



The Cerulean

Spring 2013 Vol. 9, No. 2

Quarterly Newsletter of the Ohio Ornithological Society

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Keene and Lau Join Volunteer Staff of The Ohio Cardinal

The Ohio Ornithological Society is pleased to announce two additions to the staff of *The Ohio Cardinal*, our quarterly journal. First, Laura Keene is our new Photo Editor; she's already at work rounding out the next issue. And second (chronologically speaking), Roger Lau will soon be doing the layout after a transition period from the very capable hands of Lee Beachy at Carlisle Printing. We thank these volunteers!

—Craig Caldwell,
Editor, *The Ohio Cardinal*
OOS NE Regional Director



PHOTO COURTESY LAURA KEENE

Laura Keene, our new photo editor, taking a photograph for *The Ohio Cardinal* several years ago.

Ohio Division of Wildlife Celebrates 25 Years of Birding on the Magee Marsh Boardwalk

By Mary Warren, Wildlife Communications Specialist, Magee Marsh Wildlife Area

If you've ever birded the Western Lake Erie Basin, you have likely birded "the boardwalk" or "Bird Trail" at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, managed by Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife (DOW). This trail is the main reason the area is referred to as "the warbler capital of the world"!

Magee Marsh officially became a state wildlife area in 1951 when DOW purchased the property. The Sportsmen's Migratory Bird Center was built in 1970 and is a great place to begin any visit; just pick up a bird

checklist, see what birds have been recently reported, use the restrooms, and talk to one of the friendly staff or volunteers. Inside the Bird Center are unique displays, exhibits, and educational materials provided by ODNR/DOW.

Twenty-five years ago, construction on the renowned boardwalk began with funding from the "Do Something Wild!" state income tax check-off program. Proceeds from "Do Something Wild" are used by DOW for wildlife diversity projects, including wildlife viewing areas such as Magee Marsh. Following



Magee Marsh Wildlife Area parking lot spectators.

ANN OLIVER

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Ohio Division of Wildlife Celebrates 25 Years of Birding on the Magee Marsh Boardwalk

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construction in 1988, the boardwalk was officially dedicated in the spring of 1989. The concept and design of the almost 5,000-foot boardwalk was the result of collaboration by DOW with the Toledo Naturalists' Association, Audubon members from Cleveland, *Toledo Blade* newspaper, and other partners.

Today, Magee Marsh Wildlife Area hosts more than 150,000 visitors annually from all 50 states and many countries. In May, the primary reason to visit is birding! Others come to Magee to hunt, take photographs, fish, walk, and enjoy the beauty of the 2,200-acre wetland along Lake Erie.

The boardwalk is just one of many fantastic places to enjoy birding in the area; when the boardwalk gets crowded, check out other locations including the beach trails and the parking lot. The beach trail to the east of Magee is a great



place to look for Kirtland's Warbler! A trail to the west, accessible from the terminal end of the Magee parking lot, takes you to the estuary of Crane Creek. There are also two partnership trails to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, including a trail across from the Bird Center. Finally, there are some wonderful,

often less crowded walking trails located behind the Bird Center. Maps of all trails are available.

So how can you, the average birder, help with the maintenance of the boardwalk and habitat management at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area? If you enjoyed your visit to Magee Marsh, or if you saw a life bird during your visit, consider purchasing an Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp (OWLS) at the Bird Center to help conserve Ohio's native diversity. The sale of this stamp supports projects and habitat management at Magee Marsh and other wildlife areas throughout the state. Maintaining the boardwalk at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area is just one example of how these funds help bird watchers and other wildlife enthusiasts every day. The \$15 Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp (OWLS) is a bargain to support wildlife conservation in Ohio. Ohio residents can also make a donation through the "Do Something Wild!"



ABOVE: A dedicated beach for birds only and a great place to look for the Kirtland's Warbler! ABOVE RIGHT: The Sportmen's Migratory Bird Center at Magee Marsh.

