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Flyway

Summer 2008

Detroit Audubon Given Michigan Audubon Award

At the Michigan Audubon Annual Luncheon held on March 1st, The Detroit Audubon Society was given the Michigan Audubon Bird Conservation Award by President Jack Lapinski. DAS President Richard Quick, board member Fred Charbonneau and Safe Passage Committee member Doris Applebaum accepted the award on behalf of Detroit Audubon.

We are very grateful for this recognition of the Safe Passage Great Lakes program DAS has started in the Detroit area. We are also grateful for the tremendous support Michigan Audubon has given to Safe Passage Great Lakes. MAS has reached out to all of its chapters to work towards the goals of Safe Passage - reducing migrating bird mortality due to collisions with and effects of tall buildings - in the western and northern parts of the state.

DAS is collaborating with MAS on the Michigan IBA program as well. It is good to have our two Audubons working hand in hand. Thanks Michigan Audubon!

Safe Passage Great Lakes

The Safe Passage Great Lakes Program has been making steady, if slow progress over the Fall and Winter months. Among the highlights are the following:

Development of an attractive logo design, thanks to the efforts of Rosemarie Attilio, who also has designed and printed the first set of our Certificates of Recognition for the current Honor Roll. The awards have been framed and are ready for delivery as appropriate.

We now have an impressive display board thanks to the efforts of a number of committee members who assembled at the Charbonneau residence on a cold winter Sunday.

DAS was honored at the Michigan Audubon Annual Meeting in Lansing with an award in recognition of the Safe Passage effort. The award, a framed print of Caspian Terns, was presented to DAS President Richard Quick, who was accompanied by Safe Passage Committee Secretary Doris Applebaum, and Fred Charbonneau. Richard was also a member of a panel who addressed the issues of Environmental threats faced by birds and other wildlife.

The Michigan Audubon membership approved a resolution requesting the Governor and Legislature to enact legislation permanently designating the spring and fall migration dates as Safe Passage Great Lakes Days.

Rochelle Breitenbach, Safe Passage Committee Chair, made PowerPoint presentations to Southeast Michigan Sierra Club, a group of concerned

Oakland County leaders, and DTE employees at a special luncheon event. She also accompanied the display to a Clinton River Watershed Council event, and as a result, we hope to receive their endorsement.

Governor Jennifer Granholm has reissued her proclamation of Safe Passage Great Lakes Days for the third year.

Doris Applebaum, Fred Charbonneau, and Frank Zaski attended a hearing in Lansing on HR89, Rep. Lisa Wojno's resolution in support of Safe Passage. Rep. Rebekah Warren, Committee Chair, supported the resolution which passed by an 8-2 vote, with 5 abstentions. The Legislature recessed for the Easter Holiday. Hopefully it will have passed the resolution by the time you read this.

Jonathan Walton is leading the effort to produce a brochure for spreading the word about the Safe Passage program. DTE Energy has generously offered to underwrite the printing of ten thousand copies, a portion of which will be distributed to DTE employees.

DAS will have a Safe Passage display table at the annual BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association) Vendors Fair at no cost, thanks to BOMA Administration.

Doris Applebaum, Jonathan Walton and Frank Zaski attended an event in Monroe which attracted representatives of numerous environmental groups. They took the display and copies of some of our Safe Passage informational flyers. The display attracted a continuous stream of visitors and the flyers disappeared as fast as they were put out.

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Flyway

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Advertising rates are available by contacting the
DAS office.

Flyway Editor: Sue Beattie

Flyway Layout/Design: Don Tinson II

Our 'Oldest' Members Write About Their Membership

We received a couple of letters in response to the article in the Spring
FLYWAY about our longest continuous members. We would still like to
hear from those of you that have been with DAS for over 35 years.

Richard Nicholas wrote about his DAS membership.

"We got started when my best friend's wife, a kindergarten teacher,
talked us into going down to Rackham for the Audubon Nature
Programs. I'd guess we started around 1968 when my youngest
daughter was 9 (maybe sooner). Their 5 kids and our 4 trooped
down there for every program and enjoyed them immensely, until they
were discontinued.

Sadly, I am the only one who has become a dedicated birder,
although the others were all strongly influenced. Having started
way back, I've been able to attain a 525 bird life list. I've been
especially helped by the many Detroit Audubon field trips, with their
excellent volunteer leaders. Now that my serious hiking days are
over, birding is my favorite pastime. Thanks, Detroit Audubon."

Beverly Kirby sent in a copy of her 1971 National Audubon Society member card with her thoughts.

