



# THE NUTHATCH

[www.oaklandaudubon.org](http://www.oaklandaudubon.org)

## “Birds of Prey”

Will Lubrano

Tuesday, September 12, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

Will Lubrano, from Wildlife Revealed, a non-profit organization dedicated to the education and preservation of wildlife, will discuss the natural history of birds of prey along with their unique traits and natural abilities.



Follow us on 

## “Japan in Winter: Cranes, Eagles, and More”

Don Burlett

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 - 7:00 p.m. \*\*

A visit to Japan in winter is an opportunity to see many birds that spend their summers in Siberia. Cranes, eagles, owls, and many other species can be seen while visiting three of Japan’s main islands. Culture, food, and the people are also of interest to the visitor. Join Don Burlett for this presentation and get acquainted with this wonderful country during a season different than what most would consider.

\*\* note updated date



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## “Panama: Darien Province and the Chiriquí Highlands”

Sue Wright

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

Sue Wright, former OAS President, will share her November 2021 trip to Panama, which covered the Darien Province in eastern Panama (staying at the Canopy Camp) and the Chiriquí Highlands in western Panama. One of the highlights of the trip was a chance to see a Harpy Eagle adult and chick on the nest.



Photos: Banner, G. Cummins; Programs, Wildlife Revealed, Don Burlett, Sue Wright.

# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

## Fall 2023

It's time to put an end to the summer doldrums. As I write this article, I have already finished most of my summer activities. Climate watch surveys are completed. Breeding bird survey is done. I finished my summer birding trip to Ethiopia. Summer butterfly survey for Stellantis is complete. With many breeding birds now headed south (especially the Orioles at my jelly feeder), it's time to embark on our fall activities and to get back together for meetings and field trips.

The fall schedule is always worth enjoying. Our program meetings kick back into gear and we always have some interesting topics to enjoy. The fall field trip schedule is usually full of treats (even before Halloween). Then, there's the Nuthatch Open competition to spur the fall schedule. Then the CBC is right around the corner and it's the Holidays before you know it.

The fall migration is already underway and we will have visited Pointe Mouillee already when this newsletter reaches our members. With warblers passing through again (and confusing everyone as they do), it's time to get those feeders ready for the fall-winter feeding period.

Another thing to consider is how the summer season went. Did the bird flu epidemic affect our bird numbers this year? Did the strange weather we have begun seeing regularly have a major effect? What about the effect of decreased insect numbers and many other factors? It felt like the numbers were down in the spring and that may have continued in the summer. Keep an eye open to fall numbers and see if we are really facing a crisis in our bird numbers. And will this continue with our CBC numbers?

The world seems to keep taking shots at us and we need to understand what it all means. Hopefully, we will see things getting better but we need to be vigilant and focused on improving the situation.

Well, another fall is upon us. I hope that everyone had a great summer and is looking forward to fall and all it has to offer for birding and seeing friends again. Take care. See you all soon.

Don Burlett  
President

# OAS BOARD MEMBERS

## Elected Officers

President	Don Burlett	(330) 697-7735	<a href="mailto:baikalteal13@netzero.net">baikalteal13@netzero.net</a>
Secretary	Doris Applebaum	(248) 542-2506	<a href="mailto:ibis4247@sbcglobal.net">ibis4247@sbcglobal.net</a>
Treasurer	Jen Benke	(734) 657-7498	<a href="mailto:scubadu9900@yahoo.com">scubadu9900@yahoo.com</a>
Membership Officer	Robert Moll		<a href="mailto:OASmembershipofficer@gmail.com">OASmembershipofficer@gmail.com</a>
Field Trip Officer	Jeff Stacey	(248) 798-0508	<a href="mailto:jdstacey@ameritech.net">jdstacey@ameritech.net</a>
Program Officer	Dave Hoch	(248) 808-3696	<a href="mailto:hochdavid1@gmail.com">hochdavid1@gmail.com</a>

## Appointed Officers

Young Birders Club Rep.	Kathleen Dougherty		<a href="mailto:kad8186@msn.com">kad8186@msn.com</a>
Hospitality Officer	Sue Wing	(586) 382-0203	<a href="mailto:slwing@ameritech.net">slwing@ameritech.net</a>
Publicity & Fundraising	Karen Kessler		<a href="mailto:Karenmk@live.com">Karenmk@live.com</a>
Web Co-Editor	Hannah Dunbar		<a href="mailto:oddbirdstoonest@gmail.com">oddbirdstoonest@gmail.com</a>
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Nuthatch Editor	Guadalupe Cummins		<a href="mailto:cummins.guadalupe@gmail.com">cummins.guadalupe@gmail.com</a>
Seven Ponds Rep.	Dr. Greg Gossick		<a href="mailto:ggossickdds@sbcglobal.net">ggossickdds@sbcglobal.net</a>
Conservation/Environment	Greg Petrosky		<a href="mailto:gpetrosky06@gmail.com">gpetrosky06@gmail.com</a>
Advocacy Officer	Greg Harris		<a href="mailto:gbharrisiv@gmail.com">gbharrisiv@gmail.com</a>

On June 13, 2023 OAS awarded Kathleen Dougherty, Young Birder's Club "the Owlets" Coordinator, a lifetime membership award.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to teach young people and their families the importance of birds and nature!!



## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Schedule changes and updates will be posted on our website and members will also receive email updates. Owlets trip details are listed on pages 15 - 16.

**Pre-Registration is required for most trips — contact trip leader for details.**

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

[www.oaklandaudubon.org](http://www.oaklandaudubon.org)

Date	Event	Trip Leader(s)
September 9 (Saturday) 12:00 AM – 4:00 PM	<b>Nuthatch Open</b> <i>** 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Competitive Event **</i>	Jeff Stacey <a href="mailto:jdstacey@ameritech.net">jdstacey@ameritech.net</a>
September 16 (Saturday) 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge	Jim Koppin <a href="mailto:jimmykoppin@yahoo.com">jimmykoppin@yahoo.com</a>
September 23 (Saturday) 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	“Bats & Birds” at Stony Creek Metropark (Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty <a href="mailto:kad8186@msn.com">kad8186@msn.com</a>
September 24 (Sunday) 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Sterling State Park	Mike Mencotti <a href="mailto:mmencotti9@gmail.com">mmencotti9@gmail.com</a>
October 7 (Saturday) 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Stony Creek Metropark	Kayla Niner <a href="mailto:shad0wc00kiecrumbs@gmail.com">shad0wc00kiecrumbs@gmail.com</a>
October 14 (Saturday) 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM	“Fall Migration Celebration” at Lake St. Clair Metropark (Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty <a href="mailto:kad8186@msn.com">kad8186@msn.com</a>
October 14 (Saturday) <i>All Day</i>	Tawas State Park & Tuttle Marsh	Don Burlett <a href="mailto:aikalteal13@netzero.net">aikalteal13@netzero.net</a>
October 27 to 29 <i>Weekend</i>	Muskegon	Don Burlett <a href="mailto:aikalteal13@netzero.net">aikalteal13@netzero.net</a>
November 4 (Saturday) 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Lake Erie Metropark (Joint field trip with Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty <a href="mailto:kad8186@msn.com">kad8186@msn.com</a>
November 18 (Saturday) 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Belle Isle State Park	Jeff Stacey <a href="mailto:jdstacey@ameritech.net">jdstacey@ameritech.net</a>
December 16 (Saturday) 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Christmas Bird Count at WM’s Eagle Valley Recycling & Disposal Facility (Owlets)	Kathleen Dougherty <a href="mailto:kad8186@msn.com">kad8186@msn.com</a>
December 16 (Saturday) 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM	124 <sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count	Jeff Stacey <a href="mailto:jdstacey@ameritech.net">jdstacey@ameritech.net</a>

# Field Trip Reports

## June 3, 2023 - Oak Openings, Kitty Todd Nature Preserve & Irwin Prairie

Leader: Don Burlett

This frequently held trip took us to Ohio to visit the Oak Savanna region west of Toledo. A group of 13 birders came along to seek out a couple of special species and whatever else came our way. As you can tell by the group photo, this was taken before a long, hot day.



Photo Credit: Don Burlett

We began by hiking through the woods north of the Buehner Nature Center with the faint hope of spotting a Blue Grosbeak that was seen earlier in May. Despite not getting that bird, we did get Pine Warbler, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and a fair number of others.

The conditions here and in the other sites were very dry. This along with the heat made for tough slogging for birds.



Photo Credit: Karen Kessler



Photo Credit: Sharon Korte



Photo Credit: Rick Tobias



Photo Credit: Rick Tobias

**Clockwise from top left:** Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*).

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

We then moved to the Girdham Road area where the known Lark Sparrow nesting sites are. We were not disappointed; the number there was reasonable, given it was later in the day, things were getting warm, and bird activity was slowing down. Walking along the road we added Eastern Bluebird, Baltimore Oriole, and Eastern Towhee. We also enjoyed having the bird songs drowned out by jets flying overhead – Saturday pilots getting in their training hours. By far, the biggest birds in the sky!!



Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*)



Photo Credit: Sharon Korte

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)



Photo Credit:  
Karen Kessler

After a lunch break, we headed to Irwin Prairie to walk the boardwalk. It was a long, hot walk with little protection from the sun. We did find a few new species including Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler, but the most surprising bird of the day was not expected. As noted previously, this prairie area was very dry with almost no water except in the pond at the end of the boardwalk. There was about a square foot of a puddle under a bridge over the ditch along Irwin Road and, surprisingly, we scared a Virginia Rail from under the bridge upon our return. Wow!

A few of us ventured to Kitty Todd Nature Preserve primarily to scout the habitat for a possible future field trip. It was very nice oak savanna habitat and might be quite nice earlier in the spring. The preserve is managed by The Nature Conservancy.



