

Washtenaw Audubon Soc. NEWSLETTER

Minot Birding *Article, photos and drawings by Harold Eyster*

If you had been camping at Garrison Dam in North Dakota, and were crazy enough to get up at 6:10 in the morning, you would have seen two vans come up the drive and park. Then, you would have seen fourteen teenagers step out of those vans, along with four adults. You would have thought, "What on earth are they doing here?" Then, one of them would point up into a tree and say "Orchard Oriole," and you would see every one of them put some weird black things up to their eyes, and you would have thought, "I must be dreaming." You would have gone back to sleep, and woken up six hours later and thought "what a weird dream I had last night!"

Day 1

I arrived at the Minot International Airport, North Dakota, at 3:50 p.m. on June 17th. I walked off the plane into a small airport, and met other young birders who were here also for the American Birding Association's 5th biennial Young Birders' Conference. I had some apprehension as to what the people would be like, but they proved to be nice. We were driven in two vans (the only two that you could rent in all of Minot) to the Comfort Inn, which was surprisingly nice. But what we saw out the window of the van while driving there was even nicer: a male Yellow-headed Blackbird! When we got to the hotel, everyone introduced themselves and told where they were from. There were a total of fourteen young birders. It was amazing to see people from all over the United States united in a common interest. There were also four leaders: Steve N. G. Howell, Ron Martin, Michael O'Brien and Louise Zemaitis.

At six o'clock, Ron Martin presented an introduction to the birds of North Dakota starting with geology. For many eastern birds, North Dakota is the edge of their range, and for many western birds this is also the edge of their range, so there is a lot of hybridization. For example, the Rose-breasted and Black-headed Grosbeaks are both found in North Dakota as well as the Lazuli and Indigo Buntings.



Lark Sparrow

Day 2

The next morning, we were up at 4 a.m. We ate a hurried breakfast of cold cereal, and it was still dark when we got into the vans. At 5:50 a.m. the sun rose, but there was still a cloudy sky. After driving for 50 minutes, with birds as the chief discussion topic, we saw a huge, pale buteo fly over the road. "Ferruginous Hawk," said Ron Martin. We pulled to the side of Route 2, and we all rushed for the door of the van. The air was cool. I wished I had brought my jacket. One of the leaders pointed out their nest. We looked through the scope and saw that there were at least three babies. One of the adults was standing on the top of a hill. He was much bigger than a Red-tailed Hawk. He had a dark eyeline, light supracillium, and a dark cap. The back and wings are a beautiful orange-chestnut, and the tail a pale orange. The underside was buffy, with darker flanks, and the yellow gape extended to the eye.

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Sept./Oct. 2008

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Stewardship

Open

President's Letter *By Ray Stocking, WAS President*

This month I officially started my fourth year as president of the Washtenaw Audubon Society (WAS), and I am more excited than ever before about the coming year. Having just returned from the first WAS Board meeting of the fall/winter season, I am enormously pleased to be able to tell you about the good things that will be taking place over the next few months and will help to increase and improve the overall experience for our members. I do believe you, too, will be delighted with the results.

The first thing you will notice is that we are changing our logo. The entire WAS Board agreed that it is time to bring the WAS image into the 21st century. This edition of the Washtenaw Audubon Society Newsletter will be the last to carry the logo that has been featured on the front page for the past 34 years. The November issue will have an all new look and feel. You will still receive, however, the same wonderful articles and informative field trip updates, program announcements, and rare or unusual bird sightings. It will be the same outstanding newsletter with an updated appearance.

Another change approved by the WAS Board is that all new members will receive their newsletter online only, unless they request otherwise. Simply put, we are spending too much money on printing costs, paper, and postage. These expenses limited the amount of scholarships and other program activities that complement our mission. We would also like to think we can save a few trees in the process. This does not mean that the paper edition will disappear entirely. If new members want a paper copy, especially because of limited or no access to the Internet, we will gladly mail one. At the same time, we do strongly encourage all members, new and existing, to consider reading the newsletter online.

Finally (and this is something I am very excited about), you will now be able to pay your annual membership dues online! Our website has greatly improved over the past 18 months, and we will soon offer a PayPal feature for everyone. You will not need an account with PayPal to use this service. It is simple, secure, and easy to use. And, it is free to all members! Of course, we will still accept checks delivered by mail if that is the payment method you prefer.

So, there you have it. Lots of change, yet all the same benefits you have come to expect from the Washtenaw Audubon Society. With this new season of exciting programs and field trips already in high gear, please accept my invitation to join us in these very special events. I know you will be pleased with the quality of our planned trips and programs, as well as the opportunity to meet and greet other birders.

