



THE CERULEAN

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

OOS – One Year Later

Nearly a year has passed since the Ohio Ornithological Society officially launched on International Migratory Bird Day, May 8th, 2004. I'd like to take this opportunity to bring our membership up to speed on what the OOS has managed to accomplish over the past year, and offer some thoughts on the year coming.

First, on behalf of the OOS Board, I want to thank you for your support. As I write this, we are closing in on 600 members, and all of us are thrilled with the growth of the organization. We plan on working hard in 2005, with the hopes of propelling OOS membership into the four figures.

When a few of us first started to meet, back in 2003, to discuss the idea of forming a statewide organization of birders, we knew that there was a need for such a group. In fact, it was surprising that Ohio hadn't yet joined the other 30-some states that had already formed similar groups. Now, more than ever, it's vital that birders band together to form a unified voice to speak to habitat conservation. We should gratefully acknowledge and thank the tremendous contributions of another group of outdoors people – hunters. For instance, since Ducks Unlimited was formed in the 1930s, this group has raised tens of millions of dollars, much of that put on the ground by purchasing wetlands. The Federal Duck Stamp, launched in 1934, has raised over 500 million dollars, and over 90% of each dollar goes to habitat acquisition. Other hunting groups, like the Wild Turkey Federation, have also done a commendable job of raising big bucks, and protecting big blocks of habitat.

Protecting habitat is the single most important thing that we can do to protect our birds, whether they are ducks or cerulean warblers. In an increasingly urbanized state such as Ohio, this task becomes of paramount importance, and takes on increasing urgency. Birders are a tremendous potential resource to effect huge change, in a positive way. Birders continue to increase their numbers at a rapid pace, and in Ohio, people who like to watch birds are estimated at nearly 2 million. The amount of money and clout that this largely unconsolidated group could have, and the collective contributions that we could make, are staggering!

With these thoughts in mind, the OOS was formed. It's vital to have a group that can represent the interests of the birding public, provide opportunities for collaboration among Ohio's birders, and promote protection of bird habitat.

Our first year allowed us the opportunity to forge ahead with some of these ideas. Our first field trip, to the huge grasslands of The Wilds in June 2004, was a real hit. We followed that up with two fall warbler trips/workshops along the shores of Lake Erie. Then, in February 2005, the OOS had a waterfowl trip to the vast

marshes of the Killbuck Valley. There were two common denominators with all these trips. One, we had excellent partners on all of them – The Wilds, Columbus Audubon, Greater Mohican Audubon, and Cleveland Metroparks. Because of the hard work of our collaborators, there was another common thread – all trips filled up practically overnight, and we couldn't accommodate all who wished to go. We plan on helping to organize even more birding adventures in 2005.

Our first symposium was held on January 8th, 2005, and focused on "The Gulls of Lake Erie". Nearly 150 birders attended that event, which featured excellent speakers, great camaraderie, and some good gull-watching along Lake Erie. Our partner was the Kirtland Bird Club, Ohio's oldest birding organization. We are busily planning a shorebird symposium for next fall, which should be an absolutely top-notch affair – watch for details to come.

The inaugural OOS conference has us all excited! To be held the last weekend of April in the heart of the spectacular Shawnee State Forest, that event is a first of its kind for Ohio. It quickly filled up – we could only handle about 200 – but we are looking for ways to expand in 2006. You can be sure we'll have a detailed account of the conference, along with plenty of photos, on our website soon afterwards. Hopefully you can come in '06, if you didn't make it to this year's.

Electronic communication becomes increasingly important to the birder, and the OOS-sponsored Ohio Birds list serve continues to recruit more subscribers all the time. This e-mail forum has been a fabulous tool for hundreds of birders all over Ohio to share their sightings, and a collateral effect has been that many of us who would have otherwise never met have been able to connect in this way. The OOS website – www.ohiobirds.org – has also proven very popular as a resource, and hits now average around 10,000 a day.

The *Ohio Cardinal* is our quarterly journal, and that publication also continues to improve. We are constantly looking for new ways to make that a better magazine, just as we are with this newsletter. We welcome your comments and contributions to both.

In 2005, we will forge yet more partnerships with Ohio's birding clubs and Audubon societies. The OOS has no intention of operating in a vacuum; our primary goal is to help to unify our birding public. We also hope to fund our first "youth grant" in 2005; encouraging young birders is very important to us and we are looking for ways to involve young birders in our organization.

As the OOS grows and continues to find its feet over the next year, please be assured that we will embark on new and exciting initiatives. We are grateful that you are a member, and are appreciative of your support. Please, if you have thoughts about what the OOS could or should do, share them with us.

Yours in Birding, Jim McCormac, OOS President

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 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.

Happy Bird Day!!!!