Photo Credit: Karen Kessler

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*)

Also, although they weren't part of the official trip list, we did get Grasshopper Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark in the fields at the west end of the airport on our way to the field trip.

All totaled, we got 42 species –this was not surprising since we were past the main portion of migration, and the heat and dry conditions didn't help.

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

### July 22, 2023 - Butterflies at Independence Oaks County Park

Leaders: Doris Applebaum & Jeff Stacey

After several Saturdays with rain predicted, this field-trip Saturday had pleasant temperatures and no rain, as seven OAS members visited Independence Oaks County Park in Springfield Township to look for butterflies and whatever else might show up.

Since we never ignore birds, the group enjoyed seeing several species. However, rather annoying were a couple of Yellow-throated Vireos that allowed us to hear them for quite a while but refused to give us a good look.

Our butterfly sightings started out extremely well when we found several species obtaining some kind of nutrient from a gravel and dirt path near a marshy area. The marsh itself produced nothing of interest, but on the gravel path we got excellent looks at Red Admiral, American Lady, Eastern Comma, and Viceroy, all intently mining that gravel/dirt.

Although we managed to see several other species during the field trip, we never found another spot quite as productive as that early one.

There were no surprises among the species that we saw, but there certainly were some surprises about what we did not see. In a park like Independence Oaks that has large areas of meadow, which should be excellent butterfly habitat, those areas were all but devoid of any butterflies at all.

Or perhaps it wasn't really surprising, because we saw a number of signs informing the public that herbicides had been spread around in those areas to fight invasive plant species. Where we were fully expecting to see large numbers of Clouded and Orange Sulphurs, we saw none. We couldn't even find a Cabbage White. Invasive species of plants may have been the targets, but apparently there were some unintended consequences as well.

Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable outing, and although not everyone saw all the species, we all saw many of the 16 on our list, as follows: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Spicebush Swallowtail, Great Spangled Fritillary, Eastern Comma, Red Admiral, American Lady, Red-spotted Purple, Viceroy, Little Wood-Satyr, Common Wood-Nymph, Monarch (a nice total of 7), Silver-spotted Skipper, Northern Broken-Dash (skipper), Broad-winged Skipper, Dion Skipper, and Dun Skipper.



Photo Credits: Malissa Bossardet

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

**August 19, 2023 - Point Mouillee**

Leaders: Jeff Stacey & Jim Fowler

Shorebird season at Pointe Mouillee can be a magical time – or not. It totally depends on water levels (and to a lesser extent construction). We had to work pretty hard to find decent shorebird habitat this year, partially because some of the more productive locations were off-limits due to ongoing construction.

Lesser Yellowlegs and Killdeer were easy to find throughout the game area, but with considerable effort and patience, our group was able to track down a couple mixed flocks of shorebirds. These included Solitary Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, Wilson's Snipe, and easily the best bird of the day – a single Ruddy Turnstone! Non-shorebird highlights included American White Pelicans (surprisingly difficult to find this year), several Common Gallinule families, a Bobolink up-close, and a very surprising and convenient Blue Grosbeak singing from the parking lot!

Special thanks to Jim Fowler for leading our group safely through some congested conditions. All in all, the 58 species we saw is a pretty good total for a trip to Mouillee.



Rudy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*), top; Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*), right.

Photo Credits: Jeff Stacey



## Field Trip Reports (continued)



**Clockwise from top left:** Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*); Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*); Common Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*); Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*).

Photo Credits: Karen Kessler

# Oakland Owlets

## Field Trip Reports

**May 13, 2023 - Rose Oaks County Park**

Leaders: Kathleen Dougherty & Mike Dougherty

The Oakland Owlets' families and friends celebrated *World Migratory Bird Day* at Rose Oaks County Park near Holly. Rose Oaks is a 649-acre undeveloped park with extensive natural resources. The park features several miles of trails and supports multiple outdoor recreation opportunities for hiking, trail riding, fishing, and archery hunting. The park is at the headwaters of the Shiawassee River watershed and has multiple wetlands and kettle lakes. It was an ideal place to celebrate *World Migratory Bird Day* and go birding. The group started at the Buckhorn Lake Road parking lot, then ventured onto the trail across the long boardwalk over the wetland adjoining Mallet Lake.



On the boardwalk, a loud buzzy call grabbed everyone's attention. This distinct call is described as "*fritz bew*" of the Willow Flycatcher. This bird belongs to Empidonax flycatchers group, which are best identified by their distinctive calls. Everyone listened to and watched this flycatcher's behavior, perching on the end of a branch and darting out for an insect — [listen to this audio](#).

Along the path we stopped to hear the songs of forest birds singing high in the tree canopy, including the songs of three different vireos, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Warbling Vireo. These small songbirds live high in the forest canopy, making them easy to hear but hard to see. Knowing each vireo's unique song helps to identify them even high in the trees. Insect-eating birds, vireos consume caterpillars and a variety of invertebrates.

