

# the Caller

November 2021, Volume 60, No. 4

published monthly September – April, bi-monthly May – August, November – December  
by GRAC, 6152 Georgeann Ct., Belmont, MI 49506-9783



[www.graud.org](http://www.graud.org) | [information@graud.org](mailto:information@graud.org)  
[www.facebook.com/grandrapidsaudubonclub/](https://www.facebook.com/grandrapidsaudubonclub/)

## November Meeting Details

- Date:** Monday, Nov. 29  
**Time:** 7:30 PM program  
**Location:** John Donnelly Conference Center  
Aquinas College (virtual option available)  
**Speaker:** Matt Iglecki, president, Illinois  
Ornithological Society  
**Topic:** Chicago-area birding

We are pleased to announce a cautious but optimistic return to in-person membership meetings, with COVID-19 guidelines to protect our members and the communities we serve.

- **You must properly wear a mask** that covers your nose and mouth at all times while indoors, regardless of vaccination status. This is a requirement of using our hosting venue's (Aquinas College) facilities.
- You will be asked to provide your name and contact information in the event contact tracing is required.
- Social distancing is required regardless of vaccination status. We will forgo the snack table and ask that you please maintain a six-foot distance between yourself and anyone outside your household.

Join via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85312126317?pwd=TzBOTS9iMVhDUGFQTEEyZEg5MUZEUT09>

Meeting ID: 853 1212 6317

Passcode: 798397

COVID-19 remains a dynamic situation: Stay tuned to the GRAC website for the latest information.

Deadline for January newsletter articles: **Jan. 1**

Send to: [newsletter@graud.org](mailto:newsletter@graud.org)

## President's Corner

by Scott Hutchings

We threw it together at the last minute, our original planned speaker vanished and we got the word out very late, but the first in-person meeting of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club went surprisingly well. Bill Sweetman stepped in and did a program on California Birding. We had 26 members in attendance, masked and distanced, and another 15 joined us on Zoom. It was so great to see people again! Even with the COVID-19 restrictions.

Maybe I'm being overly dramatic, but I've been worried about the club. There were two previous Audubon Clubs in Grand Rapids. The first closed during the First World War and the second was ended by the Second World War. I was afraid the COVID-19 War might do us in. I was looking forward to spending my presidential term filling in committees, setting up fundraising activities, promoting the club, etc. Instead, we've spent the last 18 months in survival mode.

Now we can begin to build the club, not just to where it was, but bring it forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have a lot that needs doing and more hands makes the work go faster. I'm asking everyone to think about how they can support the club going forward. Could you be an officer? Head up or sit on a committee? Maybe be a greeter or a people feeder? Take over as the *Caller* editor? This can be an exciting time.





## October 2021 eBird Summary

### Very Unusual and Rare Sightings by Carol VanOeveren

The following is an overview of the very unusual and rare eBird sightings for October 2021 for Allegan, Kent, Muskegon and Ottawa counties. This report does not include rare birds that are flyovers, unchaseable, on inaccessible private property and those with sketchy details.

The warm, much above normal weather of late September with temps in the 70s (80 with uncomfortable dew points and scattered severe storms on the 11th) continued into the first two weeks of October, with occasional storms and showers. According to the National Weather Service, this was the warmest ever start to October in 100 years of climate recordkeeping. More seasonable conditions (except for a couple of days around 70) in the 60s and then 50s returned on the 15th and continued through the remainder of the month with pleasant days interspersed with occasional rainy periods. Our first Frost Advisory was the night of October 23-24.

