

The Hushwing **HERALD**

Volume 52 Number 4
April, May, June, 2017

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE: Tuesday, April 18, 2017
PROGRAM: "Exploring Holden's Wildflowers"
SPEAKER: Ann Rzepka Budziak
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: The Holden Arboretum

If you ever wanted to introduce native wildflowers onto your property, learn how from horticulturist Ann Rzepka Budziak as she describes how to select and propagate native plants. Her presentation will focus on wildflower identification, propagation and cultural information. She will help us better appreciate Ohio's wildflowers so we may create or expand our own wildflower gardens.

Ann has been a horticulturist at the Holden Arboretum since 2008. She maintains the Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden, collects and propagates seed for use within the garden, assists conservation staff with the heritage species monitoring program, and helps to fulfill Holden's commitment to the Center for Plant Conservation and the preservation of rare and endangered plant species. Ann was previously a Natural Resources Specialist with the Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District. She earned a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Hiram College. In her free time she enjoys gardening, hiking and fishing with her two little girls and husband.

Ann will lead us in a guided tour of the five-acre Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden later this month. See the April Activity for details.



DATE: Tuesday, May 16, 2017
PROGRAM: "Buckeye Black Bears are Back"
SPEAKER: Mike Sustin
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Big Creek Park,
Geauga Park District

Our speaker for the evening, Mike Sustin, grew up in Russell Township and currently teaches science at his alma mater, West Geauga High School. His program will describe the biology and ecology of the resilient black bear, highlighting life in the den and foraging behaviors. We'll discuss the management challenges facing Ohio's bruin population. Once extirpated from Ohio, confirmed sightings of black bears have increased in the eastern half of the state.

Mike works to provide deeply meaningful and enriching experiences for all students in the West Geauga Local School District. He was the recipient of a Toyota TAPESTRY Grant to develop a bobcat and black bear population study project with his students and in partnership with the Ohio Division of Wildlife. In April of 2011, Mike and some of his students were honored with a National Conservation Achievement Award by the National Wildlife Federation for their work on wetlands education and conservation. His continued pursuit of learning experiences keeps him in touch with his students, and makes him the outstanding educator he has become.

On a more personal note, Mike was thankfully led into the swamps and forests of Geauga County by his dad. Mike and his brothers and sister caught crawfish in the creek, painted themselves with clay, and built forts with sticks and stones. He enjoys being "Crazy Uncle Mike" for his nieces and nephew, who are also being raised in the woods and wetlands of Geauga County.



ACTIVITIES

APRIL ACTIVITY

DATE: Saturday, April 29, 2017
 ACTIVITY: Walk among the Wildflowers
 TIME: 10:00 a.m.
 PLACE: The Holden Arboretum

Explore the Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden with Ann Rzepka Budziak as a follow up to her presentation last week on Ohio's native wildflowers. She will show us the plant communities she tends here and share what works and what doesn't. Meet at the Corning Visitor Center. Admission to the Holden Arboretum will be free for those joining Blackbrook for the walk among the wildflowers. After the hike, anyone wanting to visit the canopy walk or emergent tower who is not a member of Holden will have to pay \$4.00 per ticket at the visitor center.

The five-acre Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden includes more than 400 native Ohio species displayed in representative habitat plantings modeled after significant plant communities found in Ohio. Associated woody and herbaceous species are displayed together to demonstrate habitat relationships, landscape situations and Ohio's diverse flora. The communities are: woodland, rockery, prairie, bog and flood plain.

Located in a native pawpaw patch, the Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden was established in 1968 through the donations of the Arthur S. Holden family in memory of Myrtle S. Holden. Developed as a setting to bring in and display the many wildflowers common in Holden's diverse acres, the Myrtle S. Holden Wildflower Garden evolved to become a showcase of Ohio's native flora and a repository for the vanishing flora of the Great Lakes region, according to literature from the Holden Arboretum.

Native plant species are as much a part of our natural heritage as the land and its physical features. Besides their beauty, native plants make up the framework and support mechanism upon which thousands of animal and insect species evolved. They represent a great resource for the horticultural and landscape professions and the home gardener.

