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# The Cerulean

Quarterly Newsletter of the Ohio Ornithological Society



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# lights out

## *for birds: small changes with big impacts*

By Matthew Shumar

Ohioans are no strangers to bird migration. In fact, the Biggest Week in American Birding draws birders from all over the globe to locales within the western Lake Erie basin. Visitors flock to this region with the promise of excellent views of some of the millions of birds that pass through Ohio on their way to breeding grounds farther north. While the phenomenon of migration is exciting for those of us donning binoculars and fancy cameras, it is one of the most perilous periods in a bird's annual life cycle. Long-term research on Black-throated Blue Warblers, for example, has shown that mortality during migration is at least 15-times higher than during the breeding or overwintering periods (Sillett & Holmes 2002). More than 85% of apparent annual mortality of these Black-throated Blue Warblers occurred during migration.

This movement from overwintering locations in Central and South America to and from breeding grounds in temperate North America proves challenging enough in a natural system: the combination of unpredictable weather and increased exposure to predation for thousands of miles is nothing to bat an eye at. Add on top of that loss of stopover habitat over an increasingly developed landscape as well as countless obstacles in urban areas, and you have a rather daunting journey—one that is made twice each year!

Most songbirds migrate at night, guided in part by constellations and lunar paths. Like the Sirens of Homer's *Odyssey*, artificial light sources in urban centers prove to be a perilous attraction for many passage migrants. Birds frequently collide with buildings at night, and during the day many of these structures prove additionally problematic: highly

reflective glass is often perceived by birds as an extension of the surrounding vegetation and sky.

Building collisions are second only to predation by free-ranging domestic cats as the largest source of direct human-caused bird mortality in birds, and it is estimated that between 365 million and nearly one billion birds are killed by collisions each year in the United States (Loss et al. 2014). "Lights Out" and "Safe Passage" programs across the globe are working to address this problem. The Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP) of Toronto was the first organization in the world to address the issue of bird collisions with buildings. Since 1993 volunteers have been working with Toronto business owners to address reflective glass issues and reduce nighttime lighting, and they have picked up tens of thousands of dead and injured birds during their monitoring. Unfortunately most birds are found dead, but



View from space at night

those that are found alive have a very high chance of successful rehabilitation and release.

Encouraged by the success of FLAP, Chicago launched their own program (Lights Out Chicago) in 1995, and similar efforts have been replicated throughout the United States. In 2012, we started a Lights Out program in Columbus as a joint effort by the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative and the Grange Insurance Audubon Center, with financial and organizational support from a number of local conservation and business groups. Seven buildings in downtown Columbus enrolled in the program during the first year, and enrollment has steadily increased over the past five years.

Starting in mid-March of each year, building owners, managers, and residents are encouraged to reduce exterior nighttime lighting during peak bird migration periods. From March 15 through June 1, and August

15 through October 31, building managers are encouraged to reduce their lighting as much as possible by doing the following: eliminating architectural lighting and spotlights; eliminating upper floor interior lights when not in use; using blinds and/or task lighting when interior lighting is required overnight; eliminate or dim atrium lighting; use shielded (downward facing) lighting for walkways.

While our primary objective is to reduce the number bird collisions as much as possible, there are also many benefits for

business owners and residents, including positive gains in public relations, reductions in CO2 emissions, and potentially substantial cost savings. For example, Lights Out Wilmington (Delaware) estimated savings of \$6,000 per year for a 20-story building participating in the Lights Out program. In an attempt to understand enrollment motivations and increase participation, we surveyed business owners in Columbus after the first year of the program. The vast majority of respondents cited

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TIM JASINSKI

Red-eyed Vireo, dead from collision



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that the primary driver for their enrollment was to show consumers that they were an environmentally friendly or “green” company. To help them reach that goal, we created signs that businesses can display in their entrances and lobbies showing participation. We also include the company’s logos on our website and in advertising for the program. We have seen a positive response to these actions, and we now have over half of the tallest buildings in downtown Columbus enrolled in Lights Out.

