

# PASSENGER PIGEONS IN MICHIGAN—FROM BILLIONS TO NONE



MARTHA  
1885-1914

In the early 1800s flocks of hundreds of thousands of Passenger Pigeons would darken the sky for miles as they migrated to a new feeding ground. People thought nothing of killing them for food or sport because all you had to do was shoot into the sky and dozens of birds would fall to the ground.

By 1878, in Petoskey, Michigan 50,000 Passenger Pigeons were being killed each day — and it went on for 5 months. That was the last time such a large number of the beautiful birds would gather anywhere. The Michigan Legislature passed laws prohibiting such wholesale slaughter but they were too little, too late. Martha, the last of her species, died in the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914.

Local historians and storytellers Al and Dave Eicher will explain why the Passenger Pigeons had been able to survive in such great numbers for so long and the factors which led to their total extinction in less than a century. Maybe there are lessons to be learned for today's endangered species. Join us to find out.

Local History/Local Resources  
Program Series

SUNDAY  
February 28  
3:00—4:30 PM

Open to the public at no charge

Sponsored jointly by  
Bloomfield Historical Society



Community Room  
1099 Lone Pine Road  
Bloomfield Township MI 48302

Questions? contact the Library:  
248.642.5800 or [www.btpl.org](http://www.btpl.org)

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