



THE CERULEAN

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www.ohiobirds.org info@ohiobirds.org

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

GULF COAST OIL SPILL: Drew Wheelan of ABA to speak at OOS Annual Conference in October

from the Editor

The Sixth Annual Conference of the Ohio Ornithological Society is October 8-10, 2010 in Eastlake, Ohio. You are invited to the shores of Lake Erie to explore fall migration, seek rare birds of the Cleveland area, learn about sparrows, find out about safe lighting on high rise buildings, and get first-hand details on the effects of the Gulf Oil Spill on migrating birds.

We have a fantastic lineup of speakers, workshops, and field trips including an optional pelagic on Lake Erie! Whether you are from outside the Cleveland area or a native of Parma, this is a great opportunity to explore famed birding hotspots along the northeast shore near Cleveland.

Our Friday night theme is the birds of Cleveland with keynote speaker Larry Rosche, a birder famed far beyond the borders of the Buckeye State. Saturday afternoon, we have a trio of speakers lined up. Then Saturday night, visit the Gulf Coast Oil Spill through the insights and perceptions of our special guest Drew Wheelan, of the American Birding Association.

Look inside this newsletter for your registration form! Space is limited for some field trips and pelagic options, so don't delay! Come join the fun, learn about birds and natural history, meet fellow birders, and go birding with OOS!

Ann Oliver
-Cincinnati

The American Birding Association's (ABA) Gulf Coast Coordinator, Drew Wheelan, is our Saturday night keynote speaker on October 9, at the upcoming OOS Annual Conference in Eastlake, Ohio. Wheelan will share his extensive first hand observation of events in the Gulf — from inspirational tales of Snowy Plover chicks saved from being crushed by unaware cleanup crews speeding through nesting grounds in ATVs — to heartbreaking descriptions of massive fish kills, the stench of spilled oil, and the need for third-party oversight to all response efforts.

Wheelan, stationed at Grand Isle, Louisiana since May, has risen to national prominence for truthful, often disturbing, reporting on the British Petroleum (BP) oil spill. His blog on the ABA website, birding.typepad.com/gulf, is regarded as one of the most credible sources of information regarding the effects of the oil spill on the Gulf Coast's birdlife. His coverage includes documented ecological abuses by BP cleanup workers, persuasive objections to BP's use of dispersants, and heartbreaking images of dead and dying wildlife. Wheelan also chronicles the heroism of the region's birders, biologists, and activists. **Catch Drew's talk on Saturday evening, October 9!**



Live interview on CNN.
Photo courtesy Drew Wheelan.



In front of BP's headquarters in Houma, Louisiana (left) and during an encounter with local officials (right). Photos courtesy Drew Wheelan.

**SIXTH ANNUAL OOS MEETING:
OCTOBER 8-10 IN EASTLAKE**

**Pelagic Trip on
Lake Erie**

Get ready to set sail for a Lake Erie Pelagic on either Saturday, October 9 or Sunday, October 10.

OOS has chartered the craft 'Holiday' out of Cleveland: we will head out several miles and proceed along the shoreline. The pelagic is an **optional excursion** offered as part of our conference.

This is your chance to head out onto the open water of Lake Erie during the Sixth Annual OOS Conference!



A pair of Red Phalaropes at Conneaut. Photo courtesy Gabe Leidy.

Most exciting about this opportunity is the timing of this trip, set up in hopes of catching the likes of Sabine's Gull, Red Phalarope, Long-tailed and Parasitic Jaegers—species whose movements are rarely visible from onshore. For this reason,

these early-fall pelagic species are among the most-coveted Ohio birds, and we're giving you an opportunity to get out there where these species theoretically are. Little Gull is a possibility and Franklin's Gull is in the realm, too.



Little Gull, foreground, at Headlands Beach State Park. Photo courtesy Gabe Leidy.

And of course, we should encounter other waterfowl, gulls, and shorebirds...you just never know what will pass by along Lake Erie! **Register for this option early: space is limited for the early morning pelagic lake cruise. Leaders: Gabe Leidy and John Pogacnik.**

Gabe Leidy, OOS NE Regional Director
-Cleveland

Editor's Note: Gabe Leidy compiles Ohio's Rare Bird Alert. Birding since the age of 9, Gabe won the ABA "Young Birder of the Year" contest as a teen. He and Jen Brumfield operate "Local Patch" birding tours (www.jenbrumfield.com/)



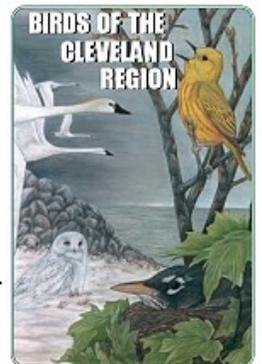
Franklin's Gull, center, at Huron. Photo courtesy Gabe Leidy.

