

May – July 2023

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WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON

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WHAT'S IN A NAME ... AUDUBON?

By the Board of Western Cuyahoga Audubon

Recently, the National Audubon Society (NAS) reexamined the AUDUBON name in light of the complex history of the organization's namesake, John James Audubon. Audubon had a very significant impact on the field of ornithology. However, he was also an enslaver, whose harmful attitudes toward Black and Indigenous people have been brought to light. Western Cuyahoga Audubon, like NAS, does not want to ignore the importance of John James Audubon and his contributions to birds and bird study, nevertheless, we are very concerned with the racist legacy of John James Audubon, the man.



*John James Audubon.
Painting: George P. A. Healy;
Museum of Science, Boston*

In mid-March 2023, the NAS Board of Directors announced the decision to keep the organization's name intact. NAS will continue to promote an awareness and understanding of his problematic legacy as an individual and the inherent inequalities in the conservation movement as a whole. As NAS explained, "the evaluation considered many factors to determine how the decision would impact NAS's mission to protect birds and the places they need long into the future. Based on the critical threats to birds that Audubon must urgently address and the need to remain a non-partisan force for conservation, the Board determined that retaining the name would enable NAS to direct key resources and focus towards enacting the organization's mission." The following link is the complete story of National Audubon's reasoning, decision, and actions: <https://www.audubon.org/news/national-audubon-society-announces-decision-retain-current-name>

In addition, a link to NPR's Science Friday podcast on March 31, 2023 is below, with interesting information and thoughts. National Audubon Society Announces Decision to Retain Current Name: <https://www.npr.org/pocasts/583350334/science-friday>

The organization's name decision has trickled down to individual chapters ...what to do with the name AUDUBON in the chapter name? NAS emphasizes that "chapters are an essential part of what makes NAS a strong and impactful force for conservation." and "that chapters are independent entities with the authority to make their own naming decisions."

Among the many possible considerations for WCAS (and, for that matter in understanding NAS's decision) are the following:

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What's in a name, continued from page 1

- Is it better to bury the remembrance of John James Audubon in its entirety?
- Is it better to celebrate the ornithological contributions and stay ever mindful of the racist side of the man, encouraging us to strive for continuous improvement in our efforts to promote diversity?
- Is it better to use our resources to blot out the Audubon name?
- Should our resources be used to promote our vision and mission to all people?

Western Cuyahoga Audubon understands that the NAS Board's decision will prompt many questions and strong feelings.

In 2020, in the wake of the George Floyd protests, WCAS published a policy statement in solidarity with the Black community: <https://www.wcaudubon.org/policy-blog/wcas-statement-on-solidarity-with-the-black-american-community>. This is an issue that our chapter needs to continue to raise, to examine, and to put to work to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive presence ... now and for the future. Additionally, Western Cuyahoga Audubon sent a letter in March of 2021 to the then president of the National Audubon Society, Mr. David Yarnold, stating, "Our chapter (WCAS) is striving to be more diverse and inclusive, but we find that we need more and better information about the future of the Audubon name and how NAS suggests we respond to those who raise the issue of Mr. Audubon's beliefs. Please continue to have National Audubon and the Great Lakes Regional Office reach out to chapters to assist with charting a socially just and inclusive future for those who love the outdoors and birds. Chapters are the grassroots of the parent organization and any help would be greatly appreciated."

So we ask, how can we, as a chapter, improve our presence in diverse communities? How can we work to have a more diverse Board, and attract a diversity of members and volunteers? Everyone deserves to enjoy birds, wildlife, and the habitats they need ... and that we need as well.

The Board of WCAS has wrestled with many considerations, but we have not reached out to our members for their thoughts, considerations, and suggestions. As members, we'd like to hear from you. If you have positive, well thought out suggestions, (on the Audubon name, how our chapter can work toward inclusivity, what our chapter can do to increase diverse members and volunteers), and how to implement them, we would like to hear from you. Suggestions may be sent to info@wcaudubon.org. Thank you for your time and serious consideration of this matter.

