

The Chat

Newsletter of the

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF OHIO

Cincinnati, Ohio

Established 1897, A Chapter of National Audubon Society

"Committed to Conservation for over 110 Years"

October-November

Vol. 114 No. 5

2011

Calendar

Monthly Program Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at Winton Centre, the visitor center of Winton Woods Park. Members are encouraged to bring guests, and especially youngsters to the programs that would particularly interest them. Programs are free. A Hamilton County Parks parking sticker is required (\$3 for a daily, \$10 for an annual sticker which can be purchased at any HCP ahead of time or there at the program. Light refreshments are served at a brief social hour at 7 p.m. with the program starting at 7:30 p.m. Please bring your own mug so we do not add more trash to the waste stream. Join us also on Field Trips which emphasize many aspects of nature - birds, plants, snakes, turtles, insects, and fish. For times, locations, and detailed information refer to the schedule in the newsletter or the website. Youngsters are welcome on field trips, but if under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. For any questions, call the trip leader. In case of severe weather, trips will be cancelled. All participate at their own risk.

September 25 , October 2 and 9 - Bird Class cancelled, to be re-scheduled in 2012. Several things contributed to re-scheduling the first time in the twenty-four year history of the popular event: the minimum enrollment number was not reached, the renovation projects at Audubon House left some concerns with drywall and plaster dust that seeped into everything that days of cleaning did not eliminate, and some personal matters made it wiser to not have the class at this particular time. Thanks to all who tried so hard to help make it happen but a reality check dictated the decision. We are sorry for any inconvenience, and look forward to holding the 25th annual Bird Class next year. Watch for the dates and further information to be announced.

Saturday, October 15, 2011. Field trip to enjoy a relaxing time in Sharon Woods Park while strolling among the colored autumn leaves. Meet park naturalist, Jerry Lipfert at 10:00 a.m. at the entrance to the Visitor Center. See more detailed information in the Field Trips article for this and the other field trips.

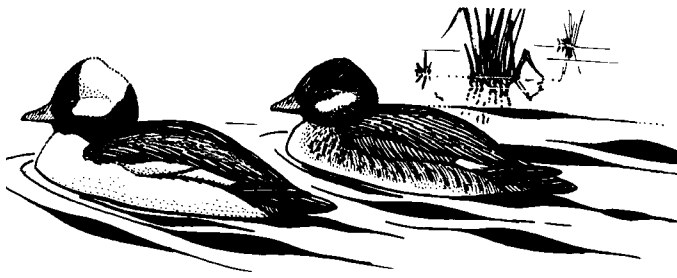
Sunday, October 16, 2011- Fall Bird Walk at two Cincinnati City Parks, enjoying the diverse habitats and diverse migrant birds at Daniel Drake Park and Armleder Park, co-managed with Hamilton County Parks. Join leader Mark Gilsdorf at 8:00 a.m. in the Overlook Parking lot at Daniel Drake Park ready to enjoy the Little Miami River Valley from different perspectives on an autumn morning. See more details in the larger field trip article.

Monday, October 17, 2011 - PROGRAM MEETING at Winton Centre: "California Birding" with Steve Maslowski. Steve, with his brother Dave, and father Karl have made quite a reputation as Maslowski Wildlife Productions photographing, filming, videographing, and writing in all areas of the world. You can notice credits in magazines, on television and other media outlets, and books. For years we read the articles and enjoyed the observations of "Naturalist Afield" by Karl and we keep company daily with their magnificent bird photos in the Feathered Friends calendars on our walls. Based here in Cincinnati we have been a little part of their lives and careers, and we are so delighted to have Steve again wow us with his gifts of photography and narration as he takes us along to California.

Monday, November 21- PROGRAM: TBA. Our annual visit from research expert, Mark Shieldcastle, co-founder of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory and Research Director at BSBO, retired ODNR Division of Wildlife biologist and USFWS biologist with the successful



Bald Eagle Recovery Project, has over twenty-five years of banding research records of the Western Basin of Lake Erie marshes region, highly-respected for his methods and professionalism and knowledge and we are honored and delighted to have him as our speaker. Come and get THE FACTS, not just what we assume or hear from birding gossip but what has been learned from credible research by scientists. You will exercise your brain and stretch your thought processes and learn so much as you hear and benefit from many years of training and research.



