



THE NUTHATCH

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“Wildlife Recovery Association: Birds of Prey”

Joe Rogers

Tuesday, June 14, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

The Wildlife Recovery Association will present an enjoyable and informative program alongside live hawks and owls. Look straight into the dark eyes of a beautiful barred owl, understand mysterious sounds of the night, and see the beauty of peregrine falcons which returned from near extinction. Learn and discover the fascinating world of wild hawks and owls, their language, hunting habits, niches, and adaptations. Laugh, learn, and develop a passion for these magnificent birds!



The Wildlife Recovery Association is dedicated to promoting the understanding, appreciation, and protection of wild raptors and their connection with nature.

This children’s program is open to everyone.



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Inside This Issue

President’s Column	2
Board Members	3
Upcoming Field Trips	4
Field Trip Reports	5 - 8
Owlets Field Trip Reports	9 - 12
Owlets Upcoming Field Trips	13- 14
Book Reviews	15 - 16
Nature Notes	17
OAS Around Town	18
Bird Briefs	19
Bird Quiz	20
Board of Directors Meeting Highlights	21
Membership Information	22
A Call For Advocacy from Annis Pratt	23
Upcoming Meeting Schedule	24
Membership Form	25

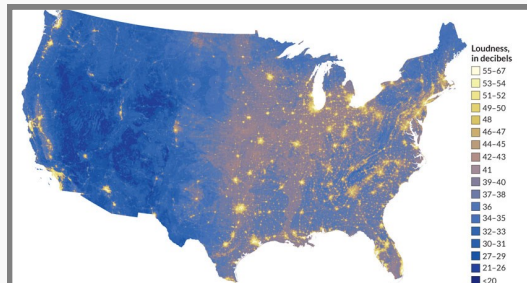
“On Soundscapes: Listening to Stories of the Environment”

Dr. Sharon Gill

Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Soundscapes reflect the combined sounds of the environment, connect us to nature, and help build memories of time and place. As humans change the sound environment, we risk degrading not only our experiences in nature but those of animals that rely on natural areas.

In this talk, Dr. Sharon Gill, from Western Michigan University’s Department of Biological Sciences, will discuss her research investigating effects of environmental change on soundscapes and animal sounds, as well as a project merging art and science to explore human experiences of our changing environment.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Summer 2022

Finally!! Warm temperatures and migration have arrived. Seemed like a long time coming this year, but the hummingbirds, orioles, and warblers have finally made it back to the yard and our favorite local areas.

On May 1st I went to my usual greenhouse to get hanging baskets and flowers for the summer. I just hung the baskets to get them off the ground knowing that if we got a frost warning, I would have to bring them in. I hadn't had one hung on my front porch for more than a couple of hours when a female cardinal started bringing things to the basket of begonias and was building a nest!! I was so worried that we would get a frost after she finished it and laid eggs and then I wouldn't be able to bring it in at night. But she actually finished the nest and then waited about a week before she laid her eggs, so we were safe from frosts by that time. Now it just makes it hard to keep it watered without disturbing the nest, but I look forward to the arrival and fledging of the young cardinals.

I would like to welcome and sincerely thank Karen Kessler who has volunteered to take over the vacant position of Publicity and Fundraising Chair!! We all look forward to working with her and I think she will do a great job!

I hope everyone is busy planting native plants to welcome our birds, bees, butterflies, and other native insects back this summer. If you have the time, there are lots of opportunities available for volunteering at native plant sales, invasive plant control stewardship work, and nest box monitoring. Greg Petrosky, our Conservation/Environment Chair has been posting several of these. Keep your eyes out for something that fits your interest and schedule.

Have a wonderful summer and hope you can get out and enjoy our returning birds and other wildlife!! Stay safe and healthy.

Sue Wright



Photo Credit: OAS Gallery

OAS BOARD MEMBERS

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President	Sue Wright	(248) 330-6861	suzwright2@aol.com
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Appointed Officers

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Advocacy Officer	Vacant		

Volunteer With Us!

Do you want to get involved with your local Audubon Chapter? Consider contributing your talents and skills as an OAS Board Member to help us realize our mission. *Please contact president Sue Wright if you are interested in the following position:*

Advocacy Officer

This position involves keeping members informed of new happenings in the area of conservation & environment, with a specific focus on advocacy. We need someone to stay abreast of national and local advocacy efforts and be a resource to the Board and our members. You will use social media, birding listservs, and OAS mailing list to inform members about opportunities to advocate on behalf of birds, their habitat, and the environment.

Photo Credits: Cover Page Banner, G. Cummins. Program Photos, Wildlife Recovery Association and National Park Service.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Covid-19 Update: OAS continues to adhere to Michigan Health Department’s recommended precautions during all field trips (see page 14).

Schedule changes and updates will be posted on our website and members will also receive email updates. Owllet trip details are listed on pages 13 - 14.

Pre-Registration is required for all trips — contact trip leader to register.

