

LET'S GO WILDLIFE WATCHING

WHITEFISH POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY – BIRDING IN PARADISE

BY HAZEL FREEMAN

Whitefish Point Bird Observatory (WPBO) located in Paradise, Michigan ranks among the most significant avian sites in North America. Due to the Point's geographic location and shape, it's an important migration corridor for the Great Lakes Region. From the months of March through June, and August through November, impressive numbers of migrants stop over in this area. During their annual migrations, thousands of birds are funneled to this narrow point where land and water meet.



With their main focus on migration the Observatory has been monitoring and documenting the annual migrations of hundreds of species of birds for over 30 years. Recognized globally as an Important Bird Area (IBA), the Observatory's mission is to document the distribution and abundance of birds in the Great Lakes Region. The status and movements of bird populations are assessed and the information utilized to further bird migration research as well as help to educate the public about bird conservation and environmental awareness.

The Observatory offers a variety of education programs throughout the changing seasons including bird walks,

slide presentations, owl programs, bird ID classes, and special workshops. The WPBO celebrates the annual bird migration each year with its Spring Fling, held the last weekend of April. This is a great weekend event for novice and experienced birders alike to immerse themselves in bird walks, field trips, workshops and a banquet where you'll meet lots of other fellow birders.

For those who would like a more hands-on birding experience the Observatory offers the Birding Michigan Field Trip series. Participants get to experience some of Michigan's hottest birding spots at peak season. These small focused groups led by experienced birders are a great way to

thoroughly enjoy birding while improving your birding skills.

The Observatory is located directly across the parking lot from the amazing Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum, which houses, among other fascinating displays, that of the Edmund Fitzgerald.

Photo by Hazel Freeman at:
Whitefish Point Bird Observatory
www.wpbo.org

Hazel Freeman is a freelance writer from Ohio. With a life-long love of nature and the out-of-doors her writing reflects her deep passion, respect, and concern for the natural world in which we live.

Wildlife Viewing Areas

Wildlife Watching is a growing trend with presently 71 million participants. That's 31% of the population. Wildlife Watchers spend 45.7 billion dollars with 7.5 billion spent on food and lodging! If Wildlife Watching were ONE business, it would rank among the top 50 businesses in the country. Why don't YOU become a WILDLIFE WATCHER? Start by visiting one of the best websites we've found:

<http://www.wildlifeviewingareas.com>

