

The Hushwing **HERALD**

Blackbrook Audubon Society

Volume 45 Number 1

September/October, 2009

*Spreading the Love of Nature in Lake,
Geauga and Ashtabula Counties*

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPT. 15th, 2009
PROGRAM: "Bird Guides"
SPEAKER: Dr. Andrew Jones
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: West Woods Nature Center,
Geauga Park District

Please join us for an evening with Dr. "Andy" Jones, from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, featuring a talk about why the bird guide market is flooded with new publications. Is it a conspiracy to have us spend more money on these "updated" guides, or something "more" to capture the changing world of identification, especially in the taxonomy of ornithology. We all remember the Rufous-sided Towhee and Slate-colored Junco, but what are they called today and why. Dr. Jones will also cover some of the prospects for future changes.

Dr. Jones is the Curator of Ornithology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and the first person hired to fill the William A. and Nancy R. Klamm Endowed Chair of Ornithology. He received his B.S. from the Univ. of Tennessee at Knoxville and his PhD. in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior from the Univ. of Minnesota. He grew up in east Tennessee and his early field experiences took him to the Great Smokey Mountains. He also did field work in the Everglades and the Ozarks in Missouri. His current research involves the evolutionary history of the birds from the Appalachian Mountains as well as the Andes and the Philippines. This evening promises to be entertaining and informative, so come with your curiosities raised and discover the future of ornithology.

Directions: West Woods Nature Center is located on OH Rt.87 between OH Rts.306 and 44

DATE: TUESDAY, OCT 20th, 2009
PROGRAM: "Muddy Boots and Migrations"
SPEAKER: Ann Bugada
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen

Join us for an armchair tour of one naturalist's favorite tropical places; the rainforests of Costa Rica, the Mayan ruins of Belize and the River of Raptors overhead in Vera Cruz, Mexico. Enjoy the sights and stories of the 'backyard birds' of these American wild places. Meet the birds known locally as Jumpin'joe, the Mayan waterthrush, and more!

Ann Bugada is the Chief of Interpretive Services for the Lake Metroparks. She is a long time member of Blackbrook Audubon Society and a former Board Member. She is from North East Ohio and has been with Lake Metroparks since the glacier retreated. She was hired to establish the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center at Penitentiary Glen Reservation, and her job has grown to managing the nature and environmental education services there, as well as the Nature Center, the Children's Schoolhouse and our outreach programs in LMP's "parks less traveled". In 2007, she was recognized nationally as a Master Interpretive Manager by the National Association for Interpretation.



One of her favorite things is putting adults and birds together in fun, fabulous and possibly foreign settings. Bitten by the travel bug in 1993, she has ventured off many a beaten path including birding hot spots in the US, Central America (Costa Rica, Belize, Guatemala, Panama, Mexico), South America (Peru and Ecuador), and Africa (Kenya and Tanzania).



ACTIVITIES

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY

DATE: SUN, SEPT. 20th, 2009
 ACTIVITY: *Headlands Beach State Park*
 TIME: 8:00 a.m.
 PLACE: Mentor

Once again, we choose our initial 2009-2010 season of field trips to “our” premiere birding spot on the east side. The “Headlands”, as we affectionately call it, is a migrant trap for “almost” all of the birds that are seen in Ohio during either the spring or fall. So what better place to kick-off our season than here. We should discover warblers, thrushes, sparrows and possibly some shorebirds. We have had all these species in years past and we will have a good chance to see them again this year. After looking in all the “hiding” places here, we will travel a short distance to the Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve in search of more migrants. Depending on what rarities may have been located, we also may stop at Wake Robin Trail. Last year there were several Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrows located here and would be “life” birds for many of our members. We are always on the lookout for elusive “prey”. Join us for a day of fun and adventure. Need more info or directions? Call Jim McConnor at 440-257-2507

Directions: Take SR-44 north to the entrance of the park and follow the road to the right until you get to the last parking lot. Furthest parking lot east is designated P-1 and is locally know as “the fisherman’s parking lot”.



