



DOUG HITCHCOX, MACAULAY LIBRARY 2019

the Call Note

CAPITAL AREA AUDUBON
JANUARY 2020

Join Us

AT OUR JANUARY MEETING!

January 9 – 3 Billion Birds Lost: And What You Can Do About It
Speaker - Rachael Pierce

A new study published in *Science* found that there have been steep, long-term losses across virtually all groups of birds in the U.S. and Canada.

Rachael Pierce, a waterbird biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in East Lansing, MI, will present a comprehensive overview of this recent assessment and explain what it means for the four major bird groups - landbirds, waterbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl - as well as for specific species. She will also discuss the drivers of bird decline, reasons for hope, and what we can ALL do to help change the trajectory of birds in decline

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

**MEETINGS IN 2020 WILL BE HELD AT
FENNER NATURE CENTER'S
NEW BUILDING,
2020 E. Mt. Hope Ave, Lansing, MI**

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

At the start of each new year, I try to reflect and assess how I have grown and changed as a birder. I think about the goals I may have for the coming year and ways I can find more opportunities to spend time out in nature.

I don't know if I have ever looked back and thought that I spent too much time outside. It renews my spirit, gives me time to clear my mind, makes me more creative and more committed to sharing this amazing natural world we live in with others.

This year I had plenty of opportunities to share my time in nature. I started a new job with the Michigan State Bird Observatory, began an after-school nature club for middle-school students and started work on a native plant garden at a Holt elementary school. I was able to lead and join bird walks, travel to the Everglades and visit Seney National Wildlife Refuge. My outdoor time has been purposeful and varied, and I look forward to continuing that well into 2020.

Each year I also try to see how my identification skills have grown. In 2019, I was really trying to work on birding by ear. A few songs are in there for good now, but I do fear that the Hairy/Downy calls will forever be indistinguishable to me. I know as soon as spring migration arrives, the mystery of bird song will throw my ear ID into high gear and I can hopefully add a few more warbler songs to the long term memory bank.

I am also excited for our return to Fenner Nature Center this winter. The new building is a sign of the continued expansion and dedication of Fenner's education and outreach goals. The building will help open up new opportunities for nature programming right here in Lansing including a new nature based preschool.

Our meeting in January will highlight the ways we can help birds recover from years of decline and I am so hopeful that 2020 will bring the change we need for birds and each of our lives. Happy New Year!

See you Thursday the 9th!
- Kristy Taylor

CAAS APPAREL UPDATE

Unfortunately, we were unable to meet our minimum order requirement for the apparel order through the Custom Ink online fundraiser. All orders will be refunded and we will investigate alternate options for ordering apparel and give information later in the spring.

Please contact caascallnote@gmail.com or Kristy Taylor at 517-980-4600 with any questions.



UPCOMING CAAS EVENTS

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 along with **Peter Fowler**, from the Bat Association of MSU will share their knowledge of bats and bats' habitat needs. 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 7:30 p.m. with announcements and bird sightings followed by the program.

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 or pick one up at our next meeting.

Online registration and payment is now available at
capitalareaaudubon.org/membership

BIRDING BOARDGAME

Our family has fallen in love with a new bird-themed board game!

Wingspan is a card-driven game by game designer Elizabeth Hargrave and Stonemaier Games. Players collect bird cards, gain food, lay eggs and earn points over four rounds of play. The game can be played alone or host up to five players.

Wingspan is beautifully designed and features realistic art highlighting the birds of North America. A new expansion pack featuring European birds was just released in November.

Players place birds on three different habitats and birds have game abilities based on the actual properties of the real birds!

The American Birding Podcast interviewed creator Elizabeth Hargrave in May to learn more about the creation of Wingspan. She shared that as a birder and lover of board games, she was excited to put something together that was a collaboration with both her passions

and with artists and game testers to make the best game possible. She used data from eBird to highlight the most common birds from the United States and added endangered species and birds with special abilities to the mix.

Wingspan is available online through Stonemaiergames.com, on Amazon and other online resources.



EXCITING SIGHTINGS

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

- The Snow Goose continues this month at the MSU Farm Fields near the corner of Jolly and College road.
- A Short-eared Owl was reported flying over a road in Dansville on Dec. 23.
- White-crowned Sparrow and Eastern Towhee have been spotted in Ingham County a number of times in December.
- A Rose-breasted Grosbeak has been reported at a birdfeeder in Lansing on December 24th.

These sightings were reported at our last meeting or on eBird.com.

Do you have an exciting sighting to share?

Email us at - caasCallNote@gmail.com

or share it on our facebook page - [facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon)

Thank You!

Thanks to Nancy Mince Moyer Boyce, Sandra Conn, Julia Spalding and Mike Moquin for providing the snacks for our December meeting and to Gene Wasserman for sharing his bluebird products and depth of experience with us. A big thank you as well to Liz Febba for hosting the Christmas Bird Count compilation dinner and to Barb Hosler and Tom Wheeler for compiling the two area counts!

GET READY FOR BLUEBIRDS

- Michigan Bluebird Society

All bluebirds are classified as "cavity nesting birds". This means that their natural choice in nesting in the wild is some sort of hollowed out cavity in a tree. Before people put out nest boxes, natural cavities are what bluebirds nested in exclusively. Even now, some bluebirds will nest in these cavities, IF they can find them. And this is a big problem today, as available natural tree cavities are scarce. Why is this the case? There are several reasons:

1. Extreme development has removed many trees which develop cavities.

2. Landscaping methods today tend to favor removal of dead or dying trees rather than leaving them as a home for wildlife. In nature, these types of trees are not removed, but left to gradually decay. And the process of this decay, taking place over years, provides food, shelter, and nesting sites for many animals including bluebirds.

3. Aggressive, competing species like house sparrows and starlings have taken over the few natural cavities that are available.

Bluebirds cannot create their own nesting cavities. They have to rely on either natural decay to create the space inside the tree or woodpeckers to excavate the cavity for them. Either way, the bluebird has to search extensively to find a suitable cavity in the right habitat.

All of this has created a shortage of bluebird nesting sites that has directly contributed to the decline of bluebirds for the first 3/4 of the 1900's.

This is where bluebird nest boxes solve the problem. The nest box looks a lot like a natural nesting cavity to a bluebird. If it is designed to the proper dimensions and placed in a good location, bluebirds will respond readily.

Habitat is the single most important factor which will determine whether you attract bluebirds to nest in your box. You MUST locate the nest box in a location attractive to bluebirds. Good types of areas include golf courses, open subdivisions, farm fields, pastures, orchards, metroparks, open cemeteries, school yards, and church yards.

For more information and full nest box plans, visit michiganbluebirds.org/nest-boxes/nestbox-basics



CALL NOTE

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20th of the month.

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Join the CAAS Board!

Would you like to help serve and shape the Capital Area Audubon Society? We are looking for three new applicants to serve on our board next year. For more information, please contact a board member or email us at caaudubon@gmail.com.

LOCAL EVENTS

Michigan Audubon Owl Prowl
January 11 - 5-6:30 p.m.
Capital City Bird Sanctuary
6001 Delta River Drive, Lansing, MI

Michigan Audubon Winter Walks
January 5, February 2, March 1
Capital City Bird Sanctuary
6001 Delta River Drive, Lansing, MI
9 - 10:30 a.m.

More information can be found at -
www.michiganaudubon.org

Treats for Wildlife
Sunday, January 12 - 2-3 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

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!

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
or share it on our Facebook page -
[facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/capitalareaaudubon)