



The Hushwing **HERALD**

Volume 50 Number 3
February/March, 2015

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2015
PROGRAM: A Visit to Galapagos
SPEAKER: Debbi Schuster
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

Take a break from winter and be transported to the Equator as Debbi takes us on her excursion to the Galapagos Islands!

In January of 2013 Debbi and her daughter traveled to the Galapagos with National Geographic and Lindblad Expeditions. She will share with us photo highlights from that adventure! Birds will be the main subjects of course, but she will also show us the diversity of other animal inhabitants of this incredibly unique archipelago. Included will be some history and geology that make the Galapagos Islands one of a kind. You will see endemic species and perhaps, some birds you wouldn't expect to be visitors to this area. Learn how conservation efforts and wildlife management in this fragile ecosystem can serve as examples to the rest of the world.



DATE: Tuesday, March 17, 2015
PROGRAM: Birds of Dusk & Dawn
SPEAKER: Dan Best
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE; The West Woods
Geauga Park District

Geauga Park District Naturalist Dan Best presents an illustrated overview (PowerPoint) of the habits and habitats of the variety of local birds active in the twilight including owls, herons, swifts, killdeer, woodcock, snipe, nighthawks, etc. Dan encourages the audience to add observations and insights from their dawn and dusk field experiences with crepuscular birds.

Since his 1979 graduation from Ohio State University with a BS in Natural Resources and an emphasis on Environmental Interpretation, Dan Best has dedicated his life to conservation and nature education. Following graduation from college, Dan worked as a naturalist for the Shaker Lakes Regional Nature Center. In 1987, he found his niche as a naturalist for the Geauga Park District, where he currently serves as Senior Naturalist.

We've planned a dusk field trip at Frohring Meadows on Friday, April 10th to hopefully observe woodcock courtship flights. Watch the April/May/June edition of the Hushwing Herald for details.



ACTIVITIES

February Activity

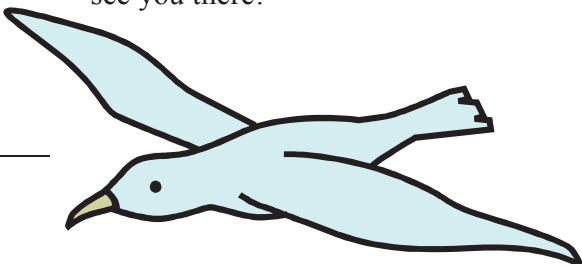
DATE: Saturday, February 28, 2015
 ACTIVITY: Waterfowl
 TIME: 8:30 AM
 PLACE: Mosquito Lake Causeway

Join us in Trumbull County at Mosquito Lake as we look for returning water fowl. Larry Richardson and Debbi Schuster will introduce you to Mosquito Lake and Wildlife Area. We will tour the lake stopping at different spots to view any returning ducks, swans, grebes and geese. We will also search for Northern Harriers, Bald Eagles and other feathered friends (or furry ones) that this diverse area has to offer.

Dress for the weather! It can be as cold and windy as Lake Erie. For more information contact Debbi at debbischuster@live.com

DIRECTIONS: From the north, head south on SR 534 or SR 45 to SR 88 and head east. SR 88 crosses the lake (it is the causeway), and on the south east side there is a large parking lot where we will meet.

NOTE: This trip will only be cancelled if there is NO open water at the causeway or if driving conditions are too hazardous. Otherwise, we hope to see you there!



MEETINGS OR HIKES CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER

How do I know if a meeting or hike is canceled? Blackbrook Audubon is now registered with the I-Alert system that is seen on WKYC-TV 3, wkyc.com; Newsradio WTAM 1100 AM, wtam.com; as well as our website: www.blackbrookaudubon.org

March Activity

DATE: Saturday, March 21, 2015
 ACTIVITY: Birding at Sandy Ridge
 TIME: 9:00 AM
 PLACE: Sandy Ridge Reservation,
 Lorain County Metro Parks
 6195 Otten Road
 North Ridgeville, OH 44039

DIRECTIONS: Follow I-90 west beyond Cleveland. Exit on Ohio 254 (Exit 148) toward Avon/Sheffield. Turn left onto Rt. 254/Detroit Rd. and follow it for 1.3 miles. Turn right onto Case Rd. and follow it for 2.3 miles. Turn left onto Otten Rd. and follow it for 0.5 miles. The entrance to Sandy Ridge is on the right.

Description: The visitor center is not normally open to the public, but recent bird sightings are posted and restrooms are available. The main trail is about 1¾ miles long and goes through the wet woods and wetland areas. The trails are gravel-surfaced on flat terrain. Pets are not allowed on most trails. The park is 310 acres.

Sandy Ridge is reclaimed farmland that includes wetlands, wet woods, and meadow habitats. Sandhill cranes have also been nesting there for several years. On this field trip we'll be looking for sandhill cranes that may be returning for breeding season, raptors (including resident bald eagles) and a variety of waterfowl,

Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Sandy Ridge Reservation. Sandy Ridge is about 50 miles from Mentor and travel time is about an hour.

