



July—August 2016

No. 180

# WETLAND *matters*

Published bi-monthly for the Friends and Members of Oxbow, Inc.

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## Birdathon 2016 Summary Or "Ibis Larking about"

.....by Jon Seymour

It happened again, why should I be surprised? All those that turned out for the 2016 Birdathon had a great time. Over 20 teams, over 50 individuals attending the Tally Party, 24 hours of birding and it is all tied together with friends and fun and food. PARTY! Not to mention that by raising money for Oxbow, Inc. everyone did a good deed that will help us protect the environment so all God's creatures have a place to live.

A solo (solitary vireo) participant competed with her 4 month old baby attached to her on a frontal carrier. A new record low age for a "participant" helper! Another team of eighteen and under participants had a young lady, age 7, as an active participant. It is great to see the youth getting involved and learning how much fun nature can provide. We have been blessed with several youth teams over the last few years and we hope that continues to grow. Two of our previous youth participants have gone on to full time efforts in nature study. One is employed at Fernald and the other is a Ph.D. student at U.C. We are proud of both and they are both consistently among the leaders in the Birdathon competition.

This year the combined species count for all teams was 192 species. Not as near 200 as I would have liked but some common species just slipped past us this year. Also it was not a great year for "accidentals". The rarest bird on the Birdathon was an Ibis species (either Glossy or White-faced). Since it was an Ibis it does count. Also a few teams found Lark Sparrows scattered around the Birdathon area. Hence, the secondary title to this article. A complete listing of the teams and their totals is listed below. The composite of all the teams sightings is shown on the two page insert.

(continued on page 2)

## October Art Show Masterworks for Nature and Oxbow, Inc.

We are sponsoring our first Art Show ever from Friday, October 14, 2016 to Sunday, October 23, 2016. A grand opening celebration will be held on Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup> with special activities during the opening weekend. A closing celebration will take place on Sunday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Plan on coming to Lawrenceburg, visiting our office and buying those special Christmas presents that warm the heart and soul. Maybe you want a special keepsake for yourself? We encourage that! The art of nature brings the wild to life inside our homes and gives us comfort when we view a work of nature art we love.

Friday will begin with a gala opening and meet the artist activities. Browse the show and select keepsake for your home or that special gift for family or friends. If you would like to try your own hand at sketching or painting, or have someone in the family who needs encouragement or a new project, Adam's Art Supply (our partner in the Art Show) will be open and ready to serve your needs. We hope to have the show open most of the weekend with special activities for the family each day. The actual hours of the show will be posted later and available on our website. During the show the door connecting the Art Shop with Oxbow, Inc. will be open and will act as one shop. The Art Store is open during all the hours of the Art Show. We hope to add some extra hours on the weekends.

Last month we highlighted the work of Ann Geise and Gary Denzler. In this issue we celebrate the artistry of Mary Louise Holt and John Ruthven.

Come to downtown Lawrenceburg in October and enjoy the Art Show. Wander the historic streets and take advantage of other area shops and the local restaurants. Take a drive through the Oxbow and watch the gathering of Herons and Egrets as they get ready to migrate south for the winter. Nothing sounds better to me.

(Birdathon continued from page 1)

Notes from the Birdathon, Saturday, May 7th  
...by Jerry Lippert

### Competing as Solitary Vireos (single participant)

- ◆ Mary Cullum – 46 species
- ◆ Renee McGill, Birds of Pray #3 (+ 4 month old Andy) – 52 species
- ◆ Suzanne Clingman, Team Clermont County Parks – 102 species
- ◆ Jerry Lippert, Team Lipkin – 103 species
- ◆ Jon Seymour, Team First Timers – 106 species
- ◆ Jason Gantt Team Ohio Department of Natural Resources – 108 species
- ◆ Bill Hull – 114 species
- ◆ Ethan Rising, Team Birds of Pray #1 (also 18 and under) – 114 species
- ◆ Bill McGill Team Birds of Pray #4 – 116 species
- ◆ Gary Stegner – 123 species

### Competing as a Team

- ◆ Lauren Williams & Madeleine Lippert, Team Nightengales, (18 and under) – 64 species
- ◆ Lois Shadix & Chris Moran, Team Ladyhawks – 73 species
- ◆ Brian Keane & Katherine Yutzey, Team Miami University – 75 species
- ◆ Dave Tozier, John Eckles, Barb Knott & Jen Eckles, Team Birds Elude Us – 76 species
- ◆ Bill Stanley, James Wheat & Richard Amable, Team Invasive Species – 118 species
- ◆ Eric Burkholder & Kirk Westendorf – 120 species
- ◆ Erik Routolo, Joshua Warren, Levi Parker, Scott Schap & Laura Kate Schap, Team Birds of Pray #2 (18 and under) – 120 species
- ◆ George Farnsworth, Alex Thebert, & 3 St. Xavier University students, Team X-pert Birders (not) – 124 species
- ◆ Wayne Wauligman & Erich Baumgardner, Team Finneytown's Fabulous Flying Fortune Seekers – 132 species
- ◆ John, Sarah, Evan & Carly Leon, Team Four in a Bush – 136 species
- ◆ Brian Wulker, Bill Zimmerman & Brenard Palmer-Ball – 149 species

### And finally the winner of the team competition:

- ◆ Jack Stenger & Joe Bens (Jay Stenger as designated driver), Team Beasts of Birdin' – 158 species

There were 21 checklists evaluated and a conglomerate total of 192 species. Ten teams saw species that other teams did not. There were 18 species seen by every team. There were no sightings of highly possible species such as Gadwall, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sandhill Crane, Black-bellied Plover, either Dowitcher, Bell's Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, several flycatchers, or Dicksissel, all of which were found during several other Birdathons.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS! NOW WE NEED THE DONATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THESE HARDWORKING TEAMS!!!!**

