
ABA BIRDFINDING GUIDE

A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO MICHIGAN

ALLEN T. CHARTIER AND JERRY ZIARNO



AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION

A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO MICHIGAN



Great Gray Owl
By Allen T. Chartier

Many birders come to Michigan with the intention of adding Kirtland's Warbler to their life lists – but the state should by no means be dismissed as a “one-species wonder.” Surrounded by four Great Lakes, Michigan boasts 3,000 miles of shoreline. Add the additional habitat afforded by 11,000 interior lakes, 36,000 miles of rivers and streams, and the largest state forest system in the nation, and it's not surprising that Michigan's official bird list now stands at 421 species.

Boreal breeders include such species as Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Purple Finch, and Red and White-winged Crossbills. Winter irruptions bring Northern Hawk, Great Gray, and Boreal Owls to the Upper Peninsula, and Snowy Owls statewide. And most winters at least one Gyrfalcon can be found hunting

in the UP. A day of birding in May can produce a list of 20 or more warbler species, and summer breeders include Connecticut, Cerulean, and Yellow-throated Warblers, among others. Fall offers the spectacle of numerous loons, grebes, sea ducks, and jaegers at sites such as Whitefish Point, Presque Isle Lighthouse, Port Huron, Manistee, and Alpena, as well as thousands of migrating hawks on western Lake Erie.

A Birder's Guide to Michigan describes over 200 sites, with details on each site's birds, best seasons, and driving directions, accompanied by 200-plus maps. Thoroughly researched bar graphs describe the seasonal status and abundance of the state's regularly occurring species, and an annotated list of specialties will guide birders to some of North America's most sought-after species. A bonus is an appendix listing the state's amphibians and reptiles, butterflies and dragonflies, mammals, and orchids – Michigan is home to a stunning and sometimes rare assortment of these gorgeous plants.



Spruce Grouse
By Rick Baetsen

Front Cover Photo:
Kirtland's Warbler
By Roger Eriksson

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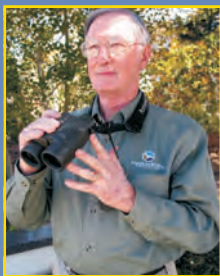
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A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO MICHIGAN

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AND
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WITH EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE FROM
BRIAN ALLEN,
ADAM M. BYRNE, AND
JONATHAN T. WUEPPER

AND WITH SITE ACCOUNTS
CONTRIBUTED BY MANY MICHIGAN BIRDERS

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DEDICATIONS

To my uncle Bernard (Budd) Chartier (1921–2009) for sparking my interest in birds with his wonderful stories; to my parents George and Beverly for encouraging me to pursue my interest; to my good friend and mentor Ellie Cox for pointing me in the right direction; and to my wife Nancy for our 25 years of happy birding experiences together.

Allen T. Chartier
October 2004

To my father, who instilled in me a sincere appreciation of nature in general; to Arnold Small (1926–2000), a former fellow ABA Board member who suggested and encouraged my involvement in this guide; and to my wife Yoshie for her patience and understanding during the development of this book.

Jerry Ziarno
October 2004

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FOREWORD

I first came to Michigan on 30 June 1971 as a lad of 17. I was on a cross-country, seven-week birding sojourn with four friends, a trip that took us from southern California to Maine, south Florida, south Texas, and finally home. We tallied nearly 14,000 miles and 500 species for the trip. We, of course, had come to Michigan to see its signature species, the Kirtland's Warbler. We entered the state in the north from Ontario and by late morning were searching for the Kirtland's near Mio. It was one of those hot and humid summer days near 100 degrees and we didn't really know where to look. We did know that Jack Pines were the key. and so by mid-day we found ourselves searching in *mature* Jack Pines. Needless to say, we didn't see the Kirtland's Warbler, but we did come across a rare Spruce Grouse. Heavy thundershowers descended and we retreated to Mio for shelter and to find out where we should look. By late afternoon, the rains had ended and it was 30 degrees cooler. I was amazed by the weather change, but then that it is so typical of the Midwest, where the weather is *always* changing. We now knew where to look for the warbler. At that time, the population of the Kirtland's was at about its lowest ebb, this being just before the management plan was developed. Needless to say, we did find the Kirtland's that afternoon, and the following day we were on our way east to Buffalo.

I suppose our experience is typical for many birders visiting Michigan. Unless you get incredibly lucky and see a migrant Kirtland's farther south, you have to come to Michigan to see this species. But by focusing solely on this one rare warbler, you miss so many other birding opportunities in Michigan. Most of the habitat types and species found in eastern North America can be found in Michigan. In the southern counties, extensions of Carolinian Forest offer opportunities to see such typically southern species as Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Hooded Warblers, and in some years Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers and Summer Tanagers occur. In the Upper Peninsula, there is extensive boreal forest with breeding Spruce Grouse, Gray Jays, Boreal Chickadees, and Connecticut Warblers. In the nearby marshes of the UP you can find Yellow Rails and Le Conte's Sparrows.

Most birders don't fully appreciate just how spectacular the migration is in the Midwest, especially in spring. It totally dwarfs whatever occurs on the East Coast, especially south of Long Island, and is better overall than either south Florida or even the Gulf Coast. In particular the migration is consistently good, while in Florida or the Gulf Coast it is so weather dependent and a week or more may go by with the "wrong" conditions to ground migrants. Remember, farther north the weather is always changing and significant movements seem to occur every few days. In addition, the eastern migrants use various routes to enter the United States (e.g. Florida, trans-Gulf, circum-Gulf), but once birds get far enough north (e.g. the Upper Midwest), all routes converge. This results in an observer being able to see nearly all of the eastern North American passerines, most in significant numbers, during a single migration. From the Chicago lakefront in the west to about Buffalo in the east, the spring migration is simply spectacular and should be experienced by all North American birders. Even better, most of the migrants (the males) are in full song. Surrounded by water, Michigan has many fine areas to experience this migration. My own favorite, indeed my favorite place to bird in all of North America, is Tawas Point in the upper half of the Lower Peninsula on Lake Huron. Here the trees are not very tall and the area is relatively open, resulting in great opportunities to see these birds well. Even better, the huge crowds of birders present at Pt. Pelee in Ontario, and now at Crane Creek in Ohio, are not found here. This is one of the best-kept secrets in North America, but no doubt there are dozens of other spots along the lakeshores which must be nearly as good. Indeed, Whitefish Point on the Upper Peninsula, which I have visited on only a few occasions, is also one of those magical places which has produced so many rarities and which has a fabulous spring hawk migration as well as a large passage of waterbirds in both spring and fall.

Overall numbers of passerines in the fall don't seem as spectacular as spring, but on peak fall days one can still find from 20 to 25 species of warblers. One of the best passages of fall raptors can be found at Lake Erie Metropark. In addition to Whitefish Point, the south end of Lake Huron at Port Huron can experience strong passages of waterbirds, especially after a strong cold front moves through. In addition to regular species, this movement often includes such uncommon species as all three jaegers, Sabine's Gull, and Black-legged Kittiwake. Only Hamilton at the southwest corner of Lake Ontario and Miller Beach at the south end of Lake Michigan experience the same number of such uncommon species.

Winter in Michigan is usually perceived as bleak, cold, and snowy. And that is often true. My one winter trip to the Upper Peninsula in February was hampered by the fact that we were effectively driving through tunnels of snow, the banks being higher than the car! This had resulted from a near 100-inch snowfall earlier in the winter. But, birding here at this season is not to be missed. Both Ruffed and Sharp-tailed Grouse are often feeding high in the trees, eating buds. Winter finches can often be excellent, and in some

years there are invasions of northern owls. There are probably only one or two locations elsewhere in Lower 48 where Gyrfalcon occurs as regularly.

Michigan has a long and distinguished ornithological reputation. One of North America's finest museum collections can be found in Ann Arbor. A relatively recent state book has been published (*The Birds of Michigan*) and the Michigan breeding bird atlas (*The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan*) is felt by many to be the finest breeding bird atlas ever published. The state journal (*Michigan Birds and Natural History*) includes many articles of ornithological interest for the state. The regional reports published in *North American Birds* chronicle the bird movements during the seasons. Michigan has an excellent and well-respected state records committee.

The two editors have spent nearly their entire lives in Michigan, and along with the other contributors, have an enthusiasm for their home state that is evident throughout. They clearly love birding in Michigan, and this I can certainly understand. I feel there is no better place to be in spring migration in North America than the upper Midwest, and many of my most memorable moments have come from Michigan in April and May. I hope other visitors can also come to appreciate the great species diversity and birding locations the state has to offer.

—Jon L. Dunn

INTRODUCTION

Many birders come to Michigan with the intention of adding Kirtland's Warbler to their life lists—but the state should by no means be dismissed as a “one-species wonder.” Centered in the Great Lakes and at a crossroad of the Atlantic and Mississippi migration flyways, surrounded by four Great Lakes, Michigan boasts 3,000 miles of shoreline, 11,000 interior lakes, 36,000 miles of rivers and streams, and the largest state forest system in the nation. With these diverse habitats, Michigan is particularly rich in bird species, with 435 species on the official state list as of January 10, 2010.

Birds with northern and southern distributions occur in the state. There are wandering herons in summer, spring and fall shorebird migrations, southern and northern breeding warblers, impressive hawk, waterfowl, grebe, and loon migrations, irruptions of winter finches, and invasions of northern owls. Of the species that turned up on American Birding Association member surveys of the “10 Most-Wanted Birds” on birders’ life lists, many of them can be found in Michigan on a somewhat regular basis. These include boreal species such as Spruce Grouse, Yellow Rail, Gyrfalcon, Great Gray Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, Boreal Owl, and Black-backed Woodpecker, and even scarcer species such as and Connecticut Warbler and Henslow’s Sparrow. It is possible for an active birder to find over 100 species in a day at many locations (the state Big Day record is 203), and between 250 and 300 species in one year.

Previous birdfinding guides for Michigan have been largely local in nature, such as those for Washtenaw County, St. Clair County, the Grand Rapids area, the Lansing area, and the Saginaw Bay area (see References). All are excellent local guides and should be consulted in conjunction with this book. A detailed birdfinding guide for the entire state, however, has been lacking until now, and the need to fill this void is the driving force behind this guide. It is hoped that this guide will be as useful to Michigan birders as it will be to out-of-state visitors seeking one of their 10 most-wanted birds.

For this guide, we have chosen areas that are favored by many Michigan birders. Unfortunately, not all of our local favorite sites could be included due to space considerations. Changes of habitat brought about by the nature of this largely industrial and agricultural state will require updates of this book.

Readers are encouraged to send any comments or current information on areas to ABA, whether described here or not, for future editions of this guide. Corrections to this guide will be posted on the ABA website, www.americanbirding.org.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The distribution and seasonal occurrence of birds in Michigan is complex. One of the greatest factors influencing birds is the presence of four of the five Great Lakes (Erie, Huron, Michigan, and Superior), which form the boundaries of Michigan's two large peninsulas, the Upper Peninsula (UP) and Lower Peninsula (LP). Additionally, the 45th parallel of latitude runs through the middle of the Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP), with the consequence that the forests dominated by deciduous forest in the Southern Lower Peninsula (SLP) generally transition to coniferous and boreal forests farther north. Plant names are based on the standard Michigan reference by Voss (1972).

These three regional designations (UP, NLP, SLP) have been used for many years in the compilations of the Michigan Bird Survey, which is published quarterly in the state's ornithological journal, *Michigan Birds and Natural History*, with seasonal highlights forwarded to ABA for publication in *North American Birds* (formerly *Field Notes* and *American Birds*, formerly published by the National Audubon Society). The state's *Atlas of Breeding Bird of Michigan* (Brewer, McPeck, and Adams, 1991) also used these three regions.

For this guide, each of these three regions is further divided into east and west sections. The resulting six regions are treated in separate chapters, titled Southeastern Lower Peninsula (SELP), Northeastern Lower Peninsula (NELP), Northwestern Lower Peninsula (NWLP), Southwestern Lower Peninsula (SWLP), Eastern Upper Peninsula (EUP), and Western Upper Peninsula (WUP). Sites are numbered separately within each of these regions (i.e., SW-22, EU-6, etc.).

Site locations are referenced in two ways—a DeLorme Atlas page number and grid reference (i.e., DeLorme p. 49, A1), and a Latitude-Longitude reference to the nearest minute (i.e., 42°25' N, 83°22' W). This information is provided as an additional means for locating the sites on whatever maps may be available to the birder, but it is not a replacement for the directions provided within each site account.

To help birder's plan their visits, sites have been subjectively rated by season for their birding quality. This ranking system gives from 0 to 4 stars for each season, defined generally as follows:

- **** (four stars) = Site that is one of the best in the state at this season
 - *** (three stars) = Site that is one of the best in the region at this season
 - ** (two stars) = A good site in the region or state at this season
 - * (one star) = A fairly good site in the region or state at this season
- (If there are no stars, the site is not worth visiting at that season.)

The DeLorme *Michigan Atlas and Gazetteer* is used as the basis for providing specific directions to the sites covered in this guide. In many instances, however, the designations used by DeLorme for roads, particularly those in the more remote areas, do not agree with the actual signposts in use to designate those roads. The situation is made more complicated by the fact that some roads may carry federal, state, county, and/or even local designations. In those instances where a road critical to reaching a birding site carries more than one designation, we have tried to identify these accordingly in the text and on the appropriate map.

In the text and on the maps, the following abbreviations are used to denote roads managed by the various governmental agencies:

- Federal Interstate Highways: I (Example: I-75)
- Federal Highways: US (US-131)
- State Highways: M (M-46)
- County Roads: CO (CO 500)
- U.S. Forest Service Roads: FR (FR 3145)
- City and Local Roads not otherwise designated: Actual name used on signposts on site.

TOPOGRAPHY

The following information was originally published in *The Atlas of Breeding Bird of Michigan* (Brewer, McPeck, and Adams 1991, pp. 15–16), by contributing author Margaret T. McCann, and has been edited slightly for this guide. It is used with permission of the authors and editors.

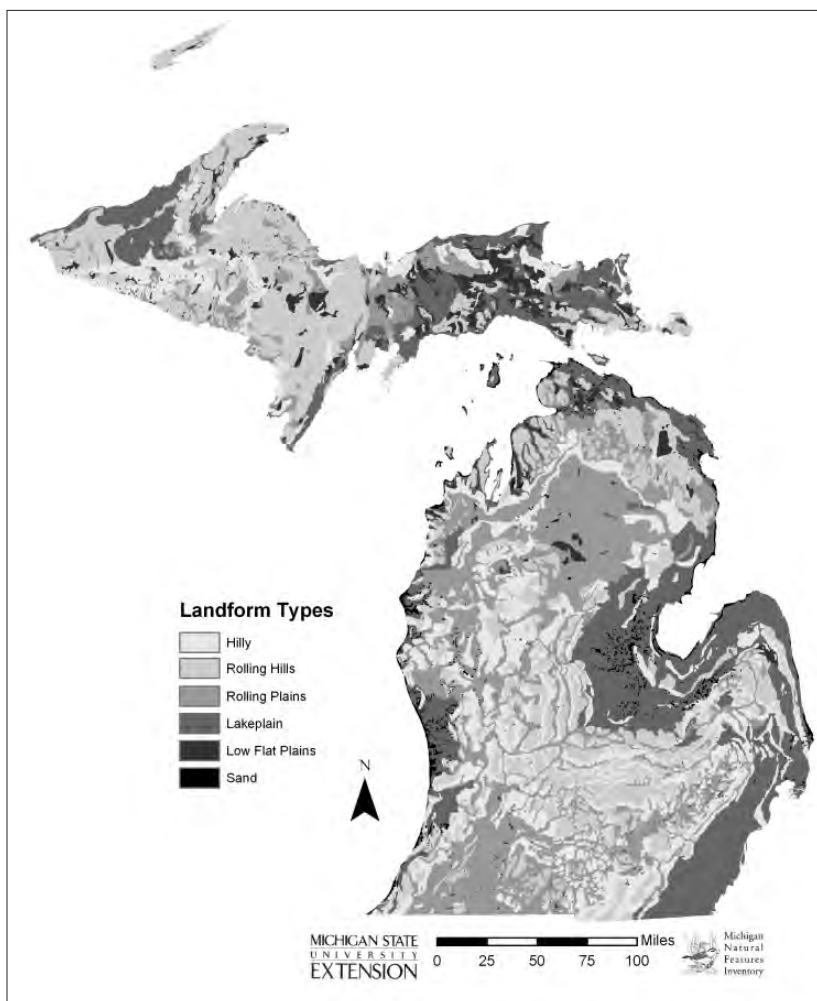
Geology: Most of Michigan is covered with glacial deposits, with bedrock below (Dorr and Eschman 1970). In the western Upper Peninsula, the underlying bedrock is part of the Canadian Shield, which was formed in the Precambrian Era (3 billion to 600 million years ago). This erosion-resistant bedrock is responsible for the rugged terrain of the Porcupine Mountains and the Keweenaw Peninsula as glaciation caused little scouring and left only shallow deposits.

Bedrock in the rest of Michigan is younger, sedimentary, and softer. It was formed in ancient seabeds of the Michigan Basin, primarily during the Paleozoic Era (600 to 230 million years ago). This bedrock is almost entirely covered by glacial deposits, but is exposed at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Drummond Island, and a few other places, mostly in the Upper Peninsula.

Deposits from the last glacial retreats of 16,000 to 9,500 years ago lie up to 200 feet thick on this old bedrock; there are only minor traces of rocks that formed and eroded in the intervening millions of years. The glacial deposits, or drift, are materials ranging from big rocks to clay. These were picked up by the glacial ice, carried along during advances of the glaciers, then dropped or carried from the glacial front in meltwater. Most of the glacial deposits in Michi-

gan date from the retreat of glaciers of the Lake Wisconsin substage, 16,000 to 12,000 years ago. A readvance and retreat 12,000 to 9,500 years ago left a shallow, red, iron-rich drift in the Upper Peninsula and the northern tip of the Lower Peninsula. The receding glaciers, of course, also formed the Great Lakes; for details see Hough (1958).

Landforms: The glaciers left Michigan with a great variety of landforms, from level, low-lying, lake-border plains to the high-relief, high-elevation highlands of the western Upper Peninsula (Sommers 1977). The southern Lower Peninsula is mostly below 1,200 feet in elevation. Local relief (that is, within a 2-by-3-mile grid) exceeds 300 feet only in the Hillsdale-Lapeer hilly



upland and the southwestern hill-land. A broad lake-border plain characterizes much of the eastern shore of the Lower Peninsula, especially from the Thumb southward. This area, which was inundated during glacial recession, has both low elevation (mostly 600 to 800 feet) and low relief (under 50 feet).

The northern Lower Peninsula has higher elevations, with areas over 1,600 feet, and greater relief, with 400 to 600 feet of local relief in the hill-lands. The interior is relatively flat, especially in the Houghton-Higgins Lake area (Roscommon County).

The eastern Upper Peninsula, like the southern Lower Peninsula, has moderately low elevation and low relief. The western Upper Peninsula, in contrast, includes the only mountainous areas in Michigan, the Huron Mountains of northern Marquette County, the Keweenaw ridge, and the Porcupine Mountains in Ontonagon County. Elevations over 1,800 feet occur in the Gogebic hilly upland and in the Marquette highland (where Michigan's highest point, Mt. Arvon at 1,979 feet, is located). Local relief is greater than 800 feet in the Keweenaw and Marquette highlands.

The Michigan shorelines of the Great Lakes are diverse. Along Lake Superior and Lake Huron, shorelines may be sand, gravel, clay, or rock, with or without bluffs. The shores of Lake Michigan are mostly sandy, with high bluffs along its Lower Peninsula shores. The Michigan shoreline of Lake Erie is now mostly man-made.

Michigan has some 36,000 miles of streams, nearly all of which drain into the Great Lakes. The Saginaw River and Grand River watersheds are the largest. Water quality is, in general, related to urbanization, with cleaner water northward and in headwaters. Michigan is also known for its numerous inland lakes, of which there are 6,500 larger than 10 acres (Institute for Water Research 1987).

The landforms map in the opposite figure was created from Landsat data and was provided by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

VEGETATION

The following information was originally published in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan* (Brewer, McPeck, and Adams 1991, p. 23–30), by contributing author Margaret T. McCann, and has been excerpted and edited slightly for this guide. It is used here with permission of the authors and editors.

The color vegetation map on the inside front cover of this guide was created using satellite data, and shows the current distribution of general vegetation types, as well as farmland and urban areas. This map was provided by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

All plant names (common and scientific) used in the guide are listed in the Appendices—Plants. The basis for all plant names is the three-part work by E. G. Voss, *Michigan Flora* (see References).

One hundred and seventy years ago, the southern Lower Peninsula had vast expanses of oak forest and savanna, smaller tracts of maple-beech forest, and wet forests of American Elm, Red Maple, and cottonwood. There were also extensive marshes and sedge meadows, scattered prairies and fens, and relicts of vegetation types more common farther north, such as bogs, conifer swamps, and mixed coniferous-deciduous forest. In the northern Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula, there were pine or pine-oak savanna and forest on the drier sites, maple-birch-hemlock forest on the moister sites, extensive bogs and swamps, and a few areas of boreal (spruce) forest. These same vegetation types occur today, but with some major changes.

The main post-settlement changes are in size (in the south) and in content (in the north). The southern Lower Peninsula no longer has vast expanses of forest; it has cities, farms, houses, and woodlots. The only large forests are on poor agricultural land in Allegan, Barry, and Tuscola Counties and these, like nearly everywhere else, have been cut and regrown. The remaining woodlots, which are mostly under 100 acres (Gysel and Arend 1953), are mostly too small to show up on the color vegetation map, and are generally of the same types as the pre-settlement forests.

The northern forests are still vast, but they have greatly changed since the logging boom of the late 1800s. In general, clearcutting and/or the fires that followed resulted in acres and acres of aspens and birches, which were previously minor trees. In other places, the prized White Pine was removed from pine-oak forests.

Early ecologists in Michigan (Livingston 1901, Beal 1904) noted that there was a major difference in the vegetation north and south of a “zone of tension” that ran at about 43° north latitude, or from Muskegon to Saginaw. On the north side of the tension zone, conifers are important constituents of most forests; on the south side, conifers occur but are usually minor species (see Elliot 1953, Hushen et al. 1966, and Kapp 1978). Thus, the forests look different, even to the casual motorist on US-131 or I-75. Besides the gross vegetational difference, the tension zone is a floristic boundary: many southern plants reach their northern range limits there. A few of Michigan’s vegetation types are described below.

Boreal and Wet Coniferous Forest: True boreal White Spruce–Balsam Fir forest, of which there is very little in Michigan, occurs on nutrient-poor, cold, humid sites such as Great Lakes islands, northern shores, and sand dunes (Voss 1972). Other common trees include White-cedar, Paper Birch where disturbed, Quaking Aspen, White Pine, Red Maple, and Mountain Maple. The understory is scant under the dense evergreen canopy. Lichens are abundant on limbs, logs, and stumps.

Wet coniferous forests of various sorts are extensive in the eastern Upper Peninsula and scattered throughout the rest of the state to its southern border, often in small patches. They are considered post-glacial relicts in the south. Tamarack-spruce bogs are essentially open bogs with trees added; one walks on a resilient surface of deep peat, sphagnum moss, and sedges instead

of mineral soil. The dominant trees, which are seldom over 60 feet tall, are typically Tamarack, Black Spruce, and Balsam Fir; Red Maple is likely at the edges. White Pine, White-cedar, and several ericaceous shrubs such as Leatherleaf are common. Tamarack-spruce bogs are common north of the tension zone; most of the same plants occur in southern bogs, too, where the microclimate is markedly cooler and the growing season is weeks shorter than in the surrounding uplands (Spurr 1965).

White-cedar swamps have underlying peat, but it is shallower than in Tamarack-Spruce bogs. White-cedar is dominant; Balsam Fir is frequently present; birches, Red Maple, spruces, Tamarack, Hemlock, and White Pine may occur. Speckled Alder and dogwoods are common shrubs. The diverse ground layer includes sphagnum and other mosses. Where the soil is more mineral and not as wet, deciduous trees such as Black Ash and Yellow Birch are found with the conifers. White-cedar becomes an important constituent of the riverbank forest north of the tension zone. Wet coniferous and mixed forests grade into northern hardwood-hemlock forest.

Dry Coniferous Forest: In pre-settlement days, forests of pines or pines with oaks covered much of Michigan on sandy soil north of the tension zone and south along Lake Michigan. In the 1800s, however, logging and the frequent, extensive fires that followed brought drastic changes. White and Red Pines were essentially removed: large ones were cut and small ones were killed by fires. The remaining tree species—aspens, Jack Pine, oak, Red Maple, and Paper Birch—survived because they were less valued as timber and/or would pioneer or root-sprout after a fire. Currently, pines are becoming re-established where there are seed sources or plantings.

Jack Pine and Scarlet Oak occur in extensive tracts (Jack Pine plains) on very dry sands in the central, cold upland plains of the Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula. In such areas, Jack Pine rather than aspen is the main pioneer after fire or other disturbance. Fire readily occurs in these places (Simard et al. 1983) and the plants there are fire-adapted. Jack Pine produces some serotinous cones and, in the post-fire absence of shade, grows to reproductive size in about five years. Scarlet Oak also persists after fire, sprouting from stumps. These trees occur as thickets (which are very flammable and susceptible to budworm attack), or even as forests, if unburned for several years. Frequently, though, Jack Pine and Scarlet Oak are in savannas or “barrens” of scattered trees only about 15 feet tall among grasses, sedges, Bracken Fern, Sweetfern, Huckleberry, various blueberries, Bearberry, New Jersey Tea, and Bush-honeysuckle. After fire, these understory plants regenerate from underground stems.

Severe fires in pine forests or barrens in some places with soil so degraded that the usual pioneer trees (Jack Pine, aspens, Paper Birch) did not invade, creates stump prairies. Instead, Bracken Fern and grasses invade, leaving conspicuous charred stumps.

Mesic Mixed Forest: This coniferous-deciduous mixture is found on moist sites north of the tension zone and also southward in a narrow belt

along Lake Michigan nearly to the Indiana border. Sugar Maple is abundant, and Hemlock is nearly always present, though patchy. Yellow Birch, Basswood, and White Pine are frequent. American Beech is a common constituent eastward of the mid Upper Peninsula, its western range limit. This forest grades into maple-beech forest southward, where Hemlock is likely to be limited to ravines and north slopes and White Pine to sandy ravines. Where the canopy is dense, the understory is shaded and sparse. Slightly less shaded areas support an understory of maples, including Sugar Maple, Mountain Maple, and Striped Maple, Hemlock, Yew, and Red-berried Elder. The ground layer, which is scant where Hemlock needle litter has built up a layer of humus, typically includes Partridge-berry, Bunchberry, Twinflower, baneberries, bedstraws, Common Trillium, Canada Mayflower, Solomon-seal, and False Solomon-seal, various ferns and club mosses, and the spring ephemeral herbs. The spring ephemerals, more diverse in the maple-beech forests to the south, sprout in early spring while the forest floor is relatively sunny, then die back about the time the tree canopy closes.

Dry Mixed Forest: Dry-mesic sites with a low fire frequency between fires (100–300 years) support or once supported White Pine with White Oak, Black Oak, Red Oak, and Scarlet Oak, Red Maple, Red Pine, and Hemlock. On drier sites or where fires are more frequent, Red Pine is more common. Red Pines develop thick bark, so once they reach about 50 years in age, they can withstand fires. The ground layer includes Bracken Fern, blueberries, Huckleberry, Bush-honeysuckle, Sweetfern, wintergreen, Bearberry, Trailing-arbutus, Hazelnut, and Beaked Hazelnut.

Wet Deciduous Forest: Silver Maple-ash forest is the typical wet forest south of the tension zone. It also occurs northward. Wet deciduous forests are of two types: floodplain (bottomland) forests, which are found along streams that periodically flood and deposit silt, and swamp forests, which are on flat, poorly drained but aerated sites such as lake-border plains. In both situations the common trees are Silver Maple, Red Ash, Black Ash, and Red Maple; before the 1960s epidemic of Dutch Elm disease, American Elm was frequent. In floodplains these species are joined by Black Willow and cottonwood on old banks and channels, and Sycamore where flooding is less frequent. In swamp forests, additional species include Pin Oak, Swamp White Oak, and Sour-gum. Vines, including Poison-ivy, Virginia Creeper, River-bank Grape, dodder, and Wild-cucumber are common, but shrubs are infrequent.

Mesic Deciduous Forest: Forests of Sugar Maple and American Beech occur on moist sites in the southern Lower Peninsula and, less frequently, north of the tension zone. Common components of these forests include Red Oak, Tulip-tree, Basswood, Wild Black Cherry, White Ash, and Bitternut Hickory. Hemlock and White Pine may occur, especially near Lake Michigan. American Elm and Slippery Elm were common members before the epidemic of Dutch Elm disease. American Chestnut occurred in these and oak forests in southeast Michigan before the chestnut blight. Maple-beech forest is deservedly known for its spring flora. Many of the herbs are spring ephemerals,

such as Dutchman's Breeches and Spring Beauty, which sprout, expand their leaves, flower, and die back in the short time between thawing of the soil and closing of the canopy.

Dry Deciduous Forest: Oak forests occur only on dry sites in the southern Lower Peninsula. In addition to Black and White Oaks, the canopy often includes Red Maple, Wild Black Cherry, and Sassafras. Pignut Hickory and Shellbark Hickory, White Ash, and Scarlet Oak are found less frequently. The subcanopy is composed of Red Maple, Wild Black Cherry, Flowering Dogwood, and Sassafras; oaks are infrequent. Shrubs, which may be abundant under the fairly open canopy, include Common Blackberry, Prickly-ash, Flowering Dogwood, Hazelnut, and Witch-hazel. Herbs include beggars-ticks, Hog-peanut, and baneberries.

Oak Savanna: In pre-settlement times, oak savannas, or "oak openings," were extensive in the southern Lower Peninsula, particularly in the southwest but also across the state into the southeasternmost counties. On better soils, Bur Oaks occurred sparsely with prairie plants. These Bur Oak openings often fringed mesic prairie, but in some places they occurred without a central prairie (J. Wood unpubl. map, Kenoyer 1940, Brewer et al. 1984). Although a few areas with scattered Bur Oak trees exist, nothing approaching an intact Bur Oak opening is known to survive in Michigan (Chapman 1984).

Prairies are grass-dominated areas and were never extensive in Michigan. They were scattered across the southern Lower Peninsula, mostly in the southern three tiers of counties, but dry prairies (or sand barrens) occurred northward into southern Newaygo County (Veatch 1928, Chapman and Crispin 1984) and wet prairies into Tuscola County (Veatch 1959). Today, only remnants remain, mostly along railroad rights-of-way and in old cemeteries; there are also small prairie reconstructions.

Wetlands are of several types, including Cattail Marsh, Sedge- and Grass-dominated Wetlands, Bog, and Shrub Wetlands. Cattails readily invade roadside ditches, swales, and other fertile places that are consistently wet and sufficiently aerated that peat does not accumulate (Crum and Planisek 1988). Bulrushes, Bur-Reeds, and various sedges and willows are common associates.

Open, wet, grassy places look similar at first but closer examination shows that there is a broad spectrum of types. Fens have a peaty substrate and flowing groundwater rich in calcium. They are usually dominated by sedges, but grasses may also be important. Shrubs, including Shrubby Cinquefoil, dogwoods, and willows, may invade. Wet meadows and wet prairies are similar to fens but the substrate is mucky mineral soil and the groundwater is not distinctive. Grasses, including Reedgrass, Cordgrass, and Big Bluestem, and sedges are dominant plants. Asters and other composites are frequent forbs. These plants tolerate dry periods; in consistently wet places, wet meadows and prairies grade into cattail marshes. Certain wetlands that have great fluctuation in water level and a sand or mucky sand substrate have an array of rare, disjunct, or very local plants (Voss 1972).

Bogs are acidic, wet, nutrient-poor communities dominated by sphagnum mosses. Sphagnum and other plant remains accumulate as peat, which may become several yards deep. Bogs are found throughout the state, but are more common northward. In early stages, sphagnums and other plants, frequently including sedges and Whorled Loosestrife, form a floating mat that eventually becomes anchored as the peat becomes thicker and roots reach deeper. Open bog communities typically include Pitcher Plant, Sundews, both of which are carnivorous, as well as low shrubs such as Leatherleaf, Bog-rosemary, and cranberry. Taller shrubs (blueberry, chokeberry) and eventually trees (Tamarack and, northward, Black Spruce) invade, forming a Tamarack-spruce bog.

Shrub wetlands (sometimes called Shrub Carr) are successional and positionally intermediate between open wetland and wet forest. Streamside or lakeside communities are dominated by Speckled Alder north of the tension zone, and by dogwoods and willows southward. Around bogs or kettle lakes where there is little water movement, Buttonbush dominates statewide. All form nearly impenetrable head-high tangled thickets enlivened by stinging insects.

Dunes, Rocky Shorelines, and Islands: Sand dune vegetation along Lake Michigan is a classic example of succession described in many general ecology texts. Annual plants, including Seaside Spurge and Sea-rocket, occur sparsely on the beach. The dunes are stabilized by rhizomatous grasses, including Beach Grass, Dune Grass, and Little Bluestem. The shrubs and trees that survive here send up new shoots after being buried by sand. Sand Cherry, Bearberry, Common Juniper, cottonwood, and aspens are typical. Farther inland, dry forest (pines and oaks) occurs.

Rocky shorelines, such as along Lake Superior, typically have lichens and, in the upper portion, herbs, including bellflower, Silverweed, and Three-toothed Cinquefoil, low shrubs including Bearberry, blueberry, and Common Juniper, and stunted trees. Red Ash is frequently found on islands. The inland areas of larger islands are similar to nearby mainland.

BIRD HABITATS

Bird distribution in Michigan is not as closely tied to specific habitats as, for example, in much of the Western U.S., where a knowledge of Life Zones segregated by elevation is helpful for finding birds. During migration in Michigan, birds will use any area containing the appropriate general component (i.e., trees, shrubs, grasslands, mudflats, etc.), with little regard to specific vegetation types. For most species, breeding habitat is also tied at least as closely to the size or continuity of these general components, as well as climate variables and latitude. Listed below are a few characteristic, mainly breeding species that can be found in some of the vegetation types discussed above.

Boreal and Wet Coniferous Forest: Some of Michigan's most sought-after species are found in these habitats, including Spruce Grouse,

Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Other species that breed in these areas, and rarely elsewhere, include Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Tennessee, Cape May, Palm, Wilson's and Connecticut Warblers, Red and White-winged Crossbills.

Dry Coniferous Forest: In the Northern Lower Peninsula, the Jack Pine habitats are of course the only breeding habitat in the world for the Kirtland's Warbler. Upland Sandpiper, Nashville Warbler, Lincoln's and Clay-colored Sparrow, and Brewer's Blackbird are also found in these areas. In the Upper Peninsula, Spruce and Sharp-tailed Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, and several breeding warblers can be found.

Mesic Mixed Forest: The greatest variety of northern breeding warblers can be found here, including Nashville, Golden-winged (open areas), Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Canada, and Mourning Warblers.

Dry Mixed Forest: Species are similar to other forest types, with Pileated Woodpecker, Ruffed Grouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Chestnut-sided Warbler and American Redstart among the species that breed.

Wet Deciduous Forest: Covering a broad latitudinal range, these forests host a large variety of breeding species with both northern and southern affinities, including Wood Duck, Barred Owl, Acadian Flycatcher, Hooded, Prothonotary, and Yellow-throated (local) Warblers.

Mesic Deciduous Forest: Includes many of the common, and some less common, woodland breeding birds of the Lower Peninsula, including Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting.

Dry Deciduous Forest: Many of the permanent residents familiar to those maintaining bird feeders in the Southern Lower Peninsula are found here, including Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Oak Savanna: The extinct Passenger Pigeon's last stronghold in Michigan was in Oak Savanna, and the decline of this habitat, in addition to over-hunting, is implicated in the demise of the species. Loggerhead Shrike is another species that is characteristic of Oak Savanna, and is barely hanging on in the state in shrubby areas that are similar in appearance. Other species that traditionally are considered Oak Savanna residents include Northern Bobwhite, Red-headed Woodpecker, Orchard Oriole, and American Kestrel, all of which have experienced declines and are hanging on in similar habitats. In addition, Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, and Eastern Towhee can be found here, as well as in other open habitats.

Prairie: Prairie areas, including grasslands, provide breeding habitat for Horned Larks, Savannah, Grasshopper, and Henslow's Sparrows, Bobolink, and Eastern and Western Meadowlarks.

Wetlands: Cattail marshes are home to Virginia Rail and Sora, Red-winged and Yellow-headed (local) Blackbirds, Marsh Wren, American Coot, and Common Moorhen, among others. Sedge marshes are good places for breeding Yellow Rail (very local), Sedge Wren, and Le Conte's Sparrow (local). Shrubby swamps are home to Blue-winged, Golden-winged, and Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow.

Agricultural areas: At times, agricultural areas provide habitat for some interesting species. Horned Larks find breeding habitat here, and when flooded during spring and fall migrations, these areas can be a draw to migrant shorebirds, including such interesting species as American Golden-Plover, Black-bellied Plovers, and Buff-breasted and Baird's Sandpipers, as well as the more common Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers, and Dunlin.

Other man-made habitats: Few species inhabit the urban areas of the state other than Rock Pigeons, European Starlings, and House Sparrows, but in a few cities there have been successful introductions of Peregrine Falcons, and isolated remnants of habitat are often a draw to migrant passerines

MICHIGAN'S CLIMATE

Sitting at middle latitudes in the Upper Midwest, and surrounded by the Great Lakes, Michigan's climate is characterized by cold, often snowy winters, cool to warm wet springs, warm to hot and humid, sometimes stormy summers, and warm to cool autumns. Of course, the great differences in latitude, and the complicating effects of the lakes, means that there are local differences from north-to-south, and to a lesser extent from east-to-west, with lake-effect snows near the shores of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior being a notable difference. Additional climate information can be found in Brewer, McPeck, and Adams (1991).

We have included a table in the appendices (page 636) that presents average daily maximum and minimum temperatures by month for several cities throughout Michigan, as well as normal average monthly precipitation (water equivalent including snow in winter months).

BIRDS OF MICHIGAN

A Brief History of Michigan Ornithology: The history of ornithology in Michigan is rich and extensive, with many regional and local works in addition to several important statewide publications. The first bird list for the entire state was published by Gibbs (1879). This was followed by a more detailed account of Michigan's birds by Cook (1893). This was followed by another thorough reference published by Barrows (1912) that updated the list of known species. The work of Norman A. Wood (1951) updated the state's list once again, and incorporated a growing body of data provided by increasing

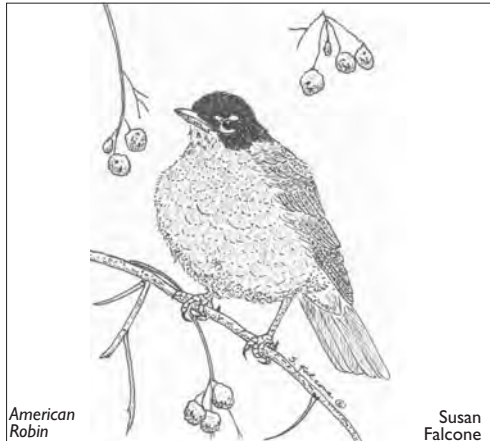
interest of the state's birders, through 1943. By 1959, Zimmerman and Van Tyne published their distributional checklist, again updating the state's list. Payne (1983) reviewed previous records and updated the state's bird list once again.

The Michigan Bird Survey, a detailed accounting season-by-season of the state's bird records, contributed by a growing band of birders, began in 1957. The survey was published in the state's journal, *The Jack-Pine Warbler*, from 1957–1989 and 1991–1993. From 1994 to the present, the survey has been published in the replacement journal *Michigan Birds and Natural History*. Much briefer versions of these surveys have been submitted for publication in *North American Birds* and its predecessors.

From 1983–1988, Michigan's birders took to the field in a monumental undertaking to document the breeding distribution of the state's birds. The results were published in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan* in 1991 (Brewer, McPeck, and Adams). Currently, a second atlas is underway, which will run through 2006; it will document changes in breeding status and distributions from the first atlas. In 1994, another major work covering all Michigan's birds was published, *Birds of Michigan* (McPeck and Adams).

The Michigan Bird Records Committee was formed in 1988 and currently archives records of casual and accidental species, as well as new species for the state list, and reviews these records to determine whether they should be published in the quarterly Michigan Bird Survey. Contents and voting results of each round are posted on a website: www.michiganaudubon.org/research/records_committee.html, and an annual report of the committee's proceedings is published in *Michigan Birds and Natural History*.

Michigan's state bird is the American Robin, designated in 1931 by the state legislature after a contest conducted by the Michigan Audubon Society. Recently, there have been movements, headed up by the Michigan and Detroit Audubon Societies, to replace the robin and designate the Kirtland's Warbler as the state bird. Some groups have also suggested the Black-capped Chickadee as a replacement.



American
Robin

Susan
Falcone

Bird Collections: The **University of Michigan Museum of Zoology** (UMMZ), Bird Division (1109 Geddes Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1079; 734-764-0457; www.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/birds), contains by far

the largest bird collection in the state, and the seventh largest in the world. Among the approximately 200,000 specimens are 321 type specimens, and the third most diverse collection of skeletal material in the world. In 1930, the UMMZ became the headquarters of the Wilson Ornithological Society, including the Josslyn Van Tyne Memorial Library. This library, available to members of the society, is one of the largest ornithological libraries in North America and currently contains approximately 3,000 books, 4,800 bound journal volumes, 63,000 reprints, 550 translations, plus dissertations, sound recordings, videos, and other miscellaneous material.

The **Michigan State University Museum** (West Circle Drive, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1045; Collections Manager: 517-355-1290; <http://museum.msu.edu>), founded in 1857, is one of the oldest natural-history museums in the United States. The MSU Museum Ornithology Collection has over 13,000 specimens, including 6,891 skins, 1,115 taxidermy mounts, 1,827 skeletons, over 1,600 fluid-preserved specimens, 2,563 nests and egg sets, and a large teaching collection. The collection is worldwide in scope, with especially significant holdings from Michigan and the Great Lakes Region. Access to the collection is by advance appointment.

Central Michigan University (Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48859; 989-774-4000; www.museum.cmich.edu) holds about 5,000 specimens, mainly from Michigan.

Other Michigan institutions with more modest collections include the University of Michigan Biological Station, Andrews University, Kellogg Biological Station, Adrian College, Wayne State University, and Michigan Technological University.

Nomenclature: The official names of birds and the order in which they appear are determined by the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature of the American Ornithologists' Union. The nomenclature used in this guide matches that of the 7th edition of *The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds* published in 1998 and supplements through July 2004. The 2003 supplement changed the sequence of non-passerines. Ducks, grouse, pheasants, and quail were moved to the beginning of the list, ahead of loons and grebes, with the remainder kept in the same sequence. The July 2004 supplement changed the scientific names of three Michigan species, Green Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, and Worm-eating Warbler. In addition, the Cackling Goose was split from the Canada Goose. Nine skins labeled "hutchinsii" and one labeled "taverneri" exist at the University of Michigan. Since the 2004 AOU supplement was published immediately prior to the publication of this book, the guide went to press before the Michigan Bird Records Committee had time to review these specimens and to consider adding Cackling Goose to Michigan's avifauna.

THE MICHIGAN BIRDING YEAR

This calendar of bird activity is intended to help you learn what birds you are likely to find when you visit Michigan. This is a very general description, and differences exist between lakeshore and “inland” areas, and occasionally between eastern and western regions. For more detailed information, consult the bar graphs at the back of the book.

January is the middle of winter in Michigan, often with the coldest temperatures of the season and plenty of snow, and with the Great Lakes freezing almost entirely in colder years. Wintering gulls, including northern species such as Thayer’s, Iceland, and Glaucous, move inland to smaller, often frozen lakes, and landfills. Waterfowl are concentrated into smaller areas of open water with diving ducks, sea ducks, and Common Mergansers, predominating and dabbling ducks mostly moving out of the state. In modest irruption years, northern finches and owls may not arrive until mid-month. This is a good time to look for these species, as well as boreal species including Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee in the Upper Peninsula.

February often continues cold and snowy, with gulls and wintering waterfowl still dominating the birding scene. The last half of the month typically sees the initiation of the breeding season for Great Horned Owl, Mourning Dove, and Gray Jay. The first migrants returning north are found near the end of the month, including Horned Lark and male Red-winged Blackbirds. If the thaw is early, greater numbers of diving ducks and a few dabbling ducks move into the Great Lakes. Northern finches and owls, when present in irruption years, will remain through the month.

March is perhaps the most variable month weather-wise, sometimes being an extension of winter, sometimes heralding the beginning of spring, and usually exhibiting characteristics of both seasons. Ice on the Great Lakes typically breaks up, with numbers of diving and dabbling ducks moving back into the southern areas of the state. Red-tailed Hawks and Horned Larks begin nesting activities, and American Woodcocks arrive and begin their courtship displays. Killdeer, Wilson’s Snipe, Tree Swallows, and Rusty Blackbirds arrive in the southern regions of the state, while the Upper Peninsula is typically still in the grip of winter, with some movement northward of some of the finches and raptors. Eastern Phoebe often move into the southern portions of the state at the end of the month.

April sees a definite increase in migrant arrivals, with many sparrows, kinglets, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers typically arriving mid-month. This is a good time for loon migration on the Great Lakes, and in the Upper Peninsula the duck migration is in full swing. Spruce and Sharp-tailed Grouse breeding activity is at its peak this month, making them somewhat easier to see than at most other times of the year. Raptor migration reaches its peak in the latter half of the month, with Rough-legged Hawks passing through sites such as Whitefish Point in the UP, and Broad-winged Hawks arriving in the Lower Peninsula. The first few shorebirds arrive at the

end of the month, as well as the first scouts of the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, thrushes, and warblers. American Tree Sparrows, which have been resident all winter, usually depart by the end of the month. Least Flycatchers sometimes move into the state during the last week.

May is the high point of migration throughout the state, with peak numbers of some species occurring in the southern part of the Lower Peninsula as much as one or two weeks earlier than in the northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula. Thrushes and warblers begin to arrive the first week, and most peak mid-month. Cuckoos and flycatchers arrive later in the month, along with some of the later arriving warblers, particularly Connecticut Warbler. Waterfowl and loons continue to move through the Great Lakes, especially in the Upper Peninsula. Shorebird numbers build up, at least where there is habitat, through the end of the month. Whimbrels make a fleeting appearance statewide in a narrow window centered around May 25, and a number of other shorebird species have mostly departed by the end of the month. Given the peak of migration, this month is the best in spring for rarities and vagrants to appear.

June is the most active period of singing activity for breeding passerines, and is the peak of breeding activity for most species. Very few waterfowl remain and their migration is essentially over. A fair number of shorebirds remain through the middle of the month before departing north to breed. Some years, cuckoos may not arrive until early in the month, and some of the later-breeding northern species, including Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers and Connecticut Warblers, remain in the south into the early part of the month.

July is dominated by adult passerines feeding fledged young from their first broods, and singing activity tends to diminish in most species. After a brief lull early in the month, fall migration begins with the arrival of the first shorebirds. By the end of the month, some of the more southern breeding passerines slip quietly out of the state, and adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbirds begin to depart from the Upper Peninsula.

August sees the return of early Bonaparte's Gulls, the first northern breeding waterfowl (scoters in the UP), and the peak of Red-necked Grebe migration past Whitefish Point. Shorebird migration is in full swing, and passerine migration (flycatchers, warblers, and some thrushes) builds up through the month. Common Nighthawk migration typically peaks at the end of the month, and raptor migration begins with the first trickle of birds. Most cuckoos slip out of the state almost undetected by the end of the month.

September is the peak of vireo, thrush, and warbler migration. Waterfowl migration picks up significantly at Great Lakes and inland sites, and hawk migration peaks this month, with large movements primarily of Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned Hawks, mainly in the southeast, and smaller numbers of several other species. Shorebird migration continues through the month. Gulls, including the more rare species as well as jaegers, begin moving through the Great Lakes. Northern passerines, including American Tree Sparrows,

Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings begin arriving in the Upper Peninsula, and Dark-eyed Juncos begin moving into the southern Lower Peninsula. This is a good month for rarities and vagrants to appear. In strong irruption years, northern finches will begin to appear in the Upper Peninsula.

October: Migration of thrushes and warblers winds down, and the last few straggling Ruby-throated Hummingbirds depart in the first half of the month. October is still a good month for waterfowl and hawk migration, with somewhat lower numbers than September but greater species diversity. Gulls and jaegers continue to move through (small numbers of the latter). Sparrow migration peaks during this month, and kinglets and Brown Creepers begin moving south. American Pipits move through in peak numbers.

November: Rarer gulls and small numbers of jaegers continue, and more sea ducks and diving ducks move into the Great Lakes, including many that will remain until freeze-up. Many sparrows continue to migrate through the state, with significant numbers of American Tree Sparrows, which will remain through winter. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings migrate in peak numbers throughout the month. In strong irruption years, northern finches move into the southern portions of the state. Northern owls, in irruption years, make their first appearance most often in this month. The end of the month is often quite wintry, bird-wise and weather-wise, even in southern portions of the state.

December: Peak numbers of “wintering” diving ducks occur this month, often with spectacular rafts of Canvasbacks and both scaup. White-winged gulls typically move into the Great Lakes during this month. Winter resident passerines are mostly settled in, with a very few late lingering migrant sparrows.

HAZARDS

Hazards to birders in Michigan are few, and include biting insects, traffic, theft in urban areas, certain weather conditions, Poison-ivy and Poison Sumac, Black Bears and even Moose in some areas, and, in a very few areas, a rattlesnake species.

Biting insects are by far the most frequent hazard that birders may encounter. From May through September, mosquitos will be present in any wooded or wetland area statewide. Swampy situations and more northern areas are often the worst, and some may want to consider head nets in these areas. Every birder should consider using insect repellent, as mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus have been detected in Michigan. In more northern regions, Black Flies can be a problem in the summer months (June–August), and in some boggy and swampy areas there can be swarms of them. Insect repellent is recommended. Ticks are found statewide, most often Wood Ticks, and precautions should be taken when walking in tall grassy areas. The much tinier Deer Tick, while less commonly encountered, is a more significant problem as it carries Lyme Disease, which has occurred in

Michigan. Tucking your pant legs into your socks and using insect repellent on the socks, and wearing long-sleeved shirts in these areas is usually sufficient protection. Chiggers are relatively rare in Michigan, but do occur in summer in drier prairie areas of the southeastern and southwestern corners of the state, though they are infrequently encountered by birders.

Toxic vegetation in Michigan consists of two plants, Poison-ivy and Poison Sumac, both of which cause skin irritations and rashes with intense itching. Some people are immune to the effects of the plants' oils (urushiol), but as one of the editors recently discovered, this immunity is not necessarily permanent!

Poison-ivy is found in shrubby and wooded areas statewide and is quite common. In northern areas, it is often little more than a ground cover, when is sometimes called Poison Oak (which does not occur in Michigan), but in the southernmost areas it is often a vine that can be as thick as your finger to, exceptionally, as thick as your forearm. Some birds, most notably Northern Flickers, relish Poison-ivy berries in the fall. Learn to recognize the "hairy" tendrils on the vines of this plant, and the leaf arrangement and shape—"leaflets three, let it be". Virginia Creeper is similar to Poison-ivy, but typically has five leaflets, a woody vine without hairy tendrils, and often grows even larger.

The distribution of Poison Sumac is quite patchy, confined to the Lower Peninsula, and typically restricted to swampy or boggy lake and pond margins, and is infrequently encountered by birders. The appearance is similar to the very common Staghorn Sumac, but has fewer shinier leaflets, which also lack serrations on the edges. Staghorn Sumac is infrequently found in the same habitats as Poison Sumac.

Black Bears occur through the northern Lower Peninsula and the entire Upper Peninsula, though they are not as common as in many western states, and they are rarely a problem. Bears may be encountered at campgrounds, and precautions should be taken to properly stow food so as not to attract them.

In a few areas of the western Upper Peninsula, Moose have been reintroduced and could possibly be encountered, though they are still somewhat rare. Never approach a Moose closely on foot, and never get between a female and her calf.

Michigan has a single venomous reptile, the Eastern Massassauga, a small rattlesnake. The Eastern Massassauga, a Threatened, protected species in Michigan, occurs in the southern two-thirds of the Lower Peninsula and is rarely encountered. It inhabits swamps, bogs, and some marshes, and its distribution is quite patchy. Sites where the presence of this snake is known are noted in the text. Being one of the smallest of rattlesnakes (up to 30" and usually much smaller), the bite of the Eastern Massassauga is most serious only to small infants or the elderly (rarely fatal), but can cause considerable pain and illness even in a healthy adult. Most bites from this relatively even-tempered snake are caused by people attempting to move the snake off a trail. The

snake, while generally tolerant, interprets too much of this activity as harassment and reacts defensively as it would to any threat. The best strategy is to walk around the snake, giving it a wide berth, enjoy the fact that you're experiencing something that few Michiganders ever have, and by all means leave the snake alone!

Certain areas in Michigan, as in all states, are prone to crime. No birding areas are located in high crime areas, but there are a few where caution is advised, some surprisingly far from urban areas. These few areas are noted in the text. By far the most frequent crime that birders fall victim to, and even this is rare, is theft. Precautions consist largely of making sure you do not leave valuables in sight inside your car. Take your valuables with you, or lock them in the trunk.

The few weather-related hazards include snow and cold, thunderstorms, and tornados. Severe winter conditions can be encountered by birders visiting the Upper Peninsula and even the northern Lower Peninsula, and appropriate precautions should be taken. Driving on unplowed roads is not advised, as getting stranded in deep snow miles from help, with temperatures below zero, could develop into a life-threatening situation. Serious winter trips into these regions means bringing blankets, candles, extra food, etc. Wind, in combination with cold temperatures, will create wind chill that can cause frostbite on exposed skin in minutes. Sometimes winter wind chills as low as -20 to -50°F can occur anywhere in the state, most often in the UP. Dangerous thunderstorms and tornados (most frequent in June and July) are easily avoided by birders, as such conditions are usually apparent.

In early spring, many of the less-used backcountry roads can become very wet with deep mud-holes that can entrap the unwary birder. Many of these same roads in sandy areas, particularly those used by ORVs, can be quite soft, sometimes resulting in standard cars becoming stuck. Thoroughly checking out these potentially hazardous conditions may prevent a long, expensive trip to the nearest towing facility.

In May 2004, Michigan law was changed regarding pedestrian travel over the state's beaches. The law, which applies to beaches on private property, states that private landowners with beachfront property control all the land up to the water's edge. Thus, the only way to avoid trespassing under this new law is to be in the water! It is unclear how this new law will play out, but for now it is wise to exercise extra caution when walking on Great Lakes beaches in Michigan to avoid trespassing on private property.

Under most conditions, the breakwalls, piers, and jetties along the lake shorelines are reasonably safe for birding, though it is always a good idea to dress warmly. Be careful where you walk, as large cracks or uneven places in the concrete could cause injury. Dangerous conditions exist on all Great Lakes breakwalls during strong winds and icy conditions. *DO NOT walk out on a breakwall if waves are breaking over it, or if it is icy.* Falling off the breakwall into

the water could result in drowning in strong currents in windy conditions, or death from the rapid onset of hypothermia during icy conditions.

RESOURCES FOR BIRDERS

Michigan Tourism Resources

In the Lower Peninsula, accommodations, restaurants, and gas stations are ubiquitous, and for the most part the site accounts do not provide details on these facilities. In some tourist centers, reservations for accommodations or campgrounds are advisable, and these are noted in the appropriate site accounts. In the Upper Peninsula, such conveniences are not as numerous, are more widely spaced, and sometimes have seasonal operations, or less than full-time daily operations. Many of the site accounts for the Upper Peninsula provide details on local facilities. A partial listing of tourism resources for those planning a birding trip to Michigan is provided below.

STATEWIDE

Michigan Travel Bureau: 800-543-2937, www.michigan.org

Michigan Festivals & Events Association: 989-845-2080, www.mfea.org

Internet lodging directory: www.usa-lodging.net

SOUTHEASTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Ann Arbor: 800-888-9487, www.annarbor.org

Detroit: 800-338-7648, www.visitdetroit.com

Flint: 800-253-5468, www.flint.org

Frankenmuth: 800-386-8696, www.frankenmuth.org

Huron County: 800-358-4862, www.huroncounty.com

Jackson: 800-245-5282, www.jacksonmich.org

Lansing: 800-648-6630, www.lansing.org

Livingston County-Howell area: 800-686-8474, www.lccvb.org

Monroe: 800-252-3011, www.monroeinfo.com

Port Huron area: 800-852-4242, www.bluewater.org

Saginaw: 800-444-9979, www.visitsaginawcounty.com

Wyandotte: www.wyandotte.net

Ypsilanti: 734-483-444, www.ypsilanti.org

NORTHEASTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Northeast Michigan, 800-424-3002, www.misunriseside.com

Alpena, 800-425-7362, www.alpenacvb.com

Bay City area, 888-229-8696, www.tourbaycitymi.org

Cheboygan, 800-968-3302, www.cheboygan.com

Clare, 800-715-3550, www.clarecounty.net

Gaylord, 800-345-8621, www.gaylordmich.com

Grayling, 800-937-8837, www.graylingmi.com
 Houghton Lake area: 800-676-5330, www.roscommoncounty.com
 Mackinaw City area: 800-666-0160, www.mackinawcity.com
 Mackinac Island: 800-626-6304, www.mackinac.com
 Midland: 888-464-3526, www.midlandcvb.org
 Oscoda: 800-235-4625, www.oscoda.com
 Rogers City: 888-854-9700, www.presqueislemi.com
 Tawas area: 877-868-2927, www.tawasbay.com

NORTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

West Michigan Tourist Association: 800-442-2084, www.wmta.org
 Benzonia area: 800-882-5801, www.benzie.org
 Big Rapids: 888-229-4386, www.bigrapids.org
 Cadillac: 800-225-2537, www.cadillacmichigan.com
 Charlevoix: 800-367-8557, www.charlevoix.org
 Ludington: 800-542-4600, www.ludington.org
 Manistee: 231-723-2575, www.visitmanistee.com
 Mt. Pleasant area: 800-772-4433, www.mountpleasantwow.com
 Petoskey area: 800-845-2828, www.boynecountry.com
 Sleeping Bear Dunes: 231-334-2000, www.sleepingbeardunes.com
 Traverse City: 800-872-8377, www.tcchamber.org

SOUTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Southwest Michigan, 800-447-2821, www.rivercountry.com
 Lake Michigan Car Ferry, 800-841-4243, www.ssbadger.com
 Adrian area, 800-536-2933, www.visitlenawee.com
 Allegan, 269-686-9088, www.visitallegancounty.com
 Battle Creek, 800-397-2240, www.battlecreekvisitors.org
 Benton Harbor, 269-925-6301, www.swmichigan.org
 Coldwater area, 800-968-9333, www.discover-michigan.com
 Four Flags area (Berrien Springs, Buchanan, Niles, Eau Claire), 269-684-7444, www.fourflagsarea.org
 Grand Haven, 800-303-4094, www.grandhavenchamber.org
 Grand Rapids, 800-678-9859, www.visitgrandrapids.org
 Holland, 800-506-1299, www.holland.org
 Kalamazoo: 800-530-9192, www.kazoofun.com
 Muskegon: 800-250-9283, www.visitmuskegon.org
 New Buffalo area: 800-362-7251, www.harborcountry.org
 Paw Paw: 269-657-5395, www.pawpawmi.com
 Saugatuck: 269-857-1701, www.saugatuck.com
 South Haven: 800-764-2836, www.southhaven.org
 St. Joseph: 269-982-0032, www.sjtoday.org

UPPER PENINSULA

Peninsula-wide: 800-562-7134, www.uptravel.com

EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA

De Tour Village: 906-297-5987, www.detourvillage.com

Drummond Island: 800-737-8666, www.drummond-island.com

Les Cheneaux Islands area: 888-364-7526, www.lescheneaux.org

Newberry: 800-831-7292, www.newberrychamber.net

Paradise area: 906-492-3219, www.paradisemichigan.org

Sault Ste. Marie: 800-647-2858, www.saultstemarie.com

St. Ignace area: 800-338-6660, www.stignace.com

WESTERN UPPER PENINSULA

Western Upper Peninsula: 800-522-5657, www.westernup.com

Alger County Chamber of Commerce: 906-387-2138

Baraga County: 906-524-7444, www.baragacountytourism.com

Escanaba-Delta County area: 800-533-4386, www.deltami.org

Iron Mountain area: 800-236-2447, www.ironmountain.org

Ironwood area: 906-932-1122, www.ironwoodmi.org

Keweenaw-Houghton area: 800-338-7982, www.keweenaw.org

Manistique: 800-342-4282, www.onlynorth.com

Marquette County: 800-544-4321, www.marquettecountry.org

Menominee: 906-863-2679, www.rivercities.net

Munising: 906-387-2138, www.munising.org

Ontonagon: www.ontonagonmi.com

Watersmeet: 906-358-9961, www.watersmeet.org

Michigan Maps

The ***Michigan Atlas and Gazetteer*** by DeLorme Mapping is used as the standard reference throughout this guide and is very helpful in most of the state, although in many places in the UP additional map resources are necessary. Available from DeLorme Mapping Company, P.O. Box 298, Yarmouth, ME 04096; 800-561-5105; www.delorme.com/atlasgaz.

The ***Mapbook of Michigan Counties*** is produced by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and provides more detail, in some cases, than DeLorme. Available from *Michigan Natural Resources Magazine*, Box 30034, Lansing, MI 48909. 2010 update: magazine and mapbook no longer available.

The ***Michigan County Atlas*** by UniversalMap is another useful and detailed publication. Available from UniversalMap, 795 Progress Court, P.O. Box 15, Williamston, MI 48895; www.universalmmap.com

National Forest Service maps are available from the U.S. Forest Service, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0003;

202-205-8333; www.fs.fed.us/maps. Maps and information for individual Michigan national forests are available from the individual forest offices:

- Ottawa National Forest, Supervisor's Office, E6248 US-2, Ironwood, MI 49938; 906-932-1330; www.fs.fed.us/r9/ottawa.
- Hiawatha National Forest, 2727 North Lincoln Road, Escanaba, MI, 49829; 906-786-4062; www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/hiawatha.
- Huron-Manistee National Forests, 1755 South Mitchell Street, Cadillac, MI 49601; 800-821-6263; www.fs.fed.us/r9/hmnf.

The *Huron-Clinton Metropark Guide* is a map that covers the Detroit Metropolitan Area, and is one of the finest maps available for any large city and surrounding suburbs. It is updated annually and can be obtained at the visitor centers at any of the metroparks, or from park headquarters at: Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, 13000 High Ridge Drive, P.O. Box 2001, Brighton, MI 48116-8001; 800-247-2757 (outside the local area); www.metroparks.com.

Michigan Telephone Hotlines and Internet Chat Groups

- **Michigan Statewide Rare Bird Alert:** 269-471-4919. Updated weekly by compiler Jonathan Wuepper: 269-556-9510. Reports are posted to Mich-Listers and to BirdCntr (<http://listserv.arizona.edu/archives/birdcntr.html>). **2010 update: no longer active.**
- **Detroit Rare Bird Alert:** 248-477-1360. Includes southeastern Michigan and occasionally farther afield in the state, as well as portions of northwestern Ohio and southwestern Ontario. Updated weekly, more often in migration, less often in summer, by compiler Karl Overman: 248-473-0484. **2010 update: no longer active.**
- **Mich-Listers:** Forum for reporting accidental, casual, and rare species throughout the state. This is a hotline, not a chat line. List owner is Jim Lesser. Information on how to subscribe can be found at www.michbirds.com.
- **SE-MI-Birdlist:** Chat group discussing unusual bird sightings in southeastern Michigan. List owner is Mary Wise. Information on how to subscribe can be found at www-personal.umich.edu/~auntyem/SE_MI_Birdlist.html.
- **Birders:** Chat group discussing all aspects of birds and birding, including rarities, and sometimes non-birding topics, centered on Washtenaw County and southeastern Michigan. Birds around the state are sometimes discussed. List owner is Bruce Bowman. Information on how to subscribe can be found at www-personal.umich.edu/~bbowman/birds/birders_FAQ.html.
- **UP-Birders:** Chat group discussing birds in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. For subscription information: www.upbirders.org.

- **BBCList:** Chat group discussing birds and birding, including rarities, centered on Berrien County and southwestern Michigan. List owner is David Steen (steen@andrews.edu). To subscribe, send a message to listserv@andrews.edu with a blank subject line, and in the body of the message type “subscribe bbclist” and nothing more.

Michigan Birding Websites

- **Birding Sites in Southeastern Michigan and Vicinity:** www-personal.umich.edu/~bbowman/birds/se_mich/locations/index.html. Many birding sites in southeastern Michigan (and beyond) are described, some of which could not be included in this guide for space reasons.
- **Kirtland’s Warbler:** www.fs.fed.us/r9/hmnfl/pages/kirtland.htm. Anything you’d ever want to know about Kirtland’s Warbler, its natural history, current census information, tours, and more. For address and telephone contact, see the Huron-Manistee National Forests information on the previous page.
- **Michigan Bird Records Committee:** www.umd.umich.edu/dept/rouge_river/MBRChome.html. Includes the current state bird checklist, current and previous rounds for review, annual reports, a downloadable rare bird report form, and a photo gallery.
- **Michigan Birding:** www-personal.umich.edu/~auntyem/michigan.html. Provides bird reports, events, information on e-mail groups, birding sites, publications, local checklists, and birding humor.
- **Michigan Birds and Natural History:** Michigan’s only ornithological journal of record, publishing quarterly Michigan Bird Survey summaries, annual proceedings of the Michigan Bird Records Committee, summaries of the state’s Christmas Bird Counts and North American Migration Counts, important ornithological records for the state, birding site guides, and much more. Subscription information can be found on-line at www.umd.umich.edu/dept/rouge_river/mb.html, or by mail or phone from the Michigan Audubon Society, 6011 West St. Joseph Highway, Suite 403., P.O. Box 80527, Lansing, MI 48908-0527; 517-886-9144; www.michiganaudubon.org/news_events/publications/birds_natural_history.html.
- **Saginaw Bay Birding:** www.saginawbaybirding.org. Local bird sightings, seasonal compilations for the Michigan Bird Survey, checklists, site guides, and travel resources.
- **Rouge River Bird Observatory:** www.umd.umich.edu/dept/rouge_river. Provides a wealth of information on birds and nature in Wayne County and southeastern Michigan, including research projects conducted by the observatory.

- **Detroit River Hawk Watch:** www.drhawkwatch.org. Provides detailed information on one of North America's premier hawkwatching areas (Lake Erie Metropark and Pointe Mouillee State Game Area), including daily and annual count information, where to go, and festivals. (Formerly Southeastern Michigan Raptor Research)
- **Whitefish Point Bird Observatory:** www.wpbo.org. Provides information on birding at the Point, events, bird sightings, and membership. Blogs of waterbird and raptor counts, rare sightings, and owl banding are also available on the site.

Michigan Birding Festivals

- **Kirtland's Warbler Festival:** Held in mid-May each year and sponsored by Kirtland Community College. Contact Jim Enger, Marketing Director, Kirtland's Warbler Festival, Kirtland Community College, 10775 N. St. Helen Road, Roscommon, MI 48653, 989-275-5000, ext. 266; warbler.kirtland.edu.
- **Winter Birding Festival:** Held in mid-February each year (first festival was in 2004) and sponsored by the Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce; 800-647-2858, www.saultstemarie.com. **NOTE:** the festival is no longer being held, as of this reprinting in 2010.
- **Hawkfest:** Held in mid-September each year and sponsored by Lake Erie Metropark; 800-477-3189 or 734-379-5020.
- **Bluebird Festival and Wildlife Art Show:** Held in early April at the Jackson Community College Dahlen Center; 517-782-3453; www.dahlencenter.org.
- **CraneFest:** Held the second weekend in October at the Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary. Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek, Michigan Audubon Society, and Binder Park Zoo; 269-763-3090; www.michiganaudubon.org/bakersanctuary/cranefest.html.

National Parks, National Lakeshores, and National Wildlife Refuges

- For fees, campground information, maps, and other information, contact the National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW, Room 3112, Washington, DC 20240; 202-208-4621; www.nps.gov.
- Maps of individual parks are available from data2.itc.nps.gov/geosearch.cfm. In Michigan, the National Park Service administers the Father Marquette Memorial, Isle Royale National Park, Keweenaw National Historic Park, North Country Scenic Trail, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.
- Information on National Wildlife Refuges is available from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service at www.refuges.fws.gov.

- Information on the North Country Scenic Trail (which passes through seven states, including Michigan) is available at www.northcountrytrail.org.

Michigan State Parks, Forests, Game Areas, Recreation Areas, and Wildlife Areas

- All **Michigan State Parks** require an entry fee (daily resident \$6, non-resident \$8, annual pass resident \$24, non-resident \$29 in 2010). A listing of Michigan's State Parks and State Forests, including links to specific sites with maps, campgrounds, and other information can be found at www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parkmap.aspx.
- **State Game, Recreation, and Wildlife Areas:** All Michigan State Game Areas, State Recreation Areas, and State Wildlife Areas require a State Park entry fee (see above). Information on these areas (and state forests) is available from the Parks and Recreation department of the Lansing office of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Mason Building, Third Floor, P.O. Box 30257, Lansing, MI 48909, 517-373-9900. A complete listing of all game, recreation, and wildlife areas, including downloadable maps, campgrounds, and other information is available at www.michigan.gov/dnr/, click on "Publications and Maps", then "on-line maps," and then "State Game Areas and other Wildlife Areas."

Michigan Conservation Organizations

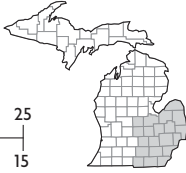
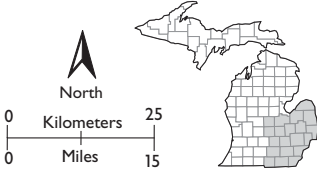
This list includes selected Michigan conservation organizations (including those managing properties mentioned in this guide). Many have information about and trail maps of their preserves on their websites, or available by mail.

- **Michigan Audubon Society**, 6011 West St. Joseph Highway, Suite 403,, P.O. Box 80527, Lansing, MI 48908-0527; 517-886-9144; www.michiganaudubon.org.
- **Detroit Audubon Society**, 1320 North Campbell Road, Royal Oak, MI 48067; 248-545-2929; www.detroitaudubon.org.
- **The Nature Conservancy of Michigan**, 101 E. Grand River Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906; 517-316-0300; www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/michigan.
- **Michigan Nature Association**, 326 E. Grand River Avenue, Williamston, MI 48895; 517-655-5655; www.michigannature.org.
- **Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy**, 1100 North Main, Suite 212, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; 734-997-0942; www.bendor.org/smlc.html.

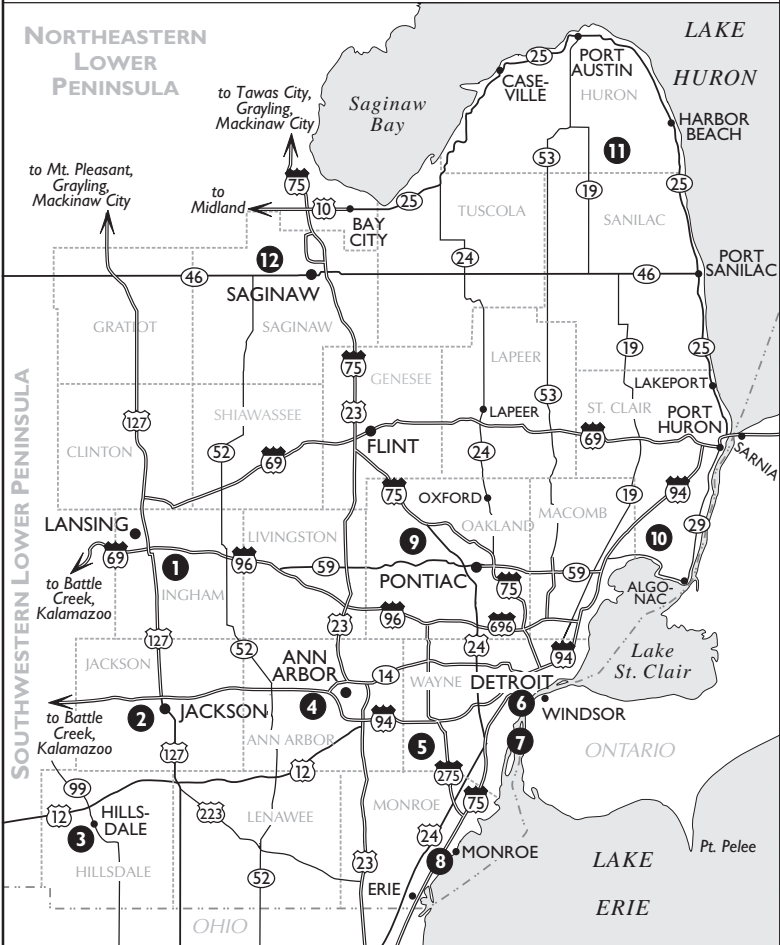
- **Oakland Land Conservancy**, P.O. Box 80902, Rochester, MI 48308, 248-601-2816; www.oaklandlandconservancy.org.
- **Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy**, 6851 South Sprinkle Road, Portage, MI 49002; 269-324-1600; www.swmlc.org
- **Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy**, 3860 North Long Lake Road, Suite D, Traverse City, MI 49684; 231-929-7911 or 888-929-3866 (toll-free); www.gtrlc.org.
- **Little Forks Conservancy**, 105 Post Street, Midland, MI 48640; 989-835-4886; www.littleforks.org.
- **Little Traverse Conservancy**, 3264 Powell Road, Harbor Springs, MI 49740, 231-347-0991; www.landtrust.org.
- **Leelanau Conservancy**, P.O. Box 1007, Leland, MI 49654; 231-256-9665; www.theconservancy.com.
- **Central Lake Superior Land Conservancy**, P.O. Box 7135, Marquette, MI 49855; 906-226-2461; www.clslc.org.
- **Michigan Nature Centers**: Links to many of Michigan's Nature Centers can be found at www.geocities.com/sevenponds/Centers.html. These nature centers include Seven Ponds, Chippewa, Fernwood, Thurston, Kalamazoo, Whitehouse, Blandford, DeGraaf, Sarett, Thorn Swift, and Howell.

SOUTHEASTERN LOWER PENINSULA

MAJOR BIRDING AREAS



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Lansing Area
Sites SE-1 – SE-10 | 7 Detroit River
Sites SE-42 – SE-45 |
| 2 Jackson Area
Sites SE-11 – SE-18 | 8 Lake Erie Marshes
Sites SE-46 – SE-54 |
| 3 Hillsdale Area
Sites SE-19 – SE-23 | 9 Pontiac Area
Sites SE-55 – SE-66 |
| 4 Ann Arbor Area
Sites SE-24 – SE-30 | 10 St. Clair Marshes
Sites SE-67 – SE-71 |
| 5 Huron River
Sites SE-31 – SE-36 | 11 The Thumb
Sites SE-72 – SE-83 |
| 6 Metro Detroit Area
Sites SE-37 – SE-41 | 12 Saginaw Bay South
Sites SE-84 – SE-86 |

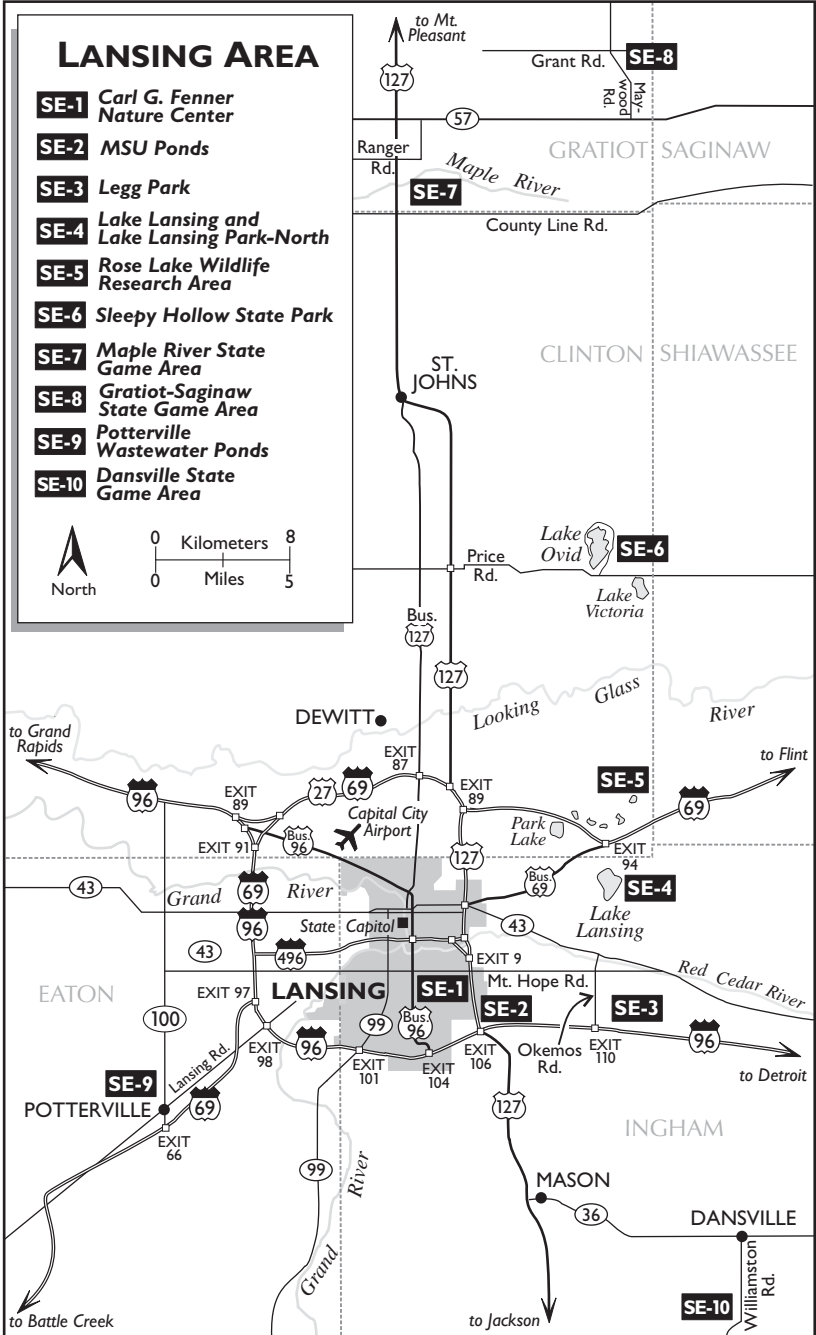


SOUTHEASTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Michigan's Southeastern Lower Peninsula, as defined here, includes the eastern half of the area characterized as the Southern Lower Peninsula in recent state publications, including the *Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan* (Brewer, McPeck and Adams 1991) and the annual Michigan Bird Survey. It encompasses all areas from Gratiot through Huron Counties south, and from the Lansing, Jackson, and Hillsdale areas east. Because this is the most densely populated and developed area in the state, birding areas are often isolated and fragmented, although there is good diversity to be found here.

The landforms of this region consist of low-elevation lake-border plains within about 50 miles of the Great Lakes, rolling plains farther inland, and an area of hilly uplands from the Ohio/Indiana border northeastward to Oakland and Lapeer Counties. Unlike the Lake Michigan shorelines, the margins of Lakes Erie and Huron have few areas of dunes, with the notable exception of the northern tip of the "Thumb." The woodlands in this region are mainly deciduous in nature, with the northern areas gradually mixing with the coniferous and birch forests of farther north. As a result, there are a number of opportunities to see a mix of breeding species with northern and southern affinities at a single site. The proximity of Lakes Huron, St. Clair, and Erie as well as the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers, provides excellent waterbirding, and Lake Huron offers one of the two best sites in the state for watching loons, sea ducks, and jaegers. Much of the region outside of the urban centers consists of farmland, but a number of quality open areas provide habitat for open-country birds.

The Huron-Clinton Metropark Authority (www.metroparks.com) manages a total of 13 parks in the drainages of the Huron and Clinton Rivers in the greater Metropolitan Detroit area, west to Ann Arbor and north to Pontiac and Mt. Clemens. Many of the Metroparks are included in this chapter, and the free Metropark map is indispensable for birding the Metro Detroit area. There is a daily entry fee of \$4, good at all Metroparks, with annual passes



available for \$20. State parks as well as state game and recreation areas also require entry passes (\$6 daily for Michigan residents, \$8 for non-residents, and \$24 for an annual pass for Michigan residents, \$29 for non-residents). Fees for campgrounds vary (www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp). Birders will have no difficulty finding plenty of options for food and accommodations throughout this region.

Sites that should not be missed, depending on season, include Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary (SE-12), Waterloo State Recreation Area (SE-13), Lost Nation State Game Area (SE-23), Nichols Arboretum (SE-26), Crosswinds Marsh (SE-36), University of Michigan – Dearborn Environmental Study Area (SE-40), Belle Isle Park (SE-41), Lake Erie Metropark (SE-44), Pointe Mouillee State Game Area (SE-46), Erie Marsh Nature Preserve (SE-53), Highland State Recreation Area (SE-57), Metro Beach Metropark (SE-67), Port Huron, St. Clair River (SE-72), Port Huron State Game Area (SE-73), Port Crescent State Park (SE-79), and Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (SE-84).

THE LANSING AREA

Michigan's capital has a long tradition of bird study, centered at Michigan State University, which has hosted such ornithological luminaries as W. B. Barrows and George J. Wallace as staff ornithologists. The School of Natural Resources is one of the best in the country, and many Michigan birders are former students of this institution. *Birds of the Capital Count Area of Michigan* by Douglas W. McWhirter and Donald L. Beaver, published in 1977, provided seasonal and historical analyses of the birds recorded up to that time in the Lansing area, as well as a gazetteer of local birding sites. Lansing is centrally located for birders wishing to make birding trips to sites on Lakes Michigan or Erie should a mega-rarity show up there, both being about a two-hour drive.

SE-1 Carl G. Fenner Nature Center

By Jack Reinoehl

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 39, C5. 42°42' N, 84°31' W

Contact Information: (517) 483-4224; <http://parks.cityoflansingmi.com/Fenner/FNC.html>

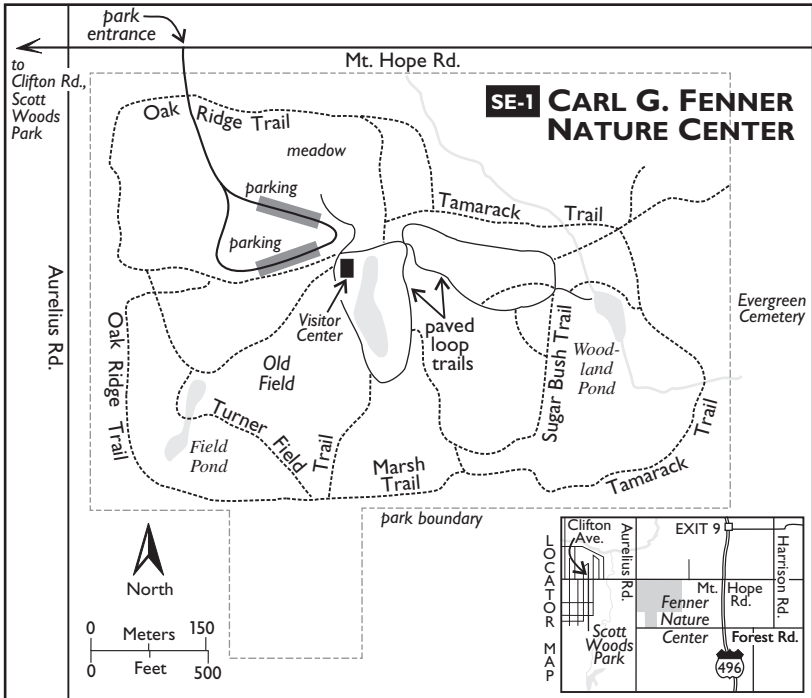
Directions: From I-96, go north on US-27/1-496 to the Trowbridge Road exit (Exit 9), just south of the exits for downtown Lansing. Go east (the only direction possible) for 0.5 mile on Trowbridge to Harrison Road, turn right (south), go 0.5 mile, and turn right onto Mount Hope Road for 1.3 miles to the park on the left (south), just before Aurelius Road.

The **Carl G. Fenner Nature Center** is a 120-acre park located within the city limits of Lansing. Operated by the Lansing Parks and Recreation Department, the nature center has a gift shop, displays, and a large picture window overlooking the numerous feeders. A map of the park and its trails is

available there. The eastern portion of the park is mostly wooded, a mixture of pine plantations and deciduous woodland, and the western part is dominated by an old field with a hedgerow.

Because its isolated woodlands are located in an urban area, the park acts as a migrant trap, and birding visits during spring and fall can be very rewarding. In April, the park attracts Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and both kinglets. By early May, several warbler species will have appeared. The dense brush throughout the wooded part of the park is particularly attractive to Canada Warbler, which migrates mostly in the second half of May. Occasionally as many as four or five will be scattered around the park, singing loudly. On such days, Connecticut Warbler is also a definite possibility. It is imperative that observers be acquainted with its vigorous song when searching for this species during its brief spring migration period at the end of May. The park is of relatively little interest in the summer, though Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, and Hooded Warbler have nested.

Fall migration begins with flycatchers and warblers in mid-August. The warblers often flock with the chickadees, and the flocks can be located by listening for the more vocal and easily found chickadees. On a good day at the height of migration in mid-September, you might find 15 species of warblers in the park. The pine plantations are favored by Cape May Warbler in both



spring and fall. Rarities are found here more regularly than might be expected for such a small area. Examples include White-eyed Vireo and Clay-colored Sparrow (both in October). By early October, the migrant flocks have lots of kinglets and White-throated Sparrows. In late fall and winter, Pine Siskin, and Red-breasted Nuthatch are often present; Golden-crowned Kinglet and Brown Creeper frequently winter in the park.

Birding starts right at the parking lot; the viney tangles toward the western side of the lot often attract some migrants. A paved trail leads east from the visitor center. Within the wooded part of the park, the combined Tamarack and Sugar Bush Trails make a loop of about one-half mile, with migrants often concentrated near the Woodland Pond and nearby damp woods. Listen for Northern Waterthrush near the pond in May (by song) and August (by call note). There are also a number of side trails, each of which should be checked; the result can be two to three hours of very enjoyable birding. Though not a high probability, be alert for owls when visiting the park. Listen for the excited activity of jays and crows mobbing larger owls, or chickadees and nuthatches chasing smaller owls. Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls have been found occasionally in winter, and Eastern Screech-Owl and Great Horned Owl occur year round.

A good nearby area is **Scott Woods Park**, which can be reached by taking Mt. Hope Road west for about 0.5 mile west of Aurelius Road to Clifton. Turn left (south) and go 0.5 miles to the parking lot. The park has several trails and a creek that wind through the many tall trees. Migration, especially spring, can produce good numbers of migrant passerines.

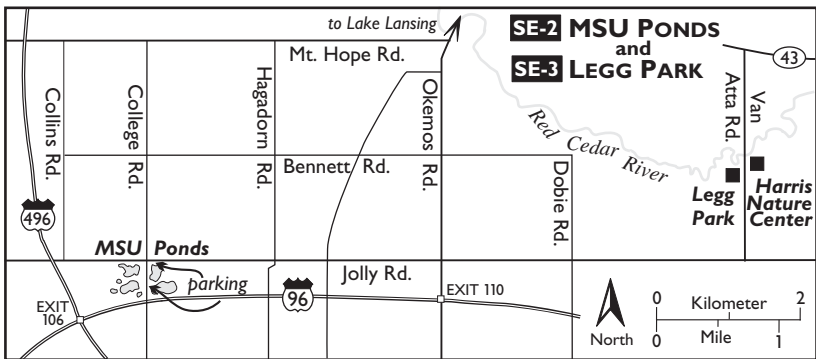
SE-2 Michigan State University Inland Lakes Research and Education Area (MSU Ponds)

By Bruce Cohen

Spring** Summer Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 39, C5. 42°41' N, 84°29' W

Directions: Take I-96 to Exit 110 (Okemos Road). Go north to Jolly Road (0.2 mile). Turn left (west) and go to College Road (2.6 miles). Park along the roadside here, or along College Road south of Jolly Road and north of the I-96 overpass.

The southern part of the Michigan State University campus consists of much farmland and open fields. There are four ponds located at the corner of Jolly Road and College Road, known by local birders as the **MSU Ponds**. Although the ponds are fenced and not open to the public, viewing can be satisfactory from outside the fence. These ponds attract migrating geese, ducks, terns, and swallows; this is a good place to find migrant Black Terns in May. In spring and fall, large numbers of Canada Geese use the ponds; Snow Geese are annual and there have been several sightings of Greater White-fronted Geese. Eastern Meadowlarks sing from around the ponds in



spring and summer. Water levels are usually high, but occasionally there is decent shorebird habitat. Viewing shorebirds can be problematic since not all areas of the shoreline are always visible. There have been some exceptional records here, including Ross's Goose (casual), Ruff, Willet, American Avocet, and Snowy Egret.

During invasion years, the telephone poles and farmland around the south MSU campus area are the best places to find Snowy Owl in the Lansing area. Searching these farmlands in winter can also yield Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspur, and Rough-legged Hawk.

SE-3 Legg Park

By Bruce Cohen

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 39, C5. 42°42' N, 84°23' W

Contact Information: Trail maps for Legg Park and Harris Nature Center available from the Meridian Township Park Commission, 517-349-1200, ext. 330.

Directions: From I-96, take Exit 110, Okemos Road, and go north 0.2 mile to Jolly Road. Turn right onto Jolly for 2.8 miles, and turn left (north) onto Van Atta Road. Go 0.8 mile to the park entrance on the left (west) side of the road. The gate is open down to dusk, with no entry fee required. Should you find the gate closed, as occasionally happens, it is a short 0.3-mile walk to the parking area and the trails.

Legg Park is located along the Red Cedar River in Meridian Township east of Lansing. The park consists of wooded bottomlands, uplands, and fields covering approximately 100 acres. It is best in spring, when migrant passerines can sometimes be found in large numbers. Parts of some trails can be flooded in early spring if the river is high, and the entire bottomlands can be completely underwater.

On sunny mornings, migrant passerines may be at the edge of the woods, where viewing can be quite good. As you enter the woods, there is a trail (before the bridge) that goes immediately to the right (east) and winds through wooded bottomlands. To access more trails, cross the bridge and go to the

west (toward the railroad tracks) to a winding trail north. Soon you will go up a small hill where you look down at the river, with upland woods on the west and more bottomlands across the river to the east. This is a good place to look and listen for Barred Owl, which resides here. Legg Park is also the most reliable place in the Lansing area to find Louisiana Waterthrush.

Harris Nature Center is just north of Legg Park and across Van Atta Road. The short trails there can also be worth exploring during migration.

SE-4 Lake Lansing

By Bruce Cohen

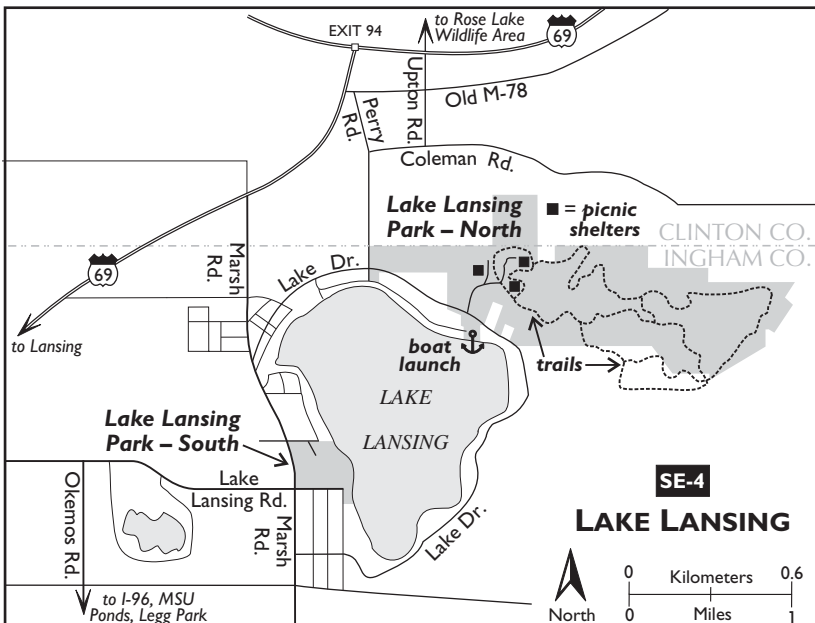
Spring** Summer Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 39, B5. 42°46' N, 84°24' W

Contact Information: Trail map of Lake Lansing Park–North available at 517-676-2233 or www.ingham.org/pk/soccer/LLNTrailmap.jpg

Directions: Take I-96 to Exit 110 (Okemos Road) and turn right (north). Go 5.3 miles, through the towns of Okemos and Haslett, to Lake Lansing Road. Turn right (east) and go 1.0 mile to Marsh Road. Turn left onto Marsh Road for 0.25 mile to the entrance on the right for Lake Lansing Park–South.

Lake Lansing, the largest body of water in the Lansing area, covers roughly 450 acres and is the best place locally to see migrating loons, grebes, scoters, ducks, cormorants, terns, and gulls. Because it is a busy recreational lake, nesting waterfowl are usually not present. As of this writing,



there is no fee for entry, but that policy could change. Gates to all areas discussed below are open from 8:00 a.m. to sunset. A scope is needed here.

Each fall, large numbers of migrating gulls (up to 4,000) come in to the lake in the evening. Fewer gulls use the lake in the spring, but good sightings can also occur then. The best place to observe gulls is from the beach at **Lake Lansing Park-South**, on the southwest corner of the lake. To reach the viewing location at the boat launch area, continue north from the south entrance on Marsh Road for approximately 0.4 mile to Lake Drive on the right. Follow Lake Drive for 1.2 miles to the boat launch on the right. When the gulls fly in late in the day, the sun is at your back, making for excellent viewing conditions. There have been nine species of gulls recorded. The overwhelming majority are Ring-billed and Herring, with Bonaparte's a distant third. Lesser Black-backed Gull has become annual, while Glaucous Gull is seen most years (four occurred on one Christmas count). Less than annual are Great Black-backed, Iceland, and Thayer's. There are several records of Franklin's Gull, including 1998, when a strong storm blew many migrating birds east into Michigan. Between 75 and 100 Franklin's Gulls lingered for about three weeks that November. All other sightings of Franklin's Gull have been of single birds.

Red-necked Grebe is spotted some years, and Horned Grebe occasionally occurs in large numbers, with 425 being the highest count. There have been at least three sightings of Red-throated Loon in the past decade. Long-tailed Duck and White-winged and Surf Scoters are less than annual. Tundra Swans occasionally make brief stops. Trumpeter Swan has occurred here. Bald Eagle, Osprey, and terns (Common, Forster's, Caspian, and occasionally Black) are sighted during spring migration in most years. Shorebirds on the beach are rare, including a one-time American Avocet.

On the north side of the lake is **Lake Lansing Park-North**, on the left near the boat launch. Enter the north unit of the park, turn right at the sign for the Snell Picnic Area, and follow the road to the left to Sandhill Shelter parking lot. Hiking trails begin at the end of the parking area by the shelter. There are approximately five miles of trails that pass through oak and maple forests, pine plantations, transition fields, and cross boardwalks over marshes. In summer Virginia Rail, Sora, and Swamp Sparrow are found in good numbers, and Marsh Wren is fairly dependable.

SE-5 Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area

By Jack Reinoehl and Bruce Cohen

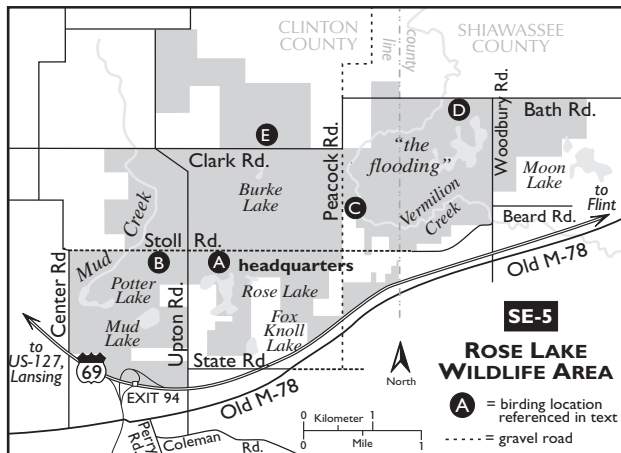
Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 39, B5. 42°49' N, 084°23' W
Contact Information: 517-373-9358

Directions: From the north end of Lake Lansing, take Perry Road north from Lake Drive. Turn right onto Coleman Road and then quickly left onto Upton Road. Go north for 1.5 miles to Stoll Road, then 0.2 mile east to the Rose Lake headquarters (map location A). Alternatively, if you are coming from the center of Lansing, go north on US-127 for about 3 miles to I-69. Go east about 6 miles and take the East Lansing exit (Exit

94). Go south for 0.3 mile and turn left onto Old M-78. After 0.6 mile turn left onto Upton Road and go north for 1.5 miles to Stoll Road; the headquarters is 0.2 mile to the east on Stoll Road.

Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area, nearly six square miles of land northeast of Lansing, includes mature and young second-growth woodland, fields, and natural and man-made lakes. It is heavily used by hunters in the fall, but is otherwise good for birding at all seasons.

Attracted by the large number of crabapple trees scattered throughout the headquarters area, many fruit-eating birds are present during winter. Look for large flocks of Cedar Waxwings (with a few American Robins mixed in) along Stoll Road east or west of the headquarters. Bohemian Waxwing has been seen but is very rare. Purple Finch is usually present in winter, and Pine Grosbeak is rare. At any season, hiking Stoll Road in this vicinity will produce a good variety of species. Just west of Upton Road on Stoll is a low area with dense thickets where Yellow-breasted Chat has summered; 0.6 mile west of Upton on Stoll Road is another parking area and a trail to the south (**B** on map). This trail goes through second-growth and plantings and then angles through mature woodland as it passes near Mud Lake. Common breeding birds that can be found here include Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. From the headquarters, drive east to Peacock Road and then 0.5 mile north to a parking area on the right (**C** on map). An excellent trail goes east across a bridge over Vermilion Creek; Poison-ivy grows luxuriantly near this bridge. Yellow-rumped Warbler can sometimes be found here in winter. Soon after crossing the bridge, you will come to an intersection of trails. Take the north route to a T-intersection. Go left and follow the trail that stays along the creek. This area should yield Cerulean Warbler and Acadian Flycatcher in spring and early summer, and Barred Owl is a possibility year round. The area can also be good for migrant passerines. Near the northeast corner of the Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area is an area referred to as "the flooding". Go north for one mile on Peacock, follow the pavement to the right, and go 0.9 mile east



along Bath Road to a small parking area on the right (**D** on map). A trail into the flooding goes south from this point, heading up a small hill, past a field, and soon reaching a fork. Going left, to the east, takes you past a pine grove where Chipping Sparrow may be found, through deciduous woods where Wood Thrush, Indigo Bunting, and Scarlet Tanager are often present, and along a shallow lake and marsh area where you should look for Common Yellowthroat and Swamp Sparrow, as well as occasional migrant waterfowl and breeding rails. Going to the right (west) from the junction takes you past several hedgerows and through woods that border the lake. The trail then connects with other trails through the area. In recent years, a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers has been present along this west part of the trail near the edge of the lake. Continuing on this west segment, past the lake, you will enter woods where Cerulean Warbler can be found.

To reach another fine birding area, backtrack 0.9 mile west on Bath Road, 0.5 mile south on Peacock, and another 0.55 mile west along Clark Road to a small parking area on the north side of the road (**E** on map). From here there is good birding in all directions. Clark Road will be rather busy for birding except early in the morning, but it is worth exploring in both directions along the road. To the west there is mature deciduous forest; during breeding season listen for Yellow-throated Vireo, Acadian Flycatcher, and Cerulean Warbler right along the road. To the east is a Tamarack bog where Veery, Blue-winged Warbler, and Swamp Sparrow breed. A trail to the north and a road to the south allow further exploration of the area.

SE-6 Sleepy Hollow State Park

By Jack Reinoehl

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 39, A5. 42°56' N, 84°24' W

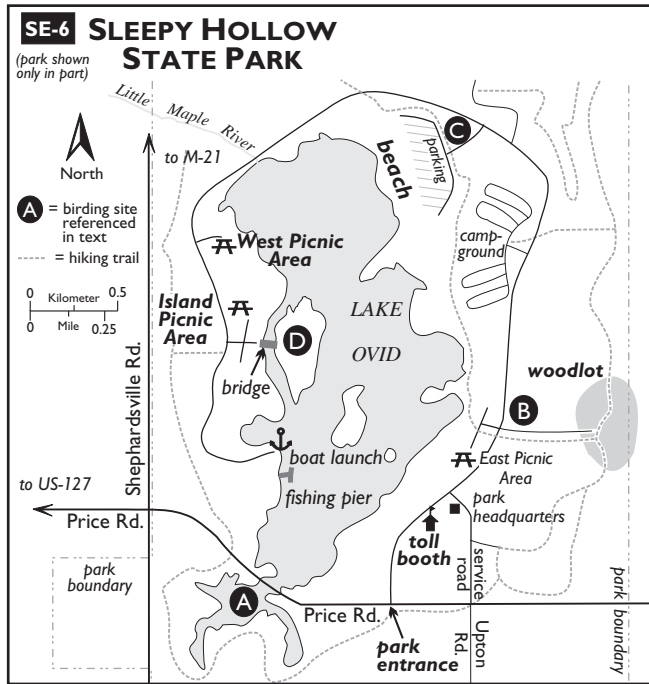
Contact Information: 517-651-6217 for trail maps; 800-44PARKS for camping information; www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.aspx

Directions: Go north of Lansing on US-27 for about 12 miles to the Price Road exit and go east on Price. After just under 6 miles, you will reach Shepardsville Road. Continue another 0.8 mile on Price Road to the park entrance on the left. Note that at 0.4 mile past Shepardsville you will have a good view of the south end of Lake Ovid (A on map).

Sleepy Hollow State Park, located in eastern Clinton County about 12 miles north of Lansing, is comprised of 2,600 acres of young second-growth, open areas, and a few mature woodlots, with 16 miles of hiking trails and 9 miles of horse trails. The park's dominant feature is Lake Ovid, a 410-acre artificial lake over one mile long. Sleepy Hollow is popular for boating, fishing, and camping in summer, and hunting in fall. The park literature has a bird list of 228 species, including many waterfowl and migratory songbirds.

Go 0.3 mile north of Price Road to the toll booth, where you will pay the state park entry fee. From November through March, watch for Northern

Shrike in the toll-booth area. Though quite uncommon, this species shows a preference for Sleepy Hollow during invasion years. Another passerine that is fond of the southern area of the park is Orchard Oriole. Watch and listen for it in spring and summer along the row of trees to the west near the toll booth. At



0.4 mile beyond the toll booth, a road turns right (**B** on map) to the Organizational Campground and to a hiking trail at the end of the road, which leads through the park's best woodlot. Acadian Flycatcher and other more common woodland birds of southern Michigan are found here in summer.

Continue past the Organizational Campground Road for 1.2 miles to a turnoff on the left for the **beach** near the north end of Lake Ovid (**C** on map). This lake is quite attractive to waterfowl and the beach provides a good vantage point. In early spring the number of Common Mergansers can be impressive. These are regularly joined by good numbers of scaup and other diving ducks, including Ruddy Duck in April. As the season progresses, dabbling ducks, Common Loon, and Horned Grebe are possible. The beach sometimes attracts a few shorebirds in May and August; visit early in the day before human activity increases.

From the Beach Road turnoff, it is another 1.1 miles along the main road to the picnic areas as you circle the north end of the lake and head south along the lake's west side. Three locations on this stretch of road provide additional opportunities to view the lake. The **West Picnic Area** provides an alternate viewpoint for birds visible from the beach. Return to the main road for another 0.3 mile to the **Island Picnic Area**. Here you cross a short footbridge and hike onto a wooded island (**D** on map). The large trees and planted pines on the island make this is the best area of the park to look for migrant passer-

ines in spring and fall. The road ends 0.6 mile farther south at the **Boat Launch**, which provides a good view of the southern areas of the lake.

SE-7 Maple River State Game Area

By Jack Reinoehl

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 48, C4. 43°09' N, 84°35' W

Contact Information: 517-651-6217 for trail maps; 800-44PARKS for camping information

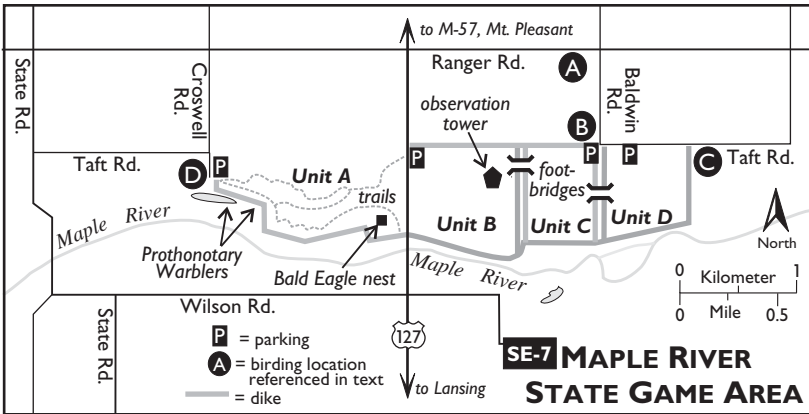
Directions: Go about 27 miles north of Lansing on US-27 to where the highway enters Gratiot County (South County Line Road). Go a mile farther north, crossing the Maple River, to Ranger Road, which can be difficult to see from the high-speed US-27. It is the first east-west crossroad, about 1 mile north of the Maple River. If you reach M-57, you have gone about 1.5 miles too far and should backtrack south.

Maple River State Game Area, stretching across three counties in southcentral Michigan about 29 miles north of Lansing, includes wooded floodplain along a substantial length of the Maple River. The smaller East Unit is most often visited by birders, though the much larger main body of the game area certainly merits exploration.

East Unit birding starts at the intersection of US-27 and Ranger Road. Go east on Ranger Road for about 0.8 mile to a large field on the right (**A** on map). Listen for Henslow's Sparrow here, especially during June and July. A small colony was present during 1999, 2000, and 2001. At Baldwin Road, turn right and head south. Along this short 0.5-mile stretch of Baldwin Road, listen for Sedge Wren, with an outside chance for Orchard Oriole in the early summer. This road, and all nearby areas, are good for raptors, especially in winter when Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Harrier, and Short-eared Owl are possible. Where Baldwin Road ends and Taft Road goes to the left (east), a parking lot on the right (**B** on map) provides access to three management units. To the south and east is Unit D, which is flooded only in the spring. To the south and west is Unit C, with cattail marshes, flooded woodlands, and open shrubby areas. West of Unit C and east of US-27 is Unit B, 200 acres of shallow open water and cattail marshes. The Maple River flows just south of here.

From this parking area, two parallel dikes head south between Unit C and Unit D of the game area, and another dike goes west along the north side of Unit C. A one-mile loop route allows you to walk around the perimeter of Unit C, providing good views of Unit D to the east, and views and access to Unit B to the west. Even in winter, when the area is entirely frozen, it is attractive to raptors and Northern Shrikes. Shrikes prefer the thorny trees west of the parking lot, but can be seen anywhere in the game area. Bald Eagles are now expected, sometimes in good numbers very early in the spring.

Walk south on the westernmost of the two parallel dikes. On your right, you will soon pass a cattail marsh. The cattail marshes throughout the area



host breeding Marsh Wren, Swamp Sparrow, Sora, and Virginia Rail. Rare species such as Least Bittern and King Rail (casual) have also been seen. On your left, you will have good views of Unit D, which is managed to provide habitat for dabbling ducks, geese, and swans in the spring. Corn is grown in the unit in summer, and the area is flooded in winter. As soon as there is any hint of a thaw in the spring, Canada Geese and Mallards return to the area and Common Mergansers appear on the river to the south. Maple River State Game Area is a favorite stopover for migrating Tundra Swans, primarily in March, and Unit D is the best place to look for them. Well over a thousand may be briefly present. During March and April, many species of waterfowl, including Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, and Green-winged Teal, are attracted to these fields as well. During late March and April, American Pipit, Wilson's Snipe, Pectoral Sandpiper, and yellowlegs are often present. Except in unusually dry springs, the fields also provide fine mudflats into May, when shorebirds that typically migrate through the interior of Michigan, such as Least Sandpiper and Dunlin, can be seen in good numbers. Rarities such as Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes have also been seen.

At the southeastern corner of Unit C, the dike turns right (west) and passes through a flooded woodland which attracts a variety of migrants through the spring. Rusty Blackbirds are almost always present in April. In May, Cape May, Blackpoll, and Wilson's Warblers are drawn to these woods, along with the numerous Yellow-rumpeds.

Continue west past the flooded woodland to a trail junction at the southeast corner of Unit B. Turn right (north) and go to a footbridge which provides additional access to Unit B, and leads to an observation tower with a view of much of the open water in Units B and C. A thorough search of the entire area during spring migration may turn up 15 or more species of waterfowl, mainly dabbling ducks, and rarely a species fond of deep water (such as Red-breasted Merganser). After mid-May, Willow Flycatchers are numerous in the vicinity of the tower. Unit B should be carefully checked for rarer species. Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese are occasional in early spring. In

three successive Aprils (1992–1994), a Eurasian Wigeon was present. American White Pelican and Tricolored Heron (casual) have also turned up here.

Just north of the footbridge to the observation tower, you will come to a T-intersection. The dike to the left leads along the north side of Unit B, and the dike to the right leads back to the parking area. About one-half mile east of this parking area along Taft Road, a second parking lot (**C** on map) provides access to the north and east sides of Unit D and several vantage points with good light on sunny mornings. Along the east side of US-27, immediately after the road crosses the river, there is a parking area providing additional access to Unit B's northwest corner. Depending on water conditions, there is always a chance of an interesting shorebird or heron. In summer, mosquitos can be very numerous. The area is used by hunters in fall, so caution is necessary.

Unit A: To reach Unit A, return north to Ranger Road and go west for 2 miles from Baldwin Road (cross US-27) to Croswell Road. Go left (south) on Croswell Road for one-half mile, continuing south past Taft Road to a parking lot (**D** on map). The brushy area north of the parking lot should be checked during spring migration. Yellow-breasted Chat, rare this far north, has been recorded more than once, though it is not to be expected. The primary attraction at this location is the nesting Prothonotary Warblers, which are often found right at the parking area in spring and summer (May–July). A few more Prothonotary Warblers might be found along this trail near the river. Bald Eagles can often be found in this unit, where they have recently nested. Look for Red-headed Woodpecker among the dead trees within Unit A or along Croswell Road. A trail going south and east from this parking area is relatively unproductive compared to those east of the highway, but has numerous Wood Ducks and Tree Swallows.

SE-8 Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area

By Jack Reinoehl

Spring** Summer*** Fall* Winter
DeLorme p. 49, C5. 43°13' N, 84°23' W
Contact Information: 517-373-9358

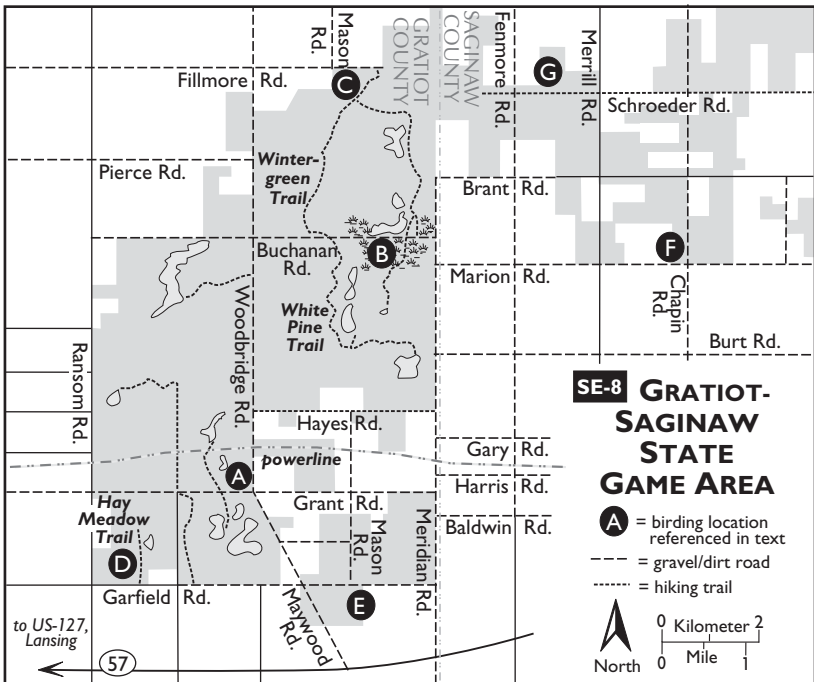
Directions: Take US-27 north of Lansing for about 29 miles to M-57. Go east on M-57 for about 9 miles to Maywood Road. Turn left (north) onto Maywood Road to enter the game area.

North of M-57 in eastern Gratiot County and spilling over into western Saginaw County is **Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area**, roughly 17 square miles of public land in Gratiot County and an additional 5 square miles in Saginaw County. The Gratiot County land is mostly contiguous, while the Saginaw County portion consists of several small, disjunct plots. Birders are encouraged to explore other trails and visit areas not mentioned below at this relatively underbirded site.

The game area's varied habitats include mature deciduous forest, pine plantations, cutover forest of mixed ages, swamps and marshes, water im-

poundments, and open fields. This area is most attractive to birders during the nesting season because of its intriguing mix of northern and southern species and its large population of Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers. Late spring through early summer is the recommended time for finding local rarities, which come from both north and south. Northern species of note have included Northern Goshawk, Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Green Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Purple Finch. Southern species that have occasionally been present, besides Carolina Wren and Kentucky Warbler, include Hooded Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat.

It should be noted that some of the sought-after species in this area, including Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers, inhabit relatively young second-growth. Shrubby fields that grow in following clearcuts will first attract Blue-winged Warbler and Field Sparrow. As the shrubby fields mature, they become more attractive to Golden-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Indigo Bunting, and Eastern Towhee. Once such areas become young woodland in the course of natural succession, these species will be replaced by more typical and widespread woodland species. Thus, some of the sites mentioned below, especially for Golden-winged Warbler, may not host this species much longer. There are a couple of recent clearcuts in the area that may mature to the appropriate stage suitable for Golden-wings in the next few years. These



clearcuts are west of Woodbridge Road and north of the powerline cut, but they are perhaps 50 yards away from the road and are difficult to detect in summer when they are screened by tall roadside vegetation. Several smaller clearcuts are located along the trails going north from Grant Road.

A good place to begin exploration of the game area is at the intersection of Grant Road and **Woodbridge Road (A)** on map). From the intersection of US-27 and M-57, go east on M-57 for about 9 miles to Maywood Road. Turn left (north) and go about 2.25 miles to Grant Road. Listen and watch for Yellow-throated Vireo and Cerulean and Golden-winged Warblers. To the west, along Grant Road between Woodbridge and Ransom Roads, three trails lead to the north, all passing through a mixture of mature forest and second-growth; any of the three trails is worth exploring. One-half mile north of Grant Road along Woodbridge, a powerline cut has been particularly good for Golden-wings. Cerulean Warbler has also been found on Hayes Road, which goes east from Woodbridge a mile north of Grant Road.

Several different habitats are encountered in the two miles north along Woodbridge between Hayes and Buchanan Roads. It is worthwhile to drive slowly, with the window rolled down, listening, to sample the birds. A bicycle would be the perfect way to explore this area, if you can bring one along. Common species include Least Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, and Ovenbird. Near Buchanan Road, you will enter a cut-over area where Eastern Towhee and Field Sparrow can be found.

Turn right (east) onto Buchanan Road. You will first pass a pine plantation where you should check for Blue-headed Vireo (bred once), Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Pine Warbler, which could be found in summer. After 0.7 mile, you will reach the **Wintergreen Trail**, which leads north through damp aspen second-growth. Listen for Black-and-white and Golden-winged Warblers here. Another 0.2 mile farther east on Buchanan Road is **White Pine Trail**, which heads to the south through mixed upland forest where you may expect Great Crested Flycatcher and Scarlet Tanager, both numerous throughout the area. One-half mile farther to the east (**B** on map), just before Meridian Road, a brushy marsh on both sides of the road hosts nesting Alder Flycatcher, Golden-winged Warbler, and Swamp Sparrow. American Bittern and Virginia Rail have also been detected here.

Backtrack to Woodbridge Road and continue north. The intersections at Buchanan Road and Pierce Road are good places for grassland birds. Listen for Grasshopper Sparrow along Woodbridge between Pierce and Fillmore Roads; the old field habitat east of the Woodbridge Road 0.2 mile south of Fillmore Road hosted Clay-colored Sparrows in 2001 and 2002. The woods along Fillmore east of Mason Road (**C** on map) should be checked for American Redstart, which is usually present; an improbable Carolina Wren was found here once.

Garfield Road, along the south boundary of the game area, provides additional birding opportunities. Go south on Woodbridge to Maywood,

then continue south to Garfield Road. Turn right (west) onto Garfield and go about 2 miles to the **Hay Meadow Trail (D)** on map) on the right (north) side of the road. This is about 0.5 mile east of Ransom Road. The trail goes through mature forest where Acadian Flycatcher is regular. Also worth a stop along Garfield Road is the parking area 0.15 mile east of Mason Road (**E** on map). Mourning and Golden-winged Warblers are good possibilities here, and a Kentucky Warbler, a real rarity this far north, was present here through the summer of 2000.

A couple of other areas in the **Saginaw County** portion of the Game Area are worthy of brief mention. Chapin Road north of Marion Road (**F** on map) has forest more mature than any on the Gratiot County side. Listen for Acadian Flycatcher here. Schroeder Road, which is not always drivable, between Merrill and Fenmore Roads (**G** on map) has wet brushy habitat that could produce Alder Flycatcher as well as Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers.

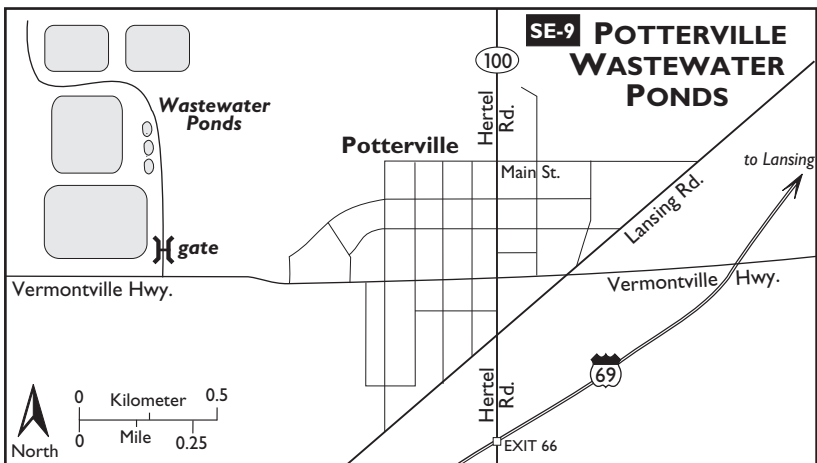
SE-9 Potterville Wastewater Ponds

By John Baumgartner

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 38, D3. 42°38' N, 84°45' W

Directions: From I-96, take I-69 southwest of Lansing for 6 miles to M-100 (Hertel Road) at Exit 66. Turn right (north) and go about 0.5 mile to Vermontville Highway in the center of the town of Potterville. Turn left (west) and go 0.7 mile to the entrance on the right, adjacent to a mobile-home park. See map on next page.

The main attractions of the **Potterville Wastewater Ponds** are waterfowl and shorebirds, best in spring through fall. The site consists of an upper pond, a mid-level pond, and two lower ponds, all accessible by car. There



is a series of three smaller ponds adjacent to the upper and mid-level ponds. The engineer-in-charge has been agreeable to birders entering the site. A gate back from the road is kept locked except when the engineer is present, usually but not always after 9:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. Access may be granted during weekdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. When the gate is locked, you should obtain permission to enter at the City Hall in Pottersville at 319 Nelson Street, or by calling 517-645-7641. Maintaining good relations with the engineer and the staff at the city hall is essential for continued access to this site.

In spring and fall, the larger ponds often have numerous ducks, geese, and gulls, including an occasional Snow Goose or Mute Swan, as well as Ruddy Duck, Wood Duck, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Hooded Merganser. Great Blue and Green Herons are regular. During periods of low water, a small assortment of shorebirds may be present, including American Golden-Plover, both yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, Semipalmated, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Wilson's Snipe. Ring-billed and Herring are the common gulls. American Kestrel and Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks are irregular. During the fall migration, good numbers of Bank, Barn, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows (and an occasional Cliff Swallow) and Cedar Waxwings gather at the ponds. Along the edges a variety of passerines, including Savannah Sparrow in summer and American Pipit in fall migration, may be observed. Unusual species recorded include a pair of Trumpeter Swans (introduced), Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, and Iceland and Franklin Gull's.

SE-10 Dansville State Game Area

By Bruce Cohen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall Winter
DeLorme p. 39, D6. 42°31' N, 84°19' W
Contact Information: 517-641-4903

Directions: From I-96 and US-127, go south on US-127 to Mason. Take M-36 east for about 7 miles to the town of Dansville. Take Williamston Road south to the game area.

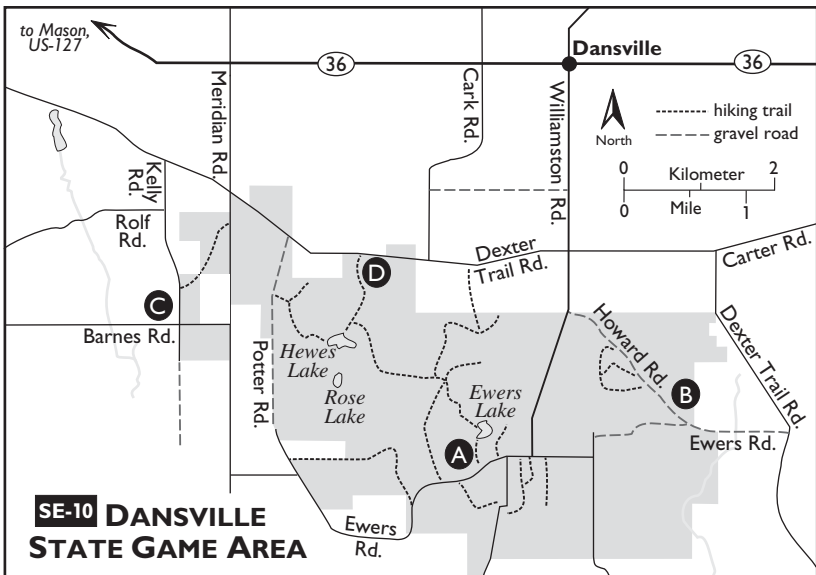
Dansville State Game Area, located in the southern part of Ingham County about 20 miles southeast of Lansing, includes approximately 5,600 acres of woodlands, fields, and marshes, and two shallow lakes. Dansville SGA is birded by fewer people than most other birding spots in the Lansing area, so you are less likely to come across others while on the trails. Due to its status as a state game area, hunting is allowed and appropriate cautions should be taken during hunting seasons.

Dansville SGA is one of the better areas near Lansing to find or hear Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, and in some years, Northern Bobwhite. Also, while not expected during the breeding season, there are recent late June records of singing Alder Flycatcher, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning

Warbler. There are numerous trails leading through the varied habitats where one can expect the typical central Michigan birds, including Sandhill Crane, both cuckoos, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, Veery, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting. There have been scattered sightings of Pileated Woodpecker. One of the better birding trails starts on the north side of Ewers Road, 0.6 mile west of Williamston Road (**A** on map), and passes through a mixed deciduous forest that is usually flooded in spring but passable. A Prothonotary Warbler was present one spring. The trail continues into drier mixed woodlands with some pine plantings, a good place for Cerulean Warbler. Other breeding-season birds to be expected along the trail are Acadian Flycatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo.

A good sparrow field (**B** on map) is located off the northeast corner of Howard and Ewers Roads. Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows are good bets in spring and early summer, and in some years, Henslow's Sparrow is present. Willow Flycatcher and Sedge Wren can be found along Barnes Road just west of Kelly Road (**C** on map).

There is another good birding trail that goes to Hewes Lake (**D** on map). The parking area for this trail is on the south side of Dexter Trail Road, 1.8 miles west of Williamston Road. The trail passes through mixed woodlands, where species similar to those previously mentioned can be found, and goes by Hewes Lake to connect with other trails. American Redstarts are particularly common along this trail in summer.



THE JACKSON AREA

Jackson sits in the middle of a population center of breeding Sandhill Cranes, which require open areas and marshlands that are attractive to many other species as well. Birders will surely encounter Sandhill Cranes on any birding trip in this area from March to November. The woodlands and rivers have a more southern affinity than many parts of the state, and indeed there may be no better area in Michigan to find breeding Hooded Warblers.

SE-11 Grand River Riparian Forest

By *Lathe Claflin*

*Spring** Summer** Fall* Winter*
DeLorme p. 31, A5. 42°24' N, 84°24' W

The Grand River flows northwest from Jackson into the northern part of Jackson County. The narrow strip of woodland along the river can provide interesting birding in spring and summer. Two areas can be accessed along Berry Road and Lansing Avenue (see map on previous page). To reach them, go north on US-127 for about 8 miles north of Jackson to Berry Road. Go right (east) on **Berry Road** past Lansing Avenue to where the river crosses the road and park along the roadside (this is about 1 mile east of US-127). Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting may be seen here, and in 2002 a Prothonotary Warbler was present. Return west on Berry Road about one-third mile to **Lansing Avenue** and turn right (north). Go about 1 mile to where the road crosses the Grand River and park along the roadside. Many of the same species listed for Berry Road can be found here, and in 2002 a Yellow-throated Warbler was seen in early June.

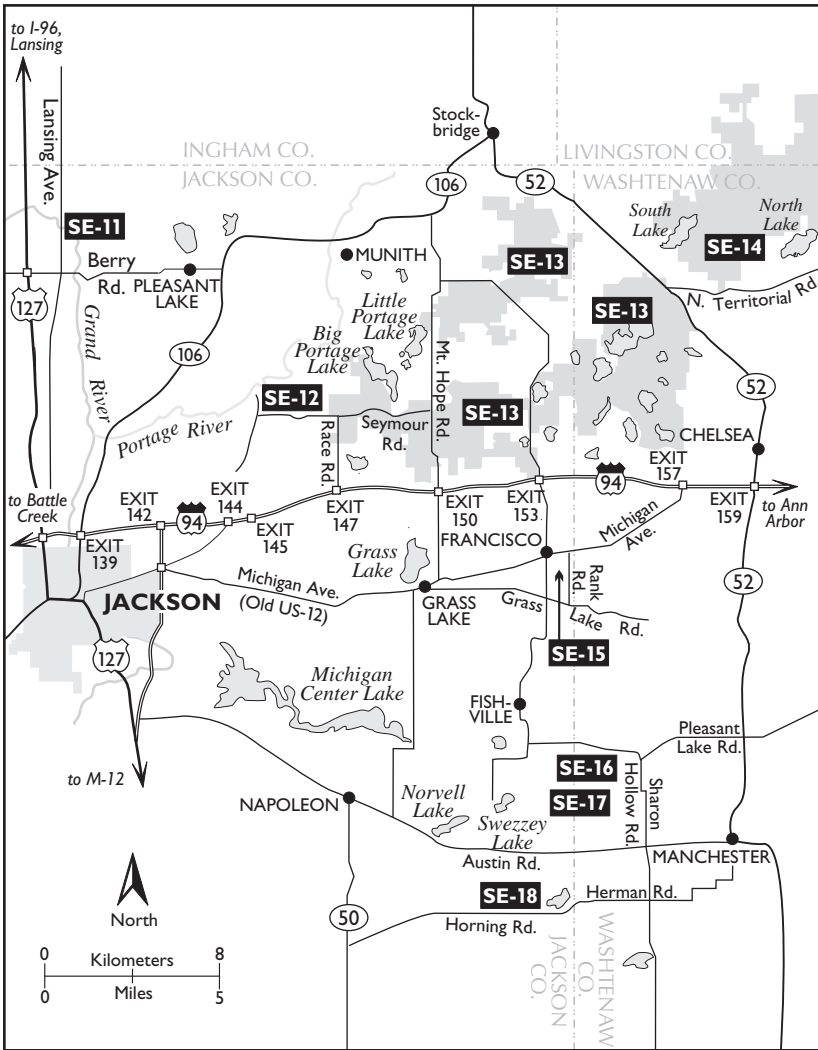
SE-12 Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary

By *Allen T. Chartier*

*Spring** Summer** Fall**** Winter**
DeLorme p. 31, A5. 42°24' N, 84°24' W
Contact Information: www.haehnlesanctuary.org/index.htm

Directions: From I-94 take the Race Road exit (Exit 147) and go north on Race Road for 2.0 miles to a T-intersection with Seymour Road. Turn left (west) and go 1.4 miles to a difficult-to-see parking area on the right. Watch for a brown sign with yellow lettering. See map on page 53.

More than 50 pairs of Sandhill Cranes nest within and in the general vicinity of this 930-acre sanctuary of the Michigan Audubon Society. The wetlands and adjacent woodlands and fields provide excellent habitat for a variety of wetland species as well as for migrant passerines. It is the fall season, however, that provides the birder an opportunity to see one of Michigan's true wildlife spectacles, when upwards of 3,000 Sandhill Cranes use the sanctuary as a night-roosting spot.



JACKSON AREA

- | | |
|--|---|
| SE-11 <i>Grand River Riparian Forest</i> | SE-15 <i>Rank Road Grasslands</i> |
| SE-12 <i>Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary</i> | SE-16 <i>Sharon Hollow Nature Preserve</i> |
| SE-13 <i>Waterloo State Recreation Area</i> | SE-17 <i>Sharonville State Game Area</i> |
| SE-14 <i>Pinckney State Recreation Area</i> | SE-18 <i>Watkins (Thorn) Lake</i> |

From the parking area, climb the hill to the signposted observation site. Here there is a panoramic view of Mud Lake (one of three Mud Lakes in this county!), as well as benches and an information kiosk. During the peak period for crane migration in late October and early November, crane watchers begin assembling at this spot at around 4:00 p.m., about an hour before sunset. Cranes will fly in from all directions, and there is no more stirring sound than a flock of cranes trumpeting overhead as they fly into their roost for the night. During the day, smaller numbers of cranes remain in the Mud Lake Marsh, and many birders spend several hours in the early afternoon driving the backroads in this part of Jackson County, sometimes being rewarded with very close views of the cranes feeding in the surrounding corn fields.

Much of the sanctuary is not open to the public to allow the cranes their privacy during nesting and roosting. These closed areas also hold nesting Least Bitterns, which may occasionally be seen from the overlook observation site as they fly over the cattails, or from the trail that leads from the left side of the overlook into the edge of the marsh. A scope will be useful to view the roosting cranes, as well as to scan for migrant waterfowl. In fall, many species use Mud Lake to rest, including American Black Duck, Gadwall, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, and Wood Duck. Occasionally, a few diving ducks can be seen as well, including Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Duck. The flocks of Canada Geese occasionally contain Snow Geese, and on rare occasions Greater White-fronted Goose has been seen. Later in fall and into winter, a Northern Shrike sometimes puts in an appearance, and the shrubby areas around the short trail leading down from the observation area will have many sparrows, including Song, Swamp, Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned in September and October, and American Tree and Fox Sparrows and Dark-eyed Junco in November and December.

In spring, many of the dabbling ducks will return, along with Great Blue and Green Herons, and occasional American and Least Bittern, as well as Virginia Rail, Sora, Marsh Wren Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. Eastern Bluebird commonly nests in the sanctuary, and is often present in winter as well. Small patches of woodland attract migrant warblers, and Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler are common nesting species.

SE-13 Waterloo State Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier and Lathe Clafin

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 32, B1 for Washtenaw Co., A7 for Jackson Co.

Contact Information: 734-475-8307

Directions: *From Jackson, take I-94 east to the Pierce Road exit (Exit 157). Or, from Ann Arbor, take I-94 west to Exit 157. See next map.*

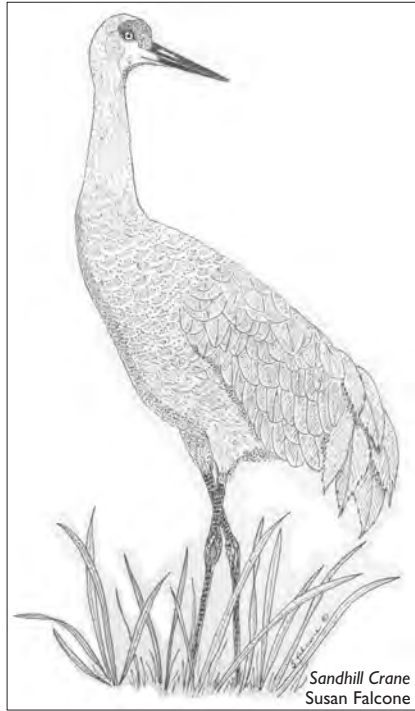
The **Waterloo State Recreation Area** and the contiguous Pinckney SRA to the northeast (see following account) are located about 30 minutes northeast of Jackson in a large area of oak-hickory woodland, swamp for-

est, cattail marsh, and sedge meadows, interspersed with patches of other interesting habitat, such as beech-maple woods and Tamarack swamp. The following route describes some of the best sites at Waterloo, although the entire area is worth exploring, with its many underbirded nooks and crannies of habitat. Since this site is just as easily reached from the Ann Arbor area, this account describes sites from east to west, though any site can be visited individually from several access points on I-94.

(A) McLure Road area: Take I-94 to the Pierce Road exit (Exit 157). Go north (straight ahead) for 2.3 miles to Bush Road and turn left (west). Go 0.6 mile through good habitat for Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Indigo Bunting, and Scarlet Tanager, to the Gerald E. Eddy Discovery Center (0.8 mile off the road). There are several trails to

explore here, including the Bog Trail, which is interesting for plants, and an overlook of Mill Lake, where waterfowl can be found in spring and fall. The center is a fairly dependable spot for resident Pileated Woodpecker and migrant Louisiana Waterthrush. Continue west on Bush Road, stopping to listen for Wild Turkey in May, and go 0.75 mile to McLure Road, where you should turn left. McLure Road is an excellent place for Cerulean Warbler, especially near the intersection with Loveland Road 2.3 miles ahead (an unmarked T-intersection). There is a pullout on the right at 1.6 miles from Bush Road (0.7 mile before Loveland Road) where you can park to bird the road on foot. There is often a Cerulean Warbler territory near this pullout, and several more between here and Loveland Road. Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, and American Redstart, and Scarlet Tanager are regular summer residents. In late May through June, Hooded and Kentucky (rare) Warblers can occasionally be found.

(B) Cassidy Road: At the T-intersection, turn left and go 1.25 miles to Cavanaugh Lake Road. Turn right and go 1.0 mile to Clear Lake Road (Clear Lake Road is Exit 153 from I-94). Turn right (north) onto Clear Lake Road and go 3.1 miles to Waterloo Road. Turn right and go 1.1 miles to Roe Road. Turn left and go 1.6 miles to Cassidy Road and turn right. After about 100 yards, Cassidy veers to the right, while Roe Road goes left. Narrow Cassidy

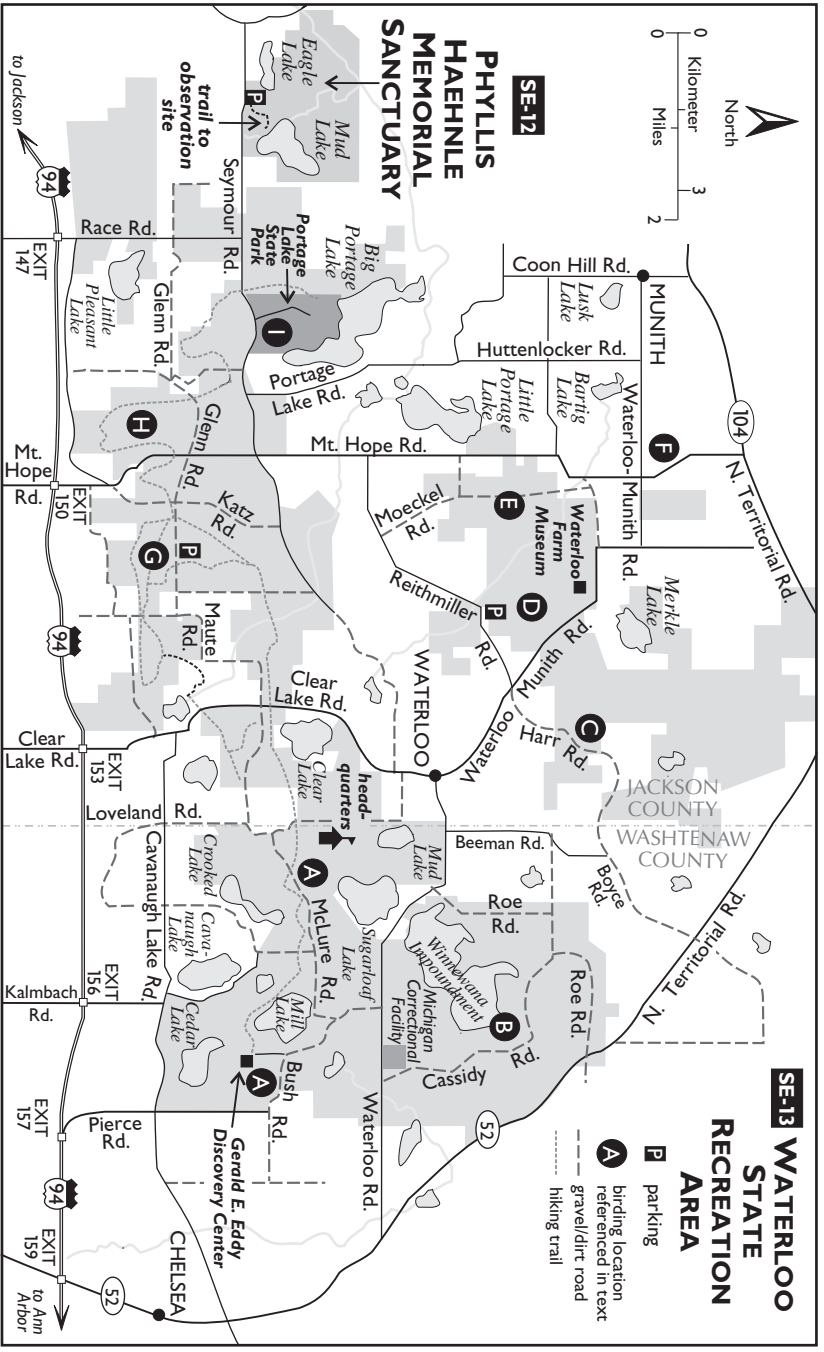


Sandhill Crane
Susan Falcone

Road then winds east and south for about 3 miles to meet Waterloo Road, first passing through an extensive mature woodland that holds resident and breeding birds, including Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, Wood Thrush, Veery, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, and Hooded Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Barred Owl has been found near the intersection with Roe Road, and Eastern Screech-Owl and Whip-poor-will are occasional along this stretch as well. Farther along, the road leaves the dense woods and the habitat becomes more varied, with smaller, shorter patches of woodland interspersed with shrubby areas, open fields, and marshes. Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark have been found in the fields, and Blue-winged and Yellow Warblers have been seen in the shrubby areas, along with Eastern Towhee. The marshes sometimes have an occasional American Bittern or Sedge Wren, as well as summer resident Swamp Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat. Hooded Mergansers, rare this far south in summer, once bred along here a few years ago. Cuckoos may be found anywhere along the road. *The last quarter-mile or so of Cassidy Road passes the Michigan Correctional Facility on the right, and roadside signs warning against trespassing should be strictly observed. Do not stop for anyone walking along this short stretch of the road.*

(C) Harr Road marshes: At Waterloo Road, turn right and go 3.9 miles back to Clear Lake Road. Veer slightly right, go 0.3 mile to Waterloo- Munith Road, and turn left. Go northwest for 1.2 miles to Harr Road and turn right for 0.6 mile to the marsh. Sedge is primarily on the left (northwest), and cattail is primarily on the right (southeast). This is a good spot for Virginia Rail and Sora, and both Marsh and Sedge Wrens can be found most years from April through September, each segregated into its appropriate habitat. Sandhill Cranes usually nest in the large marshy area on the right and Wilson's Snipe can often be heard winnowing over this marsh in April and May.

(D) Portage Lake Marsh: Backtrack to Waterloo-Munith Road and turn right (northwest). Go 0.1 mile and turn left (southwest) onto Reithmiller Road. Go 1.1 miles to a parking area on the right. Reithmiller Road crosses Portage Lake Marsh here, and there is a fire trail (no vehicles) along the north edge of the marsh beginning at the parking area. Sandhill Crane, American Woodcock (March/April), Eastern Screech-Owl, and Acadian Flycatcher can be found in spring and summer in the woodlands and marshes along this fire road, and Virginia Rail and Sora are often found in the marsh adjacent to Reithmiller Road. On spring mornings, American Bittern and Wilson's Snipe can be heard in the marsh at the northern end of the fire road. King Rail has been reported here, although not recently, and the species has been reduced to only a few pairs statewide (mainly in the Monroe Marshes and parts of Saginaw Bay). Wood Duck, Common Moorhen, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow are regular, and Least Bittern is occasional. A worthwhile side trip on the way to or from the fire road is to go northwest on



Waterloo-Munith Road for about 1 mile from the intersection with Reithmiller Road. Just before the Waterloo Farm Museum, the road crosses the marsh, where American Bittern is found every spring and Least Bittern is occasional.

(E) Portage Lake Swamp (Moeckel Road): Continue west on Reithmiller Road for 1.3 miles to Moeckel Road. Turn right onto Moeckel and go 1.5 miles to a dead-end. Walk about one-quarter to one-half mile along this road through a marshy area, where Blue-winged Warbler is common in summer, and Wild Turkey and Veery can often be heard calling from the adjacent woodlands. Virginia Rail and Sora are present in May and June, and Blue-winged Teal is a common summer resident. American Woodcock, Barred Owl, and Whip-poor-will have been heard here at night. The marshes are also a good place for frogs, with both Cope's and Common Gray Treefrog recorded in May and June.

(F) Waterloo-Munith Road: Before heading south to Glenn Road and Sackrider Hill, you may want to make a side trip for Northern Mockingbird. Go west from Reithmiller Road for 0.9 mile to the T-intersection at Mt. Hope Road. Turn right (north) onto Mt. Hope Road and go 6.8 miles to Waterloo-Munith Road, where Mt. Hope jogs right and then left at 5.7 miles. The mockingbird is often seen in the hedgerows within one-quarter mile of the intersection of Mt. Hope and Waterloo-Munith Roads, most often to the west but sometimes to the east as well.

(G) South Glenn Road trails: From the intersection of Reithmiller and Mt. Hope Roads, go south on Mt. Hope for 2 miles and turn left (east) onto Glenn Road. Go 1 mile to a parking area on the north side of the road adjacent to two large cottonwood trees, one of which is dead and which should be checked for nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers. The immediate area is excellent for nesting Chestnut-sided and Blue-winged Warblers. Cerulean and Hooded Warblers can often be heard from the road. Walk west on Glenn Road for about 200 feet to a trail leading into the woods on the south side of the road. This trail and the many unmapped trails south of Glenn Road between Katz and Maute Roads provide excellent access to search for nesting Acadian Flycatcher, Veery, American Redstart, Scarlet Tanager, and other woodland species. Watch overhead for Broad-winged Hawk, which also nests in the area. The specialty of this site, however, is Hooded Warbler. This is one of the best areas in Michigan to find them; 10 to 12 pairs are often present. A simple route is as follows: take the trail south from the Glenn Road parking area for about one-quarter mile to where it ends at marker post #4 on a main east-west trail. Walk this main trail in either direction for one-half mile and listen for both Hooded and Cerulean Warblers as well as for other woodland species. Hooded Warbler is usually easily seen at mid-level in the woodlands, while Cerulean Warbler prefers the treetops, requiring patience to see. American Redstart is usually found on the westernmost stretch of this trail. Glenn Road is also home to a healthy breeding population of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

(H) Sackrider Hill: Backtrack to Mt. Hope Road and turn left (south). Go 0.7 mile to the parking area for Sackrider Hill on the right (hard to see). The urge to climb to the top of this 120-foot hill may be irresistible. Birds you'll see along the way might include Chipping and Field Sparrows, as well as a few Blue-winged and Yellow Warblers. At the top of the hill, the Waterloo Trail leads off to the right, where the scrubby habitat is good for breeding Eastern Towhee. The woodlands farther along the trail to the northwest hold Least Flycatcher, Hooded (local birder Lathe Claflin finds four–six pairs per year) and Cerulean Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Prairie Warbler was discovered on the hill in 1976 by one of the editors, and occurred at least through the early 1990s. Though it has not been found recently, likely due to habitat succession, the species could occur in migration. Pileated Woodpecker has occasionally been reported from this area.

(I) Portage Lake State Park: Located at the south end of Big Portage Lake, this state park, surrounded by the recreation area, is primarily for boaters and fishermen. However, during late fall and early spring, the lake is a good spot for migrant waterfowl, including Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, all three mergansers, Common Loon, Horned Grebe (spring), and Red-necked Grebe (rare in spring). This is one of the best lakes in the area for finding migrant loons and grebes in October and November. To reach the park, go north from Mt. Hope Road (Exit 150 from I-94) for 2.3 miles to Seymour Road. Turn left (west) onto Seymour Road for about 2 miles to the park entrance on the right. The woodland trails provide opportunities to see common species such as Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, and American Goldfinch. This park is also a good place to see nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers, typically near the boat launch; occasionally they overwinter here. In spring, the areas around the park entrance and boat-launch parking are good for migrant warblers, with up to 15 species recorded on a good day. Rarely, Broad-winged Hawk has been found in summer (twice from 1999 to 2002).

SE-14 Pinckney State Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier, Mike Sefton, Roger Wykes, Dick Wolinski, and Bruce Bowman

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 32, A1

Contact Information: 734-426-4913

Directions: From I-94 east of Jackson (west of Ann Arbor), take M-52 (Exit 159) north for 7.2 miles to North Territorial Road.

This area and the previous site, Waterloo SRA, have similar habitats and birds. **Pinckney State Recreation Area** is visited by fewer birders, but certainly deserves as much attention as Waterloo.

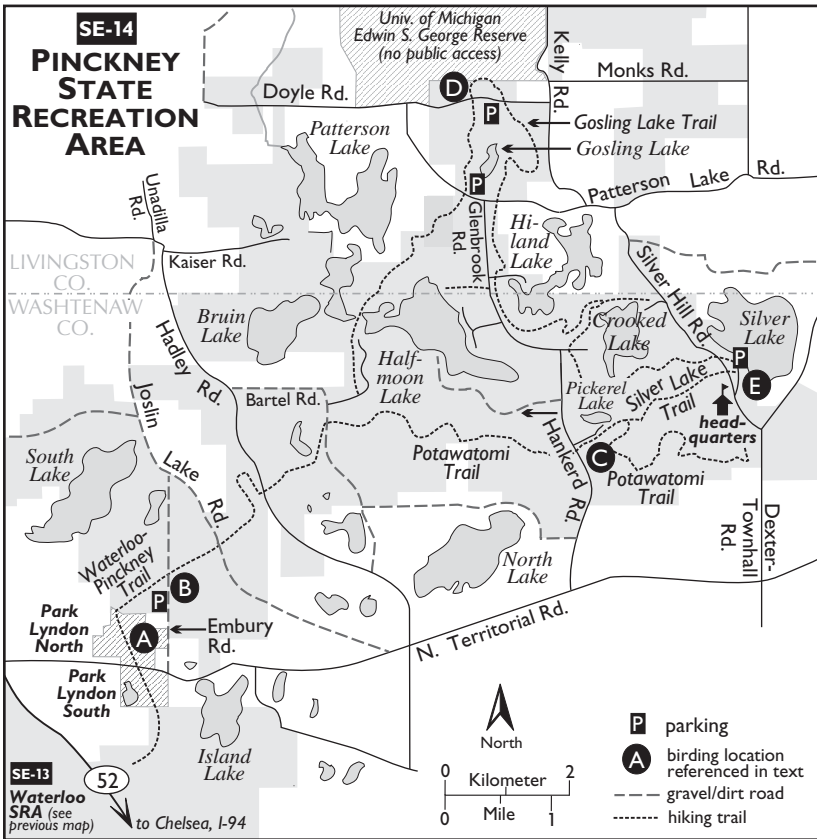
Park Lyndon (A on map), a Washtenaw County park and technically not part of the state recreation area proper, is on North Territorial Road northeast of Chelsea, 1.25 miles east of the M-52 and North Territorial Road inter-

section. The first entrance is to Park Lyndon North, which will be on your left. Continue on another few hundred yards to the entrance for Park Lyndon South on your right. There is a great variety of habitat in the two sections of the park, including deciduous and coniferous woodland, Tamarack swamp, shrub swamp, and cattail marsh, particularly in the North. Park Lyndon South includes Lake Genevieve. The trails and woodland of Park Lyndon are excellent in spring and fall migrations, and are a regular spot for Olive-sided Flycatcher in late May. In summer, both cuckoos, Alder Flycatcher, Hooded Warbler, and a few Blue-winged Warblers may be found, including an occasional hybrid Brewster's Warbler.

It's easy to get lost in either section of the park—particularly the north section, which has many criss-crossing trails. Some of the trails are not on the map of Park Lyndon, but a map is useful nonetheless. Call the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission at 734- 971-6337 to obtain a map. No maps are available at the park entrances. Park Lyndon North is bordered on the east by Embury Road, the one site in this area that is regularly visited by birders, as it is a dependable spot for Whip-poor-will, a species difficult to find in southeastern Michigan. Great Horned and Barred Owls as well as Eastern Screech-Owl can also be found along this road. In spring and summer, Yellow and Blue-winged Warblers are common, especially in the swampy areas of Tamarack, and Yellow-throated Vireo is occasional. Wild Turkey, Broad-winged Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Cerulean and Hooded (occasional) Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, and Eastern Towhee, can also be found along this road.

From North Territorial Road, go east for 0.3 mile past the entrance to Park Lyndon South and turn left (north) onto Embury Road. Birding is good in spring and summer all along this road, which continues north for 1.7 miles to a T-intersection with Joslin Lake Road. The Waterloo-Pinckney Trail crosses Embury Road 0.8 mile north of North Territorial Road, where there is a parking area on the left. The most productive birding is to the west (from the left side of the road) through the woodlands and leading eventually to a boardwalk. Ruffed Grouse and Barred Owl have been seen and heard (generally before dawn) along this trail, and Virginia Rail, Sora, Alder Flycatcher, and Swamp Sparrow can be found from the boardwalk. Least and American Bitterns are rare possibilities here. The trail continues west for a short distance, then turns south across North Territorial Road along the west side of Park Lyndon North and into Park Lyndon South.

Return south to North Territorial Road and go east. About 0.75 mile east of Embury Road, on the south side of North Territorial, is Island Lake, worth checking for waterfowl in April and October, especially for Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and others. Continue another 2.75 miles to Hankerd Road (**C** on map) and go left (north). The habitat is similar to that along Embury Road, but the higher traffic volume makes birding a little more difficult. To get away from the road, go 1.2



miles north to the parking area for **Pickarel Lake** on the right. There is a small parking area at a nice Tamarack and cedar swamp along Hankerd just before this turnoff. The road to Pickarel Lake is very rough and full of large potholes, and may be impassable after a rain, but it is better to walk it anyway. The road continues for 0.4 mile east to the lake and passes through habitat for Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Yellow and Blue-winged Warblers, and Swamp Sparrow. Broad-winged Hawk may nest here on occasion. About 0.75 mile north of Pickarel Lake, the road makes a sharp bend to the left and becomes Glenbrook Road, ending at a T-intersection with Patterson Lake Road (3.7 miles north of North Territorial Road). There are two additional pulloffs before this sharp bend where you can park and bird the woodland adjacent to the road. Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting can often be found here. Halfmoon Lake, on the left side of Glenbrook Road about 0.6 mile past Pickarel Lake on the left, is a recreational lake and probably worth checking only in April and October for ducks, if the gate is open.

Hankerd Road makes a sharp left turn after about 0.75 mile and becomes Glenbrook Road. Pull off the road on the right here and listen for Whip-poor-wills just after dark. If you are unable to hear them from the road, walk a trail east from the road a short distance to where it intersects another major trail and listen from there. Continue north on Hankerd Road for another 0.3 mile (about 1.8 miles past Pickerel Lake) to an access road on the right to Hiland Lake, which may be productive for migrants and waterfowl. There is a trail that leads to the west along the stream that connects Hiland Lake with Halfmoon Lake. This trail, part of the Potawatomi Trail system, leads to the old campground on the shore of Halfmoon Lake. This area is good in spring and fall migrations for migrant passerines, and should also be checked during late summer and early fall for migrants that may be using the hanging fruit and cover along the stream. Pileated Woodpecker and both cuckoos have been found in this area in recent years.

Continue north on Glenbrook Road, turn left at a T-intersection onto Patterson Lake Road, and stop after about 0.2 mile at a parking area on the right at a trailhead, another portion of the Potawatomi Trail. To the north the trail passes through a wooded hillside and down over a small boardwalk near the emergent, sedge-dominated marsh, where Virginia Rail and Sora may be found. Farther up the trail, a diverse set of mature deciduous-woodland birds may be found, including Cerulean Warbler, which has also been found near the parking area, though not recently. Hooded Warbler has been found here in summer in recent years.

Return to Patterson Lake Road and continue west to a T-intersection with **Doyle Road (D** on map); this is about 1.5 miles west of Glenbrook Road. Turn right (east) and begin listening for Cerulean Warbler, which was found just east of this intersection in summer 2002. Continue east on Patterson Lake Road for about 0.75 mile to the Gosling Lake Trail on the right, good in spring and summer for Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested and Acadian Flycatchers, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Hooded Warbler has occurred in early summer.

Similar habitat, which can be accessed only from the roadside, is found along Kelley Road. Continue east on Doyle Road for about a mile past the Gosling Lake Trail to a T-intersection at Kelly Road and turn left. Stay left at the next junction at Monks Road (about one-quarter mile) and continue north on Kelly Road. The University of Michigan's Edwin S. George Reserve is fenced along the left side of the road and the area is closed to the public. Fortunately, birding from the roadside along Kelly Road can produce many of the same species as on Doyle Road, as well as both cuckoos, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and occasionally a White-eyed Vireo.

Go east on North Territorial Road from Hankerd Road for about 2 miles to Dexter-Townhall Road. Turn left (north) and go about 2 miles to Silver Hill Road. Turn left into the Pinckney Recreation Area at Silver Lake

(state park fee) and go about 0.6 mile to a parking area and trailhead on the right. The **Silver Lake area** (E on map) is another site for Whip-poor-will, and offers good birding during daylight hours as well. Most birders visit here for waterfowl in spring and fall, and there is often no better place locally to find migrant loons and grebes; rarities such as Long-tailed Duck and Surf Scoter turn up regularly. Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Horned Grebe, Bonaparte's Gull, are found annually, most often in fall. Sandhill Crane, Hairy Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Veery, and Blue-winged Warbler have been found here in June. The Silver Lake Trail leads to a small bog after about 0.75 mile. Barred Owl has been found in the area, and this trail may be a good spot to try to see one.

SE-15 Rank Road Grasslands

By Allen T. Chartier and Lathe Caffin

Spring** Summer** Fall* Winter
DeLorme p. 31, B7. 41°16' N, 84°08' W

Directions: From I-94, take the Clear Lake Road exit (Exit 153) left (south) for 0.8 mile to Francisco Road. Turn right (south) and go 1.3 miles to Michigan Avenue (Old US-12). Turn left (east), go 0.5 mile to Rank Road, and turn right (south). See the Jackson Area map on page 49.

This small area has been productive in recent years for some species uncommon in the region, including Sedge Wren, Western Meadowlark, and Dickcissel (not annual). The 2 miles on Rank Road to Grass Lake Road are worth checking for the three species mentioned above in addition to Northern Bobwhite, Horned Lark, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlark, and Bobolink. Grasshopper Sparrows are most easily found in the unmowed grassy areas in front of some of the houses on the southwest section of this road. Western Meadowlarks are usually heard singing from behind the northernmost houses.

SE-16 Nan Weston Nature Preserve at Sharon Hollow

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 32, C1. 42°11' N, 84°06' W
Contact Information: <http://nature.org/wherewework/northamericalstates/michigan/preserves/art5250.html>

Directions: From I-94 east of Jackson, take M-52 (exit 159) south for about 7 miles to Pleasant Lake Road (about 2.5 miles north of Manchester). Turn right (west) for 3.2 miles to Sharon Hollow Road and turn right. Go 0.1 mile to another T-intersection at Eusades Road. Turn left (west) and go 0.9 mile to the preserve entrance on the left. There is a small parking area near a mailbox (No. 16000). If the area is full, park along Jacob Road north of Eusades Road, 0.1 mile farther west.

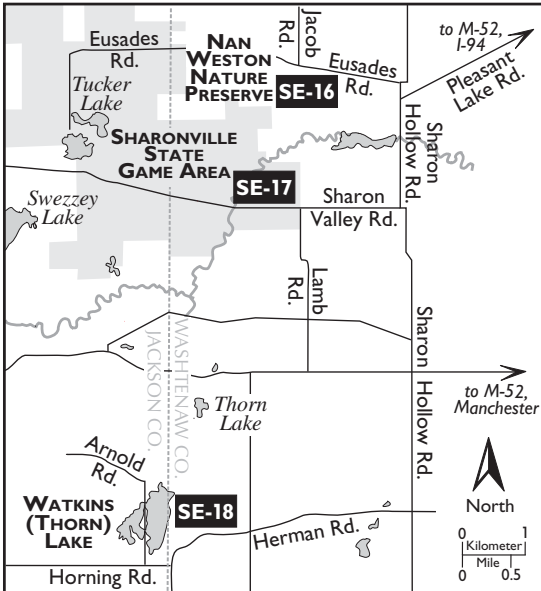
The **Nan Weston Nature Preserve at Sharon Hollow** (The Nature Conservancy of Michigan) is a good place to see Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Yellow-breasted Chat, as well as migrant passerines in spring and fall. This site was set aside for its excellent spring wildflower displays, so please stay on the trails to protect the sensitive and legally protected vegetation. Pileated Woodpecker has been heard from this road, and occasionally seen flying overhead. The trail meanders south for about one-quarter mile to a powerline right-of-way, where Sedge Wren and Yellow-breasted Chat have been found on occasion. The trail re-enters the woodland, where Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, and Wood Thrush may be found. The trail turns west here and crosses a small stream.

SE-17 Sharonville State Game Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p.32, C1. 42°11' N, 84°06' W
 Contact Information: 517-522-4097

Directions: From M-52 and Pleasant Lake Road (see Sharon Hollow above), go west for 3.2 miles and turn left (south) onto Sharon Hollow Road. Go 1.1 miles and turn right (west) onto Sharon Valley Road for another 1.1 miles to a small dirt drive and parking area on the right (north), just past Lamb Road on the left and near a small white barn.



There is much habitat to explore at this site, but of primary interest is a grassland area that has been productive in recent years for Henslow's Sparrow. Eastern Bluebird and Baltimore Oriole are often seen at the parking area, and occasionally an Orchard Oriole is present as well. Walk the trail to the north, following the fenceline. Please stay on the trail to avoid trampling any bird nests. A scope can be helpful. Listen carefully for the insect-like song

of the Henslow's Sparrow among the songs of the more common Grasshopper and Field Sparrows. Henslow's likes weedy fields with varying heights of vegetation, including dead stalks of Queen Anne's Lace and Mullein, which it uses as a singing perch, making it possible to scope the bird. Grasshopper Sparrow prefers more uniform-height grassy areas, and may even be seen perching on the fence near the trail. Dickcissel is occasional here as well, among the more common Northern Bobwhites and Eastern Meadowlarks.

SE-18 Watkins (Thorn) Lake

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter**
DeLorme 31, C6. 42°08' N, 84°08' W

Directions: See map above. From M-52 and Pleasant Lake Road (see Sharon Hollow directions above), go west for 3.2 miles to Sharon Hollow Road. Turn left (south) and go 4.1 miles to Herman Road. At Sharon Valley Road, 1.1 miles, jog left then right to stay on Sharon Hollow Road. Turn right (west) onto Herman Road and go 2.3 miles to the T-intersection with Horning Road. Turn left and then almost immediately right again to stay on Horning Road. After another 0.25 mile, turn right (north) onto Arnold Road for 0.75 mile north through the center of Watkins Lake and adjacent fields (this road sometimes floods). Please stay on the road along here, as the surrounding land is private property.

Although this lake is marked on the DeLorme atlas as Watkins Lake, virtually no local birders call it that, instead referring to it as Thorn Lake. To make matters more confusing, there is a small, mostly inaccessible lake to the northeast labeled Thorn Lake in DeLorme. Whatever the real name of this lake, it provides a haven for waterfowl during spring and fall migration.

Spring (March–May) and fall (September–November) are the best times to bird the lake, when one of the highlights is the large rafts of hundreds of Ring-necked Ducks in April and October. Other diving ducks that are found annually, often in good numbers, include Canvasback, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Hooded and Common Mergansers. Ruddy Duck is fairly common and occasionally a few Snow Geese or a Greater White-fronted Goose can be mixed in with the Canadas. Great Blue Heron and Double-crested Cormorant are often seen as well, and occasionally an Osprey or a Bald Eagle will put in an appearance. Dabbling ducks are well represented by Gadwall, American Black Duck, American Wigeon, Mallard, both Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, and an occasional Northern Pintail.

THE HILLSDALE AREA

By Jack Reinoehl

The following section describes areas around Hillsdale County that are of interest primarily for species of more southern affinity, such as White-eyed Vireo, Hooded Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush, as well as open-country and grassland birds, including Dickcissel (irregular) and Henslow's Sparrow. In recent years, Hillsdale County has been the only reliable place in the state for breeding Kentucky Warblers, and is one of the more dependable sites for wintering Short-eared Owls.

SE-19 Baw Beese Lake

*Spring** Summer Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 22, A4. 41°54' N, 84°35' W

Directions: From the town of Hillsdale, drive south on M-99 past the fairgrounds for just a little under a mile. Turn left onto Ash-te-wette Drive and proceed to the Hillsdale Country Club parking lot, one of several vantage points for observing the lake.

Though there is often much human activity on the lake, it still hosts good numbers of ducks, grebes, and loons in spring and fall. The best time to visit is just after a storm, when a scoter is a slight possibility, or just before the lake freezes over in late fall. Brushy areas on the east side are good for migrants, especially in bad weather. Owens Park has nesting Red-headed Woodpecker, Baltimore Oriole, and Warbling Vireo, and is good for Yellow-rumped and Blackpoll Warblers in spring migration. The shallow south end of the lake and several smaller lakes south of M-99 often thaw first, and ducks and coots regularly concentrate there.

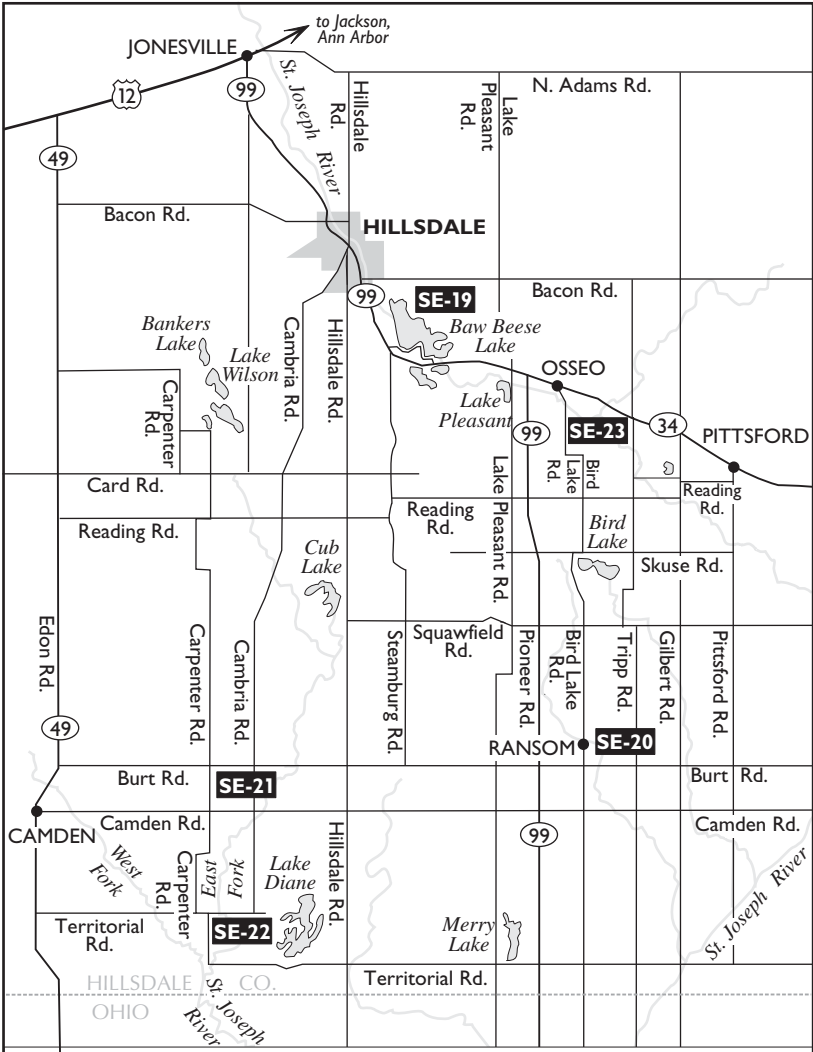
Hillsdale County Grasslands: The following describes two of the best grasslands in Hillsdale County, although there are other good areas, mostly in the south central and southwestern parts of the county. The areas described are on private land; please respect that and do not enter the properties. Both sites are at risk of eventual plowing as well as invasion by shrubs.

SE-20 Ransom Grasslands

Spring Summer** Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 23, B5. 41°46' N, 84°31' W

Directions: Follow M-99 south to Burt Road, roughly 12 miles from the Baw Beese Lake, and turn left (east). Go 2.0 miles and turn north onto Tripp Road.

This area of grasslands is east of the small town of Ransom. The field extends for less than one-half mile to both east and west and almost a mile to the north; it can be birded very well without leaving the road. This field has



HILLSDALE AREA

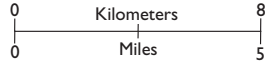
SE-19 Baw Beese Lake

SE-22 St. Joseph River, West Fork

SE-20 Ransom Grasslands

SE-23 Lost Nation State Game Area

SE-21 Camden Grasslands



lain fallow for many years. Short-eared Owl, difficult to find anywhere in Michigan, is very likely between late October and mid-April; numbers vary from one year to the next. The owls often become active at sunset, although occasionally they are not seen until almost dark. This is also a good area for scarce raptors, including Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Harrier. In summer, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Bobolink are numerous; Dickcissel and Henslow's Sparrow have occurred.

SE-21 Camden Grasslands

Spring Summer** Fall** Winter***

DeLorme p. 22, B3. 41°46' N, 84°41' W

Another grassland of note is about 9 miles west of the Ransom grasslands (east of the town of Camden), south of Burt Road between Carpenter and Cambria Roads (see previous map). Unlike the Ransom grasslands, this lovely huge field is mowed each year, but is still a good place to look for the highly unpredictable Henslow's Sparrow and Sedge Wren. These species may both be absent from this area in June and appear in July. A good vantage point for the field, and often a good place for Henslow's Sparrow, is the small cemetery on Burt Road about 0.2 mile east of Carpenter Road.

SE-22 St. Joseph River (Carpenter and Territorial Roads)

*Spring** Summer** Fall Winter*

DeLorme p. 22, C3. 41°42' N, 84°41' W

This site, 7 miles west of the intersection of Territorial Road and M-99 at the south end of Hillsdale County (see previous map), where two forks of the St. Joseph River join as they flow south into Ohio, has a few small patches of forest with several large sycamore trees. Louisiana Waterthrush often nests, and Yellow-throated Warbler and Summer Tanager are both outside possibilities. Summer Tanagers were present through the breeding season in 1987 and 2000. Be alert here, as traffic is heavy and fast along Territorial Road.

SE-23 Lost Nation State Game Area

*Spring*** Summer**** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 23, B5. 41°50' N, 84°30' W

Contact Information: 517-522-4097

Directions: Starting at the intersection of M-99 and M-34, go east for 0.7 mile to Bird Lake Road and turn right (south). Continue 1.4 miles to where the road jogs to the east; after 0.2 mile go straight (east) when the road turns south. You will very shortly reach a parking lot and a locked gate (A on map on next page).

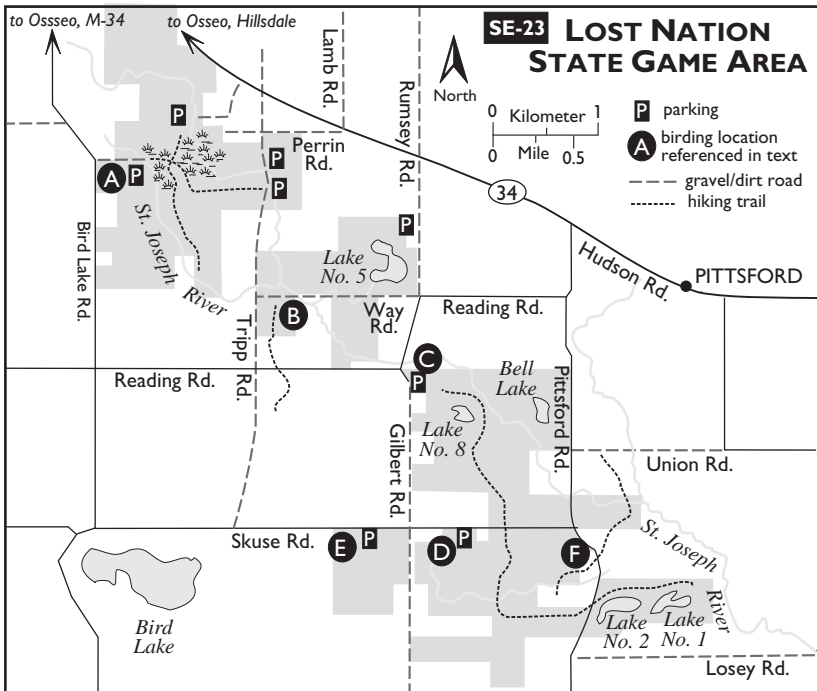
Lost Nation State Game Area, in southeastern Hillsdale County, has good populations of some of Michigan's scarcer species, including White-eyed Vireo, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky and Hooded Warblers, and

Yellow-breasted Chat. The area consists of a number of relatively small woodlots near the East Branch of the St. Joseph River as it flows to the south-east. Common species throughout the area include Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, and Ovenbird. Visitors from farther north are dismayed to discover that wood ticks, generally harmless, frequent the area. Wearing Wellington-type boots discourages the ticks most of the time and is helpful when walking in the area's wet grass and brambles.

White-eyed Vireos have bred in the immediate vicinity of the parking lot (**A** on map on next page) in recent years. Walk past the gate and enter a Tam-rack bog where there are Veeries, several pairs of Alder Flycatchers, and often a Yellow-breasted Chat.

After one-quarter mile, you will reach a north-south road. Going right (south) takes you through a fine woodland with Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager, all species that are common throughout Lost Nation. The low area one-third mile along this trail hosted a Kentucky Warbler through the summers of 2001 and 2002. If, instead, you go straight for another one-quarter mile, you will enter a brushy area that usually has a pair or two of White-eyed Vireos. This is also a good spot for fall warblers during migration and for Fox Sparrows around April 1.

Return to Bird Lake Road, go south for 1.2 miles to Reading Road, and turn left. At 1 mile turn left (north) onto Tripp Road, and after 0.5 mile turn right





Kentucky Warbler
Rosemarie Attilio

(east) at Way Road. After 0.3 mile, just past a bridge, there is a pulloff on the left (**B** on map). The entire Way Road area is good birding at any season and makes for a pleasant hike (unless there is activity at the nearby shooting range). Eastern Phoebe nests here and, in early May, a singing Northern Waterthrush is surprisingly likely along the river. In winter, this area often hosts Winter Wren and Swamp Sparrow.

Continue east for 0.4 mile to another pulloff on the left and a trail to the north. Along the trail, you will find high-quality forest where, along with the species previously mentioned, Barred Owl and Cerulean Warbler are possible. This woods borders Lake No. 5, where you may also park.

Continue east for 0.3 mile and turn south onto Reading Road. After 0.5 mile, when this road turns west, keep going south (you are now on Gilbert Road) and look for a parking lot on your left after 0.1 mile (**C** on map). Park here and walk the trail to the east through a brushy area past a few ponds. After about one-third mile, look for a large pond on the right, nicely visible from the top of a hill. This pond, Lake No. 8, has recently hosted Beavers. Courting Hooded Mergansers have also been seen here in April. Continuing along the trail, you will enter woods and soon tramp along a dam (boots may be advisable). A pair of Louisiana Waterthrushes can be expected near this dam between April and June. This area has all the common, nesting woodland species; Barred Owl and Pileated Woodpecker are also possible. Concentrations of migrants are often found here in May. It is possible to follow this trail past the dam to the upper woods.

Another way to visit the upper woods is to drive south on Gilbert Road for a mile from the parking area to Skuse Road and turn left (east). Watch for an

inconspicuous parking area about 0.3 mile from this intersection on the south (**D** on map). From here, walk east about one-quarter mile, or two-thirds of the way down the hillside, to a trail that goes to the left, passing Lake No. 8. This trail first enters a brushy area where you should listen for White-eyed Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat. If it has been exceptionally wet, the trail may be flooded along some sections. In about one-third mile, you will encounter the remains of an immense fallen tree. In the next 100 yards, listen carefully for Kentucky and Hooded Warblers as you continue along the trail. One or two pairs of Kentucky Warblers spent the summer in this general area every year between 1996 and 2001, in 2003, and in four out of the nine years prior to 1996.

Another fine area may be reached by backtracking west along Skuse Road for 0.4 mile past Gilbert Road to a parking area on the south (**E** on map). In summer, listen for Alder Flycatcher and Yellow-breasted Chat near the parking area. In early spring at dusk, several pairs of American Woodcocks can be observed displaying here, and on still nights you may hear a Great Horned Owl in the distance. From the parking area, follow a trail south for about 100 yards to the edge of a mature woodlot which has regularly hosted Barred Owl and Cerulean Warbler.

A final site can be reached by going one mile east of Gilbert Road on Skuse Road to Pittsford Road, and then south 0.5 mile on Pittsford Road to a parking area at the top of a hill (**F** on map). The trail that goes to the east along the ridge is highly recommended in spring migration. This area is brushy on the south side of the ridge, with a large artificial lake and a few ponds, and wooded on the north side, with a wet area below the woods. Follow the trail for nearly a mile to a small woodlot and the St. Joseph River. The varied habitats attract many nesting species and, on a good day, numerous migrants. In mid-May is quite possible to find up to 15 species of warblers and 60 to 70 species total in a few hours. Cuckoos are regular here; listen also for Yellow-breasted Chat along the trail, sometimes to the north well below the ridge.

THE ANN ARBOR AREA

The Ann Arbor area is one of the most intensely birded regions of the Southeastern Lower Peninsula. Many students from the University of Michigan get their first exposure to birding here, and the area is blessed with a good variety of habitats and a number of dedicated birders. Only 25 miles west of Detroit, this county is more rural and hilly than most of the nearby Detroit Metropolitan area. Farm ponds in the south provide good opportunities for waterfowl and shorebird viewing, coniferous areas in the north contain habitat for species that typically breed farther north, and islands of habitat within the city itself serve as migrant traps where unusual species turn up in many years.

Only a select few of the numerous birding locations are covered in this guide. Details of many other sites (46 in total) can be found in an excellent

county publication, *The Birds of Washtenaw County, Michigan* by Michael A. Kielb, John M. Swales, and Richard A. Wolinski, published in 1992. Maps and additional information on other parks and birding are available from:

- Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation: 734-222-6715, www.ewashtenaw.org/living/recreation/lv_rc_index.html
- Birders@umich list archives: www.virtualbirder.com/bmail/umichbirders/latest.html
- Washtenaw Audubon Society Field Trips: www.washtenawaudubon.org/field-trips.htm
- City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation: 734-994-2780, www.ci.ann-arbor.mi.us/framed/parks/index.html

SE-24 Stinchfield Woods

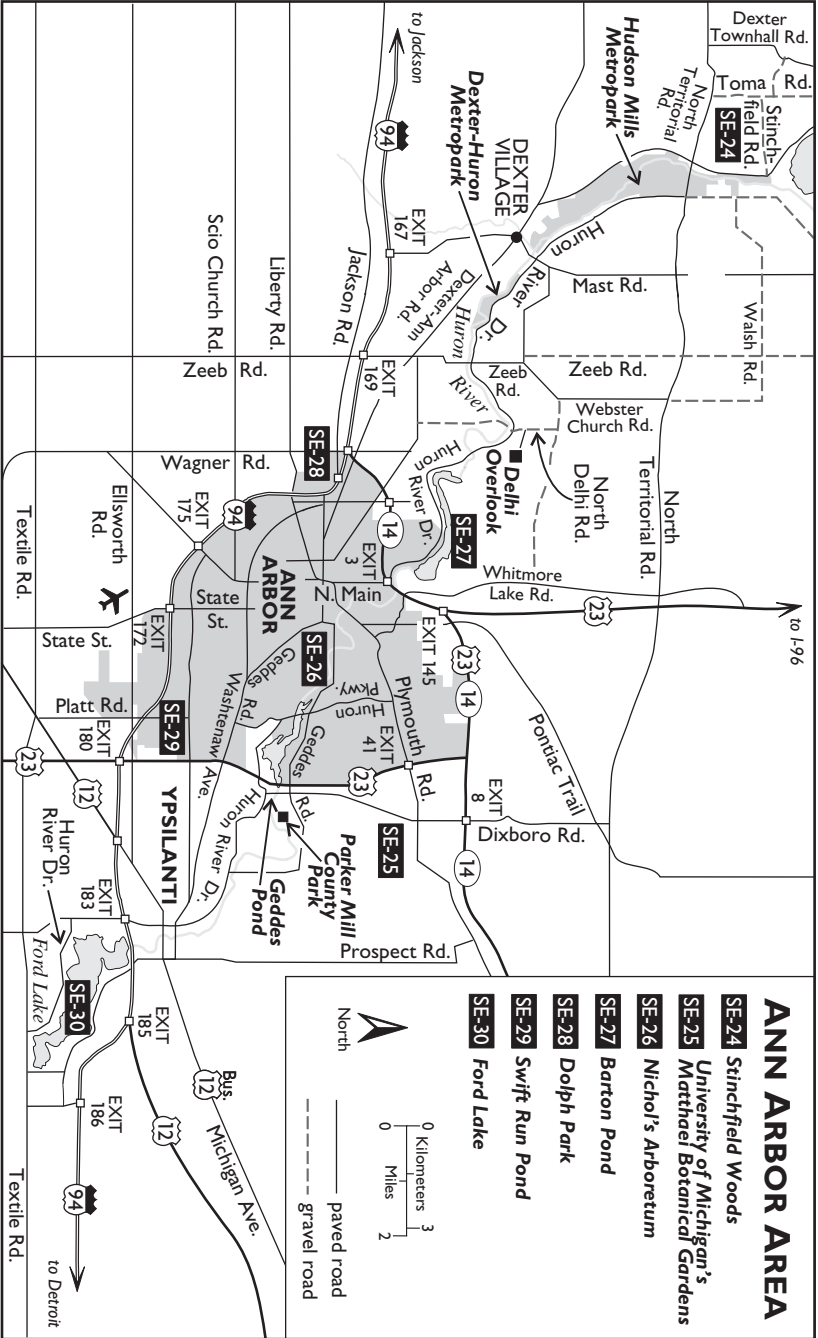
By Allen T. Chartier and Karen Markey

Spring*** Summer*** Fall* Winter**
DeLorme p. 32, A2. 42°24' N, 83°56' W

Directions: Take I-94 west of Ann Arbor to Zeeb Road (Exit 169) and go north for 2.2 miles to Huron River Drive. Turn left (west) for 5.8 miles to North Territorial Road and turn left (west) for 1.75 miles to Toma Road. (Note that at 2.4 miles, Huron River Drive jogs right at Mast Road near the village of Dexter, then jogs back left.) Turn right (north) onto Toma, go 1.0 mile, and turn right onto Stinchfield Road. Go 1.0 mile to a small parking area on the right.

This interesting area, about 15 miles northwest of Ann Arbor, has significant disjunct breeding populations of species found farther north, mixed in with some species more common south of Michigan. It is probably the largest tract of contiguous forest in public ownership in Washtenaw County, with 777 acres of mainly coniferous forest (planted between 1925 and 1960) and patches of oak-hickory woodland surrounding Peach Mountain. The property is owned by the University of Michigan and is occasionally used by the School of Natural Resources and Environment as a forest-ecology demonstration area and as a research laboratory for faculty and students. The WUOM radio transmitter, a radio telescope, and a 24-inch optical telescope are housed here. Local birders Lathe Claflin and John Swales conducted breeding and summer bird surveys here (83 species), which were published in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* (6: 3–14). These surveys are being continued by Karen Markey (www.si.umich.edu/~ylime/stinchfield.html).

Stinchfield Woods lies to the south of Stinchfield Road. During spring and summer, a walk along the road back toward Toma Road can produce good numbers of Blue-winged and Pine Warblers. Ovenbird and Chipping Sparrow are very common along the trails leading from the parking area, with Pine Warbler found regularly, along with breeding Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, and surprisingly, Golden-crowned Kinglets (most years). In

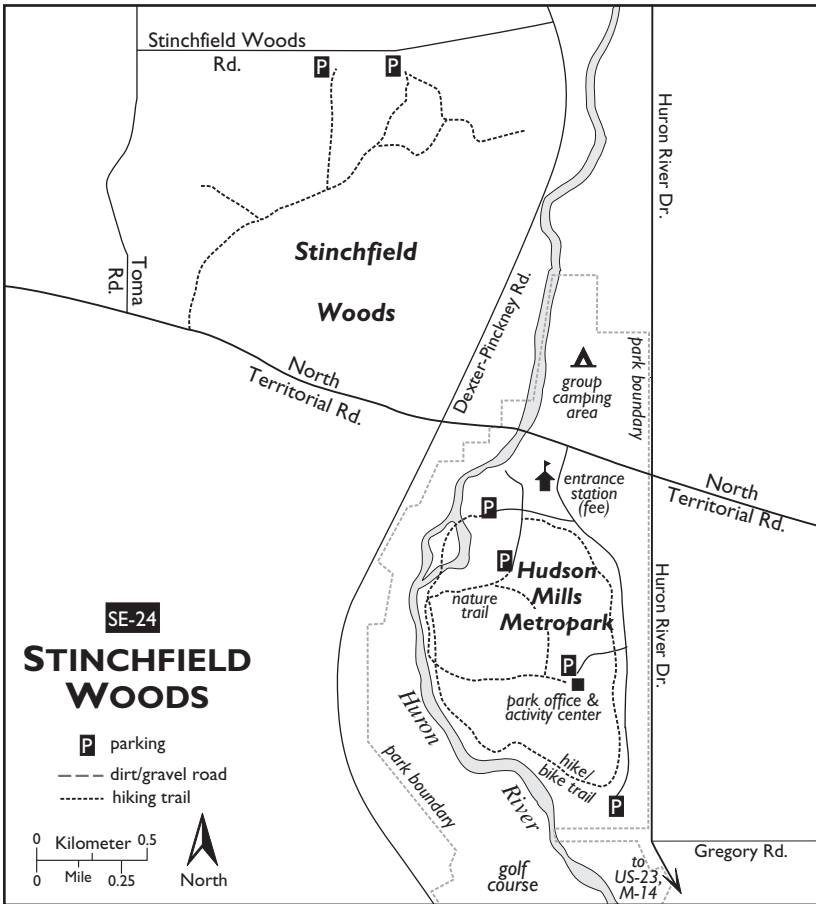


most summers, Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, and Cooper's Hawk are regular. Other northern breeding species regularly found here include Blue-headed Vireo (rare) and Black-throated Green Warbler (common). Blue-headed Vireo is a rare breeder at Stinchfield Woods, occurring annually, although there is probably only one pair. It will take patience and some effort to find the birds. Migrant Blue-headed can probably be found more easily in May than the breeding birds, although the breeders arrive in late April. By June the local breeding Blue-headed can be difficult to find in the dense vegetation and because their song is often lost among those of the more numerous Acadian Flycatchers and Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos. Carolina Wren, and Hooded Warbler (occasional) are southern components of the avifauna here. Both species of cuckoo occur occasionally in varying numbers, and Broad-winged Hawk has nested (rare in southern Michigan). In irruption years, this area can be good in winter for northern finches, including both crossbills (rare), and Red-breasted Nuthatch and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Other sites on the way to Stinchfield Woods merit attention as well, depending on the season and your interests. **Delhi Overlook** is a short road that in many winters hosts a Northern Shrike, which often remains there for several weeks during November–January. To get to Delhi Overlook (see map on previous page), go east from the intersection of Zeeb Road and Huron River Drive for 1.8 miles along Huron River Drive to North Delhi Road. Turn left (north) and drive 0.25 mile to the top of the hill. There you will see a street sign (private road) for Delhi Overlook. Turn right onto Delhi Overlook and drive 0.3 mile to a pond on the left side of the road, where there are several scattered tall trees. Although the shrike may be seen sitting on top of any of the tall trees or lower in the abundant Hawthorn before the pond, it seems to prefer the tree nearest the pond. If the shrike is perched, you'll have no problem getting an excellent view. It is often skittish, though, and likely to fly if you get out of the car. You might want to stop well short of the bird if you see it, in order to get out of the car to use your scope. Other birds that are occasional here in winter include Ring-necked Pheasant, Red-tailed Hawk, and Eastern Bluebird. *NOTE: This area is all private property and Delhi Overlook is a private road. Without permission from individual landowners, access to the area is STRICTLY confined to the road.*

Another stop in the area is **Dexter-Huron Metropark** (Metropark entry fee), a small park along Huron River Drive on the left, about 1.3 miles west of Zeeb Road. The woodlands here can be good during spring and fall migrations (both species of waterthrush have been recorded).

Also worth a visit is **Hudson Mills Metropark** (Metropark entry fee), located on North Territorial Road. From Dexter-Huron Metropark, continue west on Huron River Drive as it curves to the north for 4.5 miles (5.8 miles from Zeeb Road) to North Territorial Road. Turn left and go one-quarter mile to the park entrance on the left. From the entry station go 0.6 mile to the Park Office/Activity Center where the trails begin. In addition to the



birds, this site is of particular interest for its salamanders, as five of Michigan's ten species have been found here (Tiger, Spotted, Blue-spotted, Four-toed, and Red-backed).

Birding can be good all year in the varied habitats along the numerous well-maintained trails. Breeding species include Wood Duck, both cuckoos, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Wood Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Eastern Meadowlark, and Baltimore Oriole. Recently, Blue-winged Warbler has been found summering in the park along the Frisbee Golf Course near the Activity Center. The species is dependable along the field near the Nature Trail just north of hole #14. Spring birding can turn up good numbers of migrants, including Horned Lark, both kinglets, many species of warblers, and White-throated

and White-crowned Sparrows. Both Pileated and Red-headed Woodpeckers have been reported. Among the more unusual spring and fall migrants are Golden-winged Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Yellow-breasted Chat, Connecticut Warbler, and Lincoln's Sparrow. There are occasional winter records of Northern Shrike.

SE-25 University of Michigan's Matthaei Botanical Gardens

By Allen T. Chartier

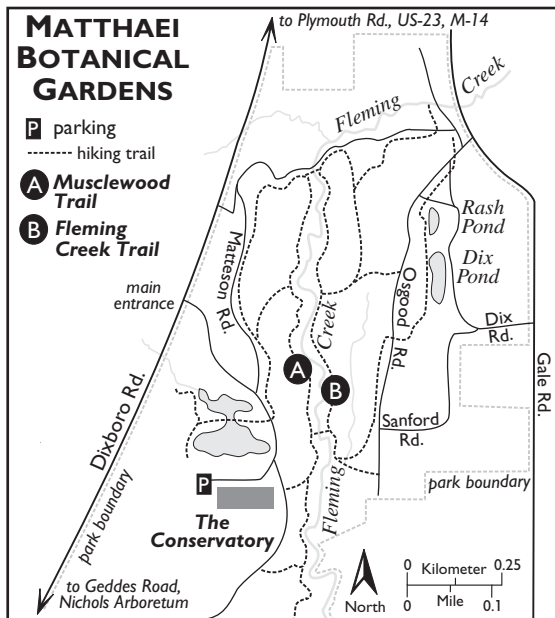
Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 33, B4. 42°18' N, 83°40' W

Contact Information: Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 734-998-7061; www.lsa.umich.edu/mbg; Parker Mill County Park map: www.ewashtenaw.org/assets/pr_parkermillloc_med.jpg; Gallup Park map: www.umich.edu/~bbowman/birds/al_brushaber/directions/galluppk.gif

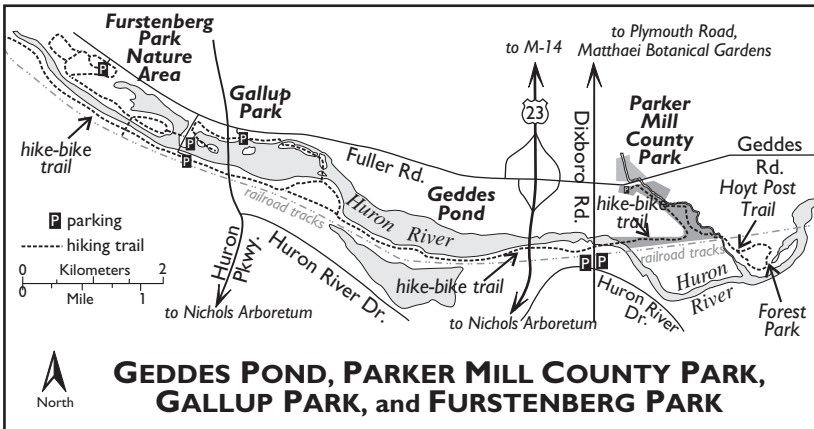
Directions: Take the Plymouth Road exit (Exit 41) off US-23 (also accessible from Exit 180B on I-94 5 miles to the south, or from Exit 8 on M-14 1 mile to the north). Go east (left from southbound, right from northbound) on Plymouth Road for 1.4 miles to Dixboro Road. Turn right (south) and go 0.5 mile to the entrance to the gardens on the left.

From the entrance, go 0.3 mile to the Conservatory, where you can park. The Conservatory (fee) has a greenhouse and some interesting displays, as well as a gift shop and restrooms. The well-marked trails (free) begin at the east end of the parking area. Birding is good year round, with spring migration being the peak of activity. Wet areas along Fleming Creek, reached on the



west side by the short Red (Musclewood) Trail and on the east by the longer Yellow (Fleming Creek) Trail, can produce both species of waterthrush. Woodland habitat throughout attracts migrant thrushes and warblers, often including Mourning Warbler. Scrubby areas at the north end of Fleming Creek and near Dix Pond provide habitat for White-eyed Vireo and Blue-winged Warbler, both of which remain to breed (the vireo a rarity). Or-

chard Oriole, when present, can sometimes be seen from the conservatory parking lot. Fall migration is typically good, with many kinglets, Brown Creeper, and again good numbers of warblers. The varied habitats along the several miles of trails provide cover and food for numbers of birds in winter. Wintering American Robins and Hermit Thrushes are regular, along with permanent resident Carolina Wrens.



There are several nearby birding stops worth a brief look. The first is **Geddes Pond** in the eastern portion of **Gallup Park**. From the intersection of Geddes Road and Dixboro Road (south of Matthaei Botanical Gardens), go south on Dixboro for 0.3 mile, crossing the river but not the railroad tracks, to park entrances on both the right (west) or left (west). To the west there is good access to Geddes Pond, which is actually a wide part of the Huron River, worth a brief stop in fall through spring. Waterfowl and gulls are the main attraction here, with the best time being September–April. Typically only the more common species are present, but sometimes a more unusual species turns up, such as a Snow Goose or a Great Black-backed Gull. Trumpeter Swans, introduced but established, are frequently seen here year round, and occasionally an Osprey can be found. Belted Kingfishers are often present in winter.

Adjoining Gallup Park to the west, and directly accessible by foot trail, is **Furstenberg Park Nature Area**, another small park worth a brief stop in spring. The area's 48 acres of wetland, woodland, prairie, and oak savanna provide habitat for good numbers of migrants. One spring a Lark Sparrow was found here, a species that has declined to only a single record or two statewide each year. The entrance is 0.4 mile west of Huron Parkway on the left (south) side of Fuller Road.

From the east parking area at Gallup Park, a paved hike-bike trail goes about 0.3 mile east, then turns north into **Parker Mill County Park**. You can take this trail for another 0.3 mile back to Geddes Road and the main park

entrance (closed in winter). The woodland habitat here is worth a look during spring and fall migration, and is a noted site for woodpeckers in winter. An observation blind on the shore of the Huron River can be accessed via the Hoyt Post Trail to the southeast, which crosses the railroad tracks into Forest Park, a winter favorite of local birders since the creek here usually does not freeze. Winter Wren, both kinglets, and Hermit Thrush are usually found here, and sparrows are sometimes numerous in fields across from the water-treatment plant and in brush on the upland side of the railroad tunnel.

SE-26 Nichols Arboretum

By Allen T. Chartier, Bruce Bowman, Mike Sefton, and Roger Wykes

Spring**** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 32, B4. 42°17' N, 83°44' W

Contact Information: 734-998-9540; arb@ummich.edu, www.umich.edu/~wwwarb/; map: www.umich.edu/~wwwarb/downloads/trails_big.pdf

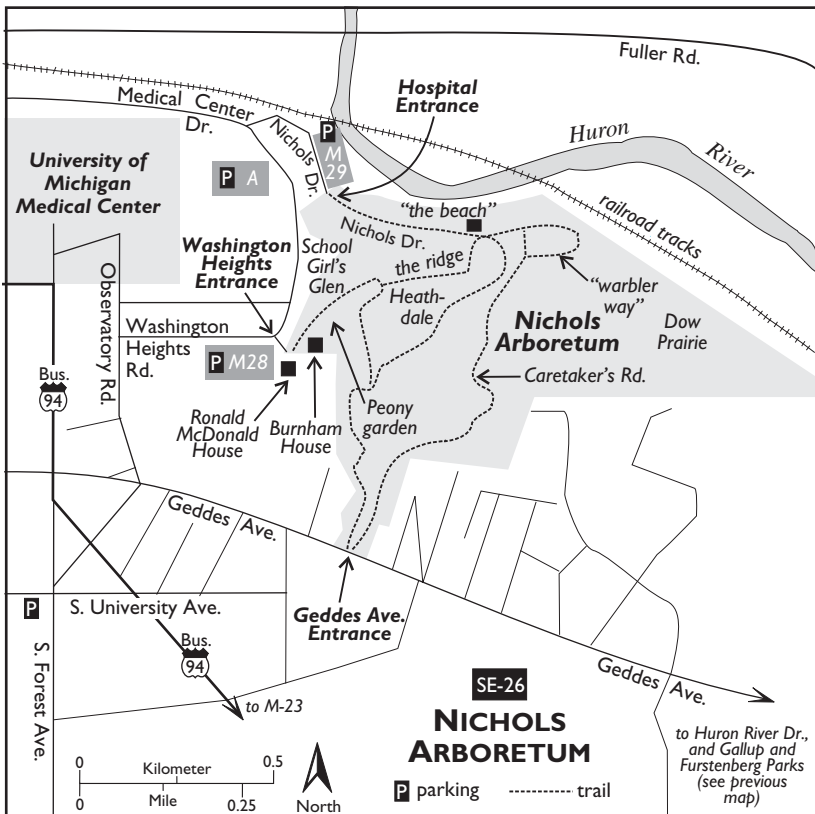
Directions: From the section of US-23 between I-94 and M-14 on the east side of Ann Arbor, take the Geddes Road exit (Exit 39) west (right from southbound, left from northbound) onto Geddes Road for 1.1 miles to the first traffic light at Huron Parkway. Turn left, cross a bridge, go 0.2 mile, and turn left again, following Geddes Road around and under the bridge. Stay on Geddes for another 2.2 miles to Observatory Road. You will pass the Arboretum's walk-in Geddes Road Entrance on the right after 1.9 miles, and if you're lucky, you may find parking in the residential areas on your left.

Otherwise, turn right (north) onto Observatory Road, go 0.2 mile, and turn right (east) onto Washington Heights Road. Go 0.25 mile to a parking area, Lot M28, on the right. On weekends, you can park in this lot despite the "Permit Parking Only" signs, but do not park at the eastern end of the lot which is reserved for use by Ronald McDonald House. On weekdays, this lot will be full, and in any case you will be ticketed if you do not have a permit. The best parking option on weekdays is to park at the University of Michigan Hospital parking structure (\$2 hour but cheaper than a parking ticket). To reach the hospital parking, follow the east end of Washington Heights Road as it curves north and soon meets Medical Center Drive at a T-intersection. Turn right and follow the road around the curve for about 100 yards to parking structure A on the left. The Washington Heights Entrance to the arboretum is at the east end of Washington Heights road.

Yet another parking area (weekends only) can be reached by continuing about one-quarter mile past the hospital parking structure to a T-intersection with Nichols Drive. Turn right and go about one-quarter mile to the parking area, Lot M29, at the end of the road. This is the Hospital Entrance to the Arboretum.

Nichols Arboretum, known locally as “The Arb”, is one of the best locations in the state for observing spring passerine migration, making the difficult access worth the effort. Connecticut and Mourning Warblers and all five of the state’s *Empidonax* species are recorded at the Nichols Arboretum regularly, with White-eyed Vireo and Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers found occasionally. Unusual species found with regularity include Broad-winged Hawk (occasionally nests), Cooper’s Hawk (nests), Worm-eating, Kentucky, and Connecticut Warblers (late May), and migrant Summer Tanager. The great diversity of tree species provides an excellent winter haven for birds, including winter finches during flight years. The winter food crop assists the survival of wintering American Robins, Hermit Thrushes, and occasional Yellow-rumped Warblers.

At the Washington Heights entrance, the Reader Center (Burnham House, M-F, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., weekends variable) has restrooms, a gift shop, and maps (if none are available at the kiosks at the entrances). Several miles of trails provide a good morning’s birding, and the birder-friendly hours (6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) add to the area’s appeal. The “ridge”, a great place to



observe spring and fall migrants, is almost at treetop level of the woodland on both sides of the ridge. Often the best spot for warblers is the small loop near the northwest end of the Dow Prairie, known locally as the “warbler way”. The School Girl’s Glen area can also be good for skulking sparrows and warblers, including both waterthrushes. The end of Caretakers Road is the best spot for nesting Cooper’s and Broad-winged Hawks, though the latter has also been seen along the Huron River at the north end of the arboretum. Heathdale is another excellent spot for warblers.

A good birding strategy is to start at the Washington Heights Entrance, with Burnham House on your right. Make sure you pick up a map. Walk along the path overlooking School Girl’s Glen (the ravine on your left) and follow it until it begins to loop to the right. The Arb’s formal Peony garden will be on your right. The Ridge Trail goes off to the left at the end of the Peony garden and eventually leads to steep stairs going down to the river at an area called “the beach” by local birders. Look for migrants in the trees along the Ridge Trail, and check the beach area and nearby trails for migrant warblers and flycatchers (Olive-sided is often seen in the snags across the river in late May). At the foot of the Ridge Trail as you face the river, you can go either left (northwest) along Nichols Drive and the river, or right (southeast) along the river on the parallel path through “warbler way.” A third option is a sharp right turn (south) at the bottom of the stairs onto an asphalt patch, which will take you toward Heathdale and eventually to the Geddes Road Entrance. You can also take a path that loops back to the Washington Heights Entrance above Heathdale. Warblers are likely in any of these places.

At “the beach” you can walk left along the river path to a hospital parking lot, where you should retrace your steps back to the beach area. If you walk right along the river on the parallel path, you can continue to the end of “warbler way” and a hill by the pines and spruces. Follow the path up the hill through the pines to Dow Prairie, a restored native Michigan prairie remnant. The path that goes around the outer part of Dow Prairie passes shrubby edges that can be good for migrants. The path between the railroad tracks and the trees along the northeast edge of the prairie can be particularly productive in the morning, when the sun angle is favorable, if you walk from southeast to northwest. In April, keep your eyes and ears open for Winter Wren and sparrows. And don’t forget to look up! Unusual species such as Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Northern Harrier, Broad-winged Hawk, and even an American White Pelican (once) have flown over.

Walk back to the beach area along the river or “warbler way” and take the Ridge Trail back to the Washington Heights Entrance, or take the path past Heathdale back up to the Peony garden and then to the same entrance.

SE-27 Barton Pond

By Allen T. Chartier and Bruce Bowman

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 32, B3. 42°16' N, 83°49' W

Directions: From US-23 and M-14, go west for 2.0 miles to where US-23 turns north. Stay in the far left lane to remain on M-14 (Exit 45). Continue on M-14 to the North Main exit, 1.4 miles past Exit 45 and immediately after M-14 crosses the Huron River. At the bottom of the exit ramp, make an immediate sharp right turn onto Huron River Drive. Barton Pond is about a mile ahead on your right.

