



# Columbus Audubon Song Sparrow

February-March 2007  
Volume 39, No. 4

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The Song Sparrow is published 5 times per year by Columbus Audubon, a chapter of Audubon. Stefanie Hauck, editor, stefanie.hauck@gmail.com or (740) 972 1680.

## Get ready for the Great Backyard Bird Count

What mid-winter activity is fun, free and helps bird conservation? ...The answer is ... the Great Backyard Bird Count! The GBBC provides everyone a chance to discover the birds in their neighborhood and "Count for the Record."

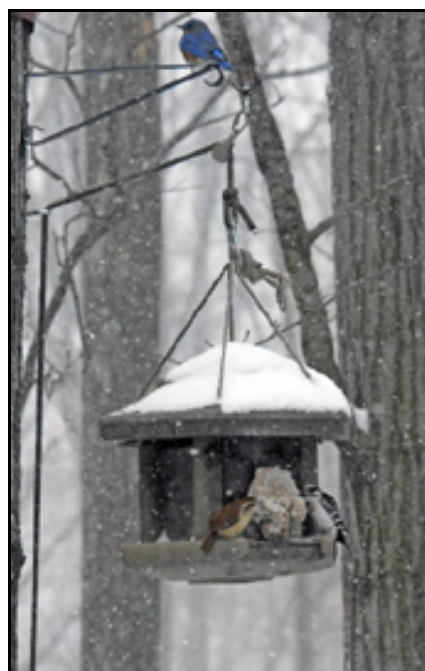
This year's count will be held February 16-19. The GBBC is sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon.

During the count period, people of all ages, from beginners to experts — people just like you — are invited to join the GBBC which spans all of the United States and Canada. Participate anywhere you want — at home, in your schoolyard, at a local park, in a wildlife refuge, by counting the highest number of each species you see at each site. Then enter your tally on the GBBC Web site at [www.bird-source.org/gbbc](http://www.bird-source.org/gbbc).

"Participating in the GBBC is easy, fun, educational, and a great opportunity to get involved with Citizen Science — as well as being a great benefit to Citizen Science — all just by watching birds," said Judy Kolo-Rose, an ambassador for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

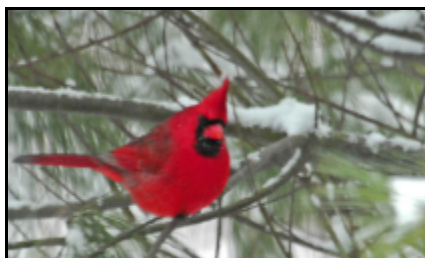
"The GBBC is a wonderful way to spend the weekend, or just a few minutes,

See Great, page 11



Photos by Judy Kolo-Rose

**Eastern Bluebird, Carolina Wren and a Downy Woodpecker.**



**Northern Cardinal.**



**Dark-eyed Junco.**



**Black-capped Chickadee.**

# 2006 Columbus CBC enjoys mild weather, good birds

By Rob Thorn

On December 17, 60 observers sponsored by Columbus Audubon spent the day counting birds in different areas of Columbus. The weather was mild for the date, being cloudy with a temperature between 34 – 52 ° F. The sky was cloudy for the morning, with very limited periods of sun later in the afternoon. The final total was 74 species and 33,173 individual birds, which was a good total. The complete breakdown was as follows: (Unusual numbers and rarities annotated in a special font).

Common Loon – 1; Pied-billed Grebe – 15; Horned Grebe – 2; Double-crested Cormorant – 5; Great Blue Heron – 51; Black-crowned Night Heron – **15** (1 roost); Canada Goose – 1798; Black Duck – 514; Mallard – 883; Gadwall – 33; N.Shoveler – 11; Green-winged Teal – 6; American Wigeon – 1; Ring-necked Duck – 36; Redhead – 9; Hooded Merganser – 49; Sharp-shinned Hawk – 2; Cooper's Hawk – 22; Red-tailed Hawk – 42; Red-shouldered Hawk – 1; **Merlin** – 1; American Kestrel – 7; Ring-billed Gull – 605; Herring Gull – 7; Rock Dove – 1670; Mourning Dove – 896; E. Screech Owl – **5** (2 parties); Great Horned Owl – 1; Barred Owl – 3; Belted Kingfisher – 18; Red-bellied Woodpecker – 135; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 8; Downy Woodpecker – 261; Hairy Woodpecker – 25; N.Flicker – 63; Pileated Woodpecker – 5; Blue Jay – 268; American Crow – 1751; Horned Lark – 10; Carolina Chickadee – 494; Tufted Titmouse – 129; White-breasted Nuthatch – 134; Brown Creeper – 39; Carolina Wren – **190**; Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet – 48; Eastern Bluebird – **80**; Hermit Thrush – 2; American Robin – 1738; N.Mockingbird – 34; European Starling – 15,660; Cedar Waxwing – 11; Yellow-rumped Warbler – 14; **Western Tanager** – 1 (present for 2 weeks); Northern Cardinal – 827; Eastern Towhee – 4; American Tree Sparrow – 58; Field Sparrow – 1; Savannah Sparrow – 2; Song Sparrow – 194; Eastern Fox Sparrow – 1; Swamp Sparrow – 4; White-throated Sparrow – 918; White-crowned Sparrow – 12; Dark-eyed Junco – 471; **Lapland Longspur** – 1; Red-winged Blackbird – 402; Rusty Blackbird – **16**; Common Grackle – 361; Brown-headed Cowbird – 6; House Finch – 323; American Goldfinch – 634 and House Sparrow – 1102.

Totals: 74 species, 33,173 individuals.

Birds seen Count Week, but not Count Day: Mute Swan, Wood Duck, Canvasback, Common Goldeneye; Northern Harrier, Winter Wren, **Pine Warbler** and Chipping Sparrow.

