



WASHTENAW AUDUBON SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

September/October 2016

Two Times the Fun for Hudson Mills Fall Trip by Karen Markey

[Editor's note: Karen Markey led not one, but two back-to-back trips to Hudson Mills in early September, fighting weather and mosquitos, to try to get as many Washtenaw Audubon Society birders on some gorgeous fall migrants. Thanks, Karen!]

Our persevering group of 20 birders expertly scanned the high treetops at Hudson Mills in search of fall migrants from 8 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. on Saturday, September 10. We had great luck at the compost heaps where Brown Thrashers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings, Scarlet Tanagers, and Olive-sided Flycatcher came into full view in bare trees and bushes. Overcast and threatening skies, occasional raindrops, thick leafy trees, and low-light conditions made for tough viewing and difficulty identifying the birds we were able to spot. Despite so many silhouette birds, we identified at least 13 warblers for the fourth fall in a row!

Saturday's field trip was a birding-by-committee event, where the many expert birders in our group spotted and identified birds and helped their fellow birders find them. Thanks to you for benefiting all in attendance. Special thanks to WAS President Juliet Berger for compiling and sharing her list with us and answering the hard questions.

With better weather in the forecast for Sunday, September 11, we determined to repeat the trip. Our counts on Saturday included 52 species, plus one other taxa. Please see the Washtenaw Audubon Society Web site for details about species seen and heard.

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President's Letter

Hello Washtenaw Audubon,

As fall gets into full swing, I find myself reflecting on the year. A wealth of wonderful memories of birding adventures with many of you, times to socialize, juggling work and personal life. A heartfelt thank you to those who walk this journey with me, who help out on the WAS Board and with our field trips and events, who volunteer for the Breeding Bird Survey at Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation, and who bird with me and support the work that we do. I guess that is all of you!

With autumn here, a time of transition, there have been some changes on the Washtenaw Audubon Board of Directors, as well. Jessica Adamczyk replaces Rachelle Roake as WAS Membership Chair. Thanks to Jessica for stepping into this new role. Many thanks to Rachelle for keeping our members up to date and organized for the last three years! Also, David Amamoto will be assisting Rob French on the Tech and Social Media Committee by posting photos and helping us promote field trips and programs on the WAS Facebook page. Enjoy our new activity on Facebook—like us on Facebook, and share our posts to promote awareness of our field trips and programs!

With fall bird migration in full swing, take some time to get out and enjoy the birds. We have several weekend leaderless walks at the Arb, designed to get birders together to observe birds on the same routes we take Thursday mornings, through the end of October. Nichols Arboretum is one of the premier birding destinations in Southeast Michigan. We are lucky to have the chance to bird there often.

The Big Sit, coming up in early October, encourages us to bird in one place, thoroughly. We count all the birds we observe from our 17-foot circle at Independence Lake County Park, over a maximum of 24 hours, and usually come up with quite an impressive list. Don Chalfant ably organizes this event again for us this year.

Check this newsletter, our website at www.washtenawaudubon.org, and our Facebook page @washtenawaudubon, for more information on recent and upcoming field trips, as more events will be posted in the coming weeks. And, don't miss our evening programs at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, nearly every third Wednesday of each month. I hope to see many of you soon.

As the seasons change, let's get out there and enjoy what fall has to offer in beautiful Washtenaw County and beyond.

As always,

I am for the birds,

Juliet Berger

Two Times the Fun for Hudson Mills Fall Trip

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What could be better than returning to Hudson Mills after a big storm, north winds, and cooler temperatures blowing through? Warblers were plentiful with American Redstarts topping the list at 22 and Chestnut-sided Warblers at a whopping 15. Dan found the bird of the day, an elusive Black-billed Cuckoo, who posed for barely a minute for most to see and then scooted away. Rarely did our group of about 15 birders have a moment to rest and compose ourselves. Birds were almost non-stop from beginning to end, and all got good looks at stunning male Redstarts, Black-throated Blue Warblers, and Black-and-white Warblers.

Thanks to everyone who helped both beginning and experienced birders find this and that bird. Big-time thanks to Jim Law for his fastidiousness compiling the list throughout the trip so we are very confident in these amazing numbers you can find at <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31528147>.

