



The Passenger Pigeon

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

October 2008 Vol 44 No. 7

October Bird Club Meeting: Then and Now, An Evening With Ron Austing

**-Thursday, October 16
-Sharon Woods Visitor
Center at 7:00P.M.**

Our October speaker will be Cincinnati birding legend, and one of the founding fathers of our Cincinnati Bird Club, **Ron Austing!** Our community has been fortunate to have Ron, as he has shared his knowledge with us over the years and has presented many programs to the CBC as well as many other local organizations.

Ron's program will, of course, feature his outstanding photography. His program will focus on historical changes that have occurred among regional bird populations during his lifetime. He would like to have audience participation during his program and will encourage questions throughout. Ron, who has seen many changes first hand, is an exceptional storyteller and this program

should be of great interest to anyone interested in birds and natural history.

Ron hardly needs an introduction to the CBC. Nationally renowned as a bird and wildlife photographer and videographer, Ron's photos have appeared in several field guides and in thousands of publications such as *National Geographic*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Audubon*, *National Wildlife*, *Ranger Rick* and countless others. In addition to many articles featuring photography and birds, he has authored several books, including *I WENT TO THE WOODS*, *THE WORLD OF THE RED-TAILED HAWK* and *THE WORLD OF THE GREAT HORNED OWL*. His first work was published while he was still in High School. Ron was also an official photographer at the Cincinnati Zoo for many years.

Ron is a true birding "pioneer". He began studying birds at an early age during the late 30's and early 40's, long before birding became popular. As an artist Ron is somewhat unique, a "throwback" if you will, in that his work as a photographer is an extension of the fact that he is first and foremost a naturalist and an authority on birds, especially birds of prey, of which he has had a lifelong involvement. His work with banding raptors is legendary and his Northern Saw-whet Owl banding efforts at Miami Whitewater during the 70's and early 80's were remarkable.

In 1947 the CBC was formed by a group of hardcore and knowledgeable birders. These stalwarts admired Ron's skills and he became part of the original 12 founding members of the CBC at the tender age of 16. In 1953, at the age of 22, Ron wanted

a career where he would be close to nature so he began a thirty-year career with the Hamilton County Park District. He first became a Park Ranger and when he retired with the rank of Captain after 24 years he was immediately appointed to be the Park District's first Wildlife Manager, a post he retained until his retirement.

Birds remain his primary subject with special emphasis on birds of prey and neotropical migrants but more than fifty thousand transparencies and hundreds of hours of video footage in his files are of insects, mammals, herps and flowers, The majority of subjects are representative of Eastern and Midwestern regions of the U.S., with some Western species and a limited number from the Canadian arctic, Ecuador and the Galapagos, Mexico, Africa and India.

*-Jay Stenger
Program Coordinator*

October Field Trips:

-Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge
-Saturday, October 4
-Meeting Place & Time: 7:30 a.m. at Tanners Creek Boat Ramp (see directions below)
-Leader: Darlena Graham, 859-341-4893, darlena@fuse.net

Muscatatuck is one of Darlena's favorite birding locations and she has thorough knowledge of the area. This is a great time of year to see a mixed bag of species as migration for a number of species is either winding down or just getting started.

The varied habitat of this 8,000-acre refuge attracts a diverse avifauna so we expect a great day of birding. We expect to find migrant warblers and other songbirds including sparrows and other returning winter residents, raptors, shorebirds, waders and waterfowl. In addition to the great birding, Muscatatuck is a beautiful and quiet preserve and the pleasant temperatures and glorious fall color that is usually the norm at this

time of year should add up to a great day afield.

Darlana plans to stay well into the afternoon and there is no place to buy food and drink, so plan accordingly. A modern visitor center will provide the creature comforts. If you have any questions contact Darlena.

We will meet at the Tanners Creek Boat Ramp at 7:30 a.m. and caravan to Muscatatuck from there, about an hours drive due west on US 50. Tanners Creek Boat Ramp is located just south of US 50 in Lawrenceburg Indiana, about 3/4 of a mile west of the Tanners Creek Bridge. From the Cincinnati area take I-275 West to the US 50 Lawrenceburg, Indiana Exit # 16. At the end of the ramp turn left onto US 50 and go west through Lawrenceburg. After crossing the bridge look for Tanners Creek Drive and turn left. There is a McDonalds at this corner and you should see a small boat ramp sign. Drive to the boat ramp parking lot at the end of the road.

-Caesar Creek State Park
-Saturday, October 25
-Meeting Place & Time:
7:30 at CCSP Beach
(see directions below)
-Leader: Jay Lehman
H 527-4701; W 622-
2399, lehman.jg@pg.
com.

Late fall migration will be well underway and the focus of this trip will be waterfowl (ducks) and waterbirds (i.e. loons, grebes, gulls etc.). In addition to checking many sites around Caesars Creek Lake, Jay will probably make stops at nearby Spring Valley Wildlife Area and the Roxanna gravel pits.

This will be a day trip, extending well past noon, so be sure to bring a lunch and drinks. Restrooms are available throughout the area. Scopes will be useful, but if you don't have one don't let that stop you from coming.

We will meet at the Caesar Creek swimming beach parking lot. From Cincinnati, take I-71 north to the State Route 73 exit # 45. Turn left (west) onto SR 73 and go about 5 miles. After crossing the SR 73 bridge over Caesar Creek Lake, turn right

at the State Park entrance and follow the signs to the swimming beach. If you have any questions about this trip or directions contact Jay Lehman.

MEMBERSHIP FILES BEING UPDATED

Please help CBC as we update our files. When you renew your yearly membership, please give us your current address and email address (if you have one!).

If you haven't yet sent in your dues for the September 2008 - May 2009 birding year, please fill out the form on the back of the newsletter and mail it in along with your membership fees.

We prefer to send you the Passenger Pigeon electronically in an email. Your newsletter will arrive days, or weeks, before regular mail. That way you'll receive program and field trip listings in a timely manner. Plus, an email version saves trees and costly postage. If you miss the feel of a paper newsletter in your hands, you can always print your own copy at home or at a local library.

Also, several dozen people have *not* renewed their membership in a very long time. We'll give you a few months to catch up and send in your dues, but if we don't hear from you, and we haven't seen you recently at a program or on a field trip, we'll assume you've lost interest. Dues are an affordable \$12 for an individual, \$15 for a family membership, and just \$5 for a student. But if you are retired or disabled, and \$12 is a hardship in these difficult economic times, we certainly can work something out to keep you on our membership list!

If you haven't attended a program meeting or a field trip in a while, please consider attending the monthly Cincinnati Bird Club program meeting at Sharon Woods (see page 1). The special guest is nationally known photographer Ron Austing. Please bring along a friend or two who might be interested in birds or photography.



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2008-2009 Dues:

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2008 - May 2009 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 _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

_____ Individual \$12.00 _____ Family \$15.00 _____ Student \$5.00

Make your check payable to **Cincinnati Bird Club**, and mail to our Treasurer:
Lois Shadix, 2928 Saddleback Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45244