

January - February, 1972

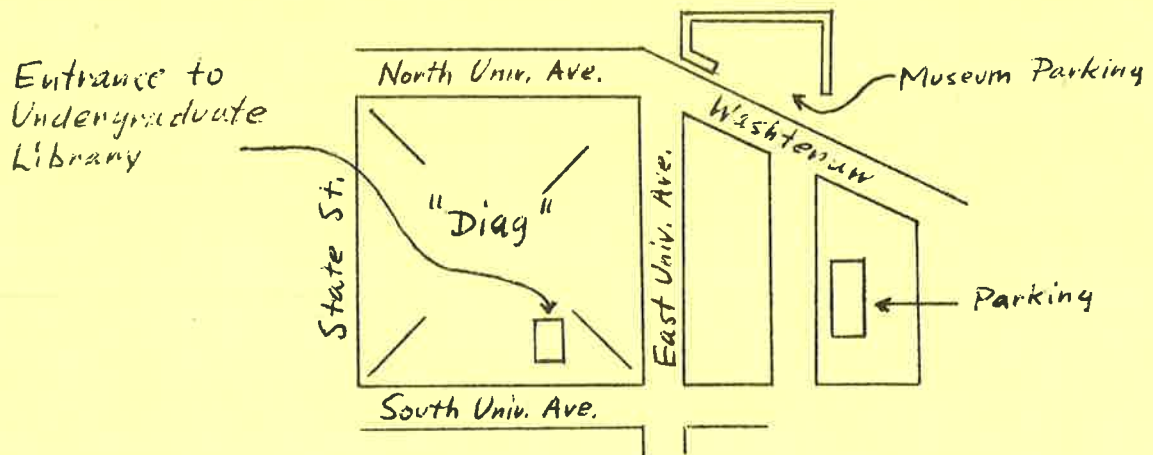
Dick & Gaylee Dean Editors

JOINTLY SPONSORED JANUARY MEETING FEATURES

PHOTOGRAPHER LARRY WEST

On Monday at 8:00 p.m., January 17, 1972, WAS is sponsoring jointly with the Botanical Society, the Rose Society and the Nature Photography Club, a presentation entitled "The Magic Moment," by Larry West. West is a professional photographer who specializes in natural history. His photographs have appeared in many magazines including National Wildlife and Audubon Magazine.

The meeting will be held in the Multipurpose Room of the Undergraduate Library. You may park at either the Museum Parking Lot or the Church Street Parking Structure. Walk through the "Diag" to the library entrance which faces the center of the "Diag". A map is included for easy location.



Note: The regularly scheduled meeting on January 19, will not be held. The above program replaces that meeting.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

On February 16, "A Week on Matinicus Rock," will be presented by Wally Rensch at the Ann Arbor Ornithological Society meeting at 7:30 p.m., Room 2009, U of M Museums Building. Matinicus Rock is an island off the coast of Maine containing seabird colonies and birds of the coniferous forest and is described in Pettingill's "Guide to Bird Finding."

MONROE COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

In 1965, Dean Fisher, with 5 observers, initiated the Monroe County Christmas Bird Census. The 6 observers were able to record 55 species that first year. In 1966 and 1967, the census was not conducted, primarily because Fisher was in Australia. Fisher returned to Michigan in 1968, and again held the Monroe count. This time he had 8 observers, and again they recorded 55 species. The following year (1969), Fisher was able to muster 23 observers. This time the number of species soared to 74, the highest number ever reported on a Michigan Christmas census. However, on that same day, on the other side of the state, Berrien County observers had sighted 79 species. In 1970, Sheldon Miller replaced Fisher as compiler of the Monroe count. He was able to get 14 observers to sight 72 species, the highest in Michigan that year. The combined list of species for the years 1965, 1968, 1969, and 1970 totals 100 species.

This brief history of the Monroe County census illustrates one fact clearly. The number of species recorded is directly proportional to the number of observers. Of course, weather conditions on or before the count day can drastically change the results. We cannot control the weather, but we can do something about the number of observers. Therefore, the goal for 1971 was to concentrate our efforts on getting a large number of observers.

Twenty-seven dedicated census takers were present for this year's census on Sunday, December 19. Optimism was high because of this high number of observers and because of the relatively mild weather. From dawn to dusk, observers roamed through fields and forests. Others waded through marshes and along Lake Erie beaches. At dusk, they all convened to Al's Diner (guess who picked this diner) in Monroe. A hearty meal preceded the tallying of results. Suspense built up during the meal as rather vague reports of rare species circulated from table to table. Finally, the time arrived for reporting the days observations. When all reports were in, we were happy to discover that we had achieved our goal. The list of 84 species was indeed a new high for Michigan. Furthermore, we added 10 species to the combined list, bringing it to 110 species.

