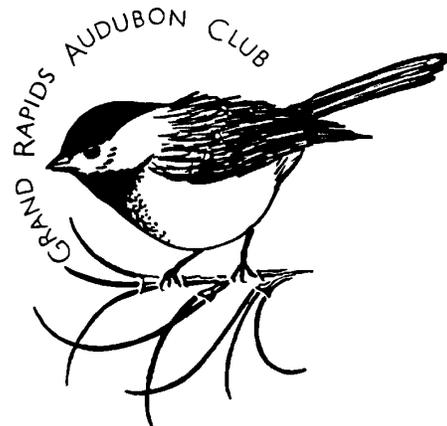


the Caller

May-June 2018, Volume 56, No. 9

published monthly September – April, bi-monthly May – August, November – December
by GRAC



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GRAC Leadership and Club Updates

Congratulations to the newest members of the Executive Board for the upcoming year. Their terms begin July 1, 2018. The new officers approved by a vote of the membership:

President: **Sheryl Helmus**
Vice President: **Scott Hutchings**
Assistant Treasurer: **Cynthia Davidek**
Secretary: **Tom Leggett**
Board Members: **Landon Bell, Becky Kuhn and Jan Lewis**

They will serve with:
Treasurer: **Jeff Neumann**
Board Member: **Keith Helmus**

A sincere thank you to all of our outgoing Executive Board officers and Board Members for their hard work and dedication. And thank you to those who are assuming new committee roles with the club. You may find a complete listing in this *Caller*.

Also of note: The membership voted in May to approve the 2018-2019 budget. Much appreciation to Roselle Park in Ada for hosting our annual May meeting and potluck.

Our new season kicks off Sept. 24. A list of topics and speakers for the 2018-2019 season will post in the next *Caller*. Stay tuned and enjoy your summer!

President's Corner

by **John Chronowski**

Since this will be the last time I will be able to address you as president of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club, I wanted to share some thoughts with the membership. I believe we have accomplished several things in the past two years. Our meeting place at the Donnelly Center has been a very good fit for our membership.

We have expanded our outreach into the Grand Rapids community with events such as the Thornapple Woodpecker Festival, the Grand Rapids Public Library field trips program (see page 12), Discover Millennium Park and the Climate Watch program.

Improvements have been made at the Maher Sanctuary. Several possible partnerships are on the horizon including the Highlands Golf Club green space development, and greater cooperation with agencies like the John Ball Park Zoo, the Sierra Club and Michigan Audubon.

Yet there is still much to do: developing a much more diverse membership, constructing an active Junior Audubon program and greater interaction with the Grand Rapids community.

I want to personally thank the GRAC Board and all members for their willingness to work with me to make GRAC a more vibrant and effective organization. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to birds, the environment and your fellow man/woman.

It's Time to Renew Your Annual Membership!

See "Mary's Membership Musings" on page 3 for details, or find the membership form on page 13.

Thank you!

Deadline for July-August newsletter articles: **Aug. 1**

(send to Tricia Boot)



The Year of the Bird

by Sheryl Helmus

We are approaching the halfway point of 2018. This year is being celebrated as the Year of the Bird by National Audubon Society, National Geographic, BirdLife International and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We can join them and other nature and conservation groups in remembering the 100-year anniversary of the enactment of the Migratory Bird Act (MBA) of 1918. The MBA was a watershed event born as people began to recognize that birds and other wildlife were threatened by human actions. The act established rules and protections that have made a huge difference for many species over the last century.

As we look back a hundred years we can celebrate and thank those who worked for change. Because of their help, herons and egrets still feed in the shallows, loons' calls echo across inland lakes, V's of migrating geese continue to fly overhead and bald eagles again perch majestically along many waterways.

It is now our responsibility to help determine the fate of birds in the coming decades. What action can you take? Will you intentionally choose two or more ways to help secure the future of wild birds during the second half of the Year of the Bird?

Perhaps you could invite your non-birding friends both young and old to join you in birding activities. Your interest could help them grow to love and care for birds and develop a desire to protect them. Others may celebrate by joining together to advocate for bird-friendly policies and laws. Those with yards might increase their bird-friendly landscaping to provide beautiful views for people and critical habitat for birds. Others may opt to spend their time or money protecting habitat critical for bird survival during all stages of their lives. It could be helping with workdays at local preserves or giving funds to secure critical wintering habitat in faraway lands for migrant birds.

So celebrate birds! Celebrate together or solo, a few times a year or every day. And know that your choices today can affect the future.

Maher News

by Chris Baer

Linda Damstra and I cleaned the bird boxes at Maher Sanctuary on April 12. This was the latest date from previous years for this task. The marsh was still frozen and did not pose any threat to us sinking into the muck.

Many of the houses hosted swallows. Bluebirds were second in frequency followed by wrens. One house had wasps last year and another had mice. The two houses in the southwest corner of the property will soon be moved next to 108th Street. Where they are presently is too

brushy with small trees getting larger. The area beside the road is more open and the neighbor's tended front yard will be attractive to bluebirds.

Noted birds seen or heard: Eastern phoebe, chestnut-sided towhee, Eastern bluebirds, sandhill crane, tree swallows, black-capped chickadee, hairy woodpecker, field sparrow, blue jay, Northern cardinal, red-winged black birds and American robin.

Thank you Linda!

Around the end of April, the new section of boardwalk near the Bridge to Nowhere was installed by Rooks Landscaping. They did a superlative job and this was all possible with a donation from Eileen Shedleski. Before the installation, a slippery trot through the mud by visitors and members alike along the trail. No more. Please thank Eileen for her generous donation.

Ed Bolt and I met on May 8 at Maher to fix the sagging bridge corners over the artesian well spring creek. Ed had ingeniously fixed it a few years prior with the help of a car jack and he used one for this redo. It appeared that the floods of April undermined the blocking, which we replaced using short pieces of 4 x 4 under the offending corners. We also screwed a short piece of wood along the top south edge to bolster the fix. Please thank Ed!

We have so many members who do wonderful things of which the membership is not aware.

Mr. Durkee, our Maher neighbor and trail trimmer, told me recently there are many people from surrounding new neighborhoods who walk the loop at Maher.

The North Country Trail Association has a kiosk at the Maher parking lot. They have a sturdy little plastic box to house nice, informative brochures. I am going to ask them if we may put up our own little box at the kiosk with GRAC business cards with membership/meeting information. I welcome your suggestions on signs that would be informative in the sanctuary. There will be a sign posted this fall directing people to wear orange during hunting season.

More sign news: our "No Dogs" sign was stolen. Do we want to install another? The sign was quite high on a tree at the parking lot but the next sign could be fastened with screws and placed high to make removal more difficult.

