EARTHSTAR

NEWSLETTER OF MACOMB AUDUBON

www.macombaudubon.net **Vol. 53, No. 6 | Nov – Dec, 2026**

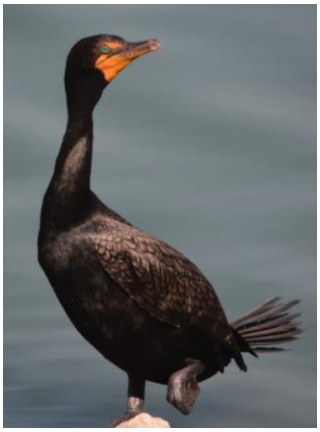
Programs

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

Double-crested Cormorants: Controversy, Conservation, and Education

Mon., Nov. 2nd, 7:00 p.m.

Double-crested Cormorant photo by Paul Messing



For our November monthly program, we'll gather to hear a short talk and watch a presentation on Double-crested Cormorants. This topic has been especially relevant recently due to the controversial pending decision to remove the trees on Dog Island at Lake St. Clair Metropark, which would effectively also remove many cormorant nests, both Double-crested and Neotropic varieties.

Our meeting will touch on why Macomb Audubon is opposed to those proposals to remove the cormorants' nesting trees and begin to manage cormorants in Lake St. Clair. The presentation will be accompanied by a webinar with cormorant biologist Gail Fraser.

In this webinar, Professor Gail Fraser from York University describes the role of cormorants in the Great Lakes ecosystem and why she is also opposed to the province-wide "hunt" in Ontario as a tool to manage cormorants. Her research examines issues around the ecology and management of avian wildlife with a focus on colonial nesting water birds. For those who can't attend our meeting in person, you can view Professor Fraser's webinar here.

Annual Photo Sharing Party

Mon., Dec. 7th, 6:30 p.m.

You're invited to our end-of-year celebration where we'll keep up our tradition of sharing our nature photos and eating pizza. If you'd like to share some of your favorite birding/nature photos you've taken this year, we'd love to see them. 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 look forward to reflecting back on 2026 with you. Stay updated about Macomb Audubon meetings, events, and other news by following us on Facebook and viewing our website.

Field Trips & Birding Opportunities



Late Fall Walk at Wilcox Warnes Nature Sanctuary

Sat., Dec. 5th, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Leader: Paul Messing

Since our last walk at Wilcox Warnes Nature Sanctuary was mostly rained out, we're planning another tour in early December. Join us as we travel through the old-growth woods of the sanctuary, which provide a nice shelter for winter birds that have moved south to our area. We'll listen and look for juncos, Golden-crowned Kinglets, American Tree Sparrows, and White-throated Sparrows among the tall tulip trees in this 44-acre Michigan Nature Association property. Perhaps we'll even get a listen or glimpse of the Pileated Woodpeckers that have nested there as we make our way through the 1-mile walk on the often narrow but well-marked trail loop.

For directions, search for Wilcox Warnes or 56665 Schoenherr. You'll enter on the west side of the road, 1/8 mile south of 26 Mile Rd. Meet in that small gravel parking lot. RSVP to Paul at macombaudubon@gmail.com or by phone at (586) 899-2157.

Christmas Bird Count

Sat., Dec. 19th, Dawn to Dusk

On Saturday, December 19th Macomb Audubon will host its 52nd Christmas Bird Count (aka "CBC"), as part of the nation's 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.

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

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:

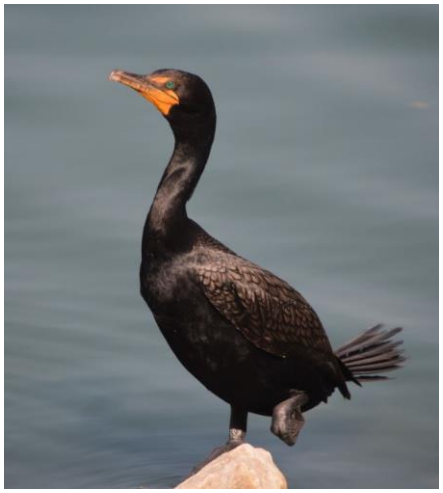
- Promote interest in the world of nature and to aid in the conservation of natural resources.
- Provide an outlet for nature activities via field trips.
- Provide an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience through lectures, films, discussions, and newsletters.
- Aid organizations that 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.



President's Letter

As we head into winter, plenty weighs on my mind. Some of it optimistic, looking forward to the birds that will move down from the north and be more visible as so many trees lose their leaves. I look forward to the Christmas Bird Count and waterfowl that visit nearby lakes and waterways before (or if) they freeze over.



On the other hand, we have a sad reality to face that could affect the Double-crested Cormorant population on Dog Island in Lake St. Clair Metropark. This winter we may find the landscape of our beloved seasonal cormorant population gone. These changes are left up to the decision makers, but perhaps they will limit their destruction due to lack of funds or concede the unique nature of the Neotropic Cormorant that has been returning for many years to nest on Dog Island. As time marches on, we see plenty of changes – environmental, landscape, building, and beyond. Even back when I was young, I remember coming back from vacation, and invariably a wooded lot was cleared, or a new shopping center went up seemingly overnight.

Nevertheless, we can be resilient and enjoy what nature does to rebound with changes that come with the seasons. I will continue to stay positive and support the wildlife in Michigan.



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 VP (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

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

New Member _____ Renewal _____ (check one)
Total amount enclosed $_____
Amount of donation over membership $_____ (optional)
Contributor - up to $49.99 Supporter - $50-$99 Donor - $100 and up

_____ Family membership $20.00
_____ Individual membership $15.00
_____ Student membership $10.00
_____ 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
http://www.macombaudubon.org

