



## Climate Change & the Paris Accord

by Chris Moran

On Earth Day, April 22, 2016 at a United Nations ceremony 175 countries signed the Paris Agreement, including the United States, China & India, major emitters. The signatories set a record for the highest number of countries signing an international agreement on its opening day.

Each country has pledged to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by Intended Nationally Determined Contributions. The United States INDC is a 26–28% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 measured against the country's 2005 level. The message of the Paris Agreement includes the need for a transition to large scale deployment of renewable energy.

According to Audubon's 2014

*Birds and Climate Change Report* climate change is the single greatest threat to North American birds. Half of North American bird species could lose more than half of their current ranges by 2080 due to rising temperatures.

Recently Audubon adopted a Strategic Plan 2016–2020. One of the conservation priorities is Climate Change and Audubon work to protect species threatened by climate change. Through the Important Bird Area program, and identifying bird strongholds, Audubon aims to protect habitats birds need to survive in a changing climate. Audubon will advocate for public policy changes at the local, state and federal levels and engage Audubon members to support state and local efforts to lower carbon emissions.

Speak up for action on climate change and speak up for birds. What's good for birds is good for people. Support climate action, speak with others and use social networks to speak up for action on climate change.

For more information:  
[www.parisagreement.org](http://www.parisagreement.org)  
& [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)



Audubon's climate model projects that the Mississippi Kite will lose 88 percent of its current summer range by 2080. Photo: Jerry Oldenettel / Flickr Creative Commons

## Education

### 2016 ASO Bird Course

October 16th, 23rd & 30th

Hone your birding and identification skills by registering for the 30th annual Audubon Birding Course. Our local chapter of the Audubon Society (ASO) has been sponsoring this class since 1987. The three-week course will be held on three consecutive Sunday mornings. This year's dates are; October 16th, October 23rd and October 30th. The father-son team of Jay Stenger and Jack Stenger will again be this year's instructors. Both Jay and Jack are well known and exceptionally knowledgeable birders. Jay has been an instructor for this course since its inception in 1987.

The course is held at the Audubon House which is located in Groesbeck at 3398 W. Galbraith Road,

just a couple of minutes from the Cross County Highway.

Each class will begin at 8 a.m. with a casual classroom session, featuring a continental breakfast. The classroom sessions will be followed by a field trip to a local hot spot, usually wrapping up about 1 p.m. The locations will be determined by current birding conditions and the interests of the participants.

Through discussions, visual and audio presentations and field observations, the course will particularly focus on sharpening identification skills. But the course will offer much more than that. When, where and how to find birds in our area is also prioritized. Other course topics will include migration, bird abundance and distribution, habitat,

conservation, local hotspots, and birding equipment and resources. The setting is informal and questions are encouraged. Jay and Jack also infuse a lot of fun, levity and enthusiasm throughout.

This course is geared towards all birding levels. While mid-level birders will likely gain the most from this course, most birders, beginners and experienced alike, will find that this course will help hone their ID skills and add to their knowledge of local birds. Over 400 area birders have taken this course over the years and have found it entertaining and informative. The course is open to everyone, including older kids if accompanied by an adult. Binoculars are required and a field guide will be useful to refer to in class and in the field. If you do not have a pair of binoculars the ASO can lend you a pair during the course.

Advance registration is required. Course fees are \$15 for ASO members and \$30 for non-members which include a year's membership in ASO. The course will be limited to a maximum of 25 participants. To register, please send your check payable to "ASO" to: ASO Bird Course, Audubon House, 3398 W. Galbraith Road, Cincinnati, OH, 45239. If you have any questions call the Audubon House at 741-SWAN or email Jay Stenger at [jaystenger@cinci.rr.com](mailto:jaystenger@cinci.rr.com).

## Programs

The Audubon Society of Ohio will not be scheduling any programs during the month of July or August. Please join us again in September when our regular monthly meetings will resume.

## Field Trips (contributed by Jay Stenger)

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### Sunday, July 17th

8 a.m.

**Theme:** Grassland Birds

**Location:** Fernald Nature Preserve

**Leader:** Brian Wulker, (513) 405-8373, bdwulker@gmail.com

**Meet:** 8 a.m. in the Fernald Visitor Center Parking Lot

Fernald Preserve has a great diversity of habitats that include grassland, weedy fields, marshes, ponds, savannah, woodland, pine plantings and riparian corridor all of which attract a great number of birds and other wildlife. Much of the 1,050 acres at Fernald Preserve is open country. While this will be a general birding field trip our focus will be the grasslands and successional areas found at the preserve and the specialized species of birds that use those habitats.

