# Jack Pine Warbler

SPRING: Going Beyond Birding • Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary Restoration • Gateways to Environmental Education • Cerulean Warbler Weekend • In Memoriam: Roger Allen Sutherland • The Magic of Whitefish Point • Spring Events



# .Jack ine Warbler

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# Cover Photo • Tree Swallow Photographer: Joe Povenz

Joe Povenz is an award-winning bird and nature photographer whose work has appeared in several national publications. He and his wife, Cari, several national publications. He and his wife, Carl, share a passion for photography. Joe captured this photograph while he and Cari Joe were attending the Red-headed Woodpecker Festival in Middleville, Mich. They captured many images of these entertaining Tree Swallows and this was Joe's favorite.

Thank you to Joe Povenz for submitting this wonderful image for the 2017 Jack Pine Warbler cover photo contest. If you have photographs you would like considered for inclusion in future issues of the *Jack Pine Warbler*, please contact Communications & Marketing Coordinator Diane Huhn at dhuhn@michiganaudubon.org or (517) 580-7364.

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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. More than 30 chapters of Michigan Audubon focus on local conservation issues and provide educational programs within their communities. Contributions to Michigan Audubon are tax-deductible.

Visit Michigan Audubon.org for more updates, and follow Michigan Audubon on social media









# From the Executive Director

# The Magic of Whitefish Point

When I first moved back to Michigan in 2009, Whitefish Point was at the top of my places to visit. In fact, I recall placing a vintage WPBO sticker on the bumper of my Subaru after visiting the Owl's Roost Gift Shop. Suffice it to say, long before joining the organization, then the board, then the staff of Michigan Audubon, Whitefish Point Bird Observatory had spoken to me. As trite as it sounds, I found myself referring to WPBO as magical, yet it was hard to describe why. Technically speaking, we can describe why it's tremendous in terms of observing birds and what those observations can in turn do for birds, wildlife, and habitat. WPBO is an important bird area and a natural, concentrated migration corridor. Describing it in full is a hard task - I think it warrants a visit to really appreciate and experience this gem of a place for birds and people alike.

Don't get me wrong: this isn't an ornithological Disneyland made for all. WPBO is not a place that shouts just why and how it is so special and important to the layman (part of its charm). To those visiting the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum, for instance, the bird observatory's existence may seem elusive and intangible. But, dig deeper and you'll find that — no matter your birding knowledge — Whitefish Point offers a memorable way to connect you to birds. Each time I visit, I learn something new. I witness something new. I am a better observer, more connected to birds and the natural world.

As you drive through the quaint town of Paradise, Mich., curl your way to the Point, and step out of your car to have a look around, you might (if not a veteran visitor) not know exactly where to begin or even what is implied by "observatory." With over 340 species of birds that have been seen at the Point, there is plenty to see. It takes just a bit of basic research to prepare yourself for making the most out of a visit.

Moving into another exciting Spring season at WPBO, I want to make it clear to our members and supporters: Whitefish Point Bird Observatory is not an exclusive club. You don't need to have advanced birding knowledge to appreciate what WPBO is, has been, and continues to be and do. You might, however, benefit from some insider tips, which I hope I can provide here. I also hope you will take the time to learn, visit, and explore WPBO as you travel around Michigan this spring and summer.

Here are some things you can get out of your visit during the spring season at WPBO which kicks off on March 15 and wraps up on May 31:

- Enjoy a spirited, highly-educational guided bird walk with our Spring Field Ornithologist Skye Haas.
- Visit our counters, Louie Dombroski (Waterbird Counter) and Gary Palmer (Hawk Counter), and learn about what they see in real-time at the waterbird shack and the hawk deck.
- Observe owl banding Friday and Saturday evenings from



dusk to midnight with veteran owl banders, Chris Neri and Nova Mackentley.

- Attend Michigan Audubon's Spring Fling, a celebration of migration at WPBO, held annually during the last weekend in April.
- Browse the Owl's Roost Gift Shop and stock up on new and old graphic t-shirts, hoodies, field guides, gifts for kids, and gorgeous, affordable photography by Night Flight Images (nightflightimages.com).
- Observe the endangered Piping Plover and attend a program in the Owl's Roost on this vital little shorebird.

