

GRAND TRAVERSE AUDUBON CLUB NEWSLETTER

March 15, 2009

www.grandtraverseaudubon.org
Infor2@grandtraverseaudubon.org

Bird Notes

From the President's Pen

Ed Moehle

As we start our new year, and my first as president, I would like to acknowledge all of the past presidents and their contributions to our Club. Without them this Club would not be as strong as it is today. I would especially like to thank Cindee DuBey for her long and dedicated service for the last 5 years. She's going to be a hard act to follow! But with her help and the boards'. I'll do my best.

I also want to recognize the board members for all they do to keep this Club active and make it enjoyable for all of us. They have been serving us long and well. The board meetings are open to all. Let us know if you're interested in serving on this board. Please give any suggestions and concerns to me, or any board member so we can address them.



(47+ people attended the Beginning Birders Workshop on Saturday)

You probably know by now, our meetings will be held at the Boardman River Nature Center. In lieu of payment for the use of the Nature Center meeting room, 6 of our scheduled programs, will be held, at the Nature Center including the following: The Beginning Birders Workshop, Dance of the Woodcock, June Plants and Birds of Boardman River, August Plants and Birds of Board River, Bird Banding Observation and Demonstration and Snowshoe hike and birding. As always, there is absolutely no fee charged by the Grand Traverse Audubon Club for these events. These and the balance of hikes, bird counts, regular meeting programs, and various field trips, as outlined in the Club's annual brochure and membership booklet, do not and have not had a fee associated with these activities. (at the annual meeting held at Twin Lakes Lodge in October, because there is a catered dinner, reservations and a charge to cover the cost of the meal, is needed.).

Hopefully, Spring and Summer are just around the corner. So, come on out and enjoy the many Audubon Club activities.

Update Walter Hastings Environmental Fund Distribution: At the end of 2008 the board approved the following expenditures: \$500 toward efforts to purchase Arcadia Marsh area; \$100 to Wings of Wonder; \$100 Whitefish Point Bird Observatory; \$103.32 for Bird Sightings posting board at the Boardman River Nature Center.

Proposed By-laws Amendment

At the March 5, 2009, meeting of the GTAC, board meeting, one of the topics of discussion was the possibility of utilizing e-mail and telephone conference calls, in order to conduct the business of the Club. There are times when it is difficult for all of the board members to be physically present. This is especially an issue, during the winter months, when travel on icy winter roads is not recommended. (have we had a long winter or what?). In reviewing the Club by-laws, it was determined that the way that electronic contact could be recognized is if there is an amendment to the Club's by-laws. Under Article V – item E. to add after ...open to any member in good standing. "The ability for the board to participate in electronic or telephone discussion and voting of issues and/or to achieve a quorum at board meetings". **In order to amend the by-laws, the proposed amendment has to be voted on by the membership present at a regular meeting.**

UP COMING EVENTS AND FIELD TRIPS

March 26 – meet at the Boardman River Nature Center meeting room at 7:00 p.m.

Tom Ford to present "Get to know your Warblers". This should be a great presentation and a timely one at that. The Spring Migration is just around the corner and Tom has some wonderful tips on the how-to's and what to listen for. Bring your favorite

Birding Field Guide(s) and enjoy this Special Presentation.
(NOTE: Nate Winkler has been "transferred" and is not able to be present to give the "Cormorants in the Great Lakes" program.)

Here are two web sites that Cindee has suggested: www.northbirding.com and www.birdsource.org/gbbc to use to prepare and practice for the warblers to come

April 18 – Field Trip to Arcadia Marsh - Leonard & Barb Graf Spring Search

Searching for Spring? Come with us on Saturday, April 18, to Arcadia Marsh and Onekama area to see what Spring has brought to Northern Michigan. The Club has supported preservation of this area with a \$500 donation to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. We will meet at Tom's on Division and Fourteenth Street at 7:00 a.m. to carpool. Bring a sack lunch as we will stop at the Onekama library grounds

for a picnic and to scout out the later migrating waterfowl that remain on Portage Lake. We've experienced all types of weather on this trip so be prepared with layers of clothing for warmth. If you have any questions, please call Barb or Leonard at 231 946-5120.

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April 23 – Brian Allen and “Birding Manistee County & Arcadia Marsh”. This is the regular meeting that will take place in the Boardman River Nature Center, starting at 7:00 p.m

April 25 – Adopt-A-Highway & Adopt-A-Trail Joe & Elise Brooks

FIRST BLOOMS OF SPRING

Spring is just around the corner, and as the snow recedes along our roadsides and hiking trails the careful observer might notice some of the earliest things to emerge. You know what I mean ... unsightly trash!

Come help us clean up our adopted highway and trail in Sleeping Bear Dunes. On Saturday, April 25th, bring your work gloves, and meet at the Windy Moraine trail head,

M-109, at 9:30 A.M. We will pick up trash along our stretch of highway, then clean the Duneside Accessible Trail near the Dune Climb. Extra brooms and fan rakes for the trail clean-up would be appreciated.

