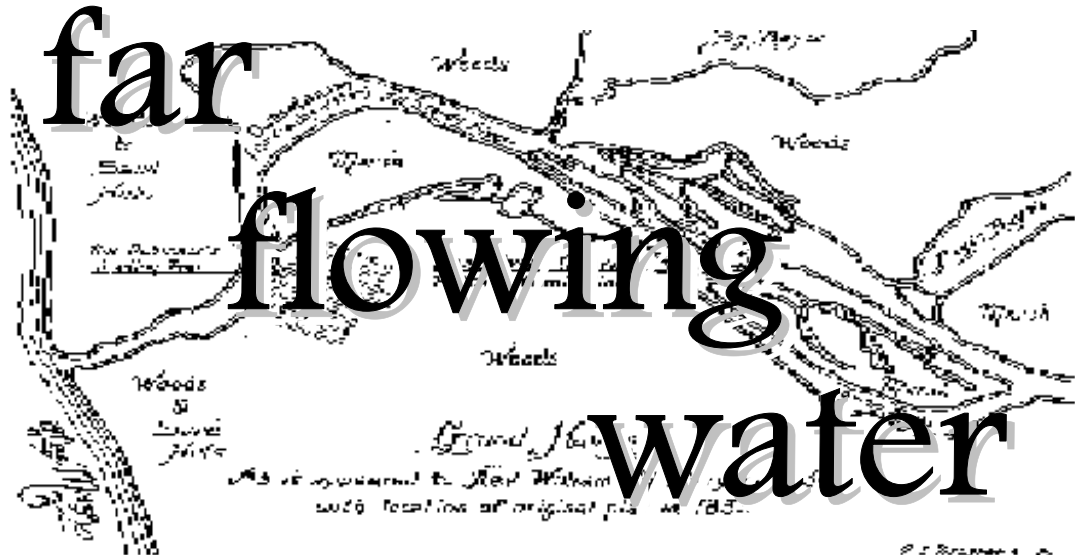


Grand Haven, Michigan



**April 17**

**6:30 P.M.**

**KIRTLAND’S WARBLER CONSERVATION:  
BACKGROUND AND FUTURE**



Presented by **David Ewert**, Kirtland’s Warbler Program Director and Conservation Specialist, American Bird Conservancy

This presentation will focus on the natural history of the Kirtland’s Warbler, actions taken for its remarkable recovery, and future work that will be needed to ensure the species does not become endangered again.

The Kirtland’s Warbler, which breeds almost exclusively in Michigan and winters almost exclusively in The Bahamas, was delisted in 2019 after being listed as federally endangered since 1972. Intensive habitat work on its breeding grounds, including jack-pine management and control of a nest parasite, the Brown-headed Cowbird, has led to recovery from as few as approximately 170 pairs to approximately 2,000 pairs. Research and capacity building on the Bahamian wintering grounds have focused conservation efforts on the island nation.

You can watch  
live on the OIAS  
Facebook page

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407 Columbus Avenue, Grand Haven

*Everyone is welcome to OIAS’s programs*

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<https://www.facebook.com/oias.org/>

## From the President's Desk – April 2024

Despite the up-and-down nature of the weather the last several weeks, there is evidence that spring migration is underway. I've had a Fox Sparrow and a Chipping Sparrow hanging out at my bird feeders for the last two weeks and I saw an Eastern Phoebe this morning, 1 April, in my neighbor's yard. Other early migrants like Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Song Sparrows are becoming common sights in Ottawa County. I encourage you to use the resources of [ebird.org](http://ebird.org) to help you track the return of spring migrants and point you in the direction of locations where birds can be found. Better yet, try to go birding as much as you can. One of the great things about birding as a hobby is that spring migration rolls around every year and as we can become reacquainted with some of the "regulars," there is always a chance of adding a new bird to our life lists.

Please attend this month's program "Kirtland's Warbler conservation: background and future" presented by David Ewert on 19 March at Loutit District Library in Grand Haven. Dave is Director of Conservation Science for the Great Lakes Program of the Nature Conservancy. The recovery of the Kirtland's Warbler populations is a conservation success story and demonstrates what may be possible in promoting the recovery of other declining bird populations. We begin with a social "hour" from 6:00-6:30 pm. The program begins at 6:30. Please invite your friends to this program. All are welcome!

