



Grand Haven, Michigan

September 20 @ 7:30pm

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A Year in the Life of a Nature Photographer

Ed Post

This program traces Ed's travels as an avid nature and landscape photographer for a 12 month period.

The show features images of natural subjects including wildlife, birds, insects, flowers and landscapes.

This is a program you will not want to miss.

**Join us. Everyone is invited.
Programs are free.**

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United Methodist Church of the Dunes
717 Sheldon, Grand Haven, MI

Visit the OIAS homepage at
<http://www.oias.org>

Programs

2011—2012

- Oct 18: **The Threat of Invasive Phragmites in Ottawa County** - Phragmites group -
 Nov 15: **Aquatic Invasive Species in the Great Lakes** - Dan O'Keefe, MSU extension
 Jan 17: **Amazing Bird Behaviors** - Michael Lombardo, GVSU
 Feb 21: **Fragmentary Blues: decline of the Karner Blue Butterfly in the rare Michigan oak savannah** - Jim Dunn, GVSU
 March 20: **Birding Hawaii: Exotic and Endemic**, Carl & Judi Manning
 April 17: **Bird Adventure in Trinidad and Tobago**, John McAree
 May 15: **Potluck and Member's Show & Tell Picture Show**

Identify Found Feathers

Feathers in the yard. Who does it belong to? Check out this website: <http://www.lab.fws.gov/featheratlas/index.php> It helps if you have an idea of what it might be I looked at the male Northern Cardinal feathers.

Excerpts from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Forensics Laboratory, The Feather Atlas website: "This website is designed to assist feather identification by providing high-resolution scans of flight feathers of major groups of North American birds. This is an ongoing project that will continually add new species.

How to use the Feather Atlas

To search the image database by the common or scientific name of a bird species or group, click on 'Search Scans.' To browse by taxonomic group (for example, owls or woodpeckers), click on 'List all Scans' or 'List all Species'. Feather identification can be made by comparing an unknown feather with the scans of similar feathers on the Feather Atlas. The scans typically illustrate the dorsal surfaces of 12 wing flight feathers (remiges) or six tail feathers (rectrices) from an individual bird

A data table of total feather lengths and vane lengths is provided for each scan, beneath the image of the scanned feathers. More information on the data table and on how the scans were created are presented on the "About" page.

The Legal Status of North American Bird Feathers: All species of native North American migratory birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty (MBTA). Some species are also protected by additional statutes, such as Endangered Species Act (ESA). The list of MBTA-protected species can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/regulationspolicies/mbta/taxolst.html>.

The possession of feathers and other parts from MBTA-protected birds without a permission is **prohibited**. The only exceptions are the feathers of legally-hunted waterfowl or other migratory game birds, which may be possessed by hunters. This prohibition extends to molted feathers and to feathers taken from road- or window-killed birds. Individuals or institutions wishing to use bird feathers, bones, or whole specimens for educational or research purposes must apply for permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and their state wildlife or natural resource agency. For more information see <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/mbpermits.html>.

Bird Behavior

Judi Manning



We look forward to spring and fall migration to watch for different species of birds in our yards and parks. Bird behavior is also exciting to watch and can be a lifelong fascination.

Bird behavior???

How does the bird move, fly?

How does the bird feed?

Is the bird social, comes in a group or alone?

Have you seen any displays – mating, territory?

Watch birds fly away or from tree to tree in your yard. Are their flight patterns different?

Birds are grouped together by physical characteristics. Most found in the backyard are perching birds and have similar characteristics. The exception is birds appearing during migration. Study their size, body shape, colors, markings, beak shape, feet, and wing shape in flight. Birds also have a variety of calls. Can you tell the difference between species? Bird behaviors help with identification. Bird behaviors such as flight pattern, feeding, physical displays and social interaction help with identification.

