

In REMEMBRANCE

Honoring those who touched our lives, forged a connection to the natural world, or nurtured the flame

Winged ambassador passes on

Great Gray Owl provided 21 years of education and fun

Lady Gray'l, a Great Gray Owl that educated and entertained thousands of Manitobans for more than twenty years, has passed away.

"People who had the opportunity to meet and visit with Lady Gray'l knew the bird as a wonderfully tame Great Gray Owl and an excellent representative of her species and Manitoba wildlife," said Conservation Minister Stan Struthers, when he learned of the bird's passing. "The owl's handler, Dr. Bob Nero, and this beautiful owl traveled together throughout Manitoba to over 200 schools, educating students and teachers about birds of prey, especially owls and the importance of habitat protection."

Nero, who is a volunteer ecologist with the Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch of Manitoba Conservation, found the owl injured and starving as a young nestling in 1984. The bird was nursed back to health by volunteers with the Wildlife Haven. Nero is a familiar name to many Manitobans because of his extensive education program for the conservation of wildlife, in particular, Great Gray Owls.

"This Great Gray Owl was an excellent representative of the wonderful natural areas in Manitoba and of her species – designated Manitoba's provincial bird on July 16, 1987," said Struthers. "Dr. Nero and Gray'l educated many about owls and the importance of habitat protection and also appeared at many fundraising and social events delighting young and old."

Contributions from appearances were donated to organizations caring for injured wildlife and to cancer research. In addition, funds raised by Lady Gray'l helped to fund six graduate students who studied owls in Manitoba and elsewhere.

In addition to caring for Lady Gray'l, Nero is a naturalist, ornithologist, vocational archaeologist and poet. Many of his nine books were inspired by Lady Gray'l including his newest entitled 'Growing Old Together', and 'Lady Gray'l – Owl with a Mission'.

Jane Clarke Olyphant "Janie"

Janie was my mothers dearest friend all of my life. She was my teacher, my mentor and my close friend as well. 84,000 birds are better for knowing her and the hundreds of thousands of children that she spoke to are as well. We will miss her. But her radiant smile and heartfelt laughter will remain with me forever and for that I feel blessed. – Jim Fitzpatrick (Hastings, MN)

Published in the Pioneer Press on 11/16/2005.

Passed away at home Sat. Nov. 12 at the age of 80 after a long struggle with cancer. Janie was born March 16th, 1925 to Dr. and Mrs. Edward Clarke in Englewood, NJ. She was cared for until the end by her devoted husband of fifty-eight years, Murray Olyphant. Her family especially wishes to thank the many volunteers and the gentle nurses and aids of St. Johns Northeast Hospice who helped take such good care of her during the last six months. In addition to her husband, Janie is survived by her sister, Anne Larsen of Gorham, ME; her children Carol Olyphant of Minneapolis, MN, Robert (Rena) Olyphant of St. Louis Park, MN and Catherine (Bart Hoekstra) Olyphant of Woodville, WI; her grandchildren Eric Olyphant, Trent Woodworth, Melissa Jelatis, Gavin Woodworth and Rosita Woodworth; her four great-grandchildren; and also two grieving doggies. Besides her adoring family, Janie's almost life-long passion was birds. Actually her husband succeeded in sparking her interest in birds only after her children were born. Through the help of the late Dr. Walter Breckenridge, Francis Lee Jaques and other ornithologists she became a licensed bird-bander for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1959. During her 45 years of active banding she gently put "little aluminum bracelets" on over 84,000 birds. Janie became widely known as the "Bird Lady" of Hidden Bay Trail. Many neighbors, friends and others by referral through Como Zoo, brought or sent hundreds of baby and injured birds to the Olyphants' bird hospital (State and Federally licensed) in the years before the Raptor Center and other facilities became available. Through her teaching and banding work with many nature centers, schools and other organizations she passed on a love and enthusiasm for birds to a wide community of children and adults. Janie's knowledge of the infinite variety of plumages and plumage changes was phenomenal. She played a special part in the outdoor programs at Belwin Outdoor Educational Lab, Dodge Nature Center, the Lee and Rose Warner Nature Center, the Wilder Foundation and Century College. She also hosted countless school and community groups for bird-banding demonstrations at her home in rural Lake Elmo, MN. Her home banding activities were recorded by the Japanese Trust for Ornithology's for a TV documentary on birding around the world. Janie was an active member of most of the North American bird-banding associations and was an officer of several. In recognition of Janie's devotion to educating and interesting the public, particularly children, in birds and bird-banding, Janie was honored in 1970 with the Thomas Sadler Roberts Memorial Award, given by the Minnesota Ornithologists Union for "Outstanding Contributions to Minnesota Ornithology". She will be sorely missed by her family and friends and by many others whose lives she touched and enriched.



