

audubon

MIAMI VALLEY

the newsletter of Audubon Miami Valley, in Butler sanctuary

Winter 2016-17
Spring 2017 Preview
Volume 42

FROM THE PRESIDENT

How to Become a Craniac in One Easy Trip

On October 1st I gazed face-to-face with a Grey Crowned Crane.

We were in Baraboo, Wisc., visiting the International Crane Foundation, the only place in the world to see all 15 species of cranes.

George Archibald and Rob Sauey, ornithology students at Cornell University, co-founded the ICF in 1973 when cranes were in a perilous situation and several species were on the brink of extinction.

Today, the headquarters is on 225 acres, featuring: a visitor center, breeding facilities, research library, miles of nature trails and a global center for conservation leadership and training.

A self-guided trail takes the visitor to see the African cranes, where gorgeous Gray Crowned and Black Crowned birds show their beauty. Then it's on to the 10 species of cranes from Europe, Asia, Australia and North America.

The Whooping Crane exhibit features a small theater where the film *George and Tex* is shown. The incredible story of Tex, one of the last Whooping Cranes alive in 1976, and how she imprinted on Archibald is the subject of the film. It should not be missed.

Then, while seated in a covered amphitheater, watch a pair of Whooping Cranes in the wetland setting created for the exhibit.

Archibald's visionary work created a worldwide organization protecting the world's cranes and the ecosystems, watersheds and flyways on which they depend. Due to ICF efforts, the number of Whooping Cranes has increased to several hundred today. In 2013, George Archibald received Audubon's highest award: The Dan W. Lufkin Prize for Environmental Leadership. He received the Indianapolis Prize – recognizing heroes saving

Gazing face-to-face with a Grey Crowned Crane can change your perspective



Photo by Charles J Sharp
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species-in 2006. In 2014 Archibald came to Oxford to present the Hefner Lecture and receive an honorary degree from Miami University in recognition of his work.

The 466 miles from Oxford to Baraboo can be covered in one full day of driving. Accommodations are available, with a delightful bed and breakfast nearby.

Visit the website www.savingcranes.org for the hours, fees, and directions to the International Crane Foundation.

-- Mickey Simonds, AMV President

DECEMBER 2016 CALENDAR

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10

Brookville Lake Area

Ornithologist Dr. David Russell will again lead us on a birding tour of the Brookville Reservoir area between Liberty and Brookville, Indiana.

We'll visit a number of good spots around Brookville Lake as well as Whitewater State Park, looking for migrating ducks, geese, gulls, sandhill cranes and other species.

A map of the area can be found at www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/files/brookville_trail.pdf.

The group will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the west end of the Walmart parking lot (on US 27, north of Oxford).

Pack a lunch and bring binoculars if possible.



MONDAY DECEMBER 12

Nature's People: The Intriguing Connection of Emily Dickinson to the Hog Island Audubon Camp

Tom Schafer, Author and Educator

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

Join Tom Schafer as he retells fascinating elements of the story that connects poet Emily Dickinson to Hog Island, home of Audubon's first summer camp devoted to teaching key elements of nature study and ecology.

Schafer first went to Hog Island on a Dayton Audubon Scholarship and completed his Master of Humanities degree at Wright State University by studying the founding in 1936 of the Audubon Nature Camp for Adult Leaders.

Today he serves on the Friends of Hog Island board of directors and volunteers at the camp. At home in



Tom Schafer
author of
A Forest of Ferns: Reflections on Hog Island

Dayton, Schafer is completing his book *Nature's People: The Hog Island Story from Mabel Loomis Todd to Audubon*. He will share key parts of that narrative along with photographs housed at Yale University.

Schafer's book of poetry, *A Forest of Ferns: Reflections on Hog Island*, will be available for purchase.



OUR VISION

We envision a world where humankind accepts the obligations of being part of nature, especially the obligation of stewardship. We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically, and morally unacceptable. In short, we seek a culture of conservation and an environmental ethic.

OUR MISSION

Audubon Miami Valley works to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

The Audubon Miami Valley newsletter is published three times a year and includes program and field trip information.

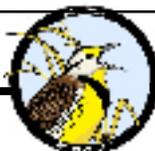
Deadline for the spring 2017 issue is February 1. Send contributions to jhetrick@amvohio.org or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056

- Judi Hetrick is editor.
- John Blocher is proofreader.
- Caitlin Stone designed the Meadowlark logo.

