



Columbus Audubon Song Sparrow

May 2003 Volume 34, No. 8

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Creature Feature: Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*)

By Dave Horn

Family: Parulidae.

Range: Breeds primarily from central Minnesota, northern Wisconsin, southwest and south-central Michigan, southern Ontario, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island south to Arkansas, central Mississippi, central Alabama and eastern North Carolina. Cerulean Warblers winter almost exclusively in northern South America, from Venezuela and Columbia south to southern Peru and northern Bolivia.

Conservation status: A WatchList species that suffers from habitat loss and degradation in both its summer and winter range. (Visit www.audubon.org for information about the WatchList and other listed birds.)

Few birds are better than the Cerulean Warbler at causing “warbler neck,” the discomfort from bending backwards and straining to view treetops. This smallest of warblers spends nearly 100 percent of its time foraging for insects in the highest branches of mature deciduous forest. Fortunately, between early May and mid-July the males advertise their presence by constantly singing “zray-zray-zray-zray-zeeee.” (It’s like the song of the Black-throated Blue Warbler but with a more rolling cadence.) Males are light blue above, but that may not help you much since you are likely to be looking straight up at their bellies, which are white or light gray with a thin, dark breast band. Females are gray above, white below, and lack the breast band. Both sexes have wing bars.

The Cerulean Warbler inhabits mature forests throughout the Midwest and much of the Northeast during summer, but populations have declined drastically since the 1960s. This decline is estimated at 70 to 80 percent. The reasons are unclear but forest fragmentation and cowbird parasitism may be partly responsible, along with logging in their South American wintering grounds. The pattern of decline has prompted a petition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Cerulean Warbler as a threatened species. Southeastern Ohio lies in the core of the warbler’s Appalachian breeding grounds, and most Ohio populations seem to be stable. However, near my weekend retreat in the Hocking Hills, an average of four nesting pairs of Cerulean Warblers in the 1970s declined to one-and-one-half by the late ‘80s and none since 1995.

The most reliable spot near Columbus for observing the Cerulean Warbler is Clear Creek Metro Park. Along the stretch of Clear Creek Road between Starner Rd. and the Hambleton Picnic Area in May there may be over a dozen singing Cerulean Warblers, with more on the adjoining hillsides. If you walk the Fern Trail or the Hemlock Trail far enough to get up on a hillside, you might even be rewarded with a side view of a male. We hope that preservation of large tracts of unbroken mature forests in southeastern Ohio and other places will halt the decline of this distinctive little bird.

Alexander Wilson discovered and described the male Cerulean Warbler. The female was described by Charles Lucien Bonaparte, ornithologist nephew of the emperor Napoleon.

The *Song Sparrow* is published nine times each year by Columbus Audubon, a chapter of Audubon; Kristan Leedy, editor, kleedy@larkspur-pro.com.



Columbus Audubon 90th anniversary spotlight: Interview with Dave Blyth

Dave Blyth is a long-time member and former president of Columbus Audubon. After a successful career as a psychologist he retired to Deep Woods Farm a 280-acre tract in the Hocking Hills. In retirement, Dave has maintained a keen interest in environmental issues. Recently he opened Deep Woods to researchers interested in documenting the flora and fauna of southeast Ohio. Dave Horn interviewed him as part of CA's 90th anniversary celebration.

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN THE OUTDOORS /BIRDING?

Originally we lived in a big old house in East Cleveland. It was in an urban area so birding opportunities were limited. My uncle had a farm out in the country, and we would go out there for day trips. We would help with chores, and there would be time to explore the woods and fields. Eventually we moved to Willoughby, some distance from the city in those days, and there was good birding by the lakeshore. I was in Boy Scouts, and of course we got outdoors on hikes and campouts, and I learned to identify birds along with everything else, but I didn't do the merit badge for bird study.

WAS THE EASTLAKE POWER PLANT OPERATING? THE HOT WATER OUTLET THERE ATTRACTS A LOT OF WINTERING WATERFOWL.

I don't think it had been built yet. Lake Erie didn't freeze much in those days. We went down to the lakeshore for birding.

WHEN DID YOU JOIN COLUMBUS AUDUBON?

