

HLPL to host 'Kirtland's Warbler' author Bill Rapai March 13 ²⁻¹⁶⁻¹²



Bill Rapai

The Houghton Lake Public Library will present author Bill Rapai and his newly published book, "The Kirtland's Warbler: The Story of a Bird's Fight Against Extinction and the People Who Saved It," March 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Rapai's appearance is an opportunity to hear the fascinating story of the Kirtland's warbler, whose quirky nesting habits limit their habitats to jack pine forest areas in a few counties in Michigan's northern Lower and Upper peninsulas, Wisconsin and the province of Ontario.

Nearly extinct in the 1970s and '80s, the bird was rescued by volunteers dedi-

cated to the small bird's preservation.

"The Kirtland's warbler is poised to join the peregrine falcon as globally significant examples of how scientific understanding, effective management policy, public-private partnerships, and citizen-science can be integrated to recover a species," Cornell Lab of Ornithology Director John Fitzpatrick said.

Before taking on his first book, Rapai, an award-winning reporter, traveled across North America and to Cuba, Iceland, and Thailand to view and research birds. Kenn Kaufman of Kaufman Field Guides describes the book as an "adventure novel, except that it's all true."

Greg Bodker, an avid bird watcher, who also serves on the board of directors for the Michigan Audubon Society, said, "It is exciting that the Houghton Lake community lives so close to the Kirtland's warbler's primary breeding grounds."

Bodker has met people from all over the U.S. who came here to see "our" local bird, he said, adding, "We really have to tip our hat to those who helped to save this bird so we can still see and hear it today. I can't wait to hear Bill Rapai speak and tell us how it was done."

Copies of "The Kirtland's Warbler" will be available for purchase at the Houghton Lake Public Library. This program is open to the public and free of charge. For information stop in at the library or call 366-9230.