

## Climate Change News from Around Ohio

As you know, National Audubon Society published important new research in September 2014, *Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report* (<http://climate.audubon.org/sites/default/files/Audubon-Birds-Climate-Report-v1.2.pdf>). The research includes a model that predicts that 314 North American bird species face serious threats from climate change by the end of this century. The modeling shows predicted impacts on winter and summer ranges in 2020, 2050, and 2080. You can explore the models and all 314 species at <http://climate.audubon.org/all-species>.

As many of us focus more attention to the climate report and threats from climate change, there are public and high profile activities taking place with Audubon chapters, conservation organizations, government and nonprofit agencies. Here are just a few of the recent Audubon-related climate change and citizen science activities from around the state.

**February 3:** More than 150 people, including a representative from Sen. Sherrod Brown's office and Cleveland's director of sustainability, turned out to *The Impacts of Northeast Ohio's Warming Climate* at Case Western Reserve University. The symposium featured experts from Cleveland Museum of Natural History, University Hospitals, Cleveland Water Alliance, National Audubon's Marnie Urso, along with others, and highlighted local climate change impacts in northeastern Ohio and the Audubon birds and climate report.

**February 22:** Members of the public were invited to a reception and program at Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm for their winter speaker series. Tom Auer, National Audubon conservation data specialist, explained how Audubon's science team made their findings and the uncertain future that birds face.

**March 1:** Grange Insurance Audubon Center opens enrollment for the Backyard Refuge program, part of Audubon at Home. The program emphasizes backyard conservation through gardening with native plants, the removal of invasive plants, citizen science, sustainable lawn care, and conserving energy and water. Visit page 5 for more details.

**May 6:** Gary Langham, National Audubon vice president and chief scientist, will speak at the Cleveland City Club on *A Bird's Eye View of Climate Change*. He will discuss the results of the study and the steps being taken to protect our nation's birds from the threat of global warming. For details, visit [www.cityclub.org](http://www.cityclub.org).

### IN THIS ISSUE

CA Programs	2
GIAC Library Refresh	3
Creature Feature	4
Citizen Science	5
CA News	6, 8-9
CA Field Trips	7
Leadership Letters	10
GIAC News	11-14

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

Gary Langham



### Download John J. Audubon Prints for Free From National Audubon's chapter update:

John James Audubon's *Birds of America* comes to life in a [vibrant digital library](#) on Audubon's new website. You can enjoy and download a free high-resolution version of all 435 prints. Share these beautiful watercolors with your network and spread the legacy of Audubon's namesake and inspiration.

Explore the collection at [www.audubon.org/birds-of-america](http://www.audubon.org/birds-of-america).

# CA Monthly Programs

## March Program – Past, Present and Future



*Tuesday, March 24 in the GIAC multipurpose room*

7:00 - 7:15 pm: Short Program by Pete Precario, executive director at Midwest Biodiversity Institute, Inc. Pete will discuss the development of a significant wetland at the Scioto-Audubon Metro Park and MBI's proposed significant enhancement to the park.

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

7:30 pm: Main Program by Richard Crossley, internationally acclaimed birder, photographer and award winning author of *The Crossley ID Guide* series. He is also co-founder of the global birding initiative Pledge to Fledge ([www.pledgetofledge.org](http://www.pledgetofledge.org)) and Race4Birds ([www.race4birds.org](http://www.race4birds.org)). He has contributed to most major birding publications, is frequently

heard on radio, and is a highly sought-after public speaker.

Richard's topic is *Past, Present and Future: Learning from Success and Failure to Change the Future*, and he'll share tales of lessons learned while growing up in the wild British birding scene, from travels around the world, to living in Japan and settling down for good in his birding utopia Cape May, NJ. He'll also share his thoughts behind *The Crossley ID Guide* series.

## April Program – Backyard Birding



*Tuesday, April 28 in the GIAC multipurpose room*

7:00 - 7:15 pm: Short Program by Randy Rogers, chair of the grounds and historical preservation committee at Green Lawn Cemetery. Cemetery trustee Randy Rogers will give us a brief update on recent events in the park and insight into plans for the future to preserve and enhance Green Lawn for birds and birdwatchers.

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

7:30 pm: Main Program by Dr. Bernard Master, who is an internationally recognized conservationist and distinguished health care professional and business entrepreneur. He was the founder, chairman and CEO of Health Power, Inc. Bernie is well-known to local birders and Columbus Audubon members. He has a life list that includes over three-quarters of the

world's bird species (in excess of 7,700 birds). He is a former Columbus Audubon board member and was a key leader in supporting the purchase Calamus Swamp.

*Green Lawn Cemetery is a beloved local birding spot in the Scioto River - Greenlawn Important Bird Area. See page 5 for more on the local IBA.*



Deadline for proposed submissions for the May-June issue of the Song Sparrow is March 15.

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



# GIAC Happenings

## GIAC Library Made Better for All

After much planning, reorganizing, construction, and book sourcing, the library at Grange Insurance Audubon Center is reopened to the public and it's fantastic! Spearheaded by former board member Jan Rodenfels with the assistance of current board member Lori Overmyer, the library invites visitors into a warm, comfortable space illuminated by natural light and a spectacular view of the Columbus skyline.

Guests can listen to dozens of bird species as they feed outside the library; the specially designed audio system captures the activity through hidden outdoor microphones. Dozens of books on subjects ranging from conservation, birds, wildlife, and habitats fill the shelves next to numerous antique and vintage volumes as pertinent today as they were 100 years ago. Many donated displays and items of interest complete the space as a revitalized learning area.

