

The HOUSE WREN

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

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Visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org

October, 2013

6am wake-up call is for the birds

2013 breeding bird surveys give crucial information about sanctuaries

The IBA Committee/Friends completed our 9th annual breeding bird surveys of the ASGC sanctuaries. The surveys are always done during the first half of June, when the spring migration is over and the birds are nesting. The surveys start at the crack of dawn, 6am, since the birds sing in the early morning, and detection of birds is more easily done by ear rather than by sight once the trees have leafed out. A standard path is taken, and sightings are broken down by multiple habitat zones in each sanctuary.

We keep a very detailed record of each survey, including the different bird species, the number of individual birds seen or heard, and where they were observed. We also maintain spreadsheets



Survey volunteers in 2008

showing year-to-year comparisons of each sanctuary. Over the years, the number of different species seen in the different sanctuaries has varied from 35-56. Every year we see at least one new species. The total numbers of individual birds detected has varied from 100-270. Over time these surveys give us an admittedly inexact picture of the health of the sanctuaries, but are an important tool that we utilize to understand bird diversity and population trends.

In the Aurora Sanctuary, we detected typical numbers of individual birds but had the highest ever total number of different species detected (56). We saw two species never before seen in the survey: herring gull and black-throated green warbler. There were fewer Acadian flycatchers than in any previous survey.

In the Novak Sanctuary west of Townline, birds were slow to become active on this cool cloudy day. Both the number of individual birds and different bird species detected were average vs. prior years. Numbers of great blue herons sadly remained very low, with no evidence of any nests in the former nesting area last used in ~2006. Northern junco was detected for the first time in this sanctuary.

SEE INSIDE THIS EDITION

Kim Kaufman speaks at SABN
Page 4

In the Novak Sanctuary east of Townline, no new species were detected, but this survey showed the greatest ever number of species for this sanctuary (46), and typical numbers of individual birds.

This year's survey participants included Jim Tomko (leader of 2 surveys), Christi Carlson (leader of the 3rd survey), Steve Zabor, Claudia Orr, Ken Kresina, Kathryn Craig, John Lillich, Carol Lillich and Mary Salomon.

As in recent years, there were relatively low numbers of meadow birds and very low levels of ovenbirds (perhaps indicative of habitat loss due to deer grazing). Particularly abundant this year were red-eyed vireos, grey catbirds, American goldfinches, cardinals, indigo buntings, eastern towhees, red-bellied woodpeckers, and great crested flycatchers.

—Mary Salomon, IBA Chair

From the Nest...



President's Corner

To our 1300+ Members:

Over the summer we had some great backyard talks and nature walks. You can review them on our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org. I would like to personally invite you to any and all of our great events over the coming months.

Most importantly, the Audubon

Society of Greater Cleveland **needs your HELP.** Please take the time to fill out the survey in this newsletter OR go to our FB page OR website and fill out the survey. We want to hear from you our MEMBERS, so that we can better provide the programs that interest you. I look forward to some Great Ideas and Insights.

We are always looking for great conservation and nature-loving people to

join our organization as members or "Friends of the Audubon Society." A few trustee positions are also still open. If you are interested, or know anyone who might be, please contact me at 216-556-5441 or email me at auduboncleveland@hotmail.com.

Take care and enjoy the beauty of nature.

—Mark Demyan, President

The saga continues...

Cleveland Bird Club purchases Aurora Sanctuary

On April 2, 1940, at the Cleveland Public Music Hall, 3500 people paid approximately 50 cents to attend a lecture and a movie featuring live birds with synchronized sound, a Cleveland first. For Dr. Arthur Allen, professor of biology at Cornell University, creating "Twenty Thousand Miles in Search of the Rarest Bird in the United States" was a long-time goal. His presentation was sponsored by the Cleveland Bird Club (predecessor to the ASGC) and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Professor Allen was the outstanding ornithologist in the U.S. of his day, training all the new ornithologists of the '20s, '30s, '40s and early '50s. On his retirement, his former students donated funds to create the Cornell Lab of Ornithology—Sapsucker Woods, where Allen continued to do research until his death in 1964. For more about this



Dr. Arthur Allen, professor of biology at Cornell University

remarkable man and his dedication to Audubon Societies and birds, go to <http://www.scricciolo.com/in.memoriam.A.A.Allen.pdf> or plug "In Memoriam: Arthur A. Allen" into your browser to find his epitaph written by another outstanding ornithologist (and Allen's student) O. S. Pettingill, Jr. published in *The Auk*, April 1968.

The profit from the movie and lecture (\$1760) was the largest contribution to a fund for the purchase of what is now the 165-acre Aurora Sanctuary. This dream was realized July 16, 1941, when the Cleveland Trust Company sold the land for the Sanctuary for \$3785. The Aurora Sanctuary is the first and largest of our sanctuaries, notable for its mature hardwood forest, four ponds and hiking trails.

—Ed Buckles

(Editor's note: As the ASGC's unofficial archivist, Ed has been spending many hours reading and organizing old articles, pictures, and records from the ASGC's past. From these, he is in the process of compiling a history of the organization, from the early days when it was the Cleveland Bird Club. For previous chapters in this series, please see The House Wren archives on our website, www.clevelandaudubon.org and look for the February and March 2013 issues.)



Where's Harvey??

Harvey Webster, the ASGC's Programming Chair, has been absent from the Wednesday night programs at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. In fact, the *programs* have been absent as well.

Some of you have called the museum, demanding to know where your monthly nature talk fix has gone.

Well, *we* know where Harvey is. He and Sandy Buckles (Education Chair) have been trying to figure out the future of the ASGC's programming, both at the museum and the Novak Education Center in Aurora. Attendance is down at both locations, and we don't know why.

