

Columbus Audubon Song Sparrow

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Creature feature

Prothonotary Warbler (*Prothonotaria citrea*)

By Rob Thorn

The Prothonotary Warbler is one of the many brightly colored wood warblers that migrate into Ohio during the spring to set up nesting territories. It is particularly bright, with a golden plumage on its head and breast, contrasting with gray-blue wings in the male. Its name makes a sly reference to this, since a prothonotary is a clerk of the Catholic Church and wears a gray-blue robe with a yellow hood. (Try putting the emphasis on the 'notary'!) This name is repeated in the scientific genus name, where it is the only member of its genus.

Family: Emberizidae. This is a huge family of perching birds that includes Eurasian buntings, sparrows, tanagers, and wood warblers among others. The wood warblers of the subfamily Parulinae represent nearly 100 species of brightly-colored tree-loving birds of the New World. Like much of this family, wood warblers are basically tropical birds that have developed a northern migration to escape the crowded tropics for the relatively less crowded habitats of temperate North America. There are still plenty of tropical warbler species, but the large number of species that have evolved from these northern migrants attests to the success of this strategy. Every spring we bear witness to this success in the waves of migrant wood warblers, grosbeaks, and tanagers that flock through our newly leafed forests.

Range: Prothonotary warblers nest in wooded swamps and riparian woods in much of the eastern United States. Their range seems to be largely defined by where they can find such swampy woodlands. At their western margins, they extend up some of the Great Plains rivers into central Kansas and Oklahoma. To the north, they follow the floodplain forest of the Mississippi and its tributaries as far north as south-central Minnesota and Wisconsin. In the Great Lakes, they can be found as far north as the lacustrine swamp forests of western Michigan and southern Ontario. The heart of their range, however, is the mysterious cypress/hardwood swamps of the lower Mississippi and the Gulf Coast. If these seem hauntingly familiar, think about a large woodpecker in the news recently.

Like most wood warblers, you can't summarize their range just by talking of their nesting range. Winter range is just as important. Prothonotaries appear to carry their love for swamp forest with them on their travels: the hearts of their wintering range are the brooding mangrove swamps of central America extending from the Yucatan down to Columbia and Venezuela. Apparently the birds forage as small groups or flocks through specific areas of these mangrove swamps, which must be a sight to behold. Spring migrants use either the coastline or go trans-gulf, and the species is a regular member of fallout flocks along the Gulf Coast of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas.

Field Marks: As with many wood warblers, Prothonotaries are blessed with a wealth of bright field marks. The males have an almost unmistakable golden-yellow head and neck. The species was formerly called the Golden Swamp warbler, and one look at a male foraging among tupelo stumps will tell you why. The females are somewhat duller, but the lack of breast or head-striping or markings rules out most other warblers, other than some immature yellow warblers. Along with the golden appearance, comes a rather large size (for a warbler) and deliberate behavior, unlike many of the more frantic smaller warblers. Add in the loud song and the relatively unusual habitat, and you have many ways to pick out a prothonotary. Interestingly, the golden color that seems such a eye-catcher to us may not be so out of place in their mangrove wintering grounds. Mangroves are notorious about continually dropping leaves and they nearly always have some bright yellow leaves in the process of senescing. Many other small mangrove insectivores - Yellow, Prairie, and Mangrove warblers - are all quite yellow, and my experience with the former two is that they're not easy to pick out in the mangrove canopy.

Voice: A loud, penetrating 'Sweet sweet sweet sweet' announces that you are in the



Courtesy of National Audubon

A Prothonotary Warbler.

See Prothonotary Warblers, page 11

Birdathon 2006: There's still time to sign up

By Julie Davis

What will our Birdathon teams see this year? Cape May Warbler, American Bittern, Summer Tanager or our own mascot, the Song Sparrow. Our teams are hard at work planning their trips and recruiting sponsors. We are all looking forward to this great spring tradition. It is all of you, our members, who help make the Birdathon such a huge success. Your support is what makes this an exciting and fun event every year for our birding teams.

Our sponsors are as important to our success as our birders. If you would like to become a sponsor, simply pick one of the

teams, fill out the sponsorship form below and send it in. You do not need to send your money in until you hear from your team. This year, 75 percent of the profits from the Birdathon will go to Audubon Ohio to support the Whittier Peninsula project, which is located in the Important Bird Area 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 con-

junction with the Whittier project. If you have not formed a team yet, there's still time! Just start with a couple of birding buddies, choose a team name and call Katryn Renard (614) 261-7171 to register.

Ask friends and co-workers to sponsor you and then go birding! Count all the birds that you can identify in either 5, 10 or 24 hour increments. On any day between May 5 and May 14. Remember, you don't have to stay in Ohio to do your birding, so be creative. The teams that have already registered are listed on page 3. So, call now and add your name to the list.

Birdathon Celebration

We are anticipating our best year ever and we want you to join in our celebration. All of our birders, sponsors and their families are invited to celebrate their success on Friday, May 26 at the Nature Center at Highbanks Metro Park. Join our own birding expert Dave Horn at 6:30 p.m. for a pre-party bird walk. If you can not attend the walk, you are welcome to join us at 7:30 p.m. at the nature center.

We will re-live our birding adventures over dessert and award some great door prizes. The grand prizes this year are a Denali 60mm angled spotting scope which was generously donated by Eagle Optics and a one night's stay at Sandy Cove

Cottage on the North Shore of Kelly's Island.

You must turn in all of your pledge money by May 26 to be eligible for the door prizes. Please plan to join us for a great night of birding, food, prizes and fun.

Highbanks Metro Park is located on U.S. 23 north about 2 miles north of I-270. The nature center is near the front of the park on the right. Please RSVP by May 20 to Julie Davis at (614) 523-2180 if you plan to attend.

Birdathon teams should bring their sponsor sheets and money collected to the party or send it to Julie Davis by May 20.



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

Join the CA '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/ 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

Receive this newsletter 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 to sign up!

daily digest or not at all.

