



# The HOUSE WREN

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

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Visit our website at [www.clevelandaudubon.org](http://www.clevelandaudubon.org)

October, 2014

## What is Education?

It's the prominent 2nd half of our mission: "...to promote the conservation and appreciation of birds and other wildlife through habitat preservation and educational activities focusing on the greater Cleveland community." What do we mean by that and how are we meeting the goals of that mission? The *House Wren* posed that question to the Education Committee, trustees and friends of ASGC. While not a comprehensive survey, this special Education issue explores some of the answers and ideas for how we can continue to educate, and better educate, our members and the non-bird-loving public. Thank you to all who responded.

### It's a philosophy...

Education is the only avenue whereby the principals of conservation, stewardship, and the need to balance the precious resources of our natural world can be taught.

We must take a balanced approach and not become "environmental zealots" by rationally discussing all sides of the issue. If we do not, we run the risk of alienating the very group of people we are trying to educate. We have to keep in mind that the vast majority of people only care about how it affects them or their family. Nobody in Toledo really cared about the algae bloom that has occurred for years in Lake Erie until they couldn't drink the water. We must keep the objectives in mind. You can get more done with honey than vinegar as they say.



Volunteer Laurenda Messer speaks with two Cleveland youth at the Tinker's Creek Watershed Festival in September.

I believe we should appeal to the average Joe, no pun intended. We should develop programs that will spark an interest in the "ordinary average guy/gal." Once you have the hook in place and people are interested in birds, then topics that affect birds and the environment can be discussed with some context. I go back to a statement by a person in Geauga County during the recent Park District controversy: "Who cares about the Virginia rail; it is just some dumb bird from Virginia."

I have been an educator for over 30 years and I strongly believe that with education comes knowledge. And knowledge is power. The power to effect change in a positive way.

—Joe Malmisur

## Second "Co-op" event to be held in Independence

Please join Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, Kirtland Bird Club and ASGC as we present the

### *Symposium on Wind Energy and Wildlife.*

**Date:** Sunday, October 19, 2014

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Place:** Independence Civic Center  
6363 Selig Dr. Independence, OH

Featured speakers include Dr. Michael Hutchins, American Bird Conservancy (ABC); Dr. Lorry Wagner, Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCO); and Jen Miller, Sierra Club.

We are fortunate to have representatives from three organizations deeply interested in the use of wind energy and its potential impacts on avian wildlife. The ABC has a strong, successful record working to conserve birds throughout the Americas. LEEDCO is a regional non-profit and economic development organization building an offshore wind energy industry in Ohio. The Sierra Club is the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

Expect an afternoon of rousing debate and information. Please support the ASGC at this event!

## *From the Nest...*

### Special Meeting, 9/18/2014

Every so often, we're inspired to examine our organization, above and beyond our daily efforts in conservation and education. This was such a gathering.

As lead by Hiram College professor and ASGC trustee Sarah Mabey, we spent two hours engaged in a "visioning" exercise. Sounds like a made-up word, but it is, in fact, part of the



current corporate lingo.

We tried to create a vision of what the ASGC should be, without being distracted by reality or future goals or implementation issues. It was very hard to leave reality behind, but we successfully discovered a number of ideas for an ongoing vision.

These were as varied as wanting to see someone we'd never seen before at an Audubon event, someone who was just discovering Audubon for the first time, to the ASGC being the "go-to"

organization for all bird and nature-related questions. Our vision created an ASGC that is universally known and loved throughout NE Ohio for our dedication to birds and nature education.

Not bad for two hours' work!

Now comes the hard part: setting goals and implementing them to make that vision a reality. Our next meeting will be in early November, and we will be issuing invitations for non-trustees to join us for this all-important next step.

—Alison DeBroux, Editor



Photo: NAS

**...it's also in the details, ideas, and people who are passionate about what they do**

We can all agree that the ASGC sanctuaries offer a unique educational opportunity. ASGC has its own "outdoor classrooms!" Lisa Rainsong has been recording insect songs in the ASGC sanctuaries for some while now and her presentation is a fine example of using those sanctuaries as an educational opportunity and asset.

I would recommend each trustee (and/or friend of the Audubon Society) take time once a year to be the eyes and ears at an event like this [Tinkers Creek Watershed Festival]. Sue Graham and I had a busy couple of hours of 30 to 40 people, including a lot of youth (children 3 to 17)...You learn a great deal of what people are looking for and want from the Audubon Society. In fact three people then attended Lisa Rainsong's event (SABN—see next page).

