



# Heron Tracks

The Quarterly Newsletter of Seven Ponds Nature Center

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## A Tiny Predator

Article and Artwork by Katie McKiernan

When we think of predators we often draw up images of mountain lions, bears, and hawks. These majestic, large, and powerful animals inspire the warrior in all our hearts. Michigan, however, is also home to a different kind of predator. To see it you have to look down. Under the ground, in the waters, and the forests around you, lies a voracious eating machine... the shrew.

Michigan is home to seven different shrew species inhabiting various habitats throughout our state. Arctic (*Sorex arcticus*), Masked (*Sorex cinereus*), Pygmy (*Sorex hoyi*), Smokey (*Sorex fumeus*), Northern short-tailed (*Blarina brevicauda*), Water (*Sorex palustris*), and Least (*Cryptotis parva*) shrews all reside in this part of North America. The northern short-tailed shrew is our most common species you can find.

Shrews are indeed predators. Often smaller than a mouse, they must eat 50-150% of their body weight every day in order to live to see the next one. Shrews have an extremely high metabolism. Their little bodies have the highest surface to mass area ratio of any mammal and it runs hot! All that surface area allows much of that heat to easily escape. What's a shrew to do but eat until it can't eat anymore, and then cache the rest for a midnight snack. A shrew can starve in as little as half a day if it goes too long without food.

I participated in a small mammal (live trapping) experiment in college. We set up a transect of traps to see what the population of small mammals were in a given area. We were required to check the traps every so often because of the shrews. If left in the traps for too long they would quickly starve. One of our traps had gotten a shrew and we originally thought it was no longer alive when we removed it. But after a moment it moved and we quickly let it go. As I was walking out of the transect area guided by the headlights of one of our cars and the setting sun, I looked down near our bucket of bait and saw the shrew eating away at some oats that had spilled. It had wasted no time in refueling even in the presence of big, scary humans. It knew it needed to consume calories or it was indeed a goner.

It is important to remember that shrews are not rodents. Rodents, like mice and voles, have ever-growing teeth used to gnaw on plant materials. Shrews are primarily carnivorous and don't have ever-growing and replenishing teeth. This presents a problem when most of your active time is used to eat. Luckily, shrews have some adaptations to help combat the wear and tear and it all begins in the womb. Shrews will lose their baby teeth and grow in their full set of adult teeth in utero before ever taking a bite of actual food. Due to that high metabolism and the need to eat, they don't have time to waste on re-growing teeth. So they "hit the ground running," as it were, and are born with a full set of iron-covered adult teeth. The iron plays a part too. If they were a rodent they would replenish their teeth all the time with new growth and not have to worry about wearing away (arguably) their most important asset. Instead they have developed iron caps on the tops of their teeth cusps to slow down the erosion of too many meals. Shrews only live about a year and a half, and it was found that even with all these preventative measures to preserve their teeth, an old shrew might not have much dentition left after only a year.



## Reflections...

Recently a grandmother has been bringing her two young granddaughters to the nature center on a regular basis. Grandma and the girls play in the Discovery Room, exploring the various nature-themed games and puzzles, watching the animals in the Critter Corner, investigating the items on the touch table, and observing the birds and squirrels that visit the feeders. Meanwhile, a couple has been hiking the trails, day after day, for well over a year. Regardless of the weather or trail conditions, they show up every single morning for their walk. A young man armed with a digital camera ventures out in search of the memorable shots of the natural world. A woman stops in to find the perfect birthday gift in the Rookery Gift Shop.

Seven Ponds Nature Center is different things to different people: a place to commune peacefully with nature, a special time with children or grandchildren, trails on which to get in their steps. Teachers bring their classes here for high quality environmental education that supports their science curriculum. Scout leaders bring their troops here to earn badges. Members bring a kayak to paddle the still morning waters of our wonderful glacial lakes. So many reasons to visit.

