



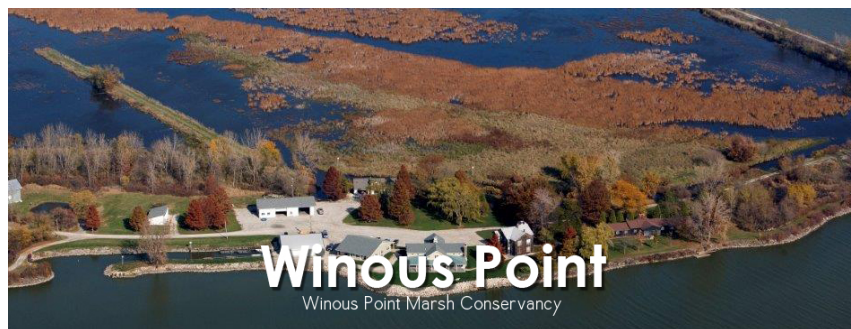
Upcoming Programs and Events

GAAS January Program (Virtual)

**The Winous Point Marsh Conservancy:
Partnering to Further Wetland Conservation
in Ohio from 1856 to Present**

Brendan Shirkey

Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:00 p.m.





Brendan Shirkey has been the research biologist for the Winous Point Marsh Conservancy since 2014. Brendan's research focuses on wetland dependent wildlife and wetland function. Prior to working for WPMC, Brendan was the aerial survey coordinator for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources coordinating pelagic bird surveys on Lake St. Clair and western Lake Erie.

Brendan completed a Master's degree in Wildlife Science from Michigan State University and an undergraduate degree in Wildlife Management from The Ohio State University.

The Winous Point Marsh Conservancy was established in 1999 and shares its facilities with the Winous Point Shooting Club, which is the oldest continuously operating duck hunting club in the United States. Early members of the shooting club had strong conservation interests and pioneered early wetland management and research techniques. This talk will show how the scientific interest of the hunting club eventually led to the formation of a 501(c)3 organization that focuses on research, education, and conservation to support the protection of Great Lakes coastal wetlands.

Please register in advance for this Zoom meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApdeiorjspGtJaDrmmCE0r6sV_SKg8cnMa

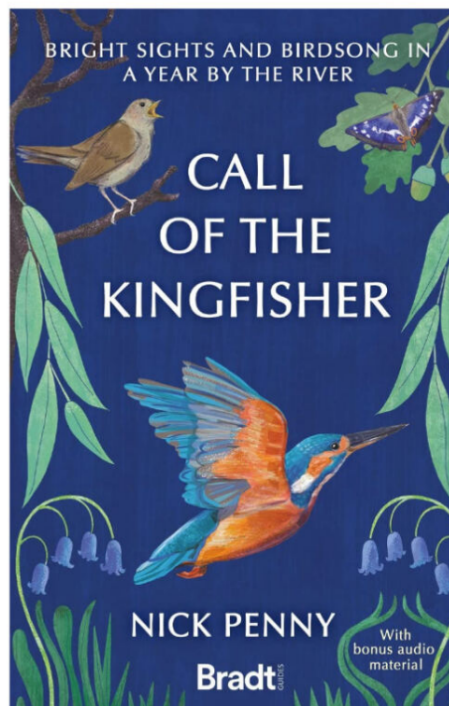
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**Environment for the Americas Bird Book Club (Virtual)**

***Call of the Kingfisher***

**With Author Nick Penny**

**Thursday, January 25, 2024 2:00 p.m.**



English composer and wildlife recordist Nick Penny had walked beside a short stretch of Northamptonshire's River Nene for forty years and had used sounds in the natural environment as inspiration for his work. But when he decided to devote a year to really being present, he became more keenly aware of the high whistling calls and presence of the kingfishers. The text of the book relates his experiences and the different people he meets. As a complement to the text, readers can access high-quality audio soundbites of the kingfishers, nightingales, owls and cuckoos and more via QR codes. Register in advance for the book club discussion with Nick Penny: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

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### **Wild Ohio Day**

**Saturday, January 27, 2024**

**11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Ohio History Center**

**800 East 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211**



Join the Ohio History Connection for special natural history programming and learn more about the plants and animals that call Ohio home. Central Ohio partner organizations will be on hand with display tables and several activities are scheduled throughout the day. Event is included with General Admission but pre-registration is strongly recommended. Free for Ohio History Connection members. For more information, see [Wild Ohio Day, 2024 - Ohio History Connection](#)

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### **Medina County Park District**

#### **Birds & Beverages**

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

#### **Oenslager Nature Center**

**6100 Ridge Rd., Wadsworth, OH 44281**

**(Sharon Township)**



Cozy up in the bird viewing area with a cup of coffee, tea, or cocoa and join a naturalist for this indoor opportunity to observe various bird species! Ages 10 to adult. No registration is required. Free.

