

Jack Pine *Warbler*

FALL MIGRATION ISSUE: The Bird of Kings Meets Motown: Peregrine Falcon ■ A Life of Conservation ■ Annual Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, "CraneFest XIX" ■ Kirtland's Warbler Tour Recap ■ New Birding Trail & Fall Color Tour



Jack Pine Warbler

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Cover Photo ■ Peregrine Falcon

Photographer: Barb Baldinger | barbarab@tir.com

Bud-z hatched on May 8, 2000, at the Commodore Perry Motor Inn in Toledo, Ohio and was banded by the Ohio DNR at about three weeks old. Bud-z has been nesting on the AT&T building in Detroit (pictured) since 2009. He has a purple U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service band on his right leg, numbered 2206-62710. His left leg has a Midwest Peregrine Falcon Restoration color band. This photo was taken with a Nikon Coolpix P90 camera.

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MICHIGAN AUDUBON CONNECTS BIRDS AND PEOPLE FOR THE BENEFIT OF BOTH ...

... through conservation, education, and research efforts in the state of Michigan. Formed and incorporated in 1904, it is Michigan's oldest conservation organization. Michigan Audubon supports bird surveys throughout the state, publishes survey data, provides educational opportunities, and preserves nearly 5,000 acres of land within 19 sanctuaries as habitat for birds and other wildlife. The 41 chapters of Michigan Audubon focus on local conservation issues and provide educational programs within their communities. Contributions to Michigan Audubon are tax-deductible.

Executive Director's Letter



CITY BIRDS

Detroit's population has been declining since 1950, including a 25% decline between the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census. On September 4, 2008, Detroit Mayor, Kwame Kilpatrick, announced his resignation following a guilty plea to two felonies for obstruction of justice. In July 2013, we learned that the City of Detroit filed for bankruptcy protection.

Despite the doom-and-gloom stories we're so familiar with hearing, there are good things happening in Detroit. Artists, entrepreneurs and corporations are investing in the city and taking advantage of empty storefronts, warehouses and idle factories. "Made in Detroit" can now be applied to everything from barbeque sauce to bicycles (and the first pickles I've ever eaten without gagging).

Coasting through Detroit reveals yet another positive highlight: a wealth of habitat and wildlife. My grandfather lives in Grosse Pointe and keeps me up-to-date on the male pheasant that struts through his yard most mornings. Belle Isle and the Detroit River are reliable venues for viewing birds like Bald Eagle, Saw-whet Owl and great rafts of Canvasback Ducks (the Detroit River is a global IBA for the latter). As you can see from the cover of this issue, Detroit is one of several cities in Michigan that Peregrine Falcons call home.

There are great bird conservationists in Detroit too. On October 26, Detroit Audubon and Oakland Audubon will co-host a Fall Conservation Symposium that "promises to be both entertaining and educational for bird lovers of all ages" (www.detroitaudubon.org). Detroit Audubon continues to run a successful Lights Out campaign to deter birds in migration from colliding with tall buildings. Oakland Audubon, led by President, Don Burlett (a lifelong birder with 4,000 species on his list), continues to grow its membership and now offers a young birders program (www.oaklandaudubon.org). The list of Detroit's contributions to bird conservation goes on: the Detroit Zoo's work on Piping Plovers, the Rouge



Canvasback Ducks experienced a population decrease in the late 1980's and early 90's due to habitat loss and lead poisoning. Populations are now stable with well over 650,000 individuals. © Roger Eriksson

River Bird Observatory's ongoing research programs and a Wild Birds Unlimited store that's been promoting conservation and supporting birdwatching for over 30 years (www.grossepointewoods.wbu.com).

Members of Audubon entities throughout the state are in tune with the challenges that Detroit faces in the years to come. I encourage you to consider your fellow birders who live and work in the city—and all of their great contributions to promoting birds and their habitat—and share the good stories about the birds and birders of Detroit. Together we can promote a bright spot in the city's landscape: the birds.

I look forward to talking about bird conservation initiatives in Detroit and communities throughout Michigan at the upcoming Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, "CraneFest" (www.cranefest.org). On Friday evening, October 11, we will be hosting renowned author-photographer, Richard

Crossley, during our Birders' Soirée. The event takes place at a small township hall just 12 miles northeast of Battle Creek. Traditionally, this event has attracted bird enthusiasts from Lansing, Jackson, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. The Battle Creek area, including nearby Marshall, is an excellent destination for a fall getaway. Please consider joining Michigan Audubon for the 19th edition of our state's largest birdwatching event.

Find me, introduce yourself, and I'll give you the name of my new favorite pickles, "Made in Detroit".

Best regards,

Jonathan E. Lutz, Executive Director

A Life of Conservation: Mary Jane Dockeray

BY HOWARD MEYERSON

GRAND RAPIDS - Mary Jane Dockeray is concerned about kids today; they are out of touch with the land and so are their parents. Not farm land and cornfields so much, but the origins of things most take for granted: boxes of cornflakes, cans of peas, toilet paper and even window panes.

Glass from sand, cardboard from trees, aluminum from the earth: These are lessons the 86 year old naturalist says are disappearing in a consumption-driven world where manufactured goods are considered of the highest value.

"The present generation of parents is a lost generation in terms of the environment," said Dockeray, a lifelong nature educator, Michigan Audubon lifetime-member and lecturer for National Audubon. "We live in a boxed,

bagged and canned economy and kids don't know where things come from before they are boxes and cans."

Dockeray knows of the lapse first-hand, the urban children who know little of the natural world, and the youngsters who've never played in mud or listened to a symphony of crickets and frogs at night. She is the founder and former director of Blandford Nature Center in Grand Rapids and its environmental-school called Blandford School.

During her 22-year tenure there and 19 prior years lecturing about nature for the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Dockeray taught thousands of young students, who in turn educated their parents about their connection to the world around them.

"It became plain to me in my first 19-years that kids had less and less

connection to the land," said Dockeray, who was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 2012 for her work in environmental education.

"And, as the years went by, I got really concerned. When the nature center started we saw kids who didn't want to get off the bus for fear of what was in those dark woods. I thought then, we really need to be here."

Dockeray retired from Blandford in 1990, but her love for the natural world has not diminished. At 86, she remains a picture of health: spunky, well-spoken and still passionate about environmental education. Daily water aerobics help keep her fit and in good shape. She continues to spend time each week at the center as a naturalist-in-residence.

"Her ability to connect is why people



Mary Jane Dockeray's garden is a veritable nature center and her very own playpen. ©2013 Howard Meyerson

come back here year after year. She leaves a lasting impression because she is so engaging,” said Annoesjka Steinman, Blandford’s executive director. “She was a pioneer when she started this nature center. Her work style was no-holds barred, get it done. I admire her willingness to buck the system, even back then.

