



THE CERULEAN

Fall - 2009, Vol. 6, No. 3

www.ohiobirds.org info@ohiobirds.org

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

5TH ANNUAL *WILDS* WINTER RAPTOR EXTRAVAGANZA SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 2010

from the

EDITOR

This fall, as the holiday season approaches, please consider giving a *gift* membership in the Ohio Ornithological Society to a friend or family member. Through the end of 2009, you can *join* or *renew* at the \$40 level and *give away a gift membership to OOS at no additional cost*.

Another option is to treat yourself: *join or renew at the \$100 level*, and we'll send you a \$25 *voucher* for OOS activities or merchandise. Details are on the back page of the newsletter in the membership application section. Both options are "green" gifts (i.e. low-impact to the planet) with "*Cerulean*" benefits — membership in Ohio's *only* state-wide organization for birds and birders.

In the spirit of good cheer, you can embody the spirit of Dickens with a "Christmas Present" to the OOS Conservation Fund: see page 12. Donations are funneled to worthy causes, such as the land-trust Black Swamp Conservancy, which has helped protect nearly 8,100 acres in northwest Ohio. See pages four and five for details on OOS funds recently allocated to several groups.

Ann Oliver
-Cincinnati

"I will honor Christmas with all my heart,
and try to keep it all the year. I will live in
the Past, Present, and the Future. The Spirit
of all three will strive within me."

~ Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*

Pull out your fleece and get *Wild!* OOS and the *Wilds* will host the annual mid-winter foray to Muskingum County's birding mecca on January 16, 2010.

Raptors converge at the *Wilds* to take advantage of abundant Meadow Voles inhabiting 10,000 acres of reclaimed grassland. Northern Harriers, Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, Short-eared Owls, along with a number of other species of meat-eating predatorial birds are expected. Several Golden Eagles have overwintered at the *Wilds* for at least nine years. This is the locale where a Prairie Falcon spent two winters. Northern Shrike is also possible.

Arctic-like temperatures and icy blasts of air don't deter the birds or birders. Last year, about 130 people showed up and a good time was had by all — in spite of 12 below zero temps at the day's start!

As a bonus, there will be a special behind the scenes tour of the Rhino house. Seeing these massive multi-ton horned beasts up close — near enough to touch! — is an incredible experience. And, if we're lucky, there might be a special surprise in the Rhino department!



This trip is a **free, open-to-all "give back"** to the Ohio birding community, but we need a head count to know who is attending. Please send an email to wilds@ohiobirds.org to reserve your space for the Winter Raptor Extravaganza. Full details, maps, and group assignment will be emailed back to you for proper preparation.

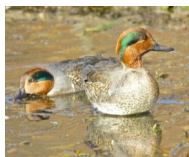
Jim McCormac
- Columbus

DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE: OOS WATERFOWL SYMPOSIUM FEBRUARY 26-28, 2010

Save the date for an amazing weekend! OOS, with partner Columbus Audubon, will host a Waterfowl Symposium February 26-28, 2010. Our venue is the green-designed Grange Insurance Audubon Center along the Scioto River on the Whittier Peninsula, in downtown Columbus.



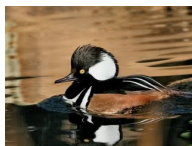
Friday evening, *The Swinging Orangutangs* (better known as Julie Zickefoose, Bill Thompson III, and musical friends) kick-off the weekend with a musical fundraiser. Question: will a birder-friendly version of "Disco Duck" be performed?



Green-winged Teal. Photo courtesy Emie Cornelius.

Saturday, travel near and far with guest speakers. *"The Secret Life of Ducks: A Year in the Life"* will be presented by Jessie Barry, from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Learn about Lake Erie aerial surveys and future installation of wind turbines with Keith Lott, Ohio Division of Wildlife. Saturday evening, our keynote speaker is Dr. Alwash Azzam, CEO of Nature Iraq. Azzam will talk about restoration of the Mesopotamian wetlands, a Ramsar wetland site of international importance. There will be other great speakers and programs, too!

Sunday, join us for several field trip options to Central Ohio reservoirs, rivers, and ponds. Registration starts this December, 2009 on our OOS website (www.ohiobirds.org/) and in the winter issue of *The Cerulean*.



Hooded Merganser. Photo courtesy Dave Lewis.