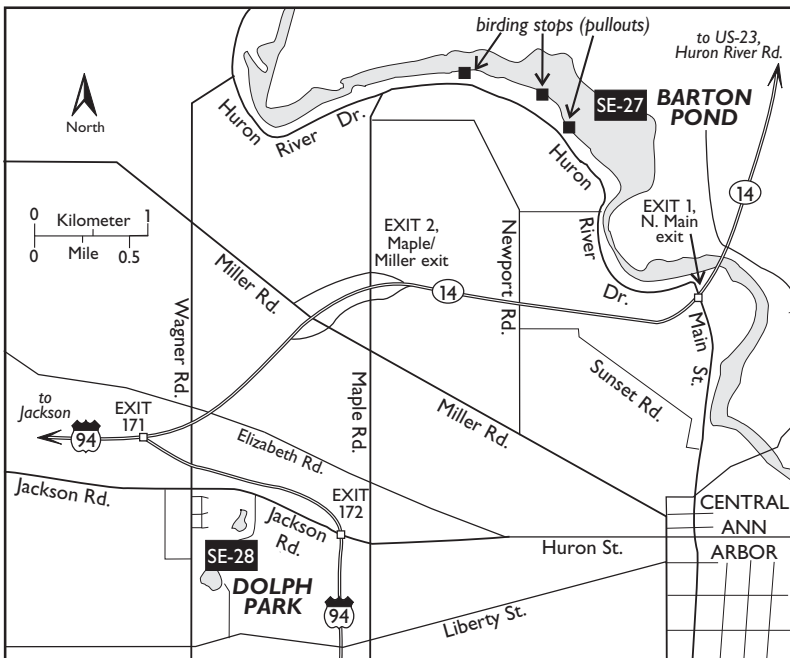
On the northwest side of Ann Arbor, **Barton Pond** is one of the best local sites for waterfowl as well as loons and grebes, most often in March and April. Osprey and Bald Eagle have also been reported. Barton Pond, a wide, slow-moving, mile-long portion of the Huron River just west of Barton Dam, is 3 miles east along Huron River Drive from the Delhi Overlook. There are several small pullouts on the right shoulder of Huron River Drive, with the best views of the lake from a pullout at 1.4 miles from the exit ramp. Another stop near the bend in the river is at 1.7 miles from the exit ramp.

SE-28 Dolph Nature Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 32, B3. 42°16' N, 83°49' W

Directions: Follow the directions to Barton Pond above and continue past the N. Main exit to the Maple/Miller exit (Exit 2) on M-14. Instead



of turning at Maple Road, continue straight ahead across Maple Road. Go 0.4 mile to a T-intersection with Miller Road and turn right for 0.75 mile to Wagner Road. Turn left and go 1.75 miles to the park entrance and parking area on the left. Note: If you are coming from I-94 west-bound instead, take the Jackson Road exit (Exit 172), which is 7 miles west of US-23. Go 0.8 mile west on Jackson Road to Wagner Road. Go south here by going past Wagner Road and making a U-turn left around the median and then turning right at Wagner Road. Go 0.45 mile to the park entrance on the left.

This 44-acre city park on the west end of Ann Arbor is an excellent birding site for migrant passerines in spring and fall. A rather small park, Dolph Park requires a minimal amount of walking to cover it well, but the birding is often so good that two to three hours can easily be spent here. In addition to the more expected spring and fall migrants, a number of unusual species have been recorded, including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, White-eyed Vireo, Prothonotary and Connecticut Warblers, both waterthrushes, and Fox Sparrow. A few ducks, Virginia Rail, Sora, Belted Kingfisher, and Osprey have been noted at the park's two small lakes. On the northeast edge of the park is a small wet woodland that local birders call the "Waterthrush Hotel".

SE-29 Swift Run Pond

By Allen T. Chartier and Bruce Bowman

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter
DeLorme p. p. 32, C4. 42°13' N, 83°44' W

Directions: From I-94 take the State Street exit (Exit 177) and go south for 0.6 mile to Ellsworth Road. Turn left (east) and go 2.0 miles to Platt Road and turn left (north). After crossing back over I-94, you will see the St. Paul Missionary Church on the left (0.4 mile from Ellsworth). Pull around to the parking area behind the church to view the pond. Please do not visit this area when church services are in session.

A small pond adjacent to the I-94 freeway, Swift Run Pond has become known as a local hotspot for unusual wading birds, and dabbling ducks commonly gather here in spring and fall migrations. American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Common Moorhen (rare), Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Green and Great Blue Herons are also regular in spring and summer. This is one of the best spots near Ann Arbor to see Great Egret, and the pond has attracted even greater rarities, including Little Blue Heron (twice) and a *Plegadis ibis*. When water levels are low, the pond also has a few shorebirds, including both yellowlegs and Pectoral, Solitary, and Least Sandpipers. A Red-necked Phalarope was found here once.

Another worthwhile stop in this area is the **Ann Arbor Landfill and Materials Recovery Facility**. To reach the facility, turn right (south) onto

Platt Road from Ellsworth and go 0.3 mile to the entrance on the right. The borrow pit at the Recycling Center attracts a good variety of ducks and gulls, including Bonaparte's Gull and an occasional Lesser Black-backed Gull. All visitors must check in at the Materials Recovery Facility Scalehouse each visit for a one-day pass. Access is on weekdays only (8:30 a.m. –4:00 p.m.), and the facility is closed on holidays. The front gate at 4120 Platt Road will be locked at all

other times. NOTE: A longer version of this account by Deaver Daves Armstrong, including a map, was first published in 2000 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 7: 163-169.

The nearby **Ann Arbor Airport** (see main Ann Arbor area map) has occasionally hosted Upland Sandpiper and rarely a Western Meadowlark. Other species here include Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink.

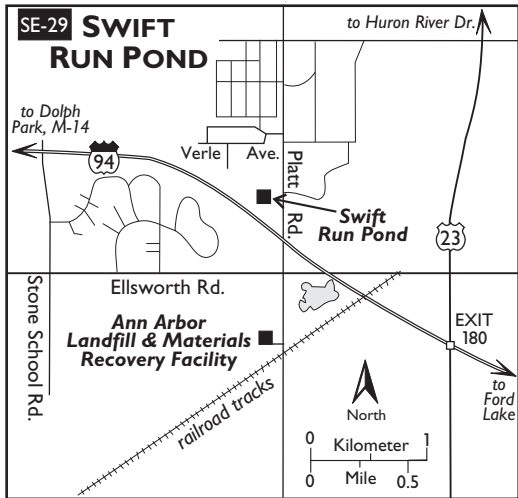
SE-30 Ford Lake

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 33, C5. 42°13' N, 83°35' W

This relatively large body of water in the town of Ypsilanti, just southeast of Ann Arbor, has several access points, described below. Ford Lake is perhaps the most reliable yet underbirded site near Ann Arbor for finding scoters, loons, and grebes, primarily in fall and winter. Rarities have included the county's second Eared Grebe in September 1997. Both Iceland and Thayer's Gulls have also occurred. A scope is essential.

In addition to dabbling ducks such as Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, and Northern Shoveler, this lake regularly attracts diving ducks, including Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, and Redhead, and sea ducks including Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead as well as all three mergansers. American Coot is often common in fall. Double-crested Cormorant and Pied-billed Grebe are regular from spring through fall, and occasionally even Bald Eagle and Black-crowned Night-Heron have been reported, while Osprey is annual. Common Loon and Horned Grebe are also reported annually in small numbers, typically in October and November,



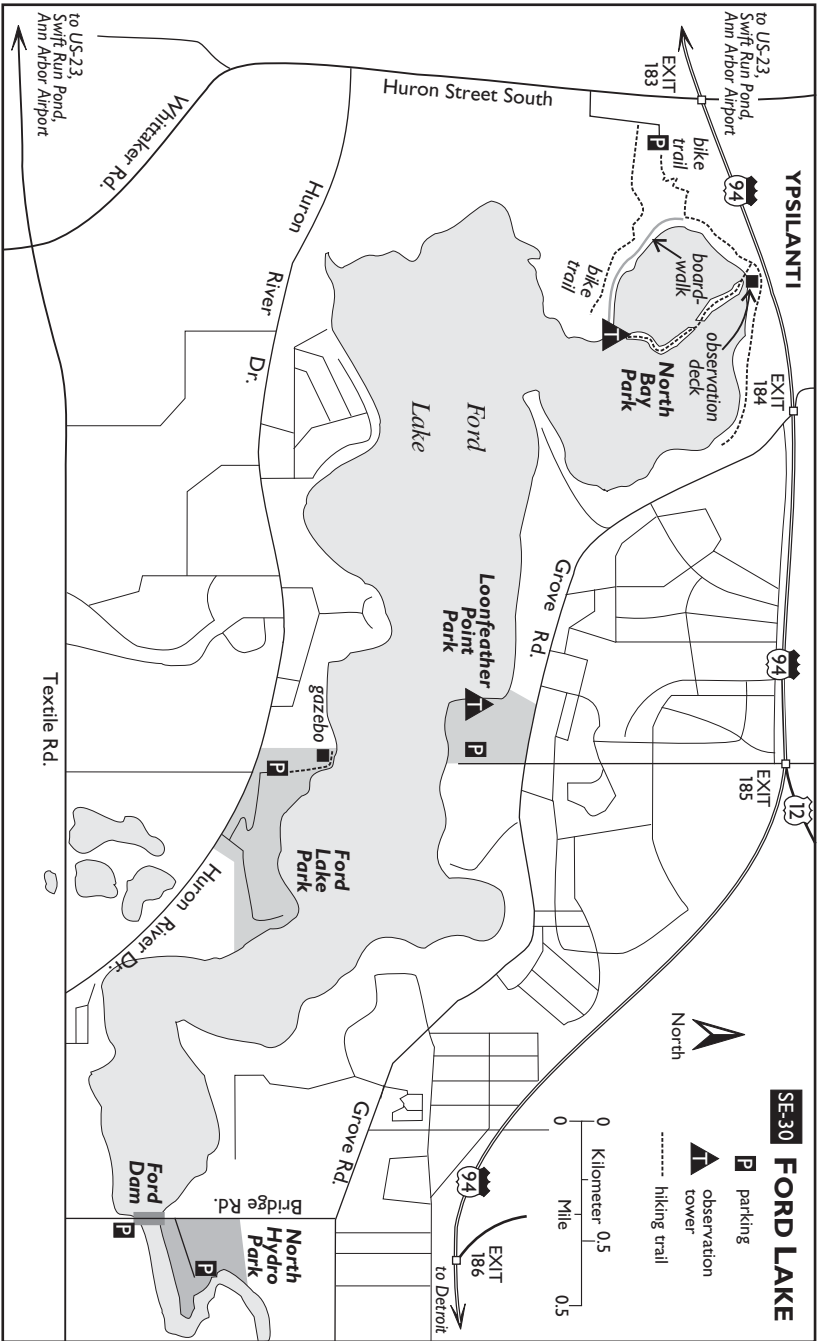
while much rarer scoters are less than annual during this period, with single birds of any of the three species possible. Gulls and terns also find the lake attractive, and once freeze-up occurs in late fall or early winter, the roosting gulls can include Great Black-backed and, rarely, Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous.

The first access point, **North Bay Park**, can be reached by taking I-94 east of Ann Arbor to S. Huron Street/Whittaker Road (Exit 183). Turn right (south) and go 0.1 mile to a car-pool parking lot on the left. Turn left into the parking lot, go north all the way to the end, and turn right toward the contact station (currently a \$5 entry fee but usually not collected in late fall through early spring). Park in the parking lot at the end of the road and hike 0.1 mile down the steep, winding paved bike path (slippery in winter) to the boardwalk, which circles the northernmost lagoon of the lake (1.25 miles round trip). There is an observation tower on the right at the south end and a series of islands connected by bridges past the tower.

Another access point, allowing views of the center of the lake, is **Ford Lake Park**, reached by continuing south on Huron Street South for 0.7 mile to Huron River Drive (second traffic light). Turn left (east) and go 2.2 miles to the park entrance on the left. Take the first left past the Contact Station (\$5 fee in season) and drive to the parking area at the end. There is a small gazebo on the lakeshore, just past the large shelter, which provides lake views. The small woodlots here and at North Bay Park attract migrant passerines in spring and fall, and host common species year round, including Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, and Northern Cardinal.

To reach the area at **Ford Dam**, continue east on Huron River Drive for 0.5 mile to a T-intersection with Textile Road. Turn left and go 0.7 mile to Bridge Road. Turn north and go about 0.25 mile to a wide shoulder on the right. This is often the last place on the lake to freeze in winter, and the site where a Lesser Black-backed Gull was found a few years ago. Just past the dam is **North Hydro Park**, with views of the river below the dam, where Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, and Hooded Mergansers may be seen.

Continue north on Bridge Road to a T-intersection with Grove Road. Turn left (west) and go 1.5 miles to **Loonfeather Point Park** on the left, often the best vantage point for viewing waterfowl in the middle of the lake. In winter the gate is closed, but you can park at the gate and walk in a short distance to the parking area. Just beyond and to the right is a viewing platform.



THE HURON RIVER, SOUTHWESTERN WAYNE COUNTY

By Allen T. Chartier

The Huron River's source is northwest of Ann Arbor, and from there it flows southeast through the southwestern suburbs of Detroit, emptying into Lake Erie (see The Lake Erie Marshes section later in this chapter). Along this river are some excellent riparian habitats, one of which contains the highest tree diversity in the state, as well as open-country areas and even a reclaimed wetland. A few species occur here that can be difficult to find elsewhere in the Metro Detroit area, including Upland Sandpiper, Bald Eagle, Cliff Swallow, Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, Grasshopper Sparrow, Orchard Oriole, and Western Meadowlark.

SE-31 Willow Run Airport

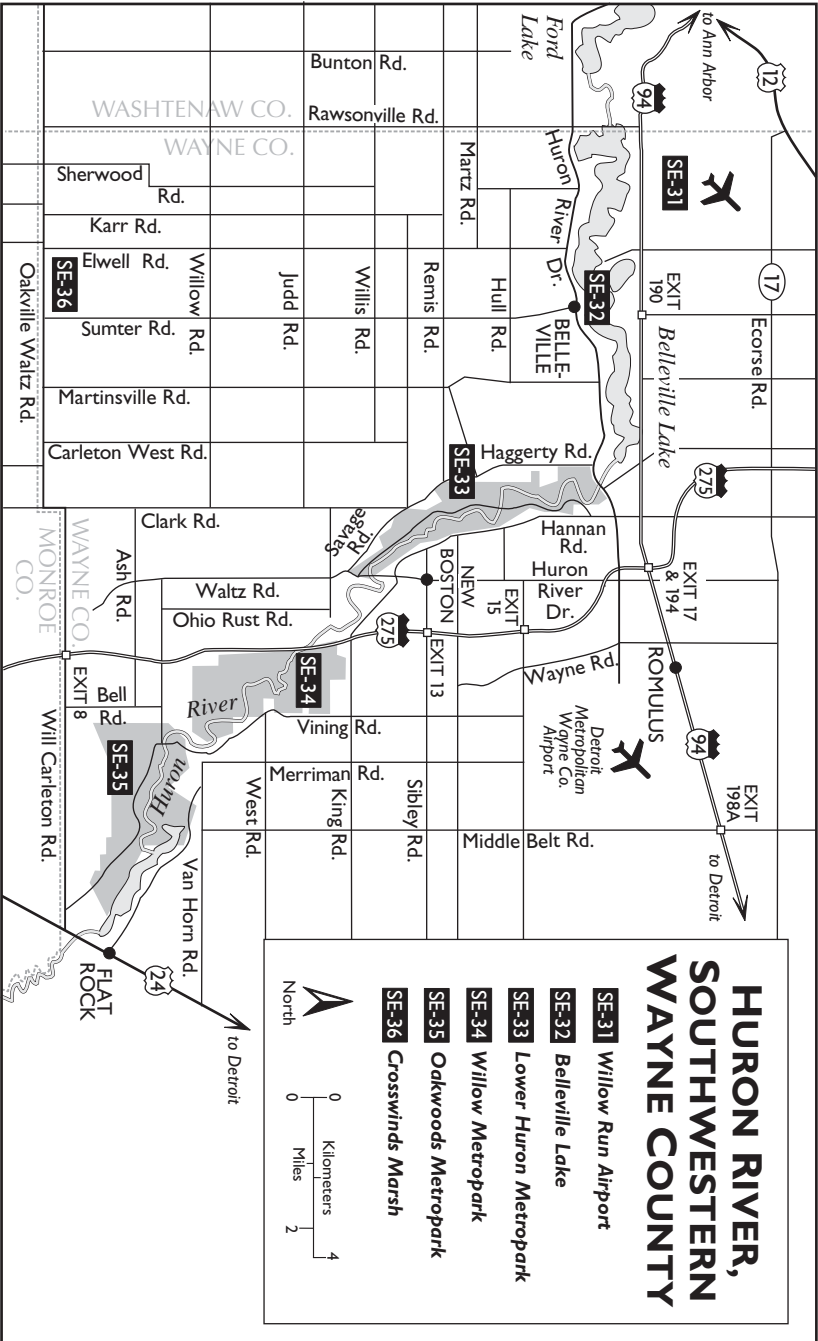
*Spring** Summer** Fall* Winter**
DeLorme p. 33, C5. 42°15' N, 83°31' W

Directions: From the interchange at I-275 and I-94, go west on I-94 for about 6 miles to Rawsonville Road (Exit 187). Turn right (north) onto Rawsonville Road and, almost immediately (0.1 mile), you will come to a T-intersection at I-94 North Service Drive. Turn left and go 0.2 mile to McGregor Road. Turn right, go 0.9 mile to Tyler Road, and turn right onto Tyler Road toward Willow Run Airport.

Willow Run Airport is the only site in the Metro Detroit area (Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties) where breeding Upland Sandpiper can still be found with any regularity. Other open-country birds of interest here include breeding Grasshopper Sparrows and Western Meadowlarks. Surprisingly, this open area is not as good in winter for raptors, longspurs, or Snow Buntings as other areas in the state. A scope can be useful here to scan the distant runway markers for perched Upland Sandpipers and Western Meadowlarks.

From the intersection of McGregor and Tyler Roads, go 0.3 mile on Tyler to the right fork (toward Willow Run Cargo) and stop in the parking area on the left, 0.1 mile past the fork, just where the road bends back to the right. The brushy area around the fork in the road has had Northern Mockingbird, though in recent years it has become less regular and difficult to find. In spring and summer, Upland Sandpipers and Western Meadowlarks can occasionally be seen by looking through the fence onto the airfield here, though there is a better spot for the sandpiper farther on.

Continue along this road for 0.4 mile to the Cargo Terminal, which has a dirt parking lot where you can safely stop to view the airfield for Upland Sandpipers and meadowlarks (three to four Westerns would be a high count among the more numerous Easterns). Continue past the Cargo Terminal for



0.4 mile, where the road bends to the left; go left again after another 0.4 mile and right after another 0.4 mile (1.2 miles total from the Cargo Terminal). *Note: Although you will pass an open gate with signs indicating “No Admittance”, these gates are almost never closed, and birders have not been bothered as long as they pull safely off the road.*

This corner is a good place to stop to scan, but make sure you pull well off onto the dirt shoulder. The airfield ahead of you is often productive for Upland Sandpiper and Western Meadowlark, and is a good spot for breeding Grasshopper Sparrow and rarely Henslow’s Sparrow (usually in May). Horned Larks and Savannah Sparrows are common summer residents. Other good sites for Grasshopper and sometimes Henslow’s Sparrows and Western Meadowlark are all along the road from here up to the next left bend (1.0 mile). When these fields are wet, other shorebirds may be present, such as Wilson’s Snipe and both yellowlegs, and during summer the fields are a sure bet for Bobolinks.

After 0.3 mile, turn left at Tyler Road, which dead-ends at a small parking area which can be a good vantage point for finding Western Meadowlark and Grasshopper Sparrow. Upland Sandpiper is most easily located by its “wolf-whistle” call note, which it typically gives in a display flight. This is the only time the bird will be visible above the tall grass, unless you get lucky and



find one perched on a fencepost. Bank Swallows have nested in the area in some years, and occasionally Cliff Swallows nest inside the open airline hangers. Eastern Bluebirds can often be seen sitting on the fence along here.

If you have time, nearby **Van Buren Park** has a small area of woodland that can be quickly checked for migrant passerines in spring and fall. Waterfowl may also be seen on adjacent Belleville Lake from fall to spring. This park was opened to the public in 2000, and has been little explored by birders. With the report of a Lark Sparrow (casual) and a Kirtland's Warbler in May 2004, this is likely to change. From Rawsonville Road, take S. Service Drive for about 0.25 mile east to the park entrance on the right (\$2 entry fee in 2004).

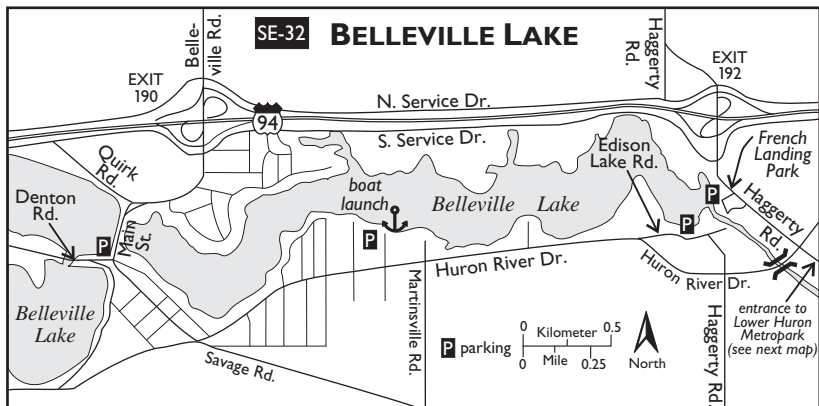
SE-32 Belleville Lake

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 33, C5. 42°13' N, 83°29' W

Directions: From I-94, take the Belleville Road exit (Exit 190). At the top of the exit ramp, turn right (south) onto Belleville Road (Main Street) and go 1.0 mile to Denton Road.

The best time for a brief visit to **Belleville Lake** is late fall through early spring, when waterfowl and gulls are the main attractions. There are two access points to this large lake. At the intersection of Belleville (Main) and Denton, you can park in the small dirt parking lot in the southwest corner of the intersection. Both bridges visible from here (one on Denton Road, one on Belleville/Main) have nesting Cliff Swallows. Geese and ducks are regular here in migration, and some winters Lesser Black-backed Gull can be found.

Continue straight ahead on Belleville Road, which becomes Main Street at Denton. Go 1.25 miles to Huron River Drive and turn left. Go 0.7 mile to the DNR Access, a boat launch, on the left (entry fee when attendant on duty). This site is best in winter when large gulls (mainly Ring-billed and Herring with a few Great Black-backed) roost at the lake. Continue east on Huron River

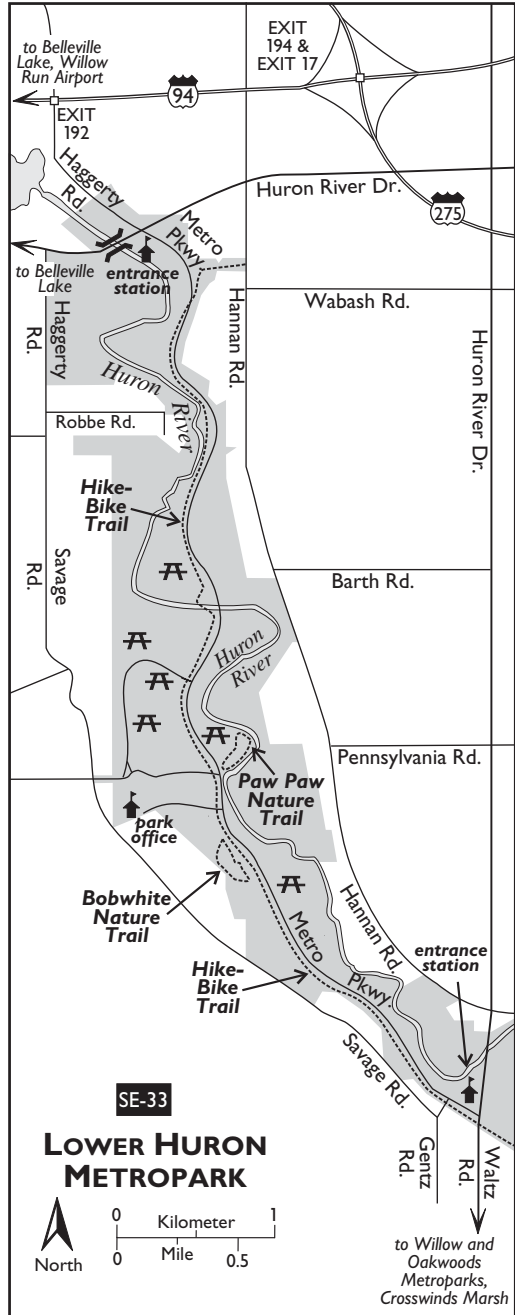


drive by turning left out of the DNR Access parking lot. Go 1.4 miles to Edison Lake Road and turn left for 0.2 mile to a wide dirt pulloff on the left, a good spot to scan the lake for ducks and gulls in winter. In winter of 2002, two Thayer's Gulls, two Iceland Gulls, and a Glaucous Gull were reported here. The eastern end of Belleville Lake is often referred to as "Edison Lake" by birders. One final viewpoint of the lake, near the dam, can be reached by backtracking to Huron River Drive. Turn left and go 0.8 mile to Haggerty Road and turn left (north) for about 0.3 mile to the French Landing Historical Park on the left, where a boardwalk overlooks the lake.

SE-33 Lower Huron Metropark

Spring** Summer**
 Fall** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 33, C6
 42°11' N, 83°24' W
 Contact Information:
 734-697-9181
 www.metroparks.com

Directions: The park entrance (Metroparks entry fee) is about 0.1 mile south from the intersection of Haggerty Road and Huron River Drive. You can also reach the park directly from I-94 via the Haggerty Road exit (Exit 192).



Lower Huron Metro-park along the Huron River is a riparian woodland which claims the greatest diversity of tree species of any single site in Michigan. Spring and fall migration are good times to look for passerine migrants, and a few species of more northerly distribution have been noted in early summer.

The first bridge, 0.3 mile from the intersection of Haggerty Road and Huron River Drive, has nesting Cliff Swallows, but there isn't any place to park here and stopping along the roadsides is discouraged. Instead, continue (south) along the park road (Metro Parkway) for 2.5 miles past the entrance station to the parking area on the left for the **Paw Paw Nature Trail**. This trail passes through a part of the Huron River floodplain woodland. On a good May day, more than 20 warbler species have been recorded, and earlier in spring there are often numbers of Song, Lincoln's, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows. Occasionally, birds of more northern affinity have been found summering here, including Blue-headed Vireo, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and even Golden-crowned Kinglet. Among the more common summering species, woodpeckers are well represented, with Red-headed topping the want lists of most local birders. Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy Woodpeckers, as well as Northern Flicker, are common here, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker can be expected in migration in April and October.

Continue south on the park road for 0.9 mile to the **Bobwhite Nature Trail**, with parking on the right. This trail provides additional habitat to explore with similar species to those along the Paw Paw trail.

Note: A Hike-Bike Trail runs the entire length (about 4.5 miles) of the park road, allowing foot and bike access to the numerous roadside woodlots which otherwise are inaccessible, as there is no parking along the roadsides.

Continue south on South Metro Parkway to a T-intersection with Waltz Road, 1.2 miles past the Bobwhite Nature Trail, where you exit the park to reach the next site, Willow Metropark.

SE-34 Willow Metropark

Spring** Summer* Fall* Winter*

DeLorme p. 33, C6. 42°08' N, 83°22' W

Contact Information: 734-697-9181; www.metroparks.com

Directions: From Lower Huron Metropark, turn right onto Waltz Road and go 1.4 miles to South Huron River Drive. Turn left and go to the end of this road, which crosses over I-275, for 1.4 miles to the entrance to Willow Metropark on the right (Metroparks entry fee). The park can also be reached from I-275 at South Huron River Park Drive (Exit 11).

Although **Willow Metropark** generally has few birds, it is worth driving through the area on the way from the previous site, Lower Huron Metropark, to the next one, Oakwoods Metropark. Take the first left after the entry station (which is 0.3 mile from the turn off South Huron River

Drive). The first parking area on the right provides good views of **Washago Pond**, which has waterfowl in migration and an occasional rarity such as Caspian Tern (unusual inland) and Little Blue Heron. The open fields are often crowded in summer and on spring weekends, but some of the picnic areas have Savannah Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark. The **Hike-Bike Trail** continues from Lower Huron Metropark through the park (about 2 miles), again allowing access to some woodlands that can be good in migration. Continue on the main park road to the second road, 1.9 miles past Washago Pond, and turn right to exit the park (sign marked “Willow Road Exit”). Go 0.1 mile to Willow Road and turn left.

SE-35 Oakwoods Metropark

*Spring*** Summer** Fall* Winter***

DeLorme p. 33, D7. 42°07' N, 83°19' W

Contact Information: 734-782-3956; www.metroparks.com

Directions: *At the exit from Willow Metropark (see above), go 0.6 mile on Willow Road to the entrance to Oakwoods Metropark on the right.*

From the entrance to **Oakwoods Metropark** (Metroparks entry fee), the first mile of the park road passes through mostly open areas with scattered woodlands, which are set back well away from the road. As with the previous two parks, there is no parking along the roadsides here, so access to some of these woodlands is best from the **Hike-Bike Trail**, which continues here from Willow Metropark. Eastern Bluebird, Field and Savannah Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlark are the most common birds in these fields, with Grasshopper Sparrow occasional, and rarely a Henslow's Sparrow or a Clay-colored Sparrow. In winter, keep an eye out for Northern Shrike, which winters regularly.

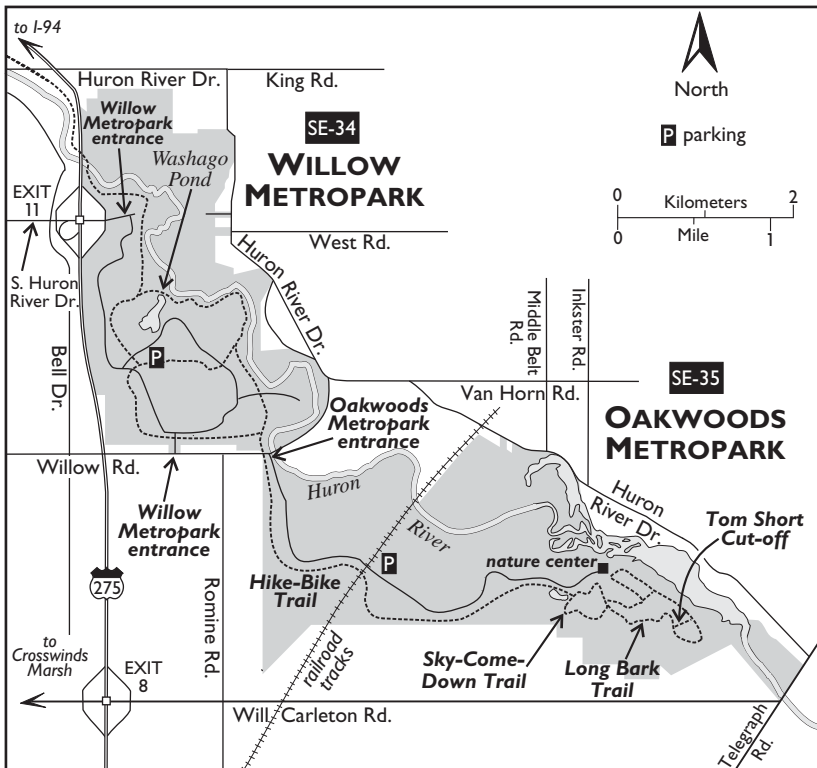
Just past the railroad tracks, 1.0 mile from the entry station, there is a parking area on the left which is a very reliable spot for Eastern Bluebird, sometimes even in winter, and which is the most reliable spot in the park for Northern Shrike. The shrubby areas here have Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and Eastern Towhee, and most years a Yellow-breasted Chat can be found. Occasionally Orchard Orioles are around in May and June, and in 2001 and 2002 a Clay-colored Sparrow spent the summer here.

Continue on the park road to the turnoff for the **Nature Center** on the right, 2.1 miles from the entry station. Continue for another 0.6 mile to the parking area for the Nature Center (open 1:00–5:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. weekends during the school year, and daily 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. in summer). Naturalist Bob Wittersheim is a birder, and can tell you if anything unusual has been seen in the park recently. There is also a bird-sightings checklist in the Nature Center. There are feeders behind the Nature Center where Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Northern Flicker, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, and other common species are present most of the year. In winter American Tree Sparrow,

Song Sparrow (uncommon in winter), Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch, and other species occur.

There is a good network of trails through the woodland here, which is typical deciduous woodland adjacent to the Huron River. The high bluffs along the river prevent serious flooding of most of the trails, although in some springs there is a lot of water, particularly along the **Long Bark Trail**. In spring and fall migrations, these woodlands can be full of migrant cuckoos, vireos, thrushes, warblers, tanagers, and sparrows. The more densely wooded portions, particularly east of the Tom Short Cut-Off, host breeding Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager. The **Sky-Come-Down Trail** occasionally has summering Yellow-breasted Chat, and the woodland edges have Yellow-throated Vireo.

Return to the park entrance at South Huron River Drive and turn left (west). Go 0.25 mile to Romine Road and turn left (south). Go 1.5 miles to Will Carleton Road and turn right (west). After 0.7 mile you will come to I-275, where you can end your Huron River birding or continue on to Crosswinds Marsh.



SE-36 Crosswinds Marsh

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 33, D6. 42°06' N, 83°27' W

Contact Information: www.waynecounty.com/parks/cwinds_park.htm; 734-261-1990 (Wayne County Parks), 734-654-1220 (park naturalist)

Directions: From I-94 and I-275, go south on I-275 for 8.8 miles to the Will Carleton Road exit (Exit 8). Turn right (west) onto Will Carleton Road (After 1.8 miles, Will Carleton Road jogs left for 0.3 mile, then jogs back right, changing to Oakville-Waltz Road at this point.). At Haggerty Road, which is 3.3 miles from I-275, turn right (north) and go 0.6 mile to the parking area for Crosswinds Marsh on the left.

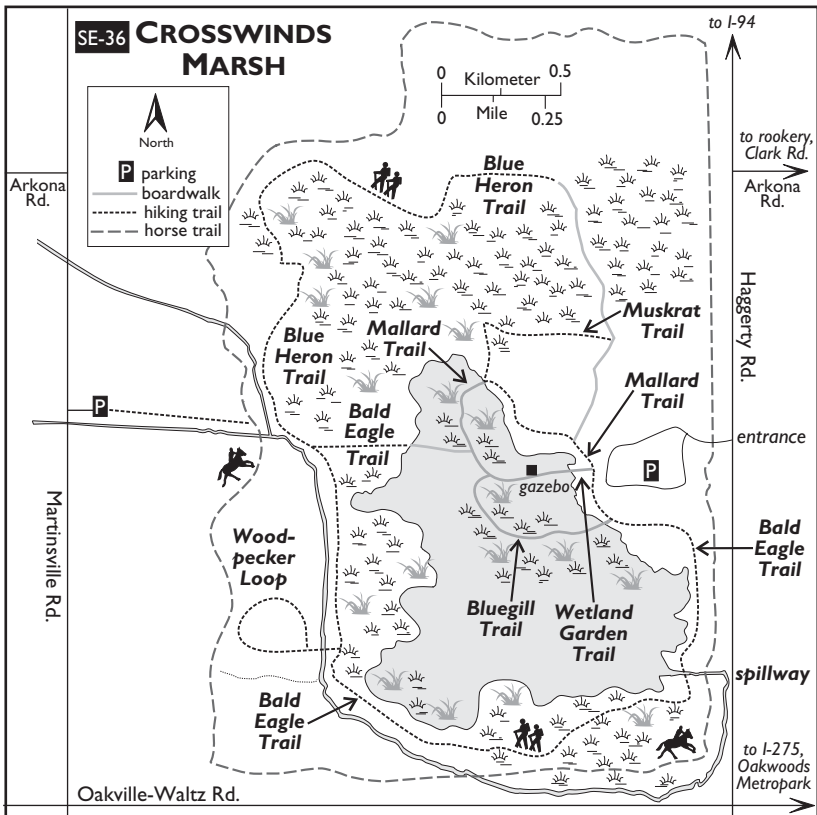
Crosswinds Marsh, at 1,050 acres, is one of the largest man-made wetlands in the country. It was built to replace wetlands paved over to expand Detroit Metro Airport, and opened to the public in 1996. This area, originally wetland that had been converted to farmland, was dredged, flooded, and planted with wetland plants and today is an excellent birding site. As of May 2004, a total of 232 species has been reported at the site (unofficial list at www.geocities.com/daspery/Crosswind_Marsh.html; you can e-mail your sightings to compiler Daryl Aspery at Daspery1@woway.com).

There are 6 miles of hiking trails and 5 miles of horse trails to explore, in addition to the option of canoe rental in summer for those so inclined. From the parking area, a nest of Bald Eagles is visible year round, and they are often seen in the vicinity. The birds moved in soon after the area was restored, and have made attempts to breed, which so far have proven unsuccessful. In spring, the marsh can be full of dabbling and diving ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, American Coots, and Double-crested Cormorants, and the air will be filled with Tree Swallows. Walking west along the boardwalk of the **Bald Eagle Trail** (1.8 miles) toward the gazebo will take you past marsh vegetation where Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats, and Swamp Sparrows are common. When this boardwalk gives way to a gravel trail, about 100 yards before a T-intersection with the Blue Heron Trail, you should look for Orchard Oriole, which has recently taken up residence at Crosswinds Marsh. This short stretch of gravel trail may be the most reliable spot in the state for the species. At the junction with Blue Heron Trail, you can either go right (north) for about a quarter-mile to a half-mile to look for Yellow-breasted Chat, Eastern Towhee, and Field Sparrow in the scrubby areas west of the trail, or continue on the Bald Eagle Trail by going left (south) at the T-intersection. Along this stretch of the Bald Eagle Trail, you may see breeding Willow Flycatchers and numerous Yellow Warblers.

You will soon come to an intersection with the **Woodpecker Loop** (0.5 mile). If water levels are low, shorebirds may be seen in the nearby fields to the southwest, along with many Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons. The more regular shorebirds include both yellowlegs, Killdeer, Semipalmated Plover, Spotted, Pectoral, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers, Sanderling, and Dunlin. More unusual species, such as American Golden-Plover and Red

Knot (flyover), have recently been recorded. In summer 2002 a Least Bittern was seen here and in adjacent cattails east of the Bald Eagle Trail. The Woodpecker Loop is not particularly well named, although Downy and Red-bellied Woodpecker and Northern Flicker occur. Instead, the attraction in this patch of wet woods is spring migration, when it can be alive with warblers. Up to 15 species can be seen on a good day, and rarities have included migrant Cerulean and Prothonotary Warblers. Wood Thrush and Northern Waterthrush like the flooded woodlands, and Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole prefer the treetops. Sometimes Orchard Oriole can be found along the margins of this woodlot along the Bald Eagle Trail.

Continuing eastward along the south end of the Bald Eagle Trail, you may encounter migrant Black Terns and many more Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. A small woodlot at the southeastern corner of this trail has had sparrows in migration, with Chipping Sparrow common in summer, as well as an occasional unusual warbler species, including Blue-winged and Pine (once). At the spillway along the eastern end of this trail, you may find ducks in early



spring and fall, and in winter many gulls roost on the ice here. In recent winters, several uncommon gulls have been noted flying in from the landfill to the east, including Iceland, Great Black-backed, Thayer's, and Lesser Black-backed. In spring and fall, Bonaparte's Gulls and Forster's Terns frequent the area as well. The fenceposts along the walk back to the parking area have nest boxes which are occupied mostly by Tree Swallows, but a few Eastern Bluebirds nest as well. Back at the parking area, the brushy areas are good for American Tree Sparrow in winter and Song Sparrow in spring through fall.

Another good route leads north from the parking area along the **Mallard Trail** (0.6 mile). At the first fork here you should go right onto the **Muskrat Trail** (0.5 mile), which goes through another patch of wet woodland that can have good numbers of migrant warblers in spring and fall, and summer Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch. In fall, both kinglets, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, and White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows can usually be found. At the junction of the Blue Heron Trail, it is worth a short (about 100 yards) detour west along the Muskrat Trail, which goes through some very good cattail habitat with lots of Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroats, Swamp Sparrows, and of particular note, rails. Virginia Rail and Sora are often heard along here, and in May 2002 a King Rail (endangered in Michigan) was heard as well, but it apparently did not stay to breed. Following the **Blue Heron Trail** (1.6 miles) north and west will take you through more good wetland and small woodlots, and eventually to shrubby habitat along the western edge where Yellow-breasted Chat may be found in some years. The Heron Trail joins the Bald Eagle Trail at its southwestern end.

A small Great Blue Heron rookery (about 7–10 nests) can be viewed from **Arkona Road** adjacent to another portion of Crosswinds Marsh (northeast of the main site). From the parking area, go left (north) on Haggerty Road for about 0.4 mile to Arkona Road. Orchard Oriole can sometimes be found on the left (west) side of this stretch of Haggerty Road. Turn right and go about one-half mile to a T-intersection with Clark Road. About 100 yards before this T-intersection, the rookery will be visible on the right. Marsh Wrens and Swamp Sparrows are common on both sides of Arkona Road here. Turn right at Clark Road and go south about one-quarter mile to view the rookery from the other side. *The rookery is on private property, so please do not leave the road.*

If you turn left (north) onto **Clark Road**, you will be driving along the eastern side of another smaller portion of Crosswinds Marsh. Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper are common along the roadsides here, and near the intersection with Ash Road there is an area that attracts migrant shorebirds when water levels are low; species can include both yellowlegs, Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated and Pectoral Sandpipers, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Wilson's Phalarope (once). In May and June 2004, both American and Least Bitterns were found here, and winnowing Wilson's Snipe were present in April and May. The fields along the eastern side of Clark Road look quite

barren, but often have Vesper Sparrows in spring and summer, a species that is difficult to find in the Metro Detroit area. Another good spot for Vesper Sparrow is along the east side of Haggerty Road just north of Oakville-Waltz Road, in the fields south of the landfill.

Driving the backroads for 4 to 5 miles west and 1 to 2 miles north and south of Crosswinds Marsh can be productive for finding Yellow-breasted Chats in spring and summer. The birds are very thinly distributed here but reliable. In winter, this can be a good spot to look for Rough-legged Hawk, Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting.

METRO DETROIT HABITAT ISLANDS

As with any large city, the pressures of increasing human populations have left little room for birds. As little as 20 years ago, much of Oakland County was rural and relatively undeveloped. Today, Oakland County's population is greater than the city of Detroit proper. The result of all this development is that there are now only "islands" of habitat left for migrants and resident birds to utilize. A few of the best areas are described here.

SE-37 Maybury State Park – Northville

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter
DeLorme p. 33, A5. 42°26' N, 83°32' W

Contact Information: 248-349-8390; www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/

Directions: From I-275 and 8 Mile Road (Exit 167), go west on 8 Mile Road for 5.3 miles to the park entrance on the left. Or, from M-14 go west about 4 miles past I-275 to Beck Road (Exit 18). Turn right (north) and go about 3.8 miles to 8 Mile Road. Turn left and go 1.1 miles to the park entrance on the left (entry fee). The park headquarters is one-quarter mile south of 8 Mile Road on the west side of Beck Road.

Maybury State Park, formerly a state hospital for tuberculosis patients, is 944 acres of hilly deciduous forest and open fields. There are 6 miles of hiking trails, 4 miles of paved bike trails, 4 miles of mountain-bike trails, and 11 miles of horse trails. Camping is available. The best trails to explore are the foot trails going southeast from the westernmost parking area and the paved bike path going south through the center of the park. Summer resident birds include many common species in addition to Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, and Field Sparrow. During spring and fall migrations, at least 15 species of warblers may be seen on a good day, as well as flycatchers, thrushes, sparrows, and occasionally both cuckoos. Winter is a good time to acquaint yourself with common permanent residents, including Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch, while the brushy areas may have flocks of American Tree Sparrows.

SE-38 Heritage Park – Farmington Hills

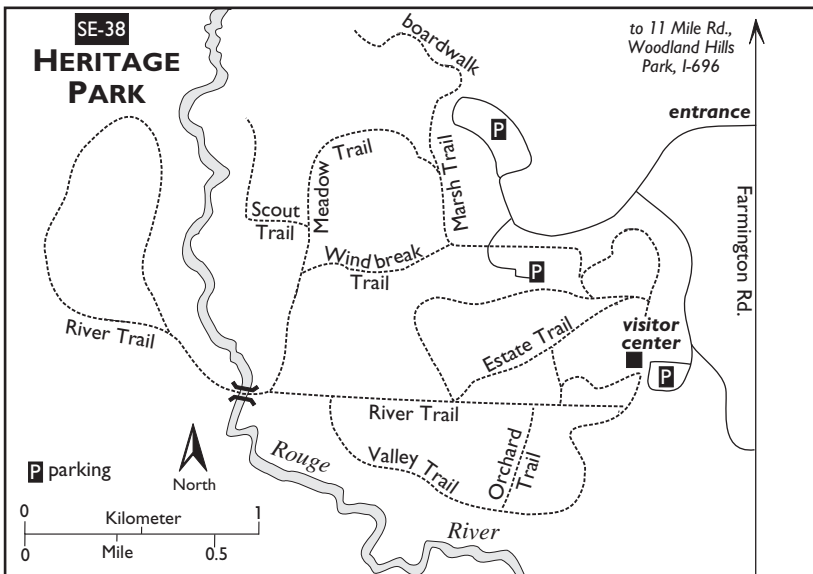
By Allen T. Chartier

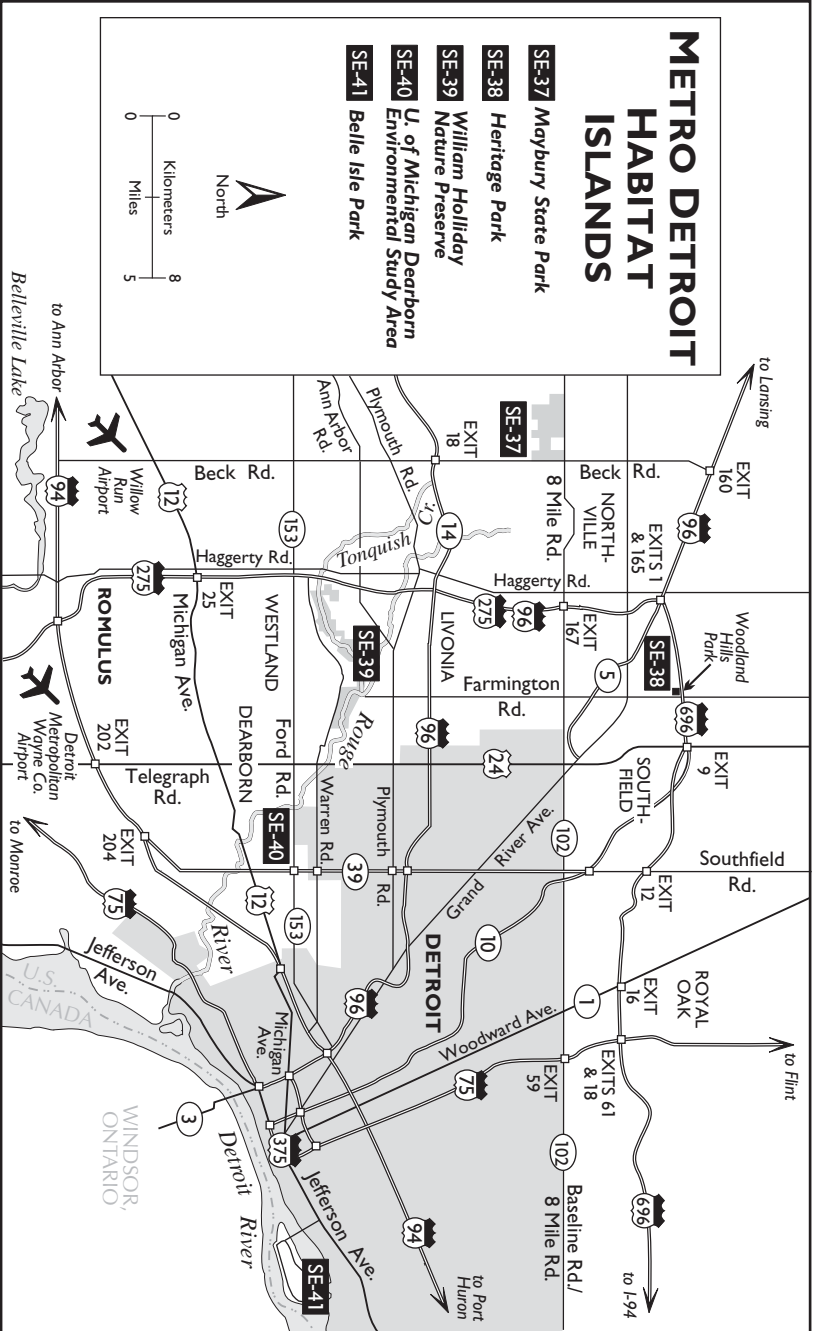
Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 33, A6. 42°29' N, 83°23' W

Directions: From I-696 and Orchard Lake Road (Exit 5) go south on Orchard Lake Road for about 0.75 mile to 11 Mile Road. Turn right and go 1 mile to Farmington Road. Turn left and go 0.3 mile to the park entrance on the right (first traffic light). Take the first left in the park to the parking area near the visitor center.

This 211-acre park provides several miles of trails through deciduous woodland and open areas along a branch of the upper Rouge River. In spring migration the most productive trail is often the River Trail, with Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler, and Song Sparrow along the brushy area, and thrushes, kinglets, warblers, and sparrows around the loop. Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Baltimore Oriole, and occasionally an Orchard Oriole can be seen along the Meadow Trail. Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Cooper's, Broad-winged, and Red-tailed Hawks, and even a Northern Goshawk have all flown overhead. In winter, the common resident species, including Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch, are joined by wintering American Tree Sparrows and in irruption years, a few Pine Siskins and Purple Finches.





The open area between the River Trail and the Windbreak Trail has hosted a Northern Shrike in some winters. A nearby area worth exploration is **Woodland Hills Park**. From Heritage Park, go north (left) on Farmington Road about 0.6 mile past 11 Mile Road to a signed parking area on the left. This is immediately opposite the entrance to Oakland Community College on the right. This small park (74 acres with about 2 miles of trails) can be good in spring migration for warblers and thrushes, and in summer there is often a resident Wood Thrush, and in recent years a Louisiana Waterthrush has taken up residence in spring and early summer at the stream crossings. Ducks, herons, Belted Kingfishers, and Tree Swallows can be found at the pond at the west end of the property.

SE-39 William Holliday Nature Preserve – Westland

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter**

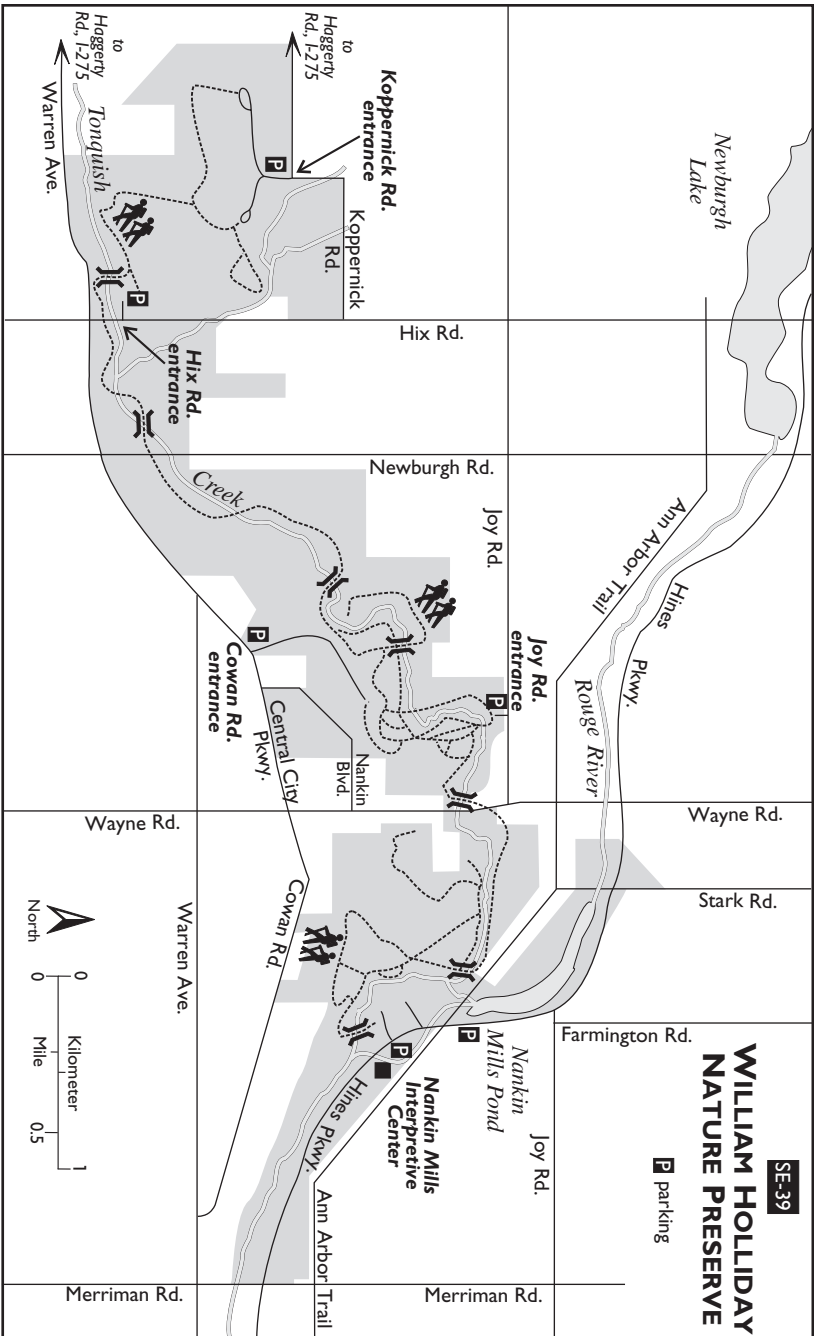
DeLorme p. 33, B6. 42°20' N, 83°26' W

Contact Information: Wayne County Parks, www.waynecounty.com/parks/william_p_holliday.htm; Holliday Nature Preserve Association, www.hnpa.org

Directions: *From I-275 and M-153, Ford Road (Exit 25), go west for 0.25 mile to Haggerty Road. Turn right (north) and go 1.25 miles to Koppnick Road (½ mile past Warren Avenue). Turn right (east) and go 0.75 mile to the Koppnick entrance on the right (where the road makes a 90-degree bend left).*

The **William Holliday Nature Preserve**, in the city of Westland, contains approximately 550 acres along the valley of Tonquish Creek, a tributary of the Rouge River. The land was acquired by Wayne County for the purpose of habitat preservation, made possible through the estate of Arthur J. Richardson, a Detroit banker. Mr. Richardson, a philanthropist who died in 1938, stipulated in his will that the county establish a park in honor of his uncle, William P. Holliday, who was a lifelong mentor. It took the county over 20 years to assemble hundreds of little parcels that eventually became the William Holliday Nature Preserve in 1958. Threats of a golf course in the tallest forest at the west end of the preserve brought this park to public attention in the early 1980s, when the quickly formed Holliday Nature Preserve Association successfully prevented development of one of the county's last scraps of native riparian woodland.

This 3-mile section of the Tonquish Creek watershed is in its natural state, containing thickets, upland woods, wetlands, and meadows. The foot trails that follow the streambed date back to the days of the Potawatomi Indians who fished and trapped this rich land. Chief Tonquish was killed and buried on the lands within the preserve. There are over 10 miles of hiking trails, though some are hard to follow, some sections are not well maintained, and some of the bridges in more remote areas are in disrepair. Unfortunately, the Wayne



County Parks Commission has not yet produced an accurate trail map. Do not leave valuables in your car anywhere in this area.

The **Koppernick Entrance** accesses the preserve's largest block of habitat and is the most-visited of the preserve's five main entrances. From the parking area, you can walk either east or west along an abandoned road. Since the treetops are more visible from the road than from inside the woods, this is often the best place to look for migrants in spring, when at least 15 species of warblers may be seen, as well as migrant flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, and a few sparrows. Heading east, you will come to the end of the road and a shelter, where the trail begins. Almost immediately, you will come to a trail leading to the left, which goes for less than 0.5 mile before petering out. Along this trail, you may find Eastern Wood-Pewee and many migrant warblers; Blue-winged Warbler has been found in the shrubby areas near the end. In the woodland, there is a single record of a migrant Hooded Warbler, and in the open areas a "Lawrence's" Warbler was banded many years ago.

Take the main trail straight ahead, bearing right at the forks, eventually making a loop that takes you to the western end of the abandoned road, a total distance of about a mile around the entire loop. The trail at its southwestern end is often very wet and muddy, and sometimes even impassable. Wood Ducks are often seen here in summer, and this is also a good spot to look for migrant waterthrushes, with both species recorded, although Louisiana only once or twice. Broad-winged Hawks have nested here in the tallest beech trees, one of only a few sites in the Metro Detroit area where they nest. In late April, they can be easily detected, if present, by their high-pitched, pewee-like calls. The forest floor here is covered with Large-flowered Trillium, Bloodroot, Yellow Trout Lilies, hepaticas, and many other spring wildflowers in late April through May. The southern portion of this area can be accessed by continuing on Koppernick Road north and then east to the T-intersection with Hix Road. Turn right (south) onto Hix and go 0.7 mile to the entrance to **Hix Park** on the right. The trail that leads west from here turns north and joins the loop trail described above at the Koppernick Road entrance.

The next largest block of habitat is to the east and has two entrances, one at the north and one at the south. From the intersection of Koppernick Road and Hix Road, go north on Hix Road for 0.5 mile to Joy Road. Turn right (east) and go 0.9 mile (crossing Newburgh Road after 0.5 mile) to the **Joy Road entrance** on the right. From here, the trails weave back and forth across Tonquish Creek in an often bewildering pattern, eventually reaching the north end of an abandoned road described below under the Cowan entrance. This area has good forest where Great Horned Owl has been seen, and Cooper's Hawks have nested. Walk east along the creek, toward Wayne Road, where you will encounter some of the largest cottonwood trees in the county, and perhaps in the state, with one tree more than three feet in diameter. There are patches of rare White Trout Lilies along this stretch.

To access the southern end of this woodland, continue on Joy Road east about one-quarter mile to Wayne Road. Turn right (south) and go 0.6 mile to the first traffic light at Central City Parkway (right) and Cowan Road (left). Turn right (west) onto Central City Parkway and go about 0.5 mile to the **Cowan entrance**, which is on the right just past the intersection with Nankin Boulevard and the multi-story apartment complex. This entrance is named after the road, which has since been renamed Central City Parkway! Park here, where the road is named Wildflower Drive, and walk along the abandoned road which turns northeast and meets the southern end of some of the Joy Road trails. With luck, you may be able to locate some of the trails heading southwest and walk all the way to the Newburgh Road entrance (now closed). Eastern Phoebe has occasionally been found under the bridges here.

SE-40 University of Michigan – Dearborn Environmental Study Area

By Julie Craves and Allen T. Chartier

Spring**** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 34, B1. 42°19' N, 83°15' W

Contact Information: RRBO, www.rrbo.org (posts updates on bird sightings and a great source of information on area birds); UM-D Natural Areas Department, 313-593-5338. The publication *Birds of Southeast Michigan: Dearborn* by Julie Craves (1996) provides detailed information on the status and occurrence of birds at ESA.

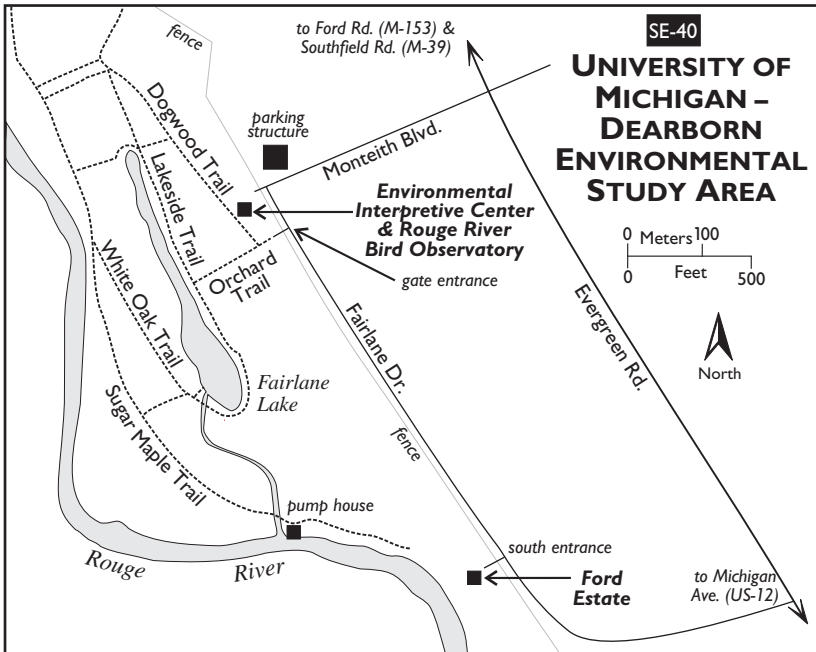
Directions: From M-39 (Southfield Freeway) and Ford Road (Exit 7), go west on Ford Road for 1 mile to Evergreen Road (exit ramp at 0.5 mile). Turn left and go 0.5 mile to the entrance to the University of Michigan – Dearborn campus on your right (west) after the fourth stoplight (the second and third lights are close together). After turning right onto the campus, drive straight (west) one-quarter mile to a multi-story parking structure on the right, where you should park. See map on next page.

Although located in a highly urbanized area within shouting distance of Ford Motor Company's world headquarters, the **University of Michigan's Dearborn Environmental Study Area (ESA)** has earned a reputation as a migration hotspot in southeast Michigan. Over 250 species—about 130 of them annual—have been recorded. Sometimes referred to as “Fairlane Woods” by locals, the ESA is nearly 300 acres of varied natural habitats: beech-maple forest and sycamore-willow floodplain along the Rouge River, some old field areas, and a small freshwater lake. The property was owned by Henry Ford, and you can visit his home, **Fairlane Estate**, a national historic landmark. Keeping track of the birds is the University's Rouge River Bird Observatory (RRBO), which conducts daily migration surveys and a bird banding operation handling 2,000 birds a year.

From the parking structure look for the University's Environmental Interpretive Center directly in front of you at a sharp left turn. Here you can view displays, check out the gift shop, find out about public natural-history pro-

grams, visit the Rouge River Bird Observatory, and pick up a trail map and bird checklist before you head out onto the trails.

Spring is the best time to bird the area. Forty species of warblers have been noted. One can usually count on Cerulean, Prothonotary, Worm-eating, Hooded, and Kentucky Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat being present every year. Several singing Connecticut Warblers are typical (usually six or so are also banded each fall), and both “Lawrence’s” and “Brewster’s” have been found, along with their parental types. Accidental species have included the state’s first Virginia’s Warbler (banded) and the state’s only Townsend’s Warbler. Michigan’s third Black-throated Gray Warbler was reported from nearby **Greenfield Village**, serving as a reminder that even if your family insists on visiting this world-famous historical park, there can be birding rewards if you remember to bring your binoculars! Most of the other Eastern warbler species are fairly common to abundant in this area during May. All four species of *Catharus* thrush can be found in migration, although greater numbers come through in fall. Swainson’s Thrushes are most common, but Gray-cheeked is not hard to find. In springtime, there is occasionally a visit by at least one White-eyed Vireo or Summer Tanager. Breeding species at the ESA include Cliff Swallow (nearby, under the bridges spanning the Rouge River), Brown Creeper (one of only two nesting locations in Wayne County), Carolina Wren, Wood Thrush, Gray Catbird (the most commonly banded species), Indigo Bunting, Baltimore Oriole, and occasionally Orchard Oriole.



There is one record of Blue Grosbeak (casual) in spring migration. Beware that mosquitos are plentiful and vicious during the summer months. Come prepared with plenty of repellent.

Thanks to the abundance of native berry bushes planted by Henry Ford, fall migrants also love the ESA. There are plentiful thrushes and sparrows (Song, Lincoln's, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned are the most common). The ESA sometimes hosts Northern Saw-whet Owls during fall migration; the RRBO conducts a banding study of this species.

In winter irruption years, Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls join American Goldfinches to feed on the cones of the Speckled Alder trees growing along the edges of the lake. A little searching will usually produce overwintering Song and White-throated Sparrows, and occasionally a Fox Sparrow. A few Hermit Thrushes and Yellow-rumped Warblers, and often hundreds of American Robins, also spend the winter.

Fairlane Lake, though small, attracts some interesting birds. Pied-billed Grebe is common in migration, Great Blue and Green Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons are found all summer, and Wood Ducks nest. In 2000 a Tricolored Heron (casual) was a one-day wonder. A startling flyover in 1995 was a Long-tailed Jaeger, and spring 2002 produced a flyover Mississippi Kite, both casual in the state.

SE-41 Belle Isle Park – Detroit

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 34, B3. 42°20' N, 82°59' W
Contact Information: 313-852-4075

Directions: From I-94, take I-75 south (Exit 216A). Stay in a center lane and, after 1.6 miles, continue straight ahead where I-75 goes to the right. Here the freeway becomes I-375 (signposted as Exit 51C but not a true exit). Continue another 0.75 mile to the exit on the right for Jefferson Avenue East. Stay in the center lane and continue across Congress Avenue and Jefferson Avenue westbound (two traffic lights). Continue around the curve left onto Jefferson Avenue eastbound at the third traffic light. From here, go east on Jefferson Avenue for 2.0 miles to the turn on the right for Belle Isle (small white sign). Alternately, you can take US-10 (Lodge Freeway) South (Exit 215A) from I-94, which ends at Jefferson Avenue, which you can then follow for about 2.75 miles east to the turn for Belle Isle. Do not leave valuables in your car anywhere in this area.

The Detroit River has long been a migration corridor for waterfowl and landbirds. **Belle Isle** is one of the only remaining forested areas along this now industrialized pathway and is Detroit's version of New York's Central Park. In addition to being a good migration oasis, the park contains a number of plants that are extremely rare elsewhere in Michigan but which are very common here. These include Shumard Oak and Pumpkin Ash trees as well as,

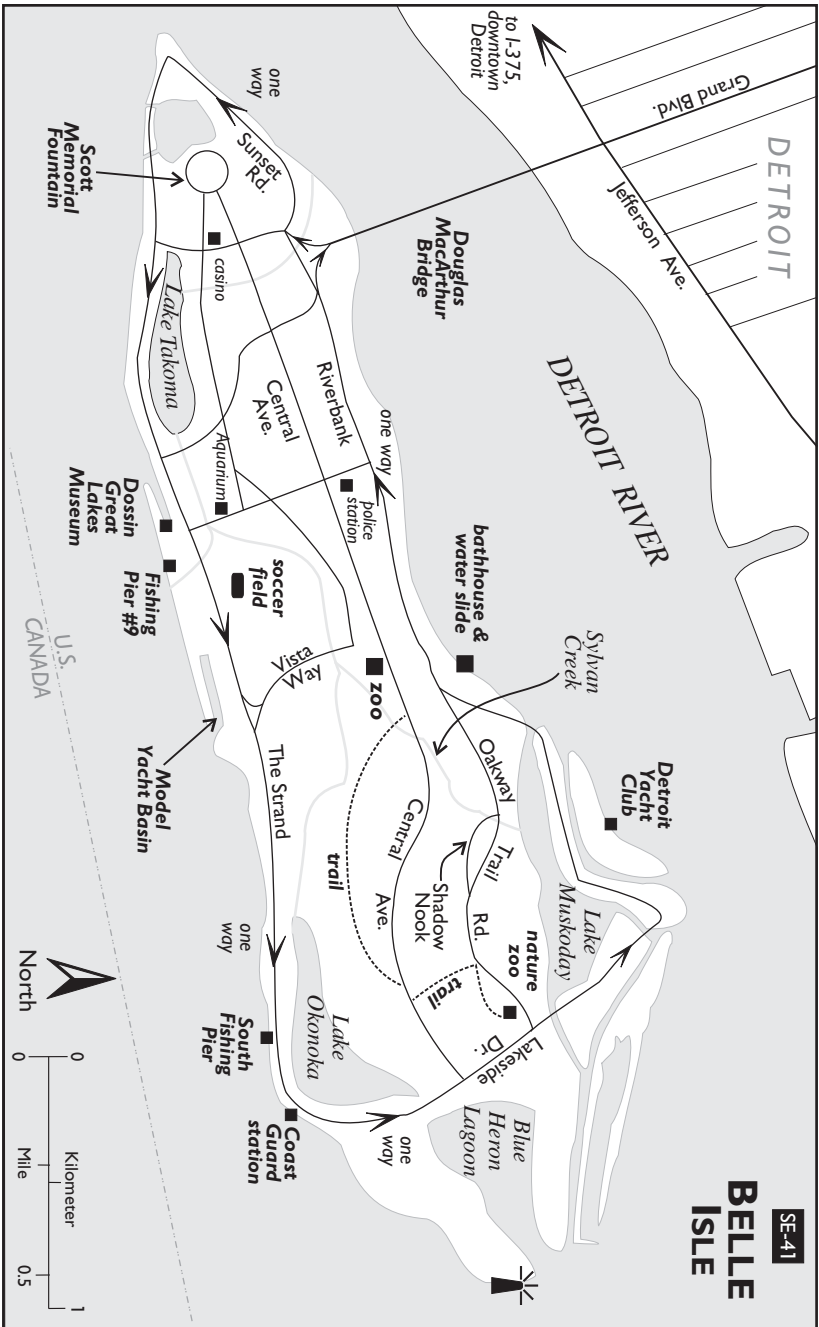
surprisingly, 200 acres of old-growth forest. The threatened Northern Madtom (*Noturus stigmosus*), a small catfish, and Prairie Ladies Tresses, an orchid, have both been found here.

After crossing the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Bridge (0.75 mile long and known to birders simply as the Belle Isle Bridge), bear right onto Sunset Road (0.0 mile), which is a one-way road that runs counterclockwise around the perimeter of the island, and which changes names four times! The first pullout on the right (0.2 mile) is a good place to check the river for Red-necked (rare in February/March and October/November) and Horned Grebes and numerous ducks, and to scan the swallows overhead for Cliff Swallows, which nest under the nearby MacArthur Bridge. The **Scott Memorial Fountain** and pond (0.4 mile) on the left often has ducks when water levels are high and a few shorebirds when water levels are low. At 0.6 mile, you will have rounded the western end of the island to its southern side (the Detroit River runs east to west here). The name of the road changes to The Strand. This is usually the best side of the island for viewing diving ducks from September to March. Continue following the shoreline east along The Strand, checking the river for rafts of ducks at any point. There are numerous parking areas and pulloffs all around the island. **Lake Takoma** (1.0 mile) on the left is a good place to check for additional waterfowl, sometimes with good close views. Note that Canada is to your right here, so any distant birds may not be in U.S. waters.

The **Dossin Great Lakes Museum** and **Fishing Pier #9** at 1.4 miles make good vantage points in October and November to look for scoters, all of which are rare, although all three species have been recorded. Common Loon and Horned Grebe are occasional here (March/April and September/October). The **soccer field** (1.7 miles on the left) usually has only Canada Geese and Ring-billed Gulls, but Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese have made rare appearances here during migration in March and October. Sometimes the geese congregate at the back of the field, where closer views can had by turning left onto Vista Way (a two-way street). There are often a number of strange Canada/domestic Goose hybrids mixed in, some of which may resemble Greater White-fronted Geese, Graylag Geese, Bean Geese, or nothing at all! The small **Model Yacht Basin** ahead on James Bay on the right is an impoundment between the road and the river that sometimes provides close views of waterfowl, especially Hooded Merganser.

Lake Okonoka at 2.4 miles on the left is another good place for Hooded Merganser, dabbling ducks, Bufflehead, and Black-crowned Night-Heron (April–December). The large **South Fishing Pier** at 2.6 miles is a favorite winter hangout for Bufflehead and other diving ducks, including rafts of Canvasbacks from October to March when Blue Heron Lagoon is frozen.

Just past the **U.S. Coast Guard Station** at 2.8 miles, there is a good view of the Detroit River to the east near the east end of the island, where scoters, Common Loon, and Horned Grebe can occasionally be seen in October and November. Straight ahead (to the east) is Peche Island, where Bald



Eagles have nested. Immediately to your left, at the east end of Lake Okonoka, is a favorite roosting spot for Black-crowned Night-Heron, particularly in late fall and early winter. This end of Lake Okonoka is also often favored by Wood Ducks. A Snowy Owl spent one winter at the lighthouse at the far eastern end of the island.

The road turns north here, now named Lakeside Drive. **Blue Heron Lagoon** at 3.1 miles on the right is a favorite staging and wintering area for Canvasbacks in most years, and from September to April when it is ice-free, usually holds a variety of diving and dabbling ducks, including both scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Red-head, and all three mergansers, as well as American Coot and Pied-billed Grebe.

At mile 3.3 on the left is the **Belle Isle Nature Zoo** (formerly the Nature Center) and a parking area. The building is closed indefinitely for renovations, and the restrooms are not available. Restrooms are available across from the Aquarium, behind the Police Station, and at the Casino. Park here and walk (do not leave valuables in your car). The trees immediately adjacent to the parking are often a good place to see Red-headed Woodpecker, even in winter. A short trail system begins directly behind the Nature Zoo and leads to some of the quieter roads in the well-wooded center of the island. These roads typically have less traffic than the main perimeter road. The best spots are the wooded areas along Central Avenue and Shadow Nook. These wet woodlands are excellent in spring migration for numerous flycatchers, vireos, kinglets, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows, with the month of May being the best. Virtually every regularly occurring migrant warbler has occurred here, and unusual species such as Prothonotary, Kentucky, Connecticut, and Hooded Warblers have turned up. Northern Waterthrush is annual and Louisiana Waterthrush is occasional. After a wave of migrants moves in, it can seem that every treetop has a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, an Indigo Bunting, or a Baltimore Oriole. Most of these birds do not nest here, but in September the migration commences again and is likely to be as productive, though the island is little birded at this time of year.

The trail that starts immediately behind the Nature Zoo leads straight to Oakway Trail Road, through an area that is often wet and is good for Red-headed Woodpecker, Tree Swallow, Yellow Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, and occasional nesting Great Horned Owls. After birding along Oakway Trail for a bit, continue on the trail which turns left and goes straight through a usually productive area for migrants, including Gray Catbird (nests), Brown Thrasher, and White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows. After about one-quarter mile, this trail meets Central Avenue. Turn right and bird along the road toward the Belle Isle Zoo. There are additional trails leading toward Sylvan Creek and others that go toward Nashua Creek and end up behind the zoo. This latter trail is actually an old road that has been closed for several years (but is marked on some maps as Tanglewood Drive). The little patch of

woods encircled by Shadow Nook can be alive with sparrows and Indigo Buntings on the right day. When you near the zoo, don't think you've added Wild Turkey or Sandhill Crane to your list, as they are incarcerated at the zoo along with the very vocal Common Peafowl. Ring-necked Pheasants have been released on the island and their countability is questionable.

After returning to the Belle Isle Nature Zoo parking lot, turn left back onto the main perimeter road. **Lake Muskoday** (3.5 miles) on the left is a good place for Ring-necked Ducks, all three mergansers, and Pied-billed Grebe. The name of the road changes here once again to Riverbank Road. A pullout on the right (3.7 miles) leads to a picnic shelter and provides another good vantage point of the river. Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser frequent this area.

The channel adjacent to the **Detroit Yacht Club** (4.0 miles) usually has only Mallards and feral ducks begging for handouts, but occasionally has one or two individuals of other species as well, such as Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Hooded Merganser, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Gadwall, American Black Duck, and (in 1989) a hybrid scaup x Tufted Duck. Close views are possible here.

The parking area for the **Bathroom and Water Slide** (4.3 miles) is the final good vantage point of the river before leaving the island. In winter, a few Tundra Swans might be seen among the many Mute Swans, and the shoreline occasionally has shorebirds in migration. Rafts of Common Mergansers and Canvasbacks are usually here in late winter. Great Black-backed and rare Glaucous Gulls have been seen in winter. At 5.0 miles, you will be on the Belle Isle Bridge to depart the island. If you wish to go around again, stay in the left lane and watch carefully for a difficult-to-see sharp left turn (marked with arrows on the pavement) just before the bridge. (Once you cross the bridge, you are again at Jefferson Avenue, where you can turn left to return to the downtown area and the major freeways.)

THE DETROIT RIVER

The Detroit River is fairly short as rivers go, only about 30 miles long, connecting a "minor" lake, Lake St. Clair, at the north end (see The St. Clair Marshes and Islands section later in this chapter), with Lake Erie at the south end. The Detroit River is a heavily used shipping channel, and due to its rapid rate of water flow and the industrialization along its shores, it typically does not freeze in most winters, providing good winter birding. The Detroit River has two main islands, Belle Isle at the north end (site SE-41) and Grosse Ile at the south (SE-43). Both have good river access, with the added bonus of woodlots that provide stopover sites for northbound and southbound migrant landbirds. The river's reputation as a migration corridor for landbirds is borne out by sightings of numerous interesting migrants in the concrete jungle of downtown Detroit, including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Gray Catbird,

Brown Creeper, Ovenbird, Connecticut Warbler (once or twice), Eastern Towhee, Lincoln's and White-throated Sparrows, and other misplaced migrants.

As might be expected, waterfowl migration is a major attraction along the Detroit River. Results of local Christmas Bird Counts have found globally significant numbers of wintering Canvasbacks (8,000-plus) and Common Mergansers (7,000-plus), both representing more than one percent of the North American population. Occasionally, thousands of Redheads can be found (9,000-plus in 1997) among many other species. Ring-billed and Herring Gulls breed on inaccessible islands in the river, and a heron rookery is occupied most years on Stony Island, east of Grosse Ile. At the southern end of the river, viewed from Lake Erie Metropark, migrating diurnal raptors cross into Michigan from Ontario, resulting in one of the most spectacular hawk migrations in North America.

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge was established in 2001, the first of its kind in the world. The refuge boundaries extend from the mouth of the Rouge River at the north end south to the Ohio border, and include both U.S. and Canadian waters. The refuge incorporates the Wyandotte National Wildlife Refuge, which consists of two islands (Grassy and Mamajuda) offshore of the town of Wyandotte. These islands have become contaminated with pollutants since the formation of the refuge in 1961 and are now off-limits. Refuge headquarters are currently co-located with Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (see the Saginaw Bay South section later in this chapter), but there are plans to develop a visitor center along the Detroit River shoreline. For updates on the status of this interesting new refuge development, go to their website at <http://midwest.fws.gov/DetroitRiver/>.

SE-42 Middle Detroit River

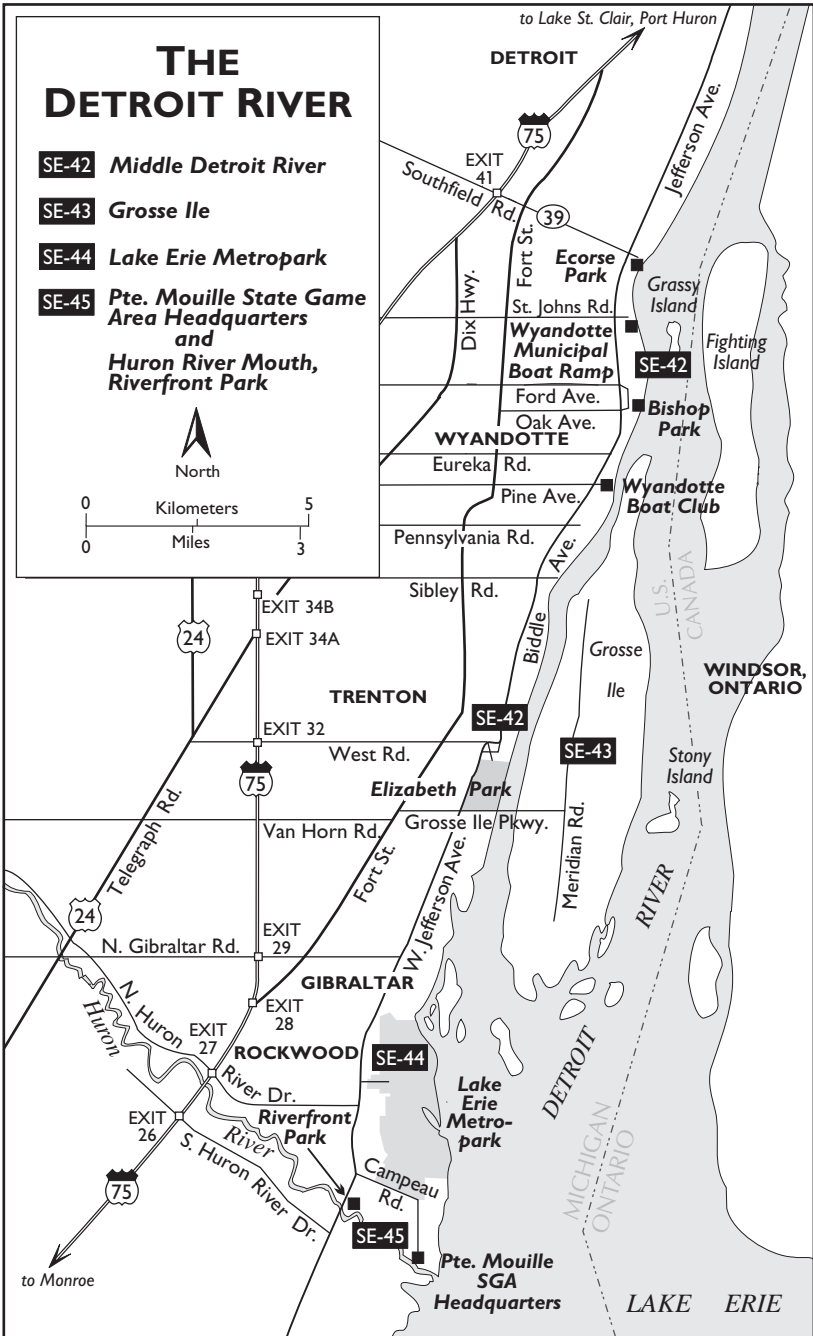
By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 34, B1-C1. 42 14' N, 83 09' W

Several sites between Ecorse and Trenton, described below, provide access for viewing migrant and wintering waterfowl along this middle stretch of the Detroit River, as well as habitat for migrant passerines and the possibility of migrating raptors overhead. See map on next page.

Ecorse Park is located at the foot of Southfield Road (M-39) at Jefferson Avenue. From I-75, take the Southfield Road exit (Exit 41) and go south 2.3 miles to the T-intersection with a stoplight at Jefferson Avenue (make sure you're in the middle lane). There is a parking area straight ahead, near the Grand Port Cafe. Park here and walk along the riverside boardwalk south for about one-quarter mile, scoping the river and the margins of Mud Island just offshore. Many migrant waterfowl can be found here in spring and fall, and even in rare winters when the river freezes completely, this portion of the river is often the first to become ice-free in February. In winter, hundreds and



sometimes thousands of Canvasbacks and Common Mergansers can be found among smaller numbers of Mute Swans, a few Tundra Swans, Redheads, both scaup, Ring-necked Ducks, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, and Hooded Mergansers. Once the ice breaks up, the ducks disperse and quickly depart the area to move north. Ring-billed and Herring Gulls are the common gulls in winter, with Great Black-backed Gull present in smaller numbers, and an occasional Glaucous Gull. Dabbling ducks are more numerous in migration, with plenty of Mallards and a few American Black Ducks year round. In early spring and fall, groups of American Wigeon, Gadwall, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal may be seen in addition to Red-breasted Mergansers, which only rarely winter, and in April and October, there may be rafts of Ruddy Ducks. Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, and Northern Pintail occur in small numbers in spring and fall, and Bonaparte's Gull and Common and Forster's Terns may be seen as well.

The **Wyandotte Municipal Boat Ramp** provides yet another view of the river a bit farther south. Similar species to those described for Ecorse Park can be found here. From Ecorse Park, go south (left) on Jefferson Avenue for 1.1 miles to St. Johns Road (stoplight). Turn left and follow the signs to the boat ramp. Waterfowl can often be seen swimming among the boat docks as well as out in the river. In winter 2004, a Red-necked Grebe was found here among the many Canvasbacks, Redheads, Common Mergansers, and a few Ring-necked Ducks. Avoid this area between April 1 and October 31, as you may interfere with boaters.

Bishop Park is located in the city of Wyandotte, and provides a vantage point for scanning the Detroit River at the north end of Grosse Ile (no views of the river possible from the island). From the boat ramp, go south (left) on Jefferson Avenue for 1.5 miles to Oak Road. Turn left and go one block to the parking area at Bishop Park. There is an observation deck and a short boardwalk along the river where you can scope the water. It is also worth checking around, and even under, the short pier. In addition to the species mentioned at the previous sites, Common Loon and Horned and Pied-billed Grebes may be found here where the channel is a bit wider, and in winter 2004 a male Harlequin Duck (the first in Wayne County in 30 years) was found here.

To reach the next site, the **Wyandotte Boat Club**, continue south on Jefferson Avenue, which is now named Biddle Avenue, for 0.5 mile from Oak Street to Pine Avenue and turn left (just past the McDonald's restaurant). Park near the end of the road on the left. There is a walkway going south for about one-eighth mile along the river, with several observation decks. Avoid this area between April 1 and October 31, as you may interfere with boaters.

From the boat club, continue south (left) on Biddle Avenue. After you pass West Road (4.3 miles from Pine Avenue), which goes west to I-75, continue another block (next traffic light) to the first intersection. (Note: Biddle Avenue changes to West Jefferson Avenue 1.6 miles south of Pine Avenue, where it curves right then left at Bridge Road. Bridge Road leads to Grosse Ile via a toll bridge, but there is a free bridge farther south that provides better

access.) Continue straight ahead to the entrance to **Elizabeth Park**, another river viewpoint, with the additional attraction of adjacent woodlands for migrants. The park road is a circular, one-way loop of 1.2 miles. Occasionally, a Northern Mockingbird can be found here, but it tends to be rather skulky due to the human activity here. The woodlots in this small park usually have a few migrant passerines in spring and fall migration. During fall migration (September–November), it is also worth checking the skies. When winds are from the west or southwest, migrant raptors are often forced to cross the Detroit River farther north than usual, often in the vicinity of the two tall red-and-white smokestacks.

Humbug Marsh was recently saved from development through efforts of the Trust for Public Land, the Detroit Audubon Society, and several other groups. This 410-acre marsh is the last remaining mile of natural Detroit River shoreline on the U.S. mainland. There is currently no public access to this site, but the future headquarters for the new **Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge** may be built near here. Waterfowl, herons, and egrets, as well as Common Yellowthroats and Swamp Sparrows, may be seen here once public access is possible. It is worth checking the website for this area to see if it has been opened: www.unitedearthfund.org. From the entrance to Elizabeth Park, go west for 0.2 mile on West Jefferson Avenue to a T-intersection. Turn left to continue on West Jefferson and go 2.1 miles to Vreeland Road. The marsh is on your left at this point, and N. Gibraltar Road, 0.9 miles south of Vreeland, runs along the southern boundary of the marsh.

Note: Grosse Ile Parkway, which leads to the next birding site, Grosse Ile, is 0.9 mile from the entrance to Elizabeth Park along West Jefferson. Also, the entrance to Lake Erie Metropark, site SE-44, is 2.1 miles south of N. Gibraltar Road.

SE-43 Grosse Ile

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring** Summer* Fall* Winter****

DeLorme p. 34, C1. 42°05', 83°10' W

Directions: *From the Elizabeth Park loop, turn left onto West Jefferson Avenue. Go 0.2 mile to a T-intersection and turn left for another 1.2 miles to Grosse Ile Parkway. Turn left (east) and cross the bridge onto Grosse Ile. See map on next page.*

The Detroit River's other major island (in addition to Belle Isle), **Grosse Ile** is about eight miles long and two miles wide, and is largely residential. However, there are several wooded areas good for birding in spring and winter, and there is good access for viewing waterfowl on the Detroit River.

After entering Grosse Ile at Meridian Road (1.4 miles from Jefferson Avenue), turn left (north) for 0.6 mile to Macomb Road and turn right (east). Go 1.0 mile to the end of Macomb at a T-intersection with East River Road. Park at Nate's convenience store on the left (0.9 mile), and please do them the courtesy of purchasing something while you use their parking lot. At the end



of Macomb Street and along the east side of **East River Road**, there is a public observation deck overlooking the river. In winter, there is often a stretch of open water here where Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Canvasback, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneye may be seen. Dabbling ducks typically include American Black Duck, Gadwall, and a few American Wigeons. As spring and the ice melt progress, all three mergansers become more common, and there is a greater variety of dabbling ducks, including Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, and Northern Shoveler. Although the entire length of East River Road provides good views of the river, this is a residential area, with almost no pulloffs, and birding by car along here is not recommended. In spring and summer, colonies of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets on nearby Stony Island can be seen from the

eastern end of Grosse Ile. In fall, migrant hawks may pass over the south end of Grosse Ile, especially during periods of west or southwest winds, so keep an eye to the sky.

Return west to Meridian Road and go right (north) 2.2 miles to Horse Mill Road. Turn right (east) and go 0.4 mile to the **Grosse Ile Wildlife Sanctuary** on the left. Turn left and, at the fork in the road (0.25 mile), go left, and park at the end of the road. Birding along the roads here in migration can produce many vireos, warblers, Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers, and more.

Return west on Horse Mill Road to Meridian Road. Continue straight through this intersection (west) and follow the road as it curves left and becomes West River Road. **Westcroft Gardens** is 1.2 miles from the inter-

section of Meridian and Horse Mill. Turn left at the entrance sign and park among the buildings. Westcroft Gardens is a delightful little area that most local birders visit only in winter, when both Red and White-winged Crossbills seem to favor this area in irruption years. Surprisingly, in some winters when there are few crossbills elsewhere in southeastern Michigan, there may be some at Westcroft Gardens. Other birds that can be found here in winter include Carolina Wren, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, and winter finches. Spring may also be a good time to bird here, but the spectacular Rhododendron gardens are popular with the public, and you will not be alone as you probably will be in winter.

From Westcroft Gardens, turn left onto West River Road and go 1.7 miles to Grosse Ile Parkway, where you can cross the bridge back west to Jefferson Avenue.

SE-44 Lake Erie Metropark

By Paul Cypher

Spring*** Summer* Fall**** Winter**

DeLorme p. 34, D1. 42°04' N, 83°12' W

Contact Information: 734-379-5020; www.metroparks.com

NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 1997 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 4: 167-174.

Directions: From the Grosse Ile bridge, turn left onto W. Jefferson Avenue and go 4.2 miles through Gibraltar to the entrance to Lake Erie Metropark on the left (Metroparks entry fee). Direct access to Lake Erie Metropark from I-75 is via North Huron River Drive (Exit 27), east on North Huron River Drive. Go 2.2 miles to the T-intersection with West Jefferson Avenue. Turn left and go 0.15 mile to the park entrance on the right. (The signposted exit on I-75 for Lake Erie Metropark, Gibraltar Road exit, is a less direct route to the park.)

Lake Erie Metropark, one of the premier hawkwatching sites in North America, contains over 1,600 acres of land with three miles of Lake Erie/Detroit River shoreline. Habitats include marshes, meadows, woods, and thickets, all available to be explored by curious birders. From waterfowl and warblers to thousands of migrating hawks, there is plenty to offer, with over 225 species recorded. Lake Erie Metropark is situated where the Detroit River meets Lake Erie, making waterfowl another major birding attraction. Overall, Lake Erie Metropark has wonderful opportunities for the birder in all seasons. With the exception of the golf course, all areas of Lake Erie Metropark are open for birding.

Marina Point (A on map), located at the south tip of the Cove Point Picnic Area, is one of the state's best fall, winter, and spring locations to view waterfowl. Thousands of scaup, Canvasbacks (counts have exceeded 20,000), and other diving ducks can be seen in the winter. During fall migration, American Wigeon can be plentiful. Be sure to check for Eurasian Wigeon; it has

been recorded here more than once. Since parking at Marina Point is for handicapped vehicles only, you will need to park at the southernmost lot of Cove Point and walk over to Marina Point .

During the last week of October, Tundra Swans begin arriving from their northern breeding grounds. At times, thousands can be seen, making Lake Erie Metropark one of the most reliable locations in Michigan to see numbers of this species in winter, with hundreds often staying through March, when they depart back north. It is also worthwhile to check for introduced Trumpeter Swans, which have been seen here.

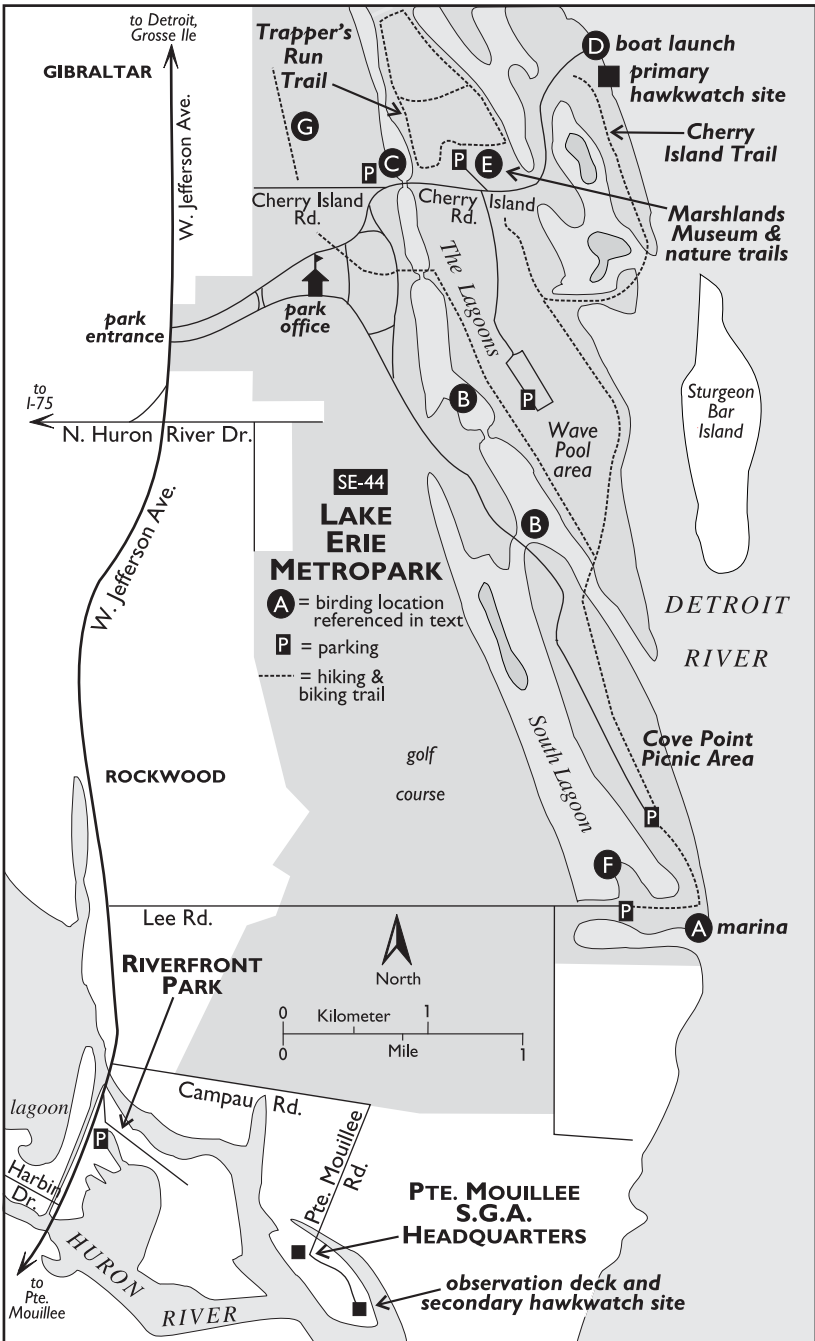
Up to 24 species of waterfowl are regularly seen over the course of a year, with the best variety present during March and April. Snow Geese among the numerous Canada Geese are reliable during September–November. In addition, a few of the more prized waterfowl species occasionally turn up. Greater White-fronted Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Long-tailed Duck, and White-winged Scoter, have all been recorded. Remember to check the Common Goldeneyes for a rare Barrow's Goldeneye, and scan the scaup for an even rarer Tufted Duck (both accidental in the state). Though neither has been recorded here, many birders suspect they will show up one day. Many of the dabbling duck species can be viewed where the roads cross over **The Lagoons (B on map)**. However, most of these areas do not have parking.

Wading birds are well represented. Great Blue Heron can be found year round, while Great Egret, Green Heron, and Black-crowned Night-Heron can be found generally from April–October. In addition, Cattle Egret, Little Blue Heron, and Glossy and White-faced Ibis (both casual) have all been recorded.

The **Boat Launch (D on map)** at the north end of the park can be good, depending on the time of year. Waterfowl numbers here will be low until the end of the boating season. In the winter when launch activity is minimal, ducks will congregate in the lead of open water. This is also an excellent place to check for gulls; Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous Gulls have been recorded here. An added bonus: winter viewing at the Boat Launch can be done from the comfort of your heated car.

Bald Eagles are becoming an increasingly common sight during the winter months. Open leads of water are guaranteed by hot-water discharge from upriver power plants, providing feeding opportunities for lingering migrant eagles as well as for local wintering birds. In addition, nesting activity in the region has increased dramatically compared to the DDT years. The result is good Bald Eagle viewing year round, especially in winter; often more than 20 may be seen on the ice off Cove Point. Be sure to check the dead trees on Sturgeon Bar Island, any tree at Cove Point Picnic Area, and the ice itself.

The **Marshlands Museum and Nature Trails (E on map)** are great for woodland and marsh birding. The wide trails are surfaced with wood chips or sections of boardwalk, and are flat and easy to manage, even with a wheelchair. Completed in the autumn of 1996, **Trapper's Run Trail** (1 mile)



winds through what used to be old pasture. Scrubby Hawthorns, Buckthorn, Poison-ivy, and Virginia Creeper are mixed with mature ashes, maples, and cottonwoods, providing insect-attracting flowers in spring and early summer and lots of berries in the winter. During migration, dozens of species of vireos, warblers, and other passerines can be found. A small number of passerines nest here.

Trapper's Run is highlighted by five marsh overlooks. The longest, Riley Creek Overlook, is probably the most popular with birders. In spring, Sora and, with luck, Virginia Rail can be heard from here. Various dabbling duck species can also be observed from this location. Wyman's Canal, Eagle's Way, and Sanger's Bay Overlooks along the east side of the trail can also be good for ducks, especially Wood Ducks. Be sure to check the large dead cottonwoods for perched herons, egrets, raptors, woodpeckers, and swallows. (For the historically inclined, the series of canals along the eastern edge of the trail were dredged in the late 19th century for Dr. Hal Wyman, a prominent Detroit-area physician.)

In winter, the abundant berries may be used by the lone Hermit Thrush or a flock of American Robins. Yellow-rumped Warbler is usually reliable here, but can sometimes be hit-or-miss. Starting in late October, Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls migrate through the area. While the saw-whets have been recorded mainly at night by banders, the Long-eareds are more easily found during the day. The Long-eared's ability to blend in with the Hawthorn scenery is uncanny, and it is not easy to find. Look for its silhouette contrasting with the branches and sky, or for whitewash. Once a bird (or birds) has been found, it can be remain at the location for the remainder of the season (through March), provided it is not disturbed by over-anxious observers. Please stay on the trails.

Big Turtle Shortcut can be used for those not interested in walking the full distance. Insects here, however, have both a positive and negative aspect. The Deer Flies in the summer can be beastly. However, for the dragonfly enthusiast, the marsh overlooks provide wonderful viewing opportunities.

The **Cherry Island Marsh Trail**, completed in 1999, is a great companion trail to Trapper's Run. This 1.25-mile trail offers more access to the marshes and great views of the Detroit River mouth. The boardwalk sections that parallel Cherry Island Road are good for the expected marsh species, including Marsh Wren and Swamp Sparrow in summer. The small patches of alders along the shoreline just south of the boat launch can be productive in migration. In addition, the large bridge at the southeast corner of the trail offers more good viewing opportunities of marshes to the west where dabbling ducks, herons, egrets, and coots may be seen. It also provides good views of Lake Erie and Sturgeon Bar Island to the southeast. During late summer, you can't miss the American Lotus along the southern end of this trail. This spectacular native plant is a Michigan threatened species due to the loss of its natu-

ral shoreline habitat. The marshes of Lake Erie Metropark are some of the last places in the state to see this magnificent flower. Please do not disturb it.

Unlike Pointe Mouillee State Game Area farther south, where pumps are used to manage water levels, at Lake Erie Metropark the presence or absence of shorebirds is dependent on the naturally fluctuating water levels of Lake Erie. Thus, shorebirds are difficult to predict. In years with low water levels, the park's various lagoons can have exposed mud and are worth a look during shorebird migration. The **Cove Point Picnic Area and South Lagoon (F on map)** can be very productive. To access the **South Lagoon**, park at Cove Point Picnic Area's southernmost parking area. Walk south past Marina Point (**A on map**) and west to the marina parking lot. The large expanse of marsh to the north can be wonderful. Both yellowlegs, Willet, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlin, both dowitchers, Wilson's Snipe, and a host of other shorebirds can be found here when conditions are right from May–October. (Note: You can also reach this lagoon by entering the marina from Lee Road, but to access other areas of the park, you will have to return west on Lee Road to West Jefferson, and then north to the park's main entrance.)

In years with high water levels, the flooded, low-lying grassy areas near South Lagoon and particularly near Cove Point Picnic Area provide good shorebird habitat. Spring of 1997 was a good example, with highlights that included Willet, Whimbrel, and Wilson's Phalarope. In 1996, a Glossy Ibis and a White-faced Ibis (both casual in Michigan) were observed together feeding in the grass. Other low-lying grassy areas with potential for shorebirds include any place along Cove Point Picnic Area and the grass between the Wave Pool Parking Lot and the lakeshore.

Don't forget to check the shoreline, where variable water levels and washed-up vegetation can be attractive to migrating shorebirds. In addition, check the stone bridge at the north end of the Cove Point Picnic Area for nesting Cliff Swallows, which began nesting here on a regular basis in 1999. Look for them from mid-May to the end of the summer.

The **Woods/Meadow area (G on map)** complements Trapper's Run/Big Turtle Shortcut. Instead of scrub and cattails, there are large maples, beeches, and oaks. Park your vehicle at the parking lot on Cherry Island Road. The paved hike-bike trail that runs over 1 mile north to South Gibraltar Road provides various habitats to explore, including meadow. Good numbers of warblers and other passerines can be found here, especially in spring and fall migrations. Raptors have also taken a liking to the adjacent woodlot. In 1997 Great Horned Owls, Red-tailed Hawks, and Cooper's Hawks nested here. Eastern Screech-Owl is very reliable here during the Rockwood Christmas Bird Count.

During the fall months, the skies over Lake Erie Metropark are alive with migrant hawks, and this locale is one of the most productive **hawkwatches** in North America. Beginning in mid- to late August, hundreds of thousands of raptors of 16 species begin to migrate south from their breed-

ing grounds. Most originate to the north and east in Ontario. Unwilling to cross the open waters of Lake Erie, they are funneled by the peninsula of southwestern Ontario until they are forced to cross the Detroit River in the vicinity of Lake Erie Metropark.

Weather is a key factor in determining the intensity of hawk migration. The best days are those following the passage of a cold front, combined with a light wind with a northerly component and increasing barometric pressure. These factors can result in enormous numbers of hawks passing over the park, especially in mid-September. Record counts of Broad-winged Hawks have included 228,176 counted by two observers on September 19, 1994, and over 550,000 on September 19, 1999! The incredible totals of these two years seem to be correlated with North Atlantic hurricanes. Typical peak days for Broad-winged Hawks are often in the 80,000–100,000-plus range.

From 1983–2008 Southeastern Michigan Raptor Research, and beginning in 2009 counters for the Detroit River Hawk Watch (www.drhawkwatch.org), have been recording this incredible phenomenon. The official hawkwatch season begins September 1 and concludes November 30, even though a few migrants can be observed in August and December. See the table at right for season averages, peak dates, and total numbers for each species.

The hawks are not necessarily in a concentrated group when they cross the river. Instead, they use two or more flight paths that are primarily affected by wind conditions. Thus, the positions of the counters will vary based on the wind direction and speed. The Lake Erie Metropark **Boat Launch (D** on map) is the main count site. The boat launch at **Pointe Mouillee State Game Area Headquarters** (see next site) is a secondary count site, and is manned when stronger northwest, north, and northeast winds blow the birds farther south, which often produces the greatest numbers. If staffing allows, both hawkwatches are operated simultaneously.

Each of the three months of the hawkwatch has its own appeal. For those most interested in viewing sheer numbers, September is the month to visit. Broad-winged Hawks pass through in the tens of thousands. The second and third weeks are the most productive, with the peak centering around September 19. Swainson's Hawks have become annual in recent years, making this the most reliable site in the state to see this casual species. Transient Ospreys and Bald Eagles are seen almost daily, and some individuals may linger for weeks. The majority of migrant Sharp-shinned Hawks and American Kestrels are seen in September.

The pace shifts in October. Huge numbers are unlikely, but there is a greater variety of species. Red-shouldered, Red-tailed, and Cooper's Hawks build in numbers through the month. Peregrines peak in the first week, while Turkey Vultures peak (thousands in a day) in the second week. On two occasions, both in October, all 16 regularly occurring species of raptor have been recorded on the same day. By November, species diversity is low, but Golden Eagles, Northern Goshawks, and Rough-legged Hawks make the chilly days

Hawk Migration at Lake Erie Metropark and Pointe Mouillee SGA headquarters

Species	Average Annual Totals (1992–2001)*	Main Migration Period**	Peak Day Count*	Peak Migration Period
Turkey Vulture	26,263	15 Sep – 15 Nov	6,363	10-20 Oct
Osprey	116	1 Sep – 15 Oct	40	1-30 Sep
Bald Eagle	97	1 Sep – 30 Nov	24	1-30 Sep
Northern Harrier	731	1 Sep – 30 Nov	310	1 Sep – 30 Nov
Sharp-shinned Hawk	9,215	1 Sep – 1 Nov	3,570	15 Sep – 10 Oct
Cooper's Hawk	588	15 Sep – 15 Nov	214	1 – 15 Oct
Northern Goshawk	33	15 Oct – 30 Nov	13	15 Oct – 15 Nov
Red-shouldered Hawk	752	1 Oct – 15 Nov	235	15 Oct – 15 Nov
Broad-winged Hawk	201,297	1 Sep – 15 Oct	555,371	10-20 Sep
Swainson's Hawk	8	15 Sep – 31 Oct	4	15-30 Sep
Red-tailed Hawk	6,874	1 Oct – 30 Nov	4,282	15 Oct – 15 Nov
Rough-legged Hawk	68	15 Oct – 30 Nov	62	1 – 30 Nov
Golden Eagle	109	1 Oct – 30 Nov	53	20 Oct – 10 Nov
American Kestrel	1,524	1 Sep – 31 Oct	1,344	15 Sep – 20 Oct
Merlin	44	1 Sep – 15 Nov	15	20 Sep – 15 Oct
Peregrine Falcon	46	15 Sep – 15 Nov	19	20 Sep – 15 Oct
Total Hawks	247,852			

* Data from Southeast Michigan Raptor Research as published annually in *Hawk Migration Studies*, journal of the Hawk Migration Association of North America

** Dates presented here describe dates when approximately 90% of the migration of each species occurs; individuals of most species can be seen throughout the 1 Sep–30 Nov official count period.

worthwhile. In addition to the 16 annually occurring species, there are single confirmed sightings for Black Vulture (March 2000 and October 2003), Mississippi Kite (one of few fall records), Ferruginous Hawk, and Gyrfalcon.

Be sure to dress appropriately. In September, the heat and humidity can be quite high. Conversely, November's cold winds and snow flurries can be bone-chilling. Comfortable shoes make standing for hours more bearable. A lawn chair is even better. A sack lunch with a thermos, a hat, and sunscreen are all good ideas. If you have a scope, bring it.

During the third weekend in September, the **Marshlands Museum** hosts Hawk Fest, a two-day festival highlighting birds of prey and the migration. Bird-banding demonstrations, crafts, and other activities are ongoing throughout the weekend. For details, contact the Marshlands Museum at 734-379- 5020, ext. 5736. Please report any unusual sightings to the museum staff.

SE-45 Pointe Mouillee State Game Area Headquarters and The Huron River Mouth

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall**** Winter**
DeLorme p. 34, D1. 42°02' N, 83°12' W

Directions: From the entrance to Lake Erie Metropark, turn left (south) onto W. Jefferson Avenue and go 1.6 miles to Campau Road. Turn left and follow Campau Road east for 0.6 mile to a right-angle bend, then south for another 0.6 mile to the parking area at the end of the road at the Pointe Mouillee State Game Area Headquarters.

This parking area at the **Pointe Mouillee State Game Area Headquarters** is a secondary hawkwatch site for the Southeastern Michigan Raptor Research (SMRR) from September to November, with the primary site being at Lake Erie Metropark (see previous site). During large hawk flights, this parking lot is often as good as the Metropark, since birds can often take a more southerly route during peak flights. This is also a good site, one of the best in the state, to see Swainson's Hawk (mid-September to mid-October). In late October to early November, this is also the best site in the state for Golden Eagle, which migrates through here in numbers unequaled anywhere else in eastern North America (200-plus each fall in recent years).

In spring through fall, the mouth of the Huron River to the south of this parking lot, and adjacent Lake Erie to the east and north, hold herons, egrets, gulls, and terns. If water levels are low in spring and fall, the mudflats can attract numerous shorebirds, including hundreds of Black-bellied Plovers and Dunlins, with lesser numbers of both yellowlegs, and, rarely, a Willet or a Hudsonian or a Marbled Godwit. In November 2001, an adult Northern Gannet (accidental in the state) was seen flying out of the mouth of the river east into Lake Erie! The scrub and fields along Campau Road can be worth checking for sparrows and, occasionally, Sedge Wren.

Return to the intersection of West Jefferson Avenue and Campau Road and go left (south) for 0.3 mile to the entrance to **Riverfront Park** on the left, overlooking the mouth of the Huron River. When water levels are low, as they have been for the past few years, the area hosts shorebirds and gulls, especially in fall. In 1999 and 2000, both Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, as well as Willet and Short-billed Dowitcher, were seen here (the river here is also visible from the Pointe Mouillee headquarters described above). On the opposite (west) side of West Jefferson Avenue, a large lagoon can hold even greater numbers of shorebirds and numerous gulls, but they are often more distant. The best way to view this lagoon is from Harbin Drive, which is a short distance (less than 0.1 mile) south of Riverfront Park on the opposite side of West Jefferson Avenue. Park in the wide area on the right just after crossing the small concrete bridge.

The Huron River marks the boundary of Wayne County to the north and Monroe County to the south. This is significant only because this is where

West Jefferson Avenue becomes U.S. Turnpike. To end this route, go left from Riverfront Park onto West Jefferson south for 0.1 mile to South Huron River Drive on the right. From here, you can go west 2.2 miles back to I-75, or straight ahead on U.S. Turnpike to begin the Lake Erie Marshes route.

THE LAKE ERIE MARSHES

Monroe County, in the southeastern corner of the state, has a rich birding history, although it has suffered more environmental degradation than any other county of Michigan. For example, the vast Monroe Marshes at the mouth of the Raisin River, where a young Louis Campbell from Toledo did extensive ornithological work in the 1930s, have been totally destroyed. The irony is that, even though man has destroyed virtually all of the original marshland in Monroe County, man has also belatedly created some of the finest inland shorebird habitats in North America.

This route extends along the western shore of Lake Erie in Monroe County, with enough sites for two or three days of birding. Sites can be easily visited individually and, although the route is described from north to south, most sites can be visited in any order, since Interstate 75 runs the length of the route and provides easy access to all of the stops.

SE-46 Pointe Mouillee State Game Area

By Karl Overman and Allen T. Chartier

Spring**** Summer**** Fall**** Winter**

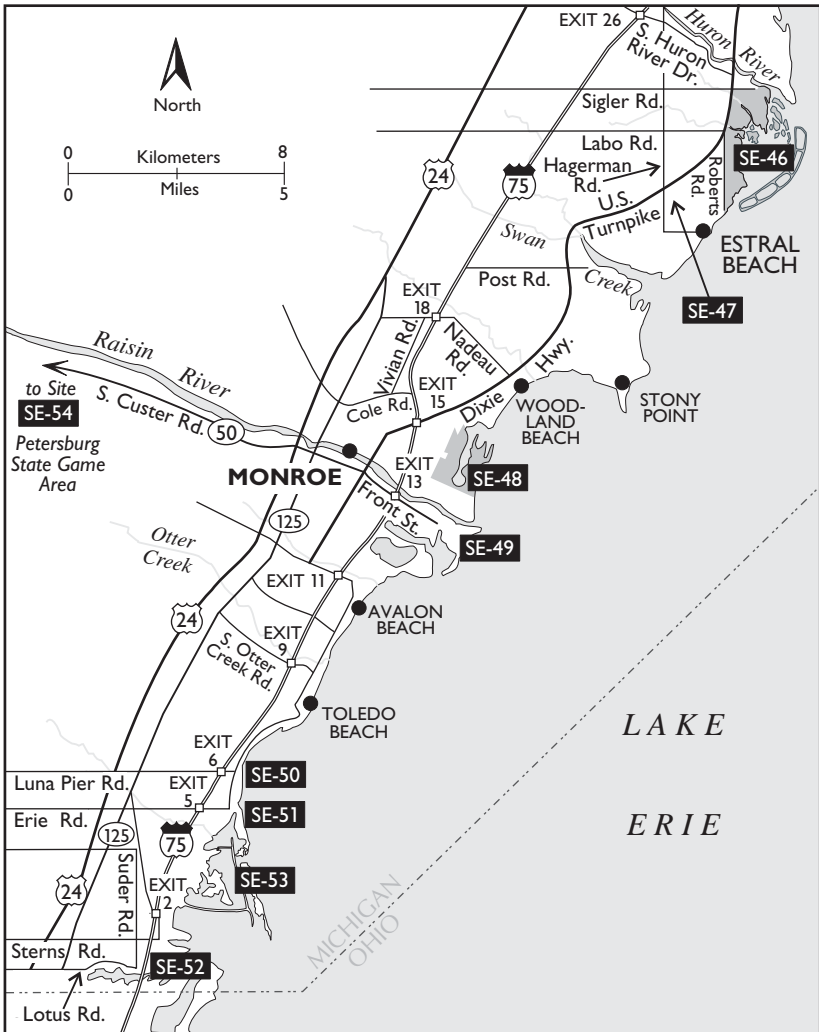
DeLorme p. 34, D1. 42°02' N, 83°13' W

Contact Information: 734-379-9692

NOTE: A version of this account by Karl Overman was first published in 1996 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 3: 131-138.

Directions: From Detroit, take I-75 south to the South Huron River Drive exit (Exit 26). At the top of the exit ramp, turn right (east) and follow South Huron River Drive for 2.9 miles to its end at a T-intersection with U.S. Turnpike (labeled Jefferson Avenue on some maps). Turn right onto U.S. Turnpike and go 0.2 mile to Sigler Road. Turn left and go 0.3 mile to the Sigler Road parking area at the locked yellow gate. Note: Even if the yellow gate is open, DO NOT drive in. Pointe Mouillee is closed to motor vehicles, although special passes may be available for disabled birders to drive on the dikes. Contact the game area management at 734-379-9692, Monday and Wednesday, 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Pointe Mouillee (pronounced MOO-yay), is one of the top birding sites in Michigan, and should be on any birder's "must-see" list. The only downside to this excellent birding site is that it is closed for duck hunting from September 1 to December 1.



LAKE ERIE MARSHES

- | | |
|--|--|
| SE-46 <i>Pointe Mouille State Game Area</i> | SE-51 <i>Whiting Power Plant & Woodtick Peninsula</i> |
| SE-47 <i>South Rockwood Antenna Farm & Estral Beach</i> | SE-52 <i>Erie Township</i> |
| SE-48 <i>Sterling State Park</i> | SE-53 <i>Erie Marsh Preserve</i> |
| SE-49 <i>Monroe Power Plant</i> | SE-54 <i>Petersburg State Game Area</i> |
| SE-50 <i>Luna Pier Jetty Allen's Cove</i> | |

In 1945, the State of Michigan acquired 2,604 acres of marsh for Pointe Mouillee SGA from the Pointe Mouillee Shooting Club. Over the years, an offshore barrier island, which protected the marsh, eroded and eventually disappeared, leading to the destruction of the marsh by the rising waters of Lake Erie. Restoration of the marsh was made possible when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers needed a disposal site for contaminated dredge material. This 700-acre facility was built offshore roughly in the shape of the barrier island that formerly protected the Pointe Mouillee Marsh. This man-made island—3.5 miles long and 1,400 feet wide at its widest—was immediately dubbed “The Banana”. The Banana is comprised of five cells, numbered from south to north, that are being filled with dredge material.

There are some logistical considerations you need to make before setting out to bird Pointe Mouillee. The road system on the dikes is closed to private vehicles. That leaves two options: walking or biking. The latter is the most popular choice among local birders. Given the scale of the place, a scope is required. In summer be prepared for long spells in the sun, as there is no shade on the dikes. Keep an eye out for lightning, as you are likely to be the tallest object around. Fortunately, despite the marsh setting, biting insects are rarely a problem.

There are three access points; the Sigler Road entrance (**A** on map), the Mouillee Creek entrance (**B** on map), and the Roberts Road entrance (**C** on map). The Sigler Road entrance into the northern part of Pointe Mouillee is usually the preferred entry point for birders. There is another parking area near the Sigler Road entrance, about 0.1 mile south along U.S. Turnpike, adding about one-quarter mile to your walking/biking distance. The Mouillee Creek entrance is 0.8 mile to the south of Sigler Road along U.S. Turnpike. This allows the quickest access (about 1 mile) to the north end of the Lead Unit (**O** on map). The Roberts Road entrance is at the south end of Roberts Road. Drive 1.0 mile south of Sigler Road along U.S. Turnpike, turn left onto Roberts Road and go 2.0 miles to the parking area at the end of the road. After spring rains, this road can be rutted and muddy for the last mile. Roberts Road allows access to the southern end of Pointe Mouillee. Where you choose to enter depends on where the best birding is; check local rare bird alerts.

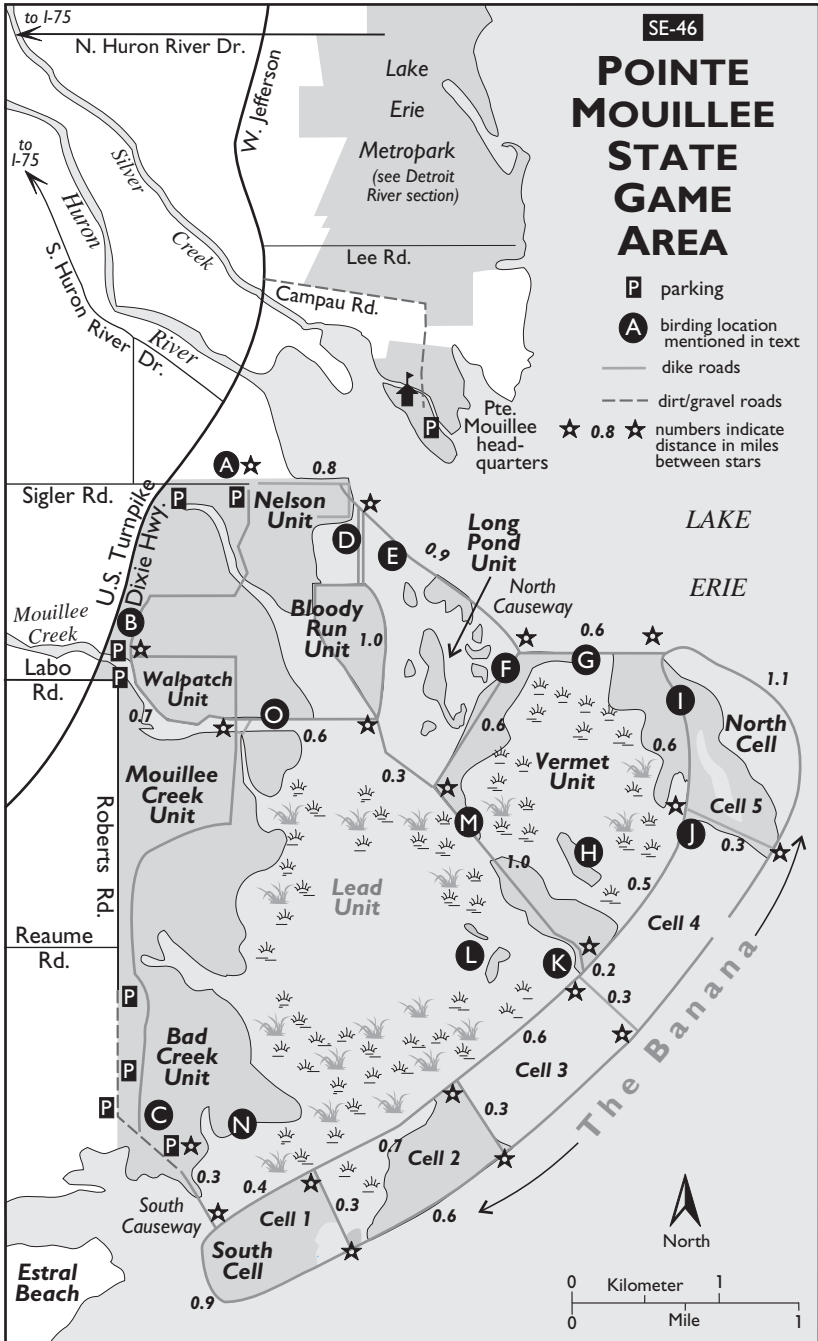
When parking at any of these parking areas, be security-conscious. The shattered safety glass in the parking lots bears evidence to the fact that these places are sometimes favored by thieves, so unless you are a strong proponent of redistributive justice, do not leave any valuables in plain sight. The Mouillee Creek entrance, being on a main road, is perhaps less prone to this problem than the other entrances.

From the end of Sigler Road (mile 0.0), walk around the tank-stopping yellow gate and out onto the dikes. On your left will be the shallow waters of the mouth of the Huron River. Forster’s Terns like to rest on the snags in the water here. Little Gull has occurred here in the past but not recently, and

shorebirds are sometimes present. In spring the first impoundment, the **Nelson Unit**, sometimes has a small amount of shorebird habitat at a time when the rest of the game area's shorebird habitat is flooded. Look for American Golden-Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, and both species of yellowlegs from approximately March 20 on. A spring phenomenon here is the Whimbrel flight, a species that rarely appears with the masses of other shorebirds in late summer and early fall. You can count on seeing flocks of Whimbrels at Pointe Mouillee during a narrow window in late May from about May 15 through May 26. (The only other places in Michigan where Whimbrels are reliable are Whitefish Point and Tawas Point, in late May.)

At 0.5 mile there will be a small log-filled pond on your left that occasionally has herons, especially Green Heron. One summer it held a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (casual). Next, the dike bends to the right, where you will come to a wide, straight ditch with a dike on both sides (0.8 mile). The dike on the east (left) side of the ditch, known in birding circles as the "grassy dike" (**D** on map), forms the western edge of the Long Pond Unit and extends southward for 1.0 mile to the north end of the Lead Unit. Curlew Sandpiper (casual) and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron have been seen east of the grassy dike in the western side of the Long Pond Unit. The adjacent Bloody Run Unit has recently been a regular site for Sedge Wren. The **Long Pond Unit** typically has lush marsh habitat, accented in mid-summer by striking swaths of Purple Loosestrife, that beautiful but noxious alien plant. Marsh Wrens are a characteristic summer sound, and in some years there is a pair of Yellow-headed Blackbirds in the cattails. Least Bittern is a summer resident but is infrequently seen. American Bittern is tenuously hanging on here but is seen even less frequently. At the northwest corner of the Long Pond Unit there is a large pool (**E**) that can be good for shorebirds when water levels are low, and in some years has been a good location for Buff-breasted and Baird's Sandpipers in July and August. Rarely, a Ruff (casual) has turned up here. This pond can be wall-to-wall with Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets just after first light in mid-summer, and is an excellent place to look for casual waders such as Glossy and White-faced Ibis, a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, and a Tricolored or a Little Blue Heron. In times of low water, gulls and terns often rest in the northwest corner of this unit. The Long Pond unit is the place to look for a King Rail in Michigan, although the species is not present every year; when present, it occurs in mid-summer from about July 15 to August 15.

Continue along the north causeway to a T-intersection at 1.7 miles. To the south (right), the **Center Dike** (**F** on map) extends for 0.6 mile to the north end of the Lead Unit. This is also the west boundary for the **Vermet Unit**, best viewed from the drainage pipes along the north causeway (**G** on map). After the break-up of ice in early March, the Vermet Unit can be covered with waterfowl, with all of the standard dabbling and diving ducks represented. Greater White-fronted Goose has proven to be somewhat regular here in early March. Tundra Swans can be seen whenever there is open water



in late February and early March. Pointe Mouillee is at its best when this unit is pumped out, and on the rare occasions when the Vermet Unit is drained in late May and early June, you might see such otherwise rare spring migrants as Stilt Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Little Gull, or Franklin's Gull, not to mention a wide variety of other shorebirds, including a few Ruddy Turnstones, Red Knots, White-rumped Sandpipers, and good numbers of Black-bellied Plovers. The Vermet Unit really comes into its own in late summer if the water levels are low, attracting thousands of shorebirds and a host of other waterbirds. Beginning in the last week of June, both yellowlegs and Short-billed Dowitcher start the southward flood of shorebird migrants. Short-billed Dowitcher numbers peak in late July just as the rest of the shorebird species start building up their numbers. Stilt Sandpipers can be numerous in the fall, beginning to show up around the 4th of July. Both Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits will be around in August if water levels are low, but for some reason they are typically seen singly at Pointe Mouillee, unlike the flocks that can appear when the habitat is right in the vicinity of the Erie Marsh Preserve to the south. At the south end of the Vermet Unit, there is a brushy island (**H** on map) which sometimes has nesting herons. In late summer, hundreds of American Coots and a few Common Moorhens can be seen on the marshy eastern fringe of the Vermet Unit, while out in deeper water there will be the too-numerous Mute Swans and many Double-crested Cormorants.

At 2.3 miles on the north causeway, go uphill to a dike going off to the south (right) for 3 miles (**I** on map). This is the north end of **The Banana** and the eastern boundary of the Vermet Unit. On the east side of the north cell of the Banana (cell 5) is a pond that is particularly good for the expected gulls and terns; an Arctic Tern was present in mid-summer 1995. The cell's rocky northern perimeter is a favored location for Snowy Egret (rare but nearly annual in May through July), and often has shorebird habitat in late summer when there is none elsewhere at Pointe Mouillee. Stilt Sandpiper seems especially fond of this pond, as is American Avocet, a rare but annual visitor. Ruddy Ducks are frequent, and thousands of Bank and Tree Swallows mass in late July in the nearby marsh vegetation. The outer part of the Banana is the place to look for Sanderling. Go south on the inner side of the Banana for 0.7 mile to an anchorage for pleasure boats on the east (left) side of the Banana (**J** on map). The Corps of Engineers will eventually close the access to Lake Erie and fill this area (cells 3 and 4), but for now this is the best location in southern Michigan for summering diving ducks—Redhead and Lesser Scaup predominate, but there are always a few Canvasbacks around, and not infrequently, summering Common Goldeneyes and Common Mergansers. From May to November 2003, a female Common Eider (third state record) resided here.

At 3.4 miles from Sigler Road, you will reach the east corner of the **Lead Unit** (**K** on map), which often has shorebird habitat and is normally as far as you need to go on the Banana. Be on the lookout for Baird's or Buff-breasted

Sandpipers flushing from the dike. The flats here often have resting gulls in mid-summer; rarities such as Little and Black-headed Gulls have been found. When present, American White Pelicans like to rest on the larger of the two islands offshore here (**L** on map). In 1994 and 1999, several pelicans spent the entire summer here. The smaller of the two islands is also favored by terns in late summer, especially Caspian, Common, Forster's and Black Terns.

The most productive birding route back to Sigler Road is to take a two-track down off the Banana onto a dike road that separates the Lead Unit from the Vermet Unit (**M** on map), and which then travels along the southwest side of the Long Pond Unit. The north end of the Lead Unit typically has a wide variety of waterbirds and is often the most productive birding area in the Lead Unit. Remarkably, in summer 2003 two pairs of Black-necked Stilts (third state record) remained to breed, raising 11 young. Mouillee Creek empties into the Lead Unit here and a large permanent pump has been built in that corner to control the water level. Curlew Sandpiper has appeared here several times over the years. When there are flats in this northwest corner, there are masses of gulls and terns resting there. Michigan's second Snowy Plover occurred here in August and early September 1994, and this area may be your best bet for Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes in late summer.

Although the south end of the Lead Unit can be reached by foot, instead travel by car to the south end of **Roberts Road**. To do so, return to the Sigler Road entrance and go south on U.S. Turnpike about 0.75 mile to Roberts Road. Turn left and drive 2.0 miles to the end of the road, where there is a parking area on the left (**C** on map). After spring rains, this road can be rutted and muddy for the last mile. When the water levels are low, you can walk onto the flats around the west side of the Lead Unit (**N** on map) from the parking area. In recent years, good shorebird habitat has been here at the east side of the Lead Unit opposite Cells 2 and 3 of the Banana, and this is a good place to look for Baird's Sandpiper. In 2002, 2003, and 2004, Cell 2 provided most of the shorebird habitat in the Pointe Mouillee area. The southern end of the Lead Unit is currently mostly dry and contains large expanses of cattails where Marsh Wrens are common, American and Least Bitterns are occasional, and a Yellow-headed Blackbird was noted in 2002. Cell 1 is vegetated with mainly cottonwood trees and willows, providing good habitat for migrating passerines. In May this can be a good place to see a variety of vireos, thrushes, warblers, sparrows, and even cuckoos. (Cell 5 is also largely wooded and provides another good spot for passerines, as does a patch of woodland near the pumphouse along Mouillee Creek.)

Winter birding at Pointe Mouillee is definitely for the stout-hearted and well-dressed. In flight years, it is a good area for Snowy Owl, while Short-eared Owl and Snow Bunting are occasional. With effort, you might find a lingering Marsh Wren or a Common Yellowthroat. When Lake Erie remains ice-free, the outer Banana provides good waterbirding, with flocks of Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and mergansers.

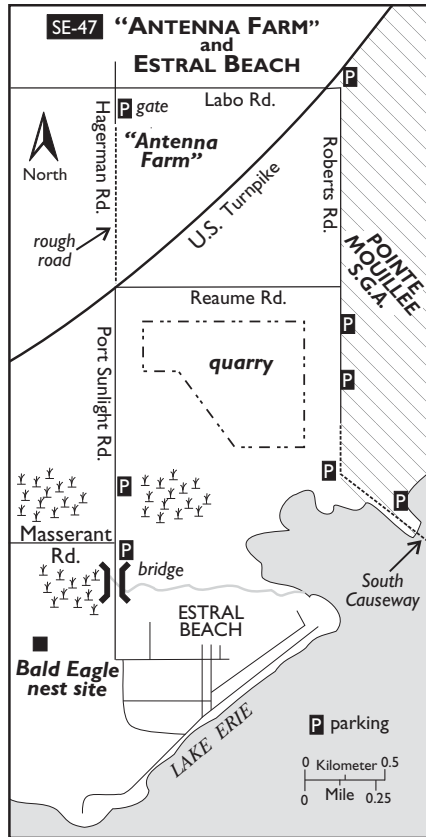
SE-47 The South Rockwood "Antenna Farm" and Estral Beach

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall* Winter*
DeLorme p. 33, D1. 42°02' N,
83°14' W

Directions: From the intersection of Jefferson Avenue (U.S. Turnpike) and Roberts Road, go west on Labo Road for 0.9 mile to Hagerman Road. Turn left and go about 0.1 mile to a gate on the left where you should park.

The South Rockwood "Antenna Farm" is a good spot for several breeding species that are difficult to find in Monroe County, including Vesper and Savannah Sparrows, Bobolink, occasionally Grasshopper Sparrow, and rarely Henslow's Sparrow and Dickcissel. From the gate, walk the last 0.3 mile of this road toward U.S. Turnpike and walk along the fence surrounding the antennas. This is private property, so do not cross this fence. In winter, the fields sometimes have Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings. Depending on water levels, the **Estral Beach** area is worth checking in spring and fall for shorebirds and ducks. From the intersection of Jefferson Avenue (U.S. Turnpike) and Roberts Road, go south on U.S. Turnpike for 1.3 miles to Port Sunlight Road. Turn left and take Port Sunlight Road south toward Estral Beach. Sometimes the area beyond the quarry has been good for Cattle Egret (not annual). The fields on the west (right) side of the road often have meadowlarks, including an occasional Western. When these fields are wet, they can also hold shorebirds and a few ducks. The creek crossing at 0.9 mile from U.S. Turnpike can be good for Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and occasionally Virginia Rail. In March 2003 a Gyrfalcon was present in this area. At Masserant Road (1.0 mile), turn right (west) to view an active Bald Eagle nest to the south.



SE-48 Sterling State Park

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 25, A6. 41°55' N, 83°21' W

Contact Information: 734-289-2715; www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

Directions: From I-75, go south to the Dixie Highway exit (Exit 15). Turn left at the top of the ramp and go 0.9 mile to the state park entrance on the right. A state park entrance fee is required at the entry station (0.75 mile).

Sterling State Park is famous among long-time Michigan birders as the last place in the state where Barn Owls were known to nest. The park is a good mixture of marshes and woodlands where more than 200 species have occurred. Water levels are variable, as everywhere in the state, but when they are low, the lagoons usually attract a few shorebirds. The woodlands attract passerine migrants in spring and fall.

Stop at the first parking area on the right, 0.2 mile past the entry station, for the 3-mile **Marshview Nature Trail (A on map)**, a nice mix of marsh and woodland that is excellent for migrants in mid-May. Up to 20 species of warblers can be seen along this trail, as well as good numbers of vireos, tanagers, sparrows, Eastern Towhee, and orioles (both Baltimore and Orchard). In winter, the usual Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Tree Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco can be found. Near the start of the trail (**B on map**), Black-crowned Night-Heron and Green Heron are usually in the narrow channel on the right. When water levels are low, the lagoon on the right near the start of the trail attracts shorebirds, including both yellow-legs, Stilt Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Wilson's Phalarope. This is also



where the state's only Spotted Redshank was found in 1976. In the summer of 2004, a pair of Ospreys fledged two young from a nest on an artificial platform. The marsh behind this lagoon is good for Virginia Rail and Sora. The park's **three lagoons** are also good in winter for ducks and even the occasional wintering Bald Eagle. Red-breasted Mergansers often provide excellent views in March and April when the males begin courting females.

Backtrack to the main park road, turn right, and follow the road around the curve to the right. On your left is the **Monroe Harbor Diked Disposal Facility** (MHDDF). Turn left at the first road (0.5 mile) and park at the end near the lake (**C** on map). The new paved Lakeshore Walkway (**D** on map) provides views into the MHDDF and Lake Erie for loons, grebes, and ducks in spring and fall, and the rocky shoreline could turn up a Purple Sandpiper some day (November and December). Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings have been seen here in November and March. The main park road continues for another 0.6 mile and ends at a network of parking areas (**E** on map) with access to the south end of the lagoon and Lake Erie, where ducks and gulls occasionally congregate on the ice floes near the shore.

SE-49 Monroe Power Plant

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter
DeLorme p. 25, A6. 41°54' N, 83°21' W

Note: Power-plant security policies and access to all areas described below are subject to change without notice.

Directions: From I-75 and Dixie Highway, take I-75 south for 1.5 miles to the Front Street exit (Exit 13). At Front Street, turn right and go 1.1 miles to a parking area on the left marked as fishing access parking (before entering the Monroe Power Plant property). See next map.

The main attraction here is the power-plant discharge channel with its water a few degrees warmer than the river and lake. There are often duck and gull flocks (typically thousands) in winter, and rarities have included Little and California Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, and King Eider. The mouth of the Raisin River, downstream along the channel, attracts many ducks in migration, and since 1995 a large group of wintering Bald Eagles. Up to 33 Bald Eagles have been counted by power plant staff in January. Access is currently limited to April 1–October 31. Security is restrictive, so do not point binoculars and scopes at the buildings, and leave your camera in your car.

From the parking area, walk cautiously across the road and the railroad tracks to the entry gate. A walking path leads to a series of wooden decks built as fishing piers along the channel. The farthest deck is the best for viewing the Bald Eagles and the mouth of the river. If a train should block your return to your car, be patient, as it will eventually move on. **DO NOT walk between the stopped railroad cars. This is illegal and very dangerous.**

The entrance back onto the I-75 freeway can be confusing here, as the ramps for north and south I-75 are next to each other. To continue the route southbound, be sure you take the ramp for I-75 south.

SE-50 Luna Pier Jetty and Allen's Cove

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 25, B6. 41°49' N, 83°26' W

Directions: Continue south on I-75 to the Luna Pier exit (Exit 6), which is 7.4 miles south of Front Street. At the top of the exit ramp, turn left (east) and go 0.4 mile to the Luna Pier parking area at Lake Erie. See next map.

Walk out on the **Luna Pier Jetty** to view any ducks that may be present on the lake. In late fall this is often a good spot to look for migrating Tundra Swans, diving ducks, loons, and grebes. Small numbers of all three scoters and occasional Long-tailed Ducks, although infrequent, are seen almost annually along the shoreline.

To go to **Allen's Cove**, turn right out of the parking lot onto Lakeside Drive (one-way, do not turn left!). This small road eventually curves left and ends at a T-intersection with Harold Road. Turn right onto Harold Road and go 1.1 miles to a T-intersection with Allen's Cove Road. The pond, which is straight ahead, sometimes has waterfowl and shorebirds in migration. In dry years, it is filled with vegetation. Return south along Harold Road to Luna Pier Road and turn right to return to I-75.

Another site worth a brief stop on the way back to Detroit from any of the sites in this section is the **Michigan Welcome Center/Rest Area**, accessible only from northbound I-75. The area is between the Otter Creek (Exit 9) and La Plaisance Road (Exit 11) exits. While this site does not merit a trip in itself, the small pond in the patch of trees behind the Welcome Center attracts migrant warblers, tanagers, thrushes, and sparrows in spring and fall. Both Louisiana (April) and Northern (May and August) Waterthrushes have been seen here.

SE-51 Whiting Power Plant and the Woodfick Peninsula

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 25, B6. 41°48' N, 83°27' W

Note: Power-plant security policies and access to all areas described below are subject to change without notice.

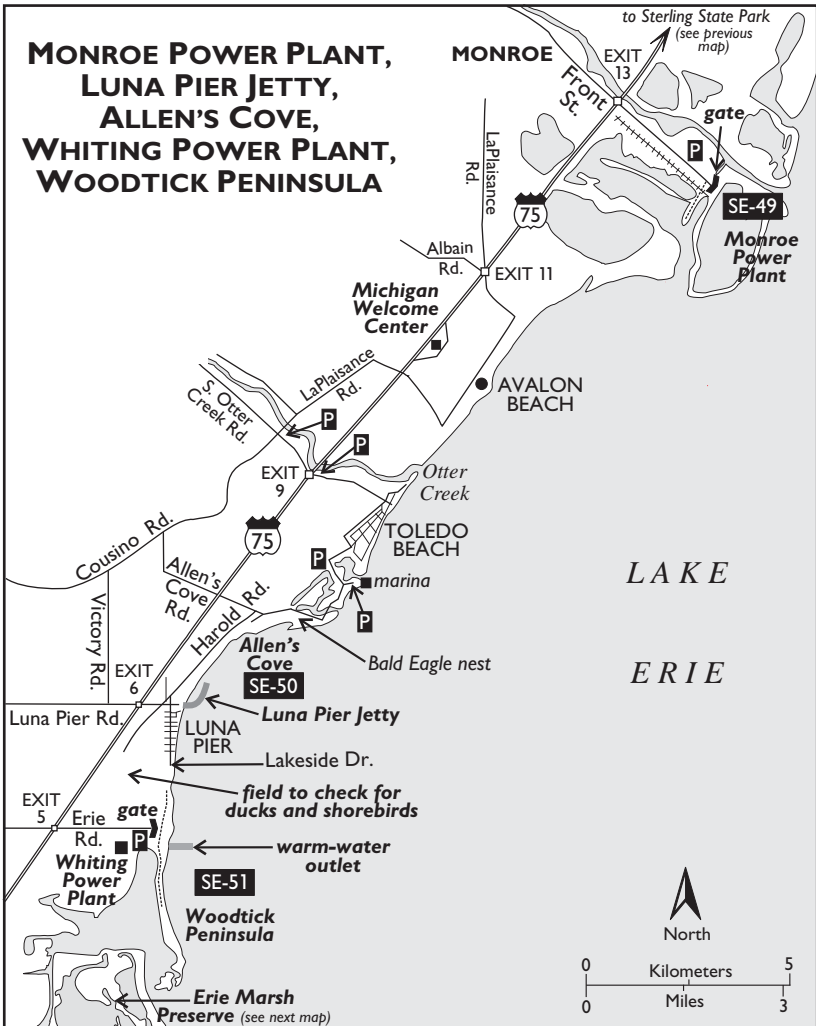
Directions: From Luna Pier Road, take I-75 south 0.8 mile to the Erie Road exit (Exit 5). At the top of the ramp, turn left (east) and go 0.6 mile to the parking area at the end of the road. From the parking area, it is about a quarter-mile walk east to the Lake Erie shore. See next map.

This is part of the site often mentioned in older literature as “Erie Marsh.” The remnants of the marsh itself lie along the north side of Erie Road, though the easternmost portion is closed. The extent of the marsh is only about a quarter of what it once was. The westernmost portion is most often just a damp field, though it sometimes has enough water to support a few waterfowl. When water levels are high enough for shorebirds, this field can attract fair numbers, as well as rarities such as the Ruff seen in late April 1992.

The **Whiting Power Plant** (sometimes called the Erie Power Plant; see previous map) owns most of the land around here, the majority of which is off limits to birders. Some of the area has been designated as Certified Wildlife Habitat. Birder access is limited to Erie Road and the public beach along the immediate shoreline of Lake Erie. Walking a short distance north (through the broken gate for Lady of the Lake campground, long abandoned), or south of Erie Road along the shoreline, provides access to a small amount of scrubby habitat which can produce some interesting passerines in migration, including White-eyed Vireo (rare), Carolina Wren, Common Yellowthroat, Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and once, a vagrant Yellow-throated Warbler. The first spring arrival of Tree Swallow in the state is often recorded from this spot, as well as first arrivals for other species as well. Winter visits can produce Pine Siskins and Common Redpolls during invasion years, and American Pipit, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting annually, though these birds are typically seen here only in flight.

Between September and April, scoping the lake here can produce good numbers of ducks, including rafts of Ruddy Ducks in April and October, Red-breasted Merganser in September and October, and Common Merganser in December and January (while the lake remains ice-free), along with good numbers of Canvasbacks, Redheads, both scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and a few Buffleheads. All three scoters, rather rare on Lake Erie, are found here in very small numbers each year in October and November.

Walk about one-quarter mile south along the beach from Erie Road to a **warm-water outlet**. This outlet was a considerable draw in winter for gulls in years past (tens of thousands in November), but since the turbine blades were removed to reduce the number of fish killed (an EPA requirement), gull numbers have been reduced considerably. Black-headed and Laughing Gulls have not been recorded here since these changes were made, and Little Gull has become infrequent. Ring-billed and Herring Gulls are common year round (2,000–3,000 present in winter), and Great Black-backed Gull is fairly common in winter, with more than 100 counted on some Christmas Bird Counts. Black-legged Kittiwake still turns up from time to time and Lesser Black-backed Gull (up to 7 individuals) is fairly dependable (October–March), while Thayer’s, Iceland, and Glaucous Gulls are occasional. These large gulls often rest offshore on ice floes or sand bars, depending on temperatures and season, and the smaller gulls favor the warm-water outlet. Many gulls travel between here and the landfill near Lotus Road (see next site).



To continue walking south along the **Woodtick Peninsula**, you must scramble up the rocks surrounding the warm-water outlet to the top of the dike. This dike is private plant property, and this spot is the *only* place where birders are allowed onto the dike. The raised vantage point provides a commanding view of Lake Erie and, in fall when winds are north or northeast, it is a good place to watch for migrating gulls (many Bonaparte's), jaegers (very rare), loons (mainly Common but Red-throated once or twice), and occasional shorebirds moving south along the shoreline. Be aware that there is often truck traffic on this portion of the dike, so do not stand in the middle of the

road, and don't get in the way of the trucks! Pointing binoculars or scopes at the plant buildings is a sure way to get a visit from plant security; Rock Pigeons are all you'll see anyway. The warm-water channel toward the power plant can be viewed from this point as well, and is a good place to look over the numerous Bonaparte's Gulls for less-than-annual rarities such as Franklin's or Little Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, or, even more rarely, Black-headed Gull.

From the warm-water outlet, you can continue walking south along the beach for about 0.75 mile, where the peninsula ends at a broad channel formed in the early 1990s when high water levels of Lake Erie breached the peninsula. Recent low lake levels may again make the entire peninsula, 4 miles in length to North Cape, accessible to adventurous birders.

If you walk up to the top of the dike west of the shoreline along here, you are trespassing onto power-plant property. You will be stopped and may even be asked to leave. Staff of the plant have been accommodating to birders in the past, giving permission to bird the closed areas on Christmas Bird Counts and on twice-annual field trips by the Erie Shores Birding Association, but access to those areas is not possible for independent birders.

The habitat along the rest of the Woodtick Peninsula is scrubby with occasional taller cottonwood trees. The 0.75-mile walk to the channel at the end is usually fairly easy, but storms can knock down tree branches along the beach and strong east winds can raise water levels, making the beach narrow in spots. Under these conditions, the sand can have wet and deep spots! Migrants flying across or around Lake Erie in spring often make their first landfall here, and the peninsula has great potential as a migrant trap. In winter, sparrows predominate, and this is the best spot in the state to see a Swamp Sparrow in winter. A sandbar offshore of the channel at the end of the peninsula is a roosting spot for Canada Geese and gulls in winter, and Double-crested Cormorant and both Common and Forster's Terns in late summer and fall.

SE-52 Erie Township

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring* Summer* Fall** Winter**

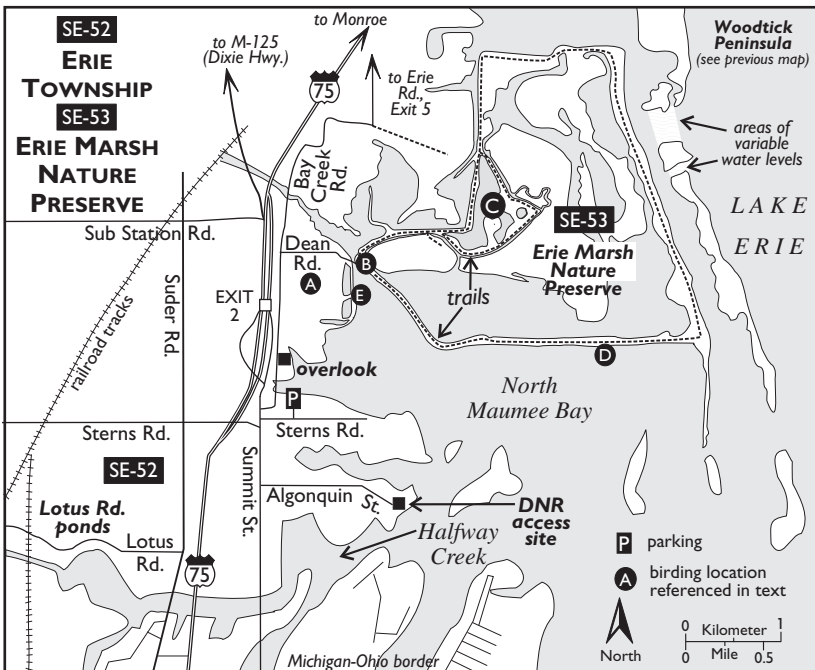
DeLorme p. 25, C5. 41°45' N, 83°31' W

Directions: Take I-75 southbound from Erie Road for about 2.7 miles to the Summit Street Exit (Exit 2). [This exit can be reached only from southbound I-75. If coming from Ohio on northbound I-75, go to the Erie Road exit (Exit 5), turn left at the top of the ramp, and turn left again to get back onto I-75 south. This is the last Michigan exit before Ohio.] The exit ramp for Summit Street swings up and over I-75 and drops you onto southbound Summit Street. Soon after getting onto Summit Street (1.0 mile from the start of this long exit ramp), you will come to Stearns Road, which is the first road to the right (west). Go west on Stearns Road for 0.5 mile to Suder Road. Turn left (south) and go 0.7 mile to Lotus Road. Turn right (west) onto Lotus Road. See next map.

The ponds along **Lotus Road**, adjacent to Halfway Creek, are close to a large landfill to the south, making it a good spot to check for gulls from October to April. Weekdays tend to be better than weekends, when the landfill is in operation. Go 0.3 mile west on Lotus Road to the first of two ponds on the left. Pull well off the road onto the shoulder to view these ponds. There can be a lot of traffic along this narrow, winding road, so please be careful and don't block traffic. In another 0.4 mile and just after crossing the railroad track, you will come to the second pond.

Ring-billed and Herring Gulls are the regular species, with Bonaparte's present in small numbers during spring and fall migrations. Caspian and Forster's Terns can be found in August and September, and a few waterfowl are often present as well. Up to nine Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been found here at one time, making this the current best site in the state to find this species. Thayer's, Iceland, and Glaucous Gulls have all been recorded, but are rare. The fields north of Lotus Road occasionally host migrant Tundra Swans in March and November if water is present, along with other waterfowl. In winter 2001, a Snowy Owl was seen in these fields.

Backtrack to the intersection of Summit Street and Sterns Road to reach **North Maumee Bay**, which can be viewed from sites along Summit Street. Most of the birding is from the roadside, so use caution. From Sterns Road, go south on Summit Street. You will pass several areas of open water



on both sides of the road. After 1.5 miles you will reach the Ohio border, where you should turn around and head back north for 1.3 miles to Algonquin Street, which leads to the Halfway Creek DNR Access site. Turn right and go to the end of the road (0.6 mile) to view Halfway Creek. This area is full of boaters and fishermen from June to August; a \$4.00 entry fee is required.

Return to Summit Street and go north (right) 0.2 mile to Sterns Road. Turn right (east) and immediately left into a rough parking area (you may want to leave your car on Sterns Road) for a view of North Maumee Bay. This spot is best in migration, when ducks and shorebirds can be seen in the small ponds along Summit Street, depending on water levels. Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, and Black-crowned Night-Heron are frequent. Both yellowlegs, Dunlins, and Short-billed Dowitchers are the more usual species of shorebird here, but Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits (both rare) have occurred. In winter, Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls are fairly common, with Iceland and Glaucous rare visitors. In early spring, Bonaparte's Gulls are joined by scaup, Red-breasted Mergansers, and other waterfowl.

SE-53 Erie Marsh Nature Preserve

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 25, C5. 41°46' N, 83°27' W

Contact Information: Michigan chapter of The Nature Conservancy, 517-316-0300; www.nature.org/michigan

Directions: From Summit Street and Sterns Road, go north for 0.3 mile to the turnoff for Bay Creek Road on the right. **IMPORTANT:** If you miss this turn, you will be on the entrance ramp onto I-75 north, and you will have to drive 4 miles to Erie Road (Exit 5) to turn around and try again, exiting at Summit Street (Exit 2) and making a U-turn at the first opportunity.

Note: Direct access to the Erie Marsh Nature Preserve from the north is as follows. From I-75 south, take the Erie Road exit (Exit 5). At the top of the ramp, turn right and go 0.4 mile to Bay Creek Road (just before the railroad tracks) and turn left. Bay Creek Road makes several turns in the 2.5 miles before reaching Dean Road, but most are easy to follow (follow the yellow arrows for the main road). After the first 0.9 mile, you will come to a stop sign where you should turn left (passing under the freeway) to stay on Bay Creek Road. After another 0.5 mile, there is another stop sign where you should turn right. From here, the road makes three 90-degree jogs (left, right, then left). Dean Road is 0.5 mile past this series of jogs. Turn left onto Dean Road and follow it to the end.

Also known by local birders as the Erie Gun Club, Erie Marsh Nature Preserve is now owned by The Nature Conservancy and managed by the Erie Shooting and Fishing Club (established in 1870). Birders are welcome

here, but should note that the area is closed during the hunting season from September 1–December 15 each year.

Follow Bay Creek Road for 0.8 mile north to Dean Road. Along the way, you may see good numbers of waterfowl and shorebirds, depending on water levels in the adjacent fields (**A** on map). Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, and Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal are common when the water levels are high. Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, both yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Dunlin, and Short-billed Dowitcher are the more common shorebirds.

Turn right onto Dean Road, go past the stop sign at the entrance to Erie Marsh Nature Preserve, and drive to the end of the road (0.4 mile) at the cottages (**B** on map). Parking for birders is to the right after the gate at the small bridge. Foot traffic only is allowed on the dikes here. The typical route, out to the Sulphur Pond and back, is about 1.5 to 2.0 miles. The route around the outside, initially east along the south dike, is about 5 to 6 miles, though many birders walk the south dike out and back (4 miles round trip). In spring the dikes are often quite muddy, so bring boots; bicycling is impractical.

Herons, waterfowl, and shorebirds are the strong suits of this area, and more than 250 species have been recorded. The extensive diked marsh has hosted numerous rarities over the past two decades, including southern herons, in particular. Snowy Egret, Tricolored and Little Blue Herons, and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron have all been reported. Other rarities, some reported more than once, include Eurasian Wigeon, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, and American Avocet. King Rail, endangered in Michigan, is occasional. Please do not use tapes (which are illegal) to lure this species. If the birds are present (usually only a single pair, out of about a dozen pairs in the state), good views can be had with a bit of patience. The small scattered woodlands in the eastern areas of the preserve host good numbers of landbird migrants. Up to 10 Northern Waterthrushes per day have been seen here. Marsh Wren, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow are common. One year, a Clay-colored Sparrow was present during May, and a Yellow Rail was flushed from one of the dikes another year (April). Northern Harriers may be seen coursing over the reeds, but unfortunately they probably no longer nest here. The Nature Conservancy has an agreement with the owners of the property, the Erie Gun Club, which includes the gradual phasing out of waterfowl hunting over the next 20 years. The rare marsh vegetation, which includes Swamp Rose Mallow and American Lotus, was one of the factors that led The Nature Conservancy to preserve this area.

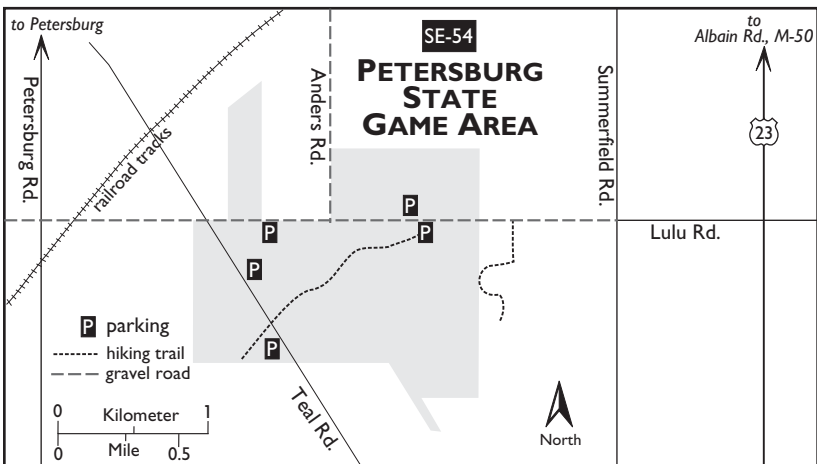
In winter, those birders who brave the cold and snow often head directly to the **Sulphur Pond** (**C** on map), the last water to freeze in the area. It is about 0.75 mile to this pond from the parking area, and Northern Shrike and American Tree, Song, and Swamp Sparrows may be seen along the way. Gadwall is the most abundant duck here, although up to a dozen species may occur in late winter. In mild winters when there are other areas of open wa-

ter available, the Sulphur Pond may only have a few Gadwalls, while in colder winters this pond may be jammed with American Black Ducks, a few Northern Pintails, Redheads, a few Ring-necked Ducks, and Hooded Mergansers. A cautious approach, using the dried marsh vegetation as cover, is advised, since the birds will flush if approached too closely. You will know when you're getting close to the pond, as the sulphur odor is quite strong! In spring and summer, there can be many herons and egrets along the channels on the way to the Sulphur Pond, as well as numerous Wood Ducks and Blue-winged Teal. In winter, this route often produces an occasional Great Horned Owl or a Winter Wren.

Large numbers of blackbirds come in to roost and have been recorded on Christmas Bird Counts (about 500,000 in 2001). In severe winters the roost may be completely empty. Most are European Starlings, but thousands of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles can also occur, with smaller numbers of Brown-headed Cowbirds ("only" hundreds) and a few Rusty Blackbirds. An occasional Brewer's or Yellow-headed Blackbird makes this gathering a bit more interesting. The parking area (**B** on map) is the best vantage point, and the afternoon return to the roost (4:00 to 5:00 p.m.) tends to provide better viewing than the morning departure (7:00 to 7:30 a.m.), which is rather explosive and farther from the viewing area.

A pair of Bald Eagles began nesting here in the mid-1990s. The nest site is often in the middle of the South Dike (**D** on map), which usually results in The Nature Conservancy closing this trail to foot travel during critical stages of the nest cycle. *Do not enter these closed areas when they are posted against entry.* The eagles begin nesting in March, and the young fledge in June or July.

During migration, the north side of the South Dike is often the best area for shorebirds, and the corner of land at the far east end (2 miles from the parking area) is best for migrant passerines. In early winter, large rafts of



Ring-necked Ducks, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Common Mergansers can be seen along the south side of this dike. In fall migration if water levels are low, the mudflats south of the South Dike can have hundreds of gulls and shorebirds.

Near the small bridge at the parking area, there is a grassy dike leading south from Dean Road (**E** on map). In spring through fall, the small pond near this dike usually has gulls and terns, including Caspian and Forster's, and in August 1986 a Least Tern showed up here. Walking this dike may also provide better views of the flooded fields to the east of Bay Creek Road. Backtrack to Bay Creek Road, turn left and go 0.8 mile back to Summit Street. Turn right at the stop sign to enter the ramp for I-75 north.

SE-54 Petersburg State Game Area

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter***
 DeLorme p. 25, A6. 41°56' N, 83°23' W
 Contact Information: 734-379-9692

Directions: From the Kmart (Big K) in Monroe, take M-125 south (left) for about 1.5 miles to M-50 (Front Street), which is just past the bridge over the Raisin River. Turn right (west) and go about 15 miles to US-23. From here US-23 goes north to Ann Arbor and south to the state line. Take US-23 south to the Ida Petersburg exit, Ida Road West (Exit 13). Turn right and go 0.4 mile to Summerfield Road. Turn left and go 2.0 miles to Lulu Road and the game area. (See below for side trip along the way.)

This game area in the center of Monroe County provides birders with a good opportunity to see a good selection of migrant and breeding landbirds to complement your waterbird list from the Monroe Marshes. White-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat, among many other species, are the attraction here. A site for Northern Mockingbird in the city of Monroe is also worth a brief stop. From I-75 north of Monroe, take the Nadeau Road exit (Exit 18). Turn left (west) and go about 0.25 mile to Vivian Road. Turn left and go 1.8 miles to a T-intersection with Cole Road. Northern Mockingbirds have been found nesting in years past in the residential area to the left, but the most reliable site is to the right. Take Cole Road to the right for 0.9 mile to the entrance to the Kmart (Big K) shopping center on the left (just before North Monroe Street, M-125). Turn left, and drive past the front of the store to the opposite end where there is a Garden Center. Turn left here and park in the corner near the bike trail. There is a Multiflora Rose hedge here that the birds favor, but they can be difficult to find. The birds were not present in 2001 or 2002 for the first time in many years, but returned in 2003 and 2004.

Using the directions above, leave the shopping center and travel to **Petersburg State Game Area** on Lulu Road to begin your exploration of this small but interesting game area. Be aware that there can be ticks in the

prairie areas. One of the best stops is along Lulu Road 0.7 mile west of Summerfield Road, where there is a pullout on the left (and right) at the beginning of a trail. This trail, which passes mainly through brushy fields, can be excellent in spring and summer for Willow Flycatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Baltimore Oriole, and in the adjacent woodlands, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager. Occasionally White-eyed Vireo is present. In migration, up to 23 warbler species have been found in a single day, including Golden-winged and Connecticut.

Another pullout 0.4 mile farther west along Lulu Road can also be productive, as are two pullouts along Teal Road. Go west another 0.25 mile to Teal Road and turn left. The two pullouts are at 0.1 mile on the left (at the southern end of the trail from Lulu Road) and 0.4 mile on the right.

Albain Road, 1 mile north of Lulu Road and running east-west, can also be a good place to see Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks, and to hear Northern Bobwhites. In summer, Albain Road is lined with interesting plants, including abundant and colorful Cardinal Flower, and a number of uncommon prairie species including Tall Sunflower, Gray-headed Coneflower, Green-headed Coneflower, Culver's Root, Colic Root, and Wild Lupine. This is also an interesting area for butterfly enthusiasts from May through September.

THE PONTIAC AREA

In contrast to the heavily populated eastern half of the county, western and northern Oakland County (as well as western Macomb County) is a patchwork of Metroparks and state recreation areas which provide interesting birding sites with a mixture of northern and southern breeding species, as well as a few good areas for migrant passerines and migrant and wintering waterfowl. If planning to visit several of these areas, it is well worthwhile to obtain annual passes for both the state parks and the Metroparks.

SE-55 West Bloomfield Nature Areas

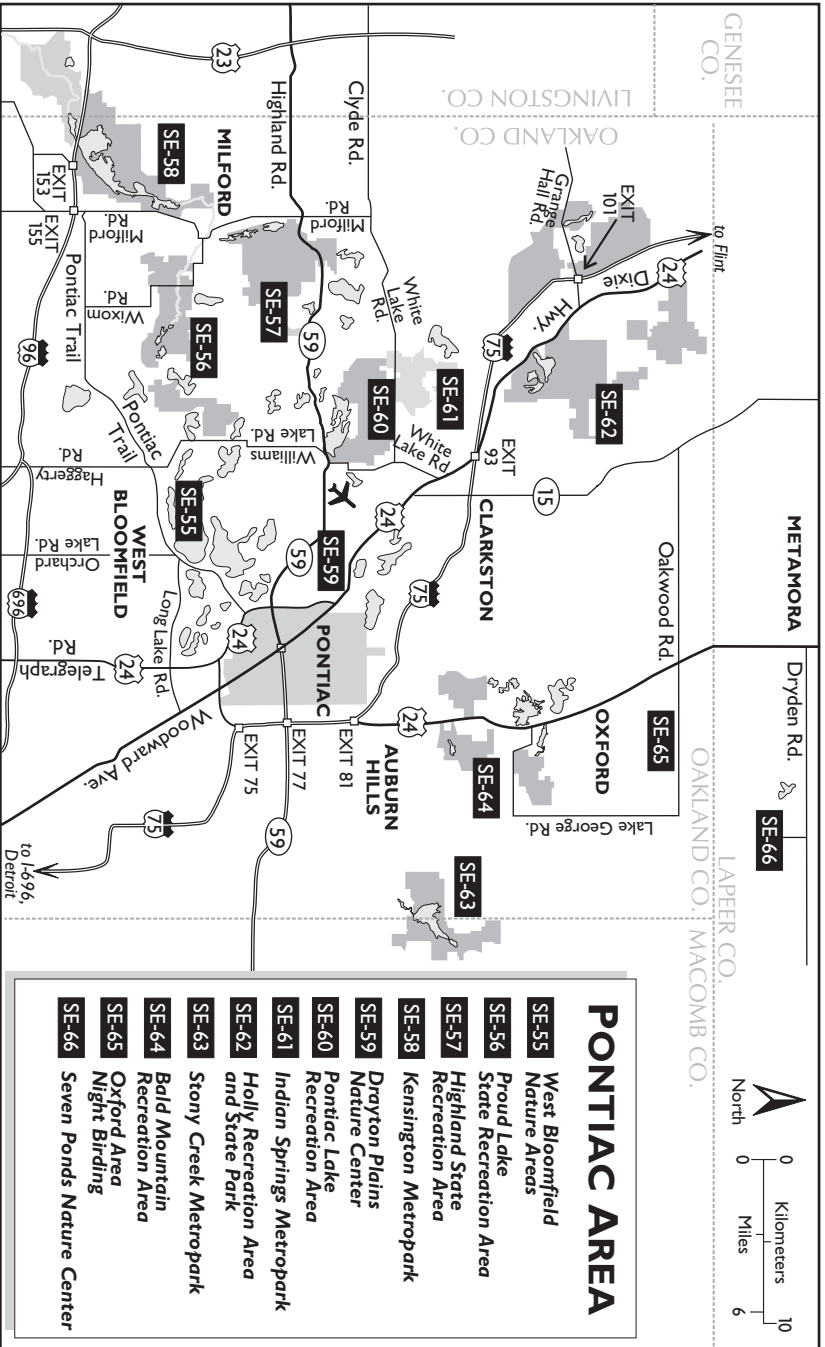
By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 41, D6. 42°35' N, 83°23' W

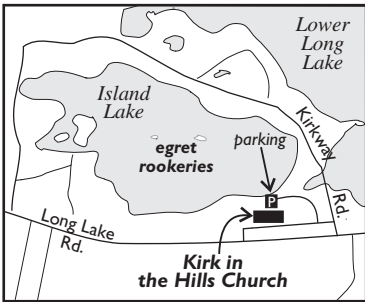
Contact Information: West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation, 248-738-2500; trail map available

Directions: From I-696 and Telegraph Road (US-24), go north on Telegraph Road for about 6.25 miles to Long Lake Road. Go west on Long Lake Road by continuing north through the intersection, making a U-turn left at the first road crossing the median, turning back south onto Telegraph, and turning right onto Long Lake Road.



There are four areas close together in the densely populated West Bloomfield area that merit the birder's attention: Kirk in the Hills Church, Orchard Lake, Orchard Lake Nature Preserve, and West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve. All have fairly good birding in migration, good views of both Great Blue Heron and Great Egret rookeries, and interesting nesting species such as Red-headed Woodpecker.

Go west on Long Lake Road for 0.5 mile, turn right onto Kirkway Road, and then immediately left into the **Kirk in the Hills Church**, where the most

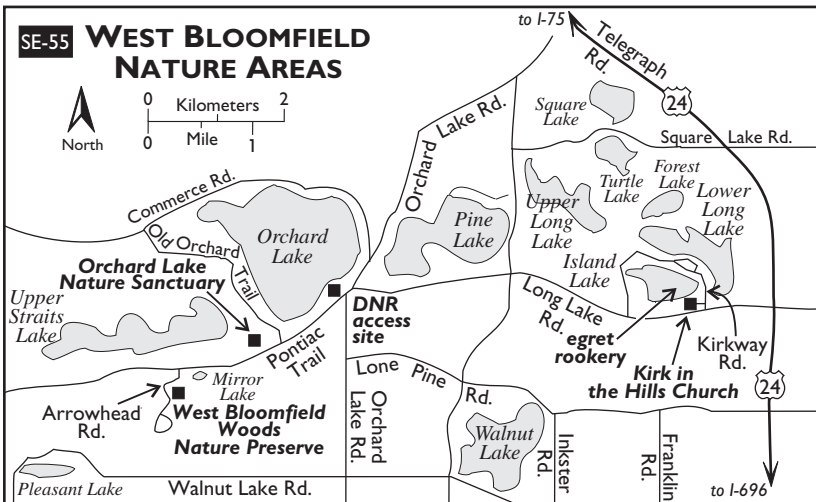


accessible nesting colony of Great Egrets in the state can be found. Go right at the first opportunity onto the church drive and make your way to the lowest parking area nearest the lake, by staying to the right. The viewing is best from the maintenance area parking adjacent to the lake. The birds nest on two islands in Island Lake, along with a few Great Blue Herons and Double-crested Cormorants. Please respect the church and its grounds, which

are private property, and avoid the area on Sundays during church services.

To reach **Orchard Lake**, continue west on Long Lake Road for about 3 miles to a T-intersection with Orchard Lake Road. Turn left and go 0.25 mile to a DNR Access Site on the right for Orchard Lake. This lake often has waterfowl in spring and fall and a few gulls in winter. In the winter of 2001–2002, two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found here. Continue south on Orchard Lake Road for 0.1 mile to the traffic light at Pontiac Trail. Turn right (west) onto Pontiac Trail and go about 0.75 mile west to the **Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary** on the right (north) side of the road. This is a worthwhile stop in migration, with five trails through the woodland and marsh adjacent to the lake, ranging from 0.1 to 0.5 mile in length.

Continue west for another 0.75 mile to Arrowhead Road (1.5 miles from Orchard Lake Road). Turn left and go 0.3 mile to the parking area on the left for the **West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve**, a 162-acre preserve that was Michigan's first designated National Urban Wildlife Sanctuary. In addition to an active and visible Great Blue Heron rookery, this is a good place for spring and fall migrants, and is one of the few local areas where Red-headed Woodpecker can still be reliably found. There are two trails through the woodlands; the one-half mile loop is paved, and the second, which continues from the first, is wood-chipped and is a total distance of 2.1 miles. Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch are common residents, and the woodlands can hold good numbers of migrant thrushes and warblers in spring (May) and fall (September) migrations. Access to the viewing site for the Great Blue Heron rookery is via a trail leading east from the parking area to an overlook adjacent to Mirror Lake. If you bring your scope, you should be able to watch the her-



ons as they repair their nests, mate, incubate, or feed young, depending on the time of year. Green Heron is sometimes found at this lake, and the dead snags nearby are a good place to find Red-headed Woodpecker.

SE-56 Proud Lake State Recreation Area

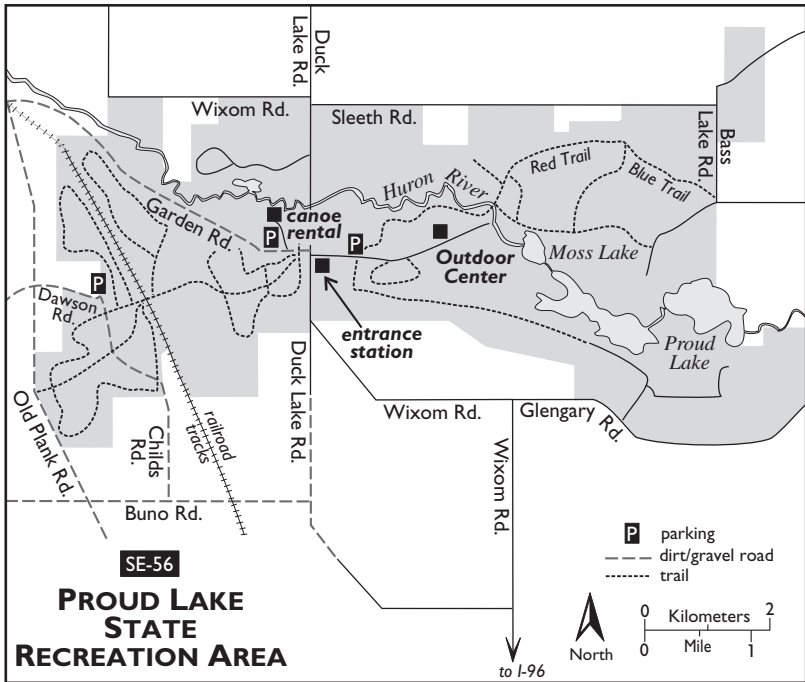
By Allen T. Chartier and Karl Overman

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 41, D5. 42°34' N, 83°33' W
Contact Information: 248-685-2433

Directions: From I-96, take the Wixom Road (Exit 159) and go north for about 4 miles to a T-intersection. Wixom Road continues to the left (west) for 0.9 mile, then bends back right (north) Go 0.7 miles north to the signposted park entrance on the right (state park entry fee). Go 0.2 mile past the entry station to the parking area and trailhead on the left. See map on next page.

With more than 4,000 acres, the varied habitats at **Proud Lake State Recreation Area** include marshes along the Huron River, old pine plantations, deciduous forest, and overgrown fields. The extensive old pine plantations by the headquarters area may have a number of northern nesting species that are hard to find elsewhere close to Detroit: Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet (occasional), and Pine and Black-throated Green Warblers (occasional). This is also one of the few areas near Detroit where Pileated Woodpecker has occurred in recent years, and is a good place to find nesting Black-billed Cuckoos and occasional Yellow-breasted Chats.

The short (one-half-mile) service road from the parking area past the Outdoor Center to the Huron River is the best area for finding the specialties mentioned above that typically breed farther north. Common nesting birds



here include Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Tufted Titmouse, Veery, and Chipping Sparrow.

Most birders do not explore beyond the river, but the longer trails through the old-growth forest on the other side of the river (Red Trail 2.75 miles, Blue Trail 3.75 miles) could have surprises, including Cooper's Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, and Ovenbird. Just north of the park entrance go west along Garden Road from Wixom Road for about 150 yards to a road leading to a canoe rental along the Huron River. Breeding birds in this area include Sandhill Crane, Willow and Alder Flycatchers, and occasionally Sedge Wren. At the end of Garden Road at North Creek, about 0.25 mile from Wixom Road, you can park and walk an abandoned road west, or take one of the horse trails leading south of the trail. Birds commonly encountered in this area include Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Ovenbird, and Swamp and Song Sparrows. Pileated Woodpecker has also been seen here, and in migration good numbers of warblers and even Olive-sided Flycatcher can be found. The horse trails are your best bet for finding Yellow-breasted Chat, and the open fields, woodlands, and Tamarack bogs can be interesting for both birding and botany.

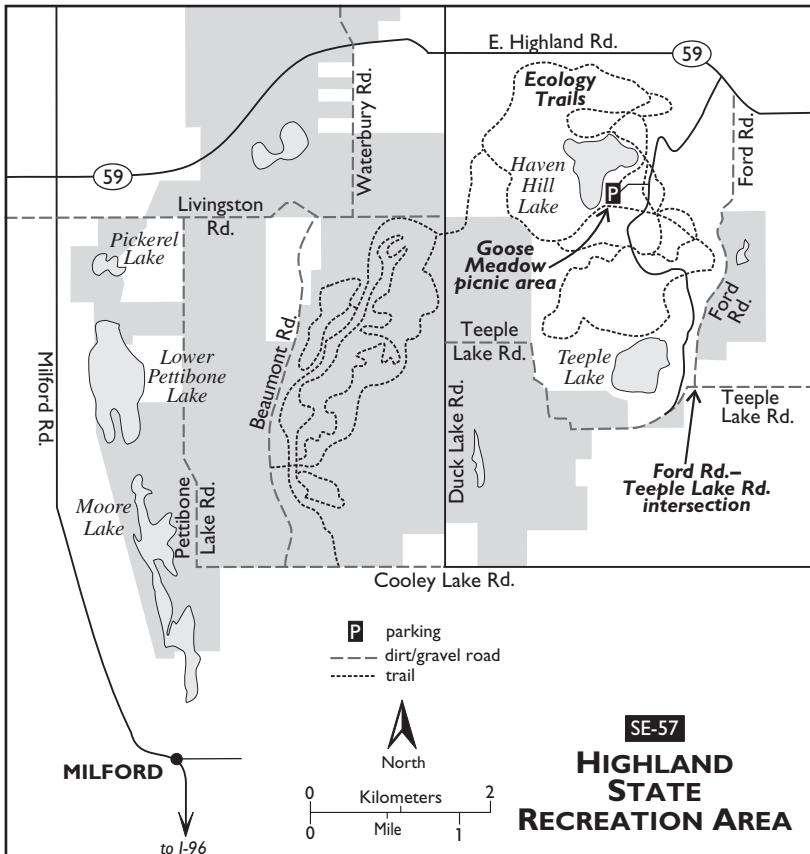
SE-57 Highland State Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 41, C5. 42°39' N, 83°33' W
 Contact Information: 248-889-3750

Directions: From I-96, take the Milford Road exit (Exit 155) north. In the town of Milford, the road takes a short jog right, then left. Continue north to M-59 (Highland Road) and turn right (east). Go east 4.1 miles to the park entrance on the right (state park entry fee). Go 0.5 mile to the parking area on the right for the Goose Meadow picnic area, where the Ecology Trails begin at the east end of Haven Hill Lake.

Highland State Recreation Area's 5,900 acres of mixed and deciduous woodland, open fields, marshes, and lakes provide interesting birding year round. There are about 17 miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails, more than 16 miles of mountain bike trails, and about 12 miles of horse trails. Species of both northern and southern affinities can be found here, and



the area is excellent for reptiles and amphibians, with eight of Michigan's ten species of salamander and about half of the state's reptile species.

The best birding trails are on the north side of **Haven Hill Lake**. Walk north toward the lake and go to the right to cross a spillway which provides good views of the lake. In spring and fall, ducks often rest here including Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, and occasionally Hooded Merganser. In spring 2000, a Little Blue Heron was found here. In late spring and summer, Mute Swan, Great Blue Heron, and occasionally Pied-billed Grebe can be found. After crossing the spillway, take the first fork to the left onto a trail that meanders along the north side of the lake through uplands and a couple of muddy spots for about 0.25 mile. At the first trail junction, go right over a hill and down to another junction with a horse trail. Go left at this junction, past some vernal ponds, for about 0.25 mile to where the trail turns left. Go right onto a foot trail (marked by a small sign). The trail meanders from here back to the spillway through woodlands carpeted with wildflowers in spring, good in some years for Hooded Warbler. The trail also crosses two creeks, where you should look and listen for waterthrushes in the vicinity of the two bridges; both species have summered. In areas of pine and cedar farther along the trail, Winter Wren and Canada Warbler have summered in years past.

Of the other roads and trails throughout the recreation area worth exploring, one of the best is **Beaumont Road**. Go east of the park entrance for 0.1 mile on M-59 to Ford Road. Turn right and follow the gravel Ford Road as it winds to an intersection with Teeple Lake Road. This stretch of Ford Road is good in spring and summer for both cuckoos, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers, American Redstart, Field Sparrow, and Eastern Towhee. In summer 2002, a Magnolia Warbler was found along this road. At the intersection with Teeple Lake Road, continue straight ahead (Ford Road goes left) through open habitat for Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, and Brown Thrasher, Yellow Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and Field Sparrow. At the T-intersection with Duck Lake Road, turn left and go south to another T-intersection with Cooley Lake Road. Turn right and go about 0.5 mile to Beaumont Road. Beaumont Road (a narrow, winding dirt road) is heavily wooded between Cooley Lake Road to the south and Livingston Road 2 miles to the north. Park and walk along the road (or drive slowly) to look for Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and sometimes even a Cerulean Warbler. In some years, Northern Waterthrush and Hooded Warbler summer along this road, and Barred Owl and Cooper's Hawk are rare residents. Red-shouldered Hawk formerly nested in the area. This is also a good site for both Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos. The long horse and bike trails east of Beaumont Road may also reward the birder willing to walk a few miles. A compass or GPS is a good idea here. These trails begin on the south side of Livingston Road just west of Duck Lake Road. Pettibone Lake Road, another dirt road, is also worth exploring, with habitat similar to that of Beaumont Road, along with more open areas and some residential sections.

SE-58 Kensington Metropark and Island Lake State Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier

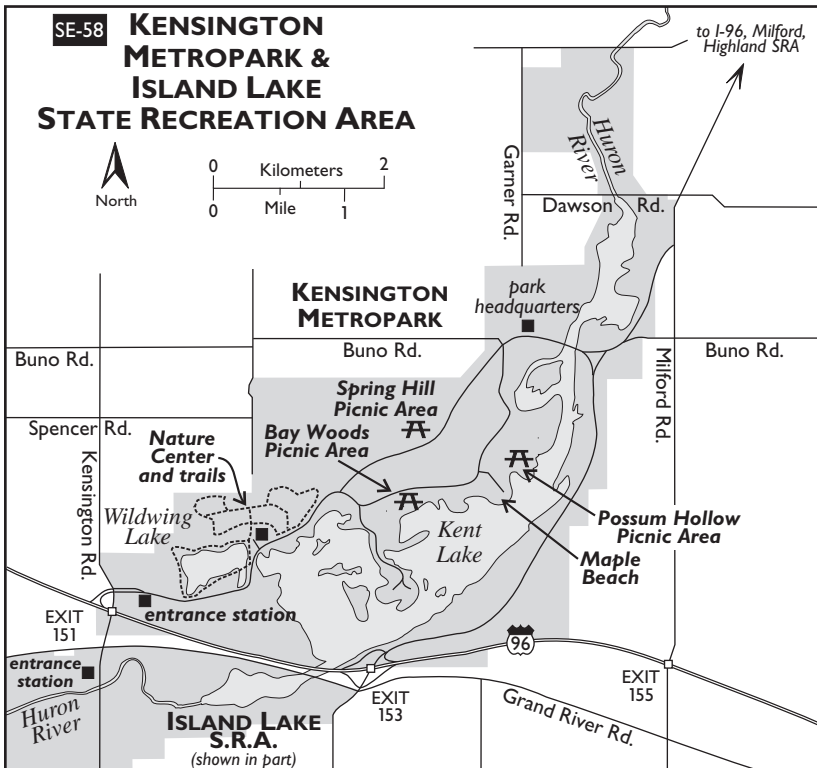
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 41, D4. 42°32' N, 83°40' W

Contact Information: Kensington Metropark, 248-685-1561, www.metroparks.com;
Island Lake SRA, 810-229-7067

Directions: From I-96, go about 12 miles west of I-275 to the Kensington Road exit (Exit 151). From the top of the exit, go straight ahead into the park (Metroparks entry fee). It is 0.5 mile to the Nature Center from the entrance station.

Straddling the Oakland/Livingston County line, Kensington Metropark is the most popular park in the area, for both recreation and nature enthusiasts. The park consists of 4,367 acres of hilly woodland surrounding Kent Lake. Birding is good year round, but the number of people in the park in summer makes it less attractive at that time. The park's bird list includes more than 250 species, and three bird counts are conducted annually by Nature Center naturalists, in spring, fall, and winter.



Most birders begin at the **Nature Center**, where there are exhibits, restrooms, and trail maps. The Nature Study Area is a good place for migrant passerines as well as waterfowl, as the trails encircle Wildwing Lake and lead into upland woodlands. Thirty-five species of warblers have been recorded in the park, including more unusual species such as Golden-winged, Pine, Prairie, Cerulean, Prothonotary, Kentucky, Connecticut, and Hooded Warblers. One or two of these specialties in any given spring is all that can be expected. There is even a single record of a migrant Kirtland's Warbler. Both waterthrushes have been reported, with Louisiana only in migration but Northern occasionally in summer. Yellow-breasted Chat is also occasional in summer in areas of scrubby fields that are not often visited by birders. The trails are also good for resident birds, and the Black-capped Chickadees are often tame enough to land on you. For many years, visitors hand-fed birds near the Nature Center, but more recently this practice has been discouraged by park staff, but the birds seem to have different ideas! Surely some visitors continue to break the rules, resulting in the birds' continuing tameness. The trails are also good for woodpeckers, including Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied, Northern Flicker, and in migration Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Occasionally Red-headed Woodpecker can be found, and in recent years a Pileated Woodpecker has been regular. In finch irruption years, it is a good idea to check the feeders at the Nature Center for Pine Siskin, Common Redpoll, and on rare occasions Evening Grosbeak.

Kingfisher Lagoon, adjacent to the Nature Center, usually has dabbling ducks, including Mallard, American Black Duck, American Wigeon, and Gadwall. **Wildwing Lake** often has a greater variety of waterfowl and can have migrant loons and grebes as well as Double-crested Cormorants; there is a very visible Great Blue Heron rookery on the south side of the lake. Occasionally a Great Horned Owl will use one of the nests. Sandhill Cranes have begun to nest in the park, and during summer 2002 a pair nested very near the boardwalk and with their chick was easily seen by hundreds of visitors. Osprey is being reintroduced into this area, and you can view the birds at an observation tower on the west side of Wildwing Lake. The 2003 and 2004 breeding seasons have been quite successful.

The **Spring Hill Picnic Area**, about a mile from the Nature Center (go left at the fork at 0.6 mile after turning left out of the Nature Center parking lot), is a good area for nesting Orchard Oriole as well as Eastern Bluebird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole. In some years, both cuckoos, uncommon summer residents, may be present. The woodlands in this area also support Acadian and Great Crested Flycatchers and Eastern Wood-Pewee, and the shrubby fields often have Willow Flycatcher, with the wetter fields sometimes having Alder Flycatcher.

Kent Lake, where a variety of waterfowl can be seen (including a Barrow's Goldeneye in 1986), can be reached from the Bay Woods Picnic Area (1.3 miles from the Nature Center), the Possum Hollow Picnic Area, and Maple

Beach (2.3 miles from the Nature Center). Nearly every regularly occurring species of waterfowl in the state has been seen on Kent Lake, and some species that are difficult to find inland, including all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Common Loon, and Horned Grebe, are somewhat regular. Among the hundreds of Canada Geese present in March, there will often be a few Snow Geese, and occasionally a rarity such as a Greater White-fronted or a Ross's Goose (2001). Other rarities, such as Red-throated Loon and Red-necked Grebe, have occurred, but should not be depended on. Gulls often use the lake to rest in winter, and in addition to the common Ring-billed and Herring Gulls, Lesser Black-backed, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls have been reported. Caspian, Common, Forster's, and Black Terns can all be found in migration. When water levels are low, shorebirds may be present very locally, with sites varying from year to year. Typically, when shorebird habitat is available, most of the more common species are present, including both yellowlegs, Killdeer, Spotted, Solitary, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, and Dunlin. There are rare records of Hudsonian Godwit, Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, and Red-necked Phalarope.

The nearby **Island Lake State Recreation Area** is one of the most reliable sites in the southeastern Lower Peninsula for Prairie Warbler, a rare nesting species in the state. When present (not every year), Prairie Warbler can most often be found between the entrance station and the Kent Lake picnic area, typically closer to the entrance station. Barred Owl can often be heard calling along the park road between the Riverbend Picnic site and Spring Mill Pond. Sometimes a Whip-poor-will calls in this area in May, and American Woodcocks are easy to find in early spring (March–April). The area is just south of Kensington Metropark and is reached by going south from the same I-96 exit; from the top of the exit, turn right and go south for 0.5 to the entrance on the left (state park entry fee).

SE-59 Drayton Plains Nature Center

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 42, Cl. 42°44' N, 83°14' W
 Contact Information: 248-674-2119

Directions: From M-59 and Telegraph Road (US-24), go north on Telegraph Road for 2 miles to an intersection where US-24 (called Dixie Highway here) goes left and Business US-24 goes right, back toward Pontiac. Turn left here onto Dixie Highway and go 2 miles to Hatchery Road in the town of Drayton Plains. Turn left onto Hatchery Road and go 0.25 mile to Edmore Road (conspicuous sign for the center). Turn left onto Edmore and immediately bear right at the first fork to stay on this road. At the next fork bear right onto Oakdale Road, and at Denby Road turn right. Follow Denby Road for 0.35 mile to the Nature Center on the right. See next map.

The 137-acre Drayton Plains Nature Center was originally a fish hatchery established in the early 1900s and abandoned in the 1960s after the water quality was deemed unsuitable. A group of concerned citizens purchased the property and buildings with the intent of preserving the natural area. The center is privately owned, non-profit, and self-supporting. There are self-guided trails through patches of deciduous and coniferous woodland, cattail marsh, and around the hatchery ponds. The Clinton River is split by a dam at the north end of the property, and flows around both sides of the ponds, rejoining at the southern end of the property. Water quality has improved in recent years, and the Michigan DNR now uses some of the ponds for rearing Walleye. The nature center grounds are open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and the nature center building, containing displays, a gift shop, and restrooms, is open Monday–Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday 11:00 to 4:00 p.m., Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In March and April (after the ice melts), and again in September through November, these ponds are good for waterfowl. The southernmost ponds are full of cattails and, at least formerly, were a good place to find American Bittern. More recently, nesting Sora and migrant Black Terns have been found at the ponds. Good numbers of passerine migrants use the small patches of adjacent woodland, and 20 species of warbler are included on the locale's checklist (which has 132 species total, compiled by local birder Terri Chapdelaine through 2001).

After birding the nature center, return to Hatchery Road and go about 0.25 mile west past Edmore Road to Fish Hatchery Park. This park, near a wide area of the Clinton River above the dam and south of the road, is a good stop in waterfowl migration (March–April, September–November). Dabbling and diving ducks, including Common Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser, can often be found here among the numerous Mallards and a few feral ducks. American Wigeon is sometimes common in winters when the river does not freeze, and a Eurasian Wigeon was present in the winter of 1988–1989.

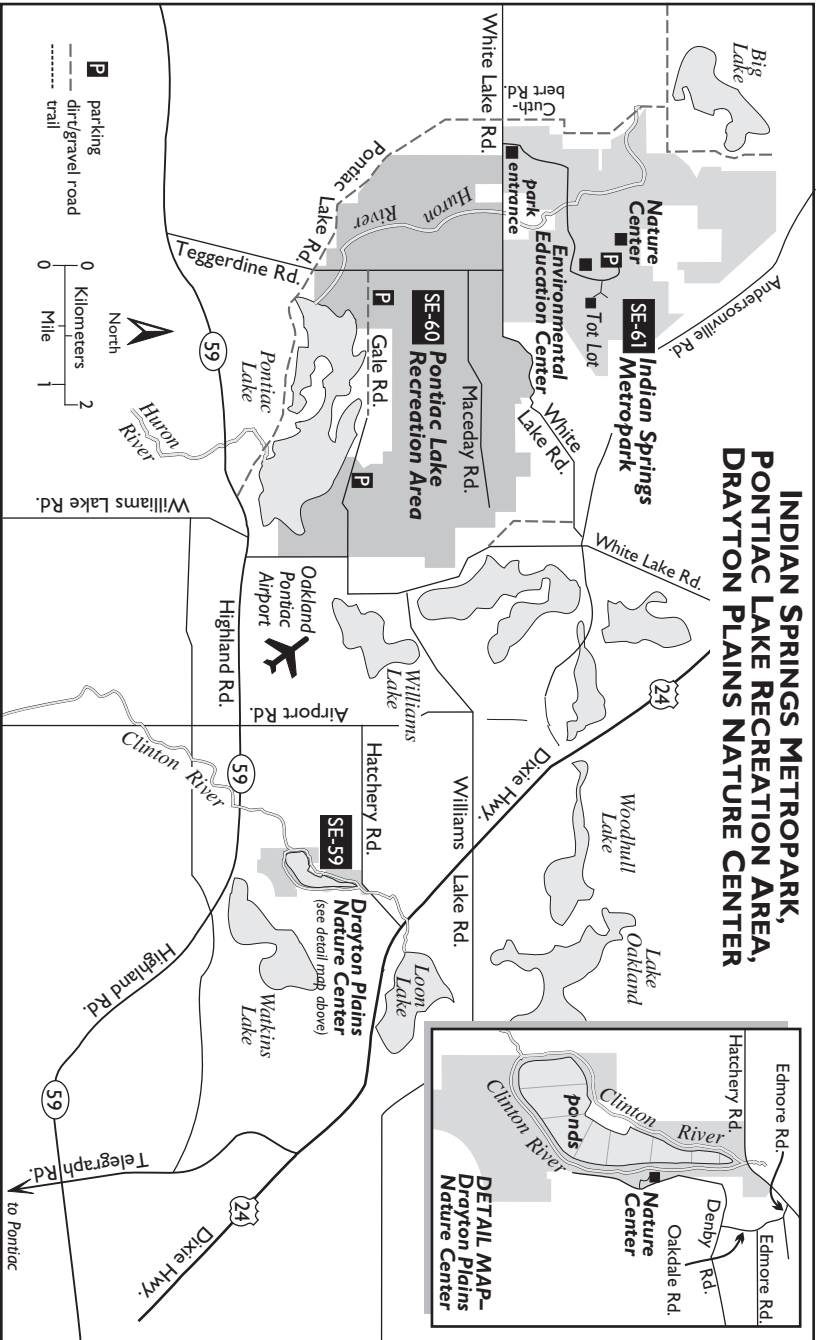
SE-60 Pontiac Lake Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer*** Fall* Winter*
 DeLorme p. 41, C6. 42°41' N, 83°27' W
 Contact Information: 248-666-1020

Directions: From M-59, take Williams Lake Road (about 5 miles east of Highland SRA, Site SE-59) north for about 0.8 mile to Gale Road. Turn left (west) onto Gale Road.

The **Pontiac Lake Recreation Area** (state park entry fee) is little explored by birders. The area has more than 3,800 acres of woodland and shrubby fields, with Pontiac Lake at the south end. Most of the trails are horse trails, so rough walking should be expected if you explore this area away from the roads. Pontiac Lake is very heavily used by area residents and visiting



recreationists. The main areas of interest to birders are along Gale Road between Williams Lake and Teggerdine Roads.

The road to the park headquarters is 0.2 mile west of Williams Lake Road along Gale Road. Turn right and park in the lot near the headquarters building. The fields with shrubs, pines, and cedars in this area have Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and Chipping and Field Sparrows. There is a small lake nearby that has Canada Geese, Tree Swallows, and Red-winged Blackbirds. Return to Gale Road and continue west for 0.2 mile to a pullout on the right where you may find Brown Thrasher, Blue-winged and Yellow Warblers, Eastern Towhee, and Song and Field Sparrows. (Note: you will pass an access area to Pontiac Lake on the left, but the lake is heavily used for recreation and does not often have waterfowl.) Continue west on Gale Road for 0.4 mile to a small marsh on both sides of the road. Common Yellowthroats and Swamp Sparrows breed here, and Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Red-eyed Vireo are often found in the adjacent woodlands. Both cuckoos have also been found in this area, with Yellow-billed the most frequent. Continue west on Gale Road for 1.0 mile to another small marsh (you will have passed an overlook of Pontiac Lake on the left, and the road turns to dirt after 0.8 mile). Wood Ducks and Green Herons are regularly found at this marsh, along with the more common Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, Swamp Sparrows, and Red-winged Blackbirds.

From this marsh, continue west on Gale Road for 0.4 mile through a woodland to a pullout on the right. One or two singing Cerulean Warblers are usually found here, and Acadian Flycatcher is regularly heard as well. There is a trail leading north of the parking area, where exploration of the woodland may turn up more common species including Red-eyed Vireo, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Veery, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting. From here, it is 0.25 mile west to Teggerdine Road, where you can turn right (north) for 1.0 mile to White Lake Road. Turn left to reach Indian Springs Metropark, the next site. (Note: There is a parking area on the south side of White Lake Road, 0.5 mile east of Teggerdine, with open fields that can have Ring-necked Pheasant, Eastern Bluebird, Field Sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark.)

SE-61 Indian Springs Metropark

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 41, C6. 42°42' N, 83°29' W

Contact Information: Nature Center, 248-625-7280; www.metroparks.com

Directions: From M-59, take Teggerdine Road north for 3 miles to White Lake Road. Turn left (west) and go 1.0 mile to the park entrance on the right (Metroparks entry fee). It is 2.3 miles from the entrance to the parking area for the Nature Center and trails. In fall 2004, a new Environmental Education Center, located across from the Tot Lot, is scheduled to open.

The Huron Swamp covers a large portion of this 2,217-acre park, much of which is accessible via several miles of hiking and biking trails within the Metropark, and also via a restricted, members-only access in the northern areas in the Timberland Swamp preserve of the Michigan Nature Association. **Indian Springs Metropark** is fairly reliable for Barred Owl and Pileated Woodpecker, both difficult to find in the Metro Detroit area. Both waterthrushes are present most summers, with Northern annual and Louisiana occasional. Acadian Flycatcher summers here as well, and there is a Great Blue Heron rookery on the property, though it is well off the trails. Mosquito swarms and Deer Flies can be quite vigorous here in summer.

The park's checklist has 140 species. There are good numbers of passerine migrants in spring and fall; few ducks and shorebirds occur here as there is little habitat for them. Rarely, Upland Sandpiper has been recorded in migration in the larger grassy areas. More than 20 species of migrant warblers have been seen in a season, and such rarities as Yellow-throated and Hooded Warblers have been recorded. Eastern Bluebird, Field Sparrow, and Bobolink are common in the open areas. In summer 2001 and 2003, Henslow's Sparrows were found in a large field south of the Adventure Playground (Tot Lot), and the Metropark Authority is now interested in maintaining the habitat for this declining species. Grasshopper Sparrow is also occasional here. Brown Thrasher, Blue-winged Warbler, and Eastern Towhee are fairly common in brushy fields, and American Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe likely breed in the park and can be heard *peenting* and winnowing in early spring. Both Broad-winged and Red-shouldered Hawks have summered, and other less common summering birds include both cuckoos, Yellow-throated Vireo, Marsh Wren (rare), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Veery, Cerulean Warbler (rare), and American Redstart. This is one of the few areas in Oakland County where Ruffed Grouse can still be found, but actually seeing one is very difficult.

The Eastern Massassauga Rattlesnake has a good-sized population here, and researchers are tracking them using radio telemetry. Use caution while on the trails.

SE-62 Holly Recreation Area and State Park

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 41, B5. 42°49' N, 83°32' W
 Contact Information 248-634-8811;
www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

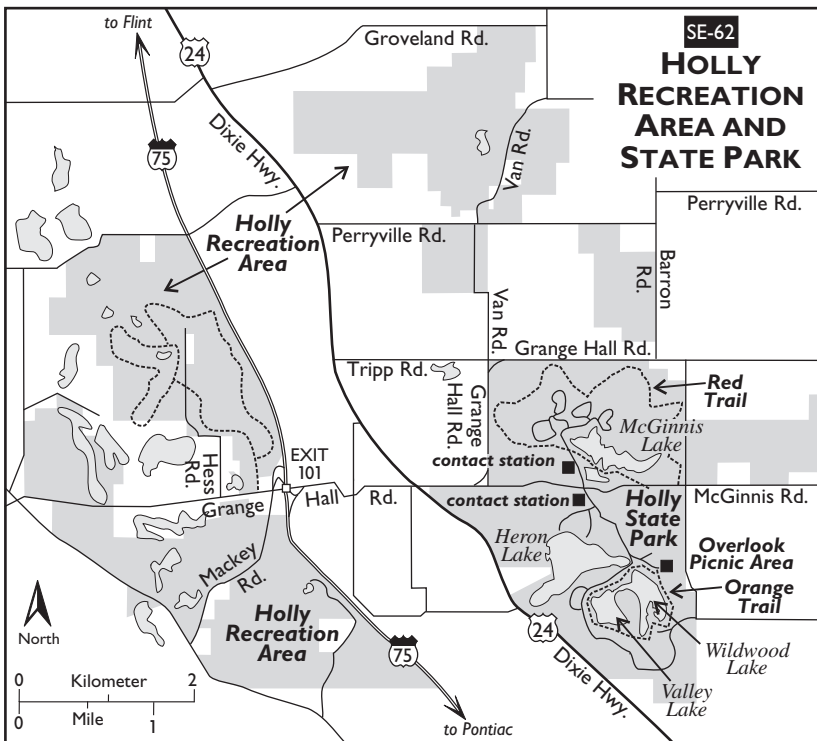
Directions: From Pontiac, take I-75 north from US-24 for about 20 miles to Grange Hall Road (Exit 101). To visit the western portions of the recreation area, not often explored by birders, turn left. Mackey Road and Hess Road, both intersecting Grange Hall Road, are worth exploring. For the eastern sections of the recreation area as well as the state park, turn right and go 1.4 miles to McGinnis Road. Turn right onto McGinnis where Grange Hall turns sharply left (north). Go 0.7 mile to the en-

trances to Holly State Park to the right or left (state park entry fee). See map on next page.

Situated in northwestern Oakland County, **Holly Recreation Area and State Park** consists of nearly 8,000 acres of rolling woodland and open areas, providing a variety of birding opportunities. The recreation area is fragmented and a bit far-flung, but both the western and eastern sections are worth exploration if you have the time.

To the right (south) of the entrance are picnic areas and trails around Heron, Valley, and Wildwood Lakes. Wild Turkey, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian and Great Crested Flycatchers, Yellow-throated Vireo, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting occur in this area in summer, and good numbers of thrushes, warblers, and sparrows may be found in spring and fall migrations. In summer 2001, a Hooded Warbler was singing from the woodlands about 0.25 mile south of the contact station. The Orange Trail, which begins near the overlook picnic area, is a 2.5-mile loop trail that encircles Valley and Wildwood Lakes.

To the left (north) is McGinnis Lake and campgrounds, which are encircled by the 5.6-mile Red Trail. The habitat on this side of Grange Hall Road is more extensive than that on the south side, and there is more walking involved. A



2.2-mile route can be taken by going west on the Red Trail, a shortcut back to the campgrounds at a numbered post #3. In summer 2001, a Hooded Warbler was singing near campsite #27.