As you plan, please check out our newly-revamped website, wpbo.org, for more tips on seasonal highlights, program offerings, and blog posts. Oh - and one last tip be sure to fuel (or charge) up your vehicle after you cross the Mackinac Bridge.

If visiting isn't in the cards for you, we are doing our best to bring WPBO to you through our three WPBO blogs, social media content, the online store, regular content in the JPW, and the Dunkadoo app. Dunkadoo is software that allows our counters to sync their daily observations with eBird. These data are then shared live on our homepage so that you can easily connect with what our field staff are observing on a daily basis during the spring and fall migration seasons.

It's a privilege for Michigan Audubon to own and operate WPBO, and it's a responsibility we take great care of in terms of honoring the history and planning for a sustainable future. We rely on your support - from visits to the Owl's Roost Gift Shop to symbolic owl adoptions to monetary donations to the program and gifts to the endowment – to keep this program growing into the future. We hope you will take the time to connect — either virtually or on the agatelined Lake Superior shore — with this very special place.

For the birds.

Heather L. Good, Executive Director

Genther Lord

P.S. If you have a story about WPBO, share it with us at birds@michiganaudubon.org. We would love to hear what WPBO means to you!



Garter snake © Carolyn Miller

r, as a birding friend is fond of saying, "birds don't exist in a vacuum." The Henslow's Sparrow you find this spring is more than a bird. It's the grasshoppers it eats and the grasses from which it builds its nest. It's the stalk of last year's blazing star that it uses as a singing perch. It's the raccoon that threatens to raid its nest. It's the snowfall that saturated this grassland and even the geologic forces that shaped the small swale where the bird nests. All of those are part of the bird's story and it in turn is part of myriad other stories. To see that is to understand the basis of ecology. To appreciate it is to be a naturalist.



Rose pogonia orchid © Carolyn Miller

It seems inevitable that birders would gradually become naturalists, but that isn't always the case. For some, the bird is the thing, and the oak, the mink, and the spider are distractions. That's one way to bird, but it takes an effort of focus that most birders lack, happily so in most cases.

When summer matures in Michigan and the songbirds have largely quit singing, birders start talking about dragonflies and damselflies (collectively called "odes" for the order Odonata), and moths and butterflies (called "leps" for the order Lepidoptera.) Any given walk is guaranteed to produce numerous sightings of odes and leps, even if the birds are scarce. Appreciating insects is a perfect way to ensure that no summer expedition is ever fruitless. They provide everything that birds do – bright colors, fascinating behavior, and identification challenges. How can one not stop and admire the elegant beauty packed into the three inches of an ebony jewelwing damselfly in a damp June forest? The meadowhawk dragonflies of late summer are the frustrating equivalent of the silent Empid flycatchers for those who love a challenge and don't mind admitting that some things must be left unidentified. There's the striking eight-spotted forester, a diurnal moth that is black and white with neon-orange brushes on its legs. Its caterpillar stage feeds on the leaves of Virginia creeper, a common vine that produces berries that are a favorite of some migrating warblers in the fall. Just like that a moth brought us back to birds by means of a literal (and figurative) vine.

Knowing trees is both natural and useful for a birder doubling as a naturalist. Have you ever been on a walk where a guide or another birder says, "It's near the tip of the rightmost cedar"? You look up and see a mass of conifers. The cedars stand out at a glance among the white spruce and eastern hemlock, if you know your trees. Would you like to find a first record of Yellow-throated Warbler for your county? You're going to want to look for sycamores along a stream. Hear a Blackburnian Warbler somewhere high in the canopy? Check the hemlocks as they're often the tree of choice for that species. Trees are, at the risk of stating the obvious, the lifeblood of the forest. Their flowers feed migrating birds, their trunks provide cavities for woodpeckers. Their leaves feed insects and their branches are highways for rodents. The roots form intricate associations with fungus that impact the wildflowers that grow at the tree's base. Even in death, a fallen log becomes a cradle of nourishment and repose for everything from salamanders to mushrooms.

