



Song Sparrow



A joint newsletter of the
Grange Insurance Audubon
Center and Columbus Audubon

May-June 2009
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Osprey in central Ohio-What a show to watch!

By Darlene Sillick

In case you have not yet seen the 'free show' at central Ohio coastal areas, you really need to add a 'must-do Osprey' trip this spring and summer. The conservation efforts to help bring

back this bird of prey are indeed a compliment to those individuals who believed that they could do just that! The Osprey's main requirement is to have open water where it can hunt for fish and a platform or large tree where it can build its nest. The

Delaware County platforms have produced 43 Osprey since 2001. There have been 21 Osprey nest attempts and 20 were successful to fledge young. Platforms at Alum Creek alone have produced 27

See Osprey, page 5

2009 Alum Creek

Osprey nesting update

We had two Osprey show up around March 23. They settled on platform #1, (the one most north). The regular pair that has used platform #4 or #3 the last three to four years have not shown up as of April 1, they are usually back by March 21. Not sure what happened or where they are.

On March 31 at about 6:45 p.m. as I drove north just starting down the hill to the bottoms, I saw three Osprey soaring and chasing each other, (one was carrying a fish) and the pair on #1 were watching at first, with one of them joining in after awhile. This went on till after the sun set. Dick Tuttle and three others were observing across from platform #1.

The next morning (April 1) around 8 a.m., there were back at it (soaring and chasing each other). One bird from platform #4 joined in after a bit. Then locking and fighting ensued (*see photo*) right over and 50 feet south of me. They started at tree level and fell to within one foot of the road bed, then lifted up and over the guard rail to the muddy flats for just a few seconds, talons flying and squawking bloody murder. Even some of the geese started their way to get a front row seat. I was shooting pictures as fast as the Canon 50D camera would allow.

When I left at 8:30 a.m., things had settled down, with the pair back on #1, and a lone bird on #3, the other two soaring high and to the west.

On Sunday, April 12 at about 11:30 am, what I believe was the male osprey from platform #1 went south along Hogback Road to and hovered (near platform #2), then dove down coming back up seconds later with a meal. He headed back to platform #1 to enjoy his catch. But, about 100 feet from the nest he had a Bald Eagle on his tail. The eagle must have been watching from the trees close by. Squawking ensued. The

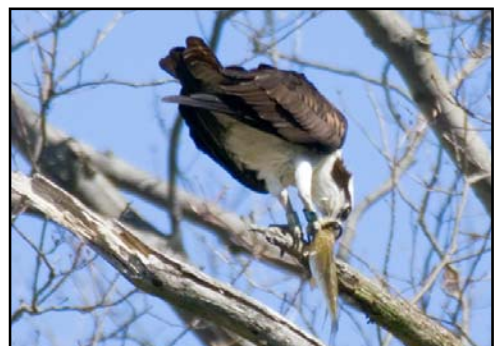


Photos by Frank Germann

The two osprey, talons locked in a fight on the morning of April 1.



A Bald Eagle chases the male osprey from platform #1 on April 12.



The male osprey, starts to eat the fish after eluding the eagle on April 12.

See nesting update, page 11

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Director's Journal

As summer approaches I would like to encourage people to get outside and enjoy nature. Time in nature is an amazing way to relieve stress and rejuvenate your soul. There are many easy and fun activities that you can do with your children to encourage play in nature. Here are two that my daughter loves.



**Heather
Starck**

Nature scavenger hunts

One fun way to help your kids explore the natural world is by creating nature scavenger hunts. Come up with a list of things each child or team of children should try to find. Once they do, they can collect it (where appropriate), show it to you, or even draw a picture. Here are some possible items in the list below.

a feather
a leaf with five lobes
a black stone
an insect hole
a nest
a small animal hole
a bud
a fruit
animal tracks
a spider web
ants
a seed
a red flower
something that is decaying
something that smells good

a shade tree
moss
a fungus
something that sings
something that buzzes
a puddle
a hill
mud
a plant with thorns
a plant with fuzz
a tall skinny plant
a dense bush
a flying insect
a worm
a root
a quiet place

Homemade Bird Nests

Take the kids outside and have them collect nest-building materials such as dried grasses, small sticks, leaves, and mud (made by the children by digging up soil and adding water). Then have them construct nests in small bowls or strawberry baskets. The mud is the glue to hold the materials together. Give the children small bits of yarn and shredded paper to incorporate into their nests. Also have them find something soft, such as cattail seeds or moss, for the eggs to lie on. They can make the eggs out of clay or Play-Doh.

So go out and enjoy nature with your family and see you soon at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center!

Heather Starck

Grange Insurance Audubon Center wish list

If you have a donation for the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, please call Christy Smith at 614-224-3303.

- Any type of field guide in good shape
- Increment Borer
- D-Tapes
- Spotting Scope
- Telescope
- Laminator
- Garden gloves
- Garden tools
- Color printer
- Hip waders
- Fishing tackle and boxes
- Rain ponchos or jackets for children
- Computer speakers
- Digital camera

Thank you for your support

New donors for the period of 2-26 to 3-27-2009

Bowman, Jenny
Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters
James, Patricia
Jenike, David
Knight, Tami
Leedy, Kristan
lynne, Judith
Pfeiffer, Marie
Taliaferro, Kristan

Volunteers needed to get GIAC ready for opening day and beyond

Volunteers will soon be needed at the new Grange Insurance Audubon Center within the Scioto-Audubon Metro Park. While the Center is not expected to open until summer, we need to lay the volunteer framework now to be ready for opening day! Critical volunteer positions which will be needed as soon as we open include gift shop clerks and front desk greeters. While experience handling money would be helpful for the gift shop positions, it is not necessary as center staff will train volunteers.

