



# The Passenger Pigeon

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The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

April 2013

## **Program:** Do-it-Yourself Costa Rica

**Speaker:** Ann Oliver, OOS

**Date:**  
Thursday, Apr 18  
7 p.m.  
Sharon Woods  
Visitor Center

What county has more than 880 species of birds, is smaller than West Virginia, has stunning scenery ranging from lush rain forests to dry deserts, and is just a quarter-day plane ride away? Costa Rica of course!

Staggering biodiversity makes Costa Rica a dream destination for a birder, containing almost ten percent of the world's species of birds. But how do you plan your trip? One way is to travel with one of the many birding tour companies offering guided trips to Costa Rica including Field Guides, MGNature, Tropical Birding, Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, or Wings. You won't have to worry about details other than studying ahead of time.

But what if you want to do-it-yourself? Ann Oliver did just that and will share her "lessons learned" on planning and enjoying a productive and cost effective Costa Rican birding adventure!

Ann is the former president of Cincinnati Bird Club and currently serves as Executive Secretary of the Ohio Ornithological Society. She's been a birder for nearly 20 years, has traveled/birded across the US, and has birded in China, Borneo, England, Zimbabwe, and Guatemala. Ann, and her husband Mike, spent two weeks in Costa Rica last March. She'll share photos and videos of their Costa Rican trip during the April bird club meeting and will bring Costa Rica guide books for members to peruse. Be sure to join us for what promises to be an informative and exciting program, with what I anticipate will be some great photos!.

*-Steve Bobonick*



*Three-wattled Bellbird. Courtesy Ann Oliver*

# Field Trips

*(Contributed by Jay Stenger, Field Trip Coordinator)*

## Location:

### Cincinnati Parks:

- Daniel Drake Park
- California Woods
- Armleder Park

**Date:** Saturday, Apr 06

**Meet:** 8 a.m.

Overlook Parking Lot

Daniel Drake Park.

(see directions below)

**Leader:** Mark Gilsdorf

(513) 253-6062

markg74@gmail.com

Join us for what should be a pleasant spring morning birding in some of Cincinnati's east side parks. April is a great month to get out birding. Spring is rapidly advancing by this date and spring migration is well under way. While most neo-tropical songbirds will still be three weeks away, a great diversity of birds will be on the move and you might be surprised at what we find in these urban settings.

Our trip leader, Mark Gilsdorf, is a skilled birder and current President of the Cincinnati Bird Club. Mark lives on the east side and is very familiar with these three city parks and birds them frequently. Mark plans to begin the morning at Daniel Drake Park; a quiet

Cincinnati Park nestled on top of the wooded hills overlooking the Little Miami River valley where we should find Pine Warblers among other songbirds. From there Mark will head over to California Woods Nature Preserve, a quiet woodland preserve along the Little Miami River. Louisiana Waterthrush and Yellow-throated Warblers should be easily found here. Our final stop will be the nearby Armleder Park. This park is co-managed jointly by the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Park Districts. Armleder Park is situated along the banks of the Little Miami River and its varied habitats of open meadows and wooded riparian corridor along the Little Miami will contrast with the woodland settings of the earlier stops. Mark will likely make a couple of other quick stops along the way that may produce some good birding.

On the day we should find a mixed bag of migrants and residents that will most likely include waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and terns, herons and egrets, raptors and a diversity of open-country and woodland songbirds

Mark plans to spend about equal time at the three main locations. The trip will run until about noon. Walking will be moderate but level along Park roadsides and trails. Restrooms are available in the parks.

Daniel Drake Park is a Cincinnati City Park located at 5800 Red bank Road. To get to Daniel Drake Park from I-71 N or S; take Red Bank Road (exit # 9) onto Red Bank Expressway. Go about ½ mile to Duck Creek Road and turn right. Go a very short distance and turn right onto Red Bank Road. Go about 1 mile to the Daniel Drake Park entrance on your right. Follow the Park Road until it ends at the Overlook parking lot.

For a map and directions to Daniel Drake Park visit the following website:  
[www.cincinnati-parks.com/index.php/daniel-drake-park](http://www.cincinnati-parks.com/index.php/daniel-drake-park).

