



The Passenger Pigeon

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

November 2006 Vol 42 No. 8

November Meeting:

Sharon Woods Visitor Center: Thursday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.: "Maslowski's Top 40"

Upcoming Field Trips:

- Hueston Woods State Park & Brookville Lake, Saturday, November 11.
- Summit Lake State Park, Sunday, November 19.
- East Fork State Park, Sunday, November 26.

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Karl Maslowski Remembered

Sadly, this past June 1st, Karl Maslowski passed away. And with his passing, I can't help but feel that the passing of an era also occurred. To Greater Cincinnati birders, naturalists, conservationists, and outdoorsmen, Karl represented our local history. His life encompassed most of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. Karl was birding when the activity was in its infancy, before Roger Tory Peterson had published his first field guide. Karl witnessed and played a large part in those beginnings and the conservationist movement that grew alongside of it. Not only did he do this on our local level, but he also contributed greatly on a national scale through his travels, films, photography, writings, and records.

Karl was born in Atlanta, Georgia on Febru-

ary 5, 1913 and moved with his family to Cincinnati the following year. Over the next 93 years Karl devoted his life to his family, his community and to natural history. And over his long life, Karl was *involved*. It would be difficult to find one Cincinnati area based conservation or natural history organization that he did not in some way contribute to. We knew him as an avid outdoorsman who loved to hunt and fish, as the godfather if you will, of our birding community, as a conservationist who put his time, energy and name behind so many causes. We knew him as a nationally renowned wildlife photographer and filmmaker and were proud to claim his worldwide fame as our own. We knew him as the "Naturalist Afield" whose column we read every week.

We also knew Karl as a founding father and the first president of our own Cincinnati Bird Club. He, and a small core of other notable birders, began our organization in 1947. The Cincinnati Bird Club and the NAS Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count always held a special place in Karl's heart.

Karl served as a combat motion picture cameraman for the Army Air Corps during WWII. In 1947, after the war ended, Karl and others organized the CBC and their first order of business was to resurrect and reorganize the Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count. Karl was proud of the fact that since 1947 he had attended a record 59 consecutive Cincinnati Christmas Bird Counts. It will be with a special sadness that our 60th count will have Karl present in spirit only.

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 The month of November was always Maslowski month for the CBC. In the early days, Karl started a long running holiday tradition where he and his family hosted the November meeting, presented the program and provided, at his cost, trays of fresh baked doughnuts, apple cider and hot chocolate for refreshments. For years he hosted this program at his home, but as the CBC membership grew and the program's popularity soared, the location was moved to the Founders Room of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History on Gilbert Ave. The business portion of this holiday meeting was always the planning of the upcoming Christmas bird count. When it became a little too much for Karl to handle, his son Steve, and daughter-in-law Karen, graciously continued the tradition for years. But while the Cincinnati Bird Club can proudly claim Karl as our own, it's a distinction that must be shared with the myriad of other individuals and organizations that called Karl

family, friend and benefactor.

Karl grew up in then semi-rural Avondale during the 1920's. It was here that his interest in nature and the outdoors was awakened as he pursued hunting, fishing and bird watching as pastimes. In 1928 when Karl was 15, Christian Goetz, president of the Christian Moerlein Brewing Co and a duck hunter befriended him. During the spring Karl helped Mr. Goetz band birds. Mr. Goetz bought a camera for the project, eventually turned it over to Karl and a career was born. While attending evening college at the University of Cincinnati, Karl presented a short program about local wildlife, using slides and short movies. This led to his instructor hiring him to produce a series of wildlife programs for the university and subsequently teaching natural history and birding courses at the UC evening college.

From these beginnings Maslowski Wildlife Productions was born and continues today through his sons Steve and Dave. In the late

1930's Karl was one of the first to begin using color film. He photographed birds and wildlife here in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana, but also throughout North America and in a number of exotic locations such as the Caribbean, Africa and the Arctic. Thousands of his writings and photographs have appeared in books and magazines including *National Geographic*, *Life*, *Sports Afield*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. It would be hard to find a prominent birding magazine that hasn't used a Maslowski photo. He produced more than 70 documentaries, contributed to several Walt Disney nature films and the TV program *Wild America*. Karl gave hundreds of nationwide lectures, accompanied by his motion pictures, for the National Audubon Society, the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian. For more than 50 years, from 1937 through 1988, Karl wrote the weekly column entitled "Naturalist Afield" for the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. His tremendous body of work has inspired generations and countless individuals and has

brought to many an increased awareness of the wonders of birds and our natural world.

When the workday was over Karl didn't stop. His love of nature led to a strong environmental ethic and he believed in grass roots conservation. He served on the boards of many natural history and conservation organizations. Karl was a past president and long time board member of our local Audubon Chapter. He was a founder and longtime board member of Oxbow, Inc. He was a founder of The Cincinnati Nature Center and served for many years on their board of directors; he also served many years on the board of directors of The Cincinnati Museum of Natural History.