Participants: Charles Bombaci, Aaron Boone, Marcia Brehmer, Gerry and John Brevoort, Nancy Bringardener, Don Burton, Katharine Burton-Hoy, Barb Christel, Andrea Cooke, Rich Cressman, Glen Crippen, Ken & Julie Davis, Thad & Stephanie Evans, Sheila Fagan, Lisa Fosco, Diana Fowler, Joan Frederick, Paul Gardner, Sharon Givan, Bret Graves, Kevin Hinkle, Becky Jordan, Rich Kerns, Bill Kinkad, John Kuenzli, Bruce Lindsay, Helen Lindsay, Neil Marquard, Susan Martin-Moses, Carolyn May, Jim McCormac, Dick & Kathy Miller, Richard Oxley & Rick Oxley Jr., Steve Pendleton, Kacy Ray, Matt & Ben Rich, Sherri Rida, Paul Rodewald, Robert

Royse, Brenda Rushka, Troy Shively, Bruce Simpson, Jim & Shauna Skinner, Sandra Sklar, Doug & Deena Snapp, Gene Stauffer, Mark Steinmetz, Rob Thorn (compiler), Dick Tuttle, Pam Unger, Ben Warner.

This year's CBC took place against a background of cold November-early December, followed by mild weather up to the count date. The cold weather appears to have chased off many lingering birds, so that straggling migrants were not much of a highlight for this count. The one glaring exception was a very out-of-place Western Tanager found in Grandview Heights two weeks before the count. It lingered through cold and warm, feasting on the berries in this lushly-landscaped neighborhood. This was a first record for this species on the CBC, and only the 6<sup>th</sup> record of one in Ohio.

Waterfowl were a highlight of this count, with 14 species on count day and another four seen count week. Much as we like to think of cold weather driving waterfowl down from northern Ohio refuges like Kildeer Plains or Sandusky Bay, in fact

warmer weather keeps open many of the small ponds that hold dabbling ducks. Formerly rare dabblers like shovelers, wigeon, gadwall, and green-winged teal can now be expected in small numbers in many of the mitigation ponds found in areas along the southern arc of the circle. But even some deep-water divers were found, with a Common Loon on a quarry in south Columbus and two Horned Grebes found on the Hidden Lake quarries by Bob Royse. Columbus has more varied wetland habitat than many realize.

Another group that noticed the warm temperatures were raptors. Unlike last years cold weather count, this years CBC had only middling numbers of raptors, with none of the weather-related strays like Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, and Rough-legged hawk that have graced the past several

counts. One exception was a Merlin found by Jim McCormac's party in the Greenlawn cemetery. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> straight year with one on the count, and as of this writing, one-to-two more have appeared and stayed here so far this winter. Coupled with last year's wintering bird around the Olentangy river, along with regular reports of wintering birds in Cincinnati (at another cemetery, no less), this may indicate the vanguard of future winter residents in this part of the state. In other places, like Saskatchewan and the Puget Sound Area, Merlins have become quite urban, adapting to a diet rich in Starlings, House Finches, and Sparrows. Hopefully that can happen here.

Some hidden local residents continue to slowly reveal themselves. A Red-shouldered Hawk hung around the The Ohio State University West campus, adding to the small wintering numbers suspected in Columbus. Even more remarkable were five Screech Owls found by two different parties: three around the OSU's West Campus by the Paul Rodewald-Aaron Boone-Bret Graves team, and another two found out at Portman Park by Troy Shively. These elusive little owls are probably regular residents along streams and in ravines around Columbus, but we rarely hear them in winter. Kudos to these teams for taking the effort to search for them during predawn hours.

Not surprisingly, the numbers of perching birds varied depending on how well these birds enjoyed mild weather. The

## Columbus CBC

Count Date: Dec. 17, 2006;

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Temperature: 34 to 52 degrees Fahrenheit.

Wind: South-Southwest 0-5 miles-per-hour.

Water: Still water open, moving water open.

Weather: A.M. overcast; P.M. cloudy.

Observers: 54 in the field in 20-22 parties, 6 at feeders.

Total party hours: 118 (97 on foot, 21 in cars).

Total Party miles: 347 (102 on foot, 245 in cars)

See Columbus, page 11



## Columbus Audubon annual meeting and potluck dinner

Tuesday, February 20, 2007 at 6:30 p.m at the Clintonville Woman's Club, 3951 North High Street

Please join us for food, fellowship, our distinguished speaker, Tom Bartlett, informational displays and a few other surprises. Please bring your family and friends! Dinner starts promptly at 6:30 p.m. so come early, by 6-6:15 p.m. to find a seat, visit with friends and set out your dish before the line forms. After dinner, the evening will include a short business meeting before Tom's presentation. Non-members are welcome but may not vote during the business meeting, which will include the election of five trustees for three year terms (2007-2010). Each individual or family is asked to bring a substantial dish large enough to share with 12 other people. You may bring a casserole, salad, dessert or bread of some kind. Bring your own utensils, plates, cups and beverage other than coffee, which will be provided.

### Monitoring Ohio's Birds

Every year, habitats around Central Ohio provide most local birding enthusiasts with a large variety of resident and migrant species of birds. Everything from diving ducks

See CA annual meeting, page 5



Volunteers surround Tom as he holds a Song Sparrow who was the 20,000th bird banded at Springville Marsh in 2006.

## Wildlife artist Dorenda Watson to be featured at potluck

Columbus Audubon would like to once again welcome local artist and teacher Dorenda Watson to exhibit at our annual potluck meeting.

Dorenda will be bringing her nature related greeting card line, prints, and will have a few original oils for sale. She will donate 20-percent of any sale to Columbus Audubon.

She has also graciously agreed to donate a door prize item that evening.

Dorenda attended an annual potluck meeting two years ago and we welcome her back once again.

She has had many drawings published in this newsletter. At right, are some examples of her recent work.

A native of Ohio, Dorenda studied at the internationally known Columbus College of Art and Design and graduated in 1985 with a BFA in illustration.

