

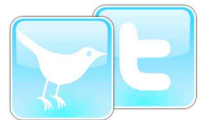


WASHTENAW
AUDUBON SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER
May/June 2009

Tweet!!! WAS is Now On Twitter!

By Ray Stocking



Did you miss the Lark Sparrow out at the Arb last month? Maybe you saw the alert sent out to the Birders Listserv a bit too late, or maybe you did not hear about it at all. Washtenaw Audubon has a solution for you. A new Twitter account has been set up that will be used exclusively for alerting you by text message of local rare sightings. In fact, the nine lucky people who were already following WAS on Twitter were alerted almost immediately on that day once the bird was found again in the afternoon.

How it works:

Alerts are sent out only when a rare bird is sighted. Alerts will be sent directly to your cell phone.* It is important to note that only select members of the Washtenaw Audubon Society have access to this account. We will personally manage the content so that it is used for its exact intent. This is a rare bird alerting system only.

How does WAS determine what is and is not a rare bird?:

Three local reference guides (*Birds of Washtenaw County*, *Birder's Guide to Michigan* and *Birds of Southeast Michigan*) will be used. If a bird is listed as a six or higher (on a scale of ten), we will alert you. If the bird is out of season and considered very rare for the time of year, we will alert you.

What you need to do:

1. If you have not done so already, you need to register at Twitter (www.twitter.com) and create a new account.
2. Enter your contact information including your cell phone number (required, but not for the public to see).
3. You then search for our account by typing in the name "WashAudubon" in the SEARCH PEOPLE tab (located at top right) and click to follow us.
4. Once you are successfully following WashAudubon, you will need to send an automatic command to Twitter to have all alerts from us sent to your phone.

The specific command should be written exactly like this: **ON WashAudubon**

That's it! You can use Twitter to follow others via the web, but only WashAudubon alerts will be sent to your phone. Please feel free to contact me at president@washtenawaudubon.org should you have any questions.

**Text charges do apply if you do not have this already in your phone plan (usually ten cents per message). Because of these charges, messages will be strictly limited to rare bird sightings only.*

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

Alert!!! No, not a rare bird alert (but I'll get to that in a few), but a high-tech alert! Yes, Washtenaw Audubon is going more and more high tech as the months go by. Some of you may recall a recent email I sent out stating that Washtenaw Audubon Society (WAS) would now offer Twitter Updates. There are some people reading this who are saying "why do we need Twitter?" Others no doubt are asking "who or what is Twitter!?" And then there is Facebook, and our website which now features an all new PayPal service so you can renew your annual dues (or sign up for the first time!) online.

All this high-tech stuff begs the question - "What ever happened to just good ol' bird watching with a pair of binoculars with a bird guide?" Well, I am very pleased to tell you, that we do that too. And we do it very well I might add. First, the high tech items.

Let me start off with the basics about high tech birding from a low tech perspective. If you have a computer and an email account, then you certainly qualify for our most basic way of communicating with members outside of this newsletter. Email updates from the Birders Listserve.

Birders@umich.edu (aka Birders Listserve)

Other than this newsletter, the most popular communicating tool used by WAS is the Birders Listserve. This is a local/regional email list which reports and discusses bird sightings in Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, and southeast Michigan. There are approximately 750 members who subscribe to this list. The membership includes birders all over the state and even some outside of Michigan. Anyone with an email address is welcome to join. Many beginning birders as well as some of the top birders in Michigan and even the country use this free service.

Rule number 1 about this listserv - There are NO "stupid" questions. Most of the postings represent sightings that people have made in the area, but the list also includes a fair amount of "chat" about many aspects of birding and even some nature topics in general. A question about an interesting sighting that has you stumped is likely to be rewarded with responses giving the exact ID or at least several options to consider.

If you have not signed up for this free service, I encourage you to try it out for a week and see what you think. To subscribe send an email to "lyris@listserver.itd.umich.edu" and include "SUBSCRIBE BIRDERS Your Name" (without the quotes) in the subject line or as a one-line message. That's it. You will soon receive emails from other birders about their latest sightings and other related birding topics.

(continued on the next page)

Rare Bird Alerts

Michigan Bird Report

<http://birdingonthe.net/birdmail.html>

Scroll down to Michigan, Mich-listers, and SE Michigan

(President's Letter continued from previous page)

Facebook

Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. Millions of people use Facebook everyday to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet. So what does this have to do with Birding?

