



Volume 29, Issue 1  
September, 2017

**September 19 7:00 P.M.**

### A Congregation of Birds & Photo Poetry

**Richard Havenga**, Nature Photographer, will share 170 species of birds that he photographed around the U.S., followed by a short poetry reading. The poems will focus on some of his favorite birds and birdsongs: the Wood Thrush, Canyon Wren, Prothonotary, and other warblers; which we will view as he reads from his blog: "*Walk With Father Nature*".

Richard Havenga seeks to make the ordinary extraordinary through close, personal observations of nature. This Poet/Photographer/Naturalist writes with a supple blend of awareness, curiosity, spirituality, and discovery. Always attentive outdoors, always searching for new epiphanies of beauty, always grateful for the extravagant gifts of creation; he leads the reader-viewer along an inviting trail of words and images.

Richard has published in Blue Heron Review, and The Homeschool Handbook, and presents programs in West Michigan and Florida.

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Bobcat	4
Common Nighthawk	3
Monarch Butterfly	5
Programs	2
Roberto Cedeño, Hope College	2
Warbler Confusion	6

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**LOUIT DISTRICT LIBRARY**  
407 Columbus Avenue  
Grand Haven

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

*We welcome everyone to OIAS's free programs.*

## 2017-2018 Programs



October 17: *Things with Feathers that Migrate*, Janet Hasselbring, Author and OIAS Member

November 21: *Current Conservation Research on Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnakes*, Jennifer Moore, Professor, Assistant Professor, GVSU

January 16: *Ephemeral Wildflowers: Remarkable Blooming Wonders of Spring*, Carla Kocher, OIAS Member & President, Conservation Outreach Solutions, LLC

February 20: *Ornithology and Taxidermy*, Roger Tharp, OIAS Member

March 20: *Nest Wars: Research on Eastern Bluebirds and their Nestbox Competitors*, Kathy Winnett-Murray, Professor of Biology, Hope College

April 17: *A Birder's Guide to Muskegon County*, Ric Pedler & Charlie DeWitt, Muskegon Nature Club

May 15:

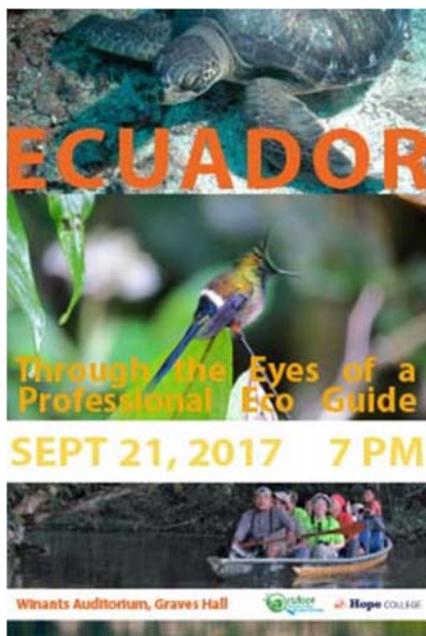
**6:00:** Potluck, Annual Meeting, and Member Photos

**7:00:** *Feather Brained – My Bumbling Quest to Become a Birder and Find a Rare Bird on My Own*, Bob Tarte, Author to talk about his latest book

### September 21, 7:00 - 9:00 PM: A Special Presentation

#### Ecuador: Through the Eyes of a Professional Eco Guide

Hope College, Winants Auditorium, Graves Hall



Explore the most biologically diverse country on earth with world renowned Eco Tour guide Roberto Cedeño. Roberto has been an expert naturalist guide in Ecuador for 27 years where he specializes in birds and photography. His remarkable skill to identify species by sight and sound allow him to share the amazing wildlife of Ecuador.

His knowledge of Ecuadorian flora and fauna is as notable as his love of sharing native culture and history. Anyone considering a trip to Ecuador including visits to the Amazon, Galapagos Islands and the Andes Mountains will be inspired by hearing Roberto speak!

Light refreshments and social time will follow the presentation. No registration required.

FREE - program sponsor Hope College.

## Common Nighthawk

*Chordeiles minor*

Judi Manning

The Common Nighthawk is neither strictly nocturnal nor closely related to hawks. It is a nightjar and closely related to owls with similarities in DNA and plumage. They are difficult to spot while roosting on a fence post or sitting parallel on a tree branch during the day.

Near dusk these birds with long pointed wings fly in graceful loops flashing white patches in the wing. During courtship the male will fly slightly above the tops of trees and abruptly dive toward the ground. Just off the ground, he comes out of the dive and flexes his wings downward. Air rushing over his wingtips makes a booming sound. You can hear them Peent near dusk.



