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# the Call Note

CAPITAL AREA AUDUBON  
DECEMBER 2019

## Join Us

### AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING!

#### December 5 – Bluebirds

##### Speaker - Gene Wasserman

Join local bluebird expert Gene Wasserman as he shares how to get started as a bluebird landlord and how to help bluebirds succeed in your area.

Wasserman serves as the Ingham County Coordinator for the Michigan Bluebird Society.



### DECEMBER MEETING LOCATION

During the renovation at Fenner, we will be meeting at the **Michigan Nature Association, 2310 Science Parkway, Okemos, MI 48864**. This is the same building as Michigan Audubon.

The meeting will begin with refreshments at 7:00p.m. followed by the program at 7:30.

*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 OUR PRESIDENT

In December, 2015, I sent an email to Tom Wheeler asking how I could help with the Christmas Bird Count. I was a new birder and loved the idea of citizen science. I was used to birding alone, and really excited about meeting other birders and heading out with a group.

I read about the CBC on the Audubon Society website and was excited to get out on a walk with people who knew what they were doing!

Tom graciously connected me with Clara Bratton, who leads Area 9. This area is great for beginners and includes Fenner Nature Center, Hawk Island Park, parts of the Lansing River Trail, Scott Woods, Mt. Hope Cemetery and areas in South Lansing.

Clara also leads the crow count bright and early in the morning. I met up with our group at the Fleetwood Diner for breakfast just after they had counted crows.

As a newbie, walking with a naturalist was a bit of a dream come true. Clara was patient with my identifications and explained what plants the birds were eating and areas that they had counted birds in years past. She also encouraged me to come out to one of the Capital Area Audubon Meetings. As you can see, her advice shifted my life in a pretty big way!

I had afternoon plans with family, so I had to call it a day after a drive around the cemetery to listen for a few cedar waxwings. I missed out on the compilation dinner, but I knew I was hooked and would absolutely be coming back next year.

This year will be my fifth Christmas Bird Count and I still feel just as excited as I did my first time out.

Each year holds memories and surprises of its own. I have worn snow pants, hand warmers, and waded through snow almost up to my knees. We have had nice temperate days with open water and a golf course filled with geese. We have counted thousands of crows leaving a roost in Lansing, and the following year only found a few hundred. My first count gave me a lifer, the first White-throated Sparrow I had ever seen.

One year we spotted an Ovenbird at Fenner long past the time they should have migrated south and last year spent 30 minutes trying to get a tiny stray kitten out of a tree!



Please consider joining us at this year's count. Beginners are welcome and I would love to have you join me in Area 9 if you are not sure where else you would like to participate. Page 2 will have all the details! 1

See you at the Count!  
- Kristy Taylor

# UPCOMING CAAS EVENTS

**Christmas Bird Count -  
December 14 - East Lansing Count**  
Barb Hosler - [birdingbarb@yahoo.com](mailto:birdingbarb@yahoo.com)

**December 28 - Eaton Rapids Count**  
Thomas Wheeler -  
[tom.wheeler@gmail.com](mailto:tom.wheeler@gmail.com)

## MEETINGS IN 2020 WILL BE HELD AT FENNER NATURE CENTER'S NEW BUILDING

**January 9 – Marsh Birds**

**Speaker - Rachel Pierce**

Would you like to learn more about some of our more secretive marsh birds? Join us Thursday, January 9th, at our monthly meeting to learn more about these amazing birds.

**This meeting will be held the SECOND THURSDAY of the month due to the holiday.**

**February 6 – Grassland Management  
Speaker - Chad Krumnauer**

Explore the changing and fascinating restoration of native prairie with Chad Krumnauer from the Michigan DNR.

**March 5 – Bats**

Michigan is home to 9 species of bat, including the endangered Indiana bat. These bats play an important role in controlling local insect population. Dr. Allen Kurta, nationally respected bat expert and wildlife biologist at Eastern Michigan University will share with us along with Peter Fowler, from the Bat Association of MSU. This will be a joint meeting with the MSU Bat Association!

