



Welcome back to Greater Akron Audubon Society's 2021—2022 program year! Our program meetings will resume in person on September 28th at 7:00 p.m. in the Shady Hollow Lodge in Sand Run Metro Park, 1750 Sand Run Parkway, Akron, OH 44313 (see below for directions and presenter). October's program will also be held live there on the 26th. Our winter programs will be held virtually on Zoom in November, January and February. Depending on attendance and member preference, our speakers will return to a yet-to-be-determined venue to present in-person programs from March through June 2022. We respectfully ask that everyone attending our fall meetings wear a face mask while inside the lodge due to the resurgence of the COVID-19 Delta variant.

The **Wild Bird Seed Sale (our only fundraiser)** is on for November 6, 2021, with pick-up again at Copley Feed from 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please look for the order forms in the mail by October 1, 2021; as is tradition, our schedule of programs for the 2021—2022 will be listed on the reverse side of the order form.

A lot has happened while we were on summer hiatus!

The biggest news centered around the first pair of nesting Piping Plovers in Ohio in 83 years! Below, Mike Edgington, GAAS member and Christmas Bird Count Coordinator, offers an informative review of the work that Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) did to ensure a successful nesting season. He completed six 6-hour shifts as a Piping Plover Monitor at the Maumee Bay State Park beach.

Piping Plover Watching in Ohio! Piping Plovers return after 83-year absence!

On 25 May, 2021, two birders at Maumee Bay State Park spotted 2 Piping Plovers (PIPL) on the beach – a male and a female. These birds were followed for two weeks and nesting behavior was observed. On 31 May, the first of four eggs was spotted on the nest cup and nest-attending behavior began. The two adults had been banded, so their ID information was confirmed: in 2020, the male (Nish) had been hatched at Montrose Beach in Chicago and the female (Nellie) was hatched at Presque Isle in Pennsylvania.

Ohio now had the first PIPL nest in 83 years!

Interest expanded and the Ohio Division of Wildlife became actively involved, developing a plan for round-the-clock monitoring. The Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO) was engaged to develop, implement, and manage the extensive monitoring plan which included on-site daily observation by multiple volunteers, with ODOW support after dark. A training plan was developed and taught (on-line) by BSBO, which included logging procedures, banding code overview, raptor identification and various threat definitions.

The extensive training was mandatory for all volunteer monitors; it included presentations by the Great Lakes PIPL monitoring team, showing how the plan works in Michigan, at the Great Bear Sand Dunes area.



The Plover Patrol Team Shirt

A detailed, online volunteer schedule was created and implemented at once, with dozens of volunteers signing up for the several hundreds of hours of observation. Trained volunteers were able to schedule themselves for monitoring duty using this online calendar.



The Exclosure

Young PIPL chick: Mike Edgington, photo

At this time, monitoring is complete. All four eggs hatched and the four chicks fledged successfully and were banded. Maumee, Erie, and Ottawa (sadly, one PIPL chick, Kickapoo, was taken by a predator) have now headed south to their wintering grounds, probably in Florida. We do know that in 2020 Nish wintered on Anclote Key State Park, a barrier island off the Gulf Coast of Florida near the Tampa/Clearwater area. And Nellie is thought to have wintered nearby on Honeymoon Island State Park. Piping Plover adults often return annually to the same nesting area and have been known to have the same mate in consecutive years. Nish and Nellie are expected to return to the Maumee Bay area in March 2022.

BRAVO! This monitoring program was a monumental effort, very professionally managed by the excellent team at BSBO, with Kimberly Kaufman's very capable leadership. By the numbers:

Total Plover Patrol Volunteers: 100+

Total Hours: 4200

For more details: <https://www.greatlakespipingplover.org/>
<https://www.bsbo.org>
<https://www.maumeebaypipingplovers.org/>
<https://www.bsbo.org/donate.html>
<https://www.facebook.com/NellieandNish>

Mysterious Bird Disease

An unknown illness across six states that included Ohio resulted in several symptoms these species: Blue Jay, Common Grackle, American Robin, European Starling, Northern Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, Northern Cardinal, Gray Catbird, Barred Owl, and some sparrows, including House Sparrows. Common changes around the eyes were noted: crustiness, bulging or swollen or sunken eyes. And neurological symptoms and disorientation was noted in many. Studies on sick or dead birds indicated that the cause was not West Nile virus, salmonella, or avian flu. Based on geographic distribution and timing, the prevailing thought is that the disease correlates to the timing of the emergence and subsequent decline of Brood X cicadas. If birds ate cicadas infected with a fungus or sprayed with a pesticide, the resulting toxins and chemicals ingested could have caused the neurological symptoms. Locally, in Summit County, there were some reports of afflicted birds but the majority of reports came in to the Division of Wildlife (ODW) in areas where Brood X emerged.