MEMBER PROGRAMS

May Program: *"Bird Communities as Bellwethers for Habitat Quality and Disturbance"*

Presenters: Tim Krynak, Cleveland Metroparks Natural Resources Manager and
Dr. Nathan Byer, Cleveland Metroparks Research and Database Manager

Date & Time: Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom. Register on Eventbrite: <https://birdcommunities.eventbrite.com>

Description: As natural systems become increasingly fragmented and degraded, there is a pressing need to understand the capacity of altered habitats to support native species. In this presentation, we leverage a district wide breeding bird survey with nearly 13,000 bird observations with a long-term vegetation monitoring program to demonstrate how migratory and non-migratory bird species vary in habitat preferences. Using a multispecies occupancy model, we demonstrate the importance of high-quality habitat for sensitive bird species and how modern quantitative approaches can be used to better prioritize bird species of conservation concern and assist in land management decisions for these species.

June Program: *Picnic, Bird Walk, and Plant Exchange*

Date & Time: Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Location: Meeting in person at the Lagoon Picnic Shelter/Picnic area

Description: As we have been doing for the past couple of years, WCAS members and guests are gathering for an evening picnic, bird walk and plant exchange. The picnic is - bring your own dinner - homemade or purchased, to enjoy in the

company of other members and guests. An outdoor, charcoal grill will be started to heat or cook food items. While having dinner, peruse the selection of indoor or outdoor plants brought by members and guests. Seedlings, transplants, seeds, bulbs, small trees and shrubs, vegetable and flower plants may be available. You do not need to bring plants in order to take home plants, everything is free and ready for a loving yard. After dinner, a short bird walk around the Lagoon area will be done. Let's see how many species we can tally. Plan to attend this event!

July

No Member Programs/Speaker Series in July and August. Enjoy your summer and look ahead to September!

Western Cuyahoga Audubon is excited to announce that our chapter Meetings and Programs will be held in person beginning in September 2023 for the 2023 - 2024 program year. We will be meeting at the Fairview Park Library, 21255 Lorain Rd. on the first Tuesday of each month from September through May. In addition, our meeting times will begin at 7:00 p.m. We just wanted to give our members and those who plan to attend, a heads-up! We will continue to announce the changes every opportunity we get. Please begin to mark your calendars starting Tuesday, September 5, 2023!

SECOND SATURDAY BIRD WALKS

The Second Saturday Bird Walk is our very popular bird walk during which we explore the Rocky River Nature Center trails. Join us the second Saturday of every month to enjoy the beautiful landscape, thrilling birds, and good company. New to birding? Spring is an exciting time of year to pick up those binoculars as many colorful birds return or pass through our area.

Dates: Saturdays, May 13, June 10, and July 8, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Leaders: Bill Deininger, Dave Graskemper, Ken Gober, and Al Rand

Location: Cleveland Metroparks, Rocky River Reservation. Meet at the Rocky River Nature Center parking lot at 24000 Valley Pkwy, North Olmsted, OH 44070



Second Saturday Bird Walk June 2022 by Michelle Brosius

TREMONT TOWPATH TRAIL URBAN BIRD WALKS



Tremont Birders

The Tremont bird walk encourages an appreciation for the birds and wildlife in urban settings. We'll discover a variety of birds, plants, and other interesting bits of nature along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail and Cuyahoga River. New to birding? Bring binoculars if you have them, dress for the weather conditions and have extra layers just in case, a water bottle, comfortable footwear, and curiosity about the natural world. Walking is relatively easy along the paved Towpath and urban streets. Join us and learn with this friendly group!

Dates: Saturdays, April 22, May 27, June 24, and July 22, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Leaders: Nancy Howell and Al Rand

Location: Meet at the Cleveland Metroparks Towpath Parking Lot on Abbey Ave. just west of the former Sokolowski's University Inn. Google Maps link:

<https://goo.gl/maps/rRJW6HNY3xpB6r5J8>

WCAS & KBC JOINT FIELD TRIP: FROHRING MEADOWS

Frohring Meadows is a 298-acre park that offers trails through prairie, wet sedge meadow, and woodland habitats. Michelle Brosius, Bird Walk Coordinator for Western Cuyahoga Audubon, birded this location last April with her uncle and experienced birder, Bob Oppen, and was amazed at the variety of species they found. Last year, they had 36 species, including the Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Bluebird, Tree Swallow, Brown Thrasher, Killdeer, Virginia Rail, Wilson's Snipe, and Sora. Please join us for this joint field trip with Western Cuyahoga Audubon and Kirtland Bird Club!