Our front desk volunteers will greet visitors as they enter the center, and

help them find their way to the library, gift shop and other locations of interest. Our front desk will also be our connection to the Metro Parks staff via two-way radios.

We ask that volunteers be available for four-hour blocks of time. Weekday and weekend time slots will be available.

If you want to be an important part of this exciting new project, contact Chris Kline, volunteer coordinator, at (614) 754-7055 or via e-mail at ckline@audubon.org. Training begins in June!

Columbus Motmots explore Costa Rica

By Joan Arnfield

The Columbus Motmots are a group of friends who returned in late March from a “relaxed” birding trip to Costa Rica. Most of the group are members of Columbus Audubon although the trip was not an Audubon activity.

Most days began soon after dawn with a bird walk. We took walks or trips in the morning and late afternoon, but after lunch most of us avoided the heat by taking a siesta or a dip in the pool (except for the butterfly hunters who made chase amongst the vividly coloured tropical flowers). After dark we would meet to compile our daily list and later there were evening rambles to seek out moths, owls, amphibians and reptiles.

Our guide for this trip was Paco Madrigal (of Cotinga Tours) who gave a talk in Columbus a couple of years ago. Paco and Carlos, our super bus driver, took great care of us throughout the two week adventure. Both men kept a keen lookout as we travelled along. When they spotted something interesting (mostly birds, but also rattlesnakes, monkeys, sloths, iguanas, turtles, crocodiles, etc.) they would quickly stop the bus, set

up the scope, and we’d all pile out to see it. Paco can spot birds when no-one else can, identify them and set up a scope in the wink of an eye!

The Renards and Dave Horn did a 3-day pre-trip excursion to the Pacific shore. Dave writes: “It was a good opportunity to adjust to the heat (low 90s), food (very good), culture, exotic birds and beasts, and driving a stick shift once again. The highlight was a very interesting, instructional tour of an environmentally friendly Teak plantation where we forded a small river four times and managed reasonably well in Spanish.

The first region visited by the whole group was the central mountains. At 8500ft, beside the Savegre River and in the cool cloud forest, we searched for Resplendent Quetzals. It took a while, but we were finally rewarded with really good views. Other highlights of this region included lots of hummingbirds (especially Fiery-throated, Magnificent, and Volcano Hummingbirds, Green Violet-ear and White-throated Mountain-Gem - what a delight!), lying on our backs watching the Swallow-tailed Kites circle overhead and some spectacularly-colorful species such as Flame-colored Tanager, Golden-browed Chlorophonia, Sulfur-winged Parakeet and Collared Trogon.

Dropping down to the Pacific coastal lowlands, we were lucky enough to see Double-toothed Kite, Crested Guan, Baird’s Trogon and yet more hummingbirds in Carara National Park. A highlight of this stay was a boat trip on the Tarcoles River where we were treated to great views of Turquoise-browed Motmot, many herons (including Bare-throated Tiger-Herons) and Amazon Kingfisher.

Moving further north along the Pacific coast, we found ourselves in Guanacaste Province, where we had our first encounter with Howler Monkeys. These

guys make strange, grunting, moaning howls, especially in the very early morning! This is a region of deciduous tropical forest as the trees here shed their leaves during the dry season. We stayed on a large hacienda and visited marshes, lagoons and salt ponds. Among the treats at this

location were Jabiru, Snail Kite, Yellow-naped Parrot, Passerini’s Tanager and Laughing Falcon. One of the lagoons was crowded with a large, noisy mixed flock of water birds including Jacanas, Wood Storks, Roseate Spoonbills, and Black-bellied Whistling Ducks.

It was really hot and humid in the lowlands, so it was a relief to climb up into the mountains again. We stayed at the Arenal Volcano Observatory where we could lie in bed and watch the volcano spitting out boulders and steam! Our only tropical downpour caught us just as most of the party had descended a steep flight of steps to see a waterfall but it brought out the fireflies in the evening, so it wasn’t all bad! The lovely gardens of the Observatory were teeming with wildlife. White-necked Jacobins, Black-crested Coquettes and Bananaquits flocked to the Jamaican vervain plants, and when fruit was put out on the bird feeders we were able to admire Montezuma Oropendulas, various tanagers and both Red-legged and Green Honeycreepers. The feeders were also raided by two tropical members of the raccoon family – Kinkajou and Coati.

Crossing the mountainous backbone of the country, we descended to the Caribbean lowlands. We lodged by the



By Captain Minor of the SS Motmot

Columbus Motmots ready to go.

Serapiqui river and on our early morning walk were treated to great views of the elusive Great Tinamou. We visited the famous La Selva Biological Station, run by the Organization for Tropical Studies where we found White-winged Becard, Vermiculated Screech-Owl, Slaty-tailed and Violaceous Trogons and Pygmy Kingfisher. A boat trip on the Serapiqui river yielded Bay Wren, Green Ibis and, for some, King Vulture.

Our final stop of the trip was at Tortuguero. This village is on the Caribbean coast and only accessible by boat. In fact, we spent most of our stay in boats as we explored the rivers and canals of this region. Paco explained that the land was too swampy for people to explore on foot. Here we found the smaller Caimans, Howler, Spider and White-faced Monkeys, turtles, Red-eyed Tree-Frogs, Poison Dart Frogs and a host of interesting birds including White-faced Puffbird, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Great Potoo and a splendid Agami Heron.

