



# Columbus Audubon Song Sparrow

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## Westerville

# Bald Eagle nest: Two perspectives

By Donna Daniel and Doug Askew

Westerville Bald Eagles – an ODNR, Division of Wildlife perspective

As a biologist with the Ohio Division of Wildlife, my role in our state's Bald Eagle management program is to locate and coordinate nesting in central Ohio. Although I receive many reports of possible new eagle nests, few actually turn out to be eagles. Indeed I was skeptical about the reports I received early last December: Bald Eagles nesting in Westerville? Sure ... probably another pair of Red-tailed Hawks! With the realization that central Ohio did really have its first urban eagle nest, my work was cut out for me. Bald Eagles attract attention wherever they occur. A nest this close to a major metropolitan area was sure to be extraordinary.

Thus began my balancing act ... between residential and commercial landowners, city government, developers, wildlife enthusiasts, state and federal wildlife agencies, law enforcement organizations, utility companies, the media and so on.

Protection of the eagles was our primary concern, but certainly not our only concern. In this situation, it is especially important that we, as the state wildlife agency, do what is reasonable to protect the eagles while minimizing impacts to local landowners and the community.

So as to not deter a nesting attempt, developers agreed to put building projects that were planned for the immediate area around the nest on hold until summer. To further minimize disturbance to the eagles, we posted a "No Trespassing" zone around the nest to keep people from getting too close.

The restricted zone also applied to above the nest — important in an urban area with a plethora of news, traffic, police and med-flight aircraft. To promote eagle watching, the Westerville Sports Complex just south of County Line Road was designated as a public viewing area.

Although the nest is visible from properties closer to it, the sports complex was selected as the logical place for public viewing that effectively addresses public safety, trespassing, traffic and parking concerns of neighboring landowners. Leg band reports indicate that the male fledged from the Lake Erie region. Volunteers will monitor the birds' behaviors to tell if/when incubation begins. The female and male are estimated to be 4- and 5-years-old respectively, thus this is likely their first time nesting. I am cautiously optimistic that nesting will be successful. Oftentimes, first attempts fail for a number of reasons, and this nest has the added factor of

## Nest update

The latest observations indicate that the pair have returned to the nest. Jim White observed the pair bringing in more nesting material and hanging around. On March 12, he observed one adult eagle fly into the nest at 4 p.m. It was also bothered by two adult Red-tailed Hawks, but only for a few minutes. Around March 5, observers reported that the female abandoned the nest. Since this is likely her first nesting attempt, this behavior was not surprising. Recently, several other Bald Eagle nests have also been spotted in the Columbus area. One such nest was reported in late February off I-71 north of U.S. 36. For further updates, please check Columbus Audubon's "Yahoo!" group site or go to <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/resources/Eagle/default.htm>.



By Doug Askew

The Bald Eagle nest in Westerville. Along with his handy pair 8x20s, Doug used a small telescope to photograph and view the nest site.

See Bald Eagles, page 8

# It's Columbus Audubon Birdathon time again!

By Julie Davis

The Columbus Audubon Birdathon is right around the corner and our teams are making their strategic plans. This event is the kick-off of the spring birding season and the high point for many of our teams. There are three time categories made to fit any birder's schedule.

For those who think a short walk or a picnic in the park is the way to go, we have the five-hour limit. Our Deck Bird team takes full advantage of this category! The 10-hour timeframe is for the serious, but well rested birder. The 24-hour limit is for all those avid birders striving to identify every warbler, flycatcher and sparrow in their path, as the Quick Three Beards and Wild Birds Unlimited teams do every year. As you can see, we have something for every birding level.

The CA Birdathon is great fun for everyone, whether you are part of a team or a team sponsor.

Our sponsors are as important to the Birdathon as our birders. If you would like to sponsor a team, just fill out the form below, pick the team you wish to sponsor and send it in. You do not need to send your money until you receive a notice from the team you sponsored.

## 2005 statistics

**Amount raised:** \$18,857.38.

**Teams that raised over \$1,000:**

Chestnut Ridge Chachalacas, Scarlet & Gray Tanagers, Slate (Run) colored Juncos, Mellow Bellied Snack Seekers, Les Chasseurs des Oiseaux and Westerville Waxwings. Wild Birds Unlimited on Riverside raised \$2,100!

**Teams that saw the most species:** Quick Three Beards (168)

Wild Birds Unlimited (160), Westerville Waxwings (130) and Road Runners (125).

If you have ever thought about joining in the birding fun, this is the year.

Start with your favorite birding buddies, choose a fun team name and call Katryn Renard at (614) 261-7171 to register. Then, ask all your friends and co-workers to sponsor you and go birding! Count all the birds your team identifies in your chosen category on any day between **May 5 and May 14**. Remember, you don't have to stay in Ohio. Be creative, bird anywhere in the world or your own backyard.

Although last year's record-breaking

totals will be hard to beat, this year's teams are going to try.

This year, 75-percent of the profits from Birdathon will go to Audubon Ohio to support the Whittier Peninsula project, which is located in the Important Bird Area (IBA) recently adopted by Columbus Audubon.

