



The Hushwing **HERALD**

Volume 51 Number 3
February/March, 2016

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: Tuesday, February 16, 2016
PROGRAM: Bringing Up Bobcats for the First Time
SPEAKER: Tammy O'Neil and Traci Keller
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

DATE: Tuesday, March 15, 2016
PROGRAM: Why Should You Care About Invasive Plants?
SPEAKER: Becky Donaldson
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Penitentiary Glen Nature Center

Thousands of orphaned baby animals native to Ohio have been raised in the nursery of the Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center and released back to their natural habitat. The same year the facility celebrated 30 years of wildlife rehabilitation, two very unique youngsters arrived at the door needing the staff's care and expertise.

A bobcat kitten was found along a road in Muskingum County with a dead female bobcat nearby. The Ohio Division of Wildlife contacted the Wildlife Center to arrange care for the three-week-old orphan and delivered her on May 14, 2013. The Center's staff consulted with other wildlife professionals and zoos to ascertain "raise for release" techniques for bobcats. Demand for feedings doubled when wildlife officers brought a second bobcat kitten May 23 from Noble County, also east of Columbus. She had been found by a homeowner mowing his lawn, but no mother bobcat was in sight. Join us as two Wildlife Center staff members share what it took to raise these special orphans and prepare them for life back in the forests of southern Ohio.

The kittens weighed a little over a pound each upon arrival. They required a specialized milk formula and were fed every two to three hours. They gained weight and were weaned after five to six weeks. LMP staff modified an existing, off-display cage to accommodate cat behavior and to allow feeding of live prey with minimal human interaction.

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Invasive plants are a bane to biodiversity. In Ohio, about a quarter of the plants found in our state are not native to our state. Of the more than 700 plants that are found in our state that are classified as non-native, about 100 of them are "invasive", meaning that they cause problems to our native plants and animals.

Becky will lead us through a virtual tour of woods, fields and wetlands (and backyards) for a primer on these invasive plants and explain how they can be managed. Some of these may not be in your backyard yet, but this talk will tune your eye to the invasions and help you keep a look out for them. Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve encompasses about 700 acres and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History is undergoing a large scale restoration of the wetlands found here. Becky will give an update on the fight to knock back phragmites and restore native plants to Mentor Marsh.



ACTIVITIES

February Activity

DATE: Sunday, February 21, 2016
 ACTIVITY: Lake County Shoreline
 TIME: 9:00 a.m.
 PLACE: Meet at Lake Erie Bluffs
 (Lake Metroparks)
 3301 Lane Road Perry Township,
 OH 44081

It's certainly been a strange winter for birdwatching! The numbers of gulls and ducks have been unusually low, but very late songbirds have been reported. We'll keep our eyes and ears open for reports of any interesting sightings along Lake Erie's shoreline in Lake County. Of particular interest will be unusual wintering gull and waterfowl species, depending on the ice situation on Lake Erie. We'll also search for bald eagles and other raptors. Our adventure will stay along the shoreline within Lake County – unless we hear of something not worth missing closer to Cleveland or Ashtabula!

We will meet at the Lake Erie Bluffs picnic shelter (Lane Road entrance). If you have not visited this park, this will be a great opportunity to see the improvements there, including the 3-season picnic shelter with indoor & outdoor fireplaces, electricity and flush restrooms! Please dress for the weather and expect colder and windier conditions along the lake. Bring your binoculars and spotting scope if you have one. For more information, contact Pat at pmorse@lakemetroparks.com.

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 12, 2016
 ACTIVITY: Winter Owls & Raptors of
 Killdeer Plains
 TIME: 12:00 noon
 PLACE: Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area,
 Wyandot County Ohio

This expedition is a little further than we normally travel, especially in the winter, but when looking for “wintering” owls and raptors this is the time to go. We will be scouting the area out for owls such as Saw-whet, Long-eared and Barn. These species have been sighted here during winter and we hope to see them all. Short-eared Owls also frequent this area but are best seen at dusk when they are out foraging for their “supper.” If the weather holds up we will plan to stay until that happens. Other raptors that may be seen include Red-tails, Red-shoulders and Cooper’s Hawks. Possibly Northern Harrier and Rough-legged Hawks will be sighted.