**Friday Night
Keynote Speaker:
Larry Rosche**

Every state should be as lucky as The Buckeye State is to have a birder of note such as

Larry Rosche. He's the Conservationist Specialist for the Natural Areas Division, Conservation & Biodiversity Department, Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

His resume is a lifetime of achievement. In 2007, he received the Ohio Biological Survey's *Naturalist of the Year* award. In 2008, he received the prestigious *Cardinal Award* for Outstanding Contribution to Ohio Conservation. In 2009, he received the *Portage County Environmental Hero* award. Larry is an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Kirtland Bird Club, having served as Editor of the *Cleveland Bird Calendar* for 16 years and as President. In addition to updating the *Birds of the Cleveland Region* in 2004, he co-authored with Judy Semroc the highly acclaimed *Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northeast Ohio* (2008). Larry also penned the 1988 and 2004 editions of the *Field Book of Birds of the Cleveland Region*, co-authored the chapter on Cleveland area birding for the *Birder's Guide to Metropolitan Areas of North America*. In the first Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas he inventoried and atlased birds in numerous sites throughout eastern Ohio for the Ohio Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. He has been Houghton Mifflin's mapmaker for 15 years and his digitized renditions of range distribution occur throughout the Peterson Field Guide Series®. In addition, Larry has reviewed all the distribution maps pertaining to Ohio birds for *The Sibley Guide to Birds* and the National Geographic Society's *Birds of North America*.



Don't miss Larry's presentation on Friday evening, October 8 at 7:30 pm at the Radisson Hotel & Suites in Eastlake. Larry will present an overview of the diversity of birds found in northeast Ohio throughout the year. And, he'll address questions on when and where to find the rare species you've been hoping to add to your state or life list.

Field Trips: Saturday & Sunday morning

unlike any in Ohio. From a birder's, and a shorebird's perspective, this drive-up sandspit offers tremendous shallow pools, sandbars, mudflats, and beaches, directly on the Lake Erie shoreline. Throughout the day, groups of shorebirds arrive and depart from this stopover spot. A multi-hour visit should yield a fairly decent list, including possible rarities. The easy access of the site, and its location directly on the flyway, make it attractive to some skittish species, if only briefly. Allow more than an hour to drive to this site near the Pennsylvania border.



Upended driftwood log at Conneaut. Photo courtesy Gabe Leidy.

Dike 14: Few places in Ohio have as storied an ornithological past as Dike 14. During its glory days as a shorebird hotspot, every regularly occurring Ohio shorebird appeared, along with ABA-area rarities such as Curlew and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, and Ruff. When the dredging stopped, habitat began to revert to a natural state of fields and willow thickets, and the birdlife adjusted accordingly. The spot soon became known as the best in the state



Winter aerial view of Dike 14. Photo courtesy Jim McCormac.

for variety and sheer number of migrant sparrows, including regular visits from Clay-colored, Grasshopper, Henslow's, Nelson's, and Le Conte's Sparrow.

Space limited: signed waiver required. Leaders Craig Caldwell and Jim McCormac.

Headlands Beach State Park/Wake Robin Trail:

Most experts would agree, with the possible exception of the Magee Bird Trail, there exists not a better migrant hotspot in the state. At Headlands, a combination of fields, pristine beaches, thickets, and mature forests—bordering Lake Erie and Fairport Harbor—have attracted 315 species of birds.



Historic lighthouse at Headlands Beach State Park, October '09. Photo courtesy Cheryl Harner.

Conneaut Harbor:

To the east, just barely within our state's border, is a lakefront park

Rarities occur here, including a brief appearance by Vermilion Flycatcher in the fall of '09.



Headlands in November, 2008. Photo courtesy Jim McCormac.

The recent creation of Wake Robin Trail at nearby Mentor Marsh made the area even more attractive, especially to migrant sparrows. Nelson's Sparrows seem to be present throughout the entire month of October, and there is no better place to seek elusive



Le Conte's than at the boardwalk, often while encountering bitterns, rails, and Sedge Wrens.

Wake Robin Trail, October '09. Photo courtesy Cheryl Harner.

Wildwood and Villa Angela:

Join Mary Anne Romito and the



Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society at hotspots that are part of Cleveland Lakefront State Park. Expect waterfowl on the lake and migrating warblers in the woods and fields above the marina. **This field trip is offered Saturday morning only.**

Three Saturday Afternoon Speakers

Sparrow Identification: Saturday, October 9 at 1:30 pm. John Pogacnik is a Natural Areas Specialist with Lake County Metroparks, and one of the most well-rounded field bi-



ologists in Ohio. Many years of birding along the shores of Lake Erie have given him one of the largest Ohio lists.