By now, everyone was using Merlin's sound identification application. We were all hoping to see many migrating wood warblers, but we missed the big warbler wave. A few stragglers were found, including Northern Parula, American Redstart, and Bay-breasted Warbler, along with summer residents.



# *Oakland Owlets*

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

When we reached Richardson Lake, the habitat changed dramatically. Waterbirds were in and along the shoreline of the lake. Amazingly, two Trumpeter Swans flew into the lake while Pied-billed Grebes, Mallards, Wood Ducks, and a Great Blue Heron were feeding along the shoreline. Tree Swallows soared overhead. It was wonderful to see Trumpeter Swans, which are designated a species of special concern in Michigan. Everyone took a few moments to enjoy the scenery and see these amazing birds.



Before reaching the northern boundary of the park, the group crossed another long boardwalk. Swamp sparrows, Marsh Wrens, and Song Sparrows provided surround sounds. Loud Sandhill Cranes were heard but not seen due to dense vegetation. Our last destination was the extensive fields beyond Richardson Lake. Mike conducted grassland bird survey work in these fields. We were greeted by Field Sparrows.

It was a beautiful day filled with over 50 species of birds along the hike. Rose Oaks was a good place to see and celebrate birds.



A special thank you to **Mike Dougherty** for sharing Rose Oaks County Park with the Young Birders' Club families and friends.

Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty and Nathan Stouffer.

# *Oakland Owlets*

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

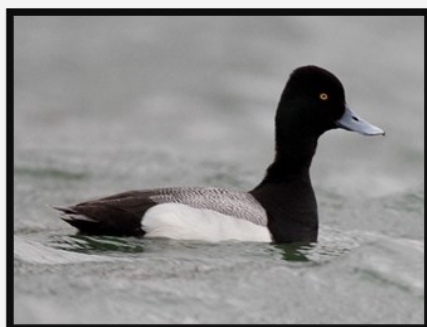
### June 17, 2023 - Rouge Park

Leaders: Kathleen Dougherty & Rachel Felder

The Oakland Owlets' families and friends gathered at Rouge Park in Detroit on a sunny and pleasant day for our monthly birding hike. The Rouge Park is owned and managed by the Detroit Parks and Recreation Department. Detroit Parks and Recreation Naturalist, **Rachel Felder**, joined the Owlets as co-leader. Rachel has extensive knowledge of the area and uses this park regularly.

The group began at the Scout Hollow Campground and hiked about a mile along the east side of the Rouge River. Habitats along the path included a mature forest, wetlands bordering the river, and an edge/opening at the trailhead. The group tallied 33 species of birds along the hike, including Tree Swallow, Great Blue Heron, Great Crested Flycatcher, and of course, White-breasted Nuthatch. One surprise was the Orchard Oriole found along the woodland edge at the beginning of the hike.

Later, the group ventured to Lahser Marsh, another location within the Rouge Park. The marsh features open water and it gave the group an opportunity to see new birds. The extra drive did not disappoint us. Several species of swallows glided over the wetland, including Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, not seen during the wooded trail. Here, the group was able to observe more wetland species including Great Egrets and waterfowl. Surprisingly, a Lesser Scaup posed for everyone to see. A special thank you to Blanche Wicke for identifying this bird. The area surrounding the marsh included a field and woodland. Overhead, Turkey Vultures soared while Chimney Swifts darted along with the swallows. On the ground, the calls of Wild Turkeys could be heard. Amazingly, these large birds are present in this urban area. The Owlets spent about 30 minutes birding at the marsh and observed 25 additional species, bringing the field trip total to 58.



# *Oakland Owlets*

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

At the conclusion of the field trip, snacks and drinks were offered to the group. Some people decided to stop at the Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Association site before departing Rouge Park. The Buffalo Soldiers were African American troops responsible to protect national resources in the west after the Civil War. The site has a stable with horses, and the few families that stopped by were able to see the horses. The staff at the Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Association site greeted the Owlets warmly.



Rouge Park is an amazing park in Detroit. It is Michigan's largest urban park, protecting 4.6 miles of the Rouge River that flow through the park. In addition, Rouge Park has over 400 acres of forested habitat, 60 acres of prairies, and multiple wetlands. A special thank you to **Rachel Felder** for sharing her time and expertise guiding the Oakland Owlet's families and friends during this visit.



Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty, Heather Klish & OAS Gallery

### **July 8, 2023 - Golden Preserve**

Leader: Kathleen Dougherty

On Saturday, July 8, young birders' families and friends planned to participate in a butterfly survey/count at the Golden Preserve in Springfield Township. The Six Rivers Land Conservancy surveys this preserve annually to measure the success of management practices to create habitat for butterflies. This year was the nineteenth year of the survey. Butterfly counts require sunny skies and a rain-free forecast. Unfortunately, the weather forecast for our scheduled date included rain, so the official butterfly count was rescheduled to another day. However, the count's compiler, Sue Greenlee, agreed to meet the Owlets to look for butterflies and birds despite the weather.

