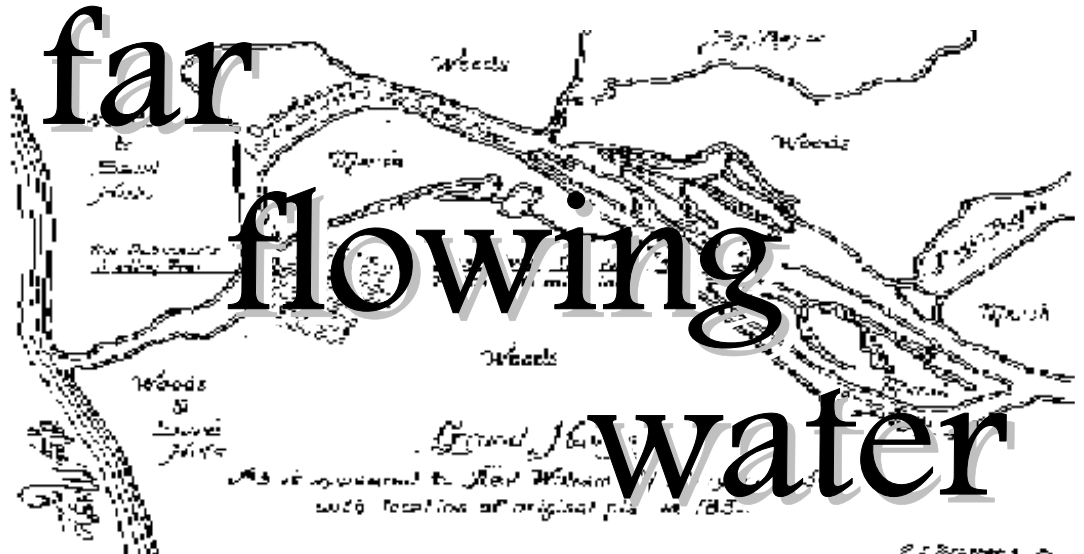


Grand Haven, Michigan



January 21

6:30 P.M.

NEOTROPICAL MIGRANTS: BIRDING IN THE AMERICAS



Presented by **Nahuel Medina**, Ottawa County Parks Naturalist

The Americas are renowned for their abundant and breathtaking biodiversity, and I have been fortunate to visit several countries in the Western Hemisphere, including Costa Rica, Mexico, and Argentina. Originally from Miami, Florida, I had Central and South America just a hop and skip away, which gave me plenty of opportunities to explore the region's natural beauty. Even though I now reside in Michigan, this move has only fueled my ambitions to visit more countries in the tropics.

In this presentation, I will share my experiences with Neotropical migrants during their stopover in Miami, as well as insights into the lives of local birds that thrive in tropical regions. I invite you to join me as I discuss my travels, birdwatching, and wildlife photography throughout the Americas.

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From the President's Desk – January 2025

I hope that everyone had a great holiday season.

Michigan Audubon Society (MAS) is embarking on a state-wide effort to help Michigan municipalities to become designated as a Bird City Michigan. In mid-December, Beth Miller and I participated in a Zoom presentation by MAS about the Bird City Michigan program. The basic idea is that "...a Bird City is a community that has been recognized for its work to create and protect habitat, reduce threats to birds, educate and engage people, and promote sustainability." Currently, over 200 communities in four countries are Bird Cities. As you all know, the natural areas (e.g., the MAS Wildlife Sanctuary in the Grand River, our county and city parks) in Grand Haven, Spring Lake, and Ferrysburg contain ecosystems that are critically important for breeding and migrating birds, including some of the Neotropical migrants that are the subject of this month's program. Being named a Bird City aligns directly with OIAS's mission because it will help us (a) aid MAS in its study, conservation and research efforts, (2) maintain areas critical to birds and other wildlife, and (3) educate the citizens of and the many visitors to the Tri-Cities area about the importance of these natural areas. The OIAS Board will explore the possibility of achieving a Bird City Michigan designation for the Tri-Cities Area. Achieving this goal will require a team effort. I hope that the OIAS Board can count on your assistance as we explore the possibility of being named a Bird City Michigan.

