



The Hushwing **HERALD**

Volume 50 Number 4
April, May, June, 2015

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: Tuesday, April 21, 2015
PROGRAM: "Songs from the Pond:
Amphibian Serenade"
SPEAKER: Lisa Rainsong
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

Birds aren't the only singers in the spring! From the earliest songs of Wood Frogs and Spring Peepers to the endlessly entertaining songs of Green Frogs, Bullfrogs and American Toads, there's always something to hear from the ponds. We'll look and listen to songs of NE Ohio's frogs and toads from the initial ice melt of March through the early summer songs of June. There may be a few more singers than you realized.

Lisa Rainsong's musical life integrates composition, education, vocal performance, and natural history. She earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from Cleveland Institute of Music and is a member of CIM's Music Theory faculty. She is also a soprano who currently performs in the professional early music choral ensemble Quire Cleveland.

After she earned a Naturalist Certificate from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Lisa developed a music-based approach to teaching classes on bird song and insect identification. She is now in demand as a speaker at conferences and programs throughout Ohio. In addition, she does field research on "singing insects" – crickets and katydids – that includes field recording, surveys, and in-service training for naturalist. Her stories from the field can be seen – and heard – at her blog, [Listening in Nature](http://listeninginnature.blogspot.com), at listeninginnature.blogspot.com.

Don't forget to check out our June picnic Activity– information on page 3!

DATE: Tuesday, May 19, 2015
PROGRAM: "The Monarch Butterfly Crisis"
SPEAKER: Mary Ann Wagner
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

Monarch butterflies, along with all pollinators, are declining due to many factors. We are losing monarch habitat in the North American breeding ground at the rate of at least one million acres per year. Although the monarchs fared better this winter than last, the annual monarch migration from Canada and the United States to the overwintering grounds in Mexico is threatened.

Some people are circulating petitions to have the monarch butterfly placed on the endangered species list, which could take years to be approved. Others feel monarchs need help NOW. Are we only one bad winter away from losing the entire eastern North American monarch population? We'll discuss the pros and cons of listing the monarch on the endangered species list.

We'll take a look at the four-part butterfly life cycle, the threats monarchs face, and share some ideas on how the average person can help. It's important to grow nectar plants as well as milkweed, the monarch butterfly's host plant. We'll have common and swamp milkweed seeds available for people to take home to plant.

A member of the Ohio Lepidopterists, Mary Ann participates in butterfly surveys for Lake Metroparks and leads tours of the butterfly garden at the Holden Arboretum. She has been involved with MonarchWatch.org since 2002. Three of Mary Ann's tagged monarchs have been recovered in Mexico. She also raises monarch butterflies and leads an annual monarch tagging program at Mentor Marsh. (This year's program is scheduled for Sunday, August 30th at 1 PM.)



ACTIVITIES

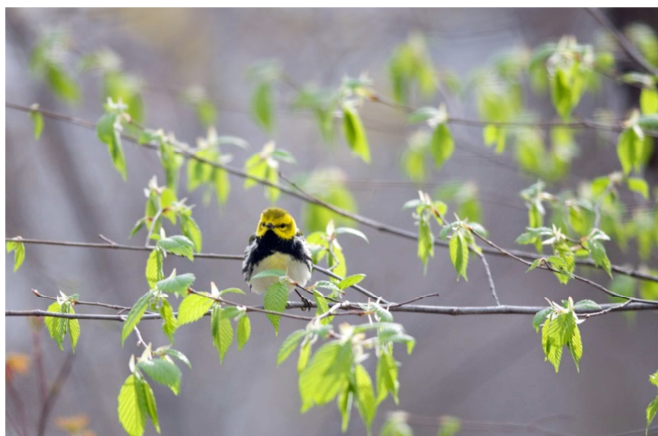
APRIL ACTIVITY

DATE: Friday April 10, 2015
ACTIVITY: Snipe Hunt & Woodcock Watch
TIME: 7:00 to 8:30 P.M.
PLACE: Frohring Meadows
(16780 Savage Rd, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023)

Sundown sets the stage for an evening of wildlife activity: toad and leopard frog sonata, calling killdeer, the aerial ballet of courting woodcocks and, just maybe, the winnowing courtship flight of snipe. True rites of spring! This is a collaborative activity with the Geauga Park District.