After birding Holly State Park, return west on McGinnis Road for 0.7 mile to Grange Hall Road and turn right (north) to access the northern sections of Holly Recreation Area. Go 1.0 mile to the first T-intersection and proceed straight ahead onto Van Road, which has several pullouts that are worth exploring. Look for Cerulean Warbler in the wooded areas along Van Road, and for Willow Flycatcher and Blue-winged Warbler in the shrubby areas. At Perryville Road, 1.1 miles north of Grange Hall Road, jog right for 0.1 mile and turn left again onto Van Road. The stretch between here and Groveland Road, 1.2 miles to the north, has varied habitats where any of the previously mentioned birds could be found.

SE-63 Stony Creek Metropark

By Allen T. Chartier

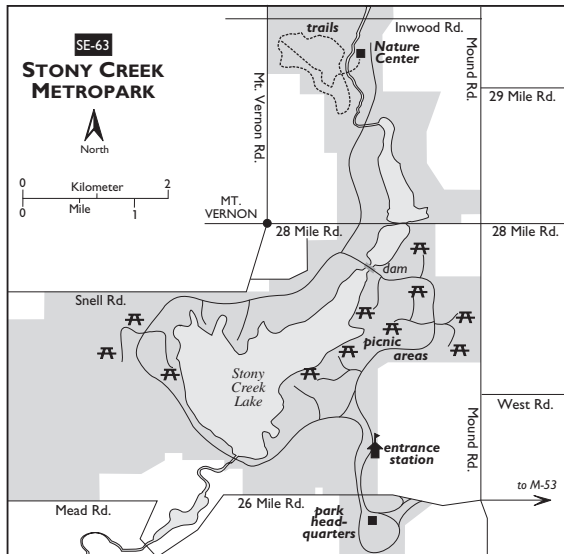
Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 42, C1. 42°44' N, 83°14' W

Contact Information: Nature Center, 810-781-4621; www.metroparks.com

Directions: From M-59 and M-53, take M-53 north for 6 miles to 26 Mile Road. Turn left (west) and go 1.9 miles to the park entrance on the left (0.4 mile west of Mound Road). The park road curves around to the right and crosses north over 26 Mile Road for about 0.5 mile to the entrance station (Metroparks entry fee).

Stony Creek Metropark is 4,461 acres of hilly woodland and open areas, with 550-acre Stony Creek Lake dominating the southern end of the park. While the lake occasionally attracts migrant waterfowl in spring and fall, birders will want to concentrate their activities on the Nature Study Area, where there are several trails and a nature center. From the entrance station, continue north to a



T-intersection, where you should go right toward the picnic areas. At a bridge across the lake 2.3 miles from the entry station, you can scan the lake for waterfowl. After crossing the lake, take the first right toward the nature center, which is 4.0 miles from the entry station. The grassy areas along this road could have Grasshopper Sparrows.

At the **nature center**, most birders head out on the longest trail, the Habitat Trail, which winds for 2.5 miles through a mix of habitats. Near the nature center, breeding Eastern Bluebird, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Song Sparrow are common. In migration, any of these trails can be good for warblers and sparrows, and in summer are home to Eastern Kingbird, Yellow Warbler, Song and Swamp Sparrows, and many other common species. Note that Michigan's only poisonous snake, the state-endangered Eastern Massassauga Rattlesnake, occurs in the area and is sometimes seen along the trails. You should avoid going near any Massassauga you see, both for your sake and the snake's. Other interesting reptiles found here more often than in other places in the greater metropolitan Detroit area include Ring-necked Snake and the stunning Milk Snake. In the evenings, Barred Owl can often be heard during special programs offered by the nature center.

A nearby area worth exploring is Mound and Inwood Roads. Exit the park to the south, and head back east along 26 Mile Road to Mound Road. Go north for about 3.5 miles on Mound Road to Inwood Road. Along Mound Road, between 28 Mile and Inwood, is a fairly reliable spot for Vesper Sparrow. Turn left and bird Inwood Road west for about 2 miles to its intersection with Mt. Vernon Road. You should be able to find other open-country birds such as Horned Lark, lots of Eastern Bluebirds, and Field Sparrow.

SE-64 Bald Mountain Recreation Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 42, C1. 42°44' N, 83°14' W
 Contact Information: 248-693-6767

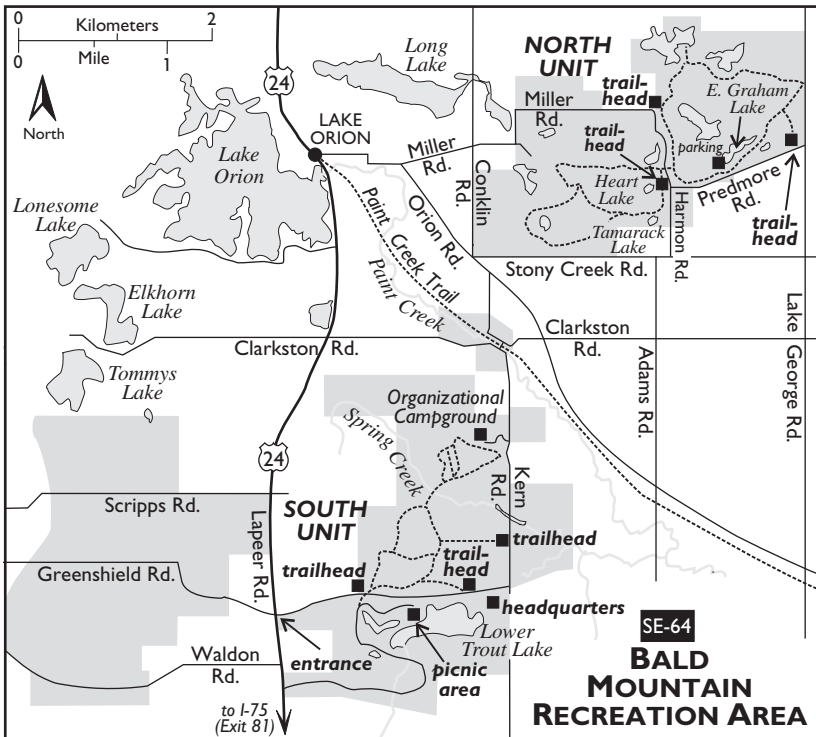
Directions: From the intersection of I-75 and M-59, go north on I-75 for 3.5 miles to the Lapeer Road (US-24) exit (Exit 81). The connector ramp goes east and joins Lapeer Road (US-24) after 0.8 mile. Turn right onto Lapeer Road (US-24) and go 2.75 miles to the entrance on the right at Greenshield Road.

Bald Mountain Recreation Area has 4,637 acres of rolling woodland, marsh, and open areas, with some of the steepest hills and most rugged terrain in southeastern Michigan. Birders will find good birding along some of the more than 15 miles of trails in spring and fall migrations as well as in early summer. Insects can be bothersome during summer. From the intersection of I-75 and M-59, go north on I-75 for 3.5 miles to the Lapeer Road (M-24) exit (Exit 81). The connector ramp goes east and joins Lapeer Road (M-24) after

0.8 miles. Turn right onto Lapeer Road (M-24) and go 2.75 miles to the picnic area at Lower Trout Lake on the right. Along the first stretch of the road after entering the area, especially where the road crosses a stream, Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers have been found, as well as Cerulean Warbler (summer 2001). Return to Lapeer Road and continue another 0.5 mile north to Greenshield Road. Turn right and you will soon enter the recreation area (state park entry fee). Hunting is allowed in most of this area between September 15 and March 31, during which time birding only from the road is suggested. Turn right onto Greenshield to enter between September 15 and March 31, when birding should be done only from the road.

There are three main units within the recreation area, two of which have maintained trails. Greenshield Road passes through the **South Unit**. After entering the recreation area at Greenshield Road, go 0.6 mile to the first trailhead on the left. The second trailhead is another 0.6 mile farther on the left. The park headquarters is another 0.2 mile farther on the right. Greenshield Road ends in a T-intersection with Kern Road at 1.5 miles from Lapeer Road. Turn onto Kern Road to the final trailhead, another 0.4 mile ahead on the left (past the Shooting Range).

These three trailheads each lead to several miles of other trails, northwest of the intersection of Greenshield and Kern Roads, surrounding a shooting



range (do not be alarmed; it is safe to bird here). The Yellow Trail, parts of the Red Trail, and the trail system north of Spring Creek are often the best, with Wood Duck, American Woodcock, and Northern Waterthrush breeding in the wet woods. This is also an excellent area for spring wildflowers and for reptiles and amphibians. There is more good birding along Kern Road from a fourth trailhead at the entrance to the Organizational Campground 1.0 mile farther north, and there are several pulloffs along this stretch of road, which passes through areas of Tamarack swamp, shrubby swampland, cattail marsh, and wet woodland where you can find both cuckoos, Least, Willow, and Alder Flycatchers, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Blue-winged Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, Swamp Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole. Occasionally, a White-eyed Vireo may be present in spring or summer. In migration, the trees can be full of warblers and the undergrowth loaded with flycatchers, thrushes, and sparrows. In March and April, Barred Owl and displaying American Woodcocks can occasionally be found along Kern Road near the Organizational Campground.

At 0.6 mile past the Organizational Campground you will come to the intersection of Kern and Clarkston Roads (unmarked). The fields on the left near here sometimes have Bobolinks, along with more common Field Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks. To reach the trails in the **North Unit**, turn right at this intersection, cross Paint Creek (Eastern Phoebe) and turn right again in 0.1 mile to remain on Clarkston Road. Continue straight across Orion Road for 0.4 mile to the stop sign at Adams Road (1.1 miles from Kern and Clarkston Roads). From Adams Road, go left for 0.5 mile to a T-intersection with Stony Creek Road, go right for 0.1 mile to Harmon Road, and turn left. From the intersection of Stony Creek and Harmon Roads, go 0.5 mile to Predmore Road, which goes only to the right (sign missing). The parking area on the left of this intersection is the best parking area and trailhead for the North Unit trails. Another trailhead is at 0.9 mile farther along Predmore Road (0.1 mile before Lake George Road), and yet another is 0.5 mile farther north along Harmon Road where it makes a 90-degree left turn and becomes Miller Road. There are several miles of trails in the North Unit, with those near Heart, Tamarack, and East Graham Lakes generally the best. The woodlands here are hillier and drier than those in the South Unit, with more pines. Breeding Cooper's Hawks have been found here, and Black-throated Green Warbler is occasional.

To return to US-24, follow Miller Road west into the town of Lake Orion. Miller Road makes a 90-degree left bend after 0.9 mile and a 90-degree right bend after 1.1 miles. At the second traffic light, turn left onto US-24 and go 0.1 mile to Lake Orion (the lake, not the town), which sometimes has waterfowl in winter. The western areas of the recreation area are much less developed, though birding along Scripps Road and Greenshield Road, both going west from Lapeer Road, can be productive. During the hunting season, you will not want to bird too far from the pullouts unless you're wearing bright orange.

Waldon Road is often too busy with traffic to be very birdy, as it is paved, unlike Scripps and Greenshield Roads.

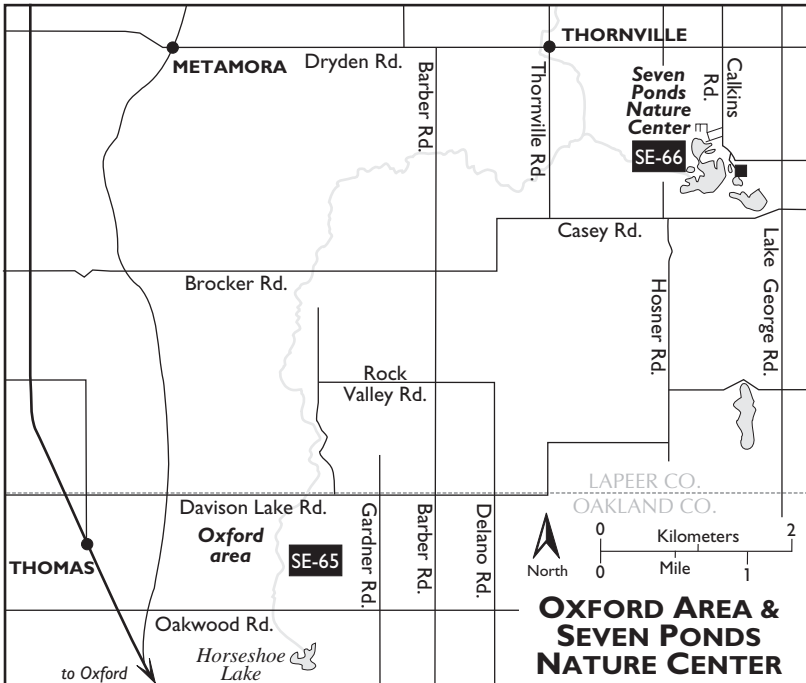
SE-65 Oxford Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 41, A7. 42°52' N, 83°16' W

One of the best locations in the greater Metro Detroit area for owls, American Woodcock, and Ruffed Grouse is along Oakwood and Davison Lake Roads north of the town of Oxford. From US-24, go north of Oxford for about 3 miles to Oakwood Road. Turn right for about 0.25 mile to good habitat for Ruffed Grouse and American Woodcock. This is one of the last areas in the greater Metro Detroit area where Ruffed Grouse can still be seen, and it is possible that the population is being supplemented with released birds. Eastern Screech-Owl is fairly common along this stretch of road, and Great Horned Owl is present in small numbers. During Christmas Bird Counts, Barred Owl has been found on occasion at the east end of the road near Delano Road, and rarely both Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls have turned up in the vicinity of the Detroit Sportsmens Club near Horseshoe Lake (private, no access). At the intersection with Delano Road, about 2.5 miles east of Lapeer Road, turn left (north) and go 1 mile to Davison Lake



Road. Turn left and bird this narrow, hilly, and pot-holed road west to its intersection with Lapeer Road. Davison Lake Road may be difficult to negotiate in muddy or icy conditions.

SE-66 Seven Ponds Nature Center

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter***

DeLorme p. 42, A1. 42°56' N, 83°11' W

Contact Information: 810-796-3200; www.geocities.com/sevenponds/;

Birding Club, www.geocities.com/sevenponds/Birding.html

Directions: From M-24, go north of Oxford for about 8 miles to Dryden Road. Turn right and go east for about 6 miles through Metamora and the small town of Thornville to Calkins Road. Turn right and go about 0.5 mile to the signposted entrance on the right.

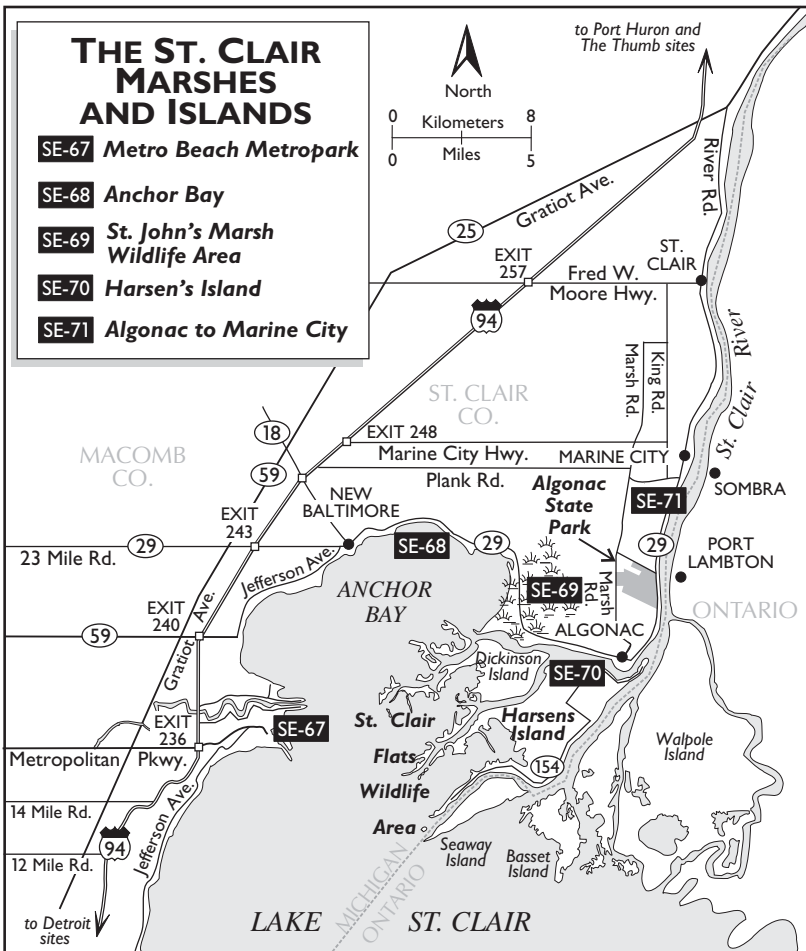
The **Seven Ponds Nature Center**, an affiliate of the Michigan Audubon Society, is 313 acres of deep, glacial lakes, wetlands, fields, and woodlands. Boardwalks and bridges enable visitors to reach pond edges and shorelines, and observation towers provide scenic overlooks. Maps and self-guiding booklets are available, and a naturalist is on duty to answer questions. There is a \$3 admission fee per person, and the grounds are open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday, closed Monday.

The center also maintains areas of special interest: Earls' Prairie is a reconstruction of a rare Michigan plant community featuring many native wildflowers. The Wildfowl Feeding Area offers nesting and feeding sites for ducks and geese. The Butterfly Garden provides food and host plants for insects and their larvae. An Herb Garden displays plants used by our forebears for food, medicine, and dyes. In spring the Wildflower Garden has a wide variety of native woodland wildflowers and ferns.

The local bird checklist numbers 212 species, including 36 vagrants. Wild Turkeys come to the feeders from November to March, and this is one of the most reliable sites within an hour's drive of Detroit for this species. Although the turkeys are year-round residents, they are more difficult to find from April–October. Barred Owl can be called in at the nature center building during annual owl prowls. The lakes provide refuge for numerous ducks in spring and fall; in October good numbers of Ring-necked Ducks are often present. The margins of the lakes are good for Virginia Rail and Sora in spring and summer. Ruffed Grouse can be found in the more remote and heavily forested areas. In spring and fall migrations, the woodlands and open areas provide good birding for passerine migrants. The restored prairies here are excellent for wildflowers, butterflies, and dragonflies in July and August.

THE ST. CLAIR MARSHES AND ISLANDS

At 420 square miles, Lake St. Clair could rightfully claim to be a sixth Great Lake. It fills a flat area (the St. Clair flats) between Lake Huron to the north and Lake Erie to the south, and is connected to both bodies of water by two rivers, the St. Clair River to the north and the Detroit River to the south. The St. Clair River empties into the lake, forming the largest coastal delta in the Great Lakes system. Much of the original marshland in this region is still present, some in state game areas and some in preserves that, even today, come under development pressures despite legal protection.



SE-67 Metro Beach MetroparkBy *Mike Mencotti*

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 43, D4. 42°35' N, 82°48' W
 Contact Inforamtion: 586-463-4581

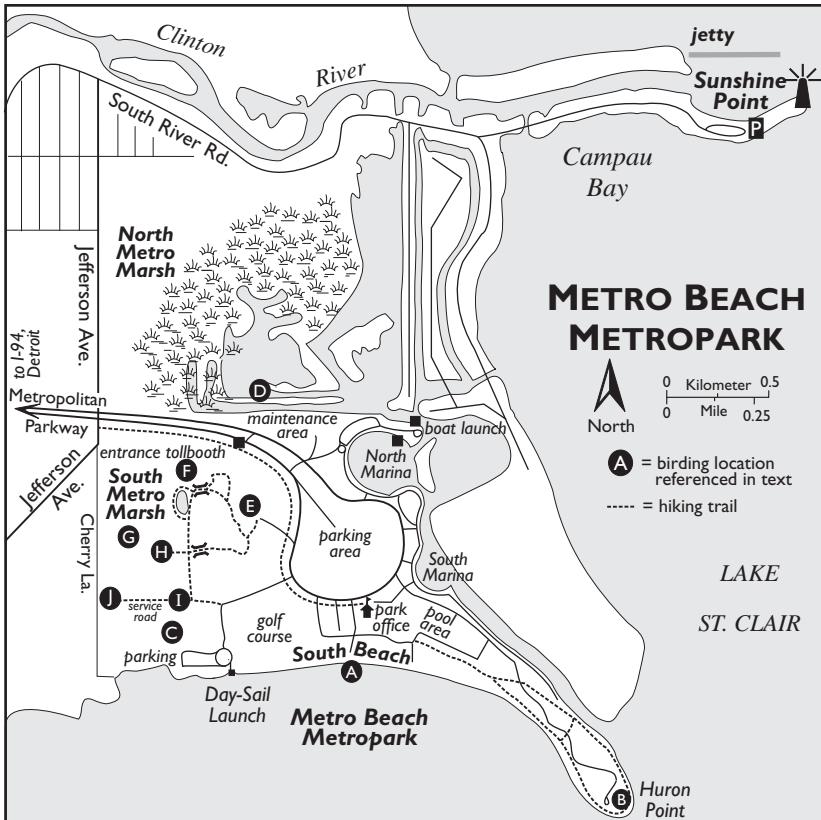
NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 2001 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 8: 219-222.

Directions: From I-94 and I-75 in Detroit, take I-94 east (which is really going north at this point) for 20.0 miles to Metropolitan Parkway (Exit 236). Turn right (east) and go 2.5 miles to Jefferson Avenue. Go and straight ahead for 0.4 mile to the entrance station (Metroparks entry fee).

Metro Beach Metropark is the premier birding spot in Macomb County and is one of the best migrant traps in Michigan. A total of 277 species has been recorded here, including 37 species of warblers, most of them annual. This is remarkable considering that the park is relatively small (770 acres) and is a multi-use facility that has up to two million non-birders visiting the park annually. It is best to plan your visit with the non-birders in mind (especially on fair-weather weekends), even if that involves a little backtracking once there. In migration, plan on spending at least five hours at Metro Beach; you should be justly rewarded, if you get there early. Park hours vary with the seasons, so plan to call ahead (810-463-4581).

The park, situated along the western shore of Lake St. Clair, packs some wonderful habitat into its modest confines. In the early 1900s, the lakeshore here was a collection of widespread marshes, which later gave way to lake-front houses and marinas. The park was built in 1948 with sand dredged from Lake St. Clair, which formed the park's natural areas. Since these marshes are almost the only ones remaining along the lake, many birds stop here to refuel. As with most migrant traps, the best months to bird are in spring and fall, although summer and winter have turned up interesting birds, especially shorebirds.

After entering the park, proceed straight ahead through the main parking area. You should see **South Beach (A)** on map) in front of you, flanked by buildings. Stop here first, since this spot tends to be crowded once the non-birders arrive. In winter, the birch trees near the buildings often have Pine Siskins and can have Common Redpolls in irruption years. With an early spring thaw, a good variety of waterfowl can be found off the beach, including remarkable concentrations of Canvasbacks, both species of scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers. In late summer, if you reach the beach before the hordes of swimmers arrive, you may see hundreds of swallows staging here before heading south. Recently, high concentrations of *E. coli* bacteria have closed the beach to swimming on occasion, an advantage for the birders. Consequently, many migrant shorebirds stop here, including Baird's, Least, and Semipalmated Sandpipers, as well as



Semipalmated Plover and Ruddy Turnstone. In winter, a walk east along South Beach to Huron Point should yield Snow Buntings and in some years a Snowy Owl. Look for Great Black-backed or the occasional Glaucous Gull among the Ring-billed and Herring Gulls at the edge of the ice pack, all waiting for a handout from the ice fishers. The 0.75-mile walk to **Huron Point (B)** on map) could yield a Long-tailed Duck among the rafts of more common waterfowl.

In spring and fall, be sure to stop at **Pt. Rosa Marsh (C)** on map) near the Day-Sail area, which is west of the swimming beach. This is a wonderful spot to view Common Loons flying north from mid-April to early May, with as many as 500 tallied in one day. Days with a northerly element to the wind tend to be the best. The water level of the marsh fluctuates widely from year to year, but this can be a good spot for Virginia Rail and Sora as well as Marsh Wren and Swamp Sparrow. This is also where the only Magnificent Frigatebird present for more than one day in Michigan was found in October 1995; it

spent the night perched in a tree. Please note that although hunting is not permitted in the park itself, it is permitted from boats offshore, facing away from the shore. You may see the duck in your scope become someone's dinner.

The **North Metro Marsh (D on map)** is good for herons, rails, and shorebirds. Backtrack toward the park entrance and turn right a few yards before the tollbooth. Park in the parking lot facing the marsh. Parking is open to all visitors from October to April only; a boat-trailer permit is required at other times, so walking in from the main parking area is suggested from May to September. Before the water freezes in winter, you can find a fine assortment of waterfowl and gulls here. In summer, check for herons and shorebirds, including both yellowlegs, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Short-billed Dowitcher. A Red Phalarope was present in October 2003. The Midwest's only recorded Great White Heron (the white form of the Great Blue Heron) took up temporary residence in fall of 1999. Least Bittern and Black Tern have nested, though a large colony (100-plus nests) of the latter was pushed out in the 1980s by cattail die-offs, with circumstantial evidence pointing toward the explosive increase of Mute Swans. The marina on the opposite side of the road is where Michigan's first Heermann's Gull was regularly observed after being discovered on the South Beach by Howard and Ellie Cox in August 1979; it returned for three fall seasons (1979–1981). Rarely, Laughing and Franklin's Gulls have also been found here. A spotting scope is helpful.

Next, return to the main road, turn left, and then right as soon as you enter the main parking area, following the signs to the parking area for the **Nature Center (E on map)**. In the morning sun, the edge of the woods can be full of migrant flycatchers, vireos, and warblers. Also check the feeders from the deck at the back of the nature center for interesting seed-eaters, including Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows in migration (and rarely Clay-colored Sparrow). The feeders attract American Tree Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos in winter. In irruption years, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin may join the common House Finches and American Goldfinches. In late spring, the bushes behind the center are a reliable spot for Connecticut Warbler, although other similar areas in the park have yielded this elusive warbler as well. The nature center has a sightings book, and your interesting sightings should be entered. After checking the woodland edge, enter the woods on the trail and follow it to a meadow. (In summer, insect repellent is highly recommended.) The **Meadow area (F on map)** should be checked for Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Orchard Oriole, annual spring visitors here.

Proceed west onto a bridge over a ditch to a short loop trail that borders **South Metro Marsh (G on map)**. This is a dependable spot for Least Bittern most years, particularly from the **Marsh Observation Deck (H on map)**, as well as for rails and hundreds of swallows in the summer. A Yellow-headed Blackbird spent a few weeks here one spring. Continue south past the next bridge to the **Marsh Road (I on map)**; a service road (closed to vehicles) and turn right (west), watching for warblers and flycatchers along

the ditch. The back of Pt. Rosa Marsh will be on your left. Walk the road to the end, where you will reach the Maple Woods, probably the best place in the park for warblers. There are no defined trails in the Maple Woods, so you are best off birding from the service road. In wet years, these roadside marshy areas sometimes provide close-up views of Virginia Rail and Sora, and one year a Yellow Rail was flushed here. Marsh Wren is frequent in the cattails, and farther from the road there are areas of sedge that have Sedge Wren in some years. Retrace your steps and turn left on the trail/service road and head toward the marsh loop. Turn right just before the observation kiosk and cross the bridge. In winter and early spring check on your right for a bucket high up in the tree where a Great Horned Owl nests (Tom Heatley, one of ABA's leading listers, put the bucket in the tree many years ago, and it has been the site of the successful fledging of more than 20 owlets). In spring and fall, this is another fine area for migrants. In summer, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Warbling Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Yellow Warbler are among the notable nesters. The trail ends at a field near the Nature Center and the parking lot.

Another good vantage point on Lake St. Clair is the nearby **Sunshine Point DNR Access** at the east end of South River Road. From Metropolitan Parkway and Jefferson Avenue, at the entrance to Metro Beach Metropark, turn right (north) onto Jefferson Avenue and go 1.0 mile to a T-intersection with South River Road. Turn right and go 1.8 miles to the parking area at the end of the road. At the DNR gate (entry fee required during open-water months), proceed straight ahead to check the jetties to your left off the boat ramp. Park in the lot as close to the lighthouse as you can. The site lures many boaters, as it is one of the few public boat launches in the area, but the busy boating season doesn't overlap much of the best birding season here (October–April). The area can be good for viewing ducks, loons, grebes, and shorebirds (when water levels are low). In winter, be sure to walk the short distance along the trail to the lighthouse. If a Snowy Owl is in the area, chances are it will be perched on the lighthouse. Snow Bunting is regular in this area as well. The small woodlot at the point can hold migrant landbirds in spring and fall.

SE-68 Anchor Bay

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring* Summer* Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 43, C5. 42°41' N, 82°42' W

Directions: Go east on I-94 to M-29 at Exit 243. As you drive east on M-29, you will see Anchor Bay coming into view on your right just past the town of New Baltimore (3.0 miles from I-94). See map on page 159.

Anchor Bay is an excellent place for migrant and wintering waterfowl, especially Tundra Swans and Canvasbacks. The best months here are October–December and February–April. Canvasbacks pass through in

exceptional numbers, and the highest Christmas Bird Counts in the nation of this species are regularly recorded here, with tens of thousands often present. With the freeze-up of the lake, which is typically in January, most of the birds leave the area, returning north in the “spring” thaw, usually in March but sometimes as early as February. The first pullout is at 8.2 miles from I-94, but this is not much more than a wide area on the shoulder of the road. A better (and less dangerous) strategy is to use the various parking areas along the shoreline to view the bay. Be aware that these are active businesses, so please try to stay out of the way of the owners and their customers.

SE-69 St. John’s Marsh Wildlife Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer* Fall* Winter*
DeLorme p. 43, C6. 42°39’ N, 82°37’ W
Contact Information: 810-748-9504

As you continue east on M-29, **St. John’s Marsh Wildlife Area** is visible on the left side of the road (between 11.0 and 14.3 miles from I-94). See map on page 159. This is one of the largest natural wetlands remaining in southeastern Michigan (about 4 square miles), and its preservation has been a struggle for many years, with new threats of development continuing to turn up from time to time. Another threat is the invasion of alien plants. When the marsh was originally preserved, it consisted of extensive stands of Cattail marsh, but much of this has now been replaced with European Reed and Purple Loosestrife, which support far fewer bird species.

Viewing the marsh from M-29 is not possible in the heavy traffic whizzing by at 55 miles per hour. Do not use the shoulder, but instead use one of the parking lots at one of the many businesses on the right side of the road. One safe vantage point is at the end of Perch Road, which goes to left (east) from M-29 at 11.2 miles from I-94. There is a small parking area 0.75 mile ahead on the right at the end of this road. This area, signposted as “Wildlife Refuge”, is closed for hunting from September 1 to December 3. *Note: Stier Road, at 11.5 miles, might seem to be a good access point to the marsh, but leads only through a housing development.* At the eastern end of the marsh (14.3 miles), there is a large dirt parking area on the left specifically for the wildlife area, though views and access from this point are not very good.

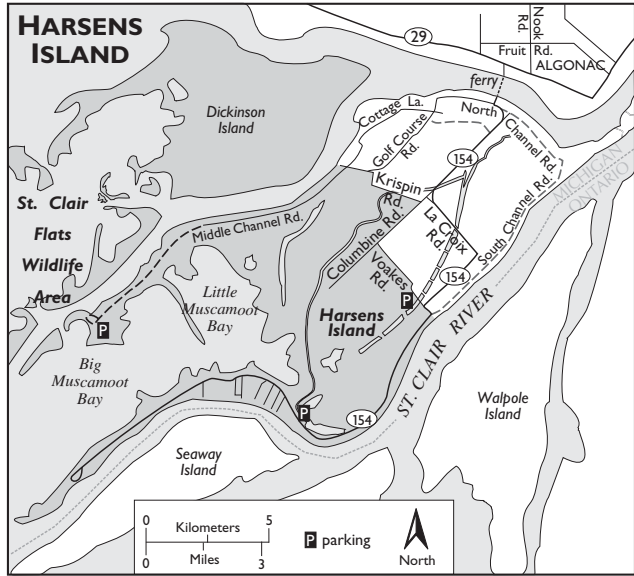
SE-71 Harsens Island

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 43, D6. 42°35’ N, 82°36’ W

Continue east on M-29 from St. John’s Marsh to the town of Algonac, where the ferry dock (16.6 miles from I-94) provides access to **Harsens Island**. This interesting island, dominated by the **St. Clair Flats Wildlife Area** (810-748-9504), is reached by car ferry (two to three minute trip, \$5

round trip), which runs every 20 minutes in summer and continues through the winter on a less frequent, as-needed schedule. The best months for birding Harsens Island are September–April for migrant and wintering waterfowl, though during the fall season many areas may be closed for hunting.



Turn left from the ferry dock and follow Highway 154 south. After 2.8 miles, you will enter state land with marshlands on both sides of the road. After an additional 0.7 mile, the road curves sharply left at Voakes Road (unmarked) to the right (we will backtrack to here after going to the end of Highway 154). Highway 154 ends at 2.8 miles past Voakes Road (there is a parking area on the right here), but the road continues another 3.0 miles on a rougher paved road to a loop at the end. This section of road is an excellent place to view the marshes, especially at a couple of raised areas along the way that allow good scope views of the open water of Lake St. Clair.

Return north 5.8 miles to Voakes Road, an unmarked dirt road, and turn left (west) for 0.1 mile to a foot-only access point on the left (may be closed in fall to all access except hunting). Continue on Voakes Road as it turns sharply right to become Columbine Road. At 1.8 miles turn left onto Krispin Road. Go 0.3 mile to Middle Channel Drive and turn left. At 2.5 miles, where Middle Channel Drive changes to dirt, the birding improves. The road continues another 1.2 miles to a cul-de-sac turnaround. Watch the skies for flights of raptors, which sometimes occur here in September and October; species can include Red-shouldered, Broad-winged, Red-tailed, and Rough-legged Hawks and a few Accipiters, including the occasional Northern Goshawk.

Return north for 3.7 miles to Krispin and continue straight ahead on the winding main road, which becomes Cottage Lane. At 1.5 miles past Krispin, turn left at the first T-intersection for 0.8 mile to the ferry dock on the left, and return to Algonac on the car ferry to continue the route.

SE-71 Algonac to Marine City

By Allen T. Chartier

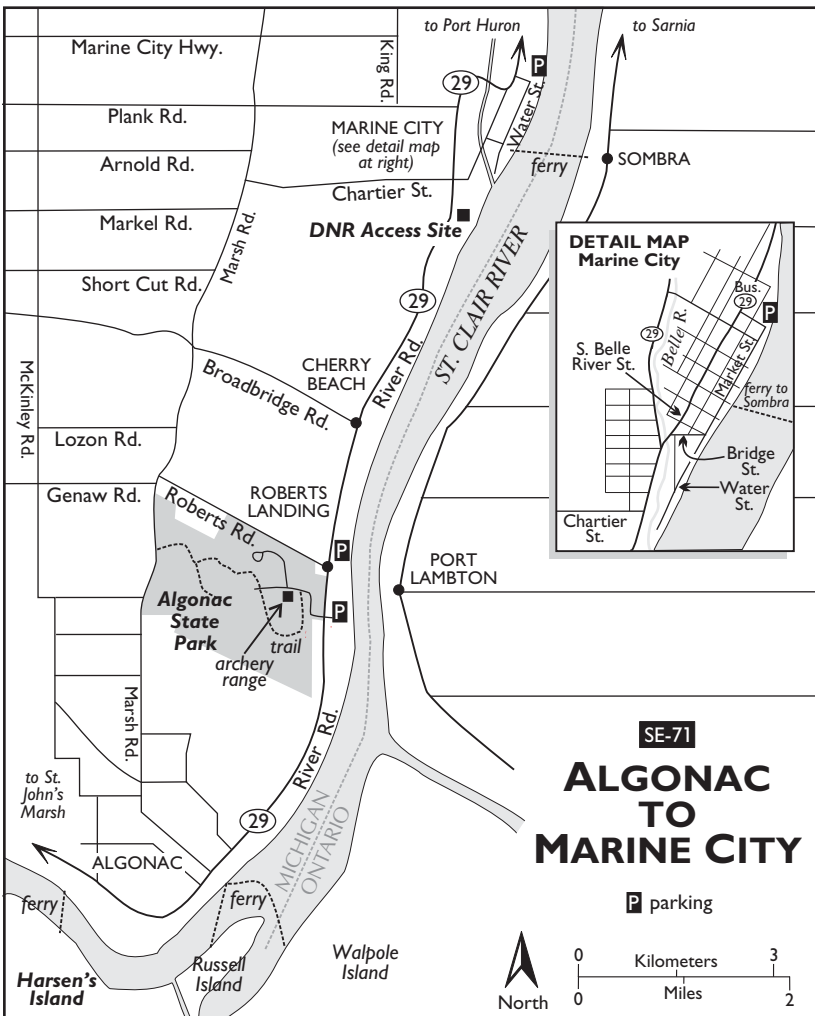
Spring** Summer* Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 43, C6. 42°39' N, 82°32' W

Contact Information: Algonac State Park, 810-765-5605;

www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

Continue east from Algonac on M-29, which eventually turns north and passes a ferry dock for Walpole Island (Canada) and Russell Island (U.S., not worth the trip for birding). At 4.1 miles from the Harsens Island ferry dock, you will reach the entrance for **Algonac State Park** on the left (state



park entry fee). The park's 1,500 acres of woodland and open areas are a good stopover site for migrant landbirds. The park is also home to some of the rarest natural communities in Michigan, and the lakeplain prairies and lakeplain oak savannas are considered globally significant habitat. Nineteen plant species that are on the state list of endangered, threatened, and special concern occur here. These prairies and oak savannas require periodic burning to remain healthy, and stewardship efforts are underway to restore Algonac's prairies and savannas. In summer, the blazing star prairie across from the archery range is a wonderful place to view prairie plants, butterflies, and other insects.

Immediately across M-29 from the state park entrance, there is a parking area on the right that provides good views of the St. Clair River. From here north to **Roberts Landing** (about 1 mile) there are other good views of the mouth of the St. Clair River. Parking is not allowed along the roadside, so you will need to park only at designated parking areas. In winter, you may see migrant ducks, including a few scoters and Long-tailed Ducks, among the more common Canvasbacks, Redheads, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Common Mergansers, as well as interesting gulls, including Iceland and Glaucous. North of Roberts Landing, residential and commercial development makes access to the river difficult (although a Tufted Duck was found along here in February 1995).

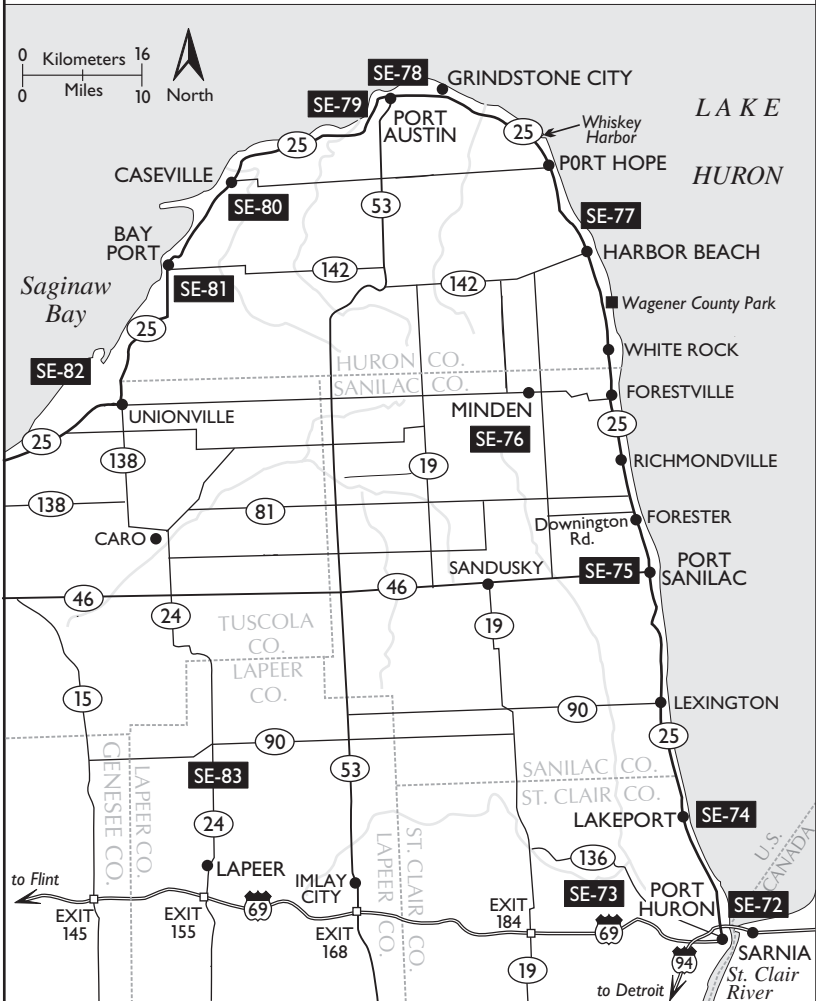
Continue north on east M-29 toward **Marine City** (DeLorme p. 43, C6. 42°43' N, 082°30' W) for 4.1 miles to a DNR access site on the right (boat launch, fee from spring–fall), which provides additional views of the St. Clair River. One final view of the St. Clair River from the Michigan side is at the north end of Marine City (views of the river north of here are better from the Canadian side). Go north from the DNR access site for 0.4 mile to Chartier Street and turn right. Go 0.2 mile to South Belle River Street and turn left. Immediately after crossing the bridge (0.1 mile) turn right onto Bridge Street. Go 0.2 mile to South Water Street, where you turn left for about 0.5 mile north through town to a parking area at the road's end. This stretch of the river is wider than parts farther south, and often has numerous ducks and gulls from October–April. It is the site where a female Barrow's Goldeneye was present (on the Canadian side) in March 1978. *Note that the ferry dock to Sombra, Ontario, is 0.2 mile north of Bridge Street on South Water Street; the ferry operates year round depending on open-water conditions.*

THE THUMB

Michigan's "Thumb" provides interesting birding opportunities year round, with inland areas of good habitat for breeding birds, including a couple of sites with isolated populations of species that typically breed 100 miles to the north. One location has rare peat-bog habitat, and another provides quality habitat for more southerly species with sites ranging from Hemlock groves to riverine sycamore. This broad peninsula, jutting northward

THE THUMB

- | | |
|---|---|
| SE-72 Port Huron and St. Clair River Mouth | SE-78 Port Austin Area |
| SE-73 Port Huron State Game Area | SE-79 Port Crescent State Park |
| SE-74 Lakeport State Park | SE-80 Caseville Area |
| SE-75 Port Sanilac | SE-81 Bay Port Area |
| SE-76 Minden City State Game Area | SE-82 Fish Point State Wildlife Area |
| SE-77 Harbor Beach Area | SE-83 Lapeer State Game Area |



into Lake Huron, also has good “sea-watching” opportunities where more “pelagic” species such as loons, scoters, jaegers, and gulls such as Sabine’s Gull and Black-legged Kittiwake are regularly noted. The various breakwalls and jetties attract occasional late fall migrants such as Purple Sandpiper and Snowy Owl in winter flight years. The eastern shore and adjacent farmland have resting sites for numerous migrant Tundra Swans in March and November.

The federally endangered Piping Plover used to be a common nester here, and may be recolonizing beaches that are protected from human disturbance. The northern shoreline of the Thumb contains excellent dune habitat and has a good spring hawkwatch site. The dunes also harbor a number of interesting and three threatened plant species: Pitcher’s Thistle, Houghton’s Goldenrod, and Lake Huron Tansy, all endemic to the Great Lakes. More common dune plants, some of which are more typical of oceanic shores, include Marram Grass, Sand Reed Grass, Beach Pea, Sea Rocket, Hairy Puccoon, Wormwood, Sand Cherry, and Red-osier Dogwood.

A birding route for the Thumb can begin either in Bay City or Port Huron. Since many birders from the Detroit area visit the Port Huron sites in mid-June to get another dose of warblers, which are present here on their breeding grounds, this route will begin in Port Huron. It should be noted that direct access from the Detroit area to sites such as Minden City State Game Area and those sites at the tip of the Thumb (Port Austin, Port Crescent State Park) can be had by taking M-53 north from Detroit (Port Austin is about 120 miles north of Detroit via M-53).

SE-72 Port Huron, St. Clair River Mouth

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring** Summer - Fall**** Winter***
DeLorme p. 53, D7. 43°01' N, 82°26' W*

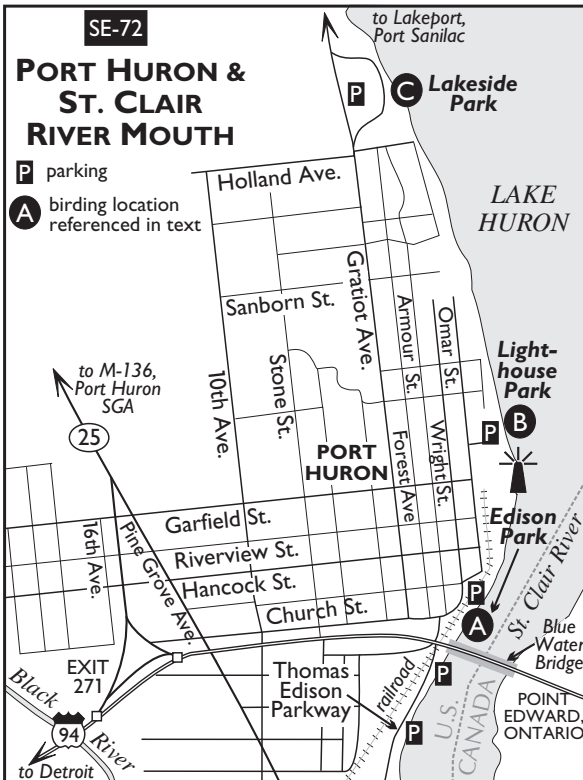
Directions: Take I-94 east from Detroit to its end in Port Huron (38 miles past Metropolitan Parkway, and 58 miles from the junction of I-94 and I-75 in Detroit). See map on next page.

The southern end of Lake Huron funnels migrating waterbirds, including scoters, loons, grebes, gulls, and jaegers, past Port Huron. September through November are the peak dates here, and northwest or northeast winds following a cold front are the prime weather conditions to watch for. On such a day, Port Huron has an uncanny resemblance to birding on the North Atlantic coast!

Most Michigan birders head across the border to the Canadian shore of the river at Point Edward north of Sarnia (see *A Bird-Finding Guide to Ontario* by Clive E. Goodwin, 1995). Most of the sightings from the Port Huron area, especially the confirmed rarities, are from the Canadian side. But this is more a reflection of local birder habits than of bird distribution, because many birds migrating past this site do actually cross into U.S. waters, and almost all are vis-

ible from Michigan shores. Fortunately, international travel is not necessary, as there are three good vantage points in Michigan.

Thomas Edison Park (A on map). As you enter Port Huron on I-94, stay in the left lane after passing Water Street. Exit left to Pine Grove Avenue (M-25). *NOTE: This is the last exit before entering Canada.* At the first traffic light (0.5 mile), turn right onto Hancock Street. Go straight through the traffic light at Pine Grove Avenue (0.1 mile). Go 0.7 mile past Pine Grove Avenue to Wright Street and turn right. Go 0.1 mile to the parking area on the left for Thomas Edison Park (not signposted), which provides a good view of the mouth of the St. Clair River. You can easily watch the river from the warmth of your car here. A scope is essential. Be sure to check the shoreline from the paved walkway, as there could be an eider or a Harlequin Duck hidden there! More likely it will be just Mallards, but who knows? For listing purposes, note that the International Border between the U.S. and Canada is the middle of the river; a red buoy to the north in Lake Huron is also a good indicator of the border. Continue south on Thomas Edison Parkway, with the river on your left, where you can check three other pullouts along the river, all of which are south of the Blue Water Bridge to Canada. The southernmost of these three



observation sites provides a distant view of Sarnia Bay (in Canada), where ducks and gulls often congregate in winter. On birdless days, you may want to stop in at the historical Thomas Edison Depot Museum.

Good days in fall can produce numbers of migrating loons, with an occasional Red-throated among the more numerous Commons (much more rarely, Pacific Loon has been reported from the Canadian side). Red-necked Grebes occasionally pass by, along with more frequent

Horned Grebes. Shorebirds are not numerous here, but flocks of yellowlegs, Dunlin, and Sanderling may occasionally include a Red-necked Phalarope, or very rarely, a Red Phalarope.

Waterfowl migrants include all three species of scoter (White-winged is by far the most common) and Long-tailed Duck, as well as both scaup, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, and rarely Brant and Harlequin Duck. The latter two species, while still rare, are more frequently found along the Lake Huron shore several miles east of Sarnia. King Eider is another rarity that has shown up here, although not annually and scarce in recent years. This site hosted the first of Michigan's three records of Common Eider. Barrow's Goldeneye has been reported once from the Canadian side of the St. Clair River, several miles south of here. During warm winters (more frequent in recent years), most waterfowl may remain here on Lake Huron and may not move south down the river. Occasionally Red-necked and, rarely, Red Phalaropes can be seen here.

Bonaparte's Gull is the most visible component of the area's small gull migration (September–November), although some interesting species are occasional here, including Little Gull and Black-legged Kittiwake, and rarely Sabine's Gull. Jaegers are the big draw, this being one of the most reliable sites for them in the state (Whitefish Point Bird Observatory is another), and close views are perhaps more likely here, given the appropriate wind conditions. A good day could produce several Parasitic Jaegers, the most common species, with an occasional Pomarine Jaeger (later in the season) and more rarely Long-tailed Jaeger (earlier in the season). A very few lucky birders have seen all three species on the same day from the Canadian side. Occasionally jaegers approach closely, but most are some distance out, and a scope is very helpful. Many jaegers seen here are juveniles, presenting a considerable identification challenge. Bear in mind that Pomarine and Long-tailed Jaegers are rare enough that documentation is requested by state compilers and the records committee before sightings of these species can be published. In late fall and early winter, large gulls migrate through, and among the many Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls, you may find an occasional Iceland or Glaucous Gull, or rarely a Thayer's. As is the case for waterfowl, how far these birds move south into the river is dependent on the amount of ice present on Lake Huron. Both Ross's and Ivory Gulls have been reported from the Canadian side of the St. Clair River, but have yet to be reported from the U.S. side. Michigan has but a single record of Ivory Gull (from Marquette in the UP) and none of Ross's. The St. Clair River mouth may be one of the better spots in the state for one of these mega-rarities to show up.

Lighthouse Park (B on map). Often, jaegers seen in the mouth of the St. Clair River circle high and head southwest over Michigan. Lighthouse Park near the Port Huron Lighthouse is an excellent vantage point on such days, with the possibility that the birds might fly directly overhead. This park also provides better views of the shoreline west of the St. Clair River mouth,

but is completely exposed to north and northeast winds on the beach, the best conditions for birding at this site, and you must leave your car to view the lake. In October 2003, two Sabine's Gulls spent a few hours just offshore feeding with a flock of Bonaparte's. From Edison Park, return north on Wright Street for 0.1 mile to Garfield Street and turn right. Go one block to Omar Street and turn left. The parking area for Lighthouse Park is 0.1 mile ahead on the right. Walk the short distance to the beach to scope the lake.

Lakeside Park (C on map). Farther from the "bottleneck" at the mouth of the St. Clair River, this site is less likely to produce sightings of jaegers but is a good vantage point for viewing rafts of offshore migrant waterfowl in fall and early winter. Migrant American Pipits, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings occasionally rest briefly on the beaches. From Lighthouse Park, take Garfield Road back west to Gratiot Avenue. Go north about a mile to Holland Avenue, and then another 0.1 mile past Holland Avenue to the entrance to Lakeside Park on the right. The beach is open to the public between mid-June and Labor Day, which means that during the best birding seasons—fall and winter—human disturbance will be minimal. You must walk about 100 yards to the beach to view Lake Huron. Dress warmly.

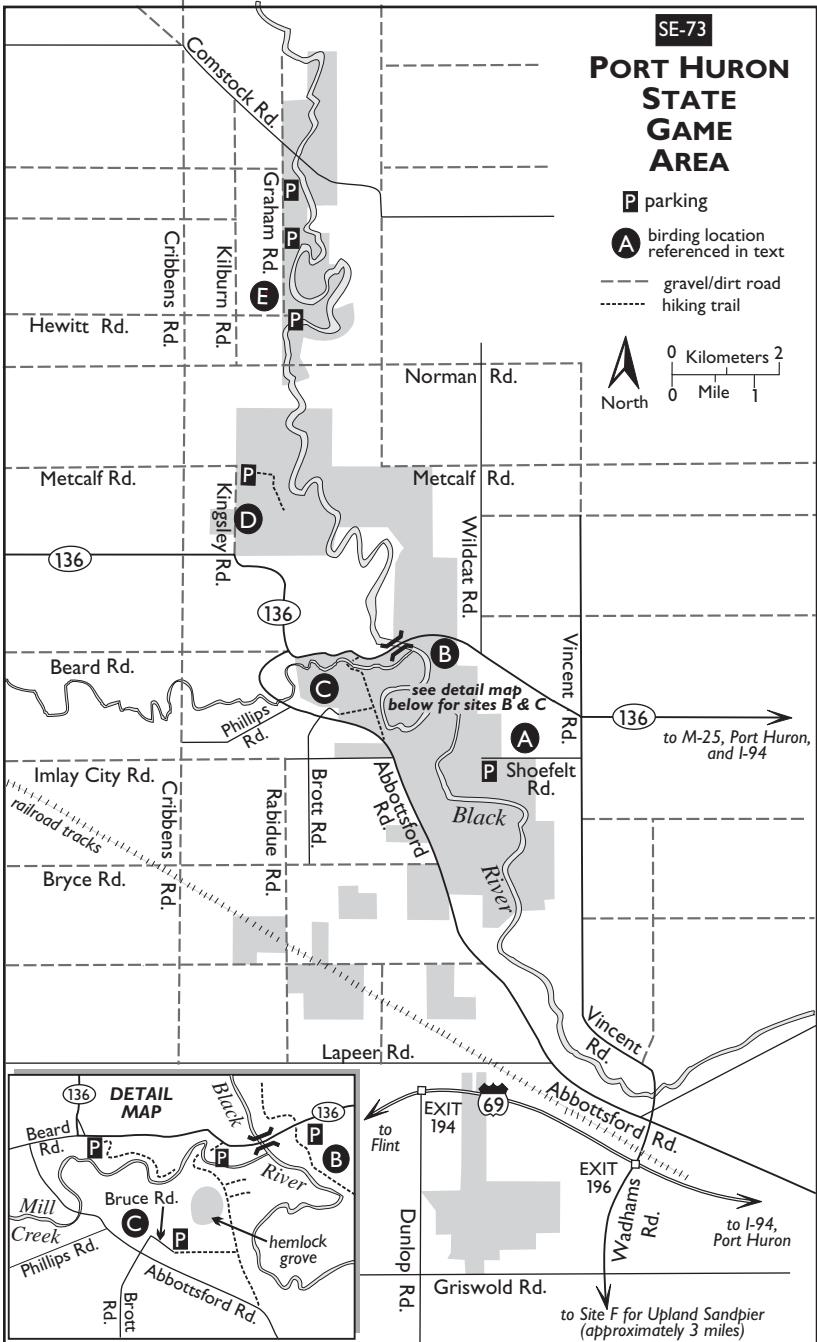
SE-73 Port Huron State Game Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer**** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 53, D6. 43°03' N, 82°26' W
Contact Information: 810-664-8355

Directions: Take I-94 east from Detroit to its end in Port Huron, the previous site (38 miles north of Metropolitan Parkway, and 58 miles north of the junction of I-94 and I-75 in Detroit). Stay in the left lane after passing Water Street. Exit left to Pine Grove Avenue (M-25). At the second traffic light, (0.8 mile) turn left (west) onto M-25 (Pine Grove Avenue). Continue 1.3 miles to M-136 and turn left (0.0, this is the continuation of Pine Grove Road). After 4.0 miles, M-136 jogs right onto North Road, then back left (after 0.5 mile), becoming Beard Road.

By the end of May, after the migrant warblers have departed southeastern Michigan, many Metro Detroit birders can't resist heading up to this area for a final warbler "fix," typically in the first half of June. This very productive area supports 16 species of regularly breeding warblers, and 9 less-than-annual species, including disjunct southerly populations of several northern species along with an interesting mix of southern species. Blue-winged, Yellow, and Chestnut-sided Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, and Common Yellowthroat are common and widespread. Golden-winged, Magnolia, Cerulean, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Pine, and Black-and-white Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning and Hooded Warblers are more locally distributed. Less-than-annual warblers include Northern Parula (2002), Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Yel-



low-throated (nested in 1982), Worm-eating (2002), Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky, Canada, and Yellow-breasted Chat (formerly regular and local). Four species of *Empidonax* flycatchers and four species of vireos are regularly seen in summer, and this is also a dependable area for both cuckoos. Henslow's and Clay-colored Sparrows were regular until around 1997 but are very sporadic in occurrence now. More than 85 species can be seen on a mid-June trip here, and the author has had 100-plus species days in mid-May on more than one occasion.

Shoefelt Road (A on map): At 6.0 miles from M-25 on M-136, turn left (south) onto Vincent Road for 0.5 mile to Shoefelt Road. Turn right and go 0.5 mile to a parking area on the left (the road becomes a trail 0.1 mile farther on). The last quarter-mile of this road can be muddy and rutted after a rain, perhaps even impassable in a passenger car. From the parking area, walk along the road for a quarter-mile in both directions. There is a healthy population of Golden-winged Warblers along the road, with occasional hybrids seen, mostly Brewster's but sometimes the much rarer Lawrence's. Golden-wings seem to be holding their own at this site, where they have been present for 20-plus years, despite the increasing presence of Blue-winged Warblers, which are crowding them out in many other areas in southern Michigan. Other birds frequenting the open and shrubby habitats here include Least, Willow, and Alder Flycatchers, Indigo Bunting, and rarely Yellow-breasted Chat. Black-and-white and Nashville Warblers are occasional, and Yellow-rumped Warbler has been seen twice (though it probably was not breeding).

Black River Trail (B on map): Return north on Vincent Road to M-136 and turn left (west). At 1.0 mile you will reach Wildcat Road, where the historic Dorsey House restaurant is located. After another 1.0 mile (and 8.1 miles west of M-25), park at an obvious wide dirt parking area on the left side of the road, just before crossing the Black River. Birds that can be seen at this parking area include both cuckoos, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, American Redstart, and occasionally Cerulean and Pine Warblers and Baltimore Oriole. Use caution as you walk to the bridge over the Black River (about 0.1 mile west along M-136). Mind the high-speed traffic here; if you stay on the wide shoulder of the road, you will be safe. At the bridge you may get good views of Cerulean Warbler. There has been a colony of several singing males here for more than 20 years. You may also encounter Chestnut-sided and Mourning Warblers on this short walk. This is the area where the author found a nesting Yellow-throated Warbler in 1982.

Another alternative is to go to the extreme west corner of the parking area to an easy dirt trail leading south, where you should find Blue-winged, Golden-winged, and Cerulean Warblers (in the sycamores near the river), Willow, Least, and Alder Flycatchers, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Pine Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and occasionally breeding Purple Finch. Both cuckoos are often seen along here, and this is also a very reliable spot for Ruby-throated Hummingbird. The small wetlands here sometimes have Vir-

ginia Rail and Sora. The larger marsh to the southwest has had a pair of Sandhill Cranes in recent years.

Another less distinct trail leads north from M-136 across from this parking area (be careful crossing the road), but has become quite overgrown (look for a rock pile at the beginning of the trail) and flooded in places. For the adventurous birder who makes the somewhat strenuous hike, this is a good spot for Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Alder Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, American Redstart. Yellow-breasted Chat is rare. As you make your way up the hillside (about 0.3 mile in, after crossing the creek on some rocks and walking through a wet shrubby field), you may encounter Broad-winged Hawk (rare), Blue-headed Vireo, Brown Creeper (occasional), Magnolia and Black-and-white Warblers, and very rarely a Nashville Warbler (check the shrubby edges of the field at the top of the hill, about 0.5 mile from the main road).

Ruby Hemlock Grove (C on map): Continue west on M-136 for 0.4 mile to a difficult-to-see turnoff on the left, marked by a break in the guardrail. This short dirt road ends at the Black River. Cerulean and Mourning Warblers can often be found right at this parking area, in addition to Yellow-throated, Red-eyed, and Warbling Vireos. In 2002, a Northern Parula summered here. The river here is also a good spot to study dragonflies. Continue west on M-136 for 0.75 mile to another parking area on the left, where M-136 makes a sharp right turn to the north and Beard Road continues straight ahead (west). A trail begins at the southeast corner of this parking area and leads steeply down the riverbank to flatter areas along the river's edge, where Mourning and Cerulean Warblers can be found.

Instead of continuing on M-136 north, go west on Beard Road for about one-quarter mile, bearing left at the fork onto Abbottsford Road (stay on the paved road). Go 1 mile and turn left onto Brott Road, which then turns to the right, changes to Bruce Road, and ends at a parking area after about 0.25 mile. Walk the abandoned sand road straight ahead for about 0.3 mile to a T-junction, where you may encounter Blue-headed (rare) and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, and Pine Warblers, as well as Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, and Indigo Bunting. At the T-intersection, go left onto another dirt track through similar habitat, where additional species may include Magnolia and Mourning Warblers.

At about 0.25 mile along this road, you will come to a grove of Hemlock trees on your left marked by a large tree with two green boards nailed to it. The Hemlocks are about 50 yards from the trail, across a shrubby area, which often has Golden-winged and Mourning Warblers, with Great Crested Flycatchers nesting in the nearby woodlands. Listen for Barred Owl (sometimes calling in daylight) and Pileated Woodpecker (occasionally flies over). Wild Turkey, Broad-winged Hawk, and Whip-poor-will have also been found regularly at this spot. Nightbirds include American Woodcock, Great Horned, Eastern Screech-Owl and Northern Saw-whet Owl (once in May).

This open area, which includes a sedge marsh near a small creek, has produced some interesting dragonfly records recently, including Arrowhead Spiketail and Illinois River Cruiser.

Getting to this Hemlock grove requires a little bushwhacking for about 30 yards through the grasses and shrubbery when the trail is somewhat overgrown. Once inside the Hemlocks, navigation is easy due to the lack of understory. Acadian Flycatcher, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Pine Warblers are usually present. Often, a summering male Hooded Warbler sings from the edge of the grove, and can sometimes be seen from inside the grove. Most of these birds can be heard from the road outside the grove, but good views require entering into this tranquil, “up-north” cathedral.

Return to the dirt road and go (left) another 0.5 mile to the river. Soon you will come to two short “roads” leading to the right into an open field. Between these two roads is another spot for Hooded Warbler. Occasionally two to three singing males can be found in this general area (including the Hemlock grove), with at least one bird present every year. Black-throated Green and Magnolia Warblers can usually be found in the pine-maple woodland, and this is one of the best spots in the area for Mourning Warbler. Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers occur as well. The woodlands also have Eastern Wood-Pewee, Veery, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager. Near the river, this road is good for Ovenbird and Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes, though the latter is irregular; a Kentucky Warbler once summered. The few winter reports from this section of the game area indicate that irruption years may produce Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch (also nests here), and both crossbills.

Kingsley Road (D on map): Return to M-136 at Beard Road and go north. The fields on your left often have Bobolinks. M-136 makes a sharp left bend, and after about 1.5 miles you will see Kingsley Road on the right. Turn right (north) onto Kingsley Road and go about a mile to a parking area on the right, just before the road makes a sharp left bend onto Metcalf Road. Walk south along Kingsley Road for about 50 yards to a trail that heads east and then south along a high bluff above the Black River. Acadian Flycatcher and Black-throated Green Warbler are particularly common in this area, Blue-winged Warbler can be found in the adjacent shrubby fields, and Field Sparrow is sometimes present across the road. A Worm-eating Warbler was reported in summer 2002. Wild Turkey, Pileated Woodpecker, and Scarlet Tanager have been found here.

Graham and Hewitt Roads (E on map): After you tire of the beautiful mixed woodland of the southern portions of this game area, with its mix of northern and southern breeding warblers, you should head to the northern end for nesting open-country birds.

From the parking area on Kingsley Road, go west on Metcalf Road for about 0.5 mile to Cribbins Road. Turn right (north) and go 1.5 miles to Hewitt Road, listening along this stretch of road for Vesper, Savannah, and Song Sparrows as well as Eastern Meadowlark. Keep an eye open for Eastern Bluebird

as well. Turn right (east) onto Hewitt Road and go 1.0 mile to a parking area at the corner of Graham Road, which heads north. This stretch along Hewitt Road was formerly good for Clay-colored Sparrow, but encroaching housing and aging habitat have made the species difficult to find here. Summering Purple Finches frequent the area, and Cliff Swallows can often be picked out among the Barn and Northern Rough-winged Swallows overhead. Walk (or drive) about 0.3 mile north of Hewitt Road along Graham Road to a field on the left. The shrubby areas across the road are excellent places to find an Alder Flycatcher and compare its song with that of the less numerous Willow Flycatcher. Both cuckoos, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Least Flycatcher, and Purple Finch can also be found here. The trails heading east from three additional parking areas along the east side of Graham Road can be productive for Alder Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Wood Thrush, Blue-winged Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting. In June 2003, a Clay-colored Sparrow was near the second parking area.

Wadhams Road (F): When this large grassy field is allowed to go fallow, it is a good place for Upland Sandpiper, and Dickcissels were here during a recent irruption of this species from the southwest, which occurs sporadically in Michigan in drought years. Bobolink is often in this field as well, and Sedge Wren is occasional. To reach the field, return to I-69 and take the Wadhams Road Exit south for 4.0 miles to the Wadhams Animal Clinic (closed on weekends) on the right. Check the fields to the southwest from this parking area. Smith's Creek Road, which intersects Wadhams Road 0.5 mile south of the clinic, also provides views of the fields to the west, but the shoulder along Smith's Creek Road is quite narrow and stopping here is not recommended.

SE-74 Lakeport State Park

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall* Winter
DeLorme p. 53, D6. 43°07' N, 82°30' W

Contact Information: 810-327-6224;
www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

Directions: From the intersection of M-25 and M-136 in Port Huron, go north on M-25 for 6.2 miles to the first park entrance on the left (west). See the Thumb map on page 167.

The 565-acre **Lakeport State Park** can be worth a brief stop in May and June while on your way to sites farther north in the Thumb. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Mourning Warbler, and American Redstart, summer here. Migrant thrushes, warblers, and sparrows may be found in April through May in the small woodlands and shrubby areas. Whip-poor-will has been heard from near the campground in June.

Between early March and late May, this is also the site of a modest (by Michigan standards) hawkwatch, with 3,000–5,000 hawks of 11–15 species seen in a typical season. Dan Miller has been the sole chronicler of this event, which is thought to represent “reverse migration”, with the birds moving

south along the Lake Huron shoreline and then east across the mouth of the St. Clair River into Canada. Dan has been counting and banding hawks here since 1990. Depending on weather conditions, hawks might be right near the lakeshore or several miles west, and from treetop level to the limit of vision overhead. Days with strong southwest winds are best. There is good visibility from the park no matter where the birds decide to fly. The peak migration is from the end of April into early May, which is when Broad-winged Hawks, the most numerous species, also reaches peak numbers. The 11 most frequently recorded species are Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Red-shouldered, Broad-winged, Red-tailed, and Rough-legged Hawks, and American Kestrel. Four additional species are rare and not recorded each year: Northern Goshawk, Golden Eagle, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon.

The park has two units, a day-use area (Franklin Delano Roosevelt Unit) to the south and a larger campground to the north of the village of Lakeport. The entrance to the day-use area is on the left (west) side of M-25, 6.2 miles north of the M-136 junction in Port Huron. The best spot for observing the hawk migration is from the picnic grounds, which are on the east side of M-25 and reached from the day-use parking area via a pedestrian overpass. From here, trails lead into the woodlands. The campground can be birded on foot; park in the visitor parking lot. The park is closed from November to mid-April.

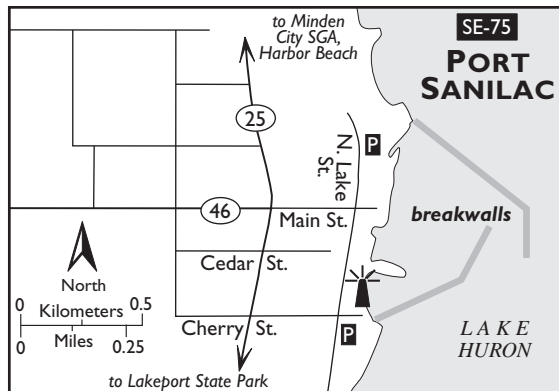
SE-75 Port Sanilac

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring* Summer
Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 53, A6.
43°26' N, 82°33' W

Directions: Port Sanilac is located on M-25 about 25 miles north of Lakeport. From the intersection of M-25 and M-46 in Port Sanilac, go east on Main Street for 0.1 mile to N. Lake Street.

Turn left (north) and go 0.1 mile to a parking area at the foot of the breakwall. The lighthouse can be reached by turning south at N. Lake Street and going about 0.25 mile to Cherry Street. Turn left into a small parking area near the lighthouse and at the foot of the breakwall.



Along M-25 and 30 miles north of Port Huron lies the small town of **Port Sanilac**. As you travel north from Port Huron toward Port Sanilac, there are several opportunities to view migrant waterfowl, gulls, and terns along the way. At **Lexington**, about 19 miles north of Port Huron and 11 miles south of Port Sanilac, the breakwall offers good views of Lake Huron. Turn right (east) at M-90 in Lexington onto Huron Avenue for about 0.25 mile to the harbor and breakwall. Next, head north from Lexington to **Port Sanilac**. In the early 1980s, October boat trips onto Lake Huron from Port Sanilac found conditions akin to pelagic birding, with scoters, loons, jaegers, Black-legged Kittiwake, and even Sabine's Gull being seen. Although the boat trips are no longer organized, some of these species might be seen from shore at the breakwall and lighthouse, with the best months being September–November. The breakwalls in Port Sanilac and Lexington should also be checked in October and November for Purple Sandpiper, and from November to March for Snowy Owl.

SE-76 Minden City State Game Area

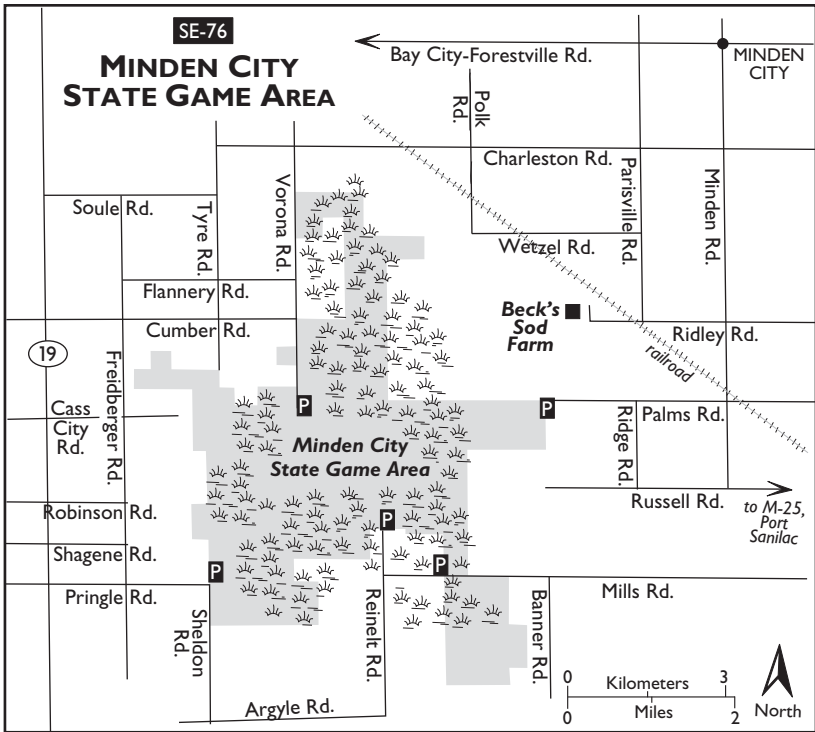
By Karl Overman, Steve Santner, and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 62, B3. 43°36' N, 82°51' W
 Contact Information: 989-872-5300

Directions: From Port Sanilac, continue north on M-25 for 12.4 miles to Russell Road, about 4 miles south of the town of Forestville. Go west for about 10.5 miles to Ridge Road, turn right (north), and go 1 mile to Palms Road. Turn left onto Palms Road to the end. Access to the bog itself is limited to a trail heading west from a small parking lot at the west end of Palms Road. There are no formal trails, so a compass may be helpful.

Note: Access is also possible from M-53 via the Bay City-Forestville Road about 1 mile south of the Huron County line. Go east on Bay City-Forestville Road about 16 miles to Minden Road (just before Minden City). Turn left (south) on Minden Road, go 4 miles to Palms Road, and turn right. See map on next page.

The Thumb of Michigan was one of the last areas settled in the Lower Peninsula and remained a wilderness until after the Civil War. This is where Michigan's last native Elk was killed. However, with monumental forest fires helping to clear the way, the Thumb's native habitats were destroyed and transformed to vast areas of productive farmland and, all too frequently, wildlife wastelands. The Minden City State Game Area is a hint of what the Thumb looked like in pre-settlement days, with its more than 3,000 acres of bog and scrubby forest, although it is little explored by birders since access is very limited. The flora and fauna of the area has a distinctly northern flavor. In February 2004, a Wolverine was found nearby. The species was extirpated from the state more than 100 years ago, and the origin of the 2004 animal remains unknown. The **Minden Bog** is a vast, saturated plain of sphagnum moss and



rare plants, a splendid natural spectacle that still looks much as it did when the Thumb region was settled. Peat moss has been mined in the Minden Bog since the 1950s to supply America's gardens. There have been recent attempts to mine larger and larger areas of this bog, in spite of protests by environmental groups.

The bog is home to an isolated colony of Lincoln's Sparrows, typically more common about 100 miles farther north. Other breeding birds in the bog include Northern Harrier, Alder Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Purple Finch. Brewer's Blackbird is occasionally found in surrounding sod farms and farm fields in the breeding season. White-throated Sparrow has likewise been found here in the breeding season. In the bordering swampy woodlands, there are breeding Mourning Warblers. The surrounding farmland is excellent for open-country birds, including Wild Turkey, Upland Sandpiper, Cliff Swallow, Sedge Wren, and Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows.

Other areas that are worth checking in this area include **Mills Road** between Banner and Reinelt Roads, good for open-country birds, and **Beck's Sod Farm** at the west end of Ridley Road (1 mile north of Palms Road), a good spot for seeing Brewer's Blackbird from the road.

Along the way to Minden City SGA, you may want to make a brief stop to look for Sedge Wren, possible Henslow's Sparrow, Dickcissel (some years), Orchard Oriole, and other species. From M-25 in Port Sanilac, go north for 6.3 miles from M-46 to **Downington Road**, just north of the town of Forrester. Go left (west) onto Downington Road for about 2 miles to State Road. Turn left (south) and go about 0.25 mile to an area of fields where Grasshopper Sparrow is occasionally found, and rarely Henslow's Sparrow. Downington Road between State Road and Maple Road, a distance of about 3 miles, should also be checked for Sedge Wren, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, and Orchard Oriole. In summer 2002, a Clay-colored Sparrow was found along here.

SE-77 Harbor Beach Area

By Karl Overman and Allen T. Chartier

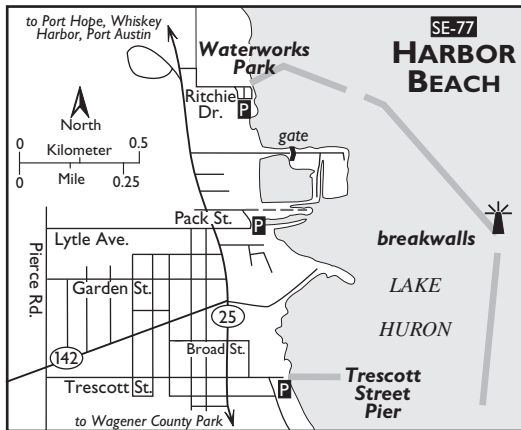
Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 63, B5. 43°46' N, 82°37' W

Contact Information: 517-269-6404, www.huroncountyparks.com/wagener.htm

Directions: Go north on M-25 for 7.7 miles north of Bay City-Forestville Road in Forestville to the entrance to Wagener County Park on the right, about 0.7 mile north of Purdy Road and 0.3 mile south of Helena Road.

There is precious little woodland remaining along Michigan's Lake Huron shoreline, but **Wagener County Park** on the east side of the Thumb is a delightful exception. The park is open from May 1 to October 15, with no entry fee unless one is staying at the attractive cabins or in the extensive campground. The park has an excellent trail system that goes through a wet, northern,

mixed evergreen and hardwood woodland, which is remarkably rich in breeding birds with a northern affinity. Warblers are especially well represented, with Chestnut-sided, Black-and-white, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning and Canada as the common breeders, and Black-throated Green and Blackburnian rare in summer. Other breeding birds include Ruffed Grouse, Northern Waterthrush, Veery, Least Flycatcher, Winter Wren, and Brown Creeper. Even in summer it is worth scanning Lake Huron for Red-breasted Merganser and Common Loon, and during fall migrant water-



fowl should be visible from shore. The park has been little birded in migration, but given its lakeside venue, it should be a productive spot.

From fall through spring, the power plant and breakwalls surrounding the harbor at **Harbor Beach** provide refuge for waterfowl and, when water levels are low, shorebirds. The best access point is at **Waterworks Park**. From the intersection of M-25 and M-142 in Harbor Beach, go 0.8 mile north on M-25 to Ritchie Drive. Turn right onto Ritchie Drive for about 0.25 mile to the parking area at the base of the breakwall. It is a quarter-mile walk out to the end of the breakwall, where migrating ducks, scoters, loons, and grebes are often visible. In late November this is a good spot to check for Purple Sandpiper; in winter, scope the breakwall from the parking area for Snowy Owl. The sheltered harbor to the south of the breakwall often has many migrant and wintering ducks, geese, and swans. Another access to this sheltered area is at the east end of **Pack Street**, about 0.5 mile south of Ritchie Drive. A third access point is at the east end of Trescott Street, about 0.25 mile south of M-142 on M-25. Go left (east) for 0.25 mile to the parking area at the end of the road at the foot of the **Trescott Street Pier**. Migrant waterfowl congregate here, and in winter a few Tundra Swans linger in the warm water created by the power plant. Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls have been noted in winter as well.

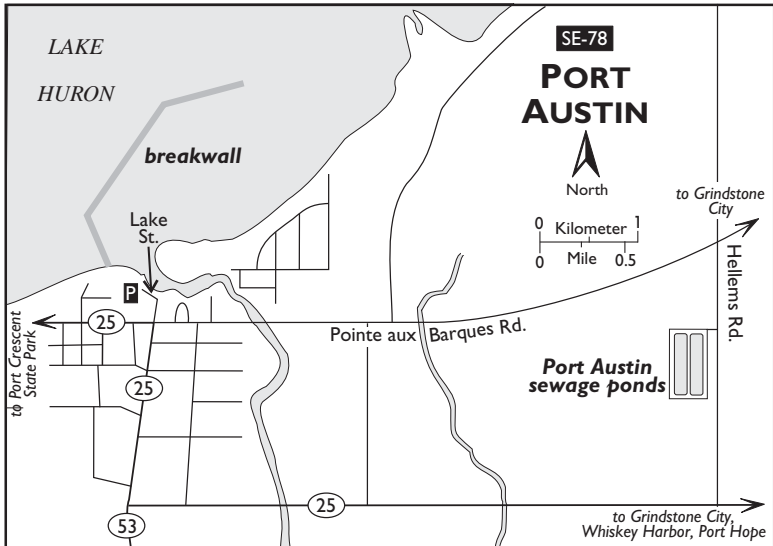
SE-78 Port Austin Area

By Allen T. Chartier and Monica Essenmacher

Spring** Summer - Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 63, A6. 44°03' N, 83°00' W

Port Austin is at the tip of the Thumb, about 25 miles past Harbor Beach along M-25, and about 65 miles from Bay City. There are several small county parks and pullouts along M-25 on the way north from Harbor Beach that provide access to the Lake Huron shore, including **Stafford County Park** in Port Hope. **Whiskey Harbor** also has good views of Lake Huron, as well as habitat for migrant passerines in spring and fall. In the center of **Port Austin**, there is a breakwall with habitat for potential Purple Sandpiper (November) and migrant waterfowl, including scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, loons, and grebes, in spring and fall. King Eider has also been reported here. This breakwall is reached by taking M-25 west to the junction with M-53. Turn right (north) and where M-25 turns sharply west (left), continue straight ahead on Lake Street to a parking area about one block ahead at a public access site (\$4.00 fee during boating season). Shorebirds can occasionally be found from May through October at the **Port Austin sewage ponds**. From the north end of the northbound portion of M-25 in town, turn right where M-25 turns left. This road soon becomes Pointe Aux Barques Road. Go east for 1.25 miles to Hellem's Road. Turn right (south) and go about 0.3 mile to the entrance on the right. These ponds may be entered with permission on



weekdays, but may be viewed only from outside on the weekends. Farther east, **Grindstone City** provides additional access to Lake Huron.

SE-79 Port Crescent State Park

By Monica Essenmacher

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 62, A1. 43°59' N, 83°03' W

Contact Information: 517-738-4029; www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 1996 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 3: 61-66.

Directions: From the intersection of M-25 and M-53 in Port Austin, go 6.9 miles south on M-25 to the entrance to the day-use area at Port Crescent State Park on the right. Along the way, Jenks County Park provides a stopping point from which to scan Lake Huron. See map on next page.

Located southwest of Port Austin, **Port Crescent State Park** is one of the most interesting and attractive birding spots in the southern Saginaw Bay area. The day-use area of Port Crescent State Park includes a variety of habitats; lakeshore, dunes, grasslands, open Jack Pine forest, and oak-dominant old dunes all provide possibilities for observing an assortment of birds (200-plus species recorded).

For the birder who has never ventured into the Thumb, perhaps the first visit to Port Crescent would be to witness the spring raptor migration, the best time being the last two weeks of April and the first week in May. With a scant average of 200 volunteer observer-hours a season, over 5,000 raptors

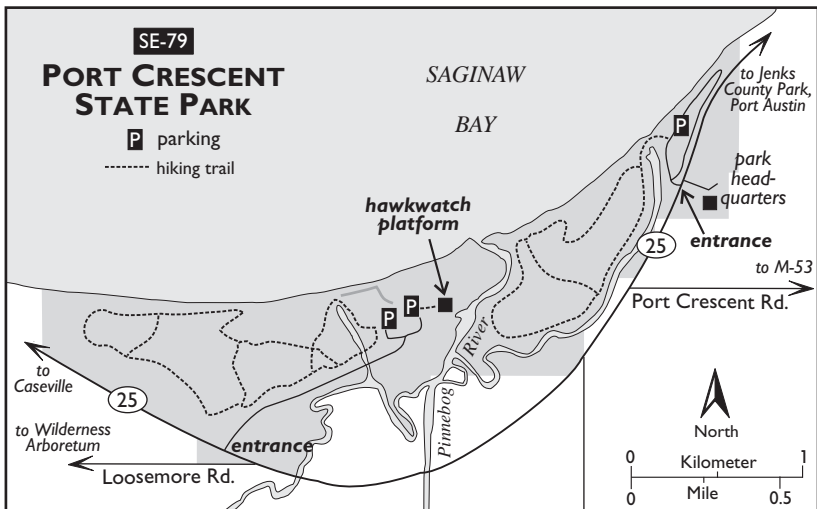
(more than 10,000 in 1994) are tallied from March through May. Huron Audubon Club sponsors a Hawk Fest at the park on the last Saturday in April, featuring bird-banding demonstrations, a program, and a potluck lunch.

Impressive numbers of Cooper's, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed Hawks are seen annually. Broad-winged Hawk numbers are more inclined to be affected by dominant weather patterns during the big push. On April 26, 1994, 4,108 Broad-wings were counted, yet the following year the entire seasonal total barely surpassed the 5,000 mark. In comparison to Whitefish Point tallies, modest numbers of both eagles, Rough-leggeds, and the three falcons are noted. Northern Goshawk and Peregrine Falcon are the least common raptors here. Ferruginous Hawk is the only rarity to have made an appearance, but many birders anticipate that Black Vulture, Swainson's Hawk, and Mississippi Kite will someday be added to the park list.

When hawkwatching is slow, there is still the possibility of observing other spring migrants. Waterfowl, Sandhill Cranes, loons, gulls (Glaucous and Great Black-backed regular through early May), and assorted passerines also make regular appearances at Port Crescent.

Eurasian Wigeon, Snowy Egret, American White Pelican, Prairie Warbler, and Henslow's Sparrow have recently been added to the park list. An impressive 1,342 Cedar Waxwings passed overhead in four hours on May 29, 1994. Shorebirding is limited except in high-water years when cattail die-off in the Pinnebog River creates attractive mud flats. It is likely that migrating owls take a route which includes the park; this is definitely an area to investigate if one is an owl aficionado.

Summer at Port Crescent affords ample opportunity for observing breeding birds and lingering migrants. A few of the more interesting breeders include Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Pine, Mourning, and



**Hawk Migration at Port Crescent State Park
(1991-1995 data for regularly occurring species)**

Species	Migration Period	Annual Totals (minimum-maximum)	Peak Daily Count (minimum-maximum)	Peak Period
Turkey Vulture	18 Mar-6 Jun	921-1,825	114-439	15-30 Apr
Osprey	7 Apr-27 May	21-103	6-23	15-30 Apr
Bald Eagle	12 Mar-29 May	6-24	1-4	21 Apr-15 May
Northern Harrier	12 Mar-29 May	45-137	8-36	15 Apr-7 May
Sharp-shinned Hawk	12 Mar-6 Jun	720-1,379	178-337	21 Apr-7 May
Cooper's Hawk	11 Mar-30 May	29-324	9-50	15-30 Apr
Northern Goshawk	4 Mar-25 May	2-18	1-5	21 Apr-7 May
Red-shouldered Hawk	11 Mar-30 May	62-213	12-49	21 Mar-30 Apr
Broad-winged Hawk	6 Apr-6 Jun	1,151-5,575	277-4,108	15 Apr-15 May
Red-tailed Hawk	7 Mar-6 Jun	380-1,082	63-310	15-30 Apr
Rough-legged Hawk	28 Feb-28 May	26-61	7-20	7-15 Mar & 15-30 Apr
Golden Eagle	13 Mar-9 May	5-11	2-5	15 Apr-7 May
American Kestrel	11 Mar-30 May	53-126	11-35	7-30 Apr
Merlin	11 Mar-29 May	4-25	1-4	21-30 Apr
Peregrine Falcon	21 Mar-30 May	0-12	1-4	21 Apr- 1 May

Yellow-rumped Warblers. Brown Thrasher, Eastern Bluebird, and Field Sparrow are plentiful in the grasslands, while Eastern Wood-Pewee, Ovenbird, and Scarlet Tanager abound in the oak woods. Unusual summer sightings include late (or summering) Short-eared Owl, Swainson's Thrush (at least four sightings), Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers, and territorial Northern Parula. In addition, Blue-headed Vireo has been observed in areas just outside the park.

In August and throughout the fall, migrants renew the excitement of Port Crescent birding. Warbler numbers can be very good, and have included regular appearances by Orange-crowned Warbler and one fall Prairie Warbler. Vireos and thrushes also make strong showings. Large concentrations of sparrows pass through the park, the rarest being eight Clay-colored Sparrows in September 1991. Good numbers of marsh ducks are found in the park, but those looking for waterbird thrills are directed to head to Grindstone City (a few miles southeast of Port Austin) to look for loons, grebes, scoters, and the like.

Although Port Crescent birding is productive throughout most of the year, winter is a hit-or-miss situation. Bare oaks, frozen water, and wind-whipped dunes greet those hardy birders who visit the park. Rough-legged

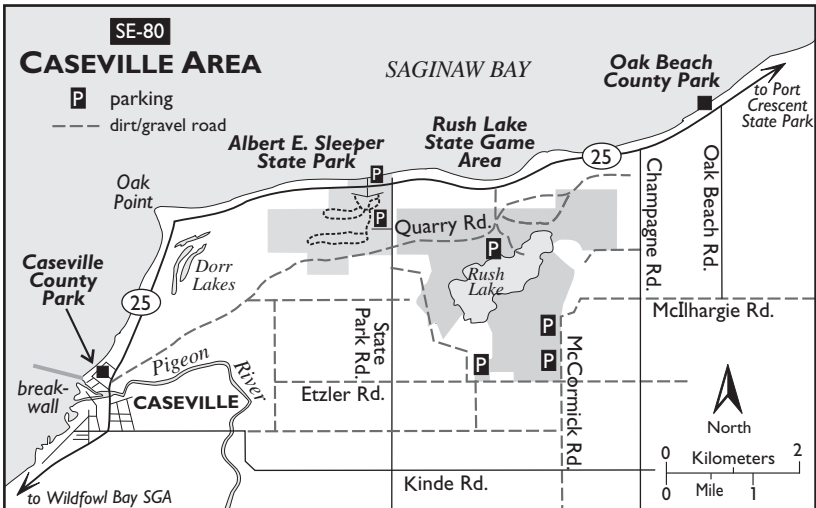
Hawk and Northern Shrike may be observed and, with a healthy heaping of luck, winter finches might show up. Feeders at the headquarters are the best bet. In spite of the dearth of winter birds at the park, Huron County attracts a some enticing annual winter visitors. Snowy and Short-eared Owls, Northern Shrike, and Bohemian Waxwing are seen yearly. Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks are usually somewhere to be found, as are both kinglets, Common Redpolls, and Pine Siskins; Hoary Redpoll has been seen twice in the last three years. One of the best spots for these winter species is the nearby Wilderness Arboretum. **Wilderness Arboretum** is along Loosemore Road, which is reached from M-25 about 50 yards east of Port Crescent State Park's day-use entrance. An open area between 1.5 and 2.0 miles along this road typically has an excellent berry crop, which attracts waxwings of both species and which is a good spot to find Bohemians. The trails through the 120-acre arboretum property also provide habitat for common resident species and uncommon winter finches.

SE-80 Caseville Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 62, A1. 43°58' N, 83°10' W

East of Port Crescent State Park is the town of Caseville, with several sites worth brief visits. **Oak Beach County Park**, primarily a camping park with a beach, is located about 8 miles east of Caseville. The attraction for birders here is access to Lake Huron to check for waterbirds. Continue west along M-25 to **Albert E. Sleeper State Park**. There are entrances both north and south of M-25, about 0.1 mile past State Park Road (6.7 miles from Port Crescent State Park). To the north is a beach area which not only has



views of Lake Huron, but is also a good place to study the specialized and threatened plant life of the dunes. To the south is a campground with trails at the southeast corner which lead into the nearby woodlands. Given the amount of human activity in the area, only May and September are likely to be productive for passerine migrants in this area. A little farther east, another 1.3 miles along M-25, turn right (south) onto Quarry Road to **Rush Lake State Game Area**. The lake contains large stands of cattails, and both American Bittern and Sandhill Crane have been reported here. Other vantage points are along the east and south side of the lake, though direct access to the lake proper is not possible due to the surrounding shrubby wetland. Go east for 1.8 miles to Champagne Road and south about 2 miles to McIlhargie Road. Turn right (east) to several pullouts along the lake that may be productive. Continue west along M-25, about 5 miles from Sleeper State Park, to **Caseville County Park** in the town of Caseville. This park provides viewing access to Lake Huron and the breakwall in Caseville, also worth checking for gulls and terns year round, and for Purple Sandpiper and Snowy Owl in November and December.

SE-81 Bay Port Area

By Allen T. Chartier

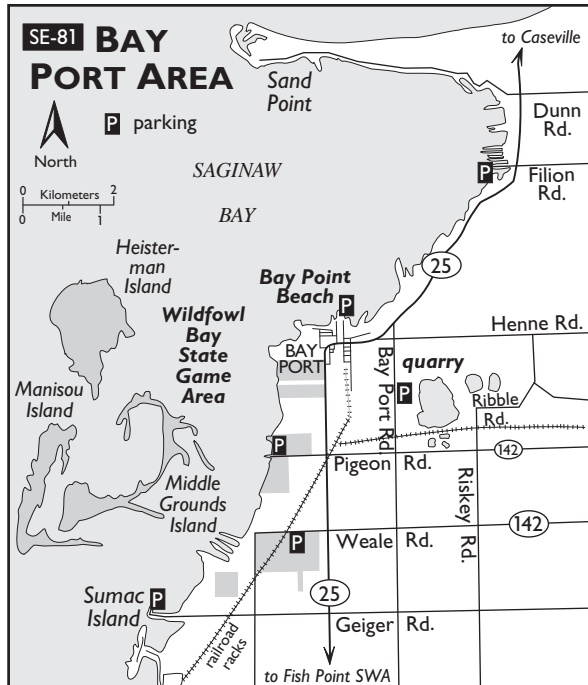
Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 61, B6.

43°58' N, 83°10'

W

Wildfowl Bay State Game Area lies on the east side of Saginaw Bay. Most of the refuge consists of islands in the bay accessible only by boat, and is generally visited only by duck hunters. The northern boundary of the bay is Sand Point, which juts westward into Saginaw Bay, although this inviting landform is largely private property with no significant public access. The next available view of



the bay is at the west end of Filion Road, about 4.5 miles south of Caseville. Turn right (west) onto **Filion Road** for about 0.25 mile to the bay. Diving ducks, scoters, and Long-tailed Ducks can be seen here in early spring and late fall. In March and November, good numbers of Tundra Swans may use the bay for staging. When water levels are low, numerous gulls and shorebirds may be seen, and Snowy Egret and Little Gull are among the rarities that have turned up here. In early spring (March or April), this has been a reliable spot for an occasional late lingering Glaucous Gull. Continue south toward Bay Port and just before entering town, about 3.5 miles from Filion Road, turn left onto Bay Port Road. On the left, after crossing Henne Road, check the ponds in the **Bay Port Quarry** on the left (east) side of the road for migrant waterbirds. Return north to M-25 and turn left. Just before the road turns sharply left (south), turn right onto Promenade and drive about 0.3 mile north to the parking area at its end at **Bay Point Beach**, another good view of the bay. Continue south of Bay Port for about 3 miles to Geiger Road. Note that both Pigeon and Weale Roads, which you pass on the way, also have access points to the bay (to the west or right) which may reward exploration. Turn right and go about 2.25 miles to a parking area at the end of the road at the **Sumac Island Access**. When the winds are strong from the south, mud flats can be exposed, attracting gulls, terns, and shorebirds in migration. Both Black Tern and Yellow-headed Blackbird and nest near here and are possible anywhere in the area, especially the terns.

SE-82 Fish Point State Wildlife Area

By Allen T. Chartier and Ron Weeks

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 61, C5. 43°42' N, 83°31' W
 Contact Information: 989-674-2511

Directions: From M-25, take Ringle Road north, which is about 9.5 miles from Sebawaing and about 23 miles east of I-75 (Exit 162A).

The primary birding attraction of the Fish Point area is migrant waterfowl, particularly the spectacle of thousands of Tundra Swans and Canada Geese resting and feeding in the flooded fields. There are also a few isolated pockets of woodland that are good migrant traps for passerines in spring and fall. Migrant raptors occasionally soar overhead in spring. Breeding birds include mainly wetland species, with American and Least Bitterns and Yellow-headed Blackbird among the more interesting. Winter can be very bleak and birdless here, with only an occasional Red-tailed Hawk or a Northern Harrier working the open fields, but in irruption years, this is a good spot for Northern Shrike and sometimes Snowy Owl as well. In addition, Horned Larks and Snow Buntings, and occasional Lapland Longspurs, can be found in the surrounding fields. Rarities that have turned up in the Fish Point area include Greater White-fronted Goose (almost annual), Ross's Goose (once),

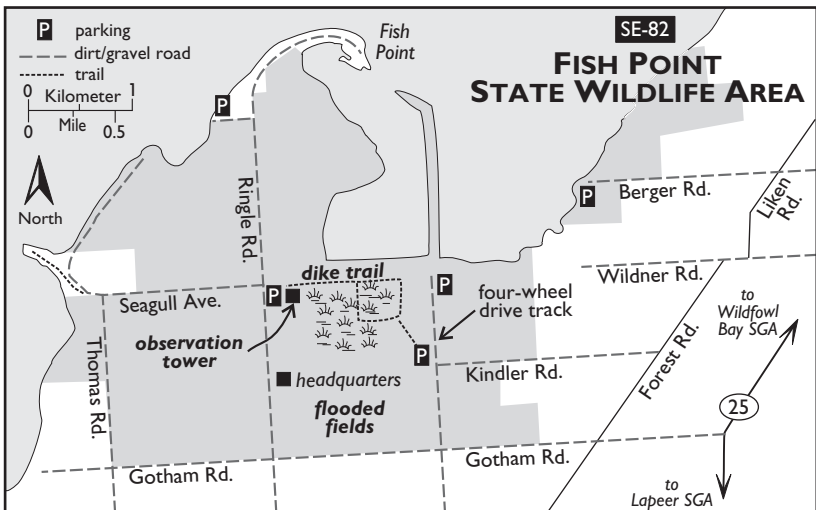
Brant (once), Cattle Egret, Little Blue Heron, American White Pelican, and Ruff.

Observing the Tundra Swans, Canada Geese, and other waterfowl is most easily done from any of the many roads in the area. Driving the roads is also a good way to look for rarities, including Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese, Brant (casual), and Ross's Goose (casual).

From M-25, go north on Ringle Road for 3.5 miles to the intersection with Seagull Avenue, where an observation tower provides an excellent view in all directions of the flooded fields to the south and west, and the marsh to the north. A dike leads east from the tower for close views of some of the nesting marsh species, including Pied-billed Grebe, Willow Flycatcher, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. In addition, spring and fall can bring thousands of dabbling ducks to the marshes and flooded fields.

About 1 mile north of the tower is a parking area on the left, adjacent to a grassy two-track. Walking this half-mile road is best in spring migration when it functions as an excellent passerine migrant trap. There are views of Saginaw Bay at the end of this road and, if water levels are low enough, it is one of the few spots in the Fish Point area where shorebirds can be seen in any numbers. The end of the point along Seagull Avenue also has views of the bay. The tip of the point is privately owned, but a check of the feeders and the lake from this vantage point is possible. Often, rafts of waterfowl, a Bald Eagle, or a Snowy Owl (irruption years) are within view.

Another area for viewing Saginaw Bay is at the east end of Fish Point along Berger Road. To get there from Ringle Road and Gotham Road, go east for about 2 miles to Forest Road. Turn left and go about 1.25 miles to Wildner Road and turn right. Turn left again almost immediately onto Liken Road and



go about 0.75 mile to Berger Road. Turn left and go to the parking area at the end of the road (about a mile) and a view of the bay.

SE-83 Lapeer State Game Area

By Jeff Buecking

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 51, C7. 43°08' N, 83°18' W

Contact Information: Lapeer SGA 810-664-8355; Kresge Environmental Education Center, 810-667-2350, www.emich.edu/public/fishlake/fishwebb.htm

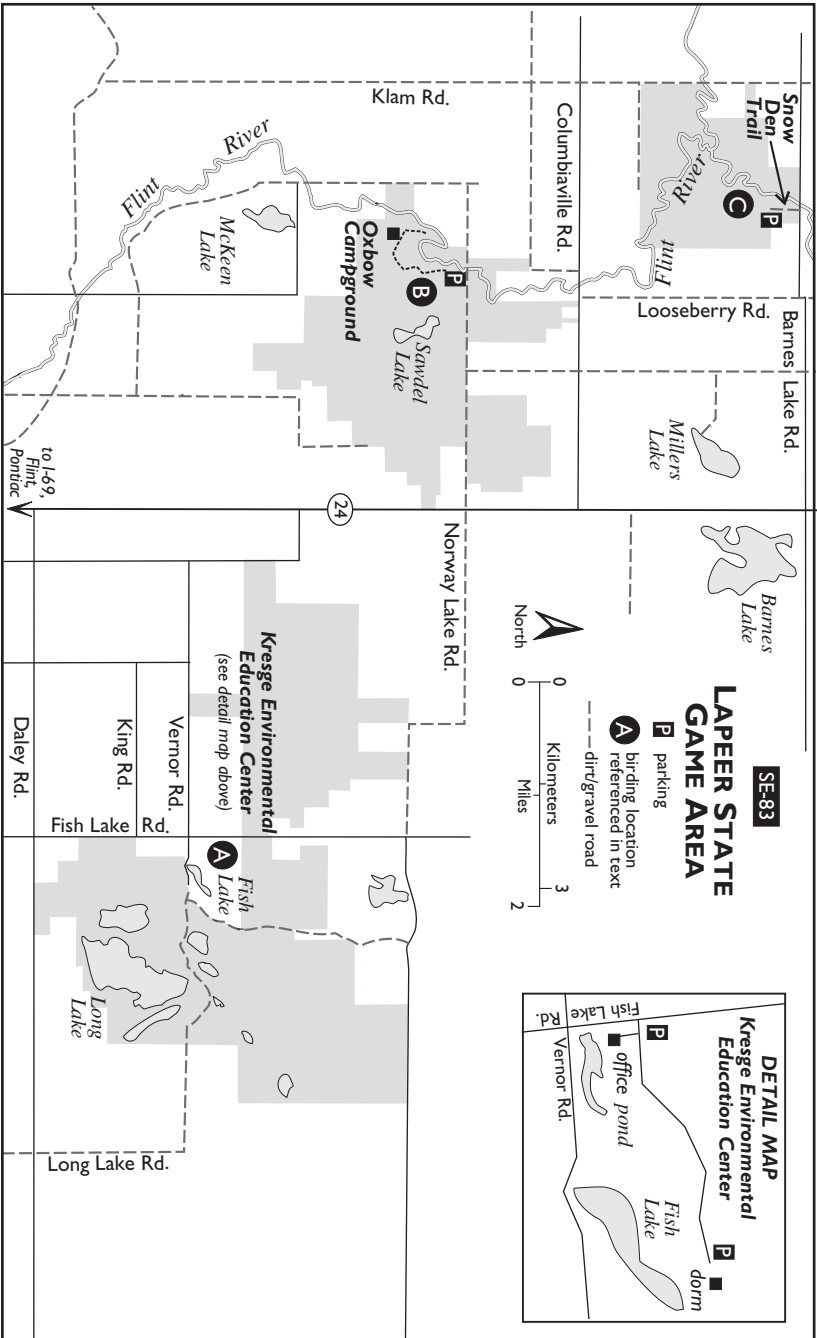
Directions: From the intersection of M-24 and I-69, drive north on M-24 for 4.7 miles to Daley Road. Turn right onto Daley and go east for 3.0 miles to Fish Lake Road. Turn left onto Fish Lake and go north for 1.6 miles to the sign for Kresge Environmental Education Center on the right.

Lapeer County had a primarily agricultural economy until relatively recently, and as late as World War II it had more dairy cows per square mile than any county in Michigan. Its population grew by over a third in the 1970s with the arrival of new residents commuting to jobs in Pontiac and Flint. While agriculture is still important to the county, farms and open country are giving way to housing developments and other forms of suburban sprawl. Lapeer State Game Area offers fine birding within this increasingly congested area.

The **Kresge Environmental Education Center (A** on map) of Eastern Michigan University is an excellent location for seeing a variety of breeding species. The center is open to the public, but birders should stop at the office to check in for birding and to get a trail map. The best place to park is at the end of the drive at the turnaround. From here, the main trail begins behind the left side of the dormitory building (straight ahead from the turnaround).

Along Fish Lake, keep an eye open for Wood Duck and Green Heron. Permanent residents such as Barred Owl, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and White-breasted Nuthatch may be seen along the several miles of trails. Summer residents include Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Listen for Mourning Warbler in the area around the dining hall near the turnaround. Hooded Warbler was found in the mid-1980s during the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas, and one was heard in late June 2002 on the north side of the Beaver Lodge (at the north end of the center). Veery is numerous on the trail leading to the "Chip Pile". For those interested in wildflowers, numerous Grass Pink and a few Rose Pagonia orchids can be found on the site of this old sawmill in late June and early July. *These are protected species in Michigan; please do not disturb them.*

Another worthwhile site for breeding species is the section at **Norway Lake Road (B** on map). To reach it, drive north on M-24 from I-69 for 9

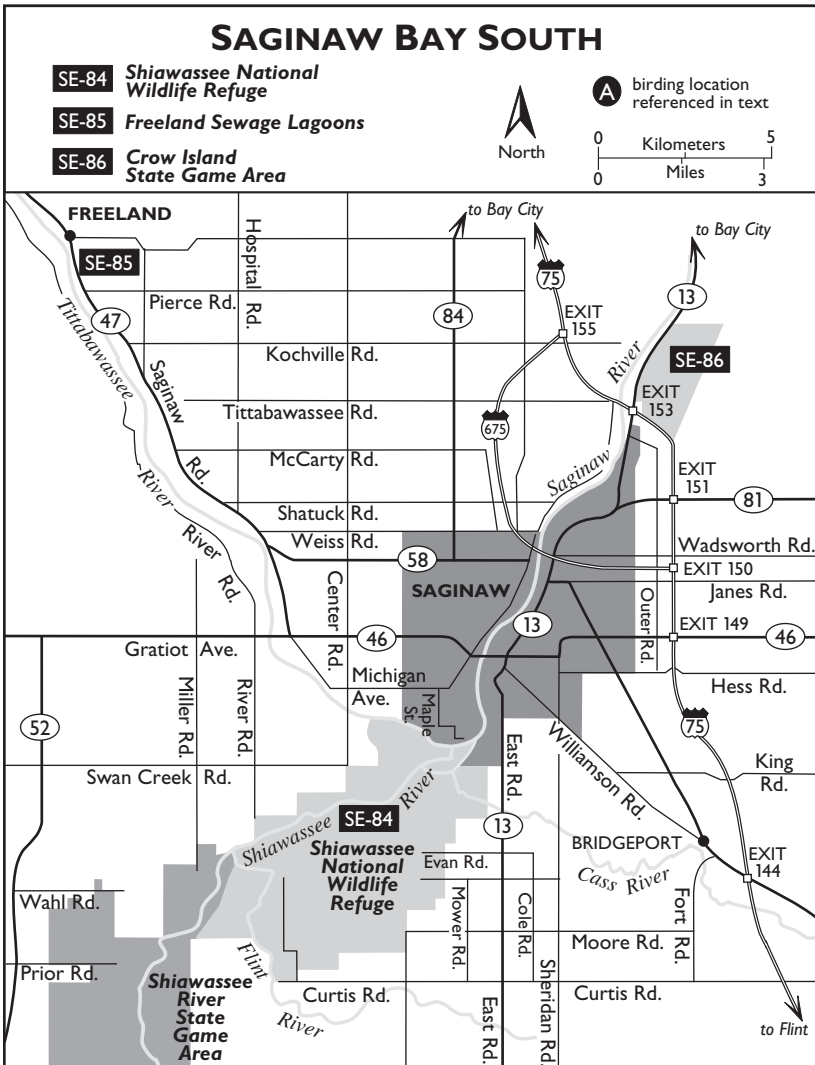


miles to Norway Lake Road. Turn left and proceed west for 2 miles to the parking lot on the left, across the road from 3066 Norway Lake Road. (If coming from the previous stop at Kresge Environmental Education Center, go north from the center on Fish Lake Road to Norway Lake Road and turn left. Follow Norway Lake Road for about 4.5 miles to the parking lot.) The trail begins behind a heavy steel gate and gets most of its use from horseback riders. It begins as a two-track which eventually narrows into a single trail through the deciduous forest for about 2 miles to the Oxbow Campground on the banks of the Flint River. There are ten rustic campsites here (permit required, 810-667-0304). About a quarter-mile from the parking lot, the trail passes an open area on the right (west) with thick second-growth poplar trees. This has been a fairly dependable area as recently as June 2002 for Golden-winged Warblers, as well as for the more numerous Blue-wings. In addition, species reaching the northern edge of their range in the state, such as Acadian Flycatcher and Cerulean Warbler, can be found farther down the trail. Other species found here in breeding season have included Chestnut-sided Warbler and, once, Black-throated Blue Warbler, whose normal range is farther north. The **Barnes Lake Road (C on map)** section of Lapeer is also worth checking. Drive approximately 15 miles north on M-24 from I-69 and turn left onto Barnes Lake Road for 2.0 miles to Loosebury Road. (From the Norway Lake Road trail, return to M-24 for 2.5 miles north to Barnes Lake Road.) At the jog, take an immediate right and continue west on Barnes Lake Road for 0.8 mile to Snow Den Trail, turn left, and park at the turnaround at the end.

This section of the game area has an open field with five long and widely spaced rows of small, fruit-bearing trees. During the winter, fruit-eating species such as Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, and Eastern Bluebird can be numerous here. Carefully check flocks of Cedar Waxwings for Bohemian Waxwing, which was found at least twice during the 1990s. During the winter of 1994, a group of Pine Grosbeaks spent several months in the area. This spot can also be good for raptors, with occasional sightings of Northern Goshawk along with the more regular Cooper's, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed, and Rough-legged Hawks. During the summer, Brown Thrasher, Nashville Warbler, and Field Sparrow are present. Vesper Sparrow is especially numerous, and this is also a dependable location for Grasshopper Sparrow.

SAGINAW BAY SOUTH

Saginaw Bay encompasses a large area at the “crotch of the Thumb”, and is well served by a previously published summary of birds and birding sites (*Birds and Bird Finding in the Saginaw Bay Area* by Ron J. Weeks, 1995). The two sites covered here are south of Saginaw Bay proper. The remaining sites on Saginaw Bay are covered in the next chapter, the Northeastern Lower Peninsula.



SE-84 Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

By Jerry Ziarno

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 50, B1. 43°20' N, 84°00' W

Contact Information: Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, 6965 Mower Road, Saginaw, MI 48601; 989-777-5930; email: shiawassee@fws.gov; website: www.fws.gov/midwest/shiawassee
Shiawassee River State Game Area, St. Charles Field Office, 225 East Spruce, St. Charles, MI 48655; 989-865-6211

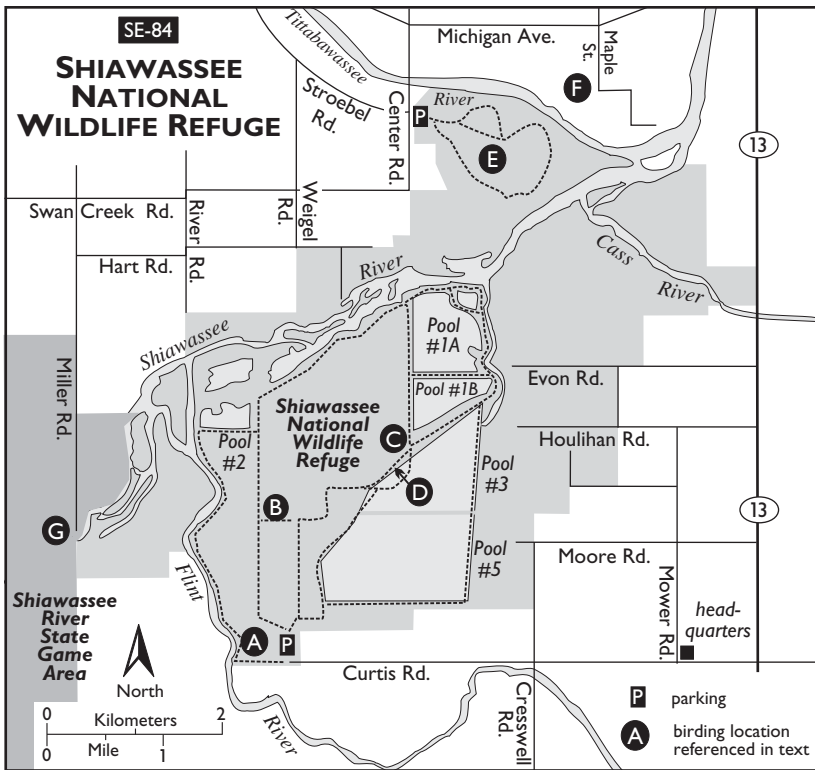
Directions: From the south, take I-75 to Exit 144B at Bridgeport; from the north, take Exit 144A. Go northwest on Dixie Highway (Genessee Street) for 0.8 mile to Fort Road. Turn left (south) onto Fort, cross the Cass River, and proceed for 2.5 miles to where Fort Road ends at Curtis Road. Turn right (west) onto Curtis for 3.5 miles to M-13 (East Road). Continue across M-13 for another 0.7 mile to the refuge headquarters, where information is available. (The refuge can also be reached from the city of Saginaw by following M-13 south to Curtis Road.)

The Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR) consists of more than 9,000 acres of river wetlands, grasslands, bottomland-hardwood forest, and cropland. Four rivers, the Tittabawassee, Flint, Cass, and Shiawassee, converge within the boundaries of the refuge, forming wetlands that provide a resting place and source of food for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Over 260 species of birds have been observed in the refuge. During migration, SNWR harbors enormous concentrations of Canada Geese, Tundra Swans, ducks, and shorebirds, and Ross's Goose is occasionally present. Other interesting species recorded include American White Pelican, Snowy and Cattle Egrets, White Ibis, American Avocet, Willet, Whimbrel, Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Single sightings of King Rail and Black-necked Stilt top the rarities list. Several Short-eared Owls can be found coursing over the marsh areas in migration in most years.

The refuge also provides habitat for a long list of nesting species, and is one of the more northerly nesting areas for Prothonotary Warbler. Other breeding species include Hooded Merganser, American and Least Bitterns, Bald Eagle, Virginia Rail, Black Tern, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-Owl, Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpeckers, Yellow-throated Vireo, Marsh Wren, Wood Thrush, Field, Vesper, Savannah and Swamp Sparrows, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Baltimore Oriole.

Portions of the refuge are open for goose and deer hunting, usually from September 1 until November 30, when access may be limited, but the hiking trails are safe and open. The refuge does not permit auto access. To visit the farther reaches of the refuge for better views of the foraging birds, call the refuge for dates when group tours are scheduled.

From the headquarters, continue another 3.2 miles west on Curtis to Bishop Road, where the parking area for the **Trails and Observation**



Tower (A on map) is located. From the tower, scan the grassy fields and cropland in spring and fall for American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Killdeer, Gearer and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Wilson's Snipe. In fall and winter, Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Lapland Longspur use the crop fields along the road into the parking area.

Next, take the nature trail from the parking lot north for about 0.5 mile to another trail that goes west to a blind (**B** on map). From the blind, you can look over cropland which can have thousands of feeding waterfowl and shorebirds during migration. The trail out to the blind is bordered by trees which can hold numbers of migrating flycatchers, warblers, thrushes, and sparrows. In March, Rough-legged Hawk may be seen hunting over these fields, and Bald Eagle and Red-tailed Hawk may be perched in the nearby trees.

Return east and follow the nature trail to the Observation Tower (**C** on map). The flooded woods along the trail provide habitat for Wood Duck, Mallard, and Blue-winged Teal. The tower overlooks a large permanent pool which, during early spring and late autumn, provides a resting and feeding spot for Canvasback, Redhead, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Horned and Pied-billed Grebes. In ad-

dition, Bonaparte's, Ring-billed, and Herring Gulls are usually present. Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Common Moorhen can be seen in this pool and along the river. Cattle Egret (rare) has been observed here.

From the tower, walk the trail south that goes through the flooded timber. Prothonotary Warblers nest along this trail (**D** on map) a few hundred yards south of the tower. Hermit and Wood Thrushes are often heard singing, and Eastern Screech-Owl can be present. Wood Ducks nest in this flooded timber, and Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Blue-winged Teal, and American Coot are readily seen from late March until mid-May. On the walk back to the parking lot, check the ditches and brushy shrubs for Savannah and Song Sparrows. In fall, Harris's Sparrow has been seen in this area.

The **Woodland Trail System** (**E** on map) in the northern part of the refuge between the Tittabawassee and Shiawassee Rivers traverses 4.5 miles of bottomland hardwoods. From M-46 (Gratiot Avenue), go south on Center Road to the parking area for these trails, just south of the point where Center Road crosses the Tittabawassee River.

The **Green Point Environmental Learning Center** (**F** on map), located north of the main refuge, is now part of the SNWR. This 76-acre natural area on the north bank of the Tittabawassee River has 2.5 miles of trails through the floodplain. Most of the birds seen here are the same as those previously listed for the main refuge area, and flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, and warblers can be especially abundant during migration in late April through mid-May. Green Point, within the city limits of Saginaw, can be reached from M-46 (Gratiot Avenue) by going south on Center Road, then east on Michigan Avenue, and south on Maple Street to the Center.

The **Shiawassee River State Game Area** (**G** on map) adjoins SNWR to the west, and provides another large wetland area for use by waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds. There are no roads into the inner areas of the state game area, but trails along the dikes provide foot access into the area. From Saginaw, go west on M-46 to M-52 south. Wahl, Prior, and Hulien Roads go from M-52 into the game area. You can also reach the game area by going east from M-52 on Swan Creek Road for approximately 3 miles to S. Miller Road, and then south to the parking area.

SE-85 Freeland Sewage Lagoons

By Ron Weeks

Spring** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme 60, D1. 43°31' N, 84°06' W

Directions: Go east from M-47 on Pierce Road just south of the town of Freeland, northwest of Saginaw. The ponds are directly across from a large state correctional facility, less than a mile east of M-47, on the left (north) side of the road. See map on page 193.

The **Freeland Sewage Lagoons** have produced several interesting records. Although the ponds are clearly posted *No Trespassing*, permission may be obtained to bird here during the week when staff are present. Birding during other times would be foolhardy; people walking on the dikes around the ponds are in clear view of prison personnel. A visit by the local police is sure to follow. Nonetheless, this collection of six small ponds is worth a visit. It is one of the better places in Saginaw County for waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls. In April, its wide variety of waterfowl includes good numbers of Northern Shovelers and Buffleheads. It is an excellent spot in summer for straggling ducks that never made it north to the breeding grounds. Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, and Ruddy Duck have been found here into mid-summer, and once a male Eurasian Wigeon in breeding plumage graced the ponds. Surf and White-winged Scoters were also recorded in April 2002. Shorebirding is best in September, when a wide variety of shorebirds may be found on the rocky edges of the ponds and along the grassy dikes. These have included American Golden-Plover, Stilt Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Red-necked Phalarope. Wilson's Phalarope is often found here in spring and even into summer. Rare birds found in past years have included Tundra Swan, Eared Grebe (twice), and Western Kingbird.

SE-86 Crow Island State Game Area

By Allen T. Chartier and Jerry Ziarno

Spring** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 50, A2. 43°29' N, 83°54' W
 Contact Information: 989-684-9141

Directions: From I-75 north of Saginaw, take M-13 north (Exit 153). The area can be viewed from the road here for the next 1.5 miles. See map on page 193.

Another site worth brief exploration, though with limited access, is the **Crow Island State Game Area**, straddling the Saginaw/Bay County line along the Saginaw River northeast of Saginaw. Good numbers of herons, egrets, waterfowl, and shorebirds can sometimes be found here, and in the 1980s when Mary Rabe was surveying King Rails in the state, this area was a stronghold for the now critically endangered species. There have been no recent confirmed reports. Yellow-headed Blackbirds occasionally use the area, and a rare Little Blue Heron has been noted. Migrant thrushes and warblers can sometimes be found in the nearby patches of woodland. There is a parking area on the right side of M-13 immediately north of I-75, with a gate that sometimes is closed. You are permitted to walk around the gate, if closed, and follow the dirt road that winds through portions of the game area. A second parking area is at 1.5 miles from I-75, where there is a short dike that can be walked to the east (closed during the hunting season).

NORTHEASTERN LOWER PENINSULA

This chapter covers that part of the Lower Peninsula lying north of a line from Bay City west to Mt. Pleasant and east of US-127/I-75, which travels through the middle of the Lower Peninsula to Mackinaw City. The region includes the Lake Huron shoreline from Bay City north to Mackinaw City, often referred to as the “sunrise side” of the state. The Lake Huron shoreline includes the shallow marshes of Saginaw Bay, the sandy beaches at Tawas and Oscoda, and the somewhat rocky shores of Alpena and Cheboygan. The noted Au Sable River and its tributaries wind through much of the area, and vast areas of Jack Pine forest provide essentially the only habitat locations in the world for nesting Kirtland’s Warblers. Tawas Point State Park is one of the premier migrant traps in the U.S., with many rarities recorded there.

This entire area was once heavily forested with immense stands of large White Pines but, by the early 1900s, lumbering operations had logged essentially all of the trees, the remaining scrub was burned, and large areas were converted to agricultural uses. Fortunately, the U.S. and state governments were able to purchase large tracts of this “useless” land and, during the Depression in the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps actively replanted many of the forests that are now evident. Hartwick Pines State Park, north of Grayling, is Michigan’s only remaining example of the original White Pine forests.

While a good part of the Northeastern Lower Peninsula is now residential areas or farmland, there are still large tracts of relative wilderness in the Huron part of the Huron-Manistee National Forest and in the Mackinaw, Pigeon River, and Au Sable State Forests. A number of state, county, and local parks provide access to good birding spots along the Lake Huron shoreline and to most of the inland lakes and streams.

The region’s diverse habitats support a rich birdlife, which changes dramatically with each season. The shallow marshes of Lake Huron, from

Saginaw Bay in the south, to Squaw Bay near Alpena, and to Grass Bay near Cheboygan in the north, provide resting and feeding spots for large numbers of migrating waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds in spring and fall. Receding water levels have exposed sandbars and mudflats attractive to migrating shorebirds. However, the current low water levels have caused some of these mudflats to become overgrown with vegetation. This has somewhat reduced their usefulness to shorebirds and has made viewing difficult. Lower lake water levels have also forced diving ducks farther out on the big lake, making close observation of these migrating birds more difficult at some formerly reliable vantage points.

Many migrating passerines tend to follow the shoreline, especially in spring, as they feed on the small midges that become active along the shoreline in early spring, before the larger insects become numerous away from the shore later in spring and summer. Numerous warbler species breed in this region, including Golden-winged, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Mourning Warblers.

In winter, during irruption years, typical far-northern breeders such as Rough-legged Hawk, Snowy Owl, Snow Bunting, Pine Grosbeak, and Common and Hoary Redpolls visit the region, particularly in the northern portions.

Motels, restaurants, and commercial facilities are readily available in most of the cities and larger towns and villages. Most roads are passable for the entire year, with the exception of some of the back roads in the national and state forests. Biting insects can be a problem in late spring and summer, so repellent is always recommended.

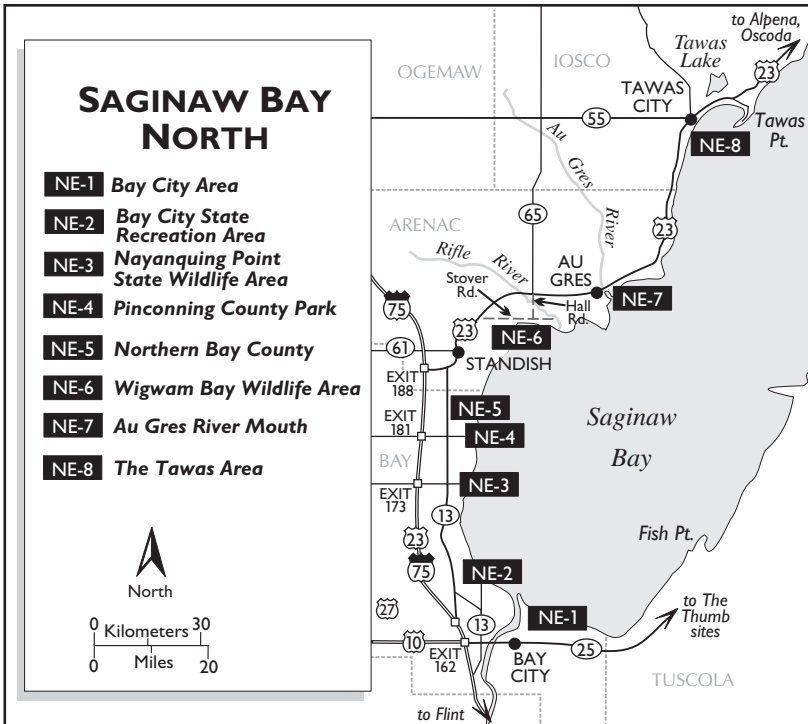
Because of the relatively large size of this region, the chapter covers it in three separate, somewhat linear segments: one along the Lake Huron shoreline, another through the middle of the region, and the third along the western edge.

THE LAKE HURON SHORELINE: SAGINAW BAY NORTH

By Jerry Ziarno

Before the Europeans arrived, the Saginaw Bay Area was known as the “Gathering Place” by the local Native Americans and was one of the focal points of trade and settlement in the Great Lakes Region. While the human population on the shores of Saginaw Bay has changed considerably, and residential areas and agriculture have replaced many of the coastal marshes, the Saginaw Bay region is still the “Gathering Place” for thousands of birds during annual migration periods.

Thousands of years ago, as the glaciers that covered most of the northern U.S. slowly retreated and formed the Great Lakes, a relatively shallow bay was left, fed by several rivers and streams that make up the Saginaw Bay Water-

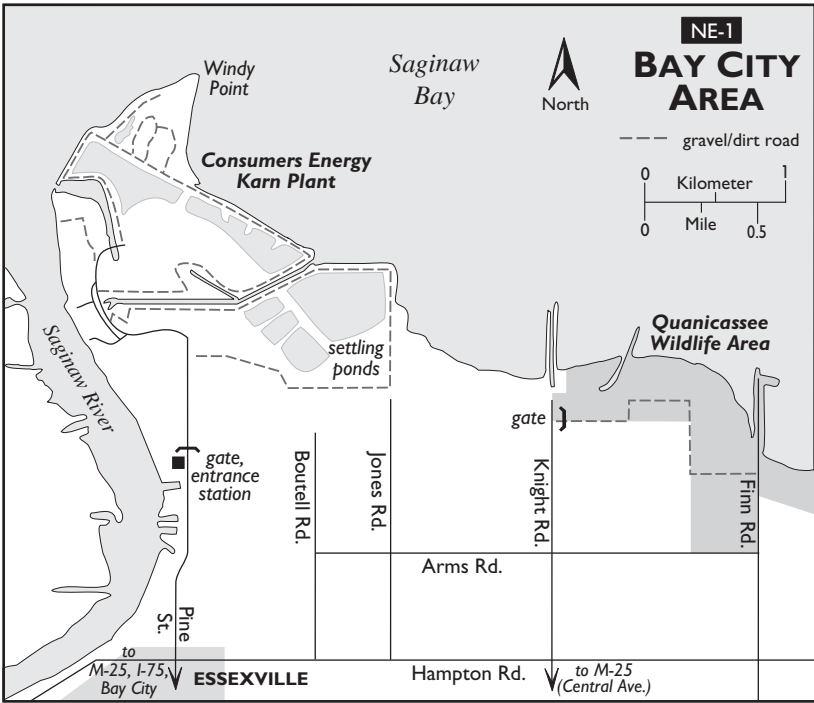


shed. Historical records show that there were nearly 37,000 acres of emergent marsh around Saginaw Bay prior to human settlement of the area. About 15,000 acres of these coastal areas still remain, comprising the largest freshwater coastal system in the United States. Fortunately, many of these wetlands are accessible to birders in the form of national wildlife refuges, state parks, state game areas, county parks, and public boat accesses. The shallowness of the bay has created miles of sandy beaches, large tracts of cattail marsh, small remnant pieces of native lakeplain prairie, and wooded areas comprised of both beech-maple and pine forests. This wide variety of habitats provides opportunities to view impressive numbers of many bird species, especially during spring and fall migrations.

NE-1 The Bay City Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 60, D2, 43°36' N, 83°53' W

Bay City, located at the mouth of the Saginaw River, was renowned as a boom town during the lumbering era and later was the site of a large ship-building facility which manufactured many naval ships during World War II. More recently, it was the childhood home of pop-music icon Madonna. The



starting point for this route is the Veterans Memorial Bridge in the city center, where M-25 (Business I-75) crosses the Saginaw River.

Karn Plant: As part of recent security measures, visitors are no longer allowed into the Karn/Weadock electrical generating power plants owned by Consumers Energy Company, located at the mouth of the Saginaw River. This location is well-known locally as a hotspot for waterfowl, herons, and shore-birds, particularly in late autumn and early spring, and many rarities have turned up over the years. Additional information on possible re-opening is available from the Consumers Energy office, 517-891-3480, or at www.saginawbaybirding.org.

Quanicassee Wildlife Area: To reach some other access points to Saginaw Bay, go east from Veterans Memorial Bridge in Bay City for 5.0 miles on M-25 (Central Avenue) and turn north onto **Knight Road**. Just before reaching the end of the road at 2.5 miles, there is small, dirt road to the east, blocked by a red gate, which leads into the wildlife area. Park and walk this road for 1.0 mile to the east as it makes several right-angle turns to reach Finn Road, which parallels Knight Road. You will pass through brushy areas, flooded woods, and open grassy areas where Bald Eagles have been regular nesters, as have Eastern Screech-Owls and Great Horned Owls. Black-crowned Night-Heron is common, and nesting Great Egrets are present from

spring into fall, sometimes in large numbers. This area also provides good nesting habitat for a number of passerines, and many neotropical migrants pass through, particularly in spring. Prothonotary Warblers nested here in 2002 and 2003. At the north end of **Finn Road**, 1.0 mile east of Knight Road, there is a walkway that extends out into Saginaw Bay and goes through brushy areas along the pathway that can be good for migrating passerines. From the end of the pathway, you can scope the edge of the bay for waterfowl and shorebirds, which may be present in good numbers in spring and fall, depending upon water levels.

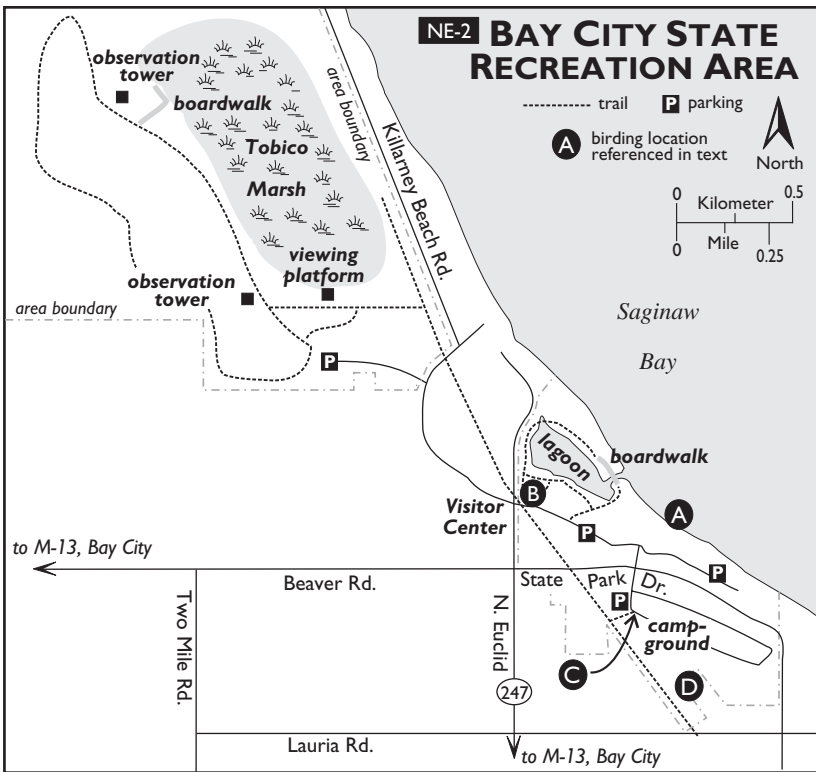
NE-2 Bay City State Recreation Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 60, C2, 43°40' N, 83°54' W
 Contact Information: 989-684-3020

Directions: To reach Bay City State Recreation Area (BCSRA) from the west side of the river in Bay City, proceed north on M-13 for 2.1 miles from its intersection with Business-75/M-25. Where M-13 veers to the northwest, go straight (north) on M-247 (N. Euclid Road) for 2.5 miles to the intersection with State Park Drive. Turn right (east) and go 0.2 mile to the park entrance. The BCSRA can also be reached from the I-75/US-23 intersection by exiting east at the Beaver Road exit, 6.3 miles north of US-10, and going east on Beaver Road for 5.3 miles to the park entrance (fee required). See map on next page.

From the entrance road, go left (north) to the beach and the visitor center. Gulls often congregate on the sand bars just off the beach (**A** on the map); this is a good place to look for Lesser (rare) and Great Black-backed Gulls during fall and early spring. The visitor center (**B** on map), with numerous feeders, is well worth a birding stop. Maps to the park trails are also available here. Behind the visitor center is a lagoon with a floating platform from which you can usually see a variety of ducks, grebes, herons, and shorebirds in migration. A nature trail circles the lagoon and passes through some mature oak habitat, where you may find resident Great Horned Owl and Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is a breeder, and thrushes and warblers are present in migration. Connecticut Warbler is not easy to find, but one usually makes an appearance every year in late May.

Directly across State Park Drive to the south of the visitor center entrance road is a large, excellent campground. Immediately after entering the campground, park in a small parking area to the right, near the restrooms, where a narrow path (**C** on map) heads west. This is one of the best places in the park for look for flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows during migration (mid-May to early June). Red-headed Woodpecker has nested here, and Kirtland's Warbler, rarely seen in migration, has been found in spring along the path. After about 200 yards, the trail comes to a T-intersection at an old railroad bed. A turn to the right along the railroad bed leads back through



similar habitat to State Park Drive. The trail to the left goes past the group campground on the left (D on map) and ends at Lauria Road in about 0.5 mile.

Tobico Marsh, another section of the BCSRA, is an easy half-mile walk along a hard-surfaced trail from the visitor center, or a short drive to a parking lot to the left off Killarney Beach Road. This area, once the Tobico Hunt Club, was purchased by the then Michigan Conservation Commission in 1956 and became part of the present BCSRA. The marsh includes approximately 2,000 acres of state-owned land, of which 1,109 acres are designated as a wildlife refuge. Over five miles of trails, some of them hard-surfaced, lead through the area. During spring and fall, thousands of waterfowl are present, and many species breed in the area, including Redhead and Ruddy Duck (probable). Sora and Yellow-headed Blackbird also breed in the marsh. Boardwalks, two observation towers, and a newly constructed viewing platform provide good views of the more open waters in the marsh. Migrating warblers can be observed from the trails.

After birding the marsh, return to State Park Drive and drive west (it becomes Beaver Road) 2.6 miles to M-13. Go north 5.0 miles to Linwood Corners.

NE-3 Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area

Spring**** Summer** Fall**** Winter*
 DeLomre p. 60, B2, 43°47' N, 83°56' W
 Contact Information: 989-697-5101

Directions: From the I-75/US-23 intersection, take the Linwood Road exit east for 2.2 miles to the intersection with M-13 at Linwood Corners. Go north from Linwood Corners on M-13 for 2.8 miles to Kitchen Road. Turn right (east) and proceed 1.2 miles to Tower Beach Road. The area headquarters is visible just to the northeast of this intersection.

Even the name stirs the imagination of every Michigan birder. Known for sightings of some of the state's rarest species, Nayanquing Point consists of 1,400 acres of coastal wetland, croplands flooded for waterfowl hunting in the fall, and diked, permanent pools holding large numbers of waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds during migration. Depending upon the bay water levels, Nayanquing Point can offer some excellent shorebird habitat, and is also one of the best sites in the state for nesting Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Least and American Bitterns also breed in the marshes, but it is usually much easier to hear the booming call of an American Bittern than to spot the bird. Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, and Caspian and Forster's Terns are regular nesters and present in spring and summer. At least one pair of Bald Eagles has nested in the area. Some of the more interesting observations from this site in recent years include American White Pelican (rare), Snowy Egret (rare), Tricolored Heron (casual), Cinnamon Teal (accidental), Tufted Duck (accidental), Peregrine Falcon (uncommon), King Rail (casual), American Avocet (rare), and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits (both rare).

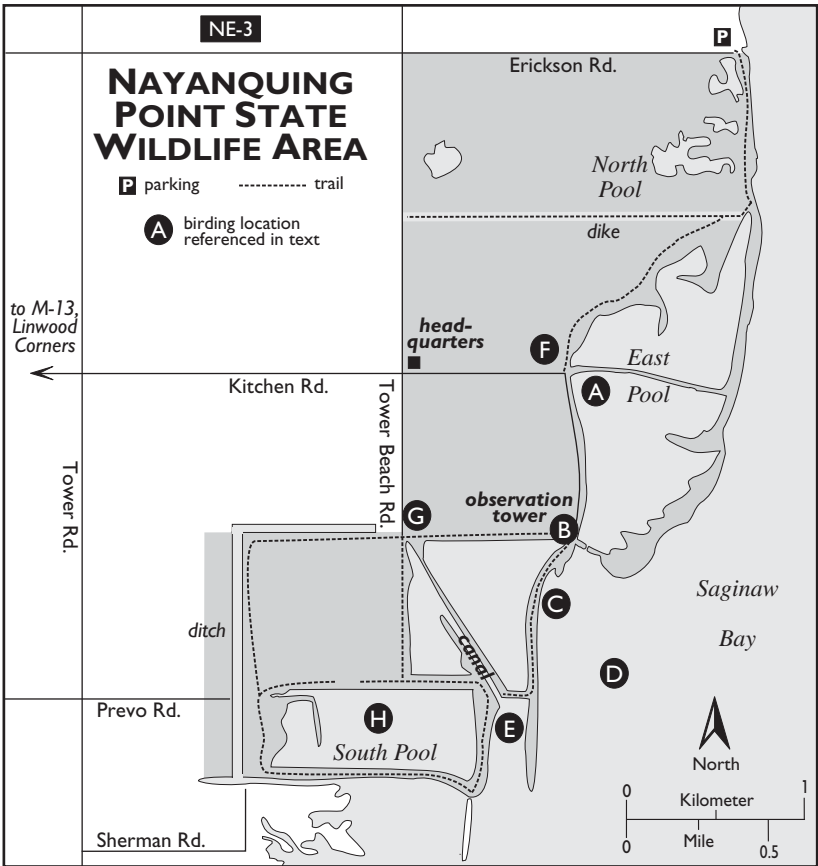
From the intersection of Tower Beach and Kitchen Roads, continue east on Kitchen Road while watching for herons on both sides of the road. Where Kitchen Road turns right (south), there is a large lagoon (**A** on map) that can be teeming with shorebirds during the spring and late summer months, depending on water levels. Semipalmated Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, and Pectoral Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers are regular visitors. Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets often congregate here in the fall. Canada Geese, dabbling ducks, American Coots, and a variety of gulls are usually present from early spring through late fall.

Continue south on this road to an observation tower (**B** on map) for a view of the entire area. The field to the northwest of the tower has been diked to establish additional habitat for dabbling ducks, herons, and shorebirds. Migrating Wilson's Snipe are often seen here in spring. Michigan's fourth Rock Wren was seen near this tower in October 2003.

The road along the dike (**C** on map) leading south from the tower is closed to vehicular traffic, but birders are welcome to walk the dike except during waterfowl hunting season (usually September through December). The open water of Saginaw Bay (**D** on map) to the east of the dike has good numbers of

waterfowl at any season. Look carefully among the cattails for Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Common Moorhen, American Coot, and rails. In the refuge to the west, Northern Harriers often hunt over the marsh; watch for Yellow-headed Blackbirds perched on the cattails. The dike trail will eventually make a turn to the west, where the shallow-water area (E on map) to the south is often good for shorebirds during migration. Where the dike reaches the canal, retrace your steps back to the observation tower.

Drive back along Kitchen Road to the left turn to the west, where there is a parking area on the north side of the road (F on map). A path, sometimes overgrown later in the summer, leads north from the parking area through an area that can be very good for passerines during migration, particularly Blue-headed, Warbling, and Red-eyed Vireos, Brown Thrasher, and Bay-breasted and Wilson's Warblers. Continuing on this path will lead to another dike road which wanders through the northern part of the area. In spring,





Yellow-headed Blackbird
Philip Chu

Short-eared Owls have been observed in the field to the northwest. The flooded areas to the east may contain Virginia Rail, Sora, and Marsh Wren.

Return to Kitchen Road and go west to the intersection with Tower Beach Road. Turn left (south) onto Tower Beach Road and drive about 0.5 mile to a small parking area at a gate (**G** on map). Park here and walk south on the two-track for about 0.5 mile along the ditch to a T-intersection. Along the way, look and listen for Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Song and Swamp Sparrows, all of which breed here and are present from spring through fall. The crop fields to the west often harbor Ring-necked Pheasant and, during migration, Wilson's Snipe and Bobolink. Raptors, including Peregrine Falcon, Northern Harrier, and American Kes-

trell, often hunt the area. At the intersection, go left. The flooded area to the south (**H** on map) is good for Black-crowned Night-Heron and nesting waterfowl, including Wood Duck, Redhead (rare), Blue-winged Teal, Common Moorhen, and American Coot. Forster's and Black Terns also breed in the area. It is possible to walk the road around the east side of this flooded area to view the mudflats, cattail marshes, and the open water of Saginaw Bay. Sightings of Little Blue Heron (rare), Tricolored Heron (casual), and Marbled Godwit (rare) have been recorded, usually as spring or summer visitors.

NE-4 Pinconning County Park

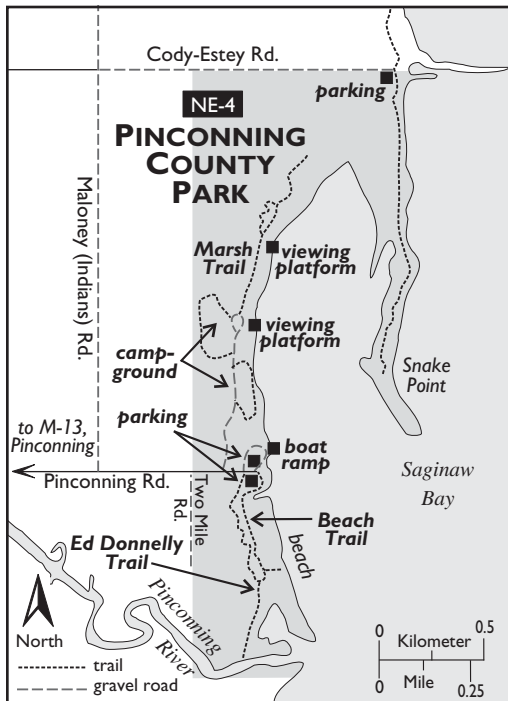
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 60, B2, 43°51' N, 83°55' W

Contact Information: 989-879-5050

Directions: From the intersection of Kitchen Road and M-13, west of Nayanquing Point, proceed north on M-13 to the village of Pinconning and turn right (east) on Pinconning Road for about 2.5 miles to the park.

Pinconning County Park is not very well-known, even by local birders, but is a little jewel, consisting of a small campground, a boat ramp, and trails that go to the north from the campground and to the south from the parking lot. In spring and fall, watch for Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, and



Spotted (breeds), Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers on the mudflats along the shoreline, and for Tundra Swan, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Bonaparte's, Ring-billed and Herring Gulls, and Caspian and Forster's Terns out in the open water. The shallow bay here is a feeding area for migrating Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets in the fall. The trails traverse a variety of habitats, including dry hardwoods, wet bottomland, and coastal cattails, providing good cover for migrating passerines in spring, including Willow and Least Flycatchers, and Tennessee, Orange-crowned,

Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, and Mourning Warblers. Numerous migrating Wilson's Warblers can be found in the willows and Red-Osier Dogwood along the Marsh Trail. Nesting species include Ruffed Grouse, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Wood Thrush, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, and Savannah, Song, Swamp Sparrows. In late fall and winter, Snowy Owl, American Tree Sparrow, and Snow Bunting are possible.

To the south of the parking lot, the Beach Trail leads through oak woods for about a quarter-mile to a beach and a view of the open water. The parallel Ed Donnelly Trail is about a half-mile walk that terminates at the Pinconning River. Waterproof footwear may be required for this trail, and biting insects in late spring and summer can be brutal.

An observation tower that provides excellent views of the bay is located at the north end of the campground. The Marsh Trail goes north from the campground for a few hundred yards to an observation deck that provides good views of a sheltered, shallow bay. The far end of this one-mile trail may be impassable due to overgrown vegetation.

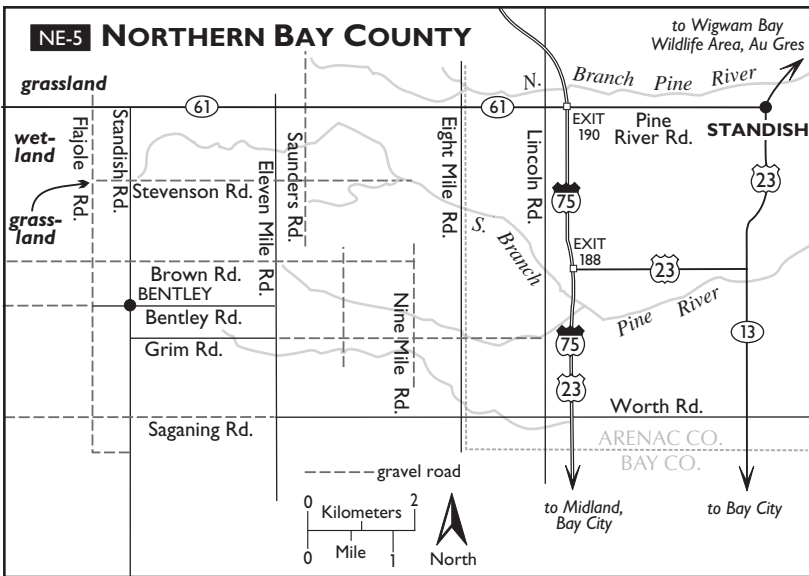
Snake Point, a separate section of the park that extends out into Saginaw Bay, can be an excellent resting spot for the same gulls and shorebirds mentioned earlier, and Bald Eagles often perch in the tall trees. To reach the point, return west on Pinconning Road for 0.25 mile to Maloney Road (Indians Road on some maps), go north for one mile to Cody-Estey Road, and continue east for about 0.5 mile to a parking lot on the right. A trail out to the point from the parking lot is not maintained and may be overgrown. If so, walk along the beach.

NE-5 Northern Bay County

*Spring*** Summer* Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 59, A7, 43°59' N, 84°07' W

For an interesting side trip, proceed north from Pinconning Road on US-23 to the exit for M-61 and go west on M-61 for 6.2 miles to Flajole Road, which may not be signposted (see map on next page). Sedge Wren, Henslow's (rare) and Grasshopper Sparrows, and Bobolink have bred in the grassy fields north of this intersection. These fields are private property and are posted against any entry, but there is room to park along the road to scan the fields from the fence line. *Do not trespass.* Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers are often present in the brushy area to the southwest of this intersection. The flooded woods to the west of Flajole Road usually have Wood Duck, Northern Flicker, and Tree Swallow.

Proceed another 0.8 mile south on Flajole Road, where there are extensive, rolling grass fields on the west side of the road. Henslow's Sparrow has nested here in recent years. They can be found only by listening for their distinctive *tse-lick* song in the May to early July time frame, at dawn or at dusk. You can also try farther south along Flajole Road and at the intersection of



Eleven Mile and Saganing Roads. If present, Sedge Wren is usually found in the lower, wetter parts of the fields.

NE-6 Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme pp. 60 & 70, A3, 44°00' N, 83°47' W
 Contact Information: 989-697-5101

Directions: From the Flajole Road area, return to M-61 and proceed east across I-75 to US-23 at the traffic light in Standish. Continue northeast from Standish on US-23 for 9 miles to the intersection with M-65. Turn right here on Hale Road, proceed 2.9 miles to Stover Road. Turn left (east) and go approximately 1.0 mile to the parking lot. See map on page 201.

Stover Road hosted a singing Cerulean Warbler, quite far north for this species, in summer 2002, and Prothonotary Warbler and Orchard Oriole have also been recorded here. Once you reach the parking lot of the large east unit of **Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area**, you will need to hike to the bay shore. Along the way, there is excellent habitat surrounding the permanent pools within the diked area. A two-track road on the dike is closed to vehicular traffic but allows you to hike completely around the wildlife area, a walk of about 4 miles. Nesting birds include dabbling ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, Virginia Rail, Common Moorhen, American Coot, and Sedge Wren. Thousands of waterfowl pass through here during migration, as do many passerines, especially thrushes and warblers, and Rusty Blackbirds. In spring, numerous

American Tree, Field, Savannah, Song, Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows feed in the grasses along the dikes. Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, and Red-tailed Hawk are often present as well. In the early spring and late fall, large rafts of diving ducks, including Canvasback, Redhead, and Greater and Lesser Scaup, can often be seen out in the open water of Saginaw Bay.

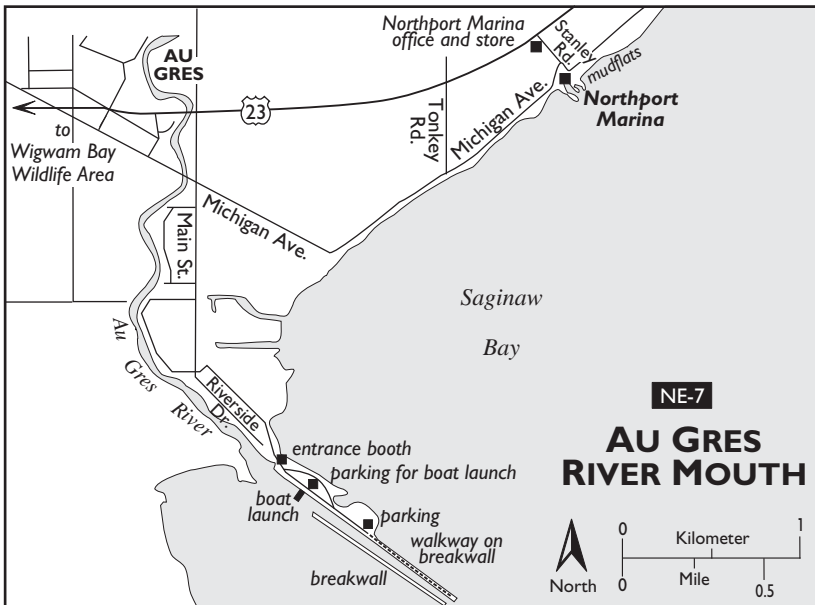
NE-7 Au Gres River Mouth

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 71, D4, 44°01' N, 83°41' W

Directions: From Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area, return to US-23 and proceed east and north to the village of Au Gres. After crossing the bridge over the Au Gres River, turn right onto Main Street and follow this to its end at the Au Gres River Boat Launch.

At the entrance booth for the **Au Gres River Boat Launch**, take the road to the left (north) around the parking lot. Northern Shrike has been observed in the trees at the parking area. Check the grassy areas for Horned Larks, sparrows, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings from late fall through early spring. Any mudflat can be good for migrating shorebirds, and deep water can harbor Long-tailed Duck, scoters, and other diving ducks until the lake freezes over. Walking out to the end of the long jetty can also be rewarding for waterbirds. During winter, the river flow usually results in some open water on which gulls, including Glaucous (uncommon) and Great Black-



backed, can be observed. During migration, large flocks of Tundra Swans often frequent the area, and Mute Swans are usually present as long as there is open water. Return to US-23 and go north for about 1.5 miles to the **Northport Marina** on the right. Turn right onto the road to the east of the marina and keep right at the stop sign, then bear left to the area where the marina channel enters the bay. The mudflats here have large numbers of shorebirds in migration (including both yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitcher, Sanderling, and Least Sandpiper), and the bay can have diving ducks, gulls, and terns.

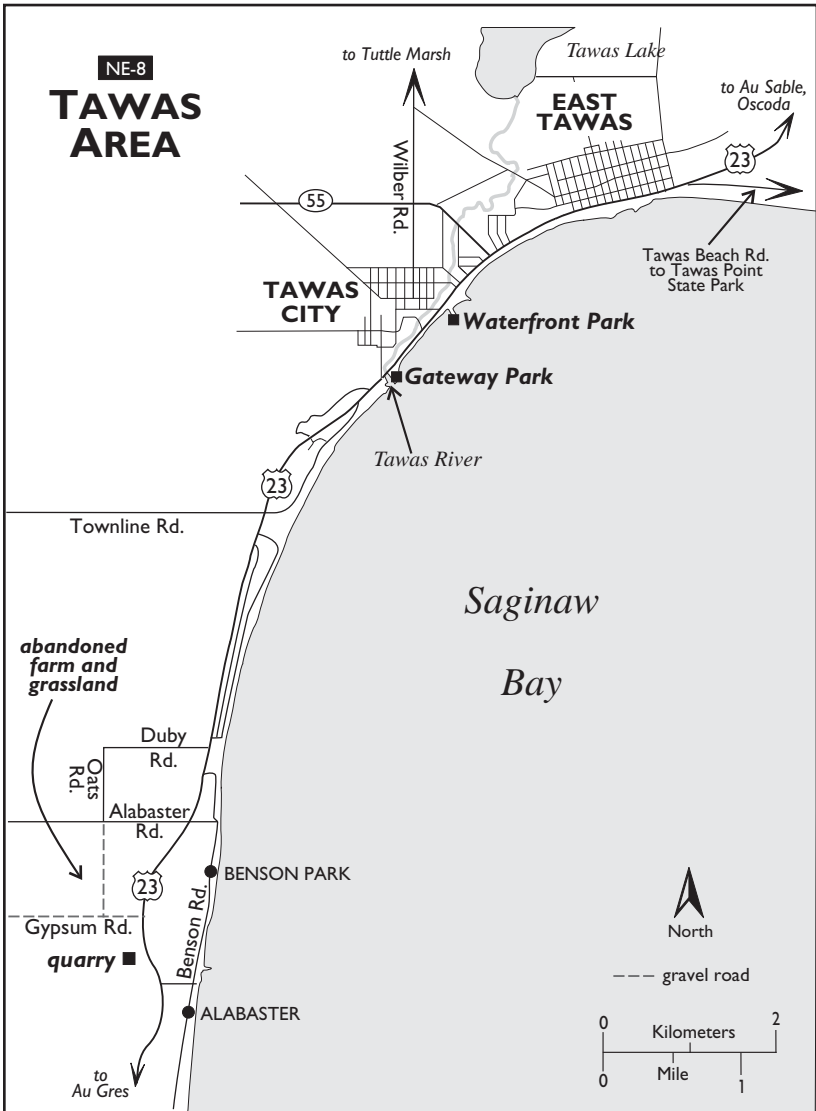
NE-8 The Tawas Area

*Spring**** Summer** Fall**** Winter**
DeLorme p. 71, B6, 44°16' N, 83°30' W
Contact Information: Tawas Point State Park, 989-362-5041;
www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp*

Directions: Return to US-23 and go north from Au Gres for about 12.5 miles to Alabaster Road for the first stop in the Tawas area. (If coming from the north, Alabaster Road is about 5 miles south of Tawas City.)

As you travel north on US-23, you will pass a large quarry for the mining of Alabaster, a variety of gypsum which was discovered here in 1837 by Douglass Houghton. A right (east) turn onto Alabaster Road, just north of the quarry, will take you down to the lakeshore, where you can scan the beach and offshore areas, where Horned Grebes and gulls sometimes congregate in spring and late fall. Return west on Alabaster Road and continue across US-23 for about 0.5 mile to Oats Road, which goes south for about 0.6 mile to its end at Gypsum Road. On the west side of Oats Road is an abandoned farm and grassland which has been home to nesting Henslow's Sparrows and Bobolinks. Bird only from the road here along this private property. During spring migration, numbers of warblers and sparrows, including Clay-colored and White-crowned, can be found in the trees bordering the road. Rarely, singing Black-billed Cuckoo and Wood Thrush have also been found here. From late fall through early spring, Rough-legged Hawks hunt in the area.

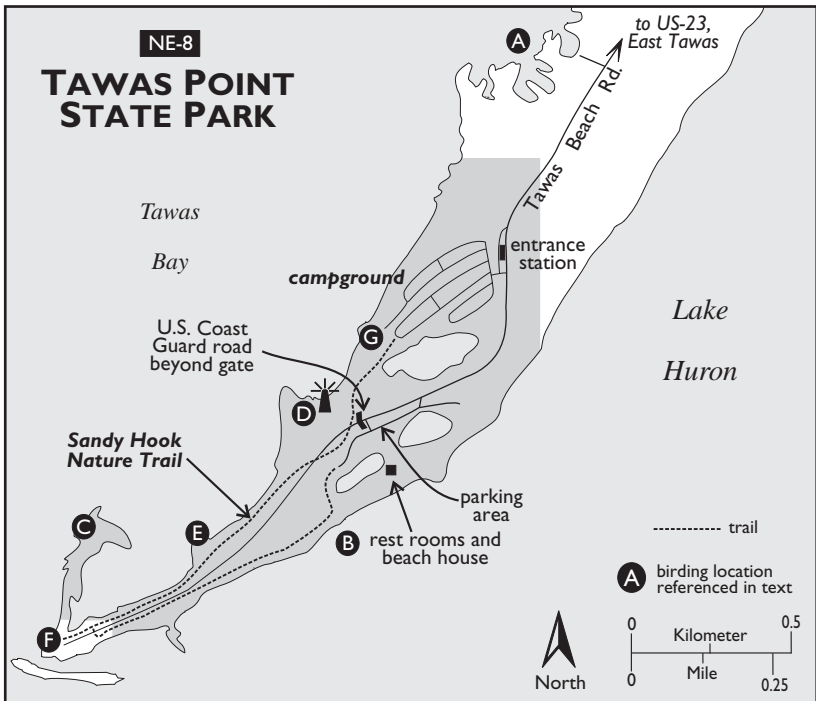
Return to US-23 and go north to Tawas City. **Gateway Park** is located on the lake side of US-23, just past the bridge over the Tawas River. To enter the park, turn right at the driveway just past the bridge. Except in mid-summer, numbers of gulls, including Great Black-backed, are often present, and Double-crested Cormorants, diving ducks, and mergansers are usually out on the open water. In early spring and late fall, the waterfront park in **Tawas City** (about 0.5 mile past Gateway Park) can have many resting gulls and shorebirds. As you continue north on US-23, stop in East Tawas to check out the protected water inside the pier behind the Holiday Inn located on US-23. In late fall and early spring, a variety of waterfowl, including Canvasback, Red-head, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, and Common Loon, can be seen at fairly close range. In spring, shorebirds are also found along the beach.



Continue northeast on US-23 through East Tawas to a traffic light where Tawas Beach Road forks to the right (a sign indicates the route to Tawas Point State Park). After 1.8 miles, the road forks again. Stay to the right on Tawas Beach Road for another 1.0 mile to the state park entrance. Just before the marina, a short road to the right ends at a protected harbor (A on next map)

where Horned and Red-necked Grebes and such rarities as Harlequin Duck, Black Scoter, Franklin's and Little Gulls have been sighted.

Tawas Point State Park is one of the premier birding spots in the Midwest, with more than 290 species recorded. A sandy cape, sometimes referred to as "Michigan's Cape Cod," hooks south and slightly west into Saginaw Bay. The point is an exciting migrant trap in the spring, but can also be very productive through the summer and into autumn. The park consists of 200 acres, with over 200 excellent campsites and long, sandy beaches on both sides of the point. Trails lead from the parking area out to the end of the point and past a lighthouse which is usually open for tours. In early spring and late fall, large numbers of diving ducks, Common Loons, and Horned Grebes may be seen flying off the east beach (**B** on map), with rafts of yodeling Long-tailed Ducks present in amazing numbers out in the open waters of Saginaw Bay. A variety of shorebirds may be seen feeding on the vast areas of sand beach, with good numbers arriving in mid-May and remaining through the end of the month and into early June. Fall migrants may arrive early in July, with stragglers lingering to November. Regular migrants include Black-bellied and Semi-palmated Plovers, both yellowlegs, Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Semipalmated, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, and Dunlin. Less common but very possible are Whimbrel, White-rumped



and Baird's Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitcher. Willet and Red Knot, rare visitors, have been recorded. One or two Piping Plovers are usually seen in spring migration, and have attempted nesting several times in the past few years. Successful hatching occurred in the spring of 2002, but, unfortunately, the chicks succumbed to scavenging gulls or crows.

Scan the sand spit off the tip of the point (**C** on map). Little Gull has been seen here, and Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls are regular in late fall and early spring if open water is present. Bonaparte's, Ring-billed, and Herring Gulls are common and can be present throughout most of the year. Caspian and Common Terns are common in spring, with Forster's and Black Terns possible. Least Tern has been observed here at least once. Various raptors often stop over during migration, including Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered, Broad-winged, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon.

Tawas Point is best known for the major fallouts of passerines which occur during migration, generally when weather fronts move through the area in spring. The best time to witness such an event is usually during the period of May 15–25. The trees on the exposed point are not very tall, enabling good views of the many species of passerines that can be present. It is not unusual to observe as many as 24 species of warblers in a single day, including Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Orange-crowned, Northern Parula, Cape May, Blackburnian, Prairie, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Mourning, Wilson's, and Canada. Although rare, Kirtland's and Connecticut Warblers may be spotted in late May.

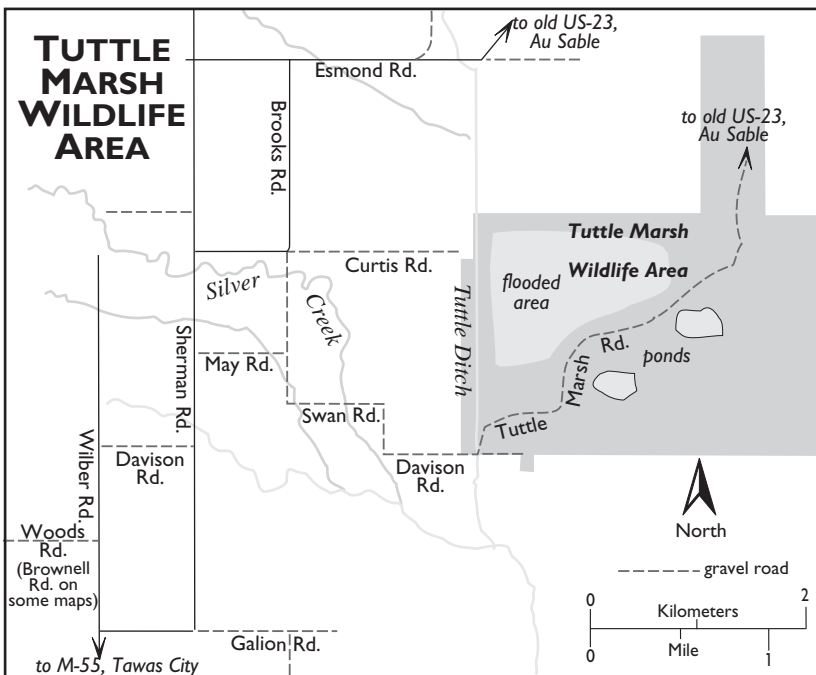
The fall warbler migration through Tawas Point differs somewhat from that of spring. The numbers of warblers are not as concentrated, and the birds are in their duller, winter plumages. Adding to that is the fact that the birds are not as vocal in the fall, making the fall warbler search a challenge. Nonetheless, there are good numbers at the point, beginning in mid- to late August and continuing into October. And in the case of Palm and Blackpoll Warblers, these species are more numerous in this fall period than in spring. Additionally, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows are also common in September and October.

Excellent spots for viewing passerines, especially warblers, during a fallout are the scrub pines immediately to the south of the lighthouse (**D** on map), the brushy areas to the right (west) of the main trail about halfway down to the tip (**E** on map), and the scrubby trees at the point itself (**F** on map). Another dependable warbler hotspot is the area between the lighthouse and the campground (**G** on map). Because of Tawas Point's location, there is always the possibility of true rarities, which have included Wilson's Plover, Ruff, Mew Gull, Say's Phoebe, Western Kingbird, Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer and Western Tanager, and Harris's Sparrow. One of the most amazing sightings here was a White-collared Swift seen in 1996, a species recorded only a few times north of Mexico.

Located north and inland of East Tawas, **Tuttle Marsh** (DeLorme p. 71, 44°21' N, 83°28' W) has 5,000 acres of productive wetlands and mixed forest. Waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds migrate through, Grasshopper and Clay-colored Sparrows nest in the grassy areas near the entrance road, while Sedge and Marsh Wrens and Swamp Sparrows use the wetter areas. In spring, thousands of migratory Tree Swallows feed over the flooded area. This is also a good spot to look for Alder Flycatcher, and to look and listen for American and Least Bitterns. Ospreys use the nesting platforms. In late spring and summer, Whip-poor-wills are often on this road late in the evenings.

Tuttle Marsh is reached by going north from Tawas City on Wilber Road for 5.0 miles from its intersection with M-55; turn right onto Davison Road for 0.5 mile to Sherman Road and turn left for 0.5 mile to May Road. Follow May Road to the right turn onto unmarked Brooks Road and follow the road for 1.6 miles through a series of left and right turns to the entrance. At this point, you can follow the Tuttle Marsh Road northeast through the wildlife area to old US-23 and Oscoda (covered in the next section of this chapter), or return to Wilber Road, through the Kirtland's Warbler area and north to the Au Sable River area (also part of the next section).

While the best and probably the easiest way for visitors to obtain good views of the much-desired Kirtland's Warbler on territory is to take a guided tour from Grayling or Mio, which is covered later in this chapter, the eastern

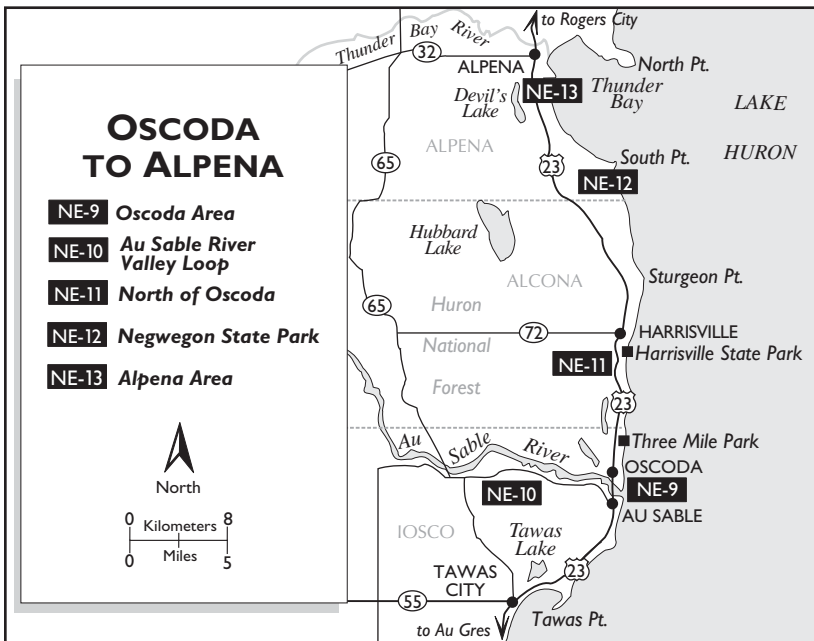


edge of the nesting habitat does reach into Iosco County just to the west of Tuttle Marsh. Turning west on Woods Road from Wilber Road will lead into Kirtland's Warbler nesting areas, which are well-marked. *Please respect the signs and bird only from the roads in this area. Do not trespass into the protected nesting areas of this Endangered species.* Upland Sandpiper can usually be found in the large pastures on Woods Road to the west of Wilber Road.

THE LAKE HURON SHORELINE: OSCODA TO ALPENA

By Jerry Ziarno

North of the extensive marshes of Saginaw Bay, the western shoreline of Lake Huron becomes one of long sandy beaches interspersed with sections of rocky flats and a few grass bays. Here, in contrast to the relatively shallow Saginaw Bay, the deeper, bluer waters of Lake Huron are close to the shore. US-23 closely follows the shoreline, passing through the Huron National Forest, with easy access to two state parks, as well as several vantage points from which to view the lake. In addition to scenic views, there are opportunities for close observation of large numbers of migrating diving ducks, particularly as they move south in the fall, and migrating shorebirds in spring and fall. This section also covers a loop trip around a portion of the Au Sable River Valley, including part of the nesting range of Kirtland's Warbler. The



large forested area is composed primarily of Jack Pine, Black Spruce, Balsam Fir, White-cedar, Balsam Poplar, and White Oak, habitat for many nesting and migratory neotropical species.

NE-9 The Oscoda Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter****
DeLorme p. 71, A7, 44°25' N, 83°20' W

Directions: From Tawas City, continue north on US-23 for about 15 miles to the communities of Au Sable and Oscoda, located at the mouth of the well-known and popular Au Sable River.

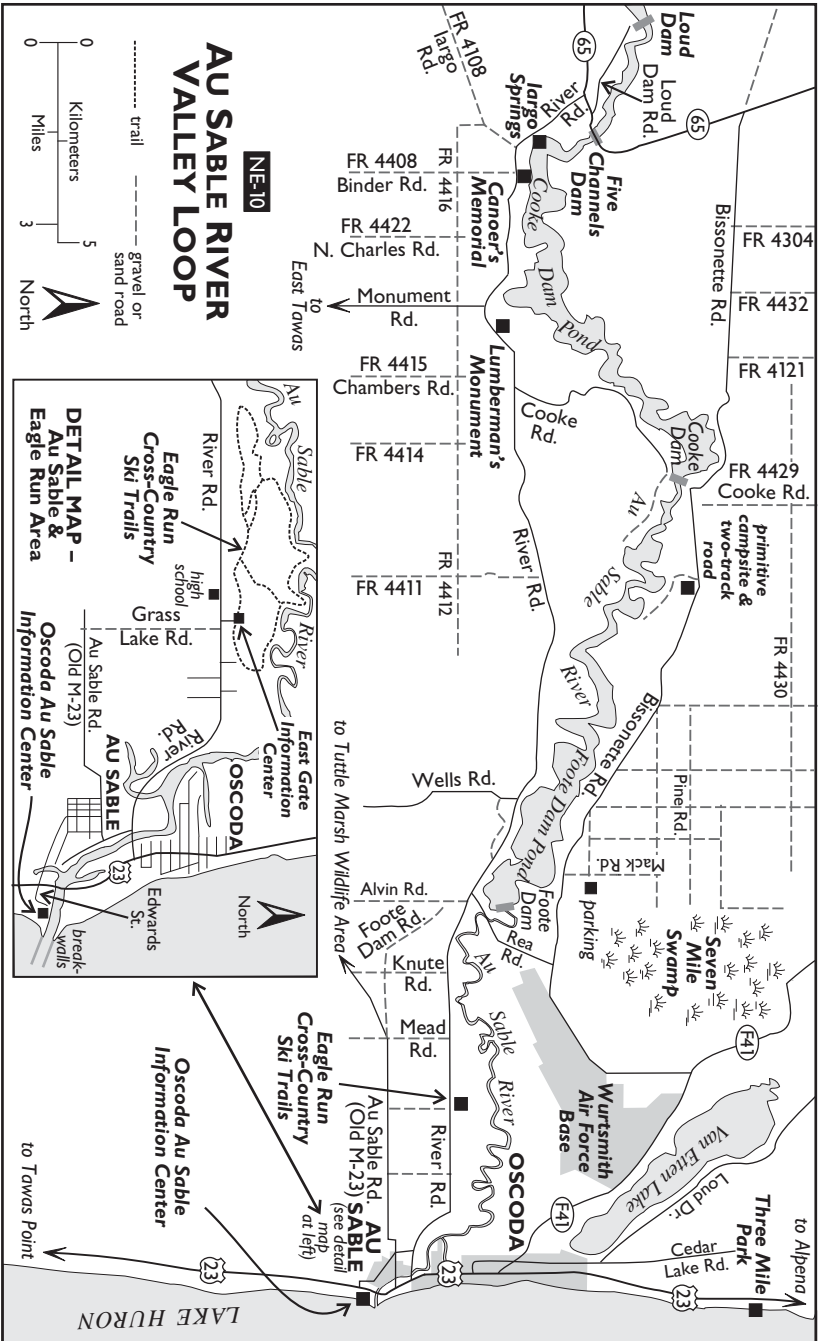
As you approach Au Sable and before the bridge over the river, turn right onto Edwards Street and into the **Oscoda-Au Sable Information Center**. Here you can get information and maps for the area. Parking is available, and a hard-surfaced path provides access to the beach. Edwards Street, next to the center, leads east and north to a boat launch and a pathway out to the end of the jetty on the south side of the river. The mouth of the river and the beach just to the south are excellent places to bird in late autumn, winter, and spring, when waterfowl often rest on the river inside the jetties; shorebirds use the beach in migration. This is one of the better spots in the area to find a Whimbrel. In winter, Snow Buntings are reliable in the grassy areas near the parking lot. Large numbers of gulls, including Great Black-backed, are usually present. Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, and Song Sparrow can be found in the wetlands just behind the information center from spring into fall. Migrating passerines can be found flitting in the low vegetation along the lakeshore. Rarities such as Harlequin Duck, Black Scoter, Red-necked Grebe, and Purple Sandpiper have been sighted in winter, and a Rock Wren spent several days here in December 2003.

NE-10 The Au Sable River Valley Loop

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p.71, A4-7

Note: Many of the road names in this area are not signposted with the names shown in the DeLorme Gazetteer. For clarity, the U.S. Forest Service designations (usually shown on signposts) are used.

The **Au Sable River** to the west of Oscoda is historically notable for its use as a “highway” into the interior of the lower peninsula of Michigan by Native Americans and French fur traders, and later as a means of floating White Pine logs from the forests of the interior to sawmills located along the Lake Huron shore. Today, six hydroelectric dams along the river provide power to the area as well as opportunities for water recreation. The famous Au Sable canoe race, held during the Labor Day weekend in early September, starts in Grayling, 240 miles upstream, and ends in Oscoda. The River Road Scenic Byway follows the south bank of the Au Sable River for 22 miles west



from Oscoda, and from high banks along the river, provides scenic views of the backwaters formed by the dams. In addition to the beautiful scenery, there are several spots along this byway that are very productive for birding.

Eagle Run (DeLorme p.71, A7, 44°25' N, 83°21' W): From US-23 at the light in Oscoda, go west on River Road for just over 2 miles to the East Gate Information Center and the trailhead on the north side of the road for the Eagle Run Cross-Country Ski and Nature Trail. This system of three loop trails, a total distance of 7 miles, winds through areas of plantation pines, hardwoods, and marshy areas along the Au Sable River. The easternmost loop is the easiest to walk, has the best variety of habitat, and provides opportunities to see nesting Ruffed Grouse, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, and Belted Kingfisher. Other breeding species include Alder and Great Crested Flycatchers, Hermit Thrush, Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Pine, and Mourning Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. During spring and fall migrations, some of the more northerly nesting species such as Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Bay-breasted, Wilson's, and Canada Warblers may be present. Connecticut Warbler is seen in some years, and occasional Red-shouldered Hawks also pass through.

Lumberman's Monument (DeLorme p. 71, 44°26' N, 83°37' W): Established in 1932, this monument to the courage of Michigan's earliest European settlers, located on River Road about 14 miles west of Oscoda, sits on a high bluff overlooking the Au Sable River. This area has a good system of trails, some of which are barrier-free, that pass through pines and dune habitat, along with a steep boardwalk down to the river level. Birds usually present in spring and summer are Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, a variety of warblers (especially in spring), Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, and Common Raven.

Just west of Lumberman's Monument is another memorial, **Canoeer's Memorial**. The habitat here, although very similar to the other areas along the Au Sable, is particularly attractive to breeding warblers, which seem to like the steep slopes below (and viewable from) the memorial. The species include Nashville, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, and Black-and-white Warblers, and Northern Waterthrush. Bald Eagles often cruise the river below eye level, and Winter Wrens nest here.

At 2.5 miles west of Lumberman's Monument is an interesting historical site, Iargo Springs (DeLorme p.71, 44°25' N, 83°40' W). The original Chippewa inhabitants believed these springs had curative powers and held ceremonial gatherings at this site. From the viewing platform overlooking the Au Sable River, a long series of wooden steps lead down to several pools formed by springs seeping from the high banks, where Louisiana Waterthrush has nested. Other passerines that nest here include Yellow-throated Vireo, and Black-throated Green, Pine, and Black-and-white Warblers. In recent years, good numbers of Trumpeter Swans (40 or more) have been found here

in late fall and early winter. In early spring, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, and Common Loon can be seen in the river. Osprey and Bald Eagles often perch in the trees along the banks.

There are several sand roads that wander south from River Road through a large area of dry mixed forest where many of the same passerine species can also be observed. Farther to the south, from about 5 to 7 miles along the road, is a Kirtland's Warbler nesting area. (This area can also be accessed from Monument Road, which angles northwest from East Tawas and terminates at Lumberman's Monument.) The Huron National Forest map and a compass/GPS will be helpful here.

At 1.2 miles west of Largo Springs, River Road ends at M-65. Go north (right) on M-65 for 0.3 mile to Loud Dam Road on the left. This interesting side trip to the dam (2.0 miles) features a large colony of Cliff Swallows which use the dam building's nooks and crevices for their nests. The impoundment above the dam usually has Tundra Swan, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneye in early spring. There are several foot trails that lead from the road down to the Au Sable River and, in May and early June, the mixed forest along these trails harbors migrating flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, and warblers. Song Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting are local breeders, among others.

Return to M-65 and continue north as the road crosses the Au Sable River with Five Channels Dam visible on the left. About 2.0 miles north of the bridge, turn east (right) onto Bissonette Road. This road meanders along the north bank of the Au Sable River and its impoundments as the river flows, eventually, into Lake Huron. Several roads, including FR 4304, FR 4432, and FR 4429, lead north from Bissonette Road into Kirtland's Warbler breeding habitat. (Note: these roads may have other names in DeLorme, but this guide is in agreement with the actual signage.) There is a network of sandy, Forest Service roads that cross-cross the area, and most are not signposted. They are usually drivable, even with two-wheel drive, after any snow cover has melted. Other breeding birds utilizing the Jack Pine and scrub habitat here are Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, Nashville and Pine Warblers, and Chipping, Savannah, and Song Sparrows.

There are a number of places on the right (south) side of Bissonette Road that provide panoramic vistas of the Au Sable River valley. One is at 6.7 miles from M-65, where there is a primitive campsite above the Foote Dam impoundment and a nice two-track road that parallels the north bank of the impoundment. During spring migration, vireos, thrushes, and warblers pass through. Nesters include Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ovenbird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting.

At 5.7 miles east from the Foote Dam Primitive Campground entrance on Bissonette Road, there is a turn to the north on Mack Road leading to an Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) parking area. From here, several ORV trails lead into

varied, fairly dry habitat where breeding Ruffed Grouse, Common Nighthawk, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo can be found. Use of these trails is restricted to ORVs, and automobiles are not allowed, although the ORV trails can be walked on foot from the designated parking area. Walking northeast from this parking area across a powerline lane, you will reach the edge of Seven Mile Swamp, a tangle of cedars and brush attractive to breeding Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-headed and Pileated Woodpeckers, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Magnolia, Pine, and Canada Warblers, and Vesper Sparrow. Back at Bissonette Road, continue east and north as the road skirts the old Wurtsmith Air Force Base. At about 4.4 miles, you will come to a stop sign at County Road F41. Turn right (southeast) and proceed for another 4.4 miles back to US-23 to end this loop in Oscoda.

NE-11 Harrisville Area

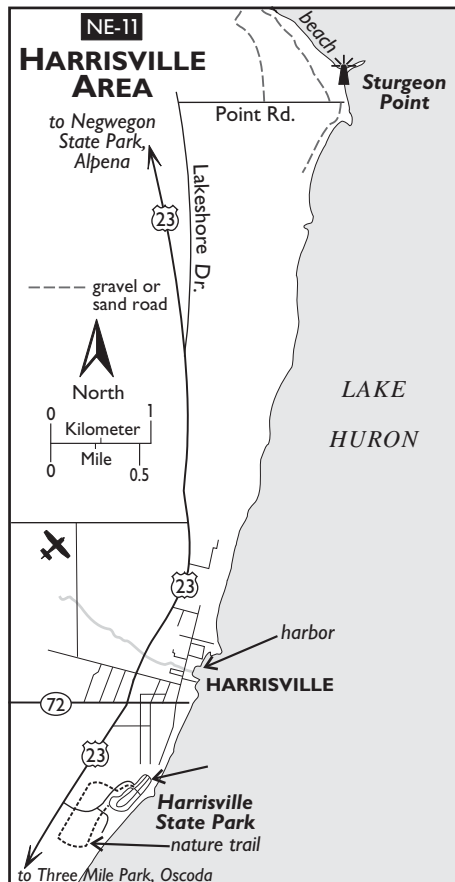
By Jerry Ziarno

Spring*** Summer**

Fall*** Winter

DeLorme p.79, C-7. 44°39' N,
83°17' W

From the intersection of County Road F41 (Veterans Memorial Highway) and US-23 at the north edge of Oscoda, go north on US-23 for 2.5 miles to **Three Mile Park**, a small roadside park along a beautiful sand beach. One of the few sites along the Lake Huron shoreline where deeper water is found fairly close to shore, this is a good spot from which to view migrating waterfowl in early spring and late fall. Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, mergansers, Common Loon, and Horned Grebe can be observed flying by or resting and feeding in the open water. All three scoters and Long-tailed Duck may also be present. During migration, particularly in the spring, the pines between the parking area and the beach can be good for warblers and Amer-



ican Tree, Chipping, and Song Sparrows. Look also for shorebirds on the beach in spring and fall.

As you travel north on US-23 with Lake Huron on your right, most of the beach is private property until you reach **Harrisville State Park**, 12.5 miles north of Three Mile Park. This small but pleasant park has a nice campground, a picnic area, a swimming beach, and a nature trail. While not known as a particularly good migrant trap, this park provides opportunities to view similar species as described for other sites along the Lake Huron shoreline, and makes a nice spot for a lunch stop. Approximately 0.5 mile north on US-23 from the park, turn right (east) at the traffic light in Harrisville. Go four blocks and turn left (north) to the entrance to Harrisville Harbor. In early spring and late fall, check the harbor and beyond the breakwall for diving ducks, including possible scoters, mergansers, and Common Loons.

Continue north on US-23 for 3.1 miles to the point where Lakeshore Drive angles to the right. Drive north for 1.0 mile north on this road to a turn-off to the east for **Sturgeon Point** and its lighthouse. The small wooded area surrounding the lighthouse can have migrant warblers and a beach where shorebirds can be present, also in migration. From Sturgeon Point, you can return south on Lakeshore Drive to rejoin US-23, or you can continue north on Lakeshore Drive to Alcona Road for about 4.0 miles, where a left turn will bring you back to US-23.

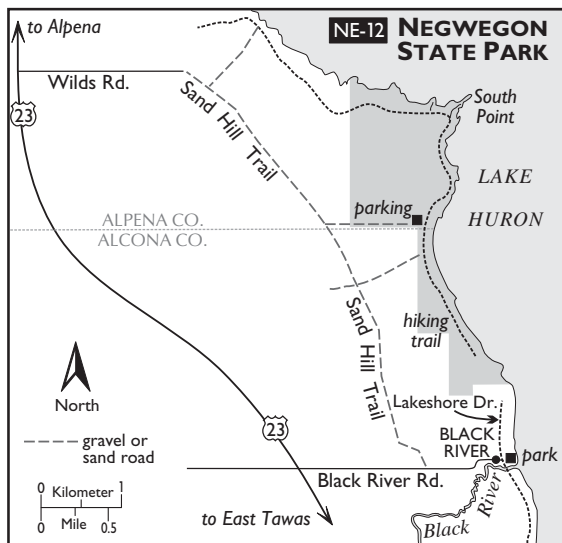
NE-12 Negwegon State Park

By Jerry Ziarno

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter
 DeLorme p. 79, B7, 44°51' N, 83°19' W
 Contact Information:
 989-724-5126;
www.michigandr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

Directions: From the Sturgeon Point area, continue north on US-23 for about 5.0 miles to Black River Road.

To reach **Negwegon State Park**, turn east from US-23 onto Black River Road for 1.0 mile. Turn north onto Sand Hill Trail (it is just a sand trail and, at certain times of the year



it may be impassable except to high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicles) and go 2.7 miles to the park entrance road. If the Sand Hill Trail north from Black River Road is not drivable, then return to US-23, go northwest for 6.5 miles to Wilds Road. Take this road east for 2.2 miles, at which point the road turns right (south) and becomes a two-track road, the northern extension of Sand Hill Trail. Follow this road in a southeasterly direction for 3.5 miles to the entrance to Negwegon State Park. This northern road into the park is usually in better shape than the southern road. The access roads into the park may not be plowed during winter. The small parking lot is 1.3 miles east from the entrance.

This large, rustic, undeveloped park is designed for hiking and is open to hunting during the autumn season. There is access to a nice sand beach, where shorebirds may be present in migration, and a series of three loop trails of varying length that lead through a variety of habitats, where you can look for breeding birds such as Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Alder and Great Crested Flycatchers, Veery, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, and Nashville, Magnolia, and Mourning Warblers. Neotropical migrants in spring pass through in large numbers. The park is also an excellent site for wildflowers during spring and summer.

Another worthwhile stop is the nearby mouth of the **Black River**. From the intersection of Black River Road and Sand Hill Trail, continue east on Black River Road for 1.4 miles into the village of Black River. At the T-intersection at the church, turn south to the boat ramp and small park on the north bank at the river mouth. Shorebirds use the sandy beach and migrating waterfowl can be observed off the beach. Gulls, including Bonaparte's and Great Black-backed, are usually present in early spring and late fall. Migrating sparrows, including Vesper, Savannah, and Lincoln's, may be seen in the grassy area between the picnic area and the shoreline.

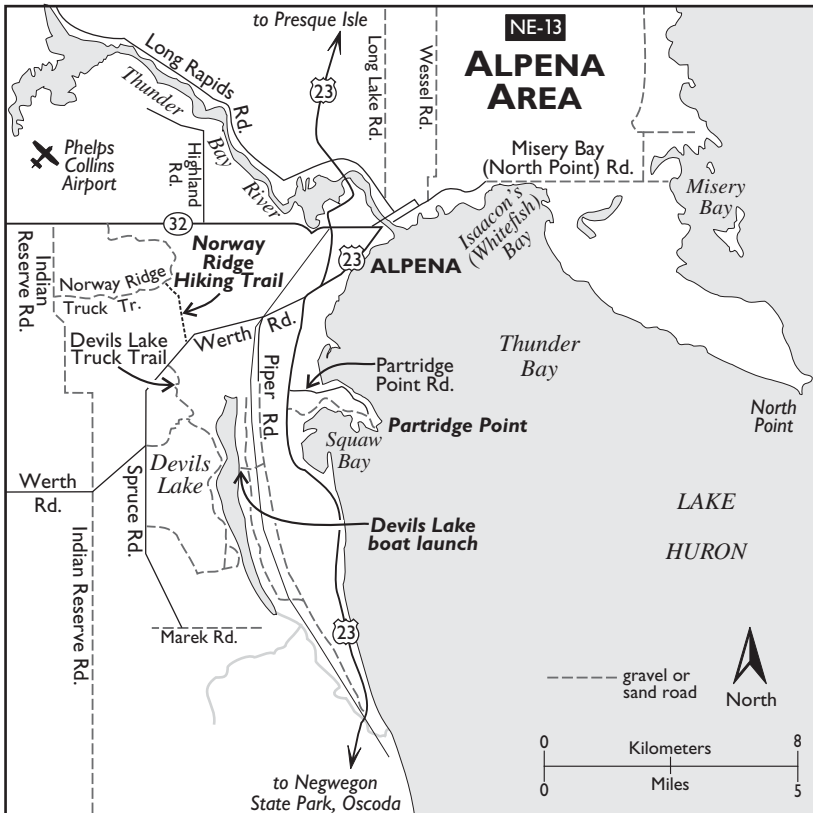
NE-13 The Alpena Area

By Jerry Ziarno

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 85, D5, 45°03' N, 83°26' W

Directions: From Negwegon State Park, return to US-23 via Black River Road and go north for about 13 miles to Squaw Bay on the east side of US-23.

Squaw Bay's shallow waters provide a stopover site for large numbers of migrating shorebirds, especially in late summer and early fall. (It is interesting to note that the 45th parallel, halfway between the equator and the North Pole, runs through Squaw Bay.) There is one small pulloff on the west side of the road, but care should be taken, as US-23 is a busy, two-lane highway. Scope the bay from here for herons and shorebirds as well as for waterfowl. The birds may be a considerable distance from the road and a scope is necessary. During periods of low water levels, you may be able to wade quite



far out into the bay, as the water depth may be less than 12 inches. Special care should be taken, however; there can be unexpected spots of deeper water.

Migrating shorebirds that may be seen include Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted and Upland Sandpipers, Hudsonian Godwit (rare), Sanderling, Semipalmated, Least, White-rumped, Baird's, Pectoral, Stilt, and Buff-breasted (late summer to fall) Sandpipers, and Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitchers. American and Least Bitterns, Virginia Rail, Sora, and Wilson's Snipe are local breeders. Wilson's Phalarope, Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Lapland Longspur pass through the area in migration. In winter, Snow Bunting may also be on or near the shoreline.

Partridge Point (DeLorme p. 85, D6, 45°00' N, 83°26' W) provides good views of the north end of Squaw Bay and the open water of Lake Huron. From US-23, turn right on S. Partridge Point Road. At 1.5 miles from US-23, there is a very rough two-track trail that leads out to the point, which consists of 40 acres of state-owned land. A four-wheel-drive vehicle may be required.

If impassable, it is a short walk out to spots from which you can view Squaw Bay.

In addition to the shorebirds, large numbers of waterfowl can also be observed from the point in early spring and fall. Tundra Swan, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Redhead, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneye are usually observed off the point, along with Great Black-backed Gull. Brant (casual) has been observed in fall but is not regular. Caspian and Common Terns nest on the islands out in Thunder Bay and Lake Huron, and may be seen here in summer. Other species that nest at the point are Green Heron, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Sandhill Crane, American Woodcock, Great Horned and Short-eared Owls, Belted Kingfisher, and Bobolink. During spring and fall migrations, Peregrine Falcon, Sandhill Crane, and Short-eared Owl may be present.

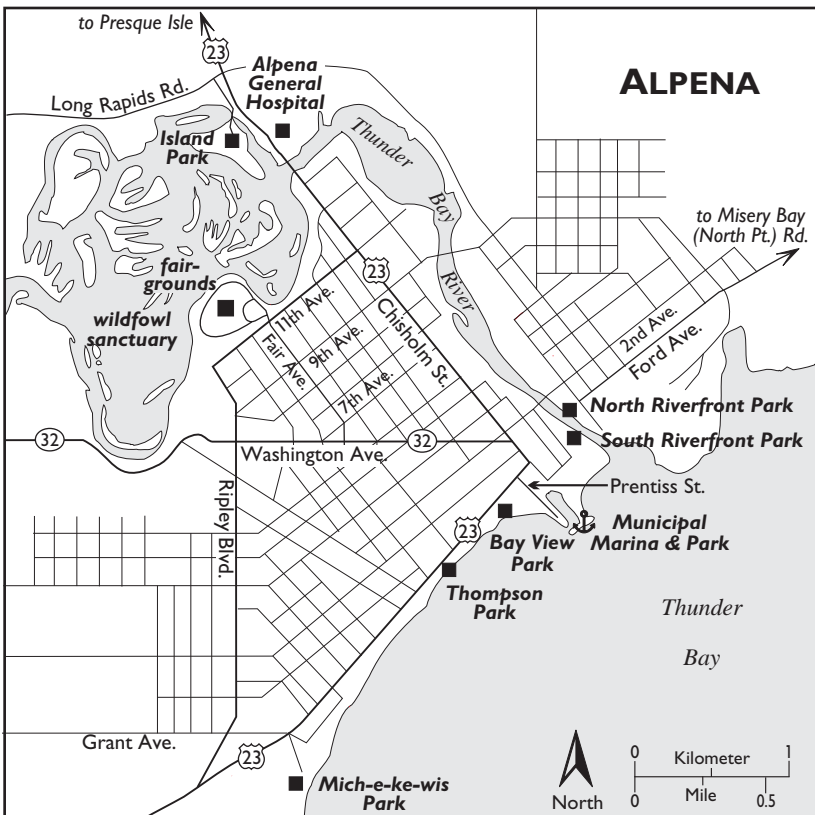
The brushy areas on the point also provide habitat for numerous nesting passerines such as Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Brown Thrasher, Black-throated Green Warbler, Savannah and White-throated Sparrows, Baltimore Oriole, and Purple Finch. During spring migration and, to a lesser extent during autumn, the point can be alive with birds passing through the area. These may include Northern Shrike, Hermit Thrush, Golden-winged, Cape May, and Blackburnian Warblers, Northern Parula, and Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows. In winter, waterfowl will remain in the bay as long as there is open water. In addition, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Herring, Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls, Snowy Owl, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Snow Bunting are usually present. In years of winter irruptions, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak can be found at the point.

Continue on around Partridge Point to US-23 and continue north to the city of Alpena. As you come into **Alpena** from the south on US-23, you will pass several parks along the beach that provide easy access to Thunder Bay. Mich-e-ke-wis Park, Thompson Park, and the Municipal Park at the marina can be good spots from which to view migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, and for a variety of gulls during much of the year.

Within the city limits of Alpena in an ox-bow of the Thunder River, there is a wildfowl sanctuary, located north of M-32 (Washington Avenue) and west of US-23 (Chisholm Street). The Alpena County Fairgrounds, at the intersection of 11th and Fair Avenues, provides views of this sanctuary. Another pleasant spot from which to view the river is Island Park, which is reached by going northwest on Chisholm Street (US-23) from its intersection with Washington Avenue, crossing the bridge, and continuing past the Alpena General Hospital on the right. Turn left onto Long Rapids Road and take an immediate left into the parking area for Island Park. A footpath circles the island, with good views of the river and marshes. Summer residents include Canada Goose, Mute Swan, dabbling ducks, Common Merganser, and Great

Blue Heron; the surrounding brushy areas draw migrant passerines. Newly installed nesting platforms should attract breeding Ospreys.

An excellent shorebird site just outside of Alpena is **Isaacson's Bay**. During spring and autumn migrations, shorebirds (the same species that are listed for Squaw Bay) can be present along the rocky beach, and a variety of gulls, including Glaucous and Great Black-backed, usually forage here. Piping Plovers nested in 2002 in an area of beach not accessible to the public but visible from the road. To get to Isaacson's Bay, take Ford Avenue northeast from the city. Ford Avenue will eventually become Misery Bay Road (identified as North Point Road on some maps). Proceed past the large Lafarge Corporation cement plant and, approximately 3.0 miles from the city, look for a signpost indicating Isaacson's Bay on the right (south). This is the north end of Thunder Bay, although some maps will identify this as Whitefish Bay. Several pulloffs provide excellent places from which to scan the beach for waterfowl and shorebirds. Brant have been seen here in late May.



An interesting side trip from Alpena is **Devils Lake** (DeLorme pp. 79 and 85, 45°00' N, 83°29' W). To reach the lake, take Werth Road to the southwest from its intersection with US-23, just south of Alpena (see map on page 225). At 1.0 mile from US-23, there is a railroad crossing where you should take Piper Road to the south, paralleling the railroad tracks, for about 2.3 miles to a two-track road west to an undeveloped boat access. The best way to see most of Devils Lake is by canoe or kayak from this point, although there are also several footpaths that lead to the lake. Another route into the lake area is to follow Werth Road southwest from US-23 for about 3.0 miles to the Devils Lake Truck Trail, which leads south along the lake's west shore. Again, several foot trails lead to the lake. Nesting birds that can be seen on the lake or in the surrounding woods in late spring and summer are Common Loon, Ruffed Grouse, American Bittern, Great Egret, Northern Harrier, Broad-winged Hawk, Virginia Rail, Sora, Sandhill Crane, American Woodcock, Black Tern (nesting colony), Barred Owl, Whip-poor-will, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Alder Flycatcher, Winter Wren, Veery, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, and Black-and-white Warblers, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, and Song and White-throated Sparrows. An Eared Grebe has been seen here.

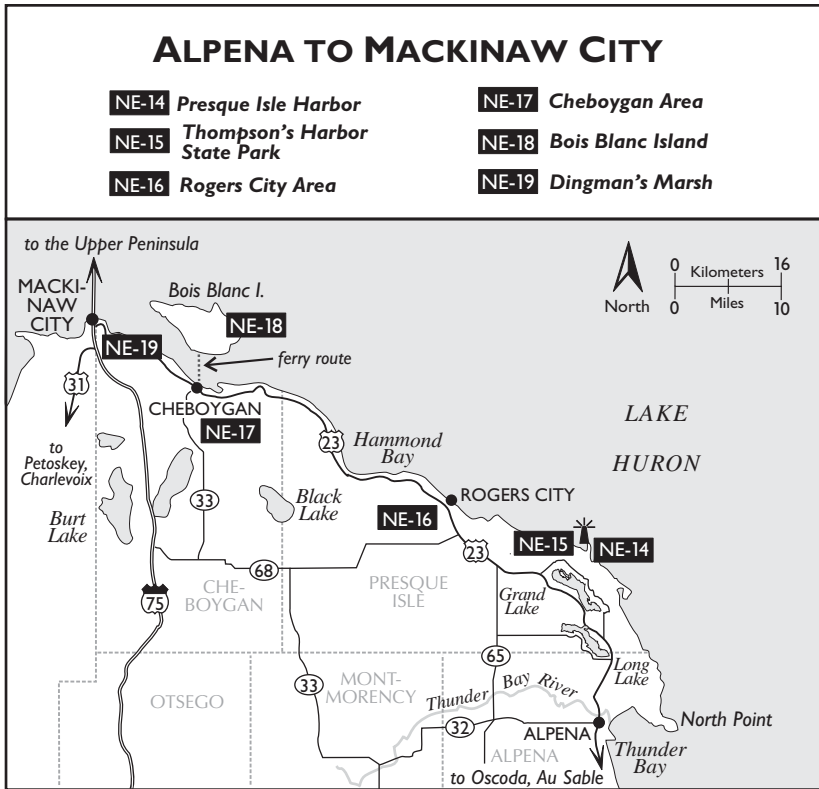
In spring and fall, good numbers of Wilson's Snipe can be present, along with Gadwall, American Wigeon, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Bufflehead, Common and Hooded Mergansers, Greater Yellowlegs, and numerous migrating passerines.

Another side trip from Alpena is the **Norway Ridge Hiking Trail**, where Northern Saw-whet Owl has nested. Boreal visitors such as Pine Grosbeak may be present in late fall and winter. The trailhead is reached from Alpena by going southwest on Werth Road from US-23 for 3.5 miles to the trailhead on the north side of Werth Road. During migration, Tennessee Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and Bay-breasted Warblers may be spotted. The same set of species that nest at Devils Lake may also be found here. Bobcat has also been sighted in the area.

THE LAKE HURON SHORELINE: ALPENA TO MACKINAW CITY

By Jerry Ziarno

This route continues along the shoreline of northern Lake Huron through forests with several large tracts of Wet Coniferous Forest, along with sections of Dry Coniferous Forest (pines), disturbed Northern Forest (aspen, Paper Birch), and open farmland. US-23 provides easy access to four fine state parks (Thompsons Harbor, P. H. Hoeft, Cheboygan, and Historic Mill Creek) and passes near picturesque lighthouses at Presque Isle and Forty Mile Point

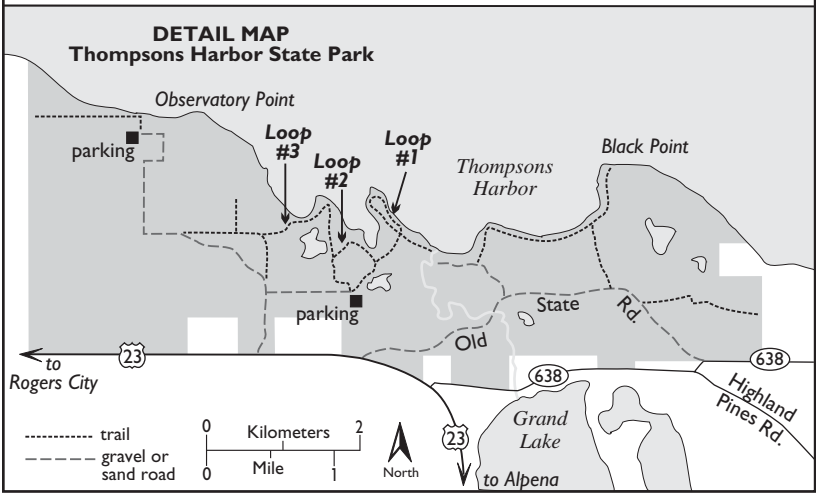
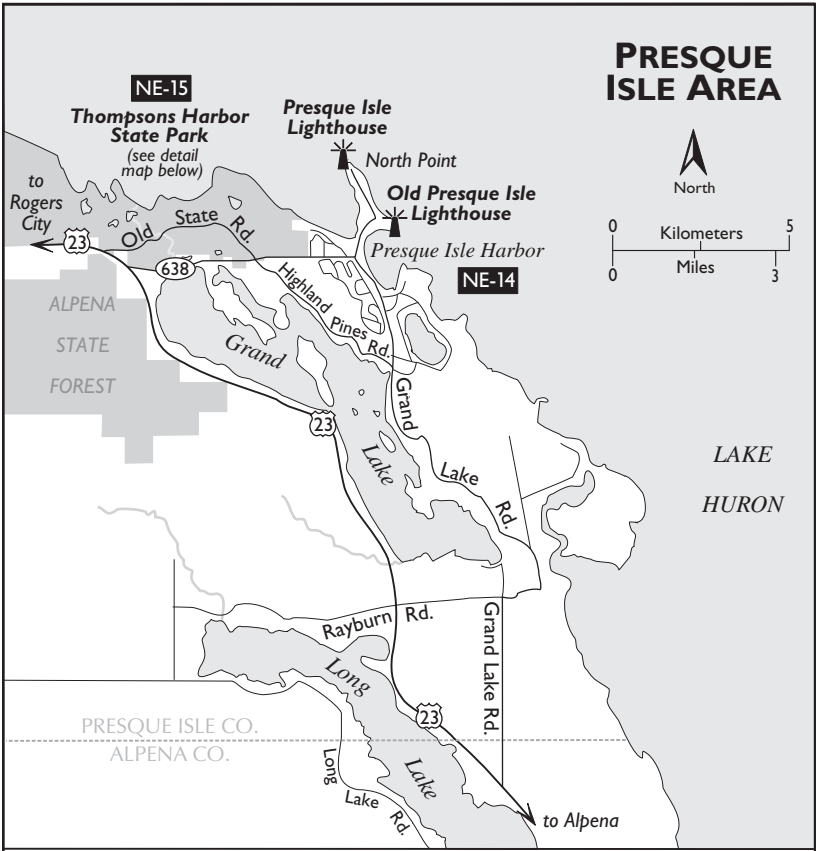


as well as the world's largest limestone quarry at Rogers City. The city of Cheboygan is the base for the ferry to Bois Blanc Island, and is close to a preserve known for its rare flora. This section of northern Lake Huron is exposed to strong storms with northeast winds, attested to by numerous shipwrecks that lie in these waters, especially near Alpena. Birdlife, both nesting and migratory, is similar to that of the preceding section but with better opportunities to see northern nesting species such as Blue-headed Vireo and Prairie and Canada Warblers.