Becky Kuhn had a good warbler count October 3 along Walnut Park Dr E of Northland Dr NE along the Grand River in Kent Co. She tallied 13 species and 50 individuals while likely searching for a possible Anhinga that had been reported in the area (many observers searched, but no Anhinga found; likely a Double-crested Cormorant). Visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95545884> to view her checklist. Warblers continued to pass through the area with the warmer than normal temps, but the numbers continued to wind down except the traditional late migrants, such as Yellow-rumped (huge push of at least 50 at Paw Paw Park east/Macatawa Greenspace in Ottawa Co Oct 6, 49 at Millennium Park Oct 12, other large numbers reported near the end of the month). Late stragglers are listed below along with many other late migrants. Both kinglet species and White-crowned and White-throated sparrows were found in good numbers moving through the area. Shorebirds continued to pass through (notables listed below), waterfowl continued to congregate in large numbers at the Muskegon Wastewater including thousands of Canada Geese, Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Ducks and divers (scoters, scaup, etc) started to congregate offshore in Lake Michigan.

**Notables for the month:** A **Snow Goose** continued since late Sep at the Wastewater Oct 4 and 26 and up to three there Oct 17-18. **Cackling Geese** continued intermittently since Sep at the Wastewater with a high count of 11 Oct 27, up to 16 at 116th Ave/8th St wetland in Allegan Co Oct 7-10, six on Kalamazoo River in downtown Allegan Oct 31. Huge number of **Ring-necked Ducks (450)** at Winnetaska Rd/Nugent Sand lagoons in Muskegon Oct 19. Three **Surf Scoters** (found by Caleb Putnam) at Versluis Lake in Kent Co Oct 17-24 – rare inland location, fifteen at

Grand Haven SP Oct 18, two at Holland SP Oct 23 and four Oct 31, two at Port Sheldon Windsnest Park in Ottawa Co Oct 24, two at Lakeshore Dr guardrail in Allegan Co Oct 25. Fifteen **White-winged Scoters** at Grand Haven south pier Oct 22 – first report, 32 at Holland SP and **175** at Grand Haven north pier and 7 at Reeds Lake (uncommon inland) all Oct 30. Four **Black Scoters** at Douglas Beach Park Oct 25 – first report, one at Grand Haven north pier Oct 30, three at Holland SP Oct 31. Two **Long-tailed Ducks** at Grand Haven north pier Oct 30 – first report, 460 at Grand Haven SP Oct 31. A **RED-NECKED GREBE** (found by Rick Brigham) at Holland SP Oct 31. Up to two **Eared Grebes** continued at the Wastewater Oct 31 – known location. A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at Harbor Island in Grand Haven Oct 6 – late. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** at Black Lake Park in Muskegon Co Oct 17-19 – late. Two **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** continued at a residence at Niles Ave/Lakeview St in Ottawa Co Oct 14 – late. A **Virginia Rail** along the Grand River near Spring Lake in Ottawa Co Oct 13 – late. A **Sora** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 15 – late. Six **Common Gallinules** at Mill Point in Spring Lake Oct 2 and one there Oct 11, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 4 and 12-15, one continued at Window on the Waterfront at Holland Oct 9 – all late. An **AMERICAN AVOCET** (found by Carl/Judi Manning) at Holland SP Oct 25 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96706561> for photos) – likely late Ottawa Co record. Up to ten **Black-bellied Plover** continued since late Aug at the Wastewater Oct 20, two at Mill Point in Spring Lake Oct 2, up to eight at Grand Haven north pier Oct 4-9, one at Holland SP Oct 10. Up to ten **American Golden-Plover** continued since Sep at the Wastewater Oct 12, two at 114th Ave/19th St in Allegan Co Oct 3, up to three at Grand Haven north pier Oct 4-9. A **Baird's Sandpiper** at the Wastewater Oct 1 and two Oct 4-5. Five **White-rumped Sandpipers** at the Wastewater Oct 7. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Wastewater Oct 1 – late. Three **FRANKLIN'S GULLS** (found by Chip Francke) at Grand Haven SP Oct 12 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96037922> to view Jim Markham's photos). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** continued at the Wastewater throughout the month with a high count of three Oct 14, one at Pere Marquette Park Oct 9, up to four at Holland SP Oct 6-31. Two **Red-throated Loons** at Holland SP Oct 31. An **American White Pelican** at the Wastewater Oct 16. An **American Bittern** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 19 – late. **Great Egrets** again present this fall through Oct 16 at the Ball Perkins Park pond in Grand Rapids with a high count of 28 Oct 1, one continuing at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 31 – late. (Cont. page 3)