John is particularly adept at finding cryptic species such as Le Conte's Sparrow, and is a master at sorting out tough groups such as gulls. Several "first" state bird records are credited to John, including Great-tailed Grackle. John has branched into many other facets of natural history, and is an accomplished botanist and entomologist as well as a skilled photographer. John will teach you the key ways to identify those "little brown birds"- sparrows in the field.

Smart Light—Safe Flight Ohio: Saturday, October 9, 2:30 pm. Harvey Webster, Director of Wildlife Resources at Cleveland Museum of Natural History (CMNH) will discuss ways to reduce dangerous nighttime illumination of tall buildings during peak migratory times (mid-March to mid-June and mid-August to mid-November) as well as other hazards from man-made structures such as windows, communication towers, and wind turbines. Find out how individuals can assist this energy reduction effort and promote Smart Light—Safe Flight Ohio across the Buckeye State.



Migration All Around Us—How Birds Navigate the Americas: Saturday, October 9 at 3:30 pm. For some five billion individual birds, an annual trip to Central or South American from North America is an absolute requirement, and a stunning annual accomplishment. Many perish during this migration. Why do birds undertake this costly annual trip? How do they manage to find a wintering ground they've never seen? This talk will answer these questions, as well as detail how ornithologists study the phenomenon of migrations. Dr. Andy Jones is the Curator of Ornithology at CMNH. He received his PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from the University of Minnesota.

Elections for OOS Board Positions & Officers

Four OOS Board Positions/Officers will be voted on at the upcoming annual meeting Saturday evening, October 9, at the Radisson Hotel & Suites, Eastlake.

Below are brief profiles of the four nominees.

OOS President: Jen Sauter, current OOS Executive Secretary, is credited with much of the success of the organization. Jen has served as conference/symposium coordinator, expeditions coordinator 2005-2010 for OOS trips to Costa Rica and Guatemala, and as executive secretary has overseen promotional and marketing materials. She has a degree



in Wildlife Management from OSU. Jen also has a vast background in finance.

Jen birding in Galapagos sporting an OOS hat. Photo courtesy Jen Sauter.

Executive Secretary: Ann Oliver, currently the OOS Southwest Regional Director, is nominated to replace Jen Sauter. Ann is a current board member of the Cincinnati Bird Club. She has edited The Cerulean Newsletter, quarterly publication of OOS, for more than two years. She also helped coordinate the February 2010 Waterfowl Symposium at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center.



Ann birding the Sax-Zim Bog area, MN, wearing OOS hat, OOS shirt, and copious insect repellent in June. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.

Southwest Regional Director: Just back from a summer in Fairbanks working as a visiting professor at the University of Alaska, Dr. Jill Russell is an Assistant Professor in the Biology Department at The College of Mount St. Joseph. She is a federally licensed bird bander as well as a researcher at the Clifford Bird Observatory and Hueston Woods Biological Station. Her research has three focuses: 1) conservation of neotropical birds, 2) collaborations between colleges, secondary schools, and community partners, 3) educational outreach. Jill and her husband, Dr. Dave Russell of Miami University, together run the Avian Research & Education Institute, Inc. (AREI). She is also the founder of the Queen City Bird Festival.



Jill in Alaska, summer 2010. Photo courtesy Dave Russell.

Director-at-Large: Julie Davis is the former President of Columbus Audubon, assists with CA Birdathon and Art for Audubon, and is on the board of the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, acting as co-chair for their 2010 fundraising gala. Julie helped coordinate the Waterfowl Symposium in February 2010 at GIAC.



Julie Davis congratulates Dr. Azzam Alwash of Nature Iraq, February at GIAC. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Jim McCormac who has served as OOS President since the founding of the organization. Another big thank you to Tom Bartlett, über birder, for his service to OOS and myriad birds of Ohio. You will both be missed!

VOLUNTEERING WITH OOS: A Message from Jen Sauter

Dear OOS Members,

You're invited to lend your time and talents to the Ohio Ornithological Society. It's a rewarding experience to be a part of a society that shares in my passion of the love of wild birds, along with a feeling of community among Ohio birders.

On behalf of the board of the OOS, I thank you for being a part of Ohio's birding network. Our society relies on volunteer efforts from birders in each corner of the state and is in a constant state of growth and refinement. You help make it as strong as possible by offering suggestions and volunteering your skills and knowledge to the cause of preserving birds and bird habitats.

Since our inception in 2004, we have grown to more than 750 members. The planning and implementation of our symposiums, workshops, and field trips takes dedication and attention to detail. We are currently in search of enthusiastic and outgoing individuals to help us.

Please take a moment to go to our website, www.ohiobirds.org/volunteer.php, so we can create a database tailored to your specific interests and availability as a valued volunteer.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you in the future.

