



THE CERULEAN

Spring 2006, Vol. 3, No. 1

www.ohiobirds.org info@ohiobirds.org

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

Our Second Year

By the time you read this, it will nearly be the conclusion of the second year of existence for the Ohio Ornithological Society. Our anniversary is May 8th; we launched on that date in 2004, which was, fittingly, International Migratory Bird Day.

Our second year was a good one. I wrote a similar update one year ago, and at that time we had about 550 members. Now, we are over 700. All of us on the board are very pleased with this growth, but want to grow much larger. There is power in numbers, and by banding together in an organized statewide organization, birders can do a much better job of helping to protect our birds and their habitat. Decision-makers - particularly political ones - respect groups with large numbers, and together we are much stronger.

A core OOS mission is to provide educational opportunities, at events that bring birders together. Our first annual conference succeeded on both counts. About 200 birders from all parts of Ohio descended on Shawnee State Forest last April for the inaugural conference, and to say it was a fun event would be an understatement. Not only did we find 160 species of birds, participants got to go afield with experts in many other facets of natural history. Not only that, but our large conference also sent a message locally - groups that size spend a lot of money, and benefit the local economy. We can't wait for the next conference, which will be even bigger!

Many of you attended the Shorebird Symposium that we held last August, in partnership with the Toledo Naturalists' Association and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. There were about 200 attendees, and we were treated to talks by some of the foremost experts in North America regarding shorebirds. The field portion was fantastic, too, thanks to the efforts of the refuge, and this event allowed us to forge an excellent partnership with Ottawa.

We held another 200-birder event in December - the raptor symposium at Zanesville in December. Following the formula of speakers in the morning and field trips in the afternoon, we had another fun and educational event. We are grateful to staff of the Wilds, which partnered with us on this event.

Our website - www.ohiobirds.org - grows in popularity, with the number of daily hits far above what it was a year ago. We continually try and update and improve the content, and the News section and the Site Guide section in particular have proven popular among birders.

More birders sign on to the ohio-birds listserv all the time, and that e-mail forum is now the second largest in the country; with over 1,000 subscribers, it is second only to that in Texas. We hope you find it valuable, and we're committed to maintaining it

despite sharply increasing costs as the volume of traffic grows.

The two OOS print mediums, this newsletter and our quarterly journal, *The Ohio Cardinal*, continue to improve. As we grow, our intention is to funnel more resources into these publications and try to constantly improve their quality.

This year will bring a number of other OOS events and opportunities, some described in this issue of *The Cerulean*. We are always looking for ways to engage Ohio's birders, and there are some events on the horizon that should do just that. Read upcoming issues of this newsletter, and follow our web site, to keep abreast of them.

Many challenges remain, and new ones appear as we grow. Two major priorities are involving casual birders, such as feeder-watchers, and attracting young people to birding and involving them in our organization. We have much to do on these fronts.

Fortunately, many of you have stepped forward and helped us. Thanks to all who volunteer with OOS activities and events, and a big thanks to those of you who do your part to share the magic of birds with others.

Great Birding,

--Jim McCormac
OOS President

Comings and Goings

One of the most instrumental members of the OOS Board has been Laura Kammermeier. She was in on the very first planning meetings before we even formed, and has proven to be an enormous asset up to the present. Among her many contributions, she helped create strategies for membership recruitment that have pushed us over 700 members to date. Laura has also been a core part of many OOS events, and last year's annual conference. We are rightfully proud of our website - it often is hailed as one of the best ornithological society sites to be found - and it is largely Laura's doing that the OOS website looks the way it does. Life has caused Laura and her husband, Paul, to migrate north to New York State, and we'll miss her very much. She does plan to be at our April conference, so if you see her there, be sure to say thanks.

