

Jack Pine *Warbler*

THE HOLIDAY ISSUE: Trumpeter Swans: A Conservation Success in Michigan ■ Rough-legged Hawk Identification ■ WPBO 2014 Hawk Count ■ Year One of the Capital City Bird Sanctuary Nest Trail ■ The MBS Recap



Jack Pine Warbler

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Cover Photo ■ Rough-legged Hawk
Photographer: Roger Eriksson
The Rough-legged Hawk, adult male, light morph was
photographed near Whitefish Point on May 1, 2011.

Canon EOS 7D with a Canon EF800 mm f/5.6L IS USM
lens. Shutter speed: 1/250 seconds. Aperture: f 8. ISO:
500.

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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.

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Executive Director's Letter

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JONATHAN LUTZ STEPPING DOWN

BY ALEC LINDSAY, CHAIR, MICHIGAN AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS



It is with a heavy heart that I write this guest column, for as some of our members already know, our executive director, Jonathan Lutz, is stepping down from his role with Michigan Audubon to accept a senior position with Montana Audubon. For those who know Jonathan and his love of whitewater, trout, and dogs, such a move may come as no surprise. We on the Board of Directors are crestfallen to bid Jonathan farewell; he is a consummate professional, an excellent ambassador, a passionate conservationist. Jonathan would be the first to recognize the invaluable work of the dedicated Michigan Audubon staff and corps of volunteers, but it is fair to note that under his tenure as executive director, Michigan Audubon has grown and accomplished a great deal. In the last seven years, our statewide organization, Michigan Audubon ...

... has nearly doubled in membership, erased a \$250k operating deficit and now operates in the black, and has maintained a robust endowment for mission-appropriate activities;

... now has a regional and national leadership presence with varied partners through our roles with Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative, the Michigan Birding Trails, National Audubon Initiatives, and more;

... has made the meaningful transition into the digital social age through website redevelopments, a strong social media presence with thousands of new followers, comprehensive email outreach campaigns, and contemporary rebranding;

... reconfigured the *Jack Pine Warbler* magazine, and reinvigorated Michigan Audubon's research publication, *Michigan Birds and Natural History*;

... provided thoughtful public and private input on regional and local bird conservation issues, along

with important state legislative issues such as Senate Bill 78, the "anti-biodiversity bill";

... established the Signature Event series that now includes Tawas Point Birding Festival, Cerulean Warbler Weekend, and the Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, CraneFest, and the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory event, "Spring Fling";

... has supported and continues to support research projects at the Rouge River Bird Observatory, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Mackinaw Straits Raptor Watch, and start-up bird counts at Peninsula Point and Brockway Mountain in the Upper Peninsula.

With such a strong position, it is understandable that we on the Board of Directors are ramping up our engagement with operations management and strategic planning. Our first concern is to ensure that the effectiveness, quality, and professionalism associated with Michigan Audubon continues unabated in the coming months. To that end, we are especially thankful for the dependable and passionate staff that works so tirelessly toward fulfilling our mission. In the coming months, the Board will assume some of the executive director's leadership duties, but we are confident that this highly capable staff—Wendy Tatar (program coordinator), Rachelle Roake (conservation science coordinator), Kristin Phillips (marketing and communications coordinator), and Lyn Scrimger (membership manager)—will keep the organization flying ever forward, strong, and steady.

The Board is also looking prospectively to the future—executive transitions can be exciting times for growth and development for an organization, and our search process for a new executive director is already underway. We have every intention of proceeding with alacrity and thoughtfulness to find the right individual to fill this important role. If you have questions, concerns or thoughts about the future of Michigan Audubon, please feel free to send a message to the Board at boardchair@michiganaudubon.org.

Finally, a personal note. Jonathan has been the executive director since I have been on the Board, and I feel fortunate to

have worked with such a terrific leader for Michigan Audubon. His passion, eloquence, and intelligence have inspired me. As we bid him farewell, I know he is comforted that the Board, staff, volunteers, and members of this great organization will continue to work on behalf of our mission, a mission we have all heard Jonathan trumpet over the years: Connecting birds and people, for the benefit of both.



Alec Lindsay



Thank you for the opportunity to lead Michigan Audubon these past seven and a half years. I've been honored to lead Michigan's oldest conservation organization during its most significant period of professional operation. One hundred years ago, Michigan Audubon helped halt the use of bird feathers in the fashion industry; 50 years ago, we fought to overcome use of the deadly pesticide, DDT. Today Michigan Audubon is engaged in a global effort to combat the single greatest threat to birds: climate change. The grassroots support of Audubon members like you is key to our conservation success, and I am most proud of the network of volunteers, donors, and members I am leaving behind. See you on the birding trail!

Sincerely,



Jonathan Lutz

Trumpeter Swans: A Conservation Success in Michigan

BY HOWARD MEYERSON

Fifty years ago the plight of Trumpeter Swans was a cause for concern in North America. The majestic birds were perched on the brink of extinction. America's largest waterfowl species was in need of a helping hand.

Today their status has greatly improved due to reintroduction efforts by government wildlife agencies, conservation organizations, Indian tribes, and public utilities. Their numbers have increased across much of the continent. Reintroduction work continues in some locales. But here in Michigan the Trumpeters are doing very well; their recovery is a significant conservation success, according to state officials.

"This still needs to be vetted within the agency, have a public review, and be finalized by the legislature, but we will recommend in the next 12 to 18 months that the Trumpeter Swan be removed from the Michigan Threatened and Endangered Species List," said Dan Kennedy, the endangered species coordinator for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "Their population made a drastic upswing between 2000 and 2010."

Approximately 756 Trumpeters now inhabit Michigan waters, according to DNR survey records, a dramatic change from none in 1986 when the state's swan reintroduction efforts began. Michigan's recovery goal was modest: having two flocks of 100 swans each by year 2000. That goal was reached in 1997, according to Kennedy. It was accomplished by rearing and later releasing two-year-old Trumpeter Swans at select locations around the state.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 2010 North American Trumpeter Swan Survey, the last available, reports 46,225

Trumpeter Swans were found in North America that year, 33 percent more than 2005 and the highest number since the survey began in 1968. Fewer than 70 were known of in 1933, according to the Trumpeter Swan Society, a nonprofit dedicated to the restoration and conservation of the species. Trumpeters were once abundant all across North America.

