



# EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF THE MACOMB AUDUBON SOCIETY

<http://www.macombaudubon.org>

Volume 45, Number 4, July – August 2018

## Programs

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*Monthly programs are held at Sterling Heights Nature Center unless otherwise noted. **We will have a summer recess during July and August; monthly programs to resume in September.***

### **Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 7:00 p.m.** **Annual Bonfire at Lake St. Clair Metropark**

Grab your lawn chair, roasting forks, hot dogs/buns, s'mores fixin's and a beverage and join us for a fun evening around the fire! Bring a potluck dessert to share if you would like. Mustard and Catsup will be provided. In the event of rain, we'll move inside the nature center and put a fire in the fireplace. Bring a friend!

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### **Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 7:00 p.m.** **Jeevak Badve Presents - "Birds of Southern India"**

Jeevak Badve recently returned from a fascinating bird safari in the remote jungles of southern India. He will recount his adventures living at the edge of the forest and will share his observations and photos of the flora and fauna (mainly birds) that he found. You'll see photos of the Sri Lankan Frogmouth, the Indian Pita, Mottled wood owl and many others.

**About Jeevak Badve:** Jeevak is an avid bird lover and he loves bird photography. His love for all avian species stems from a fundamental appreciation of what these lovely creatures do to master the 3D domain. Everything they do is just incredible - from their unique adaptations and behaviors to survive the raw wild, their

fascinating displays of colors and beauty along with everyday elements like taking a bath in a creek. Birds never cease to amaze!

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## Field Trips

### **Pointe Mouillee State Game Area:** **An Exploration by Car** **Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 8:00am**

Pointe Mouillee SGA provides some of the best shorebird viewing in the state, especially during late summer and early fall. Leader Jim Fowler has been guiding field trips here for many years, for various Audubon groups. He has a special permit which allows cars to enter on these trips. A limit of four vehicles may caravan onto the dikes; ride sharing is required. We can only accept twenty people unless someone has a van we can use, in which case they should reach out to Tom Heatley to let him know - (586)468-2025. Reservations will be accepted starting August 1<sup>st</sup>, and can be made through Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Make your reservation by calling Tom Heatley at the above number. If leaving a voicemail, please include your name and phone number so you can be reached regarding whether you've made the list of twenty. Spots will be filled on a **first come, first served** basis, with priority given to Macomb Audubon members. Bring water, a hat, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

**Directions:** Take I-75 south to Exit 26, then take S Huron Rd. east to U.S. Turnpike. Take U.S. Turnpike south to Sigler Road, then head east on Sigler Road til you reach the parking lot at the end.

# Stony Creek Bird Walks

**\*Stony Creek Bird Walks will resume in the fall. For now, enjoy a few words from bird walk leader and Nature Center Volunteer, Ruth Glass:**

The grasslands bird walk on 5/26 was one of the most successful ever, in that of the almost thirty participants, most got good looks at multiple life birds. We visited the Habitat/Inwood connector trail, the east end of Inwood, and two undeveloped fields in subdivisions that border the east and west sides of the park, for a total of eight sparrow species (and a ninth on 5/27).

Highlights included two separate Henslow's Sparrows sites (state endangered status), a half dozen Grasshopper Sparrows (state special concern status), two Clay-colored Sparrows (2 sites), Vesper Sparrows, several Savannah Sparrows, close looks at Eastern Meadowlark (including taking food to nest), and Horned Lark flight displays and ground feeding.

A spur-of-the-moment trip occurred the evening of 5/27 to the Mitigated Wetlands Bank at 29 & Omo Roads. We heard our ninth sparrow (Swamp), watched the dramatic courtship dance of a pair of Sandhill Cranes, saw over two dozen Great Egrets, Spotted Sandpipers, and had great looks at Wilson's Snipe both perched on stumps and winnowing during flight displays.

I hope to see you in the metroparks this summer!

Ruth Glass  
Stony Creek Nature Center Volunteer

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## In Other Bird News...

**WRA Birdathoners Find 159 Species:**  
**A Recap of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Birdathon**  
**By: Mike Mencotti**

Birders who participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Macomb Audubon Birdathon cast a wide net and turned up 159 species. Seventeen birders combed Pt. Pelee, Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek metroparks and other Macomb County birding spots, Alcona, Oakland, Shiawassee and

Oakland counties. It was a blast to participate, despite the rain. The highlight species had to be Snowy Owl, Ross's Goose, White-eyed Vireo, Henslow's and Lark Sparrows, bitterns, and 26 species of warblers. The count took place on May 11-13.

