

Audubon Strategic Plan Emphasizes Flyways

National Audubon is implementing a reorganization that will recognize the importance of flyways for bird conservation. This will help focus on the reality that political boundaries are of no concern to birds, but that habitat—for summering, migrating, and wintering birds—is central to their success and our enjoyment of them.

There are four flyways over North and South America: the Atlantic, Mississippi, Central, and Pacific. Except along the coasts, flyway borders are not sharply defined. In the United States, there is some overlap, and in Panama all four flyways merge. Ohio is primarily in the Mississippi Flyway; the exception is the northeast corner of Ohio in the Atlantic Flyway.

The Mississippi Flyway encompasses the Mackenzie River in Canada and the Mississippi River in the US. The longest migration route of any in the western hemisphere lies in this flyway. The northern end is on the Arctic coast of Alaska, and the southern end is in Patagonia. The length of this route is around 9,000 miles.

Many birds make use of this flyway ranging from the endangered Snowy Plover and Interior Least Tern to the common Great Egret and most of our familiar warblers. The Mississippi Flyway has no mountains or significant ridges. Water and woodlands are plentiful. Because of this topography, this flyway is especially important for waterfowl and shorebirds.



During migration, bird mortality is at least 15 times higher than it is when they are nesting or wintering. Birds use their fat reserves during migration. So along the way, they must refuel and build up their reserves in order to continue the migration. They do this at places called "stopovers." Well known stopovers in Ohio include, but are not limited to, several sites along the Lake Erie shore, and locally Green Lawn Cemetery, Pickerington Ponds, and the river and stream corridors passing through central Ohio. It is important to continue to identify stopovers, rank them as to importance, and protect them. In some cases, the stopover is only a few acres in size. Birds may not stay at them for more than a few days, but if stopovers are not identified, human activity may cause them to be lost, and migrating birds may die due to loss of fat reserves.

IN THIS ISSUE

Look for the bird icon throughout this issue for stories relating to Migration issues.



CA Programs	2
Creature Feature	3
Wonder of Migration	4
CA News	5
CA Field Trips	6
Birdathon	7
Monthly Calendars	9-10
GIAC Wine & Warblers	11
GIAC News	12-14
Donors & Members	15

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

Threats to stopover sights include:

- Habitat loss, especially coastal; for the Mississippi Flyway, this is mostly the Gulf Coast
- Threats to biodiversity
- Human encroachment including but not limited to introduction of invasive species
- Water quality degradation
- Night lighting, wind turbines, windows, and other such hazards
- Legal protections that are under unprecedented attack

What can we do to help?

- We can help at all levels: National Audubon, the local chapters, service organizations, families, and individuals
- In the Mississippi Flyway, we can work to protect bottomland forests, prairie areas, the Mississippi River delta, and migration corridors such as river and stream edges
- Make our own backyards bird-friendly
- Support efforts such as Audubon at Home and Together Green

Dave Horn and Suzan Kramp

Columbus Audubon Monthly Programs

March Program - Annual Meeting & Potluck

Kenn Kaufman

Tuesday, March 27 - 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. book signing with Kenn, main speaker 7:30 pm

Grange Insurance Audubon Center multi-purpose room

Please join us at our annual meeting and potluck! Our speaker this year will be author and bird expert Kenn Kaufman. You can read more about Kenn's background elsewhere in this newsletter, but you probably know already that he is a nationally-renowned speaker, a master storyteller, and the author of seven books. In fact, he is working on his eighth book right now – and promises to tell us more about it tonight!



Kimberly Kaufman

We welcome all Columbus Audubon members and encourage you to bring your family and friends for a great evening of food, festivities, and fun. It's your chance to meet your Columbus Audubon trustees as well as Grange Insurance Audubon Center staff – and your chance to win one of our great door prizes.

Doors open at 6:00 and dinner starts promptly at 6:30 p.m., so come early to find a seat, visit with friends, and set out your dish before the line forms. 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 other side dish. Bring your own utensils, cups and beverage other than coffee, which will be provided. After dinner, the evening will include a short business meeting and presentation of our annual awards, followed by Kenn's talk.

April Program

Dr. David Brandenburg

Tuesday, April 24 - 7 p.m. short program, Main Speaker 7:30 p.m.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center multi-purpose room

Join us on Tuesday, April 24 for guest speaker Dr. David Brandenburg's program, "Eat This, Not That: Edible and Not So Edible Wild Plants." Dr. Brandenburg is the on-staff botanist at The Dawes Arboretum and author of The National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Wildflowers of North America, which covers 49 states and all of Canada.



From the GIAC Board President - Greg Cunningham

Building on Momentum at GIAC

Aristotle once said, "If one way be better than another, that you may be sure is nature's way." When I look at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center and Scioto Audubon Metropark, I remember how the area looked before all of the efforts to bring it back to a more natural state. Where there was once an inhospitable landscape, nature has been invited to return. Old buildings and surface lots have been replaced by wetlands and prairies. Invasive vegetation and abandoned cars have given way to native trees and wildflowers. Unsafe, abandoned structures have been replaced with recreation spaces and a climbing wall. The result is that birds, animals, and people have begun to return and enjoy this special place downtown.

During the first few years of the existence of the GIAC, the staff and board were busy creating programs and garnering community support for the Center. We have worked closely with our partners at the City of Columbus, Columbus Audubon, and Franklin County Metroparks. We have stayed engaged with the visionaries and funders who, through the capital campaign, helped us turn a bold idea into reality.

The Center was built to be a resource and destination for all in central Ohio. Children learn about science through first-hand observation and activities. Visitors, whether interested in birds and conservation, learning about sustainable living, or meeting others with interests similar to theirs, find a welcoming and unique facility to engage their curiosity.

