



Columbus Audubon Song Sparrow

November-December 2005
Volume 37, No. 2

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Feature Birds and Watersheds

By Heather Raymond and Paul Gledhill

Many birds rely on healthy watersheds for their survival. A watershed is the area draining to a stream and its tributaries. Bird conservation is closely linked to watershed protection.

Watershed impacts that affect birds

The beneficial natural functions of watersheds may be impaired by a variety of human-caused impacts. Many of these impacts are likely to negatively affect birds.

Probably the greatest impact to birds is from habitat loss due to land-use changes, which includes the conversion of natural ecosystems (rivers, adjacent wetlands and forests) to mining areas, timber harvest zones, agricultural lands, and urban uses. These impacts can cause chemical, physical, and biological changes.

Some agricultural activities can reduce natural habitats, increase sedimentation to rivers, increase nutrient run-off and add chemical pollutants to upland, wetland and aquatic systems. Urbanization often eliminates habitats, increases sediment, heavy metal and nutrient loads to waters and changes the speed and amount of run-off reaching rivers. These changes to watershed habitats result in decreased numbers of waterfowl due to loss of wetlands, fewer migratory songbirds as a result of forest fragmentation, or losses of bird species dependent on rare or limited habitats.

Invasive and non-native species

Another major factor reducing the quality of native bird habitats is the introduction of invasive and non-native plant and animal species. People have brought thousands of species to North America from other parts of the world and we continue to do so at an alarming rate. Some of these species cause severe stresses to watersheds and native birds. Researchers at The Ohio State University have demonstrated that birds nesting in non-native bush honeysuckle suffer increased predation and chick mortality versus birds nesting in native shrubs. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that non-native, invasive species destroy approximately 4600 acres of indigenous habitat per day and researchers estimate that non-native species cause over \$136-billion of damage every year.

Pollution and Pesticides

Pollution and pesticides remain significant stressors on some bird populations. Pollutants from agriculture, logging activities, urban uses and other human activities can significantly degrade watershed habitats. Water quality regulations have been effective at controlling point sources of pollution, but non-point sources of pollution from overland run-off and air deposition is still a significant contributor to watershed degradation. Use of pesticides and other toxins can also directly and indirectly affect bird species. Studies have shown that Canada Geese, duck species, and Brant have been killed by parathion and methyl parathion, carbofuran, and diazinon. The Environmental



Osprey in flight.



Louisiana Waterthrush.

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2005 Christmas Bird Count

See the chart for dates of central Ohio Christmas Bird Count circles. A \$5 fee for field observers is waived for participants age 18 and younger and for feeder watchers.

CA announces the 35th Columbus CBC

What is the Christmas Bird Count? It's an organized single-day bird census that has become the largest and longest running environmental inventory run by volunteers. For the uninitiated, the count comes with a few standardized rules. It must take place within an imaginary circle that is 15 miles in diameter and must take place on one day between the third week-end of December and the first weekend in January. Count circles don't move once started, and are carefully sited to take in as many good parks and preserves as possible. The Columbus circle is centered just north of Bexley, so that it stretches from Upper Arlington east to Blacklick, and from Minerva Park south to Groveport. Key parks and preserves within this circle include Whetstone-Olentangy, Griggs, Greenlawn-Whittier, Blendon Woods, the Alum Creek Greenway, Blacklick Woods, and Three Creeks Park. Much of the area is decidedly urban and suburban, although it was much less so when the count started back in the 1960s. In a real sense, our CBC has chronicled the birds' responses as Columbus has grown into a major metropolitan area.

Strictly urban birds, like pigeons, starlings, and house sparrows have all increased to the point where they have become part of the background of many of our cityscapes. However, other supposedly 'wilder' birds have been adapting to our suburban areas, including Coopers and Red-tailed Hawks, Red-bellied and Downy woodpeckers, Carolina Chickadees, robins, Carolina Wrens, Dark-eyed Juncos, and American Goldfinches. Many of these birds are prospering due to the huge concentration of feeders in the city, while others take advantage of our extensive plantings of fruiting ornamental trees like the Hawthorn and Bradford Pear. If the weather is not too severe, large numbers of these species should be found in every area of Columbus.

Increasingly, we are seeing hardy strays and wintering birds that were formerly rare or unknown from here during December. Our list of wintering waterfowl has slowly grown as small numbers of teal, wood ducks, and shovelers have started to stick around in different ice-free ponds or creeks. Sapsuckers are now wintering in fair numbers in our ravines and parks. Phoebe's have shown up increasingly in December and January, but have somehow missed the count period. Cedar Waxwings and hermit thrushes are also quite regular, probably due to our fruit trees. Warblers other than yellow-rumped have started to stay as well: we had pine warblers in 2002 and 2003 (count period) and an Orange-crowned also in 2003. It's probably just a matter of time before we find a Yellowthroat,

Palm, or a Black-throated Green. We will be hoping to see all of these birds on count day. And you never know what true rarity, like a Rufous Hummingbird (2003), will suddenly appear. That's what makes a CBC so fun.

Teams of birdwatchers will comb parts of the city inside the circle looking for common birds and unusual rarities alike. Most of the major parks in the circle will have teams of birders. We need as many birders as we can recruit, since more eyes make spotting birds easier, so come out for the morning, or the whole day, or just keep an eye on your birdfeeders. For more details contact me at the phone number or e-mail listed in the chart below.

-Rob Thorn, Columbus CBC compiler

Other central Ohio CBCs

Hoover Reservoir Christmas Bird Count

This is the 50th year for the Hoover Reservoir Circle. Since the first count in 1956 there have been 131 species recorded within the circle. Some past highlights have included red-necked grebe, cackling goose, surf scoter, white-winged scoter, long-tailed duck, bald eagle, northern goshawk, merlin, dunlin, Baird's sandpiper, long-eared owl, loggerhead shrike, Lapland longspur, snow bunting, white-winged crossbill, and common redpoll. Several areas of special note within the circle include Hoover Reservoir, Alum Creek Reservoir, Westerville Reservoir, the Olentangy River, Inniswood Metro Park, Sharon Woods Metro Park, Highbanks Metro Park and Camp Mary Orton. The main assembly point for the circle is the parking lot at the Hoover Reservoir dam on Sunbury Road. Participants gather at 8 a.m. to break into area teams. In recent years we have had a team start directly at Camp Mary Orton and Highbanks Metro Park has tied the count to one of their programs led by the park's naturalists. All are always warmly welcome and appreciated. Contact Charles Bombaci.