All in all, it was a wonderful trip. The group as a whole saw more than 370 species. Good food and lodgings, excellent company, a skillful bus driver and a superb guide combined to make this a holiday we’ll never forget.



By John and Joan Arnfield

The splendid Agami Heron.

Columbus Audubon

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. If you have suggestions for field trip locations or want to lead a field trip please contact field trip chair, Earl Harrison at eharrison@ehe.osu.edu.

Field trips

Dublin Kiwanis wildflower walk

Sunday, May 3, 2 p.m.

Leader: Jim Davidson and Darlene Sillick

Join Jim Davidson and Darlene Sillick for a wildflower and bird walk at Dublin Kiwanis Riverway Park in Dublin south of 161 on Dublin Rd/Rt 33. (6245 Riverside Drive). Look for the large stone with the words Quarry Place for the Riverside Dr. turnoff to park near the trail entrance. <http://www.dublin.oh.us/recreation/parks/> We will start at Dublin Kiwanis Riverway Park, then we will visit several other Dublin sites, all favorites of the leaders. One site supports 3 species of trillium. Bring your field guides and we will review keying out wildflowers as we look at a variety of spring beauties. We are usually out for a couple hours, bring your binocs and camera and prepare for wet, muddy conditions. Contact Darlene at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or call (614) 761-3696.

Evening at Pickerington Ponds

Sunday, May 3, 6 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

Spring migration is moving into full swing at this time. Some birds are resting and feeding as they prepare for continued journeys, while others are selecting a place to call home and then raise a family. We will spend the evening observing and enjoying the birds and other wildlife species that are inhabit this great wetland preserve. Meet at the Bowen Road parking lot. **Directions:** www.metroparks.net. Call Mike Flynn at (614) 769-1681.

Wednesday walks at Scioto-Audubon

Wednesdays, May 6 and June 3, 7:30 a.m.

Leaders: Paul Gledhill and Heather Raymond

Note: Walks are always held the first Wednesday of the month. 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) Please contact Paul Gledhill at (614) 848-7666; gledhillpaul@yahoo.com, or Heather Raymond at (614) 785-0342; heather_columbus_audubon@yahoo.com for more information.

Honda Wetlands, Glacier Ridge

Friday, May 8, 7 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

Come join us for a weekday evening walk along the boardwalk as we look and listen for the wetland birds and other wildlife that

CA May Program

Tuesday, May 26, 7 p.m., social time, 7:30 p.m., presentation at Innis House, Inniswood Metro Gardens

Birds of Costa Rica

Imagine a land the size of West Virginia with more species of birds than all of North America. That is Costa Rica: a land of active volcanoes, granitic mountains, cloud forests, rivers and waterfalls and lowland rainforests; the land of the Scarlet Macaw, toucans and tanagers; and the winter home of many North American songbirds. Join Don Burton for a memorable evening on tour in this magical kingdom of birds.

Join us for refreshments at 7 p.m., and the program at 7:30 p.m.

About Dr. Burton

Dr. Donald L. Burton is a local veterinarian and the founder of the Ohio Wildlife Center. The center's mission is to foster awareness and appreciation of the state's native wildlife through rehabilitation, education, and health studies. Over the last two decades, the OWC has treated more than 50,000 injured and orphaned wild animals representing more than 175 species. In addition, the center operates a 24-hour emergency hotline that offers free assistance to more than 25,000 citizens each year. Burton serves as the center's executive director, chief veterinarian, and research director, and has donated more than a thousand hours per year of his time and tens of thousands of dollars of revenue from his private veterinary practice to support the center's nonprofit work. The Ohio Wildlife Center is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Go to www.ohiowildlifecenter.org for details on special anniversary events.

live here or are stopping along the way on their migration to points north. This is a good habitat for herons, egrets, bitterns, rails and many other bird species. Meet at the main parking lot of the Honda Wetlands Education Area. **Directions:** www.metroparks.net. Contact Mike Flynn at (614) 769-1681.

IMBD Magee Marsh/Ottawa NWR auto tour

Saturday, May 9, 6:15 a.m.

Leader: Michael Packer

This is International Migratory Bird Day at the lake and it is crowded with people from all over the state for good reason. Mid-May is the peak of bird migration and warblers are said to be "dripping from the trees" at Magee Marsh. In the past we have seen over 100 different species of birds in eight hours along the lake. Join Michael Packer on a walk along the boardwalk in the morning. After lunch we will drive the auto tour of the Ottawa NWR looking for waterfowl, rails and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Pack a lunch and drinks. We will be carpooling from the Worthington Mall parking lot nearest to the Kroger. Also, if you are interested in being part of a Birdathon team here's your chance. The name of this open

See Coming up, page 9

Meet the GIAC Together Green Team!

The Grange Insurance Audubon Center welcomes six high school students, Luke, Sydatriis, Matthew, Falis, Elizabeth, Albane, and assisting teacher Abigail from Focus Learning Academy as interns this spring. The students are working as GPS interns through a new center program, Conservation on Location, funded through a new alliance between Audubon and Toyota called Together Green.

They come from diverse backgrounds and represent schools throughout the city of Columbus. Their interests vary from automotive mechanics, graphic design, medicine, and resource management. They were all selected for their interest and enthusiasm about our natural world.

