



# The MI Marsh Chatter



## A Word from our Chairman

*Pete Albrecht: 2013 & 2014 State Chairman*



As we look forward to 2014, let us take a moment to review our accomplishments for 2013. It was a somewhat mixed, but largely positive, year. Our event income was almost \$1.7 million, which is up almost 3%. We saw an increase of bronze sponsors of 136 or 11% and our all-important volunteer numbers have increased nicely also. On the down side, our new major

donor numbers decreased sharply and our regular membership slid by about 400 or about 1% state wide. These results follow two very strong growth years, especially the 2012 (75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary), and should not be at all considered disappointing. Your hard work, dedication, and generosity made this possible.

Congratulations and thank you to all of you for another fine year.

We have just completed our first year of the Calendar Gun Raffle sales. The 2014 calendar sales were a virtual sell-out and, although we did have a few hiccups along the way, we will be expanding the program in both calendar numbers and guns to be raffled for 2015. We have gotten a much earlier start than last year so we hope to have calendars available early enough for more of the spring event chapters to participate. Please talk to your RD or give me a call for details.

The 2014 drawings will be held each Wednesday at the Great Lakes-Atlantic Region office in Ann Arbor for those of you interested in witnessing the drawing.

This years Leadership Conference at Higgins Lake will be Jan 31<sup>st</sup> and Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. We will once again be refunding registration to AC, ZC, and DC attending for the first time. It would be great to see all of our Area, Zone, and District Chairs attend.

The 2014 State Convention will be at the Sterling Inn in Sterling Heights on the weekend of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please mark your calendar & plan to attend for a fun and informative weekend.

Please remember that we are volunteer organization. As such, we should always be looking for and welcoming new individuals to join our ranks.

Thank you for all that you DU, and I hope to see you along the way.

*Pete Albrecht*

## JANUARY-MARCH 2014

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#### Nayanquing Point Youth Hunt

Young hunters get a crack at some early waterfowl hunting with help from the DNR & Ducks Unlimited.

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#### Outstanding Greenwing Event

The Flat River chapter hosted a number of young people, and built over 2 dozen Wood Duck boxes

Full story on page 3



#### Wetlands Increase in Our Area

The great Lakes region was the only region in the country where we gained wetlands in the past five years!

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#### Have a Thunder Chicken?

Try this grouse recipe for a little something different!

Full Recipe on page 4



#### LSSU Chapter Fun

First duck hunt for some of the LSSU chapter members, at Dey's Duck Blind Inn in Brimley, MI

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## MI DU supports DNR's annual Youth Hunting Program kick-off



This was the sixth year of MI Ducks Unlimited hosting a youth event to coincide with the MI DNR's opening weekend of the youth hunting program. MI DU provided anyone that visited the Nayanquing State Game Area with refreshments and handouts stating the Ducks Unlimited mission and accomplishments in the Saginaw Bay area and throughout North America.

Also provided were duck identification posters and the DU magazine. Youth were also presented with their choice of a DU hat or DU Edition Buck Gardner duck call.



## Greenville Greenwing Event

The New Year brought a Greenwing Event to the Greenville area. Hosted by the Flat River chapter, it pulled kids from a number of surrounding areas to build Wood Duck houses. Years ago there were a number of Greenwing events occurring around the State, but they declined as the years passed and the Flat River committee wanted to be one of the first to get the movement started again. The committee has a number of younger volunteers that have kids and they wanted to be able to help the DUCKS in a different way than just the traditional event. The committee feels that by getting the kids involved with a hands on project it will help them continue to support DU and its conservation message. All of the kids got the chance to make their own wood duck house and take it home. Hopefully next winter they get to a chance to see if a duck used the house!

The State Greenwing chairmen Pete Wyckoff made the trip up to Greenville as well; he gave a short talk about Wood Ducks and the how to's of wood duck boxes. The event would not have happened if it were not for the Area Chairmen Max Lehman, he was kind enough to donate the lumber and the facility to hold the event, a huge THANK YOU to Big-L-Lumber for helping the Greenwings.