Now we are entering into our next phase – telling central Ohio and the world about our special place. I am honored to have been selected to help the GIAC achieve this goal through leading our Stewardship Board. Our board is made up of

See page 14

Columbus Audubon

Founded 1913

614-545-5475

www.columbusaudubon.org

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Vice President: Suzan Jervey

Newsletter/Web Editor: Stefanie Hauck

Treasurer: Warren Grody

Recording Secretary: Tamara James

Past President: Julie Davis

Trustees (through June 30): Jackie Bain, Gerry Brevoort, Tim Daniel, Warren Grody, Bill Heck, Dave Horn, Suzan Jervey, Katryn Renard, Tom Sheley, and Darlene Sillick

Additional chapter leaders

Birdathon: Julie Davis, 614-523-2180 or Katryn Renard, 614-261-7171

Conservation: Dave Horn, 614-262-0312

Eco Weekend: Roz Horn, 614-262-0312; Lois Day, 740-657-1604

Education: Jackie Bain, jbain@insight.rr.com

Field Trips: Earl Harrison, eharrison@ehe.osu.edu

Membership: Joe Meara, 614-430-9127

Ohio Young Birders: Gerry Brevoort, jbrevoor@columbus.rr.com

Programs: Darlene Sillick, azuretrails@columbus.rr.com

Service in the Preserves: Katryn Renard, 614-261-7171

Web site: Bill Heck, webmaster@columbusaudubon.org

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org

614-545-5475

Staff

Center Director: Christie Vargo

Director of Development: Jeff Redfield

Director of Education and Conservation: Amy Boyd

Educators: Allison Roush, Tori Strickland, Joe Jennings and Mindy Tehan

Facility Attendants: Ian Dowden and Monica Johnson

Facility Coordinator and Nature Store Manager: Patty Hecht

Finance and Office Manager: Kristen Clark

Volunteer Coordinator: Nancy Hartman

Winter hours: Tuesday – Friday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.;

Saturday 10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Sunday 12 noon – 5 p.m.

Spring and Summer hours start Sunday, March 11:

Tuesday – Friday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.;

Sunday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Directions to the GIAC: From High Street (going south) turn right on Whittier (which runs along south end of German Village and Brewery District). From Front Street (going north) turn left onto Whittier. Follow Whittier, making no turns, across the bridge spanning the tracks, past the other side streets until you drive into the parking lot in front of the center.

GIAC Advisory Board

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Thank you recent GIAC donors

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Welcome New & Renewed Members

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John & Meliha Bosworth	Gary Meisner
Jennifer Bowman	Susan Moran
Barbara Brooks	Lori Overmyer
Joann Brown	H. Carol Price
Gerald Ciula	Sandra Kettler & Paul Price
Erin Coffey & Sara Cousins	Steven & Mabel Puckett
Lonnie & Lisa Dearth	Jane Reeves
Gretchen Eckstein	Stanley & Diana Sells
Michael Grote	Kathleen Anne Smith
Daniel & Kathleen Hill	Michelle & Nathaniel Stitzlein
Annette Hrach	Gerald Tackett
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Beth Jordan	Jane Walsh
Patricia Kokoczka	Kaye Willi
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The Wonders of Migration

Migration Signs at the Center

The weather and your calendar are not the only ways to tell when it is migration time. Here at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, our facility has several features that help indicate migration season is approaching. Here are some of the ways you can tell “just by looking!”

Oculus: On sunny days the oculus, or circular skylight, in the Center’s lobby brings in sunlight and becomes a unique building-sized sundial that tracks the solar path. The “X” on the floor (visible a few weeks before the spring equinox and after fall equinox), transverses indicators embedded in the floor that each day mark the equinoxes and summer solstice. During peak migration seasons, the X crosses through lines on the floor. Come into the Center and check them out during morning hours! The crosshair on the floor also has an indicator embedded for John James Audubon’s birthday on April 26.

Entry Court Roof Overhang Shadow: The GIAC entry court is designed to be more than just a path to the front door. Deep roof overhangs not only keep the summer sun off the office area glass and eliminate unwanted solar heat, the shadow of the overhang indicates seasons: burgundy for migration seasons, light green for spring and fall equinoxes, and dark blue for winter solstice. The shadow at the summer solstice casts into the beds along the walk to provide maximum shade and cooling.

Seasonal Bird and Education Display: While visiting the Center, you may have noticed a special bird sculpture that is always on display above the front desk. Around each equinox and solstice, GIAC staff celebrate the season by “changing” this bird to match the season. During spring you’ll see the American Redstart and during fall the Osprey is displayed. When not in season, summer’s representative, the Baltimore Oriole, and winter’s, the Hooded Merganser, roost in the administrative hallway. In conjunction with the bird sculpture, education displays in each of the three classrooms change to match the bird. In spring you’ll see education displays in the Invasive Species, River, and Forest classrooms with information about the American Redstart related to that room’s theme.

Place holder for
pic



Birds and Color Indicators: The nearly 200 species of birds whose pictures are on display in the lobby show one of four colors on their reverse side and at the bottom of the image to indicate when you would see them. Migratory birds most likely to be seen during migratory season are coded with the burnt orange/reddish color. This is also the predominate color in the Center’s design. Many call it “Audubon Red” or “Audubon Orange.” Used throughout the Center and on the Scioto Audubon Metro Park’s iconic water tower, it represents the coloring on back of the head of the northern flicker. In fact, every paint color in the Center can be found in Audubon’s official image of the northern flicker (in the lobby at A9).

Feeders and Osprey Nests: During migration season it is not uncommon to see warblers and other migrating birds on the bird feeders outside the Library windows and hear them through the speakers from microphones on two of the feeders. Spring 2011 included a visit by two nesting pairs of osprey. Though both pairs were young and did not lay eggs, they demonstrated infantile nesting behaviors. After what appeared to be challenges between the pairs, a few weeks later they built nests in light towers in the former city impound lot. We hope you’ll be able to see spring migration season this year when osprey return to those nesting spots (or find new ones) as GIAC and Metro Parks continue to restore the riparian habitats. Next time you’re at GIAC, ask staff or volunteer to help you find the signs of migration.



