



# 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)

April, 2015

## Scout Day gets bigger and better

The Novak Education Center was filled to capacity with almost 40 Scouts, grades K-3<sup>rd</sup>, on February 28<sup>th</sup>. They enjoyed a fun-filled two hours learning all about birds.

Walking to the “Feet” station, flying with Jim Tomko at the “Wings-n-Bones” station, and “Nest(ing)” with Sue Graham, the attendees participated in hands-on activities at these and five other stations. On hand to help facilitate the stations were Katie, Sarah, Julia and Rachel, middle school Girl Scouts from troops 90141 and 90344 and former participants in the program, and two senior high school students, Madison and Nicole.

At each station the Scouts received



Student volunteers Madison, Nicole, Katie, Julia, Rachel and Sarah

something fun to take home, from a hand-colored feather bookmark to a book of bird stickers. Betsy Simon shared an “Owl Lunch” with the scouts by assisting them in dissecting an owl pellet. And the day wouldn’t be complete without making a pinecone bird feeder. Kathryn Craig made sure

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## ASGC mourns passing of trustee Earl Biederman



Earl and MaryAnn Biederman at an ASGC event in 2012.

Long-time ASGC trustee Earl Biederman passed away March 6<sup>th</sup>. He was a civic-minded person who cared deeply about people and nature. He understood the importance

and synergy of good partnerships and helped ASGC develop such partnerships. He never gave up on putting forth ideas and suggestions on how ASGC could better market itself.

He persuaded the Aurora chapter of Rotary International to sponsor the printing of Aurora parks and trail maps. At board meetings Earl would bring up the subject of the map, and then hand

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## From the Nest...

Ahhh, technology. If you’re on our email list, you already know that we were hacked in early March. You got a message saying I had been held up at gunpoint in the Ukraine and needed money in order to get back home. It didn’t say how you were supposed to send me that money, and visiting the Ukraine has never been on my bucket list, so I hope none of you were in the least taken in by it.



The funny part, or maybe not, is that I had attempted to access the email account in January from a public computer in Washington state, and been refused unless I could “verify” who I was. The verification required me to identify another email address which I didn’t have access to from there, so I couldn’t complete my business.

When I returned to Ohio, I attempted to change the verification email and was told there was a 30-day “grace” period

before it would go into affect.

So when the Hotmail account was hacked, I couldn’t recover it because it was still in this grace period.

Ironic, isn’t it? Microsoft does its best to interfere with legitimate users’ access to their own accounts, but hackers can act with impunity.

I guess you get what you pay for. Until we have a better solution, we will regrettably continue to use Microsoft’s free service. Our new email address is: [auduboncleland@outlook.com](mailto:auduboncleland@outlook.com).

—Alison DeBroux, Editor

**SEE INSIDE THIS EDITION**

**Spring Bird-Walk Schedule  
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**Save the Date!**

**ASGC Annual Meeting  
June 6<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**Cleveland Metroparks  
Canalway Nature Center  
State Boat Landing Room**

**3:00** Bird walk along the towpath by John Lillich and Jim Tomko

**4:00** Wine and Cheese reception

**5:00** Chapter meeting and awards ceremony

**6:00** Dinner

**7:00** Dr. Robert Rice speaks on shade grown, bird friendly coffee

## Announcing the 82nd Annual Spring Bird Walks 2015 April 12, 19, 26; May 3, 10, 17

Bird Walks begin at 7:30 A.M. each Sunday from April 12th through May 17th at the following locations:

### [Cleveland Metroparks Reservations](#)

Huntington: Beach Parking Lot off Lake Rd., Bay Village

Rocky River: Rocky River Nature Center Parking Lot, 24000 Valley Pkwy, North Olmsted

Big Creek: Lake Isaac on Big Creek Pkwy., Middleburg Hts.

Brecksville: Parking Area at Station Rd. Bridge Trailhead; entrance just south of Rte. 82 on Riverview Rd. entry to park, Brecksville

Hinckley: Bridge on Medina Rte. 44 at S. end of Hinckley Lake, Hinckley

Bedford: Hemlock Creek Picnic Area, off Button Rd., Bedford

South Chagrin: Jackson Field Parking Lot on Chagrin River Rd. N. of Miles, Moreland Hills

North Chagrin: Sunset Pond at Sanctuary Marsh, Mayfield Village

Ohio & Erie Canal: Visitor Center Parking Lot, Whittlesey Way off E. 49th St., S. of Grant Ave., Cuyahoga Hts.