Continued from page 2

A **Green Heron** at Millennium Park Oct 14 – late. Up to four **Black-crowned Night-Herons** continued since Aug at Mill Point and surrounding area in Spring Lake Oct 14, one juv still at Window on the Waterfront in Holland Oct 9 – all late. A **Rough-legged Hawk** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 3 – first report, three at the Wastewater Oct 18. A **Short-eared Owl** at the Wastewater S Swanson Rd area Oct 12 and up to five there Oct 27-30 – known location. A great total count of eight **Red-headed Woodpeckers** (observed by Hannah Safford) at various spots at Morrison Bayou along the Kalamazoo River in Allegan Co Oct 1. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Grand Isle Park in Kent Co Oct 3 – very late. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at a residence in Norton Shores Oct 3 – late. An **Acadian Flycatcher** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 1 – late. A **Northern Shrike** at the Wastewater Oct 20 – first report, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 31. A **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Roselle Park in Kent Co Oct 4, one at Ada Twp Park Oct 5, two at Lake Hills School parking lot in Spring Lake Oct 9 – all late. A **House Wren** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 19 – late. Up to two **Sedge Wrens** at Huff Park Oct 7-11 – late. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at Holland SP Lake Macatawa Campground Oct 30 – very late. A **Brown Thrasher** at Calvin University Ecosystem Preserve Oct 24 and at Edsell/Mitchel St in Otsego in Allegan Co Oct 31 – both late. The usual great counts of **American Pipits** throughout the month at the Wastewater with highs of **130** Oct 1, **150** Oct 9 and est **200** Oct 11 and 23. Nine **Pine Siskins** at Ball Perkins Park Oct 13 and five Oct 17, five at Waterfront Park Reeds Lake Oct 15, several reports at residences. Three **Lapland Longspurs** at 118th Ave/23rd St fields in Allegan Co Oct 3, one at the Wastewater Oct 4 and 12, two at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 31. Twenty-five **Snow Buntings** at the Wastewater Oct 25 – first report, present at several locations in Muskegon and Ottawa cos with a high count of **215** at the Wastewater Oct 27. **Sparrows:** Two **American Tree** at Ball Perkins Park in Grand Rapids Oct 9 – first report. A **HARRIS'S** (found by Craig Kingma) at Holland SP Lake Macatawa Campground Oct 25 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96702578> to view photos). A **Fox** at GVSU campus in Allendale Oct 8 – first report. A **LECONTE'S** (found by Jeff Slaughter) at a residence along Butternut Dr N of Van Buren St in Ottawa Co Oct 16 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96242267> to view photos), one (found by Beth/Glen Miller) along Black Lake Trail at Hoffmaster SP near Lake Harbor Rd in Muskegon Co Oct 23 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96605149> to view Glen Miller's photos). A rare **NELSON'S** (found by James Markham Oct 7 and ID confirmed Oct 8)