Many people are linked to Seven Ponds through the clubs and organizations affiliated with the nature center. Four clubs offer unique opportunities and expertise for those seeking a new hobby or hoping to gather with like-minded people: Photography Club, Birding Club, Astronomy Club, and Beekeeping Club – all led by friendly, welcoming people with a passion for their endeavor. Our Friends of Herbs and Butterfly Gardeners help keep the herb garden and butterfly garden in top shape. The Stingers are a volunteer group that works to support the nature center with various fundraisers. Assistant Naturalists augment our Naturalist staff during school group visits and other events. Many other volunteers help move things along here at Seven Ponds, providing critical help in a number of different areas.

I trust that Seven Ponds Nature Center means something special to you, as well. If you haven't been here in a while, please make time for a visit. If you've considered joining one of our clubs, check out the information on our website and mark your calendar for the next meeting. If you've been meaning to start that exercise program, use the nature center trails as the backdrop for your daily steps. If you're looking for a unique gift item, consider the Rookery Gift Shop as your go-to spot.

Keep Seven Ponds as your special place.

Daryl Bernard  
Executive Director

## Dispatches from the Field

Seven Ponds Nature Center has offered field tours to destinations throughout North America and beyond for more than thirty years. These field tours generate important revenue for the nature center, which supports our educational programs and stewardship efforts. The impact of these tours goes far beyond revenue, however. Participants are immersed in amazing natural landscapes where nature is experienced close-up and first-hand. Relationships are forged, and many tour participants come home lifelong friends, nature being the common bond. Non-members become members, and many tour veterans become some of the nature center's most devout supporters.

In January, Seven Ponds organized and led a birding field tour to southern California. Participants explored the mountains, deserts, marshes, and coastal and urban habitats of the Los Angeles region. The tour included a boat trip to Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Islands National Park to experience two island endemic species: Island Scrub-Jay and Island Fox. Other tour highlights included a very accommodating Ridgway's Rail, a covey of California Quail, and incredible experience with raucous parrots coming into their evening roost, distant views of majestic California Condors, and a total of 186 species of birds.

In April, we headed to the southwestern United States for an experience as big as Texas. Starting in San Antonio, the tour ventured west through the Texas Hill Country of the Edwards Plateau, to spectacular Big Bend National Park, and finally to the Davis Mountains. An incredible 208 species of birds were tallied by the group, including the highly range restricted Colima Warbler, which required a demanding 12-mile round trip hike in the Chisos Mountains. Other standouts were nesting Elf Owls, seven species of hawks, up-close and personal encounters with curious Mexican Jays, and the spectacle of six million Mexican Free-tailed Bats emerging from their cave.

Check the nature center's website for details about future Seven Ponds field tours.

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## *Heron Tracks*

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*The mission of Seven Ponds Nature Center is to conserve its natural environment as a sanctuary for native plants and animals and to serve as a community resource for environmental education that fosters an understanding, appreciation, and stewardship for our natural world.*

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**Del Hunsinger**



Image courtesy of WikiCommons

Northern short-tailed shrews take their dentition one step further. They are the most common species we have here in Michigan and they have an extra trick up their sleeve to catch and eat prey: venom. Northern short-tailed shrews possess venom secreted from their salivary glands that then runs along a groove in their front incisors. This venom will quickly paralyze its prey and will, if given enough time, kill it as well. Shrews eat pretty much anything they can subdue and scarf down. Insects, worms, crayfish (if they are the swimming water shrew), frogs, mice, and voles are all fair game for eating.

In the winter, shrews don't have the ability to hibernate and wait for more pleasant weather. Their metabolism just won't allow it. When winter comes along the shrews will ramp up the body heat even more and will live primarily under the snow in what is called the subnivean zone. The snow acts as an insulated cover where vast tunnel systems and food supplies can be found. Under about half a foot of snow the area between that and the ground will maintain a constant 32 degrees Fahrenheit, regardless of how cold it is above the snow.

By the time this article reaches you, you (and the shrews) will hopefully be enjoying the warmer months of late spring/early summer. During this time of the year shrews are actively in breeding season. They will have 1-3 litters per season which runs February through September and have about 2-10 babies at a time. Nests are lined with grasses and sometimes the fur of past vole kills. If it is a northern short-tailed shrew, the nest will be underground. Northern short-tailed shrews spend much of their time un-

derground and even use echolocation to help them navigate their tunnel system. They can send out little sounds to check to see if a tunnel is blocked or which way it turns next. While shrews do have working eyes, their eyesight is not the best. An impressive nose and whiskers helps guide them to prey. These are especially important to the water shrew as it dives into the water after prey and eyesight is very limited.

