

October 2009

Edited
by Carl Freeman

The *Meadowlark* is the newsletter of the
Benzie Audubon Club

Dedicated To Increasing Our Knowledge Of The Natural World

Printed on Recycled Paper

The Meadowlark



President's Thoughts



Benzie Audubon and the Grand Traverse Band

In 2007 the Grand Traverse Band of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians kindly allowed us to begin meeting at their beautiful Tribal Outpost. To thank the Tribe and encourage their participation in Audubon events Agnes Glinski and I prepared an article that appeared in the Tribal newsletter. At Agnes's suggestion we provided an updated version that appeared in the newsletter this year. Here is that article:

The Benzie Audubon Club feels very fortunate to have the privilege of holding meetings at the Tribal Outpost of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The Club is a non-profit charitable organization whose purposes are stated in our Bylaws as follows:

- The Benzie Audubon Club, a chapter of the Michigan Audubon Society, has as its primary objective the promotion of interest, knowledge and appreciation of the abundant flora and fauna of Northern Michigan.
- The club will support activities whose goals are to protect and preserve the natural environment of the region.

To meet its mission Benzie Audubon offers educational programs and seasonal field trips. In addition, the Club took a generous bequest and established the Robert Lytle Education and Environmental Fund. From this fund the Club offers a limited number of mini-grants each year to teachers, schools or organizations for purposes of environmental education or enhancement of the natural environment of our area.

All of our meetings and field trips are open to the public (including Tribal members!) without charge, and we encourage participation by families. In that regard some of our programs popular with children have been those involving live birds, snakes and bats (under close supervision, of course!). We have offered special field trips for Tribal students and their parents to places such as Pearl Lake and Old Baldy. We also have sponsored programs on serious ecological concerns such as a symposium on the water quality of Lake Michigan.

We believe we are on the same wave length as the Grand Traverse Band with regard to conservation and the natural environment, and we hope our programs will be of interest to Tribal members. One of our popular programs last year featured John Bailey, who spoke about birds and animals as they relate to Native American culture. By the same token we hope our members can learn more about the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. In that regard we have provided a link to the GTB website on our website at www.benzieaudubon.org.

Our website also contains a full schedule of upcoming field trips and programs. The remaining programs at the Tribal Outpost this year will be on July 9 (featuring nature photographer Jay Burt), September 3 (with environmental attorney Jim Olson) and November 5 (our annual potluck dinner, followed by a talk by Doug Cook on "Birding Addiction"). Come and join us!

[Signed by John Ester and Agnes Glinski]

Annual Meeting & Pot Luck Nov. 5th, 6 PM

After the potluck dinner and a brief business meeting,

Doug Cook

will present a program titled

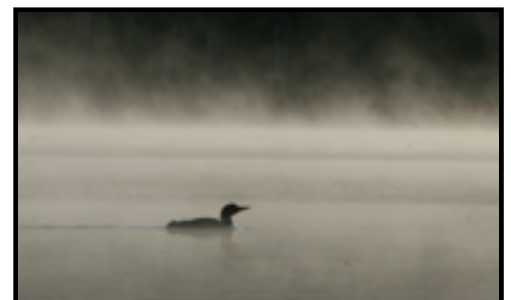
"The Seven Mysteries of Birding"

or

Learning to Fly with One Oar in the Water."

An introspective look at one birder's search for enlightenment through the mysteries and magic of birding.

Bring a dish to pass
and your table service.
**Join us at the Tribal Outpost
on Hoadley Road.**



What mysteries will Doug
conjure up out of the mists?

Bluebird Trail Update

For the seventh consecutive year the bluebird boxes along the Betsie Valley Trail found a lot of activity. Of the 48 boxes, 37 contained nests and two were even used twice.

Twenty-six boxes contained bluebird nests and 18 of these were successful, producing an estimated 68 young bluebirds.

Tree swallows used 10 boxes and 9 of these produced about 32 young. Cold weather may have been responsible for reduced flying insect activity which in turn took a toll on these insect dependent birds with 9 dead adults found in the boxes.

Three boxes were used by other species, a house wren, a chickadee and one unidentified species that built a bulky nest of grasses and then abandoned it.

Another box, post and all, disappeared this year bringing the total missing to six over the past seven years (three disappeared the first year).

Keith Westphal

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

According to its bylaws, Benzie Audubon Club's board is made up of ten members, and the term for each board position is two years. Half of the positions become open each year, and new board members are elected at the Annual Meeting. This year's nominating committee was made up of board members Sally Cook (Publicity) and Char Ester (Membership).

