



The HOUSE WREN

Bulletin of the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland

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Visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org

May, 2019

Biomimicry - A part of the solution

ASGC Annual Dinner keynote program

If you think about it, 3.8 billion years of research and development is all around us. Biomimicry is learning from nature and imitating its time-tested designs and strategies. The practice helps humans solve problems, innovate and create sustainable solutions while renewing an appreciation for nature.

Biomimicry is a rapidly expanding field that's transforming the way we think, design, package, produce and distribute goods and services.

GOJO studied the clever archerfish to find a better way to help keep your hands clean.

By untangling the mysteries of a spiderweb, Ornilux discovered the secret to creating its amazingly bird-friendly glass solution.



What would nature do?

By studying snakeskin, Parker Hannifin extended the life of abrasive materials-handling pipes from two weeks to over six years.

"Biomimicry offers real, time-tested solutions. Because nature has had many
(Continued on page 2)

MAY ... The Biggest Month

If you could only go birding one month a year in NE Ohio, May should be your pick. Why? Because during the



Bobolink at S. Russell Park.

Photo: M. Valencic

last 10 years, 276 species of birds have been recorded in eBird during May in our seven-county area. That's 80% of the 341 species seen during the full year in the same area! And ... all these birds are in their finest breeding plumage with many singing their best songs.

May is the peak migration month in

Ohio for warblers, vireos, flycatchers and others that breed throughout Canada and the Arctic Circle. Many of these birds travel from Central America (about 1,700 miles) and South America (over 2,500 miles) to get here.

The tiny ruby-throated hummingbird does a non-stop flight across the Gulf of Mexico from Central America to Texas – about 500 miles. After resting and feeding it continues its journey toward Cleveland.

Bobolinks fly 4,500 miles from Paraguay to the hay fields of our region with many individuals continuing on to Canada.

Go to www.allaboutbirds.org and put in the name of your favorite bird to learn more about its amazing life history.

(Continued on page 2)

From the Nest...

I've made my plans for spring birding and I feel like it is a race between the arrival of the migrants and the emergence of leaves. As the leaves expand the birds are obscured making it a challenge to see their beautiful plumage. Sometimes I have to be satisfied with hearing their song and



then picturing the songster in my mind. My point is that migration seems fleeting and I need to get events on my calendar so I do not have to wait until next year for this amazing phenomenon! There are great places to go and fantastic birds to see!

Speaking of which please consider attending our annual meeting at an excellent venue at Lake Farm Park and a

captivating key note speaker, Carol Thaler, who will be describing the science and engineering to be gleaned through biomimicry. We may be able to solve problems in a sustainable fashion by imitating nature's way. I look forward to seeing you June 1st at Lake Farm Park.

Good birding and I hope our trails cross this spring.

—Jim Tomko, President

ASGC Annual Meeting & Dinner

When:
Saturday, June 1, 2019

Where:
Lake Farm Park's Machinery Barn
8800 Euclid Chardon Rd.
Kirtland, OH 44094

Schedule:
3:00 pm Nature Walk
4:00 pm Social Hour
5:00 pm ASGC Business Meeting
5:30 pm Dinner
6:30 pm Carol Thaler "Biomimicry"

Cost:
\$30 adults
\$25 Seniors 65+/children under 15

RSVP by May 18:
Send your payment to ASGC
Annual Dinner, PO Box 391037
Solon, OH 44139

Sorry, no walk-ins or reservations without payment accepted.

Biomimicry

(Continued from page 1)

attempts at these solutions, they require the lowest amount of energy, provide the most efficient investment and are most sustainable. You don't want to invest in solutions that have to be abandoned in the future." Peter Buca, Vice President of Technology and Innovation, Parker Hannifin

Great Lakes Biomimicry (GLB) is an entrepreneurial non-profit based in Cleveland that helps organizations learn from nature to accelerate innovation. Since its inception in 2010, GLB has created a biomimicry ecosystem in

Northeast Ohio that connects businesses, universities, research, and startups. GLB teaches biomimicry thinking as a new innovation tool through professional development, consulting, and the Biomimicry Fellowship Program at the University of Akron.

To learn more, visit www.glbiomimicry.org. Join us **June 1st for ASGC's Annual Dinner** and hear about these and many more solutions from Carol Thaler, Co-Director of Great Lakes Biomimicry. Biomimicry can be a solution for redesigning our economy based on a respect for and knowledge of nature.

Critter Corner

Photo: M. Valencic



Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*)

Here is a bird that is so appropriately named due to their inextricable attachment to pine trees. This is as opposed to the Cape May warbler that has only rarely been seen in Cape May and the palm warbler that is only seen in palms during migration and other birds that were curiously named. Pine warblers are "our" birds!

Many other warblers spend most of the year in Central and South America while nesting north of Ohio. Pine warblers range from Florida and the Gulf Coast to just over the Canadian border. They are year-round residents south of the Kentucky border.

