

The HOUSE WREN

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

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

Volume XXXI, Number 5

Visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org

September, 2013

Annual Meeting held at Shaker Lakes

The ASGC held its Annual Meeting and Dinner at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on June 1st. Early attendees joined John Lillich for a short nature walk along the boardwalks around Shaker Lakes.

Refreshments began at 4pm and the meeting was called to order at 5:03. The attending trustees and members re-elected Mark Demyan as president and Steve Zabor as treasurer. Nancy Adams remains in the office of past president.

Next, attendees elected new trustees Bill Kennelly and Meagan Moore. Mr. Kennelly owns his own business and lives adjacent to the Hach-Otis sanctuary. Ms. Moore is an environmental lawyer.

John Lillich presented the annual Seeley Award posthumously to Dan Melcher, past president and leader of the ASGC. (See accompanying article) The award will be displayed in the Novak Education Center.

Mark Demyan then presented a surprise award to John Lillich, honoring his 37 years of service to the ASGC. Mr. Lillich is retiring as trustee but will continue to oversee the Hach-Otis sanctuary.

The Annual Report was available for all attendees to view and take home a



Mark Demyan presents special award to retiring trustee John Lillich.

copy if they desired. Highlights include: Annual Appeal (Chair, Mary Salomon) - Our generous donors contributed \$12,300 through March 1st. As always, the December appeal drive is the only time during the year we ask our members and supporters for donations.

Education Committee (Chair, Sandy Buckles) - Courtney Brennan, a student at Cleveland State University, was the first recipient of an ASGC Student Research Grant.

Finance Committee (Chair, Steve Zabor) - Agreement was reached to contract with Merrill Lynch to manage our funds.

Programs Committee (Chair, Harvey Webster) - Instead of monthly programs, (Continued on page 2)



Dan Melcher honored with 2nd Seeley Award



Dan Melcher (1947 – 2008), long-time president and tireless leader of the ASGC, was honored with his 2nd Seeley Award at the 2013 Annual Meeting.

Mr. Melcher graduated from Kenyon College in 1968 with a degree in English. He went on to earn a master's from the University of Michigan. He enjoyed wood carving and muzzle-loading rifle re-enactments. His darkly stained hands were the result of using real black walnuts to dye a leather jacket.

“Dan was a big guy, in every way,” says Penny Orr, who succeeded Melcher as president. “It was his vision to create an education center out of the carriage house [on (Continued on page 2)]”

From the Nest...



Welcome, members and friends, to another edition—and season—of *The House Wren*. First of all, please note that the ASGC has *moved*. Our new address is Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, P.O. Box 391037, Solon, OH 44139.

Secondly, you may notice a change in *The House Wren's* format from two columns to three, and the addition of several new articles.

The first of these is *From the Nest*, which will include editorial, highlights from our bimonthly board meetings, and our president's corner.

On page 3, please look for *The Squawk*. This column is for *you*. Email your comments, questions, or complaints to thehousewren@gmail.com or send via snail mail to our new address.

Speaking of complaints, we have had many over the last year or so. When this

newsletter is your primary source for information and schedules of our events, it is frustrating when it shows up in your mailbox after the event in question has taken place. We apologize for the inconvenience this caused. We have streamlined our publishing process and hope we have solved this problem.

—Alison DeBroux, Editor

(Continued on page 2)

First Scout Day a huge success

On May 11th, Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland hosted its first "Scouts and Scholars Day" at the Novak Education Center in Aurora. Thirty-one Girl Scouts attended and by all accounts learned a lot and had a wonderful time.

Education Committee members and volunteers, including Rebecca Drenovsky, Jim Tomko, Ed and Sandy Buckles, Cathy Wheeler, Kathy Cochran, Sue Graham, Faith Osborn,



Jim Tomko assists with dissecting owl pellets.



Nancy Adams, and Alison DeBroux, created informational displays and manned stations on bird beaks, feet, feathers, nests, bones and wings, bird classification, and bird identification. The Scouts also examined owl pellets and made bird feeders.

The Scouts answered questions at each station, earning a Junior Birder patch and a Student Membership in the ASGC. Older scouts helped the kindergarten through 3rd graders complete their patches in the morning and then did their own work in the afternoon.