Establishing and Defending Territory: Male birds defend their territory against other males of their own species. Males sing to let other males know of their presence. They chase and fight other males that may venture into their territory – Robins and Cardinals for example. *This year our backyard Northern Cardinal was relentless in his chasing of other males.*

Courtship: Courtship starts when a male meets a female and end when they mate. Courtship behavior varies greatly between species. Male orioles and tanagers parade before the females. Buntings singing loudly flutter over fields. Woodpeckers drum their bills on dead limbs and aluminum house-gutters. Cardinals feed their potential mates. Hummingbirds perform complex flying patterns as the female watches. Each male is hoping to impress the female with his vigor and sexual enthusiasm. It is believed the female selects her mate. How many of these behaviors have you observed? The male is more colorful to attract a mate. The female is drab to be less conspicuous to nest predators.

Nest Building: Some species do not build nests. Nighthawks nest on bare, flat roofs of buildings. Hummingbirds build elegant little nests held together with cobwebs. Swallows build mud nests. Each species has a preferred nest-building material, but some species are flexible. Some species both parents build the nest; some just the female; some just the male. A Warbling Vireos' nest was built almost entirely of Kleenex; a Brown Thrasher's nest had a \$5 bill woven into it. In California, a pair of Canyon Wrens built a nest containing 1,791 countable items, all office supplies such as thumbtacks and rubber bands.

Family Raising: This begins with egg laying, continuing through incubation, hatching and the time nestlings remain in their nest being fed and ends when the birds fledge and no longer need the parents' help. This is a fast-paced time for the parents. If you find a nest with young birds, do not disturb it. The parents may abandon it. Parents forage among a yard full of native plants, finding food for the young. After the young fledge, the parents educate the young. *I watched an adult Blue Jay showing its young how to bath in the pond this year. Last year I watched a male Baltimore Oriole show its young how to eat grapes.*

Birds have various mortality rates and life expectancies. Nesting behavior among birds is a strategy unique to that species to help it ensure survival and the passage of genes to subsequent generations. Red-tailed Hawks nest once a year and rear two to three young each time. Other

species nest two or more times in a season with two to four young each time.

Communal Behavior: Some species flock together (Titmouse, Chickadee). After nesting season, many species undergo personality changes. They no longer defend territories or clash with neighboring birds. Instead, some species flock together to feed and/or migrate south.

Migration: Instinct causes birds to travel. Many cover thousands of miles. Some birds (thrushes, warblers, orioles) arrive from the tropics and nest are "Neotropical migrants". Others pass through spring and fall are "Transients". Others stay here only during the winter months (Dark-eyed Juncos; American Tree Sparrow). Crows, cardinals, goldfinches, chickadees are permanent, year-round residents.

Feeding birds year round gives the best opportunity to watch bird behavior in your yard. Be sure to purchase a premium mix that contains a high percentage of quality seeds like black oil sunflowers and millet. This mix brings birds to your yard faster with less waste. Make sure you purchase a good, functional feeder that matches the seed you are providing. Once the birds find the feeders, keep them filled. Water (heated in winter), shelter, and suet are helpful to encouraging birds to frequent your yard. Birds in West Michigan do not eat milo. Milo is a filler and creates yard waste.

There are more than 90 million cats in the U.S. The majority roam outside at least part of the time. There are also millions of stray and feral cats that roam cities, suburbs, and rural areas. Experts estimate free-roaming cats kill hundreds of millions of birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians each year. This is an added stress to wildlife populations already struggling to survive habitat loss, pollution, and other human impacts. For more information go the American Bird Conservancy, <http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/index.html>

References: Bird Behavior: <http://www.kaytee.com/wild-birds/bird-watching/bird-behavior.htm>; <http://www.backyardnature.net/birdbkyd.htm>; <http://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/outdoor-recreation/nature--viewing/birding/basics-bird-behavior> Missouri Dept. of Conservation.