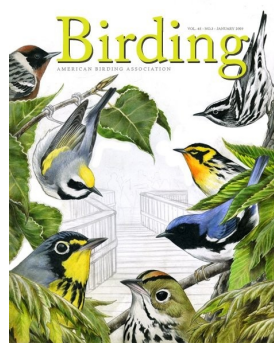
OOS MEMBER SURVEY: YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

Ohio's *only* statewide birding organization wants to serve you better! That's why we've developed an online, member survey. **To participate, be one of the first 100 to respond by December 31, 2009.**

Go to: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=GoO5wx_2fc34xnsMU0lznI9Q_3d_3d.

Or, look for a link on our OOS website. We'll tabulate the results in the winter issue of this newsletter.

BRUMFIELD'S ARTWORK TO GRACE *BIRDING* MAGAZINE: JANUARY 2010



Warblers in Ohio: not yet complete cover with unofficial ABA graphics. Image courtesy Jen Brumfield.

If you are a springtime regular at Ohio's famed Magee Marsh boardwalk, the January cover of *Birding* magazine will look familiar. The artwork of Ohio naturalist Jen Brumfield will depict spring warblers and binocular-clad birders in the background. Jen, a Cleveland Metroparks Naturalist and tour leader for Tropical Birds, is beginning to faintly sketch the

boardwalk behind and below the birds. For a larger image of this work-in-progress or to learn more about this artist-naturalist-field trip leader: <http://birding.posterous.com/>



The American Birding Association cover promotes the inaugural "Biggest Week in American Birding", May 6-16, 2010 in Northwest Ohio. Soon, *all* ABA members will know about our spectacular birding along Lake Erie's south shore (so make your lodging reservations early!). To get your own copy of *Birding*: <http://www.aba.org/>

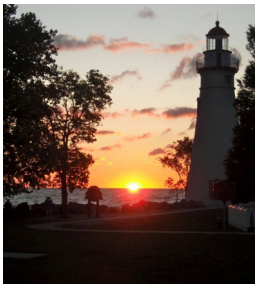


SYMPOSIUM RECAP: PHOTO & AUDIO ARCHIVES

If you attended the 2009 Midwest Birding Symposium, but missed a lecture or two, you can listen to audio archives courtesy of *Bird Watcher's Digest*: <https://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/mwb/clips.php>. You can also link to blogs featuring the event. The BWD website, and page three of this newsletter, has photos for your enjoyment. MBS returns to Lakeside, September 15-18, 2011!



Sisters Judy and Micki Hendrick with friend Emie Cornelius (wearing commemorative MBS tee-shirt) in front of Hoover Auditorium in Lakeside, Ohio. Judy, wearing a blue OOS long-sleeve tee-shirt, was one of the happiest folks at the symposium for two reasons. Judy signed up at MBS to join OOS on our trip to Guatemala this spring! And, Judy made a big upgrade in optics at MBS to take to the tropics: new, top of the line Zeiss binoculars. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



Sunrise over the Marblehead Lighthouse. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.



MBS logo bird: Caspian Tern. Photo courtesy Kelly Riccetti.



Midwest Birding Symposium Troika. Left to right: Ann Kerenyi of *Bird Watcher's Digest*, Bill Thompson III from OOS and BWD, and Jen Sauter, OOS Executive Secretary. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



Wilson's Snipe banded at Ottawa NWR. Photo courtesy Cheryl Harner.



Sunset. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.



Mona Rutger, Director of Back to the Wild, a wildlife rehabilitation and nature center in Castalia, with a Bald Eagle. Photo courtesy Dave Lewis.



Ring-billed Gull. Photo courtesy Kelly Riccetti.



The undisputed STAR of MBS: Kirtland's Warbler at East Harbor State Park. Dozens of people added Kirtland's to their life list including Wayne Petersen of Massachusetts Audubon, Jessie Barry of Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Mike Bergin of 10,000 Birds Blog, and festival sponsor RRI Energy's Bill Baker who is a member of the 5-time consecutive winning team in The Great Texas Coastal Classic. Photo courtesy Laura Kammermeier, former OOS board member, who also added Kirtland's Warbler to her life list (Laura's Blog: <http://bit.ly/71NtN>).



Tom Kashmer and Tom Bartlett banding at Ottawa NWR. Photo courtesy Cheryl Harner.



'Bird'-ers food. Photo courtesy Dave Lewis.



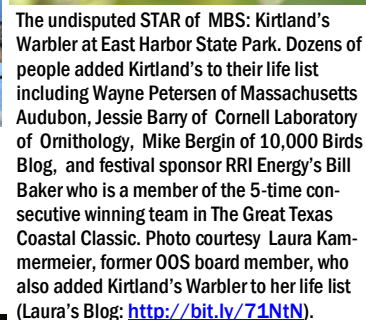
Vendor Hall: Travel to Guatemala. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.