Check the “Field Trips” page on our website often for current information and more details!

www.oaklandaudubon.org

Date	Event	Trip Leader(s)
June 18, 2022 (Saturday) ** see more info below **	Kirtland’s Warbler Tour (Owlets & Everyone) Huron-Manistee National Forest	Kathleen Dougherty kad8186@msn.com
July 16, 2022 (Saturday) 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Indian Springs Metropark (Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty kad8186@msn.com
July 30, 2022 (Saturday) 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Butterfly Walk at Indian Springs Metropark	Doris Applebaum ibis4247@sbcglobal.net
August 13, 2022 (Saturday) 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Heritage Park, Farmington Hills (Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty kad8186@msn.com
August 27, 2022 (Saturday) 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Pointe Mouillee State Game Area	Jeff Stacey jdstacey@ameritech.net

Kirtland’s Warbler Tour — Huron Manistee National Forest, Mio

Join OAS on a journey to the Huron-Manistee National Forest in Mio, Michigan for a chance to see the famous Kirtland’s Warbler (*Setophaga kirtlandii*). The Kirtland’s Warbler depends on Michigan’s jack pine habitat to breed. The comeback of this formerly federally listed species is a remarkable conservation success story thanks to the U.S. Forest Service and partner organizations who worked to increase the Kirtland’s Warbler population for more than 50 years. Although the Kirtland’s Warbler was delisted from the federal endangered species list in 2019, the species remains dependent on conservation efforts and monitoring of its population continues. We will join a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) tour to visit nesting grounds, have a chance at spotting this iconic bird, and see other resident species. In advance of the tour, on June 15 at 7 PM, participants will have the option to attend a virtual presentation by USFS to learn about Kirtland’s Warbler history and management. The field trip will be re-scheduled for Saturday, June 25, 2022 in the event of rain.



Photo Credit: OAS Gallery

Registration is required. A list of lodging options will be provided to registered participants.
Contact trip leader for full details.

Field Trip Reports

March 6, 2022 - Kensington Metropark

Leader: Jeff Stacey

There was an uninvited guest on the OAS early March trip to Kensington Metropark – an unforgiving wind. Despite later topping out at 61 degrees, it didn't feel all that warm due to a sustained 22 mph wind with gusts close to 50 mph. Needless to say, that made finding birds more challenging than usual – but our group was up to the task!

Probably due to the weather, the group of 8 was on the smaller side. We started at the nature center and went to look for Red-headed Woodpeckers that had been seen in the area recently. It was a bit of a slow start, but we finally spotted one holding onto a tree for dear life in that stiff wind. We tried to feed some of the smaller birds by hand (a Kensington ritual), but only a couple brave Black-capped Chickadees were hungry. Like everything else that didn't go according to plan that day, we blamed it on the wind. We were able to fulfill one birder's request of Brown-headed Cowbirds as well (first sighting of the year is about the only time they are popular).

We stopped at the farm center bridge to look for waterfowl. The ice had melted recently so there was a lot more open water to scan through. There were mostly diving ducks here – Common Goldeneye, Common Mergansers, and Hooded Mergansers. Those also attracted several Bald Eagles to the area.

The third stop was at the Spring Hill area. After a long walk across the field and through the woods, this stop was looking like a bust. However, an Eastern Meadowlark called as we were walking back to the cars. It was hard to spot, but it called again and sang twice before flying off, giving everyone a view.

Finally, we ended up at the Osprey platform, where waterfowl were very numerous. Pretty much all of the expected species (American Black Duck, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, and Gadwall) were there. The real treats were several Northern Pintail, a pair of early Pied-billed Grebes, and also a pair of Green-winged Teal.

We ended up with 51 species – a very respectable total for early March.



American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*);
Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*);
and Sandhill Crane (*Antigone canadensis*)

Photo Credits: Kayla Niner



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Field Trip Reports (continued)

March 19, 2022 - Lake Erie Metropark

Leader: Mike Mencotti

Neither threat of rain nor gloom of fog kept 11 dedicated birders away from looking for early spring migrants at Lake Erie Metropark on March 19. The day unfolded slowly as the museum trails had little to offer at first with only doves, robins and blackbirds flying and singing. But things soon picked up with sparrows and waterfowl. A Carolina Wren was a pleasure to hear; White-throated Sparrows and Golden-crowned Kinglets strutted their stuff from low perches. Waterfowl numbers were low, but the variety was impressive. And those early migrants? Well, we had Tree Swallow, Bonaparte's Gull, Rusty Blackbird, Killdeer, and – to cap off the trip – a Great Egret. Full disclosure: I arrived to the park about 30 minutes ahead of the meeting time and was rewarded with an American Woodcock calling—the early birder gets the bird, I guess! At noon, the rain began. Perfect timing. We counted 45 species.

April 2, 2022 - Belleville Lake

Leader: Jim Koppin

Thirteen birders met at the east end of the chain of lakes formed by dams on the Lower Huron River. We worked our way up the south side of the river from Edison Dam to the North Bay of Ford Lake, stopping at several sites. Several of the newer birders recorded “lifers” on this trip. We observed 44 species; the highlights were several Common Loon, Tundra Swan, nesting Ospreys, and a Pileated Woodpecker at North Bay Park.

April 30, 2022 - Belle Isle State Park

Leaders: Mike Mencotti & Manny Salas

The last day of April brought 18 birders to the OAS Belle Isle field trip. The outing offered great looks, fine birds, excellent camaraderie, and a few wacky moments too.

We began at the Nature Center parking area, which yielded our first wacky moment: a wild turkey hanging out all morning by the (empty) feeder area; it was a park bird for all attendees. (Now. How the heck did this bird get to the island? Hmmm).

We broke off into two smaller groups, and each group had a lot of success along the Lighthouse Trail. Common Tern, Marsh Wren, Sora were ID'ed, and we all got to see a Bald Eagle carrying nesting material and a Sandhill Crane fly by.



Photo Credit: Jo Rohloff
Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*)

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Field Trip Reports (continued)

Our other stop was the Nashua Creek trail, which has been newly refurbished. The wackiness continued, with a few Canada Geese perched in a tree – obviously channeling their inner Wood Duck – as well as a couple of Solitary Sandpipers in a puddle in the middle of the woods. Hmm. The early warblers were few, but certainly welcome; the Northern Parulas were the highlights of the six warbler species found. We all enjoyed learning to identify the swooping swallows (four species with some Chimney Swifts spicing up the skies). But the bird of the day had to be the gazillion White-throated Sparrows. A total of 60 species were seen.



