



THE NUTHATCH

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Singing Insects of Michigan

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

7:30 p.m.

Susanne Greenlee

Go outside at night in August and you'll hear a cacophony of insect sounds. Which insects are making those sounds? Sue Greenlee of Oakland County Parks will tell us.

Mother Nature's orchestra includes many insect songsters, from spring through fall, at night and during the day. Tonight we'll learn what many of them look like and hear the "music" that they make.



Meadow Katydid by Susanne Greenlee



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Evening Nature Walk at Heritage Park

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

6:30 p.m.

In place of our June meeting we'll be going on a Nature Walk at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills. Wear clothing and footwear appropriate for hiking outdoors, and meet at the Nature Center. Refreshments will be provided. Heritage Park is located on Farmington Road between Ten and Eleven Mile Roads. **Please note the earlier starting time of this event.**



Common Yellowthroat by Jeff Stacey

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Information

We live in the “information age” or so I have been told. Computers and phones are the constant tools of everyone. Go to dinner and you will see at least a half dozen people on the phone. At work, many people spend a large portion of their time at a computer. If not that, then the phone. I can attest to that. I spend a large portion of my time between the two.

So what does this have to do with our Audubon Society? Well, you're reading our newsletter, possibly on a computer or even from your phone. Communication is a way to pass “information” amongst people. We use it all the time. To learn, to be entertained, to get somewhere—most things we do rely on information of some sort. So, unsurprisingly, information is very important for our nature activities. We rely on postings on the internet for finding out about sightings of birds. We read articles about fascinating places to visit. We learn who is doing what, when, where, and why. Can't get around it...we need information.

Today, we rely on these tools and they are always evolving. People also adjust to what they have available for communication. I know I'm showing my age but I remember the “rare bird alerts” that required you to call a phone number to leave a posting or find out what had been seen. Then the internet came along and we adapted. We started using this to send out notes to friends about good spots and rare birds. Then came the “listservs” allowing wider communication, obviously much less personal but very effective (if you were interested). Then came eBird, another way to communicate what you were seeing to a computer that tallied and organized the information. Again, a little less personal.

I don't know if it's real but I have felt recently that we have either slowed down birding or slowed down our reporting to those forums (listservs) that were a little easier to use. Don't get me wrong, eBird is great and is really useful. But, if you report to eBird, I have to either look at a specific site or for a specific species to find out what I want. And that's a little less easy to peruse and get a feel for what is going on out there.



Photo by David Cosand, via Flickr

I suppose a few people contact friends by phone, many send out a note to friends and some use the listservs to get the word out. Some use eBird but it doesn't get the word out as effectively as the other routes. I won't even discuss Facebook and Twitter. They are useful to some and not so to others.

Of course, my favorite mode of information gathering is the spoken word. A few friends and I referred to this as “sponging,” sucking information out of people so we could act on that knowledge.

Walk up to someone and just ask “What are you looking at?” It's pretty useful and it works, especially in places where a number of people are birding.

In the end, it's the process of communication and the search for information that helps us get out there and enjoy nature. Now, you might say that just going for a walk in the park, not knowing what you might come across, is just the right approach. And I won't argue. That can be just as rewarding as finding the rare bird that you want for your list. I am guilty of doing both.

So, enjoy nature and if you need a little help finding some interesting birds, other animals, or plants to enjoy, you can count on there being lots of sources for said knowledge. Just be sure to enjoy it when you get the information.

Don Burlett

Page one banner credits: Chestnut-sided Warbler by Joan Tisdale; Black-throated Blue Warbler by Robert Epstein; Northern Parula by Joan Tisdale; Kirtland's Warbler by Robert Epstein

THE OAKLAND OWLETS—OAS YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB

by Lisa Badgero

This year has already seen some fun events for our Owlets, beginning with the Great Backyard Bird Count in February. Then in March we enjoyed a wonderful photography workshop by Jeff Stacey. We learned a lot of techniques to help us get great bird photos!



Taking photos at Kensington Metropark. (Photo by Lisa Badgero)

Please join us at these upcoming Owlet events:

North American Migration Count, Kensington Metropark — Sat., May 9, 2015, 8:00–11:00 a.m.

This will be our third time participating in this important spring bird count, and each year we have seen new species. Meet outside the Nature Center.