Photo: Tree Swallows at Frohring Meadows by Michelle Brosius

Date: Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

Leaders: Michelle Brosius and Bob Oppen

Location: 16780 Savage Rd, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023; We will meet at the end of the driveway in the second parking area by Katydid Lodge.

SPRING BIRD WALKS

The Series of Spring Bird Walks continues on Sundays, April 23 and 30, and May 7, 14 and 21 at 7:30 AM unless otherwise noted. Please check the following link to see the entire list of walk locations, descriptions, and contact information. Walks take place in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Lorain Counties, so there are many opportunities and places to bird!
<https://www.wcaudubon.org/2023-spring-bird-walks.html>

WCAS EVENING BIRD WALKS 2023

Perhaps you need a nice walk to wind down from the day, or maybe you're not an early riser for morning bird walks. If so, then these evening walks could be perfect! Evening is a great time to look and listen for birds as they begin to settle for the night ... or for some species, just beginning to be active. No matter what, these evening walks are a nice way to observe birds and the beauty of nature at a different time of the day. Walks take place on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 PM. Below is the list of walk locations.

Wednesday, May 17

Where: Little Met Wetland, Rocky River Reservation

<https://birdinghotspots.org/hotspot/L2604798>

Meeting place: Park at the Big Met Golf Course Parking lot on Valley Pkwy, Fairview Park

Leaders: Nancy Howell

Wednesday, June 21

Where: Fowles Marsh and surrounding areas, part of the Lake-to-Lake Trail in Middleburg Hts.

Meeting place: Parking lot of the Engle Rd Sledding Hill off of Engle Rd. in Middleburg Hts.

<https://birding-in-ohio.com/cuyahoga-county/engle-road-sledding-hill/>

Leaders: Nancy Howell

Wednesday, July 19

Where: West Creek Conservancy's Hemlock Trail, Independence NOTE: Most of the path is sloped.

Some sections are 11% grade. But, there are plenty of benches along the way for taking a break.

<https://birdinghotspots.org/hotspot/L9924256>

Meeting place: Parking lot at 6801 Brecksville Road.

Cars pull back to the southeast corner behind the Cleveland Clinic Business Operations Center.

Leaders: Nancy Howell

WCAS SUPPORTS STUDENTS!

Western Cuyahoga Audubon was thrilled to support students at the Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF) on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. NEOSEF was held in person at Cleveland State University and we had 3 judges ready to view the student's projects. Mary Anne Pfrogner and Carol Miske, WCAS members, as well as Erich Schnack, a ranger from the National Park Service, representing WCAS, stepped up to judge. Carol, unfortunately, had to step away from the event, but is looking forward to other years.

Nearly 250 projects were represented by students in 7 through 12 grades from parochial, private and public schools, as well as homeschools.

This year WCAS presented 2 Special Awards with each awardee receiving \$100.00, and 3 Honorable Mentions. The list of students, the schools they attend, and the titles of their projects are below. Congratulations to these students as they continue in the sciences or engineering.

Special Awards

Avalon Woconish from Beaumont School.

Category: Environment 9-10 grade.

Project: *Invasive invasion: a study on lawn fertilizer and invasive species in Horseshoe Lake Park*

Allen Yu from Beachwood High School.

Category: Engineering 11-12 grade.

Project: *Exploring the benefits of fungi in soil conservation: structure and function*

Honorable Mentions

Willie Willson from John Marshall School.

Category: Environment 11-12 grade.

Project: *Does the presence of vegetation remove more nitrate than soil alone?*

Edwin Rosello from John Marshall School.

Category: Environment 9-10 grade.

Project: *Can nanotechnology help clean up ocean oil spills?*

Connor Marrie from Hawkin Upper School.

Category: Biology 11-12 grade.

Project: *The effect of garlic mustard aphids on garlic mustard*

SUMMER CLIMATE WATCH PROJECT

By Mary Anne Romito, WCAS Climate Watch Coordinator for Northeast Ohio

Help Track the Effects of Climate Change—and Help the Birds You Love

Audubon's Survival by Degrees study shows that two-thirds (64%) (389 out of 604) of North American bird species are at risk of extinction from climate change. The good news is that our science also shows that if we take action now we can help improve the changes for 76% of species at risk. Join Western Cuyahoga Audubon as we participate in Audubon's new community science program, Climate Watch.



