

SEPTEMBER 2014



Newsletter of the Jackson Audubon Society

517.787.3453

www.jacksonaudubon.org

BIRDTRACKS

Oldest Ruby Throat Confirmed Near Waterloo - Jackson County

Allen Chartier

On July 17, 2014 I recaptured a Ruby-throated Hummingbird at a home near Waterloo, Jackson County, that I had banded there on June 8, 2006. She was an adult when banded, so was hatched in summer 2005 or earlier, making her at least 9 years 1 month old (using the Bird Banding Lab's standard method of calculating bird ages).



According to the Bird Banding Lab's longevity database (http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/longevity/longevity_main.cfm), this is the oldest Ruby-throat ever confirmed. She has been recaptured a half-dozen times over the years since she was banded, including last year when she was at least 8 years old, and always at this same home. I've calculated that she's traveled at least 36,000 miles in her migrations during her lifetime, or possibly as much as 49,000 miles, depending on where she spends the winter. She has probably produced between 18 and 36 young in the past 9 years, so with an 80% mortality rate of hatch-year birds, 4-8 of those have likely lived to be adults. The "average" life span that I see on these birds is about 4 years.

The next day I recaptured another female Ruby-throat that was banded as an adult in 2007, making her at least 8 years 1 month old. So far this summer I have banded 300+ Ruby-throats mainly in southeastern Michigan, plus have recaptured an additional 100+ returning from previous years, which is more than average.

Photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mihummingbirdguy/collections/>

Website: www.amazilia.net

Blog: <http://mihummingbirdguy.blogspot.com/>

Big Tree

Bob Venners



Only two new champion trees this summer, number one being the large Linden (Basswood) which was in full view on West Michigan Avenue for how many years before being spotted July 20 by an Audubon member. The tree is a full 163 inches in girth. The second new champ replaces the Smoketree felled at Jackson College several summers ago. It is located by the pool at Sharp Park. Not very large, but they never are.

County Champ: Basswood on W.Michigan Ave.

Purple Martin Party

Twenty five people enjoyed beautiful weather at Connie's house on Crispell Lake. Martin landlords and Jackson Audubon members feasted on tasty food and drinks while enjoying the martins. Great prizes were given to all. What a



Barb Anderson & Joyce Peterson enjoying the Martin Party
Photos curtesy of Doug Leffler

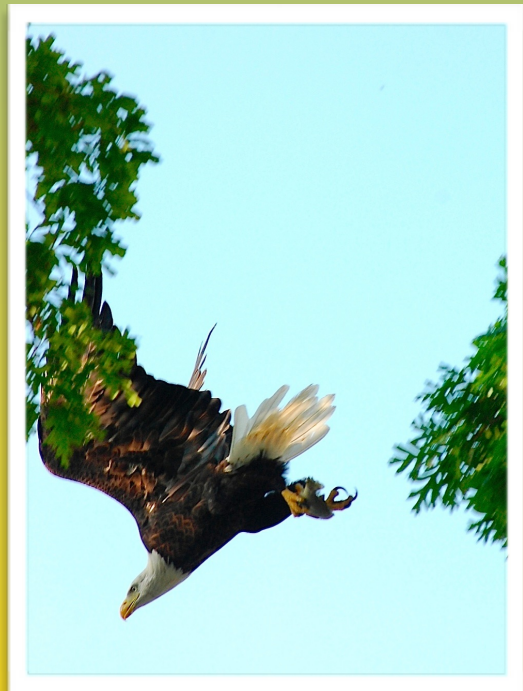


Have a small yard and want to have several birds nest in one small area????

Connie is standing by three boxes that are back to back. This really works. She had two pair of wood ducks and a pair of tree swallows nesting all at the same time. Connie only needed one guard to protect the three.



Photo by Doug Leffler



Bald Eagle spotted July 30, 2014

Eagle Point ~ Clark Lake

Photo Credit: John Stewart

HAEHNLE HAPPENINGS

Lathe Claflin

Dedication and Open House for Edward and Jennie Klee Tract at Haehnle Sanctuary

On Saturday, October 18 from 2 -3:00 PM we will celebrate the acquisition of Klee property to Haehnle Sanctuary. This is the same day as the Cranes, Color, and Cabernet Festival. What better time to hear about and see the addition that now allows full protection of the cranes in Mud Lake Marsh.