Fortunately for us, Jennifer Sauter has stepped into Laura's former role as Executive Secretary, and has proven more than capable of following Laura's footsteps. Many of you no doubt already know Jen, or have at least communicated with her. She is often the frontline contact for the OOS, and is integral to many of our events, especially the conference. Jen came to our attention after finding one of the few inland Ohio records of Long-tailed Jaeger, and has been working with us almost since that time. She is an organizational genius, and has an abundance of creative ideas that have advanced the organization. For those of you attending April's conference, give her big thanks for all her work.

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. Because the newsletter is sent as bulk mail, subscribers should remember that the Post Office will not forward this newsletter to a new address. Please notify the Editor promptly if you move.

Design Manager--Delores Cole, Editor--Su Snyder.

A Conversation on Conservation: Part I

"Outdoorsmen—hunters, fishermen, trappers—were instrumental in purchasing and setting aside this land for wildlife." Statements like this greet us constantly, on signs on public lands, and in print. It doesn't seem to bother butterfly enthusiasts or botanists or joggers, but it drives birders into throes of breast-beating and agonizing self-examination. We are deadbeats, we tell ourselves, parasites! We too should pay excise taxes, maybe on optics and field guides; we should have to buy licenses to bird, or buy duck stamps even if we don't hunt! The atmosphere grows thick with guilt, and also with ambiguity.

Let's not forget that birders are outdoorsmen—and outdoorswomen—too. And many hunters and fishers study and admire birds in the field, and not always over the sight of a shotgun. Like us, most hunters just enjoy getting out in the woods and marshes, whether we succeed or not. We are fellow spirits in many ways. Why divide us?

The statement avoids acknowledging that sportsmen's contributions come largely by way of taxes and fees imposed by government on expensive consumptive users, rather than acts of disinterested generosity. The picture it conjures up, a legion of Nimrods eagerly writing out checks to buy wild lands, is a blurry one. But even more poorly drawn is a picture of hordes of thoughtless self-involved birders enjoying scot-free the sacrifices of others. Who takes account of how much birders contribute to conservation in other ways? We send money to the Nature Conservancy, we do tax check-offs for wildlife, buy those special license plates, volunteer to maintain trails, etc. Birders also vote for and otherwise support government acquisitions of wild land. We should not forget these as we quantify our guilt. As for buying duck stamps, etc., are we welcome to buy hunting licenses, enroll in lotteries for blinds in the marshes, then show up with spotting scopes instead of shotguns? Well...partnership does have its limits.

Anyway, it's hard to tell exactly how birders' contributions stack up against those of others, but one lesson is clear—more land can

be saved by taxes than by good-will donations. Will folks who observe birds ever buy seven hundred thousand yearly licenses to pursue their pastime? Ohioans who fish do. But excise taxes and license fees imposed on consumptive users are not saving enough land fast enough. Sure, in recent years a narrow attitude worshipful of the economic marketplace has gripped the nation, and we turn increasingly to user fees—like those charged to hunters, and those some propose for birders—to pay for common goods like wild country. And pay for it in some way we must, for in Ohio wild land must now be bought back from private hands; otherwise its future is in perpetual jeopardy. How will we ever have enough to buy so much back? This question will be the topic of the second half of this conversation on conservation.

--Bill Whan
Columbus

Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative Update

The Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative (OBCI) is a diverse coalition of more than 70 partners that are working to conserve bird populations in Ohio. These groups include non-profits, local, state, and Federal agencies, including the OOS. OBCI's primary mission is: "*To ensure the conservation and effective management of birds in Ohio by fostering partnerships among governmental agencies, conservation organizations, businesses and the public*". OBCI was started in 2003 by several members of the Ohio working group of Partners in Flight. In early 2004, a Coordinating Council was formed and a Chair (Paul Rodewald, Ohio State University) and Vice-Chair (Julie Shieldcastle, Black Swamp Bird Observatory) were chosen and in May 2004 OBCI had its official signing ceremony in Columbus. OBCI held its first All-bird Conservation Workshop in November of 2004 that was supported by a grant from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and was attended by many partner groups. In 2005, Paul Rodewald and associated groups secured funding to hire a full-time Coordinator. OBCI's new Coordinator is Suzanne Cardinal; she started working for OBCI in November 2005. Suzanne recently finished her M.S. degree in Biology at Northern Arizona University and is now based at the Ohio State University. With a full-time Coordinator, OBCI will continue to expand and work to achieve all-bird conservation in Ohio. OBCI will meet with Partners in Flight at their national meeting in March to discuss OBCI's All-bird Conservation Plan and the PIF step-down process. For more information contact Suzanne Cardinal: cardinal.11@osu.edu or 614 292-6544.