Given the success we observed in Columbus, we hoped to expand the effort to as much of Ohio as possible. However, before proceeding we wanted to be able to explicitly demonstrate that all this work was indeed having a positive effect on the rates of bird collisions. Few studies have examined the potential for Lights Out programs to reduce bird-building collisions. Lights Out Chicago reported an 80% reduction in

building collisions following reduced nighttime lighting, but we wanted to assess specific structural aspects of buildings as well as light output with respect to bird collisions. To that end, we set up a study in Columbus to explore factors associated with bird-building collisions. For two years, a small team of volunteers surveyed the Uptown and Arena Districts of Columbus. The survey area included buildings across a range of heights and nighttime lighting brightness. Volunteers searched the perimeter of buildings early in the morning, documenting all dead and injured birds along with

the specific location and time of discovery. Dead birds were taken to the Ohio State University Museum of Biological Diversity, and injured birds were taken to the Ohio Wildlife Center for rehabilitation.

Concurrent with our collision monitoring, we took a standardized set of photographs of each building at night. Using specialized software (Analyzing Digital Images; Museum of Science 2008) we were able to quantify the percent illumination for each building. Over the course of this study, approximately 250 birds of 49 species were collected. Eight injured birds were found and transferred for rehabilitation. Unsurprisingly, we found that the number of birds found at a building was positively correlated with the number of floors and the amount of light coming off that building. The good news that comes with those results is that we will effectively reduce the number of bird collisions in Columbus if we reduce the amount of light coming from each building. With that in hand, we began growing the effort into a statewide initiative—Ohio Lights Out.



TIM JASINSKI

Collected birds



*Grasshopper Sparrow, ready for release*

In 2015 we launched Lights Out Miami Valley with the help of Brunner Nature Center, Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm, Five Rivers Petromarks, Daytona BOMA, and Partners for the Environment. Over the course of two years, we enrolled more than two dozen buildings across a six county area. This year, we continued developing a regional program in Cleveland with the help of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center (LENSC). Tim Jasinski, a wildlife rehabilitator at LENS, led a group of highly motivated volunteers to monitor downtown Cleveland this spring. They found over 300 dead and injured birds, and successfully rehabilitated and released more than 90 birds!

To date we have roughly 50 buildings enrolled in Ohio Lights Out, and in addition to recruiting participants in our three regional efforts, we hope to launch programs in Toledo and Cincinnati in the near future. We also encourage building owners and even private homeowners

in other reaches of Ohio to participate. Every building makes a difference. For more information on Ohio Lights Out and the regional programs, including how to volunteer or enroll your building, please visit <http://ohiolightsout.org/>

#### References:

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- Museum of Science (2007–2008): *Analyzing Digital Images*. Version 11. Museum of Science, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.
- Sillett, T.S. and Holmes R.T. (2002): Variation in survivorship of a migratory songbird throughout its annual cycle. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 71: 296–308.

*Dr. Matthew Shumar is the Coordinator of the Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative.*



*Atlantic Puffin*

#### Scholarship

## OOS sends young birder to Hog Island

Adriana Losey was awarded an OOS Young Birder's Award to attend the Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens at Hog Island Audubon Camp. The birding camp was held June 11 to 16, 2017 on Hog Island, off the Atlantic coast of Maine. Adriana met with 20 other aspiring birders aged 14 to 17 for intense programs in field identification, bird ecology and conservation. Adriana writes "Hog Island was one of the best weeks ever and I am very thankful I was able to receive this scholarship from OOS."



*Black Guillemot*

# Appearance of a Calliope Hummingbird in Ohio



ROCHELLE D. WALDMAN

By Stefan Gleissberg

An *American Goldfinch* looks massive next to a rare *Calliope Hummingbird* visiting a family's backyard in Delaware, Ohio.