Under the direction of Doreen Whitley, Conservation Program Coordinator, the



Together Green Interns with Doreen Whitley after their first GPS session.

students completed an intense training on mapping grade GPS protocol using Trimble units. Each week the group fol-

lows a new protocol created to collect spatial data from a restoration site within the Scioto Audubon Metro Park, an Audubon and Birdlife International designated Important Bird Area. Anthony Rubeck a student from Columbus State Community College's GIS program is also interning and assisting center staff in data management, correction, and file conversion. The data will be used to complete a spatial temporal analysis of the relationships between the plants within the restoration area in the park. This analysis will lead to action by informing the creation of a calendar for resource management within the park to beat the clock on new invasive species spread after restoration in new habitats on site.

-Doreen Whitley, GIAC conservation program coordinator

GIAC construction update

As the Grange Insurance Audubon Center moves towards a summer opening, we want to share with you some of the unique features of the site and building. We will be hosting preview tours for our Founding members this summer!

GIAC features

Building Features

- Explicit **passive solar** design
- **Sun-shading** devices
- **Bird Friendly Fritted Glass** with a unique frit design to reduce solar gain and protect from bird strikes
- **Operable** windows
- Solar tracking feature - "**sundial**" embedded in floor
- Color coded horizontal window mullions **marking shadows** cast at key points of the year
- Extensive **exterior view** opportunities
- Vegetated "**green**" roofs
- Artful **downspouts** to convey roof run-off to site features
- Ground source heat pump "**geothermal**" system
- Exhaust airflow **energy recovery**
- **Daylight** harvesting

- **Light pollution** control
- **Waterless** urinals

Site Features

- Elevated ground plane providing **clean fill barrier** above impacted soils
- Constructed **wetland** and **rain garden** tied to building storm run-off
- Extensive **pervious** hard-scaping
- Native Ohio **xeriscaping** strategy
- Extensive vegetated **bioswale**
- On-site **storm water** processing
- Steel **salvaged** from former site structures to be used for site sculpture
- **Nature play** and **outdoor learning areas**
- Outdoor learning area
- Nature Play learning nodes
- Demonstration gardens
- Rain Garden and wetland demonstration areas

Osprey

Continued from page 1

young since 2001.

Incubation starts when the second egg is laid and they usually have two to three young. Incubation lasts for 37 days and starts in mid April. Then the nestling period is 55 days.

The young and adult Osprey tend to fledge in early August and leave our area by the second week of September.

Then they return again late March after spending the winter in Brazil, Columbia or Venezuela. When they return they look for a mate within 50 miles of where they were raised.

The Osprey has about a 3,500 mile journey lasting several weeks.

No wonder some of us get so excited to see them return in the spring!

Dick Tuttle has stated, "This project is 50 percent for the birds and 50 percent for the people."

Dick Tuttle and Dick Phillips, both retired teachers from Delaware, put up the first three platforms during the winter of 1997 at the north end of Alum Creek.

Dick Tuttle promises that the show will be wild and he and

many faithful observers are hooked watching the Osprey antics each season.

A good place to observe in northern Columbus are the shallows of Alum Creek Reservoir, along Hogback Rd. Exit I-71 at the U.S. Rte. 36/37 exit and head west less than a mile toward Delaware to 3B's and a K Road and turn right and travel north about four miles to state Route 521.

Then turn left and travel west about one mile to Hogback Rd. and turn left.

You will see the platforms on your right and proceed to the parking lot on your right just past Hogback Rd. Park and walk the trail towards the water to easily view the platforms and some amazing aerial entertainment.

Also, check out Rte. 229 southwest of the bridge to view a platform and the Hoover boardwalk now sports two platforms. Also Pickerington Ponds and Slate Run Metro Parks and Deer Creek Wildlife Area have platforms for easy viewing. Additional information and 2009 nesting updates can be found at www.columbusaudubon.org.

Birdathon 2009

It's not too late to support your favorite team!

By Julie Davis

What will our birdathon teams see this year, Blue-winged Warbler, Upland Sandpiper, Yellow-headed Blackbird or our own mascot, the Song Sparrow? Our teams are already 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 in this newsletter and send it in. You do not need to send your money in until you hear from your team.

CA Birdathon 2009 will help raise more dollars towards our \$100,000 commitment to the GIAC.


All of the profits from the birdathon this year will again go to support the Grange Insurance Nature Center, which is located in our Important Bird Area.

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

The center is under construction and slated to open this summer. We hope our commitment will encourage new and larger donations towards this great cause.


If you have not formed a team yet,

2009 grand prizes



Eagle Optics has once again generously donated a pair of binoculars. The **Vortex fury 8x42**, valued at \$390. Sure to be a favorite for all-around viewing, the steady power of the 8x42 Fury points out critical details from both near (less than five feet!) and far. For more, go to www.eagleoptics.com.

Red Maple Inn has also donated a nights stay at their Inn in Geauga County. Located in the fourth largest Amish community in the world, The Red Maple Inn Ohio bed and breakfast is a little like a small hotel. No two rooms are alike in the two-story inn. Each



Red Maple Inn. of the 17 rooms and one suite are individually and elegantly decorated and are furnished with Ohio Amish handcrafted furniture, concealed televisions and VCRs, and a Jacuzzi Tub. It has an elevator, small fitness center, balconies, game room, and fireplaces. However, its friendly staff and its many amenities set it far apart from any hotel. <http://www.redmapleinn.com>.

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 hours. On any day between May 1st and May 17th.

Remember, you don't have to stay in Ohio to do your birding, so be creative. The teams that have already registered are listed below. So, call now and add your name to the list.

Birdathon Celebration

All of our teams and sponsors are invited to celebrate their birdathon success at our annual BAT celebration on from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, May 22 at the Highbanks

Metro Park nature center. There will be a bird walk, door prizes, two grand prizes and dessert.