Publication

WAS Newsletter is published in January, March, May, July, September and November. Email or send submissions by the 15th of the month prior to publication to:

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Canton, MI 48187

Rare Bird Alerts

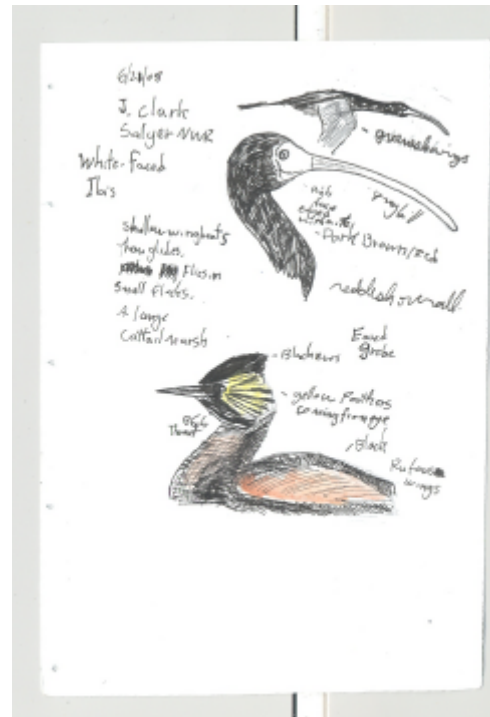
Michigan Statewide Bird Report

http://www.umich.edu/~bbowman/birds/se_mich/mi_bird.html#rba

(Minot Birding continued from pg. 1)

We then saw about 6 Sharp-tailed Grouse at their lek atop a small nearby hill. Also standing on this hill was one of the Ferruginous Hawks. Neither seemed to mind or know that the other was there, but then the other hawk flew over to join her mate, and, just before she reached him, the hill seemed to come alive with nervous Sharp-tailed Grouse.

We drove on, stopping frequently to look at the pothole lakes that littered the countryside. At one lake, we saw many Black Terns, American Avocets, Wilson's Phalaropes, Eared Grebes, and many ducks. We got to Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge, a 27,000 acre refuge about 14 miles south of the Saskatchewan border, at about 8 a.m., and were met with a huge expanse of small, rolling hills, and mixed-grass prairie. We drove along the gravel road that goes through the park, and we got out at a bull rush marsh. Ron Martin said that we were looking for LeConte's and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows. We listened. Then we heard a weird sound that really couldn't be called a song. It sounded like hot metal being doused in water. It was a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Then, we saw him, sitting atop a bull rush. He was an orange and brown sparrow. He would tilt his head up for a second and give his un-birdlike song and then resume his hunched posture. Since the first time I saw a picture of this bird, in the Golden Guide, I have always wanted to see one. It was hard to believe that I was actually seeing one. Steve then interrupted our viewing, saying: "Sprague's Pipit!" We looked up, but I saw nothing. All I heard was a haunting whistle descending in thirds. Then, I saw a small dot in the sky that appeared to be moving. It was slowly descending, to the rhythm of its song. We continued along the road. At the crest of a hill we stopped. We were going to look for Baird's Sparrow, the highlight bird for most of the group. We got out of the vans and there was a one-wire fence running along the side of the road. Nobody wanted to test if it was electrified, so we made sure to step well over it or under it. We were now walking through short grass. We hadn't gone far when one of the leaders said that they heard one after about two minutes of scanning the Western Snowberry Bushes, one of the prime ingredients of their habitat. We then found one sitting at the top of a Snowberry, and watched him sing. Their song is similar to a trill. I saw a Swainson's Hawk fly over; my first. Their wings are so much longer than a Red-tail's. They seem much more eagle-like. We continued along the road, stopping by a pair of Marbled Godwits with two small furry young, then stopped at a large pond, which contained 11 species of duck.



White-faced Ibis, Eared Grebe

At 1 p.m. we left Lostwood NWR and headed for Des Lacs NWR. On the way, we stopped at a big field where there was a Richardson's Ground Squirrel town. This is where we were going to look for Burrowing Owls. After walking around for about five minutes a small, rounded-winged bird flew out of the grass and to the other side of the rise so that he was out of view. We quickly, but quietly, strode to the other side of the hill, but no sooner had we gotten there than the owl flew again, but this time landing within view. In the 15 seconds that he stood there, I managed to get a quick look through a scope. They sure are different than other owls, and this marked another bird that I had always wanted to see. At 1:30 we got to Des Lacs NWR. We parked by a large, cattail-bordered lake, where many Franklin's Gulls flew over and around the lake. This is one of only two species of birds worldwide that have two complete molts per year. (The other is the Bobolink.) But what was in the lake was equally amazing: 11 Western Grebes! Two would swim together, then one would dive, come up with seaweed in his bill, and the other one would grab onto it and they would stand nearly straight up in the water. Another car arrived which contained the North Dakota News, and they did a program on us. Apparently, this was big news in North Dakota. We got back to our hotel, drew and looked through pictures and ate dinner. Then Michael conducted a workshop on birding by ear, which was very interesting and informative.