Saturday, November 26, 2011 - FIELD TRIP to Brookville Lake and Hueston Woods led by Jay Stenger with the focus on migrating waterfowl. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Park and Ride lot at the 1-275 exit #7 at SR 128 marked Cleves-Hamilton. Complete information is in the Field Trip article.

As is our custom there will not be a Program Meeting the third Monday in December. We wish you "Happy Holidays." **Please join in on the Christmas Bird Counts collecting data about the birds in our area.** The dates, locations and group leaders are detailed in the Field Trip article.

Field Trips

(Contributed by Jay Stenger)

Location: Sharon Woods (Hamilton County Park)
Theme: Fall Color
Date: Saturday, October 15, 2011
Leader: Jerry Lippert, (513) 522-6567, jlippert@great-parks.org
Meet: 10:00 A.M. at the entrance to the Sharon Woods Visitor Center (see directions below)

Autumn may be the prettiest season of the year due in large part to the leaves of the trees changing into an array of glorious colors. If you are an autumn lover like I am you may want to join our field trip leader Jerry Lippert as he takes a two hour morning stroll around Sharon Woods at the height of the fall color season. Jerry, a Hamilton County Parks naturalist, will give us a fall color tutorial and answer all our questions concerning this annual phenomenon.

Jerry will point out the various species of trees, discuss the various colors of different trees and explain the factors that influence autumn leaf color. Jerry is an all around naturalist and will not ignore the birds and other wildlife that we see along the way.

This will be a very relaxing laid-back field trip. While we may cover a bit of ground it will be mostly level and easy walking. Restrooms are available at the Visitor Center. A Hamilton County Park Motor Vehicle Permit is required (\$3.00 daily, 10.00 annual). For more information feel free to contact Jerry.

Sharon Woods (730 acres) is located at 11450 Lebanon Rd. (US 42) Sharonville, Ohio.

To get to Sharon Woods from I-275 take exit US 42, # 47, south about 1 mile to the park entrance on the left. Follow park signs to the Visitor Center.

Visit the Sharon Woods website at:
<http://www.greatparks.org/parks/sharonwoods.shtml>



Location: Daniel Drake Park & Armleder Park

Theme: Fall Bird Walk

Date: Sunday, October 16th, 2011

Meeting Time & Place: 8:00 A.M. in the Overlook Parking Lot at Daniel Drake Park. See directions below.

Leader: Mark Gilsdorf, (513) 253-6062, markg74@gmail.com

October is a beautiful month and autumn color is near peak on this date. October is also centered in the middle of fall migration and because of that it offers somewhat of a mixed bag of birds. Neo-tropic songbird migration is winding down and winter residents are just returning. Shorebird migration is waning and waterfowl migration is just starting up. Raptors are on the move throughout the month. The focus of this trip will be to witness this changing of the guard so to speak, a mixture of birds, some on their way out and some on their way in.

Come out and join our trip leader Mark Gilsdorf for what should be a pleasant morning of birding in these two city Parks. Mark plans to begin the morning at Daniel Drake Park, a quiet Cincinnati Park nestled on top of the wooded hills overlooking the Little Miami River valley. From there Mark will lead us to nearby Armleder Park (about two miles away). This park is co-managed jointly by the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Park Districts. Armleder Park is situated along the banks of the Little Miami River and its varied habitats of open meadows and wooded riparian corridor along the river will contrast with the mixed upland woodland of Daniel Drake Park. The two locations taken together offer a diversity of habitats and should offer an interesting array of birds.

The trip will run until about noon. Walking will be moderate but level along Park roadsides and trails. Restrooms are available in the parks. A Hamilton County Park Motor Vehicle Permit is required (\$3.00 daily, \$10.00 annual) at Armleder Park.