Bring binoculars and a spotting scope if you have one. March weather is always changing, so dress accordingly!

For more information contact Pat Morse at pmorse@lakemetroparks.com.

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. Please attend our April meeting and vote for these fine candidates to show your support for all of the time, effort and work they (as well as the other members of the Board) do on behalf of Blackbrook Audubon Society. The Nominees are:

President:	Mary Ann Wagner
Vice President:	Becky Thompson
Secretary:	Laurie White
Treasurer:	Debbi Schuster

A Ticket Raffle Success Story!

Our November 2014 ticket raffle was a major success!

We were able to raise \$107 to be used toward the purchase of Audubon Adventures. Thank you to everyone who donated their treasures and to those who bought tickets. Thank you also to everyone who helped organize our prize packages (more work than you would think!), sell tickets and help pack up. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately?) we had items left over, which will reappear as door prizes at programs.

Whether you donated items or purchased tickets, your support is very much appreciated. We had some outstanding prizes in addition to the usual assortment of books and birdfeeders.

Please keep the 2015 ticket raffle in mind as you come across nature-related items you may want to donate.



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

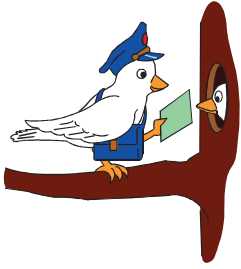
115th Christmas Bird Count December 27, 2014

The results of the 115th CBC were somewhat flat considering the nice weather we had this year as compared to last year. On the plus side we had more participants this year with 56 field counters and 10 feeder counters. I would like to give a heartfelt thanks to all participants! We were able to count 62 species with 21,511 individual birds. Last year we found 62 species also but it was in a pouring rain. We think this year the poor results were because of the heavy lake effect snowfall in November forcing the birds to either leave or perish. We hope they left. The complete results will be published at a later date on the CBC web site.

Once again “thank you” to all who helped with this year’s count. Hope to see you all next year.
Regards Jim McConnor



Photo from Roger Beuck taken 12/8/13
at Headlands Nature Preserve



FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

By Mary Ann Wagner
maryannelizabeth@aol.com

All of us want to see and perhaps photograph “good” birds, but are we going about it in an ethical manner? According to the American Birding Association (ABA), everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, the environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

ABA Code of Birding Ethics

1. **Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.** Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area. Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas and feeding sites. Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist, otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.
2. **Respect the law and the rights of others.** Do not enter private property without the owner’s permission. Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.
3. **Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.** Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. **Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.** Respect the interests, rights and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

I’ve summarized the key points. For the complete text of the ABA’s Code of Birding Ethics, please visit the ABA’s website at <http://www.aba.org> and follow the link “About the ABA”.

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We have new Blackbrook Audubon coffee mugs available for purchase. Each mug costs \$7 and is white with our Blackbrook logo in dark brown printed on two sides. Feel free to bring your own coffee or travel mug to our programs. We’ll supply the tea or coffee, but if you bring your own mug, we generate less garbage and no one has to stay late to wash cups.

THE UNIVERSAL LAWS OF BIRDING

THE SPITEFUL AVOIDANCE LAW. If you don’t see the bird within a certain amount of tries, it becomes insulted and deliberately avoids you from then on, becoming your “Nemesis Bird”. {Arie Gilbert}

THE COAST IS CLEAR LAW. The birds will only come out after you have begun to leave. Sometimes you can trick the birds into coming out by loudly announcing that you are leaving and starting to move in that direction. {Jim Frazier}

THE LAW OF PROPORTIONAL OBSERVABILITY. If there are two or more birds in a tree and one is a rarity, the only one you can’t see is the rarity. (Bill Elrick)

THE METEOROLOGICAL PARADOX. Whenever the weather is unseasonably nice, the birds you are seeking are also enjoying the good weather. Elsewhere. {Ian Resnick}

THE YELLOWLEGS CONSTANT. If a Lesser Yellowlegs and a Greater Yellowlegs are next to each other, someone invariably comments: “There’s a good size comparison.” (Jim Frazier)

How to Join Blackbrook Audubon Society

Many of you reading this are already members of Blackbrook. But for those of you who aren't and would like to join, there are two ways you can do so. You can join the National Audubon Society and if you live in our territory - Lake, Geauga or Ashtabula Counties - you will be assigned to this chapter. Or, if you prefer not to belong to the national organization, you can join Friends of Blackbrook as a Chapter member. (See below) We are a 501(c)3 organization and your donation is tax deductible. And if you wish to belong to National Audubon and also provide additional support to Blackbrook, you can do both.

Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

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 _____

Email address _____

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.