Our hats are tipped to our participants: Barb Baldinger, Daryl Bernard, Ruth Glass, Mike Goethe, Tom Heatley, Cliff Jones, Vicki Jones, Dave Lancaster, Mike Mencotti, John Porath, Carole Rolph, Andrea Rose, Andrew Simon, Heather Slayton, Ken Slayton, Jeff Stacey, and Lee Western. A shout-out, too, to all who attended the Stony Creek walk, led by Ruth. A special thanks goes out to Barb Baldinger, who once again coordinated the sign-up sheet and follow-through at the Macomb meeting. Andrea Rose gave invaluable suggestions for the web page story as well as putting together a kick-butt team in the field. Full species list included on the following page.

If you've pledged, please follow through with your pledge. Didn't pledge yet? No problem. Just fill out the form below, and send it in. Your pledge is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Address**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of pledge.**\_\_\_\_\_ per species,

or a flat donation of \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to:**

Wildlife Recovery Association

**Mail c/o Mike Mencotti,**

25378 Wykeshire, Farmington Hills, MI 48336

**Email:** [mmencotti9@gmail.com](mailto:mmencotti9@gmail.com)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Birdathon**  
**Species List:**

**Ross's Goose**

Canada Goose  
Mute Swan  
Wood Duck  
Mallard  
Blue-winged Teal  
Green-winged Teal  
Canvasback  
Lesser Scaup  
Long-tailed Duck  
Bufflehead  
Common Merganser  
Red-breasted Merganser  
Ruddy Duck  
Ring-necked Pheasant  
Wild Turkey  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Horned Grebe  
Double-crested Cormorant  
Least Bittern  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Green Heron  
Turkey Vulture  
Osprey  
Bald Eagle  
Northern Harrier  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Cooper's Hawk  
Broad-winged Hawk  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Virginia Rail  
Sora  
Common Gallinule  
American Coot  
Sandhill Crane  
Black-bellied Plover  
Killdeer  
Dunlin  
Least Sandpiper  
Spotted Sandpiper

Solitary Sandpiper  
Greater Yellowlegs  
Lesser Yellowlegs  
Wilson's Snipe  
Bonaparte's Gull  
Ring-billed Gull  
Herring Gull  
Caspian Tern  
Common Tern  
Forster's Tern  
Rock Pigeon  
Mourning Dove  
Great Horned Owl  
Eastern Screech-Owl  
**Snowy Owl**  
Chimney Swift  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Belted Kingfisher  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Downy Woodpecker  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Peregrine Falcon  
American Kestrel  
Olive-sided Flycatcher  
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
Willow Flycatcher  
Least Flycatcher  
Eastern Phoebe  
Great-crested Flycatcher  
Eastern Kingbird  
**White-eyed Vireo**  
Yellow-throated Vireo  
Blue-headed Vireo  
Warbling Vireo  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Horned Lark  
Rough-winged Swallow

Purple Martin  
Tree Swallow  
Bank Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
House Wren  
Marsh Wren  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Eastern Bluebird  
Veery  
Gray-cheeked Thrush  
Swainson's Thrush  
Wood Thrush  
American Robin  
Gray Catbird  
Brown Thrasher  
European Starling  
Cedar Waxwing  
Ovenbird  
Northern Waterthrush  
Blue-winged Warbler  
Black-and-white Warbler  
Tennessee Warbler  
Orange-crowned Warbler  
Nashville Warbler  
Mourning Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Hooded Warbler  
Black-throated Blue Warbler  
American Redstart  
Cape May Warbler  
Cerulean Warbler  
Northern Parula  
Magnolia Warbler  
Bay-breasted Warbler  
Blackburnian Warbler

Yellow Warbler  
Chestnut-sided Warbler  
Blackpoll Warbler  
Palm Warbler  
Pine Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Black-throated Green Warbler  
Canada Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Grasshopper Sparrow  
Chipping Sparrow  
Clay-colored Sparrow  
Field Sparrow  
White-crowned Sparrow  
White-throated Sparrow  
Dark-eyed Junco  
Savannah Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Lincoln's Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
Eastern Towhee  
Scarlet Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Indigo Bunting  
Bobolink  
Eastern Meadowlark  
Orchard Oriole  
Baltimore Oriole  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Common Grackle  
House Finch  
Pine Siskin  
American Goldfinch  
House Sparrow

## Observing Bird Behavior Submitted by: Wade Leonard

In the corner of the courtyard at the hospital, there is a tree where a robin recently built a nest, raising two youngsters. The young fledged and then, for a time, the parents fed them. At this point, the youngsters spent some time on the ground, following their parents around with open beaks. On one occasion, one of the parents turned away and went in the opposite direction, the young still following closely. Finally, the adult bird turned around and gave a worm to one of them, then flew off as if to say, "You're on your own, kids."