Don't forget your binoculars!

Questions? Call Elise or Joe Brooks, (231) 269-4343, or email furelise6@gmail.com.

April 29 – Saturday – Field Trip “Dance of the Woodcock” just before sundown at the Boardman River Nature Center.

MAY, THE VERY BUSY MONTH OF MAY !

May 2-3 Field Trip to Whitefish Point. Meet at the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday. Contact Tom Ford for further details.

May 8-10 Field Trip – Magee Marsh Wildlife Refuge(Crane Creek) and Ottawa Federal Refuge – Lake Erie - John Mesch

This May, GTAC members will make our 14th annual trip to southwest Lake Erie. We always see lots of birds on this outing and usually a surprise or two. Last year our group found 144 species, including 26 kinds of warblers. Rarities seen were Cerulean and Yellow-throated Warblers and Glossy Ibises. There is no food service available in the area where we bird, so bring picnic food for supper on Friday and lunches on Saturday and Sunday. We will gather around the west boardwalk entrance of Magee Marsh Wildlife Area on Friday at 6 p.m. for our supper on the

park picnic tables. Shirley and I will be staying at the Comfort Inn on Navarre Ave. a.k.a. SR2, in Oregon Ohio. Reservations at 800-533-2100. Ask for the 60+ rate if you qualify, which is better than the internet rate. I suggest you make your reservation as soon as possible. Some of us will be camping at Maumee Bay State Park. My cell phone will be on during the trip – 231 499-1439. For any queries before departure, call me at 946-3624. (Bring your hand-held radios to keep in touch) * * * * *

May 9 – Grand Traverse County Migratory Bird Count – Bob Carstens
(International Migratory Bird Day web site www.birdday.org/stars.php)

2009 Migratory Bird Count

The first North American Migration Count was in 1992. The purpose was to increase public awareness and education concerning migratory birds and to provide an opportunity to celebrate and support migratory birds and their conservation. Moreover, it provides every birdwatcher the opportunity to enjoy a day's birding during Spring Migration with the knowledge that the result of their findings, together with the birds counted by others, would fit together like pieces of a puzzle and reveal the status of bird migration on a specified date.

The goals of the North American Migration Count are:

- To obtain a "snapshot" of the progress of Spring Migration.
- To obtain information on the abundance and distribution of each species.
- Initiate more participation among Birders within a state and between states.
- Create challenges and goals among birders while collecting useful information.
- Aid in organization and centralization of data.
- Have fun.

To establish the second Saturday in May as "National Birding Day".

The Grand Traverse Migration Count will be on May 9, 2009, which is the traditional second Saturday of May for the North American Migration Count.

All skill levels are welcome

The Migration Count covers an entire county. Count day will last for all 24 hours on May 9th. If you participate, you choose the length of time and the level or particular way in which you can participate. You can go owling, do a stationary count, observe your feeder, yard, or some other specific single location, such as a park, portion of a township, TART trail, VASA, or the like.

If you would like to take part, please call Bob Carstens at 938-5976. You will be mailed a species documentation form on which to indicate the species and number of each you have observed. Your compilation should be returned to Bob via return mail. A combined list of the species and the number of each species observed will be mailed to you as well as posted on the Grand Traverse Audubon Club web site.

www.birdday.org/stars Web Site for Information



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May 13 & 20 – Reffitt Nature Preserve Bird Hike(s) – Carole Groves

There will be five birding hikes in May and June at the Reffitt Nature Preserve, part of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. The Preserve has a 1.7 mile trail near the state park and Tart Trail near Three-Mile and Parsons. Please join me and help me find the birds!

Over 70 birds, most catalogued by Abby Gartland at Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy have been identified in a running list. Ed Kaminisky's efforts added four to the list with an Ovenbird, Nashville, Palm, and Pine Warblers. I found the remains of a Barred Owl during one winter. Last spring, there were several Indigo Buntings singing. I also saw the Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches making nests. In the Warbler family, the Common Yellow Throat, Black and White, and Yellow-Rumped have also been observed. Can Audubon members find more?

Although an attempt has not been made to keep lists of nesting birds, those notes might be helpful to GTRLC

At some time, Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, and Spotted Sandpiper have been

observed. The list will be posted on our web site at grandtraverseaudubon.org in the Files area. Click on Files from the front page and you will find the Reffitt PDF file on the list. If you'd like a list of mammals, fish, and plants, ask Carole. Please call or email Carole at 231.492.456 or clgroves@yahoo.com with phone number and email address. (please use Reffitt in the subject line). Park at 3-Mile and Parsons by the railroad track. Be prepared, the bugs may be out!?

At this point, the "Reffitt Eagles" have not been observed nesting.

Many Audubon members also participate in one of our local conservancies. Ed Moehle and I are Reffitt Stewards for GTRLC.