Eco Weekend 2012 is coming soon!

Eco Weekend begins Friday evening, May 4 and ends Sunday at noon on May 6. The total weekend cost for an adult is only \$118; the cost for a child (age 4 through grade 8) is only \$73 (includes meals and lodging). Registration deadline is April 8. You can get copies of the registration form by calling Roz Horn at 614-262-0312 or email ecowekend@columbusaudubon.org. You may also download the information through our website, www.ecowekend.org.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of Eco Weekend, you can order a special t-shirt with your registration. Youth and adult t-shirts are \$10 and adult sizes 2XL and 3XL are \$12. Go to www.ecowekend.org to see the design and use your registration form to order.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

What's happening at GIAC?

Earth Day Celebration

Join us on Saturday, April 14 as we celebrate Earth Day at the GIAC! We'll start the day by working and end the day with a little relaxation!

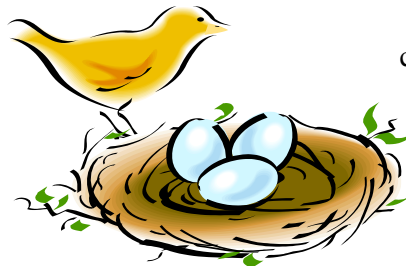
Want to get involved in a service project for yourself, your family, or your group? Give us a call to sign up for one of the many service projects that will be happening at the Center: from removing invasive species to cleaning up the banks of the Scioto River. Our service projects will run in shifts from 8:00 a.m. until noon, and you can help for a little while or all morning long. There will be lots to do! After all your hard work, take a break and enjoy the afternoon at GIAC as it is transformed into a relaxing, laid back place to celebrate the Earth. In partnership with Columbus Green, we'll have activities for the whole family including hikes, recycled craft projects, information for you to make your spring cleaning a little greener, music, and food. Everyone is welcome to the afternoon festivities so even if you are doing service somewhere else, be sure to stop by from noon to 3:00 p.m. for the fun.

If you'd like to sign up for a service project or to learn more about the day, contact Amy Boyd at 614-545-5486.



Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day and Mother's Day

Join us on Saturday, May 12 from 9 a.m. until noon as we celebrate Mother's Day and International Migratory Bird Day! Start your day by celebrating mom with a light continental breakfast and then stay to celebrate IMBD by learning more about one of the most important and spectacular nature events in the Americas – bird migration.



Our educators and volunteers will lead fun and interesting activities, including crafts and a bird hike. You'll learn more about these migratory birds, identify threats to them, and be prepared to be involved in migratory bird conservation when you return home to your own backyard.

Creature Feature

Continued from page 3



Hocking Hills and Mohican areas during the 1960s to 1980s; prior to that, they were only breeders in the far northeastern part of the state. Also, expanding their foraging habitats has allowed them to colonize other areas. 'Wayne's' Black-throated Green, a subspecies, switched to Bald Cypress trees, which allow them to breed in coastal swamps of Virginia and the Carolinas. Other Black-throated Greens have taken to pines, which have allowed them to set up small breeding populations in southern Indiana and the Arkansas Ozarks.

Conservation status. Black-throated Greens are one of the few bright spots among warblers because of their fairly stable population. Their wide range and their adaptable breeding and migration habits seem to buffer them against drastic habitat changes. This is not to say that there aren't problems. Southern birds are having trouble adapting to the loss of hemlocks mentioned earlier, while boreal Canadian birds show wide population fluctuations tied to spruce pests like the spruce budworm. However, birds in southern Canada and the northern US seem to be slowly increasing in numbers and expanding their ranges, probably because of the re-establishment of our forests.

In Ohio, breeding Black-throated Greens seem to be localized to conifer patches in the unglaciated parts of eastern and southern Ohio. If you want to see them after spring migration, you can pretty much be guaranteed summer Black-throated Greens along the Hemlock Trail in Clear Creek and around Old Man's Cave. While you can expect them in hemlock areas of the Hocking Hills and Mohican forest, they should also be looked for as breeding birds in the Shawnee and Tar Hollow forests, as well as the Flint Hills. If some of our birds make the jump to pine trees that has occurred in some other parts of their range, they could become even more widespread. We hope we will still have plenty of these fearless little warblers to amaze us for many springs to come. [Click here for more on this story and photos.](#)

Rob Thorn

Columbus Audubon



March & April Field Trips and Programs

For complete descriptions of all trips, please visit www.columbusaudubon.org/events

OSU Museum of Biological Diversity

Saturday, March 3 at 9:30 a.m.

Please join Columbus Audubon members and guests for a tour of The Ohio State University Museum of Biological Diversity. We will tour the Borror Laboratory of Bioacoustics (BLB) with Curator Dr. Angelika Nelson; Bill Whan will show us around the avian collections; and Dr. Dave Horn will introduce us to the Entomology and Acarology collections. The Museum is located at 1315 Kinnear Road, Columbus, OH 43212. Please park in the west side of the lot in visitor parking. Contact Darlene Sillick at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696.

First Day of Spring at Big Island

Sunday, March 11 at 12:00 noon

Come and look for signs of spring and migrating waterfowl as we visit Big Island Wildlife Area. Meet in Worthington Mall parking lot (SE area) for carpooling. For more details, contact trip leader Mike Flynn at 614-769-1681.

Funk Bottoms & Killbuck Marsh Trip

Saturday, March 17 at 7:30 am.

It's a combined trip to Killbuck Marsh and Funk Bottoms Wildlife Areas for early migrants with Columbus Audubon and the Wilderness Center Bird Club with leader Su Snyder. Meet at Bob Evans at 550 Robinson Road in Wooster at 7:30 am for breakfast and 8:00 departure. Bring water and snacks; we will stop for lunch. Contact Darlene Sillick at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696.

Birding Big Island Wildlife Management Area

Saturday, March 24 at 8:00 a.m.

