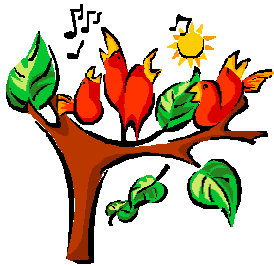


# Grand Traverse Audubon Club Newsletter

September 2006  
Issue #114

www.grandtraverseaudubon.org  
GTAC@grandtraverseaudubon.org



## Bird Notes

### Upcoming Events

- ◆ **September 9** - Skegemog Lake Field Trip 938-5976
- ◆ **September 16** - Adopt-a-Highway & Trail clean up, 9:30 a.m. M-109. 947-8432
- ◆ **September 23- 24** Whitefish Pt. & Rudyard, U.P. 946-5120
- ◆ **September 28** - Meeting 7:30 p.m. Great Lakes Campus, Rm.211
- ◆ **October 7** - Boardman Lake Trail Field Trip 9:00 a.m. 929-1514
- ◆ **October 21**- Annual Dinner Twin Lakes Camp 6:00 p.m.
- ◆ **November 16** - Meeting 7:30 p.m. Great Lakes Campus, Rm.211

### Annual Dinner      October 21      by Shirley Mesch

It is time for the Annual Dinner Meeting for our Audubon Club. This yearly event is open to members and all who are interested in meeting friends, new and old. You will be meeting Caleb Putnam, our guest speaker, who will be giving us an update on the "Ivory-billed Woodpecker". Caleb was part of the search team that rediscovered this illusive bird. Caleb is a Michigan native and presently the coordinator of the Michigan Important Bird Area project. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Alma College in 1999 and went on to earn his Masters in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana in 2003. In 2004 and 2005 he led public Kirtland's Warbler tours for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and led the 2005 Michigan Audubon Society Specialty Tours. He is currently the chairman of the Michigan Bird Records Committee and has authored several ornithological articles. His account of the Ivory-billed along with audio of the bird and video/still shots of the area in eastern Arkansas should bring out the "romance" in all of us. Have your

questions and thoughts ready for this one.

The gathering begins at 6:00 p.m., at the Grand Traverse County Twin Lakes Park, located just West of Traverse City on North Long Lake Road. (contact Shirley Mesch at 964-3624, if you are in need of directions)

The dinner, which begins at 6:00 p.m., is being catered by Canteen Catering. The menu for appetizers is a variety of cheeses, crackers, crunchy veggies and fruit, and fruit punch, The dinner menu is: Roast Beef with rosemary/garlic demi glaze, Roast Turkey with dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, California medley veggies, tossed salad with the works, dinner rolls, coffee; regular and decaf, and/or fruit punch. Topped off with assorted dessert choices of cheese cake, carrot cake, etc. The dinner cost is \$15.00 per meal and is served buffet style. For your convenience, a reservation form is located on the back page of the newsletter, and should be sent in by October 14.

### Skegemog Field Trip

September 9

No information on this field trip was available. If you are interested, please call Bob Carstens 938-5976.

## From the President's Pen

by Cindee DuBey



*"Our regular meetings will begin again this fall and I hope that you will plan to be there."*

Weren't we at Tawas just a couple of weeks ago? Where did the summer go? I do remember watching the tree swallows learning to fly and the bluebirds learning to bathe under my sprinklers. There have been lots of young finches, both purple and house, lots of noisy baby blue jays, rose-breasted grosbeaks in all stages of molt, young chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers and even grackles. Then there is that funny colored cardinal that is obviously somewhere between baby and adult male. O.K. I guess it really is September.

I would like to start with a few thank yous. Thank you Bob for coordinating both the migratory bird count and the breeding bird count this spring and summer. Thanks to Leonard and Barb for setting up the nets so we could get really good looks at the migrating warblers (and the hummer). And a HUGE thank you to Robbie and Jerry Kolak for making sure that we have refreshments at all of our meetings. The speakers were really good but the goodies were great.

Our regular meetings will begin again this fall and I hope that you will plan to be there. We have some great speakers lined up (and great eats too). It's been really great to have a "full house" and I hope we can continue to fill that room. Our meetings will continue to be at the Great Lakes Campus for the rest of this year, room 211. Speaking of speakers, the board is currently working on programs for 2007 so if you have any ideas for speakers or field trips, please contact Nate Crane, or any board member so that we can get them scheduled. I am looking forward to seeing everyone soon. Speaking of soon, our September board meeting will be Monday, September 11, 7 p.m. at the library. All interested members are welcome to attend. Board members, please don't forget this important meeting.