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DECEMBER-FEBRUARY 2016 CALENDAR

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 **Christmas Bird Count**

The Christmas Bird Count is more than just a winter morning out in nature. It's an important research activity.

The data were used in Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report, predicting the change's effects on the ranges of 588 North American birds.

plan to join the count this year. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Miami University Ecology Research Center on Somerville Road. Bring a covered dish to share for lunch and your own table service. Dress warmly and wear boots for walking. Wear a bright jacket and bring binoculars if possible.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 11 **Summit Lake, Indiana**

Indiana's Summit Lake State Park, northeast of New Castle, features a 2,780-acre mixture of woods, wetlands, and grasslands, an 800-acre lake, three waterfowl management ponds, and an excellent bird and wildlife observation area

The property is important for waterfowl because of the many low-lying wet meadows and prairies.

Experienced birder Bill Wilson will lead this trip, which will leave at 7:30 a.m. from the west end of the Walmart parking lot (on U.S. 27, north of Oxford). We expect to arrive around 9 a.m. and return in the afternoon. Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible



SUNDAY JANUARY 15 **Fernald Preserve**

The 1,050-acre Fernald Preserve, managed by the U.S. Department of Energy, is on the site of the uranium-processing facility that ceased operations in 1989.

Comprehensive environmental remediation and ecological restoration of the site was completed in 2006 at a cost of \$4.4 billion — one of the largest U.S. environmental cleanup operations ever.

The property's natural features have been restored using native plants and grasses, creating one of the largest man-made wetlands in Ohio.

The Preserve features 400 acres

of forests, 387 acres of grassland including tallgrass prairie and savanna, and 140 acres of wetlands, including three lakes, and seven miles of trails.

Over 240 species of birds have been observed, and over 100 different species have been documented as nesting at the Preserve.

Our leaders are expert naturalists Gary Stegner and Brian Wulker.

The trip will leave at 8 a.m. from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's) and return to Oxford in the afternoon. Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible



MONDAY FEBRUARY 13 **We've Come a Long Way, Baby! Or Have We?** **Alexis R. Faust, Executive Director,** **Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm**

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank,
30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

Alexis Faust will discuss the state of conservation 30 years ago, where we are today, and what we might see in 30 years.

Faust is responsible for managing Aullwood's 200-acre nature sanctuary and working farm north of Dayton as part of The National Audubon Society. Aullwood serves 60,000 students annually with field trips exploring nature and farming.

Faust began her career as manager of the Princeton Materials Institute and the Princeton Center for Complex Materials, where a National Science Foundation grant sparked her passion for outreach.

She worked at Columbia University's Biosphere 2 Center as head of public outreach and at the Flandrau Science Center and Planetarium in Tucson, Arizona, as director.

Before coming to Aullwood, she was president of Taltree Arboretum and Gardens in northwest Indiana.



Alexis R. Faust



MARCH 2017 CALENDAR

MONDAY MARCH 13

How Eastern Bluebirds Can Change Your Life!

Kent Hall, Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank,
30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio



Kent Hall

Kent Hall will talk about his life-long encounter with the Eastern Bluebird. It all started in the village of Versailles, Mo., where he was born and raised. He grew up surrounded by and immersed in the natural environment. One of the most intriguing birds he encountered growing up was the Eastern Bluebird, the state bird of Missouri.

He writes: "I spent 30 years as a professor of zoology. After I retired, I looked around for hobbies that might interest me ... I remembered my childhood experiences with bluebirds and their influence on my professional career and decided to return the favor.

"For the last 13 years, I have coordinated the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society Bluebird Trail. It started

modestly and has grown into the largest bluebird trail in North America.

"When started, we had only 89 boxes, which produced 188 bluebirds in Portage County, and I was the only monitor. In 2014, we had 1,354 boxes and produced 4,953 bluebirds in six counties with 76 monitors.

"In 13 years we've produced 45,500 bluebirds, plus another 14,000 songbirds, from our boxes. To put our growth into perspective, we have averaged 5,300 bluebirds produced over the past six years.

"During that time, we have produced more bluebirds from artificial nest boxes than all but three states in the U.S.: Wisconsin, Nebraska and Minnesota."

SATURDAY MARCH 18

Aullwood Audubon Center

Aullwood Audubon Center, one of the Midwest's first nature centers, is just outside of Englewood, Ohio, about a one-hour drive from Oxford.