Clockwise: Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*); Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*); Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*), Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*), and a boardwalk full of happy birders.

Photo Credits: Jo Rohloff

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Field Trip Reports (continued)

May 28, 2022 - Oak Openings Preserve Metropark & Irwin Prairie Nature Preserve

Leader: Don Burlett

A small group of birders (4 total) came out to enjoy a very nice day of birding. The day started off cloudy and with very temperate weather. We began at the Oak Openings Preserve Metroparks' Buehner Center, where we birded along a woodland trail north of the center. There were some birds to see, but many were high in the trees or distant so they were identified by call. Highlights at this location were Olive-sided Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Pine Warbler, and Northern Parula.

We then traveled to the fields on Girdham Road. These fields are protected from intrusion because they are breeding grounds for several important sparrows. We got very nice looks at Lark Sparrow, including a breeding moment, along with other sparrows like Grasshopper Sparrow and Field Sparrow. The ever-present Red-headed Woodpeckers were flying all over the place. We also spotted calling Eastern Towhees, Baltimore Orioles, and other woodland species. Up the road we heard a Yellow-breasted Chat calling from an inaccessible area. There were reports of a Blue Grosbeak, but we didn't identify a call or see one.

After a lunch break, we headed to Irwin Prairie. Water levels were okay and we added a number of species not seen previously, including Indigo Bunting, Cedar Waxwing, Red-winged Blackbird, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The highlight of this section was a Sedge Wren calling from just off the boardwalk. He did present himself for good looks, a delight to see.

We identified 45 species in total, but it was the overall quality of the species seen and the enjoyment of nature itself that made this a fun one. This is always a good trip because of the iconic species regularly seen here; it's not a trip to miss too often.

Oakland Owlets

Field Trip Reports

February 19, 2022 - Great Backyard Bird Count at E. L. Johnson Nature Center

Leader: Kathleen Dougherty

The Oakland Owlets families and friends participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) at the E. L. Johnson Nature Center in Bloomfield Hills. The GBBC is a four-day community science project that encourages people to observe and report birds locally. This year was the 25th edition of this large birding event —318,000 people from 192 countries participated. The GBBC tallied 7,091 species of birds globally.

Master bird bander Allen T. Chartier explained bird banding methods and demonstrated banding of birds captured at the Nature Center's feeding station. Everyone was able to see birds up close —once banded, participants released the birds. The Owlets' experiences with bird banding were interesting, exciting, and memorable. A total of 24 birds representing seven species were banded, including common feeder birds like Downy Woodpecker and Dark-eyed Junco.

The Owlets then bundled up and ventured outdoors to explore the E. L. Johnson Nature Center's property. Frigid temperatures and strong winds made birding challenging. Despite these conditions, the group saw 52 birds of 17 species along the trail system.

The forty-acre site is an outdoor classroom for students from the Bloomfield Hills School District and is also a community resource open to the public. The property offers opportunities for hiking, cross-country skiing, and various outdoor recreation experiences where visitors can see nature locally. The property offers over two miles of trails and contains a pond and natural areas such as prairies and woodlands.



In partnership with E.L. Johnson Nature Center, OAS sponsored Allen's banding demonstration for the Owlets Program and for a public GBBC program that followed, which attracted 59 people. OAS Board Member David Hoch and OAS Field Trip Leader Manny Salas led the public nature hikes. OAS volunteer Blanche Wicke assisted during the Owlets' program. Lastly, Ms. Lisa Perez, the U.S. Forest Service's Detroit Urban Connections Coordinator, hosted a display and answered questions about the USFS's Kirtland's Warbler Calendar Contest.

Thank You to Cass Arsenault (E.L. Johnson Nature Center Lead Naturalist), Allen T. Chartier, David Hoch, Lisa Perez, Manny Salas, and Blanche Wicke for making this event possible.

Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty.

Oakland Owlets

Field Trip Reports

March 26 - Highland State Recreation Area

Leader: Kathleen Dougherty

The Oakland Owlets families and friends met on a cold and windy evening to explore the Haven Hill Natural Area at the Highland State Recreation Area (HSRA). Weather conditions were difficult, but the hardy group of birders were ready to go! This 5,900-acre State Recreation Area protects natural communities in Oakland County. The Haven Hill Nature Area is a 721-acre designated National Natural Area within the park. It was the estate of Edsel and Eleanor Ford who donated the property to the Michigan State Parks.



The Friends of the Highland Recreation Area (FOHRA) is an active friends group that helps with education and restoration projects at the park. Lar Falardeau, a member of the FOHRA, explained the history of the property related to the Ford family and the importance of the National Natural Area designation of Haven Hill.

After the presentation, the group headed to Haven Hill Lake. Several species of waterfowl were on the lake, including Ring-necked Ducks, Canada Geese, Mute Swan, Bufflehead, Lesser Scaup, and Mallard. A Bald Eagle was also spotted at a nest across the lake, which was an unexpected discovery. Sandhill Cranes were calling loudly, but the noise did not disturb the eagle.

The group walked along the lake's edge and then entered the shelter of the Oak-hickory Forest. The tall trees blocked the winds and hiking helped everyone warm up a bit. Young birders explored the woodland pathways with energy and enthusiasm. Toppled giant trees littered the forest floor from wind throws and uprooted trees towered over us along the path. Everyone scrambled over a fallen tree blocking the trail at one point. Gray skies muted colors making bird identification harder. Nevertheless, sharp-eyed birders persisted and found interesting woodland birds including a very camouflaged Brown Creeper inching along a branch high in the canopy. The hike was challenging but rewarding.



Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty.

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Oakland Owlets

Field Trip Reports (continued)

The group trekked about 1.5 miles and returned to the parking lot near sunset in anticipation of seeing the American Woodcock's famous display—the reason for the field trip.

Everyone wondered if the wind and chilly weather would impact our plans. After a quick explanation of what to expect, the group waited for the right amount of twilight. With us standing at the edge of the parking lot and looking across the open field, the first Woodcock sounded its “peent” call. The light levels were too low for binoculars. Everyone stood quietly, listened, and watched. The American Woodcock did not disappoint the group. We watched and heard several male Woodcocks perform their “Sky Dance” for 20 minutes!



Photo Credit: OAS Gallery

Thank You to the Friends of Highland Recreation Area and Lar Falardeau for spending time with the Young Birders' Club. Thanks also to HSRA Park Management.

Learn more about The Friends of Highland Recreation Area at fohravolunteers.org.

April 9 - Davis Lake Overlook

Leader: Kathleen Dougherty



Oakland Owlets families and friends explored the Davis Lake Overlook within the Shiawassee Basin Preserve in Davisburg, Michigan. Springfield Township Parks and Recreation owns and manages the property and the Blue Heron Headwaters Conservancy (BHHC) holds a conservation easement. The Shiawassee Preserve protects one of the highest quality Prairie Fens in Michigan and is home to several endangered species. Upland oak forests found in the preserve also support vernal pools. Vernal pools are “pocket wetlands” that occur in forested areas in the spring. Although they may vanish by summer, in the spring, vernal pools provide habitat for amphibians, insects, and other invertebrates. Frogs and salamanders use vernal pools for breeding—their tadpoles develop in a predator free environment until they metamorphose into adults.

Lynn Simmons from BHHC joined the field trip to share her expertise in vernal pools. Lynn demonstrated how to use equipment to explore these special habitats and then led the group to a vernal pool nearby to search for creatures. The group hoped to see fairy shrimp, one of the vernal pool indicator species, but the cold temperature limited activity in the vernal pool and silenced frogs. After dipping nets in search for vernal pool creatures for some time, the group moved down the trail looking for birds.

Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty.

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Oakland Owlets

Field Trip Reports (continued)

From the Shiawassee River Basin to the end of Long Lake, the trail winds through a mature hardwood forest and glacial depressions. The large trees provide habitat for woodland birds —on this day, woodpeckers were obvious, vocal, and flitted overhead. The group saw one unusual woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, one of the early migrants moving through the area. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker looks like a Downy or Hairy Woodpecker but is distinguished by a long white stripe on its wings. Songbirds were singing vigorously; some of the loudest vocalists were Tufted Titmice, Northern Cardinals, and Blue Jays. Knowing the songs of these birds made identification easier. Smaller round birds darted about high on the bare branches. These tiny vocalists were almost impossible to see even with binoculars. Golden-crowned Kinglets on their way to their breeding grounds in the boreal forests of northern Michigan and Canada were also seen. These kinglets are associated with mixed, coniferous, and spruce forests.

Near the waters of Shiawassee Basin, the ever-present songs of Red-winged Blackbirds and the occasional calls of Sandhill Cranes filled the air. Sandhill Cranes were loud and could be heard from afar. Eventually the group reached the outlet of Long Lake, which offered a scenic view of the Basin's wetlands. The wetlands have some unusual carnivorous plants including Pitcher Plant and Sundew. These plants dine on insects and other animals.

Springfield Township Parks and Recreation offers tours to explore this remarkable park. Learn more about these events at: [Springfield Rec Guide Spring and Summer 2022 DRAFT 5.pdf \(revize.com\)](#)



Photo Credit: Kathleen Dougherty.

Thank You to Lynn Simmons from BHHC and Mike Losey from the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Department for their assistance with this field trip.

Oakland Owlets Field Trips

June 2022 - August 2022

Kirtland's Warbler Tour – Saturday, June 18 (All Day) **Huron-Manistee National Forest, Mio**

Join OAS on a journey to the Huron-Manistee National Forest in Mio, Michigan for a chance to see the famous Kirtland's Warbler. The Kirtland's Warbler depends on Michigan's jack pine habitat to breed. We will join a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) tour to visit nesting grounds, have a chance at spotting this iconic bird, and see other resident species. In advance of the tour, on June 15 at 7 PM, participants will have the option to attend a virtual presentation by USFS to learn about Kirtland's Warbler history and management. The rain date for this field trip is Saturday, June 25, 2022. Registration required.



Mid-Summer Birds – Saturday, July 16, 8:00 am - 11:00 am **Indian Springs Metropark, White Lake**



By mid-summer, birds are tending and guarding their young. Family activities often go unnoticed. However, skilled observers can see parent birds carrying caterpillars to nests or watch parents feeding young after they leave the nests. Indian Springs has significant habitat for breeding birds and is a wonderful place to witness mid-summer bird behaviors. Prepare to hike about 1 - 2 miles along the trails. Insect repellent, sunscreen, hats, and proper footwear are recommended. A Metroparks permit is required for park entry.

Birds & Bugs – Saturday, August 13, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm **Heritage Park, Farmington Hills**

Bug and butterfly experts Susanne Greenlee and Doris Applebaum will co-lead this walk. As summer progresses, birds are quiet and preparing for fall migration, but insects are abundant and loud. August is often known as the Dog Days of summer. Hot days are filled with the distant sound of an insect known as the Dog Day Cicada. Butterflies, bees, damselflies, dragonflies, and grasshoppers can all be seen in August. This is a special hike where bugs are respectfully captured, identified, and released. It is a good chance to see bugs up close and understand their ecological importance. Plan to hike a mile or more along the trails. Heritage Park is owned and operated by the City of Farmington Hills. There are no park entry fees.