Birding's close cousin herping is another way to expand beyond birds. Herping is the hobby side of herpetology, the study of reptiles and amphibians. Have you ever seen a log in a swamp with four species of turtle on it? That's the equivalent of an eight-warbler tree in May. Any birder who denies ever having been fooled into thinking a pond full of weird ducks was just around the corner, when it was actually a mating frenzy of wood frogs, is probably lying. An attempt to photograph a Lincoln's Sparrow in the rocks along a dike might reveal a stunning eastern fox snake. The snake may have just taken a freshly hatched American Coot as a meal. It will shed its skin later in the day and a Great-crested Flycatcher will grab the shed to decorate the entrance to its nest cavity, a nifty way of telling rodents to stay away.

To go beyond birds is to turn a walk of a hundred yards into an entire afternoon's adventure. Stand on the banks of a stream and notice the crayfish castles in the mud. Figure out the web that connects the crayfish that had been there to a nearby perched Merlin to the staghorn sumac trees behind you. Look at the tiny spots of lichens with a hand lens and a distant porcupine with a telescope. Get to know nature and you'll inevitably be compelled to protect it, because after a few exercises of constructing webs of connection, you'll realize that you are part of the one big web. For better or worse, you're a part of nature. Everything you do in some way affects the towhee, the goldenrod, and the mink. You're made up of the same material as every single thing you see in nature. You are natural. But unlike a plant or a bird, you can go beyond instinct and consider the broader consequences of your actions. For a naturalist, a walk outside becomes an enjoyable immersion, but the ultimate lesson becomes one of a lifelong commitment to the conservation of nature, which, after all, is self-preservation.



Crab spider © Carolyn Miller

In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught.
-Baba Dioum, Senegalese ecologist









Left to right: Cicada on big blue stem; damselflies on yellow pond-lily; wax cap mushroom; tiger swallowtail @ Carolyn Miller



# Building a Home for Henslow's Sparrows

BY SARAH NELSON, BARRY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ajor restoration efforts are underway at the Michigan Audubon Otis Farm Sanctuary in Hastings. In collaboration with Michigan Audubon, Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Barry Conservation District began work in October 2017 to restore 153 acres of wildlife habitat, including 106 acres at Otis.

Healthy habitat fosters healthy avian populations, which is great for birds and birders alike. In this case, good habitat starts with diverse native plant communities for food, nesting, and cover. The work at Otis includes creating or restoring 32 acres of fen, 48 acres of tallgrass prairie and cool season grassland, 19 acres of oak savanna, and 7 acres of oak forest.

This work is important because habitat degradation and destruction are serious problems for birds. Development, invasive species, intensive agriculture, unsustainable logging, and fire suppression or ending prescribed burning are just some of the past practices that have led to conservation and restoration challenges today. Land-use practices post-European settlement led to the loss of over 99% of both native prairies and savannas in the Midwest.

"It has been well-documented that the populations of many bird species are in decline, some in serious decline. One of the reasons cited for the decline is the lack of suitable habitat. There are many ongoing projects already in progress to develop more high quality habitats, but the need for more exists. The current habitat improvement projects at Otis Farm Sanctuary will help fulfill this crucial need," explained Jack Wykoff, a top birder in Barry County.

Given the history of some parcels of land, a hands-off approach isn't always the best option. Work needed over the next two years includes non-native and undesirable tree species removal, invasive species management,



Some of the restoration work at Otis Sanctuary aims to improve habitat for the Henslow's Sparrow and other grassland birds . @ Joshua Clark

prescribed burns, native seed planting, and native tree planting. Removing trees and shrubs in grassland habitat is especially important for grassland birds like the Henslow's Sparrow, which has been seen at Otis for many years. Grassland birds require large tracts of contiguous open space because trees can serve as perches for predators like hawks, so grassland birds are less likely to nest where the trees are too close.



"The removal of invasives and non-native trees and shrubs will make Otis Farm Sanctuary more attractive to bird species that are threatened due to habitat loss elsewhere in the state. We look forward to seeing how this project changes the species mix at Otis," added Doug Klein, another of Barry County's finest birders.