Please join us on 21 January at Loutit District Library to learn about Neotropical migrants and birding in the Americas from Nahuel Medina. We begin with a social "hour" from 6:00-6:30 pm. The program begins at 6:30 pm. The program is free and open to all. Invite your friends!

We continue to live-stream our programs on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/oias.org and those programs can be found on the OIAS YouTube channel at (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg4WKwR1KqyfLoqZuoY18Jg>). Please subscribe to the OIAS YouTube channel. Also, please visit our website <http://www.oias.org>, and, like our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/oias.org. We will post birding information and information about OIAS and upcoming events there.

Good birding
Michael P. Lombardo

2024-2025 MCNC/OIAS Field Trips

All field trips are from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon

January 18, 2025	Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center
February 15, 2025	Pere Marquette Park and the Muskegon Channel
March 15, 2025	Snug Harbor and Lost Lake Trail (MSP)
April 19, 2025	Upper Macatawa Natural Area (east of Holland)
May 15, 2025	Potluck Picnic Meeting & Bird Walk (Snug Harbor)
May 17, 2025	Big Day Count
June 21, 2025	Allegan State Game Area & Crane's Orchard Rest.
July 19, 2025	Black Lake Park
August 16, 2025	Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center



Cornell Lab eNews

January 12, 2025

Stunning Bird Photos to Kick Off the New Year

As of the end of 2024, birders around the world had contributed more than **67 million** photos to our Macaulay Library archive! Here are [some of the best from the past year](#).

2024 - 2025 PROGRAMS

- February 18: **Natural features of Ottawa County**, Bill Martinus
- March 18: **Storm chasing and birding adventures**, Isaac Polanski
- April 15: **A Beginner Birder's Journey by Fledgling Cindy Dobrez**
- May 20: **Business Meeting**, etc.

Note: April Program Change

Judi Manning

Bald Eagle: America's Official Bird



* * * * *

Excerpts/Synopsis, *Bald eagle is officially America's bird, with Biden's signature*, 12/25/24, CBS News, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/bald-eagle-biden-law/>

The Bald Eagle was first used as the national symbol over 240 years ago. Due to the use of the pesticide DDT that caused weak egg shells, the population declined to 417 nesting pairs by 1963. DDT was banned in 1972 and a few years later the Bald Eagle was declared endangered. By 2007 in the U.S. there were nearly 10,000 nesting pairs and they were removed from the endangered list. Now there are hundreds of thousands of nesting pairs.

On Christmas Eve President Biden signed into law legislation sent to him by Congress that amends the United States Code to correct what had long gone unnoticed and designated the bald eagle as the national bird.



The Board will decide and notify members via email, the website and Facebook.



Bald Eagle from the Brink in Michigan

Judi Manning

Synopsis: *Back from the brink: Michigan's bald eagle population soaring once again*, Matt Jaworowski, WoodTV, 7/23/23, <https://www.woodtv.com/news/michigan/back-from-the-brink-michigans-bald-eagle-population-soaring-once-again/>



* * * * *

In 1980 there was a low of 83 breeding pairs of Bald Eagles in Michigan. There were an estimated 359 breeding pairs in 2000 and 900 breeding pairs in 2024.



Why the decline?

- ◇ Hunted because people thought they were a threat to livestock and fisheries.
- ◇ They lost a lot of preferred roosting and nesting habitat (Trees next to a body of water)
- ◇ Introduction of the pesticide DDT in 1940s that caused then unprecedented chemical pollution.

Initially DDT was thought to be a scientific breakthrough. It was later found it had serious negative effects on the environment because it is extremely durable and can travel long distances. Eggshells of the eagles were thinned and would crack when incubating them. Michigan banned DDT in 1969. The Bald Eagle became critically endangered, and conservation groups stepped up and rehabilitated the few remaining eagles and reintroduced them into the wild. The 1973 Endangered Species Act provided funding to help bring them back.