We hope to see some of the birds active at twilight that we learned about in our March 17th program, "Birds of Dusk & Dawn". Please note the date and time has changed on this activity from our original schedule.

DIRECTIONS from the North: Take OH-306 south. Turn right on E. Washington Street. Turn left onto Savage Road. 16780 Savage Road is on the right. Still have questions? Email blackbrookaud@aol.com or call Mary Ann at 216-990-4245.



MAY ACTIVITY

DATE: Saturday, May 16, 2015
ACTIVITY: Cuyahoga Valley National Park
TIME: 8:00 AM
PLACE: Meet at Station Road Parking Lot

There are so many great places for bird hikes in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP), it was hard to choose just one for our May field trip. We've decided to meet at the Station Road parking lot. We will hike along the towpath in one of the best places in the park to see many migrating songbirds. The trail here is as flat and easy as it gets; however, keep in mind bicyclists share this trail.

Early arriving species may already be busy with nesting activities, and the river is sure to provide more opportunity with birds and wildlife. The towpath here runs along the base of a steep slope covered with mature forest. We hope to see many species, but specialties include Cerulean Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Red-headed Woodpecker and the resident Bald Eagles.

The Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area was established in 1974 and was designated a national park in 2000. It is the only national park in Ohio. The park's namesake river flows both north and south. The Cuyahoga River begins its 100 mile journey in Geauga County, flows south to Cuyahoga Falls, then turns sharply north and flows through the CVNP.

Doug Marcum, our leader for this field trip, has been working at CVNP as a biological technician since 2011.

DIRECTIONS: From the North, take I-271 south toward Akron/Columbus. Take the OH-82 exit (EXIT 19) toward Macedonia/Twinsburg. Turn right onto E. Aurora Road/OH-82. Continue to follow OH-82 for 4.3 miles. Turn left onto Riverview Road then turn left onto Chippewa Creek Drive. Our destination, the Station Road parking lot, is across from the Brecksville Reservation. Still have questions? Contact Mary Ann at 216-990-4245 or email blackbrookaudubon.org.



June Picnic

Date: Tuesday June 16, 2015
 Activity: Annual Potluck Picnic
 Time: Gather at 6:00 p.m. Eat at 6:30 p.m.
 Place: Veterans Park, Mentor

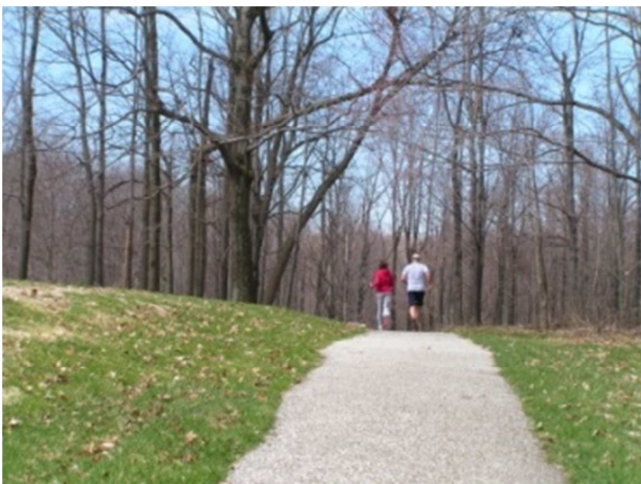
It is time again for our annual potluck picnic. Please join us on Tuesday, June 16 at Veterans Park in Mentor. We will start gathering at 6:00 p.m. and begin eating around 6:30.

