



GREATER AKRON

AUDUBON *Matters*

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Chapter Meeting

There will be no regular meeting of the Greater Akron Audubon Society in December; the annual Christmas dinner will take its place (see below). But we'll be back at the Seiberling Naturealm on January 27th. Our speaker for the first meeting of 1998 will be Pat Claar, administrative associate at PPG in Barberton. If you're not familiar with the reclamation project undertaken at the Lime Lakes in Barberton, you won't want to miss this program. Pat will bring us a slide show, giving us the history of the project, as well as fill us in on the work that is currently going on. This ongoing project by PPG is something that we can all be proud of, and I'm sure that you'll leave the program with the knowledge that big business CAN take on an environmental task with enough imagination and commitment.

The GAAS meets at the Seiberling Naturealm; the meeting begins at 7:30 PM.

Christmas Bird Count

Mark your calendars now for the birding event of the year, the annual Christmas Bird Count. This year, the Count will be held on Sunday, December 21st and will be the Chapter's 59th (officially, it is our 58th; the 1949 count was unofficial because it did not last the required eight hour period). The territory covered during the Count is a 15-mile diameter circle centered on the intersection of Front Street and Broad Boulevard in Cuyahoga Falls. The circle is divided into 19 smaller territories. To cover this large area many volunteers birders are needed. If you have not yet signed up or if you have not participated before and would like to join us, please call Marie Morgan at 867-9850, Bill Osborne at 929-9712, or Bob Furst at 686-2727. We will be very happy to assign you to one of the nineteen leaders. You do not have to be an experienced birder to help. The Christmas Bird Count is always a fun day for all, so join us.

—Marie Morgan

Christmas Dinner

'Tis the season—for the annual GAAS Christmas Dinner! Once it's too dark for even the most dedicated Christmas Bird counter to see, we will once again be gathering at Papa Joe's Restaurant at the west end of Portage Trail in Cuyahoga Falls. On December 21st, from 6-9 PM, we'll have the use of the Tuscan Room for our dinner. The cost per person will be \$14 this year (tax and tip are included); a cash bar will also be available. All you need to do, whether you've been out counting or want to hear the first results, is to show up at the restaurant. No reservation or advance purchase is required, so come on down! You'll be able to find a seat and choose one of the dishes listed below. Each entree will come with a salad and soup, and your choices this year will be:

Smothered Chicken: breast of chicken with onions, mushrooms and provolone cheese, served with roasted red potatoes.

Beef Tips: served over fettucini noodles with a fresh vegetable.

Vegetable Lasagna: served with fresh vegetables. Papa Joe's Restaurant is at 1561 Akron-Peninsula Road; their phone number is 923-7999. Please set aside this evening to join your friends in the GAAS—we all look forward to seeing you!

Witt's End!

First Life Bird

In late August a non-birding friend stopped by the house, 18-month-old daughter in tow. The hummingbirds were putting on quite a show at the feeder so I used the opportunity to introduce this youngster to the wonders of birding. As I held her and pointed at the feeder she dutifully looked at the end of my finger. When I imitated a



hummingbird she giggled. So much for ornithology.

But it got me thinking about what my first life bird might have been. Probably a robin or bluejay. The first bird I have any recollection of (besides fried chicken) is the mourning dove. I recall hearing them calling in the morning and my dad would say the birds were calling for rain. And dad was always right. Later that day — or week — it would rain, just like dad had predicted.

So for years I called this bird the moaning dove because that's how it sounded and that's what I thought dad called it. Only later did I start calling it a morning dove — since it called in the morning. Probably not until I bought my first Peterson's guide did I realize the correct spelling. More proof that what we don't understand we describe. And what we can't describe we count.

All of which brings me around to a major event on our local chapter calendar. The annual Christmas Bird Count December 21. This event has been nearly 100 years in the making. Our chapter has participated for about half that time. Typically, we have one of the larger turnouts in the state in terms of humans as well as species of birds. It's a great opportunity to get out of the house and into the joys of winter. If you are not inclined to romp in the woods early on a Sunday morning, we have the option of feeder counting if you are within our 15-mile count circle. Bird counting is citizen-science at its best.

Don't delay. If you've not already made plans with one of the area coordinators, contact Bill Osborne at (330) 929-9712. Bill will get you to an area coordinator.

—Clyde Witt

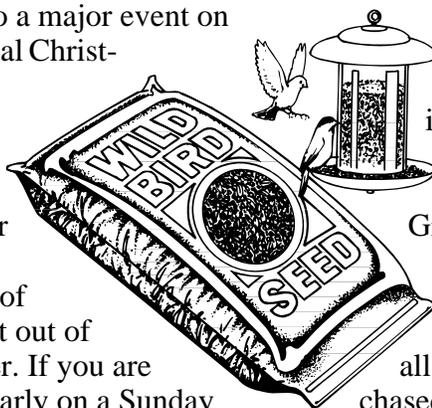
My Aching Back!

If you thought that stack of bird seed at November's sale was big, you're right. According to Tina Osborne, we sold 24,610 pounds of the wild bird goodies. A big thanks goes to all of the volunteers who moved and toted the stuff and helped load buyers' cars. Sales totaled more than \$7,000 and our profit is expected to be more than \$1,500. The profits from the sale will pay for the Audubon Adventures program, a series of environmental teaching packets published by the National Audubon Society and supplied by us to local schools.

