



GREATER AKRON

AUDUBON *Matters*

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Witt's End

A Walk in the Woods

Taking a walk in winter reveals the inner workings of the natural world like no other time. Trees, shorn of their leaves, reveal their skeletal structure. Bundled and insulated from the cold we can now stand and peer into the beating heart of nature. We see where the great horned owl makes its roost or where woodpeckers fed last summer. The tree's strength is revealed. Its relationship to the landscape clear.

Along the way we catch glimpses of where animals live, what they've done — or what's been done to them. We see where the deer or quail rested. We study small patches of their lives. Maybe we can learn some lessons of survival. Move slow. Eat right. These are the things that define their world and isolate it from ours.

In winter we easily watch a deer mouse work beneath the snow or a dark-eyed junco forage (for what?) on the patio. Each creature seems captive, yet sustained, on its own island.

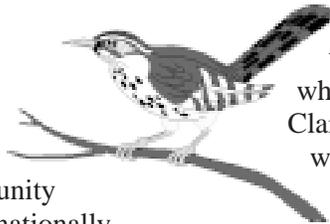
In a sense we all live on islands. We humans are surrounded not by sea or mountain barriers, but by the confining noose of development. Too many shopping malls for too many people. Will we be able to sustain ourselves as the tide of development rises?

In winter (or any other season for that matter) we can escape those threatening seas pounding against our islands. It does not require a raft to visit other, fascinating worlds, just some sturdy boots. It's called a simple walk in the woods.

— Clyde Witt

Christmas Bird Count

The annual Christmas Bird Count will be more than just a stroll in the woods. It will be your opportunity to join thousands of other like-minded folks. Internationally more than 45,000 people will join in counting every bird and every species, adding to the longest running database in ornithology. It began in 1900 when Frank Chapman organized 25 volunteers to count instead of hunt birds on Christmas Day. Since this is the 100th event a greater turnout is anticipated. If you can't come to the meeting to sign up with an area leader, give Marie Morgan a call at (330) 867-9850 and tell her you want to be part of this great event.



Free Dinner!

Who says there's no such thing as a free lunch? On December 19th, following the Christmas Count, the chapter will provide a free, chili dinner — regardless of whether you participated in the count. Since we do not have a regularly scheduled meeting in December, chapter officers decided this would be a great chance to socialize and compare notes if you did trudge through the woods all day. The dinner will be held in the Mingo Shelter, Sand Run Park, Sand Run Road. Doors will open around 4 p.m. but don't expect any hot food until about 5 p.m. The chapter will provide an outstanding array of chili, bread and vegetables. We'll also have plenty of coffee, soft drinks, hot chocolate, bowls, spoons and napkins.

What could be better than a bowl of hot chili on a cold December evening? Well, you'll have to get that for yourself elsewhere after the doors close at 7 p.m.

Outstanding Programs Ahead

We have some great programs slated for November and January. The **November 23rd** program will feature an outstanding display of bats and flying foxes, brought to us by the nationally known Organization for Bat Conservation. This promises to be a special event and we urge you to bring the kids — and the neighbor's kids. As with all of our programs, it is free and open to the public.

January 25th we'll shrug off some of the winter chills and Northeast Ohio blahs when we travel to Morocco with Akron's own Claire and Mark Purdy. This globe-trotting duo will show us the biodiversity of this country so prepare to have some of your preconceived notions of the desert changed. Don't forget your shades and sunscreen.

And just a hint about the **March 28th** program: For this one you'll not only need sunscreen, I'd suggest bringing raingear as well ...

All of our meetings are held at the Seiberling Naturealm on Smith road in west Akron. The doors open at 7 p.m. and the programs begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. You can do your part for conservation by bringing your own coffee mug.

P. O. Box 80056
Akron, Ohio 44308

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<http://www.cppnet.com/gaas>

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As a member of the National Audubon Society, you are also a member of the Akron area chapter. There are no local dues, and you receive our newsletter automatically. GAAS meets at 7:30 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Seiberling Naturealm, on Smith Road between Sand Run Road and Riverview Road in northwest Akron.

If you have a question about our organization and its activities, call GAAS Central at 644-0373. Upcoming events are announced on this number. You can also contact: Clyde Witt, newsletter editor, at (330)723-7527 or e-mail to clydew@bright.net.