

2019 Tawas Point Birding Festival

Complete Schedule of Activities

Festival Headquarters – Tawas Bay Beach Resort (300 E. Bay St. East Tawas)

Thursday, May 16

2-8 p.m. | Registration and information tables open at Festival Headquarters

3-5 p.m. | Birding 101 Workshop

Learn the birding basics. Workshop topics will include optics, field guides, etiquette, and technology, along with some identification basics. **FEE: \$25**

6 p.m. | Birds and Brews

Join Michigan Audubon and your fellow birders for dinner and a brew at Northwoods Steakhouse, 1222 East US-23, in East Tawas (just north of the US-23/Tawas Beach Road intersection). The anticipation of the Festival will fill the air with bird stories galore! Participants are responsible for paying for their own meal.

7 p.m. | Evening Birding – Twilight at Tuttle Marsh

Board the bus at Festival Headquarters for an evening guided birding experience at Tuttle Marsh National Wildlife Area. Waterfowl, shorebirds, marsh birds, and forest species will be the source of the night's entertainment. Arrive back at Festival Headquarters at approximately 10:00 p.m.

FEE: \$25 Tour Rating: Moderate

8 p.m. | Evening Birding - Whip-poor-wills in the Moonlight

Visit the local nesting habitat of the Whip-poor-will. Participants will carpool from Festival Headquarters. Return at approximately 10:00 p.m. **FEE: \$25 Tour Rating: Easy**

Friday, May 17

6:30 a.m.-4 p.m. | Registration and information tables open at Festival Headquarters

Morning activities at Tawas Point State Park

7-11 a.m. | Tawas Point State Park: Campground Trail and Lighthouse Trail – Venture on your own through a series of stations. Guides will be on hand to help identify birds. Maps with stations will be included in your packet. Areas around the lighthouse, pavilion, bird feeding station, and the campground are covered. Expect migrating songbirds, hummingbirds, gulls, and shorebird species.

Tour rating: Easy

7 a.m. | Guided tours

Tawas Point State Park: Sandy Hook Trail

Guided walk of the trail that goes to "the point." Migrating warblers and songbirds will be seen. Possible migrating shorebirds and gull species too. Meet at the tent in the State Park next to the lighthouse gift shop. Tour ends at 9:30 a.m. **FEE: \$15 Tour rating: Moderate**

Pine River Kirtland's Warbler Management Area

Board the bus at Festival Headquarters with your guide to head to the Pine River Kirtland's Warbler Management Area. Besides the Kirtland's Warbler, you may see Clay-colored Sparrow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown Thrasher, and other species of the jack pine habitat. On the return trip, the bus will stop at a known Trumpeter Swan nesting site. Bus returns at approximately 11:30 a.m. **FEE: \$25 Tour Rating: Moderate**

Eagle Run Trail

Board the bus at Festival Headquarters and head to the Eagle Run Trail in Oscoda. The trail runs along the AuSable River. Expect waterfowl species along with birds of the forest and forest edge. Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Veery, and Hermit Thrush are all possible. Tour returns to Festival Headquarters at approximately 11:00 a.m. **FEE: \$25 Tour Rating:** Moderate - Trail is a maintained grass trail; walk will be approximately 2.5 miles.

8 a.m. | Carpool Tour

Grasslands and Clark's Marsh

This carpool trip will depart from Festival Headquarters and head to several grassland areas between East Tawas and Oscoda. Species to be observed may include Upland Sandpiper, Bobolink, Grasshopper Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark. Stop at Clark's Marsh where you will add marsh species. Driving time to first stop is approximately 25 minutes. Group may lunch in Oscoda (on your own) with a return to Headquarters by 12:30 p.m. **FEE: \$25 Tour Rating:** Easy

Birding at Little Loon Lake Nature Area

This carpool trip will depart from Festival Headquarters. Driving time to Little Loon Lake is approximately 30 minutes. A leisurely walk with Peggy Ridgway along a woodchip trail reveals a variety of warblers in the canopy overhead. Participants will experience a change of scenery as they transition to wetland habitat after traversing the boardwalk out into Mud Lake. Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Veery, and Hermit Thrush are all possible. Group will have lunch in the area (on your own) with a return to Festival Headquarters by 12:30 p.m. **FEE: \$25 Tour Rating:** Easy

9 a.m. | Carpool Tour

Wildflowers of the AuSable

Join Emily Kemnitz of AuSable Valley Audubon as she shares her wildflower expertise while you journey down woodland paths. Visit several sites along the famed AuSable River corridor while also observing bird species unique to wetland and woodland habitats. Departing from Festival Headquarters, drive time to the first stop is approximately 30 minutes. Return to Festival Headquarters at around 12:00 p.m. **FEE: \$15 Tour Rating:** Moderate

10 a.m. | Guided Tour

Tawas Point State Park: Sandy Hook Trail

Guided walk of the trail that goes to "the point." Migrating warblers and songbirds will be seen. Possible migrating shorebirds and gull species too. Meet at the tent in the State Park next to the lighthouse gift shop. Tour ends at 12 p.m. **FEE: \$15 Tour rating:** Moderate

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. | Vendor area open at Festival Headquarters

12-1:30 p.m. | Waterbird ID Workshop at Festival Headquarters

Join us to go over the basics of waterbird identification and brush up on your ID skills.
FEE: \$15

2-3:30 p.m. | Warbler ID Workshop at Festival Headquarters

Linnea Rowse-Chriest, Michigan Audubon Conservation Program Coordinator, will cover tips and tricks for warbler identification during this workshop. Learn more about behavioral cues, along with the basics of warbler ID. **FEE: \$15**

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Saturday, May 18

6:30 a.m.-4 p.m. | Registration and information tables open at Festival Headquarters

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2-3:30 p.m. | Raptor ID Workshop at Festival Headquarters

Join Rich Couse, Executive Director of Mackinac Straits Raptor Watch, to learn the basics of raptor identification. **FEE: \$15**

3:30-4:15 p.m. | Birds of Prey Presentation

Join Wildlife Recovery Association for a birds of prey presentation at Festival Headquarters.

4:30 p.m. | Tally Rally and Social

Join your fellow birders to review the Festival species list and hear the stories that go along with the most exciting sightings. Light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar will also be available during this informal festival wrap-up.