



# GREATER AKRON AUDUBON *Matters*

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## **My Witt's End** – by Clyde Witt, editor

### *What We Did At Summer Camp*

Maybe you missed the party. August 20 was the 75th anniversary of Audubon's Hog Island Camp in Maine. It's a national treasure of wildlife conservation. It's teachers are as legendary as the island itself; Roger Tory Peterson, Rachel Carson, Kenn Kaufman and Dr. Stephen Kress, to name a few.

Susan and I had the honor and privilege of working at Hog Island this May, as volunteers, helping Dr. Kress with his continuing efforts of developing Project Puffin, the successful seabird restoration program started in the 1970s, now recognized internationally.

The National Audubon Society, at the inspiration and direction of Dr. Kress, started Project Puffin in 1973; an effort to learn how to restore puffins to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine. Although puffins are not an endangered species (they're abundant in Newfoundland, Iceland, and Britain), they are rare in Maine. In the 1970s, two surviving colonies were vulnerable to disasters such as oil spills and accidental establishment of predators such as rats and mink.

The Project began with an attempt to restore puffins to Eastern Egg Rock in Muscongus Bay, about six miles east of Pemaquid Point. Puffins nested there until about 1885 when hunters took the last survivors of this once-flourishing colony. The restoration of puffins to Eastern Egg Rock is based on the fact that young puffins usually return to breed on the same island where they hatched ([www.projectpuffin.org/EasternEggRock.html](http://www.projectpuffin.org/EasternEggRock.html)).

Restoration of seabird colonies takes years of persistent work, since so many factors influencing success are beyond the control of researchers. For example, young puffins must find ample food and clean waters while avoiding predators. Unfortunately, oil spills, depleted fish stocks, entanglement in fishing nets and predation by gulls decrease the number of surviving birds. Considering these odds, the establishment of new puffin and tern colonies through active management is especially exciting. Our workdays (Okay, when you're a

birder, standing side-by-side with experts from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, it's hardly work.) started with bird walks at 5:45 a.m. and finished with lectures on seabird restoration about 9:30 p.m. We not only studied seabirds, we learned about geology, life in tidal pools and the threats to flora of islands.



Most of all, we learned about the power of one man's dream. Dr. Steve Kress (an absolute thrill and joy to bird with), teaches how you can make a difference in this world so torn apart by the efforts of less-caring people. His mission, to overcome and repair damages caused by less-conservation-minded individuals, lives on in Project Puffin.

To learn more about Hog Island, Project Puffin, and how you can help, visit [www.projectpuffin.org](http://www.projectpuffin.org),

or [www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCampsLegacyHistory.html](http://www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCampsLegacyHistory.html).

**Editor's Note:** Because of chapter budgetary concerns, rather than reduce the already overburdened Newsletter staff, the executive committee has opted to print four Newsletters again this season. Hang on to this one. Inside there's important information about programs and the Annual Wild Bird Seed Sale. You'll receive the next issue in early October. For an up-to-the-minute schedule attend the meetings, stay tuned—and keep your eye on the chapter's Web site, [www.akronaudubon.org](http://www.akronaudubon.org).

## **Program Schedule**

The chapter holds meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month, except for December when we do the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. June is our annual picnic, so the meeting place will most likely be Bath Nature Preserve. There are no meetings in July and August. Meetings are held at Mingo Shelter in Sand Run MetroPark in the Merriman Valley. The entrance is off Sand Run Parkway, east of the ford and east of the Shady Hollow Pavilion. Check MetroPark's maps at [www.summitmetroparks.org](http://www.summitmetroparks.org) for a map of Sand Run Park. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The meeting begins promptly at

7:00 p.m., usually with a short, informative, business session. Meetings are open to the public so bring a friend.