Join us as we explore Big Island and nearby areas for migrating waterfowl and other birds. Pack a lunch and be ready for muddy walking. We will carpool from the south-east parking lot at Worthington Mall. Contact Earl Harrison at harrison.304@osu.edu or 614-505-1123 for details.

Birding at Green Lawn Cemetery

Saturday, March 24 at 8:30 a.m.

Join Warren Grody and Darlene Sillick while we search for birds, fill the feeders, and make some exciting discoveries. Meet at the Green Lawn Cemetery office. Contact Darlene Sillick at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696 with questions.

Avid Birders

Saturday, March 31 at 5:30 a.m. AND Saturday, April 28 at 5:30 a.m.

Early spring can bring waterfowl, raptors, and more. As usual, the destinations and route will be based on late-breaking reports from likely areas of the state. All birders are welcome! Meet in Worthington Mall parking lot (SE area) for carpooling. Contact the Avid Birders Team at avidbirderleads@columbusaudubon.org.

Calamus Swamp Bird Walk

Sunday, April ?

A field trip to Columbus Audubon's Calamus Swamp Preserve near Circleville will be scheduled for April but at press time we do not have the date. Calamus Swamp is a beautiful, diverse and rare wetland that was dedicated as a Columbus Audubon Preserve on June 3, 2000. Calamus' 19 acres offer a unique glimpse into the glacial past that shaped Ohio's landscape. Check the website for details or contact Dave Horn at davehorn43@columbus.rr.com or 614-262-0312.

For more Field Trips See page 8

Service in the Preserves

Morris Woods State Nature Preserve

Saturday, March 3 from 7:45 am to 5:00 pm

Morris Woods State Nature Preserve is a little-known treasure in Licking County with a mature beech-maple forest, young forest, scrub, open field and even a small lake. Volunteers will be helping to preserve the diversity by removing invasive honeysuckle, privet, and multiflora rose. We will also tackle some boardwalk repairs.

Lake Katharine State Nature Preserve

Saturday, April 21 at 7:45 a.m. returning

Sunday, April 22 by 5:00 p.m.

Ask anyone who's been to Lake Katharine to describe it and you'll no doubt hear superlatives about wildflowers, big leaf and umbrella magnolia trees, and impressive rock formations. It is becomes a favorite spot with just one visit. We will be rebuilding sections of the trail that are slipping and cleaning up some others. This weekend project will build on last year's progress, and it's a great excuse to spend a weekend in this magnificent preserve. Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast and lunch will be provided for a nominal fee.

For both trips, Please call trip leader Katryn Renard at 614-261-7171 five days prior to sign up, reserve space for transportation, and to help us determine tool requirements. Bring your lunch for Saturday, water, work gloves, appropriate foot gear, and camping equipment. All skill levels are welcome. Meet at 7:45 a.m. in the parking lot inside the gate house at the Ohio Department Natural Resources Complex, 2045 Morse Road, Columbus; we'll return to ODNR by 5:00 p.m.

The Service in the Preserves program is a partnership with Columbus Audubon and Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Volunteers from CA go to various State Nature Preserves about once every six weeks during the school year. We work on projects that range from invasive species removal to building boardwalks. This is especially important now during these lean times of budget cuts throughout ODNR.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Migrate to “Wine and Warblers” on May 9!

Spring migration is a gorgeous and fun time at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. We'll add to the warmth and color by hosting our second annual Wine and Warblers event at the Center on Wed., May 9, 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We hope you will join us for this entertaining evening featuring wine and hors d'oeuvres, bird walks, bird/nature authors, a silent auction, and much more.

Whether you're a birder, a wine lover or simply want to celebrate spring in the beautiful Center surroundings, this will be an evening to remember!

We are excited to announce that this year's featured authors are Julie Zickefoose and Bill Thompson III. You may know Julie from her fascinating nature commentary on National Public Radio. As editor of *Bird Watcher's Digest*, Bill has more than a few stories of his own. Copies of their books, including Julie's recent *The Bluebird Effect: Uncommon Bonds with Common Birds*, will be available for purchase and signing by the authors.

The silent auction will include a variety of special items and packages, including:

- Wine Tree – a variety of wines donated by board, staff, volunteers, and supporters
- Wine Nest (NEW THIS YEAR!) – a unique collection of specialty wines

Tickets for Wine and Warblers offer several levels for supporting your Center's conservation and education programs. Each level includes valet parking, access to featured authors, and silent auction.

Yellow Warbler (Early Birds)

\$40 general admission advance tickets by April 20

American Redstart

\$50 after April 20 and at the door if not sold out

- Warbler walk with Audubon volunteers
- Wine sampling
- Hors d'oeuvres and desserts (some paired with specific wines)
- Learning opportunities (e.g., bird banding)
- Additional bird-watching at hot spots around the Center

Cerulean Warbler

\$100 author-walk admission, all of the above plus:

Special book signing times and Warbler Walk with one of our featured authors

Top Flight NEW THIS YEAR!

\$250 wine enthusiast admission; limited number of tickets, receiving all of the above, plus:

- 5:30-6:30 p.m. Special Warbler Walk with one of the featured authors
- 6:30-8:30 p.m. Special wine event in the River Room, featuring unique wines and insights of local wine enthusiasts and oenophiles



Wednesday, May 9

5:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Must be 21 or older to attend.

A limited number of tickets are available (total 500), ranging in price from \$40 for early bird general admission to \$250 for a unique wine enthusiast event.

Purchase tickets by May 7 online at www.GIAC-Audubon.org or at the Center's nature store.

We are still finalizing all the details, *including adding more ways to support the Center by sponsoring a warbler as well as reserving tables!* Stay on top of the latest by visiting www.giac-audubon.org/ww.

Conservation Corner: Here Comes Another One

The song “Here Comes Another One” from *Monty Python* might apply well to invasive species. Another recent arrival to Ohio is the Viburnum Leaf Beetle (VLB) which occurs from northeast Ohio eastward through Pennsylvania, New York, New England, and eastern Canada although it has not yet reached central Ohio. The VLB is native to Europe and first appeared in Ontario in 1947. We do not know how it got to North America but it was more likely transported by human commerce than by the beetles’ flying here on their own.