Bald Eagles are adapting to more urban landscapes and new forestry practices are helping their numbers increase. In 2007, they were removed from the federal endangered species list. In 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated across the continental U.S. that there were more than 70,000 breeding pairs and more than 315,000 individuals.

Lead poisoning from fishing sinkers and lead shot is a continued threat as well as discarded fishline and trash left along the shoreline.



FEBRUARY 14 TO 17, 2025

Great Backyard Bird Count

Participating is easy, fun to do **alone or with others**, and **can be done anywhere** you find birds.

Step 1: Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for **15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days**, February 14–17, 2025.

Step 3: Identify all the birds you **see or hear** within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

If you are a **beginning bird admirer and new to bird identification**, try using the [Merlin Bird ID app](#) to tell us what birds you are seeing or hearing.

If you have **participated** in the count **before** and want to record **numbers of birds**, try the [eBird Mobile app](#) or enter your bird list on the [eBird website](#) (desktop/laptop).

Verbatim, <https://www.birdcount.org/participate/>

Long-tailed Duck

Judi Manning

Clangula hyemalis

“Oldsquaw”. This name dates back centuries and the Long-tailed Duck was named this because of the vocalizations of the females comparing it to the chattering of old women. The Long-tailed Duck was known as “Oldsquaw” up until 1991. Field guides were revised in the 1990s and 2000s. By 2010 Oldsquaw became obsolete.



Nonbreeding female



Male



Female

Both the male and female are easy to identify. Only the male has the long slender tail feathers.

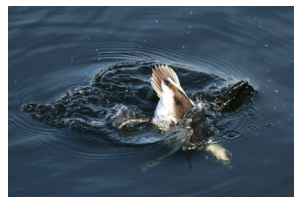
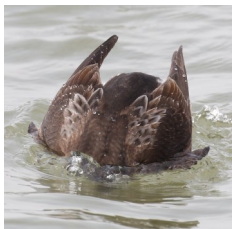
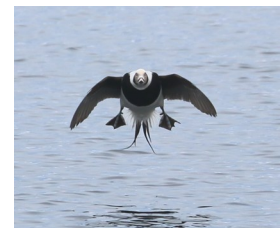
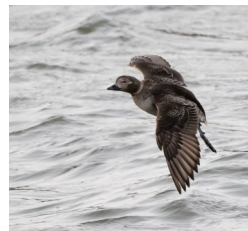
This species breeds in the undisturbed high Arctic wetlands near tundra pools in the North American Arctic. Their breeding habitat with extreme conditions is critical for their life cycle. They spend approximately nine months in coastal marine water, except for breeding. They breed in shallow wetlands of low-lying tundra. They migrate quite late in the fall and early in the spring. During migration they can be found along the coasts of the Great Lakes, Atlantic Ocean and Northern Pacific.



Large flocks can be seen flying along the horizon from the Ottawa County shoreline.

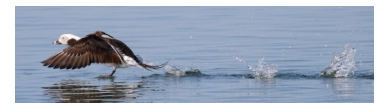
A master of Arctic survival, they have evolved to thrive in the frigid conditions and are the most arctic-adapted duck:

- Winter plumage for enhanced insulation
- Substantial fat reserves for energy
- Multiple insulation layers to trap warmth
- Specialized circulation to prevent frostbite
- Adaptations for cold water diving



By propelling themselves with their webbed feet and flapping with partially opened wings, they can dive down 200 feet to find invertebrates and small fish. Most of the time they forage 30 feet deep. In the winter, adults spend about 80% of the day looking for food. This species spends three or four times as long underwater as on the surface.

Most puddle ducks can spring straight out of the water into flight, but diving ducks like the Long-tailed Duck must run across the water building up speed before taking off.



In winter it has its breeding plumage. In spring it molts into nonbreeding plumage that lasts all summer. Most other ducks molt into nonbreeding plumage for a brief period in late summer.

