



## Young Birders Event:

*Meet Blue the Blue Jay and Hand-feed Birds at Kensington*

Detroit Audubon and Oakland Audubon are co-sponsoring a Young Birders' Hand-feeding at Kensington Metropark. Come enjoy refreshments and see wildlife up close in this special event Sunday, October 23rd at 1 PM.

The birds at Kensington have a unique behavior: they will land in your hand for a free meal! Black-capped Chickadees are intelligent and quick to adapt; they have been passing this behavior down for generations, along with other bird species like nuthatches and woodpeckers at Kensington. Park officials are aware and supportive of hand-feeding birds at Kensington; there are even dispensers for seeds. Detroit Audubon and Oakland Audubon will provide birdseed and share information on the natural history of the birds we will get to see eating out of our hands.

Along with hand-feeding the wild birds outside in the Metropark, we are happy to welcome a special guest that Young Birders can meet and learn more about: Blue the Blue Jay! He was rescued as a chick, and has since become a live educational ambassador.

Come out and enjoy the fall weather, along with complimentary refreshments! We will be serving apple cider and doughnuts for the people and seeds for the birds.

Detroit Audubon membership, though appreciated, is not required to attend this event—all interested youths are welcome!

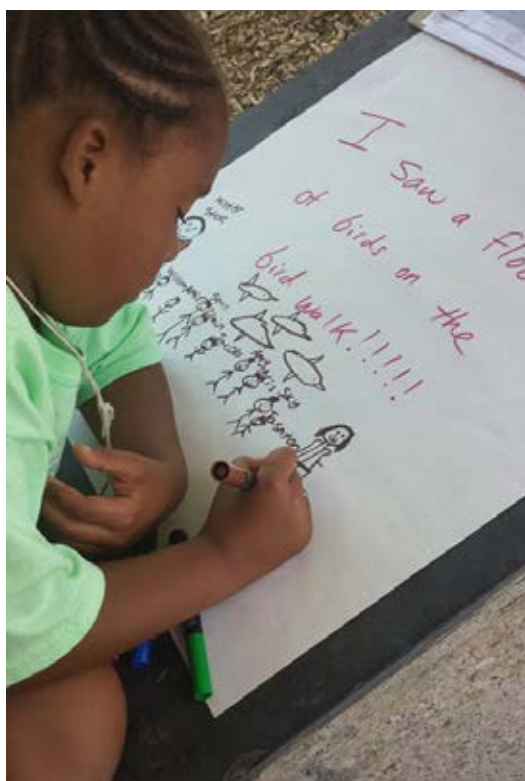


## Belle Isle Nature Zoo Summer Camp Wrap-up

*Story and Photos by Terra Weiland*

Every Wednesday during summer 2016, Detroit Audubon joined our friends and partners at the Belle Isle Nature Zoo for a bird day at the Summer Nature Camp! This weekly summer camp has an innovative curriculum designed to meet the social and developmental needs of young campers while giving them enriching experiences in nature. Students investigated the plants and wildlife on the island, while discovering how they can care for the natural world around them.

Belle Isle Nature Zoo Summer Nature Camp is divided into two age groups of students: The Grasshoppers at 5 to 7 years old, and the Dragonflies at 8 to 12 years old. Our Program Coordinator tailored our programming to best fit each age group's interests and needs. Our programming focused on mindfulness in nature; with every student group, we asked them to slow down and pay attention to the birds around them.



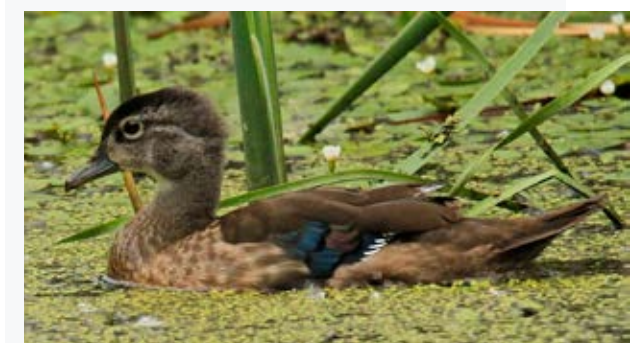
With the younger students, we went on a story walk and focused on listening and seeing birds on Belle Isle. We counted every bird we saw, and many students were surprised by how many birds were around! We actively listened to bird songs and calls, while physically pointing out where we heard the sounds coming from. As a group and individually, we created stories and art celebrating the birds we saw on our story walk.

With the older group, we were a group of young ornithologists learning how to use binoculars and field guides, how to identify a bird species, and about the Common Tern Colony on Belle Isle. We kept track of how many species we saw. Students even set up a trail camera, capturing images of the birds and other wildlife on Belle Isle, including a young Green Heron living near the Nature Zoo.

This was a wonderful summer, and we are already excited to be back again next summer!



Scopin' it out: kids in the Belle Isle Summer Nature Day Camp. Terra Weiland photo



## Mystery Bird

Can you identify this youngster photographed by Sharon Korte at Lale St. Clair Metropark? See the last page to check your answer.

