

Indigo Bunting courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



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New Urban Birding Station on the Detroit RiverWalk Was Dedicated July 29

About 150 people gathered on a very hot morning for an opening ceremony and ribbon cutting for the new Birding Station on the Detroit Riverwalk which will provide Metro Detroiters access to one of the fastest growing outdoor recreational activities in North America. The spot at Gabriel Richard Park, located on East Jefferson Avenue, just east of the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle, features four wildlife spotting scopes (two of which are universally accessible) and an interpretive panel identifying common birds that can be seen from the location. It is hoped that this spot will entice many new folks into becoming birders. These newcomers will join at least 71 million wildlife watchers in the U.S. who spent \$45.7 billion on those activities according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



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 (hence the name of our newsletter!). More than 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. A Spotted Sandpiper showed up on the rocks just as the show was beginning, and flock of Canada Geese watched from the water right next to the shore just a few yards up river from the exhibit.

This Urban Birding Station was sponsored by The Detroit RiverFront Conservancy, your Detroit Audubon Society, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Detroit Parks and Recreation and the PNC Foundation.

Combined with views of beautiful Belle Isle, the City of Detroit and the historic MacArthur Bridge, in addition to this Birding Station, Gabriel Richard Park provides a water fountain, butterfly gardens, fishing outlooks and the brick paver labyrinth according to Mark Wallace, president and CEO of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

Detroit Audubon President Jim Bull was one of three speakers at the dedication ceremony. "You don't have to go to a remote wilderness to see Bald Eagles any more—they now nest on islands in the river and you can see them flying in and around downtown Detroit! Peregrine Falcons nest on downtown buildings and on the Ambassador Bridge. Both of those species were once on brink of extinction due to DDT pesticide poisoning. Hundreds of thousands of ducks spend time on the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair in the fall and late winter to refuel on their migration journeys. That's a compelling story," he began "This wayside exhibit and observation post focused on urban birding will help city dwellers open their eyes to new ways to enjoy nature as part of everyday urban life."



He went on to note that the late Georgia Reid, who was a board member of Detroit Audubon for over 30 years would be particularly pleased, because as an African American she often lamented that so few urban people and especially people of color had joined the rank of birders and wildlife enthusiasts. Reid, chair of the dance department at Wayne State University and a modern dance instructor was known as the professor who did the "bird show" every Monday morning regaling he students with stories about the exciting new birds she saw the previous weekend. She was known by birders far and wide and was fond of helping new birders see "life birds." Georgia was the organization's historian and also coordinated our Memorial Day Nature Get-away for many years. There is a chapter about her in Dudley Edmondson's book, *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places*.

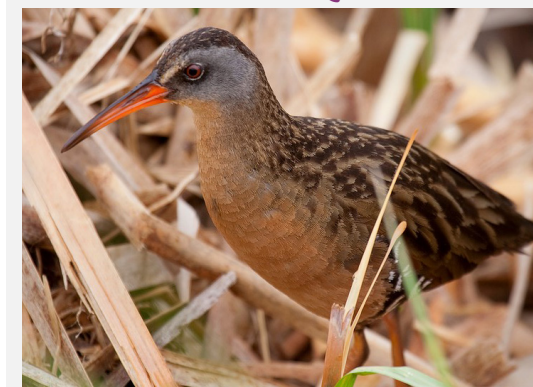
"Georgia, today your dream is coming true. Millions of urban dweller and especially African Americans will be introduced to birding through this new Birding Station, but not only through the scopes and the exhibit, but regular educational programs that will be provided at this spot all during the year. Sara Cole, our Program Coordinator has already come up with lots of good ideas for those programs which will be conducted by Detroit Audubon the Riverfront Conservancy, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service."

Beginning today Detroit will not only be known as "The Motor City" and as a cultural mecca, but as a great place for viewing wildlife, especially birds. And we hope that Detroit also becomes known for producing some of the great conservation leaders on the future. Detroit Audubon couldn't be prouder to be partner in establishing this Urban Birding station."

This urban birding spot was dedicated in memory of Reid and David Campbell, the former president of The McGregor Fund and a dedicated member of the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy Board of Directors. Members of the Reid and Campbell families cut the ribbon to officially open this Birding Spot. Each family was given a framed large Pewabic Tile depicting birds as a memento of the occasion. Georgia's nephew, Butch Pyant spoke about Georgia's commitment to education of young people, including giving him books about birds, and how this spot brought together her two greatest passions, education and birding.

Stay tuned for information about the upcoming educational programs for youth and the general public which will be offered at this location.

Bird ID Quiz



Do you recognize this bird? Check your answer on page 8. Photo Credit: Joe Brooks, Grand Traverse Audubon

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Detroit Audubon is currently seeking personable and enthusiastic volunteers to staff our booths at the following events.

Web Volunteer Needed

Detroit Audubon is looking for a volunteer to help manage content on the new website. Knowledge of Wordpress is required. Social Media experience is a plus.

Midwest Birding Symposium

September 10-13

Bay City, MI

<http://www.midwestbirding.org/>

Hawkfest

Saturday & Sunday, September 19 & 20, 2015

Lake Erie Metropark

<http://www.metroparks.com/Lake-Erie-Metropark>

Great Lakes Bat Festival

Saturday, September 26, 2015

Cranbrook Institute of Science

<http://www.batconservation.org/education/bat-festival>

If interested, please contact Sara at daprogramcoordinator@detroitaudubon.org.



Flyway

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Our Program Coordinator generally works 9-5 Wednesday-Friday but is sometimes away doing program and attending meetings. If she doesn't answer she will generally return your call on her next work day.

