



CINCINNATI BIRD CLUB

THE PASSENGER PIGEON

VOLUME 51, ISSUE 7 OCTOBER 2015

PROGRAM: SUBURBAN RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS: OUR WILD NEIGHBORS

Speaker: Jeff Hays

Date: October 16, 2015,
7:00 p.m.

Location: Sharon Woods Visitor Center

Jeff Hays has been monitoring and studying Red-shouldered Hawks in the Cincinnati and Hocking Hills areas for approximately 20 years. He has co-authored several ornithological papers on the productivity, nest site selection, home ranges and eating habits of Red-shouldered Hawks based on original field research. Each year he also con-

ducts field work as a climber for the Wisconsin, Kentucky and Michigan Departments of Natural Resources, that study the productivity and contaminant levels of Bald Eagles, Osprey, and Northern Goshawks. He is a longtime board member and volunteer of RAPTOR, Inc., a Cincinnati-based organization dedicated to rehabilitating injured birds of prey and educating the public about them. In short, Jeff is an expert on raptors and his extensive knowledge and experience is always intriguing.

For October's program Jeff will give a multi-media presentation on his Red-shouldered Hawk research. He and his collaborators use video cameras mounted at nest sites to gain insight into the lives of one of our most common raptors, the Red-shouldered Hawk. Jeff will discuss nest building, incubation, diet, sibling aggression, mortality and a variety of other facets of this fascinating raptor.

~Jack Stenger - Program Chair

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Meeting
- Field Trips
- Meeting Notes
- Field Trip Notes
- Birding Expo

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FIELD TRIP: LATE FALL MIGRANTS AND SPARROW HIKE

Date: Sunday October 11, 2015

Time: 8:00 am

Where: Miami Whitewater Wetlands

Leader: Ned Keller

Email: nedkeller49@gmail.com

Late migrant passerines, late shorebirds, early waterfowl, raptors and early winter visitors are all possible on this trip to one of our areas finest wetlands, the Shaker Trace at

Miami Whitewater Forest. The focus of this trip however will be on sparrows. While most neo-tropical migrants move through during September, the month of October

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FACEBOOK

The Cincinnati Bird Club is now on facebook at [https://](https://www.facebook.com/cincinnatibirdclub)

www.facebook.com/cincinnatibirdclub Like our page and follow it for information about upcoming meetings,

field trips and other bird club information.

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sees the bulk of the sparrow passage. Nelson's Sparrow, an otherwise rare migrant through our area, has become an annual and regular migrant at the wetlands, and is seen fairly often here during the month of October. We have a good chance of finding one or two. Lincoln's Sparrow is also expected at this time of the year and many of the winter sparrows should be in by then. Familiar winter visitors such as White-throated, White-crowned, and Swamp Sparrows should be back by this date as well. LeConte's Sparrow is a long shot, but it's the right habitat and right time of the year. We can expect some surprises and a mixed bag on this trip.

The weather could prove to be the star of this trip as mid-October has typically cool, crisp autumn days. Fall colors will be abundant and make a picturesque backdrop to what should be a great trip.

The trip will consist of level, moderate walking. However the trails through the wetlands are not paved and can be damp and muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. This trip should end around noon. There are no restroom facilities at the Miami Whitewater wetlands. A Hamilton County Park pass is required (\$3.00 daily, \$10.00 annual) at Miami Whitewater for each vehicle.

We will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the wetlands parking area on Baughman Road. From I-74, take the Dry Fork Road exit # 3, and turn right. Continue past West Rd, and stay on Dry Fork until it ends. Turn right onto New Haven Road. At the first stop sign, turn left onto Oxford Road, and then immediately left again onto Baughman Road. The dirt parking area is on the right side of the road, just past the bike trail crossing. Contact Ned to answer any of your questions. Directions to Miami Whitewater as well as maps and other information can be found at the following website: <http://greatparks.org/parks/miami-whitewater-forest>
~Brian Wulker - Field Trips

FIELD TRIP: LATE FALL AND EARLY WINTER MIGRANTS EAST FORK STATE PARK

Date: Saturday, October 31, 2015

Meet: 8:00 A.M. at the East Fork Water Craft Office parking lot (see the directions below)

Leader: Bill Stanley

(513) 324-2796

tyrannus58@gmail.com

On October 31 the Cincinnati Bird Club will be going to East Fork State Park. With its varied habitat, East Fork is an excellent spot to find a good diversity of species. While neo-tropic migration is winding down by the end of October, there should still be some warblers and other migrant songbirds around. Shorebird migration continues and some can usually be found on the beaches. Waterfowl migration is just beginning and gulls and terns are also likely. Raptors are on the move throughout the month and Bald Eagles should be expected. Some of our winter residents will be showing up by this date, and there is always a chance for a rarity, as East Fork has an excellent reputation in that regard, particularly in the fall.

