

Haehnle Sanctuary News



Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary

Owned By Michigan Audubon

Maintained and Operated by The Jackson Audubon Society

Preserving and Protecting our Natural World

Fall 2019



In Memory of Hugh Zernickow

Audubon and cranes lost a good friend August 6 when Hubert Peter Zernickow passed away at age 97. After many years of good health, he fell requiring a hip replacement and then suffered a series of setbacks before being transferred to Henry Ford Allegiance Hospice Center, Jackson.

Hugh served as president of the Michigan Audubon Society from 1976 to 1978, and previously as vice president and chairman of the Finance Committee. During his tenure as president his calming demeanor helped M.A.S. overcome a controversial proposal to extract hydrocarbon at Baker Sanctuary.



He also served as president of Jackson Audubon Society, was a compiler of the Waterloo Christmas Bird Count and served from its formation on the Haehnle Committee. Hugh was a strong advocate of the Haehnle Sanctuary, volunteering at work bees, making weekly cranes counts during the fall and providing sound advice and financial support.

Photography was among his other many interests, especially using Leica equipment.

His wife, Norene, preceded him in death. He is survived by grandson John Hoyer and wife Laura, and a great grandson, Chris. Honoring his wishes, there was no funeral or memorial service.

Remembrances may be given to the Hugh and Norene Zernickow Memorial for the Haehnle Sanctuary. They can be sent with the notation Haehnle Sanctuary to either the Jackson Audubon Society, P.O. Box 6453, Jackson, MI 49204 or to Michigan Audubon, 2310 Science Parkway, Suite 200, Okemos, MI 48864.

By Ron Hoffman

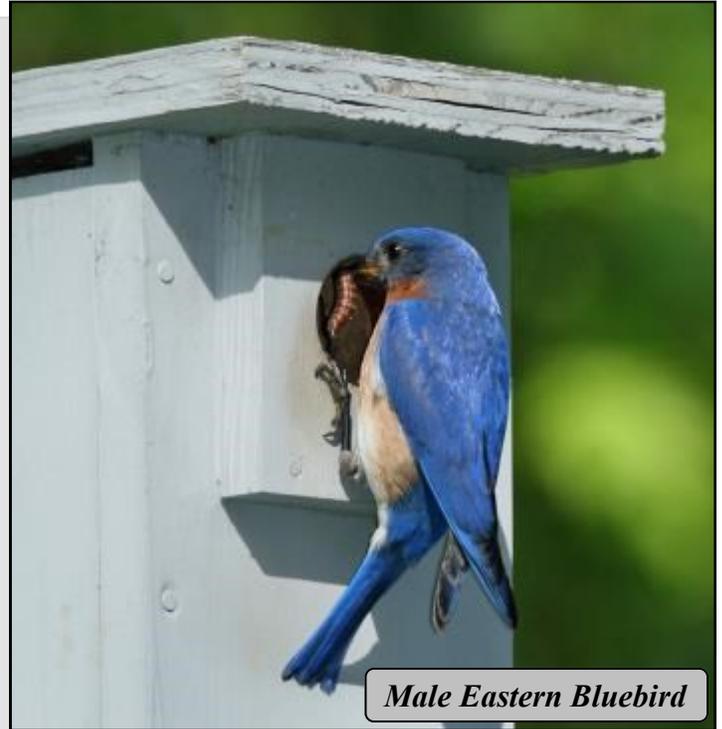
Annual Bluebird Nest Box Report 2019

By Steve Jerant

With the cold spring I expected a bad year for our nest-box residents. However, I'm happy to report a successful year at the Sanctuary. We had success for blue birds and tree swallows. I monitored 23 boxes, of which 20 had observed nesting activity for a total of 32 attempts. This resulted in 22 clutches which is up from 17 last year.

The Eastern Bluebird (EABL) group had 7 attempts yielding 15 fledglings. That is a bit lower than normal, and I did record one nest failure. But the overall success rate was in the 60% range which is about average.

My aggressive friends, the Tree Swallows (TRES), had a good year. Their fledgling numbers continue to trend down from a high near 60 in 2017 to 45 this year. They are normally aggressive when the landlord comes to check on each family. I did not get mobbed as much this season so perhaps they are getting used to me. No dead adults were found even with the cool spring. I recorded 18 nesting attempts yielding 45 fledglings with one partial failure of some unhatched eggs. One box yielded 8 eggs, which the folks at Cornell NestWatch tagged as



Male Eastern Bluebird

The good news is that they were only in Unit #1, below the Wing Overlook, and were limited to only two boxes.