—Mark Demyan

Because I worked with young children, through teaching and volunteering, for many years, my thoughts regarding our educational programs are as follows: First and foremost, our program and events should offer kids fun and a good

time. Yet, while they are enjoying themselves, we should focus upon instilling in them a love of nature and of the importance of protecting our environment. If we can do this, hopefully they will be willing to embrace our objectives and want to learn more.

—Sue Graham

I think it is our main mission to educate people in how we are all connected to nature and all the things we do and purchase can have an impact on "Mother Earth." Things as rote as buying a plastic bottle of drinking water or spraying our lawns with herbicide and fertilizer impacts all our water supplies. Many people do not see or feel the association with our natural world and the many things going on in our own backyards. Most children no longer want to get "dirty" looking for insects, frogs and salamanders. We need to continue to take the lead in offering information and programs so that we can conserve, preserve, and be astounded by the wondrous natural history just outside our doors.

—Jim Tomko

**Penultimate year for Project Que**

In July, the ASGC hosted approximately 40 students for the annual "Project Que." (PQ)

PQ is a one week summer camp for middle schoolers from the near west side, sponsored for the last nine years by John Carroll University. The program also includes tutoring and twice yearly science seminars, with the goal of developing students for STEM fields: science, technology, engineering and math. The program costs about \$30,000 per year, mostly from grants and JCU.

Goria Vaquera, PQ's past director and a JCU sociologist, says grant money has dried up and JCU will no longer be able to fund the week-long program. There will be one more year so that this year's 7<sup>th</sup> graders can finish the program.

For the last five years, PQ participants have been bused to the Novak Education Center for a day of nature activities sponsored by the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland. This year, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders were



treated to a presentation by Back to the Wild, the wildlife rehabilitation organization from Castalia, OH.

A Northface grant initially funded this Audubon Day; ASGC has continued to fund it since then.

"I think it's wonderful to bring inner city kids out to experience nature," says Steve Zabor, ASGC trustee and volunteer. It's "one of the few things we do for Cuyahoga County youth."

As work begins on ASGC's programming budget for 2015, funding a final Audubon Day for PQ looks likely. Beyond that, providing a nature experience for this inner city population remains high on our priority list.

**A Mighty Mite**

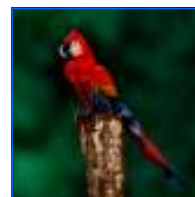
Mighty mite is my nickname for one of our smallest songbirds. Only about four inches long with a seven-inch wingspan, the golden-crowned kinglet is even smaller than our black-capped chickadee and blue-gray gnatcatcher. Only winter wrens are as small. (Of course the ruby-throated hummingbird is the smallest bird, but he is not a songbird.) How these tiny creatures can withstand the rigors of the northern forest is astounding!

Golden-crowned kinglets have a beautiful olive-green back with darker wings which have 2 white wing bars and white under parts. The dazzling clincher is the scarlet crown stripe flanked on each side by a golden yellow stripe bordered by a black line (females lack the scarlet crown).

This kinglet seems to be a perpetual motion machine with its constant flicking and flitting from branch to branch. These birds are extremely fond of conifers and almost exclusively nest in them. Even in migration they are most likely found in pines, spruces, and hemlocks.

Golden-crowned kinglets do not usually nest in Ohio. They are considered more northern birds but do nest as close as northern Michigan and New York. We begin to see them commonly in the middle weeks of October. Some try to winter in Ohio but most continue farther south. So now is the time to get out there and be awestruck by our natural world!

—Jim Tomko



**Is it a bird?**  
See the November issue for the answer!

## In Case You Missed It!

*"Crickets and Katydid's in Concert"*  
Lisa Rainsong, SABN 9/20/14

Who hasn't enjoyed a cardinal's multi-faceted calls or the perky *chickadee-dee-dee* so common at our birdfeeders? But you may not have paid much attention to the concert in the background. At this fall's first SABN presentation, Dr. Lisa Rainsong of the Cleveland Institute of Music introduced a rapt audience to the instruments of the crickets and katydids that populate almost every meadow and forest of NE Ohio.

