

Adoption announcements!

AMV takes Hueston Woods Important Bird Area under our wing

Spring Beauties.
Dutchman's Breeches.
Trout Lilies.
Trilliums.

If you have ever walked the Big Woods trails at Hueston Woods State Park, you know what a fairyland this old-growth forest is in springtime, with wildflowers carpeting the ridges as far as you can see.

Mostly free from choking honeysuckle, this 200-acre stand of beech, maple, ash, and tulip poplar is open and airy — good for hikers and wildlife alike.

On most visits you will hear the haunting call of a Pileated Woodpecker echoing through the trees.

Breeding neotropical migrants and edge species also

find the mature forest to their liking. These include several common birds in population decline: Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Flicker, and Eastern Meadowlark.

The Hueston Woods IBA includes Acton Lake and the Four Mile Creek corridor, stopover and staging areas for spring migrants and breeding grounds for riparian species.

Our partner AREI (Avian Research and Education Institute) has an established bird-banding station for collecting data on resident and migrating birds.

As an IBA Adoption Group, we have declared our intention to be stewards of this land and advocates for

**FROM THE
PRESIDENT**

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Photo by Sandy Flint

Our very own EN 53

Meet EN 53, our Puffin on Egg Rock

EN 53, a 32-year-old female Atlantic Puffin, is one of the newest members of the Audubon Miami Valley family,

On September 2, 2011, AMV donated \$100 through the Project Puffin Seabird Restoration Program, and was assigned the bird, which was transplanted from Great Island, Newfoundland, to Eastern Egg Rock, Maine on July 21, 1979.

She was 17 days old then, and she fledged from Eastern Egg Rock on August 21, 1979, and spent the next

two years at sea. Presently, she has a right leg US Fish and Wildlife Service metal band 785-37053.

Project Puffin was established by the National Audubon Society in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service in 1973 to reintroduce Atlantic Puffins to their former Maine Coast nesting islands.

From 1973 through 1981, 954 puffin chicks were transplanted to Eastern Egg Rock in Muscongus Bay from the largest Puffin colony

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AUDUBON ACTION

We can help fight coal-fired air pollution

The Environmental Protection Agency is poised to fight carbon pollution through proposed standards for new coal-fired power plants.

With the unlovely name of New Source Performance Standards (NSPS), this draft rule is our next best shot to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and slow climate change.

Leading scientists warn that climate change poses a grave threat to the world's biodiversity.

With legislative climate solutions mired in bipartisan gridlock in Congress, this new draft standard offers a way to make progress on one of the biggest carbon polluters



– coal-fired power plants.

If this rule goes through, dirty, older plants are next in line for pollution reductions.

Getting comments to EPA to support this standard is a top priority for Audubon.

You can help by sending in the postcard you'll find in the March/April edition of Audubon Magazine.

Look for the snowy owl — one of many birds whose habitat is being impacted by our warming climate.

Let's get an avalanche of support into EPA to reduce carbon pollution!

— **Connie Mahan,**
Audubon Policy Office

Did you know...?

Information about air quality in our state is available online from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Web site: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/>

Among the topics found there are:

- air quality reports for Ohio cities.
- a current air quality map.
- enforcement settlement documents from 2003-2012.
- The Public Interest Center, which offers public notices, information on how to submit complaints, and procedures for review of public records.

You also can find advice on issues ranging from disposing of your old cell phone (or railroad ties, or refrigerators) to how the state regulates drilling for gas in the Marcellus and Utica Shales.



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 four times a year, as the seasons change.

Deadline for the summer 2012 issue is June 1. Send contributions to Newsletter@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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Visit us online at amvboard.wordpress.com/



AMV aims to clean out state park's Big Woods

(Continued from page 1)

wildlife, in whatever ways we can, now and in the future.

Such a special place needs special care, so Audubon Miami Valley has chosen it as the site of our habitat restoration project. We'll remove invasive garlic mustard, which is rapidly spreading throughout the native wildflowers.

Care must be taken not to disrupt the ecosystem in this nature preserve, so we are studying the best time and method to do so.

