



www.detroitaudubon.org

Flyway

Summer 2009

Volume 2009, Issue 3

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ANNUAL PROGRAM 2009

By Rosemarie Attilio

On March 28th, over 100 people enjoyed an exciting day of hands-on nature programs at the Southfield Parks and Recreation Building in Southfield. The day began at 8:00 am with a nature hike around Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve. Naturalist Mary Carlock gave a presentation explaining how the City of Southfield restored the park and lake. Some of the renovations included making the site more accessible and dredging the lake and stocking it with over 14000 native fishes such as bass, catfish, bluegill and minnows. They also developed over a mile of groomed trails that are home to deer, mink, fox and a variety of birds, such as hawks and owls. The park is easily accessible, located on 10 Mile Road just east of Inkster Road. There is also information about Carpenter Lake on the City of Southfield website. www.cityofsouthfield.com

After the morning walk, the day's events switched over to the Parks and Recreation Building. Our first speaker was Becky Johnson from the Detroit Zoo. Becky gave a very informative talk on the metamorphosis of amphibians. Becky showed beautiful slides of some of the colorful frogs and salamanders of the zoo. Becky has worked at the Detroit Zoo for many years and had a wealth of information on the zoo's amphibian treasures. Visit the National Amphibian Conservation Center (Amphibiville) at the Detroit Zoo. Go and see the amphibians live and learn more about the Detroit Zoo's work in rare amphibian breeding programs and preservation. www.detroitzoo.org/Attractions/Amphibiville/



Getting to know one of Beth's snakes

- Photo by Richard Quick

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Beth Duman, the next speaker, got the crowd into group participation by passing around an array of friendly, curious snakes. You could hear the oohhs and ahhs of the participants as one of the snakes decided to explore the inside of one woman's sleeve! Beth jumped into action to remove the misguided snake, much to the amusement of the onlookers. Beth was full of fun and fascinating snake facts. It was also exciting to see a few people hold snakes for the first time in their lives.

Beth has been an environmental educator since 1974 and has led numerous programs in years past for the Detroit Audubon Society and many other organizations. Her talks are always funny and very informative. Beth said her passion is to create a compassionate world where no one, human or nonhuman is left out. She has been a long-time volunteer for the Howell Nature Center which exhibits many injured Michigan animals and birds. You can visit many other exciting animals up close, at the Howell nature center. www.howellnaturecenter.org

The group then broke for a delicious Potbelly sandwich lunch. During that time, many eager shoppers bid on silent auction items that were generously donated by various organizations and DAS members. The silent auction raised over \$1200.00 for the

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Flyway

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For the Latest News and Views from Detroit Audubon

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jack Smiley

It's nice to know that some people read the *Flyway*. In the last issue, I had asked people to contact me if they had any suggestions as to what Detroit Audubon should be doing in the coming year. A few people took the time to write and I thank everyone for their comments. I will make sure that the Board considers all of the suggestions which are made.

I also mentioned that 2009 was the 70th Anniversary of the Detroit Audubon Society. As one of the largest chapters of the National Audubon Society, our newsletter reaches over 5,000 Audubon members in southeast Michigan and beyond. It also must be read by some of the leaders at National Audubon since John Flicker, President of the National Audubon Society, sent us a nicely signed certificate congratulating Detroit Audubon on our 70th Anniversary. We should return the favor next year when John begins his 15th year as President of National Audubon.

What I didn't mention in the last issue, however, was one of my goals for 2009: for the Detroit Audubon Society to begin an Endowment Fund. An Endowment Fund could help to provide some financial stability to the organization, helping DAS to weather economic downturns. It could also enable members to make larger donations and bequests which would be restricted in use so that the gifts would continue to benefit the Audubon cause year after year. I figure that with 70 years under our belt, we might as well plan to be around for a lot longer. Even if we begin small, we can grow the endowment over time.

So, what do you think about the idea of establishing an Endowment Fund? I would especially like to hear from long-time members. Before we launch a campaign to begin an Endowment Fund, we will need a few commitments to make sure that we get off on the right foot. We should probably receive pledges of at least \$10,000 before we begin this endeavor. We may be able to set up the endowment so that donations are eligible for a 50% Michigan tax credit -- on top of the usual federal income tax deductions.