### **Another Great Program Line Up**

At press time the full schedule of programs had not been confirmed. Those we do have, however, are outstanding—as usual. This year the executive committee scanned the globe for a mix of programs to serve all interests. The schedule leans heavily toward the avian side of nature, with some interesting twists. Bird programs will be balanced with informative presentations featuring other natural and man-made phenomena.

**SEPTEMBER 27** This year we'll kickoff the season (to mix a metaphor) with a program by Akron's own, Lisa Petit, chief of science and resources, Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Her program, "From Basketballs to Bobolinks: The Real 'Miracle of Richfield,'" will explain how nature snatched victory from the jaws of defeat at the old Coliseum property.

**OCTOBER 25** Fasten your seatbelts and be sure your tray-table is in the full and upright position. This is a program every frequent (or not-so-frequent flyer) will enjoy. Ripped from the front pages of the news, Dr. Richard Dolbeer, Science Advisor, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, Bird Strike Committee USA, will tell us about bird strikes and aircraft. The full program title is: "Sharing the skies: Advancing the science of Ornithology and Aviation Safety."

**NOVEMBER 22** Again, tapping into the vast pool of local talent, Pat Rydquist and Megan Doran, from Metro Parks, Serving Summit County, will present a program that will aid your bird identification multifold. They'll explain classifying bird song by sonograms. Don't be spooked by the technology aspects of this program. Think of it as another tool to help identify those pesky birds that would rather sing than show their faces in the forest.

**DECEMBER 18** Annual Christmas Bird Count. As has become our custom, we will also have a chili supper at the Mingo Shelter following the count. Details to follow at the chapter meetings, on the Web site and in the next newsletter.

And when the new year starts, we'll have programs on emotionally and politically charged issues of genetically modified food, the science of climate influences on natural phenomena such as bird migration, and acoustic communication among birds—just to name a few. All of these, and their program dates, will be described in future newsletters.

### **Save This Info**

It's not uncommon during fall migration to find banded birds—particularly Canada Geese. There have also been reports of plovers with odd-colors on their chests—part of a migration study. Other first-year birds, banded a few months earlier, are making their way south, getting lost and dying

in the adventure. If you find a banded bird, and it's a fresh kill, contact Dr. Andy Jones ([ajones@CMNH.ORG](mailto:ajones@CMNH.ORG)) at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to learn if he'd like the specimen for the museum's collection. Also, copy down the exact data, band color and location (i.e. right leg, etc.) and the spot where you found the bird, then report the information to <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL/homepage/call800.cfm>.

Any banded, or painted bird is part of someone's research study. These folks are grateful for any feedback you can give them. In my experience of reporting banded birds, the response has been quick and welcome.

### **33rd Summit County Census Sets New Records**

*by Ann Chasar and Doug Vogus, coordinators*

Good weather and few mosquitoes provided ideal birding conditions for volunteers who canvassed Summit County in June. Volunteers commented that birds were fewer, and indeed, birds-per-party-hour total was the lowest since 2000. The extended wet spring led to poor conditions for early nesters. Birds per party hour were down for ground nesters: Lowest for Canada Geese since 1991, Mallards since 2000 and an all-time low for Killdeer. Mourning Dove numbers were down; Downy and Hairy Woodpecker numbers were lower than usual. Yet the same weather probably increased insects for fly-catchers; Eastern Wood-Pewees, Eastern Kingbirds, Purple Martins, Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds all had a good season. Again, weather related, low Carolina Wren numbers could have been predicted from the cold, snowy winter. Sadly, habitat loss explains the lack of American Kestrel for the first time. And was the pair of Blue Grosbeaks, found in an undisclosed area, an anomaly or a sign of the future? Check it all out at [www.akronaudubon.org](http://www.akronaudubon.org) and compare 34 years of data. This year we had 129 total species and 28,005 total birds, found by 80 volunteers who spent 399 party hours in the field.

