



www.detroitaudubon.org

# Flyway

## Spring 2013

Volume 2013, Issue 2

### **DAS ENDORSES “KEEP MICHIGAN WOLVES PROTECTED” CAMPAIGN**

The Detroit Audubon Society Board of Directors has endorsed the “Keep Michigan Wolves Protected” Campaign opposing legalized game hunting of Gray Wolves in Michigan. The Gray Wolf was delisted as an endangered species a year ago. Although there was supposed to be a two-year study period before any further action concerning its status was taken, the state legislature—without any public hearing or discussion—passed legislation during its lame-duck session in December making the Gray Wolf a game species. There are approximately 670 Gray Wolves in the Upper Peninsula.

Dr. Rolf Peterson, the professor at Michigan Technological University who for years ran the wolf and moose predator-prey study on Isle Royale, has voiced opposition to making the wolf a game species. So has his successor, Dr. John Vucetich. Although the bill says that its purpose is to control wolves that are creating problems for people, pets, or livestock, current law already allows the taking of problem wolves, so this new legislation was not needed. Furthermore, hunting will allow the killing of *any* wolf, whether it is a “problem” or not. Proponents also justified the legislation because of the purported need to control and manage the wolf population in the mistaken view that wolves are somehow a threat to the survival of game species like White-tailed Deer and Moose. However, research has shown that predator populations regulate themselves naturally, increasing when there is more prey (more food) available and declining during downturns in the prey population.

DAS board member Dr. James N. Bull has been appointed to the campaign steering committee. He participated in a press conference at the state capitol to launch this campaign on January 22, 2013 (see photo on page 8). A press release from the news conference and a fact sheet about the rationale for keeping the wolf protected are posted separately on the Detroit Audubon website ([www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org)).

Petitions are available at the Detroit Audubon office. **We have only until March 26 to gather the 161,000 signatures needed** to place a referendum to repeal the law on the November 2014 ballot. The campaign's goal is to collect at least 225,000 signatures. If enough valid signatures are submitted, the law allowing wolves to be hunted will be suspended until the election, when Michigan voters will decide the issue. We need your help. Please circulate petitions as soon as possible among your friends, family, and colleagues. And take them to public places if you can as well. Help keep Gray Wolves in our state protected.

### **A GREAT OPPORTUNITY**

for a Southeast Michigan teen with a passion for learning about birds

The Detroit Audubon Society is offering a **Scholarship** for one young birder to attend the National Audubon Society program “Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens” **June 23-28, 2013, Hog Island, Maine**

#### **The program**

This is a 6-day, 5-night program on Hog Island with expert birders and ornithologists. There will be sessions on field identification, bird song recognition, and conservation practices. This program includes the opportunity to observe Audubon's seabird conservation field research in action and includes the rare opportunity to be on Eastern Egg Rock during the Atlantic Puffin breeding season.

#### **The participants**

This program is for teens 14 to 17 years old with a serious interest in birds. The group is limited to 16 participants. The program requires physical and emotional maturity.

#### **The scholarship**

Detroit Audubon Society will cover the program costs (housing, meals, instruction, and all boat trips) for the selected individual. The scholarship winner is expected to cover the cost of travel to and from Maine, if at all possible. Fundraising opportunities may be available to help defray travel costs in the event of financial need.

#### **Applications**

Detroit Audubon is accepting applications through April 2, 2013. A small number of finalists will be contacted for personal interviews. The scholarship winner will be selected by April 20. Applications should be submitted electronically to [daspres@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:daspres@detroitaudubon.org).

Applicants must be between 14 and 17 years of age (as of June 2013) and should submit the application form that is available for printout on the DAS website, [www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org). The form requests a short written statement describing the applicant's current bird-related activities and skills and a statement of his or her reasons for wanting to attend this program. In addition, the application form requests a statement of permission and support from the applicant's parent or guardian.

# Flyway

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Submission of original articles and artwork is welcomed. Send articles via email to [flyway\\_submissions@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:flyway_submissions@detroitaudubon.org).  
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## For the Latest News and Views from Detroit Audubon

be sure to frequently visit our website:  
[www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org)

### DAS 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.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Kathy Hofer

As the new president of Detroit Audubon Society, I struggled over whether to emphasize our Mission Statement in this first message to you, or to express my profound gratitude to DAS for opening new horizons to me and my husband, Curt, as birders. Upon review of the Mission Statement, which begins, "Our mission is to promote AWARENESS and protection of the environment through education," I realized that I can achieve both objectives.