For you flower buffs out there, Saul Lake Bog Prairie will be blooming with lupine in June. This also is a good time to check out native bees slurping at the lupine and sparrows of various species setting up housekeeping in the prairie. There are two new trails installed last year. Use the driveway at 10471 Six Mile Rd. Follow signs to the preserve. I take Cannonsburg Road east (turns into Five Mile Road) to Gavin Lake Road, turn left and a little down the road turn left again onto Six Mile Road. The driveway is the second on the right.



Mary's Membership Musings

by Mary Austin

Twenty years – I can't believe it! – I've been acting as GRAC's Assistant Treasurer and Membership Chairperson. I took over the positions from Cheryl Wisdom, who had taken over the positions from long-time members, Helen Spore and Fran Hunt. (I'd have to check the GRAC archived *Callers* to find out how long the Assistant Treasurer/Membership Chairperson lineage can be traced back.)

It's been a fun position for the past 20 years, and it is with misty eyes I leave it. I know that Cynthia Davidek as Assistant Treasurer, Theresa Dykhuis as Membership Chairperson and Peggy Falk as Publisher will do a great job keeping membership finances, records and notifications in order.

I would be remiss if I didn't remind the membership – **Pay Your 2018-19 Membership Dues!** (This does not apply, of course, to those who have already paid their 2018-19 dues or to those who are Life or Honorary Members.)

Most members pay their dues annually. June 30, 2018 is the expiration of the GRAC 2017-18 fiscal year. July 1 begins the GRAC 2018-19 fiscal (and membership dues payment) year.

How can you tell if your membership expires June 30? If you receive a printed edition of the *Caller*, your expiration date will be on your address label. If you receive an email notification of *Caller* online availability, you will receive an email message advising you your membership dues are, well, due.

Please pay your dues promptly. We know you enjoy being part of a vibrant organization like GRAC. Your membership supports interesting and informative speakers at our membership meetings, exciting field trips, maintenance of our Maher Sanctuary, the Bird-a-Thon experience, publication of our newsletter and general information (in print and via online media sources), the Audubon Adventures elementary school program, Junior Audubon, scholarships for environmental and nature workshops and courses, our lending library and many other things that bring joy to our members

In other membership news, GRAC welcomes **Pamela Bacon** and **Erica Fraley** (both of Grand Rapids) and **Ann Nowak** (of East Grand Rapids) to the GRAC membership ranks. Thanks to **Linda Damstra** for her donation to the Maher Sanctuary Fund and to **Ann Nowak** for her donation to the General Fund.

(P.S. When you renew your annual membership, please remember a contribution for one of our specially designated funds: General Fund, Junior Audubon, Maher Sanctuary, Scholarship and Audubon Adventures.)

Remembering Tom Blandford

GRAC Life Member Thomas Blandford, 89, passed away on April 7, 2018. An obituary on MLive.com shares many of Tom's hobbies, interests and life pursuits, including his love of nature and all things outdoors. According to the piece, Tom "had a big heart, big hands and a boundless enthusiasm for life. He liked camping, hiking and being outdoors. His birding life list was very impressive from his world travels and many trips to local refuges with Sue (his late wife of 56 years) and Karen (his partner of nine years)." Tom supported numerous local non-profit organizations and would enthusiastically lend a helping hand to friends and family. A celebration of Tom's life was held May 10.

Remembering Henry Tjoelker

by Mary Austin

GRAC Life Member Henry Tjoelker, 77, passed away on May 4, 2018. Henry is survived by his wife of 54 years, Marjean, who also is a Life Member. Both Henry and Marjean have had a long-time fascination with our feathered friends and traveled around the country to go birding. Henry was a lifetime member of the National Audubon Society and was involved with service organizations including the South Kent AMBUCS. He enjoyed socializing with family and neighbors and was known to spend many an evening playing Euchre and other card games. An interesting note is that Henry was born in Nazi-occupied Netherlands in March 1941. In 1953, he and his family immigrated to the United States, first living in Lynden, Washington, and then moving to Grand Rapids. Henry graduated from Grand Rapids Christian High in 1958 and married Marjean in 1964.

Henry's *Grand Rapids Press* obituary notes his funeral service was May 7 at Third Reformed Church on Michigan Street NE with interment in Fairplains Cemetery.

May Finance Report

Prepared by Jeff Neumann-Treasurer

Checking Account Balance: \$ 8,674.89

Edward Jones Account: \$38,641.20

Total Assets as of 5/31/18: \$47,316.09

Restricted Funds (included in the total assets)

Maher Sanctuary Fund: \$4,252.04

Junior Audubon Fund: \$4,150.12

Life Dues Fund: \$9,103.00

The balances in the Maher Sanctuary and Junior Audubon Funds are restricted to expenditures for items related to the respective funds. The Life Dues Fund is not restricted as to what expenses may be recompensed, but the amount of such payments is limited to only the interest generated by the fund.



April/May 2018 eBird Summary

Very Unusual and Rare Sightings by Carol VanOeveren

The following are overviews of the very unusual and rare eBird sightings for April and May 2018 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.

April 2018

The operative words for April were cold, windy, rainy and snowy – the coldest start to April since 1972 ending up 7.7 degrees below normal overall and the fourth coldest April on record. Only three days (11th, 12th and 13th) were near to above normal prior to a whopping windy, rain/freezing rain/snow storm that first dumped inches of rain and then ice, sleet and snow through that weekend with snow lingering into the following Tuesday. The result was numerous power outages and treacherous ice- and sleet-covered roads. We finally entered a warming pattern by the 19th, with temperatures slowly warming to around 70 by month's end.

Although **Snowy Owl** sightings dwindled somewhat, they continued to be seen at several locations: **Allegan Co** - two along 58th St S of 136th Ave Apr 13, one at 64th St and 143rd Ave Apr 18, one along 50th St S of M-40 Apr 20, one at 48th St and 142nd Ave Apr 20, one at West Michigan Regional Airport in Allegan Co Apr 30. **Kent Co** - one at Hull Ln and Hart St Apr 21, one along M-6 near Thornapple Pointe Golf Course Apr 30. **Muskegon Co** - one at Muskegon Wastewater through the month (two seen Apr 22), one along Moorland Rd S of Cline Rd Apr 21. **Ottawa Co** - one at 128th Ave and Bingham St area Apr 9-28, one at Holland SP Apr 10-22, one at 64th Ave and Gordon St Apr 16, one along 116th Ave S of Van Buren St Apr 18, one along 68th Ave S of Garfield St Apr 18.