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

Good birding,  
Michael P. Lombardo

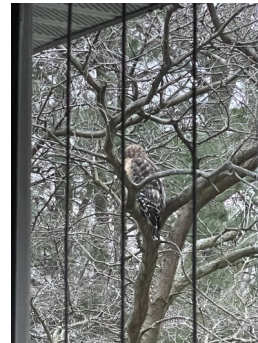
## Yard Sighting

Judi Manning

During the snow on March 22nd, I saw a Red-shouldered Hawk sitting on the top of our front yard bird feeder about 30 feet away from the house. It then flew to a tree at the edge of the yard. Soon I saw a large blur fly across the yard to the west side. Yup, a second Red-shouldered Hawk. This one decided it would perch on the top of an Eastern Bluebird nest box not currently being used.

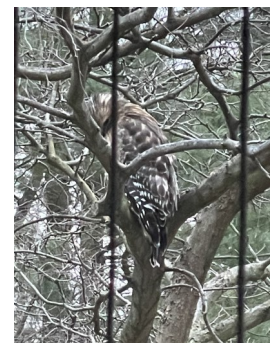
On March 31st as I was opening the curtain, I looked to the left and was shocked to see the Red-shouldered Hawk perched about 8 feet from the house. A squirrel soon chased it away.

On April 3rd I saw it fly from west to east across the yard carrying wet leaves. It landed in the tree across the street and I watched it as it pulled the leaves apart and moving its right foot up and down I assume to feel for a rodent. The hawk flew off without any food.



Outside house

March 31 photos



# 2024 PROGRAM

May 21—Stay tuned for more information

## Field Trip Schedule in conjunction with Muskegon Nature Club

Apr. 20, 2024: Howard Christensen Nature Center  
June 15, 2024: Walkinshaw Sanctuary and Gale's Pond  
July 20, 2024: Allegan State Game Area and Crane's Orchard  
Pie Pantry Restaurant  
Aug. 17, 2024: Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center

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

OIAS  
welcomes the  
new member.

## Rare Owl winter's secretly in Ottawa County

By Anonymous

In April 2023, our non-birding neighbor drew our attention to a large deposit of owl pellets at the base of a small grove of white pine trees. It was immediately apparent that an owl had spent many a day roosting in these 7 trees. The owl was not present. Our neighbor said he saw an owl sitting out once but could not identify it.

This grove of trees is only 75 feet from where we lay our heads at night. Amazingly we never heard or saw the bird for the couple of months it roosted there. We collected over 50 pellets from an 8 foot circle. Most of the pellets upon examination by a 5th grade class, contained an intact bare vole skull and the remnants of the rest of the prey. The pellets were a dark gray, 1-2 inches long and about as round as a shotgun shell. Through the summer we speculated, was it a Great Horned, a Barred or the other common owl the Screech.

The mystery was resolved in late November. A patch of white feces was found in the grove, and when looking up I spotted a Long-eared Owl looking down from about 10 feet. I shared my observation with my partner and took a few quick photos with my cellphone, without flushing the owl. We shared our find with some serious birding friends who alerted us to some protocols in the birding community to protect rare species. The Long-eared Owl is a "sensitive species" in Ebird's world.

We decided to protect the owl, no matter that we would like to share the sighting with the birding community. If the word got out about a residing rare owl, we would not be able to keep the hordes away.

The evidence piled up along with the pellets, about one a day. With binoculars from our house we could see a small portion of the owl's belly, which we observed nearly everyday. Once, weeks later LEO was spotted out on another tree at dusk. Never heard. Friends came by to monitor weekly if we were away.

The owl sat in exactly the same spot every day, all day and then foraged at night. We live adjacent to a large open area where the owl found excellent hunting. In early March after about 100 pellets, LEO disappeared to probably return North to find a mate.

If you know the source of this saga you belong to our "LEO Team". Please keep our secret. We, of course, are hoping that LEO returns year after year and lives its life unmolested.

With habits like this, the species is hard to discover, but easily disturbed.

