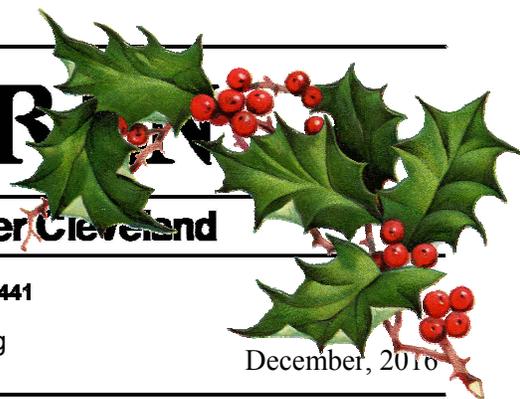




The HOUSE WR

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland



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

Visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org

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2016 Annual Appeal underway

The following is a quote from one of my all-time favorite books, "A Sand County Almanac," authored by Aldo Leopold and published by his son in 1949:

"We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Many of you will recognize Aldo Leopold as one of our first wildlife management scientists. Most of his ideas and principles apply today just as they did almost 100 years ago.

The Audubon Society of Greater



Rob Swaney won in the Landscapes category in our first ever Photo Contest, new in 2016.

Cleveland is striving to live the words of Aldo Leopold and other forward thinking ecologists. Among our priorities is studying and monitoring the Chagrin River Important Bird Area (IBA). IBAs are regions designated by the National Audubon Society as high quality habitat strongholds for migratory and breeding birds. We have begun

gathering and organizing data in order to educate land owners and residents in the IBA about the best practices for wildlife preservation so that we may live in harmony with the natural community.

We also are working to permanently preserve land adjacent to our "emerald gem," the Hach-Otis Audubon Sanctuary, in Willoughby Hills. Additionally, we are developing a stewardship plan for each of our four wildlife sanctuaries, totaling more than 500 acres, all of which are contained in the Chagrin River IBA.

The Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland continues to develop programs that inspire people, young and old, to respect and preserve our natural world. We also provide college scholarships to help students planning to study nature related topics.

These and other projects require much assistance with your time, talents and funds.

Please keep in mind that Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland is an all-volunteer organization. Your entire donation stays local promoting wildlife in your own backyard. Our chapter is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization making your donation tax deductible.

We sincerely thank you for considering us as a recipient of your end-of-the-year donations. Rest assured that we will make careful and thoughtful use of your generosity.

Happy Holidays,

—Jim Tomko, President

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**NAS election response
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High School Scholarships available for 3rd year

For the third consecutive year, ASGC is proud to offer five \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors who plan to major in the natural sciences. To be eligible, a student must be a current graduating senior of a high school in the Greater Cleveland area.

The student must be intending to enroll full-time at an accredited college or university in Environmental Science, Science Education, Natural Resources or a related field in the Natural Sciences.

Preference will be given to students planning a career in environmental science.

This non-renewable award is open to all college-bound seniors fitting the eligibility criteria regardless of GPA or financial need.

Applications are due April 1. The scholarship application will be available in January at clevelandaudubon.org (click on Education and then Scholarship).

From the Nest...

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed time, talent, and funding to the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland this year. We could not accomplish all that we do without your help. Anytime you offer assistance of any kind or in any amount, it is greatly appreciated. Please continue to



help us promote our mission and achieve our goals.

It is Christmas Bird Count season. This is one of the longest citizen science projects in existence. 117 years ago ornithologist Frank Chapman converted folks from a horrendous tradition of the "Side Hunt" (where teams would shoot and collect as many bird and mammal carcasses as they

could) to now counting and not disturbing the birds. An interesting history of this census can be found here: <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/history-christmas-bird-count>

This is a National Audubon sanctioned event occurring from December 14th through Jan 5th. A group of at least 10 volunteers count all the birds seen or heard in a 15 mile diameter

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National Audubon Society responds to election results

Audubon thinks you deserve a thoughtful response to the election that reflects our shared passion for birds — and for progress. Together we've protected birds for 111 years — through administrations led by both parties — and there's an urgent need to bring some perspective to bear.