"We know they are increasing and they are occupying areas they did not before," explains Barb Avers, the Michigan DNR's waterfowl program specialist. "They are still on the state [threatened and endangered species] list, but not the Fed list. We don't anticipate any setbacks [from delisting]. They have been doing well enough on their own.... I think we will continue to see growth as we [further] bring down the mute swan population."

Mute Swans, which are identified by an orange bill, black face, and bulbous black knob at the base of the bill, are an aggressive non-native swan species known to drive Trumpeter Swans and other waterfowl out of their wetland breeding areas. They are found in every Michigan county, according to Avers. Her agency began a local control program in the 1960s which was stepped up in recent years with a goal of reducing Michigan's Mute Swan population to fewer than 2,000 by 2030.

"We've had lots of reports about them driving Trumpeters out, and when we remove the Mute Swan, we see Trumpeter Swans nesting," Avers said. "Fortunately the Mute Swan population is going down. The 2015 state estimate is 8,700 Mute Swans, compared to 2010, when we had 15,000 and began a more intensive effort to remove them. Having that many Mute Swans on the landscape was definitely a concern. Trumpeters don't face that many threats, but that is one."

Michigan's Trumpeter restoration effort began in 1986 as part of a nationwide restoration effort that had begun two decades before. But the Trumpeter's demise dates back to the 1800s when European settlers began clearing land, draining and filling marshes, and the swans were pursued by unregulated market hunters for meat, skins, down, and quills.

Michigan's swan release program was coordinated by the late Joe Johnson, a biologist and manager for the W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, part of Michigan State University's W.K. Kellogg Biological Station, where the program was headquartered. Johnson, who eventually traveled to Alaska to get Trumpeter Swan eggs, is credited with overcoming a number of challenges in the early stages of the reintroduction program that ended in 1993.



Trumpeter Swans. © Roger Eriksson

“A total of 124 Trumpeters were released as two-year-olds” Johnson penned in the 2011 *Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas*, the year before he died. About a third of the swans were released in the eastern UP, another third in the NLP and the remainder in the southwestern LP. Many of the swans were hatched and reared from eggs collected in Alaska; many others were donated by major zoos and private aviculturists. From 1994 to 2005, 122 more were released in the western UP, northeastern LP, northwestern LP and southeastern LP by Consumers Energy Corporation, Native American tribes, and private citizens. The restoration effort was sponsored by the DNR Nongame program and MSU’s Kellogg Bird Sanctuary.”

“They reared all the eggs, did all the incubation, and it took some trial and effort to figure out whether they could release the swans as two-year-olds when they were ready to mate,” recalls Kara Haas, science education and outreach coordinator for the biological station. “One thing they tried to do early on was incubate Trumpeter eggs under Mute Swans in the wild. It didn’t work. The swans wouldn’t raise them—and they didn’t survive.

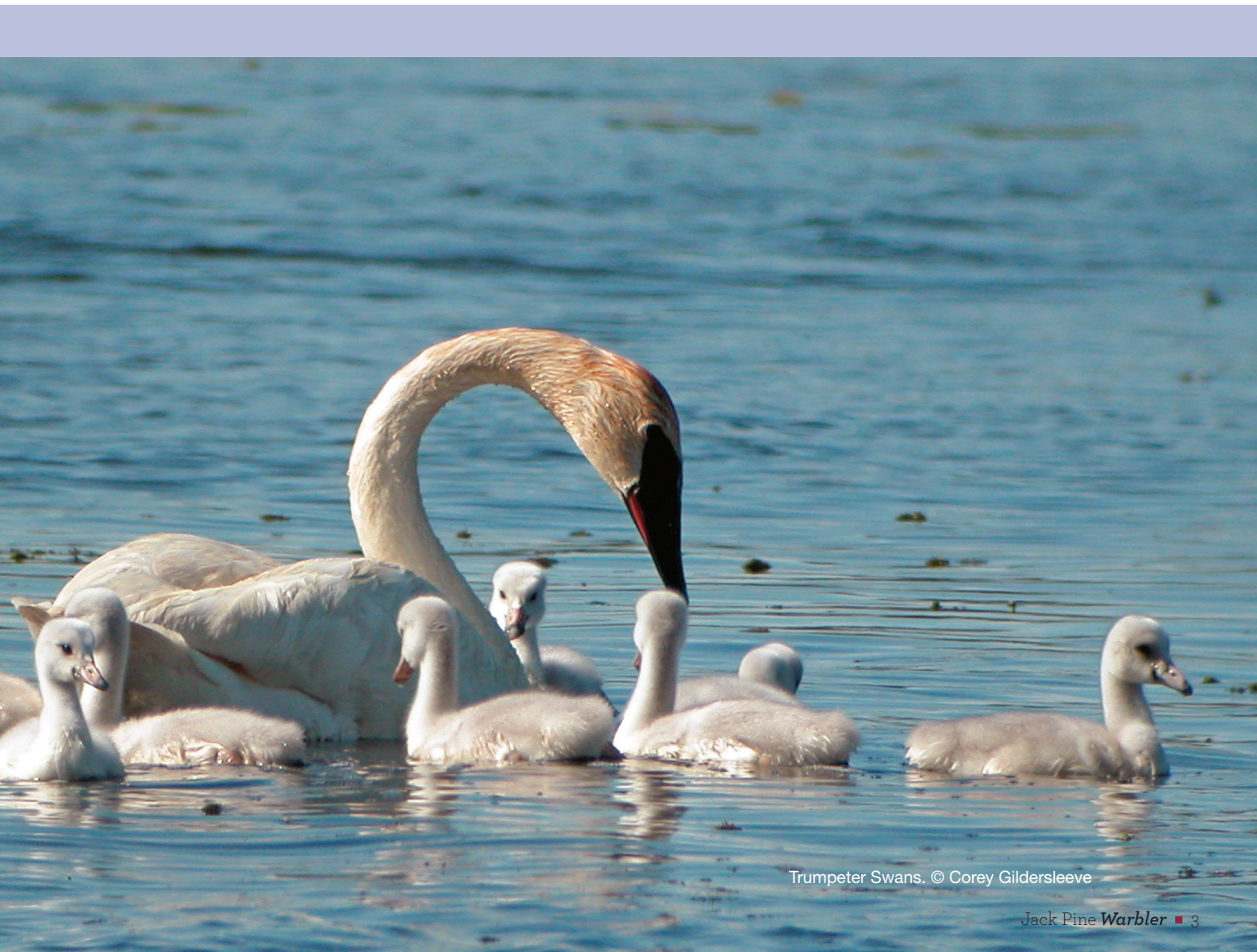
“They also had to find release sites where there was no waterfowl hunting, where lead shot was not an issue. And

they eventually found that by raising the young swans in family units, they wouldn’t interbreed. It’s pretty encouraging that they did breed and seem to be doing OK.”