This is a species that nests in western mountains and spends the winter in Mexico, but this individual, hatched from a tiny egg earlier this year, got 'off track' on its first migration journey and went east instead, ending up in central Ohio. It is just the 2nd record of a *Calliope*

*Hummingbird* for the state.

When our *Ruby-throated Hummingbirds*, the only species nesting in Eastern North America, have left for their tropical winter quarters, any hummingbird showing up after mid October should be carefully evaluated. Reports of western species straying east have become more numerous during the last decades. Most of these vagrants are *Rufous Hummingbirds*,

although several other species have been reported as well, including *Calliope*s. This year, a *Calliope Hummingbird* was banded on 18 October in Pennsylvania, and multiple sightings have been reported along the golf coast from Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. Apparently, *Calliope*s can be even more adventurous in their travels: one was discovered and photographed on 19 June on

Herschel Island, off the arctic coast of Yukon territory in Canada.

Tania Perry first noticed the rare visitor in her Delaware yard when hearing its call note, and then saw the tiny bird visiting her late blooming Pineapple Sage (*Salvia splendens*), a favorite nectar source in its normal Mexican winter habitat. First suspected to be a *Rufous Hummingbird*, some expert birders including Bryan Sharp and Allen Chartier identified it as a hatch year male *Calliope Hummingbird* (*Selasphorus calliope*).

That was on October 31, and as of this writing, he is still there and has stayed in place all of November.

Some vagrant *Rufous Hummingbirds* that were banded have been reported to survive in their unusual eastern winter quarter, and return in subsequent years. There is a possibility that also this young *Calliope* will make it through the central Ohio winter – it is a species adapted to cool mountain temperatures.

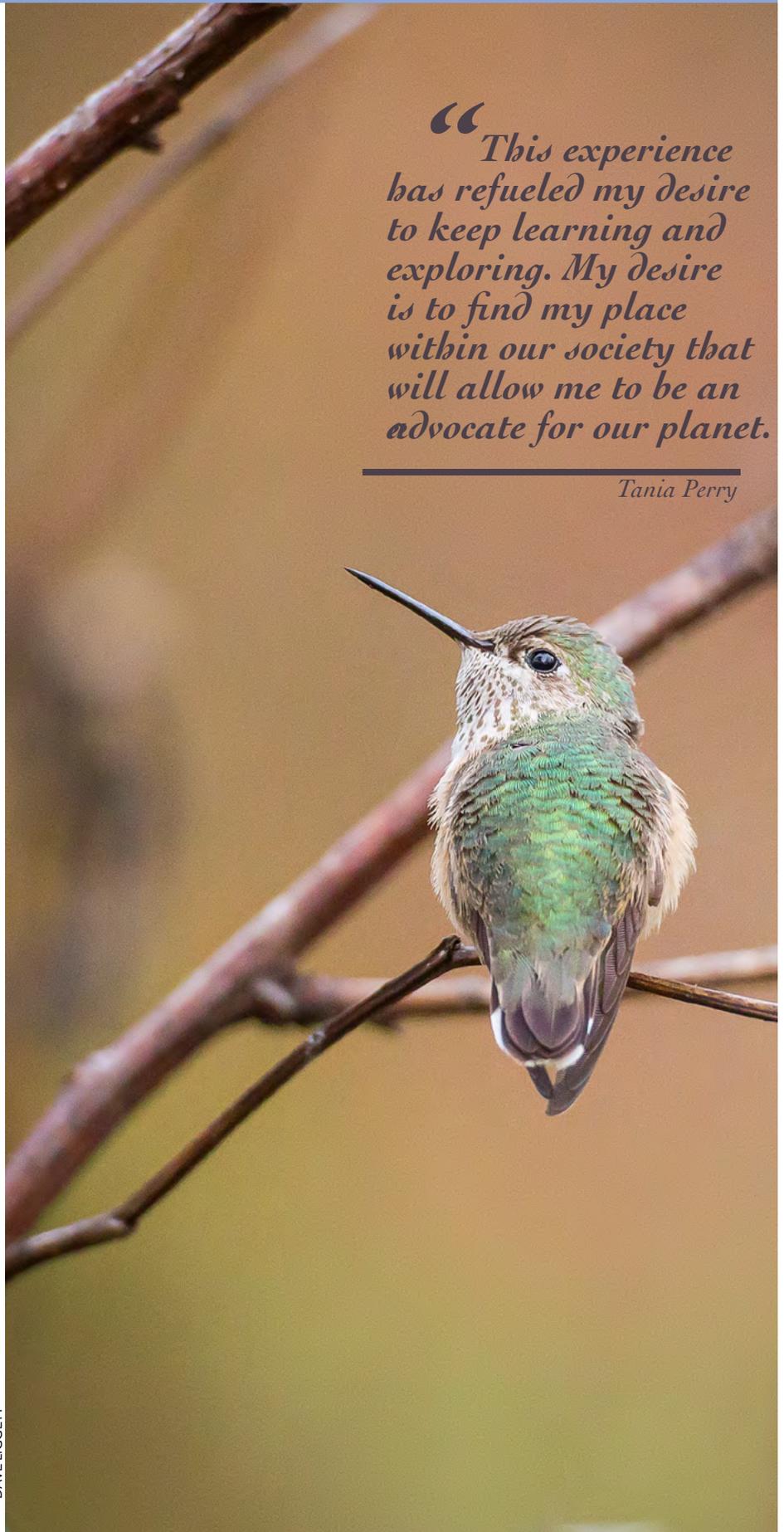
It was some good luck that this *Calliope Hummingbird* found the yard of Tania and Corey Perry – they have been dedicated and thoughtful hosts of the celebrity visitor and have graciously accommodated around 700 visitors to their back yard, allowing many life birds to be checked, photos and videos to be taken, or just looks and behavior enjoyed through binoculars and scopes.