Many thanks to this fantastic group of enthusiastic volunteers: Emily Andregg, Claudia Anders, Gregory Bennett, Peg & Rob Bobel, Sandy Brown, Dave Brumfield, Jen Brumfield, Garnet Byrne, John Cameron, Dwight & Ann Chasar, Ernie Cornelius, Wayne Crouse, George & Sandy Cull, Mary Deal, Phyllis Devlin, Fred Dinkelbach, Meghan Doran, Sue Dupstadt, Lois Eckart, Mike Edgington, Paul Ellsworth, Chriss Fulton, Bob Furst, Craig Griffin, Ann & Marty Gulbransen, Judy Hendrick, Michele Hendrick, Bob Hinkle, Nancy Howell, Larry Hunter, Mary Lou Hura, Andrea Irland, Diane Johnson, Susan Jones, Hedy Jones, Marilyn & Steve Kaminsky, Winnie Kennedy, Gene & Linda Kovach, Jeffrey & Marian Kraus, Louisa Kreider, Karl Liske, Elaine Marsh, Sarah Matheny, Wilbur McQueen, Marie Morgan, Marianne Nolan, Marc Nolls, Hope Orr, Bill Osborne, Michael Pasek, Wolfgang & Joyce Pelz, Mark & Clalre Purdy, Dave Reinhart, Jim Reyda, Fred Riley, Mary Anne & Tom Romito, Pat Rydquist, George & Linda Sangrik, Phyllis Schnell, Stanley Stine, Bert Szabo, Henry & Jim Trimpe, Doug Vogus, Annette Webb, Janet Wertz, Clyde Witt, Michelle Zager, Marian Zehnder.

## Annual Wild Bird Seed Sale

We've confirmed the date with Copley Feed for our Annual Wild Bird Seed Sale, November 5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Plan your purchases, however, be prepared for sticker shock. According to Mark Roesner of Copley Feed, and the folks at Oliger Seed (our generous partners in this venture), pricing of sunflower products has gone crazy this season for a couple reasons: The huge jump in sunflower cost forced by a drought in Russia, coupled with excessive rain in the Midwest of this country. Actually, that's a single reason—the weather.

We'll have the usual menu of avian attractions, plus peanuts (shelled, 25-lb bags) a favorite of Blue Jays and those fat fuzzy brown birds with big fluffy tails.

As has been our tradition, this year's wild bird seed sale is possible through the generous cooperation of Copley Feed & Supply store on Copley Circle, 1468 S. Cleveland-Massillon Road.

Our seed is fresh and prices are competitive with retail offerings in the area. This is the chapter's only fund raising effort. Profits support our educational programs and newsletters.

A special thanks go to Nancy and Mark Roesner of Copley Feed for their usual outstanding generosity. And let's give an additional shout-out to Joyce and Wolfgang Pelz, and the good folks at NaturaLawn of America, for their efforts in coordinating this project.

### **Order Deadline is October 31. Pick up is November 5 at Copley Feed**

Please mail your check, payable to Greater Akron Audubon Society, and completed order form ASAP to:

JoyWolf Enterprises  
PO Box 26278  
Akron, OH 44319

All order forms must be in by October 31 to accurately place the order with Copley Feed.

		How many?	Total \$
Oil Sunflower, 50 pounds .....	\$40.00	_____	_____
Niger seed, 10 pounds .....	\$13.00	_____	_____
Wild bird mix:			
20 pounds .....	\$11.00	_____	_____
50 pounds .....	\$22.00	_____	_____
Bird Banquet, 35 pounds .....	\$25.00	_____	_____
Songbird Choice, 40 pounds .....	\$33.00	_____	_____
Peanuts, 25 pounds .....	\$32.00	_____	_____
I would like to donate to the Chapter general fund .....			_____
		<b>TOTAL</b>	_____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ **(In case we must call.)**

*Pick-up will be Saturday, November 5 from 9AM to 1PM, at Copley Feed.  
All seed not picked up by 1PM is donated to the Seiberling Nature Realm.*