Karl received many awards for his work, including the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology Arthur Allen Award in 1978; Miami University granted him an honorary doctorate in 1977 and he was inducted into the Outdoor Writers of America "Circle of Chiefs" in 1983.

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Karl was a local treasure and a great resource. As I mentioned before, Karl was our birding community's unofficial historian. There wasn't much that went on that Karl didn't know about or couldn't remember. He was birding before most of us were born, and in some cases, before our parents were born. He first birded in the Ox-bow in 1929! Of course it wasn't called the Ox-bow back then, but "Lawrenceburg Pond," according to Karl. He kept many records and had a great memory. When a historical question arose, Karl was your man. For instance, in 2005 a Cincinnati Museum specimen of a Black Rail (and another in the Ohio State collection) was being examined. The birds were dated 1928 and labeled as being from the Ross Lake Swamp. The question arose, where is the Ross Lake Swamp? Karl remembered the birds well. He remembered they were collected by Ralph Kellogg and re-cataloged by Charles Dury and himself around 1928-1929. He remembered the Ross Lake Swamp as being in the Car-

thage/Woodlawn area and being a part of the old canal system. He remembered it was located somewhere behind the old Longview Hospital, probably under I-75 near Paddock Rd.

But all of his achievements and accomplishments aside, Karl was first and foremost our friend. To many of us Karl was an icon, a legend if you will. It would have been easy to be in awe of him. That is, until you first met him. The term gentleman is often used, but in Karl's case it is the definition of the man. Karl was a straightforward genuine individual who put on no airs, although he could have rightfully done so if he wished. He had a humorous nature and sharp wit and was always a pleasure to be around. I can imagine him reading this remembrance and in his modest and droll manner telling me I've gone way overboard. But I haven't. Karl was a born storyteller and he had the stories to tell, accumulated over a lifetime of adventures. He made you feel he was always glad to see

you. Karl loved people and people loved Karl.

Karl would also be proud to say he was a family man. He survived his beloved wife Edna and his daughter Karla. He leaves his sons and daughters-in-law Peter & Linda, Steve and Karen and Dave, and his six grandchildren Elizabeth, Jennifer, Laurel, Jed, Holly and Robin. To all of you the CBC offers our heartfelt condolences and hope that our admiration for Karl helps in some way to ease your loss.

Karl was a large part of the fabric of our birding community over the last 75 years and he won't be forgotten. His legacy will continue in his photography and films. It will continue with future generations that study the birds of Ohio and regularly see the name Karl Maslowski attached to a particular record or specimen. But mostly it will continue in the hearts of his family and all of us who knew, loved, and admired him.

— Jay Stenger

**November Bird Club
Program: "Maslowski's
Top 40" Thursday, November 16. 7:00 p.m.**

This will be a digital program of Steve Maslowski's favorite shots from the Maslowski files. Every picture tells a story, and Steve will tell the story behind the pictures, as he recounts memorable experiences with animals, cameras and the world at large.

For those who are new members, the Maslowski family is world renowned in the photography business. It all started and continues here in Cincinnati! Maslowski photos continue to appear in national wildlife and bird publications and magazines, and their videos have appeared on public TV. This started with Karl Maslowski, and that tradition is being continued by his sons, Steve and Dave.

We haven't had a Maslowski presentation in about two years, so come and enjoy world class photography.

— Jay Lehman
CBC President

Development Plan Pitched for Burnet Woods

The integrity of Burnet Woods as a high-quality birding location is in some danger.

The Uptown Consortium, composed of the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati Zoo, Tri-Health (Good Samaritan Hospital), Children's Hospital, and the Health Alliance (Christ, Jewish and University Hospitals) is an organization set up to "define a coordinated development agenda" for the Clifton, Fairview, Corryville and Avondale neighborhoods. This agenda includes a "Parks and Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan," including a Master Plan for the "strategic redevelopment" of Burnet Woods and other area parks. It is Burnet Woods, however, that is targeted for the most extensive development.

The Consortium and Cincinnati Park Board recently held an open house to let the public view and comment on preliminary Master Plans. You can still view older versions of the Master Plan (described as low, moderate, and significant impact)

on the Consortium's web site:

<http://www.uptownconsortium.org>

This web site also provides information on how you can still offer your comments on the Master Plan.

The team of designers have tried to balance different interests and concerns, soliciting comments from across the spectrum from "environmental" types concerned with preserving bird habitat and removal of invasive plant species to interests that want to put more parking, more through traffic, various concessions such as boat rental, and a storm water treatment facility in the park.

Features of the plan that might raise birders' concerns include road and traffic control modifications that might significantly increase the traffic in the park, a coffee shop and 100-seat lakeside restaurant that would increase traffic and other disturbances near the heart of the park, and expansion of the Frisbee golf course

to cover an area about twice its current size.