The *Calliope* was seen performing its territorial climb-dive flights, obviously considering the Perry's yard as a space well worth defending.

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“*This experience has refueled my desire to keep learning and exploring. My desire is to find my place within our society that will allow me to be an advocate for our planet.*”

*Tania Perry*



DAVE LIGGETT



TANIA PERRY

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The tiny bird would first ascend and then dive down, ending with a “little flatuloid sound presumed to emanate from dive-brake action of rectrices, followed by faint, high-frequency pzzt (or pzzt-zing)” (Calder and Boesman, 1994). For some high speed video of courtship behavior, see [[youtu.be/HnenUl9nkCk](https://youtu.be/HnenUl9nkCk)].

Not only is the *Calliope Hummingbird* smaller than our Ruby-throated, but it is altogether the smallest breeding bird in North America. Our goldfinches appear as heavy weights in comparison, and it would take more than 4 *Calliopes* to make up the 13 grams (.46 oz) of a single goldfinch.

All the more surprising, *Calliopes* inhabit cool mountain habitat. The authors of the species account in ‘Birds of North America’ write: “The *Calliope Hummingbird* survives and breeds successfully in chilling northwestern montane environments, despite having the severe thermal disadvantage of a high ratio of surface exposure to heat-producing tissue mass”. *Calliopes* also travel long distances – in fact they may qualify as the smallest long-

distance avian migrant in the world.

“Cal” received a lot of attention from his hosts and from the many visitors. As feisty as tiny, he would aggressively defend a territory and chase the much larger *Carolina Chickadees* around, as if these songbirds were competing for sugary food. On a Facebook site devoted to the visitor, Tania Perry writes:



DAVE LIGGETT

“He spent quite a bit of time going after one goldfinch [...] He actually made contact with the finch several times on the head and wouldn’t accept that the finch moved away; he would follow him and continue his assault.”