### Global Big Day – May 11

Judi Manning

#### Protect Insects, Protect Birds

<https://migratorybirdday.org/resources/press-release/>

This year the focus is “on the importance of insects and their impact on migratory birds. Insects are essential sources of energy for many migratory bird species, supporting their extensive journeys and greatly affecting the timing, duration, and overall success of bird migrations.

Along their migration routes, birds actively seek out insects in fields, forests, wetlands, and various habitats during stopovers. The timing of their bird migration often coincides with peak insect abundance at stopover locations, supplying nourishment for birds to replenish their energy reserves before continuing their journey.

The loss and disturbance of insect populations along avian migration routes threaten bird survival and well-being. Natural spaces like forests and grasslands are transformed or endangered by intensive agriculture and urban

development, resulting in a decline in insect populations. Pesticides and herbicides designed to protect crops can unintentionally harm beneficial insects that birds rely on for food. Pollution from sources like plastics and industrial waste also negatively impacts insect health. A scarcity of energy-rich insects can hinder bird migration, leading to weakened immune systems, reduced reproductive success, and increased mortality rates for both adult birds and their offspring. Birds play crucial roles in pollination and pest control, and a lack of insects disrupts these ecosystem functions. Overpopulation of certain insects, without natural predators from birds, can cause outbreaks that damage plant health and agriculture.”

To learn more about this year’s World Migratory Bird Day campaign and actions to take, visit:

[www.worldmigratorybirdday.org](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org)  
[www.migratorybirdday.org](http://www.migratorybirdday.org)

## eBird

### “Enter what you see and hear in eBird:

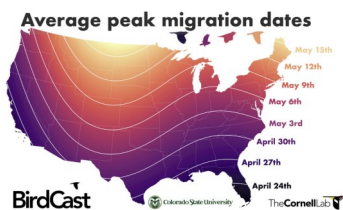
You can enter your sightings [via our website](#) or download the [free eBird Mobile app](#) to make submitting lists even easier. Please enter your checklists before 14 May to be included in our initial results announcement.

### Make your sightings more valuable:

[submit complete checklists](#), [keep counts of the birds that you see](#), and keep multiple checklists throughout the day”.

<https://ebird.org/news/global-big-day-2024>

Excerpts: *Peak Spring Bird Migration Periods for U.S. Cities*, Andrew Farnsworth, The Cornell Lab 4/3/24, <https://birdcast.info/news/peak-spring-bird-migration-periods-u-s-cities/> Check this website for more info



“Broadly, spring migration runs from approximately 1 March to 15 June and fall migration from approximately 1 August to 30 November (though some species migrate even earlier and later in both seasons) in the contiguous U.S. We try to capture particularly intense periods of migratory movements by defining what we call peak periods: seasonal windows during which 50% of total nocturnal bird migration traffic historically passes through each city (n.b. with values taken from the radar nearest to the city). This peak period date range is determined by examining radar measurements from 1995 to 2018. [More detailed discussion and methods are available in this publication.](#)”

Follow the above link to check 998,998 of the largest cities in the contiguous US. Here is an example:

City	State	Peak Period Start Date	Peak Period End Date
Grand Rapids	Michigan	5/7/23	5/25/23

## Peak Spring Bird Migration Periods

## Earth Day – April 17<sup>th</sup> Planet vs. Plastics

Judi Manning

Copied verbatim from the Earth Day Website: <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2024/>

Earthday.org has an “unwavering commitment to end plastics for the sake of human and planetary health, demanding a 60% reduction in the production of ALL plastics by 2040.”

### Planet vs. Plastics Global Theme for Earth Day 2024

““The word environment means what surrounds you. In the case of plastics we have become the product itself – it flows through our blood stream, adheres to our internal organs, and carries with it heavy metals known to cause cancer and disease. Now this once-thought amazing and useful product has become something else, and our health and that of all other living creatures hangs in the balance,” said Kathleen Rogers, President of EARTHDAY.ORG. “The *Planet vs. Plastics* campaign is a call to arms, a demand that we act now to end the scourge of plastics and safeguard the health of every living being upon our planet.”

Plastics extend beyond an imminent environmental issue; they present a grave threat to human health as alarming as climate change. As plastics break down into microplastics, they release toxic chemicals into our food and water sources and circulate through the air we breathe. Plastic production now has grown to more than 380 million tons per year. More plastic has been produced in the last ten years than in the entire 20th century, and the industry plans to grow explosively for the indefinite future.

