



The HOUSE WREN

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

P.O. Box 391037, Solon, Ohio 44139-8037 Ph: 216 556 5441

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Visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org

September, 2014

Annual Dinner held June 7th



Attendees Pete Church, Mary and Bob Salomon and John Lillich dig in to the buffet.
Photo: C. Lillich

Close to 40 people attended the 2014 Annual Meeting and Dinner, held this year at the North Chagrin Nature Center.

John Lillich led the traditional nature walk, beginning at 3:00pm, which was followed by an hour of appetizers and chit-chat with fellow members and trustees.

President Mark Demyan called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Bud Shaw, Nominating Committee Chair, put

forward the slate of officers for the upcoming year. The members approved Mark Demyan to

continue as president; Jim Tomko was voted in as vice president, John Weber as treasurer and Carol Lillich as secretary.

Trustees for the 2014-2015 year include: Penny Orr, Andy Lihani, Earl Biederman, Steve Zabor, Alison DeBroux, Bud Shaw, Harvey Webster, Sarah Mabey and Bill Kennelly. There



Mark Demyan presents Award of Merit to John Weber.
Photo: C. Lillich



The evening's program featured Patrick Coy and Karin Tanquist.
Photo: C. Lillich

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were no new trustees voted in this year.

Mark then presented the Seeley Award, which is given to a member for his/her outstanding service. This year the award was presented to Jim Tomko. The Award of Merit went to John Weber, CPA and ASGC

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Jim Tomko wins Seeley Award

Jim Tomko has spent his life enjoying birds. One of his first memories is sneaking off with his father's binoculars to look at things, then returning them before they were

missed. He joined the ASGC while in high school, working closely with sanctuary manager Jim Fulton and field trip leader Neil Henderson.

He helped build the boardwalk on Fulton Pond in the 1990s, and became a trustee in 2000.

President Dan Melcher "assigned" him to lead the field trips after Henderson's death, and he's been leading them ever since. "I'm going to walk

there anyway, so I just invite people to come with me." A favorite memory is a night hike with John Lillich, during which they carried an audio system and called in barred owls.

Jim is a proponent of "local patch birding," the idea that it may be most rewarding to learn the moods and seasons of a place close to you instead of traveling to exotic locales to see a bird

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From the Nest...



Even though we don't publish *The House Wren* during the summer, that doesn't mean we aren't doing anything!

The Education Committee has been busy planning BIRDday parties, a new program for five- to twelve-year-olds who are interested in birds.

Our Saturday Afternoon speaker series (SABN) is set for a new season with Dr. Lisa Rainsong returning with a program on insect songs. Dr. Rainsong

has been busy recording katydid and crickets in our own sanctuaries so you won't want to miss this display of local musicianship.

Neither should you miss our upcoming Symposium on Wind Energy and Wildlife, produced in conjunction with Western Cuyahoga Audubon and Kirtland Bird Club. Our first "co-op" event, "The Lost Bird Project," held March 9th, was a huge success, so we hope you'll support our efforts on this as well.

Look for news of our Annual Dinner and Breeding Bird Surveys reported in this issue. At our July board meeting, we were happy to learn that, thanks to John Weber, we are reinstated as a fully functioning non-profit 501c3 corporation.

—Alison DeBroux, Editor

President's Post

It was a successful Annual Dinner on 7 June. Good food, refreshments and desserts homemade by Robert Demyan

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Surveys show Audubon sanctuaries maintaining good bird habitat



Jim Tomko leads a survey team through the Aurora Sanctuary.

Photo: K. Carter-Cohn

The 10th annual breeding bird surveys of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland sanctuaries were completed in June. Survey leaders were Jim Tomko and Kim Pease, and recorders were David Platt and Mary Salomon.

For the Aurora Sanctuary, the highest annual count of downy woodpeckers, hooded warblers, rose breasted grosbeaks and brown headed cowbirds were observed. Counts of crow and tufted titmouse were at a historical low.

For the Novak Sanctuary west of Townline Road, there were historically high counts of tufted titmouse, eastern towhee, song sparrow and field sparrow. Mourning doves were not observed.