Photos submitted

Michigan birder: Jim Granlund, a vigorous contributor to birding and butterfly knowledge in Michigan. Shown above shooting butterflies, Jim's sudden death shocked and saddened the birding community.



JIM G. GRANLUND 1957–2005

By Jack Reinoehl

For the last two decades, Jim Granlund was a vigorous contributor to birding in Michigan. In September 2005, he passed away very suddenly at the age of 48, a great loss to the Michigan birding and ornithological community. Herein, we commemorate his life and review his contributions to that community.

Jim grew up in Gaylord, in the northern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. He gained his love of the north country and the outdoors early and it was always strong. He attended college at Northern Michigan University studying chemistry and biology. After graduation, he moved to Kalamazoo in 1980, completing his education at Western Michigan University and beginning a career of teaching high school. From the early 1980s, he taught chemistry and other sciences at Comstock High School, east of Kalamazoo.

In Kalamazoo, Jim started birding in earnest and gained some excellent longtime friends: Ray Adams at the Kalamazoo Nature Center and Dave Powell. All aspects of birding appealed to Jim, and, as well as spending time in the field, Jim became involved with numerous activities and accepted many responsibilities. In the late 1980s posts held by Jim included: compiler of the Michi-

gan Bird Survey, secretary of the Michigan Bird Records Committee, Chairperson of the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory Research Committee and Curator of the Kalamazoo Nature Center avian collection. Jim also was active in the Michigan Breeding Bird Atlas Project around that time, doing much field work and writing accounts of several species for that book. At the same time, 'The Birds of Michigan', published in 1994 by the University of Indiana Press, was taking shape. Jim was to be the book's principal author.

The area of Michigan birding in which Jim was involved most deeply was the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory (WPBO). As indicated above, he had been on the WPBO board and served for many years in several capacities. He regularly volunteered as substitute raptor or waterbird counter. To raise money for the observatory, he participated in bird-a-thons and led some of WPBO's winter birding tours. He compiled the Whitefish Point Christmas Count for many years. He edited and contributed to the WPBO newsletter. In a less official capacity, he was a regular visitor in chase of the startling rarities that frequently showed up at 'The Point'. Some of my favorite recollections of Jim come from the WPBO Christmas Count: Jim coming in from the tip of The Point excited by a Purple Sandpiper that had flown by; Jim locating a Townsend's Solitaire that had been lingering at the Observatory, a new state bird for me; and the year we had a Three-toed

Woodpecker which was a state bird for Jim (an infrequent occurrence). These are reminders of great times with Jim and additionally of the excitement always felt upon arriving at The Point where the unexpected so frequently happens. It is no wonder that WPBO was high among Jim's favorite birding sites.

With the birth of two daughters in the early 1990s, Jim did cut down on his activities to some extent, though he remained very active. When Dave Powell moved to California in 1992, he became a regional editor for 'American Birds' (now 'North American Birds'). In these years he became interested in world birding. He, Dave Powell, and myself formed the nucleus of groups that traveled to Ecuador, Malaysia, and Africa during the 1990s. With his newfound interest in world birding, Jim greatly looked forward to the arrival of each new volume of the Handbook of the Birds of the World.