Please let me know if you would be willing to make a pledge in anticipation of an Endowment Fund being established. No donations will be collected until we are certain that this will be successful. Please contact me at daspres@detroitaudubon.org. Thank you!

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DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

Detroit Audubon Memorial Weekend Nature Get-Away May 22-25, 2009, (Friday thru Monday)

Don't miss this weekend with wonderful people and fine birds. Besides an array of notable breeding birds in the area (including Kirtland's Warbler), nearby Tawas Point should be hopping with migrants. Two years ago our group even found a new bird for the Michigan list - Couch's Kingbird! There will be great food, music and educational programs, children's activities (including a challenge course), all amid beautiful surroundings. In addition to the camp, there will be trips to the scenic Rifle River State Recreation Area, Kirtland's Warbler Management Area, Au Sable River Scenic Overlooks (including Largo Springs), and Tawas Point State Park. Watch the DAS website for more details. Registration form below.

Oak Openings Metropark, Ohio May 30, 2009 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m. Leader: Karl Overman

This area is only about 12 miles south of the Michigan state line, but the avifauna is distinctly different. The premier bird is Lark Sparrow which does not regularly nest in Michigan. Other birds likely include Red-headed Woodpecker, Summer Tanager, Hooded Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat. Insect repellent could be your best friend this day.

Take US 23 South to Salisbury Road exit. Turn right at exit and go to Briarfield. Turn left here, go up to 20A and turn right. Stay on 20A and go through two flashing lights (Albon is 1st light and Eber is 2nd light) up to 295 south. Turn left on 295 and take 295 to Oak Openings Parkway. Stay on Oak Openings Parkway past Lodge to get to Mallard Lake area on the right. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot on Mallard Lake.

Memorial Weekend Nature Get-away At Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, Hale, MI Friday, May 22 - Monday, May 25, 2009

Registration Deadline: May 16, 2009 (No refunds will be given after this date)

Rates: Children < 4 years = Free, K - 8th grade = Child, 9th grade and Up = Adult

_____ **Plan A (Lodging, Meals, Snacks, & Programs)**

_____ Seaholm Lodge (Dorm style bunk beds for men & women)

_____ Mini Lodge (Priority given to families with young children)

_____ Rustic Cabin (Unheated w/ bunk beds, minimum of two people needed to reserve a cabin)

_____ Child(ren) X \$140 + _____ Adult(s) X \$170 = \$ _____

_____ **Plan B Day Rate Entire Weekend (Meals, Snacks, Programs & Day Use Fee)**

_____ Child(ren) X \$100 + _____ Adult(s) X \$125 = \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL = \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Detroit Audubon Society

_____ Vegetarian / Dietary Restrictions: (please explain) _____

_____ I will assist with field trips / activities

_____ DAS Member

Declaration: (Each participant must sign; if under 18, legal guardian must sign)

I/We agree that I/we have read the preceding information and agree not to hold DAS liable for injury, accident, loss or theft, or any other problems on the 2009 Memorial Weekend Nature Get-away.

Signature(s): _____

Adult Name(s) & Gender: _____

Name(s), Age(s) & Grade Level(s) of Children under 18: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Any questions can be directed to Jim Bull at 313-928-2950

Mail this completed form and check(s) to:

DAS Memorial Weekend Nature Get-away, 26080 Berg Rd., Southfield, MI 48033

Safe Passage Great Lakes Update

By Fred Charbonneau

On March 19, the Michigan House of Representatives passed HR 31, a resolution to encourage the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Public Service Commission to promote Project Safe Passage. The resolution was passed by a bipartisan support vote by a show of hands.

HR 31 was sponsored by Representative Lesia Liss (D) of Warren and passed with a 12-0 bipartisan vote in the House committee on Great Lakes and Environment on May 5. Doris Applebaum, Frank Zaski and Fred Charbonneau attended the hearing, where Frank and Fred testified in support of the resolution. Gayle Miller, representing the Sierra Club, submitted a card indicating support as well.

