



Upcoming Programs and Events



Urban Impacts on Streams

Speaker: Sarah Barrow (subbing for Kendra Heiser)

Date & Time: February 18, 2026 @ 7pm

Location:

Zoom meeting: Registration required:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/VBbsSGg4TUeHjgcumciy3w>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Abstract:

Urban development dramatically alters both the ecological health of streams and the well-being of the people who depend on them. Impervious surfaces increase stormwater runoff, erosion, and pollution, degrading water quality and aquatic habitat. These changes also affect communities—raising flood risks, reducing access to clean, safe waterways, and diminishing neighborhood greenspace. This presentation explores how urbanization impacts local streams in Summit County and highlights restoration and green infrastructure projects that improve both ecological resilience and community livability. Attendees will gain insight into how collective action can restore balance between people and their watersheds.

Biography:

Sarah Barrow joined Summit SWCD in the fall of 2023 as the Watershed and Outreach Supervisor, bringing a wealth of experience to the role. Prior to her current position, she spent eight years as a biology department lab manager and adjunct professor at Stark State College. Sarah holds a B.A. in Biology from the University of Akron and completed her master's degree in river conservation at Miami University of Ohio in 2022. In her day-to-day work, Sarah partners with communities and organizations across Summit County, developing and implementing watershed management solutions that protect and restore local waterways. When she isn't coordinating river health initiatives, you'll find her kayaking, hiking with her dog, birdwatching or enjoying reading and mindfulness activities. Sarah has a particular passion for constructed wetlands—an innovative best management practice she champions for their dual benefit of filtering stormwater and providing habitat for native plants and pollinators.

Her leadership, community focus, and scientific background make her a driving force behind Summit SWCD's watershed and outreach programs.

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**From Nursery to Nature: How to Find, Grow and Collaborate for  
Pollinator-Safe Plants (Sponsored by Western Reserve Land  
Conservancy)**

**Thu Feb 19th 1:00pm - 2:30**

Presentations will examine the factors that impact our natural world—from human infrastructure and pesticides to everyday gardening practices—while giving participants a deeper understanding of ecological connections and practical ways to support healthier habitats and a stronger conservation ethic.

Zoom registration

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_5T4foP7dQpiPX2elu-5DZQ#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5T4foP7dQpiPX2elu-5DZQ#/registration)



**Owls of Ohio Program**

**February 24, 2026 @ 7:00pm - 8:00**

**Middleburg Hts Library**

**16659 Bagley Road**

**Middleburg Hts, Ohio**

Twelve species of owls have been spotted in Ohio. Several are residents, some are migrants, and a few are accidental visitors. Interesting owl trivia will be revealed. Some tips on how, when and where to spot owls will be shared.

Presented by Jim Tomko. (This is a power point presentation and no live owls will be exhibited).

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**Homegrown Habitat: Remove That, Plant This**

**February 19 @ 6:30pm – 8:00**

**FA Seiberling Visitors Center**

**1828 Smith Rd  
Akron, OH 44313**

Learn how to re-wild your home landscape. This month, we'll highlight some of the most common invasive and exotic landscaping plants. You'll discover how to remove them properly and what native plant to replace them with this spring.

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**Waterfowl Watch**

**February 20 @ 9:00am – 10:30**

**Towpath Trail**

**Manchester Road Trailhead**

**2740 Manchester Rd**

**Akron OH 44319**

Do you know your dabblers from your divers? Your geese from gadwall? Join a naturalist to learn more as we walk approximately 2 miles along the canal in search of waterfowl.

Several pairs of binoculars are available on a first-come, first-served basis.



**Coffee With The Birds TWO LOCATIONS**

**February 21 @ 10:00am – 11:00**

**Liberty Park Nature Center or**

**Summit Lake Nature Center**

Join a naturalist to see which birds visit our viewing area. Bring a mug and your bird questions — we'll provide warm beverages and birding insights. Make it a total "birdy" day: Hand-feed the chickadees or stay to help count birds for Project Feeder Watch.