Jen Sauter
-Rockbridge

THANKS TO ALL OOS IMBD VOLUNTEERS IN MAY

A special note of gratitude to OOS volunteers who assisted at our two-day booth in May at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area on International Migratory Bird Day! Many birders joined or renewed their memberships. The weekend was cold and windy, but we had great fun!

Volunteers: Rick Asamoto, Dana Bollin, Tim Bollin, Craig Caldwell, Yvonne Cecil, Ernie Cornelius, Warren Grody, Judy Hendrick, Michelle Hendrick, Gabe Leidy, Doreene Linzell, Ronnie Macko, Pat Mauer, Jim McCormac, Marc Nolls, Ann Oliver, Dave and Nancy Reinhart, Dan Sanders, Lee Schmid, Linda Sharp, Renee Tressler, Sheryl Young.

FALL GUATEMALA WITH OOS: November 7-16, 2010

There's still time to register for your own "resplendent adventure" in Guatemala this fall with OOS: **a few spaces are available on our excursion from Sunday, November 7 through Tuesday, November 16, 2010.** Guatemala has one of the most amazing diversity of birds in the world: more than 700 exotic, rare, endemic, and migratory species can be found within seven eco-regions. Imagine seeing Resplendent Quetzals, Pink-headed Warblers, motmots, parrots, toucans, trogons, antbirds, tinamous, and more! Plus, the trip includes an optional climb up (and back down!) a volcano to search for Horned Guan, one of the rarest birds in the Americas.



This Turquoise-browed Motmot was incorrectly labeled the last issue. We thank Elliot Tramer for pointing out our error. Photo courtesy Jen Sauter.



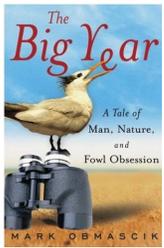
Excellent accommodations throughout the Guatemala tour: DeeAnne Helm and Julie Davis relax after a day of birding. Photo courtesy Dave Helm.

Mary Elizabeth Huey of Cincinnati remarked: *"Our March 2010 trip with Operador Latino was outstanding. This is a wonderful trip with a first class guide — Hugo Haraldo Enriquez Toledo. Yes, the birds are incredible but there is more — orchids, volcanoes, monkeys, gardens, art. Antigua is a beautiful colonial city and Tikal was so much more fascinating than I expected."*

For a full description of the trip, including complete itinerary and registration form, see our website for more information: www.ohiobirds.org/

Editor's Note: Trip pricing based on a group of ten participants: Double accommodation: \$2,400. Single accommodation: \$2,600.

This nine-day adventure is ALL-inclusive (except for your own personal flight/transportation between the US/Guatemala): 9-nights lodging, 9-days food, 9-days guide services, applicable entry fees, and MORE including air fare within Guatemala to and from Tikal National Park!



BEHIND-THE-SCENES OF THE BIG YEAR MOVIE

The film adaptation of Mark Obmascik's book *The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession*, is currently underway. The book details the quest of three birders, including Ohio native Greg Miller, to see the most avian species in North America in 1998. Back from consulting on the movie, Miller shared his experiences and remarked "if the movie is half as funny as the filming, we are in for a treat".

1. Director David Frankel called you last fall... was that the first you'd heard officially about the movie? But it had been in the works for a few years, right? **Greg Miller:** Yes. This is the first official notice there might be a movie. Hollywood plans are not like ours. It takes a certain amount of magic and a whole lot of hoops to jump through to get everything to come together. When he called, he told me that although this had been worked on for several years, progress was only about 5% complete for the movie with the toughest part to come. So even though it was "official", I still could not get my hopes up too high. On the other hand, how cool is it to have a Hollywood movie director call you at home and chat for 20 minutes about the most fun year of your life?

2. What did you talk about with the director? **GM:** We spent about 20 minutes on the phone. He asked questions about the book and the actual interaction between the three Big Year competitors. He told me he really enjoyed the book and was excited about making the movie. On a finishing note, he asked if everything magically came together and all the stars aligned and the movie became a reality, would I be interested in being a birding consultant for the movie. Of course I told him "Yes".

3. What was it like on the set and how have the screenwriters adapted the story?

GM: I spent 3 whole weeks on the movie set of *The Big Year* in May. I was treated royally. Folks treated me like a celebrity. I was shuttled everywhere. I didn't have to drive myself. I stayed in a 5-star hotel. Several times I got to sit in those cool chairs with the director and producers and watch the monitors as each take was being shot. I got to read the script a week before the filming started. The script is a fictional story that was "inspired by" the book, *The Big Year*. I scoured the script for birding accuracy and provided the movie

crew with suggested changes for birding references. I enjoyed it. I think it will be a fun movie.