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**Summit Metro Parks Program**

**Bird Nerds: Feeding**

**Saturday, February 3, 2024 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**

**F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm Visitors Center**

**1828 Smith Rd., Akron, OH 44313**



Newbies and experts alike are welcome to join a naturalist in this lively series for a fun approachable discussion on a new bird topic each month. This month's topic will explore the wide world of a bird's feeding strategies: who's eating what and when.

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**Summit Metro Parks Program**

**Superb Owl Sunday**

**Sunday, February 11, 2024 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Liberty Park Nature Center**

**9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg, OH 44087**



Stop by the nature center before the big game to learn about these amazing birds and meet a live owl ambassador. Enjoy hands-on activities, make a craft, or take a self-guided owl hike and even dissect a real owl pellet! "Whooo" is interested?

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## Get Ready for the Great Backyard Bird Count!

February 16 – 19, 2024



Cornell Lab partners with National Audubon, Birds Canada and founding sponsor, Wild Birds Unlimited, to bring the Great Backyard Bird Count to a global scale. Connect to birds, to nature, and with each other by spending as little as 15 minutes in your favorite places watching birds and submitting your observations to eBird or Merlin to help scientists better understand and protect birds around the world. The pre-event fun begins on February 9<sup>th</sup> and continues through February 15<sup>th</sup> and includes Merlin Bird Trivia with India birds and U.S. and Canada birds and an explanatory webinar on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Get all the details and review last year's results here: [Great Backyard Bird Count – Join us each February when the world comes together to watch, learn about, count, and celebrate birds.](#)

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## Bird Walks

Medina County Park District

Winter Bird Walk

Saturday, January 27, 2024 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Susan Hambley Nature Center

1473 Parschen Blvd., Brunswick, OH 44212



Bundle up, bring a pair of binoculars, and join a naturalist for this walk to search for and observe various bird species, because a winter walk is always enhanced by the sights and sounds of local winter birds! Ages 10 to adult. No registration is required. Free.



**Medina County Park District**  
**Natural Discoveries Hiking Series: Owls**  
**Sunday, January 28, 2024 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.**  
**Caroly Ludwig Mugarage Park**  
**4985 Windfall Rd., Medina, OH 44256**



With their nocturnal nature and excellent camouflage, owls can be difficult to find. Join us for a winter walk through the woods where the shorter days and lack of leaves on trees could make it easier to spot these secretive birds. Natural Discoveries is an award-based series of nature programs designed for ages seven to adult. No registration is required.  
Free.



**Summit Metro Parks**  
**Beginner Winter Birding**  
**Sunday, February 4, 2024 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.**  
**Goodyear Heights Metro Park Pioneer Area**



No birding experience? No problem! Dress for the weather and join us for a short hike on portions of Alder and Piney Woods trails to learn some birding basics. Binoculars will be available to borrow on a first-come, first-served basis.



**Cuyahoga Valley National Park**

**Saturday Adventure: Bird Watching for Beginners**

**Saturday, February 10, 2024 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Red Lock Trailhead on the Towpath**

**1175 Highland Road, Sagamore Hills, OH 44067**



Curious about bird watching? Come along on a leisurely walk with a ranger to search for birds. Learn how to use binoculars, field guides and bird apps. Binoculars provided or bring your own.



**Medina County Park District**

**Winter Bird Walk**

**Saturday, February 10, 2024 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

**Buckeye Woods Park (Meet by the ballfields)**



(Lafayette Township)



Bundle up, bring a pair of binoculars, and join a naturalist for this walk to search for and observe various bird species, because a winter walk is always enhanced by the sights and sounds of local winter birds! Ages 10 to adult. No registration is required. Free.

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## News You Can Use

### **Comment Period Open Through February 7, 2024: Proposed Construction of Parking Lot on Stanford Road in Cuyahoga Valley National Park**



Figure 4. Photo of typical wetland vegetation in the project area in Wetland A (see Figure 1) dominated by reed canarygrass with dead and upland trees in the background.

The National Park Service (NPS) and the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park have proposed construction of a new parking lot to more safely support equestrian and pedestrian visitors to the park on Stanford Road in the Village of Peninsula, Ohio. The proposed lot on 0.366 acre would support 15 horse trailers and 40 cars, including two

spaces designated for handicapped accessibility. While the construction area, described as a degraded wetland, has been relatively birdy, especially during spring and fall migration periods, the proposal offers to enhance 15 acres of wetlands adjacent to the project area to offset the impact to the affected area. A Statement of Wetland Findings has been prepared by the National Park Service and can be viewed and commented on here: [ParkPlanning - Stanford Parking Area Wetland Statement of Findings \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/parkplanning/stanford-parking-area-wetland-statement-of-findings).

