

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"

January-February

Vol. 114 No. 1

2011

Calendar

As you know from the previous Chat, there are no programs in December. Join in on the **Christmas Bird Counts** for Field experiences. See article for dates, locations, and how to participate. We wish you "Happy Holidays" and look forward to seeing you in January on **Sunday, January 16th for an ASO Field** trip that will focus on wintering species, especially those drawn to pines and other conifers. To get out and shake the winter blahs meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Wood Duck Trail parking lot at Mitchell Memorial Forest to meet leaders Charlie Saunders and Mike Busam for an about three- hour walk over moderate terrain. Restrooms are available. A Hamilton County Park permit is required, now \$3 daily or \$10 annual. Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. But if you do not have any, we have some you may borrow for this trip. Call 741-7926 prior to the 15th to reserve a pair. Youngsters are welcome if accompanied by an adult.

We hope to see you also at our Monthly Program on **Monday, January 17th at Winton Centre** visitor center auditorium, Winton Rd. in Winton Woods Park, at 7:00 p.m. for a brief social time and light refreshments (bring your own mug to avoid adding more disposables to the waste stream) and at 7:30 for "**The Birds of Senegal**" presented by Dr. George Nafziger, retired military captain, employed by Northrop, works training African officers and NCOs in Peacekeeping operations, who have served in Liberia, Lebanon, Ivory Coast, Congo, and Darfur. He has traveled to Africa some 30 times over the last eight years. His travels have taken him to places with opportunities to observe the abundant bird life with camera in hand. We have the opportunity to see the best of his photographs of native species of Senegal, where he has been 16 times. We are so privileged to have the opportunity of his experiences and know you will not want to miss his presentation.

The Great Backyard Bird Count returns for four days: **February 18 – 21, 2011**. This is fun, easy to do for all ages and levels of expertise. Can be done online or someone can enter your data for you. You will be hearing more about this or you can access their site for

checklists and the data forms to be filled out. Visit www.birdcount.org for instructions and to download a checklist for your count area.. You can repeat your count at the same place on each day of the GBBC . You can also visit other locations and submit separate tallies from those areas as well. This is the 14th annual GBBC and is hosted by National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Chapter Chatter

The work at Audubon House is progressing. Trees have been trimmed that were overhanging the parking lot and power lines and dead wood was removed from some of the very large trees. Bushes were removed so the removal of old paint and and repair of brickwork and the painting could be done, windows re-glazed and painted, chimney repairs and painting completed, the doors repaired and painted, all tedious and time-consuming, and now looking really good and in good shape. The entrance sign is being repaired and will be re-hung. Next, the interior will get some repairs, and freshened up with some paint, and perhaps a few improvements. While this phase is in progress it will help everyone to keep activities there to a minimum, so Movie Nights will resume in April or so. Then some of the work will be on the outside again and we may have to return to finish interior work. If anyone has suggestions on plantings at the front planters let us know, and if you can physically help with any of that we would be delighted. We are so appreciative for the gift from Pat Davis via her estate that makes some of this work possible. She was always so interested in our offices throughout the years, offering suggestions and support, and we carry on in that spirit with gratitude. We thank other friends who also have made donations towards this project. Some of the work will help us serve our members better, take care of the property, and make a nicer working environment for the many volunteers who donate their time on behalf of all the members to carry out our mission of conservation education. We would welcome any year-end donations towards the Audubon House improvements, with a check to ASO and send to ASO at office. All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Thank you!

Thank you to all ASO Friends for your memberships that keep those funds locally, providing for program expenses, educational outreach materials, and operating expenses. We are glad for your timely renewals also, and glad many of you are taking advantage of the two-year memberships and renewal rates. You receive a 2011 Audubon calendar in appreciation. Friends of ASO members who have not already picked up yours up at a meeting can pick yours up at the November program. You must have an ASO expiration date ending in 2011 or later on your Chat label to receive yours. Please check the ASO expiration date on this newsletter. If there are any questions or problems about your membership please call 741-7926 and leave a message. Dues for ASO Friends are still \$15 for one year, \$25 for two years, a savings plus a calendar in appreciation. If you would like to purchase calendars for great gifts, they are \$4.00 each and may be purchased at the November meeting also, preferably with a check. We might have some available at the January program but you won't have it as 2011 begins so come in November and also enjoy the program.

