



Fall 2016
Volume 42

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT

National Audubon goals rely on network

“Extending our Conservation Reach Together” is the theme of the National Audubon Society’s five-year plan ending in 2020.

“The birds are counting on us,” said David Ringer, Audubon’s Chief Network Officer.

The new strategic plan emphasizes the central role of the Audubon network and selecting what we can do best and most effectively.

Audubon’s network is a collaborative, interconnected community of partners and local leaders. Every

Audubon chapter, nature center, sanctuary, volunteer leader, member, partner organization and advocate is a vital link in a web that supports migratory birds and the places they live throughout the hemisphere.

The plan focuses on five strategic conservation priorities: coasts, working lands, water, bird-friendly communities and climate.

Here are a few details:

Coasts

Coastal habitats — beaches, tidal flats, salt marshes — are crucial to

birds. Our goal is to protect these places to preserve breeding, stopover and wintering sites for shorebirds. Audubon will target 16 flagship species and habitats, identify threats to breeding, and reduce predator and human disturbance with expanded coastal stewardship programs.

Working lands

Working lands are one of the best hopes for conservation. Audubon will collaborate with landowners, land managers, government agencies

(Continued on page 2)

Yes, that is a Gray Heron standing on a hippo’s back

It’s true what they say: A journey to Africa IS a trip of a lifetime. It’s amazing to see animals we have known from childhood storybooks, zoos, and TV documentaries: Elephants, giraffes, zebras, LIONS!

For a birder, it’s a fantastic display. The fairy tale colors of the Lilac-Breasted Roller. A Gray Heron just hanging out on giant hippo’s back. An elegant Gray-Crowned Crane trying to impress his lady friend. Comical Hornbills squawking as our Land Rover bounces by.

When I (apologetically) told an avid birder friend I was not going to Africa on a ‘birding’ trip, he said, “Don’t worry, you’ll see plenty.”

When a fellow traveler asked me if the Saddle-Billed Stork was a ‘life’ bird for me, I replied, “All of them are!”

-- Gail Reynolds



Photo by Gail Reynolds

See color photos of Gail’s trip and read a full account of her journey in the fall 2016 E-Extra version of the AMV newsletter, available only to digital subscribers. Send your e-mail address to Bev Thomas: bthomas@amvohio.org

National Audubon goals rely on network

(Continued from page 1)

and private industry to increase or stabilize the quality of habitat on privately managed lands to benefit the populations of 20 flagship species.

Water

Audubon will engage and involve the public in issues surrounding water rights and water quality; restore habitats along rivers, wetlands and deltas; and explore market-based solutions that contribute to these goals. This initiative will focus on landscapes where both water quantity and quality are necessary to birds' survival.

Bird-friendly communities

Audubon will provide tools to share information and make all communities safe for birds. Using local expertise the network will identify local opportunities to help birds thrive by addressing local threats and connecting people to conservation actions.

Climate

Climate change is the greatest threat to birds. Audubon's climate initiative focuses on protecting the places

We work together to protect birds and their habitats, and to introduce people to the wonder of birds.

that birds need in a warmer world and advocating for public policy changes to lower carbon emissions. Audubon will tap into people's passion for birds to create a greater demand for change at the local, state, national and hemispheric levels.

Audubon Miami Valley's goals are guided by the National Audubon Society. We work together to protect birds and their habitats, and to introduce people to the wonder of birds. We encourage our members to support both the National Audubon Society and Audubon Miami Valley — together we provide the tools crucial to bird conservation.

— Mickey Simonds, AMV President



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 winter 2016-17 issue is November 15. 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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SEPTEMBER 2016 CALENDAR

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 11

Governor Bebb MetroPark

Horticulturist Dick Munson will lead us on a visit to Governor Bebb MetroPark in southwest Butler County just a 20-minute drive from Oxford.

This 264-acre preserve appeals to nature lovers, history buffs, and outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Acres of woods, meadows, fields, and streams provide ample habitat for wildlife observation and nature study while the park's Pioneer Village provides a glimpse of earlier times in Butler County and the region.

The park takes its name from William Bebb, 19th governor of Ohio, whose 1799 birthplace cabin and boyhood home is the centerpiece of the Pioneer Village.

A park trail map is at www.yourmetroparks.net/governor-bebb-map.pdf.

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



Photo copyright Ellen Dougoud, www.planetgedon.com/ 2016, used with permission

Winter hike at Governor Bebb

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 12

Look, Learn, Touch, Teach:

Connecting with Nature through Authentic Objects

Steve Sullivan, Director, and

Julie Robinson, Senior Project Manager, The Hefner Museum

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

Miami University's Hefner Museum of Natural History is a teaching museum dedicated to the importance of the authentic object in making connections with nature (and recruiting the next generation of birders)

Julie Robinson and Steve Sullivan will address how museum specimens are used in the generation and dissemination of knowledge.