Visitors at the Cerulean Warbler Weekend in 2017 enjoy the boardwalk at Otis Farm Sanctuary.

This project was made possible by support from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources through the Wildlife Habitat Grant Program (WHGP). The WHGP provides funding to conservation partners to manage habitat for sustainable wildlife populations and wildlife-based recreation. "This is a great example of the type of project the DNR is interested in, because of the strong

collaborative relationships and broad wildlife benefits," said Clay Buchanan, WHGP Coordinator for the Wildlife Division. "The project partners have done a great job of navigating through the project complexities of different habitat restoration needs towards the end goal of great wildlife habitat."

Since 2013, the Wildlife Habitat Grant Program has funded over \$3.7 million in wildlife habitat work. The grants are funded by a portion of hunting and fishing licenses that are sold each year. The work done by these grant projects benefits birds, too, so thank a hunter for helping to protect our natural spaces. Better yet, consider buying a license yourself, even if you don't hunt!

The project also offers many opportunities for community involvement. There will be volunteer workdays from spring to fall in 2018 and 2019. Interested volunteers should contact Michigan Audubon for information. For public safety, Otis may be temporarily closed during restoration, so make sure to check with Michigan Audubon before venturing out!



Sarah Nelson is the resident manager at the Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary and the executive director of the Barry Conservation District. She is passionate about finding ways to make conservation important to and feasible for everyone. Contact her at sarah.nelson@macd.org.



# Gateways to Environmental Education

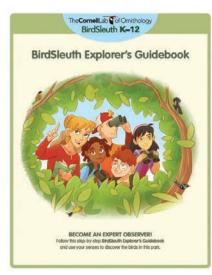
BY LINDSAY CAIN, EDUCATION COORDINATOR

ne of the easiest ways to get anyone interested in learning more about the natural world, is to get them outside. As you know, birding is a great way to do this. The great part about birding is that anyone can do it. People of different ages, backgrounds, locations, and skill levels can all participate. This is especially important when engaging children and young adults.

Youth are increasingly important in the future of birds and bird conservation. Michigan Audubon is currently working on more opportunities for young birders, as well as resources for those who interact with potential young birders. However, there are already many means available to help increase interest in birds and birding skill for young people.

BirdSleuth, birdsleuth.org, a K-12 program by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, offers various educational

tools to help students science skills, and connect with local habitat biodiversity. Additionally, the program offers experience with citizen science projects. BirdSleuth is a great way to students engage in science utilizing birds and birding. Resources include downloadable activities lessons. and activity kits.



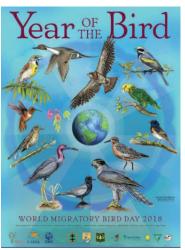
workshops, and online webinars, which can also be found on their Youtube channel. Although these activities may seem to be set up for teachers to lead a class, they can also be utilized in informal sessions or homeschool groups. Some items have a nominal cost, but many are free.

Environment for the Americas offers educational features for World Migratory Bird Day, migratorybirdday.org, including infographics, activities, and PowerPoints. All new resources are tailored to coincide with the unique theme chosen for the current year. Past years' work is also available on the site for use. You can utilize these tools to hold your own World Migratory Bird Day celebration or for a classroom lesson, community presentation,

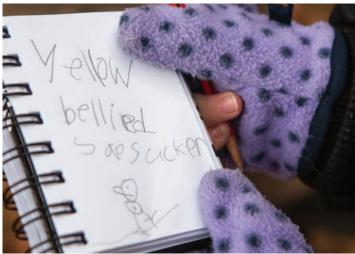
or informal educational event. Resources could also be used for homeschool students or by parents or grandparents at home.

Are you looking for help with identifying bird songs and calls? Bird Song Hero, academy.allaboutbirds. org/bird-song-hero, offered by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, teaches just that with a game that has players matching bird calls with the corresponding spectrogram. The game helps you to visualize the bird calls, which in turn helps commit them to memory. Being a bird song hero is fun for participants of all ages.

weather When the keeps inside. you Where the Birds Are, wherethebirdsare.com, allows you to virtually step outside. This game has children identify the bird species, and sometimes gender, of birds found in common habitats by using real birdina data from hotspots around to simulate country a real bird watching



experience. Birds are recorded on a check list and identification success rate is tracked as participants work through their game. This website gives students an opportunity to experience bird watching and work on their identification skills from their classroom or home.