.....More than 500 billion plastic bags—one million bags per minute—were produced worldwide last year..... 100 billion plastic beverage containers were sold last year in the United States. That’s more than 300 bottles per inhabitant. A few of them will be converted into park benches; none of them will be made into new plastic bottles and 95% of all plastics in the US won’t be recycled at all.

.....People seldom think of water when they think of plastics. But making a plastic water bottle requires six times as much water as the bottle itself contains.”

## Colors? Smell? Mosquito Bites?

Judi Manning



Why some get mosquito bites and some not so much? Researchers at the U. of Washington studied the behavior of female *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes to find out why. Our sweat, skin temperature, and breath attract mosquitoes. Mosquitoes detect carbon dioxide 100 feet away, look for certain colors and visual patterns that indicate food, follow the trail, and begin to see us 20 feet away.

Specific species of mosquito are attracted to certain colors according to the study published in the journal [Nature Communications](#). Mosquitoes are attracted to shades of orange, red, cyan, or black and less so to purple, white, green, and blue. After they sense CO<sub>2</sub> and identify a host, they use a heat sensing receptor in its antenna to find unprotected or exposed parts of the body. One theory is when a mosquito looks at you, she sees red. So, if you are sweaty or get red from being in the sun, it attracts them.

After extensive research they found a mosquito is more likely attracted if there is contrast between the subject and the background. With about 200 different mosquito species in the U.S., researchers say it is possible each species has a specific trait when looking for a target.

Timothy Best, a certified entomologist, says “Light colors are perceived as a threat to mosquitoes, which is why many species avoid biting in direct sunlight”<sup>2</sup> Best further says “Mosquitoes are very susceptible to dying by dehydration, therefore light colors may instinctually represent danger and prompt avoidance. In contrast, darker colors may replicate shadows, which are more likely to absorb and retain heat, allowing mosquitoes to use their sophisticated antenna to locate a host.”

The researchers hope to build better mosquito traps so they can test for mosquito-borne diseases.

References: “Bug bite breakthrough? New research shows which colors attract mosquitos”, Matt Jaworowski, 2/15/22, <https://www.woodtv.com/news/national/bug-bite-breakthrough-new-research-shows-which-colors-attract-mosquitos/>,<sup>2</sup> “New Research Says Mosquitoes Are Most Attracted to One Color in Particular” Korin Miller, 2/9/22, <https://www.prevention.com/health/a39024582/red-attracts-mosquitoes/>

# When to put out Hummingbird Feeders

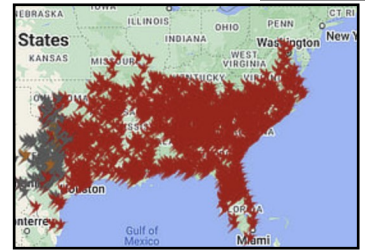
Judi Manning

Synopsis/Excerpts

Hummingbirds are on their way! Check the northward migration: <https://hummingbirdcentral.com/>

4/4

It is important hummingbirds find food when they arrive. They have traveled a long way and need food to replenish the energy they need to continue their journey or to breed. Hummingbirds will get nutrition from natural flowers as well as the feeder. They also get protein from small insects found inside the flowers they visit.



- \* Place the feeder near other perches and in areas with native flowers.
- \* Avoid hanging close to windows.
- \* Hang them four or five feet above ground.
- \* Space them so multiple birds can hopefully feed if there is an aggressive/dominant bird around.
- \* Clean feeders every two to three days. Change immediately if it looks cloudy.
- \* No red dye. Red dye or artificially colored water negatively impacts their health. Recipe below for homemade nectar.
- \* Plant native plants for nectar, small gnats and spiders found on the plants. For some ideas, follow this link: <https://www.audubon.org/content/how-create-hummingbird-friendly-yard>
- \* Add a mister. Hummingbirds like to fly through it, bathe in it and drink.

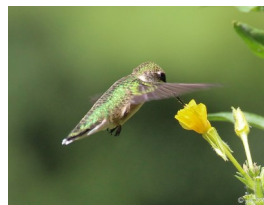
Reference: *The Best Time To Put Out Your Hummingbird Feeders, According To Experts*, Kait Hanson, 2/17/24, <https://www.southernliving.com/when-to-put-out-hummingbird-feeders-8584598>.



