



January—February 2017

No. 183

# WETLAND *matters*

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

Have you visited our website? — [www.oxbowinc.org](http://www.oxbowinc.org)

Need a speaker? Call 513-851-9835

## What's Taking Flight

.....by Jon Seymour

The year 2016 is drawing to a close as I write this review. It has been another great year for Oxbow, Inc. We have presented an outstanding series of lectures covering such diverse topics as water chemistry and its effect on Oxbow Lakes, Waterfowl in the Oxbow, adaptation and extinction in the Everglades, the geology of plant distribution in Adams County, bird brain behavior, and trekking across South Georgia Island to name a few. We have Dr. Meg Riestenberg to thank for putting this outstanding lecture series together for us to enjoy.

We continued our educational grant program established by Jinny Wiseman-Witte with an award to another land trust, the Western Wildlife Corridor, to help them jump start their education program at the newly established Kirby Nature Preserve. The land trusts in the Greater Cincinnati area have a long history of cooperative effort and support for each other's efforts. Oxbow, Inc. was pleased to be able to help the Western Wildlife Corridor in this manner.

In a different kind of educational grant, Oxbow, Inc. was able to continue to provide \$500 scholarships to five high school seniors from all the high schools surrounding the Oxbow area. This year the winners were Claudia Dawson, William Henry Harrison High School; Kelsie Roth, South Dearborn High School; Kristen Hartman, East Central High School; Isbel Holland, Lawrenceburg High School, and Tara Hale, Taylor High School. We wish all the winners every success in their studies pertaining to the natural world.

Birdathon 2016 was a great success and was our 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Cincinnati Area Birdathon (sponsored for a few years by the Cincinnati Nature Center before returning to its original home of Oxbow, Inc.). This year the Birdathon raised about \$3,700 from over 50 participants in 22 teams and 56 supporting donors. A total of 192 species

*(continued on page 2)*

## Growing Pains

.....by Jon Seymour and Meg Poehlmann

We ask for your patience as we blend together 3 separate membership tracking systems that Oxbow, Inc. has used over the last several years. Unfortunately these three sources were kept in three different databases but only one was used primarily for newsletter and renewal mailings. It took a great deal of volunteer time to keep it connected to the other databases that handled donations and membership renewals. A third database containing more in-depth information was also maintained but not connected to either of the other two databases. With our decision to centralize all the membership management in one database we have had some hiccups blending the three. Two major problems have occurred. First, when one database was added to the other some of the information overwrote information already in the system. It was not necessarily consistent with the latest information (think more than one address). The second problem was that the databases were not necessarily equally current. Some data looked like memberships that were recently paid, but were not. Again these had to be manually corrected.

We are absolutely certain that we did not catch and correct every glitch. If you get a notice about membership renewal and you have recently paid just give us a call (812-290-2941) or email ([meg@oxbowinc.org](mailto:meg@oxbowinc.org)) to let us know. If you inadvertently paid twice this year, we will advance your membership another year. If *Wetland Matters* is returned for an incorrect address we will work out the correct one and re-mail it to you. We apologize in advance if it arrives a bit late. We expect that by the next mailing of the newsletter in March we should have most problems sorted out. Thank you for your patience and we hope that after this initial data crunch we will be able to process membership information in a more efficient and useful manner.

(Continued from page 1)

were identified by the combined team lists during the 24 hour period that constitutes the Birdathon. Money raised by the Birdathon is dedicated to either land purchase, habitat improvement, or access improvement.

Oxbow had a couple of firsts this year as we finally hired our very first and one and only employee. Meg Poehlmann comes to Oxbow well known to us as having previously been on the Board of Oxbow, Inc. as well as volunteering as the editor of this missive. Prior to Oxbow, Inc. Meg was the manager of a non-profit research organization handling approximately \$2,000,000 in contracts per year. Meg's task is to get Oxbow, Inc. ready to last another century or more as we create systems for managing the organization and all its facets. This is no small job and Meg and I are working together to get institutional knowledge of the organization translated into best practices models of how we operate.