Some things didn't change last Wednesday morning. An overwhelming majority of Americans still believe climate change threatens their future and the lives of birds and they want real solutions. Millennials still believe their parents have put short-term gain ahead of an environmental legacy, and they want that fixed. Many business leaders believe in a predictable set of environmental regulations. Americans didn't vote against clean air or clean water. Most people still believe in science.

Two things did change that will have a direct bearing on birds and the places they need. It's clear that the incoming administration will have new conservation priorities and that most of the opportunity to make progress on climate change will shift to the states.

Audubon is a durable, respected, trusted conservation network and we're local everywhere. With 463 chapters and 22 state offices and a membership of one million that's almost evenly divided between Ds and Rs, we're authentic messengers for birds in every state in the U.S. Our bipartisan history and membership base is what makes us effective in states that voted for both major candidates. Believe me, it would

be a lot easier to stand on one side or the other of the political road and shout slogans, but that's not what actually conserves forests or sagebrush or city parks.

You know what we're for: the places birds and people need in order to thrive in a warming and drier world, resilient coastlines and communities where people watch out for birds so they have food, water and safe passage. We're also for the common sense rules that have cleaned our air and water and protected endangered species. Together, we have proven our political clout, whether the goal was protecting tens of millions of acres of Alaskan wilderness or the bird-rich islands off Florida's coast. If successful wildlife or environmental protections are threatened, you can expect us to be highly effective, vocal advocates (ask the wind power industry what it's like to oppose Audubon) and to lean hard on our relationships with officials everywhere.

We also stand for Audubon's long-held values of respect and compassion. That's what built the Audubon movement and it's why we will unequivocally speak out against the bigotry, nativism, misogyny, sexism and discrimination that erupted in this year's campaign.

Together we will do everything we can — for birds and the places they, and we, need to thrive.

—David Yarnold, President & CEO
National Audubon Society
(Excerpted from a post-election letter to members)

Critter Corner



Red-breasted Nuthatch
(*Sitta canadensis*)

This tiny northern visitor makes a winter irruption every two or three years apparently tied to the abundance of the conifer seed crop in boreal forests. This is the only nuthatch that undertakes long distance migrations. A few stay with us in the summer and even nest here, usually in the cool hemlock gorges of Lake and Geauga County. Some may arrive as early as August but most do not appear until late September.

At four and a half inches in length and 0.35 ounces it is only half the weight of our year-round resident the white-breasted nuthatch. You could mail two of them with a single first class postage stamp.

Red-breasted nuthatches are blue-gray above with a black cap, a white eyebrow and a black stripe through the eye. Its underparts are an attractive rusty-orange.

These are one of the few North American birds that excavate their own nest cavity in a tree (other than woodpeckers). The cavity is usually in a conifer 5–40 feet high. They will also use soft wood trees such as aspen. The nest cavity is lined with shredded bark, grass, plant fibers, feathers, and fur. Four to seven dull white eggs speckled with reddish-brown are incubated for 12 days. The nestlings fledge in 18–20 days.

They feed on many invertebrates which they glean from trees, working headfirst from the top down to the ground. Because most birds forage heads up, the nuthatches gain a different view and can spot prey the other birds have missed. In winter they take suet and seed. They do cache food items for leaner times.

This may be a good year for red-breasted nuthatches in our area. Watch for these pretty little dynamos at your feeders.

—Jim Tomko

Please return this form and your tax-deductible donation to:

The Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

P.O. Box 391037

Solon, OH 44139

The Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____ Amt Enc _____

E-mail _____

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

In case you missed it!

Wild Turkey Trek
November 12, Novak Sanctuary

The leaves crunched under our feet, giving the wily turkeys a distinct advantage. Maybe they knew it was Thanksgiving month and were avoiding being the center of attention. Luckily Russ Buckbee spotted a feather along the path and it turned out to belong to wild turkey. That proved to the group that turkeys were there! We enjoyed the

autumn leaf color on the trees and on the ground. Black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, tufted titmouse, and ruby-crowned kinglet escorted us along the way. American crow and blue jay called from a distance and a red-shouldered hawk perched in the tree line across the field. This was a great way to spend an hour and a half on a perfect autumn morning.