WAS uses Facebook to connect other birders with Washtenaw Audubon events and communications. We frequently have current stories and photos to share that are not necessarily added to the Birders Listserv or this newsletter. Anyone can post a comment or story or even a photo taken by you to share with all. And it's all free. Our goal is to reach out to as many birders who use Facebook already, but also to attract many of the students in high school and college in the county. They may not be members of WAS, but at least they can see what is going on within the organization and maybe even join us for a field trip or two.

Twitter

Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length which are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as "followers"). The service is free to use over the Internet, but using text messaging on your cell phone may incur phone service provider fees.

(For more information, see the article on page 1)

PayPal

WAS members no longer have an excuse to be late with their membership dues. Now you can renew (or subscribe for the first time) directly online on our website. You do not have to have a PayPal account to do this. Simply choose your membership category from the menu on the website and click Pay Now to get started. That's it! You will receive an email confirmation letter noting that your payment has been received.

Online Newsletter

WAS now offers this very newsletter online. We offer this service for multiple reasons but primarily to reduce cost, save on paper (and save a few trees too!) and to meet the demands of many birders who prefer to read our newsletter online. If you would like to see this newsletter in full color, please send me your email address and I will add you to the distribution. If you decide you prefer the online addition over the paper edition, just send me another message and I will remove you for the paper distribution altogether. Please contact me at president@washtenawaudubon.org.

Of course, if you enjoy the paper edition, rest assured it is not going away anytime soon. Please enjoy.

Good Old Fashioned Bird Watching

Yes, we have that too. Please come and join us for any one of our many field trips. Most are free and open to the public. We even co-sponsor walks with the Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation group (NAP) and the Sierra Club. All are family friendly events and all levels of birders are welcomed. This is who we are and what we do. It's all about the birds and our love for them. How you find them is up to you. You can be twitted about a rare bird, or you can walk the trails with us and we'll find them together. Either way, we want you to just enjoy the birds. And that, doesn't require any high-tech gear at all.

Good birding!

Ray

Thursday Nichols Arboretum Spring Migration (Leaderless) Walks

First walk of the season, April 9, 2009 *By Ellie Shappirio*

Fifteen birders gathered at the Arb entrance on Riverview this morning at 8:00. It was a fine sunny day although a bit chilly at 45°. The group walked around Dow Prairie and later followed a pair of Wood Ducks to the river. There were many singing chickadees, titmice, House Finches and Goldfinches in the woods along the railroad tracks as well as several Hermit Thrushes and pairs of Robins plus a male Bluebird and a Brown Creeper. In the prairie we saw Field, Song, Chipping, White-throated and a Fox Sparrow. We heard juncos and saw one. Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy Woodpeckers were seen in the woods along with a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Pine Siskins were calling. In the woods above the river we found Golden-crowned Kinglets, cardinals, and phoebes. Canada Geese and Mallards flew over us along with crows and Turkey Vultures, but the most exciting was the adult Bald Eagle flying along the railroad tracks. Several of us walked to Heathdale to look for the Winter Wren. We heard one singing in the distance and had brief glimpses of one in the brush pile. We found at least 28 species.

April 16 *By Ellie Shappirio*

13 birders walked around Dow Prairie and up the road to Heathdale on a beautiful, sunny morning. The birds were quieter than last week but we saw most of the same species. Two Pine Warblers were singing in the pines near the entrance. Golden-crowned Kinglets were numerous, and a flock of Cedar Waxwings were in the trees across the river. A Pine Siskin was calling from the pines. Nineteen cormorants flew East over the river.

Others included:

Eastern Phoebe, Hermit Thrush, Cooper's Hawk, Eastern Screech-owl (red phase) in a hole in a tree in Heathdale, Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and White-throated Sparrow.

