



# Passenger Pigeon

Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

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April 2006

## April Program

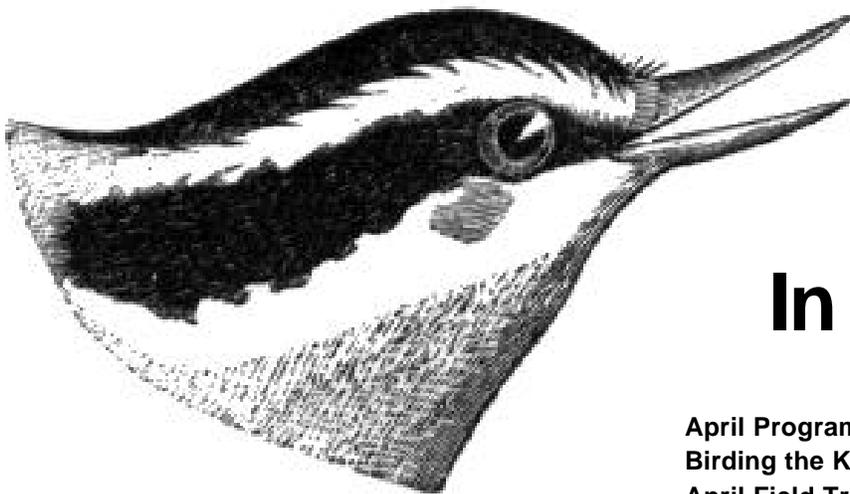
### The Nuthatches of North America

Thursday April 20, 7:00 p.m.

Our April program will feature longtime Cincinnati Bird Club member Frank Renfrow with a presentation on the nuthatches of North America. Frank and Veronica Renfrow have traveled through much of the Southeastern United States documenting range expansion and breeding behavior in both Red-breasted and Brown-headed Nuthatches. Frank's work with nuthatches has resulted in the publication of two articles in the national journal *North American Birds*, as well as numerous articles in state birding journals including the *Ohio Cardinal*, *Kentucky Warbler*, Tennessee's *Migrant*, Georgia's *Oriole* and the

Carolinan's *Chat*. Frank will take us on a travelogue adventure to a number of scenic areas within the lower elevations of the Appalachians. Trips to the Red River Gorge, Hocking Hills, the Big South Fork and the Chattooga River include photographic documentation of first state nest records for the Red-breasted Nuthatch in Kentucky, Georgia and South Carolina, as well as first nest records for Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau and Southern Ohio. Frank will also delve into the breeding habits of White-breasted Nuthatches within our own Cincinnati area as well as those of Pygmy Nuthatches of the Laguna Mountains in Southern California. Featured will be unique serial action shots of some unusual nuthatch behaviors including possible tool use, nest defense displays, fledging and nest hole modification strategies.

Please mark your calendars for the third Thursday of the month, April 20. We will meet at the Sharon Woods Visitor Center at 7:00.



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## Birding the Klamath Basin

*contributed by Darlena Graham*

I recently returned from a birding trip to the Klamath basin. We were based in Klamath Falls, Oregon and birded down into Northern California. The area is just incredible. I'm amazed that it gets so little print among birders. It is famous for its waterfowl and raptors. I was actually targeting the White-headed and Three-toed Woodpecker, Mountain Quail, and Blue Grouse. It was not to be but the trip was wonderful anyway.

There were so many geese, most of them, incredibly, Ross's, that we were just overcome. There was a total of easily 100,000 Ross's, Greater White-fronted, Snows, Canadas, and Cackling, up close and personal. One lady foolishly leaned out of the window to take a picture and soon regretted it. She was not amused. There were also huge numbers of ducks including a Eurasian Widgeon and Barrow's Goldeneye. The only Swans we found were Tundra Swans but one was the Siberian subspecies, the Bewick's Swan and that was nice. It's in the bank as a potential life bird in case of a future split.

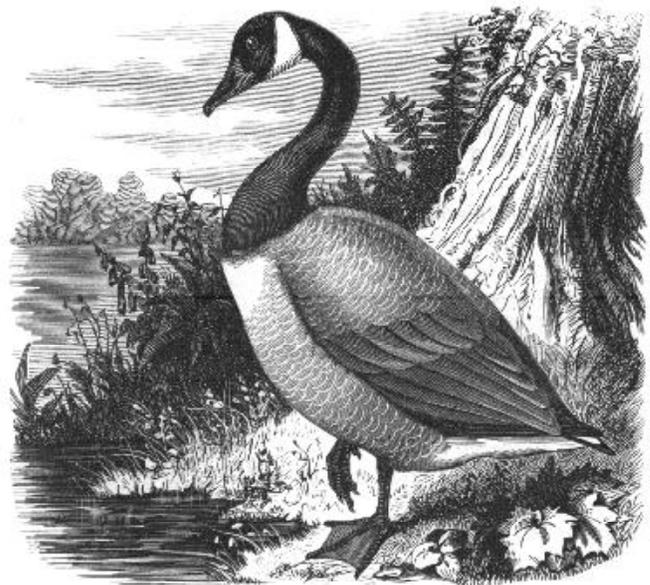
The raptors were out of sight. Easily 100 Bald Eagles, 20 Golden Eagles, 6 Prairie Falcons, 10-20 Ferruginous Hawks, numerous Rough-legged Hawks, and we forgot to try to count Red-tails. There had to have been hundreds of them, and 1 Barn Owl scowling at us from a cavity in a lava cliff. No wonder they were in such great supply. The fields were swarming with poor little California Ground Squirrels, dinner afoot.

Sadly we also had snow. One day was supposed to warm up and rain. We hoped it would melt the snow on the roads into the mountains. Sadly, instead of warming, the temperature dropped and the precipitation was

snow. We could not get into the mountains to get the birds that would be there including the Mountain Quail and woodpeckers. We were actually able to reach a certain level but with very little luck. One place had a sign that a Cougar had been spotted and we found paw prints but no big cat. We did see Mule Deer, Black-tail Deer and Pronghorn. It was really fun being in an area where almost every song bird was a novelty from the Black-billed Magpie to Mountain and Western Bluebirds.

This is the area where the farmers and ecologists clashed a couple of years ago over the need for water for irrigation. I felt very conflicted. I can sympathize with the farmers' need as well as the need for the food supply but seeing the wonderful wetlands I feel it would be a terrible shame to damage them. It is an area where poverty could be just around the corner although the people were cheerful and friendly. There are no easy answers for this problem.

I'll have to go back in the summertime to get my target birds.



## April Field Trips

### Gilmore Ponds

Thursday, April 13

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Leader: Mike Busam

mjb@schaffer.cc

This will primarily be a trip for American Woodcock, but who knows what else we might find. We'll look around at whatever is there until dusk or so, and hopefully around 8:00 p.m. or so the Woodcocks will start displaying. Hopefully!

Meet at the Symmes Road parking lot. From I-275, take the Winton Road exit and go north. Stay on Winton all the way to the parking lot (although it changes names several times: it becomes Gilmore Road just north of I-275, then Holden Blvd after it crosses Route 4, and then Berk Blvd. as it nears Symmes), which is just north of Symmes.

### Hueston Woods & Environs

Sunday, April 23 2006

Time: 7:30 A.M.

Leader: Jay Stenger

jaystenger@cinci.rr.com

522-8147

While we will of course look at Acton Lake for migrating waterfowl, loons, grebes, gulls, terns and shorebirds, this trip will also focus on finding early to mid-spring migrant songbirds. A variety of raptors should also be seen, including Broad-winged Hawks, accipiters and Osprey. In addition to Hueston Woods, we may also visit a few nearby area "hotspots", such as Indian Creek Preserve and/or Bachelor Woods in hopes of finding a diversity of species. We might even make a run through nearby farmlands to look for pipits and Vesper Sparrows as well.

By this date many of our area's breeding songbirds have returned or will be returning. Some of the species that we expect to find include Pine Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Northern Parula and Louisiana Waterthrush. But there are dozens of other possibilities and we expect a very good day of birding and many firsts of the season. This trip will continue well past noon, so plan accordingly. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Miamitown Park & Ride Lot, located on Rt. 128 at the I-275 Exit # 7 (marked Cleves-Hamilton). We will caravan from there.

### Miami Whitewater Forest

Sunday, April 30, 2006

Time: 8:00 A.M.

Leader: Joe Bens

jbens@cinci.rr.com

353-4229

Spring migration should be well under way, and we expect to find a wide variety of species on this trip. The habitats in this park are diverse, ranging from mature woodlands to wetlands and grasslands and almost everything in between. Joe will probably start the day by looking for resident and migrant warblers and other species in the forested areas of the park. We will then work our way over to the wetlands area of the park, where we hope to find rails, bitterns, shorebirds and other wetland and grassland species. Miami Whitewater Park is one of our areas best birding sites and this is a near peak time for spring migration, so we expect a really great day of birding. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the parks Visitor Center parking lot, which is located near the Mt. Hope Rd. entrance. See the Hamilton County Park District website for a map of the park (<http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/parks/miami.htm>). There is no set end time for this field trip, but it will probably run to about 1:00 P.M. A Park District auto sticker (\$5 annual or \$2 daily) is required.