One last thank you. Tom Ford drew the Chickadee for our new logo. Isn't it great? (Check out the back of your newsletter). Thanks Tom!



-Photo by Kay Beerthuis

*Black Willow Champion Tree on the Commons, Traverse City, Michigan*

## Fall Programs

by Nate Crane, V.P. Programs

The September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting will have a presentation by Dr. Erwin 'Duke' Elsner, agricultural agent of MSU's agricultural extension in Grand Traverse County. You will remember that Dr. Elsner gave us a very interesting presentation last February on butterflies and moths. The topic of this presentation will be "Threats to our trees of Northern Michigan". Duke's extensive knowledge on this subject will make for a very informative program. The meeting will be held at NMC's Great Lakes Center, Room 211 at 7:30p.m.

The October 21<sup>st</sup>. program will be the Annual Dinner meeting held at Twin

Lakes Camp, 6:00p.m. Caleb Putnam will speak on the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

The November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will have a presentation by John Russell of the Traverse City Area Camera Club. John is a retired Record-Eagle photographer. He will present a slide show accompanied by a discussion on camera equipment. This program will be enjoyable for anyone who is or has ever been interested in photography. Due to work on the Oleson Center, this meeting will also be at NMC's Great Lakes Center, Room 211.

## Whitefish Point and Rudyard

by Leonard Graf

On September 23 -24, Barbara and Leonard Graf will be leading a field trip to the Rudyard area in search of migrating Sandhill Cranes and to Whitefish Point for other migrating birds.

We will meet at the main intersection in Rudyard at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 23. From then on there is no set schedule. Barbara & Leonard will do some pre-trip scouting to find where the cranes are congregating. After everyone has seen enough Sandhills, the group will proceed to Whitefish Point to bird the remainder of Saturday and as long as anyone

wants to stay on Sunday. The staff at WPBO should be banding owls at night. If conditions are right, we may be able to see some hand-held owls either Saturday evening or early Sunday morning. There are motels in Paradise, a State Park at the mouth of the Tahquamenon River and a primitive campground at Andrus Lake which is 5 miles from Whitefish Point.

Please contact Barbara & Leonard at 231-946-5120 or (231-620-3024 after Sept. 20 as they will be in the U.P. scouting for the trip) for more information or if you are planning on going on the trip.



Sandhill Crane

## Mourning Dove Vote

by Kay Beerthuis

Our club has taken a stand since 1998 against shooting Mourning Doves. Michigan Audubon Society and many other organizations have worked for years trying to keep the public aware of the issue. Voters will finally be able to voice their opinion. The proposal will be on the November 7 ballot. "Mourning doves are backyard songbirds and symbol of peace that have been protected for

100 years in Michigan," said Julie Baker, Campaign Director for the Committee. "These tiny birds are not hunted for food or management, but simply for target practice. It's just plain wrong and we're confident that Michigan voters will restore the dove shooting ban." Vote NO on proposal 3 and say no to shooting doves.

## A Hike for Birds and Fall Color

by Molly McCombs

Join Molly McCombs on a fall bird hike along the Boardman Lake Trail Saturday October 7 at 9:30 a.m. This trail is a relatively new section of the Tart Trail and has been open for use in the past two years. The trail is paved from Hull Park to Logan's Landing and is two miles long. For those who would only want a two mile hike, we will spot cars at the Logan's Landing area and drive you back to the trail head. Those who want a four mile hike, we can return on foot.

Early October is a colorful time of year. Since the trail travels the shore of Boardman Lake, there will be several types of habitat in which to observe birds.

Some of our summer birds will be gone but the "late migraters" and "year-rounders" should still be around. We will see fall flowers and fungus (mushrooms) along the trail.

Meet in Hull Park parking area behind the main Public Library on Woodmere Ave. at 9:30 a.m. If you would prefer to spot your car at Logan's Landing come to the Hull Park site at 9 a.m. and John and I will follow you to Logan's Landing and provide a ride back to Hull Park in time to start the hike. If you plan to attend please either e-mail Molly at [mcombs@coslink.net](mailto:mcombs@coslink.net) or call her at 929-1514.