There are other aspects of the plan that could be very good for birds and birding in the park. According to the plan the road that currently separates the two largest stands of trees will be re-routed, and the two stands known as the upper and lower woods would be allowed to grow together. Also, following repair of the sewers, small ponds would be installed along the ravine that parallels Jefferson Avenue.

Please visit the Consortium's web site (the most recent plan will be posted there soon) and let the Consortium hear your opinion of the plan. At the open house the planners were very helpful in explaining the plan and seemed quite receptive to comments, suggestions and criticisms. The more people who speak up for keeping the park a great place for birding, the more prominent those features will be in the final plan.

— Steve Pelikan

November Field Trips:

November represents the peak of the fall waterfowl migration and a number of other late fall migrants. The general focus of our November field trips will be on finding waterfowl, loons, grebes, gulls and other waterbirds. It is a good time of year to see raptors as well. Winter resident songbirds and late fall migrants will be other species we find. Sandhill Cranes will certainly be found on at least one of these trips. Guaranteed or your money back! November is also a great time of year for finding rarities, so who knows what else might be in store. This type of birding is much better with a scope, but if you don't have one don't let that stop you. CBC members are well known for generously sharing their scopes and I only charge a quarter per peek. All of November's field trips are mostly caravaning/auto-tours, meaning that we will for the most part drive from spot to spot, stopping at various vantage points to scan the lakes. Other habitats won't be ig-

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nored, but there will be little, if any, hiking. Carpooling is encouraged, but not advised if you are on a schedule or have to be home early.

— Jay Stenger
Field Trip Coordinator

Location: Hueston Woods & Brookville Lake

Date: Saturday, November 11, 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Ned Keller, (513) 941-6497, keller@one.net

Ned's plan is to hit several spots at Brookville Reservoir and then to make the short hop over to Hueston Woods where we will check several spots around Acton Lake. This trip will continue into mid afternoon, so bring your lunch and drinks. Both of these locations are tried and true for attracting waterfowl and waterbirds. The rural countryside surrounding these two large lakes has diverse habitats so we expect to find a lot of different species along the way. We will meet at 8:00 a.m. in the park & ride lot located on S.R. 128, at I-74 exit # 7, marked Cleves-Hamilton and caravan from there. This is the first exit just west of the Great Miami

River. For more info feel free to contact Ned.

Location: Summit Lake State Park

Date: Sunday, November 19, 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Jay Stenger, (513) 522-8147, jaystenger@cinci.rr.com

Summit Lake State Park, located in Henry County, Indiana, about 30 miles north of Brookville Lake, has a well deserved reputation as one of the best waterfowl sites in our region. The entire lake has restricted boat speeds and there is no hunting in the park, so there is minimal disturbance to the birds here. We expect to find good numbers of waterfowl and waterbirds, and in the surrounding open countryside we expect to find raptors, winter residents and late fall migrants associated with that habitat. On our way home we will check the shallows at the north end of Brookville Lake (as its pretty much right on the way), which usually holds a few late season shorebirds and quite often, Sandhill Cranes. This is a joint trip with the local Audubon Society and will continue well into the afternoon, so bring your lunch and

drinks. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. in the park & ride lot located on S. R. 128, at I-74 exit # 7, marked Cleves-Hamilton. We will caravan to Summit Lake from there. Feel free to contact me for more information.

Location: East Fork State Park

Date: Sunday, November 26, 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Bob Foppe, Cell 685-2739,

fopsinc@aol.com
Bob plans to check several vantage points around Harsha Lake for waterfowl, loons, grebes and gulls. East Fork State Park has other varied habitats as well and Bob will select several spots that should produce a number of winter residents and late fall migrants. East Fork has developed quite the reputation for attracting local rarities and there is always a chance this could be the day. This trip probably will end around 1:00 p.m. but it's always a good idea to have your lunch and drink handy if the birding is to good to stop. Meet Bob at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the south swimming beach. Finding him among the sunbathing crowd should not be

too hard at this time and date. To get to the meeting spot from I-275, take exit # 65 (east), S.R. 125 (Beechmont Ave./Ohio Pike) east about 9 miles to Bantam Rd. Turn left to the park entrance and follow the park signs to the swimming beach. For more info don't hesitate to contact Bob.

Life Birds at the Oxbow

David Styer is working on an article for *Wetland Matters*, the newsletter of Oxbow, Inc., and is asking for our help. The subject of his article is life birds that people have seen in the Oxbow area, which would include the Oxbow proper, Shawnee Lookout, and the Great Miami River valley from Lost Bridge to the Ohio River. He could use simple lists of your life birds, as well as brief anecdotes of particularly memorable life birds. You can send your contributions to him by email to david.styer@sbcglobal.net,

or by regular mail to P.O. Box 444, Moss Landing, CA 95039.



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Are Your Dues Due?

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2006 - May 2007 birding year, please fill out the form below and mail it in along with your membership fees.

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.cincinnatibirds.com/birdclub/index.php

Bird Club Membership

Name _____

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

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