Shrews are secretive in nature and I don't know if I have ever seen a live one (other than the one trapped during college) out in the wild. Their size can be to their advantage to avoid predators, and that includes us. A pygmy shrew is one of the smallest animals in the world. It would take about 200 pygmy shrews to weigh just one pound!

Shrews are located on every continent except Australia and Antarctica and have been in the fossil record going back 50 million years. It seems like a fast-paced way of living when you are hours away from starvation and you yourself could be someone's next snack. But these little predators have been making it work for millions of years and will continue on for many more to come. I would love to see them in action, but like many scientists out there trying to study them, they are notoriously difficult to observe and study in the wild. A lot of what we know about shrews are guesses and from captured population data. Who knows what more we will uncover about their lives as time goes on? Many people might want to be strong like a bear or wolf, but I am going with the mighty shrew.



## Wandering with the Birds *By Daryl Bernard*

Naturally, birders spend a lot of time observing birds, noting behavior, abundance, courtship and nesting, and the seasonal ebb and flow of resident and migrant populations. Every day of the year, thousands of birders across the world venture out to watch birds. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was a means for all these observations to be gathered and standardized for the benefit of avian science? Well, fortunately, such a means exists: it's called eBird.

Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University, eBird gathers data on bird abundance and distribution by encouraging birders to submit their observations. To date, 10,714 birds species have been documented by over 860,000 eBirders worldwide, who have submitted a constantly growing number of checklists, currently over 78 million. All of this bird observation data is available to ornithologists and scientists to inform their research, free of charge.

Birders may also utilize the information at eBird.org, which has numerous tools available to help birders understand where and when to find the birds they're looking for. Animated abundance maps, seasonal range maps, bar charts, and many other tools utilize the data provided by birders to show where birds are throughout the year on a week-by-week basis. Available free of charge, this form of citizen science has revolutionized ornithology.

I started using eBird in 2014, and it has been a wonderful way to record my observations and preserve my outings. I use eBird to find new places to go and more birds to see. eBird organizes and tracks all my sightings, which are then easily accessible to me. Since 2014, I've submitted more than 13,000 checklists, recording nearly 700 bird species throughout the United States. Ultimately, it's nice to know that my sightings are contributing to the growing knowledge of birds in their environment, and that my observations matter when I'm out, wandering with the birds.

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### Here and there...

Thanks to the following for their generosity:

- To **Steve Von Hatten** for donating a large amount of suet for our birds.
- To **Caldwell's Crooked Creek Farm** of Lapeer for once again providing a winter's worth of beef suet for our birds at Seven Ponds.
- To **all the folks** who dropped off items for our Stingers Rummage Sale.
- To **everyone** who provided auction and raffle items for our Corks & Caps fundraiser.

## Around the Center

### Welcome Del Hunsinger!

Please join us in welcoming Del Hunsinger to the year-round staff at Seven Ponds. After working at Seven Ponds the past two summers in a seasonal maintenance capacity, Del will now be overseeing the maintenance of the buildings and grounds on a year-round basis. Having grown up in the neighborhood, Del has a long history with Seven Ponds. He was instrumental in several large projects that were completed over the past two years, including the Treetop Dock rebuild, the new pavilion, the Naturescape, the boat house roof job, and the installation of the North-80 Waterfowl Pond teaching platform. Del takes great pride in a job well done and making sure the nature center looks its very best.

### Grants & Gifts

The nature center was the recipient of several grants over the past few months. The **Lapeer Optimist Club** provided \$3,000 and the **Lapeer Kiwanis Club** provided \$2,000 in support of Lapeer area school students, providing the opportunity for hundreds of students to visit Seven Ponds. The **Rochester Garden Club** awarded the nature center \$405 in support of a new exhibit for the Discovery Room. The **Lapeer County Community Foundation** awarded Seven Ponds \$2,500 through their Giving Tuesday campaign. The **Seven Ponds Beekeeping Club** gave the nature center a gift of \$1,000. The **Troy Garden Club** donated \$300 in support of planting native trees and shrubs. We truly appreciate the generosity and thoughtfulness of these wonderful groups and organizations for the support they have shown Seven Ponds Nature Center.