If you can identify bluebirds, nuthatches, goldfinches, or towhees by sight and sound, or are eager to learn, put your bird knowledge to use and help us conduct surveys to see how these species are already responding to climate change in our area. The next season of Climate Watch is May 15 - June 15, 2023. Be sure to check out the video from our past meeting on Climate Watch. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odMMa6GGAOo> to learn more about participating in this exciting new program including guidance on conducting a safe and socially distant survey. Please note that our presentation starts about 17 minutes in. So you can fast forward to that point. Contact Mary Anne Romito at maryanneromito@gmail.com for more information on how to participate.

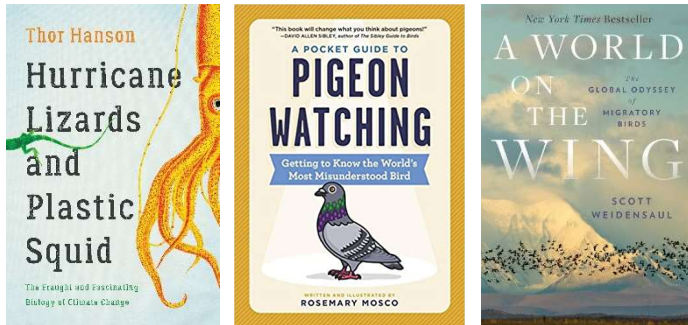
WCAS BOOK DISCUSSION SERIES

By Drina Nemes, Book Discussion Host

Stay tuned for the 2023-24 series. We plan to meet **Tuesdays October 17, 2023, January 16, 2024, and April 23, 2024**. Book selections to be determined.

Our third season of book discussions has just ended with a review of Scott Weidensaul's New York Times bestseller *A World on the Wing – The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds*. This past season's topics covered large themes of climate change, adaptation, and migration. And we looked closely at a single species, the pigeon or rock dove, which is somewhat misunderstood. Author Rosemary Mosco shows that *Columba livia* deserves more. Here are links to the 2022- 23 video discussions:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=western+cuyahoga+audubon+society+book+discussion+2022



If you would like more information on books about birds and nature, check out the American Birding Association's webpage of current and past book reviews:

<https://www.aba.org/book-reviews/>

Be careful, for you may get carried away with all the choices here! Another site filled with book suggestions is

<https://www.10000birds.com/our-favorite-bird-books-and-one-pair-of-binoculars-of-2022.htm>.

The Environment of Americas Book Club has a monthly Zoom program, featuring authors and their books. Participants can ask questions of the author at the live sessions. <https://www.migratorybirdday.org/bird-book-club/>

David Lindo's The Urban Birder website offers live webinars: <https://www.theurbanbirderworld.com/live-webinars/>, while his archive of past recordings has a wide assortment of topics related to birding and natural history.

<https://www.theurbanbirderworld.com/past-meetings/>

For a more local focus on Ohio's natural history, go to Jim McCormac's site, <https://jimmccormac.blogspot.com/>. I am often astonished with his writings and photography.

LEWIS ROAD RIDING RING BLUEBIRD TRAIL UPDATE

By Kurt Miske, Bluebird Project Coordinator

The 2023 breeding season is upon us. We have 4 additional nest boxes to monitor this year, bringing the total to 9. Cleveland Metroparks, which controls the land, allowed Nicolas Kelly, a Boy Scout trying to earn his Eagle Scout badge, to build and install the 4 new boxes. As National Boy Scouts of America stipulates that scouts will not be responsible for maintenance of Eagle Scout projects, WCAS agreed to monitor and maintain the additional boxes.

All nine boxes have been cleaned and are ready for the impending season. Monitoring has begun.

We are fortunate to have last year's monitors returning this year. They are: Alisa (Lisa) Gerbec, George M. Coleman, Jessica (Jess) Kowalski, Carol Miske, and Kurt Miske.

OK bluebirds and tree swallows - let the season begin!