ANN OLIVER (2)



Clockwise from top left: Tom Bartlett's annual Big Sit at Magee Marsh, benefits BSBO; The Magee Marsh trail head; Literature table sponsored by Ohio Division of Wildlife this spring at Magee Marsh, ; The Friends of Magee Marsh store, inside the Sportsmen's Center.

state income tax check-off. The purchase of an Ohio or Federal Waterfowl Stamp directly benefits wetland management on Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and neighboring Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Another option is to purchase an Ohio hunting or fishing license: funds from the purchase of an Ohio hunting or fishing license go directly to the ODNR Division of Wildlife which receives additional funds from a federal excise tax placed on hunting and fishing supplies. If none of these options appeals to you, make a direct donation to the Wildlife Diversity Fund. View all options at www.WildOhio.com.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife hopes every visit to Magee Marsh is enjoyable! To reach the staff at the Bird Center, call (419) 898-0960. The Bird Center is open every day in May from 8 am until 5 pm.

Editor's Note

The Friends of Magee Marsh (FOMM), a non-profit volunteer group dedicated to improving the boardwalk, are unsung heroes of Ohio birding. FOMM has raised \$25,000 for the State of Ohio to make boardwalk repairs when needed. For 11 years, FOMM has also organized a successful garlic mustard pull, clearing sections of the invasive weed. FOMM has raised funds for native habitat restoration, including many spring blooming wildflowers, which now supply nectar sources for birds, insects, as well as other pollinators. FOMM has a gift shop inside the Sportmen's Migratory Bird Center where books, birding items, and wildlife stamps are sold. A donation box, for funds to allow FOMM to continue their support of Magee Marsh and the boardwalk, is on the gift shop counter. For more information on FOMM, please visit www.friendsof-mageemarsh.org.

Two partnership trails celebrate the association of Magee Marsh and Ottawa NWR! One trail can be accessed across from the Bird Center and has two loops: 1.) Woody's Roost, a 1.5 mile loop trail and 2.) a one mile trail to ONWR.

The second partnership trail is the Crane Creek Estuary Trail, commonly known as the Estuary Trail. This trail, from the far west end of the Magee Marsh parking lot, crosses over the dikes of Ottawa to lead birders to the mouth of the Crane Creek.

Additionally, you can bird on two beach trails! The East Wildlife Beach Trail has a small separate parking lot along the Magee Causeway. A newer beach trail (no sign) is defined by driftwood and leads between the west end of the beach and the East Wildlife Beach. As in any important wildlife area, PLEASE stay on the trails and do not trample vegetation.



Lawns and Lawn Alternatives— Creating Your Bird-Safe Zone

By Cheryl Harner, Richland County Master Gardener, and President, Greater Mohican Audubon Society



ANN OLIVER (2)

The Wild Ones are native plant enthusiasts who advertise with the catch phrase, “If the only thing moving in your yard is your mower, it is time to re-think your landscape.” It’s not only the origin of the plants you should consider, but also what chemicals you use in your yard.

If you are interested in your family’s good health, it is time to sit up and take note. The environmental group Beyond Pesticides reports that of “30 commonly used lawn pesticides, 19 are linked with cancer or carcinogenicity, 13 are linked with birth defects, 21 with reproductive effects, 26 with liver or kidney damage, 15 with neurotoxicity, and 11 with disruption of the endocrine (hormonal) system.” Lawn fertilizers are also being implicated along

with farm run-off as primary causes for toxic algae blooms in our waterways.

Those little “warning” flags waving on a freshly sprayed lawn should bring home the reality of news reports linking lawn chemicals with toxicity to birds, cancer in dogs, and illness in children. Besides, if you don’t “feed” your lawn, you will mow half as often, which allows you more time to go birding!

Better yet, reduce the size of your

lawn and go completely organic. It can be done, and my three suburban acres are proof that a lawn-freak can reform and learn to relax. I am here to tell you: There is life after the lawn, and it is good. Stop the “lawn insanity” with these simple steps:

1. Grow real food, without pesticides. You’ll also eat better and

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▼ Too much lawn!