If you missed the November program presented by Mark Shieldcastle of Black Swamp Bird Observatory you missed a lot. "The Ecology of Migration" was a condensation of Mark's over thirty years of research and his vast experience with numerous scientific projects and research organizations. We learned about various kinds of migrations and the strategies used by the birds to survive their long and short distance journeys. People have always been fascinated by bird migration and we learned so many of the answers to historic questions as a benefit of Mark's knowledge and work. Birds need all the help they can get during migration and there are things we each can do during the important stopovers when they need to rest and re-fuel.

Some books I have enjoyed about migration are "How Birds Migrate" by Paul Kerlinger; "Living on the Wind" by Scott Weidensaul, and "Songbird Journeys" by Miyoku Chu. Most bird books, field guides, life histories, bird-finding guides, citizen-science projects and others cover aspects of migration so get busy! Think of all the studies, monographs, conservation articles, and numerous other publications Mark saved us time reading and studying with his awesome program that evening. (C.A.)

January Field Trip

Winter Bird Walk

Location: Mitchell Memorial Forest

Date: Sunday, January 16, 2011

Time: 8:00 A.M.

Meet: Wood Duck Trail Parking Lot at MMF

Leaders: Charlie Saunders, (513) 829-6981 and Mike Busam, (513) 755-0057, mbusam@gmail.com

Skilled birders Charlie Saunders and Mike Busam will

lead us on a winter bird walk that will focus on wintering species, especially those that are drawn to pines and other conifers. Some of the species that might be found include Pine Siskins and other winter finches, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Hermit Thrushes. This will be about a 3-hour walk over moderate terrain. Restrooms are available. If you expect to see bird's binoculars will be needed. Expect winter weather so dress appropriately. A HCPD motor vehicle permit is required (\$3 daily, \$10 annual). The Wood Duck Trail parking lot is the first lot on the left past the main Park entrance. Feel free to contact Charlie or Mike for more info. Go to the following Mitchell Memorial website for directions and Park info. Depending on birding reports closer to the date of this trip a side trip to Spring Grove Cemetery might be made.

<http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/parks/mitchellmemorial.shtm>

Environmental News Digest

One topic that has been in many places in the news lately has been gas fracking. Yes, FRACKING! Fracking is the hydraulic process in which drillers shoot millions of gallons of high-pressure water, sand, and chemicals into well to crack the rock formation and release the gas inside. From Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, West Virginia to Wyoming, Colorado the words tar sands, contaminated aquifers, dying cattle, environmental destruction, 2,000 mile-long pipeline from Canada, Marcellus Shale formation, health concerns, methane and benzene, fill the thoughts and talk of thousands of citizens whose lives are now being affected by the fracking.

Sixty Minutes on CBS featured fracking recently, talking with local residents, officials, government regulators, health departments, school administrators, and others. No one knows with any certainty how natural gas production affects the health of the people who live near it. There have been no comprehensive studies of human health impacts. Activists worry that the stories are the beginning of a health crisis or are they isolated incidents as industry contends.?. Does the fact that T.Boone Pickens and Haliburton are deeply involved in all of this build confidence or send more fear? How did that BP thing in the Gulf work out after all? This is huge and affecting millions of people and acres with a range of pollutants. Because there are no long-term studies, people feel like they are guinea pigs in their own homes. Also, just some of the chemicals being used are known, but there are no requirements to disclose all.

Some states are so concerned about contamination of soils and freshwater that they have halted drilling, but some rural landowners are eager for the money offered for drilling rights. Concerned citizen groups are organizing because neighbors want to drill near them. News sources are reporting that incoming Republican politicians are seen as much friendlier to the drillers, and the GOP House will probably doom efforts in Congress to

impose federal regulation over gas drilling.

GOP Strategist Karl Rove said he was elated that there might be less regulation as he addressed an oil and gas industry conference in Pennsylvania recently. The \$millions in donations from the industry seems to have paid off. And the citizens are having to have their drinking water trucked in.

Do a search on fracking to get additional information. The autumn issue of Catalyst is devoted to the energy-water collision and is science-based.

2010-2011 Greater Cincinnati (Local) National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts

Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count (64th Annual)

Sunday, December 26th, 2010

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

Western Hamilton County Christmas Bird Count (45th Annual)

Sunday, December 19th, 2010

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

East Fork Christmas Bird Count (28th Annual)

Sunday, January 2nd, 2011

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

Ohio River Christmas Bird Count (24th Annual)

Saturday, December 18th, 2010

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

Hamilton-Fairfield Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 18th, 2010

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

The 111th 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 2,160 individual counts conducted. Those counts included a record total of 60,753 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.

tenthingstodo

Want to do something to help stop global warming?
Here are 10 simple things you can do and how much carbon dioxide you'll save doing them.