**April 2 – Birds of Asia**

**Dr. Pamela Rasmussen** will share her vast knowledge and past work with Asian birds. Rasmussen, the lead author of "Birds of South Asia: The Ripley Guide," is an assistant professor at MSU and assistant curator at the MSU Museum. She is also the coordinator of MSU's global bird sounds website AVoCet.

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month (except January) 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.

# EAST LANSING CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

**Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 14, 2019**, for the 72nd annual East Lansing Christmas Bird Count! This is one of the oldest Christmas Counts in Michigan. We need all the eyes and ears 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.

The CBC Tally and Dinner will be hosted by Sam and Liz Febba following the count on Saturday. There will be chicken salad croissant sandwiches. 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 [lizandsam1972@att.net](mailto:lizandsam1972@att.net) with any questions about the count dinner. Food will be served at 6:00 p.m.. You may arrive anytime after 5:30. 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. If you can't decide, would like to lead an open area or if you just want to help where it's needed most, email Barb Hosler at [birdingbarb@yahoo.com](mailto:birdingbarb@yahoo.com).

**AREA 1 - Richard Yarsevich:**  
517-242-3104, [yarserich@gmail.com](mailto:yarserich@gmail.com)

**AREA 2 - OPEN**

**AREA 3 - Barb Hosler:**  
517-281-6595, [birdingbarb@yahoo.com](mailto:birdingbarb@yahoo.com)

**AREA 4 - Parks Marion & Alexia Whitcomb:** 423-956-0534, [parks.marion@gmail.com](mailto:parks.marion@gmail.com)

**AREA 5 - Ron Eggleston:**  
517-394-1372, [reggleston41@gmail.com](mailto:reggleston41@gmail.com)

**AREA 6 - John Baumgartner:**  
517-627-5211, [jeb1015@comcast.net](mailto:jeb1015@comcast.net)

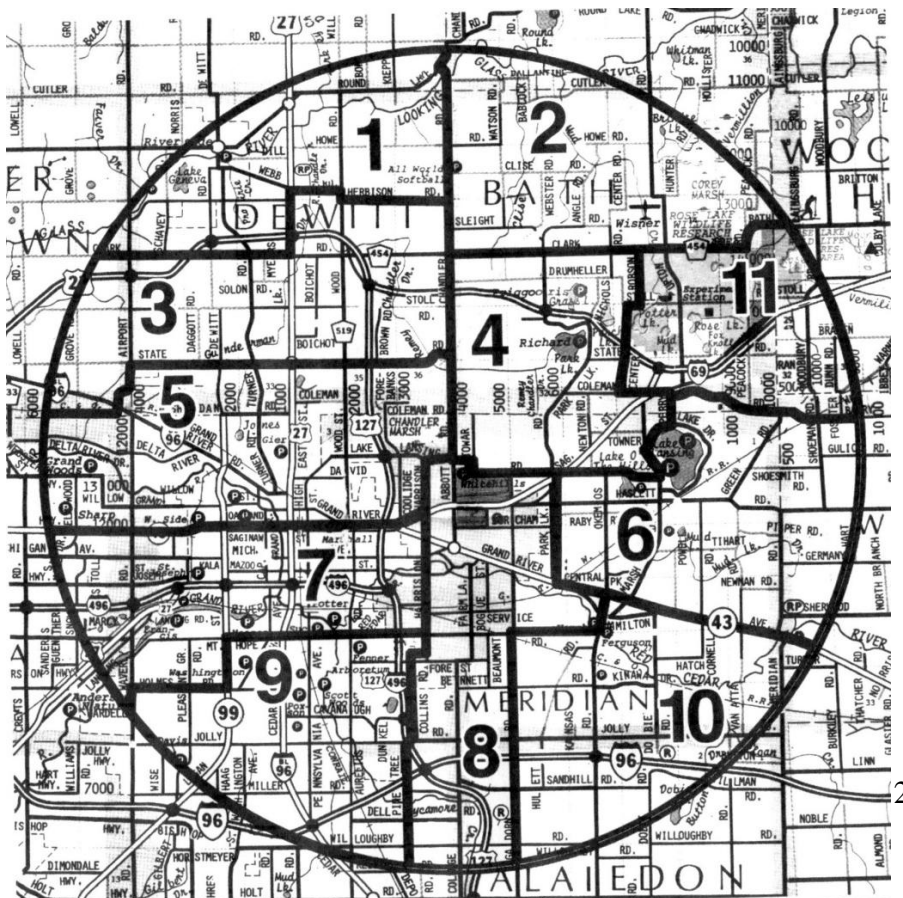
**AREA 7 - Jim McGrath:**  
517-525-9247,  
[naturedisc87@gmail.com](mailto:naturedisc87@gmail.com)

