

The Great Backyard Bird Count

At GIAC: Saturday, February 15 from 10 am to 3 pm and Sunday, February 16 from 12 noon to 5 pm

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four day event developed through a partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Audubon, and Bird Studies Canada. The count is in its 17th year and went international in 2013. Occurring in February, it provides a snapshot of where bird species occur globally. As bird populations fluctuate due to natural cycles, climate change and habitat loss, scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot just by knowing where the birds are year to year. The longer and more widespread that data is collected, more information can be used to answer questions about the distribution and movements of bird species.

This is where YOU come in! No single scientist or team of scientists could tackle such a large project. To be successful, it requires the participation of thousands of citizen scientists around the globe. The 2014 GBBC will take place Friday, February 14 through Monday, February 17.

Please join us at GIAC on Saturday, February 15 and Sunday, February 16 to participate in two days of fun, learning, and most of all, counting! Everyone is welcome, and the event allows people of all ages and birdwatching experience to become citizen scientists. Counts can occur from the comfort of our seating area watching the birds at our feeders or while on a birdwatching hike with one of our educators. You may count for as little as 15 minutes or for the entire day—it's up to you. On each count, participants create a checklist of the

number of birds of each species seen, which we will enter in the GBBC website. As the count progresses, anyone with Internet access can explore what is being reported. If you would like more information on the event at GIAC, please contact Anne Balogh at abalogh@audubon.org.

The data we collect will go towards answering many large scale questions such as: How will weather influence bird populations? How is the timing of migration changing? How do bird population distributions change year to year? Where are bird diseases occurring?

Already, much has been learned. In 2013 alone, counts occurred on seven continents in 111 countries and territories. On the four day count, 4,004 species were counted out of the 10,240 species in the world.

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Bird Feeding Tips



Bird feeding is a popular pastime year round and especially during the colder months.

It provides enjoyment for bird-watchers and benefits birds.

Place your feeders to optimize bird safety. It is estimated 1 billion birds may die each year due to collisions with buildings. To reduce the chance of a window collision, place your feeders either within 3 feet of your house or farther than 30 feet. If feeders must fall between these distances, consider window treatments.

Choose your feeder for the type of birds you hope to attract. Feeder types include ground, tube, suet, hopper, and thistle feeders.

Use quality seed. There are many to choose from but one good all-around seed is sunflower. Black oiled and striped will both attract birds, but to attract the most variety use hulled sunflower seeds.

Suet feeders will attract some wonderful birds such as woodpeckers. To deter squirrels, choose suet with hot pepper in it.

Clean your feeders to prevent the spread of avian diseases. Immerse your feeder in a 9:1 water bleach solution one to two times a month and dry thoroughly.

Avoid overcrowding; spread out your feeders.

Enjoy!

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

Columbus Audubon Monthly Programs

January Program – The Comeback of Barn Owls in Ohio

Tuesday, January 28 in the GIAC multipurpose room

7:00-7:15 pm: Short Program by Karen Norris, "Current Status of Peregrine Falcons in Ohio." Karen is a 13-year employee for Ohio Division of Wildlife and will share an update on Peregrines.

7:15-7:30 pm: Refreshments and social time

7:30 pm: Main Program by Ken Duren, research biologist at Ohio Division of Wildlife

The Ohio Division of Wildlife began installing Barn Owl nest boxes in 1988. Because of this program populations have increased during the summer of 2012 to a record estimated 100 known nests in Ohio. Come find out more of the history of Barn Owls in Ohio and how you can help conserve this beautiful owl. Topics to be covered include how the Ohio Division of Wildlife tracks Barn Owl populations, where you can find Barn Owls in Ohio, and some wild stories of Barn Owl encounters.

Ken Duren is a research biologist with the Ohio Division of Wildlife. He is primarily responsible for monitoring grassland songbirds and Barn Owl populations in Ohio. Previously he was a seasonal wildlife biologist for New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife where he conducted research on grassland birds, Northern Bobwhite, waterfowl and aquatic furbearers. He holds an MS in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Delaware and BS in Wildlife Ecology Research and Management from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point.



February Program – Hummingbird Research in the Great Lakes

Tuesday, February 25 in the GIAC multipurpose room

7:00-7:15 pm: Short Program by Matthew Erickson and Peter Emmett. Matt will talk about the Rufous Hummingbird that visited his feeder the day before Thanksgiving in 2012 and Peter will share his photos.

7:15-7:30 pm: Refreshments and social time

7:30 pm: Main Program by Allen Chartier, project director for the Great Lakes HummerNet

The Great Lakes HummerNet is a research project started by Allen Chartier in autumn 2001 to learn more about hummingbirds in Michigan, Ohio, and northern Indiana by enlisting the help of volunteer observers throughout the region. Data is gathered through observation as well as banding studies. This presentation will describe the research objectives of the project, tell you how you can participate, provide helpful hints on how to attract and feed hummingbirds, provide hummingbird gardening tips, and review what has been learned so far.

Allen Chartier is the project director for the Great Lakes HummerNet. Allen was principal passerine bander and the only hummingbird bander at Holiday Beach Migration Observatory from 1997-2003. He has authored several publications including *Hawks of Holiday Beach* (2002), *Birds of Detroit* (1997), and *A Birder's Guide to Michigan* (2004, revised 2010) for the American Birding Association.



From Columbus Audubon President, Bill Heck

Another New Year, another set of New Year's resolutions. Yeah, yeah, been there, done that.

Is that how you feel? Let's face it, you can only resolve so many times to eat right, get fit, and lose some weight. Besides, those typical resolutions are so self-centered. How about resolving to help the causes that you love while still going for self-improvement?

I modestly propose a few possibilities:

Resolve to attend a few Columbus Audubon programs. Going to the CA program gets you out of the house and helps you to meet friends and

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From GIAC chair, Greg Cunningham: Season of Change

Winter in Ohio is a dramatic time of year. It starts with subtle changes in temperature and what feels like an alarming loss of daylight. Bright fall days become fewer and fewer. Oak and beech leaves hang on to trees in defiance,
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EcoWeekend/GIAC Program

Columbus Zoo Animals at 2014 EcoWeekend

Registration information coming soon

Get out those calendars and save the dates for EcoWeekend: May 2-4, 2014. Join us for another spectacular weekend in the Hocking Hills!