BIRDS SUPPORTED BY SMITHSONIAN CERTIFIED COFFEE FARMS

By Amanda Sebrosky, WCAS Coffee Coordinator

A flash of red as the tanager disappears into the tree canopy; the frenetic sifting through ground litter of migrating sparrows; the chitter of a wren as she flits from branch-to-branch. Our world would be so colorless, silent and lonely if the birds were lost. But — You have the power to help! By purchasing **Smithsonian Certified Bird-friendly coffee**, you help protect the birds that migrate to Central and South America. What birds, and how do I help?

Gray Catbirds over-winter in the scenic mountains of the Huehuetenango region of Guatemala, which have the highest mountain ranges in all of Central America. In these mountain ranges coffee is grown in the traditional way, allowing coffee plants to be shaded by native trees, thus providing the shrubby understory that catbirds need for food and shelter. Scarlet Tanagers, wearing their yellow and black winter plumage, migrate to their winter home among coffee farms in the remote, forested Chanchamayo region of Peru. Here, tanagers eat both insects and wild fruits found in the shade trees above coffee farms. The beautiful Magnolia Warbler, with its vibrant yellow and black feathers, is a common resident of Honduran coffee farms where it searches for insects among the leaves of coffee shade trees and the coffee plants themselves.

Given all the dangers that migrating birds endure on their way to Central and South America, we owe it to them to ensure that there are places for them to over-winter. Buying Smithsonian Certified Bird-friendly Coffee is one way to do that. Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society sells Smithsonian Certified Bird-friendly Coffee as a way to provide easy access to this product, as a way to raise funds to support our mission, AND helping to preserve traditional coffee growing areas which support families that tend the coffee plants, and helps these birds.

We are grateful that many WCAS members and friends order their coffee through us, thus saving shipping fees! Order anytime on the WCAS website and your order will be sent at the next quarterly order month - the 10th of January, April, July or October. A variety of roasts, grinds or whole beans are available.

https://www.wcaudubon.org/store/c35/Bird_Friendly_Coffee.html

Please spread the word about bird-friendly coffee by using it yourself and consider gift purchases for graduations, birthdays, holidays and much more. You'll know that you're helping the birds in a big way.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members to the Western Cuyahoga Audubon flock. We look forward to seeing you at many of our events!

Connor Dart
Jordan Gonzalez
Holly Knisely
Jason Short
Bob Soltys

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Subscribe to our WCAS e-blasts. Electronic information comes out once a week with reminders and updates on events, programs and things that might be of interest. Here's the link to sign up:

<https://www.wcaudubon.org/newsletter-sign-up.html>

MISSION STATEMENT

To connect the public with birds and the natural world through education, conservation, and advocacy opportunities for the benefit of the present and future generations.

The Western Cuyahoga Audubon Feathered Flyer is published 4 times per year in Feb, May, Aug and Nov.

Western Cuyahoga Audubon programs are open to the public. Donations are appreciated.

Email: info@wcaudubon.org

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Interested in Volunteering? Send an email to info@wcaudubon.org

Visit the Store to become a member and renew your membership; order coffee, soil, and/or art; and donate at <http://bit.ly/2taLgnk>

President

WCAS is currently Board run.

Treasurer

Nancy Howell

Recording Secretary

Michelle Brosius

Directors-at-Large

Michelle Brosius, Bruce Missig, Kurt Miske, Mary Anne Romito, and Tom Romito, President Emeritus.

Field Trip Coordinator

Michelle Brosius

Ambassadors

Global Ambassador: David Lindo; Ambassador to Japan: Kaoru Tsubone.

Web & Marketing

Heather Risher

Visit the [WCAudubon Store](https://www.wcaudubon.org/store/) to become a member, renew membership, or make a donation. The Store offers a selection of nature oriented books, maps, articles, reports, event tickets, gift cards, native plants, bird friendly coffee, and organic soils. Items include **Birds & Beans® Coffee**, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center Bird Friendly®-certified beans, 100 percent shade-grown, USDA Organic, and Fair-Trade certified, order by the 10th of the first month in each quarter. **Mitchell's Homemade Ice Cream Gift Cards** for delicious frozen yogurt, sorbet, vegan ice cream. A partnership with **Tilth Soil** at WCAS offers bird friendly gardeners a selection of 4 custom compost soil mixes for indoor and outdoor plantings, and **Artwork by Shaun Missig** features poetry and seasonal photography at conserved natural areas. Proceeds benefit WCAS.

Visit the Store here: <https://www.wcaudubon.org/store/>

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