The grand prizes this year include the Vortex fury 8x42 binoculars generously donated by Eagle Optics and a free night's stay at the Red Maple Inn in Geauga County. (See box above for detailed descriptions). You must turn in all of your pledge money by the 22nd to be eligible for the door prizes. Please plan to join us for a great night of birding, food, prizes and FUN.

For more information or to RSVP, call Elaine Smith at (614) 850-0296.

Directions to Highbanks Metro Park: From I-270, take U.S. 23 north about 3 miles. Entrance is on the left, just before Powell Road/Polaris Parkway.

**COLUMBUS
AUDUBON
BIRDATHON**



Sponsorship form

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

Team Name _____ Pledge _____

My Name _____ Phone# _____

Street, City, State, Zip Code _____

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

2009 Birdathon teams

Backyard Experience

Chick-a-dees -75

Gerry Brevoort
Joan Frederick
Nina Hawranick
Lynn Singleton

Chestnut Ridge

Chachalacas - 100

Bill & Eric Reiner
Scott Felker
Eleanor Nunley

Deck Birds - 1

Cheri Brown
Pat Barron
Bev May
Pete Precario

Low Carbon

Footprinters - 75

Dave Horn
Katrjn Renard
Marty Kotter

Magee Madness - 88

Michael Packer
& field trip participants
(details in May newsletter)

Marsh Madness - 100

Bill & Deb Marsh

Metro Parks

Stellar Jays - 90

Jim Davidson
Joe Meara
John O'Meara
John Watts

Neat Nests - 40

Scott & Whitney Jaeb
Sabrina & Kiersten Jaeb

Fred Lancia

Del & Jordan Parrott

No Egrets - 80

Becky Cummings
Elaine & Larry Smith
Roger Stout
Laura Thomas

Pelicans - 40

Mark & Lauren Richards
Benjamin & Riley Richards

Quick Three

Beards - 187

Dave Horn
Bill Whan

Red-Eyed

Weary-os - 100

Earl & Alyn Harrison
Joe Eickholt

Scarlet &

Gray Tanagers - 70

Joe & Susanne Gatesman
Barb & Stephen Revard
Mark & Susan Setterlin

Slate (Run) Colored

Juncos - 100

Andrea Haslage
Lauren Metcalf
Lori Patterson
Brad Sparks
Joshua Steele

Swans and Coots - 70

Alan Cohen
Clyde Gosnell
Paul Knoop
Katrjn Renard
Marlene Woo Lun

Louise Warner

Three Hens

and a Fox - 50

Suzan Jervey
Doc Jordan
Chrissy Phieffer
Darlene Sillilck

Two Footed Boobies - 90

Marcia Brehmer
Marion Farber
Melanie Shuter
Mary Kay Wood

Two in a Bush - 65

Patty DeMaria
Elaine Fujimora
Biani Moran

Westerville

Waxwings - 140

Jackie & Tom Bain
Julie & Ken Davis
Rob & Ricki Lowry

Wild Birds Unlimited

Riverside - 170

Michael Flynn
Bill Heck
Steve Landes
Tom Sheley

Whichety Witches - 50

Tamara James
Kristan Leedy

World Series

Birders - 150

John Price
Heather Raymond
Two West Virginians

Backyards for Wildlife

Don't miss the Annual Parade of Certified Wildlife Gardens

By Toni Stahl

Half the fun of having a habitat is sharing it with like-minded people, so my yard was open to the public at scheduled times beginning in 2006. In 2007, I started an Annual Parade of Wildlife Gardens, all certified by the National Wildlife Federation. This year, it will be in the City of Worthington featuring eight different certified gardens.

Our third annual Parade of Certified Wildlife Gardens is in honor of National Pollinator week (www.pollinator.org).

Native bee species can usually be seen up close. They don't sting (unless provoked) because they don't have nests to guard. As for me, in return for the diversity of plants in my yard, I've had 33 different species of butterflies as opposed to the two species before native plants.

You'll be able to get plenty of ideas and enjoy seeing beautiful, primarily native flowers. Depending on the circumstances, you may see native birds taking advantage of the plants upon



By Marc Apfelstadt, 2007

July 2007 habitat garden tour at ODNR's native garden.

which they have grown to depend.

Seeing is believing! As you walk, notice the five essential habitat elements: food, water, cover, places to raise young and predator bugs keep pests under control naturally, taking over the job of pesticides.

Many visitors from past tours had never seen native plants before and were excited about making plans to add them to their own yards. It only takes a small area.

If you have your own wildlife habitat, consider inviting others to come by and share the fun. It's a great way to show first hand how one yard can make a difference!

Get Certified: Putting up National Wildlife Federation's Certified Wildlife Habitat sign helped me explain to others what I am doing and encourages others to help birds too.

Lessons learned? If you're interested, email me at marca@columnbus.rr.com to receive our monthly 'Nature Scoop.'

If you go

Parade of certified gardens

Sunday, June 28, Parade of Certified Wildlife Gardens in Worthington, from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., honoring National Pollinator Week. Free admission. Homes on the tour are:

243 Heischman Ave
165 Franklin Ave
6675 Worthington-Galena Rd

130 Longfellow Ave
380 Highland Ave
220 East 161
251 Sanbridge Circle
1060 Morning Street

One habitat is located in a church lot, one is a community rain garden (www.sustainableworthington.org) and the rest are located in residential yards. Native plants will be for sale as a fundraiser for the Wild Ones Columbus Chapter (www.for-wild.org). See our Web site at www.backyard-habitat.info for more information.