### Summer Intern

We are excited to welcome Madeline Lukens as an intern this summer. Madeline is in her fourth year as an undergraduate student at Michigan Technological University, where she is majoring in Applied Ecology with a concentration in Communications. Regarding her education and her upcoming time at Seven Ponds, Madeline says, "My goal with this degree is to be able to share my love of the environment and the importance of conservation and preservation. I have always been passionate about youth education and combining traditional schooling with nature play. I am beyond excited to join the wonderful Seven Ponds community this summer! In my spare time, I love walking my dogs or playing with my cats, mountain biking, embroidery, and anything that gets me moving or outdoors."

# Seven Ponds Tributes Memorials, Buy-a-Tree, In Honor

## ***In memory of Alec & Lynn Harding***

- Mr. and Mrs. R. Randall Almirall
- Sara & Keith Newell

## ***In memory of John Stoll***

- William & Marlene Garrett
- Charlotte Payne



## ***Buy-a-Tree in memory of Betty Golding***

- Steve & Sherry Golding
- Nancy & Rich Kautz
- Lisa & Clarence Smith

## ***Buy-a-Tree in memory of Pam McCallum***

- D.A.R. Nipissing Chapter

## ***Buy-a-Tree in memory of Doris Rolland***

- D.A.R. Nipissing Chapter

## ***Buy-a-Tree in memory of Ethel Sawgle***

- D.A.R. Nipissing Chapter

## ***Buy-a-Tree in memory of Geraldine Rawa***

- Karen Gossick



Aerial drone image of the nature center, parking lot, pavilion, and Naturescape provided courtesy of Tom Updike



# Volunteer News

## On the Trail

Thanks to all the many volunteers who helped with a variety of tasks this past spring:

- Thanks to **Claudine Zach** for feeding the animals in Critter Corner every week.
- Thanks to **Don Dukelow** for completing various tasks around the center.
- **Marianna Fitzgerald** for helping to revitalize our natural history library.
- Thanks to our Assistant Naturalists who help with school groups: **Nancy Kautz, Marianna Fitzgerald, and Kathy Cole.**
- **Paula Lafountain** for helping at the Native Plant Sale.
- **Jessica West** for coming out and helping with different programs and removing invasive plant species.
- **Michalle Maust** for her excellent job with our Pint-Sized Explorers program.
- **Walt Corey** for helping to remove a downed tree in our way.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Call us at 810-796-3200 or contact Katie McKiernan at [kmckiernan@sevenponds.org](mailto:kmckiernan@sevenponds.org) if you are interested in volunteering at Seven Ponds. You can also fill out the volunteer interest form located on our website at [sevenponds.org](http://sevenponds.org)

### ASSISTANT NATURALIST CLASSES

These classes are open to Assistant Naturalists only. Classes take place on the third Thursday of the month and begin at 3:00 PM. If you would like to become a part of this rewarding program, contact naturalist Katie McKiernan at 810-796-3200 or [kmckiernan@sevenponds.org](mailto:kmckiernan@sevenponds.org).

### Take a Hike!

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 3:00 PM

Enjoy the summer weather as we hike some of our most used trails and discuss what makes them interesting.

JULY & AUGUST - NO CLASSES

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## Board of Directors

At the March 26 meeting of the Seven Ponds Nature Center Board of Directors, the board renewed the terms of four current members and elected officers. Nancy Buck rejoined the board, filling the vacant Lapeer County Audubon representative position. Kelly Heyner, Nancy Kautz, Diane Mathies, and Ruthanne Flory were all appointed to a second three-year term. The current slate of officers was reelected: Joanna Pease, Chairperson; Kelly Heyner, Vice-Chairperson; Charlie Turner, Treasurer; and Paul Messing, Secretary. To see a complete list of board members, visit our website at [sevenponds.org/board/](http://sevenponds.org/board/).

