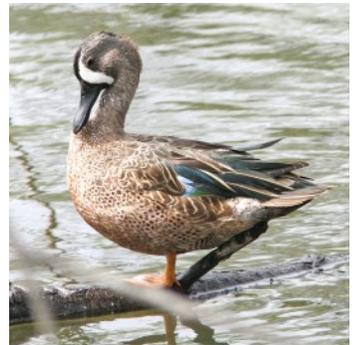


NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION

NAP's mission is to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and foster an environmental ethic within the community.



From left: Common Nighthawk; Blue-winged Teal; Black-throated Blue Warbler



Park Focus: Dolph Nature Area

Matthew Spoor, Park Steward Coordinator

It's a beautiful mid-May morning at Dolph Nature Area. I close my eyes, listen, and let the sounds tell the story of this place. The spring dawn chorus is reaching its crescendo with dozens of species audible to the tuned ear. Frogs frantically call from all directions as American toads, spring peepers, chorus frogs, green frogs, and grey tree frogs all sing their little hearts out in search of mates. My phone buzzes as local birders fervently share their ephemeral views of spring migrants. I peek at the messages to see what all the excitement is about and, of course, many are from Dolph. James messages, "Mourning Warbler at Dolph. South of the southeast entrance off Parklake." Victor shares, "Two Canada Warblers, and two Wilson's Warblers at Dolph now." Bonnie writes, "Very skulky White-eyed Vireo on the hillside above Parklake in Dolph." I look up as I hear a Sora calling from the marsh in the distance. Soon, the morning warms to afternoon and eastern garter snakes can be heard gliding away from the trail as I approach. It does not take long to realize this is a special place.

Along with the wetland communities, Dolph encompasses the only naturally formed lakes within the city.

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FALL MIGRATION AT DOLPH: BIRDS

In addition to the many year-round birds, fall sees many shorebirds and other types of migrating birds resting at Dolph.

Below are just a few of the migrating bird species one might spot—or hear—during a visit to Dolph this month.

ABUNDANT OR COMMON MIGRATING BIRDS

- Mallard
- Great Blue Heron
- Killdeer
- Chimney Swift
- Yellow Warbler
- Baltimore Oriole

UNCOMMON OR RARE MIGRATING BIRDS

- Wood Duck
- Blue-winged Teal
- Sandhill Crane
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Osprey
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Brown Thrasher
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- American Redstart
- Yellow-rumped Warbler
- Common Nighthawk

*Top: Black-throated Green Warbler;
Bottom: Brown Thrasher*



Dolph Nature Area

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

With so many birders active at Dolph on a given day, it's no surprise that 195 bird species have been identified here, with 173 being reported during spring migration in May, and 100 during fall migration in September. These reports are made to [eBird](#), an online database among the world's largest biodiversity-related science projects, gathering data from the birding community and making it freely available to power data-driven approaches to science, conservation, and education.

Due in large part to the diversity of high-quality ecosystems at the park—including open water, forest, shrubland, and wetland—Dolph's importance as a migratory respite is borne



*Juvenile Cooper's Hawk
Mike Budd/USFWS*

out in the data: more than [3,000 checklists](#) have been reported to [eBird](#) from Dolph, with 55% of these reported in May. In NAP's own plant inventories, among the 255 species of plants recorded at Dolph, there are plenty of high-quality wetland plants including bog birch, yellow pond lily, leatherleaf, bladdernut, and northern bog aster to name a few. It's also the only park where we've recorded poison sumac, which sounds ominous, but is an indication of the health of the park's ecosystem as it only grows in high-quality wetlands.

