

## **A LOOK BACK AT 2004** by Kenyon Stebbins

The year 2004 was another busy one for PRAS, and we hope you enjoyed not only our indoor programs, but also our outings. Here's a summary of most of what happened. Hope to see you out there in 2005!

### **2004 Indoor Programs:** Our programs were as follows:

January 13: The Galapagos Islands, by Wil Cwikiel – 53 folks  
February 10: The Lake Sturgeon: A Living Fossil, by Brenda Archambo – 40 folks  
March 9: Winter Birds of the Eastern U.P by Rick Baetsen – 49 folks  
April 13: Madagascar's Birds and more! by Chris Van Lonkhuyzen – 35 folks  
May 11: Tips on how to be a better birder, by Glen Williams – 37 folks  
June 15: Outdoor potluck at East Park – 36 folks  
September 14: Piping Plover Recovery in the Great Lakes Region, by Jack Dingleline – 40 folks  
October 12: Communications Towers and Bird Collisions, by Joelle Gehring – 45 folks  
November 9: Biological Threats to northern Michigan's forests, by Jim Bielecki -- 60 folks  
December 14: Members' Slide Fest & Holiday Treats – 31 folks

Attendance at these 10 programs totaled 426 people, for an average of 43 folks per program. A big thanks to each and every presenter for sharing his and her knowledge and enthusiasm with us (and to Sally Stebbins for organizing them)!

### **2004 Outdoor Activities:**

Jan. 31 Cross-country skiing at Birchwood Farms – 3 folks  
Feb. 14 Show-shoeing at Raven Hill Discovery Center – 20 folks  
Feb. 15 Field trip to the eastern U.P. – 10 folks  
March 27 Ecology walk at NCMC Natural Area – 26 folks  
April 17 Early Spring birds at the Waldron Fen – 22 folks  
May 4,11,18,25 Bird walks at Thorne Swift Nature Preserve – 35 folks  
May 6,13,20,27 Bird walks at Spring Lake Park – 33 folks  
May 8 North American Migratory Bird Count – 10 folks  
May 14 Lake Sturgeon & birds at the Black River – 12 folks  
June 2 Birding the Jordan River Valley – 10 folks  
June 5 Birding at Camp Michiganiana on Walloon Lake – 21 folks  
June 12 Wildflower Walk at Wilderness State Park – 15 folks  
June 15 Bird walk at East Park (w/ potluck) – 21 folks  
July 17 Birds & Blooms at Thorne Swift Nature Preserve – 10 folks  
July 21 U of Michigan's Biological Station – 18 folks  
July 31 Birds & Blooms at Thorne Swift Nature Preserve – 9 folks  
Aug. 14 Marge's Marsh on Lawrence Lake – 15 folks  
Aug. 28 Waldron Fen Nature Walk – 22 folks  
Sept. 18 Hawk Watching at Thorne Swift Nature Preserve – 9 folks  
Oct. 20 Tour the Oden State Fish Hatchery – 13 folks  
Nov. 1 Waterfowl field trip at the Straits of Mackinac - 8 folks  
Dec. 15 Christmas Bird Count – 15 folks

A total of 342 people participated in these 28 outings, for an average of 13 folks per outing. A big thanks to each field trip leader, and to Sally Stebbins, who coordinated them!

**2004 Treat Providers:** Our indoor programs are made extra special, thanks to the delicious treats that seem to almost magically appear on the table each month. Thanks to the following folks for their "magic": Jo Mertz, Linda Rachwitz, Jane Smith, Ron Krause, Jan Miller, Jake Snider, Faith Brooks, Dawn Sarasin, Jan Miller, Suzie Frisk, Kris Skornia, Glen Williams, Mary Beier, Sue Bissell, Tom Newberry, Cindy Hofstetter, Carol Ross, Ginny Spencer, Barbara Freiberg, Jane Guisinger, Suzanne LaBeau, Suzie Frisk, Joan Kirkman, & Mary Lou Tanton. Thanks, again, Jan Miller, for a super job of coordinating this appreciated effort! You will be missed!

**Other 2004 activities:** In addition to programs and field trips, PRAS also took the following "political" actions:  
1. Urged Friendship Township & Emmet County to "use due diligence" regarding a proposed development north of Harbor Springs, noting concerns about the Red-shouldered Hawk (a threatened species in Michigan).  
2. Endorsed a *Citizens Against Toxins* initiative urging the City of Petoskey to minimize its use of pesticides.  
3. Adopted new by-laws, which took effect on January 1, 2005.

PRAS also made the following financial donations during 2004:

\$90 in May to Ed Pike for his owl-banding project

\$100 in May to SEE-North's endowment fund.

\$500 in December (pledge) to LTC's efforts to protect the Pickerel/Crooked channel.

[NOTE: A more complete 2004 financial report will appear in the March newsletter.]