**SATURDAY, NOV. 5 • DETROIT AUDUBON'S ANNUAL CONSERVATION CONFERENCE**  
**"DETROIT: TAKE A WALK ON ITS WILD SIDE"**  
**Plus Annual Conservationists of the Year Awards • See page 3**



# Flyway

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DETROIT  
AUDUBON

## BULLY PULPIT

by Detroit Audubon President, Dr. James N. (Jim) Bull



In early July I traveled up north to visit my friend Bruce Szczechowski at his cottage on Grand Lake, just north of Alpena. No sooner did I arrive and get settled than Bruce asked if I'd like to go to Munising the next day to look for the Crested Caracara. I had not heard about it, but immediately said, "Of course!" I do not often have the time, money or inclination to drive great distances to add another bird to my life list; but a bird from Texas, Florida, and south of the border on the shores of Lake Superior—that I couldn't resist! Sounded like fun.

On our way north around Rogers City on US-23, a wild Turkey came right out on the shoulder of the road to greet us. We pulled over, and that bird came up right next to the car, where Bruce got dozens of photos. We kept seeing birds from the car. When we got to Munising, we easily found a Caracara walking in the grass behind the fence of a paper mill right on the shores of Lake Superior near the mouth of the Anna River. When we came back after lunch, it was perched in a tree in the nearby boat launch park. What a thrill! It seemed unafraid of people and gave us really great views.

On the way back, we stopped a roadside pull-off overlooking part of Seney National Wildlife Refuge. There we found a family of Trumpeter Swans and a singing Pine Warbler in a Red Pine growing at the edge of the water. In the nearby teepee-like picnic shelter, we found a Phoebe nest with young. (Seemed kind of late for that.) Back in the Lower Peninsula on US-23, we came upon that same tom Turkey in the exact same spot where we left it hours before. But, the most spectacular event of the day was yet to come.

We decided to take the long way to his cottage on a road that went through a DNR Natural Area. As we rounded a curve on the dirt road, there in the middle of the road was a Merlin locked in combat with a Blue Jay, their beaks interlocked as well. I've heard Blue Jay calls of all sorts, but I have never heard anything like the blood-curdling death scream of this Blue Jay! Bruce quietly opened the door to get a better vantage point for a photo. The Merlin reacted quickly, turning to face us with its wings spread to almost hide the jay, as if to say, "This is mine!" This change of posture apparently gave the Blue Jay enough wiggle room to wrest itself away, and it flew to the side of the road, calling louder than ever. The Merlin, having lost its substantial prey (they were about the same size!) landed high up in a dead-looking tree, looking forlorn. What an amazing drama we had just beheld. We couldn't help but wonder what would have happened if these birds had been undisturbed by the opening car door. We will never see

anything like this again, I am sure.

How much more interesting and vital these bird sightings were that day than any TV show or video game. There is an amazing show going on all around us if we just tune in and take the time to listen and observe—experiences to tickle your imagination and fill you with awe.

Of course you don't have to go to Alpena or the UP to have this kind of experience. I was amazed at the variety of birds we saw on our field trip to Pointe Mouillee this year: several American White Pelicans, lots of Great Blue Heron, Great Egrets, and those wonderful Snowy Egrets with their striking yellow feet, as well as several Moorhens (Common Gallinules), Stilt Sandpiper and lots of other plovers and sandpipers, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, and the rare and beautiful Yellow-headed Blackbird! Although it is THE premier birding spot in SE Michigan, Pointe Mouillee isn't the easiest place to get to or travel through.

Even in the heart of Detroit, there is much to see. A case in point is Elmwood Cemetery, where we had a field trip in mid-July. I was really skeptical we'd see much of anything in midsummer, but boy, was I surprised. The very first bird we saw was a Great Blue Heron that flew in and perched low and close in a tree overhanging the pond. Then a female Belted Kingfisher flew in cackling and perched even closer so that all got a good view in my spotting scope, clearly seeing the extra rufous band that makes the female of this species more colorful than the male. We also had a pair of Red-tailed Hawks and a pair of Cooper's Hawks scolding us and coming quite close. We kept adding species after species. This place was just teeming with them. And it is near downtown Detroit. This amazing stuff is everywhere if we just take time to look.



Crested Caracara and (L) Wild Turkey.  
Bruce Szczechowski photos



That's why I think it is so powerful that our Program Coordinator Terra Weiland is opening the eyes of city children and adults almost every day, to the new joys of birding. We are not just helping them develop a nice hobby, or learn a few species names, or a lesson about ecology, although all are important; we are linking them to the beauty and drama of life itself, inoculating them from the vicissitudes of later life. As Rachel Carson once wrote, "Those who dwell, as scientists or laymen, among the beauties and the mysteries of the earth, are never alone or weary of life." Give yourself the gift of experiencing nature every day if you can. You'll feel so much better, your spirit will be uplifted, and you can't help but be thankful for, and then care for and protect, these wonderful places where birds and other wildlife abound.



## Conservation Committee:

### Bird Habitat Projects

*By Diane Cheklich*

Detroit Audubon's Conservation Committee has developed "A Guide to Bird-friendly Gardens" for those who are interested in helping birds through the gardens they plant. Gardens can be an important source of habitat for birds, providing food, water, and shelter. The guide recommends using plants native to Michigan, and it also provides tips on birdbaths, birdhouses, and even bird watching. The guide is free, and is available online at the Detroit Audubon website at [www.detroitaudubon.org/birdfriendlygardens](http://www.detroitaudubon.org/birdfriendlygardens).