# First Quarter Events

### January

17 <sup>th</sup>	Vol. celebration	Craig Curtis	ccurtis@ducks.org
25 <sup>th</sup>	S. Kent DHP	Blair Bissell	bbissell@pypertool.com
30 <sup>th</sup>	Orion-Oxford		
31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (don't miss it!)</b>		
	Pete Albrecht	pete@petesautowrecking.com	

### February

6 <sup>th</sup>	Flat River (SNOW)	Max Lehmen	max_lehman@big-l-lumber.com
7 <sup>th</sup>	GLARO Dinner	Pete Wyckoff	pwycckoff@ducks.org
14 <sup>th</sup>	Davison/Flint		
15 <sup>th</sup>	E. UP Sponsors	Dan Heuer	duckman@jamadots.com
16 <sup>th</sup>	Sag. Bay Euchre	Perry Pelton	989-846-6425
17 <sup>th</sup>	Greater Kalamazoo	Davin Ojala	ojala@sme-usa.com
21 <sup>st</sup>	Southern Wayne		
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Lapeer		
20 <sup>th</sup>	Huron Shores	Bill Kidder	bkidderintawas@msn.com
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Benzie County	Gaylord Jowett	231-651-0963
28 <sup>th</sup>	Cass River	Pat Peterson	ppeterson@americanplbg-htg.com

### March

1 <sup>st</sup>	AuSable Valley	Paul Thompson	pdthompson@fs.fed.us
1 <sup>st</sup>	Cass City	Nick Chippi	nick@casscitygas.com
1 <sup>st</sup>	South Kent Co.	Joe Zupancic	ausable_joe@yahoo.com
1 <sup>st</sup>	Mid- Shiawassee		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Portland	Levi Beard	levibeard@yahoo.com
1 <sup>st</sup>	Gun River	Brian Pursley	blpursley19@hotmail.com
13 <sup>th</sup>	Paw Paw	Matt Kubiak	mattku@jeld-wen.com
14 <sup>th</sup>	Holland	Mike Norman	mike@michiganminis123.com
14 <sup>th</sup>	Tuscola Co.	Mike Bauerschmidt	mike@galaxyom.com
15 <sup>th</sup>	Eaton County	Dave Martin	macman511@juno.com
20 <sup>th</sup>	Lac De Ste Claire		
21 <sup>st</sup>	Flat River (Shoot)	Max Lehmen	max_lehman@big-l-lumber.com
21 <sup>st</sup>	Saginaw Bay	Larry Emans	Leroy_1998@hotmail.com
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sanford	Dan Merillat	dahk76@gmail.com
22 <sup>nd</sup>	LSSU	Lloyd Wilson	lwilson@ducks.org
24 <sup>th</sup>	Huron Valley		
24 <sup>th</sup>	Monroe		
TBA	Thunder Bay	Sue Crittenden	989-356-4411
TBA	Cheboygan DHP	Tom Scheske	231-627-4519

### April

4 <sup>th</sup>	Chesaning	Cindy Zietz-Lemaire	zclcritterbabe@hotmail.com
11 <sup>th</sup>	Midland Spon.	Dr. James Freye	canvasbackone@aol.com
12 <sup>th</sup>	Chain-O-Lakes	Linda Hoogerhyde	marykay@torchlake.com
17 <sup>th</sup>	Fife Lake	Randy Hendges	rhendges@charter.net
24 <sup>th</sup>	Sault Ste. Marie	Dan Heuer	duckman@jamadots.com
25 <sup>th</sup>	Bay Co.	Brian Kunz	woodman21@chartermi.net
25 <sup>th</sup>	Saginaw	Kevin Machata	duckswatter24@hotmail.com
26 <sup>th</sup>	Cadillac	Bob Inglis	binglis@cadillaccasting.com
TBA	Indian River	Greg Krot	gkrot@sbcglobal.net
TBA	Roscommon	Doug Becker	beckert@charter.net

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# Recipe of the Quarter

## Ruffed Grouse with Marsala Wine

*Compliments of Jerry Schultz*

### **Ingredients:**

4 partridge halved, boned and pounded for tenderness with meat hammer.  
You can then slice into medallions if you prefer serving smaller pieces

Flour

Butter

Sliced mushrooms

Marsala wine (get the real marsala wine not cooking wine)

Minced or grated garlic

Fresh or dried parsley, rosemary, and basil

Minced onion

Beef gravy in a can or jar

### **Preparation and Cooking:**

Melt butter and sauté mushrooms over medium heat until browned then set aside.