Bird Seed Sale

Thank you to all the following volunteers who helped with the Chapter's 18th Bird Seed Sale. As always, volunteers are the strength of an organization and their help is greatly appreciated. The volunteers are Helen and Lloyd Bresley, Allan and Susan Dooley with daughter, Sarah, Craig Griffin, Ted Haddad, George Nahmi, Bill Osborne, Dorothy Osborne, Bob and Darla Peabody, Joyce Pelz, Mark Purdy, Bert Szabo, and Clyde Witt. Thank you to all our customers, new and old, who purchased bird seed from us making the Sale a successful one. Without our customers there would be no Bird Seed Sale. And thank you to Mark and Nancy Roesner, owners of Copley Feed and Supply, for all their help in providing the place, the seed and the help of Daryl Gaylord. They are great to work with and make it easy for to provide bird seed to our customers.

—Tina Osborne and Marie Morgan



Environmental News

Noteworthy Win in City of Green

In response to comments from local citizens, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency directed developer Michael Marchetta to preserve and protect 1580 feet of headwater stream in an unnamed tributary to Wonder Lake located in Green Township. Marchetta's original request included culverting the stream to increase parking lot capacity adjacent to his proposed shopping center.

Comments and letters from concerned citizens sparked the EPA to grant the non-degradation alternative, including a suggestion of building a bridge over the stream. No culvert or filling of wetlands would be authorized. The developer must also sub-

mit a stormwater prevention plan to control discharges to the stream before and after construction.

Wildlife Refuges Victory: A Clear Mission and Significant Boosts in Funding

For the first time in history, the federal Refuge System finally has a clear mission to conserve wildlife first. The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, signed by President Clinton in October, solidifies this mission as law. The National Audubon Society played a key role in forging the compromise that led to the final legislation. Audubon lobbied for significant Refuge Operations and Maintenance funding increases. The refuge sys-

tem desperately needed more funding; many refuges had been closed to the public because of funding shortfalls. With the Interior Appropriations bill's passage came a major \$42 million increase in Refuge Operations and Maintenance to \$221 million.

Also, in the Refuge news: The bittersweet Interior Appropriations bill signed by the President July 14th includes an unprecedented \$869 million to acquire environmentally sensitive lands.

In the Everglades, significant chunks of vital habitat will be added to Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve. Congress handed the Administration an incredible \$76 million for these purchases, \$27 million more than what both the park and preserve received combined over the last 5 years.

Furthermore, 22 National Audubon Society priority sites received earmarks (funds specifically set aside) including \$1 million for Ohio's own Ottawa NWR.

Wing Watch Weekend

Mark your calendars: Lake Erie Wing Watch Weekend happens April 3 - 5. Activities include "An Evening with Peter Dunne," seminars, workshops, displays and field trips to Lake Erie's birding hot spots. Peter Dunne, Director of Cape May Bird Observatory is a well known ornithologist and has written several books and articles on bird watching. He will be signing books on Friday and speak about the art of pishing (calling birds out of the bushes, in case you were wondering). Call 1-800-344-1673 for more information and hotel discounts for birders. My husband and I truly enjoyed last year's event.

— Joyce Pelz

Habitat Protection

As you know, Audubon's mission is the protection and preservation of habitat for birds and other animals. Well, here's some incredible news for those interested in wild trout. A remnant population of native brook trout survives in the headwaters of the Chagrin River. The fish was thought to be extinct in Ohio until 1972 when two populations were discovered in the Geauga County area. One population was destroyed by developers and it was assumed the second population met a similar fate. Well, the tenacious little fish, said by many trout fishers to be the most beautiful of the trout species, is hanging in there! But this small population is now threatened by development.

Brook trout are most susceptible to anything less than perfect water conditions. These trout (actually they are char, not true trout) display light-colored spots on a dark body. True trout display dark spots on

light-colored bodies. Brookies, as trout fishers refer to them, have dark green bodies with cream-colored irregular lines. Their sides gradually shade from

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green to orange and then white on the belly. They are adorned with small red spots encircled with blue halos. That's how they got their nickname — speckled trout.

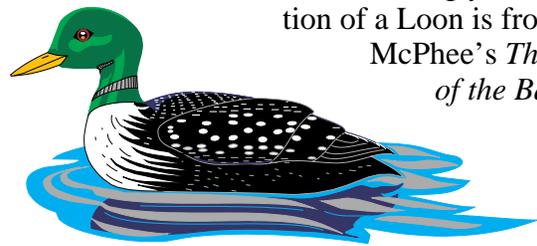
Brookies thrive only in clear, clean, cold water that is oxygen rich and siltation practically non-existent. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources is protecting the habitat of this last remaining population in Ohio and working hard to develop hatchery stocks of these fish.

—Clyde Witt

Loony Observations

[For those of you who know John McPhee's writing, he needs no introduction; for those who don't, you have a treat awaiting you. This evocation of a Loon is from

McPhee's *The Survival of the Bark Canoe.*]



He looks like a big duck, a small goose.

His back, in summer, is a tessellation of white squares and dots on a black field. His head is black and forest green, and so is his neck, which is surrounded with vertical white stripes. His eyes are red. In the air, he could be part flamingo—long neck extended, feet behind, back humped. His maximum airspeed is sixty miles an hour, and his stall-out speed must be fifty-nine. Anyway, he scarcely slows up, apparently because he thinks he will fall. He lands on his stomach (not feet first, like a duck), and at sixty miles an hour his landing is something to see. Takeoff is a considerable problem for him. With, say, ten fish in him, he needs a runway at least a quarter of a mile long. He runs over the surface of the lake on his big feet and beats the water with his wings. Heavily, he goes into the air. With fifteen fish in him, he has no chance whatsoever. For takeoff, he needs, as well, a breeze to head into—sometimes a pretty stiff one. From a calm lake—even if he has an empty stomach—he cannot fly.