**AREA 8 - OPEN**

**AREA 9 - Clara Bratton:**  
517-339-0271, [brattoncl@gmail.com](mailto:brattoncl@gmail.com)

**AREA 10 - Lee & Roger Laylin:**  
517-349-3249, [slab2make@gmail.com](mailto:slab2make@gmail.com)

**AREA 11 - JB McCombs:**  
517-641-8049, [jb@jbmcombs.com](mailto:jb@jbmcombs.com)





# BIRD BACTERIA KEY TO COMMUNICATION

- MSU Science Today

Birds use odor to identify other birds, and researchers at Michigan State University have shown that if the bacteria that produce the odor is altered, it could negatively impact a bird's ability to communicate with other birds or find a mate.

Smell is a basic sense vital for the survival of humans and animals. It warns of danger, aids in finding food, and even helps communicate and find a mate. But if something interferes with the ability to smell, or more precisely with the smell itself, there can be consequences.

The researchers discovered that scents emitted by songbirds are produced by certain bacteria in preen glands. These bacteria identify a bird to other birds. If the bacteria is removed or changed, the bird will not express the correct information. The results have been published in a [new paper](#) in the Journal of Experimental Biology.

"This is the same process as in humans. We each have bacteria on our bodies that create smells like armpit odor that is unique to each person," said [Danielle Whittaker](#), lead author and managing director of the BEACON Center for the Study of Evolution in Action. "The odors produced by birds are unique to them and allow other birds to gain crucial information regarding the mating process. Alter that bacteria and the bird could be less attractive to potential mates."

[Birds communicate with odors](#) to determine the stage of reproduction process, quality or hormonal state of a potential mate. Like humans putting on deodorant or perfume, birds preen by rubbing their bill over the preen gland and then rubbing the oil over their feathers and body.

The researchers injected antibiotics directly in the preen gland of dark-eyed juncos, which changed both the bacterial communities and the odors. They also cultured bacteria directly from the preen oil and measured the odors produced by the bacteria alone, which included the same odors present in preen oil.

"Bacteria can change for a number of reasons, including from the environment, infections, hormones or social interactions," Whittaker said. "This is the same for humans. Our personal smells are impacted by our microbiomes. Take antimicrobial products for instance. They seem like a great idea for staying clean, until you realize they can negatively change your microbiome. The same thing goes for birds and other animals."

MSU co-authors include doctoral student Osama Alian and Kevin Theis (now at Wayne State University.) Wayne State University and Indiana University also contributed to this study. This research was funded by [BEACON](#) and the [National Science Foundation](#).

