



the Call Note

CAPITAL AREA AUDUBON
DECEMBER 2018

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Join Us

AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING!

Thursday, December 7th, join us to hear from **Dave Ewert from the Kirtland's Warbler Alliance.**

The Alliance is dedicated to expanding awareness for the Kirtland's Warbler and important conservation programs that help the species as well as the jack pine forest system where it lives. Ewert will tell us more about the Alliance's role in the next phase of conservation for this iconic Michigan species.

The Kirtland's Warbler, one of North America's rarest migratory songbirds, has benefited from intensive and long-term habitat management for several decades. Numbers have increased to over 2,300 pairs. Current efforts for protection of the Kirtland's Warblers include maintaining current management programs while also planning for possible downlisting to threatened status and potentially for delisting as a result of the success of these Kirtland's Warbler conservation programs. In this presentation Ewert will summarize some of the remaining conservation issues facing this endangered species and how conservationists are working to ensure the future of this conservation reliant species.

The meeting will begin with refreshments at 7:00p.m. The program will begin at 7:30p.m. Our meetings are free and open to the public.

Dedicated to creating a greater awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the interrelatedness of all Michigan's wild places and wildlife and the need for stewardship.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Season's Greetings! It's Christmas Bird Count time again!! This truly is one of my favorite birding events of the year. There's the camaraderie of spending the day with fellow birders, the hopefulness of thinking you might find a bird unusual for this time of year, the suspense of the compilation at the end of the day, the anticipation of what the weather will bring. I'm as excited as... well, as a kid at Christmas!

This year, the East Lansing Count will be on December 16 and the Eaton Rapids Count on December 30. We always need volunteers and welcome old hands and newcomers alike. I hope you'll consider joining us. See page 2 for more details.

Good birding,
Barb Hosler

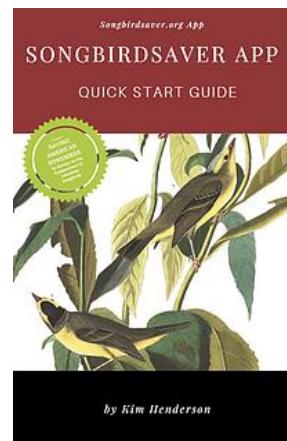
SONGBIRD SAVER

Test A New Tool to Help Prevent Birds from Colliding into Communication Towers

An estimated seven million birds die each year in North America by colliding with broadcast and cell towers. These birds, primarily night-flying songbirds on migration, are either attracted to or disoriented by the lighting systems, especially when night skies are overcast or foggy. Now, a website developer who loves birds has [created a new web page](#) to make it easy to help implement a solution. With Stan Weigman's Songbird Saver, you can enter your zip code to find tall towers near you, then send a request to operators asking them to turn off steady-burning red lights.

This simple change is known to reduce bird mortality by about 70 percent.

Visit www.songbirdsaver.org to view towers in your area that may be dangerous to birds and for more information about downloading the app.



by Kim Henderson

UPCOMING CAAS EVENTS

CAAS Monthly Meetings

Talks are held the first Thursday of each month at Fenner Nature Center. Refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Meetings begin at 7:30p.m. with announcements and bird sightings followed by the program.

December 7 – The Kirtland's Warbler: A Conservation Update

The recovery of the Kirtland's Warbler has met and exceeded the conservation goals. What is next for the rarest warbler in the world?

Presenter: Dave Ewert, Kirtland's Warbler Alliance

December 16 - East Lansing Christmas Bird Count

Get out and enjoy some winter birding by participating in National Audubon's annual Christmas bird count!

December 30 - Eaton Rapids Christmas Bird Count

This count will take place in Eaton Rapids and is also organized into regional groups.

January 4 – Experiences of a Life Long Birder

Presenter: Jon Allan, Director of the Office of the Great Lakes in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

A life-long birder, he will share stories of his extensive travels in the U.S. and Europe.

February 1 - Native Bees

Presenter: Kelsey Graham, MSU

Explore the diversity and natural history of Michigan's bee species.

March 1 - Kestrels in Cherry Orchards

Presenter : Dr. Catherine Lindell, MSU

Lindell will discuss her research on American Kestrels effects on cherry orchard pests.

Do you have an event to share?