EcoWeekend is an affordable opportunity to enjoy Ohio's beauty while learning about nature from experienced program leaders. Adult and family programs are offered Friday evening through Sunday noon, with special youth programs on Saturday. Come prepared to learn as our expert consultants share their knowledge about the natural world.

We are excited that the Columbus Zoo will present our Saturday night program, which will allow attendees to visit with the animals that travel with Jungle Jack Hanna to shows such as *Good Morning America* and *The Late Show with David Letterman*. Discover where they are from, what they eat, and get up close and personal with these animal stars and their handlers.



Registration information for EcoWeekend 2014 will be mailed directly to all *Song Sparrow* subscribers in February. Be sure to look for yours. Online registration will also become available February 1 at www.ecowekend.org. See our website for a sample program and other EcoWeekend information.



Winter Happenings at GIAC

For more information and to register, please contact Suzan Jervey at 614-545-5483 or email sjervery@audubon.org.

Project WET and Project Learning Tree Workshop

Saturday and Sunday, January 25-26 from 9 am to 3 pm each day

For teachers and other educators, parents, and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12

Calling educators of all types! Get certified in *Project WET* (Water Education for Teachers) and *Project Learning Tree* (PLT) curriculum. Studies show that when environmental education and outdoor learning components are integrated into curricula, student achievement increases including test scores (particularly in science and math).

Project WET provides awareness of water resources, empowers students to take action in their communities, and helps solve local water-resource issues. *Project Learning Tree* is an award-winning environmental education program. Learn how to incorporate activities into your current and future lesson plans and programming, meet other local professionals interested or already involved in environmental education, and become part of a network that offers you follow-up resources and opportunities. The workshops will provide you with both the *Project WET* and *PLT* curriculum and activity guides. Cost for both programs is \$45.

Conservation in Your Own Backyard Workshop

Saturday, March 22 from 9 am to 3 pm

Join us for a day-long workshop focusing on the many ways a backyard can turn into an environmentally friendly oasis. Topics will include backyard beekeeping, rain gardens, rain barrels, bird feeding and more. Learn about the fascinating and potentially low-maintenance native plants that will add beauty to your yard as well as valuable resources to birds and butterflies. Acquire information on how to certify your yard as a butterfly and wildlife friendly yard. Discover the many citizen science projects through which your efforts can contribute to larger conservation strategies. Most of all, have fun! Cost is \$50 and includes lunch.

Project FeederWatch

Ongoing through March

Become a citizen scientist and join us during Center hours to count the birds at our feeders all winter long. Data collected will help scientists determine numbers and patterns in winter bird distributions.

Ring-billed & Herring Gulls (or You're a Big Gull Now)

They've become so ubiquitous now that we almost accept them as background. They're around our parks, businesses, and shops, where they loaf, squabble, and eat junk food. If they were any more similar to us, they'd be using cell phones (probably not tweeting, though). Of course, I'm talking about gulls. One of the surprises for coastal folks that visit or settle in Ohio is the plentiful supply of gulls here. Cities up along Lake Erie shine in this regard, but even here in Columbus we have lots of gulls, especially in fall and winter. My first week here, after moving from Seattle, I was startled by a large flock of gulls along the Scioto River. They were all Ring-bills, of course, but I've since learned that you've got to look through them for other species. With lots of looking, we can find many of the 10+ gull species seen up at Lake Erie now, but the two that you're likely to encounter most of the time here are Ring-billed and Herring Gulls.

Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) are probably *the* common inland gull of North America. They're a medium large gull, with a pale pearly-gray back (called a 'mantle' by gull aficionados), greenish-gray legs, and an obvious dark ring encircling the tip of their bill. In flight, their underwings are very pale gray with black tips, but there are a few clear white spots toward the ends of the black wingtips. Young first-year birds look different, with large regions of mottled brown on their wings and head, a dark tail band, and a bill that can be all black or half black. Ring-bills are the gulls whose marks you'll want to memorize, and here in Columbus they're easy to find. Look around the shorelines of any of our large reservoirs or in the parking lots of the Columbus Zoo or many of our large shopping centers. Large flocks of them spend the evenings up at Alum Creek Lake and Hoover Reservoir, then commute down into the city in long straggling flocks, to settle around shopping centers, river dams, or down at the trash dump off of I-71 south of Grove City. Once you know Ring-bills, then you can start searching for other gulls amongst them.



Photo by Earl Harrison



Photo by Earl Harrison

The 'other gull' you're most likely to find is the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). Superficially it resembles the Ring-billed Gull, but a little experience will help you tell the two apart easily. For starters, Herring Gulls are 30-50 percent bigger than Ring-bills. If you think, "my goodness, that gull seems so much bigger than the others," you've probably spotted a Herring Gull. Other marks are subtle, but noticeable: pinkish legs, larger beak with a red spot towards the tip rather than a ring, a longer call. Young Herring Gulls are even more obvious being almost entirely a deep dark brown with a bit of gray flecking on the wings and tail and a dark beak. Herring are much less common than Ring-bills, and generally I've found the ratio locally to be less than 1:100. While I've often seen Ring-bill flocks in the hundreds, the most Herrings I've ever seen at one time in central Ohio is around 30. This changes dramatically up at

Lake Erie, where Herrings are much more common and can appear in enormous flocks.