We will visit several different locations and habitats within the park, starting at the beach and making our way around to the dam. If time permits we will continue on to the wetland area near Williamsburg. The wetland area is a good place to find Northern Bobwhite, sparrows and various water birds.

Directions: We will meet at the watercraft office on the south side of East Fork State Park. To get there, enter the park from the south side as if you were heading toward the beach. The park office will be on the right. To get to the south side entrance to East Fork SP from I-275 take exit # 65, SR 125 (Beechmont Ave./Ohio Pike) and go east about 9 miles to the junction of Rt. 222. Turn left onto Bantam Rd. (opposite Rt. 222) and follow the signs to the park

entrance.

Restrooms are available in the park. If you have any questions feel free to contact Bill.

Visit the East Fork State Park website for a Park map and other info at:

<http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/eastfork>

American Avocet found by Donald Morris at East Fork SP. September 11, 2015 Photo by Bill Stanley



CALLING ALL BIRD CLUBS: A BIRDING EXPO

Bird Watcher's Digest, American Birding Association and Grange Insurance Audubon Center are hosting a Birding Expo on October 2, 3, and 4. Information about the expo can be found here: <http://www.americanbirdingexpo.com/>

There will be seminars for Bird Club leaders and members about different aspects of maintaining and growing a bird club.

The letter sent to bird club members about bird club involvement in the expo

can be found here: <http://www.americanbirdingexpo.com/calling-all-bird-clubs/>

PROGRAM NOTES: THE CHALLENGES OF INLAND SHOREBIRDING. SEPTEMBER 18.

Jay and Jack Stenger started the 2015-2016 Bird Club year with an interesting presentation on shorebirds and the challenges that "inland" birders face. In addition to ID challenges, inland birders are also tasked each year to find decent habitat in which to view shorebirds. The Stengers offered a number of useful tips for separating and identifying species in the field, including an assortment of "holistic" and "specific" approaches. For example, viewed up close, the specific details in plumage, size, leg color, and bill shape are useful for separating Semipalmated from Least Sandpipers. But what if the birds are feeding on a mudflat hundreds of yards away? In that case, look for the Least Sandpiper and the way it has to bend

deeply at its knees, practically assuming a crouching position, in order to feed whereas the longer legged and larger Semipalmated simply leans over and gets what it's after. Also interesting was a diagnostic difference between Semipalmated and the rarer--in our area--Western Sandpiper. The Western, when viewed in profile, has a clearly "fatter" or thicker neck and head shape than the slimmer necked Semipalmated. Additionally, the legs of the Western Sandpiper appear to be set further back on the body than on Semipalmated, giving the appearance that the Western Sandpiper is front heavy, compared to the more balanced-looking Semipalmated Sandpiper.

The Stengers illustrated their talk with numerous photos, and also discussed some area sites that can be good or have been good in the past for shorebirds. Finally, Brian Wulker prepared a shorebird quiz presentation composed of photos he kept secret from Messrs. Stenger and meeting attendees. It was enlightening to debate some of the species IDs and to use a few of the tips from the program to solve the tricky challenges Brian threw at us. It's a good start to the Bird Club year, and a number of interesting programs are in store for future meetings. Try to check some or all of them out!

~ Mike Busam

FIELD TRIP NOTES: MT. AIRY FOREST

On September 5 Jack Stenger led the Cincinnati Bird Club birding at Mt. Airy Forest. Warblers were darting in and out of leaves making it a challenge to identify them, but we still ended up with 48 spe-

cies of which 9 were warblers. The highlight of the day was a Golden-winged Warbler that flew out near a Magnolia Warbler that many of us were watching. Many of us got a great look at the Golden-

winged! We also deviated from our mission and watched an interaction between a wasp and a Hackberry Emperor butterfly. It was a great morning birding with Jack in Mt Airy Forest. Here is the ebird list from

the trip: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S24897418>



Warbler Watching At Mt. Airy. Photo by Bill Stanley



Photo by Bill Stanley

Thanks Jack for a great day birding at Mt. Airy.

FIELD TRIP NOTES: MINOR CLARK FISH HATCHERY



On September 12, Brian Wulker took us to Minor Clark Fish Hatchery. This was the Cincinnati Bird Club's introduction to birding South of the Border in Kentucky which we have done little of as a club. Minor Clark is a series of water impound-

ments surrounded by hills and forest. Observation of shorebirds is close which provides great opportunity to study identification points. The weather was mild and we got some very good looks at Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, Pecto-

ral Sandpipers and more, but the star of the day was a Ruddy Turnstone. We also watched a Bald Eagle carry a very large goldfish off for dinner and strayed from our mission again to observe a water snake. Here are the ebird lists of what we

saw at Minor Clark: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25006133>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25005911>
<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S24996650>

Thanks Brian for showing the Bird Club that there is great birding in Kentucky.



FIELD TRIP NOTES: BROOKVILLE LAKE REGION

On September 20, Jay Stenger and Joe Bens led the Cincinnati Bird Club on a trip to the Brookville Lake Region in Indiana. It was a beautiful, clear day and we saw quite a few birds. The morning started with Red-headed Woodpeckers flying from the hillside out over the lake and back. We found many warblers ducking in and out of leaves with a large number of Tennessee Warblers. At one point I had 5 Bald Eagles viewed in my binoculars at one time—three adults and two immature

birds. Quite a few raptors were in the sky including Broad-winged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Osprey and all the usual suspects. We had great views of Caspian Terns and a few shorebirds even though the lake was high with little mud exposed. When we stopped for lunch in Liberty, Indiana we found Eurasian Collared-Doves at the Union County Co-op where they usually can be found.

Here are the ebird checklists from the trip:

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25101484>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25126489>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25115592>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25226548>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25101484>

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Birding Calendar

- October 2,3,4...Birding Expo
- October 4...Audubon East Fork
- October 10...Audubon Fernald
- October 11...Field Trip Miami Whitewater
- October 16...Meeting Red-shouldered Hawk
- October 25...Oxbow
- October 31...Field Trip East Fork

PROGRAM AND FIELD TRIP NOTES WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

Thanks to Mike Busam who attended our September program and wrote an excellent synopsis of the speakers' presentation. You will find Mike's work in this month's newsletter.

We would like to include a brief description of our programs and field trips in each Passenger Pigeon and are looking for volunteers who attend the meeting and field trips to write a short description for the newsletter.

This is not a whole season commitment. Just one person who attends a meeting or field trip can write a piece for that event and then a different person for the next event.

We are also looking for photographs from our field trips for the newsletter. If you take photos on a field trip and are willing to share them we would be happy to use them in the newsletter.

We would like to include this information in the newsletter to inform members who don't attend these events about our activities and to have a future

OCTOBER 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

OTHER BIRDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Audubon Society of Ohio
Fall Migration at East Fork
Date: Sunday, October 4, 2015, 8:00 a.m. Meet at the Watercraft Office.
Contact: Steve Bobonick, telephone (513) 702-3451, email STEVE.BOBONICK@GMAIL.COM
Details can be found here: <http://cincinnati.audubon.org/calevent/east-fork-state-park/>
- Sparrow Search at Fernald Preserve
Date: Saturday, October 10, 2015, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Meet: Fernald Preserve Visitors Center

Contact: Visitors Center, telephone 513-648-3330, email fernaldd@lm.doe.gov

Details can be found here: <http://cincinnati.audubon.org/calevent/sparrow-hike/>

- Late Fall Migration in the Oxbow
Sunday, October 25, 2015, 8:00 a.m. Meet in the upper Oxbow parking lot at the main entrance to the Oxbow Leader: Gary Stegner, (812) 667-6433, garyand-sally@hotmail.com Details can be found here: <http://www.oxbowinc.org/>

record of what the Bird Club does.

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<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25226549>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25115591>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25238201>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25115590>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25115589>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25238202>

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S25104161>

Note: we ended up with two ebird lists for most stops. All lists are included.

~Thanks Jay and Joe for another great Brookville trip.



