



# EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF THE MACOMB AUDUBON SOCIETY

<http://www.macombaudubon.org>

Volume 45, Number 6, November – December 2018

## Programs

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*Monthly programs are held at Sterling Heights Nature Center unless otherwise noted.*

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### Monday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

#### **Daryl Bernard Presents – “Colorado Birding: Prairies, Foothills and Rocky Mountains”**

Colorado is well-known for its Rocky Mountain splendor – where scenic vistas abound around every bend in the road. The state also happens to be a fantastic place to find some amazing birds.

Join Daryl Bernard as he shares the birds and wildlife he encountered on a recent Seven Ponds Birding Field Tour. The group visited Pawnee National Grasslands, the foothills around Boulder and Fort Collins, Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge in North Park, and Rocky Mountain National Park. Come along as Daryl recounts an extraordinary week in “Colorful Colorado.”

**About Daryl Bernard:** Daryl Bernard is the executive Director of Seven Ponds Nature Center and is an avid birder. Daryl’s presentation style is a lot of fun – come and be entertained! Who knows, maybe a birding trip with Daryl is in your future!

### Monday, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Annual Christmas Potluck and Members Slide Program**

We will meet at our usual spot at the Sterling Heights Nature Center, for this dinner get-together. Bring a dish to pass and your own table setting. Entrees, salads, side dishes and desserts are all welcomed.

After dinner, we will have a slide show presented by our members. Bring up to 20 of your favorite nature inspired photos on one thumb drive or SD Card to share with the group!

Don’t miss this fun annual meeting and chance to connect with fellow bird lovers and photographers alike.

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## Field Trips

### Saturday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, (all day)

#### **119<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count Leader: Barb Baldinger**

For over a century, the National Audubon Society has collected data from volunteers throughout the country on early-winter bird populations. Saturday, December 15th will be the date of Macomb Audubon Society's 43rd year of participating in the Western Macomb County Christmas Bird Count.



If you have never participated in this annual event, please think about volunteering to help count the birds in our area.

Many of our Macomb Audubon members attend and look forward to this special birding occasion. At the end of the day, around 5:00pm, we will meet at the Stony Creek Metropark Nature Center for a hot soup and chili supper, followed by a tally of all the birds counted. Please consider volunteering to bring a crock pot of chili, soup, snack or dessert to the tally. Remember to bring your own soup bowl, plate, and eating utensils.



Sign-up sheets will be available at the November and December membership meetings. After signing up, you will be assigned to a leader in an area with other birders. Please offer to split the cost of gas among the participants in each car. Area leaders will receive their packets at the December membership meeting.

If you wish to participate and are unable to attend the meetings please call Barb Baldinger at 586-263-6530 or email [barbarab@tir.com](mailto:barbarab@tir.com).

*Photos (opposite) by Little Bird Nerd (Canvasback ducks, Snow Buntings)*

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## **Environmental Updates**

**By: Alizah Mooman**

### **Muskegon Lake Cleanup**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration partnered with the Great Lakes Commission and is funding a \$2.8 million project to clean up sawmill debris from Muskegon Lake. The sawmill debris are remnants from the 1800s logging era, making Muskegon Lake one of the Great Lakes region's most highly polluted sites. The project, which began this summer, is expected to restore wetlands and fish habitat, improving conditions for the endangered lake sturgeon.

### **\$6.6 Million Awarded in Grants for Habitat Restoration**

Sustain Our Great Lakes, a partnership funded by federal agencies and private company ArceorMittal, has awarded \$6.6 million in grants for 25 restoration projects in the Great Lakes region. The goals of the projects are wetland habitat restoration, invasive species control, green infrastructure installation, and prevention of nutrient runoff. Projects will also reopen more than 100 miles of river for fish passage, restore coastal habitat, and add more than 160 gallons of stormwater storage capacity. Since 2006, Sustain Our Great Lakes has supplied more than \$158 million in grants and matching contributions for restoration projects.

## **In Other Bird News...**

### **Help Citizen Science Efforts – Participate in 2018-2019 Project FeederWatch**

Project FeederWatch is a citizen science-based bird watching project which takes place annually, beginning the second Saturday of November and running through early April. During the season, counters are encouraged to observe the birds at their feeders, count them on certain days, and report the findings through the FeederWatch website. Detailed instructions can be found at this link:

<https://feederwatch.org/about/detailed-instructions/#select-your-count-site>

Project FeederWatch uses data submitted by bird enthusiasts all over the country, resulting in valuable ornithological data. Because of projects like these, scientists are able to better track trends in bird populations, migration patterns, and more. This year's season officially begins on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, with new user registration opening on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Count tallies can be submitted to the FeederWatch site through April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, just before the season ends. Be sure to visit the FeederWatch website for official rules and details.