Oakland Owlets Field Trips June 2022 - August 2022

OAS continues to follow health precautions and guidelines for COVID-19

1. Pre-registration is required and number of participants is limited.
2. Face masks may be required to enter some facilities.
3. Stay home if you are sick or have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19.
4. Directions and details are sent in advance to those that pre-register.



The Young Birders' Club ~ Oakland Owlets offers field trips for youth 8 – 18 years. Young birders 15 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult. These age appropriate programs provide educational experiences and snacks for kids. Young birders must complete a release form.

Young Birders' Club programs are open to all birders. To register for Oakland Owlets field trips contact – Kathleen Dougherty, Coordinator at kad8186@msn.com

Visit <https://www.oaklandaudubon.org/young-birders>

Photo Credits: OAS Photo Gallery (above and previous page); Pixaby (below).



Book Review

SILENT SPARKS: THE WONDROUS WORLD OF FIREFLIES by Sara Lewis

Review by Doris Applebaum

Is there anyone who doesn't love fireflies? Surely those flashes in the night bring a sense of wonder and delight to you as they do to me, and certainly to the author of this book. She is among the scientists who have learned a lot about fireflies in the past few decades, and in this book, published in 2016, she provides just about anything you might want to know about them.

Fireflies aren't flies, of course; they're beetles, and are in the family Lampyridae. Like all beetles (and butterflies, bees, flies, and ants) they go through a complete metamorphosis from egg to larva to pupa to adult.

There are three kinds of fireflies. Those with adults of both sexes that can fly and produce flashes of light at night are the lightningbug fireflies. Other species fly during the day and adults don't produce light; those are the dark fireflies. And then there are the glow-worms, whose females don't fly at all but stay on the ground, glowing constantly to attract the males that fly by. There are many species of lightningbug fireflies and dark fireflies in North America but only a few glow-worms.

There are other light-producing creatures in the world, but the one thing found only in the firefly family is that the larvae of all three types of firefly species produce light.

In lightningbug fireflies, mates find each other by their flashes, but in dark fireflies the females produce pheromones that males can detect from a long distance. Glow-worm females are also thought to produce pheromones, as a backup attractant in case their glowing doesn't achieve the desired effect.

In eastern North America there are about 35 species of lightningbug fireflies in the genus *Photinus*. Most species don't have a common name, but the species with the largest range, *P. pyralis*, does have a common name: the Big Dipper firefly. It flies starting at dusk and stays rather close to the ground, and I suspect that this is the species that we are most likely to see in our neighborhoods.

Photinus species that fly at the same time during the year don't intrude on each other's activity; they separate themselves by the time of night when they fly or by the height at which they fly. Various of these species can be found in the eastern 2/3 of North America.

Another group of lightningbug fireflies, in the genus *Pyrractomena*, can be found in almost all of the U.S. except the West Coast.

The third genus of lightningbug fireflies, *Photuris*, pretty much parallels the range of *Photinus*, and there's a good reason for that. In most fireflies, it's the larvae that are the eating machines, with the adults concentrating only on mating, but female *Photuris* fireflies are the exception. They are on the hunt for a meal, and what they eat are mostly the male *Photinus* fireflies. The author of this book refers to them as femmes fatales.

These females are bigger than their prey, they're voracious, and they're downright sneaky. They can mimic the flashes of the female *Photinus* species that is most common in a particular area, and by fooling a male into thinking he's found a prospective mate, they procure their meal.

And they get more than a meal. *Photinus* fireflies taste terrible, they smell bad, and, like the Monarch butterfly, they also have a warning coloration. Most importantly, and also like the Monarch, their larvae sequester toxic substances from their food, which they pass on to the adults. The result is that most predators will leave a *Photinus* firefly alone once they realize what an unpleasant catch it is. However, this does not deter the female *Photuris* because when she eats a male *Photinus*, she also gets his toxic protection.

One of the most thrilling firefly sights is a group of synchronous fireflies, where hundreds of males all flash at the same time. In the U.S., this spectacular sight is produced by *Photinus carolinus* in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. There are also synchronous species in some Asian countries.

To acquaint us with the "how" of firefly light, the author describes the intricate construction of the firefly lantern (the area that produces the light), and she describes the chemical activity that occurs to produce the light. She also tells us of the many ways in which firefly light has been used to help humans, in the food industry and medical field among many others. These are only a few examples of the interesting information in this book.

Unfortunately, like so many other wildlife species, fireflies are at risk from many activities that humans engage in, and many knowledgeable observers have reported considerably fewer fireflies in areas where they had seen them in previous years.

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Book Review

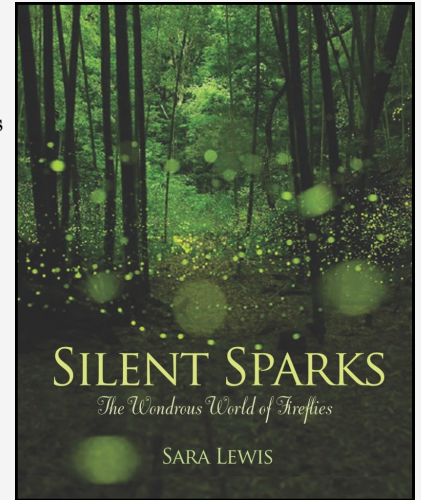
SILENT SPARKS: THE WONDROUS WORLD OF FIREFLIES by Sara Lewis

(Continued)

As might be expected, habitat loss is a major problem, not only in the U.S. but worldwide; light pollution interferes with firefly mating activity; and there have been a number of examples of overcollecting, not just for fun but also for commercial reasons. Even tourism has gotten out of hand in some areas, where regulations are needed to prevent people from loving fireflies to death. Of course, overuse of pesticides is also a threat, and we can only hope that climate change will not have extremely negative effects on fireflies.