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. Good birding and see you online!

Birdathon teams

Backyard Experience

Chick-a-dees - 70

Gerry Brevoort
Gail Burns
Joan Frederick
Cyndi Henderson
Lynn Singleton
Lisa Zidar
Nina Hawranick

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 & Dick Pruden

Marsh Madness - 100

Bill Marsh
Deb Marsh

Metro Parks Stellar Jays - 90

Jim Davidson
John Watts
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
Troy Shively
Greg Miller

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

101 class schedule

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 201: Intermediate Astronomy Course

Wednesday, May 24 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 24

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 gburk@rroho.com.

Register early as space is limited! The cost is \$25 for course materials and a year membership to Columbus Astronomical Society.

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

Wednesday walks at Whittier

Wednesdays, May 3 and June 7, 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, or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342 or heather.raymond@epa.state.oh.us.*

Magee Marsh/Crane Creek State Park

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

Leader: Brad Sparks

Meet leader Brad Sparks at the Worthington Square Mall (the usual place). To carpool to Magee Marsh and Crane Creek State Park. We will be gone most of the day, returning to Worthington in the late evening. Avid birder Brad Sparks will leave no stone unturned on his quest to show and teach you all he can about birds. Bring lunch and water. *For more information, contact Brad Sparks at birdmansparks@yahoo.com.*

Bird traps of the Darby Plains

Saturday, May 6, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

While we don't have Lake Erie to concentrate our migrants, we do have migrant traps in many locations of central Ohio. Some of the best involve the Darby Plains, the broad, flat, largely treeless expanse west of Columbus. Here, farming has isolated small patches of woodlands, usually along the creeks that flow through the area, and migrant forest birds crowd into these 'forest islands.' We'll start at Prairie Oaks, the Metro Park that straddles the Big Darby and seems to funnel migrants in good numbers. From there, we'll visit several nearby 'islands' to hunt up a variety of migrants. Meet at the Prairie View picnic area (the first one inside the west entrance of the park). *For more information, contact Rob Thorn at (614) 471-3051 or robthorn@earthlink.net.*

Stages Pond State Nature Preserve

Sunday, May 7, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Leader: Nadya Bennett

Springtime at Stages Pond is magical. The diverse habitats, including prairie, kettle lake, wetlands, and woodland attract a huge variety of bird, mammal, wildflower and butterfly species. We will be hiking through all of these areas so be prepared with sturdy waterproof shoes, water, snacks and bug spray! Also be aware that there are no restroom facilities on the preserve. Meet at the preserve. **Directions:** Located in Ashville about five miles north of Circleville. From Columbus take U.S. Route 23 South. Continue on U.S. 23 through South Bloomfield (passing state Routes 752 and 316) and begin to look for Hagerty Road on your left. Turn left

CA May Program

Penguins, Snowy Sheathbills and other summer visitors to the Antarctic

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

*7:00 p.m. social time, 7:30 p.m. presentation
Innis House at Inniswood Metro Gardens*

Program description

Multitudes of penguins visit the Antarctic during the short summer. They flock to its rich coastal waters to feed on krill and to its many islands where they can nest in relative safety from predators. They are the best known of the Antarctic's many visitors, but not the only animals to visit the Antarctic and bask in its summer glory. Jed and Pam Burt were among the summer visitors and they will share their experiences with penguins and other visitors to Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic islands in an illustrated lecture.

onto Hagerty and the preserve entrance is about 1.5 miles down the road on the left. The sign comes up kind of quickly so be on the lookout for it. *Please contact Nadya Bennett at (614) 734-1877 or nadya2003@msn.com.* **Note:** For those of you interested in staying for the evening trip to Slate Run Wetlands with Mike Flynn, we will have a break from 4-6 p.m. to get dinner and make our way back north to the Slate Run area.

Slate Run Wetlands

Sunday, May 7, 6 p.m.-dark

Leader: Mike Flynn

This extensive wetland provides a haven for waterfowl, rails, bitterns, egrets, herons and many other wetland wildlife. Join us for a quiet evening on the boardwalk as we search for these inhabitants and enjoy the evening. **Directions:** From I-270, take U.S. 33 east toward Lancaster to the Canal Winchester/state Route 674 exit. Turn right onto Gender Road/state Route 674 and go about two miles until it dead-ends into Lithopolis Road. Turn left and go about a 1/2 mile to S.R. 674. Turn right and go about four miles past the main park entrance (another 1/2 mile) to Marcy Road and turn right. Go three miles to Winchester Road and turn right. The wetlands entrance is about two miles on the right. *For more information, contact Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

Walhalla Ravine bird walk

Friday, May 12, 8:30 a.m.

Leaders: Katryn Renard and Ruth May

Walhalla Ravine is a treasure tucked in the middle of Clintonville. It has steep sides, plenty of trees, and a road that runs along the bottom of it. Come join us as we look for birds foraging there during migration. Quite a variety of birds have been spotted there in previous years, including many warblers. We will meet outside the ravine and then walk along the road, pausing as we go to see what we find. We will turn around and retrace our steps along the bottom of the ravine to take us back to the cars. Meet Ruth and Katryn at the southern side of the parking lot at the McDonalds at the intersection of West Weber Road and High Street. We will walk

See Coming up, page 9

Create the perfect bird habitat in your yard (Part 3)

By Toni Stahl

To create your bird habitat, you've read about how to imitate nature by reducing chemicals, adding native plants, and providing Cover, Water, Food and Places to Raise Young. Read on for more ways to imitate nature.

Remove invasives

Did you know what you do in your yard affects our native birds? Mother knows best - Mother Nature, that is! One way we kept native songbirds healthy was by removing non-native, invasive plants and adding native plants to our yard. Many invasives spread from our yards (via wind dispersal, birds spreading seeds, etc.) much more aggressively than native plants do.

In addition to having deep taproots that reduce soil erosion, stabilize banks, reduce run off, and filter pollutants from our water, native plants recreate native biodiversity.