Young birder compiling a checklist during the Christmas Bird Count.

© Camilla Crea

Other websites, like nestwatch.org and feederwatch. org, can also be useful in offering ways to get involved with citizen science projects and utilizing data. Involving students in citizen science at an early age can help foster interest in the environment and contribute to scientific literacy.

These resources can be used by groups or as individuals, in a public or private setting. Although some of them may be marketed for children, they are opportunities for continued education for all ages. Michigan Audubon is further working on helping to provide more materials to our chapters and members to help initiate environmental education and involvement of youth in the state.

As part of this movement, Michigan Audubon has several young birding opportunities in the works for 2018. This year, we will be reforming the Michigan Young Birders Club with several young birder events around the state. We are still looking for volunteers and partners to help with these walks and activities.

The inaugural Great Lakes Young Birders Camp will be held June 24-28 at Alma College. Campers will learn about birding basics, conservation, and ecology throughout the week by visiting locations around mid-Michigan and hearing from experts.

Michigan Audubon will also be adding some opportunities for families and young birders at the 2018 Cerulean Warbler Weekend, June 2-3, at Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary in Hastings, Mich. This year's event will feature family-friendly nature walks on the property and hands-on educational opportunities during the festival. You can find out more at michiganaudubon.org.

As the year progresses, more resources will be available for our members and chapters. Updates will be sent as able on the progress of our youth educational efforts in the state. As information about all of the above memtioned events becomes available, it will be published on the Michigan Audubon website, shared via our social media channels, and included in our monthly e-newsletter.



Lindsay Cain is Michigan Audubon's education coordinator. If you are interested in learning more about our events, workshops, presentations, or event sponsorship opportunities, please contact Lindsay at 517.580.7364 or lcain@michiganaudubon.org.



This year will mark the 10th annual Cerulean Warbler Weekend (CWW) at Michigan Audubon's Otis Farm Bird Sanctuary in Hastings, Mich. A gem of the area, Otis Sanctuary features 128 acres of rolling fields, mature forest, expansive marshland, a stream, kettle hole marshes, and several springs. Otis Sanctuary is adjacent to the Globally Important Bird Area, Barry State Game Area, which is recognized for providing critical breeding habitat for Cerulean Warblers.

Highlights of CWW have historically been tours to see the coveted Cerulean Warbler, a species of highest concern in the eastern United States because of a small total population size and significant declines throughout its range. Only about 1,000 birds are found in Michigan each year and Barry County is one of the few refuges that remain for them in the state. Additional species of note to be seen on tours throughout the weekend include Henslow's and Grasshopper Sparrow, Alder, Acadian, and Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Blueheaded Vireo, and Hooded Warbler. The variety of habitat at the Otis Sanctuary offers a unique opportunity to view a variety of species in a relatively small area. In addition to the notable bird species spotted on tours, Otis Sanctuary is also home to the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake, a federally listed threatened species.

This year, we will also be adding opportunities for families and novice birders. Our hope is to engage more young people and members of the surrounding community. We will offer family-friendly nature walks and educational opportunities during the festival to engage a new audience.

This year's event is sure to have something for everyone. Tour topics will include Cerulean Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow, and Flycatchers, in addition to the family-friendly basic birding and nature walks. The weekend will also feature the customary Bus Full of Birders tour through Barry County and new educational activities for kids. We are also planning a stewardship event at Otis Sanctuary to help with current conservation and habitat work being conducted on the property.

For an up-to-date schedule of events and registration information, visit michiganaudubon.org. We hope to share in this exciting 10th annual Cerulean Warbler Weekend with you!