The generosity of former board members Jan Rodenfels in honor of John Mundhenk, Jeffrey Chaddock, current board member Greg Cunningham in honor of Leroux and Mary Louise Cunningham, and Huntington Bank in honor of Jim Kunk, made the library's rebirth possible. We invite everyone interested to come and enjoy all the new books and displays.



*The warm and inviting space welcomes visitors, students, and wildlife enthusiasts*



*View of the Columbus skyline from the library shortly before the new improvements were completed*

*A view of the GIAC library space as seen from the outside*



## Creature Feature: American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)



Photo by Earl Harrison

My brother-in-law looked out over the waterfowl throng and said, “What are all the dark ones?” “They’re Black Ducks,” I replied. “They normally favor shadowy swamps, and this is about as many of them as you’ll see in one place nowadays.” We were looking out over the masses of wintering ducks at Thoreau Lake in Blendon Woods almost a decade ago and there were hundreds of Black Ducks. It was an unusual sight for someone raised on Mallards, which described both of us. Unfortunately, it may not be repeated in our future if current trends continue.

The American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) could easily be called the Eastern Forest Mallard since they are first cousins to that ubiquitous duck, but are much more a feature of forest ponds and rivers than their open-country cousins. Prairie ducks like Mallards

almost always have colorful males, since they’re competing for space and mates in the congested prairie potholes. Black Ducks are like Mallards that adapted to less congested, more secluded habitats. They dispensed with the colorful plumage and opted for a dark body that blended into the shadows of their forest wetland homes. They’re not the only Mallard relative to do this: Mottled Ducks in Florida and Mexican Ducks also favor less crowded swamps and have similarly dull male plumage.

Black Ducks have more than a plumage difference with Mallards. They’ve adapted to forest pools and fens from Manitoba across to Maryland, and will even nest in brackish swamps and salt marshes—all habitats that Mallards avoid. They largely winter in eastern salt marshes and southeastern river swamps and are a favored duck for hunters because of their wariness and isolated habitats. This translates into different behavior: I can often get close to Mallards, even in semi-wild areas like Darby Creek. It’s different with Black Ducks; not only does their cryptic plumage hide them better, but they tend to sit still until they see you, then quickly flush away. If you’ve ever stalked a wary flock of Black Ducks in a southern swamp, you know these are not simply dusky Mallards.

Unfortunately for Black Ducks, humans have upended their world. First we cleared and fragmented much of the eastern American forest, removing Black Duck breeding habitat and allowing their Mallard cousins access to most of the Black Duck’s range. Not only are Mallards resourceful ecological competitors, but drake Mallards will try to mate with any hen duck that looks vaguely like a Mallard hen. Black Duck females are very similar to Mallard hens, and Mallard x Black Duck hybrids are now very common. Look carefully over the Black Ducks at Blendon, and you’re sure to see some of these hybrids with their black bodies and greenish heads.

We’re also altering the climate; drying and displacing wet forests further north as the climate warms. Many of the seasonal marshes, swamps, and forest pools that these ducks love will become greatly reduced in a warmer world. Audubon researchers estimate that almost all current Black Duck habitat will be affected to some degree (see Audubon’s climate report map for Black Ducks at <http://climate.audubon.org/birds/ambduc/american-black-duck>).

Black Duck numbers will take a hit. The Thoreau Lake flock already shows this: numbering 600-800 in the 1990s, the horde has now dwindled to 200-300. And they’re not spreading into nearby habitat. You can also find some Black Ducks along wooded sections of our streams and rivers—the lower Scioto, Big Darby, Big Walnut—but those groups have also declined in number. Increasingly these ducks of the forest swamp shadows are becoming just that: shadows.

*Rob Thorn*



Photo by Earl Harrison



# Citizen Science

## Columbus's Important Bird Area

Audubon's Important Bird Areas (IBA) program is a global effort to identify and protect habitat that will support sustainable populations of birds. The Ohio IBA program began in 1999 and currently includes more than 60 state-level IBAs. Grange Insurance Audubon Center sits directly within one of our IBAs, the Scioto River-Greenlawn IBA, which offers two square miles of vital stopover habitat for birds migrating through Columbus.

Columbus Audubon, Grange Insurance Audubon Center, the City of Columbus, and the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative are partners in a new effort to improve habitat within the Scioto River-Greenlawn IBA for birds and other wildlife and to educate the public about the importance of native plants for birds. Through this project, Columbus Audubon will engage our membership in restoring the Scioto River-Greenlawn IBA and sharing this work with the community that visits the IBA.

Over the next year, Columbus Audubon and its partners will be installing a native plant demonstration garden at Berliner Park to promote awareness of the value of native plants for wildlife and to offer a demonstration of how native plants can be used in landscaping around the home. We will install a kiosk next to the garden, which will present informational signage about the garden and native plants. The garden will also provide important foraging habitat for birds, butterflies, and other pollinators in this urban park.

To further improve habitat quality for birds in the IBA, Columbus Audubon will collaborate with the City of Columbus to host a volunteer service day to remove non-native invasive plants such as garlic mustard and Japanese honeysuckle from the IBA. Volunteers will replant areas where invasive plants are removed with plants native to the IBA, which will offer superior food resources for both birds and the insects that they eat.

A final aspect of this effort will be to install and monitor new houses for Purple Martins at the wetland in the Scioto-Audubon Metro Park. In our region, Purple Martins are completely dependent on human-provided housing. The wetland within the Scioto-Audubon Metro Park offers high-quality nesting habitat for Purple Martins, and the installation of a rig of new houses will allow these birds to take advantage of the wetland habitat.

