



Flyway

Summer 2007

2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Bird Migration Perils Explored

The Annual Conference on March 31st proved to be educational for the over 100 people who attended. Held at the Ford Education Center at the Detroit Zoo, participants were provided with the fruits of years of research by Dr. Joelle Gehring and Dr. Daniel Klem.

Dr. Gehring was given the DAS Conservationist of the Year Award for her long-running studies on the numbers and kinds of birds being killed by collisions with the many kinds of communication towers scattered across our landscape. Gehring's research focuses on the correlation between the height, type – freestanding or guyed, and lighting type. Her studies involve thousands of hours of field

work collecting dead birds (lots of assistants are used) at the base of the towers. Her work has indicated that the tallest towers and the guyed towers are responsible for the greatest number of bird collisions. Her findings indicate that the constant, red lighting on a tower is the worst type while the white strobe or flashing light is the least harmful. These studies are being used to gain cooperation from the tower owners to convert the lighting to the white, strobe type and to use as few towers as possible.

The increased use of glass in modern architecture was the subject of Dr. Klem's presentation. Dr. Klem was given the Conservation Leadership Award for his long running studies on the effects of bird collisions with glass surfaces and advocacy for the use of different types of glass and better planning when designing new buildings and houses. Dr. Klem has shown that the highly reflective glass used in modern office buildings results in high numbers of bird collisions as the birds see the reflection of the surroundings rather than the building. He presented evidence that birds will hit even relatively small windows in an otherwise brick wall. Houses with large glass windows and door walls have the same effect. Dr. Klem has worked for a long time to convince architects to modify their use of glass.

Early bird participants were treated to a tour of the butterfly house and the free-flight building before the conference. Thanks to Jessica Jozwiak, bird supervisor at the Detroit Zoo, for her help. After registering at the Ford Education Center, coffee and bagels were available to participants while they were deciding on which of the over 30 silent auction items to bid. Many thanks are due to Rosemarie Atillio for organizing this effort which netted \$900. Chris Fielding recorded the proceedings and Andy Howell got coffee and bagels donated from Caribou Coffee. Thanks to each of you.

There are many people responsible for organizing the conference. Joe Bartel, Fred Charbonneau and Doris Applebaum are responsible for arranging for speakers and untold numbers of contacts with local building owners and operators. Cooperation from Detroit Edison and Ford Motor Co. to establish "lights out" policies were developed through their efforts. Special thanks to Beth Johnson for running interference at the zoo with security and arrangements. Thanks also to the Zoo Security for their cooperation. Other committee members include Rosemarie Fielding, Rochelle Breitenbach, and Richard Quick.

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Flyway

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Richard Quick

The 2007 Annual Conference on March 31st marked the commitment of DAS to work aggressively to educate you, our members, the public, the communications tower and architecture industries on the effects towers and buildings are having on bird populations. This project is our top priority. We and our sister chapter, the Michigan Audubon Society, will be working together to effect changes to mitigate the carnage exacted on migrating birds through collisions with buildings and towers. We are asking you to help by doing what you can in your homes, schools and places of work to reduce and report cases of bird collisions with man-made structures. (See "Bookstore Bits".) Volunteers will be needed to work with building operators throughout the southeast area and to monitor compliance with light use in buildings during migration periods.

The Important Bird Area (IBA) program in Michigan (see IBA article) is another top priority for DAS. As one of four sponsors along with National Audubon, Michigan Audubon and Kellogg Nature Center, DAS is committed to provide both technical and financial support. Our share of the cost is \$12,000 over the next 3 years. You can help by contributing your time as an IBA

assessment volunteer and/or by contributing toward the expense of the program.

As I stated in the spring issue of the Flyway, we would like to have a series of Members Programs beginning this fall. We need your suggestions about the type of programs to offer. We have done many natural history programs in past years without very much participation. We are hoping to offer a series of sessions for bird watching beginners that would include identification, behavior, migration, songs, binoculars and scopes. Some field trips would be included. Another possibility is a workshop on nature photography for those of you wanting to improve your photos of natural subjects. Some of you are fine photographers and we could use your help with this workshop. We really need to know what you would support. Please send in your suggestions.

Our St. Clair Woods Sanctuary is in need of trail maintenance. (For more details see "St. Clair Woods Sanctuary Workdays".)