The other first was our very first Oxbow, Inc. sponsored Art Show. Old records indicate that the Board of Oxbow, Inc. has been kicking around the idea of an Art Show to raise money for Oxbow nearly as long as we have been talking about Oxbow, Inc. itself. **This year we pulled it off. BUT WE HAD LOTS OF HELP!** Kate Ball raised her hand and volunteered to help lead the effort to pull off a show. Kate teaches art at the University of Cincinnati and is married to Oxbow volunteer and resident bird expert, Jack Stenger, who just happens to be the son of bird guru and Board member Jay Stenger. Kate brought a level of expertise to the organization which was simply not present before. Kate and I contacted Devere Burt regarding our desire to have the group Masterworks for Nature do our show. We met with them in February and convinced them we could present a good show that would benefit the artists and Oxbow, Inc. Masterworks for Nature consists of a group of local nature artists, several of whom have won national awards, with locally recognizable names such as Gary Denzler, Anne Giese, and John Ruthven.

We asked our next door street neighbor, Adam Gilliam of Adam's Art and Supply, if he would like to be part of the sponsorship. Turns out he was just getting ready to see if he could convince us to do a joint art project. Everything fell into place.

Well not exactly that easy. We had to select and install a versatile picture hanging system, select and install track lights over the display area, paint the walls white to show off the art work better, and finally advertise the heck out of it without spending a fortune. We had some unexpected help from Downtown Lawrenceburg who liked the idea of combining our opening night with other arts activities in Lawrenceburg that evening and Focus on Art Night was born. The Great Crescent Brewery from Aurora made it a magical opening with free beer available throughout the

evening. The combined space of the Oxbow, Inc. and Adam's Art and Supply (our connecting door open for unhindered passage) gave patrons of the show a place they could buy art and at the same time buy supplies to create their own art.

A dozen Oxbow, Inc. volunteers helped keep the Art Show going strong for 10 days and nearly \$10,000 in art was sold to benefit the artists and Oxbow, Inc. Better yet we now have made the investment in hangers and track lights and can conduct another show with a lot less upfront effort and investment. Art Shows draw a different demographic to the Oxbow office where we can make more people aware of what Oxbow, Inc. is and what it does. This gives us a chance to make more of the community supporters of Oxbow, Inc.

#### BIRDATHON 2017

Now that it is winter our thoughts, of course, turn to spring and spring means birds and birds in spring mean BIRDATHON. We will be celebrating the birds and 30+ years of birding the Greater Cincinnati Area and having a fun time doing it. In the process we will raise money to make the Oxbow a better place. What could be better? Join us on May 12-13 for another birding blast followed by the Tally Party at Fernald, at 5:00 pm. on Saturday the 13th, where all will be revealed. The 13th this year is the day of the World Series of Birding so we will have our own Cincinnati Series to match the folks of the coasts. At Fernald we will have our annual feature, "Stories from the Birdathon", as we party along with the annual review of bird species seen. Plus pizza, snacks (some of them healthy) and beverage make for the ending of a perfect 24 hour hunt for species. Come join us and tally some birds. We have plenty of room for participants.

If you cannot be there SEND MONEY to support the hard working (I cannot say "hard funning", but that begs the question of why we do not say groups are "hard funning") teams, and the money goes to supporting habitat and access improvements in the Oxbow. Why would you want to be anywhere else? See you ALL there.

## Birdathon Participation

Oxbow, Inc. wants to have as many birdwatchers as possible participate in the Birdathon. While there is a basic competition for the most species seen in the Birdathon area during 24 hours, there are many ways to compete besides most species for the total Birdathon area. To get your mind working, here are some possible categories of competition:

*-if not the entire Birdathon area then a portion-*

Most Species seen: in one state, in one county or a river watershed

*-maybe it is a small area-*

Most Species In one Location: like the Oxbow, back yard, or a big sit

*-maybe the type of team-*

Most Species seen: by a family, a group under the age of 20, a school class

*-maybe it can be a special category-*

Most money raised: by a team, an individual, a class

*-or-*

~~Most birds seen without using fossil fuel, while building a deck, taking the kids for a hike~~

*-or-*

Most birds photographed

You can even make up your own category. If it has anything to do with counting bird species in the Birdathon's 24 hour time window we will probably accept it.

Remember the purpose of the Birdathon is to raise money for improving Oxbow habitat and Oxbow accessibility projects. Each team or individual participating should do everything it can to raise money for Oxbow. **The way to do it is to have fun birding! Then celebrate all the fun at the Grand Tally Party.**

If you want to enter a team (or as an individual) in the Oxbow Birdathon, **please call Jay Stenger @ 513-522-8147 or Jon Seymour @ 513-851-9835.** We like to know how many are going to be participating on the Birdathon so that we can get the Pizza order right for the Grand Tally Party at the finish of the Birdathon. There is \$5.00 fee per person to participate which goes to cover the cost of the food at the Tally Party. See you ALL there.