Magee Marsh Wildlife Area — Sat., May 16, 2015, 9:00 a.m–3:00 p.m

Join us for some fantastic spring birding at Magee Marsh, in Oak Harbor, Ohio. You'll see lots of warblers, vireos, tanagers, and other spring migrants, and will definitely add some lifers to your list. Pack a lunch and water. Meet at the west entrance to the boardwalk.

Seven Ponds Nature Center — Sat., June 13, 2015, 8:00–11:00 a.m.

This will be an opportunity to find any late migrants in the diverse habitat as well as breeding birds busy making nests. This is also a great place to see butterflies and dragonflies. Meet in the parking lot.

For more information about the Oakland Owlets and our events, please see the Oakland Audubon website.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

(Details of these outings are on the Field Trips page of our website at www.oaklandaudubon.org)

Date	Event	Trip Leader(s)
Saturday, May 2 7:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.	Point Pelee National Park	Don Burlett/Jim Koppin
Saturday, May 9 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.	Magee Marsh Crazy Day	Don Burlett
Saturday, May 9 Dawn to Dusk	North American Migration Count	Ed Lewandowski
May 16-17 weekend trip	Tawas Point Birding Festival	Kathleen Dougherty
Saturday, May 23 8:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.	Port Huron State Game Area	Don Burlett/ Dave Frye
Sunday, May 31 8:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.	Wild Card Trip	Ed Lewandowski
Saturday, June 6 8:00 a.m.—noon	Orion Oaks County Park	Nancy Tar/Dave Frye



*Indigo Bunting (left)
and Scarlet Tanager,
by Robert Epstein*



© Robert Epstein 2009

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

February 7, 2015—Beaudette, Dawson Road, Kensington Metropark—Leader: Dave Frye

It's always fun to get out in the middle of winter and try to find birds. That said, finding ducks in Oakland County, with all its frozen lakes, is quite a challenge. And so, we ventured forth to Beaudette Park, which is a good spot for winter ducks because it usually has open water. And we found some open water and some ducks and swans. We had both Trumpeter and Mute Swans along with Mallards, Common Goldeneye, and Redhead.

We then headed to Dawson Road (near Kensington) and found a Sandhill Crane wading in the river along with Ring-necked Duck, Common and Hooded Mergansers, and Canvasbacks. We headed to Kensington Metropark but found no open water, so we just walked the trails to add a few land birds.

So we didn't set any records but had a fun time examining frozen lakes and rivers in search of some holdouts against the cold winter.

February 20-22, 2015—Upper Peninsula Weekend Trip—Leader: Don Burlett

The true test of hardy birders is a winter trip to the UP. Doesn't get any colder or icier than getting up there to bird. But this year had to be better than last year. There was no snow on the way up and only a little overnight, just enough to keep the cars protected from the cold. And cold it was. When we left this area, it was -18°F!! We headed north on Friday and got up in the birding areas by early afternoon. We quickly headed over to Pickford, the hot spot this winter. And it didn't disappoint. We started by getting a flock of Snow Buntings as we entered town. Immediately after that, we encountered a flock of about 75 Bohemian Waxwings and a couple of Pine Grosbeaks. We then visited a local feeder and got Common Redpolls and a pair of Evening Grosbeaks. We also started spotting Snowy Owls as we drove the local roads.

On Saturday, we drove to Hulbert Bog and it ended up being a lonely spot. No Gray Jays or anything else of particular interest. We then headed up toward Whitefish Point in search of crossbills.

We were rewarded by finding several Red Crossbills just south of the Point. We then drove back to the eastern end of the UP to Dunbar Forest. Nothing much to report. As we wandered about, we added Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, lots of ravens and a lone Northern Shrike. And more Snowy Owls. And we also got some Ruffed Grouse working the trees off the road. We drifted down to Pickford again and were rewarded by White-winged Crossbills and at least one Hoary Redpoll. Before we ended the day, we added a Peregrine Falcon and some ducks.

We birded a bit in the morning but didn't really see too much else. We headed home but decided to stop at Shiawassee NWR for fun. We saw Wild Turkeys and Horned Larks on the way in. Close by, we added American Kestrel, Merlin, and Northern Harrier.

