



EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF MACOMB AUDUBON

www.macombaudubon.net

Vol. 53, No. 3 | May – Jun, 2026

Programs

Our free monthly programs are held the first Monday of the month @ Sterling Heights Nature Center, 42700 Utica Rd (unless otherwise noted).

Mon., May 4th, 7:00 p.m.

Nominating the Saint Clair River Delta, a presentation by Teddy Wiley of Thumb Land Conservancy

Join us for our May meeting where we welcome Teddy Wiley, Thumb Land Conservancy Program and Stewardship Director, who will be presenting on his efforts to nominate the Saint Clair River Delta as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. This may sound like a lot of words, but these efforts are both relevant and crucial to all of us who love and appreciate nature and birds in this particular area of the state. The region in question, the Saint Clair River Delta, is made up of 32,000 acres of water and land, specifically where the Saint Clair River and Lake St. Clair meet. This delta is fed by Lake

Huron, and covers areas such as Saint John's Marsh, Harsens Island, Walpole, Island, and others. If the Saint Clair River delta is granted this Ramsar Wetland of International Importance designation, it would allow for more funding opportunities and more protections for the habitat and the species therein. One such funding opportunity would include more resources to control invasive species like the Phragmites Reed.

Please join us for social hour at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7:00 p.m.

Mon., Jun. 1st, 7:00 p.m.

Bird Walk & Ice Cream Social



Our June member meeting will include a short walk along the trail at the Sterling Heights

Nature Center, observing whatever late spring birds and other wildlife are around. Bring your binoculars and/or camera, comfortable shoes, and an appetite for ice cream afterwards, complements of Macomb Audubon.

Social hour is at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting at 7:00 p.m. For updates on meetings or other Macomb Audubon news, follow us on [Facebook](#) and/or our [website](#). **Note, we do not have monthly meetings in July or August.**

Field Trips

Tomlinson Arboretum

Wed., May 6th, 9:30 a.m.

Leader: Paul Messing

The Tomlinson Arboretum is a 24-acre park which hosts hundreds of native trees, wildflowers, and shrubs, a wildflower prairie, pollinator garden, and rain garden, all maintained by volunteers. There are also a creek and surrounding woods which attract many birds, including migrating warblers. A variety of nesting birds can be seen here, including Mallard, Blue Jay, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, House Finch, Song Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, and Common Grackle. For the field trip, meet at the cul-de-sac parking area at the end of 18 Mile Rd., approximately 0.6 miles east of Garfield Rd. Contact Paul Messing by email at

macombaudubon@gmail.com to RSVP and for any questions you may have.

Birdathon at Lake St. Clair

Metropark

Mon., May 18th (see below for times & other details)

Whether you're craving a full day of spring migration birding or would rather bird for just a few hours, join us at Lake St. Clair Metropark on May 18th for Macomb Audubon's iteration of the Michigan Birdathon. Teams throughout the state will be birding that day, counting the numbers of species they see and seeing how they stack up among the competition! Our Macomb Audubon team will be spending the day trying to get that highest number of bird species sightings.

For each of the following event portions of the birdathon, meet at the LSCMP Nature Center parking lot. The schedule is as follows:

- **Bird Sit w/Brenda Suchenek @ 9:00 a.m.**
- **Bird Hike w/Mike Champine @ 3:00 p.m.**
- **Bird Walk w/ Paul Messing @ 6:00 p.m.**

For whichever portion(s) you choose, plan accordingly with some good mud boots and/or hiking shoes, appropriate clothing layers, binoculars and/or camera, and whatever hydration or snacks you may need.

If you'd like to contribute financially, you can also contribute to the cause at MichiganAudubon.org, use [this link](#) to get to the Macomb Audubon Birdathon team specifically. Macomb Audubon will get 10% of the fundraising back and 25% if we are the winning team with the highest species number.

In Memoriam

Betty Ebert, long-time Macomb Audubon member and hospitality committee member, passed away on March 7th, 2026. Think of her fondly and keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.



Contributions

The following individuals have recently contributed to Macomb Audubon:

Supporter Level

Wade Leonard

Thank you for your generous support!

About Us

Macomb Audubon is a subchapter of Michigan Audubon. Programs are held the first Monday of most months at **Sterling Heights Nature Center**. Our programs foster community and friendship and provide education for all ages. Macomb Audubon events are open to the public. Macomb Audubon is a non-profit organization with a mission to:

- Promote interest in the world of nature and to aid in the conservation of natural resources.
- Provide an outlet for nature activities via field trips.
- Provide an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience through lectures, films, discussions, and newsletters.
- Aid organizations that provide people of all ages with opportunities to experience these above given objectives.

To join, complete the form included on the inside back cover and bring it to our next meeting or follow the instructions on where to send it.

The Earthstar newsletter is published bi-monthly (January, March, July, September, and November). **If you wish to submit content to be included in the Earthstar, please send by the 12th of the month before the next edition, to Andrea Rose at littlebirdnerd37@gmail.com.** Members may receive this newsletter by mail, electronically, or both.



