

Here is the field trip line up for the 2017 year. We are always looking for additional field trips. Call Steve Minard at 942-7165 if you have a spot you would like to show to the group. Watch the **Caller** for future trip announcements.

### **Millennium Park Hikes (recurring)**

**Leader: Katie Bolt**

**All trips at 8:00 AM**

#### ***Wednesdays and Thursdays***

Hike Millennium Park to see what's hanging around. Flat 2.5 or 3 mile loops are planned to see whatever might show up. Many birds have been reported from this varied habitat near the river. There are ponds, swampy ponds, lowland forest and various secondary growth. This can lead to a good variety of birds.

Essentials: Meet at the end of the dead-end section of Veterans Memorial Drive east of Maynard at 8:00 AM. Take Collindale south from Lake Michigan Drive. Take a right (west) on O'Brien for about a half-mile. Go left (south) on Maynard past the beach entrance to Millennium Park. Turn left (east) on Veterans Memorial Drive and park near the end of the road.

Safety Hazards: Dress for the weather; it could be warm or cold. If cold, roads and trails could be covered with snow and ice; be careful. Paved trails have bike traffic and the trail may cross roads. So, watch for auto and bike traffic. Please exercise caution on the roads driving to and from the meeting place.

**May 2, 2017, Tuesday, 6:30 PM**

**Leader: Steve Minard**

#### ***Tuesday Evening at Reeds Lake***

This trip is an evening walk to the Hodenpyl Woods area at the west end of Reeds Lake. Varied woodland, marsh and lake habitat provides a variety of birds right in town. On this trip, we will concentrate on water birds and early warblers. The boardwalk provides good views of the lake and marsh areas so we will visit it. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the East Grand Rapids Utility Building parking lot, on Reeds Lake Blvd north of Gaslight Village, at 6:30 PM. Waterproof footwear and insect repellent may be useful.

Safety Hazards: Watch out for traffic on the road and the bicycle path. Poison ivy is abundant in places, and some of the trails are muddy most springs.

**May 3, 2017, Wednesday, 8:00 AM**

**Leader: Bill Sweetman**

#### ***Wednesday Morning at Reeds Lake***

This trip is a morning walk to the Hodenpyl Woods area at the west end of Reeds Lake. Varied woodland, marsh and lake habitat produces a good variety of birds for this location. Early May usually sees early warblers, waterfowl and marsh birds. Bill will be checking for migrants. As usual, just about anything is possible here. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the East Grand Rapids Utility Building parking lot, on Reeds Lake Blvd north of Gaslight Village, at 8:00 AM. Waterproof footwear and insect repellent may be useful.

Safety Hazards: Watch out for traffic on the road and the bicycle path. Poison ivy is abundant in places, and some of the trails are muddy most springs.

**May 6, 2017, Saturday, 8:00 AM**

**Leader: Larry Burke**

#### ***Paul Henry Thornapple Trail in Middleville***

This trail is the site of the annual Woodpecker Festival and is a great place to find Red-headed Woodpeckers, as well as most of the other resident Michigan woodpeckers. Many other species should be present at this time, including early migrating warblers and possibly summering Prothonotary Warblers. The trail is entirely paved and flat making the walk easy and safe, as well as wheelchair accessible. The trail follows the Thornapple River (more or less) and is bordered by bayous that invite many ducks and other water birds. The variety of birds, and the sheer number of birds that we will likely see, should make this trip enjoyable for novice and experienced birders alike.

Essentials: We will meet at the Arby's at M-37 (Broadmoor Avenue) and 44th Street (northeast corner of the intersection) in Kentwood at 7:30 AM and car pool from there to Middleville. Alternatively, you

can meet us at the Paul Henry Thornapple Trail behind Village Hall (100 Main St) in Middleville at 8:00 AM. This will be a morning trip, and we will be finished no later than noon. Be prepared for insects.

Safety Hazards: Driving in a caravan can be hazardous. Get directions from the leader for travel to the next stop. Please exercise caution on the roads at all times, and watch the car ahead of you when driving in a caravan. Please have a passenger handle all radio or phone communications while in a car.

**May 9, 2017, Tuesday, 6:30 PM**

**Leader: Steve Minard**

***Tuesday Evening at Reeds Lake***

This trip is an evening walk to the Hodenpyl Woods area at the west end of Reeds Lake. Varied woodland, marsh and lake habitat provides a variety of birds right in town. The second week of May should be near the peak of spring migration, and just about anything is possible here. Steve will be looking for migrants. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the East Grand Rapids Utility Building parking lot, on Reeds Lake Blvd north of Gaslight Village, at 6:30 PM. Waterproof footwear and insect repellent may be useful.

