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

Summer 2009
Volume 41, No. 6

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Joint GIAC and Columbus Audubon memberships

The Grange Insurance Audubon Center has teamed up with Columbus Audubon, our Audubon chapter, to provide a joint membership to both organizations.

The individual rate is $30 and the family rate is $45. When you join the Grange Insurance Audubon Center (GIAC) and Columbus Audubon (CA) you become a 12 month member of the National Audubon Society as well. Joint membership benefits are:

Subscription to Audubon magazine
10% discount at GIAC nature store
Discounts on GIAC program fees
Free CA field trips and programs
Volunteer opportunities
Invitations to special events at GIAC
Building rental opportunities at GIAC
Bimonthly Song Sparrow newsletter
CA annual meeting and program
Discounts at partnering affiliates
Voice in CA/GIAC conservation initiatives

Please return form to: Heather Starck, Director
Grange Insurance Audubon Center
652 North High Street, Suite 303
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Or to: Columbus Audubon
Membership Chair, P.O. Box 141350
Columbus, OH 43214

More than 200 species of birds have been sighted, the Center is the only Audubon Center in the U.S. located within one mile of an urban center.

District Board: Columbus Audubon

Founded 1913
740-549-0333
www.columbusaudubon.org

Officers: President: Julie Davis, 523-2180
Vice President: Michael Packer, 580-3309
Secretary: Heather Raymond, 785-0342
Newsletter/Website Editor: Stefanie Hauck, (740) 972-1680
Treasurer: John Wilson, 481-8872

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Additional chapter leaders: Conservation: Dave Harp, 262-0312
Service in the Preserves: Katryn Renard, 262-1711
Education: Susan Settlin, 652-6130
Programs: Mike Flynn, mflynn.6vandand@netzero.com
Field Trips: Earl Harrison, eharrison@vc.edu
CA Web site: Bill Heck, billheck@gmail.com
CA KIDS: Nadya Bennett, 386-2815
Ohio Young Birders: Jackie Bain, 361-4610, Darlene Silik, 761-5096
Eco Weekend: Roz Horan, 262-0312; Lois Day, (740) 549-0333
Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park

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Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park

View of the front exterior of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park set to open

Friday, August 28 at 10 a.m.

Please join us for The Grange Insurance Audubon Center & Scioto Audubon Metro Park ribbon cutting celebration on Friday, August 28, 2009. The ribbon cutting ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m., with center tours immediately following.

Scheduled speakers are Governor Ted Strickland, Mayor Michael Coleman, National Audubon Center CEO John Flicker, Metro Parks Director John O’Meara, Grange Insurance CEO Phil Urban, and Center Director Heather Starck.

That weekend, Center activities will include bird and dragonfly walks, butterfly gardening classes, and activities for children including puppet shows, face painting, and story times. The Metro Park will feature a 35-foot climbing wall (including two 7-8 foot bolts), and a rope climbing area.

A primary goal of the 18,000 square foot, nature-based education center is to inspire environmental responsibility and stewardship in the daily lives of students and visitors who enjoy the Center and surrounding park. Initial planning for the Center set a goal for Silver LEED certification, yet thanks to strategic design and unwavering commitment to National Audubon Society sustainability policies, Gold certification is now a strong possibility. Situated along an Audubon Important Bird Area (IBA), on a major migratory flyway where more than 200 species of birds have been sighted, the Center is the only Audubon Center in the US located within one mile of an urban center.

Continued on page 3
Volunteers still needed to get GIAC ready for opening day and beyond

Volunteers are needed to help with various functions of the new Grange Insurance Audubon Center within the Scioto-Audubon Metro Park. 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 kline@audubon.org.

Thank you for your support

Donors from 3/28 to 6/12/09:

Tami Knight
David & Judy Canowitz
Grandview Civic Association
Ann Baird Speer
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Lynn Barro
Ellen Anderson
Stephen & Sara Browning
Kay M. Williamson
Margaret L. Turner
Amy Kesting
Joel & Beth Rabb
Columbus School For Girls

Columbus Audubon

Play “tag” with the birds: Be a CamClickr with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

We need your keen eye and quick fingers! As you may know, we have live cameras positioned at active bird nests all around the country. Since 1999, we’ve archived more than eight million images from these Nestcams. To help sort through the images, we developed CamClickr—an online tool you can use to view the images and sort them into albums, then tag each image by the type of behavior you see: preening, eating, feeding chicks, etc.

What’s in it for you? NestCams allow you to peek into the nests of Barn Owls, bluebirds, Wood Ducks, and other birds for an up-close look at fascinating bird behavior. CamClickr will appeal not only to bird lovers, but to people who enjoy testing their skills with online games. When you help sort and tag the camera images, you collect points and compete for prizes such as binoculars, DVDs, books and posters. It’s easy and fun!

