



GREATER AKRON

AUDUBON *Matters*

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Witt's End

Inspiring Conservation

Recently, it was my great pleasure to have lunch with John Flicker, president, National Audubon Society; Steve Sedam, executive director, Audubon Ohio; a couple of directors from the Audubon Ohio board and a few representatives of foundations in this area. There were nine of us. We sat around, swapping stories about how we got interested in the outdoors in general, and involved with Audubon in particular. The conversation eventually turned to a discussion of the new Audubon vision — the big picture.

After listening to what John Flicker had to say, all I can add is that the Audubon of the future is not the Audubon you know now. My best advice is to tighten your seat belt and get your tray-table in the upright and locked position.

Then I began to wonder about the vision of Audubon you might currently have. If you perceive Audubon as a friendly bird club, providing you with an evening of great entertainment each month, it's understandable. That's what our chapter has been for many years. And I'm sure we'll remain more or less the same in the future. However, the big Audubon picture is — well, much bigger.

I'm not talking about dollars or membership. I'm talking about the vision or mission that John Flicker and the board of directors have for our organization. In recent years our chapter has been moving, or trying to move, in much the same direction as National; to become more of an education resource, along with being an evening of great entertainment once a month. As Flicker noted, it's programs that are the heart of Audubon. I'm sure he meant programs like our monthly meetings that go beyond birds to other important environmental issues, and programs such as Audubon Adventures for schools.

Here, briefly, is the Audubon of the future. We are set on a course to create a culture of conservation. No small task. Within the next 20 years, Audubon will establish a network of 1,000 Audubon Centers to provide quality environmental education programs for one-in-four children.

Here in Ohio we're fortunate to have the Aullwood Audubon Center near Dayton, the quintessential example of what National Audubon envisions. In Ohio we also have another 145 nature education providers, operated by entities other than Audubon. So why do we need more?

The screenshot shows the Audubon website interface. At the top left is an image of a bird in flight. The word "Audubon" is prominently displayed in the center. Below it is a navigation menu with the following items: Conservation & Action, News, Birds & Science, Books, Gifts, and Travel, Kids & Education, Local Audubon Resources, Join & Support, About Audubon, States & Chapters, Audubon & the Internet, Search, and Membership/ Customer Service. A "Contact/E-mail Audubon" link is at the bottom. A "WHAT'S NEW!" section on the left lists "Protect The Arctic", "Pesticide Guide", "Camps", and "Refuges in Crisis". A small thumbnail image of a frog is visible in the bottom left corner of the screenshot. Copyright information at the bottom reads: "COPYRIGHT © 2000, 2001 by National Audubon Society, Inc. All rights reserved."

Studies show there is a clear need to assist in academic achievement. Schools can do only so much, and it's not nearly enough. Schools lack the critical hands-on experience that make the difference. There are many other reasons for centers, such as saving habitat and meeting the demand for more nature education in the urban core of Ohio's cities and rural areas.

Probably the best reason of all, though, is because it's the right thing to do. Audubon Centers in Ohio will make quality nature education accessible to diverse audiences.

It's easy to view this program as something for someone else. But that's the shortsighted view. True, the programs and centers are for someone else, someone less fortunate, someone who has yet to discover the wonders and beauty of nature. The centers are for someone much like ourselves when we first started down the path.

Programs: Something for Every Taste

Butterflies for Birdwatchers will be the topic of the **April 24th** meeting, presented by Margy Siebert and Alice Phillips. They'll get some help from chapter member and photographer Trudy Beal who has agreed to show some of her butterfly & caterpillar slides. The speakers will include a variety of topics, including butterfly watching and monitoring, identification guides, sources for butterfly gardening, biology and behavior, and photography.

For the **May 22nd** meeting, Dr. Londrville of the University of Akron Biology Department will tell us all we need to know about having a fun time at the beach this summer. His program will be about sharks! He has done extensive research relating to Great White sharks and this is one program you won't want to miss if you're planning a pelagic birding trip this year.

The **April** and **May** meetings will be held at the Naturealm on Smith Road. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the program begins promptly at 7:30 p.m. Our meetings are free and open to the public. The executive committee is soliciting ideas

for next year's programs so if you would like to be a presenter, or have an idea for a program, please let us know. We're open to all suggestions. We already have a couple programs signed up that will take you to places you've never been.