Day 3

I think that when we called the front desk for a 3:30 a.m. wake up call, they probably thought we were crazy. We ate another hurried breakfast and were soon on the road, this time headed for the Turtle Mountains. As we headed down N. 83, Louise said, "Be on the look-out for owls." Sure enough, about 5 minutes later, a Great Horned Owl flew across a field. After a quick stop at the Clark Salyer NWR, where we didn't see anything unusual, we arrived at the Turtle Mountains at 6:15 a.m. We got out of the vans and walked along a narrow gravel road lined with small Bur Oaks, which concealed numerous Red-eyed Vireos, Eastern Towhees, and Yellow Warblers. *(continued on next page)*

Yellow-headed Blackbird



Minot Birding (continued from previous page)

“Zeeez zeeez zeez zeeeee,” came the familiar dry buzz of a Clay-colored Sparrow, a bird which we had heard throughout the previous day, but I had not gotten a good view of. The song seemed to be coming from nearby...there he was sitting near the top of an oak, but his head was hidden by leaves, and then he was out in the open. Even though they are fairly drab birds, they are really quite beautiful in their soft shades of brown and gray. We got back into the vans to go to a different part of the mountains, where we began walking along a two-track, which was exceedingly muddy, and I had, unfortunately, forgotten to bring my boots! I would take two steps and my shoes would be covered with mud and their weight would double. Along the trail, we saw many birds typical of eastern forests.

We stopped at a lake by the side of the road, which had some American White Pelicans, Ring-necked Ducks, and some Red-necked Grebes, some of which were on nests (large mounds of fibrous material, heaped into a tall muskrat-like structure). “Magpie!” someone yelled, and our attention immediately switched to the magpies that were flying around on the edge of the lake. We kept driving, saw a Broad-winged Hawk and Bald Eagles flew over the road. We ate lunch at Lake Metigoshe, and, while lunch was being readied, we walked down to the lake and saw some loons and some more Red-necked Grebes. By 3 p.m. we were driving down a dusty gravel road, bordered by fields alive with wildflowers. We were looking for Chestnut-collared Longspurs, finally seeing one sitting on a fence post. He didn’t stay long, but we got some decent views on some others...and my, are they pretty! I had always wanted to see Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings in Michigan in winter, and had tried, but they always seemed to leave before I arrived. Aside from their beautiful appearance (black belly, ruddy collar, black cap and eye-line, and a pale yellow wash to the face), their song is one of my favorites, its slanting liquid notes, beginning slightly like an Eastern Meadowlark, and then turning into a Horned Lark. This was definitely one of the highlights of the trip.

Yellow-breasted Chat



Upland Sandpiper



We next stopped when someone saw a nighthawk out of the van window. We got out and witnessed the amazing courtship display. It flew high up into the sky, then dove nearly straight towards earth, wings bent back, then banked sharply, and you would hear a loud “Hwoouunk.” He repeated this many times, and was still doing it when we left. We hadn’t gone far when we realized that the other van wasn’t behind us. They radioed to say there were two Upland Sandpipers on telephone poles behind us. We quickly went back and saw the sandpipers. They sure have large eyes. As they flew down to the ground, they uttered their complex and beautiful whistles. When we arrived back at the hotel we ate dinner.

Day 4

The next day we were up at 4:15 a.m. and arrived at Garrison Dam by 6. “Black-headed Grosbeak,” said Michael O’Brien, one of the leaders. We looked up and got a quick look at a male before he flew. We were walking through tall, wet grass and I was glad I had my boots this time. Then I heard it: “chee chee chee chee, ka-ey ko ko ko ko ko we-do we-do-we-do-we-do-we-do-we-do-we do we-do.”

“Yellow-breasted Chat,” said Michael, confirming my conviction. I had always wanted to see a chat. They are occasionally seen around where I live, but I had never seen one. Maybe this would be my chance, but we kept walking. I feared that we wouldn’t even attempt to see him. But, I needn’t have worried. Michael turned off the two-track onto a small deer trail.

“Anybody that wants to try to see this chat follow me.” Most of us began walking towards the direction of the chat. After a bit, the bird stopped calling, but we continued. After about 10 minutes, he sang again, this time behind us. Louise Zemaitis, one of the other leaders, directed us to stay where we were and be quiet. Hoping he would fly in our direction, we waited...and, he did.

“Up there, in that tall tree,” said a fellow birder, who, unlike me, had already seen this bird. Before I could locate the chat, he was gone, back into the brush, but he seemed to be constantly moving, so I had confidence that he would reappear. He did. This time I saw him. Sitting on a horizontal branch quite low to the ground, he perched and sang his unique song, then he flew, appeared again, and was gone. This trip was one of the most amazing experiences of my life, and one I will never forget.

Point Mouillee Field Trip Report *By Cathy Carroll*

Jim Fowler led a group of about 20 birders on a great field trip to Point Mouillee for the Washtenaw Audubon Society on Sunday, August 17. Shorebirds were in good numbers and provided close opportunities for folks to really study the differences, especially amongst the peeps. Eighteen species of shorebirds were found, of which the best were probably American Golden Plover (1), Black-necked Stilts (1 adult and 3 still fuzzy juveniles starting to look adult-like), Ruddy Turnstone (1), Stilt Sandpipers (3), Baird's Sandpipers (5), White-rumped Sandpipers (2) and Wilson's Phalaropes (3).