April 30 *By Sarah Toner, young birder*

16 people attended the slightly cloudy bird walk. Around the end, at 10:20, it started drizzling rain and most birders left. Highlights include a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Baltimore Orioles, and a Common Yellowthroat. The full list: Trumpeter Swan, American Goldfinch, Tufted Titmouse, American Robin, Canada Geese, Baltimore Orioles, White-throated Sparrows, Gray Catbirds, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Mourning Dove, Song Sparrow, Turkey Vulture (being harassed by crows), American Crow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, nice views of a Palm Warbler on the path, Brown-headed Cowbird, Red-winged Blackbird, A Belted Kingfisher fly-over, Field Sparrow, Accipiter Species (Most likely Cooper's hawk), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Black and white Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Black-throated Green Warbler (heard). The Lark Sparrow previously reported was not seen, nor was the reported Hooded Warbler.

I wish we had seen that Hooded that Roger Kuhlman had seen, but he didn't get that Black-throated Blue!

April 23 *By Ellie Shappirio*

It was another sunny, warm day. 11 participants saw the expected birds including all of the species from April 16th plus Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Pine Siskins were still present. The owl was not seen.

May 7 *By Sarah Toner*

It was very cloudy in the Arb, and there were not many birds. Only 4 species of warbler were heard or seen. The highlights included a Yellow-throated Vireo, Indigo Buntings, and a Red-tailed Hawk flying over, carrying a squirrel. The full list is as follows: Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Blue Jay, Common Yellowthroat, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, American Crow, American Goldfinch, American Robin, Black-throated Green Warbler, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, Gray Catbird, House Wren, Indigo Bunting, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole, Mallard, possible Wood Duck flyover, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Chipping Sparrow, Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose, Cooper's Hawk, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Great-crested Flycatcher, White-breasted Nuthatch, Great Blue Heron, and a Red-tailed Hawk (carrying a dead squirrel, apparently a Black Squirrel). There were about ten participants this morning.

Ella Sharp Museum presents *John James Audubon*

By Katie Hill, Exhibit Coordinator

The Ella Sharp Museum of Art and History in Jackson, Michigan is excited to announce the upcoming, nationally traveling exhibition, *John James Audubon: American Artist and Naturalist*, June 6 through August 29, 2009. This is the only time this exhibit will be in Michigan. The exhibition traces Audubon's life and development as an artist and features 60 Double Elephant Folio-sized, hand colored engravings from his masterwork, *The Birds of America*, printed in England between 1826 and 1838. Also on exhibit are originals by Audubon, including oil paintings, a drawing and watercolors with his field notes. Works by Audubon's contemporaries, original letters, documents, personal items, rare books and photographs will be on display. This traveling exhibition is from the John James Audubon Museum and State Park in Henderson, Kentucky. It was organized and is being circulated by Art Services 2000 Ltd.

The Ella Sharp Museum will feature portions of the Andrews Gallery of Wildlife Art in the Audubon exhibit. The Andrews Gallery of Wildlife Art consists of over 700 works of art, with only 60 exhibited at a time.

The Ella Sharp Museum is open Tuesday-Friday 10am-4pm and Saturday 11am-4pm. It is closed Sunday, Monday and major holidays. Admission to the Museum during the *John James Audubon* exhibit is \$8. The Museum also offers Hillside Farmhouse tours featuring the Jackson Audubon Society for \$2. Please visit the website at www.ellasharp.org for more information.



*WAS members and guests look for early migrants in the Arboretum on the first Thursday Arb Bird Walk of the year.
Photo by Mike Sefton*

**Tuesday Evening Birders
Kicks Off 2009 Season**
Article and photo by Harold Eyster

Nearly 20 people attended the first Tuesday Evening Birders of the year on May 5th. Led by Lathe Claflin and Mike Sefton, our first stop was Fraleigh's Nursery on the corner of Parker and Jackson roads. Dan Sparks-Jackson showed us two cute Sandhill Crane chicks, and nesting Purple Martins. We were about to leave when we suddenly heard the unique descending cackle of a Sora. We then watched as it ran across the wet marsh, stopping occasionally and providing good looks for everyone.



Our next stop was Smith/Miller Woods on the corner of Parker and Dexter-Chelsea roads. We quietly walked down the trail, coming to a tree with a young Great Horned Owl, which then flew, but there was an even younger owl perched quite close. This owl sat cooperatively and gave the entire group phenomenal views. As we were exiting the park, a Black-Throated Green Warbler called. A Blackburnian Warbler and a Red-headed Woodpecker were also seen.