"...so if my card expired in 12/71, I guess I must have joined the
previous year when we lived in Royal Oak. My husband...was not
as crazy about birds as me, but through the years, he also became
involved. We also belong to the Straights Area Audubon Society and
the Michigan Audubon Society. I have done the winter feeder survey
for over 30 years... Birds are my passion, and we soon will be
leaving to bird the Texas coast... Then before you know it, May and
migration will be here, and we'll be off to Magee Marsh in Ohio. We
enjoy reading the FLYWAY. Keep up the good work."

For the Latest News and Views from Detroit Audubon

be sure to frequently visit our website:
detroitaudubon.org

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Rosemarie Attilio

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DAS WISH LIST

Desktop Copier Needed

Thanks to those who donated a typewriter recently. Of the 4
offered, we found one that fits our needs.

DAS is always grateful for gifts to the Society. Our current
need is for a copier we can use to produce copies for office
and Board needs. It should be in working order and have
a flatbed design so we can copy pages from books and
periodicals as well as single sheet documents. Speed is not very
important but it should be small enough for a desktop. Call the
office at 248 545-2929 to arrange delivery or pickup.

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President's Message

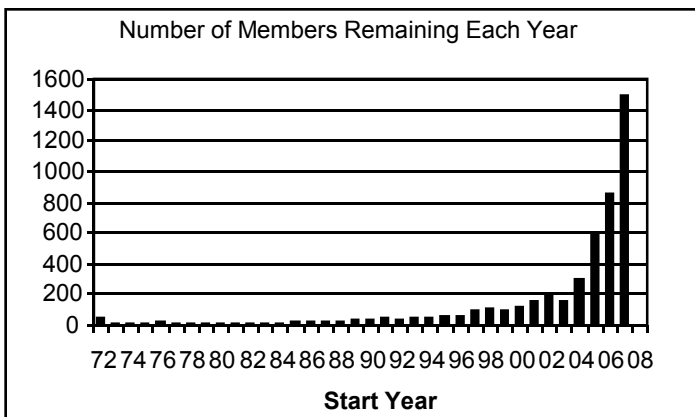
Why do our members disappear?

In the last issue I asked those 46 of you that date your National Audubon Society membership from or before 1972 to write us about your history with Audubon. We received two letters from two of our longest members. (See the separate item on Longest Members) Looking at our current membership list, updated from last issue, I wanted to see how long most new members remain as members. We do not have the number of members that joined for each year but I found that for the last ten years the "dropout rate" per year is very high. For example, for 2006, the most recent year we have data, the Joined and Remaining numbers are respectively 1261 and 852, a drop of over 32%! Looking at the data and chart, it would appear that that rate was similar for the last 10 years or more.

With 1491 new members in 2007, can we expect that to drop off by 32% each year in the future? It probably will if we don't do something to make this organization more attractive, enjoyable, relevant and fun for a broad range of people in Southeast Michigan.

Below is a table of the last 10 years and a graph of the Number of Members that have been continuous members since they joined National Audubon.

DAS Member Retention	
1998	104
1999	93
2000	118
2001	151
2002	202
2003	154
2004	297
2005	597
2006	852
2007	1491



We know that most of you joined as a result of a National Audubon Society mailing. You may not have even known about Detroit Audubon when you joined NAS. We want to hear from you about what you think we should be doing. We have important programs such as Safe Passage Great Lakes led by Fred Charbonneau and the Detroit River Important Bird Area project that Georgia Reid is leading. We have a great Field Trip program of over 20 local trips that Karl Overman and Jim Bull put together each year. We have our annual Nature Getaway that Rosemarie Atillio and Jim Bull run for us every Memorial Day and we have a very nice website that Chris Fielding keeps updated and fresh. And this publication, the *FLYWAY*, is published 4 times a year through the efforts of Rob Duchene, Sue Beattie and Don Tinson.

The letter from Richard Nicholas mentioned that his family started with Audubon at the Wildlife Film Series DAS sponsored for many years at Rackham Auditorium and later in Royal Oak. I suspect there were many new members from that same activity. Alas, the advent of "nature series" on TV led to the demise of the films back in the 80's. Since then, our membership involvement has been very low. Even the Annual Conferences we have held in recent years rarely draw over 200 people.

So we want to know why those of you from the new member classes of recent years do not stay over the years. What activities are you looking for? What projects would you support and give time to? At the very least, what activities and projects would you donate money for? Please give us your thoughts. We really want to hear from you.