I like to imagine that a scene similar to this could happen someday in homes throughout our hemisphere. The birds will be different, depending on location, but the excitement and experience would be the same from Alaska to Argentina and all points between:

"Happy Bird Day!" shout the children as they run out before sunrise into the front yard, scopes and binoculars in hand, racing to be the first one to hear the spring peeper-like calls of Swainson's thrushes descending through a thin wisp of early morning fog. Happy Bird Day, indeed, for today, the second Saturday of May is International Migratory Bird Day. The kids didn't have school on Friday—the "dark ages" when people weren't given a day off to celebrate Bird Day have long passed—and they spent the entire day searching their neighborhoods and any available wild or half wild spot for birds and butterflies. But everyone knows Saturday is the day. That's the day their parents or older siblings take them to some amazing spot to spend a full day searching out and being amazed by the numbers and varieties of migratory birds. It's not yet as big a deal for the kids as Christmas, but it's right up there with the last day of school. That's saying something. . .

International Migratory Bird Day occurs on May 14 this year. (The official acronym is "IMBD," which sounds variously like an ominous Cold War nuclear weapons program or an example of vanity plate shorthand seen on a red Lexus rocketing along I-71). We hear about it every spring, and it might seem as if IMBD has been around forever, but the first IMBD was held a mere twelve years ago. In 1993 the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology created IMBD as a way to highlight issues surrounding migratory birds in our hemisphere. Today IMBD is under the care of a number of "Title Sponsors." The IMBD Title Sponsors are the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as Partners in Flight, ConocoPhillips, US Aid, and the Forest Service. The IMBD "Program Sponsors" are the Department of Defense, CounterCulture Coffee, Swift Optics, the National Park Service, Birder's World, the Bureau of Land Management, Eagle Optics,

and Defenders of Wildlife. All of these organizations contribute funds that assist in promoting and presenting IMBD to the public.

While the official IMBD date this year is May 14, events can be held anytime, anywhere. There isn't a centralized or codified way to celebrate IMBD; rather, the sponsoring and supporting agencies and companies encourage birders, state and local wildlife and parks departments, schools, community groups, individuals, etc., to plan events that highlight the migratory birds that pass through the places where we live, work, and play each spring and fall. One major goal is to promote the existence of these creatures—after all, most people don't even know there are migratory birds around them. They have no idea that the weird rattling noise in the forsythia is a blackpoll warbler, pausing on its way north from wintering grounds in South America, or that the obnoxious chattering noise that sounds half insect, half sewing machine that's been coming from the oak out in the back yard since breakfast is a Tennessee warbler, also on its way north from a far distant south. So that's step one: make people aware these birds exist.

The next step is to make people aware of ways we can help lessen the threats and hurdles that we have thrown up in the face of birds trying to migrate from point A to point B and back. That's why each year IMBD focuses particular attention on a different issue facing migratory birds. According to the IMBD website at www.birdday.org, for 2005, "International Migratory Bird Day examines the obstacles birds may encounter in flight and explores the many ways we may minimize their impacts."

Each year, IMBD sponsors tap an artist to create a signature poster for the celebration based on the theme of the year. This year, the artist is David Sibley. Sibley's painting depicts a number of migrant birds fluttering in front of a reflective surface in which we see the mirror images of the birds as well as some of the obstacles migrants face: communications towers, wind farms, and skyscrapers. Likely we'll see Sibley's IMBD poster at places such as Magee Marsh, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, and other birding hot-spots and events this spring. You can also see the painting on the IMBD website, listed above.

Maybe IMBD will become *really* big someday and we'll get an official weekday holiday. Ideally the second Friday of May—no school, no work, just a chance to get out and enjoy the spring, the birds, and draw attention to these amazing creatures. One can dream, right? Until then, and even after then, Happy Bird Day to you.

--Mike Busam, West Chester

Birder's Bio - Jim McCarty

Editor's note: We hope you enjoy our new feature, "Birder's Bio." Jim McCarty, who writes "Aerial View," a birding column appearing every Thursday in The Plain Dealer of Cleveland, graciously agreed to be our first subject.

I've been birding my entire life as an element of a love for the outdoors, including reptiles and amphibians, native plants and trees, and all wild animals. I became a serious birder after an introduction to Larry Rosche and Woody Stover in the late 1970s. I'm passionate about birding Texas, Arizona and California, Cape May,

NJ, during fall migration and -- most of all -- Headlands Beach State Park and Magee Marsh in the spring. I have a native garden in my Lakewood backyard and thoroughly enjoy the migrants that stop there to rest and feed in spring and fall. I feel privileged and overwhelmed to bird with so many awesome birders in Northeast Ohio. I hope to instill my love for birds in my sons, ages 14 and 11. I've wanted to write about birds my entire life, and was blown away when *The Plain Dealer* accepted my proposal. The response from readers has been beyond anything I expected. I hope to continue to write the column until retirement and beyond.