The mid-month ice storm had an impact on migrants. **Fox Sparrows** had an exceptional movement through the area this spring. Large numbers were downed, especially in Ottawa and Muskegon counties, where 20-plus per day were being reported at feeders during and after the storm. Undoubtedly, migrants perished in this event due to the inability to find natural food sources (or an alternative such as a feeder) because of the ice and snow cover. The cold weather also hampered migration overall. For example, only ten species of warblers (not including the early Magnolia) were observed by month's end: Nashville, Orange-crowned, Black-and-White, Pine, Palm, Yellow, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped. Last year 18 species had been seen.

The best finds: A first year (hatched 2017) **Whooping**

Crane was found by Lisa Casler at Grand Haven SGA, Bruce Bayou, 129th Ave access Apr 11 and continued Apr 14. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S44478375> and <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S44479718> for photos and a video. You may remember that an adult male known as Lily (spotted here in Kent Co in 2015) was seen at the Schoonover WPA in Lenawee Co last summer and fall. Now six years old, Lily returned to this same area early this month likely migrating in with the Sandhill Cranes. Visit <http://graud.org/whooper.html> for a profile and history of this bird. A **Surf Scoter** was found at an unusual inland location, Reeds Lake, by Felix Perdue April 20. A **Franklin's Gull** was found by Ken Sapkowski at the Wastewater Apr 16. Two **Red Crossbills** (male and female) were observed by Dave Allen at a feeder at a private residence at 64th St and 143rd Ave in Allegan Co Apr 15-16 with the male continuing Apr 17-18. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S44596906> to view Dave Allen and Eric Gustafson's photos along with a Pine and Yellow-rumped warbler eating suet (this was during the sleet/ice storm).

Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Apr 5, three there Apr 18-19 and three at the Coopersville Goose Field – most likely the same individuals that were frequenting the sewage ponds; a **Ross's Goose** at Allegan SGA Todd Farm Apr 16; up to 17 **Cackling Geese** continued since Mar 2 at 116th Ave and 8th St wetland in Allegan Co Apr 9, five at the Wastewater Apr 7, three at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Apr 7-8 and six along Swanson Rd N of Hile Rd in Muskegon Co Apr 13; Rick Brigham and Caleb Putnam observed **764 Canvasback**, **356 Redhead** and a very unusual **Redhead x Ring-necked Duck** hybrid while birding the Gun River Aggregates gravel pit (restricted access site) in Allegan Co Apr 9; **2,100 Long-tailed Ducks** at Douglas Beach Park in Allegan Co Apr 8; est **1,000 Bufflehead** and **2,000 Ruddy Ducks** at the Wastewater Apr 29 – not unusual, but very high numbers; **23 Common Loons** at Reeds Lake Apr 21; a **Red-throated Loon** at Holland SP Apr 2, up to three at Grand Haven north pier Apr 14-18, one at Reeds Lake Apr 25; **45 Horned Grebes** at the Wastewater Apr 29; an **Eared Grebe** at the Wastewater Apr 5-8 and 27-30 and one at Grand Haven north pier Apr 18-22; three **American White Pelicans** near Dermo Bayou, Grand River seen from Boom Rd in Ottawa Co Apr 16 (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S44635471> for photos) and nine on the Grand River near Lost Channel in Ottawa Co Apr 21; an **American Bittern** at Blandford NC in Grand Rapids, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing, one at Allegan SGA 44th St wetland, one at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co and one at Kalamazoo River

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Morrison Bayou in Allegan Co; a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at Windmill Island entrance pond in Holland Apr 17, seven (six adults, one immature) at Van Bragt Park in Holland Apr 19 (two continued through Apr 21), one at Pine Creek Park in Ottawa Co Apr 19-20, one at Harbor Island Apr 21-24 and two at Window-on-the-Waterfront Apr 23; a **Golden Eagle** continued since Jan at Allegan SGA Todd Farm Apr 10; a **Common Gallinule** (which is no longer common) at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access, one at 11th St lake in Allegan Co, up to three at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland, one at Harbor Island in Grand Haven, two at Kalamazoo River 63rd St boat launch in Allegan Co and one at 116th Ave and 8th St wetland in Allegan Co; one **American Golden-Plover** at Coopersville Sewage Ponds Apr 24 – new Ottawa Co early spring arrival record; two **Piping Plovers** at Muskegon SP Apr 22-30 – most likely same pair that nested here last year; four early **Long-billed Dowitchers** at the Coopersville Goose Field off Conran Dr Apr 4 continued through Apr 19 (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S44286169> for photos); **350 Bonaparte's Gulls** in flooded fields at Upper Macatawa Natural Area in Ottawa Co Apr 20; an **Iceland Gull** at Holland SP Apr 10; a **Eurasian Collared-Dove** associating with a Mourning Dove at a residence along 118th Ave W of 62nd St in Allegan Co Apr 21; a **Short-eared Owl** at the Kraft Ave access at Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport Apr 4 (one also seen at the E end of 52nd St SE at the airport Apr 24 – possibly same bird) and one at the Wastewater Apr 22; two early **Eastern Kingbirds** at Donald Lamoreaux Park in Kent Co Apr 1; a **Common Raven** at Allegan SGA Swan Creek Marsh Apr 9 – expanding southerly range; an early **Magnolia Warbler** at Apple Trail in Holland Apr 13; an early **Savannah Sparrow** at the Rivertown Crossings Mall ponds Apr 4; **181 Dark-eyed Juncos** at a residence in Douglas Apr 17; a **Dark-eyed Junco Oregon race** at the feeders at Hemlock Crossing Park in Ottawa Co Apr 4 and one at a residence near Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co Apr 7; the **Western Meadowlark** continued since Mar 19 along 58th St between 116th and 117th Aves Allegan SGA Todd Farm Apr 29; **70 Rusty Blackbirds** at 120th Ave potholes in Allegan Co Apr 11; two **Brewer's Blackbirds** at a feeder at a residence near Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co Apr 15, two at the Coopersville/Garfield farmland E of 68th Ave in Ottawa Co Apr 18 (along with 14 Lapland Longspurs and eleven Snow Buntings – getting late for these), three at New Holland St and 48th Ave in Ottawa Co Apr 20-21, up to seven at 84th St and Wilson SW in Kent Co Apr 22-27, up to eleven at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Apr 26-27 and up to 20 at the Wastewater Apr 27-29; and **Pine Siskins** were still in widespread good numbers throughout the month.

May 2018

May started out summer-like with thunderstorms on the 2nd and 3rd. After a windy cold front passed on the 4th, pleasant and sunny weather followed with temps in the 60s and 70s. Rain and thunderstorms with temperatures falling into the 40s and 50s entered the picture by the second weekend of the month, just in time for the North American Migration Count on the 12th. Warmer weather followed with occasional showers and thunderstorms and temps soaring into the 90s by Memorial Day weekend.