Please bring your own place setting and a dish to share. Blackbrook will supply ice and some beverages (water, lemonade) but if you prefer something else, bring that also.

A walk will follow dinner.

Veterans Park is located on Hopkins Rd. in Mentor next door to Shore Middle School. Exit I90 or Rt. 2 at Center Street (Rt. 615) and proceed north. At Plains Rd., the name will change from Center St. to Hopkins. Just continue straight ahead without turning. Veterans Park will be on your left.

Please note, since we have the shelter reserved, this event will be cancelled only in the case of severe weather. Check the Blackbrook Audubon web site or WKYC-TV IAlert if you are unsure.



AREA BIRD WALKS

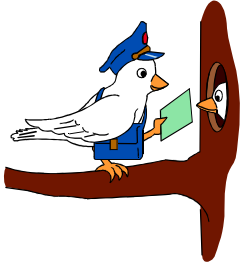
We would like to thank everyone who participated in the monitoring project at Veterans Park in Mentor. As of February, we submitted 10 checklists to ebird, totaling 72 species. The project ends March 22, 2015 with our last walk.

GREAT NEWS! Blackbrook Audubon has decided to conduct a tenth year of bird monitoring. We will be moving our studies to just over the border in Geauga County at **Orchard Hills Park**. Orchard Hills Park is a 237-acre parcel in Chester Township. The property had formerly been managed as a golf course. Driven by research of the Natural Resource Management and Planning departments, Geauga Park District followed its mission toward the reclamation and reforestation of this beautiful landscape. Phase I ended in the fall of 2010 and included the planting of hundreds of trees and the addition of a parking lot, restrooms, indoor/outdoor lodge and sledding hill. Phase II ended in the fall of 2011 and continued the effort of reforestation and trail construction.

We will be conducting one bird walk a month for a year! These walks will take place on **the 4th Sundays (8 AM)**. Everyone who is interested in lending their eyes and ears, meet at **Lodge** (larger shelter) at **11340 Caves Road, Chesterland, OH 44026**. Bring binoculars if you have them. The first bird walk at Orchard Hills Park will be **Sunday, May 24, 2015**.

See website below for more information on Orchard Hills Park:

<http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/parks/orchard.shtml>



FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

By Mary Ann Wagner
maryannelizabeth@aol.com

I am so ready for spring, and I'm sure you are too! Between the record-breaking cold and the snow that hung around forever, I am glad winter is finally over! What are some of your favorite signs of spring? Warm sunny days melting snow and ice off the roof and water gurgling down the gutters? Being able to take walks without boots and long underwear? Trees and shrubs in bloom? Robins? I know Robins aren't truly an indicator of spring, but I sure didn't see any this winter. Red-wing Blackbirds? Their calls remind me of walks near marshes with my dad when I was young. Isn't it strange how sights or sounds or smells can transport us back to a time we hadn't thought about in years? Birds singing and reappearing in breeding plumages? Warblers?

If you have never attended a Blackbrook Audubon program or field trip, let me encourage you to give us a try. There are many ways to embrace spring. We have several chances for you to participate in bird walks, as well as a couple of informal "Big Sit" opportunities if you would rather sit than walk. Lisa Rainsong's program will help us differentiate between frog and toad songs and we'll look for warblers in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and at Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve. Bring a friend with you, or if you can't find anyone to come with you, bring yourself. We are a friendly group of people and everyone is always welcome!

Please note that we mail the September/October issue of the "Hushwing Herald" to all 800+ members of the Blackbrook Audubon Society. You can download the other three yearly issues from our website at www.blackbrookaudubon.org. Also, you can sign up on our website to receive the "Hushwing Herald" via email as well as reminders about field trips and program meetings.

Nominating Committee Report

Every year, in the spring, we in Blackbrook Audubon Society have an election for the four most important officers on our Board of Directors. And every year in this Newsletter we always print the list of those candidates for those offices in the "spring" issue. So we're doing our job here and your job, then, is to attend our April meeting and vote for these fine candidates to show your support for all the time, effort and work they (and the other members of the Board) do for Blackbrook Audubon Society. Here, then, are the Nominations for those four important offices.