Why should we be concerned about native biodiversity? For the birds! Native biodiversity (all living organisms) is responsible for the healthy food chain that we humans (and our native birds) depend on and for bringing plant pests and diseases into natural balance. Native plants and animals evolved by creating predator-prey balance over thousands of years. Their non-native counterparts were suddenly introduced and haven't had time to develop a healthy balance with Ohio birds.

When we put out bird feeders and baths, our bird species count went up to 9, but when we created a native forest edge, the number of species jumped almost immediately to 30!

Some invasive plant types in Ohio

Here are some highlights of problems a few invasives cause in Ohio. Scientific names are in italics because plants have different common names, and some of the same common names apply to more than one type of plant.

Non-native Bush Honeysuckles (*Lonicera maackii*, *L. Morrowii*, *L. Xbella* and *L. tatarica*) and Autumn-olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) were planted for wildlife habitat, not realizing their eventual negative impact. (For more on bush honeysuckles see the article by Dave Horn on page 7.) Honeysuckles are detrimental to birds because their structure doesn't provide adequate bird nesting opportunities, are not used by long-distance migrating birds, have lower-protein content than native plants and their large berry is not edible by smaller birds.

The Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) is a vine that has similar impacts to the bush honeysuckles. It chokes out tree saplings and completely shades out oak tree seedlings (150 forest wildlife species in Ohio depend on Oak acorns).

Replacing invasives with native understory plants, such as Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), provides berries for feeding all sizes of native wildlife in the ravines and in your yard. You can plant Spicebush under trees. The Spicebush has leaves inside as well as outside. It provides shelter from wind, cover from predators and safer nesting.



Spicebush.

Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is a rapidly spreading, beautiful killer. It produces over 1 million seeds per plant in a growing season, in addition to underground stems (rhizomes). It changes the chemical composition of wetlands and it alters the algae community to become toxic to developing American

Coming up

Nature Fair and Native Plant Sale

Sunday, May 21, from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Wild Birds Unlimited - Riverside, 5400 Riverside Drive.

Habitat Yard Open House

Saturday, June 10, anytime between 10 a.m. - noon at 2948 Royalwood Dr, Dublin.

Fall Yard Care (Nature Friendly) Presentation

Saturday, Aug 26, 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Highbanks Metro Park.

toads. (Toads provide early warning of danger to humans, like the 'Canary in coal mines').

Pink Loosestrife (*L. virgatum*) is a favorite everywhere. Currently sold in garden stores as "sterile," studies over several years in Ohio indicate that it produces viable seed when it cross-pollinates with Purple Loosestrife. It is banned from being sold in other states. Let your friends and neighbors know that, although beautiful, this is a harmful plant that should be removed.

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) invades forest edges and road corridors. It has become the most prevalent plant in Ohio forests. One plant establishes an entire population. It exudes chemicals that reduce seed germination and growth of native plants. Seeds remain viable 7 years or more. Garlic Mustard is bare inside (tent-like) thus providing inadequate nesting and cover. It chokes out forest plants. It's earlier leaves last longer and it blocks light from natives. Mature plants should be removed after pulling because seed continues to mature. For more on Garlic Mustard, see the invasives article in the February-March newsletter.



Courtesy of ODNR

Purple Loosestrife.

Some invasives work together to cause greater harm, faster. For instance, Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) teams up with other invasives, such as Common Teasel and non-native grasses, to take over the last remnants of Ohio's original grasslands and prairies. Rare native birds, like the Bobolink,



Courtesy of ODNR

Canada Thistle.

Henslow's Sparrow, Bobwhite and Short-eared Owl, evolved to depend on native grasslands and prairies.

Be a good neighbor

Check weed and neighborhood association guides before adding native plants. Diplomatically share your knowledge about the benefits of removing invasives with neighbors so they understand what you are doing. Getting certified by the National Wildlife Federation and putting up their sign made communication with our neighbors a lot easier for us. Humanize the appearance of visible native gardens with mulch, stepping-stones, borders and garden decorations. Let's work together to help native birds, one yard at a time.

- Toni Stahl is a National Wildlife Habitat Ambassador and member of Columbus Audubon and the Ohio Invasive Plants Council. You can reach her at marc-a@columbus.rr.com.

Community outreach

South Side Settlement after-school program update

By Susan Setterlin

The students have been quite busy learning more about the birds and other animals right in their own neighborhood. Students watched intently the movie “Winged Migration” to learn about the arduous task of migration and the pitfalls that the birds face on their long journeys in the spring and fall. To reinforce what they learned from the movie, the two classes of older students recently participated in an activity centered on their own “migration.” Each student chose a bird from a group of birds on tags. The student then became that migrating bird and followed queues as they “flew” from station to station. (There were 24 stations). In some cases, the birds met with favorable winds and were able to fly ahead several stations. In other cases, they either had to spend a certain amount of time at a station looking for food or waiting out a storm. In some cases, they even had to go back several stations. Some birds did not make it to their “summer” home. (They died). The students really got into the activity and wanted to go several more rounds. In the end, the activity impressed upon the students the trials and tribulations that many birds experience at least twice a year. All in all, the students expressed a new respect for their feathered friends.

The two classes of younger students learned about bird families and how some birds are related. Their activity centered on finding their bird “cousin” by matching their bird with a related bird card found on a display table. They found out that it was not as easy as they anticipated! They learned that they had to look at many characteristics of the birds for a positive match.

The students really enjoyed a visit from the Ohio Wildlife Center. The rehabilitation center shared with the students the plights of local wildlife in sharing the environment with humans. They found



Some of the students touching a snake from the OWC.

out that snakes are not all that bad and definitely not slimy! Opossums look a lot different up close and alive as opposed to roadkill. Other animal ambassadors, the flying squirrel and American Kestrel, were both a big hit with the kids.