O'Shaughnessy Reservoir Christmas Bird Count

The O'Shaughnessy Christmas Bird Count will be held Saturday Dec. 31 and leadership for this circle will transfer from Jim Adair to Darlene Sillick. Jim Adair served as the CBC O'Shaughnessy compiler from 1991 through 2004. Before Jim, a favorite icon of central Ohio birding, Ernie Limes, used to compile this CBC count circle. If you want to help Darlene with this count, contact her at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or (614) 761-3696. For more information, visit the National Audubon site at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>.

Delaware Reservoir Christmas Bird Count

The Delaware Reservoir Christmas Bird Count will be held on

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Central Ohio Christmas Bird Count Schedules

CIRCLE	DATE	COMPILER	PHONE	E-MAIL
COLUMBUS	Dec. 18	Rob Thorn	(614) 471-3051	robthorn@earthlink.net
HOOVER RESERVOIR	Dec. 17	Charles Bombaci	(614) 891-5706	charlesbombaci@aol.com
O'SHAUGHNESSY RESERVOIR	Dec. 31	Darlene Sillick	(614) 761-3696	azuretrails@columbus.rr.com
DELAWARE COUNTY	Dec. 18	Jed Burtt	(740) 368-3886 (d) (740) 747-2936 (n)	ehburtt@owu.edu
LANCASTER	Dec. 31	David Goslin	(740) 654-6917	N/A
KINGSTON (Circleville/Chillicothe)	Jan. 1	Brad Sparks	(614) 751-6622	birdmansparks@yahoo.com
BUCKEYE LAKE	TBD	Jeff White	(614) 890-3486	N/A

After-school programs begin at South Side Settlement

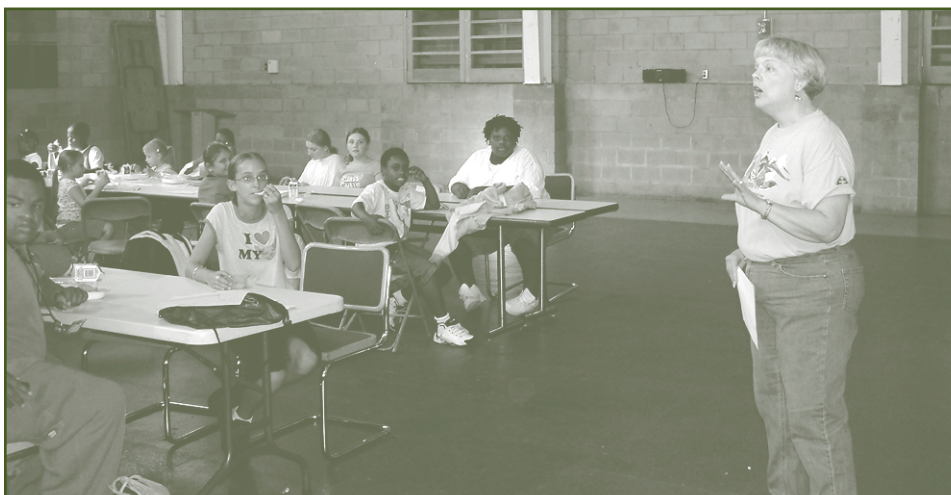
By Susan Setterlin

On Sept. 19, Columbus Audubon, Audubon Ohio, and South Side Settlement House began their after-school partnership with a somewhat chaotic student rally.

At the rally, the students learned about the exciting things in store for them at their weekly after-school program and they met Barnaby (a barn owl) from the Ohio Wildlife Center.

Afterwards as many were going to their organized groups, they got a chance to see all the tools they will be using this year on their birding adventures. Bird identifiers, Audubon birdfeeders and binoculars, field guides and stuffed birds that make individual calls when pressed, to name a few. It was pretty evident that these students were very eager to get started on this year's project.

Soon the students will become expert avian investigators and will pass on their



Susan Setterlin speaks with students.

scientific findings to the researchers at Cornell University by participating in Cornell's FeederWatch program this winter. Students will learn to document and report bird feeder data such as number of species, frequency of feeder visits as well as any other pertinent data and then report it in a scientific manner to Cornell researchers.

In the coming weeks that lead up to the beginning of the FeederWatch program the students will learn about bird biology, bird habitat and how pollution and other environmental factors impact habitat.

A field trip is planned to the Whittier Peninsula to build on their birding skills as well as scientific notation.

Also planned will be the installation of

three bird feeding stations that will be the center of their observations in the coming months.

In addition to learning the basics of avian biology and how to become effective observers, students will also incorporate art and writing skills with weekly activities based on their lessons.

This project was made possible in part with an \$1000 Audubon at Home grant from National Audubon and Audubon Ohio. All supplies to be used in the program were purchased with the grant money. South Side

Settlement House and Columbus Audubon are very grateful to Audubon Ohio for this grant. Look to this newsletter for future updates on this exciting new partnership!



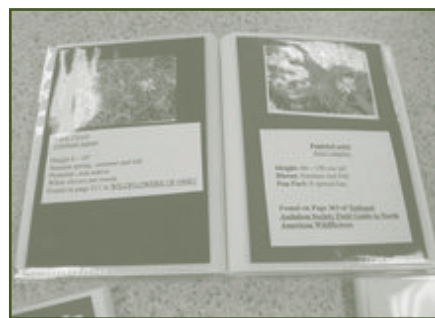
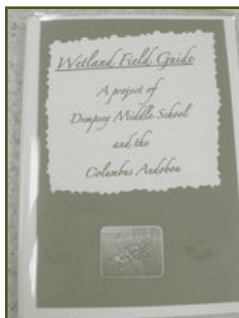
Barnaby the barn owl was a big hit!