She has been teaching art for 25 years at CCAD in their Saturday morning art classes for children and for their adult Continuing Education program.

She has also taught for the Columbus Museum of Art, Upper Arlington Parks and Recreation, and in her own studio in Columbus, The Paint Pony Studio.

For more information, visit her Web site at <http://web.mac.com/dorendacragerwatson/iweb> or e-mail her at [dorendacragerwatson@mac.com](mailto:dorendacragerwatson@mac.com).



Sacred Space.



B is for Bird.



Oasis.

-Darlene Sillick

## Columbus Audubon trustee biographies

At the Columbus Audubon annual potluck on Feb. 20 we will vote on five trustee candidates. Below are their biographies so you can learn a little more about them. We feel very fortunate to have such qualified candidates for the CA trustee position to give their energy and skill to our cause.

*For three-year terms 2007-2010:*

### Michael J. Flynn

Mike seeks to return to the board after stepping away for a year. He has served on the board for seven years and continues to contribute as Program Chair, Field Trip Leader and Eco-Weekend Consultant. His

desire is to rejoin the board with fresh ideas and insight - to again be part of a team which guides and directs what he sees as one of the most exciting and significant Audubon chapters in the country. Currently, he is an important member of the Wild Birds Unlimited staff where, as

See trustees, page 10

## 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

#### Wednesday walks at Whittier

Wednesdays, February 7 and March 7, 7:30 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Join Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond 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).

#### Green Lawn Cemetery bird walk

Saturdays, February 17 and March 24, 8:30 a.m.

Leaders: Darlene Sillick and John Wilson

Meet at the office parking lot after entering the cemetery. Plan on some walking and driving and plan to help with a short service project. Green Lawn is nationally known for its diverse history and plant life and of course the birds. See <http://www.greenlawncolumbus.org/> for more information. Contact Darlene Sillick at [azure-trails@columbus.rr.com](mailto:azure-trails@columbus.rr.com) or John Wilson at [itsjohn3@yahoo.com](mailto:itsjohn3@yahoo.com) for more information.

#### Winter Birds at The Wilds

Sunday, February 18, 1 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

Join Mike Flynn and Columbus Audubon for the afternoon at one of Ohio's premier birding spots. A large variety of species of waterfowl, raptors and sparrows as well as the possibility for a few rarities can often be found across this landscape. Be ready for an exciting trip! Bring scopes and binoculars and dress in warm layers as it can still be quite windy and chilly this time of year. Meet at the Cracker Barrel restaurant at I-70/256 South. For more information, please call Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493 by Saturday, Feb. 17 at 9 p.m.

#### Alum Creek to Hoover Reservoir

Saturday, February 24, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

Late February is when winter starts to lose its grip. Days are conspicuously longer, and birds and mammals become noticeably more active. We'll try to enjoy some of this early activity as well as get a jump on some of the early migrant waterfowl by combining these two waterfowl magnets north of Columbus. Alum Creek Reservoir should be open water by now, and often hosts loons, grebes, and the first flocks of north-bound waterfowl. From there, we'll sweep over to the northern end of nearby Hoover Reservoir, where the shallow bays south of Galena and off Oxbow Island also are waterfowl magnets. Meet at the Westerville Community Center parking lot (off Cleveland Avenue, about 1.5 miles north of I-270) and dress warmly. We'll start at near Galena at Alum Creek Lake

### CA March Program

#### Bee-eaters, Bustards, and Bat-eared foxes

##### A Birding Odyssey in Southern Africa

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

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

Innis House at Inniswood Metro Gardens

##### Program description

In October 2006 Stephen and Barbara Revard traveled to Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe for a birding adventure. Join us this evening to hear tales of their trip, beginning along the cold, fog-shrouded Skeleton Coast of Namibia and ending two weeks later dodging Chacma Baboons in over 120 degree heat in Zimbabwe. They will feature hundreds of life birds, many incredible African mammals, and even a few intimidating reptiles, encountered on this memorable trip!

and work our way north before looping east to Hoover; trip should be over by 2 p.m. For more information, contact Rob Thorn, [robthorn@earthlink.net](mailto:robthorn@earthlink.net) or (614) 471-3051.

#### Sandhill Cranes at Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area

Saturday and Sunday, March 17-18

Leaders: Mike Flynn and Michael Packer

Reservations are required to Michael Packer by March 4. Overnight trip to see Sandhill Cranes on their staging grounds at Jasper-Pulaski Wildlife Area, Ind. Various options may be available and participant space is limited. If you have ever seen a Sandhill Crane in the wild, you know how exciting it is. Imagine witnessing the sight and sound of thousands of them at one time. It is a true spectacle of nature. Meet at the Lookout Tower 3 p.m. Eastern Time on March 17. Area Map: [www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/publications/jp.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/publications/jp.pdf). For more information, contact Michael at (614) 487-1191 or via e-mail [m.packer@yahoo.com](mailto:m.packer@yahoo.com).

#### Blacklick Woods to Pickerington Ponds

Sunday, March 25, 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

March is the first true rush of Spring: frogs are calling, trees are budding, and birds are starting to migrate. We'll visit these two southeast Columbus MetroParks looking for departing winter residents and waterfowl as well as early migrating raptors and land-birds. Blacklick Woods features an isolated swamp woodland that is a good trap for late winter residents and early migrants. After checking the woods here, we'll journey south to Pickerington Ponds, where migrant waterfowl should be massed on their larger wetlands, along with herons, hawks, and early migrant swallows and blackbirds. Meet at the Ash Grove Picnic Area parking lot and dress for the unpredictable weather of early March. After hiking around Blacklick Woods for a few hours, we'll drive over to nearby Pickerington Ponds; the trip should be over by 1 p.m. Contact Rob Thorn, [robthorn@earthlink.net](mailto:robthorn@earthlink.net) or (614) 471-3051.

