



The Hushwing **HERALD**

Volume 51 Number 4
April, May, June, 2016

*Spreading the Love of Nature in Lake,
Geauga and Ashtabula Counties*

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: Tuesday, April 19, 2016
PROGRAM: "Birding Without Binoculars"
SPEAKER: Bill Deininger
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: The Holden Arboretum

Our guest speaker is Bill Deininger, "an avid and obsessed birder" from Lakewood, Ohio. Bill has been birding since high school and is currently a member of the Kirtland Bird Club and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society. He has led spring bird walks at Rocky River Reservation and participated in the monthly walks given by both organizations. He started filming about 13 years ago and covers most of northern Ohio. He has a vast collection of bird videos.

Our program is not a lecture but an "arm chair" travelogue of northern Ohio's avian population as seen through a video camera. This program is a follow up to Bill's March 2013 program for Blackbrook Audubon. We will be active participants as we view the many species of birds found locally. How many can we each identify? That will be part of the challenge, as we travel with Bill to see the beauty that surrounds us.

Come join us on a video adventure capturing the antics of our feathered friends. The clips will include interesting behaviors, comic relief, some rarities and our local favorites. Sit back, relax, watch, listen, and laugh to the birds in Northern Ohio, without our binoculars, all from the comfort of our chairs.



Don't forget to check out our June picnic Activity- information on page 3!

DATE: Tuesday, May 17, 2016
PROGRAM: "Birds, Habitat and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park"
SPEAKER: Dwight Chasar
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Big Creek Park,
Geauga Park District

The Cuyahoga Valley National Park consists of about 33,000 acres and has been host to over 250 species of birds over the years. During spring migration, up to 150 species can be found in one good day in May, if a birder could cover all of the appropriate habitats. Each summer, over 100 bird species nest in the valley. Forests, fields, scrub, river, streams, and marshes provide habitat for these nesting birds. This Powerpoint presentation will cover these habitats and show some of the special birds that nest in them.

Our speaker, Dwight Chasar, started birding about 35 years ago. Confirming nesting of uncommon birds and raptors within the boundaries of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park is of particular interest to Dwight and his wife, Ann. As a volunteer for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Dwight has led bird walks and organized and conducted spring and fall bird censuses. In addition, Dwight is a leader on the Sunday morning spring bird walks in the Brecksville Reservation of the Cleveland Metroparks. He has helped census birds for the Greater Akron Audubon Society and participates in annual Christmas Bird Counts. Dwight and Ann have travelled throughout North America and countries in Central and South America, Europe, and Africa to see birds. Dwight is a past president of the Kirtland Bird Club. He has published numerous articles in The Cleveland Bird Calendar, the Ohio Cardinal, and Ohio Birds and Natural History.



ACTIVITIES

APRIL ACTIVITY

DATE: Saturday April 16, 2016
 ACTIVITY: Conneaut Shorebirds
 TIME: 9:00 AM
 PLACE: Meet at Conneaut Harbor

Conneaut Harbor's mudflats and open waters attract migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. We will also go inland to look for early land birds. Dress for the weather and bring your scope if you have one to share. Conneaut is approximately 53 miles from Mentor via I-90 east. For details, call Pat Morse at 440-256-1404 x2101.

Geuga Parks SPRING BIRDING

Want to get in on the enjoyment, excitement, fascination and joyful outdoor recreation that watching birds has to offer? Once relegated to the domain of eccentrics, bird watching now ranks among one of the most popular pastimes in America, and Geauga Park District is eager to help you make the connection.

Continuing a Greater Cleveland tradition since 1933, the Annual Spring Bird Walk Series returns for six walks throughout April and May – April 10 at Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve, April 17 at Frohring Meadows, April 24 at The Rookery, May 1 at Eldon Russell Park, May 8 at Big Creek Park and May 15 at Swine Creek Reservation. All are Sundays from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. and among Nature's Not to Be Missed opportunities.

Gauga Park District is online at <http://geaugaparkdistrict.org>.



MAY ACTIVITY

DATE: Saturday, May 14, 2016
 ACTIVITY: Cleveland Lakefront
 TIME: 8:00 AM
 PLACE: Meet at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve, formerly known as Dike 14 (8701 Lakeshore Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44108)

Migration is in full swing! Join us as we follow the shore of Lake Erie from Gordon Park to Wendy Park (and maybe beyond) for migrating songbirds and anything else of interest. We will meet at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve, formerly known as Dike 14 (8701 Lakeshore Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44108). For details, call Pat Morse at 440-256-1404 x2101.