Michigan Audubon also had an important role in the swan’s recovery. Three pairs of young Trumpeters were released in 1991 at its Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary in Pleasant Lake. One of the swans died that summer and the other two were removed due to sickness, recalls executive director Jonathan Lutz. All three suffered from lead poisoning. But two pairs were introduced that same year at the Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary in Bellevue, home to Michigan Audubon’s annual CraneFest event. One of those pairs remains today and is reproducing.

“It’s remarkable that Baker was one of the original release sites, and we continue to have successful reproduction there,” Lutz said. “I believe that five cygnets fledged there this year. It’s an important spot for them and offers the public an opportunity to see conservation in action.”

Howard Meyerson (howardmeyerson@gmail.com) has been writing about birds, nature, the environment, and outdoor recreation for 30 years. He lives in Grand Rapids. His work appears in a variety of publications.



Trumpeter Swans. © Corey Gildersleeve

Rough-legged Hawk Identification

BY KIRBY ADAMS

They're the sentinels of winter in every corner of Michigan. Greeting them expectantly each October, we watch them hovering over farm, field, and meadow through every blizzard and nor'easter. By April, they're like old friends—and then they're gone, vanishing as silently as they arrived while we turn to the woods in search of warblers. For that darker half of the year, Rough-legged Hawks are as much a part of driving a Michigan highway as snowplows and ice.

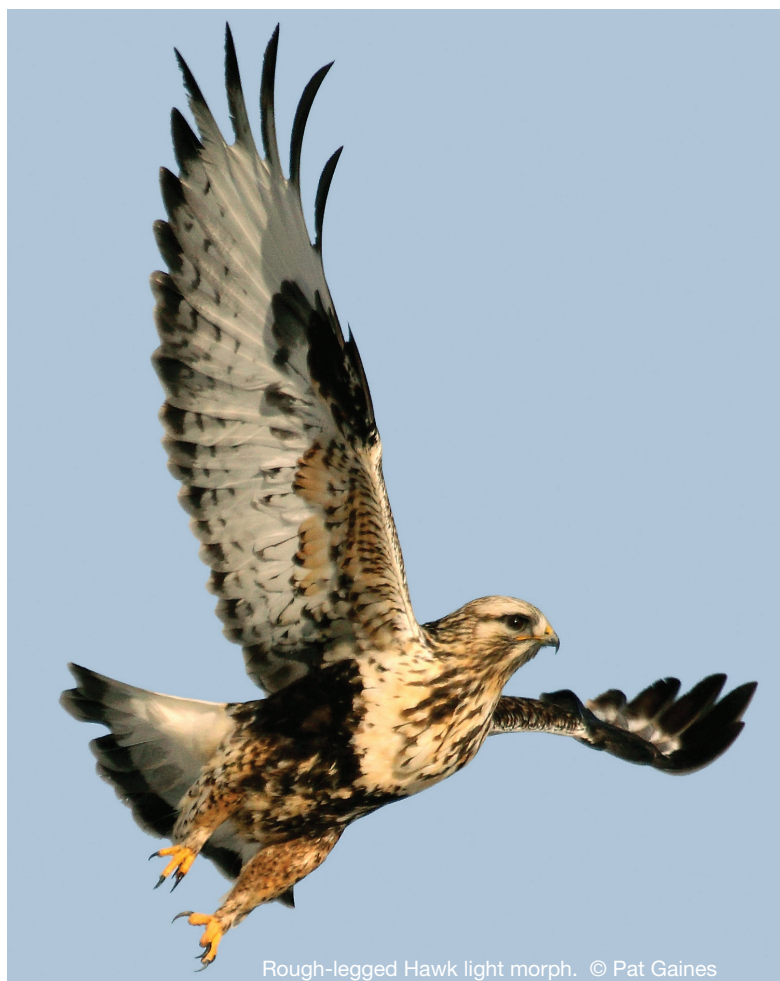
The Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) is both descriptively and deceptively named. As an adaptation to life in the arctic, the hawk's legs are feathered right down to the toes, but it's more soft like a down jacket than rough. The specific name *lagopus* translates as "hare's foot," an allusion to this trait unusual among raptors.

Even without the feathered legs being visible (they rarely are), most Roughies are easily identifiable birds by plumage and behavior. While perched, they resemble superficially the common Red-tailed Hawk in profile, but with a somewhat slimmer build and elongated neck. In flight, the more common light morph Rough-legged Hawks are distinctively plumaged. They bear a dark belly band much broader and bolder than that of a Red-tailed Hawk. The tail has a broad, dark, subterminal band, making the tail appear to have a white patch at the base and a thin white tip. The underwing is marked by dark carpal patches (dark "wrists") and dark tips of the primaries. The area between the tips and the carpal patch ends up looking starkly white. Dark morph individuals are less common, but regularly found in Michigan. These birds look similar to other dark Buteos, save for the dark subterminal tail band, which is unique among the hawks.

Behavior is also a giveaway for Rough-legged Hawks. Being creatures of the treeless arctic, they shun forests on their wintering grounds. Agricultural land, airfields, marshes, and open fields are their preferred hunting grounds. They tend to hover, facing into the wind, moving only the very tips of the wings for stability, and sweeping their head side-to-side in search of prey. Upon finding prey, they can do anything from an uncontrolled drop to a graceful parachute. Northern Harriers patrol similar habitat and also hunt by hovering, but Rough-legged Hawks are more likely than harriers to be found up to 150 feet in the air. They're comfortable below the 30-foot deck, but could be confused with a harrier when they're actively hunting that low.

Another quirk of Rough-legged behavior is reflected in the old birder's adage that if you see a hawk perched on the tiniest, spindliest twig available, it's a Roughie. They don't shun utility poles or snags as perches, but no other hawk is as comfortable on the flimsy upper twigs of small trees. It's not uncommon to see an unconcerned Rough-legged on a branch that is swaying and bent over until it nearly points downward under the weight.