There will be the usual bird walks at the Sanctuary, a talk about the natural history of cranes and why they stage at Haehnle in the fall, tours to see and photograph cranes in nearby fields, and crane viewing at the Wing Observation Hill. The dedication will feature a brief description of the property, brief words by Kerry Klee, one of the Klee daughters, and other featured speakers. We will conduct tours to the Klee Tract where one can take a short walk to a wonderful new overlook of the Marsh.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Whooping Crane 37-07 - The Wanderer

Ron Hoffman

Previous issues of *Bird Tracks* described the travels of Whooping Crane Number 37-07. A combination of colored leg-bands made it possible to track his movements. Recall that in 2007, he was the 37th young crane released in Wisconsin. That fall during migration he had to be recaptured in southern Illinois, wintered in Tennessee, and migrated to Michigan during the spring of 2008 where he was captured again and returned to Wisconsin. Each of the following springs he returned to Michigan and was often seen at the Haehnle Sanctuary and surrounding areas, especially in the fall.

This past winter, 37-07 was often observed with a pair of Whoopers in Tennessee and then followed that pair north into Indiana where he was last seen in March. It was expected he would show-up this summer in Michigan, but instead he was found the 11th of July at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, Wisconsin. Although we in Michigan are disappointed he is now in Wisconsin, his chances of finding a mate are better there. Hopefully, he will settle down and raise a family.



Photo credit: Kenny Price

Michigan Butterfly Network Surveys at Haehnle Sanctuary

Don & Robyn Henise

In conjunction with the Michigan Butterfly Network a series of Butterfly Surveys at the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary were conducted this summer by Don and Robyn Henise. The MBN protocol calls for developing a route through butterfly habitat and slowly walking it 6 times between June 1st and August 8th, recording the number of each butterfly species encountered.

The route we devised circles the perimeter of the main overlook prairie at Haehnle, then follows the nature trail through the woods to the north prairie and ends with a walk into a fen. The route is divided into 6 transects based on habitat type; Grassland 1, Woody Wetland, Deciduous Forest, Grassland 2, Deciduous Forest 2, and Herbaceous Wetland (Fen).

The summer 2014 surveys were run on June 14th, 21st, 26th, July 4th, 24th and August 2nd. The surveys recorded 8, 13, 11, 13, 16, and 17 species respectively with a total of 30 butterfly species over the 6 surveys.

Butterfly species observed with total individuals / number of surveys encountered:

Black Swallowtail – 2/1	Mourning Cloak – 1/1
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail – 5/3	Baltimore Checkerspot – 2/2
Spicebush Swallowtail – 3/2	Pearl Crescent – 8/3
Cabbage White – 33/5	Eastern Comma – 3/3
Orange Sulphur – 2/1	Red Admiral – 5/2
Clouded Sulphur – 98/6	Northern Pearly Eye – 4/2
American Copper – 2/1	Little Wood-Satyr – 19/3
Bronze Copper – 11/3	Common Wood-Nymph – 13/3
Banded Hairstreak – 1/1	Silver-spotted Skipper – 4/3
Eastern Tailed Blue – 9/4	Common Sootywing – 1/1
Summer Azure – 9/5	Least Skipper – 2/2
Monarch – 6/4	European Skipper – 5/2
Great Spangled Fritillary – 58/6	Peck's Skipper – 2/1
Viceroy – 6/3	Tawny-edged Skipper – 1/1
Red-spotted Purple – 2/2	Common Roadside-Skipper – 16/3

Since this was the first year for the survey at Haehnle Sanctuary, it would be premature to attempt to draw any conclusions from this data. A surprise for us was the number of Common Roadside-Skippers encountered during the last two surveys – 6 on July 24th and 9 on August 2nd. We had not observed this species in Jackson County before conducting these surveys. In light of how rare Monarchs were in our area in 2013, it was encouraging to record 6 of them on 4 surveys, including 3 on July 24th.

