



# The Hushwing **HERALD**

**Blackbrook Audubon Society**

Volume 59 Number 1

September / AUKtober 2023

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 19, 2023  
**PROGRAM:** Northern Ohio Hawk Migration  
**SPEAKER:** Gary Gerrone, Park Manager  
Headlands Beach State Park  
**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

**DATE:** Tuesday, October 17, 2023  
**PROGRAM:** Amazing Arachnids  
**SPEAKER:** Nora Sindelar, Geauga Park  
District Naturalist  
**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Big Creek Park, Chardon

Each spring tens of thousands of raptors soar overhead on the northern leg of their migration. Despite doing this in broad daylight, this amazing parade goes, for the most part, unnoticed. Gary will not only describe the phenomenon of raptor migration but define the weather patterns and viewing locations that will allow for the best hawk watching. He will also cover the basics of hawk identification.

Gary S. Gerrone is a Naturalist, Writer, Musician, Bird Caller, Father of Twins, and a Relator of Things. He served as the award-winning Naturalist Supervisor for most of his 30+ year career with Lorain County Metro Parks.

**Peak migration for  
Broad-winged Hawks,  
*Buteo platypterus*,  
occurs mid-  
September.**

**Huge flocks  
known as  
kettles  
head for  
Central  
America  
and  
northern  
South  
America  
in the fall.**

**Photo by  
Gus Lanese**



*Continued on Page 3 . . .*

Spiders. You either love 'em or hate 'em. Regardless of your outlook on all things arachnid, Nora will help us get into the spirit of the season when she clears up some misconceptions about this popular, spooky Halloween figure. She will share some of the natural history behind the 3,800 species of spiders in North America.

Nora has been a naturalist with [Gauga Park District](#) for 20 years, sharing her love of nature with all ages through indoor and outdoor programs. Her special interest in spiders began about 15 years ago when she started learning more about these fascinating creatures. She expanded her arachnid knowledge in 2018 with a week-long spider biology course offered at Ohio State University's Stone Laboratory. She continues to learn more about spiders and share her enthusiasm for them with others.



**Six-spotted Fishing Spider *Dolomedes triton*  
at LaDue Reservoir Photo by Deb Schuster**

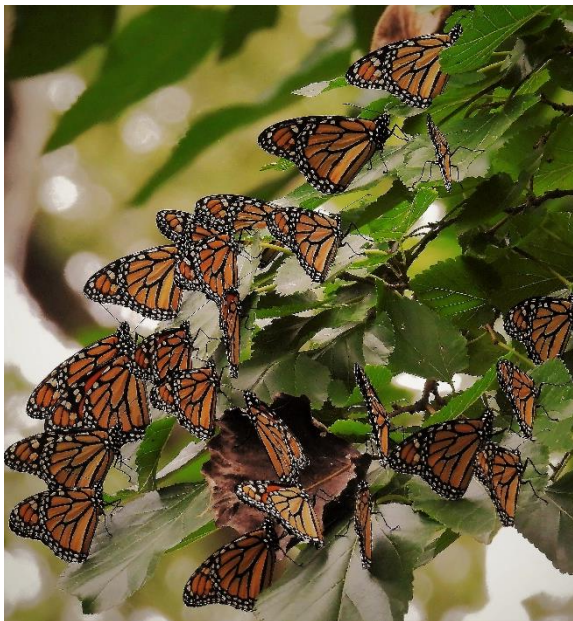
# Birding along Lake Erie

## SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP

**DATE:** Saturday, September 16, 2023  
**ACTIVITY:** Birds and Butterflies "Big Sit"  
**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.  
**PLACE:** [Headlands Dunes SNP](#)

September is migration season for birds as well as Monarch butterflies! We have a busy day planned. We'll start with coffee and doughnuts and explore the nature preserve looking for fall migrants. Birds and Monarch butterflies navigate across Lake Erie, then stop to rest and refuel as they continue their journey south. For those who prefer, bring your lawn chair to sit and visit with friends new and old while you bird from the picnic area. If we are fortunate, Monarch butterflies may be roosting in clusters not far from the picnic area in front of the nature preserve, and we'll try to tag a few for the [MonarchWatch.org](#) citizen's science project.

Bring your binoculars, coffee mug and a lawn chair if you plan to sit. Meet at parking lot P1 at the far eastern end of [Headlands Beach State Park](#), 9601 Headlands Road in Mentor, which shares a common entrance with Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve at the northern end of State Rt. 44, or Heisley Road.