It is expensive and time-consuming to put on these programs. Is it worth it? Of course it is! But only if you, our members and audience, come to the programs and enjoy them.

That is why we need your help. Please fill out the survey below and send it back to us. Let us know what kinds of programs you would attend, how often, and where you would like to attend them. A more extensive survey is available at www.clevelandaudubon.org if you would like to save a stamp.

From all of us at the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, thank you for your help.

ASGC Programming Survey

1. I am most likely to attend:
 - a) Monthly lectures with a local focus
 - b) 2-3 lectures per year with national speakers
 - c) A class (multiple lectures on a single topic)
 - d) Hands-on programs for my whole family
2. I am most likely to attend programs at:
 - a) Novak Education Center in Aurora
 - b) Cleveland Museum of Natural History
 - c) Local libraries
 - d) Other (please specify): _____
3. I find out about programs by:
 - a) Reading the newsletter
 - b) Looking at the website
 - c) Email announcements
 - d) Friends or word-of-mouth
4. I live in the following county:
 - a) Cuyahoga
 - b) Geauga
 - c) Portage
 - d) Other (please specify): _____

Please circle your choices and mail to:
Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, P.O. Box 391037, Solon, OH 44139
or click on the survey link at www.clevelandaudubon.org
Thank you for your help!

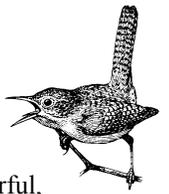
In Case You Missed It!

August 23—It was a wonderful evening walk in the beautiful Molnar Sanctuary exploring its under-used trails through field and forest. We were greeted by a black-masked wood frog and saw a flycatcher, the Eastern wood pewee, eating fruit and feeding some to one of its fledglings. We accidentally flushed two turkeys and a juvenile red-tailed hawk, startling us as much as them. At least two, maybe three scarlet tanagers were singing away. Other species were flitting about preparing for the night.

We found some woodland asters in bloom in addition to boneset, goldenrod, vervain, and great lobelia. We had some childlike fun exploding the seedpods of jewelweed, proving why its other common name is “Touch-Me-Not”! As we finished up the hike we watched some bats hunting over the lake and they were briefly joined by a common nighthawk. It was a perfect de-stressing evening.

—Jim Tomko

The Squawk



“The did you know (Sept. 2013 *House Wren*) is wonderful, but the photo does not depict chimney swifts. Not sure what they are, could be nighthawks.”

—John Lillich

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



To the Fringed Gentian

THOU blossom bright with autumn dew,
And coloured with the heaven's own blue
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,

And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

—William Cullen Bryant 1847



The Fringed Gentian

Blooms August—November
Location: wet meadows and banks
Very rare and
must not be picked!

Upcoming Events

Saturday Afternoon Backyard Naturalist Series

October 19 3:00-5:00pm

*“How To Be A Better Birder - Even If
You're Already an Expert!”*

Kim Kaufman
Executive Director,
Black Swamp Bird Observatory

Kim Kaufman has spent the last 15 years of her life completely immersed in the world of birds and birding. (See more about Ms. Kaufman on page 4) In this fun and enlightening presentation, Kim will share some of the weirdest, coolest, scariest, and most memorable things she's learned about birds and birders and, along the way, try to help you get more from every birding opportunity.

November 16 3:00-5:00pm

*“Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge:
Conserving the Future”*

Jason Lewis
Refuge Manager,
Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge

December 14 3:00-5:00pm

“Gardening for the Birds”

James F. McCarty,
Plain Dealer Columnist
“The Aerial View”

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

Visit our website at
www.clevelandaudubon.org
for directions and more information.

Field Trips

October 19 3:00pm

“Autumn Palette”
Hach-Otis Sanctuary

If weather conditions cooperate, this could be among the most colorful of all autumns. Cool nights that trap sugar and pigments in the leaves along with sunny days and adequate moisture will yield a wondrous rainbow. New England has that weather almost every year but we come in for a close second! Join us for a woods walk in our picturesque Hach-Otis Sanctuary in Willoughby Hills. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Skyline Drive off of River Road.

November 9 9:30am

“Turkey in the Woods!”
Novak Sanctuary

December 20 7:00pm

“Annual Winter Solstice Hike”
Aurora Sanctuary

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To contact an individual trustee, please leave a message at 216-556-5441
Or send an email to
auduboncleland@hotmail.com

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Please recycle this newsletter

A Wry Smile

“God promised men that obedient wives would be found in all corners of the world. Then he made the world round and laughed and laughed...”

- Unknown



Kim Kaufman comes to Novak Education Center

Kimberly Kaufman, Executive Director of Black Swamp Bird Observatory, is the featured speaker at our October SABN event (*see Upcoming Events, page 3*).

She was a founding member of the Ohio Young Birders Club, and helps organize The Biggest Week In American Birding, one of the country's largest birding festivals. Kimberly writes for the multi-author blog, “Birding is Fun,” and she is also a contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms Magazine*.

Kimberly is married to noted bird expert Kenn Kaufman, and together they are working on expanding the Kaufman Field Guides Series, which includes books on birds, butterflies, mammals,

insects, advanced birding, and the most recently published, “Kaufman Field Guide to Nature of New England,” published in fall 2012. They are currently working on the Kaufman Field Guide to nature of the Midwest!

Kimberly and Kenn make their home in northwest Ohio near the famed birding hotspot Magee Marsh Wildlife Area.



COMING IN NOVEMBER

Turkeys!



Send in your best:

Turkey photos

Turkey stories

Turkey recipes...!

email them to

thehousewren@gmail.com

DATED MAIL

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