Change a light

Replacing one regular light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb will save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

Drive less

Walk, bike, carpool or take mass transit more often. You'll save one pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive!

Recycle more

You can save 2,400 pounds of carbon dioxide per year by recycling just half of your household waste.

Check your tires

Keeping your tires inflated properly can improve gas mileage by more than 3%.

Every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere!

Use less hot water

It takes a lot of energy to heat water. Use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead (350 pounds of CO2 saved per year) and washing your clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds saved per year).

Avoid products with a lot of packaging

You can save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide if you cut down your garbage by 10%.

Adjust your thermostat

Moving your thermostat down just 2 degrees in winter and up 2 degrees in summer could save about 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

Plant a tree

A single tree will absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.

Be a part of the solution

Learn more and get active at ClimateCrisis.net.



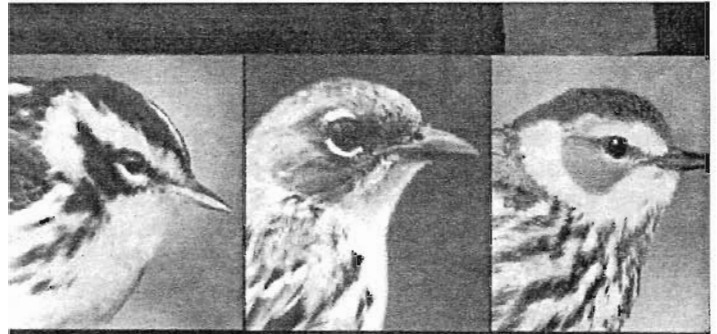
*Yellow-crowned
Night-heron
by Daniel S.
Kilby*

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 BIGGEST WEEK IN AMERICAN BIRDING

www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com

May 5 - 15, 2011

Join us in Northwest Ohio
"The Warbler Capital of the World"
during the peak of spring migration!

The Biggest Week's activities include:

- LOTS of Warblers & Other Migrants
- Guided Bird Walks & Bus Tours
- Guided Lake Erie Islands Trips
- Kenn Kaufman Bird ID Workshops
- World Birding Programs by the Experts at Tropical Birding
- Songbird Banding Demonstrations
- American Woodcock Extravanzas
- Birding by Ear Workshops
- Digiscoping Workshops
- And MORE!

"The Biggest Week in American Birding offers the most exhilarating, yet accessible spring birding imaginable among many of North America's most experienced and entertaining birders. What more could you want?"

~ Mike Bergin, 10,000 Birds

For registration and activity info visit:

www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com
or by phone at 419-898-4070

Black Swamp Bird Observatory Brings You An Important Bird Conservation Message

Every spring and fall, many millions of songbirds migrate long distances between nesting grounds in Canada or the northern United States and wintering grounds in the southern U.S. or the tropics. These birds mostly fly at night and spend the days resting and feeding. Although some birds may stop over practically anywhere, a few areas are major stop-over habitats, critically important to the survival of large numbers of birds. One such area is right here in the Lake Erie Marsh Region of northwest Ohio.

Unfortunately, the habitats that support the migratory birds are now threatened by proposals to build wind turbines nearby. Wind industry consultants suggest that birds will be unaffected, because the birds usually migrate at heights of more than 500 feet above the ground. But this does not apply at major stopover sites, where vast numbers of birds are taking off or landing. In other words, if a commercial jetliner's cruising altitude is 30,000 feet - you still wouldn't put wind turbines at the end of a runway. And because the birds mostly migrate at night, they are taking off or landing in the dim light of dusk or pre-dawn, when it would be most difficult for them to see obstacles such as wind turbines. There are currently no state or federal regulations to prevent noncommercial wind turbines as large as 300+ feet tall from being constructed anywhere in the landscape--including the areas immediately adjacent to the critical songbird migration stopover habitats of Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

Black Swamp Bird Observatory has more than 20 years of data proving that this region is globally significant for migratory birds. But studies are just beginning to establish the rate of climb or descent for birds leaving or arriving in these stopover habitats, so it is too early to say how much of a buffer zone would be needed around major stopover sites to avoid killing large numbers of birds.

Considering the importance of these stopover habi-

tats to migratory birds and to the ecotourism dollars generated by visiting birders, BSBO is working to build support for a three-year moratorium on the building of any additional wind turbines within the area of greatest concern: specifically, within three miles of the Lake Erie shoreline in Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Erie Counties, until we have more conclusive data.

