

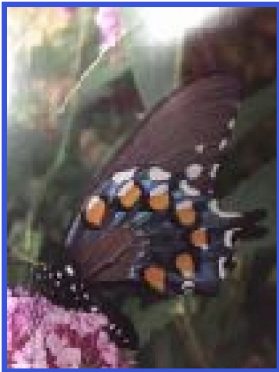


# BIRDTRACKS

## A SUMMER OF BUTTERFLIES

Connie Spotts

photos by Becky Mehall & Connie Spotts



Pipevine Swallowtail

This has been one of my best year's for raising butterflies. This year I have raised 107 Monarchs compared to last years total of 87. Becky Mehall raised and released 32 Monarchs. The Pipevine Swallowtails were everywhere. I released 174 which is a record for me. Other releases included 28 Black Swallowtails, 20 Giant Swallowtails, 5 Spicebush Swallowtails, and 36 Cecropias. One of the highlights of the summer was finding a Silver-spotted skipper caterpillar on Hog-peanut, also I found several Hummingbird Clearwings on my Viburnum bushes. Late in the season I found several Cabbage Whites on an unknown plant so I bought cabbage to raise them. They all went to their chrysalis, the smallest ones I have ever seen. Next year I will be adding flowering cabbage to the butterfly garden.



Monarch Chrysalis



Monarch ready to emerge from chrysalis



Newly emerged Monarch



Black Swallowtail Caterpillar



Connie Spotts and young boys releasing a Monarch at Dahlem Birds, Blooms & Butterflies Festival  
(Photo by Carrie Benham)



Female Monarch

## REMEMBERING HUGH ZERNICKOW



Audubon and cranes lost a good friend August 6 when Hubert Peter Zernickow passed away at age 97. Hugh served as president of the Michigan Audubon Society from 1976 to 1978. During his tenure as president his calming demeanor helped M.A.S. overcome a controversial proposal to extract hydrocarbon at Baker Sanctuary. He also served as president of Jackson Audubon Society, was a compiler of the Waterloo Christmas Bird Count and served from its formation on the Haehnle Committee. Hugh was a strong advocate of the Haehnle Sanctuary, volunteering at work bees, making weekly cranes counts during the fall and providing sound advice and financial support.

His wife, Norene, preceded him in death. He is survived by grandson John Hoyer and wife Laura, and a great grandson, Chris. Honoring his wishes, there was no funeral or memorial service. Remembrances may be given to the Hugh and Norene Zernickow Memorial for the Haehnle Sanctuary. They can be sent with the notation Haehnle Sanctuary to either the Jackson Audubon Society, P.O. Box 6453, Jackson, MI 49204 or to Michigan Audubon, 2310 Science Parkway, Suite 200, Okemos, MI 48864. Online contributions can be made using any major credit card at the [JAS Donation Page](#). Note Haehnle Sanctuary in the Comment section.

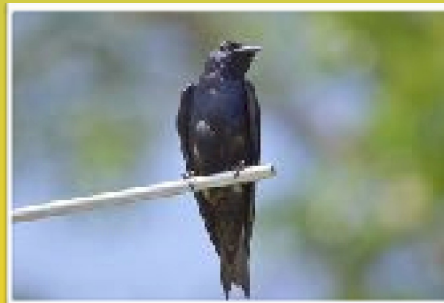
## 2019 Purple Martin Party

Photos by Doug Leffler

The annual Jackson Audubon Club Purple Martin Party's held on June 22nd. The party was hosted by JAS president, Connie Spotts at her cottage and accompanying campground at Crispell Lake, south of Jackson. Over 20 people attended the gathering and all had a great time in perfect picnic weather. Attendees enjoyed watching Purple Martins (and one Tree Swallow) with their comings and goings from their Martin houses out onto Crispell Lake. Also, a House Wren nest box was close to Connie's side-of-the-cottage garden, so "Mr and Mrs Wren" kept us entertained with their comings and goings along with their crisp-sounding calls.



Connie and Guests



Male Purple Martin



Tree Swallow

# Bluebird Nest Box Management at Haehnle

Steve Jerant

With the cold spring I expected a bad year for our nest-box residents. However, I'm happy to report a successful year at the Sanctuary. We had success for bluebirds and tree swallows. I monitored 23 boxes, of which 20 had observed nesting activity for a total of 32 attempts. This resulted in 22 clutches which is up from 17 last year.

The Eastern Bluebird (EABL) group had 7 attempts yielding 15 fledglings. That is a bit lower than normal, and I did record one nest failure. But the overall success rate was in the 60% range which is about average.

My aggressive friends, the Tree Swallows (TRES), had a good year. Their fledgling numbers continue to trend down from a high near 60 in 2017 to 45 this year. They are normally aggressive when the landlord comes to check on each family. I did not get mobbed as much this season so perhaps they are getting used to me. No dead adults were found even with the cool spring. I recorded 18 nesting attempts yielding 45 fledglings with one partial failure of some unhatched eggs. One box yielded 8 eggs, which the folks at Cornell NestWatch tagged as above the normal limits, but here's the picture to prove it.