4. What does your mom think about Jack Black portraying you? **GM:** By implication, yes, Jack Black is playing me. Technically, he is playing the fictional character in the movie "inspired by" my character from the book. Mom is not much of a movie aficionado. I don't know if she even knows or recognizes Jack Black. But she hears everyone else talking about it and I think she is pleased.

5. How do you feel about JB representing you on screen? **GM:** I am quite pleased to have Jack Black playing my role. I never had high hopes this was actually going to happen [the movie]. And even if it did I thought it would be actors I didn't recognize. To have a cast like this is, well, jaw-dropping to me.

6. Did you go birding with JB or any of the other actors? Were they receptive to birding? Were they interested in what they were seeing?

The day I arrived in Vancouver, I got a call from one of the assistant directors for *The Big Year*. He told me Jack Black wanted to go birding with me Sunday afternoon, the day before filming started. I was picked up Sunday afternoon at my hotel by the 3rd Assistant Director and the head of the makeup department.. We met some more of the movie crew at Stanley Park (a local Vancouver Park). It was there that I met Jack Black for the first time. We birded in the park for a couple hours in a light rain. Birding was pretty slow. We did see some Bald Eagles (which were Jack's favorite). There was a male Red-winged Blackbird on the ground. As Jack looked at the bird through binoculars he asked, "Where are the red wings?" As if on queue, the bird spread its wings in display and showed off the bright red shoulders. To which, Jack replied "Ohhhhh!" It was a cool moment. The head of the props department was well studied and was equipped with the latest in optics. I could tell he had really done his homework for the movie. He was curious about recognizing a bird by its songs and calls. He had an app on his iPhone. He quizzed me on maybe half a dozen random bird songs for North America. Fortunately, I did not disappoint him. He commented, "So you really do know all those bird songs?" I told him I didn't know them all, just enough to be dangerous. We both laughed.



Jack Black, and Greg Miller.
Photo courtesy Greg Miller.

7. I heard you dropped a chicken salad sandwich in Owen Wilson's limo. Did you still eat it?

GM: On my second day on set, Owen Wilson's driver (Owen was not scheduled to be on set until later in the week) picked me up at my hotel. I had gotten a chicken salad sandwich from Tim Horton's. At this point I did not know catering served breakfast, too. I asked the driver if I could eat in the car on the way to the set. He told me I could. The sandwich was cut in half and was in a brown wrapper. I opened the top of the wrapper and began eating my sandwich. I thought the brown wrapper was a brown bag. It turns out, I was wrong. After just a few bites, the bottom of the wrapper came undone and the bottom half of the chicken salad sandwich fell and hit the floor spreading chicken salad in every direction. Oh, dear! I was MORTIFIED! I had just messed up the car designated especially for Owen Wilson (a brand new silver Cadillac CTS). The driver pulled over into a gas station and I got some napkins and cleaned up the disaster as best as I could. And, being a good bachelor, I salvaged a portion of my sandwich and ate it. Haha! Pathetic, I know. Most of the damage was on the mat, so I was able to dump much of the mess quite easily. The driver would later be required to finish cleaning up after me before Owen Wilson arrived. I apologized to the driver who was having a good laugh at my misfortune.

8. I hope you were paid a consultant fee. Any other perks you can talk about?

GM: I was paid as a bird consultant for the movie. Most of my work was going through the script and addressing bird accuracy issues. Being treated like a celebrity was totally foreign to me, but very enjoyable, of course. They flew me to Vancouver. I stayed at The Sutton Place, a 5-star hotel for two of the three weeks and I stayed at Blackrock Resort on Vancouver Island. I got to meet all the major actors including Jack Black, Owen Wilson, and Steve Martin. I met many of the supporting cast as well: Anjelica Huston, Rashida Jones, Tim Blake Nelson, and Anthony Anderson. I also met many of the movie crew who do all the hard work making the whole movie thing happen. The catered gourmet food on set for breakfast, snacks, and lunch was incredible, too.

9. Was JB surviving on only pretzels and peanut butter?

GM: Hahaha! Umm. Maybe. I can't say what stories made it into the script

10. There was A LOT of internet chatter on the various list-servs about this movie. Do you think this might be good for birding? Or will birders be "set back" to the time of Miss Jane Hathaway (actress Nancy Kulp) and Professor P. Caspar Biddle (actor Wally Cox) in "The Birdwatchers" episode of *The Beverly Hillbillies*?