Nest with the Birds, a Bird Festival on Kelleys Island – May 14-20, 2006

The warblers are coming to Kelleys Island for the 12th annual "Nest With the Birds" bird festival. From Sunday, May 14 to Saturday, May 20, 8:00 a. m. and 4:00 p. m. naturalist-guided hikes will look for warblers and other migrating birds as they stop on Kelleys Island on their way north. At 1:00 p. m. each day is a program at St. Michael's Hall featuring a professional naturalist. All programs are free. For more information contact the Kelleys Island Audubon Club at 877 746-2740 or 866 878-2135, or visit www.kelleysislandnature.com.

Thank You!

We would like to thank and acknowledge the following members who have given additional donations with their renewals this year. These generous donations have been deposited into our Conservation Fund which will be used to help acquire essential habitat for our Ohio birds. Thank you!

Ms. Brenda Baber
 Greg Bennett
 Charlie & Linda Bombaci
 Margaret Bowman
 Willis D. Brubaker
 Don Burlett
 Margaret Chapin
 Dwight & Ann Chasar
 Denny Cooke & Barb Andreas
 Beth Deger
 Steve Schafer & Janet Duerres
 James Fowler

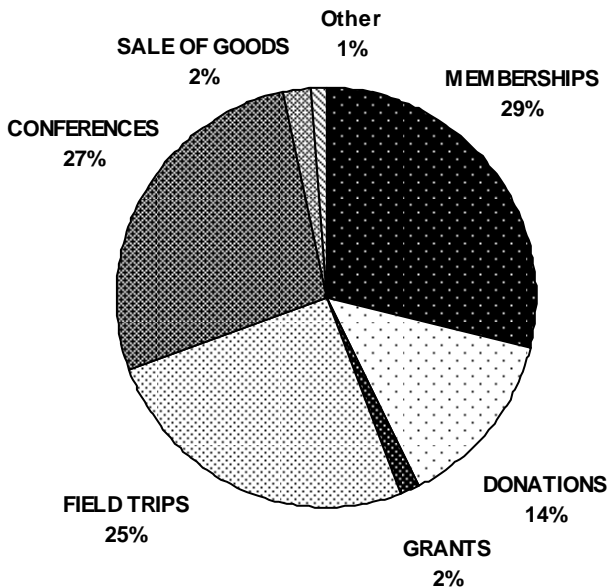
Fred Hertel
 Shari L. Jackson
 William Jones
 Alex Karlo
 Jim Heflich & Patty Kellner
 Paul Knoop
 Rick & Cindy Kryc
 Randy Lakes
 Bernie Master
 John & Martha McCormac
 Elizabeth Mitchell
 James A. Nash

Michael Packer
 John & Martha McCormac
 Elizabeth Mitchell
 James A. Nash
 David Patick
 Alan & Marjorie Poorman
 Mary E. Reinthal
 Robert Roach
 Roberta Roberts
 Winnie Sarno
 Regina Schieltz
 William Shields