If you are interested in volunteering to assist with any aspect of this project, please contact Amanda Duren at 614-432-8489 or [obcicoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:obcicoordinator@gmail.com). We are especially looking for assistance from those with interest in planning, installing, or maintaining native plant gardens.

*Amanda Duren*

## Backyard Refuge Program Makes Everyone A Conservationist

Audubon at Home emphasizes backyard conservation through gardening with native plants, the removal of invasive plants, citizen science, sustainable lawn care, and conserving energy and water.

Small steps have large impacts!

Through the Backyard Refuge program with the Audubon Center you'll learn how simple, practical changes can make your property more sustainable and habitable for yourself and local wildlife. It's as easy as one, two, three!

1. Enroll your property at the silver, gold or platinum level.
2. Commit to a series of action steps in your yard.
3. Receive technical help and incentives to help you achieve your goals!

Staff and volunteers from the Audubon Center help you by conducting an initial yard assessment to determine what elements best suit your level of involvement, as well as save you money on fuel, watering, pesticides, and expensive invasive plants. Then through our network of retail business partners you'll receive discounts on the things you need to make your refuge a success. Partners currently include Wild Birds Unlimited, Scioto Gardens, Kurtz Bros, Good Nature Organic Lawn Care, Natives in Harmony, EcoFlora, Timber Press Books, and more.

Enrollment begins March 1 at 1:00 pm. Go to [www.grange.audubon.org](http://www.grange.audubon.org) for more information or contact Amy Boyd at 614-545-5486 or [aboyd@audubon.org](mailto:aboyd@audubon.org).

## Birdathon 2015: Do Something Birdy!

Let's cut right to the chase: proceeds from this year's Birdathon will enable us to fund a Barn Owl & Wildlife Cam at Pickerington Ponds Metro Park! Money that we raise will pay for video equipment and the connections needed to stream video from the nest. Schools, kids at home, and adults all will be able to watch the resident Great Horned Owls as they raise a family from eggs to fledglings. We're delighted to be working with the Ohio Division of Wildlife and Columbus Metro Parks to make this happen, and we hope that you will be just as thrilled as we are about supporting the effort through the Birdathon.

OK, let's back up. What is this Birdathon thing of which we speak? In May, teams of nature enthusiasts and birders come together to support Columbus Audubon through their annual Birdathon fundraiser event. It's the biggest fundraiser of the year for Columbus Audubon, and it's a highlight of the spring birding season for many of us.

And it's easy. Individuals, groups, and families join in teams and ask friends and neighbors for support. Then they go birding! Each team counts the bird species that they see and report their results to the people who have pledged to donate an amount per species. Truth be told, a lot of our friends just donate without even worrying about the numbers – and that's OK, too.

*When* do you do a Birdathon? Anytime in the month of May. *Where* do you do a Birdathon? Anywhere you like – most of our teams stay in Ohio, but we have a team planning a Birdathon in Africa!

Oh, let's not forget the prizes. This year, for the first time, our Birdathon planners are busy rounding up prizes for donors. That's right, we are giving our Birding donors, as well as team members, chances to win stuff. It's our way of saying thanks.

So let's see: with the Birdathon, you get you outdoors watching birds, you spend time with friends and family, you support a great cause, and you could win some loot. So what's not to like? This year, do something birdy: form, join, or support a Birdathon team and be part of the adventure!

Columbus Audubon makes it easy to participate. Do you need to find other birders or want to join an existing team? We can help! Want to find painless ways to raise money? We have ideas for you! Go to [www.columbusaudubon.org/birdathon](http://www.columbusaudubon.org/birdathon) and we'll take you through the process. We'll also guide you through deciding on one of the participation categories and provide tips on fundraising for your team.

You don't need to join a team to participate. Sponsors are just as important to the CA Birdathon as our team members. If you would like to sponsor a team, look for the team roster posted at [www.columbusaudubon.org/birdathon](http://www.columbusaudubon.org/birdathon). You can contact a team member to make a donation and sponsor your favorite team online.

So what are you waiting for? Remember, every dollar that we collect helps fund the Owl Cam, which is also a great opportunity to connect the public with Columbus Audubon's mission and programs. Join us for Columbus Audubon's 2015 Birdathon and let the fun begin!

## COLUMBUS AUDUBON BIRDATHON



*Bill Heck*

# Columbus Audubon



## March & April Field Trips

For complete descriptions of all trips, visit our web site: [www.columbusaudubon.org/calendar](http://www.columbusaudubon.org/calendar)

### Birdwatching for Nestlings at GIAC

*Sat., March 7 from 10 am to 11:30 am*

If you've wondered what birdwatching is about, but can't see a bird in a pair of binoculars, this is for you. Bring your binoculars or use ours. We'll teach you tricks to start a fun hobby. Weather permitting, we'll go on a short hike. For more info, contact Suzan Jervey at [sejervev@gmail.com](mailto:sejervev@gmail.com) or 614-546-7857.

### Bird Hike at Blendon Woods

*Sun., March 8 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon*

Join Naturalist Bruce Simpson in search of Blendon Woods' winter residents. Meet at the nature center. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. For more information, call Blendon Woods Metro Park at 614-895-6221.

### Service in the Preserves: Morris Woods

*Sat., March 14 from 7:45 am to 5:00 pm*

Join us as we continue our work to build boardwalk over low spots on the trail in this mature beech-maple forest. No special skills are required; bring your lunch, water, work gloves and appropriate foot wear. Call Katryn Renard by the preceding Wednesday at 614-261-7171 to register and reserve space for transportation.