Daniel Drake Park is a Cincinnati City Park located at 5800 Red bank Road. To get to Daniel Drake Park from I-71 N or S; take Red Bank Road (exit # 9) onto Red Bank Expressway. Go about ½ mile to Duck Creek Road and turn right. Go a very short distance and turn right onto Red Bank Road. Go about 1 mile to the Daniel

Drake Park entrance on your right. Follow the Park Road until it ends at the Overlook parking lot.

Visit the Daniel Drake Park website for more information and maps at:

<http://cincyparks.com/parks-events/east-region/daniel-drake-park/>

Visit the Armleder Park website at:

<http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/parks/armleder-park.shtm>

<http://cincyparks.com/parks-events/east-region/otto-armleder-park/>

View the Armleder Park map at:

<http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/aboutus/pdfs/armleder.pdf>



Location: Fernald Preserve & Miami Whitewater Forest

Theme: Owl Prowl

Date: Saturday evening, November 12, 2011

Rain Date: Sunday, November 13, 2011

Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meet: Fernald Preserve Visitor Center Parking Lot (see directions below)

Leader: Jeff Hays, (513) 821-9822, JLHAYS@fuse.net

Raptor (birds of prey) expert Jeff Hays will lead us on an out of the ordinary field trip with the primary goal of finding owls. This trip will begin at 4:30 in the afternoon and last until a couple of hours after dark, about 7:30 p.m. It will be close to a full moon on this date.

Jeff will begin the trip at Fernald Preserve one hour before sunset in hopes of finding Short-eared Owls. These uncommon owls are crepuscular and are often seen just before and after sunset coursing over the grasslands in which they hunt. While they are not guaranteed, Fernald Preserve is one of the few area locations where they can be found with any regularity. While we wait for nightfall, and hopefully Short-eared Owls, we will most certainly see a number of other species, such as hawks (including Northern Harrier) and waterfowl.

Once darkness has fallen Jeff will lead us over to nearby Miami Whitewater Forest. Jeff's plan is to try to find owls at several spots around the park and other nearby areas. With the aid of vocal imitations and/or recordings Jeff hopes to attract the three common species of owls that reside within the park, Great Horned, Barred and Eastern-Screech Owls. If you have never stood in the dark trying to hoot up the local owls you are in for a treat.

To get to Fernald Preserve from I-275 take I-275 Exit # 7 at SR 128 marked Cleves-Hamilton. This is the first exit just west of the Great Miami River at Miamitown. Go north on SR 128 through Miamitown for 7 miles to Wil-

ley Road. Turn left on Willey Road and go ¼ mile to the Fernald Preserve access road. Follow the access road to its terminus in the Visitor Center parking lot.

This trip will entail driving from one spot to another, interspersed with short easy walking. Restrooms are available. Binoculars are recommended. Dress for winter. A HCPD motor vehicle permit is required (\$3 daily, \$10 annual) at Miami Whitewater Forest. Heavy rain will cancel but the following day, Sunday, November 13th will be a rain date (same time). Call Jeff for further information.

Go to the following Fernald Preserve website for directions:

http://www.lm.doe.gov/Fernald/Visitors_Center/Directions.pdf

Go to the Miami Whitewater Visitor Center for park info: <http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/parks/miamiwhitewater.shtm>



Location: Brookville Lake & Hueston Woods

Theme: Migrant Waterfowl

Date: Saturday, November 26, 2011

Leader: Jay Stenger, (513) 522-8147, jaystenger@cinci.rr.com

Meet: 7:30 A.M. at the Park & Ride Lot at I-275 Exit # 7 (see directions below)

The focus of this trip will be the fall waterfowl migration, which should be near peak at this date. Our trip leader Jay Stenger is planning on hitting several spots around Brookville Lake and then make the short hop over to Hueston Woods where we will check a few spots around Acton Lake before returning home. Both of these locations are hotspots and are excellent for attracting waterfowl and water birds at this season. We expect to see good numbers of many species. The rural countryside surrounding these two large lakes has diverse habitats so we expect to find a great variety of species along the way. In addition to waterfowl we expect to see loons, grebes, gulls, Sandhill Cranes, late shorebirds (such as Dunlin & snipe), Bald Eagles, many hawks, numbers of seasonal songbirds and much more. This will be an auto type tour and will consist of driving from spot to spot interspersed with a few short easy walks. While the trip duration is long and does entail a lot of driving, the rewards, in terms of what we see, always make it worth the effort.