An earlier version of the resolution was approved in committee during the previous session, but did not get to a vote of the full House.

Will Weber of the Washtenaw Audubon Society has joined the Safe Passage Great Lakes team and is coordinating the program in Ann Arbor. They planned to submit a resolution to the Ann Arbor City Council in time for the spring migration.

Governor Jennifer Granholm renewed her proclamation declaring Safe Passage Great Lakes days for 2009. The original proclamation was issued in 2006, making this the fourth year of the Governor's support for the program.

Certificates of Recognition were presented to Janet Langlois-Resto, Executive Director of the Business Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) of Metropolitan Detroit, Lynn Arnott-Bryks, Director of the Facilities and Operations Department, Macomb County Government Buildings, and the Mt. Clemens and Southfield City Councils for their efforts on behalf of Safe Passage Great Lakes.

DTE Energy has generously funded the printing of our Safe Passage brochures, which are available for distribution to nature centers and bird supply stores, as well as DAS and other events.

Detroit Audubon Society and Michigan Audubon have issued a joint press release to news media throughout the state. If you see an article regarding Safe Passage, send a copy to our office.

With the spring migration in progress, we need to make every effort to spread the word. If you live near or work in a building above five stories tall, check with the facility's managers regarding their night lighting practices and update us. With that information in hand, we can contact them with an offer to join our honor roll or we can approach them and explain the program. Either way, we will be able to compile a list of participating buildings.

Safe Passage Great Lakes has made significant progress in the last three years, but much remains to be done. The greatest asset we have in this continuing effort is the support and commitment of our members. With your help, we can document our successes as well as identify and focus on our challenges. Please lend your voice to this effort.

Keep Track of the Birds in Your Yard All Year

From National Audubon

Do you enjoy watching birds and contributing to our growing understanding of birds and their conservation? If so, you can help by keeping track of the birds in your yard with a new My Yard eBird online at ebird.org/content/myyard. My Yard eBird takes the power of regular eBird, but makes it friendlier and easier to use for backyard birdwatchers. By contributing bird sightings to My Yard eBird, your yard becomes a biological research station, joining a network of thousands of other yards contributing bird sightings across the country.

Unlike some citizen science programs where your data goes in but you get nothing out, My Yard eBird allows you to

see all your bird sightings, graph them, and map them along with all the other data being submitted. You can use this tool to keep track of your yard list or follow changes in your yard birds from day to day, month to month, year to year, or even decade to decade. You can also track how many times you've seen any given bird, the highest number of birds seen at any time, and dozens of other reports. Of course, to have access to such useful data, you need to first enter it online. But once you get the hang of it, My Yard eBird does all the work of preserving your data and graphing it for you.

eBird is a joint Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology project, and My Yard eBird was developed through an Audubon At Home agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

THE FLYWAY ONLINE?

Are you one of our members looking to reduce the amount of mail you receive and the amount of paper you have to recycle? Are you also interested in saving DAS postage costs - over \$1.40/year currently? If so, send us an email message and we will add you to a FLYWAY notice list and stop mailing the FLYWAY to you. We will be posting it as both text and as a pdf on our DAS website, www.detroitaudubon.org for those who like reading on their computer. We will send a message the day the FLYWAY is ready to print.

Send email to: detas@bignet.net; put "FLYWAY Online" as the subject.

We will confirm receiving it.

Gifts to DAS Top \$10,000

We would like to thank those who have donated to Detroit Audubon over the past year.

Your gifts help us to maintain our office and continue to produce *The FLYWAY* as well as to reach out to promote our environmental program. Donations by members and friends for the year 3/2008 to 3/2009 were \$10,823.

Up to \$1,000.00

Elaine Ludwig
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Up to \$200.00

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Elizabeth Vella
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Phillip Walton
John Weigold
Virginia Weingate
Judith Whittum-Hudson
John A. Williams
David Winer
Laura Woolley

DAS TRIP TO JACKSON

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON: AMERICAN ARTIST AND NATURALIST EXHIBIT

Have you ever seen an original Audubon print? How about an Elephant Folio print? How about 60 of them? Well here is your chance. Detroit Audubon is arranging a trip on August 1st to see these icons of American wildlife art and much more.