### Late Winter Birds at Slate Run Metro Park

*Sat., March 21, 2015 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.*

Join us as we search for raptors and winter residents along the horse trail, an area normally off-limits to birdwatchers. Two options: a moderately strenuous hike (90 minutes) or a longer option (2-3 hours). The short walk is level; the longer walk has a steep downhill section followed by a considerably more moderate uphill section. Both cover muddy and uneven trails used by horses, so be sure to bring sturdy shoes that you don't mind getting a little dirty. For more info, contact Randy at [randel\\_rogers@hotmail.com](mailto:randel_rogers@hotmail.com).

### Avid Birders

*Sat., March 28 from 5:30 am to 5:00 pm*

The Avid Birders meet to carpool at 5:30 am in the southeast corner of the Worthington Mall parking lot. Our likely quarry will be early spring waterfowl. As usual, we will announce more specific information on the Avid Birders mailing list shortly before the trip. For more info, contact [AvidBirderLeads@ColumbusAudubon.org](mailto:AvidBirderLeads@ColumbusAudubon.org).

### Birdwatching for Nestlings at GIAC

*Sat., April 4 from 10 am to 11:30 am*

If you've wondered what birdwatching is about, but can't even see a bird in a pair of binoculars, this is for you. Bring your binoculars or use ours. We'll teach you tricks to start a fun hobby. Weather permitting; we'll go on a short hike. For more info, contact Suzan Jervey at [sejervev@gmail.com](mailto:sejervev@gmail.com) or 614-546-7857.

### Bird Hike at Blendon Woods

*Sun., April 5 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon*

Join Naturalist Bruce Simpson in search of Blendon Woods' winter residents. Meet at the nature center. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. For more information, call Blendon Woods Metro Park at 614-895-6221.

### Service in the Preserves: Johnson Ridge

*Sat., April 25 from 7:45 am to Sun., April 26 at 5:00 pm*

Join us on this overnight trip to build new trails and bridges amongst the second-growth oak and hickory trees at this fairly new State Nature Preserve. All skill levels are welcome. Please call Katryn Renard by April 20 at 614-261-7171 for details and to sign up, reserve space for transportation, and to help us determine tool requirements.

### Birdwatching for Nestlings at GIAC

*Sat., May 2 from 10 am to 11:30 am*

If you've wondered what birdwatching is about, but can't even see a bird in a pair of binoculars, this is for you. Bring your binoculars or use ours. We'll teach you tricks to start a fun hobby. Weather permitting; we'll go on a short hike. For more information, contact Suzan Jervey at [sejervev@gmail.com](mailto:sejervev@gmail.com) or 614-546-7857.

### Spring at Slate Run Metro Park

*Sat., May 2 from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon*

Join us at the Slate Run Metro Park wetlands to look for migrants and possibly a few winter stragglers. Park Ranger and CAS member Randy Rogers will lead us on a walk that may include a visit to the back ponds or up to the overlook platform (which requires a longer hike including a moderately strenuous hill). Hiking will generally be along generally flat trails, boardwalks, and levees, but may involve some uneven footing along the levees. This area may contain a variety of ducks, migrating warblers or shorebirds, raptors, and Sandhill Cranes have nested in the area for several years and are nearly always found by early May. For more info, contact [randel\\_rogers@hotmail.com](mailto:randel_rogers@hotmail.com).

### Avid Birders

*Sat., May 2 from 5:30 am to 5:00 pm*

The Avid Birders meet to carpool at 5:30 am in the southeast corner of the Worthington Mall parking lot. Our likely quarry will be early spring waterfowl. As usual, we will announce more specific information on the Avid Birders mailing list shortly before the trip. For more info, contact [AvidBirderLeads@ColumbusAudubon.org](mailto:AvidBirderLeads@ColumbusAudubon.org).

### Bird Hike at Blendon Woods

*Sun., May 3 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon*

Join Naturalist Bruce Simpson in search of Blendon Woods' winter residents. Meet at the nature center. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. For more information, call Blendon Woods Metro Park at 614-895-6221.



## EcoWeekend 2015: Still Time to Register

EcoWeekend is May 1-3 and fast approaching. You should have received your brochure early in February. You can register online at [www.ecoweekend.org](http://www.ecoweekend.org) or call 614-888-0685 for a copy of the full program and important information on lodging, meals, etc.

Our adult program this year includes many new offerings such as bird migration, monarch mania, salamanders, wilderness first aid, beekeeping, and float-tray gardening, as well as perennial favorites such as astronomy, owl walks, campfires, archery, hikes and crafts—48 selections in all.

The youth program with three levels will emphasize study of the natural world—birds, insects, and mammals—with opportunities to decorate or build birdhouses, hike, and have fun with field games.



Pat Quakenbush, a popular speaker and naturalist with the Ohio State Parks, will present a Saturday night program about the resources of the Hocking Hills, with live animals, hands-on history, and interactive storytelling.

EcoWeekend takes place each year at Camp Oty'Okwa (near Conkles Hollow) in the Hocking Hills. Programs run from Friday evening through Sunday morning. Design your own weekend by selecting from the many choices available for each session! Cost for one adult is \$130 for food and lodging, \$85 per youth. There is no charge for children ages 4 and 5.

You can pay online via PayPal (no charge) or send payment by the **April 8 registration deadline** to the EcoWeekend registrar: Maura Rawn, 540 Coonpath Rd NW, Lancaster, OH 43130. You can reach Maura at 740-653-8574. Donations are welcome to keep EcoWeekend affordable and accessible.

## Mothapalooza!

Friday to Sunday, June 12-14, 2015

Shawnee State Park in West Portsmouth (Scioto County)

Mothapalooza is a celebration of the rich and stunningly beautiful world of moths. Their much better known diurnal counterparts the butterflies are dwarfed by the diversity of moths. Less than 140 butterfly species have been recorded in Ohio; there is an estimated 3,000 species of moths. We know from the previous two Mothapaloozas that participants can expect to see a blizzard of moths, numbering into hundreds of species.