Elegant Trogon

**Summer birding CAN be great, even providing life birds for Leonard and Barb!**

## Arizona in Summer

by Barb Graf

In the winter we travel north, and in the summer we travel south. Well, that is where we find our birds. Leonard and I and Jerry Kolak participated in the *Southeastern Arizona in July: Second Spring* tour offered through Wings Bird watching Tours Worldwide with leaders Jon Dunn and Gavin Bieber. There were nine participants. A total of 195 bird species, 17 mammals, 19 reptiles and amphibians and 29 butterflies were seen on this ten-day tour, perhaps the highest total bird sightings recorded in twenty-four years. Lifers for Leonard and I (all of them were not necessarily lifers for both of us) included Common Black Hawk; Zone-tailed Hawk; Whiskered Screech, Spotted, and Elf Owls; Buff-collared Nightjar (heard); Common Poorwill; White-eared and Berylline Hummingbirds; Gilded Flicker; Buff-breasted Flycatcher; Thick-billed Kingbird; Gray Vireo; Juniper Titmouse; Black-capped Gnatcatcher; Bendire's Thrasher; Lucy's, Grace's, Rufous-capped, and Olive Warblers; Hepatic and Flame-colored Tanagers; Rufous-winged, and Five-striped Sparrows.

Jon and Gavin exerted every effort to locate birds and to ensure that all participants had a nice view. We visited locations that we would never have been

able to find on our own. (We were really in the boonies at times!) The leaders' knowledge, plus their contacts with local birders, helped us find many species, especially the Spotted Owl, White-eared and Berylline Hummingbirds, and a nesting Northern Goshawk. We traversed many canyons, had a nesting Elegant Trogon to watch during a lunch stop, and watched over a thousand flying jewels (hummers). We put sunscreen on every morning, donned our hats whenever we left the vehicles, and made sure we drank plenty of water. We frequently left early (2 a.m. being the earliest), rested in air conditioning in the heat of the day, then returned to birding later on. At one point I held off a herd of cattle!

For additional species seen you can go to <http://www.wingsbirds.com> select Tour Calendar, select *Southeastern Arizona in July: Second Spring*, select birdlist and select July 2006.

After the tour, Leonard and I also located Williamson's Sapsucker, Northern Pygmy Owl and California Condor and watched a Common Black Hawk devour a Dipper for lunch. We visited Sun Crater, Grand Canyon, south and north rims, Zion National Park and the Petrified Forest.

## Hot Off The Press

by Leonard Graf



The "Check List of Birds of the Grand Traverse Area" has been received from the printers. The Check List is a small booklet which has all of the regularly occurring birds of the Antrim, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska County area. The Check List contains nine columns for keeping track of birds seen in different areas and/or dates.

The idea for an area check list was

initiated by Bob Carstens. Tom Ford drew a Black-capped Chickadee for the cover and arranged for the printing. Leonard Graf assisted in the lay-out and arranging the list in the new AOU order of birds. Funds for the printing came from the Walter Hastings Environmental Education Fund.

The Check List will be available at the September meeting.

**Join our birdalert and GTAudubon email groups and keep up to date!**  
Send your email address to [kay@grandtraverseaudubon.org](mailto:kay@grandtraverseaudubon.org)

## Bald Eagle Success

by Kay Beerthuis

Five new eagles are cruising East Bay as a result of two successful nestings. The eagles in Yuba valley produced three eaglets and the eagles on the Reffitt property produced two. Last April, Ken, our grandsons, and I hiked the half mile across Yuba Valley from Yuba Road. The eagles were taking turns sitting on the eggs. The nest was at a distance, on the other side of the creek, in a tall pine tree. Although we needed a scope, the eagles did not. They looked us over carefully.

In June, we stopped at the turn-in from US 31 and scoped the eagles. We watched the three eaglets flapping their wings and pecking at each other. We wondered if they would all survive. Either Mom or Dad was always close by, keeping an "eagle eye" on the fighting youngsters and bringing food.

In June, we also saw the two eaglets at the Refitt property. Entering from the East entrance at the end of Pine Street, we viewed the nest just where the trail turned after the boardwalk. The Reffitt eaglets were also practicing flapping their wings and pecking at each other.

In July, on a very hot day, we hiked in to Yuba again and saw the three grown eaglets hanging out in the shade near their nest. They seemed at peace with each other and quite companionable. Mom or Dad checked on them only once.

In August, we did not see any eaglets near either nest. We knew they were finally out hunting on their own. After an exhausting summer, Mom and Dad could finally relax and enjoy their empty nest.