Geuga Park Upcoming Programs:

Winter Armchair Birding & Bird in the Hand

The West Woods - Free
 2/14/15 2:00 – 3:00PM
 Some birds are residents in Geauga County while others just visit during the winter. Learn about which ones are which and how to provide for them from the warmth of The West Woods Nature Center. Also feel free to venture out to the Bird in the Hand feeder along the trail and invite a chickadee to take some seed from your hand. CONNECT: This program is geared toward enjoying and embracing winter weather and fun in Geauga County!



Research in Our Parks: Shorebirds in Bainbridge?

The West Woods - Free
 2/15/15 2:00 – 3:00PM
 Yes there are shorebirds in Bainbridge - at Frohring Meadows! Come out and learn what species were found as part of the 2013-14 shorebird/waterbird survey from the past two field seasons.

Ice Off Waterfowl Watch

LaDue Reservoir - Free
 3/21/15 9:00 – 10:30AM
 A bird outing for early spring migrants, briefly afoot at LaDue marina, then carpooling along the reservoir, pausing to use spotting scopes to view loons, grebes, various ducks and other migrants as well as resident bald eagles. Meet at the marina parking area at Valley and Washington streets, east of Route 44 (Auburn Corners). NATURE'S NOT TO BE MISSED.

Lake Metroparks Upcoming Programs



All programs require pre-registration unless noted. Call (440) 358-7275 or visit www.lakemetroparks.com for more information and to register.

Bird Walk

Lake Metroparks has a variety of habitats that offer the chance to see many species of birds. Bring binoculars and field guide if you have them. New birders are welcome.

Saturday, February 21
8:30-10 a.m.

FREE

Lake Erie Bluffs

Annual Winter Hike

If you are suffering from cabin fever or if you just love getting out in the winter – join us for a brisk nature walk on the trails at Penitentiary Glen Reservation! Return to the Nature Center for delicious hot soup and corn bread while listening to live music. Complete your visit with s'mores at the cozy campfire! All hikes start at 1:00.

Sunday, February 8
1-4 pm

\$8 per person

Penitentiary Glen Reservation

Owl Prowl

Whoop, whoop, whooooo's in the night sky? Discover where Ohio's owls live and their special adaptations. Meet a live owl and take a hike in search of local owls.

Friday, February 13
7-8:30 pm

\$5 per person

Gully Brook Park

The Bald Eagle is Back

For our local bald eagles, spring is already in the air, with courtship and nest building already underway. We'll visit known nest sites and territories, and watch their activities. Bring cameras for bonus close up looks at an educational adult bird.

Saturday, February 21

8:00am-5:00 pm

\$40.00

Penitentiary Glen Reservation

You might be a birder if...

- Someone yells "Duck!", and you look up and shout "Where?"
- A trip to the local sewage treatment plant is your top priority when you visit a foreign country.
- You might be a birder if your neck hurts except when you're looking up.
- You might be a birder if watching movies you notice those Wood Thrushes singing in the middle of the night in Africa.
- You might be a birder if you can say exactly where you saw dozens of lifebirds but don't recall exactly where you first met your spouse.
- You might be a birder if you can find Pt. Pelee, Pt. Reyes, and Cape May on a map in less than five seconds.
- Your spouse thinks "DEEP WOODS OFF" is your cologne.
- You refer to a good day of watching TV and don't mean television
- People stop and stare when you pish at the shrubbery at the local mall.

Answering "yes" to any of these questions qualifies you as a birder.

Get Geared Up For the Great Backyard Bird Count!

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can now participate from anywhere in the world!

It's free, fun, and easy. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year, participants turned in more than 144,000 online checklists, creating the world's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

The 18th annual GBBC will be held **Friday, February 13, through Monday, February 16, 2015**. Please visit the official website at www.birdcount.org for more information and be sure to check out the latest educational and promotional resources.

"This count is so fun because anyone can take part - we all learn and watch birds together -- whether you are an expert, novice, or feeder watcher. I like to invite new birders to join me and share the experience. Get involved, invite your friends, and see how your favorite spot stacks up."

-Gary Langham, Chief Scientist

Bird populations are always shifting and changing. For example, 2014 GBBC data highlighted a large irruption of Snowy Owls across the northeastern, mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes areas of the United States. The data also showed the effects that the

polar vortex had on bird movement around the country. For more on the results of the 2014 GBBC, take a look at the Halftime Report, and be sure to check out some of the images in the 2014 GBBC



Painted Bunting, photo by Bob Howdeshell, 2014 GBBC Participant

Photo Contest Gallery.

On the www.birdcount.org website, participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. All participants are entered in a drawing for prizes that include bird feeders, binoculars, books, CDs, and many other great products.

Those interested in participating in the GBBC can find more information by visiting www.birdcount.org. For questions and comments, please contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology or the National Audubon Society:

Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Inside the US: (800) 843-2473

Outside the US: (607) 254-2473)

gbbc@cornell.edu

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

“In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather
inside of 24 hours.”

Mark Twain

