



GREATER AKRON

AUDUBON *Matters*

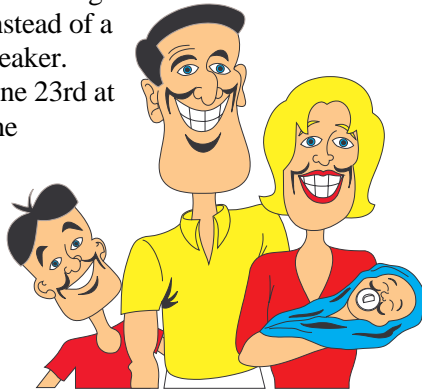
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Chapter Meetings

This year the GAAS board decided to revive an old tradition, that of the June meeting being a potluck dinner instead of a regular meeting and a speaker. We'll be gathering on June 23rd at the Octagon Shelter of the CVNRA (directions to follow). We hope to have some surprises and door prizes. We have the shelter from 6:00 onward, and will have dinner at 7:00 PM. Please bring your own silverware, and a casserole, salad or dessert to share. GAAS will be providing soft drinks, plates, cups, and napkins. This will be the last meeting of the GAAS "season;" the next meeting will be September 22nd, and we'll be back at the Seiberling Naturealm. Please join us for a casual gathering in a lovely setting.



Heading north on Route 8, exit Route 303, turn left (west) on 303, pass under Rt. 8 and turn left on Akron-Cleveland Rd. Approx. 3/4 mile, turn right onto Kendall Park Road, go 1 mile to the entrance of the Octagon Shelter which is on the right (the shelter is north of Kendall Park Rd.). Kendall Park Road is also called Truxell Road coming from Akron Peninsula Road.

Chapter Elections

The election committee (Mark Purdy, Joyce Pelz, and Allan Dooley) has come up with the following slate for the 1998-1999 term of office. Voting will be held at the June 23rd meeting. Nominations will be taken from the floor, but do be sure to have cleared it with the nominee first!

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

Witt's End

Two Birding Mysteries

Too often I've used the excuse of not getting out enough to see all the warblers on migration. This year I couldn't use that rationalization. I was fortunate enough to get to Crane Creek twice, along with River Styx Park, a number of hot spots in this area, as well as five other states during the month of May. I didn't do too bad: 21 out of a possible 38 or so. It depends on who is listing the possibilities of warblers in the East.

A lot of the birds I saw were singles (hoping to be doubles, I'm sure) or doubles. No overwhelming flocks. One day at Crane Creek the blackpoll warblers were too numerous to be counted. And while on the Appalachian Trail in North Carolina I saw more ovenbirds in a 50-yard radius than I've seen in my entire life. But those were the exceptions.

So the first mystery is: Where are the birds? And the second mystery is: Where are the birders? On the field trip to River Styx Park I asked Lisa Petit, ornithologist with the Smithsonian Bird Observatory, the first question. She does research on neotropical species in Central America as well as here. Her unproved theory is that because of El Niño, Central and South America are exceptionally dry. She observed many birds unable to feed enough (because of a lack of insects) to make the migration — at least not all at the same time. She predicted a more elongated migration, spread over more time and fewer birds making the trip this year. That does not bode well for neotropicals next season since it means fewer young this year.

Birding with Lisa was exciting as well as educational. The Kentucky warbler she found was a life bird for me. She and her husband Dan were generous with their knowledge and patient with the endless array of questions asked. We were fortunate to walk the woods on a gorgeous May morning with these two people.

Which brings me to my second question: Where were the birders this year? The response to our field trips was discouraging, to put it mildly. Only a few people from our chapter went

on the River Styx trip, missing the opportunity to bird with one of this country's leading neotropical bird specialists. I can't blame a lack of birders on El Niño. If anyone knows the answer please tell me. The executive board is already in planning programs and field trips for next year. Please tell us what you would like to do.

—Clyde Witt

It's a WHAT???

(Editor's note: in looking over some back issues of the newsletter, I came across this quiz, and thought you might enjoy it seeing it, just to tide you over until fall migration brings out the Chewink again.)

Reader Don Burlett found an early birdwatcher's guide containing some fascinating folk names for birds, and he sent along a challenging quiz. *Bird Neighbors* (1897) listed the old names, and Don keyed them to the names we use today. As he points out, "How can you know the state of your knowledge if you don't know the past?" Here's part of the quiz, with the answers buried elsewhere in this issue.

