

Application for Membership to the Ohio Ornithological Society

For an online version of this Application, see:
<http://www.ohiobirds.org/join.php>

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail (for electronic news updates) _____

Yes, I'd like to make a one-time donation to help support OOS. Amount \$ _____

Membership dues: \$ _____

Total payment enclosed: \$ _____ (please make checks payable to **OOS**)

How did you hear of OOS? _____

Are you interested in:

- Volunteering?
- Distributing OOS flyers within your club or community?

- \$15 Student/Limited Income
- \$25 Individual
- \$40 Family or Nonprofit
- \$100 Patron or Business
- \$250 Sustaining Member
- \$500 Benefactor
- \$1,000 Lifetime Benefactor

Mail to: Ohio Ornithological Society • P.O. Box 14051, Columbus, Ohio 43214



THE CERULEAN

Inaugural Issue
Spring 2004, Vol. 1, No. 1

www.ohiobirds.org info@ohiobirds.org

Quarterly Newsletter of the **Ohio Ornithological Society: Ohio's Birding Network**

From the Editor

It's been nearly a year since I received a letter that began "Dear Fellow Dreamers." It was signed by Ed Pierce and attached to a packet of information about starting a state-wide birding group. Because of that dream and a lot of hard work by many individuals, the Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS) has become a reality.

I want to thank personally all of those who have already contributed to this fledgling organization. My deepest appreciation also goes to the authors of the following articles, who so eloquently explain what the OOS is, how it came to be, and what we can all do to help it thrive.

I hope you enjoy this inaugural issue of **THE CERULEAN** and that you will join me in supporting the OOS, by becoming a founding member. 🐦

—Su Snyder, *Wooster*

Why an Ornithological Society?

Vivid and lively, ever-present outdoors, tolerant of our presence, wild birds have a deep and universal appeal. Their powers of song and flight call us to transcend our everyday lives. For many of us they open the way to the living heart of nature.

Curious humans, sensitive to the charm of birds, have often come together to seek knowledge and share enjoyment among these fascinating creatures, and to protect them and their habitats from harm. In no other hobby or scientific pursuit have professionals and amateurs worked so closely together as in the study of bird life. No other group of animals has inspired so many important conservation initiatives, natural history publications, and varieties of enthusiasm among the public at large.

There is a rich tradition of ornithological societies around the world. Ohio itself has a venerable history of local organizations devoted at least in part to birds: the Cincinnati Bird Club, in Cleveland the Kirtland Bird Club, Columbus's Wheaton Club, the Toledo Naturalists' Association, and others, including many active local Audubon chapters. But a wider organization will bring local groups together, muster many important resources, provide a larger perspective, seek wide appeal among many constituencies, and represent the cause of bird protection for all. Three dozen other states benefit from state-level ornithological societies. Until now, Ohio has been the largest state without one.

Like other societies, the OOS aims to organize and promote fellowship among enthusiasts in the study and enjoyment of wild birds, recruit new members among youth and beginning birders, encourage new and established local affiliated organizations devoted to wild birds, and bridge gaps between professionals and amateurs, private and public agents, and between lovers of birds and those who are, for the moment at least, indifferent to them.

To these ends, the OOS will foster and preserve the historical record of birds in Ohio through a quarterly state journal of ornithological record and a quarterly newsletter for members, as well as published treatments of the state's bird life ranging from field checklists to books. We will validate and archive important records of rare and

unusual birds through an Ohio Bird Records Committee, maintaining and publishing the official checklist of the birds of Ohio. Our electronic resources will include an informative and ever-changing web site and one or more mailing lists. We will conduct field trips, tours, workshops, presentations, and an annual meeting and conference.

We will encourage and support needed research on birds. We will provide educational resources to members, the public, and the news media. We promise to do what we can to unite various individuals and constituencies interested in birds, and provide means and reasons for them to cooperate. Our activities will not be conducted independently, but in concert with local organizations, whenever possible. We plan to enable our members to speak with one clear voice on conservation issues affecting wild birds in Ohio.

As a non-profit organization, and by design in our bylaws, our Board consists of thirteen representatives from every corner of the state, all subject to election by members of the Society. The Board has been instrumental in organizing and launching the Society, but later will play a secondary role to the more important work done by OOS members who volunteer their time, skills, effort, and goodwill to improving the prospects of birds, and as well as the study and enjoyment of them by our species. 🐦

—Bill Whan, *Columbus*

OOS Kickoff on May 8th at Magee Marsh Bird Trail

Saturday, May 8th, 2004 is International Migratory Bird Day, and we couldn't think of a more appropriate date to formally launch the Ohio Ornithological Society. Of course, our formative work began long before this kickoff, but all the behind-the-scenes laboring on the part of many people has positioned the Society for this coming-out party.