So what's the dynamic of big gulls around Columbus? Ring-bills are abundant from fall through spring and then most of ours withdraw up to Lake Erie to breed. There are large breeding colonies near Toledo, Sandusky, and Cleveland, and even bigger colonies on Lake Ontario, from where most of our breeders spread in the 1960s-70s. Ring-bills tend to prefer nesting on isolated islands or sand spits, and we don't have any habitat of that sort here in central Ohio. Herring Gulls are more commonly found here in the winter, although some show up in fall and spring. Herring Gulls nest at many more coastal sites, though not in huge numbers and have even taken to nesting on flat rooftops in several cities. We've had summering adult Herring Gulls along the Scioto River downtown, raising the possibility that they might try to nest on a rooftop somewhere in town. Given the problems that these large, fearless gulls have caused in other cities, this could be viewed as a blessing or a curse.

Rob Thorn

Amanda Duren Receives TogetherGreen Fellowship



Toyota TogetherGreen, a conservation initiative of the National Audubon Society and Toyota, has awarded a \$10,000 fellowship to Columbus Audubon trustee Amanda Duren. Amanda was selected as one of 40 high-potential leaders from across the country to receive a grant to create and lead projects that engage diverse communities in conservation. Toyota TogetherGreen Fellows also receive specialized training and the opportunity to become part of an alumni network of established conservation professionals.

Amanda's conservation project will focus on the development of a statewide Lights Out program for Ohio. The goal of Ohio Lights Out is to reduce the number of migratory birds killed by collisions with buildings and glass by encouraging more targeted usage and an

overall reduction of nighttime lighting. Many birds migrate at night, and artificial light can disorient them and lead to collisions with windows or buildings. Collisions are a leading cause of bird fatality in North America, and research has shown reductions in lighting can reduce collision-related kills.

Ohio Lights Out will build on the success of Lights Out Columbus, which was started two years ago as a partnership between the Grange Insurance Audubon Center and the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative. Amanda will work with conservation organizations and volunteers over the next year to develop local Lights Out programs in three target cities: Cleveland, Toledo, and Dayton. The aim of the program is to educate building owners, managers, and residents about the hazards of lighting for birds and to encourage them to pledge to reduce these risks at their buildings.

To learn more about Ohio Lights Out and how you can get involved, please visit www.OhioLightsOut.org or contact Amanda Duren at 614-432-8489.

Conservation Corner: Climate Change — Not Just for the Birds

A worldwide concern that directly affects all of us is global climate change. Most of us have heard debate on the issue: Is the earth *really* getting warmer? (Yes.) Is the major cause cutting of forests and burning of oil, coal, and gas? (Not for certain, but very likely.) Can we do something about it? (Yes, and the sooner the better.)

National Audubon has embarked on a campaign to increase awareness of global warming and enact steps to mitigate its effects. The central question is, "*What can we do about climate change starting now?*"

Here are ten ideas:

1. Take the bus or train (and lobby for passenger rail service in Columbus).
2. Turn down lights, heat, air conditioning, and hot water.
3. Don't buy electrical gadgets that you really don't need.
4. Support local food production.
5. Eat less meat, from grass-fed or free-range animals rather than grain-fed.
6. Support alternative energy production: wind, hydro, and nuclear (yes, nuclear).
7. Reuse and recycle.
8. Plant trees.
9. Tell your friends (and your enemies) what you're doing and why.
10. Join an ongoing ad hoc Columbus Audubon climate change activism team, whose primary mission is to communicate to the membership and community the facts about climate change and develop an ongoing program of active involvement to counter climate-change denial. Contact us at 614-545-5497 or e-mail conservation@columbusaudubon.org.

For further information visit the National Audubon website: <http://policy.audubon.org>

Dave Horn

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

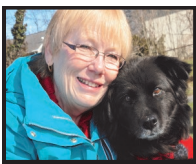
New Staff at GIAC



David Chew **Finance & Operations Manager**

We are very excited to announce the hiring of our new Finance & Operations Manager David Chew. Bringing

experience in both finance and facility operations, David is a CPA (although currently inactive) and holds an MBA. David has an entrepreneurial spirit and experience in streamlining processes and creating efficiencies. He has both interest in and passion for the Center's mission, having served as a clinical volunteer for the Ohio Wildlife Center for about four years. David's family owns a condominium management business, where he gained facility management experience. For the last 12 years David has been affiliated, as an outside consultant and full-time controller, with the Weight Watchers franchise serving more than 200 locations in Central Ohio and beyond.



Suzan Jervey **Educator/Volunteer Coordinator**

Suzan grew up in Columbus and attended Ohio State University where she received a BS in natural resources/environmental

education and MS in agricultural education. She has worked for local, state, and federal government agencies. She retired in 2008 from public service as senior naturalist at Highbanks Metro Park and has enjoyed working for or contracting with various conservation agencies and nonprofits since then. She is the vice president of Columbus Audubon, so she is very familiar with the wonderful things going on at GIAC. Suzan lives in Worthington with her dog Jack, plays cello in the Westerville Symphony, and enjoys quilting, gardening and spending time with family.



Susan Wasmund, Educator

Susan comes to GIAC after a 30 career as a science teacher in Westerville Schools. She taught primarily physical science, biology, and ecology. Susan is a volunteer at the Stratford Ecological Center and also

works part time for the Ohio Energy project. She enjoys hiking, geocaching, tennis, reading and gardening. "Participating in classes at Ohio State University's Stone Lab was a highlight of my professional development. One of my passions is to be outdoors and to help people discover the amazing animals and plants all around them. I'm looking forward to sharing that with the students and visitors that come to the Center."



Traci Weaver, Educator

Traci is studying for a Master of Arts degree in zoology through Miami University's Project Dragonfly, a hands-on, inquiry-driven conservation education program.

She spent almost 12 years teaching, performing, developing, and leading education and animal programs at COSI. Traci also teaches wellness and group exercise to seniors at the Hilltop YMCA and volunteers at PBJ Connections Equine Therapy Center, the Ronald McDonald House, and Stratford Ecological Center. She is passionate about the bonds we make with animals and nature and loves to nurture those bonds in students and visitors by helping them embrace their own



Rachael Esh, SCA Intern

Rachael is an environmental educator/natural resource intern at GIAC. She graduated from Ohio University in 2012 with a Bachelor's degree in environmental biology.