--Jim McCarty, Lakewood

Nest with the Birds, a Bird Festival on Kelleys Island - May 8-14, 2005

The Kelleys Island Audubon Club invites you to join them in welcoming migrating song birds to this wonderfully quiet 2,800-acre island in the western basin of Lake Erie. The weeklong program includes morning and afternoon guided bird walks at different nature preserves each day and afternoon nature lectures. Come for a few days or stay all week. A \$5.00 per day donation is suggested and reservations recommended. The program ends on Saturday the 14th with a bi-annual bird-banding program at Long Point. For information contact The Kelleys Island Audubon Club at 440 461-1084, staff@kelleysislandnature.com, or visit our web site at www.kelleysislandnature.com.

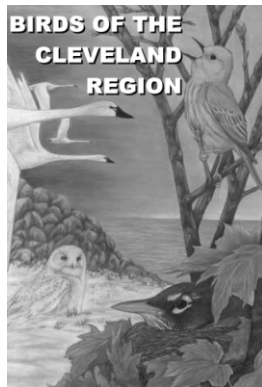
Growing Pains

It has recently been brought to our attention that there is some confusion regarding some of our members' renewal dates. We apologize for any misunderstandings that have occurred. If you receive a renewal notice that you feel is incorrect, please contact Jen Sauter at jsauter@covad.net immediately. Thank you for your patience.

Birds of the Cleveland Region

Larry Rosche's *Birds of the Cleveland Region*, published in 2005 by the Kirtland Bird Club, is in part a revision of a work of the same name by Arthur B. Williams, published in 1950 by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Williams's was the first inclusive and authoritative treatment of the Cleveland region's birds in the modern era.

Rosche, a respected field observer and past editor of the *Cleveland Bird Calendar* for 16 years, has compiled all reports of birds observed in the Cleveland region, incorporating those occurring since Williams's work of 1950. Williams used only text to describe each species' status, habitats, and distribution, as well as local nesting information when appropriate. By contrast, the species accounts in Rosche's revision include text, a graph depicting each species' seasonal status, and a small map showing confirmed occurrence for each of the seven counties of the region (the area covered by Williams was smaller, including everything within 30 miles of Public Square).



Photographs of some of the rarest species, a birding calendar, a guide to productive birding sites in the region, as well as bird portraits by Jen Brumfield and Kevin Metcalf are among the many welcome features of this work.

The book may be purchased for \$24.99 through the Kirtland Bird Club web site at: www.kirtlandbirdclub.org/booksale.htm or at KBC meetings, the Museum Shop at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and many bird stores listed on the club's website.

Karin Tanquist will have copies available for sale at the OOS conference in the spring, and the club will have others for sale at Lake Erie Wing Watch in Oak Harbor and at the North Coast Nature Festival at the Rocky River Nature Center.

Thank you, Mr. Glover--Welcome, Ms. Cole

For the past year Jim Glover has been the design manager for both *The Cerulean* and *The Ohio Cardinal*. He put countless hours into these publications and did a wonderful job. Jim has decided to retire, and we will miss him. However, with each issue we will be reminded that Jim is the artist who designed the logo for *The Cerulean*. Thank you, Jim.

Beginning with this issue, Delores Cole takes over the duties of design manager for *The Cerulean* and we are looking forward to a long relationship with her.

OOS Co-Sponsors Field Trip to the Killbuck Marsh Wildlife Area

In partnership with the Columbus and Greater Mohican Audubon Societies, the OOS organized a field trip to the Killbuck Wildlife Area on February 27, 2005. Led by Su Snyder, Bill Whan, and Jim McCormac, a group of 31 in eight vehicles braved the rough and often flooded roads of Ohio's largest inland marsh, located in Amish Country in Wayne & Holmes Counties.

Our first stop of the trip was Prairie Lane, at the northeast corner of the marsh, for ducks, geese, and swans. Our next stop was along Messner Road for close-up looks at Red-headed Woodpeckers. Deeper into the marsh, we stopped to look at more waterfowl, then traveled on to Force Road to see a Bald Eagle nest.

Around noon, we stopped for a leisurely lunch at the Pine Tree Barn, then visited a Holmes County Amish farm for great looks at two Barn Owls. We tallied 49 species, including 17 species of waterfowl, for the day. We also renewed old friendships and made some new ones.

If your group is interested in co-sponsoring a field trip with the OOS, contact Jim McCormac at ambrosia@columbus.rr.com.

Prior Issues of *The Cerulean* Available On-line

If you missed any of last year's issues of this newsletter, you can download them from the OOS web site at www.ohiobirds.org/publications/cerulean/about.php.

Membership Application Ohio Ornithological Society



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

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

(For electronic news updates)

\$ _____ Donation Amount - Yes is would like to make a one-time donation to help support OOS.

\$ _____ 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
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\$250 Sustaining Member
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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.