NE-14 Presque Isle Harbor

Spring*** Summer**Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 85, B5, 45°20' N, 83°28' W

Directions: From Alpena, go north on US-23 for approximately 9.0 miles to the intersection with Grand Lake Road (CO 405), where you can go north for 12 miles on Grand Lake Road, the scenic route to Presque Isle Harbor. See map on next page.



Grand Lake Road, a winding, pleasant road, parallels the eastern shore of Grand Lake and goes through the small village of Presque Isle. An alternate route is to continue north on US-23 for another 12.8 miles past Grand Lake Road to CO 638, where you go east for 4.5 miles through a cedar bog to Grand Lake Road. Turn left (north) to the lighthouse and **Presque Isle Harbor** on the right. In early spring and late fall, scan the open water at the harbor for both scap species, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, and gulls, including Glaucous and Great Black-backed. Also check the pine trees across the road from the harbor for migrant thrushes, warblers, and sparrows. In some years, feeders at a residence across from the marina may have Common and Hoary (rare) Redpolls and Pine Siskin in late autumn and through the winter.

Offshore from the lighthouse and museum, North Bay can have the same waterfowl and gull species seen at Presque Isle Harbor. During spring and fall migrations, watch for shorebirds along the beach. A nature trail that starts at the lighthouse parking lot can be excellent for migrating warblers in late May and early June.

NE-15 Thompsons Harbor State Park

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 85, B5, 45°21' N, 83°33' W

Contact Information: 989-734-2543; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: *From Presque Isle Harbor, return west on County Road 638 to US-23 and go north for 1.5 miles to the turn to the right (east) for Thompsons Harbor State Park.*

Take the gravel road east from US-23 for 1.1 miles to **Thompsons Harbor State Park** and the trailhead parking area. This rustic park, situated along 7.5 miles of Lake Huron shoreline, has a system of 6 miles of foot trails ranging from 1.4 to 2.6 miles in length. Loops 1 and 2, which pass through mixed forest with views of Thompsons Harbor, can be very productive. Some of the more interesting birds that breed here include Bald Eagle, Ruffed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, Wilson's Snipe, Great Horned Owl, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Sedge Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Golden-winged, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Pine, Black-and-white, Mourning, and Canada Warblers, Eastern Towhee, Chipping and White-throated Sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Purple Finch. Although nesting has not been confirmed, Prairie Warbler has been found here in summer. Some northerly nesting species also pass through the park during the spring and fall seasons.

Although birding can be good for resident and irruptive northern species during the winter, roads into the park may not be drivable due to snow, so call

ahead for road conditions. Waterproof footgear may be helpful on most of the trails at any time of the year. There are no provisions for camping.

NE-16 Rogers City Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter****
DeLorme p.84, A3, 45°25' N, 83°49' W

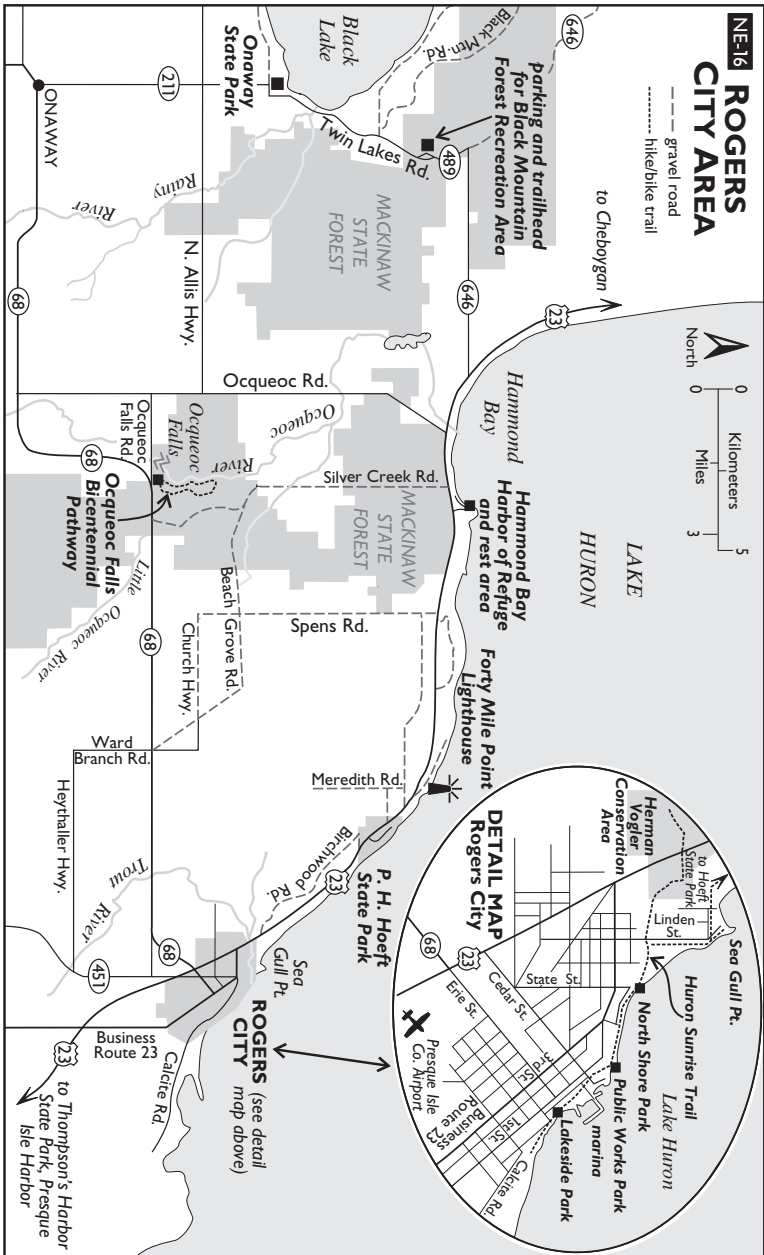
From Thompsons Harbor, return to US-23 and go north for approximately 13 miles to **Rogers City**. Check the harbor here for the usual migrating waterfowl and gulls. The **Huron Sunrise Trail** begins near the marina and passes through city parks and along the waterfront. It crosses a bridge over the Trout River and leads into the Herman Vogler Conservation Area, where there is a boardwalk through a wetland and a pond overlook. The Rogers City area has attracted some outstanding vagrants. During the winter of 2002, a Painted Bunting was found at a residential feeder just south of town, and the following November, a Painted Redstart made an appearance in town.

Just north of Rogers City is **Sea Gull Point**, which provides a good vantage point for passing waterbirds, especially in late autumn through early spring, if open water is available. A variety of gulls may be present, and Harlequin Duck and all three scoters have been observed.

Located just off M-68 about 10 miles west of Rogers City, **Ocqueoc Falls Bicentennial Pathway** has a series of loop hiking trails that follow the Ocqueoc River and provide good views of some small but beautiful waterfalls. The trails lead through habitat for resident warblers and migrant passerines.

Return to US-23 and go northwest from Rogers City for 3.3 miles to **P.H. Hoef State Park** (989-734-2543; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx). This is a lovely, small park with a mile of beach frontage on Lake Huron. In spring and fall, check the beach for shorebirds and the open water for waterfowl. Several short trails within the park can be good for migrant warblers and other passerines. The park is open for camping from April 15 to December 1. Just 2 miles north on US-23 is Forty Mile Drive, which goes east to the **Forty Mile Point Lighthouse**. The mixed pines and hardwoods provide a stopping place for thrushes, warblers, and sparrows in migration. Check the beach for shorebirds and the open waters of Lake Huron for passing waterfowl.

The **Black Mountain Forest Recreation Area**, part of the Mackinaw State Forest (www.michigandnr.com/publications/pdfs/ForestsLandWater/FMUmmap.asp), is a large, multi-use area with trails for cross-country skiing and hiking, ORV usage, mountain biking, and horseback riding. There is a short, fully accessible nature trail that provides chances to sample some of the birds that are resident as well as those that pass through in migration. The loop trails for hiking/cross-country skiing extend for several miles from the parking areas. This area can be reached by traveling northwest on US-23 from Rogers City for approximately 14 miles to CR 646. Go west of CR 646 for 6.0 miles



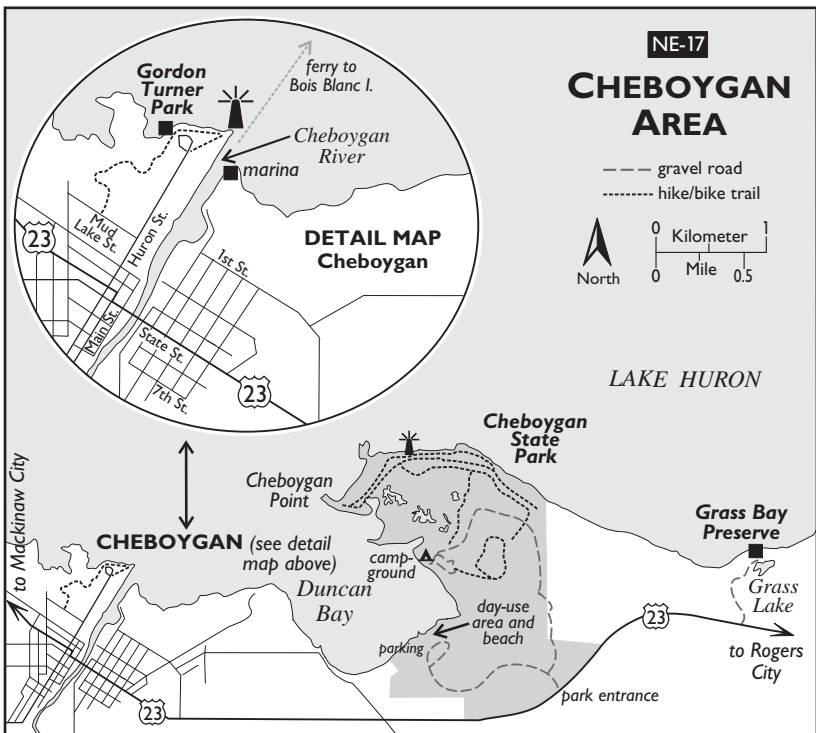
to Twin Lakes Road (CR 489) and left (south) for 0.7 mile to the parking area for the nature trail and the trailhead for the longer hiking/cross-country trails.

Hammond Bay Harbor of Refuge is located on Lake Huron just beyond a roadside park/rest area on US-23 at 12.6 miles northwest of Rogers City. A colony of Cliff Swallows nests in the rocks of the breakwall. Also check the pine trees separating the rest area from the harbor for migrating warblers and sparrows. Mute Swans and gulls are present in the harbor, with numbers highest in early spring and late fall. In migration, numerous Canvasbacks, Redheads, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, and mergansers can be seen.

NE-17 Cheboygan Area

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 95, C5, 45°39' N, 84°28' W

From the Hammond Bay Harbor of Refuge, it is about 12.4 miles west on US-23 (and 2 miles east of Cheboygan State Park) to the foot trail to the **Grass Bay Preserve**, which is accessible only on field trips organized by The Nature Conservancy of Michigan. The reserve consists of 750 acres of sand



dunes, marsh, and forest situated on two miles of Lake Huron shoreline. It is notable for its numerous species of flora, including Pitcher Plant, several rare orchids, and three species endemic to the Great Lakes region—Dwarf Lake Iris, Pitcher’s Thistle, and Houghton’s Goldenrod. In addition to its interesting plant life, the reserve is also home to a number of bird species, and is one of the few places on the Lake Huron shore of Michigan to find Prairie Warbler. Other nesters include Osprey, Bald Eagle, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Brown Creeper, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, American Redstart, and Chipping Sparrow. Check the beach for migrating shorebirds and the open water for waterfowl, including Common Loon. To protect against inadvertent damage to this fragile site, The Nature Conservancy limits access to guided field trips. For a schedule of trips (which are primarily for viewing the rare plants), contact the conservancy’s Lansing office at 517-316-0300, www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/michigan.

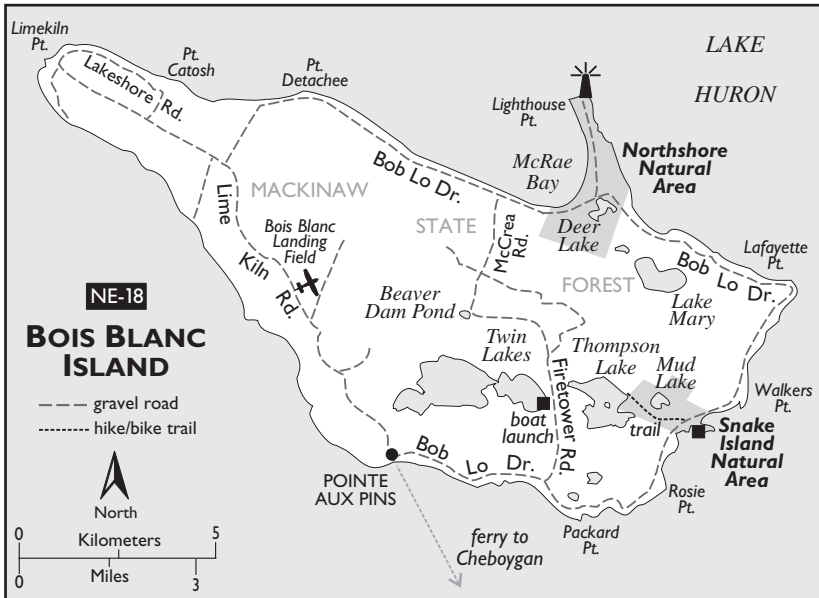
About two miles west of Grass Bay on US-23 is the entrance to **Cheboygan State Park** (231-627-2811; www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp). This scenic park, situated on a stretch of land that separates Duncan Bay from Lake Huron, has approximately 4.5 miles of shoreline and about 1,200 acres of diverse habitat. Several well-marked trails lead through the park and along the lakeshore, providing good opportunities to find local nesters such as Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatcher, Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers, Ovenbird, and Song and White-throated Sparrows. The trails that lead from the campground can be particularly rewarding. Waterproof boots may be necessary, and bug repellent is a must in late spring and early summer. Gulls congregate year round when the water is open along the beach near the day-use area, and shorebirds are present during migration. Migrant Boreal and Northern Saw-whet Owls have been banded here in small numbers (March–April and October–November). The park is open year round and has 74 excellent campsites.

Return to US-23 and continue north about 4.0 miles into the city of Cheboygan. Follow the signs to **Gordon Turner Park**, located at the mouth of the Cheboygan River and across from a marina. This pleasant public park has a boardwalk that passes through a wetland surrounded by a wooded area. The park attracts such nesting species as Common Merganser, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, and Tree Swallow, and is also a magnet for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds (on the beach), vireos, warblers, and sparrows.

NE-18 Bois Blanc Island

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme; p. 94 & 95, B,C5, 45° 46' N, 84° 27' W

Pronounced “*Bob-lo*” by Michigianians (and not to be confused with an island amusement park of the same name, located on the Detroit River), this beautiful, secluded island can be reached only by ferry from the city of



Cheboygan. Ferry service is provided by Plaunt Transportation Company, P.O. Box 2, Cheboygan, MI 49721; 888-752-8687, fax 231-627-6793. The dock is at 412 Water Street, with two or three daily departures from May through October, and more frequent service in mid-summer and on week-ends. From November through April, the schedule depends upon weather and ice conditions. Round-trip fares in 2003 were \$11.50 per adult and \$39.00 for adult and car.

Although the numerous bird species on Bois Blanc may be found just as easily in some of the sites already covered in this chapter or on the northern shore of Lake Huron (Eastern Upper Peninsula chapter), “Bob-lo” is a lovely island to visit and is an important stop for neotropical migrants. Although the entire shoreline offers good habitat for birds, much of it is privately owned. The best access is to the **Snake Island Natural Area** on the east side of the island. It is easy to reach by car, only about a 10-minute drive from the ferry dock. The natural area contains cedar swamp and fens, and has a trail leading inland past Miller Pond and Mud Lake to Thompson Lake. The trail, which becomes overgrown with vegetation in mid-summer and can be hard to find, is located on the west side of the road a few hundred feet south of Snake Island’s south bay. The Nature Conservancy has plans to better mark this trail in 2004. Common Loons and Bald Eagles nest here, as do American Black Ducks.

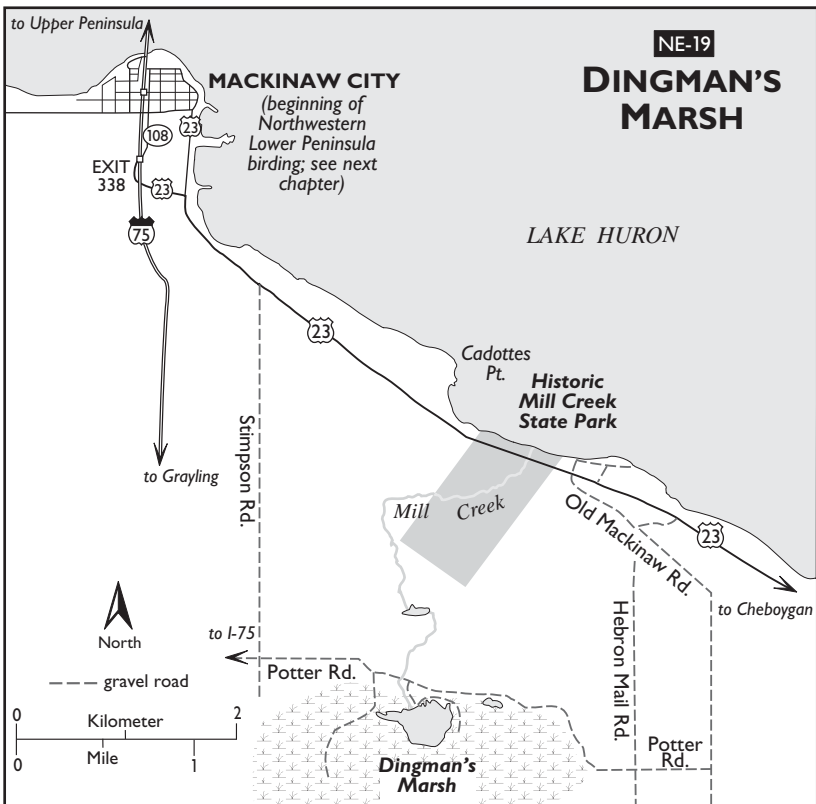
The birch and cedar along the east coast usually support nesting warblers, including Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, American Redstart, and Northern Waterthrush. Another good spot is **Twin Lakes**, especially the west end, where Osprey, Bald Eagles and Forster’s Terns have

nested. There is a public boat access to Twin Lakes at the east end off Firetower Road. The bay at the north end of the east part of Twin Lakes—near the connection between the two lakes—is an excellent place from which to view Common Loon, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and waterfowl by boat. There is another state natural area on the north shore of the island, which includes all but the northernmost eleven acres of **Lighthouse Point**. The restored lighthouse is now privately owned, but the forest remains in its natural old-growth state and is probably the best spot on the island for neotropical migrants. Check in at the lighthouse to obtain permission to bird the area on foot. The roads on the north shore from Lake Mary west to Pt. Catosh are passable only by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

NE-19 Dingman's Marsh

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter
DeLorme p. 94, B3, 45°47' N, 84°44' W

Once you are back on the mainland, continue northwest from Cheboygan on US-23 to reach the entrance to the **Historic Mill Creek State**



Park, just before Mackinaw City. This small park, while interesting from a Michigan historical perspective, also has a nature trail which may provide some opportunity to find resident and migratory birds.

Just south of Mackinaw City is **Dingman's Marsh**, which can be reached by going south from US-23 on Stimpson Road for about 2.0 miles. Turn east here onto Potter Road, where Dingman's Marsh will be to the south. Some of the species that nest in and around the marsh include Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Virginia Rail, Sora, Wilson's Snipe, Black Tern, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided and Alder Flycatchers, Blue-headed, Warbling, and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Wood Thrush, Chestnut-sided, Yellow, Black-and-white, Black-throated Green, and Mourning Warblers, Chipping, Field, Vesper, Savannah, Lincoln's, Swamp, and White-throated Sparrows, and Brewer's Blackbird.

The names Mackinac and Mackinaw are both correct spellings, and both are pronounced the same: *Mackinaw*. The Native Americans of the region called it *Michinnimakinong*, which translates as great fault land. They also called it the *Land of the Great Turtle* because Mackinac Island resembled a turtle. When the French arrived in the area in the early 1700s, they replaced the *nn* sound with *L*, the soft *sh* sound with *ch*, and changed the ending to *ac*, which they pronounced *aw*, thus calling it *Michilimackinac*. When the British arrived, they heard the ending pronounced as *aw* and again changed the spelling, shortening it to *Mackinaw*. Thus, the spellings of the city, straits, island, state forest, and bridge depends on who named them.

NOTE: *This Lake Huron shoreline route ends here, at Mackinaw City, which is also the beginning of the next chapter, Northwestern Lower Peninsula. Some birders may wish to begin their Northwestern Lower Peninsula birding at this point.*

THE M-33 CORRIDOR

By Jerry Ziarno

Michigan Highway 33, which passes through the heart of the Northeastern Lower Peninsula, has many excellent birding spots along the road as it crosses the Au Sable River and passes through a major portion of the Kirtland's Warbler nesting area, eventually ending at the city of Cheboygan on Lake Huron. This route begins in the town of Standish at the intersection of I-75 and US-23.

NE-20 Rifle River Recreation Area

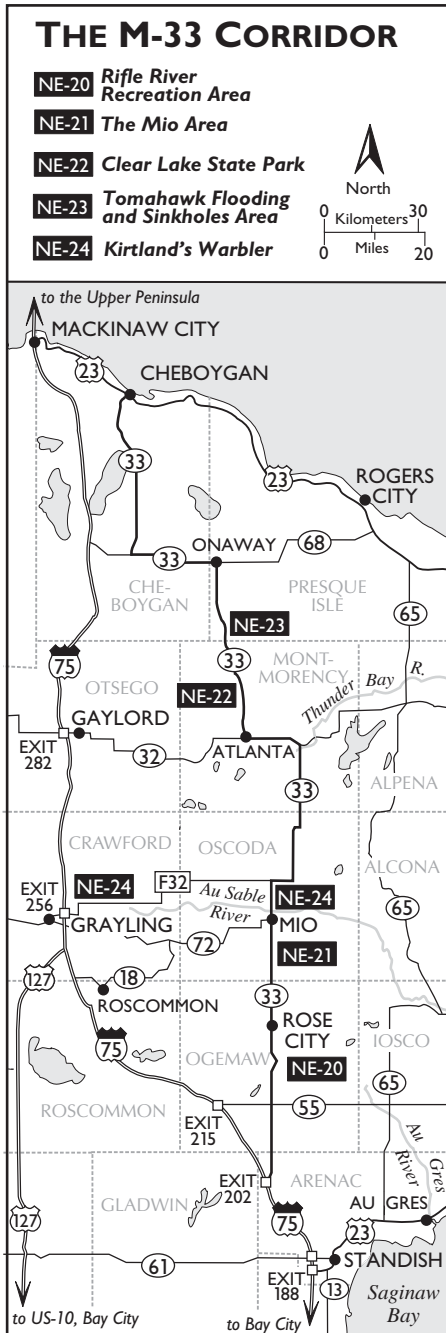
Spring*** Summer**
Fall** Winter*

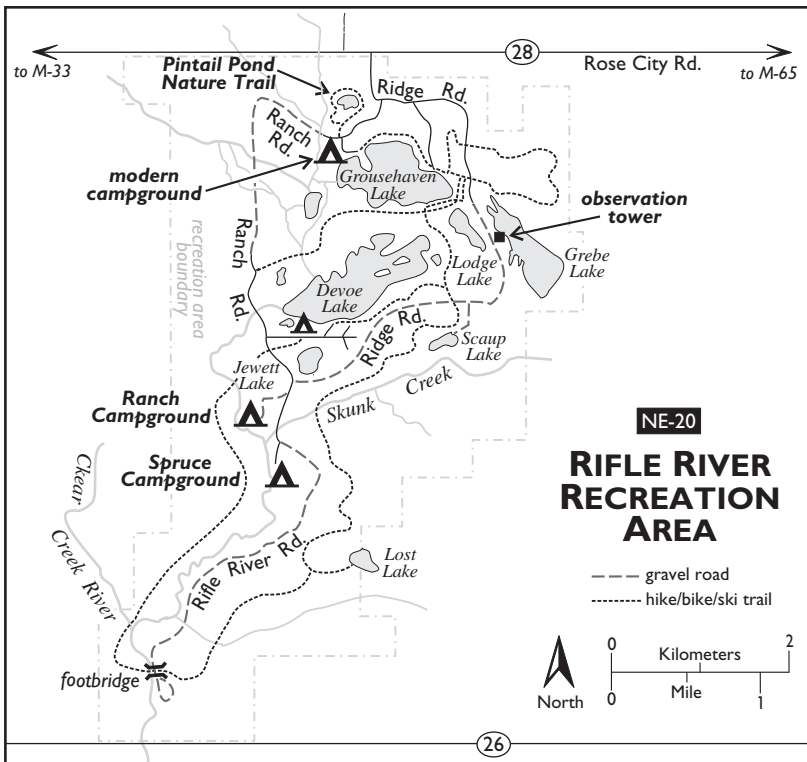
DeLorme p. 79, A1. 44°24' N, 84°01' W

Contact Information: 989-473-2258

Directions: From the intersection of I-75 and US-23 (Exit 188) in Standish, go north on I-75 for 15 miles to Exit 202, where M-33 goes north for 17.5 miles to Rose City. At Rose City, turn east onto Rose City Road (F-28) and go 4.5 miles to the entrance. See map on next page.

The Rifle River Recreation Area, a delightful wilderness area of 4,440 acres, was formerly a private hunting and fishing club known as Grousehaven. In 1945, it was purchased by the State of Michigan for use as a field laboratory for wildlife research. It was later transferred to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and renamed the Rifle River





Recreation Area. The area contains 11 lakes ranging in size from five to 54 acres, a large modern campground, several rustic campgrounds, rustic trailside cabins, 14 miles of foot trails, boat accesses to many of the lakes, and day-use areas for picnics and swimming. Motorized boats, including jet skis, are not allowed on any of the lakes, but paddling out to the islands in Grebe and Devoe Lakes can be productive for birds. Purple Martins nest on the islands.

The combination of wooded ridges, grasslands, moist bottomlands, cedar swamps, stream edges, and lakes provide habitat for a number of year-round resident birds, summer nesters, and migrant species. Breeding birds in the recreation area include Common Loon, Wilson's Snipe, Black Tern, Barred Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Sedge Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Golden-winged, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green and Yellow Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping and White-throated Sparrows, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole. Ruffed Grouse may also be seen along the roads, and Whip-poor-wills can be heard in the late evening. Eastern

Screech-Owl and Great Horned and Barred Owls are fairly common residents, and Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, and Red-tailed Hawk may be seen any time throughout the year.

In winter, you may see Northern Shrike, Common Raven, Snow Bunting, White-winged Crossbill, and Common Redpoll (look carefully for a Hoary). Ridge Road is not plowed during winter.

From the entrance, take Ranch Road to the right for a short distance to the trailhead for the Pintail Pond Nature Trail, located across from the entrance to the modern campground. This interpretive trail takes about an hour to walk, with opportunities to find summering warblers. It can also be quite lively in mid-May during migration. However, the best area for spring birding is **Ridge Road**, which goes south and follows a ridge past Grousehaven Lake and between Lodge and Grebe Lakes. In March and April, Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, and Horned Grebe may be found on any of these lakes. During migration in late April through May, numerous passerines work their way along the ridge, often providing excellent views. These can include Olive-sided and Willow Flycatchers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Brown Thrasher, Tennessee, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Magnolia, Palm, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, and Wilson's Warblers, and Northern Waterthrush. Also look for Song, Swamp, and White-crowned Sparrows, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak along this road. In spring and summer, the short road leading from Ridge Road to Scaup Lake can be productive for Pileated Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes.

Ridge Road splits into two roads just past the parking area for Jewett Lake on the right. Rifle River Road follows the Rifle River in a southerly direction, past the entrance to the Ranch Campground, through cedar swamps, flooded deciduous bottomlands, and grasslands, and ends near a footbridge over the river. Ranch Campground and the area along the river near here is another good spot for both spring and fall migrants. (The other road, Ranch Road, winds to the north back to the park entrance.)

NE-21 The Mio Area

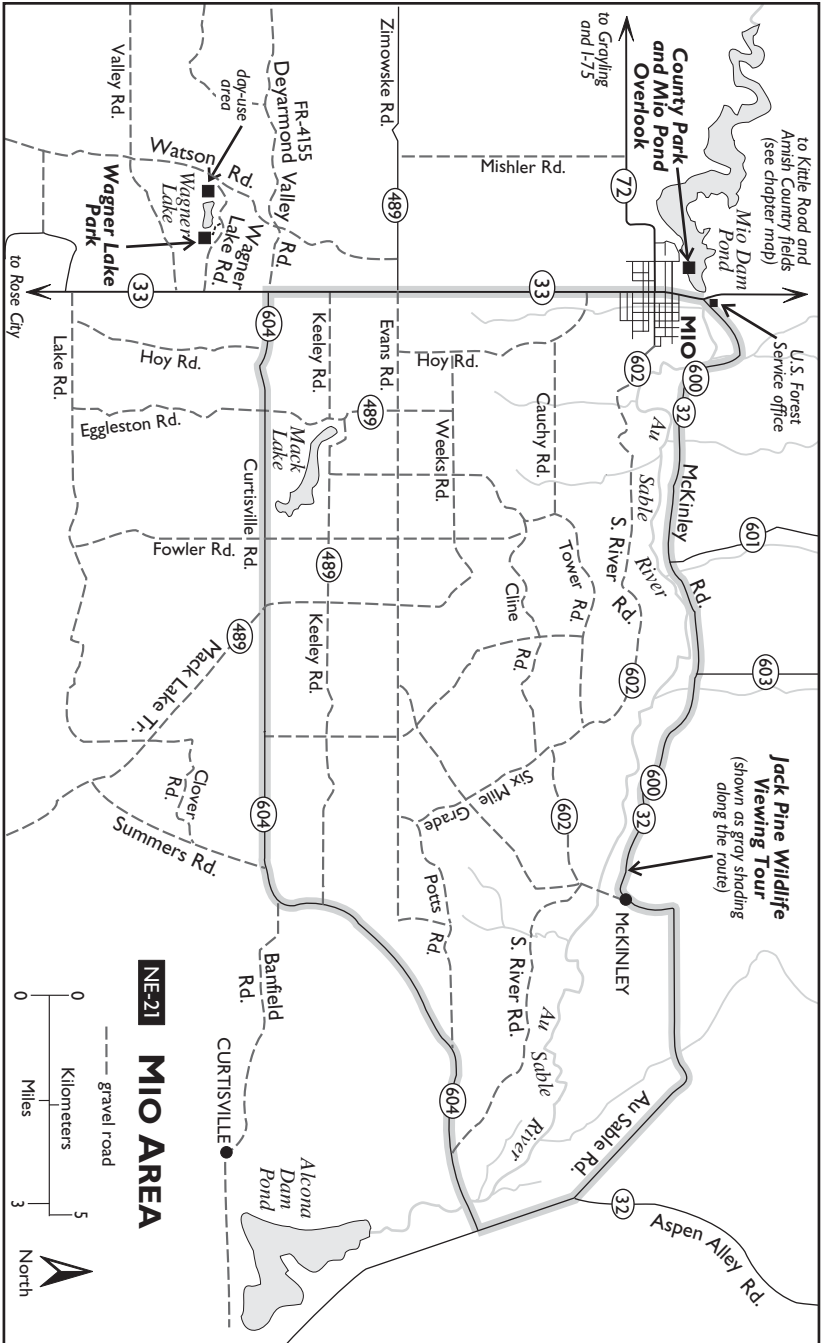
*Spring**** Summer** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme pp. 77 & 78. 44°39' N, 84°08' W

Mio is in the middle of a vast area being managed for Kirtland's Warbler habitat. Because most birders visiting Michigan have Kirtland's Warbler at the top of their lists of desirable species, a separate section of this chapter is devoted entirely to the species (see page 249). There are, however, other habitats and other species in the **Mio Area** that are of interest, including Upland Sandpiper, Black-billed Cuckoo, and a long list of breeding warblers. In Mio, you can obtain maps and information on the Huron National Forest from the U.S. Forest Service office, 107 McKinley Road (CO 600). See map on page 243.

To reach the **Wagner Lake Area**, good for migrant and nesting passerines (including Kirtland's Warbler), go north on M-33 from Rose City for 10.0 miles (or south from Mio on M-33 for 6.0 miles) to Deyarmond Valley Road (FR 4155); see next map. Turn west and go 0.8 mile to Watson Road. At this point, a small two-track forest service road (FR 4467) goes off to the north. To the west lies a large stand of Jack Pines managed (and signposted) for Kirtland's Warbler. This intersection is a good place to listen for the bird's distinctive song in late May to early July; one can often be seen singing from the top of the pines. Continue on Watson Road south for 1.1 miles to Wagner Lake Road. Along these roads you should find nesting Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Barn Swallow, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Nashville Warbler, Field Sparrow, and Indigo Bunting. West of the intersection of Watson Road and Wagner Lake Road is an open area where you may be able to find Clay-colored, Field, Vesper, Savannah, and Lincoln's Sparrows, and possibly an Upland Sandpiper. Go east on Wagner Lake Road for about 0.2 mile to a small road to the south that leads to a day-use park area on Wagner Lake. In this area and to the north of Wagner Lake Road, you may find, among other nesting passerines, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, and Eastern Towhee. To continue the route, return east on Wagner Lake Road to M-33 north to Mio.

The Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour is a scenic, 58-mile self-guided tour through the Au Sable River Valley, part of which includes the unique Jack Pine habitat where the endangered Kirtland's Warbler nests. However, your chance of seeing or hearing a Kirtland's Warbler from this route is not very good, as the nesting areas off the road are closed to public entry (see the next chapter on the Kirtland's Warbler.) *Under no circumstances should you enter the nesting areas designated by "Closed to Entry" signs.* However, this tour does offer the possibility of seeing Ruffed Grouse (resident), Wild Turkey, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk (late fall into early spring), Upland Sandpiper, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Nashville Warbler, Clay-colored, Vesper, and Lincoln's Sparrows, and Brewer's Blackbird. You can begin the tour at the Deyarmond Road/M-33 intersection described above, where CO 604 goes east from M-33. The tour route is well-marked by signposts located at frequent intervals on the roadside. The route follows CO 604 to Au Sable Road and returns on CO 600/F32, ending at M-33, just north of the Au Sable River bridge on the north edge of Mio.

The Mack Lake Trail/Summers Road Area is a productive side trip from the Jack Pine Tour. Take CO 604 for 5.0 miles east of M-33 and turn right (south) onto Mack Lake Trail (CO 489) for 4.9 miles. At this point, Summers Road winds to the east and north to re-join CO 604. In the heavily forested areas along both of these roads, you may find nesting Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstart, and Canada Warbler. On the forest edges and in open farmland and wet meadows, Black-billed Cuckoo,



NE-21 MIO AREA



Red-headed Woodpecker, Alder and Willow Flycatchers, Grasshopper and White-throated Sparrows, and Bobolink are usually present. Summers Road has Whip-poor-wills and, rarely, a Northern Saw-whet Owl in summer.

The **Mio Pond Overlook**, a county park and campground just west of Mio on the south bank of the pond, provides good views of the pond. Here in early spring, concentrations of ducks, together with Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Great Blue and Green Herons, Bald Eagle, Osprey, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows, may be observed. During late spring and summer, Red-headed Woodpecker, Pine Warbler, and other passerines may be seen in the wooded areas at the park.

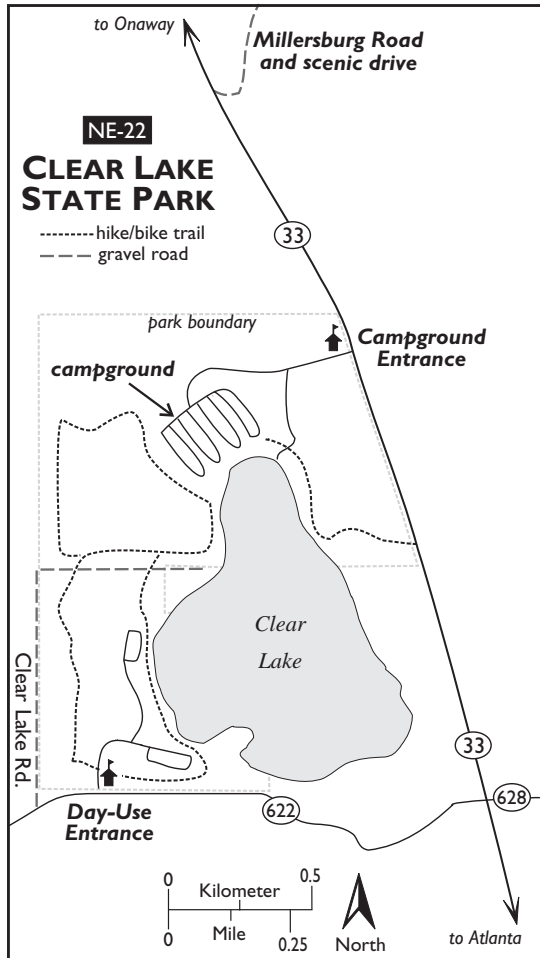
The **Amish Country** is an area north of Mio with rolling farmland, woodlots, and wetlands, and populated mostly by Amish farmers, whose tra-

ditional farming practices usually leave sufficient food and cover to attract wildlife. Go north from Mio on M-72/M-33 for 3.0 miles to Kittle Road. You can make a loop trip here by going west on Kittle Road for 3.0 miles to Bills Road, north for 1.0 mile to Kneeland Road, and east for 3.0 miles back to M-72/M-33. In summer, the hayfields usually hold Upland Sandpiper, Boblink, and Brewer's Blackbird, while Sedge Wren, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Dickcissel (rare) have been noted on occasion. During spring and fall migrations, Sandhill Crane, American Pipit, and Lapland Longspur (also uncommon in winter) are regular. In winter, Rough-legged Hawks and Snow Buntings are abundant, and Snowy and Short-eared Owls, Northern Shrike, Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak, and White-winged Crossbill are all possible.

NE-22 Clear Lake State Park

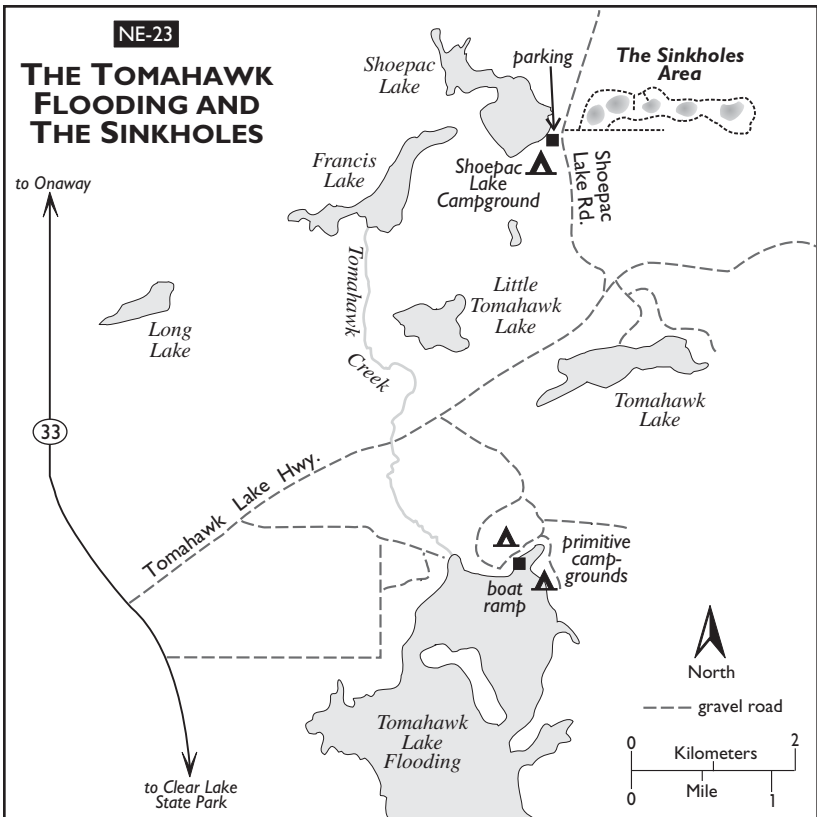
Spring*** Summer**
 Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 83, C7.
 45°08' N, 84°10' W
 Contact Information:
 989-785-4388;
www.michigandnr.com/park/sandtrails/parklist.asp

This nicely situated park, near Michigan's Elk country and on the shore of Clear Lake, has trails that pass through excellent wooded habitat. The 290-acre park occupies two-thirds of the Clear Lake shoreline and has 200 campsites. From Atlanta, go north on M-33 for 8.6 miles to CO 628 and turn left (west) to the turn for the Clear Lake State Park day-use area. One mile farther north on M-33 is the campground and a nature trail that leads back to the day-use area. A walk along one of these trails in late May and



early June may produce Common Nighthawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Nashville and Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstart, Eastern Towhee, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The headquarters maintains feeders during the winter where Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches are regular, and Evening Grosbeak is possible.

Nearby is an interesting, marked, 48.5-mile scenic drive which starts at Millersburg Road (0.4 mile north of the park entrance) and heads east from M-33 through Michigan's Elk country. Here you can see the only existing herd of wild American Elk in the eastern U.S. Elk, once native here, were extirpated over 100 years ago. They were reintroduced into this area in 1918 and now number about 1,200–1,400 animals and, although there is a closely controlled hunt in the fall, many of the Elk are of trophy size. The best time for viewing the animals is during spring and fall in the early morning and evening hours. Mating and bugling takes place in August to October. Elk are magnificent but dangerous; do not approach them closely at this season. Information on the best viewing sites can be



obtained from the Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta Field Office, Rt. 1, PO Box 30, Atlanta, MI 49709; 989-785-4252.

NE-23 Tomahawk Flooding and Sinkholes Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 83, C7, 45°13' N, 84°10' W

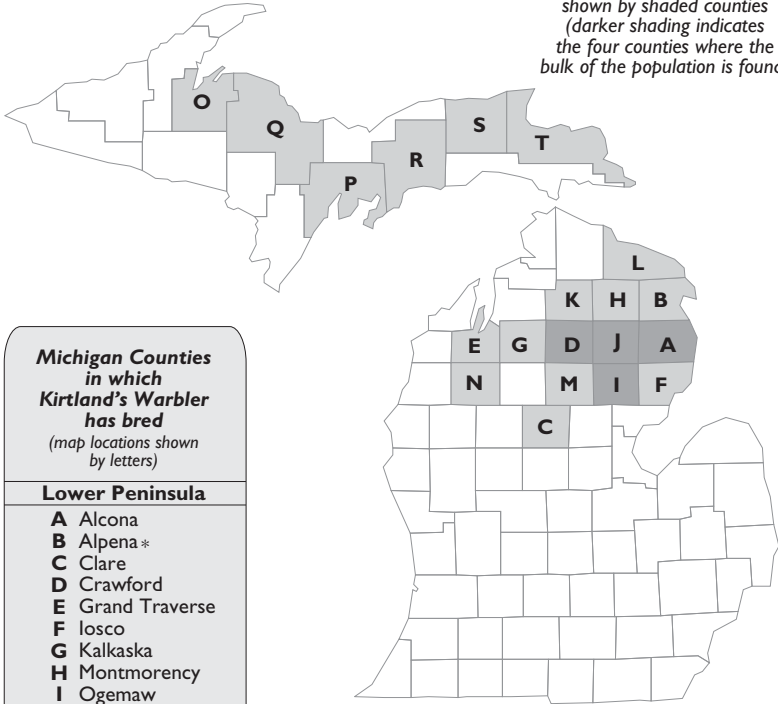
Directions: *From the entrance to Clear Lake State Park, go north on M-33 for 7.0 miles and turn right (east) onto Tomahawk Lake Highway. Go about 1.5 miles east to a gravel road to the southeast that leads to the wildlife flooding area.*

The gravel entrance road leads to a nice campground on the west side (there is boat access), and continues around the north end of the flooding to another campground on the east shore. Common Loon, Osprey, and Bald Eagle nest here, as do dabbling ducks. The surrounding forested areas are home to Ruffed Grouse and many of the same species as at Clear Lake State Park. Continue on Tomahawk Lake Highway for another 1.0 mile to Shoepac Lake Road, which leads north to a campground and parking area for a system of trails that take you through the “Sinkholes” area.

The “Sinkholes” were formed as underground water dissolved the underlying limestone rock and the resulting caves then collapsed, creating deep circular holes. Shoepac Lake is actually made up of several of these sinkholes which were sealed off from underground drainage. This 2,600-acre area is closed to motorized traffic, but a marked trail around the five major sinkholes and a system of fire lanes provide foot access. The walk around the sinkholes in late spring and early summer offers the chance to view nesting species such as Northern Goshawk, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, and Baltimore Oriole.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER IN MICHIGAN

Breeding Range
shown by shaded counties
(darker shading indicates
the four counties where
the bulk of the population is found)



**Michigan Counties
in which
Kirtland's Warbler
has bred**
(map locations shown
by letters)

Lower Peninsula

- A** Alcona
- B** Alpena*
- C** Clare
- D** Crawford
- E** Grand Traverse
- F** Iosco
- G** Kalkaska
- H** Montmorency
- I** Ogemaw
- J** Oscoda
- K** Otsego
- L** Presque Isle
- M** Roscommon
- N** Wexford*

* no records since 1977

Upper Peninsula

- O** Baraga
- P** Delta
- Q** Marquette
- R** Schoolcraft
- S** Luce
- T** Chippewa

**Counts of Singing Male
Kirtland's Warblers**

County	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Alcona	171	140	166	175	208	205
Baraga	8	2	0	1	0	3
Chippewa	1	2	5	8	12	9
Clare	64	113	138	147	141	137
Crawford	217	227	275	290	287	326
Delta	3	6	7	7	10	14
Grand Traverse	1	1	2	1	2	0
Iosco	105	131	172	238	191	180
Kalkaska	19	11	5	4	10	40
Luce	1	4	0	0	1	0
Marquette	0	0	3	8	6	3
Montmorency	7	14	10	14	11	23
Ogemaw	451	479	493	529	627	571
Oscoda	225	209	149	198	210	226
Otsego	35	47	35	43	40	27
Presque Isle	1	0	0	6	5	7
Roscommon	36	26	13	20	25	38
Schoolcraft	4	4	6	8	5	4
TOTAL	1341	1416	1479	1697	1791	1813

Data courtesy of the Michigan
Department of Natural Resources
(updated January 2010)

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

By Jerry Ziarno

Most visiting birders arrive in Michigan with one primary avian target, the Kirtland's Warbler, also known locally as the Jack Pine Warbler. (The Jack Pine requires fire in order to open its cones and drop the seeds, thus giving rise to another colloquial name for the Kirtland's—"bird of fire.") It is one of the world's rarest birds, with a breeding range restricted almost solely to Jack Pine forests of a specific size and age located in the northern counties of the Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

Interestingly, the bird was not discovered in Michigan, but was first described from a specimen collected in Ohio in 1851 by Charles Pease, and named for his father-in-law, Dr. Jared P. Kirtland. The wintering grounds on Andros Island, Bahamas, were discovered in 1879, but it was not until 1903 that the Kirtland's Warbler and a nest were first found in Michigan, in western Oscoda County.

Kirtland's Warbler nests only in large tracts (over 80 acres) of Jack Pines where the trees are usually from five to twenty feet in height and from approximately six to twenty years of age. The nest is built on the ground under or near the larger, lowest branches of these trees. It is estimated that each pair requires as much as six to ten acres of Jack Pine habitat to raise a brood of young birds. In the past, frequent forest fires destroyed the older Jack Pines and opened up the cones to release the seeds to regenerate these forests, providing an ever-present acreage of trees of the optimum size and age. Serious, well-intentioned efforts to control forest fires in the 1950s and 1960s, however, were detrimental to the growth of these new stands of trees and had a correspondingly negative effect on the population growth of the Kirtland's Warbler. Another threat to nesting success was the increase in the population of the Brown-headed Cowbird in Michigan. Cowbirds are brood parasites and, as they moved into the Kirtland's habitat, they parasitized the Kirtland's Warbler nests. Unfortunately, the warbler never developed the methods to combat the cowbird's aggressiveness and, in the early 1970s, the Kirtland's Warbler nesting production was severely reduced.

To increase nesting success, the Fish and Wildlife Service established the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team in 1973, which included representatives from the Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and interested citizens. The team's goal was to increase the number of breeding pairs of Kirtland's Warblers to 1,000 pairs. As part of a concentrated effort to accomplish this goal, approximately 150,000 acres of land has been set aside by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Michigan DNR to create breeding habitat for the warbler. Each year, a certain quantity of acreage is clear-cut or burned, and new seedlings are planted to ensure that 30,000 acres of suitable nesting habitat will always be available. In addition, a program to remove cow-

birds from these nesting areas was initiated in 1972, which removed almost 60,000 cowbirds from the warbler's nesting habitat through 1988, and today the parasitism rate is greatly reduced (less than five percent); the cowbird removal program remains in place.

The population level of the Kirtland's Warbler is currently monitored by an annual count of singing males; each singing male is considered to represent a nesting pair. The first count in 1951 located 432 singing males, the second, in 1961, found 502 males but, in 1971, the count was down to only 201 males. Since then, counts have been done on an annual basis, early in June. Numbers continued to drop somewhat, with low counts of only 167 singing males recorded in 1974 and 1987. The counts then increased, starting in 1990 with 265 males. The large, accidental Mack Lake fire in 1980 that burned nearly 24,000 acres, combined with the extensive habitat creation and parasite control efforts, began to have positive results. The count in 2001 was 1,083 singing males, and in 2002 the count was down only slightly to 1,052. A total of 1,202 males was counted in 2003, and new record total of 1,813 was recorded in 2009. A few singing males have also been recorded in Wisconsin, Ontario, and Québec.

The males arrive at the breeding grounds sometime between May 3 and May 20, and females arrive a few days later. To be on the safe side, a trip to the Kirtland's breeding area should be timed for after May 15 and before June 20. Egg laying usually takes place in late May, and incubation takes 13 to 16 days, with the average production per pair being three or more young per year. Fledglings develop quickly, leaving the nest within 9 days. By the end of the third week, they can feed on their own, and parental feeding ceases by the fifth week. The warblers begin to leave the breeding grounds in late August and, by mid-September, all of the birds have departed for the wintering grounds in the Bahamas.

Because the nesting areas are not open to the public, the easiest and most recommended method to see an endangered Kirtland's Warbler is to take one of the guided tours into the nesting areas. In addition to allowing *the only* access into the breeding habitat, the expert, professional guides are also intimately familiar with the current location of singing males, thereby greatly increasing a visitor's chance of having good views of a singing bird.

At both Mio and Grayling, the tours start with a brief presentation and video/slide presentation on the Kirtland's Warbler. Participants will then follow the tour leader (in their own vehicles) for approximately 20–30 minutes to one of the breeding sites. Once there, the tour guide will usually ask you to park your car and walk a short distance on a trail into the Jack Pines to listen for the loud, distinctive song of the male warbler. Usually, several birds will be heard and at least one will perch high enough in a tree to allow for good binocular or scope views. Tours normally last 1.5 to 3 hours. A spotting scope will be helpful. Cameras are permitted but you will not be allowed off the trail to approach the birds for closer photo opportunities. Tape recorders are not allowed, nor are pets or smoking. Your chance of seeing a Kirtland's Warbler

Kirtland's Warbler Tours

The **U.S. Forest Service** tours run daily from May 15 through early July from Mio. Mio can be reached from I-75 by taking M-33 (Exit 202) north for 31.0 miles to Mio. From northbound M-33 in Mio, pass McDonald's, go down the hill, and turn right (east) onto McKinley Road. Turn left into the first driveway. Tours start at 7:00 a.m., at a cost of \$5.00 per person; reservations are not required. For more information, contact the U.S. Forest Service, Mio Ranger District, 107 McKinley Road, Mio, MI 48647-9314; 989-826-3252; www.fs.fed.us/r9/hmfn/kw.

The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** tours depart from the Holiday Inn in Grayling twice daily from May 15 through July 4. Grayling is located just off I-75, approximately 200 miles from Detroit and 96 miles from Bay City. The Holiday Inn is on the I-75 Business Loop at the south entrance into Grayling. The two daily tours depart at 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. There is no charge for this tour. For information and group reservations, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, East Lansing Field Office, 2651 Coolidge Road, East Lansing, MI 48823; 517-351-2555; www.midwest.fws.gov/EastLansing/tour.html, or the Holiday Inn, 2650 S. I-75 Business Loop, P.O. Box 473, Grayling, MI 49738; 989-348-7611 or 800-292-9055.

The **Kirtland's Warbler Festival** is sponsored by Kirtland Community College and usually takes place on the third weekend of May. Tours to the Kirtland's Warbler nesting areas are run daily during the weekend festival and depart from the festival grounds at the College. Kirtland Community College can be reached from I-75/M-55 by going northwest from West Branch (Exit 215) for 7.0 miles to St. Helen Road/CO 600 (Exit 222). Go north on CO 600 for 5.0 miles to the village of St. Helen. Continue north on CO F97 for 7.5 miles to the college campus. For more information, contact the Kirtland's Warbler Festival, Kirtland Community College, 10775 North St. Helen Road, Roscommon, MI 48653; 989-275-5121; <http://warbler.kirtland.edu>.

For lodging and other travel information for the area, contact the Grayling Area Visitors Council, 800-937-8837, www.grayling-mi.com.

on one of these tours is said to be greater than 90 percent. If you have only one day available for your visit, one way to double your chances is to catch the 7:00 a.m. tour at Mio and, if unsuccessful, drive the 32 miles (45 minutes) to Grayling for the 11:00 a.m. tour.

Biting insects can be a problem in this area, so repellent is highly recommended. While temperatures in this area in late May and June are usually

quite moderate, it can be cool, especially for the early morning tours, and a light jacket may come in handy.

Other birds that you may see in this habitat while on a warbler tour include Upland Sandpiper, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, Nashville and Black-and-white Warblers, Clay-colored, Field, Vesper, and Lincoln's Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, Indigo Bunting, and Brewer's Blackbird.

In the event you are unable to join one of the guided tours but want to find a Kirtland's Warbler on your own, the best way is to drive the roads that border or pass through the nesting habitat, stopping frequently to listen for the distinctive song. With patience, the singing male may perch up on the top of one of the Jack Pines or other neighboring trees, allowing a good view. Patient birders can be rewarded with good views simply by standing quietly and waiting. The warblers are curious, and will occasionally approach closely (*no "pishing" required, nor is it allowed*). A scope can be helpful.

Among the several areas that have been reliable for singing Kirtland's Warblers are:

- The area southwest of Mio at Watson and Deyarmond Valley Roads (DeLorme p. 77, D7, 44°34' N, 84°08' W; see map on page 243).
- The Mack Lake area (DeLorme p.78, D1, 44°34' N, 84°04' W; see map on page 243) located southeast of Mio.
- The area located northeast of Grayling near the intersection of CO F32 (North Down River Road) and Bald Hill Road (DeLorme p. 77, C5, 44°42' N, 84°29' W).
- The area north of West Branch centered on the intersection of Perry Holt and Turney Ranch Roads (DeLorme p. 69, A6, 44°27' N, 84°17' W).

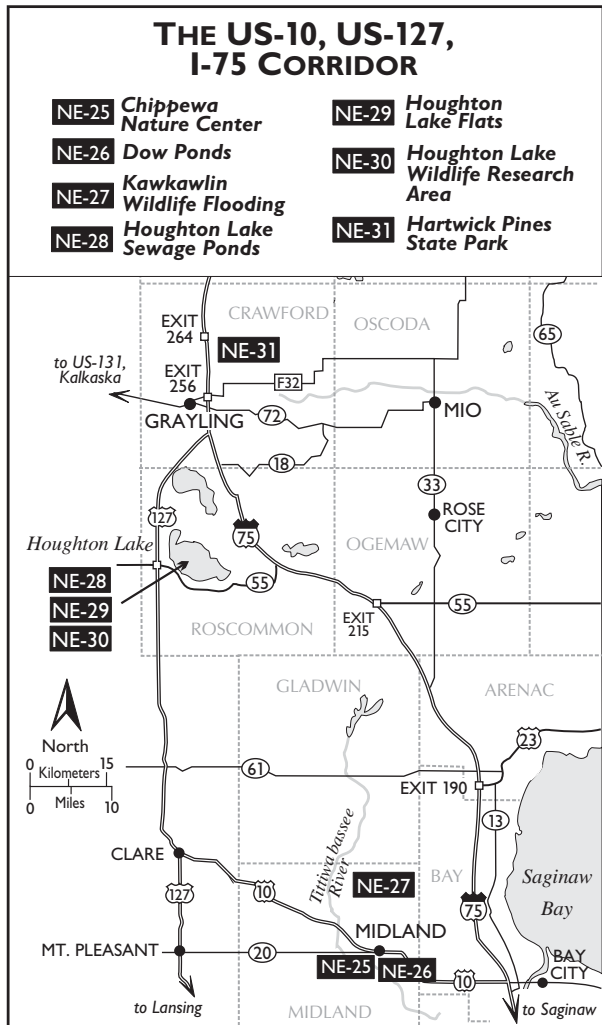
Please remember to observe the following rules: *Do not enter any areas posted as being closed and stay on the road. Do not play tapes of the bird's song or let pets wander into the breeding area. Do not disturb these endangered birds in any way.*

Additional information is available from the **Michigan Department of Natural Resources**, Natural Heritage Program Office, Wildlife, P.O. Box 30180, Lansing, MI 48909-7680; 517-373-1263; www.michigan.gov/dnr.

THE US-10, US-127, I-75 CORRIDOR

By Jerry Ziarno

This section covers a route through the heart of the Lower Peninsula and traverses varied habitats from urban areas to dry, deciduous forests, stands of old pines, wetlands, reservoirs, ponds, and large lakes. Many sites are within close proximity of an excellent highway system, but still provide nesting habitat for species that are on many birders' most-wanted lists, including Yellow Rail, and Golden-winged, Pine, and Cerulean Warblers. During spring (from late April through early June) and fall (from late August through October) migrations, good numbers of herons and shorebirds, as well as vireos, warblers, and sparrows, pass through the area. A trip here in late fall through early spring could produce large numbers of waterfowl, including Long-tailed Duck, and feeders can attract Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, and Eve-



ning Grosbeak. This route also travels through nesting habitat of the Kirtland's Warbler, covered in the previous section.

The Midland Area: Home to the large chemical firm, The Dow Chemical Company, Midland also has several good spots for visiting birders. Midland can be reached by going west on US-10 for 15.0 miles from I-75 near Bay City. To enter the city from the east on US-10, take Business 10/M-20 west and follow East Patrick Road and West Indian Street into the heart of the city. Alternately, approaching from the north, take the exit for Business 10/Eastman Road south into Midland.

NE-25 Chippewa Nature Center

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 59, D6, 43°36' N, 84°17' W

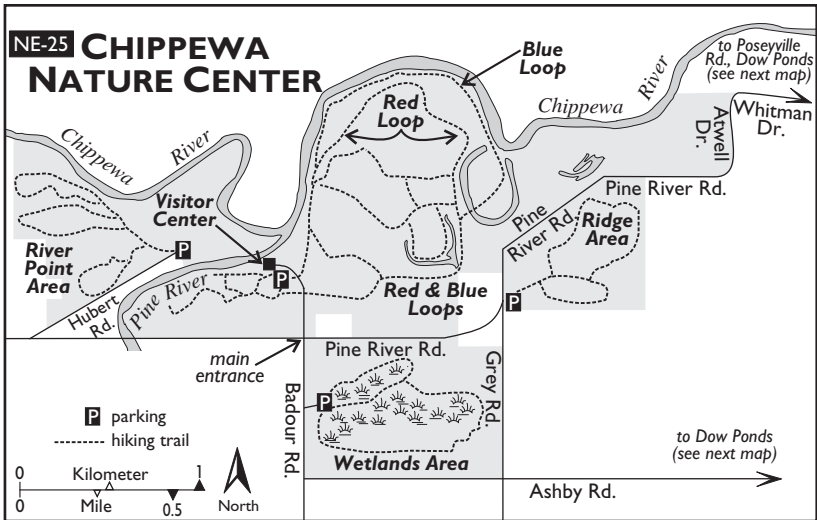
Contact Information: 989-631-0830; www.chippewanaturecenter.org

Directions: *From Business 10/M-20 in the city of Midland, go southeast on Cronkright Street (a one-way street) and cross the bridge over the Tittabawassee River. From the bridge, where Cronkright becomes Poseyville Road, take the first right turn onto St. Charles Street. Go left onto Whitman Drive at the Y-intersection, and follow this road for 2.8 miles as it makes several sharp turns and becomes Atwell Drive and then Pine River Road. Turn north onto Badour Road and follow the signs to the nature center.*

Located at the confluence of the Chippewa and Pine Rivers, the **Chippewa Nature Center** consists of 1,032 acres of woodlands, wetlands, and upland fields with 14 miles of nature trails. The visitor center maintains a feeding station outside an excellent glassed-in wildlife viewing area. The center also has a river overlook room that extends out over the river, permitting good views, upstream and downstream, of the Pine River. More than 220 species of birds have been recorded from these varied habitats, and approximately 90 species have nested on the property.

For riparian woodland species, walk the Red Loop trail from the visitor center through beech-maple woods and past several ponds. Breeding birds that may be seen in late spring through summer include Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, Great Horned Owl, Red-headed, Red-bellied, and Pileated Woodpeckers, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-throated, Warbling, and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Wood Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Orchard and Baltimore Orioles.

For grassland birds, waterfowl, and other marsh species, hike the trails at the Wetlands Area, which is reached by returning from the visitor center south on Badour Road. Cross Pine River Road and continue south for 0.2 mile to the Wetlands entrance on the east side of the road. A series of loop trails lead around several ponds and through grasslands and forest-edge habitats. Among the birds breeding in this area are Blue-winged Teal, Pied-billed



Grebe, Green Heron, American Kestrel, Spotted Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, Tree, Northern Rough-winged, Bank, and Barn Swallows, and Field, Vesper, Savannah, and Song Sparrows.

Migrating birds stop over at the Chippewa Nature Center property in fairly large numbers. In late March and April in the Wetlands Area, you may find Tundra Swan, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, American and Least Bitterns, Osprey, both yellowlegs, Solitary and Least Sandpipers, Wilson's Snipe, and Common and Forster's Terns. In the woodland areas from late April through May and again in late September through October, Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, both kinglets, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, and Fox, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows pass through. Migrant warblers usually seen in spring and fall include Orange-crowned, Nashville, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Palm, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Black-and-white Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning, Wilson's, and Canada Warblers. Unusual sightings, usually in late spring and early fall, at have included Little Blue Heron, Upland Sandpiper, Prothonotary Warbler, and Grass-opper Sparrow.

Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers (and, rarely, hybrid Brewster's Warblers) breed at the edges of the woodland and grassland habitat at the River Point property. To reach this section from the visitor center, return to Pine River Road, turn west, and go 0.8 mile to a hard right turn onto Hubert Road. Proceed for 0.5 mile to the parking area at the end of the road for the three loop trails. In winter, check the feeders at the viewing areas for

Dark-eyed Junco, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin, and look for Horned Larks and Snow Buntings along the roads on the way to the center.

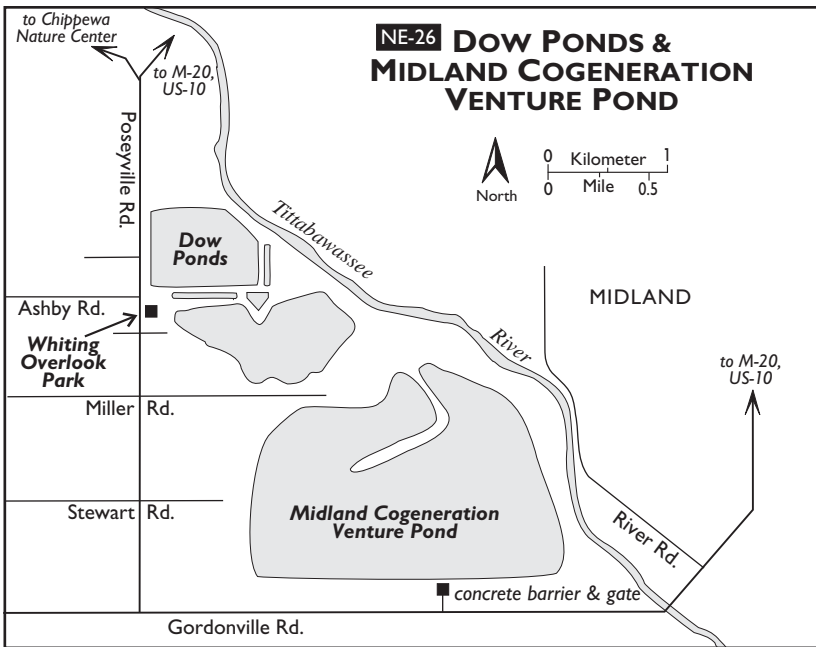
NE-26 Dow Ponds and the Midland Cogeneration Venture Cooling Pond

*Spring**** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 59, D6, 43°35' N, 84°14' W*

Directions: To reach the Dow Ponds from the Chippewa Nature Center, return to the intersection of St. Charles Street and Poseyville Road. Go south on Poseyville for 1.0 mile to the traffic light at Ashby Road. The entrance to the Whiting Overlook Park is just past this intersection on the left (east) side of the road. (Note: the ponds are not shown on the latest edition of DeLorme, and are located east of Poseyville Road, west of the Tittabawassee River, and north of Gordonville Road.)

Dow Ponds, settling ponds owned by the Dow Chemical Company, do not have public access. However, the Whiting Overlook Park is located on a small hill that provides good views of the closest ponds. A scope will be helpful. The ponds hold numbers of waterfowl, gulls, and terns for most of the year (as long there is open water), but are most exciting during migration in March through May in and again in September through October. If the water levels are low enough to expose mudflats, numerous shorebirds also stop by the ponds during migration. Migrant waterfowl include Gadwall, American Black Duck, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck (hundreds in April), Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, large numbers of Ruddy Ducks (hundreds in fall), Common Loon, and Horned Grebe. Other migratory visitors include Osprey, Bonaparte's Gull, Caspian Tern, and Northern Shrike. Common Terns have nested on a small island in the northernmost pond. Eared Grebe was an annual visitor in past years, but has not been reported recently. Red-necked Grebe (rare) has been reported as have all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck (uncommon), and Red Phalarope (one sighting in 1990).

The Midland Cogeneration Venture Cooling Pond is a large reservoir located to the immediate southeast of the Dow Ponds. The pond is closed to public entry. In spite of the lack of direct access, there is a good vantage point from which to view the pond. Go south from Overlook Park on Poseyville Road for 1.3 miles to Gordonville Road. Turn left (east) and proceed for 1.4 miles to a small driveway on the left (north) that ends at a concrete barrier blocking a gate. Park here and walk around the barrier for a view through a chain-link fence. Infrequently, security staff have approached birders peering through the fence and asked about their intentions. Most of the birds may be at some distance from the fence, so a scope is highly recommended.



Hot-water effluent from the plant and the Midland Cogeneration Venture Cooling Pond keeps areas of the pond open even in the coldest winters, attracting waterfowl in great numbers. Canada Geese and Common Mergansers can number in the thousands in winter. Other wintering waterfowl can include Gadwall, Canvasback, Redhead, Long-tailed Duck (uncommon inland), Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers. As many as 16 Bald Eagles have been observed in winter, ready to make a meal out of injured or dead ducks. During spring and fall migrations, numerous dabbling and diving ducks, Common Loon, and Pied and Horned Grebes are present. In the fall, many gulls feed and rest in the pond, mostly Ring-billed and Herring, accompanied by a lesser number of Bonaparte's Gulls and a few Great Black-backed Gulls.

Uncommon and rare species reported from the Cogeneration pond (but not to be expected regularly) have included Red-throated Loon, Red-necked and Western/Clark's Grebes (although Clark's Grebe is not on the state's checklist), American White Pelican, Greater White-fronted and Ross's Geese (casual), Surf and White-winged Scoters, and Franklin's, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous Gulls.

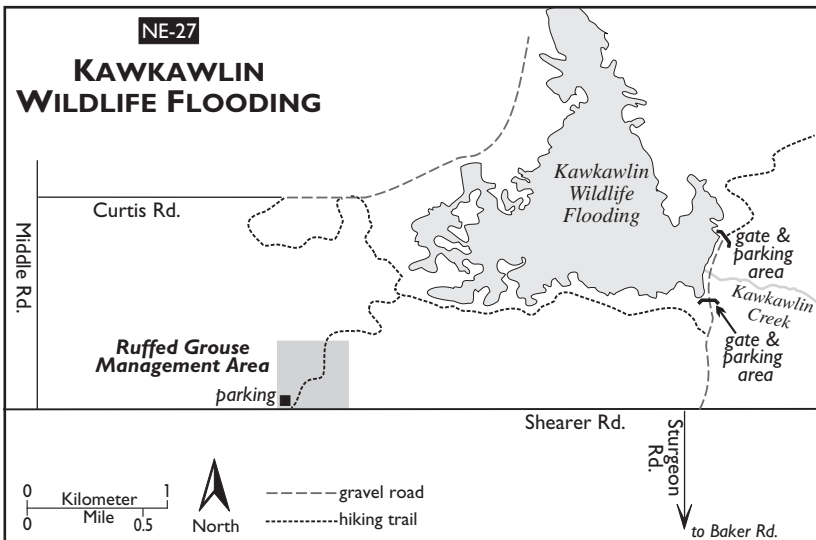
NE-27 Kawkawlin Wildlife Flooding

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter

DeLorme p. 59, B6, 43°48' N, 84°17' W

Directions: There are several ways to reach this area, but the easiest is to take Eastman Road from its exit off US-10, on the north side of Midland, and go north for 7.5 miles to Baker Road. Turn left (west) onto Baker Road for 1.0 mile to Sturgeon Road and then go north for 1.0 mile to Shearer Road. The entrance into the area is only about 100 yards to the right (east) on the north side of Shearer Road and is just west of the North Midland County Community Center Complex.

This impoundment of the Kawkawlin River, located north of the city of Midland, is a fairly large wetland area with surrounding mixed deciduous forest. Follow the entrance road north for about 0.3 mile to a foot trail that heads west along the south side of the impoundment. The trail turns north to eventually meet up with the end of Curtis Road on the west side of the pond. Stay to the north on the entrance road until you come to a gate just south of the earthen dam, where there is a parking area. The road is closed at this gate during the spring and summer. The impoundment to the west provides a feeding and resting place for numerous waterbirds, especially during spring migration, including large numbers of Canada Geese, as well as Wood Duck, many Ring-necked Ducks, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, and Pied-billed Grebe. A few nesting Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets may be joined by dozens of post-breeding birds in late summer. In spring, American Bittern can be heard. An Osprey pair has been observed in mating rituals but nesting has not been confirmed. Bald Eagle, Sandhill Crane, and Black Tern breed in the area.

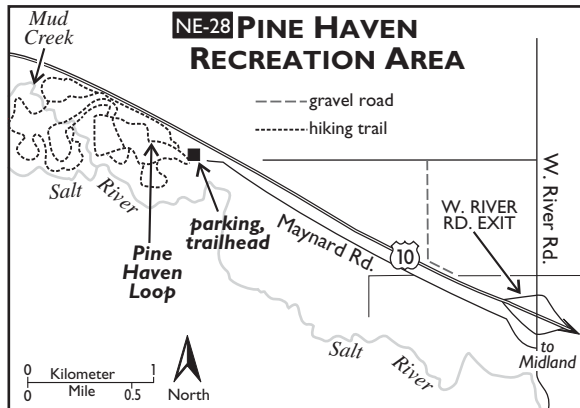


The trails through the wooded areas provide opportunities to find resident Ruffed Grouse, while nesting species include both cuckoos, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo, Veery, Wood Thrush, Song and Field Sparrows, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole. During migration, a variety of warblers, including Cerulean, pass through, and Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Ovenbird breed here. Golden-winged Warbler nests in the second-growth areas to the northeast of the pond.

A **Ruffed Grouse Management Area** to the west of the impoundment is reached by going west from the intersection of Shearer and Sturgeon Roads for 1.3 miles to the entrance on the right (north). The two-track trail into the area is usually not passable except by foot. To reach the western portion of the Kawkawlin Flooding from the Grouse Management entrance, continue west on Shearer Road for another 1.7 miles to Middle Road. Go north for 1.0 mile to Curtis Road and then east for 1.5 miles to the end of the paved road. Trails that lead from here may be drivable in drier years, but caution is recommended. Expected birds at these latter two sites are the same as those mentioned above.

Pine Haven Recreation Area (DeLorme p. 59, C5, 43°42' N, 84°26' W) is a county park with several loop trails managed for cross-country skiing in winter and for hiking and biking in summer. Situated along the banks of Mud Creek, the area offers excellent opportunities for woodland birding. Go west on US-10 from the Eastman Road Exit in Midland for 7.8 miles to the exit for West River Road.

Exit here and go left (south) over the expressway to the first possible right turn (northwest) onto Maynard Road, which parallels the expressway. Follow the road for 1.8 miles to its end, where there is a parking area for the trailheads and a detailed map of the trails. This is one of



the better places in this part of Michigan to find nesting Cerulean Warblers. Singing males, usually easier to hear than to see, can often be found high in the oaks at the far end of the Pine Haven Loop near intersection K on the park map. Other breeding species of note that may be seen here include Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Warblers migrate through in good numbers in early May though early June.

The Houghton Lake Area: Houghton Lake is a large shallow lake known as a stopover spot for migrating waterfowl, especially diving ducks, in late fall and early spring. Nearby flooded areas provide nesting habitat for dabbling ducks, herons, and rails, including the elusive Yellow Rail. Wooded areas, primarily to the west of the lake, support migrant passerines from late April through early June, and again in late August through October.

NE-28 Houghton Lake Sewage Ponds

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p.68, B2, 44°19' N, 84°47' W

Contact Information: 989-422-5811

Directions: From Midland, go northwest on US-10 for 32 miles to the intersection with US-127 at Clare. (Note: US-127 was numbered US-27 until 2002 and many older maps still carry that designation.) Go north on US-127 for 35 miles to the M-55 exit, and east of M-55 for 0.8 mile to the traffic light at Old US-27.

From the intersection of M-55 and Old US-27 (CO 270), go south for 1.2 miles to the entrance to the sewage ponds on the right (west). Check in at the office for permission to enter the pond area. During early spring and late fall, especially during high winds, waterfowl will leave the large, relatively shallow Houghton Lake and rest on these ponds. On such days, the number and variety of ducks on these fairly small ponds can be mind-boggling. The southernmost pond usually attracts the greater number of ducks. In November, as many as 150 Ruddy Ducks may be observed, and Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck (about 1,500 were observed on one November day), Lesser Scaup (with a few Greaters), Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Common Merganser may be seen here in large numbers. Migrating Sandhill Cranes and Pectoral Sandpipers use the large, grassy field to the south of the south pond, and warblers may be found in the brushy areas along the dikes. American Tree Sparrow and Snow Bunting may be spotted in late fall. It is permissible for a single car to drive along the dikes, which provides a unique opportunity to view or photograph the diving ducks at fairly close range if you use the vehicle as a blind. A scope on a window mount is an asset.

Return to the intersection of Old US-27 and M-55 and go north on Old US-27 for 0.9 mile to a DNR boat access on the right (east). **Houghton Lake Boat Access** provides a good view of the western part of Houghton Lake, where diving ducks may be scoped, particularly in early spring and late fall. In spring, migrating passerines may be found in trees along the lakeshore.

NE-29 Houghton Lake Flats

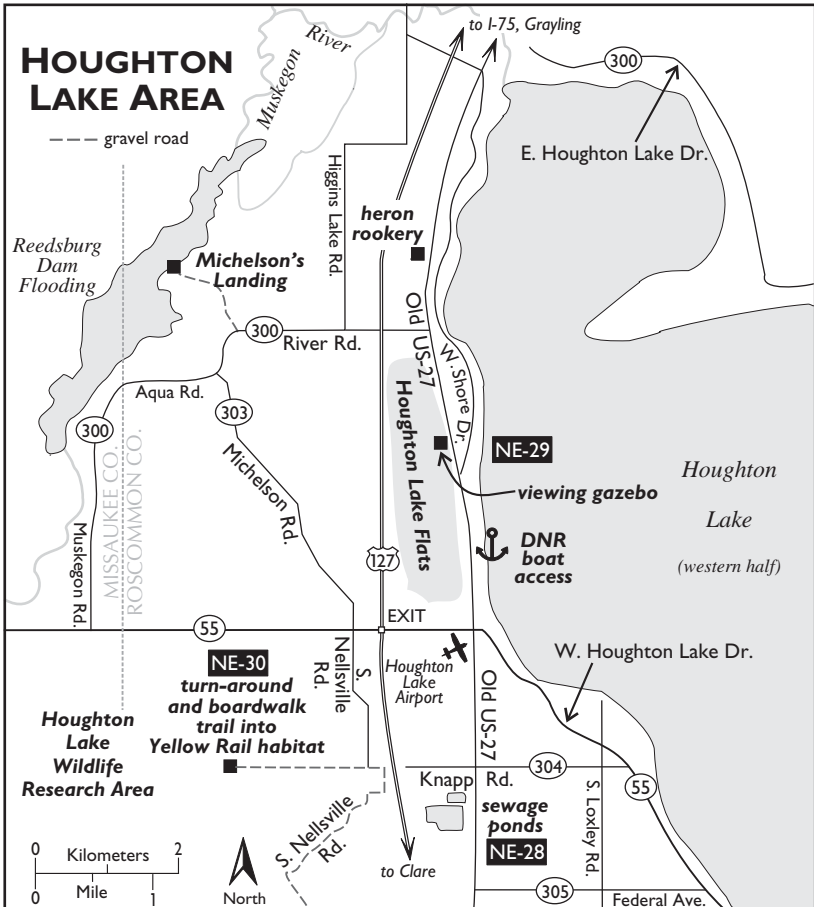
*Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 68, B2, 44°20' N, 84° 47' W

Just to the north of the DNR Boat Access on the left (west) side of Old US-27 is a large flooded marsh that is home to numbers of breeding dabbling

ducks. Nesting platforms are used by several pairs of Ospreys and Bald Eagles, which often cruise over the marsh; Great Egrets also breed here. At 1.8 miles north of the DNR Boat Access, stop at a gazebo on the left (west) of the road, a vantage point for the southern section of the marsh. Next, continue north on Old US-27 for 1.1 miles to view a Great Blue Heron rookery on the west side of the road. As many as 40 nests have been built in the flooded oaks, with nesting activity beginning in early April. There is no parking area and the two-lane road is quite busy, but the shoulder is wide enough to allow you to pull over to safely observe the rookery. In 2001, a Great Horned Owl took over one of the heron nests and raised its own brood.

Other nesting birds possible here include Wood Duck, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and Pied-billed Grebe. During migration in



early spring and late fall, Tundra Swan, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Bufflehead, and Common Merganser use the flats.

Backtrack south for 0.5 mile to CO 300 west over US-127 for 1.5 miles, where CO 300 curves to the south. At this point, an unpaved road goes north for 0.9 mile and dead-ends at a nondescript place called **Michelson's Landing** on the Dead Stream Flooding, an impoundment of Reedsburg Dam. As you reach the circular drive at the end of the road, a small pullout to the left has a parking area and a crude boat ramp where you can view the flooding. At the far end of this pullout are several large, old willow trees which have hosted a pair of nesting Pileated Woodpeckers and where you might find numbers of warblers during migration. From early April through June, this site is an excellent place to view breeding and migratory waterfowl and herons in and around the impoundment, and passerines in the wooded areas along the road. In addition to the expected dabbling and diving ducks, which appear in large numbers, American Bittern, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Common Moorhen, Sandhill Crane, Black Tern, and Sedge Wren use the marsh. Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Red-headed Woodpecker, Nashville and Yellow Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak are summer nesters often seen near the road. Black Bear has also been spotted in the area.

NE-30 Houghton Lake Wildlife Research Area

By Mike Petrucha and Jerry Ziarno

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 68, B2, 44°19' N, 84°48' W

Directions: From the intersection of M-55 and US-127, go west on M-55 for 0.4 mile to South Nellsville Road on the left (south). (Going right or north at this point on Michelson's Road/CO 303 will take you to Michelson's Landing, described in the previous paragraphs.) On South Nellsville Road, go south for one mile to where the road curves sharply to the left (east). At this point, across from a bank of mail boxes, turn sharply right (west) onto a small two-track road and continue for about 0.75 mile to the road end at a turnaround. See previous map.

The sedge-grass marsh located at the eastern edge of the Houghton Lake Wildlife Research Area is possibly the only spot, other than Seney National Wildlife Refuge and the Trout Lake Area in the UP, where you can fairly reliably find nesting **Yellow Rail** in Michigan.

This is a difficult-to-find bird, and its presence here is certainly not a sure thing every year. Breeding is dependent upon water levels and the condition of the sedge, and the bird's willingness to vocalize is dependent upon the weather. On clear nights from early May through June, the distinctive territorial call of the male may be heard from some distance. Once a calling bird is located, however, it is usually extremely difficult to actually catch sight of it. The bird will respond to an imitation of its *tick-tick* call, done by clicking two me-

dium-sized stones together to simulate the cadence of the bird's call. The bird may sound as if it is very close, but this tiny rail creeps along below the top of the sedge or marsh grass, and rarely shows even its head.

Park at the turnaround and walk roughly west over a short, overgrown sand berm to a trail which goes approximately 200 feet to the start of a boardwalk. The boardwalk runs along a pipe containing treated sewage water and, for the first 300 feet, goes through a brushy area, reaching the sedge habitat where the distinctive call notes of the Yellow Rail may be heard after dusk or before dawn. The boardwalk continues through the sedge habitat for several hundred feet and then enters cattail habitat. This boardwalk, while recently repaired, can be treacherous and care should be exercised, particularly after dark; a good flashlight is a must.

In addition to the Yellow Rail, other birds of note that have been found at the marsh include Least Bittern (breeding) and King Rail (casual) in late spring. Breeding birds regularly sighted are American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow.

South Nellsville Road continues to wind in a southwesterly direction for another 3.3 miles through mixed forest, wetlands, and farmland. Willow Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, and Field Sparrow are among the other birds breeding here.

NE-31 Harwick Pines State Park

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

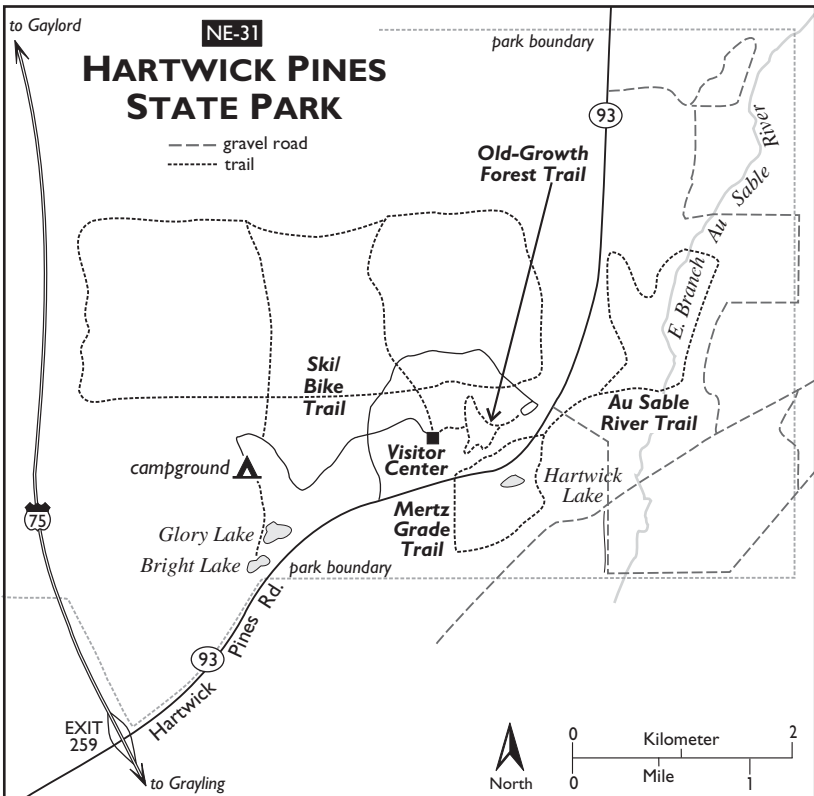
DeLorme p.76, C3, 44°, 84°

Contact Information: 989-348-7068;

www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parklist.asp

Directions: *From the M-55 intersection at the Houghton Lake area, proceed north on US-127 to the city of Grayling, about 22 miles. (Grayling is the departure point for one of the Kirtland's Warbler tours, see site NE-24.) Continue north on I-75 from Grayling for 4.0 miles to Exit 259, Hartwick Pines Road (M-93). From the exit, it is 1.9 miles northeast to the park entrance. See map on next page.*

The largest state park in the Lower Peninsula, Hartwick Pines consists of 9,672 acres of rolling hills with four small lakes, overlooking the East Branch of the Au Sable River. The park is open year round, although the Michigan Forest Visitor Center is closed on Mondays from Labor Day to Memorial Day. The logging museum, located in two log structures, uses artifacts, exhibits, and photographs to re-create a Michigan logging camp to give visitors a feeling of what life was like in the mid-1800s. The logging museum is closed from November through April. A 49-acre forest of old-growth pines is the principal feature of the park; the forest was originally 85 acres in size until high winds took down nearly half of the magnificent White Pines.



There are three foot trails of interest to birders. The **Mertz Grade Trail**, a loop to the southeast of the visitor center, follows an old logging rail-road spur for part of its length as it winds through a wooded area and fields for about 2.0 miles. Along the southern most part of this trail, Yellow-rumped and Black-and-white Warblers and Common Yellowthroat nest. The Au Sable River Trail, a loop trail connected to the Mertz Grade Trail, is northeast of the visitor center. This trail is approximately 3.0 miles long and crosses the East Branch of the Au Sable River twice as it winds through deciduous forest, some old-growth Hemlock, and wetlands along the river. Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Olive-sided and Alder Flycatchers, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Nashville, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Pine Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning and Canada Warblers have nested in this area. For grassland species, take the easternmost loop of the bike/cross-country ski trail north of the visitor center. This loop is almost 4.0 miles long and passes through grasslands and fields of old pine stumps.

Common Raven, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, and Field, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows are possible.

During migration periods in spring and fall, walking any of these trails, particularly in the wooded areas, should produce numbers of vireos, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows.

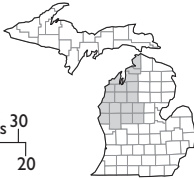
In winter, the visitor center maintains several feeders outside the large windows, with views possible of Dark-eyed Junco, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak.

NORTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

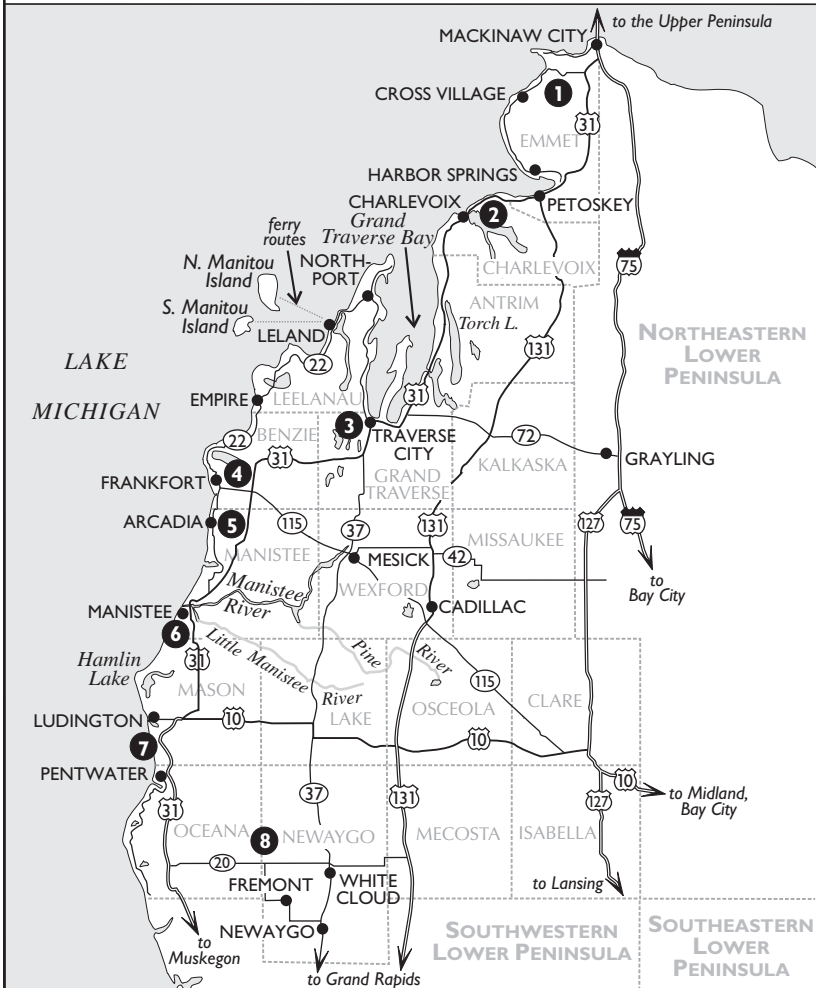
MAJOR BIRDING AREAS



0 Kilometers 30
0 Miles 20



- 1 Tip of the Mitt**
Sites NW-1 – NW-8
- 2 Charlevoix Area**
Sites NW-9 – NW-14
- 3 Traverse City Area**
Sites NW-15 – NW-18
- 4 Frankfort Area**
Sites NW-19 – NW-20
- 5 Arcadia Area**
Sites NW-21 – NW-26
- 6 Manistee Area**
Sites NW-27 – NW-34
- 7 Ludington Area**
Sites NW-35 – NW-39
- 8 Oceana-Newaygo Area**
Sites NW-40 – NW-45



NORTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Michigan's northwestern Lower Peninsula is one of the state's prime vacation areas, with the largest city in the region, Traverse City, being the hub of this activity. In summer, it is a good idea to have reservations at your intended accommodations, and in winter the ski areas are busy. This part of the Lower Peninsula is quite hilly, in contrast to most of the rest of the Lower Peninsula.

The state and national forests, the coastal sand dunes (particularly the famous Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore), and Lake Michigan itself provide the greatest interest for birders. Many breeding warblers can be found in the forests, and this is probably the best area of the state to find open-country birds such as Upland Sandpiper, Grasshopper Sparrow, and, to some extent, Western Meadowlark. The Sleeping Bear Dunes are home to Michigan's largest breeding population of the state-endangered Prairie Warbler and accessible nesting pairs of the federally endangered Piping Plover. Offshore, migrant loons, grebes, and scoters can be found, and the winter spectacle of thousands of Long-tailed Ducks on Lake Michigan (open water permitting) is not to be missed. Irruptive winter finches, and occasionally irruptive winter owls, reach this area perhaps more often than any other part of the Lower Peninsula.

Much of the Northwestern Lower Peninsula is underbirded, with the good birding opportunities awaiting the birder willing to explore a bit. The scenic beauty and North Woods feel of many areas are additional rewards. Be advised that roads labeled as "two tracks" are all unimproved, tend to be drivable at low speeds only, and are *not* open in winter. Many back roads are not maintained or snowplowed in the winter. Some are quite hilly, and some are sandy. There are no guarantees on what condition they may be in, although local residents use them all the time.

Prairie Warbler

By Chip Francke

The Prairie Warbler, currently listed as an endangered species in Michigan, is a rare migrant and local breeder in the state, primarily in the Lower Peninsula. The best chance of finding this species is from mid-May through early July when males are singing their distinctive song, although there are records from late April through late fall. Prairie Warblers are found in a very few inland locations, with their stronghold the natural dune systems along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Older foredunes with low woody shrubs such as juniper, Sand Cherry, the near-endemic Sand-dune Willow, Bearberry, young conifers, and sometimes scattered mature trees comprise the bird's preferred nesting habitat.

Because of the endangered status of this species, birders should not walk through the dune vegetation during the breeding season, as the birds nest low to the ground. The males tend to sing from exposed perches in the taller trees and are generally easy to hear and see from a safe distance in the mid-May to early July time frame.

Locations along the Lake Michigan shoreline where Prairie Warblers have occurred in recent years include Good Harbor Bay (NW-18) and Platte Bay (NW-19) in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area (NW-39), Oval Beach (SW-19) and Warren Dunes State Park (SW-43).



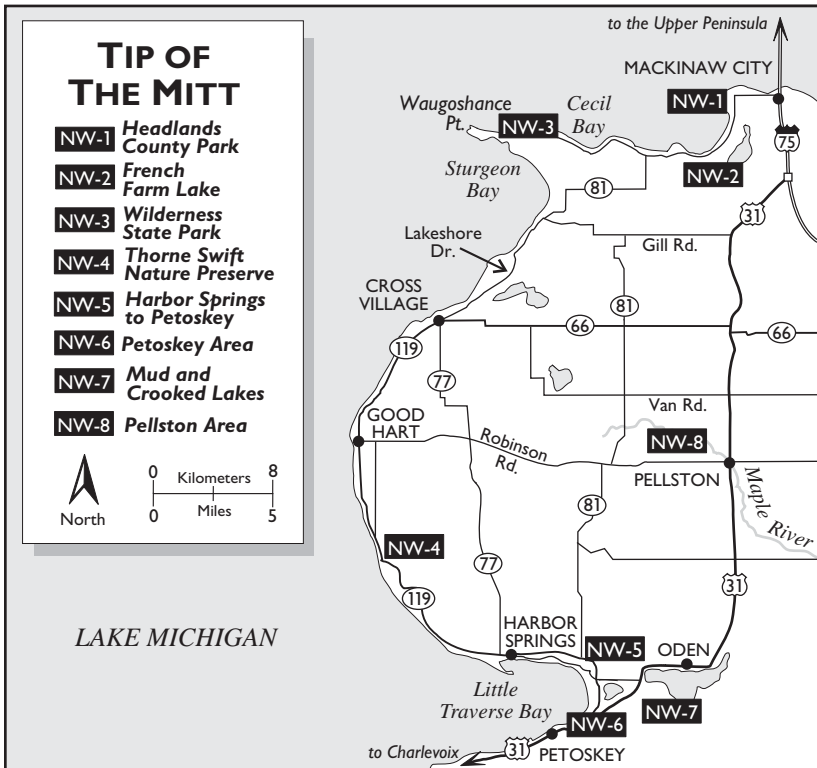
Prairie Warblers
Carl Freeman

THE TIP OF THE MITT

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

To many, Michigan's Lower Peninsula looks like a mitten on a map. This section describes a birding route through Emmet County at the north-west "tip of the mitt", starting at Mackinaw City and proceeding down the Lake Michigan shoreline to Petoskey, inland north to the Pellston area, and returning to Mackinaw City. All of the sites described are on public lands. As a result of the tapering of the Lower Peninsula to the north, many spring migrants concentrate in the Mackinaw area. During April and May, raptors and other migrants are found here, where the Lower and Upper Peninsulas meet the Straits of Mackinac, which are spanned by the five-mile-long Mackinac Bridge.

In addition to the sites described below, there is good birding almost anywhere along the roads in the extensive mixed hardwood forests and fields of the Mackinaw State Forest, with its widespread public lands scattered throughout Emmet County. A county map would be most helpful for anyone wishing to travel away from the main roads. In the woods, there are good



numbers of breeding warblers (up to 18 species nest in the county), and in the fields and edges, you may find hawks, Sandhill Crane, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Black-billed Cuckoo, Field and Grasshopper Sparrows, Bobolink, and Eastern and an occasional Western Meadowlark. Many species that only pass through southern Michigan nest here or are concentrated at the tip of the mitt in migration. Several sites described here (and many other interesting areas not covered in this guide) have been preserved through the efforts of the Little Traverse Conservancy. Maps to conservancy preserves can be found on the conservancy's website, www.landtrust.org.

This route will be among the most scenic to be found in the state of Michigan, even if you don't see many birds. You will find much to look at along the way that slows down the birding; just stay a few extra days! For those unfamiliar with Michigan tourism, fudge is the quintessential tourist treat, and this part of the state is world-famous for its fudge. But be warned—to eat fudge and wear a loud shirt is to risk being labeled a “fudgie”. With this route starting in Mackinaw City and ending in Petoskey, you can buy your fudge at either end of the county!

Mackinaw City is also a departure point for ferry boats to one of the best-known tourist attractions of the area, Mackinac Island. All of Mackinac Island's 1,800-acres are designated as a state park, including a historic park preserving Fort Mackinac, Michigan's only Revolutionary War fort. The island combines a quaint charm with the hustle and bustle of a mega-tourist site, offset by the fact that motorized vehicles are not allowed, with bicycles, horse-drawn carriages, or your own two feet providing transportation around the island. While not worth a special trip for birders, those with family agendas can still enjoy a few birds here. You can bird the island from a road that follows the lakeshore for much of the way (about 9 miles around the island), providing opportunities to view migrant and resident waterfowl, sometimes including Common Loons. A few warblers breed in the woodlands here, including Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and American Redstart. Even a short walk to Arch Rock on the southeastern side of the island should produce a few birds in spring and summer. Merlins nested on the island in summer 2004.

The names Mackinac and Mackinaw are both correct spellings, and both are pronounced the same: Mackinaw. The Native Americans of the region called it *Michinnimakinong*, which translates as great fault land. They also called it the Land of the Great Turtle because Mackinac Island resembled a turtle. When the French arrived in the area in the early 1700s, they replaced the *nn* sound with *L*, the soft *sh* sound with *ch*, and changed the ending to *ac*, which they pronounced as *aw*, thus calling it *Michilimackinac*. When the British arrived, they heard the ending pronounced as *aw* and again changed the spelling, shortening it to Mackinaw. Thus, the spellings of the city, straits, island, state forest, and bridge depends on who named them.

NW-1 The Headlands Park NW-2 French Farm Lake

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

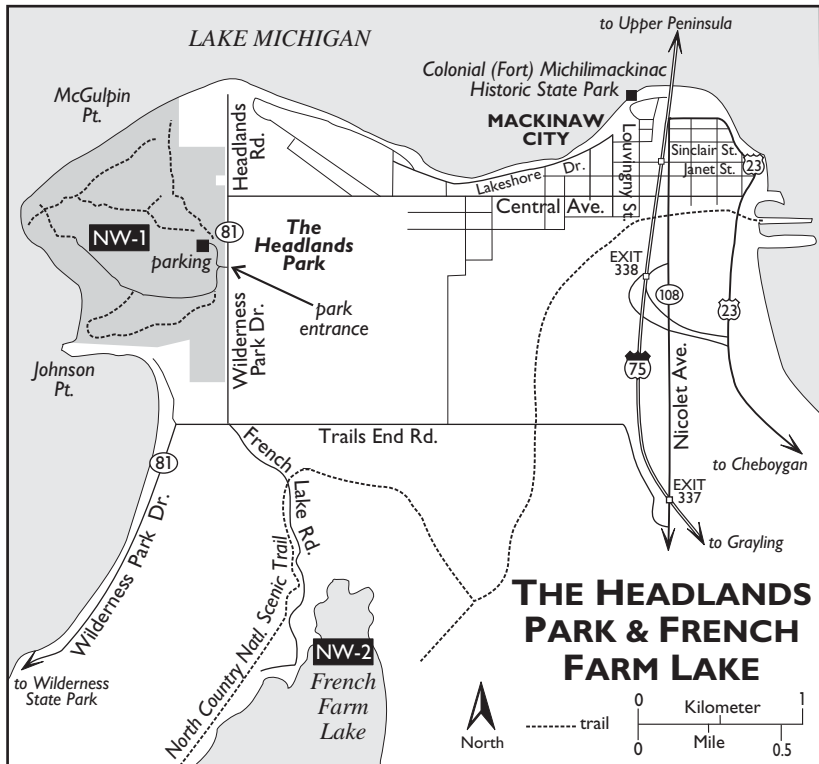
Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 94, B2. 45°47' N, 84°47' W

Contact Information: The Headlands Park, 231-347-6536.

Directions: From northbound I-75 in Mackinaw City, take Exit 337 and go north on Nicolet Avenue (M-108) to Central Avenue. Turn left and go west to Wilderness Park Drive (County Road 81) and turn left for 0.5 mile to the entrance to The Headlands Park on the right. Alternatively, if you are southbound on I-75 from the UP, take Exit 339, Louvingny Street (the first exit after you cross the Mackinaw Bridge). Turn left and follow the road as it curves left (south) to Central Avenue. Turn right onto Central Avenue and follow the directions given above.

On your way through Mackinaw City, a brief stop at Colonial Michilimackinac Historic State Park might produce migrant shorebirds along the beach. Continue on toward **The Headlands Park**, a beautiful 600-acre park of pristine northern hardwoods on Lake Michigan, with more



than 4 miles of trails. In spring, the park is a great spot for migrants, including many warblers, some of which remain to nest (including Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and American Redstart). Some shoreline is also available for waterbirds and shorebirds. Although Connecticut Warbler was found breeding here during the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas in the 1980s, there are no recent reliable reports.

From The Headlands Park, head south for about 0.5 mile on Wilderness Park Drive to Trails End Road. At this point you can take a short side trip by following the two-track road that runs straight ahead and then southeast. Follow this bumpy, narrow road for just over a mile to **French Farm Lake**, which has a small marsh at the northern end and is fairly shallow. Ducks, herons, Common Loons, gulls, and Black and Caspian Terns can be found here, and warblers are sometimes present in the adjacent wooded area.

NW-3 Wilderness State Park

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 94, B1. 45°45' N, 84°55' W

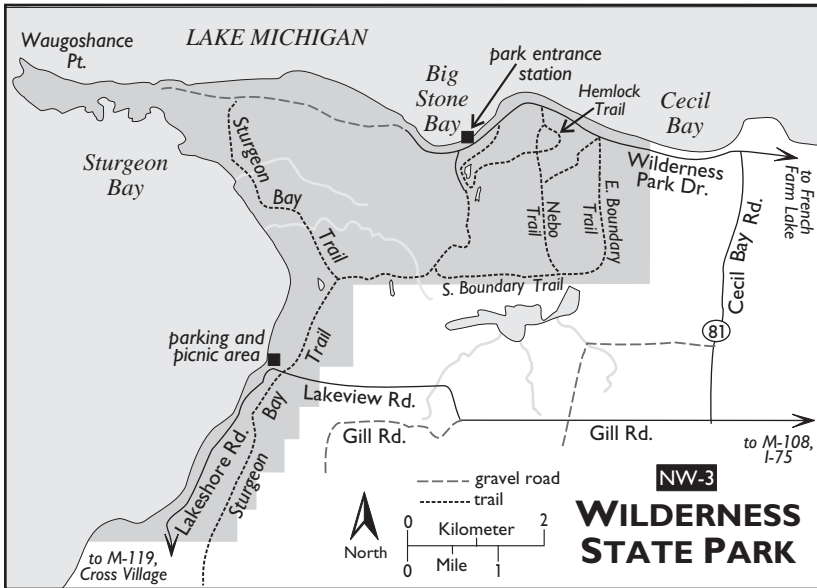
Contact Information: 231-436-5381;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From French Farm Lake, return to Trails End Road and go west to Wilderness Park Drive, which is also County Road 81 (C81). At the town of Cecil, C81 goes south (left) as Cecil Bay Road. Continue straight (west) on Wilderness Park Drive for about a mile to the park.

Wilderness State Park is an excellent spot for migrant passerines and northern breeding warblers, and has been the most consistent breeding site in the state for the endangered Piping Plover. The park has a distinctly boreal atmosphere, with an interesting mix of breeding species. Unfortunately, this also means there are large numbers of mosquitos and Black Flies from June through July, so come prepared with plenty of repellent. The park is also one of best places in the state to also see spring wildflowers, especially several orchid species. There are hiking trails through mixed and coniferous woodlands, as well as cedar swamps and bogs. Most trails begin near the Contact Station (entry fee) at Big Stone Bay, about 3 miles west of Cecil.

From the parking area south of the contact station, the short **Pondside Trail** circles a small pond that can be good for ducks in spring and fall migrations. In spring and summer, the shrubby pond margin is a good place to find migrant passerines as well as breeding Alder and Great Crested Flycatchers, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. Olive-sided Flycatcher is sometimes seen here in June, though breeding has not been proven. From the dam on the northeast side of the pond, the Red Pine Trail heads east toward Mt. Nebo and provides access to the other trails at this end of the park—the Nebo Trail, Hemlock Trail, and East Boundary Trail. From the south end of the parking area, the Swamp Line Road leads to the longer



South Boundary and Sturgeon Bay Trails. The varied woodlands along these trails are good for a great variety of breeding birds, including Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, and Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning and Canada Warblers.

From the contact station, drive west for a few miles on Wilderness Park Drive, which turns into a two-track through the mixed forest and cedar swamp, and ends at **Waugoshance Point**, where there are two small parking lots. Piping Plovers nest here, so the beach on the point is closed during the nesting season (April–August). Park rangers and volunteer “Plover Rangers” are usually deployed to watch the plovers and to keep people a safe distance away. It is sometimes possible to see the plovers when they wander close to the beach parking lot; otherwise you will need a scope to scan into the marked-off nesting area. Merlins breed along the roadside between here and the contact station, and it is often productive to walk along the road to the east in spring and fall to look for migrant passerines as well as breeding Northern Parula and Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Ducks, loons, and grebes may be found offshore in spring and fall. Various peeps, including Dunlin, Sanderling, and Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, can occasionally be found on the extensive lakeshore. Northern Saw-whet Owls have been found during migration and probably breed here. Great Horned and Barred Owls may also be found year round. In most winters, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak are present, with Bohemian

Waxwing, Common Redpoll, and both crossbills possible in irruption years. Auto access to some areas of the park in winter may be difficult or impossible.

After birding this portion of the park, return to Cecil Bay Road (C-81), turn right (south), and go 3.5 miles to Gill Road. Turn right (west) and drive 3.5 miles on Gill Road, where the paved road heads right and becomes Lakeview Road (Gill Road, now unpaved, heads to the left). Stay on the paved Lakeview Road for another 2.75 miles to the **Lake Michigan shore**. There is a small parking/picnic area on the right (north) side of the road, at the southwest corner of Wilderness State Park. There are hiking trails and beach access here, although the beach is closed when Piping Plovers are nesting. At other times, it is worth walking north to look for shorebirds during migration, including Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, both yellowlegs, Sanderlings, and Dunlin. Piping Plover young have been seen here along the shore, along with Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers. From here, Lakeview Road goes left (south) along the lakeshore past Bliss Park, an area of dunes. Drive 2.0 winding miles to the intersection with **Sturgeon Bay Trail**, where you turn right onto Lakeshore Drive, easily one of the most scenic roads in the country! Follow Lakeshore Drive through Cross Village, where the road becomes M-119 and goes into a “tunnel of trees,” with many beautiful glimpses of Lake Michigan from the bluff. Fast travel is not advised, the road being narrow, tree-lined, twisting, and, in the summer, full of “fudgies.”

NW-4 Thorne Swift Nature Preserve

By *Janie and Bonnie Stout*

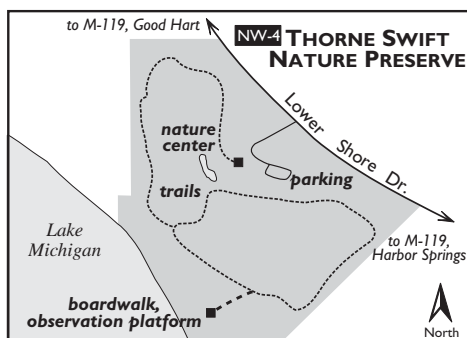
Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 81, A7. 45°27' N, 85°03' W

Contact Information: 231-526-6401

Directions: From Cross Village, continue 7 miles south along M-119 to Good Hart, which is at the intersection with Robinson Road. Continue another 5.5 miles and turn right onto Lower Shore Drive. Go 3.0 miles to Thorne Swift Nature Preserve on the right (6696 Lower Shore Drive).

A Little Traverse Conservancy park, **Thorne Swift Nature Preserve** is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to one-half hour after sunset from Memorial Day to Labor Day (parking fee). Call for hours at other times of the year (231-526-6401, www.landtrust.org). There is a small interpretive center, as well as boardwalks and trails through cedar swamp and along the



dunes and the Lake Michigan shoreline. During spring migration, the typical common migrant warblers can be present. In summer, there are nesting Pileated Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Winter Wrens, and Nashville American Redstart, and other warblers. In the small ponds you may see Great Blue or Green Herons.

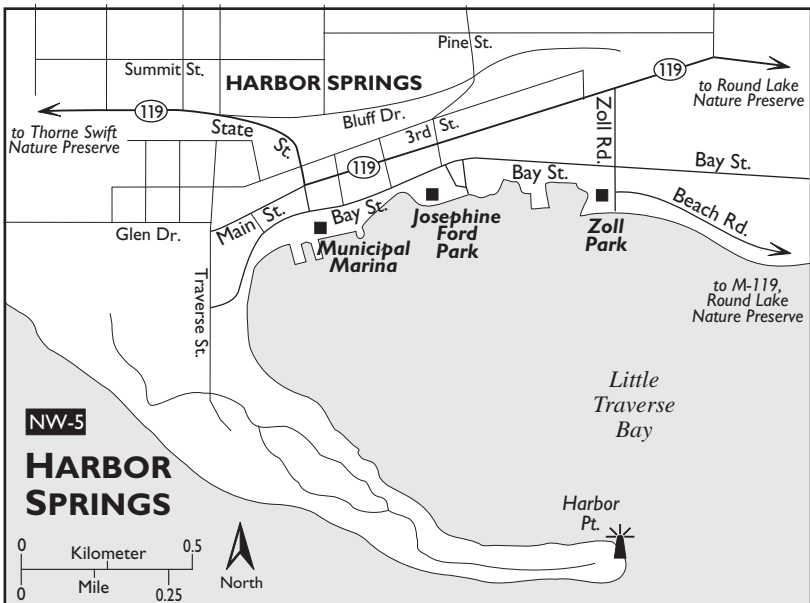
NW-5 Harbor Springs to Petoskey

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 82, A1. 45°24' N, 85°54' W

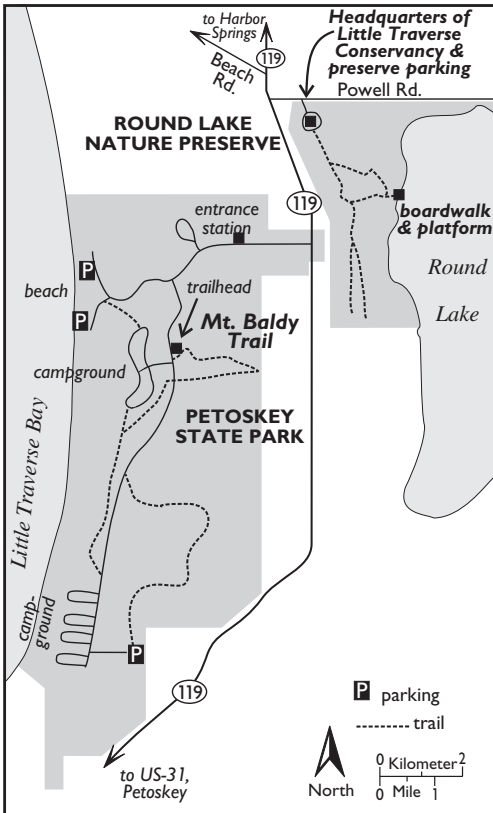
Directions: From Thorne Swift Nature Preserve, follow Lower Shore Drive for 0.5 mile back to Lake Shore Drive (M-119). Turn right (south) and drive for 4.0 miles into Harbor Springs, going down the hill to the intersection of Main and State Streets.

There are three stops from which to observe Little Traverse Bay at the **Harbor Springs Yacht Basin**. At the intersection of Main and State Streets, go straight (south) on State Street for one block to Bay Street and turn left. You can park at the Municipal Marina (in the first block), or you can drive three more blocks to the Josephine Ford Park, or you can go one more long block and turn right onto Zoll Road for one-half block to Zoll Park. All of these stops give slightly different vantage points of this part of Little Traverse Bay. In spring after ice breakup, and in fall and early winter before the bay ices over, migrating waterfowl can be present, including Redhead (occasional),



Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Red-breasted, Common, and Hooded Mergansers. Common Loon and Red-necked, Horned, and Eared (rare) Grebes are also possible. Rarely, Glaucous Gull can be seen among the ubiquitous Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. After leaving Zoll Park, turn east onto Beach Road, where the roadside is private property. You can observe the bay by pulling off to the edge of the road as much as possible, but *do not trespass on the waterfront here*. You may also enjoy looking at the “cottages” on the left side of the road.

At 1.0 mile, turn right at a stop sign where Beach Road heads left. Go 0.2 mile to a T-intersection and turn left. Follow this winding road for 2.7 miles to M-119 and turn right onto M-119. Turn left at the first corner (about 0.15 mile) onto Powell Road and then immediately right into the first driveway to the Little Traverse Conservancy office (3264 Powell Road, Harbor Springs MI 49740; 231-347-0991; www.landtrust.org) and the trailhead for the **Round Lake Nature Preserve**. At the end of the parking lot is a trail through northern hardwoods and cedar swamp to a boardwalk out to the edge of Round Lake. At times this boardwalk is right at water level. Mute Swan and



Common Loon both nest, and Caspian and Common Terns and various swallows can be seen feeding in spring and summer. Migrant ducks and Pied-billed Grebe can be present during spring and fall migrations. This is also a dependable spot to hear Northern Water-thrush in early summer, although the traffic noise from M-119 can be a distraction.

Return to M-119, turn left, and go about 0.5 mile to a right turn into **Petoskey State Park** (state park entry fee; 2475 M-119 Hwy, Petoskey MI 49712; 231-347-2311). There are several hiking trails, but the best one, if you are energetic, is the steep boardwalk trail up Mount Baldy. The beginning of this trail is located to the left of the campground entrance. The

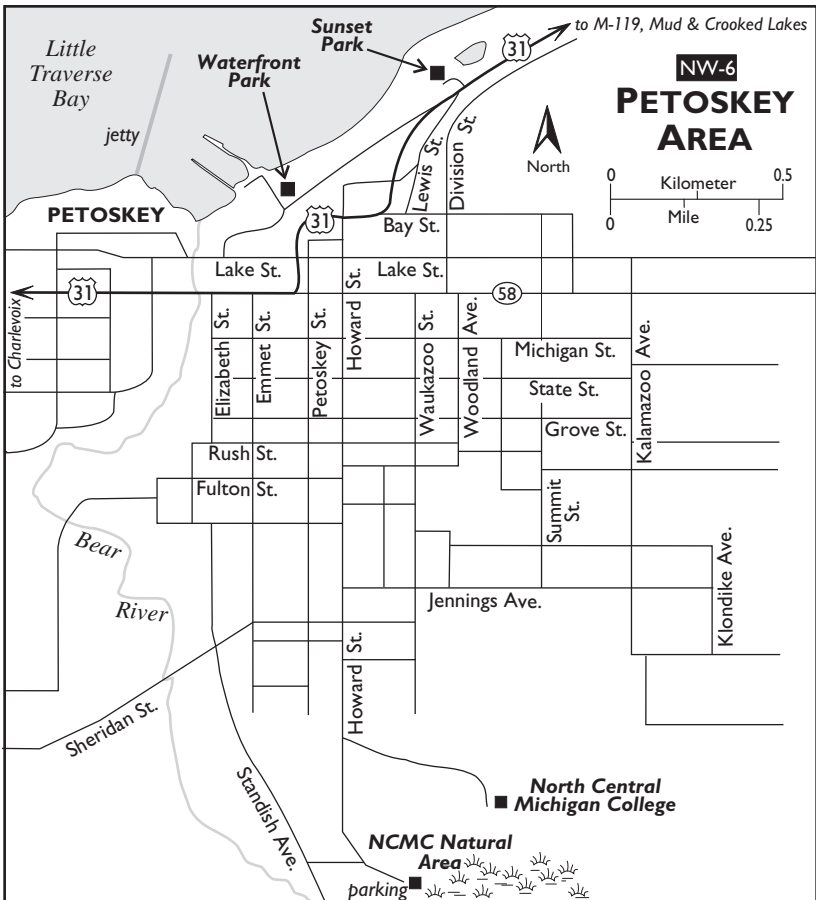
steep hike will put you right at the treetops with the birds. Barred Owls have been found along this trail, as have many migrant warblers. You can scan for ducks during migration, but better vantage points are available, such as Sunset Park in Petoskey (see next site). Return to M-119 and go south for 1.5 miles to the intersection of M-119 and US-31.

NW-6 The Petoskey Area

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 82, B6. 45°22', 84°57' W

Directions: From the intersection of M-119 and US-31 north of Petoskey, go right (west) onto US-31 through the historic community of Bay View (notice the Victorian cottages), and then west to Petoskey.



At the edge of downtown Petoskey is **Sunset Park**, on the right where Lewis Street meets US-31 on the left. This is a good vantage point for scoping ducks, gulls, terns, and other waterbirds out on the bay, especially during migration. Continue on US-31 to the right (west) and take the first turn to the right onto Lake Street to reach the entrance to the **Petoskey Waterfront Park**. Drive to the end of the park road to an old lime-quarry pond. There are nesting Bank and Northern Rough-winged Swallows around this pond in spring and summer. Caspian, Common, and Forster's Terns can be seen in summer. The shoreline is good for ducks, loons, grebes, and gulls from fall through spring. Harlequin Duck and all three scoters have been found here on rare occasions in late November. In fall and early winter before the bay freezes, there have been rare sightings of Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls, and even more rarely, an Iceland Gull.

Note: From the bluff at Sunset Park, you can see the Petoskey Waterfront Park below you. There are steps down to Waterfront Park from Sunset Park, making it possible to park at one and walk up or down along the shoreline to the other.

From Waterfront Park, return to Lake Street and turn left. Go up the hill to the US-31 intersection and continue straight on Lake Street (you might want to stop for some shopping in the Gaslight District). Go two blocks to the next stoplight and turn right (south) onto Howard Street for 1.1 miles (more than 10 blocks) to North Central Michigan College. Where the pavement ends, take the last driveway to the left and go to Parking Lot #6. The entrance to the **North Central Michigan College Natural Area** (1515 Howard Street, Petoskey, MI 49770; 231-348-6641) is at the southeast corner of this parking lot (maps available here).

From here, you can take a boardwalk trail that meanders through varied habitats: ponds, cedar swamp, White Pine stands, river frontage, and low fields. This is also a cross-country ski trail in winter. The pond may have dabbling ducks in migration, and herons (especially Great Blue and Green) and occasionally Virginia Rail or Sora in summer. This is also a good spot to search for migrants of all types. In summer, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, and Vesper, White-throated, and Clay-colored (not seen recently) Sparrows can be found.

At this point, retrace your route back to the intersection of US-31 and M-119 to the northeast of Petoskey.

NW-7 Mud and Crooked Lakes

By Janie and Bonnie Stout

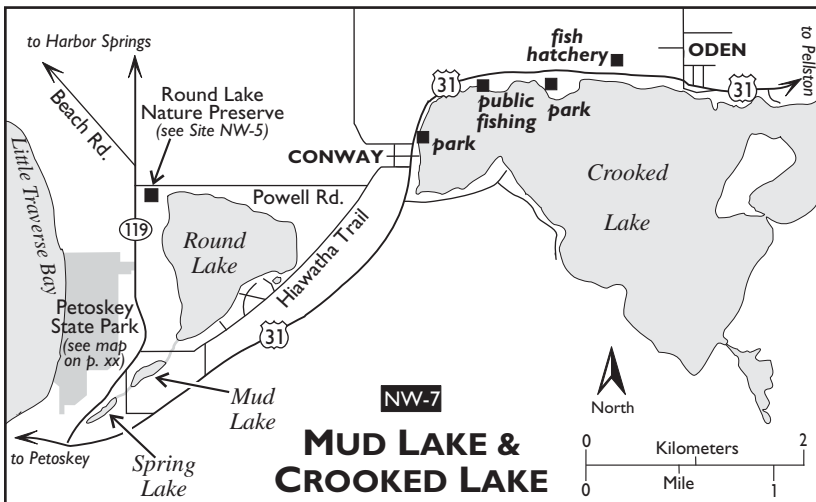
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 82, A2. 45°25' N, 84°51' W

Directions: From US-31 and M-119 northeast of Petoskey, follow M-119 for 0.7 mile and turn right (northeast) onto Hiawatha Trail, just past the old brick brewery building.

Hiwatha Trail travels between Round Lake and a small lake called variously Mud Lake by the locals, and Spring Lake by those trying to sell condos. Along Hiawatha Trail, which runs about 2.5 miles to the northeast, you can stop along the road at thickets and ditches to find nesting Wood Duck, Great Blue and Green Herons, Sora, Belted Kingfisher, Alder Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow, as well as Red-tailed Hawks or Bald Eagles soaring overhead. This is also one of very few places where Purple Martins have been seen locally in the last ten years. In fall, migrant Sandhill Cranes can be found in the fields near Mud Lake. There are also several places that have views of Round Lake to the left.

At 2.2 miles from M-119, Hiawatha Trail ends at Conway Road. Turn right and follow Conway Road for 0.5 mile to where it ends at US-31 in the town of Conway, located on the shores of **Crooked Lake**. Go north from Conway on US-31 along the lakeshore. On the right, there are several places to park, including a small township park next to the Inland House Restaurant, a public fishing site about 0.5 mile past the park, and another small park around the lake in another mile. All are good spots from which to scan the lake for geese, ducks, loons, and gulls in migration, and for nesting herons, Belted Kingfisher, Bald Eagle, and Osprey. Large rafts of ducks (mainly divers) can be seen during spring and fall migrations and into winter before the lake freezes.

On the left side of the road in Oden, there is a state fish hatchery with an underwater fish-viewing site and other educational exhibits. Use caution when stopping along US-31, as summer traffic can be very heavy.



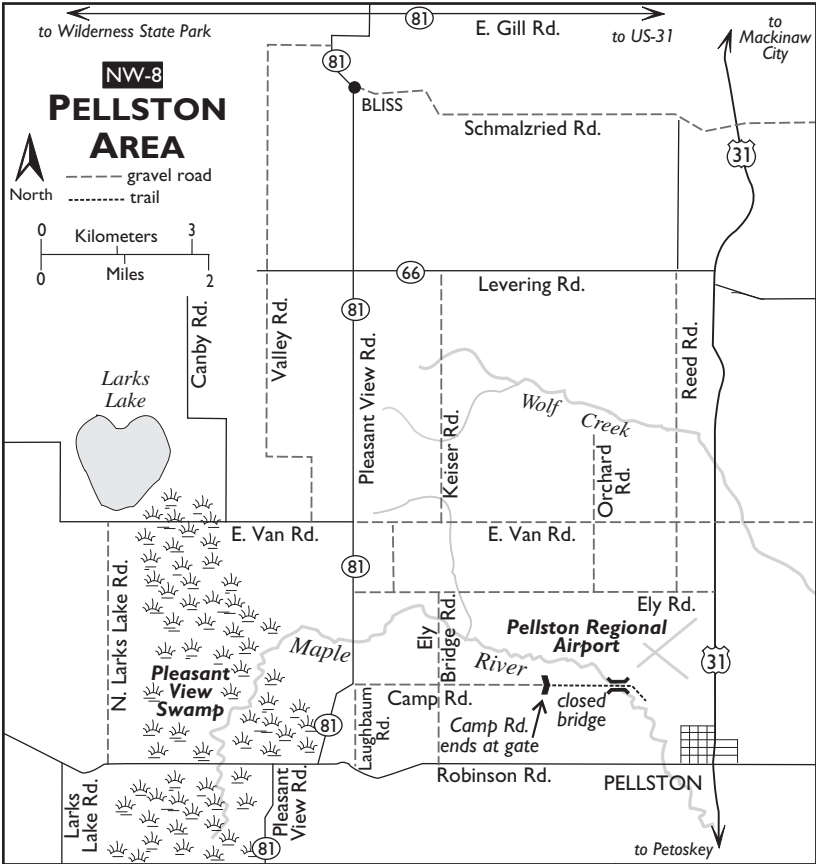
NW-8 The Pellston Area

By Doug Dow and Bonnie Stout

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 94, D2. 45°33' N, 84°47' W

Directions: From Crooked Lake, proceed north on US-31 through Alanson and Brutus to Pellston (12.3 miles from Conway).

From Pellston, continue north for 2.0 miles, passing the Pellston Regional Airport on the left, to Ely Road, which borders the north side of the airport. Turn left (west) onto **Ely Road** (this road goes only left) and look for nesting Horned Larks on the mowed grass of the airport. Slowly drive along the next 3.2 miles looking for Upland Sandpipers, which are almost guaranteed here, as well as other open-country birds including Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows.



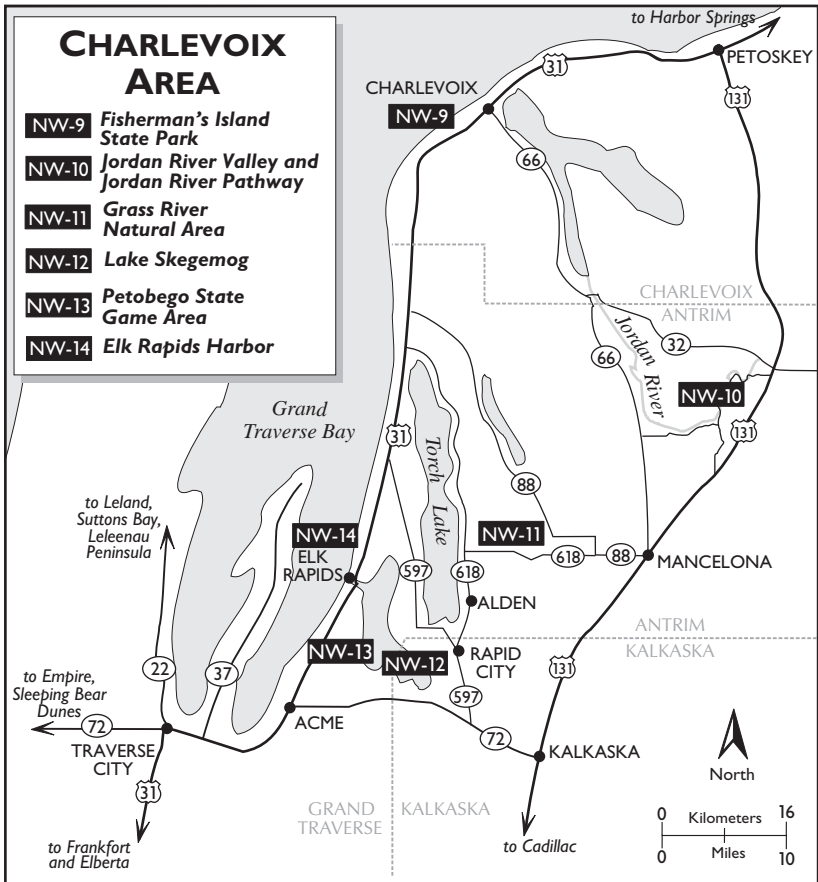
Turn south (left) onto Ely Bridge Road, a narrow dirt road which crosses the Maple River and passes through some dense beech-maple forest (part of Mackinaw State Forest). After 1.0 mile, turn left (east) onto **Camp Road** (not signposted) for 2.0 miles into the swampland of the Maple River Floodplain. Look (and listen) for breeding Golden-winged Warblers here. Camp Road ends at an open gate in a fence, where you can park and walk for about 0.1 mile to an old, closed bridge over the Maple River. You can cross the bridge on a sandy two-track along the east side of the river and walk through some savanna-like vegetation good for open-country birds, including Eastern Bluebird, Vesper Sparrow, and both meadowlarks.

Return to your car, go west to Laughbaum Road (an unmarked sand road), and go south for 1.1 miles to Robinson Road. Turn right (west) onto Robinson Road and go west for about 1.0 to the **Pleasant View Swamp**. Along the way, Robinson Road passes through northern hardwoods good for nesting warblers. Go past the first Pleasant View Road intersection (about 0.8 mile on the right) for about 0.5 mile and stop just past the second Pleasant View Road intersection (on the left). This is the Pleasant View Swamp, which has excellent birding at this corner and at the Maple River crossing 0.5 mile farther west. There is not much access beyond the road edge in this area. Soras, warblers (including Golden-winged), and Swamp Sparrows are present in summer.

To return to Mackinaw City, continue west on Robinson for 1.5 miles, turn right onto N. Larks Lake Road, go 3 miles, and turn right onto E. Van Road. From here it is 7.5 miles east on Van Road to U.S. 31 and thence north to Mackinaw City (about 14 miles). Alternatively, you can bird the fields and marshy areas in northern Emmet County by going 3 miles west on Van Road and turning north onto Pleasant View Road. Continue north on Pleasant View for about 8 miles to E. Gill Road (passing through Bliss, where you turn right to stay on Pleasant View Road). Turn right onto E. Gill Road and follow it for another 4.5 miles to US-31 at Carp Lake, where you can head north to return to Mackinaw City.

THE CHARLEVOIX AREA

The City of Charlevoix, named after a French Jesuit missionary and explorer, is one of the key summer tourist towns of northwest Michigan. The miles of nearby Great Lakes and inland lake shorelines as well as the rolling forested hills attract tourists and retirees from all over the country. There are many excellent restaurants and shops in town open during the season from May through the fall-color time in October. Prepare for slow travel on US-31 through the town of Charlevoix during the months of July and August, and plan well ahead for lodging reservations. Charlevoix is also the departure point for the ferry to Beaver Island for a wilderness experience; the island is little birded and has produced some interesting rarities.



NW-9 Fisherman's Island State Park

By Jill Anderson

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

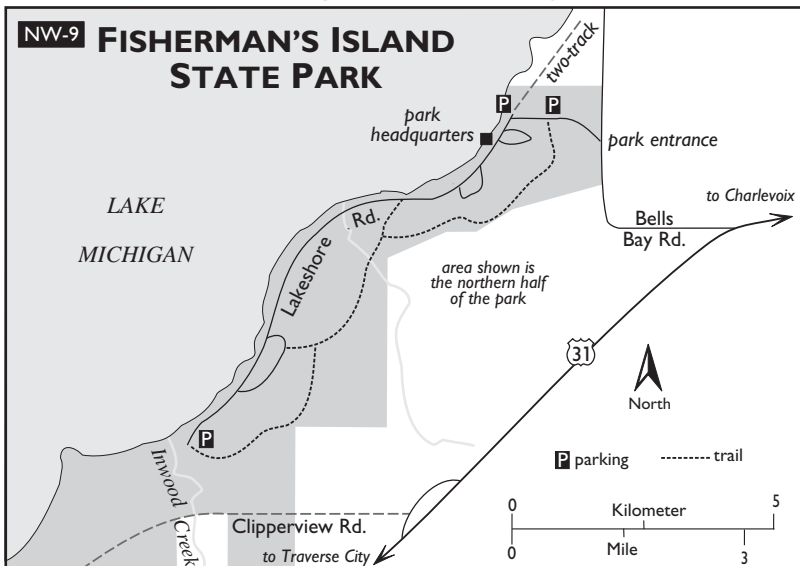
DeLorme p. 81, B5. 45°18' N, 85°18' W

Contact Information: 231-547-6641;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From the intersection of M-66 and US-31 on the south side of Charlevoix, go south on US-31 for 1.3 miles and turn right (west) onto Bells Bay Road. Follow this for 1.2 miles and go left at the park entrance.

Fisherman's Island State Park can be hopping with spring migrants in May when birds pause here as they come up against the barrier of Lake Michigan on their journey north. The rocky beaches attract migrant shorebirds in May and from August through October, including Semipalmated Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Dunlin. From the entrance, go 0.3 mile to a small, two-car pulloff on the right. There is a trail here and another directly across the road, both paralleling the lakeshore for some distance and good for migrant warblers in spring, including Tennessee, Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Palm, Bay-breasted, American Redstart, Wilson's, and Canada, among others. At 0.2 mile farther, the road reaches a lake overlook, where there is a two-track road to the right that is often worth checking for migrant passerines. The park office is to the left. Continue on the main road past the park office for 2.4 miles to a parking lot at the end of the road and a path to the beach, which is often good for migrating shorebirds in spring and fall and for ducks in late fall and early winter, including most of the dabbling ducks, Redhead, both scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and all three mergansers.



NW-10 Jordan River Valley and Jordan River Pathway

By Brian Allen, Jill Anderson, and Bert McDonald

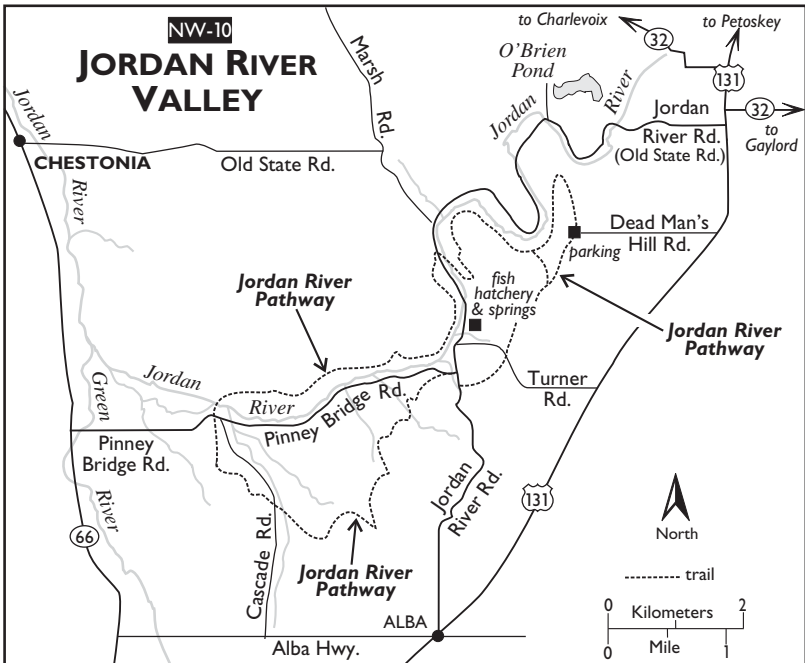
Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 82, D1. 45°03' N, 84°56' W

Contact Information: Maps of the pathway are available from the East Jordan Area Chamber of Commerce, 231-36-7351, www.ejchamber.org.

Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and M-66 in Charlevoix, go south on M-66 for about 12 miles to M-32. Turn left (east) onto M-32 and continue south for about 12 miles to the intersection with US-131.

This area of northern forest has extensive public ownership and access to one of Michigan's premier trout streams, as well as excellent birding for breeding northern warblers, including Golden-winged, Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Mourning, and Canada. Red-shouldered Hawks are common in the valley as are Barred Owl and Whip-poor-will; occasionally a Northern Saw-whet Owl will be present. Olive-sided Flycatcher may nest in some of the valley's Tamarack and spruce bogs. The **Jordan River Pathway** has two loop trails: an 18-mile hiking trail and a 3-mile loop, both starting at the Dead Man's Hill parking lot. From the intersection of M-32 and US-131 in northern Antrim County, drive 1.5 miles south to Dead Man's Hill Road. Turn right and go 1.7 miles to the parking area. The shorter 3-mile trail goes



through mostly maple and beech forest to an overlook with a view of the river valley.

Most birders enter the area by car via **Jordan River Road** (unfortunately labeled on most maps, including DeLorme, as State Road or Old State Road). From the intersection of M-32 and US-131, go south for 0.2 mile on US-131 to Jordan River Road. Follow Jordan River Road west from US-131 as this gravel, all-weather road follows the course of the Jordan River, with several pullouts where you can stop to bird both river and forest. Also check the grassy fields on both sides of this road in May through July for Grasshopper Sparrow. There is an unnamed two-track on the right at 2.8 miles from US-131 that leads 0.5 mile north to **O'Brien Pond**. This two-track can be driven (with four-wheel-drive) or walked to the pond to check for waterfowl. Olive-sided Flycatcher is often seen at the edge of the pond during late spring and summer.

Continue south and west for 3.4 miles, where Marsh Road (not signposted) merges from the northwest (right). At 1.5 miles south of the intersection with Marsh Road is a fish hatchery, where a series of springs and creeks with dense vegetation can attract breeding Mourning Warblers. At 0.5 mile south of the hatchery, turn right (west) onto Pinney Bridge Road (not signposted) and continue west to M-66, following the Jordan River, for 2 miles west to **Cascade Road**. Turn left (south) onto Cascade Road and go 0.5 mile to an open area on the west side of the road, where it is easy to see Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks in late spring and summer.

NW-11 Grass River Natural Area

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 75, A6. 44°54' N, 85°12' W

Contact Information: 231-533-8314; www.grassriver.org

Directions: From the village of Alden in southwestern Antrim County (south of the Jordan River Valley via US-131), go north on Alden Highway (CO 618) for about 4.0 miles to the entrance on the north side of the road. Or, from the village of Mancelona on US-131, take M-88 west for 2.5 miles. As M-88 turns right (north), continue straight ahead (west) onto Alden Highway (CO 618). The road into the natural area is on the right, 5.5 miles west of the intersection of M-88 and Alden Highway. See Charlevoix area map on page 282.

Between the Jordan River Valley and Elk Rapids, on the shores of Grand Traverse Bay, is an area of large, clear inland lakes including Lake Bellaire, Elk Lake, Lake Skegemog, and Torch Lake. Torch Lake has been called the third-most beautiful lake in the world by *National Geographic* magazine. The **Grass River Natural Area** is a 1,140-acre preserve at the east end of Clam Lake and south of Lake Bellaire. Naturalists are present at the trail cabin daily during the summer (mid-June to Labor Day) and on weekends through the

end of September. For program information call 231-533-8314. There are 3.5 miles of boardwalks through wetlands, including sedge meadows and cedar swamps, and along the river and streams. There are additional well-marked trails through woodland and upland meadows. Several observation decks along the trails make it easy to scope for ducks and eagles on the river. Common summer residents of the cedar swamp include Nashville and Canada Warblers, along with Winter Wren and Northern Waterthrush. Common Loon nests in the waterways and can be seen from the observation decks, and Sandhill Crane is a common spring through fall resident.

NW-12 Lake Skegemog

By Brian Allen

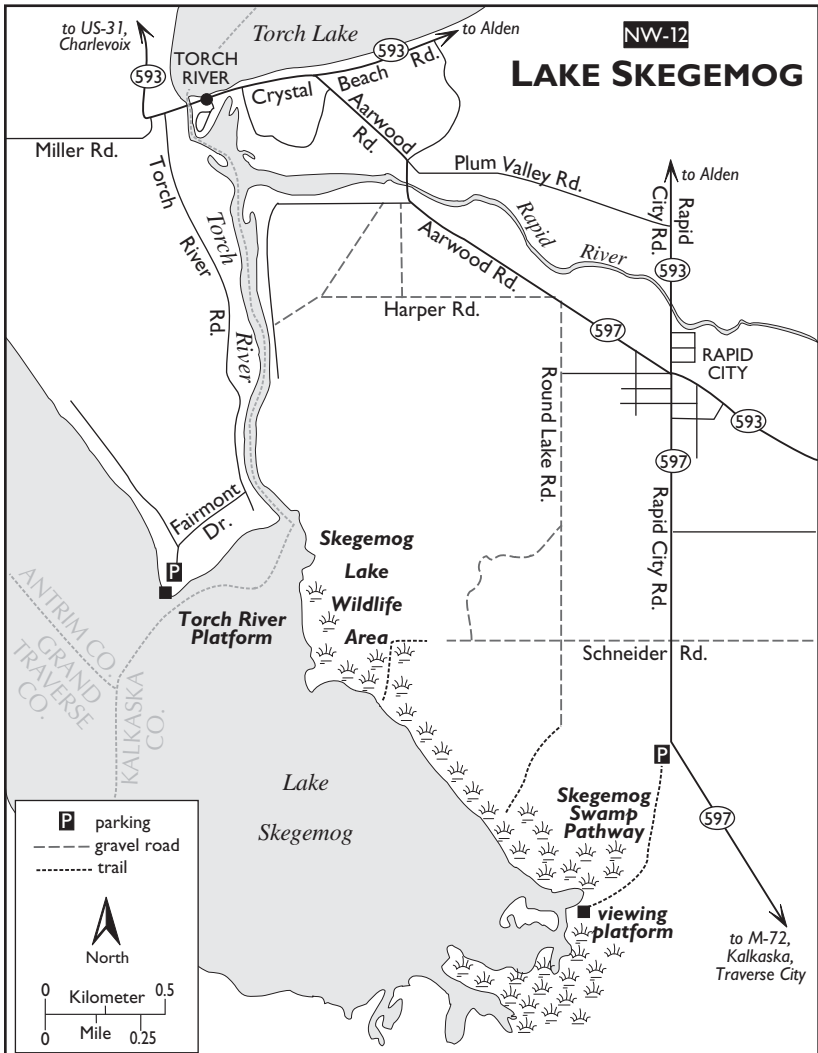
*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 75, B5. 44°58' N, 85°18' W

Directions: From the village of Alden in southwestern Antrim County, go south about 4 miles to the village of Torch River, located in northwestern Kalkaska County and inland from the town of Elk Rapids.

The eastern end of **Lake Skegemog** has a North Woods wilderness quality that is very appealing. Nesting Common Loons and Bald Eagles on the lake and northern warblers in the lakeshore forest make a visit here even more worthwhile. Much of the eastern lakeshore has been protected as a state game area, and other parcels are protected by local land conservancies, including the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (www.gtrlc.org). The easiest point of access to Lake Skegemog is the **Torch River Platform** on the north side of the lake, just south of the village of Torch River. At the yellow flashing traffic light in the village of Torch River, go about 0.1 mile west to Torch River Road. (If coming from Rapid City, go west on Aarwood Road (CO 597) for 2.1 miles to Crystal Beach Road; turn left (west) for 0.7 mile to the traffic light, where Crystal Beach Road becomes Torch River Road). Turn left (south) onto Torch River Road for 1.8 miles to Fairmont Drive. Turn right (west) and go 0.3 mile to the parking lot for the Torch River Platform on the left. Park and follow the trail through the mature oak and pine forest for about 0.25 mile to the viewing platform on the edge of Lake Skegemog.

A second area to explore is in the Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area's **Skegemog Swamp Pathway**, a trail through second-growth forest, conifer swamp, fens, and bogs on the east side of Lake Skegemog in Kalkaska County. A trail and boardwalk through the marsh end at an observation tower where Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows, and occasional Sedge Wren are found during spring and summer. Black Bear, Mink, and River Otter have also been seen. From the Torch River Platform, return north to the town of Torch River and back to Rapid City via CO 597 (Aarwood Road). Go south on CO 597 for 1.2 miles to Schneider Road. Turn right (west) here for 0.5 mile to a parking area and trail into the Skegemog Lake Wildlife Area. Alternatively, continue another 0.3

mile south of Schneider Road to a yellow sign for the Skegemog Swamp Pathway on the right side of the road, where the road curves left. Park in the lot here and follow the trail (total length about 1 mile) behind the sign at the southwest side of the parking area. You will go through an aspen forest for about 0.1 mile to the old railroad bed. The trail goes left (south) here on the old railroad bed for about 0.5 mile through a boreal swamp of Tamarack and Black Spruce. At a sign, the trail turns right (west) into a White-cedar swamp with boardwalks and bridges, following a stream for about 0.4 mile until it ends at a platform where you can see out over the marsh and to the open wa-



ter of Lake Skegemog. There are many dead trees in the water that make excellent perches for Bald Eagles and Osprey. A scope is necessary to check for waterfowl. Yellow, Mourning, and Canada Warblers, American Redstart, and Common Yellowthroat probably nest along the trail.

Continue south on Rapid City Road (CO 597) for 2.3 miles to Hill Road. Turn right (west) and go 1.1 miles to M-72. Traverse City is to the right (west) and the city of Kalkaska is to the left (east).

NW-13 Petobego State Game Area

By Brian Allen

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 75, A4. 44°51' N, 85°23' W
Contact Information: 231-922-5280

Directions: From Traverse City, go east on M-72 to the intersection of M-72 and US-31 in Acme (just northeast of Traverse City and 10.1 miles west of the intersection of M-72 and Hill Road). Go north on US-31 for 6.5 miles to a pulloff on the right at the wooden sign for Petobego Marsh. This sign, easy to miss, is just before the Antrim County line.

Petobego State Game Area is one of the best birding sites close to Traverse City (see map on next page). The game area consists of 443 acres of public land, with **Petobego Marsh** on the east side of US-31. The marsh is about 1.5 miles long and 0.5 mile wide, with about half of its surface area in open water and the other half with emergent sedge and cattail marsh. Breeding birds include American and Least Bitterns as well as Black Tern, Virginia Rail, and Sora. Portions of the marsh can be scoped from a concrete dam at the end of the two-track that goes east of the game area sign. This two-track is less than one-quarter mile long, but can be washed out after rains and is sandy, so drive with care, or walk to the dam.

Just across the road from this two-track and on the west side of US-31, a trail (marked with blue paint blazes) drops down along the streamside, then cuts back through an old field of juniper and pine, and enters a second-growth forest of White-cedar, White Pine, hemlock, and beech. The trail runs west for 0.5 mile until ending at several side trails to viewpoints over **Petobego Pond**. The forest here has nesting Pine Warblers, American Redstarts, and Northern Waterthrushes. Petobego Pond can be excellent for shorebirds and waterfowl in migration. Bald Eagles are frequent visitors from March to November, often sitting in the large White Pines on the south end. The trail goes another 0.25 mile to the beach at Lake Michigan, where you can check for shorebirds and ducks during migration. The ridge that parallels the shoreline here is often excellent in mid- to late May for neotropical migrants.

To bird the game area at the south end of Petobego Marsh, drive south for 0.4 mile on US-31 to the intersection with Bates Road. Turn left (south) onto Bates Road and go 1.25 miles to Angell Road. Turn left (east) and continue 0.7 mile to a pulloff on the right, where you can scope the marsh on both sides of

the road for dabbling ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, and herons. The Tamarracks to the east are home to nesting Veery, and both Willow and Alder Flycatchers have been seen here.

NW-14 Elk Rapids Harbor

By Brian Allen

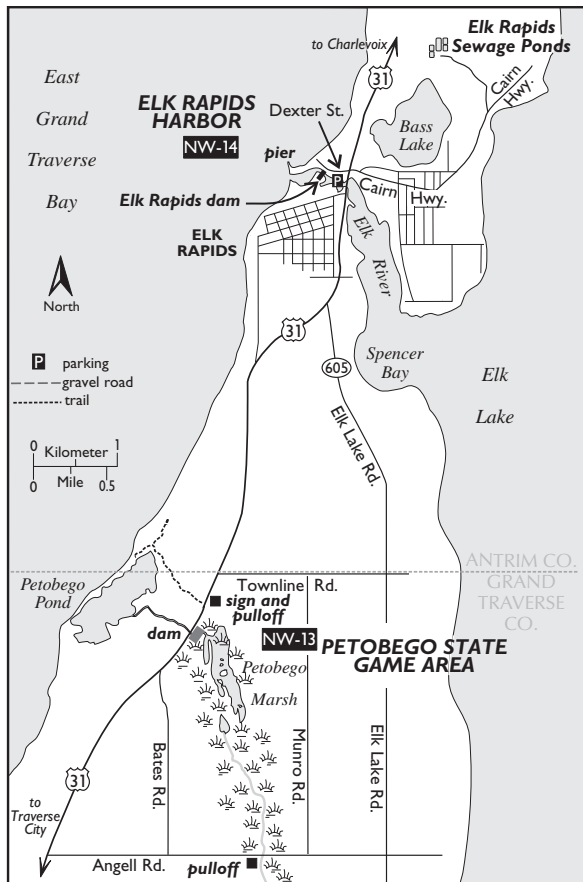
Spring** Summer*
Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 94, B2.
45°47' N, 84°47' W

Directions: From Acme, go north on US-31 for 10 miles to the town of Elk Rapids. Or, from the sign at Petobego Marsh, go 3.5 miles north on US-31.

Elk Rapids (3.5 miles north of the Petobego Marsh) has several

places from which to scan East Traverse Bay for waterfowl. As you cross the outlet of Elk Lake on US-31 in Elk Rapids, turn left (west) at the stoplight just north of the bridge onto Dexter Street (Cairn Highway). Go 0.1 mile to a parking area for **Elk Rapids dam**, where you can check the (usually) open waters below the dam for flocks of diving ducks and gulls in winter. From the parking lot, walk on the sidewalk to the west to the short **Elk Rapids pier** for a better view of the bay. A Barrow's Goldeneye spent several winters, and Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, Common Mergansers, and occasional scoters and Long-tailed Ducks can be found here from late October through early April. The sandbars and rocks of the pier area sometimes attract migrant shorebirds, but never in large numbers. Purple Sandpiper has been seen here in November on the rocks of the pier, and off the pier on the rocks that shelter the harbor. Return to US-31 and go east on Cairn's Highway for 1.3 miles to Heerman Road. Turn left and go 0.6 mile to the gate for the **Elk Rapids sewage ponds**. The gate to the ponds is always closed and entry is not

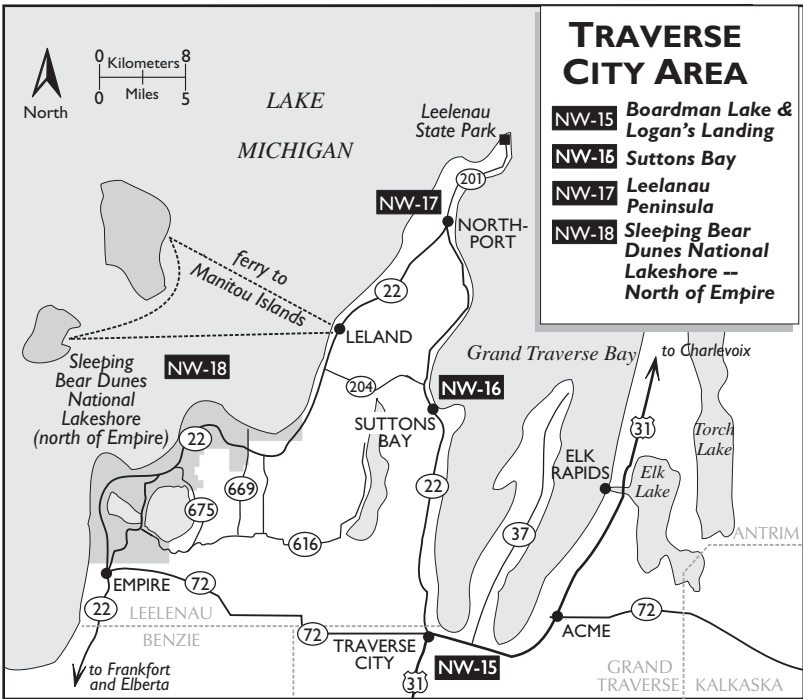


permitted, but the three ponds can be viewed from outside the gate. Migrant waterfowl and shorebirds stop at these ponds in spring and fall.

THE TRAVERSE CITY AREA

By Brian Allen

Traverse City, the regional urban center for northwestern Michigan, is a mix of quiet neighborhoods, busy intersections, beachside condominiums, million-dollar homes with views, and all the restaurants, stores, and traffic that most birders usually want to avoid. Fortunately there are several birding sites close by where you can see and hear the sights that make you feel that you are in the wilds of northern Michigan. The busy time of the year is the second week of July for the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City. Summer weekends (from Memorial Day until Labor Day) can also be very busy, and it is difficult to find a motel room unless reserved far ahead of time. The Traverse City Airport is served by scheduled airlines and is one of the closest airports to the Kirtland's Warbler areas, which are a 90-minute drive to the east (see the Northeastern Lower Peninsula chapter).



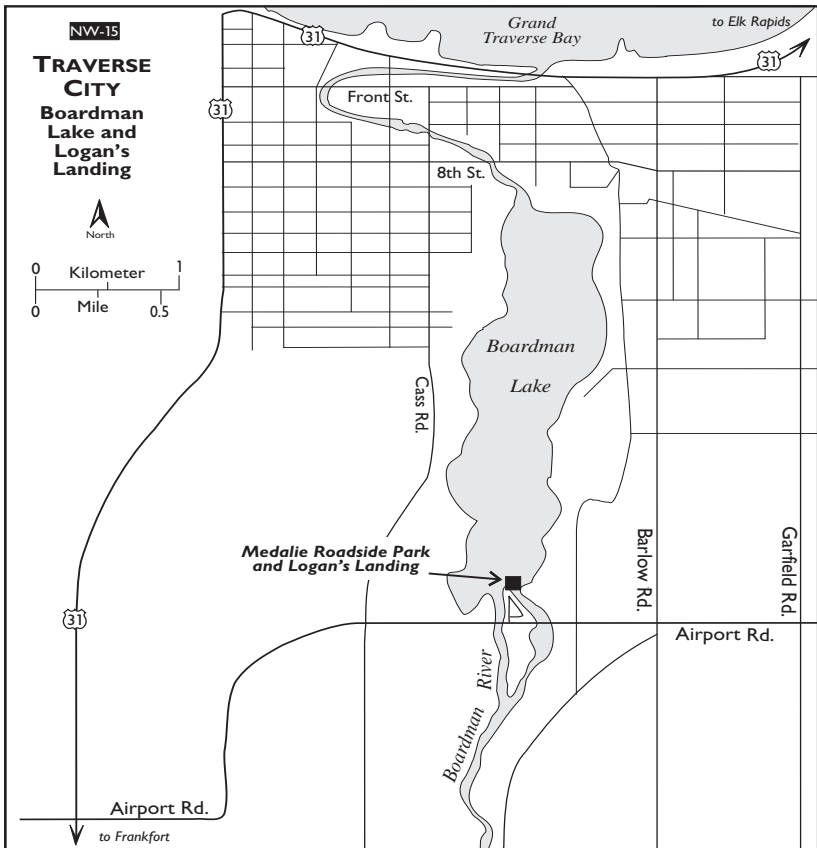
NW-15 Boardman Lake and Logan's Landing

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter***
 DeLorme p. 74, C3. 44°40', 85°36' W

Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and Airport Road on the south side of Traverse City, travel east on Airport Road for about 2.0 miles past the Cass Road intersection and across the Boardman River. Take a left turn immediately after crossing the river into the Logan's Landing shopping plaza.

The Mute Swan is hard to miss when you do any birding in northwestern Michigan, but if you haven't seen one yet, this is the place where it all started. Mute Swans were introduced here, and eventually prospered and spread throughout the middle Great Lakes region. This site is also a good spot for waterfowl all winter, as the current of the Boardman River keeps the south end of the lake from freezing. Many diving and dabbling ducks are pres-



ent through the winter in addition to several hundred gulls. One of the restaurants (currently Auntie Pasta's Italian Restaurant) in the Logan's Landing shopping plaza has a dining area with a view of the river. In winter, you can have the pleasure while you dine of watching Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, and Hooded Mergansers swimming and diving just outside your window. You can continue past the restaurant to the turnaround at Medalie Roadside Park on the lakeshore for views of the southern end of Boardman Lake.

NW-16 Suttons Bay

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 74, A2. 44°59' N, 85°38' W

Contact Information: Leelanau Trail, 231-941-4300;

www.traversetrails.org/leelanau-trail.shtml

Directions: From the corner of M-22 and M-37 in Traverse City, take M-22 north for 15 miles to Suttons Bay.

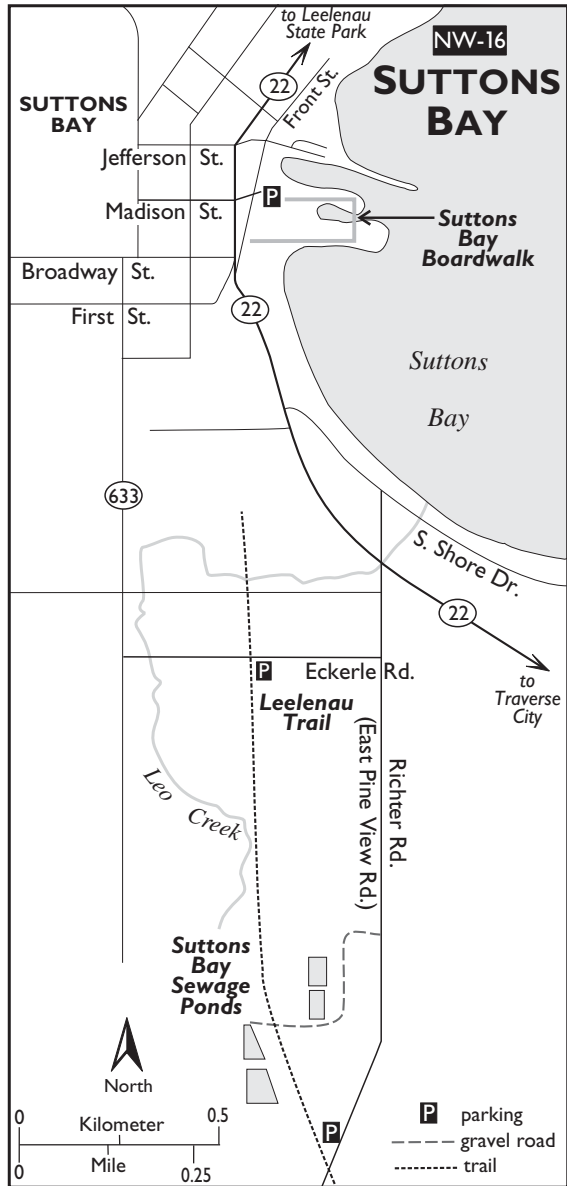
The village of **Suttons Bay**, in Leelanau County, is 15 miles north of Traverse City via a scenic drive on M-22 along the shore of West Traverse Bay. At the time of this writing, the water level is low, and extensive sand bars and rock flats, along with sedge marshes, border the bay. The clear, infertile water and sands do not attract many shorebirds, although a few can usually be found in migration, along with the ever-present Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Several pulloffs and roadside parks on the right side of the road provide good views before Suttons Bay. Prepare for a slow drive during the summer tourist season.

Another good spot for waterfowl with a better chance to see shorebirds is at the **Suttons Bay Boardwalk** in the village of Suttons Bay. At the corner of M-22 and Madison Street (one block north of the blinking yellow traffic light), turn right (east) and down a hill for 0.1 mile to the parking lot at the road's end. The boardwalk begins at the southwest corner of the lot and extends about 500 feet to the wooden bridge and another 160 feet to the observation deck. The boardwalk passes through a small, two-acre marsh bordered by willows, and crosses a wooden bridge to the observation deck on the small bay protected from the open waters of Grand Traverse Bay. The most common species seen in the warm-weather months are Common Merganser, Double-crested Cormorant, and Great Blue Heron. From late July through late September, migrant shorebirds are possible.

In the past, birders were able to walk around the lagoons at the **Suttons Bay Sewage Ponds** to search for shorebirds and ducks during migration. At present, like so many such facilities, the area is now fenced and posted against entry. Fortunately, there is some access available from the new Leelanau Trail, a hiking and biking trail that follows an old railway bed and

which goes through the sewage-ponds area, making it possible to check the lower two ponds from the trail.

To reach the trailhead, drive south on M-22 from the blinking yellow traffic light in downtown Suttons Bay for 0.5 mile to Richter Road (labeled as East Pine View Road on some maps). Turn right (west) onto Richter Road and go 0.1 mile south to Eckerle Road. Turn right (west) onto Eckerle Road and go 0.2 mile to a parking lot near the county garage next to the Leelanau Trail. You can walk (or bike) the trail for 0.7 mile south through a brushy second-growth forest to the sewage ponds. A second option with a shorter walk is to follow Richter Road south past Eckerle Road for 1.1 miles and park on the roadside where the Leelanau



Trail crosses the road. From this spot it is 0.4 mile to the ponds. The best time to visit here for shorebirds is mid- August, when you are likely to see Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers, along with Wood Duck, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Great Blue and Green Herons, and large mixed-species flocks of swallows.

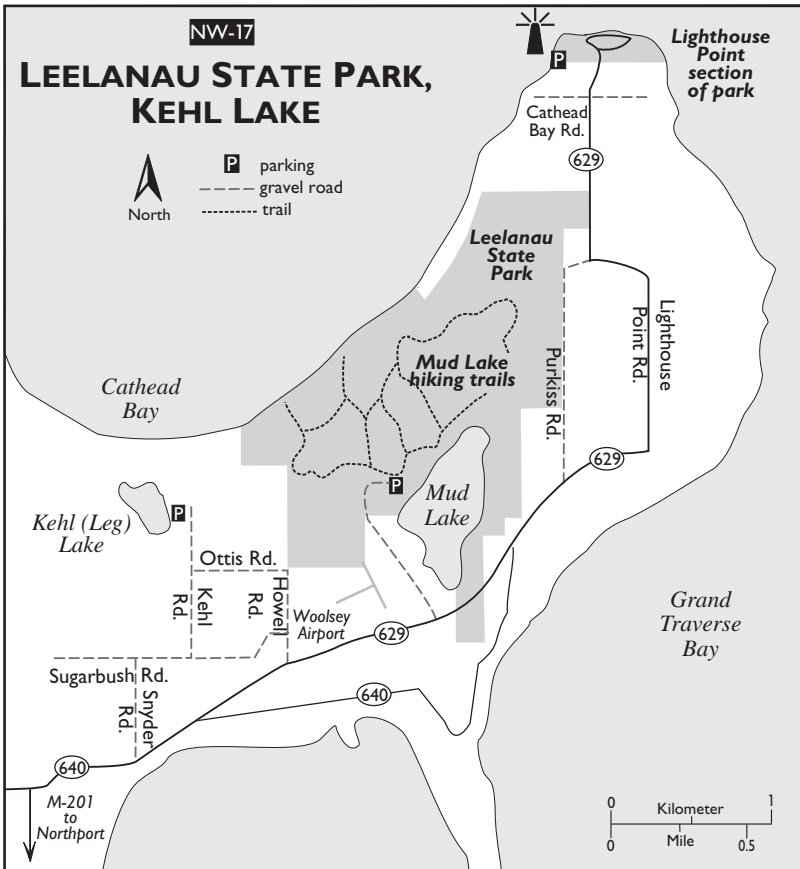
NW-17 Leelanau Peninsula

By Dave B. Sing

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 80, C3. 45°11', 85°34' W

Directions: From Traverse City, go north on M-22 for 29 miles to Northport (14 miles north from the previous site, Sutton's Bay). From the traffic light in Northport, take M-201 north for 1.7 miles to CO 640. Follow CO 640 for 1.7 miles to C-629 and turn left (north) onto CO 629 to the park entrance another 5.5 miles farther on.

Leelanau State Park, at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, juts north into Lake Michigan on the western side of Grand Traverse Bay, creating a natural concentration point for migrant passerines and hawks in spring. Lighthouse Point and the beach are good areas to watch for migrant loons, grebes, and diving ducks in spring and fall, while shorebirds can sometimes be found



on the beach. In migration, the scrubby areas can be dripping with warblers, with 15 species possible in a single day, along with many thrushes and sparrows. The beach is also a good place to look for Michigan's official gemstone, the Petoskey, a type of fossilized coral. The Mud Lake trail offers a nice combination of habitats.

The real jewel of the Leelanau Peninsula is Kehl Lake. Just southwest of Leelanau State Park, **Kehl Lake Natural Area** is maintained by the Leelanau Conservancy (www.theconservancy.com, 231-256-9665). (The lake is shown as Leg Lake on some maps, including DeLorme.) From CO 640, take Snyder Road north for 0.5 mile to Sugarbush Road and turn right. Go 0.7 mile to the corner of Kehl and Ottis Roads (Sugarbush makes a sharp bend to the left). Continue straight ahead on Kehl Road for 0.2 mile to the parking area on the left. Habitats at Kehl Lake include uncut old-growth forest, with massive White-cedar, White Pine and Black Spruce, as well as lakeshore and forest edge. The dark, wet woods at Kehl Lake have a boreal feel, as reflected by the breeding birds found here, which include Black-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Veery, Northern Parula, Black-throated Blue and Blackburnian Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, White-throated Sparrow, and others. Year-round residents include Ruffed Grouse, Barred Owl, and Pileated Woodpecker. There is a double-loop trail here that should take most birders about an hour or two to explore thoroughly.

NW-18 Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore – North of Empire

By Chip Francke, Susan Franklin, and Dave B. Sing

Spring**** Summer**** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 72–74

Contact Information: General information, including lodging and camping facilities, can be found at the park's website, www.nps.gov/slbe/. The entry fee is the current National Park Service standard \$7.00 per car, good for 7 days.

Directions: To reach the park from the previous site, return from Kehl Lake south to Northport, where you can take M-22 for about 11 miles to Leland and the start of the tour to Sleeping Bear Dunes. See next map. Or, if coming from Traverse City, take M-22 north from Traverse City for about 15 miles to Road 204 west (just north of Suttons Bay). Take 204 for about 7 miles to a junction with M-22, 2 miles south of Leland.

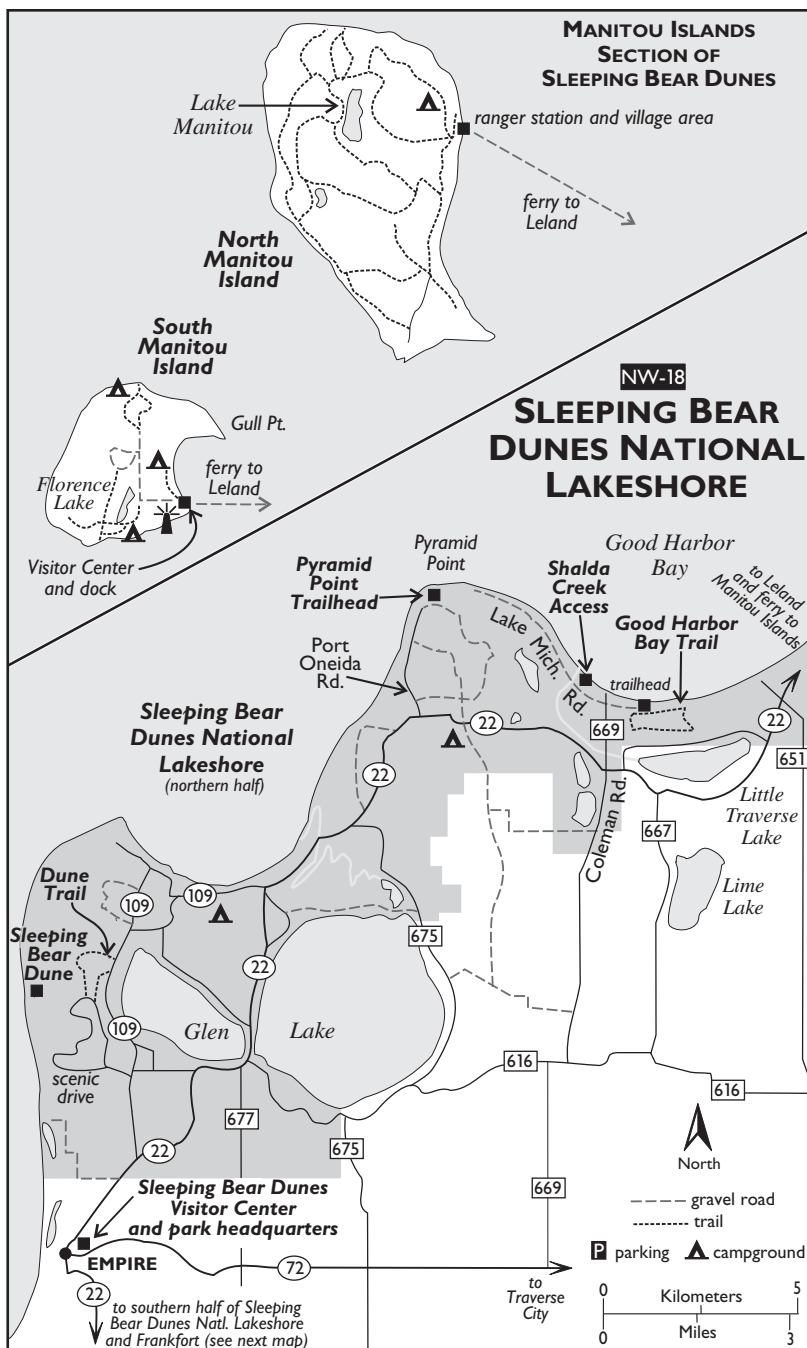
Alternatively, for birders not visting the offshore Manitou Islands section of Sleeping Bear Dunes (the first stop below), the tour would then begin at Good Harbor Bay (the second stop below). From the intersection of M-22 and M-72 northwest of Traverse City, take M-72 west for about 14 miles to County Road 669 (Coleman Road). Go straight or north (M-72 turns sharply left here) for 8.5 miles to M-22. County Road 669 continues straight across M-22 to Good Harbor Bay.

On the southwest shoreline of the Leelanau Peninsula is the **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore**, which became part of the national park system in 1970. The park encompasses more than 70,000 acres, with a 35-mile stretch of Lake Michigan shoreline as well as the offshore North and South Manitou Islands. The park was established primarily for its outstanding natural features, including forests, beaches, dune formations, and ancient glacial phenomena. The dunes contain an interesting variety of fragile vegetation, including Hoary Puccoon, Wormwood, Dune Lily, Wood Lily, Clustered Broomrape, and the endangered Great Lakes endemic Pitcher's Thistle.

Sleeping Bear Dunes gets its name from a particularly large dune area west of Pyramid Point that is said to resemble a sleeping bear. The park also contains many cultural features, including an 1871 lighthouse. There are good opportunities for birding, and this area provides habitat for the greatest concentration in the state for breeding Prairie Warblers (Endangered). Five of the best areas are described below, but birders are encouraged to explore other areas, with their many miles of trails. An essential local reference, providing information on geology and natural history of the region in addition to birds, is *Birds of Leelanau County and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore* by Chip Francke and Leonard Graf. The book is available in most local bookstores and at the national lakeshore headquarters in the town of Empire. Significant portions of the following account have been excerpted from that publication with the permission of the authors.

Manitou Islands (DeLorme p. 72, A1-B2. 45°05' N, 86°05' W): Both North and South Manitou Islands, disjunct parts of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, are excellent birding areas. Ferry service is from the town of Leland, which is along M-22 on the west side of the Leelanau Peninsula, about 12 miles southwest of Northport and about 22 miles northwest of Traverse City. Operated by the Manitou Island Transit, ferry service is available to both islands from about mid-May through mid-October. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, two ferries depart from Leland, one to each island. At other times, service may be reduced to one ferry and weekends (weather dependent). The boat ride over can sometimes be rough, and on rare occasions a crossing may be delayed. This is something to think about if you are camping on the island, and you should pack extra food in case of delays in leaving the island. Personal vehicles are not allowed on either island. Call 231-256-9061 for ferry costs, schedules, and other details. Maps to both islands are available at the Manitou Island Transit office and at the Sleeping Bear Dunes visitor center in Empire. Additional information can be found at www.leelanau.com/manitou/islands/.

South Manitou Island, about 16 miles west of Leland, is the easier of the two islands to visit. The island is 5,260 acres with approximately 10 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. Birders visiting South Manitou Island can go for a day trip or an extended camping trip. Day trips usually allow about four hours on the island; you will have another three hours to look for birds over the open waters of Lake Michigan while on the round-trip ferry. The scenery on a



clear day is spectacular. There are many good birding habitats on the island, including lakeshore, dunes, shrub-scrub, open fields, and mixed woodlands. It can be excellent during spring and fall for migrant passerines. If you don't have much time, check the shoreline, dunes, and woods near the lighthouse. If time allows, the Florence Lake area is also worth checking for breeding warblers, including Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Prairie (one sighting). On most days, the Manitou Island Transit staff also offers island tours in open-air vehicles. This is a good way to visit a variety of habitats in a short period of time, however, there is usually a limited amount of time to spend at each stop. Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Scarlet Tanager, and Bobolink are common in spring and summer. Gull Point usually has Ring-billed and Herring Gulls.

North Manitou Island is about 13 miles from Leland and 3 miles north of South Manitou. It is three times larger than South Manitou and has about 20 miles of shoreline. This large island is managed as a wilderness area. Be prepared for primitive camping and/or backpacking. Birders eager for this experience should check ahead with the Manitou Island Transit or the Sleeping Bear Dunes visitor center in Empire for more information. North Manitou offers a variety of birding habitats, including inland lakes, old farms and orchards, dunes, shoreline, shrub-scrub, and forests. Common Loons breed on the is-



Piping Plover
Tom Ford

land. Piping Plovers often breed at the southeastern tip of the island, though the area is closed to the public. Other sandy beaches on the island should be checked, while the woodlands and shorelines are good for migrant passerines.

Good Harbor Bay (DeLorme p. 74, A1. 44°56', 85°52' W): The first mainland stop is at Good Harbor Bay's varied habitats, including lakeshore, dunes, pine plains, Shalda Creek, and woods. From Leland, take M-22 south for about 10.75 miles to CO 669 (Coleman Road), which is just past Little Traverse Lake. Turn right (north) and go about 1 mile to Lake Michigan Road. Turn right (east) and go 0.7 mile to the **Good Harbor Bay Hiking Trail**. This 2.8-mile, mostly wooded loop crosses several wooded wetland areas. It is recommended that you take a trail map, which is available at the trailhead. You can also continue a short distance past the trailhead to the east end of Lake Michigan Road, where there is a small picnic area near the shoreline with good views of the bay. The huge White Pines and the adjacent smaller pines, cedars, and scrub in the dune transition forest at Good Harbor Bay are traditional nesting grounds for Prairie Warbler. *Please stay on marked trails in these areas, as this state-endangered warbler nests on the ground.* Standing on the dunes at Good Harbor Bay in summer, you can hear Ruffed Grouse, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Wood and Hermit Thrushes, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Pine and Prairie Warblers, American Redstart, Scarlet Tanager, and White-throated Sparrow. On the bay and beach, look for Caspian and Forster's Terns (spring through fall), Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed Gull (rare in fall and winter), and occasional shorebirds. Sometimes a Merlin is present near the shoreline.

If you turn left (west) onto Lake Michigan Road from its intersection with CO 669 and go 0.7 mile, you will see a sign for **Lake Michigan-Shalda Creek Access**. There is a small pulloff here and birders can walk a short distance to the shoreline. Shalda Creek empties into Good Harbor Bay near this spot. Other good spots to view the open waters of Good Harbor Bay are at the ends of County Roads 669 and 651.

Pyramid Point (DeLorme p. 73, A7. 44°58' N', 85°55' W): Return to the intersection of M-22 and CO 669 and continue west on M-22 for 3.5 miles to Port Oneida Road. Turn right (north) and go 2.1 miles to the Pyramid Point Hiking Trail parking area. Trail maps are available at the trailhead. The 2.5 miles of trails will take you through open fields where Bobolinks, Eastern and Western (rare) Meadowlarks, and other open-country birds can be found, as well as through northern hardwood forests and dunes. There are excellent open fields along Port Oneida Road where Alder and Willow Flycatchers (near Kinderhouse Road), Grasshopper Sparrows, and occasional Western Meadowlarks can be found. The view from the top of Pyramid Point is scenic but don't expect to see many birds from this high, steep bluff.

From here, you can reach the park visitor center in Empire in either of two ways. Following M-22, which makes a left (south) turn just past Glen Arbor,

takes you past Glen Lake, where migrant and wintering waterfowl may be seen, as well as breeding Common Loons and Bald Eagles. Or, at the point where M-22 turns south, you can take M-109 straight ahead to Sleeping Bear Point and the largest dunes in the park, including the dune for which the park is named. The Dune Trail is a very scenic walk through this interesting area. M-109 rejoins M-22 south in Empire, where the park visitor center is located.

THE FRANKFORT AREA

By Brian Allen

From the hill near Frankfort's signature car-ferry gate on M-115, it's easy to see why this area has attracted vacationers for over 100 years. Straight ahead lie the open waters of Lake Michigan, while below sit the towns of Frankfort and Elberta, protected in a valley of high hills and dunes. Just over the hill to the north is Crystal Lake, named for its astonishingly clear waters. And just beyond Crystal Lake is the southern portion of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, one of the region's best-known and most-visited spots. As in most northwest Michigan tourist areas, Frankfort is very busy in July and August, and quiet for the rest of the year, with the exception perhaps of early October when the tourists return to see the hills turn orange, red, and gold with the first frosts of the year.

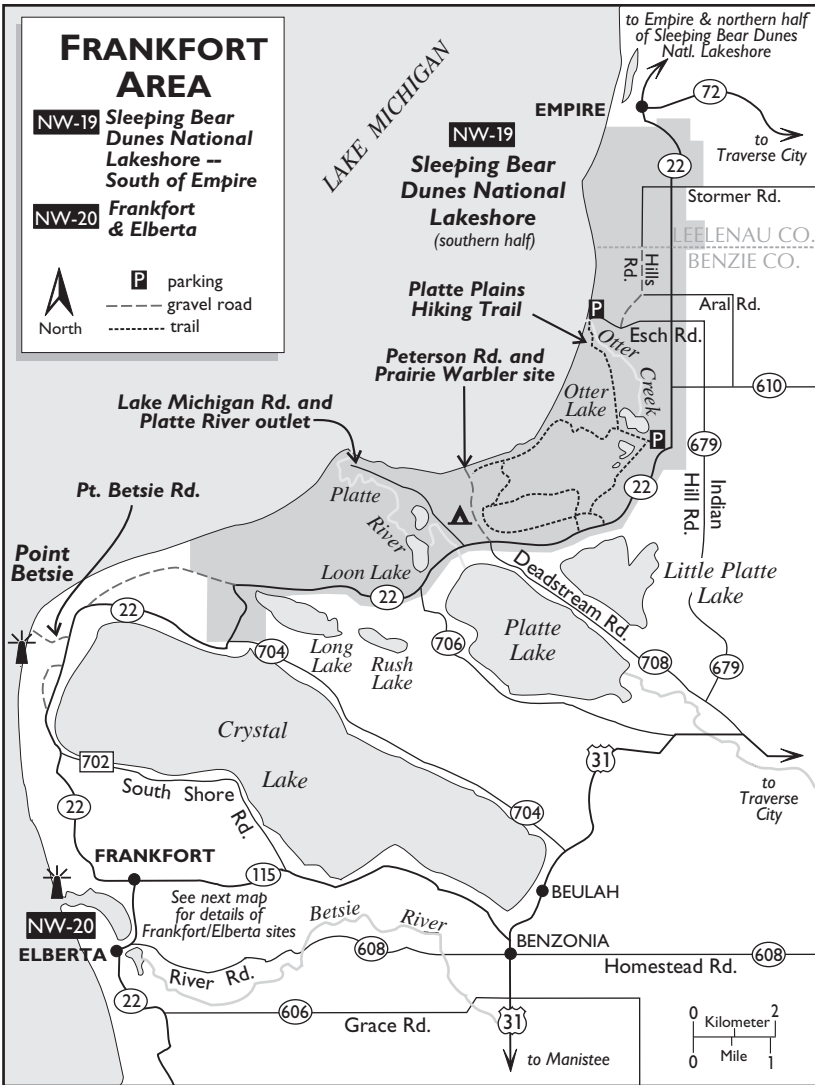
NW-19 Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore – South of Empire

By Brian Allen and Chip Francke

*Spring**** Summer**** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 73, C5–6*

Platte Plains Hiking Trail (DeLorme p. 73, C6. 44°46' N, 86°04' W): From the intersection of M-22 and M-72 in the town of Empire, take M-22 south for 3.8 miles to Esch Road. Turn right (west) and go 1.3 miles to the parking area at the end of the road. Walk a short distance back up the road to a two-track that crosses Otter Creek and a trailhead, where there are maps of the Platte Plains Hiking Trail. Mixed woodlands, dunes, shoreline, shrub-scrub wetlands, and other habitats are in this area. The two-track that goes along Otter Creek passes through woodlands and overlooks wetlands along the creek, good in spring and summer for many wetland species, such as Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, and Sedge and Marsh Wrens. The woods along this two-track are also good for migrant and nesting passerines. The extensive trail system in the Platte Plains area has many similar, productive birding spots if you have the time for exploration.

Peterson Road (DeLorme p. 73, C6. 44°43' N, 86°06' W): Return to M-22 south, which then curves west as it nears Little Platte Lake. After 5.5 miles, you will come to paved Deadstream Road (CO 708) on the left and



gravel Peterson Road on the right. This gravel road is usually passable to all cars except during heavy rain and just after snowmelt in the spring. If the road is drivable, turn right and follow Peterson Road for about 1 mile to the road's end at the beach on Lake Michigan. The road passes through boreal transition forests, where you can stop along the way in May and June to look for Olive-sided Flycatcher, which is occasional. Park at the end of Peterson Road and walk along the edge of the forest at the start of the dunes, where Prairie Warblers nest. They are often found in the thick copses of juniper. *Do not*

step into the brush, as *Prairie Warblers* are ground-nesting birds. Unfortunately, in the last few years, the junipers have been dying and the warblers are becoming scarce, but the beauty of the area and other likely birds (Wood Thrush, Veery, Black-throated Blue and Yellow-rumped Warblers, and American Redstart) always make the hike enjoyable.

Platte River Outlet (DeLorme p. 73, C5. 44°44' N, 86°09' W): From M-22 and Peterson Road, continue west on M-22 for about 0.7 mile to Lake Michigan Road on the right, just before crossing the Platte River. Turn right and follow Lake Michigan Road for 3.6 miles to the end at a parking area for the Platte River Outlet. Park and walk to the north on the beach, following the river to the outlet in about 0.15 mile. Here is a beautiful vista of the wide expanse of Platte Bay, the Sleeping Bear Dunes to the north, and the Manitou Islands. The Platte River Outlet is one of the best sites in northwestern Michigan for overwintering waterfowl. After enjoying the scenery, you should scope directly offshore from the outlet in late fall through spring. It is not unusual to see thousands of Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Red-breasted and Common Mergansers here, along with less predictable numbers of Canvasbacks, Redheads, White-winged Scoters, and Long-tailed Ducks. This is also the best spot in the area to see Piping Plovers on the beach to the north; they are often visible from the parking area (the beach will be closed when the birds are nesting). Bald Eagles are often seen at the outlet, and migrant hawks pass by in April. A hike along the shore here in summer to the north for 1 to 2 miles can bring you into the *Prairie Warbler* habitat (summer season) discussed above at Peterson Road, where the access is easier.

Point Betsie (DeLorme p. 73, C5. 44°42' N, 86°15' W): From the Platte River Outlet, continue south on M-22 for about 10 miles to the west end of Crystal Lake and Point Betsie Road. Take Point Betsie Road to the right (west) up the hill, then downhill to its end at Lake Michigan and the scenic **Point Betsie lighthouse**. Park in the lot and walk the short distance to the shoreline for an excellent vantage point for observing migrating waterfowl in spring and fall. In October, thousands of ducks (mostly scaup and mergansers), along with hundreds of Common Loons, migrate just offshore. During November through March, Snowy Owls are sometimes present on the crests of the dunes near the point.

NW-20 Frankfort and Elberta

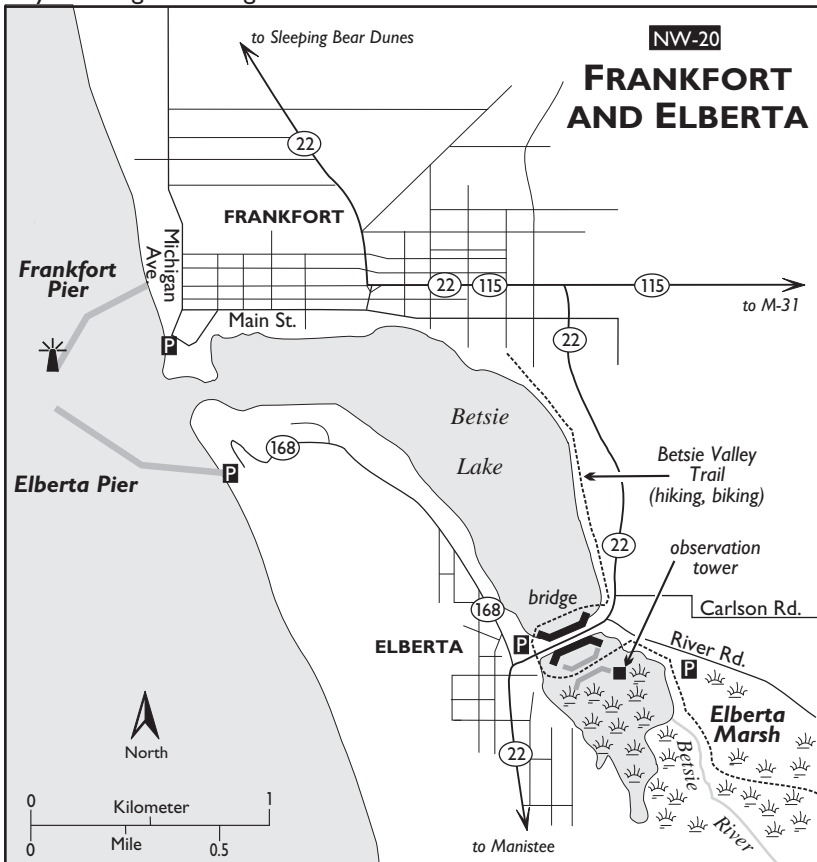
By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer ** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 73, C5. 44°38' N, 86°15' W

From Point Betsie, go south on M-22 for about 4.5 miles into the village of Frankfort and the intersection with M-115. Continue straight ahead for two blocks to Main Street and turn right. Go several blocks to the end of the street at Michigan Avenue. Turn left onto Michigan Avenue to the beach on

the right, where there is a turnaround and a parking area. Park here to check the beaches and the **Frankfort Pier**, which is a quarter-mile walk to the north. The Frankfort Pier is often not as productive as the Elberta Pier (see below) to the south, but is still a good spot for watching ducks and checking for Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper in November. The second, or far section of this pier, is narrow and not safe for walking on in the winter months.

From the intersection of M-115 and M-22 at the east end of Frankfort, drive south for 1.0 mile to the intersection with River Road. Turn left (east) onto River Road and go 0.2 mile to a small dirt parking area on the right that overlooks **Elberta Marsh**. Currently, the parking area is unimproved, but there are plans to improve and possibly pave this for access to the new Betsie Valley Trail (a rails-to-trails project). Park and walk on the trail to the west for about 100 yards to an old railroad bridge, a good overlook for the marsh and the observation platform. There are usually mudflats to the south that can be scoped for ducks, geese, and shorebirds in migration. The best months are May and August through October.



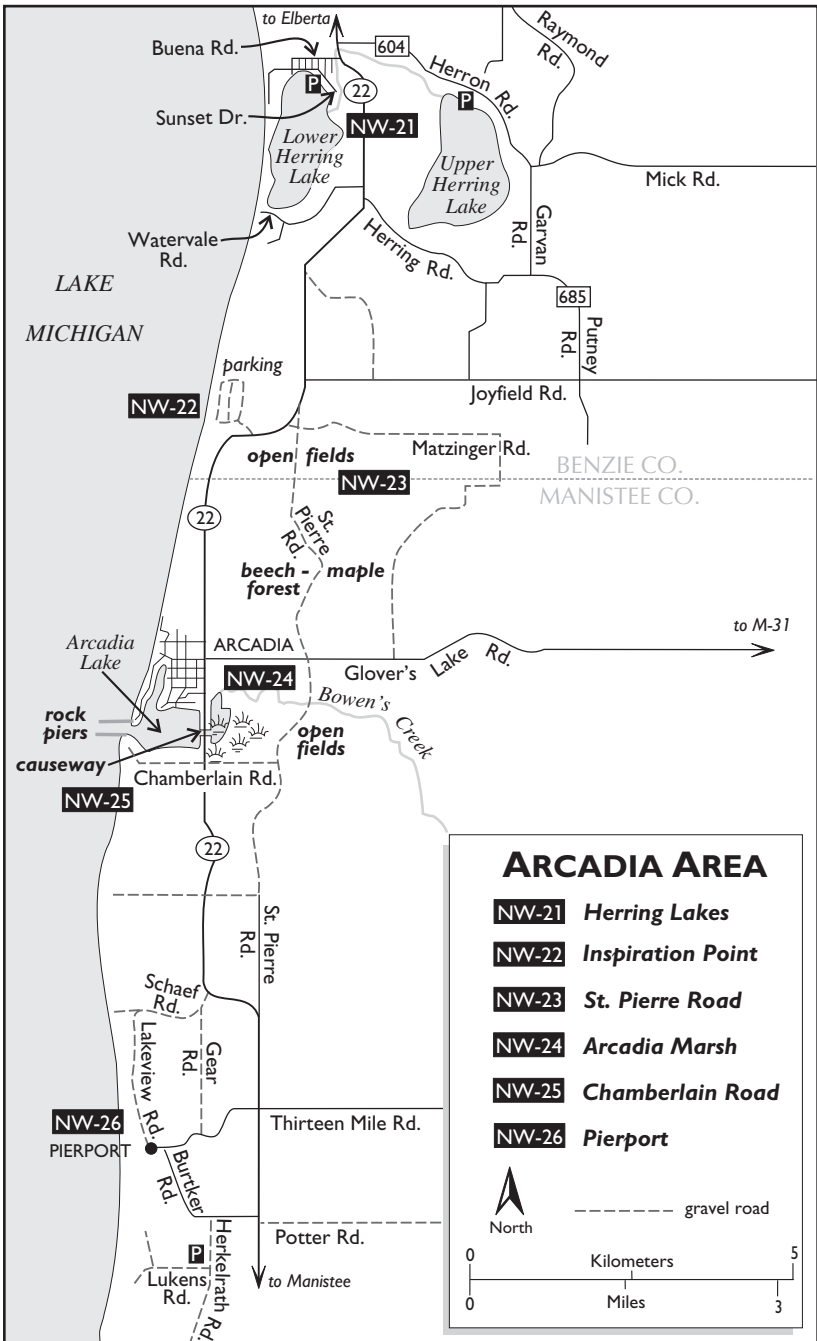
From the Elberta Marsh parking lot, return to M-22 and turn left (west) to cross the bridge. Parking is available on the other side of the bridge, where you can check **Betsie Bay** on the north side for ducks and gulls. Large concentrations of gulls are present here in the winter and early spring months, with Glaucous Gull found almost annually, Iceland Gull occasionally, and Thayer's Gull rarely. Continue 0.2 mile west on M-22 to the intersection with M-168 where it veers to the north. M-168 continues for 1 mile through the village of Elberta and past the old car ferry docks. The road forks here and continues uphill to the left through a forested dune to a parking area overlooking the coast and Lake Michigan. In winter months, scope the lake below for flocks of Long-tailed Ducks and scoters. The road then descends an extremely steep hill to the beach and the parking lot for the **Elberta Pier**. Do not attempt the drive down the hill during snowy or icy weather; you may not make it back up.

From the parking lot at the base of the hill it is a short walk to the pier. From June through September, a rolling boardwalk is in place which makes walking easier. The rest of the year you have to walk through the sand. This pier is an excellent place in late fall for migrant ducks and in November for Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper, although it may take more than one trip to find either of the two. As with most sites on Lake Michigan, it is often colder at the pier in the wind than on shore, so dress appropriately. The ice on the pier in winter and late fall is hazardous. Do not walk on the pier during high winds, when waves can wash over the pier. Another productive time to visit the pier is during September, when migrating juvenile shorebirds stop to forage at the pier. They are often tame and easily observed. Species usually present include Sanderling and Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers, along with occasional Ruddy Turnstone and Baird's Sandpiper.

THE ARCADIA AREA

By Brian Allen

Arcadia is a small lakeside village in northwestern Manistee County with a big birding reputation in this part of the state. Several significant state records have come from the area, including Harlequin Duck, eiders, Purple Gallinule, Black-billed Magpie, and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. There are sometimes large over-wintering flocks of Long-tailed Ducks and all three scoter species. Birds of local interest have included overshooting migrant White-eyed Vireo, rare nesting Loggerhead Shrikes (not recently), Cerulean and Hooded Warblers, and Orchard Orioles. Arcadia is beautifully situated in a valley that opens out to the Lake Michigan shore, with scenic roadside overlooks where views of Lake Michigan extend to the horizon. There are many resorts, vacation homes, and summer camps in the area that accommodate visitors returning each summer to enjoy the lovely natural surroundings.



NW-21 The Herring Lakes

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 73, D5. 44°34' N, 86°12' W

From the intersection of M-22 and M-168 in Elberta, take M-22 south for 3.4 miles to CO 604 (Herron Road) on the left. (See Arcadia Area map on previous page.) Turn left onto CO 604 and go 1.5 miles to the public access site at **Upper Herring Lake**. During migration, this lake is the more productive of the two for waterfowl. Continue south on M-22 for about 0.25 mile to Buena Road, turn right, and follow the signs to the public access site at **Lower Herring Lake**. Go another 1.3 miles south on M-22 to Watervale Road, for views of the southern end of Lower Herring Lake and for migrant passerines in spring. Bear left at the first fork onto Watervale Road and continue west to the end of the road at Lake Michigan, checking for migrants along the entire length of Watervale Road. A specimen of a Purple Gallinule was found near here on the Lake Michigan beach a few years ago.

NW-22 Inspiration Point

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 73, D5. 44°31' N, 86°14' W

Go south about 2 miles past the Herring Lakes, where M-22 turns to the right at the intersection with St. Pierre Road. (See Arcadia Area map on page 305.) Continue 0.5 mile on M-22 past the intersection of St. Pierre Road to the State of Michigan roadside rest area on the right, called **Inspiration Point** by area residents. Surprisingly, it is not a point of land but is a scenic pulloff for tourists. Here, you can enjoy the oceanic expanse of Lake Michigan as seen from 600 feet above the shore. A boardwalk and viewing platform make it possible to walk the 110 steps to the top of the bluff for an unobstructed view to the south. Most of the summer, when the rest area is ruled by tourists, there is no need to stop since the lake is devoid of birds other than the ever-present Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Birders start arriving just about when the tourists depart in late fall.

Large flocks of Common Loons, with an occasional Red-throated Loon, sometimes congregate offshore as they stage for their migration south. Horned and Red-necked Grebes also appear at this time of year, but it will require concentration and patience to find them in your scope while you scan the miles of open water. In winter, the water here almost never freezes, since the deepest water of Lake Michigan is just 20 miles offshore. Diving ducks are forced into the area by the freeze of the rest of the lake, and sometimes the flocks are huge. Past winters with very cold weather have resulted in flocks with incredible numbers: 10,000 White-winged Scoters, 100 Surf Scoters, 20,000 Long-tailed Ducks, and 3,000 Common Goldeneyes visible from the platform. Rarities seen from this lookout have included eider species, jaegers,

and Black-legged Kittiwake. In winter, the parking lot is not routinely plowed, so park well off on the shoulder of the road and walk in along the road to the viewing platform. Dress warmly for Michigan's winter.

NW-23 St. Pierre Road

By *Brian Allen*

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter****

DeLorme p. 73, D5, and p. 65, A5. 44° 29' N, 86° 3' W

Return north on M-22 for 0.5 mile from Inspiration Point to St. Pierre Road. (See Arcadia Area map on page 305.) Turn right (south). For the next mile or so, you will pass through old fields with sumac borders and scattered juniper. These old fields and thickets host fair numbers of Brown Thrashers, Eastern Towhees, and Field Sparrows in spring and summer. The dry, open fields attract nesting Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks.

Soon you will come to the crest of the glacial moraine on which you have been driving, where the road begins to twist and turn its way through a mature beech-maple forest. Spring wildflowers are excellent here, with showy Large-flowered Trillium the main attraction in early to mid-May. This is also a good location for migrant warblers and nesting forest birds such as Wood Thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager. St. Pierre Road is a very lightly traveled road, and the quiet hilly woodland is a pleasure to bird.

A little more than a mile from the crest of the moraine, you will come to Glover's Lake Road. Turning right here will take you back to M-22 and the town of Arcadia after about 0.75 mile. Instead, stay on St. Pierre Road by turning left onto Glover's Lake Road and then immediately to the right to continue south on St. Pierre.

From here to Chamberlain Road, about 1 mile to the south, there are open fields on both sides of the road that may have flocks of Lapland Longspurs during migration in April and May and again in October. Nesting birds in the area include Bobolink and Brewer's Blackbird. A grove of ornamental plantings near the crossing of Bowen's Creek attracts lingering birds in late fall, and in most winters this is a good spot to check for Bohemian Waxwings, which are annual but irregular winter residents. The land here is all privately owned, so please stay on the roadsides and respect the private property of the homeowners. Turn right onto Chamberlain Road for 0.5 mile to return to M-22.

NW-24 Arcadia Marsh

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall**** Winter***
DeLorme p. 65, A5. 44°29' N, 86°14' W

Directions: Between Chamberlain Road on the south and the village of Arcadia to the north, M-22 crosses Arcadia Lake on a causeway. There are several wide areas of the shoulder where you can stop to view the lake on the west side and Arcadia Marsh on the east side. Be cautious of traffic here. Although there is rarely much traffic, the cars that do pass by can be traveling at high speeds. See Arcadia Area map on page 305.

The open waters of **Arcadia Lake** to the west are best for diving ducks and sometimes hundreds of resident Mute Swans. After the spring thaw in March, Arcadia Lake hosts good numbers of diving ducks, including Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, both scap species, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and all three mergansers. Other species include the declining American Black Duck, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, American Coot, Double-crested Cormorant, as well as Great Blue Heron and Sandhill Crane. Every few years, American White Pelicans have been found here late in spring, usually in May. Winter and late spring records of unusual gulls include Glaucous and Iceland Gulls as nearly annual, and Franklin's, Thayer's, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls as rare visitors. As with most areas in northwestern Michigan, one of the best times for gull viewing is in late winter when the ice on the lakes is starting to melt, typically in early March. In late March and early April, Snow Geese are sometimes found here, and rarities such as Greater White-fronted and Ross's Geese have been seen in the flocks of Canada Geese.

On the opposite side of the causeway is the **Arcadia Marsh**. This is a typical Great Lakes marsh, with water levels determined by the fluctuating levels of Lake Michigan. Change in habitat is constant here. One year there may be extensive newly exposed mudflats perfect for shorebirds and resting waterfowl, and the next year it may have grown into sedge and cattail marsh more suitable for nesting Least and American Bitterns. Even considering the changes year by year, the marsh continues to attract carloads of birders scoping the marsh for shorebirds, ducks, cranes, and other marsh birds that are more easily seen here than perhaps at any other area of the state. There is no need to hike miles of dikes, and often no need even for insect repellent, as the Lake Michigan breeze usually keeps mosquitos and biting flies away. Most of the shorebirds that migrate through the state have been seen here, including some of the more unusual species such as American Avocet, Willet, Whimbrel, and Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits. White-rumped Sandpiper is almost annual in late May and very early June. Sandhill Crane is a local favorite with both birders and tourists when the birds arrive to roost on the mudflats every evening from April through October. During spring, the cranes often entertain any wildlife watchers present with courtship dances and bu-

gling calls. Bald Eagles often perch on the snags in the marsh to eat fish, and are easily photographed or viewed from the causeway if you watch quietly. American Bittern (and occasionally Least Bittern), Virginia Rail, Sora, and Marsh Wren call at dawn in the marsh from May through June. Late July through mid-September is the best time for fall shorebird migration, with straggling Black-bellied Plovers and yellowlegs sometimes seen up until November. There have been observations of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (casual in the state) here in late September. Although the species is not a very likely possibility here, the reports were from birders who canoed or kayaked in the canals through the sedge marsh on the east side of the main channel.

As most Michigan birders know, the winter season can be very quiet. Here at Arcadia Marsh, the streams often retain some pools of open water that attract wintering ducks along with the ever-present Mute Swans. Rough-legged Hawks are usually seen hovering over the grasslands surrounding the marsh, and it is not uncommon to see a Snowy Owl here from early November through March.

NW-25 Chamberlain Road

By Brian Allen

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 65, A5. 44°29', 86°14' W*

Directions: Go south on M-22 from Arcadia Marsh for 0.25 mile to Chamberlain Road, the first east-west road south of the marsh. Turn left (west) onto Chamberlain Road. See Arcadia Area map on page 305.