<i>Old Name</i>	<i>Current Name</i>
1. Devil Downhead	A. Eastern Phoebe
2. Corn Thief	B. Common Redpoll
3. Snowflake	C. Fox Sparrow
4. Bridge Pewee	D. White-breasted Nuthatch
5. Ferruginous Finch	E. Bobolink
6. Alice's Thrush	F. Common Crow
7. Black Cap	G. Snow Bunting
8. Cherry-bird	H. Rufous-sided Towhee
9. Chebec	I. Wilson's Warbler
10. Butterbird	J. American Tree Sparrow
11. Little Snowbird	K. Wood Thrush
12. Winter Chip Bird	L. Least Flycatcher
13. Bellbird	M. Cedar Waxwing
14. Chewink	N. Gray-cheeked Thrush

Gardening News

Spring certainly came early and in its fullest bloom this year after our mild winter. We are happy to report that our Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden planted last year at the MetroPark's Naturealm survived beautifully. The few casualties (hollyhocks browsed by deer) were replaced by delphiniums and a butterfly bush. The annual salvia plants gave way to some tickseed coreopsis. The garden is thriving with the help of Audubon member and head Naturealm gardener, David "Woody" Stover. David took a Saturday morning off to help me purchase and plant the replacement annuals and we thank him for his enthusiasm and advice. Be sure to stop by the garden. As you approach the building, the garden is on your right, just past the pine trees and ferns.

We are looking for volunteers to stop by and pull some weeds, but please call in advance to schedule dates with us (644-0373).

In other gardening news: The April issue of *Martha Stewart Living*, carried a great article on growing backyard habitat,

highlighting the impact habitat fragmentation has had on song birds. The premier issue of *Wild Garden* arrived this spring, attempting to carve out a niche in the growing world of garden magazines (contact info: *Wild Garden*, P.O. Box 70570, Eugene, OR, 97401; phone: (541) 465-1383). This season's Victory Garden finally gives some exposure to organic gardens.— from *Biodiversity News*

Delisting Demonstrates ESA Success

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has announced plans to delist or downlist 29 endangered and threatened species. National Audubon Society applauds Secretary Babbitt's initiative, which shows that after 25 years the ESA is still working for our imperiled wildlife.

Listing issues continued in the news this week as the Fish and Wildlife Service delayed consideration of a listing petition for the Yellow-billed Cuckoo due to budgetary constraints, and three scientific groups asked the Service to reconsider its decision to delist the spotted frog. The scientists argue that a conservation agreement between the Fish and Wildlife Service and state and local authorities in Utah is not sufficient to ensure the continued survival of the imperiled amphibian. These examples indicate the importance of sound science in listing decisions and the pressing need for resources to make these decisions in a timely manner.

Ohio's Forests —Supreme Court Cuts Legal Challenge Down

On May 18 the Supreme Court unanimously ruled in favor of the U.S. Forest Service and the Ohio Forestry Association in *Sierra Club v. Ohio Forestry Association*. Sierra Club had challenged the proposed logging levels in the Wayne National Forest management plan, claiming that they were too high. The court refused to recognize the harm of setting high logging levels in National Forest management plans. The court decided that management plan language, in regards to timber quotas, could not be challenged. This means that all future legal challenges to timber cuts must be directed against specific timber sales. The court's ruling applies only to timber sales, allowing future legal challenges to be made against other aspects of management plans. — from *The Advisory*; National Audubon Society's Weekly Policy Report (5/22/98)

Belize: A Great Nature Destination

Looking for a good ecotourism vacation spot? How about Belize! Belize (formerly British Honduras, in case you have a really old atlas or encyclopedia) is on the Caribbean about 200 miles south of Cancun. While probably best known for its beaches and fabulous coral reef, it is also a great place for birders. And if you get tired of birding (Is that possible?), you can also visit one of the many Mayan ruins in the country. In March, my wife and I visited three areas in Belize: Dangriga on the Caribbean coast for snorkeling, the Cockscorn Basin Wildlife Sanctuary (the world's first, and perhaps only, sanctuary created for protection of jaguars), and Chan Chich Lodge in the northern rainforest of Belize, adjacent to the

Program for Belize's Rio Bravo Project. We also made an excursion into Guatemala to visit Tikal National Park.

Our primary goal was to see tropical birds, and we weren't disappointed. Among our sightings were White-Whiskered Puffbird, Plain Xenops, Rufous Mourner, Masked Tityra, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Stub-Tailed Spadebill, and Great Tinamou. In addition, we saw multiple varieties of toucans, parrots, manakins, trogons, and antshrikes. However, we were surprised at the large numbers of very familiar birds from the US — warblers, vireos, waders, and shorebirds. Traveling on our own, without the aid of local guides, we saw 189 species of birds. (Imagine what expert birders would have seen!) Of these, 90 are visitors to the US and 51 are on the Summit County bird list! We got a first-hand lesson about the importance of wintering grounds for neotropical migrants.