I don't remember exactly, but it was when I was a student in Wildlife at Ohio State. I joined the Wheaton Club in 1939, and I joined Columbus Audubon about the same time. Ed Thomas and Don Borrer were among the field trip leaders then. Ernie Limes was involved too.

YOU WERE PRESIDENT OF COLUMBUS AUDUBON BACK IN THE LATE 60s. WHAT WAS YOUR MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Hiring Lois Day as executive secretary. Until then, the president was in charge of keeping track of things, and there was a change in president every year or two. You'd just about have things figured out and a new president would take over. I believed that we needed more continuity and a central person to whom everyone could go to answer questions and coordinate activities. Lois was reluctant at first but was willing to give it a try, and things really improved from then on.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE COLUMBUS AUDUBON DO?

We're in an environmental and social crisis and our biggest problem is that not enough people see it. Whatever Columbus Audubon can do to educate, educate and keep educating will result in improvement, or at least will slow the deterioration. Get families and children involved. There are fewer opportunities to enjoy and explore the outdoors than there used to be. Too many kids hang out in the mall or stay glued to their PlayStation instead of exploring woods and fields, and collecting rocks, leaves ... anything. We need to get people back in touch with the environment.

DO YOU KEEP A LIFE LIST OF BIRDS YOU'VE SEEN?

No, I leave that to people like Tom Thomson. I enjoy watching what happens outside my window, at the bird feeder or down in the field. I've seen some very interesting interactions between wild turkeys and vultures, for instance -- the tom turkeys face the vultures and ruffle their feathers if the vultures turn toward them and hiss. Living in the hills really helps a person keep in touch with nature. [Interviewer's note: Dave maintains a carefully documented list of species seen at Deep Woods, and there were 136 birds on the list as of April 1, 2003.]

Columbus Audubon May 1929 Field Trips

May 1

A May Day breakfast will be served at the home of Miss Doris Klie, 200 Webster Park Ave., 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. There is an outdoor fireplace for cooking. Coffee will be furnished.

May 4

Blacklick Woods
Take the 1:00 p.m. Ohio Electric east to Reynoldsburg. Leader, Mr. McCormick.

May 11

Crystal Springs
Take the 8:20 a.m. train to Sugar Grove. Bring lunch. Leader, Mr. Hine.

May 18

Boy Scout Camp
Take the 12:30 C.D. & M. car. Leader, Mr. Hambleton.

May 25

A trip to the bird haunts around Mt. Vernon in Knox county. Mr. W.L. Robinson of Mt. Vernon will conduct the trip. The details have not been worked out, but will be announced before the date set.

Green Lawn Cemetery: Birding Hot Spot

By Jim McCormac

Editor's note: Last month the Greenlawn Dam Area was our featured Important Bird Area. In this article, ODNR naturalist and Green Lawn Cemetery trustee Jim McCormac looks at Green Lawn Cemetery and its avian attractions. See page 4 for information about Columbus Audubon's Mothers Day bird walk at Green Lawn.

For decades, Green Lawn Cemetery has been known as THE place to look for migrating birds in Central Ohio. Of course, there are other good birding areas locally, but none has achieved the reputation that our cemetery has. Many fanatical birders from all around North America are familiar with Green Lawn, and many have birded it while passing through Ohio.

Why is this? Of course, the primary reason is the numbers and diversity of bird life that can be found, particularly in spring migration. Not only exceptional numbers of the more common species, but the ornithological history of Green Lawn Cemetery is liberally peppered with finds of outstanding rarities. Over the years, in excess of 220 species have been recorded within the 380 acres that comprise the cemetery. Considering that the total number ever found in Ohio is 413 species, Green Lawn's bird list is quite impressive.

Two other factors play an important role in creating this birding oasis. Green Lawn is a green patch of lush vegetation and towering trees in a sea of bird-unfriendly urban sprawl, so naturally migrants are drawn to its grounds like moths to a light. Secondly, the cemetery sits in close proximity to the Scioto River, which is one of Ohio's principle north/south drainages. Migrating birds follow rivers like people travel expressways, and from the air, Green Lawn is readily visible to them. Exhausted migrants, perhaps having traveled several hundred miles during the night, plunk down in the cemetery to rest and feed before pushing on north.