The VLB feeds on several species of viburnum, wild or cultivated, native or exotic. They seem to prefer some varieties over others; arrowwood and European cranberry viburnum seem to be favorites. Most of the damage is done by the larvae eating the leaves in May and June. A large population can completely defoliate and kill the plants, but long before then the skeletonized leaves are obvious and unsightly. If you notice that sort of damage, you probably have VLB. Adult beetles are plain-looking and about 1/4 inch long. They also chew holes in leaves but overall their feeding does less damage than do the larvae.

Viburnums are popular ornamental plants and also are a component of natural deciduous forests. I have seen no reports of defoliation and death of native plants out in the woods but I do wonder about the possibility that defoliation may cause sufficient stress to allow other shrubs (like bush honeysuckle) to gain a competitive edge. More likely the VLB “problem” is going to belong to homeowners and landscapers. While the beetles are not yet in central Ohio, much of our wholesale nursery plant production is in the area east of Cleveland where VLB is established, and we expect that infested plants might eventually arrive from there. Also, the beetles can fly.

VLB is readily controlled with several commercially available insecticides but some of our readers may be reluctant to do that. Fall pruning can be helpful as the beetles lay their eggs on twigs.

Fortunately the beetles eat only viburnum, and they do not invade homes like some other insects do. Unless you grow viburnums, you might not see the VLB once it arrives in central Ohio. If you do see one (or more) I would be interested to hear about it.

Dave Horn

Field Trips continued from page 6

Birding by Ear, part one (classroom) *Thursday, April 12 at 7:00 p.m.*

Have you ever had trouble identifying birds because those darned trees keep getting in the way? The simple answer to your problem is to learn to “bird by ear.” While identifying birds by call only may seem intimidating, both beginning and advanced birders will appreciate some tips and tricks that can make your birding more enjoyable. Please join us as we learn the basics of identifying bird sounds, helpful methods, and resources. This program includes both a short classroom session followed by a bird walk on April 29 during spring migration where we can practice what we have learned. Both events will be held in the beautiful Highbanks Metro Park at the Nature Center. Contact Steve Landes at katbird103@aol.com or 614-361-0617.

Birding at Green Lawn Cemetery- *Saturday, April 14 at 8:30 a.m.*

Join Warren Grody and Darlene Sillick while we search for birds, fill the feeders, and make some exciting discoveries—because that’s what happens at this amazing and historical cemetery. Meet at the Green Lawn Cemetery office. Contact Darlene at 614-288-3696 or azuretrails@columbus.rr.com.

Birding and Nature Walk at Clear Creek Metro Park *Sunday, April 15 at 9:00 a.m.*

Join us for a morning search for early migrants at Clear Creek. Meet in the parking lot at the intersection of Clear Creek Rd. and Starner Rd. in the park. Directions at www.metroparks.net/ParksClearCreek.aspx or contact Tom Sheley at 614-578-9501.

Birding by Ear, part two (field trip) *Sunday, April 29 at 8:00 a.m.*

Practice what you learned at the classroom session on April 12 with Steve Landes. Meet at the Highbanks Nature Center. Contact Steve Landes at katbird103@aol.com or (614) 361-0617.




Wildflowers and Birds in Dublin at Kiwanis Riverway Park *Sunday, April 29 at 2:00 p.m.*

Join Jim Davidson to discover wildflowers (and birds) at three locations in Dublin. Meet at the Kiwanis Riverway Park parking lot. Contact Darlene Sillick at azuretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696.

For complete descriptions of all trips, please visit www.columbusaudubon.org/events

March 2012






Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	 5	6 GIAC Volunteer Recognition 6:30 p.m.	7	1  8	2	3 Museum of Bio- Diversity 9:30 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Volunteer Point Count Training 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.
11 First day of Spring at Big Island Noon Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	12	13	14	15 Rain Garden Workshop 6:30 p.m.	16	17 Funk Bottoms & Kill- buck Marsh 7:30 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
18 Ohio Young Birders "Back To The Wild" Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	19	20	21 	22	23	24 Big Island 8 a.m. Green Lawn 8:30 a.m. Birding 101 Walk 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
25 Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	26	27 Columbus Audubon Annual Pot- luck/Program 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	28	29	30	31 Avid Birders 5:30 am Birding 102 Workshop 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

GIAC events are in plain black text. For complete descriptions of any event or program, see pages 11-14.

Columbus Audubon events are in bold green text. For complete descriptions of any event or program, see pages 6-8.

April 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	2 Note: GIAC is closed EVERY Monday	3 	4 Tour of LEED Gold GIAC building 10 a.m.	5	6	7 Birding 102 Walk 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
8 Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	9 GIAC Spring Break Camp ALL WEEK	10	11 Tour of LEED Gold GIAC building 10 a.m.	12 Birding by Ear, part one (classroom) 7 p.m. at Highbanks	13	14 Birding at Green Lawn 8:30 a.m. Earth Day Work Projects 8 a.m. - Noon Family Fun - Noon - 3 p.m.
15 Birding at Clear Creek Metro Park 9 a.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	16	17	18 Tour of LEED Gold GIAC building 10 a.m.	19	20 	21 Ohio Young Birders "Spring Fling" Birding Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
22 Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	23	24 Columbus Audubon Monthly Program 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.	25 Tour of LEED Gold GIAC building 10 a.m.	26	27	28 Avid Birders 5:30 am Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
29 Birding by Ear, (field trip) 8 a.m. Wildflowers and Birds at Kiwanis 2 p.m. Audubon Afternoons at GIAC 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	30			<p>Save the Date!</p> <p>Wed. May 9 - Wine & Warblers</p> <p>Sat. May 12 - International Migratory Bird Day</p> <p>Audubon Adventure Summer Camps - Weekly June 18 thru August 13</p>		

GIAC events are in italic black text. For complete descriptions of any event or program, see pages 11-14.

