



A Detroit Audubon Publication

Spring 2020

Flyway



The Warblers Are Coming! The Warblers Are Coming! The Warblers Are Coming! The Warblers Are Coming!



Also in this issue:

Pride Day Bird Walk

Spring Is for Fledglings

Detroit Bird Sanctuaries

Palmer Park Goes to the Birds

Nature's Best Hope (book review)

Pesticides and Birds Action Alerts & more...

Flyway

A publication of Detroit Audubon

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Original articles, photos and art welcome at Flyway@DetroitAudubon.org

The mission of Detroit Audubon is to foster the appreciation and conservation of birds and the environment we share. Our three mission areas are: Education, Research, and Action.



MYSTERY BIRD

Can you identify this bird?
Check your answer on page 17.
Photos by Bruce Szczechowski.



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CORRECTIONS:

Winter 2020 Issue:

Page 6. The Mute Swan's beak is, of course, orange, not "yellow."

Page 13. The Ruddy Duck photo in breeding plumage is not by Bruce Szczechowski but was found on the internet.

Fall 2019 issue:

Pages 3-4. The photos were attributed to Sarah Halson. They were actually taken by our intrepid intern at the time, Jensen Bigelow.

We regret the errors.

COVER PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: Magnolia Warbler, Yellow Warbler with mayfly in its beak, Kirtland's Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler. All photos taken by Sharon Korte.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Point Pelee National Park Annual Detroit Audubon Campout May 14-17

Point Pelee is one of THE best places to observe spring migration. Roger Tory Peterson called this “funnel to the north” one of his top dozen North American birding hot spots.

Join us for a wonderful 4-day stay (three nights) at Pt. Pelee National Park during the height of migration. We will be camping at White Pine south (near the big tent). Due to space limitations, there is a maximum of 15 campers, and requests for reservations must be received by April 30. To reserve a spot, send a check written out to Sue Fortuna, 56 Hubbard, Mt. Clemens 48043. BE SURE to include a note with your full name, email address and phone number. Confirmations and other information will be sent out by email.

The cost is \$18/night/person for a camp site to pitch your tent. Minimum 2-night stay. Park entrance fee (paid upon entering the park) and food are not included. Outing Leader: Lee Burton. To learn more contact Lee at leejburton@charter.net or 810-231-9045

Inspired by Detroit Bird City Native Grassland Projects Spread

Ford Donates \$25,000 to Detroit Audubon for Creating a Native Grassland in Corktown

At the suggestion of the local community, the Ford Fund and Community Services sent Detroit Audubon a check for \$25,000 to use to create a Detroit Bird City native grassland as part of the redevelopment of Old Grand Central Station (Train Depot) in the Corktown area of Detroit. The word about our Detroit Bird City program, which is transforming five under-utilized parks (or parts of parks) into native grassland habitat, is spreading like wildfire! If all the individuals inspired by Detroit Bird City who have told us about their plans to turn part of their private property into native grassland (with free seed from the US Fish and Wildlife Service) follow through on those plans, we may have influenced the creation of as much as 100 additional acres of native prairie in the Detroit area!

Mike Fernandez photo



Let's Go Birding Together: Pride Walk at Proud Lake State Park June 13 at 9:00 AM

Although bird migration season will be over and nesting well underway by this time, June marks the arrival of Pride Month for the LGBTQIA++ community. In honor of Pride Month, join us out in nature to enjoy birds together and to celebrate the diversity of both birds and people.

Proud Lake Recreation Area's 4,700 acres of habitat includes overgrown fields, deciduous forest, old pine plantations, and marshes along the Huron River. A wide variety of bird species can be found nesting here this time of year, including Blue-headed Vireos, Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Black-billed Cuckoos.

Detroit Audubon is dedicated to creating a safe, affirming space for LGBTQIA+ community members. Birders of all experiences and all ages, allies, and families are welcome! Youth under 18 years should be accompanied by a parent/guardian. No binoculars? No problem—loaner binoculars will be available for all those who need them.



Your Yard: A Haven for Wildlife

By Grace Vatai, Naturalist & Executive Director – Mulberry Hill Wildlife

Are you inspired to create change and help wildlife in your own yard? Here are 3 tips from Mulberry Hill Wildlife to get you started.

1) Stop using harmful chemicals and treatments such as pesticides and toxic lawn applications. Not only are they dangerous to wildlife, they harm your own health and the health of pets and family members too. Encourage friends and neighbors to do the same.

2) Include food sources for wildlife, such as native plants and bird feeders. Did you know that including just a few native plants in your yard greatly increases its wildlife value? Plants like Milkweed, Bee Balm, Black-eyed Susan, Echinacea, and Cardinal Flower are just a few on our list. And don't forget wildlife-friendly native trees and shrubs! Planted properly, these can provide both food and shelter for birds and wildlife in need. A few of our favorites are Serviceberry, Silky Dogwood, and, of course, Red Mulberry! Always be mindful of location and the growth habit of the tree or shrub when planting to ensure success.

3) Provide shelter and places to raise young. Birdhouses are great, but they aren't the only way to give wildlife a place to stay. They also love things like old logs, brush piles and, as mentioned above, native trees and shrubs. Simply including a few old logs around your property can attract beneficial insects and other wildlife, and a quality birdhouse for native birds can bring the miracle of new life to your yard. Also consider elements like owl boxes and bat houses. Did you know a single bat can eat up to 1,000 mosquito-sized insects in one hour? And, owls are like mobile mousetraps, hunting rodents like rats and mice through the night. Now that's what I call natural pest control!

The mission to restore habitat, one yard at a time:

After seeing countless birds and other wildlife harmed needlessly by pesticides and loss of habitat, we here at Mulberry Hill Wildlife were



determined to help. So, we created our Home & Habitat Program. With Home & Habitat, you can get a consultation and advice based on the unique ecosystem of your yard. You will learn how to create a beautiful natural landscape that attracts beneficial wildlife and is a peaceful, healthy haven for all. With advice and assistance from MHW Botanist and Natural Landscape Specialist Gerard Magnan, you will be well on your way to the natural yard you've always wanted. We also provide landscape design, garden design, general advice, and more. If you have any questions or would like to book an appointment, contact us at 810.892.3276 or email us at wildlife.mulberryhill@gmail.com. You can find us on the web at mulberryhillwildlife.webs.com.

Mulberry Hill Wildlife is proud to partner with Detroit Audubon for the benefit of birds and all wildlife.

While the Spring Peeper is a tree frog only 1-1.5 inches long, it has a very loud piercing song to attract females. Note the "x" on its back. Its scientific name is *Pseudacris crucifer*. *Pseudacris* is the genus for chorus frogs, and "crucifer" means "cross-bearer."

Photo by Peter Paplanus, Creative Commons
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PESTICIDES

What Do They Do?

Pesticides eliminate pests. Sounds simple enough, but what else do they do? Can they hurt wildlife like birds? Can they hurt us? The answers may surprise you.

Every year, approximately

72

 million birds

(and potentially many more) die from direct exposure to pesticides.

Birds ingest pesticide when they consume:



Pesticide granules, which birds mistake for seeds



Plants & insects that have been sprayed with pesticides



Prey animals tainted with pesticides from their environments



Water that has been contaminated with pesticide



A SINGLE GRAIN OF SOME PESTICIDES CAN BE LETHAL TO SMALLER BIRDS

Birds that survive initial exposure to pesticides undergo a period of "intoxication," causing a wide range of harmful symptoms. This makes them more susceptible to predation and collision with vehicles or stationary objects.