Coffee with Birds repeated at same two locations Feb 28



**Bird Nerds: Blue Heron**

**February 28 @ 12:00pm – 1:30**

**Firestone Metropark**

**Coventry Oaks Lodge**

**40 Axline Ave**

**Akron OH 44319**

Bird enthusiasts of all kinds are welcome to join us for a deep dive into one of Ohio's most recognizable species each month. You see them. You love them. But how well do you really know them? After our indoor presentation, those interested can join for a guided birding walk.

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**Very Valuable Vultures**  
**March 1 @ 1:00pm – 2:30**  
**FA Seiberling Nature Realm**  
**Visitors Center**  
**1828 Smith Rd**  
**Akron, OH 44313**

The wait is almost over! Join us in excited anticipation for the return of the migratory and magnificent turkey vulture. We'll take a deep dive into feathered forensics to discover the ecological importance of this misunderstood member of the scavenger squad. After a sit-down presentation indoors, we'll hit the trail and look for vultures and other birds, so please bring binoculars.

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Movie: Ripples of Plastic
Explore the unseen impacts of Great Lakes plastic pollution, inspiring a movement for systemic change and a plastic-free future.

Sunday, February 22, 2026 @ 2:00pm - 3:00

French Creek Visitor Center

4530 Colorado Avenue

Sheffield, OH, 44054



Migration Sensation 2026 – Shreve, Ohio

March 14, 2026

Clinton Township Building

225 E. McConkey St

Shreve OH 44676

Join us for a day of birding, nature exploration, and family-friendly activities in the heart of Ohio's prime bird migration corridor!

Check out the following website for a list of events and family activities:

[MIGRATION SENSATION](http://www.shreveohio.com)



49th Annual Summer Breeding Bird Census

June 5 – 14, 2026

Call for Area Leaders & Volunteers

As of today, there is one territory that need coverage this year. Volunteers are needed in Area 28. A map of the territories can be found here: [Summer Census Territories - Greater Akron Audubon Society](#). Area 28 is in the southwest corner of Summit County (in blue overlay). If you are interested in participating in any area on the map please let me know.

We love volunteers and always could use more help! This year, the checklist has been revised and participants are encouraged to use a new Google form to submit results for easier compiling; these will be coming out soon. Please reach out to compiler Paul Moser (pmoser16590@yahoo.com) if you can help during this 10-day period or if you know someone who may be able to help.

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## **News You Can Use**



## What drives animals to your yard? It's complicated

Shabnam Khan has a problem in her garden. A problem that's been visiting regularly. And while it started small, it's not going away.

Every time she works in her yard, she's visited by lizards and frogs.

Shabnam lives in the metro Atlanta area – her decades long home – and she says this number of scaly, clammy visitors has exploded over the past few years. She hears frogs croaking at night and finds lizards sunning on the cement.

And she wants to know, where did all of these animals come from?

<https://www.npr.org/2026/01/27/nx-s1-5676029/nature-atlanta-animals-lizards-frogs>

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Local Families Make Large Land Donations to Protect Forestland on Chestnut Ridge in Westmoreland County

Westmoreland County, PA – January 6, 2026 – More than 2,400 undeveloped forested acres located on Chestnut Ridge in Derry, Fairfield, and Ligonier townships in Westmoreland County are now permanently protected, thanks to the donations to the

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy of land and a conservation easement on property owned by several local families.

The property provides a forested buffer along several miles of Trout Run, McGee Run, Hillside Run and their tributaries. These streams are designated Cold Water Fisheries by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

[Land Donations](#)

The logo for Discover Wildlife features the word "DISCOVER" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, followed by the word "wildlife" in a black, serif font with a lowercase 'w'.

From the team at BBC Wildlife Magazine

Firestarter: They set the land ablaze from the sky – and then wait for their prey to run

Humans may not be the only species to deliberately control fire. Birds of prey have been observed picking up burning sticks from wildfires, then using them to ignite new fires so they can feast on the animals that flee.

