



WASHTENAW
AUDUBON SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

March /April 2019

Migration Madness 2019

The Field Trip Issue

It's officially spring! And for many birders that heralds the most wonderful birding season of the year—spring migration!

Your Washtenaw Audubon board members, the field trip committee, and generous volunteers have put together an incredible slate of birding opportunities to help you make the most of the season! This issue is packed with details about a multitude of field trips—from weekly Thursday morning leaderless Arb Walks to May's popular Tuesday Evening Birders, and much more. You'll also find service opportunities and monthly programs at Matthaei. Come join your fellow birders as we all get out and enjoy the wonders of spring birding in Washtenaw County.



Left: Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Right: Lesser Yellowlegs

Photos: Benjamin Hack

President's Letter

Dear Birders and Friends,

As I write this letter, I've just reported to the Birders Listerv that good numbers and variety of waterfowl were feeding today at Barton Pond, South Pond, and Swift Run Pond in Ann Arbor. Species included Northern Shovelers, Gadwall, both Scaup species, Redhead, Canvasback, Common and Hooded Mergs, Goldeneye, Ring-necked Ducks, Bufflehead, Pied-billed Grebe, and the usual suspects. There was a Great Egret at Swift Run. WAS member Bruce Moorman reports Tundra Swans and large numbers of the above species at Ford Lake/North Bay Park. Common Loons and Horned Grebes are not far behind. With the ice just going out, these aggregations are fun to see, but they are temporary. These species will move on to their breeding grounds to the north of us, in Northern Michigan and Canada. Get out there and see this spectacle soon, if you can, before it is over for this spring.

We have a great lineup of field trips and programs coming up for spring, so check this newsletter, our Facebook page, and the Washtenaw Audubon website (www.washtenawaudubon.org) for the latest information, and keep checking, as more programs are being added all the time.

I hope to see many of you at an upcoming field trip or program, or by the side of the road overlooking Barton Pond, trying to sort Lesser and Greater Scaup.

As always,

I am for the birds,

Juliet Berger



Indigo Bunting, Benjamin Hack

A Thank You and a Welcome

Congratulations to Ellie Shappirio on her retirement from the Washtenaw Audubon Society Board. Ellie served for at least 20 years, and probably more, in her role as Treasurer, and often helped with membership in the past. While growing up in Howell, Michigan, Ellie developed a love of nature in all forms. She's a member of the Michigan Botanical Club, as well as WAS, and is a longtime member of the Ann Arbor Potters Guild. We are so grateful for her many years of dedicated service. We'll miss you, Ellie, but we know you'll continue to be active in the birding community. Thanks a million for all your work on behalf of WAS!

We welcome Keith Dickey to the WAS Board, as our new Treasurer. We'll be affirming Keith as our newest WAS Board Officer, at the next Program. Keith moved to Ann Arbor in 2018 from New Hampshire, and immediately jumped into Washtenaw Audubon with both feet, joining us on field trips and programs and easily winning our respect and friendship. Keith is an avid and fabulous photographer and is especially expert at capturing bird images. He brings a wealth of experience in financial matters to our Board. Keith is Chief Strategy Officer with the University of Michigan Hospital System. We are so fortunate Keith has agreed to be our new Treasurer. Thanks, Keith!

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (April 2019 – June 2019)

Bryn Martin, Field Trip Coordinator (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 email address above. Also, if you have a suggestion for a field trip, please send it to Bryn at the email address above.

Thursdays in April and May, 8:00 a.m.

Spring Migration Walks at the Arb

Join us on Thursday mornings starting at the end of March and going through May (March 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30) at Nichols Arboretum to observe migrants making their way north. These leaderless walks are a great opportunity to join with other birders of all skill levels. In addition to the birds, the Arb's trees and other plants offer delights of their own. Park and meet at the Riverview Court cul-de-sac off Geddes Road at 8:00 a.m.; the walks will end around 11:00 a.m., but participants can leave whenever they prefer.