Dockeray grew up on a poultry farm in Walker Township. Her father, Winfield Dockeray, was a bookkeeper who also raised chickens. Her mother, Mary, was “a total city-girl,” she says. The family owned 2.5 acres just outside of Grand Rapids, an area where neighbors raised goats and open space was plentiful.

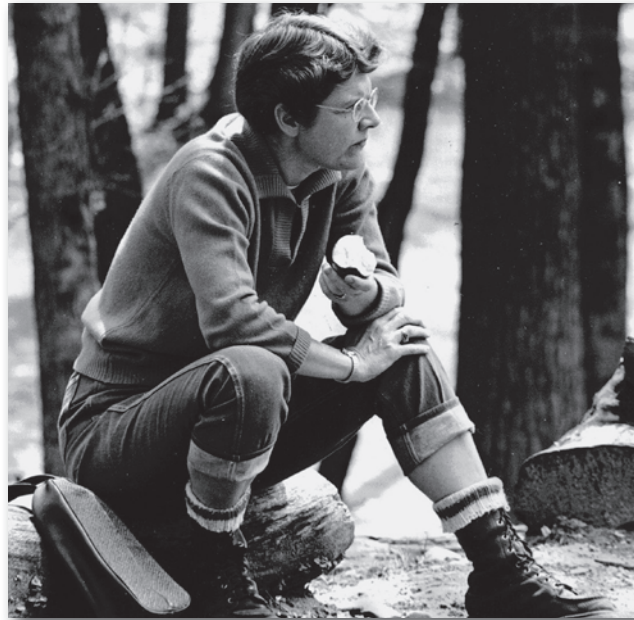
“My mother was afraid of anything that moved and my dad grew up on a farm in Rockford. They didn’t know the names of things, but they appreciated living things,” Dockeray said.

“My mother was always eager to learn what things were: this moth or that butterfly, but she was queasy about living things popping up around the house, so my dad and a neighbor built a little cabin in the backyard for all my collections: butterflies, flowers, rocks and anything else that interested me.”

Dockeray attended Oakleigh School, a 7th Day Adventist Academy. It was there her late fifth grade teacher, Anna Nelson, learned that she wanted to become a geologist. Nelson, who was known to be stern, saw something special in the young girl and took Dockeray under her wing becoming her mentor and counsel, a relationship that would grow over several decades.

“Never underestimate the influence a teacher can have,” said Dockeray who graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Geology and a combined masters and doctorate in Conservation Education.

Environmental education continues to be important, Dockeray said. College



Mary Jane Dockeray pauses for a snack while on an outing in 1973.
© 1973 Mary Jane Dockeray

instructors could use more of it. Their students are not getting the background they need.

“What bothers me is teachers don’t have any idea of how to integrate the world around them,” Dockeray says in typical, outspoken fashion. “They are not trained to do that. So much (in a curriculum) is dictated to them. But our (Blandford School) teachers do it and no one rides herd on them.”

Blandford School, which serves 60 sixth graders and ranks in the top one percent of schools in Michigan, was expanded this year to nearly double its size, following a successful \$2.3 million capital campaign to fund construction of a 7,000 square foot LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) school building and retire the portables where students had been taught.

“I would call her extremely passionate and focused on the goal she set for what she wanted to see at Blandford,” said Rob Keys, an associate professor of science at Cornerstone University and former Blandford Nature Center director from 1997 to 2000. “A lot of what Mary Jane

did was visionary at the time.”

“National Audubon was pushing the creation of nature centers across the United States. Mary Jane hopped on that bandwagon with Blandford. She introduced a lot of inner city kids to the natural world that never would have had that connection.”

Sitting on the shaded backyard patio of her northeast Grand Rapids home, Dockeray’s fondness for nature is evident. Extensive gardens fill the landscape. Wood-chip pathways meander by bird feeders, a pond she built, and around assorted flower and vegetable plots. There are birds singing in trees and chipmunks on the ground.

Ever the geologist, Dockeray points to rock cairns she’s built, reciting where and when she picked up each stone. Dramatic flowers fill beds, grown from seeds she’s collected in her travels. Smiling, she refers to the urban oasis in front of her as her “playpen.” It is a veritable nature center in her backyard.

Howard Meyerson is a lifelong outdoor enthusiast, a freelance writer and photographer in Michigan and the outdoor columnist for MLive Media Group. His work also appears in *Michigan Outdoors News* and other outdoor publications. He can be reached at howardmeyerson@gmail.com.

The Bird of Kings Meets Motown

BY TORREY WENGER

The Peregrine Falcon comes straight out of an action movie. It's frequently called the fastest bird in the world, a title it certainly deserves. In level pursuit, a peregrine maxes out at just over 65 mph. Even more impressive is the diving speed – cruising up to 3,000 feet overhead, the falcon picks out its prey, folds its wings, and dives, reaching speeds of 200 mph or more. To study this stooping behavior, ornithologists go *sky diving* with trained falcons. This extreme hunter has been a favorite of falconers for over a thousand years.

The preferred nesting sites are pretty extreme too. Any craggy cliff will do; in areas without cliffs, they'll use skyscrapers, bridges, smokestacks, bell towers or transmission towers. (In a pinch, they'll use the abandoned nests of an Osprey or Bald Eagle.) The pair chooses a ledge about a third of the way down the cliffside and scrape out a rough nest. It takes a month for the two to five eggs to hatch and the young leave their nest-ledge after about a month and a half. During this time, the adults will feed them everything from hummingbirds and cranes, to bats and songbirds, to fish and rodents stolen from other raptors. Shorebirds are especially favored. These exciting birds make their homes in cities around the state, including Detroit, Lansing and Battle Creek, but in the UP they prefer the wilds of the Pictured Rocks and the Porcupine Mountains.

Not too long ago, there were no Peregrine Falcons in Michigan – the last known successful nest occurred in 1957 in the Garden Peninsula. In fact, by 1964 there wasn't a peregrine to be found east of the Mississippi. DDT, a widely used organochloride insecticide, accumulated in apex predators; in peregrines and other birds, it caused thin eggshells that couldn't withstand the pressures of incubation. DDT was banned, the peregrine was placed on the federal endangered species list and scientists worked with falconers to create captive rearing protocols. In 1999, with much fanfare, the Peregrine Falcon was officially delisted, although it remains listed as an endangered species by the state of Michigan.