Columbus Audubon events are in bold green text. For complete descriptions of any event or program, see pages 6-8.

Calendar Key

Columbus Audubon

Birdathon 2012 - Let the fun begin!

Columbus Audubon's Birdathon is right around the corner and our teams are making their strategic plans. This event is the kickoff of the spring birding season and the high point for many of our teams, as well as the main fund raiser for Columbus Audubon. Our goal this year is to raise at least \$10,000. That money will go towards Columbus Audubon programs including conservation projects, our public programs, and youth scholarships. We have three time categories to fit any birder's schedule. The 24-hour category is for all those avid birders striving to identify every warbler, shorebird, and raptor in their path. The 10-hour category is for serious but well-rested birders who are happy to discern between a Magnolia and a Canada Warbler. For those who think a hike or a picnic in the park is the best way to see birds, we have the 5-hour category. As you can see, we have something for everyone. The CA Birdathon is great fun for all, whether you are part of a team or a team sponsor.

Our sponsors are as important to the Birdathon as our birders. If you would like to sponsor a team look for the team roster in the next newsletter, pick the team you wish to sponsor, fill out the form, and send it in. You do not need to send your money until you receive a notice from the team you sponsored. Or go to our website, www.columbusaudubon.org, and sponsor your favorite team online!

If you have ever thought about joining in the birding fun, this is the year. Start with your favorite birding buddies, choose a fun team name, and call Katryn Renard at 614-261-7171 to register. Then ask all your friends and co-workers to sponsor you and go birding! Count all the bird species your team identifies in your chosen time category on any day between **May 4 and May 20**. You don't even have to stay in Ohio. Be creative: bird anywhere in the world or your own backyard. We want everyone to get involved this year so remember, the rules and dates are just guidelines. Having fun and raising funds are the most important things!



Join us to celebrate

All of our teams and sponsors are invited to celebrate their success at our annual Birdathon celebration. Our celebration will take place on **Tuesday, May 22** during our regular monthly program at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. There will be a bird walk at 6 p.m., followed by our speaker, Tom Sheley, Columbus Audubon board member and owner of Wild Birds Unlimited on Riverside Drive.

During the celebration, we will draw for our three grand prizes and share stories of our birding success.



Jeff and Cindy Cates have offered birders a paradise location for peace, quiet, and nature in an unspoiled and secluded woods setting on 175 acres. Adjacent is 196 acres of Johnson Ridge State Nature Preserve and also close by are the Appalachia Discovery Birding & Heritage Trail and Shawnee State Forest. What a perfect prize for birders!

You can find them at <http://UnityWoods.org>.

Eagle Optics has once again generously donated a pair of binoculars, Kingbird 6.5x32. Beginner or experienced, young or old, and everyone in between will appreciate the performance of the Eagle Optics Kingbird binocular. The highly-regarded porro prism style of the Kingbird delivers an exceptionally wide field of view with sharp, rich three-dimensional views. Featuring twist-up eyecups and waterproof, fogproof construction, the Kingbird continues a classic tradition in a modern fashion.



Our third incredible Grand Prize is donated by Vortex. It is a re-usable tote/gift bag stuffed with a binocular harness, lens pen, a Vortex Optics hat, and (hot off the press) Sibley's *Warblers of Eastern North America* folding guide. Also included are a pair of Vortex Viper 10x42 HD waterproof, fog-proof binoculars. The Viper HDs significantly step up their game in 2011 with HD (High Density) extra-low dispersion glass. One look is all you'll need to appreciate why the Viper is an award-winning bino. Add XR fully multi-coated lenses and you have a bino that delivers bright, crisp details with impressive resolution and color fidelity. Rugged, compact and lightweight, they make birding a breeze.



Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Audubon Adventure Camp 2012

What are your kids going to be doing this summer? Audubon Adventure Camp is a great place for them to explore the great outdoors, learn lots of fun and interesting things, and have a blast. So many exciting discoveries to make as campers learn about the wonders of birds, what happens to our environment when invasive species are introduced, what conservation means, and how campers can make a positive impact on their world as they play in ours.

There's no cooler place to go to day camp than the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. Campers enjoy the forest play room, bird viewing library, and awesome classrooms. They'll investigate the forest, river, wetland, and prairie habitats around GIAC and play in the incredible Scioto Audubon Metro Park, an oasis of green overlooking downtown Columbus. GIAC is easy and convenient for parents working downtown.

Don't delay, register today...and tell all your friends! Go to www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org for complete program descriptions and to register online. If you have questions, please call Amy Boyd at 614-545-5486 or email aboyd@audubon.org.

Dates: weekly June 18 through August 17

Ages: 6 – 13, Grades 1 – 8

Program Hours: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Before Care: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.

After Care: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

One-time Registration Fee is \$30 per family*

Weekly:

Members - \$165

Non-members - \$180

Before Care - \$45

After Care - \$60

Before and After Care - \$100



Session 1	June 18 – 22	Habitat Detectives
Session 2	June 25 – 29	Winged Wonders
Session 3	July 2 – 6	Wonders of Water* (no camp 4 th of July)
Session 4	July 9 – 13	Audubon Artists
Session 5	July 16 – 20	Operation Conservation
Session 6	July 23 – 27	Nature Invaders
Session 7	July 30 – Aug 3	What's Bugging You?
Session 8	Aug 6 – 10	In Touch with Nature
Session 9	Aug 13 – 17	Conservation Celebration

*Early Bird Discount: Register by April 1 and save the \$30 registration fee (discount code: Early Bird)

Rain Garden Workshop

The Grange Audubon Center and Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District are partnering to provide a rain garden workshop for interested adults. The workshop will be held on Thursday, March 15 at 6:30 p.m. at GIAC. Attendees will learn what rain gardens are, their benefits, and how to design and install one on their own property. Registration is \$10 and can be done online at www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org (click on the Nature Education tab and go to Adult and Family Programs). Call Stephanie Suter at Franklin Soil and Water at 614-486-9613 with questions.

