

We're on social media!



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- AMV Facebook
- AMV Twitter
- National Audubon
- Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report
- Audubon's Climate Initiative

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We're happy to send you Audubon Miami Valley's (AMV) winter newsletter. AMV plans a full line-up of meetings and events for this winter and beyond. Find details both in this newsletter and at our website, amvohio.org

Our 40th Annual Bird Seed Sale Was a Huge Success!

We have such loyal, wonderful patrons that return year after year, just like the birds. The weather has been loyal as well (in a way); it's the fourth year in a row with cold rain and no sun. In addition to AMV, the Miami University bird blind also benefits from donations made by our patrons. These funds are used to keep the bird feeders full year-round. **Thank you for all of your loyalty and generosity.** Also, a big thank you to Kelly and Greg at [The Whistle Stop](#) for their continued support!

Oxford Mayor Declares 2018 "Year of the Bird"

On October 4th, Oxford Mayor Kate Rousmaniere signed a proclamation declaring 2018 "Year of the Bird". This proclamation is honoring the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, one of the most powerful and important bird-protection laws ever passed.

In honor of this milestone, the National Audubon Society, along with National Geographic, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and BirdLife International have joined forces with more than 150 other organizations and millions of people around the world to celebrate 2018 as the "Year of the Bird."

The presentation and signing of the proclamation took place at the Oxford Courthouse during the City Council meeting. Several board members of AMV, which proposed the proclamation, were in attendance. Click here to view the full proclamation. More information about the "Year of the Bird" can be found at audubon.org/yearofthebird

Audubon at Your House - The Birder's Garden

In this installment of *The Birder's Garden*, we'll consider some of the many woody garden species which bear fruits that attract and sustain birds year-round in the landscape. In addition to the fruits themselves, insects are attracted to these plants and are vital to the diet of many birds. Let's focus



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on the fruits of crabapples and hawthorns.

Crabapple (Malus)

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 trim the suckers that come up from around the trunk. Visit your local garden center or arboretum when trees are in bloom to make your selection. Make sure the cultivar you select is resistant to fire blight (a bacterial disease), leaf spot, and powdery mildew (fungal diseases).



Hawthorns (*Crataegus*) are less common in the landscape than crabapples but their effect is very similar. Their fruits are pomes (same as crabapples) but are normally not as heavily produced as the crabapple's pomes. 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 as not to interfere with maintenance and other activities. Another feature to consider is that the flowers are somewhat musty and can be unpleasant to the nose! Consider planting hawthorns on landscape borders where thorns and smelly flowers will be less of a nuisance.

Eastern Bluebird Nesting Project - 2018 Update

August 2018 marked the conclusion of the 2nd year of AMV's Bluebird Nesting Project at Hueston Woods State Park Golf Course. In the spring of 2017, volunteers constructed and installed 38 bluebird nesting boxes at the golf course. During that year, volunteers checked the houses on a weekly basis and recorded the activities in each house, such as number of eggs, dates of hatching, indications of predation, and when nestlings fledged. In 2017, monitors recorded the fledging of 91 Eastern Bluebirds, 41 Tree Swallows, and 125 House Wrens. This year, volunteer monitors saw the fledging of 49 Eastern Bluebirds, 121 Tree Swallows, and 76 House Wrens.

As you can see, the number of fledglings by species varied considerably from the first year to the second. The explanation for this variance is difficult at this stage. Once we have 8-10 years of nesting totals, we may be able to better explain the variance from year to year. In the meantime, our boxes are increasing the populations of three native bird species, including the beautiful Eastern Bluebird.



More "Pollinator Cities" Being Established

More and more cities are interested in becoming a "pollinator city", including our very own Oxford. Important pollinators such as bees and monarch

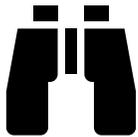


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butterflies have gained attention in recent years due to concerns about declining populations. In Ohio, pollinators include bees, butterflies, humming birds, insects and bats. The decline of pollinators is attributed most severely to a loss in feeding and nesting habitats. Plants that are native to Ohio can help provide habitats for these species, beautify your yard, and conserve water and energy resources. Maybe the best part, they can turn your yard into an absolute BIRD MAGNET! The Ohio State University Extension Office provides resources for the home gardener interested in learning more about attracting pollinators to their gardens. There are also a number of organizations that have native plant sales each year including: the Cincinnati Zoo, Aullwood Audubon Nature Center, and the Marianist Environmental Education Center. Home gardens featuring native plants can provide important resources to help our pollinators. Help your city become a Pollinator City!