Experience has shown that almost anything can turn up here. Over the years, there have been numerous records of the Federally endangered Kirtland's Warbler – North America's rarest wood warbler. And in 1985, in a dramatic case of beginner's luck, a new birder discovered a Swainson's Warbler near the bridge. This southern bird rarely ventures into Ohio, and prior to this, there hadn't been a Swainson's that was "chase-able." Fortunately, this one was cooperative and stuck around for a few days, and hundreds of birders from all corners of Ohio made the pilgrimage to see it.

Even unusual waterbirds are seen occasionally. There are a few records of American White Pelicans flying overhead, and once in a while an out-of-habitat American or Least Bittern is located hiding in a tree. In spite of its small size, the "Pit," as the small pond near the chapel is known, often serves as a refuge for herons and ducks. Early morning visitors might find Wood Ducks, Great Blue and Green Herons, or Belted Kingfishers.

While discovering a rarity is always nice, it's the diversity and numbers of colorful migrants on a good "fallout" day that make Green Lawn so spectacular for the birder. Fallouts occur when a combination of weather conditions force a large passage of migrant birds to settle in the cemetery. There have been many May mornings when a single tree has held ten or more species of warblers, and it seems as if there are Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, and other brilliantly colored species in every other tree.

Try spending a pleasant May morning in Green Lawn Cemetery this spring. Not only is it fun looking for the various feathered jewels, but the unfurling leaves of the ancient trees coupled with the fragrance of flowering shrubs and plants is a wonderful reminder that winter is long past. Besides, if the birding is a bit slow, there's always the fascinating "people history" etched into the thousands of markers.

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Be an eBirder

If you participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count, now's the time to try eBird, www.birdsource.org/ebird, and extend your citizen science leanings throughout the year. eBird lets birders submit their sightings over the Internet to a vast database anytime, anywhere. You can create a pull-down menu of your favorite birding locales by plotting their location on a map. You also can choose from the list of birding hot spots already created for each state and province. Birders' reports are pooled for access in any number of ways. You can look at your own reports for a given location, or on at certain date. You can sort by species and even view sightings made by other birders while your own data are made accessible to others. According to director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology John Fitzpatrick, "there's nothing else out there that lets you input your bird sightings and manage them the way you want to, while at the same time making them available to scientists, conservationists, educators-anyone with an Internet connection."

Please remember Columbus Audubon in your estate plans. For more information, contact Marc Blubaugh at 614-895-0857.

Coming Up

Columbus Audubon activities are for nature enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels. We invite you to join us for a field trip or program to learn more about birds and their central Ohio habitats, as well as other natural history topics. Our activities are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, May 1, 7:00 p.m.

Birding 101: Warbler Review

Skill level: Beginner, or anyone wanting to brush up

Tom Sheley, former Columbus Audubon trustee and avid birder and photographer, will show slides and discuss tips to observe those colorful insect eaters, warblers. Meet in the conference room of the Nature Center at Highbanks Metro Park just south of Rt. 23 and Powell Rd. Contact Darlene Sillick at 761-3696 or azuretrails@columbus.rr.com with any questions you may have.

Wednesday, May 7, 7:00 p.m.

Columbus Audubon Board Meeting

Museum of Biological Diversity.

Saturday, May 10, 5:30 a.m.

Magee Marsh and Ottawa NWR Special CA 90th Anniversary Event

Skill level: Beginner to Expert

Columbus birder Brad Sparks will lead a trip to the world famous Magee Marsh Wildlife Area in search of returning neotropical migrants including warblers, vireos and flycatchers. We will also visit other sites in the area to search for herons, egrets, shorebirds, and whatever else might be around. The trip may also serve as the “unofficial” practice session for the May 1 Birding 101 class on warblers. Bring lunch and drinks as this trip will last all day and we will not return to Columbus until late evening. The meeting place will be the Worthington Square Mall parking lot. This trip is limited to 15 participants so registration is required. For more information or to register for the trip contact Brad Sparks at 751-6622 or birdmansparks@yahoo.com.



