

# the Caller

**August 2017, Volume 56, No. 1**

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by GRAC, 6152 Georgeann Ct., Belmont, MI 49506-9783



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## See You in September: A Sneak Peek at Programs

The summer break is nearly over! Grand Rapids Audubon Club is gearing up for another interesting and informative year of programming kicking off next month at the Donnelly Center on the beautiful Aquinas College campus. (See preview list below.)

The first program of the year is Monday, September 25, and will feature Helen Taylor, Michigan State Director for the Nature Conservancy. Taylor will present on “The Changing Scale of Conservation,” examining the complexities of protecting natural resources. Please plan to join us – and bring guests! – for this and other programs throughout the 2017-2018 year.

### 2017-2018 Program Schedule

Programs begin 7:30 PM at the John F. Donnelly Center of Aquinas College, 157 Woodward Lane, SE.

**Sept. 25, 2017** – “The Changing Scale of Conservation,” Helen Taylor, The Nature Conservancy

**Oct. 30, 2017** – “Feather Brained: My bumbling quest to become a birder and find a rare bird ... on my own,” Robert Tarte

**Nov. 27, 2017** – “Hawks on the Wing: Seeing beyond the field marks,” Josh Haas

**Jan. 29, 2018** – “Nocturnal Flight Calls,” Caleb Putnam

**Feb. 26, 2018** – “Bird Monitoring in Muskegon County,” Brian Johnson

**March 26, 2018** – “Building Better Grasslands for Grassland Birds,” Rob Keys

**April 30, 2018** – “Purple Martins: True Backyard Pets,” Penny Briscoe

**May 21, 2018\*** – Topic TBD, Marie Perkins

*\*Meeting held at Roselle Park*

## President’s Corner

by John Chronowski

A happy summer to all Grand Rapids Audubon Club members. Before long, we will all be gathering at the Donnelly Center for our monthly meetings. I believe we have some very educational programs this coming year that will satisfy all avian interests.

Recently, Chris Baer informed me that the Maher Sanctuary boardwalk is in good condition. The bridge has been completed and the plaque in memory of Judith McNally is being finalized. In the next few months, take some time to visit our pristine sanctuary to enjoy the many benefits of our environment.

We have several interesting birding outings on the horizon, including recurring events on Wednesday and Thursday mornings at Millennium Park and an August 26 field trip to the Muskegon Wastewater Area. Please check the GRAC website and page 6 of this *Caller* for further details.

The GRAC Board will meet August 28 for our annual organizational and planning session for the 2017-18 year. Feel free to contact any of the Board members if you have any issues or ideas you wish GRAC to address. Your input is a crucial component to the continuing success of our organization.

Enjoy these last lazy days of summer and we hope to see you at our first meeting in September. Until then, good birding!

Deadline for Sept. newsletter articles: **August 25**

(send to Tricia Boot)

For membership information contact assistant treasurer Mary Austin at the address, phone number or E-mail on the back of the *Caller* or see website [www.graud.org](http://www.graud.org).



## Mary's Membership Musings

by Mary Austin, Assistant Treasurer/  
Membership Chairperson

It's an exciting time of year! Why? Because fall migration is underway and it's time to renew your membership! Except for Life and Honorary memberships, GRAC memberships align with the Club's fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. That means for many members, your membership ended June 30.

To renew your membership for the 2017-2018 fiscal year (or to obtain a gift membership for someone who enjoys birding), please use the application/renewal form in this *Caller*.

Recognition goes to GRAC member Marilyn Keigley for having photographs selected for the recent Michigan Audubon Society *Jack Pine Warbler* magazine. A photo of three Marbled Godwits and a Common Tern graces the cover of the July-August issue of the magazine. An additional photo of Marbled Godwits is on page eleven.

With enthusiasm, GRAC says "welcome" to new people on our roster: **Mindy Bergman** of Jenison and **Jo McGavin** of Grand Rapids.

Thanks go out to those individuals who recently made contributions to GRAC when they started or renewed their membership or made a donation in memory of a GRAC member.

GRAC appreciates the generosity of these individuals:

**General Fund:** Eric Bernard, Larry Burke, Ruth Cannon, Linda Damstra, Richard Hansen, Howard Huisman, Gail Kloosterman, Jan Lewis, Linda Love Stewart, Carol and Fred VanOeveren

**Audubon Adventures:** Fred and Carol VanOeveren

**Junior Audubon:** Marlene Cook

**Maher Sanctuary:** Christine Baer, Fred and Carol VanOeveren

**Maher Sanctuary (in memory of Judith McNally):** Christine Huizinga

**Patron Membership:** Howard Huisman, Henry Spenski

**Scholarship Fund:** Lucile Radick

**Sustaining Membership:** Merrie Brouwer, Bill and Sue Sweetman

## Remembering Jack Miller

by Mary Austin

Long-time GRAC member John "Jack" Miller passed away on July 28. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Faye, who also was a GRAC member for many years.