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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.



These are exciting times at Detroit Audubon. I think you'll agree. Why?

1. We have hired our first program coordinator, Sara Cole. What a breath of fresh-air Sara has been in her very short tenure here (she came on duty April 17). She brings a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience to this position.

She not only has a Master's Degree in Natural Resources and Environment with an emphasis in Environmental Education from the University of Michigan and two teaching certificates, but she also has extensive experience developing environmental education curricula and interpretive programs, has experience in bird banding, has worked as part of a team to develop strategies to address water shortage problems in India's Telangana state, and has written a curriculum on urban birds for the Smithsonian.

At Detroit Audubon, Sara dove right into creating a hands-on curriculum on birds for the Belle Isle Nature Zoo's summer day camp, which is designed to provide access to nature programming for kids from families with lower incomes. She's helped to train volunteers to teach it and teaches some of the lessons herself.

She revamped our website (take a look, I think you'll agree it is much more attractive and user-friendly), set up a twitter account, and regularly posts to Facebook!

She is scheduling birding field trips to Detroit's historic Elmwood Cemetery and will be coordinating regular bird education programs at the new birding exhibit at Gabriel Richard Park on the Riverwalk (across from Belle Isle).

Sara has made connections with a community garden, is exploring a potential partnership with schools in Detroit and the Bahamas, and is linking up with the YMCA Detroit's youth outdoors program. These and many other exciting opportunities for partnerships that she develops will help us be much more effective in achieving our mission.

Currently Sara's position is part-time (20 hour/week) but even with those limited hours Sara is helping Detroit Audubon soar to new heights.

2. We now have a presence in Midtown Detroit at the Cass Corridor Commons. That is Sara's duty station, at least for this summer. Our bird and natural history library is now accessible to our members and volunteers who may drop in from time-to-time looking for information on birds and natural history. The library includes some incredible books about birds in other countries, as well as the complete Arthur Cleveland Bent comprehensive series of natural histories of North American birds.

Cass Corridor Commons — adjacent to Wayne State University's campus, on Cass Avenue near Forest — is a hive of bustling non-profit activity run by the East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC). Among our new neighbors is Eco-Works (formerly the WARM Training Center), which gives inner city youth the opportunity to perform home energy audits. We have been partners with Eco-Works in the recent past—we produced a curriculum to help these teens to learn how to incorporate bird-friendly landscaping at houses and schools that they audit. We hope to finally implement it this year.

Congratulations Jared!

We are pleased to announce that Jared Zaporski, age 16, has been awarded Detroit Audubon's 2015 Young Birder Scholarship! This scholarship enabled him to attend Camp Avocet, based at The Virden Center in Lewes, Delaware, in August. Described by his family as a "born naturalist," Jared is an avid and accomplished birder. His observations at the family home in Roseville (133 species as of the end of May) have made their yard one of the "Top Yards" in Macomb County on eBird. Very impressive!

Jared is homeschooled, and currently also is taking a high school course in Field Biology at U. of M. Dearborn. He is a member of Detroit Audubon's Young Birders Club and has participated in National Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count and Detroit Audubon's spring Birdathon for several years. Jared's study of bird vocalizations and his "young ears" add to his awesome ability to locate and identify species, so he's always welcome on our field trips!

Although he has managed, with his contagious enthusiasm, to steer recent family vacations to birding destinations, Jared's birding experiences thus far have largely been limited to the Great Lakes Region. Detroit Audubon is proud to provide this deserving young man the opportunity to attend a camp, led by experts, in one of the best birding areas on the East Coast. Jared is looking forward to increasing his knowledge of North America's avifauna and is excited about "growing" his (already substantial!) life-list. We, in turn, hope that Jared will share with us his experiences at Camp Avocet in the fall issue of *The Flyway*.

The President's Bully Pulpit

by James N. (Jim) Bull, Ph.D.

The Commons also features a parlor where we already held a board meeting; a multipurpose room that can host events as big as our annual conferences; the professionally designed David Blair Theater, and a commercial kitchen. Currently, a number of environmental tours of the city start at Cass Commons. We will be adding regular birding tours of the area to the list. We had our first such birding tour Friday, July 10 contributing data on urban birds to eBird for locales that had not been reported on before, ever! Stayed tune for more such trips. (See article elsewhere in the *Flyway*)

Our presence in Midtown will help grow our membership in the city of Detroit, which needs to be bolstered. We will need volunteers to take full advantage of those opportunities! As John Hartig, Detroit International Wildlife Refuge Manager, says, "Urban areas are where the conservationists of the future will come from!" (See review of his new book on that subject in this issue and on our website).

We are also joining the conversation about Detroit's redevelopment as a "Green City" through helping launch the Detroit Conservation Partnership, and presenting summit on Detroit's Environmental Future in October. So far plans for the city include planting trees and creating more wetlands. My hope is that we will be able to get native prairie and other grassland included in the mix.

3. There are some exciting new opportunities with our Southfield location as well. Southfield City Manager Fred Zorn will be working with Sara to help us take the programs we have developed in Detroit and implement them across the whole region, especially the suburbs. We will also be working with Southfield Cable to videotape our programs, including in Detroit, for broadcast across the metro area. We will be working with him to secure grants as well. We will surely be doing more programs in Southfield too, so stay tuned.