Friday, April 5, 7:30 p.m.

Woodcock Walk at Barton Nature Area

Leaders: Juliet Berger & Jessica Adamczyk

The American Woodcock, is known for its unusual flying pattern during courtship, which can be seen at dawn and dusk in the spring. Park at the Barton Dam lot on Huron River Drive, across the street and slightly north/upriver from Bird Road and follow the trail around the building to the foot bridge. We will meet right on the other side (the dam side) of the bridge at 7:30 p.m. PLEASE NOTE: Do not park in the Barton Nature Area lot on Huron River Dr. just after Main St., or you will have a LONG walk back to your car in the dark. Please wear good walking shoes and dress warmly. (The temperature will drop quickly at sunset.) Bring a small flashlight to assist you in exiting the park after the program ends. Plan on returning to your car around 9:15 p.m. if all goes well. Rain date is April 6.

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (April 2019 – June 2019)

Sunday, April 7, 8:15 a.m.

Nichols Arboretum Early Migrants

Leader: Karen Markey

Early springtime walks through the Arb are productive for Yellow-bellied sapsuckers, White-throated sparrows, Winter wrens, Fox sparrows, Ruby- and Golden-crowned kinglets, and Brown creepers. These early birds are joined by the first warblers—Yellow-rumped, Pine, Palm, and Orange-crowned. Maybe a Blue-headed vireo will join them. We will wander the Arb's meandering gravel and dirt paths in search of early spring migrants. We will meet at the Riverview entrance to the Arb at 8:15 a.m. sharp. Dress appropriately for the weather including coat, gloves, scarf, hat, and sensible footwear. No strollers, dogs, or wagons please. Walk should end between 10:30 and 11 a.m.

Thursday, April 11, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Breeding Bird Survey Kickoff Meeting

NAP Headquarters, 3875 East Huron River Drive

Learn how to survey for breeding birds in Ann Arbor's parks! Experience in bird identification is necessary. Sign up for your favorite park, pick up survey materials, and learn about the 2018 survey results. Please register by April 8. For more information, or to register, call NAP at 734.794.6627, or send an email to NAP@a2gov.org. <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/Parks-Recreation/NAP/birds/Pages/BreedingBirdSurvey.aspx>

Saturday, April 13, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

In Search of Salamanders at Hudson Mills Metropark

Leader: Edwin Sanchez

Join leader Edwin Sanchez at Hudson Mills Metropark in search of salamanders. Eddie is an expert on these amphibians and this will be a fun morning turning over rocks and logs to locate some of the six species known to reside in the park. Meet at the parking lot for the River Grove Shelter area located within the park (turn right after the entry kiosk, then your next left into the lot). Expect muddy grounds. In case we end up handling any salamanders, please do not use any soaps, creams, or detergents on your hands for this morning. This fun, hands-on field trip is perfect for little ones, as well. This field trip is free of charge, but a Metroparks Pass is required for admission to the park.

Sunday, April 14, 8:00 a.m.

Arb Walk

A Sunday morning Arb Walk. Meet at the same place as the Thursday morning Arb Walks. For more info, see the first field trip entry above.

Saturday, April 27, 8:00 a.m.

Saline River Preserve

Location: 9000 South Maple Road, Saline, MI 48176 (Parking lot is tiny, recommend parking on Maple)
Join us April 27 for a spring exploration of the Leslee Niethammer Saline River Preserve! Owned by York Township and maintained by the Friends of the Saline River, the 17.4-acre preserve includes meadows and trails along the river. On our first trip to the Preserve last fall, we saw 37 bird species, including a juvenile Red-headed Woodpecker and several species of warblers.

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The Washtenaw Audubon Society is an active chapter of Michigan Audubon formed in the early 1950s. Monthly programs feature guest speakers on a wide variety of natural history and birding

Saturday, May 4, 8:00 a.m.