Jack's July 30 *Grand Rapids Press* obituary reports that Jack and Faye were drawn together by a common love of travel and the outdoors. They spent time hiking, canoeing and birding. Jack was an avid photographer and Detroit Tigers fan. He also painted, wrote and gardened.

GRAC sends condolences to Faye and other members of Jack's family. The *Grand Rapids Press* reports a memorial service was scheduled for August 5 at Bostwick Lake Congregational Church.

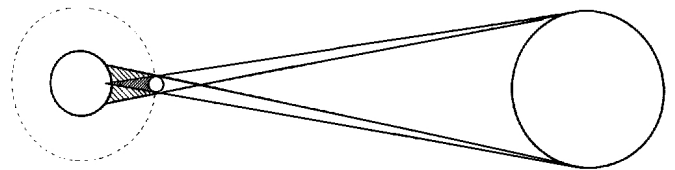
## The Solar Eclipse is August 21

by Mary Austin

Monday, August 21, should prove to be a memorable day for many people. That's when a good swath of the United States, from Oregon to South Carolina, will experience a total solar eclipse. This is the first total eclipse to sweep across the entire contiguous United States since 1918. This also is the first total eclipse on American soil since 1991.

Although Michigan is not in the path of totality, we will have a partial eclipse. Reports often are made during eclipses about the confusion birds and animals experience because of the unexpected loss of daylight. Keep a watch for unusual avian and mammal behavior on August 21.

As a reminder, do not look directly at the sun during the partial eclipse. You can use pinhole projection, which means you project sunlight through a hole onto a surface and look at the solar image on the surface. Another alternative for safe sun viewing involves using special eclipse glasses. See <http://www.eclipse2017.org> for more information on eye safety and how to view a solar eclipse.





## June/July 2017 eBird Summaries

by Carol VanOeveren

The following are overviews of the unusual or rare eBird sightings for June and July 2017 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. These reports do not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable and those with sketchy details. Rare and unusual eBird sightings are updated daily on the GRAC website.

### JUNE

The first week of June was sunny and pleasant with little precipitation. A heat wave arrived June 10 with temperatures soaring to the upper 80s and low 90s with uncomfortable dew points. Some welcome relief came with the passage of a cold front by the following weekend. Pleasant weather interspersed with occasional rain and thunderstorms continued for the remaining period.

By June, birds are on territory, nesting and raising young. A few migrant shorebird and warbler stragglers are still possible, but for the most part, this month is quiet with few rare sightings. The last of the **White-rumped Sandpipers** (14) were observed at the Muskegon Wastewater June 8 and one at the 120th Ave potholes in Allegan Co June 2. Late warbler migrants included a Blackburnian at Muskegon State Park and a Black-throated Blue at the Muskegon State Park blockhouse on Scenic Dr June 10 and one singing at Allegan State Game Area, M-89 Kalamazoo River bridge and boat launch June 21.

Finds of the month: Fourteen **American White Pelicans** continued since May 31 in the Lloyd's Bayou vicinity of the Grand River in Ottawa Co June 1 and three were observed at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland June 10. A **Piping Plover** pair again nested and fledged young on the beach at Muskegon State Park. Five chicks along with the two adults were observed June 18. A **Winter Wren** nested at 116th Ave and Swan Creek area at the Allegan State Game Area, which is very unusual this far south. An adult with two downy young was observed by Elliot Nelson June 5. One also was singing at North Ottawa Dunes Park in Ottawa Co June 9. Two **Worm-eating Warblers** continued in their usual location at 116th Ave and Swan Creek area in Allegan State Game Area throughout the month. On June 14, one was observed carrying food, so nesting is probable. A **Yellow x Prairie Warbler** hybrid was observed at 41st St S of 122nd Ave in Allegan Co by Caleb Putnam and Aaron Boone June 6. This bird has continued at this location for the past several years. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found by Amy Lyyski at Muskegon Wastewater June 25.