Two ways to get involved and get outside this summer!

Great American Backyard Campout

Join thousands of campers across the country for National Wildlife Federation's fifth



annual Great American Backyard Campout® on Saturday, June 27, 2009. Remember when you were a child and sleeping under the stars and sharing stories around the campfire were favorite pastimes? Celebrate these summertime traditions again in your backyard or favorite

Visit the Great American Backyard Campout® online at www.backyardcampout.org to register your campsite and join the nationwide community of backyard campers. Share your experiences and get ideas from other campers in your area. Download fun activities, camping tips,

In today's high-tech world, children and

families are losing touch with nature and the outdoors. The Great American Backyard Campout® encourages everyone to get outside and camp, to renew his or her connection with nature or experience it for the first time. It also provides an opportunity for parents to re-connect with their kids following an endless schedule of programmed activities during the school year. So turn off your TVs, iPods, Playstations, computers, and cell phones and experience a night outside.

For every playground you visit and share - NWF Receives \$1

National Wildlife Federation is collaborating with KaBoom (national non-profit who works with communities to create playground for kids) on their national inventory campaign for building a database of playground/play areas for children

across the US.

This campaign ties well with our national effort to get parents and children to BE OUT THERE!... Outside in nature - exploring, learning and having fun for at least 1 hour each day. We need your help and any of friends and neighbors that may be willing to do three simple things.

1) Visit a play areas - natural or "man-made" in your community.

2) Take a digital picture (with or without children)

3) Upload the picture and location into the NWF's team page on the KaBoom database at <http://playspacefinder.kaboom.org/teams/4>.



Coming up

Continued from page 4

ad hoc team is called Magee Madness. Contact Michael at Packerdigital@yahoo.com for more details.

Bird hikes at Blendon Woods

Saturdays, May 9 and June 29, 7 a.m.

Leader: Bruce Simpson

Check out winter residents and wintering waterfowl as we wander the trails. Bring binoculars. We will start at the nature center, explore Thoreau Lake and other trails for spring migrants. Call (614) 508-8000 for more information or go to www.metroparks.net.

Blacklick Woods and Pickerington Ponds

Sunday, May 10, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

Spring migration will be near its peak as we hit these southwest Columbus hot spots. Blacklick Woods is a natural migrant trap and we'll start here looking for the last of the temperate migrant sparrows and finches, and the first waves of the migrant neotropicals. Along with the swarms of migrants will be plenty of resident woodpeckers, titmice, and other forest birds. Afterwards, we'll journey to the nearby wetlands of Pickerington Ponds to search for lingering waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. With the overlap of different migrants and the variety of habitats, this should be a good trip for a great diversity of birds. Meet at the Ash-Maple parking area (second left inside the park) in Blacklick Woods. For more information, contact Rob Thorn at (614) 330-2406 or robthorn@earthlink.net.

Whetstone bird walks

Monday, May 11 and Sunday, May 24, 8 a.m.

Leaders: Donna Siple and Lynn Wearsch

Join Donna Siple and Lynn Wearsch as they take you on a walk around Whetstone Park in search of migrating and breeding birds. Meet in the parking lot in front of the main shelter house. For more information, contact Earl Harrison at eharrison@ehe.osu.edu.

Scioto Audubon and Greenlawn Cemetery

Saturday, May 23, 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 developing urban nature 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 bikepath, we'll try to find at the nearby Greenlawn 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 St.). For more information, contact Rob Thorn at (614) 330-2406 or robthorn@earthlink.net.

Five mile hike at Highbanks

Saturday, May 30, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Lowry

We'll hike approximately five miles as we explore explore various areas of the park for late Spring migrants and resident breeding birds. We'll also check out the Chimney Swift tower that is planned to be constructed in April by a local Eagle Scout candidate. Meet at

the Nature Center. For more information, contact Earl Harrison at eharrison@ehe.osu.edu.

The birds of Inniswood

Tuesday, May 26, 6 p.m.

Leader: Tom Sheley

Join Tom Sheley on a walk through Inniswood Gardens prior to the May 26 monthly program featuring Dr. Don Burton of the Ohio Wildlife Center. We will be wandering through wood and garden enjoying whatever nature has to offer. Bring binoculars and a smile. Meet at the parking lot kiosk. We will be finished in time to enjoy the social period before the program.

Treetop with the Ceruleans - Hocking Hills Canopy Tours

Sunday, May 31, 5 p.m.

Leader: Mike Flynn

This exciting new trip takes us on a journey to the Hocking Hills where we will thrill to the experience of an incredible three-hour treetop adventure on Ohio's first world-class zipline course. A professional guide will lead us. No experience necessary, just a spirit of adventure and wonder. Ages 10 through adult, and weight of 70 pounds to approx. 250 pounds are accepted, with specific requirements on participants age 10-18. All pertinent info can be found at www.hockinghillscanopytours.com. Cost: \$85 per person, payable to Columbus Audubon. We have 16 spaces reserved, available until full. Registration is required by May 15 (or until full) to Mike Flynn at (614) 769-1681 or mflynn.wildandfree@gmail.com. Signed waivers required. Cancellation after May 15 is subject to full fee.

Strays of the Darby creeks

Saturday, June 6, 8 a.m.