Pine warblers are almost always found in pines except during migration where they move through deciduous woodlands. They build a sturdy little nest of pine bark, pine rootlets and fibers tied together with spider webs found on the pine tree and lined with pine needles, fur and feathers. The nests are constructed out from the trunk on a thin, horizontal limb in a tuft of pine needles making it invisible from below. They are the first warblers to build a nest in our area and lay three to five eggs incubated mostly by the female for about 10 days.

They feed on insects, spiders and other invertebrates that they glean from the needles, grooves, cracks and crevices of the branches. They are one of the very few warblers that include a significant amount of seed in their winter diet most of which are pine seeds.

I hope you get a look at these beauties with their olive-green head and back, gray wings with two white wing bars, yellow throat and breast and a white belly. They have a broken yellow eye ring.

You may first be alerted to their presence by their musical trill. But you need to actually see them as their song can be difficult to distinguish from chipping sparrows and dark-eyed juncos.

—Jim Tomko

May birding

(Continued from page 1)

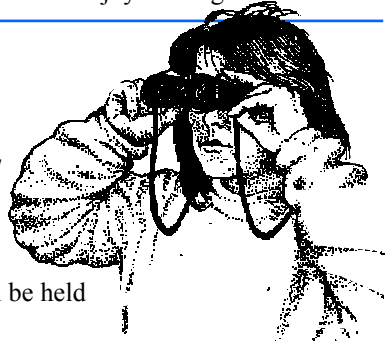
Why May? BUGS – lots of them! As trees begin to flower and leaf out, caterpillar and flying insect activity increases tremendously. Reproduction in birds is energy intensive, from attracting a mate to defending a territory, egg production and feeding of offspring. Flying insects and caterpillars are great sources of protein for both adult and offspring, and the trees, bushes, lakes and streams harbor hordes of 'bugs' for the taking.

Where can you go to see these birds? Start by joining the Spring Bird Walks that take place the first three Sundays in May throughout NE Ohio. Check specifics with your local park district. Then there are the "Hotspots" along Lake Erie from Toledo to Painesville. To the west there is Howard Marsh, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Magee Marsh & Sheldon's Marsh. Closer to Cleveland we have Lorain Harbor, Wendy Park, Cleveland Lakefront Preserve and Headlands Beach area. The more diverse the habitats (like Sandy Ridge Reservation in Lorain County and The Rookery in Geauga County) the more species you can expect to see.

Grab your binoculars, field guide and some friends and enjoy the migration!

2019 Spring Bird Walk Series

Join us as we watch migratory birds return or travel through our area towards their summer breeding grounds during the 86th Annual Series of Spring Bird Walks. Celebrate one of the oldest citizen science partnerships with a total of 6,160 Spring Bird Walk checklists entered into eBird, dating back to 1955! Walks are led by experienced birders and will be held on **Sundays, April 14 through May 19 at 7:30am.**



Locations: Aurora Sanctuary, Bedford Reservation, Big Creek Reservation, Brecksville Reservation, Gates Mills, Geauga Parks, Hinckley Reservation, Hiram, Holden Arboretum, Lake Metroparks, Mentor Marsh, North Chagrin Reservation, Novak Sanctuary, Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation, Rocky River Reservation and Shaker Lakes.

For a detailed list of locations, visit our website at www.clevelandaudubon.org.

New this year: **Saturdays** at River Styx Park, 8200 River Styx Rd., Guilford Twp., Wadsworth. Medina County Park District. **April 13 through May 18 at 7:30am.** 330-722-9364

Saturday, April 20 only: Paddock River Preserve, Aurora; **May 4 only:** John & Carol Lillich Meadows, Willoughby Hills; **May 18 only:** Spring Hill Park, Aurora.

Cosponsored by Cleveland Metroparks, Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, Blackbrook Audubon Society, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Geauga Park District, Hiram College, Lake Metroparks, Medina County Park District, The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society.

In case you missed it!

The “Waterfowl Wander” was spectacular with 13 species of Geese and ducks including a grand slam of the mergansers (common, red-breasted, and hooded). We also saw two species of grebes, and a few great blue herons. There were several bald eagles engaging each other in flight. The *piece de resistance* was a flyover of a sandhill crane. Our thanks to Matt Valencic for guiding us and helping us identify the birds of the nooks and crannies of Ladue Reservoir.



Waterfowl “wanderers” at LaDue Reservoir.

Photo: M. Valencic

During the “Woodcock Watch” we detected several males advertising in all the fields at the Novak Sanctuary. Kim Pease was the first to hear and see the

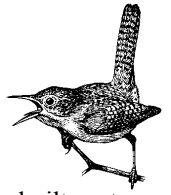
one near us in the field we selected. And he seemed to tolerate being in the “Limelight”! He allowed a close enough approach to get good views and some of us could hear the inhale sound prior to his loud exhaling “Peent”.