Sunday, May 11, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Mothers Day Bird Walk at Green Lawn Cemetery Special CA 90th Anniversary Event

Skill level: All

Come mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, grandkids, too, on this special late afternoon walk at Green Lawn Cemetery. Mike Flynn will lead the trip, which will be a perfect cap to mom's day. This is a beautiful spot for walking off some of that big brunch or sister Sue's chocolate cake, not to mention looking for some of the 220 bird species recorded there. Travel to an additional location after the walk is possible, depending on interest. Green Lawn is reached by going south on I-71 to the Greenlawn Avenue exit, then going west on Greenlawn Avenue. Meet at the administration building parking lot on the right just inside the cemetery.



Saturday, May 17, 7:45 a.m.

Clifton Gorge Spectacular Spring Worktrip

Skill level: None required

Join manager Tim Snyder to help replace a boardwalk-type bridge (Timmy's Trickle Bridge) and railing over the stream forming the picturesque Amphitheater Falls. Bridge work will occur on level ground with easy access. View the headwaters of the Little Miami State and National Scenic River while installing railings at several locations along trails (dig post holes, cut posts, install concrete, attach railings). Some rail installation may require descending to the rustic North Gorge Trail through stunning geologic features with variable plant communities and the nearby rumble of the Little Miami River. Remember to call Ron Demmy at (614) 265-6463 by noon Monday May 12 to sign up, reserve space for transportation and determine tool requirements. Bring a cup for drinking water. Meet at building E at Ohio Department of Natural Resources Complex at Fountain Square, off Morse road. Hope to see you there! Sharon Treaster, 292-1395 (W).

Sunday, May 18, 8 a.m.

Birding at Jeffrey Park

Skill level: Beginner

Jeff Grabmeier will lead this beginning birders trip to Jeffrey Park, along Alum Creek in Bexley. Jeffrey Park can be a fine migrant trap during May. Join Jeff for a relaxing walk through this urban woodland to find a variety of migrating warblers, thrushes, tanagers and grosbeaks. More than 30 species of warblers have been found there during spring migration, including Mourning, Connecticut and Golden-winged Warblers. If we're lucky, we'll also see the resident Red-shouldered and Cooper's Hawks. The park is relatively small, so this will be a good field trip for people who don't want major hiking. The trail along the creek can be muddy, so bring appropriate footwear. To reach the park, take N. Parkview Ave. north from Broad St. and turn left on Clifton Ave. The park entrance is on the right. For more information contact Jeff at 488-6275(h) or grabmeier.1@osu.edu.

Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m.

Nature Program: "Birds Of Belize II: The Chiquibul National Forest," with Marcus England

CA trustee and field trip chair Marcus England will share audio, video and photographic field documentation from his research in the Chiquibul National Forest. See page 5 for more information.

CA Nature Program

The Birds of Belize II:

The Chiquibul National Forest

Speaker: Marcus England

Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m.

In Marcus England's first talk to Audubon in 2001, he discussed his two years of fieldwork at Lamanai in northern Belize. He also touched on some supplementary work he did at the Natural History Museum's (London) Las Cuevas Research Station, in the Chiquibul National Forest, Maya Mountains. April 5-15, 2003 Marcus returned to Belize, spending most of his time undertaking avifaunal surveys at Las Cuevas, including several campsites miles from the station. Even the station is accessible only by a single dirt road that is challenging to traverse with the station's Land Rovers. With the exception of research on a nearly-extinct endemic subspecies of Scarlet Macaw, very little work has been done on birds in this area. His field documentation includes hundreds of digital photographs, video, and audio recordings of the area's birdlife. Please join us as Marcus shares this audiovisual feast.

Refreshments are served at all nature programs. Please come early for social time. Location: Inniswood Metro Gardens. Take I-270 to the Rt. 3 Westerville exit and head north to Schrock Road. Turn right on Schrock, proceed to Hempstead Road and turn right again. Inniswood is less than a mile on the left.

What did they see?

Columbus Auduboners had a busy morning April 12, when three activities were offered. Following are reports from two of the trips, both in the Dublin area but one focused on birds, the other on wildflowers.

