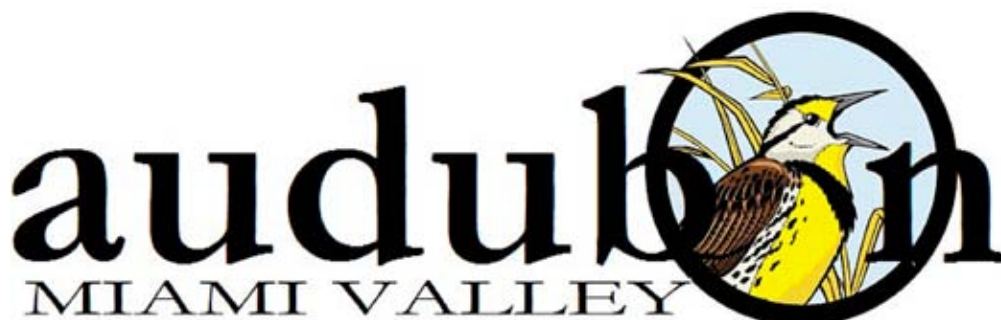


• FALL PROGRAMS RANGE FROM PARKS TO MONGOLIA. PAGES 4, 5

• DID THE SHRIKE DEFEAT THE SPIDER? PAGE 7



Summer 2008
Volume 34

the quarterly newsletter of Audubon Miami Valley, in Ohio's Butler and Preble Counties



Liz has served the chapter as president several times and she has done that with graciousness and style. Liz is a team player, facilitator, and consummate optimist. These qualities and a smile that never leaves her face have made her an ambassador for the chapter who is recognized locally, statewide, and nationally.

Photo by T.K. Tolford

FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

A tribute to Liz for 12 great years

Audubon Miami Valley is a not-for-profit conservation organization run by volunteers. Each year some of our leadership changes but most of these changes are minor and have limited impact on how smoothly the organization runs. This year is the exception to that rule.

Liz Woedl has transitioned from her role as president because she has been term-limited. Liz will continue working with and for the chapter but she will no longer be president.

How do we say thank you to Liz for all she has done?

Liz has served as chapter president

several times and she has done that with graciousness and style. Liz is a team player, facilitator, and consummate optimist. These qualities and a smile that never leaves her face have made her an ambassador for the chapter who is recognized locally, statewide, and nationally.

It is no accident that Liz has served four three-year terms as chapter president. She was a founding member of the chapter. More recently she has served as chair of the Board of Audubon Ohio, and been elected and served a six-year term on the Board of Directors of the Na-

tional Audubon Society.

I was fortunate enough to serve with Liz on the NAS Board, and one thing I learned was that when Liz spoke people listened. Liz possessed the skill to always bridge the gap between opposing positions.

So, as my first act as president of Audubon Miami Valley I want to publicly acknowledge and personally thank Liz for all she has done for the chapter, Audubon Ohio, and the National Audubon Society.

Few have given so much for what they believe in.

– Hardy Eshbaugh



Photo by T.K. Tolford

Check out our new Web feature: a different photo every month

Ever wondered what avian sights other Audubon Miami Valley folks are seeing? Or ever snapped an image you wanted to share? If so, our chapter Web site's new Image of the Month feature is for you.

In May, the page featured this image (above) of a female Northern Cardinal sitting on her nest made on the tire of a bicycle hanging in the carport at Hardy and Barb Eshbaugh's home.

See what's up this month at <http://www.audubonmiamivalley.org/imageofthemoth.htm>.

Or better yet, send your snap to Tim Tolford at Webmaster@audubonmiamivalley.org

Audubon Miami Valley needs your talents and interest

We're starting a new program year for Audubon Miami Valley, but we're missing some key players.

Chairs are needed for the following committees:

- Communications
- Conservation
- Leadership & Nomination
- Student Liaison

This year's AMV lanning retreat is scheduled for Saturday June 28, 1-4:30 p.m., so this is a great time to step up and make your voice heard. For more information, call president Hardy Eshbaugh at 513.523.8305.

All of our committees, listed on page 8 of this newsletter, can use your help even if you don't want to commit to a leadership role right now.



OUR VISION

We envision a world where humankind accepts the obligations of being part of nature, especially the obligation of stewardship. We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically, and morally unacceptable. In short, we seek a culture of conservation and an environmental ethic.


OUR MISSION

Audubon Miami Valley works to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

The Audubon Miami Valley newsletter is published four times a year, as the seasons change.

