



THE CERULEAN

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www.ohiobirds.org info@ohiobirds.org

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

2006 OOS Conference

The second annual OOS conference rapidly approaches. It will be held April 28, 29, and 30 at the fabulous Shawnee Lodge and Resort, in the heart of Shawnee State Forest. This will be the second - and last - year for us at this location. Those of you who came last year know how phenomenal a site this is for birds in the spring, and what a gorgeous backdrop the surroundings provide.

We've expanded our slate of field trips and leaders, too, and they should be better than ever. Last year, we found 156 species of birds (including some rarities), hundreds of plant species including one new to Ohio, and lots of interesting non-bird critters.

This year, we have as keynote speakers the legendary Kenn Kaufman, author of numerous books and articles, who probably needs no introduction here. Also on hand as a speaker is Phil Hoose, author of *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird*, a work about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

By the time you receive this, all OOS members should have received detailed information and registration forms in the mail. You'll want to get them in quickly; last year the conference filled up fast, and space is limited. Questions regarding the conference should be directed to Jen Sauter at vbchat@insight.r.com or 614-901-4159.

A Symposium on Raptors and Owls of Ohio Grasslands--December 3, 2005

On December 3rd, a gathering of cold, but enthusiastic, birders descended upon the Holiday Inn in Zanesville, to learn about the reclaimed coal strip mines in and around The Wilds and American Electric Power recreation lands, which have become prime grassland habitat for the region's wintering and resident raptors and owls.

Organized by the Ohio Ornithological Society (OOS), over 200 members and guests were treated to presentations by bird experts Jim McCormac of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and President of OOS, Bill Thompson III, editor of *Birdwatcher's Digest* and author of numerous books on birding, and Julie Zickefoose, a celebrated writer and artist. They were joined by master of ceremonies Dr. Bernard Master, Vice-Chairman of The Nature Conservancy's Ohio Chapter, world-renowned birder and one of only 20 American members of the international Rare Bird Club. The audience enjoyed informative and intriguing presentations on the unique ecology of grassland habitats created by reclaimed lands, key behavioral and physical characteristics in the identification of diurnal raptors, and an exceptional audio and visual presentation on owls, their nocturnal counterparts.

At the break, Carl Slater was the lucky winner of a copy of Brian Wheeler's book, *Raptors of Eastern North America*. Not only had Mr. Wheeler autographed the book, he had also drawn a gorgeous sketch of an adult Peregrine Falcon inside the cover. Attendees were also treated to live raptor demonstrations by the Ohio Wildlife Center and Black Swamp Raptor Rehabilitation Center, the opportunity to closely examine numerous raptor and owl skins on display--courtesy of Ohio State University's Museum of Biological Diversity--and informative exhibitions by the OOS, Julie Zickefoose and her beautiful bird paintings and drawings, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, and the Wilds.

Following the presentations and lunch, the entire group headed over to The Wilds for a ribbon-cutting dedication ceremony of the Birding Station at Jeffrey Point. The Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODW), in partnership with the Wilds, provided funding for the observation deck, which overlooks one of the most productive tracts of grassland for both breeding birds and wintering raptors. With over 175 dedicated birders present to witness this spectacular event and showcase their support, Dr. Bernie Master, along with Steve Gray, Chief of ODW, and Dr. Evan Blumer, Director of The Wilds, acknowledged the efforts of everyone involved in realizing the fruition of this exemplary viewing site. "We are very glad that the Ohio birding community was able to participate and show their support for this effort," stated Jim McCormac, president of OOS, "This group sends a strong message to ODW, the Wilds, and surrounding businesses that birders are a strong voice and an economic boon to communities throughout the region."