## Pledge Form for Birdathon 2017 (May 12-13, 2017)

Mail To: Attn: Birdathon Oxbow of Indiana, Inc. P.O. Box 4172 Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

My pledge for Birdathon is:

Fixed Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Check Enclosed

( ) Bill me after the Birdathon

*(Please pick a team to support - it means a lot to the birders.)*

-OR-

Per Species Pledge: (Circle One, you will be billed after the Birdathon):

\$ 5.00 \$ 4.00 \$ 3.00 \$ 2.00 \$ 1.00 \$ 0.75 \$ 0.50 \$ 0.25

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My Pledge is to Support the following Oxbow, Inc. Team

\_\_\_\_\_ Highest Scoring Team

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #1 – Joe Bens, Jay Stenger & Jack Stenger

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #2 – Wayne Wauligman & Erich Baumgardner

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #3 – Sister Marty Dermody, Lois Shadix, Katherine Miller & Chris Moran

\_\_\_\_\_ Team # 4 – Charlie Saunders, Bob Lacker & Steve Pelikan

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #5 – Jerry Lippert & Madeleine Lippert

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #6 – Jon Seymour & the First Timers

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #7 – Brian Wulker, Bill Zimmerman & William Hull

\_\_\_\_\_ Team #8 – Dave & Jane Styer (West Coast Big Day)

**Make checks payable to Oxbow of Indiana, Inc. Note this change allows us to keep better track of the money for the purposes of habitat restoration and improved access. All donations to Oxbow of Indiana, Inc. are tax deductible.**

# Horseshoe Bottoms Diary

Friday, December 09, 2016

by Jon Seymour

Well, Winter has arrived. I know it is Winter because the puddles are frozen, snow is falling (and accumulating a bit) and the temperature is below freezing with a wind chill of 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Now, if you are like me, you are asking yourself where Fall went. I was wearing my summer clothes before Thanksgiving and my fall jacket for 2 weeks from Thanksgiving to today and now it is full blown winter jacket. Actually windblown winter jacket is a more apt description. What happened to Fall?

I want to drive through the Oxbow this morning to assess how the first blast of winter is affecting the Oxbow. Driving down the hill from our entrance parking lot, I look ahead to the causeway to the backside of the lake. A large fallen tree trunk lies across the causeway nearly blocking the road. I can get my Prius around the end of the fall and up to the gate across the causeway. The tree fall is an old dead stump that is about 35 feet long and once was an old dead tree 40 feet tall. It snapped off the stump and fell directly across the road with the broken end near the stump firmly wedged between two other upright tree trunks. It will not lend itself to being conveniently pushed off the road. It will have to be lifted from between the two trees first and then moved. I will not be doing it with my bare hands today, so it will need to wait until we can bring in some equipment that will do the job. Besides in this wind-chill I will not be doing anything with my bare hands.

As I look out across Juno Pond, I notice that it is wide open but I do not see any ducks on the surface of the pond. I was hoping to find some in the water having just arrived from up north as guests of the most recent weather system. However there is a very large bird in the top branches of a tree on the water's edge directly opposite me. Since the day is cloudy I cannot make out any distinguishing markings. It is large enough to make me think of eagles but I need to check. Contrary to popular opinion, I spend most of my time with Oxbow, Inc. pushing paper, talking on the phone, and attending meetings, only a small portion is spent in the Oxbow birding (not my preferred distribution, but it is reality), as a result I do not carry my scope or my binoculars most of the time. I do always have a pair of cheap binoculars that I keep in the car at all times. Now I need them so I unlock the rear door hatch and fetch the 7X binoculars from the back of the car.

The bird is facing me and the entire breast from the neck to the feet is white. Not an eagle but clearly an Osprey. It is also facing Juno Pond so I think that maybe it is waiting for lunch to swim to the surface. That reminds me that my lunch time is coming up soon. I know where mine is coming from; I wish the Osprey luck in getting his.