The Berrien County census takers were also busy on December 19. The unofficial report has them topping us by 1 with 85 species. So, we end our 1971 census report with a familiar note, "Wait 'til next year!"

A complete list of the species observed at Monroe this year follows. Uncommon or rare species and unusual numbers are underlined.

Horned Grebe, 1; Pied-billed Grebe, 2; Great Blue Heron, 63; Canada goose, 1; Mallard, 1317; Black Duck, 612; Pintail, 13; Green-winged Teal, 3; American Widgeon, 30; Redhead, 2; Greater Scaup, 1; Common Goldeneye, 35; Bufflehead, 2; Oldsquaw, 1; Hooded Merganser, 4; Common Merganser, 9041; Red-breasted Merganser, 64; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 28; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 4; Marsh Hawk, 4; Sparrow Hawk, 25; Ring-necked Pheasant, 57; American Coot, 15; Dunlin, 2; Great Black-backed Gull, 159; Herring Gull, 1339; Ring-billed Gull, 1024; Bonaparte's Gull, 749; Mourning Dove, 321; Screech Owl, 9; Great Horned Owl, 7; Snowy Owl, 1; Saw-whet Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Flicker, 57; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 43; Horned Lark, 262; Blue Jay, 38; Common Crow, 5; Black-capped Chickadee, 4; Tufted Titmouse, 15; White-breasted Nuthatch, 14; Brown Creeper, 16; Winter Wren, 20; Robin, 1; Hermit Thrush, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 11; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1; Starling, 753; Redwinged Blackbird, 23; Rusty Blackbird, 15; Common Grackle, 5; Brown-headed Cowbird, 1; Cardinal, 206; Evening Grosbeak, 9; Common Redpoll, 7; Pine Siskin, 6; American Goldfinch, 6; Rufous-sided Towhee, 1; Savannah Sparrow, 2; Sharp-tailed Sparrow, 2; Slate-colored Junco, 116; Oregon Junco, 1; Tree Sparrow, 732; White-crowned Sparrow, 2; White-throated Sparrow, 2; Fox Sparrow, 1; Swamp Sparrow, 99; Song Sparrow 75; Lapland Longspur, 11; Snow Bunting, 131. Myrtle Warbler, 13; Yellowthroat, 1; House Sparrow, 882; E. Meadowlark, 40; N. Shrike, 1; W. Snipe, 1; C. Waxwing 9.

ANN ARBOR CHRISTMAS COUNT

An incredible Prairie Warbler, a Short-eared Owl and ten Bluebirds at a feeder topped the list of 70 species recorded on January 2 as 39 observers braved some foul early morning weather to conduct the 25th Ann Arbor Christmas Bird Count. Although the total number of birds seen, 6032, was below previous counts, record numbers of Sparrow Hawks, Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrushes and Bluebirds were found. Participants enjoyed a potluck supper at the Miles' house after the count and tallied the results by the fireside after the meal.

Dick Dean had the high party count with 48 species, including the Prairie Warbler (which Dick found at the sewage treatment plant December 12) a Yellowthroat, a Pintail, a Gadwall, and a Great Blue Heron. Chuck Steinbach recorded a Sharp-shinned Hawk decreasing the welfare load of English Sparrows at his feeder. Bill Hopkins and Rose Kahn tracked down the elusive Ruffed Grouse. The ever scarcer Barred Owl was found just before dawn at Liberty and Zeeb Rds. Yozo Tsukamoto and Al Maley found the Short-eared Owl at the airport as well as five Hermit Thrushes at Washtenaw Community College. Dwaine Brooks, after setting out hundreds of bluebird houses around Park Road and fledging 90 young this year, coaxed 10 of these beautiful birds to stay the winter at his feeder where he spoils them with mealworms. Gard Otis and Matt Heumann found the only Northern Shrike and reportedly took his picture. Shelly Miller and his party managed to locate a Rusty Blackbird and two Lapland Longspurs. In addition to the birds recorded on the count day, Long-eared Owl, Catbird, Carolina Wren, Meadow lark, Cowbird, Pine Grosbeak and Red Crossbill were recorded during the count period.

