Legislature that the bill, "specifically the re-definition of the conservation of biological diversity and the complete elimination of designation options—causes confusion and inconsistencies and could make it more difficult to sustainably manage Michigan's Public forests and world class natural resources to meet the changing needs of current and future generations."

National Audubon, at Detroit Audubon's request, circulated online petitions throughout the state urging members to oppose this dangerous bill, and both Detroit Audubon and Michigan Audubon did the same. Thanks to all who signed petitions and contacted legislators and the governor's office to voice your opposition. If you would like to receive email action alerts on conservation issues in our region, please email your request to detas@bignet.net. Grass roots efforts do make a difference!

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Detroit Audubon to Help Launch Birding Site on the Detroit RiverWalk

Detroit Audubon, along with the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy, Detroit Parks and Recreation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have secured full funding to create an educational birding site along the Detroit RiverWalk at Gabriel Richard Park.

The site, located near Belle Isle, will offer wildlife spotting scopes, an interpretive panel depicting bird migration by season, and more. Educational events and other programming will also be held four times each year to promote the exceptional urban birding experiences available right in our backyard. This new feature will help reconnect people with the Detroit River to inspire a stewardship ethic and help develop the next generation of conservationists.

Gabriel Richard Park is situated between two well-known staging areas for waterfowl—Detroit River/Western Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. Large numbers of migrating waterfowl flock to the area to feed on aquatic vegetation and invertebrates. Gabriel Richard Park provides a wonderful opportunity for viewing birds that nest as far away as the Arctic along with beautiful Belle Isle, the Detroit skyline, and the historic MacArthur Bridge.

The site at Gabriel Richard Park will honor the memory of Georgia Reid, a Detroit Audubon board member for 30 years and a tireless volunteer for several other conservation organizations. She had a distinguished 45-year teaching career at Wayne State University and was featured in the book *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places* by Arthur Dudley Edmondson. Always a teacher, Georgia quietly shared her knowledge, her sense of humor and wit, and especially her spotting scope.

A ribbon cutting to officially open the Birding Site at Gabriel Richard Park is being planned for spring 2015. Watch the website and our Facebook page for details. We hope you can join us!