MAY ACTIVITY

DATE: Saturday, May 20, 2017
 ACTIVITY: Magee Marsh
 TIME: 9:00 a.m.
 PLACE: Magee Marsh Wildlife Area,
 Oak Harbor

Once again we are off to one of the premiere birding spots in the USA! Magee Marsh, with its famous boardwalk, draws the birding community from all over the country and we will be among them. The number of migrating birds is as good as it gets, and the birds are often at eye-level or close-by, as they are "showing off" their brilliant spring finery. We are going just a little later than "The Biggest Week in Birding" and will hopefully miss the largest crowds of people, but should have a great variety of birds to see.

Plan to bring a picnic lunch and a chair; the eating places (i.e., McDonalds) are a ways away. We expect to stay the whole day and you won't want to miss what may show up in the eating area. We also plan to visit the other near-by areas such as Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and Metzger Marsh or any other place that we hear may be harboring a rarity. Meet at the Sportsmen's Migratory Bird Center parking lot along the drive into the park (not the Black Swamp Bird Observatory which is right at the entrance). Hope to see you there. Bring a friend and don't forget your binoculars!!!

If you need more information on the May Activity, contact Pat Morse at 440-256-1404 ext. 2101.

If you need more information on the April Activity, call Becky Thompson at 440-602-3852.





June Picnic

Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Program: Annual Potluck Picnic

Time: Meet at 6:00 p.m. – Eat at 6:30 p.m.

Place: Chagrin River Park, Willoughby

Our annual potluck picnic will be held on Tuesday Jun 20th at Chagrin River Park in Willoughby. We will meet in the shelter near the parking lot of the Reeves Road entrance. There is overflow parking available if the main lot is full. All members and their guests are welcome!

We will begin gathering at 6 pm and start eating at 6:30 p.m. Please bring your own place setting as well as a dish to pass. Blackbrook will supply hot dogs, buns, condiments, ice, lemonade and iced tea. If you prefer another beverage, please bring your own. We have many good cooks in the group so expect a great meal.

Following the meal, there will be a few announcements and then we will go for a walk. Bring binoculars if you have them.

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.

Chagrin River Corridor IBA

Blackbrook's long-term commitment to monitoring birds in the Chagrin River Corridor continues with monthly bird walks at Chagrin River Park through March 2018. The park is located at 3100 Reeves Road in Willoughby. We meet at 8 a.m. the 4th Sunday of each month at the Reeves Road main parking lot. Beginners and experienced birders are welcome.

The Chagrin River Corridor Important Bird Area (IBA) is a critical piece in a great web of priority conservation sites across the North American Continent that supports both rare and common birds throughout the annual cycle: breeding, migrating,

wintering. The Chagrin River Corridor IBA includes over 71 miles of river/riparian habitat (encompassing 1000 acres) in portions of Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga and Portage counties, representing a nearly unbroken ribbon of forest, old field, and wetlands amid towns, suburbs, and farms. Our specific goals for the Chagrin River Corridor IBA include:

- Increasing the knowledge base of avian diversity and abundance over time across the annual cycle and representative habitats.
- Partnering with private landowners, public agencies, and conservation organizations to assess, conserve, and improve the ecological integrity.
- Promoting public awareness of the ecological value.

Basic eBird class

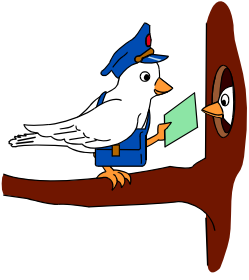
Tuesday, April 18, 2017 6:30 p.m.

The Holden Arboretum

Have you heard about “eBird”, but don’t know how (or why) to get started? We’ll conduct a brief demonstration of how to use eBird at 6:30 p.m. at the Holden Arboretum. A real-time, online checklist program launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird has revolutionized the way the birding community reports and accesses information about birds.

A birder simply enters when, where, and how they went birding, then fills out a checklist of all the birds seen and heard during the outing. Automated data quality filters developed by regional bird experts review all submissions before they enter the database. Local experts review unusual records that are flagged by the filters.

The observations of each participant join those of others in the network of eBird users. eBird then shares these observations with a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists. In time the data will become the foundation for a better understanding of bird distribution across the western hemisphere and beyond.