Leader: Rob Thorn

The isolation of the Darby Creeks, along with the mix of different habitats along them, make for an enticing place to find a diversity of birds, including some very out-of-place species. In late Spring and early Summer, all sorts of unusual species stray here, and past years have produced Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Clay-colored Sparrow, Black-billed Cuckoo, White Ibis, King Rail, Sedge Wrens, and others. The new wetlands at Prairie Oaks and Battelle-Darby parks will only increase this trend. We'll have our ears to the local grapevine and be roaming around the best spots in search of this year's strays. Meet at the Darby Bend Lakes area of Prairie Oaks MetroPark, off Amity Rd. Contact Rob Thorn at (614) 330-2406 or robthorn@earthlink.net.

CA KIDS: Wildlife at the wetlands

Sunday, June 28, 6:30 p.m.

Age range: 6-12, parents and adults

Join Doc the Nature Guy for a fun-filled adventure in search of things that hoot, hop and howl at Glacier Ridge Metro Park's Honda Wetlands area. **Directions:** www.metroparks.net. Contact docthenatureguy@hotmail.com.

Service in the Preserves

Location TBD

Saturday, May 30, 7:45 a.m.

Please call Katryn Renard at (614) 261-7171 for more information on this trip or go to www.columbusaudubon.org for updates.

Columbus Audubon's partners

Preservation Parks ready for a busy spring, summer

The summer is shaping up to be a busy one in Preservation Parks of Delaware County, with lots of new programs including a summer concert series. Below is a sampling of what's going on. For a full schedule of events, go to www.preservationparks.com.

Art in the Park, June 14, 1-5 p.m. Area artists and musicians will gather at Gallant Woods Preserve to display and sell original works of art.

Summer Concerts in the Park, Gallant Woods Preserve. July 9, 26 and 30. Go to the parks Web site for groups and times.

Bark at the Blues, 8 a.m., July 18. 5K walk/run at Blues Creek Preserve to benefit the parks and the Humane Society of Delaware County.

Perseid Meteor Shower campout at Blues Creek Preserve, 7 p.m. to 9 a.m., August 15-16. Register by e-mailing saundras@preservationparks.com.

Park Safari Challenge, August 22, 2-6 p.m. Participants will travel from park to park, completing puzzles and challenges along the way.

The cost is \$20 per carload, and the event will end with a picnic dinner at one of the parks. Register by e-mailing saundras@preservationparks.com.

Green-Wise Fair, August 30, 1-5 p.m., Deer Haven Preserve.

Mother's Day Hike, Sunday, May 10, 6 p.m. Deer Haven Preserve.

Wake Up with Wildlife, Saturday, May 30, 8 a.m. Char-Mar Ridge Preserve.

Adult Habitat Hike, Sunday, May 31, 9 a.m. Blues Creek Preserve. (3.5-miles).

"Into the Night" Hike, Friday, June 12, 9:30 p.m. Emily Traphagan Preserve.

Pond Discovery, Saturday, June 13, 3 p.m. Deer Haven Preserve.

Nature Scavenger Hunt, Saturday, June 20, 1- 4 p.m. Hogback Ridge Preserve.

Father's Day Hike, Sunday, June 21, 10 a.m. Char-Mar Ridge Preserve.

Bird Quest schedule for May and June. May 9, 8 a.m. at Blues Creek Preserve; May 30, 8 a.m. at Char-Mar Ridge Preserve; June 6, 6 a.m. at Big Run Preserve (Registration required, call 740-524-8600, ext. 3 or e-mail to jackieb@preservationparks.com) and June 28, 8 a.m. at Char-Mar Ridge Preserve.

And don't forget Preservation Parks' chapter of the Ohio Young Birders Club!

Birders, age 12-18, are invited to join the OYBC for field trips and adventures in natural history. Contact Jackie Bain, jackieb@preservationparks.com or 740-595-3725.

South Side Settlement students begin studying birds at Scioto Audubon park

The students in the after school program at South Side Settlement House are once again eager to learn and experience the developing Scioto Audubon Metro Park (formerly the Whittier). They will participate in a series of 3 in class lessons and three in field experiences. Each in class experience is followed by an in field experience that builds from the class activity. This year the focus is on good field identification techniques which included a lesson on proper use of binoculars and identifying key field marks of the birds. The second lesson which takes place in April, will be learning about birds' adaptations to their surroundings and how that is necessary to be successful in their habitat. The third lesson focuses on spring migration. Thru "The Great Migration



Students in the after-school program check bird IDs with Chris Kline, GIAC education director.

Challenge" activity they will learn first hand the trials and tribulations that face birds as they migrate back to their summer homes. Their related field experience will engage the students in identifying migrating

birds that pass thru Scioto Audubon Metro Park.

The finale that will connect all of the students' experiences will be the "Bird Festival" at South Side Settlement House on Wednesday, May 20. Check

the Columbus Audubon web-site for further details: www.columbusaudubon.org

The students are really excited about getting out of doors and learning about the diversity of nature all around them. One young student was so excited to point out a bird that he was able to see hiding among the underbrush.

You could see how proud he was of his new skill and also making the child/nature connection.

It is so gratifying to see the students' development of a curiosity and respect for the natural world.

Look to the next newsletter for updates on this great program. If you are interested in assisting with this program you can contact Susan Setterlin at 45-8130 or rsetterl@columbus.rr.com.

Don't forget to vote on May 5 for the Metro Parks levy

On May 5, Franklin County voters will be asked to approve a 10-year, 0.75 mill levy to replace the current levy which expires at the end of 2009. This will amount to about \$23 a year per \$100,000 of appraised home value, or about six

cents a day.