Becoming involved with DAS was truly a life-changing experience. Curt and I have been amateur birders for years but, to be honest, we were rather naïve about birding in Michigan. Quite simply, we didn't know where and when to look for birds other than those already familiar to us. All of that changed after we joined DAS and started to go on field trips. We met other birders, we met birding experts at the DAS annual symposiums, and we were pointed to various list-serves in Michigan that alert birders to interesting sightings. We learned about *A Birder's Guide to Michigan* by Allen Chartier and Jerry Ziarno (an unsurpassed reference guide) and were introduced to the incredible Internet tool developed by Cornell University known as "e-bird."

The field trips we've participated in over the past few years have been so rewarding. We have not only identified many new life birds and made many new friends, we have also visited several new places and revisited others that we had not enjoyed for years. We had not realized the wealth of opportunity we have here in Southeastern Michigan for birding, at very little cost. We've become AWARE of what's available to us! I'd like to name just a few locations that we've recently come to know and love:

- (1) Belle Isle is a wonderful place to bird, especially in fall, winter, and spring. DAS normally offers one or two field trips per year to Belle Isle.
- (2) The Huron-Clinton Metroparks are awesome and quite a bargain for a \$25 annual fee that allows unlimited access to 13 well-maintained Metroparks across Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, and Washtenaw counties. The May 5th DAS field trip to Lake St. Clair Metropark is already on our schedule.
- (3) Pointe Mouillee is a gem that Curt and I had not experienced before joining DAS. Shorebirds, including rarities, are typically seen in late summer. The DAS field trip scheduled in August each year is particularly appealing because a limited number of authorized vehicles are permitted along the miles of dikes that otherwise must be travelled by foot or bike. Sign up early for that wonderful trip, as space is limited.
- (4) State parks, recreation, and game areas are fantastic birding spots. An \$11 annual fee allows unlimited access to all of these areas. A favorite of ours since joining DAS is W.C. Wetzel State Recreation Area. The habitats are diverse, which means that waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as woodland, marsh, and grassland species, can all be found at this one location. The next DAS field trip to Wetzel is scheduled for May 4. Plan to join us, and you won't be disappointed.
- (5) Local parks and nature preserves are other resources we hadn't taken full advantage of before joining DAS. Eliza Howell Park in Detroit, Heritage Park in Farmington, Beaudette Park in Pontiac, Commerce Lake Nature Preserve in Southfield, Robert Long Park in Commerce Township, and many others all offer great opportunities for birding or just getting out there and enjoying nature.

*continued on Page 4*



# THINK SPRING! THINK NATURE! GET-AWAY UP NORTH MAY 24-27, 2013

Great news! The Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center is going to be open at least one more season, so we will be going back this year to continue our Memorial Day Weekend tradition.

Join us on the Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away, Friday May 24—Monday May 27. It all happens at Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, located a few miles north of Hale, Michigan, about a three-hour drive from the Detroit area. The center overlooks picturesque Loon Lake and is set in the beautiful Michigan north woods—the only state nature preserve on private land. Here your lullaby will be the eerie plaintive song of the Common Loon, the hoots of Barred Owls, and the songs of calling frogs. Trillium, Yellow Lady-slippers, and Columbine greet you all along the trails and around the cabins. You may see nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers, Pileated Woodpeckers, Common Loons, and Bald Eagles. Fox kits have often been seen playing near their den along the road or one of the many trails. A Phoebe dependably nests right under the eaves of the dining hall.

You might want to try canoeing or the camp's challenge course or just relax on a bench overlooking the lake and enjoy the sunset. You can visit the Roberts' Nature Center to learn about this fascinating place and its inhabitants and view exhibits and hand-carved birds made by Homer and Dot Roberts, longtime leaders of Detroit Audubon. One night we'll have a campfire, sing songs, and feast on s'mores. We'll have a guest speaker the other night on a natural history topic, and there will be an owl prowling, for those who give a hoot! (We usually hear and see Barred Owls incensed at intruders invading their territory—or so they think.) Last year we also went "Railing" and found several Sora and Virginia Rails along the wetland boardwalk at the camp. And of course, hearty meals will be served.