Visit the Daniel Drake Park, California Woods and Armleder Park website for more information and maps at:  
[www.cincinnati-parks.com/east](http://www.cincinnati-parks.com/east)

View the Armleder Park map at:  
[www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/aboutus/pdfs/armleder.pdf](http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org/aboutus/pdfs/armleder.pdf)

**Location:**  
Spring Valley Wildlife Area

**Date:** Sunday, Apr 14

**Meet:** 7:45 a.m.  
McDonald's  
355 S. Main Street  
Waynesville  
(Rt. 73 & Rt. 42)

**Leaders:**  
Ann Oliver  
(513)307-0929  
[annieobirder@yahoo.com](mailto:annieobirder@yahoo.com)

Jack Stenger  
(513)503-3389  
[jackstenger@gmail.com](mailto:jackstenger@gmail.com)

On Sunday, April 14, OOS will co-sponsor a field trip to Spring Valley Wildlife Area with the Cincinnati Bird Club. Spring Valley includes a 150 acre shallow lake, a 2.5 mile trail circling extensive cattail marshes, a 650 foot boardwalk, and an observation platform. There are no guarantees in birding, but expected highlights include rails, early shorebirds, swallows, and very early warblers including Louisiana Waterthrush and Yellow-throated Warbler. If lucky, we might also observe a Massasauga rattlesnake. **THERE ARE NO BATHROOMS AT SPRING VALLEY.**

We'll meet at 7:45 at the McDonald's (355 S. Main Street) in Waynesville, at the intersection of Rt. 73 and Rt. 42. At 8 am, we'll caravan to the parking area for boardwalk and observation tower at Spring Valley. We'll hopefully turn up a bittern or two, as well as species such as Virginia Rail. We will then walk around the loop trail circling the marsh. Afterwards we'll take a look at the nearby Roxanna gravel pit. Also, if time remains, Caesar Creek State Park will be an option. We should finish by early afternoon, so pack a lunch and beverage and plan accordingly. Bathrooms and drinking water is available at Caesar Creek SP.

Directions: to reach Waynesville, take Rt. 73 from either I-75 (and head east on Rt. 73) or I-71 (and head west on Rt. 73).

There's no need to pre-register, but you can contact OOS Southwest Regional Director Kathy McDonald for more information, at [whocooksforyou@gmail.com](mailto:whocooksforyou@gmail.com).

**Location:**  
Spring Grove Cemetery

**Date:** Sunday, Apr 28

**Meet:** 8 a.m.  
Just beyond tunnel  
Spring Grove Ave entrance

**Leader:** Joe Bens  
(513) 353-4229  
joebens@live.com

Spring warbler and songbird migration will be heating up by this date and Spring Grove Cemetery is an excellent place to see them as it has a well-deserved reputation as a migrant trap. The wooded grounds and park like setting is beautiful and peaceful and there is very little traffic. This is a truly enjoyable place to go birding.

Our trip leader, Joe Bens, is a long time member and past president of the CBC. Joe is also a skilled and expert birder and doesn't miss much. Joe plans to take a leisurely morning walk throughout the cemetery grounds and we can expect to find numerous species, especially warblers. This trip will end around noon. The walking is fairly easy and there is water and restrooms at the main entrance. Feel free to contact Joe if you have any questions. Note that the cemetery does not open until 8:00 a.m.

A map of Spring Grove Cemetery and other info can be found at the following website:  
<http://www.springgrove.org/maps.aspx>

**Directions:** From I-75 south heading towards Cincinnati, take exit 6 for Mitchell Ave. and turn right on Mitchell.

Turn left at Spring Grove Ave. The main entrance is on the north side of Spring Grove Avenue, just west of the Winton Road intersection.

## Local Calendar

### Audubon Society of Ohio

**Program:** *Wildflowers of Ohio*

**Date:** Mon, Apr 15

See [www.cincinnati.audubon.org](http://www.cincinnati.audubon.org) for additional details.

### Cincinnati Nature Center

#### Field Trips

April 13	Bill Stanley
April 27	Steve Bobonick
May 11	Mike Kravitz

See [www.cincynature.org](http://www.cincynature.org) for additional details.

### Oxbow, Inc.

**Field Trip:** *Ned Keller*

**Date:** Sun, Apr 21

See [www.oxbowinc.org](http://www.oxbowinc.org) for additional details.

## Ohio Division of Wildlife, et al.

### Program: *Mothapalooza*

**Date:** Jun 14-16

See [www.mothapalooza.org](http://www.mothapalooza.org) for additional details.