A visiting birder recorded video of the *Calliope* perched

on a clothesline, spreading its wings and feathers, bathing in the rain, and wiping its beak. He was observed preening and catching insects. The first dots of iridescent magenta color started to show on his throat. Eventually, entire rays of magenta feathers will develop that “Cal” will, hopefully, be using to win over a female, next year, on some western breeding grounds.

Having seen this energy bundle of a bird, that’s entirely possible.

Sources:

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- Western hummingbirds in the East—set your feeders out!! eBird, 8 November 2012 [[ebird.org/content/ebird/news/west\\_hum\\_east/](https://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/west_hum_east/)]
- Zipcode Zoo Species account [[zipcodezoo.com/index.php/Selasphorus\\_calliope](https://zipcodezoo.com/index.php/Selasphorus_calliope)]

Hallie Mason  
1956 - 2017



*Obituary by Sue Evanoff.*

Our birding friend, Hallie Mason, was taken from our community way too soon. As one of the most selfless people I've ever known, she was loved by all who knew her. She was a part of the Amish birding community, always available to drive, teach or assist in birding. Even those who only met her once or twice or just knew of her were moved by her passing. She has left a void in the birding community.

How very blessed we've all been to know this remarkable person, and to have had our lives touched by her light.



Hallie Mason (nee Deems) left us September 11, 2017, surrounded by loved ones. She was born November 11, 1956, of Josephine (nee Wells) and Charles R. (Jiggs) Deems. Raised in Uhrichsville, she went to Claymont High School, and later attended Kent, Ashland, and Franciscan Universities. Hallie learned much about medicine and about life from her beloved stepfather, Thomas E. Ogden, M.D., while working in his family practice office for

many years. At the same time, she also worked for Hospice of Tuscarawas County and in the emergency department of Twin City Hospital.

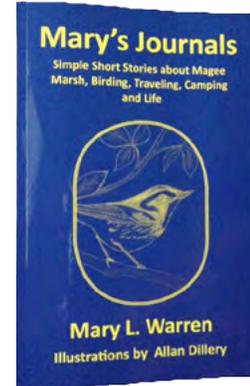
Hallie became a nurse practitioner in May of 2000 and worked at Akron City Hospital/Summa for 17 years. During that time, she helped to build a renowned palliative care service and fellowship program. "Mama Mason" nurtured many nurses, medical students, residents, and fellows at Summa.

Hallie's grandmother, Glenna Peoples, fostered in her a spirit of independence and a love of nature which years later developed into a passion for birding. Her love of birding took her around the world: Scotland, Trinidad, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Madagascar, South Africa, and much of the United States. In birding circles, she is well known for her volunteer work at Black Swamp Bird Observatory, and in the local Amish community as a proficient birder and mentor and a former hospice worker. All who knew Hallie appreciated her keen intelligence, caring professionalism, and vibrant personality.

Contributions in Hallie's name may be made to one of the following:

Black Swamp Bird Observatory  
13551 W. State Route 2  
Oak Harbor, OH 43449  
[bsbo.org](http://bsbo.org)

Blast GlioBlastoma  
2383 S. Main St., Suite D-106  
Akron, OH 44319  
[blastgbm.com](http://blastgbm.com)



**Book Notice:**

**Mary's Journals**  
Simple Short Stories about Magee Marsh, Birding, Traveling, Camping and Life

Marry Warren  
2017

416 pages

2016. xx pages.

Long-time naturalist at Magee Marsh and OOS board member Mary Warren has published a book recounting her rich experiences, from Bald Eagle restoration to the Biggest Week and reflections about the importance of marshes for wildlife and the coastal ecosystems. "It is the compilation of work and birding journals that I have written over the years that I was working at Magee Marsh", Marry writes. It is available from the Friends of Magee Marsh and Friends of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge gift shops, and also directly from the author by sending a check to Mary Warren, 310 Fremont Ave, Sandusky, OH 44870 for \$11 plus \$4 shipping and handling.

# Birding Calendar around Ohio

Please confirm event details and registration needs using the links provided.