Thanks for your interest.
Richard Quick
President

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" in the subject. We will confirm receiving it.

2007 Detroit Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count Summary

By Timothy Nowicki

December 16, 2007, the scheduled date for the DAS Christmas Bird Count, turned out to be one of the season's worst snow storms. Temperatures were in the teens and low twenties, wind was 15-25 mph and there were 10 inches of snow on the ground. As a result of these conditions, many of the count participants were unable to cover their territory. High vehicle clearance and four-wheel drive were very helpful when traveling. Seven of the 15 sections were counted. Despite the low number of sections participating, the number of individuals and species counted were not proportionately depressed. A total of 48 species were counted – count history average is 53. The total number of individuals counted was 4385 – count history average is 8389.

When scientists analyze data from surveys of this nature, aberrant data such as that collected on December 16, is taken into consideration. As long as it does not occur frequently, this minor blip in the data is not significant.

We would like to thank all the leaders and participants that either counted, or were willing to count, but Mother Nature prevented them from fulfilling their commitment.

The following are some observations relating to the count results.

- The most recent year with less than 332 Canada Geese was 1995 (154)
- The last year (0) Rock Doves were reported was 1973
- 1966 (79) was the last year fewer than 97 Mourning Doves were reported
- Despite the harsh conditions, Tufted Titmouse numbers were up from last year and have only been exceeded by the 1996 count – 282
- Nine Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen this year, only one off last year's count. This appeared to be an invasion year.
- Brown Creepers (65) is an all time high. Of the 65, 64 were seen in one section. The previous record was 47 in 1960.
- Only 7 counts in the history of the DAS-CBC have exceeded 350 Northern Cardinals – and only half the count sections were reporting this year.

Mute Swan	237	Red-bellied Woodpecker	32
Canada Goose	332	Hairy Woodpecker	14
Mallard	982	Downy Woodpecker	71
Am. Black Duck	11	woodpecker sp.	2
Ring-necked Duck	40	Blue Jay	86
Canvasback	14	Common Crow	80
Common Goldeneye	26	Black-capped Chickadee	396
Bufflehead	61	Tufted Titmouse	256
Hooded Merganser	4	White-breasted Nuthatch	67
Cooper's Hawk	6	Red-breasted Nuthatch	9
Red-tailed Hawk	8	Brown Creeper	65
hawk sp.	1	Carolina Wren	1
American Kestrel	1	American Robin	63
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	Hermit Thrush	1
Wild Turkey	12	Eastern Bluebird	42
Sandhill Crane	44	Cedar Waxwing	131
American Coot	8	Starling	97
Herring Gull	4	House Sparrow	199
Ring-billed Gull	56	Northern Cardinal	350
gull sp.	3	House Finch	61
Mourning Dove	97	American Goldfinch	120
Screech Owl	6	Dark-eyed Junco	170
Great Horned Owl	2	Am. Tree Sparrow	96
Barred Owl	1	White-throated Sparrow	10
Belted Kingfisher	1	Song Sparrow	3
Common Flicker	3		
		Total species	48
		Total individuals	4385

Our thanks to the following 2007 participants:

Jed Bromfield, Lee Burton, Diane Dugall, John Fedyk, Dan Frohardt-Lane, Chris Hull, Rich Jensen, Dorothy McLeer, Ken Mikols, Tim Nowicki

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.

FEATHERED TALES

By Bev Stevenson



On December 31st, **Anca Vlasopolos** saw several Common Redpolls at her finch feeder. Then on February 20th, she spotted a Red-Shouldered Hawk in her backyard on a silver maple tree. Anca lives in Grosse Pointe.

Michigan Important Bird Areas Program

By Caleb Putnam, Michigan IBA Coordinator

State IBA Criteria

The Michigan Important Bird Areas Program has entered an exciting new stage in its development. The primary focus for the next six to nine months is to define criteria for state level IBAs and to add to the total number of IBAs in the state, which currently stands at 22. The criteria are stepped down from the global and continental criteria and will be structured basically as follows:

1) State species of conservation concern. State threatened, endangered, and special concern species as well as those on the Audubon Watch list will each be given a threshold number for each season of occurrence in the state (breeding, migration, and winter), and any sites supporting the threshold number for any species may be named IBAs.

2) Regionally-restricted assemblages. This criterion attempts to define the top 10% of each habitat (forest, grassland, wetland, shrub/scrub) in each bioregion of the state as IBAs. Potential sites are those supporting unique bird assemblages (not single species) for which Michigan bears conservation responsibility because the species are regionally-limited.