The Conservation Committee also worked on expanding local habitat through a partnership with Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (UNI) in Detroit. UNI's Lisa Rodriguez, who is also on Detroit Audubon's Conservation Committee, was awarded a grant for resources to convert a vacant lot in Southwest Detroit to a native garden and grassland bird habitat. A team of community youth who were in a DNR-sponsored natural resources training program planted the native plants in the lot, which is located at the corner of Cahalan and Mullane. Detroit Audubon Conservation Committee member Rebecca Minardi gave a presentation to the youth about birds and climate change, and member Terra Weiland presented a demo on how to make birdhouses. The Conservation Committee hopes that the UNI lot project can be a model for how to convert other vacant lots around the city into productive bird habitats.

Detroit Audubon's Conservation Committee is planning more habitat-preservation projects in the future. If you're interested in joining us,

please send an email to committee chair Diane Cheklich at [dcheklich@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:dcheklich@detroitaudubon.org).

Start your day Nov. 5th at 8 a.m. with a bird walk led by Allen Chartier, author of *Birds of Detroit* and *Birder's Guide to Michigan*. Then head over to the Belle Isle Nature Zoo which is hosting and co-sponsoring this event, for a day-long excursion into Detroit's Wild Side. It's all free, except for lunch, which will be available for a small charge. We are working on providing an amazing lunch, mostly with food produced in Detroit. You will probably have to make a reservation in advance for this incredible meal.

Dr. Guy Williams, Executive Director of Detroiters Working For Environmental Justice, will be our Keynote speaker starting at 10 a.m. There will be presentations about Peregrine Falcons in Detroit (quite the soap opera); the Detroit comeback of Bald Eagles; a panel on the future of natural areas in Detroit; another panel on the importance and care of native grasslands, including a naturalist from Ojibway Prairie in Windsor; and a presentation by the Allen Park art teacher and elementary school students who created the first Sky Art in Michigan with their portrait of the Kirtland's Warbler. (See the Summer issue of the *Flyway* for an article about that amazing feat.) Young Birder and Teacher Scholarship recipients will also be on hand to tell us about their experiences at birding camps this summer and how you might win such a scholarship too. There will also be exhibits by many of the environmental groups with which we partner on a regular basis. The conference will end by 4 p.m. with an optional tour of the Birding Spot we helped develop at Gabriel Richard Park right across from Belle Isle, and a drop-in to see what birds are at Milliken State Park as well, but don't go too far away because we want you to...

...come back to join us for the evening for our Annual Conservation Awards Presentation and Gala Fund-raiser at the Rattlesnake Club right on the river at Stroh River Place. Some notable award winners will be speaking as well. You will not want to miss this annual conference, so put it on your calendar now! We'll keep you posted with details on our website and on Facebook.

## DETROIT AUDUBON'S ANNUAL CONSERVATION CONFERENCE

### "DETROIT: TAKE A WALK ON ITS WILD SIDE"

**SATURDAY, NOV. 5 • HOSTED AND CO-SPONSORED BY THE BELLE ISLE NATURE ZOO and Annual Conservationists of the Year Awards  
6 p.m. at the Rattlesnake Club**



Blue-Headed Grosbeak  
by Sharon Korte

#### TENTATIVE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

**8-9:30 AM BIRDING ON BELLE ISLE** *led by Allen Chartier*

**9:00 AM REGISTRATION BEGINS**

**10 AM WELCOME** *Jim Bull, President*

**10:05 AM KIRTLAND'S WARBLER SKY ART IN ALLEN PARK** *Lindemann Elementary School art teacher Rachel Tapiani, students and administrators*

**10:35 AM KEYNOTE SPEAKER** *Guy Williams, CEO, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice*

**11:15 AM PANEL ON GREENING OF DETROIT** *Representatives from Greening of Detroit, Detroit Future City, and (tentatively) City Planning Department*

**12:00 PEREGRINE FALCONS IN DETROIT AND SE MICHIGAN** *Barb Baldinger*

**12:30 PM LUNCH**

**1:00 PM DETROIT AUDUBON ANNUAL REPORT**

*Young Birder Scholarship Reports—Jared Zaporski and Corinn Jessen  
Teacher Scholarship Report—Zakiya Jackson*

**1:45 PM THE IMPORTANCE AND CARE OF NATIVE GRASSLANDS**

*Panel including Bob Grese, Landscape Architect,  
U of M School of Natural Resources and Environment*

**2:45 PM COMEBACK OF BALD EAGLES IN DETROIT**

*Chris Mensing, US Fish and Wildlife Service*

**3:30 PM CONFERENCE ENDS**

**OPTIONAL BIRDING AT END OF DAY: TOUR OF GABRIEL RICHARD, MILLIKEN STATE PARK, ELMWOOD** *Terra Weiland, Jim Bull*



Terra Weiland  
with other birders at  
Gabriel Richard Park.