Volunteers are still needed! Please consider an investment of your time to share the wonders of the natural world with our urban youth. To volunteer and to find out more about these programs, please call Susan Setterlin at (614) 457-8130.

Dempsey Middle School Wetland update

By Beth MacLehose

Well, believe it or not, the field guides are almost done. The students and I found we just did not have a camera that could take good pictures of fast moving birds, dragonflies, butterflies, etc. so we "cheated" on those pictures and got them off the web. We also had trouble with some of the macro invertebrates in the pond water. We are still trying to key out the minnows that appeared for the first time this fall in our pond, but are having problems because they don't like to hold still. We hope to have our first six field guides finished in a week or two. Eventually we hope to expand that to about 20 with a set of five in the public library, five in our school library, and 10 -15 as a classroom set that teachers can check out. The students also thought specialized field guides would be nice for us to develop later on. One for macro-invertebrates, one for flowering plants, one for trees, one for vertebrates, etc. The field guides are photo albums that can hold 36 pictures. Each page has a picture, a



(Above, left) A cover of a finished field guide. (Above, right) one of the pages inside the field guide.

common and scientific name, and a place you can go for more information. For the trees and some of the flowering plants there is also a simple map of the wetlands showing where that plant was found.

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 and there is no need to register unless otherwise noted.

Note: Field trip times, dates and locations are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. If you plan on going on a trip, please contact the trip leader 24 hours ahead of time to make sure the trip has not been changed, postponed or cancelled. Also, check the Columbus Audubon Web site at www.columbusaudubon.org for any changes or additions to the field trip listings.

Field trips

Monthly Walks at Whittier

Wednesday, November 2, 8 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Join Paul and Heather for a short walk around Whittier Peninsula to view wildlife as well as to watch the latest developments of the park and nature center. Meet at Lower Scioto Park in the boat ramp parking lot (west of Front Street and south of Whittier Street). *For more information, contact Paul Gledhill at (614) 848-7666 or gledhillpaul@yahoo.com, or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us.*

Dublin's Donegal Cliffs Park

Saturday, November 5, 8 a.m.

Leader: Mime Migliore, Nature Education Coordinator for the city of Dublin

Join Mime to explore one of the Dublin's hidden jewels. Meet at Donegal Cliffs Park for one hour of adventure along the Scioto River and through an old quarry. We'll look for birds, fossils and anything interesting. **Directions:** The park is located off of Dublin Road north of state Route 161 and Emerald Parkway. If you're heading north, turn right on Dunleary Drive and pass through the Donegal Cliffs subdivision. Donegal Cliffs will be on your right. **Note:** No restroom facilities are available. *Contact Mime Migliore at Mmigliore@dublin.oh.us or (614) 410-4730.*

Waterfowl and raptors at Big Island Wildlife Area

Sunday, November 6, 2 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

We will travel to this outstanding wetland wildlife area in search of migrating waterfowl, along with the birds of prey that have come here from the north. Meet at the Worthington Mall shopping center parking lot in front of the Kroger, just south of I-270 on U.S. 23 in north Worthington. Carpooling is available. *Contact Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

Nature in Our Neighborhoods: Reynoldsburg

Sunday, November 6, 9 a.m.

Leader: Kristan Leedy

Visit www.columbusaudubon.org for details about this trip, or contact Kristan at kristan@design4info.com or (614) 818-9440.

Monthly Walks at the Columbus Zoo

Saturday, November 12, 9 a.m.

Leader: Kevin Hils

Meet Kevin Hils, Supervisor of Shows and Outreach, for the monthly bird/nature walk around the fringe areas of the zoo's property to note bird species in an area rich with several habitats. We will hike through woodlands in search of hardy winter residents and visit the edge of the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir for any visiting waterfowl. Dress for the weather and for hiking uneven terrain – we will be roaming off-trail. Meet in front of the Zoo's Business Office located at 5220 Powell Road. *Contact Kevin Hils at (614)*

724-3408 or Kevin.hils@columbuszoo.org.

Migration at Blendon Woods and Hoover Reservoir

Sunday, November 13, 1 p.m.

Leader: Steve Landes

Come and enjoy a fall afternoon in search of the many species that are moving through at this time, with a focus on waterfowl. We will explore Blendon Woods, and then head to Hoover for a full afternoon of birding. Meet at the Blendon Woods nature center, located off of Little Turtle Way, east of I-270 on state Route 161. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. *Contact Steve Landes at (614) 876-4245.*

Deer Creek Lake

Sunday, November 20, 2:30 p.m.

Leader: Dave Horn

In some years a flock of sandhill cranes will stay in the Deer Creek area from about Nov. 10 until the 25, and it is a thrilling sight to see them coming to roost at sunset. Last year we were treated to four of them. Even without cranes, Deer Creek Lake is good for migrating waterfowl. Meet at Deer Creek Marina, off state Route 207 south of Pancoastburg. **Directions:** From Columbus, take I-71 toward Cincinnati, exit at state Route 57 into Mt. Sterling and pick up 207 there. Look for a green Subaru Outback, plate # MOTH-MAN. *Contact Dave Horn, (614) 262-0312 or horn.1@osu.edu.*

Glacier Ridge Wetland

Sunday, November 27, 7:30 or 8 a.m.