### The Eagle Was Sighted, But It Didn't Land

The Eagle did not land — it was soaring. On Friday, Madeleine and Lauren remarked how neat it would be to see a Bald Eagle on Birdathon, and expressed their desire to see one. We searched at Brookeville Lake which has had nesting eagles, but did not find one. On Saturday afternoon, in that part of the day when it is hard to pick up birds—those mid-afternoon hours—we went to a spot near Gilmore Ponds that had been recommended by Erich. This is at a parking area off Seward Road along a hike/bike trail that passes through the Ellis Lake area. While in the parking lot, I spotted a raptor far away with binoculars. As it banked I thought I saw either a white head or tail, or both, but the bird was something like a mile away soaring over West Chester. I would need the telescope to verify if it was what I hoped it was. Quickly I set the scope up and asked the girls to help me locate the bird. It was only a speck on the far horizon. Madeleine and Lauren did a nice job of telling me where the speck was in relation to a grain silo in front of us. Sure enough we all found the bird and when I got the scope on it, there was no doubt, it was an adult Bald Eagle! But now, could the girls see it through the scope? Would the bird cooperate? Seeing a soaring raptor in a high-power telescope from a great distance away can be challenging for an experienced birder. It's hard to follow the birds and by the time you make the switch from one birder viewing it to another viewing it, the bird has usually soared out of the view and someone has to guess correctly how to follow the bird on its path with the scope. This is what we were faced with. However, when I moved aside and Lauren took the scope view, the Bald Eagle was still in view and in focus and Lauren got to see the bird clearly, white head and white tail and all. The bird was cooperating with a nice, slow, deliberate soaring pattern that kept it in our scope for longer than a soaring bird usually will be in view. When it was Madeleine's turn to view the bird, we needed to find it again in relation to the silo, and once we got it in view, Madeleine slid over and got a nice view of the bird. Again the Eagle was cooperating. Lauren got to take a second look, and she said when the bird turned, she could even see its bright yellow beak! "Wow! A Bald Eagle, over West Chester, and we saw it from like a mile away, and got a great view of it!" I remarked. The girls were thrilled to see this bird—you could see how pleased they were. We were all pretty excited. I knew we had been blessed by the Lord to get to see the one bird the girls had mentioned they really wanted to see today, against the odds from such a great distance away. Over West Chester! Most young people don't find things very well in spotting scopes like this, let alone a soaring raptor through a spotting scope, yet these young ladies did a nice job of cooperating and quickly sliding over to see the bird. We couldn't have asked for more!

### But We Did Receive More...

Near the same parking lot on Seward Road where we saw the Bald Eagle, Madeleine spotted a hawk slashing low across the area. It was a Cooper's Hawk! What a sight! The bird was flying at high speed, slashing, twisting and turning. A few

(continued on page 4)

# Horseshoe Bottoms Diary

Saturday, April 23, 2016

by Jon Seymour

There are over 20 people that gathered earlier today to help clean trash and invasives out of the Oxbow. We have been cleaning up since early morning and trash is filling the dumpster as trailer loads and truck loads of trash are being hauled in from the outer regions of the Oxbow all during the morning. My own experience is much less exciting. I assigned myself to making war on Garlic Mustard, particularly the garlic mustard behind our entrance sign and visible in a visitor's first 3 seconds as they enter the Oxbow. That is motive enough, but my real motive is to eliminate the Garlic Mustard in this area so that the Wood Poppies that are spreading into the area have a better chance of surviving. A couple of years ago there were no Wood Poppy here but now they are numerous plants with their large yellow flowers that really welcome visitors during the early spring. I am interspersing ripping plants out by their roots and stuffing them in a bag with an occasional foray to the other side of the entrance for a trash break.

It is getting toward the end of the tour of duty as Kani Meyer, our clean-up leader, promised to finish up by noon. I have not noticed much more wildlife than butterflies, frogs, and occasional bird calls. Looking down at the ground for 3 hours is not conducive to seeing a lot of large animals and my plant recognition for the past 3 hours has been limited to Wood Poppy or Garlic Mustard. As I walk back to the dumpster with a load, I encounter Carrie Gibbons just pulling out in her car. She has worked all morning but now has to leave for another appointment before we officially are done. We are grateful for the time she could give us. She stops her car to say good-bye and I express my concern that she will not be able to join us for pizza following the end of the clean-up. She says she had a good time but did not see many birds. I look around and say that I had not seen much either but as I look up through the narrow gap in the trees above the road by the entrance parking lot, I see a large bird circling. My first thought is TV (not the screen but a Turkey Vulture) but then I see the proportion and it circles and I see flat wings. At the distance above us I can see that the bird is all dark. Then a second bird appears in the sky window through the trees. I tell Carrie to look up at the two immature Bald Eagles circling above us. She looks up and sees them both and two more appear. As we watch in the brief seconds they are above us, one of the eagles suddenly moves towards another of the eagles

and we witness a brief talon grappling. They break apart nearly immediately but it is a thrilling site. Since they were all immatures I believe we witnessed a little "practice event". The talon grappling is a significant part of the mating ritual of the Bald Eagle and when witnessed in the wild between two eagles is a thrilling and dramatic event.

Carrie and I both feel honored to witness this. The sad part is when I attend the pizza party with the other participants, I find out that no one else saw the event and no one else even saw an eagle that morning. However everyone but Carrie saw, and consumed, the pizza.

## A Brief Visit to the Oxbow - Saturday, April 23, 2016

by Ron Jandeczek

My wife, Jane (a fair weather cleanup person), and I took advantage of a beautiful spring day to take part in the April cleanup. Our 3 short hours were equally divided among a vicious assault on garlic mustard, walking the road sides, and mining the mother lode of broken glass on the hill near the entrance. That last hour of glass-mining was spent joining the crew that had been there for the entire morning. In spite of that intense effort, I believe there is enough glass remaining for future efforts at removal. Next time we will bring a shovel and rake for that hill.

An added benefit was finding a beautiful bright yellow fungus on a log. It was late identified by a fungus expert as witch's butter (*tremella mesenterica*).

I also enjoyed seeing two whitetail does run through a yellow field of butter weed and then disappear down the slope across the road. I regularly see deer in our back yard, so this sight was nice but not that unusual for me. I was, however, curious about their destination so I walked down the road to look for them. They apparently disappeared, but I did see two very unusual waterfowl swimming rapidly across the large pond southeast of the parking area. I wished that I had my binoculars for identification. Their species became quite evident when they emerged from the water and shook themselves dry looking like large dogs. To my surprise, those swimmers were indeed the two deer. I watched them run a few more yards and then plunge into the next pond for their second swimming lap of the day. Either they were afraid of something being pursued, or they were just getting their morning swim workout. I was quite amazed at their swimming speed and am still wondering how they propelled themselves through the water. Perhaps they are Oxbow mutants with webbed hooves.

Such experiences combined with the feeling that perhaps we had made a bit of a difference will bring us back again for the next cleanup—possibly even if there is not the attraction of hot pizza and enjoyable conversation at the end of the morn. Many thanks to Kani Meyer and Jon Seymour for making a work day a delightful spring outing.

*Birdathon Notes (cont'd from page 2)*

moments later we located a hawk nest up in some trees near the parking lot. Getting the scope on it, we saw it was a mama Cooper's Hawk sitting on the nest. We were looking her straight in the eyes, her glaring, piercing gaze fixed on us even though we were some distance away. She was not happy to be discovered, taking umbrage. It's how every good mother hawk necessarily feels when an intruder spots her nest. She was just doing her job. When we walked back to the parking lot and scoped the nest at even closer range, her gaze was even more piercing. The girls were impressed to be looking her in the eye at such close range; it was like we were up in the tree too. Nothing like a scope for this. On the big boulders lining a wetland at the parking lot, the girls found four or five Eastern Garter Snakes sunning themselves on the rocks. Wayne, a fine herpetologist, would have been proud of them. You could walk up quite close to the snakes and they didn't move, sedated by the warm sun. Now I wonder if the Cooper's Hawk we saw slashing low across this area was trying to grab one of these Garter Snakes to bring a meal back for mama hawk sitting on that nest. The sun-sedated snakes would be easy pickings' for a fast hawk. Along the path here, Madeleine and Lauren also were treated to extremely close-up views of a male Indigo Bunting, who continually landed right in front of us on a tall plant stalk. The sun lit up this bright all-blue bird. When we passed this spot on our outbound trip and return trip, the bird flew up and perched on the plant stalk, just 10 feet away. The fact it stuck around at such close range suggests it had a nest nearby to be concerned about.