## 2016 Young Birder's Scholarship Recipient

*Story and photos by Corrin Jessen*

*For a fourth year, Detroit Audubon offered a scholarship opportunity to a young birder aged 13-18 in southeast Michigan. This year's scholarship provided fully paid tuition, plus up to \$500 toward transportation costs to attend the American Birding Association's Camp Avocet, based at the University of Delaware's stunning Virden Retreat Center in historic Lewes, Delaware.*

I was very fortunate to be the recipient of the Detroit Audubon Society Young Birder's Scholarship in 2016. It provided me an all-expense-paid trip to Camp Avocet for one week. It was the highlight of my summer! My life list expanded greatly during the week that I was there. The Camp at the Virden Center in Lewis, Delaware, was supervised by the American Birding Association. ABA's Conservation & Community Director Bill Stewart and several other amazing staff members guided me and 23 other students during our week we there. They gave wonderful advice to help us be better birders.

Here's how an average day at Camp Avocet went: We woke up early (usually 5 or 6 AM). Breakfast and dinner were eaten at the Center, while we ate lunch out in the field, birding. The food served at the Center was phenomenal! Sometimes we went for special treats like ice cream. For field trips, we went to parks like Bombay Hook and Prime Hook, which offered wonderful sightings of birds.

Being out in the field was tough, since it was often hot and muggy, with plenty of mosquitoes; but all the birds we saw made it worth it! Campers got a great chance to see tons of birds, from shorebirds to passerines. I personally saw a lot of birds I have never seen before, especially shorebirds. They included Black-bellied Plover, Piping Plover, Semipalmated, Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Hudsonian Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, and many more.

We saw small groups of American Avocets, and colonies of Black Skimmers with chicks. American Oystercatchers were also near the Skimmers, with chicks of their own. Gulls included Laughing, Herring, Great Black-backed, and Lesser Black-backed. Lots of Terns were seen as well: Caspian, Common, Sandwich, Royal, Forsters, and Least. Some of the campers even got a glimpse of a Parasitic Jaeger from the ferry we were traveling on. Ducks included Mallard, American Black, Black Scoter, Wood Duck, and a few others. Of course, we sighted lots of Osprey, as well as a few Bald Eagles and your occasional Red-tailed and Coopers hawks. Juvenile and adult Clapper Rails were also seen.

Salt marshes held wonderful sightings of Seaside Sparrows, both juveniles and adults. In scrub and grassy habitats we saw a territorial Grasshopper Sparrow and, of course, a few Field Sparrows. We saw Baltimore and Orchard orioles; Summer Tanagers, Blue Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting. We had a wonderful sighting of a male Dickcissel, singing. We saw a few Warblers and Vireos: Pine Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and White-eyed and Red-eyed vireos. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo was a bird that we had

to hunt down, kind of like the Eastern Screech Owl. A pair of Barn Owls, flying briefly out of a barn, were sighted by a few of the campers.

All in all, we saw some pretty awesome birds and were given great advice by knowledgeable staff members. I will forever appreciate the experience and tips I gained from the staff. They weren't just guides; they were role models—people young birders can look up to.

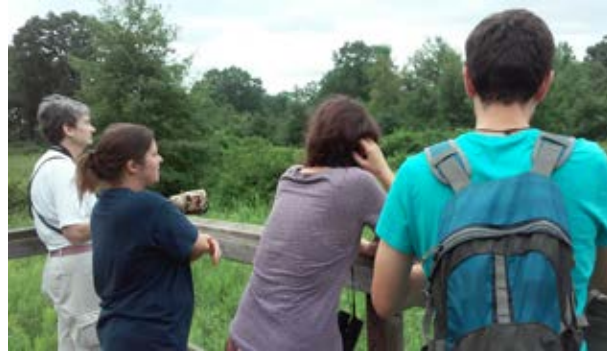
It was a great trip—something that I will never forget! I met some really cool people (staff and campers) and saw a lot of really cool birds all at the same time. How much better could it get?! I had a blast and would do it all over again in a heartbeat.





## Detroit Audubon: Birding All Summer, All Over, in 2016

(Below) Terra Weiland led the way, and Detroit Audubon provided binoculars and field guides, for several Pokémon-Go themed walks on Thursday and Friday, August 11 and 12. This was an excellent way to try out a new hobby! Jim Bull photo



Above, at Ojibway Prairie on Saturday, August 13th.  
Below: Oak Openings, Saturday, June 25th.



Above, Lark Sparrow at Oak Openings by Norka Saldana  
Below, Lesser Yellowlegs by Bruce Szczechowski



Pointe Mouillee provided wonderful birdwatching as usual on Saturday, August 6th. Jim Bull photo



Least Bittern at St. Clair Metropark  
by Sharon Korte





## Meet Ava Landgraf

Hi, Detroit Audubon! I'm Ava Landgraf. Thank you so much for welcoming me as a new member of the team. I have almost finished my undergraduate degree in environmental science at U of M. I decided to complete my last semester at Michigan through the Semester in Detroit program. With Semester in Detroit, I am taking two classes, but more importantly, working as an intern with Detroit Audubon.

I grew up always loving animals, but I hold a special appreciation and fondness for birds. This past summer, I worked with the Bird Center of Washtenaw County. There we provided rehabilitation for birds caught by cats, and birds that ran into windows, but mostly for orphaned baby birds. This experience was extremely rewarding and enjoyable. Taking care of the birds was not work—it was just doing what I loved.

Now, working with Detroit Audubon, I am pursuing my passions in a new way. Rather than working with birds on the small scale, through rehabilitation of individual birds, I will be working with whole populations of birds through conservation and education. I am so excited to contribute as much as I can to the goals of Detroit Audubon.