The entire population of Rough-legged Hawks nests in the high arctic and always in areas with cliffs or cliff-like structures as breeding sites. When late summer arrives, the whole of the species moves south. Very few turn up in the United States before October, but as Halloween approaches, they start arriving in force. Other than the densely forested areas of the western Upper Peninsula and a few



Rough-legged Hawk light morph. © Pat Gaines



Light morph juvenile Rough-legged Hawk hovering. © Roger Eriksson

spots in the northern Lower Peninsula, they are easy to locate in Michigan. Any open and relatively flat habitat is a good place to look. Heavily birded spots like Muskegon Wastewater System and Maple River State Game Area are well-known locations for the species, but this is likely as much an artifact of the number of birders at those places as it is anything else.

One area that is indisputably the heart of Rough-legged country is eastern Chippewa County in the UP, from Sault Ste. Marie down to Pickford and Rudyard. Migrating Rough-legged Hawks that skirt the eastern or southern shores of Lake Superior find themselves bottlenecked in this area. Extensive forested areas to the west dissuade them from that direction as does hilly and forested country in Ontario to the east. To the south is Lake Huron with intimidating open water that later becomes featureless ice devoid of rodents. The farm fields south of the Soo are just what the doctor ordered, leading many hawks to call it a winter home. Rough-legged Hawks of both light and dark morphs are expected treats on the traditional late-winter pilgrimages that birders make to the Soo area. Snowy Owls are also on the probable list, particularly in irruption years. Lucky birders will snag a Northern Goshawk. Really lucky birders get a Northern Hawk-Owl. The luckiest will see a Great Gray Owl or a Gyrfalcon.

Rough-legged Hawks are one of the species that really adds flavor to winter birding in Michigan, particularly “car birding.” Agricultural land is easy to bird from the comfort of a heated vehicle. Pull safely off the road, scan with binoculars, rest your scope on a slightly lowered side window and you’re ready to go. Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, and Bald Eagles will all be

doing their things in the air while flocks of Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs erupt from the field and quickly disappear back onto the ground. It’s a whole different ballgame than summer birding, and at least in open fields, tends to be even more dynamic than any other season. Every autumn, when the green maples are turning bright colors and the green grasses are turning dull and crisp, there’s a melancholy air over pastures in the north, but it’s punctuated by excitement in birders’ hearts. After all, the Roughies are coming.

Kirby Adams (kirby.adams@gmail.com) writes the birding column for the online travel blog, *National Parks Traveler*. Kirby lives in Lansing.

We welcome our newest Michigan Audubon members:

Janet Barry
Kathryn Black
Don Burlett
Karen Busch
Tim Cornish
Leah Dodd
Russ Edmonds
Grace Engler
Donna Eyster
Zachary Friebe
Dr & Mrs Arthur Frock
Paul Grabke
Kerstin Guendling
Steve & Connie Hale
Georgette M Hansen
Pilar Herrera-Fierro
Julie A Hupp
Matthew Hysell
Christine Johnson

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Gerald R Klinefelter
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Don & Carolyn Reed
Marie Schatz
Ron Shimek

Louise J Smith
Judi Sting
Jim Szczechowski
Beverly Taylor
Andrew Theus
Victoria M Vavricka
Ty Wagenmaker
Geoffrey & Christine
Williamson

The Midwest Birding Symposium Recap

BY KRISTIN PHILLIPS

We had a great time at the 2015 Midwest Birding Symposium (MBS), and hope you did too. This was the first time that MBS has been in Bay City. This year's event was headquartered in the DoubleTree Hotel, right on the Saginaw River. Here's a recap of the weekend.

On Friday evening, Kevin Karlson gave a talk about his unique approach to birding, which he calls birding by impression. Based in part on his book of the same name, this keynote explained Karlson's own introduction to birding and how the unique approach got started. After speaking to a full house, Karlson facilitated a workshop the next morning, culminating in an informative bird tour. Saturday's keynote speaker, Doug Tallamy, also spoke to a full house about how we can increase biodiversity in our own backyards by planting productive native plants to help feed the caterpillars that birds need to raise successful broods. Between the two keynotes, MBS featured a total of 23 speakers in various sessions. Topics ranged from artistic journaling and creative writing to bird ID and conservation efforts across the Midwest. Thank you to all our engaging speakers for helping to make MBS a fun and educational experience.

What's a birding symposium without birds? MBS participants visited a number of great birding sites near and far. Intrepid birders headed out by boat, bike, and bus to travel along the Saginaw River and to Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Bay

City State Recreation Area, Nyanquing Point State Wildlife Area, and others. At one of the locations, Pinconning Park, tour participants found 76 species of birds in only a few hours. On Saturday morning, 14 species of warblers were spotted at the Bay City State Recreation Area. A special trip on the tall ship, the Appledore IV, yielded a Black-crowned Night-Heron and various waterbirds. Other special birds included Yellow-headed Blackbird at Nyanquing and an American Avocet and Black-necked Stilts seen by many birders at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. We spotted 130 species of birds.

A total of 475 people attended the symposium, coming from 25 states and Ontario. MBS could not have been possible without the work of our three co-hosts, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy, and Go Great Lakes, as well as with help from our generous sponsors and hardworking volunteers. Thank you.

Kristin Phillips is the marketing and communications coordinator for Michigan Audubon and can be reached at kphillips@michiganaudubon.org.