Our leader, Brian Wulker, is a very skilled and knowledgeable birder and is now on the staff of Fernald Preserve. Brian knows the area inside and out so we can be sure we won't miss much. Brian plans to spend the morning covering a number of sections of the preserve, so this trip will consist of a good

amount of walking roadsides and trails, but the terrain is relatively flat and even. This trip will end by noon.

Due to the grassland and open habitats at Fernald a number of species of birds that are found there in decent numbers are scarce or absent from many other areas of the tri-state. Some of the species we expect to see include Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Eastern Kingbird, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat and Orchard Oriole. There is even a good chance for both Sedge Wren and Marsh Wren. Henslow's Sparrows have been reported nearby and if time permits Brian may make a side trip to look for them. As I said before, Fernald offers a diversity of other habitats and Brian won't ignore any other birds or wildlife we find as we move about the area.

Restrooms and water are available at the Visitor Center. This is the middle of summer so we can expect the day to be hot. Sunscreen, insect repellent and carrying your own water will make for a more comfortable trip. If you expect to see birds you

will need binoculars. Feel free to contact Brian if you have any questions.

**Directions:** Fernald Preserve is located in Northwestern Hamilton County. The entrance is located on Wiley Road about ¼ of a mile west of State Route 128. Follow the entrance road to where it ends at the Visitor Center.

**Use this link for further directions:** [http://www.lm.doe.gov/Fernald/Visitors\\_Center/Directions.pdf](http://www.lm.doe.gov/Fernald/Visitors_Center/Directions.pdf)

**Visit the Fernald Preserve website at:** [http://www.lm.doe.gov/Fernald/Visitors\\_Center/Visitors\\_Center.pdf](http://www.lm.doe.gov/Fernald/Visitors_Center/Visitors_Center.pdf)

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### Saturday, July 23rd

8 a.m.

**Theme:** Herps (Reptiles & Amphibians)

**Location:** Spring Valley Wildlife Area

**Leader:** Ryan Jorgensen, (630) 333-2631, jorgenrm@mail.uc.edu

**Meet:** 8 a.m. in the main Parking lot at Spring Valley Wildlife Area. (See directions below).

What are herps some of you might ask? Herpetology is the study of reptiles and

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amphibians and herpetologists are those who study them. So herps has become the colloquial term or slang name that is now widely used by those on the inside to refer to reptiles and amphibians. Really, I'm not making this up.

Regardless, the theme of this field trip is reptiles and amphibians. To refresh your memory this group of animals is divided into reptiles (crocodilians, snakes, turtles and lizards) and amphibians (frogs, toads and salamanders). Short on crocs and gators, our region is represented by everything else and it's these critters that we are going to try and find on this field trip.

Our chances of success are greatly improved by having Ryan Jorgensen as our field trip leader. Ryan is an expert herpetologist and avid naturalist. Ryan is about to complete his Masters degree in Biological Science at UC where he is specializing in herpetology. His research is on snakes and particularly their muscular activity during locomotion.

Ryan suggested Spring Valley WA as our venue for this trip because he thought it would

have more herp diversity at this season than some closer locations. Many of us know Spring Valley Wildlife Area (SVWA) as a great birding area and in fact our Audubon Society has conducted at least one field trip there annually, usually birding, going back since I can remember. But the diverse habitats found in this 842 acre wildlife area are also perfect for herps. The shallow lake with dense emergent vegetation, the extensive marsh, the shallow Little Miami River, the wooded riparian bottoms and hardwood hillsides and dense brushy edges all contribute to a perfect habitat for a diversity of herp species.

Ryan plans to spend the morning walking the loop trail investigating and probing all the hidden spots where our subjects may be hiding. While there are never any guarantees, Ryan knows how to find herps so expectations are high. Ryan will most likely find or see several species of herps including snakes, skinks, turtles, frogs, toads and salamanders and believes that finding ten or more species is a reasonable goal. And he will likely catch

a few to boot. SVWA is also famous as one of the few places in Ohio that the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake is found. Ryan told me he saw one on his last visit to SVWA (as of this writing).