The Six Rivers Land Conservancy is a private non-profit organization incorporated to protect and conserve lands in five counties in southeast Michigan. The Golden Preserve is located within the headwaters of the Shiawassee River watershed. The preserve is a biologically diverse property with unique natural communities rarely seen in the area, including a dry sand prairie, a prairie fen, wooded wetland, and a dry mesic forest.



# Oakland Owlets

## Field Trip Reports (continued)

A small and enthusiastic group headed into the preserve armed with nets and collecting jars. Although conditions were not ideal for butterfly activity, it did not take long for the group to find butterflies. Along a pathway to a prairie we netted several brown butterflies immediately. Sue examined the butterflies closely to identify them. These butterflies were members of the *Satyridae* family, which includes medium-sized brown butterflies with eyespots on the upper and under-surfaces of their wings —the Common Wood-Nymph (photo shown). Most species of this family live in brushy habitats or open woodlands. We also found other members of this family including Little Wood-Satyr and Northern Pearly-eye.



Wandering deeper into the preserve, the open prairie was dotted with multiple colorful blooms and seed pods. The brilliant orange flowers of the butterfly weed were full of nectar and pollinators buzzed around them. Other butterfly species seen in the prairie, despite the overcast skies, included Eastern Tailed-Blue, Delaware Skipper, and SiLver-spotted Skipper. Sue explained how to identify each butterfly we encountered.

Sue guided the group from the prairie into a woodland. We hiked down a ravine and across a woodland stream, then eventually climbed to a high moraine in a mature oak forest. The tree canopy sheltered the group from the light rain. Walking along the moraine ridge, we discovered several Wild Turkey feathers. Eventually, we reached a point where we could see open water. Sue identified beaver activity in this wetland, including a dam and lodge along with a perched fen adjacent to the watershed. This type of fen is unusual.

As the rain continued, the group watched several different birds hunting insects over the wetland. Tree Swallows and Barn Swallows glided over the open waters while several Cedar Waxwings darted from the trees along the shoreline to snatch insects. All the time Common Yellowthroats continuously repeated their “*Witchey, Witchey*” song nearby. Inside the magical bubble of the forest canopy, the group observed birds sheltering from the rain. The young birders tracked and listed 28 species of birds during the field trip despite the weather.

The rain stopped once the group exited the forest. A Wood Duck flew overhead as we headed back to the parking area. Although the weather was rainy and without much sunshine, the Owlets were able to see butterflies, dragonflies, and birds. An Eastern Kingbird flew into view along with a pair of House Finches at the conclusion of the hike —it was a nice ending to the walk.



Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty

Everyone thanked **Sue Greenlee** for sharing her bug expertise and willingness to guide the group through this remarkable preserve.

# Oakland Owlets Field Trips

## September 2023 - December 2023

**Bats & Birds – Saturday, September 23, 2023; 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**  
**Stony Creek Metropark, Shelby Township**

Bats are key members of natural communities because they provide many environmental services. For instance, bats can consume 600 to 1,000 mosquitoes per hour! They are unappreciated animals that control insects and fight diseases. Michigan has nine species of bats; several are endangered or threatened species. Naturalist Erin Parker will guide a night hike in search of local bats. Erin is an experienced bat monitor and will use an *echo meter*, a device that identifies bats by their echolocation signatures. Dress to be outdoors and bring insect repellent. A 2023 Metropark pass or daily permit is required for entry.



**Fall Migration Celebration – Saturday, October 14, 2023; 8:30 am - 11:30 am**  
**Lake St. Clair Metropark, Harrison Township**



Join us to celebrate *World Migratory Bird Day* at Lake St. Clair Metropark. World Migratory Bird Day is officially celebrated on the second Saturday of May in Canada and the US, and the second Saturday of October in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. In October birds move to these locations to overwinter. This year's theme for World Migratory Bird Day is water. Lake St. Clair Metropark is a top birding spot and ideally located along the shores of Lake St. Clair—a perfect place to witness bird migration. *We may have a chance to watch Allen Chartier band birds moving through the park.* Dress for being outdoors. A 2023 Metropark pass or daily permit is required for entry.

**Hawk Migration – Saturday, November 4, 2023; 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**  
**Lake Erie Metropark, Brownstown Township**

Hawk Watch events take place throughout the country to monitor the movement of raptors during migration. In Southeast Michigan fall migration starts in September and continues through November. Lake Erie Metropark is situated along one of the migratory routes of this migration—the Mississippi Flyway. It is also the official site for the Detroit River International Hawk Watch (DRIHW). Counters from the DRIHW watch the migration daily. Join us to learn about hawks and hawk migration. Hawk Watch experts will help identify birds. Plan to hike briefly before visiting the Hawk Watch. Dress for the weather. A 2023 Metropark pass or daily permit is required for entry.