Other notables: up to three **Eared Grebes** at Muskegon Wastewater June 25-29 – this is a known location for this species in the summer; a **Least Bittern**

continued at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland, two at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th St access and one at Kalamazoo River, Newport Harbor in Allegan Co; **Common Gallinules** at Window-on-the-Waterfront, Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou both Cypress St and 129th St access, East Grand River Park in Ottawa Co, 116th Ave and 8th St wetland and Kalamazoo River 63rd St boat launch both in Allegan Co and at Muskegon State Park, Snug Harbor Marsh; a **Black-bellied Plover** at Muskegon Wastewater June 27-28; Upland Sandpiper fledged young at Muskegon Wastewater, along Hayes St E of 68th Ave in Ottawa Co, S Swanson Rd potholes in Muskegon Co and at Allegan State Game Area, Todd Farm; a Ruddy Turnstone continued since May 31 at Byron Lake in Kent Co June 4 and three at Holland State Park June 6; an est **200 Semipalmated Sandpipers** at Muskegon Wastewater June 1 and some lingered there through the first week of June; two Baird's Sandpipers also there June 1; a **Wilson's Phalarope** continued since May at the Wastewater June 4 and a **Red-necked Phalarope** continued there June 3; a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Holland State Park June 6; two Bonaparte's Gulls at Muskegon Wastewater late month; a **Black Tern** at Hopkins WWTP in Allegan Co June 2-7, up to seven at Muskegon Wastewater June 3-6 and three at 116th Ave and 8th St wetland in Allegan Co June 4; Yellow- and Black-billed cuckoos at various locations in all four counties; Red-headed Woodpeckers at various locations in all four counties; **Peregrine Falcons** fledged young at JB Sims Plant, Harbor Island (three chicks, two males and a female, were banded on June 7) and at the GVSU Eberhard Center in downtown GR (DNR unable to band young because of limited accessibility to nest box – this will be corrected by next year); an Olive-sided Flycatcher at East Grand River Park June 1 and at Apple Trail June 2 both in Ottawa Co; a late Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Allegan State Game Area, 116th Ave and Swan Creek June 21; **warblers of note**: a Louisiana Waterthrush at Aman Park June 9, Allegan State Game Area 116th Ave at Swan Creek June 10, Steelcase Global Headquarters in Kent Co June 15 and Allegan State Game Area M-89 Kalamazoo River bridge and boat launch June 21; Prothonotary at various locations in all four counties; **Hooded** at various locations in all four counties throughout the month – presumed nesting; **Cerulean** at Baker Ave Coldwater River Sanctuary in Kent Co and up to five at the usual locations in the Allegan State Game Area – Pipeline Landing, M-89 Kalamazoo River bridge and boat launch, Allegan Dam along with two Prothonotary and N of Swan Creek Marsh along with a Magnolia; a **Prairie** at Mt Baldhead Park in Allegan Co June 29; a **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Muskegon Wastewater June 3 and one at end of 52nd St

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SE E of Kraft in Kent Co June 10; up to two **Henslow's Sparrows** at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft June 10-30, up to two at Kraft Ave access at Kent Co Int'l Airport June 11-17; eight along 60th St SE near S runway of Kent Co Int'l Airport June 14 (grassland study) and four there June 18; a White-throated Sparrow at a residence in western Ottawa Co June 1-2; up to 16 **Dickcissel** continued throughout the month at Muskegon Wastewater – probable nesting, up to 21 at the Todd Farm throughout the month – probable nesting; up to two at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft June 11-30, two along 60th St SE near S runway of Kent Co Int'l Airport June 14 (grassland study), two at Kraft Ave access of Kent Co Int'l Airport June 17 and up to four at several locations in Ottawa Co; and two **Brewer's Blackbirds** at Muskegon Wastewater June 16.

## JULY

Near-normal temperatures and dry conditions were the rule for the first week of July. An intense line of thunderstorms passed through the area with winds up to 103 mph (clocked at Grand Haven) early on July 7 producing extensive damage and widespread power outages. More storms with heavy rain passed through on the 12th. Near- to above-normal temperatures followed with humid conditions and occasional rounds of storms, especially north of Grand Rapids. A dry and pleasant period ended the month.

Some shorebird movement was apparent at the Muskegon Wastewater starting early in the month with both Greater and Lesser (70 on July 13) yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper (six on July 16), Least Sandpiper (est 100 on July 7), Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper (up to two July 3-14) and Short-billed Dowitcher (up to three on July 3-7) present. By the end of the month, both species and numbers increased: fifteen species were observed there on July 26 including two Stilt Sandpipers, two Baird's Sandpipers and a Long- and Short-billed Dowitcher. As usual, some diving ducks, especially Redheads and Ruddy Ducks plus a few Lesser Scaup, summered at the Wastewater and many dabblers nested there.