Email us at - caasCallNote@gmail.com or share it on our facebook page - facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon

EAST LANSING CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

On Saturday, December 16, 2017, the Capital Area Audubon Society will sponsor its 71st consecutive Christmas Bird Count. This is one of the oldest Christmas Counts in Michigan. We need all the eyes that we can get out into the field. A few hours in the morning is all that is necessary (although you can go longer if you wish.) Participation is open to people of **all skill levels**. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. **You do not have to be a member of Capital Area Audubon.**

The count circle is divided into different areas, each with its own leader. A larger map of the areas can be found on the CAAS website www.capitalareaaudubon.org.

The CBC Tally and Dinner will be hosted by Sam and Liz Febba following the count on Saturday. There will be sandwiches of some sort served. If you are able to bring a salad, veggie or dessert to share, that will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Liz Febba at 517-646-0240 or lizandsam@att.net to let her know what you are bringing.

Dinner is at 6:00 p.m. so please bring food by then. We hope to start the tally promptly at 7:00. The Febba's house is located at 9950 Donegal Drive, Dimondale, MI.

A list of Area Leaders is below. Pick an Area and give the Leader a call. If you can't decide, or if you just want to help where it's needed most, call Tom Wheeker at 517-628-3843.

AREA 1 - Ed Merz:
517-230-7527

AREA 2 - Tom Wheeker:
517-628-3843

AREA 3 - Barb Hosler:
517-281-6595

AREA 4 Parks Marion & Alexia Whitcomb: 423-956-0534

AREA 5 - Ron Eggleston:
517-394-1372

AREA 6 - John Baumgartner:
517-627-5211

AREA 7 - Jim McGrath:
517-525-9247

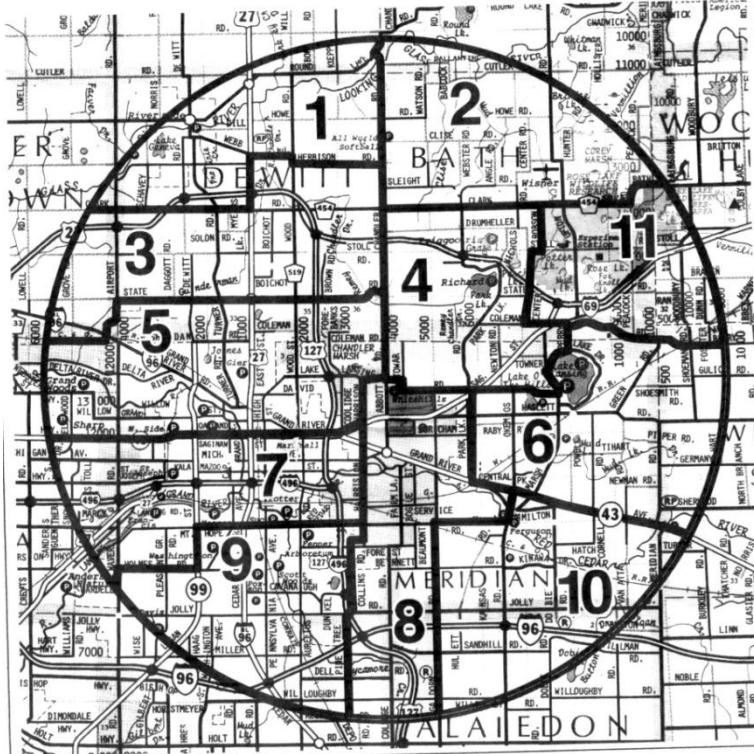
AREA 8 - Jim Keller
517-881-8473

AREA 9 - Clara Bratton:
517-339-0271

AREA 10 - Lee & Roger Laylin:
517-349-3249

AREA 11 - JB McCombs:
517-641-8049

CAAS Christmas Count



CALL NOTE

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20th of the month.

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Eileen Houston
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capitalareaaudubon.org
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EXCITING SIGHTINGS

In November a few exciting sightings were reported in the area.

- November 3 a White-winged Surf Scoter was spotted on Lake Lansing by Bruce Cohen.
- A Short-eared Owl was recorded at Witt Sod Farm in Eaton County on November 2nd. A Ross's Goose was also spotted on the 2nd at the MSU Inland Lakes Research Area.
- Jeff Pavlik reported a White-rumped Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Lesser Yellowlegs on Howell Road in White Oak.
- A Golden Eagle flew over Lake Lansing on November 7th and another was reported in Williamston.
- Winter birds have returned. Juncos are back in the area and Common Redpoll were reported at the Bunker Nature Preserve on October 29th.

These sightings were reported at our meeting or on Ebird.com or with the Ebird App.