It was a fun weekend with two grosbeaks, two redpolls, two crossbills and seven Snowy Owls. Of course, the fun was the group, surviving the cold, and enjoying cookies and other snacks as well as conversation at dinner. You won't want to miss next year.



Bohemian Waxwing by Jeff Stacey



Pine Grosbeak by Jeff Stacey

FIELD TRIP REPORTS (*continued*)

March 7, 2015—University of Michigan Museum of Natural History—Leader: Dave Frye

U of M Zoology Museum Bird Collection Manager, Janet Hinshaw, showed off some of the more than 220,000 specimens for 7 OAS members. Warblers, owls, raptors, and extinct species were all on display for the group. It was an uncommon opportunity to get close to these specimens and ask Janet anything that came to mind about her work and birds in general.

After the tour, the group birded a bit more from Willow Run Airport up to Vreeland Rd. Species seen included Bald Eagles (3), Rough-Legged Hawks (3), Peregrine Falcons (2), Wild Turkeys (6), Horned Larks (30), and House Sparrows.

March 21, 2015—Belleville Lake/Huron River—Leader: Jim Koppin

Eight eager participants braved wind and gray skies on a trip around Edison, Belleville, Ford, and Grace lakes. Although the lakes were still mostly frozen, a total of 39 species were observed. The best bird of the day was a beautiful male Long-tailed Duck observed by Dave Frye on Belleville Lake.

Reminder:

The next issue of
The Nuthatch will be
published in September.

Enjoy your summer!

(Remember, you can see complete bird lists for each field trip on our website.)

“OUR FAVORITE BIRD” CROWNED !!!

by Dave Frye

At the March membership meeting, everyone felt the drama of our Final Four as we crowned the 2014 / 2015 champion in the “Our Favorite Bird” tournament.

In the first semi-final, the Wood Duck defeated the Black-Billed Cuckoo and then in the other semi-final match, the Blackburnian Warbler defeated the American Kestrel. That set up our Grand Finale and—in a very close vote—the Blackburnian Warbler was chosen as our champion.

Thanks to everyone who took part in the event. It was heaps of fun, again this year!

*Photo credits:
Blackburnian Warbler by Joan Tisdale
Wood Duck by Jeff Stacey*



Spring 2015 Birding Festivals

Date(s)	Event and Location	Website for More Information
May 8-17, 2015	Biggest Week in American Birding (Oak Harbor, Ohio)	www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com
May 9, 2015	International Migratory Bird Day	www.birdday.org
May 14-17, 2015	Tawas Point Birding Festival (Iosco County, Michigan)	www.tawasbirdfest.com
May 14-16, 2015	Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival (Ashland, Wisconsin)	www.birdandnaturefest.com
May 28-31, 2015	Leelanau Birding Festival (Suttons Bay, Michigan)	www.mibirdfest.com
June 5-7, 2015	Cerulean Warbler Weekend (Barry County, Michigan)	www.ceruleanwarbler.com

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING March 19, 2015

Our June 9 nature walk will be held at Heritage Park, Farmington Hills.

Membership Officer Dave Frye reported that we are a little behind last year compared to revenue and members, but we have 30 new members compared to 21 last year.

The Field Trip Committee is working on scheduling field trips through the end of 2015.

We have received a nice donation from the Chrysler Foundation as a thank-you for helping Chrysler World Headquarters in Auburn Hills obtain a "Wildlife at Work" certification.

The board voted unanimously to support the American Bird Conservancy's effort to obtain a moratorium on a wind-power development in Huron County that threatens the hawk migration.

Doris Applebaum, Secretary

OAS BOARD MEMBERS

Elected Officers

President	Don Burlett	(248) 236-9486	baikalteal13@netzero.net
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Seven Ponds Rep.	Don Burlett	(248) 236-9486	baikalteal13@netzero.net

UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

Date	Time	Program	Location
Tues., May 12	7:30 p.m.	The Singing Insects of Michigan	First United Methodist Church (see below)
Tues., June 9	6:30 p.m.	Nature Walk	Heritage Park (Farmington Hills)

Monthly membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month (except December, June, July and August) at 7:30 p.m., at the First United Methodist Church, 1589 West Maple Road, Birmingham, Children's Center (Room 132). The facility is located on the south side of Maple Road between Southfield and Cranbrook Roads. There is plenty of lighted, free parking and barrier-free access. Our meetings are free and open to the public. For meeting cancellation information, check our website, call a board member or call the church at (248) 646-1200.