Evidence of the restoration effort can be seen in the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas maps. During the first Atlas (fieldwork completed 1983-1988), six townships had peregrines; all but one of these locations were release sites for young birds. Nearly 140 reared falcons were released and the first post-DDT nest attempt occurred in Detroit in 1989. During the second Atlas (2002-2008), peregrines were documented in 33 townships, mostly clustered around metro Detroit and scattered westward to Lake Michigan but with a third of those observations in the UP. For whatever



This falcon happened to be a mere 75 feet from the photographer when it caught its dinner. Here, the bird has finished its meal and is about to take off with the last traces still on its talons. © 2012 Ron Wolf.

reasons (fewer predators, perhaps and certainly an abundance of pigeons), the birds released in urban zones have obviously fared better.

Peregrine Falcons are now a regular sight in our large and even medium-sized metropolitan areas. Audubon groups take field trips to spot them in their downtown habitats. This powerful raptor was never very common in Michigan and now it's in our cities. It can only be a hopeful sign the Peregrine Falcons and humans have adapted to live in close proximity. May we ever be mindful of this great gift.

The Peregrine Falcon is just one of over 200 species featured in the two editions of the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas, available online at www.mibirdatlas.org. Each species has a map showing the results of both Atlases, so changes over the intervening two decades can be easily seen.

Torrey Wenger, a volunteer with the Kalamazoo Nature Center's Kalamazoo Valley Bird Observatory, has been a birder since college. Her favorite large bird is the Turkey Vulture. Contact her at torrey.canyon@gmail.com.

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Peregrine Falcon

MBBA I 1983-1988	
•	Possible
▲	Probable
•	Confirmed
MBBA II 2002-2008	
■	Possible
■	Probable
■	Confirmed

Block Summaries				
Atlas One	UP (2190)	NLP (2210)	SLP (2690)	Blocks (7090)
Possible	0	0	0	0
Probable	0	0	0	0
Confirmed	4	0	2	6
Total	4	0	2	6
Percentage	0.18%	0.00%	0.07%	0.08%
Atlas Two	UP (2222)	NLP(2242)	SLP(2728)	Blocks (7192)
Possible	3	0	1	4
Probable	1	0	5	6
Confirmed	5	2	21	28
Total	9	2	27	38
Percentage	0.41%	0.09%	0.99%	0.53%
Township Summaries				
Atlas One	UP (610)	NLP (590)	SLP (696)	Townships (1896)
Possible	0	0	0	0
Probable	0	0	0	0
Confirmed	4	0	2	6
Total	4	0	2	6
Percentage	0.66%	0.00%	0.29%	0.32%
Atlas Two	UP (622)	NLP (596)	SLP (709)	Townships (1927)
Possible	3	0	1	4
Probable	1	0	5	6
Confirmed	5	1	17	23
Total	9	1	23	33
Percentage	1.45%	0.17%	3.24%	1.71%

2009. Kalamazoo Nature Center. Data from MBBA I and MBBA II in Oblique Mercator Hotline Projection, on PLSS Township file polygons and centroids provided by MIDNR.

0 25 50 100 150 Miles

Species mapped by Township/Range

Peregrine Falcon Comparison of MBBA I and MBBA II. © 2012 Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas.

Calendar

September

19-22 **Midwest Birding Symposium**
Lakeside, Ohio

21-22 **Hawkfest**
Brownstown Twp.

October

11 **Birder's Soiree**
Convis Township

12-13 **CraneFest**
Bellevue

19 **Cranes, Colors, and Cabernet**
Jackson

19-20 &
26-27 **Crane Viewing; 4:00 PM - Dusk**
Kiwanis Youth Area, Bellevue
Haehnle Sanctuary, Jackson

26 **Fall Conservation Symposium**
Detroit

November

2-3 **Birding Berrien Weekend**
St. Joseph

2-3 **Crane Viewing; 4:00 PM - Dusk**
Kiwanis Youth Area, Bellevue
Haehnle Sanctuary, Jackson

9-10 **Crane Viewing; 4:00 PM - Dusk**
Kiwanis Youth Area, Bellevue
Haehnle Sanctuary, Jackson

Making Memories at CraneFest

BY WENDY TATAR

There's something about a crisp, sunny fall day spent out-of-doors that rejuvenates the spirit. When you can add a nature walk complete with a Bald Eagle or numerous Sandhill Crane observations, that day creates a memory you'll treasure for years. Many CraneFest attendees have created those memories over the past 18 years and it is what brings them back to the event year after year.

If you attended the 2012 CraneFest you know that Mother Nature was not on our side. The weather was cold and damp. Many of the storms in the area missed hitting the event site, but kept visitors at bay. Even though conditions were not ideal it was a CraneFest like no other for one reason, the cranes.

Typically those who arrive early at CraneFest see a few dozen birds in the marsh feeding. In the late afternoon they are joined by several hundred more cranes. It is a spectacular site as the birds fly in to roost for the evening.

Last year was a treat. Possibly due to the rain, most of the birds stayed in Big Marsh Lake all day, and there were a lot of them.



Get to know Richard Crossley at the Birders' Soirée and/or CraneFest. He will be signing books and giving presentations!
© Richard Crossley

There were literally thousands of birds! It mimicked the photographs you see of the cranes during spring migration on the Platte River in Nebraska. More and more migrating cranes kept flying in throughout the afternoon until it looked like you couldn't squeeze in another bird. Maybe it was the cranes' way of treating the hardy souls who braved the weather to see them. They gave us something special; something we will remember for a long time.

Of course, this year we are hoping for better weather, but wouldn't it be awesome if the number of cranes stayed the same?

This month's book review (page 8) tackles the new work of Richard Crossley, *The Crossley ID Guide: Raptors*. Michigan Audubon is happy to announce that Crossley will be joining us as the guest speaker for this year's Birders' Soirée, our fundraiser to support next year's CraneFest. Richard will present "Past, Present and Future" a program about the lessons he's learned while growing up in the wild British birding scene, from travels around the world to living today in Cape May, NJ. It will be a fast-paced story told in a Yorkshire brogue through a camera lens that loves color and art. We are very excited to bring Richard to Michigan and we have several other activities that he will be leading at CraneFest as well.

Richard will lead a sold-out workshop on perfecting your bird identification skills on Saturday morning. The funds raised from this workshop go to support Sandhill Crane conservation at Baker Sanctuary. Michigan Audubon is grateful to Richard for providing this fundraising activity while he is here.

If you don't have one of Richard's field guides yet, Michigan Audubon's bookstore will be selling them. Already have one? Bring it with you to the event for Richard to autograph during a Saturday afternoon book signing. He will also present one of the hillside chats Saturday afternoon.