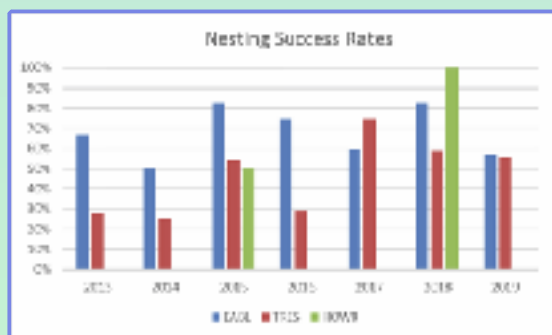
Record 8 Tree Swallow eggs

House Wrens (HOWR) had a bad showing this year. I recorded only two nest attempts and the one that produced young did not fledge. They seem to have only great and bad years. But I'm not worried as they are quite able to keep their overall population numbers quite high.

And then there are the House Sparrows. Several nesting attempts were observed this year. The good news is that they were only in Unit #1, below the Wing Overlook, and were limited to only two boxes. The Gilwood-type boxes seem to be doing the job and I will be staging this box type for future replacements to keep their numbers down. And as always, I remind all you out there, be sure that if you stage nest boxes on your property to monitor for this invasive. Please don't provide a good nest platform for a sparrow that you intended for a blue bird or swallow.

This was my second year using the Cornell NestWatch app on the iPhone. It again proved very efficient for collecting the data and posting in real time. I did encounter issues on my phone which made the app loop while using. But even with this issue, the use of the program is a huge time saver and allowed me to know stats throughout the season.

Our data for nest box monitoring has been submitted to NestWatch (<https://nestwatch.org>) and the Michigan Bluebird Society (<http://michiganbluebirds.org/>). These are both excellent organizations that can provide you with information on observing, managing, and monitoring nesting birds in your area.





## Purple Martin Nesting Results

Connie Spotts

My 2019 Purple Martin season on Crispell Lake began on April 8 with three males landing on the gourd rack. This was two days later than was reported in 2018. Once again the weather involved snow and rain so the birds went through lots of dried mealworms. The number of adults and those that fledged were down due to weather and English Sparrow problems. The number of adults in 2018 were 92 and in 2019 they were 72. There were 160 Martins that fledged which was down from 181. My Martins stayed until mid August and then started their journey to South America. I always feel sad when my last Martins leave, but I know they will be back in the spring so I have something to look forward to.



### ***BIG TREE COORDINATOR NEEDED***

With a net loss approaching 3 billion birds, or 29% of 1970 abundance in North America (National Geographic as reported in Science journal, 9/19/2019) and with increasing reports on human-caused global climate change, TREES become more important each day. Jackson Audubon is the steward of Jackson County's Big Tree database, and we are looking for someone to head up this interesting position.

As the Jackson County Big Tree Coordinator, you would:

- \* Post an email address to answer inquiries made to Jackson Audubon, about 3 per year
- \* Keep the electronic database of Jackson County Big Trees on your computer
- \* Measure new Big Tree candidates that come to you, and add the information to the current database

Anything else you choose to do is at your discretion, and you would have funds available from the budget of Jackson Audubon. You will be supplied with tree identification information and Audubon friends to assist you.

Birds are our mission and birds depend upon big trees for food or shelter. You can become a part of a solution to the habitat loss that our beautiful fliers depend upon.

Please contact Pegg Clevenger for more information at 517-750-4299

## 2118-19 MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

Meetings and programs are held at Ella Sharp Museum, 3225 S Fourth St, Jackson, except where otherwise noted. Regular meetings will begin with a social time at 6:30 p.m. with a short meeting and program at 7:00 p.m. Bring "recyclables" (magazines, feeders, etc.) to the program.

Please note - Meetings are cancelled in the event JPS schools are closed due to inclement weather.

### Meetings ~ Programs

#### 2020

Saturday, December 21: Waterloo Recreation Area Christmas Bird Count. Contact Gary Siegrist at 517-522-5990 for more information.

#### 2020

Tuesday, January 14: ReLeaf Michigan Presents "Basic Tree Care and Maintenance". Get your many questions answered by the expert. Learn how to care for all trees in all seasons.

Friday, February 7: Andy Walz will present "Glacier National Park and The Canadian Rockies". Join us at Vista Grand Villa to view the fantastic mountains, wildlife, and beautiful waterfalls. Please bring a dessert to share that does not require table service.

Tuesday, March 10: Holly Vaughn of Michigan DNR presents "Michigan Waterfowl". She will discuss field marks, biology, behavior and range of all our species.

Tuesday, April 14: Dr. Curtis Blankespoor presents "A Rare Glimpse into the Unknown world of the Common Merganser". Curtis will share amazing photos and videos of his research involving over 500 ducks and their relationship to the Swimmers' itch.

Regular Tuesday morning Field Trips continue through the year. For scheduled outings visit the JAS website: <http://jacksonaudubon.org>, email Steve Jerant - [jacksonaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonaudubon@gmail.com) or call him at (734) 883-9514.

Jackson Audubon Society wishes to thank Paul Brencher for his service on the  
Board of Directors  
Thank You Paul!

Jackson Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 6453  
Jackson, MI 49204

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## **Jackson Audubon Society is a chapter of Michigan Audubon Society**

### **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**