I need to continue my journey down the lake so I make my way back around the fallen tree and turn to travel down the Oxbow Lake Road. With the leaves now off the tree branches I can see the Osprey sitting as I head down the road. I go slow to keep it in sight but it is too much suspense for the Osprey and when the car is about 60 yards from the Osprey it drops from the

branch and starts a glide to the opposite shore. Before it reaches the far bank a few flaps of the wings increase its altitude and it turns to fly down the lake toward the Lawrenceburg end. As I continue down the road I pass the smartweed flats and the landscape changes markedly. The lake is much shallower here and the surface of Oxbow Lake is a mixture of thin ice interspersed with open water dotted in a patchwork along the surface of the lake. A lone Great Blue Heron stands on the ice near the shoreline and close to the road. He is not near any open water so maybe he is not hunting at the moment. It perceives no threat from my car and merely watches me pass without stirring from his cold footed position.

Further down the road I come upon a flock of excited Ring-billed Gulls near the opposite shore of the lake that are circling in the air and just now starting to settle back down in one of the larger patches of open water. I speculate that they were probably floating there, resting quite nicely, until a few moments ago when a big raptor (Osprey) flew their way, right over their resting flock. Now after unnecessary excitement the flock was settling back into the resting mode again.

Continuing toward the Lawrenceburg exit I cross our newly redesigned road over what was formerly the lowest portion of the Oxbow Lake Road. It looks great with grass growing on much of the constructed surface which we hope will help stabilize the structure. It has not been tested by floods yet but the design is based on the successful design of the spillway between Oxbow Lake and Osprey Pond. This is an area that will be under water more than any other part of the road. We hope the design will hold and allow us use of the entire length of the Oxbow Lake road many more days of the year. Off to the right I look at the Winter Wheat planted as a cover crop in the field and serving as a food source for wintering waterfowl. It looks to have grown well and hopefully will do its other jobs of reducing runoff, creating permeable soil, and adding organic matter to the soil. Such a lot of work for such a little plant!

I make the turn away from Oxbow Lake and head for the railroad track along the beautiful O-HI-O. Almost immediately 6 small birds startle from the middle of the road and fly to my right and then around the car in the opposite direction from whence I came. As suddenly as they appeared they are gone. I suspect they dive-bombed the ground and landed as quickly as they had appeared out of the soil. They have a certain brown color, a certain way of behaving, and a special shape in flight that is a giveaway to the presence of Horned Larks, my first of the winter.

After only about 20 minutes in the Oxbow and exiting my car once to retrieve my binoculars, it seems I have stepped through the looking glass and left the bustle of traffic on Highway 50 and I-275 behind and found a bit of respite in nature. Now it is back to pushing paper and answering phone calls, but I will feel a whole lot better about it.

### **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, January 10, 2017, 7:30 p.m. – Backpacking in Hong Kong**

Timothy Hardesty will speak in January. He has an amazing personal history, as he has volunteered in the Peace Corps in Swaziland, Africa, taught in China, and has worked professionally in the medical field in Seattle, Memphis and Cincinnati. Tim has hiked in what we might call "exotic places." However, to Tim, they are hiking trips and so, in his mind, not all that exotic when you get right down to it! He has hiked the *Camino de Santiago* across Spain, the *Coast-to-Coast* route across northern England, and the *Lantau Trail* and *MacLehose Trail* in the New Territories of Hong Kong. In addition, he will be hiking the Haite Route in the Alps in Autumn 2016. Since he has great pictures of the Hong Kong trip and because people do not usually think of Hong Kong as a place to hike, Tim thinks it is one of the unknown gems that only locals seems to know about! So prepare yourself for a real treat via a virtual trip to Hong Kong.

#### **Tuesday, February 14, 2017, 7:30 p.m. - Total Eclipse of the Sun, Coming Soon!**

Dr. Mark Fischer of North College Hill, Ohio, is a Professor of Physics at Mount St. Joseph University where he teaches physics, forensics, and astronomy. His research has involved the physics of fungal spore launch mechanisms. His free time is filled with family, music (two bands), and geocaching - which you may know from a previous Oxbow presentation. This time around, Dr. Fischer will tell us about the upcoming total eclipse of the sun, as well as introducing the physics of eclipses, and presenting us with information about historic eclipses and how they were viewed and interpreted.

#### **Tuesday, March 14, 2017, 7:30 p.m.**

#### **The Skeletons in Cincinnati's Closets: The Bones of Music Hall and Washington Park**

Dr. Elizabeth (Beth) Murray will discuss the Commingled human skeletal remains discovered beneath Cincinnati's Music Hall in 1988 have provided a biological snapshot of the lives and deaths of some of Cincinnati's early citizens. Excavations at Washington Park in 2010 exhumed other individuals who were contemporaries of those once buried beneath Music Hall, but who likely occupied a different social status. This presentation will compare Dr. Murray's analyses of the two skeletal populations, as well as discuss ongoing research involving the remains.