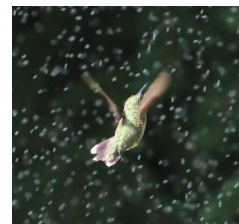
<https://nationalzoo.si.edu/migratory-birds/hummingbird-nectar-recipe>

## Directions for making safe hummingbird food:

1. Mix 1 part sugar with 4 parts water (1 cup of sugar with 4 cups of water) until the sugar is dissolved
2. Do **not** add red dye
3. Fill your hummingbird feeders with the sugar water and place outside
4. Extra sugar water can be stored in a refrigerator
5. Change feeders every other day and thoroughly clean them each time to prevent harmful mold growth



Nectaring at Evening Primrose



Bathing under sprinkler

## FAR FLOWING WATER

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Please contact Editor at [oias@oias.org](mailto:oias@oias.org) for other arrangements.

# Thank you

TO EVERYONE WHO  
CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE OF  
*far flowing water*

Judi Manning

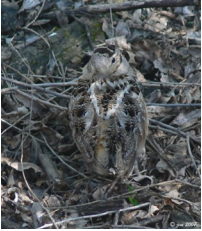
# American Woodcock

*Scolopax minor*



The American Woodcock is the only woodcock native to North America. There are seven woodcock species found in Europe and Asia. The woodcock is a member of the sandpiper family.

Instead of feeding on coastlines, they feed in forests. Snipes are their closest relative.



This well camouflaged bird walks slowly along the forest floor, probing moist soil looking for food. The lower third of its beak has a lot of nerve endings to help it feel its prey. Its upper mandible is flexible at the tip to capture and remove earthworms and other invertebrates more than two inches underground. The beak of the male is three inches long and the female's is longer.

Look for them in the spring at dawn or dusk in forest openings, meadows, and old fields. If they are around, you can hear a loud nasally peent from the ground or in the air. In the air he also makes musical chirps and a twittering sound as air passes through his outer primary wing feathers. He performs impressive aerial displays showing off for the females as high as 350 feet with a zigzagging descent. Males mate with multiple females. Aldo Leopold called the displays "sky dances".

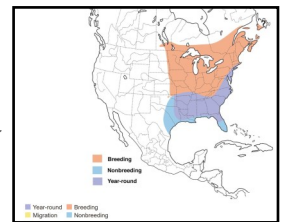
<https://xeno-canto.org/>  
Search for American Woodcock (or any other bird and some frogs)



Females visit four or more singing grounds before nesting and may continue after taking care of young. The male continues to display after she has laid eggs and does not help with the young. She exhibits a broken wing to lure predators away. The young leave the nest soon after hatching and eat on their own after three or four days.

Their large eyes are near the back of their head so they can watch the sky and look for food with almost a 360-degree field of vision.

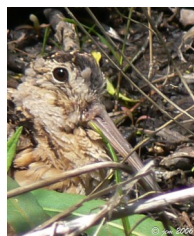
They can fly up to 45 mph in a short burst. Males performing an aerial display may flap as slow as five miles per hour and is one of the slowest recorded flight of any bird. They often fly at low elevations, typically migrating below an altitude of 100 feet.



Although declining annually by 1% since the late 1960's due to natural forest succession, shifting forest management, and habitat loss due to development, they are still classified as Least Concern. Pesticides that collect on the ground from aerial spraying for insect pests can accumulate in their body. Eating mainly earthworms, they are vulnerable to poisoning by cadmium, lead, and other heavy metals. With the eye position, they cannot see well directly in front of them which causes collisions with buildings, communication towers, glass windows, and other man-made structures.

Forest management for second-growth forests for the benefit of the Golden-winged Warbler is helping the American Woodcock.

References: American Woodcock, [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American\\_Woodcock/id#](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Woodcock/id#), 10 Fun Facts About the American Woodcock, Aaron Tremper, Audubon Magazine, 3/25/22, <https://www.audubon.org/news/10-fun-facts-about-american-woodcock>, American Woodcock, <https://animalia.bio/american-woodcock>, <https://abcbirds.org/bird/american-woodcock/>



Long bill



Beak partly in mud.