This will be the state's first urban Audubon Nature Center. Audubon Ohio envisions this as an opportunity to bring urban programs and education to children and families in the city.

The other 25-percent will go to Columbus Audubon for use on education and outreach in conjunction with the Whittier project.

All of our teams and sponsors are invited to celebrate their Birdathon success on Friday, May 26, at the nature center at Highbanks Metro Park. There will be a bird walk, door prizes, two grand prize drawings and dessert.

More details on the celebration and prizes will be published in the May newsletter and will be included in the information packets all teams will receive by mid-April.

Please see page 3 for a list of teams already registered and the number of species they expect to find.

## Two grand prizes to choose from

All participants who get their money in by Friday, May 26, will be eligible to win one of these two grand prizes. In addition to great birding and raising money for the Whittier project, these prizes should encourage you to form your own team.

### One-night stay at Sandy Cove Cottage on Kelleys Island

This one-bedroom, one and one-half bath, fully furnished carriage house sleeps four. It comes complete with all appliances along with linens, towels, dishes and a gas grill. For your leisure, the cottage also has a TV/VCR with Dish Network 500 basic programming and board games. All you need to bring to this beach

front carriage house is food, beach towels and clothing.

Whether it will be relaxing in the large yard, watching the boats navigate the north passage of Lake Erie, swimming, sunning on the private sandy beach, or visiting the many nearby restaurants and shops, the Sandy Cove management trusts you will love your visit to beautiful Kelleys Island.

### Eagle Optics prize

Our other grand prize, was generously donated by **Eagle Optics**. Details on the type of scope or binoculars donated will come in the next newsletter. Stay tuned!

COLUMBUS  
AUDUBON  
BIRDATHON



## Sponsorship form

*Sign me up!* I would like to sponsor one of the teams above by pledging a specified amount of money for each species they see during the Birdathon. (For example, 100 species at 15 cents per bird would add up to a donation of \$15.) The money will be paid in cash or check to Columbus Audubon when I am informed of the results of my team's foray.

Team Name \_\_\_\_\_ Pledge \_\_\_\_\_

My Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Street, City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: "Birdathon," c/o Columbus Audubon, P.O. Box 141350, Columbus, Ohio 43214

# Birdathon teams

## Backyard Experience

### Chick-a-dees - 70

Gerry Brevoort  
Gail Burns  
Joan Frederick  
Cyndi Henderson  
Lynn Singleton  
Lisa Zider

## Chestnut Ridge

### Chachalacas - 90

Scott Felker  
Eleanor Nunley  
Bill Reiner  
Eric Reiner

## Deck Birds - 1

Cheri Brown  
Pat Barron  
Bev May  
Pete Precario

## Gone With the Wrens - 50

Mary Counter  
Jerilynn Von Taube

## Huffin Puffins - 60

Cathie Pruden  
Dick Pruden

## Marsh Madness - 100

Bill and Deb Marsh

## Metro Parks Stellar Jays - 90

Jim Davidson  
Jack McDowell  
Joe Meara  
John O'Meara

## Neat Nests – 35

Kiersten, Sabrina, Scott  
and Whitney Jaeb  
Fred Lancia  
Del, Jordan and  
Myranda Parrott

## No Egrets - 80

Becky Cummings  
Elaine Smith  
Larry Smith  
Roger Stout  
Laura Thomas

## Pelicans - 40

Mark and Lauren Richards  
Benjamin Richards  
Riley Richards

## Quick Three Beards - 168

Dave Horn  
Bill Whan

## Scarlet and Gray

### Tanagers – 70

Mitch Berg  
Joe and Susanne Gatesman  
Barb and Stephen Revard  
Mark and Susan Setterlin

## Slate (Run) Colored

### Juncos - 102

Linda Benner  
Doug Everman  
Kristen Everman  
Andrea Haslage  
Susan Moore  
Lori Patterson

Randy Rogers

Jen Rosa  
Brad Sparks  
Lynn Taylor

## Swans and Coots - 70

Alan Cohen  
Clyde Gosnell  
Paul Knoop  
Katryn Renard  
Marlene Woo Lun  
Louise Warner

## Two Footed Boobies - 85

Marcia Brehmer  
Marion Farber  
Melanie Shuter  
Mary Kay Wood

## Two Good Eggs – 100

Jane Kleber  
Susan Kramp

## Two in a Bush - 60

Patty DeMaria  
Elaine Fujimora  
Biani Moran

## Westerville Waxwings - 140

Julie Davis  
Ken Davis  
Jennifer Sauter  
Rob Lowery

## Wild Birds Unlimited

### Riverside - 168

Michael Flynn  
Tom Sheley

## CA has a new 'Yahoo!' Internet Group Site

For Audubon members who have access to the Internet, Columbus Audubon now has a site where members can e-mail each other, post birding reports, ask questions, share photos etc. To join the group go to: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Columbus\\_Audubon/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Columbus_Audubon/) and click on the tab "Join This Group."

In the field "Comment to Owner" please give your full name so we can quickly get you signed up. If you are an Audubon member but not part of the Columbus chapter, please provide us with your address so we can get you on the list. Please note that you need to be a "Yahoo!" member (free) to join this group service. Once you join the

Columbus Audubon "Yahoo!" group, you can choose to have group e-mails sent to your e-mail account as individual e-mails, a daily digest or not at all.

