



The Passenger Pigeon

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

February 2009 Vol 45 No. 2

February Program: A Look Inside the Avian Research and Education Institute (AREI) with Dr. Dave Russell

Thursday: February 19th, 7 pm
Sharon Woods Visitor Center

The February meeting will feature Dr. David Russell of Miami University (MU). Dave's program will focus on the Avian Research and Education Institute (AREI), a non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance avian populations through research, education, and advocacy. AREI is committed to establishing biological stations that will provide bird banding and environmental education to the public and serve as both research and outdoor classrooms to give local college and high school students first-hand experience in environmental science.

The organization was established in 2004 through the vision and leadership of Dave and his wife, Dr. Jill Russell, who both serve as directors. You may remember Dave presented a program about AREI to the CBC in November 2005.

Since 2005, AREI has grown considerably. Some of their projects now include four bird-banding stations and an on-going international project entitled "Birds Without

Borders", which is a program of cooperation between AREI, MU, and Autonomous University of Tamaulipas (AUT), Mexico. This program trains students from both universities in monitoring migratory and breeding avian populations.

Dave has always had a great interest in birds and natural history and is well known in our local birding community. Born in Portland Oregon, Dave's family moved to Madeira when he was seven years old. Even at an early age, Dave's fascination with nature led him to the Cincinnati Zoo's junior zoologist program in which he was active for 10 years until college beckoned.

Dave received his BS in Entomology from the University of California /Davis and his Masters and Doctorate in Molecular Systematics from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. An Instructor of Intro and Environmental Biology at Miami University, he teaches a number of courses including Ornithology and Methods in Field Ornithology. Dave is a Master Bird Bander and certified North American Banding Council Trainer and an avid birder with a passion for sharing the birding world with all who will listen.

Bird banding is one of the major tools Dave and Jill use as educators. AREI regularly operates three local banding stations; one at Hueston Woods State Park, another on the campus of Miami U. and the third on the campus of Mt. St. Joseph. Dave and Jill not only welcome, but also encourage, the general public to join them at these sites.

Dave's enthusiasm for his subject is apparent to anyone who knows him or has met him and his program will not only be informative but will also be a lot of fun. Join us, as Dave gives us an update and an inside look at AREI. Dave will also have some great close-up shots of rare and uncommon birds in a variety of plumages. Mark your calendar for what will prove to be a special program. This program will be held on Thursday evening, February 19th, at the Sharon Woods Visitor Center beginning at 7:00 pm.

Jay Stenger, Program Coordinator

Editor's Note: Jill and Dave Russell are program coordinators and field trip leaders for the Queen City Birders Club (QCBC) of Southwest Ohio, a chapter of Black Swamp Bird Observatory's Ohio Young Birders, a program for young people ages 12-18 with an interest in nature. QCBC members receive a free membership to The Cincinnati Bird Club. Find out more about QCBC at the program meeting.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society are sponsoring the annual GBBC backyard bird watching event again this year February 13-16. Details at: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/whycount.html>

If you like counting birds in your yard or at your backyard feeders, **please consider being a "feeder watcher" during the**

Cincinnati Christmas Bird Count this December. Watch for more information next fall in the Passenger Pigeon newsletter.

Federal Junior Duck Stamp

Attention young wildlife artists! If you dream of being the next Charley Harper, John Ruthven, or Ann Geise, or DeVere Burt, mark your calendars for the Ohio 2008-2009 Junior Duck Stamp Competition March 19th - 22nd. Join the Ohio Decoy Collectors and Carvers in Westlake, Ohio for the ODCCA Annual Show and Sale.

Young artists K-12 are encouraged to include a conservation message with their original work. Proceeds from national sales of Junior Duck Stamps fund environmental and conservation education programs across the US. **Deadline for entry is March 1, 2009.**

Contest rules can be found at:

<http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck/ArtContest.htm>

Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II

Ohio's second breeding bird atlas needs volunteers to document the status of breeding birds. The first atlas was conducted from 1982 through 1987. The second project, which runs through 2010, will update that work. The Ohio Breeding Bird Atlas II is a joint project of the Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Wildlife, with the co-operation of The Ohio Ornithological Society and other partners.

Details at: <http://www.ohiobirds.org/obba2/>

February 2009 Field Trips

Brookville and Acton Lake

Saturday: February 21st, 8am to 2pm

Leaders: Dave Russell (513-382-4889) & Jill Russell (513-218-7228)

NOTE: This trip is sponsored by the Queen City Birders Club of Southwest Ohio. Birders of any age, especially age 12-18, are welcome. The Cincinnati Bird Club is a sponsor of QCBC. For details on the Queen City Birders Club:

<http://cincinnatibirds.com/oybc/index.html>

Many folks think of March as the start of spring, but late February is usually the peak of waterfowl migration near Cincinnati. Brookville Lake regularly attracts waterfowl by the thousands. Acton Lake, in Hueston Woods State Park, and the lake in Whitewater State Park offer closer looks at waterfowl that is usually possible on the big reservoirs. We hope for Long-tailed Duck or one or more of the Scoters; but even if those species aren't present, we should get good looks at a wide variety of waterfowl. **Pack a lunch.**

Meeting Place: Park Office, Visitor Center, Hueston Woods State Park, 6301 Park Office Road; College Corner, OH 45003. 513-523-6347.