Leaders: Nadya Bennett and Darlene Sillick

Join Nadya and Darlene at the Glacier Ridge wetland parking lot where the tower is located. (Meet at 7:30 a.m. if you want to join us for the sunrise). We'll be looking for waterfowl, winter visitors and winter residents at this Columbus Metro Park located in Union County just west of Dublin. Dress warmly! **Directions:** From I-270, take U.S. 33 west to state Route 161/Post Road exit. Turn right onto Post Road, then left onto Hyland-Croy Road. The entrance to the wetland area is about three miles north on the left. *Contact Darlene at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com, (614) 761-3696 or Nadya Bennett at (614) 734-1877.*

Winter Birds at Killdeer Plains

Sunday, December 4, 1 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

This wildlife area features a diversity of natural habitat & attracts a great variety of bird species in the winter. Eagles, hawks, owls and songbirds can be observed and appreciated as they live on this landscape. Waterfowl also frequent this area if there is open water. Dress for the weather, bring food/water. Some will plan on staying until dark to look for short-eared owls. Meet at the Worthington Mall shopping center parking lot in front of the Kroger, just south of I-270 on U.S. 23 in north Worthington. Carpooling is available. *Contact Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

Monthly Walks at Whittier

Wednesday, December 7, 8 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Join Paul and Heather for a short walk around Whittier Peninsula to view wildlife as well as to watch the latest developments of the park and nature center. Meet at Lower Scioto Park in the boat ramp

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President's Perspective

Soon, *The Song Sparrow* will fly only in cyberspace

By Kristan Leedy

You may remember that last September we changed from publishing the newsletter monthly from September through June to publishing it mostly bi-monthly. We did this to save money, but it didn't really save as much as we thought because we ended up having to increase the page count. After much deliberation, we have decided to transition *The Song Sparrow* to an e-newsletter. The transition will begin in January and be completed by September 2006.

The Columbus Audubon Board is a particularly fiscally responsible group. That doesn't mean we're tight fisted as a matter of principle. Rather, we take our charter seriously to spend membership dues, donations and other funds wisely in support of our education and conservation-based mission. During the 2004-05 fiscal year, Columbus Audubon spent \$8,900 on printing, \$3,600 on postage and \$610 on return postage for the newsletter. With the majority of members able to receive e-mail distributions—which cost the chapter nothing—it seems prudent to channel that money toward education programs, Calamus Swamp and other worthy projects. Not to mention the savings in natural resources.

Beginning in January, new members will receive only an e-newsletter; by the September-October 2006 issue, all members

will be converted to the e-newsletter. In the meantime, we will send *The Song Sparrow* by e-mail to anyone who wants to receive it that way now. Simply send an e-mail to membership@columbusaudubon.org and request the e-newsletter. You can even continue to receive a paper copy until the cut-off next fall, just make it clear in your e-mail that you want to receive both versions.

The Song Sparrow has been mailed to members for more than 35 years and it remains our primary means of communication. As we change to the new form of distribution, be assured it will still have the same great natural history articles and news and information important to our members.

The newsletter is also our main “face” to the community and has been a good membership recruitment tool over the years. So that we can keep attracting non-members to our programs and activities (where hopefully they will be enticed to become members), we will continue to send photocopied announcements of our field trips and programs to the public libraries and Metro Parks. And of course we will post them in the new Columbus Audubon Nature Center when it is open!

If you would like to comment on this plan, please email president@columbusaudubon.org or mail comments to P.O. Box 141350 Columbus, Ohio 43214-6350.

Invasive species

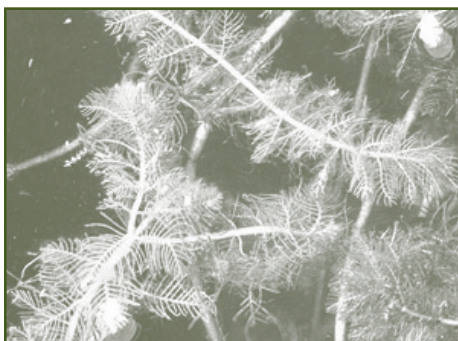
Eurasian watermilfoil

By Bruce Lindsay

An invasive species is a non-native plant or animal that causes significant damage to wildlife and wildlife habitat. According to the National Audubon Society's Web site, invasive species cause billions of dollars of damage annually to crops, rangelands and waterways.

When I was asked to write a brief article on invasive species, Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum* L.) immediately came to mind. Milfoil is a feathery underwater plant that originally came to North America from Europe, Asia and Northern Africa. Most sources estimate that it showed up on the East Coast in the 1940s. It has since spread coast to coast.

It reproduces and spreads very rapidly. A broken stem can start a new plant. It



Eurasian watermilfoil.

chokes out native plants and reduces the amount of light the can penetrate a lake. Its dense growth makes it difficult for fish to feed and fish populations soon decline.

A lake infested with milfoil is useless for fishing, swimming or boating.

Once it is established, and it doesn't take

long, removal is costly and difficult.

My family and I have a cottage on a lake in Michigan that has developed a milfoil problem.

Our lake association has elected to hire a company that will use an herbicide to try and control the milfoil. Supposedly, the chemical will not harm native plants and weeds, but will inhibit the milfoil from photosynthesizing.

Biological controls are also available, featuring a weevil native to North America that feeds on the milfoil.

Invasive species, like milfoil, are becoming an increasingly serious problem. We need to be aware of these species and do what we can to control or eradicate them. For more information, visit www.audubon.org/campaign/invasives/index.shtml.

Christmas Bird Count

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Sunday, December 18. The center of the count is in pod C of the Delaware State Park campground. Teams will be in the field throughout the count area and all team leaders would welcome additional participants. At 6 p.m. there will be a bring your own dinner at the U. S. Department of Agriculture laboratory north of Delaware on Main Road just off U.S. Route 23. The count will be compiled at the dinner and the annual Horned Lark Award will be given to the lucky participant with the closest guess of the number

of Horned Larks seen on the count. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jed Burt.

Kingston Christmas Bird Count (Chillicothe/Circleville)

The Kingston Christmas Bird Count, which has its center northeast of Chillicothe, has taken place each year since 1970. This count was started to monitor the large population of wintering raptors, which have recently shown a decline in number. For more information about this circle, contact Brad Sparks.

Conservation Corner

Calamus Swamp, 'Lights Out' and other issues

By Dave Horn

The Conservation Committee continues to work on important environmental issues in central Ohio. Foremost recently has been continuing to implement a management plan for our own jewel, Calamus Swamp.