Global Big Day Arb Walk

Join WAS for a leaderless Arb Walk to celebrate the Global Big Day. Meet at the same location as the Thursday morning Arb Walks. See above for more details.

Tuesdays in May (May 7, 14, 21, 28), 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday Evening Birders

Leaders: To be announced

Miller Road Park & Ride Lot

Each Tuesday in May, leaders will scout locations and scan bird reports during the day, and then in the evening take the group to where the action is. This is a carpool event with multiple stops. We will meet at 6:00 PM, *usually* at the Miller Road Park & Ride (at Miller and M-14), but the meeting location is subject to change if dictated by the destination of the week. We will confirm the specific meeting spot on the Monday before the trip by posting it on our Facebook page and on the Birders email listserv, and in most cases we expect to be able to update this entry on the website as well. For example, if the primary destinations are to the east, we might choose to meet at the Plymouth Road Park & Ride. Group departure from the meeting site is at 6:15 so do plan to arrive in plenty of time to form up carpools! Please bring binoculars and scopes if you have them. Dress for weather that will get cooler as sunset approaches. We almost never cancel so it is best to show up at the departure site to see what the plans are. We will bird until sunset. Usually we are well away from our departure site, so it is after sunset when we return to the parking site.

Saturday, May 11, 2019

Washtenaw County May Count

Compiler: Juliet Berger; Area leaders to be announced

As you think about the ways you will bird in the county this spring, please consider participating in the Washtenaw County May Count, on International Migratory Bird Day. Juliet Berger is the Compiler for this informal count. The Compiler divides the county into townships, each of which has an Area Leader. Leaders recruit additional volunteers to count birds throughout their area. For names and contact information for the Compiler and the Area Leaders, visit the WAS website, and please consider volunteering. *Note:* Please contact Juliet Berger if you are interested in helping out as an Area Leader—it is not too difficult or time consuming! This year, the May Count will continue to be a Washtenaw County only event, as our state-wide compilers have retired. All Washtenaw County birders are welcome to bird all or part of the day. We will post detailed instructions on the WAS website on count day logistics. Please check back here for more information about how to participate as the date gets closer. *Note:* Please also see the WAS web site for new documents describing the count procedures. Area leaders will be posted closer to the event date.

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (April 2019 – June 2019)

Bryn Martin, Field Trip Coordinator (fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org)

Friday, May 17, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

NAP Bird Walk, Gallup Park

Leader: Juliet Berger

Join Juliet Berger on this NAP-sponsored walks. For more information, please go to <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/Parks-Recreation/NAP/birds/Pages/default.aspx>.

Saturday, May 18, 2019, 7:45 a.m.

Hudson Mills Metropark Migrants

Leader: Karen Markey

Target birds include cuckoos, woodpeckers, vireos, flycatchers, thrushes, warblers and tanagers. Meet at the flagpole in front of the Activity Center at 7:45 a.m. The trip will last roughly until 11:00 a.m. This field trip is free of charge, but a Metroparks Pass is required for admission to the park.

Sunday, May 19, 2019, 6:00 a.m.

Magee Marsh and Metzger Marsh, NW Ohio

Leader: Karen Markey

Magee Marsh is an internationally renowned migrant trap where birds stop to refuel before their long flight across Lake Erie. Warblers, flycatchers, sparrows, and thrushes are just some of the many types of birds you can see there. Birders may see more than 100 species. Meet at the park-and-ride lot at Plymouth Road and US 23 at 6:00 a.m. to arrange carpools for a 6:15 a.m. sharp departure. Or meet the group at the warbler sign near the boardwalk entrance at Magee Marsh at 8:00 a.m. Karen plans to return in the late afternoon, but individual drivers and their carpools may arrange to come back at any time.