Large Tree Swallow Egg Clutch

above the normal limits, but here's the picture to prove it.

House Wrens (HOWR) had a bad showing this year. I recorded only two nest attempts and the one that produced young did not fledge. They seem to have only great and bad years. But I'm not worried as they are quite able to keep their overall population numbers quite high.



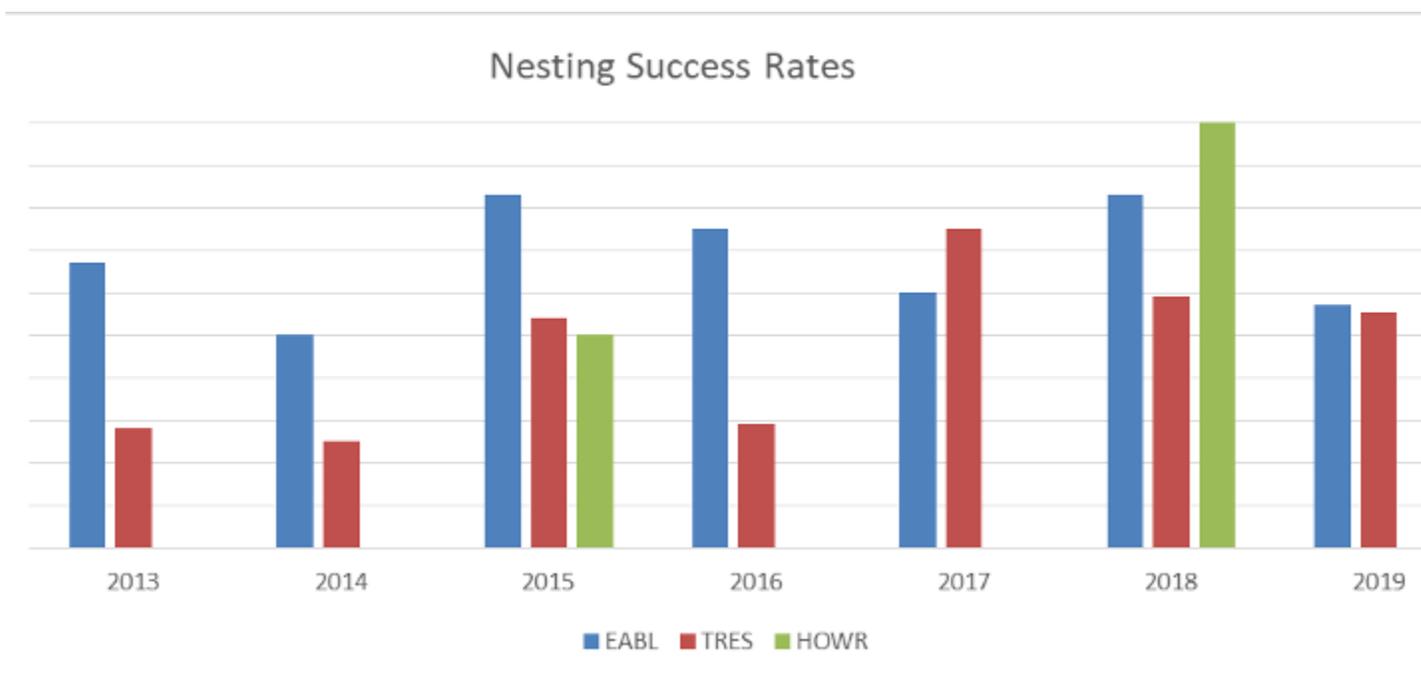
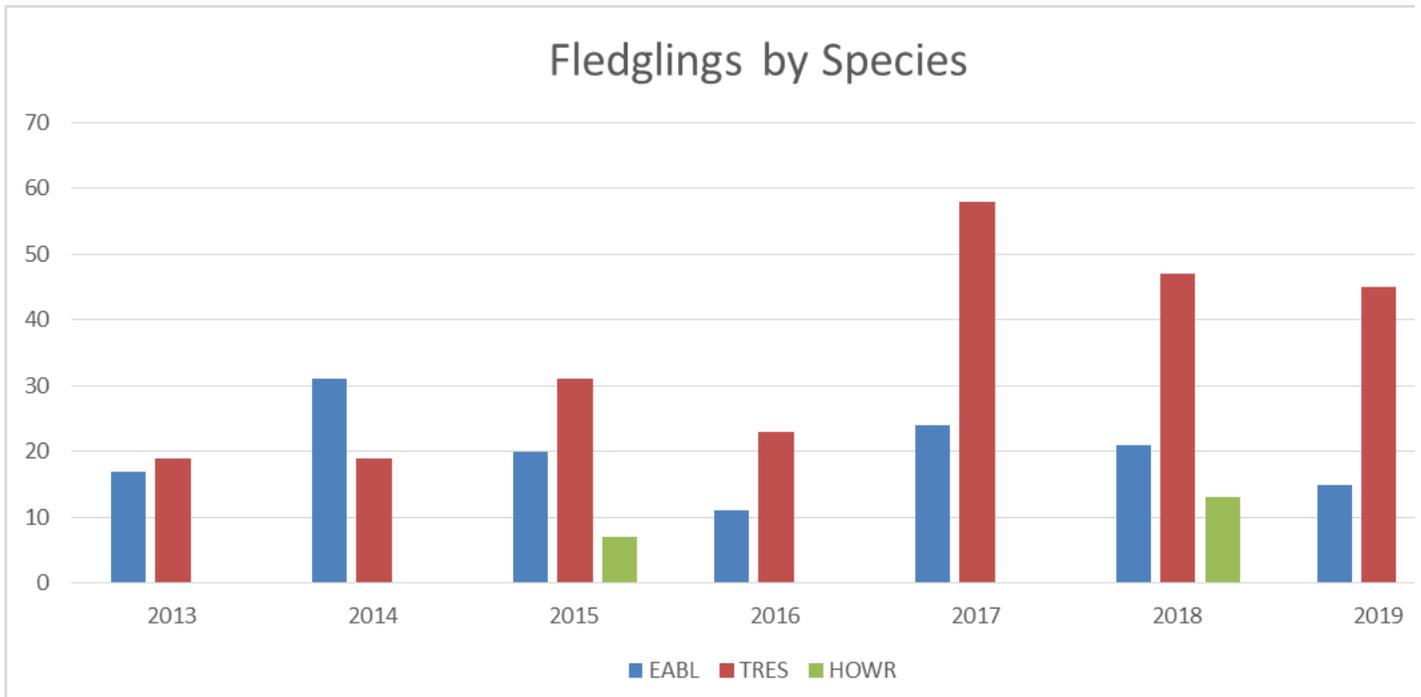
Gilwood Nest Boxes