Dredge partridge lightly in flour and brown 4 to 5 minutes per side in olive oil in the skillet

Return mushrooms to the skillet and stir in marsala wine (3/4 cup).

Add parsley, rosemary, and garlic and basil, onion and beef gravy.  
Let it simmer for 10 minutes

Put entire contents in a baking dish and pour additional marsala on top.

Bake at 350 degrees for a half an hour.



### **A little note to the volunteers from Billie Ray Fann**

Over the last several years Michigan had some challenges to overcome, but with great perseverance by our volunteers we've had some great successes. These successes could not have been possible without our continual recruitment efforts into new and existing committees and your hard work. My "hat's off" to you guys for several great years through some of Michigan and our country's most trying times.

We have a group of 5 District Chairmen who are willing and ready to help all chapters when needed. They are here to help you with recruitment efforts, coach you on organizing your events, or maybe even offer some good hunting advice (though I wouldn't expect any GPS coordinates from them). If you are not already on a committee you can call these folks in your area and they will help you become involved with DU in your town. Please feel free to contact any of them for help. You can go to the state website ([www.ducks.org/michigan](http://www.ducks.org/michigan)) and then click on state contacts to find information on any and all of these volunteers.

Volunteering for Ducks Unlimited can be a lot of fun and a great way to meet friends with similar interests. If you are on a committee or considering helping on one, the best advice I can offer you is to plan and utilize your time wisely. As we all know time is a valuable resource and you may be worried about the time required to participate on a DU committee, but you will get out of it what you put into it. I was a volunteer for many years and without planning and use of some time management tools, I would have pulled my hair out. One simple thing I did (and this may not be for everyone) was follow the banquet guide's 8 week "cook book" schedule. I planned for about 30 minutes a day (on average) to be spent working towards my 8 week goal. This time was utilized to solicit donations, to talk to other committee members or to sell tickets for the event. In any case, this worked for me. Your time allocation may be different, but the key is plan it and use it wisely. Another thing I did as a chairman was to delegate tasks and then follow up to ensure the tasks were completed. We're all busy and we forget some of these tasks, as they can't always be our number one priority, so a little coaxing on the chairman's part will help move the daily tasks along. If you don't have a copy of the Banquet guide let me know and I can email you one. I still reference it today after 20 years of this work.

Finally, I know you've heard me talk volunteer recruitment. This is the number one key to committee success and will also make hosting your event much less stressful and a heck of a lot easier. This is also a great way to expand your network of friends or waterfowl hunting buddies. Each chapter should make a recruitment event as part of their banquet planning protocol. Meaning that about 9 to 15 weeks out from your event you should be sending out mailers, calling people from your member list or hosting a "bring a buddy night."

If you're not on a committee and would like to help, go to the DU website at [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org) and click on the volunteering link(s). In just a few days you can expect to hear from volunteers from across the state encouraging you to help on their committee. Or you can contact me at 248-464-5474 ([bfann@ducks.org](mailto:bfann@ducks.org)).

*Billie Ray Fann*

## Great Lakes, only region in US to gain Wetlands



Honking geese soar overhead in a V formation, buffeted by bitter gusts off nearby Lake Erie, while flocks of mallards bob along the shore. Even blanketed in snow, the sprawling wetland in southeastern Michigan is a magnet for water birds — one reason a public-private project is underway to improve it. Crews are building levees, canals and pumps that will regulate water levels and upgrade fish passageways in a 946-acre section of Erie Marsh, making it a better home for wildlife and limiting the spread of invasive plants. It's an example of decades-old efforts by government agencies and private groups to rebuild Great Lakes coastal wetlands such as swamps, bogs and marshes that have been depleted by development. A federal report released in November suggests the work is beginning to pay off.

The eight-state Great Lakes region — extending from western New York to eastern Minnesota— was the only section of the U.S. where coastal wetland acreage increased during a five-year period when scientists took extensive measurements with satellites and field photography. The gain was modest — 13,610 acres, an area not quite as large as the New York City borough of Manhattan. Yet it happened as the rest of the nation's coastal wetlands shrank by 360,720 acres. The loss amounted to less than 1 percent of the U.S. total, but continued a longtime negative trend.