Rob Thorn reports:

The walk around Dublin produced beautiful weather and fair birds. Glacier Ridge Metro Park had the lions' share of interesting birds, and was highlighted by good numbers of grassland birds, including 5-6 meadowlarks, 8-10 horned larks, 5-6 pipits, 4 singing vesper sparrows, and 1 savannah sparrow. The best area for these unusual birds (for suburban Columbus) is the northern stretch of the multi-use trail. Most of the birds were singing and/or fighting, so they are probably going to stay around this location. Later, in May, this area should also have Grasshopper Sparrows, Bobolinks and Dickcissels. The southern portion of the trail passed through successional fields with singing Field Sparrows, towhees, Brown Thrasher, and bluebirds.

Columbus parks at O'Shaughnessy Dam and Twin Lakes had many of the more expected early migrants, although the trail at Twin Lakes had limited access due to washouts. Highlights here included Wood Ducks and Blue-winged Teal, as well as Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Red-tailed

Hawks. The dam had very high water flow, and was virtually devoid of ducks and gulls.

Kristan Leedy reports:

Darlene Sillick led six people on a wildflower tour of two Dublin spots, Kiwanis Park and Shawan Falls. Highpoints were sighting two healthy clumps of Marsh Marigold at peak bloom off the Kiwanis Park boardwalk and a carpet of Twinleaf at Shawan Falls. Other blooming species were Skunk Cabbage, Bloodroot, Trout-lily, White Trout-lily, Cut-leaved Toothwort, Dutchman's-breeches, Rue-anemone, Virginia Bluebell, Round-lobed Hepatica, Sessile Trillium, and Spring-beauty.

Darlene encouraged us to return to Kiwanis Park in a couple weeks to see Prothonotary Warblers.

Dublin is home to many interesting parks. Visit the website www.dublin.oh.us for a list and map.

Jan Rodenfels wins *Song Sparrow* Award

Columbus Audubon immediate past president Jan Rodenfels has received the 2003 *Song Sparrow* Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions by Audubon members. During Jan's term as president she moved Columbus Audubon forward with giant steps. Among her many credits, Jan worked to put us on a sound financial footing. She masterminded and carried out the very successful "Art For Audubon" fund raisers bringing in much needed revenue and involving many new people with Columbus Audubon.

But in addition to her talents as an organizer and fund raiser, Jan was the driving force behind the acquisition of Calamus Swamp and the creation of the first Columbus Audubon nature preserve. This very special accomplishment, which happened because of her tireless efforts, will help to preserve and protect a totally beautiful and valuable jewel for the people of Ohio. Congratulations Jan!

- Pete Precario, president

Song Sparrow available by e-mail

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Send a message to casmem@juno.com. In the subject line type EMAIL NL YES. You will receive the electronic and print versions.

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Send a message to casmem@juno.com. In the subject line type NL POSTAL NO. You'll get the electronic version but not the print version.

If you simply want to continue receiving the printed newsletter ONLY, you do not have to take any action.



PEENT. . . PEENT. . .PEENT

Once you have witnessed one of the most spectacular avian displays in the eastern United States, that of the American Woodcock, you will want to see it every spring. Following is an Audubon profile of the American Woodcock.

Classified as a shorebird, it is anything but your typical shorebird. American Woodcocks prefer a mix of open fields and early-successional forest. A chunky bird with short legs, American Woodcocks have large eyes set far back on their head, and a long, straight bill, which is used to probe the soil for invertebrates. The plumage is an intricate pattern of light and dark colors that provides excellent camouflage against the forest floor.

Illustration by Sarah Wilde, copyright 2003.

American Woodcock is most often identified by the "peent" call of males given during the infamous courtship display. Males take flight, rising high into the sky in a spiraling flight before eventually dropping downward, somewhat leaf-like, and returning to the ground. While in the air, the male gives a variety of twittering sounds, produced both vocally and by the rushing of air over modified wing feathers.

The American Woodcock is essentially a bird of eastern North America, with its breeding range stretching from the Maritime Provinces to eastern Manitoba in the north, and from southern Georgia to eastern Texas in the south. This species is a permanent resident in many southern states, but northern populations are migratory; wintering grounds include the southern part of the species' breeding range, as well as large parts of Florida, the entire Gulf Coast, and a swath of eastern Texas stretching to the Rio Grande Valley.