Columbus Audubon

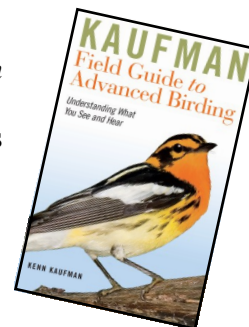
From Columbus Audubon President Bill Heck



The theme for this issue of the *Song Sparrow* is migration, so my message to all Columbus Audubon members is simple: migrate to our annual meeting and potluck dinner on Tuesday, March 27.

Our keynote speaker, Kenn Kaufman, hardly needs an introduction. Even a quick sampling of his biography is amazing: He has been a field editor for *Audubon*, a regular contributor to every major birding magazine, and is the youngest person ever to receive the Ludlow Griscom Award, the highest honor of the American Birding Association. Although he has made a special study of North American birds, his natural history pursuits have taken him to all seven continents.

Kenn is a prolific author. His “birdy” books include *Lives of North American Birds* and the *Peterson Field Guide to Advanced Birding*. But he is just as well known for his works that combine his love of nature and birds with his remarkable storytelling abilities, from his early *Kingbird Highway* to his most recent *Flights Against the Sunset: Stories that Reunited a Mother and Son*. As if that weren’t enough, he also originated the Kaufman Field Guide series, which includes books on birds, butterflies, mammals, and insects. Kenn will be signing copies of his books, many of which will be on sale in the GIAC Nature Store before and after the program.



But there’s more: the annual meeting is our traditional potluck dinner at which CA members, families, and guests come together to sample a variety of dishes and enjoy each other’s company. We also use this occasion to honor our annual conservation award winners. We will also be voting on three candidates nominated for CA trustee positions for a three-year term to begin July 1, 2012. The candidates are: George Arnold, Amanda Conover, and Warren Grody. All in all, it’s the event of the year for Columbus Audubon. You can review the schedule and see all the details at our website, www.columbusaudubon.org.

Ohio Young Birders – Binoculars... And Power Tools!



When does a “birder” catch snakes, use power tools, hang out in the Governor’s garden, and hobnob with experts from around the world?

When that birder is a member of the Ohio Young Birders Club (OYBC)! Those are just some of the amazing things this group of 12-18 year-olds has done in the recent past. These dynamic young people are drawn together by their love for birds, nature, and conservation. They get together each month for field trips and service projects: honing their birding skills and making a real difference in their community and for their planet.

They’ve studied nature photography, practiced wildlife tracking in subzero weather, built and installed a grid of nest boxes, designed and erected a bird feeding station at an elementary school, delivered presentations at a statewide conference, developed leadership skills on the Youth Advisory Board, and counted thousands of chimney swifts diving at

dusk. They even tallied 103 species in their very first attempt at an all-day Birdathon up at Magee Marsh. This year they’re going for 104!

And it just keeps getting better! In 2012, OYBC members will go behind-the-scenes at the Columbus Zoo, do some birding by kayak and by bike, monitor the osprey platform (which they built and erected last year in hopes of luring a nesting pair), take a tour of a fish hatchery, assist with bird banding, and spend hour upon hour with other young people who share their passion for the great outdoors.

Sound pretty good? Then why not join them? It couldn’t be easier. Go to www.columbusaudubon.org/oybc for more details. Annual dues are only \$10 for students and can be paid online; just click “Join Us.” Also on the website are student-written reports of past events, tons of photos, and details about upcoming trips. Don’t have access to the internet? Then contact OYBC advisor Gerry Brevoort at 614-545-5497 for more information.

[More OYBC articles](#) and photos are available at the Columbus Audubon website.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

New Nature Photography Exhibit at GIAC

GIAC is pleased to feature beautiful photos by Kim L. Graham on the wall between the classrooms in the front lobby. They can be viewed anytime during normal business hours, and are visible after hours from the path into the front door of the Center or through the glass windows near our beautiful rain gardens and rain chain collection barrel.

On his website (www.kimgraham.zenfolio.com), Kim elaborates on his work and vision: *"The images you see here represent a portion of my 32 year odyssey of trying to capture the beauty all around us, the play of light on both the natural and man-made. I have worked in 35mm, medium format and extensively in large format. My work is in both black and white and color and my galleries will reflect a wide range of subject matter."*

One of our very favorite photos from Kim is called "The Waving Warbler." We hope you will love it as much as we do! We would like to thank Kim for sharing his beautiful work and for his continual support of Audubon. His photos will be on display at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center through June/July 2012.



Artist Tom Blankenship Donates Proceeds to GIAC

Columbus native Tom Blankenship is known as the "Artist of the Waters Edge." Influenced as a child by artist Emerson Burkart, he fell in love with art and painting and ultimately discovered that he had talent that amazed even himself and his mentors.

As wildlife enthusiasts, Tom and his wife Connie were impressed with and closely followed the reclamation project on the Whittier Peninsula that resulted in the Scioto Audubon Metro Park and the Grange Insurance Audubon Center. Tom and Connie fell in love with the view from the Center where they could see the foreground beauty of the park's natural setting and the Columbus skyline at the same time.

This is the vantage point that led to the creation of "Urban Wildlife Oasis," a beautiful painting depicting the reclaimed landscape at the foot of our great city. Tom graciously donated the original painting to the Center. In addition, prints of the painting are available in many sizes, framed and unframed, with a percentage of sales coming to the Center as his gift. Prints may be purchased at the GIAC Nature Store or through the artist's website www.coqharart.com.