Birds exposed to pesticides can become averse to eating the food source that caused their poisoning and lose weight. Some even die of starvation. Birds may become uninterested in breeding or abandon their nest and hatchlings. Pesticide exposure can stop egg production or result in thin-shelled eggs prone to accidental breakage.



Neural Disfunction:
Lethargy, incoordination of muscular action, convulsions, paralysis

Eye Problems:
Protruding eyes, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, pupil dilation or contraction, blindness

Respiratory Issues:
Rapid or difficult breathing, bleeding from the nares (or nostrils)

Head & limbs arched back

Slurred vocalizations, excessive thirst

Digestive Issues:
Vomiting & diarrhea



Pesticide-Free Yard

- Safe for birds and other animals
- Healthy birds keep pests in check naturally
- No risk to children and pets



Pesticide-Treated Yard

- Unsafe for birds and other animals
- Beneficial wildlife may avoid the site
- Health risk to children and pets

Pesticide-free yards are healthy, beautiful places for everyone to enjoy, where children and pets can safely play outdoors. It is safe to attract wildlife to your pesticide free yard with native plants, bird feeders, and bird houses because there is no risk of poisoning your guests.



WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE?

Pesticides have many negative health consequences. Contact can cause skin irritation, breathing problems, and digestive issues. Some are linked to cancer, and others may cause long-term reproductive, endocrine, or neurological harm.

For a list of sources please visit mulberryhillwildlife.webs.com



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Research consultant Elizabeth Wattai

Taking Action to Protect Birds and the Environment We Share

Action alerts were emailed to all members regarding the following issues

NEW NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) RULES GUT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION— A Terrible Way to Celebrate the Act's 50th Anniversary

by Jim Bull

At its February meeting the Detroit Audubon Board of Directors voted to oppose the new NEPA rules and urge our members to take action to stop them from being adopted. NEPA was one of the first laws passed in 1970 in the wake of the first Earth Day demonstrations around the country on April 22 of that year.

NEPA, in part modeled after the Michigan Environmental Protection Act, requires that an environmental impact study be done and an environmental impact statement (EIS) written for any project involving federal funds where environmental damage might occur. It also requires that public input be sought at every stage and gives average citizens the right to sue to stop pollution or environmental degradation from federally funded projects.

Here is what the current administration's new rules would do:

- Redefine "major federal action" to exclude many projects with partial government funding or involvement—making it much easier to approve pipelines, roads, etc.
- Groups that miss the initial public comment period are subsequently excluded from the process—so if you miss the deadline for the first comment period, you are not allowed to oppose or even comment on the project ever.
- Effects are not considered "significant," meaning no environmental impact study will be required if the alleged damages from the project are remote in time, geographically remote, or the product of a lengthy causal chain.
- The need for any environmental impact study is eliminated if the alleged damages are related to climate change.
- Reviews can take no more than 2 years (some take 6-7 years now) and must be limited to no more than 100 pages (most EISs are 600+ pages long). Ecological studies often take several years to thoroughly assess the consequences, and at only 100 pages the EISs will be less useful and will certainly not be comprehensive.

Until now both Democratic and Republican administrations have upheld the basic rules for implementing NEPA, and so have both houses of Congress. Rules are supposed to be established to implement the various provisions of the law. This is the first time new rules are being proposed to essentially undermine the central purpose of the law itself, which is why the legality of the rules is being questioned not only by environmental groups but also by legal scholars.

The new rules were published for a required 60-day comment period on January 9th. We urged members to register their comments about these new rules at the EPA website by the March 9 deadline.

For more information go to: www.audubon.org/news/environmental-impact-gets-no-real-consideration-under-new-proposed-rule

Members and friends were urged to submit their comments by the March 10, 2020, deadline. Lawsuits citing these comments are certain to be filed by environmental organizations to stop this action.

ELIMINATING PROTECTIONS UNDER THE 100-YEAR-OLD MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT

by Ava Landgraf

One of the most important federal laws for protecting birds is under threat. Since 1918, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) has declared that killing or harming any migratory bird (and many nonmigratory birds) is unlawful. This law supported saving species such as Snowy Egrets, Wood Ducks, and Sandhill Cranes.

The MBTA also held BP accountable for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, in the Gulf of Mexico, that killed over a million birds in 2010. Because of the MBTA, BP paid more than \$64 million in settlement funds to restore and protect habitats affected by the oil spill.



*Black and White Warbler.
Bruce Szczecowski photo*

However, for the last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has interpreted the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to protect birds only from purposefully harmful actions. Under this new interpretation of the MBTA, companies are not held liable for any incidental harm to birds, such as an enormous oil spill, or not covering oil pits, which birds mistake for ponds and lakes. As long as killing birds is not the original intention, corporations and

industry essentially now have a license to “accidentally” kill as many birds as they want.

In January, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a proposed rule to further institutionalize the harmful new interpretation of the MBTA and thus make it harder for following administrations to change it. For more information, go to: www.audubon.org/news/preventable-birds-deaths-are-no-longer-punishable-offenses?blm_aid=0&blm_aid=21373. As with all proposed rules, there must be a 60-day period for the public to submit comments, which then must be considered before the rule is implemented as is, modified, or discarded.

We strongly believe this rule should be scrapped! If you agree that industries should be held accountable for their incidental bird fatalities as well as any purposeful bird harm, please act now.

Members were urged to register their comments with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by the March 19 deadline. As with the NEPA changes, many lawsuits are sure to follow, but our member comments can help with those too.

DETROIT AUDUBON BOARD ENDORSES EXPANSION OF MICHIGAN'S BOTTLE BILL

by Jim Bull

According to Dave Dempsey's book, *Ruin and Recovery: Michigan's Rise as a Conservation Leader*, Detroit Audubon, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, and the Michigan Federated Garden Clubs were the three main leaders of the push to gather signatures to put the original bottle bill on the ballot. I know my father, then a board member of Detroit Audubon, spent countless hours in his retirement speaking to civic groups all over southeast Michigan and gathered signatures on petitions for a citizen's ballot initiative when the state legislature repeatedly refused to act. In just two months these and other groups rounded up 400,000 signatures on the petitions. Despite much pressure from the beverage and bottling industry and unprecedented expenditures for television ads opposing the initiative, the proposal was approved by 63.8% of the vote! Support for the bill, which resulted in dramatically cleaner roadways and parks, has enjoyed an 80-90% approval rate in polls of Michigan voters ever since.

That law only dealt with beer and carbonated soft drinks excluding wine, because those were the chief throwaway items on our roadways and natural areas. Public beverage usage has changed; water bottles and juice bottles are now the predominant containers thrown away. Detroit Audubon has long been in favor of including those containers in an expanded law.

At its February meeting, the Detroit Audubon Board of Directors officially put Detroit Audubon on record as supporting expansion of the bottle bill to include noncarbonated beverage containers, including water bottles and juice bottles, as embodied in HB 5306 and SB 701, which were introduced in the state legislature in December 2019. We urge you to contact your state representative and state senator to support these bills.

