

CORRECTION

Hardy Eshbaugh talks about Mongolia on Monday May 14. (AN INCORRECT DATE WAS IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER.)

See the full calendar of activities.

Pages 3-6.



At U.S. Rep. Brad Wenstrup's Anderson Twp. office, left to right: Wenstrup District Director Jeff Groenke, Liz Woedl, Rashida Manuel, Mark Gilmore, Audubon Field Organizer Tamara Lunan

Board members lobby for conservation act

Our Audubon chapter is working for legislation to support land, rivers and lakes and working against a potentially damaging proposed energy act.

On April 9, AMV Board members Liz Woedl and Mark Gilmore attended a meeting at the Cincinnati office of Republican Congressman Brad Wenstrup of Ohio's second district.

Wenstrup was out of the country, but Audubon Field Organizer Tamara Lunan set up the session with his district director, Jeff Groenke.

Beyond introducing the mission of Audubon and describing regional partnerships, we were intent on communicating our views of support for HR 502 Land and Water Conservation Act and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. We also urged disapproval of HR 4239, the SECURE American Energy Act.

HR 4329 contains an amendment to the 100-year-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act submitted by Wyoming's Republican Rep. Liz Cheney, with language to recognize a new interpretation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. It

would effectively exempt industry potential fines in the case of "incidental" bird fatalities in the course of operations.

One example is the Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, where under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, BP Oil was financially responsible for the mortality and "incidental taking" of more than 1 million birds covered by the treaty.

BP paid \$100 million to cover damages to birds impacted by the spill. These funds are being distributed through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to restore habitat for waterfowl and other birds.

Cheney's amendment would yield no penalty under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act for a scenario such as this, even though bird mortality could be a reasonably anticipated outcome.

In a February letter to Congress, the National Audubon Society stated:

"This year, our nation celebrates the 100th anniversary

(Continued on page 7)

These native plants belong in everyone's garden

This time we'll consider some of the many woody garden species that provide fruits that attract and sustain birds year-round in the landscape.

Perhaps not as obvious as the fruits are the insects that are attracted to and feed on the flowers, fruits, and leaves and are subsequently eaten by birds.

Let's focus on the fruits of crabapples, hawthorns, roses, and pears.

Native and cultivated crabapples (*Malus*) are favored by many birds throughout the fruiting season (from mid- to late Summer through Winter and early Spring).

Birds that are commonly attracted to crabapples are American Robins, Northern Cardinals, Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Bluebirds, and alas, European Starlings.

Since cultivar crabapples have not been shown to become invasive, there is no reason to avoid them in your garden, especially since true species crabapples are often difficult to find. Just be sure to keep the suckers trimmed off that come up from around the trunk.

Instead of trying to list all the best crabapple cultivars,



The birder's garden

visit your local garden center or arboretum when trees are in bloom to make your selection.

Just make sure the cultivar you select is resistant to fire blight (a bacterial disease), and leaf spot and powdery mildew (fungal diseases).

The Hawthorns, genus *Crataegus*, are less common in the landscape, than are crabapples but their effect is very similar to crabapples.

Their fruits are pomes (same as crabapples) but are normally not as heavily produced as crabapples. Hawthorns, as their name may suggest, have thorns, some of which may be up to 3 inches long and dagger-like! They don't, however, seem to bother feeding birds at all.

The placement of thorny plants in the landscape should be carefully planned so not to interfere with maintenance and sporting activities. Another feature to consider is that the flowers are somewhat musty and unpleasant to the nose! When planted on the borders of the landscape the thorns and smelly flowers should not be a deterrent to having them in your garden.

(To be continued in the next newsletter.)

— **Dick Munson, Conservation Chair**

Zoo reopens bird exhibit

The Cincinnati Zoo has just reopened Wings of the World.

Its new interactive features include a "Migration Game," where families pretend to be a flock of migrating birds

David Orban, animal excellence coordinator, is quoted at the zoo's web site as saying: "Many of the birds' habitats were also upgraded with diverse (and beautiful) trees and plants, new perching, and new substrates.."

Charley Harper-inspired signs are seen throughout the building.

