

Photo by
Fai Chan
2016

the Call Note

CAPITAL AREA AUDUBON
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

Join Us

AT OUR FEBRUARY MEETING!

Join us at our next meeting Thursday,
February 3, 7:00 - 8:30pm on Zoom!

Each month, join fellow CAAS members and nature enthusiasts to learn about a variety of topics including how to get started birding, learn about our local birds, birding destinations around the world, the interconnectedness of nature, ongoing research in the bird community and much more.

Our February meeting will begin at 7:00pm with recent sightings, member information and brief announcements. Our speaker will begin at 7:15.

Please visit our Zoom link -
<https://msu.zoom.us/j/94720211954>
or open your Zoom app and enter
Meeting ID: 947 2021 1954
Password - CAAS

If you have an idea for a presenter for a CAAS meeting or a topic you would like covered, please contact our board at Caascallnote@gmail.com or contact board member Julia Spalding at jespalding@comcast.net.



past presenters

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

As the holiday season comes to a close, many of us like to start the new year with some fresh birding goals.

In 2020, my aim was to record an eBird checklist every day. This was a great way to keep close to home and really pay attention to the birds near me and those I encountered in my daily life. In 2021, I did not have a specific focus for certain species, or any routine goals, so birding felt a little more peaceful, and I focused my time to seek quiet and practice mindfulness. It was just what I needed during a year of near-constant change and uncertainty.

Looking ahead to 2022, I am not sure what the year of birding (or the year in general) will bring, but I would like to try to see as many Michigan birds as I can and read one bird-focused book a month. I am off to a pretty good start, but not planning on any super long distance chases. Although if the Steller's Sea Eagle shows up in Michigan, (see note on page 3) I will be sure to hit the road for that one!

A big thank you to all those who participated in this year's Christmas Bird Count. At the Zoom compilation meeting, area leaders shared the totals from their groups along with a few amusing stories. This year I was not able to find the roosting crows (they may have been a bit south of our count circle) but was able to find a group of a couple hundred near the south side KFC. These crows were such fun to watch, and seemed to be perusing the menu for a tasty breakfast option.



I was also finally able to add Ring-billed Gulls to my Area 9 count! There were six of them hanging out at the South Cedar Meijer parking lot. This may not be an exciting find, but seeing gulls in the winter, in the middle of Michigan is a pretty cool and is the first time I have been able to add them to my CBC species list!

Usually there are a couple of interesting gulls at Lake Lansing, but this year there were just the two commonly reported species, Herring Gull and Ring-billed Gull. Full CBC results will be published after all of the data has been collected and compiled. (A big thanks to Barb Hosler for all of her time and effort putting together and submitting the results!)

The CAAS Board will meet in early February and determine what the rest of the program year will look like. Hopefully you all stay safe and healthy this new year and we are able to get together again in the spring.

Happy New Year and Happy Birding!
Kristy Taylor

CAAS EVENTS

March Monthly Meeting

Notes from a Field Biologist in the Pacific Northwest (PNW)

Wednesday, March 3rd at 7pm via Zoom

Presenter: Keke Ray

Join CAAS members as we hear from Keke Ray about her work as a seasonal field biologist in the PNW. Ray recently joined Dr. Sharon Gill's Sound Ecology Lab at Western Michigan and is currently focused on communication systems, specifically within Red-winged Blackbirds.

LOCAL EVENTS

Kellogg Bird Sanctuary Out of Bounds Bird Series - January 25, February 1 & 8 6- 7:15pm, \$35-45

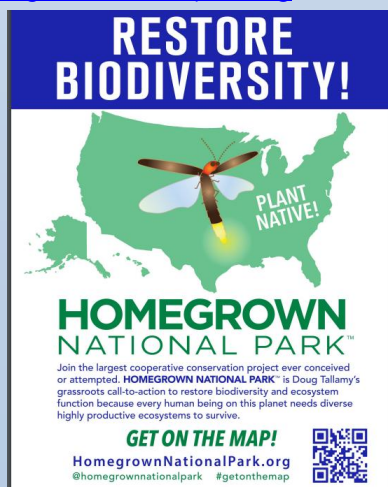
Every bird-watcher delights in seeing birds that normally live far away but periodically turn up as rarities. Learn about the rare birds that visited Michigan in 2021 and deepen your understanding of bird migration and navigation.

February 1, 2022: Avian vagrancy - birds spotted outside of their expected habitat is a phenomenon that has fascinated birders for centuries. Learn the reasons why birds get off course and what rare vagrant birds were spotted in Michigan in 2021.

Registration is required and ends January 23rd. Register at www.kbs.msu.edu/events/

Join the Homegrown National Park -

Homegrown National Park is a grassroots call-to-action to regenerate biodiversity by planting native plants! Learn more and join the cause at homegrownnationalpark.org.



WINTER COMMUNITY SCIENCE IN MI

Dec. 6th - MI Birds, Great Lakes
Audubon article by Erin Rowan

Our colorful autumn foliage has fallen, temperatures have dropped, and bird song has all but disappeared, but surprisingly, not all Michigan birds fly south to warmer climates. In addition to the birds that stay in the state year-round, Michigan welcomes many new visitors from the north in the colder months, making winter an exciting time to watch birds.

Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and Dark-eyed Juncos arrive at this time of year, in addition to Snowy Owls, Great Gray Owls, Northern Hawk Owls and Boreal Owls that make their way into the UP and northern lower peninsula. Winter is also the perfect season for waterfowl birding as hundreds of thousands of ducks, geese and swans descend on the Great Lakes.