Warblers seemed to explode into the area as the weather warmed at the beginning of the month. A major influx occurred at Millennium Park May 2. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45170856> for Caleb Putnam's impressive checklist of 10 warbler species, lots of individuals and 71 total species. Following the passage of a strong, windy cold front, Ethan Kibbey had an exciting afternoon of birding in general including 14 warbler species at Huff Park May 4. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45258635> to view his entire checklist of 69 species tallied in two hours. Warblers were in abundance, along with other passerine migrants, the first weekend of May (and the following week). They were easily found due to the lack of foliage on the trees. An approaching upper level low originating to the west of us, pushed hundreds of birds east along the shoreline at North Beach Park west of Ferrysburg the morning of May 9. Among the impressive numbers observed on an Ottawa County Parks bird walk were 33 Scarlet Tanagers, 159 Indigo Buntings, 416 Baltimore Orioles and 205 American Goldfinch. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45483835> for the entire checklist of 47 species. Eighteen warbler species were observed by Caleb Putnam at Mt Pisgah Dune Boardwalk in Ottawa Co May 10. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45525002> for the entire checklist of 57 species.

Shorebird migration through the area was good at area potholes, Muskegon Wastewater and Caledonia Sewage Ponds. See below for rarities and unusual species.

Lots of best finds: Three rare **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** were found by Jess Sory, while on a Grand Lady boat trip on the Grand River, along the riverbank opposite Grand River Park in Ottawa Co May 17. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45775226> for photo. A very rare **Glossy Ibis** was found by Brad Heath in a flooded field along Swanson Rd S of Heights-Ravenna Rd in Muskegon Co May 31. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S46184643> for photos. A **Black-necked Stilt** was discovered by Steve Minard at Roselle Park in Kent Co May 2, a first Kent Co record. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45173318> for Caleb Putnam's photos.

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Unfortunately, the bird could not be relocated the next day. An **American Avocet** in breeding plumage was seen by Brad Heath at Muskegon Wastewater May 29 and continued May 30. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S46131442> for his close-up photos. A **Little Gull** was found by Steve Minard at the Muskegon Wastewater May 11. A **Franklin's Gull** was found at Holland SP May 20 by Curtis Dykstra and continued May 21. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45870251> for Judi Manning's photos. One was found by Brad Heath in one of the concrete cells at the Muskegon Wastewater May 25 and continued May 30. Caleb Putnam and Rob Emelander observed a **White-eyed Vireo** at Caledonia Lakeside Park (along the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail) in Kent Co May 5. One observer got within 10 feet of the bird. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45279131> for photo. Another was found by Charlie DeWitt at Harbor Island in Grand Haven the same date. Another individual was seen by Dave Herdegen at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co May 6. None of these birds hung around. A **Lark Sparrow** was found by Doug Wassink at his farm 152nd Ave and Ransom St in Ottawa Co May 3, but it did not linger. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45218189> for Judi Manning's photos. A **LeConte's Sparrow** was found at Muskegon SGA, Lane's Landing by Marc Miedema and M Poort May 5. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45283526> for Marc's photos. A first year male **Summer Tanager** was found by Carl and Judi Manning at Perry St and Algonquin Ave in Ottawa Co May 4. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45258027> for Judi's photos. A **Kentucky Warbler** was discovered at East Grand River Park in Ottawa Co May 4 by Chip Francke. The bird was extremely cooperative and continued through May 7. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45265059> for Judi Manning's photos. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found by Tom Espinoza at Lake Harbor Park in Muskegon Co May 7. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45415557> to view Tom's photos. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found at Harbor Island, Grand Haven by Lisa Casler May 4. Visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45253960> for her photos. One also seen at the Glossy Ibis location by the Mannings May 31. A surprising find by Malise Prieto of **nine very late Red Crossbills** on May 30 at Kelly Lake in Allegan Co. Visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S46159523> for photos.

A **Snow x Ross's Goose hybrid** at Muskegon Wastewater (the Wastewater) May 11; up to three **Eared Grebes** continued since Apr at the Wastewater May 30; three **American White Pelicans** at Harbor Island May

12, one on Grand River near Lost Channel in Ottawa Co May 27; an **American Bittern** at Allegan SGA 44th St wetland, at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access, two at Upper Macatawa Natural Area 84th Ave access in Ottawa Co; a **Least Bittern** at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access, at Windmill Island in Holland, at Upper Macatawa Natural Area 84th Ave access, at White Lake Pathway and White Lake Dr near Whitehall, at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing, three at Harbor Island; a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at Harbor Island May 19, one at Byron Lake, Kent Co May 29; three **Common Gallinules** at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou 129th Ave access and two at 132nd Ave access, two at 116th Ave and 8th St wetland in Allegan Co, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing, two at Window-on-the-Waterfront in Holland; two **Black-bellied Plover** at the Wastewater May 6 (visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45386576> for photos) and up to twelve there throughout the month, one at Holland SP May 12, one at 76th Ave and Garfield St in Ottawa Co May 13, up to two at Allegan SGA Todd Farm May 15-19, six in full breeding plumage at the Kraft Ave access Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport May 22; two **Piping Plover** returned to Muskegon SP beach May 1 – on nest as of May 19; up to three **Willet** at the Wastewater May 3 and 11, seven at Upper Macatawa Natural Area May 5, one at Harbor Island May 9, five at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co May 15; five **Whimbrel** were found by Doug Wassink at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co May 15 (visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45705910> for photos along with the Willets), one at the Wastewater May 29; two **White-rumped Sandpipers** at Allegan SGA Todd Farm May 20, up to five at the Wastewater May 25-31; six **Short-billed Dowitchers** at the Wastewater and four at Caledonia Sewage Ponds May 11, one at 76th Ave and Garfield St in Ottawa Co May 13, 22 at 118th Ave and 23rd St in Allegan Co May 13, two at AAA Turf Farm May 15; two **Long-billed Dowitchers** at the Wastewater May 7; a **Wilson's Phalarope** at 120th Ave potholes in Allegan Co May 4-5, up to three at the Wastewater May 11-31; up to seven **Red-necked Phalaropes** at the Wastewater May 25-28; an **Iceland Gull** at Holland SP May 10; up to two **Glaucous Gulls** at Holland SP May 20-24; a now rare **Black Tern** at Reeds Lake May 11, two at Camp Lake in Kent Co and one at Caledonia Sewage Ponds May 12, four at Holland SP May 18; a late **Snowy Owl** at Muskegon SP beach May 1 and an extremely late individual at Fisherman's Landing in Muskegon May 17 (visit

<https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45774860> for photo); **Red-headed Woodpeckers** can be reliably found at Ashwood Reserve along Waukazoo Dr and Mt Pisgah