This trip will consist totally of walking the loop trail around the marsh which is a little over two miles long. But walking will be leisurely and over flat terrain with lots of stops to view wildlife. Parts of the trails may be damp or wet, so waterproof footwear is advised. Binoculars will aid you in viewing wildlife and are also advised. To make your trip more comfortable we suggest bringing water, sun screen, insect repellent and a hat. There are no restrooms available at SVWA, but there is plenty of privacy in the woods. This trip is expected to end around noon. So why not come out and join Ryan for what should prove to be a unique field trip and a lot of fun. If you have any questions feel free to contact Ryan.

**Directions:** To get to Spring Valley Wildlife Area from Cincinnati, take I-71 north from its intersection with I-275 for about 11 miles to SR 48 (exit # 28, Lebanon).

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Go north on SR 48 for about 5.5 miles to US 42. Turn right onto US 42 and go north for 12.6 miles (going past Waynesville/SR/73) to Roxanna New Burlington Road. There is a small SVWA sign before your turn. Turn right onto Roxanna New Burlington Road. Cross the Little Miami River Bridge and go 1.5 miles to Pence Jones Road and turn right. Follow Pence Jones Road for 0.7 mile to a T intersection. Turn right and follow this road 0.5 mile until it ends in the Spring Valley WA parking lot. Look for Ryan in the parking lot which should be pretty empty that time of day. From the intersection of I-275 and I-71 allow yourself at least 40 minutes.

**The ODNR Spring Valley WA website (includes a map):**  
<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/springvalley>

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**Saturday, August 6th**  
**8 a.m.**

**Theme:** Prairie Plants in Bloom & Butterflies

**Location:** Miami Whitewater Forest, Shaker Trace

**Co-leader:** Jim Mundy, (513) 748-9003, [jmmundy5@gmail.com](mailto:jmmundy5@gmail.com)

**Co-leader:** Ned Keller, (513) 349-3369, [nedkeller49@gmail.com](mailto:nedkeller49@gmail.com)

**Meet:** 8 a.m. in the Baughman Road Parking Lot.  
(See directions below).

The focus of this trip will be blooming prairie wildflowers and butterflies. In 1992, Great Parks, aka the Hamilton County Park District, began a native prairie and wetland restoration project of several hundred acres at Miami Whitewater Forest. The project has been a great success and today over 500 acres of a native grassland and wetland community is preserved. Often referred to as the Miami Whitewater wetlands, the entire complex is officially named Shaker Trace and represents the largest wetland/grassland complex in Hamilton County. Late summer is a great time to see these prairie plants in bloom in a stunning array of colors. It's also happens to be a great time to see a diversity of butterflies.

Identifying all of these plants and butterflies can be a challenge. But we have two more than able leaders to help us in that regard, Jim Mundy (Preserves) and Ned Keller (President), both of whom are current board members of our

Audubon chapter.

Jim is recently retired from the Hamilton County Park District where he worked for almost 30 years in the Stewardship Department. Many of those years were spent working on the Shaker Trace project. Jim is a skilled botanist and overall naturalist. Ned will modestly say that he is no expert on botany or butterflies but he is very knowledgeable on both subjects. He is also an expert birder so we should have things pretty well covered on this field trip.

The plan is to take a leisurely morning walk exploring the Shaker Trace complex with lots of stops to look at and identify plants, especially the prairie blooms, and butterflies and birds and for that matter any other aspects of nature we come across.

This trip will end around noon. Walking will be slow and level but we will be on our feet for 3 to 4 hours. Some places are likely to be damp as we will at times walk along a marsh. To make your trip more comfortable we suggest bringing water, sun screen, insect repellent and if you have any, binoculars. Restrooms

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are available in other areas of the park but there are none at Shaker Trace. A Hamilton County Park Motor Vehicle Permit is required (\$3 daily, \$10 annual). Feel free to contact Jim or Ned if you have any questions.

**Directions:** Take I-74 west to the Dry Fork Road exit # 3. Turn right onto Dry Fork Road (north) and go 2.2 miles to New Haven Road. Bear right (east) onto New Haven Road and go 0.8 mile to Oxford Road. Turn left onto Oxford Road and then immediately left again onto Baughman Road. Go 0.7 mile and look for the gravel parking lot on the right side (north) of the road just after passing the Bike/Hike Trail crosswalk.