Passage of Metro Parks' 10-year levy will cover operation costs and maintenance of the parks while continuing to improve wildlife habitat and water quality by restoring 1,000 acres of wetlands

along with substantial tracts of prairies and forests. Funds will also allow for the creation of several new parks and the expansion of the Scioto Audubon Metro Park. Go to vote4metroparks.com for more information.

Conservation corner: State of the Birds

With birding's "high season" upon us once again it is good to reflect on how birds are doing. National Audubon has partnered with several other conservation organizations and federal agencies in an ongoing effort to keep us all informed.

This article is a summary from the website <http://www.stateofthebirds.org/> (*Dave Horn didn't write it.*)

-Dave Horn

The United States is blessed with diverse landscapes, a wealth of natural resources, and spectacular wildlife, including more than 800 bird species. Birds are a national treasure and a heritage we share with people around the world, as billions of migratory birds follow the seasons across oceans and continents. Our passion for nature is evident: Wildlife watching generates \$122 billion in economic output annually, and an estimated one in every four American adults is a bird watcher.

In the past 200 years, however, the U.S. human population has skyrocketed from about 8 million to 300 million. As we have harvested energy and food, grown industries, and built cities, we have often failed to

consider the consequences to nature. During our history, we have lost a part of our natural heritage—and degraded and depleted the resources upon which our quality of life depends. We have lost more than half of our nation's original wetlands, 98 percent of our tallgrass prairie, and virtually all virgin forests east of the Rockies. Since the birth of our nation, four American bird species have become extinct, including the Passenger Pigeon, once the world's most abundant bird. At least 10 more species are possibly extinct.

Birds are bellwethers of our natural and cultural health as a nation—they are indicators of the integrity of the environments that provide us with clean air and water, fertile soils, abundant wildlife, and the natural resources on which our economic development depends. In the past 40 years, major public, private, and government initiatives have made strides for conservation. Has it been enough? How are birds faring?

In an unprecedented partnership, government wildlife agencies and conservation groups have come together to produce this first comprehensive analysis of the state of

our nation's birds. The results are sobering: bird populations in many habitats are declining—a warning signal of the failing health of our ecosystems. Where we have been negligent too long, such as in Hawaii, we are on the verge of losing entire suites of unique and beautiful birds and native plant communities.

At the same time, we see heartening evidence that birds can respond quickly and positively to conservation action. Many waterfowl species have undergone significant increases in the past 40 years, a testament to coordinated conservation efforts in wetlands. Through focused conservation efforts, we have brought magnificent Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles back from the brink of extinction.

It is imperative that we redouble our efforts now, before habitat loss and degradation become even more widespread, intractable, and expensive to solve. Together, we can ensure that future generations will look back at this first State of the Birds report with disbelief that their common birds could ever have been so troubled.

Visit the Web site to see how you can get involved.

Invasive species: Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum Satvia*)

By Bruce Lindsay

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum sativa*) is a strikingly beautiful plant, growing up to seven feet tall, with purple to magenta spiked flowers. It would be a stunning addition to any garden. Why then, does it have such a bad reputation?

Purple loosestrife produces approximately 100,000 seeds per plant. These seeds disperse and take over freshwater wetlands, choking out native, non-invasive plants and clogging waterways. It has no native competition or predators in North America.

The plant is native to Eurasia

and entered the United States in the early 1800s. It was undoubtedly brought over as an ornamental. It is now illegal to sell purple loosestrife in Ohio, but available cultivars can cross-pollinate with wild populations and produce viable seeds.

Once it is established, purple loosestrife is exceedingly difficult to control. Pulling out the plant is labor intensive and the seeds still



Purple loosestrife

spread. A recently discovered biological control may be a partial answer. In several eastern and midwestern states including Ohio, scientists are releasing the European Golden Loosestrife Beetle (*Galerucella pusilla*) with the hope of controlling the invasive plant. (One might wonder if we are not introducing yet another exotic and potentially damaging species but strin-

gent regulations prevent this nowadays.) Once the beetles have eaten down a population of purple loosestrife, their own population also declines. Whether the beetle proves to be the solution to the dilemma remains to be seen. They seem to be effective within a few years of release at a given site but they disperse very slowly. In the meantime, if you somehow come across a variety of purple loosestrife and are tempted to add it to your garden, please resist the urge. If you already have the plant growing on your property, do the right thing and destroy it, especially if you live near a wetland.

2009 Alum Creek Osprey nesting update

Continued from page 1

female who was sitting on the nest got between the male and the eagle. She started chasing

the eagle as the eagle chased the male with the fish.

They all went north along the creek. The male with the fish was back within a minute

and landed in a tree above me on Hogback Road and started eating. The female was back in a couple of minutes and flying back to the nest. The male then

went an old sign post finished eating half the fish, then delivered the the rest to his mate.

-Frank Germann

Grange Insurance Audubon Center
www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org

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Beginners bird walk

Twelve new and founding members enjoyed a beginners bird walk at Scioto Audubon Metro Park and Green Lawn Cemetery on April 4. The weather could not have been better.

A special thank you goes out to Michael Packer and Darlene Sillick for leading the trip. At Scioto Audubon, highlight birds were Great White Egrets and a Blue-winged Teal. At Green Lawn Cemetery highlight birds were Eastern Towhees and a pair of Eastern Pheobes going through their nesting motions at the pit. A Coopers Hawk also flew overhead. At the bridge, birders enjoyed probably the best views one can get of a pair of male Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers socializing and working a tree together. Who could ask for anything more? Well, Darlene handed out free bluebird boxes to members who have the habitat for them. So even the birds benefitted from this beautiful early Spring walk.

-Michael Packer