If you have experience with garlic mustard removal and would like to share your thoughts with us, we would welcome it! Please contact Dick Munson, our Conservation Chairperson, at conservation@amvohio.org.

For more information, the book *Ohio Important Bird Areas*, is available for purchase at our public meetings.

— Gail Reynolds, AMV President



Photo by Gail Reynolds

Garlic Mustard in the Big Woods at Hueston Woods State Park has got go.

Puffin EN 53 has a history of successful breeding

(Continued from page 1)

in North America on Great Island, Newfoundland.

The chicks were placed in numbered artificial burrows and fed three times daily with vitamin-supplemented fish for at least a month. After fledging, the chicks spend the next several years at sea.

To lure the puffins ashore and give them the confidence to nest on Egg Rock rather than Great Island, wooden decoys were placed in suitable habitat.

On July 4, 1981, the first transplanted puffin was spotted delivering fish to its newly hatched

chick in a nest hidden deep in the crevices of Egg Rock's granite boulders.

This was the first nesting pair south of the Canadian border since 1901.

EN 53 began breeding at Egg Rock in 1986. Her breeding male from then until 2005 was an unbanded male. The pair successfully fledged chicks in all the years they mated.

From 2006 -2011, EN 53's mate was Al 26, who had been trapped and banded in 2003. The pair successfully fledged chicks in the years from 2006 to 2010.

Project Puffin hopes the pair will return this May after wintering somewhere in the North Atlantic.

EN 53's history is not the only success story. During last summer's breeding season Eastern Egg Rock had 123 nesting Puffin pairs, 90 nesting Roseate Tern pairs, 829 nesting Common Tern pairs, and 2051 nesting Laughing Gull pairs.

Additionally, Puffins nested on two other Maine islands – Matinicus Rock and Seal Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Learn more at projectpuffin.org.

— Neil Poppendeck



CALENDAR

SATURDAY MARCH 3

Birds as Art Day

AMV's first school art competition

Noon-4 p.m., Rotunda of Alumni Hall, Miami University, Oxford

See birds through children's eyes at Audubon Miami Valley's first children's art competition.

All contest entries from students in kindergarten through senior year of high school will be on display.

The young artists could compete in any of three categories — realistic art, graphic design or cartooning. The two themes they could explore were Birds of the Midwest and Endangered Bird Species

An awards ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. in Room 1 of Miami's Alumni Hall. At 3 p.m. that room will host a live raptor presentation by Raptor, Inc.

MONDAY MARCH 12 AMV public program

Birds of the World:

Assessing the Status of Accessible Knowledge of World Birds

Town Peterson,

Kansas University Distinguished Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

7:30 p.m., 218 Pearson Hall, Miami University, Oxford

Town Peterson's research on the geography of biodiversity focuses on the ecology of species' distributions in space and in time.

His formal training began at Miami University, with a degree in Zoology. In his graduate studies at the University of Chicago he specialized in tropical ornithology, with a focus on systematics.

One component of his research looks at the taxonomy of birds and the phylogeny of clades. (A clade is a species and its descendants).

Tied to this is work with the basic geography of bird distributions and the composition of local avifaunas, based on detailed site inventories and scientific collections around the world, which he will discuss with us.

Peterson's work also has taken him into conservation biology and planning, invasive species biology, and disease transmission systems.

Peterson's 7:30 p.m. talk will be in 218 Pearson Hall, Miami University, Oxford.

SATURDAY APRIL 7

Cedar Bog field trip

Cedar Bog Nature Preserve near Urbana, managed by the Ohio Historical Society, is the largest and best example of a boreal and prairie fen complex in Ohio.



It has many rare plants and animals, as well as excellent orchid, prairie and woodland wildflower displays. An almost mile-long boardwalk guides the visitor through this preserve of Ohio's recent past to the Ice Age.

The Cedar Bog Visitor Center, which opened in 2009, includes exhibits that are a prelude to walk in the fen, a classroom, restrooms and a gift shop.

We'll leave from old Walmart parking lot on Locust Street next to MacDonald's at 7:15 a.m. We'll arrive at Cedar Bog around 9. Our guided tour and program will begin at 10, when the Education Center opens. Our guide will be Eric Doerzbacher, director and naturalist.