## Ann Oliver's "Top Ten" Tips for Birding Costa Rica On Your Own:

- 1) Follow the advice Sallie Parker Lotz gave us! Don't worry about trying to see it all in one trip! Target a small area, plan well, study ahead of time, and enjoy! Repeat!
- 2) Follow the advice of Barrett Lawson, author of "A Bird-Finding Guide to Costa Rica". This book will be your BEST source of birding information to help you pick a birding 'loop' appropriate for your time, budget, ambition, and bird list. Vacationing with your family? There's a loop for that! Want to target Costa Rican endemics? There's a loop for that, too! Plus, the guide has fantastic descriptions of each site, including general directions, a target/speciality bird list, a general/expected bird list, description of elevation and difficulty, suggested lodging near the birding location, anticipated entrance fees, and maps. Don't forget to read about birding locations online, including websites and Facebook!
- 3) Rent a car (manual transmission) and RENT A GPS from the car rental agency! There are essentially no street or road signs in Costa Rica. If you have a map, it won't be much help other than to show distances and cities.

You also have the option of traveling between destinations on an affordable local bus line or a tourist van shuttle service between major attractions.

4) Fly into Liberia! It's the 'other' international airport in Costa Rica and you won't have to negotiate the heavy traffic of San Jose, the capital city.

5) Eat local like a Tico! Costa Ricans love black beans and rice, salad, chicken or fish, fried plantains, and fresh fruit. Economical and delicious! Great coffee of course! But you'll also find a variety of dining options in the larger cities and touristy areas such as Monteverde. Combining birding and dining is possible, at places such as Catarata Del Toro, east of Zarcero, which featured open-air covered dining overlooking a garden of hummingbird feeders near a waterfall!

6) Always stay on the trail, but don't be afraid to go off the beaten path for your lodging! We hiked 2.4 kilometers down to the San Gerardo Biological Station (\$50/night with three meals and primitive accommodations) and experienced a private moment with Resplendent Quetzal and an Umbrellabird. If you can afford to treat yourself, stay at one of the many lush reserves with private birding guides, such as Bosque de Paz ([www.bosquedepaz.com/lodge.htm](http://www.bosquedepaz.com/lodge.htm)) which is about \$250/night per couple, which includes three gourmet meals. But if your budget is tight, you have the option to camp for \$10/night at a location like Casitas Tenorio ([www.casitastenorio.com/accommodations](http://www.casitastenorio.com/accommodations)) which includes access to a kitchen! One of our favorite places was the El Punto Hotel Bed and Breakfast ([www.elpuntophotel.com/#en](http://www.elpuntophotel.com/#en)) in Liberia, an old school converted into lodging. It was a convenient base location to access the vast expanse of Palo Verde National Park (Jabiru and Scarlet Macaws), the geology of Rincon de la Vieja National Park

(mud holes and billowing steam vents), and the secret Llanos del Cortes Waterfall (66 feet high by 130 feet wide) accessible only by a steep hike.

7) Remember proper snake precautions! Wear knee-high rubber boots if you have them or a good pair of ankle-high hiking boots. **STAY** on trails, don't put your hands on trees or in the vegetation, watch where you step, and do not, not, **NOT** wear sandals. Shake your shoes out in the morning, too, for scorpions.

8) Take your rain gear, even in the so-called "dry" season. You'll likely be in an area of micro-habitat with heavy rainfall at some point in your journey unless you're staying in Guanacaste Province. You'll need a fleece jacket, too. Other proper quick-drying field attire is advisable, including long pants and long sleeve shirts.

9) Connect with local birding guides whenever possible, especially the first few days of your trip. Costa Rica has an abundance of well-trained, ecotourism experts! **BOOK** ahead with a lodge, if possible! We were lucky to hire guide Kimberly Bustos Arias, of Bijagua, Alajuela the first few days: she was encyclopedic about avian species, and was enthusiastic about reptiles, frogs, folk remedies, and local dining!

10) Buy a good field guide, such as Richard Garrigues and Robert Dean's book "The Birds of Costa Rica", and **STUDY** your target birds! Even if you feel overwhelmed at first, you'll figure it out on-the-go! Refer back to the Barrett Lawson guide to see what birds you should concentrate on ahead of your trip.