Helpful Resources
Beyond Pesticides (2013) <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/factsheets/30health.pdf>
OSU Extension (2012) <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/4000/pdf/4031.pdf>

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live longer on homegrown food. It takes a few years to develop healthy soils and learn new coping mechanisms for pests, but organic gardening has its rewards. House Wrens and bluebirds remove my cabbage worms.

2. Plant a prairie patch.

Mowing is time consuming and gasoline is costly. A mini-prairie or meadow garden can be an attractive part of your landscape, which will attract butterflies and singing insects. We call this a win/win, because there's less work and more biodiversity.

3. Try a rain garden. If you have water run-off issues or areas that hold water, use it to your advantage. OSU Extension has promoted rain gardens as a healthy alternative for allowing water to return to the ground where it belongs. Parking lots, driveways and roof run-off add to our overloaded storm-sewers and tax our over-burdened streams during storms. You may even end up attracting frogs and herons!

4. Organic lawns require less care. OSU Extension's organic lawn-care fact sheet offers these suggestions. A mulching lawn mower blade will help you put the natural nutrients back into your lawn; chemical free lawns require less water and are more drought tolerant. Clover* can also add an attractive and beneficial component to your lawn.

**Since my lawn is chemical free, the local bunnies are thriving on the clover and that's OK. I like feeding the Red-tailed Hawks in my neighborhood too.*

Update: OBCI/OOS American Kestrel Nest Box Project



Kestrel box highway sign.

OBCI (2)

Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative is helping declining American Kestrels by placing nest boxes, made in part by the Ohio Ornithological Society, on the back of highway signs near appropriate habitat. Take a look at some of these fuzzy nestling kestrels!



Inside a kestrel nest box.



OOS Breeding Bird Field Trip to Adams County

By Kathy McDonald,
OOS Southwest Regional Director

Twenty-three people from various parts of Ohio met OOS field trip leader Dave Helm at Adams Lake to begin the Breeding Birds of Adams County field trip. Courtesy of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Eulett Center, OOS was given permission to visit properties not normally open to the public. In addition, we visited a beautiful 30-acre forest tract, the Wilderness Preserve, that OOS helped TNC purchase. Botanist Lucy Braun found the ultra-rare Canby's Mountain-lover here on the Wilderness Preserve, which was the primary reason for preserve's establishment.

Highlights of the day included Red-headed Woodpecker and Summer Tanager at Adams Lake; Cliff Swallows under the bridge on Ohio 125 at Ohio 348; Ovenbird, Hooded Warbler and Pine Warbler at the Wilderness Pre-



PHOTO COURTESY KATHY MCDONALD

Birders enjoy a lunch midday after an eventful morning birding in Adams County.

serve; Prothonotary Warbler at Beasley Fork Bridge; and Kentucky and Blue-winged Warbler at Abner Hollow. Several of the birders in the group had one or more life birds! There was much evidence of breeding activity and

we often witnessed birds carrying food and fledglings begging from parents. The Cliff Swallows were a delight to watch flying to and from their mud nests under a bridge along Brush Creek. We also searched for butterflies and pointed out some of the little known botanical species found in this rich and diverse area.

OOS Board Member Kathy McDonald arranged the trip. She and her husband Ned Keller, another well-known Ohio birder, treated the group to lunch at their cabin in Lynx, Ohio. Prairie Warblers, White-eyed Vireos, and Summer Tanagers were heard, and some participants observed the planted 'native pocket prairie' on the property, which hosts a variety of butterflies.



Prothonotary Warbler, male.

ANN OLIVER

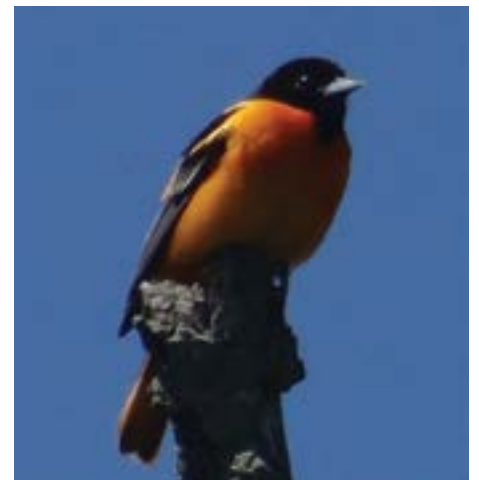
OOS Tours Cuyahoga Valley National Park

By Sue Evanoff, OOS East Central Director

Nine birders met at Happy Days Lodge to bird the Cuyahoga Valley National Park on Saturday, May 25. We had more than ten species before we even left the parking lot, including Cooper's Hawk and Indigo Bunting. First stop, Horseshoe Pond on Major Road – Blue-winged Warbler – SCORE! We had at least three calling and two came out to see us!