Tuesday, 2 January  
**'Private Land Management and Wetland Restoration'** with Mark Costilow  
Black River Audubon  
[blackriveraudubon.org](http://blackriveraudubon.org)

Tuesday, 2 January  
**'Great Lakes Biomimikry'** with Carol Thaler  
Western Cuyahoga Audubon  
[wcaudubon.org](http://wcaudubon.org)

Tuesday, 2 January  
**Photo Safari and Potluck**  
Ohio State Lima  
Tri-Moraine Audubon  
[tri-moraineaudubon.org](http://tri-moraineaudubon.org)

Wednesday, 3 January  
**'Mentor Marsh: History, Tragedy, Recovery'** with David Kriska  
Kirtland Bird Club  
[kirtlandbirdclub.org](http://kirtlandbirdclub.org)

Saturday, 13 January  
**'Ducks at Nimisila Reservoir'** with Jon Cefus  
Kirtland Bird Club  
[kirtlandbirdclub.org](http://kirtlandbirdclub.org)

Saturday, 13 January  
**Bird walk at Mohican State Park Lodge**  
Greater Mohican Audubon  
[gmasohio.org](http://gmasohio.org)

Tuesday, 16 January  
**'Veery Song Research'** with Courtney Brennan  
Blackbrook Audubon  
[blackbrookaudubon.org](http://blackbrookaudubon.org)

20 January 2018  
**The Wilds Winter Raptor Extravaganza**  
Ohio Ornithological Society  
[ohiobirds.org](http://ohiobirds.org)

Monday, 22 January  
**'Escape to the island'** with Angelika Nelson  
Delaware County Bird Club  
[columbusaudubon.org](http://columbusaudubon.org)

10-24 February  
**OOS South Africa Birding Tour**  
Ohio Ornithological Society  
[ohiobirds.org](http://ohiobirds.org)

Saturday, 24 February  
**Ohio Bluebird Society Conference**  
Grange Insurance Audubon Center  
[ohiobluebirdsociety.org](http://ohiobluebirdsociety.org)



*Calliope Hummingbird*

DAVE LIGGETT

In 2005, Vic Fazio began his volunteer work as eBird reviewer for Ohio. It was not the first transformative project he had spearheaded for Ohio birding but the hours he contributed towards Ohio's eBird experience from then until now has been herculean. In June of 2016, Vic started the wheels of transition

turning towards multiple Ohio reviewers and in May 2017 he announced the addition of three new reviewers and added several more in the following months. On November 1, 2017, oversight of eBird review of the whole state was transferred from Vic to a group consisting of Craig Caldwell,

Stefan Gleissberg, Kent Miller, and Brian Wulker. Since then (with Vic's input) this group has been actively assigning clusters of Ohio's counties to mostly local reviewers and we are very pleased to now announce the new lineup of reviewers processing Ohio's eBird data:

Adams – Brian Wulker  
Allen – Bob Sams  
Ashland – Kent Miller  
Ashtabula – Andy Avram, Jen Brumfield  
Athens – Stefan Gleissberg  
Auglaize – Troy Shively  
Belmont – Jon Cefus  
Brown – Brian Wulker  
Butler – Brian Wulker  
Carroll – Kent Miller  
Champaign – Doug Overacker  
Clark – Doug Overacker  
Clermont – Brian Wulker  
Clinton – Brian Wulker  
Columbiana – Jon Cefus  
Coshocton – Kent Miller  
Crawford – Jeff Peters  
Cuyahoga – Jen Brumfield  
Darke – Brian Wulker  
Defiance – Scott Myers  
Delaware – Ben Warner, Steve Landes  
Erie – Dan Gesualdo, Jen Brumfield  
Fairfield – Margaret Bowman  
Fayette – Gene Stauffer  
Franklin – Ben Warner, Steve Landes  
Fulton – Andy Jones, Annie Crary, Ryan Jacob, Jason Guerard  
Gallia – Stefan Gleissberg  
Geauga – Cory Chiappone  
Greene – Rick Asamoto  
Guernsey – Kent Miller  
Hamilton – Brian Wulker