I am sure you noticed that each of the above called for our members, you, to volunteer. Without a core of member volunteers, Detroit Audubon will not be able to offer quality programs and to develop effective programs to enjoy and protect the birds that we all enjoy so much.

Send your thoughts to daspres@detroitaudubon.org.

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THE ATLAS CHALLENGE

By Terry Wenger

This is the final year of data collection for the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas! Our goal for 2007 is to add another 200,000

observations to the database. While we will have the most volunteer observers and paid field staff ever this season, this will still be a major challenge.

Observations from anywhere are welcome but are especially needed for counties further north. Some townships in the UP have had no birds reported. Anyone who will be spending time up

north this summer is encouraged to watch for and report nesting behavior of any bird species.

Nesting behavior ranges from the merely possible to the confirmed. A singing male, two males involved in a territorial dispute or an adult engaged in a distraction display are all evidence of potential breeding. Finding a nest with eggs or young, while impressive, is not the only proof of nesting. Any bird that flies off with a beak full of bugs is feeding a baby bird somewhere. This common sight counts as confirmed nesting behavior.

People, desiring a challenge or another excuse to go birding, can survey a quarter-township or "block." Each township has one priority block and we're surveying all 2000+ of them. Some blocks have more habitat or more public access than others, but each has its own mix of birds.

For more details on areas needing coverage, available maps and forms, or any other information, please call 269-381-1574 x30 or e-mail miatlas@naturecenter.org. To report bird observations on-line, go to www.naturecenter.org, click on "Research and Conservation," and look for the "report on-line" links.

DAS Field Trip Schedule

Lapeer State Game Area

June 2, 2007 (Saturday)

7:30 a.m.

Leader: Joanna Pease

(straxvaria@sbcglobal.net)

The trip starts in Rowden Park to find marsh birds and late migrant warblers and then covers the Lapeer State Game Area for breeding birds and migrants. Grassland habitats will also be checked. Species seen in recent years in this area include Least Bittern, "Brewster's Warbler,"

Hooded Warbler, Grasshopper Sparrow and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Meet at the parking lot of the Lapeer K-Mart which is located on the east side of Lapeer Road (M-24) approximately one mile north of I-69. The trip will last until mid-afternoon so pack a lunch.

Port Huron State Game Area

June 9, 2007 (Saturday)

7:30 a.m.

Leader: Mike Mencotti

An exceptional diversity of breeding birds, especially warblers, may be found in this area: Hooded, Louisiana Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, etc. Insect repellent is advisable, no, mandatory. Six or seven hours.

Take I-94 to the last exit in Port Huron (on left) before crossing into Canada. Proceed north on M-25 to M-136. Drive west on M-136 five or six miles to Wildcat Road. Park near the baseball diamond at the park at the northeast corner of Wildcat and M-136.

BOOK REVIEW

By Suzanne Robinson

I recommend the book, "Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places" by Dudley Edmondson. The author explores reasons why there seems to be an exclusion of a significant number of people of color from wildlife vocations and avocations in America. He interviews nineteen outstanding Afro-Americans who have dedicated themselves to being outdoor photographers, National Park Rangers, Fish & Wildlife Managers, field guides and much more dealing with the environment in our wild places. Each person is represented by a large color photograph and has submitted an autobiographical sketch including childhood experiences leading them to the natural world, favorite outdoor places and environment advocacy.

Georgia Reid, DAS Board Director, is one of only seven women selected from the entire country and the only person from Michigan. Georgia has served on the DAS Board for twenty-three years, directed the Memorial Day weekend at Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, traveled with Field Guides, Seven Ponds, and DAS-led field trips to Alaska, Hudson Bay, Mexico and other birding hot spots in the U.S. She is a regular bird-census-taker for Kensington Metro Park and has led field trips locally and in Ontario.

You can, and I have, seen Georgia in all kinds of weather on trails, beaches, prairies, raptor observation towers, and even sewage lagoons — wherever she can follow her birding passion. I have

birded with her over the years and am only one of many who has been touched by her enthusiasm for searching and observing bird species in their natural habitats especially in wild places.

My favorite memory of birding with Georgia was the day we heard rumors of a Great Gray Owl near White Fish Point, U.P. We shared a quick glance, left our spaghetti dinners in the restaurant and bolted to the site reported. There was the owl peering through the bracken fern. Its image stares golden-eyed from a frame on my wall today.