## **CBC Special Program: Green Fire, the Story of Aldo Leopold** (Co-sponsored by Oxbow, Inc.)

**Date:**  
**Tuesday, Apr 09**  
**7 p.m.**  
**Sharon Woods**  
**Visitor Center**

On Tuesday, April 9, 2013, the Cincinnati Bird Club and Oxbow, Inc. will host a free screening of a new film called *Green Fire*, the first full-length, high definition documentary film ever made about legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold. The film explores Aldo Leopold's life in the early part of the twentieth century and the many ways his land ethic idea continues to be applied all over the world today.

*Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time* is a production of the Aldo Leopold Foundation, the US Forest Service, and the Center for Humans and Nature. The film shares highlights from Leopold's life and extraordinary career, explaining how he shaped conservation in the twentieth century and still inspires people today. Although probably best known as the author of the conservation classic *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold is also renowned for his work as an educator, philosopher, forester, ecologist, and wilderness advocate.

"Aldo Leopold's legacy lives on today in the work of people and organizations across the nation and around the world," said Aldo Leopold Foundation Executive Director Buddy Huffaker. "What is exciting about *Green Fire* is that it is more than just a documentary about Aldo Leopold; it also

explores the influence his ideas have had in shaping the conservation movement as we know it today by highlighting some really inspiring people and organizations doing great work to connect people and the natural world in ways that even Leopold might not have imagined.”

*Green Fire* illustrates Leopold’s continuing influence by exploring current projects that connect people and land at the local level. Viewers will meet urban children in Chicago learning about local foods and ecological restoration. They’ll learn about ranchers in Arizona and New Mexico who maintain healthy landscapes by working on their own properties and with their neighbors, in cooperative community conservation efforts. They’ll meet wildlife biologists who are bringing back threatened and endangered species, from cranes to Mexican wolves, to the landscapes where they once thrived. The *Green Fire* film portrays how Leopold’s vision of a community that cares about both people and land—his call for a land ethic—ties all of these modern conservation stories together and offers inspiration and insight for the future.

“The making of *Green Fire* has been a process of discovery,” says Curt Meine, the film’s on-screen guide. Meine’s doctoral dissertation was a biography of Aldo Leopold, published as *Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1988). To give the film its modern perspective of Leopold’s influence in the conservation movement today, Meine was charged with conducting hundreds of interviews with people practicing conservation all over the country. “Meeting all those people has really yielded new connections between Leopold and nearly every facet of the environmental movement, including ocean conservation, urban gardening, and climate change—

issues that Leopold never directly considered in his lifetime but has nonetheless affected as his ideas are carried on by others,” said Meine.

The Aldo Leopold Foundation is distributing the film to community screeners, and is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization based in Baraboo, Wisconsin. The foundation’s mission is to inspire an ethical relationship between people and land through the legacy of Aldo Leopold. Leopold regarded a land ethic as a product of social evolution. “Nothing so important as an ethic is ever ‘written,’” he explained. “It evolves ‘in the minds of a thinking community.’” Learn more about the Aldo Leopold Foundation and the *Green Fire* movie at [www.aldoleopold.org](http://www.aldoleopold.org).

**If you go:**

Tuesday, April 9, 2013 at 7:00 pm, at the Sharon Woods Centre, 11450 Lebanon Rd. Sharonville, OH. **Free to the public but reservations are requested. Call 513-375-1025 to reserve seating.**

Following the movie, which is about 1 hour 15 minutes long, we are going to have a panel discussion on conservation efforts in the Cincinnati area, leveraging off of the themes of the movie. The panel participants include:

Dr. Jon Seymour – President, **Oxbow, Inc.**

Bill Hopple – Executive Director,  
**Cincinnati Nature Center**

Jack Sutton – Executive Director,  
**Hamilton County Park District**

Thayne Maynard – Executive Director,  
**Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden**

For more information: Contact Jon Seymour at [jlsjks@hotmail.com](mailto:jlsjks@hotmail.com) and put “Green Fire” in the subject title.



## The Passenger Pigeon

### Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

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2012-2013 Dues:

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September  
2012 - May 2013 birding season, please fill out the form  
below and mail it in along with your membership fees.

Visit us on the Web at:

[www.cincinnatibirds.com/birdclub/index.php](http://www.cincinnatibirds.com/birdclub/index.php)

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## Bird Club Membership

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