American Woodcock is listed as a WatchList species because of a decreasing population trend and threats on its breeding and nonbreeding grounds. Habitat loss is a major factor in the decline of American Woodcock across its range due to a reduction in farmland abandonment and succession of early-successional habitat into mature forest.

To learn more about the American Woodcock, visit: <http://audubon2.org/webapp/watchlist/viewSpecies.jsp?id=10>.

Spring Wildlife Tips from the Ohio Wildlife Center

The Ohio Wildlife Center is our local wildlife rehabilitation organization. Following are some tips from the Center that could help you this spring. Additional tips and information are available at www.ohiowildlifecenter.org. If you need help, call the Center's 24-hour hotline at 614-793-WILD. The OWC is located at 2661 Billingsley Road, in Worthington.

Contrary to popular wisdom, animals will continue to care for their young even after humans have touched them. If you find a nestling animal, return it to its nest if it is healthy and uninjured. The parents will not desert it. Do not, however, willfully disturb nests. The scent you leave can attract predators.

Young birds leave the nest before they can fly well. Parent birds continue to care for their young after they leave the nest. If you find a fully feathered young bird that does not yet fly well and is in immediate danger from people or pets, place it in a nearby bush or tree. The parents will find it.

If young mammals become separated from their mother, the mother will retrieve them. Observe from a distance for several hours before attempting to rescue young mammals.

Young rabbits leave their nest and their mother when they are the size of a chipmunk. If you find a tiny rabbit whose eyes are open and whose ears are standing up, it is not an orphan. Leave it alone. Young rabbits whose eyes are not yet open can be replaced in their nests. You will never see the mother, she feeds her young infrequently and in the middle of the night.

If animals are nesting in and around your house, try to tolerate them until nesting season is over. You can do the necessary repairs to prevent their return after nesting season. Their chances of survival are slim if you displace them and their mother.

Opossums that are hit by cars may have young in their pouches. Rescue these legitimate orphans.

If you find an injured animal, think of your safety first. Cover the animal with a box if it needs protection. Then call OWC to determine how to safely rescue it. All injured animals can cause injury and they may carry diseases transmittable to you, so take caution.

Never attempt to rehabilitate wildlife on your own. The nutritional, housing and behavioral needs of wild animals are quite specific. Both orphaned and injured wild animals deserve proper veterinary care. Remember, to possess any wild animal without a permit is against state and federal laws. Volunteer with OWC if you want to work with wildlife!

Your Bird Reports - Call 614-451-4591

Compiled by Charles Wheeler

Dennis Bahnsen sent us this interesting observation on March 20: "As reported last month, I had noted a predominantly white-headed Song Sparrow (presumed to be male) in my back yard on February 3rd. On that date, he was pursuing a normally-colored Song Sparrow in an obvious effort to chase a competitor from his turf. Apparently this effort has been successful, as my white-headed male is still around and sings daily in the vicinity. This morning, I noticed him bathing in my small pond, which is situated about 10-12 feet from a window in my home. As I watched, a group of House Sparrows began gathering around the edge of the pond, where they bathe and drink daily. While my Song Sparrow continued to bathe, some of the House Sparrows began jumping down onto the plant pots, which remain there year-round, and soon were crowding my Song Sparrow just a bit too much. However, much to my surprise, instead of fleeing, he began chasing them away. At first, there were about 5-6 House Sparrows with 3-4 crowding the Song Sparrow, and he rather easily chased them back and resumed bathing. Soon there were over a dozen House Sparrows there, but he continued to keep them at bay while he finished his bath. After several minutes of bathing with increasingly frequent interruptions from increasingly larger numbers of House Sparrows, he finished his bath, hopped up onto the edge of the pond (his competitors provided him with plenty of space), ruffled his feathers a bit in a show of defiance (and water removal), and flew off (on his own very satisfying terms, it appeared)." —Robert Grossman spotted a White Pelican at Delaware Reservoir on March 1. . . . On March 2 Lois and John Day had two Brown Creepers on a locust tree in their back yard. . . . March 25 Jack and Joan George spotted two Northern Harriers in the residential area between Fishinger Road and McCoy close to the Scioto River. . . . March 30 Peter Keefe saw a White Pelican (the same one?) flying north along I-71 at the Scioto River south of town. . . . Pam Unger writes, "All the wonderful early spring birds at the Pit this weekend [March 28-30]: Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Phoebe, Winter Wren, Fox Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Brown Creeper, Rufous-sided Towhee. Still plenty of White-Throated Sparrows and Juncos. Turkey Vultures and Cooper's Hawks soaring. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers flitting about and calling—then when I returned to my Near East Side inner-city home, there was a sapsucker in the magnolia tree in my front yard (a first in 27 years)!"