at Huff Park Oct 7-9 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95839320> to view photos). Huge influx of at least **60 Song** at Roselle Park in Kent Co Oct 6. Three **Eastern Meadowlarks** at M-222/24th St wetland in Allegan Co Oct 9, continued at the Wastewater through the month with a high count of 12 Oct 17, two at the Gerald R Ford Int'l Airport Kraft Ave access Oct 21 – all late. **Rusty Blackbirds** at various locations in all four counties; high count of est 60 at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 27. Two **Brewer's Blackbirds** at AAA Turf Farm in Ottawa Co Oct 11 – known migratory location. **Late warblers:** A **Northern Waterthrush** at Stu Visser Trails in Ottawa Co Oct 9-10 and 27 (very late), one at a residence along Barry St W of 88th Ave in Ottawa Co Oct 13, one at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 15-19. Two **Tennessee** at Muskegon SGA Lane's Landing Oct 13, one at Stu Visser Trails in Ottawa Co and at Rabbit River Preserve in Allegan Co Oct 13. A **Nashville** at Holland SP Lake Macatawa Campground Oct 29-30. A **Common Yellowthroat** at a residence on Leonard St on the Grand River near Spring Lake Oct 31. An **American Redstart** at Millennium Park Oct 21. A **Northern Parula** at Reeds Lake Oct 12. A **Cape May** at Holland SP Lake Macatawa Campground entrance Oct 26. A **Magnolia** at Ball Perkins Park in Grand Rapids Oct 14. A **Bay-breasted** at Muskegon Lake NP Oct 14. Three **Black-throated Green** at Crahen Valley Twp Park in Kent Co Oct 14. A **Wilson's** at Roselle Park Oct 11. A **Scarlet Tanager** at Rabbit River Preserve in Allegan Co Oct 10 – late. A very rare **WESTERN TANAGER** (found by Caleb Putnam/Julie Pedreros/Chace Scholten/Will Keller) near Lake Macatawa Campground entrance/various areas in W part of campground in Ottawa Co Oct 23-31 (visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96609972> for Caleb's photos and map with locations within the campground where the bird was first seen and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96638848> to view Mark Parker's photos and play an audio recording). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Ball Perkins Park in Grand Rapids Oct 14-16 – late.

**Note:** Visit the Hall of Fame Bird Sightings page [http://graud.org/rare\\_birds.html](http://graud.org/rare_birds.html) on the GRAC website and scroll down for more detailed information on this month's Harris's and Nelson's sparrows and Western Tanager sightings.



## Ranger Steve's Nature Niche

*Tern, Tern, Tern*

by Ranger Steve (Mueller)

Caspian, Common, Forester's and Black terns are frequent shallow water and marsh birds. Caspian Terns are the largest here and are about the size of Ring-billed Gulls we see flying near fast food restaurants in the area. Terns in general can be distinguished from gulls by bill color and behavior. Bills are red except in the Black Tern that has a black bill. Gull bills are generally yellow but vary depending on the age of the birds.

When flying over water searching for small fish, insects or crustaceans, tern heads are dipped down with the bill pointed toward the water. Gulls tend to point their bills forward.

Most frequently, it is necessary to venture to the Great Lakes' shores and marshes to see terns. Terns are more strikingly beautiful than gulls but that of course is personal judgment. Perhaps the beauty call comes from sighting them less frequently. Gulls seem a dime a dozen but we need to search more carefully to spot terns.

During spring migration, they are more abundant in May and numbers increase again in August and September when they migrate south. I enjoy August visits to the Great Lakes shoreline because biting insects are nil and water is often warm enough for a dip. The terns are not as fussy as me. They feed in the lake whether it is warm or cold. They hover and watch for small prey near the surface, dive and emerge from water quickly.

Most terns are colonial nesters on islands or exposed gravel shoals. Nesting success is greatest during low water cycles in the Great Lakes where gravel is exposed. The Great Lakes high water levels are not only dangerous for shoreline home and cottage owners but reduce suitable tern nesting habitat. I walked to Little Hog Island when lake levels were moderately high, and it was beneficial for nesting. The high water surrounded the island and protected it as a safe nesting location. It prevented most mammals from reaching the island to feast on eggs.

I waded in thigh-deep water and both nesting gulls and terns were displeased with my approach. As I got closer to the island, they flew over me squawking to tell me to leave. Soon I smelled an unpleasant odor. I was in my swimsuit and old tennis shoes. I felt my shoulder and discovered a gull or tern blasted me with putrid fecal material. I dipped into Lake Michigan to rinse clean. It surprised me that I did not feel the bomb hit my shoulder.

