



Summer 2014  
Volume 39

the quarterly newsletter of Audubon Miami Valley, in Butler and Preble Counties, Ohio

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Whew! (says Gail, as she passes the leadership baton)

My three years serving as president (we have term limits — whew!) have been exciting, challenging, and, frankly, awe-inspiring.

I saw first-hand the dedication, time, and effort put in by our own board members, chapter members, and volunteers on our local education and conservation efforts.

As a Toyota Togethergreen Fellows grant recipient, I met the most diverse and creative people from across the U.S. working hard in their own conservation niches, from a Seattle sea captain proposing maritime environmental standards to an inner-city Chicago Black History group converting a former factory lot into a bird-watching habitat.

Our program speakers have given us a glimpses of the extraordinary efforts in research being done to preserve wildlife and their habitats around the world.

I am most proud of the chapter's stepping up to officially adopt our local IBA (Important Bird Area) at Hueston Woods State Park as an ongoing stewardship project.

With the help of the Togethergreen grant, we have made significant progress in removing invasive plants from the mature forest habitat that is so important to threatened breeding and migratory bird species.

Volunteers continue to support our very popular after-school Earth Clubs, led by Sharon Edwards of the Environmental Mobile Unit (EMU). Without the volunteers, the clubs would not be possible. (Think of a room full of very excited kids doing hands-on science projects ...)

The Student Art Contest astounds us with artistic results and a diverse group of new bird-lovers, ranging from kindergarten through high school.

At the AMV monthly public meeting May 5, new officers were voted in for 2014-15:

- Mickey Simonds, President
- Linda Williams, Vice President
- Neil Poppendeck, Treasurer
- Gail Reynolds, Secretary
- Members-at-large:

**Libby Birch, Mark Gilmore, Ben Mattox**

Changes sometimes need to be made, including the difficult decision not to hold the AMV Bird Festival this spring. Instead, we have entered into an exciting new partnership with the MU Natural Areas Hike-a-thon, to be held September 27. Many of the activity booths you enjoyed at the Bird Festival will be there, with hosts at the bird blind and guided bird-watching walks.

I wish I had the time and space to mention by name each of our board members. (Please note them listed on the back page of this newsletter.) Each one volunteers much time and effort to our chapter's mission.

I would like to thank Sarah Michael and Janet Zeigler, who will be leaving the board next year, for their tireless efforts organizing and fund-raising for the Bird Festival and the Student Art Contest.

Please welcome Ben Mattox to our board. Ben is a science teacher at Talawanda High School who has been getting teenagers excited about birds for years. We're lucky to have him!

Most of all, I enjoy the company of like-minded people walking through the woods on a field trip, catching sight of a flash of color winging through the trees, hear-

**(Continued on page 2)**

## SIGHTINGS

### Must be a Phainopepla paying a call

On our recent Spring Break vacation in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, we had a surprise visitor through the open oceanside wall of our condo.

A beautiful gray bird with red eyes and a crest on its head flew in and around, landing on the kitchen counter before perching on the curtain rod.

Our granddaughter Lily, who loves all animals, was excited and took pictures with her cell phone.

She then ran to tell us, and we all followed her to see it, only to be greeted by four workmen who were there to flush it out of the place.

So, unfortunately, I did not see the bird.

But the description given to my birder friends matches that of the Phainopepla or silky flycatcher.

The Phainopepla has a very large range, estimated at roughly 1,300,000 square kilometers. It can be found in the United States and Mexico.

Most likely we saw a female, it was gray rather than black.

It was a most striking bird and added a good story to our already wonderful vacation.



Photo by Lily Ramirez  
**Phainopepla**

— Mickey Simonds

### Gail steps down

(Continued from page 1)

ing an ethereal song ...

Thank you for all of your support, (and thank you, Mickey, for taking over as President. You'll be great!)

— Gail Reynolds

**Postscript:** As the incoming president of Miami Valley Audubon, I will attend Chapter Leadership Week at Hog Island, Maine, July 13-18.

I plan to learn about the Audubon organization, meet interesting people, learn about the Maine ecosystem, and have a heck of a good time!

Stay tuned for my tales of the night and morning birding hikes!