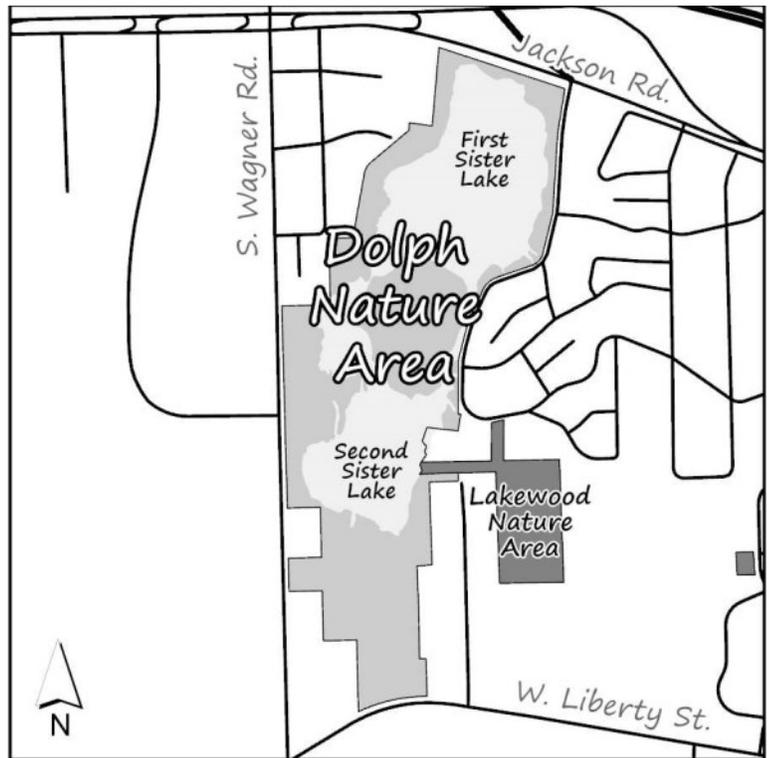
Along with the wetland communities, Dolph also encompasses the only naturally formed lakes within the city of Ann Arbor. First and Second Sister Lakes formed during the final retreat of the mile-thick ice sheet that sat atop Ann Arbor around 10,000 years ago. The two lakes (affectionately named as "sisters") are *kettle lakes*—formed as large heavy blocks of ice fell from the main glacier and sank into soft glacial sediment. The hole left after the ice melted is called a kettle, and when filled with water, a kettle lake.

Dolph Nature Area

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The lakes now receive surface storm drain input and function as part of the county’s drain system and the Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner (WCWRC) has installed natural features to manage the flow.

“The Dolph Bioswale is working hard to capture stormwater flowing from the uphill neighborhood and slow it down before the water gets to First Sister Lake,” explains Catie Wytychak, Water Quality Specialist at WCWRC. “When stormwater slows down, the pollution that gets swept along with the rush of water will drop out. Then the water can run clean! The bioswale is designed to slow stormwater, capture pollution, and let clean water flow into First Sister Lake. It has been a joy to take care of this natural space and see the plant diversity improve.” Anyone interested in helping care for the bioswale or mitigating stormwater in their own yard, can contact Catie and WCWRC to get involved.



My ears take over again as my phone alerts me to the arrival of the latest newsletter from the Sister Lakes Association, a vibrant and engaged neighborhood group surrounding Dolph. Perusing their newsletter, it is abundantly clear that they care deeply

about this unique place. The newsletter covers a variety of items about the lakes and the park, and this edition includes an announcement about NAP’s upcoming Dolph Stewardship Workday. On Saturday, September 18, volunteers can join NAP to cut and remove invasive shrubs, and a small group of volunteers will work with WCWRC to install plant plugs in the bioswale. The event is from 9 a.m. to noon, find out more and register at tinyurl.com/Dolph091822.

If you are interested in exploring this 75.2-acre nature area, you will find it on the west side of the city, bordered by Wagner Road on the west, Jackson Road on the north, Parklake Avenue on the east and West Liberty Road on the south. Parking is available in the main lot off Wagner Road, or along the street on Parklake Avenue.

See page 4 for more things to look and listen for at Dolph this month.



Sandhill Crane

NAPPENINGS

Staff Updates

Welcome...



Rosie Pahl-Donaldson
Land Acquisition Supervisor

Rosie is excited to join the City of Ann Arbor, moving from a more rural focus at the Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission to the

urban-nature interface that is the Ann Arbor area. For the last five years at County Parks, she has led or assisted 45 acquisitions; co-managed two B2B planning projects; developed, implemented, and spread to other governments a natural areas and agricultural lands assessment and prioritization GIS analysis. She got her master's of urban planning from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's in wildlife ecology conservation from the University of Florida. While not an official member of the NAP team, Rosie will be leading the City's Greenbelt and parkland acquisition efforts, and looks forward to deeper collaborations with NAP to improve City-wide conservation and recreation goals.