### [Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland](#)

Aurora Sanctuary: Parking Lot E. of Page Rd. on E. Pioneer Tr., Aurora

Blanche Novak Sanctuary: Parking Lot .8 mi. N. of Rt. 82 on Town Line Rd., Aurora

### [Holden Arboretum](#)

Corning Visitor Center: Main Parking Lot off Sperry Rd., Kirtland

Lantern Court: Lantern Ct. Parking Lot, Kirtland-Chardon Rd. Kirtland

Shaker Lakes: Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, 2600 S. Park Blvd., Shaker Hts.

Mentor Marsh: Parking Area on Headlands Rd. at E. end of Marsh, Mentor

### [Lake Metroparks](#)

Penitentiary Glen: Parking Lot on Kirtland-Chardon Rd., Kirtland

### [Geauga Park District](#)

Various Locations: Call 440 286-9516

### [Gates Mills](#)

Call Susan Curtis (440 338-4923) for information

### [Portage County](#)

James H. Barrow Field Station: Wheeler Rd., Hiram. Call Eric Faber (330 527-3076)

The Bird Walks are sponsored by the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland (216 556-5441), the Cleveland Museum of Natural History (216 231-4600), the Cleveland Metroparks (440 734-6660), the Lake County Metroparks (440 256-1404), the Geauga Park District (440 286-9516) and The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes (216 321-5935).

For further information call one of the sponsor organizations. The walks are led by expert volunteers and are free to all for the enjoyment of our out of doors.



### **The price of dedication...**

Due to the snow melt and ice jams in the creek, I had to wade across the iron bridge to get to the bald eagle nest in the Novak Sanctuary and she is incubating!

—JT

## *Critter Corner*



### Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)

They are back and I know you have heard or seen them already. Killdeer are one of the few shorebirds that regularly reside in dry areas, frequenting ball fields, pastures, gravel parking lots, school yards, and shopping centers.

Killdeer average 10.5 inches long with a 24-inch wingspan. They are very tolerant of human activities and may be one of the best-known shorebirds.

Killdeer are our only plovers with a double breast belt. From below they have a clean white plumage showing off the double breast band. From above they sport a large rufous rump patch and tail terminated by a black band. Their call is very distinctive and gives them their name.

Killdeer eat mainly insects, hunting with the “run and stop” technique to see what they stirred up. They also eat spiders, snails, worms, and other invertebrates.

Like most shorebirds, they nest on the ground but they do not nest in colonies. They prefer areas with vegetation less than one inch tall. Yes--very short grass or often no grass at all. The nest is a shallow scrape in the gravel, dust, or sand. Several pebbles and debris may be added to it throughout the nesting period. Usually four to five heavily mottled eggs are laid with a 24-day incubation period. Both of the parents incubate the eggs.

The young are ready to run as soon as their feathers are dry. The tiny balls of fluff look like camouflaged fuzz balls blowing in the breeze. When motionless, they are almost invisible. They freeze if danger is present or run for cover. They may dive into a pond for they are very good swimmers.

It is rare to spot them during the winter. Their usual time with us is March through October. Watch for them at your next baseball game!

—Jim Tomko



A Daisy checks out what an owl had for lunch.

### Scout Day

(Continued from page 1)

that each attendee decorated a bag to hold everything they collected for the day.

With Alison DeBroux at the registration desk, everyone was checked in and received their Junior Birder patch at the end of their bird station journey. Each participant also received a one-year student membership in the society.

Both attendees and facilitators had a wonderful day! We are in the planning stages of expanding our programming to include area preschools and possibly home school groups.

—Kathy Cochran, Education Committee Co-chair

### Earl Biederman

(Continued from page 1)

out a few dozen...

Mark Demyan still has at least one of those maps in his truck. "I think of Earl each time I use it...and since Earl stopped having them made, ASGC does not have a Good Map! So we will have to start a Memorial Map Fund to make sure his Legacy goes on... and ASGC has a Good Trail Map for all to use!"

Earl was a friendly, easy-going trustee, with a particular flair for fundraising and networking among his vast array of acquaintances. He was actively involved in the day to day

activities of the Aurora Recreation Department, dating to the 1990s. Earl would say, "If it's not good for the kids it's not worth doing!" He would then go into a football story. Earl was always someone with whom you could discuss just about anything youth or football.