# **Upcoming Events**

April 6-8 | Mackinaw Raptor Fest | Mackinaw City, MI | Mackinaw Straits Raptor Watch April 9 | Birding 101 Seminar | Okemos, MI | Michigan Audubon April 14 | Michigan Audubon Member Meeting | Ann Arbor, MI | Michigan Audubon April 17 | Spring Migration Bird Walk at Baker Woodlot | East Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon April 24 | Spring Migration Bird Walk at Woldumar Nature Center | Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon April 28 | Thornapple Woodpecker Festival | Middleville, MI | Grand Rapids Audubon Club April 28-29 | Spring Fling at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory | Paradise, MI | Michigan Audubon May 1 | Spring Migration Bird Walk at Capital City Bird Sanctuary | Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon May 4-13 | Biggest Week in American Birding | Northwest Ohio | Black Swamp Bird Observatory May 5 | Welcome Back Birds! | Grosse Pointe Shores, MI | The Ford House May 5 | Global Big Day | Worldwide | Cornell Lab of Ornithology May 8 | Spring Migration Bird Walk at Lansing River Trail | Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon May 12 | World Migratory Bird Day Celebration | Capital City Bird Sanctuary | Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon May 14 | Invasive Species in Mid-Michigan Seminar | Okemos, MI | Michigan Audubon May 15 | Spring Migration Bird Walk at Burchfield County Park | Holt, MI | Michigan Audubon May 17-19 | Tawas Point Migration 2018 | Tawas City, MI | AuSable Valley Audubon May 17-20 | Indiana Dunes Birding Festival | Chesterton, IN | Indiana Audubon Society May 20 | Backyard Bird Habitat Workshop at Woldumar Nature Center | Lansing, MI | Michigan Audubon May 25-27 | Warblers on the Water | Beaver Island, MI | Beaver Island Birding Trail May 31-June 3 | Aldo Leopold Festival | Les Cheneaux Islands, MI | Les Cheneaux Area Tourist Association June 1-30 | Kirtland's Warbler Tours | Grayling, MI | Michigan Audubon June 1-2 | Kirtland's Warbler Festival | Roscommon, MI | Kirtland's Warbler Festival Planning Committee June 2-3 | Cerulean Warbler Weekend | Hastings, MI | Michigan Audubon June 11 | The Art of Birding by Ear Seminar | Okemos, MI | Michigan Audubon June 22 | Breakfast and Young Birders | Hastings, MI | Michigan Audubon and Pierce Cedar Creek Institute June 24-28 | Great Lakes Young Birders Camp | Alma, MI | Michigan Audubon

# Kirtland's Warbler Festival 2018 Returning to Downtown Roscommon

After a successful return to Northeast Michigan three years ago the Kirtland's Warbler Festival is gearing up for another great turn out June 1-2, 2018! This event bringing with it numerous activities centered on the region and opportunities to explore the restaurants, culture and business district of this lively area!

The Festival begins with the Kirtland's Warbler Home Opener on Friday, June 1, hosted by the Kirtland's Warbler Alliance at the Kirtland Community College Four Mile Road Campus. The program is designed speakers soon to be announced. Tickets are \$25 and can be reserved by calling the Huron Pines office.

Community Recreation, Activity and Fitness Center (C.R.A.F.) with a wide array of activities, including kids' programs, bird tours and much more!

Renowned ornithologist Joe Rogers will be attending Recovery Association. Additional speakers will be announced later.

The Kirtland's Warbler Festival Planning Committee, a group of about a dozen local residents and community leaders, is excited to present a program that highlights the important link between conservation of our natural resources and the health and happiness of our region's

the forests, waters and wildlife that our residents and program lead for Huron Pines and member of the Festival Planning Committee.

"An event like the Kirtland's Warbler Festival is a great venue for raising awareness around how conservation protects opportunities to be physically active as well as increase investment in our local communities because work and play!"

Kirtland's Warbler Festival. For more information on or local organization area, hotel discounts and kirtlandswarbler.org.

# CraneFest 2017 Special Thanks

Although CraneFest was not the success we had hoped for due to extreme weather, we would like to thank the very dedicated volunteers who helped set up and tear down the 2017 event.