Fall birding at MBS. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Cheryl Harner, OOS board member and President of Greater Mohican Audubon Society, on the "Goodtime I" during the Lake Erie Island Sunset Boat Cruise. Photo courtesy Dave Lewis.



Landmark dock at Lakeside. Photo courtesy Kelly Riccetti.



Author David Sibley photographing Ohio trees. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



Birding at Ottawa NWR. Left to right: OOS Web Master Ned Keller, Kathy McDonald, and Mark Gilsdorf. Photo courtesy Dave Lewis.



Gulls behind "Goodtime I". Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Signs at MBS. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.



Lakeside Volunteer Mary Bishop with a MBS totebag made of recycled materials. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



Politeness, Ohio-style. Photo courtesy Ric McArthur (Rondeau Ric).



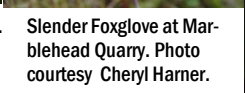
Saturday evening keynote speaker Al Batt displays the orange, reusable metal water bottle given to all MBS attendees. Photo courtesy Jim McCormac.



"Goodtime I" heads to Lakeside for evening cruise. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.



Bill Thompson III thanks speaker Alvaro Jaramillo. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Slender Foxglove at Marblehead Quarry. Photo courtesy Cheryl Harner.



Volunteers Sue Evanoff (President of The Wilderness Center, in Wilmont) and June Beyman. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



"Veery" nice license plate. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



"Letters From Eden" with Julie Zickefoose and back-up guitar by Bill Thompson III. Photo courtesy Ernie Cornelius.

MBS ADOPT-A-BIRD & RAFFLE: CONSERVATION FUNDS

How do you raise \$10,000 dollars for conservation? OOS Board Member Marc Nolls says a few dollars at a time! Thanks to Marc for his dedication to the Adopt-A-Bird booth at the Midwest Birding Symposium. Marc, along with other volunteers such as Su Snyder, Mike Edgington, Susan Evanoff, Cheryl Harner, and Jason Larson, raised \$5,000



Marc Nolls joyfully raises money for the OOS Conservation Fund. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver

dollars in donations and raffle ticket sales. The money was matched by a \$5000 donation from the OOS Conservation Fund. That brought the total to \$10,000. Five worthy groups were chosen as recipients of the funding: see page five for a list. Raffle donors are listed on page 11.



Katy Malcolm, a Naturalist Apprentice from Dayton's Five Rivers Metroparks, eats lunch on the go. One of the busiest MBS volunteers, Katy led morning field trips, checked attendee ID lanyards at lectures, and worked with the optics cleaning crew. She also made time to contribute two donations to the OOS Adopt-A-Bird campaign. Photo courtesy Ann Oliver.



More than money was donated at MBS: attendees gave 49 pairs of binoculars and two spotting scopes to the American Birding Association's Birders' Exchange Program (BEX). Thanks to *your generosity*, these optics will soon be in the field with researchers, educators, and conservationists in Latin America and the Caribbean. So many optics were donated, Chip Clouse of ABA could barely close the trunk of his vehicle when driving out of Lakeside! Information: www.aba.org/bex/



Birders' Exchange Area Map. www.aba.org/bex/

ADOPT-A-BIRD DONORS

Here's a list of folks who donated to the OOS Adopt-A-Bird conservation fund. Additional money was raised through the MBS raffle. Raffle donors include: Time & Optics, birdJam, and Eagle Optics. The OOS matched the weekend total with another \$5,000 from the "nest egg" of the OOS Conservation Fund.

The grand total: **\$10,000 dollars!** See the column on the next page for a complete list of the five groups receiving funding.

Even if you were *not* in attendance at MBS, you can *still contribute* to the OOS Conservation Fund! *Take a look at the membership renewal page on the back of the newsletter for your donation form.* OOS will add your name to the growing list of generous Ohio birders. Thanks!