[Photo credit: David Amamoto]



Swift Nights Out Results, by Juliet Berger

The First Annual Swift Nights Out was held August 12-14th. We had 18 volunteers, counting Chimney Swifts at 11 locations over 3 nights: 1200 N. Main St.; Burns Park School; First United Methodist Church; Mack School; Miller Manor/West Park; Northside School; Old County Road Commission Bldg., 415 W. Washington; Slauson Middle School; Tappan Middle School; UM Intramural Bldg; Washtenaw County Courthouse.

Friday evening we had a total of 1841 Swifts at nine locations. The Courthouse, Slauson, and Mack School were the most populous, with 274, 1250, and 283 respectively. Saturday evening we counted a whopping 4243 Swifts at eight locations. The Courthouse, Slauson, and Mack again had the most Swifts with 3461 at Slauson, 470 at Mack/AA Open, and 258 at the Courthouse. Sunday evening we observed 2831 Swifts across five locations. Mack School and the Courthouse were not counted, but there were 2750 Swifts at Slauson.

Other sites hosting Swifts last weekend were 1200 N. Main, Miller Manor, Old County Rd. Commission/415 W. Washington, Tappan, First United Methodist Church, Northside School, and Yost Ice Arena near the UM Intramural Building. St. Thomas Church on N. State hosted a few swifts, as well. There were 16 Swifts at Burns Park School on Saturday evening, and a dozen or so on Sunday. (There were none on Friday night.)

Thanks to everyone who helped us get an idea of how many Chimney Swifts Ann Arbor hosts on a typical late summer evening. The volunteer response was great for a first time local event. We now have a better idea of approximately how many of this species—in steep decline—share our city with us. We'll do this again next year!

Meet the Flock: Jessica Adamczyk

By Cathy Theisen

Meet our new Membership Chair! Jessica Adamczyk and husband Piotr have just moved to Ann Arbor after living for three years in the U.K. Jessica has only been here for four months, but she has jumped into WAS activities with both feet!



Jessica has a B.S. in Finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Certificate in Non-Profit Arts Administration from New York University. Newly arrived in Ann Arbor because of her husband's job transfer, she is now looking for work. Her background is in non-profit administration at international art and design museums (including The Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; and the Royal Museums Greenwich, a UNESCO World Heritage Site) where she specialized in exhibition project management, and prior to that, development/sponsorship. She has worked on exhibitions ranging from J.M.W. Turner to Willem de Kooning to Kraftwerk, though most of her experience has been within a modern and contemporary art museum setting. It was rewarding work, involving close collaboration with artists, curators, architects, and designers, and she takes immense pride in promoting the arts, broadening their impact and audience. Her work also involved travelling internationally as a fine art courier, so she has spent a lot of time in airport cargo warehouses and can talk your ear off about shipping logistics and crate specifications!

She grew up near Portland, Oregon, where she developed her appreciation for the outdoors early in life, but she didn't start birding in earnest until 2011 when she received her first pair of binoculars as a Christmas gift from her mom. Her interest had been sparked by time spent in New York's Central Park, which was proudly her first local patch! She has since enjoyed birdwatching on four continents, always with her non-birding husband by her side, enabling her most ambitious birdwatching schemes. But mostly she enjoys birding as a way of connecting with nature and savoring the world around us; for her, it's about slowing down and looking, listening, and appreciating.

While she has no specific birding mentor, she has been fortunate to have many great teachers both in the U.S. and the U.K. Moving to a different continent meant that she had to go through being a beginner birdwatcher twice (including learning a whole new set of vocabulary— blind vs. hide, banding vs. ringing, etc.), and she is thankful to all of the birders who've endured her questions or otherwise helped her along the way.

One of her most memorable birding experiences was going with her mom to Norfolk, England, on a guided birding trip together (what she hopes is the first of many birding trips together). It was an act of serious dedication to birdwatch along the coast of the North Sea in March. Fortunately (or

Board Members

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The Washtenaw Audubon Society is an active chapter of Michigan Audubon formed in the early 1950s. Monthly programs feature guest speakers on a wide variety of natural history and birding topics. We conduct field trips to places in Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, and beyond.

unfortunately) they had relatively subdued weather, and it was great to share that time with her mom, who has only recently taken up birdwatching in retirement. One site they visited was Grimes Graves, a Neolithic flint mine field, where they saw a hunting Northern Shrike and had extended views of courting Northern Goshawk!