If you do not want e-mails from this group sent to your home or work, you can still check out what people have posted and e-mailed by going to the group site.

More details about the site and joining can be found at the above link. If you still have problems joining, please contact Michael Packer at [moderator@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:moderator@columbusaudubon.org). Good birding and see you online!



## 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](http://www.columbusaudubon.org) for any changes or additions to the field trip listings.

### Field trips

#### Spring at Columbus Audubon's Calamus Swamp

*Saturday, April 1, 10 a.m.*

**Leader:** Jim Davidson

Join Jim on a wonderful walk through this amazing wetland south of Columbus. Calamus' 19 acres offer a unique glimpse into the glacial past that shaped Ohio's landscape. It is home to several distinct plant communities and numerous breeding birds and is an appealing resting spot for birds migrating through the Scioto River corridor. Meet at the Calamus parking lot. **Directions:** From I-71 south, take state Route 104 south about 20 miles to 1/4 mile past where it crosses state Route 22. The parking lot is in the field on the left. *For more information, contact Jim Davidson at (614) 451-3009.*

#### Migrant and resident bird walk at Highbanks

*Sunday, April 2, 2 p.m.*

**Leader:** Mike Flynn

Join Mike Flynn at Highbanks for a bird walk as part of Audubon's popular 101 series. Beginners welcome. Meet at the nature center. *For more information, call Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

#### Bird walk at Pickerington Ponds

*Sunday, April 2, 6 p.m.*

**Leader:** Mike Flynn

Join Mike Flynn at Pickerington Ponds for a late day birding event. The sounds escalate as the day winds down. Join us as we learn the songsters of early spring. Meet at the Bowen Road parking lot. *For more information, call Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

#### Wednesday walks at Whittier

*Wednesdays, April 5 and May 3, 7:30 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](mailto:gledhillpaul@yahoo.com), or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or [heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us).*

#### Birds of Ohio series (Metro Parks)

*Thursdays, April 6 to May 11*

Learn to identify Ohio's birds during this six-week series focusing on migration, natural history, habit and behavior. Series includes three field trips. The cost of the program is \$20 and advanced registration is required. *Please call (614) 508-8111 quoting registration number 76953 to sign up.*

#### Columbus Zoo and Emily Traphagen Preserve

*Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m.-noon*

### CA April Program

#### Birds of Paradise and the Coral Sea

*Tuesday, April 25, 2006*

*7:00 p.m. social time, 7:30 p.m. presentation*

*Innis House at Inniswood Metro Gardens*

#### Program description

Join world photographer, birder, diver and Columbus Audubon trustee Michael Packer as he presents a media show featuring avian and aquatic species, people and landscapes of Papua New Guinea.

**Leaders:** Barbara Revard and Nadya Bennett

We will hike through the woods north of the zoo, hoping for early migrating birds and emerging wildflowers. We will be hiking off-trail so wear sturdy boots! After exploring the zoo, we will carpool to the Emily Traphagen Preserve on Seldom Seen Road where we will explore 72-acres of mixed habitat, including woods, meadows, wetlands and a pond. Meet at the Zoo's Business Office parking lot at 5220 Powell Road. *For more information, contact Barbara Revard at (614) 645-3448 or [barbara.revard@columbuszoo.org](mailto:barbara.revard@columbuszoo.org).*

#### Glacier Ridge Wetland walk

*Sunday, April 9, 1-3 p.m.*

**Leader:** Michael Packer

Enjoy the bird life that has come to the restored 200-acre wetland area within the park. We will traverse a boardwalk through the wetlands and climb the 25-foot observation tower to see waterfowl and other animals. From the northwest section of I-270, take U.S. 33 west to the state Route 161/Post Road exit. Turn right onto Post Road, then left onto Hyland Croy Road. Entrance is about three miles north on left. *For more information, contact Michael Packer at [packerdigital@yahoo.com](mailto:packerdigital@yahoo.com).*

#### Eagles and Ospreys, oh my!!

*Sunday, April 9, 4 p.m.*

**Leader:** Mike Flynn

Join Mike as he leads a tour of Bald Eagle and Osprey sites in southern Delaware County. Specific sites to be determined. Bring a scope and binoculars, water and a chair. Meet at Worthington Square Mall in the back corner of the parking lot on the Kroger side. *For more information, call Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

#### Prairie Oaks Metro Park

*Saturday, April 22, 8 a.m.*

**Leader:** Nadya Bennett

Celebrate Earth Day at Prairie Oaks! It is one of the newer Franklin County Metroparks and is a great place to look for a wide variety of species. We will explore a number of different habitat areas including wetland, prairie and forest. There are many different trails to take including one of the newer extensions that goes out to the recently acquired former quarry. Meet at the main park (first picnic area). Wear good, waterproof shoes as these trails can get muddy if there has been rain. Expect about a 2 to 3 mile hike.

**Directions:** From I-270, take I-70 west to Plain City-Georgesville

*See Coming up, page 7*

# Create the perfect bird habitat in your yard (Part 2)

By Toni Stahl

The article in the last issue of the *Song Sparrow* covered how to begin creating your bird habitat by imitating nature (remove invasive alien plants, reduce chemicals, add native plants and provide cover and water). The last two elements are food and places to raise young.

