



EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF THE MACOMB AUDUBON SOCIETY

<http://www.macombaudubon.org>

Volume 45, Number 3, May – June 2018

Programs

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, May 7th, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Jeremy and Holly Joswick – “Birding the Lower Rio Grande Valley: An Olympic Birding Adventure”

In February of 2018, club members Jeremy and Holly Joswick ventured southward to the Lower Rio Grande valley in Texas to add some great birds to their life lists. This bird trip turned Olympic competition (in the spirit of the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic games) pitted spouse against spouse for the most life birds spotted. See who came out victorious at the end of this exciting week!

Monday, June 4th, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Bird Walk and Ice Cream Social

Our June meeting will be lots of fun before our summer recess (**there will be no meetings in July or August**). First, we'll go for a short walk on the trails around the Sterling Heights Nature Center to see the colorful warblers, orioles, grosbeaks, tanagers, and other breeding birds and migrants. Afterward, we'll return to the Nature Center for ice cream and socializing! There will be a *limited* number of bowls and spoons available for ice

cream, but you are encouraged to bring your own if you remember, as well as a favorite topping to share!

Field Trips

Magee Marsh Migration Weekend

Friday, May 4th – Sunday, May 6th, 2018

It's time to head down to Ohio to Magee Marsh and the surrounding area – just in time for the big warbler migration. MAS has 10 rooms reserved at “The Luxurious Lake Erie Lodge” and Linda is looking forward to seeing our smiling faces! If we don't run into each other at one of the many birding spots throughout the day, we'll meet at the lodge on Friday at 6pm, then head to dinner. Otherwise, meet at Magee Marsh at 9am on Saturday in the parking lot area by the main entrance to the boardwalk (west end). It's important to RSVP **ASAP** so our field trip coordinator, Colleen, can give the names to Linda at the resort. Contact Colleen at:

grandmothernature2@gmail.com

Lake St. Clair Metropark Big Day Count

|Request for birdwatching volunteers|

Saturday, May 12th, 7:00am – 12:00pm

Leader: Julie Champion

This annual count demonstrates the importance of Lake St. Clair Metropark's various habitats as vital migration stops. Birders of all levels are encouraged to help. Call Julie at the nature center at **586.463.4332** for more information (details continued on next page).

Lake St. Clair Metropark Big Day Count (cont.)

Meet at the Nature Center by 7am. Coffee and doughnuts provided; bring a lunch. Park is at the far east end of Metro Parkway (16 Mile Rd). Metroparks sticker or day pass entrance fee required.

Note – the species counted from this event will be submitted to the Birdathon happening that weekend. See page 3, “21st Annual Birdathon...”

Annual Trip to East Tawas

Friday, May 18th – Sunday, May 20th, 2018

Mid-May, we'll take our yearly trip to East Tawas, where we will be staying at “The Bambi.” The group will meet at “The Bambi” at 6pm on Friday, and from there head to dinner. On Saturday, we'll have a potluck dinner, so bring a dish to pass! Rooms have been reserved; please RSVP **ASAP** to our field trip coordinator Colleen, at grandmothernature2@gmail.com

Birding at Port Huron State Game Area

Saturday, June 2nd, 8:00am

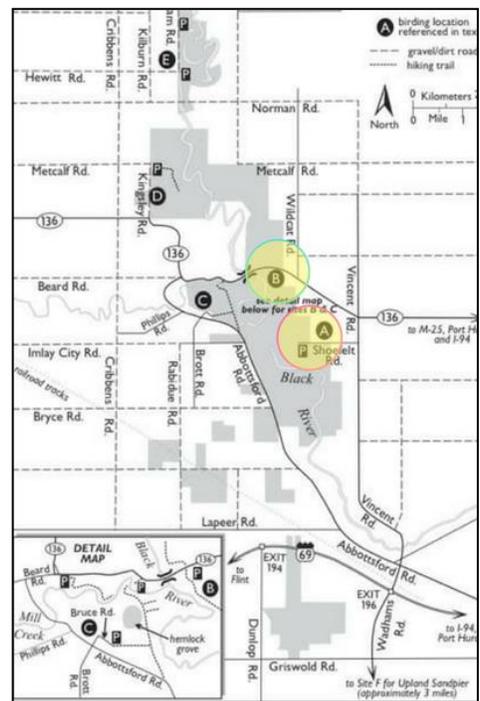
This field trip will be led by Charles Smart, and will cover portions of the over 6,000 acres of land that make up Port Huron State Game Area. Bring your binoculars, water, and a snack/lunch and be ready for some great birding! The state game area includes many different access points. Directions to our specific meet-up point(s) are as follows (parking map included, top of the next column).

-Take I-94 east to exit 271 to merge onto I-69 W toward Flint. After 2.7 miles, take exit 196 for Wadhams Rd. In 0.4 miles, turn right onto N Wadhams Rd. After about a mile, this turns into Vincent Rd. Continue straight on Vincent for 3.3 miles, then make a left on Shoefelt Rd. The parking area will be on the left, just before the road becomes a trail (Parking Spot A on map).