## Stingers Rummage Sale!

The Stingers' Annual Rummage Sale will be held Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, June 15-17 at the nature center. A special "member's only" pre-sale will take place June 10. All items in the rummage sale are available on a donation basis - you name the price. The Stingers donate all proceeds from the sale to Seven Ponds to support environmental education programs for children, so please be generous. Mark your calendars and join us for this sale!

**Item donations will be accepted through June 11.**

## Seven Ponds Clubs!

**Astronomy Club • Beekeeping Club  
Birding Club • Photography Club  
Butterfly Gardeners • Friends of Herbs  
Friends of Seven Ponds (The Stingers)**

Visitors are welcome at all club meetings.

For additional information about any of the clubs which meet at Seven Ponds, please visit [sevenponds.org](http://sevenponds.org).

## Seven Ponds Naturescape is Open!

After a few years in the making, a lot of imaginative work-arounds, and many dirty hands later, we have created a wondrous place for kids to play and explore. We all know how important, mind and body, it is for children to have free play in nature. The kind of play that is un-adulted, kid rule making, and possibly messy. This kind of play could involve climbing, loud groups or quietly playing, single person or groups. It could involve strategy play with cooperative groups, or imagination play with one kid world building. The possibilities are endless!

Children have always and will always love to play, but are often lacking the space and time to do so. Seven Ponds has created the space, and all you have to do is provide the time. With all the different ways to play, expect to spend a couple hours hanging out in nature letting your kiddos do their thing.

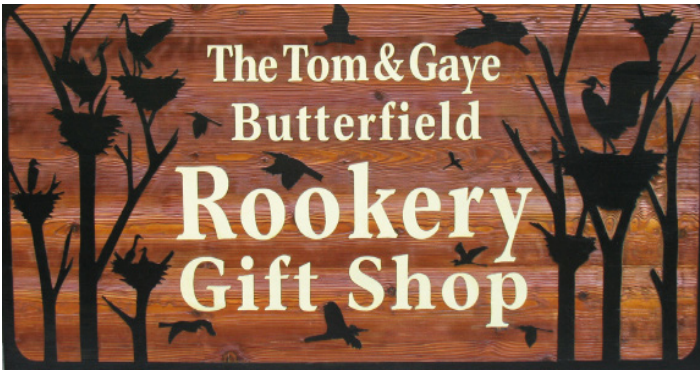
There are opportunities for water play with the hand pump and troughs. Dams are being built and water is being collected to use elsewhere, like at the art station. At the art station an easel made of a flat rock is there to water paint. Maybe you have some makers in your family - the Naturescape has plenty of spaces for making to be done. Make sand and rock structures in our sand pit, build a fort, or make plant art with our plant weave. Climbing and balancing you say? Well, try the bouldering wall or giant spider web. Want to jump straight into imagination play and pretend you are a wood nymph living in the forest and need to forage for all your supplies? There is an A-frame fort waiting for you.

If asked, all the naturalists will tell stories about when they were little balancing on fallen logs in swamps or digging in the dirt to make watering holes for their dinosaurs or about their special place in nature that provided the space for their imaginations to go wild and their love for nature to grow.

Our hope is that not only will children use this space to develop healthy minds and bodies, but also a place where their imaginations can go wild and their love of nature can grow.







### THINK GLOBALLY, SHOP LOCALLY

June is here and it's time to celebrate Dads! Need a great gift idea?

- Seven Ponds walking stick & medallion
- Vortex Binoculars
- Binocular Harness - works for cameras & range finders
- Bird feeders & bird seed
- Local Michigan history books
- New Seven Ponds long sleeve t-shirts
- Custom Seven Ponds one-liter/32-ounce Nalgene water bottles
- Handmade lotion bars in a tin for his hard working hands
- New Seven Ponds sticker for his vehicle, water bottle, toolbox, or laptop

### Seven Ponds Nature Center

3854 Crawford Road  
Dryden, MI 48428  
810-796-3200  
[www.sevenponds.org](http://www.sevenponds.org)

*Address Service Requested*

Don't forget to pick up a few items for your next outdoor adventure. Whether you are hiking the trails at Seven Ponds or off on a bigger excursion you might want some Bug Off! spray in your back pack. We have water bottle slings to hold your Seven Ponds Nalgene water bottle and help keep you hydrated and even bamboo utensils to have your meal on the go.