Sandhill Cranes eating in the field © 2008 Tom Hogdson.

Storybook corner is a new activity at the event. Taking place under a large tent, authors of children's books will present readings and drawing instruction throughout the day. The authors will be on hand to sign books too. There will also be new presentations by naturalists that will entertain both young and old. On Saturday, Marsh Mallow Man will teach us about wetlands and the creatures that live there while Bela Hubbard will visit on Sunday to tell us what Michigan looked like in the 1800's. These new activities will join your favorites from prior events to make 2013 a great year to attend CraneFest.

Returning to the event is Nature Discovery. They will be bringing their reptiles and amphibians, allowing you to get close looks at these amazing creatures. Many of the environmental organizations that you love will be in attendance. There will also be a wide array of artistic talent on display. Be prepared to purchase some artwork; from oils and watercolors, photography, wood carvings, jewelry, and pottery, there will be something for most tastes.

To make your CraneFest visit most enjoyable, remember to bring folding chairs or blankets to sit on. If the temperatures are warm enough that the insects are active late in the afternoon, the cranes will stay out in the fields eating. It may be a long wait for them to fly in. It will be worth it, though, as the air fills with their calls, the sky fills with birds, and you and your loved ones create memories of time well spent.

For additional and up-to-date information or to register to participate in the Birders' Soirée, visit the event website at cranefest.org or call the Michigan Audubon office at 517-641-4277.

Wendy Tatar is Michigan Audubon's Program Coordinator

ABOUT SANDHILL CRANES

In honor of CraneFest, which kicks off October 12th, we've provided you with some fun, quick facts about Michigan's tallest bird, the Sandhill Crane.

Brief History

Scientific evidence has found that Sandhill Cranes have been living in North America for some 9-10 million years making it one of the longest living species of birds. At the end of the 19th century there were less than 100 breeding pairs of Greater Sandhill Cranes in Michigan, now there are over 30,000 individuals. It is one of the most common species of cranes and one of few crane species in the world that is still common today. Michigan Audubon's Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary was the world's first dedicated crane sanctuary!

- FAST FACTS -

Scientific name: *Grus canadensis tabida* (Greater Sandhill Crane)

Size: Body, 31.5 to 47.2 inches; wingspan, 5 to 6 ft

Weight: 6.5 to 14 lbs

Color: Mainly gray, except for a white face and distinctive red crown which is featherless. The brown/copper tint sometimes observed is due to their grooming habits in which they rub mud on their bodies for camouflage, the iron in the mud often stains the grey feathers.

Sound: Cranes have an unusual windpipe that forms a loop within their breastbone. This produces their unique, loud trumpeting like calls.

Average life span in the wild: 20 years, making it one of the longest lived birds in North America.

Habitat: Freshwater wetlands, grasslands, meadows, bogs and croplands.

Diet: Omnivore; feeds on plants, grains, berries, mice, snails, frogs, snakes, insects and worms.

Predators: Because of their size they have very few predators in the wild; Great-horned Owls may go after young cranes otherwise, hunting and the destruction of habitat has the most detrimental effects on the population.

Range: Predominately in North America. They range south to Mexico and Cuba and as far west as Siberia.

Migration: 170-450 miles/day; they fly in v-shaped, j-shaped or single line formations.

Flight speed: 38 mph

Mating: Cranes do not start looking for a mate or breeding until they are 2-7 years old; they will mate for life.

Breeding: Females typically lay 2 eggs in the spring, both parents incubate the eggs which will hatch in 28-32 days. Males are responsible for defending the nest.

Young Cranes: Known as Colts, are covered in down and able to walk shortly after hatching. Colts can feed themselves within one day and can fly around 60 days.

The Dance: Unique to each pair, they will engage in an elaborate dance consisting of bowing, leaping, jumping, twirling, outstretching their wings and 'singing'. The 'singing' is a mating call known as "unison calling" in which the pair throw back their heads and unleash a passionate duet. The two will perfect this over their years together.

Mallory King is Michigan Audubon's Marketing and Communications Coordinator.

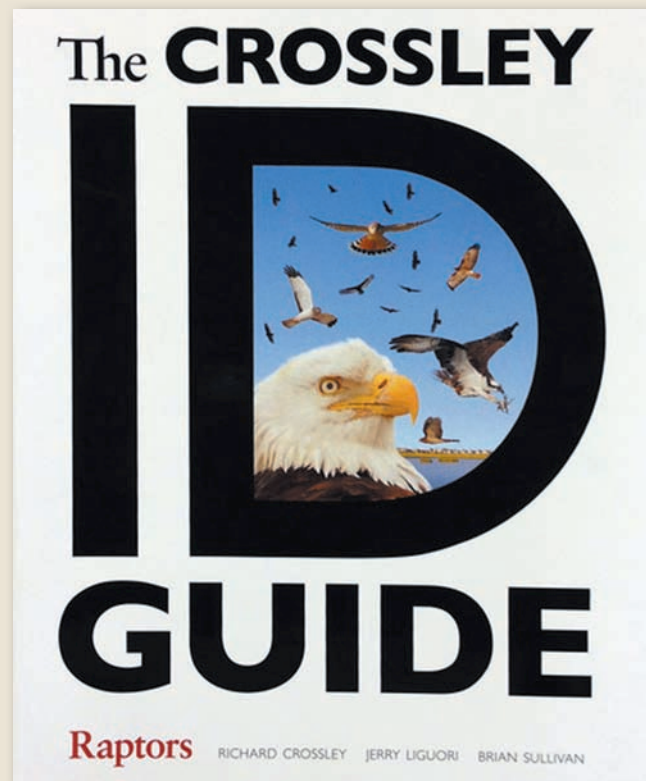
The Crossley ID Guide: Raptors

BY SKYE HAAS

Richard Crossley's innovative book (the Eastern Birds ID Guide) was met with mixed reviews by many, myself included, so I was pleasantly surprised as I warmed up to this book. Devoted solely to raptors, it has a lot more merit than I was expecting. Often illustrators such as David Sibley intend for their drawings to represent a composite creation based on observations of living birds, specimens and photographs. These types of guides synthesize a rendition of what is to be *typically* expected in the field. Extreme plumage variation is sometimes shown, but more nuanced variability in plumage is often lost, confusing the user who thinks they almost found a match for the bird they are viewing. Photo guides however, have the advantage of being able to display numerous photos where the range of variation in a species can be shown. Too many provide disappointingly few photos, but this is where the Raptor Guide really won me over. Each plate is a delightful collage of LOTS of digital images displayed across an appropriate landscape. Not only do the many photographs serve to educate on what the bird is supposed to look like, it gives you a feel for the type of habitat you might encounter that species in. As I looked at the White-tailed Hawk plate, I could almost smell that salty-smoke odor of a burn drifting over the Texas coastal plain.