High quality habitats are defined using a spatial analysis overseen by an ad-hoc subcommittee of state GAP analysis experts, biologists, and ornithologists appointed by the IBA Program coordinator. Michigan GAP models for each of the species in a specific habitat will be overlaid to look for areas of high species richness, habitat contiguity, habitat extent, and habitat fragmentation to help avoid missing areas not often birded or otherwise lacking in bird data.

3) Congregations. All significant concentrations of birds of all taxonomic groups, whether in breeding areas, migration stopovers, or winter grounds, will be captured by setting thresholds specific to each group and time of year. Shorebirds will receive a different threshold than waterfowl, while wading birds will receive a different threshold than raptors. Large single species concentrations will also be recognized.

Whitefish Point Receives IBA Recognition

On Saturday April 26, 2008, Whitefish Point was recognized as an Important Bird Area for its significant concentrations of migrant water birds. Huge numbers of Red-necked Grebes fly by the point into Whitefish Bay each fall, using the open waters of Lake Superior as a migration corridor during this part of their journey. This represents as much as 25-45% of the estimated North American population, a huge concentration by any measure. Other significant species include Common Tern, loons, waterfowl of many species, and Bonaparte's Gulls.

Conservation Activities at IBAs for 2008

IBA support groups are really taking hold at several IBAs, and we continue to increase the level of conservation at our IBAs. Caleb Putnam and Tom Funke (Michigan Audubon Society) have started

to engage the issue of wind power at the coastal Saginaw Bay IBA, at which a proposed wind development by DTE Energy is currently in the planning stage. Wind power presents a very real potential threat to many areas of Michigan, including the Keweenaw Peninsula and the Wyandotte area of the Detroit River, to mention just two. Audubon staff is working with government officials and wind energy representatives in helping set guidelines for successful monitoring of bird mortality at new wind farms. Michigan currently has only one active wind farm, the 32 turbine Harvest Wind farm near Pigeon in Huron County, which began producing electricity only in April. See the Michigan IBA blog (<http://michiganiba.blogspot.com>) for a report from this wind farm by Caleb Putnam.

Very exciting is the first annual Cerulean Warbler festival, which will celebrate the occurrence of the nation's fastest declining songbird at the Barry State Game Area/Yankee Springs Recreation Area/Perry Trust IBA. This event will be held on June 6-8, 2008 at Yankee Springs Recreation Area near Hastings, MI, and is being coordinated by Tom Funke. It will offer participants the opportunity to see the Cerulean Warbler on guided tours, as well as to contribute to the first systematic monitoring of the IBA for this and other species. More information is available at the Michigan Audubon website <http://www.michiganaudubon.org>

Another great event is the annual Tawas Point Birding Festival at the Tawas Point State Park IBA, on May 16-18, 2008. Participants can take part in guided tours of the point during the peak of spring migration, tours to see the endangered Kirtland's Warbler, and attend a variety of interesting wildlife-related talks highlighting this unique migrant trap. See the website for more information <http://www.tawasbirdfest.com>.

We hope to see you at these events this year, and we hope you'll continue to check the Michigan IBA Program website <http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/michigan/index.html> and blog for regular updates on all things IBA!

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Emergency Care for Birds

Have you ever found a bird that was injured or a baby bird that was obviously out of the nest too early? What do you do? As the nesting season passes, this will be something many of us will be asking. Below is a portion of a site for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about bird care. To find more, go to: <http://nature.gardenweb.com/forums/bird/bird911.html>

If you have already rescued a baby bird or injured bird, here's some information you need to know – NOW. When you've cared for the bird's immediate needs you be may want to continue reading this page at a more leisurely pace.

1. **Do NOT try to force food**, milk (they cannot tolerate it) or force water into the bird's beak, thinking that it will revive or strengthen a bird. You may cause more harm and possibly drown the bird because there is a direct route to the lungs at the back of its tongue. Some baby birds like Doves, Pigeons, Quail and Killdeer do not open their mouths wide to eat – they stick their beaks into the parent's beak and suck the regurgitated food, so there are different instructions for different birds. See <http://aztec.asu.edu/forthebirds/unfeth.html>

2. **Provide Warmth:** If returning the bird to the nest is NOT possible, it is imperative that you provide warmth for the baby bird. Young birds are vulnerable to chill and pneumonia. When you hold the baby bird in your hand, it should feel warmer than your hand. Warmth can be provided with a hot water bottle or heating pad turned on to low. Snuggle the bird in facial tissue directly against the source of warmth, but be sure it is not too hot!!! If you've rescued an injured bird, place it in a well-ventilated box, over a heating pad on low (or hot water bottle) in a dark, quiet place, away from household pets and noise. Sometimes, just allowing a few hours rest and recuperation is all that is required.