This field trip will be in conjunction with the Cincinnati Bird Club. The trip will run into mid to late afternoon but of course you can leave at any time you like. Bring your lunch and drinks. It always seems colder around large lakes so dress accordingly. If you have a scope it will

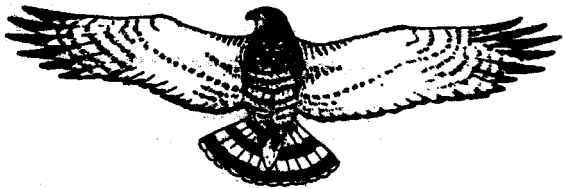
prove useful. Restrooms will be available. One important note, Indiana State Parks charges a daily per car entrance fee (\$5 resident, \$7 non-resident). At this time of year there is usually no attendants on duty but we cannot be sure of that

We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the park & ride lot, located right at the I-275 Exit # 7 at SR 128 marked Cleves-Hamilton. This is the first exit just west of the Great Miami River at Miamitown. We will caravan from there to the Brookville area, about a 30-minute drive. Call or email Jay if you have any questions.

Visit the Brookville Lake website at:
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2961.htm>

Visit the Whitewater Memorial State Park (at Brookville Lake) website at:
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2962.htm>

Visit the Hueston Woods SP website at:
<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/tabid/745/default.aspx>



F.Y.I.

Migratory Bird: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reminds birders and others to be aware of the negative impact disturbance has on wildlife. During migration periods, resting and ample foraging periods are critical to maintaining the birds proper body condition. Flushing ducks expends up to 12 times the energy used at rest. It has been estimated for every ten minutes birds spend flying, they must forage for about two hours to replenish energy reserves. We must ensure that our activities do not cause the birds to flush.



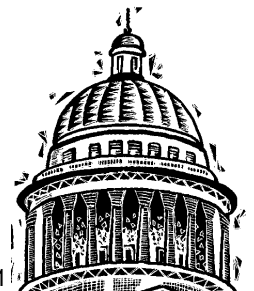
**THERE WILL BE NO JOBS
ON AN ENVIRONMENTALLY
DEAD PLANET!**

Where to Write or Call

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121



The 112th National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of citizen science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the US, Canada and 19 countries in the Western Hemisphere, go out over a 24-hour period to count birds. Last years count set an all-time high with 2,215 individual counts conducted. Those counts included a record total of over 61,000 participants.

Count volunteers search for birds within a designated 15-mile (24-km) diameter circle while counting every bird they see or hear throughout the day. It's not just a species tally; all individual birds are counted, giving an indication of the total number of birds within the circle that day. If observers live within a CBC circle, they may arrange in advance to count the birds at their feeders and submit those data to the count compiler. All individual CBC's are conducted during the period beginning December 14th through January 5th each season, and each count is conducted during one calendar day.

CBC participants are organized into groups or field parties by the compiler of the count. Each field party covers a prearranged and specific area within the 15-mile diameter count circle. And everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate regardless of ones birding skills. Compilers arrange field parties so that inexperienced observers are always out with seasoned CBC veterans. You don't have to commit to the whole day either. You are welcome to participate for as long as you like, a half-day or even a few hours

There is a \$5.00 fee per field participant per count. Feeder watchers are free, as are all observers 18 and under. These fees help to cover the costs of generating materials for compilers, producing an annual CBC summary issue, and maintaining the CBC website and database.

The data collected by observers over the past century allow researchers, conservation biologists, and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years. The long-term perspective made possible by the Christmas Bird Count is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat - and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

The first CBC was done on Christmas Day of 1900 as

an alternative activity to an event called the "side hunt" where people chose sides, then went out and shot as many birds as they could. The group that came in with the largest number of dead birds won the event. Frank Chapman, a famed ornithologist at the American Museum of Natural History and the editor of Bird-Lore (which became the publication of the National Association of Audubon Societies when that organization formed in 1905) recognized that declining bird populations could not withstand wanton over-hunting, and proposed to count birds on Christmas Day rather than shoot them.