The students are anticipating discovering more about the life of the migratory birds (and others) by learning about courtship behavior, nest building and parenting. They are anxious to visit the Whittier Peninsula this spring to see what birds they might discover that are different from those observed last October. Their Audubon after-school experience will culminate May 22 with an “Avian Olympics” celebration. Watch for a report on the “Avian Olympics” in the future.

IBA Adoption Program - Whittier Peninsula

By Paul Gledhill

On March 26 Columbus Audubon members interested in voluntary monitoring of the Whittier Peninsula portion of the Greenlawn-Scioto River Important Bird Area met to learn birding sampling techniques and discuss Columbus Audubon’s monitoring plan. The two types of surveys are a census of areas and point counts.

How to collect data

Census of areas: Birders are asked to keep track of the time birded, name of participants and number of birds species observed in these four main areas:

1) Upper Basin: Any land area (except for the spit) upstream of the Greenlawn Dam to the most northern part of the IBA (the Scioto River Dam next to the Miranova condo building).

2) Spit: The narrow peninsula within Whittier that divides the upper water basin.

3) Basin: All the water upstream of the Greenlawn Dam to the most northern dam at the upstream end of the IBA.

4) Lower Basin: Any birds observed downstream of the Greenlawn Dam to the southern end of Berliner Park.

Point counts: Points throughout the peninsula will be marked on the ground and on maps. At each point count, birders will be asked to silently observe and note all birds within 25 and 50 meters. The point count at the boat ramp will allow all birds be counted, no matter what distance from the observer, but optic types used will need to be noted.

Future monitoring methods are being considered, including birding-by-boat and birding particular areas that will have wetlands established on them.

How the data will be used

At the IBA workshop John Ritzenthaler, of Audubon Ohio, discussed the importance of data which is consistently recorded over long periods of time. This data can be used to determine trends in bird populations over time. With the development of the Metro Park and the Columbus Audubon Center, habitat types of the peninsula will change greatly over the next

few years. Volunteers’ data being collected now will help document how these habitat changes impact bird species diversity and abundance. Documented changes that occur throughout the development of the park may provide additional evidence of the importance of habitat restoration in urban areas.

How to be a part of this

Anyone interested in being a part of this project is welcome to go out and collect data at any time. Later in the program’s development we will coordinate point counts to ensure surveys occur on a consistent basis to track trends. Please contact Paul Gledhill at gledhillpaul@yahoo.com or (614) 848-7666 if you would like data sheets and maps of the census areas and point count locations.

For now, Paul Gledhill will collect all data sheets. A database is being developed which will allow volunteers to enter their data directly via the Internet. In time, volunteers’ data will be displayed and analyzed online and at the future Columbus Audubon Center.

Conservation Corner

Lights out, Calamus Swamp and CA checklist

By Dave Horn

As surely as spring comes again, conservation issues are always with us. The Conservation Committee is busy on several fronts. Breaking issues will be on the Columbus Audubon Web site as they develop, and the following may be of particular interest:

"Lights out" project: As mentioned in the last issue, Boy Scout Tyler Coburn of Troop 428 in Delaware is working on a project with the 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, who fly around the buildings until they become so exhausted they die. Tyler is collecting data on bird mortality and needs volunteers to collect information on dead birds downtown. If you are interested in helping, please contact Tyler at mcoburn@columbus.rr.com or (740) 815-1348. You may (or may not) know that retrieving dead birds is illegal without the

appropriate permits. Tyler's study will be under Dave Horn's direct supervision and yes, Dave has the necessary federal and state permits to collect dead birds for this purpose.

Calamus Swamp: We continue to encourage visits to our own little wetland in Pickaway County. If you visit Calamus Swamp we ask two things:

1. E-mail (horn.1@osu.edu) or call Dave at (614) 262-0312 to let him know what you see (bird sightings, trees across the trails, etc.).

2. Pack out trash if convenient -- not everyone who uses state Route 104 has respect for the environment. If you want a workout, mark your calendars for Saturday, June 17, from 10 a.m. onward for a work party at the swamp. We will be doing some spring cleaning. Also, on Aug. 5 (rain date: Aug 12) we'll have another work party to extend the boardwalk at the swamp.

Field Checklist of Ohio Birds: Columbus Audubon has its own checklist

of Ohio Birds which you can get in print form, or download from our Web site.

Recent actions by the American Ornithologists Union and the American Birding Association have revised the checklist sequence, and some Ohio checklists (e.g. that of the Ohio Ornithological Society) are expected to follow suit. For those of us accustomed to starting with loons and grebes it's a challenge to start with ducks and geese, go on to chickens, and then loons and so forth. More importantly, the old, now former, outdated but familiar sequence is in line with that of most bird guides on the market. So, for now, we are not going to revise our own checklist (but we do know about the revised sequence).

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 Dave at (614) 262-0312 or horn.1@osu.edu.

Invasive species

Bush honeysuckles

By Dave Horn

Our featured invasive species, bush honeysuckles, are actually three species: the Amur, the Morrow and the Tatarian Honeysuckles. All were introduced into North America from Asia over 100 years ago. As is often the case, they were introduced as ornamental plants but have since run amok and taken over the understory of woodlands throughout Ohio and much of the eastern United States.

As their name implies, bush honeysuckles are shrubs 6- to 15-feet tall with oval leaves that leaf



Courtesy of ODNR
Amur Honeysuckle.



Courtesy of ODNR
Morrow Honeysuckle.

out earlier and fall off later than those of nearly all native shrubs. The soft green undergrowth you see in central Ohio woodlands in late April is likely bush honeysuckle. The flowers are similar to those of native honeysuckle vines, but usually smaller and the fruit are yellow or red berries. The berries are attractive to birds such as robins, other thrushes, grackles and waxwings, which then spread the seeds far and wide.

What's the problem? Bush honeysuckles outcompete native understory vegetation. Greening-up early gives them a competitive advantage, and evidence sug-

gests that their roots give off chemicals that inhibit the growth of nearby plants. They simply move in and take over, and that is the definition of an invasive species. It is certain that where bush honeysuckles are well-established there is a significant decline in the variety of native plants, and on the butterflies and moths whose larvae feed on them. As if that were not enough, bush honeysuckle berries might be mildly poisonous to children. Birds apparently are unaffected by the toxins in the berries.