3. **Housing:** Make an artificial nest from a plastic berry box and use facial tissue for nest material. Do not use cloth, shredded paper, cotton or grass as these may result in injury. The legs of the baby are not strong enough to support it, so rest the baby bird in a semi-upright position so that the edges provide support for the body and head. Do not let the bird sprawl on the bottom of the nest. (If you know the location the bird was found, it is best to place it back in the same area so the parents will find it - they've been searching! Contrary to popular belief, parents will not reject the baby because you've touched it. You can use string or rope to secure the berry box to the limb of a tree or deep bush (a hidden location). Use only enough rope as necessary; do not leave any extra string dangling. Watch the nest constantly for at least two hours from as far away as possible to allow the parents to safely reconnect with the baby. The parents will show up for just a few seconds, feed it and take off until the next feeding. If you do not see this happening, continue to care for the bird until you find help.

4. **Contact your nearest Wildlife Rehabilitator:** When you find your local Rehabilitator from the link below, we suggest you make a hard-copy to keep for future emergencies.

5. **Wildlife Rehabilitators List (Worldwide):** <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~devo0028/contact.htm>

Volunteer for Work Days at DAS Sanctuary and State Parks

DAS St. Clair Woods Sanctuary

You can volunteer to help finish with the trail work we started last year at the Detroit Audubon St. Clair Woods Sanctuary. We will clear fallen trees and shrubs in the trail, repair and mark the trail and place logs and limbs along the trail. Of course we will look at the flowers and listen for birds while we are at it.

Dates: July 19th and August 9th.

Call the DAS office -248 354-4960 or email detas@bignet.net to say you are coming.

Michigan State Parks and Recreation Areas

Laurel Malvitz, volunteer coordinator in southeast Michigan, is working on a number of volunteer projects in the following State Parks and Recreation Areas: Waterloo RA (fen restoration), Pinckney RA (oak barrens, wet-mesic prairie and fen restorations, Brighton RA (dry sand prairie and fen restorations), Island Lake RA (oak barrens and fen restorations, Bald Mountain RA (fen restorations), Sterling SP (lakeplain prairie and Great Lake marsh restoration and Algonac SP (lakeplain prairie, lakeplain oak-openings, Great Lakes marsh restorations). Often we have volunteer opportunities to assist with piping plover protection.

Volunteer workdays are scheduled almost every Saturday and Sunday, and often during the week. With sufficient lead time, we will schedule volunteer events during the week for organizations and groups. With sufficient interest and commitment, perhaps Detroit Audubon could "adopt" a current or future restoration project. For more information go to <http://www.michigan.gov/dnrvolunteers> and click on the volunteer calendar. And tell them Detroit Audubon sent you.



Baltimore Oriole - Artist Edwin Leonard

DAS Field Trip Schedule

Memorial Weekend Nature Get-Away Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, Hale, MI May 23-26, 2008

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. Last year 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 area, Tawas Point and Tuttle Marsh. Visit the DAS website for more details.

Lapeer State Game Area May 31, 2008 (Saturday) 7:30 a.m.

Leader: Joanna Pease

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

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

Port Huron State Game Area June 7, 2008 (Saturday) 7:30 a.m.

Leader: Mike Mencotti

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

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

Bulgaria May 30-June 10, 2008

Leaders: Dimiter Georgiev and Karl Overman

Bulgaria is simply the best country in Europe for breeding birds. This small country has high mountains, steppe country, sea coast and fine marshes that attract many of the most spectacular birds of Europe as well as species that are difficult to get elsewhere. We will be guided by Dimiter Georgiev from Neophr on tours so we will have top-notch assistance in finding the key species in the country. We will start out in the mountains near the capital, Sofia, looking for birds like Nutcracker, Black Woodpecker and Ring Ouzel. We will proceed to the scenic Trigrad Gorge, arguably the best place in Europe for Wall Creeper. In the southern mountains of the country, raptors will take center stage, including Imperial Eagle, Levant's Sparrowhawk and Short-toed Eagle. We will visit a vulture feeding station to see Griffons, Black Vultures and Egyptian Vultures. There are also fine passerines to look for in the area including Isabeline Wheatear, Rock Nuthatch and Sombre Tit. Visits to wetlands along the Black Sea and Danube River should turn up Dalmatian Pelican, Eurasian White Pelican, Pygmy Cormorant, Ferruginous Duck and Paddyfield Warbler.