Belize has more than just birds, though. The coral reef, with its wide variety of flamboyant tropical fish, was spectacular. In the rainforests, we were thrilled to see coatimundis, howler and spider monkeys, agoutis, white-tail and brocket deer, gray foxes, and even the Fer de Lance snake, possibly the most dangerous venomous snake in the Americas. (Sightings of scorpions in our Cockscomb cabin were less thrilling.) Belize has large numbers of five wild cats (jaguar, ocelot, jaguarundi, margay, and puma). To our disappointment, we saw none; however, several other visitors we met had the thrill of a jaguar encounter!

The trip ended at Tikal, perhaps the grandest of all of the Mayan ruins. The complex, built from about 100BC to 900AD, cover six square miles, and the pyramid temples are still among the tallest manmade structures in Central America. While other visitors were gazing in awe at the magnificent Mayan temple complex, we found ourselves using the temples as platforms for better viewing of the birds in the rainforest canopy. I guess we're addicted birders. Perhaps the ancient Mayans did the same!

Being National Audubon Society (NAS) members, it was gratifying to see the impact of Audubon in Belize. Belize Audubon Society (BAS) is the leading environmental organization in the country, and has been responsible for establishment of many of the country's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. As examples, BAS sponsors the Cockscomb Basin Sanctuary and they help fund the Bermudian Landing Baboon Sanctuary (which we did not have time to visit). They are also leading advocates of reef preservation. In addition to seeing the impact of BAS, we also encountered Audubon researchers from the US. Research sponsored by NAS is currently examining the interactions between local people and nature reserves. The goal is to develop policies that gain local support, reduce poaching, and encourage ecologically-friendly land-use practices on neighboring land.

We loved our trip to Belize; you should consider it for yourself. As they say in Belize, "You Must See It to Belize It." It's very easy — either in a group or independently. Belize is a very stable country politically, English is the official language, and it's only 2 hours by air from Houston or Miami. The

main reason to go is for your personal enjoyment. But, you can also take pride in the fact that ecotourism money provides a great incentive for the local people to preserve their natural treasures. And if Belize, Guatemala, and other Central and South American nations can preserve their natural habitats, the neotropical migrants that we enjoy so much will return each Spring to our own backyards. [Note: If you can't visit, you can still help by supporting groups, such as Audubon, that support environmental projects and policies in Central and South America.]

—Mark Purdy

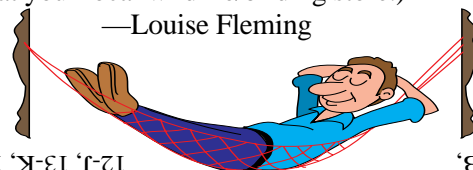
Coffee and Bird Migration

The survival of birds depends on preservation of breeding grounds, "stopovers" for migrating birds, and preservation of winter habitat. Over the years breeding areas have become fragmented, allowing predators and parasites to invade nesting areas. Stopover habitat can mean the difference between life and death for migrating birds, many of which travel 3,000 miles before resting and refueling. As a result of the physical toll taken by migration, 80-85% of first year birds die. And tropical winter habitats for many migrating birds are threatened as forests are cleared for farms, cattle ranches, and plantations of one-food crops. In an effort to preserve the rain forests in some form, biologists are seeking alternatives which meet the needs of both human inhabitants and wildlife.

Thus was born the idea of shade coffee. Coffee is the second largest export in the world and the third largest import in the United States. Over half of tropical farmland is planted in coffee plants. Their flower is aromatic, and the plants are a habitat for some kinds of birds. Experiments in growing coffee in shade have shown that coffee thrives when planted in the forest understory, enabling trees to be preserved—and therefore saving the habitat of other birds. Coffee planted in the sun requires chemical fertilizers, and much sun coffee is grown by small growers farming intensively, eroding and wearing out the soil of their plantations every 2-3 years. More forest is then cleared for new plantations. But shade coffee plants grow vigorously in dry seasons, and fallen forest leaves provide nutrients for the coffee plants. The soil doesn't wear out, and plantations don't have to be abandoned.

We can help this noble effort by asking local grocers and restaurants to carry shade coffee. It's more expensive, but we will support the farmers who use environmentally sound practices. In the long run, shade coffee will be beneficial to both land and wildlife. (Editor's note: The National Audubon Society has formed a partnership with a company that sells shade coffee, lending the NAS name to this effort. Look for it on sale at your local wildlife/birding store.)

—Louise Fleming



Answers to Quiz: 1-D, 2-F, 3-G, 4-A, 5-C, 6-N, 7-I, 8-M, 9-L, 10-E, 11-B, 12-J, 13-K, 14-H