GM: I think this movie will certainly generate some curiosity. Even during the three weeks I was there, movie crew members who starting noticing birds and bird songs they had never heard before. They asked questions. They were curious that anyone would be so passionate as to do this competitively. So in that regard, birding may have some new converts. As for birding itself? Well. Look at us. We are an eclectic clan of folks. And not everyone pays attention to birds. There are some of us who dress oddly. There are some who act oddly. Some of us watch and enjoy birds passively. Some of us pursue birding aggressively. But all of us have, at some level, an interest in birds. That is what ties us all together. I think more people may be receptive to birding now than when I started 50 years ago. As for the movie's effect? Well, I don't know. I hope it's good in that more people will take up an interest in birds and won't be afraid to do it. I hope my character doesn't scare them away from a magnificent hobby! Haha!

11. Target date for release? Will you get to attend a red-carpet premiere?

GM: The target date for release is "next year". I talked to folks in editing who said it would be at least February before they are done. So, sometime after that. The last day I was on set, the movie director, David Frankel, shook my hand, thanked me for all my hard work, and told me "See you at the premiere." So yes, I am assuming I am going to get an invitation.

12. Are you an extra in the background strolling past like Alfred Hitchcock?

GM: I was in a number of shots. Hopefully, they will make it past the cutting room floor! Look for a birder with a bright red Ohio State ball cap. That would be yours truly!



Birder and movie consultant Greg Miller, right, with Jack Black. Miller commented on his "fictionalized" *Big Year* character played by the A-list actor: "Jack Black is a pretty cool dude. He is in real life much like the characters he has played in movies. There were days where I was in tears with laughter. You'll just have to see the movie." Photo courtesy Greg Miller.

OXBOW, Inc
Celebrates 25 Years of
Wetlands Conservation



Oxbow Bald Eagle.
 Photo courtesy
 Tom Uhlman.

The confluence of the Great Miami River and Ohio River, “The Oxbow”, is a delight in all seasons. Bald Eagles watch over spring flooded fields easily catching fish trapped in ponds of receding flood water. Young Wood Ducks leap from high nest holes taking their first step into the world. Yellow-orange Prothonotary Warblers announce their breeding territory with a repeated “sweet” song. Great Egrets stand in shallow water rimming summer ponds spearing careless fish that swim too near. Great Blue Herons stand on the edge of winter ice. But this birding paradise west of Cincinnati was almost obliterated by development 25 years ago.

In 1985, the confluence of the Great Miami River and Ohio River was threatened with a proposal to build a 700-acre barge port in the middle of a floodplain. Twenty-five years later Oxbow, Inc. celebrates the preservation and the wealth of nature contained within the floodplain. This island of biodiversity adjacent to Lawrenceburg and Greendale, Indiana, only 20 miles from downtown Cincinnati, is a five square mile floodplain that has recorded in recent years 283 species of birds and 422 species of vascular plants. It is the home of damselflies, fish, mollusks, frogs, turtles, snakes, and mammals of a wide variety of species including Beaver and River Otter. None of this would be possible if the barge port project had not been derailed by a group of private citizens who subsequently formed Oxbow, Inc.



Aquatic Smartweed. Photo courtesy Tom Uhlman.

Protecting land on both the Indiana and Ohio side, Oxbow, Inc. has raised millions of dollars to safeguard more than 1100 acres, mostly by direct purchase (870 acres) while holding conservation easements on 260 acres. These easements are attached to the deed and restrict the use of the land in the future while allowing the owners to use the land

within the conservation easement agreement. Restrictions attached to the deed apply to subsequent owners of the property in perpetuity. Oxbow’s partner on the Ohio side, the Hamilton County Park District, has protected over 1000 acres of the floodplain primarily through the use of conservation easements (900 acres). Between the two organizations, nearly 2200 acres of the 3000 acre floodplain have been protected.

While primarily a land trust, Oxbow is also engaged in adult and classroom education from the primary grades through college. Oxbow, Inc. land is open to research and has been used by several area universities and colleges for student research.

Twenty-five years after its founding, Oxbow, Inc. (www.oxbowinc.org/index.html) remains an all-volunteer organization and an active presence in the local community. With more than 800 member families, Oxbow, Inc. continues to raise money for the purchase or conservation easements on the remaining 800 acres of the floodplain. Money to support Oxbow, Inc. has come from membership dues, gifts, grants, farm income, investment income, Birdathon donations, and legacy gifts. None has come from government funding. After 25 years Oxbow, Inc. remains a unique land trust preserving nature and preserving the ability of people to interact with nature in a way that brings enjoyment. We plan to keep fulfilling the mission of the organization: to protect and improve the floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio Rivers.

Dr. Jon Seymour, President of Oxbow, Inc. - Cincinnati



Prothonotary Warbler.
 Photo courtesy Lana Hays.

Mallards take flight at Oxbow, Inc. Photo courtesy Tom Uhlman.



Mallards take flight at Oxbow, Inc. Photo courtesy Tom Uhlman.