The weekend program features an interesting range of talks by leading experts, and field trips to experience moths and other elements of natural history firsthand. We are pleased to announce the return of legendary lepidopterist and caterpillar expert Dr. David Wagner, author of the acclaimed *Caterpillars of Eastern North America*. Also joining us is Dr. Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home* and perhaps the leading advocate for using native plants in the urban landscape.

The event is based at the beautiful Shawnee Lodge in the heart of the 65,000 acre Shawnee State Forest. A few miles to the west is the 16,000 acre Edge of Appalachia Preserve. This region harbors Ohio's richest biodiversity and is chockfull of rarities, both plant and animal. Expert-guided field trips, both day and night, will explore the best habitats in the area. Attendees can expect to compile huge lists of moths, butterflies, myriad other insects, birds, plants, and more.

For details and registration visit [www.mothapalooza.org](http://www.mothapalooza.org).





# Columbus Audubon

## Grow Skills & Friendships as a Columbus Audubon Volunteer



Volunteering with Columbus Audubon is a great way to meet people who share your love of birds and nature while gaining new skills, building your resume and, of course, contributing to conservation in central Ohio.

There are opportunities to match a wide variety of interests; here are just a few.

**Birdathon Committee and Chair:** Birdathon teams try to see as many birds as possible in a given time after collecting pledges from willing donors. The competition is the Columbus Audubon's biggest fundraiser of the year. Volunteers on this committee recruit sponsors, assist team and collect donations. The chairperson organizes and manages the committee's efforts and gains excellent fundraising experience.

**EcoWeekend Committee and Chair:** EcoWeekend is held each May, offering dozens of nature programs on birding, insects, wildflowers, and more. Volunteers book speakers, coordinate with the camp location, and promote the event.

**Program Committee and Chair:** The program committee suggests and selects speakers for Columbus Audubon's monthly programs. Participation on this committee, especially as the chairperson, leads to great networking with some of the state and country's biggest names in bird conservation. Volunteers also greet speakers and attendees on program nights.

**Conservation Committee:** The conservation committee gets involved in local, state and national conservation issues selected by the committee members.

There are many more ways to get involved in Columbus Audubon. To find a volunteer opportunity that fits your interests or to learn more about those listed above, send your contact information to [volunteers@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:volunteers@columbusaudubon.org).

## Christmas Bird Count 2015

The 2014-15 Christmas Bird Counts produced a welter of interesting records locally. The CBC season started with Columbus and Delaware on Dec. 14, then followed with Hoover on Dec. 20, O'Shaughnessy on Dec. 31, and Kingston on Jan. 2. The early counts had moderately cold weather, but the later counts were much colder. This is a brief glimpse of the counts results; for more detailed totals, visit <http://columbusaudubon.org/index.php/citizen-science/christmas-bird-count>.

Columbus had 82 species and 53,162 individuals (including an obscene 36,648 European Starlings). Among the highlights were count records for Double-cr. Cormorants (56), Red-tailed Hawks (69), Red-bellied Woodpeckers (171), and Pileated Woodpeckers (14). Unusual were a Merlin at the Union Cemetery, a rare Pine Warbler found at Blendon Woods, and an even rarer Nashville Warbler (their first ever) found at the OSU Wetlands.

Delaware had 62 species and 10,989 individuals, including a nice 17 Bald Eagles, 360 Blue Jays (a new record), and high numbers for most woodpeckers. A slow waterfowl day was enlivened by a Tundra Swan. A Merlin was unusual, but much rarer in central Ohio was a Northern Shrike in the Delaware Wildlife Area.

Hoover Reservoir had 77 species and 11,747 individuals. Among the highlights there were count records for Hooded Mergansers (632), Horned Grebes (33), Red-tailed Hawks (58), and Blue Jays (495), and high numbers of woodpeckers. Rarities included a Peregrine Falcon along Hoover Reservoir, an even rarer Blue-winged Teal lurking on Alum Creek, and 25 Pine Siskins totaled by several teams.

O'Shaughnessy Dam had much colder weather and still tallied 77 species and 14,580 individuals. Numbers included a healthy total of 16 waterfowl species, including three late Tundra Swans, as well as good numbers of raptors, including 12 Bald Eagles and 95 Red-tailed Hawks. This count also had large numbers of woodpeckers and Blue Jays, as well as a startling 147 Eastern Bluebirds. Rarities included both a Long-eared and Short-eared Owl, as well as a Fox Sparrow.

*Rob Thorn*

# Leadership Letters

## From Audubon Center Board Director Rich Shank

A number of people have asked me why I decided to get involved with the Grange Insurance Audubon Center and even more so, why I agreed to chair the board. A few years ago, 28 to be exact, I was fortunate enough to be appointed director of the Ohio EPA. I had already been working in the environmental area for over 10 years and was quite passionate about environmental issues. I felt that now I had the opportunity to talk to people and "convert" them to an environmental mindset. I was quite naive. After a year of traveling the state and talking to various groups and organizations, mostly comprised of adults, I realized there was some truth in the old axiom, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." I did find that there was a group of people who were eager to learn and adopt new ideas of environmental sustainability: children!



I put my efforts into that over the next couple years, and in 1990, just before I left office, the Legislature passed the Ohio Environmental Education Fund bill.