The data from the butterfly surveys has been entered into PollardBase, a data entry and management system for butterfly monitoring programs maintained by the Butterflies and Moths of North America project (BAMONA). As these surveys continue over future seasons, the data collected will contribute to the overall knowledge of the abundance and distribution of butterflies.

It was hard not to notice all the dragonflies we encountered while conducting the butterfly surveys, so we kept a list of dragonflies. Contact Don or Robyn to see the entire list, which is too long to include here.

The Wait is Finally Over - Trumpeter Swans Nest at Haehnle!

In April of 1991 eight 2-year old Trumpeter Swans were released at the Phyllis Haehnle Sanctuary (PHS). The eggs had been collected in central Alaska and were hatched and raised at the Kellogg Biological Station. Numerous observations were made between April and July of 1991 by Hugh Zernikow and Ron and Joan Hoffman. The survival rate for these eight swans was less than stellar. May 22 one was found dead - its gizzard full of lead shot even though there had not been hunting at PHS in over 35 years; on June 6 two swans were captured and appeared to be in good health but x-rays revealed that they had also ingested lead shot. One swan was never found and the remaining four swans were captured on July 30. They were treated in Minnesota and later released at Seney Wildlife Refuge. Beginning in 2003, Trumpeter Swans were being observed at PHS and on Eagle Lake but nesting could not be confirmed.

Well...it has been a long wait but on June 14, 2014 nesting Trumpeter Swans were confirmed at PHS. We spotted two adults in the southeast corner of Mud Lake Marsh and swimming behind them were two adorable cygnets. So the next time you visit the sanctuary, keep an eye out for our Trumpeter family!



MIS OSPREY CHICK BANDED & FITTED WITH TRANSMITTER

The 3 chicks on the Skuse Rd. nest fledged. This was an early nest and unfortunately we weren't early enough to get to it. We had planned to attach a transmitter to one of the male chicks...all three were males...but it wasn't to be.

At MIS, when we found a suitable candidate who was the right age and in good health we decided to fit the youngster with the unit. After DNA results were in it was confirmed the bird was female.

We banded the one chick in the Brooklyn tower MIS nest (one unhatched egg, as well) and fit it with a gps satellite transmitter. Once fledged its movements will be tracked.

The unit the MIS bird wears was purchased through a donation from American Tower Corporation in 2013. Corey Lamarche from ATC's Bird Watch department was responsible for securing the funds for 2 units. This backpack was worn last year by Leroy, an Osprey from Pinckney, who unfortunately was injured in December on a golf course west of Miami. I was able to pick up the unit while in Florida and had it refurbished. So, now it is on the back of **Corie**. I named the MIS bird after our sponsor but changed it to the female spelling.

Follow the Osprey on their Facebook page: **Michigan Osprey**

Friends of Audubon Volunteer at the Kate

Jim Rossman and Paul Rice have been using their engineering and trail development skills at the Kate Palmer Sanctuary. They have been submitting detailed drawings for Michigan Audubon to use for a floating boardwalk. It will cross the first ravine onto the new loop trail that Jim and Paul enlarged and cleared with chainsaws and brush-hog for Jackson Audubon. We hope to get the okay from the DEQ by late fall to proceed with our efforts to make the Kate more accessible for birders, fishermen, and wildflower enthusiasts.

Jim Seitz and Jack Ripstra brought their chainsaws and expertise in logjam removal from Sandstone Creek. They cut and we cleared for about two hours after two trees had crashed into the creek and over the trail. Their chainsaws were lubricated by a special enviro-river-friendly oil that they buy by the case. Jim and Jack, as board members of Grand River Environmental Action Team, were happy to help when no professional tree trimmers would take the job wading into the creek with chainsaws.

Thank you, gentlemen!

We have recorded over 100 bird species and 100 visits on eBird! This birding hotspot is a protected site for many migrants and resident birds but we needed human help to prove it. Michigan Audubon will be awarding multiple prizes in January. You still have time to enter the contest by recording your visits to the

Are You Interested in Saving Champion Trees in Jackson County????

