

Grand Traverse Audubon Club Newsletter

September 2009
Issue #125

www.grandtraverseaudubon.org
email: info2@grandtraverseaudubon.org



Bird Notes

Birds and Mammals of Central Kenya

Thursday, Sept. 24, 7:00: by Barb Graf

Africa. What visions come to mind when you say that word? Jungle and wild animals? In November 2008, Leonard and I had the privilege of traveling to Kenya, Africa. We will be sharing with you photos of people and places, birds and mammals at the GTAC regular meeting on Thursday, September 24 at the Boardman River Nature Center on Cass Road. In two weeks our birding group, led by Bird Treks Steven Easley, saw over 584 bird species and 50 mammal species. Don't worry, we will have greatly edited the over 900 photos that each of us took. We toured from the Nairobi National Park (lions), to Lake Naivasha (hippos & Goliath Herons), across the Rift Valley to Lake Baringo (Go-Away birds & Hornbills) and up to the Kakamega Rain Forest. Leaving the Rain Forest, we traveled to Nakuru National Park (multitudes of flamingos), Nara Moru on the slopes of Mount Kenya and stayed at the Samburu Game Reserve (leopards & cheetahs). Our last night was at Mountain Lodge where a person is employed to keep watch throughout the night of the local watering hole and wake you when the animal of your choice is spotted nearby. Come join Barb and Leonard Graf for a bird's eye view, or should I say, view of the birds of Kenya, Africa.

Book Collection:

Bring in your barely used nature books on our first night if you would like to donate them to the nature center. Members were asking and this is what Colleen Masterson said, "Thank you for this! Yes, Ed mentioned that some folks might like to donate some books, and we would certainly appreciate that. We were thinking of making more of a reference area in the A/V room for visitors to use, and these could be used there." Questions? cmasterson@gtcd.org or 231.941-0960

The Boardman River Nature Center is located on 1450 Cass Rd. just 1.5 miles south of South Airport Rd. in Traverse City. (This is south of the railroad track near Sabin Dam.)

Upcoming Events

- ❖ Sept. 24, Thurs., Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Boardman River Nature Center, Africa.*
- ❖ Oct. 10, Sat. Field Trip - Jordan River Valley, Larry & Cindy DuBey. 231.839.2758*
- ❖ Oct. 12, Mon. Dinner Reservation Due.*
- ❖ Oct. 17, Sat., Dinner Meeting 6 p.m. Twin Lakes. Hummingbirds by Allen Chartier, John Mesch. 231.946.3624*
- ❖ Nov. 19, Thurs., Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Boardman River Nature Center, Backyard Birds of MI by Bruce and Sam Bodjack.*
- ❖ Dec. 17, Thurs., Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Boardman River Nature Center, Photo Fest and Christmas Party: Slides, Video.

Upcoming Events, Cont.

- ❖ Dec. 19, Sat.
Grand Traverse
Christmas Bird
Count. Ed
Moehle, 231.947-
8821.*
- ❖ Dec. 20, Sun.
Leelanau Bird
Count, Bob
Carstens,
231.938.5976.
- ❖ Sun., Dec. 27,
Antrim Bird
Count, Bob
Carstens,
231.938.5976.

*Indicates article in
newsletter

The Hummer Bird
Study Group founded
by Bob and Martha
Sargent in 1993:
Non-profit
organization
dedicated to the
study and
preservation of
Hummingbirds and
other Neo-tropical
migrants.
[www.hummingbirdspl
us.org](http://www.hummingbirdspl.us.org)

Birth of a
Hummingbird: Nest
and Babies
[http://community-
2.webtv.net/Velpics/
HUM/](http://community-2.webtv.net/Velpics/HUM/) Sent by Char
Blanchard.

Thank you, Kay
Beerthuis for the help
with the Newsletter,
mailing labels, and as
the Reffitt Hiker
birder with
knowledge.--Carole

Jordan River Valley on Oct. 10 by Cindee DuBey

We will meet at McDonalds in Mancelona at 8:30 A.M. (Seems some of us don't want to get started any earlier since the color isn't going anywhere.) We'll drive to stop at Deadman's Hill, the Fish Hatchery and drive the valley road along the river to East Jordan and around the back roads of that area. Bring snacks and a lunch in case we end up in the middle of nowhere at lunch time. Sometimes we stop in East Jordan for lunch, sometimes we eat in the woods. It all depends on what we find. Bring your cameras and dress for the weather. Please let us know if you are planning to come so that we'll know who to look (wait?) for in Mancelona. Home phone -231.839.2758. Call and I'll give you my cell. *Ed. Note: They've been seen with binoculars as well.*

Annual Dinner Meeting: Saturday, Oct. 17 at 6 p.m.