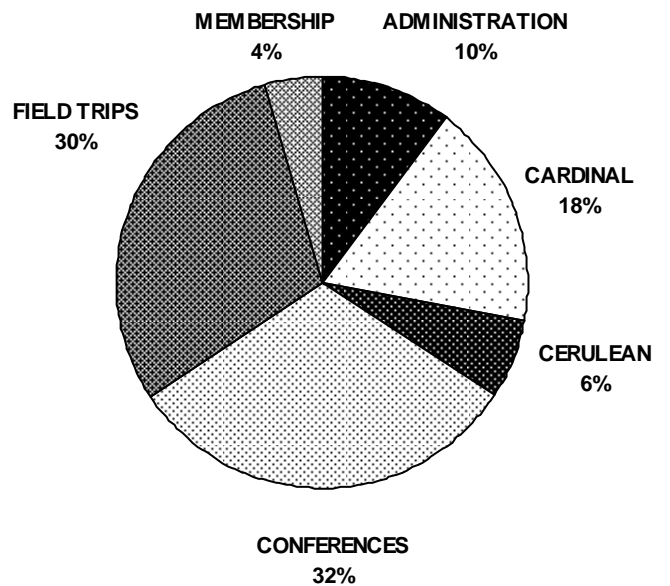
Donna Siple
 Sue A. Tackett
 William & Ann Toneff
 Dr. Elliot Tramer
 Mark Tranovich
 David R. Trout
 Pam Unger
 Peter Whan
 Bradley Wilkinson
 Susan Woolard

For complete Ohio Ornithological Society financial information visit www.ohiobirds.org

2005 SOURCES



2005 USES



Let's Help Birds—One Yard at a Time

Residential Native Bird Habitat: In 1973, two forest researchers determined that you could effectively scale down a wildlife habitat. The National Wildlife Federation began their backyard habitat education program, which reached my husband and me after 30 years (better late than never!).

We have a postage-stamp sized yard in a typical subdivision. By adding bird feeders and birdbaths, we attracted nine bird species. We created a native forest edge in our backyard in 2003 and eliminated chemicals. The count jumped from nine to 30 species in 12 different bird families as listed in *Birds of Ohio* by McCormac/Kennedy. A Cooper's Hawk showed up almost immediately. An Ovenbird refueled here last October.

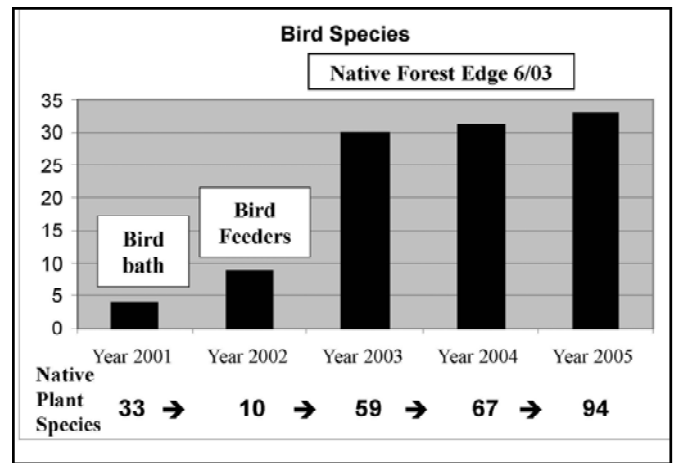
Go native: Native birds evolved to depend on native plants. They are easy to care for once established because they have adapted to our ecoregion (R. G. Bailey, www.fs.fed.us/land/ecosysmgmt/ecoreg1_home.html). Traditional chemically treated lawns have little value to most native birds.

Only about 25% of bird species will use a bird feeder. We use feeders to bring birds out about 10-15 feet from cover where we can see them, and they are safe from hidden predators. We love to watch baby birds being taught how to eat, and leave lots of leaf litter under our trees.

In sun, plant evergreens like Juniper (*Juniperus communis* for small yards), native flowers (i.e. Black-eyed Susan, Purple Coneflower) and grasses (i.e. Big Bluestem) and leave them standing until Mother's Day. We watch birds eat plant seeds through early spring.

To create a forest edge, we thought in layers. Native plants at different heights with fruits and seeds ripening at different times will bring the most species of birds. For more about berries, see article by Casey Tucker www.audubon.org/states/oh/oh/news/documents/10-05final.pdf.