## Detroit Audubon Hires Erin Rowan as Office Administrator/Research Coordinator

At its September 13th board meeting, Detroit Audubon created the position of Office Administrator/Research Coordinator and agreed to hire Erin Rowan for that position. She has accepted and will start on October 4th.

You may know of Erin's work as our Black Tern Research Volunteer this past spring and summer (see article in this issue). She is extremely well-qualified, having worked as an office manager, as a supervisor of bird research and as a trainer of bird banders for the Institute for Bird Populations. She has banded over 3,700 songbirds, and now has experience with a good number of Black Terns too.

Erin has also worked for Klamath Bird Observatory and Yosemite National Park, and has banded birds in Saipan. At the Institute for Bird Populations she was Staff Biologist, which included coordinating their bird banding projects in the United States, Canada, and the Pacific Islands.

At Detroit Audubon she will continue her work with Black Terns as an employee, help coordinate the dead bird survey for our Safe Passage Great Lakes Program, help coordinate our many Citizen Science programs including two Christmas Bird Counts, Grassland Monitoring at Huron-Clinton Metroparks, monitoring with Greening of Detroit, and restarting our Chimney Swift Monitoring Program. She will also provide valuable help to our Program Coordinator Terra Weiland on office tasks—including establishing a volunteer database, managing membership and other databases, and helping us become a "best practice" office.

Erin will also do occasional public programs as she has done as a volunteer, and maybe even some grant-writing. This is a part-time position for now. If you want to volunteer to do bird monitoring, she would love to talk with you. You can reach Erin at the general Detroit Audubon office number: 313-960-3399.

## ANNUAL CONSERVATION AWARDS CEREMONY

### Including Award to Former State Representative Rashida Tlaib



When you attend the Annual Conference on November 5th, join us in the evening too, for our Annual Conservation Awards Presentation and Gala Fundraiser at the Rattlesnake Club right on the river at Stroh River Place.

Award winners include former State Representative Rashida Tlaib (shown at left); Erin Rowan, Randy Kling and Richard Quick for their yeoman volunteer work and long hours on our Black Tern Project; Wild Birds Unlimited of Grosse Pointe; and one more big surprise.

Put it on your calendar now! We'll keep you posted on details on our website and on Facebook!

## Detroit Audubon Board Urges "Yes" Vote on Regional Transit Plan

The Detroit area has long been plagued by poor public transportation, but Metro Detroit voters can soon vote on a new \$4.6 billion public transportation plan.

The Regional Transit Authority (RTA) board voted to allow a millage request for a regional mass transit proposal on the Nov. 8th ballot. This plan, agreed to by Macomb, Wayne, and Oakland counties, and the City of Detroit, should vastly improve regional transportation.

Someday folks may be able to get to some of our field trips by bus. We could see fewer cars on the road, less pollution, and more areas left natural rather than being turned into parking lots. The ballot proposal is just part of making Detroit Metro Areas an environmentally sustainable region.



Cedar Waxwings at Eliza Howell Park by Margaret Weber.



## Oakwoods Metropark Grassland Bird Monitoring

by Ryan Colliton, Natural Resources Coordinator, Huron-Clinton Metroparks

Year two of breeding bird monitoring was a success! Through the month of June and part of July, dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers rose before the sun and surveyed the grasslands at Oakwoods Metropark. We can't thank the volunteers and Detroit Audubon Society enough for all their dedication helping us organize and execute this program. This data set, along with others (e.g. floristic inventories) will be used to determine best courses of action when managing the grasslands at Oakwoods Metropark.

So what conclusions can we make with two years of data? We need to be careful about making too many conclusions at this point. Natural communities are dynamic, and changes seen from year to year can be the result of many factors—not necessarily habitat changes. It is important to continue monitoring annually so we can establish species population trends, as opposed to making decisions and acting on them based on one to two years of data. Using multiple years of data will also help us minimize the impact of the individual on the data. This is something that many people don't think about when looking at data sets. Whether intentionally or not, the data is affected by the person collecting it. For instance, some surveyors may be better at identification through song, and others by physical characteristics. These and many other factors affect the collected data, which is why it is important to use data to identify trends over time, not just from a single year.

The more years of data we have, the more accurate our assumptions about the bird community will be. However, based on USFWS literature which was used to develop this program, these are the characteristics of our avian communities we can begin to classify based on two years of data:

- Species presence/absence
- Locally rare species
- Species richness
- Relative abundance

We experienced some changes in species presence and absence from 2015 to 2016. Most notable was a new account of the State Endangered Henslow's Sparrow. Two observations of Henslow's occurred in 2016. Eastern Meadowlark numbers were lower this year than last (11 to 5, respectively.) Alder Flycatcher was also a new account this year, found using the shrub thickets around the old agricultural drains in the park. Based on the data, it is also safe to assume that Henslow's Sparrow would be considered a locally rare species which follows the overall trend in Michigan grassland habitats. Species richness increased from 2015 to 2016, from 39 recorded species to 54.

So where do we go from here? It is my hope that this program will continue and expand as long as there is interest from the birding community to participate. In fact, because 2015 was such a success, we expanded the program to our coastal marshes at Lake St. Clair. We will review our needs and see which new location would be the next best place to establish survey sites.