The previously reported American White Pelican was long gone, as was the Hudsonian Godwit. Additionally, we saw two gull species not expected at this time of year: a fresh-appearing Great Black-backed Gull (1) and a not-so-fresh Lesser Black-backed Gull (1). The Lesser Black-backed seemed to be between its second and third year plumage. Both were in the harbor. The Black Terns were gone, but Caspian and Forster's Terns were in good numbers. Over the marsh, we had great looks at Osprey, Northern Harrier and Cooper's Hawk. The Osprey were also perched on their successful nest in the Lead Unit. Waterfowl were a bit scanty, but we really did not pay much attention to them. Finally, we saw all of the expected waders and swallows and Sedge Wrens were singing in the grass off the Sigler Road parking area. It was a great field trip with perfect weather. Thanks so much to Jim for leading this trip and thanks to all who attended.

Pectoral Sandpiper
Photo by Darlene Friedman.



A large group of birders enjoyed the Point Mouillee field trip led by Jim Fowler on Sunday, 8/17/08. In the foreground, newlyweds Mr. and Mrs. Laurent Fornier, survey the Vermet Unit. On this trip, a visitor from the Petoskey Audubon Society, Dick Taylor, also joined us. The parked bulldozer rests near a new dike being built. Photo by Cathy Carroll.

WAS Butterfly Walk at Leonard Preserve, July 13 *By Roger Kuhlman*

The weather for the Washtenaw Audubon Society butterfly walk on Sunday, July 13 at Leonard Preserve in southwest Washtenaw County just outside Manchester was pretty good--sunny and not too warm--and we had a pretty good turnout of people. The walk was led by Roger Wykes, John Swales and myself and we found 35 butterfly species for the day. We had a number of highlights including the uncommon Hickory Hairstreak and a magnificent Silver-bordered Fritillary. It was the first time either of these two species had been officially recorded at Leonard Preserve.

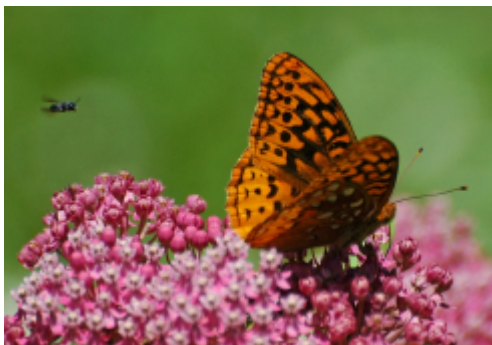
Most everybody on the trip got to see many of the butterfly species well since Roger Wykes and myself netted several butterflies and put them into a plastic jar where they could be passed around to everybody for close looks. People took a lot of pictures of the butterflies, and I hope they will share them on Grovestreet. At one time we had an Appalachian Eyed Brown, a European Skipper, an American Copper, and a Bronze Copper in the jar all at the same time. Apparently, the Bronze Copper did not enjoy this company or perhaps the furnishings were not to its tastes. It was beating its wings furiously to get out. This made it rather difficult to get a good look at him. With time, however, he calmed down a bit and we could get good views of the underside and a few fleeting views of the topside. Of course, all of the captured butterflies were released unharmed. Next year, WAS will have another butterfly walk in mid-July at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor. The targeted species there will be the rare state-threatened butterfly, Dukes's Skipper, that has sometimes bred on the site.

Butterflies seen:

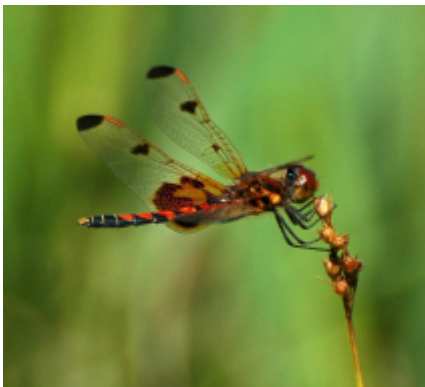
Viceroy, Pearl Crescent, Common Wood-Nymph, Monarch, Great Spangled Fritillary, Appalachian Eyed Brown, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Bronze Copper, European Skipper, American Copper, Black Swallowtail, Alfalfa Butterfly/Orange Sulphur, Silver-bordered Fritillary, Northern Broken-Dash, Hickory Hairstreak, Tiger Swallowtail, Northern Pearly-Eye, Clouded Sulphur, Cabbage White, White Colias (white female form of either Clouded Sulphur or Alfalfa butterfly), Mourning Cloak, Summer Azure, Banded Hairstreak, Little Glassywing, Red Admiral, Striped Hairstreak, Eastern Comma, American Painted Lady, Black Dash, Dion Skipper, Mulberry Wing, Acadian Hairstreak, Delaware Skipper, Baltimore Checkerspot, Eyed Brown, and Dun Skipper

Also, I should mention that we had a few good birds at Leonard Preserve, as well. There was a Sedge Wren singing in the wet meadow across from the parking area. In one of the grassy meadows, we had a Henslow's Sparrow singing and a Red-headed Woodpecker flew over us and landed in one of the tall trees by the river for a short time before disappearing.