The exhibit features skylights and LED lighting and includes UVA-emitting lights that allow birds to see colors that humans cannot.



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. Judi Hetrick is editor. John Blocher is proofreader. Caitlin Stone designed the Meadowlark logo. The newsletter is printed by Letterman Printing in Oxford on 100% recycled paper.

Deadline for the autumn 2018 issue is July 15. Send contributions to jhetrick@amvohio.org or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056

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MAY 2018 CALENDAR

Audubon Miami Valley Chapter meetings are held during the school year at 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month (except January) in the 2nd floor Community Room, LCNB building, 30 Park Place West in uptown Oxford. (We note when the location changes.) All meetings are open to the public.

MAY 5

MetroParks

Big Week of Birding

It's time again for the Big Week of Birding!

- **Saturday, April 28**, 7-9 a.m.
Gilmore MetroPark, Gilmore Road Area
- **Saturday, April 28**, 6:30- 8:30 p.m. Indian Creek MetroPark, Springfield Road Area
- **Sunday, April 29**, 7-9 a.m.,
Chrisholm MetroPark Woodsdale Regional Park
- **Sunday, April 29**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Salamander Run Preserve
- **Monday, April 30**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Forest Run MetroPark Wildlife Preserve Area
- **Tuesday, May 1**, 7- 9 a.m.
Hueston Woods State Park Bird Banding Station
- **Tuesday, May 1**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Elk Creek MetroPark Meadow Ridge Area
- **Wednesday, May 2**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Four Mile Creek MetroPark Davidson Woods Area
Pre-registration Required
- **Thursday, May 3**, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Four Mile Creek MetroPark Sycamore Bluffs Area



Mongolia photo by Hardy Eshbaugh

MONDAY MAY 14 (CORRECTED DATE)

Mongolia Revealed – Land of the Blue Sky

Hardy Eshbaugh, Professor Emeritus, Miami University

2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West

An opportunity arose for six people to accompany George Archibald, founder of International Crane Foundation, on a conservation expedition to Mongolia, a landlocked country between China and Russia.

It is a vast emptiness that links land and sky and is one of the last few places on the planet where nomadic life is still a living tradition.

Mongolia is an exotic destination for any traveler to a land of superlatives. It is also a land of extremes: largely a treeless landscape with extensive grasslands, and many lakes. It is home to a bounty of exotic wildlife and unusual birds. The average summer temperature is 65°F. Winter average is -13°F.

Mongolia has 250 sunny days a year, often with clear cloudless skies. Precipitation is sparse, averaging only 14.9 inches for the entire year in Ulaanbaatar, the capital. Mon-

golia, the second oldest communist country, shifted to capitalism in 1996. Three million people live in the country that is 78 percent urban. The rural population density is five people per square mile. Journey with Hardy and his son David as he introduces us to this most fascinating destination

Hardy Eshbaugh is a professor emeritus of Botany, Miami University. He earned his A.B. at Cornell University and his M.A. and Ph.D. at Indiana University.

In 1991 he received the Benjamin Harrison Award (Medallion) from Miami, the institution's highest award for faculty "in recognition of contributions to the advancement of education to the nation."

In 2014, Eshbaugh received the Cincinnati Nature Center's Wood Thrush Award for significant contributions to conservation and stewardship in Greater Cincinnati.



JUNE, SEPTEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

SUNDAY JUNE 3

Salamander Run Preserve

Salamander Run Preserve in Morgan Township is an excellent example of the superb conservation results that are possible through cooperative efforts of concerned organizations and individuals.

Conservation efforts by Three Valley Conservation Trust, Ohio EPA and Butler MetroParks have focused on protecting the land from incompatible surface development, protecting streams and buried aquifers from excessive surface runoff, and further



mitigating damage associated with the Fernald processing facility.

Our guides, Joe Dumyahn, Steve Gordon and Eric Hollins, will give us an informative tour of the property and opportunities to view the Preserve's diverse flora and fauna.

The trip will leave at 8:30 a.m. from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's) and return to Oxford in the afternoon by noon.

Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 7:30 P.M.

eBird - What Does It Mean to You?