The most effective control is to remove the plants entirely, roots and all. This may not be possible with larger

plants, which can be cut off at ground level and the stumps treated with an appropriate herbicide, if you are not averse to using chemicals. There has been research on biological control of bush honeysuckles but to date no effective biological controls have been identified. Management of bush honeysuckles requires ongoing effort. Even if the roots are killed, bush honeysuckle comes back, because birds continue to spread the seeds, and we like to encourage birds.

For more information on the bush honeysuckle threat, visit: <http://www.dnr.ohio.gov/dnap/invasive/1amurhoneysuck.htm> and <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/>.



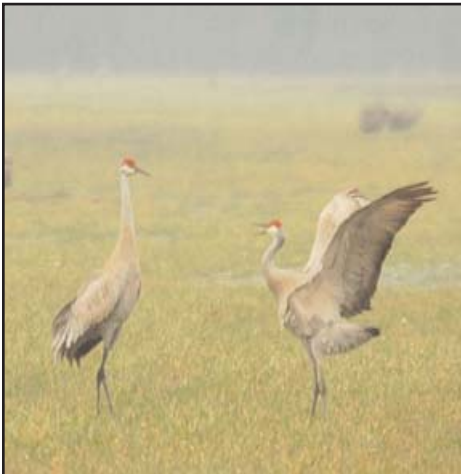
Courtesy of ODNR
Tatarian Honeysuckle.

Notes from the field

Counting the Dance Steps of the Sandhill Crane

In March and November, like clockwork, a gathering of Sandhill Cranes happens at Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. And it is easy to write this off as just another migration if you have never seen it. I have tried to describe what it's like to witness a total eclipse of the sun, "Night falls in seconds, birds stop singing" and I stress that this benign force of nature stopped warriors in battle and has ended wars. But I can see in people's eyes that they just don't get it. And how could they get it when all they have seen is a partial eclipse – one, two, or a few dozen Sandhill Cranes?

Mike Flynn's spring trip to see the staging grounds of the "Greater" Sandhill Crane began early on Saturday March 11 with a five hour trek to Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area in northwest Indiana. A couple of hours past Fort Wayne, we start looking for park signs surrounded by farmland. "Ah folks we should look up, I don't think those are Canada Geese in the sky." Mike exclaimed. Scanning the partly-sunny sky from several directions we saw flocks of 3 to 20 Sandhill Cranes vectored in the direction we were traveling. A bend in the road takes us east through a forest edge. Through the trees where the farmland resumes we see 20, no more like 60 cranes well camouflaged in a mucky cornfield. We decide to park. The trees offer us some cover to see and photograph these birds from about 30 meters. The birds see us and some take off together. Some also "parachute" land into the wind to join the group. Fantastic! A car stops next to ours and we learn from some Indianans that a Whooping Crane has been spotted in the area as well. That's a life-list bird for me and suddenly this weekend trip seems too short. Members of CA were supposed to



Sandhill Cranes.

By Michael Packer

For bird stories submitted by some of our members, go to www.columbusaudubon.org.

rendezvous at 1 p.m. at the Sandhill Crane lookout tower overlooking a vast green field. My group waits an hour to make sure everyone is together. At midday, when the majority of cranes are searching for food on fields like the one we just came from, there were still about 2000 cranes cooing, sleeping and flying over the field before us. The best time to view the Cranes is in the evening and in the morning. Through these hours, cranes congregate, pair up, and begin or resume courtship. We decided to head back to the bend in the road to catch some spots we saw while making our way to the lookout tower. And bingo! An immature Whooping Crane was now there with great views through a spotting scope. We stop at one of the wetland areas where we saw: Lesser Yellowlegs, Pintails, Shovelers, Lesser Scaup, and Sandhill Cranes of course. On our way out, Mike Flynn asks some folks where else we might go. We then head to Kankakee State Park and 100 Ross's geese (life-list bird for all) were now before us. It is a small (16") white goose with striking black primaries. We also spotted 36 White-fronted Geese, and additional diving ducks were also enjoyed and photographed.

We went back at the lookout tower. Where there were 2000 cranes, there were now three times more. The series of dry clattering "coos" by a single crane is "Jurassic" (children would love it) and can be heard a mile away. The 2000 calling now and the 5000 calling the following morning were positively mesmerizing for us. Observing the cranes at this staging ground was not just an impressive numbers game but a culminating fortitude of nature. On Nov. 4 and 5, Mike Flynn plans to take Columbus Audubon back to Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area. At this time of year the number of Sandhill Cranes can be on the order of 30,000! Details will be in this newsletter prior to the trip. For pictures of the March trip please visit: pls.125mb.com/sandhillcranes/page1.htm.

Note: Kankakee State Park and Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area are both Indiana IBA's.

-Michael Packer

Big Island-Killdeer Plains trip report

On March 26, Mike Flynn and I co-led a Columbus Audubon field trip to the Big Island Wildlife Area near Marion. Our focus was mainly waterfowl and eagles although we always hope for something bigger, better and maybe even a little



Injured Red-tailed Hawk.

unusual. Well, we picked the perfect day to achieve what we set out for. After about three hours at Big Island, the group decided to head about 20 minutes north to Killdeer Plains for more waterfowl and maybe a Short-eared Owl or two. After about an hour, around 6 p.m., we began to head over to the Sportsman's Center to look for the owls. On the way, Jane Kleber (a CA member) spotted a raptor of some sort, on the ground with what looked like prey in its mouth. Thinking we would get some great looks at a raptor close up, we all pulled into the parking area where she had seen the bird. By that time, the bird had made its way into some brush along the side of a small but fairly steep gully. After observing the bird (a young Red-tailed Hawk) we realized that it was injured and bleeding. Thanks to Jo Macintosh (a volunteer at the Ohio Wildlife Center), we managed to get the bird wrapped in a blanket and took it back to the center in Northwest Columbus for treatment. The hawk is now recovering at the center. According to center officials, the bird had been hit by a car, injuring its wing badly. As of April 6, the following update was received from Jo Macintosh, "The Red-tailed Hawk was worked on after I left, but I talked to Lisa Fosco, director of animal care at OWC, about his condition afterward. She's pleased with his wing progress, slow but healing. It's still a challenge to get him to eat. His weight is down a bit. Prognosis is still guarded, but a little more positive."