To view the original paper, visit - <https://jeb.biologists.org/content/22/20/jeb202978>

## LOCAL EVENTS

### Michigan Audubon Seminar Series Holiday Bird Crafts December 9 - 7-8 p.m.

2310 Science Parkway, Okemos  
More information can be found at - [www.michiganaudubon.org](http://www.michiganaudubon.org)

**Howl at the Moon**  
**Friday, December 13 - 7 - 8 p.m.**  
**Harris Nature Center**  
**3998 Van Atta Rd., Okemos, MI**  
Guided night walk during or near the full moon. Meet in the parking lot. Flashlights and dogs on a non-retractable leash are welcome. The walk is approximately 3 miles long. \$3/person. For more information, visit - [meridian.mi.us/HNC](http://meridian.mi.us/HNC)

**Cocoa In the Cabin & Craft Day**  
**Woldumar Nature Center**  
**December 14, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**  
Gather around the fire in the Moon Cabin and enjoy hot chocolate and historic demonstrations. Then head over to the Visitor Center and create your own ornament or barn wood holiday decor to take home. There will be a requested donation of \$5/individual, \$10/couple, \$15/family. There is a 20% discount for members of the organization. For additional information, visit [woldumar.org](http://woldumar.org)

**Treats for Wildlife**  
**Sunday, January 12 - 2 p.m.**  
**Harris Nature Center**  
**3998 Van Atta Rd., Okemos, MI**  
Have fun creating edible treats for the birds and squirrels during this hands-on nature discovery program. \$3/person, \$7 per family. For more information, visit - [meridian.mi.us/HNC](http://meridian.mi.us/HNC)

**Science on a Sphere**  
**MSU Museum**  
**409 West Circle Drive, East Lansing, MI**  
**Gallery now open**  
**Public Shows begin January 11, 2020**  
Imagine yourself in a darkened museum gallery. Gradually, four projectors illuminate a giant globe, seeming to float in front of you. You see a spectacular animation, showing geophysical, environmental, and cultural data projected on the globe. You watch our spinning earth - our tiny "blue marble" - from outer space. Then, the image instantly transforms into the rotating sphere of Mars, a history of cities on Earth, or even the interior of a biological cell. Come experience it for yourself!

## CALL NOTE

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September through June by the  
Capital Area Audubon Society  
PO Box 22065, Lansing MI 48909.  
Deadline for submissions:  
20th of the month.

### 2019-2020 CAAS Officers

President	Kristy Taylor
Vice President	Parks Marion
Secretary	Alexia Witcombe
Treasurer	Michael Caterino
Membership	Richard Yarsevich
Editor & Facebook	Kristy Taylor
Publicity & Hospitality	Sandra Conn
Field Trip Coordinator	Mike Moquin
Program Coordinator	Julia Spalding
<b>Historian</b>	<b>Open</b>
Website	Roger Wolf

### 2019-20 CAAS Board of Directors

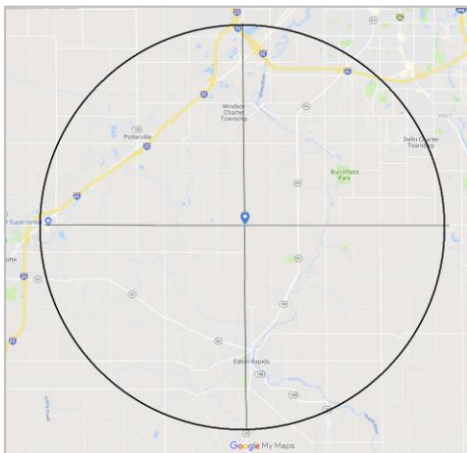
John Baumgartner  
Michael Caterino  
Sandra Conn  
Parks Marion  
Mike Moquin  
Julia Spalding  
Kristy Taylor  
Alexia Witcombe  
Richard Yarsevich

[caaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:caaudubon@gmail.com)  
[capitalareaaudubon.org](http://capitalareaaudubon.org)

# EATON RAPIDS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 2018 Eaton Rapids Christmas Bird Count will be conducted on Saturday, December 29, 2018. The center of the count circle is the intersection of Columbia and Canal Roads in Eaton County. The circle includes Eaton Rapids, Pottsville, Dimondale and the State Secondary Complex in Eaton County as well as a portion of southwestern Ingham county. Much of the count circle is rural.