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# Listening to the land: The Sand County Almanac

A year-long reading of Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, March 4, 2007-March 15, 2008

By Susan Setterlin

The conservation essays of Aldo Leopold's classic, "A Sand County Almanac," are timeless! His moving insights and words inspire us to recognize the things of nature that we have lost, value what we have, and protect our natural resources for generations to come.

During a period of 'bigger and better' early twentieth-century living, Leopold noted an ever-growing need for a land ethic, a way of acting, thinking, and doing that would reduce the loss of things natural, wild, and free. At the same time, he wanted to instill an inherent sense of obligation to protect and conserve our natural resources for future generations. Today, his messages are perhaps more important and more timely than ever before!

Please join us on this journey as we



Aldo Leopold.

share these remarkable essays through public readings and themed activities at various central Ohio sites listed in the schedule of events.

A variety of sites such as: area Metroparks, Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, The Ohio State University Library, Chadwick Arboretum at Ohio State, the

Ohio Historical Society and many others will be your hosts for the monthly readings and activities.

Brochures listing all reading sites as well as other pertinent information will be available by mid-February at many sites (Metroparks, libraries, OSU, etc.) as well as a Web site with up to date information about any new listings. The Web address is: [www.epa.state.oh.us/oeeef/leopold2007](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/oeeef/leopold2007).

The kick-off event is March 4 at Highbanks Metro Park from 1-4 p.m. Learn about Aldo Leopold thru display and actor portrayal; activity stations for kids; learn to use a two man saw; and experience live animals from the Ohio Wildlife Center. It's a great way to begin to learn more about conservation.

For more information contact Susan Setterlin at [rsetterl@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rsetterl@columbus.rr.com) or (614) 457-8130.

## Ohio Lepidopterists

### Butterfly Observer's Group slates programs

All programs will begin at the Highbanks Metro Park Nature Center unless otherwise specified in the program description. For more information, visit [www.ohiolepidopterists.org](http://www.ohiolepidopterists.org).

**Insects 102:** Dave Horn will present Insects 102 on February 6 from 6:30-7:45 p.m. - His program is an overall view of many insects we can find throughout Ohio.

**Butterflies outside the central Ohio:** On March 6 from 6:30-7:45 p.m. we will host a program highlighting butterflies outside the Central Ohio area. We will explore unusual butterflies in different areas of the country that we may not have an

opportunity to see unless we travel to their location.

**'What's Flying' series:** On April 3 from 7-8:30 p.m. we will host the first program of the "What's Flying" series. Each month during Ohio's butterfly flight times we will be reviewing what butterflies may be seen during that month, how to identify them, where they might be found, what their caterpillars look like and what host plants they use.

**Butterfly Observer's Group trip:** April 14 will be the first Butterfly Observer's Group field trip of the season. Call Leslie Angel at (614) 876-2805.

## CA annual meeting

Continued from page 3

and owls to sparrows, warblers and shorebirds grace our parks and wildlife areas giving us many hours of enjoyment in the field. Did you ever wonder though, who monitors all those different species?

Who keeps track of the numbers of individuals year to year? How in the world does one count huge flocks of birds that grace our skies?

Tom Bartlett of Tiffin, Ohio is one such individual that can probably answer all of the above questions and more.

He is an accomplished writer, and a member of distinguished organizations such as the American Ornithologist Union, American Birding Association and Cleveland Museum of Natural History just to name a few. He has also

received numerous honors including the The Nature Conservancy's Oak Leaf Award and was named the Naturalist of the Year by Toledo's Naturalists Association. Tom is retired from over 30 years of teaching biological sciences in secondary school. He has been to Costa Rica seven times since 1996 leading students and adults.

We are thrilled to have him as the featured speaker at our annual meeting!

He has been studying Ohio's bird populations for over 35 years and has many stories to tell of his adventures in the field. Most of his research takes place at his research station at the Springville Marsh Nature Preserve in Seneca County. Last year he banded 20,000 birds, (an all-time high) with hopes of getting over 25,000 by the end of 2008. Impressive!



Tom with an immature Peregrine Falcon.

## Grange Insurance Audubon Center news

# GIAC hires first full-time educator

By Heather Starck

**T**he Grange Insurance Audubon Center (GIAC) has recently hired its first full-time educator.

Doreen Whitley will serve as the School Programs Coordinator/Educator. Doreen has experience with Audubon as a former program manager and educator for Prospect Park Audubon Center in Brooklyn, NY, and the Everglades Education Center in Miami, Fla. She enjoys working with urban youth.

She has also worked with children suffering from severe emotional disturbance as a middle school science teacher in the Bedford Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn, NY.

After graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers, Fla., Doreen's passion and knowledge of the Florida Everglades led her to the Big Cypress Swamp in Ochopee, Fla., where she worked as an interpretive park ranger through the Student Conservation Association. She loves the great outdoors but finds the subtleties and challenges of teaching urban ecology particularly rewarding.

"Doreen is an amazing teacher who inspires everyone around her. The kids trust her and respond to her enthusiasm. She is a tremendous person and a real asset to our center," said Heather Starck, director of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center.

Doreen has hit the ground



Photo courtesy of Audubon Ohio

Doreen Whitley.

running. She is working with a teacher from Livingston Elementary to pilot our school program next semester. She is

also busy planning a summer program and working with the after-school program at Southside Settlement House.

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## GIAC Capital Campaign update

By Heather Starck

Audubon Ohio recently announced that Grange Insurance has donated \$4-million to help build and operate the Audubon Center in the new Whittier Metro Park.

In recognition of this incredible gift, the center will be named the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. The center, slated for completion in 2008, will serve Columbus and the surrounding area as a nature center and educational resource.

"For more than 70 years, Grange, its employees and its independent agents have been committed to our community. Our commitment to the Audubon Center represents Grange's largest gift ever and is a testament to our belief in the growth and enhancement of this area of our great city," said Phil Urban, president and chief executive officer, Grange Insurance.