Kaitlin Chamberlain Nicholas Daum Fischer Jex Carolyn Miller Sarah Nelson Shelly Stark Kristy Taylor



Thank you to our 2017 CraneFest Sponsors: Republic Services Wild Birds Unlimited Stores Redfin Vanguard USA Inc

Additional thanks to all our artists and vendors for their support with this event. We look forward to a hopefully less rainy 2018 CraneFest! CraneFest 2018 will take place October 13-14, 2018. We hope to see you there!

# **Tawas Point Migration 2018** May 17-19. 2018 | Tawas City. MI

Tawas Point Migration 2018 offers birders of all levels a combination of high-quality guided birding opportunities for small groups, coupled with one afternoon of indoor educational sessions. Field trips including: Whip-poor-will, Red-headed Woodpecker, Trumpeter Swan, and migrating warblers including the Kirtland's Warbler, all found locally. Registration is now open at ausablevalleyaudubon.org. Click the Migration 2018 tab for complete information. Online registration

# Have an event to share?

Spring is a busy time for birds and birders! Festivals. walks, trips, presentations, and more birdy events abound. Please visit the Michigan Audubon website at michiganaudubon.org for information about a variety of upcoming events near you!

Have an event to share? Michigan Audubon will soon be launching a new Community Calendar service on our website that will allow chapters and organizations to submit and share their events on our website. Stay tuned for more details!

# In Memoriam

Roger Allen Sutherland, MS, MA Professor Emeritus, Schoolcraft College January 8, 1930 – February 11, 2018



Roger Allen Sutherland (an avid beekeeper and perpetually energetic soul) often quipped, "Don't tell me to stop burning the candle at both ends, just give me more beeswax." This philosophy, along with his good humor, virtuous nature, and ability to find great joy and satisfaction in hard work remained with him and inspired all around him throughout his 88 years of vibrant and productive life

Roger was born on January 8, 1930, in Toledo, Ohio, to Farley Allen Sutherland and Estella Marie Dewey. He spent his childhood in Trilby, Ohio, where he began work at a very young age harvesting fruit, delivering newspapers on foot by age 10, and starting his first real job as a straw boss at Brock Farm at age 12. He attended Whitmer High School where he was often the jokester in the classroom. On one occasion, in biology class, he was clowning around. His teacher marched him back to the rear of the room and sat him down in the vacant chair next to Mary Ellis (his future wife) and said, "You sit here and maybe some of the good from her will rub off on you." It certainly did. Roger and Mary Folger Ellis married April 5, 1952, in Toledo, Ohio, and enjoyed nearly 66 years of marriage together.

Roger was always a steadfast and supportive rock for his family. In his life and career, he had an unwavering ability to lead by example. His family and friends admired his drive to be an active lifelong learner and teacher and appreciated his innate ability to practice humility and bring people together. Roger's captivating storytelling skills, humility and humor put everyone at ease and not only made him an effective leader, but also an impactful citizen, and an all-around wonderful human being. Even in death, his dedication to the betterment of society continued as he donated his body to the University of Michigan Anatomical Donations Program.

Education and service were a theme throughout Roger's life. He studied at Bowling Green State University (1948-1952), continued his education through the Frank E. Bunts Educational Institute, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, served during the Korean War as a physical therapist for the army at Army-Navy Hospital in Hot Springs, Ark., and Valley Forge Army Hospital in Phoenixville, Penn. (1953-1955), and earned two master's degrees (Education and Biology) from the University of Michigan. He had a 34-year career as a biology educator, beginning at Allen Park High School in 1957. In 1964, he became the first biology and botany teacher and chairperson of the biology department at Schoolcraft College. During his 27 years at Schoolcraft, teaching anatomy and physiology to nursing students was his primary focus, he started the nation's first human cadaver program at a community college, was twice named "Educator of the Year,"

began what would become a 51-year passion for beekeeping, and left a wonderful legacy of generosity.