Deadline for the autumn 2008 issue is July 15. Send contributions to Newsletter@audubonmiamivalley.org or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056

- Judi Hetrick is editor.
- Celia Ellison and John Blocher are proofreaders.
- Caitlin Stone designed the Meadowlark logo.

 The newsletter is printed by Letterman Printing in Oxford on 100 percent recycled paper.

Visit us online at www.audubonmiamivalley.org.



OUT AND ABOUT



Marlene (left) and Russ Easter (right) at the Plant Sale, where signs were available for those with healthy yards.

Photos by Hardy Eshbaugh and Judi Hetrick

Wild Blue Phlox proves popular

The 12th annual Native Plant sale took place at Shademakers Saturday May 18.

The biggest plant sale item was Wild Blue Phlox. That will help beautify many woodland gardens.

We sold Swamp milkweed to help out the Monarch butterfly population. Jo Layera had about 40

Monarch caterpillars in a container for show and tell.

Shademakers is a wonderful host each year. Thank you to all who came by to help. It truly is a fun event. I hope to see more of you buying for next year's sale.

– Marlene Hoffman,
Special Projects Chair

Crane Creekers counted 144 species



Photo courtesy of Jim Reid

First Row: Beverly Thomas, Jennifer Madewell, Carolyn Freeman, Lois Lafayette. Second Row: Alex Hickey, Dave Osborne, Larry Gersbach, Bill Wilson, Jim Reid

The Miami University Natural Areas, in partnership with Audubon Miami Valley, sponsored a field trip to northern Ohio along the shore of Lake Erie to witness the spring warbler migration.

Well, it was just fantastic.

We rode together in a Miami University 12-passenger van in comfort and style. (With the price of gas approaching \$4 a gallon this was a nice way to save money and reduce our “energy footprint.”) The cost for each participant was \$160, and this included all transportation costs and two nights’ lodging. A real bargain!

In three days, the nine of us, ranging in age from 17 to 79, saw 144 different species of birds including 30 species of warblers. (And, on one of these days it rained.)

When asked their thoughts about the trip, here are some of the participants’ comments on what they most liked: “Great itinerary, all the interesting birds and all the nice people, the boardwalk, the number of warblers, the camaraderie and the birding enthusiasm.”

– Jim Reid



CALENDAR **JULY & AUGUST**

SATURDAY JULY 19

Aullwood field trip

Join Liz Woedl for a day at Aullwood exploring the nature center, tall grass prairie and working farm. Fun for all ages!

Meet at the west side of the old Oxford Wal-Mart parking lot at 9 a.m. to carpool. Bring a sack lunch.

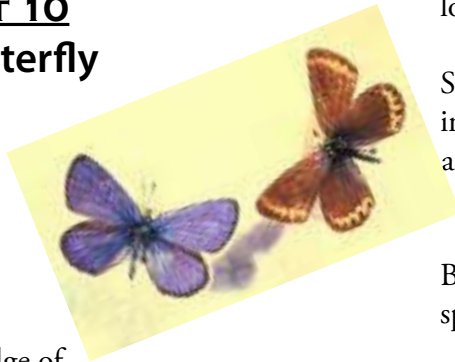
For more information and to let us know if you are thinking of going call Linda Williams at 513.523.1538.

SATURDAY AUGUST 9 AND

SUNDAY AUGUST 10

Appalachian Butterfly Conference

Shawnee State Forest and the Edge of Appalachia Preserve, Adams and Scioto counties, Ohio



Shawnee and the Edge of Appalachia preserve offer some of the best butterfly-watching north of the Ohio River. In addition to an abundance of common species, much rarer butterflies can be found. These include Hayhurst's Scallopwing, Gemmed Satyr, Juniper and White-M Hairstreaks. This region can also be great for finding good numbers of southern immigrants like Cloudless Sulphur, Little Sulphur, Sachem, and Checkered White.

Jaret C. Daniels, author of "Butterflies of Ohio," will be the Saturday evening keynote speaker for this first-ever conference.

Both Saturday and Sunday feature field trips focusing on finding maximum butterfly diversity. Additionally, plant and bird enthusiasts will be wowed by some of Ohio's most incredible biodiversity.

