



The Passenger Pigeon

Volume 50, Number 5

The Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

May 2014

Program:
Swift Thinking

Speaker:
Dr. George Farnsworth

Date:
Friday, May 16
7 p.m.
Sharon Woods
Visitor Center

Our speaker for our May meeting will be Dr. George Farnsworth, professor of Biology at Xavier University. George will present a multi-layered program entitled “Swift Thinking” that will give us an update on his ongoing project studying Chimney Swift roosting behavior during fall migration. He will also introduce a new project he has begun to look at; the roosting behavior of White-collared Swifts in Costa Rica. George will also share some of his popular work investigating the behavior of local mockingbirds over the last 10 years as well. If you have never seen any of the videos George has taken featuring his local Mockingbirds demonstrating their intelligence and problem solving abilities, you’re in for a treat.

Dr. Farnsworth received a B.S. in Biology from the College of William & Mary in Virginia in 1991 and an M.S. in Environmental Sciences from University of

Virginia in 1994. He earned a Ph.D. in Zoology from North Carolina State University in 1998. Before coming to Xavier, Farnsworth worked as a post-doctoral researcher with Patuxent Wildlife Research and taught at Meredith College and University of Houston-Downtown.

He is particularly interested in the behavioral ecology of local species of songbirds. As a Ph.D. student, George explored the nesting behavior of the Wood Thrush. By measuring the survival rate of nests from one day to the next and the likelihood that a nesting female will attempt another nest, he was able to estimate the total productivity of the population of Wood Thrushes in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

As part of this work, he developed a behavior model that he used to ask more basic and theoretical questions about why birds lay the number of eggs that they do. After receiving his degree, George began to address practical issues regarding techniques used to survey for birds. In many cases, these techniques involved recording the number of singing birds detected. He developed statistical models that are capable of including information about the singing behavior of birds, thus improving our ability to estimate the size of bird populations.

George is also a supporter of the Cincinnati Bird Club and has presented programs to us in the past and it’s not uncommon to see him on a few CBC field trips each year.

So why not come out for the final CBC meeting of our year for what will be an

enjoyable spring evening and interesting program.

As always, the Cincinnati Bird Club will take a summer sabbatical, June through August, and resume normal activities in September.

Jay Stenger, Program Chair

Field Trips

(Contributed by Jack Stenger, Field Trip Coordinator)

Location:
West-side Shorebird Circuit

Date: Sunday, May 18

Meet: 5 p.m.
Gilmore Ponds
(see directions below)

Leader:
Brian Wulker

By May 18th you will likely be tired of the brilliant palette of warbler colors and ready for the refined subtlety of shorebirds. And although most shorebirds are the color of mud, mud does come in many colors.

Shorebirds will be the focus of this trip and we will cover the best spring shorebirding hotspots in our region. Of course we will also look at other waterbirds and peripheral songbirds.

Our trip will begin at Gilmore Ponds and proceed to Fernald Preserve, Lost Bridge, and the Oxbow. The Ellis Lake Wetlands

will merit a stop providing the shorebird habitat doesn't dry-up.

This trip could get anywhere from 4 to 18 species of shorebirds depending on weather and luck. Our trip leader, Brian Wulker, is great with shorebirds (and all other birds) and will be sure to leave no inch of mud left un-scanned. This is one of the few field trips that could benefit from rain. Shorebirds are diurnal migrants and frequently weather events will "knock them down" as they migrate thousands of feet overhead. Who wants to migrate in a thunderstorm?

Expect some light walking and lots of standing. We will take our time at locations with lots of birds. Please bring a scope if you have one. The trip will likely go until sunset. Meet @ 5 p.m. at the Gilmore Ponds parking lot north of the intersection of Symmes Rd. and Berk Blvd. Berk Blvd. may have recently been renamed Bilstein Rd., but this is not yet reflected on any maps. For information and directions to Gilmore Ponds see its Butler County MetroParks webpage: [Gilmore Ponds](#)

This trip is different in that the start location will be far from the ending location (Oxbow). Plan accordingly. Also, a birder recently reported a car break-in at the Gilmore Ponds parking lot on Gilmore Ponds, which is a bit more secluded. Cars should be safe at the Symmes Rd. lot, but keep this in mind if you wish to leave your car at Gilmore Ponds.

Location:

Chevron Property, Hooven,
OH

Date: Tuesday, May 27

Meet: TBD

Leaders:

Ron Canterbury,
Jack Stenger
(513) 503-3389
jackstenger@gmail.com

The Hooven Property is situated on a bend in the Great Miami River just east of Hooven, OH. It is owned by Chevron and was formerly the site of a refinery. During the past decade Chevron has been restoring the land to native grassland, wetland, and forest and now the property boasts an impressive diversity of wildlife. We will be able to tell you much more about the birdlife after the trip, since this is a restricted area and terra incognita for local birders.