Join us for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 15th



For over 100 years, Audubon has been conducting a Christmas Bird Count. Please join AMV members for this important annual citizen science event. It doesn't matter if you are just learning to bird watch or if you are an accomplished birder, come out for a brisk walk to look for winter birds. We will be meeting at Miami University Research Ecology Center located at 5806 Somerville Road in Oxford, Ohio 7AM. Afterward (at noon), join AMV for a potluck luncheon and bird tally at the Research Center. Please bring a dish to share and provide your own table service. For more information, contact the Bird Count Coordinator Larry Gersbach at larrygers@aol.com

New AMV Newsletter Editor

AMV is very excited about our new newsletter editor Alexandria (Alex) Horne. She has all the experience that is needed to create great newsletters. In addition, she loves the outdoors and nature having grown up helping on the family farm. She knows her birds and enjoys taking her nephews birding. We are looking forward to working with her on many newsletters to come! If you have any questions or comments regarding our newsletters or would like to contribute pictures or articles, please contact Alex at ahorne@amvohio.org

Upcoming Field Trips

Brookville Lake Area – Saturday, December 8, 2018

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. 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. A map of the area is [available here](#).

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden – Sunday, January 27, 2019

The Zoo officially opened its doors in 1875, making it the second oldest Zoo in the United States. Featuring more than 500 animal and 3,000 plant species, the Zoo's collection is one of the largest in the country. The Cincinnati Zoo is also a national leader in conservation, education and preservation of wild animals and wild spaces. Our visit to the Zoo will be led by Randy Morgan, the Zoo's Emeritus Curator of the Insectarium. The highlight of the trip will be a special behind-the-scenes visit to the Insectarium. The trip will leave at 8:30 a.m. from the TJ Maxx parking lot (on Locust Street across from McDonald's). We'll meet at the Zoo Gift Shop at 10:00 a.m., then proceed to the bird house before dining at the Zoo's restaurant. We'll arrive at the Insectarium around 12:30 in plenty of time for our 1:00 p.m. guided tour. Before leaving the Zoo we'll also plan to visit the Komodo Dragon and Manatee Springs exhibits. Return to



Oxford will be in the late afternoon. This trip will be limited to ten participants. Participants will be expected cover their own costs for admission, parking and food, and an advance deposit may be required.

Whitewater State Park – Saturday, February 23, 2019

Established in 1949 as a memorial to men and women who served in World War II, Whitewater State Park borders the north end of the much larger Brookville Reservoir, which opened in 1974. It comprises 1,710 acres of varied habitat including woodlands, grassy areas and a 200-acre lake. Whitewater Lake is a good place to spot migrating waterfowl in winter. The Park can also be a good site for wintering passerine species and woodpeckers. Experienced birder Bill Wilson will lead this trip which will leave at 7:30 a.m. from the west end of the Wal Mart parking lot (on US 27, north of Oxford) and return to Oxford in the afternoon. Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible. A map of the Park is at [available here](#).

Spring Valley Wildlife Area – Saturday, March 23, 2019

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. 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. Expert naturalist Sam Fitton will lead this trip, which 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. A map of the preserve is [available here](#).

Hunter/Huffmeier Property – Sunday, April 28, 2019

This will be another delightful visit to the rural Indiana property of our hosts, Kathy Hunter and Ron Huffmeier. The land, located just to the 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. We'll leave at 8:00 a.m. from west end of the Wal Mart parking lot (on US 27, north of Oxford) and return to Oxford after lunch.

Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley Programs

AMV will meet on the second Monday of February, March, April and May (2019) in the 2nd floor conference room of the Lebanon Citizens National Bank (LCNB) building, 30 West Park Place, Oxford, OH. These meetings are free and open to the public, and begin at 7:30 pm.

February 11, 2019

Presenter - Tom Law, President, Voyageur Media Group, Inc., Cincinnati, OH "A Force for Nature: Lucy Braun"

Lucy Braun



Explore the life and legends of E. Lucy Braun (1889-1971), one of the foremost ecologists, botanists and preservationists in American history. In 1950, she published *Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America*, a landmark book that documented forests all the way from Florida to Canada. As a leader in the early conservation movement, she helped preserve natural areas throughout Ohio and Kentucky. This documentary includes stories from people who knew Braun, commentary from scholars, archival photographs and documents, and beautiful nature videography, bringing to light the story of this trailblazing woman of science. This remarkable film was recently produced by Voyageur Media Group, Inc and Meg Hanrahan, Writer/Producer/Director.