For President: **Mary Ann Wagner**
for Vice President: **Becky Thompson**
for Secretary: **Laurie White**
and for Treasurer: **Debbi Schuster**

Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

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

I would like to receive a paper Hushwing

I would like to receive an electronic copy of the Hushwing and here is my email address to send it to: _____

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.

Birdathon 2015

It's almost time for Birdathon 2015. As many of you already know, we take this opportunity to raise funds for Audubon Adventures that some of our partners, The Holden Arboretum, the Geauga Park District and Mentor Marsh, use in programs with school aged children. This helps provide the students with some early exposure to environmental issues as well as helping them master some of the specific academic skills they need to learn.

The most fun way to participate in Birdathon is to bird! Round up a friend or two and a few sponsors and go out and see how many species of birds you can find. If you don't like to recruit donors, just sponsor yourself. Then collect your donations and turn the money into Blackbrook.

If you do not want to form your own team, you can still participate. I may be able to hook you up with an existing team. Or, there are many scheduled walks this time of year (Sunday morning bird walks, park programs and field trips etc.). Participate in one of those and count the birds you see as your birdathon. You could even personalize it with a few birds you see on your way to or from the program. And there is always our Big Sit (Sunday May 17th - details elsewhere in this newsletter) which is an easy, social way to bird.

If you would just wish to make a donation, you can do so through the Blackbrook Audubon web site and there will also be donation forms at the April and May meetings.

Birdathon 2015 will begin on Saturday May 9th and end on Sunday May 17th. Pick any 24 consecutive hour period within that time for your birding. You do not have to bird the entire time as long as the hours you do bird fall within that period. Then turn in your bird list and money.

If you have questions, please contact Nancy at angydy@earthlink.net or call me at 440-257-1090.

Headlands Dunes Bird Sit

On Sunday, May 17th, the last of Blackbrook Audubon's spring bird walks steps off from Zimmerman Trail at 7:30 AM.

For a less strenuous group bird watching experience and a chance to socialize with other birders, come to the picnic area at the far eastern side of Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve anytime after 8:30 AM. Please bring your own chair, binoculars and a field guide if you have them, and we'll sit and watch birds. Last year, a juvenile Bald Eagle flew into a nearby tree, affording everyone a good look at him. The Dunes are a haven for warblers before they venture across Lake Erie in April and May. If you want, bring a snack to share. We'll provide the coffee. Stay for as little or as long as you like. We'll plan to be there until at least 11 AM. The birders starting from Zimmerman Trail should be strolling by close to 9 AM. You can walk with them along the fisherman's trail and out to the beach if you are interested.

The picnic area is close to the parking lot and restrooms. Plan to bring an umbrella in case of rain and dress warmly or bring a blanket in case the weather is cool. Headlands Beach State Park is at the northern terminus of State Route 44 (Heisley Road) in Lake County. As you enter the State Park, follow the access road straight to the end and turn left into the last row of parking lot for the State Nature Preserve. Look for a group of people sitting in lawn chairs near a table displaying the Blackbrook Audubon banner.



Lake Metroparks Bird Walks

Check out <http://lakemetroparks.com> for details.

Sunday Morning bird walks at Lake Erie Bluffs (free)

April 12 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

April 19 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

April 26 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

May 3 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

May 10 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

May 17 Sunday (7:30 – 10:00 a.m.)