Georgia Reid is surely one who has, in Edmondson's words, "made nature and the environment part of her everyday life."



photo by Rosemarie Attilio

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HAWKFEST SPECIAL

September 15, 2007

IBA Dedication

This year at our annual Hawkfest on Lake Erie, there is a special event planned. At 1 PM, a ceremony will take place at the Lake Erie Metropark dedicating the lower Detroit River as an Important Bird Area, or IBA. There will be several brief speeches by dignitaries, followed by a ribbon-cutting and media coverage, so we really want to see a good turnout.

We birders already know what a great birding area this is, but that is not why the Detroit River is an IBA. To gain this designation, a site must be critical to bird conservation on a global scale. The Detroit River supports great numbers of Canvasbacks and Tundra Swans during migration and winter as well as being critical to their long-term futures. The IBA Program aims to implement long-term conservation of IBAs through grassroots efforts.

Other in-state Dedication Ceremonies:

Kirtland's Warbler Management Units
May 19, 9:30 AM
Kirtland's Warbler Festival,
Kirtland Community College, Roscommon

Tawas Point State Park
May 19, 3:30 PM
Tawas Point Lighthouse

Barry State Game Area/
Yankee Springs Recreation Area
June 16, Time TBA
Boys & Girls Club, Erway Rd, Barry Co

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT HOME

BY David Pettit
PIRGIM Consumer Advocate
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<http://www.PIRGIM.org>

We all know that using energy more efficiently is the cheapest and cleanest way to reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels. Luckily, there are steps that each one of us can take right now to become more energy efficient at home. Replacing just one incandescent light bulb with an ENERGY STAR compact fluorescent light bulb is a quick and easy way to make Michigan more energy efficient.

Buying just one ENERGY STAR compact fluorescent light bulb will help you use at least 2/3 less energy, save \$30 or more over the bulb's lifetime, and eliminate 450 pounds of harmful emissions from power plants. And they last 10 times as long as a regular incandescent light bulb.

Choosing the right bulb for your needs can be a bit tricky, so I have included a few tips on how to select the bulb that is right for you:

To get a CFL with the right amount of light, choose one that offers the same lumen rating as the light you are replacing. The higher the lumen rating, the greater the light output. Use the table below to see how lumens can generally be compared.

40 watt incandescent bulb	- 450 lumens
60 watt incandescent bulb	- 800 lumens
75 watt incandescent bulb	- 1100 lumens
100 watt incandescent bulb	- 1600 lumens
150 watt incandescent bulb	- 2600 lumens


Matching the right CFL to the right kind of fixture helps ensure that it will perform properly and last a long time. Read the packaging to be sure that the type you choose works for the fixture you have in mind. For example:

If a light fixture is connected to a dimmer or 3-way switch, select CFLs that are labeled for this use. For recessed fixtures, it is better to use a 'reflector' CFL versus a standard-shaped bulb. Choose the color that works best for you. For example, while most CFLs are created with warm colors for your home, you could choose a cooler color for task lighting.

Finally, compact fluorescent light bulbs do contain a very small amount of mercury, which means that they need to be disposed of properly, much like batteries. For ways to properly dispose of compact fluorescent light bulbs, go to <http://www.earth911.org> to find disposal options by using your zip code.

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FEATHERED TALES

By Bev Stevenson

On January 21, **Frank Tryska** saw a blonde colored cardinal that had an orange beak. This was in Ortonville, one mile west of M15 and one mile south of the Genesee border.

On March 27, there was a partial albino robin on the front lawn of **Carolyn Krauses'** house that is located around 12 Mile and Ryan in Warren. It was with other robins.

Two days in a row, around March 15, **Gail and Jim Tryles** saw a Golden Eagle in a corn field next to their house in Groveland. This is around Mount Holly.

In Westland, **Tracy Ostasiewicz** saw two Carolina Wrens that have been around since February. She's named them Carol and Lina. They love safflower seeds and mingle with the chickadees, sparrows and juncos. Tracy has also seen a Sharp Shinned Hawk which she hopes doesn't pick one of them for his meal.

LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

If you are landscaping in the Midwest, you may want to consider plants from the following lists. These lists include some of the species that are commonly available in nurseries and are relatively easy to grow. They are directed towards individuals doing a modest first planting. For large projects, which can accommodate a wide variety of species, you may want to consider consulting a professional with expertise in natural landscaping.