MBS Thanks

Michigan Audubon would like to recognize the following organizations, businesses, and individuals that donated funds and/or assistance to the 2015 Midwest Birding Symposium:

Volunteers:

Elizabeth Abood-Carroll
Brian Allen
Sue Bengsten
Katie Bolt
Ed Bolt
Nancy Boyce
Clara Bratton
Jeff Buecking
Sam Burckhardt
Becky Crabb
Dave Dister
Sue Duncan
Curtis Dykstra
Ryan Dziedzic
Melissa Eddy
Trevor Edmonds
Roger Eriksson
Sharon Goecke
William Goecke
Maureen Hackett
Kathy Hansen
Matt Hegwood
Pat Huebner
Scott Jennex
Steve Kahl
Bob Kemnitz
Em Kemnitz
Randy Kurzinsky
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Jean Lamoreaux
Kim Laskowski
Darryl Lawson
Barbara McCarter
Ed Merz
Steve Minard
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David Peters
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Margaret Sauve
Wayne Shawl
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Allan Thiele
Pat Trahan
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Bay Sail - Appledore Tall Ships
Bay City Downtown Development Authority



Top: Appledore Tall Ship IV departing with birders aboard. Below: The DoubleTree Grand Ballroom filled for Kevin Karlson's keynote. © Michigan Audubon



Calendar

November

7-8 & 14-15

Crane Viewing

Kiwanis Youth Conservation Area,
Bellevue, and
Phyllis Haehnle Memorial
Sanctuary, Jackson

December

14-JAN. 5, 2016

Christmas Bird Count

Check with your local chapter for
exact date and time

January

1

Spring Fling registration
opens

15-16

Stewardship Network
Conference

Kellogg Hotel and Conference
Center, East Lansing

16-17

Michigan Audubon's
Birding at the Soo field trip
Sault Ste. Marie

February

1

Tawas Point Birding
Festival registration opens

12-15

Great Backyard Bird Count
<http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

13-14

Michigan Audubon's
Birding at the Soo field trip
Sault Ste. Marie

29

Cerulean Warbler Weekend
registration opens

CraneFest Weekend Thanks

CraneFest was another great success this year, and we want to thank our sponsors, volunteers, partners, vendors, and everyone involved who made the 21st CraneFest possible. Michigan Audubon would like to recognize the following organizations, businesses, and individuals that donated funds and/or assistance to the 2015 Birders' Soiree and CraneFest:

Volunteers:

Robert Bochenek
Pat Fields
Eileen Houston
Fischer Jax
Bob Kingsbury
Leah Knapp
Ann Maddox
Ed Merz
Madeline Merz
Janet Miller
Rozlyn Ross
William Rowan
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Paula Scrimger
Kathy VanBuren
Craig White
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Year One of the Capital City Bird Sanctuary Nest Box Trail

BY RACHELLE ROAKE

On a cold March day, three hardy souls crunched across a frosted landscape to install 23 nest boxes at Capital City Bird Sanctuary. Several months later, the land was green and vibrant, and many birds bustled and brooded in their new homes. It was an interesting inaugural year for the Capital City Bird Sanctuary nest box trail, with many chicks raised and perhaps even more lessons learned.

First, let's do the numbers. Surprisingly, just a little over half of the boxes were used for breeding: only 14 out of 23 available boxes were active. Nest success varied widely by species, but overall nest success was an average of 43%. Eastern Bluebird was the most successful species (60% nest success), while Black-capped chickadees fledged the most young (26 fledglings). Boxes located in the woods tended to be more successful than those on the edge or in the open. Pairs that nested earlier in the season tended to be more successful than those that nested later.

Like any nest box project, it was a bit of an emotional rollercoaster ride for our dedicated volunteers. Lindsay Ross and Richard Yarsevich graciously volunteered to check boxes once every 3 or 4 days. This regularity was enough to accurately track nest success and tend to issues (like deterring ants) but wasn't enough such that the birds abandoned their nests. With so much time spent monitoring, volunteers developed a close connection with each box, silently rooting for success and sharing the disappointment of loss. They saw tiny, pink, amoeba-shaped creatures slowly

develop pinfeathers, then full feathers, and finally take flight. In contrast, they also saw an invasive House Sparrow destroy a second brood of Eastern Bluebirds. Although some losses indicate a failure on our part, as nest box landlords we must remember that living in nature is tough.

By providing nest boxes, we provided homes for secondary cavity nesting species that may not have had the opportunity to breed at all due to limited availability of suitable nest cavities. Our boxes were waterproof, and our volunteers protected the young from disease and parasites. We faced large populations of common nest predators such as raccoons, which have flourished in urban landscapes. But let us not forget our successes: 58 new chicks fledged at Capital City Bird Sanctuary. If they survive their first year, which is the most dangerous, they will likely return to their hatching grounds in search of a place to nest. Not only will we increase predator protection, we plan to install at least 11 new boxes across the sanctuary for the next breeding season.

Overall, we believe the nest box trail at Capital City Bird Sanctuary had a successful first year and our goals for future years are to increase nest success and educational outreach. Our urban and suburban landscapes, although dangerous at times, can be havens for breeding birds. By increasing nesting habitat, be it through nest boxes or suitable native vegetation, we can all provide homes for birds in our yards, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces.

Rachelle Roake is the conservation science coordinator for Michigan Audubon and can be reached at rroake@michiganaudubon.org.

Top: 7-day-old Black-capped Chickadees.

Bottom: 16-day old Eastern Bluebirds. © Michigan Audubon



Eastern Bluebird nest. © Michigan Audubon

Chapter Spotlight: Jackson Audubon Society

BY KRISTIN PHILLIPS

Serving Jackson County, Michigan, Jackson Audubon Society (JAS) aims “to instill in the people of Jackson County an interest, knowledge, and appreciation of birds and other wildlife.” With 150 members, this chapter is very active and assists with management of both Kate Palmer Sanctuary and the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary. According to its president, Connie Spotts, passionate JAS members make this work possible: “We have such an active organization and get so much done because of the dedication of our members. They really care about what’s best for wildlife and they like to pass that education on to others.”

The hard work of JAS members really shines at Michigan Audubon Kate Palmer and Haehnle sanctuaries. Established in 1926, Kate Palmer Wildlife Sanctuary is located five miles west of Jackson. Bisected by Sandstone Creek and containing a mix of upland and lowland deciduous forests, this sanctuary offers a haven for 100-plus species of birds—woodpeckers, warblers, turkeys, Barred Owls and more—as well as a getaway for nearby residents. Pegg Clevenger, the Kate Palmer steward, calls the sanctuary “an opportunity to educate younger generations in stewardship.” Recent projects include construction projects by volunteers Jim Rossman and Paul Rice to make the sanctuary more accessible via a new parking lot, and a partnership with Trinity Lutheran school and teacher Clint Genthner. After acquiring a grant from the Jackson Community Foundation, they will create an outdoor amphitheater-style classroom on the property. This project opened the door to a partnership between JAS and the Dahlem Center to present “Kate Palmer and Your Backyard” at the Trinity Lutheran school on October 5. The presentation, led by education director Ellen Rathbone, was open to the community, and focused on connecting bird feeding and activities for teachers with wildlife viewing at the sanctuary.