CA Volunteer Corner

Thanks to Calamus volunteers!

Columbus Audubon thanks the volunteers who participated in the Calamus cleanup and maintenance day on April 5. They extended the boardwalk 67 feet, repaired holes in the boardwalk and picked up five trash bags-worth of litter. Great job!

We have had several offers to contribute to the appearance and upkeep of Calamus. As always, we greatly appreciate any contributions while also making every effort to protect the natural environment of Calamus Swamp. We ask that you please discuss any ideas or contributions with the Calamus Committee, which is dedicated to maintaining Calamus' natural state by working with the local community and volunteers. Calamus committee chair Kylene Kruse can be reached at 262-0375.

Education committee members still wanted.

If you like to share your love of nature with others, we have a place for you on the CA education committee! Call Susan Setterlin, at 457-8130. You'll be glad you did!!

Help staff the CA booth and show our new display.

June 6-7: BioBlitz-to be held at Whetstone Park. Help needed from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

June 14-15: Rose Festival at Whetstone Park of Roses. People are needed for a several-hours shift to share enthusiasm for CA with guests. Includes activities and membership.

If you can help at one or both of these events, please contact Susan Setterlin at 457-8130.

So you wanna be a bird (monitor)?

The Columbus Recreation and Parks Department is looking for volunteers to do breeding bird surveys in city parks throughout Columbus. They also need volunteers to monitor bluebird boxes at Hoover Reservoir. If you are interested, call the Natural Resources section at 645-3304.

Where Were the Birds?

Bird enthusiasts across North America submitted almost 50,000 checklists totaling more than four million birds during the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), February 14 through 17, 2003. The count documented a regional decline of at least one bird species that may be the result of West Nile virus in those regions.

This year's GBBC documented the whereabouts of 512 species, one of which showed declines in some areas compared to previous years. American Crows were reported in alarmingly fewer numbers in Illinois and Ohio, where West Nile virus has had a strong presence.

Other species showed increases this year. In the eastern U.S. more Dark-eyed Juncos were counted than since 2000, perhaps because a massive snowstorm hit the eastern seaboard during the weekend of the count, driving birds to feeders in high numbers.

In the West, Mountain Bluebirds were reported farther south than last year, and all of the rosy finches (Black, Gray-crowned, Brown-capped) were documented farther north. Visit www.birdsource.org/gbbc for more results.

Memberships

Memberships in Audubon and Columbus Audubon and gift memberships are available through Columbus Audubon. The rates below are available to NEW subscribers.

Audubon Membership

Includes membership in the national organization and Columbus Audubon; includes 4 issues of Audubon magazine and 9 issues of the chapter newsletter, local activities, and when submitted with our chapter code helps fund our programs.

_____ \$20 - 1-year introductory rate (your renewals will be \$35)
_____ \$30 - 2-year introductory rate
_____ \$15 - 1-year student/senior rate

Columbus Audubon Chapter Only Membership

Chapter only membership includes 9 issues of the chapter newsletter, local activities and helps fund our programs.

_____ \$20 - 1-year new membership
_____ \$20 - Renewal

If this is a GIFT MEMBERSHIP, please fill out the recipient information below:

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Please make checks payable to: Columbus Audubon. Thank you for your support!**

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To change your mailing address, call Joe Meara at 614-781-9602 or e-mail casmem@juno.com.

Columbus Audubon Founded 1913

614-451-4591

www.geography.ohio-state.edu/CAS/

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Additional chapter leaders: Conservation: Dave Horn, 262-0312

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