(Second to that, her next most memorable birding experience was convincing her husband to go on a pelagic trip off the coast of Cornwall, England, for their anniversary! So romantic!)

She is very much looking forward to seeing the Sandhill Crane migration, and hopes to visit some of Michigan's autumn crane migration stopover sites (Haehnle and also Michigan Audubon's CraneFest in October), and she wants to plan a trip to the Platte River, Nebraska, area for a spring migration sometime soon! Maybe next year?

As a relative newcomer to the county, she can't yet pick a favorite birding spot but she is having fun exploring. This summer she took part in NAP's Breeding Bird Survey for the city of Ann Arbor, and that got her out to some great under-the-radar natural areas, such as Bluffs and Cedar Bend.

She feels the most pressing conservation issue facing birds today is global habitat loss, especially from the intensive management of agricultural land. Her key concern is protecting existing bird-friendly habitat and creating new habitat. Also, as ecosystems are transformed and species' migration routes shift accordingly over the coming decades, ensuring we can accommodate those newcomers in suitable habitats. She believes we can all make a positive impact, even on the smallest of scales in our immediate environment, and even the smallest action is important. But corollary to that, "How do we connect people with nature? How do we encourage each other to be better stewards of nature?" These are the challenges we face.

She advises new birders to let go of the pressure to identify every bird, every time. Spend your time really watching and studying behavior and fine details. But beyond simply observing, she has found it helpful to actively write down observations or describe out loud what she is seeing or hearing. Attempting to describe a bird's song or the various color details of its plumage requires a deeper level of attention and hopefully leads to sustained learning. And remember, there's always something new to learn, even about the commonest of birds.

Jessica is a strong believer in birding as part of a community. She can already affirm that the Washtenaw community is a talented and generous group, so don't be afraid to find others who have knowledge to impart and learn from them!

Jessica is excited to be joining the board as the new Membership Chair. You can contact her at: jessica.adamczyk13@gmail.com.

Photo Credit: Piotr Adamczyk, at the Quiraing, Isle of Skye, Scotland

Washtenaw Audubon Society	Column1	Column2
2015-16 Financial Report		
submitted by Elvera Shappirio		
Description	Checking	Money Market
Balances as of July 1, 2015	2,884.21	32,679.13
Checking Receipts	5,520.55	
Checking Expenditures	4,463.70	
Rita Burke bequest= 20,000.00 in money market		
Savings Interest		16.37
Transfers: CD interest to savings		20.02
Balances as of June 30, 2016	3,941.06	32,715.52
Checking Account Receipts		
Member Dues (by check or cash)	720.00	
Member dues by paypal	2,105.55	
Donations	175.00	
Donation, unspecified	1,000.00	
memorial donations, Bob Kolas	1,295.00	
reimbursement-van rental	125.00	
Library window donation	100.00	
Total Receipts	5,520.55	
Checking Account Expenditures		
Newsletter Printing and Postage	1265.47	1 incl. prev. yr.
Speakers, Program Expense	100.00	
Grant: Whitefish Point	500.00	
Grant: Rouge River Bird Observatory	500.00	
Grant: Matty Hack	500.00	
Grant: Benjamin Hack	500.00	
Brochures	0.00	
Liability Insurance	525.00	
Banking costs (checkbooks)	0.00	
Corporate Filing Fee	20.00	
Web site costs	0.00	
Property costs: Searles drain fee	66.85	
Gull trip van rentals -125.00 fees, total=369.38	369.38	
Postal box fee	82.00	
Safe Deposit box	35.00	
Total Expenses	4,463.70	
Savings Account Receipts		
Interest on Regular Savings Account	16.37	
Interest on \$10,000.00 CD	20.02	
Total Savings Account Interest	36.39	
Investment Account		
The investment account includes one CD	valued at \$10,000.00	
The interest is transferred to the regular savings account on a monthly basis.		
The \$10,000.00 CD matures Sept. 2016		