-After this trek, time permitting, we'll take Shoefelt Rd. back to Vincent and make a left, heading north toward M-136/Beard Rd. Make another left on Beard Rd, heading west. After 1 mile you will reach Wildcat Road (keep driving) and after another 1 mile, park at an obvious wide dirt parking area on the left side of the road, just before crossing the Black River (Parking Spot B on map).

Questions? Contact Micki Special at 586.291.9881.

Port Huron SGA Parking Map:



Detroit Zoo Day

Thursday, June 7th, 2018

Let's get our dose of Vitamin Z at the Detroit Zoo! Attendees should meet at the zoo's main entrance at 10am on Thursday, June 7th. We'll visit the new Polk Penguin Conservation Center, the Butterfly House, Aviary, and more!

Pack a lunch. Parking costs \$8; prices at admission gates are as follows:

- \$18 / Adults 19-61 years
- \$15 / Children 2-18 years
- \$15 / Seniors 62+
- \$15 / Active military with ID

Stony Creek Bird Walks

With Ruth Glass

(The 4th Saturday of most months)

Bonus Walk: Clinton River

Sunday, May 13th, 8:00am

Meet at 8am in the Sterling Heights Nature Center parking lot for a walk along the Clinton River, a prolific migration corridor. We were lucky enough to get Kirtland's Warbler here two springs ago. Endangered species

aside, there is typically a great variety of passerines that use the Clinton River corridor. We look forward to seeing you!

Not-so-common Grasslands Birds

Saturday, May 26th, 8:30am

Meet at 8:30am in the Inwood Trails Parking Lot. Thanks to grassland rehabilitation efforts by the HCMA, the northern section of the Habitat Trail now attracts some of the most sought-after open country birds such as Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlark, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Just east of here, Dickcissels, Henslow's and Clay-colored Sparrows, and others have been found in recent years. We will bird in this general vicinity, relying heavily on hearing, so brush up on your grassland bird calls in advance!

Tentative Bonus Walk: MDEQ Wetland Mitigation Bank, 29 Mile Rd

Sometime in May/June (evening)

If the spring rains continue and the shorebirds follow, we will plan a spur-of-the-moment viewing with scopes, at the relatively recently created wetlands for the MDEQ banking program at 29 Mile and Omo roads. Decent rains are required to flood this area and attract shorebirds. Watch for a separate email notice from Ruth!

In Other Bird News...

21st Annual Birdathon for Wildlife Recovery Association

May 11th – May 13th, 2018

This year marks Macomb Audubon's 21st year sponsoring a Birdathon to help the Wildlife Recovery Association (WRA). The WRA is an organization devoted to helping injured raptors, in hopes of releasing them back into the wild. The organization's director, Joe Rogers, has personally devoted much of his life to educating people of all ages using in his unique, high-energy teaching style. As with many non-profit organizations, WRA is not enjoying the bounty it used to. School budgets and many grants have all but dried up. Much of its operating money comes from fundraisers like this Birdathon - *now* is the time to help!

So, what is a Birdathon anyway? It's kind of like a Walkathon, only more fun! During the weekend of the North American Migration Count (this year it's May 11th - May 13th) birders will share their checklists to the Birdathon in hopes of amassing as many species as possible.

All are welcome to participate in the birdwatching aspect. Simply record any sightings any time throughout that Friday to Sunday period. Checklists may be from individual or group efforts, including the tallies that will be submitted from Lake St. Clair Metropark's Big Day Count on May 12th (see page 1, "Lake St. Clair Metropark Big Day Count" - **volunteers needed!**)

Sightings can be handwritten and mailed or emailed to Mike Mencotti (contact info on page 4). Checklists can also be submitted via eBird, with a copy of the checklist sent to Mike. You may email your eBird checklist to yourself then forward it to Mike.

Virtually any area in the "MOO" (Michigan, Ontario and Ohio) can be included. In years past, more than 175 species have been recorded overall. Spread out, go to a hotspot of your choice, and bird your area. Every species counts!

For those looking for another way to support the event, you may choose to pledge your monetary support. Here is the important part: you can either pledge on a cents-per-species basis or make a flat donation; both are helpful! For example, if you pledged 10 cents per species, you might owe around \$17.50 by the end of the weekend.

This year, we are pushing the limits, so give generously, and as you can afford. Sign up your pledges at the May Macomb Audubon meeting (listed on page 1) or cut out the pledge form on the following page and send to Mike Mencotti. After that weekend, Mike will notify all "per-species pledgers" how much money they owe.

We are excited to sponsor another year of this fun event, and happy to report we have already received \$220 in pledges from the Macomb Audubon

Society's April meeting - thank you! In past years, we have raised more than \$600 annually toward the Birdathon, leading to a grand total of over \$11,000 over the past 20 years. Each and every dollar has been put to good use, so help the WRA today! Your pledge is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Make checks payable to:
Wildlife Recovery Association

Mail c/o Mike Mencotti,
25378 Wykeshire, Farmington Hills, MI 48336
Email: mmencotti9@gmail.com

Pledge Form for Birdathon May 11th - May 13th, 2018

Name:

Address:

Email:

Amount of Pledge:

_____ per species

OR a flat rate of _____

Refreshments

We appreciate those who brought refreshments to recent meetings, including: Bill Clark, Alice Forton, Tammy Hooton, Kathy Muscillo, Micki Smith, and Micki Special (and anyone else we may have forgotten to mention)!