OCTOBER ACTIVITY

DATE: SUN, OCT. 18th, 2009
 ACTIVITY: *Presque Isle State Park*
 TIME: 8:00 a.m.
 PLACE: Erie, PA

Meet at the Nature Center parking lot

Another of the “great” places to bird, which is not too far away from us, is Presque Isle State Park. We are choosing this site because it is not only an area rich in diversity but because we have had many requests to repeat this adventure. The last time we ran into some foul weather but still had a delightful day of exploring and locating many species of birds. Waterfowl is on the move and there still are many late “stragglers” migrating south. There have been many rare sightings at this location including a Wood Stork several years back. Please come prepared for the weather and bring your scope, as some of the waterfowl can be a little distant. The Nature Center is on the left shortly after you enter the park. DO NOT meet at the new environmental center before entering the park. See ya there!

Directions: Take I-90 east and in PA take Exit #18 PA Rte 832 toward Presque Isle/ Sterrettania. Turn left onto Rte 832 Strettettania Rd and follow to the park. It is about a 90 minute trip and approx. 78 miles from Mentor. If you need more information call Jim McConnor at 440-257-2507

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA WALKS:

Blackbrook Audubon has decided to conduct a fourth year of bird monitoring. We will be collecting data on **the birds that live or visit Strong Acres, The Holden Arboretum**. We will be conducting three Bird Walks there every month! These walks will take place on **the 2nd and 4th Sundays (at 8 A.M.) and 3rd Wednesday (at 7 P.M.)** Admission is free. Everyone who is interested in lending their eyes and ears, meet at **8859 Kirtland-Chardon Rd., Kirtland, OH 44094**.

Midwest Birding Symposium

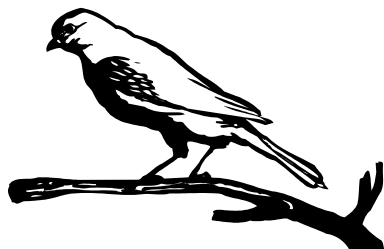
by Anders Fjeldstad

Just a short note to let you know that the “Midwest Birding Symposium” will take place this year in Ohio; specifically on the weekend of September 17th—20th in the beautiful town of Lakeside (which is just a few miles East of Port Clinton in Ottawa County, Ohio). The details can be found on the Ohio Birds “dot” org website, or the Bird Watchers Digest website, or just google up “2009 Midwest Birding Symposium” like I did.

They will have:

1. A number of field trips to all the local birding areas (like Sheldon’s Marsh, Pipe Creek Wildlife Area, etc.).
2. An outstanding array of bird watching vendors and artists in their “Bird Watcher’s Market” (with birding books, birding gear, apparel, art, jewelry, nature-themed gifts; if the company or group is birding related, they’ll be there!).
3. Twenty-two (yes, that’s 22!!) **SPEAKERS** including Jane Alexander (the actress), Alvaro Jaramillo (the birder and tour leader), Sharon Sticher (who writes at birdchick.com), Andy Jones (from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History), Kenn Kaufman (of Field Guide fame), Arthur Morris (the nature photographer), David Sibley (who will introduce his new book, the “Sibley Guide to Trees”), and Scott Weidensaul (the author).

The cost (for the Symposium only) is \$95 for three days OR \$35 just for Saturday, September 19th (and that day is when most of the activities happen). You don’t have to register online (you can send it in by mail) but you do have to register. Get all the info online. This is the largest and most important Birding Festival that ever takes place in Ohio and it takes place in Ohio about once every ten years. Perhaps we’ll see you there.



SolarTour 2009

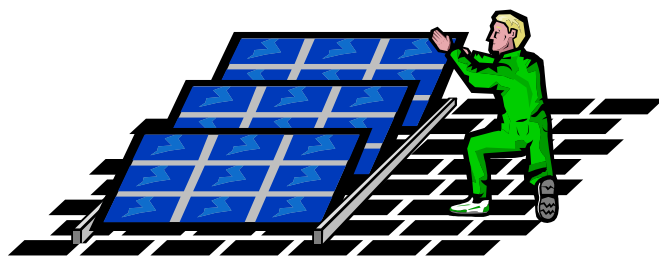
by Nancy Dilgren

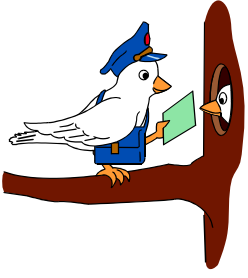
Are you solar literate?