Saturday Morning bird walks (free)

May 9 Sat (7:30 – 9:30 a.m.) Chagrin River Park

May 16 Sat (7:30 – 9:30 a.m.) Penitentiary Glen Reservation

May 23 Sat (7:30 – 9:30 a.m.) Girdled Road Reservation

Fee programs – Please register online at

<http://lakemetroparks.com/programs/>

Hérons and Other Early Nesters (PG)

April 18 Sat (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Early Birds Easy Day Trip (PG)

May 2 Sat (7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Birders Day Trip to Magee Marsh (PG)

May 9 Sat (7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

Warbler Madness (PG)

May 23 Sat (7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Blackbrook Audubon every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Blackbrook Audubon Society.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select Blackbrook Audubon as your charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

Please tell your friends and family. We appreciate your support! You can also find a link at our website to go directly to AmazonSmile. Check it out at www.blackbrookaudubon.org.....

Newly Arrived Titles from the Mentor Public Library

by Laurie White

Woodpeckers of the world : a photographic guide by Gerard Gorman

Covers all 239 species of woodpeckers. Look for call # 598.72 Gorman.

National birds of the world by Ron Toft

Over the years some of the most eye-catching species of bird have been officially or unofficially adopted by countries as symbols of their national identity; there are now almost 100 national birds spanning every imaginable group from condors to parrots, trogons to frigatebirds. Read the tales of how they came to be adopted. Call # 598 Toft.

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT GOES A LITTLE BIRDIE!

For directions and more information:

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org

Or call (440) 286-9516

Don't let spring slip up on you unappreciated, get out and enjoy the changing seasons during one of Geauga Park District's free birding programs/walks listed below.

April 17 – April Evening Adventure –
Eldon Russell Park (7:30 pm)

April 19 – Birds, Blooms, & Butterflies –
West Woods (2:30 pm)

Spring Bird Walks – (7:30-9:30 am)

April 12 – Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve

April 19 - Frohring Meadows

April 26 – The Rookery

May 3 - Eldon Russell Park

May 10 – Big Creek Park

May 17– Swine Creek Reservation



Participate in a Greater Cleveland tradition since 1933. Seasoned bird watchers assist novices of all ages with observation and identification. Walks held rain or shine, except for thunderstorms and/or high winds. Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars and a bird guide or borrow one of ours.

Marsh Summer Preview: June 14, 2-3:30 p.m. Seeking Summer Birds

Spring migration is over, let's see which birds call Mentor Marsh their summer home and find out a bit about how they make a living. Which birds nest here? We'll explore different habitats looking for our winged residents. Bring binoculars if you have them; we'll have some to lend.

BLACKBROOK ANNUAL SPRING BIRD WALKS - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DATES: SUNDAYS APRIL 12, 19, 26
MAY 3, 10, 17

TIME AND PLACE: 7:30 A.M.

ZIMMERMAN TRAIL PARKING LOT

Located on Headlands Road just west of entrance to Headlands Beach State Park

Blackbrook Audubon has been leading this walk since the 1940's and is often the best one in the Cleveland area for number of species seen during this time frame.

Come prepared for the weather as this is a rain or shine (sometimes snow) event. Remember that 90-95% of the birds we see in the entire year are seen during these six weeks so make your plans now to join us each week for great birding.

Becky and Dan Donaldson will be leading the walks this year. Come on out of hibernation and walk with us!

Mentor Marsh's Bald Eagle Fest and Silent Auction

Celebrate bald eagles on Sunday, May 3 from 12-5 p.m. at the Mentor Marsh Nature Center at 5185 Corduroy Rd. in Mentor. Visit activity stations to learn more about eagle and bird biology, see a replica eagle nest, view live animal ambassadors, visit with other conservation organizations and join a "Big Sit" led by Blackbrook Audubon.

Naturalist led hikes to view the Marsh's eagle nest will be at 12:30, 2 and 3:30 p.m.

Reservations are required; reserve your spot for the hike at 440-257-0777

or rdonalds@cmnh.org.

BLACKBROOK AUDUBON SOCIETY
PO Box 1306
Mentor, OH 44061-1306

LOOK FOR BLACKBROOK ON THE WEB!
AT www.blackbrookaudubon.org

Mary Ann Wagner - President
Bruce Roberts - Editor

Quotes

The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.

&

Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get.

- **Mark Twain**