Finds of the month: This was the month for **American Avocets**. Five were seen by John VanOrman at Byron Lake in Kent Co on the evening of July 7. These birds made a very brief stopover, perhaps blown in by the high winds the previous night, and were gone the next day. Twenty were observed flying back and forth across the channel and beach at Holland State Park by Eric Gustafson and Carl and Judi Manning July 13. About 20 minutes later, the birds were observed by the Mannings flying south along the Lake MI shoreline south of Lake Macatawa. Four were observed at Saugatuck Dunes State Park Natural Area near the Kalamazoo River mouth

along with three Willets (an additional five observed by Rick Brigham) July 18 by Ed DeVries and one was observed at Holland State Park by Elizabeth Notman July 25. The two **Worm-eating Warblers** continued to be seen at Allegan State Game Area, 116th Ave at Swan Creek area July 8. A **Western Meadowlark**, initially seen by Michael Overway, was present in the fields at Hayes and 68th Ave in Ottawa Co July 9-15 and briefly on July 30.

Other notables: two **Eared Grebes** continued since June 25 at Muskegon Wastewater throughout July; a **Least Bittern** at Covell Park in Muskegon Co, Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave St access, Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland, Reeds Lake and two at Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve; Broad-winged Hawk nested near Riley Trails Park in Ottawa Co – two fledged young observed July 13; Virginia Rail fledged young observed July 3 at Millennium Park; **Common Gallinules** continued at both Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave Access and Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland; **Piping Plover** with fledged young continued at Muskegon SP beach July 14, one banded individual at Oval Beach in Allegan Co July 19 (this male hatched at Manistee in 2010, first nested and was rebanded at Sleeping Bear Pt in 2013 and more recently was nesting at North Manitou Island fledging two chicks this year), same bird (identical band sequence) observed at Mt Baldhead Park near Oval Beach July 22, one banded juvenile (hatched at Manistee) at Holland SP July 20-30 joined by a banded mature bird July 25 and one adult with bands at Grand Haven north pier/Grand Haven SP area July 23-26; a **Willet** at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area July 1, Holland SP July 7, 19 and 29, the Kalamazoo River mouth in Allegan Co July 10, Mt Baldhead Park in Allegan Co July 22 and two at Saugatuck Harbor Nat Area July 12 and at Saugatuck Dunes SP July 30; one **Ruddy Turnstone** at Grand Haven north pier July 22-29; up to nine Upland Sandpipers at Muskegon Wastewater throughout the month – fledged young continued to be seen; a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Muskegon Wastewater July 31; a **Baird's Sandpiper** at Coopersville Sewage Ponds July 24 and up to five at Muskegon Wastewater July 29-31; a **Short-billed Dowitcher** at the Caledonia Sewage Ponds in Kent Co July 21 and up to two at Muskegon Wastewater July 23-31; up to five Bonaparte's Gulls summered at Muskegon Wastewater; a Blue-headed Vireo at Saugatuck Dunes SP July 9 – known breeding location far south of typical breeding range; up to six Common Ravens continued at Muskegon Wastewater – have become common residents at this location; a Winter Wren at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area, Hoffmaster SP and Grand River Ravines Park in Ottawa Co in early July

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– unusual in summer this far south; two American Pipits at Hayes and 68th Ave in Ottawa Co July 10,11 – early; **warblers of note:** a Northern Waterthrush at Allegan Mountain Bike Park near Allegan July 25; a Louisiana Waterthrush at Allegan SGA, 116th Ave at Swan Creek July 8; Prothonotary fledged young at Millennium Park; forty Common Yellowthroat at Upper Macatawa Nat Area, 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co July 1 – this location is known to be a prolific breeding ground for this species; **Hooded** up to three at several locations in Allegan and Ottawa cos; a **Cerulean** at Allegan SGA 116th Ave at Swan Creek July 2, Allegan SGA Allegan Dam w/ two Prothonotary July 2, Millennium Park July 2, Coldwater and 108th St SE in Kent Co July 6,7 and two at Allegan SGA M-89 Kalamazoo River bridge at boat launch July 8; a Magnolia at Lakeshore Dr and Riley St and at Riley Trails Park both in Ottawa Co and at Saugatuck Dunes SP all on July 9 – far south of typical breeding range; two Blackburnian at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co July 23 – early migrants or possible non-breeders; two **Prairie** at Saugatuck Dunes SP Nat Area July 18 – known location for this species; up to two **Henslow’s Sparrows** continued at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft in Kent Co and at Kraft Ave access Gerald R Ford Int’l Airport in Kent Co July 11 and one at Muskegon Wastewater July 30; up to 30 **Dickcissel** continued at Muskegon Wastewater throughout the month, up to three continued at end of 52nd St SE E of Kraft July 8 and up to five were seen at several locations throughout the month in Allegan Co including the Todd Farm area; Bobolink observed at many locations in all four counties with a high count of 41 at Muskegon Wastewater July 22; three **Brewer’s Blackbirds** continued since June 16 at Muskegon Wastewater July 9; and eleven Orchard Orioles (two families: one of six and one of five) at Muskegon Wastewater, Swanson Rd July 22.