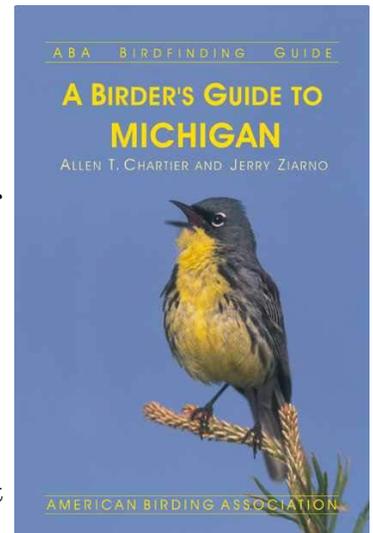
Could you tell us about your experience of writing A Birder's Guide to Michigan...what were some of the unexpected difficulties you encountered? What surprised you about the process?

I'm afraid that my answer to this question might be a little disappointing. I first proposed *A Birder's Guide to Michigan* to the American Birding Association in 1994, at an annual convention I was attending in Minot, North Dakota. I had pulled together a list of more than 350 sites that I thought could be covered, based on my own experience and an extensive search of the Michigan Bird Survey that has been published in the *Jack-Pine Warbler* and *Michigan Birds and Natural History* since 1945. At the time, ABA was working on other guides so did not have time to tackle Michigan. And in any case, I had not actually visited more than 200 of the sites I'd identified! Then, in 2000, Jerry Ziarno (who was then the treasurer of ABA) contacted me to see if we could team up to put together the Michigan guide as ABA was now available and interested.

As the copyright date of the book suggests, it took about four years to get this huge project done. My own background as a project manager, as well as the many birding contacts I'd cultivated over the years, was probably the most important qualification I had to take this on. Jerry also had a lot of contacts, including within ABA, as well as a lot of knowledge of birding sites in areas of the state I hadn't visited much. It was truly a pleasure working with the ABA staff: Cindy Lippincott on the maps and text, Bob Berman on the bar charts, and Virginia Maynard on the maps and text. But Jerry and I realized quite early that even though we were probably going to cover about 275 locations, it was a lot more work than just the two of us could finish. We enlisted the help of Brian Allen, in the Manistee area, to coordinate the writing of sites in the northwestern Lower Peninsula, and for many other individual sites, we asked about 100 other authors to help us out. It was interesting for me to hear details about some sites in this region that I did not know very well.

After getting everything pretty well organized and in a first draft, the next essential step was verifying all the directions and mileages that we were including. In a few cases, there were changes to roads or access in the four years since we started! Generally, though, this task was fairly straightforward and involved just following what was written, and using the car odometer to verify distances. Pretty exciting eh? Perhaps this was a little unexpected; that I was going to spend so much time driving around so many birding sites looking mainly at a clipboard and my odometer, and visiting these sites at seasons when birds were not present...that is, going to good warbler spots in the middle of winter, or checking mileages at waterbird sites in the middle of summer.

Overall, it was a great feeling of accomplishment to get the book done and published in 2004. It has received very good reviews, and the initial printing of 3000 copies were sold over the following few years, and in 2010 a second printing came out in which we corrected a few errors or updated some access instructions, but surprisingly few of these were needed. The ABA still has copies of the 2010 printing available if you don't yet have your copy (<http://www.aba.org/abasales/>). Normally, 2014 would have been the year to do a complete revision, as ABA's standard schedule is to do this every 10 years, but the number of copies still on hand is delaying this (most guides haven't needed a second printing). I'm not sure I'm ready to tackle this again right now, and of course the financial rewards of putting together a book like this are very, very small. It was a labor of love, and I'm glad that Jerry and I did it. The future of these guides may not involve paper and ink....



If you have a nature question for Allen, please send it to Kim Smith at kimcsmith79@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

Even with all of the great things happening within OAS, we are running a bit behind in our drive for memberships this year. If you find that you've forgotten us for whatever reason and wish to make that right, please contact our Membership Officer, Dave Frye (email: kestrel11dcf@gmail.com). Please use the form on page 13 to pay your dues.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST OAKLAND AUDUBON MEMBERS!

