

Cardinal at Pinery Park.
Sharon Korte photo



THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEB. 16-19, 2018

A 4-day event coordinated by National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Great Backyard Bird Count invites people all over the world to record their bird observations for just 15 minutes in their own backyard! All ages and birding levels are welcome to participate, and you can participate on any or all of the four days of this international birding event. This year, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will be held Friday, February 16th through Monday, February 19th. You can submit your backyard observations online at: gbbc.birdcount.org.

Last year, over 160,000 people participated in the GBBC globally, and provided scientists with the largest international snapshot of bird populations ever recorded! Please visit the GBBC website above for more information on how you can participate. If you have any questions about how you can participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count, please contact our Research Coordinator at 313-800-1578 or erowan@detroitaudubon.org.

See also *Project Feeder Watch* article on pg. 6.



SAVE THE DATE! CONSERVATION AWARDS CEREMONY 7 P.M. THURSDAY, APRIL 5, BELLE ISLE NATURE CENTER

This year Detroit Audubon's Conservation Awards will be presented at a ceremony held at the Belle Isle Nature Center during the time slot of our regular monthly nature program. Instead of a fancy dinner with tickets, this year there will be a reception with substantial hors d'oeuvres served at 7 PM. Awards will be presented starting at 7:30 PM. Awardees will be announced in the next issue. Save the date!



LIFE OF A TEEN BIRDER *By Travis Kaye*

Puffins are the most adorable clown-like birds I have ever seen. I have had the opportunity to observe them in their natural element several times since I started birding. One of these times was last summer when I went to Hog Island Audubon Teen Camp. My name is Travis Kaye and I am a 14-year-old birder from Huntington Woods, Michigan. I was awarded the 2017 Detroit Audubon Young Birder Scholarship to attend Hog Island Audubon Teen Camp. While I admit it wasn't my first time visiting Hog Island (I went with my mother to family camp in 2016), it was an amazing experience. I had a wonderful week forging new friendships, seeing new life birds, and visiting one of my favorite places on earth.

Hog Island Audubon Camp is located near Bremen, Maine, about an hour north of Portland. Since 1936 the camp has offered environmental education provided by some of the world's most respected naturalists, including Dr. Steve

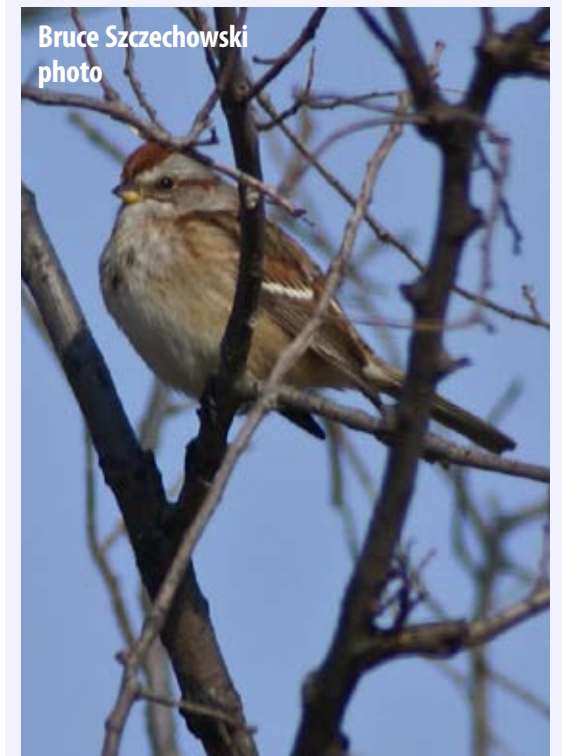
W. Kress who founded Project Puffin. Project Puffin is a seabird restoration program that has successfully brought Atlantic Puffins and Terns back to their breeding grounds off the coast of Maine.

continued on page 3



(L) Travis at Hog Island.
Above, "adorable clown-like" Puffins.

Bruce Szczechowski
photo



MYSTERY BIRD

Can you guess this bird's identity? Check your guess on page 13.



DETROIT AUDUBON YOUNG BIRDER SCHOLARSHIP

Alma College, Michigan – June 2018

Calling all Young Birders! Detroit Audubon is pleased to announce the 2018 Young Birder Scholarship for Southeast Michigan teens. One lucky recipient will be sent to Michigan Audubon's Young Birder Camp at Alma College for a week of hands-on workshops led by the best birders and ornithologists in the country. Please contact staff@detroitaudubon.org for more information. Specific dates, details and the application will be released soon.

Flyway

A publication of
Detroit Audubon
4605 Cass Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201-1256

313-960-3399 staff@DetroitAudubon.org
www.detroitaudubon.org

Program Coordinator:
Bailey Lininger

**Research Coordinator and
Office Administrator:**
Erin Rowan

Both of our staff members work part-time and are often out of the office conducting programs or research. They will return calls/emails as soon as possible, but there may be delays.

Flyway Editors:
Jim Bull and Erin Rowan
Layout: Tana Moore

Flyway is published four times a year (one print issue, three digital issues) for 5,000+ National Audubon Society members in Southeastern Michigan.

Opinions expressed by the authors and editors do not necessarily reflect the policy of the Detroit Audubon Society.

Articles that appear in the Flyway may be reproduced freely as long as Detroit Audubon is credited.

Original articles, photos and artwork are welcome. Email to jac@detroitaudubon.org

Deadline for Spring Issue:
March 1st, 2017



DETROIT
AUDUBON

BULLY PULPIT - DARKNESS AND LIGHT

By James N. (Jim) Bull, Ph.D., President

As I write this, we approach the darkest day of the year—the Winter Solstice. It is dark when we get up in the morning to go to work, and it is dark before we get home. Psychologists tell us there is more depression this time of year than any other—they call it Seasonal Affective Disorder, due to this increased darkness. However, a more insidious darkness is afoot these days, with environmental protections under attack from every direction.

The Great Lakes Initiative was zeroed out by the present administration, but some semblance a bipartisan effort by congressional representatives and senators from Great Lakes states may rescue it. The EPA is to be cut by 30%. The U.S. has pulled out of the Paris Climate Accords. Scores of environmental regulations are being rolled back. National Monuments, carved out of federal lands by presidential decree under the Antiquities Act signed by our first conservation president, Theodore Roosevelt, are being shrunk to a fraction of their size. (In one case only 15% of the original monument will still be protected.) This move is unprecedented. Monuments set aside by former presidents have never been altered by subsequent presidents, except to give some of them more protection as national parks. The aim seems to be to open more land to extensive coal mining. That will not only devastate the landscape, but spew more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere just when we need to cut emissions drastically, and when National Audubon researchers tell us that Climate Change is THE greatest threat facing birds today. The Endangered Species Act is under attack; and other legislation would give fossil fuel extraction a blanket exemption from laws protecting birds. The massive tax cut bill that just passed included a provision to expedite oil production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the nesting ground for millions of birds we only see in transit. In Michigan, we face a resurgence of the push to hunt both Sandhill Cranes and Mourning Doves. And there is so much more that causes many of us to lament these days. Environmental protection and conservation used to have bipartisan support. In fact, the great achievements in environmental laws came under Republican President Richard Nixon. With all these attacks on what we thought were enduring conservation achievements, it is easy to be discouraged.