I shall be in touch,

— Mickey Simonds



#### 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 autumn 2014 issue is August 1. Send contributions to [jhetrick@amvohio.org](mailto: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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Visit us online at [amvohio.org](http://amvohio.org)



## OPPORTUNITIES

# You can help research and honor 'Doc' Osborne

At the same time government support for scientific research has dropped as much as \$9 billion, nearly one-eighth of the world's bird species risk extinction.

About 10% of Ohio's 200 breeding bird species are endangered or threatened.

One potential way of countering these trends is through education and outreach to the public who elect the political decision-makers.

Conferences that enable researchers to interact directly with the public may be one way to educate people and maintain support for vital research.

In 2013, I organized the Ohio Avian Research Conference to bring together professional researchers with students and citizen scientists to share their work with one another and with interested audiences.

Student involvement is one component important to the conference, so I am working to create an endowed research presentation award to recognize exceptional ornithological work by a graduate student.

I wanted the award to honor a research ornithologist who also has taught and mentored younger ornitholo-

gists. Only one name came to mind; Dr. David (Doc) R. Osborne, Professor Emeritus of Miami University's Zoology Department, and my professor when I took ornithology at Miami in 1998.

The Osborne Award will become a regular component of the Ohio Avian Research Conference.

If the conference ever ceases to exist, the award will become a scholarship/grant, administered by the Oxford Community Foundation, to support graduate research in ornithology at Miami.

If you would like to help honor Doc Osborne by contributing a tax-deductible donation to the award endowment, you can do so in one of several ways:

- Call the Oxford Community Foundation, 523-0623, and ask how you can contribute to the Osborne Award.
  - Contribute via the Oxford Community Foundation website: [www.oxfordfdn.org/](http://www.oxfordfdn.org/) Specify Osborne Award.
  - Contribute via GoFundMe: [www.gofundme.com/osbornaward](http://www.gofundme.com/osbornaward)
- Thank you!

— Casey Tucker

## **NEWS FROM MIAMI'S NATURAL AREAS**

### **Monarch Watch**

We have a new exciting adventure in process. We are developing a butterfly garden beside the bird blind, adjacent to the Dewitt House.

Holly Wissing and Steve Gordon are co-curators, under the direction of Dan Garber our horticulturalist.

We are part of Monarch Watch, working to develop habitat to ensure the Monarchs' continuing survival.



### **Silvoor welcomes new curator**

Welcome to Amanda Bentley Brymer, our new curator at Silvoor Biological Sanctuary.

— James Reid,  
Miami U. Natural Areas  
Field Manager



### **Bark damage indicates borers**

Last year we saw no evidence of the emerald ash borer.

This year we see many trees that have been "debarked" by woodpeckers hunting for the borer.

As you walk the trails, you will see the evidence first-hand.

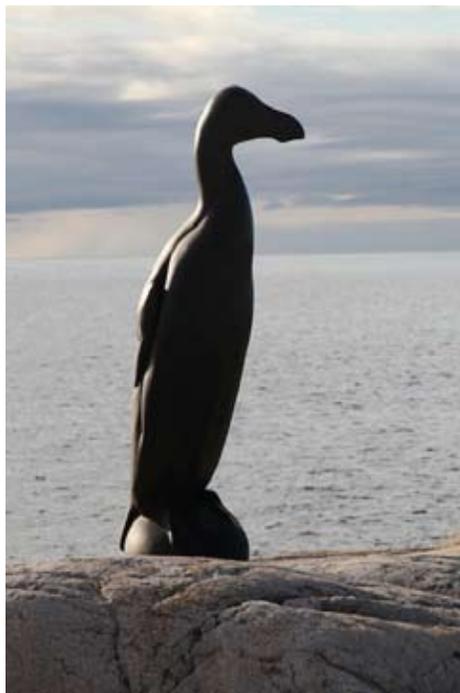


## **SEPTEMBER 2014 CALENDAR**

**MONDAY SEPTEMBER 8**, AMV public program

### **“The Lost Bird Project”: Forgetting is Another Kind of Extinction**

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



**G**one and nearly forgotten in extinction, the Labrador Duck, the Great Auk, the Heath Hen, the Carolina Parakeet, and the Passenger Pigeon leave holes not just in the North American landscape but in our collective memories.

Moved by their stories, sculptor Todd McGrain set out to create memorials to the lost birds, to bring their vanished forms back into the world.