Lake Metroparks Spring Birding

Lake Metroparks encourages the growing pastime of birdwatching through bird walks, birdwatching classes, day trips and eco-trips. Three of our parks have been designated Important Bird Areas by Audubon Ohio for their role as breeding areas and places of rest and feeding during migration. Six of our parks are now part of the new Lake Erie Birding Trail coordinated by Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife.

Lake Metroparks has a long tradition of guided bird walks. The park's variety of habitats offers the chance to see and hear many species of birds. Bring binoculars and field guide if you have them. Beginners welcome.

To find the long list of programs available visit: <http://www.lakemetroparks.com/activities/birding.shtml#sthash.z8pHEU5P.dpuf>

Check out the Saturday morning birding adventures at Lake Metroparks' best birding locations, located along major migration corridors with histories of good migration days.



June Picnic

Date: Tuesday, June 21, 2016
 Program: Annual Potluck Picnic
 Time: Meet at 6:00 – Eat at 6:30 p.m.
 Place: Orchard Hills Park, 11340 Caves Rd.,
 Chesterland

It is time for our annual potluck picnic. This year it will be held at the pavilion at Orchard Hills Park in Chesterland.

We will start gathering at 6:00 p.m. and begin eating at 6:30. Everyone should bring their own table service (plate, silverware etc.) and a dish to share. Blackbrook will have ice and some basic beverages: lemonade, iced tea and water. Following dinner, we will take a walk around the park so bring binoculars if you have them. We have been monitoring birds here with our monthly bird walks for the past year, so this will give us a final chance to check out what is present. As we are holding the picnic in the pavilion, it will be held rain or shine. We will only cancel in case of severe weather.

Directions: From the northeast, take Rt. 306 south to Rt. 6. Turn west to Caves Rd. and follow that south to the park. From the northwest, take Rt. 91 south to Rt. 6 and head east. Turn south on Caves Rd. From the south, take Rt. 306 north to Mulberry Rd. Follow that west to Caves Rd. and turn north to the park.

Please note, since we have the shelter reserved, this event will be cancelled only in the case of severe weather. Check the Blackbrook Audubon web site or WKYC-TV IAlert if you are unsure.

IMPORTANT BIRD AREA WALKS: We would like to thank everyone who participated in the monitoring project at Orchard Hills. As of February, we submitted 10 checklists to ebird, totaling 58 species. The project will end on March 27, 2016 with our last walk!

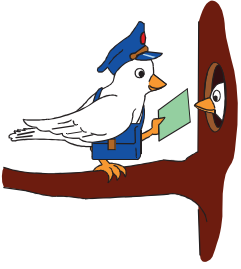
GREAT NEWS! Blackbrook Audubon has decided to conduct an eleventh year of bird monitoring. We will be returning to Lake Metroparks, **Chagrin River Park** for a long term study in conjunction with Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland's Chagrin River IBA monitoring project.

We will be conducting one bird walk a month for a year! These walks will take place on **the 4th Sundays (8 A.M.)** Everyone who is interested in lending their eyes and ears, meet at **3100 Reeves Road, Willoughby, OH 44094**. The first bird walk at Chagrin River Park will start on **Sunday, May 22, 2016**.

See website below for more information on Chagrin River Park:

<http://www.lakemetroparks.com/parks/chagrin-river.shtml>





FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

By Mary Ann Wagner
maryannelizabeth@aol.com

Spring, a time of renewal, has arrived! It's almost like a "do over" for our New Year's resolutions. We can resolve to do our spring cleaning or to have our best yard ever. We can resolve to spend more time doing things we enjoy, like watching warblers or other spring migrants, whose time with us is so short.

The annual Audubon Spring Bird Walks are a great reason to spend time outside and watch birds. There are many spring festivals to experience, such as the Arbor Day weekend festivities at the Holden Arboretum, Earth Day at Penitentiary Glen and the Bald Eagle Festival at Mentor Marsh. You don't have to be an expert birder to participate in the spring bird walks or any of the other activities. Beginners are always welcome!

Perhaps one of your spring resolutions is to volunteer some of your time to a worthy cause. Blackbrook Audubon can always use your help staffing one of our tables at the above mentioned festivals. No experience necessary – just a willingness to smile and talk to people or perhaps help kids work a puzzle or do an activity. You can stop by for as little as an hour, although longer would be helpful. You can email me at maryannelizabeth@aol.com or call 440-255-0961 if you want more details.

Another popular event is our "Big Sit" on May 15. It's a very informal way to watch birds and make new friends. Just bring your chair (and binoculars if you have them) and stay for as long as you are able.