Wanting to pursue her passion for the outdoors, she moved to New Hampshire for 10 months to work for the Student Conservation Association. It was there she began her first internship as an environmental educator and interpretive ranger at several state parks. After this experience, she knew she was hooked on environmental education and accepted another SCA internship with the Center. "I love hiking, swimming, and being outdoors and couldn't be more excited to intern for the GIAC!"



Adam McFadden, SCA Intern

Adam is a recent graduate of Ohio State University with a degree in natural resource management. Throughout school he focused on environmental education and interpretation. He is

currently a Student Conservation Association intern. His passion for conservation and environmental education truly began from playing in the woods behind his house as a boy and was reignited and turned into action when he took up rock climbing. He was a camp counselor this summer with Audubon Adventure Camp. "I'm excited about the great education potential that GIAC has with an urban center so close and look forward to being a part of it for the year to come."

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Monthly Family Movie Nights

Admission is \$2 adults, \$1 children 16 and under. Doors open 6:30 p.m. and movie begins at 7:00 p.m. Light snacks \$1 each and free beverages. Join us at our upcoming movies:



Friday, January 10
The Big Year (PG)
Two bird enthusiasts try to defeat the cocky, cutthroat world record holder in a year-long bird-spotting competition. Based on a true story.



Friday, February 7
Up (PG)
It's never too late to fulfill your dreams. Join 78-year-old Carl as he follows his dream to see the wilds of South America with an 8 year old as a stowaway!

Beauty and Nature: **AVEDA**™ and GIAC

the art and science of pure flower and plant essences™

Help raise money for Grange Insurance Audubon Center for the entire month of January by visiting Aveda Polaris for special services. All proceeds, including service fees and tips, will be donated to GIAC. What a fantastic way to support GIAC and indulge yourself at the same time. Make plans with a friend and make it an outing!

Aveda January Menu

Daily Events

Chair Massage (5 minutes).....\$5
Deluxe Hand Treatment.....\$5
Make-up Touch Up.....\$5
No appointment needed.

Services to Schedule*

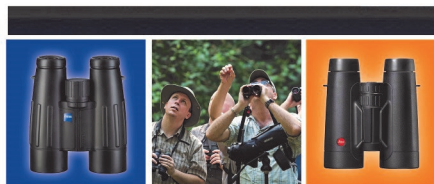
Full Face Make-up.....\$15
Eye Brow Wax.....\$15
Hair Styling.....\$10
In Store Hair Cuts with our Aveda Professional Stylist.....\$20

*Offered on specific dates. Please call for dates and times.

New Preschool Program starting in February.
Check out the
grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org
website for more information.



BIRDING OPTICS & GEAR EXPO



Hosted by:

BIRDWATCHER'S
DIGEST

GRANGE INSURANCE Audubon
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Time &
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April 4-6, 2014 • Columbus, OH
GRANGE INSURANCE AUDUBON CENTER

Join the experts from Eagle Optics, Time & Optics, and major optics manufacturers at the 2nd annual Birding Optics & Gear Expo, where you can "try before you buy" binoculars, spotting scopes, tripods, outdoor gear, and much more!

**On Friday, April 4 through
Sunday, April 6, 2014**

the Grange Insurance Audubon Center in downtown Columbus, Ohio will be filled with all the very best products for nature observation and enjoyment.

Registration is FREE! All registered attendees will be entered in the Expo Door Prize Giveaway. Visit
birdwatchersdigest.com/expo

800-879-2473

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

GIAC a Great Field Trip Spot for Classrooms



Teachers, are you looking for something new and exciting to do with your classroom this year? Consider a field trip to the Audubon Center. Our educators have cutting-edge programs planned that support the core curriculum by giving students hands-on science experience participating in real life field work. Restoration of the habitat in the Scio-to Audubon Metro Park is ongoing and much of the work has been done by students and volunteers. Consider bringing your class to the Center for an affordable field trip where we bring science to life. Contact Susan Jervey at sjerve@audubon.org or 614-545-5483 to book your field trip soon, as available dates are filling fast.

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Summer Camp and Bikes: Fun at the Audubon Center

A brand new shiny bike. What memories does that evoke for you? This summer GIAC received 10 new bikes to use during Audubon Adventure Camp. This wonderful gift came to us through a grant from the Institute for Active Living at the Columbus Health Department. GIAC along with two other non-profits and several city recreation centers received bicycles for our summer camp programs.

The Institute for Active Living (IAL) at Columbus Public Health (CPH) was created in 2008 to reduce and prevent childhood obesity, particularly in low income children who are disproportionately impacted by poor health. IAL's mission is to develop and implement strategies that increase access to nutritious food and opportunities for physical activity and help community partners to implement them successfully.

The goals for the program include: 1) increasing physical activity, 2) increasing the knowledge of participants through a comprehensive bicycling curriculum, and 3) long term achievement of continued physical activity and using bicycles for active transportation. The target population of participants is children and youth ages 2-15 living in the most socioeconomically vulnerable neighborhoods in Columbus. IAL provided education, bicycles, helmets, technical assistance, and support to implement bicycle activity programs.

"This was an exciting summer in the Audubon Adventure Camp. It was great fun to add a new dimension to the program. The bicycles allowed us to take the campers on exciting adventures within the park and the Scioto Mile as well as teach them bicycle safety. Everyone had a blast!" said Allison Roush, Adventure Camp director.

At the end of the summer, the bikes were given to children who had come to camp on a campership (scholarship). One of the goals was to encourage children to use the bikes as a safe mode of transportation and giving the bikes to our campership kids made sense on many levels.

As the New Year begins we are once again thinking about Audubon Adventure Camp and looking forward to the second year of bikes from the IAL and many more children coming to camp on a campership who would otherwise not be able to attend. We always have more requests for camperships than we have funding for, so if you would like to send a child to camp this summer please contact Amy Boyd at aboyd@audubon.org and we can make that happen.