Dee Corcoran-	Canada Goose
Claire Britton-	Trumpeter Swan
Nora Kegley-	Wood Duck
Janice Steinbach-	Common Loon
Raymond Allen-	DC Cormorant
Katy Malcolm-	Great Blue Heron
Sue Evanoff-	Great Blue Heron
Bianca Davis-	Great Blue Heron
Traci Williams-	Turkey Vulture
Liz McQuaid-	Northern Harrier
Lee Underschultz-	RS Hawk
Peggy Bartleson-	Red-tailed Hawk
Randel Rogers-	American Kestrel
Frank Voelker-	Yellow Rail
Katy Malcolm-	Sandhill Crane
Chris Kempf-	Piping Plover
Amy Evenstad-	American Avocet
Mary Fox-	Spotted Sandpiper
Laurie Boylan-	Am. Woodcock
Craig Caldwell-	Great Horned Owl
Roberto P. Leolena-	Snowy Owl
Arthur DeWolf-	No Saw-whet Owl
Peter King-	Chimney Swift
Tim Tolford-	Rufous Hummingbird
Danielle DeMuth-	B. Kingfisher
Bill Thompson, III-	RH Woodpecker
Paul J. Baicich-	Northern Flicker
Ann Gulbransen-	Eastern Kingbird
Dave Elbrecht-	Philadelphia Vireo
Mike Edgington-	American Crow
Cathie Pruden-	BC Chickadee
Jo Ann Kubricki-	Tufted Titmouse
Laurie Boylan-	WB Nuthatch
Sandy Brown-	Brown Creeper
Paul Bahm-	House Wren
Dana Bollin-	Winter Wren
Lois Main-	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Anne Main-	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Michael Shade-	Wood Thrush
Judy Borchers-	American Robin
Elsa Thompson-	Gray Catbird
Dawn Zickefoose-	Cedar Waxwing
Dave "Loopy" Lewis-	CS Warbler
Julie West-	BT Blue Warbler
Jim Mundy-	Blackburnian Warbler
Cheryl Harner-	Kirtland's Warbler
Jim McCormac-	Bay-B Warbler
Kelly Riccetti-	Cerulean Warbler
Lee Underschultz-	American Redstart
Robert Mulvihill-	L. Waterthrush
Beulah Shanks-	Conn. Warbler
Joe Blanda-	Hooded Warbler
Jen Sauter-	Yellow-breasted Chat
Laraine Turk-	Summer Tanager
Rose Detlef-	Dark-eyed Junco
Shari Jackson-	LeConte's Sparrow
Cindee DuBev-	Snow Bunting
Andrea Prud'	homme-Ind. Bunting
Sally Egan-	House Finch
Ronnie Macko-	American Goldfinch
Ann Oliver-	N.Beardless Tyrannulet

OOS & MBS DONATE \$10,000 TO FIVE GROUPS

1.) Black Swamp Conservancy: This land trust is a regional, non-profit organization directly supporting conservation of land and water resources in northwest Ohio. Since 1993, BSC has helped permanently protect nearly 8,100 acres.



The Lake Erie Island Chapter of BSC, along with The Trust for Public Land, and the Put-in-Bay Township Park District are urgently attempting to raise \$200,000 by the end of 2009 to purchase 7.8 acres of prime migratory bird habitat and natural shoreline on eastern Middle Bass Island. To donate: <http://lakeerieislandsbsc.com/nature/>

2.) Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition: Since 1987, non-profit OVEC has been dedicated to the improvement and preservation of the Ohio Valley environment through education, grassroots organizing and coalition building, leadership development and media outreach. OVEC's major work focuses on ending mountaintop removal / valley fill strip mining, ending water contamination from coal slurry injection, and improving the enforcement of mining laws. Find out more: <http://www.ohvec.org/>



3.) Black Swamp Bird Observatory: To support BSBO's Ohio Young Birders Club (ages 12-18) in their endeavor to encourage, educate, and empower tomorrow's conservation leaders by creating a community for young birders in the Buckeye State and beyond: <http://www.ohioyoungbirders.org/>



4.) Roger Tory Peterson Institute: RTPI's mission is to continue the legacy of Roger Tory Peterson by promoting the study of nature to create knowledge, appreciation and responsibility for the natural world. Grant money is earmarked for RTPI schoolteacher programs: <http://www.rtpi.org/>



5.) Lakeside Association: Since 1873, Lakeside, Ohio has been a center for education, religion, cultural arts, and recreation. Grant money is earmarked to assist Lakeside to replace trees damaged by the Emerald Ash Borer. <http://lakesideohio.com/>



75 YEARS OF PROTECTING RAPTORS AND DUCKS: HAWK MOUNTAIN AND DUCK STAMPS



Hawk Mountain is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Travel to the legendary Allegheny Mountains promontory near Kempton, Pennsylvania is a fall pilgrimage for many Ohio birders. To honor the milestone, the first-ever coffee table book about Hawk Mountain hit shelves earlier this year. *Hawk Mountain* features a forward by Deborah Edge, granddaughter of founder Rosalie Edge. The non-profit group is also selling a commemorative print of a Northern Goshawk called "75 Years of Safe Passage". Details: <http://hawkmountain.org>



Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, popularly known as "Duck Stamps", celebrate 75 years of wetland conservation this year. Approximately 98 cents of every duck stamp dollar is directed to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund for land acquisition. Ohio has played a *key role*: 2.2 million duck stamps have been sold in the Buckeye State since 1934. Nationwide, more than \$700 million has been raised since the F. D. Roosevelt administration act was passed. Since that time, more than 5.2 million acres of habitat have been acquired by the National Wildlife Refuge System.