During this time when things seem so very dark, it is good to keep in mind that proverb, sometimes attributed to Confucius: “It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.” It is amazing how one candle can light up a room, but when many people light candles it can be almost as bright as day.

Many are lighting candles in this darkness. Several environmental groups, Native American tribes, and the outdoor outfitter Patagonia have filed suit to stop the unprecedented shrinkage of our National Monuments. Our parent organization, National Audubon and coalitions of national environmental groups are taking many other actions with the help of activist members.

Detroit Audubon has been lighting candles in the darkness since 1939! We helped get DDT banned, helped win passage of Michigan’s Bottle Bill, and helped save Humbug Marsh. But I think we have lit more candles in the last three years than ever. We moved to Detroit from the suburbs. As a result, partnerships and opportunities are now overflowing—we are now part of Detroit’s Renaissance as a “green” city. We also

hired our first professional staff members in over 25 years at that same time. They have been outstanding. Our first Program Coordinator Sara Cole was followed by the equally talented Terra Weiland. When she left last May, we hired Jac Kyle. Last October, we hired irrepressible Research Coordinator/Office Administrator Erin Rowan.

During our annual holiday dinner to honor our volunteers and partners, Erin and Jac presented a PowerPoint retrospective, showing all we had been able to do in the last year with the help of our 60+ volunteers and 30+ partners. It was impressive. I have long dreamed of the day when we would have staff; now that time is here, and we are spreading so much more light because of it. We are reaching more young people than ever with our education and Young Birder programs; we have regular monthly nature programs at the Belle Isle Nature Center; we helped get Detroit declared an Urban Bird Treaty City, we were one of the leaders of the Urban Bird Summit at the Detroit Zoo; and the list goes on. On the research side, we now have a staff member to study the decline of the Black Tern and strategies to reverse that trend. We monitored grassland birds in the Huron-Clinton Metroparks and in Detroit City parks. We rescued gulls from traffic near the Detroit Wastewater Treatment Plant. We have forged ahead with Safe Passage, minimizing bird casualties from unsafe building lighting and design. And, we are about to embark on transforming five Detroit city parks into native grasslands.

Despite all those candles being lit, there is another dark spot. Our Program Coordinator Jac Kyle has accepted a position with the Detroit Parks and Recreation Department—another goodbye. We reached more students during her tenure than in our whole previous history. (That is a lot of light!) Jac used her extensive contacts with area teachers from Greening of Detroit, and just transitioned to birding programs. She looks forward to partnering with Detroit Audubon in her new position.

This points out the reality that until we raise the funds necessary to make both our Program Coordinator and Research Coordinator full-time positions with full benefits, we will not be able to keep talented staff long-term. You can help by digging deep to make a donation: <http://www.detroitaudubon.org/get-involved/donate/>

But darkness does not have the last say in this situation, either. More light is coming our way in the form of Bailey Lininger, who brings incredible passion, enthusiasm and experience with birds and environmental education as our new Program Coordinator. Yet another talented Program Coordinator will take us to the next level. Our cup has overflowed with talented staff members since we took the plunge to being a staff-driven organization. Let’s make sure we get that position to full-time soon so that this time we can keep Bailey for the long term, and Erin too!

The longest night of the year has passed. On the other side is more light each day going forward. I invite you to focus on the light coming from Detroit Audubon and to help us light more candles. Together we can light up the world (while keeping the buildings dark for sake of migratory birds, of course!)

Wishing you the happiest of holidays, and good birding!

MEET BAILEY LININGER



Hello, Detroit Audubon members. Thank you for welcoming me into your community! My name is Bailey, and I could not be more excited to dive right into my new role as the Program Coordinator for Detroit Audubon. While I have met some of you through volunteering and events over the last year or so, I look forward to meeting many more as I settle in and begin to plan events and outings.

A bit about me: I am a native Michigander and have a lifelong love of nature, ever since I grew up near the wooded edges of the Rouge River in Birmingham. I received my B.A. in Environmental Studies from Whitman College and my M. Ed. (with a focus on community and environmental education) from the University of Washington. I've spent the last 10 years working and learning all over Washington, Oregon, and Michigan. I have developed a deep and abiding love for the work that I do, connecting people to the natural world. Before accepting my new position with Detroit Audubon, I worked as an educator at the Cranbrook Institute of Science, where I delivered grant-funded science programming in Detroit and Flint public schools. Before working with Cranbrook, I managed the Harris Nature Center for Tamarack Camps, where I had the delight of caring for a Red-tailed Hawk and a Snowy Owl (and a skunk!).

Over the last few years, I have become fascinated with the way that birds, and birding, can foster especially strong connections between people and the world around them—I even did a Master's project on citizen science birding programs in schools! I look forward to continuing this work with Detroit Audubon and all of you. If there's anything you need, please let me know!



LIFE OF A TEEN BIRDER *continued from page 1*

While at camp I explored and hiked around Hog Island and its beautiful landscapes. One of the days, we went to the mainland of Maine to visit McCurdy Pond Road, Great Salt Bay Wildlife preserve and Hidden Valley Nature Center. We also took a boat cruise around Muscongus Bay. Some of the highlight birds I saw during these three field trips are: Bobolink, Prairie Warbler (only heard), Northern Waterthrush, Broad-wing Hawk, Surf Scoter, Black Scoter, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Purple Finch and Scarlet Tanager, just to name a few.

The most spectacular part of my week was going on Eastern Egg Rock. This island, 8 miles east of Hog Island, is the first and primary location for Project Puffin. While there, I sat in a blind and observed awesome birds close up. I saw and photographed Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Common Eider, Laughing Gull, Common Tern, Roseate Tern, and Arctic Tern. It was the best part of my week.

An added bonus of attending camp was being surrounded by fellow teen birders. I made many new friends at camp that I am still in contact with. It is my hope as a young birder to energize more kids my age to join in the fun and excitement of birding. One of the ways I do this is through my Instagram account. You can view some of my photographs from Hog Island by following me on Instagram at [savage_birder](#).

Hog Island Camp is not only for teens. They have programs for adults and families. I highly recommend a trip to the camp. I would like to thank Detroit Audubon for this opportunity to attend teen camp, and I hope to return to Hog Island in the future.

Editor's Note: Travis Kaye will be presenting about his experiences at Hog Island at our January Monthly Nature Program! Come to Belle Isle Nature Center on Thursday, January 4th at 7 p.m. to hear first-hand about his experiences. The talk is free. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/550248335317696/>



THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT HISTORY

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is entering its 118th year of existence! Originally created in 1900 by ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, the Christmas Bird Count replaced an old holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt." The latter was a wildlife census using a strategy popular back in the 1800s—people would go to an area and shoot all the wildlife in their path. Frank Chapman and others had observed a decline in bird populations and suggested a change in methodology, establishing the first-ever Christmas Bird Count.