Wetlands don't have the cachet of spectacular natural features that oceans and mountains do. They're sometimes dismissed as worthless, especially by those wanting to cover them with shopping centers or highways. But they are immensely valuable, helping prevent floods by absorbing excessive rainwater. They are known as "nature's kidneys," filtering out pollutants that otherwise would wash into lakes and rivers, and also provide vital wildlife habitat — nesting grounds for ducks and geese, temporary refuges for migratory birds, spawning areas for fish. Scientists say the continental U.S. has lost roughly half the wetland acreage that existed prior to the European settlement era. They've been relentlessly filled and drained for farms, housing and cities.

Replacing wetlands is a primary goal of a program called the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative that is focusing on the region's biggest environmental problems. Separately, the U.S. and Canada signed an agreement last year to upgrade the lakes' water quality that calls for boosting wetlands.

Experts say the gains in the Great Lakes region reflected in the study resulted partially from a prolonged drop in water levels, which created new wetland areas as vegetation sprouted along shorelines in places that had been submerged. Some of that acreage could disappear if the lakes rise again in coming years, said Tom Dahl, a scientist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and one of the report's authors. Great Lakes coastal wetlands also face continuing development threats. Many are along shorelines that would be prime locations for hotels or condominiums. Regulations designed to protect them have drawn legal challenges from critics who say they stifle economic growth and violate property rights.

As those battles continue, other government programs encourage voluntary wetlands restoration through means such as flooding unused cropland. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service has worked with landowners to revive over 40,000 wetland acres in Michigan alone since 1995, spokesman Brian Buehler said.

"Regulations slow the loss. But if we're going to turn the tide and have a net gain, we need to re-establish wetland acres," said Jim Hudgins, who coordinates such projects for the Fish and Wildlife Service. "We can work with people to maintain the values and functions of wetlands in ways that benefit the landowners."

One such project is Erie Marsh, a network of wetlands, farm fields and open water along Lake Erie's North Maumee Bay. The Nature Conservancy bought the property from a private hunting club and is working with Ducks Unlimited to improve natural features that make it hospitable for waterfowl and fish.

Culverts, gates and other infrastructure are being installed to re-establish a connection with the bay that was cut off decades ago by construction of dikes. Group leaders hope the project will be completed by 2017, enabling fish to reach the wetlands for spawning and foraging. Farther up the coast, the Fish and Wildlife Service has bought dozens of acres of corn and soybean fields that will be partially flooded to create wetlands and prairie, becoming part of a wildlife refuge covering 48 miles along the Detroit River and Lake Erie.

"You look at it now and wonder how it could be a wetland," Ducks Unlimited conservation programs manager Jason Hill said, surveying a snow-covered field on a recent afternoon. But once the water level rises, it will teem with swamp vegetation, aquatic birds and critters such as muskrats and snakes — all within a half-hour's drive of the Detroit metro area, where millions rely on the river and the lake for drinking water.

## 2014 Calendar Raffle brightens New Years Day



Deb Grey from the GLARO office in Ann Arbor draws the first of 208 winners in the 2014 Michigan Ducks Unlimited Calendar raffle. There will be four lucky people drawn each Wednesday to win a firearm, for all 52 weeks of this year. The first winner this year was from Hillman, Michigan.

The calendar raffle is the first held here in Michigan and has been a smashing success. Over \$90,000 was raised by the calendar sales. Winners are drawn each week at the GLARO office, the winners are notified and arrangements are made to ship their firearm to the FFL dealer of their choice. After each winner is drawn from the barrel their name is recorded and their card goes back in the drum so that they are eligible to win again.

If you missed getting a calendar this year, the 2015 calendars will be available for purchase sometime in mid to late July. Contact your RD or State officers for more information. OR you can go to the MI DU website, at <http://www.miducalendar.org> and see who the winners are for this year.