Previously, the recommendations were to take down backyard bird feeders and clean them with a 10% bleach solution to slow the spread of disease. September 8th, ODW has lifted the restrictions on feeding with the caveat to keep feeders clean on a regular basis and remain vigilant. Research continues to find the cause of the mysterious bird disease. For more guidance and reporting procedures, please see [Bird Disease Reporting | Ohio Department of Natural Resources \(ohiodnr.gov\)](#). Conjunctivitis symptoms in finches are still being reported throughout the state but they ask us to please be aware of that these and other diseases are commonly seen in songbirds. GAAS members can stay abreast of the recommendations by visiting the website's **NEWS** tab: <http://www.akronaudubon.org/crusty-eye-disease.html>



Federal Duck Stamp issued July 1, 2021

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls on birders and nature photographers and other outdoor enthusiasts to help acquire and protect wetland habitat. In addition to serving as hunting license and conservation tool, a current Federal Duck Stamp is also a free pass to National Wildlife Refuges that charge an entry fee. To learn more or to buy a stamp, please see [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Migratory Bird Program | Conserving America's Birds \(fws.gov\)](#).



A Local BirdingPal Experience

Mike Edginton also shares this tale so that more of us are aware of what BirdingPal is and how it can connect us to other birders as we travel. Thank you, Mike, and Kathy Mock, for representing Akron and creating a safe, positive experience for an out-of-town birder.

“In late June, I received a call from a fellow birder, telling me that he had a request from Carol, a member of the BirdingPal website; she was asking if someone could escort her for a short birding trip in the Akron area, since she would be visiting here and would enjoy birding the local area. He was unable to do this but knew I was local and offered the request to me. I listened a bit about how BirdingPal works and readily agreed.

I got in touch with my new Bird Pal, Carol, and learned that she was from Portland, ME, and she was very pleased to learn that she could go birding with a local while she was here. I then emailed Kathy Mock, explaining this and suggested that Carol might feel more comfortable if another ‘woman birder’ was along. Kathy readily agreed.

I consulted Jon Cefus (a Canton area birder) who recommended that I take Carol to Nimisila Reservoir, which made total sense. On 18 July, I picked Carol up and we went to Nimisila where Kathy awaited, and, upon intros, we commenced a very pleasurable outing showing Carol all the avian beauty of the area. We saw many exciting local birds, including Bald Eagle families, Osprey, a Belted Kingfisher, and many others. Carol got to see the Willow Flycatcher, which was a ‘lifer’ bird for her. We all did the lifer dance and she was very pleased.

After Nimisila, we took off to Boettler Park enroute to the Akron Canton Airport, where Carol got another lifer—a Yellow-billed Cuckoo!

In addition to being a positive experience for all three of us, I learned about BirdingPal, which I had never known of. Carol said that she uses it quite regularly (world-wide), has never been disappointed and told me of a specific trip, to Paris, where the local escort not only took her all around this beautiful city, but, for lunch, he had scheduled an employee of a French restaurant he owns, to bring a large and delicious lunch, including wine, which they enjoyed at one of Paris's beautiful parks and celebrated the joys of Paris birding.

Next time you're going to Paris, (or Nebraska) try it! <http://www.birdingpal.org/> “

Akron Zoo Welcomes First Andean Condor Chick

A male chick hatched for the first time in the zoo's 68 year history on July 23rd. The egg had been incubated by the animal care and vet team because in the past, the eggs had been accidentally crushed by the chick's parents. This is only one of two chicks to hatch this year in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and he's being raised with the help of a hand puppet to simulate feeding and social interaction. Read more about the species and the zoo's breeding program here: [Akron Zoo welcomes Andean condor chick - www.akronzoo.org](http://www.akronzoo.org)

Upcoming Programs and Events

Cornell Lab of Ornithology is hosting a fall *Migration Celebration* September 13—24, 2021.

Two weeks of free online events, family-friendly programs and other resources to help you take pause and marvel at the migration of billions of birds on their journeys. All the webinars are free but do require registration. And if you can't make the live event, you can check back on the website to view the recorded talks. Check out the schedule and click the topic links to register for each event. [Migration Celebration 2021 | Birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology : Birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#)

Summit Metro Parks: Raptor Identification Basics
Liberty Park Nature Center
9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg, OH 44087

Sunday, September 19, 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Join a naturalist to discover how to identify hawks and other raptors in flight and perching in a tree or on a wire. Then hike a short distance in search of raptors in the wild.