Saturday, June 1 (tentative)

Stinchfield Woods Annual Breeding Bird Census

The Stinchfield Woods breeding bird census is an annual survey of elusive species breeding within the 777-acre Stinchfield Woods, located at 9401 Stinchfield Woods Rd., Pinckney, MI. Typical birds found at Stinchfield include Pine and Black-throated Green Warblers, Blue-headed Vireos, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Hooded Warblers, Ovenbirds, and Acadian Flycatchers. This survey is mostly a hearing event so birders with a keen ear are especially needed, although all birders are welcome to participate. Please see the WAS web site for more details or email Mary Wise (auntyem@umich.edu) to RSVP for this event.



Left: Black-throated Green Warbler

Right: Hermit Thrush

Photos: Benjamin Hack

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (April 2019 – June 2019)

Bryn Martin, Field Trip Coordinator (fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org)

Sunday, June 2, 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

NAP Grassland Bird Walk, A2 Landfill/Wheeler Service Center

Leader: Juliet Berger

Join Juliet Berger on this NAP-sponsored walks. For more information, please go to <https://www.a2gov.org/departments/Parks-Recreation/NAP/birds/Pages/default.aspx>.

Tuesday, June 11, 2019, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Volunteer Stewardship Event

Searles Nature Preserve (Bolla Road in August Twp.)

After the rush of spring migration slows down, come join the WAS volunteer stewardship crew to help care for our Searles Nature Preserve. This natural gem is off the beaten path and gives nature lovers and birders a quiet place to visit and enjoy. We'll be focusing on maintaining trails at this event, so please bring saws, loppers, pruning shears, and any other tools that may be helpful for clearing brush. Dress for the weather, and bring boots, pants, gloves, and water. Long sleeves are recommended to protect against poison ivy. Park along Bolla Rd., approximately 1/4 mile west of Stony Creek Rd. in Augusta Twp.

Saturday, June 15, 2019

Prothonotary Paddle

Please see the WAS web site for details about this unique way to see the Prothonotary Warblers along



Prothonotary Warbler, Benjamin Hack

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, P.O. Box 130923, Ann Arbor, MI 48113**.

<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	Membership Dues	
Additional Donation \$ <input type="text"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Household	\$25 (online only \$20)
Name: <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Student		\$15 (online only \$10)
Address: <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior		\$15 (online only \$10)
Phone: <input type="text"/>	Email: <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$50

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 and 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 7:30 p.m. at the U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. Free and open to the public. **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.*

April 17 Birding Romania

Rodolfo Palma shares the wonders of birding Romania. He is a native of Chile and settled in the U.S. after getting his Ph.D. in engineering in the 1980s. In the early 2000s, after borrowing binoculars from a local park ranger and attending a Washtenaw Audubon event, Rodolfo got hooked and has been birding ever since. He has birded in 16 countries and his birds photographed list approaches 2500 species.

May 15 Saving the Endangered Manatee

Katherine LaCommare, Ph.D., presents a program on one of nature's most fascinating creatures, the Manatee. Dr. LaCommare, who teaches at the U of M, Dearborn, has been studying Manatees for the past several years. Though they may not be the loveliest of mammals, they are among the most endearing and inoffensive. Unfortunately, they are also endangered. Join us to learn what problems these animals face and what is being done to help them.

June 19 The Birds of Pte. Mouillee

Join the inimitable Don Chalfant for a photographic field trip to see the lovely birds of Pte. Mouillee, one of Michigan's premier birding locations. Pte. Mou, a series of dikes, impoundments, and coastal wetlands on the western shore of Lake Erie, hosts many of Michigan's rarer birds in season (though not necessarily each year), including American White Pelicans, Yellow-headed Blackbird, King Rail, Glossy Ibis, and Tricolored Heron, and the occasional mega-rarity. Don Chalfant is a retired Ann Arbor Public School teacher, who has spent many hours walking and biking the dikes at Pte. Mou and has photographed many birds there.

Washtenaw Audubon Society

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