*Do you have an exciting sighting to share?
Email us at - caasCallNote@gmail.com
or share it on our facebook page - facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon*

Thank You!

A huge thank you to **Debbie Wolf and Elaine Fischhoff** for supplying the wonderful snacks at our October meeting!

Big thanks to Fai Chan for allowing the CAAS to use his beautiful images on our header, website and Facebook page. To submit an image for publication, please email Kristy Taylor at caasCallNote@gmail.com

EATON COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 2016 Eaton Rapids Christmas Bird Count will be conducted on **Saturday, December 30, 2017**. The Eaton Rapids count circle actually bumps up to the East Lansing circle. The circle includes Eaton Rapids and Dimondale, as well as and the State Secondary Complex and large portions of both Eaton and Ingham Counties. The center of the circle is Canal Rd. and Columbia Rd. There is a lot more farmland and open areas than in the East Lansing count circle, which means that there is the potential for a different species mix. This Count has been conducted for several years now by a dedicated group of CAAS members. There is

plenty of room for more counters, so come on board. Anyone who wants to participate is welcome. Contact Tom Wheeker at 517-628-3843.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Christmas Bird Count - Volunteer to help count birds in the count circle! The areas are broken down into 11 groups. Contact Tom Wheeker at 517-628-3843 to find an area that will work for you.

Wildside Rehabilitation and Education Center in Eaton Rapids is looking for volunteers to help feed and care for rehab animals. Additional help is needed with cleaning enclosures, food preparation, and hand feeding baby animals. Please visit wildsidemi.wordpress.com/volunteering for more information or call 517-663-6153.

HISTORICAL FLASHBACK - CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1935 - 2016

The beginnings of Capital Area Audubon Society date to June, 1935 when the Lansing Audubon Society was founded. On December 26 of that year five members of the new organization ventured out to conduct a bird census. It was the first Christmas Bird Count for this area following a national tradition begun in New York in 1900 by ornithologist Frank Chapman. Their route, on foot and by car, took them from the Zoology Building on the Michigan State College Campus east along the Red Cedar River, then north to Park Lake and then west to the airport. They found 20 species including five Common Goldeneye, nine Ring-necked Pheasant, one Northern Harrier, and one Common Redpoll.

Lansing Audubon and Christmas Bird Counts continued through the 1930's and into the 1940's until World War II interrupted. The Club de-activated until 1950, but with a few exceptions an annual winter census of birds still took place during the 1940's. From 1949 to the present, Christmas Counts are believed to have been continuously held. The primary organizers through the 1950's and 1960's were Carl Haussman, a Lansing businessman and Audubon benefactor and George Wallace, an MSU professor who connected the pesticide DDT with robin mortality. In 1971 Christmas Bird Counts began to be conducted in affiliation with National Audubon. Data would now be reported and stored in their North American database and the area of the counting would be prescribed within a 15-mile diameter circle with its center point at the intersection of Lake Lansing Road and Harrison Road.

From 1972 to 2016 there have been three primary organizers of the Christmas Bird Counts: Doug McWhirter in 1972, Sam Febba in 1982, and Tom Wheeker in 1999. It is a fine achievement and contribution of time and effort of

these three to organize the counts and to collect, prepare, and submit the data. A common thread through all the 45 years was that every December evening, after the count was finished, Lee and Roger Laylin would host the participants at their home to report and tally their sightings and to enjoy hot soup or chili, a remarkable record of hospitality.

In the 46 years that count results were reported to National Audubon the average number of

species seen is 58 and the average number of field participants is 49. The high point for species was 1975 when 66 participants recorded 70* species. The total number of species recorded in the count circle for this period is 141. Of these, 17 were seen only once and 13 were reported but twice.

* includes 'Oregon' Junco, since lumped as Dark-eyed Junco

~Jim Hewitt, CAAS Historian

CBC WORD QUIZ

The first letter of all correct answers will vertically spell CHRISTMASBIRDCOUNT.

CLUE

Unwelcome boxer nickname	C - - - - -
Reclusive thrush	H - - - -
Often quoted	R - - -
Corvid off the coast	I - - - - - - - -
Duck with corrected vision	S - - - - - - - -
From sooty to elegant	T - - -
Gull named for its voice	M - -
Vegetarian woodpecker	A - - - -
Most common Michigan rail	S - - -
Louisiana state bird	B - - - - - - - -
Iconic Hawaiian endemic	I - - -
Not blonde or brunette	R - - - - -
Surface-feeding ducks	D - - - - - - -
Fond of herbivores	C - - - - - - - -
Bivalve harvester	O - - - - - - - -
Largest sandpiper	U - - - -
Largest accipiter	N - - - - - - - -
With blue or green wing patches	T - - -

ALLEGAN FIELD TRIP SUMMARY

If you were driving though the Allegan State Game area Sunday, November 12th, you may have run across a group of wet, cold, muddy but smiling birders from the Lansing area.