4. In June Sara coordinated a Citizen Science program for Detroit Audubon volunteers to do baseline grassland bird surveys at Oakwoods Metropark as part of a joint venture with the Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority. (See Sara's article elsewhere in the *Flyway*). Next year a similar survey will be done at Lake St. Clair Metropark. Stewardship projects for Detroit Audubon volunteers will come out of this project as well. This will help us make the case for preservation and creation of grasslands, not just in the Huron-Clinton Metroparks, but in other areas in southeast Michigan as well.

5. We helped launch a Chimney Swift Live Video Camera at the Historic Winery/Swift Sanctuary in Farmington, MI, home to roost of as many as 50,000 Chimney Swifts, the largest known roost of Chimney Swifts in North America. We will have field trips to the site and education programs for youth may be on the horizon too.

The excitement is palpable with these new developments and opportunities. If you have time, please volunteer. And if you do I can guarantee with Sara at the helm you will not only be doing important work but you will have lots of fun as well. And if you can't volunteer, come to our office anyway. You just have to meet her and get better acquainted with YOUR Detroit Audubon.



Bringing Conservation to Cities: Lessons from Building the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

by John Hartig

What percentage of people in the United States and Canada live in urban areas? The answer is 80%. Throughout the world 54% of all people now live in urban areas and this is projected to increase to 60% by 2030. Most urban residents are disconnected from the natural world. As a global community, we cannot afford to allow this disconnection to continue and that is why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created an Urban Wildlife Conservation Program to help create a connected conservation constituency.

If you are interested in learning more about this topic or about what is being done to bring conservation to the Detroit metropolitan area, you may want to read the new book written by Refuge Manager John Hartig titled *Bringing Conservation to Cities: Lessons from Building the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge*.

Today, the cleanup and recovery of the Detroit River represent one of the single most remarkable ecological recovery stories in North America. Out of the recovery has come the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge that is one of 14 priority urban wildlife refuges in the county charged with bringing conservation to cities and making nature part of everyday urban life. It represents a new model for conservation – one that both restores habitats for fish and wildlife in an urban area through innovative public-private partnerships, and one that provides a blueprint for bringing conservation to cities across the nation.

Bringing Conservation to Cities is the story of how innovative partnerships are making nature part of everyday urban life in the automobile capitals of the U.S. and Canada in an effort to inspire and develop the next generation of conservationists in urban areas because

that is where most people on our planet live. Most urban residents are disconnected from the natural world. Therefore, there is growing interest in re-connecting urban residents with nature. Compounding this problem is the fact that most conservationists avoid cities and want to work in pristine or wilderness areas. Furthermore, when scientific assessments are made, most urban areas are found to be too degraded to rank high enough on conservation priority lists.

Bringing Conservation to Cities is a timely and informative expose of what it takes to foster a conservation ethic in a major urban area, complete with critical lessons learned, and to simultaneously inspire and develop the next generation of conservationists that must be developed with increasing frequency in urban areas because that is where most people on our planet live. If you are interested in exploring this new urban conservation frontier, one that has numerous challenges and opportunities, and in fostering more urban conservation initiatives throughout the world, than *Bringing Conservation to Cities* is a must read. "If we can bring conservation to the Detroit-Windsor Metropolitan Area and make nature part of everyday urban life in these automobile capitals, we can do it anywhere," noted former U.S. Congressman John D. Dingell. "I recommend this book to you, particularly its lessons learned, and hope that it will inspire you to bring conservation to your city."

For more information about this book and where you can purchase it, visit:

<http://msupress.org/books/book/?id=50-1D0-348A#.VUlgjCFViko>
<http://www.amazon.com/Bringing-Conservation-Cities-International-Ecovision/dp/0992100747>



Birding at Elmwood Cemetery: Detroit Audubon and Detroit's Elmwood Cemetery have partnered to put on a series of bird walks through this historic over the course of the coming year. Designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and dedicated in 1846, these history-infused bird walks offer the public a unique opportunity to experience the nature, culture, and history of Detroit all in one place. Future walks are currently in the works and will be announced on the website this fall.

Hello Junior Birders!

by Mary Stempien, Coordinator of the Detroit Audubon Young Birders

On behalf of Young Birder Bridget Stempien, I would like to give a brief Detroit Audubon Young Birder's update (Bridget has a lot of homework and extra dance practices as the school year is winding down, so I offered to help).

The Young Birders joined President Jim Bull and the Detroit Audubon Society in Grosse Ile for an Owl Prowl on a cold night in early March. Many of us less experienced birders learned during a brief presentation that the larger the owl, the greater their hunting territory. In other words, larger owls must cover a greater area to hunt and also protect a greater area from their fellow predators. Towards the end of the outing, we were able to attract a tiny Eastern Screech Owl using a taped recording of a Screech Owl call. After many unsuccessful attempts throughout the night at trying to attract various types of owls, the kids were thrilled to see this extraordinary little Screech Owl! For many, it was their first time seeing an owl in the wild. Lesson of the day which many of the kids learned when out on any owl prowling... PATIENCE.

In early May, the kids met up with Detroit Audubon members on a trip to Magee Marsh in Ohio once again led by Jim Bull. The boardwalk at Marsh Magee was extremely crowded with birders from all over and of all ages. I do not exaggerate when I say that one of the top birders of the day was a Detroit Audubon Young Birder Jared Zaporski (age 16), winner of this year's Detroit Audubon Birding Scholarship. A sincere congratulation to Jared! Jared spotted more birds by sight and sound than you would believe possible. This young man is truly an inspiration to birders everywhere. I had the pleasure

of getting to know Jared's mom Julie on this outing and she helped me spot a Summer Tanager (my first ever). Although our group was small, we had a wonderful time and were very lucky to spend the entire day with Jim Bull as our guide. I can't say how many types of warblers we saw and heard that day, but I saw my first Summer Tanager as well as the Scarlet Tanager. As a direct result of Bridget's love of birds, our entire family (extended as well) is starting to share in her birding passion. I have a feeling that all of our young birders are having a great impact on so many others as well!