Brian Wulker, Fernald Preserve, Harrison, Ohio

2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West

Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University and the National Audubon Society, eBird gathers basic data on bird abundance and distribution from a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

As of November 2016, more than 330,000 unique users have submitted to the program more than 26 million checklists, more than 366 million observations, and data for more than 10,300 species.

eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers.

The observations of each participant join those of others in an international network. The data are then available via internet queries in a variety of formats.

eBird documents the presence or absence of species, as well as bird abundance through checklist data. A web interface allows participants to submit their observations or view results via interactive queries of the database. Internet tools maintain personal bird records and enable users to visualize data with interactive maps, graphs, and bar charts. All these features are available in a dozen languages.

Brian Wulker is an environmental scientist with both B.S. and M.S. degrees from Morehead State University in Kentucky. He works for Navarro Research and Engineering at the Fernald Preserve in Harrison, Ohio, where he has primary responsibilities in restored area maintenance and monitoring of constructed wetlands and prairies.

He is an avid and accomplished birder and bird photographer. He also volunteers as an eBird regional editor for Ohio and northern Kentucky to review bird records and maintain data quality in eBird.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 15 Talawanda High School Natural Areas

When the new Talawanda High School was constructed, 97 acres were set aside as natural forest, wetland, and prairie spaces, creating opportunities for student field studies and public recreation.



This trip will give us an opportunity to visit and appreciate this remarkable preserve.

Our leader will be Adriane C. Ruther, Sustainability Initiative Coordinator at Talawanda.

Trails could be swampy, so wear appropriate footwear. We'll meet at the high school at 8:30 a.m.

For field trip information, including any last-minute changes, contact trip coordinator Jim Michael at jmichael@amvohio.



OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 2018 CALENDAR

MONDAY OCTOBER 8

Of Fire, Bison ... and Voles

Amy Sullivan, Miami University

2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West

Tallgrass prairie is one of North America's most endangered ecosystems: only about 2 percent remains, mostly in small disconnected patches.

We will explore how fire and bison shaped intact tallgrass prairie ecosystems historically, and how the flora and fauna of modern remnants and restorations are shaped by mammalian herbivores of a very different sort: voles.

Amy Sullivan holds a Ph.D. in biological sciences from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she combined her fascination with grasses and small mammals in a practical way by studying how

voles, which are herbivorous rodents, impact tallgrass prairie vegetation.

She has worked in grasslands spanning deserts, mountains, and prairies.

Currently she is a Visiting Assistant Professor with Project Dragonfly at Miami University. Project Dragonfly. That project offers graduate-level courses and does science outreach, financed by a National Science Foundation grant.



Amy Sullivan

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10

East Fork State Park

East Fork State Park in Clermont County, at 4,870 acres, is

one of Ohio's largest state parks. It is in the Little Miami River basin, just 25 miles from Cincinnati.

Within the park, Harsha Lake provides opportunities for water birds of all kinds.

East Fork offers a great diversity of landscape, including dry-forested hills, rocky cascades, abandoned farmlands, thickly grown floodplains, marshy grasslands and swamp forests.

This diversity lends to an abundance of plant and animal life

Woodlands are composed of

beech, sugar maple, red and white oak, shagbark hickory, and wild black cherry, while the swamp forests contain silver maple, American elm, sycamore, and black gum.

A map of the Park is at https://parks.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/parks/PDFs/parks/Maps/East_Fork/east-forktrailmap.pdf.

David Taylor, park naturalist, will lead our visit.

The trip will leave at 7:30 a.m. from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's), arriving at the Park around 9 a.m., and returning to Oxford by late afternoon.

Pack a lunch and bring binoculars if possible.



SUNDAY OCT. 14

Spring Valley Wildlife Area

Spring Valley Wildlife Area is situated in the gently rolling agricultural region of southwest Ohio just east of the Little Miami River.

This 842-acre preserve contains a wonderful variety of habitats, including cropland and permanent meadow intermixed with brushy fencerows and extensive brushy coverts. Its bird list features more than 230 species.

Of special note is one of the largest and most easily accessed marshes in the area.

Other notable habitats include mature hardwoods, brushy hedgerows, croplands and overgrown fields.

The wetlands comprise about 150 acres and are encircled by an easily traversable trail.