Black Tern. Jim Bull photo



Have Fun and Support a Good Cause at Lake St. Clair Metropark

Black Tern Discovery Cruise This Summer!

Friday, July 10th, 2020 | 9:00 am to 1:00 pm OR

Saturday, July 11th, 2020 | 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Imagine this: it's a dazzling day in early July, one of those days when Michigan is the most beautiful place in the world to be. It's sunny and warm, and there's a light breeze that makes you want to get out on the water—and that's just what we're going to do! Our ever-popular Black Tern Discovery Cruise is back again, and we want YOU to join us for one of these lovely cruises across Lake St. Clair and into the Saint Clair Flats, home to Michigan's largest Black Tern colony.

We'll depart the Lake Saint Clair Marina at 9:00 am and cruise for a few hours across Lake Saint Clair. Along the way, we will enjoy the breeze and views, as well as presentations about Lake Saint Clair ecology and Black Tern research and conservation from our hosts. As we enter the Saint Clair Flats area, we'll serve a delicious homemade lunch, complete with refreshments and dessert. We'll look for Black Terns and their nests as we wind our way through the grass beds of Harsens Island and the Saint Clair Flats area, and eventually make our way back across the lake towards the marina, sunned and satisfied.

The Black Tern Discovery Cruise is one of Detroit Audubon's biggest fundraising events of the year, and all proceeds support the work we do in conservation and education here in Southeast Michigan. To purchase a ticket, go to www.detroitaudubon.org/black-tern-discovery-cruise/!

Part of Palmer Park, with Its Storied History, Goes to the Birds!

By Noah Levinson

This is the first in a series profiling the history of each of our five Detroit Bird City sites. Before European contact, the Fox, Sauk, Potawatomi, and Wyandot tribes, among others, called southeast Michigan home. There was a home filled with sunflowers, milkweed, asters, and innumerable grasses. As we return these sites to their native habitats, we have the opportunity to reflect on their history and the people that have lived there in years gone by.

Just up the Woodward corridor beyond the enclave of Highland Park sits Palmer Park, one of the finest gems of Detroit's city parks. The park sprawls nearly 300 acres between historic Palmer Woods and the many mid-century apartment buildings near McNichols (a historic district in its own right).

Today, Palmer Park is one of our Detroit Bird City parks. Our area of focus is the section of the park facing Woodward at the corner of 7 Mile Road. The space has been tilled by tractor and will undergo another round of tilling. This will kill the turf grass and any invasive species so that the native plant seeds can take root with less competition from the invasives and ultimately restore the native grassland.

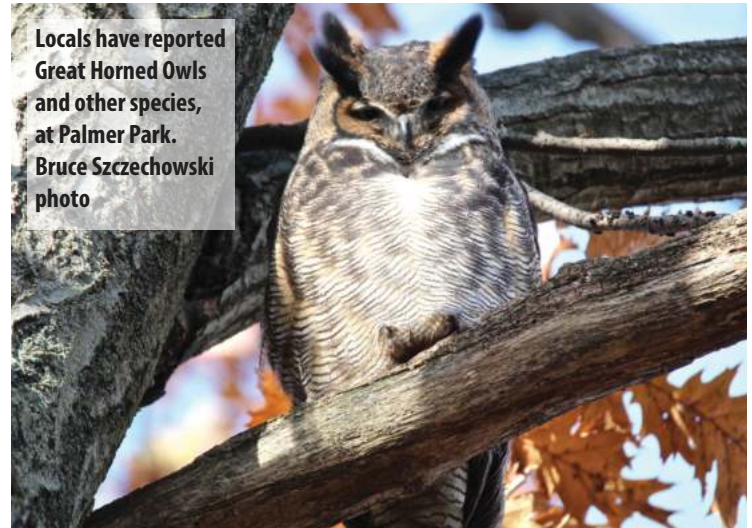
Seeding will begin this spring, depending on the seasonal forecast, but we do anticipate that the seeds will germinate and begin growing this summer. After the plants reach a predetermined height, the area will be mowed, which will again help to fight off invasive species. This may sound counterintuitive, but in fact mowing is the best practice to ensure long-term success of this landscape. After some mowing in subsequent summers, we are hopeful that this will be a self-maintaining natural habitat with limited need for human support. In the long run, this will even help save the city maintenance time and costs.

When you visit this summer, don't be surprised if only a couple of species of flowers are in bloom; many species take two or three years for their first bloom. Each subsequent year should look more and more spectacular at Palmer Park until ultimately reaching a stasis in several years.

Research coordinator Ava Landgraf has already heard locals speak of Coyotes, Great Horned Owls, and American Kestrels. The existing wildlife holds promising future birding and animal sighting opportunities in our little corner of Palmer Park.

Palmer Park originated in 1893 when former U.S. Senator and Minister to Spain Thomas Witherell Palmer donated 140 acres of land to the city conditioned on the parcel's being preserved in its original landscape. This had been part of Palmer's farm and homestead, which was estimated at over 600 acres total. It was yet another example of Palmer's generosity to the city of Detroit, which had included the Michigan Soldiers and Sailors monument in Campus Martius, the Merrill Fountain formerly in Campus Martius and now located in Palmer Park itself, and significant financial support in creating the Detroit Institute of Arts. He even served as the DIA's first president.

Amid the vast acreage you'll find hiking and biking trails and natural woodlands—a true oasis in urbanity. The park boasts many interesting features, too: a historic log cabin dating to 1887, butterfly and urban



Locals have reported Great Horned Owls and other species, at Palmer Park. Bruce Szczechowski photo

gardens, the home base barn of the Detroit Police Department's Mounted Police Division, a splash park for children and families, handball courts dating to 1950 (and re-opened in 2018), and the Old Spanish Bell, whose foundry dates back to 1793. The bell arrived in Mexico over 200 years ago and was ultimately purchased by friends of Thomas Palmer as a gift to the city.

Over the last decade People for Palmer Park (PFPP), a neighborhood-based 501(c)(3), has spearheaded the efforts at refurbishing and rejuvenating the park, to make good on Palmer's own promise of "a park for the good of everyone." In addition to much overdue maintenance, PFPP has replanted and maintained an apple orchard in the park, planted a butterfly garden, established a community garden with 21 raised beds, provided educational programming, restored the stained glass windows and the door of the historic log cabin, offers weekly yoga and bike rides, established the Palmer Park Tennis Academy, which serves over 100 children per year, coordinates three annual festivals, and were instrumental in the return of the Palmer Park Art Fair to the park. PFPP partners closely with the city to restore, preserve, and beautify this great space.

PFPP board member Angella Durkin detailed, "In 2013, People for Palmer Park, in partnership with The Gibbs Planning Group, the Michigan Chapters of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Congress for New Urbanism, brought together local residents and stakeholders to develop a master plan for Palmer Park. The vision created by the community reflected the park's original design by Fredrick Law Olmsted, incorporating natural beauty and trails as main features of the park. The Detroit Bird City project is a perfect complement to the vision created by the local community, and People for Palmer Park is excited to have Detroit Audubon bring this project to Palmer Park."

It is precisely this sort of public-private partnership that will continue Detroit's recent positive trends of becoming a more sustainable city for everyone. There is still much work to be done, and Detroit Audubon is thrilled to contribute to this effort through Detroit Bird City.