## Treasurer’s Report in Brief

The following shows the balances in the three restricted GRAC accounts as of June 30, 2017. This is the end of the fourth quarter of the 2016/2017 fiscal year.

**Maher Sanctuary Fund Balance** = \$3,243.04

**Junior Audubon Fund Balance** = \$4,014.12

**Life Dues Fund Balance** = \$9,103.00

The balances in the first two funds are restricted to expenditures for items related to the respective funds. The last fund is not restricted as to what expenses may be recompensed, but the amount of such payments is limited to the interest generated by the fund.

## June/July 2017 Bird Reports

by Carol VanOeveren

On June 14, Joe McDonnell, a former GRAC member now living in the UP, made the trip to the 116th Ave and Swan Creek area in the Allegan State Game Area again this year. The third time was the charm! He finally found the **Worm-eating Warblers** this location is known for. He observed them “many times foraging and carrying food in a place with some noisy and agitated Ovenbirds.” Other good finds among his 30 species were **Black-billed Cuckoo**, two **Acadian Flycatchers** and a **Hooded Warbler**. Visit

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S37589687> for his entire checklist. He also stopped at the M-89 Kalamazoo River Bridge and Boat Launch and picked up two **Cerulean Warblers**.

He also visited the area along 60th St SE south of the south runway of the Gerald R Ford Int’l Airport on June 18 to search for grassland birds. There he picked up two **Grasshopper Sparrows**, four **Henslow’s Sparrows**, a **Field Sparrow**, two **Savannah Sparrows** and eight **Bobolinks**.

A **Peregrine Falcon** landed on the ground near a bird feeder in Sheila Miner’s back yard in Holland on June 18 frightening away a female cardinal. The photo she included was good enough for a positive ID.

The **Whooping Crane** named Lily (a male) first reported in Kent County in May 2015 continues to return to Michigan (identified by the band sequence on the legs). From mid-June through mid-July he was reported in the Schoonover WPA/Canandaigua Rd area in Lenawee County. Visit

<http://www.graud.org/whooperhtml> for an overview and a link to Brian Clegg’s June 18 eBird checklist with photos and

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/crane/12/BandingCodes1214D.html> for Lily’s history. To learn about the Schoonover WPA visit

<https://www.fws.gov/uploadedFiles/WPASchoonover.pdf>.

Three **Pileated Woodpeckers** (an adult pair and an immature) were observed in the same tree along the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail in Middleville by Gary Deckert on July 24.

## Share Your Sightings!

Your birding knowledge and activities can benefit other birders – and the birds themselves, in some cases. Share your local sightings with Carol VanOeveren ([bird.reports@graud.org](mailto:bird.reports@graud.org)) for inclusion in the monthly/bi-monthly bird reports which appear in the *Caller*.



## Upcoming GRAC Field Trips

Contact Becky Kuhn with field trip suggestions/ideas. Watch the *Caller* for future trip announcements. Visit [www.graud.org](http://www.graud.org) for the most up-to-date trip list. Safety hazards: Driving in a caravan can be hazardous. Get directions from the leader and exercise caution on the road at all times. Have a passenger handle all radio or phone communications. Dress and drive for the weather.

**Thursdays, August 10, 17 and 24, 8:00 AM**

**Wednesday, August 30, 8:00 AM**

**Wednesdays, September 6 and 20, 9:00 AM**

**Thursdays, September 7, 21 and 28, 9:00 AM**

**Leader: Katie Bolt**

### *Recurring Millennium Park Hikes*

Hike Millennium Park to see what's hanging around (route depends on day/week). A good variety of birds have been reported from this diverse habitat near the river, which includes open and swampy ponds, lowland forest and various secondary growth.

Essentials: August 10, 17, 24 and September 7, 21, 28, meet at the east end of Veterans Memorial Drive for a three-mile walk. August 30, meet at the east end of Veterans Memorial Drive for a two-and-a-half mile walk. September 6 and 20, meet at the corner of Butterworth and Riverbend to walk approximately two miles of the Hansen Nature Trail.

**Saturday, August 26, 7:30 AM**

**Leaders: Lizzy Kibbey, Becky Kuhn and James Fyfe**

### *Fall Shorebirds: Muskegon Wastewater area*

This trip will focus on clues to use in identifying migrating shorebirds that are primarily in their winter plumage. With the challenges of dwindling bird numbers, this location is a consistent stopover for shorebirds and other birds migrating south. We will be able to spend as much time as needed to use binoculars and spotting scopes to compare and evaluate shorebirds at relatively close proximity. In past years, we have seen seven "you can count on them" species and a variety of seven or more others, covering plovers, dowitchers, phalarope, snipe, and all sizes, from Greater Yellowlegs to the Least Sandpiper. Of course, you can plan on viewing a collection of waterfowl and field birds as well.