Fingers crossed, it looks like the bird will make a full but very slow recovery. Big thanks to Jane for her keen "birding" eyes and Jo for her quick assessment of the situation. Without these two, the bird probably would not have made it. CA holds field trips to educate the public and get them to spend some time outdoors to enjoy and appreciate all that nature and the environment has to offer. As I watch Jo 'do her thing', I realized how we as individuals can truly make a difference in the lives of the creatures we share our planet with.

-Nadya Bennett

Coming up

Continued from page 4

across High Street to reach Wahalla Road and enter the ravine on foot. *For more information, contact Katryn Renard at (614) 261-7171.*

Saturday walks at Whittier

Saturdays, May 13 and June 17, 7:30 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Same as the Wednesday walks at Whittier. See page 4 for more information.

Mother's Day evening walk at Glacier Ridge Wetlands

Sunday, May 14, 6 p.m.-dark

Leader: Mike Flynn

This new wetland refuge attracts a wide variety of birds and other wildlife that draw on the habitat for food, shelter and nesting. Last year we were excited to observe and hear the Sora numerous times from the boardwalk. End this day of celebrating loved ones with an evening enjoying the sights and sounds of this amazing natural area. **Directions:** From I-270, near Dublin, 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 to the Honda Wetland Education Center is about 1.2 miles on the left. *For more information, contact Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493.*

Weekday bird walk at Green Lawn Cemetery

Thursday, May 18, 8 a.m.

Leaders: Katryn Renard and Ruth May

Columbus Audubon has a tradition of guiding bird walks at the ever popular migratory bird trap, Green Lawn Cemetery. This year is no exception. We will, as tradition dictates, meet at the pit and let our ears lead us from there as we track down warblers and other delights. Please join Ruth May and Katryn Renard as they share their identification tips in this well-loved birding spot. *For more information, contact Katryn Renard at (614) 261-7171.*

Whittier-Scioto River IBA and Green Lawn Cemetery

Saturday, May 20, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

If you can't get up to Erie or don't have the full day for birds, make a morning of it with us at one of Columbus' most diverse birding areas, as well as its future urban metro park. Migration should be just past its peak, and we'll especially be on watch for an array of late warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, and grosbeaks as we hope for a good fallout. What we don't find along the bike path, we'll try to find at the nearby Green Lawn Cemetery later in the morning. This is a great time for rarities. Meet at the South Scioto boat launch (off Whittier Street west of Front Street). *For more information, contact Rob Thorn at (614) 471-3051 or robthorn@earthlink.net.*

Birding by canoe and kayak

Saturday, June 3, 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Darlene Sillick

Join Darlene Sillick to paddle Twin Lakes in search of nesting Prothonotary Warblers and other local residents and late migrant species. Please RSVP to Darlene by May 30. Meet in the parking lot at Area S just off state Route 745 north of Shawnee Hills. Bring your own canoe/kayak, personal flotation device and water. We will be out about 2 to 3 hours and may access the Scioto River north of the zoo if conditions are calm. Interested to rent a kayak and join us? Contact Darlene for more information by May 15. There is a pre-paid charge for all kayakers. Arrangements are being made with Mimi Morrison of Touch the Earth Adventures, for kayak

rental and guiding expertise. She has 10 kayaks so first come first served. *For more information, contact Darlene Sillick at (614) 761-3696 or azuretrails@columbus.rr.com.*

Birds, butterflies and dragonflies of Calamus Swamp

Saturday, June 3, 9:30 a.m.

Leader: Dave Horn

Find out the skinny on the birds, butterflies and dragonflies of Calamus Swamp with Dave Horn. Meet in Calamus parking lot. Look for a green Subaru Outback, license plate "MOTHMAN," bring mosquito repellent. We may continue on to Canal Park, Circleville, and Pickaway County airport where blue grosbeaks have nested in recent years. *For more information, contact Dave Horn at (614) 262-0312.*

Bird/nature trek at Denison University Biological Reserve

Saturday, June 10, 8 a.m.

Leader: Michael Packer

Join Michael on one of the nicest walks (about 1.5 miles) in central Ohio. Denison University Biological Reserve encompasses 350 acres of indigenous forest interspersed with old orchards and former plantations of pine, spruce, sugar maple and yellow poplar. The woods and grassland along with four ponds and seven natural springs provide refuge for numerous amphibians, turtles, snakes, flying squirrels, white-tailed deer, butterflies, and over one hundred species of resident birds. Meet at the Blendon Woods Nature Center parking lot. *For more information, contact Michael Packer at (614) 580-3309.*

Hoover Meadows and beyond

Sunday, June 11, 1 p.m.

Leader: Nadya Bennett

Come and see a different side of Hoover Reservoir as we explore Hoover Meadows - an extensive area diverse in habitats. Wetland, field and forest species will all be part of the agenda in this preserve. After leaving this area, we will head over to Galena to walk the newly created boardwalk. The rest of the afternoon will be spent visiting other sites around Hoover. Meet at Worthington Square parking lot in the back corner by Kroger. *For more information, contact Nadya Bennett at (614) 734-1877 or nadya2003@msn.com.*

Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park

Sunday, June 18, 2 p.m.

