The Warbler Tour! Magee Marsh & Michigan

May 8-15, 2025

Tentative Itinerary

May 8: Detroit, Michigan
The group will arrive in Detroit and take a shuttle to the hotel. We'll meet in the lobby of the hotel in the evening for introductions and to go over trip details. Your trip leaders, Brodie and Tara, are arriving in Ohio several days early to scout, and will not be on your flight. We'll meet you at the hotel.

May 9: Oregon, Ohio
We'll leave in the morning to drive to Oregon (about a two-hour drive) and make a few birding stops along the way. These will be at various Metro Parks, and will involve short hikes on well-maintained, mostly flat trails. After we check into our hotel, we'll take the 20-minute drive to Magee Marsh. Note that there will be hundreds of people at Magee Marsh, as it is peak season for migratory birds, and the start of the local festival, The Biggest Week in American Birding. We will concentrate our time at Magee Marsh on the main attraction: A mile-long boardwalk (that has restrooms at either end).

May 10: Oregon, Ohio
This day will be dedicated to the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (depending on auto-tour route opening times) and Magee Marsh. We hope to see good numbers of migrants such as Bay-breasted, Black-throated Blue, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided and Cape May Warblers. By the end of the trip we may see over 25 species of warblers! Other species of migrants should be well represented, including Orchard Oriole, Wood and Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager. At Ottawa we will walk a few of the trails (flat, with gravel surfaces) around the wetlands, and will possibly drive the auto-tour route if available. The length of our hikes will depend on the status of the auto-tour route, but shouldn’t exceed one to two miles. At Magee Marsh we will once again visit the boardwalk: the waves of migration mean that different birds will be seen with each visit.
**May 11: Oregon, Ohio**  
We'll begin today by checking out the activity at Magee Marsh, possibly also visiting the estuary trail, a short and mostly flat trail. In the late morning, we'll drive to the remnant prairie and woodlands of Oak Openings Metropark Preserve. We'll look for Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Meadowlark, Lark and Grasshopper Sparrows and if we are really lucky we may see a Henslow’s Sparrow. Flocks of migrants may be seen anywhere while we are visiting this park. We will be stopping at various locations and birding from the roadside, and taking a few short, flat hikes.

**May 12: Tawas, Michigan**  
We'll take one final opportunity to visit Magee Marsh and enjoy the spectacle. We'll bird for a few hours on the boardwalk before we begin our drive north to Tawas, Michigan. The drive takes approximately four hours, and we'll have dinner in Tawas.

**May 13: Tawas, Michigan**  
Today we'll search for [Kirtland's Warbler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirtland%27s_warbler), the rarest warbler in North America. Our morning will be spent exploring [Huron-Manistee National Forest](https://www.fs.usda.gov/nf/tawas) by van, with short hikes along the little-trafficked roadways, and learning more about conservation efforts to save this endangered songbird. In the afternoon we'll drive some farm roads searching for Upland Sandpiper, Clay-colored Sparrow, and both the Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos. Time permitting, we'll visit the mouth of the Au Sable River on Lake Huron, looking for Red-breasted Merganser and Spotted Sandpiper. Dinner will be in Tawas.

**May 14: Detroit**  
After breakfast, we'll head to [Tawas Point State Park](https://www.dnr.state.mi.us/parks/parks/tawas-point.php) to search for migrants. This stop features a 1.5-mile loop trail on mostly flat surfaces (with some small dunes and hills), with excellent diversity of habitats and an always exciting surprise bag of possible species. In the afternoon we'll drive about 3 hours to our Detroit airport hotel.

**May 15: Detroit**  
The group will depart on their flights home from Detroit.