Can you find me?

# Migration Stopovers

Judi Manning

Princeton Ph.D. student Fengyi Guo and her colleagues from Princeton and the University of Delaware researched the question “where do migratory birds stop to refuel and rest during their flights”? These researchers used weather radar imagery maps to find the stopover sites in N. America. By using bird movement patterns for five years of spring and fall data they located over 2.4 million hectares (593,0529 acres) as key stopover hotspots in the eastern U.S. for landbirds.

The radar samples the atmosphere every 6-10 minutes and detects the take-off of birds up to a radius of 80 km (50 miles). The weather radar data takes lots of processing. Using these radar images provides the first accurate picture of key stopover sites. With this information, they identified sites to protect the safe passage of migrating birds.

Migrating birds are famished and fatigued after an all-night flight. As they fly, they are looking for large areas with suitable shelter, plenty of food, and few predators or competitors.

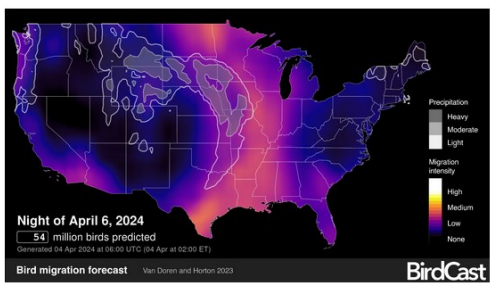
The areas are primarily deciduous forests including forest fragments in broadly deforested areas among the squares of cities and agricultural fields. These areas are crucial for the bird species that use these areas. Sites birds use in the fall do not overlap with sites they use in spring. Only 17% of the stopover sites are used by migrating birds in the spring and fall.

The loss of migratory birds since 1970 is attributed to many human-induced factors, including habitat loss, overexploitation, and climate change. The report of the above researchers said: *“We found generally higher stopover densities in protected areas than in unprotected areas in both seasons. A well-distributed network of well-protected stopover areas, complementing conservation efforts on the breeding and wintering grounds, is essential to sustaining healthy populations of migratory landbirds in North America.”*

References: *Princeton research reveals the secret sites where America’s migrating songbirds stop to rest and refuel*, Bing Lin, Cara Clase, 12/12/23, <https://cpree.princeton.edu/news/2023/princeton-research-reveals-secret-sites-where-america%E2%80%99s-migrating-songbirds-stop-rest-and-refuel>, *How Do Tired Birds Choose Where to Stop During Migration?* Jennie Miller, 1/7/15, <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/how-do-tired-birds-choose-where-to-stop-during-migration/#>

BirdCast

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[Migration tools](#)
[Science-to-action](#)
[News](#)

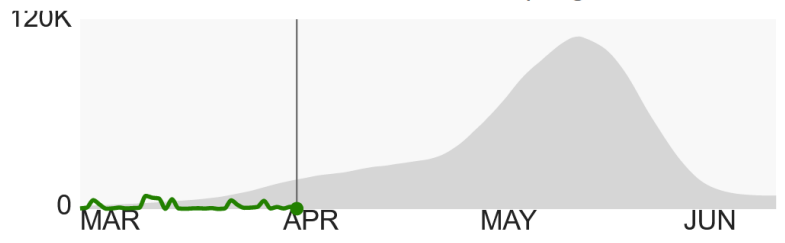


**Night of April 6, 2024**  
54 million birds predicted  
Generated on Apr 2024 at 08:00 UTC (04 Apr at 02:00 ET)  
Bird migration forecast Van Doren and Horton 2023

## And so far this season... As of April 4th

**Birds in flight (nightly avg.)** ■ Spring 2024 ■ Historic

120K



0      MAR      APR      MAY      JUN

During spring migration, most birds pass through the contiguous U.S. from mid-April to mid-May.

We check this almost daily to watch the migration in spring and fall:

<https://birdcast.info/>





Red-shouldered Hawk

Who Am I?



Purple Finch (male & female)



Lower right photo of up close female taken by my sister, Jan, on her feeder.



2023-2024 OIAS Membership Application/Renewal Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEND BY EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



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

My contribution to speaker fees and activism projects \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Grand Haven, Michigan

Thank you for your support!

(4/24)

**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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