From about one-half mile west of M-22, **Chamberlain Road** has areas of dense shrubs and second-growth forest that are excellent for migrating passerines concentrated along the Lake Michigan shoreline. During most May mornings, a walk along Chamberlain Road from here to the road's end at the dunes (about a half-mile) will be productive. If you are fortunate enough to be here after a southeast wind has been overrun by a northwest cold front, the trees will be full of neotropical migrants, and it would not be unusual to see 15 to 20 species of warblers just along this half-mile stretch of road. In addition to migrant passerines, Chamberlain Road has occasional nesting Black-throated Blue, Magnolia, Mourning, and Canada Warblers. At the end of Chamberlain Road, the public right-of-way continues straight over the dune to Lake Michigan and the outlet channel from Arcadia Lake to Lake Michigan. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has built a **rock pier** along the channel extending 50 to 60 yards into Lake Michigan and for about 200 yards on both sides of the channel. For birders brave enough to hike out to this pier in November and December, when temperatures can range from the teens to the forties with a similar range in wind speed, the reward might be a Purple Sandpiper or a Harlequin Duck, probably annual visitors here. With the aid of a scope, wintering flocks of Long-tailed Ducks and a few scoters, mostly White-winged, can be seen offshore. Better viewing conditions are in February and March on calm, sunny days, when the Long-tailed Ducks can be heard

making their *oh-odely* calls. In winter, it is essential to dress warmly for any hike out to the shore. Ski pants, gloves, winter jacket, and insulated boots are a must on most outings. *The rocky pier can be extremely hazardous in winter, when ice coats the rocks; do not attempt to walk on the pier.* A slip and fall into the icy waters of Lake Michigan could make an early end to your life listing.

NW-26 Pierport

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 65, A5. 44°26' N, 86°14' W

Directions: From Chamberlain Road and M-22, drive south (uphill) for about 2.25 miles to where M-22 goes sharply to the left. Rather than continuing on M-22, bear to the right onto Gear Road. Go south on Gear Road for 0.25 mile and turn right (west) onto Schaeff Road downhill toward Lake Michigan for about 1 mile. Schaeff Road curves to the left (south) to become Lakeview Road along the shore of Lake Michigan. See Arcadia Area map on page 305.

There are many good stops along Lakeview Road from which to view migrants in the lush second-growth woods; one of the better stops is at the corner of Schaeff and Lakeview Roads. In addition to being attractive to migrants in spring and fall, the many ornamental and berry-producing shrubs make this an interesting spot in winter, when groups of foraging chickadees include Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and sometimes White-throated Sparrows. This is also a good location to look for Bohemian Waxwing and Purple Finch. Schaeff Road continues west past Lakeview Road as a public right-of way to Lake Michigan, passing through a grove of old Norway Spruce and Douglas-fir. This combination of shelter and food is very attractive to overwintering birds as well as to predators such as Northern Shrike. Lakeview and Schaeff Roads are narrow, scenic drives. *Be sure to pull as far off the road as possible, and remember that this is private property.* Most of the residents are friendly, especially if you take the time to explain what you are seeing and how their ornamental plantings and feeding stations make this area a good birding spot. Birds unusual for this part of the state have included Hooded Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush in spring, and Hoary Redpoll in winter.

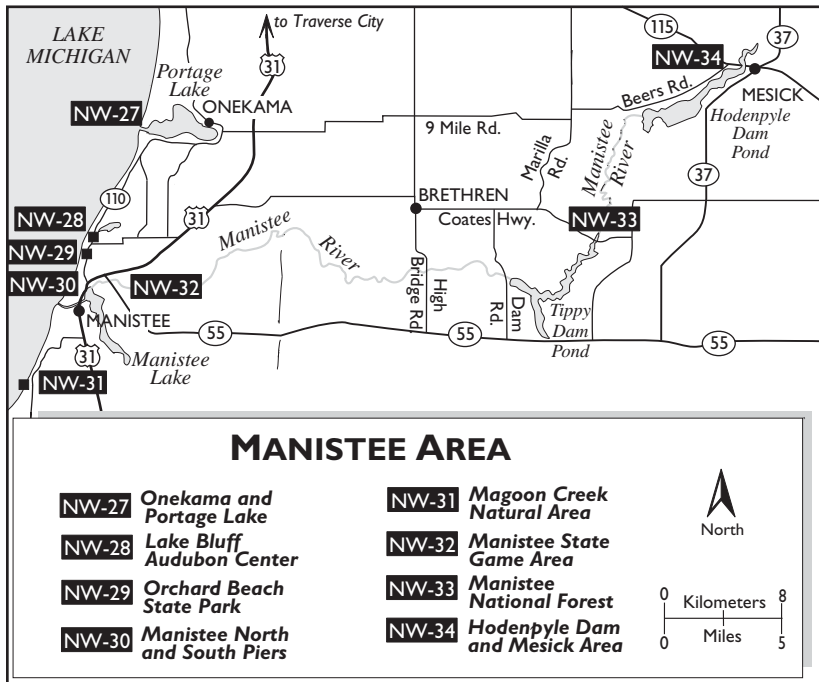
If you continue south on Lakeview Road, you will see the Lake Michigan access at the west end of Thirteen Mile Road. This is the “almost” village of **Pierport**. There are no stores here, just a group of summer homes and a few old village streets from the days when Pierport was an 1880s logging village that serviced the railroad pier on Lake Michigan. During the original logging period, trains from Bear Lake would back down the hill and out over the lake to load schooners bound for Chicago. Now, during periods of low water, the old pier can have gulls and terns, visible from the public access and beach.

From the west end of Thirteen Mile Road at the Lake Michigan beach in Pierport, drive east for 0.5 mile and turn right (south) onto Burtker Road. Follow Burtker Road up the hill for 0.8 mile to the next road, Herkelrath, and

turn right (south). Go 0.5 south on Herkelrath Road to the intersection on the right with **Lukens Road** (more accurately a two-track, although it does have a road sign). Lukens Road is an excellent place for observing summer breeding birds, as it crosses several habitats in just one mile, including grassland, shrub edges, and deciduous woodland. Additionally, there is no traffic and few mosquitos or biting flies in summer. Summer nesting species include Clay-colored and Grasshopper Sparrows in the fields and in Christmas tree plantations, and warblers (including Black-throated Blue) where the road enters the forest at its western end. Birds unusual this far north include nearly annual Northern Mockingbird and Dickcissel. The real pleasure here is walking the length of the road while watching the Eastern Kingbirds, Eastern Towhees, Eastern Meadowlarks, and other residents at close range in the bushes along the road, without the interruptions of traffic.

THE MANISTEE AREA

The Manistee area has had some of the highest Christmas Bird Count and North American Migration Count totals in the state of Michigan, reflecting the diversity of birds and habitats to be found year round in this region of Great Lakes marshes, river deltas, inland lakes, coastal dunes, National Forest



lands, and Great Lakes harbors. Described below are several birding spots within a 15-minute drive of Manistee, good for migrant waterfowl passerines as well as winter irruptive species. Farther afield, the Manistee River Valley stretching east to and beyond the town of Mesick provides good birding along with wonderful solitude and great hiking opportunities in the Manistee National Forest, with a fine assortment of breeding warblers.

NW-27 Onekama and Portage Lake

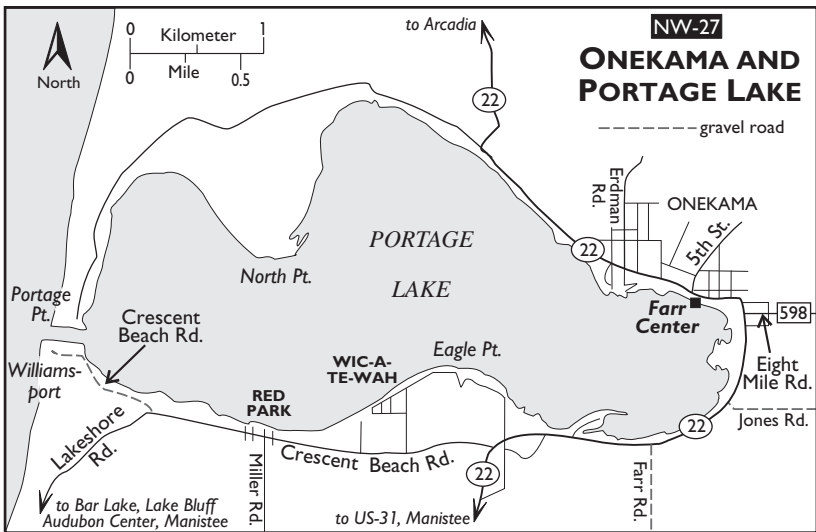
By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 65, B5. 44°22' N, 86°16' W

Directions: From the intersection of M-55 and US-31 on the north side of Manistee, go northeast on US-31 for 3.1 miles and turn left onto M-22 (at the sign for the Little River Casino). Take M-22 north along scenic hillsides overlooking Lake Michigan and around Portage Lake on your left for 6.9 miles to CO 598 (Eight Mile Road). Just past CO 598, M-22 jogs sharply left. Continue west on M-22 for 0.3 mile (three blocks) to 5th Street in Onekama and the entrance to a parking lot on the left for the Farr Center and the Onekama branch of the county library. Park here to scope the east end of Portage Lake.

Late fall at **Portage Lake** is an excellent time to see hundreds of diving ducks, including Gadwall, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Canvas-back, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and all three mergansers, along with up to 2,000 American Coots. Portage Lake hosts Mute Swans as year-round residents; they overwinter where a stream enters the lake to the south and keeps some water open. In addition to the Mute Swans, migrating Tundra Swans and a few Trumpeter Swans are present in late October through late November. Bald Eagles often sit in the large cottonwood trees near the point to the south, visible from the Farr Center. Shorebirds are usually present in low numbers, including Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, both yellowlegs, Sanderling, Spotted, Least, Pectoral, and Semipalmated Sandpipers, and Dunlin.

Return south toward Manistee on M-22 for 2.1 miles to Crescent Beach Road. Turn right (west) and go past the summer resort colony of Red Park to an intersection with a gravel road at 1.8 miles. This is the continuation of Crescent Beach Road (the paved road curves to the south as Lakeshore Road). For a side trip to a small spring migrant trap, continue on the gravel road for 0.5 mile and park on the side of the road. This forest is on a point of land between Lake Michigan and Portage Lake (labeled *Williamsport* on some maps). All the land is private here, but birding along the road is easy and safe, with little traffic. Warbler watching is excellent during the first through third weeks in May when birds concentrate along the lakeshore. Typical migrants include Nashville, Tennessee, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, and Blackpoll Warblers.



Return to the intersection of Crescent Beach and Lakeshore Roads and follow **Lakeshore Road** south, a scenic, winding drive along the Lake Michigan shore through dunes and forests. There are many good spots to bird along the roadside, but watch the traffic. The road looks like it belongs in a television ad for a sports car, and people drive as though they're in one, despite the 35-mph speed limit! A good stop is at 2.6 miles south of the intersection with Crescent Beach Road. There are good areas of dune forest on both sides of the road that attract flocks of passerine migrants. Another spot where migrant warblers and other passerines congregate is at 3.9 miles south of Crescent Beach Road. Next, you will reach a beach on Lake Michigan at 5.2 miles that is a good place to scan the lake for waterfowl. On the left side of the road is a small wetland that drains Bar Lake. From May through early August Black Terns are frequent here. In another 0.2 mile south you will reach the entrance to the Lake Bluff Audubon Center on the right, the next site.

NW-28 Lake Bluff Audubon Center

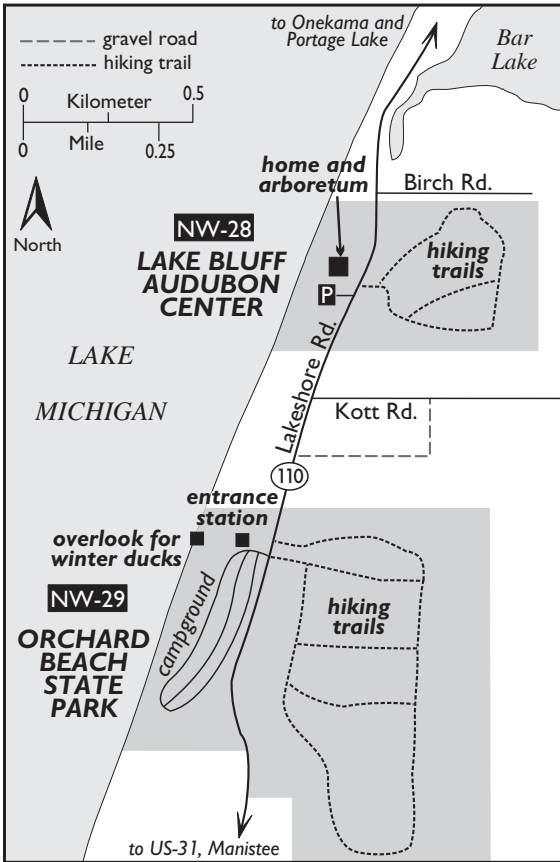
By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 66, B4. 44°17' N, 86°19' W

Contact Information: 616-723-4042

Directions: From the Bar Lake stop described above, go 0.1 mile south on M-110 to Lake Bluff Audubon Center on the right (west). Or, from Orchard Beach State Park (next site), go 0.5 mile north on M-110 to the entrance on the left (west) side of the road. Park near the house, making sure not to block the driveway. See map on next page.



The Michigan Audubon Society owns the **Lake Bluff Audubon Center**, an area of forest, meadows, and thickets with a beach on Lake Michigan and the Gray Family Home, now used for local and state Audubon Society meetings. The 60-acre preserve is open to the public seven days a week. During the summer months, there are guided tours of the grounds and the home. The grounds around the home on the west side of Lakeshore Road are managed as an arboretum. Several interesting and state champion trees are here, including the Sycamore Maple, a Mediterranean tree that survives due to

the moderating influence of Lake Michigan, and several Redwoods planted in the late 1950s but already starting to tower above the other trees.

The best time to visit Lake Bluff is in mid-May during the peak of spring migration. The passage of a warm front with strong easterly winds, or a stalled cold front with fog, can produce fallouts as birds pile up along the Lake Michigan shoreline. On one memorable May day, the author saw 15 species of warblers in one small birch tree! In April, warm days with strong easterly winds are also excellent for hawk migration, which is best viewed from the field directly east of the Gray home, across M-110. Some of the berry-producing plantings are attractive to fruit-eating birds in winter. Bohemian Waxwings are seen here most winters, in addition to occasional Pine Grosbeak. Unusual birds found here have included Varied Thrush and Michigan's first Ash-throated Flycatcher (seen just down the road).

There are several loop trails through second-growth forests and edges on the east side of M-110: the Jack Fern Trail and the Ridge Trail, with maps available at the trailhead. The longer Jack Fern loop, over gently rolling hills, is about 0.75 mile long. Summer resident birds found along the trails include Hermit and occasional Wood Thrushes, and Yellow, Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green Warblers. During the winter months, the bluffs are an excellent area for viewing flocks of Buffleheads and Common Goldeneyes on Lake Michigan. All three species of scoters can be seen here, as well as Long-tailed Ducks and Red-necked and Horned Grebes. During the late spring from February through March, there are often huge flocks of Long-tailed Ducks, sometimes as many as 20,000, that can be viewed with a scope; they tend to stay from a few hundred yards to a mile or more offshore.

NW-29 Orchard Beach State Park

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter****

DeLorme p. 66, B4. 44°17' N, 86°19' W

Contact Information: 231-723-7422;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From Lake Bluff Audubon Center (previous site), go 0.5 mile south on M-110 to the entrance to Orchard Beach State Park.

If coming from Manistee, go south on US-31 for 0.9 mile from the intersection of M-55 and US-31 on the north side of Manistee to the intersection with M-110 (Lakeshore Road). Turn right (north) onto M-110 and go 1.4 miles to Orchard Beach State Park. During winter it is best to park at the closed front gate, staying well off the shoulder of M-110. See map at left.

Orchard Beach State Park, open from March through November, has trails on the east side of M-110 that pass through mature beech-maple forests hosting migrant warblers and breeding birds similar to those found at the Lake Bluff Audubon Center (previous site). The more mature forest here also sometimes attracts Blackburnian Warblers in summer and Barred Owls and Pileated Woodpeckers in winter. However, the main birding attraction here is wintering waterfowl. From the top of the bluffs along the Lake Michigan shore, huge flocks of Greater Scaup, Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, and Long-tailed Ducks are more easily seen here than at any other site on the northwest Michigan lakeshore. The best observation point is directly west of the entrance station (on the west side of M-110). From mid-February to mid-March, upwards of 5,000 (and as many as 20,000) Long-tailed Ducks are usually present. Other species often seen include White-winged Scoters, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, and Horned Grebes, along with occasional Red-necked Grebes and Surf and Black Scoters.

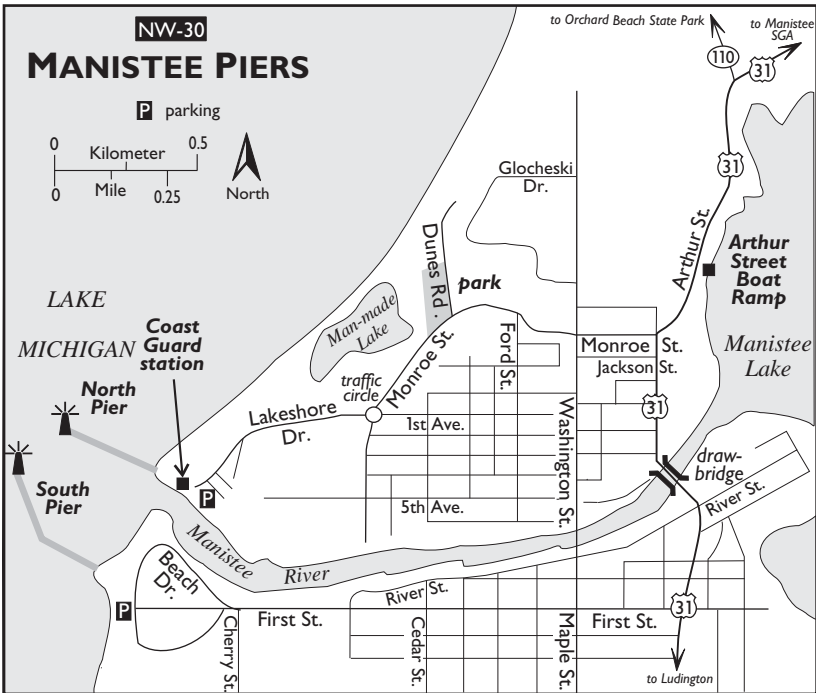
NW-30 Manistee North and South Piers

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 64, B4. 44°15' N, 86°21' W

Manistee's North and South Piers are both worthwhile for migrant waterfowl and gulls in spring and fall, and for shorebirds in fall. The North Pier does not attract as many species as the South Pier, but provides a good vantage point for scoping the ducks and gulls out on Lake Michigan. The South Pier is the better site for viewing shorebirds and ducks up close, with a chance for Purple Sandpiper and Harlequin Duck in late fall to early winter.

To reach the **North Pier**, travel south from the intersection of M-110 and US-31 south on US-31 for about 0.5 mile to the Arthur Street Boat Ramp on the left. In March, this is a good spot from which to scan the ice edges of Manistee Lake for unusual gulls, including Glaucous and Iceland, which are annual. This can also be a good spot to check for waterfowl, but fishing boats often keep the waterfowl distant. At 0.7 mile south of the intersection of US-31 and M-110, turn right (west) onto Monroe Street and continue to Dunes Road, which is past the stop sign at Washington Street. Turn right onto Dunes Road and go 0.1 mile to the entrance for a small park with a grove of oak trees and dense shrubs, an island of habitat for passerine migrants in



spring and fall. There is also access here to Man-made Lake and the Lake Michigan beach. Continue on Monroe Street for 0.7 mile to a traffic circle at the Harbor Village development; stay to the right for 1.2 miles, where you will come to a stop sign just before the U.S. Coast Guard Station. Turn right and park here or in the lot to the left. Follow the base of the North Pier out to the lake. Shorebirds occasionally forage on the beach next to the pier. This pier itself has steel sides and does not attract shorebirds, nor as many ducks and gulls as the South Pier, but it is a good platform for watching migrating ducks and gulls out in Lake Michigans.

Manistee's **South Pier** is a concrete-and-rock pier that juts out about 300 yards into Lake Michigan. To reach the South Pier, return to US-31 and go 0.5 mile south across the drawbridge over the Manistee River. Turn right (west) at the second stoplight onto First Street (three blocks south of the bridge over the Manistee River). Continue on First Street, past the stoplight at Maple Street, to the road's end 1.2 miles from US-31. From the parking lot next to the beach, it is a short walk to the South Pier on Manistee harbor. Its rocky sides are covered with algae and recently invading Zebra Mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*). The pier is a magnet for passing shorebirds and waterfowl as they follow the otherwise long open beach of Lake Michigan. During August Buff-breasted Sandpipers are often found at the base of the pier, along with the more common Sanderlings and Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers. Farther out past the "elbow" of the pier, Spotted Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstones, and Baird's Sandpipers like to probe the rocks. Piping Plovers have been seen here in August, but do not nest. During late August and September, many juvenile sandpipers stop here, making this a great spot for photographing these rather tame birds. The beach here is wonderful for swimming after birding, or as a diversion for non-birding spouses and families. If you come in late November or early December, forget the swimming but be prepared for good birds! Thanksgiving weekend is when Purple Sandpipers often show up here and at the other piers along Lake Michigan, and Harlequin Ducks may also be present then. Wear very warm clothing and walk carefully if there is freezing spray on the piers.

NW-31 Magoon Creek Natural Area

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer* Fall** Winter*

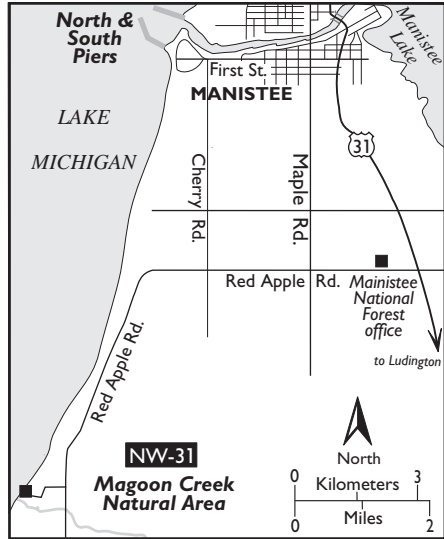
DeLorme p. 64, C4. 44°11', 86°23' W

Contact Information: Filer Township, 2505 Filer City Road, Manistee, MI 49660; 231-723-3138

Directions: From the intersection of M-55 and US-31 in Manistee, drive south on US-31 for 4.5 miles and turn right onto Red Apple Road. At 0.5 mile west of US-31, you will come to the district office of the Manistee National Forest on the right. Maps of Michigan National Forests are available here, along with additional information on forest recreation. The

entrance lobby is open 24 hours and the main lobby is open from 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Continue on Red Apple Road past Maple Road. The road turns left (south) at 2.3 miles from US-31; go another 2 miles to the entrance sign and gate for **Magoon Creek Natural Area** on the right. Magoon Creek has access to Lake Michigan for hikers and beach-goers. Trails lead from two parking lots down to the beach on Lake Michigan and through second-growth mixed oak-pine forests and hillsides planted with invasive Autumn Olive that attract frugivorous birds, including Cedar and Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks in late fall, winter, and early spring. In mid-May, this is also an excellent site to look for migrating warblers and other spring passerines on days when they move north along the shoreline, depending on the weather. Periods of south or southeast winds are best.



NW-32 Manistee State Game Area

By Brian Allen

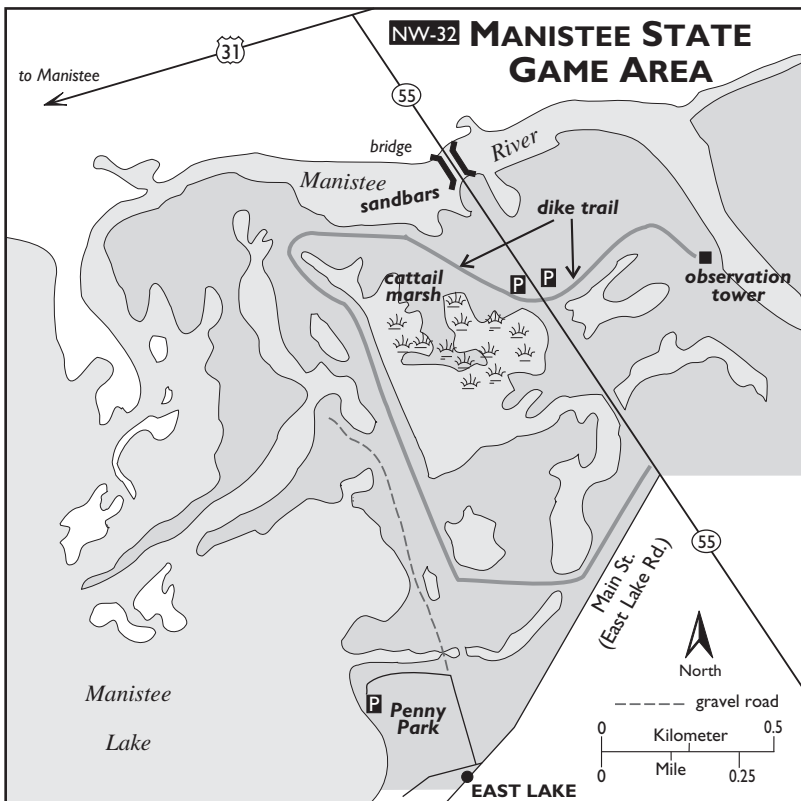
Spring** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 65, B4. 44°15' N, 86°16' W

Directions: From the intersection of M-55 and US-31 in Manistee, travel southeast on M-55 for about 0.5 mile until you cross the bridge over the Manistee River and reach the Manistee State Game Area.

The **Manistee State Game Area** extends for several miles east on both sides of the Manistee River, with extensive marshes along the river's channel. Begin your birding after crossing the bridge over the river, where the first pulloffs on both sides of the highway are two-tracks that end at gates for dikes into the marshes. Parking is not allowed on either side of M-55 before the bridge, an parked cars must not block the gates at the pulloffs. The dike on the southwest side of M-55 goes about 0.5 mile to the west before heading to the south. The first quarter-mile borders a cattail marsh on the left and a shallow canal on the right that often has Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, and Green Heron in spring through fall. Alder and willow shrubs on the left of the dike are excellent places to find Willow Flycatcher in June. Just before a bend

to the left (west), the dike follows the Manistee River channel for a short distance. In winter, early spring, and late fall, the water remains open here and the sandbars become resting places for gulls and ducks. Bald Eagles are also regular visitors here and throughout the Manistee State Game Area. American and Least Bitterns and Marsh Wrens are found annually in the cattail marshes, especially to the left (east) of the dike where it turns away from the Manistee River. It has been years since King Rail has been found here, but Virginia Rails and Soras are still present. Directly across M-55 from the southern dike, there is another dike and path to the northeast. Follow this dike for about one-third mile to an observation tower built with funds from the local Audubon Society chapter. This tower has a good view of wet meadows and the river, and is an excellent area for Sedge Wren.

Continue about one mile east on M-55 to N. Main Street. Turn right (west) and travel about 0.5 mile through what looks like a tunnel of willows lining both sides of the road (locals call this "Frog Alley") until you see a road to the right. This is the entrance to **Penny Park**, a boat launch and campground with a good vantage point over Manistee Lake and the delta of the Manistee River. Park in the lot adjacent to the guardrail next to the lake. Lake



Michigan's water level affects the level of Manistee Lake, and recently there have been excellent mudflats visible from this spot. Recent interesting records here include *Plegadis ibis* species and Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits. With a scope, you can see large rafts of Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Ducks, and American Coots in migration off the point that is directly west of Penny Park.

NW-33 Manistee National Forest

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

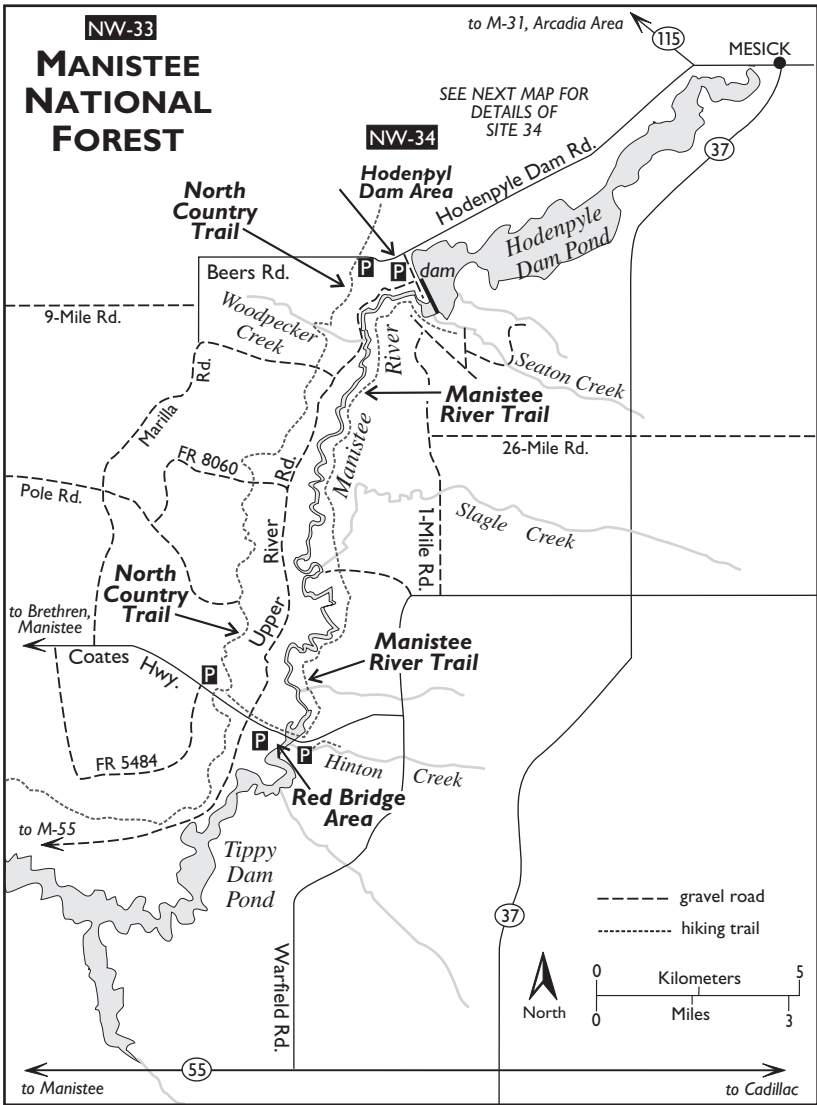
DeLorme p. 65–66

Contact Information: Trail maps available at the Manistee National Forest Ranger Station, 412 Red Apple Road, Manistee, MI 49660; 231-723-2211.

Directions: From the intersection of M-55 and US-31 in Manistee, take M-55 east for 15 miles to CO 669 (High Bridge Road). Turn left (north) and go 6 miles to the village of Brethren, where there is gas and food, and where High Bridge Road intersects Coates Highway (which, despite its name, is just a two-lane paved road) at the old high school. Turn right (east) onto Coates Highway and go 7.1 miles to the trailhead on the left for the North Country Scenic Trail, marked by a blue-capped post.

The **Manistee National Forest**, established in 1938, is 481,000 acres of deciduous, coniferous, and mixed forest, vast floodplains of the Manistee River, as well as more than 550 miles of additional waterways on nine other rivers (some high-quality trout streams), swamps, marshes, and open areas. In 1945, this forest was combined with the Huron National Forest in the Northeastern Lower Peninsula (providing much of the Kirtland's Warbler habitat) for a total of more than a million acres. The birding sites described here cover a small portion of the northern sections of the Manistee National Forest along the Manistee River, between an area known as Red Bridge and Mesick to the northeast. The primary attraction of this area, in addition to the superior scenery and recreation opportunities, is the interesting collection of breeding species, especially warblers. Breeding warblers include some species at or near the northern edge of their range, including Cerulean Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush, as well as a good mix of the more expected species in this part of the state, such as Golden-winged, Nashville, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Pine, Blackburnian, and Mourning Warblers. Other interesting breeding species include Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, and Blue-headed and Yellow-throated Vireos.

The **North Country Scenic Trail** (DeLorme p. 66, Bl. 44°17' N, 85°52' W) heads north from the parking lot on Coates Highway for about 11 miles to the trailhead at Beers Road and links with the south end of the Manistee River Trail (see below) at a pedestrian suspension bridge over the Manistee River. In spring and summer, common birds along the trail include Red-eyed and Blue-headed Vireos, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, and Black-throated Green, Pine, and Cerulean (occasional) Warblers, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.



The forest in the **Red Bridge area** (DeLorme p. 66, B1. 44°17' N, 85°52' W) is a remnant of the once-vast transition forest that covered northern Michigan. This area is attractive for its wooded hilly terrain with crystal-clear streams and even some small waterfalls, but especially for its breeding warblers: Golden-winged, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Pine, Cerulean, and Mourning, and both Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes. Late spring or

early summer birding in this area requires insect repellent, hats, and long-sleeved shirts, as there are many biting flies.

From the North Country Scenic Trail parking area, continue east on Coates Highway for 1.0 mile to **Upper River Road** (labeled River Road in DeLorme). This gravel road can be birded either to the north or to the south near the Manistee River, and is excellent in late spring and early summer for a mix of northern and southern warblers, including Blackburnian, Cerulean, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Mourning on territory in May through June. The best way to find the warblers is to stop at any appropriate habitat along the road; park well to the side. There are several streams descending steep ravines that have singing Louisiana Waterthrushes. It is possible to hear both waterthrushes together if you stop next to a wooded swamp near one of the ravines. The forests along both sides of the road for a distance of 1.5 miles to the south (right) have been reliable for Cerulean Warbler in the past several years.

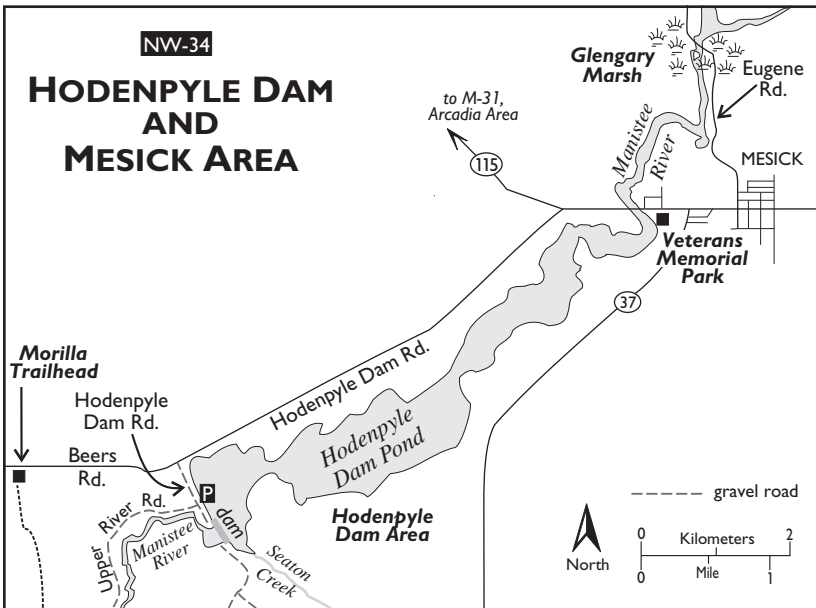
From the intersection of Upper River Road and Coates Highway, continue east for 0.6 mile downhill to the parking lot at the bridge over the Manistee River. Locals call this spot **Red Bridge** after the color of the original bridge. This scenic area has steep ridges rising up above the valley floor. The forest here is a mix of oak-pine northern transition on the ridges and cedar, Red Maple, and Yellow Birch in the low river valley.

Hinton Creek flows into the Manistee River just south of Red Bridge. From the parking lot at Red Bridge, walk across the bridge and follow the two-track on the south (right) side of the road to Hinton Creek. A rough path follows Hinton Creek to the east (left) and up a steep ravine. Here, tall pines, hemlock, and cedar shade the stream that tumbles down rapids and which is home to foraging Louisiana Waterthrushes in early summer. Black-throated Green, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, and Pine Warblers are some of the summer residents along the streamside. Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos are also common here from May until September. The trailhead for the **Manistee River Trail** (DeLorme p. 66, B1. 44°17' N, 85°51' W) is 0.3 mile east of Red Bridge, and is the eastern half of a 22-mile hiking trail loop, with the North Country Scenic Trail comprising the western half. In addition to the warblers mentioned above, other birds commonly seen along this trail in summer include Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, and Scarlet Tanager.

Upper River Road (DeLorme p. 66, B1. 44°20' N, 85°51' W), labeled River Road in DeLorme, heads northeast from the Coates Highway through an extensive forest to Hodenpyle Dam (next site). It is one of the best areas in northwestern Michigan for breeding warblers. Although the rest of the region is scenic, with high hills and valleys, Upper River Road is more utilitarian, following a powerline corridor. The birding in late spring and early

summer is excellent, with an interesting mix of southern (Cerulean Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush) and northern (Nashville and Blackburnian Warblers) species. The high-pitched calls of Brown Creepers and the drumming of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers add interest. Upper River Road is usually passable by most vehicles, but may be difficult to travel in early spring after snowmelt and after heavy rains, when it becomes very pot-holed and muddy. It is not maintained or plowed in winter. The road travels north from Coates Highway for 6.7 miles to end at Hodenpyle Dam Road. There are a number of recommended stops, listed by distance from Coates Highway:

- Mile 0.1 On the left side of the road is the trailhead for the North Country Scenic Trail connector, with maps available.
- Mile 0.5 A trail into the woods on the right and along the ridge is good for Blackburnian Warblers in the breeding season and for migrating warblers in May.
- Mile 0.6 As you go down a hill, you can pull over to listen for Veery and Hermit Thrush singing in the early morning or late evening from the Tamarack forest in the valley below the left side of the road.
- Mile 0.9 Mourning Warblers are found along a stream and the trail that follows it to the right.
- Mile 1.4 Check the forest on both sides of the road here for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, and Cerulean Warbler.
- Mile 1.6 A trail on the right goes into a forest area with breeding Blue-headed Vireos and Blackburnian Warblers.
- Mile 2.7 A clearcut with regenerating aspen that is good for Golden-winged, Nashville, and Chestnut-sided Warblers.
- Mile 3.1 Another clearcut with similar habitat and birds as mile 2.7.
- Mile 4.4 Marilla Road comes in from the left. Stay to the right.
- Mile 4.7 A good spot to look for Louisiana Waterthrush at the creek.
- Mile 5.1 An extensive and older pine plantation with breeding Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine and Yellow-rumped Warblers.
- Mile 5.9: An overlook of the river on the right is good for Bald Eagles in most months, and for Broad-winged Hawks during summer.
- Mile 6.3: The road crosses Woodpecker Creek and there are parking areas on both sides of the road. Red-shouldered Hawk, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Mourning Warbler have been found along the streamside here in late spring to early summer.



NW-34 Hodenpyle Dam and Mesick

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 66, A1-A2. 44°22' N, 85°49' W

From the north end of Upper River Road where it ends at an unmarked gravel road, turn right onto the gravel road and go 0.2 mile to a parking area at the **Hodenpyle Dam**. Park here and walk up the steps to the portage site for a view out over the reservoir. In late fall, diving ducks and Pied-billed and occasional Horned Grebes can be seen here. A second trail goes to the down-river portage, where flocks of Cliff Swallows that nest on the dam forage over the river in spring and summer. Backtrack along the gravel road and continue straight ahead for 0.4 mile past Upper River Road on the left to a T-intersection with Hodenpyle Dam Road, which passes through second-growth forests, home to singing Golden-winged and Mourning Warblers in May and June. Near the intersection with Hodenpyle Dam Road is a wetland on the left that is crossed by a powerline with perches for Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks in spring through fall. In most years, Rough-legged Hawks are also present from late fall through March. Wilson's Snipe and American Woodcock can be heard here calling in the evenings in early April through May. At Hodenpyle Dam Road, turn left (the road becomes Beers Road as you cross into Manistee County) and go 0.7 mile to the **Morilla Trailhead** of the North Country Scenic Trail. As previously mentioned, this western counterpart to the Manistee River Trail goes 11 miles south through

hilly deciduous forests and ends at Coates Highway, one mile from Red Bridge.

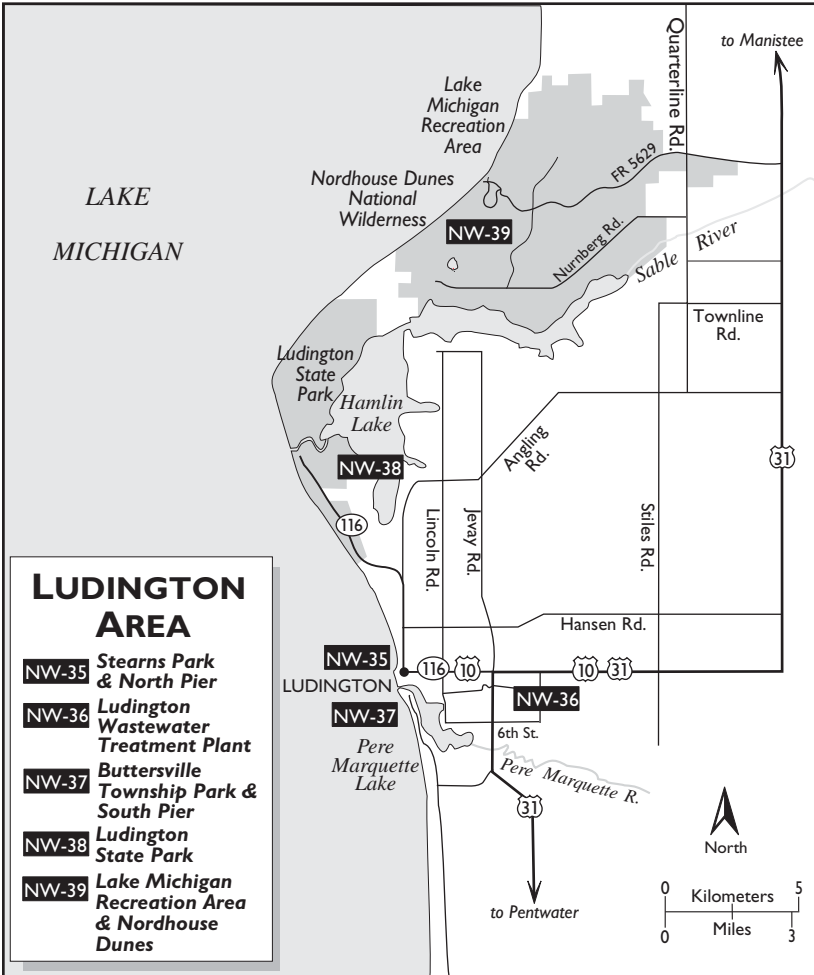
Go northeast from Hodenpyle Dam Road for 4.5 miles to M-115. Turn right onto M-115 and go up the steep hill and into Mesick. For most people traveling through northwest Michigan, the Mesick area is either a beautiful, hilly (mountainous for us Midwesterners) area, or a small town to pass through that has an unusual name. The name Mesick (pronounced *MEE-sick*) was not uttered by a stricken frontiersman, but was the surname of the trappers who settled the area. Some of the last wild wolves in the Lower Peninsula were trapped here in the late 1800s. The annual Mesick Mushroom Festival attracts hundreds of tourists in early May to search the forest floor for Morel mushrooms.

The main birding attraction in Mesick is not in the hills but rather in the valley of the Manistee River. Just after crossing the Manistee River on M-115 (0.6 mile), you will reach Mesick and an attractive little park, **Veterans Memorial Park**, on the right (south) of the road and on the east bank of the Manistee River. There is a parking area with picnic tables next to the roadside, and a covered deck about 100 yards to the south, across an open grassy field. The observation deck is a good spot from which to scope the sandbars and mudflats of the Manistee River for ducks, shorebirds, and often Bald Eagles. There are Bald Eagle nests along the Manistee River in this area, and the eagles frequently forage in the bend of the river visible from the deck. Mute Swans are permanent residents and may be easily seen in the winter when they are concentrated in the unfrozen pools of fast-flowing water.

Another good vantage spot for viewing the riparian wetlands of the Manistee River is at the **Glengary Marsh**. From Veterans Memorial Park, drive east for about 0.4 mile to the intersection of M-115 and M-37. Continue another 0.3 mile to Eugene Road on the north (left) side of M-37. Turn left and follow Eugene Road as it winds downhill to the ponds and marshes at 0.5 mile from M-37. Be careful to pull far off the road, as cars often travel down the hill at high speeds. The ponds and marshes are attractive to ducks and Mute Swans as well as occasional American and Least Bitterns. Some of the ponds are spring-fed and remain open well into the winter. To return to Manistee, take M-37 south to M-55 west.

THE LUDINGTON AREA

Ludington is well-known throughout Michigan for its beaches and car ferries to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, which operate from spring through fall. The piers and beaches are excellent sites from which to observe waterfowl, and there are several accessible marsh areas and inland lakes good for shorebirds and waterbirds. In addition, forested dune areas have one of the state's largest population of breeding Prairie Warblers, an Endangered species in the state. As with most tourist areas, the months from June through September are busy, and reservations for accommodations are recommended.



NW-35 Stearns Park and the North Pier

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 64, D2. 44°02' N, 86°30' W

Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and US-10 in Ludington, go west on US-10 past the light at Old US-31 (South Pere Marquette Highway) at 1.5 miles, and through Ludington (here US-10 is Ludington Avenue). After another 1.5 miles, US-10 turns left (south) to the car ferries. Continue straight ahead on Ludington Avenue (now M-116) for another 0.7 mile to the intersection with South Lakeshore Drive. Turn right (north) onto South Lakeshore for 0.4 mile to Stearns Park on the left. See next map.

Stearns Park is a city park with a broad sandy beach on Lake Michigan. In summer, this park is too busy for birding other than at dawn, when large flocks of gulls congregate here. The best seasons are fall and early spring, when low water exposes the rocky edges of the pier, attractive to migrant shorebirds, including possible Purple Sandpiper in November. Park at the south end of the parking lot to access the **North Pier** and walk west to the breakwall. The pier extends some 300 yards offshore and is a good vantage point for observing migrating waterfowl. However, for shorebirding, most birders also head to the South Pier (see later in this section).

NW-36 Ludington Wastewater Treatment Plant

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 54, A3. 43°57' N, 86°23' W

Contact Information: 5160 W. Sixth Street, Ludington, MI 49431; 231-843-3190

NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 1998 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 5: 96-102.

Directions: From the intersection of the US-31 freeway and US-10, drive west on US-10 for 1.5 miles to the stoplight at Old US-31 (South Pere Marquette Highway). Turn left (south) onto old US-31 and go 1.0 mile to Sixth Street. Turn left (east) onto Sixth Street and go 0.6 mile to the entrance to the treatment plant on the left (north) side of the road. See next map.

The **Ludington Wastewater Treatment Plant** is one of the few areas in Michigan that has consistently good shorebird habitat despite the vagaries of Michigan weather, Great Lakes water levels, and game-area management decisions. This is also one of the most convenient places for shorebirding in the area. After you park in the lot next to the headquarters, check in with the staff for permission to bird the ponds. The building and facility are open every day, including Sunday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The staff has been friendly and helpful to local birders for many years, and we would like

to continue this good relationship. Do not enter the gated area behind the headquarters in your car; there have been problems with trespassing here, and you should not contribute to the problem. Use the gate to the west (left) of the building to reach the ponds. Within 50 yards of your parked car, you can set up your scope to start scanning the shorebirds. Another advantage to birding the Ludington Wastewater Disposal Facility is that all three ponds are small enough to be easily walked for better views or lighting angles. Also, due to the low volume of wastewater here, breathing is much easier than at other sewage lagoons around the state! There are three impoundments: the first two are asphalt-lined, yet the muddy edges at the corners of the ponds can have good numbers of shorebirds in May and July–October. The center dike dividing these pools always has a huge number of gulls, invariably the resident Ring-billed and Herring, but sometimes Bonaparte's in migration. At the back or north side of the ponds, some of the more wary shorebirds and ducks will congregate. You can easily walk the center dike to get an excellent view of the farther reaches of these impoundments. In August, it is often easy to get a close look at Baird's Sandpipers, which frequent the edges of the center dike.

The best birding is the third and westernmost impoundment. This settling pond is larger and at a much lower level than the first two ponds, so you will be looking down at the birds from the dike above. There are extensive mudflats and some areas of cattail marsh, much more aesthetically pleasing than the other two ponds. This lower pond often hosts hundreds of shorebirds, and in 1997 had an American Avocet, a Long-billed Dowitcher, and a Western Sandpiper. The more common species here include Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Short-billed Dowitcher, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, as well as Dunlin and usually a few Semipalmated Plovers among the numerous Killdeer. This pond is the easiest place in northwest Michigan to see Common Moorhen, Virginia Rail, and Sora.

NW-37 Buttersville Township Park and Ludington South Pier

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 54, A3. 43°57' N 86°27' W

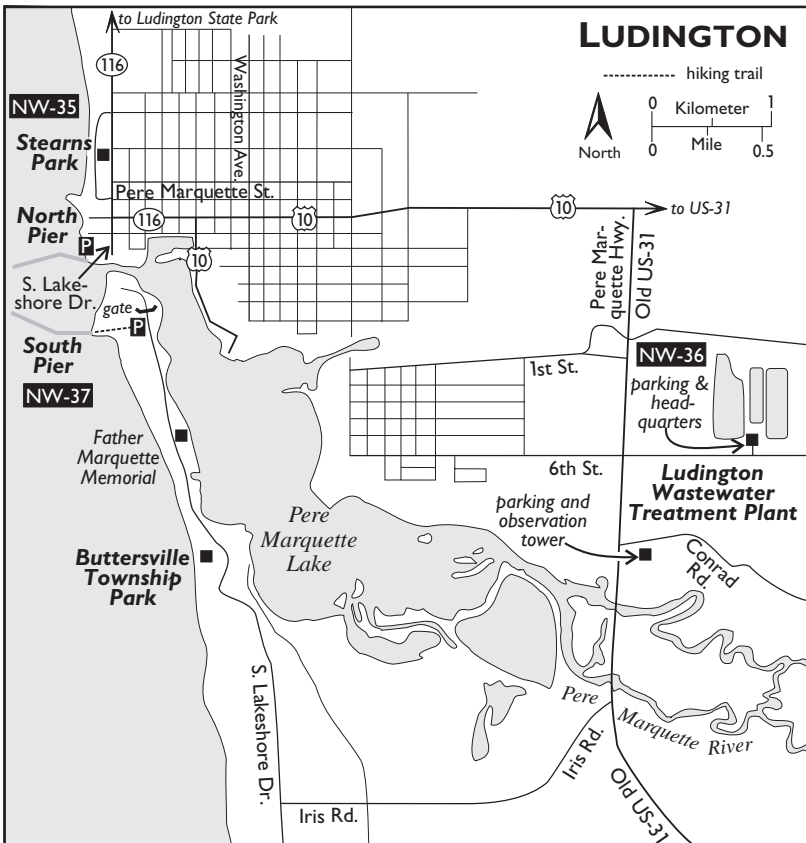
NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 1998 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 5: 96-102.

Directions: From the intersection of Old US-31 (South Pere Marquette Highway) and Sixth Street (just west of the Ludington Wastewater Treatment Plant, on the southeast side of Ludington), go south for 0.4 mile on Old US-31 to an observation tower at the corner of Conrad Road.

In spring, the observation tower on Conrad Road is a good overlook to scan for Yellow-headed Blackbirds and to listen for bitterns and rails early in the morning before the traffic gets too noisy. Next, return to Old US-31 and go south to Iris Road, the first road to the right (west) after crossing the Pere

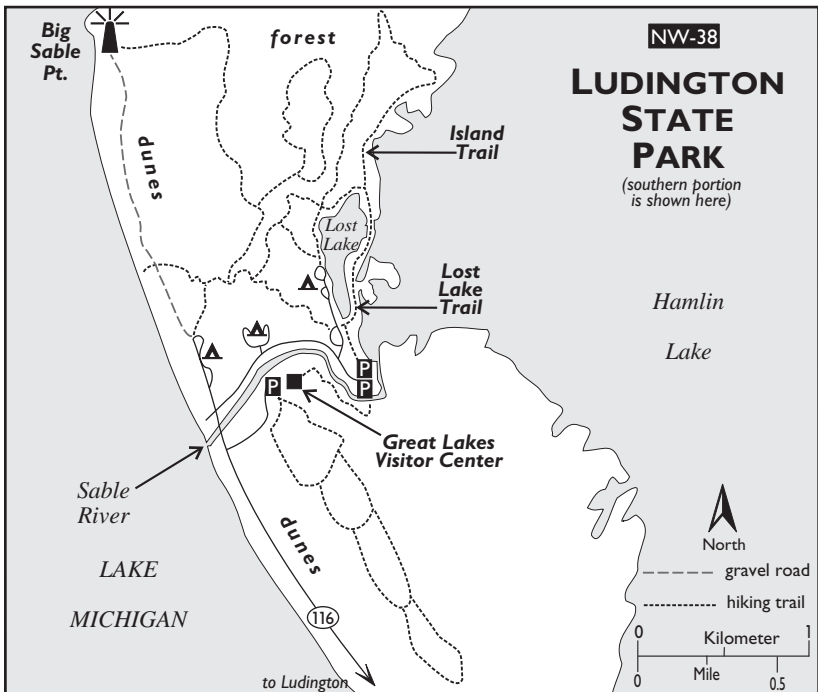
Marquette River (2.4 miles south of the intersection of Old US-31 and US-10). Take Iris Road west for 2.0 miles to S. Lakeshore Drive and turn right (north). At 1.1 miles you will come to the entrance to **Buttersville Township Park** on the left. The small wooded dunes at the park are excellent in spring for migrant passerines on the trails between the campground and the beach. Be careful of the Poison-ivy at this location, and stay on the trails. There is another parking spot for the park in another 0.2 mile north on S. Lakeshore Drive, at the beach on Lake Michigan.

At 0.5 mile beyond Buttersville Park is the **Father Marquette Memorial** on the right side of S. Lakeshore Drive. The honeysuckle and grapevines in the wooded area around the knoll are attractive to spring and fall passerine migrants. Continue north on Lakeshore until the road ends, 2.0 miles from Iris Road, at the entrance to the Crosswind Condominiums. Park in the area on the west side of the road just before the entrance to the gated condominiums. The **Ludington South Pier** is about a 200-yard walk west from the parking area over the sand dunes on a well-traveled trail. The diversity and



numbers of shorebirds here are lower than at the Ludington Wastewater Treatment Plant, but there are often surprises. In recent years Willet, Whimbrel, Purple Sandpiper, and Buff-breasted Sandpiper have been seen, in addition to the expected Sanderlings, Dunlins, and other shorebirds. At the base of the pier, there is often a pond or series of sandbars that make good resting and foraging spots for shorebirds. When the lake level is near the level of the lower ledge of the pier, greater numbers of shorebirds will be present foraging in the exposed algae. Over the last few years, 27 species of shorebirds have been recorded here.

After scoping the pier and sandbars, walk the perimeter of the pond to check for any skulkers you may have missed. In the fall and early winter, scoters can be seen just out from the end of the pier, and Harlequin Ducks can be seen surfing the waves near the rocky borders of the breakwall. This beach is often quiet, with less pedestrian traffic than the pier on the north side of the harbor, especially in the early morning. Many of the gulls, terns, ducks, and shorebirds that are in the harbor area will rest here and can be easily seen.



NW-38 Ludington State Park

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 64, D2. 44°02' N, 86°30' W

Contact Information: 231-843-2423;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and US-10 in Ludington, go west on US-10 past the light at Old US-31 (South Pere Marquette Highway) at 1.5 miles, and through Ludington (here US-10 is named Ludington Avenue). After another 1.5 miles, US-10 turns left (south) to the car ferries. Continue straight ahead on Ludington Avenue (now labeled M-116) for another 0.7 mile to the intersection of South Lakeshore Drive. Turn right (north) and go 5.2 miles, passing Stearns Park (see above), to the Lincoln River, where pulloffs are available for checking the river for waterfowl. Continue north another 0.8 mile to where M-116 veers left into the park, reaching the park in another 1.0 mile.

Here you will enter Lake Michigan dune habitat which looks not unlike the barrier dunes of the Carolinas. There are several pulloffs on the left (Lake Michigan) side of the road for beach parking. Snow Buntings are often present in the dunes from late October until March. At 2.9 miles past the park entrance, there is a road to the right for the Great Lakes Visitor Center. A short distance past this road, M-116 crosses the Sable River and ends at the entrance booth for the state park (fee area). **Ludington State Park** has one of the most popular campgrounds in the state park system, with frontage on several miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The best birding spots are Big Sable Point, Hamlin Lake, and the Sable River. Big Sable Point does not concentrate migrants in the numbers found at Tawas Point or Whitefish Point, but is the first point of land in the area visible to birds caught over Lake Michigan or flying from the west, and so is a good migrant trap in spring and fall. There is an extensive and well-marked trail system through the wooded dunes between Hamlin Lake and Lake Michigan. Ludington State Park, along with the Nordhouse Dunes National Wilderness and the Lake Michigan Recreation Area to the north, are contiguous and constitute the largest area of public land on the Lake Michigan shore.

The Lost Lake and Island hiking trails along Hamlin Lake are the best birding trails for finding migrant passerines and for viewing waterfowl on Hamlin Lake. Stop at the **Great Lakes Visitor Center**, open during June through September, for trail maps. Past summer nesters have included Olive-sided Flycatcher and Prairie Warbler in the Jack Pine groves in the dunes south of the visitor center.

NW-39 Lake Michigan Recreation Area and Nordhouse Dunes National Wilderness

By Brian Allen

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

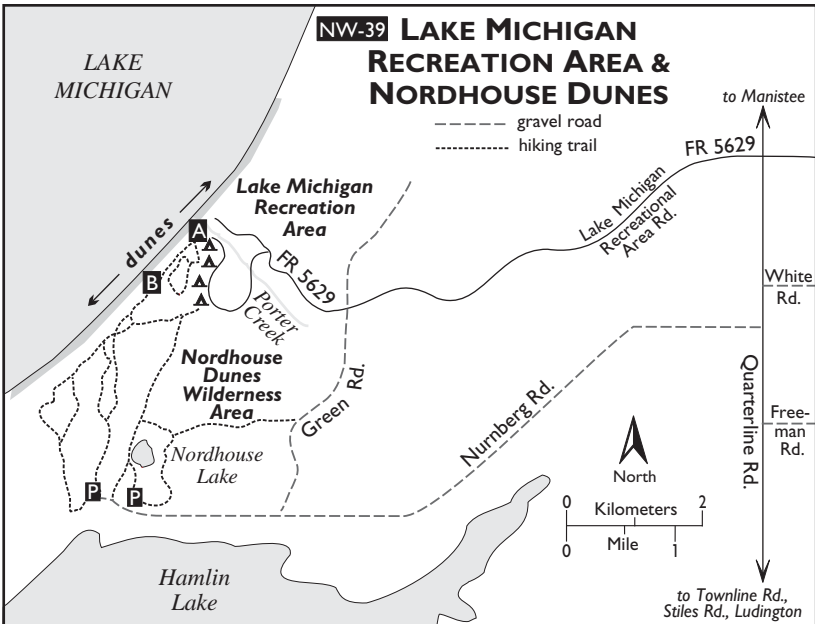
DeLorme p. 64, D4. 44°08', 86°25' W

Contact Information: Lake Michigan Recreation Area, www.t-one.net/~om/mason/nordunes.htm;

Nordhouse Dunes: www.t-one.net/~om/mason/nordunes.htm

Directions: From the intersection of the US-31 freeway and US-10 in Ludington, go east 2.2 miles to the traffic light at Stiles Road. Turn left (north) on Stiles Road and go 8.5 miles to Townline Road. Turn right with the pavement, continuing 0.5 mile to Quarterline Road. Turn left (north) with the pavement onto Quarterline and continue past Nurnberg Road (see below) for 3.4 miles to Forest Road 5629, also known as Lake Michigan Drive [This road is labeled in DeLorme as Lake Michigan Recreational Area Road]. Note: Forest Road 5629 is 10.5 mile south of the intersection of M-55 and US 31 in Manistee. Turn left (west) here and follow Forest Road 5629 to its end at the Lake Michigan Recreation Area and the trailheads for the Nordhouse Dunes National Wilderness.

The wooded dunes in the **Lake Michigan Recreation Area** provide good habitat for migrant passerines, and the Lake Michigan shoreline is a good vantage point for viewing migrant loons, grebes, and waterfowl. **Nordhouse Dunes** hosts one of the most consistent breeding populations of Prairie Warblers in the state. The Lake Michigan Recreation Area consists



of campgrounds and public beaches on Lake Michigan that are fairly heavily used from mid-June until Labor Day. Both the recreation area and the Nordhouse Dunes National Wilderness are mostly forested, with second-growth oak-pine among scattered wetlands and pine groves. Parallel to the Lake Michigan shoreline are two ridges of sand dunes with some shrubby openings consisting mainly of wild blueberries.

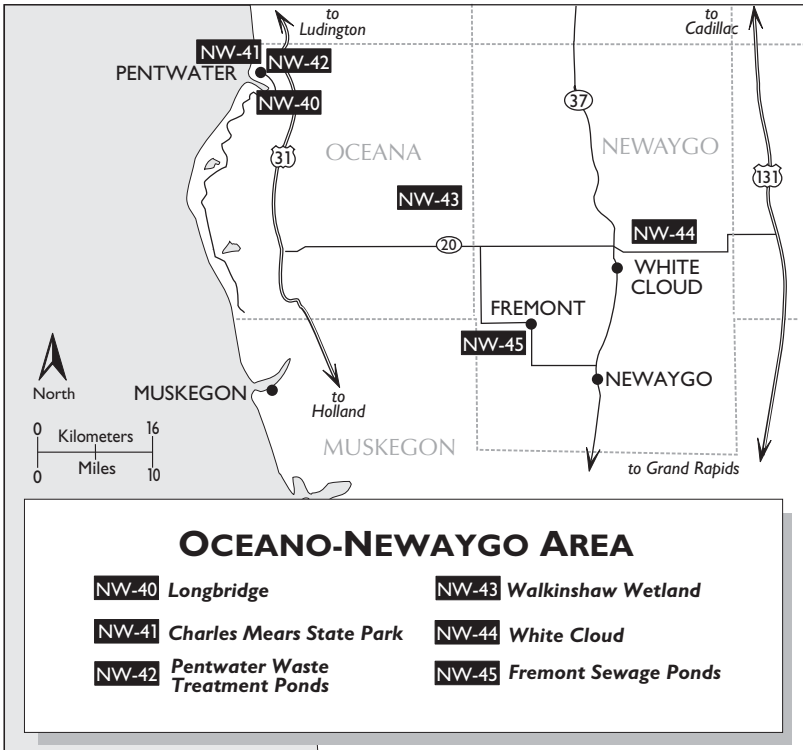
The smaller frontal dune adjacent to the beach is covered with typical dune vegetation of beach grasses, Sand Cherry, Beach Pea, Red Osier, juniper, and some stands of introduced Lombardy Poplar. The Nordhouse Dunes are sand-dune blowouts, with bare sand, beach grass, and scrub forests of Jack Pine. Some of the moist areas in the lee of the dunes are forested with mature beech and maple.

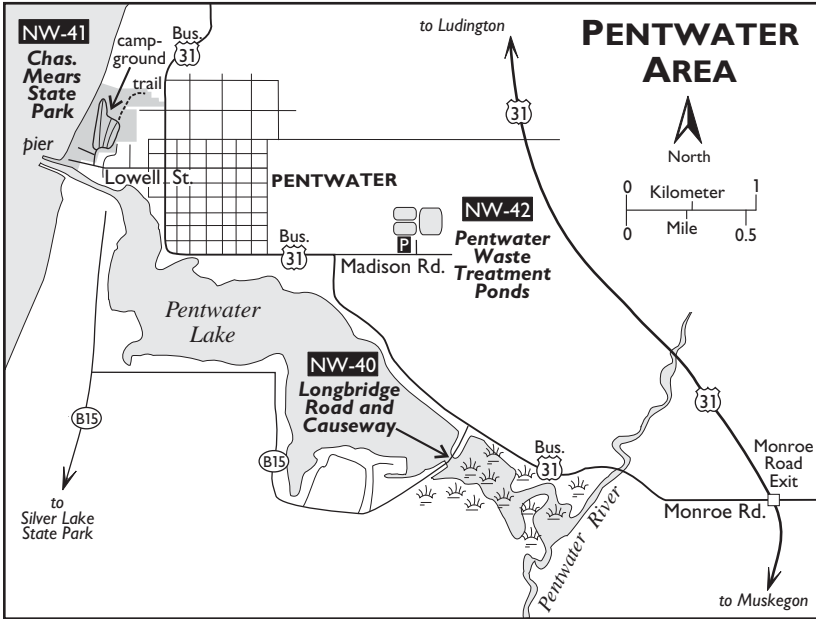
The Lake Michigan Recreation Area beach is known to Michigan birders as one of the most consistent breeding areas for **Prairie Warbler**. To look for the warblers, park in the turnaround at the end of the campground loop nearest to Lake Michigan (**A** on map) and take a boardwalk that leads a short way through the woods toward the lake and out into the open dunes. Here, the ascending-scale song of the Prairie Warbler may greet you from late May until mid-July. Another hiking trail (**B** on map) follows a ridge of forested sand dunes to the south from the boardwalk just before it leaves the forest at the open dune. This second trail is most productive in mid- to late May for passerine migrants, which tend to concentrate along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The numerous thrushes, warblers, and sparrows can include most of the state's regularly occurring migrant species. This trail extends south for 2 miles and connects with several other trails in the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness.

Another entrance to the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area is at the trailhead on **Nurnberg Road**. From the recreation area, go back on Forest Road 5629 to Quarterline Road and turn right (south) for 1.5 miles to Nurnberg Road. Turn right (west) onto Nurnberg Road (gravel surface, but passable to all vehicles) and follow it west for 7 miles until it ends at the trailheads for the Nordhouse Dunes National Wilderness. There is a trail map posted at the parking area. This is one of the smallest, officially designated wilderness areas in the United States, and the only one in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Most trails are less than a few miles in length. The trail to **Nordhouse Lake** skirts the west shore of the lake and provides views of the shallows. This lake has actually dried up completely in some of the recent dry summers, and the mudflats have attracted shorebirds and waterfowl in August and September. In the summer months, bring sunscreen, insect repellent, and plenty of water. The trails are sandy and hilly and you should be at least moderately fit to venture out on them. The trail to Lake Michigan is about 2 miles long and is very sandy. From May through August, nesting Piping Plovers are often seen along the Lake Michigan beaches at the end of this trail. In fall, migrating loons and other waterfowl, as well as Bald Eagles and rarely Common Ravens (near their southernmost limit in this part of the state), have also been seen here.

THE OCEANA-NEWAYGO AREA

Oceana and Newaygo Counties are perhaps the most underbirded counties in all of the Northwestern Lower Peninsula. A variety of habitats occur here, including mixed and deciduous forest, wooded dunes, lakeshore, marshes, swamps, and grasslands. Found in only a few western Lower Peninsula counties, Prickly-pear Cactus can be found in sandy areas of Oceana County, and much farther from the lakeshore in Newaygo County. A good variety of birds is present year round, with a special attraction being the breeding Sandhill Cranes in Newaygo County. Northern Newaygo County contains the southern part of the Manistee National Forest. Pentwater is a quaint lakeside village in Oceana County, south of Ludington. The village bustles in summer as tourists arrive by boat and car to shop the trendy downtown stores or to enjoy the beautiful Lake Michigan beaches.





NW-40 Longbridge

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 54, B3. 43°46' N, 86°25' W

Directions: From US-31 east of Pentwater, take the Monroe Street Exit (Business US-31 south) to Pentwater and go west for just over 1 mile until you see Longbridge Road and the Pentwater River marshes to your left.

The aptly named **Longbridge** is a long causeway across the Pentwater River, just east of the village of Pentwater, that is a convenient spot from which to scope the marshes of the Pentwater River to the east and Pentwater Lake to the west. Turn left from Monroe Street onto Longbridge Road and park just before the causeway where there are several wide shoulder areas. There are also wooden decks next to the bridge that are good spots to set up your scope while staying well off the road. This is another productive Great Lakes marsh, and birding conditions change almost annually as the levels of Lake Michigan rise and fall. Significant numbers of migrant ducks rest here during spring migration from March through May. There is one record of Eurasian Wigeon from the marsh, in addition to the typical American Wigeons, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Northern Shovelers, occasional Northern Pintails, and plentiful Mallards and Mute Swans. Marsh Wrens nest in the

cattails on the south side of the marsh, and Soras are often seen foraging at the edge of the cattails.

NW-41 Charles Mears State Park

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 54, B3. 43°47' N, 86°26' W

Contact Information: 231-869-2051;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From the Longbridge causeway, continue on Business US-31 into the village of Pentwater. Watch for the state park sign at Lowell Street, where you turn left (west). Follow Lowell Street to the park entrance (entry fee), which is on the right about 100 yards before the road ends at Lake Michigan. See map on previous page.

The **Charles Mears State Park**, about 1.5 miles west of Longbridge, is a good spot in spring and fall for migrant waterbirds along the Lake Michigan shore and for migrant passerines in the wooded areas along the dunes. The main attraction is the **pier and Lake Michigan beach** during the spring and fall migrations. One of the few Michigan records of California Gull was a bird spotted in a large flock of loafing Ring-billed and Herring Gulls (which are nearly always present). During the summer tourist season from June through Labor Day, the beach may be busy, with few birds around. During that time, it is best to visit very early (daylight begins by 5:00 a.m. in June), before the flock takes flight from the tourists.

At the east end of the campground is a place to park and a nature trail (**Old Baldy Trail**) that climbs up a small wooded sand dune. From late April to late May, flocks of migrant passerines are concentrated here, and the deck at the top of the dune is a great place to watch them. During fall, it is more difficult to find concentrations of birds when migration is more drawn-out, but this is still a good spot to find passerines. The climb up the trail is steep, and if you find it too challenging, you can check the edges of the woods along the parking area.

NW-42 Pentwater Waste Treatment Ponds

By Brian Allen

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter

DeLorme p. 54, B3. 43°47' N, 86°25' W

Directions: From downtown Pentwater, take Business US-31 to a sharp turn to the left, near a marina. Continue east on US-31 for another 0.6 mile, where Madison Road continues straight (east) and US-31 turns south. Go east on Madison Road for about 0.3 mile to the Pentwater Waste Treatment Ponds office, the last building on the left. See map on previous page.

Another site with good shorebird potential in spring and fall are the lagoons at the **Penwater Waste Treatment Ponds**. The lagoons are each approximately three acres in size. The facility is open from 7:00 a.m to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday and occasionally on Saturday. Stop at the office to ask permission to enter when you arrive. After getting permission to enter, walk or drive to a track that goes north through the gate to the lagoons. After about 200 yards, this track goes up onto the dike, a good spot to scope the banks of the pond for ducks and shorebirds. The edge of the woods near the lagoons is also a good spot for passerines feeding on the insect hatches. During April and early May on warm, sunny days with a stiff east wind, good numbers of raptors may be seen overhead as they pass north along the shore of Lake Michigan.

NWLP-43 Walkinshaw Wetland Preserve

By Brian Allen and George Wickstrom

Spring** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 64, D4. 44°08' N, 86°25' W

Note: a version of this account was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas*, a publication of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc. 2000.

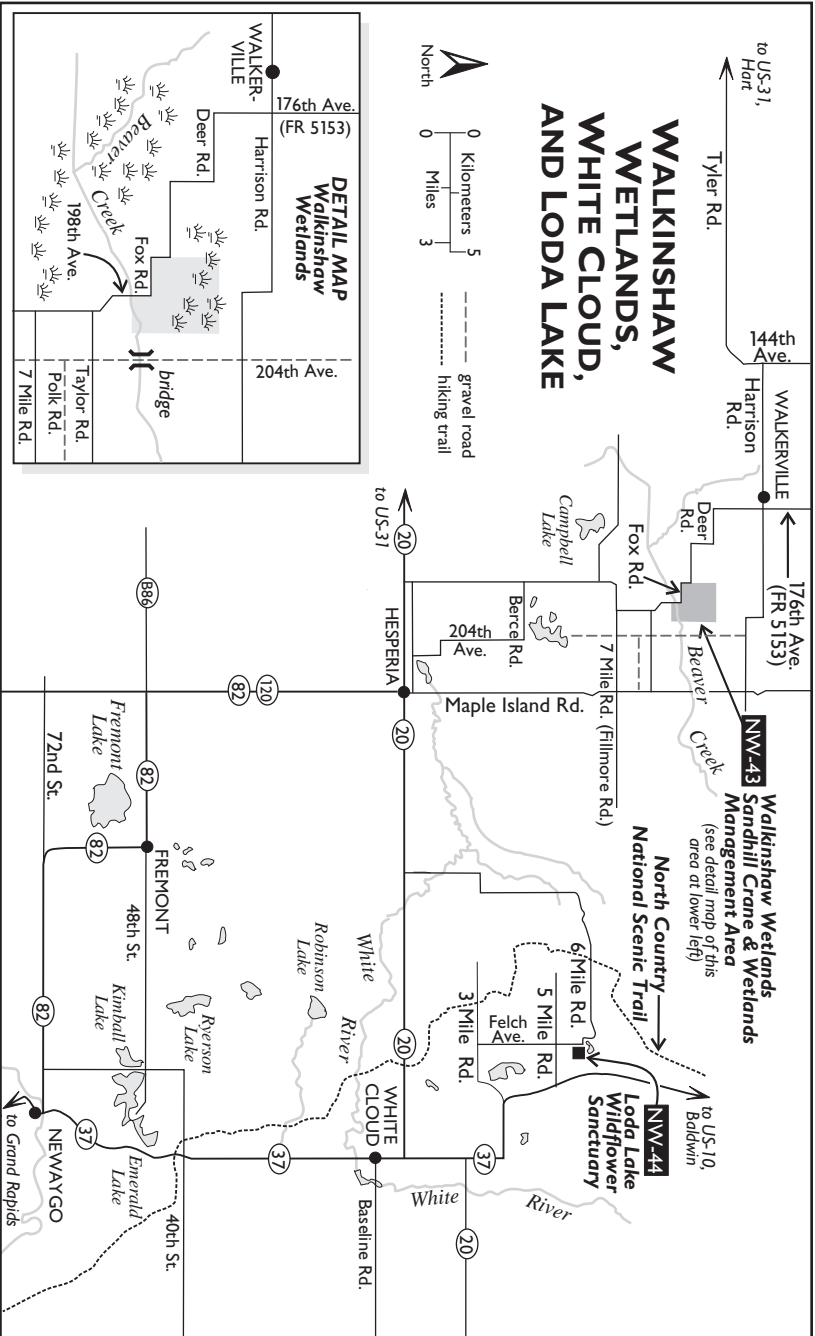
Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and Business US-31 at the south end of Pentwater, take US-31 south for 4.4 miles to the exit for the town of Hart (W. Polk Road). Travel east for 1.9 miles, past the first stoplight on State Road to the second stoplight, turn north onto Old US-31 (Oceana Drive), and go 1.0 mile and turn right (east) onto Tyler Road. Go east for 7.7 miles until Tyler Road curves to the left and continues north as 144th Avenue for 0.8 mile. Turn right (east) onto Harrison Road and go 3.9 miles to the village of Walkerville. Turn right (south) onto 176th Avenue (also labeled USFS 5153). USFS 5153 stair-steps southeast for 4 miles (always stay on the paved road), and changes names several times. At 4.0 miles from the corner of 176th and Harrison (now labeled Fox Road), the road goes east for 0.5 mile, then turns south at the corner of 198th (there is a road sign here, not labeled in DeLorme). At the corner of 198th and Fox Road there is a sign for the Walkinshaw Wetlands Sandhill Crane and Wetlands Management Area next to a farm house. The wetlands are visible from the roadside here. See next map.

This is an out-of-the way place where probably no one has run into another birder since the discovery here by Joan Wolfe in 1984 of the first (and only) state record of Gray Kingbird. You probably won't discover a new state record, but if you arrive in fall you may see hundreds of roosting Sandhill Cranes and thousands of Red-winged and Rusty Blackbirds and Common Grackles in the marsh. Spring sightings usually include American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, and occasionally a Henslow's Sparrow in the moist grassy fields. Dry fields have Eastern and sometimes Western Meadowlarks.

The **Walkinshaw Wetlands Sandhill Crane and Wetlands Management Area** was acquired by the Michigan Chapter of The Nature Conservancy to protect the roosting area of the Sandhill Cranes, and is now owned by the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Manistee National Forest. Named for Lawrence H. Walkinshaw, a Michigan dentist whose amateur ornithological work with Sandhill Cranes made him one of the world authorities on this and other cranes, the preserve is a fitting memorial. An interesting biography, published in 1991, can be found at <http://www.michiganadubon.org/bakersanctuary/history/walkinshaw.html>.

This area is birded mainly from the roadsides. Foot access into the preserve is limited to the area behind the sign at 198th Avenue and Fox Road, although it may not always be open in fall when the Sandhill Cranes are roosting; however, it is usually open in spring. (For detailed information concerning access, call the Baldwin Ranger Station at 231-745-4631.) From the preserve sign, you will have a good view of the marsh to the north and east, where you may see Sandhill Cranes from spring through fall, as well as migrant waterfowl and raptors. The cranes are present in the greatest numbers in October and November. If the area is open, walk alongside the large barn to a two-track that enters the open field. In May through June, many of the areas of grassy fields along the roadsides near here also host Upland Sandpiper, Bobolink, and Eastern and occasional Western Meadowlarks. Listen for the *tse-lick* song of Henslow's Sparrow in moist grassy fields with scattered shrubs, although specific sites where the sparrow occurs change from year to year. Please pull well off the roads, and be alert for infrequent but high-speed drivers.

Continue south from the preserve sign and then east onto Taylor Road, where the pavement ends, passing through good areas for close views of Sandhill Cranes and other waterbirds, including Wood Duck, Gadwall, and Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal. After about 1 mile, you will come to 204th Avenue, a gravel road that may not be passable after rains, especially in early spring. If it is drivable, turn left (north) onto 204th Avenue and stop along any areas of marsh to view waterbirds. American Bitterns nest here, and Virginia Rail and Sora can be heard calling in spring migration. Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Common Yellowthroats, and Swamp Sparrows can be found in spring and summer, and likely nest. Barred and Great Horned Owls may be heard year round in the evenings along this road. About 1 mile north along 204th Avenue, there is a bridge over Beaver Creek, an excellent vantage point from which to watch the cranes come in to roost in the evening. In May 2004, two Wilson's Phalaropes were found here.



NW-44 White Cloud Area

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 56, C1. 44°38' N, 85°50' W

Directions: From Taylor Road at the Walkinshaw Wetlands, return back west to the paved road and turn left. Go about 1 mile to Seven Mile Road (E. Fillmore Road) and turn left. After about 1.5 miles you come to Maple Island Road. Turn right (south) and go about 6 miles to M-20 in the town of Hesperia. Turn left (east) onto M-20 and go about 13.5 miles to the intersection with M-37, just north of the town of White Cloud.

The **White Cloud** area provides access to a small portion of the southern part of the Manistee National Forest, good for breeding passerines in summer and for occasional migrant passerines in spring and fall. From M-20 north of the town of White Cloud, turn left (north) onto M-37 and go about 4 miles to 5 Mile Road. Turn left (west) and go 1 mile to Felch Avenue. Turn right (north) and go about a mile to the entrance (sign) to the **Loda Lake Wildflower Sanctuary**. This sanctuary was set established in 1938 by the Federated Garden Club of Michigan and the U.S. Forest Service to preserve native Michigan plants, including native orchids. The preserve consists of a small lake, a marsh, and wooded areas. There are over 150 different species of wildflowers, trees, and shrubs marked with signposts that correspond to the trail guide available at the trailhead. The trail is about 1.5 miles long, including a boardwalk through the wetter areas. You can expect the common breeding species here, including Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Scarlet Tanager, and Swamp Sparrow. The area is occasionally attractive to migrant passerines in spring and fall.

From Loda Lake, continue on Felch Avenue, which turns west and changes name to 6 Mile Road. Go west about 2.5 miles from the sanctuary to where the **North Country Scenic Trail** crosses the road. There is no official trailhead or parking area, so you must pull well off onto the side of the road. The trail runs both north and south of 6 Mile Road through more upland forest. Birds that may be seen here are similar to those along the same trail farther north near Red Bridge and Mesick, and include breeding Black-throated Green, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Pine, and Mourning Warblers, American Redstart, and Northern Waterthrush.

NW-45 Fremont Sewage Ponds

By George Wickstrom

Spring*** Summer** Fall***

Winter*

DeLorme p. 45, A7. 43°25', 85°58'

2010 UPDATE: This site has now been closed to the public. There is no birder access to the ponds.

Note: a version of this account was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas*, a publication of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club, Inc., 2000.

Directions: From White Cloud, take M-37 south to Newaygo, and then take M-82 west for about 7 miles to 72nd Street. At this point, M-82 turns north and 72nd Street continues straight ahead to the west. Continue on 72nd Street for about 1.25 miles to the sign for the sewage ponds on the left. See previous map.

The **Fremont Sewage Ponds** consist of three diked ponds with farmland to the south and east. In spring and fall, ducks congregate here, and shorebirds are found along the pond edges. Gulls, primarily Ring-billed, nest in summer on the dikes. In the adjacent fields, Eastern Meadowlarks and Bobolinks nest along with Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels may be sighted year round hunting over the fields and sometimes over the ponds, Northern Harriers are present in migration and winter, and Rough-legged Hawks are occasional in winter. Among the rarities that have been found here are Harlequin Duck, Surf Scoter, Eared Grebe (spring and fall), Purple Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Glaucous Gull, and Northern Wheatear (1989). Ask permission at the office to bird the area, and be very careful driving on the dikes, as there are no guard rails and the roads may be soft and muddy. The area is accessible only on weekends from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

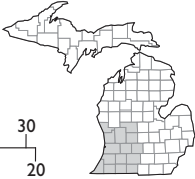
NOTE: This site can also be reached easily from Muskegon and Grand Rapids. From Muskegon, take Maple Island Road (B-31) north from the vicinity of the Muskegon Wastewater System (site SW-1) for about 12 miles to 80th Avenue. Turn right and go about 3.5 miles to Sleeper Road and turn left. Go 1 mile to 72nd Avenue and turn right. The entrance is about 0.5 mile ahead on the right. From Grand Rapids, take I-96 west to the exit for Nunica, which is Maple Island Road (B-31). Go north on B-31 for about 11 miles to the vicinity of the Muskegon Wastewater System, and follow the directions given above.

SOUTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

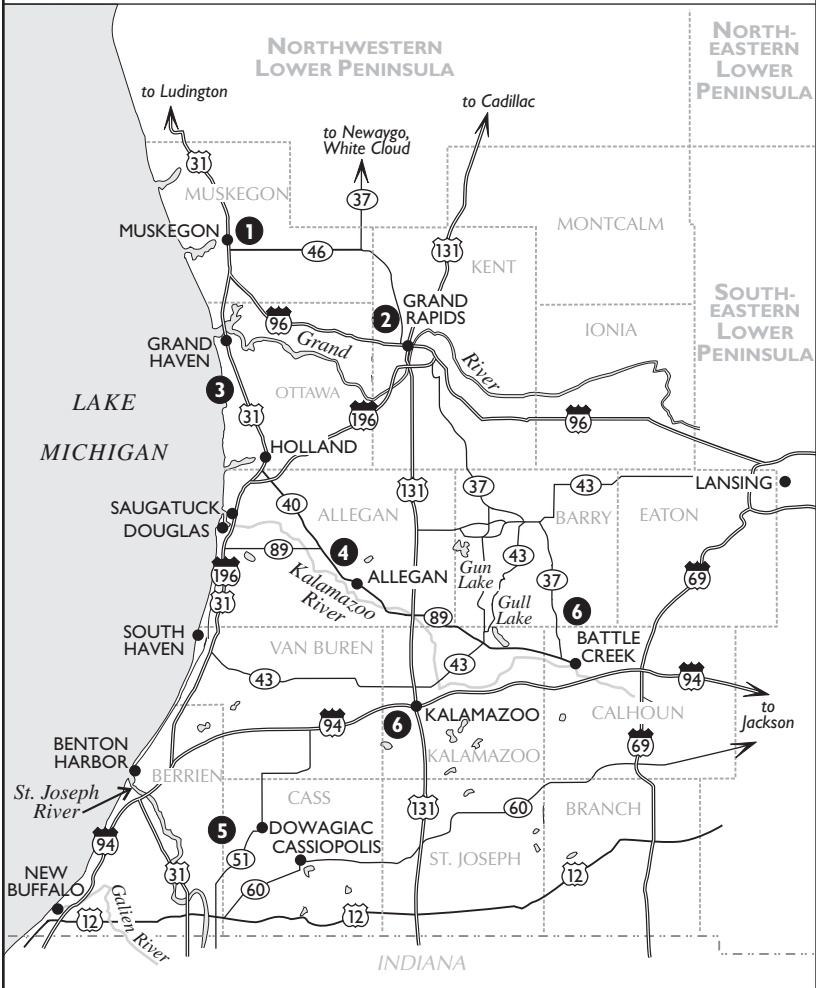
MAJOR BIRDING AREAS



0 Kilometers 30
0 Miles 20



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Muskegon Area
Sites SW-1 – SW-4 | 4 Allegan Area
Sites SW-19 – SW-23 |
| 2 Grand Rapids Area
Sites SW-5 – SW-11 | 5 Southwestern Corner
Sites SW-24 – SW-37 |
| 3 Grand Haven to Holland
Sites SW-12 – SW-18 | 6 Kalamazoo-Battle Creek Area
Sites SW-38 – SW-54 |



SOUTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

Michigan's Southwestern Lower Peninsula offers a great diversity of habitats, including small areas of restored prairie, lakeshore, wooded dunes, wetlands, and some of the best riparian woodlands in the state. Grand Rapids, one of the largest urban centers in the state, is a good base for exploring the region. Despite the large human population in this region, or perhaps because of it, there are many birding sites near Grand Rapids. There are also many active birders and several active bird clubs in the region.

As with the Northwestern Lower Peninsula, the proximity of Lake Michigan provides numerous vantage points for watching migrant waterfowl, as well as several excellent breakwalls and jetties that attract specialties such as Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper. The largest wastewater treatment facility in the state, and possibly in the country, is near Muskegon and is one of the best birding sites in the state. Open and wooded dunes along the lakeshore serve as concentration points for migrant passerines. Breeding populations of several northern species, including Black-throated Green and Canada Warblers, occur farther south along this shoreline than elsewhere in the state, and there are small breeding populations of Prairie Warblers here as well.

The riparian forests along the Galien River and its tributaries in southwestern Berrien County are host to a variety of southern breeding species, including Hooded and Cerulean Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, Acadian Flycatcher, and the state's most dependable (and largest) breeding population of Yellow-throated Warbler. The Kalamazoo River, surrounded by the Allegan State Game Area, provides breeding habitat for the largest populations of Cerulean and Prothonotary Warblers in the state. In the previous century, the prairie region of northwestern Indiana extended north into southwestern Michigan. Though most of the original prairie habitat has been altered, agricultural grasslands still provide habitat for grassland species, including Dickcissel and Henslow's Sparrow.

LAKE MICHIGAN BREAKWALL BIRDING

The breakwalls along the Lake Michigan shoreline from Manistee to New Buffalo provide a specialized birding opportunity in spring (March–May) and fall (September–November), and occasionally in winter (December–February). Birders in western Michigan often check as many of these breakwalls as they can in late fall in the hope of finding rarities such as Purple Sandpiper, Harlequin Duck, Red Phalarope (casual), or Western Grebe (casual). Other birders station themselves on one of the breakwalls to conduct a “seawatch”, often tallying good numbers of migrating scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, loons, grebes, and unusual gulls (rarities have included Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Gull, and Franklin’s Gull), and hoping for that adrenaline rush when a jaeger or a King Eider might pass by. The breakwalls are of two main types. Some are concrete breakwalls with lots of large boulders piled along the sides, especially attractive to Harlequin Duck and Purple Sandpiper. Others are steel-sided breakwalls with concrete walkways on top, and few or no boulders along the sides, good for doing a seawatch. The second type does not attract much to the breakwall itself, although Harlequin Ducks and Purple Sandpipers have been seen at all of these breakwalls, and other shorebirds can often be found in the sandy beach areas at their bases. The distance from the northernmost breakwall to the southernmost one is considerable, more than 200 miles, so it would be difficult to do them all in a single day. Virtually all are accessible via US-31 (and I-94 in Berrien County). Breakwall birders Rick Pedler and George Wickstrom provide the following tips when looking for Purple Sandpiper on the breakwalls:

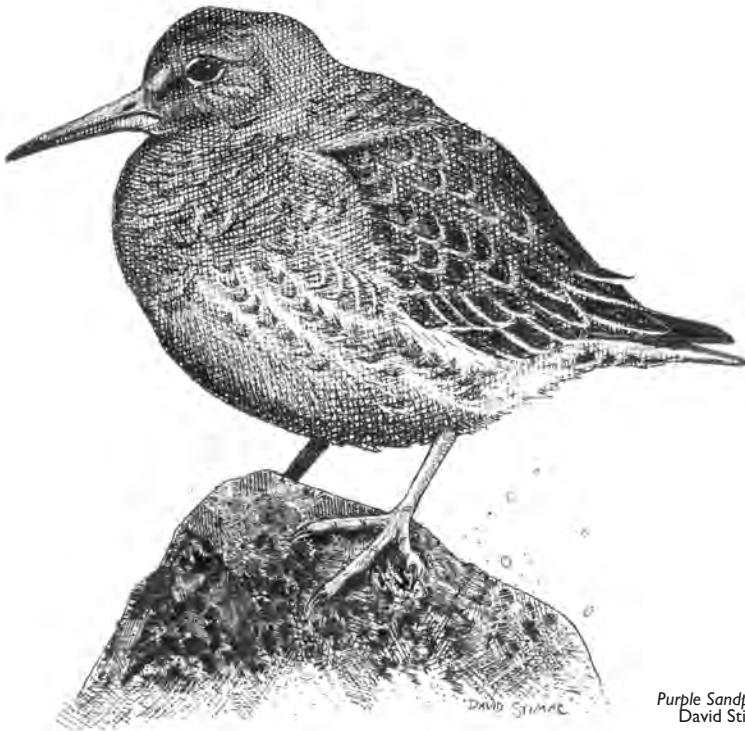
- Tip 1 (Rick): When looking for these relatively tame birds, be patient. Perhaps walk back and forth the length of the breakwall, looking carefully along both sides. Bless the rocks for providing the habitat that brought the bird to us, while you curse the rocks for hiding the bird from view.
- Tip 2 (George): Talk. Talk loudly. Purple Sandpipers will often come into view to investigate people talking.
- Another tip—dress warmly.

From north to south, the breakwalls and their site numbers are:

- Elk Rapids Pier (NW-14)
- Frankfort Pier (NW-20)
- Elberta Pier (NW-20)
- Manistee South Pier (NW-30)
- Ludington North Pier (NW-35)
- Ludington South Pier (NW-37)
- Charles Mears SP (NW-41)

- Muskegon North and South Breakwalls (SW-2)
- Grand Haven South Pier (SW-12)
- Holland North Pier (SW-17)
- Oval Beach/Douglas Public Beach (SW-19)
- South Haven North and South Jetty (SW-22)
- Tiscornia Beach Park, St. Joseph (SW-26)
- New Buffalo Public Beach (SW-29)

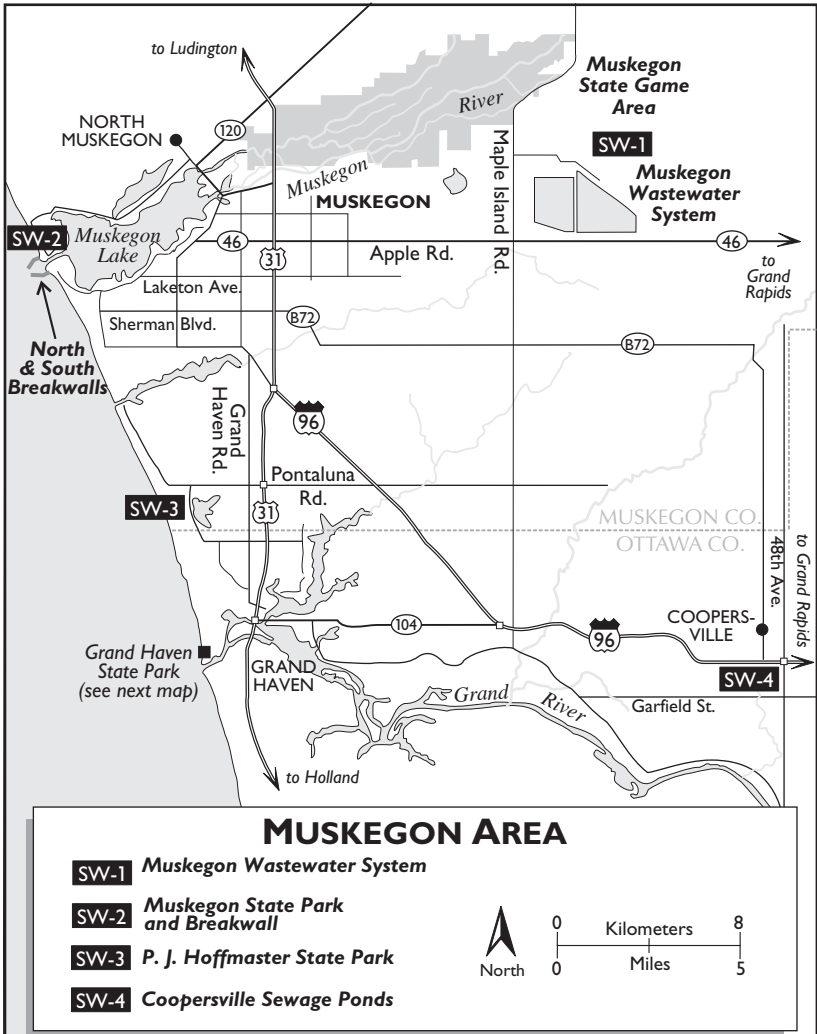
NOTE: Under most conditions, the breakwalls, piers, and jetties are reasonably safe for birding, though it is always a good idea to dress warmly. Be careful where you walk, as large cracks or uneven places in the concrete could cause injury. Dangerous conditions exist on all Great Lakes breakwalls during strong winds and icy conditions. DO NOT walk out on a breakwall if waves are breaking over it, or if it is icy. Falling off the breakwall into the water under these conditions could result in drowning in strong currents in windy conditions, or death from the rapid onset of hypothermia during icy conditions.



Purple Sandpiper
David Stimac

THE MUSKEGON AREA

The Muskegon area provides diverse birding opportunities, with the proximity of Lake Michigan for waterfowl and shorebirds, and coastal dunes and scrub vegetation that harbor migrant passerines and that funnel migrant hawks in the fall. Current sightings and local information can be found on the Muskegon County Nature Club website at <http://users.tm.net/mcnc>.



SW-1 Muskegon Wastewater System

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer**** Fall**** Winter**

DeLorme p. 45, B6. 43°15' N, 086°01' W

Contact Information: Muskegon County Wastewater Treatment System, 8301 White Road, Muskegon, MI 49442; 231-724-3440; www.co.muskegon.mi.us/wwtft.htm

Directions: From US-31 in Muskegon, take the exit for M- 46 (Apple Road) and go east for 6.9 miles to Maple Island Road. Turn left (north) for 2.1 miles to the entrance on the right (just past White Road).

The huge Muskegon County Wastewater Management System, referred to by birders as the **Muskegon Wastewater System**, includes 11,000 acres of aeration, settling, and spraying areas, and is one of the best birding areas in the state. As with any wastewater treatment area, the olfactory sense is assaulted immediately upon arrival. But the main features of this site are the large numbers of waterfowl in migration, as well as good shorebird numbers. This is currently the most reliable location in the state for Eared Grebe. In winter, the surrounding fields support pipits, longspurs, Snow Buntings, and raptors, including Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl. Snowy Owl is more often reported here in late fall and winter than elsewhere in the Lower Peninsula (although not every year). Also possible are Peregrine Falcon in migration and occasional Gyrfalcon and Golden Eagle in winter. Rarities show up every year, and Ruff, Purple Sandpiper, Eurasian Wigeon, Western Grebe, and Gyrfalcon have all occurred here within the last ten years or so. In summer 2004, a Northern Mockingbird and an Orchard Oriole were seen along the entrance road.

From the entrance on Maple Island Road, turn right into the facility and go 1.3 miles to the Administration Building on the right, where you should obtain a permit to drive on the dikes. The building is closed on weekends, although birders can enter if a permit has been obtained in advance. The dikes are posted as closed at 5:00 p.m. Occasionally, portions of the area may be closed during reconstruction work.

The dike access road is behind the building. As you drive onto the dike, you will be near a row of “bubblers” to your right, where a few waterfowl and gulls are sometimes found. Turn left here and go to the first road to the right. After a short distance, you can either continue straight ahead on the 1.5-mile-long center dike, or turn right to drive the perimeter of the area. The center dike is often favored by Snowy Owl (when present) and Snow Buntings in late fall and early winter, and is usually covered with Ring-billed and Herring Gulls at other seasons. The two large impoundments on either side of the center dike hold large numbers of waterfowl in spring (March–April) and fall (September–November). The southwestern area is often the best area for flocks of geese, which in late fall often include a few Snow Geese. Northern Shovelers are widely distributed around the system, and peak counts of 4,000 to 5,000 have been made in late fall. Ruddy Ducks tend to occur in rafts, and

fall high counts have exceeded 3,000. There are also thousands of the more common species. Nearly every regularly occurring species of waterfowl in the state has been recorded here, including an occasional scoter. Hundreds of Gadwalls, American Wigeons, American Black Ducks, and Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal are often present, with typically smaller numbers of diving ducks. In October and November, Buffleheads are numerous, with 200 or more sometimes present, along with hundreds to thousands of Lesser Scaup.

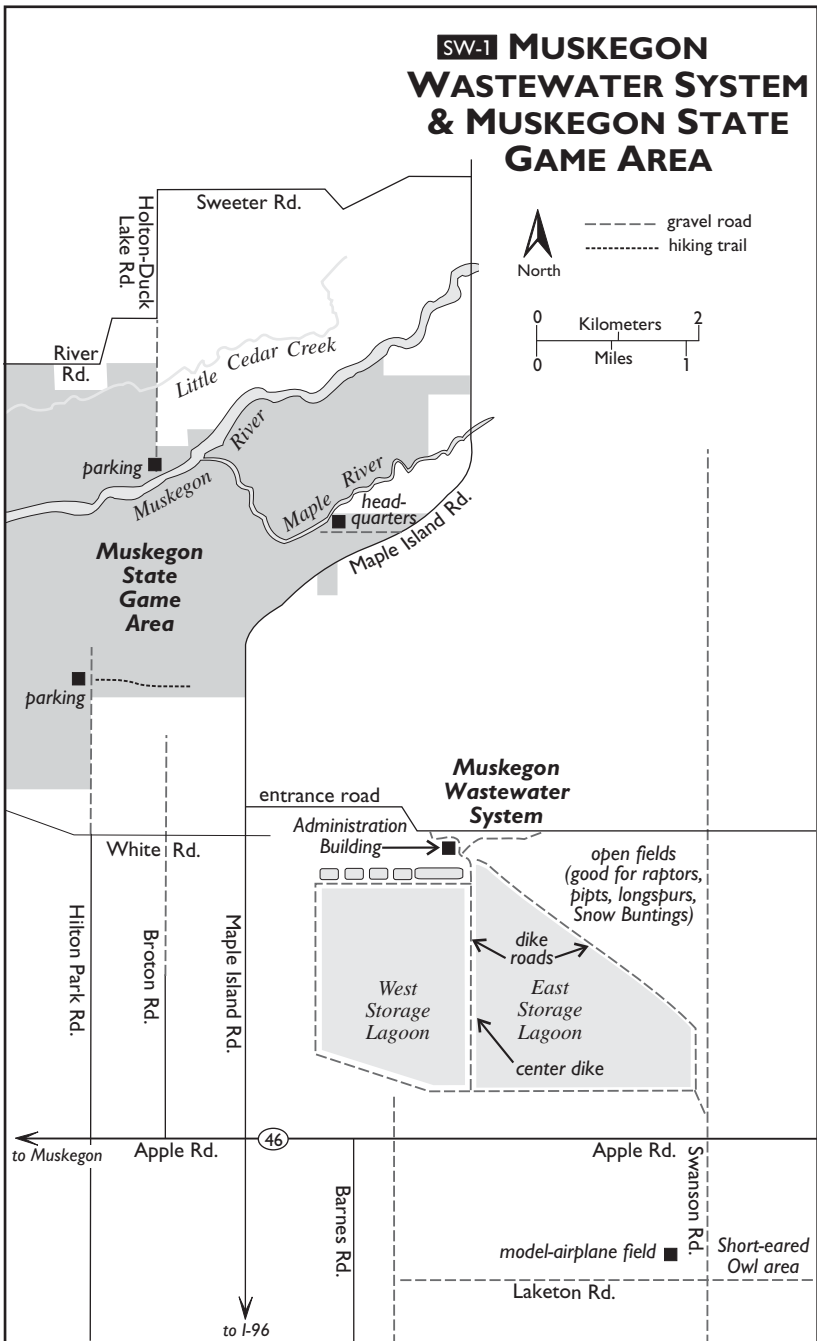
Shorebirds are found along the edges of the dikes and in the shallow areas that form in late spring through summer. High state counts have been made here for Hudsonian Godwit (63 in August 1999) White-rumped Sandpiper (60 in September 2000), and Red-necked Phalarope (21 in August 1997, 20 in September 2002). Other normally uncommon to rare shorebirds that occur here somewhat regularly include American Avocet, Willet, Marbled Godwit, Red Knot, Baird's, Stilt, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitcher, and Wilson's Phalarope (up to 25). Gulls typically include the common Ring-billed and Herring all year, with migrant Bonaparte's in spring and late fall. In late fall through early spring, Thayer's, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous Gulls are possible.

Eared Grebe occurs generally from April through November, with peak numbers (from one to 15) occurring in spring and fall. They can be seen from the dike roads almost anywhere in the area.

The fields along the northeastern side of the system are the best places to look for open-country birds, including American Pipit, Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting. Black-bellied Plover and American Golden-Plover are also more likely in the fields than within the impoundments. In winter, this is also a good area to look for Northern Harrier and Rough-legged Hawk.

Short-eared Owls have overwintered in the area in recent years, with birds typically appearing in late fall and remaining into early spring. At dusk, the intersection of **Laketon and Swanson Roads** is often a good place to check. From the southeast corner of the impoundments, go south on Swanson about a mile to its intersection with Laketon Road. Occasionally the owl is also seen from the dike roads. Recently, a Western Meadowlark was seen at the model-airplane field northwest of this intersection.

The nearby **Muskegon State Game Area** is also worth exploring if you have extra time. This large game area follows the floodplain and bottomlands of the Muskegon River, and stretches from near the Muskegon city limits eastward into the southwestern corner of Newaygo County. It is a particularly good area for breeding species such as Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Cerulean, and Prothonotary Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. To reach the first of two access points from the Muskegon Wastewater System administration building, head west back to Maple Island Road and go south (left) for 0.1 mile to White Road. Turn right



(west) for about a mile to Hilton Park Road and turn right (north). Follow Hilton Park Road to its end, birding along the road. You should also walk the dirt two-track going east off Hilton Park Road. A second access point can be reached by turning right (north) onto Maple Island Road after leaving the Muskegon Wastewater System. Go 4.7 miles (crossing the Muskegon River) to Sweeter Road and turn left (west). Go 2.1 miles to Holton-Duck Lake Road and turn left (south) for about 0.7 mile to where the road curves right. Continue straight ahead on the dirt road marked "Dead End Road". In muddy or wet conditions, you may not want to drive down the steep hill into the bottomlands. And since the birding is done along this road, you should park and walk. About halfway down to the Muskegon River, you will cross Little Cedar Creek, also worth birding.

SW-2 Muskegon State Park and Breakwalls

By Allen T. Chartier, Jeff Johnson, and Rick Pedler

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 44, C4. 43° 15' N, 86° 20' W

Contact Information: 231-744-3480;

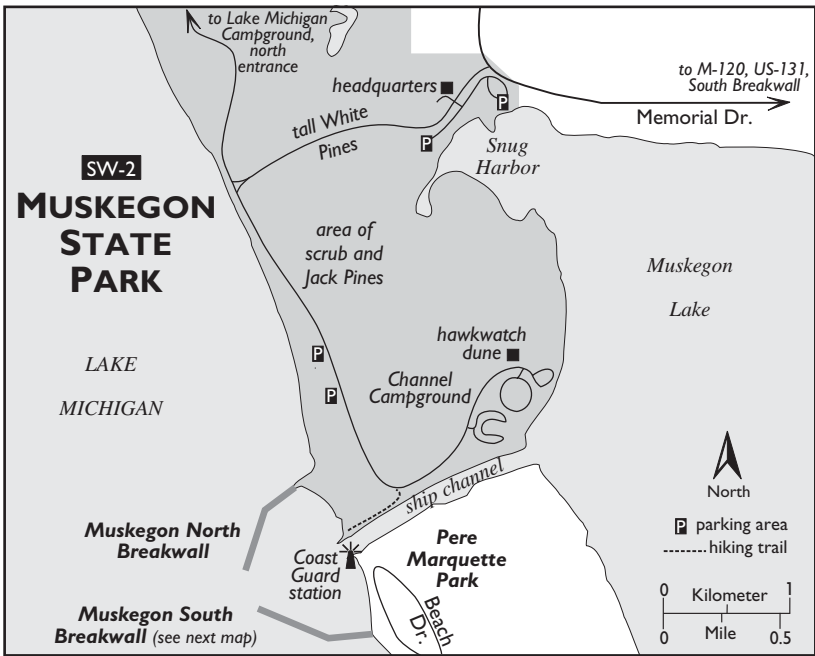
www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

(NOTE: A version of this account by Jeff Johnson was first published in 1999 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 6: 75-80.)

Directions: From US-31 about 2 miles north of Muskegon (about 3 miles north of M-46), take the exit for M-120 (Ruddiman Avenue) and go west for about 2 miles to a junction where M-120 goes left and Memorial Drive continues straight ahead. Continue straight at Memorial Drive and go about 5 miles to the park entrance on the left (state park entry fee).

At Muskegon, the Lake Michigan shoreline runs north-northwest to south-southeast. Just east of the shore, connected to the big lake by the 0.75-mile Muskegon Channel, is Muskegon Lake. The irregularly shaped lake is 4.5 miles long east-to-west and up to 2 miles wide, with the outlet channel to Lake Michigan at its west end. Immediately north of the channel, between Muskegon Lake and Lake Michigan and part of Muskegon State Park, is an expanse of "trough" dune terrain. It consists of low- to medium-height grassy dunes, a few interdunal ponds set among Jack Pines, the occasional copse of hardwoods, and scattered blowouts (unvegetated loose-sand patches). The open dunes end about a mile north of the channel, where the elevation reaches perhaps 200 feet and the mature, mostly unbroken forest follows the shoreline north toward the city of Whitehall and beyond.

Located right on Lake Michigan, Muskegon State Park provides opportunities to view waterbirds along 2 miles of Lake Michigan shore and 1 mile along Muskegon Lake. The park is on a blunt peninsula separating Muskegon Lake from Lake Michigan, and is a migration corridor for passerines and hawks. More than 12 miles of trails wander through the varied habitats.



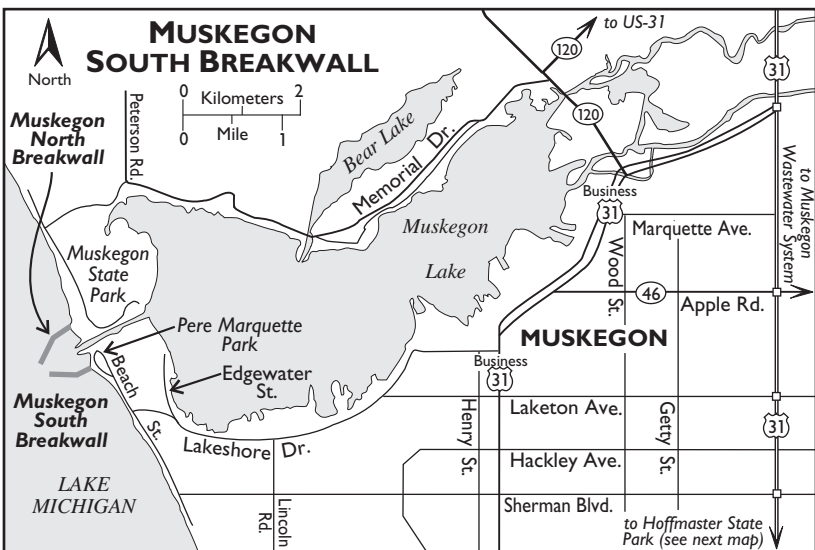
From the entrance, turn into the first parking area on the left for a good view of **Snug Harbor**. The adjacent woodlot is probably the best spot in the park for migrant passerines in spring and fall. Continue on Memorial Drive to the T-intersection and turn left. You will pass through scattered patches of scrub, Jack Pines, and dunes before arriving at the parking areas for the beach. From here, you can walk toward the lake and onto the **Muskegon North Breakwall**, where shorebirds occasionally congregate, including Purple Sandpiper in October–December. Offshore, migrant ducks, scoters, loons, and grebes may be observed in spring (March–April) and fall (September–December). Some years Harlequin Ducks can be found, primarily in October and November, and overwintering on rare occasions.

Follow the park road east along the ship channel nearly to its end. The large dune on the left is where the **hawkwatch** is conducted on an informal basis. In other regions on the Great Lakes, a number of observatories monitor raptor migration, tallying great numbers. Western Michigan, on the other hand, despite its considerable shoreline, has rarely produced much of a raptor flight. To be sure, there have been notable occurrences of large numbers of hawks, invariably on winds with an easterly component. For many decades, the west shore in the fall was regarded as a place where one might see a fair number of hawks when the wind was easterly, nudging the southbound flight against the shore. Margaret Drake Elliott, a longtime chronicler of natural phenomena in the Muskegon area, reported seeing hawks over the low, open

ground south of the channel during easterlies. George Wickstrom, a noted western Michigan birder, reported 5,995 Broad-winged Hawks on September 14, 1986, one mile south of the channel. Sixty years ago, citizens would gather atop Mt. Garfield, seven miles south, to shoot raptors on an east wind.

But east winds at Muskegon are rare in early fall. Observations at Muskegon State Park during fall 1998 suggest that there may be a significant raptor migration at this location, and that the unique features of the shoreline at this site have a greater effect than wind direction on the birds' flight path. In September–November 1998, Jeff Johnson documented the migratory passage of over 2,000 raptors, during winds of *all* directions. The species list included Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon. On one occasion, more than 300 passed in one day, and the seasonal average was 15.5 per hour. Compared with the counts at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Lake Erie Metropark, and other Great Lakes monitoring sites, these numbers are very low. However, they are significant because no one expected even modest counts at this location.

Modest numbers notwithstanding, the timing of movements of individual species past Muskegon State Park correlates well with that of other Great Lakes sites. Following a late summer passage of immature Red-tails, Broad-wing numbers peak in mid-September. Sharp-shins then predominate until mid-October, when adult Red-tails arrive on colder winds, accompanied by Rough-legged Hawks and Golden Eagles. Other species seemed to adhere to a more random timetable, appearing throughout the season.



Although the **Muskegon South Breakwall** is easily visible from within the park at the North Breakwall, access requires leaving the park and a 12-mile drive. In late fall and winter, the detour is worth the effort, as the South Breakwall produces sightings of Harlequin Duck, Purple Sandpiper, and other rarities perhaps slightly more often than does the North Breakwall. Return east from the park to M-120 and turn right. Cross over the Muskegon River to Business US-31 and turn right (note that M-46, Apple Avenue, meets Business 31 along here, providing a direct route to the South Breakwall from the Muskegon Wastewater System). Go south from M-120 on Business US-31 for 2.6 miles to Laketon Avenue and turn right (west). Go 1.1 miles to a T-intersection with Lakeshore Drive. Turn left and follow Lakeshore to another T-intersection with Beach Street (note that you should veer left at the fork with Edgewater Street, 2.1 miles past Laketon Avenue). Turn right and follow Beach Street around the one-way loop to the parking area along the beach at Pere Marquette Park. *NOTE: Dangerous conditions exist on this breakwall, as at all Great Lakes breakwalls, during strong winds and icy conditions. Be careful where you walk, as large cracks in the concrete could cause injury. DO NOT walk out on this breakwall if waves are breaking over it or if it is icy.*

SW-3 P. J. Hoffmaster State Park

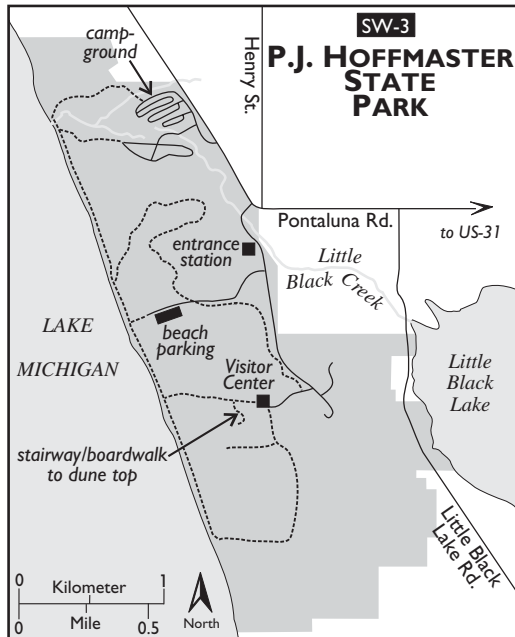
By George Wickstrom and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 45, C4. 43°08' N, 86°16' W

Directions: From I-96 and US-31 south of Muskegon, go south on US-31 for about 3 miles to Pontaluna Road. Turn right (west) and go 2.7 miles to the park entrance on the left (state park entry fee).

P. J. Hoffmaster State Park is an excellent migrant trap for passerines in spring and fall, and the Lake Michigan shoreline provides opportunities to view migrant and wintering waterfowl, loons, grebes, and gulls. The park is approximately 1,100 acres of some of the finest wooded dunes in the state, with three miles of



Lake Michigan shoreline and ten miles of trails. The woodland is fairly old second-growth, which, in some areas, approaches the beech-maple climax state. White Pine, Hemlock, cherry, oak, and ash are the common trees.

Because the woods here are so dense, most birding is done from the roads and trails. For waterbirds and shorebirds, the beach areas are easily reached from the beach parking lot or from a trail which begins at the Gillette Visitor Center. One of the highest dunes in the park is also reached from the visitor center; a 144-step stairway and boardwalk take you to the top. During migration, the visitor center bird bath can attract dozens of warblers and other species, which can be observed from inside the building. Bird feeders are also filled in winter, which lure winter species for close viewing.

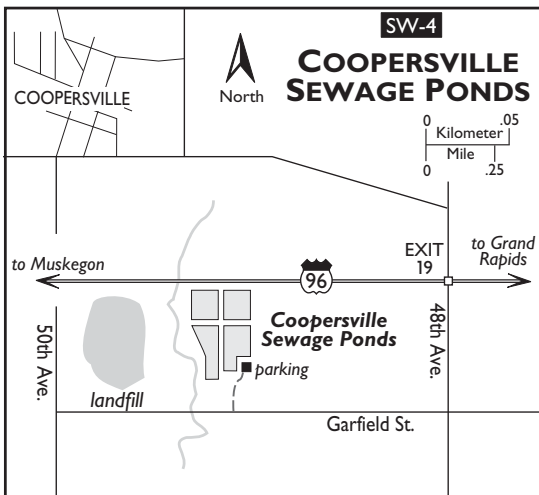
Acadian Flycatchers and, rarely, Hooded Warblers have been observed along the wooded trails from the visitor center to the beach parking lot and the campground. In the fall, when there are east winds, many migrating hawks can be seen from the dune-top boardwalk. On a good day, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Broad-winged, and Red-tailed Hawks can be seen. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon are also frequently sighted.

SW-4 Coopersville Sewage Ponds

By Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 45, C4. 43°07' N, 86°16' W

Directions: From I-96 and US-31 south of Muskegon, go east on I-96 toward Grand Rapids for about 15 miles to the town of Coopersville. Continue another 2.5 miles, where you will see the sewage ponds on the right. Do not stop along the freeway! Continue past the ponds for about



1 mile to Exit 19, Lamont- Coopersville (48th Avenue). Turn right (south) and go 0.5 mile to Garfield Street. Turn right (west) and go 0.7 mile to a dirt road leading to the ponds on the right. Note: for those traveling from Grand Rapids, Exit 19 is about 12.5 miles west of the intersection of I-96 and US-131 in Grand Rapids.

The Coopersville Sewage Ponds are a good birding stop for those traveling between Muskegon and Grand Rapids. These small ponds are host to migrant waterfowl and shorebirds in spring and fall. A May 1984 record of Curlew Sandpiper from here is the only record of this vagrant in Michigan away from Monroe County.

After you arrive, park near the fence, staying clear of the entry gate. There is no public access inside the fence, however, the staff here are currently birder-friendly, allowing birders to scan the ponds from just outside the fence. The only real views are on the southeast side of the ponds; the weedy fields adjacent to the fence here can be wet and muddy. There are several mud mounds in this area that you can stand on for views of the farther ponds. The corn fields along the eastern fence line are private property and should not be entered. A landfill on the north side of Garfield Street and just west of the ponds sometimes will have a flock of gulls.

THE GRAND RAPIDS AREA

Grand Rapids is the second-largest city in Michigan and the birthplace of former President Gerald R. Ford. There is an active network of local birders, including members of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club, and a number of good to excellent birding sites nearby. There is little good birding habitat within the city center, but the Grand River, which runs through the center of the city, can provide good opportunities for viewing waterfowl, including occasional rarities such as Harlequin Duck and Surf Scoter. Small, isolated patches of woodland along the river act as migrant traps for passerines. Access points are from several downtown sites, where parking is limited and often metered. Several of the location accounts in this chapter, and others nearby, have been updated and excerpted from an excellent local publication, *Favorite Birding Areas*, published in 2000 and revised every few years by the Grand Rapids Audubon Club. The book details more sites than can be included in this guide; contact Bill Sweetman (616-247-6741 or wjs3@calvin.edu) for ordering information. Local field trips and other information can be found on the club's website at www.glsa.org/grac.htm.

SW-5 Blandford Nature Center

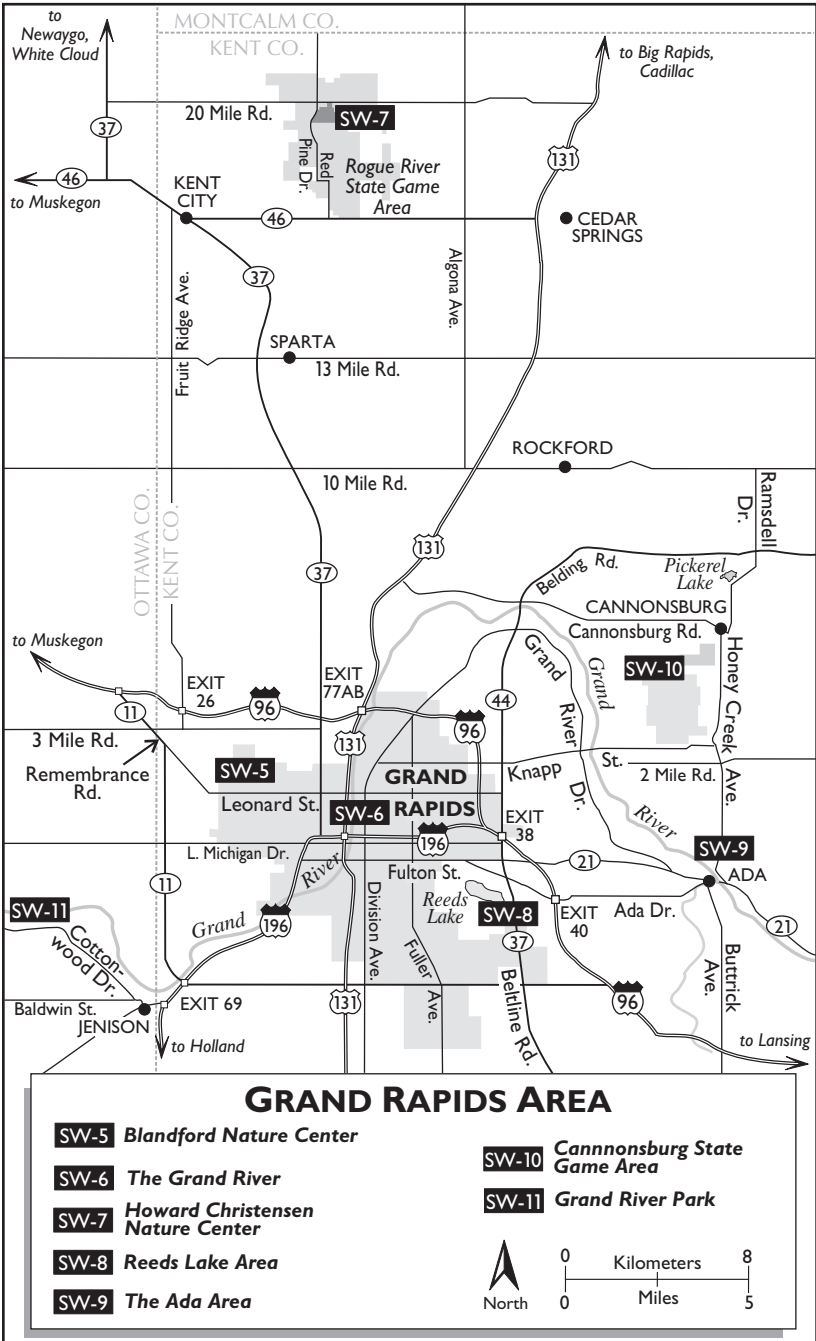
By Allen T. Chartier and Steve Minard

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 36, A1. 42°59' N, 85°44' W

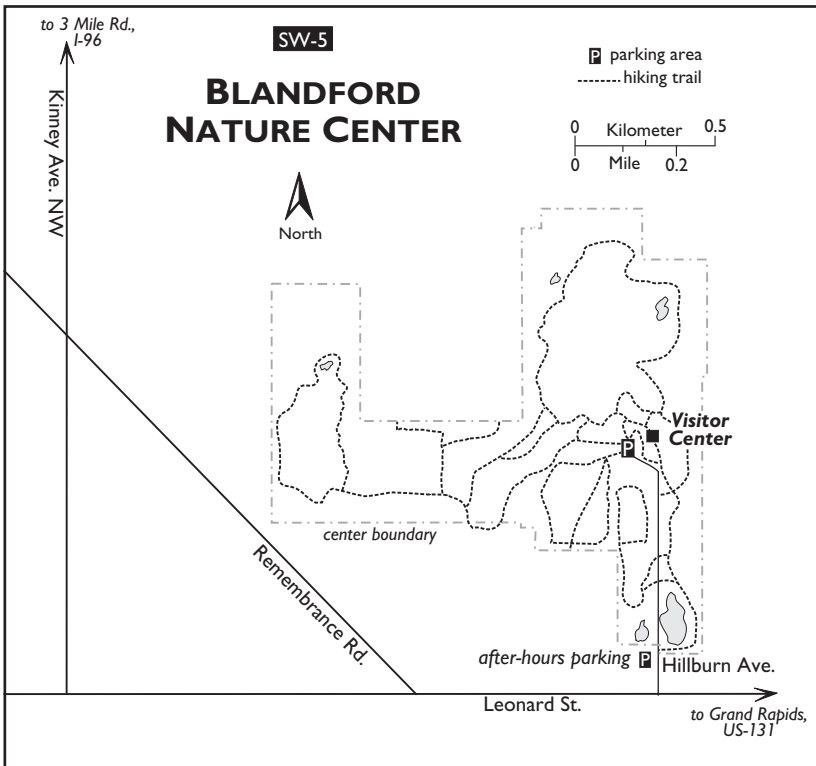
Contact Information: 606-819-5540; www.grmuseum.org/bnc/index.htm

Directions: From I-96 on the northwest side of Grand Rapids, take Exit 26 (Fruit Ridge Avenue) and go south for 0.1 mile to a T-intersection with 3 Mile Road NW. Turn right (west) and go 0.2 mile to Kinney Avenue NW. Turn left (south) and go 1.0 mile to Remembrance Road. Turn left (southeast) and go 1.4 miles to Leonard Street. Turn left and go 0.4 mile to Hillburn Avenue. Turn left (north) and follow Hillburn to its end at the



Nature Center. Note: This site can also be reached from the center of Grand Rapids. From US-131 take the Leonard Street exit (Exit 88), go west for 3.5 miles to Hillburn Avenue and turn right.

The **Blandford Nature Center's** 143 acres of woodlands, fields, ponds, and streams are administered by the Grand Rapids Public Schools. There are more than four miles of trails with boardwalks and marsh overlooks. The visitor center is open Monday–Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.; trails are open from dawn to dusk. Migrant and breeding songbirds are the attractions here, along the many trails that begin at the nature center. In winter, the feeders behind the nature center are worth checking for sparrows and finches. Look for resident Eastern Screech-Owls in the Wood Duck nesting boxes, which are also used by breeding Wood Ducks in summer. Green Herons and a pair of Great Horned Owls are also usually present in summer. In the fields, look for Red-tailed Hawks and Eastern Bluebirds. Regular woodland birds such as Red-bellied Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, and White-breasted Nuthatch may be found year round. Brown Creeper, an infrequent breeder in the southern Lower Peninsula, has been found in summer.



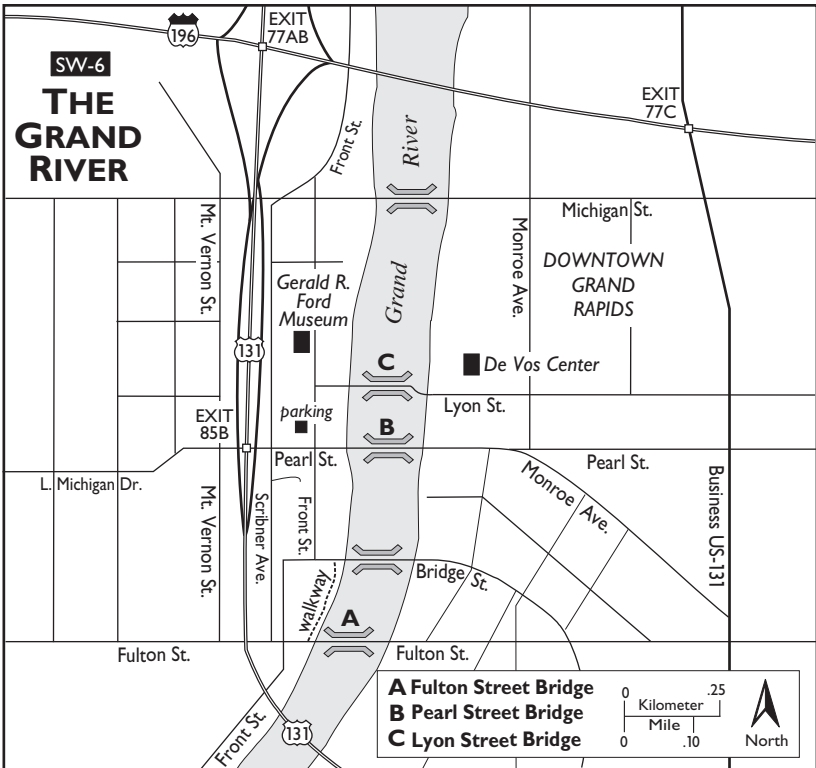
The nature center also operates a wildlife rehabilitation center, and usually has a variety of birds recovering or on display. Some recent patients have included Short-eared and Barred Owls, Eastern Screech-Owl, American Kestrel, and Rough-legged, Cooper's, and Broad-winged Hawks.

SW-6 The Grand River

By Steve Minard and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter***
 DeLorme p. 36, A2. 42°58' N, 85°39' W

The **Grand River**, which flows through downtown Grand Rapids, provides habitat in migration and winter for waterfowl. In two recent winters, an adult male Harlequin Duck graced these waters. In addition, the limited vegetation along the river provides habitat for passerine migrants, including some warblers. During the summer months, downtown Grand Rapids is a nesting area for Chimney Swifts and Common Nighthawks, and the riverside is an excellent place to observe them. Access points include the Fulton Street bridge, the Pearl Street bridge, and the Lyon Street pedestrian bridge.



To get to the **Fulton Street bridge** from northbound US-131, take the Pearl Street exit (Exit 85B) and turn west under US-131. Turn left (south) onto Mt. Vernon Street on the west side of US-131. (From southbound US-131, also take Exit 85B, which will put you on Mt. Vernon Avenue.) Take Mt. Vernon south for 0.3 mile to Fulton Street, turn left (east), and go 0.1 mile to the Grand River. The best place to park during non-business hours is the metered parking available on the bridge (9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Saturday). During business hours on weekdays, you will probably have to park in the Gerald R. Ford Museum parking structure on nearby Pearl Street, or at one of the other nearby municipal parking structures. Scan the river from both sides of the bridge. Ducks congregate here, and this was the preferred area of a recent Harlequin Duck. In the winter of 2003–2004, a Yellow-throated Warbler visited a window feeder at an office building along the river here. To the north, paved walkways follow both sides of the river from Fulton Street north to Bridge Street. Parts of the walkway on the east side of the river are closed during winter.

The **Pearl Street bridge** is two blocks north of Fulton Street and can also be accessed from the museum parking area on Pearl Street. The patch of trees to the north of the bridge and the trees in front of the Gerald R. Ford Museum on the west side of the river are the best places to look for passerine migrants. Several warbler species, including Golden-winged, Chestnut-sided, and Bay-breasted, have been observed here. Northern Rough-winged Swallows nest along the river, and in migration large flocks of several swallow species will frequently gather along the river.

The **Lyon Street bridge** is the next bridge north of Pearl Street along the river. Be sure to check the east side of the river here, behind the De Vos Center, where there is a year-round flock of ducks and occasionally other waterbirds. A pair of Red-necked Grebes showed up one winter.

SW-7 Howard Christensen Nature Center

By Steve Mueller and Steve Minard

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 46, B2. 43°16' N, 85°41' W

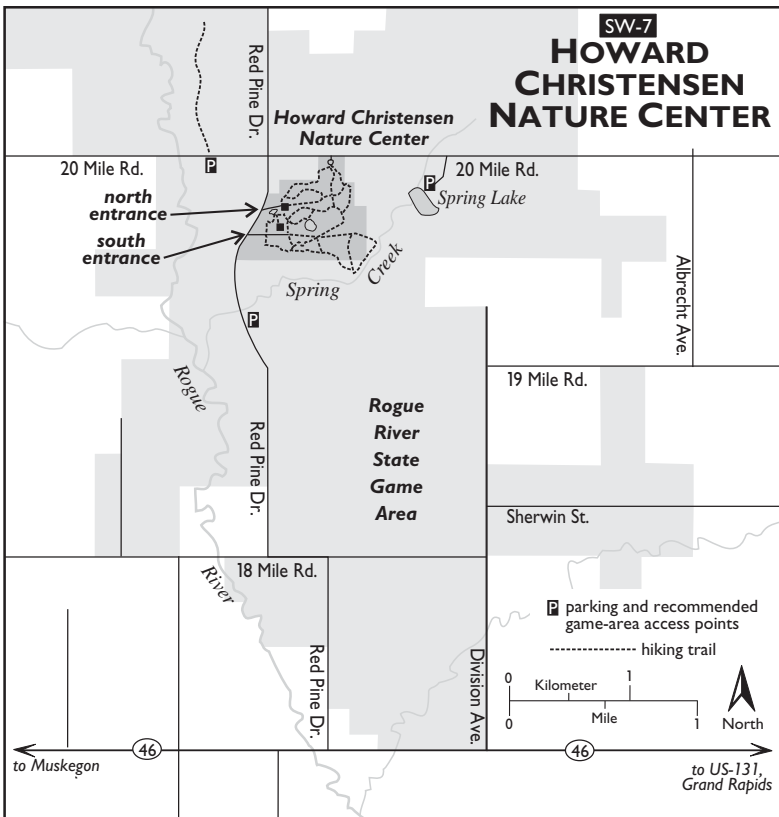
Contact Information: 616-887-1852; www.kentisd.k12.mi.us/hcnc/index.shtml

(This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

Directions: From I-96 and US-131 in Grand Rapids, go north on US-131 for about 15 miles to M-46 (17 Mile Road, Exit 104) near Cedar Springs. Go west on M-46 for 5.5 miles to Red Pine Drive. Turn right (north) onto Red Pine Drive and go 1.0 mile to 18 Mile Road. Turn left (west) onto 18 Mile Road for 0.3 mile to the continuation of Red Pine Drive. Turn right (north) back onto Red Pine Drive and go 1.6 miles to the signed nature center on the right. Park at the first (southern) entrance. See map on next page.

The **Howard Christensen Nature Center** is located adjacent to the 6,000-acre Rogue River State Game Area, about 20 miles north of Grand Rapids. The land around the center, consisting of 135 acres, was donated in the memory of Howard Christensen by Frank and Rita Christensen. With over seven miles of scenic marked trails, the facilities and grounds are owned and managed by the Kent Intermediate School District, with the primary purpose of serving all students in the area. The grounds also have unique habitats that include upland oak forests, an oak/aspen community, pine plantations, vernal ponds, bogs, deciduous wetlands, and shrubby fields.

Birding is good all year, with the center's bird list totaling 143 species. Depending on the season, there is a good chance to see Wood Duck, Wild Turkey (year round), American Woodcock (breeding), Pileated Woodpecker (year round), Red-shouldered Hawk, Sandhill Crane (in migration), Barred Owl (year round), Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Brown Creeper, Eastern Bluebird, and in spring and summer, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged and Black-throated Green Warblers, Ovenbird, and Scarlet Tanager. The stream banks and adjacent wetlands have Great Blue and Green



Hérons, Belted Kingfisher, both Northern and Louisiana Waterthrushes, and Common Yellowthroat. Rarely seen but possible are American Bittern, Bald Eagle, Sora, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Long-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Martin, Northern Shrike, Henslow's Sparrow, and Pine Grosbeak.

The non-birding highlights are White-tailed Deer, Mink, Beaver, Bobcat, Green Frog, Western Chorus Frog, Spotted Salamander, Snapping Turtle, Spring Azure Butterfly, Io Moth, and a variety of wildflowers. Recently, the rare Ringed Boghaunter dragonfly was found here.

Exploration of the adjacent **Rogue River State Game Area** will certainly be rewarding to the visiting birder, with its great diversity of habitats such as mixed and deciduous woodlands, open fields, marshes, and floodplain forest. There are many miles of trails, including the southern portion of the North Country Scenic Trail. Some interesting species that have been recorded here include breeding Sandhill Cranes and Golden-winged and Prairie (rare) Warblers. Among the better access sites are a parking area on the east side of Red Pine Road just south of the Spring Creek bridge (0.4 mile south of Howard Christensen Nature Center), the Spring Lake access site south of 20 Mile Road (1.1 miles east of Red Pine Road), and the access road along the east side of the Rogue River north of 20 Mile Road (0.3 mile west of Red Pine Road). This latter site runs 0.8 mile north and allows access to some beautiful floodplain forest, which is probably the best area in which to find breeding Louisiana Waterthrushes in the Grand Rapids area.

SW-8 The Reeds Lake Area

By Steve Minard, Bill Sweetman, and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 36, A3. 42°57' N, 85°34' W

(This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

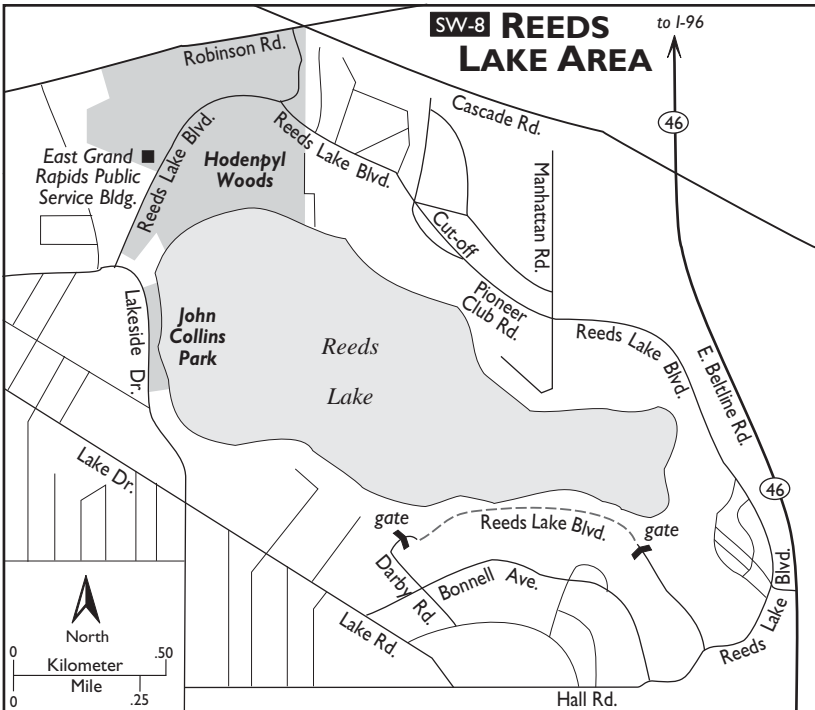
Directions: From I-96 and M-37 (Exit 38, East Beltline Road), go south on M-37 for about 1.9 miles to Reeds Lake Boulevard. Turn right (west), then immediately right again (north), and follow Reeds Lake Boulevard for 0.9 mile as it winds around the lake. See map on next page.

Reeds Lake and the adjacent woodlands, including Hodenpyl Woods, provide good birding year round, with migrant waterfowl on the lake itself and many migrant passerines in the woodlands.

From the junction of Reeds Lake Boulevard and Reeds Lake Road, go 0.9 mile to Manhattan Road. Continue straight (west) onto what is Pioneer Club Road. In another 0.2 mile, Pioneer Club Road turns left, but you should continue west on Reeds Lake Boulevard—Cut-Off. An Eastern Screech-Owl sometimes roosts along this stretch of road. After another 0.2 mile you will come to a five-way intersection where you should veer left (west) back onto Reeds Lake Boulevard. After another 0.3 mile, look for the rock at the inter-

section and turn left (south) onto Reeds Lake Boulevard (if you come to Robinson Road, you've gone too far). You are now at the west end of the lake. After another 0.3 mile, you will come to the East Grand Rapids Public Service Building on the right, where you should park for access to Hodenpyl Woods. (You can also reach Reeds Lake from downtown Grand Rapids by taking Lake Drive east to Robinson Road. Go east on Robinson Road until you reach Reeds Lake Boulevard just west of Cascade Road. Turn right and go until you see the rock where you turn right or south onto Reeds Lake Boulevard, leading to the Public Service Building.)

The **Hodenpyl Woods** area is exceptional for migrating passerine species. This woodland preserve covers part of the northwest shore of Reeds Lake. The best birding is along Reeds Lake Boulevard in the first 100 yards east of the Public Service Building. There is a paved walkway here on the lake side of the road, which is heavily used by walkers, joggers, dogs, and bicycle traffic on weekends. Due to the large number of people using the walkways and lake, birding is best here in early morning and on weekdays. Each year, up to 29 warbler species are recorded, with 12 or more species likely on most days in mid-May. Rarities in spring have included White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated, Prothonotary, Kentucky, and Connecticut Warblers, and Summer Tanager. Winter rarities have included Bohemian Waxwing and Pine and



Evening Grosbeaks. Breeding birds include Great Horned Owl, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow and Cerulean (rare) Warblers, and Baltimore Oriole.

Reeds Lake is a moderate-sized lake with enough open water for migrant waterfowl to use it as a feeding and resting place. Although most of the land around the lake has been developed, there are some good vantage points from which to view waterfowl. At **Lakeside Drive**, 0.1 mile south of the Public Service Building, turn left and go 0.5 mile to Lake Drive. There are views of the west end of the lake from John Collins Park along Lakeside Drive. There are good views of the south and eastern ends of the lake from Reeds Lake Boulevard off **Darby Road**. From Lakeside Drive, go left (east) onto Lake Drive for 0.4 mile to Bonnell Avenue and turn left. Go 0.1 mile to Darby Road and turn left. After 0.1 mile the road turns right (just past a gate) and becomes Reeds Lake Boulevard. Here the road is rough, narrow, unpaved, frequently muddy, and gated. The gates are closed overnight and during the winter (December 1–March 31). It may be best to park near this gate and walk in, or you can park along the road, being careful not to block it. Be mindful that this public road passes through private property. Scope the lake for waterfowl. Herons and rails are common, and up to 18 species of waterfowl are recorded each year, including Northern Pintail and Hooded Merganser as well as infrequent occurrences of Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern, and Double-crested Cormorant. Common Loons stop on the lake in April and November. Tundra Swans usually stop over briefly in early November. American Black Ducks nest around the lake. Gadwall and American Wigeon are regular fall visitors. Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye are regular in winter. Rarities on the lake have included Red-throated Loon, Red-necked, Eared, and Western/Clark's (1985) Grebes, Brant, and Black and Surf Scoters.

Return to your car and continue east on Reeds Lake Boulevard. After 0.8 mile, the road is paved again, and at 0.9 mile go straight ahead (Hall Road comes in from the right). At 0.3 mile beyond Hall Road, turn right to return to East Beltline Road.

SW-9 The Ada Area

By Al Hook, Steve Minard, and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 36, A4.

(This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

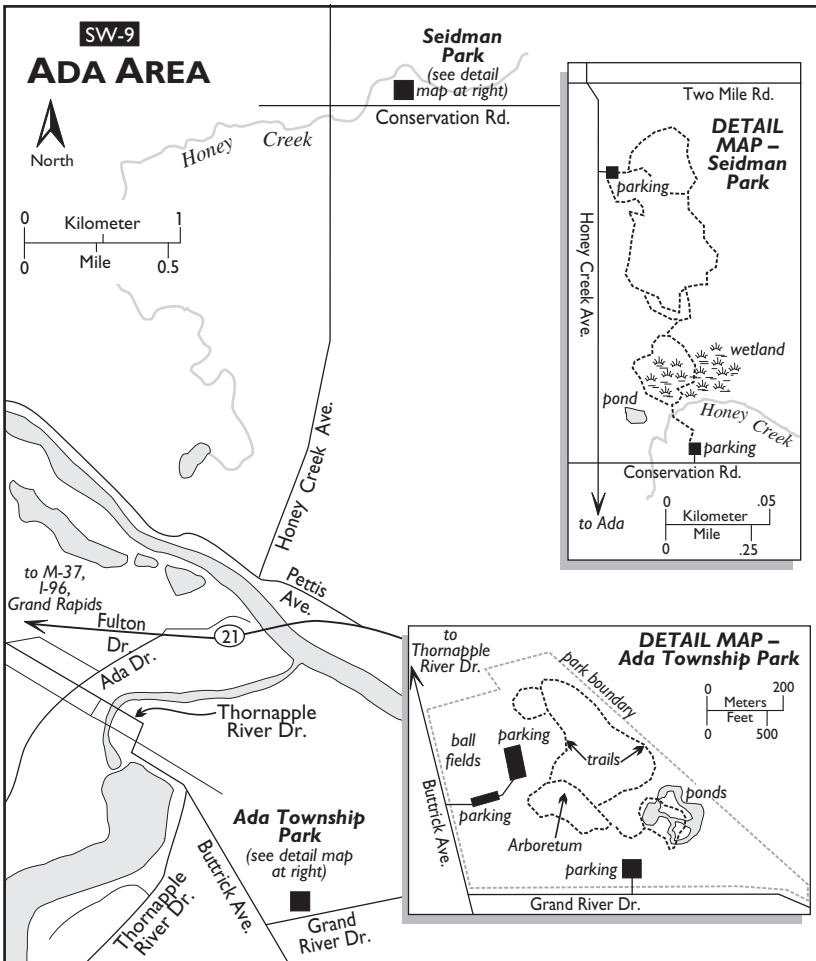
Directions: To reach the Ada area from Grand Rapids, go east on I-96 to M-37 (Exit 38). Go south on M-37 for 1 mile to M-21 (Fulton Drive). Turn left (east) onto M-21 and go 5.5 miles to Ada Drive. Note: From westbound I-96, there is currently no exit at M-21 (marked as Exit 39), since it is under construction. When returning westbound on M-21, the

ramp to I-96 westbound is currently open. When this ramp is reopened, you can take M-21 from Exit 39 on I-96 east 4.8 miles to Ada Drive.

There are two small parks in the Ada area, east of Grand Rapids, that are good for migrant and breeding passerines, as well as a few wetland and open-country birds.

From the intersection of M-21 and Ada Drive, turn right onto Ada Drive and go 0.2 mile to Thornapple River Drive. Turn left and go 0.5 mile to Buttrick Avenue, where Thornapple River Drive angles off to the right. Go 0.5 mile to Grand River Drive (at 0.25 mile you will pass a sign for Ada Township Park on the left, but this is just parking for the baseball diamond). Turn left onto Grand River Drive and go 0.25 miles to the entrance to **Ada Township Park** on the left. The park consists of a pond and marsh area, a woodland, and a meadow. An arboretum is located between the shelter house and woodland area. Three nature trails and the pond area offer vantage points from which to observe a variety of habitats and wildlife. The woodland area supports a wide variety of breeding species, including Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks, Eastern Screech-Owl, Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy Woodpeckers, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole. During migration, good numbers of vireos, thrushes, and warblers may also be seen. The pond area and surrounding wetlands comprise the most productive habitat to be found in the park, with a large variety of insects, fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals. Despite their natural appearance, these ponds are man-made, although enhanced by a freshwater spring which supplies the pond with fresh, clean water. In late April, American Woodcock can be heard and with luck, seen in its display flight in the marsh area, along with winnowing Wilson's Snipe. During late spring through early fall, the prairie area in the meadow north of the ponds is worth a look for the good variety of native prairie wildflowers. Birds in the meadow, pond, and marsh area in summer include Great Blue and Green Herons, Killdeer, Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-winged and Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp and Song Sparrows, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Meadowlark, and American Goldfinch.

Return to M-21 (Fulton Drive) and turn right. Go 0.5 mile to Pettis Avenue and turn left. Go 0.2 mile to Honey Creek Avenue and turn right. Go 1.5 miles to Conservation Road. Turn right and go 0.25 mile to the parking area for **Seidman County Park** on the left. Seidman Park has a good variety of birdlife, easily seen from an extensive trail system that provides access to most of this wooded park. The best birding is during spring migration and in summer. The trails form three circles connected in a north-south line, and are also part of a larger trail system leading north and south from the park. Consult the numerous maps posted along the trails when in doubt about your location. Park information and a trail map can be found at www.accesskent.com/



[CultureLeisureAndTransit/Parks/seidman.htm](#). Seidman Park is dotted with hills and small wetlands. Much of the area is wooded; the remainder is open fields, old fields, and open sand. Honey Creek runs through the southern end of the park. The largest of the wetlands is a wooded swamp along the eastern boundary just north of Honey Creek.

Resident owls, migrant warblers, and scrub and woodland birds are all found here. Blue-winged Warbler and Field Sparrow nest in good numbers in the scrubby areas, and Eastern Wood-Pewee, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, summer in the wooded areas. Eastern Screech-Owl and Barred and Great Horned Owls may be present. Black-billed Cuckoos are frequently found near the Honey Creek parking lot in late May or early June. American Woodcock has been found performing its courtship display here in

March and April. Louisiana Waterthrush is a summer resident along Honey Creek by the large swamp, while Fox Sparrow is frequently found in early spring and late fall near small swamps along the connecting trails between the southern and central circle trails. Brewster's Warbler (rare) has been seen along the boardwalk in this area, as has the occasional Yellow-breasted Chat. Broad-winged Hawks are occasional in summer.

SW-10 Cannonsburg State Game Area

By Steve Minard and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 46, D4. 43°02' N, 85°29' W

Contact Information: 616-794-2658

Note: This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.

Directions: From Seidman Park, continue north on Honey Creek Road into the Cannonsburg State Game Area. Parking areas are available on 3 Mile Road, 4 Mile Road, and 5 Mile Road, west of Honey Creek. The game area can also be reached from Grand Rapids by traveling east on Knapp Street to Egypt Valley Avenue, where you should turn left (north). The same parking areas are east of Egypt Valley on 3 Mile, 4 Mile, and 5 Mile Roads.

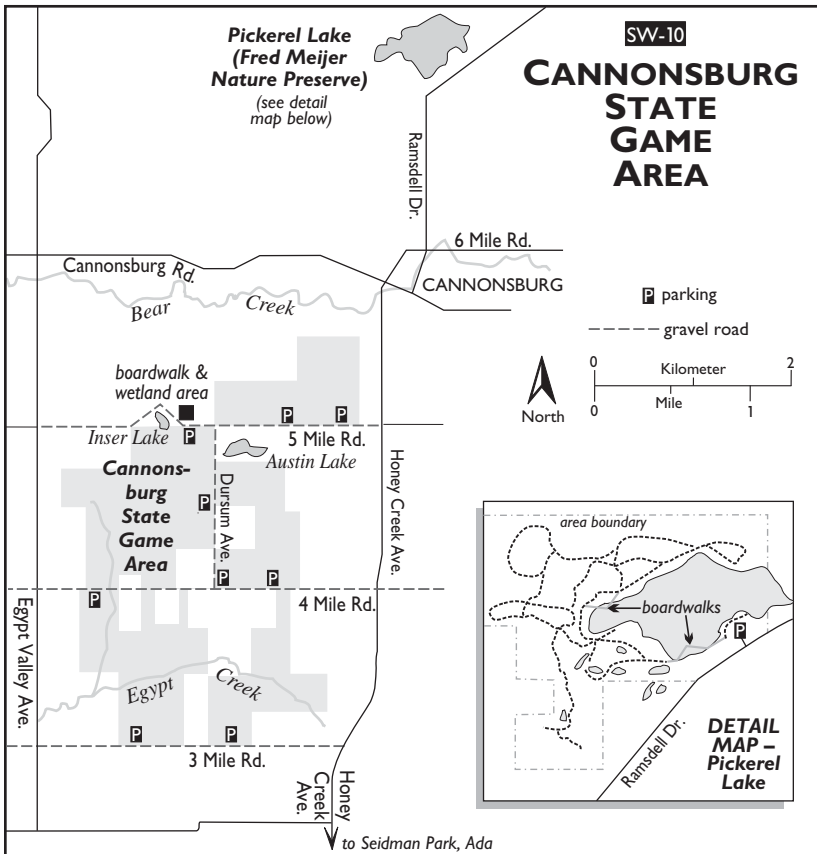
Cannonsburg State Game Area is one of the largest available to wildlife in Kent County, although it is not birded as frequently as it might deserve. There are many trails through the rolling, wooded terrain which is dotted with scattered fields and wetlands. These varied habitats support a good songbird migration, and have produced unusual summer sightings such as White-eyed Vireo and Hooded Warbler. There are large patches of non-native Autumn Olive throughout, and despite its invasive nature, the tree's fruits provide food for winter sparrows and finches. It is also the prime owling area for the local Christmas Bird Count.

Trails lead from the parking areas. (These trails receive heavy winter use by cross-country skiers, and by hunters in season.) Woodland and marsh birds are the prevalent species to look for here. Common Yellowthroats and Swamp Sparrows sing from the wetlands, and Virginia Rail and Sora are found in the marsh on 5 Mile Road. Red-eyed Vireos, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and other woodland birds sing from the trees. Barred Owls are regularly seen on Dursum and 5 Mile Roads. Broad-winged Hawks have nested on private land along 5 Mile Road. In 2003, both White-eyed Vireo and Hooded Warbler were found singing along 4 Mile Road between Dursum and Honey Creek Roads. Bohemian Waxwings have been found on rare occasion, including once on 3 Mile Road feeding on the Autumn Olives.

A nearby area that should not be missed is the **Pickereel Lake Nature Preserve**, which was acquired by Kent County Parks with the assistance of the Grand Rapids Audubon Club. Pickereel Lake is a rather small lake

surrounded by plantings of coniferous trees, swampy areas, some oak-maple woods, and sandy hills. Go north on Honey Creek Avenue to the town of Cannonsburg. At Cannonsburg Road, turn right (east) for about 0.2 mile to Ramsdell Drive, where you turn left (north). The parking area is 1.2 miles from here on the left.

The list of birds reported from here is lengthy; Hooded Merganser, Green Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos are present in summer. Sandhill Crane, Purple Martin, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Pine Siskin have been seen as well.



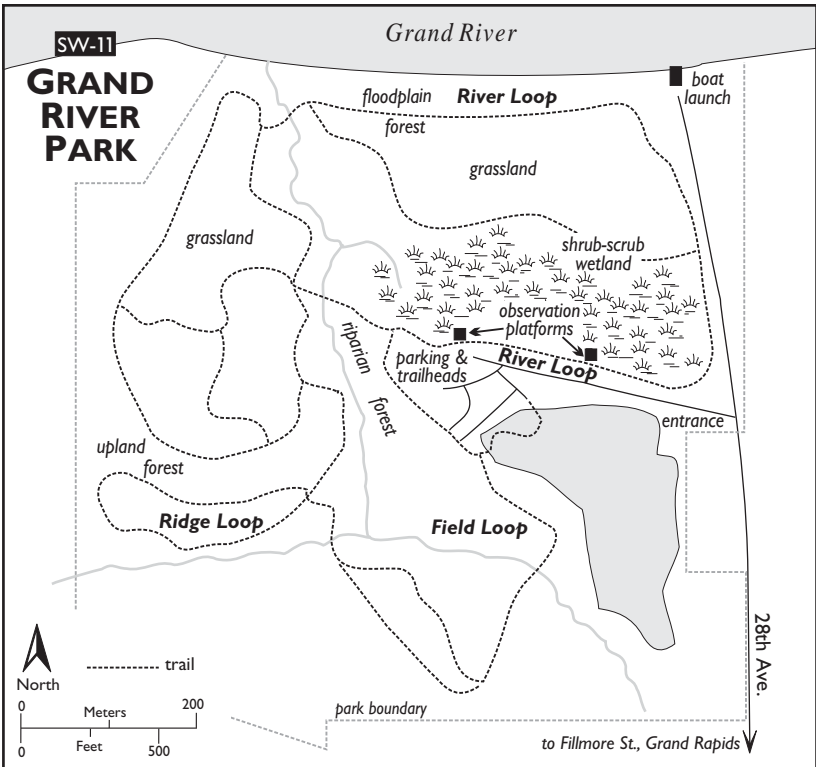
SW-11 Grand River Park

By Chip Francke

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
DeLorme p. 36, A1. 43°57' N, 85°52' W

Directions: From Grand Rapids, take I-196 west for 7.8 miles from US-131 to Chicago Drive (M-21) west toward Jenison (Exit 69B). Go west for 0.1 mile on Chicago Drive to Main Street and turn right. After 0.2 mile, Main Street merges with Baldwin Street, which comes in from the right. Continue another 0.1 mile to Cottonwood Drive and turn right. Go 2.8 miles to Fillmore Street and turn left (west), following the curve in the paved road for 1.0 mile to 28th Avenue. Turn right and go 0.3 mile to the park entrance on the left. The road ends 0.2 mile ahead at a boat launch, where there is an overlook of the Grand River.

Grand River Park is a good location for migrant and nesting songbirds, with its variety of birding habitats that are easily accessible along the three miles of trails. Floodplain forest, upland hardwood forest, shrub-scrub wetlands, open fields, and a small lake attract a good diversity of nesting and



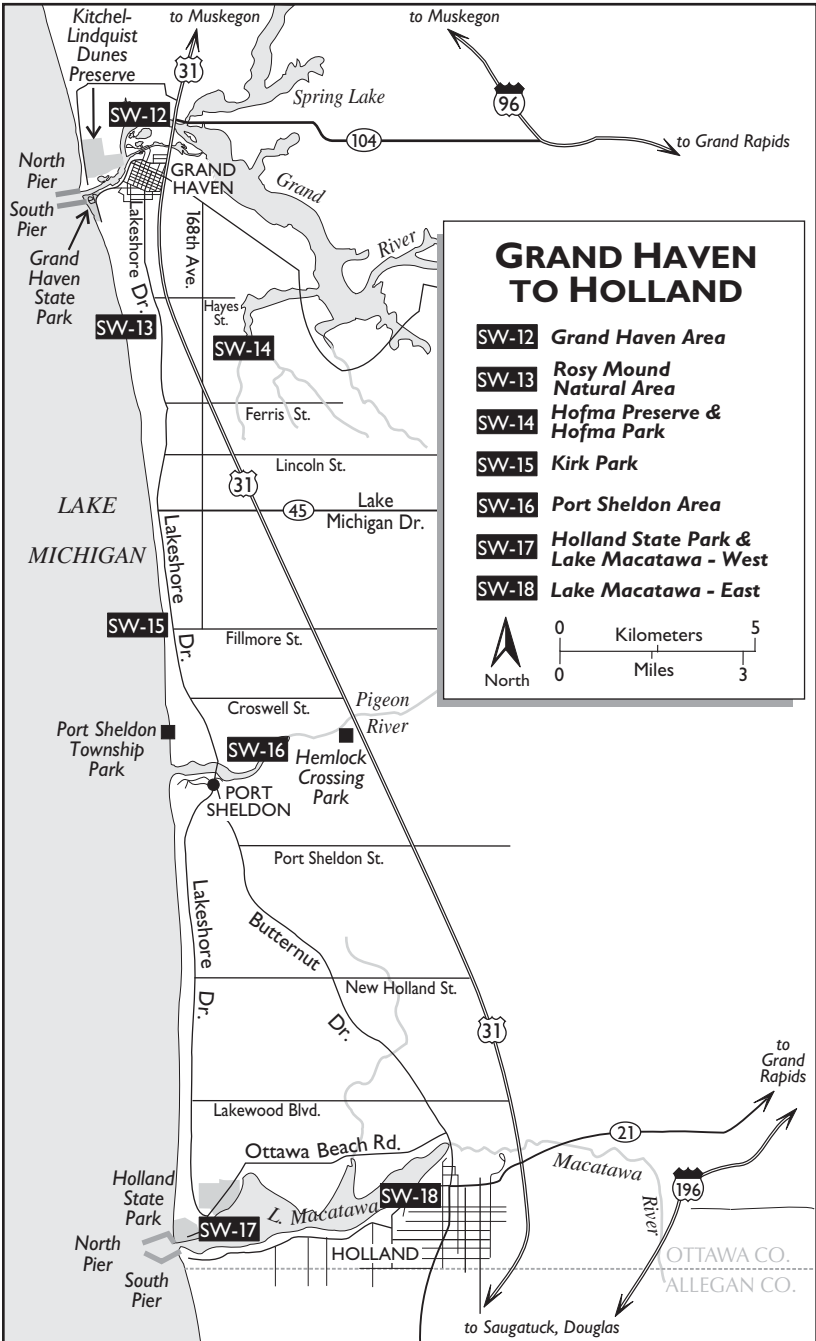
migrant species. Two observation platforms overlook a shrub-scrub wetland area. In 2000, over 20 acres of former corn fields were planted with warm-season grasses and wildflowers in an effort to create a native grassland, which should attract nesting grassland birds in coming years. There is a trailhead kiosk with a trail map, and all trail intersections are well-marked. The 162-acre park is managed by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission (www.co.ottawa.mi.us/parks/parks/grandriver.htm). Park hours are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. from April 1 through October 31, and 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. from November 1 through March 31; there are no entry fees.

Many common woodland nesters can be found in the upland and floodplain forests, including Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird, and Scarlet Tanager. Less common species that have occurred during the nesting season in recent years include Blue-winged Warbler (shrub-scrub wetlands), Prothonotary Warbler (along the Grand River), Barred Owl and Cerulean Warbler (both along the Ridge Loop), and Orchard Oriole (near the easternmost wetland observation platform). Be aware that Poison-ivy is very common along the trails, and grows both along the ground and up the trunks of trees.

From the trailhead, check the observation platform near the trailhead before hiking any of the several trails. The Field Loop (0.9 mile) goes past shrub-scrub wetlands, the largest of the two native grassland fields, and through a large fallow field. The wooded edges of this fallow field are good for breeding Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, American Redstart, and Indigo Bunting. The low and often wet shrubby areas of this field harbor nesting Willow Flycatcher, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat. When the trail nears the small lake, look for nesting Warbling Vireo and Baltimore Oriole. If you have time, also walk the Ridge Loop (0.5 mile) through a mature beech-maple forest. The third loop, the River Loop (1.1 miles), goes through floodplain forest along the Grand River and along the road to the boat launch (this trail may be muddy or flooded during periods of high water). You can also access one of the native grassland fields from this loop.

GRAND HAVEN TO HOLLAND

The city of Grand Haven, positioned where the Grand River empties into Lake Michigan, has worthwhile birding sites that include coastal migrant traps and shorebird stopover sites. Several of the sites are administered by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission (www.co.ottawa.mi.us/parks/). The City of Holland draws more than 2.5 million visitors in early May to its world-famous Tulip Time festival, when more than six million tulips burst into bloom and the town celebrates its Dutch heritage. Holland has been named one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For birders, the proximity of Lake Michigan, as well as the connected Lake Macatawa, provide good opportunities for find-



ing migrant waterbirds and passerines, and an interesting variety of breeding species.

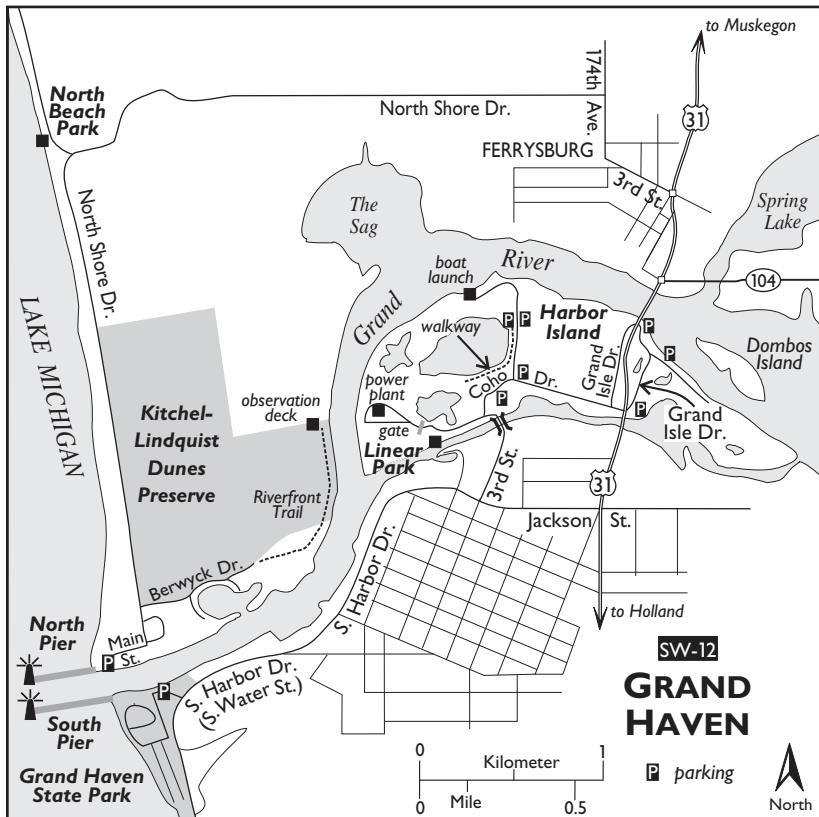
SW-12 The Grand Haven Area

By Allen T. Chartier and Betty J. Mattson

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 45, D5. 43°03' N, 86°14' W

(This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

The **Grand Haven North Pier** provides an opportunity to look for migrant waterbirds on the lake. From US-31 north take the Ferrysburg Exit (3rd Street) and turn left (west). Veer right after 0.1 mile where the road curves onto 174th Avenue. After 0.3 mile, you will come to North Shore Drive, where you should turn left. Follow this road west until it curves to the south at North Beach Park (1.7 miles) on the right (just past the dead end road labeled North Shore). **North Beach Park** is worth a quick check from Oc-



tober through April for waterbirds on Lake Michigan and gulls on the beaches, which are uncrowded in those months. Continue south on North Shore Drive for 1.5 miles south to Main Street (hard to see) on the right, where North Shore makes a sharp left turn. Turn right onto Main Street and park in the fenced parking lot 0.1 mile ahead on the left. From here you can walk out onto the North Pier, a steel pier without a rocky base, making Purple Sandpiper unlikely but still a good vantage point for for scoping the lake.

Established by The Nature Conservancy and now managed by the City of Ferrysburg, the **Kitchel-Lindquist Dunes Preserve**, 112 acres of Lake Michigan dunes, is a good spot to look for migrant passerines in spring and fall, when they follow the Lake Michigan shoreline to and from their breeding grounds. Return north on North Shore Drive for 0.1 mile to Berwyck Drive and turn right. The entrance to the preserve is 0.1 mile ahead on the left. This preserve contains excellent examples of sand dune succession, from foredune to interdunal ponds to climax forest. *Do not climb the open dunes, as this is an unstable, moving dune area.* The Kitchel Dune itself is a climax forest. The area also contains pine plantings from the Civilian Conservation Corps era of the 1930s. The waterfront on the Grand River is open beach, and vegetated sections vary from clearings and open areas to dense thickets, where many birds nest. In winter, Black-capped Chickadee, American Tree Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco are fairly common, and Northern Harrier and Rough-legged Hawk are possible.

Walk along the river on the Riverfront Trail to observe the river for waterfowl and gulls from late fall through early spring. Eventually you will reach an observation deck located in the middle of a dense thicket of vegetation. From this location, many passerine migrants can be seen in the thicket in spring and fall. Waterfowl (mainly Mallards and Blue-winged Teal) used to nest in the interdunal ponds, but are now found only along the riverfront areas. Bald Eagles, hawks, and owls have been observed hunting over the dunes. Nesting species include Great Blue Heron, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Mourning Dove, Tree and Barn Swallows, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Redstart, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and American Goldfinch. Yellow-rumped Warbler occurs as a migrant.

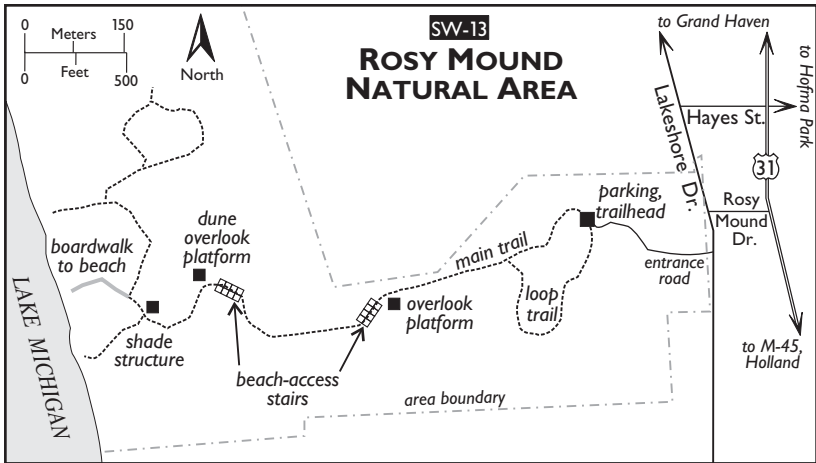
Harbor Island, in the Grand River in the center of Grand Haven, provides a good vantage point to observe dabbling and diving ducks in spring and fall. Shorebirds are often present in spring, summer, and fall in areas of low water levels. To reach Harbor Island, go south from US-31 to Jackson Street (the first stoplight south of the Harbor Island bridge) and turn right (west). Go 0.4 mile to 3rd Street and turn right for 0.2 mile to a small bridge onto Harbor Island. Straight ahead, just before a closed gate at the entrance to the power plant, stop at Linear Park on the left. Check brushy patches in this area for sparrows and other migrant passerines. Backtrack from Linear

Park to the bridge and follow Coho Drive to the right for about 0.1 mile around a curve to a parking area on the right and a pond on the left. There is a walkway along the left side of the road and along the east side of the pond, which can be good for gulls and dabbling ducks, and for shorebirds when water levels are low. Check brushy areas along the pond edges for sparrows, including Song, Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned in migration. Just east of this parking area, take a detour where a spur of Coho Drive turns left (north) for 0.5 mile north to the boat launch. This is another vantage point for viewing the North Channel of the Grand River. The mudflats and sandbars here can have Double-crested Cormorants, Ring-billed, Herring, and Bonaparte's Gulls, and Caspian and Forster's Terns, and the shallow marshy fringes should have Great Blue Herons in summer.

Return back to the main Coho Drive and go straight (east) for 0.3 mile to a left turn onto Grand Isle Drive, just before reaching US-31. Grand Isle Drive goes north for 0.3 mile and turns sharply to the right and passes under the US-31 bridge. Just after passing under the bridge, you will see a small dirt pulloff on the left where you can park to view part of the North Channel where ducks and gulls may be present. In another 0.1 mile, you will see a road on the left leading to the Grand Isle Marina. The marina is private, but birders are permitted here as long as they use common sense and stay out of the way of any boaters. There are views of the North Channel and Dombos Island from the marina, with ducks, gulls, and shorebirds likely during migration when mudflats are present. This is also the site of Michigan's only record of Cave Swallow.

Continue on Grand Isle Drive, which is now heading south, for 0.3 mile to a small, private parking area on the left. Here you can view of a section of the South Channel which may have a few dabbling ducks, gulls, and shorebirds. Just ahead is the intersection with US-31 (northbound only), a dangerous intersection with limited visibility and fast-moving traffic. You may do better to backtrack to Jackson Street, where there is a traffic light and better visibility.

Grand Haven State Park, a crowded beach in the summer, provides access for the **Grand Haven South Pier**, which is a good vantage point from fall through spring to look for migrant and wintering waterfowl, loons, grebes, gulls, jaegers, and a few shorebirds. This and the North Pier, are steel piers without rocky bases, so Purple Sandpipers are less likely here than at some other jetties and piers on Lake Michigan. From US-31 south of Harbor Island, take Jackson Street west for 0.8 mile (0.4 mile west of 3rd Street), where the name of the street changes to South Harbor Drive (South Water Street). Continue on this road for about 1.25 miles to the Fisherman's Parking area of the Grand Haven State Park on the right. Access to the South Pier is from the west end of this parking area. From fall through early spring, when most birders visit the area, the remaining sections of the park are closed to public entry.



SW-13 Rosy Mound Natural Area

By Chip Francke

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 45, D5. 43°02' N, 86°12' W

Contact Information: www.co.ottawa.mi.us/parks/parks/rosymound.htm

Directions: From Grand Haven, go south on US-31 for about 1 mile south of the Grand Haven city limits to Rosy Mound Drive (3 miles from Jackson Road in Grand Haven, about 0.5 mile south of the traffic light at Hayes Street, and turn right (west). Go about 0.1 mile west and turn left (south) onto Lakeshore Drive for about 0.1 mile to the park entrance on the right (west) side of the road. If traveling north on US-31, Rosy Mound Drive is about 4 miles north of M-45. Plans call for a sign on US-31 at Rosy Mound Drive, directing visitors to the natural area.

The **Rosy Mound Natural Area** is a classic Great Lakes dune ecosystem, with mature wooded dunes, foredunes, open dunes, a parabolic dune, and a scenic stretch of Lake Michigan beach. The trail from the parking lot to the lakeshore is less than a mile one way, however, the hike is somewhat strenuous due to a steep climb up and down the stairs that traverse the dunes. The area is managed by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission. This 160-acre park along the Lake Michigan shore opened in spring 2004 and is open year round. Daily parking fees may be in effect. Park hours are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. from April 1 through October 31, and 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. from November 1 through March 31.

Many migrant birds follow the Lake Michigan shoreline in spring and fall as they travel to and from their breeding grounds. Waterfowl, loons, cormorants, gulls, and terns migrate offshore, while passerines follow the wooded dunes that parallel the shoreline. Rosy Mound also has a good diversity of nesting species. From the trailhead, walk the 0.4-mile loop trail that goes

south from the parking lot. This trail can be excellent for migrants (especially sparrows from mid-April through mid-May), as it meanders through dry shrub-scrub, small open dunes, a pine plantation, and along the base of a high wooded dune. When the trail reaches the main trail, walk the trail toward Lake Michigan. When you reach the first overlook platform (at the base of the first long stairway), listen and look for Hooded Warbler, which typically nests in this area, usually arriving during the second week of May. Other nesters in these wooded dunes include Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Ovenbird. Pileated Woodpecker is present year round but not always seen.

When you reach the parabolic dune overlook platform, look for raptors and other birds that may be feeding or perched in the blowout area. Continue on the trail to the shade structure near the beach. From here, you can scope the beach or walk a boardwalk through the open dunes. The beach is worth checking in spring and fall for shorebirds and for gulls, terns, or other waterbirds on Lake Michigan. The dune boardwalk meanders through open dunes and a small pine forest. Butterfly watchers may find *Olympia Marbles* or *Buck-eyes*. Migrating Monarchs may be present in September.

SW-14 Hofma Preserve and Hofma Park

By James Ponshair and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 45, D5. 43°01' N, 86°11' W

Contact Information: 616-842-5988

(This is an updated version of an account that was originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

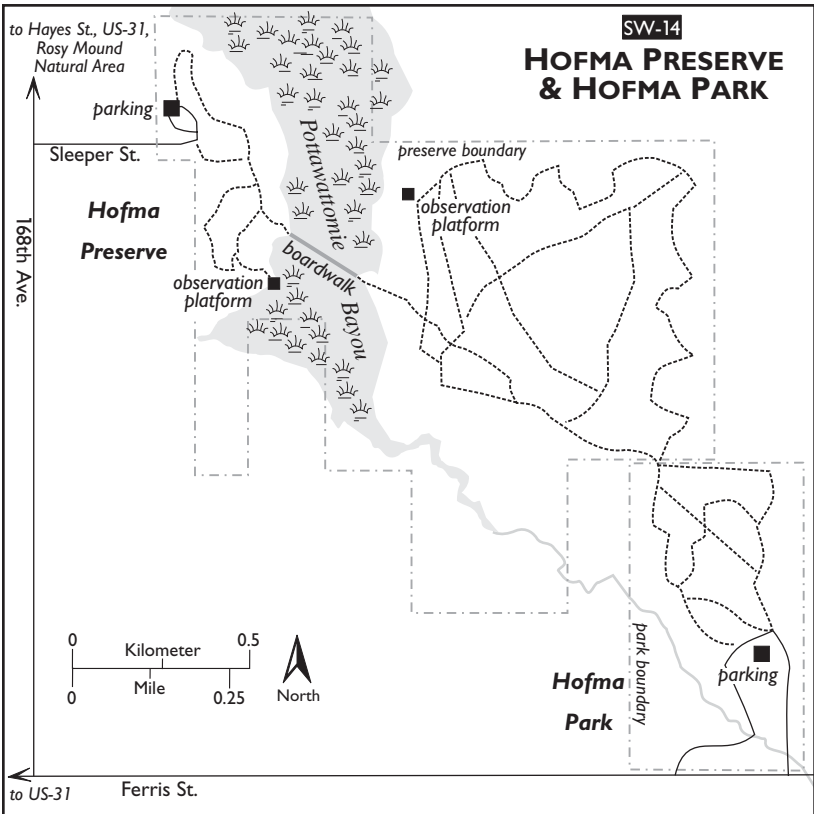
Directions: From Grand Haven, take US-31 south to Hayes Street. Turn left (east) and go about 0.6 mile to 168th Avenue. Turn right (south) and go 0.5 mile to Sleeper Street and turn left (east). Go 0.6 mile to the end of Sleeper Street, where you will find the parking area for Hofma Preserve.

Hofma Preserve and Hofma Park have over 400 acres of beautiful woodlands and marsh. Trails traverse areas of large Hemlocks, beech, maple, and oak, and a stream flows through the south portion of the park into a large marsh on Pottawattomie Bayou. Over five miles of trails travel through the varied habitats, including a boardwalk over the huge marsh, where marsh birds can sometimes be observed at close range.

The trails are color-coded, as shown on the trail map near the park entrance. Two of the trails—the Green Trail and the Red Trail—lead to lookout platforms with excellent views of the marsh. Spring and fall are good for kinglets, thrushes, and warblers. During the summer months, marsh birds can be observed from the boardwalk (the Yellow Trail). At times, nesting Virginia Rail and Sora are seen within a few feet of the boardwalk. Marsh Wrens and Swamp Sparrows commonly nest, while a small colony of Sedge Wrens occa-

sionally nests in the shallower portions of the marsh. A Black Rail found here in June 1988 is only the second ever found in the state. Barred Owl and Pileated Woodpecker also nest in the park, along with Acadian Flycatcher. There are several summer records of Blackburnian and Canada Warblers, which are normally found farther north. In early fall migration, Olive-sided Flycatcher can be found on the border of the marsh. In migration, Osprey may be seen perched on dead trees near the bayou. In the fall, large numbers of Eastern Bluebirds sometimes feed on the many berry-producing shrubs in the preserve and in Hofma Park.

The preserve trails connect with the trails in **Hofma Park** to the southeast. To reach the park by car, go south on Sleeper Street for 1.0 mile to Ferris Street. Follow the curve left onto Ferris Street and go 1.5 miles to the park entrance on the left (a very narrow dirt road just before the Hofma Park sign; if you see a boardwalk on the left, you've gone too far). The forest at this end of the park is older and drier, and is a good place in summer for Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, and Scarlet Tanager.



SW-15 Kirk Park

By Chip Francke

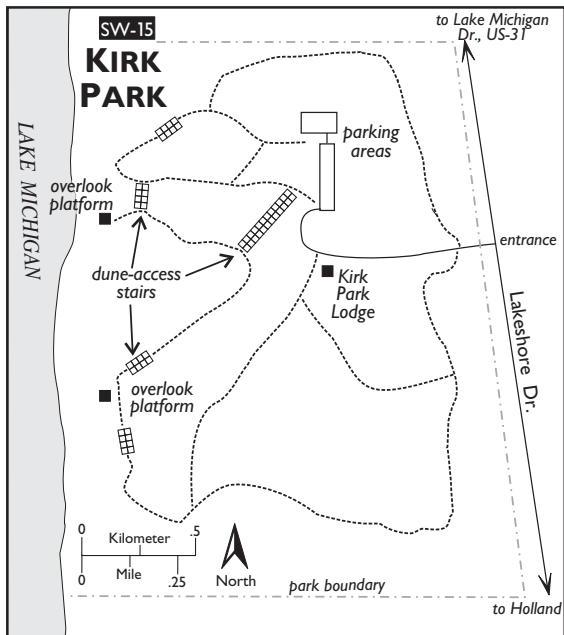
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 35, A5. 42°57' N, 86°11' W

Contact Information: www.co.ottawa.mi.us/parks/parks/kirk.htm

Directions: From the intersection of US-31 and M-45 (2.7 miles south of Ferris Road), go west on M-45 (Lake Michigan Drive) for 2.0 miles to Lakeshore Drive. Turn left (south) onto Lakeshore and go 1.8 miles to the park entrance on the right (west) side of the road.

Kirk Park, another Ottawa County Park, has 68 acres along the Lake Michigan shoreline. It is open year round, from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., April 1–October 31, and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., November 1–March 31. Parking fees are collected from Memorial Day through Labor Day. As is true for many other Southwestern Lower Peninsula sites, migrant birds are seen here in fall as they move along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Waterfowl, loons, cormorants, gulls, and terns migrate offshore, while passerines tend to follow the wooded dunes that parallel the shoreline. At Kirk Park, the shoreline and the dunes are easily accessible. There is a beach observation platform near the shoreline, just a short walk from the parking lot. With the sun at your back, morning is a great time to look for migrants over the big lake. The two miles of trails at Kirk Park allow you to walk along the top of wooded dunes, where you will have spectacular views of Lake Michigan. One of the access points to the trail is the stairs near the beach observation platform, although the stairways up and down the dunes can be a strenuous walk. The birding, however, is usually better on the trails *behind* the dunes. If you take the trail along the top of the dunes, you will eventually connect with those trails. If you prefer to skip the stairways, the trails behind the dunes are reached directly from a trailhead near



Kirk Park Lodge, a short walk south from the parking area. The trails travel through beech-maple-hemlock woods and pine plantations, good for common woodland nesting species. Less common are Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Blackburnian, Pine, and Hooded Warblers, which have been present during the nesting season in recent years. If your timing is right—in spring after south winds, in fall after north winds, or after overnight rains—Kirk Park can be excellent for spring or fall migrant passerines.

SW-16 The Port Sheldon Area

By Chip Francke, Rick Brigham, and Eleanor Burgess

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 35, A5. 42°55' N, 86°10' W

Note: Portions of this account were originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.

Directions: From US-31 south of Grand Haven, turn right (west) onto Crosswell Street (3.8 miles south of M-45, and 1.3 miles south of Fillmore Street), and almost immediately left (south) onto West Olive Road. Follow the signs for 0.3 mile to the park entrance on the right (west) side of West Olive Road. Note: If traveling north on US-31 from Holland, turn left (west) onto Port Sheldon Street, right onto West Olive Road, and follow signs to the park entrance on the west (left) side of the road.

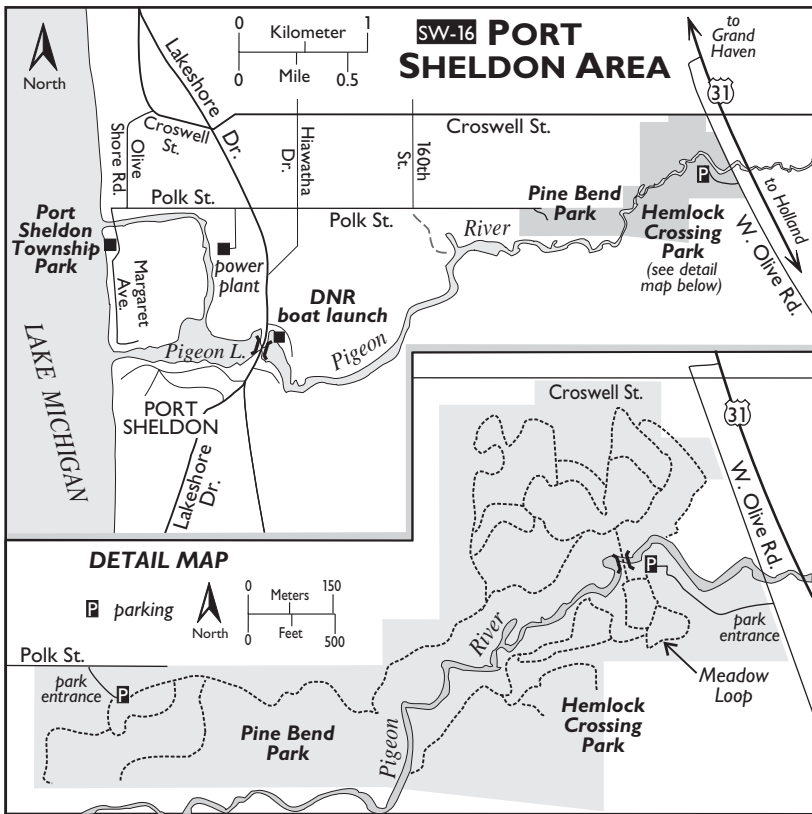
Halfway between Holland and Grand Haven is **Hemlock Crossing Park** (www.co.ottawa.mi.us/parks/parks/hemlockcrossing.htm), the best birding area in Port Sheldon Township. This 239-acre park is open year round, from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., April 1 through October 31, and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., November 1 through March 31. The park's six miles of hiking trails along the Pigeon River meander through upland forest, bottomland forest, pine plantations, and open areas. Scenic overlooks along the trails offer views of emergent wetlands, the Pigeon River, natural springs, and wooded ravines. There is a trailhead at Hemlock Crossing, and all trail intersections are well-marked with trailside maps.

The riparian areas along the Pigeon River attract many spring and fall migrant passerines, and most of the common Southern Lower Peninsula woodland breeders are also found here. Less common species that have occurred during the nesting season in recent years include Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Mourning Warbler. The river is narrow and meandering, making waterfowl difficult to see; Mallards and Wood Ducks are the most frequently seen ducks. Belted Kingfisher is common, and nesting species in the emergent wetlands include Marsh Wren, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird.

The Meadow Loop near the Hemlock Crossing trailhead is your best chance for field birds such as Eastern Bluebird or Vesper Sparrow. Also watch

for raptors overhead. The 1.3-mile (one-way) trail from Hemlock Crossing to Pine Bend (at the west end of the property) is a good route.

While in the area, it is also worth checking **Pigeon Lake** for waterfowl from late fall to early spring. From Hemlock Crossing Park, return north to Crosswell Street, turn left (west), and go 2.8 miles to Lakeshore Drive. Turn left (south) and go 1.1 miles to a causeway over the Pigeon River. The river widens into Pigeon Lake just east of the causeway, and the western end of the lake ends in a channel that flows into Lake Michigan. The north side of the lake is bounded by property owned by Consumers Power Company and is inaccessible. A road lined with private cottages runs along the south side of the lake—trespassing is taken very seriously here. The best vantage point is from the side of the road before (north of) the causeway on the left (east) side of the road, where the DNR boat launch provides a public parking area. Migratory waterfowl, marsh birds, shorebirds, gulls, and terns may be observed in spring and fall, and you should check the adjacent shrub and woodland for warblers. Winter is one of the best seasons to observe ducks



here. Warm water from the Consumers Power Plant is released into Pigeon Lake, keeping the water open all winter. When Lake Michigan freezes, hundreds of ducks are forced into this spot, including Gadwall, American Wigeon, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, both scaup, a few Long-tailed Ducks, all three mergansers, and Horned Grebe. Rarities such as Harlequin Duck, White-winged, Surf, and Black Scoters, Golden Eagle, Osprey, Snowy Owl, and White-winged Crossbill have been found in and around this lake over the years.

Port Sheldon Township Park on Lake Michigan is just north of the mouth of the Pigeon River. From US-31, take Crosswell Street west for 2.8 miles to the overpass at Lakeshore Drive. Turn right (north) for a short distance to the continuation of Crosswell Street on the left. Follow Crosswell Street to its end at Olive Shore Avenue and turn left (south) to Polk Street, where you will turn right and shortly thereafter left onto Margaret Avenue. About 0.1 mile after this last turn onto Margaret Avenue, you will see the gated chain-link fence of the park on the right. The park is posted “Residents Only”, but birders have not been bothered here, as beach activity is almost nonexistent between September and April, when birding is best. The adjacent power plant discharges warm water into Lake Michigan through a submarine pipe here. Look for roiling water about one-eighth of a mile directly west and offshore of the park. This area attracts diving waterfowl, as the water temperature here is also attractive to fish. As a result, this can be an active spot, especially in winter when the ice is kept open by the bubbling waters. Linger- ing scaup, mergansers, loons, and grebes enjoy this “hotspot” in the colder months. Occasionally, Red-throated Loon can be found here in late fall and early winter. As is true along much of this stretch of shoreline, migrating waterfowl can be seen as they fly offshore in spring and fall. From November to March, large gull flocks reside on the beach to the south at the base of the north breakwall at the mouth of the Pigeon River.

SW-17 Holland State Park and Lake Macatawa (West End)

By Allen T. Chartier and Rick Brigham

Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter**

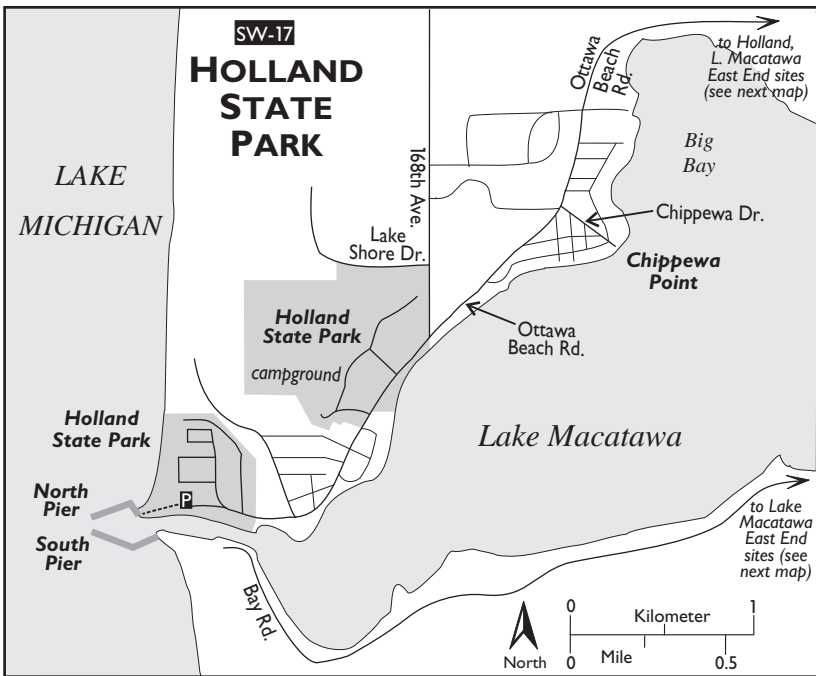
DeLorme p. 35, B5. 42°47' N, 86°12' W

Contact Information: 616-399-9390

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From US-31, take the Lakewood Boulevard exit (8.5 miles south of Crosswell Street) on the north side of the city of Holland. Go right (west) onto Lakewood Boulevard for 1.2 miles to Douglas Road. Stay on the main paved road, which veers left and continues for 6.0 miles to the parking area at the end of Ottawa Beach Road (At 1.5 miles, Douglas Road becomes Ottawa Beach Road.)

Holland State Park's main attractions for birders are the piers on Lake Michigan and the views of Lake Macatawa on the way in along Ottawa



Beach Road. There are several pulloffs on the left side of the road where you can scope the west end of Lake Macatawa, especially in the last 2.0 miles before reaching the park. At 4.0 miles from Lakewood Boulevard, you will come to Chippewa Drive on the left. Turn left and follow the road 0.25 mile to the end at **Chippewa Point**, where there is a great vantage point of the lake. Scope in both directions from here in late fall—but especially before freeze-up in mid- to late December—for flocks of lingering Tundra Swans and a variety of sea ducks. The mudflats are usually good for shorebirds in migration. Late August is a good time to scan for rarities such as American Avocet and Western Sandpiper, both of which have been found here recently. In winter 2003–2004, an amazing four Little Gulls were reported here.

Return to Ottawa Beach Road and continue another 1.5 mile to the road's end at a parking area in the park. From here, you can walk out onto the **Holland North Pier**. In spring and fall migration, loons, grebes, and scoters can be seen from the pier. Harlequin Duck, all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Common and Red-throated Loons, Horned and Eared (rare) Grebes, Purple Sandpiper, Black-legged Kittiwake (rare), and Little Gull are possible.

Across the channel from the North Pier sits the Holland Harbor Light-house, a landmark familiar to many Michigianians, also known as “Big Red”, though it is not particularly large. The unique twin-gabled design, with diamond-paned windows and shake-shingled appearance, is a good example of

the prevalent Dutch architecture of the area. The light is located at the end of the Holland South Pier, but access is restricted. A guard must grant permission to pass into a private community in order to see the lighthouse up close, and birder access is similarly restricted.

SW-18 Lake Macatawa (East End)

By Allen T. Chartier, George Wickstrom, and Rick Brigham

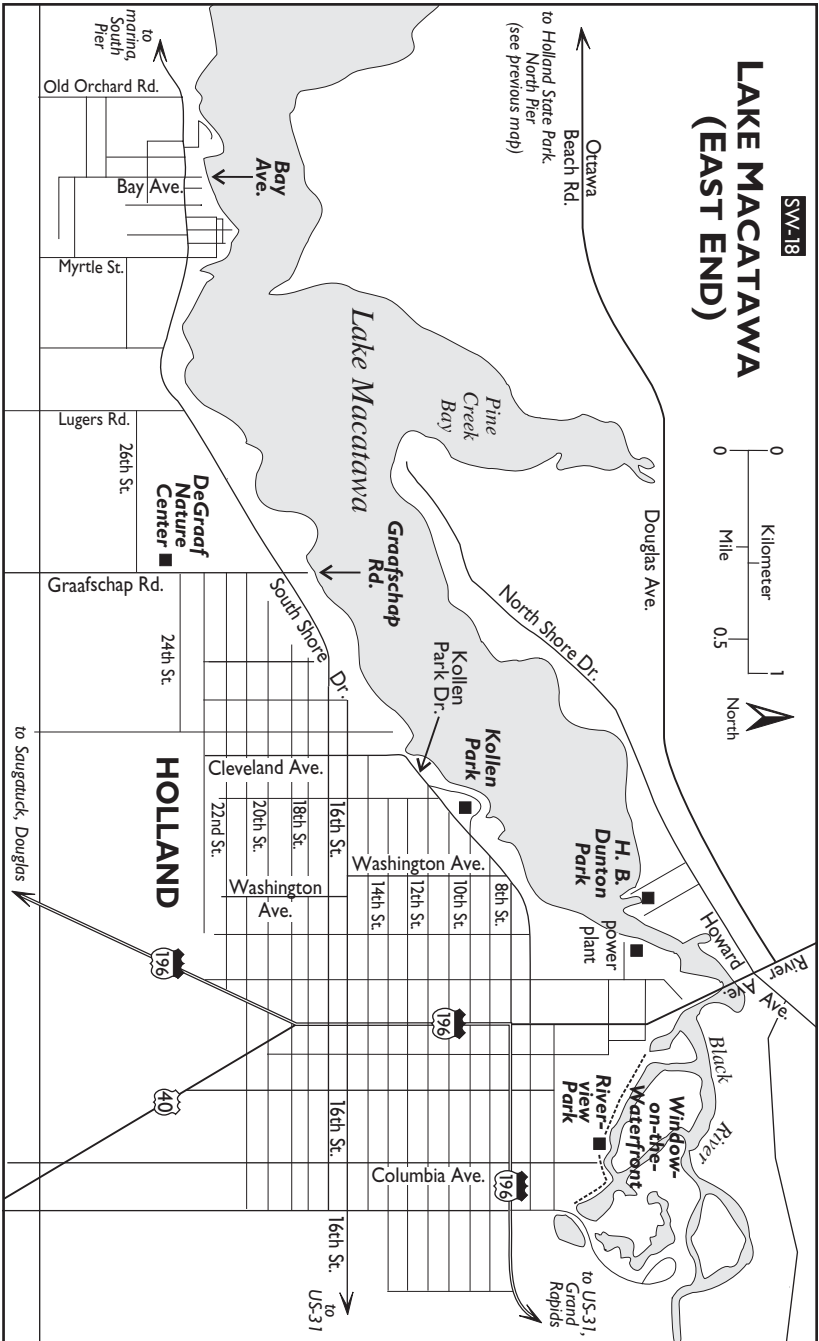
Spring** Summer* Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 35, B5. 42°47' N, 86°06' W

Note: Portions of this account were originally published in *Favorite Birding Areas* by the Grand Rapids Audubon Society, 2000.)

Directions: From US-31, take 16th Street (1.6 miles south of Lakewood Boulevard) west for 2.5 miles where it makes a sharp left bend and then immediately curves right to a stop sign. Turn right at the stop sign onto South Shore Drive and continue another 0.4 mile to Graafschap Road.

Lake Macatawa, often called “Lake Maca” by the locals, is a good area to check from fall through spring for waterfowl and gulls. The first stop on this lake tour, however, is a brief visit to one of the area’s best passerine migrant traps, the **DeGraaf Nature Center**, an 18-acre preserve and Audubon Nature Center (616-355-1057; www.ci.holland.mi.us/degraaf). Over 100 species of birds have been recorded in this small area, and spring and fall migrations are the best times to visit. Pileated Woodpecker and Carolina Wren have also been seen here in summer. From the intersection of South Shore Drive and Graafschap Road, turn left (south) for 0.3 mile to the park entrance on the right. The preserve’s woodland, scrub, marsh, and pond habitats have trails that are open from dawn to dusk. The Brower Interpretive Center provides displays and trail information. The Brower Interpretive Center is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday. The center is closed Sunday, Monday, and holidays; admission is free.

There are several access points from which to scan Lake Macatawa. From the DeGraaf Nature Center, you can take **Graafschap Road** north of South Shore Drive for 0.1 mile to its end at the lake. Other viewing areas can be reached from the intersection of South Shore Drive and Graafschap Road by going west on South Shore Drive. There are a number of roads leading off to the right and down to the lake. Be aware that this is private property along here. Two good spots are **Bay Avenue**, which is 1.3 miles west of Graafschap Road, and the **Marina**, which is 2.2 miles west of Graafschap. Public access to the **Holland South Pier** at the west end of South Shore Drive is restricted. As described above, a guard must grant permission to pass into a private community. Return to Graafschap Road and go east on South Shore Road for 0.4 mile to 17th Street, where the road curves right. Continue past this curve another 0.4 mile to Cleveland Avenue and turn left (north). Go 0.4



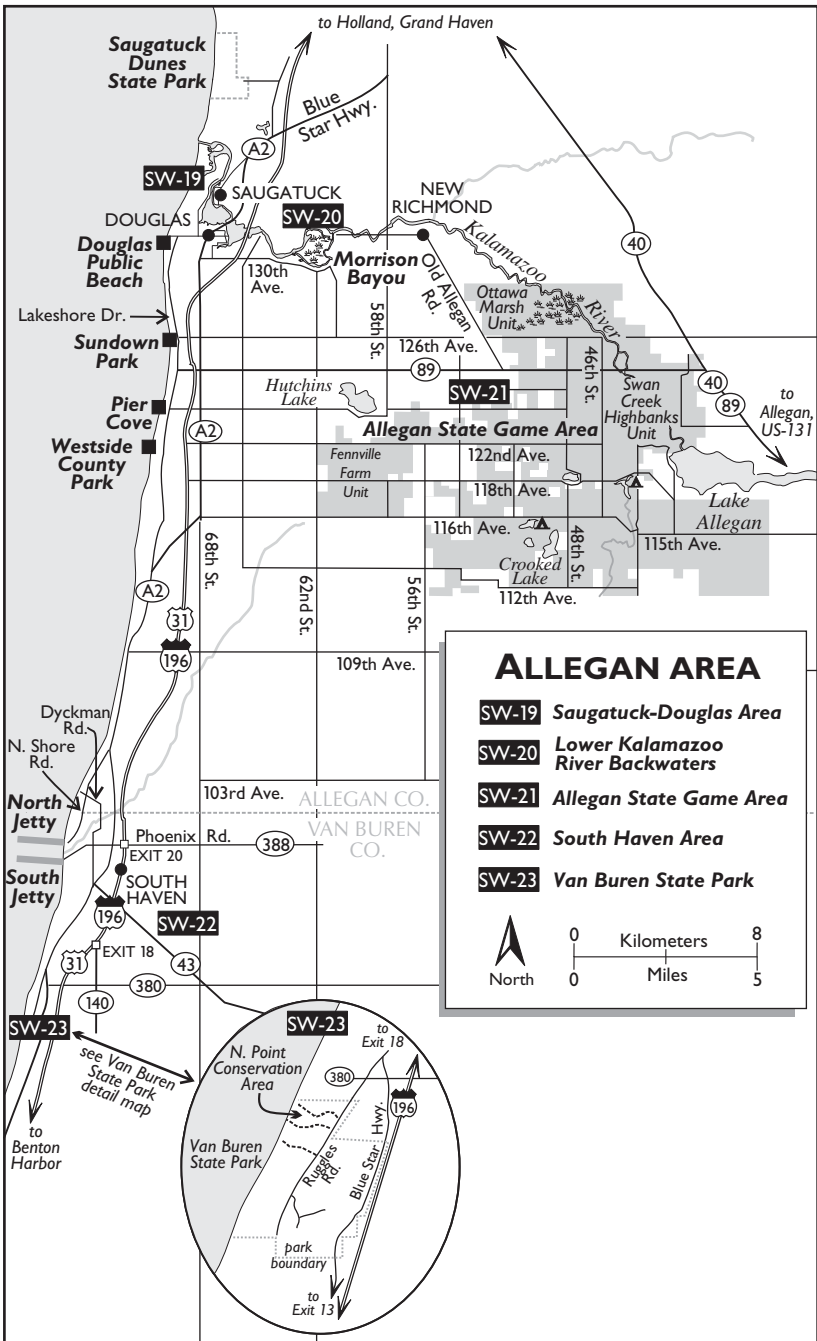
mile to the entrance to **Kollen Park** on the left, which has a good vantage point overlooking the southeastern portion of the lake.

From Kollen Park, take Washington Avenue south for about 0.4 mile to 16th Street. Go left (east) for 0.4 mile to River Avenue. Turn left (north) and go to 8th Street. Turn right (east) and go to Columbia Avenue. Turn left and go 0.1 mile to the end of the road at Riverview Park and **Window-on-the-Waterfront**, another site for waterfowl, where the Macatawa River enters the lake from the east. Window-on-the-Waterfront has a paved walkway that goes downriver for a short distance to an odd-looking, former utility building; the top has been converted into a lookout tower, which is a good place to set up a scope to scan the marsh. Ducks, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and other waterbirds can be seen here, particularly in late summer and fall. If the river is low, there may also be mudflats attractive to shorebirds. A willow-poplar thicket farther along the walkway can be a good place to look for migrant flycatchers, thrushes, and warblers. American White Pelicans have been seen in this park, as well as Glaucous and Great Black-backed Gulls in winter.

The final vantage point is **H.B. Dunton Park** on the northeastern side of the lake. From the intersection of Washington and River Avenues, go north on River Avenue for 0.8 mile to Howard Avenue. Turn left and go 0.3 mile to the first entrance into the park on the left, just past the Pfizer Pharmaceutical factory. Gulls are easily viewed from the public beach, docks, and breakwall. Bonaparte's Gull is particularly numerous in October and November; this is also when Little Gull has been seen here. The warm-water outflows from the nearby power plant and pharmaceutical factory keep this section of the lake open in winter when the remainder is frozen. In January and February, the ice-free waters attract thousands of Common Mergansers and smaller numbers of other species of overwintering waterfowl. Black-crowned Night-Herons and Bald Eagles have overwintered around the warm-water discharge coming from the concrete wall on the opposite side of the lake.