Meet at Twin Lakes Center on Long Lake Road at 6 p.m."Hummingbirds" by Allen Chartier. Go to <http://grandtraverseaudubon.org/> for updated information about cost and dinner selection or call Shirley Mesch at 231.946.3624. See Page 7 for mailing information and membership renewal.

From the President's Perch by Ed Moehle

Even though we still have plenty of nice weather to look forward to, hopefully, summer seems to pass so quickly. Hope you've been out in nature enjoying yours.

We will have our regular meeting and programs resuming soon. There are a lot of interesting events coming up: bird banding, annual dinner and photo fest, Christmas bird counts and many more. So take time to get out and enjoy these activities.

With the birding opportunities all around us and the information easily available on the web, we always will be able to find some quality birding. The club's Bird Alert and website, which passes along current info and pictures, are great places to look for possible outings. Cindee DuBey, in addition, has posted this new site to check out: mibirdingnetwork.com.

With harvest time approaching and all the great fresh foods available for us, so too, are the variety of fall migratory birds to go out and enjoy. GT Audubon newsletter is also a good source to find out about trips and sightings. If you have anything of interest to submit concerning the birds, nature and our surrounding area, I know our newsletter editor, Carole Groves, would be happy to hear from you by Nov. 21 for the December newsletter with events through March.

Adopt-a-Highway / Adopt-a-Trail by Elise Brooks



You, too, can sport one of our spiffy new vests if you come to one of our highway and trail cleanups next year at the Windy Moraine trail head, Sleeping Bear Dunes, off M-109. Be there, and make a fashion statement ... fluorescent vests are the new green.

Club members led by Joe and Elise Brooks have been busy this year. At this clean-up, Tom Ford, Kay Beerthuis, and Bob Carstens joined them for some hard work and birding.

Photo by Joe Brooks

New Club Officers Needed

The Audubon Club has open board position for 2010. We will need a new Michigan Audubon Society Representative to replace Elise Brooks, a secretary to replace Lane Corbin, who wants to listen and not write, and Newsletter Editor, Carole Groves, who will be traveling. There may also be other openings to fill. If you are interested in getting involved as a board member, please contact one of the nominating committee persons: Tom Ford, Barb Graf, or Shirley Mesch.

Volunteer Training at the Nature Center

The next Nature Center volunteer orientation sessions are on September 22 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. and on October 20 from 3-5 p.m. People are welcome to fill out a Volunteer Application Form ahead of time, also, and get started anytime. Desk positions are now open. Contact Colleen Masterson at 231.941.0960 or email cmasterson@gtcd.org

Website Pictures by Kay Beerthuis

Thanks to so many of you who have sent pictures for our web slide and music shows. I would like to see more members add their online photo album to our page of member links. It is easy and free to get your pictures online with a service like Google's Picasa. You can make as many albums as you want and set them as private. You can make bird albums "public" and list that link, or just give us the permission to link to one or more of your private bird albums (that is the address at the top when you are viewing the album). This does not have to be a big project. Try just uploading ten of your favorite nature pictures to start with. Putting your pictures online is one of the best ways to preserve and protect them. Also, you can give the private address of your albums to friends and family to view and you can access them no matter where you are in the world. Contact me if you need help on Picasa or I can put you in touch with members who are using other programs.

On Hummingbirds and Fall by Tom Ford

Keep hummingbird feeders going through September. However, you will notice dwindling numbers of hummers down to a trickle by the equinox (September 22). In the last decade or so I have had three October hummers. So, if you're in the mood, keep feeders going til mid-October, and maybe you'll get a look at a rare visitor such as a Rufous Hummingbird (photo of female). Very few are seen each fall in Michigan. These hardy hummers can be seen as late as December.



By month's end, the first wave of Juncos and Sparrows will have arrived. Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrow are all fall transients. Good numbers of Junco will stay the winter if the habitat is right, while the sparrows move further south.

Bird baths should be kept clean and filled during September. Your best chance to see an unusual fall bird will be at a water feature. Many songbird species, including warblers and thrushes that migrate at night, need water sources to rehydrate for the next big flight, and clean feathers are essential for good performance.

Orioles should be out of the area and on their way to wintering grounds by now. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks hang on til early October.

