



**WASHTENAW**  
AUDUBON SOCIETY

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**NEWSLETTER**

**July/August 2013**

*Adventures in Arthropod-ing!*

Sometimes when people ask me why I “watch birds” I say “because insects are too small”. And there’s a lot of truth to this. I really believe the general public and even hard-core birders would have much more interest and respect for insects and their relatives if they took the time to get down on their level and truly look at them. Summer is the perfect time for this endeavor. Birding has slowed incredibly and insect diversity is at its highest. Plus, you can do a cursory walk around your own yard over and over and continue to find lifers. This summer I got a new moth identification book and have took to identifying moths. Added bonus for moths: you turn your porch light on and they come to you! This summer WAS offered two opportunities to explore and learn more about insects and spiders. Saturday, July 20, John Swales and Roger Wykes led an outing to collect and identify butterflies and on Saturday, August 3, Cara Shillington, a Biology professor from Eastern with a specialty for spiders led us around Matthaei Botanical Gardens to learn about these intriguing predators.

The **Butterfly Bonanza** was held northwest of the town of Manchester at the Leonard Preserve, the same location as last year. We had roughly the same human turn-out as last year with about 20 people, but the butterflies were noticeably less (24 this year to last year’s 31). John said one reason was that we just were not seeing the “immigrants” that one would typically see, such as the Buckeyes. Weather also definitely played a role not only in the numbers we saw, but in the numbers of individuals of different of species and where in the preserve the species were being seen. Maybe you noticed what a wet year we’ve been having? Additionally, the heat had been quite oppressive over the



*Check out this beautiful butterfly on Dick Theile’s leg. (Below)*



last few days leading up to the event with it reaching the 100’s with the heat index. Luckily, for us participants, this particular day was not quite that hot, but it tested some of us by the end of the event. As one of my daughters whispered to me “Even my butt is sweaty!”

Here are the species we saw: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Giant Swallowtail, Black Swallowtail, Cabbage White, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Eastern Tailed-Blue, Summer Azure, Pearl Crescent, Silvery Checkerspot, Question Mark, Mourning Cloak, Red Admiral, Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy, Common Wood-nymph, Eyed Brown, Appalachian Brown, European Skipper,

*(continued on pg. 3)*



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## Publication

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Dear Friends,

Undoubtedly most of you are finding plenty of bird-related distractions in what can sometimes be classified as a slow time for the birds. I look forward to our September gathering to hear about your summer travels filled with fabulous sightings! But before we gather together again at Matthei Botanical Gardens, I wanted to share a few words about what your membership means to Washtenaw Audubon. As with any non-profit, we value and count on your membership both financially, and through the many volunteer hours you offer. Your membership dues and volunteer time are both strong votes of confidence in our mission to further our understanding of birds and their local environment. Thank you for all that you do.

### Membership and membership renewal

A few years ago we reorganized our membership cycle so that all members would renew in either June or December. At this point, we are comfortably settled into this cycle and whether you receive a paper or electronic copy of this newsletter, you receive a notification that your membership is up for renewal, usually a month before it expires. Because we are a community of volunteers, with no paid staff, the more quickly you can respond to your renewal notices, the more efficiently we can make use of our volunteers' time. When you receive your notice, we hope you will renew promptly. Your membership dollars allow us to fund a variety of activities that further our mission, from helping our young birders attend birding camps, to supporting research in the field, paying special guest speakers, funding local bird conservation, and providing outreach materials for attendees at local birding and ecological events. We appreciate and count on your support! I'd like to express a special thank you to those members who have stepped up to be members at the \$50 Patron level. Your generosity truly opens more doors.

### Volunteering with WAS

In addition, if you participate in any of our trips or programs, I hope you will consider ways you can contribute time to our bird-loving community. Washtenaw Audubon has several members who have been giving of their time and expertise for years, even decades. We have come to rely on them, and maybe even take them for granted. All that we offer the community is the result of volunteer dedication, and we hope you'll consider playing a role-large or small. There are many things you can do that will help our efforts. Simply signing up to bring snacks or beverages to a monthly meeting lets our "regulars" take a break. Perhaps you can agree to participating in the Christmas Bird Count or May count or helping put together the pot-lucks that follow. Or maybe you'd like to help represent WAS at a local nature fair and spend a few hours on a weekend engaging with interested birders or birders-to-be who want to learn more about us. Please know that only a desire to help is required; one need not be a "super-birder"! Have a look at the various board positions listed on our web site and see if your interests would lead you to contribute as a co-chair or simply offer to help. Whatever the task, you are welcome to join us and I encourage you to give a call or send me an email. I'm quite sure you'll find that the engagement only furthers your own interest in all that we do.