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

Contributor Level

Beverlee Babcock
Roger & Eugenia Bajorek
David & Jacquelline Lancaster
Frances Lautner
Ward Randol
Micki Special
Terri Udvare
Thomas & Ramona Van Tol

Supporter Level

Denis & Laura Barbour
John Bieganowski
Raymond & Gretchen Glime
Wild Birds Unlimited Grosse Pointe Woods / Rosann Kovalcik

Donor Level

Macomb Bloomin' Sunflowers

Thank you for your generous support!

MAS has recently been given a generous gift of a collection of Lenox bird figurines, all with proper certification of authenticity. 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.



Downy Woodpecker and Baltimore Oriole figurines

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 12th of the preceding month to:**

Andrea Rose (Little Bird Nerd)
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:



With spring upon us, and migration spreading day-by-day, the Year of the Bird is underway! This season kicks us off to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. It is just one example of what people can accomplish when they work together. Across countries, east to west, north to south, this treaty showed how important birds are to everyone. This treaty that raised the status of birds by adding protections and recognizing their status throughout their movement across borders as they move to new places to nest and breed; 100 years ago, began a cooperation between countries that would protect birds for all posterity, so they would prosper. We see the benefit today as we enjoy such a variety of birds, especially those that travel great distances, and rely on the cooperation of many country's protection. Do your part this year by learning more about, and perhaps seeing, a new species of bird that is protected by this [act](#), last updated just five years ago.



As my backyard FeederWatch is coming to an end this week, I'm moving my search for birds to new locations: at work, on short trips to wild areas, and still out my back window. As things green up, flowers bloom, insects repopulate, and the deciduous trees leaf out, we'll once again witness that amazing transition that we know so well, but hopefully still truly appreciate. Looking back on the last ten years that I've been birding, I can't seem to find one where there hasn't been something new in store. This seems to be the season when that is most apparent. Most often, the new things appear when heading out at a different time, down a different path, or an altogether new place. I hope this season brings you many great experiences, new and renewed.

Happy Birding!

Paul Messing

Macomb Audubon President

Photos by Paul Messing (top) and Little Bird Nerd (middle)

Editor's Note

Hello all, Little Bird Nerd here, hoping springtime is treating you well (in between and throughout the changing weather). I've personally come to appreciate each and every stage of the changing seasons. I like to think living in a place like Michigan gives you extra time to notice these subtle changes with such depth and fullness it's like moving in slow motion. As Paul said in his president's letter, each day has the potential to bring something new, and in terms of the birds, sometimes it's a new bird species while other times it's a familiar bird doing something unusual.



The photo to the right depicts one such moment, where I observed a few tiny Golden-crowned Kinglets lining up for a drink at this inch-long icicle. Perhaps there was sap inside, or maybe they were just thirsty? Either way, I thought it a magical thing to see, and for a while, I forgot the coldness of my hands and the wetness of my feet.



Sometimes it's like this, where we're struck by the beauty of an 'old bird' doing a novel thing. Other times, we get lucky and see a bird we've never seen before, like in the case of a recent sighting at Stony Creek.

It happened just a few days before I was set to leave for Missouri, when fellow birder, photographer, and friend, Paul Poronto, discovered a Snowy Plover (pictured below) at Stony Creek Metropark ([click here](#) to see Paul's birding blog and fantastic images). What a day this was, and what a cool little bird, so far out of its usual southern range!



One thing is for sure, and birding reminds me of this constantly – if you're paying attention, you can never be bored!!

[Click here](#) to read my recent blog post about my birding adventures in Missouri, including a surprise life bird and rarity I discovered in Forest Park, St. Louis!

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

facebook.com/littlebirdnerd
littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com

Photos by Little Bird Nerd

Proud Supporters of Macomb Audubon Society

Lake St. Clair Metropark Nature Center,
 Sterling Heights Nature Center,
 Seven Ponds Nature Center,
 Stony Creek Nature Center,
 Burgess Shadbush Nature Center,
 Wild Life Recovery Association,
 Michigan Nature Association,
 Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy,
 Michigan Audubon RRBO

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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

Committees

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Car Pool Coordinator | Vacant |
| Christmas Bird Count | Barb Baldinger: barbarab@tir.com |
| Conservation/Legislation Elect | Alizah Mooman |
| Historian | Vacant |
| Hospitality (Refreshments) | Betty Ebert & Alice Forton |
| Hospitality (Door Prizes) | Denis & Laura Barbour |
| Earthstar Newsletter Editor | Andrea Rose Meldrum: parchmentheart@hotmail.com |
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| Seven Ponds Representative | Paul Messing |
| Web Editor | Paul Messing |
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Contact the Macomb Audubon Society via e-mail at:
macombaudubon@gmail.com
 To join the Macomb Audubon mailing list please e-mail
macombaudubon-subscribe@yahoo.com

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

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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 _____

Macomb Audubon Society

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