**Monarch butterflies resting in a cluster**  
Photo by Nan Patrick

## OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

**DATE:** Sunday, October 8, 2023  
**ACTIVITY:** Pennsylvania, here we come!  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.  
**PLACE:** [Presque Isle State Park, PA](#)

Presque Isle is a great location for fall waterfowl, hawks and other migrants along the shores of Lake Erie, and it's only about a 1½ hour drive from Lake County. Bring your binoculars and a spotting scope (if you have one). We will meet at the [Vista 1 parking lot](#), the first pull-off to the right after you enter the park.

Find Presque Isle by taking PA-832 north from I-90. Please RSVP [blackbrookaud@aol.com](mailto:blackbrookaud@aol.com) if you plan to come. Explore eBird for [recent listings](#). Dress for windy, lake conditions.

### **Important Bird Area Walks** [Orchard Hills Park, Geauga Park District](#)

4th Sunday of each month, 8:00 a.m.

11340 Caves Road, Chester Township

**Come find the birds at this restored golf course next to Patterson Fruit Farm.**

TheCornellLab    
**GLOBAL BIG DAY**

**14 October 2023**

- Use your [eBird account](#) or start one.
- Watch birds on Saturday, 14 October:  
Even 10 minutes in your backyard will help.
- Enter what you see and hear on eBird:  
You can enter your sightings [via the website](#) or download the [free eBird Mobile app](#) to make submitting lists even easier. Try out the Cornell Lab's [Merlin Bird ID app](#) for help with species identification.
- Your checklists help Cornell better visualize global bird populations through products like these [animated abundance maps](#).

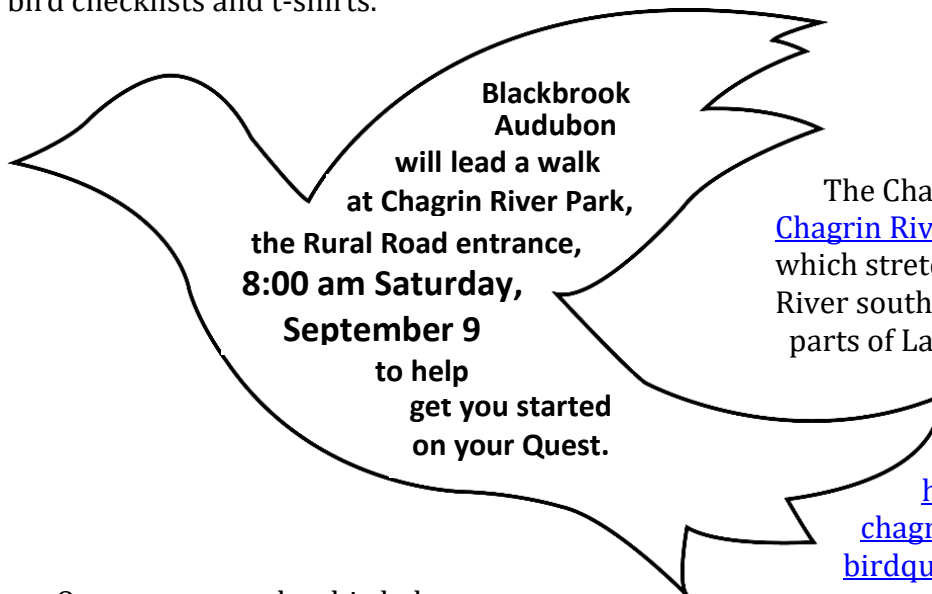
## Join the Quest for Birds along the Chagrin River Corridor Important Bird Area

Friends, family, co-workers and classmates are forming teams for the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Chagrin River Bird Quest, sponsored by Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, Blackbrook Audubon and Geauga Park District. Novice and experienced birders will explore the Chagrin River watershed to find as many bird species as they can in a 24-hour period from 4:00 pm September 8 to 4:00 pm September 9.

All Bird Quest activities and resources are free, but [registration](#) is required by 11:59 pm, Thursday, September 7. Team check-in will be 4:00 - 6:00 pm Friday, September 8 in the Oak Room of The West Woods, 9465 Kinsman Road (Rt. 87) in Russell Township. Check-in materials include maps, quest rules, a list of guided walks, bird checklists and t-shirts.



**John Lillich, a past president of Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, donated this American Woodcock carving for the raffle at the Quest Celebration September 9.**



Chagrin River  
**BIRD QUEST**

The Chagrin River Bird Quest highlights the [Chagrin River Corridor Important Bird Area](#), which stretches from Lake Erie along the Chagrin River south to Aurora and Mantua. It includes parts of Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga and Portage Counties.