According to Audubon Ohio Executive Director Jerry Tinianow, the Grange gift is the largest ever made to any Center in the national network. It has caused a ripple effect and continues to raise the bar for cor-

porate giving to center projects across the nation.

"I am constantly amazed by the leadership of Grange and their commitment to making Columbus a great place to live, work and raise your family," said Heather Starck, director of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center.

Other noteworthy Columbus area donors contributing to the Grange Insurance Audubon Center include Limited Brands with a \$1-million gift; Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) with an \$810,000 gift; Columbus Foundation contributing \$500,000; the Crane Group and family contributing \$500,000; Huntington Banks and an anonymous donor each contributing \$200,000; and the All Life Foundation contributing \$100,000.

"We have been working through our silent phase of fundraising for nearly a year. To be at \$7.72-million at the end of 2006 is a great accomplishment," said Starck. "These gifts prove that our community believes in the center. They enable us to

gain even more momentum as we move towards achieving our campaign goal."

The GIAC is now much closer to achieving its campaign goal of \$11.5-million with only \$3.78-million remaining to be raised. The center has drawn such substantial early support in part because it is an outgrowth of a unique partnership among Audubon Ohio, Franklin County Metro Parks and the Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks.

"The Columbus Foundation and its donors have been strengthening our community through focused and informed grants for 63 years," said Douglas Kridler, president and CEO of The Columbus Foundation. "Our grant to Ohio's first urban Audubon nature center ... our largest grant ever to fund a central Ohio conservation project ... follows in that tradition. For Audubon Ohio, the new Audubon center, and the development of the Whittier Peninsula, is one of our community's most significant environmental projects and a home-run for our community's residents, children, and visitors," Kridler said.

### Columbus Audubon KIDS!

The Winter newsletter has hit the streets! Contact Nadya Bennett, CA Kids Committee Chair to get your child's issue mailed to them and to sign up for our CA Kids monthly programs. You can contact Nadya at [nadya2003@msn.com](mailto:nadya2003@msn.com) or (614) 306-8215.

## Conservation Corner

### Committee focuses on Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact

By Dave Horn

While your Conservation Committee emphasizes issues affecting central Ohio, we are also trying to influence wider issues, in support of our state organization (Audubon Ohio) and in recognition that many of our members enjoy birding and other outdoor activities beyond our region.

An example of this is our support of the Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact, an important interstate and international (USA-Canada) agreement that would greatly strengthen the ability of the Great Lakes states and provinces to prevent diversions of water to other areas. CA has joined many environmental organizations to urge passage of the Compact.

The ratification legislation was before

the Senate after passing the House 84-5 and prospects for passage by the Senate looked good, until the Senate leadership was swayed by claims that the Compact would take away the rights of property owners to control water standing on or flowing through their land. Although the Compact contains language specifically stating that it cannot be read to divest anyone of rights existing before it is ratified. The Senate leadership was unwilling to bring the Compact before the Senate as the session came to its conclusion in December. However, Representative Matthew Dolan vowed to reintroduce the ratification legislation as soon as the new General Assembly takes office in January, so that may have been done by the time you read this. Audubon will work with

Rep. Dolan and others from the outset to assure that the General Assembly understands the importance of the Compact and the need to ratify it quickly. If you feel that this is appropriate please take time to contact your representatives. (Some of this information was taken directly from the Audubon Ohio e-news – like, I didn't write it.) We have a bunch of other issues on our plate: cormorant management, Calamus Swamp, birds colliding with buildings – the list goes on and on.

If you're interested, the Conservation Committee usually meets the second Tuesday of each at 7:30 at Dave Horn's house. If you want to help out but don't cherish evening meetings, contact Dave at (614) 262-0312 or horn.1@osu.edu.

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## Invasive species: Asian carp threatens area waterways

By Bruce Lindsay

An invasive species that merits notice is the Asian carp. There are four species of Asian carp that are established in the United States: Common, grass, bighead and silver.

Common and grass carp have been around for a long time. They destroy habitat and diminish water quality for native species of fish by uprooting aquatic vegetation.

A more recent and troubling introduction are the bighead and silver carp. They were imported in the 1970's to clean up ponds used to raise catfish by removing algae and other suspended matter.

During the devastating floods of the early 1990s, these carp were able to make their way into the Mississippi River basin. They have since moved upstream and it is feared that they could gain a foothold in the Great Lakes.

These carp pose a severe threat to the Great Lakes. They are huge, adults weighing over 100 pounds. They consume vast amounts of food and are extremely prolific.

They would greatly disrupt the food chain that now exists in the Great Lakes and could well become a dominant species.

Silver carp jump high out of the water in response to boat motors. Boaters have been injured when hit by such fish. Recreational users of the Great Lakes find this to be disconcerting. Many are looking for a quiet, contemplative pastime, not



Asian carp.

hand to hand combat.

Steps are being taken to protect the Great Lakes from these invasive species.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers constructed a temporary electronic dispersal barrier on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal in 2002. It proved to be effective and a permanent barrier has since been constructed.

## Sale of Entertainment Books again successful

Our Entertainment Book fundraiser in 2006 provided \$ 700 to Columbus Audubon for our educational programs. A huge "thank you" is due to our sales outlets: Accent on Nature, the Backyard Experience, Better Earth, Wild Bird Supplies and Gifts, and Wild Birds Unlimited stores in Westerville, Dublin Rd. and Blacklick Center. We thank all of you who purchased the book this year. Thank you also: co-chair Linda Marshall and those who help by servicing our outlets or simply doing the details of preparing mailing, distributing books and picking up proceeds, or simply tolerating the chairperson's idiosyncrasies. We're talking about Roz Horn, Candy Martinson, Molly Rudy and Pat Wolfrom. Look for next year's book in September.

-Dave Horn



## Backyards for Wildlife

# Birds who eat the most survive the winter!

By Toni Stahl

For those who feed birds in winter, it's important to continue until you see insects flying. Plants may turn green, but there won't be any berries or seeds for them to eat yet. We regularly put softened raisins out for robins until the ground is completely thawed.