(Continued on page 7)



(Continued from page 6)

Dune Boardwalk both in Holland and at Long Lake County Park in Kent Co (I can remember seeing them at this location in the 1950s) – all likely nesting locations; a **Northern Mockingbird** was found by Eric Gustafson at Mt Pisgah Dune Boardwalk in Ottawa Co May 6; **warblers**: two **Worm-eating** at the usual known breeding location at Allegan SGA Swan Creek at 116th Ave May 5, one at Ken-O-Sha Park in Grand Rapids May 13; **Golden-winged** were observed at numerous locations from early to mid-month with many of the following observed on the 9th downed by rain: one at Prairie Wolf Park in Kent Co, one at Allegan SGA Swan Creek 116th Ave to Swan Creek Pond, one at Cannonsburg SGA in Kent Co, one at Roselle Park, one at Eastmanville Bayou County Park in Ottawa Co, up to two at Hofma Preserve in Ottawa Co, three at Rosy Mound Natural Area in Ottawa Co, one at Mt Pisgah Dune Boardwalk, one at Clear Lake Access Trail in Kent Co, one at Mt Baldhead Park in Allegan Co, one female at Upper Macatawa Natural Area 84th Ave access, one at Allegan Mountain Bike Park, one heard along Indian Mounds Dr SW to Market in Kent Co, one female at Pine Creek Park in Ottawa Co; a **Connecticut** (found by Caleb Putnam) along the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail between 52nd St and Wing SE in Kent Co May 22; a **Mourning** at Patterson Park in Muskegon Co, at Upper Macatawa Natural Area, at Hofma Preserve, along 128th Ave E of 58th St in Allegan Co May, at Pickerel Lake NP in Kent Co, at Grand Ravines Park in Ottawa Co, two along Paul Henry Thornapple Trail between 52nd St and Wing SE in Kent Co; **Hooded** at multiple locations in Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa Co, (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45457960> for Brad Heath's gorgeous photos of two at Hoffmaster SP); four **Cerulean** at Allegan SGA Allegan Dam and at Allegan SGA M-89 Kalamazoo River Bridge and Boat Launch, one at Allegan SGA Swan Creek Marsh, one at Allegan SGA Highbanks Unit (all are known locations in Allegan Co), one female at Pine Creek Park in Ottawa Co (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45525005> for Judi Manning's photos along with other warbler species), one at a residence near Lowell, one along Indian Mounds Dr SW to Market and at Millennium Park both in Kent Co, at least one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing and the Headquarters, one at Dolan Nature Sanctuary in Kent Co (known location); a **Yellow x Prairie hybrid** at 41st St and 122nd Ave in Allegan Co May 5 – known location; a **Henslow's Sparrow** at Hoffmaster SP in Muskegon Co May 2 (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45171632> for Brad Heath's photos), one along 60th St SE near S runway of Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport May 6 and 28, one at Kraft Ave access Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport May 7 and 26,

up to two at E end of 52nd Ave SE May 17-30 (all known locations in Kent Co); one **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Grand Haven SGA Bruce Bayou Cypress St access, at a residence in W Ottawa Co, at East Grand River Park in Ottawa Co, along N Shore Dr Grand Haven, at Harbor Island, at Hopkins WWTP, at the Wastewater, at Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve, at Allegan SGA Todd Farm; a male **leucistic Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was visiting a feeder at Robin Smith's home in southern Kent County since early May (visit <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S45550612> for photo) - you may remember that Robin had a male Baltimore Oriole that lingered into December last year, which she diligently offered mealworms, but it succumbed to the frigid weather late in the month; **Dickcissels** returned to the Wastewater May 25, two at Allegan SGA Todd Farm May 29, three at 128th Ave and Bingham St in Ottawa Co May 31; the **Western Meadowlark** continued since Mar 19 at Allegan SGA Todd Farm 58th St between 116th and 117th Ave May 29; up to six **Brewer's Blackbirds** at the Wastewater May 1-11, up to eight continued since Apr at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co May 18, three at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing May 17; and **Pine Siskins** lingered through the month (two still coming to my feeders until May 28, when another showed up which exhibited begging behavior to one of the others and two still at my feeders and eight at the Mannings' through May 31) with a high count of 58 at the Mannings' property in Ottawa Co May 9 (migrants on the move likely knocked down by inclement weather).

Caledonia Sewage Ponds Access Update

Caleb Putnam informs us that vandals have again struck at the sewage ponds prompting the Caledonia City Manager to order the front gate locked after business hours. As in the past, you will again have to park outside the main gate along M-37 if visiting the ponds very early or late, but do not block the narrow entrance drive (those familiar with the sewage ponds will know the location and that it is used by workers after business hours). During business hours (approx. 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM) you may park at the barn area, well out of the way of the workers. The entire access instructions are posted on the GRAC website. Please follow these instructions as access to this site is a privilege.

If you see suspicious behavior, please call the Kent County Sheriff Department (616-632-6100) immediately or contact plant manager Aaron Zimmerman at (616) 638-5636 or azimmerman@jaiwater.com as they have not yet apprehended the offenders.



Ranger Steve's Nature Niche

Nesting Records

by Ranger Steve Mueller

Several species nest during March or before though it might seem early because it still looks wintery brown. Rabbits, mice, shrews and other mammals produce families despite the cold, dreary brown pre-spring appearance of neighborhoods. Bald Eagles, hawks and owls have eggs or young in nests. The timing for predatory birds to have young in the nest is linked with the other species' young leaving nests. February eggs in the nest is normal.

It is important adults find enough food to supply rapidly growing young with nutrition. A young owl or hawk that hatches first gets a head start on growth. If the first hatched is satisfied with a full stomach, other young in the nest might get to eat. When this is not the case, others go hungry or might be pushed out of the nest by the larger sibling. When predators are searching for prey, it is good when many of the prey's young are just out of the nest. They are easier to capture and can be abundant.

Population replenishment is better when one owl or hawk survives than for two or three to die of starvation. When prey populations are doing well, the predator population can do well and produce more than one young.

I have observed a Great Horned Owl fledge three young. Bravo! Normally, I encounter nests haphazardly by chance. Birds have a good knack for hiding nests. One March, I flushed a Horned Lark and noticed it left a nest. I sat nearby waiting for its return. When it came back, it landed a distance away and sneaked through the vegetation on foot to the nest where it continued incubating. I noted behavior and other interesting details.