You can purchase a yearly Federal Duck Stamp from Ohio's Black Swamp Bird Observatory. For details: <http://www.bsbo.org>. Duck Stamps are also available for purchase through the United States Postal Service (1-800 STAMP-24).

BSBO MILESTONE: 500,000TH BIRD BANDED



Black Swamp Bird Observatory hit the half-million mark this fall when founders Mark and Julie Shieldcastle banded a migrant Blackpoll Warbler. BSBO's Kim Kaufman says "It is more than just a research milestone, it tells a story about this area, about the concentrations of birds and the impact birdwatching has on the local economies, and about the extreme importance of, not only conserving the habitat we have now, but creating more."



Blackpoll Warbler # 2560 59455.
Photo courtesy Julie Shieldcastle.

GOODBYE BARROW, ALASKA: HELLO CAPE TOWN



Bear gun and arctic outerwear.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

Flat, treeless, isolated, windy – those are words that describe Barrow, Alaska, the most northern point in the U.S. This Inupiaq Eskimo village lies 320 miles north of the Arctic Circle and has roughly 4,500 residents. This summer, I had the opportunity to study shorebirds in Barrow for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Being my first time in Alaska, let alone the tundra, I was excited. With 24 hours of daylight, I had infinite time to bird.

I arrived on June 2nd to a mostly snow covered tundra. On the short jaunt from the airport to our house, it became evident that Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs are the most abundant passerines. Since Barrow is at such a northern latitude, passerine diversity is very low. The only resident passerines around are Common Ravens, Savannah Sparrows, Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings, Common and Hoary Redpolls. I had nearly twenty species of passerines so it's apparent that Barrow receives a lot of overshoot migrants. Interesting overshoots I had around town include: Bank Swallow, Varied Thrushes, American Robin, Hermit



Lapland Longspur. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Migrating Long-tailed Ducks. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

Thrush, Fox Sparrow and a singing Blackpoll Warbler! Another passerine highlight was three Yellow Wagtails that flew over me while doing a seawatch.

As the snow melted, shorebirds set up territories. Through the month of June, our job was to find as many shorebird nests as possible on



Wildflowers on the tundra. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Red-necked Phalarope.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

six different study plots. Regular breeders included American Golden-Plovers, Dunlin, Pectoral, White-rumped, Western, Semipalmated and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, as well as Long-billed Dowitchers, Red and Red-necked Phalaropes.

Nesting Baird's Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers,



Baird's Sandpiper (left) and Semipalmated Sandpiper (right). Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

and Lesser Yellowlegs (possibly first nesting record) were also found around town. Besides breeders, we also had a few transient shorebirds including Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeer, Ruddy Turnstones, Sanderlings, Ruffs (white and chestnut males) and Stilt Sandpipers.

Early July is when shorebirds hatch and we were soon busy banding adults and chicks. Depending on the species, we were collecting data on Avian Influenza, mercury levels, molt and so on. It is vital to look for Avian Influenza in Alaska given many of our shorebirds, such as Dunlin, migrate to infected areas in East Asia. Most of our project funding came from Avian Influenza research.



Dunlin chicks in nest.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.



Rock Ptarmigan on nest.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

Unfortunately, this year turned out to be a Brown Lemming crash year. Brown Lemmings are small rodents that experience drastic population cycles.

During the entire summer I saw only one, while last year a few hundred a day wasn't out of the question. During crash years, predators that normally rely on lemmings, such as jaegers and Arctic Fox, are forced to prey on shorebird eggs instead. Roughly 60% of nests we found were eventually predated. Luckily, once the chicks hatched, the fledgling rate was more successful.



Dunlin eggs in nest.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

By the end of July, there were no active nests remaining and shorebirds were flocking up. I boarded a plane and followed them south.



Sabine's Gull. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

Ethan Kistler
- Newton Falls, Ohio

Editor's Note: Ethan has been accepted at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. His plans include academic pursuits and working as a professional birding guide. If you're planning a trip to the African continent, you can contact Ethan through Tropical Birding: www.tropicalbirding.com



Arctic Tern, Sabine's Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake in Barrow. Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

BEHIND THE SCENES IN BARROW: Q & A WITH ETHAN



BASC housing in Barrow.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

1. **What were your accommodations?** - A house in town owned by BASC - Barrow Arctic Science Consortium.