Plan your trip accordingly to the weather and length of our stay. This has been a productive trip in years past, so why not be “game” for this one? We will meet at the McDonald’s in Upper Sandusky at 10 A.M. and travel together to the wildlife area. Need more info? Call Jim at 440-257-2507

DIRECTIONS: Take your best route to I-71 south and exit at US 30 Mansfield. Follow US 30 west until it meets with US 23. Take this north to McDonald’s, just off the highway (past OH Rt. 182) on Wyandot Ave. We will meet here at 10A.M. GPS users: 1650 E. Wyandot Ave., Upper Sandusky, OH 43351
 This trip is about 145 miles from Mentor and takes about 2 hrs 20 min.



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

Bringing Up Bobcats

Continued from page 1

Did the kittens grow up and get to live on their own? Find out if they were successful when Tammy O'Neil and Traci Keller tell us about the specialized needs of the bobcat pair, the challenges that arose in their upbringing and the plan to release them in collaboration with Division of Wildlife Biologist, Dr. Suzie Prange. Dr. Prange has been studying Ohio's bobcat distribution with trail cameras, radio collars and genetic analysis.

Bobcats were common here prior to European settlement, but by 1850 were extirpated from the state, meaning they were no longer present. When Ohio compiled its first endangered species list in 1974, the bobcat was one of 71 species. Reports of sightings trickled in prompting a project in 1997 to monitor the species with surveys and to confirm sightings. When the kittens arrived at LMP, bobcats numbered 169 and were listed as threatened in Ohio. The bobcat was removed entirely from the list in July 2014, but remains protected.

Tammy O'Neil is the Wildlife Care Manager and has been with Lake Metroparks for 21 years. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Zoology from Kent State University and a Master's in Environmental Management from Green Mountain College. Traci Keller is the Senior Wildlife Care Specialist and has been with LMP for 16 years. She has a Bachelor's in Biology from Cleveland State University.

For more details on the bobcat as a species in Ohio, go to <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index/mammals/bobcat>. The "Photos and Media" tab has great videos and details from Dr. Prange on her research.

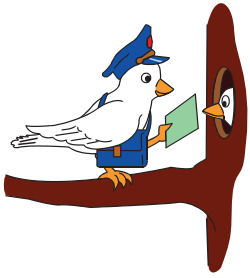


CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS

116th Christmas Bird Count December 26, 2015

The results of the 116th CBC were somewhat flat considering the nice weather we had this year. We had fewer observers this year compared to last in part because of the count date being one day after Christmas. This year we had 39 field counters and 4 feeder counters. I would like to give a heartfelt thanks to all participants! We were able to count 62 species with 13,423 individual birds. Last year we found 62 species also in similar weather. 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 Dan Donaldson, Jim McConnor, and Anders Fjeldstad



FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

By Mary Ann Wagner
maryannelizabeth@aol.com

Thank you to everyone who participated in Blackbrook Audubon's November ticket raffle at The Holden Arboretum. We were able to raise \$136 toward the purchase of Audubon Adventures for school classrooms.

Plan to go native this summer? Not too long ago, I thought people who were critical of non-native plants were "plant snobs", but I have since come to appreciate the importance of native plants. Last October, I attended the Cleveland Pollinator Symposium and heard Douglas W. Tallamy's presentation based on his book *Bringing Nature Home – How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. He autographed my copy of the book "Garden as if life depended on it!" Plants turn the sun's energy via photosynthesis into food for the rest of us. In new developments, we bulldoze native plant communities and replace them with a few ornamental plants from other countries.

The plants we choose to grow in our yards can profoundly impact the diversity of life in our yards, towns and on our planet. Many non-native plants are touted as being pest free. Our native insects have not co-evolved with these plants and therefore are not able to eat them. Therefore, the non-native plants are using resources (soil, water, sun) without providing food for our native herbivores, which provide food for the animals higher up the food chain.

We can no longer rely on natural areas alone to provide enough food and shelter for biodiversity. We need to restore native plants in the areas we have taken for our own use so that other species can live with us in those areas. Everyone can welcome more wildlife into their yard by planting just a few native plants. Non-native plants harm birds in that there are fewer insects for the birds to feed their young.