When someone brings up a subject, are you satisfied with saying: “I’ve read about that.”? Or are you someone who likes to be able to say: “I’ve seen that.”? “I’ve met someone who is doing that.” “I know where you can get more information.” If you are the second type of person and want to be “in the know” on green energy, consider taking a Solar Tour on October 3, 2009.

Over the past three years, I have been in the basement of the Great Lakes Science Center, on the roof of a Cleveland fire station and visited a well-known brewery where the beer is delivered in a truck with an engine powered by the waste fat from their kitchen fryers. While the tours have a serious purpose, they are also a fun way to learn about what is going on with solar (and other green) energy in Northeast Ohio. There are three guided all day tours to choose from. If you don’t have that much time, you can visit one or more individual sites on your own.

The final tour book is currently in the process of being compiled. As soon as it is complete, we will get a link up on the Blackbrook web site. Or you can go to www.GreenEnergyOhio.org and look for the Solar Tour 2009. Their phone number is 866-GREEN-OH. If you have any questions, you can contact me at (440) 257-1090. If I can’t answer your question, I will find someone who can.





FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

by Becky Thompson
btkingfisher@yahoo.com

Blackbrook relies on community support financially through membership and donations. I would like to personally thank everyone who donated to this past year's Bird-a-thon and other raffles. This September, money donated will go to distributing Audubon Adventures into local classrooms. AUDUBON ADVENTURES is an environmental education curriculum for children in grades 3 to 5. It helps students form positive attitudes about nature and covers topics and themes that are important to Blackbrook's mission in a way that helps teachers meet their teaching needs. Each classroom will receive a curriculum which contains four sets of newsletters and a teacher workbook containing hands-on classroom activities.

It's not too late! If you are interested in donating or want to support a specific classroom please contact Julie Dougherty, Blackbrook's Education Chair. The cost for an entire class (30 students) is only \$38.50 plus \$7.15 for shipping and handling. The more money we raise each year, the more Audubon Adventures we can place in classrooms. For donations see Blackbrook contact information on the back of this newsletter.

Not only are monetary donations important to keep Blackbrook running but equally important is the time individuals give through volunteering. I would also like to personally thank everyone, including boards member, who have dedicated his or her time and energy to make Blackbrook a successful non-profit organization. Without dedicated volunteers, Blackbrook would not be able to survive and grow. If you are interested in volunteering please contact myself or another board member for more information.

Currently there is a volunteer position open, Hospitality Chair. The hospitality chair is responsible for arriving a bit early for each meeting

and starting the hot water and/or coffee. This person also coordinates people offering to bring refreshments and if there are not enough volunteers, buys (at Blackbrook's cost) something to serve. This does not take a great deal of time, as the other board members stand ready to help deliver the materials. If anyone would be interested, please let me know.

Blackbrook holds monthly board meeting the first Tuesday of the month at 7:15 p.m. at The Mentor Marsh House. Any member / friends are welcome to attend the meetings. We welcome new faces and ideas! Please check first with a board member as occasionally we change the date to accommodate the board member's schedules.

We have an exciting year ahead of us including many new trips and programs. I look forward to seeing everyone at our fall events.

Thank you for your continued support,

Becky

Birdathon 2009

We had another successful Birdathon this year and want to thank everyone who participated, both birders and donors. Blackbrook raised \$850 and while this was less than we have collected in some previous years, it will still go a long way towards meeting our commitment to provide Audubon Adventures to school classes in our area.

We extend special thanks to Mary Ann Wagner who raised the most money this year and Jim McConnor who came in second. Good job.



Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

If you would like to support Blackbrook Audubon Society, then you may want to consider a membership in Friends of Blackbrook. You will receive our newsletter four times a year and will be invited to our annual thank-you event. More importantly, you will be helping Blackbrook continue to provide opportunities for people to learn about and enjoy nature. Blackbrook is a 501(c)3 organization and your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Amount: ___ \$25 ___ \$30
 ___ \$40 ___ \$50 and over

I do not wish to become a member of Friends, but would like to donate _____

Please make checks payable to: Blackbrook Audubon Society and mail to: James McConnor 5758 Beech Dr. Mentor on the Lake, OH 44060 Call (440) 257-2507 for more information.

November Ticket Raffle

At our "Bluebirds" program at The Holden Arboretum in November, we will have a Ticket Raffle to raise funds to purchase Audubon Adventures. Blackbrook Audubon purchases these nature-themed newsletters for several classrooms in Lake and Geauga counties and hopes to add a few classrooms in Ashtabula county.