FROM the DESK of the PRESIDENT

By Mary Ann Wagner
maryannelizabeth@aol.com

As I try to gather my thoughts to write my last column, I remember the fun we've had over the years. We're never too old to learn new things and share experiences together.

It's been a pleasure being the President of the Blackbrook Audubon Society. It forced me out of my comfort zone to stand up in front of a group of friendly people and talk about our upcoming programs and field trips and encourage you to participate. Hopefully, I've been somewhat coherent! When I was in school, I hated speech classes. I thought, 'This is so stupid! I am NEVER going to stand up in front of a group of people and talk. . . .'

I grew up in a time when kids were not rushed from one heavily scheduled activity to another. We were encouraged to go outside, stay out of trouble and come home when the streetlights came on. My cousins or friends and I spent a lot of time walking through muddy fields or along unpaved dirt roads. Trying to reach cattails in a marsh without getting our feet wet. Watching fireflies at night. Listening to my dad whistle back and forth to bobwhites outside the back door. Watching bees travel from clover to clover in the lawn. Climbing trees and watching people walk by below. If you came home muddy with a tear in your pants or a scrape on your knee, it wasn't a big deal. What are some of your favorite memories?

We do have many more resources today that we didn't have back then. If you took a picture, you'd wait until you finished the entire roll before you got the film developed and it could be months before you realized the picture you took of a beautiful flower was out of focus. When the car broke down and you needed to call someone for help, you had to walk to find a pay phone. If you wanted to look up something, you had to look in the encyclopedia rather than "googling" it. Embrace change. Never stop learning. Have fun and enjoy the journey.

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: **Becky Donaldson**
for Vice President: **Debbi Schuster**
for Secretary: **Trevor Wearstler**
and for Treasurer: **Mary Ann Wagner**

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 2017

Each year Blackbrook Audubon holds a birdathon to raise money to support our commitment to supply Audubon Adventures to school children attending programs through Holden Arboretum and Geauga Park District. We need to raise over \$1000 to do this.

What is birdathon? It is an effort to go birding, count the number of species of birds seen and gather sponsors to pledge money based on species seen (or sponsor yourself). You can bird alone, gather some friends to go with you or join an existing walk and count the birds you see on that walk.

Birdathon 2017 will be held from Saturday, May 13th to Sunday, May 21st. You can choose any 24 hour period (or part thereof – you do not have to be out for 24 hours straight) during those days. If you wish to join an existing walk there will be many opportunities. Spring bird walks will be held on Sunday, May 14th and 21st at Mentor Marsh and Holden Arboretum among other locations and there will be a field trip to Magee Marsh on Saturday, May 20. You can check park websites for other opportunities.

Since Blackbrook is working on supporting the Chagrin River IBA we are encouraging participants to do their birding in the IBA but you are welcome to go elsewhere. For more information contact Nancy at angydy@earthlink.net



Headlands Dunes Bird Sit

On Sunday, May 21st, Blackbrook Audubon will again hold our version of a “Big Sit”. The Bird Sit on the last Sunday of the Audubon spring bird walks has become one of our favorite traditions. Come to the picnic area at the far eastern side of the Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve anytime after 8:30 a.m. We’ll provide the coffee (restrooms with flush toilets are nearby). You should bring your own chair and binoculars and we’ll sit and watch the birds come to shrubs and trees near us.

The Dunes are a haven for warblers before they migrate across Lake Erie in April and May. Bring a snack to share if you want and stay for as little or as long as you are able. The birders starting from Zimmerman Trail at 7:30 a.m. should be strolling by the picnic area around 9 a.m. You are welcome to walk along the fisherman’s trail and out to the beach with them if you are so inclined.

The picnic area is close to the parking lot. Bring an umbrella in case of rain and dress warmly or bring a blanket if 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 or standing near a picnic table displaying the Blackbrook Audubon banner.



Feral Cats

By Mary Ann Wagner



Although I do not condone TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return), I do applaud the City of Mentor's attempt to reduce the feral cat population. Kirtland City Council is also looking into feral cat legislation.

