



BIRD WATCHING ECO-TOURISM & EDUCATION PROJECT

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

A Partnership of Michigan Sea Grant and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance. The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge covers 48 miles of shoreline along the lower Detroit River and the western basin of Lake Erie. It focuses on conserving, protecting and restoring habitat for 29 species of waterfowl, 65 kinds of fish and 300 species of migratory birds.



The Bird Watching Eco-tourism and Education Project is a partnership of Michigan Sea Grant and the International Wildlife Refuge Alliance with funding from the Wild Birds Unlimited, Inc. Pathways to Nature® Conservation Fund, a program of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Project goals include:

- Constructing a wildlife observation deck and educational signage at Humbug Marsh in the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.
- Promoting eco-tourism through the development of a bird watching driving tour map and educational brochure for Southeast Michigan and Southwest Ontario.

Michigan Sea Grant's Role

Michigan Sea Grant provided initial grant writing support for the project, and will continue to provide the following:

- Facilitate collaboration among avian experts in the region in the development of eco-tourism based bird watching materials.

- Grant administration and project management.

Expected Project Impacts

Nearly 3.5 million people participated in outdoor sports in 2001; 77% of those were involved in wildlife observation and/or photography, spending \$693 million. Anticipated impacts of this project include:

- Positive economic development by highlighting significant avian habitats, bringing more participants and funds to Southeast Michigan.
- Positive environmental education and outreach.
- Increasing awareness of these significant avian habitats, leading to further protection and restoration efforts.

The mission of the IWRA is to support the first International Wildlife Refuge in North America by working through partnerships to protect, conserve and manage the refuge's wildlife and habitats, and to create exceptional conservation, recreational and educational experiences to develop the next generation of conservation stewards.

The IWRA is supported by DTE Energy Foundation, BASF Corp., DaimlerChrysler, Ford Motor Company /AutoAlliance, General Motors Corp., ITC Transmission, Hamilton-Anderson and Assoc., Praxair and Wade Trim.

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Michigan Sea Grant College Program
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