We expect to arrive back in Oxford late afternoon. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$5 for Golden Buckeyes. Bring a lunch.

TUESDAY APRIL 13

The Impact of Hog Island, 2011

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

Hog Island Educator's Workshop brought together 60 educators from around the country to share and learn how to incorporate natural history into the classroom. As a participant, Hickey had the chance to meet fascinating people, play in nature, gain new ideas and insights into science education, and enjoy a beautiful paradise.

Her talk will focus on the highlights of the camp and will show the impact the workshop has had in her classroom.

Hickey is a first-grade teacher at Marshall Elementary School. She has served as an Earth Club Co-Advisor for the past four years and is currently in her third year as treasurer for the Environmental Mobile Unit.



CALENDAR

SATURDAY MAY 5 Annual Warbler Walk



Join Audubon Miami Valley for the annual Warbler Walk at Kathy Hunter and Ron Huffmeier's farm in nearby Indiana to search for these neo-tropical jewels.

Besides warblers, many other species of birds can also be seen at this beautiful family farm. This time of year many wild flowers are also seen on our hike in their woods.

Meet at 7:30 a.m. on the west side of the parking lot at the old Walmart store (on Locust Street next to MacDonald's) to carpool or caravan. Bring a sack lunch.

MONDAY MAY 14 AMV public program

The BIG Garden

Carol Mundy

Head Naturalist, Glenwood Gardens

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

When children can play and learn in a safe environment, such as a children's garden, they become at ease with nature.

Learning to be at ease in a small garden setting allows them to translate the lessons learned there to their visit to a large park, a hike in a forest, or chasing butterflies in the prairie (i.e. "the BIG Garden").

We must use any opportunity to foster in children the genuine, deep-seated love for nature that only comes from compiling lots of little nature experiences throughout life.

You remember the first firefly you caught or the first shooting star you witnessed — these are the experiences that build a foundation for healthy mind, body and spirit.

This program was originally presented at the American Horticultural Society's Youth and

Children's Gardening symposium and it is meant to encourage parents, teachers and other adults to involve children in nature exploration. By exploring on a small scale, such as in a children's garden, children learn to be aware and respect nature on a big scale when they encounter it.

Mundy holds a degree in Animal Health from the University of Cincinnati. She's been a nature enthusiast her whole life and claims most of her natural history knowledge is through "osmosis."

She's been a naturalist with the Hamilton County Park District since 1986 and became head naturalist at Glenwood Gardens in 2004.

She's taught for University of Cincinnati, traveled as a naturalist with the Delta Queen Steamboat

Audubon Miami Valley meets the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are free and open to all.

We usually meet in the 2nd Floor Community Room of Lebanon Citizens National Bank, in uptown Oxford, Ohio. This newsletter will note when any meeting, such as the March 12 session with Town Peterson, is moved to a larger venue.



Carol Mundy

Company, and currently hosts a weekly radio program on WMKV 89.3 FM.

She has spoken to many local and national groups including the Miami Valley Gardening Conference, the National Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association, the Herb Society of America, the National Conference for Wild Ones, the Native Plant Association, and the Midwest Native Plant Conference.



A CONSERVATION STORY

Suddenly,
our driver
exclaimed
“White-
bellied
Heron!”
And there
was one of
the rarest
birds on
earth.

Photo by
Hardy Eshbaugh



A day in Bhutan with a mythical species

Editor's note: AMV members Hardy and Barb Eshbaugh and Jim and Sarah Michael were among a dozen people who took a two-week birding and cultural trip to Bhutan sponsored by the International Crane Foundation. This is Hardy's report of one remarkable day.

After breakfast in Punakha, we drove along the Puna Tsang Chhu River. It was harvest time and all along the route villagers were threshing rice. On a crystal clear sky-blue day, the scene could not have been more picturesque.

Suddenly, our driver exclaimed “White-bellied Heron!”

There on the other side of the river, not so very far away, was a heron searching and feeding on a rock beach. All of us got a good look at this mythical species, one of the rarest birds on earth and the rarest bird in Bhutan.