As we continue to manage the grasslands at Oakwoods we will continue to have the need for experienced people to monitor the bird populations. At the moment, we are focused on reducing invasive shrub coverage and promoting native grasses and wildflowers at the bird monitoring sites. It is our hope that this work will result in the return of stable populations of some of our declining grassland species, especially those identified in the new Michigan Wildlife Action Plan. These include the Northern Bobwhite, Henslow's Sparrow and Dickcissel. We will need your continued support to collect this data—because if no one is looking for them, how will we ever know?

Thank you again to the Detroit Audubon Society and volunteers for all your hard work. It is because of your efforts that the Huron-Clinton Metroparks will be able to make more informed decisions when it comes to the management of your Metroparks' Natural Resources.



Oakwoods Metropark grassland.

## Swift Night Out September 24-25

Join us on Saturday, September 24th and Sunday, September 25th for Swift Night Out in celebration of the spectacular roosting Chimney Swifts at the Swift Sanctuary in Farmington, Michigan!

This is the largest known Chimney Swift roost in North America, and to celebrate we are having a festive birding night unlike any other!



In a magnificent display, up to 50,000 Chimney Swifts swirl around and around like a tornado into the chimney to roost at dusk. Detroit Audubon is now officially a partner with the Swift Sanctuary, including collaborating on education programs and on swift monitoring.

As the swifts go down the chimney, we will see a projection from inside the chimney on The Stephen Stackpole Memorial Chimney Swift Live Cam. This live feed is underwritten by Detroit Audubon in partnership with the Swift Sanctuary in Farmington Hills, MI and is named in memory of Stephen Stackpole, whose generous bequest provided funding that makes this possible. You can also see it on Detroit Audubon's website.

Bring a lawn chair to watch this incredible show! Detroit Audubon will have a table at this Swift festival both nights and we will present a program on the natural history of Chimney Swifts. A live band will add to the festive atmosphere leading up to the grand mass descent of thousands of swifts into the chimney for the night.

Refreshments will be served and there will be a raffle, all to raise funds for the expensive upkeep of this historic chimney!

Come celebrate Chimney Swifts with Detroit Audubon and our friends and partners at the Swift Sanctuary in Farmington, Michigan!

Please RSVP at: [tweliland@DetroitAudubon.org](mailto:tweliland@DetroitAudubon.org) or [DetroitAudubon.org/UpcomingEvents](http://DetroitAudubon.org/UpcomingEvents).



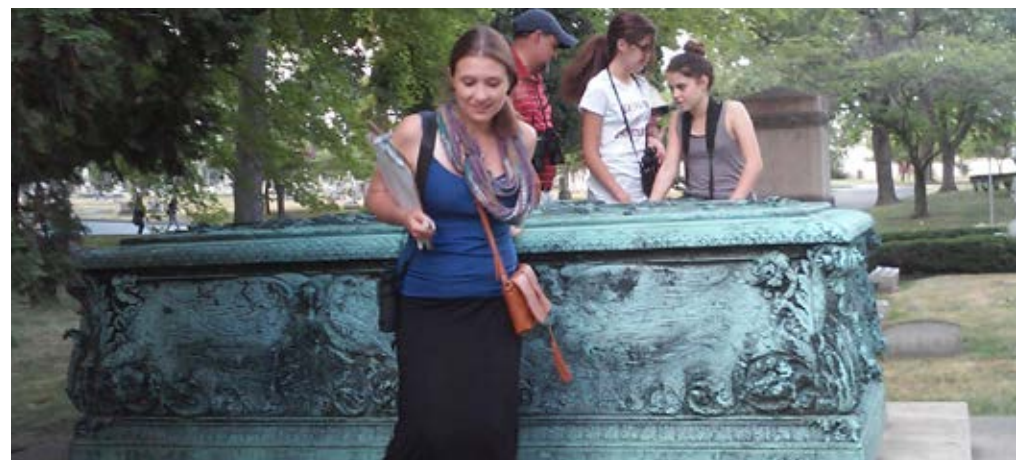
## Elmwood Cemetery Bird Walks

Detroit Audubon is pleased to continue its monthly bird walks at Elmwood Cemetery, Detroit's only certified arboretum! Elmwood Cemetery has been a great way to reach new birders; it's conveniently located and beautiful. Detroit Audubon is happy to offer equipment and expertise to beginning birders.

Due to demand, we have scheduled more Elmwood Cemetery walks for the fall! Come celebrate fall migration with us at Elmwood Cemetery. We will be keeping track of every bird we see on our bird walks for the Elmwood Cemetery Bird List that we are compiling. In the spring, we were happy to see many migrant warblers at Elmwood Cemetery and hope to see them again this fall.

There will be an evening bird walk at **5 pm Friday, September 23rd**. In October, we will have two **9:00 AM** walks: **Friday, October 14th** and **Friday, October 28th**.

It's a wonderful place to bird and to just enjoy one of the only places that still features Detroit's original topography, and a lot of great local stories too.





## BLACK TERN END-OF-SEASON REPORT

*by Erin Rowan, Detroit Audubon Research Volunteer • Photos by Diane Cheklich*

The Black Tern 2016 field season was a great success! Our volunteers monitored the terns on 11 days over the course of three months. The breeding season started later than usual this summer, with the cold spells of Spring lingering into May. By mid-June however, the breeding season was in full swing and the sub-colonies were teeming with adults!