We'll have a variety of birdfeeders and nature books available as well as a few surprise items. The cost will be \$1 per ticket or \$5 for six tickets.

ARTISTS FOCUS ON 3-R'S FOR PARK DISTRICT EXHIBITION

Join Geauga Park District in welcoming discARTed, a unique art exhibit featuring works created primarily from recycled/discarded materials. Beginning this fall, The West Woods Nature Center in Russell Township will be transformed by creations from dozens of regional artists of all ages and disciplines.

The three-month show, which opens November 7th and runs through January, will demonstrate sustainability through the use/reuse of discarded materials, create environmental awareness and encourage recycling. Admission to the show is free and visitors are sure to be delighted with the unexpected connection of discarded materials to finished artwork and cleverness of the transformations. Visitors will be encouraged to participate as judges by choosing their favorite pieces in each category.

For information about the show or to become a participating artist, please contact show coordinator, Teresa Runion at 440.286.9516 Ext. 2015 or email trunion@geaugaparkdistrict.org.



Quote from the Frontispiece of Frank Oberle's colorful book "TALLGRASS PRAIRIE."

"When the first European explorers emerged from the dense northern forests of America, they could scarcely believe their eyes. A 'fruitful champayne countrie', a treeless ocean of wildflowers, birds and animals, and grasses nine feet high, stretched unbroken to the distant horizon. The explorers name it 'pr erie,' meaning grassland or grassy orchard.

Over the years to follow, this uniquely American landscape would symbolize for many the possibilities of life in our country. Writers from Willa Cather to Carl Sandburg celebrated the prairie as a place of beauty and a source of strength – America's 'heartland.' But symbols have a way of taking on a separate life, and so it was with the ancient tallgrass prairie, reduced to remnants by settlement even as it was romanticized in verse and song."

PRAIRIES in OHIO

by Anders Fjeldstad

Ohio? A Prairie State?
It was indeed! Just go to the Ohio Prairie Association's website at ohioprairie.org and learn that Ohio had at least



1,700 square miles of prairie (and perhaps more, even as much as 3% or 4%!). This Prairie in Ohio was in six large areas and hundreds of smaller patches and mostly in the western part of the state. But it has been nearly all destroyed by agriculture and "development", and only about 100 acres or so were left that was original, unplowed prairie. Most of the remnant prairie was and is in pioneer cemeteries and rural railroad right-of-ways.

Other states, "Prairie States" like Iowa and Illinois (which, unlike Ohio, were almost all Prairie!) did not save any more Prairie than Ohio did! But nowadays, through the efforts of many different environmental groups, state natural area divisions, and organizations like the Nature Conservancy, the decline has been halted and is turning around as former farmlands are planted with

Prairie Plants and over the years with proper management (and this means burning it!) prairies are starting to return. And once again, we can see what the first European explorers and pioneers saw.

And to see a Prairie in full bloom with acres and acres of Big Bluestem Grass (and other grasses) as well as "Forbs" like Bee Balms and Bergamots, Purple Coneflowers and Hairy Wild Petunias, Sunflowers and Compass Plants, Mountain Mints and Rattlesnake Masters is both beautiful and exciting; it's an experience you wouldn't think possible in Ohio. And it's so beautiful and exciting that we in Blackbrook Audubon have made five annual trips down to Knox County and Guy Denny's Prairie; the last one on Sunday, July 19th, 2009.

He has about 20 acres of Prairie there (that's about six Football Fields!) and it's almost too much to walk around and see all the blooming Wildflowers, many of them visited by many Butterflies and Bees. That was in July, so you've missed your chance to see Guy's Prairie this year (but you could go with us next year).

However, there are a few other small Tallgrass Prairies in our local area that you could visit right now (or at least through August and September) to get a taste of what they are like. These local Prairies are all small and all planted prairies, of course, and in various stages of maturity, but still, they are nice to visit. There may be others, but I'm not aware of them but maybe you are. Let me know.

To summarize, a local list of Prairies to visit –

1. The one at The Holden Arboretum in Kirtland (LAKE County); see their website.
2. The new one at Frohring Meadows in Bainbridge (GEAUGA Co.); see the Geauga Park District website.
3. The one at Brecksville Reservation (CUYAHOGA Co.); see Cleveland Metroparks website.
4. The one at Quail Hollow State Park in Hartville (STARK Co.); see Ohio State Parks website.
5. The one at Wellington Reservation in Wellington (LORAIN Co.); see Lorain County Metroparks website.

