



GREATER AKRON

# AUDUBON *Matters*

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## Chapter Meetings

The June 24th meeting of the Greater Akron Audubon Society will feature Mark and Julie Shieldcastle. Their program, "Return of the Shorebirds," will focus on identification to help us gear up for the fall migration, which starts around July 24th. The Shieldcastles are involved with the Black Swamp Bird Observatory; Mark is the Research Director and Julie is the Executive Director. Since shorebird migration is next next "event" on the birding calendar, you won't want to miss this program. We'll begin the meeting at the Seiberling Naturealm at 7:30 PM.

This is the last program of the 1996-1997 season. Programs will begin again in the fall; the first meeting will be on September 23rd. In a related matter, I want to extend the thanks of the GAAS to Marie Morgan, who has been the program chair for several years now. She's retiring from that position, and we all owe her a debt of gratitude for the fine programs she has lined up over the years.

## The Garden is Ready!

After months of planning, gathering and a day of planting, our butterfly and hummingbird perennial garden is in place at the Naturealm. Over the winter, we consulted reference books, gardeners, nurseries and the naturalists in our choice of perennials. But it didn't come together until the last two weeks. Soon we will be viewing the benefits of our labor of love as the wildlife

visitors we planted the garden for discover the banquet of nectars to sup, leaves to munch and seeds to eat. Of course, we will enjoy the beautiful blooms while looking out for these visitors as the plants develop over the seasons.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in this project, I hope I don't leave anyone out. First, to Gretchen Motts of the Naturealm. She heard that our chapter was interested in planting a bird and butterfly garden, and spoke with Judy Foltz, Director of the Naturealm. Judy agreed to let us plant the garden on site. Sue Mottl, the arborist, consulted with me many times on our plant selection, site location and plant collection methods. A wish list was worked out by Paramount Landscaping of Portage Lakes. We decided to accept donations from chapter members to keep costs down and let members participate in the project. Our number one donor was Hope Orr, in spite of the rainy weather and late timing of the donation day, she came through with several of the perennials from our list. Our hospitality chairperson and dedicated Metro Parks volunteer, Helen Bresley came through with several interesting plants. I also purchased more plants from Pam's Perennials on Berry Road. Pam generously donated a Happy Returns ever-blooming daylily and discounted her prices on all other plants for the project. We had one spot left to fill and decided to work in some bee balm from an overgrown spot in the Herb and Rock garden.

On planting day, everything started to fall into place as Helen, Ted Haddad, and my good friend Kathy Liszka grabbed hold of their trowels while I danced

## CHAPTER ELECTIONS

The list of nominees for the 1997-1998 Greater Akron Audubon Society officers was announced at the May meeting. We will list it in this newsletter and state the list once more at the June meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at this time and the annual election will be held during the business meeting prior to the evening's speaker. If you wish to be nominated or know of someone else who does, please contact one of the committee

members at 644-0373. Without further ado, here is the current slate of officers respectfully submitted by your election committee, Pat Haddad, Joyce Pelz and Alan Dooley:

- President** ..... Clyde Witt
- Vice President** ..... Wolfgang Pelz
- Secretary** ..... Pat Haddad
- Treasurer** ..... Susan Dooley

around the empty flower bed shuffling pots all over the place trying to guess what it would look like after the plants matured. I had drawn out a detailed plan the week before, but six new plant species showed up just before the trowels hit the dirt and some planning had to be done “on the wing”. With the able guidance of Naturealm gardener David “Woody” Stover, we dug in and planted our prize perennials in a flash. I hope you enjoy our gardening efforts during your visit. Maybe you will be inspired to plant one of your own someday, we’d be happy to help!

— Joyce Pelz

### **Volunteers in Action**

Aside from planting flowers and watching birds, our chapter has been involved in many activities this spring. On May 10th, we participated in River Day in the Cuyahoga Valley. We pitched in the clean-up effort behind the Boston Store site. The bike path view will be much more pleasant after hauling out, among other things, a rusted truck bed, roofing materials, and a stove tossed down to the river’s side. We spent Sunday, May 11th with The Great Lakes Regional Office Birdathon team covering the Lake Erie birding sites to find 104 species of birds to raise money for wetlands education projects in Ohio. A few members attended the Ohio EPA’s Great Lake’s Initiative question and answer session at Revere High School on June 4. Several members helped out the Metro Parks on June 7th, National Trails Day. Next week, I’ll be attending a consortium for the Scenic Rivers and Natural Areas division of Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources to learn more about how they operate. Thanks to everyone for your time and efforts. We hope you enjoyed your volunteer time. Even though everyone seems so busy, we do find people willing to take time out to lend a hand. It’s probably because volunteering is one of the most rewarding experiences they’ll ever have. If anyone is interested in participating in our activities, please talk to one of the officers at the next meeting or call us at 644-0373.

— Joyce Pelz

### **Birding Medina County**

For the second year, the Medina County Parks/ Greater Akron Audubon bird walk at River Styx Park was an overwhelming success, in terms of humans and birds. More than 80 people, and as many bird species enjoyed the first warm day of an otherwise cool spring season. Steady winds from the northwest and west encouraged the birds to delay their northward migration.

Lisa Petit, bird migration specialist from the Smithsonian Institution, gave a brief overview of neotropical bird migration and the importance of habitat preservation. Brad Westall of the Medina County Parks gave a preview of some new and exciting areas that are or will be opening to birding throughout the summer. There were numerous highlights on the walk including a rather late pied-billed grebe on the small pond. It provided excellent views of this bird often seen at a distance. Warblers were found throughout the park, especially numerous bay-breasted warblers, a species not often seen. Probably the mystery bird of the day, a Philadelphia vireo, challenged even the best field guides.