We continue to support work trips to clean up and improve the trails, and are entering into discussions with the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, to come up with the most responsible approach to reach our long-term conservation and educational goals for Calamus. You can help in a small but important way: we are interested in how many people use Calamus. We know the use patterns by scheduled Columbus Audubon field trips, but it would be helpful to know how many individuals enjoy our little wetland. *If you visit Calamus, give Dave Horn a call (614) 262-0312 or e-mail horn.1@osu.edu.*

We are attempting to involve Columbus in the "Lights Out" program. Many species of migrating songbirds rely on the moon and stars for orientation, and evi-

dence is accumulating that the bright lights on tall buildings in urban areas interfere with their navigation. Birds are confused by the glare, and fly into walls and windows. The problem is particularly acute when the weather is rainy and foggy; up to 10,000 have been killed in one night at a single radio transmission tower complex. (Our own Dr. Milton Trautman regularly retrieved dead birds from the base of Perry's Victory Monument at Put-in-Bay.) While there are no reliable figures for total collision mortality, one estimate is 100 million birds are killed annually by colliding manmade structures. That's a lot of birds. The "Lights Out" program attempts to persuade managers of skyscrapers, transmission towers, smokestacks, monuments, etc. to dim their lights during migration. Chicago has taken the program to heart with positive results, and Cleveland and Cincinnati are joining the program.

We are increasing awareness of the impact of invasive species by initiating a column in this month's *Song Sparrow* and we hope it will be a regular feature. Look for Bruce Lindsay's article on Eurasian

watermilfoil on page 5.

On the national scene, Congress is considering a bill to water down the Endangered Species Act by adding amendments to render it less effective. For instance, one amendment would allow a species to be listed as endangered, but then prohibits the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from protecting its critical habitat. Another prohibits the FWS from using scientific information about an endangered species that is learned after the recovery plan is completed. National Audubon President John Flicker says this is like prohibiting a doctor from using medical information that is learned after the patient is admitted to the hospital.

The Conservation Committee will post developing information on our Web site; meanwhile, write to your representative and senators and let them know your opinion of this and other conservation issues.

The Conservation Committee meets monthly on a Tuesday evening at Dave Horn's house. Due to scheduling issues we're jumping around a bit this fall (Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 13) but hope to settle on the second Tuesday monthly, come 2006. We welcome members and visitors.

Winter on the Wilds

By Al Parker

Winter on the Wilds is a remarkable program that gives you and your family fun opportunities to discover unique winter wildlife at the Wilds.

Programs include wildlife watching, hiking, adventures into the Wilds unique habitats, and some indoor activities.

Be prepared to spend time outside. Bring plenty of warm layers (coats, coveralls, hats, gloves, boots, etc.), lunch, a coffee mug, and a thermos (cocoa and coffee will be provided).

Programs start at 10 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. We will meet at the main parking lot on International Road.

Reservations and pre-payment are required.

To reserve a spot or for more information call Al Parker at (740) 638-2116 or e-mail aparker@thewilds.org to set up your winter visit.

The cost for the program is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children. All fees are non-refundable. The mailing address for the program is Winter on the Wilds, 14000 International Road, Cumberland, Ohio 43732.

November 12 and December 10- Wild Birds - Bird ID Days

Walkabout the Wilds with one of our educators to discover bird habitats, songs, and signs. Bring binoculars and bird guides if you have them. This will be a learning experience for birders at all skill levels.

January 7, 2006 - Eagle Survey Day

Discover some favorite places for Bald and Golden Eagles with the Wilds conservation education staff as we travel around the Wilds and Muskingum Valley. Data that we collect will be added to the National Mid-Winter Bald Eagle count. Bring your binoculars, scopes, lunch, and gas in the tank - we will try to carpool as much as possible.

January 14, 2006 - Winter Hawk - Raptor ID Day

The Wilds is home to many types of raptors in the wintertime. The open grasslands attract short-eared owls, harriers, rough-legged and red-tailed hawks; even golden eagles and prairie falcons have been seen. Bring your binoculars and spotting scopes if you have them!

February 11, 2006 - Hawk Talk - Raptor Field/Zoo Bird Day

See live raptors from the Columbus Zoo up close and personal! Join the Wilds conservation educators for a walking and driving trip across the Wilds looking for winter birds of prey.

March 11, 2006 - Bison Prairie Day

Observe bison in our large pastures and explore the grasslands of both native prairie grasses and reclaimed mine lands. See "first-hand" why prairies are so important to wildlife.



Coming up

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parking lot (west of Front Street and south of Whittier Street). For more information, contact Paul Gledhill at (614) 848-7666 or gledhillpaul@yahoo.com, or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us.

Winter is coming to the Wetland

Saturday, December 10, 1 p.m.

Leaders: Andrea Haslage and Jennifer Rosa

Explore Slate Run Metro Park's Wetlands Wildlife Refuge with park naturalists Andrea Haslage and Jennifer Rosa. They'll take you on and off the trail (be prepared for some mud and tall plants!) in search of the wetland's more unique cold-weather feathered friends like northern harriers, waterfowl, and several different sparrow species. Meet at the Wetlands Wildlife Refuge on Winchester Road. For directions, go to <http://www.metroparks.net>. Contact Andrea Haslage, Haslage@MetroParks.net.

New Year's Day bird walk at Blackhand Gorge

Sunday, January 1, 2006, 1 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

We will hike the trail and see what's out and about as we start our 2006 bird list. Winter species will keep us company and we will be close to water, field and woods on our hike. The geology of the winter landscape tree silhouettes will be a wonderful way to usher in a new year of bird watching. Wear layers and good footwear and bring food and water. Meet at the Worthington Mall shopping center parking lot in front of the Kroger, just south of I-270 on U.S. 23 in north Worthington. Carpooling is available. Contact Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.

Monthly Walks at Whittier

Wednesday, January 4, 2006, 8 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Join Paul and Heather for a short walk around Whittier Peninsula to view wildlife as well as to watch the latest developments of the park and nature center. Meet at Lower Scioto Park in the boat ramp parking lot (west of Front Street and south of Whittier Street). For

CA November Program

Flesh-eating Plants!