So, why am I involved with GIAC? Because few other organizations or institutions are so focused on touching the young people of our community with messages of environmental sustainability and conservation. GIAC is particularly appealing because they serve the inner city school programs, where children rarely get exposed to the natural world. So, maybe 20 to 30 years from now we will see the real impact of these efforts in the leaders, lawmakers, and voters that will be making decisions and enacting laws that impact our environment.

Enjoy the rest of the winter, quietly contemplating the activity at your bird feeders and be considering what you can do to help GIAC further their mission in the coming year.



## From Columbus Audubon President Barbara Revard

"Spring work is going on with joyful enthusiasm."

--from *The Wilderness World of John Muir*.

After the short days of winter, mixed with cold temperatures and snow, why is it that every spring seems fresh and new and so unexpected? I am so looking forward to rediscovering my favorite stump to sit upon along the banks of the Big Darby, to hearing those very first, absurdly hopeful spring peepers who sing well before temperatures feel like spring to me, and to searching for the earliest of wildflowers.

While we may enjoy these early days of spring by sitting in a pool of sunshine or by hiking without five layers of clothing, the plants and animals are indeed busy with their spring work. There is so much to see and hear and smell. In my book spring just can't be beat as the best time of year to simply enjoy being outdoors. Spring is such a wonderful "excuse" for walking slowly! From watching a snake sun itself in a sunny spot or checking the progress of tree buds bursting larger day by day, the work of spring is best observed by going slowly with a sense of wonder. Share this spring with co-workers on a lunchtime walk or take the family out for a hike to discover what's happening in the woods or prairies – just go out and enjoy!

## Wanted: Your Thoughts and Your Help

As a member-based organization, Columbus Audubon needs your input to be sure we are offering services, programs and information that you value and that represent what Audubon means to you. In the coming year we invite you to share your thoughts and opinions in surveys on a variety of topics.

Our first survey topic is the *Song Sparrow* newsletter. We want to know what you value and enjoy. Please take a moment to fill out the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LBLTD5B>.

# Grange Insurance Audubon Center

## Earth Day 2015

**Work Day at GIAC**

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**

**9:00 am to 12 noon followed by lunch (a reward for all your hard work!)**

Gather your friends and family and join us at GIAC as we come together to help wildlife by continuing to restore critical bird habitat in our Important Bird Area (IBA). Plan on getting your hands dirty and feet wet as we pick up trash along the Scioto River and on the peninsula.

Honeysuckle removal is an ongoing battle and work will be done to clear a significant area of the invasive plant and replace it with native plants to continue the restoration efforts in the Scioto Audubon Metro Park. We will also be working in the gardens that surround the building, weeding, trimming, raking, and planting natives in the flower beds.

Register yourself or your group at [www.greenbus.org/](http://www.greenbus.org/) to volunteer at GIAC on April 18.

**Earth Day Celebration**

**Saturday, April 25, 2015**

**1:00 pm to 11:00 pm**

Join Green Columbus and a group of wonderful sponsors in celebrating Earth Day 2015 at a celebration at Columbus Commons on Saturday, April 25.

The celebration will feature your favorite local bands, food trucks, kids' activities, environmental groups and businesses, and much more. Bring your friends and family for a full day of fun in the heart of downtown Columbus. Visit [www.greenbus.org/earth-day-2015](http://www.greenbus.org/earth-day-2015) for more info.



## SAVE THE DATE!

### AMERICAN BIRDING EXPO

*A Showcase of Products & Services  
for Bird Watchers*

**FRIDAY • SATURDAY • SUNDAY  
OCTOBER 2-4, 2015**

**at Grange Insurance Audubon Center**

Volunteer opportunities available. Contact Allison at [aroush@audubon.org](mailto:aroush@audubon.org) or 614-545-5482 if interested.



# Grange Insurance Audubon Center

## Audubon at Home Backyard Conservation Program Series

Grange Insurance Audubon Center will begin offering monthly instructional courses about Audubon at Home conservation program the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm. These programs will help support homeowners enrolled in the GIAC's Audubon At Home Backyard Refuge Program, as well as anyone interested in backyard conservation. All are welcome.

**Program Fee:** \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members, **RSVP** to Amy at [aboyd@audubon.org](mailto:aboyd@audubon.org) or 614-545-5486

### Going Organic in Your Lawn

*Wednesday, March 11 at 7 pm at Grange Insurance Audubon Center*

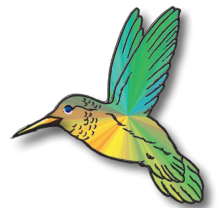
Going organic in your own lawn is easier than you think! With proper cultural practices, balanced fertilization, and building soil life, you can obtain a beautiful lawn without the use of pesticides. We will outline what is important when it comes to the soil life and turf grass. Other topics will include natural pest controls, correct cultural practices (mowing and watering), and natural weed suppression. Program presented by Good Nature Organic Lawn Care.

**Good Nature™**  
organic lawn care

### Hummingbirds at Home and Nestbox 101

*Wednesday, April 8 at 7 pm at Grange Insurance Audubon Center*

Hummingbirds at Home is a new program offered by National Audubon, and GIAC is a pilot site for the program. You can attract, feed and nourish hummingbirds in your backyard with a few easy steps. Due to development and climate change, hummingbird-friendly habitat is rapidly disappearing across many hummingbird migration routes. Flowers, feeders, perches, insects, and water are the key ingredients to a healthy yard that will attract these amazing jewels. Come to this workshop and learn how you can create a healthy environment for hummingbirds in your backyard.



During Nestbox 101 you will learn how habitat will attract the various secondary cavity species that might use a nest box on your property. You'll learn the various species you might attract and how you can make them safe as they raise a family under your watchful eye.