The Ella Sharp Museum of Art and History in Jackson, Michigan is excited to announce the upcoming, nationally traveling exhibition, John James Audubon: American Artist and Naturalist, June 6 through August 29, 2009. This is the only time this exhibit will be in Michigan. The exhibition traces Audubon's life and development as an artist and features 60 Double Elephant Folio-sized, hand colored engravings from his masterwork, The Birds of America, printed in England between

1826 and 1838. Also on exhibit are originals by Audubon, including oil paintings, a drawing and watercolors with his field notes. Works by Audubon's contemporaries, original letters, documents, personal items, rare books and photographs will be on display. This traveling exhibition is from the John James Audubon Museum and State Park in Henderson, Kentucky. It was organized and is being circulated by Art Services 2000 Ltd.

The Ella Sharp Museum will feature portions of the Andrews Gallery of Wildlife Art in the Audubon exhibit. The Andrews Gallery of Wildlife Art consists of over 700 works of art, with only 60 exhibited at a time.

We will leave Southfield at 9:00 am on Saturday, August 1st to arrive at the museum by 11:00 am. We plan to tour the exhibit and the other galleries before and after lunch. We will have lunch at the museum. We plan to be back in Southfield before 5:00 pm.

The trip fee of \$50.00 for members, \$55.00 non-members, will include transportation, lunch and museum entrance. We can do this only if we have 40 or more people. We can take up to 54. This promises to be a fun day and we will learn about the namesake of Audubon. Send in your reservation form and fee soon to be assured of a seat on the bus. We will send you a confirmation and details of times and schedule.

DAS Trip to Jackson Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Payment: _____ Cash _____ Check _____ Credit Card

Credit Card: _____ VISA _____ MC # _____ Exp Date: _____

Detroit Audubon Society

Mail To: **26080 Berg Rd.**

Southfield, MI 48033

PLEASE E-MAIL US!

If you would like to receive notices about membership meetings, field trips, and other time sensitive material, please send your e-mail address to detas@bignet.net. Simply type the word "subscribe" in the subject line. Please include at least your name in the message area of your e-mail. We will only send out a few e-mails a month and you can ask to be removed at any time. E-mail will help save postage and paper costs -- and will allow us to give you speedy notification of events.

Detroit Audubon Office Has a New Phone Number (248) 990-1316

As some of you know, we have been without a phone for over a month. The new phone is a cell phone. If there is no one in the office to take your call, please leave a message with voicemail.

The email address is still the same - detas@bignet.net - but we will probably be changing it within the year.

Our mailing address also remains the same:

Detroit Audubon Society, 26080 Berg Rd., Southfield, MI 48033

Annual Program - continued from Page 1

Detroit Audubon. A special 'thank you' to all of the organizations and people who donated items and to all those who purchased them.

After lunch, Joe and Barb Rogers from the Wildlife Recovery Association had people running for their cameras. They brought out a wide variety of live, flapping, hooting, amazing birds of prey from their center. People were in awe of the beautiful Great Horned Owl, American Kestrels, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Turkey Vulture, Saw-whet Owl, Screech Owl and a beautiful white puff ball which was Joe's pet chicken. Joe Roger's presentations are

well known at many schools and nature centers around the state. They have been presenting their birds of prey programs since 1976. Joe and Barb have also worked on many research, rehabilitation and educational programs, including the Peregrine Project. They are a non-profit organization, so check out their website to donate or become a member to their worthy cause. www.wildliferecovery.org

Our last speaker was Allen Chartier, project director for the Great Lakes HummerNet which studies hummingbirds. Allen gave a talk on digiscoping and bird-nature photography. Allen showed the group how to hook a camera to their telescope

and how to take a photo from their cell phone through binoculars or a scope. Allen also made reference to the website of digiscoper and Michigan photographer, Jerry Jourdan, jerryjourdan.blogspot.com, which gives many tips and references to camera equipment and the cost of nature photography.