Joy Barron
Patricia and Randy Judd
Dana Loewenstein
Alice and Leo McIntyre
Katie-Ann McKlinsky
Robert Moll
David Weinberg

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

Oakland Audubon greatly appreciates *all* of its members. The contributions of those noted below are exceptional and worth highlighting. Thanks for your continued outstanding support!

Benefactor Level (\$100)

Carolyn Beauvais and Bill Newman
Lisa Katzman
Gerald Moore
Jeff Stacey
Darcy and Gary Wolfson

Supporting Level (\$50)

Nancy Bogart
Gail and Phil Bugosh
Nancy and Dick Fromm
Maryanne and Rod Guest
Sue and Frank Hibbard
Alice and Arthur Marotti
Alice and Leo McIntyre
Joy and Tim Reade
Edward Scharrer

Thanks to everyone who helps sustain OAS with your membership contributions. We would be nowhere without you!

BIRDING BY THE NUMBERS

47 million

Number of birdwatchers in the U.S.

666,000

Number of jobs supported by birdwatchers.

18 million

Number of people who travel to see birds.

\$7 billion

Amount of federal tax revenue generated by birdwatchers each year.

Source: Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis. USFWS, 2011-1.

HELP FOR THE GOLDEN-WING

by Doris Applebaum

The number of Golden-winged Warblers has been on a downward spiral for several decades. The largest remaining breeding populations are in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Now a number of private and public organizations, led by the American Bird Conservancy and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, are undertaking a habitat-management project covering 50,000 acres in these three states.

The goal is to help private landowners improve their property with an eye toward providing good breeding habitat for over 1,100 pairs of Golden-winged Warblers. If the project succeeds, it is estimated that the population will increase by 16,000 individuals in the next several years.



Golden-winged Warbler by Joan Tisdale

There is also an effort planned to improve the wintering habitat for the Golden-wing in Latin America. At a meeting in Honduras late in 2014, threats to the species were identified and plans for conservation actions were discussed, with an emphasis on prioritizing the most important habitat areas. It is expected that a final plan will be completed by the summer of 2015.

As is so often the case in nature, habitat is the key to survival, and in both the breeding and wintering areas the efforts on behalf of the Golden-winged Warbler are expected to help other species as well, both avian and mammalian.

(Information for this article was found in the February 2015 issue of *Bird Calls* newsletter published by the American Bird Conservancy.)

Cranbrook Launches BioBlitz 2015



The Cranbrook Educational Community will host BioBlitz 2015 on August 7 and 8, 2015. The BioBlitz will be a two-day event that will gather hundreds of volunteer scientists, students, and community members to measure and highlight the biodiversity of Cranbrook's unique habitat in the heart of the urban Detroit area. This family-friendly event will be a public

celebration of the biodiversity in Southeast Michigan and will feature hands-on science and nature exhibits, photography workshops, food, art, and entertainment. For more information, visit science.cranbrook.edu or call 248-645-3210.

BIRD ID QUIZ

Who am I?



(A) _____



(B) _____



(C) _____

Photo credits: A, B, and C by Robert Epstein

Mar/Apr Answers

(A) Ruffed Grouse; (B) Spruce Grouse; (C) Sharp-tailed Grouse



OAKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Mobile: (____) _____

Email address: _____

Please indicate with an (X) in the box any personal information above you do not want listed in the OAS membership directory.

Check also if you are a member of:

____ National Audubon Society

____ Michigan Audubon Society

OAS needs and welcomes volunteers — please participate if you can!

Check if you have the skills to help:

____ Become a board member

____ Lead a field trip or present a program

____ Fill an open position (Position: _____)

Please check appropriate line:

____ Member renewal

____ New member

____ Change of address

OAS Membership Fees

- Individual \$15
- Family \$20
- Contributing \$25
- Supporting \$50
- Benefactor \$100

Our Mission

- To provide, on a local level, access to the natural world through educational programs such as meetings and field trips.
- To advocate the preservation of wildlife habitats and endeavor to create interest in native birds, other animals and plants in Michigan.

Please make checks payable to:
OAKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Mail to:
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