See <http://www.flora-quest.com/butterflies.html> for more information, or "google" Appalachian Butterfly Conference. Questions? Contact Jim McCormac at 614.265.6440, or jim.mccormac@dnr.state.oh.us

Look forward to fall:

*** TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9**

Brukner Nature Center – Always Something to Learn

Deb Oexmann, BNS Executive Director

AMV public program

7:30 p.m., Lebanon Citizens National Bank,
2nd floor Community Conference Room,
30 Park Place West, Oxford, Ohio

* Please note the Tuesday meeting day

Come learn about the Brukner Nature Center, a privately funded, nonprofit preserve dedicated to environmental education and wildlife rehabilitation, located just five miles west of Troy, Ohio.

The 165-acre preserve, bounded by the scenic Stillwater River, comprises a variety of habitats including pine forest, prairie, woodlands and wetland, all traversed by six miles of hiking trails.

Brukner is a birding hotspot, as noted in the newly published Waterford Press "Pocket Guide to Ohio Birds." Annually, the center tallies more than 110 species, including a record 28 different warbler species.

Deb Oexmann graduated from the Institute of Environmental Sciences at Miami University, finished her master's through a practicum with Brukner, and never left! Her love of birding began with her first ornithology class with Doc Osborne.

MONDAY OCTOBER 13

Natural Science Observations in the Land of Chinggis Khan

Dr. Richard H. Munson

Department of Botany, Miami University

In July 2007, Dick Munson spent nearly three weeks roaming the steppes of central Mongolia and in the Gobi Desert in the south with his Mongolian-speaking daughter and son-in-law. Everything about Mongolia is large and bold, starting with its history and its landscape.

This presentation will sample the places, the people, the landscape and the animals (including many birds) that make Mongolia a unique and wonderful place.



Parks, photos, Mongolia and more

Munson received his undergraduate degree in landscape horticulture from The Ohio State University in 1971. He earned his master of science degree and doctorate in ornamental horticulture from Cornell University in 1973 and 1981, respectively. Munson became the manager of The Conservatory at Miami University Hamilton in September 2004. He also teaches in the Department of Botany.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 23

Ravens at the Feast

**Bernd Heinrich, Professor Emeritus,
University of Vermont**

The Hefner Lecture, time and place TBA

Dr. Bernd Heinrich's research has been at the interface between the field and laboratory, examining behavioral and physiological adaptation to the physical environment. His research has led to the study of energetics of bees and their colony economy. He then worked on the social organization of ravens with a view to understanding how and why unrelated individuals share and/or defend food bonanzas. More recently Bernd Heinrich has concentrated on exploring cognition. His many books include *Bumblebee Economics* (1979), *One Man's Owl* (1987), *Ravens in Winter* (1989), *Mind of the Raven* (1999), and *The Geese of Beaver Bog* (2004).

MONDAY NOVEMBER 10

MetroParks of Butler County:

An Overview

**Jonathan Granville,
MetroParks Executive Director**

AMV public program , 7:30 p.m.
2nd floor, 30 Park Place West, Oxford

MetroParks was established to enhance the quality of life in Butler County by acquiring, establishing, and managing a system of regional natural-area parks. This park system contains a number of gems

including the Rentschler Forest Preserve, Gilmore Ponds Interpretive Preserve, Dudley Woods, Hueston Farm and Forest Preserve, Indian Creek Preserve, the Voice of America Park and many others for people's use and enjoyment.

Jonathan Granville became the executive director of the MetroParks in September 2007, after 21 years with Erie MetroParks in the Sandusky area. He led the growth of that park system from less than 80 to more than 3,600 acres.

His bachelor of science degree is from Bowling Green State University, and Granville has, taught high school science in Delphos and Wapakoneta, Ohio.

MONDAY DECEMBER 8

Re-cognize Your Environment: Conservation through Photography and Education Emphasizing Beauty in the Ordinary

**Molly Barger Steinwald
Department of Zoology, Miami University**

AMV public program , 7:30 p.m.
2nd floor, 30 Park Place West, Oxford

Environmental outreach focused on species extinction and the destruction of distant exotic ecosystems often confuses children and connects negatively with the public at large. In contrast, education that creates an awareness of the value of one's local surroundings can lead to the development of an authentic, lasting environmental ethic.

Interweaving personal experiences as a child, student, teacher, researcher, photographer, and mother, Steinwald argues that integrating the seemingly disparate spheres of art, education, and research is necessary for the ultimate success of the conservation movement.

Steinwald, a self-taught photographer, earned her M.S. in ecology at Purdue University and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Zoology at Miami University. She has nearly 10 years of college-level teaching experience and she has research experience with plants, birds and mammals in coastal, desert and woodland habitats around the United States.