Another exciting addition to camperships this summer was transportation. In the summer of 2012, many camperships were not used because the kids could not get to the Center. This past summer GIAC received a grant from the Duke Foundation to provide transportation. Every child that signed up for camp through a campership was able to attend because the transportation barrier was removed. We are seeking funding for transportation again this summer. What could be better than a wonderful week of summer camp and brand new shiny bike for a child in need?

Great Backyard Bird Count (Continued from page 1)

The countries with the highest counts were Mexico at 645 species, USA with 638 species, India with 544 species, and Costa with 508 species. International participation is increasing, offering more information at a larger scale each year.

Results to date have shown large irruptions (or an incursion of birds that don't normally winter in our area) of winter finches such as Red Crossbills and other species such as Red-breasted Nuthatch and Snowy Owls. It is generally believed that irruptions are driven by a lack of food on the normal wintering grounds, and the data collected from GBBC will help answer where, how often, and with what species these irruptions occur. Data has also begun to show the possible effects of climate change, as some species such as swallows are wintering further north than they used to. For more information on all the exciting discoveries using the GBBC data, visit the website at www.birdsource.org/gbbc/whycount.html.

But you don't have to come to the Center to participate! During the four day event, counts can be done anywhere. If you would like to count at home or another favorite spot and would like more information in creating your own account please contact GIAC or visit the GBBC website. Participants can also participate in the GBBC photo contest and have their images posted in the online photo gallery.

For more than 100 years and beginning with the Christmas Bird Count, Audubon has activated its network of citizen scientists and collected data to inform conservation priorities. We look forward to your participation in the 2014 Great Backyard Bird Count.

Anne Balogh, conservation manager and educator

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

In Remembrance and Celebration of Milton Schott



On November 13, 2013, the Grange Insurance Audubon Center and the Columbus non-profit community as a whole lost a devoted leader, philanthropist, and volunteer. Milt Schott was an astute businessman and humanitarian with a spiritual calling to aid the underserved. An advocate of the Center's mission to augment science education for schools in the urban core of Columbus and as a trustee of the Harold C. Schott Foundation, Milt was instrumental in leveraging a foundation gift to close out the \$14.5 million capital campaign to build the Center. In 2012 Milt joined the Stewardship Board of the Center and took on the self-designated role of ambassador, sharing the Center's story and mission with everyone he encountered.

Milt's cancer diagnosis in the spring of 2012 left him with both the time and the desire to be in nature and at the Center. Throughout his treatments, Milt faithfully volunteered as a Center greeter every Thursday and became fast friends with co-volunteer Denny Forest. His family shared how he found peace, joy, and solace at the Center.

Milt left a legacy that went beyond his financial gifts to the Center. We grieve for him, yet his kind spirit, enthusiastic embrace of our work, and his gentle smile stay with us and infuse this space.

To Milt: We are very grateful for the time we had with you. You taught us courage, hope, and joy in the moment.

Welcome New Board Member Jamie Taylor



Jamie Taylor, president of Taylor Financial Management, Inc., joined the Stewardship Board of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center for a three-year term. Jamie holds an MBA and brings financial management and strategic thinking skills to his work on the Board. Birding is one of Jamie's passions, and he has been an enthusiastic member and supporter of the Center since its inception. We are grateful for his willingness to give his time and talents.

GIAC board chair (Continued from page 2)

before finally letting loose and joining the others on the ground. Human activity steadily progresses from lawn and leaf maintenance and football Saturdays to hectic holiday bustle. And then in January things slow down. Temperatures plunge and the sky seems to become permanently gray. People bundle up and hunker down for winter. It would be easy to go into "hibernation mode," but there is still plenty to see and do.

Winter is a great time to explore the GIAC and surrounding Scioto Audubon Metro Park. Audubon Afternoons are a super reason to get out of the house and learn new things. The GIAC library is a great place to research and plan for spring while watching birds at the feeders. All the windows at the Center allow you to enjoy the winter landscape while staying warm inside. The occasional mild days are good times to explore the park, walk the paths, or maybe check out the new Columbus Rotary obstacle course.

Don't let winter slow you down. As the days grow longer, take time to visit the GIAC and see how much fun winter can be!

GIAC Design Award-Winning



The Grange Insurance Audubon Center, designed by Design Group, received an American Institute of Architects' 2013 Honor Award for newly completed buildings, additions, remodelings, renovations, restorations. The AIA Ohio Design Awards Program promotes those projects that have distinguished themselves, through attention to high quality design, performance, and commitment to AIA's 10 principles of liveable communities. These awards recognize some of the best of Ohio architecture. Thank you Design Group for excellence in design of the Center.

Columbus Audubon and GIAC Events

Schedule of Events

GIAC events are in black text.

www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org

Columbus Audubon events are in green text

www.columbusaudubon.org

New Year's Day Hike at Chestnut Ridge Metro Park

Wed., Jan. 1 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Family Movie Night: The Big Year (PG)

Fri., Jan. 10 7:00 pm \$2 adults, \$1 children

Audubon Afternoons: Building tour and scavenger hunt

Sat. & Sun., Jan. 11/12 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series – preregistration required for series.

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Jan. 11 10:30 am – noon

Service in the Preserves: Crabill Fen State Nature Preserve, Clark County

Sat., Jan. 11 7:45 am

Avid Birders

Sat., Jan. 11 5:30 am

Winter at Killdeer Plains

Sun., Jan. 12 12:15 – 7:30 pm

Audubon Afternoons: Take a hike; learn about and explore two different habitats in winter.

Sat. & Sun., Jan. 18/19 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series; preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Jan. 18 10:30 am – noon

Winter Birds of the Urban Scioto

Sat., Jan. 18 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Jan. 23 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Audubon Afternoons: Nature journaling; create a nature journal of your own.

Sat. & Sun., Jan. 25/26 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series – preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Jan. 25 10:30 am – noon

Green Lawn IBA Birding

Sat., Jan. 25 9:00 – 11:30 am

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Jan. 30 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Audubon Afternoons: What's in our Water?