**We Found A Diamond, But Couldn't Find Limestone**

It's almost like we had gone out looking for neat rocks, gems, and minerals, and somehow found a diamond, but could not find the limestone that is the very bedrock under our feet and which lines every creek we walked along. Yes, we were able to see the American Avocet, a very uncommon shorebird in our area that I'd never found on Birdathon in 29 years, but we found no Killdeer, the most common shorebird in our area which can be found in virtually every parking lot, field, and pond edge. Granted, we got a tip from Erich and Wayne before Birdathon giving us the exact location of where 18 American Avocets were hanging out, and we found them in that exact same spot during Birdathon. But, Erich and Wayne would never have given us a location where we could find Killdeer because that would be almost absurd, as it is taken for granted that a team out birding for nearly 24 hours will find a Killdeer! Yet, Madeleine and Lauren and I found no Killdeer! The girls slept in on Saturday morning and did not rejoin the birding until 12:00 Noon on Saturday. But, I was birding by 5:00 AM Saturday morning, joining Erich and Wayne by 6:00 AM, and never did find a Killdeer myself. That is Birdathon—you really could miss seeing a Chickadee, but instead could find rare birds like Eurasian Wigeon or Kirtland's Warbler. Most of the teams that have won Birdathon over the years have at least a few crazy stories like that, missing some bird that is virtually everywhere in our area, but finding a rarity. It begs the question, maybe more teams should look for diamonds, gold, and rare coins during Birdathon? It could be a get-rich-quick scheme that only the Bermuda Triangle that is Birdathon could make happen! :) During Birdathon 2016, Madeleine, Lauren, and I also missed House Finch, a very common bird found in every single neighborhood in our region, yet we found

the Lark Sparrow, one of the rarest songbirds in our area. It must be said we did go to a known breeding site for Lark Sparrow; however, other teams did the same and still missed Lark Sparrow. At the Birdathon tally we found out we were one of only two groups, I believe, to find Lark Sparrow. It was ironic and fun to see that most of the best birding experts in our area did not find a Lark Sparrow, yet 13-year-old Madeleine and Lauren who could be considered novices, got to see four Lark Sparrows. That is Birdathon for you too. Of course, the venerable birding experts probably saw Killdeer and House Finch. Or, maybe not! Next year during Birdathon, I will spend some time panning for gold, and checking the change given to me at a convenience store for a 1933 Saint-Gaudens Double Eagle coin. You never know during Birdathon! Next year, I'll probably get a bird presumed to be extinct for decades or centuries, but I might miss Killdeer again. Though all Birdathoners have crazy stories about missing easy birds while recording rare ones, they also have stories of having a rare bird in their sights at 4:59 PM on Friday, and the bird flies away out of view and can't be recorded when Birdathon begins at 5:00 PM. It all tends to even out.

**Get Thee To A Rookery!**

After we left the Seward Road bike path area where we'd seen the Bald Eagle, we headed for Winton Woods in hopes of getting a Black-crowned Night Heron, and we knew of a Red-shouldered Hawk nest there which Erich had found prior to Birdathon. I wasn't sure if the Black-crowned Night Herons were present this year at Winton Woods. It was a long drive and a gamble, and time was getting short as it was something like 2:00 or 2:30 in the afternoon already. Thanks to some pre-scouting Erich had done, I knew Black-crowned Night Herons were present at Gilmore Ponds in a rookery which had four nesting species including Double-crested Cormorant, Great Egret, and Great Blue Heron. The Cormorant and the Night Heron would both be new additions to our lists. As we neared our turnoff to head south from Route 4 to Winton Woods, we saw a raptor in flight close to Route 4. It was a Red-shouldered Hawk and the girls both got to see the distinctive tail bands from the road. So instead of turning left towards Winton Woods, we turned right and headed towards Gilmore Ponds. We had been there earlier, but not at the south end where the rookery was. It was really a no-brainer. That bit of Providence giving us the Red-shouldered Hawk at a precise moment in time helped me decide right away that I should take the girls back to Gilmore Ponds to see the rookery. How could I have even considered not taking the girls to this rookery? So glad that Providence intervened. Prior to that morning, when I'd gone to the rookery with Wayne and Erich, I had never seen a rookery with 4 species of waterbirds nesting all at once, not anywhere, let alone in our area. It was quite an opportunity. So when Madeleine and Lauren were looking at Black-crowned Night Heron and the Cormorant, plus Great Egret and Great Blue Heron, all together in this rookery, these big gangly wild birds squawking, flapping, and jockeying for position as they built and tended nests, it gave me some satisfaction. Many years we have missed the Egret and the Night Heron on Birdathon. And the girls were seeing something unique that has not been in evidence at Gilmore Ponds or anywhere

*(continued on page 10)*

**Oxbow Inc. PROGRAMS**

To reach the Oxbow, Inc. office take Highway US 50 west from the #16 exit off I-275. Pass the Hollywood Casino exit and turn left at the second stop light onto Walnut St. 301 Walnut is on the right side at the second stoplight at the corner of Walnut and Center Streets. Free parking is available on Walnut St., Center St., and in the parking lot behind the building.

**All meetings are at The Oxbow, Inc. Office, 301 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg unless otherwise noted**

**Tuesday July 12, 7:30 PM**

**ADAPTATION or EXTINCTION in the Everglades**

Jack Berninger – will present an enticing talk entitled “ADAPTATION or EXTINCTION in the Everglades.” The ecosystems here are complex. Jack will emphasize the roles of Bromeliads, Slash pine and Carnivorous plants along with Pythons and other fauna/flora.

**Tuesday August 9, 7:30 PM**

**The Breeding Birds of the Oxbow Area and Southwestern Ohio**

Dr. Wayne Wauligman – will report on "The Breeding Birds of the Oxbow Area and Southwestern Ohio." Wayne has photos and information on the changes occurring with breeding birds, especially with range expansion or shifts.

**Tuesday September 13, 7:30 PM**

**Effects of Geology on Plant Distribution in Adams County, OH**

Dr. Meg Riestenberg, geologist and plant biologist - will present “Effects of Geology on Plant Distribution in Adams County, OH”. Plant communities and species distribution are strongly affected by the geology of a region. One of the most dramatic displays of these relationships can be seen in Adams County, Ohio.