THE ALLEGAN AREA

West of Allegan the Kalamazoo River, which begins in Calhoun County, flows westward into Lake Michigan, providing riparian habitat for the state's largest populations of Cerulean and Prothonotary Warblers, as well as many other interesting, southern breeding species. Good marsh and shorebird habitat is also found near the river's mouth. The shoreline of Lake Michigan provides good vantage points for viewing waterbird migration, as well as vegetated dunes where passerines congregate in migration and a small but dependable population of breeding Prairie Warblers can be found. There are no large cities in the Allegan area, with the two largest towns being Allegan and South Haven (Van Buren County), the best options for accommodations and food in the area.



SW-19 The Saugatuck-Douglas Area

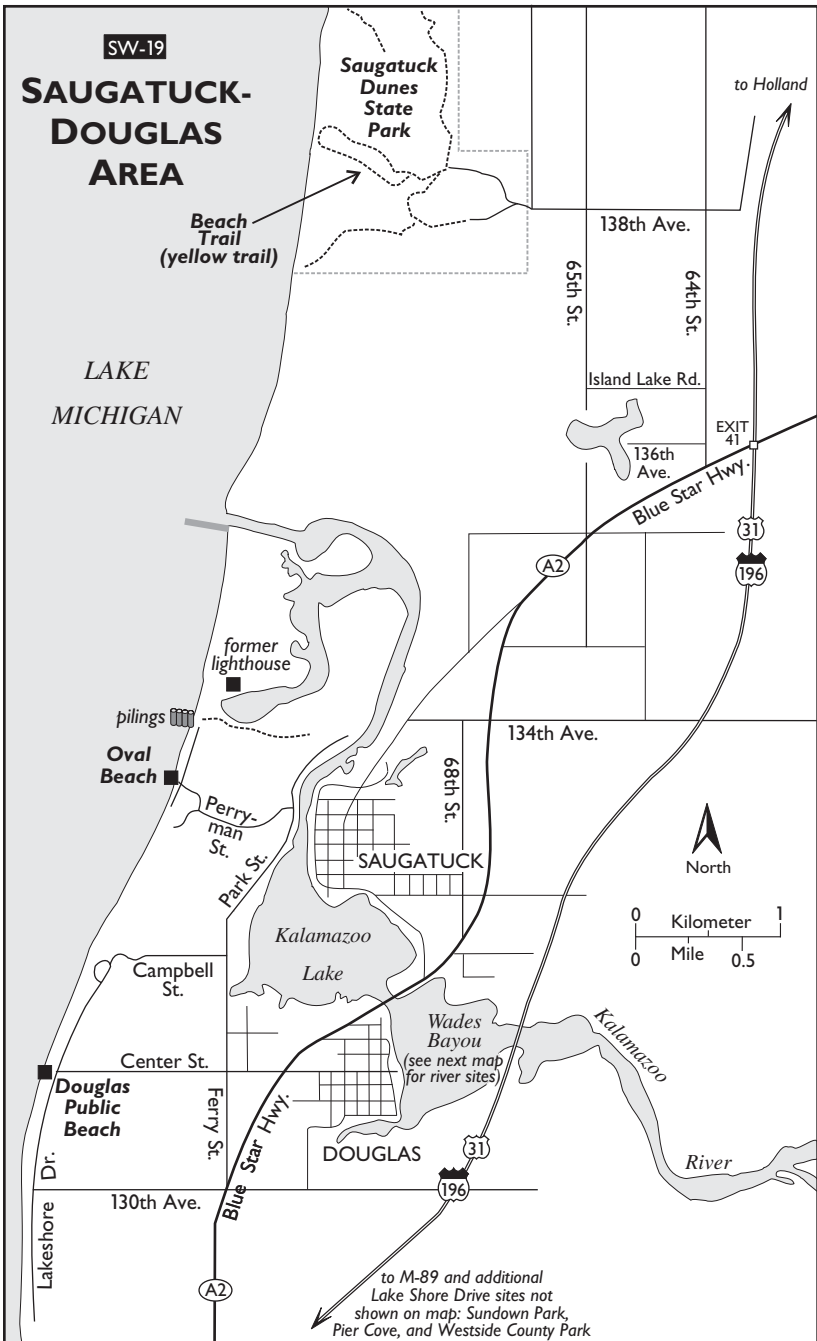
By Allen T. Chartier and Rick Brigham

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 35, C5. 42°42' N, 86°12' W

Directions: From I-196 north of Saugatuck, take the Blue Star Highway (Exit 41, Allegan County Road 2, A-2) south for 0.1 mile to 64th Street and turn right. Go 1.0 mile to 138th Avenue and turn left. Go 0.8 mile to the park entrance at the end of the road (138th veers left at the park entrance and ends 0.2 mile ahead at the Shore Acres Recreation Park).

Allegan birding begins with stops at three lakeside parks good for migrant passerines in spring and fall, wintering waterfowl, and breeding species of interest, including Prairie Warbler. From the parking area at **Saugatuck Dunes State Park** (269-637-2788; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/ParksandTrailsInfo.aspx), you can access some 13 miles of lakeshore trails. The Beach Trail (yellow trail markers) is a total of 2.5 miles, but reaches Lake Michigan in just a half-mile after a climb of 50–70 feet up a wooded dune ridge. The ridge can be filled with migrant flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows during migration in May and again in September. The pines, cedars, and Hemlocks, mixed with deciduous trees (mostly oaks) also provide breeding habitat for Eastern Wood-Pewee, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Canada Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. From fall through spring, the Lake Michigan shore attracts loafing gulls, and, when not frozen, the lake itself can have many migrant and wintering waterfowl, loons, and grebes.

From Saugatuck Dunes, return to the Blue Star Highway and turn right (south) for 3.5 miles to Center Street in Douglas. Turn right and go 0.2 mile to Ferry Street and turn right (the name of the road changes to Park Street here). Go 1.1 miles to Perryman Street and turn left. Go 0.2 mile to a gate, and then another 0.5 mile to **Oval Beach**. Turn right and go about 0.3 mile to the northernmost parking area near some pilings by the beach. The gate is open from 9:00 a.m. until dark, and an entry fee is charged from Memorial Day through Labor Day. However, before and after these holidays, the gate usually remains open around the clock, allowing for dawn gulling and waterbird watching. The Kalamazoo River empties into Lake Michigan just north of the parking area, just beyond the jetty visible to the north. The jetty itself and the property north of the Oval Beach area are private property, but walking along the water's edge is permissible. As of this writing (January 2004), purchase of 160 acres of this area is under consideration as an addition to the park on the south side of the river, along with another 250 acres to be added to Saugatuck Dunes State Park on the north side of the river. (For more information and updates on this effort, go to www.saugatucksos.org.) Offshore of Oval Beach, migrant and wintering ducks are usually present, including Redhead, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and, less commonly, all



three scoters. In the winters of 2002, 2003, and 2004, up to six Harlequin Ducks have wintered here, a notable count anywhere on the Great Lakes.

The wooded dunes east of the parking area have breeding Prairie Warblers (up to six pairs in the Jack Pines). Also during the breeding season, the dunes to the east of the parking lot host species favoring grassland/scrub habitat, including Eastern Kingbird, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee, and Field, Vesper, and Savannah Sparrows. Look overhead for Northern Rough-winged and Bank Swallows, which utilize the sand banks of the parking lot and adjoining dunes for their nest burrows. Ruffed Grouse and several woodpecker species (including Red-bellied, Hairy, and Pileated) are resident in the woodlands that have taken root in these dunes. Summer breeders here include Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, several warbler species (including Black-throated Green, American Redstart, Hooded, and Canada), and Scarlet Tanager. Raptors that enjoy this varied habitat include Bald Eagle, Osprey, Northern Harrier, and Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and Red-tailed Hawks, Eastern Screech-Owl, and Great Horned and Barred Owls.

If you care to explore this area further, there is a fairly primitive but well-worn trail that traverses 0.75 mile (one way) through the diverse ecosystem and offers a chance to look for many of the same species, including Prairie Warbler. The uphill section can be a strenuous climb for those with a meek constitution. Begin your hike at the western terminus of the trail, which is at the northeast corner of the parking lot. From here you can walk over a low dune and look down onto the Old Harbor, which was formerly the mouth of the Kalamazoo River before the river changed course to its present location. This lagoon and all the property to the north of the fence on your left are currently private and inaccessible. However, the magnificent views of the adjacent lands along the trail will not leave you disappointed. Walk down into the hollow in front of you via the trail skirting the fence and, in spring and early summer, listen for Prairie Warbler, which nests in the Jack Pine habitat on the north side of the lagoon, beyond the distant home (formerly a lighthouse). Several birds usually frequent the area at the west end of the lagoon.

Farther along you will get close looks at the lagoon as the trail winds through the sandy woods, so watch for waterfowl and shorebirds along the shoreline and on the spit of land that has encroached upon the old wooden dock pilings in the middle of the waterway. Semipalmated Plovers and Solitary and Least Sandpipers regularly visit here during spring and fall migration, while Spotted Sandpiper nests along the lagoon's edge. As the footpath gains elevation, better views of the Old Harbor can be had. After a short but steep ascent, you will top out at a spot that allows a complete vista through the trees of the former river bend below you. From here the pathway is wider. A hundred years ago, this was a wagon trail leading to Fishtown, a town that existed at the bend of the river before the old river mouth closed up and rerouted to its present position. This area is a hemlock, beech, and oak forest where many of the previously mentioned woodland species can be found. The path levels

out somewhat through this last stretch and comes to a metal gate at the end of a gravel drive. This is the eastern terminus of the trail, where you must retrace your steps back to the parking area.

Return to Center Street and go west to its end at Lakeshore Drive. Turn right (north) and go about 100 yards to the parking area for the **Douglas Public Beach** on the left (see previous map). Walk down the stairs to scan the lake from the lower landing, or from anywhere along the shoreline. From where you parked, you can also walk the quarter-mile south on Lakeshore Drive to the guardrail to see what might be out in the lake. Sometimes there are small duck flocks here, and the 100-foot elevation above the lake makes for better viewing when there are rough water conditions. Please do not park along this stretch of road south of the Public Beach, as you would interfere with the passage of local traffic on this narrow road.

Several miles of Lake Michigan shore can be viewed from the bluffs along **Lakeshore Drive** south of Douglas Beach (see Allegan Area map on page 384, 385). Retrace your route from Douglas Beach to Center Street and go back east to the Blue Star Highway. Go south on Blue Star Highway for 3.5 miles to 124th Avenue (M-89) and turn right (west). You will shortly intersect Lakeshore Drive once more. There is one overlook to the right (north) and several to the left (south). To reach the northern overlook, turn right (north) onto Lakeshore Drive and go 1.0 mile to Sundown Park. In late fall and early winter, there are often numerous flocks of Buffleheads and Common Goldeneyes, along with many Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, and a few Greater and Lesser Scaup. Long-tailed Ducks and any of the scoters are sometimes found here as well, and occasionally Harlequin Duck has shown up. In migration, Common and occasional Red-throated Loons and Horned Grebes are possible. To visit the southern overlooks, return to Lakeshore Drive and M-89, and continue south on Lakeshore Drive. Public access to the shoreline is available at Pier Cove at 0.5 mile south, at Westside County Park at 1.5 miles, and at the west end of 121st Avenue about 2 miles south of M-89. Although snow plows do what they can to allow for parking in winter at these roadside parks, the availability of parking spaces may be at a premium as a result of the heavy lake-effect snowfalls that often occur throughout the region. From M-89 you can go east to the Allegan State Game Area (Site SW-21), or you can return to Douglas to visit the Kalamazoo River area, described next.

SW-20 The Lower Kalamazoo River Backwaters

By Rick Brigham

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 35, C5. 42°38' N, 86°10' W

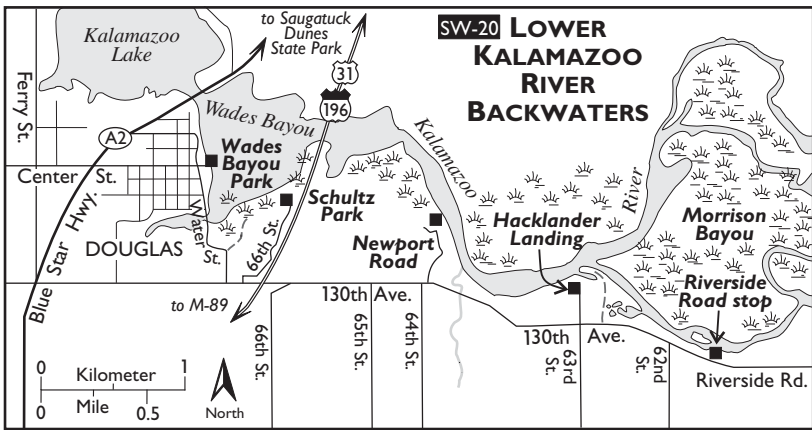
Directions: From the stoplight at the intersection of Blue Star Highway and Center Street in Douglas, go east on Center Street for 0.5 mile through downtown Douglas. Just before the road curves sharply right

(and changes to Water Street), take the road to the left and downhill to the waterfront.

The backwaters of the lower Kalamazoo River provide a unique setting for a rich and diverse birdlife. Here are areas of riverine habitat, marshlands, and islands that constitute many miles of birding pleasure. Much of this area can be viewed from the roadways along the south side of the river, as described here, but greater accessibility can be had via a shallow-draft boat such as a kayak or canoe. Several launch points are along this route, but keep in mind that this area of rivulets, deadwater, and meanders can be a difficult labyrinth to navigate.

From the bottom of Center Street at the waterfront, stop at **Wades Bayou Park**. Until this shallow backwater freezes completely in winter, it is very productive in fall, when many migrant shorebirds rest and feed here on the extensive mudflats, as well as in spring. Regular visitors include both yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers, and Dunlin, among others. Rarities in recent years have been American Avocet, Willet, and Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits. A family of Sandhill Cranes is often seen on the island in the middle of the bayou in spring and summer. Great Egrets may feed here in late afternoons during the spring months. In May 2003 a Snowy Egret was present, and in June of that same year an American White Pelican took up residence for a week. Before dawn in spring and summer, listen for rails calling from the surrounding cattail marsh. You may be lucky enough to see a Virginia Rail or a Sora poking around on the mudflats adjacent to the cattails. Flocks of gulls and terns are often found roosting near the island whenever there is open water. Caspian, Common, and Forster's Terns are often seen here in spring, and in summer keep your eyes open for the occasional Black Tern to perch on a snag or to fly by. Nearby residences have well-maintained Purple Martin houses actually inhabited by martins. This park has canoe and kayak rentals available if you are inclined to explore by water. The handicap-accessible gazebo is a wonderful spot from which to scan the bayou for birds.

Looking east across the bayou, you will see **Schultz Park**, another vantage point for the bayou. To get there, return to the top of the hill and take a sharp left onto Water Street (marked as Walter Street on some maps). Follow Water Street for 0.5 mile as it snakes around to 130th Avenue (Wiley Road). Turn left (east) and after a few hundred feet turn left (north) onto 66th Street. Go about one-half mile past the tennis courts and ball field, and park just before reaching the toll gate for the parking area. (Note that the tokens required to operate the toll gate are available for purchase at the Douglas Village Hall and at other various local government facilities in downtown Douglas. Detailed information is posted at the toll gate.) Walk around the toll gate down to the picnic tables under the shade trees to view Wades Bayou from the east. This spot frequently provides the best view of the bayou



early in the morning when the sun is behind you. Another boat launch is located beyond the toll gate.

To reach the next viewing area, go back south to 130th Avenue and turn left (east). After another mile turn left (north) onto **Newport Road**. This road ends at a cul-de-sac that overlooks another backwater of the lower Kalamazoo River. Listen for rails and Marsh Wrens here in the dawn hours in spring and early summer. Also watch for Great Egrets flying past, and look for shorebirds on the mudflats (including the species mentioned above) and various dabbling ducks feeding in the marsh.

Return to 130th Avenue and continue east for 0.75 mile to **Hacklander Landing** on the left, which is across from the end of 63rd Street. This Michigan DNR boat launch provides another view of the river and is also another great spot to listen to the dawn—and pre-dawn—bird chorus. When water levels are high, the surrounding cattail marshes are good for Virginia Rail and Sora. (A King Rail, endangered, was heard and seen here in the summer of 1993.) When water levels are low, it is possible to walk out beyond the boat launch to the river's edge to scan in both directions. The marsh to the right and on the opposite side of the river is a Black Tern nesting colony. Wilson's Snipe can usually be seen at dawn foraging along the muddy edges around the boat launch apron. A dead snag at the southeast corner of the parking lot is a traditional nesting tree for Red-headed Woodpeckers. In spring and summer, Willow, Least, and occasional Alder Flycatchers can be found in the wet thickets around the boat launch.

Continue east on 130th Avenue. After 0.5 mile, just after 130th Avenue curves right (south) and becomes 62nd Street, turn left (east) onto Riverside Road, where you should park along the road after 0.2 mile. From here scan the marshlands of **Morrison Bayou** to the north. The folks in the big house on the hill have been very nice to birders in the past; they appreciate the marsh habitat and its birds and may show some interest in what you're seeing.

Please be just as gracious and pull sufficiently off the road for cars to pass by (very few will come by), without parking on the lawn or blocking the driveway.

In all seasons, Morrison Bayou is a productive and pleasurable site. The large marsh can be viewed from this one spot, with its concentration of protective habitat and food sources. Take your time and expend some effort here, scanning thoroughly with a scope over the vast marshland (1.5 miles across and 2 miles wide). Whether it is earlier in spring when migrant multitudes find a temporary respite here, or summer when nesting species again take their places, a great ensemble of bird song is heard in this bayou. The sounds from such birds as Pied-billed Grebe, Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Wilson's Snipe, Belted Kingfisher, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Veery, Wood Thrush, Yellow Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, White-throated Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark, as well as the more common residents, give you a sense of the possibilities here. The marshlands also harbor a large Red-winged Blackbird population, which in itself provides quite a chorus. In winter, birders consistently find Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles, Northern Harriers, and Rough-legged Hawks. The cranes, often as many as 200 individuals, will remain as long as the snow depths do not prevent them from finding food. They can often be seen feeding in the farm fields to the south along 62nd and 63rd Streets between 126th and 128th Avenues. Northern Shrikes are few in number but annual here in winter. In winter of 2003, a flock of 70 Pine Grosbeaks (an irruptive species that rarely reaches the southern Lower Peninsula) enjoyed a stopover here.

SW-21 Allegan State Game Area

By Russ Schipper

Spring*** Summer**** Fall**** Winter***

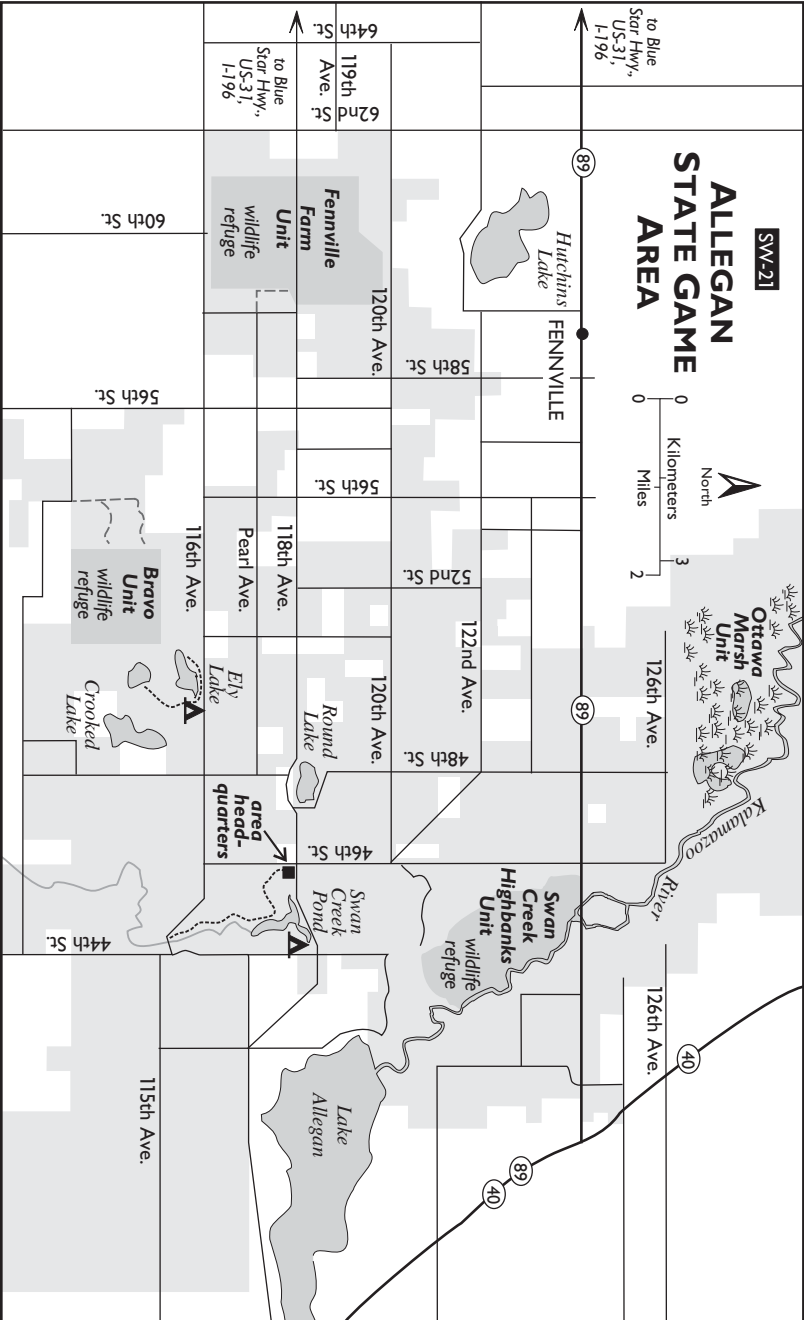
DeLorme p. 35, C6-C7

Contact Information: 269-673-2430

NOTE: A version of this account was first published in 2002 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 9: 127-137.

Directions: To reach the headquarters of the Allegan State Game Area from US-31, take Exit 30, the Blue Star Highway, north toward Ganges for 1.4 miles to 118th Avenue. Turn right (east) onto 118th Avenue for 3 miles to reach the Farm Unit. Go east for another 8 miles to the headquarters building on the southeast corner of 46th Street on the right. (Note: From Allegan follow M-89 West/M-40 north toward the edge of town, where the high school will be on the left (southwest) side of the road. Beyond the school, turn left at the flashing traffic light; there is a grocery store on the corner. This is Monroe Road, which becomes 118th Avenue. Go west on 118th Avenue for 7 miles to the headquarters.)

At over 50,000 acres, the **Allegan State Game Area** (ASGA) is the largest block of public land in the southern Lower Peninsula. It is also the region's largest forested area and as such is a significant habitat for birds.



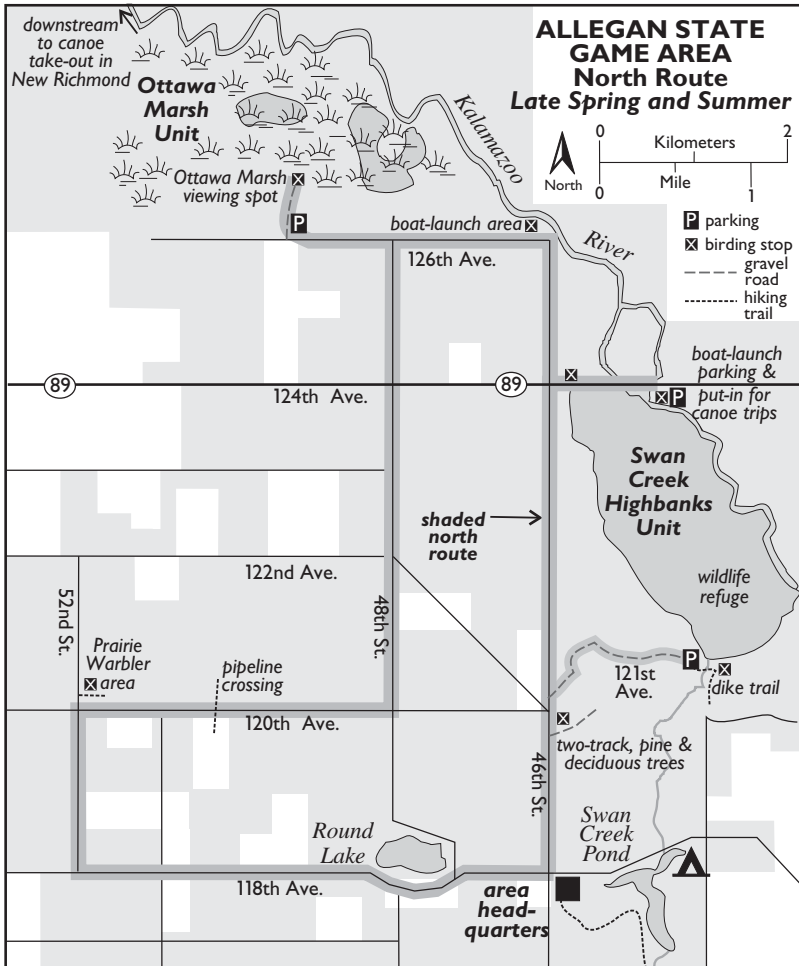
There are two distinct portions: the **Forest Unit**, which is primarily forested, and the **Farm Unit Wildlife Refuge** on the west end of the game area, which is mostly agricultural fields and primarily managed for migrating waterfowl. Over 220 bird species have been reported for the game area, and nesting records have been accumulated for 136 species, the latest being a Worm-eating Warbler in 1996, to date the only confirmed nesting of this species in the state.

The vegetation of the Allegan State Game Area consists of oak/pine and oak forest (65%), oak savanna (7%), southern floodplain forest (8%), central hardwood forest (2%), southern swamp (8%), and wetlands (10%). The topography is generally flat, and in large part the soils are dry and sandy. The creation of the ASGA was a result of these poor soils. Following the logging of the late 1800s, immigrant farmers failed in their attempts to farm these highly erodible soils. In 1935, the U. S. Government bought out the struggling landowners, eventually amassing over 34,000 acres of public land. In 1950, the area was acquired by the Michigan Department of Conservation (now the Department of Natural Resources, or DNR). The purchase of the Fennville Farm Unit began in 1949 as a waterfowl management area, which is now a major fall stopover site and wintering area for impressive numbers of Canada Geese. There remain many private inholdings within the game area.

While much of the area is dry uplands, mosquitos and ticks can still be a problem. Also, prudence dictates that you do not leave valuables in sight when you leave your car. As a word of warning, some of the best birding spots are near or in designated "Wildlife Refuge areas". Entry is forbidden in these closed refuge areas, so keep an eye out for the signs. The game area is patrolled and the Conservation Officers pay little attention to excuses such as "I didn't know I wasn't allowed in here".

Rustic camping is available at the Ely Lake Campground on 116th Avenue east of 51st Street, and at Pine Point Campground at the southwest corner of 118th Avenue and 44th Street. The campgrounds are primitive, with no running water. The only restroom facilities on the game area are vault toilets, located at the southwest corner of 118th Avenue and 46th Street (across 46th Street from the headquarters) and at the campgrounds.

The three driving routes described below cover different seasons and/or aspects of the game area, and each route takes about four to six hours to cover. There are two additional trips (the Swan Creek hiking trail and canoeing the Kalamazoo River) which each take several hours or more. The starting point of all the routes is at the centrally located Allegan State Game Area Headquarters, where additional maps are available. For the most productive birding, it is best to begin the routes in the early morning. There are few service facilities located in or near the ASGA; the closest locations for gas and food are the city of Allegan to the southeast and the village of Fennville to the west. Conveniently, the streets in Allegan County run north and south while the avenues run east and west. This makes it easy to orient yourself while visiting the ASGA.



North Route - Late Spring and Summer

From the headquarters, go north on 46th Street. In summer, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers can often be found along 46th Street in areas where the pines and the deciduous trees meet. In particular, look for them from about 0.9 mile (where there is a two-track to the right) to about 1.4 miles from the headquarters. Pine Warbler is also usually present in the thinner sections of pines. Continue north for 0.3 mile and turn right onto 121st Avenue. This road can be a little rough, but at the end there is a fairly reliable location for Red-headed Woodpecker and several other breeding passerines, such as Wood Thrush, Black-throated Green and Prothonotary

Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Take 121st Avenue for 1.4 miles, staying on the main track, to a parking lot where you can walk the area to look for birds.

Through the treeline to the east is the upper pool of the **Highbanks Refuge Unit**. *Note: this is a closed refuge unit; do not enter.* Instead go to the southeast corner of the parking lot and walk around the red gate; in 30 yards go to the right over the Swan Creek culverts (do not follow the two-track to the left past the orange gate into the refuge) and go down the dike to the south. There is a backwater on the right with several dead snags, favored by Red-headed Woodpeckers and often a Prothonotary Warbler. At the south end of this dike, there was a singing Yellow-throated Warbler in June 2001. This trail hosts a good array of other warblers. Although this trail reaches Swan Creek Pond on 118th Avenue after 1.5 miles, there are several side trails which make following the route confusing. (Swan Creek Trail birding is described later in this site description.) Instead, backtrack from the dike area to the parking lot, stopping at the orange gate to scan the open water of the refuge for Mute and Trumpeter Swans, Black Tern, Osprey, and Bald Eagle. This area is a particularly good spot in migration for waterfowl and songbirds.

Return on 121st Avenue to 46th Street and turn right (north). Continue north to the stop sign at M-89 and turn right. Park on the shoulder before the guardrail to view the lower pool of the **Swan Creek Marsh**, which is a refuge area where entry is forbidden. Walk down the shoulder of the road for about a quarter-mile to find an opening in the treeline to view the marsh. Use extreme caution here as traffic, including large trucks, travels at high speed. Mute Swans are almost always present, and Trumpeter Swans are occasional in late summer. This is also a nesting area for Black Terns, which can usually be found most years. Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Common Moorhen are occasional. The eagles are most often found on the dead snags at the far end of the marsh; a scope is necessary. Look for the moorhens among the emergent vegetation. Carefully cross the road and go down to the outflow bridge. This is a regular Prothonotary Warbler territory; listen for its loud, emphatic, clear *zweet zweet zweet* song.

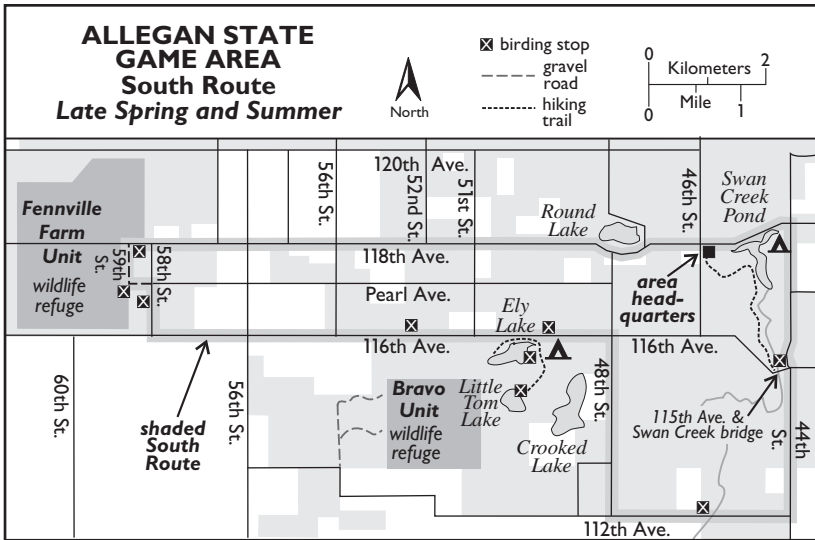
Return to your car and continue east; just after crossing the river, turn right into the boat-launch parking lot. In late May through early July, such species as Least Flycatcher, Yellow-throated, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cerulean Warbler, American Redstart, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole are present around the parking area. To get closer to some of these birds, try the footpaths along the river to fishing spots on both the north and south sides of M-89. Both paths end in less than 100 yards. Beware of Poison-ivy and Stinging Nettle, which are abundant in this area.

Return to 46th Street and turn right (north) for 1.0 mile, where the road turns left onto 126th Avenue. At 0.1 mile take the sometimes rough two-track veering to the right. There is a small parking area on the right just before you get to the riverbank. Park here and walk down to the river to the

boat launch. This is a fairly reliable location for Cerulean Warbler. Return to the parking area and check the pines along the two-track for Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers. Return to 126th Avenue and turn right. If you missed the Cerulean at the river, there is often one in the mature oaks at 0.1 mile farther, on the south side of the road.

Continue west for 1.9 miles to a two-track on the right (north). Take this two-track in a few yards to the gate and park off the track (do not block the gate). A 0.75-mile walk down the two-track takes you to a nice view of the **Ottawa Marsh**. From the gravel parking area (provided for hunters in waterfowl season), look roughly north for a great distance to an old Bald Eagle nest in some snags. To the left, check the cavities in the snags for nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers and Prothonotary Warblers. In spring, Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers use the larger cavities for nesting. Other species in the adjacent woods include Yellow-billed Cuckoo, American Redstart, and Baltimore Oriole. Black Terns can often be seen over the open water. The term “marsh” here is somewhat misleading. While there are portions of Ottawa Marsh which have typical marsh vegetation such as rushes and cattails, much of the marsh is open water with numerous dead snags. It more resembles a backwater than a marsh. The principal plant species are Buttonbush, Pickerelweed, Common Arrowhead, and Fragrant Water Lily. The current configuration and condition of the 1,600-acre Ottawa Marsh are the result of a failed water management effort in the middle part of the last century, and the marsh is a unique site in southwestern Michigan.

Prairie Warblers are not annual in the game area, but when present are most often found in large clearcuts that have begun to regenerate. One such location is on 52nd Street just north of 120th Avenue, where a bird was heard in June of 2000. Go back east to 48th Street and turn right. Go 3.0 miles to 120th Avenue and turn right. (While you are on 120th Avenue you may want to stop and check the woods at the pipeline crossing for Blue-headed Vireo. Though Blue-headed Vireo breeding areas in Michigan generally have a coniferous component, dry deciduous woods such as this one sometimes host the species.) To continue to the Prairie Warbler location, go another 1.0 mile past the pipeline to 52nd Street and turn right. About 0.1 mile on the right is a two-track which takes you to a clear-cut area. Prairie Warbler can sometimes be found in this area, or farther up 52nd Street from the two-track. To return to the headquarters, take 52nd Street south to 118th Avenue and turn left. The headquarters is 3.0 miles east on the right.



South Route - Late Spring and Summer, Farm Unit and Game Area

This route starts at the grasslands of the Farm Unit and then travels into the forested portions of the game area. From the headquarters building, go west on 118th Avenue for about 6 miles to 59th Street. Turn left and park just around the corner on 59th Street. There are a surprising number of grassland species found at this spot; the thick, wet growth to the west supports multiple Sedge Wren territories, typically more in mid- to late summer. The field on the east usually has Upland Sandpipers, while Savannah Sparrows and Bobolinks can be found on both sides of the road. A Willow Flycatcher usually occupies the small coppice on the corner, and in the last few years Henslow's Sparrows have been found regularly on the west side of the pond, though usually well off the road. In some years they can be found on the east side as well. *Note: much of the west side of the road is a designated Wildlife Refuge, so you must stay on the road.* If the fields on 118th Avenue have standing water, it is worth taking a side trip to check them for shorebirds. Continue south on 59th Street to the intersection with Pearl Avenue, where you should look for nesting Grasshopper Sparrows and Orchard Orioles in the fields southwest of the small parking lot on the right. Hike through the trees to get to the fields.

Return to your car and continue around the corner of 59th and Pearl to an area with cedar trees. Check here for Northern Bobwhite, Loggerhead Shrike, and Northern Mockingbird. At the intersection with 58th Street, turn right. About a quarter-mile south on 58th is an area that Loggerhead Shrikes had frequented until the late 1990s. Another pair was found in the late 1990s on 119th Avenue, a quarter-mile west of 62nd Street; see larger game area map for this location. It may be worth checking both these areas. *Note: Log-*

gerhead Shrike is endangered in Michigan, and not annual at this site. If you are lucky enough to find one, do not approach too closely, and be sure to report it

Next on this route are the forested areas around the **Ely Lake Campground**. From 58th Street, continue south to the T-intersection at 116th Avenue and turn left. Enroute, at 2.7 miles, check the aging clearcut on the north side of the road for possible Prairie Warbler; this site still supported a singing male in 2002. Continue straight ahead; the campground will be on the right about 0.4 mile after 51st Street. The mature, primarily oak and beech woods here host a variety of accessible forest species, including Acadian Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Chestnut-sided, Blackburnian, and Cerulean Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager in the campground area. You can also take the two-track to **Little Tom Lake**, where additional species, including Yellow-throated Vireo, Veery, and American Redstart, may be found, as well as more Cerulean Warblers. To reach Little Tom Lake, follow the drive past the Ely Lake beach, jog to the left, and take the two-track on the left (across from campsite #45) to the lake. It is probably best to drive to Little Tom Lake to park at the turnaround, and then walk back along the two-track.

While Hooded Warblers may be found in the Ely Lake Campground area, there is another reliable Hooded Warbler territory nearby. To reach it go back to 116th Avenue and turn right. The territory is about 0.25 mile east of the campground entrance, where the road continues east after going around the wetland. There are several other roadside areas not on this route that are worth checking for Hooded Warblers in or near the game area. These include: 120th Avenue about 0.25 mile west of 48th Street; the corner of 113th Avenue and 54th Street; and 112th Avenue between 52nd Street and 50th Street.

There is a fairly regular location for Louisiana Waterthrush where Swan Creek crosses 112th Avenue. From the Hooded Warbler location on 116th Avenue, continue east to the first crossroad at 48th Street and turn right. Go 2.0 miles to the T-intersection and turn left onto 112th Avenue. The Swan Creek crossing is 1 mile farther. Note that Louisiana Waterthrushes tend to be on territory by early May and often reduce their singing by mid-June.

From here, there is a nearby location to look for Red-shouldered Hawk. Continue east on 112th Avenue to the first crossroad and turn left onto 44th Street, stopping at the wetland a half-mile farther on the road. The hawks can sometimes be seen soaring over the woods at mid-day. This wetland also hosts Willow Flycatchers and is good for butterflies as well. To return to the headquarters, continue north on 44th Street for 2.75 miles to 118th Avenue. Turn left onto 118th Avenue for 1 mile west to the headquarters on the left.

Swan Creek Trail – Late Spring and Summer

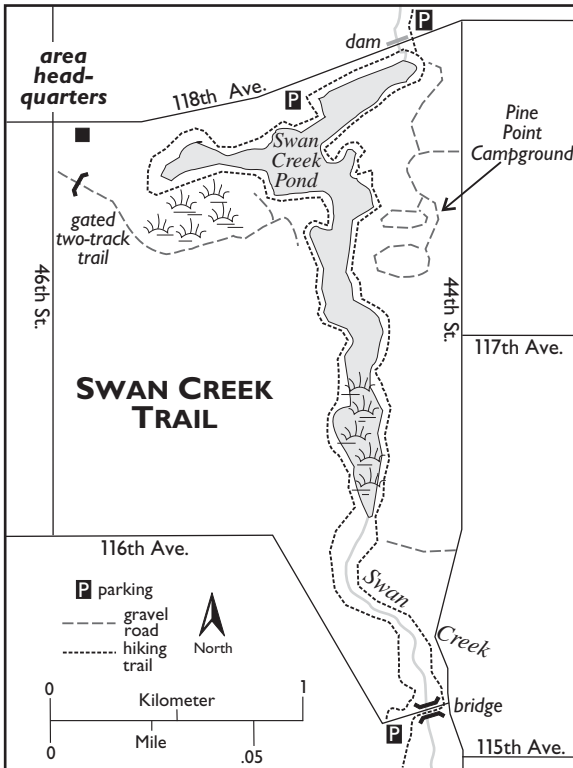
The **Swan Creek Trail** can be accessed from either the north or the south, with short out-and-back trips from both points the best option. At-

tempting to walk all the way around on a one-way loop is a long trek, and the southern part of the trail is difficult to follow on the west side of the creek. From the north, the trail begins at the large but inconspicuous parking area on the south side of 118th Avenue, 0.5 mile east of the headquarters. Keep an eye out for Broad-winged Hawk near the parking area. A Yellow-throated Warbler was discovered in 2001 in the pines along this section of the trail, about 0.75 mile from the parking area and well beyond the bridge. From the south, the trail is reached on 116th Avenue near the bridge over the river. Walk north from here on the east side of the creek.

From the south access, significant species to watch for are Red-shouldered Hawk and Louisiana Waterthrush, most often found within the first 0.75 mile. A number of other warblers have been found during breeding season on this trail, including Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian (in Hemlocks), Pine, Cerulean (occasional), Black-and-white, American Redstart, Prothonotary, and Canada. If you want to look for a rare Worm-eating Warbler (one was singing here on June 2, 2003), you should park at the headquarters parking lot and walk south about 300 yards on 46th Street to a gated two-track slanting off to the left. Walk down the

two-track for about a half-mile or more. Where it turns south along the bank of the pond, begin listening for the Chipping Sparrow-like song of the warbler. Be aware, however, that Chipping Sparrows are abundant here. Another spot to look for this species is a short walk in from the 116th Avenue parking area just west of the bridge at the top of the hill. This hike is about 0.2 mile.

A walk north of 118th Avenue along the trail on the east side of Swan Creek can be productive for some of the



same warbler species listed above, including possible Worm-eating Warbler. You can park in the small parking lot next to the dam on the north side of the road. The trail eventually reaches the parking area at the south end of the **Highbanks Refuge**, mentioned earlier in the North Route—Late Spring and Summer. The trail, however, is confusing to follow all the way to 118th Avenue because of several unmarked side trails. All trails in the Swan Creek area are also good in spring or fall migration.

Canoeing the Kalamazoo River

Designated in 1981 as a Michigan Wild and Scenic River, the Kalamazoo River is the largest area of southern floodplain forest in the state, and is an excellent location for many bird species associated with this habitat. A productive and enjoyable way to experience the floodplain forest is by canoe. Canoes can be rented from Old Allegan Canoe, 616-561-5481; three-hour and five-hour trips are available.

Since 1996, breeding-season canoe surveys have been conducted for birds along the river. The average number of species recorded during these surveys has been 65, and the average number of individuals has been 1,295, with a total of 113 species recorded to date. Yearly average numbers of selected species recorded on the river from the dam at Lake Allegan to New Richmond include: Yellow-billed Cuckoo (24), Pileated Woodpecker (4), Acadian Flycatcher (24), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (70), Red-eyed Vireo (177), Cerulean Warbler (49), American Redstart (158), Prothonotary Warbler (70), and Baltimore Oriole (38). While most are “heard-only”, the numbers alone make the trip worthwhile.

Because much of the river here is bordered by undeveloped state land, this route has a distinctly remote feel to it. The trip will be most productive if you start near dawn, a wonderful time to be on the river, when the cool morning air often creates a mist over the river and the dawn chorus is at full volume. The abundance of song can be almost overwhelming. In the early morning, mosquitos are rarely a problem out on the river; once you touch land, it is a different matter. Be prepared with repellent.

In general, the canoeing only requires basic abilities; the greatest challenge is maneuvering around downfalls. And there are only a couple that might provide a slight challenge. It must be noted that, belying the abundant birdlife, this portion of the Kalamazoo River is a Federal Superfund site. The sediments contain high levels of the carcinogenic Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) and there is a fish-consumption advisory.

Though most of the species on this trip will be heard, the stunning Prothonotary Warbler is prominent and highly visible. Look for it near snags and downfalls. Some other species fairly easily seen during the trip are Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole. Also, Pileated Woodpeckers and Yellow-billed Cuckoos often make flyover appearances, and Osprey and Bald Eagle are occasionally seen hunting

along the river. A reliable spot to see a Cerulean Warbler is at an unmarked boat launch on the left side of the river, about an hour beyond the M-89 bridge, which is the put-in point for the three-hour livery trip. Also, about 30 minutes north of the M-89 bridge, keep an eye out for Louisiana Waterthrush, which often nests in this area.

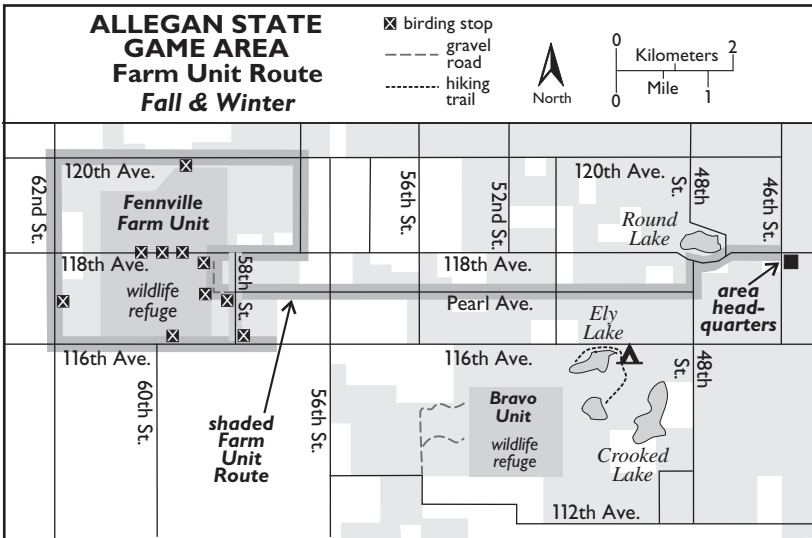
Approximately a half-hour after the boat launch, there is an obvious fork in the river where you should keep to the right; to the left is the Ottawa Marsh inlet. Depending on whether you float with the current or paddle, in another 1.5 to 2.5 hours you will see the only other obvious fork, which is the outlet channel from the Ottawa Marsh, again on the left. You will begin to see some houses now. After about another one to one-and-a-half hours downstream, you will see the DNR Public Access takeout point on the right, just after the pair of bridges near the town of New Richmond. The first bridge is one of the last revolving railroad bridges in the state and slated for much needed refurbishing. The bridge is no longer used, except by Cliff and Barn Swallows.

Note: the canoe livery does not permit its canoes in the Ottawa Marsh, and taking your own canoe into the marsh without some instruction is not advised. There are numerous opportunities to get lost.

Farm Unit Route – Fall and Winter

The **Farm Unit**, located on the western edge of the game area, is bisected by 118th Avenue, the main birding road in the unit. From the headquarters building, go west on 118th Avenue for about 6 miles to the fields of the Farm Unit. From here, the best tactic is to stop frequently to scan for raptors and for flocks of geese. Much of this is a closed waterfowl-management area and is posted with the DNR Wildlife Refuge signs; since this is also a hunting area with variable season dates, all birding should be done only from the road. In winter there are several Bald Eagles and often a Golden Eagle hanging around the unit, primarily drawn by the injured or sick geese. Usually the geese and eagles are present from November until March. The eagles are most reliably seen perched on a dead barkless snag a half-mile to the south of the road. To reach the snag, take 118th Avenue for 0.7 mile west of 58th Street, pull over, and look to the south-southwest. *Caution: this can be a surprisingly busy street at times.* A scope is needed for a decent view. If the birds are not on the “eagle” tree, scan all other large trees. In your scan, you may also find Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks and American Kestrel. If all of the geese lift off at once with great commotion, an eagle is in the air.

In the winters of 1989–1990 and 1990–1991, a Ferruginous Hawk established winter quarters here for several weeks, and in 2001 a dark-morph western Red-tailed Hawk was seen several times. Flocks of resting or feeding geese are found along 118th Avenue in fields of green forage interspersed with corn; search through the flocks for Snow and rarely Greater White-fronted and Ross’s Geese. You should plan on stopping at least three or four times to to check all large flocks in the 1.5 miles of 118th Avenue west of 58th.



Continue west on 118th Avenue to the crossroad at 62nd Street and turn left. These fields can harbor Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings. The Lapland Longspurs usually move out of the area by December and the Horned Larks by January. The Snow Buntings are usually around until March. Turn left at the first crossroad, 116th Avenue. The roadside ditches here can harbor several species of passerines, and occasionally a Wilson's Snipe may be found up to mid-December. Continue to keep an eye out for raptors. At 1.1 miles there will be a small parking area on the north side of the road, just past 60th Street. This is another good spot to look for eagles on the same dead tree, this time looking north-northwest with the light at your back.

Continue east on 116th Street to 58th Street and an area with many fruiting shrubs that is often productive for passerines (between 0.25 and 0.75 mile beyond 58th Street on the north side of 116th Street). Return to 58th Street and turn right (north) for about 0.5 mile, checking the cedars for an occasional Northern Mockingbird. When you reach 118th Avenue, turn right and then take the first left (north). At the first crossroad, turn left again onto 120th Avenue. The next 2.5 miles is the most reliable area in the ASGA for Northern Shrike, especially during irruption years from October through March. The weedy fields may also harbor a migrating Northern Harrier, or in winter, denizens of the north such as American Tree Sparrow and, in irruption years, Common Redpolls. A stop at the creek crossing is usually worthwhile for passerines. At the stop sign on 62nd Street, turn left for 1.0 mile, turn left again to return to 118th Avenue in case anything new has turned up. Continue on 118th Avenue for 8 miles east back to the headquarters building.

If you missed Horned Lark, Lapland Longspur, or Snow Bunting, check the farm fields to the west of the Farm Unit, in particular the large private farm on

62nd Street about 1.5 miles south of 118th Avenue. Be alert for Gyrfalcon, which was seen on or near the game area on several occasions in the 1990s. Short-eared Owls sometimes hunt the grassy fields and corn stubble at dawn or dusk, generally from October to December before the first heavy snow.

SW-22 The South Haven Area

By Jim Granlund and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 27, A4. 42°24' N, 86°17' W

Directions: From I-196, take Phoenix Road (Exit 20) west for 1.75 miles through South Haven to South Beach and the South Jetty. To reach the North Jetty, return east on Phoenix Road for 0.3 mile to Kalamazoo Street (at the traffic light). Turn left and go 0.3 mile to Dyckman Road. Turn left and go 0.3 mile to North Shore Road. Turn left and go 0.1 mile to North Beach Access (Avery Road) on the right. Turn right on this one-way street and go 0.1 mile to the parking area. Walk out onto the South Haven North Jetty. See the Allegan Area maps on page 384, 385.

The **South Haven Area** affords a number of birding opportunities, however, the most promising is the access to Lake Michigan. Birding from the beach or either the **South or North Jetties** can produce interesting birds year around. In winter, check the beach for uncommon gulls such as Great Black-backed, Glaucous, and Thayer's Gull. The more expansive north beach is often better than the south beach. Also in winter, ducks such as Black Scoter, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneye, and more rarely Harlequin and Long-tailed, can be seen along the breakwall. The spring migration, which lasts from mid-March through May, can produce a wide variety of migrants, including ducks and other waterbirds, raptors, and a surprising variety of passerines. Duck and loon migration is best from March to late-April, while May brings good numbers of terns and passerines. During summer, the beach is busy with sun-worshippers, but a visit early in the morning may produce shorebirds or unusual gulls. The fall migration begins early, with the first Sanderlings and Bonaparte's Gulls appearing as soon as late July. Migration is fairly steady from August through early November. The best days are late in the season when the wind is strong from the north or northwest. On one day in early November, nearly 11,000 birds were counted in less than four hours. Outstanding numbers of ducks can be seen, including all three scoters. Gulls can also be numerous, with such rarities as Little Gull and Black-legged Kittiwake seen almost annually. Other outstanding fall rarities have been Western Grebe, Purple Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Long-tailed Jaeger, and Sabine's Gull. Birding can be done from either of the breakwalls or at the beach, depending on weather and lake conditions. *Great care should be taken when venturing out on the breakwalls, as waves may rise very quickly in hazardous conditions.* Like all migration spots, the number of birds varies widely and weather is the best determinant for success. Often flights peak about two to three hours

after sunrise, so arriving at dawn and spending a few early hours here will maximize your birding opportunities.

SW-23 Van Buren State Park

By Jim Granlund and Allen T. Chartier

Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 27, B4. 42°20' N, 86°18' W

Contact Information: 269-637-2788;

<http://www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx>

Directions: From I-196 south of South Haven, exit the highway at M-140 (Exit 18). Go south for 1.2 miles to CO 380 and turn right (west). Go 1.5 miles to the Ruggles Road and turn left into the park. From the south, exit from I-196 at CO 378 (Exit 13). Go west 0.3 miles to Blue Star Highway and turn right (north). Go north about 3.2 miles to CO 380 and follow the directions above. See the Allegan Area map on page 384.

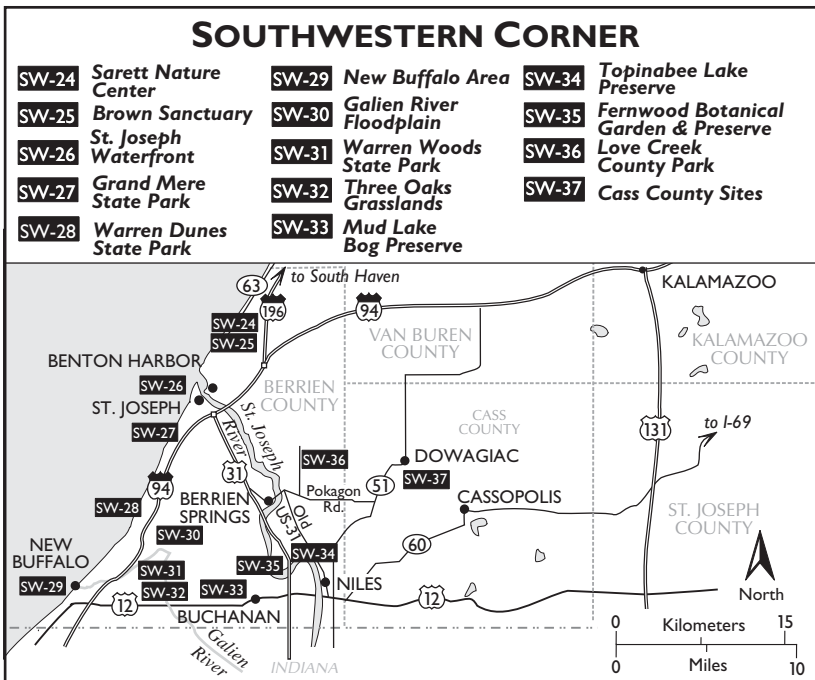
Van Buren State Park (state park entry fee) is another excellent site along the Lake Michigan shore. The park and surrounding area offer good habitat for migrants in spring and fall as well as interesting nesting species. Just prior to reaching the park entry gate, you will encounter the North Point Conservation Area on the west side of the road. Park in the small pullout in front of the sign. The conservation area is dominated by a wet marsh on the east, dunes in the center, and shoreline on the west. During spring and fall, birding the wetland along the paved park access road to the south often turns up a wide variety of migrants, including a good selection of warblers. Walking the trails in the conservation area can also be productive, particularly the small clearing just before the trail climbs the dunes. By going north on the trail, you will reach a high bluff overlooking the lake. Keeping left will also take you to the lakeshore if you take the roads back to the west or if you travel east to the paved park access road. During the summer, you will likely encounter Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Hooded, and possibly Black-throated Green and Mourning Warblers. Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, and Wood Thrush are also common in summer. The trails are steep but the walk is fairly short, and you can leisurely bird it in less than an hour.

The forested dunes in the park have very much the same birds as found in the conservation area, but in smaller numbers. In addition, the large open areas allow a good vantage point for watching for migrant raptors in spring. Pine Warblers have nested in the campground, and the beach has produced a good variety of gulls and shorebirds over the years. This is a popular park and crowds should be expected in the summer. In winter gulls often congregate on the beach, particularly near the power plant to the south, however, access has been limited since 2001.

THE SOUTHWESTERN CORNER

By Kip Miller

Berrien County, in the extreme southwestern corner of Michigan, has a great diversity of birding habitats. The county bird list, at 349 species in 2010, attests to the area's birding potential. Open and wooded dunes along the Lake Michigan shore provide concentration points for migrant passerines and host a small breeding population of Prairie Warblers. Offshore, the lake attracts many migrant loons, grebes, waterfowl, and gulls. The riparian forests along the Galien River and its tributaries in southwestern Berrien County are host to a variety of southern breeding species, including Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean and Hooded Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, and the most dependable (and largest) breeding population of Yellow-throated Warbler in the state. In addition, these forest corridors are excellent locations to search for a variety of other migrants and resident woodland species. The prairie region of northwestern Indiana once extended north into Berrien County as well. Though most of the original prairie habitat has been altered, agricultural grasslands still provide habitat for some of the state's most dependable breeding populations of Henslow's Sparrow and Dickcissel in Michigan (although sites vary from year to year within the county).



The active Berrien Birding Club regularly sponsors field trips to the locations listed below, as well as to other regional locations. These trips are open to all, and a schedule of upcoming outings can be found on the “Birding Events” page of the Berrien County Parks website at www.berriencounty.org/parks/bird_events.html. The club also operates a local chat group, BBCList, through Andrews University in Berrien Springs. Birders may want to subscribe before making a trip for information on the status of local specialties and recent rarities. Instructions for subscribing to BBCList can be found at the website.

SW-24 Sarett Nature Center

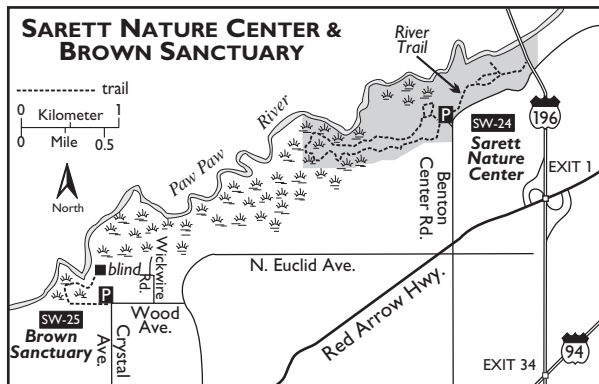
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 26, C3. 42°09' N, 86°23' W

Contact Information: 269-927-4832; www.sarett.com. \$3 fee for non-members.

Directions: From the junction of I-94 and I-196 northeast of Benton Harbor, go north on I-196 to Exit 1 (Red Arrow Highway). After exiting, turn west onto Red Arrow Highway and continue for 0.6 mile to Benton Center Road. Turn right and continue north for another 0.6 mile to the entrance on the left.

The floodplain forests and marshes adjacent to the Paw Paw River in northern Berrien County are excellent locations to search for birds. Two of the best sites are the **Sarett Nature Center** and the **Brown Sanctuary** (SW-25). Sarett is well-known for its wetlands and an extensive boardwalk system, and the nature center also has a variety of other habitats, including woods, thickets, old fields, and areas of restored tallgrass prairie. In spring and early summer, Prothonotary Warblers are usually present along the Paw Paw River at the end of the River Trail, and Orchard Orioles are sometimes seen in the trees near the parking area. In some winters, Long-eared and Northern



Saw-whet Owls are found in the pine plantation across the road from the nature center entrance, or in the cedars along the trails below the interpretive center. The old field and prairie areas along Benton Center Road to the south of the entrance have hosted Grasshopper Sparrows, Dickcissels, and Bobolinks in some recent summers, as well as a few Clay-colored Sparrows. These

areas are part of the nature center property and access is permitted. A variety of other wetland and upland species may be found by exploring the many trails, particularly during migration periods. Birding information and detailed trail maps can be obtained in the interpretive center, where feeders attract numerous birds. The center offers bird walks, both on-site and in the area.

SW-25 Brown Sanctuary

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 26, C3. 42°08' N, 86°24' W

Directions: To reach the Brown Sanctuary from Sarett, return to Red Arrow Highway and turn right. Almost immediately turn right again onto Euclid Avenue for 1.7 miles to Wood Avenue and turn right. Go 0.4 mile to the junction with Crystal Avenue, where you will see the entrance gate to the Brown Sanctuary just ahead.

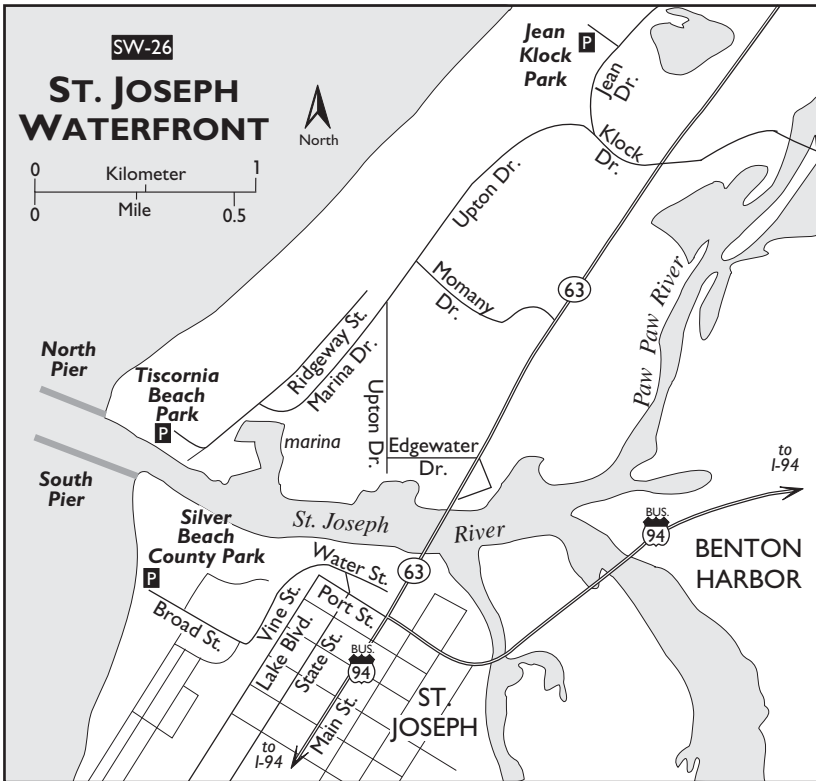
The **Brown Sanctuary**, owned and managed by Sarett Nature Center, is located just downstream from Sarett along the Paw Paw River. It includes an old field area, a wooded ridge, floodplain forests, and a large marsh adjacent to the river. Depending on water levels, the marsh may be host to variety of geese, ducks, or shorebirds in migration, while numerous woodland migrants may be present along the wooded ridge and in the floodplain forest. The floodplain forest is also an excellent location for Prothonotary Warblers in spring and early summer. Native prairie grasses were recently planted in the old field area, and at least two Henslow's Sparrows were singing on territory here throughout the summer of 2001. For current information on recent bird sightings here, stop in the interpretive center at Sarett or call 269-927-4832.

At the entrance gate, you should park and walk in to the sanctuary. To reach the river and the marsh observation blind, walk straight in from the gate along the two-track road. You will first pass through the old field area and then down a wooded ridge to the river. Once adjacent to the river, you will soon reach an area where you can view the marsh from an observation blind. This is a good area to look along the river for Prothonotary Warblers. You can also view parts of the marsh from a smaller observation platform higher up on the ridge. To reach this platform, turn right immediately after walking in through the entrance gate and follow the trail to the top edge of the ridge. Turn left and follow the trail along the ridge until you can see the platform below on your right.

SW-26 St. Joseph Waterfront

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter****
DeLorme p. 26, D2. 42°07' N, 86°29' W

The beaches and breakwaters at the mouth of the **St. Joseph River** are excellent locations to watch for ducks, geese, loons, grebes, gulls, and terns during spring and fall migrations. Particularly during the fall, impressive concentrations of southwestern Michigan's regular waterbird migrants may



be seen in passage, and a variety of less-common species such as Red-throated Loon and Parasitic Jaeger are sometimes seen. A partial list of the regional rarities that have been recorded here includes Western Grebe, American White Pelican, Long-tailed Jaeger, California and Sabine's Gulls, and Arctic Tern. Shorebirds often pause to rest on the beaches, particularly in the early morning. While overall numbers are typically low, almost any of the regular shorebird species in Michigan can occur (especially both yellowlegs, Sanderling, and Dunlin), and this has become a regular location for recording American Avocet, Willet, and Marbled Godwit in mid- to late summer. Gull and tern flocks, comprised of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls and Caspian, Common, and Forster's Terns, often gather on the beaches, particularly north of the river mouth, and should always be checked for less-common species. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon are regular migrants along the shore here, and Snowy Owl turns up occasionally in late fall and early winter.

Tiscornia Beach Park is directly adjacent to the North Pier on the north side of the St. Joseph River mouth. Because it receives less use than the beaches on the south side of the river, it is the favored stop for local birders. This is an excellent area for scanning the lake and beaches north of the river,

and it is very easy to walk out onto the North Pier from here. But be cautious during periods of high winds or waves! A daily parking fee is charged from spring through fall.

To reach Tiscornia Beach from northern Berrien County, take the Benton Harbor exit (Exit 33) from I-94 and follow Business I-94 West for 4.8 miles, through downtown Benton Harbor and over the St. Joseph River, to the stoplight at the intersection of Port Street and Main Street (M-63) in downtown St. Joseph. (*NOTE: After crossing the river, Business I-94 West and Port Street are one and the same for a few blocks until Business I-94 turns south on Main Street.*) Turn right (north) at the light onto M-63 and go 0.6 mile, crossing over the St. Joseph River, to Momany Drive. Turn left onto Momany and go 0.3 mile to Upton Drive. Turn left onto Upton and after 0.1 mile angle left onto Marina Drive. Continue 0.2 mile, passing the marina, to Ridgeway and turn left. The park entrance is 0.1 mile ahead on the right.

NOTE: If you're coming from southern Berrien County, take the Stevensville exit (Exit 23) from I-94 and follow Business I-94 East for 5.9 miles into downtown St. Joseph to the intersection with Ship Street (at this point Business I-94 East, M-63, and Main Street are one and the same). Business I-94 East goes to the right onto Ship Street, but you should continue straight ahead for one block to the intersection with Port Street. From here continue straight on M-63 for 0.6 mile to Momany Drive.

Jean Klock Park, located about one mile north of Tiscornia Beach, is another good spot from which to scan the lake and often has flocks of resting gulls and terns in the afternoon. The trees, shrubs, and grasses in the small dunes can also be good locations to check for migrant landbirds. From Tiscornia Beach Park, return to the intersection of Upton and Momany Drives. Continue straight on Upton Drive for 0.4 mile to Jean Drive. Turn left for 0.1 mile to the park entrance on the left. A daily entry fee is charged during the summer months. (*NOTE: At the time of this writing, January 2004, park hours were sporadic and unpredictable. This information has been provided in the hopes the park will be open on a regular basis in the future.*)

Silver Beach County Park is adjacent to the South Pier on the south side of the St. Joseph River mouth. To reach Silver Beach from Tiscornia or Jean Klock Parks, return south on M-63 to the intersection with Port Street. Turn right onto Port Street and go one block to the stop sign at State Street. Turn right onto State Street and proceed down the hill and then left along the river for 0.3 mile to Broad Street. Turn right and continue straight ahead to the park entrance. A daily entry fee is charged from spring through fall.

From the parking areas and beach, you can scan the lake and nearby shoreline. To reach the South Pier, walk north along the beach or to the north end of the parking lot. Walking out on the pier (weather and wave conditions permitting) allows a closer view of birds sitting on the water or flying offshore. Silver Beach can be an excellent location in the early morning during spring and fall, but on warm, sunny days, the beach crowds usually force the birds to move to other, less-crowded beaches.

SW-27 Grand Mere State Park

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 26, D2. 42°00' N, 86°33' W

Contact Information: 269-426-4013

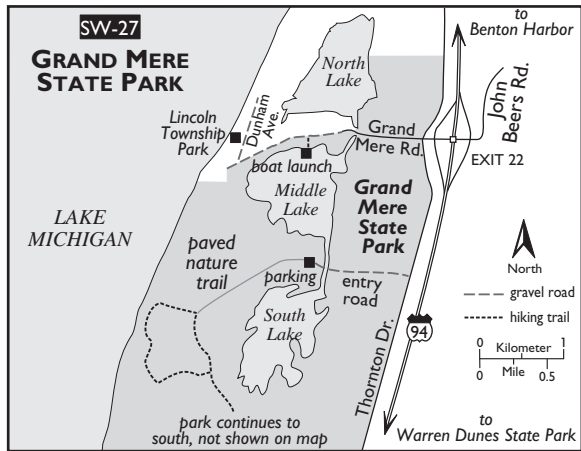
www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From I-94 south of Benton Harbor, take Exit 22, John Beers Road, and turn west. Continue straight ahead on John Beers, which soon becomes Grand Mere Road and enters the park.

Undeveloped Grand Mere State Park features over 1,200 acres of woodlands, scenic dunes, a mile of Lake Michigan shoreline, and three inland lakes. To explore North Lake and Middle Lake in the northern section of the park, continue on Grand Mere Road across the channel between the two lakes. To the right are North Lake and a parking area. From the children's play area near the parking lot, you can scan the lake for waterfowl in the spring. (You will find only duck hunters and decoys here in the fall.) The trees around the parking lot and the edges of the adjacent woods can also be good for woodland birds in migration, so it pays to wander around a bit, particularly during the peak of the spring warbler movement in mid-May.

To scan Middle Lake, continue west on Grand Mere Road for a short distance to a small boat launch on the left, where you can stop. For a view of Lake Michigan, continue west on Grand Mere Road. Just before the road ends at a barrier, turn right onto Dunham Avenue to Lincoln Township Park on the left. The small overlook here is a good spot from which to scan the lake for diving ducks from late fall through early spring. In recent years, flocks of scaup and Common Goldeneyes have been joined by all three scoter species. This is also a good place for shore access if you wish to walk south along the state park beach to check for other waterfowl as well as shorebirds offshore.

To access the forests and dunes of the main Grand Mere area, return to John Beers Road and turn south onto Thorton Drive (this is immediately on the west side of the I-94 interchange and will be a left turn if coming from the interstate exit). Continue south for 0.5 mile to the park entrance on the right. Turn in and continue down the gravel road to the main parking area. (If



you don't have a state park annual pass, you can purchase a daily pass at the self-serve pay station just inside the entrance.) Depending on the season, a variety of woodland species may be found along the entry road and around the edges of the parking area.

To explore beyond the parking area, follow the paved trail at the west end of the parking lot. You will soon come to a short paved trail on the left that leads to an opening where you can scan through the trees for wetland species on South Lake. To continue searching for woodland species or to bird the open dunes, continue west on the main paved trail, which eventually becomes an unpaved surface. You will find numerous side trails that allow explorations of Grand Mere's forests and dunes, but few are marked, so exercise caution if you start wandering about and are not familiar with area! Several northern breeding warblers nest here, including Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, and Canada, but Grand Mere is also often host to species with southern affinities, such as Hooded Warbler and occasionally White-eyed Vireo. Some of the steeper dune slopes in the southern part of the property have also been host to Worm-eating Warbler in recent years, but its occurrence has not been annual. The best way to find one, when present, is to hike through the area in late spring or early summer and listen for its song.

NOTE: As is the case at many Michigan state parks, sections of the park are open to hunting between September and April.

SW-28 Warren Dunes State Park

Spring**** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*

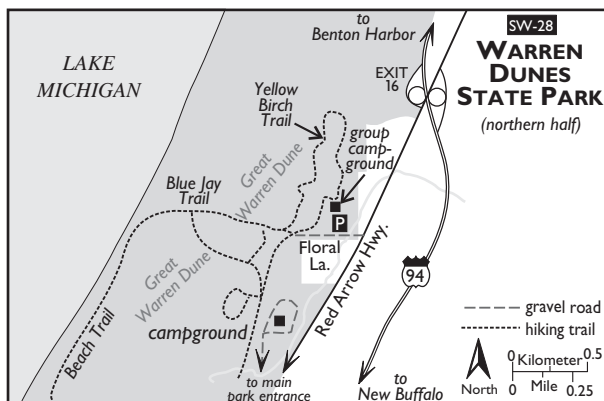
DeLorme p. 18, A2. 41°55' N, 86°35' W

Contact Information: 269-426-4013

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: The main entrance to Warren Dunes State Park (about halfway between St. Joseph and New Buffalo) is reached from I-94. Take the Bridgman exit (Exit 16) and go 2.0 miles south along the Red Arrow Highway to the park entrance on the right.

Warren Dunes State Park offers excellent birding on 1,950 acres of wooded and open dunes and extensive beachfront along Lake Michigan. Waterfowl, gulls, terns, and shorebirds can



often be viewed from the beach pavilions, which are reached by following the main park road west to the lakefront parking areas. However, the favorite spot of local birders is at the quieter, northern end of the park in the vicinity of the Organizational Youth Camping Area. To reach this area, drive 1.5 miles north of the main park entrance on Red Arrow Highway to **Floral Lane**. (If coming from the north, Floral Lane is 0.5 mile south of Exit 16 from I-94.) Turn west off Red Arrow Highway onto Floral Lane and park in the small trailhead/campground parking just ahead on the right. (Sections of the park are open to hunting between September and April.)

There is an excellent birding trail that begins here, but don't rush off, as the birding right around the parking lot and in the youth camping area can be very good, especially in the early mornings during spring and fall migrations. Eventually, you will want to walk to the west end of Floral Lane, birding along the way. This will lead to the start of the Yellow Birch Trail, just inside the woods at the base of the dunes. From here, the trail loops north around a wetland at the base of the dunes and ends up back in the youth camping area. The diverse habitats along the trail usually results in an excellent variety of landbird sightings during migration periods. Virtually all of Michigan's regular migrant warblers are seen here and several breed, including Hooded and Canada. Each spring, Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers are found by a few lucky birders. On days with easterly winds, it pays to keep looking up, as good raptor movements are often noted from the camping area, or better yet, from the tops of the open dunes. Raptor rarities that have been seen from here include Mississippi Kite, Swainson's Hawk, and Golden Eagle.

In recent years, a small colony of Prairie Warblers has also been present in the open dune areas at the far west end of the Blue Jay Trail, which is also reached from the west end of Floral Lane. It's a fairly strenuous hike over the dunes on Blue Jay Trail, best done early in the morning. In summer 2004, another Prairie Warbler location with easier access was discovered in the park. Enter at the main park entrance on Red Arrow Highway, 1.5 miles south of Floral Lane. After the entrance booth, make an immediate right turn onto the road to the main campground. In 0.5 mile, you will see a paved parking area with a picnic shelter on the left. Park here and follow the currently unnamed but obvious trail west into a large open dune area. (The Nature Trail also begins at this parking area, but heads north into the woods and eventually links with the Yellow Birch Trail.) To look for the Prairie Warblers, continue into the open dunes for a couple of hundred yards over level terrain. When the trail begins to climb a noticeable rise, veer left off the trail toward the base of the wooded dune ahead, which is where the birds were in 2004.

SW-29 The New Buffalo Area

Spring**** Summer*** Fall**** Winter***
DeLorme p. 18, B1. 41°48' N, 86°44' W

Directions: From I-94, take Exit 1, LaPorte Road, and turn northwest toward New Buffalo; this is a right turn if exiting from I-94 westbound.

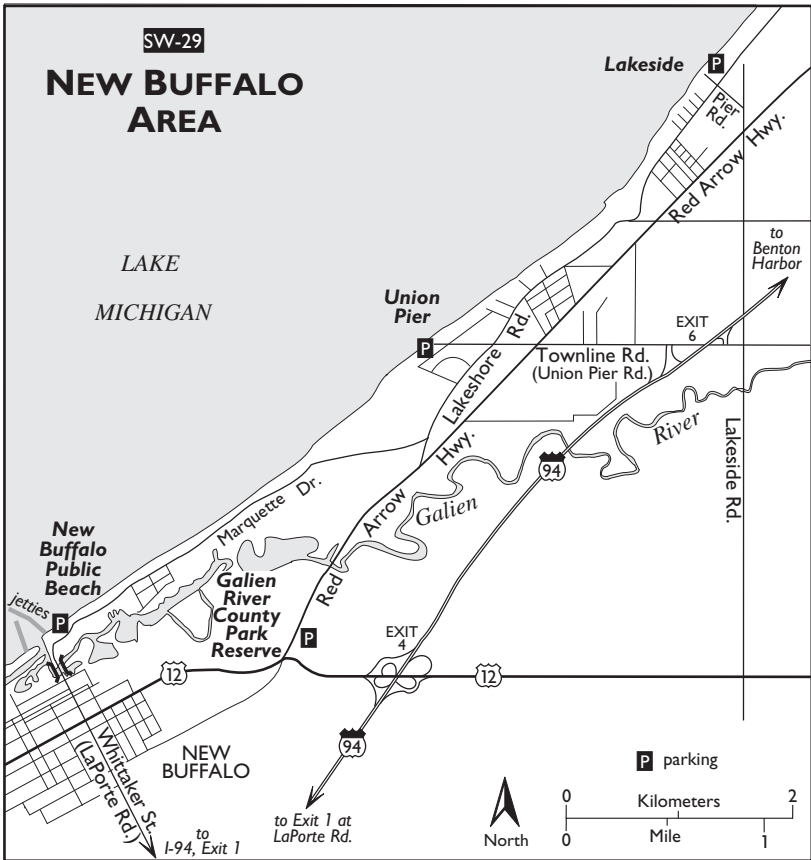
Follow LaPorte Road, which becomes Whittaker Street, for 1.3 miles into New Buffalo to the stoplight at the intersection with US-12 (Buffalo Street). Continue straight ahead on Whittaker Street over the Galien River. The entrance to the beach parking lot is on your left about 0.5 mile from the stoplight. An entry fee is charged.

The small **New Buffalo Public Beach** at the mouth of the Galien River is another excellent location for geese, ducks, loons, grebes, gulls, and terns during the spring and fall migration periods. As previously mentioned for the St. Joseph River mouth site, impressive concentrations of waterbird migrants may be seen during fall migration, particularly following the passage of a cold front. Rarities that have been recorded here include Brant, King Eider, Western Grebe, Snowy Egret, Red Phalarope, Mew Gull, Long-tailed Jaeger, and Roseate (the only state record) and Arctic Terns.

This is one of the better locations in Michigan for Laughing Gull in spring and summer, and other uncommon gulls may be seen with the gull flocks on the beach. In late fall and early winter, Purple Sandpipers sometimes show up on the rocky jetties, and Harlequin Ducks are occasionally seen swimming and feeding adjacent to the jetties. The beach and the sandy areas on both sides of the inner harbor should be checked for resting shorebirds, gulls, and terns. Peregrine Falcons and Merlins are regular migrants along the shore here, and Snowy Owls turn up occasionally in late fall and early winter.

Galien River County Park Preserve is located a short distance upstream from the river mouth. The entrance is located on Red Arrow Highway, 0.3 mile north of the junction with US-12, and across from the New Buffalo Township Hall and Fire Department. Parking is available at the Township Hall, but please use caution when crossing busy Red Arrow Highway on foot. This recent park acquisition will provide excellent landbirding in the New Buffalo area in the future. Planned developments include an interpretive center with observation windows and feeders, as well as trails through both upland and wetland habitats. At the time of this writing (January 2004), the park is undeveloped, but some trails do exist and birders are welcome to explore and search for birds. The wetland area is particularly significant in that it is part of the larger New Buffalo Marsh, a Great Lakes marsh that formed along the Galien River just upstream from the river's mouth at Lake Michigan. For updates on access and planned improvements, call Love Creek County Park at 269-471-2617, or visit the Berrien County Parks website at www.berriencounty.org/parks/galien.html.

Located along the lakeshore north of New Buffalo, the **Union Pier** and **Lakeside Overlooks** offer opportunities to scan Lake Michigan for resting ducks, loons, and grebes. From late fall through early spring, large flocks of diving ducks occasionally form here and could include Harlequin Duck, all three scoters, or Red-throated Loon. Rarities that have been seen with these flocks include King Eider and Barrow's Goldeneye. To reach the overlook at **Union Pier**, go north from the intersection of US-12 and the Red Arrow Highway on



Red Arrow for 2.4 miles to Townline Road. (Note: This area can also be reached from the north by taking the Union Pier exit, Exit 6, from I-94 and going west on Union Pier Road, which changes to Townline Road west of the Red Arrow Highway.) Turn left (west) onto Townline Road and go to its end at an observation platform and a stairway to the beach. Local birders often refer to this site as Townline Road. Residents have installed “no parking” signs near the end of the road, but these seem directed at summer beach crowds. The birding is best during the beach off-season, so if you use common sense and don’t block driveways, you should not have any problems.

To reach the overlook in **Lakeside**, continue north from Townline Road on the Red Arrow Highway for 1.8 miles to Lakeside Road in the small community of Lakeside. Turn left onto Lakeside Road, and after 0.1 mile turn left again onto Pier Road. Drive to the end of Pier Road, where you will find another overlook platform with stairs to the beach.

SW-30 The Galien River Floodplain

Spring**** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 18, B2. 41°47' N, 86°38' W

The floodplain forests along the **Galien River** in southwest Berrien County are some of the best sites in the area for a variety of nesting woodland species and spring migrants. The roadsides near the intersection of Forest Lawn and Lakeside Roads and the trails in Warren Woods State Park (the next site) both provide good access. The large sycamores in the river floodplain along these roads are some of the best locations in Michigan for breeding Yellow-throated Warblers. Other species to expect in the forests during spring and summer include Red-shouldered Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cerulean Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush.

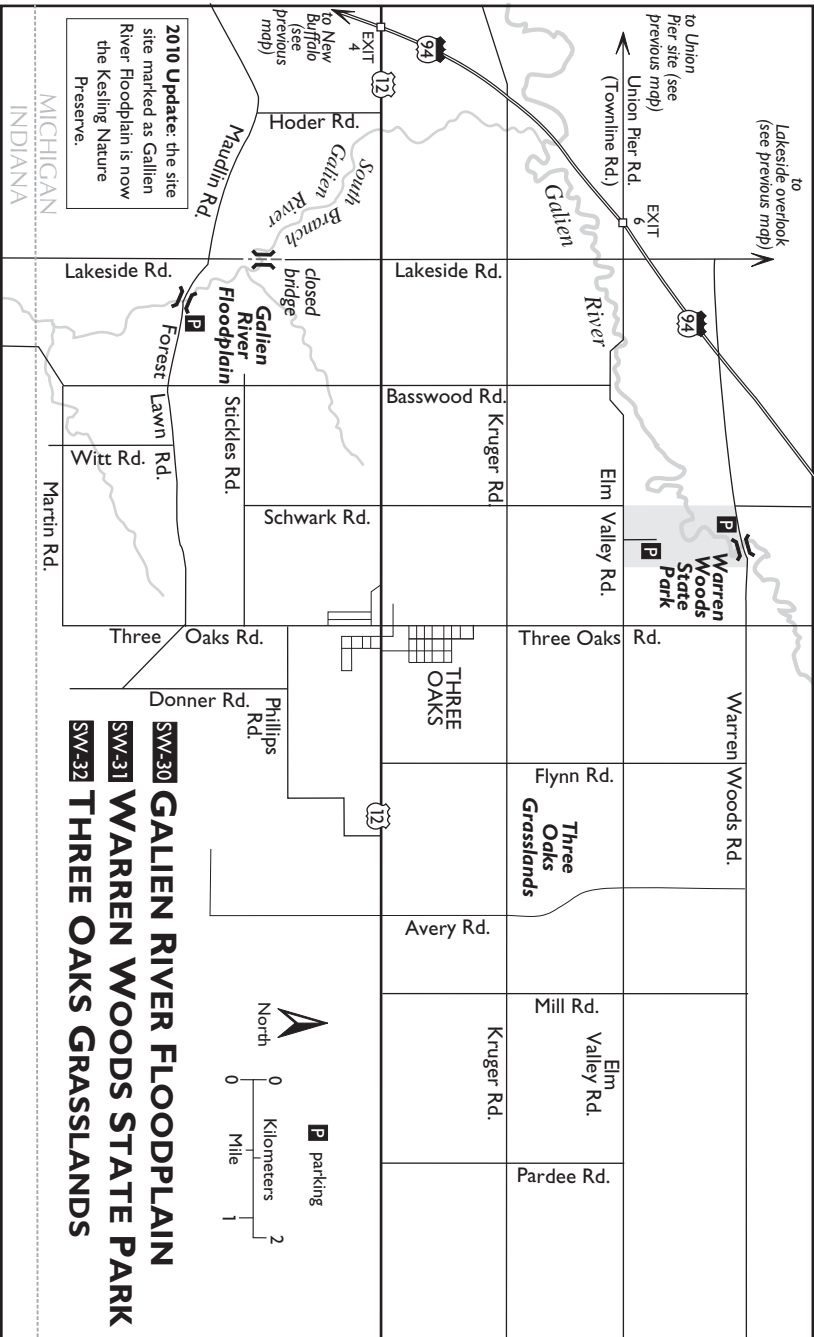
To reach the Forest Lawn and Lakeside Roads area, take I-94 to the US-12 exit (Exit 4). Go east for 3.0 miles on US-12 to Basswood Road (you will pass the intersection with Lakeside Road, but do not turn here, as the bridge over the Galien River has been closed). Turn right (south) onto Basswood Road and continue 1.6 miles to Forest Lawn Road. Turn right (west) and drive past the towering Forest Lawn Landfill until the road drops into the river valley, where you will find a small pulloff area on the right (north), 0.7 mile from Basswood Road. You can park here, or farther ahead on the opposite side of the road (beyond the main bridge), to begin exploring the roadsides on foot. The best birding is typically between the bridges just ahead of the pulloff, and at the west end of the guardrails on the north side of the road. (NOTE: When parking and birding here, be sure to pull well off of the road; stay alert for passing traffic.)

To explore the riparian habitats along Lakeside Road, continue 0.4 mile beyond the pulloff to the intersection with Lakeside Road. Turn right on what is now labeled as a “one-lane, unimproved” road and proceed 0.3 mile to the currently closed bridge over the Galien River. Some birders prefer to park near the intersection and proceed on foot to the bridge, birding along the way. The best birding is typically in the vicinity of the bridge and along the road back to the bridge, between the intersection and the bridge. Most property in this area is private, so all birding must be done from the roadways. However, at the time of this writing (January 2004), Three Oaks Township had acquired a section of forest on the east side of the river to the south of Forest Lawn Road. (2010 update: This section is now known as the Kesling Nature Preserve, with access and parking on the east side of the bridge; www.swmlc.org/images/Kesling_Preserve_Trail_Map.jpg.)

SW-31 Warren Woods State Park

Spring**** Summer*** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 18, B2. 41°50' N, 86°37' W
 Contact Information: 269-426-4013
www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From the intersection of US-12 and Three Oaks Road in the town of Three Oaks, take Three Oaks Road north for 3.0 miles to Warren Woods Road and turn left (west) for 0.7 mile, where the road enters



the woods and the road is wide enough to park along the road. (NOTE: Exercise caution when parking along or pulling back out onto Warren Woods Road. It's not a particularly busy road, but some vehicles travel through this section at high rates of speed.)

Warren Woods includes 311 acres of mature floodplain forest along the Galien River and an impressive stand of old-growth beech-maple forest. It is a great spot to search for woodpeckers, thrushes, and warblers, and is probably the best location in Berrien County to see a Pileated Woodpecker, but even here they can be elusive. Acadian Flycatchers and Hooded Warblers are usually easy to find in the upland forest north of the river, while Carolina Wren, Yellow-throated and Cerulean Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, and many other species are often present near or along the river. Before dawn this is a good location to listen for Barred Owl—and sometimes one can be seen during daylight hours. The official park entry is on Elm Valley Road, but the pedestrian bridge over the Galien River was destroyed by a falling tree a few years ago. As a result, it is not possible to reach the northern section of the park from the southern parking area, and the best birding is typically in the northern section. From the north, the park can be entered by parking along Warren Woods Road and hiking south along the trail that starts just west of the bridge over Galien River. Although the trails are not marked, it is not too difficult to find your way south from Warren Woods Road to the river and back again.

SW-32 Three Oaks Grasslands

*Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 18

As noted earlier, the prairies of northwest Indiana once extended north into Berrien County. Although most of the original habitat no longer exists, a few Henslow's Sparrows, Dickcissels, and Western Meadowlarks are typically still present during the breeding season in suitable agricultural areas. The back roads northeast of the town of Three Oaks have been dependable for these species in recent years. The best way to find the birds is to drive the backroads, looking for appropriate habitat and listening for the songs. To begin, take Three Oaks Road north from the town of Three Oaks to Elm Valley Road and turn right. One recently occupied location is north of Elm Valley Road and east of Mill Road (see previous map). The nearby intersection of Mill Road (labeled Avery Road in DeLorme) and Kruger Road has also been reliable for Western Meadowlark and Dickcissel (present in 2004). In winter, Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings can occasionally be found. Locations for any of the species mentioned here vary from year to year based on farming practices, so driving any of the roads in the area may turn up grassland species. The best way to get current information is to check rare bird reports or contact the staff of any of the three nature centers listed in this section (SW-24 Sarrett, SW-35 Fernwood, or SW-36 Love Creek).



Yellow-throated Warbler

Allen T. Chartier

SW-33 Mud Lake Bog Preserve

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 18, B3. 41°49' N, 86°25' W

Directions: From the intersection of US-12 and Cleveland Road in Galien, go east on US-12 for 1.2 miles to Gardner Road. Turn left (north) and go 2.0 miles to Elm Valley Road. Turn right (east) and go east 2.0 miles to the walk-in entrance on the left (north) side of the road.

This small, infrequently birded preserve, located on Elm Valley Road between the towns of Galien and Buchanan, was preserved primarily for its unique plant community, but also offers good birding. Woodland resident species as well as migrants may be found in the trees and shrubs around the parking lot. White-eyed Vireo and Yellow-breasted Chat are present some years, and Sandhill Cranes recently began nesting in the bog. Henslow's Sparrow was present in 2003 and 2004 along Warren Woods Road to the north-

east of Mud Lake. Red-shouldered Hawks also nest nearby and should be watched for overhead. If you arrive before dawn in mid- to late spring, listen for bitterns, rails, Eastern Screech-Owl, and Barred Owl. Boardwalk trails provide access to the bog, and an observation tower provides a good view.

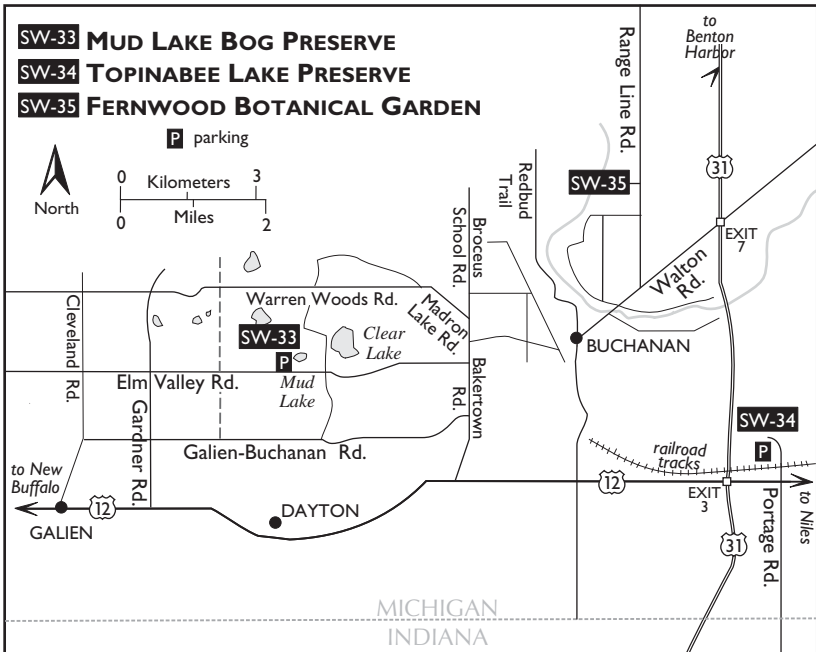
To return to US-12, continue east on Elm Valley Road 2.6 miles to Madron Lake Road. (Note: Madron Lake Road is shown incorrectly in DeLorme as Broceus School Road, but in reality Broceus School Road branches off Madron Lake Road just north of Fourth Street). Turn right (south), where Madron Lake Road soon becomes Bakertown Road. Continue south on Bakertown for 1.6 miles to US-12. To continue on to the Topinabee Lake Preserve, the next site, turn left onto US-12.

SW-34 Topinabee Lake Preserve

Spring*** Summer** Fall* Winter
DeLorme p. 19, B4. 42°48' N, 86°18' W

Directions: From the intersection of US-12 and US-31, go east on US-12 for 0.8 mile to the turn for Portage Road North. Turn left (you will be briefly directed back to the west on US-12) and then turn right onto Portage Road.

This Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (www.swmlc.org) property is probably not worth a special trip to Berrien County, but its proximity to the intersection of US-31 and US-12, just southwest of Niles, makes it a nice



stop for birders enroute to other locations in eastern Berrien County. The 71-acre shallow lake with emergent marsh vegetation attracts waterfowl and other marsh species. In early and mid-spring, this site can host ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, wading birds, and other wetland species. Rarities that have been recorded here include Snowy Egret. From Portage Road near the railroad tracks, you can see the south side of the lake. *Do not walk out onto the tracks.* The north side of the lake can be viewed from a recently completed observation deck that is near the preserve sign, another 0.5 mile north of US-12.

SW-35 Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 19, A4. 41°52' N, 86°21' W

Contact Information: 269-695-6491; <http://landtrust.org/fernwood/fernwood.htm>

Directions: From US-31 north of Buchanan, take the Walton Road exit (Exit 7). Turn west (left if coming from the south) onto Walton Road and go 1.7 miles to Range Line Road. Turn right onto Range Line Road and go 1.7 miles to the entrance on the left. See previous map.

Fernwood is located on the east bank of the St. Joseph River northeast of Buchanan, and features 105 acres with woods, gardens, an arboretum, and a restored native prairie. A five-acre restored tallgrass prairie preserves a gene pool of more than 150 species of grassland plants, including examples of 140 trees and shrubs, many native to the region. The nature center staff sponsors regular birding field trips and can provide information on recent sightings and trail recommendations. Stop in at the nature center, or call 269-695-6491 to speak with a naturalist (www.fernwoodbotanical.org). An entry fee is charged, and the preserve is closed on Monday.

At least one pair of Orchard Orioles is present most years in the arboretum area, and one or more Yellow-throated Warblers have been present in recent years in the large sycamores near the nature center. The gardens and woodland edges near the visitor center are excellent areas to search for Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Scarlet Tanager, orioles, and many woodland migrants. Additional woodland species such as Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Red-eyed Vireo can be found by exploring the trails that head west to the river and north to the preserve, while a variety of feeder species can be seen from the nature center's observation window.

SW-36 Love Creek County Park and Nature Center

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 19, A4. 41°57' N, 86°19' W

Contact Information: 269-471-2617, www.berriencounty.org/parks/lovecreek.html

Directions: From US-31 in southern Berrien County, take the Walton Road exit (Exit 7). Turn right (northeast) onto Walton Road for 2.1 miles to the T-intersection at Old US-31, turn left (north) onto Old US-31, and

go 5.9 miles to Deans Hill Road. Turn right onto Deans Hill Road and then make an immediate right onto Pokagon Road. Go 1.7 miles to Huckleberry Road and turn left (north). The entrance to the park is 0.8 mile on the left. Directional signs are located on Old US-31 south of Berrien Springs and on M-140 in Berrien Center. From the St. Joseph/Benton Harbor area, exit from I-94 at M-139 in Benton Harbor (Exit 28). Follow M-139 south to Berrien Springs. (Note that M-139 becomes Old US-31 8.3 miles south of I-94.) Follow the directions above from Berrien Springs. The park can also be reached from the north from I-94 near Watervliet (M-140, Exit 41). Go south on M-140 to Deans Hill Road, and follow the directions above from Berrien Springs. See the Southwestern Corner Area map on page 406.

This county park and nature center features mostly upland habitats, including areas of mature beech-maple forest. Acadian Flycatchers and Louisiana Waterthrushes nest in the wooded stream ravines, and Pileated Woodpeckers are being seen with increasing frequency. The wooded trails and forest edges can be very good for migrant songbirds. The park also includes old field areas where White-eyed Vireos and Yellow-breasted Chats have been present in recent summers along the brushy margins of the Prairie View Trail. The new nature center building features observation windows where a variety of birds can be seen at the feeders. Love Creek is also the sponsor of the Berrien Birding Club, so it is a dependable place to find both local and regional birding information. A daily entry fee is charged.

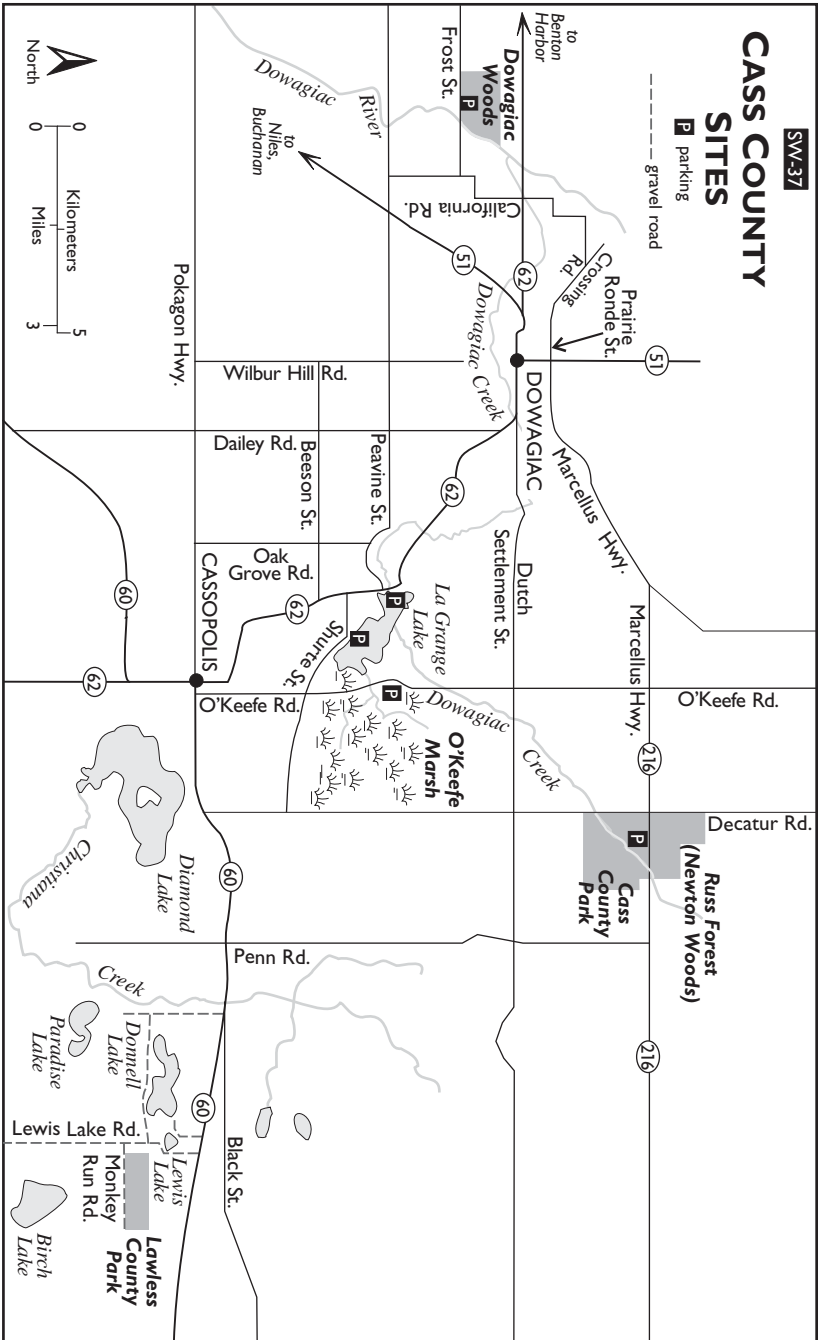
SW-37 Cass County Sites

By Jonathan T. Wuepper and Allen T. Chartier

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter*

Although not birded as frequently as its better-known neighbor, Berrien County, **Cass County** has a variety of good birding sites and contains more prairie areas than any other county in the state. Short descriptions of a few of the better sites are provided below for those interested in exploring, without specific target species in mind. The county is underbirded, even by Michigan birders, although when a Green Violet-ear showed up at the feeder of artist Cyndy Callog in Edwardsburg, the county gained temporary national recognition. Since 2000, Trumpeter Swans are usually present nearly every season among the Mute Swans on Stone Lake in Cassopolis.

Dowagiac Woods (DeLorme p. 19, A5. 41°58' N, 86°12' W) is owned by Michigan Nature Association (www.michigannature.org) and managed by the Cass County Audubon Society. This 235-acre preserve is primarily beech-maple forest, interspersed with tall Tulip-trees among the more than 50 other tree species recorded here. In spring the stunning wildflower display is considered one of the best in the state and includes rare and protected species, so please do not leave the trails or disturb the wildflowers in any way. In April and May, among more than 50 flowering species, there are carpets of Dutch-



man's Breeches, Sharp-lobed Hepatica, Bloodroot, Large-flowered Trillium, Red Trillium, Drooping Trillium, and many other species. There are also rare orchids, including Showy Orchis, but the specialty here is the Blue-eyed Mary, which occurs in Michigan primarily in Cass County (smaller populations occur in Berrien, Lenawee, and Kalamazoo Counties). Rare reptiles recorded here include Black Rat Snake, Eastern Box Turtle, and Spotted Turtle.

From the intersection of M-51 and Prairie Ronde Street in the town of Dowagiac, go south on M-51 for 0.5 mile to the intersection with M-62. Turn right (west) and follow M-62/M-51 west for 0.8 mile to the west end of town, where M-51 goes to the left. Continue straight ahead (west) on M-62 for 1.7 miles to California Road. Turn left and follow California Road, which jogs right and then left for 1.1 miles to Frost Street. Turn right (east) for 1.2 miles to the parking area on the right for Dowagiac Woods.

Ruffed Grouse, Red-shouldered Hawk, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat have been found here in spring and summer. Occasionally, Blue-winged and Yellow-throated Warblers are present, and the latter may have nested in 2003. Acadian and Great Crested Flycatchers breed, as well as Red-eyed Vireos, Wood Thrushes, and Scarlet Tanagers. This is a wonderful area to walk through simply for the richness of the woodlands in April and May. There is a short loop trail in the southwest corner of the preserve, which is entered from Frost Road west of the parking area. From the parking area, a 1.5-mile trail (the "inner trail") leads north to a small pond and a junction with another trail (the "outer trail"). In spring, waterproof footwear is helpful, as the trails are often muddy.

La Grange Lake and O'Keefe Marsh (DeLorme p. 19, A6. 41°57' N, 86°01' W), about halfway between the towns of Dowagiac and Cassopolis, are great for waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes. From the intersection of M-51 and Prairie Ronde Street in the center of Dowagiac, go south on M-51 for 0.5 mile to the intersection with M-62. Turn left (east) onto M-62 and go 4.4 miles to the intersection with Peavine Street in the hamlet of La Grange. The lake is best viewed from two locations here: the first is the parking lot at Lindy's Restaurant, which is just before Peavine Street on the left. (Lindy's is also an excellent place to dine.) The second location is a pulloff on Shurte Street east of M-62. Take M-62 south from Peavine Street for 0.4 mile to Shurte Street. Turn left and go 0.7 mile to the pulloff on the left shoulder of the road; the shoulder here is narrow and caution is advised. The **O'Keefe Marsh** is actually the eastern part of La Grange Lake. Although much of the marsh here was drained in 2002, there are still cattails but somewhat reduced birdlife. The best stop is where a creek crosses under O'Keefe Road north of Shurte Street, about 2.5 miles north of the village of Cassopolis. There are dense cattails here, attractive to bitterns and rails, and as of this writing (November 2003), it was free of the invasive Purple Loosestrife. To reach the marsh, continue east on Shurte Street for 1.0 mile past the La Grange Lake pulloff to O'Keefe Road. Turn left and go 0.8 mile to the creek, where you can

bird from the shoulder of the road. Use caution when birding along the road. This lake and marsh are currently privately owned. Specialties here include Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, and Sandhill Crane. The cranes have overwintered in recent years. Osprey and White-eyed Vireo have also been reported here.

Russ Forest (Newton Woods) (DeLorme p. 27, D7. 42°01' N, 86°58' W), owned by Michigan State University, is one of the few permanently preserved virgin forests in Michigan. Russ Forest is located east of Dowagiac along the Marcellus Highway. From the intersection of M-51 and Prairie Ronde Street in the center of Dowagiac, go east on Prairie Ronde Street, which becomes Marcellus Highway (M-216) just out of town. Go 7.5 miles to Decatur Road and continue for another 0.5 mile on M-216 to the park entrance on the right (south) side of the road. The forest is a mosaic of tree plantations and natural stands covering 939 acres. The site has 400 acres of natural forest containing Black Walnut and White Oak, and an 80-acre pristine stand of maple and beech trees that has been preserved as a natural area. The forest is one of MSU's fourteen Agricultural Experiment Stations, and this particular station is one of four administered by the Forestry Department. It is a multi-use area, where research and extension projects, hunting, fishing, biking, hiking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing all take place. The historically significant Newton House, managed by the Cass County Historical Society, is located here. The forest is good for warblers (including Blue-winged), as well as Ruffed Grouse, Red-shouldered Hawk, Barred Owl (year round), Pileated Woodpecker, and breeding Acadian Flycatcher. It was at this location that a rare hybrid Blue-winged x Mourning Warbler was collected in 1948. The adjacent 12-acre roadside Cass County Park provides parking, playground, and restroom facilities. From the park, you can access the forest trails on foot or bicycle.

Dr. T.K. Lawless County Park (DeLorme p. 20, A1. 41°54' N, 85°52' W) has more than 820 acres with a broad range of habitats and recreational activities, including 7 miles of hiking trails. In October 2001, a tornado damaged part of the forest, which was then logged. There is still much acreage that was untouched by the tornado, and 800-plus acres were added to the park in 2003. Breeding specialties include Red-shouldered Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Red-headed and Pileated Woodpeckers, and Cerulean Warbler. To reach the park from Cassopolis, go east for 7.4 miles on M-60 to Lewis Lake Road. Turn right (south) and go 1.1 miles and turn left (east) onto Monkey Run Road. Go 0.8 mile to the park entrance on the left (entrance fee).

THE KALAMAZOO-BATTLE CREEK AREA

By Ray Adams and Allen T. Chartier

In addition to being the cereal capital of the world, with Kellogg Corporation located in Battle Creek, this area offers some of southern Michigan's best birding opportunities. Two of the state's most important centers of ornithological studies are located here, the Kalamazoo Nature Center and the W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. Long-term population and banding studies, focusing on songbirds and raptors, have been carried out since the 1960s by the Kalamazoo Nature Center. The Kellogg Bird Sanctuary has an even longer history, with research beginning in the 1930s and focusing on waterfowl. Habitat diversity in the region is exceptional, with abundant wetlands, plentiful forest, agricultural land of various types, rivers and lakes, and some limited grasslands. Surveys for the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas conducted during the 1980s found that the number of breeding species in Calhoun, Barry and Kalamazoo Counties is higher than in other comparable inland areas in southern Michigan. Wetlands support a rich variety of waterfowl as well as a large breeding population of Sandhill Cranes. Two of the largest concentrations of breeding Cerulean Warblers in the state occur here, although some of these are on a military reserve with no public access. This is also one of the best places in the state to see a Worm-eating Warbler, typically an overshooting spring migrant from farther south, as well as the elusive Connecticut Warbler, an annual spring and fall migrant. Other southern species, such as White-eyed Vireo, Kentucky Warbler, and Summer Tanager are found in the area almost every spring. Extensive natural areas under protected public and private ownership, interspersed with large and varied agricultural sites, pull in large numbers of migrants. Widespread wildlife plantings in the 1960s and 1970s have added to the area's attractiveness to birds, providing plenty of food and cover throughout the year. The regrowth of forest since the 1960s has greatly aided the recovery of large landbirds such as Wild Turkey, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, and Cooper's Hawk.

SW-38 Mrozek Sod Farm

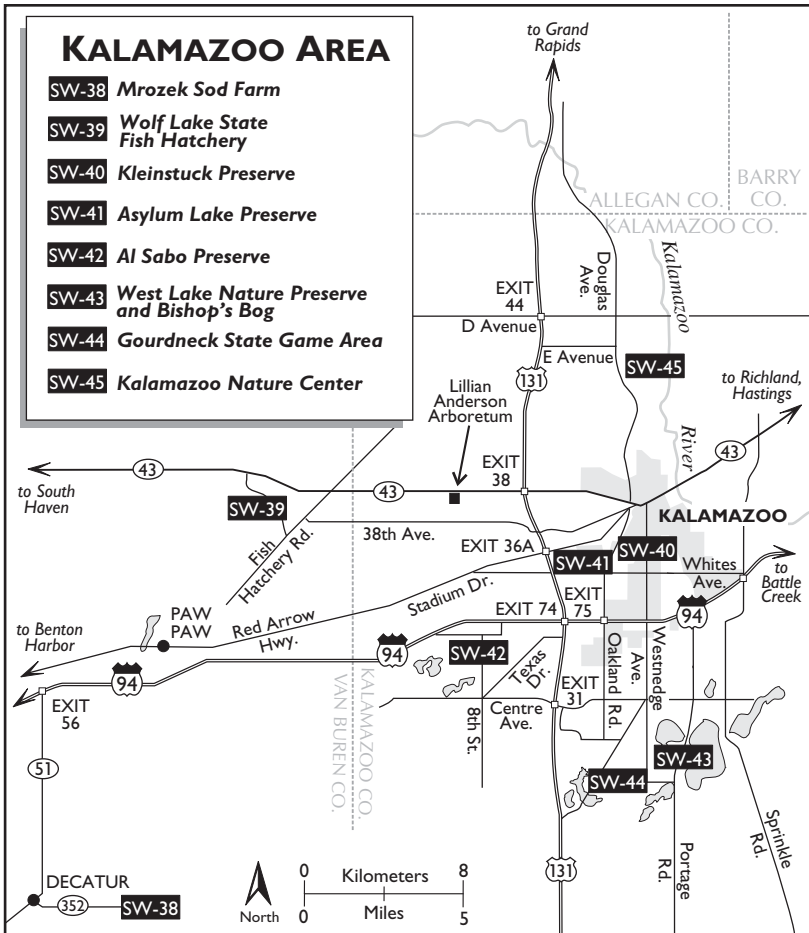
By Russ Schipper and Allen T. Chartier

*Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 27, D7. 42°06' N, 85°55' W

Directions: *From I-94 west of Paw Paw (and some 15 miles west of Kalamazoo), take M-51 (Exit 56) south for 6 miles to the town of Decatur. Go east on CO 352 for about 2 miles to the sod farm. See Kalamazoo Area Map on opposite page.*

Unlike many sod farms in Michigan, the **Mrozek Sod Farm** properties have easy access from public roadways. There is habitat for a number of open-country birds during summer and especially during autumn migration. American Kestrel, Killdeer, American Golden-Plover (September and Octo-



ber), Horned Lark, Savannah Sparrow, and Brewer's Blackbird can all be found here, as well as the occasional Buff-breasted Sandpiper (mainly August and early September). There are numerous places to stop on the side of the road to scope the fields. Birding along 82nd and 88th Avenues, immediately north and south of the sod farms, may yield additional species.

SW-39 Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery

By Jim Granlund and Russ Schipper

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 28, B1. 42°17' N, 85°47' W

Contact Information: Visitor center hours from March through May, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.

From June through August, hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday through

Saturday, and from noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free; 269-668-2876; www.michigan.gov/dnr/; follow the links to fishing, and then fish hatcheries.

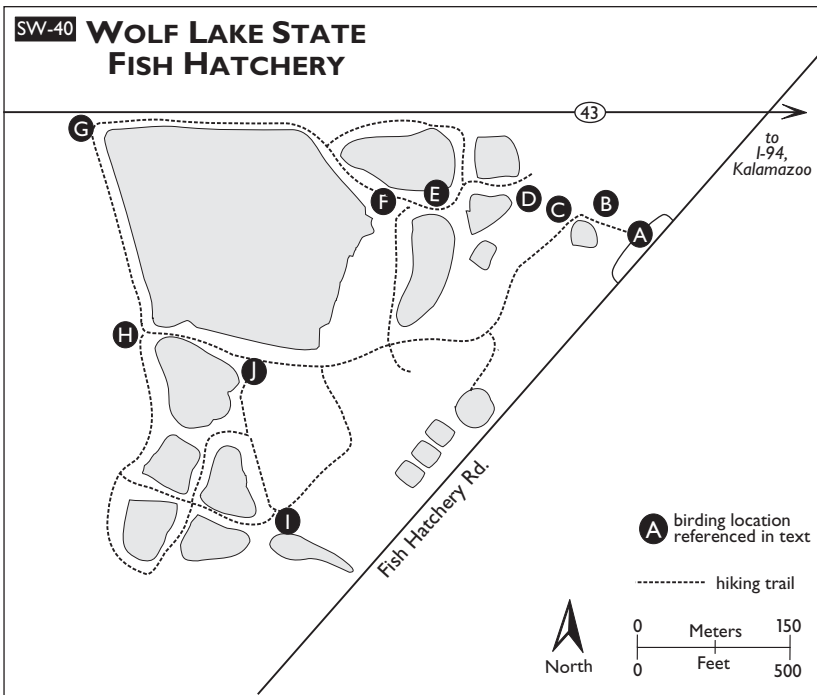
Note: A version of this account was published in 2004 in *Michigan Birds and Natural History* 11: 53-57.

Directions: From I-94 west of Kalamazoo, take US-131 north (Exit 74B) for 3.5 miles to M-43 west (Exit 38B). Go west on M-43 for 6.0 miles to Fish Hatchery Road. Turn left and go 0.1 mile to the visitor center on the right.

Finding shorebird habitat in southwest Michigan is becoming increasingly difficult as access to sewage-treatment facilities becomes restricted and new farming practices eliminate seasonally wet fields. Fortunately for birders, the **Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery** in Van Buren County can, in some years, provide outstanding habitat for shorebirds. The hatchery also hosts good numbers of waterfowl and other migrants as well as a variety of resident species. Situated on 137 acres, the facility has 11 earthen ponds, state-of-the-art rearing facilities, a visitor center, and a show pond. The earthen ponds, varying in size from 2 to 25 acres, and the surrounding woods are the attraction for birders. Suitability of the ponds for waterfowl and shorebirds varies considerably from year to year and from season to season, depending on the management plans of the hatchery. Recent and ongoing renovations have made it difficult to predict the timing of these fluctuations; it may be worth calling the visitor center before making a trip to the area.

Upon arrival, check the large trees bordering the parking lot (**A** on map), which is located on the east end of the facility, for spring and fall migrants, particular warblers in spring. Also consider a visit to the visitor center (**B** on map) and show pond (**C** on map). The center has excellent displays on angling and the hatchery. The show pond on the south contains examples of some of the fish raised at the hatchery, including trout, Muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*), bass, and most interesting, Lake Sturgeon (*Acipenser fulrescens*). It is worth spending a few minutes here, particularly to see the massive, prehistoric-looking sturgeon, which can often be found on the sandy bottom near the drain at the end of the boardwalk. From the show pond you have an excellent panorama of the rearing ponds. You can either go northwest on the established nature trail, or go directly to the rearing ponds to check for waterfowl and shorebirds by crossing the grass to the access road and walking west to the first pond (**D** on map).

The first pond, which receives outflow water from the rearing ponds, stays open in winter, and often has waterfowl. In late winter 2003, a Surf Scoter remained on this pond for a few weeks. The pond is also good in spring and fall for geese, swans, and dabbling ducks. Mute Swans often nest here. Good numbers of swallows are present from spring through fall, with Tree Swallows arriving first and gradually being replaced by Northern Rough-winged, Bank, and Barn Swallows, with the Tree Swallows back from August into September. As you progress west on the road, you will pass be-



tween two ponds (**E** on map), both larger than the first pond. The northern pond (on the right) is generally productive for waterfowl, particularly when the larger pond (just ahead) has low water levels. The vegetation on the margins attracts breeding birds such as Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song and Swamp Sparrows, and Red-winged Blackbird. The southern pond has been dry for the past few years, with water only in the northwest corner. This combination of grass, mud, and water—although small in area—provides excellent habitat for shorebirds, including both yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, and Least Sandpipers, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Wilson's Snipe.

Continue west to a fork in the dike, a pump house, and the largest of the rearing ponds (**F** on map), the main birding attraction at the facility. Depending on the time of day and lighting conditions, good views of the pond can be had from the dike or from a viewing platform on its southeast corner. When full, the pond attracts geese, swans, ducks, American Coots, and grebes. It often remains open throughout the winter and hosts a good variety of wintering ducks, including dabblers (Gadwall, American Black Duck, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, and Northern Pintail), diving ducks (Redhead and Canvasback as well as Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye), and all three mergansers (Hooded and Common are most likely). In migration, any duck species is possible, however, scoters and sea ducks, such as Long-tailed, are

rare. Gadwalls appear in large numbers. Tundra Swans are regular visitors to the hatchery, along with one or two Trumpeters in fall and early winter, and again in spring, allowing birders direct comparison of these difficult-to-separate species.

The pond margins are fringed with cattails, providing nesting habitat for nearly all the typical marsh birds, including Virginia Rail, Sora, and Marsh Wren. In the past, Least Bittern and Common Moorhen have bred here. The margins also provide habitat for herons, of which Great Blue, Green, and Great Egret (primarily in August and September) are regular. Careful observers may also find Black-crowned Night-Heron (most often in August); in early September 1996, a Little Blue Heron was found, and in 2003, a Snowy Egret put in a brief appearance. Shorebirds can be plentiful along the margins when this pond is drawn down. Over the years, nearly all the commonly occurring shorebirds have been recorded, with the most common species including Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, both yellowlegs, Solitary, Spotted, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitcher. Other less-common shorebirds that occur with some regularity are American Golden-Plover, Stilt Sandpiper, and, in the fall, Baird's Sandpiper.

If you wish to continue looking for waterbirds, you can walk south toward more ponds, or if you are interested in passerines, you can continue west until the road curves to the south. This brings you to the western end of the facility, which is fringed by a fairly mature woodlot (**G** on map). In summer, you can expect typical breeding species such as Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Recently, a Pileated Woodpecker has frequented these woods. During spring and fall migration, almost any species can be expected, including a good variety of warblers. The woods continue south to the southwest corner of the hatchery.

Once you have passed the largest pond, you will encounter a series of six smaller ponds laid out roughly in a checkerboard pattern (**H** on map). Each of these ponds can have similar but often fewer of the same waterfowl as the two smaller northeastern ponds (**E** on map). Typically at least one of the ponds is drawn down, providing some shorebird habitat. Since the ponds often become dry when completely drawn down, they provide better habitat after a good rain, attracting swallows and passerines. In early September 1994, a Glossy Ibis was present for several days on the northeastern most pond. You can circle the ponds on the dikes or walk between them, but eventually you will reach the southwestern corner of the facility, where you should head back to the visitor center.

A good route back is a primitive interpretive trail beginning at about the center of the east edge of the six small ponds. South of the six small ponds is a spring (**H** on map), and a small clearing with a couple of two-tracks going to the left. One goes right a short distance to some fenced ponds, the other track heads left (northeast) through a shrubby wooded area in the direction of the visitor center. In migration, this shrubby trail often has White-throated

Sparrows and occasionally a Fox Sparrow. Gray Catbirds and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks nest here. You will come out near the southeast corner of the large pond (I on map). Take the gravel interpretive path up the hill with the handrail. At this point, you can return to the visitor center on either of two routes. If you continue east on the interpretive path along the woods, you will pass a very overgrown pond on the right signed as the “Disappearing Wetlands” (J on map). This spot is productive for migrants such as warblers and Lincoln’s, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows. Alternatively, if you go past the radio tower to a wooded track to the right, you can see the other side of the same overgrown pond. At the radio tower, go north on the gravel path to the visitor center.

An alternative route back to the visitor center from the top of the handrail is to go left between the two ponds. The shrubby pond edges support a variety of sparrows, especially in late summer and fall when the fruiting shrubs attract them. In summer, a Willow Flycatcher often sets up a territory in the area. From this point, you can see the visitor center. On the north side of the show pond is a hedge of bittersweet which, when in fruit, is a good spot to check in winter. Keep a careful eye out for Northern Mockingbird, which occasionally frequents this area. Eventually you will return to the show pond and the parking lot. The entire trip is about 1.9 miles and takes about 1 to 1.5 hours, depending on birds and pace.

On your way to the Fish Hatchery, you will pass the **Lillian Anderson Arboretum**, with more than 100 acres of marsh, meadow, pine plantings, and second-growth deciduous forest. The arboretum, owned and administered by Kalamazoo College, was established in 1998 and has several miles of trails. Birding can be good during migration, but this site is best during the summer because its diverse habitats and extensive forest attract many breeding species. These include Ruffed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, Red-headed Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. For more information and a partial list of species observed, see the arboretum website at www.kzoo.edu/arbort/.

SW-40 Kleinstuck Preserve

By Ray Adams

Spring**** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 28, B3. 42°16' N, 85°36' W

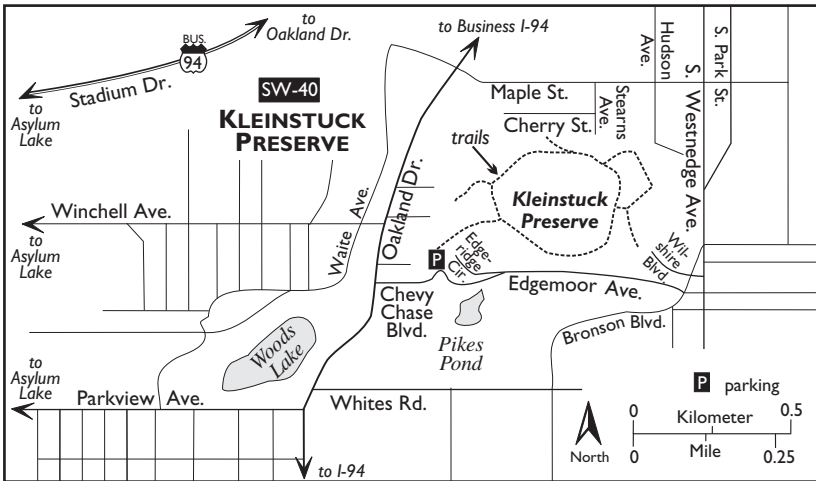
Directions: From I-94, exit onto Oakland Drive (Exit 75) north for 1.9 miles to Chevy Chase. Turn right and follow Chevy Chase east and north about 0.2 mile to the right-angle intersection with Edgemoor. Park along the guardrail on the north side of the road where Chevy Chase ends and Edgemoor begins. The trail begins on the other side of the guardrail near the sign for Kleinstuck Preserve. See next map.

This 44-acre site, owned by Western Michigan University, is one of the top inland sites for migrants in the state. **Kleinstuck Preserve** is a natural oasis in the middle of an upscale older neighborhood in the city of Kalamazoo, and includes open marshland, bog, conifer plantation, deciduous forest, and thickets. The property was acquired by the State of Michigan in 1923. At that time, Kleinstuck was a small wetland surrounded by open fields and younger forest in a mostly urban setting. Extensive plantings for wildlife during the 1930s and 1940s, and years of protection, have resulted in a diverse marsh and woodland-dominated plant community that provides food and cover for birds and other wildlife year round. In early spring, the numerous early-leafing shrubs and a developing maple understory in the midst of the oak-dominated hillsides attract long-distance migrants in large numbers. The open marshland and its associated insect hatches also make the site attractive to a range of marsh-nesting birds. Several side trails join the main trail at various points around the main circular trail, and all are worth exploring.

The area has been well-known as a birding destination since the 1950s. Beginning in 1972, the Kalamazoo Nature Center established a daily spring migrant survey that began in early April and continued through May. The starting date was gradually advanced until 1992, and since then the survey has run from March 23 through May 31. Over the 31-year period, the survey has tallied more than 205 species of birds, including 38 warbler species, on this small site. On the best May days, 20 or more warbler species can be found, along with a great variety of other migrants, and daily species totals have occasionally exceeded 80 species.

In late March and the first half of April, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Fox Sparrow are common migrants. By mid-April, Hermit Thrush and Yellow-rumped Warbler begin to arrive. Other warblers and long-distance migrants arrive in numbers in the last week in April, with many arriving about May 1. By May 8, the majority of spring migrants are passing through Kleinstuck, and from then through May 15 the migration can be spectacular. At times the warbler numbers have been amazing, with over 120 singing Tennessee Warblers present on one noteworthy day. Kleinstuck also is an excellent place to see uncommon migrants such as Connecticut Warbler, which has been observed in all but three years of the survey. Worm-eating Warbler has been present 14 years, as has Kentucky Warbler. Bell's Vireo has been found on 4 occasions, White-eyed Vireo in 14 years, Prothonotary Warbler in 8 years, Yellow-breasted Chat in 5 years, and Summer Tanager in 7 years. Among the exceptional migrants reported has been a Black-throated Gray Warbler that remained for six days in 1991. In recent years, the numbers of migrants have declined slightly, possibly as a result of continuing maturation of the forest on the site.

When water levels are high, you might see some of the more secretive wetland species. Virginia Rail and Sora have bred here on numerous occasions, as have Wood Duck and Green Heron. Sandhill Crane, American Bit-



tern, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, and Common Moorhen have also been present when water levels are high. In late March and early April, migrant waterfowl stop by.

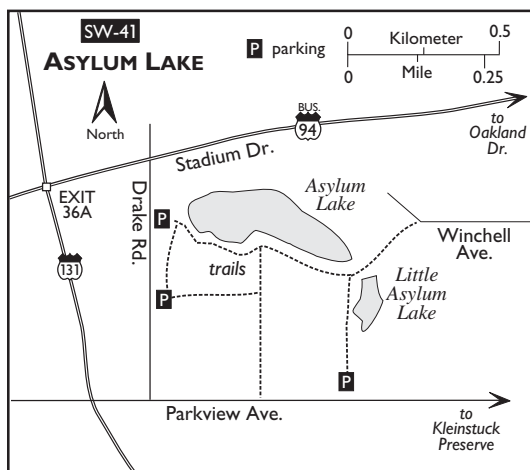
The small size of the area limits the number of species remaining to breed, although the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas in the 1980s reported over 70 species as possible, probable, and confirmed breeders. Among the more interesting were a confirmed Pine Siskin, and, as recently as 2003, a Northern Goshawk observed several times in May. Regular nesters include Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Carolina Wren, Indigo Bunting, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole. The area is also worth visiting in fall, with warblers occasionally present in good numbers. The extensive fruit-bearing shrubs provide plentiful food for permanent residents and late-lingering and overwintering birds. Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, White-throated Sparrow, and Purple Finch are regular in most winters.

SW-41 Asylum Lake Preserve

By Ray Adams

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 28, B2. 42°16' N, 85°39' W

Directions: From I-94 west of Kalamazoo, take US-131 (Exit 74B) north for 3 miles to Stadium Drive East (Exit 36A). Go 0.1 mile east to Drake Road and turn right for 0.2 mile to a parking lot on the left. Additional parking lots are located south along Drake Road and east of Drake on Parkview Avenue. See map on next page.



This is another site owned by Western Michigan University, with 274 acres that include **Asylum and Little Asylum Lakes**, a small stream, wetlands, open fields, a prairie/oak savanna in the process of restoration, and substantial mature oak forest. Since 1976, 180 bird species have been observed on the site. Among the most unusual were King Rail (casual) in 1976, Townsend's Warbler

(accidental) in 1996, and Summer Tanager in 1987 and 2000. The list of waterfowl observed during the 25-year period is impressive, as is the list of warblers, with 29 species recorded. In an average year, 130 or more species can be expected. More information and links to research reports can be found at www.wmich.edu/asylumlake/.

The best time to visit the area is during spring migration, when thrushes, warblers, and sparrows are moving through in good numbers, and waterfowl are lingering on the lakes. Flocks of migrant warblers frequently forage along the southern shore of Asylum Lake. Virginia Rails and Soras may be found at the west end of Asylum Lake and around Little Asylum Lake during late spring and summer. During the fall migration, birds again pass through on their way south, and during late August and September, passerines are present in good numbers. Connecticut Warbler, for example, is a regular visitor at that time. The fall waterfowl migration is concentrated during October and early November, with birds remaining into December as long as open water persists at the west end of Asylum Lake. Fall birders may see 10 to 12 species of waterfowl on Asylum Lake, including Wood Duck, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, and American Coot. Spring waterbird migration takes place in March and April, bringing as many as 16 species, with the greatest numbers and variety occurring in April. Species include Wood Duck, Gadwall, Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, and Pied-billed Grebe. Forty-five or more species breed at the Asylum Lake site, including Green Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Great Crested Flycatcher, Field Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, and Eastern Meadowlark. Prior to the 1990s, grassland birds were prevalent, and Bobolink had a long history at this site and on the adjacent Baker Farm (now Western Michigan University's Parkview Avenue campus). Hopefully the prairie/oak savanna will again attract some of the declining grassland species once restoration is completed.

SW-42 Al Sabo Preserve

By Ray Adams

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 28, C2. 42°13' N, 85°40' W

Directions: From US-131, about 2.5 miles south of I-94 on the south side of Kalamazoo, take Centre Avenue (Exit 31) west for 2.2 miles to Texas Corners. Take a jog right onto 8th Street and turn northeast (right) onto Texas Drive. The preserve is 1.1 miles farther north on the northwest side of the road. There is no sign for the preserve, but you should look for a large metal gate just after the Camp Rota Kiwan Boy Scout sign. The preserve entrance and parking lot are located just past the entrance to the Boy Scout camp. See the Kalamazoo Area Map on page 426.

The **Al Sabo Preserve** is a 741-acre tract of woods, wetlands, and meadows purchased in the late 1960s by the City of Kalamazoo's Utilities Department to protect the water supply and to preserve the land in its natural condition. The wetlands and sandy soils serve as a recharge area for the area's groundwater. Trails are available for hiking, jogging, biking, and cross-country skiing. The preserve is contiguous with the 78 acres of land belonging to the Boy Scouts of America, creating an 820-acre natural area. The varied habitats include Tamarack bog, open and shrubby wetlands, cattail marsh, old fields, conifer plantations, Red Maple swamp forest, and mature hardwood forests dominated by oak and hickory. The wetlands form the headwaters of the West Fork of Portage Creek. While many of the trails are well-marked and easy to follow, other informal and unmarked side trails have developed over the years. The preserve is open from sunrise to sunset.

Like Kleinstuck Preserve and Asylum Lake, Al Sabo can be excellent for migrants during the spring and fall. Flocks of foraging warblers build up along the wooded corridors bordering Portage Creek, joined by several species of flycatchers and vireos. The most abundant warbler is usually Yellow-rumped, although Tennessee, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Palm, and Bay-breasted Warblers as well as American Redstart can be common. All of the regularly occurring thrushes can be found, along with large flocks of White-throated Sparrows, sometimes intermixed with White-crowned and Lincoln's Sparrows. Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers as well as Philadelphia Vireo are possible in the latter half of May. Migrant waterfowl include Gadwall, American Wigeon, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, and Northern Pintail. Al Sabo is generally a very productive birding destination in winter as well. Wilson's Snipe, Belted Kingfisher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, and Yellow-rumped Warbler are present in many winters.

The list of breeding birds is extensive, reflecting the diverse range of habitats. Wetland breeders include the ubiquitous Canada Goose and Mallard, as well as Mute Swan, Wood Duck, the state-threatened Least Bittern, Green

Heron, Virginia Rail, Sora, Marsh Wren, and sometimes Spotted Sandpiper. The Tamarack bog often yields lingering Nashville Warbler and Veery, while the upland conifer plantations provide nesting habitat for Blue-headed Vireo, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers, and some years, Red-breasted Nuthatch. Other woodland breeders include Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Acadian and Least Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, Ovenbird, and Scarlet Tanager.

SW-43 West Lake Nature Preserve and Bishop's Bog

By Ray Adams

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 28, C3. 42°11' N, 85°35' W

Contact Information: 269-329-4522; www.portagemi.com/living/parks.asp

Directions: From US-131 about 2.5 miles south of I-94 on the south side of Kalamazoo, take Centre Avenue (Exit 31) east for 3 miles to South Westnedge Avenue. Turn right (south) onto South Westnedge and continue for 1.2 miles to South Shore Drive. Turn left onto South Shore Drive for about a quarter-mile to the park entrance on the left.

West Lake Nature Preserve's 110 acres include upland, woodland, and sensitive wetland areas, all accessible via two miles of hiking trails and a boardwalk that crosses a bog to West Lake. During spring and fall migrations, West Lake attracts a large number of waterfowl, which can be viewed from the end of the boardwalk. Flocks of diving ducks, Redhead, Lesser and Greater Scaup, Canvasback, Ring-necked and Ruddy Ducks, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Common and Hooded Mergansers, and hundreds of American Coots are just a few of the species to be seen on West Lake. Least Bittern has been found along the boardwalk, along with Green Heron, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. In mid- to late May, passerine migrants can be found in the swamp forests near the beginning of the trail. The site is not as productive during the breeding season.

The nearby 145-acre **Bishop's Bog** is a relict bog, created by Ice Age glaciers. It is connected to South Westnedge Park and Schrier Park via a 1.75-mile trail, much of it floating dock. From West Lake Nature Preserve, return to South Westnedge Avenue and go north a short distance to a parking area on the left (west). From there, follow a trail that leads southwest into the bog. Rubber boots are recommended for the dock trail. The unique bog habitat provides homes for many species during the summer, including Northern Flicker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Black-capped Chickadee Veery, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Swamp Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. In some years, Nashville Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat can also be found in the summer. Although birding data for the

spring and fall are lacking, the site has good potential in either season, especially if Schrier Park is included. The bog is also home to several rare plants, including Pink Lady's-Slippers (best in May), Yellow Fringed-Orchids (in late July), Pitcher Plants, and sundews.

SW-44 Gourdneck State Game Area

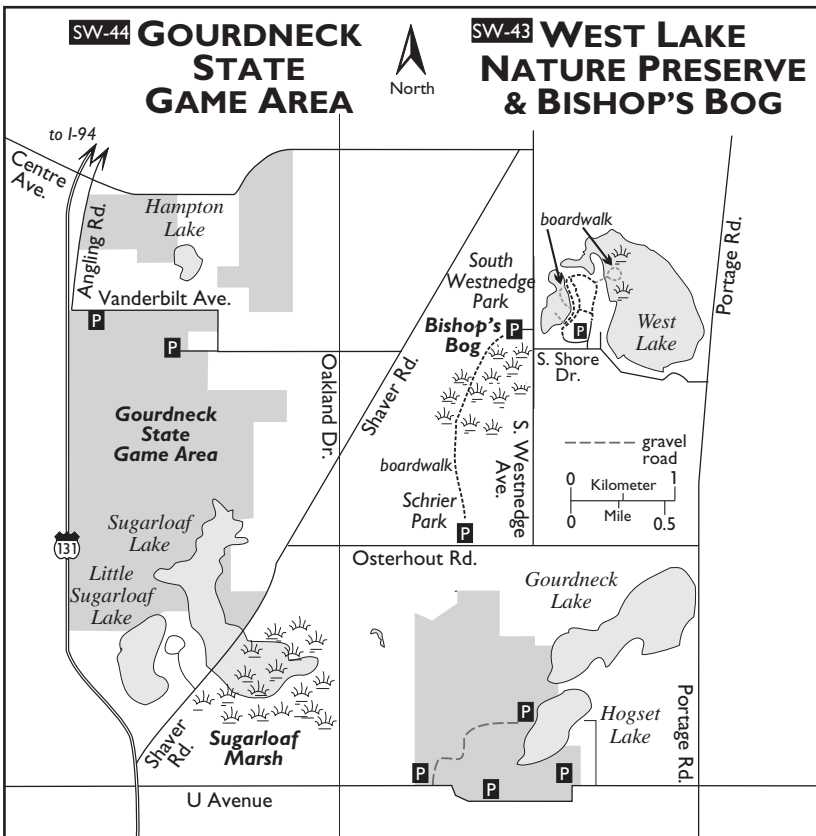
By Ray Adams

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter***

DeLorme p. 28, C3. 42°08'36" N, 85°36'08" W

Contact Information: 269-244-5928

Directions: From US-131 about 6.5 miles south of I-94 (south of Kalamazoo), turn left (northeast) onto Shaver Road, which heads north to the city of Portage. About 0.8 mile north of the intersection, Sugarloaf Lake will be on the left and the Sugarloaf Marsh will parallel Shaver Road on the right.



The **Gourdneck State Game Area** consists of several hundred acres in four non-contiguous parcels of land in the southwest portion of the city of Portage and in the northwestern portion of Schoolcraft Township. Biologically, these parcels are most noteworthy because of the presence of several rare and listed plant species and a diverse fauna that includes a number of reptiles and amphibians, in addition to the many nesting bird species. The game area regulations permit hunting, and caution is necessary throughout the fall and early winter hunting seasons and when target practice occurs, principally in the southern parcels. Birding in this area is done mainly from the roads.

The game area, despite its proximity to the city of Portage, attracts a diverse population of breeding birds as well as many migrants. Each of the three largest parcels contains 60 or more breeding species, reflecting the range of habitats. The northern parcels adjoin Hampton, Sugarloaf, and Little Sugarloaf Lakes, while the southern parcel is contiguous with Hogsett Lake and the west end of Gourdneck Lake. Much of the land was originally farmed, and consequently, upland sites reflect a mix of successional stages, from shrub-dominated old field to second-growth oak forest. Wildlife plantings are widespread, with pines liberally scattered through the game area. Lowland habitat ranges from small amounts of Tamarack bog to extensive shrub wetlands. Poison Sumac is abundant in the lowland, and is a major attraction for many overwintering species. Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and, to a lesser extent, Hermit Thrush, are regular in winter. A Fox Sparrow has been present twice in recent winters, and this is one of the best places in southwestern Michigan to look for the elusive Long-eared Owl in winter.

The pine plantings have nesting Green Herons during summer. Most species found in early successional habitat (shrubby old field) are regular here, including Eastern Kingbird, Brown Thrasher, Blue-winged Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and Field Sparrow. The forested areas attract most of the major woodland songbirds, with the mixed forests around Sugarloaf Lake drawing occasional Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, Kentucky, and Canada Warblers during the summer. Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks breed, and Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned Hawks are regular in migration. White-throated, White-crowned, and Lincoln's Sparrows are commonplace in migration, as are most of the regular migrant warblers. White-eyed Vireo and Yellow-breasted Chat have also been found in migration, and sometimes remain to attempt nesting. Unusual are Peregrine Falcon and Summer Tanager, which have been noted on occasion in migration. Grassland birds are among the few species faring poorly here, although Eastern Meadowlark can still be found. Unfortunately, Grasshopper and Henslow's Sparrows and Bobolink have been gone since the mid-1980s.

While waterfowl are regular on all of the adjacent lakes, the best viewing is from along the roadside at **Sugarloaf Marsh**, midway between the two southern units of the game area. This wetland is well known locally for

the waterfowl that it attracts, especially large numbers of dabblers such as American Black Duck, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, and Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal. Mute Swan is common and Trumpeter Swan is frequent, both year round, and Tundra Swan shows up in migration. Diving ducks are also plentiful, especially Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, and Common and Hooded Mergansers, as well as American Coot. Sugarloaf and Little Sugarloaf Lakes have Least Bitterns in the adjacent marshes, which are accessible only by boat. There is boat access at the north end of Sugarloaf Lake on the left side of Shaver Road.

To reach the southern portion of the game area near Hogset Lake, go south from Centre Avenue (Exit 31) on US-131 to U Avenue (about 3.8 miles). Or, from Sugarloaf Marsh, return on Shaver Road to Centre Avenue and go south a short distance to U Avenue. Go east on U Avenue, following the signs (there is no left turn from southbound US-131) for about 1.8 miles to the driveway into the game area on the left. This driveway can be quite muddy in spring, so proceed with caution if you go past the parking area near U Avenue. If you are coming from the West Lake Nature Preserve, turn right onto South Shore Drive, then almost immediately left onto South Westnedge Avenue, continuing 1.4 miles to Osterhout. Turn right and go west 1.2 miles to Oakland Drive, turn left and go 1.6 miles to U Avenue. Turn left onto U Avenue and drive just over 0.5 mile to the parking area described above.

To reach the northern portion of the game area along Vanderbilt Avenue, return to US-131, go north to Centre Avenue (Exit 31), and go to the right (east). Almost immediately, turn south onto Angling Road. The game area south of Vanderbilt Avenue is reached by going south on Angling Road to Vanderbilt, where you turn left for 0.2 mile to parking on the right.

SW-45 Kalamazoo Nature Center

By Ray Adams

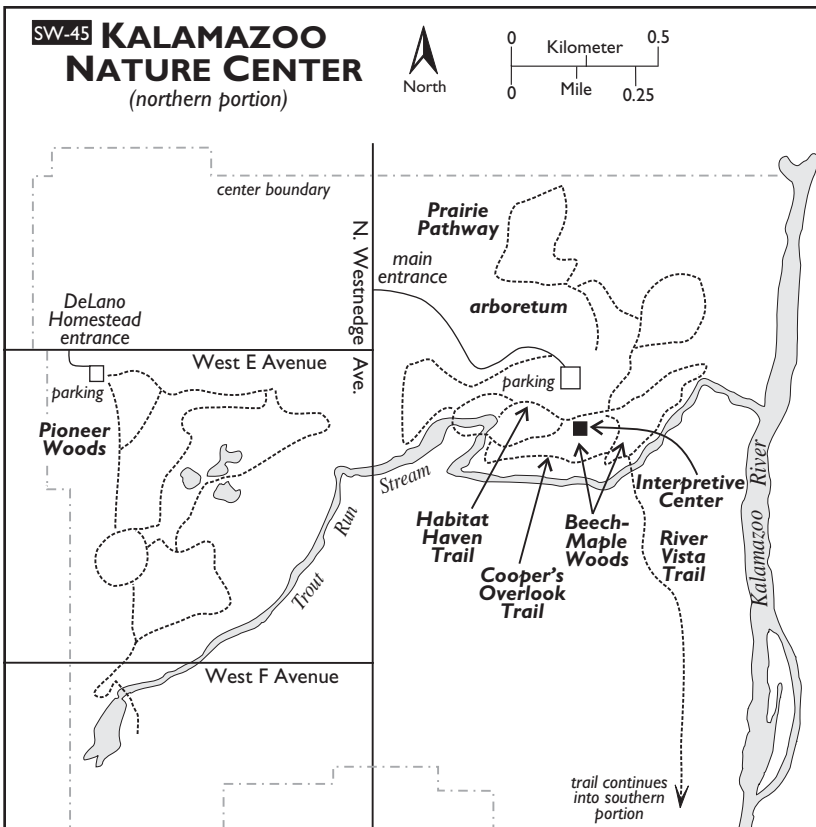
*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 28, B3. 42°21' N, 85°35' W

Contact Information: 269-381-1574; www.naturecenter.org

Directions: *From I-94 west of Kalamazoo, take US-131 north (Exit 74B) for 9.8 miles to D Avenue (Exit 44). Turn right (east) and go 3.3 miles to North Westnedge Avenue. Turn right (south) and go 0.8 mile to the entrance on the left. Entry fee is \$5.50 per adult. See map on next page.*

The **Kalamazoo Nature Center** is a private, member-owned, non-profit organization, established in 1960. Currently, there are 1,100 acres with about 11 miles of trails through a broad range of habitats that are easily accessible to the public. The center includes the mature beech-maple forests in Cooper's Glen and Pioneer Woods, the marsh and fen along the Habitat Haven trail, the floodplain forest along the Kalamazoo River reached via the River Vista trail, the reconstructed prairie along the Prairie Pathway,



and a major wildlife feeding area visible from the Interpretive Center. An extensive arboretum has a large variety of native and introduced plant species that attract nesting and feeding birds.

A major center for ornithological research in Michigan, the Kalamazoo Nature Center has overseen both the original Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas and the second Atlas project. Staff conduct bird surveys and natural-features inventories for public, governmental, and private landowners. The center is also doing much of the technical work for Michigan's Important Bird Areas program. Since 1970, the center has also maintained an extensive banding program, both on site and on private property near Vicksburg. This program is one of the larger of its kind in the country, with over 320,000 birds banded since 1970. Fall banding starts at the beginning of August and runs through early November, with approximately 7,500 birds of 90 species banded each fall between the two sites. When conditions permit, the public may observe banding operations at the nature center.

Birding is good year round. Spring migration finds many species stopping over, especially in the wooded areas near the river and along Trout Run, a small stream originating on the nature center grounds. The Habitat Haven trail is ideal for observing spring migrants because the shorter vegetation along the trail permits easy viewing. On this and other woodland trails, birders can expect to see Swainson's Thrush, Veery, and warblers such as Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, and American Redstart.

In summer, the center hosts more than 80 species of breeding birds, including Prothonotary Warbler along the Kalamazoo River, and Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, and Scarlet Tanager in the mature forest, Louisiana Waterthrush along Trout Run, Turkey Vulture on the south end of the property near an abandoned structure at an old gravel operation, Wood Duck along Trout Run and in the Pioneer Woods, Pileated Woodpecker in the River Vista, Beech-Maple and Pioneer Woods, Cooper's Hawk and Barred Owl in the Beech-Maple Woods and Pioneer Forest, and Red-tailed Hawks hunting over the open fields. American Woodcocks do their aerial displays behind the DeLano Homestead and along the Habitat Haven trail in early spring. Eastern Phoebe nests regularly at several locations on the grounds. Nest-box trails attract Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, and Eastern Bluebird.

During winter, the arboretum's many plantings make the nature center especially attractive to wintering birds. Eastern Bluebird and American Robin often remain all winter. Cedar Waxwing can be found in large numbers feeding on the ornamental fruits in the arboretum, and, in some years of northern finch irruptions, both crossbills, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak have been seen around the arboretum. Rarely, a Pine Grosbeak is found in winter feeding on the ornamental crabapple trees. In recent years, Wild Turkeys have become year-round residents and are especially visible in winter when snow covers the ground. Over the years, most species passing through Kalamazoo County have been observed on the center's grounds. The presence of a Hammond's Flycatcher, currently the only Michigan record, was exceptional. Townsend's Solitaire has been observed, along with White-eyed Vireo, Worm-eating and Kentucky Warblers, and Harris's Sparrow, among other rarities.

SW-46 W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary

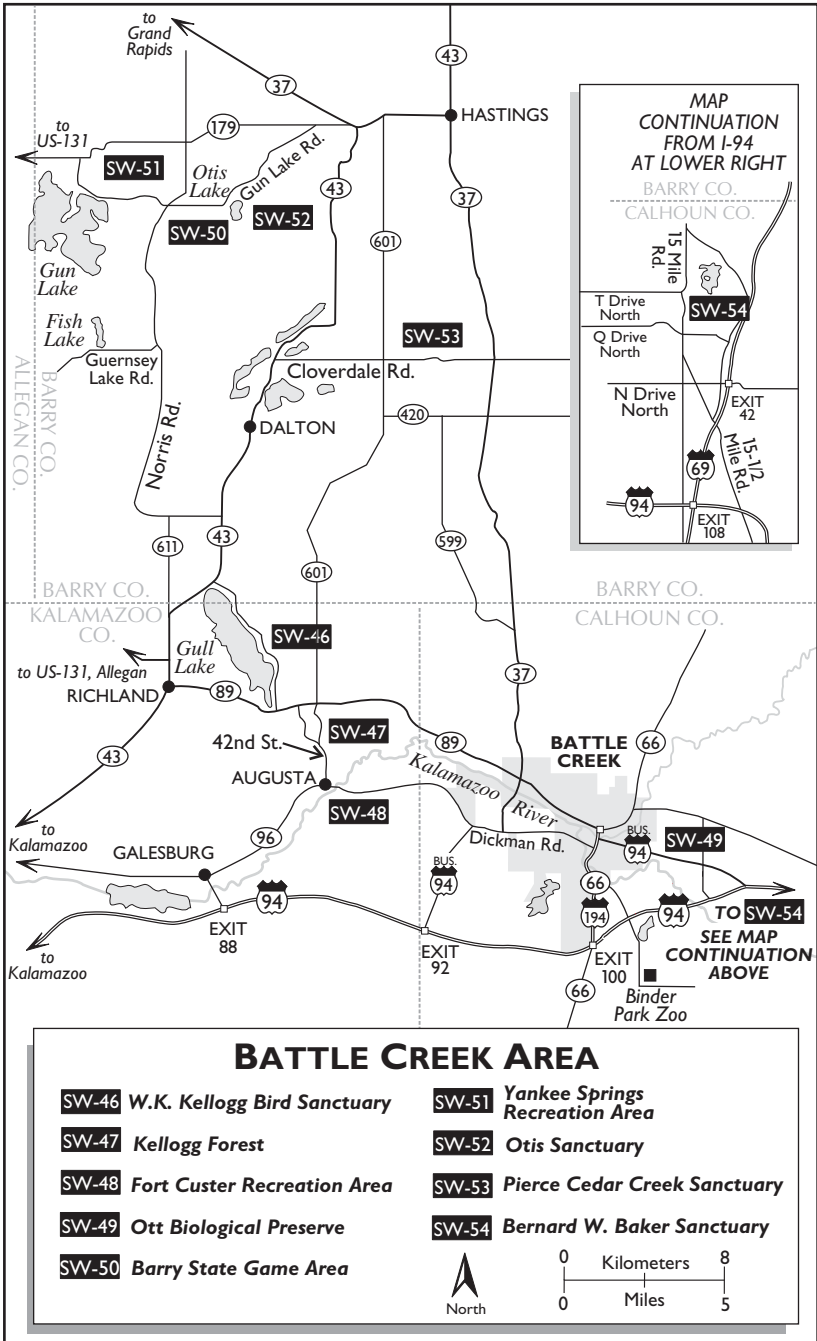
By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 29, A4. 42°23' N, 85°22' W

Contact Information: 269-671-5117; www.kbs.msu.edu/Bird_Sanctuary

Directions: From I-94 east of Kalamazoo, take Sprinkle Road (Exit 80) north for 4.5 miles to M-43 (Gull Road). Turn right onto M-43 for 5.2 miles northeast to the junction with M-89 in Richland. Head east (straight ahead) on M-89 and go 4.1 miles to 40th Street. Turn left



(north) and go 1.3 miles to C Avenue. Turn left and go 0.3 mile to the sanctuary entrance on the right. See map on next page.

The **W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary** was originally created in 1927 to be part of a network of rest stops to protect then-dwindling numbers of Canada Geese on their annual migratory flights across North America. In 1928, cereal-maker W. K. Kellogg donated the sanctuary to what is now Michigan State University, so that fisheries and wildlife experts could best manage its resources and use the sanctuary as a center for research and education. The sanctuary regularly cooperates with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Michigan DNR to provide wildlife population estimates through banding and surveys. Staff are also very active in Michigan's Trumpeter Swan introduction project.

The sanctuary is open every day year round, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. May–October, and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. November–April. The current admission fee is \$3.00 for adults. For more information, visit the sanctuary website, www.kbs.msu.edu/Bird_Sanctuary.

The walking paths wind through a number of enclosures holding birds being rehabilitated or being captive-bred for release (i.e., Ring-necked Pheasants and Trumpeter Swans). During spring and fall migrations, the woodlands are a hotspot for migrant passerines. From October through April, the edge of the trail near the Wildlife Observation Platform at the south end of Wintergreen Lake is a good place to scan for migrant and wintering waterfowl, including Trumpeter Swan. In the fall, large numbers of waterfowl gather on the lake, with some exchange of birds between Wintergreen and Gull Lakes. Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked, Greater and Lesser Scaup, and Ruddy Ducks are among the hundreds of ducks present. Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese may be found among the thousands of Canada Geese on Wintergreen and Gull Lakes and in the surrounding agricultural fields. In spring 2004, a Tricolored Heron (casual) was present on Wintergreen Lake.

Gull Lake is an excellent place to view migrant and wintering waterfowl. There are records of Lesser Black-backed Gull from here, and scoters (mainly Surf) are probably annual, although access to the lake itself is not possible (private property nearly surrounds the lake). There are vantage points at the north end at Baseline Road where it dead-ends at the east side of the lake, and at Prairieville Township Park along M-43 at the northern tip of the lake.

SW-47 W. K. Kellogg Experimental Forest

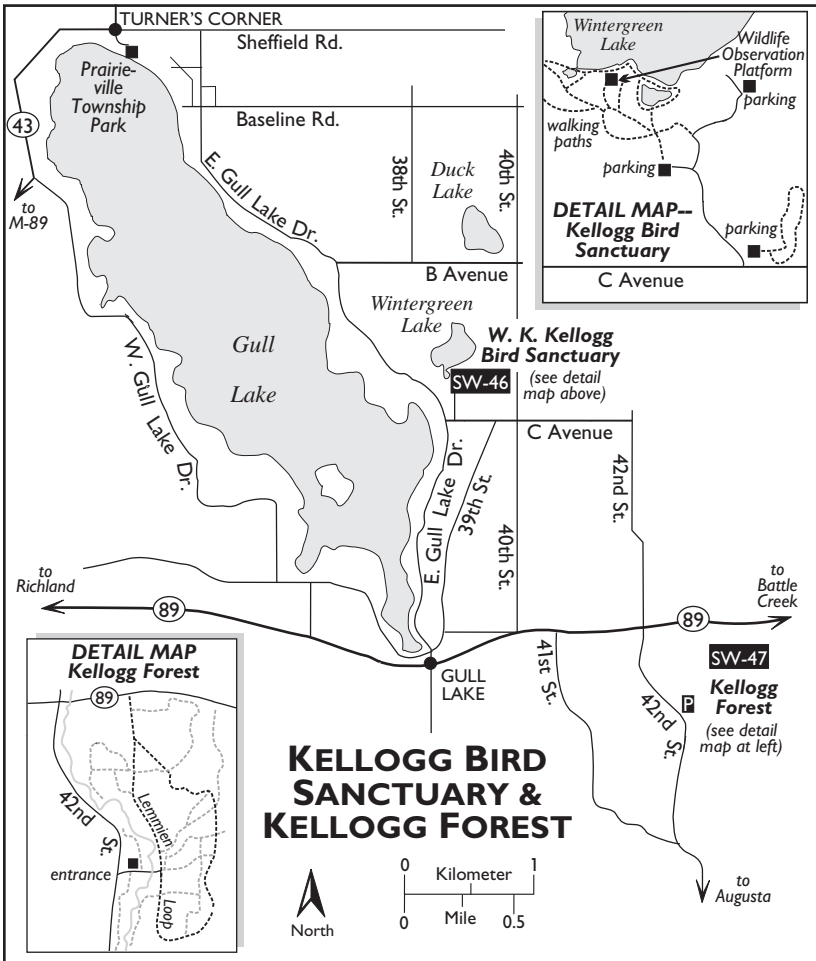
By Ray Adams

*Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter***

DeLorme p. 29, B5. 42°22' N, 85°21' W

Contact Information: 269-731-4597; www.maes.msu.edu/ressta/kelloggforest

Directions: *The directions to Kellogg Forest are similar to those for the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. From I-94 east of Kalamazoo, take Sprinkle*



Road (Exit 80) north 4.5 miles to M-43 (Gull Road). Turn right on M-43 and follow it 5.2 miles to M-89 in Richland. Head east (straight ahead) on M-89 and go 4.9 miles (0.8 mile past 40th Street) to 42nd Street. Turn right and head south approximately 0.8 mile to the Forest entrance on the left. Kellogg Forest also can be reached from Exit 85 on I-94. Go north on 35th Street for 1 mile to M-96, turn right onto M-96 and follow it through the angled left turn in Galesburg for 6 miles to Augusta. Turn north in the center of town onto 42nd Street for 2 miles to the entrance.

Kellogg Forest may be the most unique birding destination in the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek Area. When the forest was established by Michigan State University in 1931, it consisted of abandoned agricultural land. Intensive

reforestation, forest-management research, and other forest-related research have today created one of this country's premier research forests. The experimental forest now covers 716 acres and has 150 species of trees. Trails meander throughout the forest, providing access to both hikers and cross-country skiers. Bow-hunting is allowed in the forest, so caution must be exercised during the bow-hunting season (October 1–January 1).

In contrast to the deciduous forest that characterizes most of the rest of Kalamazoo County, the Kellogg Forest has been planted with a wide variety of conifers. These plantings attract a set of breeding species that would not otherwise nest in the county. Present only as migrants elsewhere in the county but regular as breeders at Kellogg Forest are Blue-headed Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Black-throated Green, Pine, and Blackburnian Warblers. Occasionally present in summer are Red-breasted Nuthatch and Magnolia and Black-and-white Warblers. The 2.5-mile Lemmien Loop trail through the eastern unit of the forest is the best place to find most of these species.

In addition to the conifer-related species attracted by the plantings of pine, spruce, and fir, a long list of birds is drawn to the extensive deciduous forest of Red Oak, aspen, Sugar Maple, hickory, Tulip-tree, and walnut. Those plantings provide homes for Ruffed Grouse, Broad-winged and Cooper's Hawks, Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Chestnut-sided and Hooded Warblers, and Ovenbird. Worm-eating Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat have been seen on multiple occasions in appropriate habitat for nesting. The windstorms of October 24, 2001 that devastated thousands of trees in southwestern Michigan caused extensive damage to the natural forest areas and to many of the cultivated pine plantations. The storm also created the open habitat preferred by Blue-winged and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Eastern Towhee, and Field Sparrow, which also occupy the powerline corridors that run through the site.

Spring and fall migrations can also be good, although the numbers of migrants vary widely. During winters of northern finch irruptions, both crossbills, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak are frequently found in the forest from November through March. Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, and American Robin often are present in the winter as well.

SW-48 Fort Custer Recreation Area

By Ray Adams

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 29, B5. 42°20' N, 85°20' W

Contact Information: 269-731-4200;

www.dnr.state.mi.us/parksandtrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: *Take I-94 east from Kalamazoo to the 35th Street (Exit 85) and go 1 mile north to M-96. Turn right onto M-96, following it through the angled left turn in Galesburg for 6 miles through Augusta. The entrance is on the right 0.2 mile past the railroad crossing on M-96*

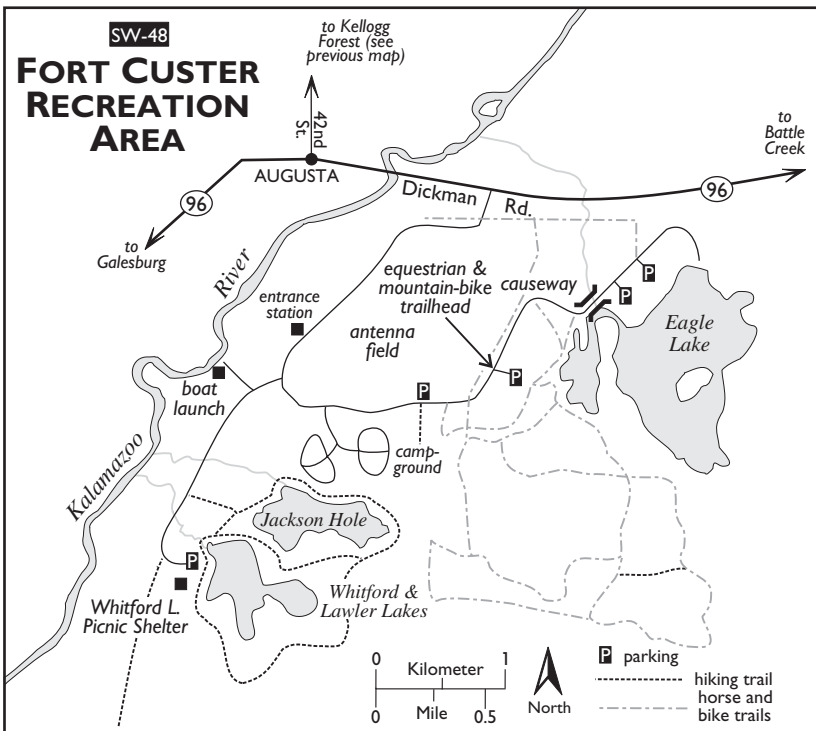
on the east side of Augusta. Alternatively, from westbound I-94, take Business Loop 94 on Columbia Avenue (Exit 92), north for 4 miles to M-96. Go west 4.8 miles on M-96 to the park entrance.

The 2,988-acre **Fort Custer Recreation Area**, located between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo, combines second-growth forest, remnant and restored prairie, a variety of old fields, three lakes, and Kalamazoo River frontage. Originally farmland, the area was acquired by the U.S. Army for use as an induction and training center during World War II, and was deeded to the state in 1971. The recreation area is contiguous to the 7,570-acre Fort Custer Training Center (not accessible to the public), resulting in a protected natural area of more than 10,500 acres. There is good birding year round, with access via 12 miles of trail for hikers and equestrians, and 20 miles of mountain biking trails. Use caution when hiking any trails where horses and bikes are present.

More than 100 species can be found during the summer in the area comprising the recreation area and adjacent military reservation. The military training center to the south and east has one of the larger populations of Cerulean and Hooded Warblers in Michigan, along with over 90 other breeding species. While the training center is closed to the public, most of the species found there occur in smaller numbers within the Fort Custer Recreation Area. The river and three lakes have boat-launch sites and camping is also available. The area is open to hunting from September 15 to March 31, so caution must be exercised during that time.

The Kalamazoo River forms the western boundary of the recreation area. This serene stretch of river curves through river bottom and swamp forest, providing a beautiful spot for birding by canoe or on foot. From the entrance on M-96, go 1.2 miles southwest into the park, passing the main contact station (ask for a trail map), and turn right onto the road to Whitford Lake and Jackson Hole. Take another right 0.1 mile after that to reach the boat launch on the river. The Kalamazoo River floodplain forest hosts a number of interesting nesting species, including Prothonotary Warbler, which can usually be found near the boat launch from May through mid-August. Great Blue and Green Herons, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Pileated Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Brown Creeper, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cerulean Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush are also regular breeders along this stretch of river. Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, and Bald Eagle also are possible in summer. During migration, this area is a good spot to find flocks of migrant warblers moving along the river. In late April, Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers predominate, followed in early May by Nashville, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided, and Black-and-white Warblers, and Northern Waterthrush. Later in May, Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Backpoll, and Wilson's Warblers pass through. The dead snags bordering the Kalamazoo River are a good place to find Olive-sided Flycatcher from mid- to late May. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and both kinglets are common in this area earlier in the spring.

The area around Whitford Lake, Jackson Hole, and Lawler Lake is also worth birding during migration and in summer. To reach the entrance to Jackson Hole and the Whitford Lake boat launch, turn right after leaving the previous boat launch and go 0.6 mile to a left turn to the lakes. Whitford and Lawler Lakes are reached by continuing past the road to Jackson Hole for another 0.4 mile to a drive on the left that goes back to the Whitford Lake Picnic Shelter. There is a system of interconnected trails encircling the lakes and providing access between them. Within this portion of the recreation area, the diverse habitats include the lakes and adjacent wetlands, a small marsh associated with the creek that runs out of Jackson Lake, stands of Black Locust, shrubby wetlands, old field, agricultural fields, oak forest, and swamp forest. Trumpeter Swans breed here most years, as do Mute Swan, Wood Duck, and occasionally American Black Duck. During migration (especially in spring), Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, and other ducks are present. Virginia Rail, Sora, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat can be seen along the lake edges. Sandhill Crane occurs regularly in this portion of the park, and when not found in the associated marshes, is often seen feeding in the agricultural fields southeast of Whitford Lake. One of the more unusual summer residents here is Orchard Oriole, which has been present most years



in the small trees on the west side of Whitford Lake. This species is uncommon and mostly irregular elsewhere in the Kalamazoo area.

Turn right as you leave the Whitford and Lawler Lakes area, proceed back to the intersection with the entrance road, and turn right to continue toward the equestrian and mountain-bike trailhead, about 0.9 mile east. Before reaching the trailhead, at 0.6 mile from the intersection, there is a small parking area on the left. Park here and walk along the drive past the gate to the right (south), passing through second-growth oak and Black Locust. After you cross a two-track, you reach an area immediately ahead that provides habitat for a small colony of Cerulean Warblers. Cooper's Hawk, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Bluebird, and Blue-winged Warbler can also be found along this drive. Return to the parking area and continue east, then around a curve heading north, and look for the equestrian and mountain-bike trailhead parking on the right. After parking, wander the extensive series of trails leading through the mix of upland deciduous forest, dry prairie, regenerating aspen, Black Locust, and scattered walnut that forms the southeast portion of the recreation area. Regularly breeding species such as Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Cerulean Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole, as well as the more sporadic Cooper's Hawk, Blue-headed Vireo, and Hooded Warbler make the hike well worth the effort.

Return to the parking area and turn right (north) for 1.1 miles to Eagle Lake. While this attractive beach area can be full of people in summer, the site attracts Osprey during spring migration, and Turkey Vulture can be seen in numbers soaring over the extensive forests south of the lake. The road to Eagle Lake passes over a causeway across the outlet stream flowing north out of the recreation area. There is usually much to see along the streamside, reached by a walking path that begins near the northern end of the Eagle Lake access point. Willow and Least Flycatchers and White-eyed (occasional) and Warbling Vireos can be found along the stream corridor here, along with resident waterfowl and herons. Fort Custer is one of the few areas in the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek region where Beavers are regular.

Nestbox trails monitored by Kalamazoo Nature Center staff dot the recreation area along the entrance road, in the antenna field immediately south of the park entrance, between the entrance road and river, and throughout the southeast interior portion of the park (accessible only from the mountain biking and equestrian/hiking trails). The nestbox trails house over 50 pairs of Tree Swallows, 40–50 pairs of Eastern Bluebirds, and numerous Black-capped Chickadees and House Wrens. Blue-winged Warblers are fairly common throughout the more open areas where aspen is regenerating, especially adjacent to the nestbox trails. Among the trees recolonizing these nestbox areas is Black Cherry, a tree species strongly preferred by tent caterpillars. As a result, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos are prevalent here in years of tent caterpillar outbreaks.

SW-49 Ott Biological Preserve

By Ray Adams

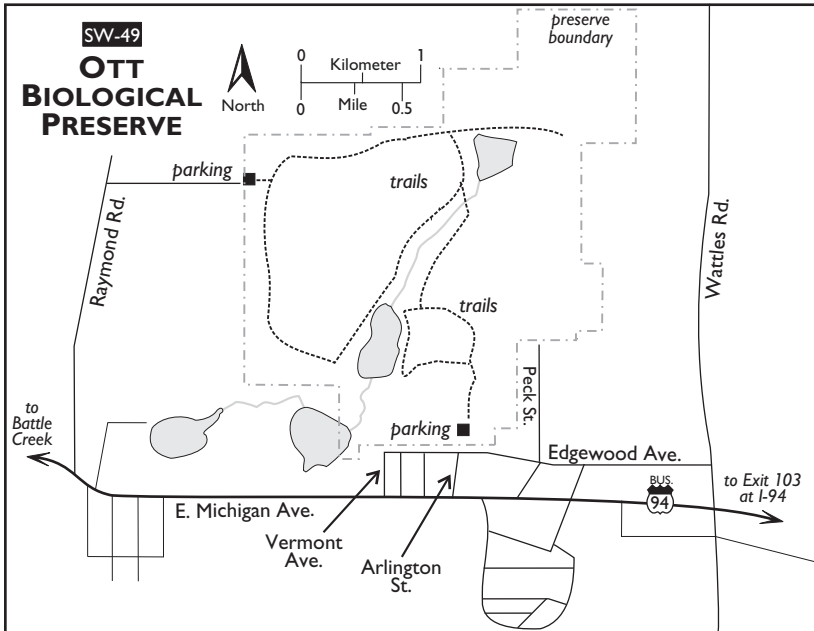
Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 29, B7. 42°18' N, 85°07' W

Contact Information: www.ottpreserve.org

Directions: From east of Battle Creek on I-94, take Exit 103 (Business I-94 or E. Michigan Avenue) and travel 2 miles west toward the city of Battle Creek. After the stoplight at Wattles Road, watch for the brown county park sign indicating an upcoming right turn at Arlington Street, which will take you to the preserve entrance. From the west, take Exit 104 from I-94 (11 Mile Road), turning right over I-94. Immediately after the overpass, re-enter I-94 heading west, leaving the freeway at Exit 103, 0.4 mile ahead. Follow the above route to the preserve.

The 300-acre **Ott Preserve** is one of the best-kept secrets in Calhoun County. Now a county park, the first part of the preserve was acquired in 1911, and in 1926 the original property, plus additional land purchased by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, was set aside as a preserve and given to Battle Creek College. Then known as the Kellogg Biological Preserve, it was acquired by Albion College after Battle Creek College closed in 1938. In 1977 Calhoun County purchased the property from the college and in 1995, added additional acreage to the preserve.



This site, like Kleinstuck Preserve in Kalamazoo County, is invaluable as a diverse biological setting in a largely suburban landscape. The preserve contains outstanding geological features, with parts of three lakes included in its boundaries, along with eskers, bog, and fen. Oak-hickory woodland dominates the well-drained sandy uplands, with Tamarack, Red Maple, Yellow Birch, and Black Ash among the trees dominating the lowland areas. Shrub swamp, wet prairie, fen, marsh, abandoned fields and orchards, and some cultivated fields attract many migrant and breeding birds.

While published bird lists do not exist for the preserve, the site has much to commend it. The kettle lakes attract their share of migrant and resident waterbirds and swallows. The site is also well used by woodpeckers, including Pileated Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, as well as several flycatchers. Best times to visit the preserve are April through mid-May and late August through mid-October. This area should not be missed when planning a trip to the Battle Creek area. From the parking area at the end of Arlington Street, trails traverse the south end of the property and work their way over most of the site. Caution should be used, since some of the trails are not well-groomed.

Nearby, the 405-acre **Binder Park Zoo** south of Battle Creek (see map on page 442) has more than 300 acres of undeveloped forest, fields, and wetlands traversed by eight miles of trails. While much of the area immediately around the headquarters is in use by the zoo, the native vegetation remaining on most of the rest of the area attracts an abundance of birds, especially during migration. Observers have recorded 135 bird species to date. Among the wetland species found there are Trumpeter Swan, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue and Green Herons, Black-crowned Night-Heron (uncommon), Sandhill Crane, Spotted Sandpiper, and Northern Harrier (uncommon). Warblers are common in migration, with 22 species reported, including Louisiana Waterthrush and Connecticut Warbler (rare). To reach the zoo, take Beadle Lake Road (Exit 100) south from I-94. After about 3 miles, look for the zoo entrance on the right. An admission fee is charged to enter the zoo and the wetlands, but the remaining trails may be used free of charge.

SW-50 Barry State Game Area

By Ray Adams

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 36-37, C-D4. 42°38' N, 85°27' W
 Contact Information: 269-795-3280

Directions: From US-131 at the Hopkins/Bradley area (Exit 61, some 30 miles north of Kalamazoo), go east on Route 179 (129th Avenue) through Bradley for 8.5 miles to the three-way intersection of Gun Lake Road, Briggs Road, and Chief Noonday Road. There are many parking areas scattered throughout the game area, which are indicated on the

Several of the Partners in Flight high-priority species of management concern in the Midwest also occur here and in sufficient numbers to make the Barry State Game Area an important conservation site for birds. While Cerulean Warbler is the highest-ranked of these species, another 18 species of concern occur here. Among the warblers, Blue-winged, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Hooded, and Canada can all be found in the breeding season, although Black-throated Blue is decidedly scarce. Other high-priority species here are Wild Turkey, Sandhill Crane, Black-billed Cuckoo, Willow, Acadian, and Least Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Wood Thrush, Field Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole. Current management techniques at this state game area benefit several of these species that require earlier successional stages of vegetation, including Blue-winged and Chestnut-sided Warblers and Field Sparrow. By contrast, the most abundant species are American Crow, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Gray Catbird, Ovenbird, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and American Goldfinch.

The Barry State Game Area is relatively easy to characterize in terms of the birds found there, but it is more difficult to identify specific locations providing the best birding opportunities. This stems partly from the small patch size of many of the stands, the ever-changing nature of succession, and the fact that there are only a few distinct sites spread over a large area of forest. One way to approach birding at this location is to delineate the habitats and the species usually associated with those habitats. Aspen is widespread, and because of its relatively short life span, is cut more frequently than most trees, creating a dynamic habitat with open areas and young trees which then rapidly fill in the openings. The three most common species associated with the aspen cuts are Gray Catbird, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Indigo Bunting. Other species commonly occurring in aspen are Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Chipping Sparrow, and Brown-headed Cowbird. Occasionally, Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Veery can be seen. White-eyed Vireo and Canada Warbler (both rare) have been found only in aspen in the Barry State Game Area.

Birders in pine plantations are likely to find Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Black-throated Green and Pine Warblers, and Chipping Sparrow. Additional species in the pine plantations include Wild Turkey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Barred Owl, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Grassland habitat is relatively scarce and in small parcels, so grassland birds are generally uncommon here. Birders in the grassland areas are more likely to see early-successional-dependent species such as Field, Chipping, and Song Sparrows, and Indigo Bunting. Other species that may be observed in this habitat are Barn Swallow, Blue-winged Warbler, and Grasshopper and Savannah Sparrows.

The most abundant birds in patchy wooded areas are Red-eyed Vireo, American Redstart, Ovenbird, and Indigo Bunting. Scattered throughout

the forest are the occasional Veery and Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, and Hooded Warblers. In areas of lowland brush habitat, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Song Sparrow are common. Yellow Warbler, Brown-headed Cowbird, and American Goldfinch also are likely to be seen in the appropriate seasons, and Marsh Wren, Veery and Blue-winged and Chestnut-sided Warblers may also be present.

Lowland hardwoods are limited in the game area. Birds likely to be seen include Veery, Blue-winged Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat. Northern hardwoods host Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Black-throated Blue Warbler, well south of its normal range, also occurs on occasion.

Oak-hickory forest is the largest single habitat type in the game area. Red-eyed Vireo and Ovenbird are the most common species, while other frequently observed species include Broad-winged Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Scarlet Tanager. Others inhabitants of the oak-hickory forest are Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Chestnut-sided and Hooded Warblers, Field Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Upland brush habitat also is abundant in Barry State Game Area. Birds seen there are Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Veery, Gray Catbird, Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, and Prairie Warblers, the hybrid Brewster's Warbler (rare), Field Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole. The limited wetland habitat hosts Pied-billed Grebe, Belted Kingfisher, Veery, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird.

One of the better birding sites in the game area is the area around **Otis Lake**. Take Gun Lake Road for 2.7 miles east from Norris Road, turn right, and follow Otis Lake Road south for 1.0 mile. This lake is one of the southernmost nesting locations in the country for the state-threatened Common Loon, which can usually be seen from April through July by careful scanning of the open water from the east side of the lake. *Disturbing the loons is illegal, so do not try to approach them.* In spring, large numbers of Ring-necked Ducks are usually present, as are a variety of other ducks and American Coots. In May through July of some years, Black Terns are seen feeding above the water's surface. American Bitterns are occasionally present, while Great Blue and Green Herons are common through spring and summer. The mesic forest surrounding much of the lake attracts a large number of breeding birds during the summer, as well as woodland migrants in spring and fall. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, and Cerulean Warbler are among the highlights. The species diversity around Otis Lake places this site among those not to be missed.

SW-51 Yankee Springs Recreation Area

By Ray Adams

Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 36, D4. 42°38' N, 85°31' W

Contact Information: 269-795-3280;

www.michigandnr.com/parksandtrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: The Yankee Springs Recreation Area is immediately adjacent to the Barry State Game Area (previous site). From US-131 at the Hopkins/Bradley area (Exit 61), go east on Route 179 (129th Avenue) through Bradley for 8.5 miles to the three-way intersection of Gun Lake Road, Briggs Road, and Chief Noonday Road. Turn right onto Gun Lake Road and continue another 0.8 mile to the recreation area entrance. See previous map.

The 5,037-acre **Yankee Springs Recreation Area** is a topographically varied site with a mosaic of woodland types, wetlands, and, to a lesser extent, early successional terrestrial sites. It includes Gun Lake, a large lake used for recreation, as well as smaller lakes. Forests include some of the best mature forest in the area, resulting in a bird community that is markedly different in relative abundance of species from that in the adjacent Barry State Game Area. Noteworthy breeding species in Yankee Springs' conifer stands are Blue-headed Vireo, Nashville, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Cerulean, and Kentucky Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Chipping Sparrow. Birds found in the wetlands and open mixed forests include American Crow, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping and Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, and American Goldfinch. Forest interior species observed frequently are Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpeckers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Tufted Titmouse, Veery, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Cerulean and Canada Warblers, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting.

The recreation area extends into Gun Lake on Murphy's Point. This narrow peninsula, jutting southwest into the lake, offers excellent waterfowl viewing. It also is a good place to observe migrant songbirds along the lakeshore. Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos and Baltimore Oriole are common during the breeding season. From the peninsula, turn right onto Gun Lake Road and go about 1.2 miles to Hastings Point Road. Turn left just past this intersection toward the Long Lake Outdoor Center and park in the parking area to your right. For those who like to hike, the trail to Hall Lake (one hour) goes through oak forest with scattered pine, with chances to see Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-eyed Vireo, and Scarlet Tanager.

Return to your car and continue straight, past the drive to the Long Lake Outdoor Center on your left, for 0.6 mile and follow signs to the right to Graves Hill and Devil's Soup Bowl. About 0.4 mile along the road to Graves Hill is a series of pine stands that attract Black-throated Green, Blackburnian,

and Pine Warblers during the breeding season. The road to Graves Hill leads to the highest point in Yankee Springs, with a good view of the surrounding countryside. The extensive forest is home to most of the woodland birds found in southern Michigan. The trail to Devil's Soup Bowl leads to a natural kettle-hole lined with mature forest, including several species of ferns of interest to botanists. Acadian Flycatcher is prevalent in this area.

Return to Gun Lake Road, turn right and then immediately left, heading south on Hastings Point Road. Along this road, 0.4 mile beyond the intersection with Duffy Road, is a mixed coniferous-deciduous swamp forest that is worth a stop for breeding birds. Return to the intersection with Duffy Road, turn right, and drive 0.9 mile to Horseman's Campground on the right. As you enter the campground, notice the trail heading west (to your right). Park at the campground and take this trail as it winds its way over Baird Hill and back to the campground. This is one of the most attractive sections of the recreation area, with mature hardwood forest lining the slopes of Baird Hill and bordering the extensive mixed coniferous-deciduous swamp which extends to Hastings Point Road on the north. Among the more interesting species found along this trail are Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-throated Green, Cerulean, and Black-burnian Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Scarlet Tanager. This trail is well worth the two-plus hours it requires.

From Horseman's Campground, return to Duffy Road, turn right (east) and continue about 0.3 mile to a swampy area, find a safe place to stop, look, and listen for Northern Flicker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat, among others. Additional hiking is available along the North Country Scenic Trail, which crosses Yankee Springs Road (called Norris Road farther south) just north of the intersection with Duffy.

Continue north on Yankee Springs Road past Gun Lake Road to the Deep Lake Campground. This area has ample parking and provides a mountain-bike trail access. Use caution whenever mountain bikes are present. The area around Deep Lake offers opportunities to view numerous wetland and forest species, including Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-winged and Kentucky (rare) Warblers, and Ovenbird.

From the intersection of Gun Lake Road and 129th Avenue, turn right and follow Gun Lake Road to the intersection with Norris Road, approximately 3.5 miles. Turn right onto Norris Road and continue south approximately 4 miles to Guernsey Lake Road. Turn right and travel approximately 2.5 miles west to the **Fish Lake Unit** of the Yankee Springs Recreation Area. En route to Fish Lake, Guernsey Lake Road travels through topographically varied oak forest containing Wild Turkey, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and, in some years, Black-and-white Warbler. After passing through the wooded uplands, the road drops into a valley with marsh and shrub wetland. There you may find Sandhill Crane, Willow Flycatcher, Sedge Wren, and Swamp Sparrow; you can also see Turkey Vultures hunting over

the surrounding hillsides. Near Fish Lake, the road passes through extensive marshes and travels over the stream connecting Fish Lake to Tamarack Lake, a private lake to the south. These marshes are home to Least Bittern, as well as Sandhill Crane, Virginia Rail, Sora, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, and Marsh Wren, with Great Blue and Green Herons along the lake edge and stream. Red-headed Woodpecker can frequently be found in the dead trees bordering the marshland. The surrounding forests are a mix of mesic and swamp forest on the low sites, with oak-hickory on higher ground. Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak are regular in these forests. A public-access site maintained by the DNR can be reached by turning north (right) onto the driveway at the west end of the marsh. Turn left onto Enzian Road from Guernsey Lake Road to observe additional species (Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Blue-winged Warbler, American Redstart, and sometimes Cerulean Warbler). Avoiding private property, stop at appropriate habitats along the next 0.7 mile of Enzian Road.

SW-52 Otis Sanctuary

By Ray Adams and Bill Sweetman

Spring** Summer** Fall** Winter*

DeLorme p. 37, C4. 42°36' N, 85°23' W

Contact Information: 269-948-5777; www.tangofoxtrot.homestead.com/otis2.html

Directions: To reach the Otis Sanctuary from US-131, take the Hopkins-Bradley exit (Exit 61), and go east for 8.9 miles on Route 179. At the three-way intersection of Gun Lake Road, Briggs Road, and Chief Noonday Road, turn right onto Gun Lake Road and travel south and then east for 7.9 miles to Whitmore Road. Turn right on Whitmore, go 0.9 mile to Goodwill, turn left, and go 0.8 mile to a right turn onto Havens Road for 0.6 mile to the sanctuary entrance. Park on the Resident Manager's south lawn. From the north, go south on M-43 to 4 miles southwest of Hastings, turn right (west) onto Goodwill Road for 1.6 miles, then south onto Havens Road, and continue as above. See previous map.

The 120-acre **Robert and Mildred Otis Sanctuary** in Barry County, Michigan Audubon Society's newest sanctuary, was established in 2001, and consists rolling fields, mature forest, expansive marshland, a trout stream, kettle-hole marshes, and springs. Among the more than 80 species reported to date are Wood Duck, Wild Turkey, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Harrier, Barred Owl Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Carolina Wren, Wood Thrush, Veery, and Grasshopper and Henslow's (May 2004) Sparrows. A 1.2-mile walking trail heads east from the parking area through grassland and young forest. In the spring Sandhill Cranes are often observed displaying in the marshland west of Havens Road. Visitors should be aware that the Eastern Massassauga rattlesnake is found on the preserve. This small

snake is relatively non-aggressive and is a state-threatened protected species. Heavy shoes and jeans are recommended. Be prepared for wet terrain if you want to hike the wetland (west of Havens Road), since there are no established trails in the wetland area. The Otis Sanctuary is bordered by the Barry State Game Area on three sides. Hunting, pursuing game, shooting into the sanctuary, and possession of game are strictly prohibited in the sanctuary. Please report any such activities to the resident manager. It is a good idea to wear hunter orange from September 14–March 31.

SW-53 Pierce Cedar Creek Institute

By Bill Sweetman and Ray Adams

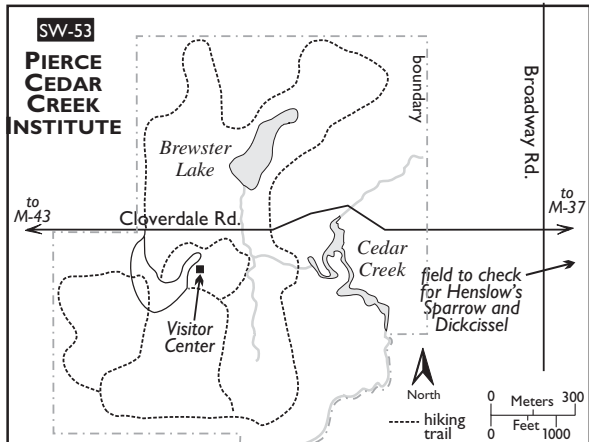
Spring** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 37, D5. 42°32' N, 85°18' W

Contact Information: 269-721-4190; www.cedarcreekinstitute.org/index.htm

Directions: From Grand Rapids, take M-37 south to Cloverdale Road, 7 miles south of Hastings, turn west (right), and travel 2 miles to the entrance to the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute visitor center. From I-94 east of Kalamazoo, take Sprinkle Road (Exit 80) north for 4.5 miles to M-43 (Gull Road). Turn right onto M-43 and follow it for 5.2 miles northeast to the junction with M-89 in Richland. Turn left at M-43 and continue 13 miles north through Delton to Cloverdale Road. Turn right onto Cloverdale Road and go 4.8 miles to the Cedar Creek visitor center. Hiking trails are open from dawn to dusk.

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, a biological field station in Barry County, has 660 acres of forest, fields, and wetlands. Most of the land has been protected from degradation for the past 50 years, thanks to the foresight of Dr. H. Lewis Batts, Jr., the former owner, and is currently main-



tained as a preserve under an easement granted by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. Glacial action left a 9.5-acre kettle-hole lake, Brewster Lake, several other kettle-hole wetlands, and an outwash ravine 150 feet deep. Wetland habitats include Tamarack, White-cedar, and mixed hardwood swamp forests, marsh wetlands, fen, a small bog, a spring-fed trout stream,

and nearly the entire watershed of the kettle-hole lake. There also are several upland habitats: mature beech-maple and oak forest, second-growth forests, abandoned fields, hayfields, and a 30-acre reconstructed tallgrass prairie.

The diverse habitats attract many species during the breeding season. Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Great Blue and Green Herons, Sandhill Crane, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrel nest on the property. Songbirds breeding at the site are Acadian, Willow, Alder, and Great Crested Flycatchers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Blue-winged, Black-throated Green, and Cerulean, Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager, to name a few. Many flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows can be seen in migration. Among the more unusual sightings here have been American Bittern and Bald and Golden Eagle. The most significant hazard may be a healthy population of Eastern Massassauga rattlesnakes on the premises. Wear jeans and sturdy footwear. Also take care to avoid Poison Sumac in the bog.

The field at the southeast corner of Cloverdale and Broadway Roads has had Henslow's Sparrows in 2003 and 2004, and in 2004 also had a Dickcissel. Broadway Road is about 1 mile east on Cloverdale Road from Pierce Cedar Creek Institute.

SW-54 Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary

By Allen T. Chartier

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 30, A1. 42°23' N, 84°58' W

Contact Information: 269-763-3377; www.bakersanctuary.org.

(In fall you may want to stop at nearby Turkeyville, a tourist stop famous statewide for its turkey dinners.)

Directions: From I-94 east of Battle Creek (west of Marshall), take I-69 north (Exit 108) to N. Drive North (Exit 42). Go west for 0.7 mile to 15½ Mile Road and turn right. Go 2.3 miles, joining 15 Mile Road along the way, to the entrance to the sanctuary on the right.

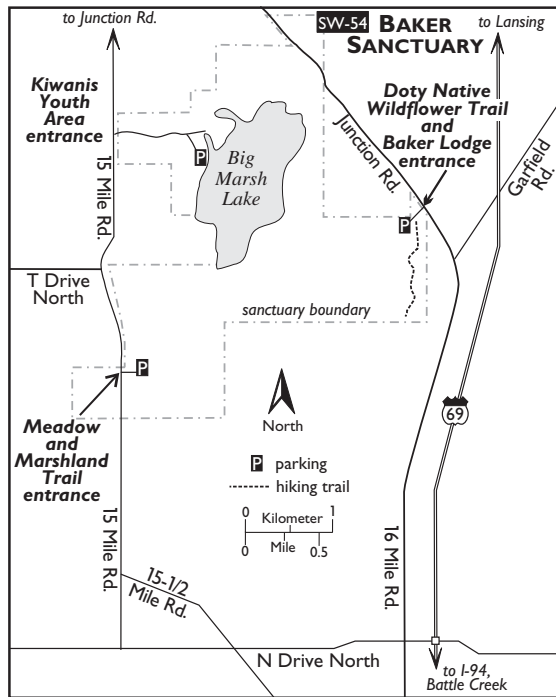
The 897-acre **Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary**, owned and operated by the Michigan Audubon Society, contains ponds, streams, cattail marsh, Tamarack bog, oak openings, flood plain forest, and wet meadows, dominated by Big Marsh Lake. More than 200 bird species have been noted, and the special attraction is the thousands of Sandhill Cranes that stage here in late fall.

The 2-mile **Meadow and Marshland Trail** passes through areas of open fields, meadow, and marsh, with opportunities to see geese, ducks, Ruffed Grouse, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, occasional Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, Eastern Bluebird, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark, as well as a few nesting Sandhill Cranes in summer and thousands more in fall staging for their flight south. Nesting Common Moorhen, Marsh Wren, and Blue-winged and Prothonotary Warblers can be found in summer, and occasionally Henslow's Sparrows will take up residence. The Eastern Massassauga, Michigan's only venomous snake, has been found here.

During October, another place to view the Sandhill Cranes is at the **Kiwanis Youth Area**, which is owned by the Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek. The entrance to this area is 1.3 miles north of the Meadow and Marshland Trail on 15 Mile Road on the right. This area is open to the public only in October, on Sundays from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., during the annual CraneFest in the second weekend in October, and occasionally at other times by special arrangement. Thousands of Sandhill Cranes stage here in

their southward migration (peak counts of 3,000 to 4,000 are not uncommon), and October and November are the best times to see them, particularly in the afternoon as the birds come in to roost on the lakes and marshes of the sanctuary. At this time of year, the cranes will be quite visible (and audible) almost anywhere in the area, including in the adjacent farm fields where they feed during the day.

On the northeastern side of the sanctuary, the mile-long **Doty Native Wildflower Trail and Baker Lodge** has an extensive boardwalk that winds through a wet meadow, past a quiet pond and woodland creek, and along the edge of a floodplain forest. A wide variety of flowering plants occurs along this trail, and during the fall and early winter, good numbers of sparrows, including American Tree, Fox, Song, Swamp, and White-throated, Sparrows, can be found here. To reach this area, go west on N Drive North for 0.3 mile to 16 Mile Road. Turn right (north) and go 3.0 miles to where the road name changes to Junction Road (straight ahead). Continue north on Junction Road for 0.2 mile to the entrance on the left. This trail also can be reached from 15 Mile Road by going 1.2 miles north of the Kiwanis Youth Area, then turning right on Junction Road and continuing 2.3 miles to the sign for the sanctuary. These three locations are most easily visited as part of a simple loop along 15 Mile and Junction Roads.





Boreal Owl
Tom Ford

“THE UP”

THE UPPER PENINSULA

The UP is a unique part of Michigan, not only for the avian life that it supports, but also geographically, geologically and, to some extent, culturally. The residents of the UP are mostly a proud, independent lot, with an innate sense of the outdoors. While very protective of their private property, they can be gracious, hospitable hosts. They refer to themselves as “Yoopers” and, only partly in jest, they often refer to their less fortunate fellow Michiganders who live south of, or “below”, the Mackinac Bridge as “trolls”.

This relatively large peninsula, connected to the Lower Peninsula only by the magnificent Mackinac Bridge, is bordered by three of the Great Lakes, which provide it with a continuous shoreline 1,700 miles in length. The UP stretches 384 miles from Drummond Island on the east to Ironwood on the west, and is blessed with 4,300 inland lakes and 12,000 miles of rivers and streams. It possesses the highest point in the state, Mt. Arvon (el. 1,979’), located east of the town of L’Anse in Baraga County, and is home to 150 of Michigan’s 152 major waterfalls. Isle Royale National Park, a wilderness island in Lake Superior and the state’s only national park, is also part of the UP. The Hiawatha National Forest, comprised of two sections, is located in the east and central parts of the UP and covers 879,000 acres of northern hardwoods, upland boreal forests, grasslands, rocky shorelines, wetlands, and beaches.

The vegetation types of the UP consist primarily of Boreal and Wet Coniferous Forest (balsam fir, spruces, Tamarack, and White-cedar) and Mesic Mixed Forest (Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, and Hemlock) with smaller areas of Dry Coniferous Forest (pines), Disturbed Northern Forest (aspens and Paper Birch) and Open Farm Land.

Winter weather conditions are harsh, with the Lake Superior watershed receiving as much as 350 inches of snow annually; the back roads may remain snowed in until mid-May. Cool temperatures can remain even into summer, and along the lakeshore it can be downright cold, so a warm jacket will be

handy at any time of the year. Summers are delightful, and fall is spectacular, with its changing colors.

From a birder's viewpoint, the UP provides the opportunity to view many of the species that are on many birders' "most-wanted" lists. Birds that have been recorded as nesting in the UP but usually not elsewhere in the state include Ring-necked Duck, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Spruce and Sharp-tailed Grouse, Merlin, Yellow Rail (rare and threatened), Black-backed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Tennessee, Cape May, Palm, Bay-breasted (very few), Connecticut, and Wilson's (rare) Warblers, Le Conte's Sparrow, and both Red and White-winged Crossbills. In winter during irruption years, avian visitors from the far north arrive in the UP and provide opportunities to see species not commonly seen anywhere in the Lower 48: Gyrfalcon, Northern Hawk, Great Gray, and Boreal Owls. Also, two of the three reliable places to find Yellow Rail in Michigan—Seney NWR and Trout Lake—are both in the UP.

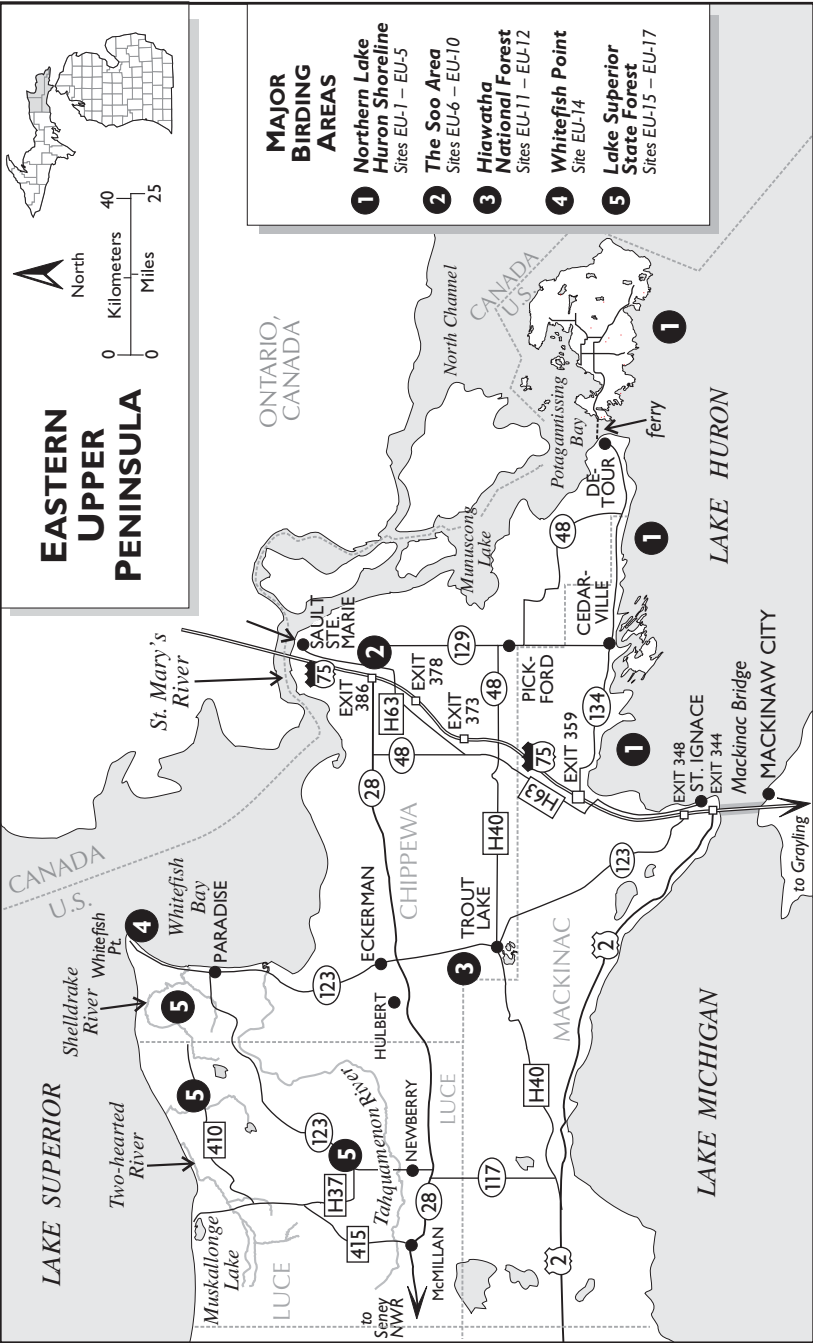
Vast areas of the UP are relatively uninhabited and accessible only by primitive roads that cross numerous bogs and streams, and especially during the winter and spring months, many roads may be drivable only by high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicles, or not at all. During summer months, many of these roads are heavily used by recreational off-roaders, which can disturb the UP's sandy roads to the point where two-wheel-drive vehicles become mired in the soft sand. Caution and common sense should prevail, particularly when driving alone, as towing services may be a considerable distance away. Gas stations can also be few and far between once you leave the large towns, so if you are venturing into the national and state forest areas, you may want to fill-up whenever you have the chance. Throughout the UP, there are various federal, state, county, forest service, and local roads that provide access to most of the desirable birding spots. While the DeLorme maps are very good, with considerable detail, they are not adequate as a sole reference for traveling the UP. The U.S. Forest Service roads, as an example, are not designated in the DeLorme guide, yet these roads are often signposted only with Forest Service road numbers. County maps, published by UniversalMap (795 Progress Court, P.O. Box 15, Williamston, MI 48895, www.universalmmap.com), do provide the Forest Service road numbers but, conversely, do not always give the names of other roads. The U.S. Forest Service has Michigan national forest maps available at their district offices, as listed on page 25.

Most of the larger towns have plenty of motels and restaurants and campgrounds abound. Listings of these facilities can be obtained from the appropriate tourist offices listed on pages 20–23. Once away from the larger towns, however, many of these establishments are open on a seasonal basis, catering primarily to skiers and snowmobilers in winter and tourists in summer, but may not be open for early spring or late fall birders. Restaurants also tend to open after "birder hours" in the morning and close fairly early in the evening;

therefore, some prior checking may prevent going to bed hungry after a long day of birding.

The boggy geography of the UP provides premium breeding grounds for mosquitos, which can be present in awe-inspiring numbers from ice-out until ice-in. DEET-defying, biting flies (mainly Black Flies, but also Deer Flies and Sand Flies) are usually active from June into mid-August. Ticks are present in the drier areas, mostly in the western UP. Lyme Disease has been reported in Michigan, so appropriate precautions should be taken. A necessary addition to the packing list for a warm-weather birding trip in the UP is good insect repellent and/or head nets and bug-proof clothing for those who can wear such things while birding. The positive element is that these insects attract the very insect-eating birds for which you may be searching.

For the purposes of this guide, the UP has been split, based partly on differences in landforms and birdlife, into western and eastern sections. The eastern part includes Mackinac, Chippewa, and Luce Counties, and the western part includes the rest (the counties of Schoolcraft, Alger, Delta, Menominee, Marquette, Dickinson, Iron, Baraga, Gogebic, Ontonagon, Houghton, and Keweenaw).



THE EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA

The Eastern Upper Peninsula, as we have designated it, is a relatively small area consisting of three counties: Mackinac, Chippewa, and Luce. This area is rather flat, with some extensive agricultural lands, large bogs of cedar and spruce, coastal marshes, and an irregular coastline with many islands.

The oldest settlements in Michigan are located in the Eastern UP. French missionary explorers reached the vicinity of the present Sault Ste. Marie in the winter of 1618–1619, but were slow to follow up the initial explorations with any permanent settlements. Sault Ste. Marie was established in 1668 and St. Ignace in 1671. Many other site names in this area reflect the influence of those early French explorers: De Tour, Epoufette, Les Cheneaux, and Barbeau.

This can be a fascinating place to visit in the winter months when the invasion of normally far-northern resident species occurs. During these irruption years, occurring usually every three to five years depending upon weather, rodent populations, and pine-cone production in the Canadian north, Gyrfalcon and Snowy and Great Gray Owls are regularly seen. Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Shrike, Pine Grosbeak, and Common and Hoary Redpolls may also be present. Northern Hawk and Boreal Owls are possible, but may require considerable luck to find.

Many migratory birds pass through the Eastern UP in spring and fall on their way to and from the far Canadian north, and the excellent habitats host numerous breeding species, including many neotropical migrants. Several of the better-known migrant traps are located here: Whitefish Point, the “Soo” Area, Pt. La Barbe, and the northern shore of Lake Huron.

Driving in the eastern parts of Chippewa and Mackinac Counties is normally not problematic, except during severe winter snowstorms. Many of the side roads in the national and state forests in western Chippewa County and all of Luce County are not maintained during winter and may not be passable until mid- to late May. Even then, some of the roads can be a challenge with a

two-wheel-drive vehicle. Motels, restaurants, and gasoline stations are available in the larger cities and villages of St. Ignace, Sault Ste. Marie, Newberry, Cedarville, and Paradise, but are scarce or non-existent away from these places.

NORTHERN LAKE HURON SHORELINE

By Jerry Ziarno

The northern shore of Lake Huron, with its many bays, peninsulas, and islands, is an area of large marshes, sedge meadows, alvar grasslands, extensive rocky beaches, and sandy coves. The shoreline is dominated by forests of cedar, fir, White Birch and aspen, while the interior features beech-maple forests and bogs with Tamarack and spruce. These diverse habitats provide homes for numerous nesting birds and serve as feeding and resting places for migrants. In the spring, as migrants from the south reach peak numbers in mid- to late May, birding can be spectacular along the shoreline. Tiny midges hatching in the shallow waters near shore provide necessary nourishment for these long-distance travelers. Birds nesting in the area include 15 species of warblers, as well as Sharp-tailed Grouse, Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Black Tern, Sedge Wren, Bobolink, and Savannah and Le Conte's Sparrows. Although the extended fall migration is not as exciting as the spring season, the numbers are higher, augmented by the presence of the year's young birds, and there is an increased chance of vagrants. Also in the fall, westward flights of raptors are evident. Winters can be severe, but visitors from the north such as Snowy and Great Gray Owls, Northern Shrike, Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Red and White-winged Crossbills, and Common and Hoary Redpolls may be seen in irruption years.