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Bluebird Nest Box Report (continued)

This was my second year using the Cornell NestWatch app on the iPhone. It again proved very efficient for collecting the data and posting in real time. I did encounter issues on my phone which made the app loop while using. But even with this issue, the use of the program is a huge time saver and allowed me to know stats

Our data for the monitoring has been submitted to NestWatch (<https://nestwatch.org>) and the Michigan Bluebird Society (<http://michiganbluebirds.org/>). These are both excellent organizations that can provide you with information on observing, managing, and monitoring nesting birds in your area.



Bogus Lake Fen Restoration

Within the thousand-acre Phyllis Haehnle Sanctuary are some of the rarest wetlands found in North America, prairie fens. They are considered both globally and state rare ecosystems. For example, only 140 prairie fens have been identified in Michigan.

At Haehnle, fens are found at four locations, but historically they probably were all connected. The largest one, covering about 60 acres, is the Bogus Lake Fen. Its unusual name comes from a local legend. Supposedly in the 1930's, some criminals that were being pursued by the "Feds" dumped their counterfeit plates in the small lake now called Bogus Lake.

The fens at Haehnle have been and are faced with a variety of threats. Dredging the Portage River in 1921-22, subsequent construction of ditches, and drain tile lowered water levels.

Fires started by lighting, native Americans and later the early European settlers suppressed woody plants and helped maintain prairie fens. In recent times fire has been mostly eliminated from wetlands. Invasive plants, especially glossy buckthorn, have invaded the Bogus Lake Fen as a result of disrupted hydrology and fire suppression.



Efforts to restore the Bogus Lake Fen began August 2015 by cutting 6.4 acres of buckthorn with a hydrohoe followed by aerial spraying with an herbicide. In 2016 and 2017, 4.8 more acres were treated.