Times and Dates:

6:30 p.m. May 13, 20 (Early May light until 8:30) and June 10, 17

6:30 p.m. Saturday, June 27

May 15 – 17 Tawas State Park & Tuttle Marsh – Cindee DuBey

Tawas Annual Field Trip – Cindee DuBey – 231 839-2758

Warblers and orioles and others, Oh My. That's always been the theme of the Tawas Spring Field Trip. You NEVER know what might show up at Tawas in the springtime. Larry and I will again be camping (site 132) and plan to be there on Thursday sometime. We'll spend some time on Friday scouting but will be in and around the park most of the day. We will probably go out to Tuttle Marsh Friday evening around 7:00 to see if we can scare up...I mean call out ... (that doesn't sound right either) some rails and maybe even that cute little Saw-Whet Owl that we saw a couple of years ago. So if you are around and want to go with us, meet at the campground at 7:00.

Saturday morning we'll meet at the Bambi Motel and caravan out to Tuttle Marsh to see what may have arrived. When finished at the Marsh, we'll picnic at our campsite. You are

all invited (just bring your own lunch) and then we'll check out the park. Dinner will be around 6:00 at the Chinese Restaurant in town (sorry I can never remember the name) and do a preliminary tally.

Sunday we will again "bird the park" until noon and then meet and do a final tally.

Leonard usually starts at daybreak (around 6:00) but you are welcome to come out whenever you wish, just don't wake me up before 5:45 please, let the birds do it.

It's always a great weekend since migration is in full swing. We always see lots of birds. It's a great trip for beginners because there is so much to see and even better for us

"seasoned warbler watchers", because they are easy to see, fun to hear, and a challenge to find.

**May 28 at 5:30 p.m. – Regular meeting and Potluck Dinner & Birding at the Boardman River Nature Preserve. Meet at the pavilion closest to the Nature Center Building. Please bring your own table service and a dish to share. This is a great time to come together to reminisce about the May adventures and the fun events to come. Contact any one of your board members with any questions.
(this is open to anyone, but table service and dish to pass is expected by all)**

Welcome to New Members

Barbara Baker
Daniel LeCouteur
Robert & Mary Marshall
Richard O'Neil
Charlotte Blanchard
Greta Peck

Missy Rassel
Carol Towar
Holly Vaughn
Phyllis Wiltzer
Laura & Bob Otwell
Al & Julie Hurd

May 31 – Field Trip to Skegemong Wildlife area for Flowers and Birds – Bob Carstens.

Now it is June!!!!

June 6 - Bird Blitz at Arcadia Dunes and Arcadia Marsh – Joe and Elise Brooks

The Second Annual Bird Blitz at Arcadia Marsh and Arcadia Dunes, which is a part of the C.S. Mott Nature Preserve.

This process has a goal of providing a clear picture of the number and distribution of Birds at the Arcadia Dunes and Marsh. Contact Joe and Elise, who will be happy to direct you in what is needed for this event.

And a sad farewell to some old friends

This past year has left us missing some of our long time friends: Ken Beerthuis is now with us in spirit as the Spring birding events begin. I, for one, will be listening not only for the various bird songs but also for that gentle chuckle. Thank you, Ken for so many memorable times.

George Hutchinson, a past club president, who shared his Christmas bird count area with John and I on our first count ever. He made it so much fun and interesting, we've been counting ever since. Good work George. Shirley Mesch

In memoriam for long-time member, Emmy Williams who passed away on February 25 at the age of 98. Emmy and A.V. Williams were regular attendees at Grand Traverse Audubon, previously known as Walter Hastings Audubon Club. A.V. served as president in 1978 and 1979. When I went on my first field trip with Audubon in 1973, a snow shoe/cross country skiing event at Sand Lakes Quiet area, A.V. was leading. He and Emmy were very welcoming, enthusiastic and dedicated Audubon members.

Barb Graf

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American Birding Association (ABA) ABA Principles of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

Code of Birding Ethics

1. **Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.**

- (a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.
- (b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area. Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover. Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- (c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance can be minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
- (d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. **Respect the law and the rights of others.**

- (a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- (b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- (c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. **Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.**

- (a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- (b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- (c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. **Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.**

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #11 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

- (a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as those of people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- (b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

- (c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- (d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- (e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
- (f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).
- (g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

member@aba.org



Grand Traverse Audubon Club
Board Members

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| President | Ed Moehle |
| Vice Pres: | Tom Ford – Programs |
| Vice Pres: | Bob Carstens - Environment |
| Treasurer: | John Mesch |
| Secretary | Lane Corbin |
| Newsletter | Carole Groves |
| Elected | Barb Graf |
| | Shirley Mesch |
| M.A.S. Rep: | Elise Brooks |
| Past Pres: | Cindee DuBey |

Grand Traverse Audubon Club
Carole Groves – Newsletter Editor
1508 Newport St. #4
Traverse City, MI 49686