The next day, three inches of snow covered the landscape. The adult bird kept the eggs in its well-hidden nest warm. I returned to observe the nest until the two young ventured into the world on their own. I numbered that nest 1971-2 in my journal. It was the second nest I found that year. When I encounter a nest and note it in my field journal, it receives a number that follows the year. If I observe the nest repeatedly to monitor development and nesting success, the nest number remains the same, but the new date and activity are documented. For 1971, I had 65 different nests' discoveries.

Interesting observations are recorded that hopefully will add to our understanding of bird ecology. Last year, I found a Yellow Warbler nest with six eggs. At Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Center, I found a Wood Thrush nest with five eggs but one was not a thrush egg. It was a Brown-headed Cowbird egg.

Cowbirds have a nature niche adaptation to follow bison that were constantly on the move grazing prairies.

By laying eggs in other birds' nests, cowbirds can continue to follow bison, eating insects stirred by the bovines. Cowbirds were not a natural part of Michigan's European pre-settlement wildlife communities. When we reduced the forest cover, cowbirds expanded their range. The adventive establishment of cowbirds to new habitat created survival risks for many bird species.

Young cowbirds are raised by the parasitized species adult. Often the baby cowbird pushes the parent's eggs or young out of the nest and will be the only bird to fledge. I removed the cowbird egg from the thrush nest and set it on the ground for a chipmunk or other small mammal to discover and eat. Hopefully, a cowbird adult did not return to lay another egg in the thrush nest.

It is good to avoid nests for a number of reasons. A mallard cracked an egg when it rapidly flushed from a nest when people approached. Eggs left unattended might be preyed upon or lose heat needed for development. Walking to nests can create a scent or visual path that predators like raccoons or opossums use to find nests with eggs or young. Rarely do I monitor nests. I note what I discover and hope the bird successfully raises a family. For 2018 I currently have 38 nests added to my Excel database.

I note the species, habitat, nest location, tree species used, height of nest among other details such as behavior. Nests' records are entered to eBird and will be available for others to review the "what," "when" and "where" for bird nesting well after I am dead. You can become a part of citizen science data gathering and add it to eBird. I do not personally like the NestWatch program the Cornell Lab of Ornithology promotes. It seems too invasive and is especially hazardous for non-nest box nesters.

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.





Upcoming GRAC Field Trips

Contact Becky Kuhn with field trip suggestions/ideas. Watch the *Caller* for future trip announcements. Visit 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, particularly in the event of hazardous winter weather. Particularly bad weather may cancel a trip.

Thursdays, June 7, 14, 21 and 28 and July 5, 12, 19 and 26, 8:00 AM

Leader: Katie Bolt, Jeanne Griffin or Kathy Haase
Recurring Millennium Park Hikes

Hike Millennium Park to see what's hanging around (route varies). 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: Meet at the east end of Veterans Memorial Drive parking area.

Saturday, July 7, 8:00 AM

Leader: Steve Minard

Summer Marsh Field Trip

This is planned as a summer trip to the marsh at Lane's Landing in the Muskegon State Game Area. We usually have a spring marsh field trip when many of the migrants are just back on territory. By July, they have settled in and many of them should be attending to their young. It is one of the better times of year to see Least Bitterns in flight. They are present in this marsh and if you are watching carefully, and are lucky, you may see one make a brief flight from one spot to another in the marsh. Rails, ducks and cranes also are possible. Depending on time, we may visit other nearby birding areas.

Essentials: Meet at the Boy Scout Headquarters west off Walker Road just north of I-96 at 8:00 AM. We plan to bird until noon; you may want to bring a snack to hold you over until lunch.

Saturday, Aug. 25, 8:00 AM

Leader: Becky Kuhn

Fall Shorebirds: Muskegon Wastewater Area

This trip will focus on clues to 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'll 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.

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. Call Becky if you get lost or want to meet later in the morning: (616) 437-9205.

Saturday, September 15, 7:30 AM

Leader: Lizzy Kibbey

Huff Park Fall Trip

We'll head south through the woods, making our way around the trails, checking out the marshlands, too. Possibilities here are migrating passerines, particularly fall warblers and others such as flycatchers and sparrows. Marsh birds of interest include wrens such as Sedge Wren. I've had Sedge Wrens in the past at this time of the year, and they are always nice to see. Rails also are a possibility. The hike should only be an hour or two, depending on the weather, bugs and birds.

Essentials: Meet at the Aberdeen Street parking lot near the playground at 7:30 AM (north end of the park). Dress for the conditions, bring binoculars and wear good hiking boots or waterproof footwear. Insect repellent, water and a snack would be useful.

Saturday, Sept. 29, 8:30 AM

Leader: Doug Klein

Paul Henry Trail, Middleville

We'll meet in Middleville in the parking lot behind the Village Offices in Middleville. Head south on M-37 through Caledonia and into Middleville. Turn left at the only traffic light in town and go about ¼ mile to the bridge over the Thornapple River. Turn right on the drive immediately after the river and the parking lot will be visible. We'll hike a total of about 1.5 miles on a level, paved trail through woods and waters. Bring a spotting scope if you normally use one; binoculars are a must. Trip length will be approximately two hours. This trip is handicap-accessible. If folks are interested, we'll follow up with lunch in Middleville at the Riverdog Restaurant across the street from our parking lot.

Note: Please see pages 10 and 12 of this *Caller* for additional opportunities to get out in the field and observe nature.



2018 Butterfly Counts

Discover butterflies in a variety of local habitats with people knowledgeable in butterfly identification. This is a great way to begin learning some of the 170 species known to Michigan. Join with the West Michigan Butterfly Association on a count for fun and learning. Participants will be given the book *Michigan Butterflies and Skippers* by Mogens C. Nielsen.

Counts are sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) and cost \$3 for each participant. This money is sent to NABA to create a publication documenting butterfly abundance, distribution and trends throughout North America. Scientists make use of citizen science data much like is done with eBird. About 17 counts are held annually in Michigan. Bring families. Contact Ranger Steve for more information about Michigan counts. Your help spotting butterflies is desired. Knowledge of butterflies is not required.

We carpool to various sites in the 15-mile diameter designated count circle. Have a good time discovering in the outdoors, learn species identification, habitat associations, behavior and nature niche needs. Participate for part of the day or stay all day.

Bring a bag lunch, plenty to drink, snacks and dress with lightweight long sleeves and pants to protect from any biting insects or raspberry thorns. Some exploration is off trail when searching for butterflies.

Mark calendar dates and meeting locations:

June 30, (Sat) 9:00 AM

Allegan Butterfly Count – Allegan Co.

Leader: Ranger Steve (Mueller)

Meet at the Fennville Allegan State Game Area headquarters, 6013 118th Ave, Fennville
odybrook@chartermi.net

July 5, (Wed) 9:00 AM

Newaygo County Butterfly Count - Newaygo Co.