It was always in Jim's nature to step forward when a need arose. In 2003, the journal 'Michigan Birds and Natural History' had fallen behind in its publishing schedule and vigorous intervention was needed to keep it going. Though perhaps feeling some reluctance at accepting this difficult task, Jim applied great energy to the job, writing some articles and encouraging others to contribute. At the same time, he skillfully dealt with such varied issues as financing the journal, choosing an appropriate printing company, and locating

– continued on page B7

Dr. Dwain W. Warner

Published in the Pioneer Press on 10/9/2005.

Dr. Dwain W. Warner 88, of Stanchfield, MN died on Sept. 30, 2005. Dwain was a passionate and involved teacher whose influence was far-reaching. A professor at the University of Minnesota for 40 years and Curator of Ornithology at the Bell Museum of Natural History, he energized others with his enthusiasm and expertise about the natural world. As a researcher, he was visionary and influential. In 1958, he pioneered radio tracking of animals, successfully testing what he admitted was a dream at Cedar Creek Natural History Area. From the early 1940s, his ornithological research has been critical to our understanding of bird ecology and migration; work he began in Mexico decades ago continues today. Dwain served on the board of trustees for the Science Museum of Minnesota; was environmental director from 1983-89 at the Belwin Outdoor Education Laboratory in Afton; was consultant on biological surveys and assessments for governmental agencies and the private sector; and played a major role in litigations regarding landfills and other environmental issues. His contributions to Minnesota ornithology and his impact will be long felt. Following his retirement, his life of travel, discovery, and teaching continued. He led over 20 natural history safaris to Kenya in the 1980s and 90s. Dwain was born in Cottonwood County, MN, on Sept. 1, 1917, and grew up in Northfield. He completed degrees in botany at Carleton College in 1939 and ornithology at Cornell University in 1947. He served with the U.S. Army in the South Pacific during World War II.

Dwain is preceded in death by his first wife, Dorothy Warner, and son Robert Warner. He is survived by wife Marie Ward of Stanchfield, MN; son Bill (Martha) Warner of Minnetonka, MN; daughter Betsy (Paul) Hoppe of Ogilvie, MN; daughter Bonnie Alexander of Valley City, ND; son Richard (Linda) Warner of Spottsylvania, VA; son David Warner of Red Wing, MN; 11 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Jim G. Granlund, continued from page B6

good photography and artwork for the journal.

Over the last 10 years, Jim developed an interest in butterflies. I remember in late May of this year visiting a bog with him near McMillen in Luce County. As Lincoln's Sparrows and Palm Warblers sang nearby and a family of Gray Jays went about their serious business, we observed numerous Frigga Fritillaries—a species whose flight period lasts only a couple weeks. Jim was able to take some magnificent photographs of this intricately patterned species. Jim was one of the first to realize that, just as wandering bird species regularly find their way to Whitefish Point, it has the potential to host vagrant butterflies. On August 18th, 2001 he photographed a Funereal Duskywing at that location, a new addition to the Michigan state butterfly list.

Jim's friends cannot but think fondly of him. I recall the droll greeting that I frequently received upon encountering him, a booming "HELLO YOUNG MAN" (notwithstanding my surplus of years). Jim's generosity was evident to all who knew him; when you were his friend, his possessions were yours. His generosity with his time was if anything even more impressive, as evidenced by the large scope of his contributions to Michigan birding. This big friendly guy seemed indestructible. In June 2002, he was in a head-on collision that broke many bones in his body. By August he was walking with a cane, and a year later he was essentially back to normal. His passing is made even more poignant by the fact that he had planned to retire from teaching in 2006 to be able to devote more time to his family and to the interests that added so much to the richness of his life and of ours. All those who enjoyed Jim's friendship count themselves most fortunate, and count their loss proportionally great.

Will the owls return?

By Kim Risen



One year ago Minnesota became the focal point of an unprecedented invasion of northern forest owls. Great Gray, Northern Hawk, and Boreal Owls first showed themselves in November. By early January they were present in such high numbers that they were making newscasts and headlines across the country. By winter's end the area had hosted owls, and the people who came to view them, by the thousands. The most common phrase heard among birders searching for owls last winter was, "There's another one!"