CraneFest XVII October 7 -9, 2011

Sandhill Crane & Art Festival

Jonathan E. Lutz, Executive Director
MI Audubon Society

Friday, October 7, 6:30 pm *Birders' Soiree* - Caleb Putnam

\$30 for Michigan Audubon Members, \$40 for non-members; at Convis Township Hall

October 8 and 9, Noon to Dusk - Sandhill Crane and Art Festival

Dear Fellow Birders and Friends,

I am writing to personally invite you to Michigan Audubon's 17th Annual Sandhill Crane & Art Festival, "CraneFest XVII."

To start CraneFest off right, we're having a *Birders' Soiree*, featuring star birdwatcher, Caleb Putnam, and a **NEW** program titled "Chasing Rare Birds in Michigan - Stories and more!" Each attendee will have a chance to win a new pair of 10x32 binoculars, courtesy of Eagle Optics. Space is limited, so we encourage you to **register online today**.

If you haven't witnessed Michigan's largest gathering of Sandhill Cranes (nearly 10,000 birds were recorded in 2009), I strongly encourage you to join us at CraneFest. Enjoy the art and nature hikes in the afternoon, and watch the birds arrive to roost at dusk.

for more information, check the website: <http://cranefest.org>

Bernard W. Baker Bird Sanctuary
Bellevue, MI (near Battle Creek)



August 2011 Chapter Connection — Michigan Audubon

Bringing Nature Home

[Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens](#) by Dr. Douglas Tallamy, This book is the bible for those touting the native plant movement. It talks about the plants, and more importantly, why natives are so important to create the biodiversity of wildlife needed in a habitat.

Midwest Birding Symposium (MBS), a non-profit event, in Lakeside, Ohio will be September 15 - 18. The symposium will feature programs and performances by North America's leading bird watchers, a vendor area with nature products and services, field trips to the area's best birding spots, and an opportunity for birders to network with hundreds of their fellow enthusiasts. If you have questions about the Midwest Birding Symposium, call 800-879-2473, x314. Make sure to mention the Midwest Birding Symposium. <https://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/mwb2011/main2011.php>

Dues are due

We have a cherry tree out front. One night I was sitting on the couch in the living room and looked at the tree as Cedar Waxwings were thoroughly enjoying the berries. I looked once, twice, three, four times at this unexpected bird climbing around the branches eating the berries. It was a female Pileated Woodpecker. Never saw them eat these berries before. Never know what you will see when. Judi

If you change your mailing address or email address at any time, please contact me at oias@oias.org. Mailing newsletters to outdated mailing addresses costs the OIAS \$\$\$\$.

2011-2012 OIAS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL / APPLICATION

Name _____
 Street _____ E-Mail _____ Mail _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____ How did you hear about OIAS? _____

Check Member Type: \$18 Individual or Family
 \$100 Individual Life \$15 \$20 \$30 Contributing

My contribution to speaker fees \$_____.

Make checks payable to: Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society
 Mail to: OIAS, Post Office Box 1654, Holland, Michigan, 49422

FAR FLOWING WATER
 is a publication of the Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society, Grand Haven, MI All articles are copyrighted; permission is granted to copy any article in its entirety with references attached. Please contact Editor for other arrangements.

Far Flowing Water is published eight times per year. If you would like to contribute to the next issue, **please have your articles to me by October 1st**

Our programs are made possible, in part, by an Emilie Baker Fund for the Environment grant from the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.

Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society Mission Statement

a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation

Provide stewardship of local Grand River island wildlife sanctuaries owned by the Michigan Audubon Society;

Achieve through education, public recognition of the value and need for protecting and preserving wildlife, plants, soil, water and other natural resources as well as an understanding of their interdependence;

Promote an interest in our native birds and as well as native flora and fauna, and their habitats because of their great economic, cultural and recreational value; and

Aid the Michigan Audubon Society in its study, conservation and research efforts.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO
CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE OF
far flowing water

Fall migration has started. Watch your birdbaths, shrubs, trees, skies for the birds.

Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society

Judi Manning, Editor

P.O. Box 1654

Holland, MI 49422

PLEASE FORWARD

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

SEPTEMBER 20

ED POST

**A YEAR IN THE LIFE
OF A NATURE
PHOTOGRAPHER**