Tuesday, November 22, 2005

7:00 p.m. social time

7:30 p.m. presentation

Innis House at Inniswood Metro Gardens

Join us as we welcome Jim McCormac as our speaker. He will be speaking on flesh-eating plants. Jim works for the Ohio Division of Wildlife, where he involved primarily with birds and ornithology. Prior to that post, he was botanist for the Ohio Division of Natural Areas and Preserves, and has scoured the state looking for rare plants, carnivorous or otherwise.

Program description

Carnivorous plants are among the more fascinating members of our vegetable life, and many people are surprised to learn we have a number of species right here in Ohio. Of course, most are familiar with the Venus-flytrap which is commonly sold for in the nursery trade, but while that species isn't native to Ohio, we have some plant carnivores that are equally interesting.

Most of our species are rather rare, and this talk will focus on the odd habitats in which they occur, and on the plants themselves. This Powerpoint program will be illustrated with many beautiful photos of our carnivorous plants, their habitats, and associated plants.

... more information, contact Paul Gledhill at (614) 848-7666 or gledhillpaul@yahoo.com, or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us.

Monthly Walks at the Columbus Zoo

Sunday, January 22, 2006, 2 p.m.

Leader: Barbara Revard

Meet in front of the Columbus Zoo's Business Office located at

Continued on page 10

Eco-Weekend thanks

The Eco-Weekend Committee would like to say a big thank you to all who made the 33rd Eco-Weekend a success. There were 56 programs offered this year plus the main Saturday evening program. We saw a total of 81 species of birds at Camp Otter Creek. Eco-Weekend was held in the rolling hills at Camp Otter Creek west of Logan. Programs included birding, insects, wildflowers, geology, bats, edible and medicinal plants, mosses, trees, reptiles, amphibians, raptors, astronomy, owl walks, canoeing, and many other activities. A special thank you to Camp Otter Creek and staff, for the use of their wonderful facility, the good food, and help in making this a successful event.

Thank you to storytellers Natalie and Greg Wittmann, Adele Brown and Sally Crandall for our Saturday evening program. Sincere thanks go to our Adult Consultants: Susie and Jarrod Burks, Jim Davidson, Patty DeMaria, Shirley DenBroeder, Mike Flynn, Elaine Fujimura, Frank Gifford, Elayna Grody, Mike Hall, Dave and Roz Horn, Mike Hufferberger, Doc Jordan, Bob Klips, Mark Kohler, Kim Leach, Gisela McDonald, Matt Martin, Ralph Moran, David Paris, Heike Perko, Tara Poling, Eric Reiner, Don Rice, David Sagan, John Schmidt, Sue Setterlin, Sandra Sklar, Tony Skrabak, Jill Snyder, Fred Steck, Tim Taylor, and Christie Vargo. We were saddened to hear of the death of Joel Wachtel

who was a Program Leader for many years. We appreciate his faithful dedication to Eco Weekend; he will be missed. Thanks also go to our Youth Consultants: Roz Horn, coordinator; Michelle Croft, Megan DeLaurentis, Dave Horn, Roberta Jones, George Keeney, Barbara Natterer, Don Rice, Sandra Sklar, and Camp Otter Creek staff for the archery course. Special thanks to our tireless Eco-Weekend Committee: Susie and Jarrod Burks, Kate Carus, Mary Counter, Lois Day, Cathy Elkins, Roz Horn, chair and youth coordinator; Linda Hufferberger, Keith Lindeman, Connie Kobalka, Liz Melick, Bev Potts, and John Tucker. We were also saddened to hear of the death of Clint Lefler, an active member of the Eco Weekend Committee.

We shall miss our parking czar! Of course, you realize that it's never too early to start recruiting and planning for 2006. Eco-Weekend will be held May 5, 6 and 7, 2006. This will be our 34th year. If you are interested in being on the Eco-Weekend Committee or acting as a Program Leader, call Columbus Audubon at (740) 657-0333. Let us assure you that we can use your help, as it takes many willing workers to make this a successful event.

Eco Weekend Committee

Your Bird Reports ... are being replaced

By Karen Augenstein

Your Bird Reports has been a favorite column with many Columbus Audubon members, largely because it gives everyone an opportunity to contribute and share sightings with other members. John Arnfield's informative and accessible writing style added to the appeal of this column. So it is with reluctance that the board has decided to discontinue the column in its current form.

One compelling reason for this decision is that John and his wife Joan have recently moved to England. Our loss is doubtlessly England's gain. We will miss John's witty and illuminating compilations of our local bird reports and wish him well in his new endeavors.

Another inescapable conclusion the board reached is that last year's change to a bi-monthly newsletter schedule has rendered

your bird reports out of date by the time they are published. In this age of having information available any time of day at the dial of a phone, stroke of a keyboard, or click of a mouse, a bi-monthly column can't compete with more immediate forums, such as Dial-a-bird (614) 221-WREN or 221-9736, the Rare Bird Alert (614) 464-0103 and the Ohio-Birds listserv <http://lists.environment.org/mailman/listinfo/ohio-birds>, to name just a few. These and other forums can be found on the Columbus Audubon Web site, particularly under References, then Links. You can glean information about others' sightings and contribute your own via such forums. If you haven't already made use of these resources, I encourage you to give them a try—there's something to suit almost any need you have.

I mentioned this column is being discontinued in its current form, which suggests we have something else in mind to replace

it. Indeed, we do: We are flinging open the doors to invite in anyone who would like to contribute a short article about bird sightings. Let's say you had a really great day of backyard birding or on a birding trip you took in Ohio or anywhere else in the world. Review the following editorial guidelines before submitting your experiences.

All articles must be signed and include address and phone number for purposes of verification. Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Articles should be 500 words or less and relate a single birding experience. The *Song Sparrow* Editor reserves the right to edit submissions for content and space constraints.

You may e-mail submissions to the Editor at stefanie.hauck@gmail.com or by snail mail to: 99 Camden Lane, Delaware, Ohio 43015, Attn: Stefanie Hauck, *Song Sparrow* Editor.