Dr. Murray is a Professor of Biology at Mount St. Joseph University, and is one of only approximately 75 anthropologists currently certified by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA). Dr. Murray has participated in hundreds of forensic investigations since 1986. She is a Fellow in the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, and is on the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport's Disaster Committee. Since 2009, Dr. Murray has served as a consultant to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs). Her doctoral work at UC involved the analysis of several hundred pounds of human bone discovered in 1988 entombed beneath Cincinnati's Music Hall. More recently she analyzed the remains of additional early Cincinnatians interred beneath Washington Park. She has authored of several science books for grades 7-12.

***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)

Now that winter is upon us we like to think back to past beauties and forward to the beauties yet to come. Here are four beauties that bring comfort to our winter blahs.



Aquatic Smartweed covers many acres of the shallow area of Oxbow Lake and provides cover for breeding of frogs, fish and many other aquatic species. It is also a favored hunting ground for several species of herons in the Oxbow. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*



Pale Jewel Weed likes the shade of the woods and seems a shy flower but has another name that seems to give warning to a duplicitous nature - touch-me-not. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*



Wingstem is an odd large plant with a spindly look with lots of big flowers (sunflower family) but is easily identified by the presence of a four-sided stem. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*



Spotted Jewel Weed, like its pale cousin, has an exploding seed pod that sprays seed on the forest floor when touched by a passer-by. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*



The Great Miami River makes it's final turn before entering the Ohio River. As it does it carves the soil away from Oxbow property and probably deposits it somewhere in Kentucky or Illinois. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*



On the other side of the river soil from Dayton or maybe the Hamilton area is deposited and forms a place where little seeds from little plants can get a foothold. If you view across the river to where the new soil is building you see new grasses and forbes near the shore, shrubs back further, then small trees, and finally the furthest from the shore in the oldest soil are the tallest trees. *(photo by Jon Seymour)*

**Oxbow Inc. FIELD TRIPS** ((Contributed by Jay Stenger)

**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.

**Annual Moonlit Evening Winter Walk**

**Date & Time: Friday, February 10, 2017, 7:00 p.m. (Evening)\***

**Meet At the Shawnee Lookout Golf Course Parking Lot**

**Leader: John Klein, (513) 304-2310, [john.kleinp2@yahoo.com](mailto:john.kleinp2@yahoo.com)**

(\*This annual trip is usually conducted in January but scheduling difficulties has moved it to this new date)

One of Oxbow Inc.'s beloved founders, Morris Mercer, loved the night winter woods, especially if there was snow on the ground. He and his good friend John Klein started doing this night walk in the Shawnee Lookout woodlands that overlook the Oxbow many years ago. Morris is no longer with us, but John loves the tradition and has kept Morris's spirit alive. We now refer to this annual event as the Morris Mercer Memorial field trip.

If you are looking for a unique experience come and join John as he leads us on about a two hour night walk around Shawnee Lookout Park to see what the night woods have to offer. John, an Oxbow Inc board member and retired Land Manager for the Hamilton County Park District, is the perfect guide. There will be a full moon on this date and there is a fair chance that owls, deer and flying squirrels **will** be seen or heard. John will talk about the history of the Oxbow and Shawnee Lookout area and also have a scope available for stargazing. And as always at some point, John will pass out M & M's to celebrate Morris's memory.

Meet John in-the-parking-lot of the Shawnee Lookout Golf Course Clubhouse at 7:00 pm. The rest rooms will be open. The park is normally closed at this time of night but the rangers will have the entrance gates open for us. Remember that its nighttime in early February so be sure to dress warmly. John is like Morris, in that he would like a little snow on the ground. However severe weather will cancel this trip. If you have any doubts as to whether the trip is cancelled, call John at (513) 304-2310. This trip offers a unique outdoor experience and is highly recommended. Visit the Shawnee Lookout website for Park Maps and other info. <http://www.greatparks.org/parks/shawnee-lookout>

**Early Spring Waterfowl Migration**

**Date & Time: Saturday, February 25, 2017, 8:00 a.m.**

**Meet: In the upper Oxbow parking lot at the main entrance to the Oxbow**

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

Early spring waterfowl migration should be in full swing by this date and they will be the primary focus of this trip. However a diverse number of other early spring migrants and seasonal species are expected and will also be seen. It's also a great time of year to find Bald Eagles and other raptors in the Oxbow. Our trip leader, Jack Stenger is a lifelong Oxbow Inc. advocate and is an expert birder and burgeoning naturalist. He has great bird finding abilities so expectations are high. Jack plans to move around to several spots in the Oxbow area depending on accessibility and water conditions as flooding is the norm in the Oxbow at this season.