The author provides a list of things that people can do to help fireflies. She also provides a field guide to help us identify some of the fireflies that we see, and she lists a number of experiments we can do to increase our knowledge of these amazing creatures. She even shows us how we can “talk” to them by using an LED flashlight or penlight.

This book is written for the general public, in an engaging style that reveals the unending love that the author has for her study subjects, all the while providing a great deal of insight into the truly wondrous world of fireflies.



Silent Sparks: The wondrous World of Fireflies - Princeton University Press (2016). Source: <https://silentsparks.com/>

BIRDING WITHOUT BORDERS: AN OBSESSION, A QUEST, AND THE BIGGEST YEAR IN THE WORLD by Noah Strycker

Review by OAS Member

Noah Strycker's *Birding Without Borders: An Obsession, A Quest, and the Biggest Year in the World* is a tale of just that, a world-big-year – the book chronicles the adventure that took the author to all seven continents and 41 countries, and to eventually observe 6,042 species of birds.

He began in Antarctica, on New Year's Day at the end of the world aboard a research vessel with One Ocean Expeditions, and ended on December 31, 2015 in Australia. He used the power of eBird and relied on the knowledge and generosity of the international birding community, professional guides, researchers, and local birders rather than organized tours to craft an itinerary that maximized the number of possible bird species. This approach also helped with logistics, but he did use a travel agency to get one-way plane tickets and lots of visas!

The book is not a day-to-day journal, nor was it meant to be a commentary on worldwide habitat destruction and conservation. It provides a narrative of experiences, anecdotes, milestone bird sightings, difficulties faced during travel, and vivid descriptions of the thrill of trying to find as many bird species as possible. It was also inspiring – it left me longing for more travel, birding, and connections. As Noah puts it, the mission was “...pure and simple, a celebration of birds, in all their fascinating detail, and how fun it is to watch them.”

The first couple chapters mostly describe the goal of the big year, logistics, and rules. The rest of the book is very interesting and hard to put down. The descriptions of events and moments, landscapes, bird sightings, and the narrative about connections with people and culture are simple, beautifully told, and sprinkled with humor and facts. Reading was like going on a field trip. It was fascinating to see the author's perspective and to get a peek inside the head of a professional birder.

A detailed daily account of Noah's big year was recorded with the support of the Audubon Society. The daily blog entries sorted by date and country, lots of photos, and a great 5-minute video are available online at: <https://noahstrycker.com/galleries/world-big-year/>. If you don't read this book, check out the video!

NATURE NOTES *by Allen Chartier*

Up here in Melvin (southernmost Sanilac County), I have had a young male Sharp-shinned Hawk since March 6th. When he first appeared, he seemed quite robust, but it was obvious that he was starting to get some adult color. He has been around in the yard every day since I first saw him. He seems to be alternating between the feeder areas in my yard and the feeder area of a neighbor's house, several hundred yards across the road. Today, his tail seems significantly diminished. I wonder whether this is because of molting or a physical altercation with, say, a crow. He has been fairly successful - one catch was a House Finch and another was an American Goldfinch - so I would assume he is healthy. When do Sharp-shinned Hawks molt into adult plumage?

There is individual variation in the timing of molt in all birds, but of course within some boundaries. The rusty-barréd underparts can molt in by their first spring (they fledge in summer of course), but sometimes not. A brown-striped Sharp-shinned (or Cooper's) in April and May is a bird hatched the previous summer, in its second calendar year. Some will not get this rufous barring until they molt again, which I think is in the fall before migration. The back color is similar in process. The blue-gray can come in by their first spring, but sometimes not! And the wing and tail feathers usually do not all molt at this time, giving a mix of blue and brown into their second summer. By their third calendar year almost all of them have blue-gray back, wings, and tail and rusty-barréd underparts, but even then there are a few with a couple lingering brown wing or tail feathers. Their eyes are yellow at hatching, and change to red at adulthood, taking 2-3 years for that process although some second calendar year birds may still have yellow, and some 3rd or 4th years may still have transitional orange eyes. Further complicating things is that these four areas (underparts, back, wings and tail, and eye) do not necessarily change at the same pace on the individual. So a bird that is delayed in maturation of one element may not be delayed in the others! This gives lots of combinations to sort through to accurately age them. The bird in your two photos is definitely in its second calendar year, and does not yet appear to show any rufous barring or blue-gray back, wing, or tail feathers, and its eye is yellow.

I can add that the timing of molt is triggered and controlled by several factors, including hormone levels, which in many species are controlled by day length, as well as availability of food. Sharp-shinned Hawks overwinter in a broad area, from the Great Lakes to northern South America. I often see birds like yours in early spring, appearing to be in juvenile plumage, with more advanced molt on migrants that come through during April and May. The more northerly overwintering individuals may have more difficulty finding food and keeping warm, which may inhibit their ability to muster the additional energy required to grow a new set of feathers.