With thanks,

Sue Johnson, President

### Rare Bird Alerts

#### Michigan Bird Report

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

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

**Congratulations** are in order for two of WAS young birders (once again!). Sarah Toner and Matty Hack are now student editors of the American Birding Association's Young Birders' Blog, *The Eyrie*. Sarah Toner began her time as a student editor in October, 2011 and recently, Matty Hack was selected from applicants to join the student editor team as well. These two active, young, excellent birders are well known in WAS birding circles. Paraphrasing from the application, as *Eyrie* blog editors, Matty and Sarah will not only edit the blog along with other student editors, but will also seek out contributors and ask them to provide posts, artwork, and photographs. They'll also be responsible for taking turns with other editors at putting together the whole monthly blog. This requires that they keep abreast of the goings on in the world of youth birding and birding period! Not at all a problem for these two. Way to go Sarah and Matty!

*Young birders Sarah Toner, Matty and Ben Hack. (Right)*



*(Arthropods continued from pg. 1)*

Northern Broken-dash, Little Glassywing, Dun Skipper, Mulberry Wing, and last, but not least, Broad-winged Skipper!

My 5 year old daughters loved both field trips. I know I've started them early to appreciate nature and being out looking for and identifying things, but I am surprised that there aren't more people out with their little ones. These trips are perfect for this age as they can physically engage with the subjects in nets and jars and they can get up close and personal, which is harder to do on a birding specific field trip. If you know people with little ones, encourage them to get out to these field trips. They are the future stewards of our natural world!

The **Spider Field Trip** attracted a few more people than the butterfly trip (close to 30) and I wonder how much of it was due to the fact that the weather was much more pleasant! Additionally, for the most part, we were walking the shaded forest trails of Matthaei rather than an open field. Dr. Shillington was again a very engaging



and energetic leader, treating the field trip as a walking classroom. Whereas the butterfly field trip was a little more scattered with participants going this way and that catching butterflies, this was more contained as we would walk from one spider specimen to the next, learning its specific life-habits, etc... For example, do you know what separates the Daddy Long-legs, or Harvestman, as they are actually called, from the spiders? (Maybe I'm assuming that you knew that a Daddy Long-legs was not an actual spider...) Well, one difference is that Harvestmen have a penis, while spiders do not! Or did you know that the Jumping Spiders are the smartest of the spider groups (the *intelligentsia* as she called them) and can figure out mazes? *(continued pg. 4)*



*(Arthropods continued from pg. 3)*

Typically, Dr. Shillington would walk the trails looking for the spiders' diagnostic webs. Usually, she would be able to tell us what we were seeing even before finding the spider specimen. Occasionally, Dr. Shillington would brush through the fields with a net (pictured right) and then dump the contents on a white mat (pictured below) for us to analyze. Here, we would find the more secretive Crab Spiders. At the end, Dr. Shillington took us into the Botanical Gardens to observe some Feather-legged Orbweavers, representatives of the only group of spiders that do not use venom. It's still being researched what they do to subdue their prey.



Here's the list of spiders we saw: Funnel Weaver, Spined Micrathena, Bowl and Doily Spider, Striped Lynx Spider, Common Fishing Spider (the largest spider in our area--pictured in the jar in the photo in the bottom-right), Nursery Web Spider, Familiar Jumping Spider, Long-jawed Orbweaver, Orchard Spider, Common House Spider, Ray Orbweaver (the egg sac only--Dr. Shillington said that she finds this quite frequently, but has found the actual spiders only twice!), Feather-legged Orbweaver, Brown Crab Spider, and the Red-banded Crab Spider.



*Above is simply the picture of a nice yellow flower, right? Look closer!*



# Washtenaw Audubon Society

## 2012-13 Financial Report

submitted by Elvera Shappirio

Description	Checking	Savings	
Balances as of July 1, 2012	2,025.48		12,593.77
Checking Receipts	9,635.74		
Checking Expenditures	9,577.69		
Savings Interest			6.29
Transfers: CD interest to savings			32.17
Balances as of June 30, 2013	2,083.53		12,632.23
<b>Checking Account Receipts</b>			
Member Dues	2,086.24		
Memorial Donations	1,354.50		
Donations	195.00		
Leslie Science Center Audubon grant	1,000.00	pass through	
Transfer from C D for Haehnle grant	5,000.00	from C D	
Total Receipts	9,635.74	operating \$3635.74	
<b>Checking Account Expenditures</b>			
Newsletter Printing and Postage	755.49		
Speakers, Program Expense	249.00		
Telephone service	585.78		
Grant:Andrew Johnson	500.00		
Grant: Sarah Toner	500.00		
Liability Insurance	322.00		
Banking costs (checkbooks)	0.00		
Corporate Filing Fee	20.00		
Grant to Haehnle Preserve land purchase	5,000.00		
Web site costs	255.90		
Christmas Count Expenses	0.00		
Property costs: Searles drain fee	28.96		
Trip van rentals	254.56		
Postal box fee	76.00		
Safe Deposit box	30.00		
Leslie Science Center Audubon grant	1,000.00	pass through	
Total Expenses	9,577.69	operating \$3577.69	
<b>Savings Account Receipts</b>			
Interest on Regular Savings Account	6.29		
Interest on \$10,000.00 CD	32.17		
Total Savings Account Interest	38.46		

### Investment Account

The investment account includes one CD valued at \$10,000.00. The interest is transferred to the regular savings account on a monthly basis. \$5000.00 promised to Haehnle Preserve purchase 9/30/12.