Learn more about invasive plants and the problems they are causing in Mentor Marsh at our March 15th program with Becky Donaldson.

The Ohio Lepidopterists spring workshop will be held at Penitentiary Glen on Saturday, April 2, 2016 from 10 AM to 4:30 PM. One session will include extensive identification training covering every butterfly likely to be seen in Ohio. A concurrent session will include topics such as plants that butterflies depend on, life cycles and gardening to attract butterflies. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$15 (\$5 without lunch). Workshop space is limited. For more information, contact Jerry Wiedmann at wiedmannJL@gmail.com.

THE UNIVERSAL LAWS OF BIRDING

Sacrificial Lamb Law - The bird will be seen by others only after you, as the sacrificial lamb, leave. (*unknown*)

Sitting in the Woods Corollary - The bird will be seen by others only after you have snuck into the woods to take care of biological responsibilities. (*Jim Frazier*)

Hoffman's Law - You may look for a particular bird for 20 years without finding it, but once you DO find it you find them everywhere. They turn up in your driveway, on your porch, EVERYwhere. They suddenly become robin-like in their numbers. (*Carolyn Hoffman*)

Cates' Arbor Advisory - Never look up into a tree with your mouth open. (*Bob Cates*)

Elizabeth's Consideration - The bird that you struggle through difficult terrain, endure multiple injuries and screw up your schedule for, will be waiting for you above your car in the parking lot. (*Elizabeth Miller?*)

Weather Advisory - Mark Twain reportedly said of the Northeast weather: If you don't like it, wait a few minutes and it will change. Birders say: When you go out in the morning, the wind will be in your face. No matter when you come back in, however, the wind will still be in your face. (*Bruce Roberts*)

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.

Celebrate the National Park Service's Centennial



This year marks the 100th anniversary of our National Park Service. The people of Northeast Ohio are fortunate to have Cuyahoga Valley National Park nearby. While this 33,000 acre park charges no admission, some parks around the country do.

The White House has an initiative called Every Kid in a Park. This program allows fourth graders nationwide to go to www.everykidinapark.gov and obtain a pass for free entry for them and their families to more than 2,000 federally managed lands and waters nationwide for an entire school year. The passes are good September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016. Check <https://www.everykidinapark.gov/rules/> for details.

Congress established Yellowstone National Park in the Territories of Montana and Wyoming in 1872 and placed it under the control of the Secretary of the Interior. More national parks, monuments and historical areas were named and administered by the Department of the Interior, the War Department and the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture. On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service, a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior responsible for protecting the 35 national parks and monuments then managed by the department and those yet to be established. The National Park System of the United States now comprises more than 400 areas covering more than 84 million acres in 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, Saipan, and the Virgin Islands.

The founding of Yellowstone National Park began a worldwide national park movement. Today more than 100 nations contain some 1,200 national parks or equivalent preserves.

To see what our own national park plans for the centennial, visit www.nps.gov/cuva/getinvolved.

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.

Jack Miner by Laurie White



Anyone visiting the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center in Bay Village may notice a plaque beside the path to the building's entrance. The plaque commemorates the

achievements of Jack Miner in creating a popular waterfowl sanctuary and discovering migratory routes of geese and ducks by banding them.

John Thomas Miner was born April 10, 1865 in Dover Center, Ohio, which is present-day Westlake. He was shy and rather than attend school, his mother allowed him to explore the woods and creek near their home. An older brother encouraged him to go to school but after three months, the family moved to a homestead near Kingsville, Ontario, Canada. He worked in his uncle's brick and tile yard extracting clay from the soil. He supplemented this with trapping and market hunting to provide for the family. Jack married and while his own family grew, he became widely known as the best hunter in Canada.

Jack used his knowledge of the natural world to turn his land into a home for birds. He raised Bobwhite Quail and Ring-necked Pheasant. He planted rose arbors, gardens and thousands of trees. In 1904, he founded the **Jack Miner Migratory Bird Sanctuary**. The Minneapolis Journal called him the "Father of Conservation."

The clay pits on the property became ponds and Jack studied Canada Geese closely. They were much more wary than the birds we are used to today and in order to attract them to his ponds, he bought seven captive geese. The townspeople made fun of him and Jack's son recalled the teasing his father took. However, four years of waiting paid off in the spring of 1908 when eleven migrating Canada Geese landed. Jack's son said his father got to have the last "honk." The local paper covered the arrival. Geese kept coming over the years until the "vibration of wings shook the windows on the house."