Last year an additional 20 acres were sprayed. Spraying killed standing buckthorn however, new stems sprouted from the roots and dormant seed so additional treatment was needed this year.

Standing dead buckthorn needed to be cut because it shaded the sprouting invasives from aerial spraying. Dennis Marshal, Dragline Works began August 30 grinding dead buckthorn in the 20 acres and was able to treat 16 acres before funding ran out.

Restoration work at the Bogus Lake Fen would not have been possible without technical and financial support from various conservation organizations.

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Bogus Lake Fen Restoration Continued

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division provided funds last year. It is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's "Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program" that has consistently assisted Michigan Audubon.

For example, Tom Eitniew, USFWS biologist obtained a grant in which Michigan Audubon agreed to pay \$11,000 while Ducks Unlimited, North American Wetland Conservation Act Grant and USFWS provided the balance of the \$24,500 cost this year.

Cranes are already using some of this reclaimed area.

By Ron Hoffman



Weekend Greeters Needed



As the sun moves to the western horizon in October and November, crane enthusiasts flock to Haehnle to see the Sandhill Cranes flying into Mud Lake Marsh, both groups increasing in numbers as the daylight turns to dusk.

We never tire of hearing the Sandhill's prehistoric-sounding call, despite the countless years this species has been delighting us with their evening ritual. For many of our guests, however, this is a new and thrilling experience.

Both young and old watch the skies and listen, spellbound by the splendid sights and the trumpeting sounds. We welcome folks from other states within the US., Canada, Scotland, Russia, and even China. They have many questions about the sanctuary and the cranes and have told us many times how much they appreciate having hosts to both welcome them and answer their questions, many of which are

answered by our Haehnle and Sandhill Crane brochures. (Greeters also have an Interpreters Guide to Haehnle.)

This year we thank the following who will greet at Haehnle: Ron Hoffman, Bob Harkness, Libby Warner, Gary Childs, Allen and Jordan King, Marsi Darwin, Susan Morell-Samuels, Brenda Wineman, Jose Wixson, Carol Strahler, Steve Jerant, Don Siegrist, Mike Olney, Ross Green, Barbara White, Helena Robinovitz, Lathe Claflin, Meghan Milbrath, Amy and Bryon Ennis, Charity and Bill Steere, Bill Wells and Andy Walz.

We still have a few more slots to fill. If you have a few hours on a Saturday or Sunday before sunset, we would really appreciate your help. Please email Helena Robinovitz helena@robinovitz.com.

By Helena Robinovitz

Haehnle Sanctuary Helping Bees and Butterflies



Honey bees were brought into Haehnle in 2016 to support a grant through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS has special grants for pollinators, but only in areas where there are bees nearby.

Haehnle partnered with local beekeeper Meghan Milbrath of The Sand Hill (www.sandhillbees.com), who brought out some hives. Since that time five to ten hives live on the North part of the sanctuary.

They are tucked away to protect both bees and humans, and happily feed on the flowers in the trees and other plants in the surrounding landscape. The bees and the sanctuary were recently featured in a PBS special "Tastemakers," about mead in Michigan, to air in 2020.



The sanctuary is also participating in "Project Wingspan." In this project, volunteers come and collect seeds known to support monarchs.

The volunteers raise plants from the seeds and distribute the plugs to areas around the state, including back to the original properties.

Many natural lands tend to have a lot of grass over time, and taking time to add in more flowers supports honey bees, monarchs, and the thousands of native pollinators that support Michigan's ecosystems.

By Meghan Milbrath



Common Milkweed



Bergemot



Blazing Star

Important Haehnle Wild Flowers for Bees and Butterflies



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Level **Amount**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic	\$30
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustaining	\$500
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Make my donation in memory of the person(s) below: _____	

Make Checks Payable to Michigan Audubon and designate for the Haehnle Sanctuary

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Mail To:

**Michigan Audubon
c/o Ron Hoffman
6142 E. Territorial Rd.
Pleasant Lake, MI 49272**

*Thank You,
Your Support is Greatly Appreciated!*



*Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary
c/o Jackson Audubon Society
P.O. Box 6453
Jackson, MI 49204*



*Official News Letter
For The
Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary*



We wish to thank the following people who have generously supported the sanctuary during recent months.

Hugh and Norene Zernickow Memorial

Ron & Joan Hoffman
Max & Theresa Odell
Helena Robinovitz
Jan E. Thomas
Robert Ochs