That is when I realized the real value of this guide - Crossley has begun to successfully recreate the field experience. We get to see what these birds look like up close, at a distance, perched, or kettling with dozens of other birds, often with multiple species together. Every page has at least a half a dozen photos of raptors. Different age classes are well covered, as is sexual dimorphism, all laid out on a realistic background. I particularly enjoyed the pages where confusing species (and subspecies) were placed alongside one another. The Accipiter and Red-tailed Hawk pages, for example, did an excellent job of showing the range of variation within the taxa and how one could begin learning to distinguish them from closely related or look-alike species. Furthermore, the many photo quizzes are an excellent learning tool. I do wish the answers had been placed on the immediate following pages rather than the back of the book, but overall these quizzes will help the learning birder immensely as they try to commit to memory just what a light-morph juvenile Swainson's Hawk actually looks like.

The text is well done. Truncated notes accompany each page of photographs to help guide the reader through that plate. The second half of the book contains detailed accounts of each species covered, each at least two pages long, complete with a map displaying the breeding, wintering and year-round ranges. Accounts include valuable information on flight style, size, shape, plumage, similar species, status and distribution. Helpful for the field birder is the fact that each account begins with a species full common and Latin name as well as the often ignored four-letter code that, once learned, makes writing in one's field notebook less of a chore!



\$29.95

Available at the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

This is not to say I don't have a few critiques that must be noted. There are times where some photographs of a species are more 'glamour' shots, and not as useful for ID purposes. It would be best for a reader to learn a species from a good profile shot that displays as many of the pertinent field marks as possible as opposed to a picture of a raptor doing something "cool". Another complaint was some photos are just too small or at an awkward profile to be of any real use in learning raptor ID. While some shots do fulfill an educational need (it is good to know what a species looks like from far away), there are a few too many pictures of birds in odd poses that, if they had been seen in real life, one would simply have to wait a moment before the bird moved into a more identifiable position. Thankfully most photos are useful, but a few more "quintessential" profile shots wouldn't have hurt! Finally, while most of the text is informative, the essays that began all the species accounts were varied. Some were in the old-time style of natural history writing that I rather enjoy, but other times were anthropogenic tales from the bird's perspective; a little too cutesy for my liking. A matter of personal preference of course and should not detract from the wealth of information provided to the reader.

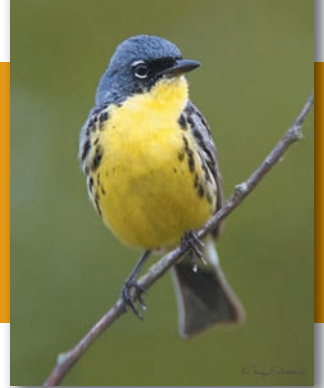
In all, this guide is worth the time and every raptor enthusiasts should make room on their shelves. It may not be the only book on raptors one should own, but I suspect this guide will become one of the first ones you reach for when you ponder that age-old question; was that a Sharpie or a Coop?

Skye Christopher G. Haas is an avid birder and author of the UP Rare Bird Report, which is distributed via list serve and can be found at UPBirders.org. Skye can be reached at theowlranch@gmail.com.

2013 Kirtland's Warbler Tour Recap

BY ARIEL TAUSK

The Kirtland's Warbler is on a good path to recovery with the help of conservation actions across the region. © Roger Eriksson.



Each year, birders from all across the country and globe gather in Grayling, Michigan for the opportunity to witness one of the world's rarest birds: the Kirtland's Warbler. Michigan Audubon in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service presents tours to see the warbler each year in the spring and early summer.

Kirtland's Warbler tours not only allow people to see the warbler, they are also meant to inform them about the warbler, their habitat and its path to recovery.

The tour group I attended met with Claire O'Connell, Michigan Audubon's 2013 tour guide, at the Ramada Inn in Grayling. There, everyone became acquainted and watched an informative video on the warbler. As part of the group I was surprised to see some young birders with their parents hoping to add this rare species to their Life Lists.

Next, my group followed O'Connell to a state-owned parcel of jack pine forest. Upon walking into the habitat, we could hear the song of one Kirtland's Warbler as clear as a bell. The challenge became finding the tiny bird in a mass of trees by listening to where his calls were coming from. The group donned their binoculars and began searching. Several males were defending their respective territories in the area and seemed to exhibit similar behavior: they would appear momentarily at the top of a tree, allowing people to look and take photos before disappearing in search of insects. The air was always ringing with the sound of the warbler's call.

Another unique aspect of the tour was being able to see a Brown-headed Cowbird trap. The cowbirds bubbled in their cage, puffing up their feathers with each sound they made. Seeing the birds so close made it seem like a zoo exhibit. A friendly squirrel even followed the tour group, perhaps wanting some tasty corn from inside the cowbirds' cage.



Cowbird trap on Kirtland's Warbler tour with jack pine habitat in the background. © 2013 Ariel Tausk.

At the end, my group seemed quite happy with the outcome. Everyone got a chance to see the warbler. "It was definitely worth it," Jamie Borrello, a participant on the tour with her son, said. "I had never seen one before."

Not only did we see Kirtland's Warblers, we were able to see an array of other noteworthy species and travel to a one-of-a-kind Michigan habitat. The scruffy jack pines and dry soil contrast from the lush forests normally found in Michigan.

"This just looks so different from any other place I've been in the state," said Donna Keller, a lifelong birder on the tour with her family.

According to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Biologist, Chris Mensing, coordinator of the Kirtland's Warbler tours, the 2013 season was a great success. This past season brought in more people than usual, with the average tour consisting of 10 people, some with as many as 30 or 40.

"We had just over 700 people attend the tour," Mensing said. "It was one of our highest tour seasons that we've had."

This year may also mark a milestone for the Kirtland's Warbler. Because the species has recovered so dramatically, Mensing said that there is discussion of removing the species from the endangered species list.

"The recovery goal that we've used is 1,000 pairs sustained over five years," Mensing said. "We've been well over 1,000 pairs for at least ten years now. In fact, in the last few years, it's been over 2,000 pairs."

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, along with Michigan Audubon, have been working with Huron Pines on The Kirtland's Warbler Initiative, a program aiming to help with the bird's recovery. Those involved in the recovery program realize that delisting the species will be a difficult road to take, since jack pine ecosystems need to be continually managed to ensure the survival of the warbler. The Kirtland's Warbler Initiative seeks to educate the public of the benefits of jack pine ecosystems and attending tours are a great way to gain knowledge and support the bird.