Conservation efforts have grown tremendously since 1900, as has the reach of the Christmas Bird Count! The CBC is primarily conducted by citizen scientists like yourself, in conjunction with an Audubon chapter. Data is then sent to National Audubon, which has been managing this extensive database that has contributed to many studies regarding bird populations. CBC data has been listed as one of the 26 indicators of climate change by the Environmental Protection Agency, and was also used in the American Bird Conservation Initiative's and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's State of the Birds Report in 2009. This long-term data set provides us with population trends for hundreds of species of birds in North America, many of which are in decline.

Detroit Area Christmas Bird Counts

Detroit Audubon is proud to sponsor the annual Detroit and Rockwood Christmas Bird Counts. The Detroit CBC took place Sunday, December 17, 2017.

This is one of the oldest Christmas Bird Counts. Birders spend all day covering a 15-mile circle in northern Oakland County to count as many birds as possible. Birders meet for pizza and count wrap-up at day's end.

The Rockwood Christmas Bird Count took place Tuesday, December 26, 2017. This annual count within a 15-mile circle includes Grosse Ile, Lake Erie Metropark, Trenton, Rockwood, South Rockwood, Newport, and Oakwoods Metropark. Detroit Audubon guides a public hike at 9 AM prior, and lunch and dinner are provided.

Detroit Audubon's Research Coordinator surveyed the International Wildlife Refuge portion of the Rockwood Christmas Bird Count, which includes Humbug Marsh and the Gibraltar Wetlands Unit.

If you are an experienced birder, please consider volunteering for the 2018 Christmas Bird Count. Many routes for both counts need coverage. Some are not covered at all due to lack of volunteer counters.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS AT ELIZA HOWELL PARK

By Jac Kyle

Many of us can trace our passion for the environment to childhood memories of family camping trips, building forts with friends or watching birds out our bedroom window. We grew up outside—making mud pies and exploring stands of trees that felt like huge forests. Unfortunately, kids are staying indoors more and more. Many Detroit students have never set foot in a forest, or spent extended periods of time in natural environments. Part of our work at Detroit Audubon is to provide opportunities for youth to personally connect with diverse habitats and build a sense of wonder and love for the outdoors. That sense of wonder can stay with us even into adulthood. One of Detroit Audubon's dedicated field trip leaders, Leonard Weber, embodies that youthful excitement and curiosity. (For more on Leonard Weber see pg. 13.) His love for Eliza Howell Park and all its natural treasures is infectious. He invited me to this gem located in Northwest Detroit and showed me spots where he spotted Baltimore Oriole nests and Goldfinches harvesting thistle. We walked along the Rouge River and spotted numerous animal tracks along its shores. I immediately fell in love. Eliza Howell presented an exciting opportunity for our youth education efforts and Leonard also wanted to share this unique spot with students. He took it to the next step and connected us with Michigan Nature Association and their Nature Field Trip Grants Program. One thing led to another, and in no time we had funds to take two field trips with a fifth grade class from Southwest Detroit.

We worked with Ms. Howland-Bolton's fifth grade class, more affectionately known as "The Penguin Squad." We visited them at their school, Clippert Multicultural Magnet Honors Academy, to develop their observation skills, explore nature around their schoolyard and practice using binoculars before heading to Eliza Howell Park. It was a gorgeous day in October—the type of fall day where the breeze is fresh and flavorful with fall scents, and a T-shirt feels perfect in the warm sun. Students explored the biodiversity of their school garden and were beyond excited to see the diversity of life at Eliza Howell.

A week passed and the field trip arrived, with much different weather. A cold rain blanketed the morning, but none of the students' attitudes were dampened. We fashioned some trash bags into makeshift raingear and boarded the bus with binoculars and notebooks.

The students braved the wet weather to explore sections of the Rouge River, and even saw a huge snapping turtle. For them, the trip came to an end all too soon, but luckily there was another class visit and field trip planned. The Michigan Nature Association grant made it possible for us to work with the class multiple times, allowing us to build inquiry and observation skills among the students. Their love for the park was apparent, and they have asked numerous times when they can go back.

Detroit Audubon is working to continue our relationship with both the class and the park. We are currently seeking funding to provide field trips for the Spring. Moreover, we are working with the Michigan Nature Association, Leonard Weber and other local community groups to host a BioBlitz at Eliza Howell Park, which will be for both students and community members. To get involved or provide support, please contact staff@detroitaudubon.org.

For those of you interested in learning why Eliza Howell is so special, be sure to attend Leonard Weber's Bird Walks at the park, or volunteer on a class field trip. It is a unique gem for birders and naturalists of all ages.





LONGTIME BOARD MEMBER JOAN SEYMOUR DIES

We are sad to report that one of our longtime board members, Joan Seymour, passed away at age 83. A memorial service was held September 18th. Anne Runkle's article in the Sept. 6 *Daily Tribune* is used below by permission:

"Ms. Seymour served on the (Southfield) City Council for 24 years...

"She served as chairwoman of the Council Finance Committee, chairwoman of the Legislative & Urban Affairs Committee, and twice chaired the Boards & Commissions Committee. She was also a member of the Southfield Housing Authority and was elected City Council president twice and president pro tem five times.

"With a background that included more than 30 years of corporate management, Ms. Seymour devoted significant time and energy to various causes that benefited youth, women's issues, the environment and the arts.

"She held leadership positions on the Environmental Protection Council of Oakland County, Detroit Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, International Art Center/

BELLE ISLE FIELD TRIP SATURDAY NOV. 25, 2017

*The Eagle has landed,
and then took off...*



November 25th was a cloudy day, with a light wind, but unseasonably warm—we usually freeze on this Belle Isle field trip.

The outing attracted 39 participants (over 50 signed up!). With so many people, many of them new birders, we needed more than one leader to help folks find the birds.

President Jim Bull was the trip leader, with assistance from past president Leonard Weber and past board member Bruce Szczechowski.

The first bird Bruce and Jim saw on the way to the Nature Center was a Bald Eagle on a post right on the shore of the Detroit River. It stayed there at least 20 minutes while we met the group and got the caravan going to that spot. After several minutes it took off, allowing Bruce to get a shot of the eagle with its talons out!

All photos were taken by Bruce Szczechowski. Here's a link to the [eBird checklist](#).

A second field trip to Belle Isle on Thursday, December 7th was sponsored by Audubon Great Lakes, the Michigan DNR, and Detroit Audubon. Caleb Putnam, Jim Bull, and Holly from the Michigan DNR led the trip, which brought together both birders and hunters. This trip attracted about 25 participants on a very cold day!

We saw lots of waterfowl, including too many Canvasbacks and Redheads to count; many American Goldeneyes, and about 40 Hooded Mergansers on the Scott Fountain pond.



(L) A female
Great Blue Heron
at Lake Okanoka
on Belle Isle.

A Goldeneye in flight.

(R) A hardy group on Belle Isle Dec. 7th.



Institute, Michigan Wetlands Coalition, National Organization of Women - Detroit area employment committee, and others.