In the rear, plant canopy trees (i.e. Hackberry *Celtis occidentalis*) and sub-canopy trees (i.e. Common Chokecherry *Prunus virginiana*). Below, plant small, shade-tolerant trees (i.e. Nannyberry *Viburnum lentago*, Gray Dogwood *Cornus racemosa*) and bushes (i.e. Spicebush, *Lindera benzoin*). Then plant groundcover and vines that provide fruit (i.e. Virginia Creeper *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), and woodland plants (i.e. Jacob's Ladder *Polemonium reptans* or Heart-leaved Aster *Aster cordifolius*).



Get Certified: Provide food, water, cover, places to raise young, move toward adding chemical-free native plants, and National Wildlife Federation will certify your yard as a backyard habitat. Displaying their sign helps us explain what we are doing, see www.nwf.org/bwh.

Lessons learned: For tips about what we learned changing our yard, email marc-a@columbus.rr.com for notifications about presentations and habitat yard tours. Let's work together to help birds, one backyard at a time.

Coming Up:

What: Nature Fair Exhibit & native Plant Sale

Where: Wild Birds Unlimited - Riverside, 5400 Riverside Dr, Columbus, Phone: 614 766-2103

When: Sun. May 21, 12pm - 4pm

What: Habitat Yard Open House (See how we use 95 different Native plant species to help songbirds)

Where: Marc & Toni's, 2948 Royalwood Dr, Dublin, Phone: 614 791-0529

When: Sat. June 10, any time between 10am - noon

--Toni Stahl, Columbus

The Cerulean Available On-line

If you missed any previous issues of this newsletter, you can download them from the OOS web site at 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.

Birder's Bio - Rob Thorn

Like more than a few members of the OOS, I was hooked on birding as a young boy. The difference was that I was a teenager in south Florida. Plagued by a dysfunctional family, but blessed with basically a 12-month summer, I found escape in trips with the Tropical Audubon Society. Mentored by such local birding luminaries as Jane Behr, Joel Abrahamson, Mark Trafton, Abelardo Mena, and Howard Langridge, I quickly developed a deep-rooted passion for the outdoors, with birding as my primary focus and best 'excuse' to get out. Alloyed to this was a commitment to help spread birding & conservation, so I was a volunteer trip leader for the Audubon Society at an early age, leading trips as far afield as the Everglades, Big Cypress, and even the Dry Tortugas. I carried my passion with me through college at University of Wisconsin, then on to graduate school at University of Washington. Living in Seattle showed me that large numbers of people could feel the same way I did, and also introduced me to an intense strategy of local birding, epitomized by charismatic birder Gene Hunn, who knew the regional birds of the Puget Sound area so well he became a civic resource. I also met my future wife, Diana, there on a field trip; we eventually made natural history trips all over the Northwest, as far afield as Colorado and Texas, and even honeymooned in southeastern Arizona. Pursuing jobs & a better environment to raise a family landed us in Columbus in 1994. My commitment to my family keeps me from spending long days in the field, but I still hold to the philosophy of many Northwest naturalists that 'Every Morning is Sacred' and try to spend a small part of every day outside. I've also carried many of my other outdoor interests with me, volunteering for the Ohio Lepidopterists' butterfly surveys and the Ohio Frog survey as well as a continual interest in hiking & biking. I even pack a pair of boots & a bike in my trunk; I never know when an opportunity to get out may arise, so I don't waste them.
--Rob Thorn, Gahanna

The Breeding Birds of Holden Arboretum June 3 - 4, 2006

Please mark your calendars for the weekend of June 3rd and 4th. The Holden Arboretum and the Ohio Ornithological Society have joined forces to put on what promises to be a fantastic weekend of birding in the midst of some of the most scenic habitats to be found in northeastern Ohio.

Saturday and Sunday will feature guided walks into some of the most pristine areas to be found within Holden's several thousand acres, including hemlock gorges like Stebbins Gulch and the beautiful sandstone formations of Little Mountain. All trips feature expert birders, as well as botanists, as Holden obviously offers much in the way of interesting plant life. We are pleased that many of Ohio's finest naturalists have agreed to help with this event. We expect to find around a hundred species of breeding birds, including rare nesters like Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, and Dark-eyed Junco.

