



THE FEATHERED FLYER

Feb 2018 - April 2018

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On the Cusp of Spring Migration

By Tim Colborn, Board Member, Western Cuyahoga Audubon

"When March finds us, we can get truly excited both in the freedom that warmer temperatures bring and the beginning movements of birds back into and through the region."

As winter draws to a close in Northeast Ohio and the rivers and lakes begin giving up their icy surfaces to the warmth of longer days, it isn't unusual for us birders to experience an increasing sense of anticipation for the imminent migration. January and February have their charms for the hardcore birder and those who enjoy searching for open veins of water out on the lake for a handful of waterbird species. