



Passenger Pigeon

Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

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October 2005

October Program

Digital Photography of the Birds of Ohio and Kentucky by Lana Hays

Thursday, October 20, 7:30 p.m.

Digital photography has opened up many opportunities for those interested in Avian photography. Lana Hays will share her experiences over the past three years including how she got started, the equipment used, editing software, internet resources, and what she has learned. There will be a slide presentation of her work to include the shorebirds of Conneaut, grassland species of VOA, warblers of Magee Marsh, and birds from her backyard. A question and answer session will follow.

Lana Hays has been a high school biology teacher for the past 32 years. As an amateur photographer, her initial interest in photography began by creating images that could be used in the classroom. She later photographed sporting events for her school and then her twins as they

grew up. Three years ago she developed an interest in birds and digital photography. Today she travels through Ohio and Kentucky with the purpose of learning the birds, improving her photographic skills, capturing interesting behaviors, and creating images that can be used in the classroom. She posts her images on the internet and shares them with both Ohio and Kentucky birding organizations.

Entry at Sharon Woods Visitor Center

The meeting will be held at the usual location, the Sharon Woods Visitor Center. Due to security and related insurance concerns the main glass entry doors need to remain locked during our meetings. To enter, please use the wooden door to the right that is on the same wall as the main entry glass doors. Once through this door, enter through the door on the left. Once inside, one can exit through the main entry glass doors.

Alaska 2005 Trip List

Several people have asked for a copy of Jay Lehman's trip list from the last program. He'll have a few copies available this month for anyone who wants one.

Are Your Dues Due?

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2005 - May 2006 birding year, just fill out the form on Page 5 and mail it in. If you've already sent your dues, why not give the form to a birding friend who isn't a member?

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Bird Observing on TOSRV – 2005

contributed by Jim Perry

Just as in previous years, I rode TOSRV, the weekend bicycle Tour Of the Scioto River Valley. It was cloudy and damp at the start in Chillicothe. The duck pond at Youctangee Park had produced an interesting gene study as I saw a family with two kinds of exotic duckling patterns. Many ducks and geese here are partially exotic. The Mute Swan swam elegantly with its wings lifted away from its body. But for the most part, I only hear the birds which I count as I ride along. If I can identify a bird when I hear it, I count it as an observation.

The route between Chillicothe and Portsmouth passes through Ross County, Pike County, and Scioto County. Mentally I think of it as several habitats. There is the city habitat as I pass through Chillicothe, and eventually Waverly, West Portsmouth and Portsmouth. Just outside of Chillicothe on OH 104, it changes to what I call it the woodland river valley habitat. After a few miles, the route rises away from the river to what I call the upland farm plateau; this is along Three Locks Road/OH 335. Then OH 335 descends to river level and enters Waverly where the route connects with OH 104 again, and follows it close to the Scioto River all the way to West Portsmouth. This portion of the route is virtually all woodland river valley habitat. Sometimes the woodland river valley habitat is only on the east side of the road and farm fields are on the west side. Some birds are observed exclusively in one habitat or the other. Other birds are observed mostly in one of the habitats, but not exclusively.

Since I am mostly riding while observing, I probably miss many birds, such as hawks flying above, herons along the river and bird calls I cannot hear clearly. The farm fields sometimes have trapped water in a lower corner with and I try to look for shorebirds, but I usually do not

see any from my bicycle. Also, just outside Portsmouth, there are some mud flats left from construction. Last year this area was completely flooded. This year I saw a shorebird for the first time, a medium silhouette walking knee deep in water and I made a guess that it was a Solitary Sandpiper.

Another influence is where I happen to stop for a rest. This year, I pulled over at the intersection of OH 32, where the Scioto River bends around to within a few feet of OH 104. I began seeing swallows and more swallows. I could have hurried to finish the ride, but the sun was out and the swallows were having fun everywhere so I lingered to watch them. I think the OH 32 bridge over the river is a swallow farm producing lotsa youngsters. They were not the more common barn or tree. They were mostly cliff with some bank and a few rough-winged. One folded its wings close to its body but still used them (like a falcon stoops) to steer it horizontally to catch a bug. Another interesting observation was when they would fold their wings to their body and go into a full stoop, apparently for fun. One flew directly at me and changed direction only about half way across the road.

I consider some birds missing if I do not observe them. This year, some missing birds were kestrels, woodpeckers (other than Red-Bellied), Carolina Wren, gnatcatcher, chickadee, Yellow Throated Vireo and some others. Now that I have done this ride several times, I know where to expect some birds such as buntings which seemed to be less numerous this year. On the other hand, phoebes seemed to be calling more often along the woodland river valley than past years. The thrasher and the mockingbird were within a few minutes of each other in the woodland river valley not far out of West Portsmouth. Weather may influence these anomalies; this year, it rained the night before, as well as occasionally on Saturday, which happens at virtually all TOSRV. Sunday was sunny and good which does not happen often on TOSRV.



*Treasures of the Public Library
An Intimate Afternoon of Audubon*

Presented by
The Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County Foundation

**Sunday, November 6
1:30-3:30 p.m.**

DeVere Burt, wildlife artist and Audubon expert, will talk about Audubon's life in the Ohio Valley, followed by viewing the extremely rare four-volume double elephant folio "Birds of America" in the Library's collection.

Live avian guests courtesy of the **Cincinnati Zoo**.