When I reached the island and wandered through the nesting colony, I noticed the nests were on barren gravel and clustered close together. I should have counted nests and recorded how close they were to each other. Instead, I quickly made a mental note of the sighting and left to prevent continued disturbance. I noticed the nests

were fairly close to water on a barren shore instead of among thicker vegetation.

I revisited the island during low water when it was no longer an island. Dry land extended from mainland to what had been an island. No nests were present even though it was prime nesting season. The birds sought better nature niche nesting habitat that would be safe from egg predators like raccoons, skunks, coyotes and foxes.

Forester's and Black Terns utilize inland marshes for nesting. Nests are constructed on emergent vegetation and will rise and fall with changing water levels. When canoeing to an extensive marsh at the south end of a large lake, I entered a stand of reeds. Suddenly, two Black Terns became agitated and dive-bombed me. I scanned the surrounding vegetation and discovered a tern nest anchored to reeds a bit above water. Inside were two eggs. Mostly satisfied, I quickly retreated to please the birds. I returned with my young daughters to show them the nest.

Once we saw the nest, Jenny said let's go and stop upsetting the birds. I was pleased with her interest in protecting the birds' "home and privacy." We called the marsh turtle bay. We often returned to turtle bay observing turtles, muskrats, Red-winged Blackbirds and other wildlife. We steered clear of nesting terns.

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

## Birdathon Awards

by Ed Bolt

Time flies when you are in a pandemic. Birdathon 2021 raised more than \$500 for the club—less than prior years, but significant considering membership hibernation. The Birdathon Committee plans to present awards for the past two years—2020 and 2021—at the November GRAC meeting. The trophies have a new, streamlined look. If you were on a Birdathon team in either of those years, you may have won an award.

Until we all have 3-D printers, consider physically attending the November meeting (if you are comfortable doing so), and claim your trophy! Enjoy the afterglow and consider joining the committee for 2022. It's fun and minimal work. Contact Jill Goodell, Scott Hutchings, Tom Leggett or me.



## Get to Know the Different Types of Birds (Part Four)

by Mary Austin

Greetings to all! This is the last of the “Get to Know the Different Types of Birds” challenge. If you would like to review the prior three parts in the August, September and October 2021 *Callers*, no problem. Just go to [graud.org](http://graud.org); then under the “Newsletter” heading, select “Archived List” to open the *Caller* issue(s) you want to access.

Although this is the last of the articles about the 41 bird orders, a little bird name etymology is appropriate. So here we go.

1) –iformes: This suffix is reserved for bird order names. When you see a scientific name ending in this, you know in the taxonomy ranking (kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus and species), the word is describing the order rank.

2) –idae: This suffix is reserved for bird family names.

3) orn-: The Greek word for “bird” is “ornis.” Ornithology is, of course, the study of birds. Additionally, many ancient bird names that end in –ornis.

4) avi-: The name of birds as a class is Aves. Therefore, “aves” means “birds” in Latin (with “avis” as the singular “bird”).

5) pter-: Many scientific bird names are based, in part, on the Greek word “pteron” (feather) or “pteryx (wing). A “pterosaur” is a winged lizard, and “pterygoid” is a wing-like object (such as a bone).

6) ala: This is the Latin word for wing (singular “ala”, plural “alae”). “Alae” particularly is found in many bird scientific names.

7) pod-, pedi-: Feet are common body parts that can be referred to in scientific names, especially at the family and order levels. Considering the grammatical variations of Greek and Latin words (declension), “pod-” is derived from the Greek word for foot, “pous.” In Latin, foot is “pes,” with the root “pedi”.

8) a-: As a prefix, this generally means “no” or “without.” Therefore, “aptery-” means “without wings” and “apodi-” means “without feet.”

Now on to the last quiz challenge. Just match the Latin bird order name with the description of the order. (The answers can be found at the end of the quiz, on page 6.)