Following the dedication ceremony, the assembly broke into smaller groups that then drove to 10 field stations spread across the 63,000 acres of the property, each stationed by a pair of experienced birders. Hoping to put their newfound knowledge to the test, participants eagerly searched the skies, fields, trees, telephone lines, and numerous ponds for sightings of Golden Eagles, Rough-legged Hawks, Short-eared Owls, Merlins, American Kestrels, Northern Harriers, as well as song birds and waterfowl. On a scouting trip a day earlier, an unusual visitor to this area, a Long-tailed Duck, had appeared on one of the ponds along Zion Ridge Road; by Saturday, however, it had moved on. Many of the birders did see a Golden Eagle, a species that has become a regular winter visitor to The Wilds. The OOS, ODW, and The Wilds were very pleased with the turnout and success of the Raptors & Owls of Ohio Grasslands Symposium, and hope that future collaborative endeavors will ensue. The Wilds provided special off-season facilities for restroom breaks, hot beverages, and gift purchases, as well as spectacular views from their location atop a scenic overlook.

The OOS thanks all the volunteers who helped make this event the great success that it was... without your help events such as this could never come to fruition.

--Judy Kolo-Rose
Richfield

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 and meetings, recent bird sightings and 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 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.

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Ohio Coverts Project

Did you know that individuals own about half of Ohio's forests and that the average private woodlot is only 15 acres in size? Further, only about seven percent of Ohio's forest resources are in public hands. Corporations and not-for-profit entities own the balance of Ohio's woodlands. This places a weighty responsibility on and provides a tremendous opportunity for private forest landowners. With these statistics in mind, I attended the Ohio State University's *Ohio Coverts Project*. This three-day seminar on woodland management is sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society, the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, and the Ohio State University Extension. The seminar is held each September at the beautiful Canter's Cave 4-H Camp nestled in a quiet hollow of Jackson County.

Twenty of us spent part of the time in a classroom setting learning diverse strategies to manage woodlots for simple aesthetics, for economic benefit, or--my favorite--for wildlife diversity. Dave Swanson from the Division of Wildlife opened the seminar with a great overview of woodlot terminology and management considerations. Many of you may have heard Dave's interesting breakout session at the OOS's Annual Conference at Shawnee State Park last year. He is able to provide amazing insight into the complex needs of different forest wildlife species and the management strategies that can be employed to foster their required habitats.

We also heard from Bill Hunyadi from the Ruffed Grouse Society, Heidi Devine from the Division of Wildlife, Eric Roush from Mead/Westvaco, and Randy Heiligmann and Dave Apsley from OSU. All have devoted careers to improving wildlife habitat and maximizing the value of forest resources. They explained such topics as forest anatomy, shelter cuts, crop tree release, stand density, and the often-criticized clear cut. Though certain biases came through as they explained the art and science of their trade, each presented a balanced effort to first define various objectives for woodlands and then match the most suitable management measures to meet them. Everyone agreed that management strategies for forests and for wildlife are intricately related. The best part of the seminar was the considerable time spent out in the woods for a firsthand look at different forest types

and examples of various approaches to management. Besides hiking Canter's Cave, we visited the Jackson Beagle Club's early successional habitat, Lake Katharine State Nature Preserve's mature forest, and Mead/Westvaco's Vinton Furnace Experimental Forest. The Experimental Forest is part of a 17,000-acre woodland classroom that demonstrates a wide array of management plans and results.

One leaves the seminar with an overflowing notebook of information on forest and wildlife management, a directory of forest resources, and a renewed sense of awe for Ohio's woodlands. So whether one is managing a neck of the woods for the Short-tailed Shrew or the Northern Fence Lizard or our Cerulean Warbler, or wants to gain a fuller understanding of ways to protect woods from abuse, or is just someone like me who thinks forests are great places to experience and learn about, the Ohio Coverts Project is worth the time.

--Peter King
Westerville

Birder's Bio - Michele Hendrick

My sisters, Judy and Olga, were birding long before me and I admit I thought it was a little on geeky side. Then Judy told me that the Black-capped Chickadees at Firestone Metro Park in Akron would come and feed right out of your hand. OK, I gave it a try. It worked!!! The chickadees landed in my hand and went straight to my heart. From that moment on, I was hooked. Twenty-plus years later, birds have remained one of my passions. While I certainly love to travel outside Ohio migrating with the birds, most of my birding is done right here, either along Lake Erie or in the various parks and lakes that grace our state. I anxiously watch my feeders at home hoping for the unexpected, like the Rufous Hummingbird that kept me company for a month this fall. Capturing their antics with my camera has served not only to enhance my birding, but brings me a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. As an accountant stuck behind a desk all day, I am still lucky enough to work for a company whose headquarters are in the woods of Holmes County. A glance at the feeders outside my office window helps ease the stresses of the day. When I'm not out in the field, I pore over my ever-growing library of guides and the listserv with hopes of being able to identify the birds when I see them. I also enjoy reading about birding adventures. There's nothing I would rather be doing than being out in the field birding with my family and friends. Those are the times that make life special!