East of Townline, a typical number of individual birds were

noted, BUT we had the highest number of species in 10 years (49)! Historically high numbers of barred owl, willow flycatcher, and red-winged blackbirds occurred, while low numbers of wood thrush were unfortunately noted. We observed two new species: wild turkey and blue-headed vireo.

Overall, there were no major surprises or areas of new concern, though as in recent years, great blue herons were scarce. Our sanctuaries are maintaining their good bird habitat.

Thanks to all who participated and continue to express interest. See you next June!

Mary Salomon, IBA Chair



The debris on the boardwalk, according to survey leader Jim Tomko, is most likely otter scat, and contains the skeletal remains of fishy-smelling crayfish. Mark Demyan checks it out.

Photo: K. Carter-Cohn

A summer walk



Photo: L. Jeffreys

I took a friend for a walk in the Aurora Sanctuary and she took this photo from near the bench where we usually stop to eat cookies. It seems to me to capture the very essence of the place.

As the ominous-looking clouds above the trees became more ominous looking, we decided to retrace our steps back to the parking lot rather than go forward. The skies opened almost as soon as we entered the forest and we were quickly soaked through. I discovered that the trail, being after all a slight depression in the surrounding terrain, becomes a rushing torrent during a downpour. Fortunately my friend is a very good sport.

There was a whole bunch (at least 6 or 8) of cedar waxwings at the pond. I had no idea they gathered there. It's only the second or third time I've ever seen even one! We saw two catbirds and heard more. Saw just a couple of tree swallows and not a single red-winged blackbird! Heard a couple of peewees in the woods on the way in, and the robin-like call of the bird whose call involves something about tea. Carolina wren? or house wren? Not a vireo, I didn't think but it could have been. On the other hand, maybe it was a robin. Heard some jays, too.

—Laurenda Messer

Annual Dinner

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Treasurer, for all the work he did in helping Audubon regain its 501c3 status during 2013. Mary Salomon, who retired at this meeting, was honored for her many years as a member and trustee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm, just in time for a great buffet of home-style cooking with a variety of cookies for dessert. Dinner was followed by "Birds and Beasts in Botswana and Beyond." Patrick Coy and Karin Tanquist lived in Central Africa during 2010-11, and they presented a slide show and narrative of their birding excursions while there.

Jim Tomko

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species that you'll never see again. "Cleveland Audubon is unusual in how much property we own," Jim says. "We should capitalize on this to help educate people about what's in their backyard." Jim's special "patch" is the Aurora Sanctuary, where he often goes to relax.

Jim holds a master's degree in Environmental Science, but chose optometry for a career. Though it may have been his second choice, he enjoys going to work every day to find out who's coming into the office and how he can help them. Jim lives and works in Aurora.



at the 9th Annual
Tinker's Creek Watershed Festival
September 20th, 9am to 1pm
Gazebo Green, Hudson, OH

In Case You Missed It!

7/26/14—WOW! Just as we had hoped! We were dazzled by the spectacular courtship dance of the ebony jewelwings. The iridescent green male with his totally black wings would flutter to a perch on some driftwood in a spot of sun on the sun-dappled stream while two or three females would land near him and flash their white stigmas by repeatedly flicking their wings. They were the stars of the show. We had great, leisurely looks from the bridge above them.

On this walk we were lucky enough to have Lisa Rainsong to help us identify some coneheads, grasshoppers, and crickets by sound. She also identified an Eastern forktail damselfly for us.



Sword-bearing conehead male nymph
Photo: L. Rainsong

John was busy with his net, catching and releasing interesting insects. We saw the ferocious Eastern pondhawk along with blue dasher, common white-tail, ruby meadowhawk, and common green darners. I know there were dragons and damsels that I am forgetting. But what a fantastic hike we had.

—Jim Tomko

The Squawk



Send your comments, questions, or complaints to auduboncleland@hotmail.com or via snail mail to our regular address.

President's Post

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who also was the host and Go To Guy for the event. Thank you, Robert, for all the hard work and organization.

The Executive Committee is looking for our members to step up and get involved in our organization. Since we are all volunteers, we need you the membership to help with the many events, activities and work of our mission.