So why not shake off your cabin fever and join Jack for what should be a productive morning of wildlife viewing in the Oxbow. Aside from seeing waterfowl and other birds, mud and cold weather is also guaranteed, so dress appropriately. This is a morning trip that should end before noon. Restrooms are available nearby. Feel free to contact Jack if you have any questions regarding the trip.





Usings

by Dave Styér

### The Great Blue Heron

Of the roughly ten heron relatives that might show up at the Oxbow, only one, the Great Blue Heron, can be expected in winter. Great Blue Herons are not only seen throughout the year, but they are seen in greater numbers than any other relative. Having taught courses with ecologist Michael Miller, has, perhaps, led me to ask questions such as: what biological adaptations make the Great Blue Heron so successful? I find these questions hard to answer, but we can try.

The Great Blue Heron is larger than any of its local relatives, so that might make it hardier. However, all the heron relatives are larger than most of the birds that spend the winter in the Cincinnati area, so that size hardly seems to be the deciding factor.

I prefer Robert Butler's statement under Breeding Range in *The Birds of North America*: "widespread and remarkably adaptable." I feel that this statement applies quite generally, not just to the heron's "breeding range." Even though Great Blue Herons don't breed in the Oxbow area, they certainly use the area throughout the year. This likely requires a similarly great flexibility as noted in their breeding range.

When I see these herons getting food, they are usually waiting patiently in water until they can quickly spear a fish and eat it. However, they spend a lot of time hunting in fields, where I suppose they snap up things like mice and voles, as well as grasshoppers in season. Even if things freeze over, these herons still have a source of food.

While feeding, the Great Blue Heron is noted for patiently standing perfectly still until a prey item comes within striking distance. When it does strike, I believe the motion is so sudden, and unexpected by the prey, that the prey seldom has time to react; the heron gets it meal.

One of the consequences of the Great Blue Heron's large size and large wings is a relatively slow wingbeat when in flight. The wing movement of the heron in flight is more suggestive of a person dancing than of a duck or a sparrow flying. It is no wonder that Bent's *Life Histories* state that it "is a stately bird, dignified in its bearing, graceful in its movement and an artistic feature in the landscape."

Even the most graceful can sometimes fall short. From Worth Randle I inherited the classic *Birds of*

*Massachusetts* by Edward Howe Forbush. In it Forbush relates an entertaining Great Blue Heron Story:

Mr. George W. Morse of Tulsa, Oklahoma, writes that he saw a heron strike at a small fish between its own legs, thereby tripping itself, and so, being upset, was carried by the swift current down stream on its back with legs in the air. However, it held on to the fish.

This tale reminds me of a Robert Frost poem, the White-tailed Hornet. Frost relates watching a hornet that was trying to catch a fly. First, the hornet attacked a couple of nail heads, and then a huckleberry that "rolled him on his head." After that, it actually went after a fly, but missed! Frost considers the well-known statement: to err is human. We humans used to hold ourselves in an exalted state. Then downward comparisons kept being made until "nothing but fallibility was left us, and this day's work made even that seem doubtful."

#### Hunting Permit Applications Due July 1, 2017

Oxbow, Inc. members who wish to apply for permits to hunt on Oxbow, Inc. land must submit their application by July 1, 2017 to:

Oxbow, Inc.  
c/o Denny Mason  
10210 Scull Rd  
Cincinnati, OH 45252

Your application must include a copy of your valid Indiana hunting license and a completed memorandum of understanding printed on page 11. Cut out the memorandum. Complete the form and mail it with a copy of your license and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Denny. Once accepted you will receive a permission slip to hunt on Oxbow land designated for hunting, east of I-275. Members must have dues paid current to the time of application. Any violation of the memorandum of understanding will result in immediate revocation of hunting privileges.

If you have any questions contact Denny Mason at 513-385-3607.

## MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUM

### Donor

Elaine & Patrick Carroll  
Jon & Jackie Seymour

### In Memory of

Thomas Huntley  
Thomas J. Mara

### Donor

Mary & Charles Saunders

### In Honor of

Allen Stankiewicz

### Oxbow Inc. would like to thank the following donors for their generous gifts

Ken & Bonnie Borisch  
Alan M. Gast  
John & Karen Martens  
Steve & Karen Maslowski  
Ben Miller & Kristina Thorsell  
Charlie Noe  
Mr. Wilson Cary Palmer  
Bonnie Pence  
Charles & Mary Saunders  
Mr. & Mrs. David Yelton

*Oxbow, Inc. has established Memorials in honor of those who have passed on. Each Memorial established in the name of a friend or relative will be enrolled permanently in the records of the Corporation. Each contribution to a Memorial will be acknowledged to the family or to those selected by the donor.*

*Tributes are also enrolled permanently in the records of the Corporation. Some tributes are birthday or anniversary remembrances, holiday greetings or gratitude acknowledgements. If so desired, "Happy Birthday!" or the like can be inscribed in the tribute notice.*

*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 acknowledgement.*

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.

## Oxbow's Wish List for 2017

*We hope that if members know about items and talents that we need, they might realize ways the very real ways they might be able to help.*

If you have a truck in good shape that you are no longer using and wish to donate it to Oxbow, we are interested. Having a truck available to use, when we have to haul something in or out of the Oxbow, is a valuable necessity.



Lack of a truck has more than once caused us to lose the opportunity to haul a piece of trash out of the Oxbow when conditions were right to do so. We have an offer of a nearby location where we can park the truck when not in use so all we need is a donor and a truck that works. As a 501(c)(3), your donation may provide you with a tax deduction.

We need someone familiar with both plants and GPS to do an invasive species map of plants on Oxbow property. We would like to use this type of map to help us direct efforts to eradicate invasive species in the Oxbow.



If you can help with any of these needs or think you know someone who can, please call Meg Poehlmann or Jon Seymour at 812-290-2941. Please leave a message if we miss your call and we'll get back to you.

## Moving your nest?

Make sure **WETLAND MATTERS** goes with you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Old Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:

Oxbow Inc.

P.O. Box 4172

Lawrenceburg, IN 47025

Please mail right away - *Wetland Matters* is third class mail and is not forwarded!

**Audubon Ohio River (Oxbow) Count ....by Jack Stenger (compiler)**

On Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, sixteen participants conducted the 29<sup>TH</sup> annual Ohio River Christmas Bird Count. We recorded 77 species, only one species off the totals of our last two years. This is a small victory because we had half as many participants as last year and it rained the entire day. It warmed up to sixty degrees in the afternoon. The rain didn't seem to hamper the bird activity, but the wind often drove them deep into cover. This was the first time we recorded Cackling Geese (5). We set high counts for Sandhill Crane (551), Red-headed Woodpecker (9), Red-breasted Nuthatch (3) and American Pipit (42). Our count of 33 Fox Sparrows, while not a high, was exceptional. If you are interested in participating in the count next year (as a feeder watcher or field counter), contact Jack Stenger at [jackstenger@gmail.com](mailto:jackstenger@gmail.com). All are welcome. **Participants:** Kate Ball, Joe Bens, Jeff Bilsky, Mark Gilsdorf, Darlena Graham, Debra Hausrath, Chris Moran, Tim Sisson, Jack Stenger, Jay Stenger, Paula Stenger, Mary Uhlenbrock, Darry Whitsett. **Feeder Watchers:** Linda Hartman, Nick Ludwig, Linda Osterhage