OOS VISIT TO TNC/EOA PROPERTY IN ADAMS COUNTY

In May, nearly thirty OOS members and guests experienced a special Breeding Bird Workshop at The



Look closely to see Chuck-will's-widow (above, facing right) on a nest in the EOA preserve. Photo courtesy Greg Cornett.

Edge of Appalachia Preserve (EOA) in Adams County. More than 100 species of birds were observed including Chuck-will's-widow on a nest!



Eulett Center in Adams County. Photo courtesy Jim McCormac.

Thanks to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Cincinnati Museum of Natural History for sharing their knowledge and expertise. Together, we explored the richest diversity of breeding birds in the state! You may recall, in 2007 OOS made a \$10,000 dollar donation to EOA to assist with funding the "Sunshine Corridor", a 6,000 tract of land linking 14,000 acres of EOA with 60,000 acres of Shawnee State Forest. A \$500 donation to EOA/Eulett Center was made late this summer after our visit.

MISSION POSSIBLE: Dan Sanders Celebrates Milestone 800 Birds on his ABA Life List

-Sunday, May 16th.

-Dan Sanders' mission, should he decide to accept it, is to travel on a moments notice from Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, Ohio to Ft. De Soto Park, Florida to add Bahama Mockingbird as number 800 on his life list.

-To "get the BAMO", and not have an AOU "split" species become # 800 by default, Dan must see the Bahama Mockingbird before nightfall.

-Cue the theme song to Mission Impossible.

What started as ordinary day near Lake Erie for Dan Sanders and Doreene Linzell became a tale of extraordinary persistence. One minute, they were driving the causeway towards the boardwalk expecting the usual stellar birding at Magee. The next, they were headed to the Columbus airport, Dan



Bahama Mockingbird: notice the dark streaks along the flanks, dark tail with white tips, and the lateral throat stripe. The Fort De Soto area has 330 "verified" species on its checklist including other Caribbean strays like Bananaquit and Thick-billed Vireo. Photos courtesy Ron Smith: www.PinellasBirds.com

behind the wheel and Doreene making enroute flight and rental car arrangements from her phone. Fortunately, the stars aligned and a direct flight for a reasonable price was available: whether or not a MasterCard was used for purchase, the serendipity of the day was "priceless". By 6 pm that evening, Dan was observing life bird # 800 and Doreene, life bird # 724.

An amazing series of events for one amazing day of birding! Dan says "I'm thankful # 800 didn't turn out to be the Winter Wren split that will become official this summer and that the new wren species will be # 801 on my ABA list".

"Winter" Wren has been split into three species. The species breeding in the Pacific Northwest is now called Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*) and the eastern "Winter" Wren remains Winter Wren (*Troglodytes hyemalis*). *Troglodytes troglodytes*, the third new species, retains the original scientific name and is now Eurasian Wren.

Dan has accomplished several "life" birding goals:

- 1) his "lifetime" listing goal for Ohio was 350 or more and he is currently at 351 (White-Winged Dove observed in 2009 was #351)
- 2) after 15 years of trying, he hit his goal for an "annual" Ohio list of 300 in one calendar year (tallied 301 in 2009)
- 3) ABA Big Year: observed 715 birds in 2005 (ending with Black Rail at Waldo's Dike in San Francisco Bay area during annual high tides).

What's left for the Powell resident? To tally 250 or more Ohio species for 20 consecutive years! Dan says "If things go well, I'll reach this goal in 2014: I started listing in Ohio in 1995 after retiring from teaching Biology after a nearly 30-year career."

Editor's Note: Dan has another interest: he's a National Board Officer for the World Horseshoe Championship! He also atlases many OBBA II blocks and serves on the OOS board.



Dan Sanders at Fort De Soto Park after traveling 1000 miles. Photo courtesy Doreene Linzell.

WCAS BIRD SURVEYS PROTECT ROCKY RIVER

In 2006, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society (WCAS) began a five-year project to collect data on bird populations in the Rocky River's East Branch. WCAS partnered with Cleveland Metroparks (CMP) to conduct point counts at locations throughout the watershed. Prior to this survey, data



Rocky River near Berea, Ohio.
Photo courtesy Mary Anne Romito.

were lacking on bird populations in the Rocky River area. CMP is using the data to help protect the watershed from development and to buy private parcels in order to reduce storm water runoff into the Rocky River. The outcome of this collaboration will be to protect forest habitats and wetlands, maintain a clean river, and enhance quality of life for citizens in the watershed.

What's magic about five years? The answer is five years of data from our point counts will show definite trends in bird populations in the Rocky River valley. It takes at least five years to lend significance to any data stream. Year Five, which is this year, will culminate in a data set CMP can use for conservation purposes.