## Food

Only about 25-percent of native bird species will use a bird feeder. Native plants at different heights with fruits and seeds ripening at different times will bring the most species of birds. For more about berries, see the article by Casey Tucker at [www.audubon.org/states/oh/oh/news/documents/10-05final.pdf](http://www.audubon.org/states/oh/oh/news/documents/10-05final.pdf). We use bird feeders to bring birds out where we can see them. It is fun to watch baby birds being taught how to eat.

The largest increase in the number of bird species we had in our yard happened when we created our forest edge. We jumped from 9 to 30 kinds. House Sparrows like open habitat and we see less of them as the yard becomes more densely planted.

If you would like to give a forest edge habitat a try, think layers: In the rear, plant canopy trees like Chinkapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) or Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) and sub-canopy trees like Common Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*). The tricky part is that below the canopy, we found invasive plants such as alien Honeysuckles (*Lonicera japonica*). Remove invasive plants.

Plant small, shade-tolerant trees in their place like Nannyberry *Viburnum* (*Viburnum lentago*) or Grey Dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), bushes like Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) or Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*). Below, add groundcover and vines that provide winter fruit like Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and woodland herbs, ferns and flowers like Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium reptans*) or Heart-leaved Aster (*Aster cordifolius*).

Our front and side yards are in the sun, so we plant native cone-flowers, like Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) and native grasses like Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*).

Birds are a great reason to procrastinate! We delay fall cleanup every year until Mother's Day. This gives us the opportunity to watch birds eat plant seeds through early spring. We also have sun-loving evergreens like the Common Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) with berries that persist into winter, and provide cover and nesting materials.

Don't break your back! Break your transformation down into small phases. To remove lawn, (which has little wildlife value for



Our front yard. Stop by for a habitat yard tour this summer!

garden space) take the following steps:

- ◆Overlap 6-10 layers of black and white newspaper and wet thoroughly.
- ◆Cover with 4" - 6" shredded hardwood mulch or dirt for 4 to 6 weeks.
- ◆The newspaper should break down before spring. If not, plant directly through the mulch and newspaper.

## Places to raise young

Plant native trees and bushes to bring baby birds. Keeping your plants chemical-free gives baby birds healthy bugs to eat.

Get Certified: If you provide food, water, cover, places to raise young, add native plants and are moving away from chemicals, the National Wildlife Federation will certify your yard as a backyard habitat. Displaying their sign helps us explain to neighbors what we are doing, and some of them have made similar changes to their yards.

## Be a good neighbor

- ◆Check weed and neighborhood policies before planting.
- ◆Diplomatically share your knowledge about the benefits of removing invasives with neighbors to help them understand what you are doing.
- ◆Humanize the appearance of native gardens with mulch, stepping-stones, borders, and garden decorations (See [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org) for more ideas).

We designed our yard to help birds, with over 95 different native plants.

Lessons learned? For tips about what we learned while changing our yard, e-mail [marc-a@columbus.rr.com](mailto:marc-a@columbus.rr.com) for notifications about presentations and scheduled habitat yard tours. We are setting up tours from June through September. Let's work together to help birds, one backyard at a time.

- Toni Stahl is a National Wildlife Habitat Ambassador and member of Columbus Audubon and the Ohio Invasive Plants Council.



Goldfinch fledgling eating seeds from a Cup Plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) in our backyard.

## Coming up

**What:** Nature Fair and Native Plant Sale

**Where:** Wild Birds Unlimited - Riverside, 5400 Riverside Dr, Columbus, Phone: (614) 766-2103

**When:** Sun. May 21 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

We will be there with our exhibit and native plants will be available for sale

**What:** Habitat Yard Open House

**Where:** Marc & Toni's, 2948 Royalwood Dr, Dublin, Phone: 614-791-0529

**When:** Sat. June 10, anytime between 10 a.m. - noon



## Conservation Corner

# Wind power and birds: It's not easy being green

By Dave Horn

**T**raditional electrical energy production is hard on the environment. Every one of those daily coal trains that rumble north through Columbus means that some mountaintop in West Virginia, Kentucky or Tennessee has been leveled and some Swainson's warblers and Diana fritillaries have to flutter off to another place.

The emissions from electric generating plants waft eastward to acidify precipitation, killing spruce forests in New England that boreal chickadees and Bicknell's thrushes call home.

Nuclear energy is a potentially cleaner alternative but has its major expenses and risks. (Think Chernobyl.)

Wind power is an attractive, environmentally friendly "green" alternative. The concept is simple: just locate a giant fan (turbine) where it will spin in the wind, then harness that spin to a generator, and *voila!* electricity — around 100-kilowatts from a modern wind turbine.

That's enough to light two thousand 50-watt bulbs, which is more than enough to run all the electrical stuff in your house. It surely sounds like an improvement over blowing the tops off the Appalachians and killing conifers in Vermont.