We also offer field trips to some of the best birding and scenic places in northern lower Michigan, including Tawas Point State Park; the Kirtland's Warbler breeding area; Iargo Springs, Lumberman's Monument, and other Au Sable River overlooks; and the Rifle River State Recreation Area.

### Fees for 2013:

#### With Lodging at the Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center

Adult (6th grade up)	\$198
Child (K-5th grade)	\$174

#### Day-Use (for those not lodging at the Center)

Adult (6th grade up)	\$170
Child (K-5th grade)	\$145

To register, download the registration form available on the DAS website, [www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org), or call (248) 354-5804 to request that a form be mailed to you. Questions about the Nature Get-Away can be directed to Jim Bull at (313) 928-2950 or [jamesbull22@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesbull22@yahoo.com).

Once again this may be the last time Detroit Audubon Society is able to offer this opportunity. By next year the Retreat Center may finally be sold. Don't miss this chance to experience this 30-plus-year Detroit Audubon tradition. And if the center remains a camp, you'll want to make this *your* annual tradition too. It just doesn't get any better!

## BIRDATHON 2013

The annual Detroit Audubon Society Birdathon will be held in 2013 from **May 4 to May 26**. While enjoying a day in the field at the peak time of the spring migration, Birdathon participants raise money in support of Detroit Audubon Society's efforts to protect wild birds and their habitats and to promote nature experiences and education.

- Each team is asked to select any date between May 4 and May 26 for their birding day and to choose any location(s) in **Southeast Michigan**.
- In advance of the birding date, all team members seek pledges from sponsors.
- Sponsors can make a flat donation or pledge an amount per species seen.
- In Birdathon 2011, one team recorded 111 species. For those who like competition, that is the number to try to beat.
- As in previous years, individuals of all skill levels are invited to organize teams or to volunteer to participate on a team.
- Team leaders are asked to register their teams by May 1.

To indicate a desire to participate or to register a team, please contact [daspres@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:daspres@detroitaudubon.org) or the Detroit Audubon office at (248) 354-5804 or at [detas@bignet.net](mailto:detas@bignet.net).

For more complete information on Birdathon guidelines, visit the Detroit Audubon website, <http://www.detroitaudubon.org>.

## ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD APRIL 14

Join us for the Detroit Audubon Society Annual Meeting, which will be held on Sunday, April 14, beginning at 2 p.m. at the charming and historic Spicer House, located within Heritage Park in Farmington Hills, Michigan. Heritage Park is located on the west side of Farmington Road, between Ten and Eleven Mile Roads.

The Annual Report to Members regarding the state of DAS will be presented along with a discussion of future plans. The meeting will be followed by a guided BIRD WALK through Heritage Park.

Light refreshments will be provided, and the courtesy of a reply regarding your attendance will be appreciated. Please respond (no later than April 2) by telephone to the DAS office, (248) 354-5804, or send an email to us at [detas@bignet.net](mailto:detas@bignet.net).

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS AVAILABLE

The results of the 2012 Rockwood and Detroit Christmas Bird Counts are tabulated and available on the DAS website, [www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org). Click on the "Citizen Research" tab and then select "Christmas Bird Counts."

- (6) Specialty trips offered by DAS target specific birds: Owls in fall/winter/spring, and American Woodcock in spring. These trips in particular are child-friendly and lots of fun. Please check the DAS Field Trip schedule for the next opportunities.
- (7) Weekend trips – The annual Memorial Day Weekend gathering at Loon Lake (near Tawas) is a spring migration extravaganza. More details can be found elsewhere in this issue. Lots of birds and loads of fun!

Curt and I hope to meet many more DAS members on upcoming field trips. Other than the weekend outings, field trips are FREE, aside from park entry fees. You'll be delighted by the birds you will see and enriched by the knowledge you gain. The skilled and informative guides who volunteer their time to lead us and educate us on bird walks are to be commended. The birds, and the camaraderie of the birding community, keep us coming back for more.

Curt and I have gained a much greater awareness of the resources that we enjoy here in Michigan, and a further appreciation of the need to do all that we can to protect these precious resources. Other articles in this issue of the *Flyway* and on the website, [www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org), provide more information about how DAS is contributing to protection efforts and how you can help, though donations and/or by volunteering your time. Please visit the website for the most current information on issues we're involved with, as well as information and updates on upcoming field trips. Hope to see you soon!