## Monroe DU volunteer receives Governor's thanks

Much to his surprise, Monroe DU chapter volunteer Tracy Oberleiter received the letter of thanks (shown below) from Governor Rick Snyder. Tracy as well as many other volunteers and staff have made it possible for Michigan to have the new MI DU license plate that will be available from the Secretary of State's office this June.



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR



BRIAN CALLEY  
LT. GOVERNOR

November 8, 2013

Area Chairman Tracy Oberleiter  
418 Ruff Dr  
Monroe, MI 48162-3525

Dear Tracy,

It is a distinct personal privilege to extend the highest praise of your leadership in Ducks Unlimited. You and your entire committee have accomplished much to ensure a strong future for ducks and for water-fowlers in Michigan.

In recognition of your dedication to Ducks Unlimited projects including restoring and enhancing Michigan's wetlands, maximizing the amount and quality of waterfowl nesting habitat as well as improving habitat conditions for migrating waterfowl.

I sign this document to commend your efforts and the efforts of your committee in preserving and promoting Michigan's natural resources.

Sincerely,

Rick Snyder  
Governor



## LAKE SUPERIOR STATE DU COMMITTEE GATHERS

Nine Laker DU committee members gathered the weekend of October 18-19 for their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Committee Hunt at Dey's Duck Blind Inn in Moran, Mich. Everyone gathered Friday evening, bringing their boats, decoys and equipment looking forward to having a successful weekend.

Committee Chairman Jake Crawford, along with Ryan Buchler, Nick Dion, Garret Price, Luke Hoover, Jacob Northius, Eli Leach, Jason Burkhardt and Cassidee Nation enjoyed their best hunt so far. Several highlights from the weekend included freshman Cassidee Nation harvesting her first duck -- a nice redhead -- while the group harvested a mixed bag of divers and puddlers, including two white-winged scoters and a long-tailed duck and a harlequin duck. The group also harvested several snipe. As everyone was packing their gear Sunday morning, they all agreed they had the best weekend hunt.

The hunt was started by hosts past Committee Chair Kris Dey and past Senior VP Steve Dey so new committee members could get to know their fellow committee members and build a team to have a successful dinner in the spring.

The LSSU chapter is in its seventh year, making it the oldest active college chapter in Michigan. The Committee has grown over the past few years to 25 members this year.

If you would like to meet some of these up-and-coming DU leaders, their dinner will be March 22, 2014 at Lake Superior State University's Walker Cislser Center.

## Where is Dane now?

**Dane Cramer, Regional Biologist - Michigan** *From where I'm sitting, the snow is falling and the water is a little harder. Even the duck hunt I had planned for southern Illinois later this year seems to be jeopardized by freezing weather. It's beginning to look a lot like ... ice fishing season. Have a happy holiday season, too, everyone!*

Worked with Shiawassee National Wildlife refuge staff to solicit bids from local contractors to remove trees from a berm between moist soil units 6 and 7 that was damaged by spring floods during the past two years. This work is being done in advance of repairing the berm by re-grading it to originally designed specifications and installing two emergency spillways to reduce long-term, recurring maintenance needs (Saginaw County).

During recent travels through western Michigan, I stopped to take a first-hand look at our projects at Maple River State Game Area.

Attended the fall meeting of the Michigan Wetlands Association at Woldumar Nature Center in Lansing. Completed the final walk-through of the Arcadia Marsh enhancement project with the contractor. After nearly four years of planning and building, construction of this enhancement project has been completed.

Discussed the current status and future steps of the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network grant with Michigan Department of Natural Resources partners that was awarded to Ducks Unlimited on behalf of the Michigan Waterfowl Legacy partnership to promote waterfowl and wetlands conservation throughout the Saginaw Bay region.

Monitored a Ducks Unlimited held easement on North Island in Saginaw Bay (Huron County).

Met with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service partner from Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. We discussed the next steps in the restoration of the 940-acre Farm Unit 1. Ducks Unlimited's engineering staff is currently drafting significant revisions to the plant in hopes of submitting the wetland permit applications by the end of winter (Saginaw County).

Visited the Manistee Marsh project site with our new regional engineer in advance of a meeting with Michigan Department of Natural Resources staff to review our draft plans for the project. This project will entail the installation of three water control structures and retrofitting the existing pump structure to provide the tools that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources needs to better manage this resource for the public.