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## This Year It Was Plovers

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Last year it was osprey. Two immature ospreys had to be rescued when a storm blew their nest down from a snag at Tuttle Marsh. This year it has been piping plovers. The eggs and chicks had to be protected from human activities on the Lake Huron beaches.

For the first time in many years piping plovers picked Iosco County beaches to raise their young; not once but twice. There were two nesting pairs of piping plovers that favored us with their presence; one at Shoreline Park near the Au Sable River mouth, the other in front of summer homes five miles south at Au Sable Point.

These events have been well publicized locally so there is no need to recount the stories here. This is just to remind members of the significance of the events and the important roll some members played in the successful outcomes. Peggy Ridgway and Roger Eriksson have had significant roles in coordinating the efforts of various governmental agencies and private property owners in the process of saving these endangered birds and their offspring from human interference.

## Wurtsmith Grasslands

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This spring we recorded several avian species for the first time at the air base in the open fields east of the runways.

We have been aware of the sparrows: grasshopper, savannah, vesper and clay colored, but never the upland sandpipers. Someone counted nine at one time this year. And, very rare in this area was the dickcissel. We didn't ever see two and it didn't stay long but just seeing it here was remarkable. Of course, the western meadowlark and the bob-o-link were back and increasing numbers seem to be breeding successfully.

We have the management of Wurtsmith Airport to thank for the high number of grassland breeders because, at AVA's request, mowing is delayed each year until August in that special field. By then the birds are gone. If you see Gary Kellan, thank him.



*Photo courtesy of Roger Eriksson*

## Highway Serviced

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In July nine of us got out early to beat the heat and clean up the shoulders of our adopted section of M-55 east of Sand Lake Road. It went very smoothly because Larry and Sue had everything well organized. Afterward Sue, Larry, Peggy Ridgway, Arno Poener, Ed Davis, Mariann Wojahn, Mark Misenheimer, Ed Cole and Larry and Sue's son Ben made up the happy group that picnicked with the birds in the Larry and Sue's yard.

## Chimney Swifts

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Larry Van Wagoner is getting ready to show us how chimney swifts act when their day is done. He is scouting out chimneys in Tawas where they are roosting. It ought to be an impressive show of aerial acrobatics that puts the Blue Angels to shame as they swoop in in close formations to their chimneys.

Frank Apsey, who was going to lead a shorebird trip to Tawas Point this month has lost the sight of one eye due to a stroke. We hope he will recover quickly. That event will be cancelled.