And what better place than Ohio's premier birding locale, the Magee Marsh Bird Trail? Almost everyone who has been instrumental in the OOS to date will be there – Board and other volunteers – and we'd all love to meet you! Not only will we join thousands of birders there, but everyone will hopefully be treated to the fantastic display of an incredible fallout of neotropical migrants, as was the case on this day in 2003.

We look forward to seeing you, and Great Birding! 🐦

—Jim McCormac, *Columbus*

P.S. Watch for news of future birding programs and seminars at our web site at www.ohiobirds.org.

Why the Cerulean Warbler?

A number of considerations led to making the Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) the emblematic bird species for the Ohio Ornithological Society. Habitat destruction has greatly diminished its numbers continent-wide, and it is being considered for Federal status as a Threatened Species. Ohio occupies the very heart of its present range. Our remaining mature deciduous forests represent a stronghold

Ohio's Birding Network

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Micki Dunakin – *Antwerp*
Rob Harlan – *Norton*
Laura Kammermeier – *Kent*
Ned Keller – *Cleves*
Peter King – *Westerville*
Greg Links – *Toledo*
Bernard Master – *Columbus*
Jim McCormac – *Columbus*
Greg Miller – *Sugarcreek*
Ed Pierce – *Akron*
Su Snyder – *Wooster*
Bill Thompson III – *Marietta*
Bill Whan – *Columbus*

THE OHIO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 14051 • Columbus, Ohio • 43214
OUR MISSION
Welcoming backyard birdwatchers and researchers in the field alike, the Ohio Ornithological Society is devoted to fostering a deeper appreciation of wild birds, fellowship and collaboration in advancing our collective knowledge about them, and our ability to speak with one voice to preserve Ohio's bird habitats.

THE CERULEAN

THE CERULEAN is the official newsletter of the **Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS)**. **THE CERULEAN** is published four times a year. It contains timely information regarding upcoming field trips & meetings, recent bird sightings & current hot spots, trip reports, as well as other pertinent birding information. A subscription to **THE CERULEAN** is included among the benefits of the OOS. Members of the OOS are encouraged to contribute announcements, articles, photographs, drawings, and other birding related information to the newsletter. Seasonal deadlines for contributions to **THE CERULEAN** are as follows:

- ❖ Spring: 1 March
- ❖ Summer: 1 June
- ❖ Fall: 1 September
- ❖ Winter: 1 December

Send contributions for the newsletter to the editor, Su Snyder, at cerulean@ohiobirds.org, or by regular mail to **THE CERULEAN**, c/o OOS, P.O. Box 14051, Columbus, Ohio 43214. For more information see the Publications page on the OOS web site at www.ohiobirds.org.

charm of its unique presence will argue for careful stewardship on its behalf, and that our appreciation of its beauty, and our advocacy on its behalf, will lead to a healthy future for a species that so well symbolizes Ohio's wild habitats. 🐦

—Bill Whan, *Columbus*

Birds of Ohio

Ohio is blessed with a geographic orientation that brings us lots of birds – both numbers and species. Of the five states that border us, only one manages to eclipse our total species list of 412. Unfortunately for dyed-in-the-wool Buckeye fans, that state would be Michigan, whose list currently stands at 419. This isn't much of a difference, though, and we will eventually surpass them, just as we do in football.

Perhaps more important than high species lists are the large numbers of certain birds that Ohio plays an integral role in supporting, either as part of their migratory corridor or by providing breeding habitat. And since our state has strong influences from all directions – prairies from the west, unglaciated Appalachian plateaus on the south and east, and of course our great inland sea to the north, Lake Erie – we are critical to a broad suite of species.

From gulls to sparrows, Ohio harbors some of the best habitats of any Midwestern state for birds. The examples are many. Nineteen species of gulls have been documented, an amazing total for ANY state, and this is in large part due to the importance of Lake Erie as

for this woodland sprite, an indicator species for the least-deteriorated segments of this type of habitat.

