

Audubon Board Meeting 6/11/2025

1. Roll Call
 - a. Present: John Imboden, Jenny Young, Mary Ellen Newport, Kathie Wiley, Kirk Waterstripe, Jared Gugnitz
 - b. Absent: Kathy Flegel
2. Michigan Audubon Conference
 - a. Can send up to 2 representatives if anyone is interested, Sept 20th
3. Waterfowl Conference
 - a. They are requesting our help in leading trips
4. Potebego pond Owl survey
 - a. John to contact to see if it's a one time request or multiple sessions
5. Whitefish point presentation on 6/19/25
 - a. NMC space is booked (\$220), cookies ordered (\$48)
 - b. Need 2 people for directing traffic, one at entrance, one outside room. Mary Ellen and Jared volunteered.
 - c. Owl box will be raffled off at this event.
6. Loon platform
 - a. Need to get it back out of the water and repaired. Kirk to follow up.
7. Publicist business
 - a. Newsletter
 - i. Would like to find other people to contribute, so it's not all on the shoulders of one person
 - ii. Would like to conduct a survey to ask recipients about how they would like to consume the newsletter, and maybe include a feeler for who would like to help produce the newsletter
8. 501c3
 - a. Decision has been made to become a 501c3. Application has been submitted.
9. Should we move our membership meetings to the 1st or 2nd Thursday of the month to accommodate members who are also in the rock club?
 - a. Kirk to include this idea in the survey being sent to the membership.
 - b. Contract with the Nature Center goes through the end of the calendar year, so this would start in January.
10. Reaching Younger Birders
 - a. Ideas to Consider
 - i. The Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club has a monthly youth meeting (Pebble Pups) just prior to their monthly adult meeting
 1. We'd need someone to lead an effort like this. Also need to look into training for working with minors
 2. Kirk to put a feeler into the newsletter to gauge interest
 3. How do we get kids to come to this?

4. Mary Ellen reach out to Loren Vaughn to try to get contact info to talk to someone about the rock club kids meeting
- ii. Dedicated position on the board for Youth Engagement?
 1. Maybe not a board position, but a designated person who would maybe get a small honorarium?
 2. Teacher or retired teacher?
- iii. \$0-\$5 under-21 membership fee
 1. \$5 to have them have some skin in the game
- iv. Community events beyond membership meetings
 1. Bird trivia (like collab with IPR at Rare Bird), Peents and Pints
 2. Field trips (see below)
- v. More social media: FB, Instagram, TikTok, Ticker, Northern Express, IPR Almanac
 1. Need to find a person devoted to this effort. We do not have this expertise on the board currently
- vi. Reach out to top (100) local eBirders, email Amanda, Evan Reister (need admin access)
 1. Jenny started reaching out to these but hasn't had a good hit yet
- vii. Minimized business vs program (done!); "meetings" vs "programs" (done!)
- viii. Birding field trips
 1. focused explicitly for beginners
 2. lots of different leaders of trips
 - a. Jenny and Mary Ellen have volunteered to lead some Sunday morning walks so Kirk doesn't have to lead all of them
 3. multiple time slots (Sunday vs church...)
 - a. Evening birding has been successful this year
 - b. Saturday trips have been also been successful this spring
 - c. Kirk is open to other times, but having it reliably and predictably on Sunday mornings is important
 - d. More discussion to follow about the schedule. Maybe we could try some other things in the fall
 4. Field trips targeting snowy owls, bald eagles, feeder birds
 5. Use Eventbrite to get folks to commit
 6. Consider expansive field trips: frogs, inverts, snakes, etc
- ix. Have a library of binoculars owned by the club
- x. Consider renaming
 1. "Club" is exclusive, consider Alliance? Maybe Collective?

2. Trend away from Audubon ([NPR story](#), [NYC name change](#), [National Audubon retains name, MI Audubon debates](#))
- xi. Partnerships with “nature centers” (GTRLC, Conservation District), public libraries
 1. Feeders set up where we can have a higher chance of seeing birds. This would be a great activity for families

11. Next year program and field trip ideas

- a. Create a google sheet (shared with all the board members) as a place to put ideas for next year
- b. Wilderness first aid – what to do if something happens on a field trip
- c. Northern Wexford county (10 ½ Rd.) field
- d. Contact the area band to see if they can contribute to/lead a program
- e. Bald eagle near North Bar Lake – Next April?
- f. Field trips explicitly for beginners
- g. Carleton lead a birding photography presentation?
- h. Mary Ellen’s house bird watching at feeders
- i. Feeder watching at the Nature Center
- j. Glacial Landforms – April in a van