Our final stop was Trinkle Marsh, located on Trinkle Road, just east of Dancer Rd. As we arrived, Dan Sparks-Jackson already had his scope on a Common Moorhen, a lifer for some. Also seen at Trinkle Marsh were 3 American Widgeons, a lone Gadwall, Ring-necked Ducks, American Coots, and a Pied-billed Grebe. The evening ended with a total of 44 species. Thank you to Lathe and Mike again making Tuesday Evening Birders a great success.

Tuesday Evening Birders, May 12 *By Dea Armstrong*

A beautiful evening for Tuesday Birders! While numbers of species were not huge (43), many of the views were spectacular. We were able to have looks at yet another family of Great Horned Owls that Lee Hefner located for us (and thank you Charlene as well!). While there, Harold found us a nice female Scarlet Tanager in the tall oaks. We moved on to shorebirds in the few ponds that we could find with appropriate habitat (Solitary Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers and Spotted Sandpiper along with Killdeer and a Wood Duck.) At Schneider Road we found a single Semi-palmated Plover and courting Spotted Sandpipers. However, I think all will agree that the highlights of the evening were the rails. Why did the Virginia Rail cross the road? To give the Tuesday Birders the best looks possible of this species! And a very cooperative Sora left all of us satisfied and knowing exactly what these birds look like up close and personal --they practically walked across our toes!

Some of the species seen or heard by someone on the trip:

Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Virginia Rail, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Semi-palmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Great Horned Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow, N. Rough-winged Swallow, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Oriole

Searles Nature Preserve Gets a Facelift

By Ray Stocking

The Washtenaw Audubon Society Board would like to extend a special thank you to future Eagle Scout Thomas Porter, who recently gave our Searles Nature Preserve a major cleaning so all could enjoy this property once again. The Searles property has been owned by Washtenaw Audubon for many years and had been neglected more recently. Trails were overgrown and confusing. Some trails were very difficult to maneuver because they were so overgrown.

Thomas contacted us last year asking if he could clean up the property for his Eagle Scout project. We were delighted with his offer and gave him 100% of our support. Thomas's plan was to bring in 2 groups of scouts and adults with rakes and other tools to clear out the trail. The ideal path would be 2 feet wide in most parts. He had one group start at the Margaret Ave. entrance and the other at the Bola Road entrance. Both groups met in the middle. Once the trails were cut, wood chips were placed along the entire length of the trails. Additional highlights included a very nice welcoming sign, plus trail markers and maps.

Thomas raised 100% of the funds for this event (as required for this specific Eagle Scout project). His goal was \$600. When everything was completed, Thomas had an additional \$100 left over. The entire balance was donated to Washtenaw Audubon and the funds were immediately ear-marked for the Safe Passage program.

Thank you Thomas Porter for an outstanding job well done!



Special Visit to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (Humbug Marsh)

By Monty Brown

On Sunday, March 28, an impending rainstorm held off long enough for about twenty visitors from the Washtenaw Audubon Society (and two more from Jackson Audubon) to take advantage of rare access to the Humbug Marsh Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established by an act of Congress in 2001 and remains a work in progress. Encompassing more than 5,000 acres at the southern end of the river, just above the western tip of Lake Erie, the refuge is the result of a concerted effort to rehabilitate land and water from decades of industrial pollution.

The Humbug Marsh Unit is a 410-acre section of the refuge along the final mile of the U.S. shore of the Detroit River, just below Grosse Ile. It currently contains one small pavilion and an observation deck, as well as trails in varying states of preparation. Visits for the time being are only available through prior arrangement. Greg Norwood, a biologist at the refuge, took the group on a brief tour of the marsh property, explaining its history and some fairly aggressive efforts underway to improve habitat and remove invasive plant species. After his introductory tour, birders had a couple more hours to explore the area.

But what about THE BIRDS??? Highlights included a Peregrine Falcon, Winter Wren, and a Belted Kingfisher. Tantalizing sounds of woodcock, Fox Sparrow, and an Eastern Towhee were heard, but these birds were not seen (at least not by your correspondent). Male Red-winged Blackbirds had begun to return to the area, and were more accommodating of their human visitors. Woodpeckers included a pair of Red-bellieds and a Northern Flicker, as well as a few Downies. Along the river, the waterfowl were surprisingly sparse that morning, with only cormorants, Great Blue Herons, Canada Geese, Mute Swans, Common Mergansers, and Mallards in evidence. Fortunately, late in the morning along an estuary at the northern edge of the Humbug Marsh area, a Wood Duck couple passed back and forth at fairly close range, offering splendid looks.