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## Will You Attend a Birding Festival in 2024?



Birding festivals are a great way to travel with intent to see new birds and meet other birders. They're usually offered at ideal times with local and expert guides to help you find and identify the specialties of an area. The Cornell Lab keeps an updated list of all birding festivals and events organized by location on its web page. It's a free resource funded by donors and includes an interactive map by locations and listings in chronologic order.

[Birding Festivals and Events | All About Birds All About Birds](#)

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## After 20 Years of Prepping, a Piece of Georgia Land is Ready to Host Red-cockaded Woodpeckers



A three-minute segment on NPR's *All Things Considered* details the lengths that conservation biologists in Georgia have gone to in order to save the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker from extinction. That's how long it took to rid the existing landscape (in hills of western Georgia) of sweetgum trees and establish mature, softer pines that the species needs to nest in. In an attempt to move a small population of six birds away from the coastal plains that continue to be ravaged by increasing hurricane activity, biologists sculpted the forest farther to the north and west for almost two decades.

The birds were released in early December and were still there at Christmas when a Georgia Department of Natural Resources senior biologist returned to the area. Have a listen or read the transcript: [After 20 years of prepping, a piece of land is ready to host endangered woodpeckers : NPR](#)

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## Audubon Supports Introduction of Bill That Would Promote Native Plants in Federal Projects



Black-throated Green Warbler on Eastern Hemlock. Photo: Scott Keys/Audubon Photography Awards

A new bipartisan bill, The Building Native Habitats at Federal Facilities Act, would promote native plants in federal projects was introduced last month and would require federal projects to prioritize the use of native plants as part of any landscape planning. Native plants help birds find the food and habitat they need in a changing climate. Rep. Dave Joyce (R-OH) was among those who introduced the bill. See the press release and supporters of the bill here: [Heinrich, Braun, Sherrill, and Joyce Int... | Senator Martin Heinrich \(senate.gov\)](#)

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## [Bald] Eagle Craze in Norwalk!

Earlier this month, about 40 Bald Eagles were observed by flocks of local birders as the birds gathered near the open water of Huron County's Lower Reservoir that is also near a water treatment facility. The area usually has a couple of Bald Eagles but because of the open water, the convocation was probably a result of a feeding frenzy on the dying gizzard shad, a more southern species of fish. John Hageman, a long-time worker at The Ohio State's Stone Laboratory on South Bass Island, was quoted in the article by the Norwalk Reflector's Mark Hazelwood: "Similar congregations often occur on the Sandusky Bay under the same circumstances. The highest number in

one set of trees that I've heard of was 69." See the news and photos here: [Eagle craze in Norwalk | Norwalk Reflector Upwards of 40 American bald eagles have converged on the lower reservoir in Norwalk in recent weeks, attracting many onlookers](#)

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**Wildlife Photographer of the Year**  
**25 Images up for Vote for People's Choice Award**



Starling Murmuration Photo by Daniel Dencescu

About the photo: Each day, as they returned from foraging, the starlings would gather in large numbers and perform spellbinding aerial shows, known as murmurations, on their flight home to their communal roosts. In a bid to locate the best roosting sites at which to capture the spectacle, Daniel spent hours following the starlings around the city and suburbs of Rome. Finally, on this cloudless winter's day, the flock didn't disappoint, swirling into the shape of a giant bird.

The Natural History Museum in London is marking its 59<sup>th</sup> annual contest. An international judging panel selected 25 images for the shortlist from a pool of almost 50,000 entries, representing 95 countries. The images on the shortlist are all on display at the museum until June 30th. But the final stage of judging is up to the public: To win the prestigious People's Choice Award, a photograph must become the favorite in a popular vote. People often refer to this contest as the "Oscars of wildlife photography." Anyone can cast a vote in the online competition and virtual ballots may be submitted through January 31, 2024.

The winner and four runners-up will be announced on February 7, 2024. See all the images and vote for your favorite: [The People's Choice Award | Wildlife Photographer of the Year | Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](#)

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## **Cleveland's Icebreaker Wind Project on Hold Due to Rising Costs, Pushback**

Migratory birds flying over Lake Erie through the Cleveland lakefront may have been handed a temporary win in December, when the Icebreaker Wind Project was put on "indefinite" pause after financial backing from a private Norwegian developer fell through due to cost increases. The project was to have been a test case for a first of its kind renewable energy freshwater wind farm in a frozen lake; six turbines were to have been placed 8 miles off the coast of Cleveland. But the last 10 years of the project were plagued with legal and political maneuvers that included opposition by Black Swamp Bird Observatory, American Bird Conservancy and other bird lovers. Stories in the Cleveland Plain Dealer and Ideastream Public Media reported the news in December: [Icebreaker Wind project halted, no plans to resurrect effort to put wind turbines in Lake Erie - cleveland.com](#) and [Cleveland's Icebreaker Wind project on hold due to rising costs, pushback | Great Lakes Now](#).