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 1/2 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series – preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Feb. 1 10:30 am – noon

Bird Hike at Blendon Woods

Sun., Feb. 2 9:00 am – noon

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Feb. 6 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Family Movie Night: Up (PG)

Fri., Feb. 7 7:00 pm; \$2 adults, \$1 children

Audubon Afternoons: Winter Adaptations

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 8/9 1:00 – 3:00 pm

January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

YoHi Sampler Series: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Feb. 8 10:30 am – noon

Winter Birds of Hoover Reservoir

Sat., Feb. 8 9:00 am – noon

Service in the Preserves: Sieganthaler Esker SNP

Sat., Feb. 8 7:45 am – 5:00 pm

Avid Birders

Sat., February 8 at 5:30 am

Winter at Killdeer Plains: Encore

Sun., Feb. 9 1:00 – 8:00 pm

GIAC Volunteer Recognition and Dinner

Wed., Feb. 12 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Feb. 13 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Audubon Afternoon: Great Backyard Bird Count

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 15/16 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Feb. 15 10:30 – noon

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Feb. 20 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Audubon Afternoons: Prepare to be creative and join us to explore birds and art.

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 22/23 1:00 – 3:00 pm

YoHi Sampler Series: preregistration required for series

(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Sat., Feb. 22 10:30 am – noon

Green Lawn IBA Birding

Sat., Feb. 22 9:00 – 11:30 am

Winter Birds of The Wilds

Sun., Feb. 23 noon – 7:30 pm

Mindfulness Yoga: preregistration required for series

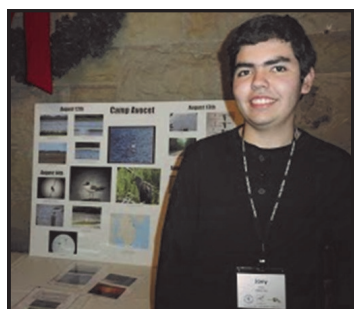
(www.Yogaonhigh.com)

Thurs., Feb. 27 5:45 – 7:15 pm

Young Birders Active This Winter

What do you get when you combine an enthusiastic bunch of teenagers with the frosty months of winter? A celebration of Nature's wonders, a dedication to the stewardship of planet Earth, and probably a crazy snowball fight or two!

The central chapter of the Ohio Young Birders Club (OYBC)—for birders and conservationists aged 12-18—will kick off 2014 with a January field trip to The Wilds with the Ohio Ornithological Society (fingers are crossed that a Golden Eagle will be spotted!), followed by a road trip up to Lake Erie in February for some shorebird scoping. March will be dedicated to a conservation service project, and April will find this band of birders seeking early migrants in central Ohio.



Our OYBC chapter continues to grow in members and experience. Our young birders are stepping up and taking leadership roles by teaching others to build nest boxes, monitoring nest box trails and assisting with banding, volunteering at nature camps and with restoration projects, and providing direction to OYBC by serving on the Youth Advisory Board. At the most recent statewide OYBC conference at the Toledo Zoo, members of our chapter amazed over 150 attendees with their professional presentations and poster displays, leadership roles in the onsite conservation service project, and their public speaking skills as master of ceremonies and assistants to renowned birder Kenn Kaufman. We couldn't be more proud of our OYBC teens!

The adult co-advisors for Central OYBC continue to be astounded by these students. They inspire us with their thirst for knowledge, their generosity, their passion for the great outdoors, their love of birds, their love of life, and the richness of the friendships they forge in breathtaking open spaces. We hope more young birders will join us! Check out all things OYBC by going to www.columbusaudubon.org/oybc. Keep your eyes to the skies!

Gerry Brevoort, co-advisor for Central OYBC

Eagle Scouts Soar

Due to the generous financial support of Columbus and National Audubon, two conservation grants are helping two Boy Scouts achieve their Eagle Scout Award, the highest award in Boy Scouts. These high school students will be working at two different sites to help native cavity nesting birds by educating the public about proper protocols for nest box construction, placement, monitoring, and data collection.

The Columbus Audubon Conservation Grant is being used to refurbish and relocate a 100-nest box trail at The Dawes Arboretum in Newark, Ohio. The FY14 Chapter Collaborative Grant from National Audubon is being used to install a new 20-box Eastern Bluebird and Tree Swallow trail, a Purple Martin gourd rig, and an informational kiosk at the Genoa Township Community Gardens. Both projects are collaborative efforts between other community groups stepping in to help fund and volunteer their time for trail installation and monitoring.

Over the next year, you will meet both of these high school students from Boy Scout Troop 117 in Dublin; they will present their Eagle Scout projects at one of our short programs. I have worked with scouts for over 20 years, doing conservation projects locally. As an Eagle Scout advisor, with the completion of these two projects, I will have helped 20 Boy Scouts achieve their Eagle Scout Award.

I wish to extend a special thank you to Columbus Audubon for their continued support of young birders. Without the collaboration between Columbus Audubon, National Audubon, private donations, and countless volunteer hours, these conservation projects with our youth would not be possible.

Darlene Sillick

Columbus Audubon



January & February Field Trips

For complete descriptions of all trips, visit our web site: www.columbusaudubon.org/calendar

New Year's Day Hike at Chestnut Ridge Metro Park

Wed., January 1, 2014 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

Celebrate the New Year with a quiet walk in nature. This is a good time to see many natural features and to be renewed outdoors. From I-270, take US 33 east toward Lancaster; drive about 11 miles and turn right on Winchester Rd. (at the Carroll, OH traffic light). The park entrance is about three miles on the left. Follow the main park entrance road to its far end, by the second pond, and park near the shelter house and the restroom. For more information, contact Mike Flynn at 614-769-1681 or mflynn.wildandfree@gmail.com.

Service in the Preserves: Crabill Fen State Nature Preserve, Clark County

Sat., January 11 at 7:45 am

Winter is a great time of year to remove honeysuckle. Join us as we travel to Crabill Fen to clear out this invasive species so the native plants can once again thrive in this remote fen community. Meet in the parking lot inside the gate house at the ODNR Complex, 2045 Morse Road, to travel in the ODNR van. Registration required; call Katryn Renard by the preceding Wednesday at 614-261-7171 to register and reserve space for transportation. No special skills are required; bring your lunch, water, work gloves and appropriate foot gear.

