

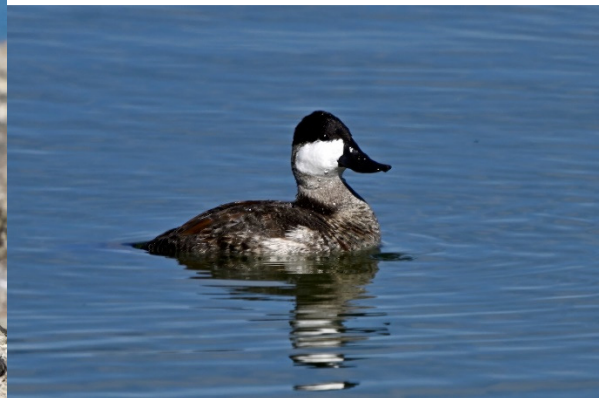
**Field Trip Report – Muskegon Field Trip – Jointly with Grand Rapids Audubon Club
October 5, 2024**

Leader: Spencer High and Don Burlett

This field trip was a collaboration between Oakland Bird Alliance (OBA) and Grand Rapids Audubon Club as suggested by Audubon Great Lakes. A subsequent field trip will be hosted in our area in return for this field trip. OBA does a frequent trip to the Muskegon area in November, but this is an opportunity to see that area earlier in the fall migration.

We began at Lane’s Landing, just north of the waste water facility, an area with woods and a large marsh. A total of 17 birders gathered and walked a road through the marsh to see what was around. We began by having Yellow-rumped Warblers and Eastern Bluebirds chirping from the trees at the parking lot. As we walked along, White-crowned Sparrows were very active along with a Marsh Wren. A Northern Harrier swooped through the area while a family of Trumpeter Swans basked in the early morning light. An Eastern Kingbird was a nice find along the road while we watched the skies and the area over the marsh. Several Wilson’s Snipes were seen flying around while groups of ducks flew around, many landing in the remote sections of the marsh. We also observed an early Dark-eyed Junco passing through the area.

We then headed to the waste water facility where we combined into a few cars and proceeded to drive clockwise around the two lake treatment ponds. The variety of ducks was typical for this early. There were thousands of Ruddy ducks and many Northern Shovelers. A scattering of Mallards, Gadwall, American Black Duck, Lesser Scaup, Green-winged Teal and Redhead made up the rest of the contingent. Of course, there were hundreds of Canada Goose everywhere. Interestingly, the landfill at the southeastern edge of the ponds was covered and the gulls were located at a new area farther west than previously. Murmurations of European Starlings were present but almost no crows. A couple of Bald Eagles graced our presence. In the area, we had a couple of American Kestrels along the northeast section of the drive along with a group of three Merlin’s. We were also pleased to catch a few Vesper Sparrows on the rocks at the east end of the ponds and after that we began running into American Pipits and Eastern Meadowlarks. We also caught a Horned Lark in the drying pond area.



American Pipit

Ruddy Duck



Savannah Sparrow
(Photos by Cliff Hodge – GR Audubon))

After finishing the field trip, a group went out for lunch to exchange stories and experiences. It was a nice outing, and we hope to duplicate the success and fun at our next joint field later this month. A list of species seen at each location is provided below.

Lane's Landing
Gadwall
Mallard
American Black Duck
Pied-billed Grebe
Mourning Dove
Sandhill Crane
Wilson's Snipe
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Northern Harrier
Bald Eagle
Northern Flicker
Merlin
Eastern Kingbird
Blue Jay
American Crow
Marsh Wren
Eastern Bluebird
House Finch

Dark-eyed Junco
White-crowned Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Red-winged Blackbird
Yellow-rumped Warbler

Muskegon Waste Water Facility

Canada Goose
Northern Shoveler
Gadwall
Mallard
American Black Duck
Green-winged Teal
Redhead
Lesser Scaup
Ruddy Duck
American Coot
Pectoral Sandpiper
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Bald Eagle
American Kestrel
Merlin
Blue Jay
Horned Lark
European Starling
American Pipit
Savanah Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Eastern Meadowlark