"Long interested in environmental issues, she was active in preservation efforts of several natural areas in Southfield and, as a private citizen, led the successful effort to preserve a large wooded wetland in the path of the I-696 expressway.

"Following this successful campaign, she helped to form the Southfield Wetlands/Woodlands Preservation Council and, as its president, led the community-wide successful effort to enact both the Wetlands Protection Ordinance and the Woodlands Protection Ordinance. She was active in gaining protection for several of Southfield's special natural areas, including Lincoln Woods Nature Preserve, Horsetail Woods Nature Preserve and Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve."



Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve,
one of the natural areas championed
by the late Joan Seymour.

FIELD TRIP LEADERS NEEDED

By Jim Bull



Currently I lead about 2/3 of the Detroit Audubon's field trips. I love going on field trips, and leading them is a surefire way to get me out when other business might

otherwise keep me inside. However, depending on one person for so many of our field trips is just not sustainable.

Detroit Audubon needs a cadre of new field trip leaders. That would remove the risk of having to cancel a field trip if I am unable to lead that day. Also, a diverse group of field trip leaders usually means that we can offer a wider variety of destinations. Each person brings special knowledge of birding and the benefits of different kinds of birding expertise.

Let us know if you'd like to lead a field trip (even once would be helpful) and where you'd like to lead it (you should be somewhat familiar with the area).

If you are not ready to lead a field trip on your own, how about being a co-leader with me? Once you share the lead role once or twice, you should be ready to lead a group on your own. And, if you've already got some expertise, you would serve as a critical backup for leading the field trip if something happened to me.

Actually, it would be great if all our field trips could have co-leaders or understudies!

To volunteer, please send an email to staff@detroitaudubon.org and tell us about your birding experience and where you'd like to lead a field trip, what time of year, time of day, and a proposed date or two.

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH: A GREAT GIFT FOR BIRD-LOVERS!

Are you a teacher looking to engage your students in a Citizen Science project? Or someone looking for a gift for your bird-loving friend or family member? Or someone interested in becoming a Citizen Scientist? Project FeederWatch is organized by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. A Citizen Science project, much like the Christmas Bird Count, project FeederWatch encourages people to put up a bird feeder in their yard and periodically count the birds they see there. This is a winter-long survey, beginning as early as November through early April. Data is sent to Project FeederWatch to join a larger database that can help scientists track the movements of wintering birds over a large geographic range as well as trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Are you interested in participating? Here's what you need to know!

1. All age levels and birding skill levels are welcome!
2. You can monitor your bird feeder as frequently or infrequently as you'd like; you create your schedule.
3. Materials you will need: bird feeder, bird bath, or bird-enticing plants.
4. There is an annual participation fee of \$18 which goes towards materials (your Research Kit), staff support, web design, data analysis and the year-end report.
5. Your Research Kit will include a welcome letter, a FeederWatch Handbook and Instructions, a full-color poster of common feeder birds, and a bird watching calendar, to help you keep track of your FeederWatch days.

To participate in FeederWatch, you can register online at: <http://feederwatch.org/join-or-renew/>

If you have any questions about how to participate in FeederWatch, please contact our Research Coordinator Erin Rowan at erowan@detroitaudubon.org or 313-800-1578.

KENYA BIRDING AND WILDLIFE SAFARI JUNE 28-JULY 11

*\$5,500 double occupancy if we have 12 participants**

Tembokanga Tours and Educational Adventures, partly owned by former board member and Detroit Audubon friend Bruce Szczechowski, will host a 15-day tour featuring as many as 300 different bird species and all the spectacular wildlife of the African Savannah and Rift Valley.

The tour will be intimate, with approximately a dozen participants. This will afford opportunities to experience eating and interacting with villagers in the Rift Valley and Highlands.

Highlights will include visiting Masai Mara National Park, Lake Nakuru National Park (featuring thousands of Greater and Lesser Flamingos), Lake Baringo, Lake Nasasaha and more. One of Kenya's best birders will be our guide on many of the excursions. We will stay at well-appointed (3-4 star) resorts and hotels.

Email staff@detroitaudubon.org to let us know of your interest, and a trip meeting will be set up to let you know more and to give you a chance to sign up. This is both an educational and fund-raising event for Detroit Audubon.

**\$1,000 more for single room occupancy. Price will increase if there are fewer than 12 participants, and does not include*

airfare to and from Nairobi National Airport.

Dates are approximate and subject to change until registrations are secured.

Photos by Bruce Szczechowski



DETROIT AUDUBON MISSION STATEMENT

adopted June 2017

The mission of Detroit Audubon is to foster the appreciation and conservation of birds and the environment we share.

*Our three pillars or mission areas are:
Education, Research, and Action.*



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

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

DON'T MISS FLYWAY!

Only the Spring issue of the Flyway is printed and mailed annually. 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 313-960-3399 or staff@DetroitAudubon.org to provide us with the correct email address. Rest assured that DAS will not share or sell your email address to any other person or organization.

WHY ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE CALLING FOR A STUDY ON BELLE ISLE GRAND PRIX

By Brian Allnutt, written for *Detroit Metro Times*

Like all large parks, Belle Isle is a place for many things, and different bits of programming and infrastructure express competing visions for what the park is and what it should be. The ongoing debate over the presence of the Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix auto race on the island is a prime example of such conflicts, pitting racing enthusiasts against those who believe a park should provide a reprieve from the noisy world of the city.

For hundreds of thousands of migrating and nesting birds, the island park is something more vital still—a linchpin in their struggle for survival. The island sanctuary is an important habitat in the midst of miles of concrete and attracts a number of birds, including shorebirds, waterfowl, owls, woodpeckers and songbirds. These birds either visit during their migrations—the Detroit River is situated at the confluence of the Mississippi and the Atlantic flyways—or raise their young here during the summer, taking advantage of the island's varied ecologies.

For birds, putting an auto race in the middle of their flight path might be like putting a small garden in the middle of the seventh turn—perhaps it wouldn't destroy the race, but it could make things more complicated.

It's the kind of issue that race opponents and environmentalists want scientists to study. Michigan's Department of Natural Resources, which manages Belle Isle, is currently reviewing the future of the race on the island, and groups like Belle Isle Concern and Detroit Audubon are pushing for an independent, third-party review of the Grand Prix's environmental impact.

So far, the DNR has not committed to such a study. Without that, there's no telling what exactly the race means for countless birds, or in what other ways pollution and heavy use of the delicate 982-acre park could be detrimental. However, scientists we spoke with suspect there is cause for concern.

For their part, race supporters and even some environmentalists emphasize the perks for the city and the park, with Grand Prix organizers claiming between \$45 and \$50 million in economic benefit from the race. (It's worth noting, however, that they've never provided any evidence to support the claim, despite repeated requests from race opponents.) Organizers also note that the race runs at the beginning of June for three days, and therefore misses peak migration time. And the race occupies the western end of the island—not the more biodiverse eastern side.

