

# 2025 MA Board of Directors Election

Voting for the Board of Directors election will be open February 1-28, 2025, to all current Michigan Audubon members.

## How to Vote

Voting can be done online (Feb. 1–28) or via the paper ballot provided in the 2025 Winter *Jack Pine Warbler*. Paper ballots must be postmarked by Feb. 28 and received in the Michigan Audubon office by Mar. 3. Two positions are open, and voters may select up to two candidates on the ballot. If more than two candidates are selected, your vote will be disqualified.

## Who Can Vote

All Michigan Audubon members in good standing can vote in the Board of Directors election. Please note that if you have a Household, Supporting, Sustaining, or Benefactor level membership with two people listed as current members, both are eligible to vote. Membership status will be validated against our records using your name and address.

## Board Member Candidates

Each board candidate was asked to complete a candidate application, which includes a biography highlighting their leadership experience, unique skill sets, why they want to serve as a board member for Michigan Audubon, and what they hope to contribute. You may visit [www.michiganaudubon.org/election](http://www.michiganaudubon.org/election) to learn what they shared or read on below.

## 2025 Board of Directors Election Candidates

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### Robin Coon

Muir, MI

I have experience as a volunteer steward for Michigan Nature Association. I am a licensed Real Estate Agent and utilize leadership qualities in my professional pursuits. I have education in Business Administration, Fine Arts, Real Estate, and Biology as well as certifications in Equine Behavior and Zoology education acquired from John Ball Zoo.



**Why do you want to serve as a board member for Michigan Audubon, and what would you like to contribute?**

I want to serve as a board member for Michigan Audubon to help further the education, protection, and preservation of avian species and habitats. I would like to contribute to scientific studies utilizing the skills and education I have.

**What is your favorite bird and why?**

My favorite bird is the Gray Catbird because of their ability to mimic. This bird is still understudied and it is unknown exactly why they mimic although theories exist. They are rather elusive but males will bravely fly up to humans and other species to listen and mimic, making them an entertaining bird to have nearby.

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## **Ray Stocking**

**Ann Arbor, MI**

My leadership skills come from 30+ years of project and program management in the high-tech industry. My passion for birds and conservation helps drive this leadership together into one, which has served the non-profit organizations I have worked for in the past. One of the most significant contributions I helped lead for Michigan Audubon in the past was to generate both social change and financial returns on its investments. Together with the rest of the board, I led the team through the critical financial investment shift while maintaining a professional and fiscal calm to make sure the entire process was done in a timely and responsible fashion. This guidance helped the executive director at the time to move to socially responsible investments for the organization, completing the process in just under a year. There was no loss in investment value, and the returns shortly thereafter showed improved results than before. While serving as president of Washtenaw Bird and Nature Alliance (formerly known then as Washtenaw Audubon) between 2005 and 2011, I helped the organization jump into the computer age. New features like Facebook and Twitter presence, plus updated webpage designs that allowed membership renewals and donations to be made online were quickly added. Additionally, I helped reduce by 50% the #1 expense for the organization, the bi-monthly newsletter, by offering a non-printed online edition. Each of these additions added under my leadership remains in place today, some 15 years after they were first implemented.



## **Why do you want to serve as a board member for Michigan Audubon, and what would you like to contribute?**

Serving on the boards of nonprofit organizations aligned with my passions has been a deeply fulfilling experience. I dedicated 14 years to the Washtenaw Bird and Nature Alliance (WBNA) and Michigan Audubon, including six years as President of WBNA and a combined 5 years as Secretary, Vice-Board Chair, and Board Chair of Michigan Audubon. These roles allowed me to contribute to critical conservation initiatives, foster community engagement, and advance the mission of preserving wildlife and natural habitats. As family responsibilities grew and professional travel demands increased, I decided to step back from my volunteer commitments to focus on these demanding priorities. However, my dedication to nonprofit leadership and conservation has remained steadfast. I have always viewed this as a temporary pause, intending to return to meaningful service when the opportunity aligns with my availability. Contributing to organizations that inspire stewardship and promote biodiversity is a profound source of joy for me. Now living the life of an empty-nester with my wife, and business travel reduced, it would bring me great joy to bring my experience and passion back to the Michigan Audubon board, helping it continue to serve the mission of connecting birds and people for the benefit of both through conservation, education, and research efforts in the state of Michigan.

## **What is your favorite bird and why?**

For 30 spring migrations, my father and I cherished the Blackburnian Warbler, a vibrant symbol of our shared love for birding. Its fiery orange throat and sweet song always promised a day filled with the wonder of warbler diversity. Since his recent passing, this remarkable bird has taken on an even deeper meaning, forever reminding me of the joy we shared and the bond we formed through our mutual appreciation of spring migration. It stands as a poignant tribute to his memory and our connection to the natural world.

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## **Bill Volz**

***Incumbent, Current Board Treasurer***  
**Bloomfield, MI**

I teach law in the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University in Detroit. I have served on boards for the Kirtland's Warbler Alliance, the Detroit Historical Society, a Detroit theater group, financial institutions, and organizations providing mental health services to the community. My committee work on these boards has been in budget and finance, human resource management, and fundraising. In thirty years of participating in the Oakland Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count, I have watched the Michigan forests and fields north of Rochester become backyards. The Ring-necked



Pheasants and Horned Larks, always special, are seldom if ever seen, even by these expert birders. The struggle for vibrant wildlife habitat is not limited to the Brazilian jungles and Louisiana swamps. The struggle is, literally, in our backyards.

**Why do you want to serve as a board member for Michigan Audubon, and what would you like to contribute?**

Two years ago, I was appointed to the Board of Directors of Michigan Audubon. This last year, I served as the board's Treasurer. Under the strong leadership of Kathleen Mennillo, Michigan Audubon's Chief Executive Officer, I can report that the organization's financial health is excellent. The historic strength of the work done in Audubon societies across America has recently brought Michigan Audubon remarkable gifts of land and money. Those resources have been managed well. The small, very talented group of employees has added equally committed newcomers. The foundation has been laid for an ambitious plan of expanding our impact on birds and people through conservation, education, and research in the state of Michigan. Michigan Audubon's Board of Directors is focused on making that plan a reality. I believe I can help.

**What is your favorite bird and why?**

As a board member of the Kirtland's Warbler Alliance and having spent days lobbying the Michigan Legislature to make OUR WARBLER Michigan's state bird, I feel compelled to name this five ounces of courage as my favorite. Still, I have always felt a special relationship to the Common Merganser. We share bad hair and a dismissive name. Why not the Magnificent Merganser? The Volz family are good people. But I secretly envy surnames like Wise, Swift, and Champion.

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