Why do we need your help? By using CamClickr to help tag and sort the NestCam images, you help scientists studying breeding bird behavior. The more we understand about bird behavior, the better equipped we are to understand how birds are responding to threats in their environment.

Just visit www.camclickr.org to create an account. This allows you to chat in the NestCam forums, tag photos, and track your stats in CamClickr anytime. You can check your rankings in “my sessions” to see how you stack up against other taggers. The redesigned CamClickr home page also provides the latest Twitter feeds. Educators will appreciate the newly developed lesson plan, appropriate for all ages, and easily modified for individualized instruction. You can watch videos of fascinating nesting behaviors from the Lab’s Macaulay Library.

Make it your summer project to help science and the birds—a CamClickr!

2009 Birdathon preliminary results

With donations still coming in, this year’s birdathon was another great success! As of July 3, we have raised just over $11,000.00 dollars from our 2009 effort. Columbus Audubon is once again donating all of our proceeds to the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, to help fulfill our $100,000 pledge. Look in our September issue for full results.

Columbus Audubon KIDS!

The Summer newsletter has hit the streets and the fall issue is not far away! Contact Nadya Bennett, CA Kids Committee Chair to get your issues mailed to them and to sign up for our CA Kids monthly programs. You can contact Nadya at nadya2003@msn.com or (614) 306-8215.
South Side Settlement celebrates fifth bird festival

Students who participated in South Side Settlement’s after-school program spent the early and late spring learning about bird observation, adaptations and migration through a series of class activities as well as three field trips to the Scioto Audubon Metro Park.

Observing, identifying and listing the birds they saw in the field, the students confirmed the existing bird species list that is being documented in the IBA area of the park. As in the past, they celebrated their accomplishments with a bird festival held on May 21. With parents and South Side Settlement board members in attendance, the students were eager to share what they had learned by making displays about bird migration and bird observation skills.

They were very proud of their artistic talents in their displays of “Adaptation Artistry” that featured their creation of new bird species based on unique habitat adaptations.

Future plans include a full array of regularly-scheduled hands-on programs for the general public to encourage recycling and enhance environmental awareness.

The Center is available to rent throughout the year, and features inside and outside meeting space, a gift shop, an approved catering list, and designated parking. Admission is free! Please see the GIAC Web site for more information: www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org.

Center, park set to open on August 28

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony and through the weekend, tours of the new Center will highlight classrooms, native plant demonstration gardens, a natural playground area, outdoor amphitheater, nature themed exhibits, a nature store and library, and outdoor observation deck and terrace.

The Grange Insurance Audubon Center actually began eight years ago, when Audubon supporters met with city officials in Columbus, Ohio to discuss a plan for the Whittier Peninsula – a narrow strip of abandoned industrial land in downtown Columbus that also happens to be remarkably positioned on a major migratory bird flyway. Two years later, Audubon Ohio, Franklin County Metro Parks, and the Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks agreed to collaborate on a project to reclaim and restore 160 acres on the Whittier Peninsula. Of this acreage, the Metro Parks will lease 84 acres; the Grange Insurance Audubon Center - so named for its major benefactor, Grange Insurance - will sublease 5 acres from Metro Parks.

The Whittier Peninsula applies to the area bounded by I-70, the Scioto River, and CSX and Norfolk Southern Railroad Tracks spanning approximately 160 acres. The peninsula has seen various types of operations over the past 100 years including waste disposal, flood control activities, incineration, dumping and landfill, the City Impound Lot, warehousing, electrical substations, storm tanks, and wastewater treatment. Commercial uses for the peninsula included: steel and iron works, foundry, machine shops, warehousing, electrostatic painting, asphalt, concrete, and brick production, and gas stations.

Rail operations on the peninsula were extensive and included transportation, a round house, maintenance operation, and a scrap yard. Many of these activities created adverse environmental impacts on the land, and the long and varied history of uses earned the site brownfield status.

This means that the site was severely contaminated, but with a potential for use after clean up. During its ongoing transformation from a brownfield to a brightfield, the birds of the peninsula have been indicators for the natural resilience of the site. The peninsula is part of the Audubon and Birdlife International designated Important Bird Area (IBA) which also includes Greenlawn Cemetery and Lou Berliner Park to S.R. 104. The IBA designation was granted in October of 2000 due to documented sightings of suites of shorebirds, neotropical migrants, and birds of prey. There is also evidence that the peninsula was the historical breeding ground for Yellow-Crowned Night Herons.

Columbus Audubon has also been closely involved in the Center’s growth and development – pledging a very generous campaign gift, as well as donating hundreds of volunteer hours to support Center initiatives which span from youth programs, to community outreach and awareness, to database support. Columbus Audubon will also hold meetings and volunteer events at the Center.