***Participants in the outdoor programs need to be aware of the following potential hazards that could be encountered during any of the outdoor programs offered by Oxbow, Inc.:***

The trails are uneven graveled and often unmaintained dirt roads. We may have to go off the road if there is an obstacle in the road. Areas off road are often more uneven, may have poison ivy and may be close to water and steep banks. You must decide for yourself if you are able to safely navigate this terrain. If at any point an individual decides they need to discontinue the tour the tour leader will do their best to help them to the extent that that it does not prevent the tour from being completed for the enjoyment of the other participants or put their safety at risk. There are no restrooms. (ADA)

# OXBOW & MASTERWORKS FOR NATURE

PRESENT AN ORIGINAL ART EXHIBITION

*Ann Geise - De Vere Burt - Linda Howard Bittner - **Mary Louise Holt** - John Ruthven - Debbie Lentz - Gary Denzler*

**Mary Louise Holt's** passion for natural history compels her to bring to life on canvas the rich natural history of the Eastern Frontier. She began her career as a graphic designer, illustrator and courtroom artist for local and national television. She created exhibits for nature centers, museums and other institutions involved in environmental education here and abroad. Mary Louise Holt's historical paintings as well as her portraits, landscapes and wildlife art can be found in private and corporate collections throughout the United States. Her work has also been exhibited in several prestigious museums in the United States and Europe.



Native Cincinnati **John A. Ruthven** returned home after Naval service during WWII to attend the Cincinnati Art Academy. After a successful commercial art career he began his own company, Wildlife Internationale, Inc. in 1970 and still maintains his gallery in Georgetown, Ohio. Highlights of his accomplishments include the 1960-61 Federal Duck Stamp competition, 1st Artist of the Year print for Duck's Unlimited, Eagles for three U.S. Presidents, Eagle to the Moon for the

Neil Armstrong Aerospace Museum, and many private collections. John was awarded the National Medal of Arts by the National Endowment for the Arts, presented in the White House.

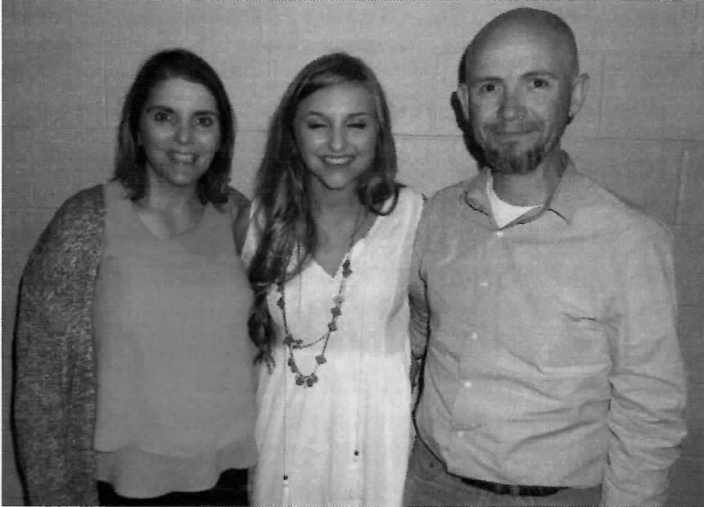
**October 14-23, 2016**

**Opening Reception Friday, October 14th, 5-9p**

*Oxbow Office, 301 Walnut St., Lawrenceburg IN 47025*

### Oxbow, Inc. 2016 High School Scholarships

May and June are exciting months for Oxbow, Inc. as we are privileged to present five \$500 scholarships to area seniors who are going on to college in some field of nature study. We make these awards to five graduating seniors in each of the high school districts surrounding the Oxbow. The winners are chosen by each high school's science and/or guidance department and a member of the Board of Oxbow, Inc. is on hand to make the presentation in person at each school's award ceremony. This year's winners are:



**Claudia Dawson, William Henry Harrison High School:** Claudia is the daughter of Jodie and Ken Dawson. She greatly enjoys outdoor activities and mixes that love with community service to improve the local environment. She sees the big picture from restoring forests to protecting the rain forest and the need to recycle human used materials to protect scarce resources. Claudia will be majoring in Geology at Miami University.



**Kelsie Roth, South Dearborn High School:** Kelsie is the daughter of Laura (Andrew) Dittmer and Brian Roth. Kelsie has her eye on a career as a veterinarian and will be attending Purdue University majoring in Biology. She would like to have her own veterinary practice someday and would not mind if that allowed her to work with zoo animals.



**Kristen Hartman, East Central High School:** Kristen lives with her family of Kathy, Gary and Kyle Hartman. She is planning on a double major in animal biology and environmental studies at the University of Cincinnati. She wants to be a zoologist or an conservation biologist.



**Isabel Holland, Lawrenceburg High School:** Isabel has been a volunteer for PAWS Animal Shelter and grew up on her grandfather's farm surrounded by animals. She is passionate about the need to defend the environment and the ecosystems on which we all depend. She will attend Ball State and studying Environmental Science.

**Tara Hale, Taylor High School:** Tara plans to attend Northern Kentucky University, majoring in Biological Sciences. She participated in a number of volunteer activities in high school, while working part time at the local Kroger store.



4	BCD	Hermit Thrush
19	AAAAA	Wood Thrush
22	AAAAA	American Robin
22	AAAAA	Gray Catbird
19	BBBBB	Northern Mockingbird
17	ABBBB	Brown Thrasher
22	AAAAA	European Starling
2	EEEE	American Pipit
13	DCBBB	Cedar Waxwing
13	BBBBB	Blue-winged Warbler
19	DDDE	Golden-winged Warbler
19	BAAAD	Tennessee Warbler
1	DDD	Orange-crowned Warbler
1	BABC	Nashville Warbler
17	CCDD	Northern Parula
19	AAAAA	Yellow Warbler
12	CBBBD	Chestnut-sided Warbler
9	DCBBC	Magnolia Warbler
1	CBBCE	Cape May Warbler
6	DCCD	Black-throated Blue Warbler
18	AAABE	Yellow-rumped Warbler
8	AAABD	Black-throated Green Warbler
1	CBBBD	Blackburnian Warbler
18	BBBBB	Yellow-throated Warbler
4	CCDDD	Pine Warbler
14	CCCCC	Prairie Warbler
13	BBBOD	Palm Warbler
7	DCBBD	Bay-breasted Warbler
15	DCBBD	Blackpoll Warbler
12	BBBBB	Cerulean Warbler
10	BBBCD	Black-and-white Warbler
15	DCBBC	American Redstart
19	CCOCB	Prothonotary Warbler
3	DDDDD	Worm-eating Warbler
13	BBABC	Ovenbird
14	CCDDD	Northern Waterthrush
8	BCCCC	Louisiana Waterthrush
12	CBBBB	Kentucky Warbler
	EEE	Connecticut Warbler
	DCCD	Mourning Warbler
22	BAAAA	Common Yellowthroat
8	BBBBC	Hooded Warbler
3	EDCCD	Wilson's Warbler
1	DCCC	Canada Warbler
1	DCBBB	Yellow-breasted Chat
12	CBBBB	Summer Tanager
19	BAAAB	Scarlet Tanager
19	AAAAA	Eastern Towhee
22	BBBBB	Chipping Sparrow
20	AAAAA	Field Sparrow