# Oakland Owlets Field Trips September 2023 - December 2023

**Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 16, 2023; 8:30 am - 10:00 am  
Eagle Valley, Orion Township**

This field trip is scheduled during OAS participation in the 124<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The Oakland Owlets will have a chance to see wintering birds at WM's Eagle Valley Recycling & Disposal Facility, a landfill. Eagle Valley provides critical habitat for wildlife while managing the waste we generate in Southeast Michigan. WM's site is certified by the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC). We will explore this restricted area on a guided tour. Participants will be required to sign a liability waiver. Dress for being outdoors. A special thank you to Kathleen Klein, WM's Community Relations Representative, for making this field trip possible.



## **OAS is following the following field trip guidelines:**

1. Pre-registration is required and number of participants is limited.
2. Directions and details are sent in advance to those that pre-register.



*The Young Birders' Club ~ Oakland Owlets offers age-appropriate educational experiences for youth 8 – 18 years old. Young birders 16 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult. All 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](mailto:kad8186@msn.com)*

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

Photo Credits: University of Michigan Animal Diversity Website, Kathleen Dougherty, OAS Photo Gallery, and Pixaby.





## Oakland Owlets Shining Stars

by Kathleen Dougherty

Oakland Audubon Society (OAS) recognized three young birders this year for their dedication and field time birding in 2022. These Oakland Owlets shining stars were awarded certificates and age-appropriate books to continue expanding their knowledge of birds. All three Owlets have previously received this recognition.

**Congratulations to Henry, Meg, and Tanya!** OAS supports the interest of these exceptional young birders. Growing the development of these budding birders is essential to the future of bird conservation. OAS honors and celebrates the parents of these young birders who spend time to nurture their children's interest.



Oakland Owlets field trips and programs are open to all birders. Youth under 16 years must be accompanied by their parents. All young birders are asked to complete release forms to participate and allow OAS to use photographic images to promote our programs.

OAS members make the Young Birders' Club programs and field trips possible. **Thank you for your support!**

*"Time in nature is not leisure time; its an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own)."*

*Richard Louv*

# OAKLAND AUDUBON AROUND TOWN

## Owlets Summer Community Outreach - July 11, 2023

*Micah 6 Community* is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the community and neighborhoods in Pontiac. They were awarded the Summer Youth Employment Program by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to expose high school students from Pontiac to jobs in the outdoors and natural resource management.



[About Us | micah6community](#)



*Micah 6 Community* invited OAS to help with this summer youth enrichment program to highlight birding with area's youth. OAS Young Birders' Club coordinator, Kathleen Dougherty, represented OAS and led a summer birding day for the *Micah 6 Community* on July 11, 2023.

Kathleen met the group in Pontiac and gave a short talk about birding, including how to use eBird. The group then traveled to Bear Creek Park in Oakland Township for a birding walk. Clinton Watershed Council loaned OAS their binoculars for this group to use. Most of the teens had never used binoculars or been birding before. Bear Creek is a wonderful birding spot with easy to access trails.

## Tollgate Farm 4-H Winged Wonders Traveling Camp - July 10-14, 2023

A young birders camp was held this past July. Youth ages 11 – 14 met at the *Michigan State University (MSU) Tollgate Farm & Education Center* in Novi and traveled to the Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners. The camp offered exploration of wild and domestic birds through interactive, hands-on science learning. *OAS awarded a scholarship to one young birder to attend this camp. Kathleen Dougherty visited the camp on July 10, 2023.*

It was a great opportunity to meet some of the students and camp instructors—the group took a wagon ride to watch birds in the beautiful woodlot on the farm and everyone was thrilled to observe flocks of swallows feeding over the farm fields.

The Tollgate Farm & Education Center has an extensive summer youth camp program and highly qualified instructors including Ellen Koehler and Elliot Nelson.

OAS is excited to promote the work of the MSU Extension to develop future birders.

### Learn more at:

[Tollgate Farm and Education Center \(msu.edu\)](https://msu.edu)

## Summer Butterfly Survey at Stellantis - July 24, 2023

Don Burlett and Doris Applebaum conducted OAS's annual butterfly survey on the Stellantis Grounds.

These surveys support their "Wildlife at Work" certification with the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC). Species detected included:

- *Six species of butterflies* (the numbers were down this year) — eastern tiger swallowtail, cabbage white, clouded sulphur, orange sulphur, monarch, wild indigo duskywing, and
- *Five species of dragonflies* — halloween pennant, black saddlebags, green darner, blue dasher, and eastern pondhawk.

In addition to surveying species, we noted invasive species present on the grounds and advocated for remediation of some of these issues.



# CLINTON RIVER WATER FESTIVAL

by Kathleen Dougherty

Oakland Audubon Society (OAS) presented at the 2023 Clinton River Water Festival on May 18, 2023. This event was sponsored by Oakland University along with several conservation groups from the area including the Pure Oakland Water, the Clinton River Watershed Council, and the City of Auburn Hills. The event took place on the campus of Oakland University and nearly 1,000 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from area schools participated.

This “Project Flying WILD” activity involved several academic disciplines, including general biology, observation, critical thinking skills, conservation actions, and the importance of stewardship.