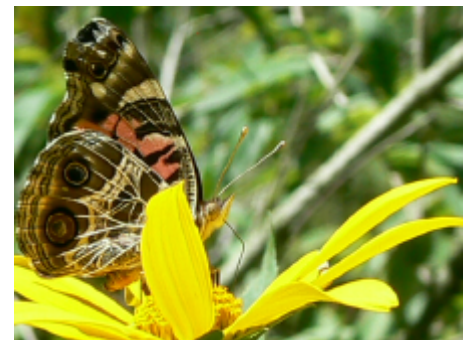
Thanks to everyone who came out for the field trip. For those who could not do the carpooling, we look forward to seeing you at Matthaei Botanical Gardens next year where there is unlimited parking. The Leonard Preserve has beautiful butterfly habitat, but for future trips, we think it best to avoid locations with such limited parking.



Great Spangled Fritillary with fly.
Photo by Darlene Friedman.



Male Calico Pennant.
Photo by Darlene Friedman.



American Lady.
Photo by Harold Eyster

Washtenaw Audubon Society 2007-08 Financial Report

Submitted by Elvera Shappirio

Description	Checking	Savings
Balances as of June 30, 2007		10,241.83
Checking Receipts	5,218.00	
Checking Expenditures	4,971.77	
Correction	3.81	
Transfers: Checking to Savings	0.00	
Savings Interest		133.99
Transfers: CD Interest to Savings		699.17
Balances as of June 30, 2008	1,166.10	11,074.99

Checking Account Receipts

Member Dues	3,645.00
Photo Sales (Donations)	40.00
Book Donations	0.00
Extra Trip Payments for Van Cost	43.00
Donations	390.00
MAS Teacher Training Grant	1,000.00
Refund for Dreamweaver Program	100.00
Total Receipts	5,218.00

Checking Account Expenditures

Newsletter Printing and Postage	2,464.59
Speakers, Program Expense (Donations)	25.00
	0.00
	420.39
	15.00
	billed late > 7/1/08
Banking Costs (Checkbooks)	0.00
Corporate Filing Fee	20.00
Grants: Dopp, Eyster	300.00
MAS Teacher Training Grant Costs	889.97
Web Site Costs	162.00
Christmas Count Expenses	115.00
Property Costs: Searles Drain Fee	37.35
Gifts	197.53
Trip Van Rentals	233.94
Postal Box Fee	56.00
Safe Deposit Box	35.00
	4,971.77

Savings Account Receipts

Interest on Regular Savings Account	133.99
Interest on \$15000.00 CD	699.17
(Interest included in smaller CD)	208.37
Total Savings Account Interest	1,041.53

Investment Account

The investment account includes two CDs, one valued at \$15,000 and one at \$5,011.45*. The interest on the \$15,000 CD is transferred to the regular savings account on a monthly basis. The interest is retained in the other CD *. (\$208.37 in 2007-08). The \$15,000 CD matures Aug. 2009, current interest rate 4%. The \$5,011.45 CD matures Oct. 2008, interest rate 4.55%.

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (October - December 2008) *Cathy Carroll, Field Trip Coordinator*

The WAS field trips are a great opportunity for anyone interested in getting outside and reacquainting yourself with all that you share the world with. After a long week at work or school - join us to restore your awareness and faith in what we work so hard to protect. All of our activities are free and open to the public; membership in the WAS is not required. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. We do trips in the heat and the cold, including rain and snow. When introducing a field trip schedule so far in advance, there are bound to be updates and changes as the actual dates arrive. Check with our primary communication resources: birders@umich.edu and our website (click on the field trips icon) as field trips approach. Additionally we list all of our field activities in the Ann Arbor News and the Ann Arbor Observer. Join us if you can!

**August 28-
Oct. 16
(Thursdays)**

Nichols Arboretum for Fall Migration: Please join us for one or all of this eight week series of walks through Nichols Arboretum to monitor and observe fall migration. Each Thursday morning starting August 28th through October 16th, meet at 8:00 am at the Riverview Court cul-de-sac just off Geddes Road. These are well-attended, "leaderless" walks and a terrific opportunity to meet and bird with others. This is our third season monitoring fall migration through the Arb. Fall migration is much different than our spring migration. Instead of hurrying through on the way to their nesting grounds, the fall migrants sort of trickle in and quietly take their time about it all. Many are in their basic or first year plumage and new identification challenges await. Additionally, the Arb is beautiful in fall. This is our opportunity to say goodbye, so to speak, to our migrant visitors until next spring and enjoy Michigan's crisp, spectacular autumn. (Walks usually last until about 11am, but you can join or leave the group as your schedule requires.)

Sun., Oct. 12

The Big Sit (Independence Lake County Park) 5:00 am (!) - whenever Leader: Don Chalfant. Don has been doing this international competition for approximately 10 years and has the data to prove it. This is a very relaxing day of birding from within a 17 foot circle to hear and/or see the greatest number of species possible. Bring food, a folding chair and your binoculars. Typically the weather is spectacular and the day is great fun. Don typically arrives around 5:00 am to get his owls. Feel free to sleep in a little longer and arrive when you wish. Things are usually wrapping up around 3:00 pm, but you may leave whenever. This is a great field opportunity for mobility challenged birders.