1	EEEEE	Vesper Sparrow
13	CCDDD	Savannah Sparrow
3	DDDDD	Grasshopper Sparrow
2	EEEEE	Henslow's Sparrow
22	AAAAA	Song Sparrow
5	EDDDE	Lincoln's Sparrow
7	BCCE	Swamp Sparrow
16	AABCD	White-throated Sparrow
21	CBBCE	White-crowned Sparrow
	DDD	Dark-eyed Junco
22	AAAAA	Northern Cardinal
18	BBBBB	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
10	EEDDD	Blue Grosbeak
21	BAAAA	Indigo Bunting
	EDDD	Dickcissel
3	ECCDD	Bobolink
22	AAAAA	Red-winged Blackbird
18	BBBBB	Eastern Meadowlark
	DDE	Rusty Blackbird
12	AAAAA	Common Grackle
22	AAAAA	Brown-headed Cowbird
20	BBBBB	Orchard Oriole
20	BAAAA	Baltimore Oriole
	DDE	Purple Finch
16	AAAAA	House Finch
4	DDDE	Pine Siskin
20	AAAAA	American Goldfinch
	EE	Evening Grosbeak
22	AAAAA	House Sparrow

- 2 Greater Scaup
- 5 Lark Sparrow
- 2 Common Merganser
- 1 Ibis (sp) [White faced or Glossy]

Key: XXXXX represent each of the five weeks of May  
 A → E represent abundant (A) to rare (E)

# CinCheck

Cincinnati Birding Checklist  
 cinincinnatibirds.com

Date: May 6-7, 2016

Birders: 22 Teams

Location: Greater Cincinnati  
 Birdathon Area

Notes: 192 species

18 species seen by every team  
 10 species seen by only one team

The number in front of the species name indicates how many teams saw the species.



EEE Snow Goose  
 22 AAAAA Canada Goose  
 13 DD Mute Swan  
 19 BBBB Wood Duck  
 9 DDD Gadwall  
 DDDE American Wigeon  
 22 DDEE American Black Duck  
 AAAAA Mallard  
 19 BBCCC Blue-winged Teal  
 CDDDD Northern Shoveler  
 1 DD Northern Pintail  
 4 CD Green-winged Teal  
 2 E Redhead  
 10 CDDDD Ring-necked Duck  
 1 CDDDE Lesser Scaup  
 1 DEE Bufflehead  
 4 DDDDD Hooded Merganser  
 3 DDDE Red-breasted Merganser  
 2 DDDDD Ruddy Duck  
 EEEEE Ring-necked Pheasant  
 13 CCCCC Wild Turkey  
 6 CCCCC Northern Bobwhite  
 6 DDDDD Common Loon  
 16 BCDDD Pied-billed Grebe  
 2 EE Horned Grebe  
 19 CCCCC Double-crested Cormorant  
 3 DDDDD American Bittern  
 DDDDD Least Bittern  
 22 BBBB Great Blue Heron  
 12 DDDDD Great Egret  
 1 EE Snowy Egret  
 EEEEE Little Blue Heron  
 EEEEE Cattle Egret  
 13 CBBB Green Heron  
 5 CCCCC Black-crowned Night-Heron  
 EEEEE Yellow-crowned Night-Heron  
 20 DDDDD Black Vulture  
 20 AAAAA Turkey Vulture  
 9 CDDDD Osprey  
 14 DDEE Bald Eagle  
 1 DDEE Northern Harrier  
 5 DDEE Sharp-shinned Hawk  
 15 CCCCC Cooper's Hawk  
 16 CCCCC Red-shouldered Hawk  
 2 CCCCC Broad-winged Hawk  
 22 BBBB Red-tailed Hawk  
 19 BBBB American Kestrel  
 EE Merlin  
 9 DDDDD Peregrine Falcon  
 DDDDD Virginia Rail

11 CCCCC Sora  
 3 DDDDD Common Moorhen  
 21 BCCCC American Coot  
 EEE Sandhill Crane  
 DDDCC Black-bellied Plover  
 EEE American Golden-Plover  
 2 DDCCC Semipalmated Plover  
 20 AAAAA Killdeer  
 3 EE American Avocet  
 20 BBBB Spotted Sandpiper  
 17 BBCE Solitary Sandpiper  
 17 BCCDD Greater Yellowlegs  
 EEE Willet  
 15 BCCDD Lesser Yellowlegs  
 EEEEE Upland Sandpiper  
 EEE Ruddy Turnstone  
 4 DCCB Semipalmated Sandpiper  
 9 DCCC Least Sandpiper  
 6 CCCCC White-rumped Sandpiper  
 2 DDDDD Pectoral Sandpiper  
 DDDDD Dunlin  
 EDDD Stilt Sandpiper  
 DDDDD Short-billed Dowitcher  
 E Long-billed Dowitcher  
 2 CDD Wilson's Snipe  
 11 CCCCC American Woodcock  
 EEE Wilson's Phalarope  
 2 DDDE Bonaparte's Gull  
 9 CCCCC Ring-billed Gull  
 2 DDDDD Herring Gull  
 9 DDDE Caspian Tern  
 2 DDDD Black Tern  
 5 DDDE Common Tern  
 6 DDDD Forster's Tern  
 21 AAAAA Rock Pigeon  
 21 AAAAA Mourning Dove  
 13 DCBBB Yellow-billed Cuckoo  
 3 DDDDE Black-billed Cuckoo  
 EEEEE Barn Owl  
 4 CCCCC Eastern Screech-Owl  
 8 CCCCC Great Horned Owl  
 16 CCCCC Barred Owl  
 12 EDCCC Common Nighthawk  
 1 EEEEE Chuck-will's-widow  
 4 DDDDE Whip-poor-will  
 19 AAAAA Chimney Swift  
 14 DCCBB Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
 15 BBBB Belted Kingfisher  
 5 CCCCC Red-headed Woodpecker  
 20 AAAAA Red-bellied Woodpecker