Avid Birders

Sat., January 11 at 5:30 am

The Avid Birders meet at 5:30 am to carpool from the southeast corner of the Worthington Mall parking lot. As usual, the destinations will be chosen and announced a few days before the trip, depending on reports of birds to be seen across Ohio. All birders are welcome! Bring water, lunch, and snacks, and dress appropriately for the weather. For more information, contact avidbirderleads@columbusaudubon.org.

Winter at Killdeer Plains with Audubon Miami Valley

Sun., January 12 from 12:15 pm to 7:30 pm

Early winter at Killdeer Plains can be a true adventure with hoped-for winter specialties such as Northern Harriers, Rough-legged Hawks, Long- and Short-eared Owls, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings. We will bird much of the time from our vehicles, with frequent stops to scan promising fields and walk in the woods. Dress warmly and be prepared for a few wet or muddy fields. Bring water and food as needed; there is one porta-potty restroom for stops. Carpooling from the Worthington Mall parking lot at 12:15 pm for the 1.5 hour drive to Killdeer. This is a joint trip with Audubon Miami Valley (Oxford, Ohio); we will meet them there at Killdeer Plains at 2:00 pm. We plan to depart Killdeer by 6:00. For more information, contact Bill Heck at Bill.Heck@gmail.com.

Winter Birds of the Urban Scioto

Sat., Jan. 18 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

We'll explore along the Scioto River, first around the Greenlawn dam and then visit nearby open-water sites, looking for congregations of gulls, herons, and waterfowl. If we have time, we'll visit the nearby Green Lawn Cemetery for winter specialties like sapsuckers, pine siskins, and merlins. Meet at the Scioto Audubon Park boat launch, off Whittier Ave west of Front Street, and dress warmly. For more information, contact Rob Thorn at robthorn@earthlink.net or 614-551-0643.

Green Lawn Cemetery Birding

Sat., Jan. 25 from 9:00 am to 11:30 am

Join Warren Grody and Darlene Sillick as they fill the bird feeders and search for winter resident birds in one of the grandest and oldest cemeteries in central Ohio. Meet at the cemetery office. For more information, contact Darlene at az-uretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696.

Bird Hike at Blendon Woods

Sun., February 2 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Meet Bruce Simpson at the nature center and then explore Thoreau Lake and other trails. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. For more information, call Blendon Woods Metro Park at 614-895-6221.

Winter Birds of Hoover Reservoir

Sat., Feb. 8 from 9:00 am to 2 pm

We'll visit some of the Hoover hotspots, depending on where there is open water, looking for over-wintering loons, grebes, cormorants, goldeneye, mergansers, and other diving ducks, along with the attendant gulls and raptors. Meet at the dam parking area along Sunbury Road at 9:00 am and dress warmly. For more information, contact Rob Thorn at robthorn@earthlink.net or 614-551-0643.

Avid Birders

Sat., February 8 at 5:30 am

See description at January 11.

Service in the Preserves: Sieganthaler Esker SNP

Sat., February 8 from 7:45 am to 5:00 pm

Always a favorite service project, join us as we burn brush off this relict of the glaciers that shaped Ohio so long ago. In the process you will walk on the remains of river that ran through a glacier and see how the land was sculpted so long ago. Meet in the parking lot inside the gate house at the ODNR Complex, 2045 Morse Road, to travel in the ODNR van. Registration required; call Katryn Renard by the preceding Wednesday at 614-261-7171 to register and reserve space for transportation. No special skills are required; bring your lunch, water, work gloves and appropriate foot gear.

Continued on page 13

Columbus Audubon

CA field trips (Continued from page 12)

Winter at Killdeer Plains: Encore

Sun., Feb. 9 from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Winter specialties of Killdeer Plains should be settled in: Northern Harriers, Rough-legged Hawks, Long- and Short-eared Owls, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings. We will drive the area, birding much of the time from our vehicles, but exiting frequently to scan promising fields and walk in the woods. Sunset is about 5:55; starting a little before that we will look for Short-eared Owls hunting over the fields. Dress warmly and be prepared for a few wet or muddy fields when we look for owls during the day. Bring water and food as needed (no food or water are available onsite). We will make a few stops at the one porta-potty restroom. We will carpool from the Worthington Mall parking lot at 1:00 pm for the 1.5 hour drive, arriving at Killdeer about 2:30. We plan to depart Killdeer by 6:30, arriving back in Columbus about 8:00 pm. (Those who need to return to Columbus earlier are free to do so.) For more information, contact Mike Flynn at mflynn.wildandfree@gmail.com or 614-769-1681.

Green Lawn Cemetery Birding

Sat., Feb. 22 from 9:00 am to 11:30 am

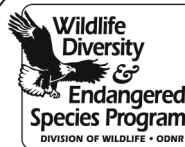
Join Warren Grody and Darlene Sillick as they fill the bird feeders and search for winter resident birds in one of the grandest and oldest cemeteries in central Ohio. Meet at the cemetery office. For more information, contact Darlene at az-uretrails@columbus.rr.com or 614-288-3696.

Winter Birds of The Wilds

Sun., Feb. 23 from noon to 7:30 pm

We will drive the roads of this wide open landscape in search of the wintering raptors and other native and exotic wildlife that are found at The Wilds. Rendezvous at 12:00 noon for carpooling at Cracker Barrel, 1860 Winderly Lane, Pickerington (from Columbus, take I-70 east to the Route 256 South exit, see restaurant on the right). We will be close to our vehicles for

Most of the trip. This terrain can be very windy and chill-factor cold. Dress warmly, including good boots. Bring snacks and warm drinks, as there are no facilities. Spotting scopes are very helpful. We will plan to stay until dusk in search of Short-eared Owls. Those who need to leave early to return to Columbus are free to do so. For more information, please contact Earl Harrison at Harrison.304@osu.edu or 202-361-2039 or Rick Stelzer at rstelzer@insight.rr.com or 614-570-7597.