Studies show their migratory routes change yearly due to environmental conditions and altering the route with variations in ice and weather.

In early spring in Holland State Park Channel, we have heard the male’s *ow-owoolett*, that sounds like a melodious yodel. They also growl, cluck and squawk.

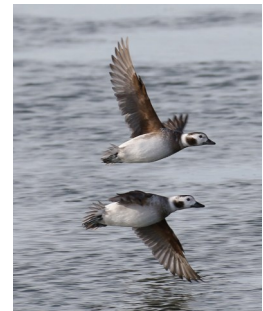
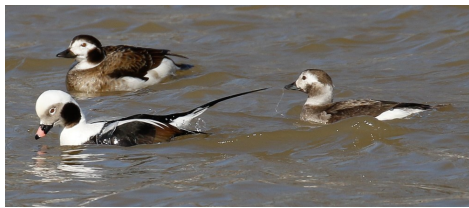
(Cont. on pg. 6)

Long-tailed Duck . . . cont. from pg. 5

The Long-tailed Duck is classified as Vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), indicating a high risk of endangerment in the wild. Their numbers have declined 80% since the Canadian Wildlife Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service began surveys in 1957 even though they have remote breeding grounds. Their numbers have stabilized since the early 1990s.

The primary concern in the future is a change in ocean conditions due to climate change, crude oil pollution, harvesting peat, disturbance, human-related hazards along the migration path, and overfishing. Like other birds, they are vulnerable to lead and mercury exposure and may be the reason for declining nesting populations in Alaska. They also become entangled in gillnets. Oil spills in northern waters, pollution by shipping vessels, and habitat loss are a threat.

References: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Long-tailed_Duck/overview, *Long-Tailed Duck: The Complete Guide*, By Anushree R., Birds All Around, <https://birdsallarounds.com/long-tailed-duck/>, Long-tailed Duck, Heleen Roos, 3/9/23, <https://www.birdzilla.com/birds/long-tailed-duck/>, *What is the old name for the long-tailed duck?* Alan Hernbroth, 1/20/24, <https://www.birdful.org/what-is-the-old-name-for-the-long-tailed-duck/>, https://seaduckjv.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ltdu_sppfactsheet.pdf,



Great Backyard Bird Count

2024 Results In a Snapshot

- 7,920 species of birds identified
- 210 countries or subregions
- 384,416 eBird checklists
- 313,874 Merlin Bird IDs (step-by-step, sound, or photo)
- 164,740 photos, videos, and sounds added to Macaulay Library
- 642,003 estimated global participants
- 385 reported community events

Verbatim, <https://www.birdcount.org/2024-final-results/>

Far Flowing Water is published eight times per year. If you would like to contribute a complete article for the next issue, please have your article to me **by February 1st**.

FAR FLOWING WATER

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Please contact Editor at oiias@oiias.org for other arrangements.

Who Am I?



Same bird. 9/29/22 Holland State Park
Lincoln Sparrow



Bingham 7/25/22
Horned Lark - First Year



Cooper-VanWieren 10/22/22 (Holland)
Fall Color

2024-2025 OIAS Membership Application/Renewal Date _____

SEND BY EMAIL _____ Email: _____

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ How did you hear about OIAS? _____

Check Member Type: \$20 Family \$30 Contributing \$100 Individual Life

My contribution to speaker fees and activism projects \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society,
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Grand Haven, Michigan

Thank you for your support!

Mission Statement **Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society**

a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation

Provide stewardship of local Grand River island wildlife sanctuaries owned by the Michigan Audubon Society;

Achieve through education, public recognition of the value and need for protecting and preserving wildlife, plants, soil, water and other natural resources as well as an understanding of their interdependence;

Promote an interest in our native birds and as well as native flora and fauna, and their habitats because of their great economic, cultural and recreational value; and

Aid the Michigan Audubon Society in its study, conservation and research efforts.

Owashtanong Islands Audubon Society

Judi Manning, Editor

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Holland, MI 49422

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