We will start our birding at the MWS and then head to lunch and the Muskegon Nature Preserve (hopefully meeting up with Brian Johnson and watching him banding birds). Then, it's on to Muskegon State Park (north side of the channel) to see if the Piping Plovers that nested this year are still there with any of their five offspring. If other rare or interesting birds have been reported in the area, we will discuss tracking them down as well.

Essentials: Meet at the main entrance to the Muskegon Wastewater on the east side of Maple Island Road (a mile or so north of Apple Avenue). Bring binoculars, scope (if you have one), drinks and snacks as needed. Lunch is traditionally at the bagel place, but there are many options. Since this is a longish day, feel free to join us as able. Call Becky if you get lost or want to meet later in the day: (616) 437-9205.

**Saturday, September 9, 7:30 AM**

**Leader: Steve Minard**

### *Grand Haven North Shore*

We'll plan to check the Grand Haven north breakwater to see what's moving on Lake Michigan. I'm hoping for some shorebirds and a tern or two. From there, it's a short hop over to Kitchel Lindquist Dunes. This starts as open dune area and moves through patchy wetlands to pines. Warblers may be moving through here. If the dunes are quiet, we will consider a move to Harbor Island or Hofma Preserve. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the Boy Scout Headquarters on Walker (north of I-96). You may want a drink or snack to keep you going until lunch. This is planned as a morning trip.

## Celebrate River City Wild Ones

River City Wild Ones, a non-profit group dedicated to teaching about the benefits of native wildflowers and plants, is celebrating its tenth anniversary next month. The club will host a celebration at 7:00 PM on Monday, September 18, at the Covenant Fine Arts Center at Calvin College, 1795 Knollcrest Circle SE.

The topic for the evening is "Attracting Bees and Beneficial Insects with Native Plants, Shrubs and Trees" and there is no cost to attend. The keynote speaker is Heather Holm, a landscape designer and consultant who specializes in pollinator landscapes and native landscape restorations. She has written two books: *Pollinators of Native Plants* and *Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide*. Her books will be available for purchase at the event.





## Book Review

by Chris Baer

*“Listening to a Continent Sing: Birdsong by Bicycle from the Atlantic to the Pacific,” Donald Kroodsmas, 2016, Princeton University Press*

If you are challenged in identifying birds by song, this is the book for you. Even if you are not, you will learn oodles of things about birds while reading this entertaining book.

Donald and his son David travel the breadth of the United States (5,000 miles) following the guide, *Bicycling Coast to Coast: A Complete Route Guide Virginia to Oregon*. They carry much of what they need in panniers on their road bikes.

Donald starts almost every day much before sunrise – which, in May, meant 4:30 AM – to listen to the predawn and dawn choruses. Did you know that most migratory birds have different songs for predawn, dawn and daytime? Another amazing thing is that many birds, especially the warblers, have more than one voice box allowing them to sing very complex songs – think thrushes. Wow!

As Donald and David traverse the continent, each chapter is sprinkled with QR codes. (A QR code is a two-dimensional bar code accessible via a QR reader application on a smart phone or tablet.) These QR codes allow you to hear the bird by scanning the code. Or visit [ListeningToAContinentSing.com](http://ListeningToAContinentSing.com) and find each song by the numbers listed below each QR code in the book. I did not use the QR codes, mostly because I am technically challenged, but also because most of the birds in the book are familiar to me.

This book is much more than learning bird songs, however. Donald discusses bird relatedness, geology and each ecotype area they visit, including Eastern woodlands, Blue Ridge Mountains, prairie, Rocky Mountains, drylands and the Pacific Northwest. He discovers different birds in each of these areas of their route and experiences adventure along the way. What is he going to see and hear next?

David, Donald’s son, is along for the ride and is a very talented chef and bicycle mechanic. At the end of their trip, he decides to bike from the Bay Area in California to Tierra del Fuego in South America looking to teach the world about climate change. (*The Bicycle Diaries: My 21,000-Mile Ride for the Climate – RideForClimate.com*.) Are these two individuals energetic or what?

Next Review: *One More Warbler: A Life with Birds* by Victor Emmanuel. The title alone should make you want to read this book.