This count is much more loosely organized than the East Lansing count. If you think that you would like to participate, call Tom Wheeler at 517-628-3843.



## CAAS EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to the support of our membership, Capital Area Audubon offers two \$250 scholarships a year to support educational programming.

These scholarships are offered each program year and are evaluated and approved by the board as they are submitted. Approved requests may include educational opportunities for groups and individuals that are in line with the mission of CAAS.

Preference will be given to CAAS Members and their families. Individuals, schools, teachers and student groups are encouraged to apply.

Recipients will be asked to share with CAAS in the Call Note or in person about their experience.

Please contact the board at [caaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:caaudubon@gmail.com) for the application or with any additional questions.

## EXCITING SIGHTINGS

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

- An Eastern Phoebe has been spotted near Potter Park Zoo and was found on the Bald Eagle Nesting sign on November 24th!
- A Snow Goose and Ross's Goose were reported at the MSU Agricultural fields near Jolly and College on November 24th.
- A Glaucous Gull was reported to eBird at Lake Lansing.

*These sightings were reported at our last meeting, on eBird.com, or with the eBird App.*

*Do you have an exciting sighting to share?*

*Email us at - [caasCallNote@gmail.com](mailto:caasCallNote@gmail.com)  
or share it on our facebook page - [facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon)*

# Thank You!

Thanks to Mickey Burns and Betty Seagull for providing the snacks for our November meeting and to Dr. Jim Sikarskie for sharing his humor, his experiences as a wildlife vet and his passion for Bald Eagles with us.

## WINTER EVENTS

**Native Garden Workshop**  
**Woldumar Nature Center**  
**5739 Old Lansing Rd., Lansing, MI**  
**January 11, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

4 Seasons of Native Landscapes- Plants, settings, structure and the best natives for landscapes. How to build a bloom cycle and/or use four-season plants. Cost: \$20 nonmembers \$15 members

*Do you have an event to share?*  
*Email us at - [caasCallNote@gmail.com](mailto:caasCallNote@gmail.com)*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Thank you so much to all of our members for joining us for another year of programs and supporting community connections with nature!

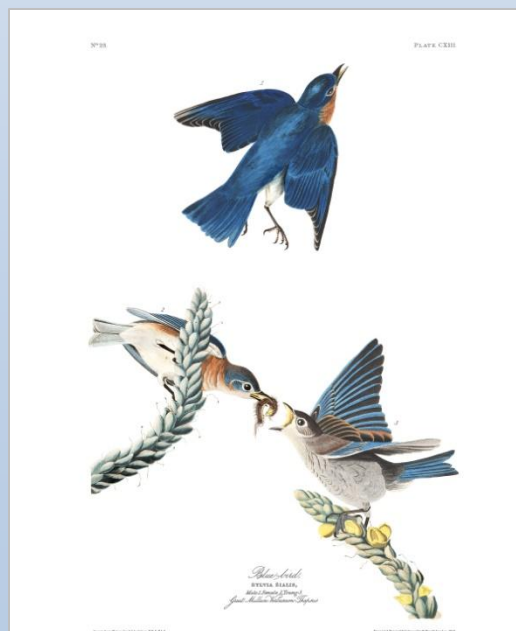
Please extend a warm welcome to all of our new members since last month!

Christine Leodler  
Ralph & Marion Gorton  
Kim Scherschligt

### Did you know?

John James Audubon's Birds of America is available online to view, download and print for free!

[www.audubon.org/birds-of-america](http://www.audubon.org/birds-of-america)



# CAAS APPAREL ON SALE NOW!

Starting November 28th, CAAS apparel will be available for sale to help support outreach by the CAAS!

From November 28th through December 20th, we will offer t-shirts and long sleeve shirts featuring the new CAAS logo for sale online.