He was the ultimate volunteer, and gave freely of his gifts and time as leader for the Boy Scouts (Troop 30 Dixboro), 4-H, SE Michigan Beekeepers Association (34 years, including roles as vice president and president), Michigan Beekeepers Association (30+ years as a board member), Michigan and Washtenaw Audubon Society leader (23+ years, including service as president and receipt of a lifetime achievement award from the Washtenaw chapter in 2003), Michigan Botanical Society, Naturalist Camera Club of Toledo (15+ years), and Huron Valley Michigan Botanical Club (7 years). Roger also served as a frequent nature program presenter for large numbers of classrooms, clubs, and church groups. He and Mary conducted countless classes on wildflowers, maple syrup, beekeeping and led many nature walks and excursions for various organizations over the years. Outside of advocacy for nature, Roger also made time to pause and enjoy the natural environment with family and friends as a fishing and canoeing enthusiast.

A notable example of Roger's unbelievable energy was his dedication to walking 3 miles every day since he experienced a heart attack in February 1992. For the past 22 years, Roger has consistently continued this ritual (with several forced breaks due to medical issues over the years), all the while collecting recyclables along the side of the road. He collected an awe inspiring \$10,712.40 worth of can deposits during this time.

Roger and Mary have been influential members of their local community since moving to Warren Road in 1967. Roger was instrumental in advocating for Warren Road to become a designated Natural Beauty Road. He also expressed his ingenuity on his property and in his workshop over the years by creating and cultivating an incredible flower and vegetable garden year after year, breaking custom nature trails for each of his 12 grandchildren, building and maintaining a co-op honey house, and creating an elaborate sunken garden and a custom greenhouse, among many other interesting projects, including what he refers to as his "25-year woodworking project" of creating 12 sets of keepsake train cars for each of his grandchildren (132 total train cars).

Roger's legacy and passion for family, science, and creativity lives on in his wife Mary, their five children and their spouses, Marie Powers, Stephen Sutherland (Christie), Ellen Neal (Mike), Anne Curtis (Barry), and Peter Sutherland (Mary Caplon), 12 grandchildren, Jeffrey and Forrest Powers, Kenneth, Daniel, and Jacob Neal, Laurel Truax, Lindsay Sutherland Gvakharia, David Sutherland, Kayla and Jessica Curtis, Whitney and Laura Sutherland, one great grandson, Asa Neal, and countless other beloved friends and family members. He is preceded in death by his parents, Farley and Estella, and his siblings Jeanette Eloise Sutherland and Charles Albert Sutherland.

A memorial service will be held at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Mich., in the Sutherland Room on April 8, 2018 1-4 p.m. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Schoolcraft College Foundation.

# Get Your Claws Off My Merganser

When you grab your bins and scope and head out for birding adventure, sometimes it pays to grab your camera too. You just never know when you might happen upon a battle of a lifetime. Christine Brackett of Alcona County recently shared images of an epic day she and a favorite birding buddy, Thomas Heatley, shared at the Harrisville Harbor.

"Not long ago, a dear friend and I witnessed a spectacular aerial battle between a Snowy Owl and Bald Eagle. It was one of those cold, raining birding days. We had stopped by the harbor to see what ducks we could find. So we grabbed our scopes, binoculars, and cameras and headed to the pavilion where it was dry. I spotted the eagle on the dock eating a merganser but to my surprise when I looked closer I shouted "Snowy Owl on the post next to the eagle!". It wanted that duck and by golly it kept

dive-bombing that eagle until the it had no other option but to acknowledge the persistence of this magnificent Snowy Owl. Needless to say that is when we witnessed the aerial chase begin. When it was finished, the owl had claimed the prize. Thomas and I looked at one another with mouths agape and eyes wide open. Not a word was uttered for what seemed like minutes, still staring at one another I said to him "What did we do to deserve this once in a lifetime opportunity! In his late 70s, Thomas has been birding most of his life. I asked him, "Have you ever seen such an encounter between these two species before?" He replied "NEVER!"

Thank you to Christine for sharing this experience with our readers. If you've got an epic birding tale to tell, please contact Diane Huhn at dhuhn@michiganaudubon.org.



# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

We are so thankful for the generosity shown by so many of you with your recent end-of-year giving. Donations brought in from December through February have bolstered what Michigan Audubon can do for birds and their habitat throughout the state of Michigan. Thank you to those who gave to the 2018 Annual Fund, contributed to WPBO, supported growth at the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Audubon Sanctuary, and more. We certainly would not be able to continue our work without the altruistic spirits of people like you.

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