Those who were able to attend this event got a preview of the property and its considerable promise. They will also be able to appreciate directly some of the changes it will have undergone once it is ready to open to the public. For those who missed out, however, the birding that morning was not exceptional. I counted a modest number of species—23. We can all look forward to times when the facility will be open for ordinary visits and to days when more dazzling birding is on offer there.

WAS members Ron Gamble and Monty Brown. Ron gives Monty some pointers on his new spotting scope. It was in this location that we saw and heard singing Brown Creepers - a real treat! Photo by Cathy Carroll





Dolph Field Trip Report for Sunday, May 3

By Dea Armstrong

What an amazing morning at Dolph! There were almost 60 of us that started the morning in 4 groups led by Karen Markey, Don Chalfant, Mike and Susan Kielb and Dea Armstrong. EVERYONE saw the Prothonotary Warbler! (Thank you for the alert, Karen!). Thanks to all of the leaders and all of the participants who pointed out birds and ooo'd and ahh'd at all of the color out there! It was wonderful!

Ellie Shapirio Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge field trip. Photo by Cathy Carroll

The following are highlights of birds seen or heard by someone in one of the groups. Not everyone saw or heard all of these birds but they were all at Dolph this morning. [(h) = heard only]



Red-eyed Vireo nest from 2008 breeding season. This nest survived our long, windy, wet, snowy and cold winter fully intact demonstrating how truly remarkable are our tiny objects of desire. Photo by Cathy Carroll

Wood Duck, Trumpeter Swans, Green Heron (3-4), Great Egret (flyover by a group of 4), Solitary Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Peewee, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay (on nest), Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Grey Catbird, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Warbling Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green Warbler, PROTHONOTARY WARBLER, Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Palm Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Tennessee warbler (h), Nashville warbler, Common Yellowthroat (h), Northern Waterthrush, Baltimore Oriole, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak (nest building), White-throated Sparrow

Celebrating Earth Day 2009



Washtenaw Audubon Society had the unique opportunity to celebrate Earth Day last month next to the Leslie Science and Nature Center Raptors exhibit. Hundreds of visitors, young and old, lined up to look through a scope aimed at the Bell Tower on the Michigan campus, and some even saw the Peregrine Falcon! Other exhibits included bird guides, binoculars for kids to enjoy and important information on preventing avian window kills. Come see us out at the Green Fair on Main Street in Ann Arbor next on Friday, June 12, 2009.



Salamander Field Trip By Eddie Sanchez

We had our first ever daytime field trip for salamanders. It took place at Hudson Mills and it was sponsored by the Washtenaw Audubon Society.

Seventeen people showed up. We did not have great numbers, but the variety of species was as expected.

Salamanders: Yellow-spotted, Blue-spotted, Red-backed, Northern Four-toed.

The Four-toeds were the most abundant, which is surprising.

But the highlight of the trip was finding a large Garter Snake in the middle of consuming a Tiger Salamander! Of course, I had just finished advising our participants that we would not find a Tiger at that location - have not done so in 12 years of trying. I guess Garter Snakes are simply better herpers!

Magee Marsh Field trip report, Saturday, May 16

By Karen Markey

Our Washtenaw Audubon Society group of 12 birders traveled to Northwest Ohio and enjoyed a birdy day at Magee Marsh, Crane Creek State Park, on Saturday, May 16. Weather changed from overcast to threatening skies, to rain, and finished up with sunshine in mid afternoon.

We stopped briefly at Metzger Marsh. Birders spotted a COMMON MOORHEN at the shore, Black Terns skimming the marsh, and a mature Bald Eagle circling overhead. We parked at Magee at 8 am, and while assembling the group, several watched the snoozing Common Nighthawk through a scope. We joined many other birders scanning the ground, shrubs, and trees in the parking lot which were loaded with birds including MOURNING WARBLER. On the boardwalk, we had great looks at the nesting Prothonotary Warblers. One of the two sleeping Screech Owls was in full view. I was so taken by the birdiness of the park, it was hard to leave. On our exit, we spotted an ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER snagging bugs in mid-sized trees and giving great views. We finished the day peering through the observation window at the Black Swamp Observatory store's outdoor feeders and making purchases. We arrived in Ann Arbor a little after 5 pm, much later than anticipated due to birdy conditions.