The open positions and nominations are:

Vice President – Char Ester
Treasurer – Doug Cook
Membership - Carl Freeman
Field Trips - Bryce Dreeszen
Conservation - Doug Wozniak
Programs - David Lean has been appointed to fill Judy's Macey's position (but also needs to be voted on by the membership).

Additional nominations from the floor to fill these five positions will be very welcome. The Board meets every two months to discuss club business and to plan programs and activities. If you have an interest in serving on the Benzie Audubon Board, please tell one of the board members. Also, all of our board meetings are open to members.



Win A Prize !

Identify this bird

The editor will give anyone who can identify this bird a free bookmark !

On our recent trip to California I was fortunate to spend an afternoon with several American Dippers (their official name), also known as water ouzels. Though the waterfalls in Yosemite NP were mostly empty because of lack of water in the fall (this is usual) and the ouzels were not playing in the rough water and my still images do not do them justice, I thought you might enjoy this 1917 poem by Harriet Monroe (1860-1936). You may notice there is poetic license in the color of the bird as it is gray instead of brown.



The Water Ouzel

by Harriet Monroe

Little brown surf-bather of the mountains!
Spirit of foam, lover of cataracts, shaking your wings in falling waters!
Have you no fear of the roar and rush when Nevada plunges --
Nevada, the shapely dancer, feeling her way with slim white fingers?
How dare you dash at Yosemite the mighty --
Tall, white limbed Yosemite, leaping down, down over the cliff?
Is it not enough to lean on the blue air of mountains?
Is it not enough to rest with your mate at timberline, in bushes that hug
the rocks?
Must you fly through mad waters where the heaped-up granite breaks them?
Must you batter your wings in the torrent?
Must you plunge for life and death through the foam?





Indian Pipe

TIME TO RENEW!

Membership dues at Benzie Audubon run from annual meeting to annual meeting. That means it's time to renew your membership! For everyone's convenience we have enclosed a self-addressed return envelope that also serves as a renewal form. Just complete the form, enclose your check, stamp the envelope and drop it in the mail.

Char Ester, Membership Chair



Bottled Gentian

2009 SCHEDULE

When you renew your membership you will be supporting programs like those on the schedule for the rest of 2009. You also will receive our newsletter and e-mail notices of programs and field trips.

Nov. 5th, 6 PM

Annual Meeting & Pot Luck

Nov. 14th 8 AM

Birding at Pt. Betsie

Dec. 20th

Christmas Bird Count - contact Carl 352-4739 or John 325-2445

Bird Banding Web Site

Alice Van Zoeren from Leelanau Co. and Piping Plover fame has been working at Powdermill Avian Research Center in PA this fall as a bander. Many of you have attended our banding demonstration over the years and might like more information about banding and to see what a large well run station is like. Alice sent this link to their very educational web site . . .

www.westol.com/~banding/

MINI-GRANTS

Benzie Audubon offers Mini grants to anyone in Benzie Co. with a natural history related project that needs funding.

Go to

www.benzieaudubon.org/mini-grants.html

to get an application form.

Our Mini-grants are funded by generous donations that we have received in the last several years.

The people, especially children, of Benzie County will benefit through activities supported by donations like this.

Grants for 2009

Crystal Lake Elem. 2nd grade,
Lake Ann Bog Walk **\$387**

Wings of Wonder-Platte

Lake Elementary **\$1,000**

Congregational Summer

Assembly - Habitat
assessment & ecology

activities for children **\$1,500**

Frankfort Elementary

Wren House Project **\$ 500**

Platte River School

Bird Food **\$ 175**

TOTAL **\$3,562**

RECENT SIGHTINGS

In September Traverse City birders visiting Frankfort found a Franklin's Gull on the beach. Many people were able to see and enjoy this bird thanks to our informal bird hot line, as it stayed around for a couple of weeks at least. Though as you can see it got bored with being watched and photographed by the bird paparazzi. Franklin's Gulls are an uncommon visitor from the plains states.



Franklin's Gull

In October Keith Westphal saw many migrating loons, including 2 Red-throated) and a few Long-tailed Ducks off Pt. Betsie. After our trip to CA a few yard birds for yours truly have been Orange-cr. Warbler, Hermit Thrush, and Ruffed Grouse. Today there has been a female Ring-necked Duck in our pond, a first for fall for our pond. Most of the day it sat very still in the cattails in one place. If you send me your sightings I will try to include them in future newsletters.

Benzie Audubon Web Site

www.benzieaudubon.org

Our web site is being kept up to date and enhanced by John Ester. Schedule of activities, membership information, etc. Especially look at the pictures page which is updated as new photos become available. Contact John if you have a photo to share.