Jackson Audubon is looking for someone who would like to take on this position. It involves keeping track of the big trees and measuring those that are nominated. Bob and Susi Venners have been doing this job for several years and they are ready to hand over the tape measure to someone they could mentor. Words cannot express how much we appreciate the wonderful job they have done. Through their fine work, many trees have been saved and many people have learned the value of a tree. Not only does Audubon thank you, but so do those big trees!

MICHIGAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY ~ 2014 FALL FESTIVAL

Sunday September 7th at the Dahlem Center. Starts at 11:00 a.m. with a meet and greet, includes a free lunch for all MBS members (\$5.00 for guests), and concludes around 2:30.

We have several very informative programs this year. One on winter roosting boxes for bluebirds by MBS Vice-President Phil Peterson. The other on a Kestrel nest box program in agricultural fruit orchards by Megan Shave. In addition, there will be lots of informational displays and merchandise for purchase to help raise funds for MBS.

RSVP by either calling Lynette Myers at 517-206-7066 or emailing her at membership@michiganbluebirds.org, and leave your name, phone number, and number of people attending.

For more details on the Festival, go to our website <http://www.michiganbluebirds.org/>

2014/15 ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

Field Trips

Saturday March 28—Early Waterfowl trip around the Jackson Area. Meet at the Eastside Meijer parking lot at 8:00 am. Call Connie Spotts (517-529-9031) for more information.

Meetings/Programs

Regular meetings begin with a social time at 6 30 p.m. followed by a short meeting and program at 7 00 p.m. Bring "recyclables" (magazines, feeders, etc.) to the program.

Thursday September 11—"Paul McCormack and his classroom Critters" He will have a variety of gentle animals such as doves, turtles, snakes, and a chinchilla. It's a chance to see and touch these wonderful creatures.

Thursday October 9- "Gardening to Support and Protect Bees in Michigan"Dr. Julianna Wilson an entomologist at MSU will be speaking about the different kinds of wild bees found in Michigan, comparing them to the honey bees and giving simple strategies to support and protect our Michigan bees.

Thursday November 13- "Invasive Species in Michigan" Kevin Walters an Aquatic Biologist with the DEQ and an expertise in aquatic invasive species will focus on plants, fish, and invertebrates. This will include management and prevention. He will also discuss the mute swan issue. There will be a short annual meeting/ election of board members.

Thursday January 8 - Tom Funke will present "Birding for Conservation" and award a prize to the winner of the Kate Palmer birding contest.

Friday February 13 at Vista Grande Villa-DESSERT TIME-Ellen Rathbone, Education Director of the Dahlem Conservancy, will present "The Lure of the Mountains". Ellen, along with 11 folks from Jackson took an eco-tour of the Adirondacks in upstate New York. She will delight us with their discoveries and adventures.

Thursday-March 12 - Don Henise will lead us on a "Birding in Southwest Oregon" trip. We will visit the south coast and a large nesting seabird colony. We will also travel to the Cascades in search of many western species such as the white-headed woodpecker, red-breasted sapsucker, and a nesting Gray Owl.

Thursday-April - 9 Brenda Dziedzic author of " Learn About Butterflies in the Garden" Brenda, who is from Westland Michigan, will present a program on raising butterflies from a small city yard. She has an indoor butterfly house at Barson's Greenhouse where she educates many people about saving butterflies. She will have her book available for \$20.00.

Other Events

Saturday September 27- Workbee at Haehnle Sanctuary-9:00-12:00. Meet at the main parking lot on Seymour Road. For more information call Lathe Claflin (517-522-3949)

Saturday October 18- Haehnle Sanctuary - Crane Festival with Klee Property dedication 2-3:00 p.m.

Saturday December 20-Christmas Bird Count-If you would like to help on this important count, please call Don Henise at 517-817-0309 or 517-795-7752.

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Jackson Audubon Society Mission:

To promote among the people of the Jackson Area an interest, knowledge and appreciation of birds, wildlife and the environment.



Michigan Audubon – Connecting Birds and People for the Benefit of Both