Sun., Nov. 9

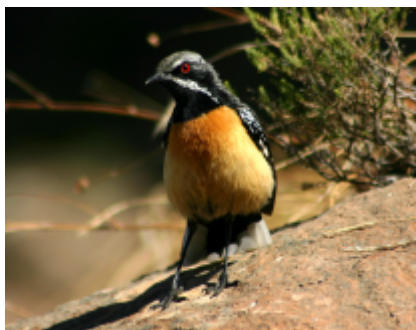
Belle Isle: Leader: Allen Chartier. Meet at 9:00 am in the parking log of the Nature Center on the east end of the island. This is the third year Allen is leading this trip for us. Notice that this year the trip is on the second Sunday of November. This is the only change. The rest is the same great birding that Belle Isle has to offer. Waterfowl, raptors, late migrants and early winter residents will be the focus of the trip. The weather has been very favorable the past two years. This is both good and bad as far as the birds go, but makes Belle Isle a very beautiful place for its human visitors.

Sat., Dec. 20

Salem Landfill for Gulls: This annual trip to the dump is a favorite for many WAS members. Unfortunately, as this new schedule goes to print, I cannot yet confirm that the trip will be on this year. Please look in all of the usual places, including mostly the Washtenaw Audubon website, as the date gets closer to confirm whether the trip will occur.

Sat., Dec. 13

Ann Arbor Christmas Bird Count: AA CBC compiler: Jacco Gelderloos. Please join us for this international event. The Ann Arbor CBC 15 mile circle is segmented into 8 different areas, each with a coordinator. The important thing for each CBC is to make sure the count circle is well-covered with thorough counting. Each coordinator will need help to make sure their segment is well-counted. As the date approaches, Jacco will post to birders@umich.edu and the website will be updated with needed information. The counting is great fun. The pot luck tally is at the end of the day.



Drakensberg Rockjumper



WAS's 2nd International Field Trip: South Africa!

In August of 2009 WAS will be embarking on its 2nd international field trip, this time to the beautiful country of South Africa! For most people interested in wildlife, Africa is at the top of their places to visit. So many of the first animals we ever knew as children are there, quite confidently, on display. Lions, elephants, zebras, giraffes... While the main focus will be on seeing as many birds as we can (especially the endemic species special to southern Africa and South Africa in particular) we will also be attempting to view as many species of Africa's famous mammals, as well. For this 17 day trip, you can plan on seeing 450-480 species of birds (over 100 of these birds are endemic to southern Africa!) and 40-50 species of mammal! Besides the large number of endemics, South Africa is an ideal location within Africa to go birding with its superb infrastructure for tourists (excellent accommodations, food, roads, etc...) It is the only true First World country in Africa. An example of a lodge we will be staying at (as well as many of the birds we will see) can be viewed at: www.aftongrove.co.za. The accommodations will be a lot nicer than the last WAS international field trip (to Peru) and the trip a lot less strenuous over all.

The first 6 days of the trip will be based out of coastal Cape Town (widely considered one of the world's most beautiful cities) in the southwestern part of the country. From here we will range out to explore the varied ecosystems conveniently accessible from our comfortable base. Time will be spent exploring the breathtaking Peninsula (and its resident penguin colony), the succulent desert-like Karoo (an ecosystem endemic to South Africa), enjoying a fantastic pelagic and having the chance to get up-close and personal with one of the most magnificent predators on Earth: the Great White Shark!

From here, we will take an internal flight to the eastern side of the country. The provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga boast some of the country's finest birding, with a combined birdlist of well over 750 species. This impressive total is a reflection of the incredible natural diversity of the region, a factor that makes birding the area a delight. Habitats change quickly here and this birding tour will cover all important areas.

From the classic African savanna of the world-renowned Kruger National Park, to the teeming Zululand game reserves, the endemic-rich mist-belt forests of the Natal Midlands, the mangroves and mudflats along the coast to the lofty peaks of the magnificent Drakensberg (Africa's 2nd largest mountain range), this eastern portion of the South Africa tour offers the very best of African birding and game watching. The timing of the trip works in our favor as well: mammal-watching is at its best as foliage is less dense and they are more concentrated around watering holes, sea bird diversity is at its highest as many of the birds are escaping the harshness of the Antarctic winter, Southern Right Whales are lounging offshore and it is "high season" for Great White Sharks.

Some additional highlights: Ostriches, 8 species of stork, Southern Bald Ibis, Hamerkop, Taita Falcon (extremely rare world-wide), Secretary Bird, over 35 species of raptors, 10 species of bustards, 3 species of crane, 4 species of turacos, 11 species of owl, mousebirds, trogons, rollers, bee-eaters, 6 species of hornbills, 7 species of barbet, drongos, 2 species of rockjumpers, 15 species of lark (most endemic), 2 species of sugarbirds, 10 species of starling, oxpeckers, 14 species of sunbirds, 14 species of weaverbirds, monkeys, bushbabies, African Wild Dogs, Cheetahs, Leopards, Hyenas, Meerkats, Hippos, Rhinos, Buffalos, and over 20 species of antelope!

For more information, a detailed trip itinerary or list of birds and mammals, do not hesitate to email Bryn Martin at brynmartin@sbcglobal.net. We hope that you will have the opportunity to share with us in this amazing experience!