Finally, although I was unable to attend, a small group of young birders joined guide Leonard Weber for a day at Point Pelee in Canada. Bridget explained to me that migratory birds heading north for the summer are exhausted from their long flight over Lake Erie. Point Pelee is the first land mass they encounter after this long flight and so it is the perfect place to spot birds as they land and take a much deserved rest. According to Bridget and her Dad, they were able to get very close to many of the birds that had recently arrived at Point Pelee. Bridget was thrilled to see an elusive Canada Warbler, a species that she had heard but escaped her sight at Magee Marsh. On behalf of the Young Birders, we can't thank Leonard Weber enough for agreeing to guide an exclusive Young Birder's outing such as this. Enthusiastic Young Birder, Caroline Baxter (age 10) was able to add quite a number of birds to her life list after this outing, according to her mother Margaret. Keep up the good work Caroline! I suspect we will see great things from this Young Birder in the future.

Mary Stempien (Bridget's mom)



Photo courtesy of audubon.org/ Rolf Nussbaumer



MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND NATURE GET-AWAY 2015

by Jim Bull

I arrived around 4 p.m. on May 22 and began moving things out of my car into Seaholm Lodge, which would be our headquarters for the next few days. A Great-crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Pine Warbler sang their welcome. Large white trillium nodded their petals giving me yet another welcome. After putting up the bird list that catalogs all our bird sightings over the 40 year + history of the campout (now Nature Get-Away), putting up signs for registration, dorms, putting out field trip lists and maps to nearby birding sites, I took a short trip down the stairs to the bottom of the bluff the camp sits on, to the beach where I could see that the Common Loon was again on her nest floating on a human-made raft. Ah, things are as they should be again. Slowly people trickle in, many of them long-time participants in what has affectionately become known as "Bird Camp." It is good to see members of our once-a-year family again.

The Loon sings to us as we head over to Rice Dining Hall for a snack. Early in the morning, about 4 a.m., boys in one of the rustic cabins by the lake heard the Barred Owl and wondered why I was out hooting for owls so early. I wasn't; this serenade was strictly orchestrated by owls. The next day started at 6:30 a.m. with an early morning bird hike. Several of us walked the main road almost to the entrance. The highlight was a bald eagle flying low over the lake as well as a cackling Kingfisher. After a hearty breakfast and a nature quote for the meal, the main morning activities began. Most campers went with me on Saturday to bird at Tawas Point State Park. Although migration seemed to be waning, there were some fantastic sightings including the closest look at a Golden-winged Warbler I've ever had. As we headed down to the Point, some folks coming back the other way told us they had heard from other birders that there was a Loggerheaded Shrike up ahead. We didn't see it but some of our group stayed on after lunch and found it. On Monday, on the way home while looking for the shrike unsuccessfully, I found a Peregrine Falcon feeding on another bird perched high in a tree (well, as high as you can get in a tree near the Point!). Kite surfers all along the lakeside of the Point kept shorebirds away, including 8 Piping Plovers that had been reported the day before.

After lunch at picnic tables at Tawas Point, I headed inland to Lumberman's Monument and the several AuSable River overlooks. Here some of our group, families with children, youth, and young adults who like to run down the dune-like Rollway (an unvegetated riverbank of sand leftover from the days when logs were rolled down to the river so they could be floated to sawmills). Birds were very quiet here, but we were greeted once again by the huge deep purple

Birdfoot's Violet. At the next stop, Canoers' Monument, we had an Indigo Bunting just glowing deep blue in the sun, and very close. At our next stop, Iargo Springs, a Scarlet Tanager male came very close as well but, according to Sharon Korte who did her best, not enough in the open for great photos! We made one last stop at Loud Dam to see the Cliff Swallows nesting their mud-pot nests with narrow neck entrances all along the top window sill of the dam building.

After dinner, former board member and former co-coordinator of this weekend (and the person who pushed to rename it a Nature Get-Away instead of a campout), Rose Attilio, gave an inspiring program on Jungle Birding. She recounted how she had dreamed of going to the jungle since watching a children's program on TV about an albino lion. She even had friends gift her with the canteen she sent away for to that show. She talked about how the dream grew and how she planned to make her dreams come true, first going to the Costa Rican Rainforest several times with other Detroit Zoo volunteers, then eventually going to Africa. She showed incredible slides of the birds she saw on both those continents, and many mammals, snakes, and insects too. And then there were slides of walking on a walkway in the rainforest canopy! She encouraged young people to have dreams and to then work to make them come true. Other campers remembered that in the past Rose lead hikes to find morels and other non-birds around camp and clamored for that to happen next year. If Rose is willing, it will happen! After an ice cream sundae snack several went with me on an owl prowl, but unfortunately the owl never responded to our calls, nor came to give us view.