Now is a good time to prepare for spring. Below are some opportunities to help you get started. Please contact Toni Stahl or Marc Apfelstadt for additional information, at [marc-a@columbus.rr.com](mailto:marc-a@columbus.rr.com) or (614) 791-0529 (between 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.).

### Certified Habitat Yard Exhibit

The exhibit will be a part of Dublin Parks & Open Spaces' Wild Night Out event at the Community Theater in the Dublin Recreation Center, 5600 Post Road on Thursday, Feb. 16 from 7-9 p.m. Open to public, no charge. The exhibit will also be at the Ohio Botanical Symposium, OSU Fawcett Center., 2400 Olentangy River Rd., Friday, March 30, \$15 advance registration. Go to <http://ohiodnr.com/dnap/symposium/default.htm> to register. Hosted by ODNr, Division of Natural Areas & Preserves.

### How to Turn Your Backyard Into a Wildlife Sanctuary

A presentation to the Friends of the Ravines' Community Forum at the Northwood High Bldg, 2231 N High St, Rm. 200, Tuesday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. Open to public, no charge.



By Marc Apfelstadt, 2005

Notice the plants standing in our yard.

### Correction from Nov/Dec 2006 article, Prepare your yard and home for winter wildlife:

If you put screening on your dryer vent to keep the birds from nesting in it next spring, make sure it is certified by Ohio code and has large enough grid openings for lint to blow out (Check it for lint build up - we don't want anyone having a fire or getting a fine from a building inspector!).

## Create the Perfect Chimney Swift habitat in your yard

By Toni Stahl

We became interested in Chimney Swifts by reading articles about the large gathering for migration at the 1919 building a few miles from our house in Dublin. I love to hear their chitter-chitter-chitter sounds as they dive over our house catching bugs on the fly.

### Places to raise young

With so many homes around the area having chimney caps, we decided to add a Chimney Swift Tower after all the baby birds in our yard had fledged this year.

We followed the plans on [www.chimneyswift.org](http://www.chimneyswift.org). Our contractor covered it with siding to match our house, and that ended up taking the most time. A Chimney Swift Tower doesn't need to be as elaborate as ours. There's another tower in Dublin that was constructed as a scout project.

We hope that when the Chimney Swifts arrive next year, a pair will find our Tower and nest inside. The helpful people at the Driftwood Wildlife Association, in Texas who are authors of several swift books, asked us to send a picture when it was finished.

We did and got back some interesting news. We hung a bat house on our tower, and they had done the same. They found



By Marc Apfelstadt, November 2006

Chimney Swift Tower with Bat House.

that with the swifts out in the day and the bats out at night, an ectoparasite in the genus *Cimex* climbed from the bat house into the swift nest when the bats were gone and killed the babies. The parasitic eggs can survive cold and heat, and will lay dormant for more than a year. Upon further investigation, we spoke with Donna Daniel of the Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODOW).

Daniel houses many bats in her barn. She has never experienced this problem with bats and barn swallows. Perhaps the extra area made a difference or those particular bats weren't infected - we don't know for sure, but just to be safe we will add a very tall pole with a baffle so the bats will have another high, warm place to drop from.

### Food

We provide healthy, flying insects, by eliminating lawn/garden chemicals and insecticides.

### Water

We don't have any ponds, lakes or rivers on our property, but we are a mile from the Scioto, so the swifts will most likely go there to skim the water. There are also some large ponds in nearby condo complexes they should be able to use.

### Cover

Swifts will find cover in the tower, as it is in an open area so no predators can get into it. A galvanized, steel baffle protects the top and sticky tape (to trap insects) protects the bottom legs.

For more information on the construction of swift towers, contact Toni Stahl or Marc Apfelstadt at [marc-a@columbus.rr.com](mailto:marc-a@columbus.rr.com).



# Coming up

Continued from page 4

## Killbuck Wildlife Area

Sunday, April 1, 1 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

Killbuck Marsh is a vast wetland area that attracts a large number of avian species. During early spring, it becomes an area for migrating birds flying north to stop, rest and feed. We will be looking for any early migrants as well as ducks, geese, swans and eagles. Last year we were lucky enough to spot a group of Sandhill Cranes! We will also want to keep our eyes open for local mammals such as beaver and mink! Bring scopes, binoculars and snacks and drinks. Make sure to dress in warm layers and sturdy, waterproof shoes. Meet at the back corner, Kroger side of the Worthington Square Mall at 1 p.m. Please call Mike Flynn at (614) 882-9493 by Saturday, March 31 at 9 p.m.

## Work trips

### Christmas Rocks Trail Cleanup

Saturday, March 3, 7:45 a.m. (March 10th rain date)

Assist Jeff Johnson, South Central District Natural Areas & Preserves manager in replacing several footbridges, installing waterbars and trail maintenance. Christmas Rocks State Nature Preserve in Fairfield County is noted for outstanding blackhand sandstone outcrops, slump rocks and flora typical of the Appalachian Plateau. Materials will be delivered to the site before the work date and assembled. Call Sharon Treaster by noon Feb. 26 at (614) 292-1395 to sign up, reserve space for transportation and to determine tool requirements. Bring lunch and a water bottle. Meet in parking lot inside gate house at Ohio Department

Natural Resources Complex, 2045 Morse Road. Please complete the Dept. of Natural Area's volunteer form to participate in this activity (contact [treaster.1@osu.edu](mailto:treaster.1@osu.edu) for forms).

### Rockbridge Renovation work trip report

Sixteen CA volunteers assisted Jeff Johnson, at RockBridge State Nature Preserve January 6. Three teams coordinated bridge building, trail maintenance, relocation of an access trail, sign posting and application of anti-skid material to bridges and a staircase. The swift completion of the tasks provided ample time to explore the largest natural rock bridge in Ohio and soak in the misty atmosphere.