The National Audubon Society established this beautiful wildlife sanctuary as a result of an unprecedented gift of land from Marie S. Aull in 1957.

Aullwood consists of two major locations, Aullwood Nature Center, and Aullwood Farm, connected by six miles of walking trails.

Today, the 200-acre Aullwood sanctuary includes six miles of walking trails winding through prairie, woods,

ponds, farmland, and meadows.

A brochure with trail map is available at aullwood.audubon.org/sites/g/files/amh851/f/static_pages/attachments/aullwood_trail-map_2015.pdf



Aullwood Education Manager Tom Hissong is coordinating our visit.

The trip will leave at 8 a.m. from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's) and return to Oxford in the afternoon.

After our morning walk we'll be able to enjoy a picnic lunch at the center.

Audubon Miami Valley chapter meetings during the school year are at 7:30 p.m. the second Mondays in the 2nd floor Community Room, LCNB building, 30 Park Place West in uptown Oxford. (The newsletter notes when the location changes.) The public is welcome.



MONDAY APRIL 10

Big Cat Conservation: Human/Wildlife Conflict in Namibia, Africa

Beth Davis, Teacher, Kramer Elementary School, Oxford

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

Whether standing face-to-face with a curious orangutan or a curious fifth-grader, Beth Davis is always prepared to draw from her experiences to teach others about nature and science.

Most recently, she has traveled to Namibia to learn about the great cats. She writes:

“I cannot wait to share my experiences of traveling to Africa as a recipient of an Audubon Miami Valley Rosie Bloom Scholarship. This allowed me to be a participant in the Namibia: Great Cat Conservation course under the auspices of Earth Expeditions and Miami University’s Project Dragonfly.

“I will be speaking about cattle overgrazing, which has caused bush encroachment. This has forced farmers to seek out more and more grassland putting them in direct contact with wildlife.

“You will learn about the Cheetah Conservation Fund that continues to work with cheetahs to re-introduce them back into the wild.

“It would be helpful if those attending my talk would view a NatGeo Wild documentary *Vanishing Kings: Desert Lions of Namib.*”



‘I cannot wait to share my experiences of traveling to Africa as a recipient of an Audubon Miami Valley Rosie Bloom Scholarship.’

– Beth Davis

The 50-minute video is available on YouTube.

Davis teaches fifth-grade science and language arts at Kramer. After many years as a secretary, stay-at-home mom, professional clown, bank teller, and elementary school librarian, she received a Bachelor of Arts in Middle Childhood Education from Miami University. She is working toward a Master of Arts in Teaching Biological Sciences degree.

Earth Expeditions has afforded Davis the opportunity to travel to Mexico’s Baja Peninsula to study desert ecology and marine biology, and to Borneo to study primate conservation.

SUNDAY APRIL 23

Hunter/Huffmeier Property

This will be another delightful visit to the rural Indiana property of our hosts, Kathy Hunter and Ron Huffmeier.



The land, just west of Brookville Lake, features stunning old-growth forest along with open grassy areas and lovely streams. We are sure to find a nice variety of birds while walking through this attractive setting.

Pack a lunch, and we will dine on the deck of Kathy and Ron’s home overlooking the woods.

For information about Audubon Miami Valley field trips, including any last-minute changes, contact trip coordinator Jim Michael at jmichael@amvohio.org.

We’ll leave at 8 a.m. from the west end of the Walmart parking lot (on U.S. 27, north of Oxford) and return to Oxford after lunch.



APRIL, MAY 2017 CALENDAR

TUESDAY APRIL 18

A Spring Warbler Refresher

Dave Russel, Department of Biology, Miami University

Ronald Reagan Lodge, Lakeview Room, Voice of America facility,
7850 VOA Park Drive, Westchester, Ohio

Join Dr. David Russell for an evening of entertainment as he regales us about neo-tropical migrants with pointers and clues on how to best identify the wood warblers, harbingers of spring, that pass through our region every spring

This program will take place from

7 to 9 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan Lodge, Lakeview Room, in West Chester's Voice of America Park.

Russell teaches ornithology at Miami University and established the Hueston Woods State Park bird banding station.

He is known to go to extremes to see any new bird that occurs within 1,000 miles of southwest Ohio -- and even beyond.

In 2016 he had seen 517 species in North America as of October 31, with hopes of reaching 600 by the end of the year.