Sunday after breakfast, we found Clay-Colored Sparrows, Vesper Sparrow, Juncos, Field Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, Lincoln's Sparrow, Brown-Thrasher and Dark-eyed Juncos in the Kirtland's Warbler nesting area. There were several Kirtland's singing loudly and one was quite close, but he never had the decency to pop up where we could see him. We counted him anyway. Lunch for me was at the picnic area and beach on Grousehaven Lake in the Rifle River Recreation Area (State Park). Then it was off to Pintail Pond, a rare Northern Fen within the State Park, with Fringed Polygala, with its dark pink flowers and fringe of stamens carpeting the sides of the trail. Here we heard, but could never get a good look at, a Northern Waterthrush. But we noted the bog-like fen plants, the insectivorous Pitcher Plant and the Tamarack, an evergreen that loses all its needles in the fall. Next was the Scenic Overlook Drive. At the observation tower we had a Bald Eagle fly low overhead and we found what we thought was its nest. Nearer to the tower we watched both an Eastern Phoebe, and a pair of

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, at their nests. After dinner, I led a short hike to the boardwalk on Mud Lake, which is mostly wetland. We called for Virginia Rail and Sora and got no response, but we did see an amazing bird on the water that none of us would have suspected to find on an inland lake—a Surf Scoter! Sharon Korte got photos to document the identification!

The evening closed with a campfire sing-a-long, under a shelter this year due to light rain, and s'mores. Favorites from our songbook seem to be the songs I created by putting new words to familiar tunes. For instance, "Puff the Magic Dragon," became "Puff the Fearless Hognose," and "Bring Back my Bonnie to Me" became "Bring Back My Kirtland's To Me." After s'mores a number of younger folks with guitars serenaded us with song after song. What a great time!!!

Memorial Day morning began with a solemn flag ceremony to honor our nation's heroes who lost their lives and servicemen and women who helped protect our nation. At breakfast Tess, a red-haired fourth or fifth-grader (I think) who has been coming to these weekends all her life, came up to me at my table to tell me, "I just wanted you to know that I love Bird Camp every year and my favorite thing at Bird Camp is the campfire and especially the songs you wrote. I sing them at home and on the bus on the way to and from school but kids tell me I'm singing the wrong words. I tell them, 'no I'm not!' these ARE the right words!" I was so touched. I thanked her then, but I wrote to her and sent her a copy of the songbook, autographed, for her very own, and a Hog-nosed Snake jigsaw puzzle. She wrote me wonderful thank-yous for each, which I shared on Detroit Audubon's Facebook page. She also sent several of her drawings of "Bird Camp." One is shared here, while others can be found on our website."

Tuttle Marsh gave us looks at Pied-billed Grebes, Virginia Rails, Willow Flycatchers, nesting Osprey and, nearby on Galion Road, we had Eastern Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolinks and eleven Turkey Vultures roosting on the ground. We looked for the Yellow-Headed Blackbird seen up close on Saturday by others in our group at Tuttle but couldn't find it.

We don't know if Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center will be open next year—it is for sale right now, but the director seems confident it will still be there. On the envelope with the invoice she wrote, "Hope to see you again next year!" Well, we at Detroit Audubon hope to see you next year at this event, whether it is at Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center or some other venue. Come join the fun! Mark your calendars now so you make sure to keep that weekend open for next year's Nature Get-away Weekend!

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND NATURE GET-AWAY 2015



A big thank you to our young birder, Tess Scheske, for her drawings of the Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away! We love when kids start their love of birding young!

Loon Lake Retreat by Tess Scheske



Detroit Audubon Launch of Chimney Swift Cam

by Rose Fielding

Sunday, May 7, 2015 launched the installation of a live webcam of the largest roosting spot of Chimney Swifts in North America. The "Swift Sanctuary and Historic Winery at Farmington Junction" at 31505 Grand River Avenue in Farmington, Michigan shelters over 50,000 of these birds with boomerang-like wings, which roost every night, clinging to the inside of the chimney.

Detroit Audubon and the Historic Winery are partnering in this venture to eventually live-stream video of the swifts' activity inside the chimney. The video equipment was installed by Mr. Larry Schwitters of Seattle, Washington on the 5th & 6th of May, with the official ribbon-cutting on the 7th. Audubon President, Dr. James Bull, introduced Mr. Schwitters, the building owners and a Farmington city official to the 40 or so interested attendees, who then watched as the ribbon was officially cut to launch this joint venture to collect data, study and eventually live-stream the goings-on of the Chimney Swifts.

Larry Schwitters is a keen observer and authority on swift activity. He spent four years tracking down Black Swifts at waterfalls in Washington state for the American Bird Conservancy. He also has been an important participant in Audubon's Vaux's Happening Project, initiated 8 years ago to locate, raise awareness and preserve the important roost sites of this species along their migratory path from San Diego to the Yukon.

Mr. Schwitters presented a fast paced Power Point covering his work on these projects. After which the Historic Winery offered sandwiches and soft drinks to the audience. As an appropriate ending to the evening, just after dusk, a few thousand birds were seen entering the chimney to roost for the night.

It is the hope of Mr. Schwitters and Detroit Audubon to preserve the chimney housing the greatest concentration of Chimney Swifts anywhere in North America, and in the very near future to live-stream from the inside of the chimney for all to observe these interesting birds.

Keep looking for the live-stream on Detroit Audubon's website, and of course you may also personally watch the birds enter the chimney each night during each night during migration. We also hope to find out if they nest here during the summer since Michelle Romans reports that she sees them going in every day during the summer too.



Photo courtesy of audubon.org/Greg W. Lasley



Detroit Audubon President Jim Bull, Farmington City Councilwoman Joanne McShane, Michelle Romans, and owner of the Historic Winery, David White cut the ribbon for the new Chimney Swift WebCam.

Women in Ornithology Quiz

by Ellen Paul

How many of these incredible women in ornithology can you correctly identify?