"We can't just say we did our job and walk away and the species exists and thrives," Mensing said. "[The tours are] the direct link to the public. People are coming from all over the U.S., all over the world, to see the Kirtland's Warbler. It's an opportunity to explain to them what we're doing."

Ariel Tausk is the Writing and Communications Intern for Michigan Audubon. She is currently a sophomore at Michigan State University and is pursuing a degree in Social Work. A lifelong nature enthusiast, Ariel enjoys exploring the Michigan wilderness and documenting her experiences. You may contact her at arieltausk@gmail.com.

Chapter Spotlight

Grosse Pointe Audubon Society

The Grosse Pointe Audubon Society has a long standing history of conservation in Michigan. Established in 1966 the society, made up of around 75 members, strives to promote the awareness, understanding, enjoyment of and stewardship of the environment with an emphasis on birds and their habitats.

The society is closely linked with the Seven Ponds Nature Center and partners with the organization on a regular basis. In the 1960's fellow Grosse Pointe Audubon Society (GPAS) members Patricia and Ripley Schemm donated land that would become part of the new Seven Ponds Nature Center. The GPAS still holds their annual North American Migration Count at the nature center.

The society does a great job of bringing the community to the birds. Each spring, for the last 10 years the group has hosted the Grosse Pointe Birding Challenge. "The competition ... pits teams from the [five] Grosse Pointe [communities] in a seven-hour race to find as many bird species as possible between 5 a.m. and noon in their respective communities," explains GPAS President, Bill Rapai. "We like to get people out bird

watching in a fun and competitive way."

The GPAS also works closely with elementary and middle school students to create an interest in birding at a young age. Members of the society lead spring birding walks with students at the Edsel & Eleanor Ford House, which is known as a migratory trap for birds. Students learn basic tips on indentifying birds, what a productive bird habitat looks like and how to use binoculars and other birding equipment.

The society's next big project is only in the beginning stages of discussion but eventually the GPAS would like to grow from a social conservation group into a 501(c)3, nonprofit organization. The reasoning for the change is quite inspiring. In time, the GPAS would like to start a small endowment to help support research of the Canvasback Duck on Lake Saint Clair.

"Research shows that 10 percent of the Canvasback Duck population, which is a species of special concern, winters on Lake Saint Clair," Rapai divulged. "We would like to make sure all of the ducks, not just the Canvasbacks, keep returning to Lake Saint Clair year after year."

This means research would need to be conducted on the lake to see what the pollution levels are, what, if any, invasive species are present and exactly what bird species utilize the lake. Rapai says the GPAS is a long way out from becoming a 501(c)3 but thinks the group could make a substantial impact on Canvasback research on Lake Saint Clair.

Monthly meetings always include a guest speaker. September's presentation was given by GPAS member Annie Crary. Crary traveled to Saipan as a bird banding biologist during the spring/summer of 2009 and fall of 2010, and ran six banding stations in different habitats on the island. Crary explored the rich natural history of a tropical paradise and shared her stories on swimming with colorful reef creatures, meeting the birds of Saipan, learning the intricacies of avian molt and discovering new, undocumented molt patterns. Contact GPAS for information on October's speaker.



Grosse Pointe Audubon member Rosann Kovalcik helps to introduce a Detroit preschooler to birding
© 2013 GPAS.



Contact Information

Website: <http://gpaudubon.blogspot.com>
Connect on Facebook: Grosse Pointe Audubon
Bill Rapai, President
Email: brapai@aol.com

Meeting Information

The Grosse Point Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of every month, September thru April.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2013
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
(17150 Maumee, Grosse Pointe, MI 48230)

Michigan Audubon Partners With State's First Birding Trail

BY DAVE BARRONS, MICK SEYMOUR & MALLORY KING



Sleeping Bear Birding Trail

Launched in April of this year, the Sleeping Bear Birding Trail is Michigan's first birding trail. Like other state birding trails, the Sleeping Bear Trail (SBT) is a travel route linking recommended, high quality birding sites. The SBT links 35 recommended sites along

Michigan's Heritage Route M-22, extending from Manistee on the south to Northport near the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, curling back south to Traverse City. The twists and turns of this 123-mile scenic state highway mirror the coastline of Lake Michigan, which is never far away. Numerous stretches of the Trail offer panoramic views of Lake Michigan and are home to over 320 different bird species.

For birds and birdwatchers, it is the shoreline that offers a special attraction. The Lake Michigan shoreline has a funneling effect during migration, when waves of shorebirds, grassland species, warblers and raptors move through and overhead in significant numbers. During fall migration expect to see large numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl such as Semipalmated Sandpipers, Ruddy Ducks and Sandhill Cranes. The SBT is also home to a number of rare and endangered species such as the Piping Plover, Common Loon and Trumpeter Swan. For these reasons and many more, there are several locations along the Trail that are globally recognized Important Bird Areas.

The SBT offers a wide diversity of habitats: shoreline and beach; woodlands high and dry, low and wet; true marsh and wetlands; and multiple pocket prairie developments. The Trail boasts a headquarters in Glen Arbor and a visitor center at Michigan Audubon's Lake Bluff Bird Sanctuary in Manistee, both offering local knowledge to visiting birders.

Fall is the perfect time of year to check out this new birding trail! Not only will you see a wide range of birds but the trail will be ablaze with autumn hues providing some spectacular fall color viewing! Check out a few of our recommended 'hotspots' to see some remarkable birds and breathtaking fall colors.

Lake Bluff Bird Sanctuary, Manistee

This is the southern tip of the SBT and a great place to start or end your tour. Michigan Audubon's Lake Bluff Bird Sanctuary (LBBS), situated in a major migratory flyway, boasts over 1700 feet of Lake Michigan frontage on 76 acres. Originally landscaped as an arboretum, many specimens have been preserved such as the California Redwood, Ginko, Giant Sequoia and Sycamore. Notable bird species include the Bald Eagle, Long-tailed Duck and all seven woodpecker species. The sanctuary also has a three bedroom Bed & Breakfast on site with great room prices all year long.

Arcadia Dune: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve, Arcadia

Managed by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, a birding trail partner, this hotspot covers 3,800 acres of land including lakeshore, dunes, forests, wetlands and grasslands. C.S. Mott hosts 150 bird species year-round and is home to the largest Michigan nesting population of Grasshopper Sparrows, which is a species of special concern. Other notable species include Eastern Meadowlark, Upland Sandpiper, Northern Harrier, Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush and Black-throated Blue Warbler.