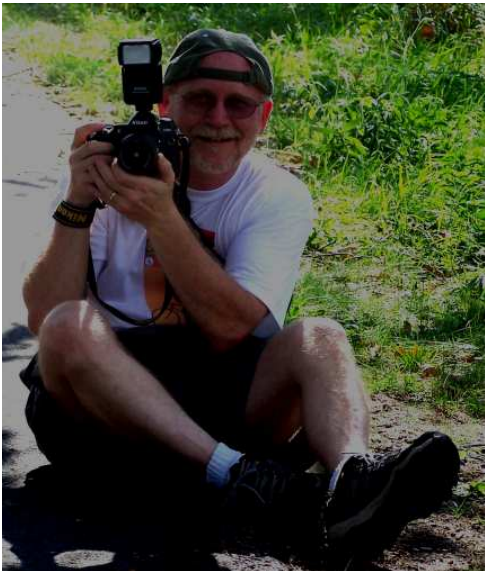
Now, the bad. Grackles and other species of blackbirds are gathering into large flocks and making themselves pests at feeding stations. So for awhile, you'll need to put up with these hungry hordes.

WBU Eliminator feeder can be adjusted to close under the weight of Grackles. Safflower seed can be used in feeders to keep Grackles away. The blackbirds prefer all the "goodies" in a suet cake, not the suet. Simply Suet is just plain fat. Upside down suet feeders keep non-clinging birds off suet. The recycled plastic models are slippery, and are my favorite choice.

I feed peanut halves all year. I serve them up in a feeder that fits inside a large mesh cage. Downy Woodpeckers are the largest bird that fits through the mesh. So I always have treats available for the little guys. Mesh cages also keep out Gray Squirrels and Fox Squirrels. *From the email Wild Birds Unlimited newsletter.*

Feeder Swap: Bring in any chewed up, cracked, weathered, old feeder to Wild Birds Unlimited and get a bright, shiny feeder for 20% off until Sept. 30. This offer cannot be combined with other discounts or offers and does not apply to previous purchases. Mention the email newsletter and Audubon.

Nov. Program: Backyard Birds by Carole Groves



Bruce taking a "people" picture on the Tart Trail by Carole Groves

The November 19 program is sure to be a winner with Bruce and Sam Bodjack's program on backyard birding. Of the program, Bruce said, "We are going to take liberties with the word backyard. The backyard may be the woods you play in or the trails that you hike. It will be somebody's backyard."

Both Bruce and Sam are members of the Photography Club and Bruce has led some excellent training sessions. He started in digital photography 12 years ago. Sam started in the early 70's. Bruce said that digital is the only way to go because of the processing time, instant feedback, and the difficulty in actually finding film.

They both use Nikons and share some lenses. Sam has a D40 and for birding uses her Sigma 50-500. Bruce has a D200 and uses a Sigma 70-300 and a Tamron 200-500. Is there a style difference? Bruce said

that he is more likely to use a tripod where Sam likes to shoot more tripod-free and from her kayak.

Bruce's bird photography began with his interest in birds. During the time he planted trees in Leelanau County, he talked to a lot of knowledgeable people about birds and became fascinated with the different types. His main tip for good bird photography: Go out on a good sunny morning. Lighting is the key.



Great Crested Flycatcher at Pearl Lake by Sam Bodjack



Ruby-throated Hummingbird by Sam Bodjack



Tufted Titmouse by Bruce Bodjack



Golden Flight By Bruce Bodjack

Skegemog Nature Hike on Sept. 6 by Bob Carstens

Marilynn & Carol Towar, Kay Beerthuis, Karen Crane, Ann Putti, and Pat Power.
Leaders: Tom Ford, Bob Carstens

Avian Species observed:

Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, White-throated Sparrow, Eastern Phoebe, Common Raven, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Belted Kingfisher, Wood Duck, American Crow, Great Blue Heron, Common Grackle, Double-crested Cormorant, American Goldfinch, Common Yellowthroat, Nashville Warbler, Black & White Warbler. (26 Species)

Plants observed:

Canada Goldenrod, Bluestem Goldenrod, Slender-leaved Goldenrod, and Grass-leaved Goldenrod, Elm-leaved Goldenrod; Calico Aster, Grass-leaved Aster;

Wild Raspberry, Blackberry, Wild Strawberry, Partridge Berry, Wintergreen, Cranberry, Creeping Snowberry, Bunchberry, Velvet-leaved Blueberry, & Elderberry;

Cinnamon Fern, Interrupted Fern, Sensitive Fern, Bracken Fern, Royal Fern, Marsh Fern, Bulblet Fern, Lady Fern, & possibly, Clinton's Woodfern;

Tamarack, Black Spruce, Balsam Fir, Red Pine, White Pine, White Cedar, Large-toothed Aspen, Quaking Aspen, Red Maple, Red Oak, Speckled Alder, Pussy Willow, Red Osier Dogwood;