## Ranger Steve’s Nature Niche

*Rogue River Butterfly Count*

by Ranger Steve Mueller

The weather was great with sunny skies and little wind. Eight participants enjoyed butterflies, learned identification and associations with nature niche habitats. Thirty species sighted on count day are listed in Table 1 (see page 8) with the number of individuals and participants. We began at the Howard Christensen Nature Center for our 30<sup>th</sup> count year at 9:00 AM. Counting began at HCNC’s Welcome Center. The group car-pooled to various Rogue River State Game Area locations within the count circle.

We visited the highest elevation in Kent County at Fisk Knob where we anticipated “hill-topping” Black Swallowtails, but none were present. We know what species to expect based on normal flight dates, but some species are not present because we either missed them or their flight schedule is different from our count date in a given year.

During the day, butterfly behavior is observed and described to help make the count a wonderful experience. Larval host plants are inspected for caterpillars or eggs. One Viceroy larva was found on aspen this year. The eight participants spent most time looking for adults and counting individuals.

The total number of species observed has varied over the 30 years from 18 to 43. Weather effects butterfly activity. Sunny days with little or no wind in the 70s and 80s are ideal. Adults often emerge from pupae following a soaking rain. I was surprised that a few species we normally find were not present. The flowering plants, and apparently some butterflies, seem to have delayed emergence this year. We had a cool spring but I expected the warm days in June would allow species to get back on schedule. Activity is closely linked with blooming of nectar sources.

Consider joining the 2018 counts next July. Watch the **Caller** for next year’s dates for the Allegan, Muskegon and Rogue River State Game Area Counts as well as the Newaygo Count in the Manistee National Forest. Books and online resources are educational, but it is best experienced by exploring the real world. Being outdoors is enjoyable, healthy and provides family time that creates wonderful memories. People can join for part of the day.

Other count results are posted on the West Michigan Butterfly Association (WMBA) website. Consider becoming a member of WMBA for \$5 a year. A check can be sent to our treasurer – Dennis Dunlap, 2599 W. Chester Dr., Zeeland, MI 49464.

Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary is the last place we visit on the Rogue River Butterfly Count after diligently searching all day. *(Continued on page 8)*



(Continued from Page 7)

I am always hopeful we will find at least one species we have not discovered elsewhere during the day. This year, we added the Appalachian Brown. During count week – the three days before and after count day – we saw two Harvesters, one Mourning Cloak and one Hobomok Skipper at Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary. Those species are listed as an addendum to the report and turned in to the North American Butterfly Association. During 29 of the 30 years we have found species at Ody Brook that we were unable to find elsewhere during count day.

Ody Brook has a bird checklist of 123 species. Unlike a nature center, its primary purpose is to enhance biodiversity through habitat management. Group visits are welcome and people come individually. It is our private property that we open to the public and we appreciate people calling or E-mailing before coming. It is an ebird “hot spot.”

Natural history questions or topic suggestions can be directed to Ranger Steve (Mueller) at odybrook@chartermi.net - Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary, 13010 Northland Dr. Cedar Springs, MI 49319 or call (616) 696-1753.

**Below and to the right are count details:**

Count Center at Algoma and 20 Mile Rds in Kent Co. MI  
Time 9:15 AM to 5:15 PM  
AM - 100% sunshine AM  
AM - 80% sunshine PM  
69 to 76 F  
Wind 0 to 3 mi/hr.  
4.5 miles on foot  
Total Party Hours: 7.5 hours

**Observers:**

Pam Dehnke  
Dennis Dunlap  
Bill Goodfellow  
Ranger Steve Mueller  
Ronda Spink  
JoAnne Stephens  
Art & Judy Visser

<b>Table 1: Rogue River Butterfly Count, MI July 8, 2017 – 30<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	
<b>Swallowtails</b>	
Spicebush Swallowtail	2
<b>Whites &amp; Sulphurs</b>	
Cabbage White	3
Clouded Sulphur	4
<b>Blue &amp; Hairstreaks</b>	
American Copper	43
Coral Hairstreak	7
Eastern Tailed Blue	1
<b>Brush-footed Butterflies</b>	
Great Spangled Fritillary	2
Aphrodite Fritillary	3
Silver-bordered Fritillary	1
Meadow Fritillary	6
Baltimore Checkerspot	15
Question Mark	2
Eastern Comma	2
Red Admiral	8
American Lady	1
Viceroy	3
Northern Pearly Eye	6
Appalachian Brown	1
Little Wood Satyr	4
Common Wood Nymph	40
Monarch	8
<b>Skippers</b>	
Silver-spotted Skipper	2
European Skipper	3
Tawny-edged Skipper	2
Long Dash	2
Little Glassywing	13
Northern Broken-dash	12
Delaware Skipper	8
Mulberry Wing	2
Dun Skipper	42
<b>Total Adult Individuals</b>	
	<b>248</b>
<b>Total Species Count Day</b>	
	<b>30</b>
<b>Early Life Stages:</b>	
Viceroy larva on aspen	1
<b>Seen During Count Week</b>	
Harvester	2
Mourning Cloak	1
Hobomok Skipper	1





