



Grand Traverse Audubon Club

Newsletter March 2021

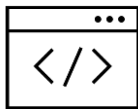
ZOOM ZOOM



Current Covid 19 issues prevent us from meeting in person. However, undaunted the Board perseveres. Vice President Kathy Flegel, who is the Program Chair, has arranged for excellent Zoom presentations. Our January presentation was a tutorial on how a few people can preserve a great piece of property: Holiday Woodlands Preserve. In February we had the great fortune to learn more about the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservatory. <https://www.gtrlc.org/> They have preserved land throughout the county and adjacent counties. Check out their Guides to property just waiting for birders.

MARCH 25TH NORTH TO ALASKA

This month, March, we are off to Alaska. From the panhandle to the artic, learn about birds, wild life and all creatures great and small. Go to <https://grandtraverseaudubon.org/> and click the EVENT tab to see the Zoom link. An email will also be sent out before the March 25th program.



WEBSITE UPDATE

Speaking of the [https:// grandtraverseaudubon.org](https://grandtraverseaudubon.org/) website.....

Recently, our indomitable webmaster, Carol Towar, relinquished her charge due to work commitments. Joe Brooks, who had been webmaster for quite a while, had trained Carol and had turned the reins over to her several years ago.

Fast forward like Spring migration. Joe agreed to step into the webmaster position on a temporary basis while the Board looks for a more permanent fix. Don Flegel agreed to work with Joe to learn the Web ropes. This is no small task.

Don and Joe have been working on updating the website. Kirk Waterstripe generously offered his Birder's Guide to the Traverse City Area 3rd Edition to the Website. If you haven't seen this guide, please take a look. It comes with map links and latitude and longitude coordinates. The only thing missing is feathers.

Go to the website and look around. If you haven't been there in while you will be pleasantly surprised.

But before we go, the club must acknowledge the woman that set up the original website and mail group. Kay Beerthuis, Life Member, setup the original website and mail group. She managed both for 15 years, eventually turning it over to Joe Brooks.

By the way, if anyone has expertise in managing websites or as a webmaster, please contact Leonard Graf or Kathy Flegel to chat about what you might be able to help with. The board is anxious to have several people able to work on the website.

Birds Birds Birds..what have we seen and where have we seen them?

Christmas Bird Count:

The Christmas Bird Count is a way to remind ourselves that our feathered friends are still around in the winter.

The National Audubon Society recorded 2,219 counts reporting sightings of 42, 188,725 birds. That is a lot of feathered friends, even though we are losing some daily.

Closer to home, Ed Moehle oversaw the TC count conducted by 26 birders reporting 7,530 birds of 64 species. Nate Crane, in Leelanau, oversaw 21 bird counters who reported 3,273 birds of 64 species. And to round out the Tri County area was Curt Hofer, in Antrim County, who worked with 19 birders reporting 4283 birds in 56 species.

Please take a look at the actual data sheets at

<https://grandtraverseaudubon.org/birding-places-2/bird-counts-2/2020-antrim-cbc/>

to see at the summaries. This gives us all a new appreciation for Citizen Science and how our club plays a role. Who knows, maybe next year we can field even more birders.

Sault Ste Marie Birding Adventure

In February of this year, our President Leonard Graf and his wife Barb took their annual trip to Sault Ste Marie.

Jerry & Sherri Freels, Larry & Cindee DuBey and Brian & 12 year old Lucas McCall joined leaders Leonard & Barbara Graf on a mid-winter birding weekend birding trip in Soo, Michigan. It was a rather mild weekend as the temperature dropped below zero degrees.

The group located 29 species. Winter specialties included excellent views of Sharp-tailed Grouse and Snowy Owls, although only a maximum of two. Others included Glaucous Gull, Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Common Redpoll and Snow Bunting.

Birds usually seen but missing on this trip were Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Shrike, but there is always next year.

Otter Creek Hike March 6th

Tom Ford led his annual hike at Otter Creek. Tom was joined by 6 hikers and what a wonderful day. A bit brisk but well worth the effort. The group saw both eagles on their nest and in good lighting. What a treat. They saw Mallards, gadwalls, lesser scaups, redheads, hooded mergansers, Golden Crowned Kinglets and other songbirds. (yes they are coming back!) Tom's troop was also entertained by two Chipmunks looking for Spring. It's coming Chips.

MORE FIELD TRIPS....CAN YOU HELP?

The Board would love to schedule more field trips as we move into Spring. You may have led a few in the past or you may know a great spot that is undiscovered. We can only have field trips with your help. Please contact Kathy Flegel at flegels@centurytel.net to volunteer to lead a great group of GTAC folks on a bird walk.

eBird

If you are just starting out in birding or if you'd like to hone your eBird skills, there is a free eBird tutorial on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website. <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/> This is a great tool and has a lot to offer birders of all levels.

BIRD ALERT

One of the best perks of belonging to the club are the Bird Alert emails that we receive. This has been a mainstay of communication for the first RWB (red wing blackbird), the Snowy Owl sightings, various eruptions in the area and our special sightings at our feeders.

We have gone through a few changes since Yahoo stopped doing list serve. Would that be the end of Bird Alert as we know it?? Into the breach stepped Mary Ellen Newport who set up the next iteration of Bird Alert. Thank You Mary Ellen! Over time, we learned that we needed more capacity that that platform had so the club moved to Google Groups. Thanks to Joe Brooks, Don Flegel, Ann Kennedy and Mary MacDowell we now are in business. You all should have received the notice that you have been subscribed to bird-alertgtac@googlegroups.com. Please use this email address to report your sightings.

Got a talent to share?

One of the things that you will notice as you read this newsletter. We can only be a successful club by helping each other and helping the club. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge and expertise in the club. Many of you have volunteered over the years and we thank you.

Won't you please consider volunteering a little time to make us grow even more successful.

Please contact Leonard Graf or Kathy Flegel if you have a talent to share. Thank you.