Pedagogical theory, conservation ethics, and philosophy will underpin the discussion with a focus on fun ways to talk with the non-birders in your life about the importance of nature to everyone. Specimens of several local bird species will be available for close inspection.

This program substitutes for the previously scheduled talk by Alexis Faust of the Aullwood Audubon Center. Her talk will be rescheduled.

**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. (We note when the location changes.)
The public is welcome.**

Marshall Elementary School is collecting clean plastic lids and caps to exchange for benches made from recycled plastic. Lids can be taken to the Marshall office, 3260 Oxford-Millville Road, or the Oxford Senior Center, 922 Tollgate Drive.



MONDAY OCTOBER 10

Caesar Creek Lake -- Where Nature and History Meet

Samantha Bachelder, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger

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

Past, present and future meet at Caesar Creek Lake in the Little Miami River Valley.

From Ordovician-age fossils and pioneer villages to tall-grass prairies and wooded wetlands, the unique history and habitats provide visitors with a vast number of outdoor activities and learning experiences.

Caesar Creek State Park is five miles east of Waynesville, in Warren, Clinton, and Greene counties.

The state leases the from the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers, who in the 1970s erected a dam on Caesar Creek to impound a 2,830-acre lake.

The total park area, including the lake, is 7,941 acres. It has 43 miles of hiking trails.

Ranger Samantha Bachelder has two associate degrees from Hocking College, one in Wildlife Management and the other in Natural and Historical Interpretation. Her bachelor's degree in environmental studies is from the University of Cincinnati.



Samantha Bachelder

SATURDAY OCTOBER 15

Shawnee

Lookout Park

One of the Great Parks of Hamilton County Ohio, Shawnee Lookout sits in a prime location at the confluence of the Ohio and Great Miami Rivers.

Well-known for its history and heritage, this hilltop park boasts 4.7 miles of nature trails with breathtaking views of the two river valleys. Our expert leader, Sam Fitton, will help us identify the wildlife we find in this diverse habitat.



A map of the park is at www.greatparks.org/parks/shawnee-lookout.

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 a lunch and bring binoculars if possible.



**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 20
The Hefner
Lecture
Dr. Helen Bailey,
Research
Professor,
Chesapeake
Biological
Laboratory, Md.**

Helen Bailey

This year's Miami University Hefner lecturer, Dr. Helen Bailey, studies spatial ecology, movements and habitat use of marine animals, predator-prey interactions, oceanographic influences of marine top predators, and assesses environmental impacts of offshore energy.

Check muohio.edu closer to the Oct. 20 event for details.

The annual AMV Bird Seed Sale will be Friday Oct. 21 and Saturday Oct. 22 at the Whistle Stop Drive Thru. Order forms will be mailed and placed online in September. Please plan to participate in this year's one AMV fundraiser. The birds will thank you.



NOVEMBER 2016 CALENDAR

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 12

Beavercreek Wetlands

Since its formation in 1988, the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association has facilitated the conservation of more than 1,700 acres along the Big Beaver Creek and Little Beaver Creek in Greene County on the east side of Dayton.



Nancy Bain, a knowledgeable member of the association's board of directors, will lead our tour of one or more of the BCWA's 11 protected properties.

Our starting point will be Siebenthaler Fen. Acknowledged as the crown jewel of the wetland corridor, this 130-acre preserve enjoys year-round use by school groups, bird-watchers and wildflower enthusiasts.

Siebenthaler features a one-mile trail, observation deck, and a boardwalk that takes visitors past wet woods, the fen, and Beaver Creek. Since 1988 biologists have identified over 470 wetland plant species here.

A map of the BCWA protected properties can be found at www.beavercreekwetlands.org/maps/BCWAMapJan2010.pdf

This trip will leave from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's) at 7:30 a.m. and arrive at the Wetlands by 8:45 a.m.

When we've seen enough, we'll gather for lunch in a nearby restaurant before returning to Oxford. Bring snacks and binoculars if possible.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 14

Trees in Trouble: Saving America's Urban Forests

Film and discussion

Andrea Torrice, Filmmaker, Torrice Media

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

It seemed to happen overnight. Thousands of trees started dying unexpectedly in southwest Ohio. Cincinnati almost went broke trying to keep the invasion from damaging property.

The killer was a tiny insect known as the emerald ash borer, a new invasive insect from Asia that will wipe out every ash tree in America unless we do something about it. Emerald ash borers have now infested trees in 35 states.

Cincinnati confronted the crisis and fought the invasive pest by joining together and taking action.