CDE Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
 20 AAAAA Downy Woodpecker  
 18 BBBB Hairy Woodpecker  
 14 AAAAA Northern Flicker  
 17 BBBB Pileated Woodpecker  
 DDD Olive-sided Flycatcher  
 16 DCAAA Eastern Wood-Pewee  
 EEE Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
 12 ECEBA Acadian Flycatcher  
 EE Alder Flycatcher  
 10 DDCBB Willow Flycatcher  
 7 CBBCD Least Flycatcher  
 18 BCCCC Eastern Phoebe  
 19 BAATA Great Crested Flycatcher  
 22 BBBB Eastern Kingbird  
 15 EEEEE Loggerhead Shrike  
 BBBB White-eyed Vireo  
 EEE Bell's Vireo  
 16 BBBB Yellow-throated Vireo  
 7 BBCE Blue-headed Vireo  
 16 BBBB Warbling Vireo  
 6 DCCCD Philadelphia Vireo  
 18 BAAAA Red-eyed Vireo  
 21 AAAAA Blue Jay  
 21 AAAAA American Crow  
 10 CCCCC Horned Lark  
 10 CCCBB Purple Martin  
 22 BBBB Tree Swallow  
 20 BBBB Northern Rough-winged Swallow  
 13 CCCCC Bank Swallow  
 18 DDDDD Cliff Swallow  
 20 BBBBA Barn Swallow  
 21 AAAAA Carolina Chickadee  
 22 AAAAA Tufted Titmouse  
 DDDDE Red-breasted Nuthatch  
 21 BBBB White-breasted Nuthatch  
 DD Brown Creeper  
 20 AAAAA Carolina Wren  
 EEEEE Bewick's Wren  
 19 AAAAA House Wren  
 EE Winter Wren  
 EEEEE Sedge Wren  
 4 DDDDD Marsh Wren  
 DD Golden-crowned Kinglet  
 7 ABCD Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
 20 BBBB Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
 20 BBBB Eastern Bluebird  
 5 ECCCE Veery  
 4 DCCCE Gray-cheeked Thrush  
 15 BBAAB Swainson's Thrush

### Oxbow Inc. FIELD TRIPS

**Directions for Oxbow Inc Field Trip Meeting Location** — Unless otherwise indicated, all trips start at the upper Oxbow parking lot. To reach the upper Oxbow parking area, go south (left) on US Hwy 50 from the I-275 #16 exit. In about 200 yards, turn left (east) at the edge of the Shell/Subway and go over the levee to where the road T's with a fence directly in front of you. Turn right and go to the Oxbow entrance sign. Turn left into the Oxbow. The upper parking area is immediately on the right.

#### **General Nature Diversity**

**Date & Time: Sunday, July 24, 2016, 8:00 a.m.**

**Where: Meet in the upper Oxbow parking lot at the main entrance to the Oxbow.**

**Leader: Joe Bens, (513) 353-4229, [joebens@live.com](mailto:joebens@live.com)**

Join skilled naturalist Joe Bens for a very interesting summer morning visit into the Oxbow. Joe, an expert birder, also has a great knowledge of plants, butterflies and other wildlife and is the perfect guide for a general nature trip.

Many breeding birds will still be around on this date but will be less conspicuous in the late summer. July also marks the beginning of shorebird migration in the Oxbow area and by this date, while not at peak, some can be expected. Heron and egret numbers will begin building up around this time and it is a good time of the year to find one of the rarer species such as Little Blue Heron or Snowy Egret. Joe has a great interest in butterflies and many of those should be seen and identified. Joe will also point out some of the interesting flora found in the Oxbow. Joe expects to visit a couple of spots in the Oxbow proper then move up to Lost Bridge to see what we can find along the Great Miami River and nearby ponds.

Temperatures can soar at this time of year and by 11:00 AM we expect it will be quite hot, so the trip will probably end around this time. Since this is the middle of summer, Joe suggests bringing sunscreen, insect repellent and water to make your visit more comfortable. Feel free to contact Joe if you have any questions.

#### **Nature Walk in the Oxbow**

**Saturday, August 20, 2016, 9:00 a.m.**

Join naturalists Ann Geise, Debra Hausrath, Mary Ann Barnett and Kathy McDonald for a nature walk focusing on Birds, Butterflies, Botany and Bugs. This will be an educational and fun walk to learn about the wildlife that inhabits the Oxbow. We'll begin with a walk along the lake where we are sure to see interesting plants and wildlife. For the more adventurous, we'll continue on a more strenuous walk to the river bottomlands where we'll find even more to see. We recommend bringing water and wearing sturdy shoes (ground can be muddy and/ or rocky). The first part of the hike should conclude around 11:00. Questions? Email Kathy at [mkmcDonald@me.com](mailto:mkmcDonald@me.com)

#### **Early Fall Migrant Shorebirds & Waders**

**Friday Evening, August 26, 2016, \*6:30 p.m.—EVENING FIELD TRIP!**

**Meet in the upper Oxbow parking lot at the main entrance to the Oxbow.**

**Co-Leader: Jack Stenger, (513) 503-3389, [jackstenger@gmail.com](mailto:jackstenger@gmail.com)**

**Co-Leader: Jay Stenger, (513) 522-8147, [jaystenger@cinci.rr.com](mailto:jaystenger@cinci.rr.com)**

To beat the heat of the August "dog days", we began scheduling our August field trips in the evening and it has become quite popular. The focus of this trip will be birds, specifically early fall migrants through the Oxbow. In late summer, the southbound fall migration of shorebirds (sandpipers & plovers), long-legged waders (herons & egrets) and several other species begins and will be well under way. Join our trip leaders, son and father team Jack and Jay Stenger, for a summer evening in the Oxbow area. These two guys are skilled and expert birders who know the area inside and out.

Shorebirds (sandpipers and plovers) need exposed mudflats and shorelines to forage for their invertebrate food. During most years the Oxbow provides good to great habitat for them. The nearby Great Miami River usually has exposed sand bars at this season as well. In addition to several species of shorebirds, we expect to find numerous Great Egrets and herons including Great Blue, Green and Black-crowned Night-Herons. This is also a great time of year to find an unusual or rare species such as Little Blue Heron and Snowy Egret. Purple Martins and other migrating swallows' can "stage" in large numbers in the Oxbow during this month and terns, Osprey, Bald Eagle (year round) and other early migrants are possible. With most of our summer residents still present as well, we should find a good diversity throughout the evening.

Jack and Jay plan to hit several spots in and around the Oxbow including Lost Bridge over the Great Miami. The trip will end around dusk (9:00 PM?). It will likely be hot, even at this time of day, so we suggest bringing sunscreen, insect repellent and water to make your visit more comfortable. Feel free to contact Jack or Jay if you have any questions.



## Musings

by Dave Styér

### The Black-necked Stilt and the American Avocet

On Tuesday, April 26, Frank Frick saw and photographed 2 Black-necked Stilts near Lost Bridge. That was a first sighting of these birds in the Oxbow area, and part of a phenomenal week for the Oxbow bird record.

The large and elegant avocets and stilts are in a shorebird family of their own, separate from the plover family and the sandpiper family we are so familiar with in the Oxbow area. Both the Black-necked Stilt and the American Avocet are rare in the Greater Cincinnati area. However, there are different levels of rare: I have seen Avocets both in Indiana and in Ohio within the Oxbow area, but I have never seen a Black-necked Stilt in either state, let alone in the Oxbow area.