On to Ira Trailhead for a long walk along the towpath where we had a very large Snapping Turtle, and added Baltimore Oriole and Warbling Vireo. After a picnic lunch, we were down to four as we headed toward Boston Store to find the Peregrine Falcons under the Ohio Turnpike bridge. Then it was down to just two of us as we headed toward Wetmore Road in search of the Worm-eating Warbler – success (heard only). Last stop was Bath Road at the Blue Heron Rookery. A great day of birding with some fun birders.

Top to bottom: Blue-winged Warbler. Horseshoe Pond. Bottom left: Warbling Vireo on nest (Ira Trailhead) . Bottom right: Baltimore Oriole.



SUE EVANOFF (4)



OOS Tours **Oak Openings** in NW Ohio

**By Rebecca Hinkle,
OOS Northwest
Regional Director**

Sherrie Duris of the Toledo Naturalists' Association and OOS NW Regional Director Rebecca Hinkle (Ottawa NWR) led a field trip to Oak Openings on Saturday, May 25. We started the morning off with great scope views of Grasshopper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks in the Airport Field at Wilkens and Sager Roads. South on Sager, just west of the spruce stand, we had a singing Yellow-breasted Chat, Blue-winged Warblers, Alder and Willow Flycatchers, and Orchard Orioles.

The Lark Sparrows put on a show at the Lark Sparrow Field on the corner of Reed and Girdham, where we also had a singing Blue Grosbeak, Summer and Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. A Hooded Warbler was singing in a pine stand south of Reed, and a Red-shouldered Hawk soared above. A Summer Tanager landed out in the open and a few members of the group were able to get great photos of their life bird!

We didn't see the Blue Grosbeaks on Jeffers across from the Horse Stable, but we did have two more Lark Sparrows, Brown Thrashers, a Wild Turkey, and a Baltimore



OOS Birders tour Oak Openings.

SHERRIE DURIS

Oriole building a nest. Red-headed Woodpeckers were out in the open behind the Lodge along with a Nashville Warbler. As we were walking back to the cars we heard a Yellow-throated Vireo singing.

It was a great morning and all the target species were heard/seen. We had some happy birders including eleven-year-old Katie, who scored several life birds on the trip. Folks were pleased that we spent some time helping them get their target birds. It was pretty exciting to witness some lifer dances! A good time was had by all!



Summer Tanager.

MIKE STRABLE

OOS on IMBD at Magee.

OOS board members and volunteers greeted folks on International Migratory Bird Day, May 11, at Magee Marsh Wildlife Area. Thanks to everyone who took a few minutes out of their birding time to stop past, pick up literature, buy an OOS hat, renew a membership, or become a new member.



Above: Mike Edgington and Craig Caldwell work the OOS booth. Below; Wendy Clark volunteering at the OOS booth.

OOS Field Trip to Spring Valley Wildlife Area

By Ann Oliver, OOS Executive Secretary

Virginia Rail.



Nearly 40 birders joined in the OOS field trip to Spring Valley Wildlife Area on April 14. Jack Stenger, who recently graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a degree in Zoology, and OOS board member Ann Oliver were the co-leaders.

A Great Egret greeted birders along our traverse of the 650-foot long boardwalk and a shy Marsh Wren gave away its presence with a gurgling, rattling trill. With luck and persistence, a pair of Virginia Rails were seen and beautifully photographed by many. More than ten participants remarked it was a life bird for them! Some partici-

pants were fortunate to also see a Sora.