## DAS SPRING CAMPOUT AT POINT PELEE

Enjoy three nights of camping, waking up to the morning chorus of spring migrants, and great camaraderie at the annual DAS Spring Campout, May 16–19, 2013, at the group campground of Pt. Pelee National Park, Leamington, Ontario. Campground amenities include running water, flush toilets, a covered eating shelter, and a large fire pit for evening bonfires (wood included). Cost is \$18 per night per camper (tents only). There is a two-night minimum. Please send your reservation, including names of all campers and your address and phone number, to Michael Fitzpatrick, 56 Hubbard St., Mount Clemens, MI 48043. Make your check out to Michael Fitzpatrick. You will be sent a confirmation of your reservation.

## THE FLYWAY HAS GONE GREEN!

As announced previously, **beginning with this issue of the *Flyway*, only one issue will be printed and mailed annually (in March).** If you've not already provided your email address to DAS, please do so! You don't want to miss notification of subsequent issues that will be available only on the website!

Please send an email to the DAS office at [detas@bignet.net](mailto:detas@bignet.net) or call the office at (248) 354-5804 to provide us with your email address. Rest assured that DAS will not share or sell your email address to any other person or organization.

## A TOWERING VICTORY FOR MIGRATING BIRDS

Thanks to more than a decade of persistent advocacy work led by ABC, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has announced it will provide new lighting standards for communication towers and other tall structures that will have an immediate and lasting benefit for birds, particularly night-migrating songbirds.

According to a recent study by Travis Longcore, Associate Professor at the University of Southern California Spatial Sciences Institute, collisions with tall towers—some of which can reach heights of 2,000 feet—result in some seven million bird deaths annually in the United States alone. Night-migrating songbirds navigating by the stars are drawn to lights on the tops and down the sides of towers over 199 feet tall that are mandated by the FAA for aircraft safety. Confused by the lights and trapped in their glow, the birds collide with the structure, each other, or the ground, or circle until they drop from exhaustion.

Research has shown that flashing lights are far less likely to result in bird deaths, but until now, the FAA has required steady-burning or slow-pulsing red side-marker lights on towers, which are particularly deadly.

In 2007, ABC led a coalition of environmental organizations to request an FAA study of tower lighting schemes. The FAA agreed, and in 2009, the FAA Airport Technology Research and Development Team began a series of flight evaluations examining the impact on tower visibility to pilots of three lighting variations: flashing the normally steady-burning side-marker lights in sync with the flashing lights on top of the tower; omitting the red side-marker lights altogether; and employing new lighting technologies, such as LED, instead of conventional, incandescent lights. . . .

Based on the results of this research, the FAA proposes to make specific changes to its Obstruction Lighting Standards, including a proposal to omit or flash steady-burning red lights from several obstruction lighting configurations.

"This FAA study offers a solution to reduce bird mortality at towers, and as such, provides a major step forward for the conservation of our declining songbirds," said Darin Schroeder, Vice President for Conservation Advocacy for American Bird Conservancy.

This victory comes on the heels of a recent interim decision by the FCC to enable a greater level of public input and review for new tower applications.

*[This update is excerpted from an article that originally appeared in the American Bird Conservancy's June 2012 Bird Calls newsletter. It is printed with permission.]*

# DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY 2013 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

DAS field trips offer fantastic year-round birding opportunities. We visit renowned hotspots in Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario during songbird, shorebird, and raptor migration seasons. Other trips focus on the many interesting resident species in our area. All trips are free (although some parks we visit have entrance fees), and everyone is welcome, especially beginning birders.

Please call the Detroit Audubon office at (248) 354-5804 by the Thursday before each field trip so that we'll know how many to expect and so we can contact you about any changes. Leave your name, address (helpful in hooking up folks for carpooling), number coming, phone number, and email address. If you are interested in carpooling or giving folks a ride, let us know.

Please tear out this page for future reference. The field trip schedule is also published on the Detroit Audubon website ([www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org)).