## Former CA President Bill Heck's Report from NAS Board Meeting



*Columbus Audubon member and former president Bill Heck was recently elected to the board of directors of the National Audubon Society to represent Audubon chapters in an eight-state region: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.*

My most vivid impression from my first National Audubon board meeting was of the quality of Audubon people: all of the board members and senior staff whom I met were intelligent, focused, welcoming – and yes, fun to be with. But most importantly, they all are passionate about birds and bird conservation.

While I was in Florida for the board meeting, I was fortunate to see some of the tremendous work that Florida Audubon and National Audubon have done together to preserve unique habitats such as salt marshes. Up here in the belt from Ohio to Minnesota and Iowa, we have some wonderful habitats and great birds to protect, too. I look forward to keeping you posted on how we're doing.

One of Audubon's great strengths is that it is open to all who care about birds. Conservatives, liberals, and the apolitical; blue, red, and purple; all Auduboners are united around bird conservation. Audubon scientists released a report last fall identifying global warming as a serious threat to birds. We care about it because it's a bird issue, not a political issue. It's that way across the entire set of issues that Audubon deals with: we're for the birds!

# Grange Insurance Audubon Center

## RWB @ the Audubon Center!

**Reserve your table now for the best view in Columbus**

**BEFORE we make reservations available to the general public!**

### **2015 Red White & Boom Fireworks!**

- Table for 10 inside the Audubon center
  - Full barbeque buffet, soft drinks
  - Reserved parking
  - Roaming magicians and jugglers
- Games for the kids prior to the fireworks
- Plenty of reserved outdoor seating for the show
  - Clean indoor restrooms

**\$495.00 per table**

Call Jeff Yost at 614-545-5479 or email [jyost@audubon.org](mailto:jyost@audubon.org)

All proceeds benefit the programs of the Audubon center!

Beer & wine sold separately in advance with your table purchase or during the event.

Sorry, no outside beverages permitted



## **Wildlife Diversity Conference 2015: Wildlife Challenges and Positive Connection**

Wednesday, March 11 at Aladdin Shrine Center at 3850 Stelzer Road

Doors open at 8:00 am; conference from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Save 20% on an Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp; order with your registration and receive it with your name tag at the conference. All proceeds benefit Ohio's wildlife diversity.

Details and registration at <https://apps.ohiodnr.gov/wildlife/DiversityRegistration/>

Sponsored by ODNR Ohio Division of Wildlife

# Grange Insurance Audubon Center

## International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD)

Saturday, May 9 from 10 am to 3 pm

### Grange Insurance Audubon Center

Join us for a fun-filled day of exploration as we learn about the incredible story of bird migration. Birds travel for thousands of miles around the globe crossing oceans and mountains. How do they do that? Come and play the migration game and learn some of the perils that birds face on their journey and celebrate a magnificent feat of nature and learn how climate change will impact birds.

The Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center from Ohio State will be at GIAC to setup a field camp featuring a tent, clothing, and safety gear used in the world's cold regions and equipment used to study Earth's climate. Hands-on displays will allow visitors of all ages to touch rock samples collected in Antarctica, investigate the flow of glaciers, and observe how ice cores preserve evidence of Earth's past.

How are the changes in the climate affecting birds here at home and the far reaches of the earth? Don't miss this day of exploration and discovery!



## Save the Date



benefiting  
 **Audubon**  
GRANGE INSURANCE  
CENTER

**FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015**

6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

### Grange Insurance Audubon Center

505 Whittier St. Columbus, OH 43215

### *Featuring*

Fabulous Appetizers, Dinner and Desserts  
by Bosc + Brie

Wine Tastings

Complimentary Wine and Beer Bar

Warbler Walks to see the Beautiful Songbirds  
during Migratory Season

Exciting Musical Entertainment

Memorable Activities

Unique items in Silent and Live Auctions

For more information, visit [www.GrangeInsuranceAudubonCenter.org](http://www.GrangeInsuranceAudubonCenter.org)  
or contact Jeffrey Yost at 614-545-5479 or [jyost@audubon.org](mailto:jyost@audubon.org).



## 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](http://www.columbusaudubon.org)

[www.facebook.com/columbusaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/columbusaudubon)

614-545-5497

Twitter: @ColumbusAudubon

### Officers

President: Barbara Revard, [bsrevard@gmail.com](mailto:bsrevard@gmail.com), 614-580-4469

Vice President: Susan Jervey, [sejervy@gmail.com](mailto:sejervy@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Maura Rawn, [maura2garden@yahoo.com](mailto:maura2garden@yahoo.com)

Recording Secretary:

Past President: Bill Heck, [bill.heck@gmail.com](mailto:bill.heck@gmail.com)

**Trustees (through June 30, 2015):** George Arnold, Tim Daniel, Julie Davis, Lindsay Deering, Amanda Duren, Warren Grody, Tamara James, Suzan Jervey, Barbara Revard, Christie Vargo (ex officio)

### Additional chapter leaders

Birdathon: Dave Horn, [davehorn43@columbus.rr.com](mailto:davehorn43@columbus.rr.com)

Conservation: Dave Horn, 614-262-0312

Eco Weekend: Dale Brubeck, [dbrubeck@columbus.rr.com](mailto:dbrubeck@columbus.rr.com); Lois Day, 614-793-8843

Field Trips: Tim Daniel, [information@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:information@columbusaudubon.org)

Membership: Joe Meara, 614-430-9127

Newsletter Editor: Tamara James, [editor@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:editor@columbusaudubon.org)

Newsletter Designer: Julie Davis, [greenheron58@insight.rr.com](mailto:greenheron58@insight.rr.com)