At the moment this trip is a speculative. Ron and Jack are actively coordinating a visit with Chevron representatives. This trip is primarily for the University of Cincinnati's spring Ornithology course, however we hope to open it to Cincinnati Bird Club members as well. Space on this trip may be limited. If you have interest in this trip please email Jack Stenger, Field Trip Coordinator, and he will put you on the list and update you with details as they develop.

Local Calendar**Audubon Society of Ohio**

Program: *Don Hogue*

Date: May 19

See www.cincinnati.audubon.org for additional details.

Oxbow, Inc.

Program: *White-nose Syndrome*

Date: Jun 10

Field Trips

Jun 22 Ann Oliver

See www.oxbowinc.org for additional details.

Cincinnati Nature Center**Field Trips**

| | |
|--------|----------------|
| May 24 | Bill McGill |
| Jun 14 | Bill McGill |
| Jun 28 | Bill Stanley |
| Jul 12 | Darlena Graham |

See www.cincynature.org for additional details.

Celebrated *rufa* Red Knot Seen in Argentina

(Bird Calls, Vol. 18, No.1, March 2014, reprinted with permission, www.abcbirds.org)

The oldest-known member of the *rufa* Red Knot subspecies, known as “B95” or “Moonbird,” has survived another trip from its Arctic breeding grounds to the southern tip of South America. In December, researchers in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, took several pictures of the celebrated bird, which is at least 19 years old.

The average lifespan of a *rufa* Red Knot is about five years. This particular Red Knot is called Moonbird because researchers believe that the distance it has traveled in its lifetime is greater than the distance to the moon.

Patricia M. Gonzales of the Global Flyway Network said she was so excited that her hands started shaking when she saw B95 on a beach in Argentina in December. Stories about the sighting ran in major newspapers in both North and South America.

Moonbird sightings have been used to draw attention to the sharp decline of the *rufa* Red Knot, and to new and ongoing attempts to protect them. One such effort is now being made in the Delaware Bay, where giant flocks of Red Knots converge once a year to eat horseshoe crabs’ eggs.

Overfishing of these crabs is thought to be one of the causes of the Red Knot’s decline. Bans and sharp restrictions on that fishing have been put in place by Delaware and New Jersey. Recently, the FWS proposed to add the *rufa* subspecies of Red Knot to the list of plants and protected by the Endangered Species Act.

B95’s remarkable life is celebrated in the book “Moonbird” by Phillip Hoose. Gonzales said a statue of B95 may soon be built near the Argentina beach on which it was last seen. An existing statue of the bird can be found at the Mispillion Harbor Reserve near the town of Milford, Del.

Cincinnati Peregrine Falcon Cam Live

The Cincinnati Peregrine Falcon Cam is now live!! Check it out on the new RAPTOR, Inc. website: www.raptorinc.org. This box is located on the north side of the 4th and Vine Building (formerly PNC), so if you go downtown you can see it from the observation deck of the Carew Tower if you take binoculars. But with this webcam, you can see it from the convenience of your own home!

RAPTOR needed to launch a new website to host this webcam. As the website is fully developed, we will add a blog so we can pass along more information about the peregrines downtown and a link to the ODNR site. Enjoy!



The *rufa* Red Knot is one of the world's longest-distance migrants, traveling from Argentina to the Arctic and back yearly. But **this remarkable bird is in big trouble**. Its population has plummeted from 150,000 to about 30,000 in the past two decades.

Now, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has proposed listing the Red Knot under the Endangered Species Act, which would ensure more resources to protect these birds. We hope you'll join us in expressing support of FWS' efforts to [protect the Red Knot from extinction](#).

American Bird Conservancy has long been fighting for the *rufa* Red Knot's future. We helped the states of New Jersey and Delaware limit overharvesting of horseshoe crabs, which fuel the birds during their long migration. We helped restore Red Knot feeding beaches that were washed away by Hurricane Sandy.

Now you can help: [Tell FWS that you support listing the Red Knot](#) under the Endangered Species Act! **FWS is taking public comments until May 19.**

take action!



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Newsletter of the Cincinnati Bird Club

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2013-2014 Dues:

If you haven't sent in your dues yet for the September 2013 - May 2014 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

Bird Club Membership

Name _____

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Yes I would like to receive my newsletter via e-mail. E-mail _____

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Make your check payable to Cincinnati Bird Club, and mail to our Treasurer:

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