About 50 Audubon members—citizen scientists—take part. Each year, we test volunteers to make sure bird identification skills meet a high standard and that they correctly fill out data sheets.

The Important Bird Area (IBA) survey has given WCAS a reputation as the go-to organization for bird surveys. Over the past three years, Metroparks asked us to survey birds in private parcels in Hinckley and North Royalton. CMP used our data in applications for grant money to acquire these parcels.

Does the end of the five-year survey mean that interest in the IBA will go away? In anticipation of the completion of our five-year study, WCAS has been conducting meetings with agencies in and around the Rocky River valley. These agencies, or stakeholders, are working with us to construct a strategy for what conservation initiatives should take place in the IBA once the study is done.

Tom Romito,
-President, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

TNC PROJECT TO REDUCE LAKE ERIE INVASIVE SPECIES



The Nature Conservancy is launching a massive, three-year project to restore Great Lake habitats along Lake Erie and its tributaries. The federally-funded Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, a new EPA interagency project, will likely fund part of the work. Invasive buckthorn and common reed will be particularly targeted.

Goals are to:

- 1.) restore 2,000 acres of coastal wetlands from Sandusky Bay to TNC's Erie Marsh Preserve in Michigan,
- 2.) restore 800 acres of wet prairie and oak savanna in tributary watershed of the Maumee River in the Oak Openings west of Toledo,
- 3.) restore 530 acres of wetlands in the Grand River watershed in northeastern Ohio.



Editor's Note: The Nature Conservancy is also supporting work in the Gulf of Mexico. To donate \$10 via mobile device to TNC's "Fund for Gulf Coast Restoration", text "COAST" to 50555. To make a larger contribution, or for more information on TNC's work in Ohio and in the Gulf, visit <http://www.nature.org/>



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY: ARCTIC NWR & PIF



Happy 50th Anniversary to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, home to 180 species of birds including breeding King Eider, Rock Ptarmigan, Gyrfalcon, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, and more, spread over 19 million acres. Read about ANWR: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/profiles/index.cfm?id=75600>

Partners in Flight celebrates 20 years. PIF is a cooperative effort linking federal, state, and local government agencies as well as involving conservation groups, industry, academic communities, and concerned individuals. PIF's missions are to 1.) help species at risk, 2.) keep common birds common, 3.) promote voluntary partnerships for birds, habitats, and people. Information: www.partnersinflight.org/

Members' Corner

Thank you for your donations!



We would like to thank and acknowledge the following members who have given generous donations. These donations have been deposited into the Ohio Ornithological Society's Conservation & Education Fund. These funds will be used towards promoting conservation, education and research of Ohio's avifauna. Thank you!

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| Elaine Barnum | Peter King |
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Welcome New Members!

We would like to welcome our new members who have joined us since our last issue.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Armstrong & Nebel Family | Frank Jea |
| Nancy Baker-Cazan | Kelleys Island Audubon Club |
| Jim & Lynn Burdine | Sherrill Kozak |
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oosmember@gmail.com

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 cerulean1@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. Because the newsletter is sent as bulk mail, subscribers should remember the Post Office will not forward this newsletter to a new address. **Please notify Barb Fate at oosmember@gmail.com if you have moved.**

Editor--Ann Oliver

Calendar of Events

October 8-10, 2010: Sixth Annual OOS Conference. Join OOS in Eastlake, Ohio at the Radisson Hotel & Suites-Eastlake for our annual meeting. **Pelagic and field trips on Saturday and Sunday morning:** some locations have limited space. **Special keynote speakers:** Larry Rosche on Friday evening, who'll present an overview of the birds of the Cleveland area, and Drew Wheelan, ABA Gulf Coast Coordinator, who will update us on the aftermath of the oil spill. A trio of **afternoon speakers on Saturday:** John Pogacnik, Harvey Webster, and Dr. Andy Jones. A registration form is available inside your newsletter (mailed version) or available on our website: www.ohiobirds.org/

November 20, 2010: Fourth Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference. Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm, Dayton. Sponsored by BSBO. Details: http://ohioyoungbirders.org/oybc_4th_annual_conference.htm

January, 2011: OOS Trip to the Wilds. Watch for details on the OOS website and in our fall newsletter.

September 15-18, 2011: Midwest Birding Symposium at Lakeside, Ohio. Co-sponsored by OOS.

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 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.

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Ohio Ornithological Society Membership Application

For an online version of this application visit: www.ohiobirds.org/join.php

Name: _____

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Address: _____

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(For electronic news updates, special events, and field trips)

Donation Amount - Additional donation to the OOS Conservation Fund

\$ _____

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Distributing OOS flyers within your club or community?

\$15 Student/Limited Income

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\$250 Sustaining Member

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\$1,000 Lifetime Benefactor