Thanks to the birders who helped everyone in our group locate and relocate the many active passerines. Extra special was our list of 23 warbler species. Here is the full list of the 70 species from the trip. My regrets if I failed to record here all species heard or seen. Key: (h=heard only, M=Metzger only)

Pied-billed Grebe (M), Black Terns (M), COMMON MOORHEN, Ring-billed Gulls, Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Green Heron, Canada Geese, Killdeer, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Screech-owls, Common Nighthawk, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Wood-pewees, Eastern Kingbirds, Least Flycatchers, Horned Larks (M), Purple Martins, Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows, American Crow, Blue Jays (many high in the sky), House Wrens, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Veery, Swainson's Thrushes, Gray-cheeked Thrush, American Robins, Warbling Vireos, Red-eyed Vireos, Grey Catbirds, European Starlings, Cedar Waxwings, Northern Parulas, Black-throated Green Warblers, Prothonotary Warblers, Black-and-white Warblers, Blackpolls, Black-throated Blue Warblers (many females), Magnolia Warblers (very numerous), Yellow-rumped Warblers, Canada Warblers, Cape May Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Bay-breasted Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, American Redstarts (very numerous), Palm Warblers, Yellow Warblers, Tennessee Warblers (h), ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER, Wilson's Warblers, MOURNING WARBLERS, Common Yellowthroats, Ovenbirds, Northern Waterthrushes, Scarlet Tanager, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrows, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (h), Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Baltimore Orioles, American Goldfinches.

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (May - August 2009)

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!

**Apr 09-
May 28**

Nichols Arboretum for Spring Migration 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

There is not an assigned leader for these walks. Eight week series Thursdays from April 9, 2009 through May 28. Park and meet at the Riverview Court cul-de-sac off Geddes Road at 8:00 am. All are welcome. This is our fourth season monitoring spring migration through Nichols Arboretum. Join us for one or all of the walks through the Arb to follow spring migrants as they storm northward on the way to their breeding grounds. These are well-attended, leaderless walks and a great opportunity to meet and bird with others. The Arb is beautiful as spring emerges and we shake off our winter blahs. As late April merges into early May the trillium blooming throughout the wooded hillsides are spectacular. The Arb is terrific for spring migration! Please join us if you can; you won't be disappointed. You may join or leave the group at any time between 8am and 11am. If arriving late, just walk to the left until you reach the river, looking for a group with binoculars.

**May 05-
May 26**

Tuesday Evening Birders 6 PM, Tuesdays Leaders: Dea Armstrong, Lathe Claflin, and Mike Sefton . Back by popular demand. One of our favorite spring birding events. Meet at 6:00 pm at the Miller Road/M-14 park and ride for a 6:15 pm sharp (!) departure. Dea will alternate weeks with Lathe and Mike for leading the trip. At the park and ride we breakdown into fewer cars and then drive the back roads of Washtenaw County to see some really great birds. Over the years the good birds (Red-necked Phalarope ...) and memorable sights (Sandhill Crane with young ...) are too numerous to mention. The field trip goes until dusk.

May 23

Hudson Mills Metropark Leader: Karen Markey. Meet in the main parking lot adjacent to the Activity Center at 7:30 am. Close out spring migration with this annual favorite field trip. Target birds include cuckoos, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, woodpeckers, vireos, flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, tanagers, and more. Bring your binoculars. Please leave pets at home. If you do not have an annual sticker, there is a vehicle fee to enter the metropark. Please purchase an annual sticker to help support our metroparks.

June 6

Wheeler Service Center - Landfill Site (Sponsored by A2 NAP) Free and fun for all ages. Join City Ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for birds at the old Landfill Site. Bring binoculars if you have them. We'll walk on the very top of the capped areas (amazing views of the city!), in very tall grasses so dress appropriately. Meet at 7:30 AM sharp in the small parking lot on the right off the main entrance to the Material Recovery Facility off of Platt Road, just south of Ellsworth. Please call 734.794.6627 for more information.