Leader: Ranger Steve (Mueller)

Meet at the grocery parking lot at the corner of M82 & M 37 in Newaygo.
odybrook@chartermi.net

July 7, (Sat) 9:00 AM

Rogue River Butterfly Count - Kent Co.

Leader: Ranger Steve (Mueller)

(Kent, Newaygo and Montcalm Counties)
Meet at Howard Christensen Nature Center
Welcome Center 16160 Red Pine Dr., Kent City
odybrook@chartermi.net

July 14, (Sat) 9:00 AM

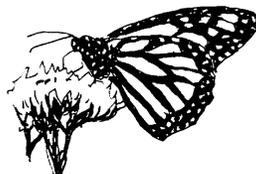
Greater Muskegon Butterfly Ct - Muskegon Co.

Leader: Dennis Dunlap

Meet on Mill Iron Road from M-46 (Apple Ave.) east of Muskegon at second set of power lines that cross the road north of MacArthur Road.
dunlapmd@charter.net

Rain day alternates will be the next day. Sign up with Ranger Steve so unexpected changes can be shared.

Ranger Steve (Mueller) at odybrook@chartermi.net - Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary, 13010 Northland Dr. Cedar Springs, MI 49319 or call (616) 696-1753.





Field Trip Report: Southern Kent County Specialty Birds, May 26

by Zach DeBruine

Saturday morning started off with some very threatening rain, but at exactly 7:30 AM the rain moved on and we were able to enjoy beautiful spring woods. We began at Baker Coldwater Sanctuary, the next-door neighbor to Maher Sanctuary, getting great looks at Acadian Flycatcher right from the start. Neotropical migrants had mostly moved on, but the woods were still alive with the sounds of Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler and Great Crested Flycatcher. Cerulean Warbler eluded us, which means there's still good reason to return later.

We then drove to the Caledonia Sewage Facility where we were met by Aaron Zimmerman, the facility manager. Aaron introduced us to the facility and emphasized that all birders are authorized personnel around the lagoons, and encouraged us to park in the grassy area outside the third gate which leads to the big lagoon. Several recent vandalism attempts have led to increased security and access restrictions, but birders are still more than welcome: the more eyes on the facility the better! We were impressed by the initiatives taken at Caledonia to ensure clean water and a pleasant facility, and it doesn't stink like other places (Muskegon Wastewater, for example).

A walk around the lagoons at Caledonia yielded a group of 19 Semipalmated Sandpiper which posed right next to us along the lagoon edge for stellar looks and photos. Several Spotted Sandpiper also were displaying throughout the area. We also had a flyover Osprey during Aaron's orientation, but tried not to look too distracted.

Most of our group continued on to the airport area in search of grassland birds. We started out at the east end of 52nd Street off Kraft Avenue where Bobolink put on a good show. At the Kraft Avenue overlook we also observed singing Grasshopper Sparrow and had distant looks at a Henslow's Sparrow. We tallied 52 species in total, a pretty solid morning of birding enjoyed by all.

Field Trip Report: Paul Henry Thornapple Trail in Middleville, May 5

by Larry Burke

Our economy-sized group of warbler-seeking birders enjoyed excellent conditions with comfortable temperatures, a light breeze and mostly sunny skies. We accumulated a trip list of 45 species when all was said and done.

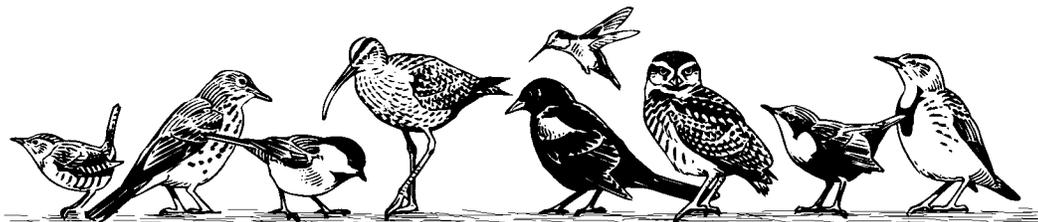
At this time of year, many – if not most – birders are most interested in seeing the eastern Wood Warblers in their sometimes-flamboyant breeding plumages. We ended the morning with six species. Of course, Yellow-rumped and Yellow warblers, and Common Yellowthroats were well represented. We also managed to tick off Palm Warbler and American Redstart. The crown jewel warbler, and probably the “bird of the day,” was a classic, drop-dead gorgeous male Northern Parula Warbler. It was in the low trees and shrubs lining the initial portion of the trail, which limited it to being from just above eye-level to comfortably below, giving us many excellent views.

We did reasonably well with the woodpeckers, seeing Downy and Red-bellied as well as Northern Flicker. This location is known primarily for providing almost sure-fire sightings of Red-headed Woodpeckers and, indeed, they did not disappoint.

Shorebird-wise, we came up light with only one species (Solitary Sandpiper) but saw several wading the shallows and walking the shoreline along the river and marsh.

Beautiful birds were all about. Wood Ducks, Baltimore Orioles and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were there, being appreciated all the more after our having to pass the cold weather season without seeing them. A Yellow-throated Vireo also put in an appearance. A Sandhill Crane favored us with a fly-over.

Gary Deckert joined me for the trip. Wendy Tatar accompanied us as well.





Mackinaw Raptor Fest

by Katie Bolt

Kathy Haase and I decided to check out this relatively new festival held April 6-8. We headed out on Friday through very mixed weather (snow, clear, whiteout, etc.). On arriving in Mackinaw City, we were surprised by 3-4 inches of snow on the ground as there was none in Grand Rapids.

Friday night included a “happy hour” sans alcohol for the early arrivals. It was a pleasant way to meet other birders and to reconnect with people we hadn’t seen in awhile. We had signed up for the owl banding but it was extremely windy so it was not possible to set out the mist nets. Instead, Ed Pike gave a very interesting presentation on his career as an owl bander. I have to say, I had never seen a picture of an owl’s ear before. Following his talk, Kathy Bricker talked about the Dark Sky Park and the night sky.

Saturday morning, we headed over to Mackinaw City High School and heard an excellent presentation on hawk ID by Josh Haas. This was followed by visits to the shorebird count and the hawk count. Although it was a gorgeous day, the winds continued to be very strong so not too many birds were seen. In the afternoon, we took our own field trip to the Upper Peninsula and found a Snowy Owl, a couple of Rough-legged Hawks and about 60 Snow Buntings hanging out on a roof. We did not attend the banquet but heard it was good.

This was a very small festival (150 people) and was well organized and had great presenters. If you sign up early, you might be able to get in on the UP field trip to the Sharp-tailed Grouse lek. We were too late for that but, perhaps, another time. We would recommend that you check out this event!