Safety Hazards: Watch out for traffic on the road and the bicycle path. Poison ivy is abundant in places, and some of the trails are muddy most springs.

**May 10, 2017, Wednesday, 8:00 AM**

**Leader: Bill Sweetman**

***Wednesday Morning at Reeds Lake***

This trip is a morning walk to the Hodenpyl Woods area at the west end of Reeds Lake. Varied woodland, marsh and lake habitat produces a good variety of birds for this location. Bill will be checking for migrants. The second week of May should be near the peak of spring migration, and just about anything is possible here. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the East Grand Rapids Utility Building parking lot, on Reeds Lake Blvd north of Gaslight Village, at 8:00 AM. Waterproof footwear and insect repellent may be useful.

Safety Hazards: Watch out for traffic on the road and the bicycle path. Poison ivy is abundant in places, and some of the trails are muddy most springs.

**May 13, 2017, Saturday, Spring Migration Count**

***North American Migration Count in Kent County***

This year Michigan will not be compiling the North American Migration Count. We plan to compile our count for Kent County and put all our results on eBird. I will be sending out checklists to everyone that wants to participate. If you have an email account and I have emailed you material in the past, I will email you the checklist as a spreadsheet. I can also email this to anyone else that would like to receive the spreadsheet. With the spreadsheet, you can add your numbers for each bird species and send it back to me. If I have mailed you the paper checklist, I will continue to do this unless you would like to get the spreadsheet via email. I will also have copies available at the April Grand Rapids Audubon meeting and at my Reeds Lake field trips on May 2 and May 9. So plan on spending some time birding in Kent County on May 13 and report your birds to me. Again feeder counts, stationary counts and moving counts all help.

**May 20, 2017, Saturday, 6:30 AM**

**Leader: Scott Hutchings**

***Berrien County Warblers Trip***

This is a prime date for warblers at Warren Dunes State Park, and the trails from Floral Lane entrance will be the major focus. This is a heavily birded area, and species such as Worm-eating Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Mourning Warbler and Connecticut Warbler are reported from here many years. This should be getting into the right time for Mourning and Connecticut Warbler. At least one of the four is likely for the week. Prairie Warblers nest out in open dune areas here, and if you make the effort, they can be found. Other possible stops are the 3 Oaks Sewage Ponds and the South Branch of the Galien River. The Kesling Nature Preserve on Forest Lawn Road and Lakeside Road are both good for Yellow-throated Warbler, Cerulean Warbler and White-eyed Vireo. In recent years, Fish Crows have been reported from the nearby dump, but with the dump closing they may move elsewhere. Other stops are possible including

Galien River Park north of New Buffalo and Chikaming Township Park. Bring your CB or Family radio if you have one, and try to keep in touch between cars. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: Meet at the McDonald's in Hudsonville, north of the freeway, at 6:30 AM. Plan to leave extra cars in the car pool lot on the way back to the freeway. This is a longer trip than most since it is a 90-minute drive to areas near the state line. Plan on the better part of the day for the trip. Bring snacks and drinks to keep you going. A lunch stop is planned.

Safety Hazards: Driving in a caravan can be hazardous. Get directions from the leader for travel to the next stop. Please exercise caution on the roads at all times, and watch the car ahead of you when driving in a caravan. Bugs and poison ivy are likely; take appropriate precautions. Please have a passenger handle all radio or phone communications while in a car.

**June 17, 2017, Saturday, 7:30 AM**

**Leader: Steve Minard**

***Pierce Cedar Creek Institute and Grasslands***

For something different we plan to visit the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute southwest of Hastings in Barry County. This facility has a variety of habitats, including some gorgeous beech-maple forest. Special birds that have been here are Black-billed Cuckoo and White-eyed Vireo. About two miles east is one of the better grasslands in the area for Henslow's Sparrow. Since early morning with gentle breezes are the best time to hear them, we'll look for them first. Birders of all skills are welcome.

Essentials: We will meet at the Arby's at M-37 (Broadmoor Avenue) and 44th Street (northeast corner of the intersection) in Kentwood at 7:30 AM and car pool from there. This is planned as a morning trip, but could be extended if desired. Be prepared for insects and watch for poison ivy.

Safety Hazards: Driving in a caravan can be hazardous. Get directions from the leader for travel to the next stop. Please exercise caution on the roads at all times, and watch the car ahead of you when driving in a caravan. Please have a passenger handle all radio or phone communications while in a car.