Bird Sanctuaries in Detroit: A Holy Mandate

By Rev. Dr. Ventra Asana, Eco-minister



Detroit Haiku II

Pheasant comes to call

Red cockscomb flashes, trembling

Startled peahens sigh

—Ventra Asana

Above, pheasant crowing. Bruce Szczecowski photo.
At right, Dr. Ventra Asana.

The haiku above reflects a relationship and love that I've long harbored for one of Detroit's illustrious city birds. Many years ago, before my mother passed and I was caring for her in her home on the eastside, there were numerous days when I felt a longing to be freed of the responsibility of cleaning, cooking, serving meals and making trips to the doctor to check out vital signs. Added to these caretaker duties, I was simultaneously teaching comparative religion at a community college, doing research for a doctorate degree and serving as an associate pastor at a church. Often, when I felt I was at the end of my endurance, I would hear a pheasant calling in the distance. Startled the first time I heard it, I ran to the back-porch window, and there was the beautiful bird staring up at me. Even though I was inside, I held my breath, standing there spellbound. I wanted the moment to last indefinitely. Looking back, I cannot recall the countless times that the pheasant came to call. But each time, it seemed to show up at a moment when I was the most in despair. It somehow seemed to me that it sensed my mood, and made its astonishing appearance to cheer my soul, to inform me that I was special in the calling I'd undertaken to be there for my mother in a time of suffering.

This remembrance of the pheasant's silent sentry in my life only serves to emphasize how important it is to establish connections with nature, and in particular, relationships with birds in the urban context. As an ecology minister, one who situates the value of Earth care at the center of my ministerial calling, I believe that the protection of nature is a divine mandate, not a holy suggestion. The United Methodist Church states this idea well in its Social Principles, which read in part: "All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation." The United Methodist Church is one of many Christian faith communities that have specific theological guidelines for Earth care, and there are also similar ones in non-Christian faith communities. However, whether one is Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, of other faiths, atheist or agnostic, the idea of caring for our planet home is something that we all must consider, even in these difficult times of catastrophic weather events and decimation of our planet home.

Though I'm now retired from the professional pulpit, I deem that I will be an ecology minister forever, as I still practice what I term "divine Earth care," seeking

whatever opportunities that present themselves in which I can show solidarity to steward the Earth. Thus, it was a joyful moment when I was recently offered the chance to work with Detroit Audubon as a Michigan State University employee in partnership with Detroit Bird City.

The program will create urban meadows in some of Detroit's community parks to provide sanctuary for birds. I was appalled to discover that around 2.9 billion birds have been lost over the past 50 years and to learn about some of the causes contributing to their demise. After I met with the team, I was eager to get started on my role as a community liaison to identify key neighborhood partners who could serve as ambassadors to advocate for urban meadows.

However, the task appears as a bit herculean in that the demographic of Detroit's impoverished neighborhoods houses people who may not share the same fervor to provide homes for birds. It is not so much that people don't care about birds, but rather, that there are other pressing and dire social needs that take precedence over concerns for nature. And yet, in the short time that I've talked to people at community meetings, social gatherings, and one on one, I have yet to recall one instance in which the person did not recollect some encounter with a bird, nostalgically sharing their bird stories with me. One person recounted a moment when she saw a blue "blob" lying on the sidewalk as she descended the stairs to take her garbage can to the curb. On closer inspection she saw that the blob was a blue jay. Not sure if she should pick it up, she softly nudged it with the hem of her shirt to see if it might stir. The bird made no response, and just as she decided to lift it up, it moved and flew away. She says she stood there a long time watching it soar, glad that it had survived for another day. There were lots of little incidences like this in which Detroiters tenderly shared a bird story.

But when I made the case at gatherings that we were looking for people to be bird ambassadors to build meadows in urban parks, I got a bit of resistance. Many told me that they needed a host of things, the least of which were meadows. These included playgrounds, gardens, walking paths and other accoutrements. Some firmly resist the idea of any meadows at all, because they want to see traditional parks, especially since they are hopeful that property values will rise. So, the issue of creating meadows in community parks within impoverished neighborhoods is multifaceted and complex.

Nonetheless, I'm inspired to learn that there are some individuals that are poised to help Detroit Bird City in this valiant endeavor. I'm encouraged to have identified some community activists that are willing to entertain the notion that urban meadows are valuable and can serve both birds and people. These persons have also shared with me that the inclusion of community benefit agreements — wherein improvements to existing areas as identified by residents — could serve as incentives to motivate them to care for meadows and to teach about their importance to urban ecology. As an ecotheologian and ecominister, it is in the sacred space of these encounters that I feel a profound hope and encouragement to continue advocating for the creation of meadows as bird sanctuaries in urban spaces. I see this as an important aspect of divine Earth care, one that exemplifies this intentional practice as spiritual mandate and not as holy suggestion, compelling us to continue to campaign for species that cannot do it for themselves.

The Warblers Are Coming! The Warblers Are Coming!

By Rebecca Minardi • Photos by Sharon Korte

Yes, of course, birding is fun year-round. In the summer we revel in fledglings learning to fly while continuing to beg their harried parents for grub. In the fall we have our hawk watches and drawn-out migrations, greeting our northern breeders once more. During winter's hush, we feeder watch and search for open patches of water, delighting in the dozens of waterfowl species jockeying for space. But spring? Ah yes, spring. Spring is when the birder in all of us comes to life and quickly ignores everything else on their calendars because there was a huge fallout last night, have you seen the numbers!? Spring migration means many things: the return of graceful swallows and secretive cuckoos, singing orioles and skulking thrushes, swooping swifts and hungry hawks. But at the center of many birders' hearts, there's a very special place for warblers. Ah yes, warblers, the ephemeral migrants, quickly here and just as quickly gone, filling our binoculars with stunning yellows, oranges, blues, and—crap! Where did that little guy go?!

Though several warbler species breed in southeast Michigan, including the **Yellow Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Ovenbird**, **Common Yellowthroat**, and the rare **Hooded** and **Cerulean Warblers**, most can only be seen during a brief window from early April until late May on their way to breed in Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula, the Upper Peninsula, or points further north. Over 30 of the dozens of warbler species that migrate through the United States can be spotted in southeast Michigan. The breeding ranges of the **Nashville Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Mourning Warbler**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Pine Warbler**, **Palm Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **Mourning Warbler**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Northern Parula** and **Northern Waterthrush** begin in the northern Lower Peninsula and extend north into much of Canada. **Cape May Warblers** head for spruce-fir forests while **Wilson's Warblers** go to river bottoms and shrubby wetlands of the Upper Peninsula and Canada.



Above,
the Common
Yellowthroat.
At right, a
Palm Warbler.



These denizens of spring migrate hundreds, and in most cases, thousands of miles from their wintering grounds throughout Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. For example, many Hooded Warblers winter in Cuba and southern Mexico while Mourning Warblers and Cerulean Warblers may spend their time as far south as Colombia. Some warbler species prefer to stay a little closer to their summer homes; Pine Warblers winter in Louisiana and Texas while the Yellow-rumped Warbler's winter range stretches across the lower 48 states. Many warbler species, such as the Cape May Warbler, which winters primarily in the Caribbean, migrate across the vast Gulf of Mexico on their way north to their breeding grounds in the United States. Other species, such as the Northern Waterthrush, may split their migration paths between crossing the gulf or flying up through mainland Mexico and the United States. These epic multiday or week flights are all the more incredible when we remember that the warblers only weigh a few ounces. Despite their diminutive size, they fly all night (and sometimes all day when crossing the Gulf of Mexico) only to land in the early morning to refuel within whatever habitat they can find. As most warbler species exist solely on insects, this migration is carefully timed to insect hatching across North America. Though climate change is impacting when insects emerge in the spring, many patterns of warbler migration are still relatively predictable.