2. **What were the cost of groceries?** - Very expensive! A box of cereal was around \$10 and a watermelon was around \$45.

3. **Average temperature?** - At the beginning around freezing but it warmed up to maybe low 40's to mid 50's. We had a few unusually warm days including a record day of somewhere in the high 70's!

4. **Insects?** - Not a problem except for those few warm days, then they were HORRIBLE.

5. **Did you try whale blubber?** We picked up some from the whale festival but we didn't eat it in time.



Gray Whale.
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

6. **Difference between an arctic pelagic versus a west or east coast pelagic?** Certainly less variety but great numbers of alcids and northern laridae. If I were there during spring/fall, I'd be watching Ivory Gulls!

7. **Threat of polar bears?** - Not really, though a few were in town. The locals dump all the whale carcasses at the point to keep the bears out of town. You don't have to worry too much about them being inland as they tend to stick near shore.

8. **Thing you'll miss most about Barrow?** All the shorebirds in breeding plumage. Buff-breasted Sandpipers displaying.



Red Phalarope (female).
Photo courtesy Ethan Kistler.

9. **Thing you missed most while away?** - Hmm... warmer weather, trees - when I return, I will pack a small conifer and use it as a vagrant trap.

THE CASE FOR CORMORANT CONTROL

In January 2006, United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS) in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Ohio Division of Wildlife published in the Federal Register, an environmental assessment (EA) entitled "Reducing double-crested cormorant damage in Ohio." The document examines various alternatives for preserving the critical colonial waterbird habitat on the Lake Erie Islands. The EA selected an integrated cormorant damage management plan that includes lethal control of adult Double-crested Cormorants (DCCO) as the best method of saving the island waterbird habitat. Harassment of cormorants on the islands was attempted as part of the integrated management approach, but was unsuccessful.

For West Sister Island (WSI), the USFWS has given consent as the land owner of WSI to control cormorant numbers based on observed and quantified habitat destruction on the island. In addition, the USFWS has a population goal (1500-2000 nesting pairs) for WSI which has been reached and the agencies are striving to maintain.

Any time a management decision is made (including the decision to do nothing), the decision will be beneficial to some species and detrimental to others. Resource management agencies make these decisions every day – cowbirds are killed to benefit Kirtland's Warblers, old growth forests are preserved to benefit the Spotted Owl, etc. Way back when, these decisions did not need to be made because there was enough habitat to go around for everyone; however, in these modern times, habitat, especially for colonial waterbirds, is extremely scarce.

Heron and egrets prefer to nest on the Lake Erie islands despite energetic costs associated with doing so. An 18-mile round trip from the mainland to WSI several times a day to feed young expends a lot of energy. If suitable habitat existed on the mainland, I would expect the waders to use that habitat. If the cormorants were left unchecked, the Division is convinced the cormorants would defoliate the islands (as they have partially done on Middle Island in Canada) and

possibly extirpate Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and Black-crowned Night-Herons from Ohio. The Lake Erie Islands remain the only long-term colony sites for these three species in Ohio, and WSI currently hosts one of the largest remaining colonies of herons and egrets in the US portion of the Great Lakes. The decision to manage cormorants was not taken



Photo taken at same place on Green Island. Top photo taken under nest of Double-crested Cormorants. Bottom photo depicts same area without nests. Photo courtesy the Ohio Division of Wildlife.



lightly, and the three agencies annually review management efforts and determine what actions, if any, need to be taken the next year. It is especially important to remember that the agencies' plan for DCCO management in Ohio recognizes DCCOs as a valuable member of the colonial waterbird community. Thus, the plan focuses on sustaining DCCO populations at a level which retains their viability as an Ohio breeding bird while also protecting against the degradation of rare island habitat upon which so many other species of wildlife depend.

Link for more informa-

tion:

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/MidwestBird/cormorants.htm>

Dave Sherman

- Oak Harbor, Crane Creek Research Station

Editor's Note: Dave Sherman is a wildlife biologist for the state of Ohio. An online article in Cleveland.com (<http://www.cleveland.com/news/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/cuyahoga/125412674688870.xml&coll=2>) from September 28, 2009 states 2,300 DCCO were killed by sharpshooters this past May.

CORMORANT DEFENDERS INTERNATIONAL

No one thinks that the 11.5 million (give or take) humans in Ohio have overpopulated the state, and yet a population of Double-crested Cormorants only 13 percent that size is deemed too many even though the cormorants are distributed from Alaska to Newfoundland and from the subarctic to Mexico.