President's Letter

Does anyone enjoy bird journaling? I'd be grateful to hear your thoughts about it. I've been thinking perhaps it will help deepen my passion for birds and the habitats that support them. Often when I am observing nature, I'm documenting quantities, species, individuals, first arrivals, and documenting occurrences in weeks when there are gaps in a species' presence.

I think it's time to go deeper.

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker visited my yard recently, as they often do in April. That's a bird I think I could watch all day. Many may know that my spark bird is the Cedar Waxwing. It really catapulted my interest in birds and made me want to document all the species around me. What you may not know is the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is my *pre*-spark bird. When I lived a mile west of my current home, it was the bird that I noticed was very different from the "mainstream" discussion of birds (cardinals, robins, jays, woodpeckers, geese, ducks, etc.). These categories of birds get plenty of mention in books, everyday discussions, and other press. Cranes also have their place in the common vernacular, as do herons, eagles, owls, and gulls. Of course, within those families, there are subcategories unknown to the common person, like being able to distinguish an American Herring Gull from a Ring-billed Gull. It's probably safe to assume that if you can strike up a conversation about a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, you've likely found someone with quite a birding background. It's birds like this that deserve more than a tally mark, but rather some deeper discussion about how they were encountered. We also might start to ask ourselves what we notice about the common birds we hear every morning. When you listen through the window or step out onto the porch for that first cup of the day, do you know what you're hearing? I've often talked about using tools to help identify what's out there. For example, open up the Merlin app, hit the record button, and see if you know what you're hearing as it pops up on the list of birds identified within earshot. Very likely, those top six will include Northern Cardinal, House Sparrow, and Blue Jay. Most morning songs would also include American Robin. The last couple of those top six will likely vary by season and location, but they could also feature Mourning Dove, Common Grackle, or Red-winged Blackbird. Try this every morning for a while, and once you've gotten these six or seven common birds identified, those other new birds should really start standing out, if they aren't already.



Best of luck making new memories of some of the less-often seen birds, and may you do the most to cherish how you came about these unique sightings and what make them special.

Happy Birding,
Paul Messing,
Macomb Audubon President

Partners, Contacts, Support

Organizations We Support:

Burgess Shadbush Nature Center,
Lake St. Clair Metropark Nature Center,
Michigan Nature Association,
Seven Ponds Nature Center,
Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy,
Sterling Heights Nature Center,
Stony Creek Nature Center,
Tomlinson Arboretum,
Wildlife Recovery Association

Visit your local backyard bird feeding experts at Wild Birds Unlimited in Macomb or Grosse Pte. Woods

Contact Macomb Audubon at: macombaudubon@gmail.com with questions, suggestions, or to join our mailing list.

Board Members & Committee Chairs

President: Paul Messing - macombaudubon@gmail.com
1st VP (Programs): Mike Champine - mikechampine02@gmail.com
2nd VP (Membership): Brenda Suchenek – bks171@comcast.net
3rd VPs (Field Trips): Wade Leonard - wadeleonard1922@att.net

Recording Secretary: Laura Barbour - denilaur@sbcglobal.net

Corresponding Secretary: **Vacant**

Treasurer: Brandy Ciaciuch - mamachach38@gmail.com

Facebook Rep: Barbara Baldinger - bbwren@yahoo.com

Committees

Car Pool Coordinator: **Vacant**

Christmas Bird Count: Brian McGee - brianmcgee@wowway.com

Conservation/Legislation: Beth Noren - maxgoodbird@gmail.com

Historian: Michael Ciaciuch

Hospitality (Refreshments): Michael Ciaciuch

Hospitality (Door Prizes): Denis & Laura Barbour

Newsletter Editor: Andrea Rose - littlebirdnerd37@gmail.com

Michigan Audubon Rep: **Vacant**

Newsletter Production, Mailing: Denis & Laura Barbour

Publicity Chairperson: Holly Vaughn Joswick

Seven Ponds Representative: Paul Messing

Web Editor: Henry Messing

Volunteer Coordinator: **Vacant**

Macomb Audubon Society Dues

Please make checks payable to **Macomb Audubon Society** and send to:

Brenda Suchenek, Macomb Audubon Membership, 48143 Lincoln Drive, Macomb Township, MI, 48044

Your name and the names of family members (please print)

Family membership applies to family members living at the same address

Name _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ (check one) _____ Family membership \$20.00
Total amount enclosed \$ _____ Individual membership \$15.00
Amount of donation over membership \$ _____ (optional) _____ Student membership \$10.00
Contributor - up to \$49.99 Supporter - \$50-\$99 Donor - \$100 and up _____ Senior (60+) single membership \$12.00
_____ Senior couple membership \$15.00

Macomb Audubon shares its membership list with members. Check if you want your phone number **left off** the list _____

Email address _____ (optional)

Check here to receive the Earthstar by email _____ hard copy _____ both versions _____

Check here if a Michigan Audubon member _____ Check here if a National Audubon member _____

I (we) are interested in becoming a Macomb Audubon volunteer. Please contact me _____

Macomb Audubon Society

C/O 1156 Avon Manor Rd.

Rochester Hills Mi. 48307-5415

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