This warbler's persistent buzzy song can be heard during the breeding season throughout Ohio, except where clearing has completely, or nearly completely, obliterated the original forests. The more mature and complete the forest, the likelier it is to host this attractive creature, and the unglaciated areas of south-central and eastern Ohio host their greatest numbers. Cerulean warblers seem to prefer the highest branches on the highest ridges, and a glimpse of the male's bright blue-and-white markings is a sought-after treat for observers, as are the matchless subtle yellows and bluish-greens of the female, even more rarely seen.

Because Ohioans are responsible for the best remaining habitat for this tiny and exquisite bird, once so numerous and now haunted by rumors of eradication, we dedicate ourselves to its preservation. We hope that the

migratory pathway and wintering area. This fantastic lake also is critical to many species of shorebirds, and it is important that we work to insure that suitable habitats are provided at key periods of their passage. Of the 48 species of shorebirds that have occurred here, many have evolved a critical dependence on western Lake Erie habitats as stopover locale to rest and refuel for the incredible trans-global migrations they undertake.

While rightly considered an ecological catastrophe, an unexpected but fortuitous benefit of surface coal extraction – strip mining – in southeastern Ohio has been the creation of enormous grasslands as a product of “reclamation.” Many of us are familiar with The Wilds in Muskingum County, a good example of this sort of habitat. These grasslands have become key breeding areas for declining species such as the Henslow's Sparrow, and consequently Ohio now supports some of the best remaining populations of grassland breeders in the Midwest. Of course, these sites are sensational for wintering birds, too, in particular raptors. And with hundreds of thousands of acres of reclaimed surface mines, they are massive enough to alter the wintering range of Golden Eagles, and attract huge numbers of Northern Harriers, Rough-legged Hawks, and Short-eared Owls. The appearance of this winter's Prairie Falcon at The Wilds may become a regular event in this habitat.

Protection of outlying or edge-of-range habitats is key to preserving genetic diversity, and Ohio has a very significant example of a disjunct habitat. Hemlock gorges, such as those found in Hocking County, Mohican State Forest, and far northeastern Ohio are examples of a boreal habitat largely isolated from the core of this plant community far to the north. Coming along with these hemlocks are isolated southern populations of boreal breeders, such as Hermit Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, Canada, Magnolia, and Blackburnian warblers, and Dark-eyed Junco. Not only are hemlock gorges one of Ohio's most beautiful habitats, they are also one of the most biologically significant.

Between the hemlock gorges, the expanses of eastern deciduous forests that still cloak parts of Ohio, and other habitats, we support about 180 species of breeding birds annually. Of global importance is the group known as neotropical migratory birds. This group includes many perennial favorites such as Scarlet Tanager, Baltimore Oriole, and American Redstart. There are 61 species of neotropicals that breed in Ohio, wintering well to the south in places like Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Columbia. Protecting Ohio habitats for these birds – like our icon species for the Society, Cerulean Warbler – becomes vital on a global scale.

Of course, the Buckeye state is legendary as a migratory pathway for migrants, and the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area bird trail is famous among birders far and wide. On a good May day, the trees and thickets here can seem to drip with birds, and even the mundane becomes extraordinary, such as the massive packs of Blue Jays winging overhead. Please visit this site on May 8 this year, as that's the date of International Migratory Bird Day, and if you've not visited Magee on that day, you're in for a treat. Thousands of birders converge to observe the spectacular spring migration, and in addition to the joy of seeing big numbers of our more common species, someone often turns up a rarity like Kirtland's Warbler.

Birding brings dollars to the state, too, and our economic impact will only continue to increase. A study conducted by the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge in 2001 estimated 130,000 visitors – most of whom were probably there to observe birds at least on some level – who collectively pumped 5.5 million dollars into the local economy. That same year, the Ohio Department of Tourism calculated that

visitors to Ohio spent 32.1 billion dollars, and as much as 400 million of this may have been eco-tourism money. That figure, too, should continue to grow. Birders are a large, diverse, well educated, and environmentally aware group as a rule, and our potential collective clout is tremendous.