If you are not able to order from home, we will have a computer for you to use to place your order at our next meeting.

Short Sleeve T-Shirts are \$20 each.  
Ladies Short Sleeve Shirts are \$20 each.  
Long Sleeve T-Shirts are \$24 each.

Shipping is free if you pick it up at our February meeting (it will be shipped to

Kristy Taylor and she will bring the shirts to the meeting) or around \$6.98 if you would like your order shipped directly to your home.

Visit - [customink.com/fundraising/capital-area-audubon](http://customink.com/fundraising/capital-area-audubon) to make your selections.

Proceeds from this fundraiser will support our programs, print materials, shirts for walk leaders, and materials for community events like the Arbor Day Celebration booth and Potter Park Zoo's World Migratory Bird Day booth.

Please contact [caascallnote@gmail.com](mailto:caascallnote@gmail.com) or Kristy Taylor at 517-980-4600 with any questions. We look forward to seeing you all in your CAAS apparel!



## MEMBERSHIP

Support community programs with your CAAS Membership.

**SEPTEMBER 2019 - AUGUST 2020**

### 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 [capitalareaaudubon.org](http://capitalareaaudubon.org) or pick one up at our next meeting.

**Online registration and payment is now available at**  
[capitalareaaudubon.org/membership](http://capitalareaaudubon.org/membership)

## WHERE WERE WE?

*- by John Baumgartner*

The change in CAAS regular meeting location at Fenner due to the renovation work caused me to think back many years when I first started attending CAAS meetings.

When I first moved to the Lansing area in 1978, Dr. Charles "Ted" Black who I had previously known invited me to my first meeting. It was held at the MSU Museum auditorium. I do not remember the content of the meeting though it was some kind of slide presentation. The auditorium type seating made viewing very easy. I also recall that some of the subsequent meetings were held at Woldumar Nature Center and at All Saints Episcopal Church. Some of these were potlucks followed by a program while others were just programmatic.

So even though most recently we have consistently met at Fenner, there was a time when meeting were held in a variety of venues.

## WINTER EVENTS

### Winter Birding in the Eastern UP

**January 18-19, 2020 or**

**February 8-9, 2020**

Are you anxious to see a Canada Jay? Hoping to check the Northern Hawk Owl off your list? Then join Michigan Audubon and birding guide Darrell Lawson, former president of Petoskey Audubon, on a birding tour of the Eastern Upper Peninsula.

This caravan adventure will start at Sault Ste. Marie and progress through Chippewa and Mackinac Counties. This trip is rated EASY. Most travel is by car caravan and foot travel is generally on gravel or paved roadways. Roads may be snow-covered and/or slippery. Duration of foot travel is less than a mile at a time and participants need to be able to withstand cold temperatures for periods of 30 minutes.

Registration opened on November 8, 2019. For more information or to register, visit - [michiganaudubon.org/upcoming-tours-workshops/](http://michiganaudubon.org/upcoming-tours-workshops/)

### Detroit River International Wildlife

**Refuge 2020 Eagle Tour**

**Saturday, January 25, 9am or 1pm**

**28820 East River Road**

**Grosse Ile, MI**

Enjoy a tour of the Eagles at the Detroit River IWF. This very popular event is sponsored by DTE Energy and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance. Tours are two hours long.

In the past, this event has filled up quickly, so an online lottery is available to register to win a spot. Registering does NOT guarantee a spot on the tour. One entry per person and up to four spots per entry. All lottery winners will be notified by Wednesday January 8, 2020 if they have won a spot at the tour.

For more information and the lottery registration form, visit -

[www.fws.gov/refuge/detroit\\_river/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/detroit_river/)

The Eagle Tour will take place on January 25th. If you have any questions please contact - [jennifer\\_braatz@fws.gov](mailto:jennifer_braatz@fws.gov) or call 734-288-6459.