The herbaceous plant lists are divided into plants which thrive in full sun, partial sun and shade. A general rule is that prairie species need full sun; savanna species will grow in partial shade (and many will grow as well, or better, in full sun); and woodland species will grow in shade. It is very important to check catalogs and nursery information before you buy, because plants also vary in their need for moisture.

FULL SUN

Grasses:

Big Bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
Little Bluestem	<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>
Sideoats Grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>
Switch Grass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
Indian Grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>
Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
Prairie Cord Grass	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>
Porcupine Grass	<i>Stipa spartea</i>

Forbs (flowers):

Lead Plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>
Pasque Flower	<i>Anemone patens</i>
Heath Aster	<i>Aster ericoides</i>
Silky Aster	<i>Aster sericeus</i>
Cream Wild Indigo	<i>Baptisia leucophaea</i>
Sand Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>
Prairie Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>
Pale Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>
Rattlesnake Master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>
Prairie Smoke	<i>Geum triflorum</i>
Western (or Naked) Sunflower	<i>Helianthus occidentalis</i>
False Boneset	<i>Kuhnia eupatorioides</i>
Round Headed Bush Clover	<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>
Rough Blazing Star	<i>Liatris aspera</i>
Cylindrical Blazing Star	<i>Liatris cylindracea</i>
Pale Spiked Lobelia	<i>Lobelia spicata</i>
Wild Quinine	<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>
Prairie Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla arguta</i>
Gray Goldenrod	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>
Riddell's Goldenrod	<i>Solidago reddellii</i>
Golden Alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>

FULL SUN - PART SHADE

Forbs:

Nodding Wild Onion	<i>Allium cernuum</i>
Prairie Thimbleweed	<i>Anemone cylindrica</i>
Butterfly Weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Smooth Blue Aster	<i>Aster azureus</i>

Sky Blue Aster	<i>Aster laevis</i>
New England Aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>
White Wild Indigo	<i>Baptisia leucantha</i>
Showy Tick Trefoil	<i>Desmodium canadense</i>
Shooting Star	<i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>
Wild Bergamot (Beebalm)	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>
Foxglove Beard Tongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>
Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>
Black-Eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
Ohio Goldenrod	<i>Solidago ohioensis</i>
Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohioensis</i>
Heart-Leaved Meadow Parsnip	<i>Zizia aptera</i>

Grasses:

Common Wood Reed	<i>Cinna arundinacea</i>
Canada Wild Rye	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>
Virginia Wild Rye	<i>Elymus virginicus</i>
Fowl Meadow (Manna) Grass	<i>Glyceria striata</i>
Bottlebrush Grass	<i>Hystrix patula</i>

SHADE

Woodland:

Wild Columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>
Wild Ginger	<i>Asarum canadense</i>
Dutchman's Breeches	<i>Dicentra cucullaria</i>
Yellow Trout Lily	<i>Erythronium americanum</i>
Wild Geranium	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>
Virginia Waterleaf	<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>
Virginia Bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>
Mayapple	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>
Solomon's Seal	<i>Polygonatum canaliculatum</i>
Bloodroot	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>
Trillium	<i>Trillium spp.</i>

Oak Savanna:

Big Bluestem Grass	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
Little Bluestem Grass	<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>
Shagbark Hickory	<i>Carya ovata</i>
New Jersey Tea	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>

American Hazelnut
Purple Love Grass
June Grass
Rough Blazing Star
White Oak
Bur Oak
Black Oak
Indian Grass
Swamp Milkweed
Blue Joint Grass
Sedges
Spotted Joe-Pye Weed
Common Boneset
Rice Cut Grass

Corylus americana
Eragrostis spectabilis
Koeleria cristata
Liatris aspera
Quercus alba
Quercus macrocarpa
Quercus velutina
Sorghastrum nutans
Asclepias incarnata
Calamagrostis canadensis
Carex sp.
Eupatorium maculatum
Eupatorium perfoliatum
Leersia oryzoides

Common Water Horehound
Dark Green Rush
Great Bulrush
Prairie Cordgrass
Common Cattail

Lycopus americanus
Scirpus atrovirens
Scirpus validus
Spartina pectinata
Typha latifolia

Lake and Pond:

Hornwort
Common Rush
Rice Cut Grass
Small Duckweed
Pickerel Weed
Common Arrowhead

Ceratophyllum demersum
Juncus effusus
Leersia oryzoides
Lemna minor
Pontederia cordata
Sagittaria latifolia

REFLECTIONS ON THE SPRING CHILL

By Julie Craves

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I'm watching the snowflakes begin to fly, again. Lifelong Michigan residents find this weather and its resultant pause in spring migration -- annoying, but somehow "typical," although this is actually the longest stretch of April cold in this region since 1982. This cold spell, however, has extended all across the eastern United States, and will end up being far more than inconvenient for migrant birds. It is likely to have a profound and long-lasting impact on bird populations.