For more information, visit <https://clevelandaudubon.org/chagrin-river-bird-quest-2023> or email [birdquest@clevelandaudubon.org](mailto:birdquest@clevelandaudubon.org).

Hope to see you out there!

Once your team has birded along the Chagrin River Friday evening (Did you get an owl?) and Saturday, you must turn in your checklist to the judges at The West Woods by 4:00 pm. Who will earn the prizes for most species overall, most warblers, most habitats visited and most creative team name?

While we're all waiting for the results, the Quest Celebration includes food, games, prizes such as gift cards to local feed stores and a raffle.

You can purchase raffle tickets to win -

- ✓ a 16x20 framed print of a Barred Owl
- ✓ a 16x20 framed print of a Great Blue Heron
- ✓ an American Woodcock carving by John Lillich

### September program continued Hawk Migration from page 1

Gary's writing portfolio includes well over 400 published pieces including his long-running nature column in a newspaper and the book [Lorain County Metro Parks: The First 50 Years](#). Well-known for his bird calls and his historical musical presentations, Gary recently added the title of Park Manager to his resume as he currently manages both [Geneva](#) and [Headlands Beach State Parks](#).



## Carefully Counting Cranes

The Sandhill Crane, *Antigone canadensis*, is a threatened species in Ohio. For the third year in a row, volunteers visited wetlands throughout the state where the cranes breed to assess their status here during the Midwest Crane Count. These citizen scientists searched for cranes 6:30 – 8:30 am on Saturday, April 15 in 10-square mile survey blocks. They reported results to [eBird](#). Cranes were observed in 24 of the 30 pre-selected counties, which were chosen based on the availability of wetland habitat. The Ohio count totaled 357 [Sandhill Cranes](#).

Geauga County had the third highest total with 63 cranes sighted, up from 45 last year. Although two Sandhills were reported in Lake County last year, “they were conspicuously absent from the blocks” searched this year, according to Lake County Count Coordinator Megan Hart. Ashtabula County, also within Blackbrook’s coverage area, was not part of the Midwest Crane Count.

The inaugural count for Ohio in 2021 yielded 160 Sandhill Cranes in five counties. Last year’s number blossomed to 311 cranes in 26 counties.



**Sandhill Crane at Sandy Ridge Reservation**

If you would like to be part of Ohio’s count, contact the coordinator for each county for instructions and a block assignment. [Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative](#) lists the coordinators and manages the crane count in Ohio in collaboration with [Ohio Division of Wildlife](#) and the [International Crane Foundation](#).

Sandhill Cranes were once extirpated from Ohio. They returned to Wayne County in 1987 and have been slowly multiplying since. You can help Sandhill Cranes find more nesting habitat in Ohio by purchasing an [Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp](#) or a [Federal Duck Stamp](#).



## Whiskered Auklet

*Aethia pygmaea*

Courtesy of  
Cornell Lab  
of Ornithology

## October is for pumpkins, Auktober is for auks

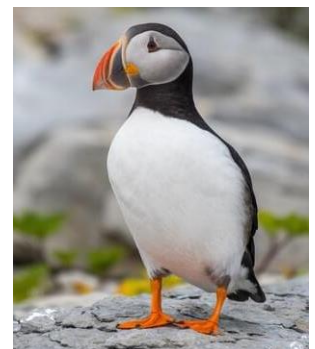
You may notice this issue of the Hushwing Herald is dated September/Auktober 2023. “Auktober” popped up on social media some time ago, so joining in the “pun” was appealing. Upon further research, we learned the city of Audubon Park, Kentucky, near the Louisville Zoo, started celebrating Auktoberfest in 2015.

For those who aren’t sure what an Auk is, the bird family Alcidae has about two dozen members that are known as the [penguins of the north](#), as they are small seabirds, mostly black and white, who dive for fish and squid. The alcids include auks, guillemots, murres and puffins. The Great Auk, who was flightless, was hunted to extinction in 1844.

## Atlantic Puffin

*Fratercula arctica*

Courtesy of  
Cornell Lab  
of Ornithology



## Great Auk

*Pinguinus impennis*

[Smithsonian magazine](#) details the loss of the Great Auk on an island off Iceland.

## BYOM and Win!

Please help us to reduce waste at our Blackbrook programs. Bring your own reusable coffee mug or water bottle and fill out a ticket to enter a drawing for a \$25 gift card. You could win a card to either the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Willoughby or Mayfield Heights or to the Centerra Co-op Country Store in Chardon. The winning ticket will be drawn at our November 21<sup>st</sup> program at the Holden Arboretum, for entries submitted in September and October. Winner need not be present to win.