Please support our local vendors:

**Arnold's Sugar Bush** - maple syrup

**Honey Witch Farms** - honey

**Secret Soap Society** - handmade soaps, lotion bars, shampoo bars

**Burns Botanicals** - lip balm and Bug Off!

**Friends of Herbs** - teas, soup mix, sniffle bags

Consider a great gift that keeps giving all year long for any of your gift giving needs: a Seven Ponds Gift Membership. Call the nature center and we can help make that happen for your family or friends.

*Purchases made in the Rookery Gift Shop support the nature center, including all of the programs we do and land stewardship we perform. Your purchase dollars help us do good things!*

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# Summer Programs

June - August  
2023

Summer is the perfect time to visit the nature center and participate in our programs. Seven Ponds offers something for everyone, from preschoolers and older children to families and adults. Mark your calendar for some programs, walks, and classes. Unless indicated, program fees are \$3 for Seven Ponds members and \$5 for non-members. Pre-registration is required for all programs, and registering online is quick and easy. Visit [sevenponds.org](http://sevenponds.org) to register.

## June

### ***Morning Paddle at the Ponds***

Saturday, June 3rd, 9:30 AM

One of the best times to be on the ponds in a canoe is first thing in the morning. We will enjoy the morning by listening, reflecting, and simply just enjoying a morning on the water. Come dressed for the weather. Minimum: 5 years old to ride and 10 years old to paddle. Space is limited, please pre-register by Friday, June 2nd.

### ***Field Netting Sunday!***

Sunday, June 4th, 2:00 PM

Do you like catching insects and spiders? So do we! Luckily, we know of some good catching places to try out your skills. All supplies will be provided. Bring your family and let's get buggy.

### ***Wetland Wonder***

Saturday, June 10th, 2:00 PM

Wetlands are wonderful! During this program we will talk about the plants and animals that depend on wetlands. Then, we'll explore our very own wetlands.

### ***Sunday Walk***

Sunday, June 11th, 2:00 PM

What does spring bring? Let's find out on this hike around our trails! We'll be on the lookout for wildflowers and wildlife.

### ***Yoga at the Ponds with Peaceful Moon Yoga***

Thursdays, June 15, 22, 29, July 6, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Unwind, rejuvenate and relax with Cat Minolli and the 'Peaceful Moon' series. These classes are designed for newcomers and beginning yoga students and/or those who wish to become re-acquainted with the practice. Participants will experience the mind, body, spirit connection while learning basic yoga poses in a serene environment. You don't have to be able to touch your toes or twist into a pretzel to participate, however many postures are done from a seated or prone position on the floor. Participants should wear comfortable clothing and bring a yoga mat or a blanket. Pillows, additional

blankets, and any other "creature comforts" are also welcome. Fee is \$15.00 per session or \$50.00 for the 4-Week Series.

### ***Teddy Bear Walk***

Saturday, June 17th, 3:00 PM

Do you have a special stuffed friend who goes with you everywhere? Do they protect you at night until you wake again? This walk is for you! Explore nature with your trusted sidekick as a naturalist takes you on an adventure around the ponds.

### ***The End of Spring Sunday Stroll***

Sunday, June 18, 3:00 PM

Hard to believe that spring is almost over for the year. Let us celebrate the comings and goings of the seasons by taking a leisurely walk around the ponds to experience the sights and sounds of nature.

### ***Nurturing a Native Garden***

Saturday, June 24th, 11:00 AM

Learn how you can support wildlife and pollinators at home in your own garden! We will take a tour of the nature center's gardens and make a water cup for pollinators.

### ***Nature Journaling: Birds***

Sunday, June 25th, 2:00 PM

Journaling is a great way to relax and be creative. For this program we will explore the world of birds with drawings, lists, observations, sketches, and more. Bring your favorite journal and curiosity. We will provide the art supplies.