We look forward to seeing you this spring!

Nominating Committee Report

Every year, in the spring, we in Blackbrook Audubon Society have an election for the four most important officers on our Board of Directors. And every year in this Newsletter we always print the list of those candidates for those offices in the "spring" issue. So we're doing our job here and your job, then, is to attend our April meeting and vote for these fine candidates to show your support for all the time, effort and work they (and the other members of the Board) do for Blackbrook Audubon Society. Here, then, are the Nominations for those four important offices.

For President: **Mary Ann Wagner**
for Vice President: **Becky Thompson**
for Secretary: **Laurie White**
and for Treasurer: **Debbi Schuster**

Friends of Blackbrook Audubon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Amount: ___ \$25 ___ \$30
 ___ \$40 ___ \$50 and over

I would like to receive a paper Hushwing

I would like to receive an electronic copy of the Hushwing and here is my email address to send it to: _____

I do not wish to become a member of Friends, but would like to donate _____

Please make checks payable to: Blackbrook Audubon Society and mail to: James McConnor 5758 Beech Dr. Mentor on the Lake, OH 44060 Call (440) 257-2507 for more information.

Birdathon 2016

Birdathon is Blackbrook's annual fundraising event. The money raised will be used to provide Audubon Adventures to elementary school children through Holden Arboretum, Geauga Park District and Mentor Marsh.

It will be held from Saturday May 7 to Sunday May 15. Each person who participates picks a 24 hour period during that week and tries to see as many species of birds as she or he can during that period (or some part of it – you don't have to bird all 24 hours!). Join up with others and work as a team if you wish. Find people to sponsor you and help us raise as much as we can.

Some of you may not have access to a team and do not wish to bird alone. Here are a couple of suggestions. Join one of the Sunday morning bird walks (info elsewhere in this newsletter) and count the birds you see then as your birdathon. Or check out other birding programs held by the different park districts. And finally, you could join our big sit which will be held on May 15 at Headlands State Park.

Please contact Nancy at angydy@earthlink.net (preferred) or 440-257-1090 if you have any questions or need more information.



Headlands Dunes Bird Sit

On Sunday, May 15th, Blackbrook Audubon will again hold our version of a "Big Sit". It's a less strenuous group bird watching experience with a chance to socialize with other birders. Come to the picnic area at the far eastern side of Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve any time after 8:30 AM. Please bring your own chair, binoculars and a field guide if you have them, and we'll sit and watch birds. One year, a juvenile Bald Eagle flew into a nearby tree, affording everyone a good look at him. The Dunes are a haven for warblers before they venture across Lake Erie in April and May during spring migration. If you want, bring a snack to share. We'll provide the coffee. Stay for as little or as long as you like. We'll plan to be there until at least 11 AM. The birders starting from Zimmerman Trail should be strolling by close to 9 AM. You can walk with them along the fisherman's trail and out to the beach if you are interested.

The picnic area is close to the parking lot and restrooms. Plan to bring an umbrella in case of rain and dress warmly or bring a blanket in case the weather is cool. Headlands Beach State Park is at the northern terminus of State Route 44 (Heisley Road) in Lake County. As you enter the State Park, follow the access road straight to the end and turn left into the last row of parking lot for the State Nature Preserve. Look for a group of people sitting in lawn chairs near a table displaying the Blackbrook Audubon banner.



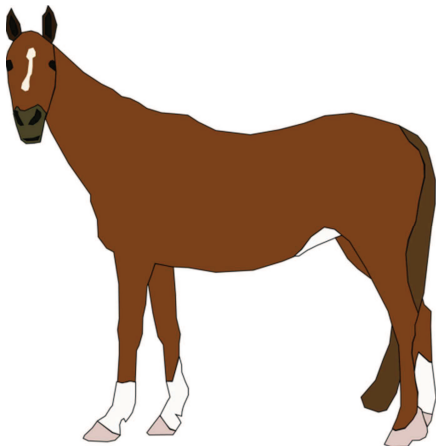
Milkweed Toxic to Livestock

By Mary Ann Wagner

I am a Monarch butterfly enthusiast and encourage everyone to plant milkweed, the only plant Monarch butterflies can lay their eggs upon. After a recent program at the Burroughs Nature Club in Willoughby, it was brought to my attention that milkweed is very toxic to horses and other large herbivores. Milkweed is unpalatable and animals generally avoid it. I know deer and groundhogs won't touch it in my yard.

