

Haehnle Sanctuary News



Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary

Owned By the Michigan Audubon Society

Maintained and Operated by The Jackson Audubon Society

Preserving and Protecting our Natural World

Fall 2015



Visitors Come To Haehnle From Far and Wide



One of Several Tour Groups Visiting Haehnle Each Year

During the past 60 years, a great deal of effort and money has gone into making the Haehnle Sanctuary a valuable place for preserving and observing native plants and animals in their natural environment. The question might now be asked: how do people value the sanctuary; for example how far will they travel to get to Haehnle and what do they have to say about the place?

To get some insight into this question visitors have been asked to sign the Visitor Registry at the kiosk indicating among other things, point of origin (city/state or country) and make comments about the sanctuary. At least 1,545 people responded to these questions since July, 2014 while many did not. As might be expected, 85% of the visitors indicated Michigan as their point of origin, most were from

the southeast part of the state traveling more than five miles. Ann Arbor area was the single highest point of origin while Jackson came in second. Considering its size, Chelsea residents comprised a disproportionate larger number of people.

The sanctuary is recognized as a go-to place which extends well beyond the borders of Michigan. Twelve percent of the visitors indicated they came from other states. Most were from Ohio followed by Illinois and Indiana, while others literally traveled from 19 states within a rectangle formed by California, Oregon, Florida and Massachusetts. Forty-nine visitors even came from nine foreign countries. Surprisingly, 16 of them were from China followed by Canada, France, India, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, and Australia. (continued on page two)

Haehnle Visitors Continued

Crane numbers staging at Haehnle were down last fall, but that did not seem to disappoint visitors as much as might be expected. Only a few commented on the lack of cranes. Instead they commonly used words like "beautiful, awesome, peaceful, and thank you". Those who came during the summer often wrote "lots of bugs" or "too many skeeters" while fall visitors often remarked about the vista looking across the marsh framed against a backdrop of beautiful autumn colors.

Some special comments were "My 5-year olds first bird outing", "kids asked to come out", "happy to be here again!", "been 11 yrs - about time I got back here!" and "love this place".

Seeing how far people will travel to visit the Haehnle and how much they appreciate it makes all the efforts to acquire and maintain this special place worthwhile.

By Ron Hoffman

Haehnle, Where Butterflies Abound!

Common Buckeye



On warm sunny summer afternoons, many butterflies, some colorful and some not so much, can be found flitting about the many blooming flowers in Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary's restored tall grass prairies. Fifty-six butterfly species have been recorded at Haehnle since the first butterfly survey was conducted in 2001.

A July 4th butterfly survey was conducted in 2001 by Roger Kuhlman in which 35 species were recorded. Since then most of the additions to the butterfly list have been incidental sightings during various other activities at the sanctuary. In the summer of 2014 Haehnle Sanctuary began participating in the Michigan Butterfly Network surveys. Systematic butterfly surveys are conducted each summer between June 1st and August 7th. The survey route is walked six different times between those dates and all butterflies encountered are recorded.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

Many of the common and easily recognized butterflies of Michigan can be found at Haehnle. These include Silver-spotted Skipper, Black Swallowtail, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Clouded Sulphur, American Copper, Summer Azure, Eastern Tailed Blue, Great Spangled Fritillary, Baltimore Checkerspot, Mourning Cloak, Red Admiral, Viceroy, Little Wood-Satyr and Monarch.

Some other less common butterflies seen on the sanctuary over the years have been Mustard White, Purplish Copper, Dorcas Copper, Gray Comma, and Milbert's Tortoiseshell.

Species that have been recent additions to the Haehnle butterfly list include a few Dainty Sulphurs which were found on the sanctuary during an influx season of this southern species during the late summer and early fall of 2012. (continued on page 3)

Haehnle Butterflies, Continued



Appalachian Brown



Great Spangled Fritillary

Both Tawny-edged Skipper and Common Roadside-Skipper were added from the summer 2014 MBN surveys. Another new species, Striped Hairstreak, was found July 23rd during a survey walk this summer. The latest addition, Wild Indigo Duskywing, was added when Craig Dobson spotted an adult during a Jackson Audubon wildflower field trip on July 25th and a tiny caterpillar of the species was found on a Wild Indigo plant during a Michigan Butterfly Survey field trip at Haehnle the next week.