Five classes from school districts throughout Oakland County visited OAS’s display:



## School

## Attendance

McIntyre Elementary School	18
Deerfield Elementary	25
Lessenger Elementary/Madison Heights	26
Eton Academy/Bloomfield	12
Auburn Elementary	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

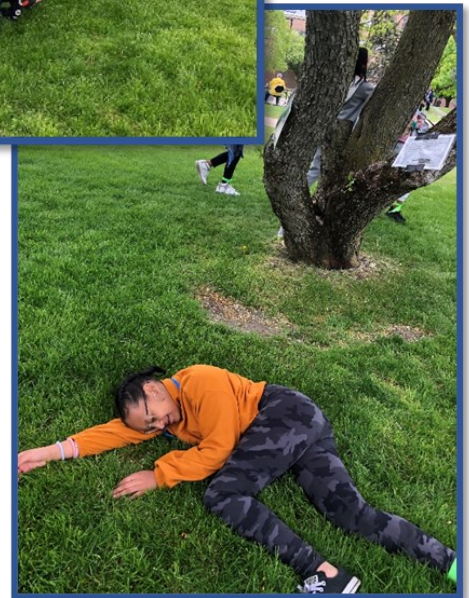
Don Burrett and Kathleen Dougherty represented OAS at the festival and led a “Project Flying WILD” activity which focused on World Migratory Bird Day.

The birds featured on the “Project Flying WILD” activity included Barn Swallow, Northern Waterthrush, Northern Shoveler, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Osprey, American White Pelican and Dickcissel. Each class that participated in the activity received a poster about World Migratory Bird Day 2023 and information about the importance of water and actions students could take to conserve birds.

The OAS display was stationed outdoors, near the Kresge Library on the Oakland University campus.

Students learned how birds are impacted on their journey between wintering grounds and summer breeding grounds by role-playing what birds encounter during migration. Through a migration course set up on the lawn, students experienced the perils of migration. Students were actively engaged as they moved on their migration journeys. At each stop they were provided instructions about where they landed and what they needed to do next.

This activity was designed to teach students that: migration is tough and challenging; changes in the environment can impact bird migration; birds need habitat to rest and refuel during migration; and not all birds survive migration.



**Events like this allow OAS to share the joy of birding with youth and the importance of bird conservation.**

Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty

## **BUTTERFLY SURVEYS AT WM**

*by Kathleen Dougherty*

WM, formerly known as Waste Management, operates two landfills in this area —Eagle Valley in Orion Township and Pine Tree Acres in Lenox Township. These landfills are two of 75 sites owned and managed by WM as wildlife habitat, certified through the [Wildlife Habitat Council \(WHC\)](#). The WHC is a globally recognized non-profit organization that encourages corporations and businesses to preserve and enhance biodiversity on corporate lands. Participation is voluntary, but WHC standards align with multiple conservation agencies. One of the best management practices, which also serve as evaluation metrics, is to conduct regular wildlife surveys.

OAS was honored to assist with butterfly surveys at Eagle Valley and at Pine Tree Acres this past summer. Doris Applebaum and Kathleen Dougherty along with Kathleen Klein from WM conducted butterfly surveys on July 21 (Eagle Valley) and August 4 (Pine Tree Acres). On August 4, the survey team was joined by Joanna Pease from Macomb Audubon and an intern from WM.

The number of species of butterflies seen was amazing, including some spectacular species like the Giant Swallowtail. A total of 15 butterfly species were observed. Monarch numbers seen at Pine Tree Acres in August were reassuring since conservation agencies are concerned about the status of this well-known iconic butterfly.

During the butterfly surveys, the group also tracked dragonflies and birds. Although mid-day is not the best time to be birding, several species were recorded. Landfills are fabulous places to see birds. Everyone in the group was pleased to watch American Kestrels patrolling both sites. Spotted Sandpipers were foraging the edges of the wetlands at Pine Tree Acres, which is near Lake St. Clair, along the migratory routes of many birds. Additionally, Eagle Valley is within the OAS's Christmas Bird Count area.

Pollinator surveys like these help WM maintain its certification through the WHC. WM is a sponsor of many conservation events in the area, like the Clinton River and Rouge River Water Festivals. Both venues provide environmental education opportunities to elementary students.

OAS is grateful to **Kathleen Klein** from WM who oversees this program. We support the work of WM as the WHC motto says — *“Every act of conservation matters.”*



Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty & OAS Gallery



## FLAP STATISTICS FOR 2022

by Doris Applebaum

Every year, the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP Canada) sends out volunteers in the Toronto area to find birds that have crashed into lighted glass windows at night during migration. Lighted windows confuse migrants, especially on cloudy nights when the birds can't navigate by the stars.

As usual, the year 2022 produced thousands of such birds, some alive but many more dead. The number is far from complete because many birds are snapped up in the early morning by scavengers like gulls.