Found by Emily during Ottawa Co. Parks field trip



They perform acrobatic maneuvering (erratic flight) to pursue prey. They fly toward bugs at 12 mph catching them out of the air with their wide, bristle-lined mouths wide open. Insects go straight down into the digestive juices with no time to be tasted. They eat many kinds of flying insects, including ants, mosquitoes, moths, and grasshoppers. They feed on insects attracted to streetlamps, stadium lights, and over fields and ponds. Usually seen at dawn and dusk, they sometimes forage in the daytime during overcast weather. They cannot feed off the ground.

Their flat feet are among the smallest and weakest relative to the bird's size. They have flattened, blunt claws that balance the bird on flat surfaces and helps it run short distances with unexpected grace and speed. These medium-sized birds have large eyes and a short neck.

In rural areas they nest on burns, scrapes, and other patches of bare ground. In cities they nest on the flat roofs of buildings. A change in roof construction methods and materials have reduced their nesting sites. The young hatch active and sparsely covered in down with eyes half or fully open.

Populations of Common Nighthawks have declined 61% between 1966 and 2014. Threats include pesticide use and habitat loss. They often forage over roads or roost on roadways at night making them vulnerable to collisions with cars. They have no defenses against predators, except for their cryptic coloring. They do hiss and raise their wings if someone gets close to a nest. They also evacuate a large, foul-smelling, messy caecal dropping on a captor.

They form flocks during migration and begin to travel to South America in August as they have one of the longest migration route of all North American birds.

Common Nighthawk fossils 400,000 years old have been found between Virginia and California and from Wyoming to Texas.



We were at Newaygo Prairie in late August at 10:30 AM and were excited to see a Common Nighthawk. As we toured the prairie with WildOnes, we counted at least 10 flying over the prairie for about an hour as they were migrating south. This is the most we have seen at one time.

References: Philip Simmons, [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common\\_Nighthawk/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Nighthawk/id); <https://abcbirds.org/bird/common-nighthawk/>; Species profile: The Uncommon Common Nighthawk, By Laura Erickson | Published in BirdWatching, 7/1/2005, <https://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/featured-stories/species-profile-nighthawk/>



**Bobcat**

Judi Manning

*Lynx rufus*

The Bobcat is a medium sized mammal with a short, bobbed tail, and is the most common wildcat in North America. It resides from the southern part of Canada to southern Mexico. Being solitary and nocturnal, they are seldom seen due to their secretive nature. Between 725,000 and 1,020,000 remain in the wild in North America.



Scientists believe the ear tufts and longer fur around the bobcat's face heightens its hearing. It also has excellent vision and a good sense of smell. They can swim, if required, but try to avoid water. The body is 2 to 3.5 feet long, tail about 6 inches long and they weigh up to 40 pounds. They are closely related to the Canadian Lynx.

The 12 subspecies vary in color depending on their geographic range to help camouflage them. Those found in forests and mountainous areas are darker with more markings than the lighter colored bobcats found in arid, semi-deserts areas. Male territories do not overlap and are 25-30 square miles; females territories are 5 square miles. Males are highly territorial and mark their range but tend to avoid each other so they do not become injured in a fight.

Excellent hunters they stalk prey silently in the dark with stealth and patience, pouncing on prey with incredible force. Its main diet is rabbits and hares, but they also eat rodents, birds, and bats. When food is scarce, they may eat deer.

They have several dens within their territory. One main den is usually in a cave or rock shelter. Several auxiliary dens can be a hollow log, fallen tree, brush piles, or stumps.



Bruce Barlow, a biologist at the DNR's Gladwin Field Office, said "It's a very special thing to have a bobcat sighting, . . . This time a year [April], especially, you will see a bobcat out periodically during the daytime, and the number one reason for that is they're trying to feed their family," he said. "They've got young somewhere and they're trying to provide food for them."<sup>1</sup>

**THREATS:** Habitat destruction and expanding human population limit their ranges by pushing them into smaller and more isolated regions. The bobcat is a fierce and dominant predator in its natural habitat and are threatened by only two animals: cougars and wolves. Hunting from the early to mid-1900s completely decimated its populations in the mid-western and eastern USA. Since the 1970s they have been internationally protected, but hunting continues in some areas, but there were able to recover throughout much of their natural range.

We were lucky to see this Bobcat in the lower peninsula, not Ottawa County, this spring.