Don't be shy! If you have a question you would like Allen to answer in a future *Nature Notes* column or there is a topic you are interested in hearing more about, you can email him at:

amazilia3@gmail.com

OAKLAND AUDUBON AROUND TOWN

Owl Fest - Lake St. Clair Metropark April 9, 2022

Kathleen Dougherty (YBC coordinator), Alice Marotti (Hospitality Officer), and OAS volunteers Roger and Jean Bajorek helped connect people, birds, and nature during the Owl Fest event at Lake St. Clair Metropark.



Farmington Hills Earth Day Celebration - Heritage Park April 22, 2022

Sue Wright (OAS President), Doris Applebaum (Secretary), and Alice Marotti (Hospitality Officer) were busy on Earth Day introducing 50 - 60 children to binoculars by way of decorating paper binoculars and teaching them to focus on bird pictures on our folding display.



Clinton River Water Festival - Oakland University May 20, 2022

Kathleen Dougherty (YBC coordinator) presented a bird-focused lesson to 5th grade classes titled "Sharing the Shoreline." Children learned about wading birds, cranes, and the World Migratory Bird Day. The Water Festival is a full day educational experience for students from the Clinton River watershed community schools in Oakland County.

Bird Briefs (articles to look at online)

from Don Burlett

[Biologists Identify First Animal That Uses the Complexity of Human Language: the Song Sparrow - LISTEN \(goodnewsnetwork.org\)](https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org)

You probably never thought of the Song Sparrow as a romantic DJ. Well, studies are showing some interesting results of Song Sparrows wooing females nearby. Shows how complex life is on this planet.

[Why did birds fall from sky in Mexico? Probably a predator, experts say | Birds | The Guardian](#)

You may or may not have read about this incident in Mexico, where a large number of Yellow-headed Blackbirds plunged from the sky with many dying upon impact with the ground or buildings. This article discusses the event and possible explanations.

[Nearly half of U.S. bald eagles suffer lead poisoning | CTV News](#)

Bald Eagles are suffering from high lead levels in their systems, which can lead to death. Natural sources of lead exist, but many experts believe that hunting with lead shot has contaminated many carcasses that these birds eat. Always a concern, this is a growing issue for Bald Eagles.

[‘Birding can be addictive,’ warns Nature Conservancy scientist - MooseJawToday.com](#)

This is a light-hearted look at birding and how it can become an addiction.

[Scientists Attached Tracking Devices to Magpies. But Nobody Asked The Magpies \(sciencealert.com\)](#)

Scientists have always wanted to know more about birds. Mist netting was quickly followed by tracking devices attached to birds. However, some birds took offense to this approach. Witness the magpies in Australia that took matters into their own bills. Fun article!!!

[Macauley Library's Best Bird Photos 2022 | All About Birds All About Birds](#)

If you need a pick-me-up today, check out this item with pictures of birds from the *Macauley Library at Cornell*. Food for the eyes!!

[Fossil Holds Clues to How Some Owls Evolved Into Daytime Hunters - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

An interesting article about the discovery of an owl fossil from way back. Nice read.

[Multiple lines of evidence indicate survival of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Louisiana \(biorxiv.org\)](#)

Everyone is discussing this latest bit of evidence purporting to have spotted the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Louisiana. Here's the article that is yet to be peer reviewed. Read and look for yourself.

[North American Birds Face Their Own Pandemic With Latest Bout of Avian Flu | Audubon](#)

Information on the current events related to the Avian Flu published by the National Audubon Society. For Michigan information, consult the following *Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development* website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/animals/diseases/avian/avian-influenza>

BIRD ID QUIZ

(Summer 2022)



A) _____



B) _____



C) _____

For the answers and explanation for this issue's quiz see Page 24

No Peeking!

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 10, 2022

The board approved donations to a variety of conservation/environmental organizations for 2022.

A welcome letter from President Sue Wright was sent to the many new members who were added to our ranks thanks to our recent affiliation with National Audubon.

Our website continues to attract visitors, and Website Editor Hannah Dunbar is continuing to improve viewing that is available through mobile devices.

Conservation & Environment Officer Greg Petrosky reported that the Oakland County Parks & Recreation Department needs volunteers to monitor nest boxes. There are seven different sites and a total of 175 nest boxes.

The Young Birders Club participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count at E. L. Johnson Nature Center, and there will be a special YBC field trip to the Kirtland's Warbler nesting area on June 18 to see the warblers and the other interesting birds that are found there.

We are at last on track to return to in-person membership meetings at the First United Methodist Church in Birmingham, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone there on April 12.

April 21, 2022

Each year the Board of Directors decides which environmental organizations we will send donations to. Recently, Treasurer Elaine Ferguson sent donations on behalf of OAS to the Clinton River Watershed Council, Seven Ponds Nature Center, and Howell Nature Center.

Although we are now able to meet in person at the church, Program Officer Dave Hoch reported that our meetings in January and February 2023 will be via Zoom, because the weather is so unpredictable during those months.

To keep our new members who came to us from National Audubon "in the loop," President Sue Wright will include them in the emails that she sends out periodically.

Social Media Administrator Dan Gertiser includes information about upcoming field trips on our Facebook page. Some people sign up without registering with the field trip leader, which is a requirement because the number of participants is limited. This had led to some disappointments, so Dan will emphasize that anyone wanting to participate in a field trip must register with the field trip leader.

Doris Applebaum
Secretary



If you are an Amazon user and would like to help benefit OAS, simply [CLICK HERE](#), add us to your favorite charity list, and then shop!

A percentage of your purchases will be donated to OAS and will help support our organization.

If you aren't using Amazon Smile, try it out. We'll appreciate it!

MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

The 2022 Membership Drive is underway!