### **Do You eBird?**

Ever wonder where to find a specific type of bird? Want to know which seasons bring which migrants to our area? Wish you had an easy place to catalogue and record your bird sightings? eBird is the answer to all of this and more! For those who do not know, eBird is an online database of bird sightings and related information; created in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The project is funded by grants, sponsors and through donations. This platform is a valuable tool for recording your own bird sightings and exploring others' sightings. The website

contains a vast amount of multimedia, including photos, maps and GPS coordinates, conservation and bird related news articles, contests, audio recordings, and more.

To create your own free eBird account, visit [eBird.org](http://eBird.org) and select "Create Account". With this account, you'll open up a whole new world of resources and tracking tools, and you'll be supporting the efforts of this worldwide citizen science database. eBird is also available as an app for both android and apple systems, though some functionality is limited as compared to what is available on the full website.

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## **In Memoriam**

We'd like to hold space here to remember four of our members who have recently passed away:

Mary Stoolmiller, on August 10<sup>th</sup>

Mary Markesino, September 13<sup>th</sup>

David McDonald, September 15<sup>th</sup>,

and Alice Forton, September 26<sup>th</sup>

May they each rest in peace. It's always sad to say goodbye, though we cherish the time we had together, connected through our love of birds and nature. In their honor may we continue to support these worthy causes as a team. May the families and friends of Mary, Mary, David and Alice find comfort and peace during this time.

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## **Contributions**

We appreciate those who bring refreshments and treats to our monthly meetings. Your generosity makes our time together even sweeter.

The following individuals have made recent financial contributions to The Macomb Audubon Society:

### Contributor Level

Bill Clark

### Supporter Level

Denis & Laura Barbour

### **Thank you for your generous support!**

MAS was gifted with a collection of Lenox bird figurines, all complete with proper certification of authenticity. We plan to raffle two of these beautiful pieces during the next few monthly meetings until the collection has been dispersed to its rightful new owners.

We thank you for your kind donations and participation in these monthly raffles which support this organization.



*Left: Downy Woodpecker*

*Right: Baltimore Oriole*

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## About Our Organization

The **Macomb Audubon Society** is a subchapter of Michigan Audubon.

Programs are normally held the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the **Sterling Heights Nature Center**, located at **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. Come alone or bring a friend! All are welcome!

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 the electronic option to save some trees!

# A Letter From the President, Paul Messing



As always, nature seems to offer both the expected and the unexpected. If you think winter is here, well, then we are greeted with record heat. When you think it might continue to be a mild fall, then here comes the cold. But to many of the birds and other wildlife, all this is just another day, it seems. I noticed the return of the ducks that make the 22-acre lake in Warren their stop during migration.



This year as a special project, I've been searching out monarch butterflies as part of the University of Kansas' Monarch Watch program. A three-day heat spell brought 36 specimens to me and my colleague's nets. Then, with a drop in temperatures, so went the numbers of monarchs. From the literature provided from the program, came the guidance to find monarchs seeking safe harbor in the warmth of the

shores. With sunny relief, this search was closer to the warm waters of the larger lakes, bringing a few more specimens in my sights at Lake St. Clair Metropark. Even when the target species is nowhere to be seen, there are other winged creatures to enjoy. The Common Buckeye is another butterfly which is a beautiful sight this time of year. A close look at a lady bug is hard to beat; and in the fields I've been searching through, there is not lack of grasshoppers.



As the pace drops for some of us, along with the temperatures, I hope you can take time to reflect, to appreciate the moments we have enjoyed throughout this year, the people who have helped us along the way, and sharing the things which mean the most to us. I look forward to hearing the stories everyone brings, perhaps with pictures, to close the year in December. We all share an appreciation for the natural world we can enjoy and express in our own ways. Take a moment to be thankful for what we have, whether it's those few minutes

of breathing time in between errands; or if we are able to set a few hours aside to enjoy the upcoming winter season. These next few weeks will bring many new opportunities to volunteer as well. If you are looking for a reason to keep record of what is at your feeder, consider Cornell's Project FeederWatch program, and there are many birders needed for the Christmas Bird Count in December. These are great opportunities to continue to watch the birds that we all enjoy. Thank you for the consideration.

Happy Birding and Happy Holidays!