Already, many insectivorous birds in the south have perished. Last weekend in south Texas, a birder reported "over a hundred swallows on the windows, patio chairs, and palms just outside the door of [a neighbor's] home. I counted over 60 by the time I got there and took photos of 20 or so on one palm branch...2 and 3 deep. We identified barn, cliff, and bank swallows perched on the window sills, patio chairs, all huddled together." These reports continued through yesterday -- the Chimney Swifts and

swallows that are not succumbing to cold and starvation are foraging very low to the ground, especially near roadways where the pavement generates some warmth and attracts insects. These birds are being killed in great numbers along highways.

My real concern is for the migrants that have yet to arrive. Deciduous trees that were leafed out and/or blooming have been devastated from the Gulf coast northward. Oaks were in full bloom in the south-central states, but the blooms are reported now to be brown and crumbling, so acorn crops in those areas are likely to be nil. In eastern Kentucky, this was reported for black oaks. In central Kentucky, a wider variety. Trees that had produced tender new leaf growth have had these leaves blackened. In the Knoxville area, hickories, black gums, maples, redbuds, locusts, and tulip trees are all brown. Also in Tennessee, one observer indicates that spring canopy foliage may be reduced 50-80%. In South Carolina, Bill Hilton gives a very sobering report of complete leaf kill on all shagbark hickories, hackberries, trumpet creeper, winged sumacs, and oaks, and heavy freeze damage to walnuts, mulberries, and above-ground foliage of Virginia creepers, wild grapes, and poison ivy, among others.

Beyond what insects were directly killed by freezing weather, the reduction in leaves will also mean that there will be less foliage available to insects and therefore fewer insects available to birds

during migration. This could have serious consequences for migrants if they are unable to successfully refuel during the journey north. If trees used up reserves producing the spring flush of leaves, this foliage reduction may persist throughout the summer; the concomitant reduction in insects available for nesting birds will surely impact reproductive success. For tree species in which even woody growth dies back due to a prolonged freeze, reduced foliage growth or flowering could persist for the next few years. It is this reduction in foliage-consuming insects that has me most concerned.

Birds that manage to make it through the migration and breeding seasons will not have overcome their final obstacles. Over much of the eastern U.S., the fruit crop will be significantly diminished. I've read reports from Kentucky and Tennessee that dogwoods, wild plums, spicebush, blueberries, black cherries, and other early bloomers will probably set little or no fruit at all this year. In central Kentucky, holly shoots have been burned back from frost, and may not produce flowers and berries this year.

I don't mean to sound alarmist. Climate events like this are not unprecedented in history, of course, and bird populations have had to deal with them before. But so many species are facing other pressures that they are not adapted to deal with -- large-scale habitat loss and fragmentation in particular -- that it may be that the spring chill of 2007 could have very long-lasting effects.

ST. CLAIR WOODS SANCTUARY WORK DAYS

In an effort to increase enjoyment of our sanctuary in St. Clair County, we have set three days to work at marking trails and repairing boardwalks over wet areas. The dates are May 26, June 16th and June 23rd. We need volunteers to help. Bring a lunch, water and insect repellent. We will be moving downed limbs to help mark the trails and to allow easier walking. The flowers will be out, so bring a camera.

Please leave a message at:
248 545-2929 or daspres@detroitaudubon.org

Go to the DAS web page for directions to the sanctuary.

BOOKSTORE BITS

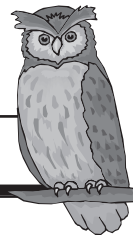
By Bev Stevenson

For the "Safe Passage" program, we have static cling decals to apply to your windows to help deter the birds from flying into the glass. They come in a package of 4 and sell for \$5.00 including tax. We have decorative butterflies, hummingbirds and leaves to choose from.

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