References: <https://a-z-animals.com/animals/bobcat/>, <http://www.theanimalfiles.com/mammals/carnivores/bobcat.html>, <sup>1</sup>Rare daytime photos of Michigan bobcat caught on trail camera, Heather Jordan, Updated on April 13, 2016, [http://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw/index.ssf/2016/03/trail\\_cam\\_captures\\_rare\\_daylig.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw/index.ssf/2016/03/trail_cam_captures_rare_daylig.html), <http://www.defenders.org/bobcat/bobcats>



**SNOW POLICY:** No meeting if Grand Haven Schools are closed.

Bird bath in deep snow after blizzard of 2/2/2011

## Assessing the status of the Monarch Butterfly

Verbatim <https://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/SSA.html>



In 2014, US Fish & Wildlife Service were petitioned to protect the monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act. Based on information in the petition, USF&WS determined that federally protecting the monarch may be warranted and USF&WS published a 90-day substantial finding in the Federal Register on December 31, 2014. Publication of the 90-day finding also announced that USF&WS would conduct a thorough assessment to determine if the monarch butterfly needs Endangered Species Act protection. USF&WS are now conducting the assessment using the Species Status Assessment framework.

When making a listing decision, the Endangered Species Act requires the Service to take into account all conservation efforts being made to protect a species. This policy identifies criteria USF&WS use in determining whether formal conservation efforts that have yet to be implemented or to show effectiveness contribute to making listing a species unnecessary.

### WHAT'S NEXT

**Spring 2017:** Templates for Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances

**Early Spring 2018:** Peer review of Draft Species Status Assessment Report

**Early Summer 2018:** Collect information from states on formal conservation efforts for use in listing analysis

**June 2019:** Listing decision is due

Wherever “we” is used above refers to the US Fish & Wildlife Service as the above is from its website.

For more information, check out the referenced website.



## Monarch Butterfly

Judi Manning

Although we had some Monarchs flying around the yard beginning May 26<sup>th</sup>, I did not find any caterpillars until July 17<sup>th</sup>. Since then I have released 15 female and 19 male butterflies. I currently have five caterpillars ranging from one week old to almost ready to chrysalis and two chrysalis that will hatch in a couple of days.

OIAS welcomes all of the new members.

The newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

## May 20, 2017 Field Trip

Hofma Preserve Report

Carolyn and Cal led this field trip. The group found 43 species. Some highlights were Yellow-throated Vireo, Sora, Virginia Rail, Alder Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, Veery, Blackburnian and Canada Warbler.

## Warbler Confusion – 2 species

Judi Manning

If you only see the head, throat, and shoulders of 2 fall species:



photos:

The **Cornell** Lab of Ornithology  
Exploring and Conserving Nature

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/>

The whole bird:



In late August, a warbler was foraging in the Joe Pye flowers outside the living room window. I called out Common Yellowthroat. Carl looked then consulted a field guide and said it was a first year female Mourning Warbler. Looking at the field guide I wonder how many times I have misidentified a first year female Mourning Warbler.

→ **Mourning Warbler:** Females have olive-brown hood and fully yellow underparts. Immature birds also have whitish eye crescents.

→ **Common Yellowthroat:** The female and young are plain olive brown back, usually with yellow brightening the throat and under the tail and a white belly. They lack the black mask.

There are many more confusing fall warblers observed as they head south.

References: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Mourning\\_Warbler/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Mourning_Warbler/id) and [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common\\_Yellowthroat/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Common_Yellowthroat/id)

Male adult  
Mourning  
Warbler  
in yard this fall



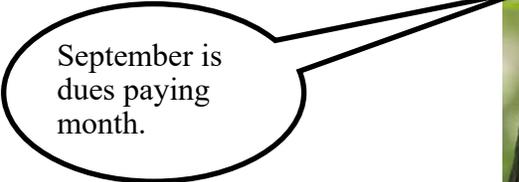
Male adult  
Common  
Yellowthroat

Here are Vol. 1 No. 1 pages 1 and 3:

September begins the 29th year of Owashtanong Island Audubon Society. Wow how time has flown. In late 1991 I started my adventure of writing a newsletter for OIAS and prepared my first newsletter in Jan. 1992. As I enjoy researching, I have been doing the newsletter ever since.



Dues help support programs and copying and mailing of some newsletters. Most newsletters are mailed.



2017-2018 OIAS Membership Application Form. Includes fields for Name, Street, City/State/Zip, Phone, Email, and checkboxes for membership types (\$18 Individual or Family, \$30 Contributing, \$100 Individual Life). Also includes a 'My contribution to speaker fees \$' field and a 'Make checks payable to:' field. A 'Receive by email' box is present on the right side.



Grand Haven, Michigan

9/2017



Receive by email

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