Another piece of news emanating from this outing is the discussions we are having with Medina Parks and Lisa Petit about a warbler identification workshop. Since Lisa travels throughout North and South America, scheduling is a challenge. Tentatively, we are looking at a workshop to be held the morning of the bird walk next year in mid-May. It offers an outstanding opportunity to learn and discuss warblers with one of this country’s leading researchers. Watch the newsletter for details after the first of the year.

—Clyde Witt

### **Field Trip to Ravenna Arsenal**

A cold and wet May 10 failed to dampen the enthusiasm of 18 birders who joined Dr. Courtney Willis of Youngstown State University and Tim Morgan, Natural Resources Manager of the Ravenna Arsenal, for the first field trip to the 21,419 acre site. The Ravenna Arsenal is a mixed habitat with fields, wooded areas, streams, marshes and ponds. The Portage/ Trumbull County acreage was originally selected during WWII by the Army because NE Ohio had the most cloud cover of all the sites under consideration in the U.S. It lived up to its reputation on the day of our visit.

We gathered at the East gate and then hiked down a muddy tank track looking for nesting Henslow sparrows. Unfortunately, they had not yet arrived but we did see Bobolinks, Meadowlarks and the ubiquitous Red-winged Blackbirds. Then we drove to the main gate, several miles away, parked and gathered in 5 cars for a long period of car birding periodically stopping when birds were sighted. This drive provided beautiful, pristine, untouched scenery with abundant wildflowers, budding trees, streams, waterfalls, and marshes - a spectacular habitat for wildlife.

Toward the end of the trip we stopped at a wooded area and hiked a short distance to a hill overlooking a stream. This was the most productive bird area on the trip. We were all very excited to see 10 species of

warblers all clustered in one small area. They appeared on branches, in bushes, and by the stream in a short period of time. Many saw lifers and all were excited.

In all we counted 35 species of birds on the trip. Birds seen included: Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Kildeer, Mourning Dove, Pileated Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Brown Thrasher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart, Hooded Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Northern Oriole, and American Goldfinch.

Some military facilities have been made available to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for use by birders and other wildlife watchers. It would be wonderful to have the Arsenal become such a facility in our community. However, the cost of converting this land and making it safe for visitors may be substantial.

We would like to thank the Ravenna Arsenal, Tim Morgan, and Courtney Willis for making this trip possible. Hopefully, this trip will be a yearly event.

—Anita and Richard O'Toole

## Natural Resources Miscellany

A new book caught my eye at the local library recently. *Choose to Reuse*, by Nikki and David Goldbeck, is a compilation of services, products, programs, businesses and organizations that foster **RE-USE**. Recycling gets lots of publicity, but it is really only third on the list of ways we can help our environment. **REDUCE** is the first—don't buy it if you don't need it, avoid products with excess packaging, use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without, etc.... Reuse is generally better than recycling. Buy refills of those household products, fruit juice concentrates, etc., rather than buy new containers each time. Buy reusable durable goods rather than throwaways. We all know about those, but what can you do with an obsolete computer? Old calendars and greeting cards? Tires? Paint? The book is a goldmine of ideas to save money as well as landfill space. It's a sturdily bound paperback, printed on recycled paper (of course!), published by Ceres Press, Woodstock, NY (\$15.95).

Now, what **can** you do with that lead-based paint that was in your garage when you moved into your house? That old bottle of pesticide that you wouldn't

think of using these days? Summit County's **Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Center** at 1201 Graham Rd. in Stow (Graham Rd. and Rte. 8, next to Carter Lumber) is open for the season. The center is open Tuesday 1 to 4 PM and Wednesday 6:30 to 10 PM. For a complete list of accepted materials call 374-0383. Ask to be put on the mailing list for the *Waste Line* newsletter—then make sure you pass it on to your neighbors before recycling it!

—Carol Tveekrem

## Kirtland's Warbler Tours

If you missed the brief, three-day appearance of the Kirtland's warbler at Crane Creek in May, you still have a chance to see this bird on its nesting grounds. Once again, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are offering guided tours to view Kirtland's warblers on its breeding grounds. These popular tours offer an excellent opportunity for observing the highly endangered birds whose entire population nests in 17 Michigan counties. Each tour is limited to 20 people. No recording or tape playing allowed. The tours, offered from Mio and Grayling on Michigan's lower peninsula, are free and available as follows:

*From Mio* — Offered by the Forest Service at 7 a.m., Wednesday through Saturday, and additionally at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, from May 15 through July 3. For more information call Mio Ranger District Office at (517) 826-3252.

*From Grayling* — Offered by USFWS from the Holiday Inn in Grayling, daily at 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., May 15 through July 4. For information and group reservations, contact the USFWS at (517) 351-2555.

## Midwest Birding Symposium

Peak of fall migration for songbirds and raptors comes at the end of September and so does the Midwest Birding Symposium. This year the event will be held in our backyard — well almost — September 25-28. Hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest, the event will be held in the Port Clinton area. It features a national art show, boat trips to offshore islands and (hoped for) 300 species of birds that have been recorded in this area. Nationally known speakers, educational seminars, new product showcase and guided tours fill the agenda of this major birding event. For more information contact Melinda Huntley at the Ottawa County Visitors Bureau, 800 441-1271.