Leader: Nadya Bennett

The largest of the Metro Parks, Battelle Darby Creek offers 6500 acres of forest, fields, and wetlands. We will be exploring about two miles of trails off the Indian Ridge picnic area that skirts the creek, takes us through forest and swampland and then a final loop around a vast field area - all perfect for seeing a wide variety of species. Meet at the Indian Ridge Picnic area at 2705 Darby Creek Drive. **Directions:** From I-270, take the West Broad Street exit. Go 5 miles on Broad and turn left on Darby-Creek Drive. Continue on Darby Creek for 3 miles. You will see the main park entrance on your right. Continue past that entrance for another mile and turn right into the Indian Ridge entrance. Follow the winding road to the parking area. Look for a black Honda Element with license plate #EA12PF. *For more information, contact Nadya Bennett at (614) 734-1877 or nadya2003@msn.com.*

Mark your calendars!

Watch for a July date (first or second weekend in July) to kayak Alum Creek to see the Osprey and an early August date to paddle at Twin Bridges in our summer flyer. Kayak rental being arranged with Mimi Morrison.

Lois and John Day Receive Great Egret Award

The Great Egret Award was created to honor individuals who have made significant long-term contributions to Audubon and conservation in pursuit of the Audubon cause. It is given only to those who have logged 25 or more years of service with the organization. Nominees for the award must be approved by the national Audubon Board of Directors, and the award itself is signed by president John Flicker.

Audubon Ohio executive director Jerry Tinianow and Columbus Audubon president Kristan Leedy presented Lois and John Day with this award at the February pot luck and annual meeting. It was the first time Columbus Audubon members have received the Great Egret Award.

Lois and John became members of Columbus Audubon in 1963. At that time Columbus Audubon was not a yet a chapter but only an affiliate with between 300 and 400 members. They began volunteering with the group in 1965, which proved to be the beginning of a journey of dedication and commitment that continues to this day.

Their list of contributions is long, from organizing a wildlife film series of nationally and internationally acclaimed directors to hosting board meetings in their basement to managing the birdseed fundraiser to recruit-

ing volunteers and much more.

Lois is perhaps best known for her long history as Columbus Audubon's one and only executive secretary. This was a part-time paid position to which she devoted probably twice as many hours weekly than the 20 she was paid for! She carried out the responsibilities of executive secretary for 25 years, from 1969 to 1994.

Former CA president Scott Warner said it best when summing up Lois' diligence in her role as Executive Secretary: "In many respects, Lois Day has been the alter ego of the Columbus Audubon Society: she always answers the phone, makes sure that we have a booth or display at public events, fields call-in questions on WOSU-AM, and in many ways is our primary contact with our community. Behind the scenes she shepherds the rest of our programs and activities: the bird seed sales, the newsletter, Eco-Weekend, Field trips, monthly programs, membership, bill paying, checkbook balancing, and maintaining our mailing list. These things (and many more) she either does herself or makes sure they get done."

Truth is though, Lois did not work entirely alone. Her husband John has been there working right along with her as her partner in a great many ventures as well. John's behind the scenes work over the years sup-

ported the infrastructure that allowed Columbus Audubon to continue to grow in membership and activity. For example, by 1985 the membership had grown to 2000, and it was time to bring the membership renewal process into the computer age. John volunteered to take on this challenge, setting up and maintaining the chapter membership database for years. Thanks to John's efforts, Columbus Audubon was one of the first chapters to download membership data directly from National Audubon.

John also supported the bird seed sale ordering and accounting process and provided ongoing computer and editorial support for Lois' activities. He has made a significant contribution to the evolution of our group from a small club to Ohio's largest and most active local Audubon chapter.

Finally, Lois and John have actively recruited many volunteers over the years, including past board presidents, many of whom have sat on the Ohio Audubon board as well.

Columbus Audubon would not be what it is today without the unwavering service of Lois and John Day. Over the last 42 years they've put in countless hours to tirelessly promote the Audubon mission. Columbus Audubon is indebted to them for their knowledge, dedication and love.

Song Sparrow award winners

Sharon Treaster and Darlene Sillick were recognized at the February 28 annual meeting for their outstanding volunteer service.

Sharon Treaster

Mention trees, especially willows, and eyes will light up on this year's winner of the Song Sparrow award. Sharon Treaster will be happy to give you a guided verbal tour through the topic of your choice, be it identifying a tree by its leaf buds or explaining how a tree gets its nutrients. Come on a worktrip and she'll likely show you the proper way to trim bushes. She is enthusiastic and loves to share her knowledge. Sharon has been a long time member of Columbus Audubon and has sought multiple ways to encourage others to learn more about trees and other aspects of nature. You may have seen her at Eco-Weekend. She has led multiple workshops on trees, taking people out into the woods for hands-on experience. For a couple of years she also assisted with the children's programs.

Sharon's willingness to serve is not limited to just the fun of field work. She also has served on Columbus Audubon's board, doing the legwork needed to keep this large organization running smoothly. In addition, she volunteered to coordinate the worktrips over the last eight years. This is a sizable task that involves coordinating preserve managers from the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves (of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources) with volunteers from Columbus Audubon. Sharon has enthusiastically spearheaded this effort and eagerly participates in the trail clearing, bridge building, and other tasks at hand. Sharon always goes above and beyond what is expected. An example of this was a worktrip at Calamus Swamp on a cold and drizzly day. Before the trip, Sharon

had made sure the key people and key tools were all lined up. One of the tasks to be done that day was to wash the sign that had mildew growing on it. Sharon had brought a bucket, scrub brush, and water for this task. But since it was a cold and drizzly day, Sharon thought ahead and heated the water first and put it into a thermos before she left home. This made the task infinitely more enjoyable for the person doing the scrubbing. This small act of kindness is typical of Sharon's attitude toward serving others in Columbus Audubon. Thank you, Sharon, for all you have done.

-Katryn Renard

Darlene Sillick

This year, I had the great privilege of introducing one of our Song Sparrow Award recipients at the Columbus Audubon Annual Potluck at the end of February. Darlene Sillick is a valuable colleague, an inspirational mentor, a community icon and a loving friend. She is the only person I know who can successfully wear all these different hats. It is perfectly fitting that the Song Sparrow award was awarded to her.