Allen has been a long time birder, bander, traveler and speaker. He has co-authored several books and publications. Check out his personal website at mihummingbirdguy.blogspot.com to learn about his birding travels and the hummingbird research.

Thank you again to all who participated in our annual conference.

A PILE OF COOTS

By Leonard Weber

January 30, 2008

The temperature this morning was about 10 degrees Fahrenheit. With a strong westerly wind, the wind chill temperature was somewhere in the neighborhood of minus 10. While that is a pretty cold neighborhood to visit, I had a little time set aside for birding and did not want the weather to stop me.

I had planned to go to Lake Erie Metro Park this morning, mostly because I wanted to look for the Long-eared Owls that have been wintering there. Like many other South Eastern Michigan birders, I have come to know LEMP as a very good spot for winter birding. It might be brutal to stand on the shore in this weather, so I probably wouldn't do much waterfowl viewing today, but at least I could look for the owls in their sheltered roosts. Dressed in several layers, I headed for L75.

When I arrived at LEMP, I parked so that I could keep the wind on my back as I walked to the spot where I had seen a Long-eared Owl in December. There were three together this time, two on one limb and the other a couple feet higher. As seeing Long-eared Owls is not a common experience for me, today had already turned out to be a good birding day. The Long-eareds were doing as I was doing – they had their backs to the wind. Only one turned its head briefly to watch me watching them.

Soon I walked on, wondering if I would see much bird activity at all, since seeking shelter is what this kind of day is all about. In the protected areas, a limited number of song birds were foraging – Black-capped Chickadees, Cardinals, White-throated Sparrows, Mourning Doves, and American Tree Sparrows. The only small birds I saw out in the open area, where the wind was whistling, were Tree Sparrows. I decided that they are truly winter birds.

As I walked along the shore, still with the wind to my back as much as possible, I began to see what looked like an extensive pile of dark rocks where the shore ice and open water met. A closer, binocular-aided, look revealed that the "rocks" were coots cuddled tightly together. Though I had not seen such coot cuddling before, it seemed to make a lot of sense to me today. I just hope that those on the outside, especially the ones taking the wind on the west side, were able to change places with ones on the inside at some point.

There were also a dozen or more swans scattered on the ice looking more like snow piles – or corpses – than like rocks. Each one was cuddling itself, no group hug here. Like the coots, they moved not at all. I presumed that they were Mute Swans because I was unable to see their heads that were tucked out of sight in their wings.

As I was about to move on, I saw a Bald Eagle come swooping down toward the water. Neither the coots nor the swans reacted at all, exhibiting none of the moves

that they usually make when an eagle approaches. They simply stayed in their warm formations. Temperature changes behavior. The eagle flew on.

When I saw a Golden-crowned Kinglet, foraging in its typical energetic behavior, I remembered reading about a naturalist in Maine who had done some research on Golden-crowned Kinglets in winter. He found that several kinglets roost tightly together at night to survive the cold. So I looked for others and was pleased to find them. A kinglet needs companions on a day like this, just as coots do.

I started back to the car. Without anyone to cuddle with out in the open, I decided it was time to seek shelter. As I walked back along the shoreline, several Great Blue Herons flew overhead. A few years ago, I would have been very surprised to see them at this time of the year, thinking that they always went south in the winter. Though I have since learned that some will stay in southern Michigan if they find open water, I have never seen them on this cold of a day. They were flying south along the shore, so maybe they were heading a bit south after all. But seeing them out and about on a day like this convinced me that they are real winter birds.

I started out this morning looking for Long-eared Owls. It was great to find them, but what made today a memorable birding day, was the opportunity to gain a little better understanding of the ways birds survive bone-chilling weather.

NETTIEBAY LODGE

Birding Workshops with Jeff Buecking

2009

May 15th - 17th

May 19th - 21st

May 22nd - 24th

\$250 Per Person
includes
Lodging and Meals



Contact
NettieBay Lodge
or check our
website for
further
information.

www.NettieBay.com

9011 W638 Hwy - Hawks, MI

(989)734-4688



*Detroit Audubon Society
26080 Berg Rd
Southfield, MI 48033*