GIAC SAVE THESE 2012 DATES

May 9	Wine & Warblers II
May 12	International Migratory Bird Day & Mother's Day
June 16	Bird Fest
June 18 to August 17	Audubon Adventure Summer Camp Weeks
September 8	Being a Green Student
September 14	Bluegrass Beer & Birds
September 30 to October 5	World-wide Eco Summit in Columbus
October 18	GIAC Fall Breakfast
October 26 & 27	Trick-or-Tweet
November 10	Holiday Shop Around
November 15	Thanks-4-Giving Dinner
December 15	Father Nature

From the GIAC Board President - Greg Cunningham

Continued from page 2

dedicated individuals from across the community and is committed to the success of the Center. But we need your help. Please visit us and get involved. Whether by attending a program, joining our dedicated volunteers, or just exploring the Center and surrounding Metropark, you can help us by telling others about your experience. Please help us spread the word about this "best kept secret" in central Ohio!

I saw the small bird out of the corner of my eye as it hovered only inches from my head, plucking insects from a budding branch. It was a 'BTG' or Black-throated Green warbler, one of the more fearless migrants. Its closeness that spring morning took my breath away. Many local birders have fond memories of 'BTGs' that they found during migration in central Ohio. The birds' apparent fearlessness makes them one of our most easily-seen spring warbler migrants.

The Black-throated Green is a bellwether among wood warblers, with some neat features to their biology. It's one of many warblers that migrate into and through Ohio during the spring to set up nesting territories here and further north. Like much of this family, many wood warblers are basically tropical birds that have evolved a northern migration. This allows them to escape the crowded tropics for the relatively less crowded habitats of temperate North America. Adult BTGs have a distinctive plumage, with a green back and crown framing a yellow cheek, gray wings with bright white wing bars, and a white belly with thick black streaks on each flank. The males have a striking black throat which gives the birds their common name.

Even though they can be at eye-level during migration, don't expect that on their breeding ground. Black-throated Greens and their kin are one of the tree-top warblers of the old genus *Dendroica* ("tree-nesting"). They live most of the breeding season 30 to 100 feet off the ground in the canopies of conifer trees, usually those with short-needles such as spruces, firs, and hemlocks. The birds' foraging habits help it there: they creep among the outer branches picking bugs and eggs out of needles, and they will readily hover to get to the tip shoots where caterpillars are most likely. They even have white outer tail feathers (common to this genus), which they flick during foraging to apparently startle insects into revealing their positions.



Earl Harrison

Breeding. Black-throated Greens' nesting range roughly corresponds to the range of small-needle conifers—hemlocks, spruce, and firs—in eastern North America. At their northern margins, they extend across the spruce belt of boreal Canada from the Newfoundland to Alberta. As you follow their range further south, it narrows to the hemlock-fir montane forests of the Appalachians, stretching as far south as Georgia and Alabama. These southern birds have been stressed by the decimation of Appalachian conifer forests by acid rain and insect pests. On a backpack trip through the Great Smoky Mountains this past summer, I saw far fewer BTGs than many other warblers, principally because the hemlock forests there were severely reduced by woolly adelgids, an insect pest from China.



Earl Harrison

Here in Ohio, Black-throated Greens are among the earliest migrant warblers to return to their territories; it's not unusual for the first males to be singing here in the Hocking Hills by mid-April. Their song is a slurring, distant 'zoo zee zoo zoo zee' or 'zee zee zoo zee zee' that is very distinctive. However, it can become hard to pick out once the bulk of Neotropical migrants start to crowd into the morning chorus in May.

The birds have a strong preference for hemlocks in Ohio and the Appalachians. They will build a small cup nest high along the branches of tall hemlocks. The female will lay 4-5 small eggs in the nest, which will hatch into tiny nestlings after about 12 days of incubation. The young are fed insects for another 8-10 days until fledging, so they grow very quickly. They will continue to trail their parents, begging for another 1-2 weeks after they've fledged, which must be very tiresome for the adults.

Non-breeding and migration. After breeding, Black-throated Greens migrate south to dry tropical forests in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. This has predisposed some of them to overwinter in Florida and Texas, where locating them among foraging flocks of Yellow-rumps and kinglets in live oak hammocks has become a favorite winter birding treat. They often stray during migration, which has allowed them to become a common vagrant to the southwest and Pacific, where they are often found in oak canyons and other migrant traps. They are one of the most common eastern warbler strays to California.

This wintering and migration plasticity has no doubt helped Black-throated Greens expand their nesting and winter ranges more easily than other warblers. Our Ohio populations quickly colonized the recovering hemlock groves of the

[See page 13](#)

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Columbus Audubon/Grange Insurance Audubon Center joint membership

Apply now for joint membership in Columbus Audubon (CA) and the Grange Insurance Audubon Center (GIAC).

We offer these membership levels:

Basic Individual \$30. Includes membership in GIAC and CA, Song Sparrow newsletter, subscription to Audubon magazine, and many other benefits.

Basic Family \$45. Includes the benefits above plus discounts at the GIAC Nature Store and on GIAC programs for your entire family.

Chickadee \$100. Includes all standard membership benefits plus enrollment as a Founding member of GIAC and an Audubon coffee mug.

Joint membership benefits are (all levels):

- * Membership in the National Audubon Society
- * Building rental opportunities at GIAC
- * Subscription to Audubon magazine
- * Bi-monthly Song Sparrow newsletter, a joint publication of Columbus Audubon and the Grange Insurance Audubon (electronic delivery only for basic membership)
- * 10% discount at the GIAC nature store
- * Discount on GIAC program fees

Great Blue Heron \$250. Includes all of the above plus your choice of an Audubon cap or tote bag.

Bald Eagle \$500. Includes all of the above plus a copy of the world-famous Guide to the Birds of North America by David Sibley.

Great Egret \$1000. Includes all of the above plus a personalized birding day in the Columbus area with a guide from Columbus Audubon.

- * Free CA field trips and programs throughout the year
- * An invitation to attend the CA annual meeting
- * Volunteer opportunities
- * Discounts at partnering affiliates
- * Invitations to special events at GIAC
- * Voice in CA/GIAC conservation initiatives

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