As Orin Gelderloos, a professor of biology and environmental studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn suggests, activists are perhaps using the environmental study as a "handle" to push their agenda of getting the race off the island to improve access and keep the park in alignment with what they feel are more appropriate uses for a park, like bicycling, walking, and birdwatching.

"The island is a park, and parks are not race tracks," Professor James Bull of Detroit Audubon says.

"If there were clear environmental damage from the Grand Prix I think we would be aware of that by now," David Howell from Friends of the Detroit River says, although

even skeptics like him believe a review could provide useful data. However, it could also be that new research relating to the effects of noise on wildlife, as well as evidence-gathering, could give a better picture of how the Grand Prix actually affects creatures on the island.

Investigations of IndyCar races in cities like Montreal and Baltimore have pointed to the problems associated with unregulated vehicle emissions from souped-up race cars, chemical and particulate matter generated by shredded tires, and spills. (The Grand Prix did not answer requests for comment for this article.) But noise, on the other hand—with its ability to travel relatively long distances—could be environmentally significant, and the hardest thing to control.

A study of the now-defunct Grand Prix of Baltimore found that the race created noise pollution of around 118 decibels, "somewhere above 'chainsaw, rock concert' and just below 'ambulance siren,'" as an article in *Baltimore Brew* put it.

This data coincides with a spate of research examining the impact of noise, particularly from expressways, on birds. One study by Boise State researcher Jesse Barber broadcast the sounds of traffic into an isolated Idaho woodland to determine the effect of noise on bird health when it's divorced from other environmental factors like pollution. Barber and his team found that a third of bird species were driven away by the noise, and several species were significantly lighter for their size.

It's worth mentioning that such research comes against the backdrop of other studies that show significant declines in bird populations. The North American Bird Conservation Initiative issued a report in 2016 showing that roughly a third of North American birds were threatened with extinction. Possible reasons for this range from climate change to wind farms and habitat loss. One outcome of a study on Belle Isle could be to investigate if the race is impacting already-threatened species.

Closer to home, Professor Darren Proppe is doing a study of his own at Grand Rapids' Calvin College, evaluating the effects of anthropogenic noise on woodland birds. Proppe says he believes that the

NEEDED: VOLUNTEER WEB-ASSISTANT

Detroit Audubon is in need of a web-assistant who is familiar with using Wordpress and Divi Builder to update parts of our website.

This volunteer would work under the supervision of our Office Administrator to help us make our website more user-friendly.

If you are interested, or know someone who might be interested in volunteering, please contact our Office Administrator, Erin Rowan at erowan@detroitaudubon.org.



A Red-tailed Hawk making a living on Belle Isle.
Daymon J. Hartley photo

©daymonjhartley.com

continued

WHY ENVIRONMENTALISTS CALL FOR STUDY ON BELLE ISLE GRAND PRIX *continued*

amount of noise pollution at the Grand Prix could affect communication, particularly among songbirds which are in decline across the country. It could also increase stress levels and in turn compromise the survivability of nestlings, some of which are being born during the time of the race, and also possibly damage the birds' hearing.

Proppe stresses that there are a lot of unknowns here. For example, how noise affects bird hearing is not well understood. Also, most studies of noise pollution on birds have studied lower decibel noise pollution over longer periods of time, and in the case of expressways this means dealing with noise that maxes out at around 80 decibels. There is also the issue of the race running on the west side of the island, and the birds primarily nesting on the east side.

"I would say that much research on noise shows that noise reduces biodiversity," Proppe says. "As far as acoustic impacts go, studies have documented impacts out to a kilometer or so from noise sources... A lot of these sources they're looking at are loud, but maybe not 118 decibels-loud."

For those of us who don't speak metric, a kilometer is about .62 miles. The far eastern edge of the track runs close to Inselruhe Avenue, about .3 miles from the Belle Isle Athletic Shelter and the beginning of the wooded areas that make up some of the prime bird habitat on Belle Isle—in other words, well within Proppe's one-kilometer range.

How much damage can 118 decibels do at this range over three days? We don't know. But it could have the effect of shrinking the already limited amount of bird habitat on the island.

There's also the issue of what's been done to the western side of the island. As a park, Belle Isle has always concentrated programmatic uses on the western side and left more natural areas to the east. Still, the Grand Prix has amplified this by adding an additional nine acres of concrete to the island and tearing down trees (some of which were planted as a memorial to victims of youth violence by an organization called Save Our Sons and Daughters, or SOSAD—perhaps not the best advertisement for a major sporting event).

Moreover, any tree cover could be valuable in a place like Detroit. "You're talking about the Detroit urban landscape, where forests are almost entirely lacking," says Caleb Putnam, who works with both the National Audubon Society and the Department of Natural Resources. He adds that the area attracts "hundreds of thousands of birds" each spring and fall. "Forest is one of the limiting habitats and Belle Isle is one of the spots that has quite a bit of it," he says.

Even the trees that were removed from the race's side of the island could have been important for migrating birds, many of which are forced to come down from their nightly flights wherever they happen to find themselves and make do with the habitat that is available.

Putnam emphasizes that none of the speculation about noise or habitat proves that the race is harmful—only that it demands further investigation. "There's a lot of uncertainty here," he says. "We are not activists; we are scientists, and we would want

to go on what the data says. And there isn't a lot of data."

But Bull makes the argument for an environmental review a different way. "Those that want to continue to do something like this should be responsible; it should be on them to show us that it's safe," he says. "We are not the ones proposing something pretty extraordinary for a park."

SNOWY OWL IRRUPTION 2017

The invasion is upon us! Grab your binoculars and get outside! :D
by Kenn Kaufman • Kaufman Field Guides [on Facebook](#)

This is shaping up to be a phenomenal invasion year for Snowy Owls around the Great Lakes in the U.S. and Canada. The graphic at right (based on eBird reports) shows sightings from Nov. 1st through midday on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2017. From western New York to eastern Minnesota, from southern Ontario to central Illinois, the owls are everywhere. In northern Ohio, where we're located, we've heard reports of more than 20 Snowy Owls within the last 24 hours. In most years, the entire winter won't produce that many individuals in the state of Ohio.

It's interesting to compare this year's flight to the last big invasion four years ago, winter 2013–14. That flight was widespread, like the current one, but centered farther east. By the beginning of December 2013, well over 100 Snowy Owls were being seen in southeastern Newfoundland (with even more later in the month), and remarkable numbers were in the Maritime Provinces of southeastern Canada and in coastal New England. This year, so far, very few have been reported in Newfoundland, not many in the Maritimes, and only moderate numbers in New England and elsewhere along the Atlantic seaboard. Because the news media in the U.S. are mostly concentrated near the East Coast, this Snowy Owl invasion isn't attracting as much coverage as the last one. But for the Great Lakes region, early indications are that this may be one of the biggest flights on record.