This year the words on everyone's lips are, "Will they be back?"

In order to answer that question we must first understand why these owls appeared in such numbers last year. All three species feed primarily on small mammals – mice and voles – that populate the forests and meadows of northern Minnesota and southern Canada. Populations of these mammals crashed to all-time lows during the extremely cold, wet summer of 2004.

Studies looking at small mammal populations in northeastern Minnesota and southern Ontario coordinated by the 1854 Authority show that forest-inhabiting small mammals suffered the greatest decline. These same studies showed a record high number of grassy-habitat loving Meadow Voles present in the area. This created the conditions for a mass exodus of owls from those northern forests into the food-filled meadows and marshes of Aitkin, Carlton, Pine, and St. Louis Counties, MN.

Dr. James Duncan of Winnipeg, Manitoba, who conducts research on Great Gray Owls in northern Minnesota and southern Manitoba, monitored small mammals in his research area in October. In his research area Meadow Voles make up more than 90 percent of the diet of Great Gray Owls. Unlike our area, Dr. Duncan's area also experienced a Meadow Vole population crash. The loss of their preferred prey resulted in no Great Gray Owl breeding success during the summer of 2004 and provided another source of owls coming south

in search of food.

While complete survey numbers from this season's small mammals surveys coordinated by the 1854 Authority won't be complete until sometime later next month, preliminary results indicate that populations of some species of voles have rebounded. Red-backed Voles, a main food source for the northern forest owls, have increased significantly. They have not, however, recovered to their pre-2004 crash numbers. Meadow Voles, the primary food source for Great Gray Owls during last year's invasion or, more properly, irruption, have declined in our area slightly from 2004's height but still appear to be far more numerous than any other year prior to last year's record peak.

Dr. Duncan reports that his surveys conducted in October, 2005 in Manitoba and Roseau County, MN showed that the number of Meadow Voles in his study area were still very low but appeared to be increasing slowly. A pattern that he describes as "normal" and one he expects to continue next year.

Previous owl irruptions documented in Minnesota have shown a smaller, follow-up or 'echo' invasion the following winter.

When asked, can we expect the owls to return in numbers this winter? Dr. Duncan replied, "Yes, our long-term winter data support what I call an 'echo effect'... in that the year immediately after an irruption year, there is typically half as many Great Gray Owls as the irruption year."



Photo by Kim Risen / NatureScape News

Vanguard: This Northern Hawk Owl searches the forest floor for his next meal. Photographed on the early date of October 16, it was one of the first signs that a major irruption of northern owls was on its way south.

While the number of Northern Hawk and Boreal Owl sightings in northern Minnesota this fall do not approach last year's, they are still above average indicating that this 'echo effect' may be realized this winter. Great Gray Owls have yet to appear this fall away from areas where they are in residence year-round.

Will the owls return? Conditions certainly appear to be right for another irruption. History has shown that in the past Great Gray Owls have returned in reduced numbers the year following an irruption. Populations of their main food source – small mammals – are still in short supply in the north and relatively abundant in the south. Conditions that mirror last year's.

So, the question remains, "Will they be back?" Owl watchers both avid and casual most certainly hope so. After all, an 'echo invasion' one half the size of last year's would still be the second largest irruption of Great Gray Owls ever recorded. Only the coming winter will tell.

FSC

We offer FSC Certified
business cards, envelopes, letterheads,
flyers, brochures, newsletters, and
handbooks, at competitive pricing.

Give us a call, we would be glad to help you!

MCGREGOR
PRINTING & GRAPHICS, INC.

171 Maddy St. N, McGregor • 218-768-4442

Forests provide us with wood for a variety of practical uses. But Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified Forests are independently, third party certified as being well managed. Well managed forests provides wood products but also clean water to drink and air to breathe, support a diversity of wildlife and give us beautiful places to visit. Trees in a FSC Certified forest are managed in a way that considers the long-term environmental health of the forest and the social and economic well being of local communities.

You can conserve forests by purchasing paper products that are FSC certified.