## Woodcock Watch - Oakwoods Metropark

**April 5, 2013 (Friday) 7:45 p.m.**

Leaders: Kevin Arnold and Jim Bull

Right at dusk this sandpiper with a long beak and huge comical eyes comes to open areas to do its spectacular aerial courtship display. This program is especially good for families with children. We will meet at the Oakwoods Nature Center.

**Address:** 32911 E. Willow Rd., New Boston, MI 48164.

**Directions:** From I-75, exit at West Road and go west. Go south on Telegraph (M-24), west on Van Horn (which becomes Huron River Drive), then west (left) on East Willow to the park entrance. Metropark entrance fee or sticker required.

## Frog Symphony - West Bloomfield Nature Preserve

**April 12, 2013 (Friday) 7:30 p.m.**

Leaders: Sally Petrella (Friends of the Rouge) and Jim Bull

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

**Address:** 4655 Arrowhead Rd., West Bloomfield, MI 48323.

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

## Spring migrants - Magee Marsh, Ohio

**April 20, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.**

Leader: Richard Quick

We will get the early spring migrants without the crowds at this famous birding locale.

**Address:** Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, 13229 W. State Rte 2, Oak Harbor, OH 43449.

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

## Spring migrants - Point Pelee, Ontario

**April 27, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.**

Leader: Richard Quick

Pelee in the spring! It does not get better for a birder. This year we are going for the heavy spring migration, including shorebirds in the Hillman Marsh area north of the park.

**Address:** 1118 Point Pelee Drive, Leamington, Ontario, CA

**Directions:** Cross the Ambassador Bridge and follow the signs for Highway #3. You will be on Huron Church Road, which is also Highway #3. Follow Highway #3 for approximately 35-45 minutes. There are two exits for Leamington. Take the second exit for Erie Street. Turn right onto Erie Street and travel through eight stop light intersections. At the ninth intersection (Erie St. and Seacliff Dr./County Road 20), turn left. Drive approximately 1/2 mile, and you will see a large Point Pelee National Park sign indicating a right turn. After making the right turn on Bevel Line, follow this road for approximately 10 minutes to arrive at the front gates of the park. Entrance fee required: about \$8/person. Meet in the visitor center parking area. Remember to bring passport for entry into Canada and back into the U.S.

## Spring birds - W. C. Wetzel State Recreation Area, Macomb County, MI

**May 4, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.**

Leader: Richard Quick

This trip takes us to an area that provides a nice mixture of habitat. Breeding birds regularly observed include Sedge and Marsh Wrens, harriers, Forster's and Caspian Terns, and Clay-colored, Savannah, Song, and Grasshopper Sparrows. Other regulars include Bobolink, Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue-winged Warbler, Willow Flycatcher, Ruddy Duck, Redhead, and Pied-billed Grebe. This trip will require walking 3 to 4 miles on trails over several habitats and will last about 4 hours. Be prepared for wet trails.

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

## Spring passerines - Lake St. Clair Metropark (formerly Metro Beach Metropark)

**May 5, 2013 (Sunday) 8 a.m.**

Leader: Joanna Pease

Lake St. Clair Metropark is a justly famous migrant trap. We will see a good number of warblers as well as many other nesting and migrant birds.

**Address:** 31300 Metropolitan Parkway, Harrison Township, MI 48045.

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

## Spring birds - Humbug Marsh

May 19, 2013 (Sunday) 2–4 p.m.

Leader: Jim Bull

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

**Address:** 5437 West Jefferson Avenue, Trenton, MI.

**Directions:** Take I-75 to Gibraltar Road. Go east toward Gibraltar, turn left on Jefferson and drive north. You will see the sign for the Humbug Unit on your right. Go past that sign until you come to the sign for the Detroit International Refuge Gateway. Turn right, go through the gate, and park in the designated area. Meet in the parking lot.

## Detroit Audubon Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away

May 24–27, 2013 (Friday thru Monday)

Don't miss this weekend with wonderful people and fine birds at the Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, where we have held this event for the past 30 years. As always, there will be great food, music, educational programs, and children's activities—all amid beautiful surroundings. We will take off-site field trips to places of interest as well. See page 3 for 2013 rates and additional information. The registration form is available on the DAS website, [www.detroitaudubon.org](http://www.detroitaudubon.org).

## Breeding birds - Port Huron State Game Area

June 2, 2013 (Sunday) 7:30 a.m.