<https://www.discoverwildlife.com/animal-facts/birds/fire-hawks>

The logo for Discover Wildlife features the word "DISCOVER" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, followed by the word "wildlife" in a black, serif font with a lowercase 'w'.

From the team at BBC Wildlife Magazine

Why is a group of crows called a murder?

Wondered why a group of crows earned the rather dark title of 'a murder of crows'? Mike Toms explains how this strange collective noun came about.

The origin of the term murder meaning flock of crow has much to do with the scavenging nature of this and other corvids.

Historically the presence of the gallows and slaughter on the battlefields would have provided rich pickings for our two species of crow.

<https://www.discoverwildlife.com/animal-facts/birds/why-is-it-called-a-murder-of-crows>



Study: Pesticide Sprays for Mosquitos May Kill Pollinators, Drift into Neighboring Yards

PORTLAND, Ore.; December 17, 2025 – A new study published in Stacks Journal has found that backyard mosquito sprays can cause insecticide contamination at levels high enough to kill pollinators, and that these sprays easily travel into neighboring yards. The contamination levels were higher in yards sprayed by private companies than in yards sprayed by local mosquito control districts.

For the study, 26 volunteers in Georgia, Iowa, and Massachusetts placed monitors in their yards before mosquito sprays in their own yard, in a neighboring yard, or by a mosquito control district. This study was conducted by scientists at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and the University of Nevada, Reno.

<https://xerces.org/press/study-pesticide-sprays-for-mosquitos-may-kill-pollinators-drift-into-neighboring-yards>



Festival of Birds

Hosted by: Presque Isle Audubon

May 15th, 16th & 17th, 2026

Discover the joys of spring migration at the picturesque Presque Isle State Park, which BirdWatching Magazine rates as one of the top birding spots in the country! Situated along Lake Erie's southern shores in Erie, Pennsylvania, more than 320 species of birds have been recorded at the park! Presque Isle is also home to Gull Point, a sand plain sanctuary that hosts a wide variety of migrating shorebirds and seabirds and the only place in Pennsylvania where you'll find nesting pair/s of the federally endangered Piping Plover!

Presque Isle is a designated Important Bird Area and is nicely located on a major migration corridor. Anything could show up!

The 2026 festival features field trips to all the hotspots and workshops for every level, from:

Presentation: Rats with Wings and Trash Pandas

Presentation: Travels with BirdingApp

Presentation: Bird Joy: The key to unlocking our inner child

Field trip: Imperfect Quirky Bird Walk

Presentation: The extraordinary diversity of origins of our local mammals

Presentation: Birds and Words: Nature Writing for Pleasure and Publication

Witness science in action at Erie Bird Observatory's bird banding station. Watch raptors ride thermals way up, up, up into the sky at the Presque Isle Hawk Watch. Bring your own kayak (or rent one here) and paddle into the Presque Isle lagoons with us as we search for migrating waterfowl, secretive marsh birds, & more!

Inside Climate News

On Michigan Cherry Farms, Small Falcons Are Improving Food Safety

Kestrels are already abundant on local cherry farms, but a new study suggests their presence might lower the risk of food-borne illnesses caused by pathogens from other birds.

Every spring, raptors return to nesting sites across northern Michigan. The smallest of these birds of prey, a falcon called the American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), flies through the region's many cherry orchards and spends its days hunting for even tinier creatures to eat. This quest keeps the kestrels fed, but it also benefits the region's cherry farmers.

Fruit farmers have been working symbiotically with kestrels for decades, adding nesting boxes and reaping the benefits of the birds eliminating the mice, voles, songbirds and other pests that wreak havoc by feeding on not-yet-harvested crops. In addition to limiting the crop damage caused by hungry critters, new research suggests kestrels also lower the risk of food-borne illnesses.⁴

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/22012026/michigan-cherry-farms-american-kestrel-food-safety/>

Spread the word.

If you know someone that may be interested in this Newsletter, please forward this email on to them.

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 \(kirtlandbirdclub.org\)](http://CALENDAR.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](#) 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

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Greater Akron Audubon Society

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