Take note:

Ohio Wildlife Center news

Watch www.ohiowildlifecenter.org for their Dine Out for Wildlife event in November.

Thanks to the many adults and children who joined us at the Oct. 1 second annual Ohio Wildlife Center's Fall Festival. Our success was in part to the attendees and the many volunteers who came out on a beautiful October Saturday to support wildlife and education.

'Winter Birding in Ohio - Make It Count'

Fall is upon us and that can only mean that winter is right around the corner. For those of us who enjoy watching birds winter is a more optimistic time than it is for most people because winter brings with it a return of many of our feeder birds, as well as the prospect of those less commonly seen northern species. Additionally, it's during the winter that many of us participate in winter bird surveys, like the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. To prepare us for the winter birding and survey season the Black Swamp Bird Observatory is hosting a symposium titled "Winter Birding in Ohio: Make it Count," on Nov. 12 at Recreation Unlimited in Ashley, Ohio. The event will feature winter bird identification talks by Mark

Shieldcastle and Jim McCormac of the Ohio Division of Wildlife, and Kenn Kaufman, as well as presentations by Geoff LeBaron, National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count Coordinator, Casey Tucker, Education Specialist for Audubon Ohio's Audubon At Home program, and Julie Shieldcastle, Executive Director of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory.

For more details or to register call (419) 898-4070.

CA Board meetings for November and December

Board meetings are held at the Museum of Biological Diversity at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. All members are welcome to attend.

Delaware County Bird Club meetings

Meetings will be in the new science building on the Ohio Wesleyan University Campus, north side of the atrium, Room 163 at 7 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month. Join us on Nov. 28 when our speaker will be Jim McCormac. **Directions:** U.S. Route 23 north to the Williams Street exit, turn left and then left again on S. Henry Street. Turn right into the parking lot. *For more information, contact Edward H. Burt, Jr. at (740) 368-3886 or ehburt@owu.edu.*

2006 Entertainment Books for sale

The books will be available through December. Proceeds from the sale support Columbus Audubon's educational activities.

Accent on Wild Birds	1340 Grandview Ave., Grandview	486-7333
Better Earth	59 Spruce St., Columbus (North Market)	224-6196
Backyard Experience	3515 North High St., Columbus	261-0355
Wild Bird Supplies & Gifts	738 E. Lincoln Ave., Worthington	431-2473
Wild Birds Unlimited	21 Cherry Park Sq., Westerville	899-9453
Wild Birds Unlimited	5400 Riverside Dr. Columbus	766-2103
Wild Birds Unlimited	6839 E. Broad St., Columbus (Blacklick Shopping Ctr.)	860-1133
Wild Bird Center of Dublin	6535 Perimeter Dr., Dublin, Ohio	734-3333
Columbus Audubon	Dave Horn (If you want an out-of-town Book, contact Dave directly)	262-0312

Feature: Birds and Watersheds

Continued from page 1

Protection Agency (EPA) has estimated that carbofuran alone kills one to two-million birds each year in the United States. Worldwide, it is estimated that up to 67-million birds are killed each year by pesticides.

Banning the most hazardous pesticides, such as DDT, is one effective protection strategy. Working with the agricultural community on best management practices and providing habitat preservation incentive programs are additional useful protection strategies. Unfortunately, the winter homes for our migrating birds are in even more danger, since DDT is still used in many countries and habitat destruction is often widespread.

Types of birds who rely on watersheds

Many birds depend on watersheds and their connected wetlands and riparian (streamside) forests for survival. Riparian corridors are bird migration highways, because they provide near continuous foraging sites along their migration routes. Approximately 50 percent of migratory species depend on U.S. wetlands and these birds are indicators of declines in wetland quality and quantity. A few examples of resident and migratory birds who rely on healthy riparian corridors include:

The Great Blue Heron is a resident species in much of its range and nests in trees near water in colonies, called rookeries. They forage year-round for fish and other aquatic organisms in shallow water.

Ospreys migrate to Mexico, Central and South America in the winter and nest in the summer over open water throughout the U.S. They feed themselves and their young with fish caught in these waters.

Louisiana Waterthrushes nest in riparian habitats next to streams in the eastern U.S. and forage on large aquatic insect species that occur only in clean water.

Prothonotary warblers are migrants that nest east of the Mississippi in floodplain forests and winter in mangroves and riparian forests in Central America. Both the breeding and wintering habitats of this warbler are being fragmented or destroyed, although central Ohio is a success story for prothonotary warbler recovery (See the May-June 2005 *Song Sparrow* article).

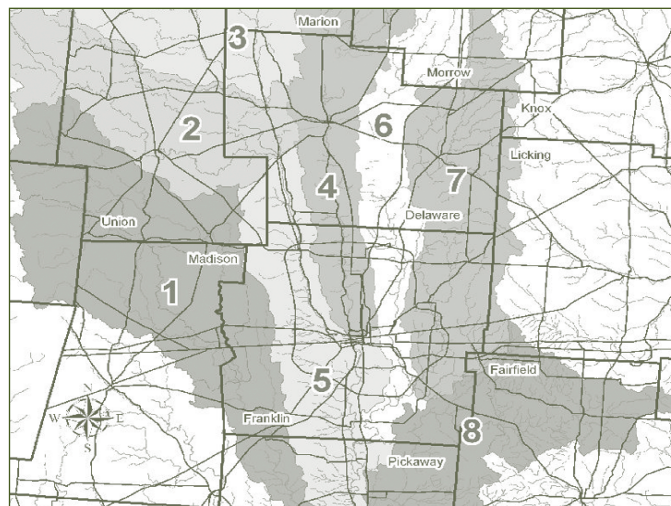
How you can help

There are many local watershed groups that are actively working to restore and protect central Ohio watersheds. Consider contacting your local watershed group to see how you can volunteer or help with their efforts (*See the watershed map at right for contact information*). Habitat restoration and protection, invasive species control, and environmental awareness programs are some of the activities these groups are involved in.