The noteworthy species and numbers are underlined in the following complete list of results:



Great Blue Heron, 1; Mute Swan, 12; Canada Goose, 106; Mallard, 268; Black Duck, 31; Gadwall, 1; Pintail, 1; Canvasback, 2; Common Goldeneye, 10; Common Merganser, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 52; Rough-legged Hawk, 5; Marsh Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 36; Ruffed Grouse, 2; Bobwhite, 16; Pheasant, 26; Killdeer, 1; Herring Gull, 30; Ring-billed Gull, 11; Mourning Dove, 283; Screech Owl, 4; Great Horned Owl, 6; Barred Owl, 1; Short-eared Owl, 1; Belted Kingfisher, 5; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 16; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 13; Red-headed Woodpecker, 10; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 13; Downy Woodpecker, 78; Horned Lark, 259; Blue Jay, 243; Common Crow, 40; Black-capped Chickadee, 164; Tufted Titmouse, 105; White-breasted Nuthatch, 77; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 10; Brown Creeper, 11; Winter Wren, 3; Robin, 5; Hermit Thrush, 6; Eastern Bluebird, 10; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 9; Cedar Waxwing, 134; Northern Shrike, 1; Starling, 507; Myrtle Warbler, 13; Prairie Warbler, 1; Yellowthroat, 1; House Sparrow, 1113; Redwing, 7; Rusty Blackbird, 1; Common Grackle, 3; Cardinal, 313; Evening Grosbeak, 8; Purple Finch, 20; Common Redpoll, 72; Pine Siskin, 250; American Goldfinch, 158; Slate-colored Junco, 281; Tree Sparrow, 982; Field Sparrow, 4; White-throated Sparrow, 20; Swamp Sparrow, 1; Song Sparrow, 85; Lapland Longspur, 3; Snow Bunting, 61.

We would like to thank everyone for their participation. Special thanks go to the Miles for allowing us to hold the post count festivities and compiling session at their home.

(AJM)

AREA BIRD COUNTS SET RECORDS

Pt. Pelee counters tallied 72 species including Scoters and a Red-throated Loon. Rondeau reached an all time high of 94 species. A few late shorebirds were seen and rarities included four Little Gulls and a Snowy Owl. Numerous White-winged Gulls were seen during the count period at Rondeau. Kalamazoo, our usual contender for inland high counts, tallied 66 species. Midland reports a species count of 38 which included a Myrtle Warbler.

Reports of species counts above are unofficial. For official figures see the American Birds Christmas Bird Count issue to be published later this year.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members and we welcome their active participation:

Milan - Don & Reva Jeppesen; Ypsilanti - Mr. & Mrs. Charles Wright; Grass Lake - Mrs. Louis C. Ramp; Ann Arbor - Mr. & Mrs. Harry Webber and David, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis L. Swartout, Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Dill, Ronald L. Graham, James Alpern, Mr. & Mrs. Clinton E. Purdy, Mr. & Mrs. David Mouw, Dr. & Mrs. Gail R. Williams, Eric Wood, Diane Griffin, Dwaine & Donna Brooks, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Houle, Dr. & Mrs. David J. Strawbridge, Mr. & Mrs. Wm. E. Riddle, Dr. & Mrs. Donald A. Braisted.

Membership dues in WAS are: Patron, \$5.00 or more (tax-deductible), Husband & Wife, \$2.50, Individual, \$2.00, Student (Under 18 yrs.) \$.50. To join, send your check payable to the "Washtenaw Audubon Society," together with your name and complete address (including Zip) to Membership Co-Chairmen, Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Behling, 130 Clubview Drive, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. If you wish a membership card receipt, please also enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you have questions, the Behlings can be reached by phone at 434-2048.

As indicated in the last newsletter, members who have not renewed their membership by payment of dues at this time have been dropped from the mailing list, and will not have received this issue. If you know of someone in this situation, it would be appreciated if you would remind them to renew membership as soon as possible.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

Haehnle Sanctuary Safe from Hunters

The Jackson Audubon Society announced that since hunting has been prohibited near the Michigan Audubon Society's Phyllis Haehnle Wildlife Sanctuary in the Waterloo Recreation Area that the number of Sandhill Cranes has doubled. A recent count showed 429 cranes flying into Haehnle. Haehnle (Mud Lake on the map) can be reached by driving west on I 94, north at the Race Road exit, and then left on Seymour Road. The sanctuary is on the North side of Seymour Road

Kirtland's Warbler Down

The population of the Kirtland's Warbler is down more than 50% since the 1961 census. This means there are less than 500 adult birds. As a result of this the Michigan Audubon Society decided at the last Board of Directors meeting to try and raise at least \$5,000 to be used to rescue the Kirtland's Warbler. The Kirtland's nest only in a few counties in the northern part of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The money will be spent to build and maintain Cowbird traps in the Kirtland's nesting areas and to assist in research on habitat improvement. In one survey of 29 Kirtland's nests it was found that 25 contained Cowbird eggs. The Cowbirds hatch earlier and mature faster than the young Kirtland's Warblers so the Cowbirds survive while the Kirtland's die. If you would like to assist in this project send your tax deductible checks to: The Kirtland's Warbler Fund, Michigan Audubon Society, 7000 North Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo 49001.