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### **Summit Metro Parks Amateur Photography Exhibit Now on Display at Nature Realm**



A variety of wildlife and landscape photos, captured across the park district by community photographers and curated by SMP staff, is now on display at F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm at 1828 Smith Rd., Akron, OH 44313. Several area bird enthusiasts and nature lovers had their images selected for display. The building is open Wednesday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and is generally closed on Monday and Tuesday.

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### **2024 Audubon Photography Awards Accepting Applications Through February 28<sup>th</sup>**

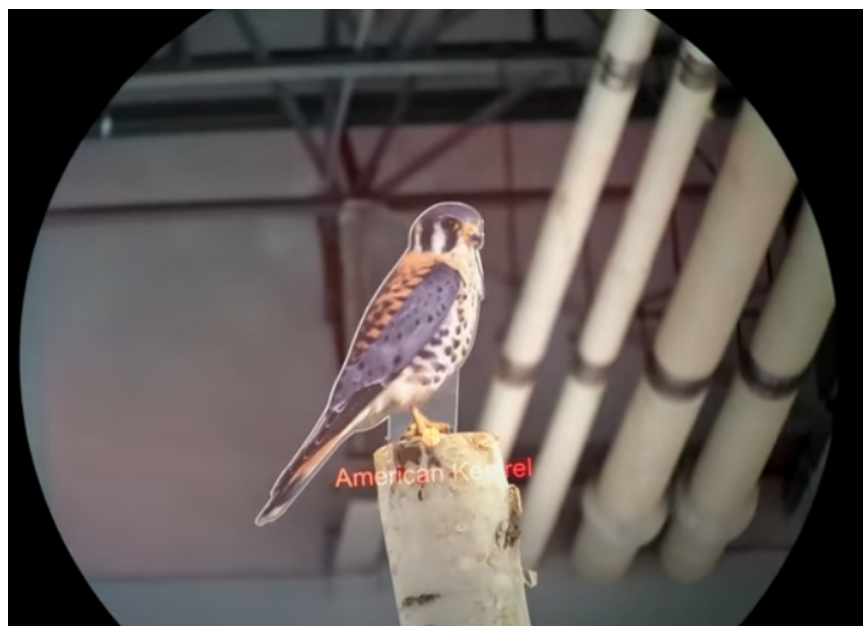


Rock Pigeons. Photo: Liron Gertsman/Audubon Photography Awards

From the Audubon website: You're wild about birds and your camera. Now combine your passions by entering the 2024 Audubon Photography Awards! This year a new Birds in Landscapes prize creates an additional opportunity for your images to shine. You could win a cash prize or, if you're our Youth winner, a special trip that will help you become an even better birder or bird photographer. Winning photos and videos will be published in future issues of Audubon magazine and on audubon.org. All you need to know to enter is here: [Audubon Photography Awards | Audubon](#)



### **Swarovski Optik Brings AI to Birdwatching!**



At the recent Consumer Electronics Show 2024 in Las Vegas, Swarovski Optik recently unveiled a new binocular that pairs AI with a built-in camera, GPS and bird ID app to make anyone an instant pro at bird ID! The company claims that 8,000 species can be identified

with the new technology. Of course, it comes with a hefty price, too. See the one-minute long YouTube video: [AI binoculars make bird watching a breeze | REUTERS \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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As always, please visit our website regularly: <https://www.akronaudubon.org> If you've missed or deleted these **For the Birds** emails, they are also posted in the **Archives** under the **News** tab on the Home Page. For more northeast Ohio bird-related programs, events (including some bird walks), please visit the **Northeast Ohio Regional Bird Calendar**, hosted by Kirtland Bird Club of Northeast Ohio: [CALENDAR \(kirtlandbirdclub.org\)](https://www.kirtlandbirdclub.org)

Note: A chronologic listing of past GAAS program pages with speaker bios and topics can be found by going to the GAAS website *Meeting Archives* page: [Meeting Archives - Greater Akron Audubon Society](https://www.greas.org/meeting-archives). If a virtual meeting was recorded and is available for watching, there will be a <Recording> button that can be selected to link to the recording on YouTube.

Please direct questions or comments to [info@akronaudubon.org](mailto:info@akronaudubon.org)

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### Greater Akron Audubon Society

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