As for the **June 26th picnic**, we have a special treat this year. Our picnic will be held at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center (CVEEC), located at 3675 Oak Hill Road, a bit south of Peninsula. See the map for directions; it's easy to find. From Akron, go north on River Road until you reach Everett Road. Turn left on Everett to Oak Hill Road. The CVEEC entrance is the first drive on the right. CVEEC is an award-winning environmental learning facility located in the heart of national park. CVEEC offers innovative school programs, scout programs, summer camps, teacher workshops, conference facilities and family events throughout the year. Following our picnic dinner we will have a tour of this outstanding facility. Bring your binoculars because there will be plenty of birding opportunities before, during and after dinner. We'll start with a covered dish picnic about 6:30 p.m. The chapter will provide beverages, chips, plates, napkins and flatware. Watch the June Newsletter for more details.

Speak Your Mind, Please

Michele Tucker is creating a list of chapter members willing to write an occasional letter to U.S. representatives and senators when she notifies them of important Audubon Action Bulletins requiring member support. If you're interested in protecting the environment for birds, other wildlife and future generations, please forward your e-mail address to mitucker@aol.com. Did you know the White House receives more than 40,000 telephone calls each day? This is your opportunity to make your voice heard above all that din!

Scholarship Available

The executive committee has agreed to grant \$500 to one person each year for assistance attending an Audubon camp. Applicants need to

submit their request to the committee by May 18. Please send a brief letter explaining why you would like to attend one of the many National Audubon camps. Send your requests to Mark Purdy, GAAS, P.O. Box 80056, Akron OH 44308. If you'd like to see the variety of camps offered, visit www.audubon.org. This \$500 is to be used as part of your expenses for attending the camp. Your actual total will vary, depending on which venue you choose.

Election Time

It's time for chapter elections. Voting will take place at the **June 26th** meeting. The elective offices are president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. If you would like to run for office, or would like to place the name of someone in nomination (please clear it with that person before you submit the name), please make your interest known to nomination committee chairperson Clyde Witt, or any of the current officers.

Help!

If you'd like to help keep the chapter moving and doing good works, we need you! There are a variety of volunteer jobs that require a minimal amount of time and effort. We are desperately looking for someone to take over the duties of hospitality chair. Michelle Tucker has been doing the job for several years now, in addition to being the conservation chair and chapter secretary. It's not a big job, but it does require someone who will attend all the meetings, set up the hot water and put out some snacks. The chapter pays for the coffee and snacks.

We're also looking for some legal advice. If you're an attorney and can talk with the executive committee about the pros and cons of the chapter's 501c3 non-profit status, talk with Mark Purdy.

Important Audubon Program

National Audubon Society has launched a national, multi-media, citizen awareness campaign promoting responsible pesticide application and the use of alternatives. The new program features

the "Audubon Guide for a Healthy Yard and Beyond," a tool designed to help homeowners, gardeners and land managers meet the challenges of detoxifying the backyards, schools and community spaces of America. It is available now at www.audubon.org.

Audubon's chart provides an easy reference. It contains information on common household pesticides while offering safe alternatives, guidelines for responsible use, information on naturally pest-resistant native plants, and Audubon's "Ten Commandments for a Healthy Yard." This chart is being made available for national distribution and also on the Internet at www.audubon.org. For more information on this subject, talk with chapter member Joyce Pelz, an expert in environmentally safe lawn care.

Field Trips

We have a growing list of spring field trips on tap. Listed below are those that were confirmed at press time. Others may be added so attend the chapter meetings to learn where and when your friends have gone without you.

We're going to get the spring warbler season off to a fast start with an early trip to Firestone MetroPark. This is one of the better Akron-area hot spots so let's meet at 8:00 a.m., Sunday, April 29. We'll meet in the parking lot off Harrington Road, just north of Warner Road. The trip will be led by Wolfgang and Joyce Pelz.

If you want to hear and see hooded warblers, about the best spot in the area is Deep Lock Quarry in the national park. Allan and Susan Dooley will take the lead at 8:30 a.m. Sunday, May 6. Deep Lock is located about one mile south of Peninsula on Riverview Road.

On **Saturday, May 19th**, we have a special treat in store with a return to the secluded Bath Nature Preserve. This exclusive spot is not officially open, but the Purdy's have special entrée permission. Meet at the Bath Elementary School parking lot 8 a.m., NW corner of the intersection of Cleveland-Massillon and Ira Roads. The preserve is a short carpool/caravan drive from there. Mark and Claire Purdy will be our leaders.