While we know cormorants were abundant in Ohio prior to the 20th Century, the arrival of Europeans was followed by a massive slaughter of wildlife that reduced, extirpated or exterminated many wildlife species before they could be documented, with predatory (including fish-eating) species often especially targeted.

Cormorants survived (although a flightless Alaskan species was exterminated), and even began returning to depopulated regions in the 20th Century. But again the species was hammered, this time by organochlorines in DDT, which led to massive reproduction losses in fish-eating birds.

In 2006 an important paper (Wires, Linda, and Francesca Cuthbert, Historic Populations of the Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*): Implications for Conservation and Management in the 21st Century, *Waterbirds*, 29 (1): 9-37) was published. It reviewed historic evidence to show that every indication is that cormorants were more common, historically, than now. That contrasts the picture painted by the wildlife management industry, whose *raison d'être* is largely based on a need to convince us that there are far too many of an increasing number of wildlife species. Last year the U.S Department of Agriculture more than doubled the number of animals poisoned, shot or snared, knocking off nearly five million wild creatures, mostly birds.

When we emerge from the relatively clean and contrived environs of our homes, offices, shops, parks and transport vehicles we sometimes find that nature is messier than books, zoos, Disney documentaries or TV shows may imply. A large waterbird colony can seem a chaotic milieu of foul smells, harsh sounds, abrupt movement, rotting fish, excrement, broken eggs, regurgitated food and dead

vegetation. But in no country, state or province on earth has any of the world's 39 species of cormorant, found on every continent, ever wiped out a population of any other wildlife species. Cormorants are all part of intricate ecological interactions three billion years in the making.



Double-crested Cormorant shot by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Cormorant Defenders International (CDI) reports this bird was alive when the photograph was taken but later humanely euthanized by a veterinarian. CDI says other birds died of starvation up to a week after the cull from gunshot injuries making it impossible for the cormorants to catch fish. Photo courtesy Defenders of Cormorants International.

Nonetheless cormorants are reviled, particularly in places where they have been so absent for so long that it is easy to convince people that recovering numbers are “out of control” and represent a “population explosion”.

The simplistic argument that they “eat too many fish” has been discredited by American Ornithological Union (see <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/OC/expert/help/AOU-cormorants.html>) review of scientific literature, hence numerous other accusations made against these dynamic birds. They are native, natural and they do belong as a recovering part of our magnificent wildlife heritage.

Barry Kent MacKay
-Markham, Ontario,
Canada

Editor's Note: MacKay is a founding member of Cormorant Defenders International, Senior Program Advisor for Born Free USA United with Animal Protection Institute, a founding director of Animal Alliance of Canada, a founding director of Zoo-check-Canada, a Life Member of the Wilson Ornithological Society, a member of the Ontario Field Ornithologists, a member of the Toronto Ornithological Club, and a bird artist and illustrator.

20,000 ACRES OF MIGRATORY BIRD HABITAT PROTECTED

Five energy industry-funded grants will soon protect more than 20,000 acres of migratory bird habitat in Ohio. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservation Fund, and other partners launched the project to mitigate impact on critical habitat and to meet future energy needs.



Funding for the grants came from two sources: Rockies Express, which is constructing a 1,700 mile natural gas pipeline stretching from Ohio to Colorado, and Columbia Gas which plans expansion of two storage facilities in Ohio.

Since 1985, The Conservation Fund (TCF) has helped protect more than six million acres spread across all 50 states. TCF is a non-profit conservation organization with a business team of real estate, legal, finance, investment, and science representatives. TCF partners with local community, government, and corporate groups to achieve local conservation goals. In Ohio, TCF and partners have protected nearly 100,000 acres including habitat on Lake Erie's North Bass Island and recreation lands near Cleveland including 90 acres at The Holden Arboretum.

Recipients of the five grants:

1.) Project: Raccoon Ecological Management Area/Vinton Furnace Experimental Forest. *Will protect the largest remaining block of privately owned forest in Ohio.*

Grant Recipient: The Nature Conservancy.

Amount: \$ 1.5 million.

Acres Protected: 15,896

Location: Vinton County

The Nature Conservancy's Lynsey White Dasher wrote to the Ohio Ornithological Society to express appreciation for

OOS backing the Raccoon Ecological Management Area/Vinton Fur-



nace Experimental Forest project. Dasher said "We wanted to thank you again for providing a letter of support for the proposal. It meant a great deal that you were willing to help."