The fabulous
Blackburnian Warbler.

Exhausted from their northern nightly flights, many warblers simply ignore the many birders standing around, ogling their beauty. In places such as Magee Marsh, Ohio, warblers often hang out right at eye-level *en masse*, searching for bugs to help fortify them for the next night's journey. This makes this place incredibly exceptional for birders, as we often must look high into the treetops or deep into tangled underbrush to spot a warbler. Once they reach their breeding grounds within the United States, Canada, or even as far north as Alaska (we're looking at you, Yellow-rumped Warblers!), the warblers quickly establish territory and get to breeding, nest building, and raising young. In Michigan, we are lucky to have our very "own" warbler species, which nests almost entirely within our state—the **Kirtland's Warbler**.

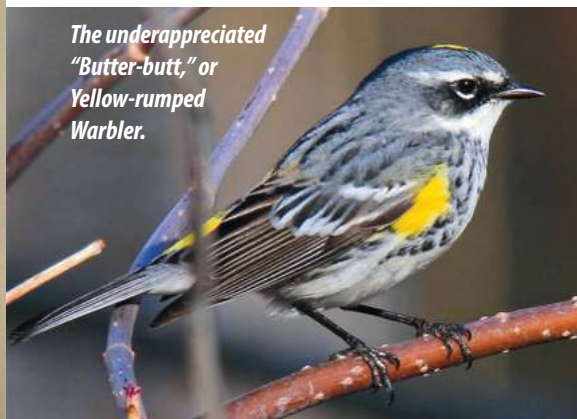
Once on the brink of extinction, its population has rebounded thanks to efforts to increase and maintain their highly specific habitat, young Jack Pine trees. This habitat protection, along with the control of Brown-headed Cowbird nest parasitism, has resulted in this beloved bird's being delisted from the endangered species just this last November! Because their numbers are still quite low, thanks to their geographical breeding restrictions, spotting a Kirtland's is a special treat for any birder.

Though I hesitate to choose a favorite warbler, there are a few near and dear to my heart. The fabulous **Blackburnian Warbler**, which may winter as far south

The Prothonotary Warbler.



The underappreciated "Butter-butt," or Yellow-rumped Warbler.



A rare Hooded Warbler.



The fairly common, but seldom seen, Northern Waterthrush.



as Bolivia, appears to be dipped in Cheeto dust. This beauty enjoys snacking on moth and butterfly larvae and breeds primarily in Eastern Hemlocks. The first time I saw one, I was blown away by how such a small bird could capture so much attention. Another warbler I find special is the **Common Yellowthroat**. Though often skulking among reeds along a water's edge, this bird announces itself with its melodic song, "Whichety-whichety-whichety." For me, this is a true sound of spring. With its striking black mask above a bright yellow throat, the male of this species is aptly named (though I'd argue there's nothing "common" about it!). Finally, I can't help loving the **Yellow-rumped Warbler**. Perhaps our most abundant species, I once overheard a birder say, "Oh, it's just another stupid yellow rump." For shame! No bird is stupid, but especially no bird that may migrate from southern California to northern Alaska! Affectionately called Butter-butts, this species is often one of the first types of warblers

to be identified by new birders (thanks to their incredible abundance). I remember the first time I spotted a small flock during a bike ride in Iowa in the spring. I was astounded by their beauty, and their appearance quickly opened the world of warbler migration to me.

Though many birders may designate themselves as hawk watchers or shorebird lovers or experts at gull ID, I know every birder melts at the sight of the first warbler of spring. So, get ready to crane your neck or peer deep into undergrowth because the warblers are coming! The warblers are coming!

The **CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** is incredibly striking with its yellowish cap, black mask, white cheek patch, white breast and belly, and that characteristic chestnut reddish-brown on its flanks. Ted Black in *Birds of Michigan* writes, "A good indicator of this species' success is the fact that each spring you can easily see more Chestnut-sided Warblers in a single day than John James Audubon saw in his entire life—he saw only one." Why has it done so well? Kenn Kaufman in *Lives of North American Birds* writes that it is because it thrives in areas where old-growth forests were cut. Unlike many warblers, which prefer old growth forests, the Chestnut-sided prefers second growth deciduous forests, edges of woods and fields, overgrown fields, brushy thickets and brambles, or as Ted Black puts it, "early successional forests." It migrates primarily at night, as do most warblers. It winters in Central America from southern Nicaragua to Panama, and a few have been found wintering in the Caribbean as well. In Spring it crosses the Gulf of Mexico, then either follows the Allegheny Mountains or comes up through the Mississippi Valley. The ones we see in Michigan take the latter route.



Birding with Baby

Story and photos by Rebecca Minardi



(Excerpted from the November 2019 edition of Birding magazine. Read the full article (with ABA membership) at www.aba.org/birding-online-november-2019/)

Before I had a child, I would spend hours in the same spot with my binoculars, searching the undergrowth for sparrows and scanning the canopy for warblers. Birding was a passion I fell into headlong in my 20s; I birded during runs, while traveling, and, to the annoyance of many, in the middle of conversations with friends. As with many others, becoming a birdwatcher transformed the world for me. I saw and heard more as my surrounding environment became much more alive, vibrant, and exciting. In 2018, I got pregnant and birded right up until my son was born, huffing and puffing through peak migration at Magee Marsh in Ohio. (My exasperated doctor: Can you please try to stay off your feet every once in a while!?)

When my son was first born, I could continue to bird while he napped in his stroller. I would walk a trail, comforting him when he woke up, and jotting down the species I saw after he fell back asleep. But, slowly, my typical birding outings had to change. As my son learned to crawl and then walk and then run, I could no longer stand fixed and rooted, neck craned, searching the canopy for warblers. Do you know how far a toddler can roam while you look into the sky for 30 seconds? After we moved to New York City last summer, when I would go out with him to play in Central Park, I would gaze longingly at packs of other birdwatchers who

were eagerly scanning the tree line and presumably spotting something cool. I would strain my eyes—because of course I never remembered to pack the binoculars in the diaper bag—and wonder what beautiful migrant I was missing. Other times, I would spot something nearby. “Look,” I whispered to my son, “a Black-billed Cuckoo!” But instead of looking at the secretive bird with admiration, my son was cheerfully shoving a clod of dirt into his mouth while brandishing a stick terrifyingly close to another child’s eye. My game plan had to evolve, at least while I was outdoors with him. Through this process, I spent a lot of time thinking: How does one birdwatch while caring for a small child? And, more important, how could I cultivate a love of both birds and the environment in my son?