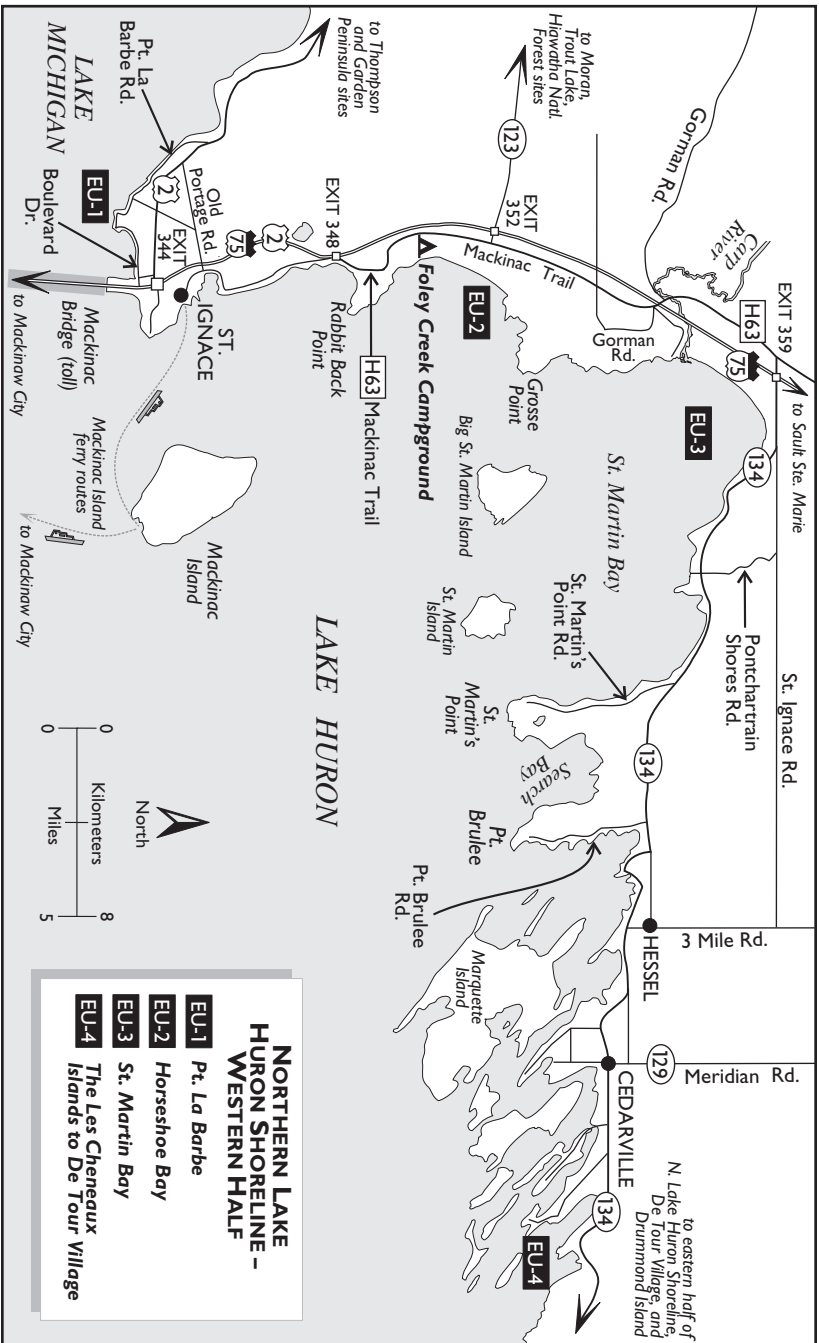
This shoreline is also home to a number of plants endemic to the Great Lakes area: Dwarf Lake Iris, Houghton's Goldenrod, and Pitcher's Thistle.

EU-1 Point La Barbe

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme, p. 94, B2: 45°50' N, 84°45' W

Directions: Point La Barbe can be reached from the Mackinac Bridge by going north on I-75 to the US-2 Exit. Go west on US-2 for 0.5 mile to a left turn onto Boulevard Road marked by a sign for the Father Marquette Memorial. (From southbound I-75, it is only 0.1 mile to Boulevard Road.) This paved but pot-holed road goes around the point and re-joins US-2 west of Point La Barbe.

Although Point LaBarbe does not have the national reputation of Whitefish Point or the Soo, it is known among knowledgeable local birders as one of the better places in the state for migrating birds. It is also an excellent vantage point for photogenic views of the Mackinac Bridge. Point La



Barbe is only about 3.5 miles across the Straits of Mackinac from McGulpin Point in the Lower Peninsula. Consequently, migrating birds trying to cross the Straits usually congregate at Point La Barbe, either after arriving there on their spring northward flight or hesitating there on their way south in fall. The small islands and sand spits just off the point can harbor numerous gulls and waterfowl. Double-crested Cormorants have established a nesting colony on Green Island, just south of the point. Great Blue Heron, Great Egret (very rare in the UP), Green Heron, and Black-crowned Night-Heron also use the island. Because of the proximity of deep water, diving ducks such as Redhead, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, and, infrequently, scoters, can be closely observed. Shorebirds seem to thrive on the sandy beaches and rocky flats. Black-bellied Plover and American Golden-Plover are usually present in spring. A Peregrine Falcon often hangs around the area, probably feeding on Rock Pigeons roosting on the bridge. In spring, numerous Broad-winged and Red-tailed Hawks migrate past the point, and a Merlin is often perched on the powerline poles near the point. Migrant vireos, warblers, and sparrows often show up in fairly good numbers in the dense cedars and pines along the shoreline.

There are several spots along the road where you can pull over or drive down to the rocky beach for close views of waterfowl and shorebirds. In May and June, this is also a good place to see Michigan's official state wildflower, the Dwarf Lake Iris, among the very common Birdseye Primrose. Return to US-2 and go east to I-75 northbound to continue the shoreline route.

EU-2 Horseshoe Bay

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 94, A3, 45°56' N, 84°43' W

Directions: From the intersection of I-75 and US-2, just north of the Mackinac Bridge, go north on I-75 for 3.6 miles to the exit for the Mackinac Trail (H-63). Go north on Mackinac Trail for 2.4 miles to Foley Creek Campground.

At Foley Creek Campground, a foot trail from the northern end of the campground leads into the 3,787-acre **Horseshoe Bay Wilderness Area**. The trail passes through a thick White-cedar swamp and coastal wetlands for about 1.0 mile northeast to a sandy beach on Horseshoe Bay. Nesting birds here include Common Loon, Red-breasted Merganser, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Magnolia Warbler (in the conifers along the trail). This is also a good spot for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

EU-3 St. Martin Bay

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 106, D3, 46°01' N, 84°41' W

Continue north on Mackinac Trail for about 5.5 miles to Gorman Road, which leads east to the **Carp River Mouth**. Birds that nest here include

Ruffed Grouse, Northern Harrier, Common Tern, Alder Flycatcher, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Parula, Blackburnian and Black-and-white Warblers, and Common Yellowthroat. Bald Eagles have nested just north of the river mouth, and Little Gull (accidental) has been observed in summer. In winter, Pileated Woodpecker and Common Raven can be seen. In migration, Tundra Swan, Common Loon, Bonaparte's Gull, Northern Shrike, and Palm Warbler pass through the area, and large numbers of Whimbrels may stop in spring migration.

Return to the Mackinac Trail, continue north, and exit to the east onto M-134. Cross over I-75 and go east for 4.2 miles to **Pontchartrain Shores Road**, which goes south to the lakeshore. For several years, the University of Southern Mississippi sponsored a banding operation near the end of this road. During the period from late April through mid-August, an average of 59 species were banded each year. Top ten in terms of numbers (in decreasing order) were American Redstart (nesting), Yellow-rumped (Myrtle), Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and Black-and-white Warblers, White-throated Sparrow, Ovenbird, Cedar Waxwing, Black-capped Chickadee, and Blackburnian Warbler. Other species of interest that were banded included Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Veery, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, and Bay-breasted Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, Mourning and Canada Warblers, and White-crowned Sparrow. All except Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers and White-crowned Sparrow nest in or near the area. The banding station is not currently in operation, but the excellent habitat remains. In early spring, the open water of St. Martin's Bay can harbor large numbers of resting waterfowl.

Return to M-134 and continue east 2.6 miles to **St. Martin's Point Road**. Go south for 3.6 miles to a small marina on the right (DeLorme pp. 94, A4 & 106, D4, 45°59' N, 84°31' W) for a good view of St. Martin Bay and numerous waterfowl and shorebirds in migration. Next, return to M-134 and continue east for 1.5 miles to CO 3436 south to Search Bay, another site that is good for migrating passerines in April and May and for Sandhill Cranes and kettles of raptors in September. Back at M-134, continue east for 2.0 miles to Point Brulee Road. There are several small nature preserves along this road and several vantage points for the bay (named West Entrance here). Birds here are similar to those that occur at the previous two sites. Return to M-134 and proceed about 5.0 miles east through Hessel to the town of Cedarville to continue the shoreline tour.

EU-4 The Les Cheneaux Islands to De Tour Village

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 95, A6, 45°58' N, 84°20' W

Located in extreme northern Lake Huron and stretching from just offshore of the town of Hessel to east of Cedarville, the 36 **Les Cheneaux Is-**

lands and the channels between them provide harbor for numbers of water-birds as well as for the same passerines mentioned above. Access to the islands is by boat only, although many islands are private property. An excellent way to sample this unique setting is by kayak. Woods and Water Eco-tours (906-484-4157) is a local outfitter offering kayak tours of the islands.

Continue east from Cedarville on M-134 for about 14 miles, cross the bridge over **Albany Creek**, and immediately pull off onto the south side of the road. The nature trails between the highway and the beach here travel through evergreens and some deciduous trees that can harbor many neotropical migrants. Birds breeding here include Warbling Vireo, Veery, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, and Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Purple Finch. Barn and Bank Swallows nest under the bridge and along Albany Creek.

Another 2.0 miles east on M-134 is a roadside park which is a well-known migrant trap during spring and fall migration periods. Mixed flocks of flycatchers, vireos, and warblers can be readily seen at this shoreline park. In September, migrating raptors are seen as they fly in a westward direction. About 0.8 mile farther east is a two-track road to the north that leads to the Cranberry Lake Flooding, where migrant waterfowl and shorebirds can usually be seen. Breeding species in the area include both kinglets, Veery, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, and Chestnut-sided and Magnolia Warblers.

Return to the M-134 Roadside Park and proceed east for 1.1 miles to the turnoff to the **De Tour Campground** on St. Vital Point. There is an excellent beach and a wooded campground here, providing good habitat for migrating shorebirds, gulls, and passerines. In summer, Boreal Chickadee has occasionally been found here, and Black-backed Woodpecker nested one year. Return to M-134 and go about 5.6 miles east to De Tour Village and the Drummond Island Ferry dock.

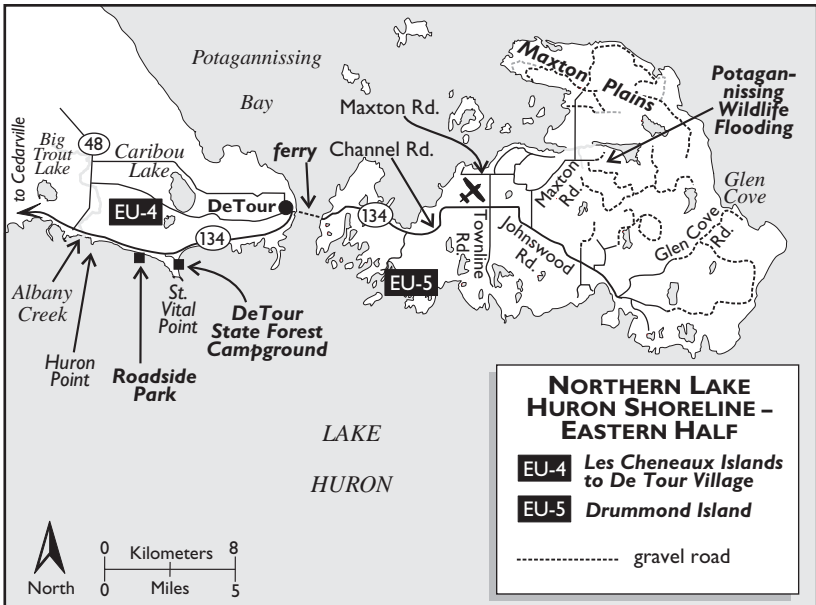
EU-5 Drummond Island

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 116: 46°00' N, 83°40' W

Contact Information: The car-ferry service (906-235-3170, www.drummondislandchamber.com) runs year round, with hourly departures for the one-mile crossing of the De Tour Passage. Round-trip fares in 2008 were \$12.00 per car and driver, plus \$2.00 for each passenger.

While there are no species of birds readily observed on Drummond Island that cannot be seen in other parts of the Eastern UP, the island is worth visiting for its wilderness setting and unique plant community. There are also some excellent birding sites. It is the largest island in the Great Lakes, with 136 square miles and 150 miles of shoreline, in a natural wilderness of cedar swamps, wetlands, and over 40 inland lakes, hardwood-forested ridges, and many small bays.



The first stop is the **Potagannissing Wildlife Flooding** (DeLorme p. 116, A3: 46°03' N, 83°40' W), reached by traveling east from the ferry on Channel Road (M-134, also labeled Cove Point Road in DeLorme) for approximately 7.0 miles to Townline Road (Drummond Road on most maps). Go north for 1.5 miles and turn right onto Maxton Road for a winding 6.0 miles to a small stream crossing. Just past the bridge over the stream will be a sign on the right indicating the entrance to the wildlife flooding. Wood Duck, Belted Kingfisher, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Song Sparrow are among the birds resident in this area in summer.

Return to Maxton Road and proceed north for about 2.5 miles to the intersection marked by informational signs describing the **Maxton Plains**. This site is an Alvar Grassland, an open expanse of rare grasses, sedge, and wildflowers that grow in the fissures of bare limestone bedrock. The combination of Great Lakes, sub-arctic, and prairie flora make this habitat rare and unique. This Alvar Grassland, a 1,185-acre property of the Michigan Nature Conservancy (<http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/michigan/preserves/art5245.html>), is considered to be one of the world's finest examples of this habitat, which occurs only in a few areas of the Great Lakes and in the Baltic Sea Basin of Europe. At first glance, an Alvar may resemble an abandoned parking lot with weeds growing in the cracks, but it is actually an area of mostly flat limestone bedrock where top soil has been eroded over thousands of years by ice, wind, and water. A unique combination of rare Great Plains Prairie and Arctic Tundra plant species occur here, including the threatened

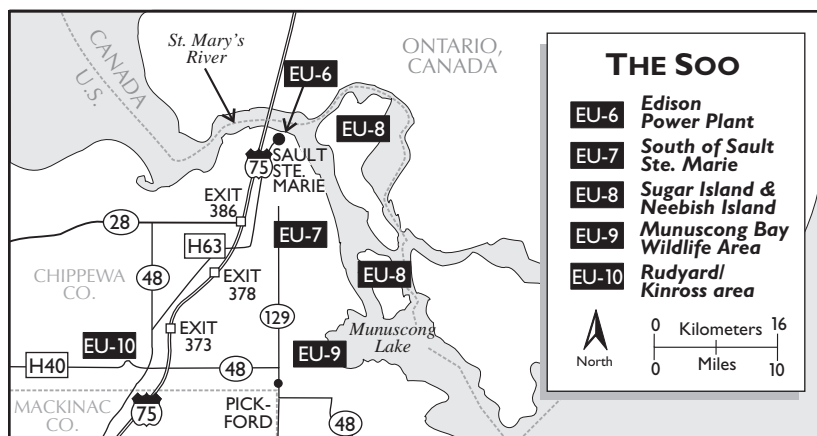
Prairie Smoke, Early Buttercup, Early Saxifrage, and Houghton's Goldenrod. From the intersection at the entrance to the grassland, several roads lead through the Maxton Plains to the northern shoreline of the island. Use care when traveling the gravel roads; they are not always passable. Birds that call these plains home include Sharp-tailed Grouse, Broad-winged Hawk, Merlin, Sandhill Crane, Upland Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, and Vesper and Savannah Sparrows.

From the Maxton Plains, backtrack on Maxton Road to Townline Road and M-134. From here, take Johnswood Road southeast for about 6.0 miles to the intersection with Bald Knob and Bass Cove Roads. Bald Knob Road (Sheep Ranch Road on some maps) becomes **Glen Cove Road** and winds to the northeast for about 6.0 miles to Glen Cove. Birds possible in summer in the cedar forests along these roads are Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, Osprey, Merlin, Pileated Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush, and Cape May, Black-throated Green, and Blackburnian Warblers. Black-backed Woodpeckers have nested in this area.

THE SOO

By Jerry Ziarno

The Sault Ste. Marie area—the Soo—is known as *the place to visit in the harsh UP winter to see those irruptive northern species that are difficult to find except in a very few places in the Lower 48*. The area also provides opportunities to observe some of Michigan's resident and migrating specialty species during the remainder of the year. In winter during irruption years (once every three to five years) and with some luck, a birder could complete the Grand Slam of northern owls in one day of birding: Snowy, Northern Hawk, Great Gray, Short-eared, and Boreal. The possibility of adding Spruce

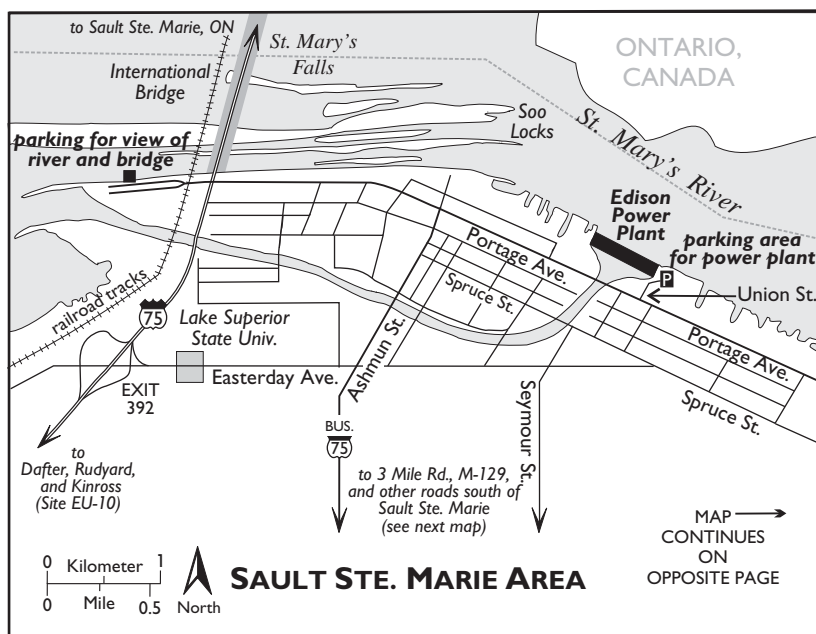


and Sharp-tailed Grouse, Gyrfalcon, Iceland and Glaucous Gulls, Black-backed Woodpecker, Northern Shrike, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak, Red and White-winged Crossbills, Common and Hoary Redpolls, and Evening Grosbeak would make a great list for even the most experienced birder.

Winter birding in the Soo area is done primarily from inside your vehicle, as the snow is usually too deep for foot travel off the road and most of the birding stops are along private property.



Gyrfalcon perched on the Soo Edison Power Plant
David Stimac



EU-6 Sault Ste. Marie

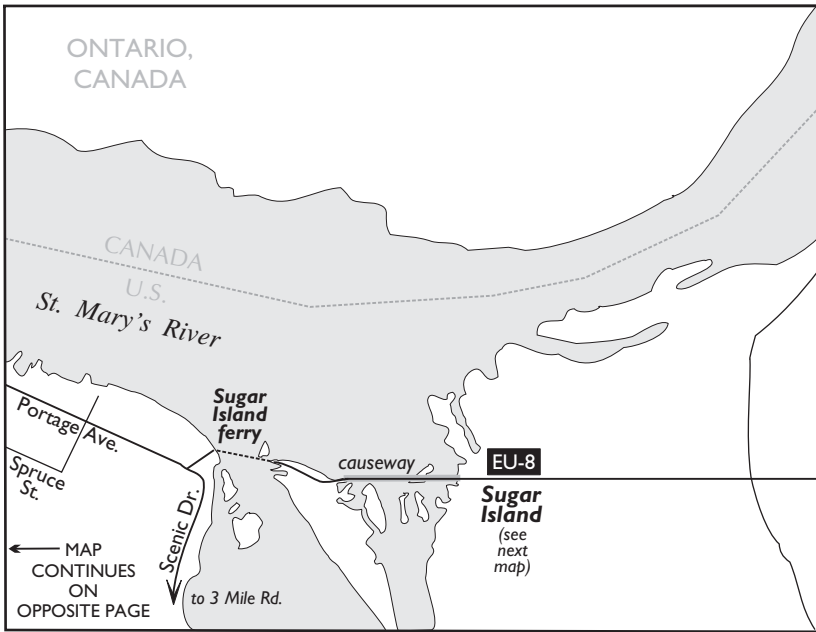
Spring** Summer** Fall*** Winter****

Delorme, p. 107, A6: 46°29' N, 84°21' W

Contact Information: Sault Area Chamber of Commerce; 906-632-3301, email at info@saultstemarie.org.

Directions: From I-75 Exit 392, go east on Easterday Avenue for 0.8 mile to Ashmun Street (the I-75 Business Route). Go left (north) onto Ashmun Street for 0.6 mile to Portage Avenue. Turn right (east) onto Portage for 0.7 mile to Union Street, where you turn left (north) to the power plant parking area.

The first stop is the **Edison Power Plant** on the St. Mary's River, which separates Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The power plant sends the river's water pouring through its turbines, which keeps a small area of the river ice-free even in the coldest of winters and provides a resting place for wintering waterfowl. However, the power plant's main attraction has been a gray-morph Gyrfalcon, which spent a number of winters perched on a window ledge of the plant in full view of the parking area. Although the species does not turn up at the power plant every year, two Gyrfalcons were present there in the winter of 2003–2004. If there is no Gyrfalcon at the power plant, the species is often seen out on the ice of the river.



Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser are usually present in the open water at the power plant, and a vagrant King Eider showed up one winter. Harlequin Duck is also a possibility, but it is more reliably seen on the Ontario side in the fast-flowing water near the power plant. (Be sure to have proof of citizenship—birth certificate or passport—if you plan to cross the border here.)

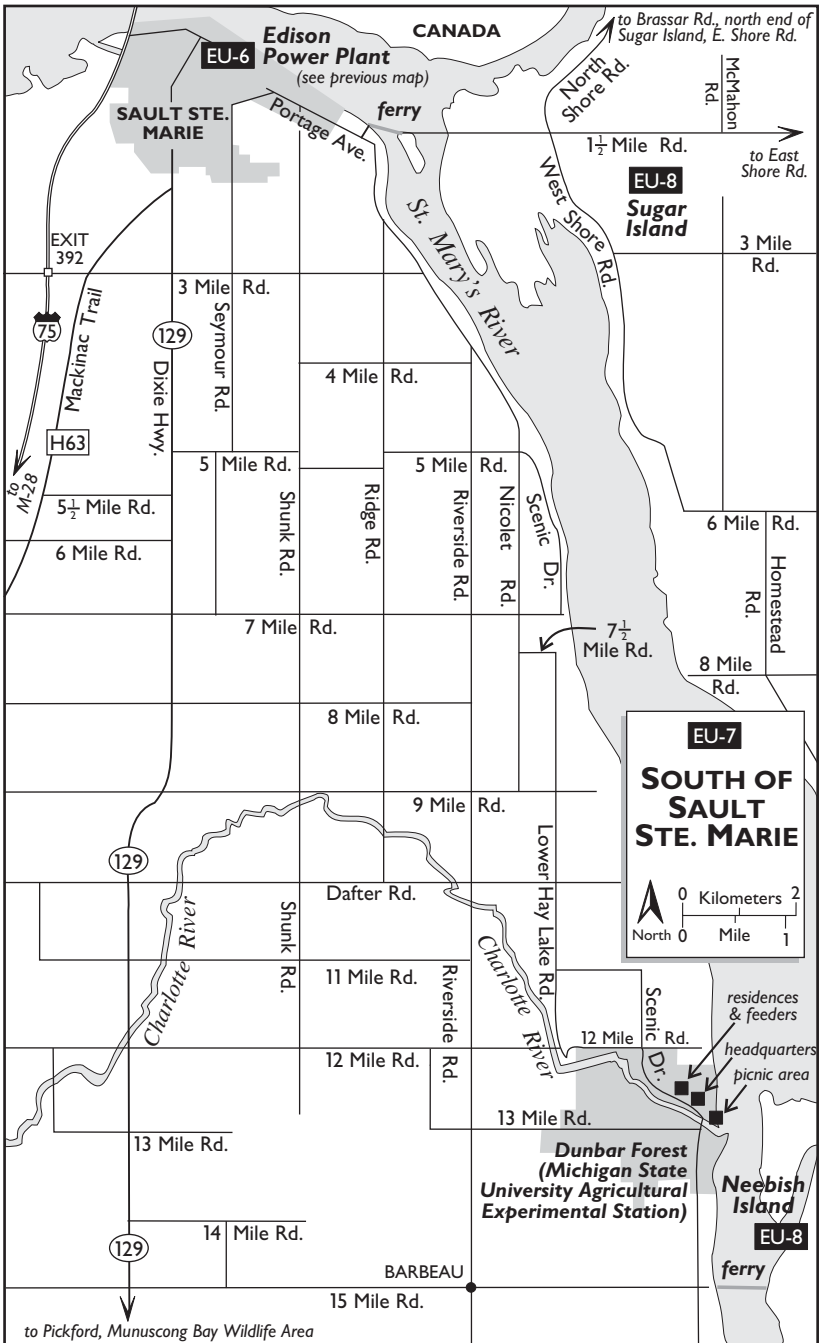
Bald Eagles are often seen hunting along the river, and Peregrine Falcons have nested for the past several years on the metal beams under the International Bridge connecting the two Soos. To reach the bridge, follow Portage Street to its west end, and then take a small road which leads under the bridge and ends about a quarter-mile west of the bridge. Examine the girders carefully; the falcons often perch quietly for extended periods. In some winters, a good place for Bohemian Waxwings is the northeast corner of the Lake Superior State University, where they feed in the crabapple trees.

EU-7 South of Sault Ste. Marie

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter****

Delorme p. 107, A6: 46°29' N, 84°21' W

After you have birded the area along the St. Mary's River, slowly drive the roads south of the Soo in an area bounded on the north by 3 Mile Road, on the east by the St. Mary's River, on the west by I-75 and on the south by 15 Mile Road (see map on next page). In irruption years, there are four dependable sites in this area to check for Northern Hawk and Great Gray Owls and



Northern Shrike: (1) the intersection of M-129 and 7 Mile Road, (2) Ridge Road between 4 Mile and 8 Mile Roads, (3) Lower Hay Lake Road between 7½ Mile and 8 Mile Roads, and (4) 9 Mile Road between Nicolet and Shunk Roads. If present, the Great Grays are usually easy to see as they perch on power poles, fence posts, or bare limbs of deciduous trees. Northern Hawk Owls are less than annual in The Soo, and if present, may number only one or two birds. They are somewhat secretive, usually perched away from the road and at mid-level in deciduous trees.

For Sharp-tailed Grouse and Snow Buntings, try Riverside Road between 11 Mile and 12 Mile Roads. In winter, the grouse prefer open areas with some brush and Jack Pines, but may often be seen perched in trees near residential feeders, feeding on catkins, or even perched on medium-sized Jack Pines. Other than visiting a lek in early spring, birding the UP in winter is the best way to see a Sharp-tailed Grouse in Michigan. Rough-legged Hawks are usually seen coursing over the fields throughout this area. Bald Eagles are often seen in the company of Common Ravens, especially if an animal carcass is present in the farm fields. Occasionally, Red and White-winged Crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks may be seen picking up salt and grit from the roadsides.

The best bet for finding Pine Grosbeak, redpolls, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak is to check any residences with feeders (rather scarce in this particular area). Currently, one such residence is located at the end of 11 Mile Road, 1.0 mile west of M-129; the residents use the roof of the large front porch as a feeding station and are friendly to visiting birders. A Northern Shrike is usually hanging around, looking to make an easy meal of one of the feeder birds.

EU-8 Sugar and Neebish Islands

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*****

DeLorme p. 107, A6 & A7. 46°29' N, 84°21' W

A side trip to **Sugar Island** (DeLorme p. 107, A7) is well worth the effort. Sugar Island is heavily forested with good boreal habitat, the roads are not heavily traveled, and birding can be good in irruption years. The car ferry to Sugar Island departs from the ferry dock on Portage Avenue in Sault Ste. Marie, about 2.0 miles east and south of Ashmun Street. Ferries depart very 30 minutes throughout the year for the 15-minute crossing; fees in 2008 were \$10 for car and driver, \$2 for each passenger. While waiting for the ferry, check the crabapple trees nearby for Bohemian Waxwings, and scan the river for Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Common Merganser. Once on the island, proceed east from the ferry dock on 1½ Mile Road for about 1.0 mile to North Shore Road, where Gyrfalcon and Great Gray Owl might be seen in the first two to three miles to the north. North Shore Road goes around the north end of the island and ends at East Shoreline Road. Between this intersection and the intersection with East 1½ Mile Road, look for Sharp-tailed Grouse, Northern Shrike, Bohemian Waxwings feeding in the trees, Pine Grosbeak, and Red Crossbill. Also check for these species at McMahon and Brassar Roads. To each the southern part of the island, use either West



Sharp-tailed Grouse
Philip Chu

Shore Road or Homestead Road. Great Gray Owl has been seen at Homestead Road just south of 6 Mile Road, and in irruption years, may be seen anywhere on the southern half of the island; in the winter of 1991–1992, more than 20 Great Grays were present there.

The same species may also be found on **Neebish Island** (DeLorme p. 107, B7), located to the south of Sugar Island. In July 1983, an adult Great Gray Owl with three fledged young here provided the first evidence of breeding in the state. Neebish Island is reached by a car ferry which departs from just south of the east end of 15 Mile Road, 3.0 miles east of the small village of Barbeau. The 15-minute crossing had a fee in 2009 of \$11 per car and driver, \$2 per additional passenger. When the river freezes solidly, the locals cross

to the island on the ice. *Be sure to check at the store/gas station near the ferry dock before trying this.*

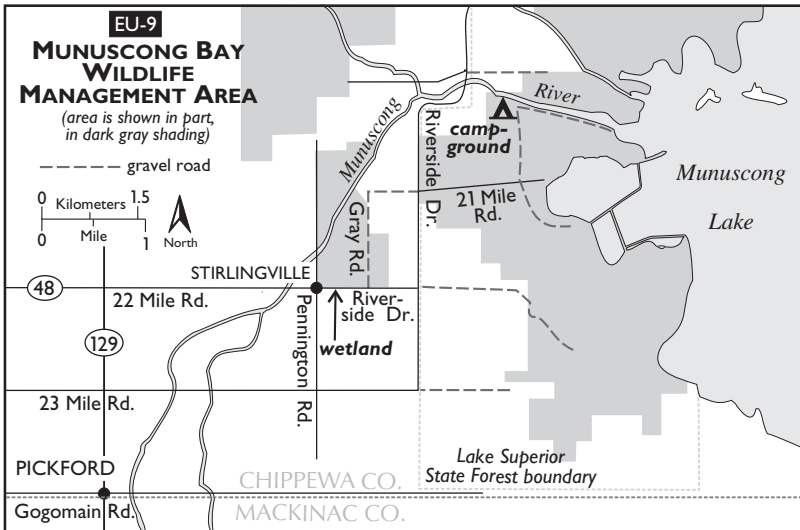
Nearby is the **Dunbar Forest – Michigan State University Agricultural Experimental Station** (www.maes.msu.edu/dunbar; Delorme, p. 107, B7: 46°19' N, 84°14' W) The station and several houses in the area keep feeders going all year, which attracts many birds during all seasons. In winter, this is usually a reliable place to find Bohemian Waxwing and winter finches. The station can be reached by going east from the intersection of Riverside and 13 Miles Roads for 3.8 miles. The research station is located on a small road just to the north of the east end of 13 Mile Road, past the bridge over the Charlotte River. There is also a pleasant picnic area at the mouth of the river where it empties into the West Neebish Channel. In summer, breeding birds here include Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, and Yellow Warbler.

EU-9 Munuscong Bay State Wildlife Management Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter***
 DeLorme p. 107: 46°11' N, 84°18' W
 Contact Information: 906-293-5131

Directions: *To reach Munuscong Bay from the south, take M-129 north from Cedarville for about 10.6 miles to the small town of Pickford. Continue north for 2.0 miles, at which point 22 Mile Road goes east and M-48 goes to the west. Proceed east on 22 Mile Road, which will soon become Riverside Drive. Continue on Riverside to the intersection with Pennington Road (at the small village of Stirlingville). Conversely, from Sault Ste. Marie to the north, take M-129 south for 22.0 miles to 22 Mile Road. See map on next page.*

Although the northern irruptive species are back on their Canadian nesting territories during the warmer months, the interesting UP breeders are present at a few sites in the Soo area. One of the better spots is the **Munuscong Bay State Wildlife Management Area**. Just past the village of Stirlingville on Riverside Road is a small pond which may hold dabbling ducks, Great Blue Heron, American Bittern, Sandhill Crane, and Wilson's Snipe. Just east of the pond is a narrow dirt road, Gray Road, which goes to the north. Northeast of this intersection is one section of the Munuscong Bay State Wildlife Management Area, which provides good, open-country birding. The large grassy fields here are probably one of the better spots in the state for nesting Le Conte's Sparrows. Up to 30 singing males have been recorded in this relatively small area. Other breeding birds include Sharp-tailed Grouse, Upland Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Sedge Wren, Savannah Sparrow, and Bobolink. Western Meadowlark has been recorded, and a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (a casual migrant in the state) was found here in June 2001 in appropriate breeding habitat, among the more numerous Le Conte's Sparrows. In winter, in addition to the Sharp-tailed Grouse, Great Gray Owl and Northern Shrike might be seen.



Go north on Gray Road for 1.0 mile to 21 Mile Road (unmarked) and turn right (east). At 0.5 mile, this road intersects crosses Riverside Drive, which is a north-south at this point. Continue east across Riverside Drive into the Munuscong Bay Flooding section of the wildlife area, comprised of a large marshy area of Munuscong Bay. In the marshes here, you can find nesting American Wigeon, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sandhill Crane, and Marsh Wren. At 1.0 mile east of the Riverside Drive and 21 Mile Road intersection, the gravel road to the north leads to a nice campground along the Munuscong River. The wooded areas near the campground can be good for nesting warblers.

EU-10 Kinross/Rudyard Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter***

DeLorme p. 106, C4: 46°15' N, 84°33' W

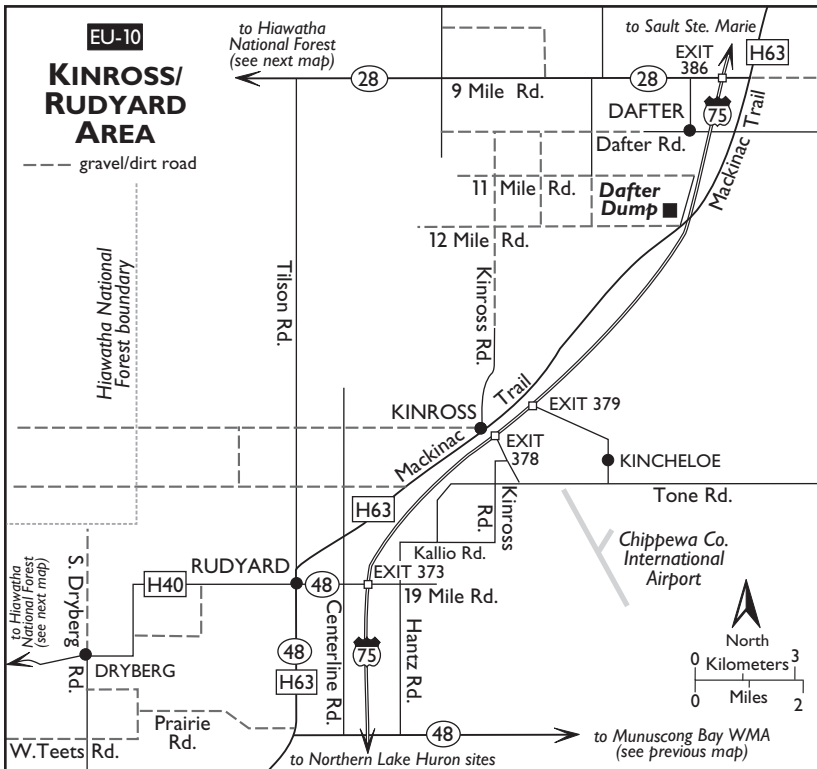
Directions: From 3 Mile Road in the Soo, go south on I-75 for about 6.0 miles to the M-28 Exit. Go west on M-28 (9 Mile Road) to Soo Line Road and go left (south) for 1.0 mile to the small village of Dafter.

Another good area for winter birding lies to the west of I-75 and south of Sault Ste. Marie. In the village of Dafter, check any feeders here for visiting winter finches. Next, go west on Dafter Road (10 Mile Road) for 4.0 miles to Kinross Road. Go south on Kinross Road, which will eventually end up at the village of **Kinross**. Along this stretch of road, between Dafter and 12 Mile Roads, Bald Eagle, Rough-legged Hawk, and Northern Hawk Owl are possible. Just north of the village of Kinross, a private residence maintains a wildlife feeding station on both sides of the road. Cedar Waxwing and Common Redpoll may be at the feeders, along with Wild Turkey or even a White-tailed Deer. Be alert for Gray Jay and White-winged Crossbill. The **Dafter Dump**

can have the occasional Iceland or Glaucous Gull among the congregating Herring Gulls and Common Ravens. This facility is located just north of 12 Mile Road, 0.2 mile west of CO H63 (Mackinac Trail). Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks often hang out in the trees surrounding the dump. Michigan's only Slaty-backed Gull was found at this site in November 1981.

From Kinross, take CO H63 south to the village of Rudyard, about 4.0 miles. The open agricultural fields in this area are reliable for Snowy Owls in winter. In some years, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Hawk Owl, Northern Shrike, Snow Bunting, and Lapland Longspur may also be present. For a loop trip through this area, take Exit 373 (Rudyard exit) from I-75, go east on the north leg of M-48 (19 Mile Road) to Hantz Road, and go south for 3 miles to the south leg of M-48 (22 Mile Road). Go west for 1 mile (crossing over the interstate) to Centerline Road and go north for 3 miles to M-48, at which point you are 1.0 mile east of Rudyard.

In late fall or in mild winters, several Short-eared Owls can sometimes be observed hunting over the open fields. Take CO H-40 west from Rudyard for 5.0 miles to South Dryberg Road. Go south for 2.0 miles to West Teets Road, where you should look for the owls over the fields at dusk. Rough-legged Hawks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings are also possible.



HIAWATHA NATIONAL FOREST

By Jerry Ziarno

EU-11 Hiawatha National Forest – Eastern Section

Spring*** Summer**** Fall** Winter**

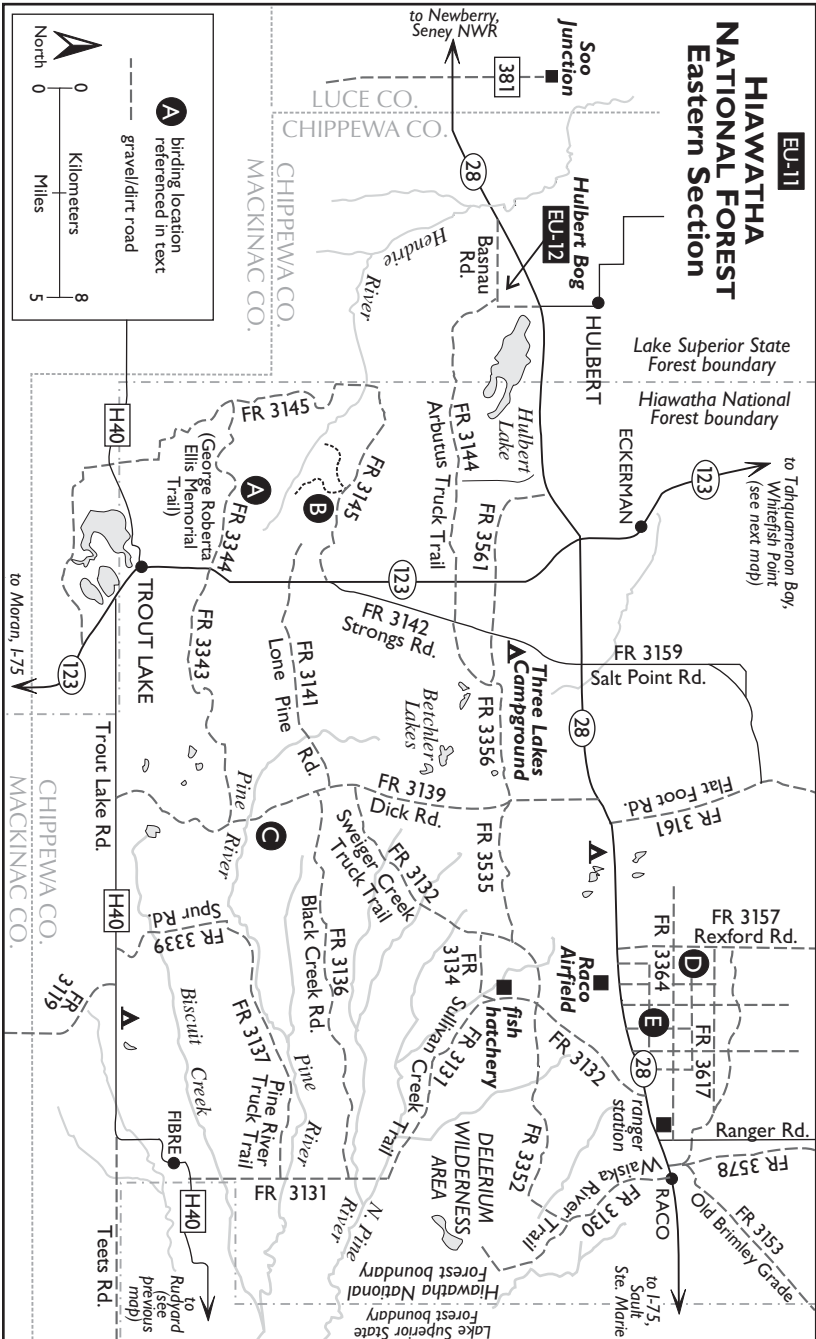
DeLorme p. 105, B8-C8

Contact Information: 906-786-4062; www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/hiawatha

Directions: From the south, go north on I-75 from the Mackinac Bridge for 9.25 miles to the exit for M-123. Go northwest on M-123 for approximately 30 miles to the village of Trout Lake, where a motel, restaurants, and gasoline are available. If coming from the previous site (Rudyard/Kinross), go west on H-40 at Rudyard for about 22.5 miles to the village of Trout Lake.

The **Hiawatha National Forest** is a vast wilderness area of varied habitats, including sandy pines, Tamarack bogs, open grassy areas, and deciduous forests where some of the most sought-after boreal and neotropical species breed. U.S. Forest Service roads wind through the area, providing good access, although some may be impassable during winter and even into early May. A forest map and compass/GPS are helpful. From the village of **Trout Lake** (DeLorme p. 105, C8: 46°11' N, 85°01' W), go north on M-123 for 1.7 miles to FR 3344, one of the better-known spots in the state for nesting Connecticut Warbler. This sand road, sometimes impassable prior to mid-May, goes left (west) from M-123 through excellent habitat for the species. From late May through August, several Connecticut Warblers can usually be found along FR 3344 (George Roberta Ellis Memorial Trail) near the bogs, from 1.5 to 3.0 miles west of M-123 (**A** on map). As is the case with this elusive bird, it is usually easier to hear its distinctive song than it is to catch a good look at one. Be aware that similar-looking Nashville Warblers and similar-sounding Northern Water-thrushes are both fairly common breeders here. From May through August, the several bogs on the left side of the road can also have Alder Flycatcher, Sedge Wren, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and sometimes Yellow Rail (rare) and Le Conte's Sparrow. The Ringed Boghaunter, one of Michigan's rarest dragonflies and rare even in the New England bogs of its core range, can be found here in late May.

At 4.6 miles from M-123, FR 3344 ends at FR 3145. A left (south) turn will take you to CO H40 back to Trout Lake. Instead, turn right (north) onto FR 3145 through the headwaters area of the Hendrie River and some of the best boreal forest in this part of the Hiawatha National Forest. Between about 6.2 and 7.6 miles from the junction of FR-3344 and FR 3145 is the best area to search for boreal species (**B** on map). In spring through late fall, a half-mile walk on one of the trails leading south from FR 3145 may produce Spruce



Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Boreal Chickadee. Great Gray Owls were observed here in the mid-1990s during the summer season, but breeding was never confirmed. Other breeding species that may be seen include Ruffed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Hermit Thrush. Nesting warblers include Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Pine, Black-and-white Warblers, and Ovenbird. Lincoln's and White-throated Sparrows and Evening Grosbeak are also local nesters. Palm Warbler is a rare breeder in Michigan, but a few nests have been found in this area. Philadelphia Vireo has been seen, although this species is easy to confuse with the much more abundant Red-eyed Vireo.

At 9.0 miles from the FR 3344/FR 3145 junction, FR 3145 re-joins M-123. Any sedge marsh along M-123 between FR 3344 to the south and M-28 to the north is worth checking for Yellow Rail, as it has occasionally turned up here in May and June. *Do not leave the road here to look for the rail, and do not use tapes, as this is a threatened species in Michigan.* FR 3344 and FR 3145 might not be plowed during winter, and snow can remain until early May. In early spring, FR 3344 may be impassable, and care is required in driving through low, wet spots at any time of year.

A network of Forest Service roads east of M-123 provides habitat for a number of the same species as mentioned above. One of the better roads is **Lone Pine Road (FR 3141)**, 3.6 miles north of Trout Lake. At about 1.3 miles east of M-123, the road goes past a productive bog where Connecticut Warblers nest. Palm Warblers have been found on territory about 1.5 miles east of M-123 on FR 3141. Sharp-tailed Grouse are usually present near the east end of the road in the vicinity of the intersection with Dick Road (FR 3139), 5.2 miles east of M-123. Turn right (south) onto FR 3139, which is maintained and passable all year, and go 2.0 miles south to a crossing over the brush-covered Pine River (**C** on map). This is an excellent spot in the spring and early summer for Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Mourning, and Canada Warblers. Also look for American Woodcock, Alder and Great Crested Flycatchers, Blackburnian Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Indigo Bunting anywhere along FR 3139. Toward the north end of FR 3139 (about 1.0 mile south of M-28) is one of the better places in the area to find Red Crossbills, particularly in winter and early spring, as well as Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks.

Return north on FR 3139 to **Sweiger Creek Truck Trail (FR 3132)**, which goes northeast from FR 3139 at 0.6 mile north of the intersection of Dick Road (FR 3139) and Lone Pine Road (FR 3141). As you travel northeast on FR 3132, be alert for Spruce Grouse anywhere along the road. At 5.1 miles northeast of the intersection of FR 3139 and FR 3132, you will reach FR 3134. Take FR 3134 east for 1.7 miles past a fish hatchery on Sullivan's Creek and intersect with FR 3131. FR 3131 goes to the southeast and forms the southern

boundary of the Delerium Wilderness, an area of rolling landscape formed from old glacial lakes. Gray Jays inhabit the area, and many of the same species found along FR 3139 (above) may be found here as well.

From the intersection of FR 3134 and FR 3131, go north for 1.2 miles to where FR 3131 merges with FR 3132 and where the road meets FR 3352 (FR 3352 heads east to form the north boundary of the Delerium Wilderness Area). Continue northeast on FR 3132 for 3.0 miles to M-28, 2.0 miles west of the small town of Raco. Some of these roads may not be passable if there is a lot of snow in winter or early spring.

Go west on M-23 from its intersection with FR 3132 to visit a dependable site for Sharp-tailed Grouse (best in April and May). Travel west for 2.1 miles on M-23 to the entrance to the old **Raco Airfield** (DeLorme p. 106, B3; 46°22' N, 84°49' W) on the south side of M-28. The entrance is marked with a sign identifying the company that occupies the buildings inside the gate, *Smithers Scientific Services, Inc.* Drive through the open gate onto an abandoned airstrip that is now state land open to the public. The grouse are usually found in early morning along the three runways that lead away from the gate. You can drive on the runways to the southwest to another, east-west runway, where you should look for the birds. *If the grouse are on the lek, do not leave your car.* Any approach from outside your car will disrupt the birds' mating activities and may drive them away from the lek.

Another good area for both Spruce and Sharp-tailed Grouse is located just northwest of here. Go west on M-28 for 1.1 miles from the old Raco Airfield and turn right (north) onto FR 3157 (Rexford Road). For the next 2 miles, FR 3157 goes through forest openings which can have numbers of Sharp-tailed Grouse (**D** on map). There are at least three leks in this area and the Forest Service has established food and cover plots of grasses and herbaceous plants for the birds. *Stay in your car and do not disturb the birds when they are on lek, usually very early in the morning.* As you travel north on FR 3157, you will reach FR 3364 at 1.0 mile north of M-28. Go right (east) on FR 3364 for 2.0 miles. With some luck, you might find Spruce Grouse along the road edges and in the pine forests near the road (**E** on map). The mature Jack Pines with branches at ground level are the preferred Spruce Grouse habitat. The birds are courting in April and May, and somewhat easier to find then, but with a bit of searching and some luck, they can be found year round.

Return to the intersection of M-28 and M-123 and proceed west 5.8 miles to Hulbert Corners.

EU-12 Hulbert Bog

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 105, B7: 46°19' N, 85°10' W*

Directions: From the intersection of M-28 and M-123 (about 10 miles north of Trout Lake), go west on M-28 for 5.8 miles to Hulbert Corners. See previous Hiawatha National Forest map.

To the southwest of Hulbert Corners is the **Hulbert Bog**, an extensive area of boreal habitat that is one of the more reliable places in Michigan for Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee. From Hulbert Corners and M-28, go south on Basnau Road for 1.0 mile, turn right (west), and stop along the east-west portion of Basnau to walk the road, the best method for finding these two species. The birds can usually be found from late fall through early spring in the westernmost 1.5 miles of Basnau Road. In fact, the Gray Jays have become accustomed to people “chumming” for the birds, and handfuls of bird seed tossed on the road will usually attract several. The Boreal Chickadees, when present, are usually with small groups of Black-capped Chickadees. Other species possible in Hulbert Bog from November through April include Rough-legged Hawk and Red and White-winged Crossbills. Ruffed Grouse, Black-backed (rare) and Pileated Woodpeckers, and Common Raven may be found at any time of the year. Breeding birds present here from late May and seen or heard through mid-June include Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Nashville, Yellow, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Cape May (rare), Yellow-rumped, Black-thoated Green, and Black-and-white Warblers, and American Redstart.

After you reach the western intersection of Basnau Road and M-123, continue west on M-123 for 3.4 miles to CO 381, which leads north for 2.1 miles to Soo Junction. (Soo Junction is the terminal for the Toonerville Trolley, a narrow-gauge railway for tours to the Tahquamenon Falls.) CO 381 can be good from late May through mid-June for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Winter Wren, Tennessee Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Connecticut Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, all of which breed in the area. Wilson’s Warbler is also seen in migration.

EU-13 Tahquamenon River Mouth

*Spring*** Summer* Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 117, D8: 46°33' N, 85°01' W

Directions: *From the intersection of M-128 and M-28 (about 10 miles north of Trout Lake and 5.8 miles east of Hulbert Corners, the previous site), go north on M-123 for 1.4 miles to the small village of Eckerman.*

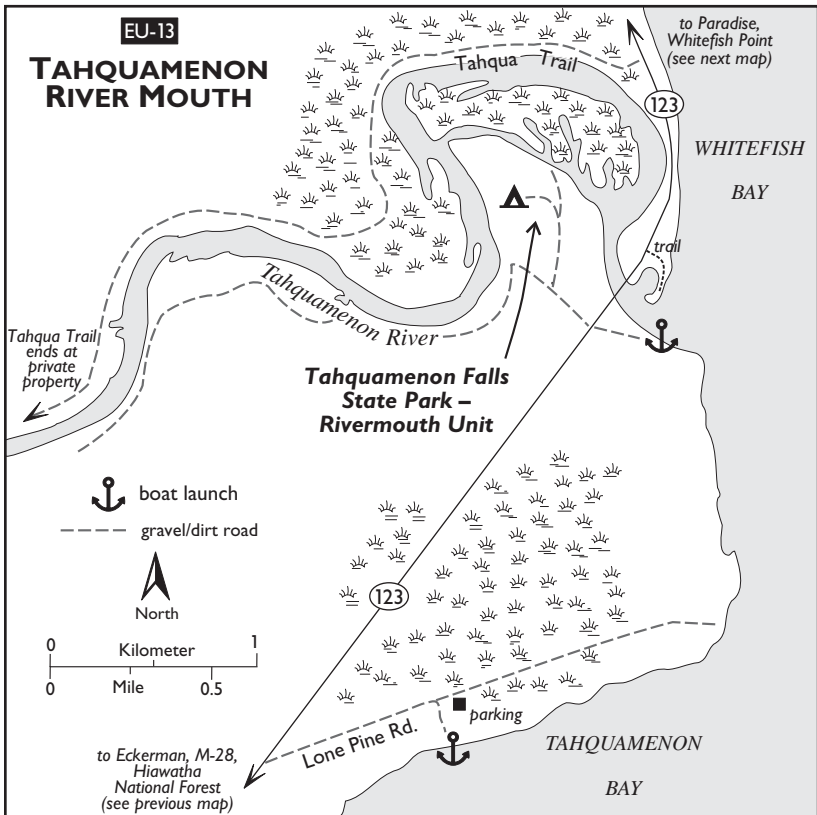
At Eckerman, consider stopping at The Bear Butt Inn (yes, that really is the name), which maintains several feeders that can attract Gray Jay, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak in winter and early spring. White-winged Crossbills may be seen feeding at the tops of the trees. The inn serves good hot chili and cold beer; it would be nice to leave a healthy tip to help pay for the bird seed. Feeders at a residence across the road from the inn also attract the same birds.

Continue north on M-123 for another 15.8 miles to the mouth of the **Tahquamenon River**, 4.5 miles south of the town of Paradise. The

boat-launch area provides a view of the open waters of Whitefish Bay and a large marshy area to the north of the river. The bay usually harbors migrating waterfowl in spring and fall, including both scaup species, all three scoters (Black is rare), Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers. Merlin has nested in the area, and a Ruffed Grouse often parades around the parking area at the boat launch. Bald Eagle and Belted Kingfisher are frequently present.

Directly across M-123 from the boat launch is the entrance to the **Tahquamenon Falls State Park** (906-492-3415; park is closed during the winter months.) Upon entering the park, take the first road to the right which will lead to the river and a view of the marsh beyond. Redhead and Ring-necked Duck use the marsh to the north of the river and west of the highway. This road can also be very good for migrating warblers in spring, and Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee are possible.

It is necessary to backtrack south for 1.5 miles from the river mouth access to reach a small, unmarked road (known locally as Lone Pine Road) that



goes east through a large wetland complex to a primitive boat-launch area and continues to a dead-end at Tahquamenon Bay (this road may not be drivable in winter and early spring). Sharp-tailed Grouse sometimes perch in the Tamarack trees, and Sedge Wren and Le Conte's Sparrow have nested here. One of the state's few nesting records for Wilson's Warbler came from this site. In late fall, flocks of Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks can be present.

In some years, the area along M-123 on the north side of the river also has large numbers of feeding Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks from November to spring. Additional views of the marsh are available on this side of the river from the Tahqua Trail, a gravel road which goes west from M-123 along the north bank of the Tahquamenon River. Great Gray Owl has been seen along this road, which eventually ends at private property. Return to M-123 and continue north to the village of Paradise.

WHITEFISH POINT

By Jerry Ziarno

In the preface to her book, *Northern Flights* (1999), author Sheryl De Vore wrote “. . . I discovered a place where murky bogs cleansed my soul and green curtains of light illuminated a darkened spirit. On an April day at dusk, a lone long-eared owl flew over Whitefish Bay in Michigan's Upper Peninsula across the *aurora borealis*, taking some of life's harshness with it. I have never forgotten that moment—and I was compelled to return again and again.” As have many birders—Whitefish Point is one of those magical places that attracts visiting birders from all over North America.

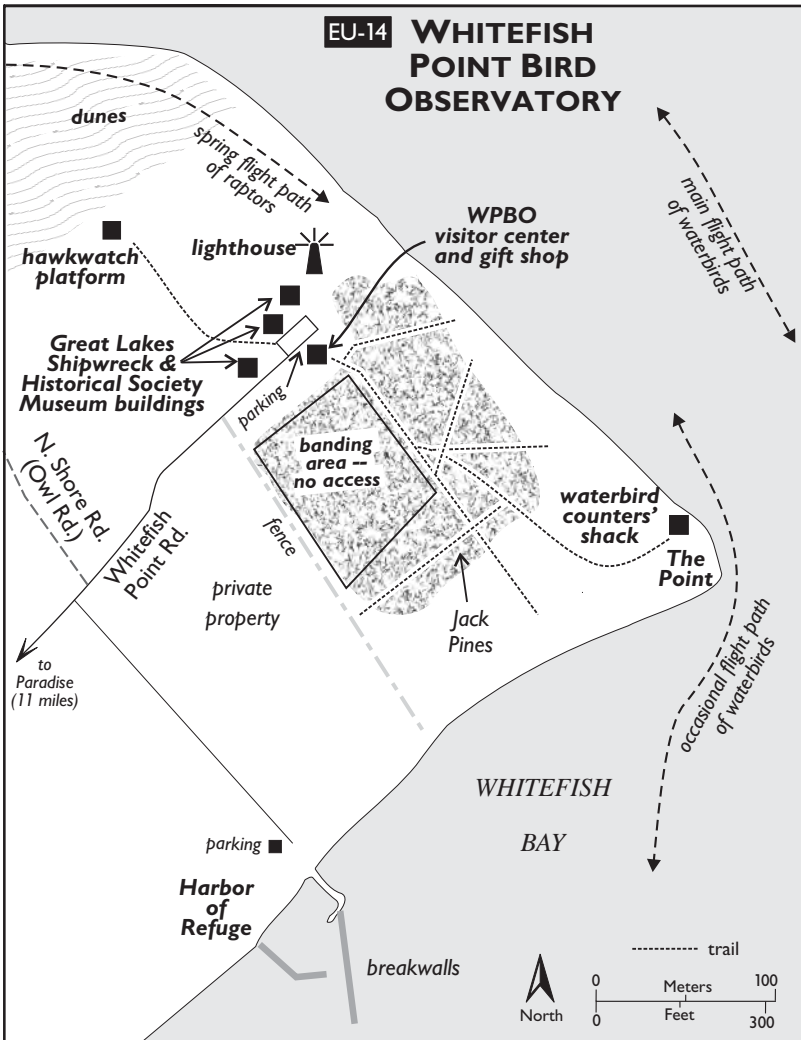
EU-14 Whitefish Point

Spring**** Summer*** Fall***** Winter**
DeLorme, p. 117, B8: 46° 46' N, 84°57' W

Contact Information: 906-492-3596; www.wpbo.org

Directions: The tour begins from the town of Paradise, which is located on M-123 approximately 22 miles north of the intersection of M-123 and M-28. This intersection is 40 miles northwest of the Mackinac Bridge, 36 miles west of Sault Ste. Marie, and 27 miles east of Newberry. From Paradise, go north on M-123 to where M-123 goes to the west. Continue north onto Whitefish Point Road, for a total of 11 miles from Paradise, to the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory. Note: Paradise is the closest location with lodging and restaurants, although some of the restaurants are open only during the summer season and all of them close rather early in the day; check on closing times as you pass through to ensure against going to bed hungry after a long day.

With its unique geographic location, **Whitefish Point** is one of the better-known migratory bird hotspots in the Midwest if not in the en-



tire U.S. Extending northeast from the Upper Peninsula into Lake Superior, Whitefish Point's topography funnels migrating birds onto the Point in the spring, which can make for spectacular birding when the conditions are favorable. Such conditions occur immediately after a major weather front moves through the area, with either southerly winds in the spring or northerly winds in the fall. The proximity of Ontario to the northeast across Lake Superior (it is only 17 miles to Coppermine Point, Ontario) also results in Canadian breeding birds stopping at Whitefish Point on their way south in autumn as they seek out the shortest lake crossing. The Point is known not only for the

congregation of raptors which occurs in spring, but also as an excellent spot in spring and fall to see large concentrations of migrating waterbirds (especially scoters, loons, grebes, and occasional jaegers), owls, and passerines. In fact, this is the best site in the state to observe jaegers; although they are usually too distant to be identified to species, most are Parasitic (Pomarine and Long-tailed are casual). It is also an excellent place to see numbers of migrating loons (Red-throated is easier to see here than anywhere else in the state), grebes (Red-necked is seen in large numbers, particularly in mid-August through mid-September), and scoters (all three species can be seen, although Black is rare).

In March 1976, the Michigan Audubon Society obtained a lease at Whitefish Point on the property owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. In January 1979, the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory was established to “engage in scientific, investigative, educational, historical and conservation pursuits.” The observatory’s many activities to document the movements of migratory birds include censuses of hawks, owls, waterbirds, and songbirds. Owl banding occurs from April 1 through May 31 and from September 15 through October 31. The Hawk Count is conducted every spring from March 15 through May 31 at a raised platform on a sand dune to the west of the parking area behind the museum. Waterbirds and shorebirds are counted from April 15 through May 31 and again from August 15 through November 15 at an exposed, windy position at the tip (you can see the small shack used by the counters as you walk out to the Point). Censusing and banding of songbirds is conducted from August 1 through September 30. Birders are reminded to heed signs designating the banding areas and to not trespass into these areas. Facilities at the Point include a parking area, a lighthouse, the WPBO visitor center, and the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum. The WPBO building has a small gift/book shop and a bulletin board with information on daily sightings. Whitefish Point also has historical significance as a commercial fishing base and as a former Coast Guard Station. The Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum is located here, and it was just off Whitefish Point that the ore freighter *Edmund Fitzgerald* with a crew of 29 capsized in a horrendous storm on November 10, 1975. There were no survivors of this tragedy which has been forever memorialized in the ballad, *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*, by Gordon Lightfoot.

When to Visit

Since the point is a major migration corridor, the best times to visit are mid-March through June, and mid-August to mid-November. More specific dates depend, of course, on your target birds. The tables on the following pages provide early and late dates for some of the more interesting waterbird and raptor species that pass by the Point, and also give an indication of the numbers of birds that are typically observed or banded. As the relatively small number of owls banded is greatly influenced by the variability of weather and the occurrence of irruption years, the yearly peak, early, and late dates have no consistency and are not given in the owl table.

A word of caution: there is very little to block the winds that come off Lake Superior and, even in mid-May, temperatures can be low enough to require winter clothes, warm boots, and gloves. Always have adequate clothing with you, even if the temperatures are quite mild only a few miles from the point. When the hawk and waterbird counts begin in mid-March and early April, there can be as much as two feet of snow on the ground and the wind chill can be considerably below 0° Fahrenheit.

Late Winter through Spring: The spring season at Whitefish Point starts as early as late February or early March, when winter visitors such as Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak, and redpolls are moving northward to their breeding grounds. By late March, raptors will be passing by the point, with Bald and Golden Eagles and Northern Goshawk leading the way. Peak numbers and the maximum diversity of hawk species occur around the end of April. Late April can be an excellent time to study the plumage variations of Rough-legged Hawk, when good numbers pass through in most years on their way to their Arctic breeding grounds. Falcons, Rough-legged Hawks, eagles, Northern Harriers, and early-season Northern Goshawks depart the point for Canada in an easterly or northeasterly direction. Other species spend considerable time milling around and flying back and forth along the point before heading back south to seek alternate routes to their breeding grounds. Owl migration also peaks at about this same period. Possible species include Northern Saw-whet, Barred, Great Gray, Long-eared, and Boreal Owls, although in non-irruption years, not all of these may be present.

Waterbirds begin appearing in March or April with the first patches of open water on the lake. Late April through May is the best time for seeing large numbers of waterbirds migrating past the Point. The loon flight begins in April, usually peaks in early May, and diminishes considerably by early June. Common Loons predominate, while Red-throated Loons occur in smaller but still significant numbers. Red-necked Grebes usually occur in late April and early May. Fairly good numbers of White-winged Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks pass by during mid-May, although larger numbers occur in autumn. Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Red-breasted Mergansers are also present. Other species expected during this period include Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, and Sandhill Crane. Shorebirds that pass by in spring include Black-bellied Plover, Whimbrel, Sanderling, and Dunlin. Bonaparte's, Ring-billed, Herring, and possible Glaucous Gulls can be seen, along with Common Tern.

A Members Weekend—the Annual Spring Fling—is usually held at the WPBO during the last weekend of April, a peak period for loons, some late raptors, owls, and some songbird species. This is a good time to visit the Point, especially if it is your first visit, as informative presentations, banding demonstrations, and guided tours are given. Boreal Chickadees often can be found mixed in with large flocks of Black-cappeds, and Red Crossbill and Pine Siskin may be present. Passerines usually reach their peak during the latter

**Spring Waterbird Counts of Selected Species,
1995–2002, at Whitefish Point Observatory.**
(Spring = 15 Apr–31 May)

SPECIES	Mean Peak Date	Mean Early Date	Mean Late Date	Seasonal Total Average	Seasonal Min–Max
Red-throated Loon	14 May	21 Apr	31 May	612	376–903
Common Loon	5 May	19 Apr	31 May	6,276	3,014–11,739
Horned Grebe	12 May	19 Apr	19 May	34	15–107
Red-necked Grebe	30 Apr	18 Apr	30 May	902	334–3,078
Greater Scaup	3 May	18 Apr	25 May	588	193–1,182
Lesser Scaup	1 May	20 Apr	16 May	55	27–115
Long-tailed Duck	19 May	18 Apr	29 May	1,778	566–2,826
Surf Scoter	20 May	9 May	29 May	127	71–175
White-winged Scoter	21 May	27 Apr	30 May	3,067	1,798–5,235
Black Scoter	13 May	9 May	21 May	6	3–11
jaeger species*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1–5
Sandhill Crane	22 Apr	15 Apr	29 May	721	479–858

**Fall Waterbird Counts of Selected Species,
1995–2002, at Whitefish Point Observatory.**

(Fall = 15 Aug–15 November)

SPECIES	Mean Peak Date	Mean Early Date	Mean Late Date	Seasonal Total Average	Seasonal Min–Max
Red-throated Loon	19 Sep	24 Aug	13 Nov	367	248–541
Common Loon	18 Sep	10 Aug	11 Nov	3,511	3,040–4,344
Horned Grebe	25 Sep	17 Aug	10 Nov	443	235–744
Red-necked Grebe	28 Aug	15 Aug	14 Nov	14,131	10,670–16,645
Greater Scaup	10 Oct	25 Aug	10 Nov	6,513	3,962–9,138
Lesser Scaup	10 Oct	3 Sep	6 Nov	407	144–1,021
Long-tailed Duck	25 Oct	18 Sep	14 Nov	10,959	6,100–17,791
Surf Scoter	6 Oct	5 Sep	8 Nov	614	117–1,468
White-winged Scoter	15 Oct	18 Aug	13 Nov	3,329	2,480–5,559
Black Scoter	20 Oct	23 Sep	10 Nov	124	39–263
jaeger species*	1 Sep	1 Sep	2 Nov	28	7–58
Sandhill Crane	23 Sep	18 Aug	26 Sep	42	3–127

For some species, birds appeared at the Point before or after the count season, or outside standardized count hours, and those numbers are not reflected in the table.

* Most jaeger species adequately identified were Parasitic Jaegers, although a few Pomarine and very few Long-tailed have been reported.

Source: *The WPBO Migrant*, published by the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, and the WPBO web site (www.wpbo.org).

**Spring Raptor Counts of Selected Species,
1995–2003, at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory.**
15 March–31 May

SPECIES	Mean Peak Date	Mean Early Date	Mean Late Date	Seasonal Total Average	Seasonal Min–Max
Osprey	10 Apr	27 Mar	30 May	140	100–177
Bald Eagle	8 Apr	17 Mar	30 May	261	142–465
Northern Harrier	19 Apr	26 Mar	30 May	421	194–719
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3 May	31 Mar	31 May	6,634	2,891–11,119
Cooper's Hawk	26 Apr	30 Mar	17 May	47	24–84
Broad-winged Hawk	5 May	20 Apr	31 May	3,986	2,834–5,151
Red-tailed Hawk	18 Apr	22 Mar	31 May	1,602	718–2,474
Rough-legged Hawk	18 Apr	25 Mar	28 May	823	180–2,470
American Kestrel	23 Apr	1 Apr	29 May	543	223–902

For some species, birds appeared at the Point before or after the count season, or outside standardized count hours, and those numbers are not reflected in the table.

Source: *The WPBO Migrant*, published by the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, and the WPBO web site (www.wpbo.org).

half of May, and some birders who visit the Point regularly say that the best time to find rarities is the Memorial Day weekend in late May. Among the expected species are Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Cedar Waxwing, Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle), Blackburnian, Palm, Wilson's, and Canada Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, and Evening Grosbeak. Black-backed Woodpecker is found in many years in the scrubby Jack Pines near the Point. Piping Plovers (Federally endangered) can sometimes be seen in late May and early June.

Summer through early Fall: The summer season at the point is rather short from a weather standpoint as well as in terms of bird migration. Spring migrants continue on their way north into mid-June and some of the rarest sightings have taken place at this time, among them Long-tailed Jaeger, Laughing Gull, Townsend's Solitaire, and Lark Bunting. Species that breed at or near the Point include Spruce Grouse, Least and Alder Flycatchers, Blue-headed Vireo, Common Raven, Gray Jay, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped, Nashville, Blackburnian, and Pine Warblers, White-throated Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak. Some of the rarer birds found singing during the breeding season have been Connecticut Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Dickcissel. Mid-summer can often be relatively quiet, but by mid-July, post-breeding songbirds form foraging flocks and can often be found along the shoreline. By early August, there can be flocks of warblers at the Point, while northern migrants such as Cape May and Blackpoll Warblers, Pine Siskins, and Purple Finches begin arriving. By late July, migrant waterbirds start to show up, with Red-necked Grebes typically the first arrivals. However, August is the prime time for Red-necked Grebe, with thousands possible on a peak day. It is likely that no other site in North America can rival this phenomenon, and

the timing is difficult to explain, as they don't arrive on their Atlantic Coast wintering grounds until mid-October. A few stage in Ontario's Georgian Bay on Lake Ontario, but the vast majority appear to be unaccounted for during September. Scoters, primarily White-winged and a few Surf, begin trickling by as early as late August, possibly accompanied by a few Long-tailed Ducks. (Black Scoter is infrequent, but with patience can be seen, usually in late October.) Shorebirds such as American Golden-Plover, Sanderling, Semipalmated and Baird's Sandpipers, and Dunlin are also arriving by early August.

Fall: By late August, shorebird numbers are increasing and the southward passerine migration is in full swing. Waterbird numbers are also increasing and by early September, the unusual species such as jaegers may appear. Loon and jaeger numbers peak in September, while scoter numbers top out in October. The most frequently banded songbirds in fall include Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Nashville, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) and Black-throated Green Warblers, and White-throated Sparrow. In the fall, late August to mid-September is the best time to view the greatest diversity of passerines, and rarities recorded during this period have included Say's Phoebe, Northern Wheatear, Sage Thrasher, and Grasshopper and Le Conte's Sparrows. By late September and into October, sparrows abound, mostly White-throated and White-crowned and Dark-eyed Juncos; one or two Harris's Sparrows turn up in some years. More vagrant landbird species are found in October than in any other month, and have included White-winged Dove, Common Ground-Dove, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (several records), Sprague's Pipit, Townsend's Solitaire (several records), Yellow-breasted Chat, and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

The fall hawk migration differs considerably from that of spring. On late August days with southerly winds, buteos will kettle as they do in spring, but for the most part, the fall hawk migration bypasses Whitefish Point. South-bound hawks migrating from Canada arrive at the water barrier of Lake Superior, and head either west to Duluth or east around the lake, thereby missing Whitefish Point. Consequently, the hawk count is not conducted in fall.

As early as late October, snow may start to fall, and the exposed point can be frigid. In late October, winter finches, Pine Grosbeaks, both crossbills, Pine Siskins, and Common Redpolls (sometimes accompanied by one or two Hoarries) show up at the feeders behind the book store, and may remain into December and even through the winter in mild years. Bohemian Waxwings appear annually in unpredictable numbers.

By late November and early December, the Point is normally covered with a fair amount of snow and the bay is freezing over. Winter finches may continue to show up at the feeders, and the bay may harbor Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Loon, and Red-necked Grebe, if the water is still open. On the beach, only gulls and Snow Buntings will usually be present. Herring Gull is predominant, but Thayer's, Iceland, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed can

**Owl Banding Results,
2005–2009, at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory**

	2005			2006			2007			2008			2009		
	Spr.	Sum.	Fall	Spr.	Sum.	Fall	Spr.	Sum.	Fall	Spr.	Sum.	Fall	Spr.	Sum.	Fall
Northern Saw-whet Owl	95	n/a	182	66	206	328	755	601	269	998	125	46	548	257	123
Boreal Owl	73	n/a	21	49	0		0	0		63	0	24	73	0	2
Long-eared Owl	31	n/a	3	33	2	15	77	4	12	110	1		138	3	1
Barred Owl	7	n/a	10	8	0	4	1	0	60	16	1	4	7	0	3
Great Horned Owl	1	n/a					1	n/a		5			2		
Great Gray Owl	14	n/a		5									4		
Northern Hawk Owl	1	n/a	1												2
Short-eared Owl		n/a											1		
Snowy Owl												1			

Spring Season (Spr.) 15 Mar–31 May; Summer (Sum.) 15 June–31 August; Fall 15 Sept–31 Oct.

Source: WPBO banding records; Chris Neri, Lead Bander. Banded birds only; other observations of these species are made during these seasons.

occur. The best place to observe gulls is the Harbor of Refuge, just south of the point. A Christmas Bird Count has been conducted at Whitefish Point since 1976. (The earlier counts were “unofficial” and included only the immediate area at the point itself.) The total count over the years is 65 species, amazing for a location this far north, and includes such surprising birds as Gyrfalcon, American Three-toed Woodpecker (casual), American Robin, and Townsend’s Solitaire.

Where to bird at Whitefish Point

The Point: Whitefish Point is relatively flat, with some sand dunes to the west. The peninsula consists of a mix of habitats; dry coniferous forest, Tamarack-spruce swamp, bog, sedge meadow, and small lakes. Predominant habitats are Jack Pine and Red Pine plains. The beach at the very tip and to the east consists of sand and small rocks, while farther inland, the sparse vegetation consists of small Jack Pines, alders, and grasses.

The most productive birding areas are: (1) the tip of the Point for passing waterbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds. This is usually more productive in the early morning but a night flight sometimes occurs an hour or two prior to sunrise producing close views of scoters, loons, grebes, and sometimes jaegers; (2) the hawkwatch platform on the dunes; (3) the low trees and brushy area between the parking area and the east beach, and between the WPBO Building and the east beach; and (4) the brushy areas around the lighthouse and the museum can also be productive. And check the feeders at the WPBO building for a variety of sparrows and finches at any time of year.

Rarities at the feeders have included Harris's Sparrow, Lark Bunting, and the state's only Brewer's Sparrow.

Also check the **Harbor of Refuge** (formerly Brown's fisheries), 0.7 mile south of the point and east of Whitefish Point Road, for gulls, including Iceland, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed, in late fall through winter, and into early spring if open water exists. Also look for waterfowl and perched raptors.

The following is a list of selected casual and accidental sightings recorded at Whitefish Point:

Pacific Loon (1983)+	Great/Boat-tailed Grackle (1997)+
Eared Grebe	Say's Phoebe
Greater White-fronted Goose	Ash-throated Flycatcher
Brant	Western Kingbird
Common Eider	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
King Eider	Carolina Wren
Harlequin Duck	Marsh Wren
Mississippi Kite (1981)+	Northern Wheatear
Swainson's Hawk	Townsend's Solitaire
Ferruginous Hawk (1985)+	Sage Thrasher (1986)+
Gyr Falcon	Sprague's Pipit
Prairie Falcon (1982)+	White-eyed Vireo
Laughing Gull	Townsend's Warbler
Franklin's Gull	Worm-eating Warbler
Little Gull	Yellow-breasted Chat
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Dickcissel
Black-legged Kittiwake	Brewer's Sparrow (1997)*
Sabine's Gull	Lark Sparrow
Arctic Tern	Golden-crowned Sparrow
White-winged Dove (1986)+	McCown's Longspur (1981)*
Yellow Rail	Smith's Longspur
Wilson's Plover	Chestnut-collared Longspur (1980)*
Piping Plover	Yellow-headed Blackbird
American Avocet	Orchard Oriole
Lewis's Woodpecker (2001)+	
American Three-toed Woodpecker	
Clark's Nutcracker (1978)*	

+ First state record

* Only state record

LAKE SUPERIOR STATE FOREST

By Jerry Ziarno

This part of the UP contains vast areas of boreal forest. Access by automobile is very limited, but the following sites provide access to this productive habitat and a chance to find some of the boreal birds that may be present. To the south and west of Whitefish Point, there are several two-track (gravel) roads that lead west from Whitefish Point Road. Most of the roads are drivable from May through November.

EU-15 Vermillion

*Spring**** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 117, B7 & B8. 46°45' N, 85°08' W

Directions: From Whitefish Point, go south toward Paradise on Whitefish Point Road for 6.0 miles and turn right (west) onto the paved Vermillion Road. See next map.

As you head south on Whitefish Point Road, there are several birding stops south of the point, before you reach Vermillion Road. Just a short 0.5 mile south of the parking area at Whitefish Point, the **North Shore Road** goes northwest. Local birders often refer to this road as the “Owl Road”. Northern Hawk, Great Gray, and Northern Saw-whet Owls can be found—with considerable effort—along this road during migration, and Boreal Chickadee and White-winged Crossbill are usually here in winter.

There are several other roads worth birding that head west into the productive, boggy areas between Whitefish Point and Vermillion Road. All are reached from Whitefish Point Road, within a few miles of the observatory. **Wildcat Road** goes northwest from Whitefish Point Road directly across from the WPBO office (Old Whitefish Point Post Office, 1.9 miles south of the point); **Doe Lake Road**, 2.0 miles south of the WPBO office; and **Goose Marsh Road**, 0.5 miles south of Doe Lake Road. None of the roads is maintained during winter and may be drivable only by four-wheel-drive vehicles for the rest of the year. Birds that may be seen along these roads, in addition to those mentioned above for Shore Road, include Ruffed Grouse, Northern Goshawk, and Brown Creeper. Return to Whitefish Point Road and continue south to Vermillion Road.

The first stop along **Vermillion Road** is Andrus Lake Campground, on the left 0.5 mile from Whitefish Point Road. In spring and fall, check out the small lake for migrating waterfowl, and the brushy areas near the lake for warblers. Black-backed Woodpecker and Red Crossbill are also possible. Continue west on Vermillion Road for another 1.0 mile to the end of the pavement and a fork in the road. For an interesting side trip, take the left fork to the Shelldrake Campground on an impoundment of the Shelldrake River. In spring, depending somewhat on water levels, the lake may harbor

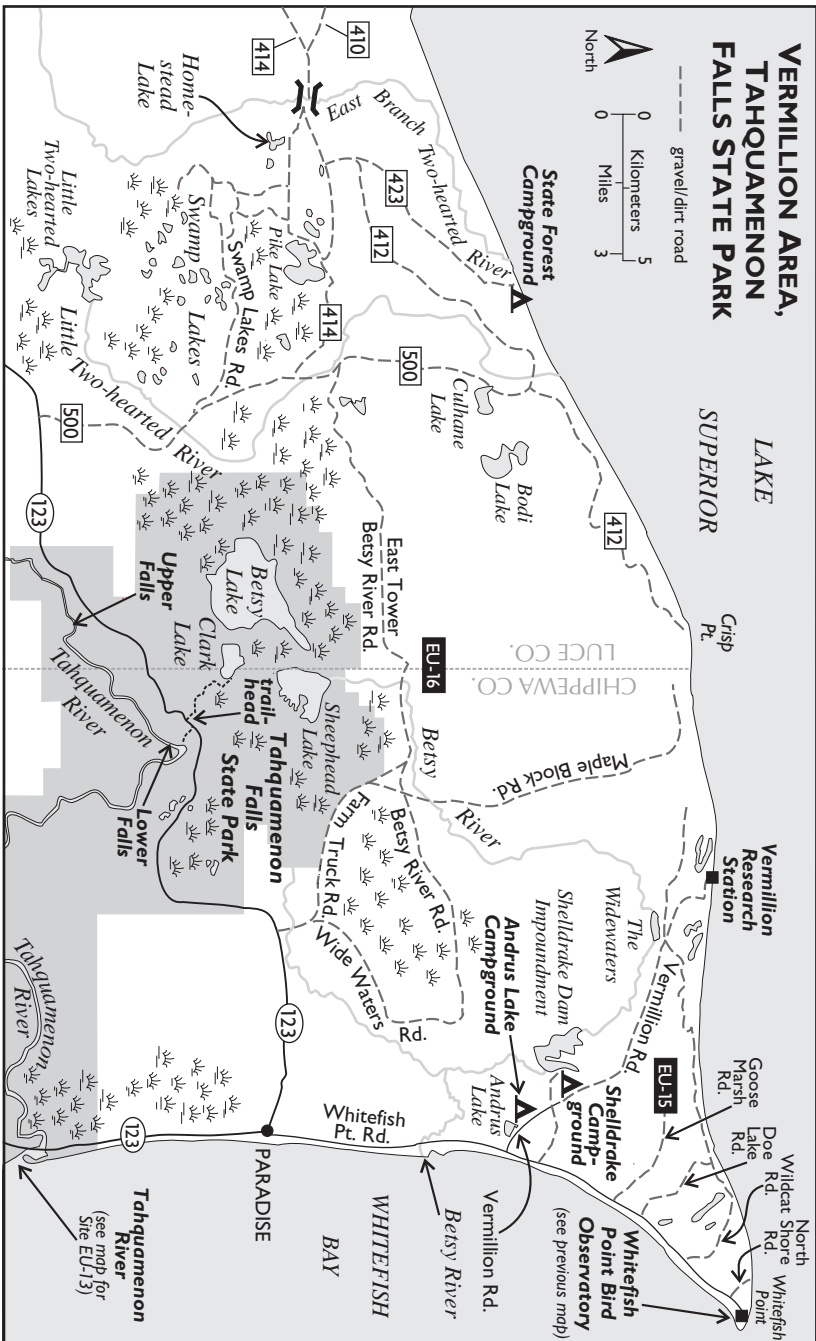
Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Common Loon. Osprey and Bald Eagle often perch in trees around the lake, and American Woodcock and Black-backed Woodpecker may also be present. During spring and fall migrations, the surrounding woodlands can be very good for vireos and warblers.

Return to Vermillion Road and take the right fork. The next sandy, not well-maintained stretch for about 1.0 to 4.0 miles used to be one of the best places in the area to find Spruce Grouse. Although timber clearcutting has destroyed some of the habitat, a few grouse remain in the area. At 1.3 miles beyond the end of the paved section, a two-track road to the right sometimes has Spruce Grouse. It takes considerable luck, but the best way to find a Spruce Grouse is to drive slowly in the early morning or late evening, searching the sides of the roads. Once found, the bird can be very tame, often allowing a close approach. Olive-sided Flycatcher and both Red and White-winged Crossbills may also be seen along this road. One of the state's rarest dragonfly species, the Ebony Boghaunter, has been found here in late May.

Vermillion Road ends at the entrance to the **Vermillion Research Station**, an old Coast Guard Station which includes 7,900 feet of shoreline and 179 acres of land. For the past few years, the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory has operated a banding station here during spring and fall migration periods. The station also manages the beach for nesting Piping Plovers, a federally Endangered species. For the past several years, at least two pairs of Piping Plovers have successfully raised young. The beach is closed during the nesting season, usually May through July. *The closed areas are clearly signposted and birders should not enter the nesting areas to avoid any disturbance of these Endangered birds.*

Excellent fallouts of passerines are possible in spring and fall. On one spectacular day—May 23, 1995—a total of 501 individual birds of 44 species were banded at Vermillion. Birds that can be expected in the area around the station during migration include Black-capped Chickadee, Cedar Waxwing, Nashville, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, and Swamp Sparrow. The sedge marsh and alder swamp near the station can be good for American Bittern, Sandhill Crane, Alder Flycatcher, and Le Conte's Sparrow. Swainson's Thrush is fairly common. Birds uncommon or rare for this area banded at Vermillion have included Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Boreal Chickadee, Northern Mockingbird, Golden-winged and Connecticut Warblers, Lark Sparrow (casual in the state), Bobolink, and Western Meadowlark.

Return east to Whitefish Point Road and go south for 5.2 miles to Paradise. Go west on M-123 for 4.2 miles to **Farm Truck Road**, which travels northwest through an extensive Tamarack and Black Spruce bog which provides good boreal habitat for such breeding species as Sandhill Crane, Le Conte's and Lincoln's Sparrows, and Brewer's Blackbird. This is also one of the few areas in Michigan for nesting Palm Warblers. Year-round possibilities



include Spruce and Sharp-tailed Grouse and Black-backed Woodpecker. At 3.0 miles from M-123, Farm Truck Road merges with East Tower/Betsy River Road in the **Betsy Lake Natural Area** (part of the Tahquamenon Falls State Park). Numerous logging roads meander through the area, so a good map and compass/GPS will be very helpful. In spring, snow cover can linger into May and the roads may be impassable.

Return to M-123 and turn right (west) onto M-123 for about 6 miles to the entrance to Lower Tahquamenon Falls. From the entrance, continue for another 0.3 mile west on M-123 to the trailhead for **Clark Lake** on the right (northwest). This trail is closed to motorized traffic, but a hike of 1.5 miles to the lake offers good opportunities to search for Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Red and White-winged Crossbills, and Pine Siskin. An unexpected Great Gray Owl has been spotted along this trail in fall in some years. The last quarter-mile to half-mile of this trail, often the best part, is usually quite wet, and waterproof boots are highly recommended. Other trails lead from Clark Lake into the Betsy Lake Natural Area.

EU-16 Tahquamenon Falls State Park

Spring*** Summer*** Fall* Winter*

DeLorme, p. 117, D7: 46°35' N, 85° 13' W

Contact Information: 906-492-3415

www.michigan.dnr.com/parksandtrails/ParksandTrailsInfo.asp

Tahquamenon Falls State Park's 40,000 acres are comprised mostly of extensive woodlands with few roads, but the park is best known for its waterfalls on the Tahquamenon River. There are two entrances from M-123, although the entrance to the **Upper Falls** is a better choice for birders. From the previous stop at the Clark Lake Trailhead, go west on M-23 for about 3 miles (this is also 13.5 miles west of Paradise and 3.4 miles past the entrance to the Lower Falls). From the parking area, take the foot path to the Upper Falls, the second-largest waterfall east of the Mississippi River and noted in Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. From the falls, return to the parking area via the nature trail, where Northern Saw-whet Owl may be heard calling in early spring. In spring and summer, other possibilities along the trail include Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo, Brown Creeper, White-crowned Sparrow, White-winged Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak.

From the falls, continue west on M-123 for 4.6 miles to Northwestern Road (CR -500). Take this road north for about 3 miles, where it crosses the Little Two-hearted River. The first road to the left (west) after crossing the river is marked as Swamp Lakes Road, although it may not be named on maps. Take this road, if passable, for 3.0 miles the **Swamp Lakes area**. This is excellent boreal forest habitat, with a mix of Black Spruce, Tamarack, Balsam Fir, willow, and Tag (Speckled) Alder, interspersed with Beaver floodings, ponds, and small to mid-sized lakes. Here you may find resident Ruffed and Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Common Raven, and Boreal Chickadee. In late May and early June, many warblers will be actively singing, including

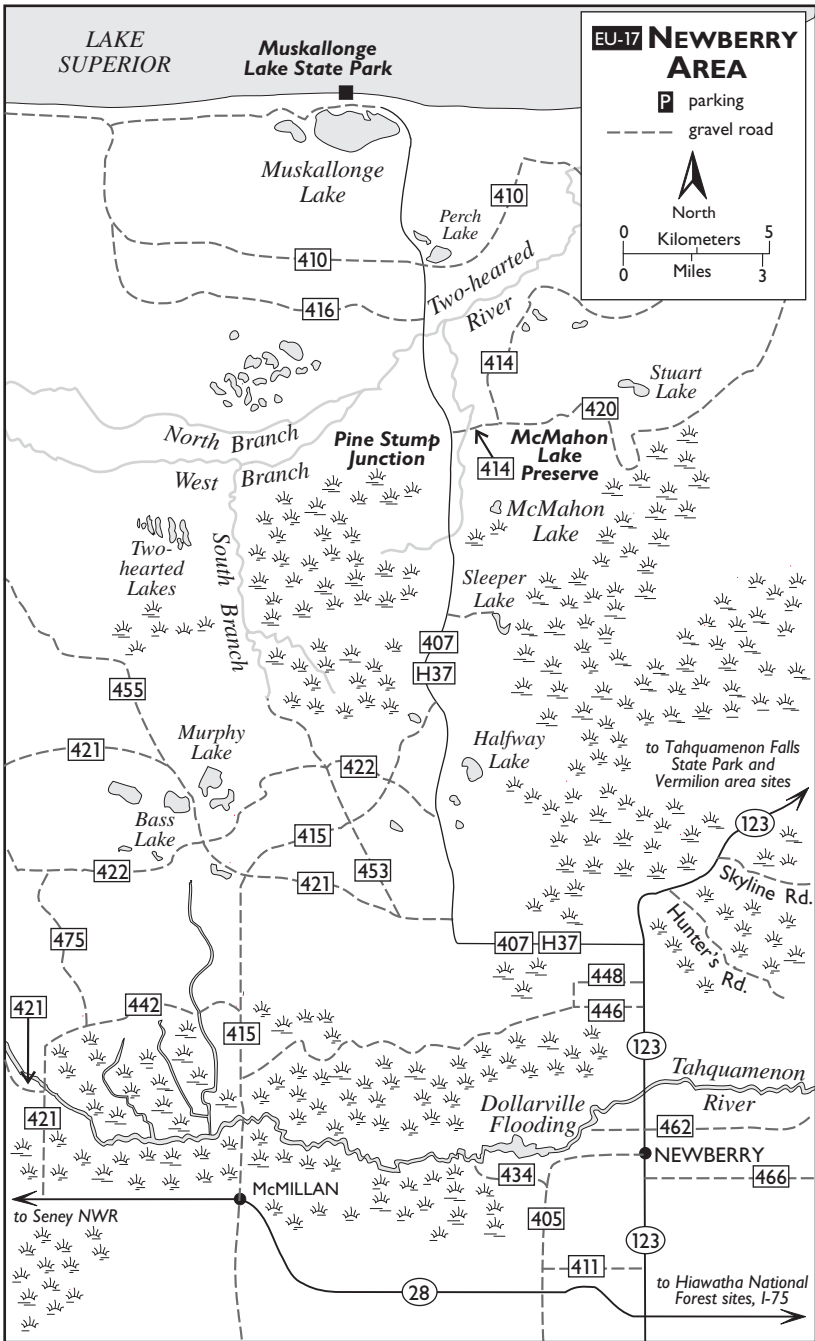


Boreal Chickadee
Allen T. Chartier

Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Black-and-white, as well as American Redstart. Moose may also be seen in the area.

If the Swamp Lakes Road is impassable, another route into the Swamp Lakes area is to continue north on CO 500 for about 3.0 miles (a total of 6.0 miles from M-123) to CO 414. Go left (west) onto CO 414 for 6.1 miles, past the north end of Pike Lake, to the bridge crossing at the east branch of the Two-Hearted River. At the east end of the bridge, there is a sandy, two-track road heading roughly east. Although unmarked, it is known as Homestead Lake Road. Follow this road for about 1.0 mile to Homestead Lake on the south side of the road. Continue another 1.0 mile or so, climbing up a long grade to a large, recent Jack Pine clearcut on the north. Just beyond this clearcut, take the small, two-track trail to the south for about 1.5 miles to the Swamp Lakes area.

The area surrounding Little Perch Lake, just to the south of CO 414 at its intersection with CO 412, about 1.5 miles west of Pike Lake, contains a large number of tall dead pines where an American Three-toed Woodpecker was reported in the summer of 2003. In addition, check CO 412 just north of CO 414, an area that is usually good for Spruce Grouse.



EU-17 Newberry Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
 DeLorme p. 104, B4: 46°21' N, 85°30' W

Directions: From the previous site, return south to M-123 and go right (west) onto M-123 for about 30 miles to Newberry. Or, if coming from sites to the east at Hulbert Bog and Hiawatha National Forest, go east on M-28 from the eastern intersection of M-28 and M-123 for about 35 miles to the western intersection of M-28 and M-123. Turn north here for 3.5 miles to Newberry.

The town of Newberry is located in a region of marshes and bogs that is excellent for nesting boreal species. From Newberry, go north on M-123 for 4.0 miles and turn left (west and then north) onto CO H37/407 for 4.0 miles to Pine Stump Junction (a total distance of 14.7 miles from M-123). To the southeast of the junction is The Nature Conservancy's **McMahon Lake Preserve**, a remote, swampy area containing a unique type of wetland known as patterned fens, or strangemoors, which resulted when receding glaciers left a series of shallow troughs and ridges. The McMahon Lake Preserve can be reached from Pine Stump Junction by going right (east) on CO 414 (DeLorme and some county maps show this road as CO 412, but it is actually signposted as CO 414) to CO 420 and then east on CO 420 to a parking area on the north side of the road (a total distance of 2.2 miles from CO 407). CO 420 may be impassable in early spring or after heavy rains. Species that can be found in the preserve include Ruffed Grouse, Northern Harrier, Sandhill Crane (nesting), Black-backed and Pileated Woodpeckers, Gray Jay, Sedge Wren (nesting) and Northern Parula (nesting). The preserve's web address is <http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/michigan/art5240.html>.

Return back the way you came to the intersection of M-123 and CO 407. Go left (northeast) on M-123 for 3.0 miles to **Skyline Road**, a sandy two-track that goes to the east. Resident Gray Jays are often seen along this road.

Return to M-123 and go south back to Newberry. Continue south on M-123 to M-28 and then right (west) for 9.5 miles to the village of **McMillan**. Take CO 415 north for 4.0 miles to the intersection with CO 442. (From this point, CO 415 continues northward to merge with CO 407, mentioned above.) Turn left (west) onto CO 442, which winds its way through more good boreal habitat to merge with CO 421 and goes south to rejoin M-28 at a point 4.5 miles west of McMillan. A trip through this area in late May through summer should provide opportunities to see breeding Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush, and Mourning Warbler. Although uncommon, Golden-winged, Palm, and Wilson's Warblers have been noted in migration.

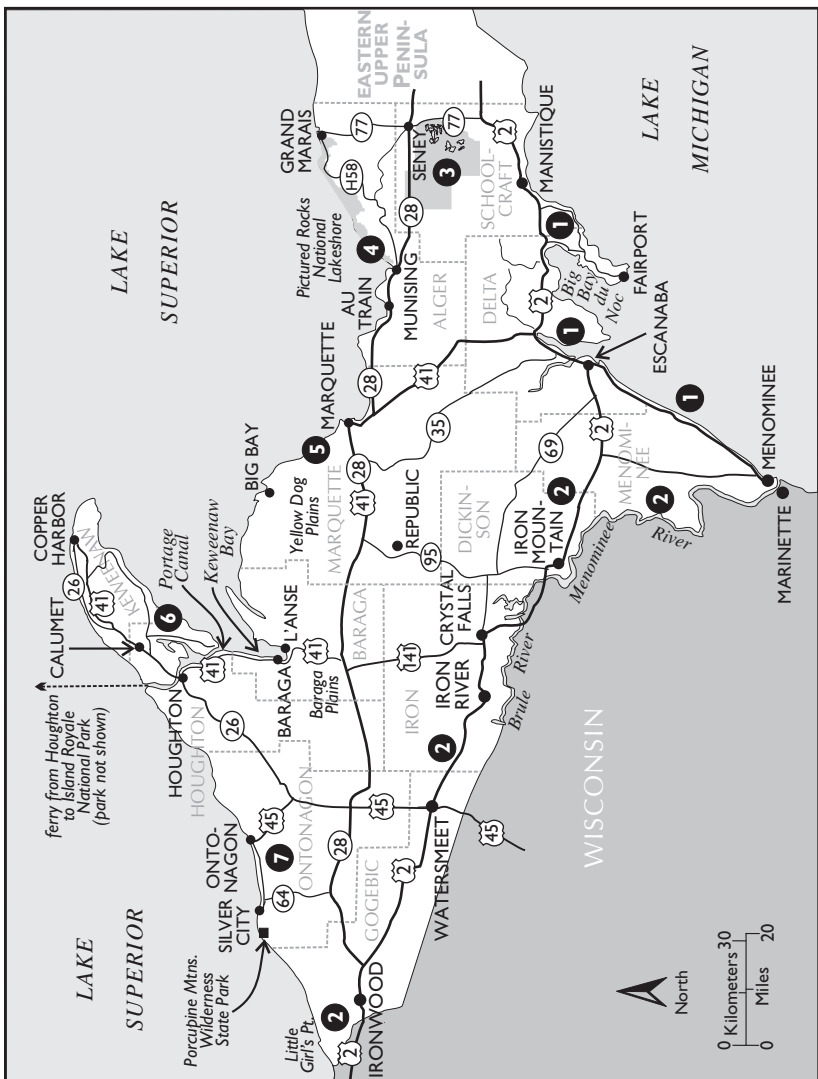
Once back at M-28, continue west to the village of Seney to begin the tour of the Western UP sites, covered in the next chapter.

WESTERN UPPER PENINSULA



MAJOR BIRDING AREAS

- 1 Northern Lake Michigan Shoreline**
Sites WU-1 – WU-5
- 2 Menominee River to Lake Superior**
Sites WU-6 – WU-12
- 3 Seney National Wildlife Refuge**
Site WU-13
- 4 Seney to Au Train**
Sites WU-14 – WU-16
- 5 Marquette Area**
Sites WU-17 – WU-20
- 6 Keweenaw Peninsula**
Sites WU-21 – WU-31
- 7 Houghton to Porcupine Mountains**
Sites WU-32 – WU-33

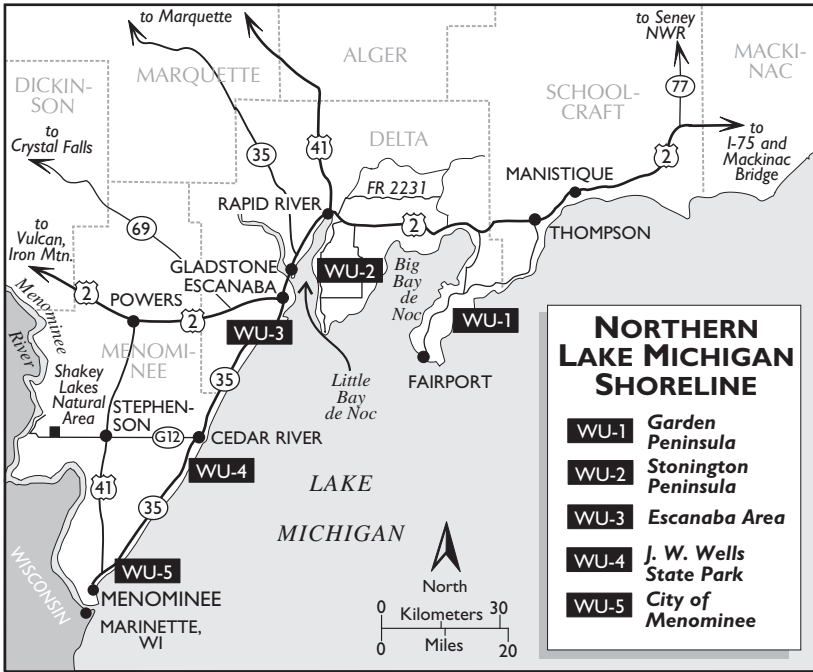


THE WESTERN UPPER PENINSULA

The Western Upper Peninsula covers a large area of some 13,000 square miles that is geologically unique in comparison to the rest of the state, including the Eastern UP. Due to the presence of erosion-resistant bedrock formed in the Precambrian Era over 600 million years ago, the Western UP has the only mountainous areas in the state: the Porcupine Mountains, the Keweenaw Ridge, and the Huron Mountains. The shoreline along Lake Superior consists mainly of high bluffs, while that along Lake Michigan has a more gradual slope and is often sandy or rocky in nature. The soils in the Western UP are acidic, comprised of wet clay and loam. The vegetation cover underwent a huge change during the logging era of the late 1800s, and now consists mostly of Mesic Mixed Forest (maple, birch, hemlock) along the Lake Superior watershed, Dry Coniferous Forest (pines) in the interior, and Boreal and Wet Coniferous Forest (Balsam Fir, spruces, Tamarack, Northern White-cedar) along the Lake Michigan watershed.

Much of the area is characterized by a relatively low population density, with large tracts of wilderness accessible mostly by two-track roads. Isle Royale National Park in Keweenaw County, Michigan's only national park, is reached by ferry from this region of the UP. The western portions of the Hiawatha and Ottawa National Forests are located here, as is the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.

Surprisingly, the western tip of the UP is farther west than St. Louis, Missouri, and the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula is farther north than the Canadian cities of Québec and St. John's (Newfoundland). Consequently, a number of Western vagrants have turned up here, and a variety of northern breeding species make this region the southern limit of their nesting ranges. The Western UP is not as well known as the Eastern UP for birding hotspots, mostly due to geographic isolation and a low number of resident birders. But local birders—and those adventurous visiting birders who take the time to get to know this vast landscape—have an opportunity to discover new birding spots and to expand the knowledge of Western UP birds.



THE NORTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN SHORELINE

By Jerry Ziarno

The route follows the shoreline of northern Lake Michigan, including the twin Garden and Stonington Peninsulas, which are separated Big Bay de Noc and Ogontz Bay. There are numerous clean sand beaches and grassy bays extending all the way down to the city of Menominee located on the border with Wisconsin. This part of the lakeshore has a milder climate than the central and northern parts of the UP, moderated by the expansive, deep waters of Lake Michigan. Consequently, the area is more heavily farmed than most of the western UP and, particularly on the aptly named Garden Peninsula, wildflowers grow in profusion from late spring through summer. Migrating birds follow the shoreline in spring and fall, and several species usually associated with the more southerly areas of Michigan are resident.

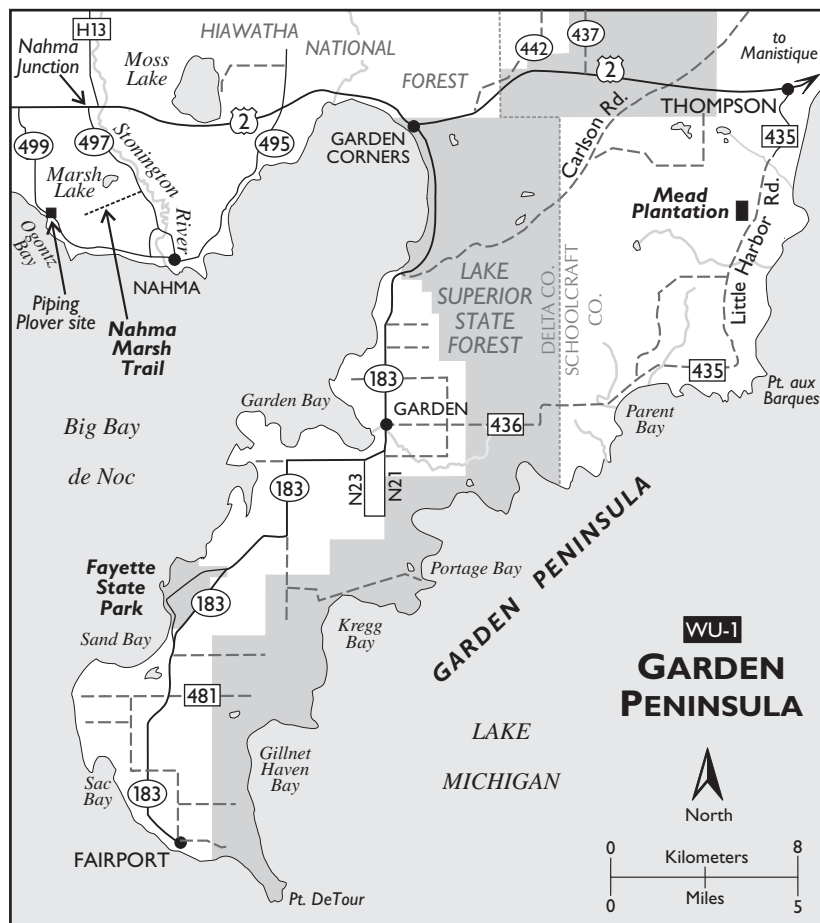
WU-1 Garden Peninsula

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 90-91. 45°45' N, 86°40' W

Directions: The starting point is the small town of Thompson (DeLorme p. 91, A6), located on US-2, approximately 92 miles west of the Mackinac Bridge.

In spring and autumn, this appropriately named peninsula, with Big Bay de Noc on the west and Lake Michigan on the east, provides a corridor for migrating raptors, shorebirds, swallows, warblers, and other passerines taking the short Lake Michigan crossing to and from Wisconsin's Door Peninsula. Gravel roads in the area pass through agricultural land, tree farms, and forested areas, all of which can be good for both resident and migratory species.

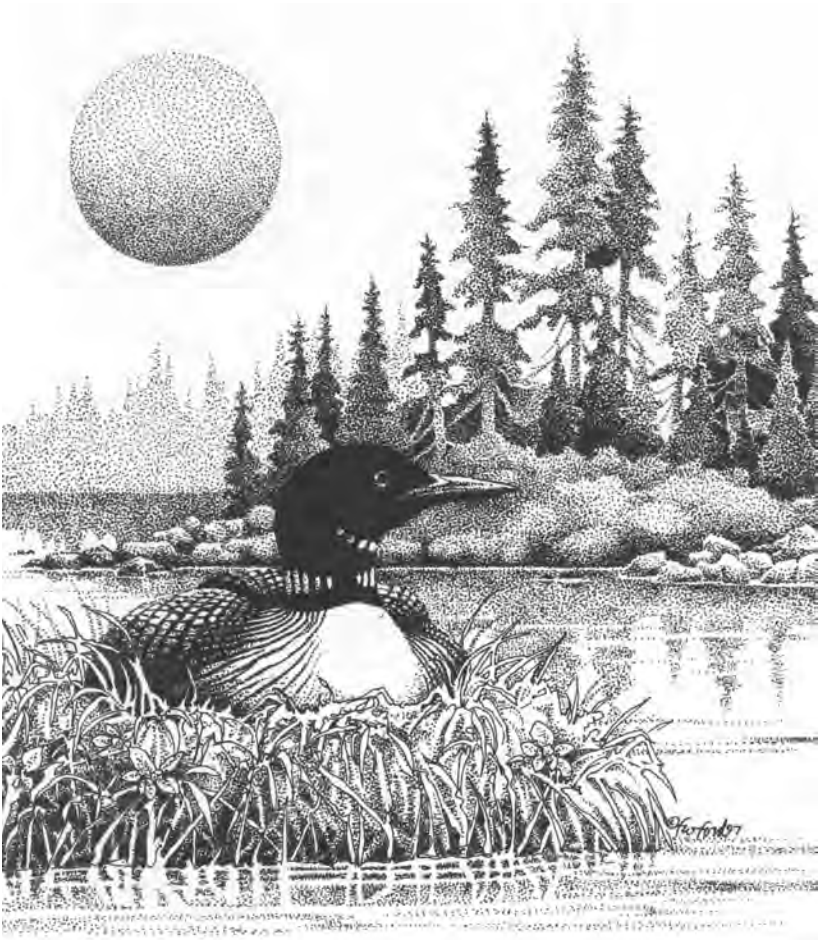


From the town of Thompson on US-2, turn south onto County Road 435, also known as Little Harbor Road, to begin birding on the **Garden Peninsula**. At just over 2.0 miles south on CO 435, the blacktop ends and a good gravel road continues along the peninsula's eastern shore. At 3.8 miles from US-2, you will reach the beginning of the Mead Corporation's Red Pine Plantation on the west side of the road. Go another 0.8 mile farther to the Mead Auto Tour route through the plantation. The small trees on the plantation provide good habitat for nesting Alder and Least Flycatchers, Red-eyed Vireo, Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Cedar Waxwing, Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, and Indigo Bunting, as well as for migratory species, particularly a variety of warblers. Southern species here, usually difficult to find in the UP, include Wild Turkey, Field Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, and Eastern Meadowlark.

Little Harbor Road (CO 435) continues south and west into Delta County, where it becomes CO 436. At a T-intersection with M-183 at the town of Garden, turn left (south) onto M-183 and proceed for about 10.0 miles to the entrance to **Fayette State Park** (906-644-2603; DeLorme p. 90, C3. 40°43' N, 086°39' W). This pleasant park is a restored town site which was an iron-smelting village in the 1870s. In addition to the nicely restored buildings, the park has cedar-forested cliffs that harbor breeding Northern Parula, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers, and American Redstart. There are also several trails that travel through a wooded area and along three miles of shoreline on Big Bay de Noc, good for migrant warblers in spring and breeding birds during the summer months. Red-eyed Vireo is common, Red-breasted Merganser breeds, and Red-necked Grebe has been seen in the harbor during migration. The park has an excellent campground with 80 campsites.

Continue on M-183 for 6.8 miles south to the small, active fishing village of **Fairport**. The fishing activity here draws large numbers of gulls, which may include some of the less common species, especially in early spring and late autumn. At this point, go north on M-183 on the west side of the peninsula for about 25 miles to return to US-2 at Garden Corners.

Go west on US-2 for 8.6 miles to Nahma Junction (DeLorme, p. 90, A3. 45°53' N, 86°42' W), watching for raptors (Bald Eagles have nested) along this section of US-2. Go south from the junction on County Road 497 (toward the town of Nahma) for 3.0 miles to the **Nahma Marsh Trail** to the west. This large, remote marshy area can be very good from early spring through late autumn for a variety of migrant and nesting thrushes, warblers, and other songbirds. After birding the trail, you can return to US-2 via either of two routes, one of which is to backtrack the way you came. If you have the time, a better choice would be to go south to Nahma and then west and north on CO 499, which will provide views of Ogontz Bay. Commonly seen here during spring and fall migrations are Redhead, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, and Pied-billed and Horned Grebes. Breeding species in the area include Osprey,



Common Loon
Tom Ford

Bald Eagle, Caspian, Common, and Black Terns, Marsh Wren, Common Yellowthroat, and Swamp Sparrow. In the summer of 2003, Piping Plovers nested on a sandy beach along CO 499 at Ogontz Bay, the first Delta County breeding record in about 50 years; the birds summered again in 2004.

Continue north on CO 499 to US-2. A short side trip from here through nearby boreal habitat might produce Gray Jay or Boreal Chickadee. Go east on US-2 just past Nahma Junction and turn north onto H-13 for 3.2 miles to FR 2231. Go west on FR 2231 for approximately 11 miles, stopping to bird in

appropriate habitat along the way, to an intersection with CO 509. Take CO 509 south for 2.1 miles to rejoin US-2 about 1.5 miles east of Rapid River.

If you wish to skip the side trip, you can go west on US-2 to CO 503, which leads south onto the Stonington Peninsula.

WU-2 Stonington Peninsula

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 90, B1-C2. 45°45' N, 86°55' W

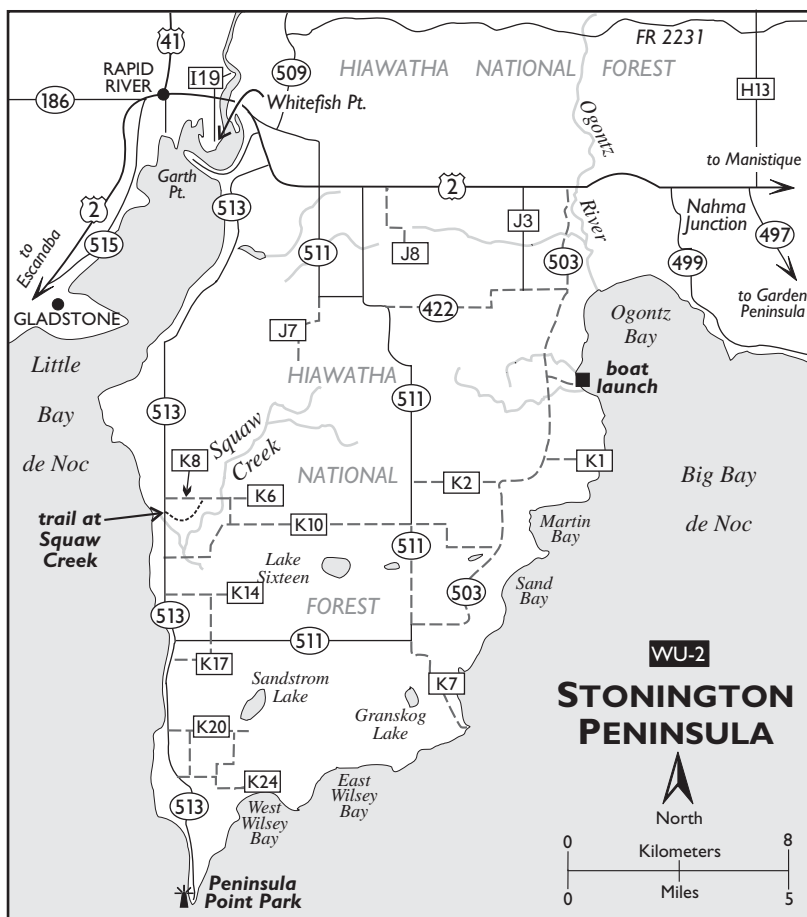
Directions: *From Nahma Junction, go west on US-2 for 1.8 miles to CO 503 and turn south.*

Stonington is the companion peninsula to the Garden Peninsula. You may find some of the same birds here, although Stonington is somewhat more forested and the tip of the peninsula is a great spring migrant trap for warblers and other songbirds.

From US-2, go south on CO 503 for 5.2 miles and take a left (east) turn for a short distance to Ogontz Bay, where there is a boat ramp and access to a large marshy area harboring the same species as noted above for the east side of Ogontz Bay.

Return to CO 503 and proceed south and west for about 8 miles to a T-intersection with CO 511, where you go west on CO-511 for 5.5 miles to the junction with CO 513. Go south on CO-513 to the **Peninsula Point Park** and lighthouse (DeLorme p. 90, C1. 46°40' N, 86°58' W). This small park can be a fantastic spot to see waves of migrating warblers during late May and early June. You could see Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Palm, Blackpoll, and Black-and-white Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, and Wilson's Warbler. Check the brushy areas around the picnic grounds for Alder and Least Flycatchers and Eastern Kingbird. The rocky beaches provide habitat for migrating shorebirds such as Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, and Spotted and Semipalmated Sandpipers. Good numbers of gulls as well as Caspian and Common Terns are usually present as long as there is open water. Waterfowl, including scoters, Long-tailed Duck, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers pass by the point in early spring and late autumn. The Stonington Peninsula also provides a resting place for large numbers of Monarch butterflies taking the short route across Lake Michigan during their migration south in August and September. In some irruption years, an interesting spectacle is the congregation of hundreds of Black-capped Chickadees milling about the point. Breeding species include Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, Black-backed (rare) and Pileated Woodpeckers, Common Raven, Scarlet Tanager, and White-throated Sparrow. Although uncommon, Western Meadowlark and Brewer's Blackbird have been observed here.

Return north on CO 513 for about 8.7 miles north of the point to where the road crosses **Squaw Creek**. Immediately after the bridge, there is a gated trail to the right (east) which leads into a preserved, natural area of



old-growth trees. There is no designated parking area, but you can park along CO 513 near the gate and walk in. A stand of large Hemlocks is located south of Squaw Creek, while large northern hardwoods are found to the south of the old road and north and east of the creek. Large Red Pines occur in the northern part of this tract. Birds dependent upon old-growth stands, such as Bald Eagle, Pileated Woodpecker, and Black-throated Green Warbler, use the area. American (Pine) Marten is present here, a mammal difficult to see anywhere in Michigan.

Continue north on CO 513 for approximately 9.0 miles to US-2, checking the farm fields along the way for Sandhill Cranes. Go west on US-2 to **Rapid River** (DeLorme p.90 A1. 45°55' N, 86°58' W), where there are two sites from which to view the open water of the northern tip of Little Bay de Noc. The first is CO I-19, about 1 mile east of Rapid River, goes south from US-2 to

the tip of Whitefish Point (not the better-known Whitefish Point on the northern shore of the UP). The other site is directly south of the town of Rapid River. From either of these vantage points you can see diving ducks, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, and Merlin during early spring and late fall. Also possible are Sandhill Crane, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, and Wilson's Snipe.

WU-3 Escanaba Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 89, C8. 45°42' N, 87°04' W

Directions: *From Rapid River, go south on US-2 for about 14 miles, through Gladstone to Escanaba.*

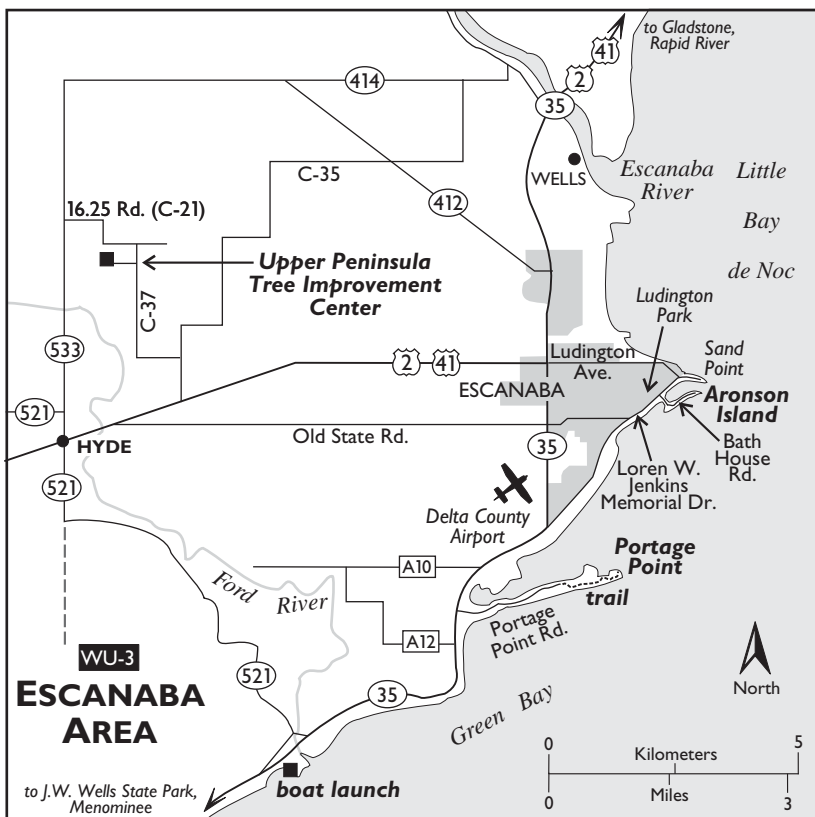
As you travel south on US-2, be alert in spring and fall for migrating raptors, especially Broad-winged Hawks, as they ride the thermals along the bluff to your right between Gladstone and Escanaba. The Lake Michigan shore in the Escanaba area is the site of Michigan's only breeding record of American White Pelican, with four nests found in summer 1999.

Soon after you enter the city of Escanaba, US-2 will go right at the intersection with M-35. Instead, turn left (east) here onto Ludington Avenue for 1.7 miles toward Sand Point. Turn right onto Loren W. Jenkins Memorial Drive. The area along this drive is Ludington Park. At 0.3 mile, a left turn onto Bath House Road leads onto Aronson Island. Aronson Island is good for migrant passerines and is the spot where a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher showed up in fall 2002. Return to the intersection of US-2 and M-35 in Escanaba and go south on M-35 for approximately 3.5 miles to Portage Point Road on the left.

Take **Portage Point Road** east from US-2 for about 1.0 mile to a parking area for a foot path to the point. Fairly extensive marshes and mudflats provide habitat for marsh-nesting species in summer and for large numbers of shorebirds in April through mid-June and again in late July to September. The fall season is usually the best time for finding shorebird rarities, covered in detail below. The view of the marsh from the foot path, particularly in late summer, can be blocked by tall cattails and brush. The north side of the marsh provides better, unobstructed views, but the only way to get there is to walk north from the tip of the point through the open marsh. Waterproof boots are recommended. During periods of high water, it is not possible to travel across the marsh. Common migrants that pass through the area are Sandhill Crane, Semipalmated Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitcher. Unusual species that have been observed, primarily in the fall, have included Black-bellied Plover and American Golden-Plover (both uncommon), Red Knot (rare), Baird's and Stilt Sandpipers (both uncommon), Buff-breasted Sandpiper (rare), and Wilson's Phalarope (rare). Large numbers of waterfowl are also present in migration, and the wooded areas along the path can be good for migrating passerines.

Among the typical summer breeders are Pied-billed Grebe, American Bittern, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Merlin, Chimney Swift, Belted Kingfisher, Red-eyed Vireo, Nashville, Yellow, and Yellow-rumped Warblers, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Savannah, Song, and White-throated Sparrows, and Red-winged and Brewer's Blackbirds. In some years, Yellow-headed Blackbird nests.

Northwest of Escanaba is a unit of the **Upper Peninsula Tree Improvement Center**. (UPTIC) operated by Michigan State University (DeLorme p. 89, B7. 45°46' N, 87°11' W). The varied habitats of agricultural fields, grasslands, tree farms, vernal ponds, and wooded areas attract a wide variety of bird species throughout the year. UPTIC can be reached from the intersection of US-2/US-41 and M-35 in Escanaba by traveling west on US-2/US-41 for 5.9 miles to Hyde. Turn north onto CO 521, which becomes CO 533 within one-half mile. Continue another 2.5 miles north to 16.25 Road (C-21). Turn east and follow 16.25 Road for about 1.5 miles to the driveway of UPTIC, marked by a green-and-white sign. The center is open only during



daylight hours, and birders must register at the visitor center, where maps and other information are available.

In migration, some of the more interesting birds seen at UPTIC and in the surrounding areas include Ruffed Grouse, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk (1,750 seen in one day in September), Rough-legged Hawk (late fall and early spring), Sandhill Crane (largest numbers in fall), Upland Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Barred Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Common Nighthawk (more than 1,500 on one late August evening). The typical birds include Red-headed, Red-bellied, and Pileated Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, numerous warblers in migration, Scarlet Tanager, Clay-colored, Field (rare), Vesper, Grasshopper, Swamp, White-throated, Harris's (fall), and White-crowned Sparrows, Lapland Longspur, Northern Cardinal (uncommon), Bobolink, Eastern and (rarely) Western Meadowlarks, and Baltimore Oriole. Among the breeding warblers found here are Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Pine Warblers, American Redstart, and Ovenbird. In winter, Bohemian Waxwing, Snow Bunting, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin may be present.

Backtrack to M-35 in Escanaba and go about 3.0 miles south past Portage Point Road to a boat launch at the mouth of the Ford River. The wooded area here often has nesting Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and Red-winged Blackbird. Caspian Tern is also present during summer.

WU-4 J.W. Wells State Park

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 87, B5. 45°23' N, 87°22' W

Contact Information: 906-863-9747; www.stateparks.com/j_w_wells.html

Directions: *Continue south and west on M-35 for about 34 miles from Escanaba (25 miles northeast of Menominee) to the entrance to the park on the left.*

The **J. W. Wells State Park** consists of 678 acres along three miles of Green Bay shoreline just south of the mouth of the Cedar River. There are seven miles of trails, with the Cedar River trail to the river probably the best for birding. Also pay attention to the shoreline for gulls during migration. During spring and fall migrations, numerous songbirds can be found on the trails. The park has a large picnic area, a campground, and six rustic cabins available for rent year round.

Return to M-35 and go another 10 miles to **Bailey Park** at Rochereau Point. In addition to J. W. Wells State Park, this is one of the few natural areas accessible to the public along this stretch of Green Bay shoreline. Bailey Park is a thin strip of about one mile of shoreline, with wooded dunes, swales, and beach. It is also the site of the West Shore Fishing Museum, a turn-of-the-cen-

tury house on the site of an operating fishery. In the vicinity of the museum, there are small patches of old pasture, some lowland and shrub wetland, wooded dunes, and swales with mature trees, good places for migrating passerines and shorebirds. Breeding species here or in the immediate area include American Black Duck, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Hooded Merganser, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Caspian and Common Terns, Least and Great Crested Flycatchers, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Winter Wren, and Veery. Nesting warblers include Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Mourning Warblers, American Redstart,

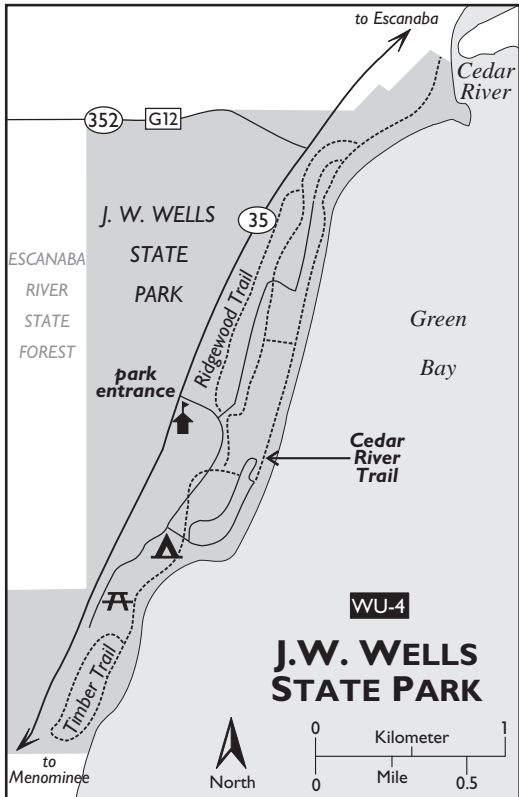
and Ovenbird. Bald Eagles are often seen on the sandbars or flying just off shore. In migration, Northern Shoveler, American White Pelican (rare), Forster's Tern, Ruddy Turnstone, Semipalmated Plover, numerous warblers and sparrows, and Brewer's Blackbird are possible here. The park has picnic tables and outhouse facilities, but no campground.

WU-5 City of Menominee

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 86, D3. 45°06' N, 87°37' W

Directions: From Bailey Park, the previous site, continue southwest on M-35 for approximately 15 miles to the city of Menominee.

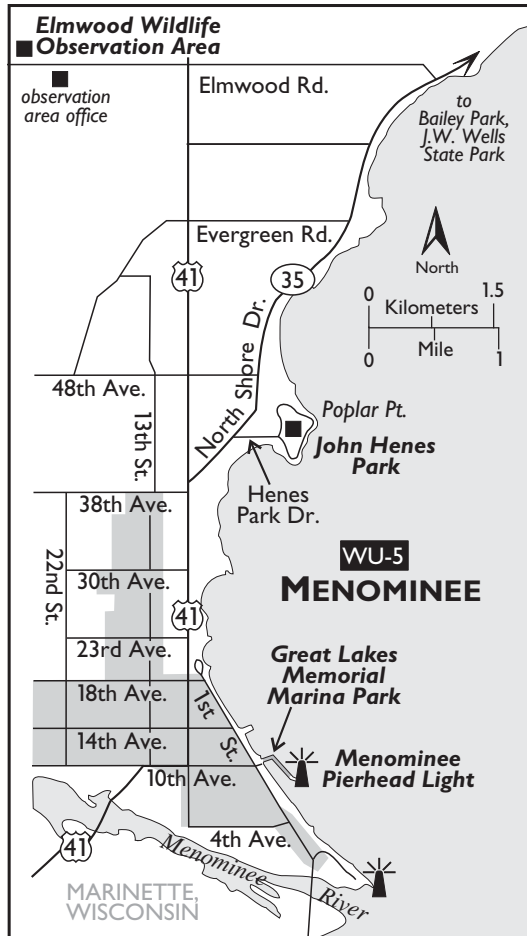
Just before you reach Menominee, stop at the **Elmwood Wildlife Observation Area**, a relatively new, 20-acre man-made wetland. This waste-management mitigation site consists of shallow open water surrounded by emergent grasses, with a riparian area planted with native wetland and upland-prairie plant species. Look for Elmwood Road on the right, about

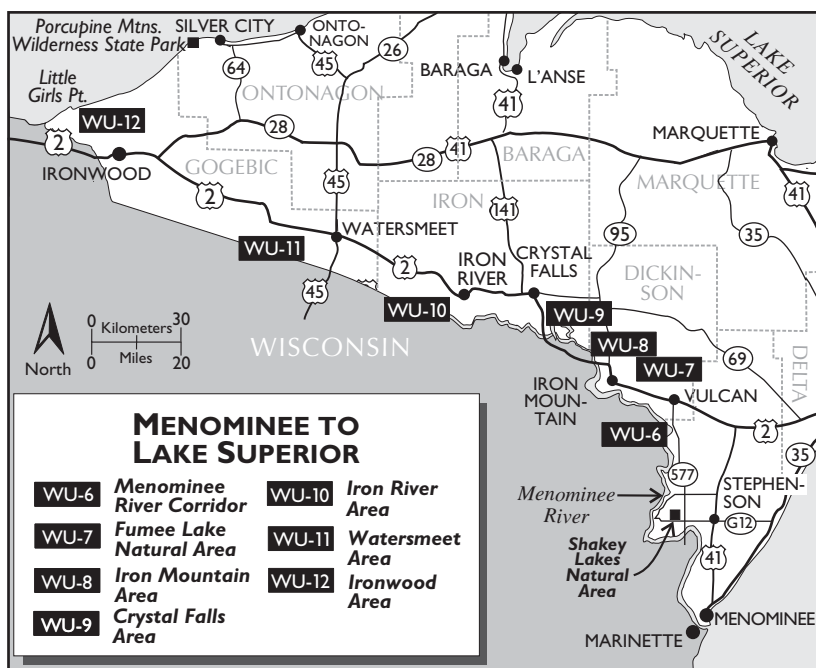


4 miles before Menominee and about 11 miles from Bailey Park (previous site). Turn west from M-35 onto Elmwood Road for 1.0 mile to a sign for the office, which is on a side road just to the south. (If coming from Menominee to the south, go north on US-41 for about 4 miles to a left or west turn onto Elmwood Road.) You must stop at the office to obtain permission to bird here before going to the wetland, located about 0.25 mile west of the office, on the north side of Elmwood Road. The area has breeding Pied-billed Grebe, Green Heron, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Wild Turkey, Killdeer, Cedar Waxwing, Tree Swallow, and Song Sparrow. Migrating waterfowl and shore-

birds (including Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, and Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers) also visit the area. Western Sandpiper, accidental in Michigan in spring, has been recorded here.

Return to M-35 and continue south to Menominee, which has several places from which to check Green Bay for migrating waterfowl. A good spot is the city park at the foot of 10th Avenue (a left turn from southbound US-41), which overlooks the Menominee Pierhead Light. Another worthwhile stop is **John Henes Park** at Poplar Point on the north end of the city, which also has a wooded area where Red-bellied Woodpecker, Purple Martin (summer), Sedge Wren (summer), and Northern Cardinal (uncommon) have been noted. From the intersection of M-35 and US-41 at the north end of town, go north on M-35 for about 0.5 mile to Henes Park Drive to reach Poplar Point and the park.





MENOMINEE RIVER TO LAKE SUPERIOR

By Elizabeth Rogers and Jerry Ziarno

Here we leave the shores of Lake Michigan and follow the Menominee River northward along the western border of the Upper Peninsula. Several hydroelectric dams are located on the river, creating sizable pools that attract migrating waterfowl, including diving ducks, in early spring and late fall. The northern part of this section is comprised of large tracts of mixed forests of Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, and hemlock, with some areas of Boreal and Wet Coniferous Forest important to nesting neotropical migrant species.

WU-6 Menominee River Corridor

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 86, A2

Directions: From Menominee, go north on US-41 for 20 miles to the small town of Stephenson. Go west on CO G-12/CO 352 for 10.5 miles to the Shakey Lakes Natural Area, the first stop on the tour.

The **Menominee River**, which separates Michigan from Wisconsin, is accessible to the public at several sites belonging to the Wisconsin Electric

Company. This area offers the opportunity to find those southern species that are uncommon in the rest of the UP—Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Northern Cardinal are found here, and Cerulean Warbler is occasional. Other species usually present include Bald Eagle, Warbling Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole.

As you head west from Stephenson toward the river, consider a quick stop at the **Shakey Lakes Natural Area and County Park** (DeLorme p. 86, B1, 45° 25' N, 87°49' W; see previous map). This state natural area has a productive stand of old oak-savanna, part of which has been burned for prairie plant species restoration. Birds nesting here include Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Towhee, and Clay-colored and Grasshopper Sparrows. Migrant warblers can be present in good numbers, particularly in spring.

From Shakey Lakes, backtrack east on CO G-12/CO 352 for about 6 miles to CO 577, where you go left (north) for approximately 16 miles to US-2 at the town of Vulcan (see next map). From here, the route heads to the Menominee River overlooks at **Kimberly Clark Dam** (also known as Big Quinnesec) and **Hydraulic Falls Dam**, good sites for Bald Eagles, diving ducks, and Surf, White-winged, and Black (uncommon) Scoters in autumn.

From Vulcan, go west on US-2 through the towns of Norway and Quinnesec to US-141; see map on opposite page. From the US-141 bridge that crosses the Menominee River into Wisconsin, go south into Wisconsin for 0.5 mile to Coolidge Avenue in the town of Niagara. Go west on Coolidge for 0.4 mile to Tyler Road and turn left (north) onto Tyler for 0.5 mile to the Riverside Park overlook. Here you can scan the backwaters of the Kimberly Clark Dam.

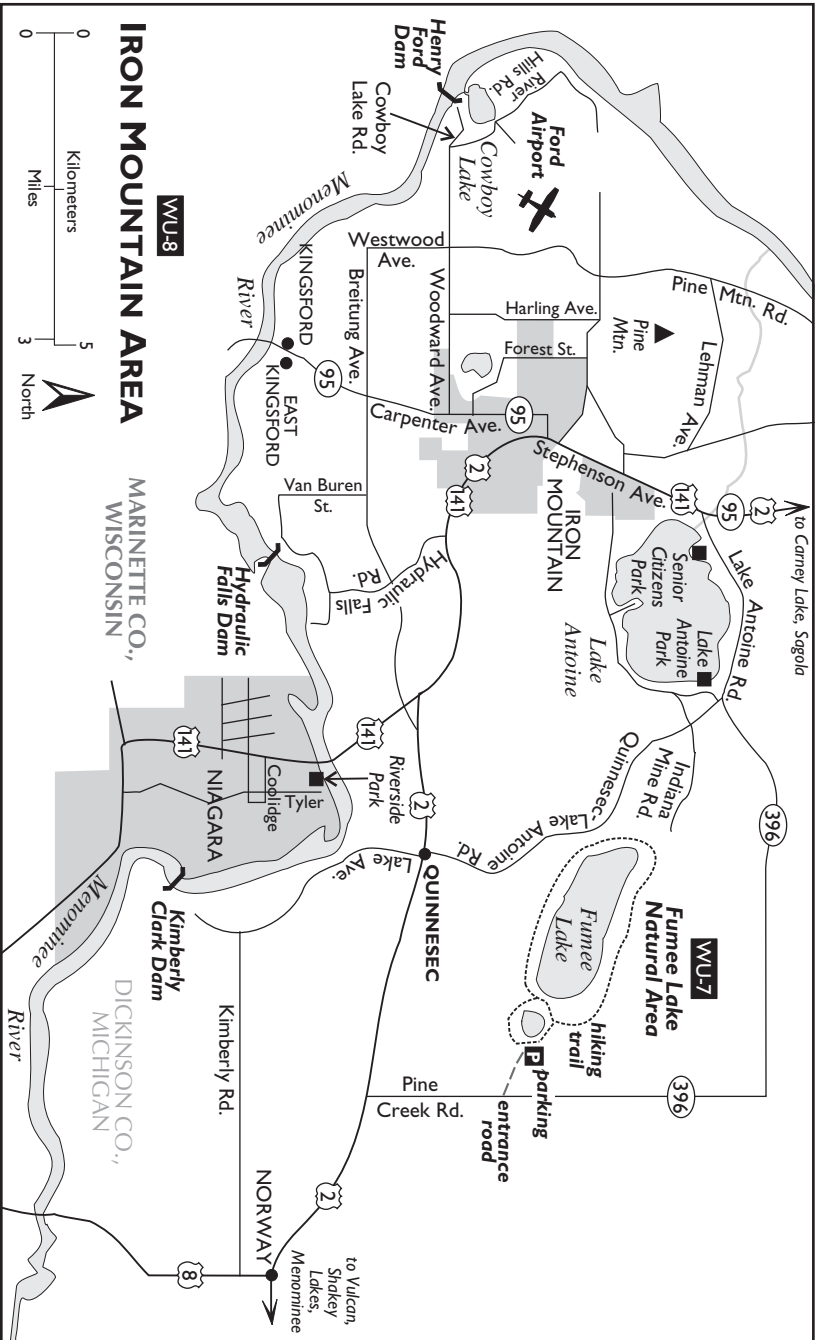
To reach the Hydraulic Falls Dam, return north to US-2, go west for 1.5 miles to Hydraulic Falls Road, and go south for 1.3 miles to a T-intersection. Turn left here for 0.6 mile to reach the first spot overlooking the river. Return to the T-intersection and go left (southwest) on Hydraulic Falls Road for 0.8 mile and several curves in the road to a pullout on the left which overlooks the river.

WU-7 Fumee Lake Natural Area

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**
DeLorme p. 88, B1. 45°49' N, 87°57' W

Directions: From Hydraulic Falls Road, return north to US-2 and go east to the small town of Quinnesec. Continue east on US-2 for 2.0 miles to CO 396, also signposted as Pine Creek Road (this is 2.2 miles west of Norway). There is a sign here for Fumee Lake Natural Area.

Fumee Lake Natural Area, with its mix of open water, marsh, cedar swamp, and northern hardwood habitats, is a favorite place among local birders looking for northern specialties. At the junction of US-2 and CO 396, go north on 396 for about 1.0 mile to the entrance sign for the Fumee Lake



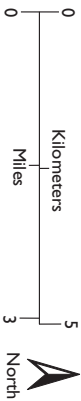
IRON MOUNTAIN AREA

WU-8

WU-7

MARINETTE CO., WISCONSIN

DICKINSON CO., MICHIGAN



Natural Area. Turn left (west) onto an abandoned railroad trail for a few hundred yards to a parking area with an outhouse. From here, you can proceed on foot into the natural area on a trail that will eventually circle Fumee Lake. Most of the bird activity is near the lake. Bald Eagles nest here, and Common Loons can usually be seen on the lake. Other breeding birds in summer include Alder Flycatcher (uncommon), Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Red-winged Blackbird, and Baltimore Oriole. During migration, you should be able to find a wide variety of passerines, including Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, and Red-eyed Vireos, Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher (uncommon), and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The abundant conifers attract such warblers as Northern Parula, Black-throated Green, Pine, and American Redstart. Both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets are found here, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, an unusual southern bird in the UP, has been a regular nester on the northeast side of the lake.

Lists of the area's birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and 17 orchid species, as well as a detailed trail map, can be found at www.fumeelakes.org.

WU-8 Iron Mountain Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter***

DeLorme p. 87, B8. 45°49' N, 88°04' W

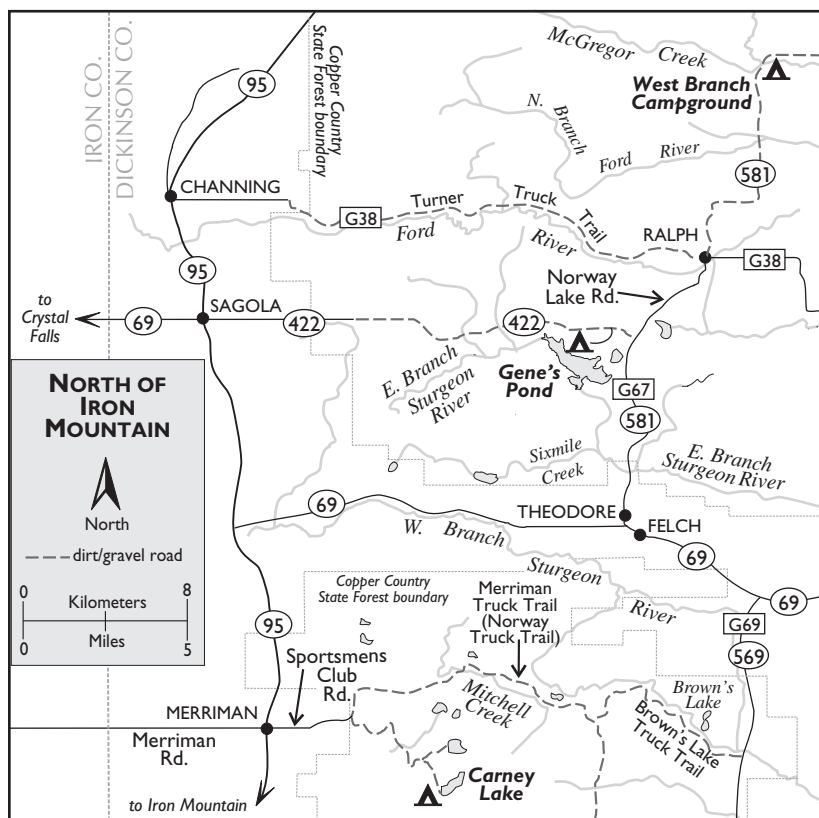
Directions: *From Fumee Lake, return to US-2 and go about 6.0 miles to the town of Iron Mountain.*

Cowboy Lake is an impoundment west of Iron Mountain created by the Kingsford Project of the Wisconsin Electric Power Company dam on the Menominee River, which forms the boundary between Michigan and Wisconsin. Cowboy Lake can be reached from the city of Iron Mountain by going south on Carpenter Avenue (M-95) to Woodward Avenue. Go west on Woodward past the airport to the turn marked Cowboy Lake Road. The dam, lake, and a nice park are about a mile west from this intersection. There is a small marshy area just northwest of the dam. The wooded area between the marsh northwest of the dam and the lake can be good for passerines. From the canoe launch parking area, just below the dam, a 15-mile trail goes along the powerline and the Menominee River. Waterfowl can be seen on the lake and on the river in fall through winter (if the lake is ice-free) and into spring, when warblers migrate through the area.

Lake Antoine, another good birding spot just to the northeast of Iron Mountain, is reached from the intersection of Stephenson Avenue and N. Lake Antoine Road on the north end of Iron Mountain. Go 0.4 mile east on N. Lake Antoine Road to the entrance to the **Jim and Ida Goulette Senior Citizens Park** on a small peninsula extending out into the north part of the lake. The short road in to the park goes through a marsh which has breeding Wood and American Black Ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, American Bittern, and Green Heron. A mature stand of Red Pines provides habitat for warblers dur-

ing migration and for nesting passerines during the summer months, including Eastern Kingbird, Tree Swallow Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Song Sparrow, and American Goldfinch. Another mile farther along N. Lake Antoine Road is Lake Antoine Park, which does not offer much in the way of birding but which does have an excellent large campground and beach with a good view of the lake.

Return to US-2/M-95 and go north; stay on M-95 when it splits from US-2. Go about 3.5 miles and turn right (east) onto Sportsmens Club Road (this road to the west is Merriman Road). At 2.6 miles, turn right and follow the signs on this rough, gravel road for 4.1 miles to Carney Lake Campground. The habitat along this road can be good for northern nesting species, including Gray Jay, Tennessee, Blackburnian, and Pine Warblers, Northern Parula, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak, and for warblers in migration. **Carney Lake** (DeLorme p. 88, A1. 45°53', 87°56') has nesting Common Loons and is a resting spot for migrating waterfowl in spring and fall. Return to the intersection with Sportsmens Club Road and, instead of returning west to M-95, proceed north and then east for about 4 miles on the road that is marked "to Ski Path-



way” (known locally as the Norway Truck Trail). There is excellent boreal habitat where this road crosses Mitchell Creek. Spruce Grouse are always a possibility, and Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee are occasional.

Backtrack to Sportsmens Club Road and then to M-95. Go north for about 12 miles to the small town of Sagola (see previous map; DeLorme p. 99, D8). Go right (east) onto Leeman Rd. (CO 422) which, after about 5 miles, turns into a gravel road. At 11.3 miles from Sagola, you will come to a small road posted for **Gene’s Pond** (DeLorme p. 100, D1. 46°04’ N, 87°52’ W), an impoundment created by a dam on the East Branch of the Sturgeon River. There is a small Great Blue Heron rookery here, and breeding Common Loons may also be present. A nature trail leads from the campground and can be good for breeding Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, Red-eyed Vireo, and Pine and Mourning Warblers. Swamp and Song Sparrows nest around the lake. This is also a good spot for warblers in migration.

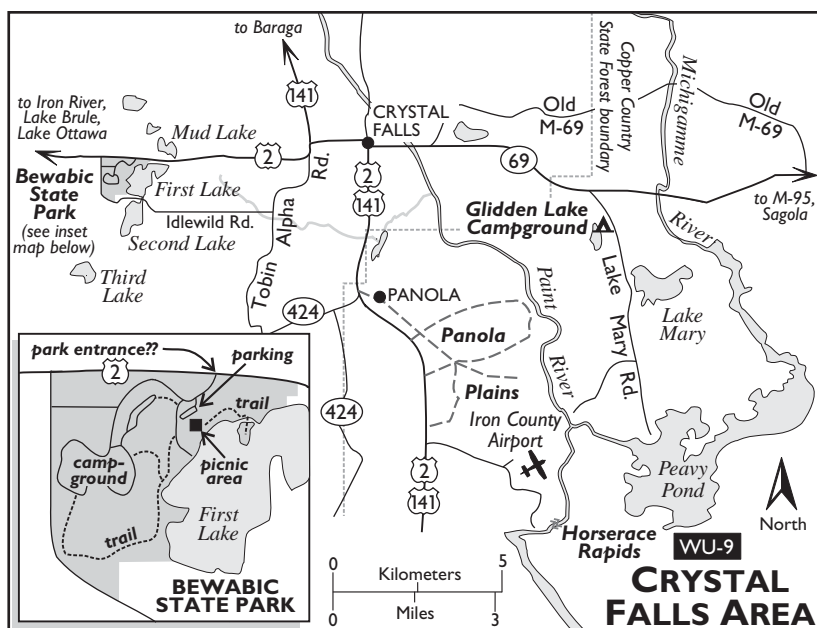
Return to Leeman Road/CO 422. Continue east for 1.4 miles to Norway Lake Road (CO 581/G-67) and turn north onto the paved road for 3.3 miles to the small town of Ralph. Continue north through Ralph on CO 581 through boggy areas with good habitat for many northern species. Cedar Waxwing, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Scarlet Tanager nest here, and many warblers and other songbirds pass through during migration. At 2.0 miles north of Ralph, the road switches to a gravel surface. Continue another 4.9 miles from Ralph to the small **West Branch County Campground** on the banks of a lovely stream, McGregor Creek. Ruffed Grouse, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Chestnut-sided, Yellow-rumped, and Black-and-white Warblers nest in the park and surrounding area. Just north of the entrance to the campground, CO 581 turns east, becomes CO 438, and enters Marquette County (covered later in this chapter). Instead, return on CO 581 to Ralph to continue this tour in the Crystal Falls area.

WU-9 Crystal Falls Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 99, D6. 46°05’ N, 88°20’ W

Directions: From the previous site, return west from Ralph on CO 426, the Turner Truck Trail (also signposted as G-38). It is about 16.5 miles to Channing, where you turn south onto M-95 for 3.8 miles to Sagola.

At the intersection of M-95 and M-69 in Sagola, go west on M-69 for 5.9 miles and turn to left onto Lake Mary Road toward **Glidden Lake Campground**. At the south end of the campground is a 6.2-mile loop trail, the Lake Mary Plains Pathway. North of the park entrance, take a 3.4-mile loop trail over a boardwalk and through wetlands as the trail circles the lake and then returns to the campground. Check this area for breeding Common Loon, American Bittern, American Woodcock, Whip-poor-will, Hermit



Thrush, Warbling Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler, Eastern Towhee, and Brewer's Blackbird.

Return to M-69 and continue west to the town of Crystal Falls. Go south from here on US-2/141 for about 3.2 miles to a glacial-outwash plain dominated by Jack Pines. For the next 2.5 miles, take any of the roads that go east from US-2/141 into the **Panola Plains**, which is crisscrossed by sandy, two-tracks roads. The roads are occasionally washed out, and four-wheel-drive may be helpful. Species usually present during spring and summer are Wild Turkey, Northern Harrier, Great Crested Flycatcher, Tree Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, Golden-winged, Nashville, and Pine Warblers, American Redstart, Chipping, Clay-colored (uncommon in this part of the UP), Vesper, and White-throated Sparrows, Indigo Bunting, and Brewer's Blackbird.

At 6.0 miles south of Crystal Falls is a road that leads east for about 1.5 miles to the Iron County Airport. Continue on this winding road south of the airport for another 2.0 miles to **Horseshoe Rapids** on the Paint River, where you can find breeding Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped and Pine Warblers, and Scarlet Tanager in the stands of large Red Pine and White Pine.

Crystal Falls is also known to mushroom aficionados as the home of the "Humongous Fungus", perhaps the world's largest and oldest living organism. This Honey Mushroom covers 38 acres beneath the forest south of Crystal Falls near the Wisconsin border. It is believed to be 1,500 to 10,000 years old, and may weigh 100 tons. It is mostly underground, except for tiny offshoots

that poke through the surface in the fall. The Crystal Falls Business Association has established the Humongous Fungus Festival, which explains the Fungus Fudge, Fungus Burgers, and Fungus T-shirts on sale in the town.

Return to Crystal Falls and go 4.5 miles west on US-2 to the entrance to **Bewabic State Park** (906-353-3324; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx; DeLorme p. 99, D5. 46°05' N, 88°25' W). This is a great migration stopover spot, with two foot trails worth checking for migrant and breeding species. One trail goes out onto a peninsula past the picnic grounds and is a very reliable place for breeding Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Baltimore Oriole, as well as Wilson's Warbler in migration. The lake usually has Common Loons, and Merlin is often seen on the peninsula. The second trail goes through a hilly wooded area where you can usually find a good selection of warblers and other species, including breeding Broad-winged Hawk, Barred Owl (year round), Least Flycatcher, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, and Swamp Sparrow. The park has an excellent campground and a nice beach.

WU-10 Iron River Area

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

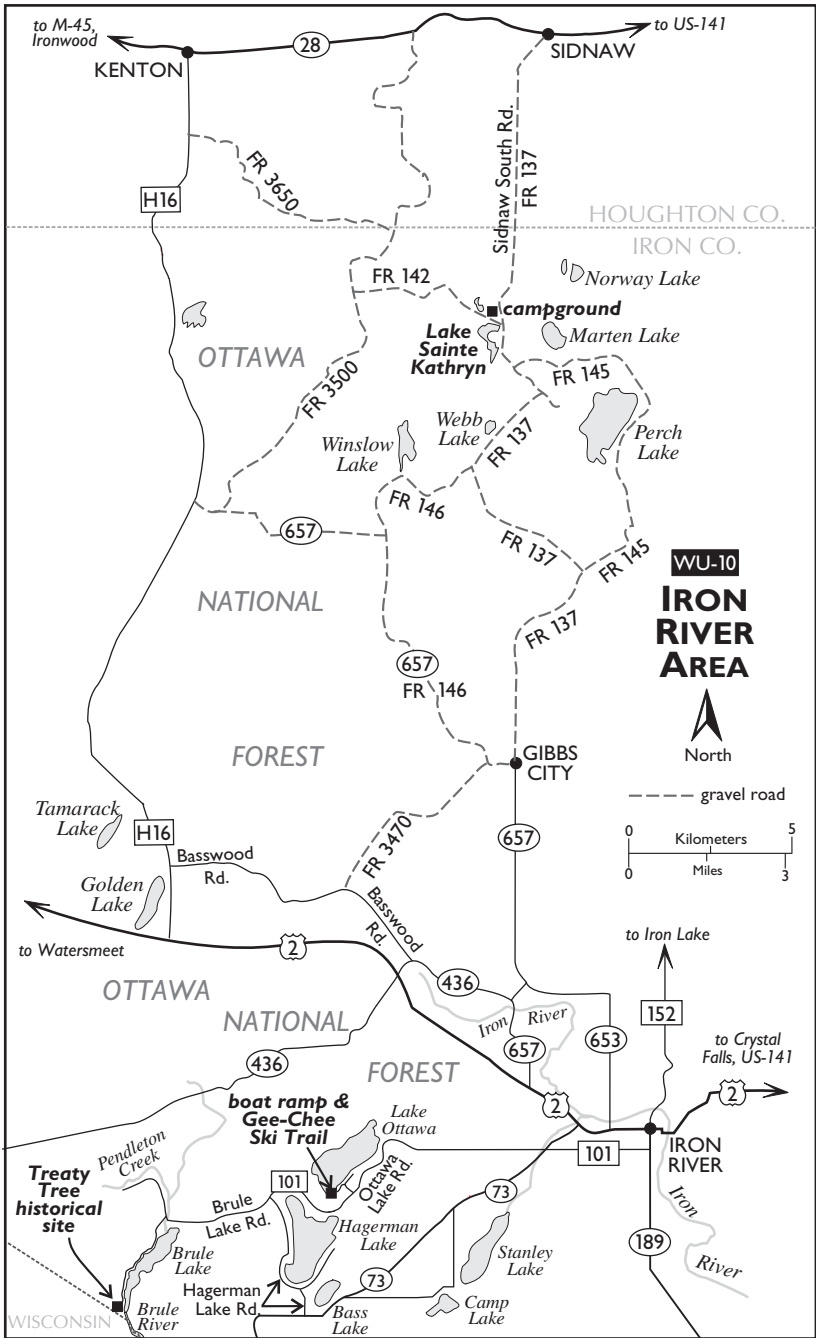
DeLorme p. 98, D3. 46°05' N, 88°38' W

Contact Information: Ottawa National Forest, 906-932-1330;

www.fs.fed.us/r9/ottawa

Directions: From the Crystal Falls area and Bewabic State Park, continue west on US-2 for about 14 miles to the town of Iron River.

Located southwest of Iron River in the Ottawa National Forest, **Brule Lake** (DeLorme p. 98, D2. 46°03' N, 88°50' W) is a haven for spring migrant passerines and northern breeding species. To reach the lake, go west on US-2 for 1.5 miles past Iron River to a left turn onto M-73. Go 6.5 miles to Hagerman Lake Road (FR 102), where you turn right (north) and then left (west) for 2.5 miles to Brule Lake Road (FR 101). Continue another 2.0 miles to a crossing of Pendleton Creek, where you should check for Nashville and Canada Warblers. Turn left here onto the paved road, which travels along the west shore of Brule Lake to the Treaty Tree historical site and the headwaters of the Brule River. The Treaty Tree marks the spot where the 19th-century U.S. territorial government signed a treaty with the Ojibwa tribe. From the southern end of the picnic grounds, there is a short trail through a riparian area at the headwaters, which serves as a funnel for migrating passerines. Late May can be particularly spectacular, with over 20 species of warblers possible on a good day, including Tennessee, Orange-crowned (uncommon), Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Pine, Bay-breasted and Wilson's. Among the species nesting here are Bald Eagle, Black-backed (rare) and Pileated (year round) Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown



Creeper (in the river area), Ruby-crowned Kinglet in the Balsam Fir by the river, Northern Parula (in the hanging lichens along the trail), Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, White-throated Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Purple Finch, and Evening Grosbeak. On the lake, possibilities include Hooded and Common Mergansers, Common Loon, and Pied-billed Grebe. For the mammal enthusiast, tracks of River Otter, Bobcat, Fisher, Raccoon, Snowshoe Hare, White-tailed Deer, Red Squirrel, Mink, Long-tailed and Short-tailed Weasels, Coyote, and Red Fox have been seen in winter.

Another good spot for migrant and nesting northern species is the U.S. Forest Service campground at **Lake Ottawa** (DeLorme p. 98, D2. 46°04' N, 88°45' W). From the previous stop at Brule Lake, return east on Brule Lake Road (FR 101) for about 3.0 miles to the campground (Brule Lake Road becomes Ottawa Lake Road just past the intersection with Hagerman Lake Road). If coming from Iron River, go 5.0 miles west on Lake Ottawa Road. Take the Gee-Chee Ski Trail, which begins at the boat launch. The best part of the trail, along the shoreline, is good during migration as well as the breeding season. There are thick spruces along the trail where a blowdown occurred, a good spot for Magnolia Warbler. Also found along the trail are Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Ovenbird, and White-throated Sparrow. Check the lake for Common Loon and Bald Eagle. Just before the trail ascends a hill and veers away from the lake, Swainson's Thrush and Northern Waterthrush are reliably present and singing during breeding season. At the top of the hill in the hardwoods (a good spot for Broad-winged Hawk), listen for Black-throated Blue Warbler. From the hill, the trail crosses Lake Ottawa Road and follows an esker (a narrow ridge formed by glacial deposits), bringing you to treetop level where migrating songbirds can be readily observed. Philadelphia Vireo has been recorded in summer in this area, and Winter Wren and Veery can be present in the wetland below the esker. This trail can also be reached from another campground at the opposite end of the park, an excellent place in spring for wildflowers, including Round-lobed Hepatica, Squirrel Corn, Dutchman's Breeches, Bellwort, Spring Beauties, and Blue Cohosh.

The **Ottawa National Forest** in northern Iron County has numerous small lakes and a variety of habitats. The area around **Lake Sainte Kathryn** (DeLorme p. 98, A3. 46°24' N, 88°43' W) may be especially productive. From Iron River, the easiest route with the best roads is to return east for 16 miles to Crystal Falls, go north for 36 miles on US-141, and go west for 9 miles on M-28 to Sidnaw. Another choice is to go west on US-2 from Iron River for approximately 14 miles to H16, where you turn right (north) onto H16. Continue north for 25 miles to M-28 at Kenton, and turn right (east) for 9 miles to Sidnaw (DeLorme p. 110, D3). From Sidnaw, go south from the town on Sidnaw South Road (may also be signposted as CO 161/FR 137) for about 8.0 miles to the campground at the north side of Lake Sainte Kathryn. You can also reach the Lake Sainte Kathryn area from Iron River by going west on

US-2 for 2.5 miles then north on CO 657/FR 137 for 9.0 miles to Gibbs City. From Gibbs City, stay north on FR 137 as it winds its way for another 15.2 miles to the campground on Lake Ste. Kathryn. This route involves more back-country driving, with some rough but drivable roads, but also offers the best birding on the way to the lake.

Scan Lake Sainte Kathryn and other area lakes for nesting Common Loon, Osprey, and Bald Eagle, and check any mature spruces for breeding Cape May Warblers. A road tour through this area during breeding season (June–July) can also produce Broad-winged Hawk, Wilson’s Snipe, Chimney Swift, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Veery, Hermit and Wood (rare in the Western UP) Thrushes, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and Black-throated Green Warblers, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows, Purple Finch, both crossbills, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak. There is additional habitat good for the same species on a return route to Iron River via FR 2149/FR 351, west of Lake Sainte Kathryn, to FR 137. An Ottawa National Forest map and a compass/GPS are highly recommended if you venture off the main roads. The map can be obtained at the USFS Ranger Stations in Kenton, Iron River, Ironwood, and Watersmeet.

WU-11 Watersmeet Area

*Spring*** Summer** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 97, B7, 46°16' N, 89°11' W

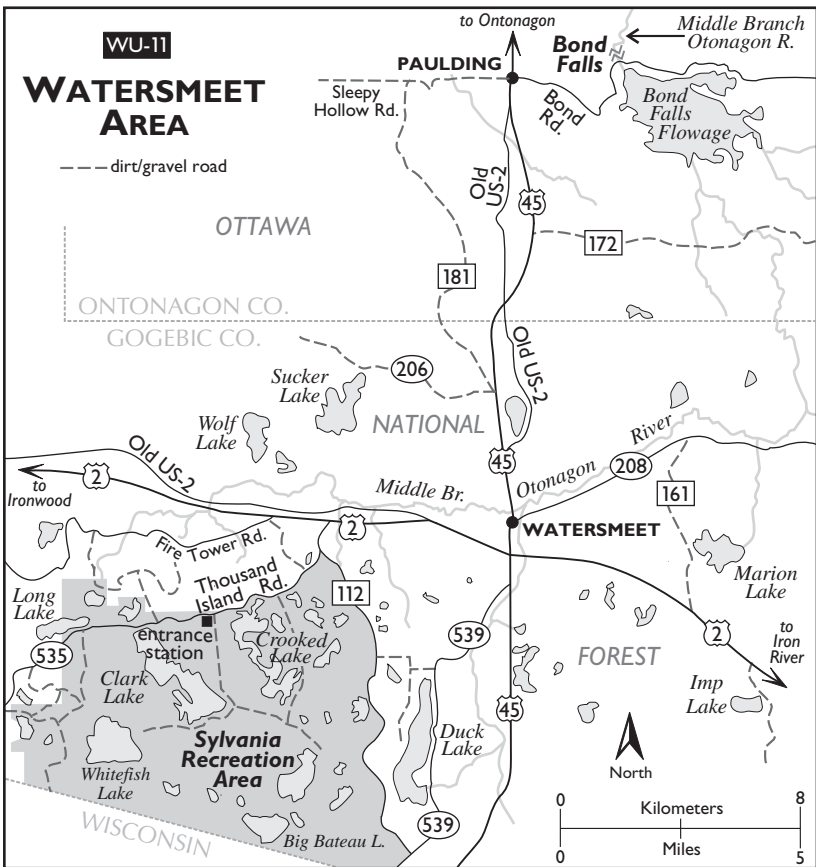
Contact Information: Ottawa National Forest, 906-932-1330;

www.fs.fed.us/r9/ottawa

Directions: *From Iron River, go west on US-2 for about 17 miles to the point where US-2 crosses the Iron/Gogebic County line (DeLorme p. 98, C1). See map on next page.*

After crossing from Iron County into Gogebic County, continue northwest for another 5.2 miles to a turn to the left (south) for **Imp Lake** (DeLorme p.97, C8. 46°03' N, 89°04' W). This small, pretty lake is a good place for nesting Common Loons, and is surrounded by habitat that hosts many boreal nesters. A short nature trail passes through mixed coniferous-deciduous woodlands where you may find Black-backed Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, Gray Jay, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Blackburnian Warblers.

From US-2, continue northwest to the intersection with US-45 at Watersmeet, where you can take a short side trip to **Bond Falls** (DeLorme p. 97, A7. 46°24' N, 89°08' W) and the Bond Falls Basin. Go north on US-45 for approximately 9.0 miles to the small village of Paulding, where you go right (east) onto Bond Road for about 3.0 miles to the scenic 60-foot falls. There is a short trail around the base of the falls, where Skunk Cabbage, very unusual in



the UP, is found. In spring and early summer, search the area around the falls, the shores of the flow, along the road, and in the campgrounds near the dam for Magnolia, Cape May (rare), Black-throated Green, Bay-breasted, and Canada Warblers and Northern Waterthrush.

The aptly named town of Watersmeet is the gateway to the **Sylvania Recreation Area** (906-358-4551; www.fs.fed.us/r9/ottawa/recreation/wilderness/index.html; DeLorme p. 97, C6. 46°14' N, 89°20' W), a scenic wilderness area with countless lakes (motorized watercraft not allowed). To reach the headquarters, proceed on US-2 about 4.0 miles west of US-45 and turn left onto Thousand Island Road (CO 535). Go 4.0 miles southwest on CO 535 to the entrance station/headquarters, where recreation information and maps are available; there are daily use and camping fees. Backcountry hiking and/or kayak and canoe camping are the only ways to bird this area. Breeding birds in summer include Common Loon, Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned and Broad-winged Hawks, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated

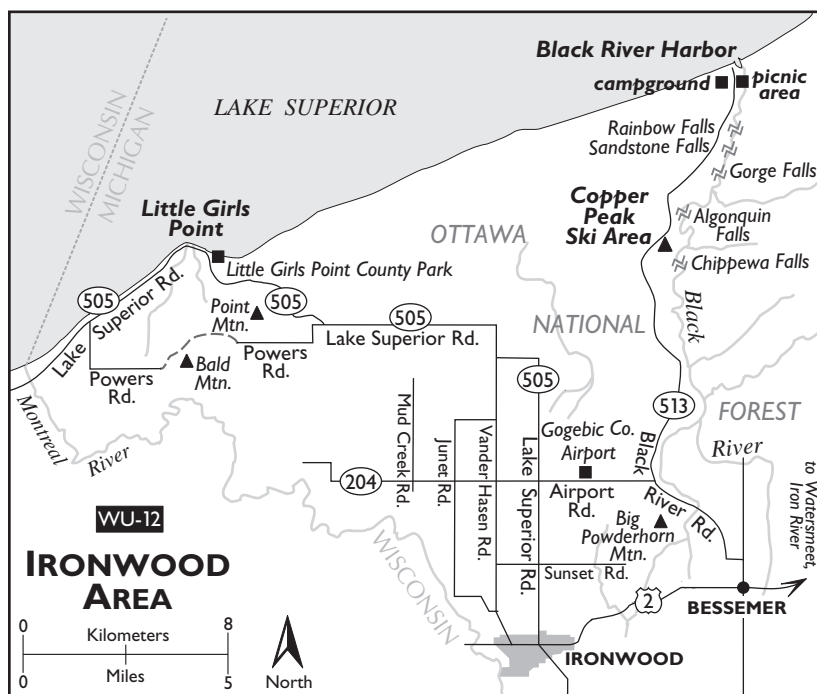
Woodpecker, Alder Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Common Raven, Cliff Swallow, Boreal Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, and Mourning Warblers, Lincoln's, Swamp, and White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, and Rose-breasted and Evening Grosbeaks.

WU-12 Ironwood Area

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 113, C7, 46°27' N, 90°10' W

Directions: From the intersection of US-2 and Thousand Island Road (see previous site), continue west on US-2 for about 47 miles to the city of Ironwood.

From the city of Ironwood, birders can visit the western tip of Michigan at the Lake Superior shoreline, good for migrant waterfowl, gulls, and warblers, as well as the scenic waterfalls along the Black River, also good for northern nesting species. **Little Girls Point** (DeLorme p. 113, B6, 46°36' N, 90°20' W) is just about the westernmost point in the state, and includes a county park with views from the bluff over Lake Superior. During migration, this can be an excellent vantage point to see passing waterfowl, including large



numbers of all three scoters (although Black is rare) and Long-tailed Ducks, while gulls are usually present on the beach. In migration, hosts of warblers occupy the trees in the campground, and are best seen from the trails leading out from the point. To reach Little Girls Point from the city of Ironwood, go north on Lake Street, which becomes Lake Superior Road (CO 505), for 17.0 miles to the point. This road passes through sections of mixed northern hardwood-Hemlock forest and, closer to the point, a wet coniferous forest of Tamarack-spruce bogs, where Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Broad-winged Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Alder Flycatcher, White-throated Sparrow, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak are possible during breeding season. About 4.0 miles before you reach the point, take a short side trip on Powers Road to the left (west) to the Bald Mountain area, which can be very good for nesting warblers, including Nashville, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Mourning, and Canada. Although Powers Road will eventually get you to Lake Superior Road/CO 505 west of Little Girls Point, the road is not in good condition (may require four-wheel-drive).

After birding the point area, return south on CO 505 for about 9 miles to Airport Road. Go left (east) for 3 miles and turn left (north) onto Black River Road. This road leads to **Black River Harbor** (DeLorme p. 113, A8, 46°40' N, 90°03' W), one of the most scenic areas in this part of the UP. At 4.8 miles north of the airport, you will come to the turn for Copper Peak, the site of the only International Ski Flying facility in the Western Hemisphere, and what is claimed to be the world's largest ski slide. You can take the elevator to the top for a fantastic panoramic view of the area.

Continue north on Black River Road for another 6.0 miles to the Black River Campground and Wildlife Viewing Area. The waterfalls along the Black River are numerous and very scenic. Continuing on for another 1.5 miles will bring you to the Black River Harbor parking lot and picnic area. Even in summer, the trees between the parking area and the harbor may hold numbers of passerines. In this mixture of Red Pine, spruce, and flowering deciduous trees, you can see Bald Eagle, Downy Woodpecker, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, and Black-and-white Warblers. At the harbor, there are gulls and Double-crested Cormorants present from spring through fall. In migration, the harbor can also be a good spot for resting waterfowl.

NOTE: This ends the Menominee River route. The next section will begin from Seney National Wildlife Refuge, at the eastern edge of this Western UP chapter. From there, we will travel west along the Lake Superior shoreline to the Keweenaw Peninsula, to Isle Royale National Park, and continue west from there along the Lake Superior shoreline, ending at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Some birders may wish to continue their Western UP birding from here at Black River Harbor, as the Porcupine Mountains are just east of this site.

SENEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

By Jerry Ziarno

Prior to the late 1800s, great forests of both Red and White Pines covered the central UP, including the Seney area. Once the lumbering operations of the 1880s severely depleted these stands, the loggers turned their attention to the lowland conifers and northern hardwoods. Fires were then set to burn away the debris left from lumbering activities but, unfortunately, these fires also damaged the rich organic soil, killing the existing seeds and preventing forest regeneration. Under the assumption that the cleared land could be used for agricultural crop production, drainage ditches were dug throughout the area. Attempts at agriculture, however, proved to be unprofitable due to poor soils and the very short growing season, and the abandoned farms eventually reverted to state ownership.

In 1934, the Michigan Conservation Department proposed to the federal government that the state assume ownership and management of the area for wildlife. As a result, Seney National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1935, and restoration of the land began soon thereafter. The Civilian Conservation Corps aided in constructing an intricate system of roads, ditches, dikes, and water-control structures that resulted in over 7,000 acres of open water in 26 major pools. These lands now provide excellent habitat for the production and protection of migratory and resident birds and other wildlife.

WU-13 Seney National Wildlife Refuge

Spring**** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
 Delorme p. 103-104. 46°17' N, 85°56' W

Contact Information: Seney, NWR, HCR#2, Box 1, Seney, MI 49883; 906-586-9851; www.fws.gov/midwest/seney. Visitor center is open daily May 15 to October 15, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The refuge is open only during daylight hours.

Directions: If coming from the Lower Peninsula, go west from the Mackinac Bridge onto US-2 for about 65 miles to M-77. Turn right (north) onto M-77 for 12 miles, past the village of Germfask, to the visitor center entrance to the refuge. Or, from the town of Seney, go south from the intersection of M-28 and M-77 for 4.5 miles on M-77 to the entrance on the right (west). The north entrance, located on M-28 approximately 7.5 miles west of the M-77 intersection in Seney, leads to the Driggs River section. This entrance road goes south for 1.5 miles to a gate, where you can park to walk in on the trails. Another entry point is located about 0.75 mile south of Germfask on M-77; turn west to a parking area that is a trailhead for a hiking and cross-country ski trail.

Seney's 5,000 acres of bogs, swamps, marshes, grasslands, pine savannah, and forest provide habitat for over 200 species of birds, 45 mammal species, and 26 fish species. With nearly two-thirds of the total area being wetlands, access by motorized vehicles is limited to a series of two-track

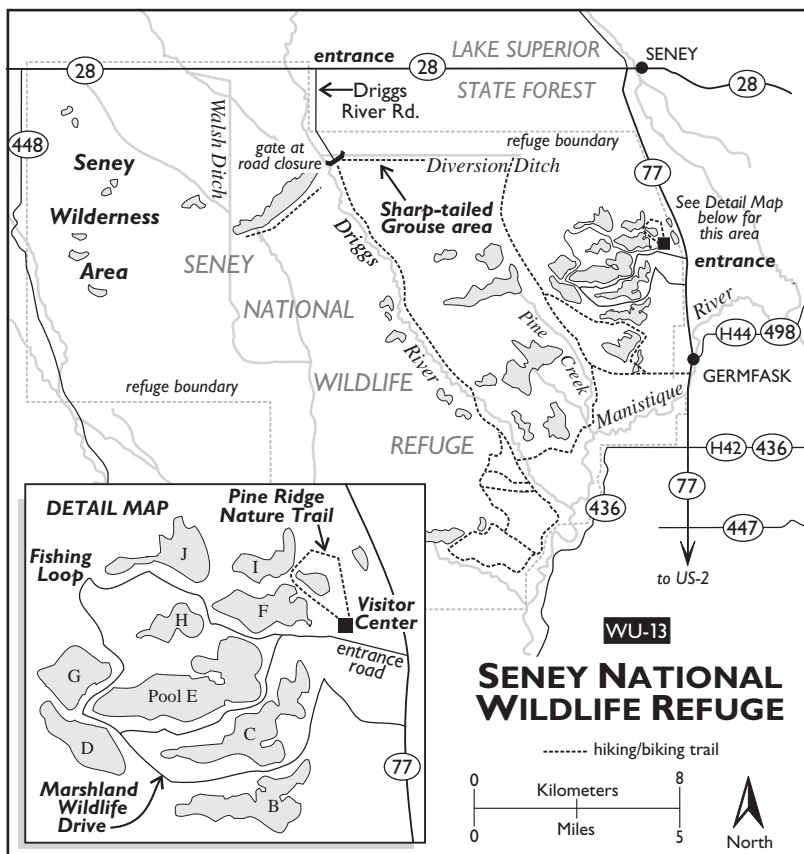
roads in the eastern section and a short entrance road on the north border. Most of the refuge is closed to motorized transport during the breeding season, although miles of hiking and biking trails provide foot access. A true wilderness area of 25,000 acres is located on the western side of the refuge. This area is open to day use only, and access is limited.

In addition to the daylight-only access, the refuge has additional rules, all designed for the protection of the area's wildlife. Dogs must be on a leash; there is no camping or overnight parking; open fires, off-road vehicles, and open fires are not allowed; and boats, canoes, and any other flotation devices are not permitted on refuge pools. Fishermen are not allowed to use lead sinkers (which may be ingested by Trumpeter Swans and Common Loons). Hunting is allowed in some sections of the refuge during the fall months, so check with the visitor center if you decide to wander off of the main roads after September 1. Portions of the roads may be closed to entry during the nesting periods of sensitive species, and will be clearly posted as such. During the summer months, there can be a high number of vehicles using the Marshland Drive, so if birding by car, be sure to pull well off the narrow road to let others pass.

The best times to visit are during the spring and fall migration periods, although there are many breeding species in evidence during the entire summer. Most of the best birding areas are at a distance from the entrances, and are most easily reached by car. Since the refuge gates are open only from May 15 to October 15, time your visit between those dates unless you are prepared for considerable walking.

Migratory waterfowl begin arriving as early as late March, although roads and trails may not be open or may be snow-covered until late April. Migrating passerines start showing up in April, with peak numbers occurring in mid- to late May. In fall, most migrants pass through from September into early October, with waterbirds present until freeze-up occurs, usually by late October. The refuge in winter can be a fairly desolate place. The annual Christmas Bird Count may produce 30 species, including Trumpeter Swan, Bald Eagle, Gray Jay, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, and Common Redpoll. In warm winters with open water, surprises such as Common Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, and Swamp Sparrow have been recorded.

To begin your birding from the visitor center, take the Pine Ridge Nature Trail, a 1.4-mile loop through primarily wetlands where Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Sandhill Crane, and numerous passerines can be observed from spring through early fall. You can also bird by car on the 7-mile Marshland Wildlife Drive, which winds around pools and travels through wetlands, meadows, and forested areas. From the Marshland Drive, you can also access the 3-mile Fishing Loop, which covers an additional section of the refuge and provides views of more of the ponds.



In addition, you can also canoe the southeastern part of the refuge on the Manistique River; canoe outfitters are located in Germfask. As is true throughout the refuge, access is permitted during daylight hours only, with no overnight camping.

From spring through fall in the pools and wetlands, you can expect to see nesting Trumpeter Swan (Michigan’s largest population, introduced and now a regular breeder), American Wigeon, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Loon, American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Virginia Rail, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Wilson’s Snipe, American Woodcock, Common Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Sedge and Marsh Wrens, Song and Swamp Sparrows, and Red-winged Blackbird.

In the forested areas along the trails, the summer residents include Sharp-shinned and Cooper’s Hawks, Northern Goshawk, Broad-winged and Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrel, Merlin, Common Nighthawk, Northern

Saw-whet Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Alder, Least, and Great Crested Flycatchers, Red-eyed Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, and Cedar Waxwing. Nesting warblers include Nashville, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Pine, Palm, and Black-and-White, Ovenbird, and Common Yellowthroat. Also present are Chipping, Vesper, Savannah, and White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, Purple Finch, and American Goldfinch. Some other possible breeders are Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Swainson's and Wood Thrushes, Black-throated Blue, Bay-breasted (rare), and Canada Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, Clay-colored and Lincoln's Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlark, and Evening Grosbeak. In winter, Northern Shrike, Bohemian Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting may visit.

During migration, particularly in spring, large numbers of waterfowl rest and feed in the refuge. These include Snow Goose, Tundra Swan, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, and Horned Grebe. Shorebirds that pass through during migration include Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary, Semipalmated, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers, and Dunlin. Other spring and fall migrants may include American Pipit, Tennessee, Blackpoll, and Wilson's Warblers, and Fox and White-crowned Sparrows. Not always seen but possible in spring and fall are Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawks, and Snowy, Long-eared, and Short-eared Owls.

Yellow Rail is the species that draws many birders to Seney. In Michigan, the refuge provides perhaps the best opportunity for not only hearing several birds making their *tick-tick* calls during hours of darkness, but also of actually catching a glimpse of one of these diminutive "ghosts". In the spring of 2002, a total of 10 Yellow Rails were found here, although the number varies considerably from year to year. Since the refuge is closed to the public from dusk to dawn, the only practical way to have a chance at seeing a Yellow Rail is to take one of the tours run by the refuge during the month of May. These tours will take you into the wet sedge areas after dark, where the refuge staff will attempt to call one of the rails into viewing range. Schedules for the tours change from year to year, so call the refuge office to obtain information before planning your visit (contact information given at the beginning of this site). A good flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries and hip boots or waders are highly recommended.

While listening for the Yellow Rail, you are likely to hear the distinct buzzy song of a Le Conte's Sparrow. One of Michigan's largest breeding populations occurs at Seney NWR in the vast sedge meadows. The first birds usually arrive in early May, with males on territory by the third week in May. These birds are elusive skulkers, much easier to hear than to see.

Another specialty bird of the refuge is Sharp-tailed Grouse. During the pre-breeding season, areas with leks will be closed to entry to protect the limited population. After the breeding period, usually by early May, the best place to find Sharp-tailed Grouse is the open grasslands in the northern section of the refuge. Take the northern entrance road south from M-28 for 2.0 miles, where it crosses a ditch and a gate blocks Driggs River Road. Park here and walk on the road to the east along the diversion ditch. From about 1.0 to 1.2 miles along this road is an area of good grouse habitat. Search for the birds in the forest openings created by recent and past agricultural practices. They can often be seen perched in, or feeding on, budding trees. Northern Harrier and Merlin are also regularly seen here.

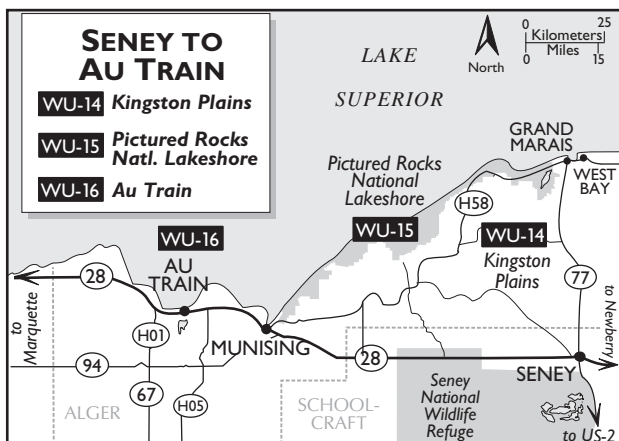
Spruce and Ruffed Grouse are also present on the refuge, although Spruce Grouse is difficult to find. The best chances for observing this species is to drive or walk the roads or trails during the early morning or late evening hours. Ruffed Grouse are found in deciduous forests, usually where aspens are present. A boreal species, Spruce Grouse is found in stands of Jack Pine or in mixed swamp conifers.

In April 2004, Rick Baetsen discovered an active Great Gray Owl nest with two young being tended by both parents. Both chicks successfully fledged. This is the first recorded sighting of an active Great Gray Owl nest in the state, although there were two previous records of newly fledged young.

SENEY TO AU TRAIN

By Jerry Ziarno

The area north and west of Seney is referred to as the Kingston Plains. This vast logged area is now in the stage of secondary and tertiary vegetation growth, providing nesting habitat for several northern breeders, including some boreal species.



The route continues on to the shoreline of Lake Superior, where the sites of Grand Marais, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, and Munising offer the chance to observe numerous migrating waterbirds and shorebirds.

WU-14 The Kingston Plains

Spring**** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p.115, D7. 46°33' N, 86°12' W

The area north and west of Seney has been heavily logged in the past and the resulting vast, somewhat surreal barren plains, with acres of burned tree stumps, provide good habitat for Sharp-tailed Grouse. The adjoining areas of mixed swamp conifers are home to the sometimes elusive Spruce Grouse. Other northern nesters of note here include Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Sandhill Crane, Upland Sandpiper, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Winter and Sedge Wrens, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Canada Warblers, Lincoln's Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Red Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak.

There are four routes into the Kingston Plains that offer good opportunities to look for Sharp-tailed and Spruce Grouse, as well as the other northern specialty birds that nest in the UP. The Bullock Ranch, Fox River Road, Danaher Plains Road, and Adams Trail will take you through logged forests and swamps typical of the area's best birding habitats.

The first stop is at a Sharp-tailed Grouse lek at the **Bullock Ranch** (DeLorme p. 103, B8). Go west from the town of Seney on M-28 for 4.7 miles to a roadside park. Just past this park, go north for about one-third mile on a two-track (gravel) road to a powerline right-of-way. Park here and go east along the powerline to the lek, which is on a patch of higher ground near the fourth pole from the road. The birds usually begin their dancing activity by mid-April and continue through mid-May, even if there is still snow cover. They are on the lek at first light and disperse soon after sunrise. To avoid disturbing the birds, plan to arrive at your vantage point in the dark, before the birds begin their activities. *Do not approach the lek too closely, and do not disturb the birds in any way.* Sandhill Crane, Merlin, and Eastern Bluebird can also be present in the area.

Return on M-28 toward the town of Seney. Just before reaching Seney, take the **Fox River Road, County Road 450** (DeLorme p. 103–104, A6–A8) left (north) for 5.0 miles to the Fox River Campground. (If you are coming from Seney, the road is about 0.1 mile west on M-28). Spruce Grouse can be found in Jack Pine forests along this road from about 2 miles northwest of Seney to the Fox River Campground at 5.0 miles. Continue on Fox River Road/CO 450, for about another mile to Taylor Dam Road on the right. Sharp-tailed Grouse have also been found along Taylor Dam Road, but numbers have been decreasing in recent years.

Continue on Fox River Road/CO 450 for 4.2 miles to an intersection where CO 450 goes left (west). Stay northwest on what is Mahoney Lake Road for about 1.5 miles to the area around Stanley Lake, where you can often find Sharp-tailed Grouse, Sandhill Crane, and Merlin, and many of the birds mentioned above. From Stanley Lake, you can return to M-28, or if you are

good with a map and either compass or GPS, you can go west on CO 450 as it passes Wardles Air Strip, winds around Driggs and Cranberry Lakes, goes past Cusino Lake, and eventually meets CO 454/H42, a total of about 16 miles from Fox River Road. Go right (north) onto CO 454 for about 3.0 miles to FR H58. Going north and then east on H58 will take you to Adams Trail/CO 637, covered in more detail below, or farther north to the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, the next major site. During the late spring and early summer, any of the birds mentioned above may be seen here. In early spring, the roads may be muddy and/or snowy and difficult to negotiate.

The third route into the Kingston Plains is **Danaher Plains Road** (DeLorme p. 104, A1), reached from Seney by going north on M-77 for about 5.5 miles. Go east here on Danaher Plains Road through a large, pre-settlement forest opening, where Merlin is a summer breeder, Spruce Grouse is resident, and Bohemian Waxwing is a winter visitor.

Return to M-77 and continue north for another 9.3 miles to **Adams Trail/CO-637** on the left. Go west on this road into the Kingston Plains for about 10 miles, where you will see a turn to the right (north) for Baker Grade. Stay on Adams Trail to its intersection with H58 (about 12.0 miles), looking for Sharp-tailed Grouse, sometimes perched in trees or along the road edges. Backtrack on Adams Trail to M-77 and go north for about 10 miles to Grand Marais. From Grand Marais, take H58 west for 1.5 miles, where H58 turns south; go left (south) to the north end of Grand Sable Lake and **Sable Falls** (DeLorme p. 115, C8). This is an excellent wildflower spot in late spring and early summer, as well as a good place for Alder Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Brown Creeper, and migrant warblers. Resident Ruffed Grouse and Pileated Woodpecker are also possible.

After you leave the falls, continue south on H58 for another 1.5 miles to the Grand Sable Visitor Center, where you can obtain maps and information on the area. From Grand Marais, go north to **West Bay**, which can be productive for waterfowl in early spring and late fall, if there is open water. Interesting species can include scoters (White-winged the most likely), Common Goldeneye, Horned Grebe, and Great Black-backed Gull. The U.S. Coast Guard Lighthouse on the point north of Grand Marais is a good spot for viewing the bay and the open waters of Lake Superior. The beach just east of town sometimes has Piping Plovers in late spring. Migrant shorebirds, including occasional Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, use the beach in East Bay, located at the mouth of the Sucker River, just east of Grand Marais on H58. In winter, the West Bay area can have Snowy Owl (flight years), Gray Jay, Common Raven, Snow Bunting, and Common Redpoll.

Return via M-77 to Seney and go west from the Seney area to Munising and the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (next site). In late fall, Rough-legged Hawks are often found along the highway in this area.

WU-15 Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore

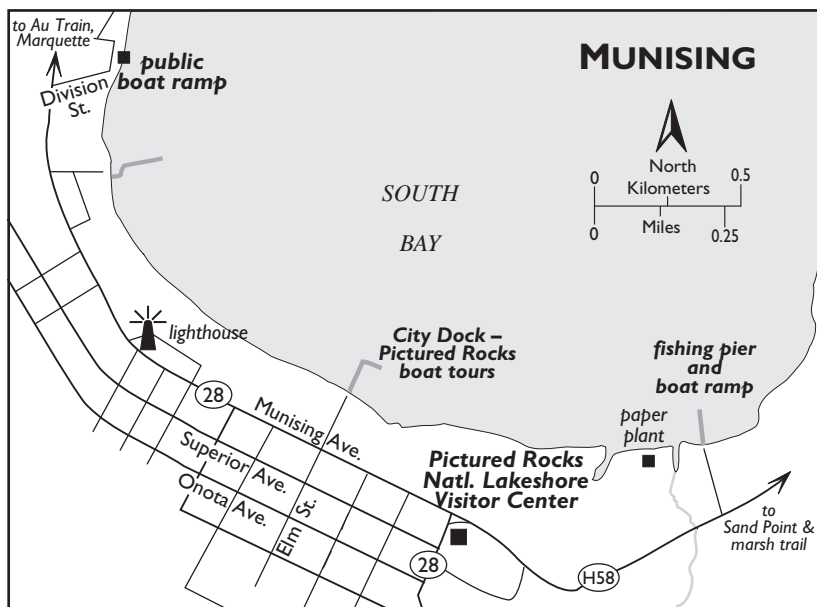
Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme p. 102, A4. 46°24' N, 86°37' W

Contact Information: 906-387-3700; www.nps.gov/piro

Directions: Munising and the Pictured Rocks Visitor Center are located on M-28, approximately 30 miles west of Seney. If returning from Grand Marais (previous site), take M-77 south to Seney and go west on M-28 to Munising.

The combined visitor center for the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore and the Hiawatha National Forest is located at the junction of CO H58 and M-28 in **Munising**. Here, you can obtain information, maps and directions, and backcountry camping permits. In the city of Munising, migrating scaup, scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, and Common Goldeneyes use the harbor near the boat ramp and fishing pier at the east end of the town (past the paper plant). Horned Lark and Lapland Longspur can also be found in this area. Another good viewing spot is near the boat dock for the Pictured Rocks boat tours, located at the end of Elm Street north of Munising's main business area. In late fall and early spring, when the harbor is relatively ice-free, you may find both scaup species, Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, Common Loon, and Bald Eagle. Thayer's Gull has been seen. **Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore**, one of the most scenic areas in the state, extends northeast of Munising along Lake Superior for nearly 40 miles. Hiking trails, with well-spaced camp sites, run

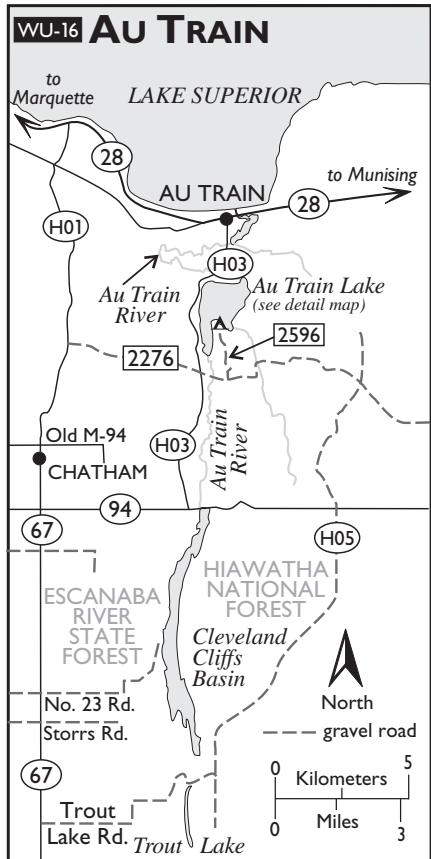
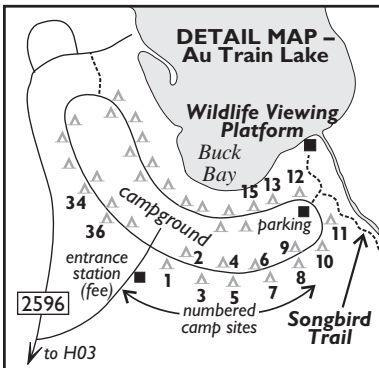


along the length of the park shoreline. Immense sandstone cliffs towering 50 to 200 feet above the lake are stained with colorful minerals and give the park its name. A combined birding and hiking trip would be a scenic and productive birding experience, and boat trips and kayak excursions to view the cliffs from Lake Superior are available in Munising. Peregrine Falcons breed on some of the cliffs. At the entrance to the national lakeshore, 3.0 miles east of the visitor center in Munising, you can sample the area by taking a 45-minute walk on the Sandpoint Marsh Trail through a scenic wetland area, productive for waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, and migrating warblers.

WU- 16 Au Train

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 102, A2. 46°26' N, 86°50' W

At the village of Au Train, about 12 miles west of Munising on M-28, the Au Train River flows north into Lake Superior at a beautiful sandy beach. An overlook park provides good views of the river mouth and beach, where numbers of gulls and migrating shorebirds congregate. Semipalmated Plover, Sanderling, Least Sandpiper, and Common Tern are likely, and Merlin is occasional. At the south end of Au Train Lake (about 4 miles south of the town) is the Au Train Songbird Trail, an interpretive trail 2.0 miles in length. Migrating vireos, thrushes, and warblers, including Blue-winged and Golden-winged, stop by the area. To reach Au Train Campground and the Songbird Trail, go south from Au Train on



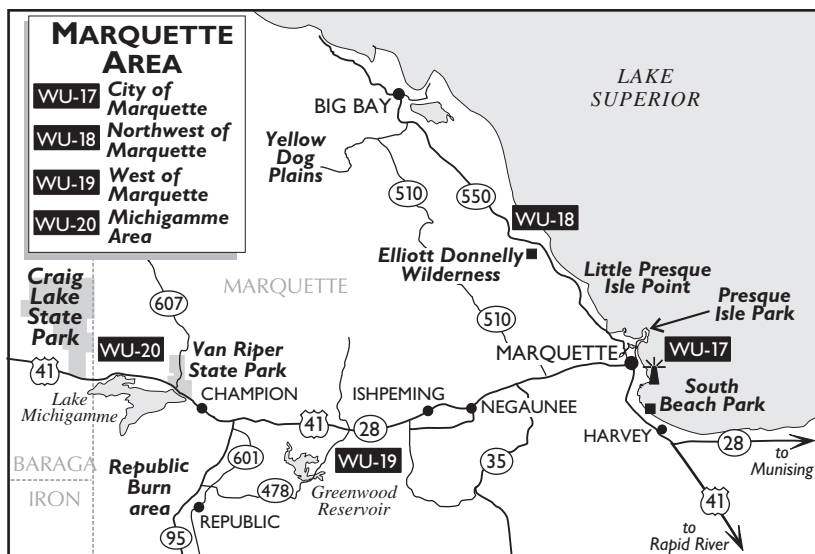
FR H03 for about 4.0 miles, then east on FR 2276 for 1.0 mile, and north on FR 2596 to the campground. The Songbird trailhead is located at the east end of the campground between campsites #11 and #12, where there is a small parking area. At the north end of the campground is the Buck Bay Wildlife Viewing Platform overlooking Au Train Lake.

Return to H03 and go left (south) for about 3.5 miles to M-94. Go right (west) on M-94 for about 3.5 miles to M-67. Go right (north) for 1.0 mile to the intersection with H01 at **Chatham** (DeLorme p. 102, Bl. 46°20' N, 86° 55' W). The sewage ponds east of town and the surrounding farm fields are good during migration for Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Scaup, Bufflehead, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Wilson's Phalarope. Large numbers of Snow Geese are likely in late fall, and Snow Buntings, Common Redpolls, and Evening Grosbeak may be present in winter. In mid-September, Sandhill Cranes stage in the fields about 8.0 miles south of Chatham at the intersection of M-67 and Trout Lake Road. To return to M-28, continue north on H01 from Chatham.

THE MARQUETTE AREA

By Jerry Ziarno

Marquette, the largest city in the Upper Peninsula and the home of Northern Michigan University and the Olympic Training Center, is also the center of a large area of rocky harbors, sandy beaches, wetlands, and extensive boreal forests that provide diverse birding opportunities. Located on the shores of Lake Superior, the lower and upper Marquette harbors attract numerous waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls during migration, and many re-



main as long as water remains relatively ice-free. The numerous parks and hiking trails also provide good opportunities to view both wintering boreal species and migrant songbirds. The vast, relatively unpopulated area of plains, bogs, and forested areas to the north and west of Marquette is home to a number of northern breeding and resident species, and provides stopover sites for many neotropical migrants.

WU-17 The City of Marquette

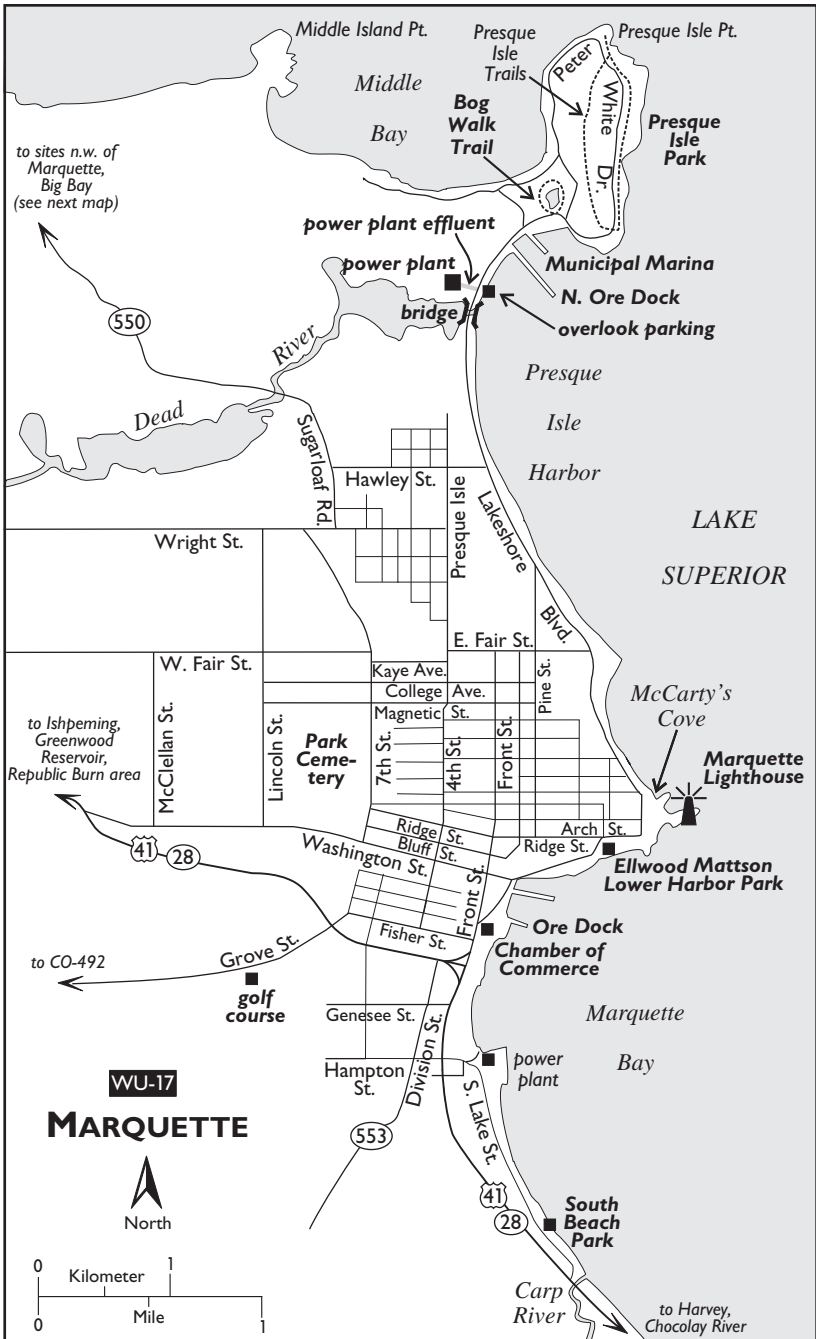
*Spring**** Summer*** Fall*** Winter*****
DeLorme p. 113, D5. 46°33', 87°24'

The waterfront of Marquette has many excellent spots from which to scan the protected harbors and bays for waterbirds. In late fall and winter, Brant (casual in state), Tundra Swan, Redhead, both scap species, White-winged and Black Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon, and Horned and Red-necked Grebes can be seen. In early spring, Harlequin Duck is infrequent but possible. Gulls that may be present in spring through fall include Bonaparte's, Ring-billed, Herring, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed. In addition, Thayer's Gull has been observed on occasion, and Michigan's only confirmed record of Ivory Gull is from here. Small numbers of American White Pelicans pass through the area, usually during spring migration. Shorebirds that can show up in both spring and fall migrations include American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Spotted Sandpiper, and Sanderling.

In winter, the area can have Snowy Owl, Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak, both Red and White-winged Crossbills and Evening Grosbeak. Great Egret and Yellow-headed Blackbird, unusual anywhere in the UP, have been recorded. Northern Cardinals, previously confined to the Lower Peninsula, are now being regularly seen at feeders in Marquette. Among the mega-rarities have been a Varied Thrush (rare) and a Sage Thrasher (accidental) in spring 2002.

As you enter the city from the south on US-41/M-28, heading downhill, turn right at a gas station on Hampton Street, which leads to the power plant. At the power plant, turn right onto South Lake Street for about 100 yards to **South Beach Park** on your left. This can be a productive spot from which to scan the waters of Lake Superior and the mouth of the Carp River for shorebirds and gulls. The mouth of the Carp River, where a Brant remained for several weeks in autumn of 2002, is just south of and visible from the park.

Return to US-41 and go north to the intersection of Front Street and Lakeshore Boulevard and park at the Marquette Area Chamber of Commerce building to scan the beach behind the chamber and next to the adjacent Ore Dock. This stretch of beach can be good for waterfowl and gulls in late fall and in winter if open water exists. At the foot of Ridge Street, a few blocks



north on M-28, the **Ellwood Mattson Lower Harbor Park** provides good views of the harbor. Another view of the harbor is possible from the rear of the Coast Guard Station and the **Marquette Lighthouse** a few blocks farther to the north on Lakeshore Boulevard. McCarty's Cove, just north of this point, is another productive waterfront site.