Columbus Audubon is developing partnerships with these organizations to promote bird conservation.

Future articles will highlight joint Columbus Audubon and watershed group activities. In addition, you may want to support organizations that promote watershed protection efforts in the winter homes of our migratory birds. More information on international watershed protection efforts will appear in future newsletter articles.

This article was adapted in part from U.S. EPA's web module "Birds: Bellwethers of Watershed Health." For more information, please visit the following U.S. EPA Web site: <http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/birds/index.html>.



Central Ohio Watershed Groups

1. Darby Creek Watershed Planning Group

Katherine Skalak
Union Soil and Water Conservation District
Phone: (937) 642-5871 ext. 109
Email: Katherine-skalak@oh.nacdn.net

1a. Darby Creek Association

John Tetzloff
Phone: (614) 288-0313
Web: www.darbycreeks.org

2. Bokes/Mill Creek Watershed Partnership

Union Soil and Water Conservation District
Phone: (937) 642-5871, option 3
Web: www.co.union.oh.us/soil-water-conservation/bokes_mill_creek_partnership.htm

3. Upper Scioto River Watershed Project

Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District
Phone: (740) 368-1921
Web: www.delawareswd.org/Watershed/Scioto/

4a. Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW)

Kathy Remias
Phone: (614) 267-3386
Email: flow2004@sbcglobal.net
Web: olentangywatershed.org

4b. Olentangy Watershed Alliance (Upper Olentangy R.)

Lindsey Ulrey
Phone: (419) 946-7923
Email: morrowswd@redbird.net
Web: www.olentangyriver.org

5. Friends of the Scioto River

Alex Silbajoris
Phone: (614) 233-4124
Email: asilbajo@hotmail.com
Web: www.geocities.com/fosrfc/scioto.html

6. Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries

Heather Doherty
Phone: (614) 409-0511
Email: doherty@friendsofalumcreek.org
Web: www.friendsofalumcreek.org

7. Upper Big Walnut Creek Water Quality Partnership

Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District
Phone: (740) 368-1921
Email: ubwc@delawareswd.org
Web: www.delawareswd.org

8. Walnut Action Group (Walnut Creek)

Bill Yaple
Phone: (614) 575-5559; Fax: (614) 575-5562
Email: violetwp@ds.net

Coming up

November/December Work trips

Continued from page 7

5220 Powell Road for the monthly bird/nature walk. We will visit the new Water's Edge area to look for birds along the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir. We may also drive to several spots along the river below the dam to look for waterfowl. Dress appropriately and wear sturdy boots as we may be hiking off-trail. *Contact Barbara Revard, Director of Program Planning at (614) 645-3448 or email barbara.revard@columbuszoo.org.*

Avid Birders field trips

Avid Birders are interested enough in birding to get out of bed very early for day-long field trips. The only requirements to join us are enthusiasm, binoculars, and a reliable alarm clock. A spotting scope is often useful, but not required. You do not have to be a member of Columbus Audubon to come along. Upcoming field trips are:

November 12, 5:30 a.m.-Reservoirs and perhaps Lake Erie.

December 2-4 - Overnight trip to New Jersey for pelagic/ocean shorebirds. *Contact Brad Sparks at (614) 751-6622 for details.*

January 7, 2006, 5:30 a.m. - Lake Erie shore for gulls, waterfowl and other winter birds.

Unless otherwise noted, participants should meet at the southwest corner of the Worthington Mall parking lot at the designated time. Bring a sack lunch, and remember we encourage carpooling. Please reimburse your driver for travel expenses. Dress appropriately; since the weather to our north, particularly along the windy Lake Erie shore, is often a lot colder than that in Columbus. Go to <http://www.columbusaudubon.org/avids/avids.html> for more information.

Improving remote trails

Saturday, November 12, 7:45 a.m.

Leader: Jeff Johnson

Assist Jeff Johnson, South Central Preserve Manager at Rhododendron State Nature Preserve in Fairfield County. Various trail maintenance tasks will rotate volunteers' efforts while traversing from the stream valley to the dry ridge top. Large fern covered sandstone slump blocks dot the winding hillside trail. Virginia pine and mountain laurel (hardier species) populate the ridge. Please call Roger Barber, researcher and DNA & P work trip coordinator, by noon Nov. 7 at (614) 265-6467 to sign up, reserve space for transportation and determine tool requirements. Bring lunch and cup or water bottle for drinking.

Meet in the parking lot inside gatehouse at the Ohio Department Natural Resources Complex, 2045 Morse Road. **Directions:** I-71 to Morse Road. Travel east on Morse, past the former Northland Mall (now NorthlandPark) and turn right into the complex. *Contact Sharon Treaster at (614) 292-1395.*

September work trip report

Columbus Audubon Volunteers at Stages Pond State Nature Preserve. Twelve Columbus Audubon volunteers converged at Stages Pond State Nature Preserve in Pickaway County on Saturday Sept. 10 and proceeded to renovate segments of a shaded soggy trail. Gravel was spread and packed to the cadence of cicadas and chirping avian residents. An alternate team repainted a bird blind that over looks the largest remnant of a glacial pond in Ohio. Roving teams inspected trails and removed woodland overgrowth while exploring the site.

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Additional chapter leaders:

Conservation: Dave Horn, 262-0312
Work Projects: Sharon Treaster, 846-8419
Education: Susan Setterlin, 457-8130
Programs: Mike Flynn, 882-9493
Field Trips: Darlene Sillick, 761-3696 or Nadya Bennett, 734-1877
Eco Weekend: Lois Day, (740) 549-0333; Roz Horn, 262-0312
Membership: Joe Meara, 781-9602
Corresponding Sec'y: Emily Eby, 855-3879
Calamus Committee: Kyleene Kruse, 262-0375
Birdathon: Julie Davis, 523-2180 or Katryn Renard, 261-7171
CA Phone Line: Lois and John Day, (740) 549-0333
Avid Birders: <http://www.columbusaudubon.org/avids/avids.html>

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