Joint Membership Available

The joint membership of the National Audubon Society and the Michigan Audubon Society is still on and application blanks are available.

Plastic Tops Needed for Feeders

Bob Whiting who runs the Michigan Audubon Society's Handicraft Shop is in need of plastic tops from deodorant cans to use in the tubular bird feeders. Any profit made from the Handicraft Store items goes to the endowment fund of the Michigan Audubon Society. The address of the Handicraft Shop is 2304 St. Jude Street, Jackson. The tops from the deodorant cans can be sent to him or brought to the WAS meetings or Wildlife Films. I will see that he gets them.

(A.L. Carpenter)

Bird Feed

50 lbs. of sunflower seed, \$7.80, or 25 lbs. of wild birdseed mix, \$2.50 are available through Roger Sutherland, local distributor for Michigan Audubon, 5488 Warren Road. Call at 668-8568 before driving out. Note, a price correction has been made since the last newsletter.

RECENT BIRD SIGHTINGS

<u>Species</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Mountain Bluebird	Pt. Pelee	12/29/71
Harlequin Ducks	Ipperwash	12/29/71
Gyrfalcon	St. Clair River (12 mi. So. of Port Huron)	12/27/71

This is the second report of a Gyrfalcon in our area this year. Numerous reports east of us (Buffalo, Brigantine, Long Island), indicate a good year for finding this rarity (invasion?) Please report all unusual bird sightings to either Al Maley, 662-6055, or Dick Dean, 761-2768, so that they are included in future newsletters.

OUR THANKS TO RALPH

We extend our thanks to Ralph Wall for serving as editor of the newsletter in 1971. Ralph's new home is Arlington, Virginia. Ralph's persistent persuasion to write our legislators concerning key environmental issues was a source of motivation for many of us to take such action and write. Indeed, a full page article by Ralph in the last Sept. - Oct. newsletter urged this kind of action in promoting passage of a bill to make it a federal crime to shoot wildlife from aircraft. We are happy to announce that a bill prohibiting the shooting of wildlife from aircraft was signed by the President on 11/18/71 and is now Public Law 92-159. Let's keep up the good work and perpetuate the drive and enthusiasm Ralph developed. There's a lot to be done. Keep writing!

WILDLIFE BILLS IN CONGRESS

Several key wildlife bills saw the end of 1971 with no action yet taken. Of particular interest to Audubonites, are following bills:

H.R. 10450 - Bald Eagle Protection Act

This bill strengthens penalties imposed for violations of the Bald Eagle Protection Act by increasing the fine from \$500 to \$5000 and increasing imprisonment from 6 mo. to one year. As far as we know this is still in the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

H.R. 5821 - Protection of Hawks and Owls

Amends the Act for the Protection of the Bald Eagle to include all species of hawks and owls. This is an important one. It is the major legal vehicle by which falconry can be outlawed, thereby discouraging the taking of wild falcons and other raptors from our lands.

If you have not written, it is important that you do so now. Also talk to your friends and neighbors and urge them to write. Write Representatives Marvin L. Esch and John Dingell and urge their support of these measures. Write Sen-

ators Phillip A. Hart and Robert P. Griffin and urge them to support these bills when they reach the Senate. Address Senators Griffin and Hart at: United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510; Representatives Esch and Dingell at: U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515

HUNTING IN A NATIONAL PARK?

Last Fall during the height of the fall hawk migration at Pt. Pelee (which, this year, was quite spectacular) hunters moved into the marshes in and around the Park and set up for the opening of the duck hunting season. Pt. Pelee is the only National Park in North America that allows hunting of this kind within its boundaries. Since Pt. Pelee is a natural focal point for migrating raptors, thousands of hawks concentrate and funnel across the point. How many hawks are strafed by gunfire? Ontario naturalists say pressure is building to close the park to hunting. We can help by writing directly to the Office of the Prime Minister, Ottawa Canada and indicating our desires. Visitors in the fall will feel a lot safer in the Park if it will conform to a no hunting regulation.

(RTD)

PLACES TO GO

The best place for Snowy Owls will probably be Harsens Island. Three were seen there in one day in December. As the cold weather moves in, Glaucous and Iceland Gulls should show up along the St. Clair River. Several were already seen at Ipperwash last week. Birders who enjoy waterfowl and a liesurely "from the car" outing will find Grosse Ile the best bet. Thousands of wintering ducks can be seen in the warm water of the Detroit River by riding around the suburban island and stopping where large concentrations of waterfowl can be observed.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Sunday, January 16, 1972, Peter Maslowski "A Naturalist Afield."

Sunday, February 20, 1972, Gred McMillan "Central California's Coastal Plain."

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