Congratulations to Nan and Bruce Horvath, who brought their own mugs to Blackbrook's Big Sit at Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve last May and won the \$25 gift card to Avonlea Gardens.

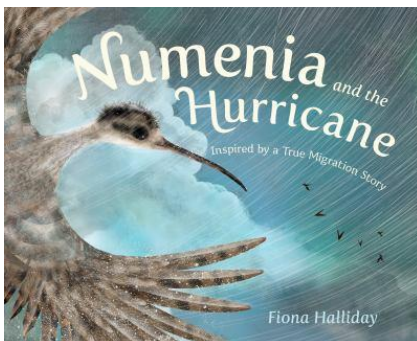


## A bird's harrowing migration tale

*Numenia and the Hurricane: Inspired by a True Migration Story* is a children's picture book that illustrates the challenges shorebirds face during fall migration. It's based on the true story of Hope, a [Whimbrel](#) fitted with a trans-mitter at a stopover in Virginia and tracked from 2009 to 2012 on her migration from western Canada to St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Scientists, bird watchers and school groups followed Hope's movements even after she lost her transmitter, identifying this long-distance migrant by her coded leg flag, AYY.

Some migrating Whimbrels (*Numenius phaeopus*) make a nonstop overwater flight of 2,500 miles from southern Canada or New England to South America.

[Hope's fascinating story](#) is summarized in the book *Numenia and the Hurricane* by Fiona



Halliday, which is available at Morley and Willoughby Public Libraries and other CLEVNET [locations](#).

Check it out!



## Northern Rough-winged Swallow

*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

Courtesy of National Audubon Society

## Exploring Solar and Sustainability

The American Solar Energy Society's [National Solar Tour](#) will be October 6 - 8 this year. There will be open houses throughout the area, two guided bus tours, and an Electric Vehicle Rally.

You will discover how many homes and businesses in the area are harvesting the sun for free, clean electricity. Many people are not only powering their entire home but are also charging their electric cars.

The October 6 tour bus will leave the Willoughby Senior Center at 9:00 am and return at 3:00 pm. It will travel to several renewable energy sites in western Lake and eastern Cuyahoga counties including a stop at an Electric Vehicle Rally at Laketran's Wickliffe Park-n-Ride.

The October 7 bus leaves the Mentor Senior Center at 9:00 am and returns at 3:00 pm. It will give participants the chance to view and discuss solar applications, battery-backup systems and electric cars in the Mentor/Painesville area.

Find out how neighbors and businesses near you have taken advantage of federal tax credits and surprisingly low solar panel prices to achieve energy independence, according to event organizer Tom Rapini.

A free lunch is included on the bus tours. To sign up, contact Valerie at 440-231-0842. You can create a self-guided tour of individual host sites by using the maps on the website.

**The 2024 [Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp](#) will have an image of a Cedar Waxwing!**





## Open House at the Mentor Marsh

Explore the wild, western end of the Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve during the Second Saturday Science Open House each month. The normally restricted utility pipeline access path is open 8 am - noon on the second Saturday while a naturalist is there to open the gate by the intersection of Woodridge Lane and Forest Road in Mentor Headlands. This walk allows for great open sky viewing. Bring binoculars, wear sturdy shoes, long pants and sleeves. Bug spray is advised. For questions, call 440.257.0777 or email [mentormarsh@cmnh.org](mailto:mentormarsh@cmnh.org).

## Styrofoam recycling resumes!

A few years ago, Blackbrook shared information on how you could recycle styrofoam, known as expandable polystyrene in the industry. However, Nova Chemicals in Painesville Township stopped accepting styrofoam at the start of the Covid shutdown and then sold the plant to Styropek.

Styropek recently put the drop-off bin back out in their parking lot for discarded packing styrofoam. When you no longer want fitted packing material, you can take the pieces to 786 Hardy Road, Painesville Township. This is the same road that leads to Painesville Township Park and the Lake Metroparks pier.



**Styropek does not accept styrofoam packing peanuts or food containers.**

Blackbrook Audubon Society publishes

### ***The Hushwing HERALD***

newsletter four times each fiscal year:

Sept/Oct	Nov/Dec/Jan
Feb/Mar	April/May/June

The Sept/Oct issue is mailed to all members of the National Audubon Society residing in Blackbrook Audubon's coverage area of Ashtabula, Geauga and Lake counties and to the Friends of Blackbrook Audubon.