Virgin's Bower, Riverbank Grape, Virginia Creeper, Blue Vervain, Ladies Tresses, Showy Lady Slipper, Yellow Lady Slipper, Pitcher Plant, Turtlehead, Grass of Parnassus, Ground Cherry, Yarrow, Bluestem Grass, Smooth Brome Grass, Common Mullein, Button Bush, Joe Pye Weed, Boneset, Bouncing Bet, Bee Balm, Shrubby Cinqufoil, Watercress, Spotted Jewelweed, Water Horehound, Great Blue Lobelia, Bur Reed, Twin Flower, Burr Marigold, Water Avens, Starry False Solomon's Seal, Star Flower, Skullcap, Marsh Bellflower, Kalm's Lobelia, Herb Willow, Patience Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), Water Hemlock, Common Nightshade, Pincushion Moss, Sphagnum Moss, Sweet Gale, Goldthread, Dewberry, Wild Lilly of the Valley, Trailing Arbutus, Labrador Tea, Wild Sarsaparilla, Spice Bush, Pyrola, Duckweed, Broad-leaved Arrowhead, Wild Mint, Spearmint. (92 plant species).

Plants observed last September but not this Alternate-leaved Dogwood, Currant, Bottle Gentian, Naked Miterwort, Non-native Honeysuckle, Bladder Campion, Gooseberry, Bristly Sarsaparilla, Oak Fern, Rue Anemone, Balsam Poplar, Wild Lettuce.

Plants observed this September but not last: Pyrola, Marsh Bellflower, Kalm's Lobelia, Wild Mint, Water Hemlock, Skullcap, Arrowhead, Shrubby Cinqufoil, Common Nightshade, Spicebush, Watercress, Duckweed, Narrow-leaved Cattail, Showy Lady Slipper, Spearmint, Grass-leaved Goldenrod, Smooth Brome Grass, Clinton's Fern, Cranberry, Blue Vervain. □

Grand Traverse Audubon Club Annual Dinner

Annual Dinner Reservation
Gilbert Lodge at Twin Lakes
Saturday, October 17, 200, 6:00 p.m.

Name(s) _____

Phone Number _____

Reservation for _____ dinner & program \$16 each,
for a total of \$ _____

Reservations must
be received by
Monday, October 12.
Mail to:
John Mesch,
Treasurer
9793 Edgewood Ave.
Traverse City, MI
49684

Program: "Hummingbirds," by Allen Chartier. Twin Lakes Center, Long Lake Road at 6:00 p.m.
Check online for cost: grandtraverseaudubon.org or call Shirley Mesch at: 231.946.3624

Audubon Membership Renewal 2010

Send in your renewal now, or at least by December 31, to be included in the membership booklet which will be printed in January. All memberships run the calendar year.

Family \$20, Single \$15, Student \$8.00

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

I would like to receive:

- Renew or sign me up for the club email groups, GTAudubon (club news) and birdalert (news of area birds).
- I do not use the internet and would like a mailed newsletter.

Enclosed is a check, made out
to Grand Traverse Audubon
Club, for:

Dinner Reservation \$ _____

2010 Membership \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Mail to: John Mesch, Treasurer
9793 Edgewood Ave.
Traverse City, MI 49684
231.946.3624



**Grand Traverse Audubon Club
Board Members:**

President: Ed Moehle
231.947.8821
Vice Pres: Tom Ford
Vice Pres: Bob Carstens
Treasurer: John Mesch
Secretary: Lane Corbin
Newsletter: Carole Groves
231.492.4567
Elected: Shirley Mesch
Barb Graf
M.A.S. Rep: Elise Brooks
Past Pres: Cindee DuBey



On August 25, Ed Kaminski reported on our Bird Alert, a White Pelican on Boardman Lake. "I think it was just stopping for a few hours on its way south. Nobody reported it from other locations... it was headed south when it flew. I followed down to Sabin & Keystone but could not find it."

Also reported by Ed on August 27, the return of Pied Billed Grebes, Hooded Mergansers (lots) and Caspian Terns.

On Sept. 5, he reported: Lone Pine Trail at Keystone Pond. The water is down from lack of rain, so lots of exposed mud flats, and lots of shorebirds! Found Least, Semipalmated, Solitary, and Spotted Sandpipers, Yellowlegs, Dowitcher, Common Snipe, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Green and Great Blue Herons, Kingfisher. Along the trail, Black Billed Cuckoo, RB Grosbeak, a family of Flickers, and some House Finches.—Oh, and there are the Merlins.

Ed certainly keeps us informed about the seasonal birding along the Boardman.

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