--Michele Hendrick
Wadsworth

The Cerulean Available On-line

If you missed any previous issues of this newsletter, you can download them from the OOS web site at: <http://www.ohiobirds.org/publications/cerulean/about.php>.

If you'd like to save trees (and OOS some postage), we will send you an e-mailed notice when future issues appear online, instead of a printed copy of this newsletter. Just send a note to the editor at cerulean@ohiobirds.org.

A Second Breeding Bird Atlas for Ohio

It has been over 20 years since the completion of fieldwork on the first breeding bird atlas in Ohio and we are pleased to announce the start of the Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II in spring 2006. Like Ohio's first atlas, on-line at <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/dnap/OhioBirding/BreedingBirdAtlas/BreedingBirdAtlas.htm>, this new project will offer volunteers an exciting way to learn about the breeding birds of Ohio while generating an immense amount of new information necessary for the effective conservation of birds in the state. By engaging Ohio's citizens in this cooperative effort, the Atlas will foster learning and interaction among bird enthusiasts of all experience levels and will heighten public awareness of birds in Ohio.

The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II is a joint project of The Ohio State University's School of Environment and Natural Resources and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Wildlife. Principal investigators for the Atlas are Paul Rodewald (OSU) and Scott Hull (Division of Wildlife), and Aaron Boone (OSU) is the atlas coordinator. Important assistance for the Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II comes from our partners, the Ohio Ornithological Society, Audubon Ohio, and the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, all of whom serve on our Advisory Board. Other individuals on the Advisory Board include Dan Brauning (Pennsylvania Game Commission) and John Castrale (Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife).

ATLAS GOALS

Ohio contains an impressive avian diversity, and a primary goal of any atlas effort is to document this diversity. Using the help of Ohio's extensive birding community over the next five years (2006-2010), the Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II will:

- Document the current distribution of breeding birds in Ohio by surveying all 4584 atlas blocks in the state.
- Assess changes in the breeding distributions of birds over the last 20 years.
- Provide new measures of the abundance of breeding birds throughout Ohio.
- Identify important areas that support high diversity or species of concern.
- Collect statewide information on the distribution of species that are difficult to survey, such as owls, nightjars, and wetland breeders.
- Generate new information on the status of Ohio's rare, threatened, and endangered birds.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE SECOND BREEDING BIRD ATLAS?

Although Ohio's second breeding bird atlas will be similar to our first atlas, there will be a number of exciting additions, due in part to available technologies. We are working with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which is developing an exciting web-based application for the atlas. This application will allow volunteers to register and sign up to survey atlas blocks online. In addition, volunteers will be able to enter their own atlas data and view up-to-

the-minute results for breeding birds across the entire state! Although this feature will not likely be available until late spring 2006, examples of Cornell's web application that were produced for the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas are viewable on our web-site. For observers who have access to the Internet, our atlas web site address is: www.ohiobirds.org/obba2/.

This web site will provide you with atlas instructions and materials, and will keep you updated on new developments. Individuals lacking easy access to the Internet will be updated through periodic newsletters or by contacting their regional coordinators or our offices (see contact information below).

Unlike the first atlas, Ohio's second atlas will survey all 4584 atlas blocks in the state, instead of 1 in every 6 blocks (a standard topographic map contains 6 blocks). Surveying all blocks will allow us to more effectively survey rare and uncommon species, including those that are unevenly distributed across the state. This is an enormous task, but we believe the birders of Ohio will meet this challenge, making Ohio's second atlas among the most comprehensive in the nation, and comparable to second atlases in Maryland and Pennsylvania. It also means that there is plenty of opportunity for you to participate, whether you want to venture into more remote parts of the state, or simply survey in your own backyard!