This winter, you can contribute to science while you're birding! Winter bird counts help scientists better understand winter bird movements, assess bird population health, and guide meaningful conservation action. With bird populations in decline since the 1960's, it is increasingly important that scientists and land managers understand all aspects of a birds life cycle.

Check out these upcoming community science opportunities hosted by MI Birds partners across the state, and find out how you can get involved:

Winter Feeder Counts (November 2021 – April 2022): Do you have a birdfeeder visible from a window in your home or at your office? If so, you are perfectly equipped to participate in a winter feeder count! Learn about how you can participate at www.feederwatch.org

Wild Turkey Observations (January 2022): Michigan DNR invites you to submit your winter Wild Turkey observations to help benefit Wild Turkey management across the state. The comeback of the Wild Turkey is one of Michigan's greatest wildlife conservation stories and they can be found in every county in the Lower Peninsula and parts of the UP. Submit your observations at - <https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/ORS/Survey/11>

Climate Watch (January 15 – February 15, 2022): This annual Audubon bird count explores how North American birds, like the Eastern Bluebird, are responding to climate change. The results from the survey will allow scientists to identify areas of high climatic suitability for target species and to inform on-the-ground land management decisions. visit Audubon.org/conservation/climate-watch for more information.

The Great Backyard Bird Count (February 18-21, 2022): This 4-day event coordinated by Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology invites people from all over the world to record their bird observations for at least 15 minutes, in your own backyard or at public lands near you! All ages and birding levels are welcome and you can participate in any or all of the four days of this international birding event. Learn how you can participate at gbbcbirdcount.org.

TOP EATON COUNTY HOTSPOTS

Did you know that eBird lists the top hotspots for each county? The next few months, we will highlight top ten hotspots for nearby counties along with the species totals!

1. Woldumar Nature Center (170 species),
2. Olivet Sewage Ponds (164),
3. Capital City Bird Sanctuary (163),
4. Windsor Township SGA (153),
5. Hawk Meadows Park (146),
6. Potterville Sewage Ponds (no access) (144)
7. Grand Woods Park (Eaton Co.) (128),
8. Keehne Environmental Area (124),
9. Fitzgerald Park (117),
10. Narrow Lake (116).

To view more, visit ebird.org/explore and enter the region you would like to explore.

CAAS MEMBERSHIP

Support community programs with your CAAS Membership. Your membership supports programs in our community and monthly meetings Sept. through June.

Your membership is more important than ever! It's time to join or renew your membership! Memberships run the length of the program year, September to August.

SEPTEMBER 2021 - AUGUST 2022

Membership Categories

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

To sign up and pay online, visit -
capitalareaaudubon.org

If you would like to mail your membership form and payment, please mail to -
CAAS, PO Box 22065, Lansing, MI 48910

CALL NOTE

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PO Box 22065, Lansing MI 48909.
Deadline for submissions: 20th of the month.

2021-2022 CAAS Officers

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BALD EAGLE POPULATION SOARS IN MICHIGAN

by Meteorologist Will Haenni | News
Channel 3, Kalamazoo, MI
Wednesday, November 10th 2021

Encounters with bald eagles used to be considered rare across Michigan, but recovering numbers across the state and region means your chances of spotting them are much higher than decades ago.

"We went from 30-some pairs of bald eagles, to now probably around 900 or more pairs of bald eagles throughout Michigan," said Chris Mensing, a fish and wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Habitat loss, hunting and nest robbing led to a steady decline in the bald eagle population throughout Michigan during the first half of the 20th century. By the 1950s, the widespread use of DDT pesticides accelerated their decline throughout the Midwest due to the breakage of thin-shelled eggs.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 labeled bald eagles as threatened in Michigan. Since then, protections and breeding programs still in existence have helped their population recover across the state and country.

"They kind of were restricted to they UP and some core areas in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan, but the population expanded throughout Michigan," Mensing said. "Over the last couple decades we're seeing a big population expansion in the southern part of the Lower Peninsula."

Population estimates across the lower 48 states released by the US Fish and Wildlife Service showed the number of individual bald eagles had more than quadrupled from 2009 to the 2018 to 2019 period, totaling 316,700 individuals and 71,467 breeding pairs.

While they're most commonly spotted near open bodies of water like lakes and rivers, Mensing said they're becoming more common even in more developed areas. While not as densely populated as northern Michigan, they've now spread throughout the state.

While it's hard to pinpoint a specific area to look in West Michigan, eagles have been seen along the Kalamazoo River in recent years, as well as in the Holland and Muskegon areas.

For those hoping to spot a bald eagle, Mensing recommended reaching out to your local Audubon Society or birding club to get local knowledge on where to look. He also recommended the website eBird.org to help track sightings in your area.

Bald eagles make large nests in tree tops, and, in many cases, will return to the nest for several years, maintaining and making it bigger year after year. So if you see a nest, be sure to check back regularly for activity.

THE STORY OF AMERICA'S RAREST EAGLE



Ian Davies - December 24th

There's an unprecedented rare eagle in the US right now, and **you could help re-find it**: a Steller's Sea-Eagle, the first ever for the Lower 48 US. It has been making history for 16 months across the United States and Canada.

It was last seen in Massachusetts on 20 December, and hasn't been seen since. It is usually in places around Bald Eagles.

Ian Davies put together a video with its story and what to look for: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fX0W1he-ZI>

Now this eagle is calling an area near Georgetown, Maine its home. The picture below was taken by Zachery Holder on Monday, January 24th.