Farewell...



Ethan Glassman
Conservation Crew Leader

After two years on the conservation crew, I am moving on to work as the new Stewardship and Outreach Specialist with Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy.

I'm incredibly grateful for the time I've spent at NAP, everything I've learned, and connections I've made, both in the office and in the field. While I'll definitely miss the NAP community, I'm excited to grow in my new position with SMLC. Thanks to everyone, coworkers and volunteers, for continuing to make NAP such a great place!

NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION
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 facebook.com/ann.arbor.NAP

Natural Area Preservation is funded by the voter-approved 2020-2026 Park Maintenance & Capital Improvements Millage.

Thank you!

Many thanks to the groups who volunteered with NAP in July and August. We could not make such a difference without you!

- Michigan Community Scholars Program
- Parks Project
- Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- UM Muslim Chaplaincy
- Youth Volunteer Corps



UM Muslim Chaplaincy at Furstenberg on July 23



Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at Scarlett Mitchell on July 23



Youth Volunteer Corps at Scarlett Mitchell on August 8

EVENTS

September-October Volunteer Workdays

Find full details at a2gov.org/NAPEvents

- Mary Beth Doyle Nature Area 9/10
- Olson Park 9/11
- Sunset Brooks Nature Area 9/11
- Marshall Nature Area 9/17
- Dolph Nature Area and Bioswale 9/18
- Lakewood Nature Area 9/18
- Oakwoods Nature Area 9/24
- Argo Nature Area 9/25
- Buttonbush Nature Area 10/1
- Dhu Varren Nature Area 10/1
- Berkshire Creek Nature Area 10/2
- Huron Parkway Nature Area 10/2
- Barton Nature Area 10/8
- Bandemer Park 10/9
- Redbud Nature Area 10/15
- Folkstone Park 10/16
- Stapp Nature Area 10/22
- Bird Hills Nature Area 10/23
- Kuebler Langford Nature Area 10/30

Autumn Nature Walks

Nature walks are a collaboration between the Ann Arbor District Library and Natural Area Preservation. Some of AADL's Science Tools will be available to admire! Registration is strongly encouraged so we can accommodate everyone.

Nature Walk at Bandemer Park

Sunday, September 25, 1 to 2 p.m.

A patch of dry prairie can be found along the railroad tracks at Bandemer Park, where sparks from passing trains occasionally ignited wildfires that maintained this open habitat. It is now home to tall grasses and goldenrods. Learn more about the habitats and diversity at Bandemer at a nature walk with NAP and AADL. We will meet at the meet at the parking lot at the end of Lake Shore Drive, off Main Street (map: tinyurl.com/BandemerLakeShore). Register at tinyurl.com/BandemerWalk092522.

Nature Walk at Marshall Nature Area

Sunday, October 30, 1 to 2 p.m.

Lace up your *BOOTS* and join us for an autumn nature hike in beautiful, wooded Marshall Nature Area. Featuring oaks, hickories, maples and beeches along gently rolling hills, this park is a great place to experience a variety of fall floral favorites and perhaps catch a glimpse of the tail end of some avian migration. Meet in the parking lot off Dixboro Rd, north of Plymouth Rd (map: tinyurl.com/MarshallDixboro). Register at tinyurl.com/MarshallWalk103022.

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY!

FRIDAY, SEPT. 16

5 to 8 p.m.

Island Park Shelter B
1420 Island Dr., Ann Arbor

Please join us at our annual appreciation event to celebrate all *your accomplishments* this past year!

In a return to pre-COVID tradition, NAP leaders will share triumphs and anecdotes from the year, and our new Deputy Director, Remy Long, will offer a welcome message to the NAP family—*which includes you!*

You can also enjoy the return of door prizes, along with fun activities and games, as well as refreshments provided by NAP.

Bring family and friends to join in the festivities!

RSVP by registering at tinyurl.com/NAPVolunteers2022