Of course, it's not going to work if the turbine isn't rotating, and it's going to

## Internet resources

- ♦<http://www.ohiowind.org/ohio/wind/page.cfm>
- ♦[http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ny/ny/wind\\_power.htm](http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ny/ny/wind_power.htm)
- ♦<http://www.ohiowind.org>

work *really* well if the turbine is spinning fast and continuously.

That happens where you get consistent wind, such as where there is a major temperature difference between water and land. One such place is Altamont Pass, California. Thirty miles west is the Pacific Ocean, at a nearly constant 55 degrees. Ten miles east, the Central Valley may reach 110 to 115 degrees on a summer afternoon. Hot air rises quickly, cool air rushes to replace it, so afternoon winds of 50 to 60 miles-per-hour are not unusual in Altamont Pass.

Trees can't grow there, and inexperienced drivers on Interstate 580 are cautioned not to pull trailers through the pass on summer afternoons. Altamont Pass has the largest concentration of wind turbines on earth. There are six thousand of them, generating a billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually.

Migrating birds also rely on rising warm air, because it simply takes less

energy to stay aloft. Altamont Pass lies along a major raptor migration route, and the California Energy Commission estimates that over a thousand of these birds are killed annually by colliding with rotating fan blades. The list includes over 40 bird species: Golden eagles, Red-tailed and Ferruginous hawks, Great Horned, Barn and Burrowing owls, and on and on. Smaller wind farms have documented mortality of bats and songbirds.

Wind power is coming to Ohio; a small wind "farm" is in place at Bowling Green, and there is interest in placing turbines at or near the Lake Erie shoreline. Why not?

There is cool water, warm rising air, so there's ample wind — but the same conditions that favor wind farms also favor raptor migration. Clearly there are some negative environmental issues associated with wind power, and the location of turbines needs to take birds into account. The Conservation Committee will be monitoring wind power issues as they develop.

*Thanks goes to Lester Peyton and the Black Swamp Bird Observatory for information contained in this article.*

*The Conservation Committee meets (usually) the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Dave Horn's house. For more information, contact me at (614) 262-0312 or [horn.1@osu.edu](mailto:horn.1@osu.edu).*

## Invasive species

# Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*)

By Bruce Lindsay

In our continuing examination of invasive species, the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*) presents an interesting study. These are the yellow or orange "ladybugs" that seem to magically appear indoors around Halloween.

The Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle is a native of Asia, where it overwinters in cracks and crevices on cliff faces.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, thousands of these insects were intentionally released by the United States Department of Agriculture in an effort to control insect pests that damage pecan and other trees.

Our native species of lady beetles, such as Ohio's state insect, the convergent lady beetle (*Hippodamia convergens*), are not

especially adept at controlling tree-damaging insects.

As it turns out, the imported insects have proved to be an important predator that consumes damaging aphids on trees, shrubs and agricultural crops, thus reducing the need for pesticides.

So, what's the problem? Well, cliff faces are somewhat scarce here in the Midwest, so the beetles seek refuge from our harsh winters by invading our homes by means of small cracks and openings in the structure.

They sometimes form bothersome clusters indoors and when crunched underfoot, their blood exudes a foul odor and can stain carpets, drapes and walls.

They are also reported to bite, although it's a mild nibble that doesn't break the skin.

Is the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle a serious pest that should be eradicated? Not really. They do an effective job of controlling damaging insects.

While they constitute a pest when they invade a house to overwinter, they do little damage.

They do not carry disease and do not feed on anything while overwintering, instead existing on stored body fat.

Pesticides have little impact on the beetles, but will kill beneficial insects.

The best solution is to gather them up with a vacuum cleaner. Just be sure to remove them from the cleaner before they can escape.

It may also be a good idea to fill in gaps in the house where the beetles gain entrance, as these gaps also let in frigid winter air, causing heating bills to soar.

# Ohio Wildlife Center Day Camp

Get ready for a fun-filled, action-packed week at a working wildlife center near Powell, Ohio. One week sessions will be offered in two age groups from June 19 to August 11. Campers will take a hands-on role in learning about Ohio's native wildlife, including the care and husbandry of our resident animals, hikes, biosurveys, nest box monitoring and other nature conservation activities. Children ages 4-6 can participate in the Owlets camp which includes three-and-a-half days of hands-on immersion in nature through hikes, games, stories and the opportunity to learn how to feed and care for the resident wild animals at OWC such as

small turtles, squirrels, birds, opossums and rabbits.

Children ages 7-12 (Wildlife Encounters) will go on hikes, study wild animals and their behavior, learn how to handle, care and feed some of Ohio's native animal species and learn ways we can help our wild neighbors! Meet hawks, owls, coyotes opossums, turtles and snakes up close and learn more about the amazing ecosystems right in our own backyards!

Download and mail in a registration form by visiting <http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org> or call the OWC Education Department at (614) 734-WILD (9453).

## Learning about waterfowl

### Pattern, pattern, pattern

Look for dark and light on birds. It is especially important with waterfowl as light conditions (dimness, angles for light or sun) tend to make color useless. A field guide with all its color plates becomes useless if the light is poor. Look for the distribution of light and dark on the object. Unless the bird is up close or you have **REALLY** good optics (binoculars or scope) and a steady hand, you will not see much of the colors illustrated in even the best field guides.