I met Darlene about 5 years ago when I began volunteering at the Ohio Wildlife Center. I kept hearing this name over and over again - "Can you call Darlene to pick up an animal?" or "Ask Darlene - she'll know" and, most often, whenever programs were being discussed, Darlene's name always came up first. Finally, I met the person behind the name. I had heard about CA's birding field trips through word of mouth and decided to attend - and, it just happened to be led by Darlene. From that point on, I have never stopped

See Award winners, page 11

Prothonotary Warblers

Continued from page 1

presence of a Prothonotary. (Kneeling is optional.) The song appears to gain in strength through the notes, and is a very well-designed sound for the flooded forests these birds favor, as it seems to ring through the tree trunks without giving a good sense of the bird's direction. Many times I discover birds in a swamp by their call and never actually get a chance to see them. They can also give a loud agitated chip around their nesting areas, but at that point you have probably already located and seen them.

Nesting: Like most wood warblers, Prothonotaries are very selective in their habitat and nest site choice. Unlike nearly all warblers, they are cavity nesters, and really like cavities over standing water. They cannot excavate their own cavities, so they are 'secondary cavity users' that take over old woodpecker cavities. Flood-killed trees, either in a swamp or along a river, which has been dug out by woodpeckers are prime Prothonotary real estate. This is also a very ephemeral habitat - cavities get pre-

emptied by bigger birds or mammals, and old snags will eventually fall down. This means that Prothonotaries in the wild often have to be opportunistic and shift nesting areas. This love for swamp cavities has been the bane and perhaps the salvation of Prothonotaries. Bane because it is hard to imagine a habitat more despised by humans; swamp forests have been relentlessly drained, especially here in the Midwest. You only need to look for the Black Swamp or Scioto Bottoms in our state to realize that large areas of Prothonotary habitat were obliterated in our push for agriculture over the last two centuries. On the positive side, cavity nests can be supplied by clever humans, in the form of artificial nest boxes. This has led to a renaissance of Prothonotaries in some places, where the combination of nest boxes and swampy forests can build and hold good populations of the birds. Prothonotary nest box programs have boosted warbler numbers in parts of Virginia, Maryland, and Ohio. Locally, you cannot say Prothonotary without saying Hoover Reservoir. Large

numbers of dead snags in the shallow northern reaches of the reservoir supported a stable population of the birds for many years.

Within the last 10 years an intensive nest-box program managed by Charlie Bombaci of Westerville has tripled or quadrupled these numbers, so that Hoover is now one of the best destinations for seeing Prothonotaries in the entire Midwest. Particularly good areas are the flooded forests around Wiese and Redbank Roads on the northwest and northeast sides of the reservoir. Hoover is by no means the only location to see Prothonotaries in central Ohio; most of the local rivers and streams can support a few pairs, usually where there is extensive flooded forest. Look and listen for them in the floodplain forest of Berliner Park (below the Greenlawn bridge), Kiwanis Park in Dublin, and the lower reaches of Big Darby Creek. Being opportunistic nesters however, means that they might not be in a certain site a particular year, or they might move to new locations, and I've seen them on territory on most of the streams in central Ohio.

Take note:

Leadership Grant awarded to Columbus Audubon

Columbus Audubon wishes to sincerely thank Cardinal Health through their Leadership Grant program for a donation of \$4,000 on behalf of the board leadership and committee work of employee Darlene Sillick. Their donation will help to fund Columbus Audubon's latest new efforts to provide a children's newsletter (in the planning stages) and children's activities to learn more about birds and our natural world. Cardinal Health recognizes community leadership efforts among their employees. Darlene has shared her passion for birds and nature at the workplace by establishing nest boxes on the corporate grounds. Several large bird feeders are in place and Columbus Audubon has manned displays at company events. She also leads walks and arranges private tours for employees to see and learn about birds. Thank you Cardinal Health!

Nature Fair at Wild Birds Unlimited

Wild Birds Unlimited on the Northwest side of Columbus will host a Nature Fair on Sunday, May 21 from noon to 4 p.m.

Columbus Audubon will have a fun educational booth to test your knowledge of local wildlife and update you on great places to go birding. Information on Audubon's Calamus

Swamp preserve and the Whittier Peninsula IBA and the future Audubon Nature Center will be available.

The National Wildlife Federation's backyard habitat ambassadors will help you plan and implement a backyard wildlife habitat. You can even get your yard certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat. The Nature Conservancy will update you on their projects locally and nationally as well as provide conservation tips and volunteer opportunities.

The Ohio Wildlife Center will have education animals, including a Eastern Screech Owl. Find out about upcoming programs and tours of their wonderful new facility.

The Ohio Bluebird Society will have an outstanding display of study skins and bird nests. Learn how to be the perfect Bluebird landlord and attract Bluebirds to your neighborhood!

The Ohio Ornithological Society and the Ohio Lepidopterists will be present with news of what's happening in the world of birds and butterflies. Admission and parking are free. Complimentary refreshments will be served.

Wild Birds Unlimited is located at 5400 Riverside Drive, on the Northwest side of Columbus between Upper Arlington and Dublin. For more information, contact Tom Sheley at wbuwvo-hio@aol.com or (614) 766-2103.

Award winners

Continued from page 10

learning from her - bird songs and identification, astronomy, wildflowers, Bluebird biofacts and even effective time management are all skills that have been passed on not only to myself, but probably everyone she comes in contact with. She has served two terms on the CA board and is now Vice President. She is involved in count-

less organizations including the Bluebird Society, Ohio Wildlife Center and the Delaware Bird Club. She is about the busiest person I know, but manages everything like a champ. It is people like Darlene that make us all strive to do our best and make the most out of everyday life. She has taught me more than any class I have or ever will sit through - and it is always so exciting to me to hear what she has to say next. Congratulations Darlene - and thank you for your years of service - you deserve it!

-Nadya Bennett

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
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_____ \$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
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Columbus Audubon

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