A boardwalk allows excellent access to the marsh without disturbing the delicate ecosystem.

A map of the the preserve can be found at <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/wildlife/Maps/Wildlife%20Area%20Maps/PDFs/springvalley.pdf>.

Expert naturalist Sam Fitton will lead this trip.

We will leave at 7:30 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 if desired and bring binoculars if possible.



NOVEMBER 2018

MONDAY NOVEMBER 12

Feeding Birds with Native Plants

Tara Poling,

Marianist Environmental Education Center, Dayton, Ohio

2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West

The Marianist Education Center at Mount Saint John in Dayton has a commitment to native plants as one of the anchors in its mission to restore communities of land and people.

It collaborates with Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning each year to host the Midwest Native Plant Society's conference.

Saturday June 23 is this year's date for its annual native plant sale, the proceeds of which go to land restoration at sites including the Mount St. John Marianist Nature Preserve.

It provides land audits for homeowners wanting to attract wildlife, incorporate native plants or remove invasive species

Its citizen science projects have included a bee count, a feederwatch, and butterfly monitoring.

The grounds of the Mount St. John campus include nature trails, a labyrinth, a living art installation, the Sacred Embrace Earthwork, designed by



Tara Poling

SATURDAY DECEMBER 8

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 http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/files/brookville_trail.pdf.

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

Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible.



MONDAY DECEMBER 10

Hiking and Birding Costa Rica

Marlene Hofman and Kathie Brinkman

2nd Floor Community Room, Lebanon Citizens National Bank, 30 Park Place West

This presentation will focus on Marlene and Kathie's recent travels in Costa Rica with the Sierra Club, a trip heavy on hiking, birding and ecology.

They have lots of photos to share from the trip; some of the birds just about posed for them!

Look for a fun evening and, if you haven't already traveled to Costa Rica, be forewarned that you may be inspired to take the plunge.

Marlene Hoffman was raised on a farm north of Oxford where she developed her love of birds and nature. Joining the local Audubon chapter and birding with the "experts" allowed that interest to grow.

Marlene retired from a nursing career at McCullough Hyde hospital and now has time to pursue outdoor hobbies. She was Oxford's Citizen of the Year in 2017.



Marlene Hoffman and Kathie Brinkman

Kathie Brinkman has been an Oxford resident for 59 years. Thirty-four of those years were spent focused on her career at Miami in computer support services. Kathie worked in Miami's central IT division and also assisted with IT strategic planning. In retirement, she's been able to return to her passions: family, photography, gardening and travel.





Mark Gilmore (right) makes a point in discussion with Wenstrup District Director Jeff Groneke

(Continued from page 1)

of the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Passed in 1918, the law is credited with saving many beloved species from extinction, such as the Wood Duck, Sandhill Crane, Snowy Egret, and more.

“The law implements the visionary treaty signed with Canada in 1916 to protect migratory birds shared by our countries, as well as similar treaties signed later with Mexico, Japan, and Russia.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act protects more than 1,000 species, most of which are not covered by other laws, while also allowing for the regulation of hunting.

“The treaty and legislation aimed to protect a variety of birds that provide value to the country, including waterfowl and wading birds that were over-hunted in the early 20th century, but also insectivorous and pollinating birds, such as hummingbirds, orioles, and

woodpeckers, which help reduce agricultural pests and pollinate crops.

“The 2016 State of the Birds report, published by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, found that one-third of our nation’s bird species are of high conservation concern, and at risk of extinction without urgent conservation action. Birds face numerous modern-day threats.”

With the SECURE Act awaiting votes in the House and Senate, data from the League of Conservation Voters reveal an extreme partisan vote split on environmental issues, arriving at a failing 45 percent average, with Republicans scoring in the single-digits, and their colleagues across the aisle scoring above 90 percent.

Unfortunately, our avian friends are caught in this partisan crossfire.

AMV Board member Mark Gilmore seeks volunteers to help with this season’s work for the Audubon Ash Tree Project - tree scouts, sitters, and technicians are needed. For more info, call Mark at 513-523-5595. <https://amvohio.org/conservation/>



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**We seek a culture of
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