2.) Project: Camp Pioneer Conservation Easement. *Property features a significant natural habitat supporting 22 state-listed species of birds, rare plants, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.*

Grant Recipient: Black Swamp Conservancy (partner with Erie Shores Council of Boy Scouts of America)

Amount: \$136,000

Acres Protected: 985

Location: Williams Co., OH/ Hillsdale Co., MI

3.) Project: Wayne National Forest, Athens Unit. *Conserve habitat for Cerulean, Worm-eating, and Kentucky Warblers, as well as Indiana Bat and the Timber Rattlesnake.*

Grant Recipient: USDA Forest Service, Wayne National Forest

Grant Amount: \$ 630,935

Acres Protected: 2,438

Location: Athens County

4.) Project: Wayne National Forest, Athens Unit, Sunday Creek Coals Lands Phase 2.

Grant Recipient: USDA Forest Service, Wayne National Forest

Grant Amount: \$ 631,500

Acres Protected: 1,044

Location: Athens County

5.) Project: Bakers Fork and Rocky Fork Riparian Corridor Project. *Expands current Arc of Appalachia Preserve properties in a connected, contiguous block for outdoor education and hiking.*

Grant Recipient: Arc of Appalachia Preserve System

Grant Amount: \$140,500

Acres Protected: 239

Location: Highland County

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION ON YOUR MAILING LABEL

Something is different on the back of *The Cerulean*. Take a look! Your membership expiration date is printed in **red** on your mailing label. Thanks in advance for renewing promptly which helps the OOS save mailing costs, time, and trees! Go "green" by signing up to get the newsletter online: see the next page for how to subscribe to an online version.

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!

Delores Cole
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Janet Duerr & Steve Schafer
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Carol Skinner
Wanda Smith
Dorinda Whitsett
Janet (Shila) Wilson

Welcome New Members!

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

Paula Arnold
Heather Aubke
Carol Bremer
Claire Britton
Anne Clouser
Michelle Dalton
Samantha Erickson
Sally Fox
Phyllis Fried
Stefan Gleissberg
Laura Gooch
Nina Harfmann
Michael Herman
Nancy Keeler
Roberta Laffey
Anne & Tom LaMotte
Bonnie Law
Patty Lehane-Hoffman

Linda Lessin
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Online Subscription Available!

Please consider subscribing to the online newsletter. Get the latest issue delivered directly to your email address. No more waiting for snail mail! Plus, you'll save a tree or two in the process. Email OOS Member Coordinator Andrea Cook:
andrealcook123@yahoo.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 Andrea Cook at andrealcook123@yahoo.com if you have a new address.**

Editor--Ann Oliver

Additional Thanks to all the MBS Raffle Donors:

Time & Optics, Droll Yankees, birdJam, Wingscapes, Alpen Optics, Eagle Optics, Kowa, Nikon, Minox, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Carl Zeiss, For the Birds (iFlyer Birdsong Scanning Wand) & Marblehead Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.

OOS Calendar of Events

Winter Raptor Extravaganza 2010 at the Wilds on Saturday, January 16: FREE but advance registration required. See details on page one. Email wilds@ohiobirds.org to reserve your space: confirmation will be emailed to you.

Waterfowl Symposium 2010 at the Grange Insurance Audubon Center in Columbus February 26-28: Presented by OOS and Columbus Audubon. Speakers include Jessie Barry and Chris Wood from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Nature Iraq CEO Dr. Azzam Alwash, and more. Field trips Sunday morning to area reservoirs and rivers. Plus a fundraiser Friday evening with *The Swinging Orangutans* (Julie Zickefoose, Bill Thompson III, & friends). Look for details in the winter issue of *The Cerulean* and check the OOS website in December for registration information: www.ohiobirds.org

Midwest Birding Symposium September 15-18, 2011: <https://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/mwb/preregister.php>

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 such as field trips)

\$ _____ **Donation Amount - Additional donation to the OOS Conservation Fund.**

\$ _____ Membership Dues— Please check appropriate box on the right.

\$ _____ **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**
- ☐ **\$40 SPECIAL: Renew your individual membership at \$25 and give a new \$15 membership to non-member. Please provide your name/address AND the name/address of the gift membership. Join by December '09.**
- ☐ **\$100 Patron or Business**
- ☐ **\$100 CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: get a \$25 dollar certificate for OOS activities or merchandise good through the end of 2010.**
- ☐ **\$250 Sustaining Member**
- ☐ **\$500 Benefactor**
- ☐ **\$1,000 Lifetime Benefactor**



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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.

OUR MISSION . . .

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