AOU CHECKLIST

UPDATE 2009 by Anders Fjeldstad

Every July, the Checklist Committee from the AOU (that is, the “American Ornithological Union” – they are the professional group of scientists that study birds) publish their now yearly changes in the Taxonomy of Birds (where they change the Names and the Taxonomic Order of Birds and sometimes drive us Birders crazy doing it!!). This year, unlike some of the other years, some of the Changes are Important. The seven Changes that you and I are interested in are summarized below.

Well, firstly and secondly, they have simplified the English Names of some of the Ammodramus Sparrows. And these are the type of Changes that will appear in future Bird Checklists and Bird Guides. To begin, [1.] the “Saltmarsh Sharp Tailed Sparrow” will not be called the “Saltmarsh Sparrow”. [2.] And the “Nelson’s Sharp Tailed Sparrow” will now be called the “Nelson’s Sparrow”. Some of us Birders have been calling them those names already if we can actually see and ID that little brown sparrow in the brown grass. Mostly, if we don’t get a good look, we just call the “Sharp Tails”! We’ll probably still do that! But you might make a few notes in your favorite Field Guide just so you’re up-to-date!

Next, the old genus *Carduelis* has been split into three genera (the plural of the word genus). So [3.] the new Latin Name for the COMMON REDPOLL is now *Acanthis flammea*; and [4.] the new Latin name for the HOARY REDPOLL is now *Acanthis hornemanni*; and [5.] the new Latin Name for the AMERICAN GOLDFINCH is *Spinus tristis*; and [6.] the new Latin Name for the PINE SISKIN is now *Spinus pinus* (now come on guys, that sounds like third grade humor!!). You might not even notice these Changes in the Latin Names but you might want to make some notes in your Field Guide.

Next, [7.] the two Tanagers that regularly show up in Ohio (the Scarlet and the Summer), as well as the two Tanagers that live in the Western US (The Western and the Hepatic) will remain in the genus *Piranga*, but will move out of the Tanager Family (the Thraupidae) and into the Cardinal Family (the

Cardinalidae)!! I guess this Change is based on DNA studies or something, but it’s still a surprise to me. The English and the Latin Names will remain the same. Though some of the “experts” are talking about changing their names from Tanager! Somehow, to me, a Scarlet Cardinal just doesn’t sound right!! What do you think?

Chicken Word Search

P	B	L	C	S	B	H	U	K	Q	K	O
W	U	A	W	O	X	D	S	C	C	C	O
W	Q	A	R	S	O	R	F	U	H	D	D
D	L	V	O	B	E	P	U	L	I	J	E
C	K	U	A	T	E	R	G	P	C	O	L
G	P	U	S	M	U	Q	E	S	K	K	D
U	S	O	X	E	W	N	U	Y	E	E	O
S	O	S	K	C	I	H	C	E	N	C	O
R	L	F	E	A	T	H	E	R	S	R	D
D	R	U	N	E	H	L	S	I	U	I	A
C	K	L	O	E	G	G	S	B	M	L	K
C	E	C	M	F	O	O	B	C	G	C	C
W	S	Y	O	U	Z	E	G	Q	U	Q	O
T	D	R	E	S	R	T	Q	D	B	F	C

BARBEQUE COCKADOODLEDOO ROOSTERS

CLAWS	CHICKEN	COOP
EGGS	FEATHERS	FOULS
HEN	JOKE	PLUCK
CHICKS	RUBBER	SOUP

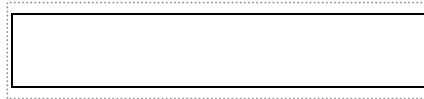
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-h+YUJV#@BLACKBROOK AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Becky Thompson - President
Bruce Roberts - Editor



Q: Why did the chicken cross the road halfway?

A: She wanted to lay it on the line.

Q: Why did the rubber chicken cross the road?

A: She wanted to stretch her legs.

Q: Why did the Roman chicken cross the road?

A: She was afraid someone would caesar!

Q: Why did the chicken cross the road?

A: To prove to the possum it could actually be done!