Hancock – Bob Sams  
Hardin – Troy Shively  
Harrison – Kent Miller  
Henry – Scott Myers  
Highland – Brian Wulker  
Hocking – Stefan Gleissberg  
Holmes – Kent Miller  
Huron – Jeff Peters  
Jackson – Stefan Gleissberg  
Jefferson – Jon Cefus  
Knox – Kent Miller  
Lake – Jen Brumfield, Cory Chiappone  
Lawrence – Stefan Gleissberg  
Licking – Margaret Bowman  
Logan – Doug Overacker  
Lorain – Dan Gesualdo, Jen Brumfield  
Lucas – Andy Jones, Annie Crary, Ryan Jacob, Jason Guerard  
Madison – Doug Overacker  
Mahoning – Jon Cefus  
Marion – Steve Landes, Ben Warner  
Medina – Dwight Chasar  
Meigs – Stefan Gleissberg  
Mercer – Troy Shively  
Miami – Sue Tackett  
Monroe – Ben Morrison  
Montgomery – Sue Tackett  
Morgan – Stefan Gleissberg  
Morrow – Steve Landes, Ben Warner, Anna Wittmer

Muskingum – Kent Miller  
Noble – Ben Morrison  
Ottawa – Andy Jones, Annie Crary, Ryan Jacob, Jason Guerard  
Paulding – Scott Myers  
Perry – Stefan Gleissberg  
Pickaway – Gene Stauffer  
Pike – Gene Stauffer  
Portage – Dwight Chasar  
Preble – Brian Wulker  
Putnam – Bob Sams  
Richland – Kent Miller  
Ross – Gene Stauffer  
Sandusky – Jeff Peters  
Scioto – Gene Stauffer  
Seneca – Jeff Peters  
Shelby – Doug Overacker  
Stark – Kent Miller  
Summit – Dwight Chasar  
Trumbull – David Hochadel  
Tuscarawas – Kent Miller  
Union – Steve Landes, Ben Warner  
Van Wert – Troy Shively  
Vinton – Stefan Gleissberg  
Warren – Rick Asamoto  
Washington – Stefan Gleissberg  
Wayne – Kent Miller  
Williams – Scott Myers  
Wood – Jeff Peters  
Wyandot – Ben Warner, Steve Landes



# Ohio Ornithological Society Membership Application

Join us online! [ohiobirds.org](http://ohiobirds.org)

We provide a statewide birding network welcoming bird watchers of all interests and abilities to unite for the enjoyment, study and conservation of Ohio's birds.

<b>\$15</b> Student/Limited income	<b>\$100</b> Patron/Business
<b>\$35</b> Individual	<b>\$250</b> Sustaining
<b>\$50</b> Family/NonProfit	<b>\$500</b> Benefactor
<b>\$20</b> Print publications*	<b>\$1,000</b> Lifetime

\*All members will receive the *Cerulean* and the *Ohio Cardinal* electronically. For Print Publications, please add \$20 to the membership fee. Membership is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## JOIN US TODAY!

The *Cerulean* is our quarterly newsletter featuring articles and birding news around the state.

The *Ohio Cardinal* is our quarterly periodical that includes the current season's bird sightings and scientific articles.

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HELP US HELP THE BIRDS!	
Conservation Fund	\$
Development Fund	\$

Total enclosed: \$

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**Please check your membership renewal date, IN RED, above your address!**



UNITED TOGETHER, BIRDERS IN OHIO CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE FOR BIRDS & CONSERVATION!

PLEASE TAKE TIME TO RENEW OR JOIN OHIO'S BIRDING NETWORK!

To provide an Ohio Birding Network welcoming bird watchers of all levels of interest and ability to unite for the enjoyment, study, and conservation of Ohio's wild birds.

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