Earl's seat will be difficult to fill. We thank him for all he has done and know that he is resting in peace free of earth-bound burdens and concerns.

There will be a "Celebration of Life" ceremony at the Church of Aurora on Friday, April 10th at 3:00.

—Alison DeBroux with Jim Tomko,  
Mark Demyan & Diann Rucki

## The Squawk



Send your comments, questions, or complaints to  
[auduboncleland@outlook.com](mailto:auduboncleland@outlook.com)

### Did you know?

Like many ground nesters, killdeer perform a "broken wing" feint to draw predators away from their nest. When a perceived predator approaches, they emit a plaintive distress call and drag a wing, limping along to distract the predator away from the nest by acting as if they would be an easy, risk-free meal. When they judge they are far enough away from the nest, they miraculously "heal" and fly out of danger.

Interestingly, if a horse or cow approaches, they don't feign an injury. Instead they begin a series of harsh calls, fluff their feathers, erect their tail and then run or fly at the face of the potential egg crusher in an attempt to turn the procession!

—Jim Tomko

## Upcoming Events

### The Backyard Naturalist

April 25 3:00pm

"Mammals of Ohio"

Marty Calabrese, Naturalist  
Rocky River Nature Center

Spring is here! We'll inventory Ohio mammals during this who's who of the fur-covered vertebrates. This promises to be a great family program!

The Backyard Naturalist is a free program and held at our Novak Education Center, 382 Townline Road, Aurora.

### More Perils & Pitfalls of Birding

April 1 7:30pm Cleveland Museum of Natural History Auditorium

Featured speaker: Bill Thompson III, Editor, *Bird Watchers Digest*

Bill tells tales of birds, birders, and the amazing things that happen when you're out there watching. Produced in partnership with WCAS and Kirtland Bird Club.

### Field Trips

April 11 7:30pm

"Woodcock Watch"

Novak Sanctuary

Take an evening to be amazed at the courtship ritual of the timber doodle. These upland shorebirds are some of the earliest breeders and the males do a wonderful dance followed by a fantastic flight display to woo the females just as darkness falls. Dress for the weather with footgear able to withstand wet meadow terrain and meet at the Novak Sanctuary Parking lot on the east side of Townline Road about a mile north of State Route 82 in Aurora.

May 1 8:00pm

"Frog Walk"

Aurora Sanctuary

Your ears will delight in one of the best concerts in the area sung after dark in an outdoor setting. There will be hundreds of voices and up to seven different parts singing for the same purpose of entertaining the gals and intimidating the guys. Help us identify the various species by sound alone. Be prepared for wet, muddy trails and bring a flashlight. Meet at the parking lot on the north side of Pioneer Trail a few hundred yards east of Page Road in Aurora.

June 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00am

"Finding Fledglings"

Former Aurora Country Club

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## Annual Meeting speaker a first-time visitor to Cleveland

Do you start your day with coffee? Have you thought about where it comes from and how it affects “our” birds? Much of the world’s coffee is grown in an environmentally hazardous plantation method. Tropical rain forests are being lost at an astounding rate and some of that loss is due to clearing for coffee plantations. Neotropical migrants that spend the summers in our area are losing their rain forest wintering grounds which greatly affects their survival and their ability to migrate back.

Dr. Robert Rice of the Smithsonian Institute is the keynote speaker at our Annual Meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup> (*See page 1 for the schedule of events*). His special area of interest is agricultural production and its impact on the environment, both

physically and culturally. He has done intensive research on coffee production and can explain why we all need to buy “shade grown” bird friendly coffee so that we can support a sustainable type of coffee farming and the people who subsist on it. These efforts will help to save some of the rain forest, provide winter food and shelter for birds (and other creatures) and provide income for coffee farmers.

Dr. Rice received his PhD in geography from the University of California-Berkeley and his MS from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.

This will be Dr. Rice’s first trip to Cleveland. Help us give him an enthusiastic welcome.

—Jim Tomko

### *A Wry Smile*

Notice in a farmer's field:  
THE FARMER ALLOWS WALKERS  
TO CROSS THE FIELD FOR FREE,  
BUT THE BULL CHARGES.



### *More Perils & Pitfalls of Birding*

**Bill Thompson III comes to the  
Cleveland Museum of Natural History  
April 1st at 7:30pm**

Bill tells tales of birds, birders, and the amazing things that happen when you're out there watching.

**DATED MAIL**