SNOWY OWLS AND MORE AT POINT MOUILLEE DEC. 23:

Bruce Szczechowski posted on Facebook: *Went down to Pt. Mouillee on Saturday Dec. 23 for the first time since September (when the units closed for hunters until Dec. 15th). Very glad I did, as I spotted 4 Snowy Owls. It is always special to see these Arctic visitors during the winter. Reports that this might be a really good year to see them were definitely right!*

Also spotted several other raptors, including a Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, 2 Northern Harriers, 3 Bald Eagles, and another nice sighting—a Rough-legged Hawk, which I hadn't seen in quite a few years, and which also only comes down from the Arctic during the winter. Thousands of Tundra Swans (and other waterfowl) as well in Lake Erie—quite an amazing wintering ground we have in southeast Michigan for birds!

A couple of Opossums also made an appearance.

You can see Bruce's photos of the four owls, the opossum, and Tundra Swans by following [this link](#):

SNOWY OWL IN DETROIT (at right)

"What if you came out of the Post Office downtown and this was sitting on top of the car in front of you? Ummm?" Check out this amazing LOCAL downtown Detroit sighting of a Snowy Owl! Thanks for sharing this with us, Kimberly Huff! See Kimberly's [Facebook post HERE](#).





(L-R) Obstacle course challenges, songs around the campfire, and outdoor fun with friends.



LOON LAKE SITE SOLD; HOME OF MEMORIAL WEEKEND GETAWAY

By Jim Bull

Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center, beloved home of Detroit Audubon's Memorial Day Weekend Nature Get-Away for over 30 years, has apparently been sold. Thus "Bird Camp" is cancelled this year, but may be back in 2019 at a new location.

While the closing has not happened yet, it appears that the Retreat Center has been sold to a developer, so what we feared for years looks like it has finally come to pass. The property will likely be divided into individual cottage lots. The site began as Camp Mahn-Go-Tahsee, founded by former Detroit Audubon presidents Homer Roberts and Wally Cripps. Homer and his wife Dot stayed on to help with the camp well into their 90s, after it was sold to the Lutherans. Homer persuaded the State of Michigan to designate this private land as a wildlife sanctuary, but unfortunately it had no legally protected status.

We will try to rescue the exhibits in the nature center. Homer and Dot created most of them, including Dot's bird carvings, papier-maché eagles that were made for Detroit Audubon's annual Flower Show exhibit, and some taxidermy specimens. We will also preserve the 30-year checklist of birds for each campout that Homer Roberts started. That may be all that will survive of this incredible camp. The Homer and Dot Roberts bench, on a high bluff overlooking the lake, won't have the same meaning in another spot.

So ends 30+ years of a Detroit Audubon tradition. There will likely be no Memorial Day Campout this year, but we will see if we can find another camp in the vicinity to host a camp next year. It will take some time and trips to the area to find a suitable replacement venue, and we just do not have time to put into that this year.

Some of us had begun discussions about Detroit Audubon possibly owning and operating the camp as place for young Detroit birders, but we just were not ready. In 2-3 years we may have been able to take it on, but we have to solidify our staffing infrastructure right now. Right now, I am mourning what might have been.

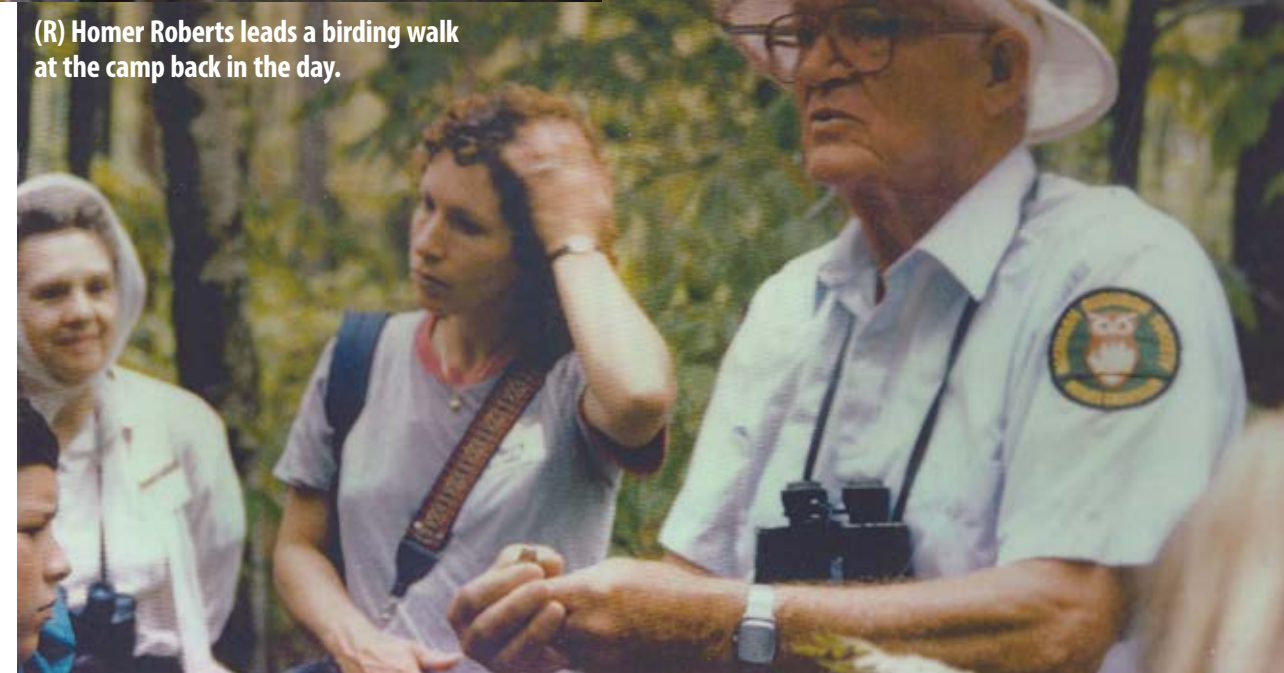
It will be hard to find another camp with this kind of natural diversity right on its own grounds, and so conveniently located relative to other great birding areas like Tawas Point and the Kirtland's Warbler breeding area.

Please send your photos for an archive we will create to remember this long tradition. We need photos of Georgia Reid, who coordinated the camp for many years; my father Wilbur Bull; Vera Haas, who coordinated and got me leading programs; Ralph Bruett, who ran the campout for a few years after my father; and Barney Huffman, who also ran it for a few years.

I grew up going to this camp—Memorial Day just won't be the same this year. Going to miss seeing all of our regulars, like the Guest family, who drew as many as 25 family members—a veritable family reunion—each year at Bird Camp.

Thanks for the memories!

(R) Homer Roberts leads a birding walk at the camp back in the day.



(L-R) Fun, fellowship and food.

SANDHILL CRANES (AND PERHAPS MOURNING DOVES) IN THE CROSSHAIRS

By Songbird Protection Coalition

There is a concerted effort in Michigan to add the Sandhill Crane to the game list and authorize a recreational hunt of this species. The Songbird Protection Coalition (SPC) is a grassroots effort to prevent this from happening. It is endorsed by many Audubon groups, other advocates for animals, environmentalists, wildlife rehabilitators, and even many farmers and hunters.