Through partnerships with scientists, city officials and everyday citizens, this community was able to protect their urban forests

The film explores the rich history of urban forestry and new research linking human health and trees, showing that trees play a critical role in protecting human health, reducing costs of infrastructure and mitigating climate change.

Filmmaker Andrea Torrice started



**Cincinnati
Filmmaker
Andrea Torrice**

working in public television nearly 20 years ago. She owns Torrice Media and lives in Cincinnati.

The Ohio Humanities Council, the Stephen H. Wilder Foundation, the Craig Young Family Foundation and the TREE Fund, joined to finance *Trees in Trouble*.

Learn more at www.treesintrouble.com/

Torrice's work is also featured this summer at the Denver Art Museum. The institution commissioned a 15-minute video commissioned by the Denver Art Museum to accompany its show on female Abstract Expressionist artists. The video combines original and archival photographs, film, paintings, text and artist interviews.

Learn more at www.toricemedia.com/

Anyone wishing to join an Audubon field trip by meeting at the site should check the AMV Web site, amvohio.org/field-trips/ shortly before the trip for coordination and meeting instructions.





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

Though Emily Dickinson knew nothing of Hog Island at the time of her death in 1896, the woman who would become first editor of Dickinson's poetry, Mable Loomis Todd, surely would know. A decade after the successful publication of three editions of Dickinson's poetry, Mrs. Todd and her husband bought a majority share of a wilderness island in Maine for a family summer retreat that would eventually become Hog Island Audubon Camp.

Join Tom Schafer as he retells fascinating elements of the story tangentially connecting 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



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

Leaders. He has been a student of Hog Island ever since.

Today he serves on the Friends of Hog Island board of directors and volunteers annually at the camp. At home in Dayton, Schafer is completing work on his book *Nature's People: The Hog Island story from Mabel Loomis Todd to Audubon*. Key parts of that narrative will be shared along with a series of photographs from the family archive housed at Yale University.

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

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17

Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count is more than just a winter morning out in nature with friends. The information collected doesn't sit in a database collecting dust.

"The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers . . . to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America," according the bird count Web site.

The data has helped Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report, predicting the change's effects on the ranges of

588 North American birds. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also used CBC data in 2012 as one of 26 indicators of climate change.

So plan to join the count this year. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Miami University Ecology Research Center on Sommerville 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.





On Hog Island, Amy said, "I began losing myself for hours at a time in my sketchbook." This is her loon.

Rosie Bloom scholar learns to look 'deep and hard'

Upon receiving word that I had been given the gift of the Rosie Bloom Scholarship award to Hog Island, I perused the catalog and thought the Arts and Birding week sounded interesting.

I teach 6th grade special education and language arts, and to my mind keeping a journal with illustrations would be another way to help my students to improve their writing.

Recording my natural surroundings in a journal, be it my garden or bird-feeders or a hike, has always been a part of my life. But to add illustrations? I'd tried a time or two but always ended up tearing those pages out.

When we arrived on the island, we learned we were bunking in the Queen Mary building right on the water. I couldn't believe the wild beauty of the place. Why, just the view out the bathroom window was enough to bring out my phone for a photo! We took a short walk around the area, and no matter where I looked, the sea and forest took over.

Cleo, the chef, treated us to the first of many incredible, locally sourced meals. As I met others from all over the country, I was struck by how all were so grateful to just be there.

Then I began classes. Our art instructor, Jean Mackay, started us with the basics. Since my sketchbook and watercolor set were as virgin as they come, I was a little apprehensive. In 30 minutes we were off and painting,

with good humor. Being a long-time naturalist, I loved how she taught us to look deep and hard at our subject, whether a bird or flower or tree. To notice every detail and wonder why it is there, what makes it work, what sets it apart.

I soon found that a deeper understanding of even the tiniest subject leads to a deeper appreciation. As the week went on, I began losing myself for hours at a time in my sketchbook.

We caught crabs in tide pools. We brought barnacles into the lab and waited patiently until they started to feed. We watched the banding of the three resident osprey chicks.

We learned about wing anatomy from Jonathan Alderfer, the National Geographic Bird Guide illustrator. We wandered into the deep, magical forests to observe pitcher plants. We went out on the boat to see an osprey dive-bomb a bald eagle. We watched the changing light on the bay with loons and seals for company. We soaked up every minute detail possible.

No words can express my gratitude to Audubon Miami Valley for giving me this opportunity. My week on Hog Island truly changed the way I look at the world around me. I hope to share this sense of wonder with my students this year, and for years to come. I am grateful beyond measure.

— Amy Cogan Clay



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Audubon Miami Valley
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natural ecosystems for
the benefit of humanity
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