Jack believed some of the ducks he raised returned to his ponds, but his neighbors doubted this. To prove it, he stamped his address on pieces of aluminum and wrapped them around some ducks' legs in 1909. Three of the ducks later came back. He had also banded a Mallard x American Black duck hybrid whose band was returned from South

Carolina a few months later, creating the first complete banding record. Hunters returned bands to Jack from far and wide over the years. The data from his logs showed that ducks depended on habitats in both Canada and the U.S. and this was instrumental in writing the Migratory Bird Treaty in 1916 between both countries. Laws resulting from the treaty varied from state to state and Jack worked to strengthen them and improve enforcement. Jack joined the campaign to establish Point Pelee National Park, within a few miles of his sanctuary. It was created in 1918.

The number of geese stopping over the years kept increasing, but the sanctuary also had many famous human visitors. Jack became friends with Henry Ford and Ty Cobb. By 1915, feeding the geese became extremely expensive. In answer to requests for Jack to give presentations, he started lecturing and showing footage taken by a cameraman provided by Ford. These lectures brought in revenue, but families were invited to explore the sanctuary for no fee. It became a playground for children where they could build bird houses and feed baby songbirds. Jack was a charismatic speaker who related well to children.

Jack Miner died in 1944 at the age of 79. Several U.S. newspapers rated him the fifth most famous man on the continent after Ford, Thomas Edison, Charles Lindbergh and Eddie Rickenbacker. The Canadian government approached the family with a proposal to turn the entire Northwest Territories into a national park

named for Jack. A businessman had Jack's birthday designated Jack Miner Day locally.

It was decided to do this across Canada and name it National Wildlife Day. Canada's Prime Minister at the time stopped the bill.

The government instead passed National Wildlife Week unanimously in 1947 to recognize Jack's conservation work and encourage public interest. Kingsville just celebrated their 46th annual Migration Festival Oct. 16-18 commemorating the 150th anniversary of Jack Miner's birthday.

The plaque in Bay Village left by the Sportsmen of Ohio is not the only sign telling us about Jack Miner. A historical marker stands near his birthplace at the corner of Westown Blvd. and Dover Center Road in Westlake. Cahoon Creek runs beside the marker. Could this creek be where Jack started his education as a naturalist?



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.



Northern Cardinals by Michele Black, Ohio, 2015 GBBC

The 19th annual GBBC will be held Friday, February 12, through Monday, February 15, 2016. Please visit the official website at 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

Donations Sought for Wildlife Center animals

Close to 2000 animals are admitted to the Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center each year. Blackbrook Audubon members can support their mission to return injured, sick and orphaned native animals to the wild by bringing needed supplies to the February 16th meeting. After hearing the story of two orphaned bobcat kittens by wildlife center staff, we hope to present them with needed items from their wish list, which appears below.

Priority items include:

Aquariums – 10, 15, 20 gallon (with lids)
Hoses (preferably non-kink, commercial)
Nozzles (preferably metal twist)
Small digital scale – grams

Gift cards:

Pet Supplies Plus
Lowe's
Kmart

Food/Nutritional supplies

Zipper freezer bags – 1 gallon, 1 quart sizes
Striped sunflower seeds
Mealworms – medium
Frozen brine shrimp and bloodworms

First Aid Supplies

Vet wrap
Lab and surgical equipment
Rolled gauze – 2" width
Sterile syringes

Miscellaneous Supplies

Laundry soap
Bleach
Paper towels
Real feather dusters
Scrub brushes –
 long-handled
Reptile heat lamps /
 UVB lamps
Dog nail clippers
Faunariums



New or gently used items from this list will be used for the care of patients or permanent residents. The newest raptor ambassador is Rufous, the red-phased Eastern Screech Owl. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

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

Mary Ann Wagner - President
Bruce Roberts - Editor

We in Northeast Ohio are blessed with many great local parks and many dedicated workers there. Check them out online to plan your next activity or visit.
www.lakemetroparks.com www.geaugaparkdistrict.org www.ashtabulacountymetroparks.org