### Watch the take – off

Dabbling ducks and gulls can take off nearly vertically (most of the time)! Diving ducks, loons, and grebes patter a long way before getting airborne. In a mixed flock, teal are fastest and smallest. They take off last and will be 100 yards ahead of the flock within a minute. Odd gulls are very rare away from Lake Erie – 99-percent of what we see in central Ohio are ring-billed and herring with Bonaparte's in season (late fall). Migration dates are good guidelines, but waterfowl will have stragglers.

### Puddle versus divers

Puddle ducks are typically birds of fresh, shallow marshes and rivers rather than of large lakes and bays. They usually feed by dabbling or tipping rather than submerging or diving. The speculum, or colored wing patch, is generally iridescent and bright.

### How is it sitting in the water?

Loons, grebes, scoters, and cormorants lie lower in the water than other waterfowl. Cormorants tilt their head up. Gulls ride higher than ducks.

### The bill is a good indicator *IF* you see it clearly!

Duck have beaks that are broad and flat as opposed to mergansers, loons and grebes whose beaks are long and thin.

### Habitat

Habitat is a semi-reliable clue. Diving ducks and loons like larger and deeper bodies of water (most of the time). Puddle ducks often feed on croplands given their diet is mostly vegetable. Mallards and Pintails are grain fed. Wood Ducks fatten up on acorns and do nest in trees.

### Check every bird

Study the common birds well so you notice what is different. Examine the wedge of geese for a smaller individual, perhaps a Brant. Study the common species. Things that just don't fit in a flock are likely to be interesting. The dark first-year Herring Gull flying twice as fast as the others might be a Jaeger. As you get better, watch for wing beat patterns, silhouettes, flock patterns, color areas such as wing patches and sounds.

-Dave Horn

## Coming up

### Continued from page 4

Road/state Route 142 exit and go about an eighth of a mile north. Entrance is on the right. *For more information, contact Nadya Bennett at [nadya2003@msn.com](mailto:nadya2003@msn.com).*

### Saturday walk at Whittier

Saturday, April 22, 7:30 a.m.

**Leaders:** Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Celebrate Earth Day by joining 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](mailto:gledhillpaul@yahoo.com), or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or [heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us).*

### Riverway-Kiwanis Park wildflower and bird walk

Sunday, April 23, 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Darlene Sillick

We will visit one or two other sites in Dublin for wildflowers. Meet Darlene Sillick at the south end of the Wendy's parking lot just south and east of state Route 161/Riverside Drive/U.S. 33 in Dublin. Be prepared for wet or muddy trails. Bring your camera and identification guides. *For more information, contact Darlene Sillick at [azuretrails@columbus.rr.com](mailto:azuretrails@columbus.rr.com) or (614) 761-3696.*

### Magee Marsh/Crane Creek

Saturday, May 6, 6 a.m.-late evening

**Leader:** Brad Sparks

Meet at Worthington Square Mall in the back corner of the parking lot on the Kroger side. Carpooling will be available. We will be gone most of the day, returning to Worthington in the late evening. Bring lunch and water. *For more information, contact Brad Sparks at [birdmansparks@yahoo.com](mailto:birdmansparks@yahoo.com).*

### Delaware County Bird Club field trips

There is a trip to The Wilds April 23 and a overnight trip to Magee Marsh May 11-12. *Contact Jed Burt at (740) 368-3886.*

### Avid Birders field trips

Go to <http://www.columbusaudubon.org/avids/avids.html> for more information.

## Light Out Columbus: Helping birds at night

Hello, my name is Tyler Coburn and I am a Life Scout of Troop 428 out of Delaware, Ohio. I am working on a project called "Lights Out Columbus" for a scouting service project that will help toward my Eagle award. "Lights Out Columbus" is a project with a goal to get high-rise buildings in downtown Columbus to turn down their lights during bird migrating seasons.

The lights of high-rise buildings disorient migratory birds flying through Columbus. Birds fly around the buildings until they become so exhausted that they collapse and die.

The portion of "Lights Out Columbus" that I am working on at this time is to collect data of bird mortalities this spring.

This data is needed to persuade building owners and city government that turning down the

lights will help curb the loss of migratory birds in Columbus. To compile this data, I will need volunteers to collect information on dead birds. Data collection would be the optimum choice, but photographs are also needed. Volunteers will need to collect or photograph dead birds early in the morning.

If you would be interested in helping provide information on bird mortality or are just interested in the "Lights Out Columbus" program, please contact me via e-mail at [mcoburn@columbus.rr.com](mailto:mcoburn@columbus.rr.com) or you can call (740) 815-1348.

The Conservation Committee of Columbus Audubon has endorsed this project and Dave Horn is helping to advise me.

- Tyler Coburn



Jan Rodenfels

### Audubon honors Jan Rodenfels as a Conservation Leader

Jan Rodenfels has been honored in Audubon's 2005 Annual Report as a Conservation Leader.