There are many Christmas Bird Counts to chose from and we encourage you to take part in as many as possible. But we also hope you can find the time to participate in at least one of our local Christmas Bird Counts listed below. If you have any questions concerning a particular count feel free to contact that counts compiler.

For more information on Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts visit the following website:

<http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>

2011-2012 Greater Cincinnati (Local) National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts:

Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count (65th Annual) Monday, December 26th, 2011

Compiler Jay Stenger, (513) 522-8147, jaystenger@cincinnati.audubon.org

Western Hamilton County Christmas Bird Count (46th Annual)

Sunday, December 18th, 2011

Compiler Ned Keller, (513) 941-6497, keller@one.net

East Fork Christmas Bird Count (29th Annual) Monday, January 2nd, 2012

Compiler Joe Bens, (513) 353-4229, joebens@live.com

Ohio River Christmas Bird Count (25th Annual) Saturday, December 17th, 2011

Compiler Paul Wharton, (513) 353-3403, pwharton@fuse.net

Hamilton-Fairfield Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 17th, 2011

Compiler Mike Busam, (513) 755-0057, mbusam@gmail.com



What's All This Noise About "Fracking"?

"Fracking" is a buzzword in Ohio's environmental circles right now. Ellen Mee, OEC's Director of Environmental Health Policy, explains the term and the danger it poses to the environment and Ohioans' health.

The term "fracking" is shorthand for drilling technology that uses water, sand, and chemicals to release oil or gas from tight underground sources.

Fracking is a relatively new technique of high-volume, horizontal hydraulic fracturing developed to reach natural gas resources trapped far beneath the earth's surface in deep shale (sedimentary rock). Using fracking, it

is now possible to reach these reserves to extract the gas for energy production, which isn't cost effective with traditional drilling techniques.

But many questions come with fracking. The OEC and partners around the state have joined together to voice concerns that high-volume, horizontal hydraulic drilling poses a threat to all Ohioans and our environment.

Two shale formations, the Marcellus and the Utica, underlie much of Ohio. These formations hold large amounts of natural gas.

In a modern-day gold rush, natural gas producers are seeking leases for drilling rights throughout Ohio. More than 1,000 new leases were registered in Stark County alone in 2010.

The fracking technique uses high-pressure injections of water, sand, and chemicals to release the trapped gas.

After drilling vertically to a depth that reaches slightly above the shale, the drill bit is turned horizontally and

pushed into the shale, sometimes as much as a mile or more.

Small fractures are created in the targeted area with underground explosions. Then the sand, water, and chemical mixture is injected at high pressure into the new fractures to further crack the rock and release the gas. While not all of the chemicals used in fracking are known, many of them are known or suspected to be harmful to human health and the environment.

The environmental and health impacts from fracking in other states such as Pennsylvania are well documented and alarming, with a significant number of spills, blowouts, leaking wells, and other accidents and releases of contaminants.

Some of these incidents include:

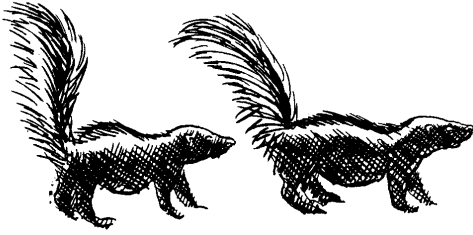
- methane and other toxic contamination of groundwater and aquifers;
- elevated levels of radioactivity in rivers and streams used for public drinking water supplies;
- releases of greenhouse gases and air pollutants harmful to human health.

The Ohio Environmental Council, Buckeye Forest Council, Sierra Club, the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, and other environmental-conservation groups are calling on the Ohio General Assembly to immediately issue a moratorium.

We want lawmakers to order the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to withhold approval of new well permits involving high-volume, horizontal hydraulic drilling, exploration, or extraction until these practices are demonstrated to be safe for the environment and human health, and are properly and effectively regulated.

**Tell your lawmakers "No Fracking"!
Learn how at www.theOEC.org.**

High-volume hydraulic fracturing, also known as "fracking," poses a direct threat to all Ohioans and our environment.