Jim Rossman and Paul Rice, and the new parking area at Kate Palmer. © JAS



Meetings:

2nd Tuesday of every month at Ella Sharp Museum, 3225 S Fourth St, Jackson, except where otherwise noted. Regular meetings will begin with a social time at 6:30 p.m. with short meeting and program at 7:00 p.m.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jacksonaudubon>

Website: jacksonaudubon.org



Lathe Claflin showing wildflowers at Haehnle Sanctuary. © JAS

Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary, the largest Michigan Audubon sanctuary at over 1,000 acres, is overseen by the Haehnle Sanctuary Committee, an active 15-member subcommittee of JAS. According to Haehnle steward Lathe Claflin, the goal of the sanctuary is to “maintain this property as a bird and wildlife preserve with emphasis on Sandhill Cranes.” Two recent projects—a collaboration between JAS, Tom Eitniear of USFWS, and Michigan Audubon—include restoration work to create fall roosting habitat for Sandhill Cranes after high water levels impacted the original area, and fen restoration to combat encroaching invasive buckthorn.

In addition to ongoing sanctuary work, JAS has also been active in the community through the “Don’t Feed the Cranes” project. After noticing how a local pair of Sandhill Cranes was begging food from the public, concerned citizen Krissy Kerwin contacted JAS. With combined donations from Krissy, Assistant Mayor Derek Dobie, and JAS, six “Do Not Feed The Cranes” signs were ordered, installed on July 22, and are hoped to increase public awareness about the negative impact of crane feeding.

Upcoming events for JAS include a presentation by Doug Leffler on Tuesday, November 10, and the annual Christmas Bird Count. Details for regular chapter meetings can be found below.

Kristin Phillips is the marketing and communications coordinator for Michigan Audubon and can be reached at kphillips@michiganaudubon.org.

Do Not Feed the Cranes signs installed on Boardman Rd. © JAS



Leaders:

Connie Spotts, president, Bflylady27@netzero.net
Gary Mason, vice president, gwmace@aol.com
Mary White, secretary, maryanddickwhite@yahoo.com
Andy Walz, treasurer, walzka@aol.com

Sanctuary Stewards:

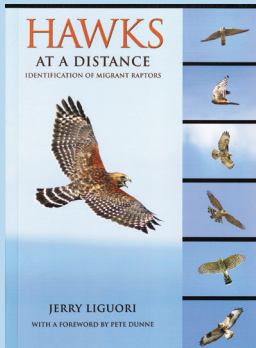
Lathe Claflin, Haehnle Sanctuary, lathe.claflin@gmail.com
Pegg Clevenger, Kate Palmer Sanctuary, acerhome@sbcglobal.net

Book Shopping for the Bird Lover

The following books remain on Michigan Audubon's list of most popular sellers since they were released. In the past, these books were reviewed in the pages of the *Jack Pine Warbler*. As the holiday season approaches we suggest considering these titles when purchasing a gift for your favorite bird enthusiast.

For the Hawk Watcher:

Hawks at a Distance: Identification of Migrant Raptors

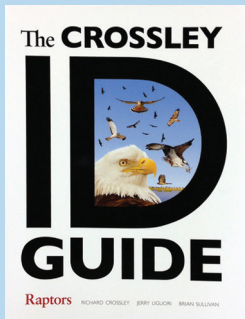


by Jerry Liguori

\$19.95 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

Bob Pettit (whose review appears in Volume 88 No. 6), states that this guide is “a necessary and welcomed addition to the raptor library. The evolution of raptor ID continues with leaps and bounds to get to that point of pure identification with few errors and Liguori is near that mark.”

The Crossley ID Guide: Raptors



by Richard Crossley

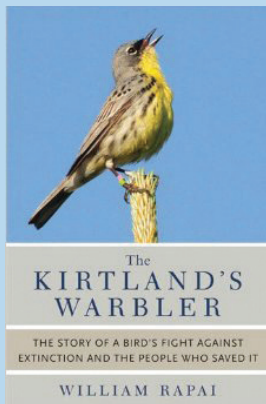
\$35.00 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

In his 2013 review, Skye Haas states that “raptor enthusiasts should make room on their shelves” for this guide. “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?”

Just a good read:

The Kirtland's Warbler: The Story of a Bird's Fight against Extinction and the People Who Saved It

by William Rapai



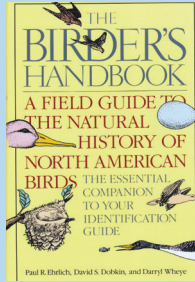
\$19.95 available in paperback from the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

In 2012 Chris Mensing had been working on the Kirtland's Warbler project for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for 11 years, so he was a natural choice to review this book by Rapai. Mensing says that the “book is a perfect complement to understanding the first century of Kirtland's Warbler management.” He also mentions that Rapai “reveals anecdotes about Kirtland's Warblers that until now were mostly unknown. In order to bring you this untold story of

Kirtland's Warblers, Rapai spent countless hours reading old documents, attending meeting after meeting, and conducting numerous interviews.”

For the Natural History buff:

The Birder's Handbook: A Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds

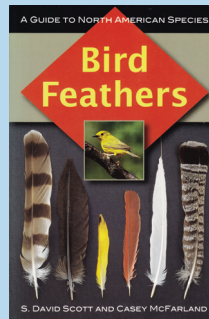


by Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye

\$22.99 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

Tom Funke shared (in Vol. 90 No. 2) his favorite birding guide: “I want to quench my thirst for learning more about [a bird's] natural history after I've logged it into a checklist. At the end of a long day of birding, I'll sit down with my field guides ... This book contains a plethora of natural history information about each of North America's regularly occurring bird species.”

Bird Feathers: A Guide to North American Species



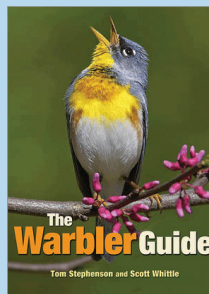
by S. David Scott and Casey McFarland

\$34.95 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

In his 2011 review, Jonathan Wuepper stated that “*Bird Feathers* may be the first book to show, through excellent color photographs, the feathers for each family of species in North America. It is an excellent book for any birder's naturalist library.”