The \$10,000.00 CD matures Sept. 2013

# Upcoming WAS Field Trips (August--October, 2013)

By Monty Brown, Field Trip Coordinator ([fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org))

Washtenaw Audubon field trips are free of charge and open to the public unless otherwise indicated. For trips with constraints on the number of participants, WAS members are sometimes given priority in registering (again, as indicated). *For trips that require carpooling, minors attending without a parent must bring a written permission statement signed by a parent.* To receive a standard form for this, contact me at the e-mail address above. Also, if you have a suggestion for a field trip, please send it to me at that e-mail address.

**Sunday.,  
August 25**

**Migrating Shorebirds and Waders at Pointe Mouillee SGA:** Leader: Jim Fowler. Pointe Mouillee, on Lake Erie near the mouth of the Huron River, is one of the best destinations in the Midwest for viewing shorebirds and waders, but vehicular access is limited. Jim Fowler knows this territory very well and leads several field trips each year at this location. PLEASE NOTE: This trip has limited space, and registration is mandatory. To register, send your name(s) and a contact phone number to [fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org). Meet at the Pointe Mouillee SGA parking lot on Sigler Road at 8:00 a.m., and from there will consolidate vehicles. Because of the restricted access, it is necessary to attend the entire outing. Bring insect repellent, wear a hat, and dress for warm weather--there is no shade at Pointe Mouillee. Bring all the food and fluids you will need for approximately five hours.

**Every  
Thursday  
August 29--  
October 31**

**Weekly Fall Migration Walks at Nichols Arboretum.** Every Thursday morning from August 29 through the end of October, participants will gather at 8:00 AM at the end of the Riverview Drive cul-de-sac (off Geddes Road) near the eastern edge of the arboretum for these leaderless walks to observe fall migration. The birders available that day will choose a route and head out in search of migrants. The walks go until roughly 11:00, but anyone can join or leave the group as his or her schedule requires.

**Saturday,  
September 7**

**Fall Migration at Hudson Mills** Leader: Karen Markey. Please join us for this hike in search of fall migrants at Hudson Mills Metropark. We will meet at 8 AM sharp at the flagpole in the front of the Activity Center, and the outing will go until about 10:30 or 11:00. Karen knows this park extremely well. Please wear appropriate footwear for early morning dew. It is also a good idea to bring insect repellent. Finally, please also note that no pets are allowed on the nature trails.

**Sunday,  
September 8**

**Weekend Arb Walk.** Meet at the end of the Riverview Court cul-de-sac off Geddes Road for this leaderless walk between 3:30--6:30 PM.

**Saturday,  
October 12**

**The Big Sit (Independence Lake County Park).** Leaders: Don Chalfant and Roger Wykes  
This is a low-key international competition that Don and Roger have participated in for the past fifteen years to try to identify as many bird species as possible while remaining in a circle that is 17 feet in diameter. You can arrive before dawn to join in the owling at 5 AM or you can come after breakfast, or in the afternoon--whatever works for you--and stay for however long you prefer. We recommend that you bring food and a folding chair, in addition to your binoculars. Please note the Saturday date! Independence Lake County Park is in Webster Township off of Jennings Road, north of North Territorial Road and west of US 23. The count circle will be situated on a mound on the left side of the main road into the park, just beyond the entrance booth.



## 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 994-3569 if you have questions about the program.

**Please note:** *The Matthaei Botanical Gardens charges for parking at the rate of \$1.20 an hour, enforced 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm. Members of the Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum park for free. This fee brings the Garden's policies into alignment with other University of Michigan venues, and provides revenue to maintain the Gardens. If you arrive at 7:15pm for a 7:30pm Washtenaw Audubon program, you will only have to pay 90 cents to park for the 45 minutes before enforcement ends at 8pm. The parking kiosks accept coins, bills and credit cards.*

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### September 18

**Birding in the 'Cloud':** Surprisingly little has changed in the way that data is recorded in the field since the time of Lewis and Clark. A local startup company, Ornicept, is changing this by developing tools to allow biologists to digitally capture their data in the field using tablets and the online 'cloud.' Founder and chief technology officer, Russell Conard, will share ways that new technology has the potential to change natural resource management. A passionate birder, Conard will provide an insider's look at how his company's tools are improving the data necessary for conservation. Conard will also share an overview of modern birding technologies.

### October 16

**Some of My Favorite Birds:** Join Doug Leffler for a program on some of the most beautiful birds you'll ever see. Doug is an avid bird photographer and a world birder.

### November 20

**Delaware: Red Knots and Horseshoe Crabs:** Join Gary Siegrist and Lathe Claflin for a program on one of North America's most important migratory spots. Every spring, the dwindling population of Red Knots stops at the same spot in Delaware Bay to refuel on horseshoe crab eggs before continuing to their Arctic breeding grounds. Gary and Lathe are members of the Haehnle Audubon Sanctuary Stewardship Committee.

## Washtenaw Audubon Society

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