All guests will be entered into a drawing for a double elephant folio print of the American White Pelican, donated by Princeton Audubon LTD of Princeton, N.J.

Main Library, 800 Vine Street, Huenefeld Tower Room

Contribution \$50 (\$25 for Bird Club members)

Please R.S.V.P. to (513) 369-3166 by October 31

Field Trips

Location: Miami Whitewater Wetlands

Date: Sunday, October 16, 8:00 a.m.

*Leader: Ned Keller, 941-6497,
keller@one.net*

Late migrant passerines, late shorebirds, and early waterfowl are all possible on this trip, but the focus will be on sparrows. Nelson's sharp-tailed have become annual here at the wetlands, and Lincoln's are also expected at this time of year. Most of the winter resident sparrows should also be in by now.

We'll meet at the wetlands parking area. From I-74, take the Dry Fork Road exit, and turn right. Continue past the entrance to Miami-Whitewater at West Road, and stay on Dry Fork until it ends. Then turn right onto New Haven Road. At the first stop sign, turn left onto Oxford Road, and then immediately left again onto Baughman Road. The parking area is on the right side of the road, just past the bike trail crossing.

Location: Muscatatuck NWR

Date: Saturday, Oct. 22, 7:30 a.m.

*Leader: Darlena Graham (859) 581-2227 Work, (859) 341-4893 Home
(call before 8:30 p.m.), email:
darlena@fuse.net*

October is a transitional month where birding is concerned. Representing mid to late fall migration, the earlier neo-tropical songbird migration is winding down as are shorebirds. Late fall migrants and winter resident songbirds and

raptors are arriving and moving through. Waterfowl migration is just now building up steam. It is a diverse time of year and a wide variety of species are possible, and it's also a good time of year to find a rarity. All of this is happening during one of the most pleasant months, against a backdrop of glorious fall color, crisp air and cool temperatures.

So, what better place to go birding at this season than in the 7,800 acres of beautiful and diverse habitats of Muscatatuck NWR. Woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, open water and pine stands are in abundance at this quiet refuge and should harbor the great variety of birds that can be found at this season. A long sparrow list is expected and there is always the possibility of a rare (Le Conte's or Nelson's Sharp-tailed ?) species. So come on out and join Darlena, who knows the area better than anyone, and enjoy what should be a glorious autumn day of birding. The trip will continue past noon, so prepare accordingly (food, drinks). Restrooms are available and there will be a bit of walking, but slow paced over even terrain. If you have any questions feel free to contact Darlena (before 8:30 p.m.).

We'll meet at the Tanners Creek Boat Ramp. From the Cincinnati area, take I-275 west to the Lawrenceburg, Indiana (The Oxbow) exit. Take US 50 west, through Lawrenceburg. You will cross the US 50 bridge over Tanners Creek. Approximately 3/4 mile past the bridge, turn left onto a paved road which will take you down to the boat ramp. This road is called either Ratliff Dr. or Reese Dr., depending on which map you are using. Watch for boat ramp signs. At this intersection, there is a McDonalds on the left (south) side of US 50, and a Steak & Shake and United Dairy Farmer across the street on the right (north) side of US 50. From the boat ramp, we will caravan/car pool to Muscatatuck NWR, which is located about 1 hour west, along US 50, just east of Seymour Indiana.

A Special Day at The Wilds

We have a unique opportunity to visit The Wilds this winter. Every year the Cincinnati Bird Club conducts a winter field trip to The Wilds. It is always a great trip, as there are more winter raptors here than any other location in our region. We can count on seeing many Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers, and Short-eared Owls. Golden Eagle and Prairie Falcon have been seen in past years.

For those who are not familiar with The Wilds, it is a wildlife conservation and education organization, connected with various zoos and universities, located in east-central Ohio just east of Zanesville. Many species of rare and unusual mammals are kept here for research and reproduction purposes. On any given day, you may see zebras, giraffes, rhinoceros, przewalski's wild horses, persian onagers, bison and fifteen or more kinds of deer and antelopes, plus many other animals.

This year we have the opportunity to not only view The Wilds from outside the fence, but also to go inside. We will look for hawks in areas generally closed to the public and be given a close up tour of the facility. We will go into the facilities, and see the animals up close. It will be a winter safari, hawk watch and a behind the scenes tour all in one. It is well beyond what the normal visitor experiences. We will need to pay The Wilds about \$15 per person so that they can have a guide on hand. This is a unique opportunity and few visitors to the area get to see the behind the scenes look we will have. I have taken this tour and I can tell you that you will not forget it. We will probably be able to pet baby rhinos on this trip! We will see giraffes at arms length away! The date has not yet been set, but it will be in either January, February or March. I need no firm commitment from anyone just yet, but I do need anyone interested in taking such a trip to email me, so I can coordinate with The Wilds. They have a group size limit. Email Joe Bens at jbens@cinci.rr.com if interested in this unique trip.

Bird Club Membership

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

eMail _____

_____ Individual \$12.00 _____ Family \$15.00 _____ Student \$6.00

Make your check payable to Cincinnati Bird Club, and mail to:
 Peg Gatch, 11 Mound Avenue, Milford, OH 45150

<http://cincinnatibirds.com/goodbird/sighting.php>

Recent Bird Sightings

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522-4245

President:
Jay Lehman
527-4701

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Peggy Gatch
831-3378

Programs:
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527-4701

Newsletter:
Ned Keller
941-6497

Bird Club Officers

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