Programs: Darlene Sillick, [azuretrails@columbus.rr.com](mailto:azuretrails@columbus.rr.com)

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

Web site: Bill Heck, [webmaster@columbusaudubon.org](mailto:webmaster@columbusaudubon.org)

## Thank you recent GIAC donors (Dec 2014 –Jan 2015)

Milly Alfano	Carolyn Kurucz
Gregory Allen	L Brands Foundation
George & Vanessa Arnold	Regina Lach
Bruce Aument	David Lambert
Sanat Barua	John Lane
Lewis Beman	Karen Linn
Lois Benjamin	Marilyn Logue
Paul Bingle	Frank Martens
John Buttler	Jim McCormac
Cardinal Health Foundation	Sara McDonell
Stephen Cartwright	Thomas McDowell
David Cepek	Robert & Janie McIntyre
Nancy & Lewis Claman	Rebecca Metcalf
Alex Darragh	Kathleen Miller
Deane Dorwart	Linda Mitchell
R. Stephen Drew	Ohio Environmental Education & Charity Trust
Shirley Fischer	Carolyn Peterson
Kaleigh Frazier	Aaron Pickrell
Robert Garbacz	Puffin Foundation West, Ltd.
Ellen Geisler	Corlyss Richards
John & Dareth Gerlach Foundation	Scott & Deb Safcik
Sandra Grasso	Ellen & Douglas Scherer
The Thomas C. & Mary Ann Hay	Jerry Severson
Charitable Trust	Adam & Kathleen Smith
The Hildreth Foundation, Inc.	Luke Steffen
Laurie Hill	Genevieve Szuba
David & Roz Horn	Valerie Theado
Phillip Hunt	Bernadine Thurn
Marline Kelley	Shirley Tobias
Carol Knoblauch	Tri-Moraine Audubon Society
Catherine Kohn	Richard Tuttle
Ralph & Sondra Kowaluk	Nancy Volksen
	Adam & Kathleen Wagenbach
	Jane Walsh
	Maury Walsh

## 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](http://www.grangeinsuranceauduboncenter.org)

Facebook: GrangeInsuranceAudubonCenter

614-545-5475

Twitter: @grangeaudubon

### Staff

Center Director: Christie Vargo

Outreach & Engagement Director: Amy Boyd

Finance & Operations Manager: David Chew

Education Program Manager & Volunteer Coordinator: Allison Roush

Development & Marketing Manager: Jeff Yost

Finance & Facility Assistant: Tina Starr

**Center hours:** Mon & Tues - closed; Wed & Thurs – 10 am to 5 pm;

Fri & Sat – 10 am to 3 pm; Sun – 12 noon to 5 pm

**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.

## GIAC Stewardship Board

Rich Shank, *Chair*

Greg Cunningham

Aparna Dial

Carol Drake

Jim McCormac

Alan McKnight\*

Sandra Nessing

Tim Maloney\*

Lori Overmeyer

Aaron Pickrell

Steven Puckett

Barbara Revard\*

Cheryl Roberto

Leslie Strader

Jamie Taylor

Maury Walsh

Christie Vargo,

ex officio

\* appointees

## Welcome new & renewed members (Dec 2014-Jan 2015)

Melanie Balson	Teresa Long
Mary Baxter	Andrea Lowman
Anne Bedor	Doug Mac Beth
Carol Bichler	Daniel & Ann McDowell
Edwin Billman	Susan McGarvey
Sherry Bjerke	Karen McGuire
Wyman Bostwick	Marla Milsted
Robert Branch	Paul Morton
Elena Chu	Kathleen Mugg
Roger Cole	Tom & Susan Pape
Glenn Davis	Sydney Penner
Terry Davis	Craig & Martha Preston
Jason & Sue & Joey Dehaan	Rebecca Princehorn
Thomas Denune	Mark Prinster
James Dick	David Pritchard
Jennifer Evans	Anne Riley
John Finn	John E. Riordan
Kaleigh Frazier	Michelle Rohrbaugh
Elizabeth Guyton	Jack Roy
Mark Haddox	Daniel Ruiz
Lisa Hamner	Jack Saeger
Mark & Cathy Harrell	Marcy Samuel
Daniel & Kathleen Hill	Amanda Scarnecchia
Catherine Huntziker	Lucas Schrader
Albert Iacovone	Amy Schwartz
Robert Kalal	Ann Starr
L. Klevay	Joseph Stewart
Dan & Patty Landis	Mark & Sharon Tranovich
Whitney Langsdon	Marcy Trinidad
Kristina Laslo	Marie Trudeau
Kristan Leedy	Michael & Lauri Von Fahnestock
James Logsdon	

**Return in 5 days to**

Columbus Audubon  
505 W. Whittier St  
Columbus, OH 43215

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
COLUMBUS, OHIO  
PERMIT 320

---

## Columbus Audubon/Grange Insurance Audubon Center joint membership

Part of the Audubon Network in the Mississippi Flyway

### Join now and receive individual and family benefits:

- Nationally acclaimed *Audubon* magazine
- *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

\_\_\_ **Premier Membership \$250**

\_\_\_ **Basic Organizational Membership \$75**

\_\_\_ **Basic Family Membership \$45**

\_\_\_ **Basic Individual Membership \$30**

\_\_\_ To help the environment  
check here to receive the *Song Sparrow*  
electronically, include email below.

Please note: local and national membership expiration dates may differ.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Method of payment

Check \_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ Discover \_\_\_  
(made payable to the Grange Insurance Audubon Center)

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (as it appears on card): \_\_\_\_\_ Card expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return form to:  
Membership  
Grange Insurance Audubon Center  
505 W. Whittier St.  
Columbus, OH 43215