OCTOBER BIRD QUIZ



(jackstenger@gmail.com) by October 25.

All responses must be the official common English names used by the American Ornithologists' Union check-list ([Link](#)). This means they must be correctly spelled, capitalized, and hyphenated or else they are counted as wrong. Mind your plovers and quails. Also include any comments you have about the quiz bird, such as how you arrived at your ID, or how you felt about the picture. Venting is welcome. Any bird that is on the state list for Ohio, Indiana, or Kentucky is fair game. Whoever has the highest number of correct answers by the end of the Bird Club season (May) "wins." Any public discussion of quiz birds will result in a trap door opening up beneath the violator.

Prize: To be determined.

Rules: Anybody is welcome and all are encouraged to participate. However, only paying members (it's only \$12 per year) are eligible for prizes and unadulterated bragging rights. To participate send your answers to me

Answers: I will post the answer with a brief analysis in the next Bird Club newsletter. This will include a list of all those who guessed correctly. Don't worry, wrong guesses will not be published, so fire away: it's better to get a CBC quiz wrong than to have never participated. I think Alexander Wilson said that. ~Jack Stenger

SEPTEMBER BIRD QUIZ ANSWER



Gulp. The September quiz birds were tough to swallow.

Their small size and long, scythe-like wings led all respondents to the swallow family. To narrow it down from there, I will let our sole correct respondent, Ned Keller, take it away:

“The bird on the right is the easiest. Dark blue wings, tail, head and upperparts, with white underparts, means Tree Swallow. Female Barn Swallow can have whitish underparts, but the tail would be much longer than the wings. Also, the white tips on the tertials say that the bird is freshly molted, and Barn Swallow would not molt until it reaches its wintering grounds.

The bird on the left is a juvenile Tree Swallow. It can be aged by the overall color – brown rather than dark blue. Northern Rough-winged Swallow of any age would have a buffier / browner throat – at least, there would be less contrast between the brown of the head and the white of the underparts. The clear demarcation between dark and white says Tree Swallow or Bank Swallow, and Bank Swallow would have a dark band across the chest.

The bird in the center is the hardest. It’s facing directly toward us, with its head bent down preening its breast feathers (creating the dark line down the center of the breast). So, markings on the throat and upper breast are not visible. One thing that we can say is that it’s noticeably smaller than the other two birds. It’s

not just shorter because the head is bent down, it also has a much narrower body, so it really is a smaller bird. Because it’s smaller, it’s not a Tree Swallow. Northern Rough-winged Swallow would be a little smaller, but not a lot; and it would have dusker underparts. This bird is white underneath (allowing for the crappy backlighting), and it’s a LOT smaller. What’s left is Bank Swallow.

Except for a drab adult female Violet-green Swallow, which I don’t think this photo conclusively rules out. But I’ll still go with Bank Swallow.”

This picture of a Bank Swallow and two Tree Swallows was taken by Rob Tunison on 15 August, 2015 at Eastview Cemetery in Switzerland County, IN. I was a bystander to the photograph. These birds were a part of a 5-species, 450 swallow swarm. All respondents included Tree Swallow or Bank swallow, but not both.

You may have noticed by now that these quiz birds are often partially obstructed or rendered at an odd angle (October’s quiz bird is no exception). There is a reason for this, outside of the fun and torment concomitant with challenging quizzes. Every bird can be identified by a few key field marks. For example, we identify Bank Swallows by their brown breast-band. No other swallow has that feature. However, when we’re in the field these marks are

often not visible, yet we still hope to identify the birds quickly. With these bird quizzes I like to emphasize secondary (or even octonary) field marks that are equally as diagnostic, yet under-utilized. In a swirling cloud of swallows it can be extremely challenging to pick out a breast-band on a flying swallow, but the slight build of a Bank Swallow is always apparent. And when swallows are perched on a wire, it is easy to pick out the wee Bank Swallows with your naked eye.

~Jack Stenger - Program Chair



CINCINNATI BIRD CLUB

c/o Newsletter Editor
3491 Bootjack Corner Rd
Williamsburg, Ohio 45176

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

Lois Shadix (lcshadix@fuse.net), 2928 Saddleback Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45244

2015-2016 DUES:

IF YOU HAVEN'T SENT
IN YOUR DUES YET
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ALONG WITH YOUR
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