This is especially interesting as it is a species of concern in Michigan. A majority of these butterflies are found in the restored tall grass prairies of the sanctuary. However, there are a few species that prefer the woods and a few others that are found more often closer to the wetter areas. Butterfly numbers tend to peak in July, but you can expect to see several species on any sunny summertime afternoon visit to Haehnle Sanctuary.

Article and photos by Don Henise

A Big Thanks to the “Mowing Man”



If you have enjoyed the nicely mowed trails at Haehnle this summer, you have one man to thank. Gary Childs has mowed the one and one half miles of trails, the dike along the Portage River and fire lanes where necessary. Every three weeks Gary has loaded his tractor and mower on a trailer and hauled it out to Haehnle with

his truck. Every three weeks from May through October he has made this trip and spent the major part of each day mowing. And when the summer progressed, and the big bluestem reached full height and began to bend over the trail, he had to mow a wider swath.

He also mowed the observation hill and trimmed around the benches so no one had tall grass tickling their ankles as they sat and enjoyed the view.

Everyone on the Haehnle Committee agrees that the grounds have never looked better. I'm sure our many visitors will feel the same.

His dedicated volunteer efforts have also saved the Sanctuary budget a lot of money. Contracting for this service would have cost hundreds of dollars.

Thanks so much Gary for all you do!!!

By Steve Jerant

2015 Bluebird Nest Box Report

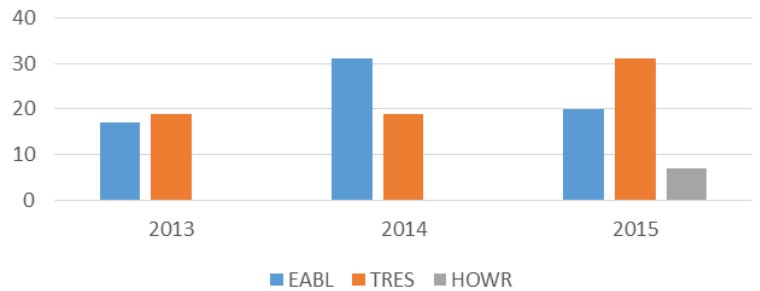
Now that I have collected three years of data, I can think of only one thing: graphs! The good news is the slopes are positive which means we are seeing more successful breeding at Haehnle. We don't have a whole lot of data in just three years, but a few simple graphs do show our progress.

First, from a species perspective, we can see an overall increase in the number of fledglings since 2013. It looks like between 2014 and 2015 our tree Swallows (TRES) and Eastern Bluebirds (EABL) have swapped dominance. Our new entrant in 2015 is my wife's favorite (ha!) species, House Wren (HOWR). That little bar represents just one nesting attempt. They may be small but they are prolific.

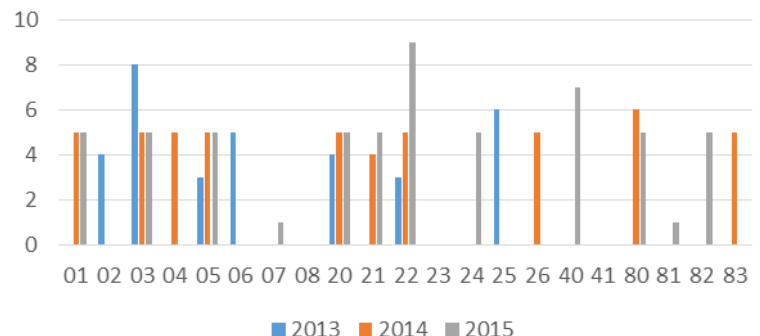
Next, I've been waiting to see what trending, if any, there are in the nest boxes. We continue to have repeated dead Tree Swallows each year in #25 & #26 in the west prairie (Unit#2.05) and in the #40 & #41 boxes west of the Wooster Road parking lot in Unit 3.11. This year I modified the front inside near the entrance hole and did not have any dead swallows after the modification. We will see if that trend holds into next year.

The new boxes we installed in 2014 continue to provide successful nesting habitat and 3 of the 4 boxes produced fledglings this year. Unfortunately, one of these new boxes was used by a House Sparrow. Continued removal of nesting material did not curtail the nesting, so I had to resort to a glue trap. A House Sparrow returned to the main prairie below the Harold Wing overlook again this year. This bird was very aggressive and built its nest on top of an existing Tree Swallow nest. House Sparrows generally use lots of different materials for their nests, and this one actually used the Tree Swallow it killed in capturing the nest as part of the structure. It was quite a gruesome sight and really drove home the level of territoriality these birds exhibit on the nest.