Let's go back in time to get a better perspective on the frequency of these birds in the area. In *Birds of Southwestern Ohio*, 1953, Kemsies and Randal wrote:

Dr. Kirkland in 1837 reported that the Avocet had been killed by sportsmen in the vicinity of Cincinnati. Lynds Jones gives a record by Charles Dury who said, "has been seen on sand bars of the Ohio River." There is also a report by Raymond W. Smith, of "one specimen in winter plumage" taken at Lebanon Reservoir in the spring of 1880....

As of 1953 that was the most recent record. On the other hand, Kemsies and Randle refer to the Black-necked Stilt as "hypothetical." They write that "in the 1879 Journal Langdon reported an individual of this species, noted by Dury." Also, "there are no preserved Ohio specimens."

Moving forward three decades, Mumford and Keller, in *The Birds of Indiana*, 1984, report the Black-necked Stilt as hypothetical for the state. For the avocet in Indiana, it appears that there were early records, and then hardly any. Then they note a definite up-tick in records: "from 1961 to 1970, there were two observations. But from 1971 to 1980 there were seventeen records."

Looking at Bruce Peterjohn's *the Birds of Ohio*, 1989, we find one main reason for the disappearance of these birds in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

Black-necked Stilts were decimated by over-hunting during the late 1800s and became rare throughout the United States while their population recovered in the western states, eastern populations remained small and locally

distributed along the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts north to Delaware.

Similarly, in the late 1800s the "avocets were decimated by market-hunting and virtually disappeared from eastern North America." As in Indiana, migrant Avocets started showing up in Ohio in the 1970s and 1980s. However, Peterjohn was able to sight only two or three Black-necked Stilt records in Ohio in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Within the past twenty-five years there has been a clear increase of Black-necked Stilt sightings in Ohio and Indiana. I recall one "Oxbow related" record of these birds: during a Birdathon (year?) Karl Maslowski's team saw Black-necked Stilts in the eastern part of the count circle, east of Cincinnati. Now, if you search Cornell University's eBird on the Internet you will find twenty-first century records of Stilts scattered across Ohio and Indiana. Both Avocets and Stilts have finally recovered from a serious depletion of their populations.

You may wonder why Avocets started showing up sooner than stilts. The Avocets actually have a large breeding population in the Great Plains, while the Stilt population is small there, and generally more southerly. Thus Avocets going between southern wintering grounds and breeding grounds are more likely to stray across Ohio and Indiana, than Stilts.

For some birders the state line is very important. If you are an Ohio birder, and saw these Black-necked Stilts near Lost Bridge, you are in luck. If you must see your Oxbow birds in Indiana, you may be in for a wait. At least, the prospect looks good for an Indiana record of Black-necked Stilts in the Oxbow area. If you feel that Indiana is being left behind, just wait for the next installment of Musings in *Wetland Matters*.

#### Oxbow Cleanup Report

.....by Kani Meyer

For a change there was no threat of rain, snow, hail or other precipitation and the sun was actually out on Cincinnati's east side. But as my husband Dave and I drew nearer to the Oxbow for the start of the Spring clean-up, the sky was leaden and even threatening. Despite that twenty good people showed up and we had one of the best clean-ups we've had in a long time. Two chain saws allowed one group to attack honeysuckle along the levee and the other to take down and treat Callery pears along the edge of Oxbow Lake and also in the prairie. Other people pulled up pesky garlic mustard which seems to be getting less prevalent in the parking lot area (or am I just wishful thinking?). Still others walked the roads and along the levee to pick up trash. At noon we all converged on the nearby LaRosas and enjoyed pizza and conversation. Once again our neighbor Best Way provided the container for the trash for which Oxbow, Inc. is most grateful.

## MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUM

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*Contributions should be sent to: Oxbow, Inc., P. O. Box 4172, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025. Be sure to enclose the names and addresses of those who are to receive the acknowledgment.*

**If you would like to contribute directly to Oxbow's High School Scholarship fund, send your donation to Oxbow, Inc., P.O. Box 4172, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025 and mark it for the "scholarship fund" and we will see it is added.**

### *Birdathon Notes (cont'd from page 4)*

else nearby in recent history--four waterbirds in a rookery together. Typically Great Egrets and Double-crested Cormorants nest at Lake Erie and the other Great Lakes. I haven't known them to nest close to Cincinnati.

Also at the south end of Gilmore Ponds, the girls saw a Brown-headed Cowbird, as well as an adult male Orchard Oriole and adult male Baltimore Oriole in the scope. These Orioles are two of the most colorful birds in our area, and seeing them up close in the scope highlights their vivid colors.

**I Don't Care If You Do See A Marsh Chicken, Get Off Those Tracks!**

Earlier in the day on the north end of Gilmore Ponds near the Hamilton-Fairfield Airport, Madeleine and Lauren had seen another uncommon bird I have only seen on Birdathon perhaps three or four times: Common Moorhen. This is a striking bird with a dark charcoal gray-blue head and neck, some bright white on the wing and tail feathers, a red-orange shield covering part of the front of its face, and a red-orange beak with a yellow tip. The shield and the beak look seamless, and the red-orange and yellow colors really stand out. The Common Moorhen is closer to the chicken family than the duck family, but it acts like a duck. It is in a family of birds called Rails which could be called Water Chickens or Marsh Chickens. The Moorhen is yet another bird that most Birdathon teams would miss this year, as they do most years, yet Lauren and Madeleine would record on their first Birdathon together! The Moorhen we saw was swimming in a flooded field near railroad tracks. While we walked along the tracks, Madeleine heard a noise she thought was a train a ways off, coming our way. There was no train in sight, but Madeleine demanded we evacuate the tracks. So we did. No train came, so we walked the tracks some more to see more of the wetlands, but Madeleine continued in her protestations that we get off the tracks. Lauren and I tried to convince her the train she heard was on another set of tracks, but Madeleine persisted. It became a silly joke after awhile, with Madeleine making over-dramatized safety-related announcements every minute or so. No train ever came during the 40 minutes we were there, but boy, if one had come, we were sure ready to get off those tracks!