## 2006 Oxbow Birdathon

*contributed by Jay Stenger, Oxbow Birdathon Committee*

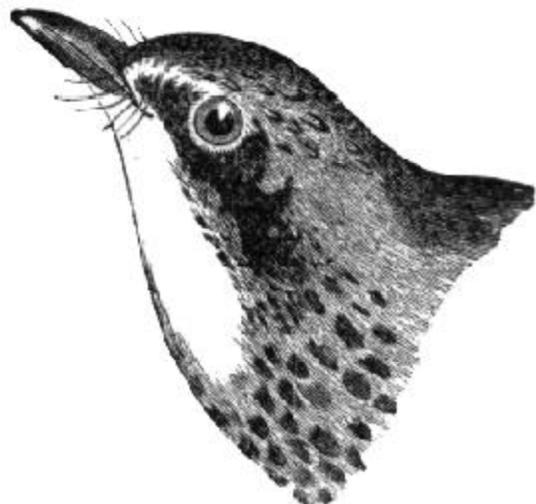
Oxbow Inc. is pleased to announce that once again we are sponsoring the annual Cincinnati Area Birdathon. We are extending to you a personal invitation to participate. As in past years, this fund raising and spring birding event will be held over a two-day period. The event will begin at 5:00 p.m. Friday May 12 and end at 5:00 p.m. Saturday May 13th, during the peak of spring migration, and will culminate in a grand tally pizza party to be held at the Winton Woods Visitor Centre. Over this 24-hour period, teams or individuals will try to find as many species of birds as possible and collect pledges for each species found. Fifty percent of the pledges collected will go to the charity of each team or individuals choice and the other fifty percent will be contributed to Oxbow Inc. to be used specifically for improving bird habitat and birding access in the Oxbow area. All contributions to this event are tax deductible.

We want this to be much more than a friendly birding competition. We see this fund-raising event as a community celebration of local birding and conservation and as an opportunity to raise some much needed funds to begin a number of exciting habitat management and birding accessibility projects we have planned in the Oxbow, as well as to raise funds for other area conservation and environmental groups. This is a chance for organizations and individuals of like mind to come together in camaraderie for a common purpose. There will be several competitive categories one can chose from, or you are welcome to participate as a non-competitor in any manner you would like. The bottom line is that we will raise some money for important causes and have fun doing it while we go birding during a fantastic time of the year. As an avid area birder and conservationist, we really



feel your participation would benefit this event. Bird a lot or a little, raise a lot of money or a little, what's important to us is your presence. We hope you will consider participating with us. More information can be found in the Oxbow Inc. newsletter and on the Oxbow Inc. website [www.oxbowinc.org](http://www.oxbowinc.org).

If you are interested and would like to form a team or register as a participant, volunteer in another capacity, or want further information, feel free to email me at [jaystenger@cinci.rr.com](mailto:jaystenger@cinci.rr.com) or call me at (513) 522-8147.



# Birdathon Participation Form

Oxbow, Inc. wants to have more birdwatchers participate in the Birdathon. While there is a competition for the most species seen in the Birdathon area during the 24 hours of the contest, you don't have to compete at all and can participate as a non-competitive individual or team. There are several categories from which you can choose. You do not even have to leave your own house. Here are some of the categories of competition:

- Most Species by a Team (most overall species by a group)
- Most Species by an Individual (most overall species by an individual)
- Most Species in a Back Yard (most species observed from one yard)
- Most Species One State (most species by state, either Ohio, Indiana or Kentucky)
- Most Species One County (most species in any one county, ex: Hamilton)
- Most Species In One Location (recorded in one defined area, ex: The Oxbow)
- Most Species Non-Fossil Fuel (recorded without using any gasoline)
- Most Species Big Sit (recorded from one fixed 30 x 30 foot spot)
- Most Species Family (most species by a family, parent/guardian and at least one child)
- Most Species Under Age 20 (most species by a group 19 & under, 1 adult allowed)
- Most Funds Raised by a Team
- Most Funds Raised by an Individual
- Most Funds raised by Persons Under 20 Years Old

Remember the purpose of the Birdathon is to raise money for improving Oxbow habitat and Oxbow accessibility projects. The way to do it is to have fun birding!

I want to enter a team (or as an individual) in the Oxbow Birdathon. Please send an entry form to:

Team Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Team Members \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Oxbow, Inc, 9761 Winton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45231

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

## Recent Bird Sightings

Field Trips:  
Jay Stenger  
522-4245

President:  
Jay Lehman  
527-4701

Treasurer:  
Peggy Gatch  
831-3378

Programs:  
Jay Lehman  
527-4701

Newsletter:  
Ned Keller  
941-6497

## Bird Club Officers

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