### Orders in this Quiz

- a. Procellariiformes
- b. Psittaciformes
- c. Pteroclidiformes
- d. Rheiformes
- e. Sphenisciformes
- f. Strigiformes
- g. Struthioniformes
- h. Suliformes
- i. Tinamiformes
- j. Trogoniformes

### Description of the Orders

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Owls (are mostly nocturnal and carnivorous birds. All owls have a so-called facial disk that frames their eyes and bills and well-developed talons. They also have a unique soft plumage, fly silently and use cavities in trees or abandoned nests instead of constructing their own nests.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Albatrosses and Petrels (are sea birds that return to land only for the breeding season. They have long, hooked bills with tubular nostrils and webbed feet. Most can eject a foul-smelling stomach oil as a defense against predators.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Tinamous (are chicken-like birds with small heads, short wings and short tails that live predominantly in the neotropics. While they can fly, their preference is to stay on the ground.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Ostriches (are in an order where they are the only species. Males are polygamous and form harems. Ostriches have small wings and no feathers on their long legs and long necks.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Parrots (are tropical birds with short, thick, hooked bills and muscular tongues. They are noted for their intelligence, ability to mimic sounds and bright coloration.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Boobies and Gannets (are sea birds that nest in colonies. All birds in this order are marine birds that spend most of their year far from land. Their feet are webbed. Notable examples are the Blue-footed Booby and Northern Gannet.)

*Quiz continued on page 6*



Continued from page 5

7. Sandgrouses (are in an order comprised of several species of treeless, open country birds found in Africa and Asia. Sandgrouses have pigeon-like heads, compact bodies and pointed wings and most have pointed central feathers.)

8. Penguins (all live in the Southern hemisphere near an ocean's coast. They dive and maneuver with great agility underwater with streamlined bodies and webbed feet set well back on their bodies. Their wings are modified into flat flippers. There are 18 species of penguins in the world including the Emperor Penguin (the largest) and Adelie, Galapagos, Rockhopper and Gentoo Penguins.)

9. Rheas (comprise a group of large, three-toed, flightless birds. These birds are found in South America and have large wings that they spread like sails when running. Most of the species in this order are extinct.)

10. Trogons and Quetzals (live in warmer areas around the world. All of the birds in this order are brightly colored and have long tails. Included in this order are species such as the Red-necked Trogon, Mountain Trogon and Resplendent Quetzal.)

In parting, I wish you in Latin, "bonum aucupium." (Good birding!)

References:

Department of Biology, Queens College, City University of New York. "Bird Name Etymologies," February 9, 2016. <http://lahtibirds.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/2016/02/09/bird-name-etymologies/>.

"40 Different Types of Birds in Bio Explorer," accessed June 2, 2021, <https://www.bioexplorer.net/animals/birds/>.

"Orders – Bird Families of the World," accessed July 28, 2021, <https://www.birdfamiliesoftheworld.com/orders/>.

Answers to the Quiz, Part Four:

1.f, 2.a, 3.i, 4.g, 5.b, 6.h, 7.c, 8.e, 9.d, 10.j



# Christmas Bird Count 2021

by Ranger Steve (Mueller)

This year's Christmas Day Count is Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022 at 7:30 AM.

The count will follow National Audubon Society guidelines, the same as last year. We are hopeful we will be able to operate in a manner like earlier years by the 2022 count. Our board has decided to proceed with the 2021 Christmas Bird Count using NAS guidelines, as follows:

1. Cancel **all** in-person compilation gatherings.
2. Masking is **required** if social distancing is not possible while in the field.
3. Carpooling may **only** occur within existing familiar or social "pod" groups.
4. Activities **must** comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

Tom Leggett will be the on-the-ground coordinator and will base himself at the Wittenbach/Wege Center, but we will not have an in-person gathering. Section leaders will coordinate their sections and gather results by email. Chris Baer is working to confirm section leaders. Section data will be sent to Tom and Ranger Steve. Steve will complete the NAS report and prepare the article for the *Caller*.