To start, you’ll have to be honest with yourself and change your expectations. You don’t necessarily need to lower them, but you must recognize that birdwatching with a partner under the age of four is going to look a little different than birding with the local Audubon group. There’s a lot more noise and Cheerios. Birding with the toddler set requires a change of pace. Sometimes that pace is rapid fire. Sometimes that pace is slow as a heron stalking its prey. You want to stop at the tupelo tree to see the hordes of migrators feasting on insects? Tough luck, your toddler is more interested in chasing the chipmunk. You want to saunter down the path to the reservoir? Not today, your toddler has stopped at the rock pile to search for millipedes. Take a deep breath. This is the new normal, and, trust me,

it can be a lot of fun. Follow the child's lead for a while. Get on their level and start noticing things with their eyes. Yes, you may be missing the Rose-breasted Grosbeaks high overhead but check out this robin really wrestling with that worm!

Common species that you may have overlooked in the past can be great fun for kids. House Sparrows take ridiculous dust baths, building little bowls in the earth as they fling dirt everywhere. Mallards bob in the water like buoys, bottoms up and bouncing. Grackles strut like royalty, scratching at the ground and looking for a snack. If you can remember when you first started birding, these were the species you probably spent a lot of time with. Get to know them again.

Birding with a young child is about slowing down and noticing, and you will be seeing more than just birds. You may follow a squirrel as it works on a discarded piece of pretzel. You may find a lovely patch of native flowers, swarming with every manner of pollinator. My son has managed to pet—yes, pet—a bumblebee on several occasions before I intervened. Once we saw a Blue Jay get into a tussle with a rat. It was weird and wonderful and totally New York City. My son thought it was great fun. Over time, as your kids grow older, you can start working on the more patient aspects of birding. This includes timeworn practices such as staking out a good spot and waiting for the birds to come to you, spending hours on a field trip, or driving somewhere out of the way because you heard there were Snowy Owls. Your older kid will probably love this. Your toddler? Have you ever been on a road trip when your one-year-old has just about had it, and next thing you know, applesauce is everywhere? Maybe it's best if you stayed closer to home.

But how do we make sure our kids are having as much fun as we are and growing up to love the environment and all the bird species that call it home as much as we do? It's easy. Do less, back off, and let your kids be. Unstructured outdoor play has been shown to help kids in all sorts of ways, such as improving cognitive capabilities, honing patience and observational skills, and allowing their imaginations to blossom. Sounds cool, right? Great, you're on board. Want to know how to promote unstructured outdoor play? Here's what you do: Find a patch of forest, grass, or something in between—preferably with birds, for your sake—and plop your kid in it, then step back. That's it. There are no rules, regulations, or templates to follow other than common sense and basic safety. Your kid will be fine. Just try to steer clear of poison ivy.

Your toddler will set the pace, and you're more or less along for the ride, stepping in only in situations where safety warrants it. My son and I have spent many a happy afternoon exploring a small patch of forest or a section of a shallow creek, following minnows, spying catbirds, overturning logs, and poking things with sticks. If you'd like, you can ask open-ended questions to spark curiosity. For example: "I wonder why the bark of that tree is smooth, but the bark of that tree is really shaggy?" Or: "What kinds of things in this forest do you think a bird might want to eat?" You might lift a child up to see something out of reach like an old nest, or point out the pinecones hanging high overhead, or call attention to raccoon tracks crossing the river's edge. You can collect things, create mini scavenger hunts, find patterns in nature, or pretend to be explorers in uncharted territory. But you don't have to do any of that; you can just wander around and climb stuff. Like I said, there aren't any rules.

There are plenty of ways to provide opportunities for unstructured play for your children. Consider joining (or starting!) a Free Forest School (FFS) chapter in your city. FFS focuses on helping parents and caregivers provide their children more unstructured time in nature in a group setting that meets in a public park. You can also go on discovery walks in your neighborhood and encourage your child to collect interesting items such as acorns, stones, and feathers to study back

home. If you have a backyard, you can allow some areas to be a little wilder where your children can search among the tall grass or scramble among the trees. As wild spaces are more likely to attract birds, this offers opportunities

for your little one to get to know the bird species you love. You can also get into advocacy, making sure that your child's school provides unstructured recess. And you can see if your child's school might create a tradition of Forest Fridays, as some schools have already instituted. If you really want to embrace the forest school philosophy, enroll your toddler in forest preschool. Popular for years in Europe, forest preschools and kindergartens have been cropping up throughout the United States. In fact, one of Detroit Audubon's former program coordinators, Bailey Lininger, started Firefly Forest School in Royal Oak (learn more at <https://www.fireflyforestschool.com/>)!

I will always be a birder, eagerly anticipating spring, marking species on my life list, and excitedly pointing out the birds I see to my husband—who once famously called a White-breasted

Nuthatch a "Gray-necked Butthatch." But I am now also a mother. This means that my life has become richer as I have had the pleasure to show the world to my son. It also means that the way I approach birding has changed. My hope is that my son grows up to love birds as much as I do. I also hope that he inherits a world that still has all my favorite species in it. I hope that by planting the seeds now, by giving him as much time as possible in the forest, by allowing him to discover and explore his surroundings without too much structure, by finding joy in the bumblebees and buckeyes and Brown Creepers, he will grow up, along with myriad kids like him, to treasure, protect, and delight in our planet.

My game plan had to evolve...



Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard

by Douglas W. Tallamy • Timber Press, 256 pages

Book review by Emily Simon

If you worry about the natural environment, especially in light of recent news about severe declines in bird populations, take heart. *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard*, by Douglas W. Tallamy, offers a simple solution: Replace a portion of your yard with native plants that support caterpillars and bees.

Tallamy, a longtime professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, has spent his career studying the ways insects interact with plants and how these relationships determine the diversity of animal communities. His research has focused on tabulating and studying the numbers of insect species using numerous types of native plants for reproduction and food.

In *Nature's Best Hope*, Tallamy builds on concepts he presented in his 2007 landmark book, *Bringing Nature Home*, in which he highlighted the fundamental importance of native plants to the environment. Plants are the organisms that convert, through photosynthesis, the sun's energy into food for the insects that in turn fuel much of the animal world. Because most insects evolved to specialize on particular native plant species, it follows that habitat destruction effectively hollows out nature's ability to survive.

In the U.S., Tallamy says, we have logged, mined, tilled, paved, drained, or otherwise developed 95 percent of our country's land and now expect all of our wildlife to thrive "someplace else," mainly in our parks—fragmented habitat islands not big or diverse or numerous enough to support it. In much of what little habitat remains, native plants and animals are edged out by invasive species. And our yards, dominated by high-maintenance lawn and nonnative ornamentals that did not evolve as part of our North American flora, are basically barren of wildlife.

Nature's Best Hope is Tallamy's call for a new paradigm in which citizens take responsibility for restoring the ecological function of their private property and treat public landscapes as opportunities to create wildlife habitat. He envisions our cities and neighborhoods joining together in corridors of native habitats that form "Homegrown National Park," where both resident and migrating wildlife can thrive.

To accomplish this, Tallamy proposes that private property owners convert half of their lawns to productive native plant communities. He suggests focusing on planting to conserve two basic categories of insects: caterpillars and pollinators, due to their crucial ecological roles. Caterpillars are a hugely important food source: 96 percent of songbird species feed insects, often caterpillars, to their young. A nesting pair of Carolina Chickadees, for example, need between 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars to feed their young during the 21 days before they fledge.