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View from the road of the exterior of the GIAC and some of the Scioto Audubon Metro Park surrounding it.

Fishing dock at the boat ramp at the Scioto Audubon Metro Park.

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With parents and South Side Settlement board members in attendance, the students were eager to share what they had learned by making displays about bird migration and bird observation skills.

They were very proud of their artistic talents in their displays of “Adaptation Artistry” that featured their creation of new bird species based on unique habitat adaptations.

The SSS board members were impressed by how much the students’ learned this year about the natural world around them in their own neighborhoods. They were grateful that the students also had the opportunity to experience field work at the park. The festival featured fun and educational activities including nest building, experiencing the different adaptations birds have for feeding in different habitats; making bird feeders out of plastic bottles; seeing live bird ambassadors from the Ohio Wildlife Center and making a “mud pie” snack.

A pizza and salad dinner ended the evening and a delightful spring of learning about birds in the South Columbus neighborhood.

The partnership between the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, Columbus Audubon and South Side Settlement has once again successfully provided students with a real connection to the natural world around them and nurtured their growing sense of respect for the earth and all its communities.

Bald Eagle ($10,000)

Osprey ($5,000)

Red-headed Woodpecker ($3,000)

Cliff Swallow ($1,500)

Bald Eagle ($15,000)

Red-headed Woodpecker ($5,000)

Osprey ($10,000)

Sponsorship Levels

Cliff Swallow ($1,500)

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Wingding on the Whittier

Join the party as Columbus celebrates the opening of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center in the heart of the new Scioto Audubon Metro Park. Come see for yourself the beauty of this urban nature center! What: Wingding on the Whittier – A Night Out With Nature When: Friday, September 25, 2009 – 7 p.m.

Where: Grange Insurance Audubon Center, 505 West Whittier Street, Columbus

Individual tickets – $150

Sponsorship Levels

Cliff Swallow ($1,500)

Red-headed Woodpecker ($3,000)

Osprey ($5,000)

Bald Eagle ($10,000)
Continued from page 1

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The Whittier Peninsula applies to the area bounded by I-70, the Scioto River, and CSX and Norfolk Southern Railroad Tracks spanning approximately 160 acres. The peninsula’s historical significance was recognized in 1981 when it was designated as an Ohio Natural Area by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). The OEPA declared the peninsula eligible for state protection since there is a strong likelihood of future historic, cultural, or archaeological resources.

Rail operations on the peninsula were extensive and included transportation, a round house, maintenance operation, and a scrap yard. Many of these activities created adverse environmental impacts on the land, and this long and varied history of uses earned the site brownfield status. This means that the site was severely contaminated, but with a potential for use after clean up.

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Future plans include a full array of regularly-scheduled hands-on programs for the general public to encourage recycling and enhance environmental awareness. The Center is available to rent throughout the year, and features inside and outside meeting space, a gift shop, an approved catering list, and designated parking. Admission is free! Please see the GIAC Web site for more information: www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org.

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Volunteers still needed to get GIAC ready for opening day and beyond

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
- Garden gloves
- Garden tools
- Hip waders
- Fishing tackle and boxes
- Rain ponchos or jackets for children

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.

Field trips

**Wednesday walks at Scioto-Audubon**

Wednesday, August 5, 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_columbusaudubon@yahoo.com for more information.

Bird walk at Blendon Woods

Saturday, August 8, 8 a.m.
Leaders: Bruce Simpson

Join park naturalist Bruce Simpson for a bird walk in Blendon Woods Metro Park. We start at the Nature Center. Blendon Woods Metro Park includes beautiful stream-cut ravines surrounded by beech-maple and oak-hickory forests in over 654 acres. Within the park, the Walnut Waterfowl Refuge with its 11-acre Thoreau Lake provides a sanctuary for hundreds of birds and other wildlife.

Thank you for your support

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- Tami Knight
- David & Jan Canovitz
- Grandview Civic Association
- Ann Baird Speer
- Amy E. Frankenbery
- Peter & Lois Meyst
- Osteopathic Heritage Foundation
- Bettye Best
- Richard Doyle
- Burton & Carol Cantrell
- Blanche Luczyk
- Josephine Hopkins
- Thomas & Margaret Floyd
- Frank & Beth Luchinger
- Richard & Kathy Miller
- Bill & Cindy Calvert
- Lynn Barro
- Ellen Anderson
- Stephen & Sara Browning
- Kay M. Williamson
- Margaret L. Turner
- Amy Kesting
- Joel & Beth Rabb

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The Summer newsletter has hit the streets and the fall issue is not far away! 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 or (614) 306-6215.

Grange Insurance Audubon

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