Upcoming WAS Field Trips (Oct 2016 – Dec 2016)

Bryn Martin, Field Trip Coordinator (fieldtrips@washtenawaudubon.org)

Washtenaw Audubon field trips are free of charge and open to the public unless otherwise indicated. For trips with constraints on the number of participants, WAS members are sometimes given priority in registering (again, as indicated). *For trips that require carpooling, minors attending without a parent must bring a written permission statement signed by a parent.* To receive a standard form for this, contact me at the email address above. Also, if you have a suggestion for a field trip, please send it to Bryn at the email address above.

Fall migration walks in Nichols Arboretum

Please join one of these popular, leaderless walks to observe fall migration at the Arb. Every Thursday morning from August 25th through the end of October, participants will gather at 8:00 a.m. at the end of the Riverview Dr. cul-de-sac (off Geddes Rd.) near the eastern edge of the Arboretum. The assembled birders will choose a route or routes and head out in search of migrants, many of which will be in their first-year plumage. The walks go until roughly 11:00 a.m., but everyone can join or leave the group as his or her schedule requires. These walks are a great, low-key way to get started in bird watching. All are welcome; it is not necessary to be a member of WAS.

Saturday, October 8

The Big Sit (Independence Lake County Park), Leader: Don Chalfant

This is a low-key international competition that Don has participated in for the past 15 years. The task is to try to identify by sight or sound as many bird species as possible while remaining in a circle of 17 feet in diameter. For participants other than Don, the timing can be completely flexible. You can arrive before dawn to join in the owling or you can come after breakfast, in the afternoon—whatever works for you. It is also a great outing for those with restricted mobility since everything takes place in a fixed spot. For those staying for any significant amount of time, we recommend bringing food and a chair, in addition to your binoculars. (Rain date is October 9th. If bad weather is projected, be sure to check the birders listserv. This decision will be made by 4:00 a.m.)

November 2016

Belle Isle State Park (with Oakland Audubon Society)

For more information, please check the Washtenaw Audubon Society Web site.

December 2016, date to be determined

Gull Trip to the Salem Landfill

For more information, please check the Washtenaw Audubon Society Web site.

Saturday, December 17, 2016

Christmas Bird Count

For more information, please check the Washtenaw Audubon Society Web site.

To become a member of Washtenaw Audubon Society, please complete the form below (or a copy) and mail it with a check or money order payable to **Washtenaw Audubon Society—WAS Membership, P.O. Box 130923, Ann Arbor, MI 48113.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	Membership Dues	
Additional Donation \$ _____		_____ Individual Household	\$25 (online only \$20)
Name: _____		_____ Student	\$15 (online only \$10)
Address: _____		_____ Senior	\$15 (online only \$10)
Phone: _____	Email: _____	_____ Patron	\$50

We encourage you to join at a lower rate if the suggested rates would otherwise preclude your membership, or at a higher rate if you possess the means. **Note:** WAS will only use your email address to communicate with you about WAS programs, field trips, or matters of interest to you, such as membership renewal and emailed WAS newsletters (in color!). We will not give your email address to anyone else.

WAS Monthly Programs

WAS monthly events usually are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Programs begin at 7:30 p.m. at the U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. Free and open to the public. **Please note:** *The Matthaei Botanical Gardens charges for parking at the rate of \$1.20 an hour, enforced 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm. Members of the Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum park for free.*

October 19 Birding Guatemala—Washtenaw Audubon Trip Report

Join Bryn Martin for a program on Washtenaw Audubon's most recent overseas field trip—to the Central American country of Guatemala—where there are a number of birds found nowhere else in the world. Bryn Martin is an avid world birder, a high school teacher, and Washtenaw Audubon's field trip coordinator.

November 16 Topic to be announced

Join Heather Good for a program on a topic to be announced. Heather is the Executive Director of Michigan Audubon, and was a Master's student in the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment.

December No formal Wednesday program in December

Join us on Saturday, December 17, for the Christmas Bird Count! Beginning birders are welcome to participate in the count. Visit the Washtenaw Audubon Society web site for more information.

Washtenaw Audubon Society

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