There were 5,481 birds found in 2022; 4,023 were dead. The species most at risk that year was the Golden-crowned Kinglet, with 809 individuals found. Ruby-crowned Kinglet came in second with 430. Other species at serious risk were Dark-eyed Junco (340), Nashville Warbler (360), and White-throated Sparrow (369). Six other species had more than 100 casualties each. In all, 109 different species fell victim.

A Green Heron and Wild Turkey were the biggest surprises; it was the first-time volunteers had ever found those species during their searches.

FLAP Canada has been doing this kind of recovery activity since 1992. They have also campaigned for reducing lighting at night during migration, as well as bird-safety retrofits on buildings in an effort to reduce the toll. There have been some improvements, but there is obviously a long way to go.

Source: "*Touching Down*," Spring 2023, newsletter published by [FLAP Canada](#).

## ***Bird Briefs* (articles to look at online, click titles below)**

from Don Burlett

It's been a quiet summer for items on birding. Hopefully, the fall will lead to increased intellectual traffic to share.

### [Garlic Mustard's Time of Decline | Research Summary - NYISRI](#)

After reading an item by the author (Bernd Blossey), I found this article of his indicating that garlic mustard lead to its own downfall by "poisoning the soil" with its own feedback. An interesting idea. Other articles by this author point to a new approach to controlling "invasive" species. Some are self-limiting and efforts to clean them up often leads to prolonged presence. Worth looking into!

## ***NATURE NOTES*** by Allen Chartier

**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](mailto:amazilia3@gmail.com)

# BIRD ID QUIZ

(Fall 2023)



A) \_\_\_\_\_



B) \_\_\_\_\_



C) \_\_\_\_\_

**For the answers and explanation for this issue's quiz see Page 25**

**No Peeking!**

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### June 15, 2023

The annual Nuthatch Open competitive birding event will be held on Saturday, September 9, 2023.

The Young Birders Club will participate in an official butterfly count on July 8, and OAS has awarded an enthusiastic young birder a \$225 scholarship to attend the Winged Wonders Camp sponsored by Michigan State University.

We sold \$81 worth of books at the June membership meeting book sale.

Programs have been scheduled for several upcoming months, but anyone who has an idea for a program that can be presented next January, March, April, or June should let Program Officer Dave Hoch know. Our financial situation is good, so we may even be able to have a well-known speaker from out of state.

Also because our financial situation is in good shape, the board decided to purchase 3 sets of walkie-talkies for better communication on our field trips.

Membership Officer Jen Benke reported that we have 195 “regular” members who pay dues directly to us, and President Don Burlett added that we have 376 other members by way of our affiliation with National Audubon.

Seven Ponds Nature Center had a successful “Corks & Caps” fundraiser recently, with about 180 people in attendance. “Party at the Ponds” is scheduled for September 9, 2023.

Doris Applebaum  
Secretary



*Summer Nesters —  
by Greg Petrosky*

# MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

## Welcome New Members!



Anne Olender, Walter Salwen, Karen Stanko & Family, Carol Trupiano, Mindy Updike-Tobias & Family, Rui Zhang & Family, Stacey Shehin, Heather & Braden Klish.

Our **2024 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 26)

**Mail renewal forms to:**

Oakland Audubon Society  
C/O Robert Moll  
PO Box 796  
Birmingham, MI 48012-0796

If you would like to check the status of your membership or have questions, contact OAS Membership Officer Robert Moll at: [OASmembershipofficer@gmail.com](mailto:OASmembershipofficer@gmail.com).

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



# Native Plant Sale

BLUEHERONHEADWATERS.ORG

**NATIVE PLANT SALE  
SEPTEMBER 9  
10 AM-3 PM**

Neiman's Parking Lot  
7121 Dixie, Clarkston

Sale benefits the Blue Heron  
Headwaters Conservancy



## 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. **Some OAS meetings and programs will be at the Church and also transmitted online via Zoom, while others will be offered only 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](http://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., September 12	7:00 pm	Birds of Prey	First United Methodist Church
Tues., October 17	7:00 pm	Japan in Winter: Cranes, Eagles, and More <i>** note updated date**</i>	First United Methodist Church
Tues., November 14	7:00 pm	Panama: Darien Province and the Chiriquí Highlands	First United Methodist Church

### Bird Quiz Answers for Fall 2023 Quiz on Page 22

This issue’s photo quiz : a) Eastern Bluebird, b) Cedar Waxwing, c) European Starling

Explanation: An easy set of birds, often seen in late summer and early fall—immature birds from this summer’s breeding.

- a) Obvious size and shape of Eastern Bluebird, but pale except for blue in wings; also shows spotting on front and back. Usually, grayish colored.
- b) Pale gray with brownish head and tell-tale mask on face; also shows the yellow tail tip.
- c) Pale brown and somewhat uniform with hints of blackish feathers beginning to appear; often shows black loreal mark on face; some mottling on chest along with dark bill and eye.

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:**

Oakland Audubon Society  
 C/O ROBERT MOLL  
 PO BOX 796  
 BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48012-0796

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