In my backyard, I have a bird bath, where I observed a robin taking a bath. A sparrow then landed on the bird bath and the robin chased it away. Next, a White-breasted Nuthatch landed and the robin chased it off too. Finally, the robin could finish its bath in peace!

Another time, I was sitting on the bench near the owls at Lake St. Clair Metropark, when a Cooper's Hawk came flying past, chased by two Red-winged Blackbirds. The hawk landed on a branch and the redwings made one pass then flew off. Minutes later, the hawk took off with one redwing in tow, following along pecking the hawk on the back of the head. It reminded me of a World War II air battle! There is so much to see in nature if we take the time to observe.

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## In Loving Memory

JoAnn B. Burgess, one of the founders and early directors of Macomb Audubon Society, passed away June 4, 2018. She was a great supporter of our Society, and certainly helped our educational efforts throughout the years of her association with MAS.

During her 41-year career in the Utica Community Schools, Jo taught music. After helping plan the site for Morgan Elementary (which included a nature center in the undeveloped areas on the school property), she became the guiding force behind UCS's Environmental Education Program. As the Director of that program, Jo saw to the planning, implementing and teaching of all the groups that made use of the Outdoor Lab, as it was called.

Upon retirement from Utica, not content to simply rest, Jo took her knowledge, creativity, organization, and joy of teaching to what became the Shadbush Nature Center in Shelby Township. The center is a fitting reminder of all of Jo's efforts, and is aptly now named the BURGESS Shadbush Nature Center.

Jo Burgess – may you rest in peace!

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## Refreshments

**We appreciate those who brought refreshments to recent meetings, including:** Alice Forton, Tammy Hooten, Mary, Heather & Ken Slayton, Micki Smith and anyone else we may have forgotten to mention. A special thank you to Holly and Jeremy Joswick for providing the many flavors of ice cream served at our June Ice Cream Social. You went above and beyond!

**The following individuals and groups have made recent contributions to The Macomb Audubon Society:**

### Contributor Level

Margaret Alyea  
Carolyn & Patrick Harrington  
Tammy Hooten  
Heather & Ken Slayton

**Thank you for your generous support!**

MAS has been given a collection of Lenox bird figurines, all with proper certification of authenticity (Downy Woodpecker and Baltimore Oriole pictured below). We plan to raffle off two of these beautiful pieces at each of the next few monthly meetings until the collection has been dispersed to its rightful new owners. We thank you for your generous donations and participation in these monthly raffles which support our organization.



The **Macomb Audubon Society** is a chapter of Michigan Audubon. Programs are normally held the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the **Sterling Heights Nature Center 42700 Utica Rd. (south and east of the Van Dyke/Utica Rd. intersection, north of 19 mile Rd.). These and other Macomb Audubon events are open to the public.**

The Macomb Audubon Society is a non-profit organization with the mission to:

- Promote interest in the world of nature and to aid in the conservation of natural resources.
- Provide an outlet for nature activities via field trips.
- Provide an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience through lectures, films, discussions and newsletters.
- Aid organizations that provide people of all ages with opportunities to experience these above given objectives.

**Support our efforts by becoming a member today! To join, complete the form included on the inside back cover and bring it to our next meeting or follow the instructions for where to send it.**

The Earthstar Newsletter is published bi-monthly (January, March, May, July, September, and November). **If you wish to submit relevant content to be included in the Earthstar, please send by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month to:**

Andrea Rose (Little Bird Nerd)  
[parchmentheart@hotmail.com](mailto:parchmentheart@hotmail.com)

**Members may receive this newsletter by mail, electronically, or both (though we encourage electronic to save trees!)**



## A letter from the President, Paul Messing:



Perhaps the pace of things is slowing down for a relaxing summer, or maybe you have great plans; whatever is on your agenda, I hope you also have a mind for what is happening in nature. Many birds have nested and fledged; the first flowers of the season have bloomed and gone to seed, butterflies and other insects are making their waves of flight. Even with spring migration past, there is still so much going on out there, it hardly seems like it will even slow.

Just in the past few weekends, I've watched trout lilies open, strawberries bloom and fruit, and the Eastern Columbine grown into an incredible display. Monarchs have returned to my favorite lunchtime walk, and even the mosquitoes are back out (which the toads in the yard seem to appreciate). I'm still keeping an eye out for one of my favorites, the fireflies in the yard on a warm, moist, summer evening.