You can renew your membership in one of two ways:

- 1) Use the "Renew OAS Membership" link on the Membership tab on our website (<http://www.oaklandaudubon.org>), to pay online using PayPal. [CLICK HERE](#) or
- 2) Mail a check along with a membership form (page 24)

Mail renewal forms to:

Oakland Audubon Society
C/O Jenifer Benke
2145 Colony Club Ct.
West Bloomfield, MI 48322

If you would like to check the status of your membership or have questions, contact OAS Membership Officer Jen Benke at: 734-657-7498 or scubadu9900@yahoo.com.

**Thank you for helping us sustain OAS with your membership contributions.
We would be nowhere without you!**

60 Species Available
→

Native Plant Sale

June 11, 2022 @ 10-4

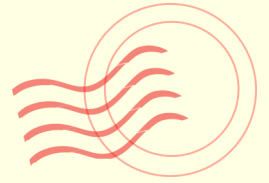
Neiman's
Parking Lot
7121 Dixie
Clarkston

Sale Benefits
Blue Heron
Headwaters
Conservancy



<https://www.blueheronheadwaters.org>





A CALL FOR ADVOCACY FROM ANNIS PRATT:

For a number of years Oakland Audubon Society members have signed Citizens' Climate Lobby constituent forms to let your Members of Congress know that you are deeply concerned with the environment.

I am a member of the [Metro North CCL Chapter](#) where we cultivate relationships with our national Senators and Representatives in order to ask for legislation that will help save our beloved planet. We are a bipartisan group, working with both Democratic and Republican legislators.

Michigan Audubon Society also sponsors member advocacy, as does the National Audubon Society. Here is National Audubon's current position:

“Market signals—such as an economy-wide price on carbon, or a [clean energy standard](#)—are needed to incentivize private sector investment in research, development, demonstration, and deployment (RDD&D) of new energy technologies. And the federal government's role in [supporting](#) these RDD&D efforts will need to be expanded.” [The Energy Innovation Agenda is at a Crossroads | Audubon](#)

Would you like to join in CCL's lobbying effort with 10 minutes of your time?

The Reconciliation Bill is presently up for consideration in the Senate, and the climate portion of it is easiest to get bi-partisan agreement on.

CCL's Goal is to ask constituents to build power in states by letting your Senators and President Biden know that there is a strong constituency for retaining the climate elements of the Reconciliation Bill.

Just 10 minutes! Here is how (scripts are provided):

- Write Congress On Climate: [Write Congress - CCL Community \(citizensclimate.org\)](#)
- Call Congress On Climate: [Call Congress - CCL Community \(citizensclimate.org\)](#)
- Write to the President: [Write to the President - CCL Community \(citizensclimate.org\)](#)
- Sign up for one set of 10 minute calls every month: [Monthly Calling Campaign | Citizens' Climate Lobby \(citizensclimatelobby.org\)](#)

To make your asks specific to recent events in Ukraine, go to: [Get loud and take action for clean energy. \(citizensclimatelobby.org\)](#)

Thank you so very, very much and please contact me with any questions.

Annis Pratt
avpratt@aol.com
www.annispratt.com

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

Monthly membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month (except December, May, July, and August) at the First United Methodist Church in Birmingham. **OAS meetings and programs at the Church have resumed and may also be offered online via Zoom. Meetings open at 6:30 PM and talks begin at 7:00 PM.** If a meeting is offered via Zoom, specific instructions and links will be posted on the “meetings” page on our website at www.oaklandaudubon.org and on OAS’s Facebook page prior to that meeting. **Updates to the schedule will be posted on our website.** Please contact a board member if you have questions.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Program	Location
Tues., June 14	7:00 pm	Wildlife Recovery Association: Birds of Prey	First United Methodist Church
Tues., September 13	7:00 pm	On Soundscapes: Listening to Stories of the Environment	Zoom
Tues., October 11	7:00 pm	Audubon Great Lakes Speaker (Topic TBD)	TBD

Bird Quiz Answers for Summer 2022 Quiz on Page 20

This issue’s photo quiz : a) Bank Swallow, b) Northern Rough-winged Swallow, c) Cliff Swallow

Explanation: A relatively easy set of birds to ID.

- a) Generally pale brown above with noticeable dark breast band; the smallest of our swallows.
- b) Broad winged and short tailed (not seen in this picture); lacks breast band.
- c) A stocky swallow with a short, square tail unlike the Barn Swallow’s forked tail; buffy rump and dark throat that contrasts with pale collar and a white forehead.

How did you do identifying these birds? Keep score throughout the year to see how you do!



OAKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Mobile: (____) _____

Email address: _____

Please indicate with an (X) in the box any personal information above you do not want listed in the OAS membership directory.

Check also if you are a member of:

- ____ National Audubon Society
- ____ Michigan Audubon Society

OAS needs and welcomes volunteers — please participate if you can!

Check if you have the skills to help:

- ____ Become a board member
- ____ Lead a field trip or present a program
- ____ Fill an open position (Position: _____)

Check appropriate line:

- ____ Member renewal
- ____ New member
- ____ Change of address

OAS Membership Fees

- Individual \$15
- Family \$20
- Contributing \$25
- Supporting \$50
- Benefactor \$100

Our Mission

- To provide, on a local level, access to the natural world through educational programs such as meetings and field trips.
- To advocate the preservation of wildlife habitats and endeavor to create interest in native birds, other animals and plants in Michigan.

Please make checks payable to:

OAKLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Mail to:

OAS MEMBERSHIP

C/O JENIFER BENKE

2145 COLONY CLUB CT.

WEST BLOOMFIELD, MICHIGAN 48322

*Oakland Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) organization.
Your donation is 100% tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*