### **You Can Record Birds While You Sleep**

Madeleine and Lauren went to bed Friday night in Madeleine's bedroom. I went outside to unload something from the car. It was my last trip to the car. As soon as I got to the driveway, I heard a Barred Owl make an abbreviated call, just two hoots from the northwest. So I went to the back yard to call for other owls. First I tried Screech Owl, the hardest one to get to call back. No answer after awhile. Next I tried Great-horned Owl calls. No answer from a Great-horned. After calling a short while from the back yard, I went to the front yard and resumed calling, alternating Great-horned calls every so often with Barred Owl calls. A Barred Owl called back from behind our house, from the southwest, and we had a conversation for time. I was hoping to get the Barred Owl going so perhaps the young ladies could hear it call through Madeleine's window and thus get to count the bird. Also I hoped to get the Barred Owl to fly in close so I could see it. I took shelter close up against

*(continued on page 11)*

*Birdathon Notes (cont'd from page 10)*

our Weeping Cherry tree so any owls wouldn't be able to see me so easily, and I stayed on the opposite side of the tree from where the Barred Owl was calling behind the house so it might not see me and fly in close, as they will often do when someone calls to them for awhile. Soon a Barred Owl was calling repeatedly from across the street behind the neighbor's house, from the east. Now I had heard Barred Owls from three directions, not that one couldn't have moved, but it seemed to be a Barred Owl party. The Barred Owl continued calling repeatedly from behind our house. Before long I noticed a Barred Owl flying from behind our house, over our front yard, all the way across the street. Nice, got to see it!

The next day, Lauren asked me if I had been doing owl calls the night before. I told her I had, and asked, "Did you hear anything through the window?" "Yes!" and she said something like, "I heard what I thought was you calling for an owl, but then after awhile it sounded different and I thought it was a real wild owl calling." "Yes," I explained, "That is exactly what you heard! You heard a real Barred Owl calling after I stopped calling in the back yard." Madeleine heard it too. Yes! Sometimes plans work out fine! Madeleine and Lauren had recorded Barred Owl while half asleep in their beds. Saturday morning, I got to the entrance to Boone Cliffs natural area in Kentucky at about 5:58 AM. Soon after exiting the car, I heard Great-horned Owls calling over and over again from the wooded slopes above the parking area. Soon two Barred Owls called in response to the **Great-horned Owls**, one from a different part of the slope, **and another from the other side of the road**. The Barred Owls **did not call long** or do their full call, doing only alarm hoots, as they don't want the Great-horned Owls to know where they are, seeing as how the Great-horned will eat the Barred Owl for dinner, or breakfast in this case. Some years you can't buy an owl on Birdathon unless you have nests staked out, as they just don't seem to call much this time of year, busy as they are feeding young and not wanting to give away the location of their nest or where they are feeding their young. This Birdathon, it was different, as I got to hear owls calling from all directions at two different places. No Screech Owl, but I will take two out of three any day. Wayne, Erich, and I walked the upland trail at Boone Cliffs and heard the begging call of a fledgling Great-horned Owl several times, as it told its parents it was hungry again. Yet another owl.

**One More Bird Who Wanted To Be Counted**

We finished our birding on Saturday at the tally site, the Fernald Preserve, former site of nuclear materials handling (and leaking unfortunately) during the Cold War, now a public nature preserve. The place is filled with ponds, marshes, grassland habitat and forests. We didn't have much time to bird here. However, we did record Pied-billed Grebe, a duck we had missed earlier. After seeing the Grebe, we only had about 5 minutes left in Birdathon, so we quickly headed back to the Visitor Center for the tally. If you arrive late at the tally, you lose one species from your count list for every minute you arrive past 5:00 PM, as far as the competition goes. As we neared the building, I breathed a sigh of relief as we were going to make it with

time to spare. But God had one more gift left for us. Into some low landscape shrubs next to the Visitor Center flew a sparrow. A White-crowned Sparrow, a striking bird we did not have on Madeleine and Lauren's list yet. Erich and Wayne and I had seen a couple of these birds earlier in the day at the Oxbow Lake area. Here at Fernald, the girls were having a little trouble seeing the bird well as it was in shadow. However, the bird sat patiently in the shrub on the same branch, right on the edge in plain view. Finally it hit me—I could be scoping this bird for the girls, even though it was close. Once in focus in the scope, both Madeleine and Lauren got to see the bird clearly with its bold black-and-white-striped crown. The bird could not have been more cooperative, sitting there the whole time on the exposed edge. It really wanted to be counted! We were happy to oblige and add one more bird to the girls' list. 64 species.

**Dost Thou Mock Me, O' Mocker?**

Despite birding for nearly 24 hours straight, I had not found a Mockingbird on Birdathon, another ubiquitous bird. On Sunday, as we drove to church, what should fly out and nearly hit our car as it did battle with a blackbird, but a Mockingbird! "Really", I thought, "I birded nearly nonstop for 24 hours and could not find one of these, but see one at an industrial cement plant on Mosteller Road at the I-275 exit?" Yes good man, consider thyself mocked!

**They Deserve A Medal, Another Medal**

Wayne and Erich once again patiently tried to help me find calling birds that I simply could not hear without some clueing in. Since childhood, I have had a pretty big hearing loss in the high ranges. Since many of the harder-to-find birds sing in the higher ranges and hide really well, I need a lot of help finding them. Often I just have to see the bird. Sometimes I can hear it with some guidance on where it is, and by getting closer. Oh yeah, and I also use a parabolic dish with an electronic headset to bring the bird calls into my ears better! However, Wayne and Erich do more for me than any device could. Without Wayne and Erich, I would walk right by many interesting calling birds, particularly the warblers which I enjoy seeing so much. Wayne and Erich have always been willing and adept at helping me find or hear calling birds. Often this takes quite a bit of extra time. Their patience is admirable and for that they deserve a medal, or at least an affectionate charlie horse to the leg, or a noogie, or a wet willy! Or maybe a 1933 Saint-Gaudens Double Eagle coin? Some birds I would not have found without Erich and Wayne's help this Birdathon, and which I only heard and did not see, are Worm-eating Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Northern Parula Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and many others! Almost every year they must find me a Prairie Warbler, but this year I actually found one by sight that was not singing, and clued Erich and Wayne into it! It may be 20 years before that happens again! For decades, one or the other of them has been finding Prairie Warbler for me. Nice to finally return the favor! I just had to mention the one time I find them a Prairie Warbler, didn't I?! What do I want, a medal?

Anyway, hats off to Wayne and Erich for yet another year of helping the infirm with bird-finding. Maybe they can take some sort of deduction on their taxes.

## **Oxbow, Inc. and Oxbow of Indiana, Inc.**

A nonprofit organization formed by conservation groups and concerned citizens of Ohio and Indiana for the purpose of preserving and protecting a wetlands ecosystem know locally as the Oxbow, Hardintown, or Horseshoe Bottoms, from industrial development and to preserve the floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This agricultural area is rich in geological, archaeological, and anthropological history.

Help us save this unique wetland ecosystem. Make your state a richer place in which to live by helping us preserve this precious resource. **Membership in Oxbow, Inc. is encouraged and solicited.**

Prothonotary Warbler	\$ 15	Wood Duck	\$ 25
Great Blue Heron	\$ 50	Green-winged Teal	\$100
Great Egret	\$250	Osprey	\$500
Bald Eagle	\$1000		
Charm of Goldfinches (Group Level)	\$25		

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