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore was voted Good Morning America's No. 1 Most Beautiful Place in America in 2011. © 2013 Derek Bacigal.

Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail, Leelanau County

This is a new trail that runs for 27 miles starting in Empire and making its way north through Glen Arbor (SBT headquarters), through the D.H. Day campsites and ending at the northern tip of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The views on this trail are awe-inspiring and during the autumn color show, even more extraordinary. The trail covers a mix of dunescapes,

forest canopy and wetlands and is rich with an abundance of bird species, including raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds and warblers.

Leelanau State Park, Northport

This state park consists of 1,350 acres and is divided into two sections, north and south. The northern park, located on the rocky shoreline, is an excellent migrant staging area where birders can see an array of gulls, sandpipers, herons, mergansers and ducks. The southern park meanders through northern hardwood forests, wooded wetlands, dunes and part of the Lake Michigan shoreline. The southern park hosts warbler and tanager species and is home to nesting Bald Eagles.

While a few spots are highlighted above, all 35 recommended birding spots offer exceptional access to birds and nature. The customized BirdTrax widget on the homepage, www.sleepingbearbirdingtrail.org details all sightings on the Trail in the past two weeks.

Trail developers anticipate the Sleeping Bear Birding Trail website will become the hub for all things 'birding' in Northwest Michigan. Check it out. Michigan's first birding trail is a gem!

Dave Barrons, SBT Chair, is a retired TV meteorologist, lifelong birder and believer in the good business of birding. Mick Seymour, SBT Operations Director, operates his own financial research business and is an avid field birder. Mallory King is Michigan Audubon's Marketing and Communications Coordinator.

Illinois Young Birders Experience Cerulean Warbler Weekend

BY EDDIE KASPER

This past spring my brother and I went to the Cerulean Warbler Festival in Michigan. We are both members of the Illinois Young Birders. I am 11 and my brother Brett is 8. Our mom drove us to the festival after we begged her all winter to take us. We wanted to attend the festival to see the Cerulean Warblers, since it is one of the best spots in the world to see them. We also wanted to see a Henslow's Sparrow.

Friday started off with an early morning start to go look for tanagers, thrushes and warblers in a nearby preserve. We saw an Acadian Fly Catcher, Veery, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, and one Scarlet Tanager. When we got back to the Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary, we spent time with several members of Michigan Audubon, and met Caleb, the Michigan IBA Coordinator. We really enjoyed meeting him, because he liked birds ever



Photo of a Blue-winged Warbler taken by Eddie (age 11) at the 2013 CWW. © 2013 Eddie Kasper



Photo of a female Cerulean Warbler taken by Brett (age 8) at the 2013 CWW. © 2013 Brett Kasper



Brett Kasper (left) and Eddie Kasper (right) as 2013 Cerulean Warbler Weekend. © 2013 Mallory King

since he was a young boy-just like us!

We had two favorite outings during the festival. The first one was early on Saturday morning to see the Henslow's Sparrow. When we were driving to the fields to find the Henslow's Sparrow, we spotted a Great Horned Owl flying over all of our cars. We were so excited, what a great start to the morning! When we got to the fields, we immediately heard a Henslow's Sparrow, and we saw a Ring-necked Pheasant. Even though we heard the sparrow, it took about ten minutes to locate it in the field. They are hard to spot!

The second outing was right after when we went birding for the Cerulean Warbler. We drove around the area, and we were successful in finding about ten Cerulean Warblers and several other bird species. It was a great time. We enjoyed meeting everyone and seeing the bird species that were there. We hope to return next year.

Many Thanks

Michigan Audubon would like to thank all the volunteers, partners and sponsors that helped make the Cerulean Warbler Weekend such a great success. This event continues to wow the participants who come from all over North America. We also thank everyone that supported the event through their donations to the Barry County Bird-a-thon.

Without the assistance of the following folks, it would be impossible for Michigan Audubon to put on a great birding event like this.

Leaders:

Tom Funke
Donna Keller
Dick Leonard
Jonathan Lutz
Ed Merz
Greg Nelson
Melanie Perry
Caleb Putnam
Richard Yarsevich

Presenters:

Jim McCormic
Ranger Steve Mueller
Greg Swanson

Volunteers:

Terry Hewlett
Ed Merz
Madeline Merz
Carolyn Rourke
Barbara Schmidt
Michelle Stratz
Richard Yarsevich

In-Kind:

Barry County Transit
Highland River Adventures
Seasonal Grille
Trail Spotters of Michigan

Sponsors:

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New Members

We thank you - our newest members as well as our renewing members - for your support of Michigan Audubon's bird conservation efforts.

Kathie Albright
David Babcock
Franny Bluhm
Tim Bogar
Malissa Bossardet
Vincent Cavalieri
Pegg Clevenger
Tim Cornish
Sue Crissey
Moir Croghan
Jill Devenport
Glenn S. Dunn
John Esser
Valerie Fargo
Caroline and Kathleen George
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Matty and Benjamin Hack
Barbara Haman
Witawas Handee
Jason Moritz and Melanie Hilliard
Janet Hug
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Doreen and Paul Ruede
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Roger Sherburn
Ruth Simmons
Jen Tewkesbury
Sarah Toner
Gloria Tonti
Al Turner
Don and Lyn Turner
Larue Wells
Kevin Wistrom
Lynn Wolan
Susan Yarrington

Announcements

Raffle Tickets Now on Sale

It is time once again for the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory (WPBO) to hold their annual fundraising raffle. The winner of the raffle will walk away the proud owner of the quilt pictured here. Second prize is a pair of Eagle Optic binoculars and third prize is an autographed copy of *The Crossley ID Guide Eastern Birds*. Tickets are \$2 each or 3/\$5. The drawing for winners will be held on October 30, 2013. If you are interested in purchasing tickets for the raffle to support WPBO, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with a check made payable to WPBO to:

Mike Fitzpatrick
56 Hubbard St.
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043



Cranes, Colors and Cabernet Festival

Jackson Audubon Society (JAS) and Sandhill Crane Vineyards will host a day of activities celebrating the Greater Sandhill Crane on Saturday, October 19 in northeast Jackson County. Cranes, Colors and Cabernet will provide driving tours to see the cranes as they forage for food, walking tours of the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary and specials and activities at the winery located at 4724 Walz Road, Jackson.

The event begins at 12:00 PM (Noon) when JAS naturalists lead one-hour walking tours of the 1000+ acre Haehnle Sanctuary. The last tour will depart at 2:00 PM. The tour will take participants to the north side of Mud Lake Marsh, a location rarely visited by humans. Mud Lake Marsh is a staging area for migrating cranes.