Many of these women have had equally brilliant male ornithological spouses. Bonus points if you can name those men.

1. This woman was the only female graduate student of Aldo Leopold. She was known for her work on Greater Prairie-Chicken and on birds of prey. Here's the give-away clue: she called her field assistants "gabboons."
2. This woman was the first female Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union. Though an Easterner, she wrote the classic Handbook of the Birds of the Western States, based in large part on her travels through California and the New Mexico and Arizona territories.
3. There is nothing ordinary about this extraordinary woman and her delightful little gray songbirds. She has been awarded the Margaret Morse Nice medal by the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Coues Award by the American Ornithologists' Union.
4. Like so many others, an incidental course in natural history lured this tropical biologist away from her planned pre-med major. Elected to the National Academy of Science in 1988, she is also a recipient of the Alexander Skutch award for Excellence in Tropical Ornithology (awarded by the Association of Field Ornithologists). She also managed to find time to serve as the president of the Cooper Ornithological Society.
5. When birds and planes collide, this is the go-to woman!
6. To know her is to love her, as Tiko and her many ornithological progeny would attest. She has brilliant plumage, unlike the shorebirds and waterbirds she is known for studying, along with not a few reptiles and amphibians.
7. Imagine seeing evolution as it happens by watching just a single bird. Imagine having a single field site for 40 years, heirs of Darwin himself. Imagine being awarded the Darwin-Wallace medal, an honor bestowed only once every 50 years, as well as the Kyoto Prize. And from the ornithologists, the Loye and Alden Miller Research Award (Cooper Ornithological Society) and the Margaret Morse Nice Medal (Wilson Ornithological Society).
8. You can have three kids, go back to grad school, and earn your doctorate at age 45. Some might think that loony, but 40 years later, she can still yodel with the best of them!
9. For the past FIFTY years, this ornithologist has lived with her avian subjects; she makes do without running water or electricity while turning the place into a luxury hotel for 3,000 pairs of shorebirds.

This list has been reprinted with permission from the Ornithology Exchange Forums. For questions or comments about this quiz, please email Ellen Paul (ellen.paul@verizon.net).

Give up? Answers are on the last page.

Celebrating the Birds of Detroit

by Sara Cole

One of the great things about birds is that they are everywhere – even in the heart of Detroit! Furthermore, every bird – from the common pigeon to the Peregrine Falcon – has something to teach us – about how birds feed, fight, or frolic, or how certain behaviors can help or hinder bird survival in certain environments.

Birds can also teach us about the environment itself. As environmental indicators, birds – and their presence or absence – give us clues about the health of the surrounding environment and the way it might be changing over time.

For these reasons, it is important to watch and record birds everywhere – even in urban areas like Detroit!

To promote birdwatching in urban areas, Detroit Audubon hosted its first Midtown Bird Walk on July 10. The group took a leisurely walk up and down the Cass Corridor observing and recording urban birds for science. After the walk, participants learned how to enter data into eBird, and how the data is used.

Highlights included:

- Getting to see wildlife-friendly plants in North Cass Community Garden
- Native plants in the “Green Alley” by the Green Garage Detroit
- A Peregrine Falcon being mobbed over the Detroit Medical Center
- ... and more!

Participants were also introduced to similar citizen science projects like Journey North, Project BudBurst, and the North American Bird Phenology Program.

We look forward to scheduling more programs like this soon. We hope you'll join us!

OFFICE AT CASS CORRIDOR COMMONS:

We now have an office at Cass Corridor Commons in Detroit's Midtown, right next to Wayne State University and near the Detroit Cultural Center. The address for this office is:

4605 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201
Office Hours: W, Th & F 9AM-5PM
Phone: (313) 960-3399

GOOD-BYE AND THANK YOU TO BEV STEVENSON

Bev Stevenson who served as our office manager for over 25 years has moved on from Detroit Audubon. We are grateful for her loyalty to the organization and her service to you our members. We wish her well.

Greetings from the New Program Coordinator!

by Sara Cole, Program Coordinator

My name is Sara, and I'm both excited and honored to serve as the new Program Coordinator for Detroit Audubon. As a recent graduate, I'm excited to bring my enthusiasm and ideas to an organization that supports the same causes that I have been interested in all my life: birds, the natural environment, and finding creative ways to connect people to nature.

While I have been a bird lover for most of my life, I can't say that I'm an expert at bird identification – I'm working on fall warblers right now! Nonetheless, I bring a lot of experience to the table and I am eager to accomplish a lot – for the birds, for Detroit Audubon and for our members – in this new position.

First of all, I'm a Michigan girl to the core and am thrilled to be working here – especially in Detroit, where I lived, went to school, and taught while I went to Wayne State for my undergrad. I can't think of any place I'd rather be, especially considering all of the opportunities for partnerships here. You can read about those partnerships elsewhere in this newsletter!

Prior to joining Detroit Audubon, I worked for several years as an environmental educator in the Detroit area developing and leading programs for “outdoor classrooms.” A special interest in birds led me to concurrent work as a bird bander at the Rouge River Bird Observatory, and later as a bander-educator at MSU's Kellogg Bird Sanctuary and Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center in Washington DC.

Those experiences opened my eyes to the need for science educators and communicators. These are people who not only know the science, but know how to educate, and engage the public in ways that bring about behavior change. This is becoming increasingly important as resources shrink and the need for public engagement grows.