It was an afternoon of learning—do you know how to tell the difference between a grasshopper and a katydid? The grasshopper has short antennae; the

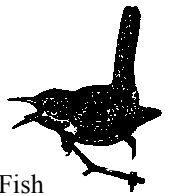
katydid's is often longer than its body. And an afternoon of a *w e — t h e g l a d i a t o r m e a d o w* katydid "sings" by stroking its wings up to 40 times per second. And finally, an afternoon of fun—after her presentation, Dr. Rainsong invited attendees to listen to the meadows outside the Novak Education Center with her headset and a seriously long, directional microphone. Amazing!

—Alison DeBroux



Dr. Rainsong (in cap) points the microphone so Mark Demyan (kneeling) can hear a cricket in the grass.

## The Squawk



After seeing the alert by the Audubon president, David Yarnold, about bald eagles/ Fish and Wildlife Service/windmill company permits I thought about trying to connect with people involved with the "Llano eagles" which have nested very close to the highway where I used to live in Texas. I'm not good at activist type things but I'm hoping to do more of a petition for the Audubon alert. It is an interesting conflict between green energy and our nation's symbol of freedom. I would like to support the Audubon alert in asking the Fish and Game Service "to create a robust eagle conservation program before changing the terms of eagle permits" and wondered if anyone was interested in signing a petition. KC  
(To respond to KC, please contact the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, below.)

Send your comments, questions, or complaints to [auduboncleland@hotmail.com](mailto:auduboncleland@hotmail.com) or via snail mail to our regular address.

## So what are we doing?

Educational programs, 2014

For children:  
*Scout Day* (see page 4)  
*BIRDday Parties* (new this year)

*High School Scholarships* (in planning stage for 2015)

For older youth:  
*Project Que* (see page 2)

For adults and families:  
*Field Trips*  
*Saturday Afternoon Backyard Naturalist*

## Upcoming Events

### Saturday Afternoon Backyard Naturalist Series

**October 4 3:00-5:00pm**  
*"Chasing Ice"*  
Marnie Urso  
Audubon Ohio

In the spring of 2005, acclaimed environmental photographer James Balog headed to the Arctic on a tricky assignment for *National Geographic*: to capture images of the Earth's changing climate. His hauntingly beautiful videos compress years into seconds and capture ancient mountains of ice in motion as they disappear at a breathtaking rate.

*Chasing Ice* depicts a photographer trying to deliver evidence and hope to our carbon-powered planet.

**November 22 3:00-5:00pm**  
*"Birding by Habitat"*  
Cheryl Harner  
Flora-Quest

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

**October 18 3:00pm**  
*"Autumn Leaf Color Hike"*  
Hach-Otis Sanctuary

See the spectacular palette of colors spreading out as far as the eye can see over the beautiful Chagrin River Valley. The mix of tree species and Mother Nature's paint brush along with cool nights and the optimal amount of moisture will provide a show rivaling all other regions. Hopefully the sun will shine on us this year and reflect a dazzling scene. Meet at the Hach-Otis parking lot at the end of Skyline Drive off River Road in Willoughby Hills.



**November 8 10:00am**  
*"Leaf Kicking Hike"*  
Aurora Sanctuary

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Or send an email to [auduboncleveand@hotmail.com](mailto:auduboncleveand@hotmail.com)

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### *A Wry Smile*



Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.

—[\*George Eliot\*](#)

## Scout Day scheduled for this month

**When:** Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 - 4:00pm

**Where:** Novak Education Center

Scouts in kindergarten through 3rd grade can learn about birds and earn a "Junior Birder" patch and a one-year membership in the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland.

Participants will learn the parts of a bird and find out about beaks, feet, nests, bones, wings, and much more. Each station includes a hands-on activity and something to take home.

Graduates of the 2013 Scout Day will teach the younger scouts this year,



Sue Graham and Katie Cochran discuss nesting materials at the 2013 Scout Day.

with adult volunteers supervising each activity. \$5 per scout. Email [auduboncleveand@hotmail.com](mailto:auduboncleveand@hotmail.com) for more information.

## Hiram College looking for butterfly lovers

Learn how to identify common butterfly species at Hiram College. You will be trained in how to walk a butterfly transect and will experience the start of a citizen science project to promote butterfly conservation!

**When:** Sunday, October 5th at 12:00pm

**Where:** Hiram College Field Station, 11305 Wheeler Road

For more information, contact [bohlspace@hiram.edu](mailto:bohlspace@hiram.edu) or [clarkjm@hiram.edu](mailto:clarkjm@hiram.edu).

The ASGC is pleased to support the programs of our higher education partners in NE Ohio.



**DATED MAIL**