Keeping Unwanted Wildlife out of Homes and Yards

Here are some tips for avoiding problem encounters with unwanted wildlife in your home and yard:

- Place bird feeders where they will not be accessible to other animal species.
- Keep pet food inside.
- Cover window wells with grates or plastic bubbles.
- Close holes around the foundation of your house so that animals will not be tempted to enter.
- Do not allow wildlife the opportunity to get into your garbage. Store it in containers with tight fitting lids. If possible, keep trash in a garage or shed until it is scheduled to be picked up.
- If birds are flying into your windows, mark them with white tape or raptor silhouettes.
- Screen fireplace chimneys, and furnace, attic and dryer vents.



What We Do:

- Conduct numerous educational field trips guided by knowledgeable leaders
- Sponsor and conduct monthly programs presented by invited guest speakers on a variety of topics related to the natural world
- Own and maintain two sanctuaries and a resource center/office
- Provide educational materials for elementary classrooms, our members and others.
- Participate in citizen science research
- Publish a bimonthly newsletter to keep members notified of our field trips, and programs and informed about bird and environmental issues
- Actively participate in local, regional and national environmental issues.

All of these activities are supported entirely through the generous gifts of time and money by our members. If you believe in the mission of the ASO we hope you will consider joining us. We appreciate your support.

LOCAL A.S.O. MEMBERSHIPS

“FRIENDS OF A.S.O.”

You will receive 6 issues of “The Chat” and all dues and donations will be used locally.

New memberships, renewing ASO local members, and those adding a “Friends” donation fill out this part of the form also, but make check payable to Audubon Society of Ohio, and mail to:
A.S.O. Membership, 3398 W. Galbraith Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45239-3955

- \$15 new ASO/“Friends” One-year membership, or
- \$25 new ASO/“Friends” Two-year membership
- \$15 renewal, ASO/“Friends” One-year membership, or
- \$25 renewal ASO/“Friends” Two-year membership

Fill out name and address information on this form
Please PRINT clearly!

Name: _____

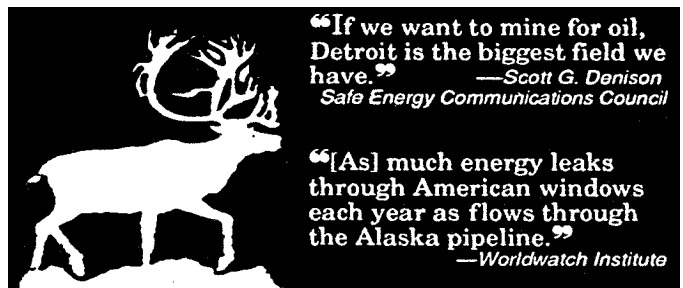
Street Address: _____

City, State, & Zip: _____

Signature _____

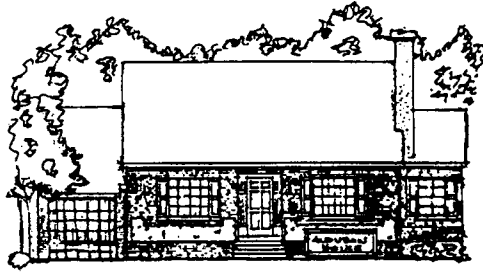
Phone _____ email (for A.S.O. use only) _____

- Do not share this information with any other organization without my permission.
- I do not want to receive any solicitations or communications from National Audubon.
- Enclosed is an additional, tax deductible gift to A.S.O. to support the local programs and projects. Amount ____ Thank You!
- Do not acknowledge this gift in the CHAT. (We do not do this anyway, but we want to be clear.)



Our Mission Statement

The Audubon Society of Ohio, Cincinnati Chapter of the National Audubon Society, is dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the natural world. Through education and conservation activities in our community, we raise awareness and promote solutions to global environmental problems.



Audubon House

3398 W. Galbraith Road • Cincinnati, Ohio 45239

Phone: 513-741-7926 (SWAN)

Website: www.cincinnati.audubon.org

“Audubon House” is located at 3398 W. Galbraith Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45239, two blocks west of Colerain Avenue, south of Cross County Hwy. Park in front lot or on side streets.



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