Rodenfels' dedication to conservation started with a passion for wildlife rehabilitation. Once she discovered the rewards of helping wildlife, she would not be deterred, even by her busy career - at the time she was working as a fashion model. "I would have these wounded birds and bats in my dressing room that I would go back to feed," she recalled. She now serves as vice-president of the board of Audubon Ohio and is on the board's development and governance committees. For the past several years, Jan has focused her energies on establishing an Audubon Center in Columbus. She brought the mayor of Columbus and local park service officials to the much loved Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm in Dayton, a trip that was decisive in the city's plans to move forward on construction of the center due to be finished in 2008. Rodenfels is also a highly successful fundraiser, gathering significant gifts for the center's capital campaign. An avid birder, she helped establish the Greenlawn Dam area near downtown Columbus as an Important Bird Area (IBA), which supports some 200 species.

## Bald Eagle nest: Two perspectives

*Continued from page 1*

being in a highly populated area. Of the 130-plus eagle pairs in the state, the Westerville eagles are among the few that seem very tolerant of human activity. But then again, if they weren't, they would not have chosen this site in the first place. Nearby Hoover Reservoir and Alum Creek are likely where these birds hunt. As nesting season progresses it will be interesting to see what transpires with this pair. As for next year? Only time will tell if they keep Westerville as their permanent "address." Ohio's Bald Eagle management is paid for by donations to the Division's Wildlife Diversity Fund. Donations can be made by checking line 29 on the 2005 Ohio Income Tax Form and/or by purchasing a Bald Eagle license plate.

*-Donna Daniel is a wildlife biologist with the ODNR, Division of Wildlife.*

### Westerville Bald Eagles – an amateur birder's perspective

*Interview by Michael Packer*

Doug Askew offers an amateur birder's perspective. Doug first spotted the nest January 26: "As I stood there looking West I saw this very large nest. I thought this was larger than any Red-tailed nest I had seen so I thought maybe the Cleveland Avenue owls had a new nest. Looking up I noticed a rather "thick" object next to it. I quickly walked to my car and got out the binoculars. Mind you they are 8x20s but when I looked at the nest there was this magnificent Bald Eagle. I also grabbed my camera and took several shots."

The next day Doug was back at the nest: "I saw them mating. The female was on nest and the male was on the edge of the nest squawking. The male walked up her back and they appeared to mate. This lasted five-to-ten seconds. The male's beak was open. After mating, the male went to opposite side of nest then flew to a nearby branch before flying away. The female also left the nest site. Only the male appeared to be banded with a red band on the left leg."

Over the next few weeks Doug reported irregular activity at the nest site but saw the following. "From the South and from out of the creek the male approached the nest site with what looked like a large piece of bark or moss ... but my photographs later showed it was a 12-to-15-inch carp."

Doug saw at least two other fish taken to the nest by the male as well as a large rodent. He has also observed the female bring nesting material to the site. A few times he thought the female was nesting but as of this writing this was not the case. The last observations Doug logged included two additional Bald Eagles: A second adult male and an immature male. "Over a time period of 20 to 25 minutes I saw the alpha pair in the nest and a second adult male circling within 50-feet harassing the alpha pair. I also saw a juvenile (perched) perhaps 2-to-3-years-old by his brown eye band sweeping down his neck. Only once did the alpha male give chase (to the second male) and remarkably quickly. Watching the alpha male posturing to the immature male was fantastic. The immature male did not move as the alpha rushed him twice. There was considerable chatter most of the time I was there."

*Doug Askew is husband, father, grandfather, amateur astronomer and amateur birder.*

Receive the *Song Sparrow* as a .pdf in your e-mail inbox! It will arrive before the first of the month and will be in full color! Help CA save money for our education and conservation programs and conserve resources. Send an e-mail to [membership@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:membership@columbusaudubon.org) to sign up!



## 101 class schedule

Columbus Audubon's 101 classes are free and open to the public and there is no need to register unless otherwise stated in the class description.

### **Birding 101: Early Migrants at Highbanks Metro Park**

*Sunday, April 2, 2 p.m.*

**Instructor:** Mike Flynn

Join Columbus Audubon's Mike Flynn on this 2.5-mile hike in search of Ohio's early bird migrants. (Nature Center).

### **Birding 101: Warblers at Highbanks Metro Park**

*Thursday, May 4, 7 p.m.*

**Instructor:** Tom Sheley

Join Tom to brush up on your warbler identification skills at this annual favorite CA 101 session. (Nature Center).

### **Astronomy 101: Beginner Astronomy Course at Perkins**

*Wednesdays, April 19, 26 and May 3*

**Instructor:** Jay Young

The Columbus Astronomical Society (CAS) is offering its popular Astronomy 101 course for Columbus Audubon at Perkins Observatory. This course is made up of three sessions with dates listed below. All classes start at 7 p.m. with an observation session after class.

*Session 1: Wednesday, April 19*

*Session 2: Wednesday, April 26*

*Session 3: Wednesday, May 3*

This course will involve both classroom and outdoor binocular and telescope viewing. Classes are designed for beginners and are guaranteed to leave you inspired and motivated to learn more of the wonders of the night-time sky. You will receive more information through e-mail before the course begins. You

must register in advance by contacting Gary Burk at [burk@columbus.rr.com](mailto:burk@columbus.rr.com). Register early as space is limited! The cost is \$25 for course materials and a year membership to Columbus Astronomical Society.