My experiences as a bander-educator led to a serious interest in the human dimensions of environmental issues, which is broadly defined as



“[every aspect of an environmental issue] that is not about wildlife and habitats.” The study of human dimensions draws upon the social sciences to provide theories, models, and methods to help us better engage the people who are often at the heart of these issues. It is a promising field of study for any scientist, educator, or conservation manager interested in working with the public.

In 2014, I graduated with my MS in Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan, specializing in Behavior, Education and Communication. Now that school is done, I am excited to spread my wings and return to the field with a whole new bag of tricks!

As Detroit Audubon's first paid staff member in twenty-three years, I am excited to help usher in a new era of engaging and impactful bird conservation in southeast Michigan – thinking up and implementing new ways to connect diverse audiences to birds and the environment. I want to continue connecting people to science and nature – through research, education, outreach, and service – in ways that benefit both people and the environment. I look forward to working with all of you and making a difference with Detroit Audubon!

Citizen Scientists Monitor Grassland Birds for a Cause

by Sara Cole

Detroit Audubon and the Huron-Clinton Metroparks have partnered to improve natural resources management on Metroparks' property. To this end, a program was developed to monitor grassland birds at Oakwoods Metropark.

Throughout June, a team of Detroit Audubon volunteer grassland bird monitors observed and recorded grassland birds by sight and sound at assigned locations throughout the Metropark following protocols created by staff at the Metroparks.

Birds are easy-to-monitor indicators of environmental health; the presence or absence of certain birds can give clues about the health of surrounding landscapes. As the adage goes, “We can't manage what we don't measure” -- and only by keeping detailed records of birds are we able to track change over time. Monitoring is an essential part of tracking the effects of things like climate change or habitat modification, which take place over long periods of time.

The volunteers' bird observations will be incorporated into the Oakwoods Metropark's grassland restoration master plan as part of the effort to track the landscape's change over time. We look forward to continue supporting this project – at Oakwoods Metropark and elsewhere – in the years to come.

Thank you to Rick Simek, Donna Posont, Jera Hogan, Melissa Brady, Natalie Ray Cyper, and Jim Bull for their dedication and passion that helped make this first year a great success!

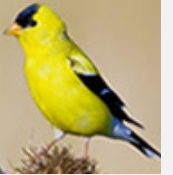


THANK YOU TO THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

including Emily Simon, Kathy Hofer, and Tana Moore for all their hard work on conceptualizing a new website for Detroit Audubon. Many of their ideas were incorporated in the present website, and others will be implemented as time and resources allow.

The Audubon Online Bird Guide

Identify Birds



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.

THE FLYWAY HAS GONE GREEN!

As announced previously, only the Spring issue of the Flyway will be printed and mailed annually. For the other three digital issues, we need all members' email addresses.

If you, or a member you know, missed an issue of the Flyway, please contact the DAS Detroit Audubon at daprogramcoordinator@detroitaudubon.org or by calling (313) 960-3399 with the correct email address. Rest assured that Detroit Audubon will not share your email address with any other person or organization.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

facebook

Yes, the Detroit Audubon Society has a Facebook page! [Like us](#) to get reminders of field trips as well as notifications of volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs, and workshops.

Share with your friends, and help spread the word about ways to support Detroit Audubon and its efforts to protect birds and the environment.

Detroit Audubon Goes Wild at the Belle Isle Nature Zoo

by Sara Cole

This summer, Detroit Audubon has partnered with Belle Isle Nature Zoo in putting on a series of fun, engaging, educational week-long nature day camps for children from the Detroit area. The weekly day camps give children opportunities to explore the natural areas, get to know local wildlife, and complete a service-learning project focused on improving habitat for the Monarch Butterfly and other pollinators.

Detroit Audubon played a major role in developing activities for young campers (age 5-8), who focus on studying birds and their habitats. At the beginning of each week, each camper is invited to "become a bird" and learns to see the island through their eyes; they also get to sculpt a bird, built a nest, and play games that teach about birds and their place in the environment.

The camp has striven to incorporate literacy, math and the arts into daily activities. Campers beginning each day with a read-aloud, and do nature-based math activities after lunch such as measuring wingspans, graphing bird observations, and making bird tangrams. With the help of art educators from Pewabic Pottery, campers create clay pieces inspired by nature which are then glazed and fired. Each week culminates in a Celebration of Learning during which campers showcase the accomplishments and special memories they made during the week.

The day camp was created, in part, to provide unique opportunities and experiences in nature to children free of charge to children who qualify. Camps like this one are playing increasingly important role in engaging young audiences with modern-day conservation issues, especially those affecting urban areas.

This year's camp, which runs through August, is currently full. Registration for next year's camp is expected to open in March 2016. For more information: <http://belleislenaturezoo.org/summer-nature-camp/>



Breeding Bird Hike at Detroit's Eliza Howell Park

by Sara Cole

Participants who came on this hike (led by Leonard Weber on June 6) were treated to over 30 species of songbirds at the peak of their breeding season. From a respectable distance, participants observed several nesting birds and their nests (including that of the White-eyed Vireo), as well as adult birds feeding their young.

Eliza Howell is a unique patchwork of grassland, mixed meadow, forest and riparian corridor spanning across 250 acres (making it the fourth largest park in Detroit). For questions about birds and birding in the park, please contact Leonard Weber at dasfieldlw@detroitaudubon.org.



What makes a bird a bird? Young birders got to find out at the Crosswinds Marsh Hobby Day held on August 8, 2015. The American Robin costume was made by Program Coordinator Sara Cole for use with upcoming youth education programs."