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS NEEDED

The ultimate success of Ohio's next breeding bird atlas depends on the active participation of birders and outdoor enthusiasts from throughout the state. We already have collected names of numerous individuals interested in conducting fieldwork in 2006 and beyond. Every participant can make valuable contributions, and your efforts and dedication as an atlas volunteer will help to make this first field season a big success! Please spread the word about this important endeavor. If you know anyone who might be interested in contributing time and effort, please give them our web site address or other contact information. We encourage all people with an interest in birds to sign up and participate in this project!

For more information and periodic updates on atlas developments, check our web site: www.ohiobirds.org/obba2/. Please sign up now through the web site to volunteer for the Atlas. If you do not have Internet access or would like further information, please get in touch with us by telephone or regular mail. Please note that we expect that atlas blocks will be available for selection in late January of 2006. We look forward to working with you in this exciting endeavor over the next five years!!

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OOS Partner—Kirtland Bird Club

The Kirtland Bird Club (KBC) was formed on 28 September 1940, and has a long tradition of significant contributions to the Northeastern Ohio birding community. Since its early years the club has conducted monthly meetings, field trips, breeding bird population studies, Christmas bird counts, and wintering duck population studies. The objectives of the KBC are the serious study of ornithology with a view to increasing the knowledge of individual members, the exchange of ornithological experiences and records, the compilation and publication of important information on birds, and the promotion of good fellowship among its members.

The KBC meets on the first Wednesday of each month, September through June, at 7:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. A typical meeting consists of a short business meeting followed by a program. The meeting concludes with members' bird sightings from the area. In July and August we schedule picnic / bird walks at various locations in Northeastern Ohio. The club schedules local monthly field trips and weekend van trips to remoter locations. Meetings and trips are posted on the club's web site at www.kirtlandbirdclub.org.

The Kirtland Bird Club and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History publish a quarterly journal, *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*. Founded in 1905 by Francis H. Herrick of Western Reserve University, it is one of the longest-running publications of its kind. Its purposes are to provide information on the movements of birds through the Cleveland region (Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit counties), to monitor population densities of resident birds, and to help in establishing what the patterns of vagrancy are for species rarely encountered in the region. *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* is funded partly from KBC

membership dues, and mostly from members' generous donations. Each member of the Club receives an annual subscription to the *Calendar* as a membership benefit. Kevin Metcalf is the current editor of this publication. *The Cleveland Bird Calendar* is in the process of being archived at www.clevelandbirdcalendar.com.

To appreciate the origins of the Kirtland Bird Club requires understanding some of the earlier organized bird groups in Cleveland. Dr. Jared Potter Kirtland (1793-1877), originally from Connecticut, moved to Ohio as a youth and in 1840 arrived in what is now Lakewood, Ohio, where he spent the rest of his life. Trained as a physician, Kirtland was also extremely conversant with the natural sciences, including ornithology. Around 1837 he began interacting with a group of young men in Cleveland who called themselves the "Arkites," and interested themselves in local natural history. Out of the membership of this group was organized in 1845 the Cleveland Academy of Natural Sciences, of which Kirtland was the first and only president. The members reorganized the academy as the Kirtland Society of Natural Sciences in 1869. This group, which became somewhat inactive towards the end of the century, merged with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in 1927. The CMNH also shares its origins with the "Arkites," and was established in 1920.

As an aside, for those of you who might be asking yourself, the Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) was indeed named in honor of Jared Kirtland by Spencer Fullerton Baird, then Assistant Secretary [director] of the Smithsonian Institution. Kirtland's son-in-law Charles Pease collected the type specimen of the species on Kirtland's farm in Lakewood in 1851 and gave it to Kirtland, who subsequently gave the skin to Baird on one of his visits to Ohio. Kirtland also prepared the first list of Ohio birds, totaling 222 species, of which two-thirds were first published therein. Kirtland is buried in Lake View Cemetery. --Dwight Chasar, Northfield

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...
OUR MISSION
Welcoming backyard birdwatchers and researchers in the field alike, the Ohio Ornithological Society is the only statewide organization specifically 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.