### Question:

*What do the Bald Eagles on East Bay eat for breakfast every morning?*

### Answer:

*Bagels*

## Gathering at the River

by Barb Graf

Eighteen members of GTAC gathered bright and early (?) at Northwestern Michigan College's Appel property on the Boardman River on Saturday morning, August 26. This annual event that starts off the fall season is full of fun, fellowship and food. Bob Carstens displayed the sign so that everyone could find the location. Robbie & Jerry Kolak brought the much appreciated coffee. Everyone brought delicious food! After eating our fill and conversing (and a very brief Board meeting), Leonard Graf led the bird walk on which we saw Common Nighthawk, American Goldfinch, Red-

shouldered Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Black and White Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Redstart, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Eastern Phoebe, Cedar Waxwings, Black-capped Chickadee, and Northern Cardinal (and probably others that I can't remember). We also enjoyed identifying many of the flower/plant species along the way. The walk was shortened by rain. We ran under a tree, which Leonard assured us was not the tallest tree around; and the ensuing lightening canceled the canoe/kayaking portion of the morning.



"fun, fellowship and food"

## Adopt-a-Highway and Adopt-a-Trail

by Ken Beerthuis

Thanks to Marlys Bandy and Barbara Vockel for helping Kay and I on the highway clean-up on July 15. We walked the two mile stretch on M-109 from the Windy Moraine trailhead to M-22 at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. We picked up altogether, one large bag of litter. The Duneside

trail needed some sweeping of the boards and some litter was picked up. Our next pick up will be Saturday, September 16 at 9:30 a.m. Come and join the crew. We will meet at the usual place, the Windy Moraine trailhead which is near the entrance to Pierce Stocking Drive.



*Elected officers  
start January 1*

## Proposed By-Laws Change

by Leonard Graf

The present By-laws of the Grand Traverse Audubon Club has conflicting sections indicating when officers are to take office. Article VI. A reads that officers are elected for the next calendar year (e.g. take office January 1). Whereas Article VI B. reads that officers shall take office at the January meeting (e.g. the fourth Thursday in January). Therefore it is proposed that Articles V.B and VI. B. be amended to read as follows:

### V. Organization

B. Terms of Office: Officers shall be elected for one year terms. Terms beginning January 1. There shall be no limitation on the number of

terms any individual may serve in any one office.

### VI. Meetings

B. Annual Business Meeting - An Annual Business Meeting of the Club shall be held in January at the call of the Executive Board. Annual reports for the preceding year shall be presented at this meeting. The Treasurer of the preceding year shall submit a written financial report and a membership statement for the preceding year at the Annual Business Meeting.

This proposed change in the By-Laws is to be voted on at the annual Meeting on October 21, 2006.

## Joyce Ellsworth 1942 - 2006

by Cindee DuBey

One of my first field trips with Grand Traverse Audubon was with Joyce to Leelanau State Park where I saw my first scarlet tanager.

On another trip, this time to the Soo, Joyce and I were "climbing" through snow banks when she lost her footing and fell. She was covered with snow. As I tried to help her up and brush her off she said, "Don't worry about me, I need to dry my binoculars". She taught me that binoculars were a most treasured possession and must be well cared for. I was with Joyce when we

both saw Great Gray Owls for the very first time. I remember how excited she was to see these magnificent birds and how special the experience was.

Joyce was a member of the Board of Directors for as long as I've been a member of the Club, up until this year. I've missed her at our board meetings. She always spoke her mind but had a calming influence on all of us. She will be truly missed by everyone that knew her.

## Newest Members - 2006

### Welcome To:

Clement, Bob and Cindy  
2590 Chandler Rd.  
Traverse City, Mi 49686

Maxwell, Thomas G.  
4749 Land End  
Traverse City, MI 49686

Nowinski, Barbara  
P.O. Box 71  
Leland, MI 49654



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[www.grandtraverseaudubon.org/news.html](http://www.grandtraverseaudubon.org/news.html)

Next Newsletter Deadline: Nov. 28



**Grand Traverse Audubon Club**

**Board Members:**

**President:** Cindee Dubey,  
(231) 839-2758

**Vice Pres:** Nate Crane

**Vice Pres:** Bob Carstens

**Treasurer:** Leonard Graf

**Secretary:** John Mesch

**Newsletter:** Kay Beerthuis

**Elected:** Shirley Mesch

Ed Moehle

**M.A.S. Rep:** Tom Ford



*Ivory-billed  
Woodpecker by John  
James Audubon*

**Has it really  
been found?**

**Find out more  
on October 21.**

**Grand Traverse Audubon Club**  
Kay Beerthuis, Newsletter Editor  
1918 Arrowhead Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49686-2003