When: July 31--Aug 16, 2009

Cost: 6 participants--\$5,500 per person sharing
8 participants--\$5,100 per person sharing
10 participants--\$4,900 per person sharing
12 participants--\$4,700 per person sharing
Single supplement--\$300

What's included: All accommodation as per the itinerary on a twin share basis, three meals (beginning with lunch on day 1 and ending with lunch on day 17), all ground transport in 17-seater, air-conditioned buses, including all costs of a driver, domestic flight from Cape Town to Durban, entry to all National Parks and reserves, as well as conservation fees, activities as per itinerary, including night drives in Kruger NP and Mkhuzi GR, gratuities, all costs of a professional birding guide/tour leader.

What's not included: International flights and departure taxes, optional excursions (like Shark diving and pelagic birding trips), insurance, drinks, laundry costs and other personal expenses.

International flights: Once we get our group together we will work out a group-flight to South Africa, however you are free to do this on your own if you choose.

How to reserve a spot: Send an email to Bryn Martin: brynmartin@sbcglobal.net (or call him--734-454-0439). This will hold your spot temporarily. To make it permanent, send a **deposit of \$500**. The trip is limited to only 12 participants and it will be based on whoever gets their deposits in first. When it fills up, it fills up! Trip is only open to current WAS members, but if there are still openings by the end of the year, it will be opened up to non-members, as well.

Noteworthy Local Sightings, 21 June 08 to 8 Sep. 08 (all in Washtenaw County, unless otherwise noted).

Species	Date	Location	Observer	Comments
Common Moorhen	22 Jun	Parker n. of Ellsworth	Sean Bachman	Adult with 5 young in marsh on e. side of Parker.
Dickcissel	22 Jun	Prospect Hill Rd. S. of Kendall	Sean Bachman	Rare in state.
Marsh Wren	22 Jun	Parker and Scio Church	Sean Bachman	First one at this spot in a few years.
Brown Creeper	22 Jun	Noggles Rd. at Iron Creek bridge	Martin Bialecki	Rare in June. A record late date for county.
White-eyed Vireo	24 Jun	Noggles Rd. at Iron Creek bridge	Martin Bialecki	Rare breeder.
Peregrine Falcon	26 Jun	Burton Tower, U-M Campus	Ray Stocking & family	Screeching during AA Summer Festival. No bird bits below tower.
Northern Parula	1 Jul	Bartell Rd., e. of Hadley.	Jacco Gelderloos	Very rare in SE Michigan in July. Territorial.
Broad-winged Hawk	4 - 6 Jul	Arb	Bob Payne	Two recently fledged birds.
Green Violet-ear	5 - 7 Jul	Alger County	Hust/Scott Hickman, SOBs	Extremely rare Mexican vagrant. C. 3rd state record.
Blue-headed Vireo	10 Jul	Bird Hills Park	Dea Armstrong	Possible breeder Hooded Warblers also present.
Peregrine Falcon	11 Jul	Burton Tower, U-M Campus	Dea Armstrong	One of 3 birds that have frequented the tower for 2 years.
Trumpeter Swan	19 Jul	Parker & Scio Church	Roger Kuhlman, MOBs	2 adults w/ 3 young born at this high traffic location.
Green Heron	28 Jul	State & Textile	Mike Sefton	Eleven birds. A record number for county.
Dukes's Skipper	31 Jul	Leonard Preserve, SW county	Roger Kuhlman	Very rare. State threatened. 1st one seen in southwest of county.
Black-necked Stilt	17 Aug	Pte. Mouillee, Monroe County	Jim Fowler, WAS field trip	Adults and 3 young. Very rare in state. Nested twice in last few years.
Ruff	19 - 22 Aug	Pte. Mouillee, Monroe County	Karl Overman	Very rare. At 1st, thought to be a Reeve. Apparently a Ruff (male).
Merlin	22 Aug	Westgate, Ann Arbor	Rick Neubig	Perched on shopping center sign. Very rare in August.
Caspian Tern	24 Aug	South Pond	Bob Arthurs, Carol Watson	2. Uncommon in county.
Stilt Sandpiper	29 Aug	Avis Farms	Mike Sefton	Very rare in county. Juvenile.
Stilt Sandpiper	31 Aug	State & Textile	Mike Sefton	Juvenile.
White-rumped Sandpiper	3 Sep	Avis Farms	Roger Wykes	Rare in county.
Peregrine Falcon	3 Sep	State & Textile	Roger Wykes	Perched.
American Golden-Plover	5 Sep	Avis Farms	Keith Taylor	Very rare in county. 10 birds.
Black-crowned Night-Heron	5 Sep	State & Textile	Rogers Kuhlman & Wykes	Six birds. A record number of this uncommon species in the county.
Red-headed Woodpecker	5 Sep	Trinkle Marsh	Don Chalfant, Mike Sefton	Uncommon and declining.
American Golden-Plover	6 Sep	McCrone & Willow Rds.	Sean Bachman, Tex Wells	Very rare in county.
Leonard's Skipper	6 Sep	Matthaei Botanical Gardens	Roger Kuhlman	Rare this year in county.
Olive-sided Flycatcher	6 Sep	Arb	Roger Kuhlman	Rare in county.
Baird's Sandpiper	7 Sep	Parker & Scio Church	Bob Arthurs	Rare in county.
Philadelphia Vireo	8 Sep	Hudson Mills Metropark	Karen Markey	Uncommon. Also 11 species of warbler.
Connecticut Warbler	8 Sep	Arb	Roger Kuhlman	Very rare in fall.
18 warbler species	9 Sep	Arb	Roger Kuhlman	Fall migration is in full swing.