Gilmore Ponds Area

Sunday: February 22nd, 3 PM to Dusk

Leader: Mike Busam, 513-259-3262, mbusam@gmail.com

This will not be a typical walk the dikes type bird trip. Mike plans on visiting the area titled Big Pond. Exact trip itinerary will be dependent on water levels. There should be plenty of winter birds remaining and waterfowl should be starting their northbound migration. Also at dusk there will be a good opportunity to observe American Woodcock.

For this trip you should prepare for water and mud. There will be some walking on paved paths but mucking around through the woods and vegetation is a good bet. Also be prepared for plenty of walking and potential for rough terrain.

Remember, the meeting time for this field trip is 3PM. The trip will continue until dusk.

Meeting Place: Seward Road parking area. A general address for electronic mapping is 8300 Seward Drive, Fairfield Ohio.

Directions: Take I-75 to Union Center. Union Center west towards Hamilton/Fairfield. Turn right on Seward Road. The parking lot is immediately before the railroad tracks.

Help Save Rusty Blackbirds: February 7-15

The International Rusty Blackbird Technical Working Group, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and National Audubon Society need volunteers from the Tristate to participate in a Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz. The species has abruptly declined by an estimated 85-98% in the last 40 years. Factors leading to the decline are unclear but degradation of habitat, including wintering sites, may be a factor.

The focus of the blitz is to locate Rusty Blackbirds and map their winter distribution across the central and southern US. During the nine-day count in February, Rusties are somewhat easier to find because of their mid-winter sedentary habits. Males also often sing during this period.

Rusty Blackbird Blitz organizers request volunteers record the number of birds present at each location along with basic habitat information. Information and instructions are available on Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's e-Bird site: ebird.org

Link to:

<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/bird-watchers-urgently-needed-to-track-rusty>

Protocol details can be found at:

http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Research/Rusty_Blackbird/protocol.cfm

Read more about Rusty Blackbirds at:

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Publications/ZooGoer/2008/4/Blackbird.cfm>

Adams County Amish Bird Symposium: March 7th

Join The Cincinnati Museum Center, The Nature Conservancy, Murphin Ridge Inn, and the Adams County Amish Community for a day of celebration of birds. The 6th annual event takes place at Yoder Log Homes in Adams County on Saturday March 7th. Registration is \$20 per person and includes an Amish-made lunch, beverages, and Miller's Bakery doughnuts.

The featured speaker is Jeff Gordon (no, not the NASCAR guy). Gordon is a professional birder for Field Guides, product representative for Leica Sport Optics, and a contributor to the newly revised "Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America".

Other speakers include The University of Cincinnati's Steve Pelikan on the topic of "Birdsong for Birders", The University of Toledo's Dr. Elliot Tramer who'll talk about our connection to birds of the tropics, Miami University's Heather Rodes who'll share a virtual tour of winter bird study on the island of Dominica in the West Indies, and Holmes County Amish Community representative David Kline who'll relate his experience with grassland birds and farming. Chris Bedel from The Edge of Appalachia Preserve and Roman Mast of the Adams County Amish Community will give the opening remarks.

Special feature during lunch will be the beautiful photography of Cincinnati's Jim Mundy. A field trip to Adams Lake State Park in West Union, Ohio will finish off the day's activities.

Register in advance with Cincinnati Museum Center's Information & Reservation Department at (513) 287-7000 or you can call toll-free (800) 733-2077.

Catesby Program at The Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden

on February 28, 4-7 pm

including lectures, film screening, and reception

**The Lloyd Library and Museum and
The Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden
are pleased to present:**
"The Curious Mister Catesby"

A film by Cynthia Neal & David Elliot documenting the life and work of Mark Catesby (1683-1749), the 18th century naturalist, scientist, and artist, on his exploration of the New World.

February 28, 2009, 4-7 p.m., at the Frisch Auditorium, Harold C. Schott Education Center, Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden.

Lectures by Catesby experts, 4-4:55 p.m.
Film Screening, 4:55-5:50 p.m.
Reception with cash bar, 6-7 p.m.

Tickets: \$15.00—includes zoo admission and parking. Deadline: February 18, 2009. Call (513) 721-3707.



**Want to know even more about the wonderfully curious Mr. Catesby?
Don't miss the Book Exhibit at the Lloyd Library and Museum**

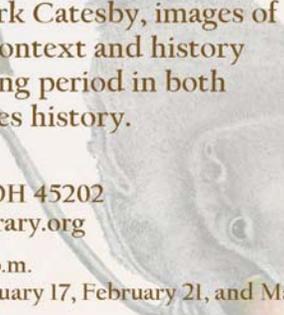
January 12—March 27, 2009

Features the works of Mark Catesby, images of his art, and provides the context and history surrounding this fascinating period in both scientific and United States history.

Lloyd Library and Museum
917 Plum Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 721-3707/www.lloydlibrary.org

Monday—Friday, 8:30 a.m.—4 p.m.
and the following Saturdays: January 17, February 21, and March 21
Admission: Free

Sponsored by:





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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 _____ Students FREE!

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