Through their research, Tallamy and his team have identified oak, cherry (*Prunus* family), and willow as "keystone" species that have a disproportionately large

effect on the abundance and diversity of wildlife in a landscape. Up to 75 percent of native butterflies and moths spend the larval (caterpillar) stage of their lifecycles using keystone trees. White Oak tops the keystone species list, hosting more than 550 species of native caterpillars and thriving in 84 percent of all U.S. counties. Planting White Oak or any keystone tree maximizes the potential for making our yards attractive to nesting birds and other wildlife.

Pollinators, especially our 4,000 or so species of native bees, also need help. Tallamy reports that without native pollinators, 87 to 90 percent of the plants on Earth would disappear. Keystone species for pollinators include goldenrods, asters, perennial sunflowers (*Helianthus* family), blueberry, and willow. Planting these species would help ensure the continued survival of our pollinators, and by extension, the base of the food web on which we all depend.

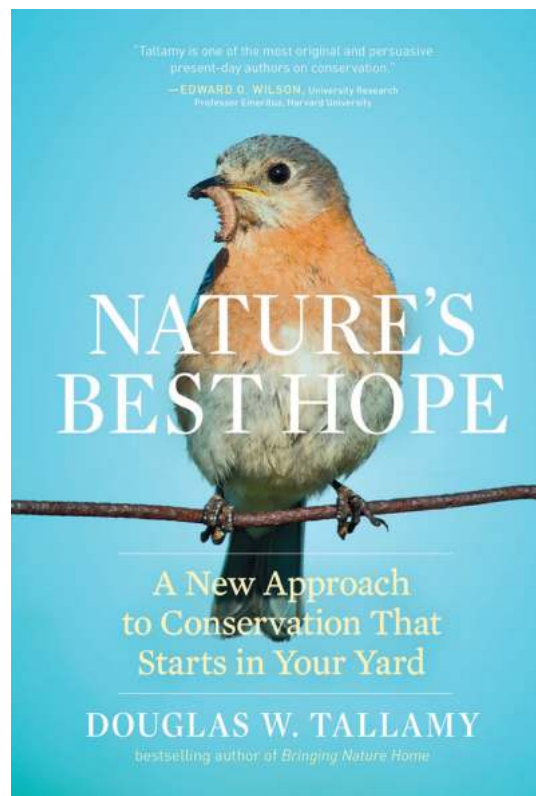
Giving up a portion of our lawns to grow native plants, Tallamy argues, is far from a painful sacrifice like becoming a vegetarian or turning in your SUV. Planting natives, he notes, is extremely gratifying. Native plants both attract wildlife and provide year-round beauty and interest. Once established, they need no extensive watering, fertilizer, or pesticides.

"Even moderate success," he notes, "could collectively restore some semblance of ecosystem function to more than 20 million acres of what

is now ecological wasteland." It's fun to imagine the fantastic boost our wildlife could get from this grassroots initiative should it gain real momentum.

The book includes a chapter addressing the inevitable objections and offering more explanation about how Homegrown National Park can succeed. Another chapter provides a list of practical steps we can all take in our yards to start creating viable habitat. In addition, Tallamy and his team contributed their research data to help develop online tools to help homeowners identify the best plants for birds and other wildlife in their location. Simply enter your zip code at the Native Plant Finder on the National Wildlife Federation's website: <http://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder>.

Nature's Best Hope represents the fully articulated summation of Dr. Tallamy's life's work. It may well become this century's conservation classic. It is also a beautiful book, providing scores of striking photos, a chapter of FAQs, and a comprehensive reference section. Do yourself and the environment a big favor and read this book, and when you are done, pass it on to a neighbor or even the owner of your local commercial greenhouse. Then go plant some native plants!



Spring Time is Fledgling Time

by Ava Landgraf

Spring is almost here! That means it's time to recap what to do when you find a bird that appears to need assistance!

First, what is a fledgling, anyway? A fledgling is a young bird that has grown to the point that it has left the nest. Now let's review a fledgling's growing-up process. Most birds cannot fly when they first leave the nest. Before they can start flying, young birds hop around on the ground stretching out their wings and building up their flight muscles. Their time on the ground, referred to as the Fledgling Stage, could last from two days to a whole week. During this precarious time, the parents might not be right by their side, but they are usually watching from a distance. About every 45 minutes a parent bird will drop off some food and quickly fly off again, trying to draw minimal attention to their vulnerable fledgling.

Fledglings are usually drabber and scruffier than adult birds. If you see a fledgling that is wide-eyed and alert, either hopping around or hiding, it is probably healthy and best left alone. Many times, when people see a fledgling, they think it is an injured adult bird or a baby that fell out of the nest early. But this is not the case! It's important to leave the fledgling alone and stay far enough away so that the parents feel comfortable to fly in and feed their offspring.

Predators are a big danger for fledglings, especially feral or outdoor cats. If you are worried about cats getting to a young bird around your yard,

Fledgling robin by
Denise Rosser,
Flickr.com



you should not move the bird, but you can spritz the cat with some water to deter them from your yard, without causing the cat any harm. Although cats are not natural predators, predators are an inevitable part of a bird's life and are not a reason to remove a healthy bird from its natural habitat. However, flightless and vulnerable fledglings are a significant reason to keep cats inside.

If a fledgling is in the road or in a yard with a dog, you can move the fledgling about 10 feet (less is better) because the parents are watching and will continue their duties as parents as long as they know the fledgling's location. If you find a nestling out of the nest (eyes closed and not fully feathered), you can pick it up and put it back in the nest. The parents will not reject the baby due to a human smell or any other reason (songbirds

have little to no sense of smell).

If you are worried about a fledgling or any bird, call a rehabber for advice before attempting to help. I recommend the Bird Center of Washtenaw County (734-761-9640) for their expertise and support. Too many fledglings are kidnapped each year by people who are trying to "help." As well-meaning as they might be, people "rescuing" a fledgling are usually doing unnecessary harm to our young feathered friends. And we know that's the last thing a bird lover wants to do.

Now that you know the truth about fledglings, please spread the word!

***If you find a young bird
on the ground:***

***It's important to leave
the fledgling alone and
stay far enough away
that the parents feel
comfortable to fly in
and feed their offspring.***



Trillium Grandiflorum. Jim Bull photo

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 Suzanne S Reynolds
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 Dietrich W Roloff