Please remember to donate to Ohio conservation when you file your taxes using the tax checkoff program.

Division of Wildlife – manages Ohio’s wildlife by purchasing and improving habitat, protects endangered species, and provides educational materials to the public.



CA President (Continued from page 2)

neighbors who share your interest in conservation. And you can't help but learn something in the process!

Resolve to go on Columbus Audubon field trips. New to field trips? Make an easy resolution: one field trip every other month. That's just a few hours commitment. You get some fresh air, see some birds or other wildlife, and yes, learn something new as well.

Resolve to volunteer for a Columbus Audubon activity or event. You can start small: help at just one program, help with the Birdathon for a few hours, assist at EcoWeekend, or join just one Service in the Preserves work trip. If you want to go a little bigger, join a team working on a project.

Resolve to support Columbus Audubon with a financial contribution. This one is really, really easy, and it doesn't need to cost much at all. A few bucks go a long way with an all-volunteer organization like CA.

No matter what you do, all of us at Columbus Audubon wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year filled with great birds!

100th Anniversary Year Closes with Art for Audubon

Columbus Audubon wrapped up our 100th anniversary celebration activities with Art for Audubon on Sunday, November 10. Participants mingled, bid on the beautiful artwork and other auction items, and enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer.

Joining the party were a Black-footed Penguin, Lesser Flamingo, North American River Otter, and Swift Fox—special guests from Columbus Zoo. Paintings by the penguin and flamingo were part of the live auction. Talented auctioneer Larry Woods roused bidders to counter and raise on seven items, including paintings by the zoo's Lesser Flamingo and Black-footed Penguin, John James Audubon framed print "Song Sparrow", Robert Bateman "Mossy Branches - Spotted Owl".

The silent auction bidding closed after some stealthy final bidding by some and Art for Audubon tote bags were given as attendees departed.

The generous donations from artists, buyers and sponsors raised over \$8000 that will fund CA scholarships and conservation activities.

Columbus Audubon offers our gratitude to:

Grange Insurance Audubon Center for providing event space

Sponsors: Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Cardinal Health, Andy's Frame Setting, Berwick Manor Catering, and Jan Rodenfels

Auctioneer Larry Woods

Photographer Mike Maier

Columbus State Community College instructor Norm Clevenger

Auction committee and board members



Event Chair Julie Davis is presented an original painting by Tamara James on behalf of the CA board.

Auctioneer Larry Woods gets the bidding going!



Mary Heck shows off her art purchase with the Black-footed Penguin who created it.



Duane Zwick poses with his purchase and the Lesser Flamingo artist.



Student artist Jaypaul Newhouse poses by the art he created.

Sneak Peek at CA's March and April Programs

A look ahead at Columbus Audubon's annual member catered dinner and monthly program on Tuesday, March 25 at 7:00 pm: *What's New at the Zoo?* presented by Tom Stalf, president and CEO of the Columbus and Aquarium. See your next issue of *Song Sparrow* or visit www.columbusaudubon.org for more details and to register for dinner.

On Tuesday, April 22 Jim McCormac will present his program, *Earth Day 2014: A Celebration of Ohio's Greatest Natural Resources*.

Columbus Audubon (Founded 1913)

Mission: To promote the appreciation, understanding and conservation of birds, other wildlife and their habitats, for present and future generations.

www.columbusaudubon.org

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614-545-5497

Twitter: @ColumbusAudubon

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Vice President: Suzan Jervey

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Past President: Julie Davis

Trustees (through June 30, 2014): George Arnold, Tim Daniel, Julie Davis, Amanda Duren, Warren Grody, Bill Heck, Dave Horn, Tamara James, Suzan Jervey

Additional chapter leaders

Birdathon: Dave Horn, davehorn43@columbus.rr.com

Conservation: Dave Horn, 614-262-0312

Eco Weekend: Dale Brubeck, dbrubeck@columbus.rr.com; Lois Day, 614-793-8843

Field Trips: information@columbusaudubon.org

Membership: Joe Meara, 614-430-9127

Newsletter Editor: Tamara James, editor@columbusaudubon.org

Newsletter Designer: Julie Davis, greenheron58@insight.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

Web/Social Media: Stefanie Hauck

Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Mission: To awaken and connect participants to the beauty of the natural world in the heart of Columbus and inspire environmental stewardship in their daily lives.

www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org

Facebook: GrangeInsuranceAudubonCenter

614-545-5475

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Volunteer Coordinator and Educator (part time): Suzan Jervey

SCA Interns: Rachael Esh, Adam McFadden

Facility Attendant (part time): Ian Dowden

Office and Development Assistant: Linda FreemanWalker

Winter hours : Tuesday – Friday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Sunday Noon – 5 p.m.; closed Mondays

Directions to the GIAC: From High St. or Front St. turn west on Whittier (which runs along south end of German Village and Brewery District). Follow Whittier, making no turns, across the bridge spanning the tracks, until you drive into the parking lot in front of the Center.

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Ex Officio

* Appointed

This newsletter is printed on 100% recycled stock with soy ink.

Thank you recent GIAC donors (through November 2013)

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Welcome new & renewed members (through November 2013)

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- *Song Sparrow* bi-monthly local newsletter
- Email updates and Action Alerts (as you choose: local and/or national)
- 10% discount at GIAC's Nature Store
- Free and discounted local programs and field trips
- Invitations to local member-only and special events
- Local science and volunteer opportunities
- Ability to rent the Center for your special events
- Knowing you support education and conservation action in your community!

Join now at the organization membership level and receive associate benefits:

- Volunteer days and opportunities for associates and employees
- 10% discount to employees for one session of Audubon Adventures summer day camp
- Knowing you are contributing to the quality of life in your community

☐ **Classic Membership \$100** (individuals, families and organizations)

Receive a free Grange Insurance Audubon Center ball cap

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