Mar 11, 2019

Presenters – Troy and Kathy Schwable

"Habitat Restoration and Pollination Preservation"



Troy and Kathy Schwable

Working hand in hand providing research and reconstruction efforts to bring a wildlife habitat back from invasive species, human mismanagement and apathy the amazing mystery of our natural world rebounds with a wonderful explosion of native plant life, native insect life and native wildlife. Troy and Kathy have earned their Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist certificates as well as Certified Volunteer Pollinator Specialists certificates from The Ohio State University Extension. They love sharing their knowledge of the outdoors and nature with others. Troy enjoys the business side of things while Kathy's passion is in the field and teaching.

April 8, 2019

Presenter – Nancy Ferguson Robinson

"Giant Panda Conservation and the Global Goals for Sustainability"

Nancy Ferguson

Nancy Robinson will join us to discuss Giant Panda conservation and her role as an envoy to the United Nations Development Programme. Giant Panda conservation has faced long odds due many factors including panda biology, habitat loss, and captive care practices which were less than optimal. In January 2017, Nancy traveled to China to learn about the challenges of Giant Panda conservation, spend time with Giant Pandas and scientists and the caregivers working to save the species, and understand the role of Giant Pandas as ambassadors of hope for the Global Goals. Join us for a conversation about the Global



Goals and the relationship between human needs, global partnerships, and species survival. Nancy Ferguson Robinson is currently the Director of Counseling Services for Miami University's Middletown Regional Campus and is a Visiting Faculty member in Social Work. From 1993-2004 Nancy's work focused upon good health, gender equality and violence prevention as director of a regional rape crisis center which also provided web-based consultation and information for people from 92 nations. Her background includes consultation for the Peace Corps and Ministry of Health in Dominica, West Indies. Nancy also worked as a Naturalist Educator/Program Leader at the Cincinnati Zoo for six years, teaching adult and child visitors about wildlife conservation, biodiversity and animal adaptations.

May 13, 2019

Presenter - Randy Morgan, Emeritus Curator - Insectarium, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

"The Leaf-Cutting Ants: Advanced agricultural civilization by instinct "

The social complexity of Leaf Cutting Ants is second only to that of humans. They dominate the Neotropics and nest in fortress cities with millions of task-specialized workers farming fungus for food on freshly cut leaves. Their relentless leaf harvesting behavior stimulates primary plant productivity in nature but also devastates human crops. Come meet our fungus-growing friends and foes: The leaf cutting ants. Randy holds an M.S. in entomology from the University of Wisconsin.



Randy Morgan

Randy worked at the Cincinnati Zoo Insectarium for 32 years and is now retired from his position as Curator of Invertebrates, Reptiles, and Amphibians. At the Zoo he managed a diverse collection of live insects and other small animals for public education display, developed a world-class exhibit and received significant recognition and awards for his efforts. He has worked extensively with leaf cutting ants in the field, in laboratory observation nests and in public exhibits for nearly 40 years. Randy loves to share his passion for these incredible insects and other little animals that propel our living world.



Calendar of Activities

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">2018 DECEMBER</h2> 						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 7:30am Field Trip Brookville Lake 
9	10 7:30-9pm Program LCNB Oxford 	11	12	13	14	15  CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
16	17	18	19	20	21  First day of winter	22
23	24	25  Merry Christmas	26	27	28	29

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">2019 JANUARY</h2>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10am Field trip Cincinnati Zoo 	28	29	30	31		



2019 FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 7:30-9pm Program LCNB Oxford 	12	13	14	15 	16
17 	18	19	20	21	22	23 7:30am Field trip Whitewater SP 
24	25	26	27	28		



2019 MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 7:30-9pm Program LCNB Oxford 	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20  First day of spring	21	22	23 7:30am Field trip Spring Valley WA 
24	25	26	27	28	29	30





2019 APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Deadline to submit articles for spring newsletter 	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 7:30-9pm Program LCNB Oxford 	9	10	11	12	13 12-5PM Art Exhibit OCAC North Parlor 
14	15 7:30-9pm Warbler Refresh Chisholm Metropark 	16	17	18	19	20
21	22  Earth Day	23	24	25	26	27 10am-12pm Big Woods Volunteer Day 
28 8am Field trip Hunter/Huffmeier Property 	29	30				

[Click here to learn more about Earthfest!](#)



2019 MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 7:30-9pm Program LCNB Oxford 	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	





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. Alexandria Horne is the editor. Caitlin Stone designed the AMV Meadowlark logo. The newsletter is printed by Letterman Printing in Oxford on 100% recycled paper.

If you would like to contribute content to the newsletter, please send your content to ahorne@amvohio.org or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Contribution deadline for the Spring 2019 newsletter is April 1st.

Visit us online at amvohio.org Save paper and postage! Sign up for e-delivery by sending your e-mail address to Bev Thomas bthomas@amvohio.org

We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically, and morally unacceptable.