Of the roughly 200 species of birds that have been known to nest in Ohio, three are extinct – Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Parakeet, and Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Another seven should be considered extirpated (locally extinct), although we once harbored established breeding populations – Merlin, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Piping Plover, Common Raven, Bewick's Wren, Golden-winged Warbler, and Bachman's Sparrow. Most of these species disappeared before there were people advocating their protection and taking steps to insure their survival. While their loss is a tragedy, it should also serve as a lesson as to the importance of birders banding together to form a collective voice that can speak for the birds. 🐦

—Jim McCormac, *Columbus*

Ohio Birder Greg Miller Featured in New Book

In 1998 Greg Miller, along with two others, competed in a North American Big Year. The goal of a Big Year is to see and/or hear as many bird species as possible in one calendar year. The journey of these three contestants is documented in a new book titled *The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession*, written by Mark Obmascik and published by Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. Greg grew up in Holmes County and currently resides in Sugarcreek, Ohio. He is also a member of the board of directors for the OOS.

Look for a review of this book in the Summer Issue of **THE CERULEAN**. 🐦

About Our Logo Artist

Our deepest appreciation and thanks go to Jim Glover, the artist of our Cerulean logo.

Glover's studies in art and zoology at Kent State and Ohio State honed his skills as a naturalist and illustrator for a 34-year career with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. During that period, Jim designed State Fair displays, illustrated and designed brochures, booklets and maps, produced paintings for numerous posters, developed interpretive nature displays at Old Woman Creek State Nature Preserve, and served as art director and occasional writer for the *Ohio State Parks* magazine. He is now working on a few freelance projects and enjoying the opportunity to paint (and go birding) again! 🐦

For more information about Columbus-based Jim Glover and his art, see his web-site at http://www.artinview.com/jim_glover.htm.

The Ohio Cardinal

A quarter of a century ago, **The Ohio Cardinal** was born of a need to bring Ohio's birding community together, to share all available information about our bird life, to sharpen our enjoyment of, and expertise in, the observation and study of those birds, and to act as a permanent record of bird occurrences in the state. Today these remain the goals of our publication, and as always we ask the help, advice, and encouragement of the birding community in reaching them. Please do more than subscribe if you can: participate in sharing information

about Ohio's birds.

See the Publications page on the Society's web site www.ohiobirds.org. Here you'll find ways to contribute articles, notes, artwork, photographs, and seasonal bird sightings. Every scrap of content in the Cardinal is donated by bird observers like you and the others you meet in the field. 🐦

New Bobolink Area Rare Bird Alert

The staff of *The Bobolink* is pleased to announce the new Bobolink Area Rare Bird Alert (RBA). The RBA phone number is (330) 763-5119. When you call the RBA, you have two choices: you can listen to the messages; or you can press 1, which will take you directly to the option of leaving your own message for the RBA. Levi Hochstetler is sponsoring the RBA. Robert Hershberger is hosting the RBA and keeping it up to date.

For more information about the RBA or *The Bobolink*, a birding publication for Holmes, Wayne, Ashland, Richland, and eight surrounding counties, contact Bruce Glick at (330) 674-2444, or email to bhglyck@valkyrie.net. Information about other Rare Bird Alerts in Ohio can be found at the OOS web site at www.ohiobirds.org. 🐦

Become a Founding Member of the OOS

The **Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS)** is uniquely devoted to the lasting protection of Ohio's birds. Our members meet across the state to watch birds, to share our sightings and insights, and to advance our collective knowledge about Ohio's birdlife. We hope you'll join us.

Through our publications and programs, you will gain a better understanding of bird populations and the issues that affect bird habitats. Plus, we will help you keep pace with the changing of the seasons so that you know what birds to expect either in the field or outside your window, every day of the year. We wish to unite Ohio's birding community in all walks of life and all affiliations, but we need your help to make this happen. If you are Founding Member already, thank you. Please copy this membership form to share with your birding friends and your bird club president. If you're not a member, please consider joining this year. Our Founding Members share a special bond in helping to form the first statewide organization uniquely focused on birds and birding. From that focus we derive our greatest benefit: the ability to speak with one voice to preserve Ohio's birds and bird habitats. But our members receive other things as well. In addition to quarterly issues of this newsletter, **THE CERULEAN**, OOS members receive quarterly issues of **The Ohio Cardinal**, the state's ornithological journal for 25 years. Members also receive reduced rates and advance registration for birding events and field trips. And each year, we will come together to celebrate and enjoy birds during our annual birding conference to be held at one of Ohio's best birding locales.

Please join this extraordinary grassroots movement to save Ohio's bird habitats. And let us know if you are interested in helping us organize our efforts. Many volunteer opportunities are available. 🐦

—Laura Kammermeier, *Kent*

P.S. If you'd like to pass out our official membership cards at an upcoming meeting, festival, or birding event, please contact us at info@ohiobirds.org.