The film “The Lost Birds Project” follows the two-year road trip that McGrain and his brother-in-law, Andy Stern, take as they search for the locations where the birds were last seen in the wild and negotiate permission to install McGrain’s large bronze sculptures there.

“These birds are not commonly known,” McGrain says, “and they ought to be, because forgetting is another kind of extinction. It’s such a thorough erasing.”

The film is directed by Deborah Dickson, whose previous work has been nominated three times for Oscars. It is produced by Muffie Meyer, who has directed several Emmy award-winning documentaries. The score by Grammy-winner Christopher Tin is a tone-poem for chamber orchestra, evoking the majesty of these birds and the pathos of their eventual demise.

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21**

### **Miami University’s Western Campus**

**H**orticulturalists Dick Munson and Vinny Cirrito will again lead us on a guided tour of a significant part of the Miami University, the Western Campus. Munson is Botany Instructor and Conservatory Manager on the Hamilton Campus; Cirrito is the university’s Landscape Architect/Designer in Planning, Architecture and Engineering.

The Western Campus contains a wealth of interesting trees, shrubbery, flowering plants and other flora. We’ll learn about those and also have a chance to appreciate significant new landscaping.

We’ll follow the Campus Tree Walk for the Western Campus to learn about tree and plant species both local and exotic. You can see maps of the Campus Tree Walks at <http://www.pfd.muohio.edu/treewalk/>.

Trees have birds, so bring binoculars!

Meet at 1:30 p.m. at the Bachelor Hall parking lot.



**Two of last year’s hikers got to touch a real snake skin.**

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 27**

### **Hike-A-Thon Plus**

Each autumn, the Hike-A-Thon showcases Miami University’s Natural Areas and their 17 miles of hiking trails.

This fall, the Hike-A-Thon will also showcase activities of the Audubon Miami Valley Chapter. We’ll have our usual hosts at the bird blind, and we’ll offer guided bird-watching walks.

But you’ll also find many of the activity booths you enjoyed in the past when we hosted the spring Bird Festival, which we did not hold this year.

Last year’s Hike-A-Thon attracted almost 1,000 people for a great day in the out-of-doors.



## OCTOBER 2014 CALENDAR

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 11**

### Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge

Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge, near Seymour, Ind., comprises 7802 acres of wetlands, grasslands and hardwood forest. It features a Visitor Center, eight hiking trails and a driving tour.



Established in 1966 to provide migration resting and feeding areas for waterfowl, Muscatatuck is a “Continentially Important” bird area.

More than 280 species of birds have been seen at the refuge.

We'll meet at 6:30 a.m. at the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's).

**MONDAY OCTOBER 13** AMV public program

### The Frogs and Toads of Ohio

**Jeff Davis, Northwest High School**

7:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Community Room,

Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

Ohio is home to 14 anuran species. Some, like American Toads and Bullfrogs, are widely distributed across the state and quite familiar to those who spend time outdoors.

Others, like Mountain Chorus Frogs and Eastern Spadefoots are more specialized and their distributions are limited to areas with specific geography and soils.

This presentation will include distribution maps, recordings of advertisement calls, and plenty of photos of the state's frogs and toads.

Jeff Davis, an educator and Ad-

junct Research Associate in Herpetology and Ichthyology at the Cincinnati Museum Center has worked as a consultant for local, state, and federal agencies and private industries for 18 years.

His focus has been on Ohio's Frogs and Toads, Cave Salamanders, and several species of Ohio reptiles. He has done amphibian surveys in all 88 Ohio counties, resulting in the recent book, “Amphibians of Ohio.”



**Jeff Davis and  
a Wall Lizard**

**THURSDAY OCTOBER 30 THE HEFNER LECTURE**

### The Magic of Cranes — Engaging a Global Community

**Dr. George Archibald**

8 p.m. Benton Hall, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

The future of many crane species was once as fragile as the delicate and graceful birds themselves. George Archibald's visionary leadership in conservation efforts over the past 40 years has given flight to crane conservation worldwide.

In 1973, when cranes were in a perilous situation and many were on the brink of extinction, Archibald, along with Cornell University colleague Ronald Sauey, Ph.D., established the International Crane Foundation (ICF) in Baraboo, Wisconsin, as the world center for the study and preservation of cranes. Today, ICF has more than 50 employees and supports conservation projects in 45 countries.