The fact that there are also many average citizens strongly in support of this effort is evidenced by the many who have signed up at birdwatching, conservation, and faith group meetings to receive "Alerts" from the SPC about what is transpiring. The response has been outstanding. You can keep up, too, by going to the [SPC website](http://SongbirdProtection.com). It will also help if you sign up for Alerts, Like the SPC on Facebook and "Share" your interest with others.

The decision on the Sandhill Crane hunt lies with the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), a group of seven political appointees. Some were appointed by the current Governor, some by the former Governor. Although many of the commissioners represent hunting or agriculture interest groups, it is not inevitable that they will vote in favor of a recreational hunting season on Sandhill Cranes. During the NRC's November meeting, Chairman John Matonich said that they would consider such an action "...only after a thorough consideration of the science and a complete exploration of all effective alternatives that might be used singly or in combination to resolve concerns." With that in mind, it is important that Michigan citizens, scientists, bird enthusiasts, and conservationists make their voices heard to the NRC on this issue.

Prior to the November NRC meeting, the Michigan House of Representatives passed a resolution strongly urging the Commission to make the Sandhill Crane a game species and authorize a hunt.

At the urging of the SPC, many people contacted their state representative to urge a No vote on this resolution. The vote was not done by roll call, but rather by voice vote. People in attendance were certain that the Nays outnumbered the Yeas, but it did not matter. The resolution was declared passed and was sent to the NRC. Nevertheless, the NRC did not take up the matter at the November meeting.

The main argument of the pro-hunting advocates is that Sandhill Cranes damage farmers' crops (mainly corn) and so a recreational hunting season on the birds would somehow benefit farmers. It may be good public relations to urge protection for crops, but it is not a valid reason for a Sandhill Crane hunt. For years, any farmer with a crane problem has already been able to obtain a permit to kill those specific cranes that are causing damage. In contrast, a recreational hunt would be indiscriminate and would not target the "guilty" cranes.

In addition, if a farmer wants to prevent Sandhill Cranes from eating corn, there is a relatively inexpensive seed coating for corn called Avipel, which is nontoxic but extremely distasteful to any kind of bird. Avipel use would deter Sandhill Cranes from eating the corn seed—but they may still stick around to eat insects and rodents in the area,



which will end up benefiting the farmer's crops.

If not to protect farmers, what other reason is there to hunt Sandhill Cranes? Is there an overpopulation of cranes in Michigan? When you consider that Michigan's annual deer hunt is aimed at a population of over a million deer, and the annual Sandhill Crane census in 2016 estimated fewer than 21,000 cranes (a decrease of about 10% from 2015), the idea of overpopulation is laughable.

So, if farmers don't need a hunt, and there is no overpopulation problem, why is there such a strong push for this hunt? The number of hunters has been declining for years, and therefore revenue from hunting licenses is also declining, so perhaps the desire for a new species to bring in hunting-license money is the driving force.

Whatever the reason, there are many Michiganders who strongly oppose this hunt. If you are one of them, you are urged to contact the NRC. It is imperative that the NRC Commissioners vote No on the Sandhill Crane hunt, because once the decision is made, the public does not have the ability to challenge it.

You can contact the NRC by email at nrc@michigan.gov, or by phone at 517-284-6237.

Contact information for the Commissioners:

John Matonich, Chair N11155 East Shore Rd. Marenisco MI 49947 906-842-3612	Christine Crumbaugh 9224 N. Crapo Rd. St. Louis MI 48880 989-763-1814	Louise Klarr 1645 West Kimmel Rd. Jackson MI 49201 248-417-5782	Vicki J. Pontz 1014 Montevideo Lansing MI 48917 517-643-2295
J. R. Richardson 36658 McGuire Rd. Ontonagon MI 49953 906-281-5835	Rex E. Slaybaugh, Jr. 492 East Main St. Harbor Springs MI 49740 313-377-0152	Chris Tracy P.O. Box 5 Richland MI 49083 269-806-7380	

There is some concern that once the Sandhill Crane hunt decision is made, the next target for hunting may be the Mourning Dove. You may recall the successful petition campaign that led to a ballot proposal in 2006, with the result that the citizens of Michigan, by a vote of 69% to 31%, emphatically rejected a law authorizing a Mourning Dove hunt. In fact, a majority of voters in every one of Michigan's 83 counties voted against this hunt.

If you think that was decisive, you may be wrong. In early 2017, hunting lobby groups expressed support for ignoring that 2006 vote by Michigan citizens and opening a Mourning Dove hunt anyway. This matter would not be decided by the NRC, but by a law passed in the state legislature to overturn the voters' decision of 2006. Stay tuned for developments on that front.

In the meantime, please contact the NRC to let them know how you feel about a Sandhill Crane hunt.

Note: Detroit Audubon is a founding member of the Songbird Protection Coalition.



Sharon Korte's photos clockwise from lower left:
Snow Bunting, Gull on Lake Huron, Eastern Screech Owl, Dunlin, and American Pipit.



POINT EDWARD TO GRAND BEND FIELD TRIP NOVEMBER 11, 2017

Twenty-five people showed up for this field trip on a cold, windy, but mostly sunny day. We opted for a later start time (9 a.m. instead of 8 a.m.). Several local Ontario birders joined us and showed us some spots we were not aware of before. With the later start, and seeing those new spots, we kept going until 4:30 p.m. (half an hour past our posted end time). That was despite not being able to go to Pinery Provincial Park, which is closed indefinitely due to a protest that threatened to occupy the park.

Highlights included Long-tailed Ducks, too many Canvasback and Redheads to count, Horned Grebes, American Pipits at two locations, and Snow Buntings at our last stop at Grand Bend beach. Some of our new friends from Ontario may agree to co-lead this trip next year. Nice to have international participation, and maybe leadership in the future.

Here are a few bird photos from the trip by Sharon Korte. We need folks to document the people on our field trips too! Anybody interested?

One of our Ontario birder friends, Brandon Edwards, provided the following links to his eBird posts for the day. He posted for each locality we visited. Detroit Audubon usually posts on eBird, but there was no need to redo what he did, and I know our location data would not be nearly as accurate. Thank you, Brandon.

[Bluewater Bridge](#)

[Point Edward Lighthouse](#)

[Canatara Park](#)

[Sarnia Bay](#)

[Grand Bend Beach](#)

[Kettle Point](#)

[Michigan Line at Brigden Sideroad](#)

[Highland Glen Conservation Area \(from top of hill\)](#)

[Bright's Grove Sewage Lagoons](#)

[Highland Glen Conservation Area \(observations from boat ramp\)](#)

Here's the overall checklist I compiled:

Canada Goose	Mourning Dove
Mute Swan	Eastern Screech Owl
Mallard	(Red-phase)
Canvasback	Red-bellied
Redhead	Woodpecker
Greater Scaup	Downy Woodpecker
Long-tailed Duck	Blue Jay
Bufflehead	American Crow
Common Goldeneye	Black-capped
Hooded Merganser	Chickadee
Common Merganser	Tufted Titmouse
Ruddy Duck	White-breasted
Horned Grebe	Nuthatch
Double-crested	Brown Creeper
Cormorant	American Robin
Bald Eagle	European Starling
Cooper's Hawk	American Pipit
Red-tailed Hawk	Snow Bunting
Rough-legged Hawk	American Tree Sparrow
Dunlin	Dark-eyed Junco
Bonaparte's Gull	Northern Cardinal
Ring-billed Gull	House Sparrow
Herring Gull	
Great Black-backed Gull	
Rock Pigeon	

DETROIT AUDUBON FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE JANUARY-APRIL 2018

Detroit Audubon field trips offer fantastic year-round birding opportunities. We visit renowned regional hotspots during the migration season. Other trips focus on the many interesting resident species. All trips are free unless otherwise noted. Everyone is welcome, especially beginning birders.