Katherine Rosevear
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 Schacht Household
 Georgia L Schmalzried
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 Kim Sfreddo
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 Jack Smiley
 Anne T Smith
 Neal Swanson
 Cynthia Taylor
 Janet Thornburg
 N. Seetha Uthappa
 Stewart Vining
 Carla Vitale
 Corinn and Steve Vollmuth
 Ann Wallace
 Noreen and Stewart Warren
 Susan and Peter Washabaugh
 Steve Weis
 Mary Lou L Wickowski
 Rose Wilson
 Felicia Wirgau
 Cathy Wood
 Stephanie Wroblewski
 Christine and Keith Yancy
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 Reg Baker
 Nancy and Howard Baron
 Diane O Bennett
 Jackie Creager
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 Joanna Fowler
 Janet R Fox
 Herbert Gabehart
 Grant Gellert
 Marilyn Grosteffon
 Cynthia A Idyle
 Shaila Jehle
 Daniel Klionsky
 John Leon and Roberta Urbani
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 Monica Parrish
 Margaret Peggy Peterson
 Beverly Raphael
 Arthur and Michele Siegal
 Mary Jane Stewart
 Debbie Thompson
 Karen and Larry Urbanski
 Alison Uzieblo
 Jon & Kathleen A Walgren
 Katherine P White
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\$100-249
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 M. Therese Bellaimey
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 John E Blanz
 Laurie J Bogart
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 James N Bull
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 Theresa and Joseph Carrier
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 William Dodge and Patricia Hidock
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 James M Edwards
 Madel A Ernemann
 Joseph and Joyce Fennell
 Marilyn Florek
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 Lenore M Trombley
 Kathy Wagner
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 Phillip M Walton
 Roger Watson
 Suzanne White
 Thomas P. Wilczak and Steven R. Quinkert

continued

Alfred Wood and Florence
Monnier
Frances A Wright

\$250-499

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Carolyn and John Carr
Nicole Darling
Joyce Delamarter
Earthshare
Michael Finnell
Joe and Jean Hudson
Marian Gram Laughlin
Donor Fund
Barbara Levantrosser
David G Miles
Gerald and Kathleen Moore
Network for Good
Marcia D Schwarz
Barbara Siepierski
Leonard and Margaret Weber
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\$500-999 KIRTLAND'S WARBLER LEVEL

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Richard P Baks
Thomas and Carol Cracchiolo
Foundation
Lisa D Goldstein
Jennifer R Poteat
Cheryl Schwartz
Margaret Steiner

\$1000-4999

PEREGRINE FALCON

Margaret Baxter
Cynthia Dooley
Mary Moix and Eugene Knaff
Lloyd A Semple
Emily J Simon

\$5,000-9,999

BALD EAGLE LEVEL

Karen and Drew Peslar
Foundation
Estate of Linda Anne
Zimmerman—bequest

\$10,000-19,999 DETROIT

METRO ECOSYSTEM BENEFACTORS

None in this category this year.

\$20,000 AND BEYOND, ATLANTIC AND MISSISSIPPI FLYWAY CONVERGENCE BENEFACTORS

Community Foundation for
Southeast Michigan—grant
for B.I.R.D.S. (Building
Informed and Resourceful
Detroit Stewards) education
program.
Roseann B Comstock Living
Trust—bequest

Ford Fund & Community
Services—grant to create a
native grassland in Corktown
in conjunction with the
train depot remodeling at
the suggestion of the local
community.

Jerrold Jung
John Stroh and Vivian Day Stroh

GIFTS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

Gail Cameron, by:
Barbara Cameron,
Kate Cameron
Sue Herron
Joyce Lloyd
Carla Vitale
Richard Ort, by:
Amy Chapman
Margaret Gram, by:
Marian Gram Laughlin

GIFTS GIVEN IN HONOR OF:

Lloyd Semple, by:
Cathy and Bob Anthony
Jim Bull, by:
Rev. Dr. Jill and Gary Zundel

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Detroit Zoological Society:
Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle
Nature Center donated the
nature center auditorium for
our Volunteer and Partner
Recognition Brunch
Island Coney: donated chili for
the volunteers conducting
the Rockwood Christmas Bird
Count

Jerry Jung: donated the use
of heavy equipment and
the services of a heavy
equipment operator to
prepare the Callahan Park
site for planting by removing
sod and concrete, followed
by seeding the site. This was
in support of our Detroit Bird
City project.

US Fish and Wildlife Service:
donated all the native
wildflower and grass seeds
for seeding Callahan Park,
part of our Detroit Bird City
Project.

Paul Weertz: donated the
materials and his services to
make a sign explaining the
Callahan Detroit Bird City
Project.

And our many volunteers,
without whose donation of
time and services we could
not do even a fraction of the
work needed to further our
mission.



MYSTERY BIRD REVEALED:

If you said Tufted Titmouse, you were misled. The photo on page 1 shows a Dark-eyed Junco with the wind blowing the feathers on top of its head into a faux crest. Note that this bird has an all gray back and an all white belly, whereas the Tufted Titmouse has a lighter gray back, white around the eye, and chestnut-colored flanks. The junco also has a pale beak compared to the dark, more slender beak of the titmouse. The Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored morph) at left also looks as if it has white bands on its tail, which we think is an illusion created by branches casting shadows in the bright sunlight. By the time you read this, all these ground-feeding sparrows—like Dark-eyed Juncos, also known as “snowbirds”—will have headed to northern Michigan and Canada to breed. Photo by Bruce Szczechowski. Both were taken at Oakwoods Metropark.



American Woodcock.
Jim Bull photo

Upcoming Field Trips

Please join us for a field trip this spring! We welcome birders and nature enthusiasts of all ages and abilities. We even have binoculars to borrow if you don't have your own. Youth under 18 years should be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Any field trip with a (\$) next to it has a fee; otherwise field trips are free of charge. Go to www.detroitaudubon.org/field-trips to get details for each trip and to sign up!

Young Birder's Field trips are for youth ages 12-18 and led by high school students (accompanied by one of our board members). Family members who provide transportation for these youth are welcome to attend as well, of course.

▲▲ 40 in 2020 is a series for beginning birders, and participants are expected to take part in all three field trips.

APRIL

- 4 Young Birders - Palmer Park
- 10 Elmwood Cemetery Walk
- 10 Woodcock Watch - Oakwoods Metropark (\$)
- 11 Pheasant Walk in Detroit
- 18 Pointe Mouillee State Game Area (\$)
- 25 ▲▲ 40 in 2020 - Kensington Metropark
- 25 Pheasant Walk with DNR Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC)

MAY

- 1 Frog Walk in West Bloomfield
- 2 Young Birders - Palmer Park
- 2 Eliza Howell Park Wildflower Walk
- 2 Magee Marsh (\$)
- 3 Elmwood Cemetery
- 9 Lake St. Clair Metropark (\$)
- 9 Superior Township Bird Walk
- 30 ▲▲ 40 in 2020 - Eliza Howell Park

JUNE

- 6 Eliza Howell Park Bird Nests
- 6 Young Birders - Palmer Park

13 Pride Bird Walk - Proud Lake State Park

17 Elmwood Cemetery Walk

20 Port Huron State Game Area

26 ▲▲ 40 in 2020 - Rouge Park

SUDDEN TEMPORARY OUTDOOR PHENOMENA

This spring, Detroit Audubon is starting a series of STOP (Sudden Temporary Outdoor Phenomena) Field Trips. These field trips are designed to provide an opportunity for interested persons to view time-limited annually recurring animal activity, when only an approximate date can be given in advance. If you are interested in attending, please send a message to programs@detroitaudubon.org referring to the STOP field trips contact list.

American Toad Breeding Pond, Eliza Howell Park

Annually, usually within a few days before or after April 20, adult toads return to the wet meadow breeding pond for about three days of loud calling and mating. During these days they can be both heard and seen between the hours of 4 p.m. and dark.

Praying Mantises in Goldenrods, Eliza Howell Park

Annually, mature Praying Mantises can be watched for several days to a week in and near blooming goldenrods, preying on insects, mating, and laying eggs. This usually occurs about the second week of September, but varies from year to year.



American Toad singing.
Margaret Weber photo

Flyaway

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*Wood Duck photos by
Dongfan Chen.*