Archibald is a true conservation ambassador who uses



**Dr. George Archibald**

his unique brand of crane diplomacy to work in sensitive places. He leverages the charisma of cranes to unite people from diverse cultures and countries in work to preserve the landscapes both cranes and people need to survive.

Born in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, Canada, Archibald received his undergraduate degree from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1968, and completed his Ph.D. at Cornell University in 1977.

Archibald has received four honorary doctorates and many awards, including the inaugural Dan W. Lufkin Prize for Environmental Leadership from the National Audubon Society Foundation.

**Please note  
the program  
location!**



## **NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2014 CALENDAR**

**MUNDAY NOVEMBER 9**

### **Germantown Metropark**

**G**ermantown MetroPark is the most diverse and significant natural area managed by Five Rivers MetroParks.

The size, quality, and age of the woodlands are exceptional. Steep topography and varied moisture gradients make for a variety of forest types and microhabitats.

Many species of plants and animals here are found nowhere else in Montgomery County.

The 1,665-acre park also contains large open grasslands, cedar glades, dry hillside prairies, all stages of natural succession, several ponds, and an exceptionally high quality stream, Twin Creek.

We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's) and return to Oxford in the afternoon.

Pack a lunch and bring binoculars if possible.



AMV Field Trip

**MONDAY DECEMBER 8** AMV public program

### **Ohio Lights Out: Using Monitoring Program Data to Save Migrating Birds**

**Amanda Duren, Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative**

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

**E**very spring and fall, millions of birds migrate through Ohio on their way to or from their breeding grounds. Many birds migrate at night, and lights on tall buildings or aimed at the sky can cause birds to strike windows or circle buildings until they fall from exhaustion.

Lights Out programs reduce these risks by encouraging building owners and tenants to limit lighting during migration. This presentation will discuss the results of a monitoring program for bird collisions in downtown Columbus, and how these results are guiding implementation of the new statewide Ohio Lights Out initiative.

Amanda Duren works as the Program Coordinator for the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative. Her duties include the development of partnership projects among public and private conservation organizations and the coordination of avian education activities in Ohio.

She earned a B.S. in Environmental Resource Management from Pennsylvania State University in 2007 and an M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Delaware in 2011. For her graduate work, she studied the impacts of non-native plants on bird populations in suburban forest fragments.



**Amanda Duren**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 13**

### **Brookville Lake**

**D**r. David Russell will again lead us on a tour of the Brookville Reservoir area between Liberty and Brookville, Indiana. We'll be looking for migrating ducks, geese, gulls, terns, sandhill cranes and other species.

The group will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the west end of the Walmart parking lot (on U.S. 27, north of Oxford). Pack a lunch. We'll return to Oxford in the afternoon.



AMV Field Trip



**Bring binoculars, if you can, to this Brookville annual outing.**



## BIRD ART CONTEST

# 3rd AMV art contest featured 170 entries



Students from nine area education programs sent a total of 170 entries to Audubon Miami Valley's third annual K-12 bird art contest on March 22 at Talawanda High School.

Entries focused on two themes: Birds of the Midwest and Birds of the Mississippi Flyway.

A live bird presentation by Hueston Woods naturalist Shawn Conner, an awards ceremony, and a program by Chris Rowlands from Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm topped the activities.

Each student received a ribbon of Merit, Excellence or Participation as well as a certificate, an origami bird and a gift bag.

Congratulations to all the artists!

Participating programs were Eaton Middle School, Kramer Elementary, McGuffey Montessori, Ridgeway Elementary (Hamilton), Talawanda High School (two teachers), Wildwood Elementary (Middletown), After School Art at OCAC, and Bogan Elementary Earth Club.

A big thanks to Audubon Miami Valley sponsors: Enterprise Holdings, Follett's Miami Co-op Bookstore, MU Department of Architecture and Interior Design, Oxford Community Foundation, Oxford Presbyterian Church, and The Kroger Company.

Next year, the Bird Art Contest exhibition will open on March 21 at the Oxford Community Arts Center. Look for details on AMV's website.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make the event a success!

— Libby Birch



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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



**Audubon Miami Valley**  
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**and restore natural**  
**ecosystems**

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