This program was funded by a grant from the National Audubon Society and funds from the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland.

Our congratulations to all the participating Scouts!

Annual Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

we are looking at presenting two auditorium-based programs annually with nationally recognized speakers.

Sanctuary Committee (*Chair, John Lillich*) - Spraying of cattails in the nearly dry wetland area of Novak was performed, but burning the resulting debris was postponed due to nesting Bald Eagles nearby.

Please visit our website (www.clevelandaudubon.org) for the complete report.

At the conclusion of business, attendees enjoyed pasta Florentine with chicken, roasted vegetables, and salad. Stephanie Demyan provided homemade desserts and Jonathan Hull brought his

signature punch.

ASGC's own Harvey Webster provided the after-dinner program, entitled "Living with Leopold." In a salute to conservationist Aldo Leopold, Mr. Webster compared the world we know today to that of Leopold's in the early 1900s.



Harvey Webster

Clean-up of leftovers was a breeze with many helping hands, and the last cars were leaving Shaker Lakes as the rain started to fall.

From the Nest...

(Continued from page 1)

Board Meeting, 7/23

Committees are forming!

The new Policies and Procedures committee will oversee (and overhaul) the governance of the ASGC. Other committees include Education, Sanctuaries, and Publicity. You do *not* have to be a trustee to serve on a

committee. Please call or email if you are interested in joining a committee.

President's Corner

I would like to welcome Bill Kennelly and Meagan Moore to our Board of Trustees.

Some of the activities and challenges this coming year are:

1. Special work sessions to brainstorm ideas about our operations

Dan Melcher

(Continued from page 1)

the Novak Sanctuary] in order to meet the "education" part of our mission...I think he loved the ASGC more than anything and promoted it everywhere he went."

"Dan had a very compelling long term vision for the future of ASGC," adds Mary Salomon, IBA chair, "and did a marvelous job of engaging many others in efforts to move towards achieving the vision."

Though he could identify whole groups of birds only as "little brown birds," he knew the importance of protecting the environment for them and for all animals, including humans.

He was the real face of the ASGC, which honored him with his first Seeley Award in 2007.

"I think that one of the reasons that Aurora is as "green" as it is," says Diann Rucki, former trustee and ASGC secretary, "is because he would talk, and talk, and talk with his city officials about the need for people to feel connected to the outside world in a way that wasn't made artificial. He was passionate, he was articulate, he was tireless in his pursuit. That is a combination you definitely want on your side!"

Dan's sudden death from a heart attack was greatly felt by all those in the Society. He continues to be remembered as a strong leader, conservationist, advocate, advisor, editor and friend.

and events.

2. Cooperative programming with other Audubon Societies and conservation groups.

3. Strategic planning for 1, 3 and 5 years.

We are looking forward to having some great events this year and hope to attract 100s of NE Ohio nature-loving people. Please contact your neighbors and tell them about ASGC and what we are up to.

We are encouraging our members to consider electronic versions of the newsletter. Sign up on our web site and help us be a more sustainable and conservation-conscious organization.

Take care and enjoy the beauty of nature.

—Mark Demyan, President

In Case You Missed It!

July 26—We had a peaceful Friday evening walk in the Aurora Sanctuary in search of juvenile creatures as they are so abundant this time of year through recent hatchings and births. We saw juvenile red-winged blackbirds, robins, song sparrows and a great blue heron.

We heard a whole family of gray catbirds, presumably from the same nest. We also saw a cedar waxwing family but could not distinguish any juveniles.

The highlight of the evening was a family of rose-breasted grosbeaks. The

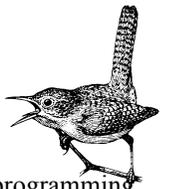
juveniles have a most wonderful buff-colored breast and were begging mom to feed them while she was attempting to get them on their own.

Non-avian youngsters included frogs, toads, and some sunfish that were darting after tick seed trefoil seeds that we were tossing into Fulton Pond. An adult beaver was laboring for its family in the clearings of spatter dock.

It was an amazing hike!

—Jim Tomko

The Squawk



The ASGC needs you!

We want to provide programming and events that appeal to you, but we need your help.