-Sharon Treaster

### Avid Birders field trips

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

### Featured Highbanks Spring programs

All programs start at the nature center. NOTE: CA provides assistance at most of these Highbanks programs.

CSI: Highbanks, February 18, 2 p.m.

Become a wildlife detective and follow the clues to solve an animal mystery at Highbanks.

Woodcock Watch, March 11 and March 24, 6:30 p.m.

Search the fields to observe the unusual courtship of the American woodcock. Bring binoculars.

Beginning Birding, March 25, 2 p.m.

Learn skills and field tricks to discover Ohio's birds. Bring binoculars.

## Notes from the field

# Fall Jasper-Pulaski Sandhill Crane trip report

By Michael Packer

A record 37 members of Columbus Audubon watched the fall migration of the Greater Sandhill Crane at Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife Area, Ind. For the cranes, everything about this staging area is social.

During the day at the lookout tower, we watched cranes display their exquisite pair dance which includes bowing to their partner while outstretching their six-foot wings. As dusk approached, we saw Sandhill cranes fly in by the thousands, some displaying their majestic "butterfly" wing beats - two rapidly successive stiff beats of the wings followed by gliding and then repeating the sequence. Just incredible! At dusk, approximately 15,000



By Michael Packer

### Sandhill Cranes flying in front of the setting moon.

cranes congregated at the staging ground followed by a spec-

tacular mass fly-out to the surrounding farmlands. Dawn

proved to be worth getting up for. At first light, we were memorized by the stadium-sized sound of coordinated guttural coos while watching waves of cranes fly in front of a setting full moon. Everyone had a wonderful time and the Saturday night dinner buffet was a hit.

While fall migration is known for the largest conglomeration of cranes in this area, spring is the time to see Sandhill Crane courtship in full bloom. In addition, Columbus Audubon's spring trip last year proved to be a great time to see Whooping Crane, Ross Geese and a myriad of ducks and shorebirds. Reservations are required for this trip by March 4. See the Coming up section for details and contact information.

## Wet but fruitful day at Green Lawn Cemetery

By Darlene Sillick

On Saturday, Jan. 13, nine Columbus Audubon members met at Green Lawn Cemetery on a very rainy, cool day to walk and drive around the area to see who might be out and about.

At the start of the day, everyone was informed that the new bird feeders at 'The Pit' needed to be filled. Each person in the group was assigned a task at the bird feeding station and the feeders were filled in short order.

On this field trip Libby Guyton, Warren Grody, Matt and Anne Jensen filled the feeders to the brim then started around the pit to scour the area for birds. It was interesting what happened next. We had only gone only a few feet and we stopped because there appeared to be a steady stream of birds flying to the feeders giving soft chortles and clucking sounds as they flew in. Many seemed to be paired. I can't remember who saw it first but we all noticed and stopped to watch the winged procession. We continued around the pit coming back to a lot of activity at the three feeding stations. Birds were sitting in the trees around the feeders like ornaments on a Christmas tree as they digested the seed, peanuts and suet. Needless to say the group felt pretty good about filling the feeders.

Of course our quest was to see some winter visitors and we were not disappointed. Coming around the pit we heard and watched a Brown Creeper in a large pine tree. In the area towards Brown Road past 'The Bridge' we watched a female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker working around another tall pine tree. The we finally found the prize of the day, one of the now famous Merlins atop a deciduous tree near the Mausoleum where it appears to enjoy peering about looking for the next meal or digesting one it just finished. We got great looks of the dark streaking on the breast and those long yellow legs and the dark eyes peering down at us. All in all through the rain and mud, we had a great day.

Recently, a member of Columbus Audubon made a generous



By Darlene Sillick

**Matt Jensen, Warren Grody, Anne Jensen, Libby Guyton and John Wilson at Green Lawn Cemetery.**

donation to do some upgrades at Green Lawn. The Columbus Audubon trustees have committed to work on this endeavor for 2006-07.

John and Darlene will lead a February and March program at Green Lawn and plan to do a service project each time as well as filling the feeders. Columbus Audubon hopes to work on the butterfly garden, donate some benches, place some nestboxes and perhaps add a few more trees to the amazing tree collection at the cemetery. We are working closely with Linda Burkey, general manager of the cemetery and the Green Lawn Cemetery Board to make these projects happen. If you want to join us on one of the field trips or on a couple of work trips please let us know. We are planning on showcasing this hidden treasure in upcoming issues of this newsletter. Please join us as we give back to one of the top birding sites in Ohio. The birds and birders will be appreciative!

## Trustee biographies

Continued from page 3

many of you know, he not only provides his customers with valuable knowledge but does it with obvious passion and excitement. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Interpretation from The Ohio State University, has been a nature photographer for over 30 years and has owned his own small business.

### Rob Lowry

Rob is an avid birder, hiker, and bicyclist with a keen interest in the natural world. He holds a B.S. (1984) and M.S. (1986) in Geology & Mineralogy from The Ohio State University. Rob has worked in the environmental consulting field for over 22 years and is currently working at Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. in their Columbus office. Rob has been a volunteer for Columbus Metro Parks for over five years in various capacities. Rob has also led birding hikes for Columbus Metro Parks and Columbus Audubon. Rob is a

member of the Ohio Ornithological Society, CA, National Wildlife Federation, and Nature Conservancy.

### Barbara Revard

Barbara Revard is the Director of Program Planning at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. She develops fun and educational ways for the public to learn about habitats, animals, and conservation issues from around the globe. She serves as co-chair for the Outreach and Education Committee of the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative, has led CA field trips at the Zoo and assists with CA KIDS.

### Michael Packer

Michael Packer is an optical design engineer, amateur astronomer and birder who has made a career out of his interest with the outdoors and light by designing and specifying environmentally friendly "dark sky" lighting. He has a M.S. in physics from San Francisco State

University. He is a member of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), past vice president of the Columbus Astronomical Society and an active member of several ornithological societies. He also enjoys worldwide travel and the collection of rare bird books.