It was nice seeing so many birds leave the nest already this spring: on a trip through Dodge Park, seeing the Great Horned Owllet, at work seeing the Peregrine Falcons wandering from the nest on webcam, and goslings following a parent around, around the corner from water seeming across the country.

The year of the bird is just about half over. Has it been a special one for you? So much has happened already. So much is planned. So much is yet to come.



Happy Birding!

Paul Messing,  
Macomb  
Audubon President



*Photos by Paul Messing*  
**Top:** June's Bird Walk at Sterling Heights Nature Center  
**Bottom:** Flowers in bloom



## **Editor's Note**



Summer is many people's favorite time of year, but for birding purposes, it's not the most action-packed time (at least not in this area). The trees are laden with thick leaves which block our view of the birds. In addition, many birds are nesting and hidden, or have migrated farther north to nest. Because of these changing conditions, so starkly different from the rush of spring migration, I've learned to adapt and develop a slightly lazier "summer birding style". In other words, I accept that I won't be tallying loads of new species every other day. Instead, it's more about releasing expectations, and inviting whatever is meant to be seen. Sometimes, during the slow and sticky days of summer, my attention turns to spiders, butterflies, moths and dragonflies; flowers and trees; chipmunks and woodchucks – you name it!

It's not all bad news for birding though, as summertime brings opportunities to see baby birds and their parents from the nest and beyond. The other day, I had an early fledgling goldfinch at the feeder, tufts of feathers still sticking out above its eyes. The bird didn't seem to know how to work the feeder, how to fly very well, or how to be afraid of my cat who was watching through the window. I marveled at the fact that these birds must learn so many different skills in order to survive. On another occasion, I found a Red-winged Blackbird nest, and quietly observed the mother feeding her nestlings; like clockwork, going back and forth every minute or two. I was sure to approach with caution and calm, leaving plenty of space between me and the nest. Despite all the dive-bombing stories I've heard, this Red-winged mama did not seem too bothered by my presence, though she kept her eye on me still. Who knows for sure, but I like to think the birds can feel our energy, especially when we mean them no harm.

Cheers to summer, with its slow pace, vibrant colors, and new life bursting forth! Enjoy the lull between spring and fall migrations, and find something that makes you say, "WOW"!

Follow my Little Bird Nerd blog and Facebook page for my personal birding adventures:

[facebook.com/littlebirdnerd](https://www.facebook.com/littlebirdnerd)

[littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com](http://littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com)



*Photos by Little Bird Nerd*

# Proud Supporters of Macomb Audubon Society

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**Visit your local backyard birdfeeding experts at one of our local Wild Birds Unlimited stores in -Grosse Pointe Woods or -Macomb**

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## Committees

Car Pool Coordinator	<b>Vacant</b>
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Conservation/Legislation Elect	Alizah Mooman
Historian	<b>Vacant</b>
Hospitality (Refreshments)	Betty Ebert & Alice Forton
Hospitality (Door Prizes)	Denis & Laura Barbour
Earthstar Newsletter Editor	Andrea Rose Meldrum: <a href="mailto:parchmentheart@hotmail.com">parchmentheart@hotmail.com</a>

Contact the Macomb Audubon Society via e-mail at:  
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## **Macomb Audubon Society Dues**

Please make checks payable to **Macomb Audubon Society** and send to: Beverlee Babcock  
 Macomb Audubon Membership 50229 Pepper Tree Dr. Macomb MI, 48044.

Your name and the names of family members (Please Print)  
 Family membership applies to family members living at the same address

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

New Member _____	Renewal _____	Check One _____	Family Membership \$20.00
Total Amount enclosed \$ _____			Individual Membership \$15.00
Amount of donation over membership \$ _____ (optional)			Student Membership \$10.00
Contributor-----up to \$49.99			Senior single Membership \$12.00
Supporter-----\$50 to \$99.99			Senior couple Membership \$15.00
Donor-----\$100 and over			(senior is over 60)

Each year Macomb Audubon makes a membership list available to members. Check here if you wish to have your telephone number **left off** the list \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

Check here to receive the Earthstar by Email \_\_\_\_\_ By Hard Copy \_\_\_\_\_ Both Versions \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if a Michigan Audubon member \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if a National Audubon member \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) are interested in becoming a Macomb Audubon volunteer. Please contact me \_\_\_\_\_

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*Macomb Audubon Society*

C/O 1156 Avon Manor Rd.

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