Leader: Joanna Pease

An exceptional diversity of breeding birds, especially warblers, may be found in this area, including Hooded Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, and Golden-winged Warbler. Insect repellent is advisable—no, mandatory. This trip will last 5 to 7 hours. Bring a lunch.

**Address:** 5080 Wildcat Rd, Clyde, MI.

**Directions:** 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. Turn right into Bill Bearss Memorial Park and park near the baseball diamond. We will try to caravan from there.

## Breeding and nesting birds - Eliza Howell Park

June 8, 2013 (Saturday) 9 a.m.

Leader: Leonard Weber

Join us for the second year of this trip to see over 30 species of songbirds that breed in Eliza Howell Park during the peak of the breeding season. We will look for nests of orioles, Eastern Bluebirds, Barn Swallows, and others. We can expect to watch birds feeding their young.

**Address:** 23751 Fenkell, Detroit.

**Directions:** Eliza Howell Park is located on Fenkell Road (Five Mile Road) in Detroit about one block east of Telegraph Road. Enter the park and drive about a half-mile around the road loop and park near the nature trail.



These Evening Grosbeaks were photographed at the Pinery Provincial Park during the DAS field trip to Point Edward and the Lake Huron Shore last November. *Photo by Pam Houston.*

## Fall 2013 Field Trip Schedule

Below is a summary of the Fall 2013 field trip schedule. Check the DAS website, <http://www.detroitaudubon.org>, for details and directions. Trip information will be posted later and current trips, as always, are displayed on the home page. You can also call the DAS office at (248) 354-5804 for further information.

### Pointe Mouillee

August 10, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Jim Fowler

### Point Pelee, Ontario

August 24, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Richard Quick

### Lake St. Clair Metropark (formerly Metro Beach Metropark)

September 8, 2013 (Sunday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Joanna Pease

### Lake Erie Metropark - Hawkfest (no bird hike)

September 21 and 22, 2013 (Saturday and Sunday)

All day: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Humbug Marsh and Lake Erie Metropark

October 12, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull

### Sandhill Crane migration stopover viewing at Haehnle Sanctuary

October 20, 2013 (Sunday) 2:30 for hike or 4:30 p.m. to observe from hill only

Leader: Jim Bull

### Point Edward and Lake Huron Shore, Ontario

November 2, 2013 (Saturday) 8 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull

### Belle Isle, Detroit

November 10, 2013 (Sunday) at 9 a.m.

Leaders: Steve Santner and Fred Charbonneau

### Owl Prowl - Oakwoods Metropark

November 15, 2013 (Friday) 7 p.m.

Leaders: Kevin Arnold and Jim Bull

### Ontario and Niagara River Trip

November 29–December 1, 2013 (Friday–Sunday)

Leaders: Alan Wormington and Karl Overman

### Detroit Christmas Bird Count

December 15, 2013 (Sunday)

Coordinator: Tim Nowiki

### Rockwood Christmas Bird Count

December 21, 2013 (Saturday)

Coordinator: Jim Bull

# MICHIGAN BIRDBRAINS

by Donna Posont

*Detroit Audubon Society note: In August 2012 I had the opportunity to participate, as the one sighted person, in a "bird hearing" walk with a group of youth at a nature camp sponsored by Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind. It was a fascinating experience, and I invited the group's leader and OUB's naturalist, Donna Posont, to write something to inform DAS members about the group. Donna is herself blind, a fact which provides an interesting perspective on the old phrase "the blind leading the blind."*  
—Leonard Weber

A group of blind and visually impaired youth has affectionately named themselves the "Michigan Birdbrains." What distinguishes us from other birders is that we learn to identify birds first of all by sound. As our experiences interacting with our feathered friends grow, we learn other identification clues, such as habitat, season, and geographic location.

While enjoying environmental encounters we have gained confidence in our orientation and mobility skills. Without even realizing it, as we travel the trails listening for birds, we are improving in abilities to navigate new territory as blind people. This new confidence leads to greater independence and an improved sense of self worth. In a visual world it is refreshing to be one who recognizes and finds something first by sound. The approach of "birding by ear" brings realization for participants that they can compete in a sighted world by the use of other senses. While putting all our clues together with auditory information, we have learned to identify many birds of Michigan and added many new species to our life lists.