Specialized guides to perfect identification:

The Warbler Guide



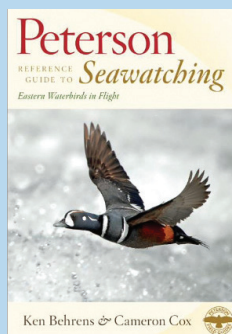
by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle

\$29.95 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

Zak Pohlen reviewed *The Warbler Guide*, one of our more recent books, at the beginning of 2014. Zak's glowing review states “*The Warbler Guide* takes the cake when dealing with new world warblers. The quantity, quality, and organization of information, coupled with the excellent photography, make this book a must-have

for any birdwatcher.”

Peterson Reference Guide to Seawatching



by Ken Behrens and Cameron Cox

\$35.00 available in the Michigan Audubon Bookstore

“We're short on actual ‘seas’ here in Michigan, but for the purpose of this guide, ‘seawatching’ refers to observation and identification of migrating waterbirds wherever they happen to be flying.” In his 2013 review, Kirby Adams says that “The species accounts are the heart of *Seawatching*. Stunning photographs appear throughout each account.”

WPBO Field Notes: 2014 Hawk Count

EXCERPTED FROM WPBO.ORG, WITH PERMISSION

On May 16, 2014, the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory (WPBO) Hawk Count blog read as follows:

After a rather dismal couple days, the Broad-winged Hawks returned in force on Wednesday morning. The kettles that were spotted in the first hour of the count numbered 490 strong. Other raptors that were spotted that day included 126 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 10 Bald Eagles, 6 Rough-legged Hawks, 2 Golden Eagles, and the first Cooper's Hawks that we've had in two weeks.

Whitefish Point is one of the most important spring flight corridors for raptors in North America. The annual spring hawk count conducted by the WPBO's seasonal technicians documents migration of hawks, falcons and eagles and compiles comparative data for long-term monitoring of raptor populations. The goal of this long-term census is to determine the migration chronology of raptors at the Point and to quantify the volume of migrants.

Days such as May 16, 2014, are not uncommon during a season of counting raptors at Whitefish Point. Spring weather at the Point—bone-chilling wind, dense fog, and lake-effect snow squalls off Lake Superior—make the hawk count challenging for the hired counter. In fact, you can go multiple days without seeing birds, only to have the weather break, the skies clear, and huge kettles of Broad-winged Hawks soaring.

From March 15 through May 31, the WPBO Hawk Count is conducted from a location long referred to as the “hawk dune.” The hours of the count are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The count station is located about 200 meters west of the Whitefish Lighthouse and about 20 meters above Lake Superior. A Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Trust Fund Grant allowed for the construction of an observation platform, complete with an enclosed booth for the hawk counter, atop the dune in 1991. The WPBO Hawk Count has been actively gathering migration data for over 30 years. WPBO is partnered with the Hawk Migration Association of America; historical data are archived at www.hmana.org and are publicly available.

Hawks aren't the only birds to count and enjoy at Whitefish Point in the spring. From the hawk count blog, counter Dave Meyer writes:

It has been a productive, interesting last couple days up here at Whitefish Point. It began on Saturday when I arrived at the hawk platform and was welcomed by hundreds upon hundreds of Blue Jays flying just feet above me. As a few hours went by and the clouds began to dissipate, the first signs of a Broad-winged Hawk kettle were starting to conglomerate far to the WNW of the platform. The high count for the kettle was a respectable 81 Broad-wings with up to 16 Red-tailed Hawks and a handful of Turkey Vultures making up the remainder. All told, the day finished off with 175 birds of prey.

Seasonal technicians counted 9,504 raptors in nearly 535 count hours during the spring 2014 hawk count at Whitefish Point. For more information about the count and the upcoming Spring Fling event (April 30–May 1, 2016), visit www.wpbo.org.

Excerpts from the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory hawk count blog, written by Dave Meyer (wpbo.org), are used with permission.

Announcements

Boreal Chickadee. © David Mitchell



Christmas Bird Count

Another year, another Christmas Bird Count (CBC) begins. The CBC will run from December 14, 2015, to January 5, 2016, and sign-up will begin online at audubon.org/content/join-christmas-bird-count in November. All participants should contact their local compiler via the National Audubon registration or through a participating local Michigan Audubon chapter. Anyone can participate, and all levels of birders are welcome.

This year will mark the 116th CBC, making it the longest-running citizen science project in the world. Data from the CBC has been used in over 200 peer-reviewed articles, as well as by U.S. federal agencies for important decisions affecting birds. At last count, there were 2,462 counts completed and over sixty-eight million birds counted. Details from the last CBC can be found at netapp.audubon.org/cbcobservation.

Even though the CBC is free for participants, the hard work of compiling, organizing, formatting, and presenting takes funds. Please consider donating \$5 to participate in the CBC so that you can help fund this vital citizen science project. Each count provides important data about bird populations across Michigan and worldwide.

Make Your Birding Voice Heard

The purchase of the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp—better known as a Duck Stamp—funds the system of National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) across the country. If you've ever birded at Shiawassee NWR, Seney NWR, or one of the other NWR here in Michigan, please consider purchasing a stamp to support the work of the refuges.

If you have not purchased this year's Duck Stamp, please consider purchasing the stamp from the American Birding Association (ABA). Last year the ABA began selling the stamps in an effort to show the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that birders are helping to fund the refuges. Information about birder purchasing provides us with a voice when an issue comes up at a refuge that may affect bird populations. In 2014–2015 over 1,000 stamps were sold through the ABA, which raised \$15,600 for habitat conservation. The ABA would like to see birders beat that number this year.

The 2015–2016 stamp features a pair of Ruddy Ducks and will be on sale until June. The price of the stamp is \$25. You can purchase the stamp through the ABA website at shop.aba.org.

Great Gray Owl. © Skye Haas



Bird Trips to the Soo

Once again, Michigan Audubon will offer weekend birding trips to the eastern Upper Peninsula during the winter months. The car caravan tours fill quickly, so don't delay in reserving your spot. Trips are scheduled for January 16 & 17 and February 13 & 14, 2016.

In the Sault Ste. Marie area, the tours will likely see Snowy Owl, Evening Grosbeak, Bohemian Waxwing, both Red and White-winged Crossbills, and Sharp-tailed Grouse. Other sightings include Gray Jay or Boreal Chickadee, and if 2016 is an irruption year, there may even be Northern Hawks and Great Gray Owls.