According to the American Bird Conservancy, domestic cats can make wonderful pets. But when allowed to roam outdoors, these introduced predators have serious consequences. Cats have been introduced into new habitats across the globe with terrible results. Outdoors, cats are a non-native and invasive species that threaten birds and other wildlife, disrupt ecosystems, and spread diseases.

Now numbering well over 100 million in the United States, cats kill approximately 2.4 billion birds every year in the U.S. alone, making cat predation by far the largest human-caused mortality threat to birds.

Please spay or neuter your pet cats and keep them indoors.

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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 Earth Day

April 23, 2017

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

PENITENTIARY GLEN RESERVATION
8668 Kirtland-Chardon Rd., Kirtland, Ohio

We are all responsible for caring for our natural environment. This has been the concept of Earth Day since its beginning in 1970. Lake Metroparks continues that focus to celebrate the Earth and make a commitment to learn and use new ways to make our planet a healthier place.

Come out for a day of earth-friendly family fun that includes an eco-fair featuring local and national conservation organizations and an Earth Day Marketplace where you can purchase locally-made and eco-friendly items. Other activities include live animal programs, a kid-friendly craft and train rides (weather permitting).

Lake Metroparks and International Migratory Bird Day

One of the best times of year for birding is quickly approaching and for some of you long-time birders, International Migratory Bird Day has become a spring tradition. This year we encourage you to invite a family member, a kid, a friend or someone new to birding to Lake Metroparks' International Migratory Bird Day celebration. This afternoon event on May 13th celebrates the importance of birds and the spectacular event of bird migration.

This year International Migratory Bird Day is focusing on stopover sites that help migratory birds along their journey north. Lake Erie Bluffs is a great stopover for many bird species just passing through. The Bluffs has great habitat that provides food and shelter for birds to rest in after a long day or night's journey. It also has the added bonus of being right on the shore of Lake Erie. The obstacle of the lake forces birds to refuel for a day or two before continuing on to Canada. This gives birders just a little more time to observe these amazing feathered creatures.

We welcome new birders, families, and anyone else looking to learn about birds and how to get started birding. There will be informational booths, bird activities and games, bird hikes and live birds. Participants can warm up with an optional morning bird walk at 9 a.m. The rest of the festivities will then kick off at 1 p.m. **Pre-registration required. Register at Lakemetroparks.com or call 440-358-7275.**

FREE, Saturday, May 13, 1-4 p.m., Lake Erie Bluffs- Lane Rd.



The 2017 Green Energy Ohio Tour has moved.

Instead of a September event, it is now **Friday, Saturday & Sunday June 16, 17 & 18th, 2017**

GEO is the Ohio Chapter of the American Solar Energy Society (ASES) - GEO's 15th 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 2017 Tour.

DESIGN YOUR OWN TOUR HERE:
<http://www.greenenergyohio.org/ost/search.cf?m?yr=2017>

(Editor's note: My favorite site is our very own Tom Rapini's house in Mentor. Large solar installation, ground source heat pump and usually a collection of EVs to tour. A hidden gem in our own backyard!)



BLACKBROOK ANNUAL SPRING BIRD WALKS - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DATES: SUNDAYS
 APRIL 16, 23, 30
 MAY 7, 14, 21
 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. If you need more info, contact Dan Donaldson at danook057@yahoo.com. Come on out of hibernation and walk with us!

Mentor Marsh Bald Eagle Fest, Sunday, May 7, 12-5 p.m.

Celebrate bald eagles at our annual open house from noon to 5pm. Register for a guided hike to view our Marsh Eagle nest at 12:30, 1:30, 2:30 or 3:30. Reservations required for hikes. Join in hands-on activities to learn about eagles, take part in crafts, a silent auction, visit conservation partners' exhibits and watch live animal programs. Food is available for purchase.

Programs are a go in all but severe weather, so please come prepared for the weather conditions. Reservations are requested for all programs and can be made by calling the Nature Center at 440-257-0777 or emailing rdonaldson@cmnh.org.

BLACKBROOK AUDUBON SOCIETY
PO Box 1306
Mentor, OH 44061-1306

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

Mary Ann Wagner - President
Bruce Roberts - Editor

If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in. - Rachel Carson