In 2013 we will be holding Birding by Ear classes in Dearborn on the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m.–noon at the U-M Dearborn Environmental Interpretive Center. On the second Saturday of each month we will be meeting for a new Birding by Ear class at Woldumar Nature Center southwest of Lansing. Also, we will be holding some birding activities in the Ann Arbor area. We will once again be participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Our Spring Birding weekend is scheduled for April 26-28 at Camp Tuhsmehta. While we are reinforcing our knowledge of bird songs and calls, we will also gain knowledge of nesting, feeding, and migratory habits of the birds returning to Camp Tuhsmehta for their season of raising young.

If you would like more information about the activities of the Michigan Birdbrains, please contact Donna at (313) 220-8140 or at [Donnabutterfly50@gmail.com](mailto:Donnabutterfly50@gmail.com)

# BIRD SAFE SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR WINDOWS

If you're looking for a simple, effective, and affordable way to prevent birds from hitting your windows, there are now a number of options available. With so many options to choose from, we hope our readers will spread the word and make their homes safer for our avian neighbors.

## Acopian BirdSavers

The newest product, Acopian BirdSavers, also known as Zen Wind Curtains, uses nylon parachute cords hung 4 1/4 inches apart outside the glass. Field experiments "provide exceptionally strong quantitative evidence that BirdSavers are an effective means of transforming windows into obstacles that free-flying birds will see and avoid." To order the custom-designed BirdSavers, measure your windows, and visit [www.birdsavers.com](http://www.birdsavers.com). To build your own, follow the instructions on the website.

## Feather Friendly

Feather Friendly© Technologies has developed a do-it-yourself kit using the same bird-strike solution proven to work on their commercial applications. The film uses a marker-only application to the exterior surface of the glass. The kit is made up of 100-foot rolls of marker tape, two measuring strips, and installation instructions. Visit [www.featherfriendly.org](http://www.featherfriendly.org) for online instructions and pricing.

## ABC Bird Tape

Over the past few years the Rusinow Family Foundation, a charitable organization founded by Jeff Rusinow, has been funding bird conservation initiatives. Jeff, a life-long birder and board member of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) feels that the issue of birds hitting residential windows has been neglected by the birding community. With the Rusinow Family Foundation's generous support, a tape that prevents bird strikes has been developed. The ABC tape comes in 3-inch and 3/4-inch widths. Homeowners can create their own aesthetics as long as the tape is applied 2 inches apart horizontally or 4 inches apart vertically. The wider tape can be used to create squares or diamonds. A roll can cover 15 windows that are 24 x 32 inches. ABC is selling the product at cost. Visit their website at [www.abcbirdtape.org](http://www.abcbirdtape.org). Wild Birds Unlimited stores have also begun carrying it. Jeff feels there's a need for an inexpensive solution that will get public support. He is eager to distribute the tape through big-box and hardware stores.

[This article was derived, with thanks, from two articles published in the fall 2012 issue of Touching Down, the newsletter of the Fatal Light Awareness Program.]

## DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Thank You for your support!



Speakers at the January 22 press conference at the State Capitol in Lansing. From left: Wayne Pacelle, Humane Society of the United States; two members of the Native American community; Aaron Winters, Kalamazoo Humane Society; Dr. James Bull, Detroit Audubon Society; George F. (Frank) Schultz, Hunters to Keep Wolves Protected; Vicki Deisner, ASPCA; and Aaron Payment, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. *Photo by Julie Baker of "Keep the Wolf Protected."*

## HELP WANTED!

DAS is in immediate need of volunteers to produce the DAS newsletter. We're looking for someone with a bit of editing experience, willing to devote time to edit articles for the quarterly editions of the Flyway, as well as someone with experience in desktop publishing/design to create the newsletter's typeset pages. If you have an interest in either of these positions, please contact the DAS office by phone at (248) 354-5804, by email to [detas@bignet.net](mailto:detas@bignet.net), or [daspres@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:daspres@detroitaudubon.org). Thank You!



## DAS NOW ON FACEBOOK

In case you haven't noticed yet, the Detroit Audubon Society has a Facebook page! "Like" the Detroit Audubon Society Page (NOT GROUP), to get reminders of field trips as well as notifications of volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs, and workshops. Help spread the word about ways to support Detroit Audubon and its efforts to protect birds and the environment.