Saturday evening features one of Ohio's most famous birding personalities - Julie Zickefoose. She is an internationally renowned artist and author who makes her home in Whipple, Ohio, along with her husband Bill Thompson, who is editor of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Julie's program will be on wood warblers - always a fascinating subject, particularly in the hands of a wonderful and entertaining speaker like Julie.

Please see the OOS website www.ohiobirds.org for more details of this event. Space is limited.

Ohio Ornithological Society Membership Application

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

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

(For electronic news updates)

\$ _____ Donation Amount - Yes I 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?

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



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

Cedar Bog Day – Saturday, June 17th, 2006

Cedar Bog State Memorial is a 427-acre wetland near Urbana in Champaign County, owned and managed by the Ohio Historical Society. And what a wetland! Technically, the “bog” is a fen – an alkaline wetland fed by cold spring waters arising from deep within limestone aquifers. If you were plunked down in the middle of Cedar Bog and not told of your whereabouts, you might well think you were deep in the wilds of northern Michigan or Canada.

A dominant plant here is the Northern White Cedar, a conifer found commonly only far to the north. Cedar Bog is the only remaining “cedar swamp” in Ohio. That isn’t the only interesting plant, though – Cedar Bog probably harbors the richest botanical diversity of any Ohio habitat. Dozens of very rare plants are found here, and among them is North America’s largest orchid, the Showy Lady’s-slipper, which will be blooming when we’re there.

There are plenty of interesting animals, too, including breeding Alder Flycatchers and dozens of other birds, scores of dragonflies including the endangered Seepage Dancer, and plenty of butterflies, like our largest, the Giant Swallowtail. More secretive but also present are the rare Spotted Turtle and Massasauga Rattlesnake.

The Ohio Historical Society and the Ohio Ornithological Society, along with the Champaign County Master Gardeners, have partnered to present a very interesting day at the bog. We will meet at the Urbana Community Center at 9:00 am, and the morning will offer talks on the history, plants, and animals of the bog by authorities in those areas. After lunch, which is included, we’ll head over to Cedar Bog and see its spectacular plants and animals

in person, aided by numerous experts familiar with the bog. A beautiful boardwalk makes exploration easy.

Spaces are limited and the cost is \$30 for members of OHS or OOS, and \$40 for non-members. To reserve your spot, please visit the OOS website at www.ohiobirds.org and look for the Cedar Bog info on the home page.

OOS Partner-- Greater Mohican Audubon Society

Greater Mohican Audubon Society (GMAS), chartered in May 1999, is the youngest of 19 Audubon chapters in Ohio and is an affiliate chapter of National Audubon Society. GMAS is a community based, volunteer nonprofit conservation organization serving Wayne, Holmes, Ashland, and Richland Counties.

GMAS is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of birds and other wildlife through environmental education and the conservation and restoration of habitat. GMAS has strived since its inception to provide individuals an opportunity to partake in our nature heritage, to experience, become engaged in and connected to the nature world of which we are a part.

GMAS sponsors Bird Walks at Byers Woods in Ashland County, Secret Arboretum in Wayne County, and Malabar Farm in Richland County. For walk dates and times and to learn more about what programs and projects GMAS has undertaken, see our web site at www.audubon.cjb.net. The annual fee to become a member of the GMAS is \$10.00.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Micki Dunakin - Antwerp
Rob Harlan - Norton
Ned Keller - Cincinnati
Peter King - Westerville
Karen Menard - Toledo
Bernard Master - Worthington
Jim McCormac - Columbus
Greg Miller - Sugarcreek
Ed Pierce - Akron
Jen Sauter - Westerville
Su Snyder - Wooster
Bill Thompson III - Marietta
Bill Whan - Columbus

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.

THE OHIO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 14051 ♦ Columbus, Ohio 43214

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
WESTERVILLE OH
PERMIT NO. 559