We are left to subjective population estimating using two methods. The first is counting the number of found active nests, and the second is observing adults in flight at each sub-colony during peak season. The population estimate for 2016 was comparable to 2014 and 2015, at about 300 individuals, or 150 pairs. However, this is fewer Black Terns than in 2013, when an estimated 400 individuals, or 200 pairs, were present.

Nine sub-colonies were found in 2016, many of which were inhabited by Black Terns in previous years: Doty North, Doty South, Fisher, Triangle, Baltimore, Mackie, Strawberry, North Channel and Muscamoot.

101 nests were visited, 251 eggs were found and measured, and 99 birds were banded. Of the 99 birds banded, 34 were adults and 65 were chicks.

Of the 34 adults captured and banded, two were recaptures! These recaptures were originally banded during previous years' monitoring efforts. One was originally banded as an adult, and the other was originally banded as a chick in 2013! It takes Black Terns roughly three years to mature enough to breed, so this was the first year we were able to recapture any chicks previously banded. As you can imagine, recapturing chicks will take time and patience, something that is required by all long-term monitoring projects. It was thrilling to get our first chick recapture, and we hope to capture more in the future!

Banding chicks and adults gives us a snapshot of the population on the whole. The recapture data is the key to understanding population dynamics like productivity (how many chicks are born each year) and survivorship (whether or not chicks are surviving to maturity or if adults are able to survive long enough to successfully raise young). This population dynamic information could help us determine the driving forces behind the population decline in the Midwest. Circumstances like habitat quality, site fidelity, predation, increased storm frequency or intensity, changes in water levels, or pollution could play a role in the population decline.

Our hope with this long-term study is to solve this ecological puzzle and help create management strategies that will conserve and protect this species.

I look forward to another successful field season in 2017 and beyond!





## DETROIT AUDUBON SOCIETY 2016 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

**D**etroit Audubon 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 have entrance fees) and everyone is welcome, especially beginning birders.

**To RSVP:** Please email [tweiland@DetroitAudubon.org](mailto:tweiland@DetroitAudubon.org) or call the Detroit Audubon office at 313-960-3399 by the Thursday before each field trip so we'll know how many to expect and 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.

### **SWIFT NIGHT OUT at Swift Sanctuary and Historic Winery** **31505 Grand River Farmington, MI 48336**

**Saturday, Sept. 24 and Sunday, Sept. 25, 6 PM to sunset**

**Leaders: Jim Bull and Terra Weiland, Program Coordinator**

Join us with our Swift Sanctuary partners to watch the spectacular show as up to 50,000 Chimney Swifts swirl like a tornado, right down into this historic winery. This is likely THE largest roost of Chimney Swifts in North America! Bring a lawn chair to watch this incredible show. Detroit Audubon will have a table, live VideoCam, PowerPoint program, refreshments and a raffle to raise funds for the upkeep of this historic chimney.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**

### **LAKE ERIE METROPARK AND HUMBUG MARSH**

**Saturday October 8th, 8 AM to 1 PM Leader: Jim Bull**

Lake Erie Metropark is one of the best places for hawk migration in North America if the winds are right. We will traverse woodlands, boardwalks and observation platforms looking for warblers, other songbirds and migrating water birds, eagles and osprey. We will also go down to the boat launch to observe the hawk migration. Some years the number of hawks can be spectacular! Humbug is a key area for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, which Detroit Audubon fought to save from development.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**

### **SANDHILL CRANE MIGRATION Stopover at Haehnle Sanctuary**

**Sunday October 16, 3:30 for hike, 5 pm to observe from hill only**

**Leader: Jim Bull**

Join us for a hike through the autumn woods. Stay to watch hundreds of Sandhill Cranes fly in to roost in the marsh for the night as they have done since the Ice Age. Or just join us on the hillside at 5:00. Northern Harrier and a plethora of waterfowl are also possible. Dress warmly; bring a blanket or lawn chair to sit on. Overlook is handicapped accessible.

**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

Red-headed Woodpecker.  
Bruce Szczechowski photo



on the trail to the overlook.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**

### **POINT EDWARD AND LAKE HURON SHORE, Ontario**

**Saturday November 12, all day; depart 9 AM**

**Leader: Jim Bull**

The focus will be on water birds and early winter arrivals. This trip historically turns up great birds. We will stop at a restaurant for lunch.

**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.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**

### **OWL PROWL, Oakwoods Metropark- YOUNG BIRDERS PIZZA PARTY**

**Saturday November 19th, 7 PM**

**Leaders: Kevin Arnold and Jim Bull**

We will call for owls and expect to hear them call back, and maybe fly in close where we can see them. This program is especially good for families with children. Before the Owl Prowl, please join us for our Young Birders' Program Pizza Party!

**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.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**



### **BELLE ISLE, DETROIT**

**Saturday November 26, 9 AM**

**Leaders: Jim Bull and Joe Rashid**

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.

**Facebook Event Page [HERE:](#)**

### **DETROIT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT\*\* Reservations Required**

**Sunday December 18**

**Leader: Tim Nowicki**

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 County to count as many birds as possible. The count is one of many all over North America used to study bird populations. Meet for pizza and count wrap-up at day's end.