We are especially looking for someone to take over the Social Media Facebook Postings, and our PR and Development Committee Chair Position.

—Mark J Demyan, President

Special note:

Our own John Lillich, former trustee and Hach-Otis caretaker, will be speaking at Holden Arboretum on September 5th. Good luck, John!

Help wanted

The ASGC is in dire need of people with the following skills:

- **Marketing**
- **Bookkeeping/QuickBooks**
- **Social Media**

If you or someone you know is looking for a volunteer opportunity, please email auduboncleland@hotmail.com or call 216-556-5441.

Thank you!

Upcoming Events

Saturday Afternoon Backyard Naturalist Series

September 20 3:00-5:00pm

"Crickets and Katydid in Concert"

Dr. Lisa Rainsong
Cleveland Institute of Music

Have you wondered about the crickets and katydids singing in the meadows, trees, and pond edges on summer nights and early autumn afternoons? Dr. Lisa Rainsong, faculty member at the Cleveland Institute of Music, will introduce you to the insect musicians of late summer and which ones have been singing at the Novak and Audubon

Sanctuaries. If the weather is warm and dry, we can listen in the fields outside the Novak Education Center after the program.

October 4 3:00-5:00pm

"Chasing Ice"

Marnie Urso
Audubon Ohio

All SABN programs are free and held at our Novak Education Center, 382 Townline Road, Aurora.

Symposium on Wind Energy & Wildlife

October 19 2:00-4:00pm Independence Civic Center

Featured speaker: Dr. Michael Hutchins, National Coordinator

Bird Smart Wind Energy Campaign, American Bird Conservancy

Dr. Hutchins will speak on ABC's national efforts to minimize the impact of rapidly expanding wind energy development on bird populations in the United States.

Field Trips

September 20 2:30pm

"Annual Fringed Gentian Hike"
Aurora Sanctuary

See what dazzled and inspired authors and poets like William Cullen Bryant, Emily Dickinson and Henry David Thoreau to write about the beauty of this native wildflower. These rare flowers are losing ground due to housing developments, loss of wet soils, excess mowing and the use of herbicides. The amazing and delicate blue blossoms are something to behold. In addition to the Fringed Gentian we also see Closed or Bottle Gentian in bloom, some of the last flowers to bloom for the season. Meet at the Audubon Parking lot on the north side of Pioneer Trail a few hundred yards east of Page Road in Aurora.

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER CLEVELAND (S 70)

Board of Trustees 2013-2014
Mark Demyan, President

Earl Biederman	Bud Shaw
Alison DeBroux	Jim Tomko
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To contact an individual trustee, please leave a message at 216-556-5441

Or send an email to auduboncleveand@hotmail.com

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Please recycle this newsletter

A Wry Smile



Did you hear the one about the crow and the telephone pole?

He wanted to make a long distance caw.

How do crows stick together in a flock? Velcrow.

From <http://www.funology.com/bird-jokes/>

“BIRDday” parties off to a good start

The Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland has begun offering children’s birthday parties at the historic, beautifully remodeled Novak Education Center in Aurora.

The Education Committee believes that giving a child (or grandchild) a bird-themed birthday party encourages his or her interest in birds and nature. We call it “Saving the world, one birthday party at a time.”

The party includes a craft, “science” experience (dissecting owl pellets), games and a personalized birthday cake and special gift. We top it off with a hayride through the Novak Sanctuary.

Our “pilot” party for Education Committee member and volunteer, Kathy Cochran’s daughter Sarah, was a resounding success. At least we think so, considering the giggles we heard during all the activities.



Volunteer Kathryn Craig supervises owl pellet dissection.

Parties are planned to last approximately two and a half hours and begin at two o’clock pm. They are available for children age five to twelve. The price starts at \$80 for a small (2-5 children) party, which covers our costs. Volunteers plan and direct the activities. Parents don’t have to do anything except invite their guests and show up.

We are accepting reservations for selected dates through November 15th. For more information, contact auduboncleveand@hotmail.com.

Special Co-op Event!
Symposium on Wind Energy and Wildlife
October 19, 2014 2-4 pm Independence Civic Center

DATED MAIL