Field Trip Reports: Millennium Park, April and May

by Katie Bolt

This is always a fun time of year for bird walks as something new appears with great frequency. On April 5, we saw our first Eastern Phoebe. On April 12, the first Great Blue Heron, Blue-winged Teal, Tree Swallows and Yellow-rumped Warblers were seen. One Gadwall was still present as well.

The 19th, we added Turkey Vulture and Double-crested Cormorant. On the 24th, two Rusty Blackbirds made their presence known. May, of course, was a great month. The 3rd brought us Lesser/Greater Scaup, Great Crested Flycatcher, Rough-winged Swallow, House Wren, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Waterthrush, Swainson’s Thrush, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Palm Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Baltimore Oriole.

On the 10th, we found a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Warbling Vireo, Eastern Bluebird, American Redstart, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided and Black-throated Green warblers along with an Indigo Bunting. The 24th brought a surprise as four Trumpeter Swans were being carried rapidly down the river. Thanks to Ken Ward for getting a great ID shot! We also saw a Pied-billed Grebe, Peregrine Falcon, Red-eyed Vireo and heard but did not see the beautiful song of a Wood Thrush.

We ended May 31 with calls and a sighting of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Wood-pewee, Spotted Sandpiper and Green Heron. Throughout the month, Kathy Haase, Ed and I were joined by Jan Klemp, Jenni Hoonhorst, Kathleen Steele, Ken Ward, Dellas Henked, Jennifer Smith, Joyce Irvine and Steve Minard.

Grand Rapids Public Library Collaborative Field Trips Summer 2018

This summer, GRAC will collaborate with the Grand Rapids Public Library to host two birdwatching activities. These free events are part of the library’s 2018 GRReads program in connection with the book “Unseen City: The Majesty of Pigeons, the Discreet Charm of Snails & Other Wonders of the Urban Wilderness,” by Nathanael Johnson. These events are a great way for new bird watchers to learn more about the joys of birding.

Huff Park – Saturday, June 23: Becky Kuhn will lead a one- to two-mile hike starting in the parking lot off Aberdeen at 8:00 AM. This will include the newly renovated boardwalk and other trails. The rain date for this event is June 30.

Urban Bird Walk in Downtown Grand Rapids – Thursday, Aug. 2: Becky will lead a 90-minute walk throughout downtown Grand Rapids in pursuit of Chimney Swifts, Peregrine Falcons and more. Meet at 7:00 PM at the front desk of the Main Library downtown and wear comfortable shoes. The rain date for this event is Aug. 6.



Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc. Membership Application/Renewal

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____ New _____ Renewal _____

****Membership Fees:** Include the *Caller* (a monthly newsletter with nine issues per year), monthly meetings (September to May), programs, birding information, educational opportunities, committee activities, fellowship and field trips with naturalists.

Make checks payable to: Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc. c/o Cynthia Davidek, Assistant Treasurer, 832 Fairmount St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Membership Level	Fee	Total
Individual	\$20.00	
Family	\$25.00	
Senior (65+)	\$12.00	
Student (14+ with ID card)	\$12.00	
Sustaining	\$30.00	
Patron	\$60.00	
Individual Life	\$400.00	
Additional Contributions (tax deductible)		
General Fund		
Audubon Adventures		
Junior Audubon		
Scholarship Fund		
Maher Sanctuary Fund		
Total Amount Enclosed		

Please indicate your interests:

Conservation Committee Junior Audubon Christmas Bird Count Field Trip Leader Nominating

Sanctuary Committee Fundraising Office or Board Member Other: _____



GRAC CALENDAR

June

- 7 Field Trip: Millennium Park w/ Katie Bolt (and 14, 21, 28)
- 23 Field Trip: GRPL Trip to Huff Park w/ Becky Kuhn
- 30 Butterfly Count, Allegan w/ Ranger Steve

July

- 5 Field Trip: Millennium Park w/ Katie Bolt (and 12, 19, 26)
- 5 Butterfly Count, Newaygo w/ Ranger Steve
- 7 Field Trip: Summer Marsh Trip w/ Steve Minard
- 7 Butterfly Count, Rogue River w/ Ranger Steve
- 14 Butterfly Count, Muskegon w/ Dennis Dunlap

August

- 2 Field Trip: GRPL Trip, Downtown Grand Rapids w/ Becky Kuhn
- 25 Field Trip: Fall Shorebirds, MWW, w/ Becky Kuhn

September

- 15 Field Trip: Huff Park Fall Trip w/ Lizzy Kibbey
- 24 GRAC Board and Membership Meetings
- 29 Field Trip: Paul Henry Trail w/ Doug Klein

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.

Field Trip Report: Goodrich Lake, May 19

by Nick Keller

It was a wonderful day of birding at Goodrich Lake. The weather was cool and pristine and the birds were very active.

We spotted interesting species such as the least flycatcher, brown thrasher and field sparrow hopping around in the forest undergrowth. Species such as the gray catbird and yellow warbler were seen out in the fen. While viewing these species, a red-tailed hawk came flying overhead sending the birds scurrying for cover.

The indigo bunting was seen multiple times calling from the tops of aspen trees. Multiple bluebirds were seen on the property going in and out of the nesting boxes.

The highlight of the trip was seeing a warbling vireo nest in the meadow. We had great photo viewing opportunities as well.

To finish the trip, we visited a local purple martin colony, where we could see the birds soaring and diving around the nest boxes.

All in all, it was a good day of bird viewing allowing us to see multiple species of birds.

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.

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5 officers + 4 elected board members

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- Board Member - Keith Helmus
- Board Member - Becky Kuhn
- Board Member - Jan Lewis

- Field Trips - Becky Kuhn
- Finance - Keith Helmus
- Fund Development - open
- Historian - Linda Damstra
- Hospitality - Bea VerBurg, Henry Raad and Rosemary Radius
- Insurance - Jill Goodell
- Junior Audubon - open
- Library - Norine and Jim Shea / Fidencio Paradez
- Maher Sanctuary - Chris Baer
- Membership - Theresa Dykhuis
- Nominating - Scott Hutchings
- Publicity - Tricia Boot
- Scholarship - inactive
- Special Events - open
- Website - Fred VanOeveren

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(non-voting member) John Chronowski 2016-17, 2017-18

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- Aud. Adventures - Mary Austin
- Audio/Visual - Robert Riepma
- Bird Reports - Carol VanOeveren
- Caller Editor - Tricia Boot
- Caller Publisher - Peggy Falk
- Christmas Count - Tom Leggett / Steve Mueller

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

- Aud. Adventures - Mary Austin
- Insurance - Jill Goodell

RESIDENT AGENT

Larry Burke

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Rockford, MI 49341

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