At the “Frog Fugue” three frog species (leopard, green, and spring peeper) and one toad species (American) serenaded us while a few red-spotted newts were seen dancing to the full and loud concert.

Amazing things are happening out there as winter sleep turns to the urgent business of spring. I hope you have a chance to witness the show.

—Jim Tomko

The Squawk



From an email:

There are sparrows who have built nests in the awning of a building. The building owner has installed mesh netting to keep the sparrows out - but it has trapped many sparrows and their nests inside the mesh, and the males can no longer get inside to bring food! Please let me know what can be done.

—Kristi

Dear Kristi,

The sparrows you describe are a non-native species from Europe which devastates our native cavity nesters like bluebirds, house wrens and chickadees. The house sparrow takes over the nest, cracks the existing eggs, or decapitates the native nestlings. Then they build their own nest over the carnage and raise their own young. They are not protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and therefore one may do as one likes with them. But the trapping of the house sparrows in the cavity is cruel and inhumane. You will not find much sympathy among naturalists but there are better ways to rid the area of these pesky little birds. I would contact a pest control service to see what techniques they would use to clear out the house sparrows. Let me know how this turns out.

—Jim Tomko, President

Did You Know?

Pine Warblers are one of the very few warblers that may visit your backyard feeders because they are one of the very few warblers that will eat and can digest seeds.

—Jim Tomko

National Audubon convention coming to Milwaukee

Friday, July 26 - Monday, July 29, 2019

Workshops, field trips, birding

More information: www.audubon.org/conservation/2019-convention

Upcoming Events

Field Trips, Etc.

April 14 — May 19 7:30am

“Spring Bird Walk Series”

Aurora & Novak Sanctuaries

Each year we are one of the hosts of 6 weeks of Sunday morning bird walks to see and experience the fascination of migration. This is the 86th year of this series of bird hikes! Each Sunday morning through and including May 19th we will see the changes in species as migration flies by. This is a great opportunity because early in the season it is easy to see the birds in the leafless trees while the number of species is not overwhelming. Come out and join in

Additional locations & dates:

May 4

John & Carol Lillich Meadows
2646 Dodd Road, Willoughby Hills (off road parking east along river; wear boots – could be wet)

May 18

Spring Hill Park
1113 East Pioneer Trail, Aurora, OH.
Meet in parking lot.

Saturdays thru May 18

River Styx Park,
8200 River Styx Rd., Guilford Twp.,
Wadsworth.

June 1 3:00pm

“ASGC Annual Dinner”

Lake Farmpark's Machinery Barn
8800 Euclid Chardon Rd.
Kirtland, OH 44094

Schedule:

3:00 pm Nature Walk
4:00 pm Social Hour
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Cost:

\$30 adults
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RSVP by May 18:

Send your payment to
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PO Box 391037, Solon, OH 44139

DATED MAIL

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To contact an individual trustee, send an email to info@clevelandaudubon.org

Like us on Facebook! 



Please recycle this newsletter

Join us June 1st for the ASGC Annual Dinner at Lake Farmpark
 Program: "Biomimicry"
Please send payment with your reservations by May 18th!

An Audubon Moment

My friend Scott called and was very excited. He was pretty sure a mourning warbler was breeding on his dad's farm in Geauga County, but he did not have any pictures to prove it. Earlier that day (June 2015) he was walking along an overgrown tractor path when he happened upon a 'highly agitated' mourning warbler that was 'giving alarm chips while moving excitedly about the dense foliage', a good sign there was a nest or young nearby. Would I be interested joining him to try for some pictures? **YOU BET I WOULD!!**



Photo: M. Valencic

I had seen few mourning warblers so just seeing one would be a treat. They favor dense cover, even during migration, so you hear them more often than seeing them. They usually breed in the boreal forests of Canada, not in Geauga County! There was only one Geauga breeding record in eBird (2007) and there were no pictures. Would we be fortunate enough to get confirming pictures?

We met the next afternoon with storm clouds to our west. I brought a heavy plastic bag for my camera, just in case. We trudged through the brush and were rewarded with a bird moving deep in the foliage. Forget the binoculars – my 400mm lens took their place. It started to drizzle. We remained very still, watching and hoping. The bird came closer ... it was a mourning warbler ... snap, snap, snap, snap, snap ... the shutter was really slow in the crummy light. What is it carrying? Is that a caterpillar? YES! We got it! Bird carrying food = babies nearby = confirmation of breeding! Then the sky opened up in a big way. Bag over the camera as we moved into the woods to allow the bird its space. We got drenched but we couldn't stop grinning and saying "WE GOT IT"! It will never get published in *Nat Geo*, but it was "good enough" to confirm breeding!

—Matt Valencic