The birds outside look so familiar

“Are the Cardinals and Goldfinches I see in the winter the same ones I see in the summer?”

This question has been posed to me on many occasions over the years, and I still do not have a definitive response.

This year marked the first year of my Winter Avian Ecology Study. I used two mist nets at my sunflower, thistle, mix and suet feeders between Dec. 5 and March 5 for a total of 38.5 hours. I banded 361 birds representing 22 species. Among them were 183 American Goldfinches, and 91 Northern Cardinals, many with high body fat counts.

The carrying of fat reserves is typical of “migration” birds. It piqued my interest because I recaptured very few of these birds during the study, which means they were probably feeding en route to . . . somewhere. Local or resident birds do not build up body fat since they have no need to fly anywhere beyond where they live year ‘round.

My feeder station is right outside our kitchen window, where my daughters and I watch the birds each day at breakfast and lunch. Throughout the study and presently, we have only identified a couple of banded Cardinals or Goldfinches at the feeders. And, yes, you can see the bands without binoculars from where we sit! It seems as though most of the birds now at my feeders differ from those that fed in the winter.

Cardinals tend to wander a bit in

winter. However, I have not been able to find any good data on how far they go. Goldfinches, on the other hand, have been known to migrate short distances. A study showed that Goldfinches in Canada migrated south to areas in the United States during winter.

The study also showed that birds in the Cincinnati area and at least as far west as Kansas were more sedentary and did not migrate.

Even more interesting is that females were found to have migrated the farthest south, young males north of them and older males wintered the farthest north.

If these two species that breed in our areas do migrate, do they travel short distances within close proximity of their breeding grounds or greater distances to southern states similar to the Canada birds? These questions, until the birds we have

banded are recaptured in different states, may take a while to answer.

I still cannot definitely answer the question, but we can, at least with some degree of probability, conclude that many of the Cardinals and Goldfinches we see in winter are not necessarily the same ones we see other times of the year and that many of the winter Goldfinches may be visiting from Canada!

The fun part will be the challenge of identifying which of the individuals at the bird feeders are wintering, breeding, or permanent residents.

For complete results of the Winter Avian Ecology Study, go to www.hbrcn.net.org

Happy Birding!

– Tim Tolford
hummers@hbrcn.net.org

Photo shows Dave Russell (not Tim) banding a Northern Cardinal.
Photo by Hardy Eshbaugh



Shrike v. spider: And the winner is . . .

I was walking down a dirt road that served as a trail in the coastal rainforest of the Osa peninsula in Costa Rica looking for any interesting birds when I was startled by a commotion a short distance ahead.

It did not sound like a bird, but on further investigation I found myself gazing into one of those special natural history moments.

Perched on the lower branches of a small shrub was a Black-hooded Antshrike, a bird restricted to Costa Rica and western Panama. This is a notably tame bird that does not flee from the onlooker.

The voice is described as a loud series of 6-10 nasal barks all at the same pitch. The song which is a trill, usually on one pitch ending with a downward-inflected bark: cow cow cow co co k'k'k'COW, is heard more often than the bird is seen.

This bird was flitting from the ground to the shrub and back again. I looked carefully with my binoculars and witnessed a life and death struggle with a spider, the size of a 50 cent piece, and the bird. The struggle between two opponents in a sword duel went on for about five minutes. The bird did everything it could to avoid being bitten by the spider while flying back and forth between the shrub and the ground using its bill as a sword.



Photo by Hays Cummins

"Cow cow cow co co k'k'k'COW"
It's a Black-hooded Antshrike.

Ultimately, the bird prevailed but not before the spider had mounted an artful defense. The bird's bill finally found its mark and the spider became the Antshrike's late afternoon snack or early evening meal.

From my viewpoint, I was the winner because I had been witness to a special behavioral exhibition that many bird watchers are not fortunate enough to see.

– W. Hardy Eshbaugh
April 8, 2008

Support AMV's mission

Supporting Audubon Miami Valley shows that you are committed to the mission of Audubon Miami Valley and are willing to give generously to support our programs and activities. Please give at one of the following levels (check your choice):

- Student \$20
- Basic \$35
- Supporting \$60
- Centennial \$100
- Partner \$250
- Other \$ _____

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Make your check payable to Audubon Miami Valley and send it, along with this form, to:

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P.O. Box 556
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"I never for a day gave up listening to
the songs of our birds, or watching
their peculiar habits, or delineating them
in the best way I could."
"

— John James Audubon

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