Note: schedule is subject to change.

Registration is not required for most field trips, but we appreciate it if you register so we'll know how many to expect and so we can notify you of any changes. To register, please follow the RSVP link in each field trip write-up. If you have trouble with the link, use the email address provided to leave your name, email address, phone number and the number of people in your party. If you want to carpool or are willing to let somebody ride with you (especially on field trips farther afield) let us know. [Email](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or call 313-960-3399.

POINT MOUILLEE

January 20 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-12 noon Fee: \$20

Leader: Jim Bull jbull@detroitaudubon.org

Our first winter field trip to Point Mouillee—a great birding venue in every season. On this winter field trip we will be looking for Short-eared Owls, Northern Harriers, and wintering ducks, as well as winter finches. Since we will be caravanning to drive along the dikes, reservations are required. 25 people or however many we can squeeze into four vehicles is our limit. [RSVP HERE](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org.

ELMWOOD CEMETERY

January 27 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-11 a.m

Leader: Bailey Lininger

This is one in a series of walks to explore the birds, unique landmarks, and history of this beautiful 86-acre cemetery, among the top “must-see” historic sites in Detroit. Designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and dedicated in 1846, the cemetery provides a unique opportunity to experience the nature, culture, and history of Detroit. Other dates for trips to Elmwood are: February 10, March 30, April 21, May 11, June 16, July 13, August 24, September 22, October 5, November 9, December 1.

Location: 1200 Elmwood Avenue, Detroit, MI 48207. Park on the road along the edge of the pond.

[RSVP here](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org

BELLE ISLE, DETROIT (PART OF SHIVER ON THE RIVER)

February 3, 2017 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Leader: Jim Bull

The Detroit River is one of the key wintering areas for waterfowl in North America, and Belle Isle is a very convenient location to take this in without having to go too far from your vehicle.

Directions: Take Jefferson to the Belle Isle Bridge. Cross over, drive around



Female Cardinal at Belle Isle.
Bruce Szczechowski photo

the northeast end of the island and park in the Nature Center parking lot. Plan to go to Shiver on the River at the Belle Isle Casino afterwards where Detroit Audubon will have a booth and activities.

[RSVP online here](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org

ELMWOOD CEMETERY

February 10 (Saturday) 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Leader: Bailey Lininger

See January 27th Elmwood description for details.

[RSVP online](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org

OWL PROWL - GROSSE ILE, MI

March 10, 2017 (Saturday) 7:00 p.m. Fee: \$10 Adults/\$3 Youth

Leader: Jim Bull

Great Horned Owls will have been nesting since early February, Barred Owls will just be beginning, and Screech Owls will be getting ready to nest. Since they are defending territories, playing an owl tape or imitating their calls will likely bring them in where we can see them by lantern light. Meet at St. James Episcopal Church for a brief slide program. [RSVP by March 7th.](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org)

Directions: Take I-75 to West Road (exit 32A) and take West Road into Trenton. Turn right at Jefferson, then left at Grosse Ile Parkway. Cross the

bridge and, when you come to a “T,” turn right on East River Road. St. James is on your right at 25150 East River Rd., Grosse Ile Township. Use the driveway on the north end of the church and come in the side entrance.

ELMWOOD CEMETERY

March 30 (Friday) 9 a.m.-11 a.m

Leader: Bailey Lininger

See January 27th Elmwood description for details.

[RSVP at this address](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or [email us.](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org)

FROG SYMPHONY- WEST BLOOMFIELD NATURE PRESERVE

April 6, 2018 (Friday) 7:00 p.m.

Leaders: Sally Petrella (Friends of the Rouge), West Bloomfield Naturalist Patrick Endres, and Jim Bull jbull@detroitaudubon.org

Join us for an evening of listening to, and searching for frogs. We often also see salamanders, Wood Ducks, herons and owls. This field trip, co-sponsored by Detroit Audubon, Friends of the Rouge, and the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Department, is especially good for children.

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

[Fill out form here](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org

WOODCOCK WATCH- OAKWOODS METROPARK

April 13, 2018 (Friday) 7:30 p.m.

6 p.m. Young Birder's Club Pizza Party

Leaders: Park Naturalist and Jim Bull jbull@detroitaudubon.org

Right at dusk, this sandpiper with a long beak and huge comical eyes does its spectacular aerial courtship display in open areas. This program is great for families with children.

Directions: From I-75, exit at West Road and go west to Telegraph (M-24). Turn left on Telegraph, right (west) on Van Horn (which becomes Huron River Drive), then left on Willow Road to Oakwoods Metropark (32901 Willow Road, New Boston) on the left. Meet at the Nature Center. Annual Metropark sticker or daily pass required.

Please fill out [online form here](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or [email us.](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org)

ELMWOOD CEMETERY

April 21 (Saturday) 9 a.m.-11 a.m

Leader: Bailey Lininger

See January 27th Elmwood description for details.

To RSVP [please fill out this form](mailto:staff@detroitaudubon.org) or email staff@detroitaudubon.org

LEARNING FROM LONGTIME DETROIT AUDUBON TRIP LEADER LEONARD WEBER



Leonard Weber (above) has led countless birding trips, like the Detroit Audubon Young Birders walk shown at right. He is especially attuned to the wildlife in Detroit's Eliza Howell Park. See his blog at elizahowellnaturewalk.wordpress.com



MYSTERY BIRD: AMERICAN TREE SPARROW

If you guessed American Tree Sparrow, you are right. These winter visitors look a lot like the familiar summer Chipping Sparrow, since both have a chestnut cap, dark eyeline, and grey breast. However, the American Tree Sparrow has a dark central spot on its breast that the Chipping Sparrow lacks. If you think you have seen a Chipping Sparrow in the winter around here, it is most likely an American Tree Sparrow. Actually, their preferred breeding habitat includes fields and shrublands in the Arctic and sub-arctic. They got their name from early European settlers who thought it looked a lot like the Eurasian Tree Sparrow.



Above, at the holiday Volunteer Appreciation Party Front Row (L-R) Gregory Alexander, Fai Foen, Erin Rowan, Jim Bull. Back row: Jac Kyle, Diane Cheklich and Peggy Dankert.

At right, (L-R) volunteer Anne Honhart, Research Coordinator Erin Rowan and Program Coordinator Jac Kyle had way too much fun doing the dishes after the party.