### **Astronomy 201: Intermediate Astronomy Course at the Ohio Wildlife Center**

*Wednesday, May 27 and TBA*

**Instructor:** Jay Young

The Columbus Astronomical Society (CAS) is pleased to offer new a Intermediate level Astronomy 201 course at the Ohio Wildlife Center (*Cook Road location*) for Columbus Audubon. The Astronomy 201 course is made up of three sessions with dates listed below. All classes start at 7 p.m. with an observation session after class.

*Session 1: Wednesday May 27*

*Session 2: TBA (weather dependent)*

*Session 3: TBA (weather dependent)*

This course will emphasize the use of telescopes and observing the night-time sky. The course is designed for intermediate and advanced observing and imaging techniques. Familiarity with the constellations is needed to get the most out of this field course and the discovery of "deep sky objects." You will receive more information through e-mail before the course begins. You must register in advance by contacting Gary Burk at [burk@columbus.rr.com](mailto:burk@columbus.rr.com). Register early as space is limited! The cost is \$25 for course materials and a year membership to Columbus Astronomical Society.

## Take note:

### **Museum of Biological Diversity Open House**

The Museum of Biological Diversity at The Ohio State University will host an open house April 7 and 8. On the evening of Friday, April 7, the museum will host a public lecture by Dr. Richard Prum, of Yale University.

Prum is an authority on the systematics of birds and the evolution of feathers. This lecture will be presented at Knowlton Hall, the new home of the School of Architecture. Parking for this event is in the stadium lot, west of Knowlton Hall or in a parking garage just south of the hall.

The Museum Open House will be held on Saturday, April 8, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be activities for children and self-guided tours of the collections. Parking for this event is in the Museum of Biological Diversity lot or across the street in Electrosience or the Research Center lots.

### **Lake Erie Wing Watch weekend is April 7-9**

During the weekend of April 7-9 Bowling Green State University Firelands College and surrounding areas will be host to the annual Lake Erie Wing Watch. On Friday, April 7, there will be a reception from 6:30-9 p.m. in which Kenn Kaufman will be the keynote speaker. Cost for the evening is \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door.

Saturday, April 8, will start with a early morning bird walk from 7-9 a.m. at Old Woman's Creek followed by breakfast (\$3 pre-registration required) sponsored by Friends of Old Woman's Creek Association. Also on Saturday morning there will be a

Woodcock Watch at Osborne Park in Huron Township at 8 a.m. Educational exhibits will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the college. Programs will be offered throughout the day in four concurrent sessions. A sampling of the programs offered are: Beginning Birding with Carol Andres, Warbler ID with Jim McCormac, Birdscaping Your Yard with Kim Kaufman, Understanding Feathers for Bird ID with Kenn Kaufman, Digital Photography with Gene Wright, Butterfly ID with Lois TerVeen and much more! Cost for the day is \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door.

On Sunday, April 9, bird hikes will be offered in the morning at Sheldon Marsh State Nature Preserve, McGee Marsh or Sandy Ridge Reservation starting at 9 a.m. From 2 to 4 p.m. a Eagle Watch is planned at Osborne Park.

The price for a full weekend ticket is \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Children under 12 are free. For more information, call 1-800-255-3743 or go to <http://www.lakeeriewingwatch.com>.

### **Delaware County Bird Club meetings**

Meetings are held 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.

On April 24, Dr. Amanda Rodewald, Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology at The Ohio State University will speak. **Directions:** U.S. Route 23 north to the Williams Street exit, turn left and then left again on South Henry Street. Turn right into the parking lot. For more information, contact Darlene Sillick at (614) 761-3696.

## Memberships

Memberships in Audubon and Columbus Audubon and gift memberships are available through Columbus Audubon

### Audubon Membership

Includes membership in the national organization and Columbus Audubon; includes 4 issues of Audubon magazine and 5 issues of the chapter newsletter, local activities, and when submitted with our chapter code helps fund our programs. Rates below are available to **NEW** subscribers.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 - 1-year introductory rate  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$30 - 2-year introductory rate  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 - 1-year student/senior rate

### Columbus Audubon Chapter Only Membership

Chapter only membership includes 5 issues of the chapter newsletter, local activities and helps fund our programs.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 - 1-year new membership  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 - Renewal (currently \$15 less than Audubon renewals)

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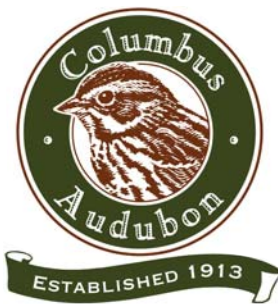
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Work Projects: Sharon Treaster, 846-8419  
Education: Susan Setterlin, 457-8130  
Programs: Mike Flynn, 882-9493  
Field Trips: Darlene Sillick, 761-3696 or Nadya Bennett, 734-1877  
Eco Weekend: Lois Day, (740) 549-0333; Roz Horn, 262-0312  
Membership: Joe Meara, 781-9602  
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Calamus Committee: Kylene Kruse, 262-0375  
Birdathon: Julie Davis, 523-2180 or Katryn Renard, 261-7171  
CA Phone Line: Lois and John Day, (740) 549-0333  
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