



KLEINSTUCK PRESERVE

2023 Annual Bird Survey Summary

**Observations & reporting by
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The Kalamazoo Nature Center's daily spring migration surveys at Western Michigan University's Kleinstuck Preserve have continued since 1973. Using the same survey method every day allows researchers to track the movements of migrating birds as they make small and large pushes northward. The 2023 season, which lasted from March 21 – May 28, started out very wet with rain and showers the norm for the first 10 days of surveys. One of the early season surprises was a pair of Trumpeter Swans landing in the small wetland at the center of Kleinstuck (normally this species is seen flying over).

April was a month of extremes with above average temperatures for the first 2 weeks of April (80 degrees one day) followed by snow and very cold temperatures for the last 2 weeks of April. What did this mean for the migration? Well, some birds arrived earlier than normal like the Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Palm Warbler. All of these species appeared 10 to 12 days sooner than normal. Of course when the cold temperatures arrived later in the month the migration was stalled with very few new migrants arriving until the first week of May.

Most of May had beautiful weather for migrating birds with warm days and nights and lots of Southerly winds. So this meant there were major pushes of new birds in our area every week with the peak of migration happening from around May 7th through the 22nd. May also marked a day where we honored Ray Adams who passed away in November of 2022. Ray was a lifelong bird watcher and longtime employee at the Kalamazoo Nature Center. In 1973 Ray established the daily Spring Bird Surveys we do today at Kleinstuck. Over the 40 years Ray surveyed at Kleinstuck he contributed almost 70,000 records representing close to 300,000 birds. A memorial walk with friends and family was done on May 19th with perfect weather conditions. We were able to tally 70 species that day which was one of the highest tallies for this season, so it looks like Ray blessed us with good luck.

A personal highlight for me was finding a Merlin on April 26th. It was being harassed by a bunch Blue Jays along the trail entering in from Chevy Chase Street. This is the first time I have sighted this species at Kleinstuck and only the 3rd time it has been documented there all time. Merlin populations are on the increase all across the state so maybe more will be found in the future. Most of the warbler species during the spring were below or at near average numbers except the Northern Parula, which doubled its normal average. Another highlight was finding the Connecticut Warbler on May 18th, this species is notoriously hard to get a good look at. It also has on the smallest windows of time it can be found at

Kleinstuck with most individuals passing through between May 15th and May 25th. It prefers to stay hidden in thickets and underbrush and will sing sporadically.

Information can be found using migration forecast maps from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. These tools predict each night's movement of birds using national weather radar. Learn more at:

[https://birdcast.info/migration-tools/migration-forecast-maps/.](https://birdcast.info/migration-tools/migration-forecast-maps/))

2023 KLEINSTUCK PRESERVE BIRD SURVEY SPECIES OBSERVED

Ducks, Geese, & Waterfowl	Woodpeckers	Treecreepers	Blackbirds & Allies
Canada Goose	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Brown Creeper	Red-winged Blackbird
Wood Duck	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Gnatcatchers	Rusty Blackbird
Mallard	Downy Woodpecker	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Common Grackle
Blue-winged Teal	Hairy Woodpecker	Wrens	Brown-headed Cowbird
Trumpeter Swan	Northern Flicker	House Wren	Baltimore Oriole
Pheasants, Grouse, & Allies	Pileated Woodpecker	Winter Wren	New World Warblers
Wild Turkey	Falcons	Carolina Wren	Ovenbird
Pigeons & Doves	Merlin	Starlings	Louisiana Waterthrush
Rock Pigeon	Tyrant Flycatchers	European Starling	Golden-winged Warbler
Mourning Dove	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Mockingbirds & Thrashers	Blue-winged Warbler
Cuckoos	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Gray Catbird	Black-and-white Warbler
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Brown Thrasher	Tennessee Warbler
Black-billed Cuckoo	Alder Flycatcher	Thrushes & Allies	Orange-crowned Warbler
Swifts	Willow Flycatcher	Eastern Bluebird	Nashville Warbler
Chimney Swift	Least Flycatcher	Veery	Mourning Warbler
Hummingbirds	Eastern Phoebe	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Common Yellowthroat
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Great Crested Flycatcher	Swainson's Thrush	Hooded Warbler
Cranes	Eastern Kingbird	Hermit Thrush	American Redstart
Sandhill Crane	Vireos	Wood Thrush	Cape May Warbler
Plovers	Yellow-throated Vireo	American Robin	Northern Parula
Killdeer	Blue-headed Vireo	Waxwings	Magnolia Warbler
Gulls	Warbling Vireo	Cedar Waxwing	Connecticut Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Philadelphia Vireo	Old World Sparrows	Bay-breasted Warbler
Cormorants	Red-eyed Vireo	House Sparrow	Blackburnian Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Crows & Jays	Finches & Allies	Yellow Warbler
Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns	Blue Jay	House Finch	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Great Blue Heron	American Crow	Purple Finch	Blackpoll Warbler
Green Heron	Chickadees & Titmice	American Goldfinch	Black-throated Blue Warbler
New World Vultures	Black-capped Chickadee	New World Sparrows	Palm Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Tufted Titmouse	Eastern Towhee	Pine Warbler
Osprey	Swallows	Chipping Sparrow	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Osprey	Tree Swallow	Field Sparrow	Black-throated Green Warbler
Hawks, Eagles, Kites	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Fox Sparrow	Canada Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	Barn Swallow	Song Sparrow	Wilson's Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Kinglets	Lincoln's Sparrow	Cardinals & Allies
Red-tailed Hawk	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Swamp Sparrow	Scarlet Tanager
Owls	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	White-throated Sparrow	Northern Cardinal
Great Horned Owl	Nuthatches	Dark-eyed Junco	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Kingfishers	Red-breasted Nuthatch	American Tree Sparrow	Indigo Bunting
Belted Kingfisher	White-breasted Nuthatch		