—Jim Tomko

The Squawk



Send your comments, questions,
or complaints to
info@clevelandaudubon.org

From the Nest

(Continued from page 1)

circle by going out in teams on specified routes and at the end of the 24-hour period tally and compile the data which is sent to National Audubon. It is great fun and you can participate as much or as little as you like. Look for one near you or go to the National Audubon website to find one.

Again, thank you for all your help.
Happy Holidays,

—Jim Tomko, President

Non-ASGC Events

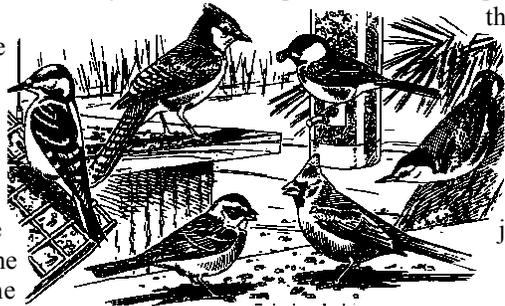
Festival of the Birds
May 5-7, 2017
presqueisleaudubon.org

Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage
June 2-4, 2017
alleghenyaturepilgrimage.com

Did you know?

Red-breasted nuthatches have a back claw on their feet that is two to three times longer than the three front ones allowing them to move about on tree trunks hanging upside down. They easily climb up, down, and sideways with no difficulty.

They anoint the entrance hole to their tree cavity with droplets of conifer resin which they smear around the opening. Often the male coats the



outside while the female coats the inside. They sometimes use a flake of bark or a chip of wood as a tool to accomplish the task thus avoiding the stickiness. It is unknown why they do this but it is likely to discourage predators and competitors from entering their nest cavity.

They do not usually perch at the nest hole which would soil their feathers with pine pitch. They just dive right in.

—Jim Tomko

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Open House

Jan 8 3:00 pm
Novak Education Center
382 Townline Road, Aurora

All volunteers!

Past, present and potential:

Join us for a little post-holiday cheer at our Volunteer Open House.

Come early (2 pm) for a hike in the Novak Sanctuary led by Jim Tomko and Matt Valencic.

Enjoy some good eats while hearing about volunteer opportunities with the ASGC for the coming year.

Check out the Novak Center—worth the trip if you've never seen it!

RSVP at info@clevelandaudubon.org

Sponsored by the Education Committee.

Dec 16 7:00 pm
“Winter Solstice Hike”
Aurora Sanctuary

The Winter Solstice is just a few days away so come and celebrate some of the longest nights of the year just a few days after December's “Cold Moon” with a night hike in the winter woods. The quiet, snow-covered forest is a special place and instills a magical feel. If we have a clear night the winter constellations along with the moon beams will light out way. If clouds are covering us then bring a flashlight. Meet at the Bretschnieder parking lot on the north side of Pioneer Trail a few hundred yards east of Page Road in Aurora.

Field Trips

Jan 28 9:00 am
“Winter Tracks”
Molnar Sanctuary

So often we hike the woods and don't realize what other creatures share it with us due to their secretive, nocturnal habits. Snow cover can reveal all the traffic on our trails from a squirrel racing to a tree with the tracks of a fox in the chase. Let's see what stories we can read in the snow. Meet at the Molnar Sanctuary on the west side of Page Road a few hundred yards north of Mennonite Road in Aurora.

Feb 19 8:30 am
“Great Backyard Bird Count”
Aurora Sanctuary

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Or send an email to info@clevelandaudubon.org

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Please recycle this newsletter

Volunteer with ASGC in 2017!



Volunteers walk with Scouts across Townline Road for a hike in the Novak Sanctuary in October.



8th-grader Julia Toth volunteers during Scout Day as part of our Youth Volunteer program.

I volunteer because I want to help people make the connection between their lives, the natural world in which we all live, and how we impact the environment. Trying to show how everything in nature is connected and how they can help mitigate the impact we have on our environment, especially as it relates to birds.

—Joe Malmisur
Chair, IBA Committee



Volunteers Sarah Mabey and Jenn Clark judge bird checklists for the Chagrin River Bird Quest in September.



Volunteer Sue Graham reads "The Best Nest" to Scout Day participants last February.

A Wry Smile



The problem with political jokes is they get elected.

—Henry Cate, VII

DATED MAIL