Continue north for about 1.5 miles on Lakeshore Boulevard to just beyond the Dead River bridge, where a small parking area overlooks the mouth of the river and the North Ore Dock. Migrating shorebirds, including American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Sanderling are usually seen here, as are Caspian Terns. American White Pelicans have been recorded almost annually as they fly over the harbor. There is a warm-water, power-plant effluent on the west side of Lakeshore Boulevard just north of the Dead River mouth, where over-wintering waterbird oddities can sometimes be found. A dam upstream of this area ruptured in the spring of 2003, causing a major flood and damaging the bridge. The impact on the birds at the river mouth and at the beach in this area remains unclear.

About a quarter-mile north of the Dead River, you will see the Municipal Marina on the right and the **Bog Walk Trail** on the left (across Lakeshore Boulevard from the marina and just before the entrance to Presque Isle Park). Although only one-quarter mile in length, the trail passes through wetland and brushy areas that can be good for migrating warblers, sparrows, and other passerines. In late fall and winter, Merlin, Northern Shrike, American Tree Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting, and Pine Grosbeak may be seen. In spring and early summer, look for Peregrine Falcon, Whimbrel, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Hermit Thrush, Orange-crowned, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Bay-breasted, and Blackpoll Warblers, American Tree, White-throated, Harris's, and White-crowned Sparrows, and Rusty Blackbird.

The very scenic **Presque Isle Park** (906-228-0460; www.mqtcty.org/departments/parksrec/presque.htm) at the north end of Marquette is not really an island but a peninsula. A short nature trail, a two-mile hiking/biking trail, and the one-way road all encircle the peninsula, where you can scan Lake Superior for migrating waterbirds. There are also opportunities to see a variety of landbirds, especially during migration; Gray-cheeked, Swainson's, and Hermit Thrushes, Tennessee and Palm Warblers, American Redstart, and Savannah, Fox, and Lincoln's Sparrows are all possible. Merlins have nested above the Presque Isle Park band shell.

There are several other spots within the city of Marquette worth checking if you have some extra time. From the intersection of Front and Washington Streets, just north of the Chamber of Commerce, go west on Washington to 7th Street. Go right onto 7th and go uphill, crossing Bluff Street, to the entrance to **Park Cemetery** at the top of the hill. Merlins and Great Horned

Owls nest here, and a variety of passerines pass through in migration. In winter, Snowy Owl has been seen in or near the cemetery. Another stop is the **Marquette Golf Course** in southwest Marquette, where Snow Geese often stop in October and November. From Park Cemetery, you can go south on 7th Street, crossing US-41/M-28, where 7th becomes Grove Street. The golf course is on the left about 0.5 mile after US-41.

To the southeast of Marquette, in the village of **Harvey** (DeLorme p. 101, A6) on US-41/M-28, the area along the Chocolay River and its mouth attract a number of breeding species, including Red-breasted Merganser, Green Heron, Northern Harrier, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Northern Mockingbird (rare), Northern Waterthrush, Vesper Sparrow, and Rose-breasted and Evening Grosbeaks.

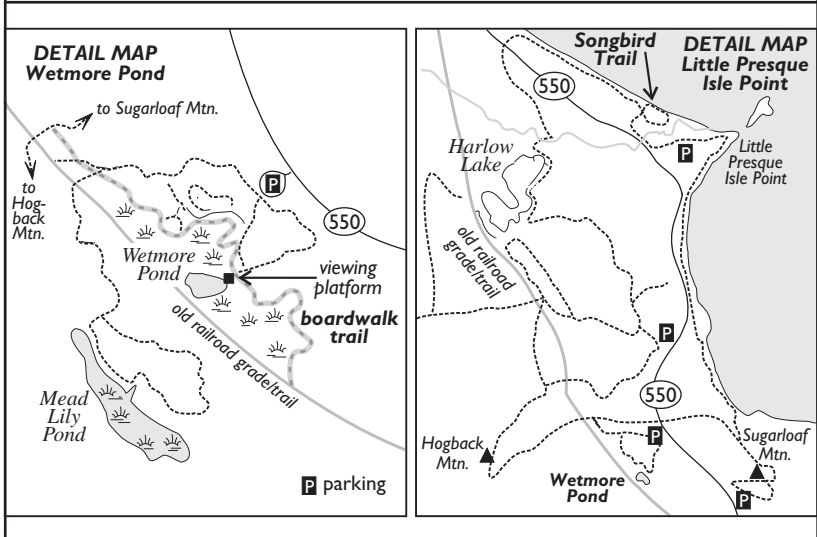
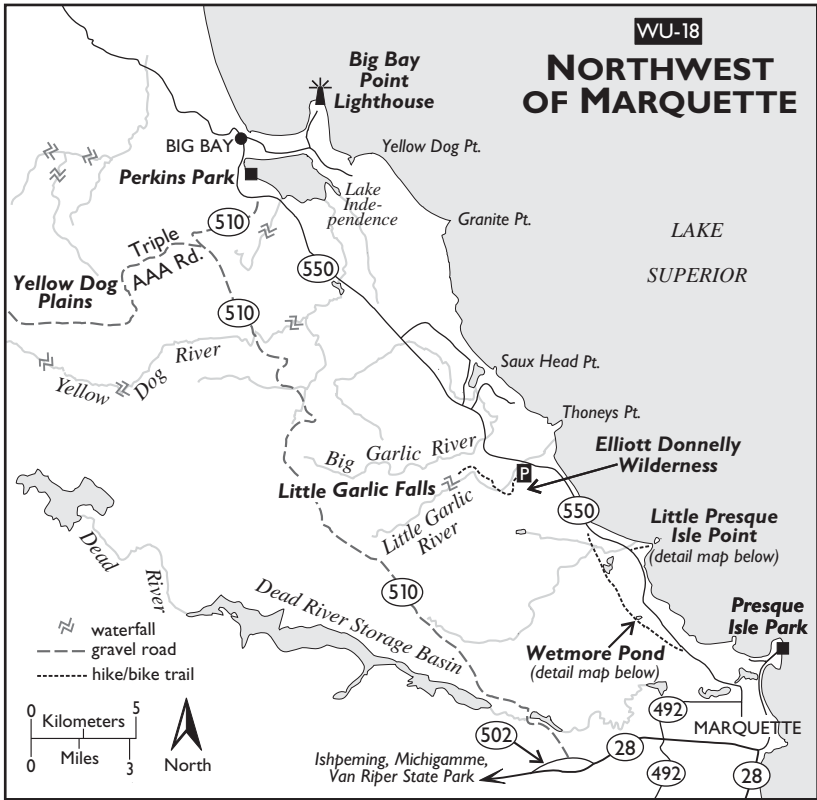
WU-18 Northwest of Marquette

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter***
DeLorme p. 113, D5

The area to the northwest of the city of Marquette has some of the most rugged and isolated terrain in the state, and is the home of such boreal species as Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Moose sightings are common. From Marquette, head north on Sugarloaf Road/CO 550 toward the town of Big Bay (see map on next page). Along the way, there are several trail systems, with trailhead parking on CO 550, that pass through wetlands and mixed forests of maple, birch, and Hemlock. Stop first at the parking area for the **Wetmore Pond Trail**, approximately 5.5 miles north of the center of Marquette. This system of short trail loops features a boardwalk and a viewing platform among ponds and bluffs. From this system, you can also access trails to Sugarloaf Mountain, Hogback Mountain, and Harlow Lake. From any of these trails, you can hear and observe numbers of breeding vireos, thrushes, and warblers. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Sedge Wren, Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers, Swamp Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Pine Siskin all breed in the area.

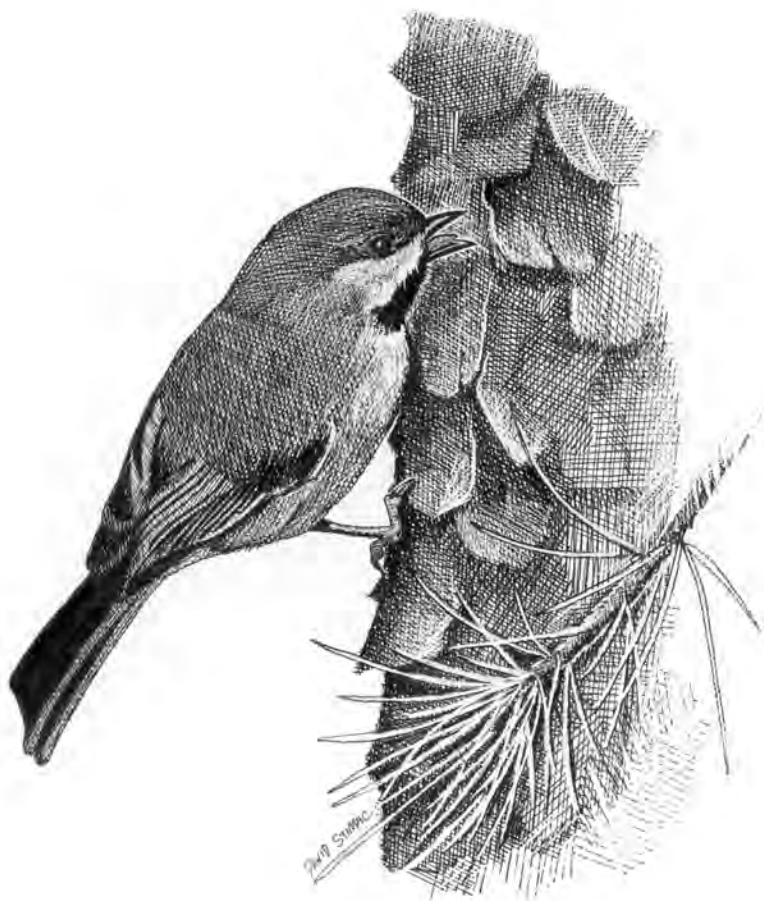
Continue north on CO 550 for about 2.0 miles to a turn to the right for **Little Presque Isle Point**. Trails lead from the parking lot out to the point, where a stand of pines usually hosts nesting warblers, including Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, and Pine, among others. The extensive beach is a resting place for migrating shorebirds, including American Golden-Plover. The Songbird Trail, which can be good during spring migration, begins at the parking area just off CR 550. From here, you can also connect with the previously described system of trails that leads to Harlow Lake, Wetmore Ponds, and Sugarloaf Mountain to the south.

Continue north on CO 550 for 5.9 miles from Little Presque Isle Point to the **Elliot Donnelley Wilderness Tract** on the west side of the road.



Trails from the parking area lead to the Little Garlic Falls (a 4-mile round-trip hike). The expected resident and migratory birds here are similar to those seen at the two previous sites, Little Presque Isle Point and Wetmore Pond. From here, continue north on CO 550 for 16.0 miles to the town of **Big Bay** (DeLorme p. 112, B3), an old lumbering town that is probably best known now as the setting for the 1959 Academy Award winning film "Anatomy of a Murder". The film, starring James Stewart and Lee Remick, was based on the novel written by Marquette lawyer and well-known fisherman, John Voelker. The Thunder Bay Inn in Big Bay was once the vacation retreat of Henry Ford and his executives in the 1940s. From Big Bay, take Schenk Road (Dam Road on some signs) east for 4.2 miles to a parking area serving the Big Bay Point Lighthouse, now a lovely restored bed-and-breakfast on the cliffs overlooking Lake Superior. Park at the gate of the entrance road to the B&B and bird the grounds there. Snowy and Boreal (casual) Owls are a possibility in this area in winter flight years, and passerines migrate though in spring and fall. As you return to Big Bay, check the community cemetery on the northwest side of town, where sightings of Sandhill Crane, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Mockingbird (rare), Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole have been reported. Perkins Park, just southeast of Big Bay on Lake Independence, has a nice campground and views of the lake, where waterfowl are found during spring and fall.

From Big Bay, go south on CO 550 for 2.0 miles to the intersection with CO 510 and turn right (south). Go 2.7 miles south and then west on CO 510 to a sharp turn to the southeast, where you should follow CO 510 southeast for 0.4 miles to an unmarked road to the west. This is Logging Road Triple AAA (no, that's not a misprint). Turn right onto this winding road for about 6.3 miles, at which point the road goes straight west through the area known as **Yellow Dog Plains** (DeLorme p. 112, C2, 46°44' N, 87°50' W). The list of nesting boreal species is short but outstanding—Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee—and spring and fall songbird migrations can be spectacular. Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting are usually present in the fall. Among the common summer species are American Kestrel, Great Horned, Barred, and Northern Saw-whet Owls, Common Nighthawk, and Whip-poor-will. Watch for Moose in the early morning or late evening hours, particularly near Beaver ponds, lakes, and streams. The roads west from CO 510 are sand trails that may not be cleared in the winter, and great care should be taken in wet weather, especially in early spring. This is essentially an uninhabited area with no commercial activity, so be sure to have sufficient gasoline, food, and water. A good map and a compass or GPS are a must. While some maps show that Triple AAA Road continues west into Baraga County and connects with other logging roads leading to Michigamme on M-28, or north to the L'Anse area, these are very primitive, unmarked roads and should not be attempted with a two-wheel drive, low-clearance vehicle, or without the advice of a local guide familiar with the area.



Boreal Chickadee
David Stimac

Return to CO 510. At this point you can return to CO 550 and head back to Marquette. An alternative route is to go southeast on CO 510 for 23.1 miles to the intersection with CO 502 and left (east) onto US-41/M-28 and Marquette. There are several areas of good habitat along CO 510 where the road crosses several streams, and Moose sightings are always a possibility. During summer, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Philadelphia Vireo, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, and Lincoln's Sparrow can be spotted along the road. Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee may be present year round.

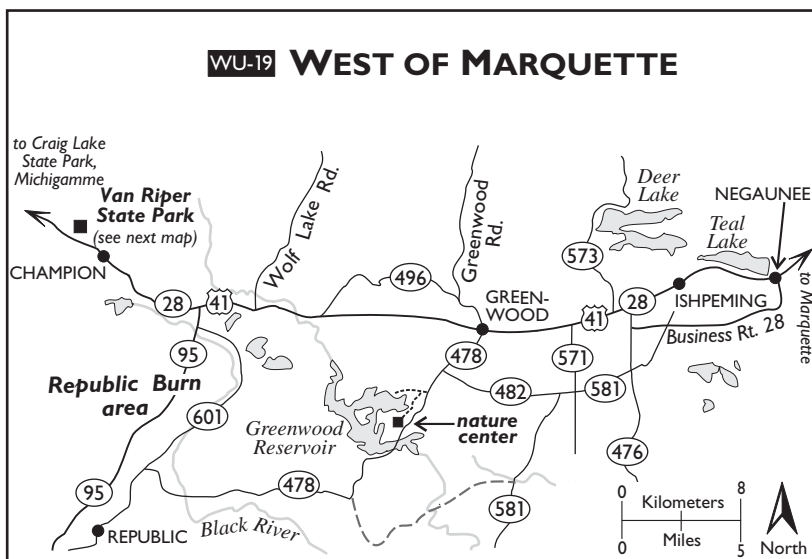
(Note: proposed sulfide mining explorations in the Yellow Dog Plains may present a threat to the area ecosystem. The Eagle Alliance, a coalition of citizens, environmental groups, hunting and fishing interests, and others has a website with information on the mining proposals at www.ydeaglescry.com.)

WU-19 West of Marquette

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**

DeLorme p. 113, D5

A worthwhile trip through additional boreal habitat is the road to **Greenwood Reservoir**. From Marquette go west on US-41/M-28 for 13 miles to Ishpeming; continue from here for another 9 miles on US-41/M-28 to CO 478. Turn left (south) onto CO 478 for just over 5 miles to the boat access at Greenwood Reservoir, where there is a nature center. In early spring and fall, scan the reservoir from here for migrating waterfowl, particularly diving ducks. For the best boreal habitat, continue south and then west on CR 478 to the intersection with CO 601 (north of Republic). Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Purple Finch, and White-winged Crossbill could be seen along CO 478. From this intersection, go north on CO 601 through an area known locally as the “Republic Burn”. Evidence of the past forest fire consists of many dead trees and stumps, promising habitat for Black-backed Woodpecker. This elusive bird is wide-ranging and may move from its breeding ground as food sources are depleted. While there is no guarantee that you will find one here, a thorough search of the dead snags may be rewarded. Once found, this species can be relatively tame. This burned area also extends to the west of M-95, which parallels CO 601 to



the west. However, M-95 is a busy two-lane road, and it is best to bird the side roads. Return to US-41/M-28 by continuing north on M-95.

WU-20 The Michigamme Area

*Spring*** Summer**** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 111, D8.

Directions: From the intersection of M-95 and US-41/M-28 (about 12 miles west of Ishpeming), go west for 2.8 miles to the village of Champion. It is another 1.0 mile to the entrance to Van Riper State Park on the left, the first stop on the Michigamme route.

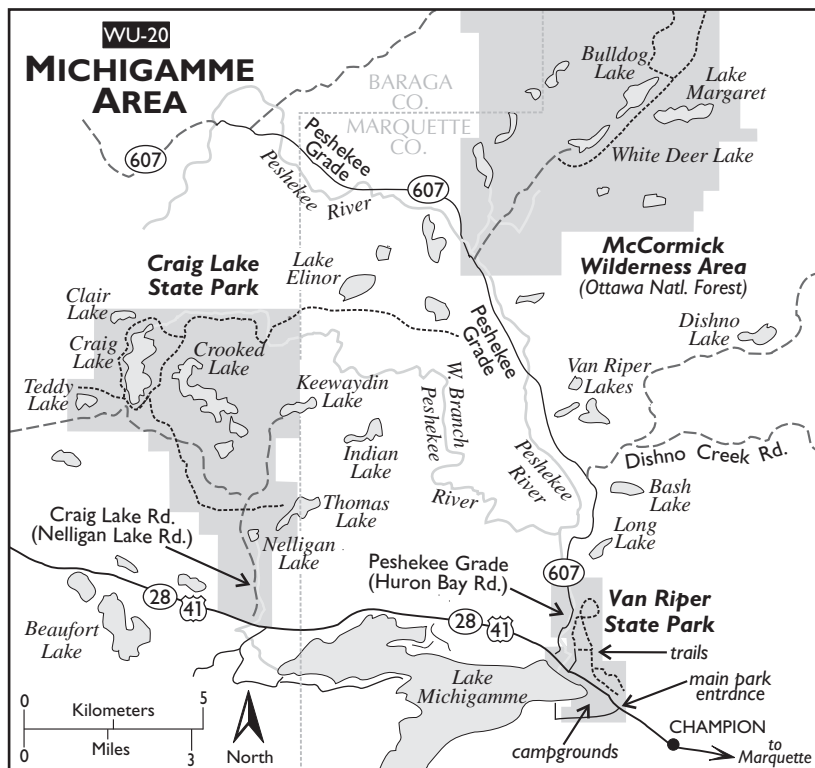
Van Riper State Park (909-339-4416; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx; DeLorme p. 112, D1, 46°31' N, 87°59' W) has a beautiful wooded setting on the sandy beaches of Lake Michigamme, where Common Loons may be seen. A system of foot trails on park property is located across US-41/ M-28, just west of the main park entrance. Possibilities from late spring through early fall could include Sharp-shinned Hawk, Blue-headed Vireo, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Black-and-white and Mourning Warblers, Lincoln's and White-throated Sparrows, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak. The park has a large, modern campground as well as an adjoining rustic campground.

One of Michigan's better-known areas of prime boreal habitat is found along the **Peshekee Grade** (DeLorme p. 111, D8). From the entrance to Van Riper State Park, go 1.4 miles west on US-41/M-28 and turn right (north) onto Peshekee Grade, which is signposted here as CO 607 (the road is also noted as Huron Bay Road on some maps). The road, which follows the Peshekee River, is paved but rough for a distance of about 10 miles. At 3.5 miles from US-41, you will reach a turn to the right (east) for Dishno Creek Road. Continue past here on Peshekee Grade/CO 607 for another 5.6 miles to a turn to the right for the McCormick Wilderness Area. A hiking trail heads from the parking area here to the northeast for 3.0 miles. While boreal species can be found along any of the roads and trails in this area, the best habitat is farther along CO 607/Peshekee Grade, in a stretch of road between 2 and 4 miles beyond the turn into the McCormick tract. Boreal Chickadees are often found feeding in tall spruce trees. Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and both crossbills are always a possibility. Winter Wren and Golden-crowned Kinglets are numerous in spring. Summer residents include Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Nashville, Northern Parula, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Palm, and Black-and-white Warblers, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, and Evening Grosbeak. Rough-legged Hawk and Common Redpoll are present in autumn. With some luck, you may spot a Northern Saw-whet Owl (present year round).

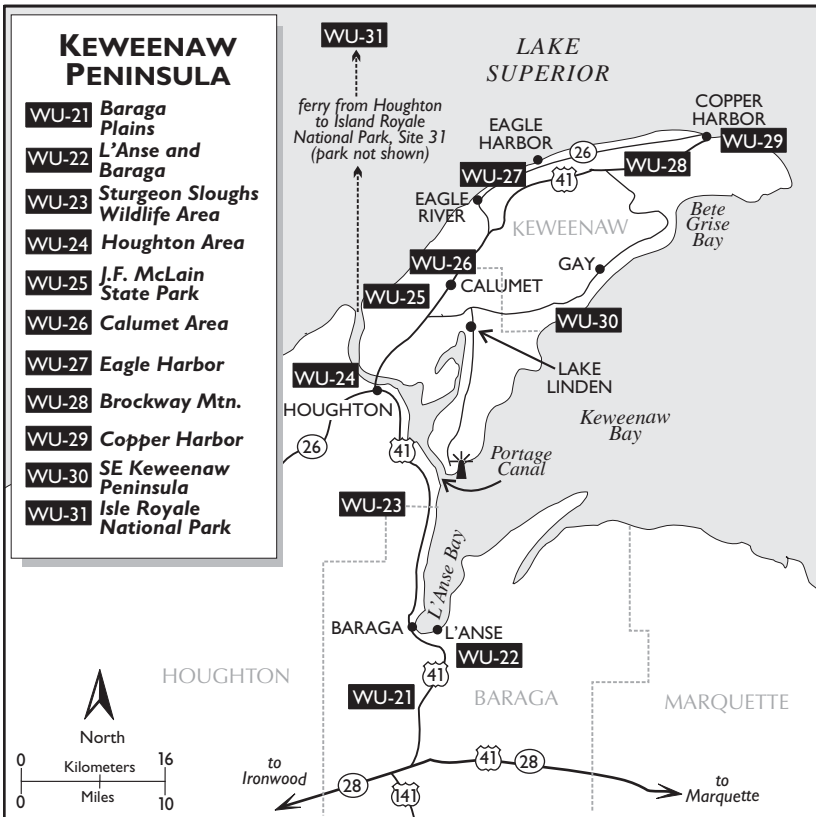
It is in this area that Moose were reintroduced into Michigan in 1985 and again in 1987, when a total of 59 animals were transplanted by helicopter from Canada. The herd has expanded to roughly 175 animals at present, and you may see one of these magnificent beasts while birding in the area. Use caution when Moose are present, do not approach too closely, and never get between a mother and her calf.

At a fork in the road (in Baraga County), you should backtrack to US 41/M-28, since the road deteriorates rapidly past this point.

Craig Lake State Park (906-339-4416; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx; DeLorme p. 111, D7, 46°36' N, 88°12' W) is a remote, scenic park that was once the property of the Miller Brewing Company family, and three of the lakes within the park are named for the children of Fred Miller: Craig, Teddy, and Clair. This park consists of 6,900 acres of mixed hardwoods and wetlands in a wilderness setting that includes six lakes and numerous small ponds. Camping is for backpackers and canoeists only. To reach the park, go west on US-41/M-28 for 6.3 miles from the Peshekee Grade/CO 607 intersection (previous site), or about 8.0 miles from the Van Riper State park entrance, to Craig Lake Road (also known as either Nelligan



Lake Road or Keewaydin Lake Road). The parking area for the park trails is on Craig Lake Road, 6.7 miles north from US-41/M-28. The turn to Keewaydin Lake is 2.9 miles from M-28. The road in, recently improved but still quite rough and rocky, especially north of the Keewaydin turnoff, necessitates driving at very low speeds. It is not plowed during winter and may be impassable during wet seasons. Birding along the road into the park and near Craig Lake can be good in this little-birded remote area. Birds present during the summer include Cooper's Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-eyed Vireo, Common Raven, White-breasted Nuthatch, Nashville and Magnolia Warblers, and Song Sparrow. Common Loons nest on the lakes. Although this area does not have as much boreal habitat as found along the Pesheke Grade, there are records of Northern Saw-whet Owl, Boreal Chickadee, White-winged Crossbill, and Evening Grosbeak.



THE KEWEENAW PENINSULA

By Jerry Ziarno

The Keweenaw Peninsula is often referred to simply as the “The Keweenaw” or “The Copper Country”, the latter name reflecting the large deposits of native copper that existed here and spawned a large mining industry that flourished from the mid-1800s until after World War I. America’s first mining boom began in the early 1840s when the richest copper deposits ever found were reported in the Keweenaw Peninsula. (Deposits of free copper metal are very rare.) During the Civil War, the area mines provided 70% of the entire United States copper production.

The peninsula’s shape and geographic position—jutting northeast into Lake Superior—concentrate passerine migrants in the spring and, to a lesser extent, in the fall. Migrant waterfowl can be seen offshore in spring and fall, and the rocky ridges which run the length of the peninsula provide updrafts used by good numbers of migrating hawks, particularly in spring. A few areas of boreal forest provide habitat for sought-after northern species, particularly breeding warblers. The peninsula has attracted its fair share of rarities and, along with Whitefish Point, provides the best opportunity in the state to see fall migrant Harris’s Sparrow. This section includes sites in Baraga, Houghton, and Keweenaw Counties.

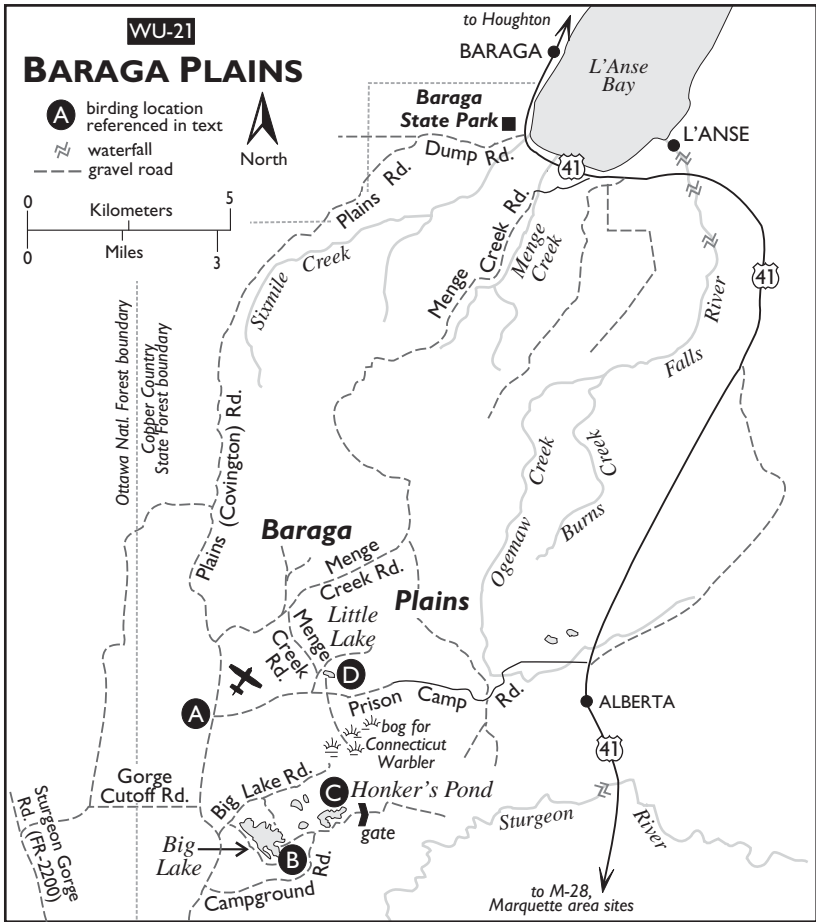
WU-21 Baraga Plains

*Spring**** Summer*** Fall**** Winter***
DeLorme p. 110-111. 46°37' N, 88° W

The **Baraga Plains** is a productive and unique area of diverse habitats that include extensive boreal coniferous forests, Jack Pine forests, deciduous forests, agricultural plantings, open grasslands, and many lakes and streams. Consequently, this is one of the better-known spots in the state for northern boreal species such as Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Connecticut Warbler, and Red Crossbill.

The plains are part of a complicated and sometimes confusing piece of geography, with many winding dirt roads, some unmarked, others identified by signs or on maps with two or more different names. A detailed map and compass can be very helpful. The map included here can be used as a guide, but there are many small roads and trails that do not appear on this map. While Prison Camp Road and the Plains Road south from Prison Camp Road are plowed in winter, the other lesser roads and trails may not be passable in winter or early spring.

One of the best and most direct of the roads into the Baraga Plains (see map on next page) is the Prison Camp Road (also called Alberta-Big Lake Road on some maps, Baraga Plains Road on others), which goes west from US-41 about 0.5 mile north of the Michigan Tech University Forestry Center at Al-



berta (DeLorme p. 111, C5). This is about 9.0 miles south of the town of L'Anse. To add to the confusion, at US-41 this road is incorrectly signposted as "Baraga Plains Road". Follow this road past the old prison camp (2.0 miles) to the intersection with Menge Creek Road, about 5.0 miles from US-41 and the heart of the best birding area.

You can also travel into the Baraga Plains from the north on either of two other roads. From L'Anse (DeLorme p. 111, B5), proceed about 1.5 miles west on US-41 and go south onto Menge Creek Road, paved for the first mile and gravel thereafter. This road is not maintained during winter and requires a high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicle in spring. Continue for 11.9 miles to the intersection with Prison Camp Road.

The other route leaves from US-41 at Baraga State Park, where you take Dump Road (signposted as Myer Road) for 2.5 miles west to Plains Road (also

known as Covington Road). Plains Road parallels Menge Creek Road and eventually intersects with Prison Camp Road (0.9 mile west of Menge Creek Road). Red Crossbills are sometimes found on or near the road at this intersection (**A** on map), feeding or searching for grit.

Sandhill Cranes and Upland Sandpipers can be seen anywhere in the Baraga Plains where there are open, dense, grassy areas of clearcuts. Palm (rare) and Kirtland's (casual) Warblers and Vesper Sparrow occur in the Jack Pine plantations where the trees are from 5 to 15 feet in height. (If you spot a Kirtland's Warbler, be sure to report it to local birders, the Michigan DNR headquarters in Baraga, and the statewide hotline. *Do not harass the bird with tape recordings or by pursuing it; it is illegal to do so.*)

To reach some boreal habitat, go south from the intersection of Plains (Covington) and Prison Camp Roads for 1.4 miles to the Gorge Cutoff Road to the right (west). Continue past the Gorge Cutoff on the Plains Road for another 1.3 miles, past the turn for Big Lake Road, to Campground Road to the east. Take Campground Road for about 2.2 miles to the Copper Country State Forest campground on Big Lake (**B** on map). There is a pond on the north side of Campground Road just before the campground that may harbor Ring-necked Duck (spring), Hooded Merganser, and Sandhill Crane. At the campground on Big Lake, you may see Pine Warbler and Lincoln's and Swamp Sparrows in spring and summer. In spring, courting Spruce Grouse and American Bitterns have been heard here.

To the right (east) off Campground Road, just before the campground, is a small two-track road which is passable for most cars. Take this road past Honker's Pond (**C** on map) to a gate. Park and walk 0.5 mile to another gate, beyond which is a clearcut. Along this section of road you may find Sandhill Crane, Wilson's Snipe, Brown Creeper, Pine Warbler and, with some luck, Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. Although not common, Northern Hawk Owl (less than annual) and American Three-toed Woodpecker (casual) have been recorded here in winter.

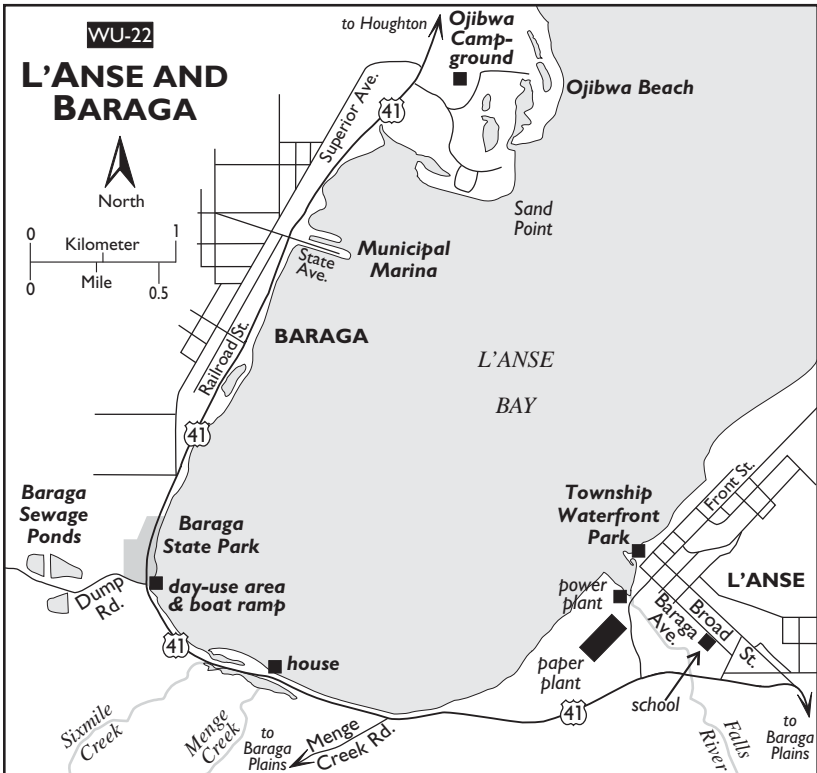
Return to the intersection of Prison Camp and Menge Creek Roads and go east on Prison Camp Road for 0.5 mile to a two-track road that goes northeast to Little Lake. In the area around Little Lake (**D** on map), you can find Wild Turkey, American Kestrel, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco, and Evening Grosbeak from May through September. The entire Little Lake area is closed from September 15 to October 31.

The two-track trail that goes south from Little Lake and across Prison Camp Road leads to a large grassland where nesting Boreal Chickadee and Connecticut Warbler occur in an extensive forested bog at the southeast corner of the grassland. Large numbers of Cliff Swallows can be seen in late summer in the grassy fields and the stands of Jack Pines near the Prison Camp on Prison Camp Road. Upland Sandpipers also nest in the open areas along this road and on the edges of recent Jack Pine clearcuts.

WU-22 L'Anse and Baraga

Spring*** Summer** Fall**** Winter*
 DeLorme p. 111, B5. 46°45'30"N, 88°28'30"W

To the east of the Keweenaw Peninsula is Keweenaw Bay, an arm of Lake Superior. At its south end, Keweenaw Bay becomes quite narrow and forms a bay formally named L'Anse Bay, although most locals refer to this part of Lake Superior as the head of Keweenaw Bay. The shoreline and waters of the bay from the town of L'Anse west to the town of Baraga have produced a number of interesting sightings almost every year during spring and fall migrations. Among the many unusual records are Harlequin Duck (rare), Surf, White-winged, and Black Scoters, Long-tailed and Ruddy Ducks, Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe, Willet (rare), Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits (both rare), Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Wilson's Phalarope. State and UP rarities that have occurred here include Western and Eared Grebes, Snowy Egret, American Avocet, Red Phalarope, Franklin's and Sabine's Gulls, and Forster's Tern. Snow Bunting may be seen as early as the beginning of October along the shoreline.



Large numbers of Horned Grebes appear in late April, and Snow Goose and Tundra Swan are occasional visitors. Other expected species, particularly during spring and fall, include American Black Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Loon, and Bonaparte's Gull. Trumpeter Swans may also be seen on the bay.

There are several vantage points in **L'Anse** which afford good views of the bay. As you approach L'Anse on US-41 from the south, follow the signs at a right fork to the business section. Take Baraga Avenue to its end at the bay, where the Township Waterfront Park has a walkway with good views of the bay. A Rock Wren (accidental) stayed on the breakwater here for a few days in October 2002. The sand spit located near the shoreline between the park and the paper plant to the southwest provides a resting place for shorebirds in April through May and again in August through September, and has attracted rarities such as Willet, jaegers, and Glaucous Gull. An interesting phenomenon in late May and early June and again in late July and early August is the sight of hundreds of Chimney Swifts at the L'Anse Catholic School and at the power-plant smokestack at the waterfront.

Continue on US-41 along the south end of the bay, where there are several places to pull off to scope the bay. At the very southernmost extent of the bay, a solitary house sits between the highway and the bay. Depending upon seasonal water levels and wind direction, sandbars can be present to the west of this house, where shorebirds may congregate in late summer. As you approach Baraga State Park, a day-use area/boat ramp on the right at the foot of Dump Road provides another good vantage point to view birds on the bay.

Return across US-41 to Dump Road (also known as the Plains Cut-off Road) west for 0.8 miles to the **Baraga Sewage Ponds**. These ponds provide a resting spot for large numbers of ducks, shorebirds, and gulls during migration. Among the birds that may be seen in April and May and again in October and November are Snow Goose, Canvasback, Redhead, both scaup species, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and rarely, Ruddy Duck. Shorebirds can include both yellowlegs, Solitary and Least Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Wilson's Phalarope (less than annual). Unexpected sightings have included Eared Grebe, Cattle Egret, and Little Gull. Five species of swallows can be seen flying over the ponds during mid-May.

The sewage ponds are located on both sides of the road and are surrounded by high wire fences, but by proceeding to the upper right pond, you can pull off the road and walk up a small hill from which you can view the upper ponds. Driving farther southwest on this road will lead to the Plains Road into the Baraga Plains described in the previous section.

Return to US-41 and continue north past Baraga State Park to the village of Baraga. The municipal marina provides another vantage point for viewing the west side of L'Anse Bay. This can be an excellent stop in early spring and late fall for loons, grebes, and all three scoters. Also check out Ojibwa Beach, a stamp-sand beach just north of Baraga, which is just past the Michigan Depart-

ment of Natural Resources office on the east side of US-41. (Stamp sand is a by-product from the crushing, or stamping, of copper ore.) Drive through the Ojibwa Campground to the beach, which can be good for shorebirds, gulls, and terns during spring and fall migrations. This is tribal land, but visitors are welcome. For the budget-conscious, the gas station located here and owned by the tribe has much cheaper gas prices than found farther north on the peninsula. Drive north from Baraga on US-41 for about 11.0 miles to Arnheim Road and the Sturgeon River Sloughs Wildlife Area.

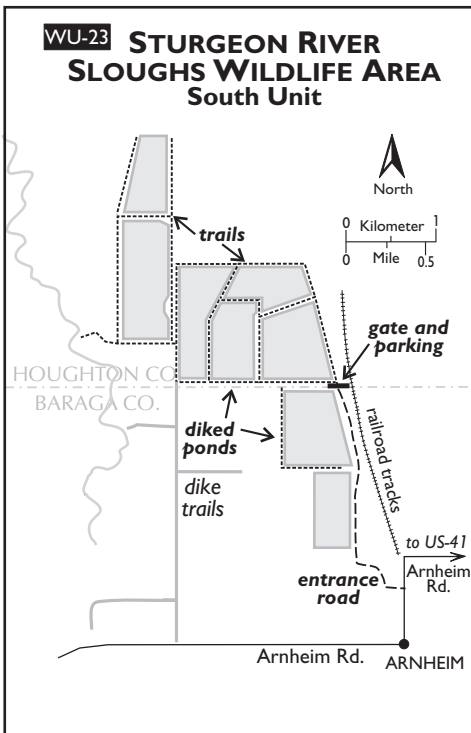
WU-23 Sturgeon River Sloughs Wildlife Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
 DeLorme pp. 110-111, A4.
 Contact Information: 906-353-6651

Directions: Drive north from Baraga on US-41 for about 11.0 miles to Arnheim Road and the Sturgeon Sloughs Wildlife Area .

There are two units to this state-managed area. The **South Unit** (DeLorme p. 110–111, A4. 46°55' N, 88°29' W), commonly referred to as the **Arnheim Sloughs**, is reached by traveling west from US-41 on Arnheim Road for 1.1 miles to the entrance, just past the point where the road turns south.

From the entrance, you can drive north into the South Unit for 1.3 miles to a gate, where you can park to walk the dikes around the ponds to the west and north. (Ticks are abundant, so preventative care should be taken.) This is one of the best places in Michigan to see or hear American Bitterns. The ponds along the road usually have dabbling ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue and Green Herons, and Sora. Also breeding in the area are Northern Harrier, Broad-winged Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, Alder Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, and Black-and-white Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Savannah, Le Conte's (uncom-



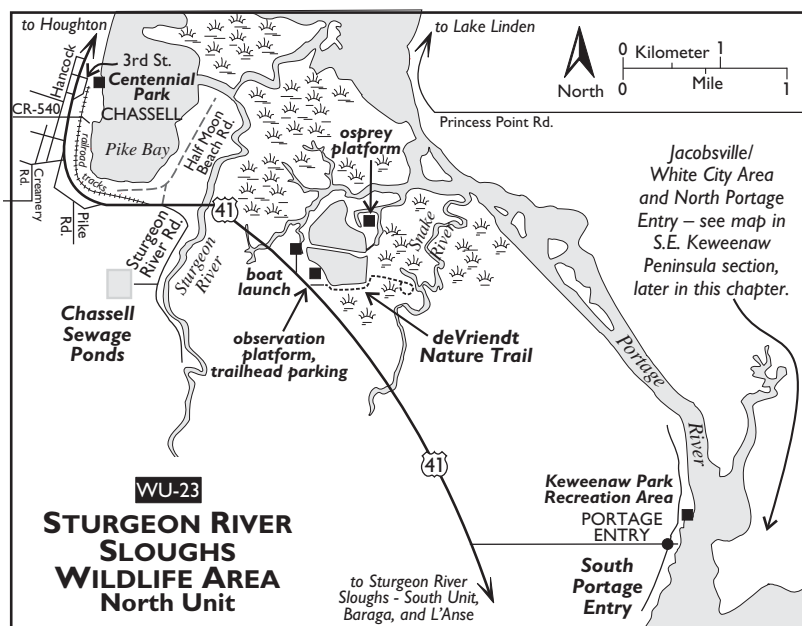
mon), Swamp, and White-throated Sparrows, and Brewer's Blackbird. In spring, Short-eared Owls are sometimes seen hunting in the area. Rarities such as Great Egret, Glossy Ibis (casual), and Greater White-fronted Goose have been seen here. In fall, look for Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Horned Lark, White-crowned and Harris's (annual in fall in small numbers) Sparrows, and Rusty Blackbird.

Return to Arnheim Road and follow it south and then west for 1.6 miles to a farm on the north side of the road, where the fields can hold numbers of feeding geese in the fall, including Snow Geese as well as Sandhill Cranes and Upland Sandpipers.

Return to US-41 and continue north for 4.5 miles to Portage Entry Road and go right (east) to **South Portage Entry** (see map on next page; DeLorme p. 111, A5. 46°59' N, 88° 26' W). At the T-intersection, go right and drive to the end of the road, where you can scope the Portage River where it enters Keweenaw Bay. Return to the intersection and go north to the Keweenaw Park Recreation Area, where a concrete pier also affords views of the Portage River. In addition to the typical species (both scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Common Loon), unusual birds sighted in this area, usually in early spring and late fall, have included Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, all three scoters, Red-necked Grebe, and American White Pelican. The river can also be viewed from the North Portage Entry in the Jacobsville/White City area just across the Portage River, but it is over 40 miles by road from this side. The North Portage Entry is covered later in this chapter in the Southeastern Keweenaw Peninsula section.

The **North Unit of the Sturgeon Sloughs Wildlife Area** (DeLorme, p. 119, D5. 47°00' N, 88°29' W) is located 6.5 miles north of Arnheim Road on US-41 (see map on next page). The entrance road and parking area for the **deVriendt Nature Trail** is located on the east of US-41. The trail starts from the parking area at an observation tower and winds east through grassland, around several ponds, over a boardwalk through a marshy area, and through a nice wooded area to the Snake River. Birds that nest here include Ring-necked Duck, Great Blue Heron, Osprey, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Alder Flycatcher, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos, Hermit Thrush, Sedge Wren, Golden-winged and Yellow Warblers, Common Yellowthroat, Song and Lincoln's Sparrows and, in some years, Le Conte's Sparrow. During spring and fall migrations, many waterfowl visit the area, and warblers can be found in the wooded area.

From Portage Entry road, go north on US-41 for 3.0 miles to Sturgeon River Road, about 1.6 miles south and east of Chassell. Go left onto Sturgeon River Road, which follows the Sturgeon River south. The farm fields along the river become flooded in early spring and can attract numerous migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. At 0.7 mile from US-41, take an unnamed road west a few hundred yards to the Chassell Sewage Ponds. The gate is usually locked, but viewing from outside the fence is rewarding, especially during migration.



In addition to the regular waterfowl normally found during in spring and fall, unusual species have included Greater White-fronted Goose and Eurasian Wigeon (once in May). In June 2004, a pair of Philadelphia Vireos was found near the entrance to the ponds. Sturgeon River Road crosses the Sturgeon River and eventually comes to a dead-end at a private farm at 4.4 miles from US-41. When the fields are flood, this southernmost section of the road is especially productive in early spring for waterfowl and shorebirds.

Return to US-41 and go north for about 1.5 miles to the village of **Chassell** (DeLorme p. 118, D4. 47°01' N, 88°31' W). Centennial Park, located at the foot of 3rd Street behind the Community Center, has a fishing pier and boardwalk which afford a good view of Pike Bay. In migration, this shallow bay is a resting place for numerous dabbling and diving ducks, American White Pelican (uncommon but nearly annual), and Tundra Swan.

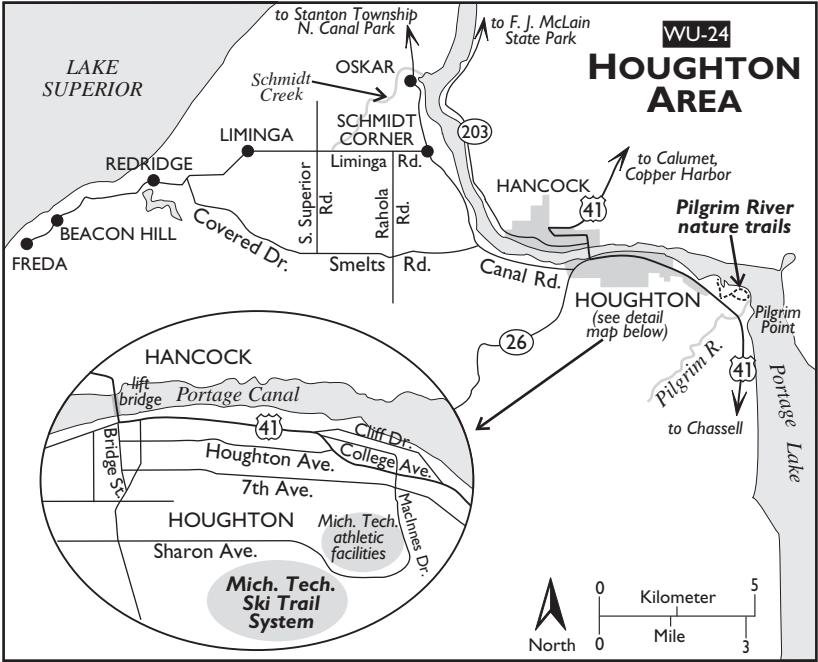
WU-24 The Houghton Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*
DeLorme p. 118, C4. 47°07', 88°34'

Houghton is the home of Michigan Tech University and the base for air or boat trips to Isle Royale National Park, which is covered later in this chapter. As you approach Houghton from Chassell on US-41, look for the entrance to the Pilgrim Terrace Trailer Court on the right (this is about 1.0 mile south of Houghton and about 6.0 miles north of Chassell). Park on the shoul-

der of the road, walk to the trailer-park entrance, and immediately turn right onto a bike trail for 30 yards to the beginning of an unnamed, wood-chipped nature trail. Follow this east (left) along a small stream through the trailer park, over a boardwalk, and out into the stamp sands. Migrating warblers and sparrows can be found in the trees, brushy areas, and cattails along the path. At the first bench on the shoreline, head south off the trail and follow the shoreline to the mouth of the Pilgrim River, where sandbars form in years with low water, attracting numerous ducks, shorebirds, and gulls in spring and fall. An adjacent trail, the Naha Nature Trail, begins about 200 yards south of the Pilgrim Terrace Trailer Park and consists of a boardwalk that follows the Pilgrim River for about 0.5 mile through a marshy area. Along this trail during spring and autumn migrations, you can find dabbling ducks, Wilson's Snipe, numbers of warblers, and Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows.

Return to US-41 and continue north into Houghton. As the road passes through the Michigan Tech campus, go past the first traffic light and turn left (south) onto MacInnes Drive. Go up a hill for about three blocks, where MacInnes Drive ends at Sharon Avenue. Turn right onto Sharon Avenue and park on the left at the trailhead for the **Michigan Tech Ski Trail** (opposite the University Athletic Facilities site). The trail system is a good spot to look for a wide variety of migrating warblers in spring and fall.



A worthwhile side trip west of Houghton is **Canal Road** and the nearby area. At the intersection of US-41 and M-26 at the west end of Houghton, take M-26 south. As the road curves to the left and goes uphill, turn to the right onto Canal Road. Go about 4.5 miles to the crossroads at Schmidt Corner, where Liminga Road goes left (west) from Schmidt Corner for 9.2 miles and ends at Freda, an old mill town with a small restaurant. The birding along the road in this area was well-documented for a number of years starting in 1972 by Arthur Weaver, the dean of Copper Country birders, who once resided on Liminga Road. Interesting sightings along the abandoned farm sections along Liminga within 4 miles of Canal Road have included White-winged Dove (in May 2002), Northern Mockingbird, and Harris's Sparrow. More commonly, nesting species here include Merlin, Sandhill Crane, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Sedge Wren, Hermit Thrush, and Brown Thrasher. In late April to early June, any flooded fields may have migrating Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalarope (rare), Marbled Godwit (rare), Short-billed Dowitcher, and Solitary Sandpiper.

Return to Canal Road at Schmidt Corner and go north for 1.4 miles to the village of Oskar, where Schlotz Creek enters the Portage Canal just north of the small settlement. In the shallow bay formed here, you can find the usual dabbling ducks in migration along with Common Merganser, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and American Kestrel. The grasslands and hayfields north of Oskar support Clay-colored Sparrows, Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, and, in some years when fields are flooded, Le Conte's Sparrows. Continue on Canal Road for another 4.0 miles to the Stanton Township North Canal Park that overlooks the Portage Canal where it joins the open waters of Lake Superior. The woods here are a migrant trap for passerines, especially in May and early June. From here, return to Houghton to continue to sites on the northern part of the peninsula.

WU-25 F. J. McLain State Park

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter*

DeLorme, p. 118, C4. 47°14' N, 88°37' W

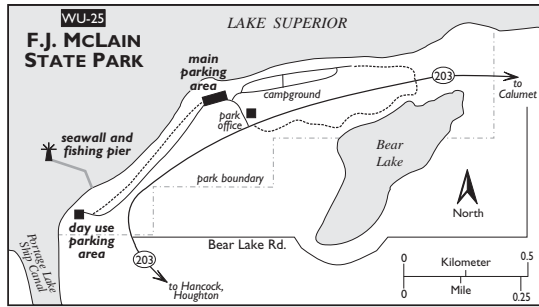
Contact Information: 906-482-0278;

www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx

Directions: From Houghton, take US-41/M-26 north across the world's highest lift bridge over the Portage Canal to Hancock. Stay left and follow US-41 through the city to the west end, where US-41 turns right and begins the ascent of a hill. At this point, follow M-203 west and north along the canal for 9.6 miles to the park entrance.

F. J. McLain State Park has two miles of sandy beach on Lake Superior, along with a campground with 103 modern campsites, six mini-cabins, a day-use picnic area with shelters, and a spectacular view of Lake Superior and its magnificent sunsets. A concrete seawall, which extends out from the beach near the day-use area, provides a vantage point for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Do NOT walk out on the seawall during windy conditions, when

dangerous waves can wash over the seawall! The best birding is in the area from the day-use parking area down to the beach and northeast along the beach to the main parking area, where passerines pass through in migration. Breeding birds include Veery, Hermit Thrush, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Chipping, Savannah, and White-throated Sparrows, and Evening Grosbeak. You may also walk the trail across M-203 from the main entrance to Bear Lake, where Sandhill Cranes nest near the trail. Also nesting at the lake are Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Ring-necked Duck, and Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, Pied-billed Grebe, and Least Bittern. The lake is appropriately named, as Black Bear activity has increased in this area during the past few years. When camping in the park, appropriate precautions should be taken to avoid attracting bears. From McLain State Park, you can drive east on M-203 for 8.0 miles to the city of Calumet to continue the Keweenaw route, or you can return to Hancock to head north from there.



WU-26 Calumet Area

Spring*** Summer** Fall**** Winter*
DeLorme p. 119, C5. 47°15' N 88°27' W

Calumet, 11 miles north of Houghton on US-41, has two sites worth a stop on your way to Copper Harbor at the tip of the peninsula (see next map). The **Swedetown Marsh and Ski Trail** area is just to the south of town. As you approach Calumet and US-41 makes a jog, turn left onto Agent Street. At the fork, go left onto Swedetown Road and proceed for several blocks to Osceola Road. There is a small lake to the northeast of this intersection where migrating dabbling ducks stop, and a cattail marsh to the southwest where American Bittern, Virginia Rail, and Sora nest. The ski trails can be good for migrating passerines in spring and fall.

The other stop is the **Calumet Sewage Treatment Facility**, where about 25 treatment ponds attract numerous waterfowl and shorebirds during spring and fall migrations. From US-41 at the northeast corner of Calumet, go west on M-203 (Pine Street/Veterans Memorial Parkway) for 2.6 miles to the entrance on the left. Check in at the office, and courteously avoid heavy equipment on the roads around the ponds. (The facility is closed on weekends.) The bird activity is dependent upon the variable water levels in the ponds, so examine each pond carefully. Regular sightings here include Merlin, American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater

and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted, Semipalmated, Least, White-rumped, Baird's, Pectoral, and Stilt Sandpipers, both dowitchers, and Wilson's Snipe. Rarities have included Eared Grebe and Wilson's Phalarope. Several duck species, including Northern Shoveler (a rare breeder in Michigan), have bred here.

Return to US-41 in Calumet and go another 4.1 miles to the small village of Ahmeek. At this point, if you are in a hurry, you can stay on US-41 toward Copper Harbor. However, for an interesting alternate route, take a left fork onto **Cliff Drive** just past Ahmeek. During early spring, migrating raptors follow the cliffs along this road, particularly at the far end where Cliff Drive rejoins US-41, 6.7 miles from Ahmeek. Early in the season, these cliffs are a good hawkwatching alternative if Brockway Mountain Drive (site WU-28) is still impassable due to snow. Near the east end of Cliff Drive, the road passes through an extensive bog which offers excellent birding in spring and summer, when you may be able to find Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green and Mourning Warblers. Listen carefully for possible Connecticut Warbler.

WU-27 Eagle Harbor Area

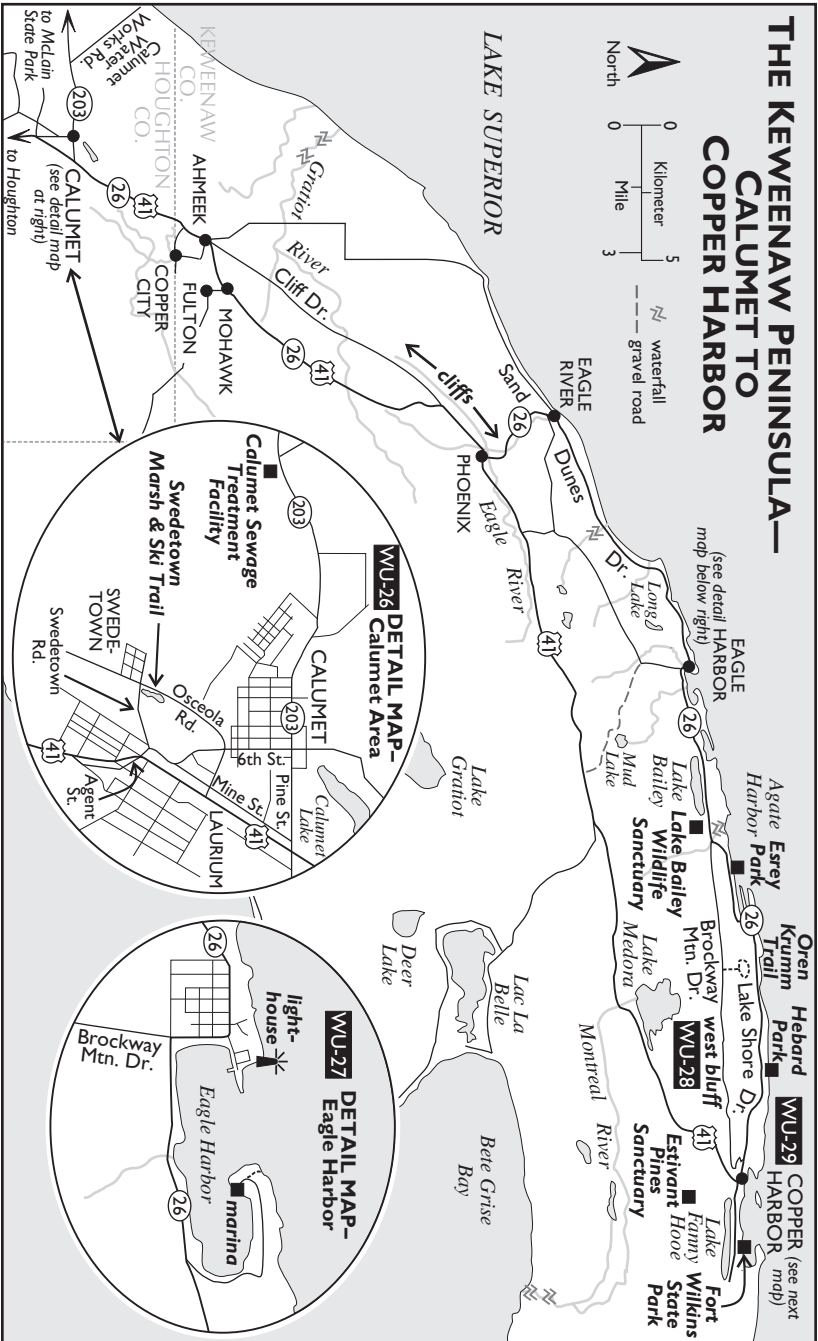
*Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter**
DeLorme p. 119, C5

After you rejoin US-41, continue northeast for 2.0 miles to the old mining town of Phoenix, where M-26 goes left (north) for 1.8 miles to the town of **Eagle River** (DeLorme p. 119, A6). As you cross the bridge over the river into the town, take the sharp left turn and follow this road to the mouth of the Eagle River and a rocky beach. A bed-and-breakfast inn along this road maintains feeders that often attract numerous birds. Varied Thrush (January 2003), Summer Tanager, and Orchard Oriole are some of the more interesting vagrants to have turned up here. Check the beach for shorebirds, gulls, and, during fall migration, many waterfowl flying parallel with the beach. In spring and fall, warblers can often be found in the brushy areas across from the beach and on the east side of town.

Back on M-26, continue in an easterly direction for 7.8 miles to the village of **Eagle Harbor**. There are several pulloffs along this very scenic route where you can view the lake. Eagle Harbor is a beautiful harbor with a nice sand beach, a large lighthouse, and a marina. During migration periods, shorebirds and gulls occasionally rest on the beach, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers breed in the harbor. Just past the harbor, a road to the left leads to the marina for another vantage point for the harbor. A foot path leads to the rocky lakeshore through a wooded area where warblers and other passerines can be found. This is a good area to check for Harris's Sparrows in September and October. A Western Meadowlark and a Northern Cardinal were found at feeders in town in January 2002.

Return to M-26 and continue east for 3.3 miles to the parking area on the right for Michigan Audubon Society's **Lake Bailey Wildlife Sanctuary**

THE KEWENAW PENINSULA— CALUMET TO COPPER HARBOR



to Metlain State Park
to Houghton
CALUMET (see detail map at right)
203
26
41
Calumet Water Works Rd.
HOUGHTON CO.
Keweenaw CO.
AHMEEK
MUNICIPALITY
COPPER CITY
FULTON
MOHAWK

**WU-26 DETAIL MAP—
Calumet Area**

Calumet Sewage Treatment Facility
Marsh & Ski Trail
SWEDETOWN
SWEDETOWN Rd.
Osceola Rd.
Mine St.
Pine St.
CALUMET
LAURUM
Agent St.

**WU-27 DETAIL MAP—
Eagle Harbor**

light house
Brockway Mtn. Dr.
marina
Eagle Harbor

North
0 5
Kilometer
0 3
Mile
waterfall
gravel road

LAKE SUPERIOR
cliffs
SAND
EAGLE RIVER
Dunes
PHOENIX
Eagle River
River
Dine
Long Lake
Mud Lake
Bailey Lake
Wildlife Sanctuary
Medora
Montreal River
Bate Grise Bay
Lac La Belle
Deer Lake
Oren Krumm Trail
Harbor
Agate Esrey Park
Krumm Trail
west bluff
Mtn. Dr.
Pines Sanctuary
Estivant Hoop
Fanny Wilkins State Park
Fort Wilkins
COPPER HARBOR (see next map)

(DeLorme p. 119, A8. 47°28' N, 88°04' W). This relatively new sanctuary currently consists of 405 acres that are heavily forested with mature stands of aspen, birch, spruce, fir, pine, and cedar; over 250 species of plants, including several species of orchids, have been recorded. A trail has been cut through some of the property and, although the vegetation is quite dense, you should be able to hear and possibly glimpse Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Winter Wren, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes, Northern Parula, and Northern Waterthrush.

WU-28 Brockway Mountain

*Spring**** Summer** Fall**** Winter*
DeLorme p. 118 inset, A1. 47°27' N, 87°57' W

Directions: From the Lake Bailey Sanctuary on M-26, go 0.3 mile to the west end of Brockway Mountain Drive. See map on previous page.

Because of its position extending into Lake Superior, the Keweenaw Peninsula is a natural corridor for spring migrants, particularly raptors. One of the premier spring hawk migration sites in the Midwest, Brockway Mountain creates thermals that large birds can use to move along the bluff. Unlike some hawk migration sites, Brockway Mountain's spectacular vantage point overlooking the peninsula affords good views of the hawks, with birds often passing by at eye level. Daily counts conducted from April 1 through May 31, 1992, totaled over 15,000 eastbound raptors of 16 species. In 2010, the newly established Keweenaw Raptor Survey will run from March 15 through June 15 (www.keweenawraptorsurvey.org).

The movement of raptors usually begins in mid-March, with Bald and Golden Eagles being the first arrivals, and continues into early June. Most numerous during the spring are Broad-winged Hawks, which are among the last to arrive in late April. Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawks also pass by in large numbers. Other birds of noted in smaller numbers are Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawks, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon. Black Vulture (one record, casual in state) and Swainson's Hawk (rare) have also been recorded. Other birds seen at the bluff during the spring migration have included Common Loon, American White Pelican (casual), Double-crested Cormorant, and Sandhill Crane. While it had been thought that southbound migration of raptors in the autumn pretty much missed the Keweenaw, recent records indicate a modest mid-August movement of mostly Red-tailed and Broad-winged Hawks over the peninsula.

On your way up Brockway Mountain Drive from the west, stop at 2.9 miles from M-26 at the trailhead for the **Oren Krumm Trail**, a half-mile loop which is part of the Brockway Mountain Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary. The trail can be good for resident thrushes and warblers. From the west end of Brockway Mountain Drive at its intersection with M-26, it is 5.0 miles up a paved but rather narrow, winding road to the West Bluff, the

best viewing area on Brockway Mountain. This road is not maintained during the winter and may not be passable until late-April or early May. Energetic types can snowshoe or cross-country ski the moderately steep uphill grade. In years with an early snow melt, although the signs may indicate the road is closed, you may be able to reach the top of the bluff. Extreme care should be taken, however, as it is a long walk down and the closest towing service is in Calumet, 35 miles away. Also, during the winter season, the carved wood signs marking the entrance to Brockway Mountain Road may be removed to prevent damage from snow plows and may not be replaced until the tourist season starts, usually about mid-May. If you are visiting prior to this time, you will have to rely on the odometer and the map, but this is the only road that goes up the mountain from M-26 in this area. From the West Bluff, it is a rather steep 4.5-mile drive east down to the town of Copper Harbor.

An alternative to Brockway Mountain Drive is to stay on M-26 from the west entrance to Brockway Mountain to Copper Harbor. There are several spots that are excellent for migrating passerines in spring. Merlin breeds along this stretch as well. **Esrey Park**, on the lake side of M-26 at 1.0 mile from Brockway Mountain Road, has a foot trail (located across the road from the park) which goes up toward Brockway Mountain Drive. This is a good spot to check for Harris's Sparrow in fall, and loons, grebes, scoters, and other sea ducks may be found on the lake here in spring and fall. At nearby **Agate Harbor** in late May 2002, a birder estimated over 11,000 passerine birds, including a Gray-cheeked Thrush and 16 species of warblers. Similar numbers were also recorded near the Copper Harbor lighthouse. Another nice stop is **Hebard Park**, 5.1 miles farther east on M-26. Here you can sit on a bench in a small, covered shelter with excellent views of the lake and beach. Fall migration of waterbirds can be spectacular, especially in October, when American Wigeon, Redhead, all three scoters, Greater Scaup, Red-breasted Mergansers, Red-throated and Common Loons, and Horned and Red-necked Grebes pass by. A spotting scope is mandatory.

WU-29 Copper Harbor

*Spring**** Summer*** Fall**** Winter***

DeLorme p. 118 inset, A1. 47°28' N, 87°54' W

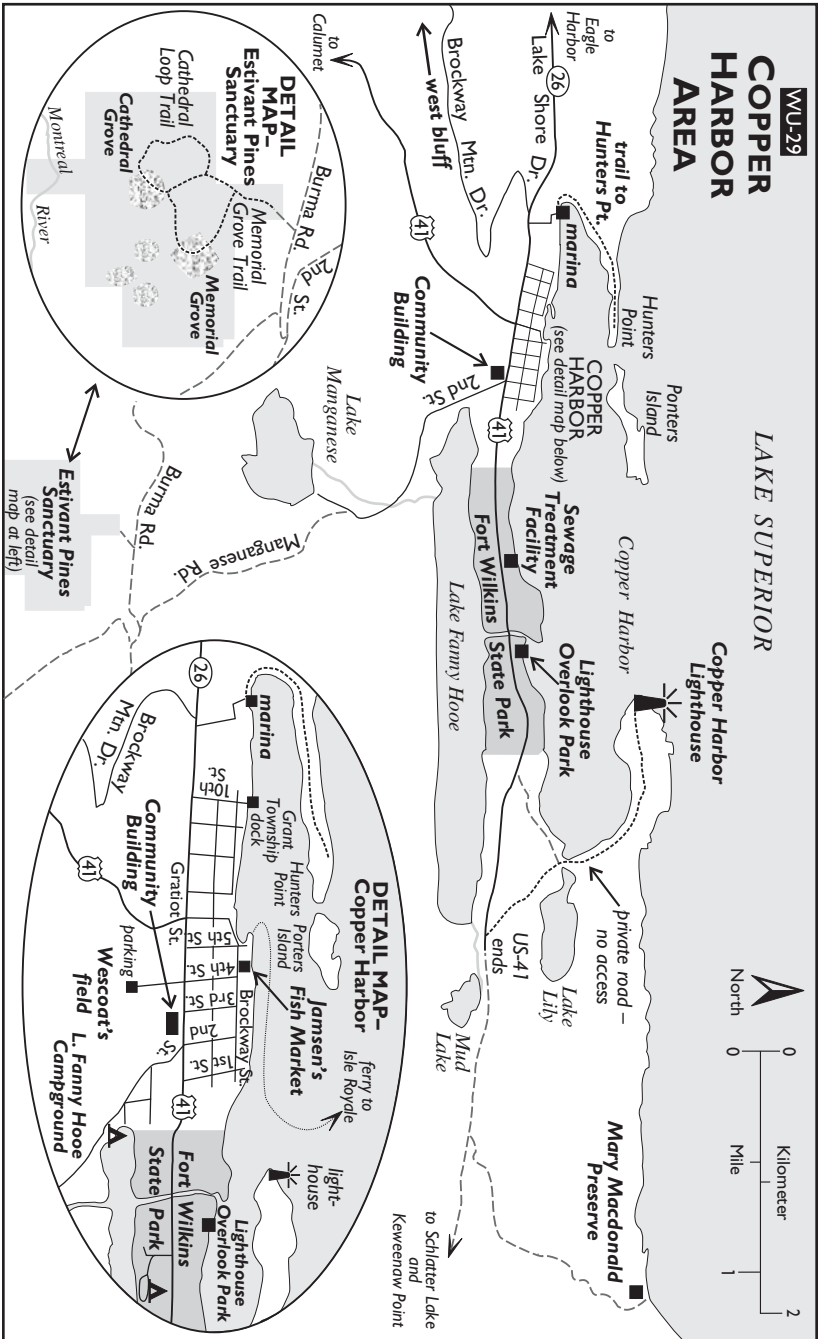
At 2.6 miles east of Hebard Park, the eastern terminus of Brockway Mountain Drive joins M-26 at the entrance to Copper Harbor Marina to the north. A footpath leading from the marina around the west end of the harbor to Hunter's Point may be productive during migration. Boat tours to the Copper Harbor Lighthouse embark from the marina from late May through early October. The tour lasts for 90 minutes; however, one can probably arrange with the tour operator to be left at the lighthouse, to return on a later boat, leaving more time to bird the lighthouse area, where large numbers of migrating passerines sometimes congregate in late May. There is no other public access to the lighthouse, but you can rent a canoe or kayak in Copper Harbor and paddle to the beach at the lighthouse, weather permitting.

The village of Copper Harbor is a quaint if somewhat touristy place, but for the birder, it is a recognized migrant trap for open-country vagrants during migration. The best way to bird the “downtown” area of Copper Harbor is on foot. The area bounded by US-41 (Gratiot Street) on the south, Brockway Street on the north, 1st Street on the east and 5th Street on the west can be productive. Pileated Woodpecker is resident and, during spring migration, numerous warblers, including Northern Parula and Black-throated Blue, may pass through. Harris’s Sparrow is regular in fall but rare in spring. Bohemian Waxwing and Common Redpolls may be present in late fall and winter. In addition to the more common species, a vagrant bird or two is found almost annually at Copper Harbor. These have included Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (twice), Townsend’s Solitaire, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Two good vantage points for observing migrant waterfowl on the harbor are Jamsen’s Fish Market at the north end of 4th Street and the Grant Township Dock at the end of 10th Street. Greater and Lesser Scaup, all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Common Loon, and Horned and Red-necked Grebes are possible, especially in October.

Because it is the only open grassland in the area, one of the best places in Copper Harbor for sparrows and other passerines is **Wescoat’s field**, also known as “the sparrow field”. This 160-acre grassland is officially named the Fort Wilkins Gardens Conservancy. This is private property and permission to enter must be obtained from Clyde Wescoat at a local bookstore, Grandpas’s Barn (906-289-4377). Use the parking area at Grandpa’s Barn, which is located at the south end of 4th Street, and follow the trails through the grassland and around a small pond and past a second, upper pond. The best time to visit these fields is in fall when Northern Shrike (late fall), Horned Lark, American Pipit, American Tree, Chipping, Field, Clay-colored, Le Conte’s (rare), Fox, Song, Lincoln’s, Swamp, and Harris’s Sparrows, Lapland Longspur, and Rusty Blackbird can be found. Vagrant Common Moorhen, Western Kingbird, and Henslow’s and Nelson’s Sharp-tailed (casual) Sparrows have also been reported.

Follow US-41 east out of Copper Harbor for 1.2 miles to the sewage-treatment facility on the north side of the road. From the roadside, check the ponds for dabbling ducks, and gulls; check the edges in spring and fall for American Pipit and Horned Lark. A few hundred yards farther east on US-41 is the parking area for the Lighthouse Overlook Park, also on the north side of the road. This small park provides views of the eastern end of the harbor (check for possible diving ducks and Common Loons in migration) and photo opportunities of the lighthouse. The entrance to the next stop, Fort Wilkins State Park, is to the south of the Lighthouse Overlook Park, on the opposite side of US-41.



Fort Wilkins Historic State Park (906-289-4215; www.michigandnr.com/ParksandTrails/parkmap.aspx) has two modern campgrounds with 165 campsites, day-use facilities, a restored military outpost which is well worth a visit, a lighthouse museum, and a foot trail which encircles most of the park. Concentrations of migrating warblers in late May and early June can be impressive. Black Bears are fairly common in the park and nearby areas, so campers should observe normal bear-proofing procedures.

The northern terminus of US-41 is located 1.0 mile east of the Fort Wilkins entrance (and 2,000 miles from its southern terminus in Miami, Florida). A rather crude, rough road continues east from the end of US-41 into the wild, harsh area at the tip of the peninsula. If you continue on this road for 0.9 mile from the end of US-41, you will come to a trail to the north to The Nature Conservancy's **Mary Macdonald Preserve** on Horseshoe Harbor (DeLorme p. 118 inset, A2. 47°28' N, 87°48' W). You can walk or drive this trail (with a high-clearance vehicle) for 1.2 miles to the parking area. A sign marks the footpath that leads from the parking area through boreal forest and down to Lake Superior and the bedrock beach. Be alert for Peregrine Falcon in migration, resident Ruffed Grouse, and possible nesting warblers such as Nashville, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Black-and-white, Mourning, and Canada.

You can drive farther along the road toward Schlatter Lake and the point itself, but the drive is not for the faint of heart or low of carriage. The state recently purchased over 6,000 acres of undeveloped land near the tip. Not much is really known about this area from an avian standpoint, however, as more birders explore this wild area, we look forward to more reports.

Return to Copper Harbor and take 2nd Street south from US-141 for 1.1 miles. Turn left just before reaching Lake Manganese and go 1.2 miles to Burma Road, where you turn sharply right for 0.6 mile to the **Estivant Pines Sanctuary** on the left (DeLorme p. 118 inset, A1. 47°26' N, 87°52' W). The preserve, owned by the Michigan Nature Association, is of considerable interest not only to the bird enthusiast, but for anyone who appreciates the opportunity to view acres of old-growth northern hardwoods interspersed with large White Pines, believed to be the last virgin stand in the UP. The dense, old growth creates a protective canopy over the forest floor, providing perfect habitat for more than a dozen species of orchids and nesting sanctuary for over 85 species of birds, including 14 warblers. A series of three loop trails over rugged terrain leads through the sanctuary. The Cathedral Grove Loop, a one-mile trail, takes you through some of the area's oldest and largest pines, some over 500 years old, four feet in diameter, and 125 feet in height.

The Community Building on the corner of US-41 and 2nd Street has a kiosk with information and maps for the sanctuary. You can also check the Michigan Nature Association's website at www.michigannature.org.

WU-30 Southeastern Keweenaw Peninsula

Spring*** Summer** Fall*** Winter**

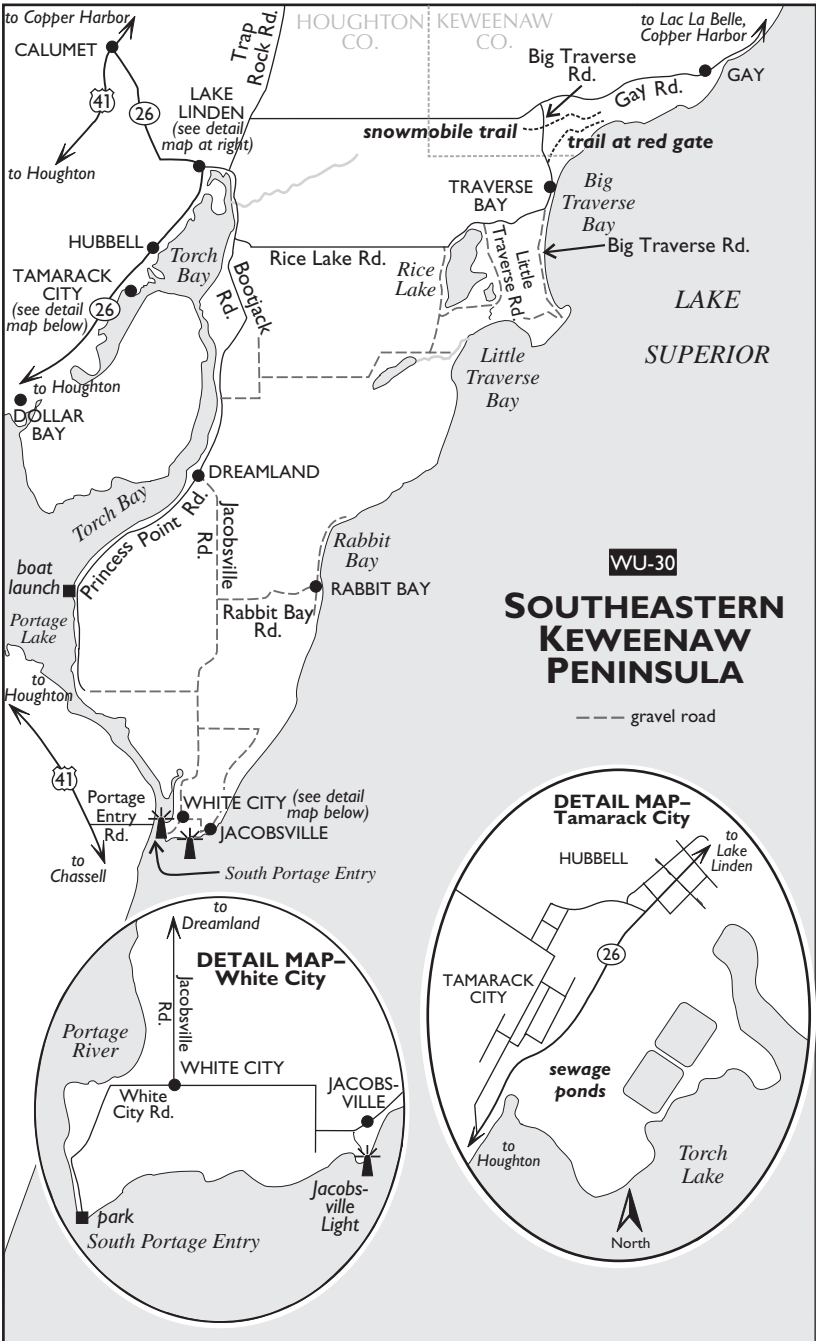
Directions: From Copper Harbor, go west on US-41 for 11.1 miles west to an unnamed road to the left (signposted as “to Lac La Belle”) to reach Lac La Belle (DeLorme p. 119, A8). See map on next page. Or, if you are doing this route in reverse order (from Houghton to Lac La Belle), take US-41 from Houghton across the Portage Canal bridge and turn right onto M-26 toward Dollar Bay and Hubbell. Skip to the end of this site description if you are doing the route in this reverse order.

This lengthy but worthwhile side trip on the way from Copper Harbor back to Houghton explores the southeastern coast of the Keweenaw Peninsula and its areas of boreal habitat. From the turn at US-41, take the road for 4.3 miles to the small resort village of Lac La Belle. The road to the left will take you to Bete Grise and the Mendota Canal. Instead, go right toward the old stamp-mill village of Gay, a distance of 22.0 miles. Be alert along this road for boreal species, including Northern Hawk Owl (uncommon to rare and irregular) and Boreal Chickadee. One of Michigan’s two remarkable records of Broad-billed Hummingbird is from Lac La Belle!

At the almost-ghost town of **Gay** (DeLorme p. 119, C7. 47°13' N, 88°10' W), go west on Gay Road for 3.8 miles to Big Traverse Road. (If you stay on Gay Road at this point, you can return to M-26 near Lake Linden.) Go left (south) through some excellent boreal habitat. Look for a snowmobile trail that crosses Big Traverse Road about 0.5 mile south of Gay Road. Park and walk east on this trail into an area where Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee are regular in winter. Red-breasted Nuthatch may also be present, and White-winged Crossbills probably bred here in 2003.

Return to Big Traverse Road and go another 0.5 mile south to a red gate, where you can park and walk a trail northeast through more of the same boreal habitat. Mosquitos can be fierce in the warmer months. One way to avoid these is to snowshoe into this area during winter. Continue south on Big Traverse Road for 0.8 mile to the fishing village of Traverse Bay and a small township park. In late fall and early spring, you can scope the waters of Big Traverse Bay from here for diving ducks (including scoters) and Common Loons (this bay is incorrectly noted as Grand Traverse Bay in DeLorme). At 0.5 mile south of this park on Big Traverse Road, go west onto Rice Lake Road for 7.8 miles, watching for Boreal Chickadees in the spruce forests, to a T-intersection with Bootjack Road. Go left (south) onto Bootjack Road for about 6.0 miles to an intersection called Dreamland. Michigan’s fifth record of White Ibis was found in a flooded field near here in May 2001.

At Dreamland, go southwest onto Princess Point Road, which follows the east shoreline of Torch Bay and Portage Lake. At 4.3 miles, a public boat launch provides a view of the open water, where you can look for dabbling ducks, Pied-billed Grebe, and American White Pelican (rare). Continue on

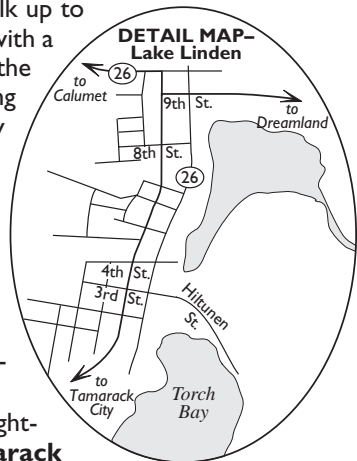


Princess Point Road as it curves east and intersects with Jacobsville Road at 9.2 miles from Dreamland, checking for Ruffed Grouse, which are often seen along the road. Go south on Jacobsville Road for about 3.5 miles to White City Road. Go right (west) and follow the road to the White City Park at the tip of the peninsula for an excellent view of resting waterbirds on **South Portage Entry and Keweenaw Bay** (DeLorme p. 111, A5. 46°58' N, 88°26' W). This is also a good migrant trap for warblers in fall.

Backtrack to the intersection of White City and Jacobsville Roads and go about 1.0 mile east to the Jacobsville Light, now privately owned. The owners might grant permission to view the waters of Keweenaw Bay and Lake Superior from this vantage point. Return to Jacobsville Road and drive north toward Dreamland. At about 4.5 miles, take Rabbit Bay Road to the right (east) to Rabbit Bay. This small settlement has all of two roads; take the longer, main road with houses only on the right. To the left of this main road is a mixed boreal forest, with three, gated two-track trails that lead to the left. Explore any of these to look for Boreal Chickadee, a variety of breeding warblers (Bay-breasted has bred here), and possible White-winged Crossbill. Return to Jacobsville Road and head back to Dreamland, about another 4.5 miles.

Continue north from Dreamland on Bootjack Road for 8.2 miles into the village of **Lake Linden** (DeLorme p.119, C5. 47°12' N, 88°24' W). Go south on M-26 into the center of the village and turn east onto Hiltunen Street to a campground and sewage ponds beyond the campground. Park at the campground and walk up to the ponds. You may have to be satisfied with a scope view through a chain-link fence, but the ponds have been very good for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds in April and May and again in late July through October. Some of the better sightings have included American Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, and White-rumped, Baird's, Pectoral, Stilt, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers. Among the rarities here have been Ross's Goose, Ruff (August 1998), Long-billed Dowitcher, and Wilson's Phalarope.

Continue south on M-26 toward Houghton, passing through Hubbell to **Tamarack City**. On the south side of Tamarack City is a gated grassland and sewage ponds on the left (east) side of M-26. Walk toward the ponds and cross the low fence on the left (public access permitted). Many waterfowl and shorebirds occur in fall (and sometimes in spring as well) when water levels are suitable. Continue south on M-26 to return to Houghton.



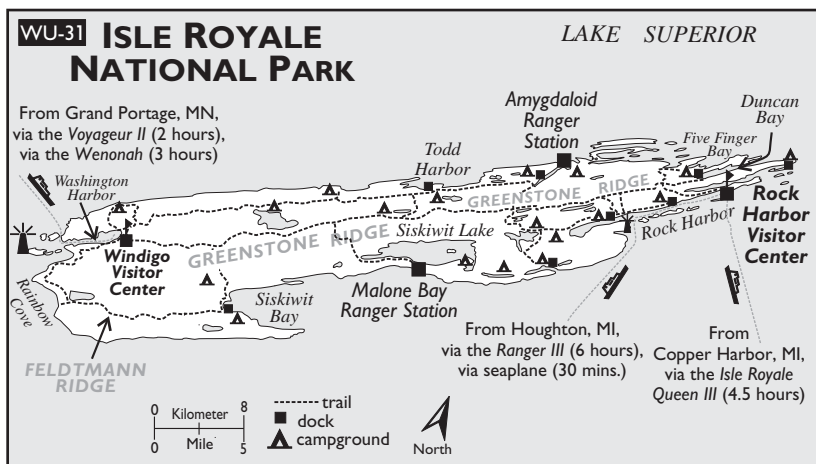
WU-31 Isle Royale National Park

Spring*** Summer*** Fall*** Winter
DeLorme p.114–115. 48°00' N, 88°50' W

Contact Information: 906-482-0984; www.nps.gov/isro

This wilderness archipelago in the northwest corner of Lake Superior actually sits closer to Minnesota and Ontario than to Michigan. Accessible only by boat or seaplane, the roadless island can be explored by foot or by boat. Because of its rugged isolation, it is often said that Yellowstone National Park has more visitors on one summer day than Isle Royale entertains in an entire season. Isle Royale is probably best-known as a sanctuary for Eastern Timber Wolves and Moose, and studies have been conducted for many years on the dynamic interdependency of the two species. Interestingly, however, there are no Black Bears or White-tailed Deer on the island. This island park is relatively small, only 45 miles long and 8.5 miles across at its widest point, totaling more than 210 square miles of unspoiled northern wilderness.

From a birding standpoint, the species here are similar to those that can be found on the Keweenaw Peninsula or in nearby northern Minnesota. The latest Michigan *Breeding Bird Atlas* in the 1980s confirmed 68 species of birds nesting on Isle Royale, and another 41 species as probable nesters. During summer, the only time it is practical to visit, on an extended backpacking or canoe/kayaking trip into the interior of the island, you should be able to observe Common Goldeneyes, which nest in tree cavities on any lake or beaver pond, and Common and Red-breasted Mergansers on the larger lakes. Seeing a Common Loon with young on one of the many inland wilderness lakes or on a quiet bay of Lake Superior is an experience that lasts forever. In the spruce-fir forest on the northeast end of the island you may also find Osprey, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Nashville, Mag-



nolia, Cape May, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, and Mourning Warblers, and White-winged Crossbills. Gray Jay and Common Raven are relatively common, and White-throated Sparrows, with their friendly song, are seen and heard regularly.

Along Greenstone Ridge Trail and in the higher, drier maple-birch forests on southwest end of island, watch for Sharp-tailed Grouse, Bald Eagle, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon (reintroduced and now nesting at several spots on the island), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Cedar Waxwing, Chestnut-sided, and Black-throated Blue Warblers, Chipping Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak. If you visit early or late in the season, you might glimpse Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, or Pine Siskin, still present from winter, or very rarely, a late-lingering Snowy Owl.

There are four commercial services that provide travel to Isle Royale National Park:

- For trips from Houghton to Rock Harbor on the eastern end of Isle Royale on the *Ranger III*, early June to mid-September, 73 miles and 6 hours, contact the park headquarters in Houghton (information at the beginning of this site).
- For trips from Copper Harbor to Rock Harbor via the *Isle Royale Queen IV*, from mid-May to late September, 56 miles and 4.5 hours. contact *The Isle Royal Line*, PO Box 24, Copper Harbor, MI 49918; 906-289-4437, www.isleroyale.com.
- From Grand Portage, MN, to Windigo via the *Voyageur II*, 2 hours, or *Wenonah*, 3 hours, the crossing is 22 miles, from early May through October. One of these boats circles the island, picking up and dropping off passengers at various points. Contact GPIR Transport Lines, PO Box 10529, White Bear Lake, MN 55110; 651-653-5872 (October–April), 218-475-0024 (May–October); www.isleroyaleboats.com.
- For trips from Houghton to Windigo or Rock Harbor via seaplane, contact Royale Air Service, P. O. Box 15184, Duluth, MN 55815; 877-FLY-ISLE or 218-721-0405. They operate from late May through mid-September, Monday through Saturday on demand.

Note: the boat crossings can sometimes be a little rough, even in summer, due to Lake Superior's near-oceanic proportions. Those sensitive to motion sickness should take appropriate precautions.

Lodging is available only at Rock Harbor; contact in summer is Isle Royale Resorts, PO Box 605, Houghton, MI 49931-0605; 906-337-4993. In winter, contact Isle Royale Resorts, PO Box 27, Mammoth Cave, KY 42259-0027; 866-644-2003; www.isleroyaleresort.com. There is no hotel lodging available at Windigo.



Gray Jay
Carl Freeman

HOUGHTON TO THE PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS

By Jerry Ziarno

This Western UP route passes through large tracts of Wet Deciduous Forest (maple and ash), with fairly large areas of open farmland, some of which are abandoned (please bird from the roads). Good opportunities exist for observing grassland birds such as Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, and for finding casual visitors from the West. The route ends at the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, a large and scenic wilderness, where breeding species of northern deciduous forests are found. The park is also a stopover site for migrating raptors and songbirds.

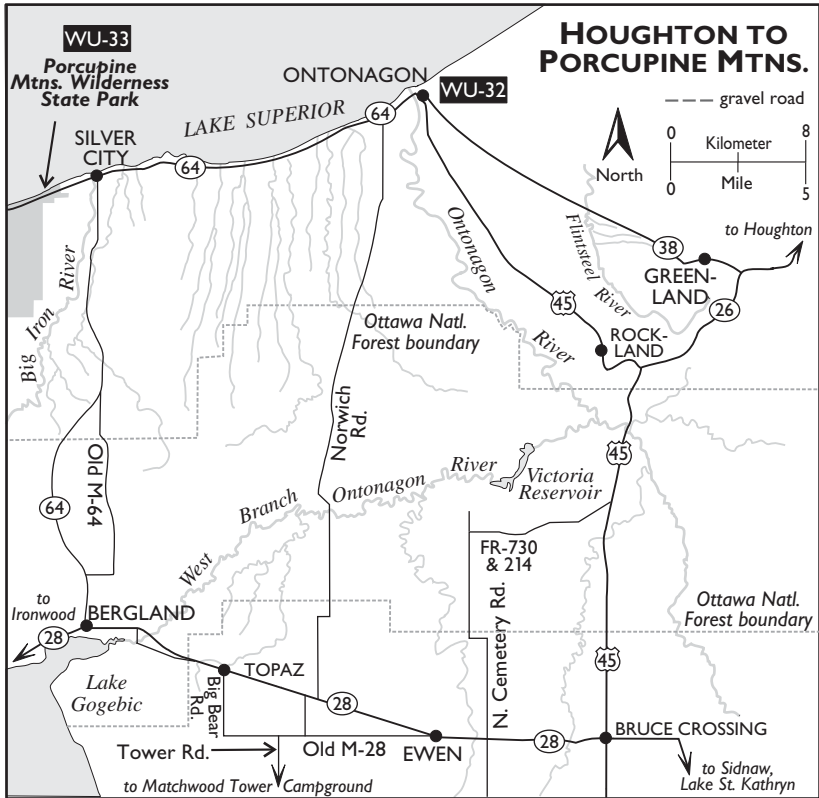
WU-32 Ontonagon Area

*Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter***
DeLorme p. 109, B6. 46°52' N, 89°18' W

From Houghton, take M-26 southwest for approximately 37 miles through the small villages of Toivola and Twin Lakes to the intersection with M-38. At this point, you can take M-38 northwest through Greenland and on to the city of **Ontonagon** (see map on next page). The lighthouse on the west side of the mouth of the Ontonagon River and the Township Park on the lakeshore just northeast of town can be good spots to view migrating waterfowl. Merlin is often found in the area from spring through fall. From Ontonagon, you can then take M-64 west along the Lake Superior shoreline for 12.6 miles to Silver City and the entrance to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park.

For an alternate route that skips Ontonagon, stay on M-26 for another 5.0 miles southwest from M-38 to the intersection with US-45. Go south on US-45 for 13.7 miles to Bruce Crossing and the intersection with M-28. Western vagrants, such as Lark Sparrow, have turned up in this area. Take M-28 west for 5.0 miles toward the town of **Ewen** (DeLorme p. 109, D6. 46°32' N, 89°17' W). At about a half-mile before Ewen, go north on N. Cemetery Road toward FR 730; an area of bog habitat between 4.0 and 6.0 miles along N. Cemetery Road has had nesting Connecticut Warbler. Sharp-tailed Grouse have been reported on at least two leks in the Ewen area, but both leks are on private property.

At Ewen, turn south for one block and then go west onto Old M-28. For the next few miles, this road goes through a variety of habitats, including agricultural, abandoned farmland, and new-growth forests. American Kestrels are numerous during summer, seemingly perched on every fourth power pole along the road. Upland Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Sedge Wren, Chipping, Clay-colored, Grasshopper, and Lincoln's Sparrows, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark (Western is casual) can be observed from the road. At 7.0 miles west of Ewen, go south on Tower



Road through a wetland to the Matchwood Tower Campground, 2.7 miles. Breeding dabbling ducks, Great Blue Herons, and Sandhill Cranes can be found in the ponds along this road, and numerous Eastern Bluebirds use the old wooden fence-posts for nesting. Golden-winged Warbler and Indigo Bunting may be found in late spring and summer at the campground.

Return to Old M-28 and continue west for 2.0 miles, where the road turns north, becomes Big Bear Road and, after another 2.5 miles, joins M-28 at a place called Topaz. In August, 2002, a Green Violet-ear appeared at a feeder here and remained for several days, surprisingly the *second* (!) record for Michigan and the first for the UP. Proceed west on M-28 for 5.2 miles to the village of Bergland and take M-64 north for 17.4 miles to the intersection with CO 107 at Silver City, the gateway town for the east entrance to the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. The Big Iron River enters Lake Superior here, and a small park and boat launch at the mouth of the river has a grove of trees that is an excellent passerine migrant trap in late May. Migrating water-birds may also be viewed in spring and fall from this park.

WU-33 Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park

Spring*** Summer*** Fall** Winter**

DeLorme p. 108, B2-B3.

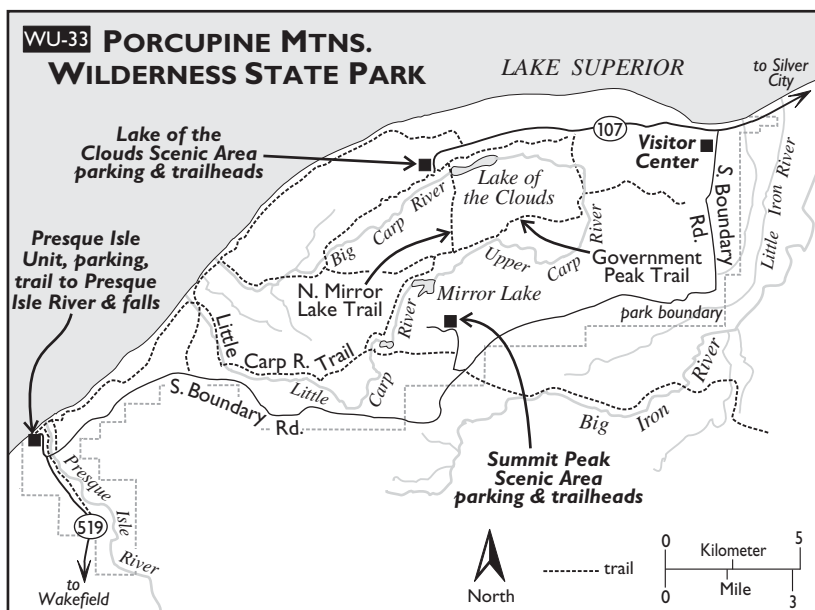
46°54' N, 89°37' W – East Entrance,

46°42' N, 89°58' W – West Entrance

Contact Information: 906-885-5275; www.dnr.state.mi.us/parksandtrails/

This gem of a park consists of 60,000 acres of towering, virgin pines, Hemlock, and maple hardwoods along with secluded lakes and miles of wild rivers and streams. This is a true wilderness park and, while there are several spots within the park that are accessible by car, the interior is remote and really designed for the wilderness hiker. There are over 90 miles of foot trails and 16 rustic trailside cabins. The trails traverse most of the park and lead to some of the most spectacular overlooks and vistas. Hiking one or more of the trails is the best way to see most of the birds, and provides a great north woods wilderness experience. In spite of its remote and far northern location, this park is not a good location for boreal species. It is, however, home to at least one nesting pair of Peregrine Falcons, which may sometimes be seen flying near the overlook at Lake of the Clouds, and hosts numerous northern nesting warblers. Black Bears are fairly numerous in the park, and hikers and backpackers should take appropriate precautions.

There are two entrances: the east entrance, used by most visitors, is also the location of the visitor center. From the town of Bergland on M-28, go north on M-64 for 17.4 miles to CO 107 at Silver City, where motels and restaurants are available. Go west on CO 107 for 2.7 miles to the Visitor Center and the intersection with South Boundary Road. CO 107 continues west and ends at the overlook for Lake of the Clouds, one of the most photographed views in the state and worth a visit for that reason alone.



The western entrance to the “Porkies” can be reached from the intersection of M-28 and CO 519, just to the north of the village of Wakefield in Gogebic County. Go north on CO 519 (Presque Road) for 13.0 miles, at which point you will enter the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park. Another 2.5 miles along CO 519 will bring you to the intersection with the South Boundary Road, which leads east and eventually to the visitor center at the east entrance. By continuing north for 0.4 mile on CO 519, you will come to the west entry gate and, after another 0.7 mile, to a walk down to the falls on the Presque Isle River. A foot trail south along the river leads to a series of very scenic waterfalls. *Caution: the falls and rapids have very strong currents and deep holes. Do not wade or swim in the river.*

To reach trailheads for the interior trails that go to some of the better spots for breeding species, take the South Boundary Road from the visitor center at the east entrance for about 11 miles (this is 12 miles from the CO 519 on the west) to a left (north) turn for Summit Peak Road. At the end of this road is the trailhead for several of good birding trails. Widespread throughout the park during summer are such species as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Least Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, Veery, Swainson’s Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, White-throated Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Also regularly seen in summer but mostly confined to the interior of the park (reached by North Mirror Lake, Government Peak, and Little Carp River Trails) are Chimney Swift, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Blue-headed and Warbling Vireos, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, and Canada Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, Chipping, Song, and White-throated Sparrows. A walk from the parking area along the Escarpment Trail may produce Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Pine Siskin in addition. You might also find Northern Goshawk and Pine and Mourning Warblers along the Little Carp River Trail. Black-backed Woodpecker (rare) has been observed along the Lake Superior Trail.

MICHIGAN SPECIALTIES

This list provides information on a number of Michigan specialties, including regularly occurring birds that Michigan birders make a special effort to find, and birds that out of state birders most often have as “target species.” Michigan does not possess the unique avifaunas of Florida, Texas, Arizona, or California, but does provide opportunities to view breeding warblers, shorebird concentrations, irruptive owls and winter finches, waterfowl migration, and even an element resembling pelagic birding. In combination with the Bar Graphs, both in-state and out-of-state birders can use the following list to plan a birding trip depending on which species are on the birder’s want list. Casual and accidental species are not included here, but follow the Bar Graphs (next chapter) in a separate list. Abbreviations used:

- LP (Lower Peninsula)
- NELP (Northeastern Lower Peninsula)
- NLP (Northern Lower Peninsula)
- NWLP (Northwestern Lower Peninsula)
- SELP (Southeastern Lower Peninsula)
- SGA (State Game Area)
- SLP (Southern Lower Peninsula)
- SP (State Park)
- SWLP (Southwestern Lower Peninsula)
- UP (Upper Peninsula)

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*. Rare migrant found in marshes and farm fields adjacent to Great Lakes. Often occurs in non-traditional birding areas, but good sites to check include Allegan SGA, Shiawassee NWR, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Fish Point.

Snow Goose *Chen caerulescens*. Uncommon to rare migrant, typically in marshes and farm fields adjacent to Great Lakes, with Allegan SGA, Fish Point, and Shiawassee NWR among the best sites.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*. Fairly common resident, introduced. This species is well established in Michigan, and thus are “countable” in the ABA area. Unfortunately, this species’ success occasionally comes at the expense of native wildlife. Found throughout the LP, but greatest numbers are in the Traverse City area, the Saginaw Bay area, and throughout the SELP, particularly at Metro Beach Metropark, Belle Isle, and Pointe Mouillee SGA.

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus olor*. Introduced birds are being seen with increasing frequency at wetlands throughout the state. In 2000 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pronounced this program a success and discontinued releases, and in 2001 the Michigan Bird Records Committee moved this species to the Regular (i.e., ABA countable) category on the state list. Largest breeding population is at Seney NWR.

Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*. Fairly common migrant and winter resident. Staging areas in migration are the best places to see this species. Saginaw Bay area in Arenac, Bay and Tuscola Counties in March and October–November is the most reliable staging area. Increasing numbers have overwintered, primarily at Lake Erie Metropark and Pointe Mouillee SGA.

Canvasback *Aythya valisineria*. Common migrant and locally common winter resident. Sites on Lakes Huron and Erie produce the greatest numbers of this species, and wintering flocks at Anchor Bay on Lake St. Clair are often the largest recorded nationwide on Christmas Bird Counts, numbering in the tens of thousands. Also winters in the Detroit River at Belle Isle, Grosse Ile, and Lake Erie Metropark.

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*. Rare migrant and winter visitor. Most are found along the Lake Michigan shore from the several jetties from Frankfort south to New Buffalo, most recently reliable at Oval Beach. A nearly annual migrant in small numbers at Whitefish Point. Can sometimes be found on the St. Mary’s River in Sault Ste. Marie, and occasionally at L’Anse Bay in the UP, the Oscoda jetty in the NELP, and Port Huron in the SELP.

Scoters. All three scoters migrate through the Great Lakes annually, with rare individuals inland and overwintering. On the Great Lakes, White-winged is by far the most common, with Surf Scoter a distant second, and Black Scoter generally uncommon to rare. Away from the Great Lakes, Surf Scoter seems to be most frequently reported, but only in small numbers. Whitefish Point in April–May and September–November is likely to produce the greatest numbers of scoters. Other good sites include Alpena and Presque Isle, Ludington, Muskegon, South Haven, and Port Huron. Little Girl’s Point near Ironwood and L’Anse Bay are reliable sites in the western UP.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*. Migrates through the Great Lakes at similar times and locations as the scoters, typically in larger numbers. Good sites include Little Girl’s Point near Ironwood and L’Anse Bay in the western

UP, Whitefish Point, Alpena, Tawas Point, Port Huron, and South Haven. In winters when the lakes do not freeze completely (most winters), thousands can be seen off of Ludington and Manistee (Orchard Beach SP), and farther south in much smaller numbers.

Spruce Grouse *Falcipecten canadensis*. Uncommon to rare resident. Most frequent in boreal forest in the UP, with reliable sites including Yellow Dog Plains near Marquette, Baraga Plains, the Kingston Plains, Peshekee Grade, and northeast of Iron Mountain. Most often found in the eastern UP at Whitefish Point, Pike Lake area in northern Luce County, near Seney NWR (more difficult here), and near Trout Lake. Also occurs in the NLP in Jack Pines, but nearly impossible to find there, as entry to most habitat is restricted because Kirtland's Warblers also nest in these areas.

Sharp-tailed Grouse *Tympanuchus phasianellus*. Uncommon to rare resident. Most birders find this species in the UP in winter (November–March) in areas between Sault Ste. Marie and Rudyard as the birds feed off the ground or in small trees in the mornings, and are fairly visible. Breeds near Seney NWR, northeast of Trout Lake, the Kingston Plains, and on Drummond Island, among other sites, where they can be located on their dancing grounds in April. Raco Airfield is an accessible dancing ground in the eastern UP. Do not disturb this species on its dancing grounds; most sites allow you to observe the birds using your car as a blind.

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*. Locally fairly common permanent resident, reintroduced and established statewide. Most numerous in the NLP. In the SLP, good sites include Waterloo SRA and Seven Ponds Nature Center.

Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus*. Uncommon resident. Declining. Found in open areas and farmland of the SLP, most often in Berrien, Cass, Washtenaw, and Sanilac counties. Probably easiest to find in southern Washtenaw County.

Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata*. Rare migrant, locally uncommon. Most reliable site is Whitefish Point where the greatest numbers can be seen during loon flights in April–May and September–November. Rare in the state away from Whitefish Point, though small numbers are regular at Port Huron, Alpena, South Haven, and New Buffalo.

Common Loon *Gavia immer*. Uncommon summer resident, locally common migrant. Breeds on small to large lakes mainly in NLP and UP. Migrates mostly along Great Lakes coastlines, most numerous at Whitefish Point in spring and fall. Also migrates past Alpena and along Lake Michigan in fall.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*. Uncommon to rare migrant, locally common. Most reliable site is Whitefish Point where the greatest numbers (thousands) can be seen during flights mainly in August. Away from Whitefish Point only a few individuals, or singles, are likely to be encountered, and mostly in October–November and February–April on the Great Lakes. More frequent in NLP than in SLP.

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*. Rare migrant. The Muskegon Wastewater System has been the most reliable site in recent years, with up to 12 present some years.

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*. Rare migrant and summer resident. Pointe Mouillee SGA, Arcadia Marsh, Shiawassee NWR, and the Keweenaw Peninsula in the UP have all produced this species in recent years.

American Bittern *Botaurus lentiginosus*. Uncommon to rare summer resident. Not easy to find anywhere, but fairly reliable in the UP, including Seney NWR, Portage Point, Baraga Plains, Sturgeon Sloughs Wildlife Area, and Munuscong Bay. Rare in SLP, with Pointe Mouillee SGA and Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area, and Tuttle Marsh the most reliable sites.

Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis*. Uncommon to rare and local summer resident. Some reliable sites include Pointe Mouillee SGA, Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area, Tobico Marsh, Arcadia Marsh, and Big Smith Lake in Berrien County.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*. Fairly common summer resident in parts of SLP. Most numerous in the SELP, where the marshes in Monroe County provide the best opportunities. Easy to find at Pointe Mouillee SGA, Erie Marsh Preserve, and Lake Erie Metropark. Also reliable at Shiawassee NWR and Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*. Rare spring and summer visitor. Records are scattered almost statewide, but most are from marshes in Monroe County, including the Erie Marsh Preserve and Pointe Mouillee SGA. Also occasionally reported from the Saginaw Bay area and Shiawassee NWR.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*. Rare to casual spring and summer visitor. Records are scattered almost statewide, but most are from marshes in Monroe County, including the Erie Marsh Preserve and Pointe Mouillee SGA. There are also occasional records from the Saginaw Bay area.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. Rare summer and fall visitor. Most recent records are from the Saginaw Bay area where breeding has occurred. Some years nearly absent from the state.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Uncommon summer resident. Most often found at Pointe Mouillee SGA and in the Saginaw Bay area.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*. Uncommon summer resident. Fairly common migrant locally. Breeds mainly in NLP and UP where any inland lake is worth checking. Not hard to find with a little effort. Migrates past Lake Erie Metropark in good numbers in September.

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. Uncommon permanent resident. Several nests are now within an hour's drive of Detroit. Most common in the NLP and UP where not too difficult to find.

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*. Uncommon summer and winter resident. Uncommon to rare migrant. Breeds in NLP and UP, very rarely as

far south as Tuscola Co. in SLP. Easiest to see at one of the hawkwatches: Whitefish Point in April or September–November, Brockway Mountain in April–early May, Port Crescent SP in March, or Lake Erie Metropark in October–November.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*. Uncommon summer resident, uncommon to locally fairly common migrant. Declining. Breeds in swamp woods throughout the state, slightly more common in the NLP. Easiest to see in migration at Lake Erie Metropark in October–November, where a hundred or more may be seen on a peak day.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*. Fairly common summer resident in the UP, uncommon in the LP, locally common migrant. Breeds mainly in the NLP and UP, uncommon to rare in SLP. Birds can be hard to see due to the height of nests, though their distinctive calls give them away. Easiest to see in migration at one of the hawkwatches: Brockway Mountain, Whitefish Point, and Port Crescent SP in April and May, and often North America's most significant numbers (many thousands) of this species can be seen at Lake Erie Metropark between 10–20 September.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*. Rare to casual migrant. Most likely in late April to early May at Whitefish Point, and in mid-September through late October at Lake Erie Metropark.

Rough-legged Hawk *Buteo lagopus*. Uncommon to fairly common winter visitor, cyclical in numbers. In good years, most open fields in the state may host this species. In most winters most numerous in the UP where the Rudyard area is a dependable location, and the northern LP. Easier to see in migration, Whitefish Point in April and Lake Erie Metropark in November.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*. Rare migrant, locally fairly common. Lake Erie Metropark from late October to mid-November is the best bet with multiple birds likely on a good day. Also noted at Port Crescent SP, Whitefish Point, and Brockway Mountain in April. Individuals occasionally winter in the state, most often at Allegan SGA and occasionally at the Muskegon Wastewater System.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*. Uncommon and local summer resident. Uncommon to rare migrant. Rare winter resident. Can be found breeding most years at Wilderness SP, near Whitefish Point, and at various sites in the UP, particularly Marquette and the Keweenaw Peninsula. All of the state's hawkwatches also annually tally this species, with the easiest site Lake Erie Metropark in September–October. Also regular in migration at Tawas Point.

Gyrfalcon *Falco rusticolus*. Rare to casual winter visitor. Nearly annual in recent years at Sault Ste. Marie. A few reports from the SLP, where casual, with three accepted records from the Lake Erie Metropark hawkwatch in late November. A few reports from Pointe Mouillee SGA and surrounding areas in March, and a couple from the Muskegon Wastewater System in November–March.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*. Has nested at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, in addition to urban birds that have been established in several Michigan cities, including Detroit and Grand Rapids. Migrants can appear almost anywhere, and sites along the Lake Michigan shore are particularly productive, in addition to the three main hawkwatches in the state, Whitefish Point in April–May and September–October, Port Crescent SP in April–May, and Lake Erie Metropark in September–October.

Yellow Rail *Coturnicops noveboracensis*. Rare summer resident. Threatened. The only reasonable chance a birder has to see this species in Michigan is in the UP at Seney NWR, where annual trips are conducted to see this species, and in the Trout Lake area. Numbers vary from year to year. Found almost annually at the Houghton Lake Flats in the NLP. Migrants are very rarely reported.

Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*. Fairly common summer resident, locally common migrant. Breeds in two main areas of the state, the central SLP and the eastern UP (Rudyard area), though expanding its range. Most spectacular are the fall migrant flocks that stage in thousands at two main sanctuaries, Baker Sanctuary and Haehnle Sanctuary in the SLP, where they also breed.

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus*. Rare summer resident. Endangered. Nest sites and numbers vary from year to year. A record 55 pairs fledged 23 young in 2004. Can most easily be found at Wilderness SP, the Sleeping Bear Dunes, Tawas Point State Park, and in the UP near Munising, Grand Marais, and at Vermillion near Whitefish Point. Recently found breeding near Alpena. Birders should not approach nesting birds closely and obey any restrictive signs.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*. Rare migrant. Annually recorded in the state in small numbers. More records from fall. Recorded from most of the state's shorebird areas. Regular sites include the beaches in Berrien Co., Ludington, Shiawassee NWR, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Erie Marsh Preserve.

Willet *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*. Rare migrant, usually singly, sometimes in small numbers. Recorded in spring and fall, somewhat more common in spring. Most records from dependable shorebird habitats, including Pointe Mouillee SGA, beaches in Berrien County, and Shiawassee NWR.

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*. Uncommon summer resident. Most frequent in open grassy areas in the NLP, particularly in the Traverse City and Pellston areas. Dependable near Escanaba in the western UP, less common in the eastern UP. Regularly found in central Iosco County and northwest of Mio in Oscoda County. Scarce in the SLP with Willow Run Airport and fields near Port Huron SGA the most reliable locations.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. Uncommon to rare migrant, mainly along Great Lakes coastlines. The third week of May brings this species to Michigan like clockwork; peak is fourth week. Pointe Mouillee SGA, Tawas Point State Park, and Whitefish Point are the most reliable sites, and some-

times flocks in excess of 100 have been seen. Much less numerous in fall migration.

Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*. Rare migrant, usually in small numbers. Less common in spring when migrants pass through fairly quickly in May. Most fall records range from August and September, but occasionally individuals linger into late November. Sites worth checking (depending on water levels) include the Muskegon Wastewater System (where 62, the largest flock ever in the state was reported), Shiawassee NWR, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Erie Marsh Preserve.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*. Rare migrant in small numbers. Occurs about equally frequently in spring and fall. In spring, occurs mainly in May, while fall records are from July through September, occasionally into October. Sites worth checking (depending on water levels) include coastal Berrien Co., Ludington, Muskegon Wastewater System, Shiawassee NWR, Nayanquing Point Wildlife Area Wildlife Area, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Erie Marsh Preserve.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*. Uncommon to rare migrant in small numbers. Mainly Great Lakes coastlines. Somewhat more numerous in spring, though generally present only briefly in late May and early June. Fall migrants typically in August and September, some lingering into October. Reliable sites include Tawas Point State Park, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Whitefish Point.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*. Rare fall migrant in very small numbers, accidental in spring. Spring records are primarily from late May, while fall records are typically in July and August with occasional lingerers into November. Sites worth checking (depending on water levels) include Pointe Mouillee SGA, Shiawassee NWR, Erie Marsh Preserve, and Muskegon Wastewater System.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*. Uncommon to rare migrant. Spring migrants are found primarily in May, while fall migrants occur mainly in August with occasional lingerers into October. Found in many of the state's shorebird habitats. Sites worth checking (depending on water levels) include Pointe Mouillee SGA, Erie Marsh Preserve, Muskegon Wastewater System, and Shiawassee NWR.

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*. Accidental spring and uncommon fall migrant. Most records are from July and August, with some lingering into November. Reliable sites include the Muskegon Wastewater System, Pointe Mouillee SGA, and Ludington. Also should be looked for in recently plowed fields and sod farms.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*. Rare late fall migrant. Most reports are from October and November, occasionally lingering into December and rarely January. The most reliable sites include the breakwalls and jetties along Lake Michigan, including the Frankfort Pier, Muskegon breakwall, Ludington breakwall, South Haven breakwall, and New Buffalo. Occasionally on Lake Huron in the NELP where it has been found recently on the Oscoda jetty and Harbor Beach. Extremely rare on Lake Erie.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*. Accidental spring and rare fall migrant. Frequents sod farms and newly plowed fields, though also found in areas of drier mudflat, such as Pointe Mouillee SGA and the Muskegon Wastewater System, and sandy areas such as Whitefish Point and the Manistee South Pier. Most records are from August and September.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*. Casual spring and uncommon to rare fall migrant. Most frequent at shorebird sites in the SLP, including (depending on water levels) Pointe Mouillee SGA, Erie Marsh Preserve, and Shiawassee NWR.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*. Uncommon to rare migrant. Found in the more dependable shorebird areas, such as Pointe Mouillee SGA, Shiawassee NWR, and Muskegon Wastewater System, as well as smaller sewage lagoons statewide.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*. Rare migrant. As with Wilson's Phalarope, found in the more dependable shorebird areas including Pointe Mouillee SGA, Shiawassee NWR, and Muskegon Wastewater System, with the latter locale providing the greatest numbers in recent years.

Jaegers. The two most reliable sites to see jaegers in Michigan are Whitefish Point and Port Huron, with the southern Lake Michigan shoreline and the Alpena and Presque Isle areas reporting small numbers as well. Jaegers are seen in both spring and fall along the Great Lakes, although they are more numerous in fall. Most jaegers that pass through Michigan in fall are juveniles, and often too far offshore to confidently identify. In fall, jaegers can occasionally be seen closer to shore at Port Huron and rarely even right on the beaches along Lake Michigan.

Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus*. Rare to casual migrant, often occurring later in the season than Parasitic, with records from August through November (exceptionally December and January).

Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus*. Locally rare spring (May) to uncommon fall (August–November) migrant. The most frequently identified species in the Great Lakes. Whitefish Point in late May often provides the best views of adult birds.

Long-tailed Jaeger *Stercorarius longicaudus*. Casual migrant, generally occurring earlier than the other species, typically in August and September, occasionally in October and November.

Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*. Casual to rare migrant. Mainly occurs on southern Lake Michigan in June and July, and occasionally into fall. Most often found from Muskegon south to Berrien County.

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*. Uncommon to rare migrant. Most often in fall along the Lake Michigan shore in small numbers, but occasionally at other Great Lakes locations. Rare in spring. Rare weather-related invasions have brought larger numbers in late fall, with 1977 and 1998 being the most recent.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*. Rare migrant and casual summer visitor. Most often found on Lake Michigan in migration in April and September–November (sometimes December), including the Ludington area, Grand Haven, Holland SP, and Lake Macatawa.

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*. Casual to rare migrant and winter visitor. Nearly annual at Whitefish Point. Other locations worth checking are the Muskegon Wastewater System, Whiting Power Plant, Port Huron, and various areas around Saginaw Bay. Recent records from the Belleville Lake area.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*. Rare migrant and winter visitor. Less frequent than Glaucous Gull, most often found at Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, Muskegon Wastewater System, and Port Huron. Several recent records from the Belleville Lake area.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*. Rare fall migrant and winter visitor. Increasing. Landfills in SELP are turning up more and more birds. Lotus Road and the Whiting Power Plant are good areas to check. Bay City State Park has hosted an adult bird, nicknamed “Lester”, for several years (from the early 1990s through winter 2002–2003). Belleville Lake has also been productive in recent years with multiple individuals.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*. Uncommon to rare migrant and winter visitor. Most frequently found at Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, the Saginaw Bay area, and Port Huron.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*. Fairly common migrant and winter visitor. Mainly on Lakes Erie and Huron from November–March. Rare in summer. Rare on Lakes Michigan and Superior. Found inland at landfills in the SELP during winter.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*. Casual to rare fall migrant. Can be found from September to November at Whitefish Point, along the Lake Michigan shore, and at Port Huron.

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*. Uncommon to rare fall migrant, accidental in spring. Most often recorded at Whitefish Point. Also regularly recorded on Lake Michigan.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*. One-third of the North American population breeds on islands in the Great Lakes, so any site along the lakeshores will likely have this species between May and September. Only occasionally seen inland.

Cuckoos. Both Black-billed *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* and Yellow-billed *Coccyzus americanus* Cuckoos are uncommon migrants and uncommon to fairly common summer residents. Numbers vary from year to year. Some years cuckoos do not arrive in the state until the last week of May or first week of June. Black-billed is more common farther north than Yellow-billed. In good years, cuckoos can be seen in many woodlands in the LP. Places to check include Tawas Point SP, Maple River SGA, Gratiot-Saginaw SGA, Lost Nations SGA, Port Huron SGA, and Bald Mountain SRA. The Rudyard area and Seney NWR are good places in the UP for Black-billed.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*. Irruptive migrant and winter visitor. Most winters one can be found near Sault Ste. Marie, or in the fields around Rudyard. In good years, may be found almost anywhere, usually more numerous along the Great Lakes coastlines. Often has been found at the Muskegon Wastewater System when scarce elsewhere in the SLP.

Northern Hawk Owl *Surnia ulula*. Irruptive winter visitor. Absent some winters, and most irruptions typically involve only one or two birds in the Sault Ste. Marie or Whitefish Point areas. Has also been reported from the Marquette area and the Baraga Plains. In good years still confined to the UP, but more numerous and at additional locations (such as Neebish Island and Sugar Island).

Great Gray Owl *Strix nebulosa*. Irruptive winter visitor. Absent some winters, with single birds typically present most winters (sometimes into spring) at Sault Ste. Marie and Whitefish Point. In good years numbers are often throughout the eastern UP, with concentrations often at Neebish Island, Sugar Island, and south of Sault Ste. Marie. Nested in 2004 at Seney NWR.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*. Rare resident, locally uncommon migrant. Difficult to find in the breeding season. Most easily found at Whitefish Point in April during migration, and at Lake Erie Metropark and Sarett Nature Center from November–March.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*. Locally uncommon to rare winter visitor, rare summer resident. Easiest to find in winter, where birds can be found in larger weedy fields. Reliable sites include grasslands in Hillsdale County (has bred), the Muskegon Wastewater System, and Shiawassee NWR. Also found occasionally in Macomb and Washtenaw Counties.

Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*. Irruptive winter visitor. Almost never seen by birders in Michigan. Most often detected in April and October–November by banding operations at Whitefish Point. Has also been banded in small numbers at the southern end of the Stonington Peninsula, near Presque Isle, and at Cheboygan SP. In good years, extensive searches of the Jack Pines in the Whitefish Point area is probably the best strategy.

Northern Saw-whet Owl *Aegolius acadicus*. Uncommon to rare summer and winter resident, locally fairly common migrant. Inconspicuous. Breeds throughout the UP and in northernmost NLP. Most reliable at migration sites in March–April and October–November, including Whitefish Point and Alpena. Occasional in the SLP at Lake Erie Metropark and Sarett Nature Center.

Black-backed Woodpecker *Picoides arcticus*. Uncommon to rare permanent resident. Sparsely distributed throughout the UP. Inconspicuous and local. Most often found at Whitefish Point, Hulbert Bog, and the Trout Lake area. Also widely distributed in boreal forest in the western UP including Brule Lake near Iron River, Yellow Dog Plains, west of Ishpeming, Peshekee Grade, and the Baraga Plains. Nests very rarely in the northern LP, where it is very difficult to find in Jack Pine areas.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*. Uncommon migrant and summer resident. Generally a later spring migrant, sometimes into early June even in SLP. Returns south quite early, often departing breeding grounds in early August. Typically only single birds encountered in migration. Breeds throughout the UP.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris*. Uncommon migrant and local summer resident. Found at most of the state's passerine migration concentration points in low to moderate numbers. Migrates later in May than other *Empidonax* flycatchers. Returns south in August and September. Breeds in bogs in the UP. Often found at Hulbert Bog and the Trout Lake area in summer. Can also be found at Brule Lake near Iron River in the western UP.

Acadian Flycatcher *Empidonax virescens*. Uncommon migrant and summer resident. Infrequently encountered in migration, easiest to find in breeding season, where confined to the SLP. Good areas to check include Allegan SGA, Warren Woods SP, Lost Nations SGA, Indian Springs Metropark, Waterloo SRA, Oakwoods Metropark, and Port Huron SGA.

Alder *Empidonax alnorum* and **Willow** *Empidonax traillii* **Flycatchers**. Both species are fairly common migrants and summer residents. While Alder is generally more northern and Willow more southern, breeding ranges overlap broadly in the state, and in a few SLP sites (Port Huron SGA, Metro Beach Metropark) both species can be found side-by-side in wet, shrubby habitat. Alder Flycatchers are most common in the UP, where Willows are rare.

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*. Rare summer resident. Endangered. Only a few pairs confined to the LP, this species is nearly impossible to find unless a nest site is discovered. Nest sites are not consistent from year to year. More likely to be seen as a migrant (rare to casual); absent most recent summers. Birders should not approach nesting birds.

Northern Shrike *Lanius excubitor*. Irruptive winter visitor. A few every winter in the UP and NLP. In good years, can be found statewide in open shrubby habitats from November–March, but often seems absent for days at known locations due to their large territory size. Sites to check include the Rudyard and Sault Ste. Marie areas in the UP, Nayanquing Point, Fish Point Wildlife Area, Haehnle Sanctuary, and Oakwoods Metropark.

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus*. Rare migrant and summer resident. Migrant almost anywhere in the SLP, with occasional reports from NLP, and a very few from the UP. Most easily found in summer at Lost Nations SGA. Also occasionally summers at other locations, including Petersburg SGA, Sarett Nature Center, and Warren Dunes SP.

Gray Jay *Perisoreus canadensis*. Uncommon resident in boreal forest in the UP. Probably most easily found at Isle Royale NP where they are quite accustomed to people, but some more accessible sites include Hulbert Bog, Seney NWR. Peshekee Grade, the Baraga Plains, and east of Lake Linden in northeast Houghton County. Can also be found at Yellow Dog Plains near

Marquette, west of Ishpeming, northeast of Iron Mountain, near Nahma Junction, Brule Lake near Iron River, and the Kingston Plains.

Boreal Chickadee *Poecile hudsonica*. Uncommon resident in boreal forest in the UP. Good sites include Whitefish Point, Hulbert Bog, Detour SP, east of Lake Linden in Houghton County, and Peshekee Grade. Also can be found near Nahma Junction, northeast of Iron Mountain, Brule Lake near Iron River, Sylvania Recreation area near Watersmeet, the Kingston Plains, Yellow Dog Plains near Marquette, Baraga Plains, and west of Ishpeming. Very infrequent irruptions southward into NLP coinciding with more frequent irruptions of Black-capped Chickadee.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. Uncommon resident, mainly in the SLP, most easily found in residential areas, but also in the Monroe marshes and much of Berrien County. Winters with deep snow, most recently the late 1970s, had eliminated this species completely from the state in the past (birds re-colonized by mid-1980s). Single birds have recently reached as far north as the UP during northward movements in fall.

Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*. Rare to casual fall and winter visitor. Found in areas with abundant fruiting trees and shrubs. Most regular in the UP, including the Keweenaw Peninsula, the Marquette area, and at Whitefish Point. Also very rarely reported in the NLP, where it has been reported from the Traverse City area and Tawas Point SP. This species is always noted on the statewide Rare Bird Alerts when found.

Varied Thrush *Ixoreus naevius*. Casual to rare winter visitor, with records throughout the state and unpredictable, almost always at feeders. This species is always noted on the statewide Rare Bird Alerts when found.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*. Rare and local summer resident, mainly in SLP, with occasional individuals farther north. Most frequent in Berrien County. Also reliable in Waterloo SRA, and typically present at several SELP sites, but they tend to move around from year to year.

Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*. Irruption migrant and winter visitor. Most years a few are found around Sault Ste. Marie and Whitefish Point. In good years, larger numbers found in the UP and farther south into the NLP. Rarely reaches SLP, with one reliable site being the Wilderness Arboretum at the tip of the Thumb.

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus*. Uncommon summer resident. Fairly easy to find in open, shrubby fields throughout the SLP and much of the NLP. Expanding its range northward at the expense of Golden-winged Warbler. Good sites for this species include Waterloo SRA, Petersburg SGA, Port Huron SGA, and Gratiot-Saginaw SGA.

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*. Uncommon summer resident. More local than Blue-winged, and range retracting northward as Blue-winged expands. Found in open, shrubby, and often wet fields in the UP and NLP. Best sites in SLP include Gratiot-Saginaw SGA and Port Huron SGA.

Both Brewster's and Lawrence's hybrids have been noted at these and other SLP sites.

Cape May Warbler *Dendroica tigrina*. Fairly common migrant, uncommon and local summer resident. Small numbers typically noted at most migrant traps in spring and fall. Breeds locally in spruce bogs in the UP.

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens*. Fairly common migrant and summer resident. Easily found in spring and fall migration. Breeds throughout the UP. Benzie County has the greatest nesting concentration in the NLP.

Yellow-throated Warbler *Dendroica dominica*. Rare summer resident. State Threatened (probably less than 100 breeding pairs statewide). Can be found along the Galien River in Berrien and Cass Counties, and at Warren Woods State Park in Berrien County. Another smaller population has recently colonized Indian Trails Crossing Park in Tecumseh, Lenawee County. Recent late spring records north to Allegan SGA suggest breeding may eventually be confirmed there. Casual in migration elsewhere in the state.

Kirtland's Warbler *Dendroica kirtlandii*. Locally fairly common summer resident. Federally Endangered (1,800-plus breeding pairs remain worldwide, almost all in Michigan). Very rarely seen in migration. The Grayling and Mio areas each have tours to see this species, which are highly recommended. While it is not illegal to find one on your own by driving the forest roads that are open to the public, it is illegal to leave the road, or play tapes, in pursuit of the birds. Has successfully bred in small numbers in the UP, mainly in Delta County and the Baraga Plains, and intrepid birders may happen across Kirtland's Warblers in appropriate habitat (with a lot of luck).

Prairie Warbler *Dendroica discolor*. Rare migrant and summer resident. State Threatened (probably less than 200 breeding pairs statewide). The largest population is at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, with birds also breeding at Nordhouse Dunes, Oval Beach near Saugatuck, Grand Mere SP, and Warren Dunes SP. Birds found elsewhere would be noted on the state Rare Bird Alerts.

Cerulean Warbler *Dendroica cerulea*. Uncommon summer resident in the SLP. About 500 breeding pairs statewide. Population center is at the Allegan SGA and also at the Fort Custer National Guard Reservation, which is closed to entry. Access to a portion of the latter breeding population can be had at Fort Custer SP. Other sites with reliable smaller breeding colonies of this species include Waterloo SRA, Gratiot-Saginaw SGA, Pine Haven Park near Midland, Holly SGA, Highland SGA, Proud Lake SGA, and Port Huron SGA. A few also breed in the Manistee National Forest.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*. Uncommon to rare migrant and summer resident. Probably fewer than 200 breeding pairs statewide. Most numerous at Allegan SGA where they are easily found along the Kalamazoo River in spring and summer. Can also be found breeding at Shiawassee NWR, Maple River SGA, and along the White River in Branch County.

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum*. Rare spring migrant and occasional summer resident. Annually overshoots northward in spring migration, and can be found at Kleinstuck Preserve near Kalamazoo, Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor, and Fairlane Woods in Dearborn. Has summered most often at Allegan SGA, where the state's only breeding record was confirmed.

Louisiana Waterthrush *Seiurus motacilla*. Uncommon to rare spring migrant, often as early as mid-April. Has summered occasionally at Highland SGA and Indian Springs Metropark. Often found at Warren Woods SP and Allegan SGA, where they breed, in early May.

Kentucky Warbler *Oporornis formosus*. Rare migrant and occasional summer resident. Can turn up at any woodland where migrant warblers congregate in spring, such as Kleinstuck Preserve near Kalamazoo, Warren Dunes SP, Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor, and Fairlane Woods in Dearborn. Has summered, though not recently, at Waterloo SRA. Probably an annual summer resident at Lost Nation SGA, which is currently the most reliable site for this species.

Connecticut Warbler *Oporornis agilis*. Rare migrant and summer resident. Can be found at many locations in migration, including: Kleinstuck Preserve near Kalamazoo, Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor, Fairlane Woods in Dearborn, Metro Beach Metropark, and Tawas Point SP. Most often found in migration in the latter half of May, and occasionally even the first week of June. Breeds in the UP, where most frequently found at Trout Lake, the Baraga Plains, and in the Porcupine Mountains SP. Adults feeding fledged young may be more conspicuous in July and early August.

Hooded Warbler *Wilsonia citrina*. Rare migrant and locally uncommon summer resident in the SLP. The best site in the state in summer (May–June) is Waterloo SRA. A few birds also occasionally summer at Allegan SGA, Van Buren SP, Grand Mere SP, Warren Woods SP, the Pontiac Area, and Port Huron SGA.

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*. Rare, local summer resident. The best site is Lost Nations SGA, with birds recently reported from Love Creek County Park (Berrien), Oakwoods Metropark, Crosswinds Marsh, and Petersburg SGA.

Clay-colored Sparrow *Spizella pallida*. Uncommon migrant and summer resident. Most easily found in the Kirtland's Warbler breeding areas of the NLP and at Christmas Tree plantations throughout the UP. Also quite regular at Tawas Point SP and at Whitefish Point.

Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*. Uncommon to rare migrant; uncommon and local summer resident. Most easily found in many areas of the NWLP, especially in the Pellston area, the Jordan River Valley, Sleeping Bear Dunes, and the Arcadia area. Reliable sites in the SLP include grasslands in Berrien County, Hillsdale County, Willow Run Airport, and Gratiot-Saginaw SGA.

Henslow's Sparrow *Ammodramus henslowii*. Rare and local migrant and summer resident. Breeding areas occupied for only a few years at a time, then move to new sites. The most reliable summer sites currently include grasslands in Berrien and Hillsdale Counties, and Sharon Valley SGA. Also sometimes found in northern Bay County.

Le Conte's Sparrow *Ammodramus leconteii*. Uncommon and local summer resident in UP. Casual migrant elsewhere. Best locations are Seney NWR and Munuscong Bay. Also found in small numbers near Vermillion in the Whitefish Point area and in the Trout Lake area.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*. Uncommon migrant and local summer resident. Often skulky and difficult to see in spring and fall as it does not sing in migration, but easily found in breeding season in the Kirtland's Warbler areas of the NLP. Fairly widespread breeder in the UP. A small disjunct breeding population occurs at Minden City SGA, though it is not reported annually.

Harris's Sparrow *Zonotrichia querula*. Rare migrant and winter visitor. Most frequently found, often in small numbers in September and October, in the Keweenaw Peninsula, particularly in the Copper Harbor and Houghton areas, and Agate Harbor. Also annual at feeders at Whitefish Point in spring or fall migration. Occasionally found in the Escanaba area and the Sturgeon Sloughs Wildlife Area. Reports elsewhere in the state will be noted on Rare Bird Alerts.

Dickcissel *Spiza americana*. Rare and local summer resident. Recently most reliable in Berrien County grasslands, but also most years can be found along Rank Road grasslands in Jackson County. In irruption years, which are apparently triggered by drought in the central plains states, this species may be found in almost any weedy field in the state.

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*. Local summer resident. Regular in grasslands in Berrien County, and in the Traverse City and Sleeping Bear Dunes areas. Annually found at Willow Run Airport and often at the Rank Road grasslands in Jackson County.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*. Uncommon and very local summer resident. Most reliable in the Saginaw Bay area, where the best sites are Nayanquing Point and Tobico Marsh. Has also nested at Portage Point in the UP (not recently), and Pte. Mouillee SGA.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. Fairly common summer resident, somewhat local. Easiest to find in open areas among the Jack Pines in the Kirtland's Warbler breeding areas in the NLP. Also breeds in open areas of the UP, especially in the west, and at the Muskegon Wastewater System. A disjunct breeding population in the SLP occurs near the Minden City SGA.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*. Uncommon to rare migrant and summer resident, mainly in the SLP. Currently most reliable at Crosswinds Marsh, Sarett Nature Center, and Fernwood Botanical Gardens. Migrants sparsely

distributed throughout the SLP, with some as far north as Tawas Point SP, and casually to the UP.

Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator*. Irruptive winter visitor. Annual in the Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, and Marquette areas, and nearly annual in NLP areas including Alpena and Presque Isle. Very infrequently, major irruptions bring birds as far south as the SLP.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*. Irruptive winter visitor. Regular breeder in small numbers in the Keweenaw Peninsula and the Baraga Plains. Most often found in winter in the Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, and Marquette areas. Very infrequently, major irruptions bring birds as far south as the SLP, where they rarely have remained to breed.

White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*. Irruptive winter visitor. Regular breeder in small numbers in the Keweenaw Peninsula and the Baraga Plains. Most often found in winter in the Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, and Marquette areas. Infrequently, major irruptions bring birds as far south as the SLP, where they rarely have remained to breed. Westcroft Gardens on Grosse Ile is a good site to check even when the species is scarce or absent elsewhere in the SLP.

Common Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*. Irruptive winter visitor. Numbers very considerably from year to year. Most frequent in the Sault Ste. Marie, Whitefish Point, and Marquette areas. Occasionally, major irruptions bring birds statewide.

Hoary Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni*. Irruptive winter visitor. Normally only 1 to a very few birds statewide during the infrequent major irruptions. Identifications should be made with caution. Most regular in the Whitefish Point and Sault Ste. Marie areas, almost always at feeders.

Evening Grosbeak *Coccothraustes vespertinus*. Uncommon to fairly common year round resident in UP and parts of the NLP. Formerly an irruptive species in winter, which brought birds as far south as the SLP, but numbers apparently declining, and no major irruptions have occurred in many years.

STATUS AND OCCURRENCE OF MICHIGAN BIRDS

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Michigan's official bird list stands at 421 species (July 31, 2003). This section consists of seasonal bar graphs and distribution graphs for 303 regularly occurring (annual) species, providing information on their status and occurrence in the state. Following these charts, an annotated list covers all casual, accidental, extirpated, and extinct species. A total of 222 of the regularly occurring species have bred in the state and these are marked with an asterisk (*) in the bar graphs. Additionally, seven species of Casual/Accidental status have also bred and, when added to the extirpated Greater Prairie-Chicken and the extinct Passenger Pigeon, brings the total number of species known to have bred in Michigan to 231.

Bird distribution and seasonal occurrence in Michigan is complex. One of the greatest factors influencing birds in the state is the presence of four of the five Great Lakes (Erie, Huron, Michigan, and Superior) which form the boundaries of Michigan's two large peninsulas, the Upper Peninsula (UP) and Lower Peninsula (LP). Additionally, the 45th parallel of latitude runs through the middle of the Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP), with deciduous forests dominating in the Southern Lower Peninsula (SLP) generally transitioning to coniferous and boreal forests farther north. These three regions (UP, NLP, SLP) have been used for many years in the compilations of the Michigan Bird Survey, which is published quarterly in the state's ornithological journal *Michigan Birds and Natural History*, with seasonal highlights forwarded to ABA for inclusion in *North American Birds* (formerly *Field Notes*, *American Birds*, etc.). The state's Breeding Bird Atlas (Brewer et al. 1991) also used these three regions.

The status of many species can be different for southern lower Michigan, northern lower Michigan, or the Upper Peninsula. The seasonal abundance for each species is shown on the bar graphs with three separate bars, one for the UP, one for the northern LP, and one for the southern LP. An effort has been made to represent the current seasonal abundance of Michigan birds, rather than to present a thorough historical documentation. For the sake of

consistency, available published data from 10 years (1993–2002) was used to create these bar graphs.

On these bar graphs, the following graphics and definitions and have been used for each quarter-month period:

-  COMMON: Found in moderate to large numbers, and easily found in appropriate habitat at the right time of year.
 -  FAIRLY COMMON: Found in small to moderate numbers, and usually easy to find in appropriate habitat at the right time of year.
 -  UNCOMMON: Found in small numbers, and usually—but not always—found with some effort in appropriate habitat at the right time of year.
 -  RARE: Occurs annually in very small numbers. Not to be expected on any given day, but may be found with extended effort over the course of the appropriate season(s).
 -  CASUAL: Occurs less than annually, but there tends to be a pattern over time at the right time of year in appropriate habitat; 4 or more records in last 10 years.
 -  ACCIDENTAL: Represents an exceptional occurrence that might not be repeated again for decades; 3 or fewer records in last 10 years.
- * Asterisk indicates a species that has bred in the state.

Certain species also show a distinct preference for east or west sections. For example, some waterbirds are more common along Lake Michigan and, in the Southern Lower Peninsula, and certain passerines breed more commonly in either the eastern or western half. To show this, a small graphical representation of these six regions is included in the first three columns of the bar graphs for each species. These six areas (WUP, EUP, NWLP, NELP, SWLP, and SELP) correspond exactly with the six main sections of this guide, with the status of each species indicated as shown in the sample below. The following definitions are used:

- R = Permanent Resident
- S = Summer Resident
- W = Winter Resident
- M = Migrant
- c = Casual
- a = Accidental

	Western	Eastern
UP	c	S
NLP	R	M
SLP	M	M

		Western	Eastern	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Greater Yellowlegs	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Lesser Yellowlegs	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Solitary Sandpiper	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Willet	UP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Spotted Sandpiper *	UP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Upland Sandpiper *	UP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	S	S				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Whimbrel Mainly Great Lakes coastlines.	UP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Hudsonian Godwit	UP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Marbled Godwit	UP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	a	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Ruddy Turnstone Uncommon migrant.	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Red Knot Mainly Great Lakes coastlines.	UP	a	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	a	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	c	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Sanderling	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Semipalmated Sandpiper	UP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	M	M				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
Western Sandpiper	UP	a	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	NLP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		
	SLP	c	c				||||	||||			||||	||||	||||		

		Western	Eastern	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Pomarine Jaeger 17 records from 1993-2002.	UP NLP SLP	a a a	c a a						..			..	..
Parasitic Jaeger Great Lakes.	UP NLP SLP	a a c	M a c					---				-----	-----	-----	
Laughing Gull Mainly Great Lakes.	UP NLP SLP	c a M	c a c					....	..						..
Franklin's Gull Mainly on Great Lakes.	UP NLP SLP	a a M	c c c					.....	..	---		.....	.....	.....
Little Gull Mainly on Great Lakes.	UP NLP SLP	a a M	c c c					.....		..	.....		.....		-----
Bonaparte's Gull	UP NLP SLP	M M M	M M M	.....			-----	-----	..	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Ring-billed Gull *	UP NLP SLP	R R R	R R R	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Herring Gull *	UP NLP SLP	R R R	R R R	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Thayer's Gull	UP NLP SLP	a a W	c c c					---			..		-----	-----	-----
Iceland Gull	UP NLP SLP	a c W	c c W	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	..				.....	.....	.....
Lesser Black-backed Gull	UP NLP SLP	a W W	c W W			.....	-----	-----	..	.....	.....	-----	-----	-----	-----
Glaucous Gull	UP NLP SLP	W W W	W W W	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	..	..			.....	.....	.....
Great Black-backed Gull	UP NLP SLP	W W W	W W W	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sabine's Gull Mainly on Great Lakes.	UP NLP SLP	a c c	c c c									.....	.....	.....	.....

616 BAR GRAPHS

		Western	Eastern	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Blackpoll Warbler	UP NLP SLP	M M M	M M M					||| ||| |||	.... ... ..			||| ||| |||		
Cerulean Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	R M S	a M S					..							
Black-and-white Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	S S M	S S M				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||				
American Redstart *	UP NLP SLP	S S S	S S S				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||			
Prothonotary Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	a S	c S					....	|||				..
Worm-eating Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	c	a c				..	|||			..	..
Ovenbird *	UP NLP SLP	S S S	S S S				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||			
Northern Waterthrush *	UP NLP SLP	S S M	S S M				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	..		....
Louisiana Waterthrush *	UP NLP SLP	S S	M S				||| |||	||| |||					..		
Kentucky Warbler * Two confirmed breeding records 1982 & 1999.	UP NLP SLP	M	a M				..	|||			..	..
Connecticut Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	S M M	S M M				||| |||	||| |||	||| |||	.... ....	.... ....	||| |||	
Mourning Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	S S S	S S S				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||			
Common Yellowthroat *	UP NLP SLP	S S S	S S S				||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||	||| ||| |||			.....
Hooded Warbler *	UP NLP SLP	a a S	c c S					.....	..		..

CASUAL AND ACCIDENTAL SPECIES

The number of records for the Casual species listed below include only those between the years 1993 through 2002, consistent with our approach for regular species in the bar graphs. The number of records for the Accidental species listed below include all known accepted records for the state. For species with a single record, details of date and location are provided. For species with two or more records, the years spanning the range of records is provided, including accepted records through 2003.

Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*): Accidental. 4 records (1962–1981).

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*): Casual. 10 records (1993–2002). Spring and fall migrant, a few in winter. Sometimes multiple individuals. Apparent hybrids with Snow Goose occur.

Brant (*Branta bernicla*): Casual. 21 records (1993–2002). Spring and fall migrant, mainly on Great Lakes. Occasionally multiple individuals.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*): Casual. 19 records (1993–2002). Migrant and winter visitor, most frequent in April.

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*): Accidental. 3 records (1969–1992). Hybrids with Blue-winged Teal have occurred.

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (24 April 1991, Saginaw Co.).

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*): Accidental. 3 records (1973–1995).

King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*): Casual. 8 records (1993–2002). Migrant and winter visitor on Great Lakes.

Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*): Accidental. 3 records (1978–2003), all on Great Lakes.

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*): Casual. 4 records (1993–2002). Winter visitor (November–March), mainly on Great Lakes.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*): Casual. 16 records (1993–2002). Spring and fall migrant, mainly on Great Lakes, with majority at Whitefish Point.

Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*): Accidental. [Specimen]. 1 record, a bird found alive (19 August 2000 in Macomb Co.) which later died. Banded as a chick on 7 September 1991 at Copeland Bird Observatory, Northern Ireland, and not seen since!

Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*): Accidental. 9 records (1911–2002), most to SELP in late fall and early winter.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*): Casual. 6 records (1993–2002), recorded from SELP, SWLP, and UP.

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*): Accidental. 2 records (1988 and 1995), following hurricanes.

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*): Casual. 13 records (1993–2002). Spring and summer visitor.

Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (3 August 1993, Monroe Co.).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*): Casual. 12 records (1993–2002). Spring and summer visitor, mainly to SLP. Last breeding record was 1988.

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*): Accidental. 5 records (1970–2001).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): Casual. 8 records (1993–2002). Spring and summer visitor, a few in fall.

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*): Casual. 5 records (1993–2002). Spring and summer visitor.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*): Accidental. 2 records (1963 and 1975).

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*): Casual. 9 records (1993–2002).

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*): Casual. 13 records (1993–2002). Primarily a spring migrant.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*): Accidental. 4 records (1924–2003).

Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*): Accidental. 6 records (1985–1992).

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*): Accidental. 2 records (1982 and 1987).

Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*): Accidental. 2 records (1951 and 1988).

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*): Casual. 15 records (1993–2002). Endangered summer resident, with perhaps only a few pairs statewide.

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*): Accidental. 8 records (1837–2000).

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*): Accidental. 2 records (1992 and 1994).

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*): Accidental. 2 records (1993 and 2001).

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*): Accidental. 3 records (1980–2003), including successful breeding in 2003.

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (9 August 1976, Monroe Co.).

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): Accidental. 11 records (1975–2002), 10 from Monroe Co.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*): Casual. 15 records (1993–2002). Mainly a spring migrant, a few in early fall.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicaria*): Casual. 22 records (1993–2002). Fall migrant, mainly on Great Lakes coastlines.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudatus*): Casual. 10 records (1993–2002). Mainly a fall migrant on Great Lakes, accidental in spring.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*): Accidental. 11 records (1966–1995). Mainly on Great Lakes.

Heerman's Gull (*Larus heermanni*): Accidental. 3 records (1979–1981, Macomb Co., considered to be the same individual returning).

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*): Accidental. 5 records (1987–1994).

California Gull (*Larus californicus*): Casual. 7 records (1993–2002).

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (29 December 1997, Genesee Co.).

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*): Accidental. 1 record (29 November 1981, Chippewa Co.).

Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*): Accidental. 1 record (22 December 1995–12 January 1996, Marquette Co.).

Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (31 July 1987, Berrien Co.).

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*): Casual. 8 records (1993–2002). Migrant and summer visitor. Mainly on Great Lakes.

Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (21 June 1997, Berrien Co.).

Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*): Accidental. 9 records (1943–2001).

Dovekie (*Alle alle*): Accidental. 2 records (1881 and 1939).

Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*): Accidental. 4 records (1894–1950).

Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*): Accidental. 4 records (1989–2001).

Band-tailed Pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*): Accidental. 1 record (24 December 1967–22 January 1968, Berrien Co.).

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*): Accidental. 1 record (13–24 June 2002, Kalamazoo Co.).

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*): Casual. 6 records (1993–2002).

Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*): Accidental. 3 records (1966–2000).

Groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*): Accidental. 3 records (1951–1976).

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*): Accidental. 4 records (1990–2000). Former rare breeder (last nesting in 1983, Monroe Co.).

Burrowing Owl (*Athene unicularia*): Accidental. 3 records (1949–1986).

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*): Accidental. 2 records (1976 and 2000).

White-collared Swift (*Streptoprocne zonaris*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (19 May 1996, Iosco Co.).

White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatilis*): Accidental. 1 record (August 1926, Hillsdale Co.).

Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*): Accidental. 2 records (1996 and 2002).

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*): Accidental. 2 records (1996 and 2000).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*): Casual. 9 records (1993–2002). Fall migrant, has remained through early January.

Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (18 May 2001, Chippewa Co.).

Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes aurifrons*): Accidental. 1 record (20 November–22 December 1974, Cheboygan Co.).

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*): Casual. 8 records (1993–2002). Mainly in winter and nearly all from UP.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondi*): Accidental. [Specimen]. 1 record (24 October 1990, mist netted in Kalamazoo Co.).

Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*): Casual. 5 records (1993–2002). Mainly a spring migrant.

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*): Accidental. 2 records (1944 and 1972).

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*): Accidental. 2 records (1994 and 1995).

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (23 May 1997, Keweenaw Co.).

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*): Accidental. 1 record (14–18 Oct 1984, Oceana Co.).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*): Casual. 14 records (1993–2002). Spring and fall migrant.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*): Accidental. 2 records (1983 and 2001).

Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*): Casual. 6 records (1993–2002). Migrant and summer resident, formerly annual, all from SLP. One confirmed breeding in 1980.

Black-capped Vireo (*Vireo atricapilla*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (22 May 2002, Benzie Co.).

Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (16 December 1978, Chippewa Co.).

Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonicus*): Accidental. 5 records (1837–2002).

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Accidental. [Sight record]. 1 record (13 November 1999, Ottawa Co.).

Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*): Accidental. [Specimen]. 1 record (17 July 1899, Wayne Co.).

Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*): Accidental. 4 records (1910–2002).

Bewick's Wren (*Thyromanes bewickii*): Accidental. 9 records (1879–1993).

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*): Casual. 6 records (1993–2002). Fall migrant, all in UP and NLP.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*): Accidental. 2 records (1980 and 1999).

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*): Accidental. 4 records (1986–2002).

White/Black-backed Wagtail (*Motacilla alballugens*): Accidental. 1 record (14–24 April 1985, Muskegon Co.).

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*): Accidental. 5 records (1935–1995).

Virginia's Warbler (*Vermivora virginiae*): Accidental. 2 records (1993 and 1997).

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*): Accidental. 5 records (1958–2002).

Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*): Accidental. 3 records (1988–1996).

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*): Accidental. [Specimen]. 1 record (3 May 2001, Barry Co., window kill).

Painted Redstart (*Myioborus pictus*): Accidental. 3 records (1983–2002).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*): Casual. 11 records (1993–2002). Spring migrant, accidental winter visitor.

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*): Accidental. 6 records (1974–2002).

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*): Accidental. 1 record (4–16 January 2003, Huron Co.).

Cassin's Sparrow (*Aimophila cassinii*): Accidental. [Specimen]. 1 record (16 September 1985, Keweenaw Co.).

Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*): Accidental. 2 records (1944 and 1946).

Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*): Accidental. 1 record (24–25 May 1997, Chippewa Co.).

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*): Casual. 16 records (1993–2002). Migrant and summer visitor, most often from UP in recent years. Formerly annual, last breeding 1959.

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*): Accidental. 3 records (1982–1992).

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*): Casual. 6 records (1993–2002).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*): Accidental. 17 records (1893–2001).

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*): Accidental. 3 records (1978–1995).

McCown's Longspur (*Calcarius mccownii*): Accidental. 1 record (27–29 May 1981, Chippewa Co.).

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*): Casual. 10 records (1993–2002). Migrant in UP, several records from Whitefish Point.

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*): Accidental. 3 records (1980–1999), all in Chippewa Co.

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*): Accidental. 1 record (17–25 March 1963, Washtenaw Co.).

Blue Grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*): Casual. 5 records (1993–2002). Mainly a spring migrant.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*): Casual. 10 records (1993–2002). Mainly a spring migrant.

Great-tailed/Boat-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus major/mexicanus*): Accidental. 2 records (1997 and 2000), both in Chippewa Co., both females.

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*): Accidental. 2 records (1977 and 1995).

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*): Accidental. 4 records (1993–2002).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*): Accidental. 2 records (1984 and 1991).

EXTIRPATED SPECIES

Greater Prairie-Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*): Extirpated. Last reported 1981, Clare Co.

EXTINCT AND POSSIBLY EXTINCT SPECIES

Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*): Possibly extinct. 1 Michigan specimen, 1879.

Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*): Extinct. Last Michigan specimen collected 1898, Wayne Co.

MAMMALS OF MICHIGAN

Michigan's mammal fauna comprises approximately 61 species. Names here follow Wilson and Cole (2000), *Common Names of Mammals of the World*.

- Virginia Opossum (*Didelphis marsupialis*)
 Least Shrew (*Cryptotis parva*) – Southern Lower Peninsula only.
 Northern Short-tailed Shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*)
 Arctic Shrew (*Sorex arcticus*) – Upper Peninsula only.
 Cinereous (Masked) Shrew (*Sorex cinereus*)
 Pygmy Shrew (*Sorex hoyi*)
 (Northern) Water Shrew (*Sorex palustris*)
 Star-nosed Mole (*Condylura cristata*)
 Eastern Mole (*Scalopus aquaticus*) – Lower Peninsula only.
 Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
 Silver-haired Bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)
 Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*)
 Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
 Keen's Myotis (*Myotis keenii*)
 Little Brown Bat (*Myotis lucifugus*)
 Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) – Endangered, extreme southern Lower Peninsula only.
 Evening Bat (*Nycticeius humeralis*) – Extreme southern Lower Peninsula only.
 Eastern Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*) – Western Upper Peninsula only.
 Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
 Eastern Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) – Upper Peninsula only, mainly Isle Royale.
 Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*)
 Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)
 Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) – Upper Peninsula only.
 Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)
 Puma (*Puma concolor*) – presence of two-plus individuals recently confirmed in Upper Peninsula.
 Northern River Otter (*Lontra canadensis*)
 Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)
 American Marten (*Martes americana*) – Upper Peninsula only.
 Ermine (Short-tailed Weasel) (*Mustela erminea*)
 Long-tailed Weasel (*Mustela frenata*)
 Least Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*)
 American Mink (*Mustela vison*)
- American Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)
 Northern Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)
 American Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*)
 (American) Elk (*Cervus elaphus*) – Reintroduced into northern Lower Peninsula.
 Moose (*Alces alces*) – Upper Peninsula only, mainly Isle Royale.
 White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)
 Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*)
 Eastern Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)
 Eastern Fox Squirrel (*Sciurus niger*)
 Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus tridecemlineatus*)
 Least Chipmunk (*Tamias minimus*) – Upper Peninsula only.
 Eastern Chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*)
 Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
 Northern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*)
 Southern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*)
 American Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)
 Woodland Jumping Mouse (*Napaeozapus insignis*)
 Meadow Jumping Mouse (*Zapus hudsonius*)
 Southern Redback Vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*)
 Prairie Vole (*Microtus ochrogaster*) – southwestern corner of Lower Peninsula only.
 Meadow Vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*)
 Woodland (Pine) Vole (*Microtus pinetorum*) – Lower Peninsula only.
 Southern Bog Lemming (*Synaptomys cooperi*)
 Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethica*)
 House Mouse (*Mus musculus*)
 Brown Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)
 White-footed Mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*)
 Deer Mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*)
 North American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*)
 Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*)
 Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*)

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF MICHIGAN

Michigan does not possess the diversity of reptiles that are characteristic of Arizona, nor the diversity of amphibians that makes the southern Appalachians so interesting, but birders who are interested in herps will surely find something of interest among our fauna of 23 amphibian and 30 reptile species. A good regional reference is *Amphibians and Reptiles of the Great Lakes Region* (Harding 1997). Regional specialties of interest to herpetologists include Blanding's Turtle, Butler's Garter Snake, and Western and Eastern Fox Snakes. Note that it is illegal to collect or handle Threatened or Endangered reptiles and amphibians in Michigan.

SALAMANDERS

Mudpuppy (*Necturus maculosus*) – Statewide. Aquatic. Fairly common in most wetlands, including larger lakes and rivers, but rarely seen except by fishermen who accidentally catch them.

Lesser Siren (*Siren intermedia nettingi*) – SWLP. Likely a relict population, but possibly introduced. Aquatic, including roadside ditches. Rarely seen due to its aquatic habits.

Blue-spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*) – Statewide. Fairly common in vernal ponds in woodlands. Populations in SELP are often hybrids with other species (i.e., Small-mouthed and Jefferson's, which does not occur in the state). Breeds February–April, when most likely to be encountered.

Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Requires vernal ponds in woodlands. Declining. Breeds February–April, when most likely to be encountered.

Marbled Salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*) – SWLP. Likely a relict population, but possibly introduced. Threatened. Requires moist woodlands with abundant ground cover. Breeds September–October, when most likely to be encountered.

Small-mouthed Salamander (*Ambystoma texanum*) – SELP, at northern end of its range. Endangered. Requires vernal ponds in woodlands. Often hybridizes with Blue-spotted Salamander. Breeds February–April, when most likely to be encountered.

Eastern Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*) – Southern and central LP, local in UP. Uncommon to common in vernal ponds in woodlands. Breeds February–April, when most likely to be encountered.

Eastern Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) – Statewide. Uncommon in ponds, marshes, and lakes. Aquatic form more frequent than terrestrial “Red Eft”.

Red-backed Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Common in moist woodlands with abundant ground cover. Two color morphs, “leadback” and “redback” in about equal numbers. Active from April–October most years.

Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylum scutatum*) – Mostly Statewide, though only locally common. Not on Isle Royale. Requires moist woods with permanent mossy ponds or sphagnum bogs. Most active in spring.

TOADS AND FROGS

American Toad (*Bufo americanus americanus*) – Statewide. Active April–October, but most common in spring, often far from water.

Fowler's Toad (*Bufo woodhousii fowleri*) – SWLP, local in SELP and NWLP. Prefers sandier situations than American Toad, most common along Lake Michigan.

Blanchard's Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans blanchardi*) – SELP & SWLP. Local and declining. Active mainly from May–July. Named after a Michigan herpetologist.

Western Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata triseriata*) – Absent only from UP, except for Isle Royale where *P. t. maculata* is present. Very common in early spring, often with ice still in ponds. Can be found in almost any wet field or woodland in April. Begins calling again briefly in September–October.

Northern Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer crucifer*) – Statewide. Another early species, typically emerging soon after Western Chorus Frog. Most common in wet woodlands, but occurs in almost any wetland area.

Gray Treefrog (*Hyla versicolor*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Fairly common in wet woodland and wooded swamps. Emerges later than other Michigan frogs, with peak of calling activity May–June.

Cope's Gray Treefrog (*Hyla chrysoscelis*) – Distribution not well known, less common than Gray Treefrog. Appearance identical to Gray Treefrog and calls subtly different.

Green Frog (*Rana clamitans melanota*) – Statewide. Fairly common in ponds, lakes, marshes, and wet woodlands. Most active May–June, but can be found through September–October.

Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Declining. Found in larger ponds, lakes, and marshes. Active later than other Michigan frogs, with most activity typically in June–July.

Northern Leopard Frog (*Rana pipiens*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Declining in some areas. Found in marshes, wet fields and woodlands. Active mainly in April–May, but can sometimes be heard calling through September–October.

Pickering Frog (*Rana palustris*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Less common and more local than Leopard Frog. Found in bogs, lakes, marshes, and streams. Active mainly in April–May.

Mink Frog (*Rana septentrionalis*) – UP only, including Isle Royale. Locally common in bogs, ponds, and lakes. Active mainly in June–July.

Wood Frog (*Rana sylvatica*) – Statewide. Most often around vernal ponds in

wet woodlands. Breeds early and explosively, becoming difficult to find after breeding. Typically calls for one to two weeks after spring thaw. Often sounds like a flock of Mallards in the woodlands.

TURTLES AND TORTOISES

Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) – Statewide, except Isle Royale. Fairly common on larger ponds, lakes, and streams.

Common Musk Turtle (*Sternotherus odoratus*) – SELP and SWLP, and very locally (unconfirmed) in NELP. Locally common but declining in lakes ponds, marshes, and rivers.

Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) – SELP, SWLP, and parts of NWLP. Rare and declining in isolated colonies in clear shallow ponds and wet woodland.

Wood Turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*) – UP except Isle Royale, NWLP, and NELP. Uncommon to rare and declining in sandy-bottomed streams or rivers.

Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*) – SELP, SWLP, parts of NWLP. Uncommon to rare and declining mainly in mixed woodlands with sandy soils. More likely along Lake Michigan.

Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) – Throughout LP and in central UP. Fairly common in LP, rare and local in UP. The Great Lakes are a stronghold for this regional endemic. Found in ponds, marshes, lakes, and rivers.

Common Map Turtle (*Graptemys geographica*) – SELP, SWLP, parts of NWLP. Fairly common away from polluted urban wetlands.

Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta*) – Statewide. The most frequently encountered turtle species in the state, present in most wetland habitats.

Red-eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta*) – SELP and SWLP. Very local but often fairly common. May be relict populations or may be introduced.

Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle (*Apalone spinifera*) – Most of LP, not in UP. Uncommon and local in rivers and larger streams and lakes. Declining.

LIZARDS

- Five-lined Skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*) – Throughout LP, and in parts of western UP. Very local and common to rare in sandy or rocky woodlands, and in particular among driftwood on sandy Great Lakes shorelines.
- Six-lined Racerunner (*Cnemidophorus sexlineatus*) – One locale in SELP, Tuscola County. May be relict population or may be introduced.

SNAKES

- Northern Water Snake (*Nerodia sipedon*) – Throughout LP and eastern UP. Very local in western UP. Fairly common in wetland areas.
- Copper-bellied Water Snake (*Nerodia erythrogaster neglecta*) – SWLP. A relict population found only in small, isolated colonies in south-central Michigan and adjacent Indiana and Ohio. Endangered. Shrub swamps, ponds, and lakes.
- Queen Snake (*Regina septemvittata*) – SELP, SWLP, and parts of NWLP. Uncommon, local, and declining on edges of ponds and streams where their main prey, crayfish, are found.
- Kirtland's Snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*) – Most southern portions of SELP and SWLP. Endangered. Moist or wet areas, and typically spends most of its time underground.
- Common Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) – Statewide. The most commonly encountered snake in Michigan, found in a wide variety of habitats.
- Butler's Garter Snake (*Thamnophis butleri*) – SELP and parts of NELP. A regional endemic, uncommon in wet meadows and prairies. Identification difficult due to similar Common Garter Snake.
- Northern Ribbon Snake (*Thamnophis sauritus*) – Throughout LP, not in UP. Fairly common along edges of lakes, ponds, and marshes.
- Brown Snake (*Storeria dekayi*) – Throughout LP, very local in western UP. Uncommon to fairly common, most often in damp woodlands under logs and in leaf litter.
- Northern Red-bellied Snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata*) – Statewide, except extreme SW corner of LP. Uncommon in damp woodlands under logs and in leaf litter.
- Smooth Green Snake (*Opheodryas vernalis*) – Statewide, except extreme SW corner of LP. Uncommon in moist grassy areas, prairies, fields, and marshes.
- Blue Racer (*Coluber constrictor*) – SELP, SWLP, parts of NWLP, and very local in SW corner of UP. Uncommon in fields, shrublands, and open woodlands.
- Black Rat Snake (*Elaphe obsoleta*) – SELP, SWLP. Rare and declining in woodlands and fields, more often in SWLP.
- Western Fox Snake (*Elaphe vulpina*) – Western UP and locally in parts of eastern UP. A regional endemic, locally common in pine-oak woodlands and adjacent farm fields.
- Eastern Fox Snake (*Elaphe gloydi*) – SELP. Regional endemic, uncommon to rare in lakeshore and near shore habitats along Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, and Lake Erie.
- Eastern Milk Snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*) – Throughout LP, local in UP. Common to uncommon in woodlands, bogs, and swamps.
- Northern Ring-necked Snake (*Diadophis punctatus*) – Statewide. Uncommon to rare and local in woodlands.
- Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (*Heterodon platyrhinos*) – Throughout LP, not in UP. Uncommon to fairly common in woodlands.
- Eastern Massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus*) – Throughout LP, not in UP. Threatened. Shrub swamps, bogs, fens, marsh borders, sedge meadows, and moist prairies.

BUTTERFLIES OF MICHIGAN

Many birders are also interested in butterflies. When they're out birding, the best local reference is *Michigan Butterflies and Skippers: A Field Guide and Reference* (Nielsen 1999). Michigan's butterfly fauna is represented by about 158 species. Common and Latin names in this list follow the *Checklist and English Names of North American Butterflies, First Edition* (1995), published by the North American Butterfly Association.

Papilionidae (Swallowtails)

- Zebra Swallowtail (*Eurytides marcellus*)
- Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*)
- Black Swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*)
- Old World Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)
- Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cressphontes*)
- Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio glaucus*)
- Canada Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio canadensis*)
- Spicebush Swallowtail (*Papilio troilus*)

Pieridae (Whites & Sulphurs)

- Checkered White (*Pontia protodice*)
- Western White (*Pontia occidentalis*)
- Mustard White (*Pieris napi*)
- West Virginia White (*Pieris virginensis*)
- Cabbage Butterfly (*Pieris rapae*)
- Large Marble (*Euchloe ausonides*)
- Olympia Marble (*Euchloe olympia*)
- Clouded Sulphur (*Colias philodice*)
- Orange Sulphur (*Colias eurytheme*)
- Pink-edged Sulphur (*Colias interior*)
- Southern Dog Face (*Colias cesonia*)
- Cloudless Sulphur (*Phoebis sennae*)
- Orange-barred Sulphur (*Phoebis philea*)
- Mexican Sulphur (*Eurema mexicanum*)
- Little Yellow (*Eurema lisa*)
- Sleepy Orange (*Eurema nicippe*)
- Dainty Sulphur (*Nathalis iole*)

Lycaenidae (Harvesters, Coppers, Hairstreaks & Blues)

- Harvester (*Feniseca tarquinius*)
- American Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*)
- Bronze Copper (*Lycaena hylus*)
- Bog Copper (*Lycaena epixanthe*)
- Dorcas Copper (*Lycaena dorcas*)
- Purplish Copper (*Lycaena helloides*)
- Coral Hairstreak (*Satyrrium titus*)
- Acadian Hairstreak (*Satyrrium acadica*)
- Edward's Hairstreak (*Satyrrium edwardsii*)
- Banded Hairstreak (*Satyrrium calanus*)
- Hickory Hairstreak (*Satyrrium caryaevorum*)
- Striped Hairstreak (*Satyrrium liparops*)
- Southern Hairstreak (*Satyrrium favonius*)
- Brown Elfin (*Callophrys augustinus*)
- Hoary Elfin (*Callophrys polios*)

- Frosted Elfin (*Callophrys irus*)
- Henry's Elfin (*Callophrys henrici*)
- Eastern Pine Elfin (*Callophrys niphon*)
- Western Pine Elfin (*Callophrys eryphon*)
- White-M Hairstreak (*Parrhasius m-album*)
- Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*)
- Red-banded Hairstreak (*Calycopis cecrops*)
- Early Hairstreak (*Erora laeta*)
- Reakirt's Blue (*Hemiargus isola*)
- Eastern Tailed Blue (*Everes comyntas*)
- Western Tailed Blue (*Everes amyntula*)
- Spring Azure (*Celastrina ladon*)
- Silvery Blue (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus*)
- Northern Blue (*Lycaeides idas*)
- Melissa (Karner) Blue (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*), Endangered.
- Greenish Blue (*Plebejus saepiolus*)

Riodinidae (Metalmarks)

- Swamp Metalmark (*Calephelis mutica*)

Nymphalidae (Brushfoots)

- American Snout (*Calephelis carineta*)
- Gulf Fritillary (*Agraulis vanillae*)
- Variigated Fritillary (*Euptoieta claudia*)
- Great Spangled Fritillary (*Speyeria cybele*)
- Aphrodite Fritillary (*Speyeria aphrodite*)
- Regal Fritillary (*Speyeria idalia*)
- Atlantis Fritillary (*Speyeria atlantis*)
- Bog Fritillary (*Boloria eunomia*)
- Silver-bordered Fritillary (*Boloria selene*)
- Meadow Fritillary (*Boloria bellona*)
- Frigga Fritillary (*Boloria frigga*)
- Freija Fritillary (*Boloria freija*)
- Gorgone Checkerspot (*Chlosyne gorgone*)
- Silvery Checkerspot (*Chlosyne nycteis*)
- Harris' Checkerspot (*Chlosyne harrisii*)
- Pearl Crescent (*Phyciodes tharos*)
- Northern Crescent (*Phyciodes selenis*)
- Tawny Crescent (*Phyciodes batesii*)
- Baltimore Checkerspot (*Euphydryas phaeton*)
- Question Mark (*Polygonia interrogationis*)
- Eastern Comma (*Polygonia comma*)
- Satyr Comma (*Polygonia satyrus*)
- Green Comma (*Polygonia faunus*)
- Hoary Comma (*Polygonia gracilis*)

Gray Comma (*Polygonia progne*)
 Compton Tortoise Shell (*Nymphalis vau-album*)
 California Tortoise Shell (*Nymphalis californica*)
 Mourning Cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*)
 Milbert's Tortoise Shell (*Nymphalis milberti*)
 American Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*)
 Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)
 Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)
 Common Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*)
 Red-spotted Purple (*Limenitis arthemis astyanax*)
 White Admiral (*Limenitis arthemis arthemis*)
 Viceroy (*Limenitis archippus*)
 Goatweed Leafwing (*Anaea andria*)
 Hackberry Emperor (*Asterocampa celtis*)
 Tawny Emperor (*Asterocampa clyton*)

Satyridae (Satyrs, Wood Nymphs, Arctics)

Northern Pearly Eye (*Enodia anthedon*)
 Creole Pearly Eye (*Enodia creole*)
 Eyed Brown (*Satyroides eurydice*)
 Appalachian Brown (*Satyroides appalachia*)
 Mitchell's Satyr (*Neonympha mitchellii*),
 Endangered
 Little Wood Satyr (*Megisto cymela*)
 Common Ringlet (*Coenonympha tullia*)
 Wood Nymph (*Cercyonis pegala*)
 Red-disked Alpine (*Erebia discoidalis*)
 Macoun's Arctic (*Oeneis macounii*)
 Chryxus Arctic (*Oeneis chryxus*)
 Jutta Arctic (*Oeneis jutta ascerta*)

Danaidae (Milkweed Butterflies)

Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*)
 Queen (*Danaus gilippus*)

Hesperiidae (Skippers)

Silver-spotted Skipper (*Epargyreus clarus*)
 Long-tailed Skipper (*Urbanus proteus*)
 Hoary Edge (*Achalarus lyciades*)
 Southern Cloudy Wing (*Thorybes bathyllus*)
 Northern Cloudy Wing (*Thorybes pylades*)
 Dreamy Dusky Wing (*Erynnis icelus*)
 Sleepy Dusky Wing (*Erynnis brizo*)
 Juvenal's Dusky Wing (*Erynnis juvenalis*)
 Horace's Dusky Wing (*Erynnis horatius*)
 Mottled Dusky Wing (*Erynnis martialis*)
 Columbine Dusky Wing (*Erynnis lucilius*)
 Wild Indigo Dusky Wing (*Erynnis baptisiae*)
 Persius Dusky Wing (*Erynnis persius*)
 Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus centaureae*)
 Common Checkered Skipper (*Pyrgus communis*)
 Common Sooty Wing (*Pholisora catullus*)

Arctic Skipper (*Carterocephalus palaemon*)
 Swarthy Skipper (*Nastra lherminier*)
 Least Skipper (*Ancyloxypha numitor*)
 Poweshiek Skipperling (*Oarisma poweshiek*)
 European Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*)
 Fiery Skipper (*Hylephila phyleus*)
 Common Branded Skipper (*Hesperia comma*)
 Ottoo Skipper (*Hesperia ottoo*)
 Leonard's Skipper (*Hesperia leonardus*)
 Cobweb Skipper (*Hesperia metea*)
 Indian Skipper (*Hesperia sassacus*)
 Peck's Skipper (*Polites peckius*)
 Tawny-edged Skipper (*Polites themistocles*)
 Crossline Skipper (*Polites origenes*)
 Long Dash (*Polites mystic*)
 Northern Broken Dash (*Wallengrenia egeremet*)
 Little Glassywing (*Pompeius verna*)
 Sachem (*Atalopedes campestris*)
 Delaware Skipper (*Anatrytone logan*)
 Mulberry Wing (*Poanes massasoit*)
 Hobomok Skipper (*Poanes hobomok*)
 Zabulon Skipper (*Poanes zabulon*)
 Broad-winged Skipper (*Poanes viator*)
 Dion Skipper (*Euphyes dion*)
 Duke's Skipper (*Euphyes dukesi*)
 Black Dash (*Euphyes conspicua*)
 Two-spotted Skipper (*Euphyes bimacula*)
 Dun Skipper (*Euphyes vestris*)
 Dusted Skipper (*Atrytonopsis hianna*)
 Pepper and Salt Skipper (*Atrytonopsis hegon*)
 Common Roadside Skipper (*Amblyscirtes vialis*)
 Eufala Skipper (*Lerodea eufala*)

DAMSELFLIES AND DRAGONFLIES OF MICHIGAN

A total of 162 species is currently known from Michigan. This list has been compiled by the Michigan Odonata Survey (MOS), and was accurate as of 27 November 2002. To view status and range maps of any species, go to the MOS website (<http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/MICHODO/MOS.html>). Michigan does not yet have an identification guide available, although one is in preparation. Useful publications are available for Wisconsin and Ohio. English names here are those determined by the Dragonfly Society of the Americas (<http://www.ups.edu/biology/museum/NAdragons.html>).

Calopterygidae (Broad-winged Damselflies)

- River Jewelwing (*Calopteryx aequabilis*)
- Ebony Jewelwing (*Calopteryx maculata*)
- American Rubyspot (*Hetaerina americana*)
- Smoky Rubyspot (*Hetaerina titia*)

Lestidae (Spreadwings)

- Spotted Spreadwing (*Lestes congener*)
- Common Spreadwing (*Lestes disjunctus disjunctus*)
- Common Spreadwing (*L. d. australis*)
- Emerald Spreadwing (*Lestes dryas*)
- Amber-winged Spreadwing (*Lestes eurinus*)
- Sweetflag Spreadwing (*Lestes forcipatus*)
- Elegant Spreadwing (*Lestes inaequalis*)
- Slender Spreadwing (*Lestes rectangularis*)
- Lyre-tipped Spreadwing (*Lestes unguiculatus*)
- Swamp Spreadwing (*Lestes vigilax*)

Coenagrionidae (Pond Damselflies)

- Eastern Red Damsel (*Amphiagrion saucium*)
- Blue-fronted Dancer (*Argia apicalis*)
- Powdered Dancer (*Argia moesta*)
- Blue-ringed Dancer (*Argia sedula*)
- Blue-tipped Dancer (*Argia tibialis*)
- Variable [Violet] Dancer (*Argia fumipennis violacea*)
- Aurora Damsel (*Chromagrion conditum*)
- Subarctic Bluet (*Coenagrion interrogatum*)
- Taiga Bluet (*Coenagrion resolutum*)
- River Bluet (*Enallagma anna*)
- Rainbow Bluet (*Enallagma antennatum*)
- Azure Bluet (*Enallagma asperum*)
- Double-striped Bluet (*Enallagma basidens*)
- Boreal Bluet (*Enallagma boreale*)
- Tule Bluet (*Enallagma carunculatum*)
- Familiar Bluet (*Enallagma civile*)
- Northern Bluet (*Enallagma cyathigerum*)
- Northern Bluet (*Enallagma cyathigerum vernale*)
- Turquoise Bluet (*Enallagma divagans*)
- Marsh Bluet (*Enallagma ebrium*)
- Stream Bluet (*Enallagma exulans*)
- Skimming Bluet (*Enallagma geminatum*)
- Hagen's Bluet (*Enallagma hageni*)

- Orange Bluet (*Enallagma signatum*)
- Slender Bluet (*Enallagma traviatum*)
- Vesper Bluet (*Enallagma vesperum*)
- Citrine Forktail (*Ischnura hastata*)
- Lilypad Forktail (*Ischnura kellicotti*)
- Fragile Forktail (*Ischnura posita*)
- Eastern Forktail (*Ischnura verticalis*)
- Sphagnum Sprite (*Nehalennia gracilis*)
- Sedge Sprite (*Nehalennia irene*)

Petaluridae (Petaltailed)

- Gray Petaltail (*Tachopteryx thoreyi*)

Aeshnidae (Darners)

- Canada Darner (*Aeshna canadensis*)
- Mottled Darner (*Aeshna clepsydra*)
- Lance-tipped Darner (*Aeshna constricta*)
- Lake Darner (*Aeshna eremita*)
- Variable Darner (*Aeshna interrupta*)
- Sedge Darner (*Aeshna juncea*)
- Spatterdock Darner (*Aeshna mutata*)
- Zigzag Darner (*Aeshna sitchensis*)
- Subarctic Darner (*Aeshna subarctica*)
- Black-tipped Darner (*Aeshna tuberculifera*)
- Shadow Darner (*Aeshna umbrosa*)
- Green-striped Darner (*Aeshna verticalis*)
- Common Green Darner (*Anax junius*)
- Comet Darner (*Anax longipes*)
- Springtime Darner (*Basiaeschna janata*)
- Ocellated Darner (*Boyeria grafiana*)
- Fawn Darner (*Boyeria vinosa*)
- Swamp Darner (*Epiaeschna heros*)
- Harlequin Darner (*Gomphaeschna furcillata*)
- Cyrano Darner (*Nasiaeschna pentacantha*)

Gomphidae (Clubtails)

- Horned Clubtail (*Arigomphus cornutus*)
- Lilypad Clubtail (*Arigomphus furcifer*)
- Jade Clubtail (*Arigomphus submedianus*)
- Unicorn Clubtail (*Arigomphus villosipes*)
- Black-shouldered Spinyleg (*Dromogomphus spinosus*)
- Flag-tailed Spinyleg (*Dromogomphus spoliatus*)
- Mustached Clubtail (*Gomphus adelphus*)
- Lancet Clubtail (*Gomphus exilis*)
- Midland Clubtail (*Gomphus fraternus*)
- Pronghorn Clubtail (*Gomphus graslinellus*)

- Splendid Clubtail (*Gomphus lineatifrons*)
 Ashy Clubtail (*Gomphus lividus*)
 Rapids Clubtail (*Gomphus quadricolor*)
 Dusky Clubtail (*Gomphus spicatus*)
 Cobra Clubtail (*Gomphus vastus*)
 Skillet Clubtail (*Gomphus ventricosus*)
 Green-faced Clubtail (*Gomphus viridifrons*)
 Dragonhunter (*Hagenius brevistylus*)
 Extra-striped Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus anomalus*)
 Riffle Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus carolus*)
 Boreal Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus colubrinus*)
 Pygmy Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus howei*)
 Rusty Snaketail (*Ophiogomphus rupinsulensis*)
 Common Sanddragon (*Progomphus obscurus*)
 Least Clubtail (*Stylogomphus albigylus*)
 Riverine Clubtail (*Stylurus amnicola*)
 Laura's Clubtail (*Stylurus lauræ*)
 Elusive Clubtail (*Stylurus notatus*)
 Russet-tipped Clubtail (*Stylurus plagiatus*)
 Zebra Clubtail (*Stylurus scudderi*)
 Arrow Clubtail (*Stylurus spiniceps*)
- Cordulegastridae (Spiketails)**
 Brown Spiketail (*Cordulegaster bilineata*)
 Delta-spotted Spiketail (*Cordulegaster diastatops*)
 Tiger Spiketail (*Cordulegaster erronea*)
 Twin-spotted Spiketail (*Cordulegaster maculata*)
 Arrowhead Spiketail (*Cordulegaster obliqua*)
- Macromiidae (Cruisers)**
 Stream Cruiser (*Didymops transversa*)
 Illinois River Cruiser (*Macromia illinoensis*)
 Royal River Cruiser (*Macromia taeniolata*)
- Corduliidae (Emeralds)**
 American Emerald (*Cordulia shurtleffi*)
 Racket-tailed Emerald (*Dorocordulia libera*)
 Beaverpond Baskettail (*Epitheca canis*)
 Common Baskettail (*Epitheca cynosura*)
 Prince Baskettail (*Epitheca princeps*)
 Spiny Baskettail (*Epitheca spinigera*)
 Stygian Shadowdragon (*Neurocordulia yamaskanensis*)
 Lake Emerald (*Somatochlora cingulata*)
 Ski-tailed Emerald (*Somatochlora elongata*)
 Forcipate Emerald (*Somatochlora forcipata*)
 Delicately Emerald (*Somatochlora franklini*)
 Hine's Emerald (*Somatochlora hineana*)
 Endangered.
 Incurvate Emerald (*Somatochlora incurvata*)
 Kennedy's Emerald (*Somatochlora kennedyi*)
 Mocha Emerald (*Somatochlora linearis*)
 Ocellated Emerald (*Somatochlora minor*)
 Clamp-tipped Emerald (*Somatochlora tenebrosa*)
 Brush-tipped Emerald (*Somatochlora walshii*)
 Williamson's Emerald (*Somatochlora williamsoni*)
 Ebony Boghaunter (*Williamsonia fletcheri*)
- Ringed Boghaunter (*Williamsonia lintneri*)
- Libellulidae (Skimmers)**
 Calico Pennant (*Celithemis elisa*)
 Halloween Pennant (*Celithemis eponina*)
 Banded Pennant (*Celithemis fasciata*)
 Eastern Pondhawk (*Erythemis simplicicollis*)
 Frosted Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia frigida*)
 Crimson-ringed Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia glacialis*)
 Hudsonian Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia hudsonica*)
 Dot-tailed Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia intacta*)
 Red-waisted Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia proxima*)
 Spangled Skimmer (*Libellula cyanea*)
 Slaty Skimmer (*Libellula incesta*)
 Chalk-fronted Corporal (*Libellula julia*)
 Widow Skimmer (*Libellula luctuosa*)
 Common Whitetail (*Libellula lydia*)
 Twelve-spotted Skimmer (*Libellula pulchella*)
 Four-spotted Skimmer (*Libellula quadrimaculata*)
 Painted Skimmer (*Libellula semifasciata*)
 Great Blue Skimmer (*Libellula vibrans*)
 Elfin Skimmer (*Nannothemis bella*)
 Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*)
 Wandering Glider (*Pantala flavescens*)
 Spot-winged Glider (*Pantala hymenaea*)
 Eastern Amberwing (*Perithemis tenera*)
 Blue-faced Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum ambiguum*)
 Variegated Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum corruptum*)
 Saffron-winged Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum costiferum*)
 Black Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum danae*)
 Cherry-faced Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum internum*)
 White-faced Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum obtusum*)
 Ruby Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum rubicundulum*)
 Band-winged Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum seminctum*)
 Yellow-legged Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum vicinum*)
 Carolina Saddlebags (*Tramea carolina*)
 Black Saddlebags (*Tramea lacerata*)
 Red Saddlebags (*Tramea onusta*)

ORCHIDS OF MICHIGAN

Michigan is home to a wonderful diversity of plants, including some quite unusual species. There are quite a number of basic publications available for those with a casual interest in botany. For those who are more serious, the best reference is the three-volume *Michigan Flora* (Voss 1972, 1985, 1996). Among the most alluring of plant species are the orchids. Michigan has a good diversity of orchids (~56 species), and an excellent reference for status and identification is *Orchids of the Great Lakes Region* (Case 1987). Most birders will not encounter many species, but those who go looking in the special habitats of these plants will reap great rewards. Orchids are delicate, and moving leaf litter to obtain photographs have been known to cause plants to die, so please be very careful if you go looking for orchids in Michigan, and remember that they are all protected by state law, and endangered species by federal law. *Species marked with T are Threatened, and those marked with E are Endangered.*

Pink Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>)	Whorled Pogonia (<i>Isotria verticillata</i>)
Ram's Head Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium arietinum</i>)	Rose Pogonia (<i>Pogonia ophioglossoides</i>)
Yellow Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>)	Arethusa (<i>Arethusa bulbosa</i>)
Small Yellow Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium pauciflorum</i>)	Grass Pink (<i>Calopogon tuberosus</i>)
Small White Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium candidum</i>) T	Case's Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes casei</i>)
Showy Lady's-Slipper (<i>Cypripedium reginae</i>)	Nodding Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes cernua</i>)
Small Round-leafed Orchis (<i>Amerorchis rotundifolia</i>)	Slender Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes lacera</i>)
Showy Orchis (<i>Galearis spectabilis</i>)	Shining Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes lucida</i>)
White Fringed-Orchid (<i>Platanthera blephariglottis</i>)	Prairie Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes magnicamporum</i>) T
Yellow Fringed-Orchid (<i>Platanthera ciliaris</i>)	Yellow Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes ochroleuca</i>)
Club-spur Orchid (<i>Platanthera clavellata</i>)	Oval Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes ovalis</i>)
Tall White Bog-Orchid (<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>)	Hooded Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>)
Tuberclad Orchid (<i>Platanthera flava</i>)	Little Ladies-Tresses (<i>Spiranthes tuberosa</i>)
Hooker's Orchid (<i>Platanthera hookeri</i>)	Menzies Rattlesnake Plantain (<i>Goodyera oblongifolia</i>)
Tall Northern Bog-Orchid (<i>Platanthera hyperborea</i>)	Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (<i>Goodyera pubescens</i>)
Ragged Fringed-Orchid (<i>Platanthera lacera</i>)	Lesser Rattlesnake Plantain (<i>Goodyera repens</i>)
Prairie Fringed-Orchid (<i>Platanthera leucophaea</i>) T	Tesselated Rattlesnake Plantain (<i>Goodyera tessellata</i>)
Blunt-leaf Orchid (<i>Platanthera obtusata</i>)	White Adder's-Mouth (<i>Malaxis monophylla</i>)
Large Round-leaved Orchid (<i>Platanthera orbiculata</i>)	Green Adder's-Mouth (<i>Malaxis unifolia</i>)
Small Purple Fringed-Orchid (<i>Platanthera psycodes</i>)	Lily-leaved Twayblade (<i>Liparis lilifolia</i>)
Alaska Orchid (<i>Piperia unalascensis</i>)	Loesel's Twayblade (<i>Liparis loeselii</i>)
Long-bracted Green Orchid (<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>)	Crane-fly Orchid (<i>Tipularia discolor</i>) T
Auricled Twayblade (<i>Listera auriculata</i>)	Calypso (<i>Calypso bulbosa</i>) E
Broad-leaved Twayblade (<i>Listera convallarioides</i>)	Putty-root (<i>Aplectrum hyemale</i>)
Heartleaf Twayblade (<i>Listera cordata</i>)	Spotted Coral-root (<i>Corallorhiza maculata</i>)
Helleborine (<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>) Introduced	Autumn Coral-root (<i>Corallorhiza odontorhiza</i>)
Nodding Pogonia (<i>Triphora trianthophora</i>) T	Striped Coral-root (<i>Corallorhiza striata</i>)
Small Whorled Pogonia (<i>Isotria medeoloides</i>) E	Early Coral-root (<i>Corallorhiza trifida</i>)

PLANT SPECIES REFERENCED IN
A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO MICHIGAN

- American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*)
 American Elm (*Ulmus americana*)
 American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*)
 Balsam Fir (*Abies balsamea*)
 Basswood (*Tilia americana*)
 Beach Grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*)
 Beach Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*)
 Beaked Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*)
 Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
 Beggars-ticks (*Desmodium* sp.)
 Bellflower (*Campanula* sp.)
 Bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*)
 Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)
 Birdseye Primrose (*Primula laurentiana*)
 Bitternut Hickory (*Carya cordiformis*)
 Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*)
 Black Oak (*Quercus velutina*)
 Black Spruce (*Picea mariana*)
 Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
 Black Willow (*Salix nigra*)
 Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)
 Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia verna*)
 Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*)
 Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda glaucophylla*)
 Bracken Fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*)
 Bulrushes (*Scirpus* sp.)
 Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*)
 Bur-Reeds (*Sparganium* sp.)
 Bur Oaks (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
 Bush-honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*)
 Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
 Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*)
 Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
 Cattails (*Typha* sp.)
 Clustered Broomrape (*Orobanche fasciculata*)
 Colic Root (*Aletris farinosa*)
 Common Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
 Common Blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*)
 Common Juniper (*Juniperus communis*)
 Common Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*)
 Cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*)
 Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*)
 Cranberry (*Vaccinium* sp.)
 Culver's Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)
 Drooping Trillium (*Trillium flexipes*)
 Dune Grass (*Elymus mollis*)
 Dune Lily (*Zigadenus glaucus*)
 Dwarf Lake Iris (*Iris lacustris*)
 Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)
 Early Buttercup (*Ranunculus fascicularis*)
 Early Saxifrage (*Saxafraga virginiana*)
 Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
 Fragrant Water Lily (*Nymphaea odorata*)
 Grass Pink (*Calopogon tuberosus*)
 Gray-headed Coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*)
 Green-headed Coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)
 Hairy Puccoon (*Lithospermum croceum*)
 Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*)
 Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)
 Hoary Puccoon (*Lithospermum canescens*)
 Hog-peanut (*Amphicarpaea bracteata*)
 Honey Mushroom (*Armillaria bulbosa*)
 Houghton's Goldenrod (*Solidago houghtonii*)
 Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*)
 Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*)
 Lake Huron Tansy (*Tanacetum houghtonii*)
 Large-flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*)
 Leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*)
 Little Bluestem (*Andropogon scoparius*)
 Lombardy Poplar (*Populus nigra*)
 Marram Grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*)
 Mountain Maple (*Acer spicatum*)
 Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)
 Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
 New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus herbaceus*)
 Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*)
 Partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*)
 Pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*)
 Pignut Hickory (*Carya glabra*)
 Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)
 Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*)
 Pitcher's Thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*)
 Poison-ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*)
 Poison Sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*)
 Prairie Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*)
 Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*)
 Prickly-ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*)
 Prickly-pear Cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*)
 Pumpkin Ash (*Fraxinus profunda*)
 Purple Loosetrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
 Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
 Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)
 Red-berried Elder (*Sambucus racemosa*)
 Red-Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
 Red Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)
 Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
 Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)
 Red Trillium (*Trillium erectum*)
 Reedgrass (*Calamagrostis* sp.)
 River-bank Grape (*Vitis riparia*)
 Round-lobed Hepatica (*Hepatica americana*)
 Rose Pagonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*)
 Sand Cherry (*Prunus pumila*)

Sand-dune Willow (*Salix cordata*)
 Sand Reed Grass (*Calamovilfa longifolia*)
 Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)
 Scarlet Oak (*Quercus coccinea*)
 Sea-rocket (*Cakile edentula*)
 Seaside Spurge (*Euphorbia polygonifolia*)
 Sharp-lobed Hepatica (*Hepatica acutiloba*)
 Shellbark Hickory (*Carya laciniosa*)
 Showy Orchis (*Orchis spectabilis*)
 Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*)
 Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*)
 Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)
 Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*)
 Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*)
 Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra*)
 Sour-gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)
 Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)
 Speckled Alder (*Alnus rugosa*)
 Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra canadensis*)
 Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)
 Striped Maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*)
 Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)
 Sundews (*Drosera* sp.)
 Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)
 Sweetfern (*Comptonia peregrina*)
 Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
 Tall Sunflower (*Helianthus giganteus*),
 Tamarack (*Larix laricina*)
 Three-toothed Cinquefoil (*Potentilla tridentata*)
 Trailing-arbutus (*Epigaea repens*)
 Tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
 Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*)
 Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)
 White-cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)
 White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)
 White Oak (*Quercus alba*)
 White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)
 White Trout Lily (*Erythronium albidum*)
 Whorled Loosetrife (*Lysimachia quadrifolia*)
 Wild-cucumber (*Echinocystis lobata*)
 Wild Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
 Wild Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)
 Witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
 Wood Lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*)
 Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*)

Wormwood (*Artemisia caudata*)
 Yellow Chestnut Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*)
 Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*)
 Yew (*Taxus canadensis*)

NEAT PLACES TO BOTANIZE

The Michigan Botanical Club publishes a gazetteer, still being compiled, on their website <http://michbotclub.org>, titled "A Neat Place to Botanize", which includes sites in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. The list is still under construction, so there is a heavier emphasis on southern Lower Peninsula sites than there should be. Many of the sites are also good birding sites that are included in this guide, and those are listed below along with the site number.

Algonac State Park, Prairie Trail, SE-71
 Bald Mountain State Recreation Area,
 South Trail, SE-64
 Blanford Nature Center, SW-5
 Highland State Recreation Area,
 Ecology Trail, Teeple Lake Fen, SE-57
 William Holliday Park, SE-39
 Howard Christensen Nature
 Center, SW-7
 Hudson Mills Metropark, Nature
 Trail, SE-24
 Indian Springs Metropark, SE-61
 Kalamazoo Nature Center, SW-45
 Lake Lansing Park North, SE-4
 Legg Park, SE-3
 Lower Huron Metropark,
 Floodplain tract, SE-33
 Nordhouse Dunes, NW-39
 Pontiac L. State Recreation Area, SE-64
 Scott Woods Park, SE-1
 Warren Woods State Park, SW-31
 Waterloo State Recreation Area, SE-13

At right: Michigan's official state wildflower, the Great Lakes endemic Dwarf Lake Iris (*Iris lacustris*), discovered on Mackinac Island in 1810.

Allen T. Chartier



Temperature and Precipitation Data for Selected Michigan Cities, 1970-2000

City (Region)	Climate Data	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marquette (WUP)	Avg. High (°F)	19.7	24.2	33.1	45.8	61.5	70.3	75.2	72.6	63.2	50.9	35.4	24.1
	Avg. Low (°F)	3.3	5.4	14.3	26.9	39.1	48.3	53.5	52.0	43.8	34.0	22.4	10.2
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	2.6	1.8	3.1	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.3	2.4
	Avg. Snow (in.)	30.4	25.3	23.8	9.4	1.4	-	-	-	0.2	4.5	18.0	28.8
Sault Ste. Marie (EUP)	Avg. High (°F)	21.5	24.5	33.6	48.0	63.2	70.7	75.7	74.1	64.8	52.8	38.9	27.2
	Avg. Low (°F)	4.9	6.6	16.1	28.8	39.3	46.5	52.0	52.4	44.8	36.0	25.9	13.1
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	2.6	1.6	2.4	2.6	2.5	3.0	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.3	3.4	2.9
	Avg. Snow (in.)	29.2	18.2	14.6	5.8	0.5	-	-	-	0.1	2.4	15.6	31.0
Alpena (NELP)	Avg. High (°F)	26.1	28.2	37.3	50.3	64.3	73.8	79.0	76.1	67.4	55.6	42.2	31.2
	Avg. Low (°F)	9.5	9.7	18.7	30.2	40.0	48.8	54.5	52.9	45.2	35.6	27.0	16.9
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	1.8	1.3	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.5	3.2	3.5	2.8	2.3	2.1	1.8
	Avg. Snow (in.)	21.8	16.0	12.7	5.0	0.2	-	-	-	-	0.6	8.5	19.8
Houghton Lake (NWLP)	Avg. High (°F)	25.9	29.3	39.4	53.0	67.2	75.5	80.0	77.1	68.3	56.0	41.9	30.5
	Avg. Low (°F)	9.7	10.5	19.2	30.6	40.7	48.9	53.4	52.2	45.3	36.2	27.6	16.8
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	1.6	1.2	2.0	2.3	2.6	2.9	2.8	3.7	3.1	2.3	2.1	1.8
	Avg. Snow (in.)	19.2	12.6	11.4	4.2	0.2	-	-	-	-	0.7	10.1	16.0
Muskegon (SWLP)	Avg. High (°F)	29.8	32.5	42.5	54.6	67.0	75.6	80.0	78.1	70.3	58.7	45.6	34.6
	Avg. Low (°F)	17.1	18.3	25.4	35.1	45.1	54.2	59.8	58.8	50.7	40.6	31.8	22.6
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	2.2	1.6	2.4	2.9	3.0	2.6	2.3	3.8	3.5	2.8	3.2	2.6
	Avg. Snow (in.)	30.8	17.3	11.3	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	8.8	24.1
Grand Rapids (SWLP)	Avg. High (°F)	29.3	32.6	43.3	56.6	69.6	78.4	82.3	79.7	71.7	59.6	45.5	33.7
	Avg. Low (°F)	15.6	17.4	25.9	36.1	46.6	55.8	60.5	59.0	51.0	40.2	31.2	21.4
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	2.0	1.5	2.6	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.8	4.3	2.8	3.4	2.7
	Avg. Snow (in.)	21.0	12.0	10.0	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	0.8	7.7	19.1
Flint (SELP)	Avg. High (°F)	29.2	32.3	43.1	56.2	69.0	77.7	82.0	79.5	71.9	59.7	46.3	34.2
	Avg. Low (°F)	13.3	15.3	24.3	34.6	45.2	54.6	59.1	57.4	49.4	38.6	29.8	19.1
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	1.6	1.4	2.2	3.1	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.8	2.3	2.6	2.2
	Avg. Snow (in.)	11.8	9.4	7.5	2.4	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	3.7	9.9
Lansing (SELP)	Avg. High (°F)	29.4	32.6	43.5	56.6	69.4	78.1	82.1	79.7	72.0	59.8	46.0	34.1
	Avg. Low (°F)	13.9	15.4	24.3	34.5	44.8	54.3	58.4	57.0	48.9	38.6	30.1	19.7
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	1.6	1.4	2.3	3.1	2.7	3.6	2.7	3.5	3.5	2.3	2.7	2.2
	Avg. Snow (in.)	12.1	9.8	8.5	2.6	0.2	-	-	-	-	0.4	4.5	10.8
Detroit (SELP)	Avg. High (°F)	31.1	34.4	45.2	57.8	70.2	79.0	83.4	81.4	73.7	61.2	47.8	35.9
	Avg. Low (°F)	17.8	20.0	28.5	38.4	49.4	58.9	63.6	62.2	54.1	42.5	33.5	23.4
	Avg. Precip. (in.)	1.9	1.9	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.3	2.2	2.7	2.5
	Avg. Snow (in.)	10.7	9.2	6.9	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	2.6	9.9

SOURCE:

National Climatic Data Center, National Virtual Data System <http://lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html>.

Comparative Climatic Data Publication, accessed July 21, 2004: <http://mndc.noaa.gov/ols.nndc.noaa.gov:80/plstore/plsql/oltore.prodspecific?prodnum=C00095-PUB-A00001>).

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION

PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wild-life, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.



CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

- 1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.
- 1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.
- Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.
- Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.
- Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- 1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance can be minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.
- 1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law and the rights of others.

- 2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- 2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- 2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

- 3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- 3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- 3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

- 4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as those of people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- 4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

- 4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.
- 4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.
- 4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.
- 4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no tape recorders allowed).
- 4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

**PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE
DISTRIBUTE IT AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS.**

Additional copies of the Code of Birding Ethics can be obtained from: ABA, PO Box 6599, Colorado Springs, CO 80934-6599. Phone 800/850-2473 or 719/578-1614; fax 800/247-3329 or 719/578-1480; e-mail: member@aba.org

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7/1/96

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REFERENCES

The following list includes references cited within this guide, as well as a partial listing of additional references that persons interested in more details of the natural history of Michigan might find useful.

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- 332 Lake Michigan Recreation Area, Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness
- 335 Longbridge, Charles Mears State Park, Pentwater Waste Treatment Ponds
- 337 Walkinshaw Wetland Preserve
- 340 White Cloud Area
- 340 Fremont Sewage Ponds

SOUTHWESTERN LOWER PENINSULA

- 347 Muskegon Wastewater System
- 350 Muskegon State Park & Breakwalls
- 353 P. J. Hoffmaster State Park
- 354 Coopersville Sewage Ponds
- 359 Howard Christensen Nature Center
- 363 Ada Area
- 366 Cannonsburg SGA
- 368 Grand River Park
- 371 Grand Haven Area
- 378 Port Sheldon Area
- 380 Holland State Park and Lake Macatawa
- 386 Saugatuck-Douglas Area
- 389 Lower Kalamazoo River Backwaters
- 392 Allegan SGA
- 404 South Haven Area and Van Buren State Park
- 407 Sarrett Nature Center and Brown Sanctuary
- 411 Grand Mere State Park and Warren Dunes State Park
- 413 New Buffalo Area

- 419 Mud Lake Bog Preserve, Topinabee Lake Preserve, Fernwood Botanical Garden
- 431 Kleinstuck Preserve and Asylum Lake Preserve
- 421 Love Creek County Park
- 422 Cass County Sites
- 427 Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery
- 439 Kalamazoo Nature Center
- 441 Kellogg Bird Sanctuary and Kellogg Experimental Forest, Fort Custer Recreation Area
- 449 Ott Biological Preserve
- 450 Barry SGA, Yankee Springs Recreation Area, Otis Sanctuary
- 457 Pierce Cedar Creek Institute
- 458 Bernard W. Baker Sanctuary

EASTERN UPPER PENINSULA

- 466 Pt. La Barbe
- 468 Horseshoe Bay, St. Martin Bay
- 469 Les Cheneaux Islands to De Tour Village
- 470 Drummond Island
- 472 Sault Ste. Marie
- 477 Sugar and Neebish Islands
- 479 Munuscong Bay State Wildlife Management Area
- 480 Rudyard/Kinross Area
- 482 Hiawatha National Forest
- 485 Hulberg Bog
- 486 Taquamenon River Mouth
- 488 Whitefish Point
- 497 Vermillion
- 500 Taquamenon Falls State Park
- 503 Newberry Area

WESTERN UPPER PENINSULA

- 507 Garden Peninsula
- 510 Stonington Peninsula
- 512 Escanaba Area
- 514 J. W. Wells State Park
- 515 City of Menominee
- 517 Menominee River Corridor
- 518 Iron Mountain Area and Fumee Lake Natural Area
- 522 Crystal Falls Area
- 524 Iron River Area
- 527 Watersmeet Area
- 529 Ironwood Area
- 531 Seney NWR
- 536 Kingston Plains
- 539 Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 540 Au Train
- 542 City of Marquette
- 545 Northwest of Marquette
- 549 West of Marquette
- 550 Michigamme Area
- 553 Baraga Plains
- 556 L'Anse and Baraga
- 558 Sturgeon River Sloughs
- 560 Houghton Area
- 562 F. J. McLain State Park
- 563 Calumet Area
- 564 Eagle Harbor Area
- 566 Brockway Mountain
- 567 Copper Harbor
- 571 Southeastern Keweenaw Peninsula
- 574 Isle Royale National Park
- 577 Ontonagon Area
- 579 Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park