Please tell us what kind of programs you would be likely to attend and where you would like to attend them. Have you been to any programs or events recently? How often would you be likely to attend a program or event?

Email thehousewren@gmail.com or send a letter to our new address with your comments or questions. Thank you!

Did you know?

Hundreds of chimney swifts roost in the brick chimney of Berkshire High School in Burton, Ohio. Take an early fall "field trip" to the parking lot of the school before dusk and wait on the birds to come in for the night. Last year the Geauga Park District counted over 600 birds in early September.



Chimney swifts near Berkshire High School in Burton.

COMING IN OCTOBER

**2013 Breeding Bird
Survey Results**

Upcoming Events

Saturday Afternoon Backyard Naturalist Series

September 28 3:00-5:00pm

*"Out with the Old, In with the New:
Treating invasive narrow-leaved cattails
to make way for improved biodiversity"*

Sarah Cech

Natural Resources Manager,
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

Sarah will talk about the Nature Center's marsh restoration, focusing on the continually improving biodiversity seen every year after the initial spraying and cutting, the methods used, the continuing efforts, and the new birds seen and heard, and native plants introduced in the restoration. Before coming to Shaker Lakes, Sarah worked as a land steward and prescribed burning firefighter for the Nature Conservancy Michigan Chapter.

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

November 16 3:00-5:00pm

*"Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge:
Conserving the Future"*

Jason Lewis

Refuge Manager,
Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge

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

September 21 2:30pm

"Last Day of Summer Hike"
Aurora Sanctuary

For most of us, September is our most pleasant outdoor month of the year. Join us for a walk to view the forest in its "prime". Nuts are ripe, fruit is falling, leaves are full. Fringed and Bottle Gentians are sure to be in bloom! The first day of autumn is tomorrow so we need to enjoy today! Meet at the Aurora Sanctuary parking lot on the north side of Pioneer Trail.

October 19 3:00pm

"Autumn Palette"
Hach-Otis Sanctuary

November 9 9:30am

"Turkey in the Woods!"
Novak Sanctuary

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER
CLEVELAND (S 70)
Board of Trustees 2013-2014
Mark Demyan, President

Nancy Adams <i>Past President</i>	Meagan Moore Penny Orr
Earl Biederman	Mary Salomon <i>Chair-IBA</i>
Sandy Buckles <i>Chair-Education</i>	Bud Shaw
Alison DeBroux <i>Chair-Newsletter</i>	Jim Tomko <i>Co-chair-Sanctuaries</i>
Bill Kennelly	Harvey Webster <i>Chair-Programs</i>
Andy Lihani	Steve Zabor <i>Treasurer</i>
Sarah Mabey	

To contact an individual trustee, please leave a message at 216-556-5441

Or send an email to
auduboncleland@hotmail.com

Like us on Facebook!



Please recycle this newsletter

A Wry Smile

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

-Will Rogers



4th Project Que may be last

Project Que returned to the Novak Education Center on July 17th. Due to budget constraints, this will likely be the last year of this summer science and math enrichment program for middle school Hispanic students from the west side of Cleveland. This is the fourth year they have come to Audubon for an entire day of outdoor education and crafts.

The kids learned about various nature-oriented subjects and got OUTDOORS! They rotated through three activities: John Carroll staff provided geocaching, Cathy Wheeler organized a craft, and the ASGC created a variety of bird education activities in the Ed Center Building.

"In spite of the heat," volunteer Steve Zabor wrote afterwards, "it was an interesting and enjoyable time. I greatly appreciate [the ASGC's] leadership of programs like this. They are our future."

Former Heights Arts Executive Director Peggy Spaeth, who volunteered on the craft project, also commented on the value of this program: "I suspect that this project is a model for effective and impactful science education for children who otherwise would never have the



Steve Zabor discusses beaks with Project Que participants.

opportunity to experience field work, and I'm sad that it most likely will not continue....But pat yourselves on the backs for a job well done and know that you **made a difference** in so many children's lives through your hard work--and hopefully inspired not only future scientists, but folks who will appreciate scientific knowledge no matter what field they enter." Ms. Spaeth's late husband, JCU biology professor Miles Coburn, started Project Que.

DATED MAIL

Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland (S70)
P.O. Box 391037
Solon, Ohio 44139-8037