Update on Safe Passage Great Lakes

by Rob Duchene, Safe Passage Great Lakes Coordinator

During spring and fall migration, night-migrating birds are lured by city lights into urban areas. In the unfamiliar urban environment, they often fatally collide with buildings at night. This is one of a myriad of threats to birds trying to coexist with man in the modern era. Other dangers include reflective or transparent glass by day, wind turbines, communication towers and their guide wires as well as the peril posed by housecats and feral cats. Safe Passage Great Lakes is committed to confronting all these threats to our birds.

Our primary focus has been our "Lights Out" program, in which we ask owners and managers of tall buildings to shut off lights between the hours of 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. during migration seasons. We have had success in convincing entities such as Ford, GM and Wayne County to participate in this ongoing campaign. Recently Wayne State University joined us with a vigorous statement of support (see below). But there are building owners that we have yet to persuade or sometimes even to reach.

Reaching out to educate the public on these threats is a primary concern. To do this, the SPGL team recently traveled up to Whitefish Point in the U.P. to take part in a multi-state convocation of bird lovers to radiate our message of concern. We will also be traveling to Toronto soon to learn from FLAP (Fatal Light Awareness Program) personnel how to mobilize and train volunteers to go out during early morning hours to rescue injured birds and the bodies of fatal building collision victims to be saved for further study and statistical analysis. This data will be useful in persuading uncertain building managers to participate. FLAP has been doing this since 1993 and is widely recognized as the state-of-the-art bird survival team. The team includes more than 100 volunteers who have collected numerous bodies of 167 different species of birds that had their migrations interrupted.

We plan to come back to Detroit and supplement our current Safe Passage Great Lakes Program by instituting the lessons we learn, no later than this fall of 2015. If you care enough, and are willing to participate in a short training, we could use your help. We are also in need of a (preferably small) freezer so that we can store the bodies of collision victims and send them to Ann Arbor for further study and analysis. Safe Passage Great Lakes has ambitious goals and we are determined but if we are going to achieve success, we need help in early morning surveys, in late night windshield surveys of participation rates, and in reaching out to building managers. If you have never saved a life, this could be your chance! Call Rob at 248-549-6328.



Office of the President
4200 Faculty/Administration Building
Detroit, MI 48202
313-577-2230
Fax: 313-577-3200

May 29, 2015

Mr. Robert R. Duchene
4302 Auburn Dr.
Royal Oak, MI 48073

Dear Mr. Duchene,

Thank you for reaching out to Wayne State University on behalf of the Detroit Audubon Society and its Safe Passage Great Lakes project.

Upon hearing of your inquiry, I was pleased to learn that various staff members here at Wayne State already have taken positive action in assisting you with your worthy cause. Please feel free to use the below statement of support moving forward, and we will continue to assist where possible from here in Midtown Detroit.

Wayne State University is pleased to support the admirable work of the Detroit Audubon Society and its Safe Passage Great Lakes project. From groundbreaking environmental research to clean-up efforts in Midtown and beyond, Wayne State remains focused on being a valued partner and conscientious neighbor to all those in our community—including birds and other wildlife. We are delighted to join a growing list of Michigan organizations and agencies dedicated to this worthy cause.

Again, thank you for allowing Wayne State to be part of this cause.

Sincerely,

M. Roy Wilson
President

DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY 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>

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 tcarp1980@yahoo.com or at (734) 728-8733.

Thank You to the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology!

Thank you to Janet Hinshaw, Curator of the Birds Division at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology (UMMZ), for generously loaning us a set of bird study skins use in education programs. UMMZ houses the sixth largest collection of bird specimens in North America representing 2/3 of the world's species. The collection is an asset to not only scientists but also artists and educators all over the world. We are grateful for their presence in the community.

We hope to give the birds a great "second life" with us!

For more information about the birds collection at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, please see the UMMZ Birds Division website: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/ummz/birds/>



Magee Marsh Field Trip with Young Birders



Young birders

Photos from the Detroit Audubon field trip to Magee Marsh on Saturday May 9, 2015 led by Jim Bull. These photos are mostly of Detroit Audubon's Young Birder's Club who joined other members for this trip, but they were the ones that stayed the whole day!!



Female Northern Parula



Jim Bull coaching young birders

Bird ID Quiz—Summer 2014



This bird is a Virginia Rail. It and the Sora are the only two rails that are commonly found in Michigan. Rails are secretive birds that prefer dense marshy areas. So, the toughest task in identifying a Virginia Rail by sight is to spy one in the first place. If you suspect you have run across one, look for the long orange, slightly curved bill with a dark upper surface, a grey face with a faint black smudge through the eye, and a very rich rusty brown color on the chin, neck, and breast. The legs are orange although they are a different hue from the bill. Viewed in profile the Virginia Rail is a stocky bird, the body somewhat resembling that of a chicken. However, when viewed from the front or rear it is surprisingly thin -- "as skinny as a rail" -- a characteristic that allows it to move easily through thick marsh vegetation.

Virginia Rails can be easily identified in the field by their calls. One of their common calls is an unmistakable grunting sound that is often characterized as oink-oink oink-oink-oink, speeding up near the end. Their "song", heard mainly during breeding season, is a metallic kiddick-kiddick-kiddick that carries quite well in the marsh.

Photo Credit: Joe Brooks, Grand Traverse Audubon

Women in Ornithology Answers

1. Frances Hamerstrom
2. Florence Merriam Bailey
3. Ellen Ketterson
4. Mercedes Foster
5. Carla Dove
6. Joanna Burger
7. Rosemary Grant
8. Judy McIntyre
9. Helen Hays

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www.detroitaudubon.org**