Field trips continued

- June 7** **Port Huron State Game Area** 7:30 am - 1:00 pm. Leader: Allen Chartier. Come prepared for hot weather. If it is not hot, that will be fine, but you should come prepared to deal with hot weather. Wear hot weather clothing, hat, sunscreen, etc. Bring food and fluids that you think will be necessary to sustain you for 5 hours of birding in hot weather. Insect repellent and long, light colored trousers may suit you very well. Target birds include: White-eyed Vireo, Louisiana Waterthrush, Golden-winged Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Mourning Warbler and numerous others that we found last year. As every one of the 25 plus individuals who attended last year will agree, this is a great early summer field trip. As the date gets closer, details will be announced on the Washtenaw Audubon Society website and on birders@umich.edu.
- June 13** **Stinchfield Woods Annual Census** 7:30 am - 11:30 am. Leaders: Karen Markey and Sharon Benjey. As the date gets closer, details will be announced on the Washtenaw Audubon Society website and on birders@umich.edu.
- July 12** **Matthaei Botanical Gardens for Butterflies** Leaders: Roger Kuhlman, John Swales and Roger Wykes. As the date gets closer details will be announced on the Washtenaw Audubon Society website and on birders@umich.edu.



Virginia Rail By Rodolfo Palma on Tuesday Evening Birders field trip, May 12.

Noteworthy Local Sightings, 1 March 09 to 30 April 09 (all in Washtenaw County, unless otherwise noted).

<i>Species</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Varied Thrush	22 Nov 08 - 11 Apr 09	Northwest Ann Arbor	Laura Woolley, Barb Ward, Will Weber, Bob Hotaling, MOBs	Extremely rare western species. 2nd county record. Many thanks to homeowners listed at left for allowing birders access to their yards.
Common Redpoll	7 Mar	Gallup Park, Ann Arbor	Maggie Jewett	50 birds. Good number of this usually rare winter visitor.
Greater White-fronted Goose	11 - 22 Mar	Pleasant Lk Rd. e. of Schneider Rd.	Dan Sparks-Jackson, SOBs	Very rare.
Tundra Swan	12 - 22 Mar	Pleasant Lk Rd. e. of Schneider Rd.	Bob Arthurs, SOBs	2 birds. Rare in county.
Cackling Goose	14 - 22 Mar	Pleasant Lk Rd. e. of Schneider Rd.	Jacco Gelderloos, SOBs	1 bird. As many as 4 later. Rare bird present w/ 200+ Canada Geese.
Northern Pintail	14 - 22 Mar	Pleasant Lk Rd. e. of Schneider Rd.	Jacco Gelderloos, SOBs	1 bird. As many as 3 later. Rare to uncommon in March.
Ross's Goose	14 Mar	Thorn Lake, Jackson County	Robyn & Don Henise	Very rare. Photos.
Snow Goose	14 Mar	Pleasant Lk Rd. e. of Schneider Rd.	John Swales, SOBs	Uncommon. As many as two at this location later
Bald Eagle	12 Mar	Portage Lake	Maggie Jewett	On ice, eating Mute Swan carcasses. Uncommon resident.
Tree Swallow	12 Mar	Gallup Park, Ann Arbor	Mike Sefton	New early date for the county. Two birds.
Brewer's Blackbird	12 Mar	Schneider Rd., Freedom Twp.	Mike Sefton	Rare in March.
Iceland Gull	15 Mar	Kensington Metropark, Livingston Cty.	Sean Bachman, SOBs	Probable first county record of this very rare winter visitor.
Surf Scoter	13 - 18 Mar	State & Textile Rds.	Maggie Jewett, Greg Links, SOBs	Weird, shallow water location for this bird, very rare in March.
Chipping Sparrow	22 Mar	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Ray Stocking	Very early migrant.
Great Black-backed Gull	22 Mar	Ford Lake	Maggie Jewett, SOBs	2 birds. Fairly common to uncommon in March.
Northern Mockingbird	22 Mar	Meyer Rd. s. of Pleasant Lk Rd.	Maggie Jewett, SOBs	Rare. 3 reported by various observers in last week of March.
Common Loon	25 Mar	Independence Lake	Faye Stoner	Two of these uncommon birds.
Fox Sparrow	26 Mar	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman	Three of these uncommon migrants.
Pine Siskin	26 Mar	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman	C. 50 of this usually rare bird in this siskin invasion year.
Hermit Thrush	26 Mar	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman	Singing; unusual in migration for this uncommon to fairly common migrant.
Pine Siskin	30 Mar	Inkster, Wayne County	Allen Chartier	Female w/brood patch & egg in abdomen banded in Allen's yard. First breeding record in Inkster, & a rare breeding record for the southern Lower Peninsula. Other breeding behavior seen in Washtenaw County.
Yellow-headed Blackbird	8 Apr	Near Dexter	Sharon Benjey	Very rare in county.
Peregrine Falcon	9 Apr	VA Hospital, Ann Arbor	Mike Sefton	Two birds seen copulating on a favorite perch. Perhaps eggs this year
Snow Goose	9 Apr	Schneider Rd. pond	Roger Wykes, Jane Leonard	In area since 14 Mar. Very rare in April.
Louisiana Waterthrush	12 Apr	Nan Weston Preserve	Roger Kuhlman	Uncommon migrant.
Northern Harrier	14 Apr	Willow & Hoelzer Rds.	Maggie Jewett	Male. Uncommon.
Swainson's Thrush	17 Apr	Noggles Rd.	Martin Bialecki	Very rare in April.
Forster's Tern	18 Apr	Barton Pond, Ann Arbor	Dea Armstrong	Uncommon in mid-April.
White-winged Scoter	22 Apr	Barton Pond, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman, SOBs	Rare in county.
White-eyed Vireo	26 Apr	Mitchell-Scarlett Woods, Ann Arbor	Jacco Gelderloos	Very rare in April.
Yellow-throated Warbler	26 Apr	Stinchfield Woods	Wayne Fisher	Very rare in county, though present at this location for past 3 years.
Lark Sparrow	26 Apr	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman, SOBs	Very rare. Only 2nd record for Washtenaw.
Bald Eagle	26 Apr	Webster Twp.	Randy Messick	Uncommon resident.
Smith's Longspur	27 Apr - period	Berrien County	Alison Vilage, MOBs	Western species. Very rare in Michigan.
Prothonotary Warbler	26 - 30 Apr	Dolph Park, Ann Arbor	Jacob Job, MOBs	Very rare in April. Thought to be both a male and female present.
White-eyed Vireo	25 - 26 Apr	Dolph Park, Ann Arbor	Maggie Jewett, MOBs	Very rare in April.
Hooded Warbler	30 Apr	U-M Arboretum, Ann Arbor	Roger Kuhlman	Very rare in April.