Our group of five joined guide Rick Brigham at the Douglas Park Beach to check on the floats of ducks just off the shore of Lake Michigan. Many ducks were too far out to be seen clearly through the fog and mist, but luckily a few drew closer to shore and two different Scoter's were identified. A group of Black Scoter and a few White-winged Scoter were floating just beside a larger group of Goldeneye and Bufflehead. Horned Grebe, Red-breasted Merganser and Bufflehead were also spotted near the Park. Two adult Bald Eagles made an appearance at the beach before we made the journey inland to Wade's Bayou near the town of Douglas.

A part of the Kalamazoo river, Wade's Bayou provides a large open area with vegetation and luckily for our wet, cold group, a small park with a gazebo overlooking the area.

This area produced Gadwall, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Redhead, Ring-Billed Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Mute Swan, Ring-necked Duck, Great Blue Heron and Pied-billed Grebe.

Our next stop was Cranes Orchard for a brief warm up, lunch and a free apple. After some great conversation at the orchard, the carpool made our way to the Allegan SGA Farm Unit. The journey was paused briefly to view a large flock of Sandhill Cranes in fields adjacent to the SGA. At one intersection our group tallied around 230 Sandhill Cranes and large numbers of Crows and Canada Geese.

The Allegan SGA was a wonderland of raptors. Three Rough-legged Hawks, a Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Merlin and Red Tailed Hawk all perched just along the edges of the farm area. We drove around searching for a possible Snowy Owl and to see which other ducks may be present. Unfortunately all of the Snowy Owl field sightings turned out to be plastic bags or trash on further inspection. The day ended by scanning the fields for a Short-eared owl, who we are guessing saw the rain and did not show up to the party.

Thanks so much to Rick for guiding our group and we hope to see more members (and possibly better weather) on our next CAAS field trip!

Trip Species Total - 43

Canada Goose
Mute Swan
Gadwall
Mallard
American Black Duck
Green-winged Teal
Redhead
Ring-necked Duck
White-winged Scoter
Black Scoter
Bufflehead
Common Goldeneye
Hooded Merganser
Red-breasted Merganser
Pied-billed Grebe
Horned Grebe
Great Blue Heron
Northern Harrier
Bald Eagle
Red-tailed Hawk
Rough-legged Hawk
American Coot
Sandhill Crane
Bonaparte's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Belted Kingfisher
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Merlin
Blue Jay
American Crow
Black-capped Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
White-breasted Nuthatch
American Robin
American Tree Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Rusty Blackbird
Common Grackle
House Sparrow



MEMBERSHIP

Members of CAAS enjoy 10 monthly programs per year on a variety of natural history topics, guided field trips, a monthly newsletter, and the satisfaction of supporting initiatives to interest young people in birds and nature.

Membership Categories

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00
Contributing	\$30.00
Sustaining	\$50.00
Donor	\$100.00

For a membership form, please visit our website at capitalareaudubon.org. Make your check payable to CAAS and mail to:
Capital Area Audubon Society
P.O. Box 22065, Lansing, MI 48909
(or bring to a meeting)

Online registration and payment is now available as well!
capitalareaudubon.org/membership

MICHIGAN WINTER EVENTS

January 20-21 or February 10-11, 2018
Michigan Audubon Winter UP Trip

Are you anxious to see a Gray Jay? Hoping to check the Northern Hawk Owl off your list? Then join Michigan Audubon on a birding tour of the Eastern Upper Peninsula. This caravan adventure will start at Sault Ste. Marie and then progress through Chippewa and Mackinac Counties.

The trip is limited to 12 participants and the fee is \$100 for Michigan Audubon Members, \$125 for non members. For more information or to register, visit the Michigan Audubon website at www.michiganaudubon.org/calendar/winter-birding-trip/

The majority of the travel is by car caravan. It is rated easy with foot travel on gravel or paved roadways. Duration of foot travel is less than a mile at a time, though there may be snow covered or slippery conditions.
Fee does not include food or lodaina.