



EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF MACOMB AUDUBON

www.macombaudubon.net

Vol. 52, No. 6 | Nov – Dec, 2025

Programs

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

Mon., Nov. 3rd, 7:00 p.m.

Native Planting: A Passion Project



Bee on Purple Coneflower

For our November meeting/educational program, we welcome back Beth Noren who will speak about her ongoing native planting project at a property she owns. Last year, around this time, Beth came and spoke on this same subject, giving background on why she started the

project and offering tips for others who want to make their yards more appealing to birds and pollinators. We look forward to this return visit from Beth where we'll hear how things have gone over this last year and perhaps get reinspired ourselves. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mon., Dec. 1st, 6:30 p.m.

Annual Photo Sharing & Pizza Party

You're invited to our end-of-year celebration where we'll keep up our tradition of sharing our nature photos and eating pizza. What's not to like about that? If you'd like to share some of your favorite birding/nature photos you've taken this year, we'd love to see them. In addition, since it's our 50th anniversary year, we invite you to go beyond just 2025 photos and consider adding some throwback pics of yourself or of the natural wonders and wild creatures you've seen throughout your life. It would be helpful if you submitted your photos in advance via email, Google Drive, or social media (if emailing, send your photos to Paul Messing at

macombaudubon@gmail.com). Otherwise, you may bring your pics in person by loading them onto a USB/flash drive. Please limit selections to 20 or fewer photos.

Food, refreshments, and place settings will be provided by Macomb Audubon. However, if you'd like to bring your own reusable plate/utensils to help cut down on landfill waste, we'd appreciate it. If you know in advance you'll be coming, give us a heads up at the same email mentioned above so we can ballpark how much pizza to order. We can't wait to celebrate the end of our anniversary year with you! Stay updated about Macomb Audubon meetings, events, and other news by following us on [Facebook](#) and viewing our [website](#).

Upcoming Events

Christmas Bird Count

Sat., Dec. 20th, Dawn to Dusk

On Saturday, December 20th, Macomb Audubon will host its 50th Christmas Bird Count (aka "CBC"), which is part of the nation's 125th annual count of the same name. We're looking for volunteers to participate by spending that day counting all the birds present within an assigned area. Participants of all birding experience levels are welcome, as we all help each other and work as a team.

After the full day of counting, we'll meet at 5:00 p.m. at the Stony Creek Nature Center for a warm meal and group tally to combine everyone's species counts. Consider bringing a shareable food or drink item to the tally such as soup, chili, dessert, or non-alcoholic beverage. Please bring your own bowl and spoon as well.

Sign-up sheets for the CBC will be available at upcoming membership meetings (see page 1 for meeting details). At the December meeting, area leaders will receive their information packets, which include maps of the assigned area, signs to put in your car windows, and official tally forms. Consider splitting the cost of gas that day with the other members of your group. If you wish to participate and are unable to attend the meetings to sign up and/or get your packet, or if you have any other questions, please contact our CBC coordinator, Brian McGee, at brianmcgee@wowway.com



Northern Cardinal & Dark-eyed Junco

Contributions

The following individuals have recently contributed to Macomb Audubon:

Contributor Level

Doris Applebaum

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.

☆ **A note from Brenda Suchenek, head of membership:** Macomb Audubon currently has over 60 members (since 2024). As a reminder, membership runs 1/01 through 12/31 of the calendar year. You can also pay in advance for several years. Those receiving a mailed Earthstar can see what year your membership expires by locating the year next to your address label by your name. All others can contact Brenda at bks171@comcast.net for that info.



President's Letter

We are off to a wonderful fall already, with many birds migrating through, led by the earlier migrations of monarchs and hawks. At Macomb Audubon, we too are migrating back toward the structure of our monthly programs, with an exciting series of speakers and festivities to come. Our website is experiencing transitions and updates too, which I have been excited to see firsthand.

Overall, it's such a wonderful time to be part of Macomb Audubon.

As I mentioned in the last Earthstar issue, Macomb Audubon had a presence at this year's HawkFest along Lake Erie in Brownstown. It was a tad warm for late September, but it rained on Sunday, pushing off the count. Still, there was so much going on inside and out related to hawks. Multiple raptors were released, so not only could you learn about how to ID hawks from afar, you could also see the release of rehabilitated birds up close. What a delightful experience it was to see them fly free as they were released! Aside from those excellent bird viewing opportunities, this was also my best chance to see this season's monarch migration. Did you know, hawk monitors keep special tallies of not only migrating raptors, but also of monarchs? Moving forward, I hope you are all looking forward to December like I am. Don't forget, it's still our golden anniversary year at Macomb Audubon. With that in mind, for one last celebration, let's make our December member slideshow gathering a special one (see page 1 for details on this meeting). For this landmark year, I'm pulling out photos from the old family album. You'll get to see up to 20 of my favorite pictures that give a glimpse of what it was like to grow up in the Messing household as I began to connect to the natural world around me. I'll share the earliest records of nature I encountered on family trips. You'll also hear more about my spark bird and how my interest in birds matured. Even if you have never taken part in our photo sharing event before, please consider sharing a photo or two that opens up the book to your past and to your love of nature. It will be a meaningful way to close out Macomb Audubon's 50th anniversary year.



Happy Birding, Paul Messing, Macomb Audubon President

Photo Courtesy: Joan Bonin



Editor's Note

Hello, bird nerds! As I was compiling this Earthstar edition, I noticed today's Google icon was a cute little cartoon bat. Curious, I hovered over the image and learned that it's Bat Appreciation Week! I'm sharing this fact with you because bats deserve to be celebrated. After all, they aren't just creepy little Halloween characters, nor are they pests. In fact, quite the contrary, bats are essential members of our ecosystem, helping to pollinate native plants, spreading seeds to regrow lost vegetation, and controlling numbers of true pests like mosquitos. Consider doing some research to put up a bat house or making a donation to Bat Conservation International ([click here](#)). I'm always in favor of the misunderstood creatures like bats, and I believe those misunderstandings usually just come from a lack of connection and curiosity. I know if you're reading this though, there's a good chance you feel the same. Maybe you can be an amBATsador to the people in your life who haven't taken the time to understand the beauty of *all* of nature's creatures, not just the flashy, conventionally beautiful ones. Have a wonderful bat week and a great rest of 2025! I hope to see you at the Christmas Bird Count. Happy Birding, Andrea Rose, Editor-in-Chief (littlebirdnerd.blogspot.com)



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

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<http://www.macombaudubon.org>