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

May 22-25: Weekend Nature Get-away

May 30: Oak Openings field trip

June 7: Lapeer State Game Area field trip

Macomb Audubon www.geocities.com/macomb_audubon

June 1: Bob Tarte talk about fostering orphaned chicks

June 20: Water Tower Park field trip

Jackson Audubon

www.jacksonaudubon.org

May 31: Oak Openings field trip

June 14: Ella Sharp Museum Wine and Birding Festival

June 15: Monarch Workshop

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

Membership Dues:

_____ ADDITIONAL DONATION \$ _____

___ Individual/Household \$20

___ Student \$10

___ Senior \$10

___ Patron \$50

___ Life (individual) \$200

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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 677-3275 if you have questions about the program.

Wed., June 17 **Birders and Their Lists** : Join Don “The Man” Chalfant for a program on the many, varied, and sometimes bizarre lists that birders keep. Don will take you far beyond the simple Yard List and Life List, deep into the realm of Total Ticks and other esoteric list-ing. Don is a Master Birder, a certified Bird Magnet, and has a Washtenaw County life list of 285 species, a Michigan life list of 362, and an ABA Area list of 757.

No Program in July

Tuesday, Aug. 18 **Raptors in our World:** Note date! Get up close and personal with a live eagle, hawk, and owl, presented by Francie Krawcke, the Raptor Specialist and Camp Director at the Leslie Science and Nature Center. A kid-friendly program for all ages, co-sponsored with the Sierra Club.

Wed., Sept. 16 **Gardening with Native Plants:** Join Darrel Morrison for a program on using native plants in your garden. Darrel Morrison is one of the leading advocates of native gardening in the US, is a former professor of landscape architecture at the University of Wisconsin, and is retired from the University of Georgia where he was Dean of the School of Environmental Design. This is a joint program with Wild Ones, the Michigan Botanical Club, and the U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

Washtenaw Audubon Society

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