Fledglings by Species



Fledgelings by Nest Box



Continued on next page

2015 Bluebird Nest Box Report cont'd

Lastly, I looked at the percent of nest boxes with successful fledglings for the last three years. That also shows a good trend, going from 41% in 2013 to 57% this year. This also includes the addition of 4 boxes in 2014.

Our nest box program continues to provide more opportunities for successful nesting of our native species at Haehnle. This winter we added a Wood Duck box on Eagle Lake. When the ice returns I'll be able to have a look and see if it had any success in 2015.

Remember if you are staging any nest boxes on your property be sure to manage them to prevent House Sparrows from using them instead of target species such as bluebirds and sparrows.

Haehnle data has been submitted to the Michigan Bluebird Society (michiganbluebirdsociety.org) and to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Nest Watch program (nestwatch.org). If you are interested in more information about songbird nest boxes or want to try setting some up on your property, the above websites are excellent resources.



Tree Swallows

We wish to thank the following people who have generously supported the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary during recent months.

***Donations to Jackson Audubon Society
Designated for the Haehnle Sanctuary***

Bill and Charity Steer (fen restoration)
Don Klotz Jr.
Hugh Zernickow

In Memory of Steward Robinovitz

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Steve & Dayle Wright
Hugh Zernickow

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Glenn & Maryanne Belyea
Mark & Mary Bradtke
Jim & Joyce Grace
Fran & John Parker
Patty & John Schmidt

In Memory of Steward Robinovitz

John & Kathy Gourlay
Sharon Knieper
Robert & Maria Strom

Buckthorn Removal in Bogus Lake Fen Has Begun

In the spring issue of this newsletter, Ron Hoffman described a rare type of wetland called a fen and mentioned that four of them can be found at Haehnle Sanctuary.

He also outlined some important restoration work that was going to take place at one of our fens, Bogus Lake Fen, which is surrounded by a large zone of a nasty, alien invasive plant called glossy buckthorn.



The invasive glossy buckthorn shown dominating the fen before the restoration work began (above).

Removal of that buckthorn is imperative if the fen is going to survive. Tom Eitnearer of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Partners for Wildlife Program, is overseeing this large project using funds from USF&WS, Michigan Audubon, and the Haehnle Sanctuary Committee.

Phase 1, removal of buckthorn, began in earnest at the end of August; 6.3 acres of buckthorn were destroyed by grinding it up with large chopper attached to a hydra hoe.



Bogus Lake Fen shown after chipping process was completed. Any re-sprouts will be treated in spring making way for the return of native species.



Chopper/grinder operated by Dennis Marshall reduces glossy buckthorn to wood chips.

This chopper/grinder was operated by Dennis Marshall of Dragline Works, who has worked with us on other projects at Haehnle. The pictures show the chopper in operation and the area at the southern end of the fen where the work began.

The next phase will be to spray the glossy buckthorn seedlings that will appear. Then native grasses, sedges, and wildflowers should take over. This is a multi-year project because the zone of buckthorn comprises more than 40 acres. Please come and see the site – it is easily reached by following the main trail through the main prairie towards Eagle Lake.

Lathe Claflin, Sanctuary Chairman



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**Michigan Audubon
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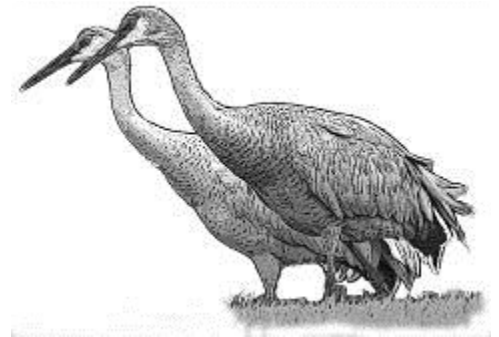
*Thank You,
Your Support is Greatly Appreciated!*



*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*



Important Date To Remember

Saturday, October 17

Cranes, Color, and Cabernet Festival

Please come and join us for a celebration of Sandhill Cranes, fall colors, and Sandhill Crane Vineyard's opening of their new cabernet.

We will also be celebrating Haehnle Sanctuary's 60th anniversary! The event begins at noon. Come to the Tobin Childs Kiosk off the main parking lot on Seymour Rd.

At 4:00 p.m. a short address will be given in recognition of the 60th. anniversary followed at 4:30 p.m. by an auto tour to view cranes in local fields.