<b>Species:</b>	Bald Eagle—9	Pileated Woodpecker — 3	Eastern Towhee — 6
Snow Goose—1	Northern Harrier— 3	Blue Jay — 89	American Tree Sparrow — 291
Canada Goose—1926	Cooper's Hawk — 2	American Crow — 64	Field Sparrow — 2
Cackling Goose—5	Red-shouldered Hawk — 2	Horned Lark — 385	Fox Sparrow — 33
Gadwall—3	Red-tailed Hawk — 24	Carolina Chickadee — 120	Song Sparrow — 24
American Black Duck—27	American Kestrel — 17	Tufted Titmouse — 65	Swamp Sparrow — 57
Mallard—522	Peregrine Falcon — 1	Red-breasted Nuthatch — 3	White-throated Sparrow — 115
Northern Shoveler—76	American Coot — 86	White-breasted Nuthatch — 24	White-crowned Sparrow — 154
Redhead — 3	Sandhill Crane — 551	Brown Creeper — 5	Dark-eyed Junco — 127
Ring-necked Duck—6	Killdeer — 4	Carolina Wren — 80	Lapland Longspur — 6
Lesser Scaup—2	Ring-billed Gull — 27	Golden-crowned Kinglet — 4	Northern Cardinal — 235
Bufflehead—1	Rock Pigeon — 68	Ruby-crowned Kinglet — 2	Red-winged Blackbird — 391
Common Goldeneye—5	Mourning Dove — 330	Eastern Bluebird — 14	Rusty Blackbird—5
Hooded Merganser—27	Belted Kingfisher— 3	Hermit Thrush — 2	Brown-headed Cowbird—9
Ruddy Duck—25	Red-headed Woodpecker — 9	American Robin — 1724	Purple Finch—25
Wild Turkey—42	Red-bellied Woodpecker — 34	Northern Mockingbird — 8	House Finch—261
Pied-billed Grebe—13	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker — 4	European Starling — 9826	American Goldfinch—97
Great Blue Heron —38	Downy Woodpecker — 46	American Pipit — 42	House Sparrow—53
Black Vulture—88	Hairy Woodpecker — 7	Cedar Waxwing — 12	
Turkey Vulture—3	Northern Flicker — 15	Yellow-rumped Warbler — 34	

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

*A hunting permission slip with a confirmatory stamp and authorized signature will be returned to you upon acceptance of your application.*

***Application and Memorandum of Understanding***

I am a member in good standing of Oxbow, Inc. and request permission to hunt on Oxbow, Inc. property east of I-275 as will be shown on the map affixed to the permission slip that must be carried while hunting on Oxbow property.

I agree to hunt subject to the following Oxbow, Inc. rules:

- I will practice good hunting ethics at all times.
- Others may rightfully visit the area and my activity has no priority over that of others.
- During my use of Oxbow, Inc. property I will not litter, remove or damage Oxbow, Inc. property, or cause any habitat destruction.
- I will not leave any structures on the property (ie. hunting stands, duck blinds, etc.).
- I will carry a valid permission slip at all times while hunting on Oxbow, Inc. land.
- I will obey all applicable laws

I understand that hunting privileges will be revoked if any of the above regulations are violated. I understand that I enter Oxbow, Inc. property entirely at my own risk and hold Oxbow, Inc. free of liability for any hazards, known or unknown to it. I HAVE INCLUDED A COPY OF MY VALID INDIANA HUNTING PERMIT and A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE.

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Oxbow, Inc.  
c/o Denny Mason  
10210 Scull Rd.  
Cincinnati, OH 45252  
Phone: 513-385-3607

Hunting permission is granted for one year (July 1 to June 30 of the following year) only and must be reapplied for yearly.

**HUNTING PERMISSION REQUESTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY JULY 1, 2017**

## **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 known 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		

Mail to: **Oxbow, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 4172  
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025  
812-290-2941

## **Corporation Officers**

President, Dr. Jon Seymour	(513) 851-9835
Vice President, Kani Meyer	(513) 948-8630
Recording Secretary, Dwight Poffenberger	(513) 241-2324
Corresponding Secretary, Dennis Mason	(513) 385-3607
Treasurer, Ed Gemperle	(812) 539-3666
Ohio Agent, Dwight Poffenberger	(513) 241-2324
Indiana Agent, Ed Gemperle	(812) 539-3666


## **Committee Chairpersons**

Conservation, Dr. Jon Seymour	(513) 851-9835
Easement Inspection, John Getzendanner II	(812) 537-0481
Education, Velda Miller	(812) 584-0187
Field Trips, Jay Stenger	(513) 522-8147
Kathy McDonald	(513) 748-0281
Land Management, Kani Meyer	(513) 307-5284
John Klein	(513) 941-4877
Programs, Dr. Meg Riestenberg	(513) 921-3986
Webmaster, Kani Meyer	(513) 307-5284
Research, Dr. Steve Pelikan	(513) 681-2574
Speakers Bureau, Dr. Jon Seymour	(513) 851-9835
Newsletter Editor, Meg Poehlmann	(812) 290-2941
Newsletter Email:	meg@oxbowinc.org

**Wetland Matters, the newsletter for members of Oxbow, Inc., is published bimonthly.**

Printed on recycled paper by  
United Copy Printing - 513-385-8888

**513-851-9835**



Give Us a Call!  
Need a Speaker?

www.oxbowinc.org  
LAWRENCEBURG, IN 47025  
P.O. BOX 4172  
Founded 1985