Sign up at [www.blackbrookaudubon.org](http://www.blackbrookaudubon.org) to receive the other three editions via email. The Friends of Blackbrook Audubon pay for a chapter-only membership and can choose to have all Hushwings sent via U.S. mail.

The electronic version of the Hushwing Herald is free, in color, and has active links leading you to trusted and verified nature-related sites and pdfs.

#### Board Members:

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**Publicity:** Laurie White

We welcome comments and suggestions at [blackbrookaud@aol.com](mailto:blackbrookaud@aol.com).

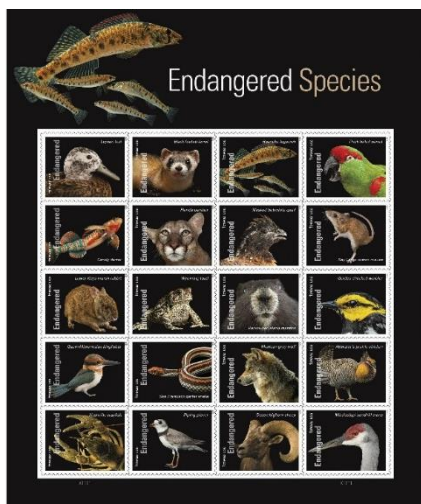
# Special Conservation Anniversaries

## BACK IN 1973

- ❖ The Cleveland Museum of Natural History and the state of Ohio signed an agreement that made Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve an Interpretive Nature Preserve. It had been named a State Nature Preserve in 1971.
- ❖ The International Crane Foundation "[hatched](#)" in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Cornell University Ornithology students Ron Sauey and George Archibald envisioned an organization combining research, captive breeding and reintroduction, landscape restoration and education to safeguard the world's 15 crane species. In 1973, the Sauey family rented their horse farm to Ron and George for \$1 a year!



- ❖ Congress passed the Endangered Species Act. Currently, over 1,600 animals and plants are listed as endangered or threatened in the United States. The ESA has been credited with [saving 99% of listed species](#) from extinction over the 50 years. The U.S. Postal Service issued [this set of postage stamps](#) to commemorate the anniversary.



On July 23, the [Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center](#) celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of wildlife rehabilitation and education. *Congratulations!*

The Lake Shore Live Steamers, a volunteer club, also marked 40 years of giving train rides on the Glen Meadow & Orchard Railroad. Miniature steam-powered engines pull passengers to the rim of the gorge at Penitentiary Glen.



## Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Blackbrook Audubon does not share or sell its mailing list.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$45 Household

☐ Hushwing Herald newsletter via email

☐ Hushwing Herald via snail mail  
(for Friends of Blackbrook only)

I do **not** wish to be a Friend of Blackbrook, but would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

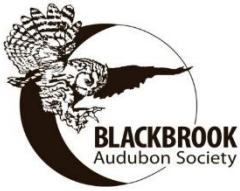
Make checks payable to **Blackbrook Audubon Society**

Mail to: **Friends of Blackbrook Audubon**

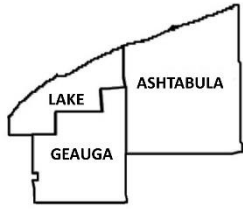
**P. O. Box 1306 Mentor, OH 44061-1306**



*Thank You!*



BLACKBROOK AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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Follow us on Facebook.

View programs on our YouTube channel.

Becky Donaldson - President  
Laurie White - Editor



Tues., Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>  
Election Day

## SEPTEMBER

Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> 7 pm  
[Burroughs Nature Club](#)

Willoughby UM Church

**"Mysterious Moths"**

**by Jim McCormac**

Author of

**Gardening for Moths**

Copies of the book will be  
available for purchase.

*Find out how we can help  
these vital pollinators.*

## OCTOBER

Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> 12 – 4 pm

[Nature Game Day](#)

Penitentiary Glen Reservation

Trivia, easy physical contests

Train rides 1 – 3 pm

Weather permitting

Wed., 18<sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm

[Gems & Jewels of NEO:](#)

[Mentor Marsh](#)

Willowick Public Library

Registration required.

## NOVEMBER

Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup>

**Blackbrook Field Trip**

**Oberlin Preserve**

Western Reserve

Land Conservancy

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> 7 pm

**Blackbrook Program**

**Bird Trivia**

**Holden Arboretum**

Raffle and 50/50 fundraiser

***Join us for this year's Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 30***