This is a 12 day/11 night trip from Sofia, Bulgaria. The cost is \$1500 which includes local transportation, food, guide service and lodging. There is a fee of \$165 for a single room supplement. A \$200 deposit is required.

DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY

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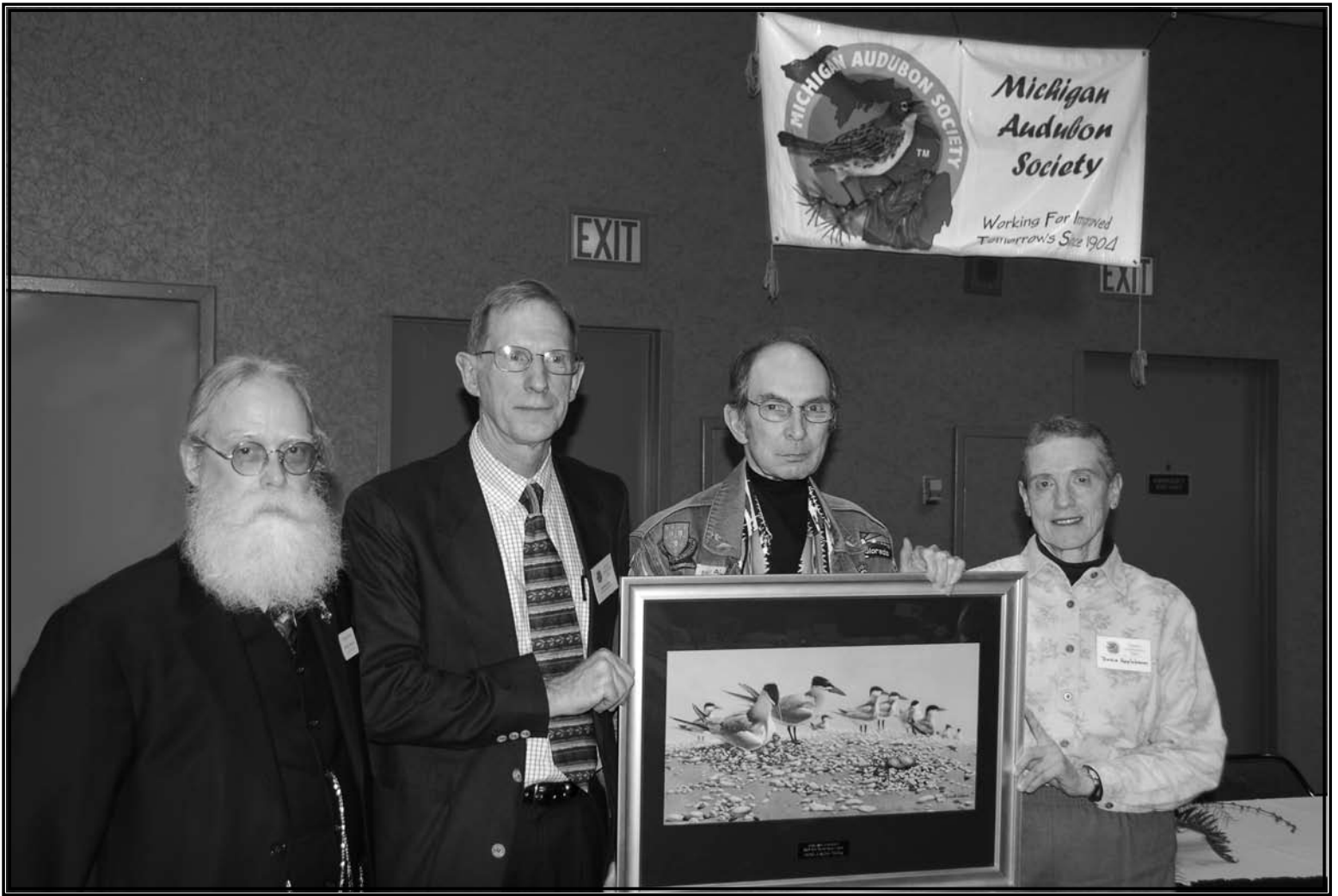
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MAS' Kieth Harrison presents the Michigan Audubon Bird Conservation Award to DAS President, Richard Quick and Safe Passage Great Lakes members Fred Charbonneau and Doris Applebaum.

- photo by Mike Boyce



Detroit Audubon Society
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