### ***Messy Mud Day***

Thursday, June 29th, 2:00 PM

Celebrate International Mud Day at Seven Ponds! This messy celebration will connect your children to the Earth through the sloppy joy of playing with mud. We will make mud castles, paint with mud, make Forest Soup, do a little mud throwing, and have a good time just playing in mud! Be prepared to get dirty.

# July

## **Butterfly Count**

Saturday, July 1, 10:00 AM

Join us for our annual count for the North American Butterfly Association. Nets available for all participants. Fee: \$3.

## **North-80 Hike**

Sunday, July 2nd, 1:00 PM

Before you head out on your 4th of July adventures, stop at Seven Ponds and enjoy an interpretive walk with one of our naturalists.

## **Invasive Species Work Day**

Saturday, July 8th, 10:00 AM

Join our Land Steward for an afternoon of working on non-native invasive plants around the center. Bring your own work gloves and water. We will provide all necessary tools.

## **Hop, Run, Fly... Its Jonathan Woods in July**

Saturday, July 8th, 1:00 PM

Let's explore Jonathan Woods in the summer. It's a great time to look for critters of all kinds. We'll meet at the nature center and carpool over. Space is limited.

## **Nature Art Walk**

Sunday, July 9th, 2:00 PM

Art is everywhere in nature! Take a walk with a naturalist as we discover the beauty of nature and even make some art of our own with natural items.

## **Snake Search**

Saturday, July 22nd, 10:00 AM

We'll learn all about the snakes that call Michigan home and meet our resident snake! After that we'll hit the trail on a search for snakes.

## **Scouting Sunday: Into the Woods**

Sunday, July 23rd, 2:00 PM

Study animals, food chains, and aquatic ecosystems while visiting the nature center and earning this pin. Fee \$4.00.

## **Yoga at the Ponds with Peaceful Moon Yoga**

Thursdays, July 27, August 3, 10, 17, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

See June for program description. Fee is \$15.00 per session or \$50.00 for the 4-Week Series.

## **Prairie Walk**

Saturday, July 29th, 2:00 PM

The great thing about Earl's Prairie is that there is always something new to look at in the summer. Come learn about the special adaptations these plants have in order to survive the hot summer sun. We will also look for the animals that make the prairie their home.

## **Garden Storytime**

Sunday, July 30th, 3:00 PM

Is there a better way to spend your Sunday morning than in the garden reading a book, doing activities, and some garden exploration with your littles? Join a naturalist as we read a garden related book and do sensory activities in our butterfly and herb gardens.

# August

## **Summer in Paul's Woods**

Saturday, August 5th, 1:00 PM

Let's take a stroll across the A-Frame and into beautiful Paul's Woods. We'll walk the boardwalk, climb the tower for a view of Big Pond, and enjoy a warm summer day.

## **Invasive Species Work Day**

Sunday, August 6th, 2:00 PM

Join our Land Steward for an afternoon of working on non-native invasive plants around the center. Bring your own work gloves and water. We will provide all necessary tools.

## **Pond Dipping Day**

Saturday, August 12th, 10:00 AM

What lies below the waters of Seven Ponds? Grab your family and explore the seldom seen world of the insects that make the ponds their homes. All supplies will be provided.

## **Summer Scavenger Hunt**

Sunday, August 13th, 2:00-5:00 PM

A super fun scavenger hunt for all! Are you a good detective? Do you think you can find all the summer clues to win a treat? Test your skills on the trails by picking up a scavenger hunt sheet at the front by talking to the naturalist. See what Seven Ponds has to find.

## **Summer Evening Paddle**

Saturday, August 19th, 7:00 PM

Let's hit the water and paddle the ponds for this naturalist-led canoe paddle. Dress for the weather. Minimum: 5 years old to ride and 10 years old to paddle. Space is limited.

## **Nature Journaling: Plants**

Sunday, August 20th, 2:00 PM

Journaling is a great way to relax and be creative. We'll explore some of our plant species with drawings, lists, observations, sketches, and more. Bring your favorite journal and curiosity. We will provide the art supplies.