Other Area Audubon offerings

Events are typically free and open to the public.
If you are interested in more information on any of these, please visit their respective websites.

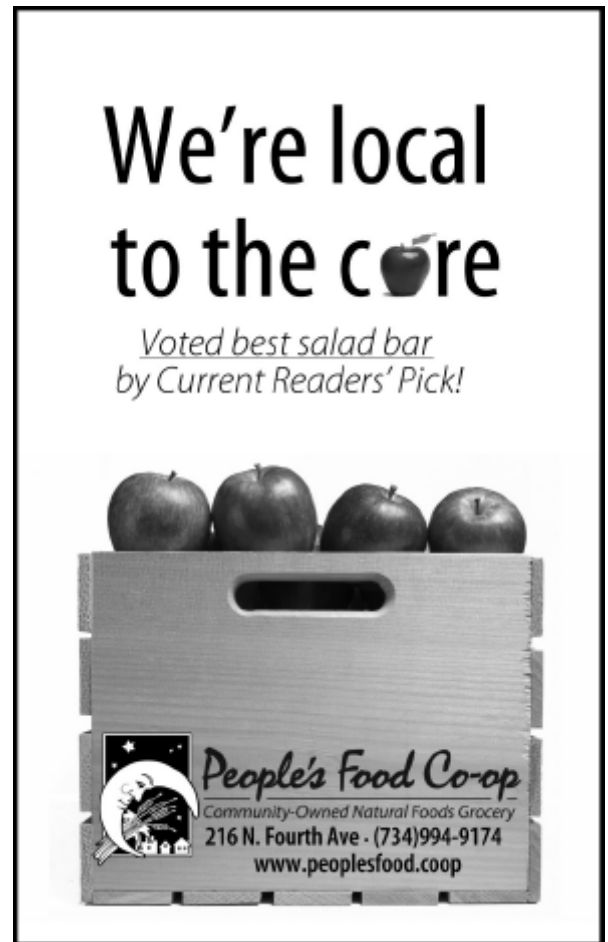
Detroit Audubon www.detroitaudubon.org

- Oct. 11--Crosswinds Marsh Field Trip
- Oct. 17-19--Point Pelee Fall Campout
- Oct. 26--Haehnle Sanctuary Field Trip
- Nov. 8--Point Edward, Ontario Field Trip
- Nov. 14--Oakwoods Owl Prowl

Macomb Audubon

www.geocities.com/macomb_audubon

- Oct. 11--Baker Sanctuary Field Trip
- Oct. 18--Haehnle Sanctuary Field Trip



To become a member of Washtenaw Audubon Society, please complete the form below (or a copy) and mail it with a check or money order payable to **Washtenaw Audubon Society - WAS Membership**
PO Box 130923, Ann Arbor, MI 48113

_____ RENEWAL _____ NEW MEMBER

_____ ADDITIONAL DONATION \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Dues:

- ___ Individual/Household \$20
- ___ Student \$10
- ___ Senior \$10
- ___ Patron \$50
- ___ Life (individual) \$200

We encourage you to join at a lower rate if the suggested rates would otherwise preclude your membership, or at a higher rate if you possess the means.

Note: WAS will only use your email address to communicate with you about WAS programs, field trips, or matters of interest to you, such as membership renewal, or possibly emailed WAS newsletters (in color!). We will not give your email address to anyone else.

WAS Monthly Programs

WAS monthly events usually are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Programs begin at 7:30pm at U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. Free and open to the public. Call (734) 677-3275 for more information

Wed., Sep. 17

Urban Dragon Hunting: Join Julie Craves for an introduction to the fascinating world of Odonata, better known as dragonflies. Julie will discuss the diversity that can be found in these beautiful insects, even in urban areas. She and husband Darrin O'Brien have recorded nearly 50 new species for Wayne County in the last 6 years, including several new state records. Julie Craves is the Supervisor of Avian Research at the Rouge River Bird Observatory, and a contributing editor to Birder's World magazine. She is the author of "The Birds of Dearborn, an Annotated Checklist," and has a chapter in "Good Birders Don't Wear White, 50 Tips From North America's Top Birders."

Wed., Oct. 15

Changing Tundra Landscapes in Arctic Alaska: Find out what's happening with permafrost in the Alaskan Arctic and how it affects the tundra ecosystem. Cathy Campbell, an Ann Arbor middle school teacher, spent 32 days on the North Slope of the Brooks Range, working with university researchers on the effect of permafrost thawing on Arctic ecology, and how increased nutrient availability affects species diversity.

Washtenaw Audubon Society

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