YOU can help!

In closing, I want to make it clear that BSBO is not opposed to wind energy when the turbines are sited responsibly. We understand the dire need for renewable energy resources to help reduce our dependency on the fossil fuels that have pushed our planet to the brink.

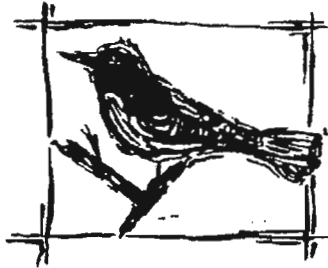
Sincerely,

Kimberly Kaufman
Executive Director
Black Swamp Bird Observatory
419 898-4070
kimkaufman@bsbo.org



Environmental Impact

Domestic usage of pesticides now accounts for the majority of wildlife poisonings reported to the EPA. David Pimentel, Professor of Entomology at Cornell University, estimates that seven million wild birds are killed each year due to the aesthetic use of pesticides by homeowners. Most pesticides are generally not species specific, important pollinators and food sources applications or "drift" into aquatic areas contamination or loss of an important humans.



of pesticides by homeowners. Most killing non-targeted beneficial insects and in their wake. Accidental pesticide is a common problem, causing food source for other animals as well as

"Birds dying on lawns from pesticides are a strong warning of the potential risks these chemicals pose to people and pets. As a wildlife pathologist, I see firsthand the carnage caused by the unnecessary use of lawn and garden pesticides."

Ward B. Stone
Wildlife Pathologist, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



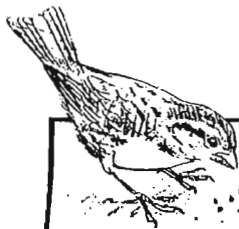
JUST SAY **NO**

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.



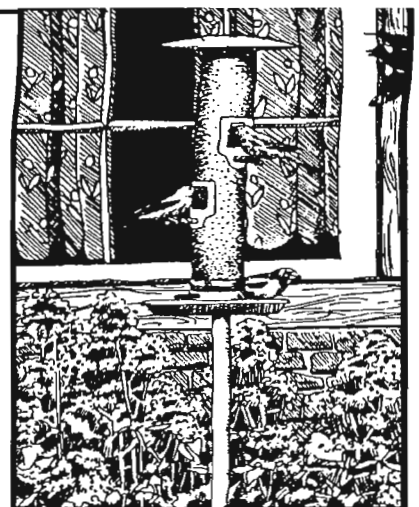
Hooded Merganser by Daniel S. Kilby



How to Help Birds

Individuals and families can help migratory birds. To turn a yard into a safe haven for birds to breed, nest, or rest and refuel:

- Landscape with native plants that flower and fruit.
- Hang bird feeders with a variety of different types of food.
- Provide nest boxes and nesting material.
- Provide a source of water.
- Place decals or streamers on large windows to prevent birds from flying into them.
- Keep the cat indoors.





Did you know—

60 million people in the United States are active birders!

Over 90 million Americans feed birds!



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!

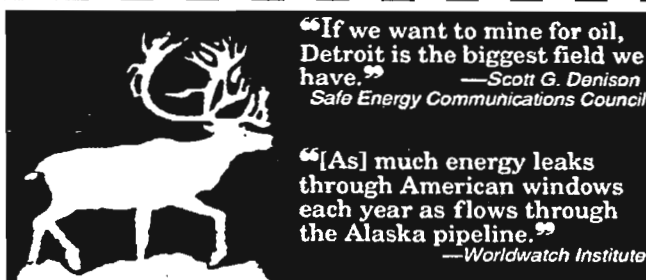
Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, & Zip: _____

Phone and 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.)

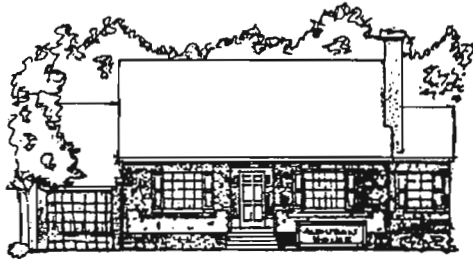


"If we want to mine for oil, Detroit is the biggest field we have."
—Scott G. Denison
Safe Energy Communications Council

"[As] much energy leaks through American windows each year as flows through the Alaska pipeline."
—Worldwatch Institute

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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Printed by RAPID COPY PRINTING, Cincinnati, Ohio 513-385-0888.
A print media provider producing environmental friendly products since 1979.

January-February 2011
Audubon Newsletter



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