To participate, contact Tim Nowicki at 734-525-8630 or email [tnowick@gmail.com](mailto:tnowick@gmail.com) or [tweiland@DetroitAudubon.org](mailto:tweiland@DetroitAudubon.org)

### **ROCKWOOD CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT and Public Hike**

**Monday, December 26, 9 AM to 11 AM**

**Leader: Jim Bull**

**Public hike: 9 AM to 11 AM:** Contact Jim Bull at 313-928-2950 or [jamesbull22@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesbull22@yahoo.com) to register for the morning hike.

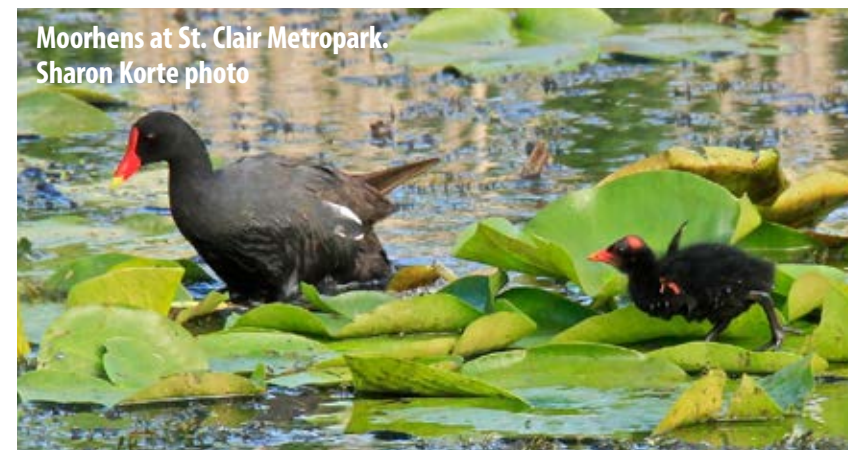
A chili lunch is provided.

**Christmas Bird Count:** All day event! 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.

Registration is required.

**RSVP:** If you want to participate in the all-day count, contact compiler Tom Carpenter at [tcarpen1980@yahoo.com](mailto:tcarpen1980@yahoo.com) or 734-728-8733.

Moorhens at St. Clair Metropark.  
Sharon Korte photo





## Bird House Making Workshop August 8, 2016

Detroit Audubon Program Coordinator Terra Weiland gave a demo on how to build a bird house on Monday, August 8, with Lisa and her DNR students. They also saw the vacant lot that is being transformed into bird habitat, and the start of the planting process there. That lot is where the bird houses will be installed. Great job Terra, Lisa, and DNR students! Board Member and Conservation Committee Chairperson Diane Cheklich took these photos.

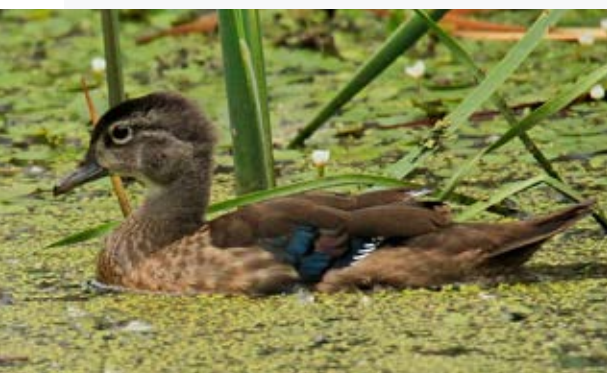


### Learning about Terns

On Saturday, July 23 at 11 AM, Detroit Audubon hosted a gathering at Harsens Island Readers Cove. Erin Rowan and Terra Weiland gave a presentation about the Black Tern Colony on the St. Clair flats and the ongoing study conducted by National and Detroit Audubon.







## Mystery Bird

Did you guess a young Wood Duck? If so, you are correct. Photo by Sharon Korte, taken at Lale St. Clair Metropark.

## The Flyway Has Gone Green!

As announced previously, only one issue of the Flyway is printed and mailed annually (in March). For the other three online issues, we need all members' email addresses.

If you, or a member you know, has missed an issue of the Flyway, please contact the office at [tweiland@detroitaudubon.org](mailto:tweiland@detroitaudubon.org) or (313) 960-3399 to provide us with the correct email address. Rest assured that Detroit Audubon will not share or sell your email address to any other person or organization.



## Bruce Szczechowski photos from Northern Michigan and the UP:

Crow chasing young Red-tailed Hawk

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Hairy Woodpecker

Trumpeter Swans



## Pheasant Watch

Detroit Audubon is excited to announce our new program this fall: Pheasant Watch!

Ring-necked Pheasants in Detroit depend on precious grassland habitat, just as Eastern Bluebirds, Field Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks do. Mowing city lots and parks to resemble a manicured golf course, instead of a grassland mosaic, eliminates habitat that birds and animals depend on and alters the character of the city. This fall, we're asking that local birders report Ring-necked Pheasant sightings; Detroit Audubon is putting a map together of Detroit area Pheasant hotspots!

We're also planning a Pheasant guided walk—stay tuned for more info!

We're asking our readers and fellow bird lovers to submit art pieces for an online gallery celebrating Detroit's iconic unofficial bird. We would love to see art in all forms, including poetry, sketches, paintings, sculptures, murals, etc.! Check out our Facebook page to keep updated on our own office Pheasant art project—a cross-stitch (above) by Program Coordinator Terra Weiland.

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