**For a Park map and other information visit the Miami Whitewater Forest website at:** <http://www.greatparks.org/parks/miami-whitewater-forest>

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**Saturday, August 20th  
8 a.m.**

**Theme:** Grassland Birds & Early Fall Migration

**Location:** Highland Stone Quarry & Rocky Fork State Park

**Leader:** Bill Stanley, (513) 324-2796, [tyrannus@fuse.net](mailto:tyrannus@fuse.net)

**Meet:** 8 a.m. at the Marathon Gas & Food Mart in Fayetteville, Ohio, located on the northwest corner of the US 50 & SR 68 intersections in Fayetteville. (See directions below).

If you have never been to these locations you are in for a surprise. Rocky Fork Lake and State Park is probably the least visited of our region's State Parks and large reservoirs by local birders. Brookville, Hueston Woods, Caesar Creek and East Fork all get more birding attention. But the Rocky Fork region is equal to and every bit as productive and diverse birding sites as any of these other hotspots. Certainly located on what we consider the periphery of our Greater Cincinnati birding area, it is only about 43 miles east of Milford and no more distant than some of the previously mentioned locations (depending on your starting point).

Before you get to Rocky Fork, about 30 miles east of Milford and one mile south of US 50, there are several old quarry's and gravel pits (Highland Stone) that are filled with water creating several large lakes. These lakes are

surrounded by grassy fields and brushy spots, plunked right down in the middle of farm country. The gravel roads are quiet and seldom used. The bird life here is outstanding and a great example of how little known unprotected areas can be magnets for wildlife.

Both of these locations provide excellent birding at any season. Since this trip is scheduled for late summer we don't expect to find too much on the water. But early fall migration is just underway by this date and migrant herons and egrets, shorebirds, terns, ospreys, large numbers of swallows and several species of songbirds will be on the move and possibly seen. It's also a good time of year to find a rarity or two. Nesting Bald Eagles are a daily site at Rocky Fork. But the focus of this trip will be on grassland species. The many grassy weedy fields adjacent to Highland Stone and Rocky Fork Lake are great for a number of grassland species that are scarce to absent over much of our region. Some open country species we expect to find include: Northern Bobwhite, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel, Henslow's Sparrows (large

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numbers at Rocky Fork), Grasshopper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows and Bobolink among others.

Our trip leader, Bill Stanley, is a very skilled and veteran birder who knows these areas very well. We will meet Bill at the Fayetteville Marathon Station (see directions below) and caravan from there. Bill will lead us to the Highland Stone Pits, about a 14 minute drive, where we will spend some time birding along the quiet roads. From there Bill will lead us to Rocky Fork Lake SP, about a 20 minute drive. Rocky Fork Lake and its environs are quite large, so Bill will lead us to several spots around the lake to maximize our birding. Expect a bit of driving interspersed with several short walks.

Bill figures this trip will run a bit past noon, or even longer if the birding is good. After the trip is “over,” Bill might make another stop or two on the way home. Remember that it is perfectly fine to leave a field trip any time you like. Walking will be over level ground and at a moderate pace. It can be very hot in late August so you may want to bring water, sun



Grasshopper Sparrow. Photo: dominic sherony (Grasshopper Sparrow) [CC BY-SA 2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

screen, insect repellent and a hat to make your trip more comfortable. There won't be an “official” lunch break but there will be ample time for you to eat so you may want to bring food and drinks along. Bill will plan restroom stops. There is a restroom at our meeting location and several at Rocky Fork. There are no restrooms at Highland Stone. Feel Free to contact Bill if you have any questions.

**Directions to Marathon Gas & Food Mart in Fayetteville, Ohio:** From I-275 at the Milford Parkway/US 50 Exit # 59, take US 50 east for about 20 miles to the intersection of US 68 in Fayetteville,

Ohio. The Marathon Station is located on the NW corner. Meet in the Parking Lot but park away from the front doors if possible.

**Rocky Fork State Park Website:**  
<http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/rockyfork>

**Rocky Fork State Park Map:**  
[http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/parks/PDFs/parks/Maps/Rocky\\_Fork/rockyforkparkmap.pdf](http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/parks/PDFs/parks/Maps/Rocky_Fork/rockyforkparkmap.pdf)



## Audubon Society of Ohio

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Our mission is to promote the conservation and appreciation of nature for environmental sustainability with a focus on birds, through habitat protection and education

## Become a Friend of the Audubon Society of Ohio

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Membership form for the Cincinnati Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Enclose a check or money order payable to "ASO."

Membership: \_\_\_ 1 Year (\$15) \_\_\_ Family (\$25) \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Contribution

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