The White-bellied Heron belongs to the family Ardeidae that includes the herons, egrets, and bitterns. Sixty-one species belong to this group, and they all fly with their necks retracted, in contrast to the cranes that fly with necks extended.

No one knows just how many individual White-bellied Herons survive. It is believed that the birds' range once covered parts of China, Tibet, India and Nepal. In Bhutan today there are perhaps fewer than 30-40 individuals

We all found positions where we could watch the heron, and some of the more ambitious and perhaps reckless photographers tried to inch ever closer to the bird.

Dr. George Archibald, founder of the International Crane Foundation, was the closest, and he just sat on the edge of the river absorbing this precious moment.

Perhaps the bird got tired of so many people encroaching on its space because suddenly it took flight and headed down river. What a thrill!

Then it was time to walk across the rice paddies, wending our way up toward the hills. We soon stopped at a collection of buildings that turned out to be a White-bellied Heron rehab and research site maintained and operated by Rebecca Pradhan and Tshewang Norbu in collaboration with the Royal Society for the

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SIGHTINGS

Western Hummingbirds come our way this winter

The mild winter has been interesting, especially for hummingbirds.

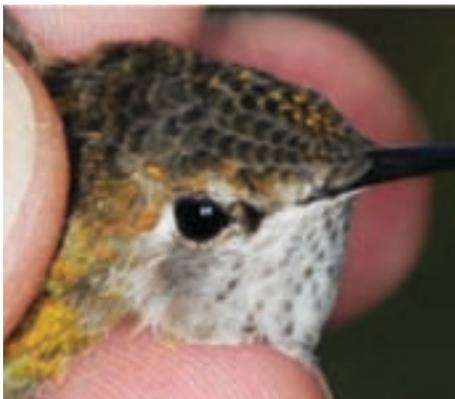
After our Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have gone, western hummers have been showing up in the Midwest more than usual.

This season eight Rufous Hummingbirds have been confirmed through bird banding in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Kentucky.

Two of the closer Rufous were in Brookville and Beavercreek, Ohio. Just next door in Indiana, a Calliope Hummingbird feeding since August, remained in Mt. Vernon as of early February. It has seen 320 visitors!

Although weather may have a part in these numerous sightings, we still do not know exactly why western hummingbirds are showing up in the Midwest.

Collecting data through banding



This Calliope Hummingbird is one of several visitors, but we still do not know exactly why the western birds are showing up in the Midwest this winter

Photo by Tim Tolford

— such as body fat, health of the hummer and other biological information — is important to help us begin to understand their habits and movement to ensure their survival.

Hummingbird banders have been encouraging folks to leave feeders out through December.

It could be they have always been here; we just did not know we were supposed to be looking!

If you would like to stay up-to-

date on rare bird sightings, join Facebook and “Like” the “Rare Bird Alert - U.S. East” page.

The Hummer/Bird Banding Research Collaborative has photos of rare and leucistic hummingbirds banded in Ohio and Indiana on its Facebook page and Web site:

<http://www.hbrcnet.org/>

— Tim Tolford,
Master Hummingbird/
Songbird Bander

White-bellied Heron gave watchers a thrill

(Continued from page 6)

Preservation of Nature.

Pradhan's training is in botany and her passion is the Lauraceae, especially the spice bushes (*Lindera*). She has studied with Dr. Peter Ashton at Harvard.

We were shown around this amazing facility to learn about the efforts to hatch these herons in captivity and to raise them successfully for release back into the wild.

They are employing techniques learned from the International Crane Foundation experiences. When the young are hatched, they are fed by puppet heads so that they won't imprint on their human mentors.

It is very humbling to see what these two advocates for the herons have accomplished in the most minimal of circumstances.

The researchers live in tents while the birds have the run of the two more substantial structures at the study site.

What they have learned has been collected into a book, *The Critically Endangered White-bellied Heron*, published by the Royal Society for Protection of Nature.

— W. Hardy Eshbaugh

See both color photos Hardy shared with the newsletter in the E-extra edition of the spring AMV newsletter.



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Audubon Miami Valley is
an incorporated,
non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization in
Butler and Preble Counties of Ohio

"A goose flies by a chart which
the royal geographical
society could not improve."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

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