A lecture on the natural history of the Sandhill Crane will be presented at 4:00 PM by a Haehnle naturalist. At 4:30 PM participants can take part in the "crane caravan tour." JAS members will lead this carpool tour to the nearby farm fields, providing the opportunity to see the cranes at a closer distance than at the sanctuary. The carpool will return to Haehnle at approximately 5:30 PM allowing participants to watch the "fly-in." Advance notice of your participation in the caravan tour is requested and can be done by emailing wendyt@michiganaudubon.org or by contacting the Michigan Audubon office at 517-641-4277.

Viewing of the cranes returning to their roost will occur at the Sanctuary's observation hill overlooking Mud Lake Marsh until dusk. Check the winery website at sandhillcranevineyards.com for specials and cabernet tasting.

Crane Viewing Opportunities

October and November weekends provide great opportunities to view Sandhill Cranes at two Michigan Audubon sanctuaries. Every fall, spectacular flocks of Sandhill Cranes gather at the Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary in Calhoun County and the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary in Jackson County, before they head out to spend winter in Tennessee, Georgia and northern Florida. After spending the autumn days foraging for insects and leftover grain in nearby farm fields, the cranes return to the safety of the sanctuaries in the hours before sunset.

Big Marsh Lake in Baker Sanctuary is the best place to see the cranes at the closest distance. Although the cranes roost on the sanctuary, viewing takes place from the Battle Creek Kiwanis Club property adjacent to Baker Sanctuary. The Kiwanis property provides the perfect vantage point, as it overlooks the shallow 200-acre lake. Michigan Audubon is allowed to open the gates to the Kiwanis Youth Area from 4-7 PM on Saturday and Sunday evenings Oct. 19 through Nov. 10. The Battle Creek Kiwanis Youth Area is located at 22300 15 Mile Rd., northwest of the I-94 and I-69 interchange, only minutes south of Bellevue.

Crane viewing is also available at the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary, northeast of Jackson, where the cranes roost in Mud Lake Marsh. The public can visit the sanctuary any day to watch cranes, but volunteers from the Jackson Audubon Society will be on hand weekends October through mid-November from 4 PM until dusk. Volunteers will have binoculars and scopes available to help you view the birds.

It can take several hours for all the cranes to return to the roost when they fly in for the evening. But when the cranes fly out in the morning—right at sunrise—all the birds pretty much leave at once, which makes for a spectacular viewing opportunity, something you can witness at Haehnle Sanctuary.

The Haehnle Sanctuary parking area is located across the road from 9011 Seymour Road in Jackson County. The number of cranes roosting at Haehnle is dependent on the water level in Mud Lake. On Tuesdays the Jackson Audubon Society posts the latest crane numbers on the Sanctuary's website, haehnlesanctuary.org. The website also contains maps and directions.

A Little Piece of Jack Pine Warbler History Returns



Michigan Audubon was recently contacted by Richard Brewer of Western Michigan University. Richard was in possession of a printing block (pictured) that was used to print the cover of the Jack Pine Warbler from at least 1930 – 1946. In the years when the Jack Pine Warbler was the scientific journal of the organization (the journal is now titled Michigan Birds and Natural History) Richard was the

editor and it was given to him. Richard was kind enough to send the printing block to us and it now has a home in our office.

We know that the organization's first newsletter was published on January 1, 1923, although we have not found any copies of the newsletter dating from that time in the office. The Jack Pine Warbler magazine was first published in October 1926. So far we have not found any copies in our files of the first few years of the magazine. The first copy we have is issue #3 of Volume VIII. We currently keep an archive of old issues of both the Jack Pine Warbler and Michigan Birds and Natural History. We have very few copies of the years prior to 1946. If you happen to be cleaning out and run across some of these old publications, we may be interested in giving them a home. Please contact Wendy Tatar at wendy@michiganaudubon.org or at 517-641-4277.

Michigan Audubon

PO Box 15249

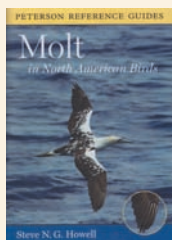
Lansing, MI 48901

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Your purchase from the bookstore supports Michigan Audubon's educational programs.

Information or phone orders **517-641-4277**



Peterson Reference Guide: Molt in North American Birds

by Steve N. G. Howell

\$35.00 (hard cover)

As with other aspects of a bird's growth and habits, each family handles molting differently. Understanding molting patterns will help you with identification and give you a better understanding of a bird's life cycle. With the aid of exceptional

photographs and a breakdown of the four strategies of molt, this book will assist you with your ID skills. Each family's molt strategy is covered in separate accounts.



The Laws Guide to Drawing Birds

by John Muir Laws

\$24.95

Not just for the novice artist, this book will help any skilled artist improve their ability to draw birds. Even the birder that believes they can't draw will be guided by the detailed exercises in this book. Law's step-by-step line drawings assist

with the quick sketching that you need in the field.



Crinkleroot's Guide to Giving Back to Nature

by Jim Arnosky

\$17.99 (hard cover)

Crinkleroot is our guide as he shows the simple ways to make a difference during our time on Earth. The book is packed with adorable illustrations and fun children's activities to help conserve our natural resources. This is a book for

adults to read to children or for the reader age 7 – 10.



Michigan Starwatch

by Mike Lynch

\$26.95 (hard cover)

A great book for the budding astronomer! Over 30 years of instructing stargazing classes helped the author create an easy-to-use guide for the Michigan stargazer. It contains monthly star maps for our northern latitude, information on planets and other celestial bodies, and helpful tips for selecting the best equipment for stargazing.



2013 – 2014 Kirtland's Warbler Young Artist's Calendar

by U. S. Forest Service Mio Ranger Station

Suggested Donation: \$12

Each year school children grades K – 8

enter artwork based on Kirtland's Warbler habitat in a competition held by the Mio Ranger Station. Winning artwork creates the next year's calendar. Funds raised from the 18-month calendar are used to continue the Kirtland's Warbler education efforts for Michigan elementary and middle schools. It is available through Michigan Audubon's bookstore or online at www.enfiamich.org.

10% off for all Michigan
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Order by phone, mail, or e-mail

By phone. Visa or MasterCard. Phone 517-641-4277

By mail. Send name, address, phone number, and payment to Michigan Audubon Bookstore, PO Box 15249, Lansing MI 48901. Prepayment includes list price + 6% sales tax + \$3.75 postage and handling for the first item + \$.85 for each additional item.

By e-mail. Wendy@MichiganAudubon.org.