Despite vaccines and significant progress dealing with COVID-19, serious threats to personal health continue. Locally in Cedar Springs, we have lost two teachers who had COVID-19. My neighbor, who works at Blandford Nature Center, and his wife have contracted COVID-19 despite being fully vaccinated. Hopefully their illnesses will be mild because they were vaccinated.

My multiple myeloma puts me a greater risk for infection, like Colin Powell who had MM and did not survive COVID-19. I have mostly remained home for the past year and a half and will not participate in the count again this year. Very disappointing. I was hospitalized for cancer treatment most of April and May 2021 at U of Chicago hospital and treatment is failing. Cancer is growing out of control and treatment options are few. I do not want any GRAC member to experience cancer or the life-threatening challenges of COVID-19. Please follow the NAS guidelines and take safety precautions to protect others and yourself or do not participate in the count. All planning and counting will take place via phone or online via email. Counting will be conducted via car and foot; please plan to bird either solo or ONLY with members of your immediate household or established social pod.

Please make the best of the serious health pandemic that we are tired of dealing with. Have fun birding and get a good sighting list. My annual list is only 109 for 2021 because I have mostly only birded Ody Brook.

Direct inquiries to count coordinators:

Tom Leggett: (616) 249-3382 or [tomleggett@hotmail.com](mailto:tomleggett@hotmail.com) or

Ranger Steve (Mueller): (616) 696-1753 or [odybrook@chartermi.net](mailto:odybrook@chartermi.net)



## UPCOMING EVENTS (visit the GRAC website for details)

### November

- 11 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 12 Field Trip: Kellogg Woods Park w/ Tom Leggett
- 18 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 29 Membership Meeting and Nature Program

### December

- 2 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 9 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 10 Field Trip: Paul Henry Trail w/ Tom Leggett
- 16 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 23 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike
- 30 Field Trip: Millennium Park Hike

## 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 and/or Audubon Adventure)</i>		_____
<b>Total Amount Enclosed</b>		_____

Make checks payable to:  
**Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc.**  
 Send application and check to:  
**Theresa Dykhuis**  
**3100 Cooks Meadow Dr. NE**  
**Grand Rapids, MI 49525-9401**

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

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <i>5 officers + 4 elected board members</i> | Field Trips – <i>open</i>       |
| President – Scott Hutchings                 | Finance – Keith Helmus          |
| Vice President – <i>open</i>                | Fund Development – <i>open</i>  |
| Secretary – Shawn Taheri                    | Historian – Linda Damstra       |
| Treasurer – Jeff Neumann                    | Hospitality – Henry Raad        |
| Ass't Treasurer – Theresa Dykhuis           | Junior Audubon – Hannah Safford |
| Board Member – Felix Perdue                 | Library – Kathleen Haase        |
| Board Member – Ruth Fridsma                 | Maher Sanctuary – Chris Baer    |
| Board Member – Mary Austin                  | Membership – Theresa Dykhuis    |
| Board Member – Jeni Taheri                  | Nominating – Scott Hutchings    |
|   | Publicity – Tricia Boot         |
|   | Scholarship – Katie Bolt        |
|   | Special Events – <i>open</i>    |
|   | Website – Fred VanOveren        |

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*(non-voting member)*  
Sheryl Helmus 2018-19, 2019-20

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- Audio/Visual – Robert Riepma
- Bird Reports – Carol VanOveren
- Caller* Editor – Tricia Boot
- Caller* Publisher – Theresa Dykhuis/  
Peggy Falk
- Christmas Count – Tom Leggett /  
Steve Mueller
- Conservation – *open*

#### SPECIAL COMMITTEES / CHAIRPERSONS

*(non-members of Board of directors  
in this capacity)*  
Aud. Adventures – Mary Austin  
Insurance – Jill Goodell

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## **Grand Rapids Audubon Club**

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