## **Seasonal Walk**

Sunday, August 27th, 3:00 PM

A naturalist will take you on the trails to see what the end of August has in store. Bring your questions!



# SUMMER BIRD TRIPS/WALKS

This summer we will offer bird walks on select Wednesdays. Our bird walks are open to birders of all skill and experience levels, and beginners are always welcome. Bring your binoculars, your enthusiasm, and be sure to dress for the weather. These bird walks are \$3 for Seven Ponds members and \$5 for non-members unless otherwise noted. Online pre-registration is required, and bird walks are limited to twelve (12) participants. Note the program description for starting time and meeting place. Please arrive on time and ready to go birding!

## SUMMER BIRD TRIP

### Bird Drive on the Wild Side

Wednesday, June 14, 7:30 AM

(depart from Seven Ponds at 6:00 AM)

### Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Join us as we venture out on the 6.5-mile Wildlife Drive at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in Saginaw County. Shiawassee NWR is designated as a United States Important Bird Area for its global significance to migratory waterfowl. We will see many wading birds such as herons and egrets, as well as lingering waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds. American White Pelicans have been at the refuge previous summers, Bald Eagles are numerous, and the refuge is a known nesting location of the Prothonotary Warbler. Rarities often show up here – and even without them the Wildlife Drive almost always delivers a great birding experience. Although this is “birding by car” we will stop often and walk a few trails as well. We will meet at the nature center at 6:00 AM and carpool/caravan to the refuge. Cost of this field trip is \$10 for non-members, \$5 for members. Space is limited, please pre-register online. Dress for the weather, bring your binoculars, field guide, and pack snacks and a beverage.

## SUMMER BIRD WALK

Wednesday, July 12, 7:00 AM

### Jonathan Woods Nature Preserve

Let's check out what birds we can find at Jonathan Woods during mid-July. The large trees and thick canopy will provide shade as we walk the hilly trails of this preserve. Summer birds found here previously include both Northern Waterthrush and Louisiana Waterthrush, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Pileated Woodpecker, Indigo Bunting, Great Crested Flycatcher, and many more. What will we find during this walk? Join us to find out!

## SUMMER BIRD WALK

Wednesday, August 16, 7:00 AM

### Seven Pond Nature Center

Let's spend a late-summer morning at the nature center, exploring the trails and waters to see what we can find. By now our nesting Tree Swallows will have moved on, but we should find plenty of other birds to satisfy our quest. We'll check out the North-80, Earl's Prairie, and Paul's Woods in search of feathered friends.

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# Viva Las Vegas Birding!

*A Birding Field Tour with Seven Ponds Nature Center*

**October 20-26, 2023**

Join Seven Ponds and the professional birding guides from Bird Las Vegas as we explore the natural beauty and avian life that surrounds the Las Vegas basin. Just a short drive from the city are pine-forested alpine peaks, golden stands of aspen, red rock canyons, Joshua tree forests, deserts and grasslands, wetlands and riparian corridors, and more. Come explore Las Vegas with us!

Registration is now open for this tour and space is limited.

Check our website for a full tour itinerary and registration information.

# ***PARTY at the PONDS!***

## ***A Celebration of Prairie, Woods, and Waters***

Saturday, September 9, 2022

Noon – 6:00 PM

Admission and activities are FREE for ALL attendees!

Join us for a day of celebration at Seven Ponds Nature Center – open to all members and visitors for a full day of fun, adventure, and discovery for the entire family!

### **FUN ACTIVITIES!**

**Naturalist-led Trail Walk**

**Field Netting: butterflies, grasshoppers, beetles, and more!**

**Pond Dipping: snails, boatman, nymphs, and more!**

**Canoeing the Ponds**

### **EXTRAS!**

**Food Trucks on site**

**Music with Ronnie Brown *aka* Chicken Man**

**Children's area with fun, old-time games and activities**

**Stingers Resale Shoppe and bake sale**

**Children can enjoy the Naturescape**

**Seven Ponds clubs presenting special activities**

(Check our website for updated schedule of club activities)

**PLEASE REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT ONLINE AT  
SEVENPONDS.ORG**