### Heather Raymond

Heather Raymond is a current Board member running for a second term. She is lead hydrogeologist in the Division of Drinking and Ground Waters at the Ohio EPA. She co-leads the monthly Whittier walks and is active in the chapter's IBA adoption, the Grange Insurance Audubon Center Committee and current center activities. She has volunteered with a variety of local environmental organizations and hopes to pilot a new watershed partnership program between central Ohio watershed groups and Columbus Audubon in 2007. She enjoys traveling and birding in the United States and abroad.



## Great Backyard Bird Count is just around the corner

Continued from page 1

doing what so many of us like to do anyway... watch our feathered friends, and help science as well. The information we collect and submit during the GBBC is valuable data that will be compiled and used to measure the occurrence of birds," Kolo-Rose said.

"We are encouraging people to count birds this year," said Paul Green, Audubon's director of Citizen Science. "By submitting your counts online, bird-watchers can quickly see how the dots you put on the map form new patterns that tell new stories about the birds that share the world in which we live, including our own backyards and parks."

This year marks the 10th Anniversary of the GBBC. Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are challenging people everywhere to "Count for the Record."



Submitted counts result in more information about bird population trends which helps scientists in their bird conservation efforts.

You can also hone your bird watching skills and learn more from the GBBC Web site, which offers identification tips and access to photos, sounds, maps, and natural history information on more than 500 bird species. You can also submit photos to an online gallery showcasing the dazzling array of winter birds found during the

GBBC. Competitions add another element of fun, including a photo contest, rankings for most numerous birds, and the coveted "checklist champ" title for towns, states, and provinces with the highest participation.

If you need help or additional information about the GBBC, bird feeding, or Project FeederWatch, contact Kolo-Rose via e-mail at [judy@kolorose.com](mailto:judy@kolorose.com) or stop by your local Wild Birds Unlimited store for complete details.

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## Columbus CBC

Continued from page 2

Count had record numbers of Carolina Wrens and Eastern Bluebirds, with many being seen by nearly all teams. These are species near the northern edge of their range here in central Ohio, and their status is very weather-dependent. An extended, fierce cold snap can push them to the south or freeze large numbers of them, but we have had no such weather this winter so far. On the other hand, winter irruptive species, like winter wrens, red-breasted nuthatches, purple finches or pine siskins, were absent from this count.

The weather failed to drive them south from their strongholds up around Lake Erie and points north. The one glaring exception was a stray Evening Grosbeak seen out at a Christmas Tree farm in Jefferson township by the hardworking Dick Miller team. Sadly, this species has become rare enough in winter here nowadays that they have become a notable species.

Two bird families that came up big because of the weather, or in spite of it, were sparrows and blackbirds. 11 species of sparrows was a very healthy number and included a rare Lapland Longspur found out at the OSU Waterman farms by Paul Rodewald & Aaron Boone, as well as a Fox Sparrow lurking out

at Blendon Woods. Blackbirds staged an even more remarkable resurgence, with four species seen by a mix of different teams. The highlight was a 700-plus bird roost down at the southern edge of the circle that included 16 Rusty Blackbirds. Normally, these roosts are further south, if in Ohio at all, but the mild weather must have allowed this one to stay here.

Finally, some species continue their winter adaptation to the urban habitats of Columbus. The count had increased numbers of Downy Woodpeckers, Carolina Chickadees, American Robins, even Crows.

All of these are birds that are adapting nicely to suburban neighborhoods and feeders. Crows are rebounding from a catastrophic decline due to West Nile Virus, and they are re-invading old haunts.

I visited their old roost site along Groveport Road in south Columbus on Count day and was treated to the spectacle of over 1400 crows spreading out into small leafless trees all along this area in the evening. It's a sight every Columbus birder should see, if just to experience the eerie power of an animal tradition that has transcended urbanization and plague. Here's hoping that all of our birds can become this resilient.

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### Take note:

#### Delaware County Bird Club meetings

Meetings will be in the new science building on the Ohio Wesleyan University Campus, north side of the atrium, Room 163 at 7 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month. Next program will be on Feb. 26 at 7:30. Title/speaker to be announced.

Directions: U.S. Route 23 north to the Williams Street exit, turn left and then left again on S. Henry Street. Turn right into the parking lot. For more information, contact Darlene Sillick at (614) 761-3696.

#### Ohio Wildlife Center news

OWC's Wildlife Encounters Day Camp will run from mid-

June to mid-August again, with six sessions of camp for 7-12-year-olds and four sessions for 4-6-year-olds. We are adding a three day with overnight camp for teens 13-17 the week of July 4. Our theme this summer is "Habitat is Home." We will be incorporating readings and themes from Sand County Almanac.

This year's WildNite for Wildlife is Saturday, April 14, at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium. The event includes visits with zoo animals, live and silent auctions, live music, dinner, cash bar, and an opportunity to learn more about OWC. The OWC is a volunteer-driven non-profit organization is dedicated to rehabilitation of native Ohio wildlife, public education and wildlife health studies. Visit [www.ohiowildlifecenter.org](http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org).

## 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

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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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### Additional chapter leaders:

Conservation: Dave Horn, 262-0312  
Work Projects: Sharon Treaster, 846-8419  
Education: Susan Setterlin, 457-8130  
Programs: Mike Flynn, 882-9493  
Field Trips: Darlene Sillick, 761-3696  
CA KIDS: Nadya Bennett, 306-8215  
Eco Weekend: Lois Day, (740) 549-0333; Roz Horn, 262-0312  
Membership: Joe Meara, 781-9602  
Corresponding Sec'y: Emily Eby, 855-3879  
Scioto-Whittier IBA Committee: Paul Gledhill, 848-7666  
Birdathon: Julie Davis, 523-2180 or Katryn Renard, 261-7171  
CA Phone Line: Lois and John Day, (740) 549-0333  
Avid Birders: <http://www.columbusaudubon.org/avids/avids.html>

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