Milkweed is a problem for horses (or cows, sheep, etc.) when pastures are overgrazed and there is nothing else for them to eat. It is also dangerous if milkweed is in the hay fed to livestock. Please do not plant milkweed anywhere livestock are allowed to graze. Also be careful handling milkweed. Rubbing the white sap in your eyes can cause blindness.

I was surprised to learn that so many things, including maple and apple leaves, are toxic to horses. Upon further research, I learned we grow many plants in our yards that are dangerous for our companion animals. We even bring plants into our homes that can be deadly. The toxicity of poinsettias has been overstated while Easter lilies are deadly toxic to cats. I knew foxgloves and yew could be toxic, but I didn't realize that cardinal flower, clematis, daffodil, hosta, tulip, yarrow -- even tomato plants! -- along with many others, could be deadly for our beloved pets. One place to look for a more complete list is at aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-not-toxic-plants.



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Blackbrook Audubon every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at **smile.amazon.com**, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Blackbrook Audubon Society.

Please tell your friends and family. We appreciate your support! You can also find a link at our website to go directly to AmazonSmile. Check it out at www.blackbrookaudubon.org.....

Celebrate Arbor Day at The Holden Arboretum

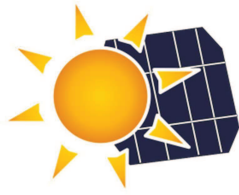
Participate in the nationally celebrated observance that encourages tree planting and care. Join Blackbrook on Friday, April 29, at 11 am for a bird walk with Jim McConnor. (Walk may be cancelled due to inclement weather.) Family fun and activities, including opportunities to talk with certified tree service professionals, from 10 am to 4 pm Saturday and Sunday. Free tree seedling give-away while supplies last.

We need your help! Blackbrook will staff an activity and give-away table on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1, 2016. If you are interested in helping, please contact Mary Ann Wagner maryannelizabeth@aol.com

Friday, April 29: Free admission to the grounds
Nonmember tickets for Canopy Walk & Emergent Tower \$4 for adults, \$2 for children

Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1:
Nonmember discount admission \$10 per car OR \$20 per car for combo admission and Canopy Walk/Emergent Tower tickets, while supplies last

For more details, visit <http://www.holdenarb.org/visit/arborday.asp>



The 2016 Green Energy Ohio Tour has moved.

Instead of a September event, it is now **Friday, Saturday & Sunday June 3, 4 & 5, 2016**

GEO is the Ohio Chapter of the American Solar Energy Society (ASES) - GEO's 14th Annual Tour is part of the ASES National Solar Tour

This FREE statewide event provides the unique opportunity for people to visit and talk with owners living and working with clean energy technologies. This interactive GEO Tour Web Site will again present Tour Site Descriptions uploaded by Site Owners pinpointed on an interactive Google Map shown by five regions and statewide with ability to show sites by county, site type and technologies.

Use GEO's website as an interactive tool to search the past Tours as well as the 2016 Tour.

DESIGN YOUR OWN TOUR HERE:
<http://www.greenenergyohio.org/ost/search.cf?m?yr=2016>



BLACKBROOK ANNUAL SPRING BIRD WALKS - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DATES: SUNDAYS

APRIL 10, 17, 24

MAY 1, 8, 15

TIME AND PLACE: 7:30 A.M.

ZIMMERMAN TRAIL PARKING LOT

Located on Headlands Road just west of entrance to Headlands Beach State Park

Blackbrook Audubon has been leading this walk since the 1940's and is often the best one in the Cleveland area for number of species seen during this time frame.

Come prepared for the weather as this is a rain or shine (sometimes snow) event. Remember that 90-95% of the birds we see in the entire year are seen during these six weeks so make your plans now to join us each week for great birding.

Becky and Dan Donaldson will be leading the walks this year. Come on out of hibernation and walk with us!

Mentor Marsh Bald Eagle Fest, Sunday, May 1, 12-5 p.m.

Celebrate bald eagles at the 7th annual open house and silent auction at the Mentor Marsh Nature Center, 5185 Corduroy Road in Mentor. Explore hands-on eagle activities, see live animal ambassadors, visit conservation exhibitors and take part in a "Mini-Sit". Also, door prizes, games, face painting, arts/crafts vendors and food available. Join a guided hike to view the bald eagle nest at 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, or 3:30 p.m. RSVPs required for hikes; call 440-257-0777 or email rdonaldson@cmnh.org to register.

BLACKBROOK AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Mentor, OH 44061-1306

LOOK FOR BLACKBROOK ON THE WEB!
AT www.blackbrookaudubon.org

Mary Ann Wagner - President
Bruce Roberts - Editor



Go take a hike !! ;-)