SATURDAY APRIL 29- SATURDAY MAY 6

Butler County Big Week of Birding

More than a field trip, it's a whole week of field trips! Audubon Miami Valley joins with Metroparks of Butler County as a co-sponsor of the Big Week of Birding in Butler County.

Start with sunrise birding on Saturday April 29, enjoy birding each day, then wrap it all up with a family event on Saturday May 6.

Eleven fantastic birding opportunities, each at a different location! With each trip being led by an experienced birder or naturalist during the peak of spring

migration, this is an outstanding opportunity to observe and enjoy the many species that move through our area each year.

It's also a great way to discover the outstanding natural areas offered by Metroparks of Butler County.

These outings will meet at the respective sites, and some may have special requirements. To learn more, visit the Metroparks website: <http://reservations.yourmetroparks.net/programs/>

MONDAY MAY 8

Madagascar: The Eighth Continent -- Why it Matters

Hardy Eshbaugh, Professor Emeritus (Botany), Miami University, Oxford

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

In September 2016 an intrepid group of nature lovers journeyed to Madagascar on an Earlham College alumni trip to learn about the "eighth" continent.

Madagascar is unique among the earth's many destinations in its high number of endemic species across various groups of organisms such as birds, frogs, primates, insects, and plants.

Madagascar faces a number of challenges including an exploding population, massive deforestation, and unsustainable development that threaten the very survival of its unique evolutionary heritage.

Come and learn what makes Madagascar a showplace of evolution and what is being done to save this incredible place for future generations.

Hardy Eshbaugh was a Miami University professor of



Hardy Eshbaugh

botany for more than 31 years and continued to teach and direct graduate students until 2012, long after he retired.

In retirement he focused on serving on various boards of not-for-profit organizations including the National Audubon Society, and the The Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Professionally, he served as the president of the American Institute of Biological Sciences, the Botanical Society of America, the Society for Economic Botany, and the American Society of Plant Taxonomy.





Kramer lid and top sorters.



The finished products!

Photos by Beth Davis

Five new Kramer benches are really tops (and lids)!

What started as a small after-school project for Earth Club grew to include the entire Kramer school and Oxford community.

Beth Davis, the school's 5th grade science teacher and Earth Club advisor, envisioned a project that partnered students with Green Tree Plastics of Evansville, Ind., to collect plastic caps and lids in exchange for 100-pound recycled benches for the new Kramer Elementary courtyard.

The benches will be used when classes work in the courtyard on grade-level gardens and use inquiry-based lessons for life sciences. The benches will also be used as a student outdoor reading area.

The project goal was to get five benches. That meant collecting 1,750 pounds of plastic caps and lids. The \$875 needed for the cost of making the benches came from an Oxford Community Foundation grant.

Not just Kramer students and families collected lids and caps. Miami students, doctors offices, banks, plumbing companies, Oxford Senior Center, and Audubon Miami Valley were among the community groups involved.

Once a week Kramer 5th grade homeroom students collected, sorted and weighed the caps. There was a learning curve in understanding just how much space 1,750 pounds of caps and lids takes up, but storage was found.

When enough were collected. Davis along with Audu-

bon Miami Valley members Dick Munson and Libby Birch, and Marshall Elementary teacher Marsha McQueen took the 1,750 pounds of plastic lids and caps to Evansville and bought back 5 benches.

This project proved how people can come together to better their community when coached on the why of the project. The students, staff and the community have learned the benefits of recycling throughout this project, understanding how they have assisted in keeping the collected plastic from polluting our city, state, nation and world.

Reactions to the new benches were overwhelming.

One comment: "This is such a great project and it keeps our earth clean. Win. Win."

Another: suggested using one for a "buddy bench." The premise behind a "buddy bench" is that if a student feels lonely or has no one to play with, he or she sits on the bench and someone will come to talk or play.

Marshall Elementary, under the leadership of Marsha McQueen, is now collecting caps and lids for benches.

If you would like to help, drop off plastic caps and lids, recycling numbers 2,4 and 5, at LCNB National Bank, 30 Park Place West, Oxford, in the red wagon just in side the door.

Another collection point is The Oxford Senior Center, 922 Tollgate Drive.

-- Linda Williams, AMV Vice President



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Audubon Miami Valley is
an incorporated,
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Butler and Preble Counties of Ohio



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where humankind
accepts the
obligations of being
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