Tour fee for Michigan Audubon members is \$75, and for non-members it's \$105 (which includes the price of membership). Hotel fees and meals are extra. To find more information and register, visit our Michigan Audubon event calendar at michiganaudubon.org/calendar.

2015–2016 Kirtland's Warbler Calendars Available

Each spring the U.S. Forest Service holds a calendar contest for school children, inviting them to create and submit artwork related to the jack pine habitat. Winning entries are used to create an 18-month calendar that raises funds to support the Kirtland's Warbler educational effort of the Forest Service.

Over 1,100 school children participated in the educational programs in 2015, and many of the artwork submissions fill the pages of this calendar. Michigan Audubon along with the AuSable Valley Audubon contributes funding to support the printing of the calendars.

This year's calendar is now available for purchase, with a suggested donation of \$10. Get your calendar by contacting the Mio Ranger District of the Huron-Manistee National Forests at 989-826-3252 or Kim Piccolo at kpicc@fs.fed.us. Or send a check (payable to the U.S. Forest Service) to the Mio Ranger District, 107 McKinley Road, Mio, MI 48647. Please consider adding \$3.50 to cover postage to mail your calendar.

Signature Events 2016

Spring Fling

Spring Fling is the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory's annual celebration of bird migration, and will take place April 30–May 1 in 2016. Expect excellent birding along with opportunities to learn more about avian migration and conservation around the Great Lakes. Cameron Cox, author of *Peterson's Guide to Seawatching*, will be the keynote speaker and will be offering some special workshops during the weekend. This is a new Signature Event, part of our collaboration with our affiliate WPBO. Registration will open on January 1, 2016. More information can be found on wpbo.org.

Tawas Point Birding Festival

Now in its 11th year, the Tawas Point Birding Festival will be held May 19–22, 2016. This year's keynote speaker will be Steven N. G. Howell, author of *Rare Birds of North America*, and *Petrels, Albatrosses, and Storm-petrels of North America: A Photographic Guide*, and leader of birding tours that travel around the world. You can pre-register for this event at tawasbirdfest.com. The event website will be updated as information becomes available and the schedule is finalized. Expect registration to begin on February 1.

Cerulean Warbler Weekend

The Cerulean Warbler Weekend will be held at the Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary on June 3–5, 2016. The event includes bird tours to see the Cerulean Warbler and other rarities such as the Henslow's and Grasshopper Sparrows, five species of Empid flycatchers, and more. Register and find additional information at ceruleanwarbler.com. Expect registration to begin on February 29. More information is at ceruleanwarbler.com.

CraneFest

Come enjoy family friendly activities at the Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, better known as CraneFest, on October 8–9, 2016, at the Kiwanis Youth Conservation Area south of Bellevue. Enjoy guided nature hikes, fine art vendors, and more. In the evening, watch thousands of Sandhill Cranes fly in to Big Marsh Lake. More information is at cranefest.org.

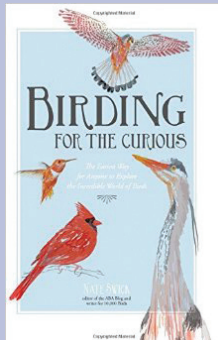
Dated Material

Michigan Audubon Bookstore

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

Information or phone orders **517-580-7364**

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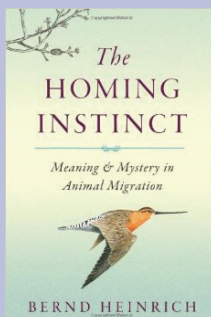


Birding for the Curious

by Nate Swick

\$21.99

If you know someone who enjoys the outdoors but isn't a birder, this book would be a good introduction to the world of birding. Full of information on birds and where to find them, it also delves into the role birds play in our everyday world. Many fun activities are included.

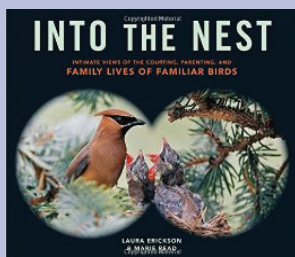


The Homing Instinct

by Bernd Heinrich

\$15.95

The latest book from Heinrich—an acclaimed scientist and author—deals with the mysteries surrounding animal homing. Why are animals pulled to a particular place? Heinrich attempts to answer some of the mysteries surrounding migration, be it a long migration over continents or just a scent trail left to pinpoint home.

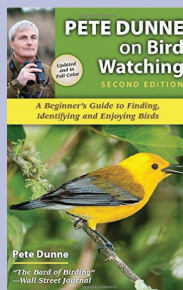


Into the Nest

by Laura Erickson & Marie Read

\$16.95

Using Read's incredible photos, this book provides a close-up display of the family life of more than 30 species of birds. This is one of the most visually stunning books currently on the shelf. All species are North American birds but range from songbirds to raptors and urban birds to marsh species. It will make a quality addition to any bird lover's library.

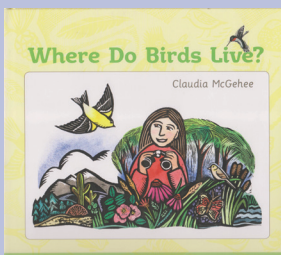


Pete Dunne on Bird Watching

by Pete Dunne

\$19.95

Billed as a beginner's guide to finding, identifying, and enjoying birds, this is an updated version of one of the most popular birding guides out there. Not just for beginners, the guide includes tips to get the most out of your equipment and how to improve your identification skills. This revised edition includes color photos (which in the original were in black and white).



Where Do Birds Live?

by Claudia McGehee

\$17.95

Using beautiful block print art, this award-winning artist has created a wonderful book for ages 5–9. It covers 14 different habitats from coast to coast and highlights one species from each habitat. One page is devoted to the bird, with information about its lifeways; the other page is an illustration of the bird in its habitat alongside all the other inhabitants. The book includes ideas about ways children can make their yards safe havens for birds.

10% off for all Michigan
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By phone. 517-580-7364

By e-mail. Wendy@michiganaudubon.org

By mail. Send name, address, phone number, and payment to Michigan Audubon Bookstore, 2310 Science Parkway, Suite 200, Okemos, MI 48864. Prepayment includes list price + 6% sales tax + \$4.25 postage and handling for the first item + \$.85 for each additional item.

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