The field trip then moved to the 'official' parking lot for the 150-acre lake. Northern Parula and Yellow-throated Warblers played 'hide-and-go-seek' from the treetops while Tree Swallows glided over the water.

A brief stroll along the Loveland Bike Trail yielded a Bald Eagle nest and a smattering of spring wildflowers.

The group then carpooled to the beach at nearby Caesar Creek State Park where a White-fronted Goose attempted to blend in with the local Canada Geese.



Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture (AMJV) Partners Release **Cerulean Warbler Best Management Practice Guide**

By Matthew Cimitile, Conservation Communications and Public Affairs Specialist, Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture

Cerulean Warbler management guidelines for enhancing breeding habitat in Appalachian forests are completed and available to download from the AMJV Library (<http://amjv.org/index.php/library>). Titled “Cerulean Warbler Management Guidelines for Appalachian Hardwood Forests,” this document provides land managers in the Appalachian Region with recommendations for retaining and enhancing habitat for Cerulean Warblers and a diverse bird community based on the best-available science. Recommendations are intended for use by federal, state, and private foresters, as well as biologists and other land managers.

These management guidelines are based to a large extent on the recently completed Cooperative Cerulean Warbler Forest Management Project but also incorporate relevant findings from other research projects. Guidelines apply primarily to upland oak-dominated habitats where the majority of the research reported was completed. The AMJV will also have on hand a limited number of hard copies of the guidelines.



LAIN CAMPBELL



LAURA KEENE



BRIAN ZWEIBEL



BRUCE MILLER



SHERRIE DURIS

New Marsh Area at Ottawa NWR Attracts Rare Ruff!

Ann Oliver, Cincinnati, OOS Executive Secretary

Congrats to Jason Lewis and the staff of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge! Ottawa and several partners will restore around 2,500 acres of marsh in the western Lake Erie Basin (NW Ohio). Partners include Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

"If you restore it, birds will come!" In early May, a 100+ acre former wheat field, now known as the Blausey Unit, was returned/reverted to coastal marsh and immediately a rare Eurasian

shorebird species was found. The day after the ribbon-cutting ceremony in May, birders and refuge staff participating in a free "Blue Goose" Ottawa bus trip observed a breeding plumaged Ruff in the wetland. Although the area was not open to the general public, Ottawa allowed an extra refuge bus to take birders and photographers to see the rarity.

Read more: <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/ohio/newsroom/partners-celebrate-conservation-success-at-ottawa-nwr.xml>



KEITH BARNES

Male Ruff at Ottawa NWR on May 4.

Thank you!

Big thanks to Craig Caldwell, OOS NE Director and Editor, *The Ohio Cardinal*, holding an OOS award for his "outstanding achievement and continual service to Ohio's birding community."



Welcome new members!

D. Keith Adams
Jason Barnhart
Gail S. Boslry
Jay Coventry
Judith Davis
Emily Donaldson
Ken Ondo & Irene Gorla
Ronald Kushmaul
Kay Lauener
Leigh Mamlin
Tyler McClain
Janet McLean
Dennis Meyer
Michael Murphy
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Bob & Debra Patek
Michael Petrucha
Karen Roberts
Bill & Marge Rupp
Eldonna Shields-Kyle
Wendy & Stacey Sparling
Debbie Swing
James C. Wilson
Sam Woods
Mary York
Tim Barhorst & Barb Zulliger

Thank you for your donations!

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

Harris Abramson
Dorothea Barker
Amber Barnes
Jay Coventry
Steve Schafer & Janet Duerr
David & Suzanna Edens
Ann & Marty Gulbransen
Mr. Ronald Huprich
Jeffrey Nancy
Robert Krajewski
William & Dianne Noice

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<input type="checkbox"/>	\$25 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$250 Sustaining Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 Family/Non-Profit	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$500 Benefactor

The Ohio Ornithological Society is a 100% volunteer and non-profit organization. Please consider making a tax-deductible donations to support the Society's development and conservation activities.

\$	DEVELOPMENT FUND
\$	CONSERVATION FUND
\$	CARBON OFFSET BIRD PROJECT

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



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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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