GAAS September Program
Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
Shady Hollow Lodge in Sand Run Metro Park
1750 Sand Run Parkway, Akron, OH 44313
(Note new location and see note below)

How Does a Fish Biologist Improve Fishing and Aquatic Resources?



We welcome **Curtis Wagner**, Fisheries Management Supervisor from Ohio Division of Wildlife's District 3, as he provides an overview of the Division of Wildlife's mission and funding mechanics and the organization of and activities that fisheries management staff engage in. He'll take attendees on a photo tour of fisheries management and aquatic conservation activities during a typical calendar year and he will bring some fish sampling gear for display.

(Because this is an indoor event, we respectfully request that all attendees wear face masks.)

Please Note: Summit Metro Parks informs us that a GPS will not work for Sand Run Parkway and if used, it will direct you to the intersection of Sand Run Parkway and Sand Run Road. Shady Hollow Lodge is very near the

Mingo Lodge that we formerly met in but is on the opposite side of Sand Run Parkway. It is on the same side of the vehicle ford (just northeast) on Sand Run Parkway as Mingo is.



The **Fall Gathering** of the Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters (COAC) will now be held virtually **October 16, 2021**. Keynote Speaker **Kenn Kaufman** will present **Everything is Connected**. Audubon Great Lakes staff will present advocacy opportunities and news from the region and other formats will encourage collaboration and networking among Ohio's chapters. All Ohio Audubon chapter members are encouraged to attend. Register at: <https://counciloac.org/gatherings/2021-fall-gathering-registration/>

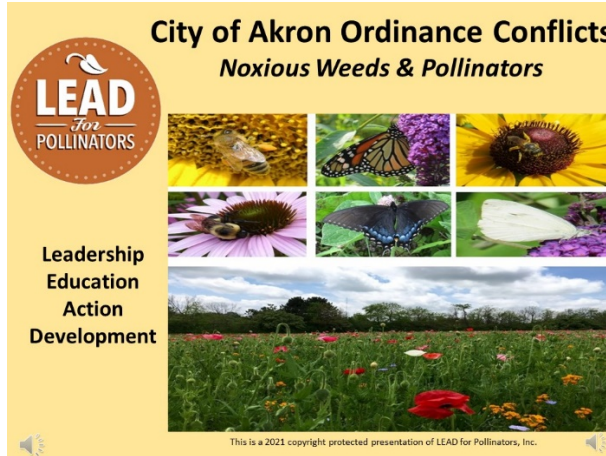
An Update about our Plants for Birds Initiative with Homegrown National Park

Last season, our chapter made a concerted effort to comply with an initiative begun by our Council of Ohio Audubon Chapters: Plants for Birds. The goal was to create interest in the need to plant native plants so that our wild birds are able to survive on the local biota associated with the various native species. By collaborating with Dr. Doug Tallamy's call-to-action to increase biodiversity by involving individual homeowners and landowners, we wanted to show support for both his Homegrown National Park and Audubon's *Plants for Birds* project. The end goal is to create 20 million acres of native plantings while replacing ½ of the green lawns of privately-owned property. THE MAP is a way for all of us to see that the small efforts of many will result in creating new and stronger ecological networks that will restore biodiversity so that earth's plants and animals [including birds and humans] will be able to weather population fluctuations indefinitely (survive).

Of the 35 signs that Greater Akron Audubon purchased to promote these efforts, only 11 were requested. And six of those 11 went to members of our chapter's leadership team! While the signs themselves are not vital to the participation, they do promote public awareness of the need for reducing our lawn sizes and planting native plants. Especially now that our feeders have been down (due to the mysterious eye and neurological diseases seen in several species of our birds) this summer, plantings for pollinators and bird food and shelter throughout the seasons is more important than ever.

Condominium and apartment dwellers may still participate if they've planted container gardens or if they planted natives in the past at a previous residence. Past actions do count.

As was mentioned last spring, a follow-up survey is in the works to help measure our chapter members' contributions toward the goal and to help show our support for the Homegrown National Park. Look for it at our upcoming September meeting.



City of Akron, Ohio Plant Species & Height Ordinances must be changed to support Pollinators.

Join with LEAD for Pollinators, Inc. in supporting changes to two City of Akron, Ohio Ordinances pertaining to “species and height of plants” as the Ordinances are outdated, unscientific, and not representative of Akron community planting for nearly thirty years or the vital needs of pollinators. Please see their website to learn more and to add your individual support: <https://leadforpollinators.org/action/> Akron Audubon supports these changes and has signed onto their support letter as an organization.

Please visit our website regularly: <http://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. Please direct questions or comments to info@akronaudubon.org

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