# LATE SUMMER/EARLY FALL GRAC CALENDAR

## August

- 10 Field Trip: Millennium Park w/ Katie Bolt (recurring 17, 24, 30)
- 26 Field Trip: Fall Shorebirds w/ Lizzy Kibbey/Becky Kuhn/James Fyfe
- 28 GRAC Board Meeting

## September

- 6 Field Trip: Millennium Park w/ Katie Bolt (recurring 7, 20, 21, 28)
- 9 Field Trip: Grand Haven North Shore w/ Steve Minard
- 25 GRAC Board Meeting
- 25 GRAC Membership Meeting and Presentation

## Grand Rapids Audubon Club Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State / ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

(Providing your E-mail address ensures that you will receive E-mail notification when the latest edition of the *Caller* newsletter is posted on the GRAC website.)

Individual	\$ 20.00	_____
Family	25.00	_____
Senior (65+)	12.00	_____
Student (14+w/ID)	12.00	_____
Sustaining	30.00	_____
Patron	60.00	_____
Individual Life Membership	400.00	_____
Donation <i>(General Fund, Jr. Audubon, Sanctuary, Scholarship, Audubon Adventures, etc.)</i>		_____
<b>Total Amount Enclosed</b>		_____

Make checks payable to:  
**Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc.**  
 Send application and check to:  
**Mary Austin, Assistant Treasurer**  
**2021 Valentine, NE**  
**Grand Rapids, MI 49525-2922**

Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### Mission Statement:

*The Grand Rapids Audubon Club brings together people who enjoy nature, especially wild birds. We seek to protect and improve our natural environment and to advance nature education throughout West Michigan.*

**GRAC Board Meetings** are held at 6:00 PM prior to each month's general membership meeting.

**Junior Audubon Meetings** are held Saturdays at various locations.

**General Membership Meetings** are held the last Monday of the month (Sept. – May) at 7:30 PM at the John F. Donnelly Center of Aquinas College located at 157 Woodward Lane SE. December (Christmas Bird Count) and May (Annual Banquet) meetings are held at different locations and times. Upcoming field trip information is published in each newsletter. See the GRAC website for the complete field trip list. Any additions or deletions to the above calendar will be noted in future issues of the newsletter.

### Serving You

GRAC Board and Committee Chairpersons are listed below for

#### *Grand Rapids Audubon Club Board of Directors and Special Committees*

*The Board of Directors consists of the Executive Council, the Immediate Past President and Chairpersons of the Standing Committees. In addition to the Board Of Directors, "Special Committees" and "Resident Agent" are also listed below.*

#### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*5 officers + 4 elected board members*

President – John Chronowski

Vice President – Becky Kuhn

Secretary – Cynthia Davidek

Treasurer – Jeff Neumann

Assistant Treasurer – Mary Austin

Board Member – Howard Huisman

Board Member – Rob Peters

Board Member – Cheryl Helmus

Board Member – Keith Helmus

Conservation – open

Field Trips – Becky Kuhn

Finance – Jill Goodell

Fund Development – Bea VerBurg

Historian – Linda Damstra

Hospitality – Henry Raad /

Rosemary Radius

Junior Audubon – open

Library – Norine and Jim Shea /

Fidencio Paradez

Maher Sanctuary – Chris Baer

Membership – Mary Austin

Nominating – Jill Goodell

Publicity – open

Scholarship – Katie Bolt

Website – Fred VanOeveren

#### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

*(non-voting member)*

Scott Hutchings 2014-15, 2015-16

#### STANDING COMMITTEES

*Per 2013 GRAC Bylaws, there are*

*19 Standing Committees. Each*

*committee chairperson is a voting*

*member of the Board. Committee names*

*shown are per bylaws.*

Audio/Visual – Robert Riepma

Bird Reports – Carol VanOeveren

Caller Editor – Tricia Boot

Caller Publisher – Becky Kuhn

Christmas Count – Tom Leggett /

Steve Mueller

#### SPECIAL COMMITTEES / CHAIRPERSONS

*(non-members of Board of directors in this capacity)*

Audubon Adventures – open

Insurance – Jill Goodell

#### RESIDENT AGENT

Larry Burke

**Grand Rapids Audubon Club**  
6152 Georgeann Ct.  
Belmont, MI 49306-9783

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*and December*

## Grand Rapids Audubon Club

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