Paul Messing, Macomb Audubon President

*(Photos by Paul Messing. [Clockwise from top left: Paul's Monarch, Paul Messing, Henry's Grasshopper, Lucy's Ladybug])*

# Editor's Note

Since this is the final edition of this year's newsletter, I thought it'd be fun to re-view my year of birding (with the help of some stats).



I started my Life List\* in June of 2014, and since then have recorded 295 species.

Of these, 9 were from other states, meaning I have seen 284 bird species in the state of Michigan. I didn't bird as much as I did last year, but I still managed, as always, to enjoy every moment I did have, and every new, small discovery.

## My 2018 Lifers\*\*

#288 – **Snowy Plover**, found by Paul Poronto at Stony Creek Metropark, 4/2/18

#289 – **Eurasian Tree Sparrow**, found by me on a trip to Missouri, 4/5/18

#290 – **Bewick's Wren**, also found by me in Missouri (totally unexpected!), 4/6/18

#291 - **Pacific Loon**, found by Andy Dettling at Lake Erie Metropark, 5/1/18

#292 – **Little Gull**, found by Phil Odum and others at Tawas, 5/21/18

#293 – **Connecticut Warbler**, heard by me at Lake St. Clair Metropark, 5/25/18

#294 – **Fork-tailed Flycatcher**, found by Andy Weinrauch in Flushing, MI, 6/4/18

#295 – **Brant**, an adorable goose found by Patrick Wright in Port Huron, 10/15/18

## Macomb County Firsts (birds I hadn't seen in the county before this year):

**Northern Mockingbird, Snowy Plover, Piping Plover, Yellow-throated Warbler, Whimbrel, Black-necked Stilt, Connecticut Warbler, Cattle Egret, and Brant**

I hope you have enjoyed this 2018 Year of the Bird. Whether you contributed to conservation efforts or birding organizations, participated in citizen science, attended meetings like ours, or simply enjoyed and respected our natural world, know that you have done something meaningful and important, giving voices to the creatures who can't speak for themselves. I hope you've seen many beautiful birds doing interesting things, and I hope next year is just as great!

As always, follow my adventures on Facebook at [facebook.com/littlebirdnerd](https://facebook.com/littlebirdnerd), or [littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com](http://littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com).

Love,  
Andrea Rose (aka Little Bird Nerd)!

\*All-time list of bird species one has observed

\*\*A bird species observed for the very first time (goes on Life List)

# 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

## Board Members & Committee Chairs

President Paul Messing: [macombaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:macombaudubon@gmail.com)  
 1<sup>st</sup> VP (Programs) Holly Vaughn Joswick: [vaughnh@michigan.gov](mailto:vaughnh@michigan.gov)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> VP (Membership) Beverlee Babcock: [beverleebabcock4@gmail.com](mailto:beverleebabcock4@gmail.com)  
 3<sup>rd</sup> VPs (Field Trips) Colleen Traylor & Micki Special:  
[grandmothernature2@gmail.com](mailto:grandmothernature2@gmail.com) & [maxfiles1@gmail.com](mailto:maxfiles1@gmail.com)  
 Recording Secretary Laura Barbour: [denilaur@sbcglobal.net](mailto:denilaur@sbcglobal.net)  
 Corresponding Secretary Micki Smith: [micki35@wowway.com](mailto:micki35@wowway.com)  
 Treasurer Brandy Ciaciuch: [mamachach38@gmail.com](mailto:mamachach38@gmail.com)

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**Visit your local backyard bird feeding 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>
Christmas Bird Count	Barb Baldinger: <a href="mailto:barbarab@tir.com">barbarab@tir.com</a>
Conservation/Legislation Elect	Alizah Mooman
Historian	<b>Vacant</b>
Hospitality (Refreshments)	Betty Ebert & Angela Slayton
Hospitality (Door Prizes)	Denis & Laura Barbour
Earthstar Newsletter Editor	Andrea Rose Meldrum: <a href="mailto:parchmentheart@hotmail.com">parchmentheart@hotmail.com</a>
Michigan Audubon Rep.	Ray Lalonde
Newsletter Production, Mailing	Denis & Laura Barbour
Publicity Chairperson	Holly Vaughn Joswick
Seven Ponds Representative	Paul Messing
Web Editor	Paul Messing
Volunteer Coordinator	<b>Vacant</b>

Contact the Macomb Audubon Society via e-mail at:  
[macombaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:macombaudubon@gmail.com)  
 To join the Macomb Audubon mailing list please e-mail  
[macombaudubon-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto: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

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.

Rochester Hills Mi. 48307-5415

<http://www.macombaudubon.org>

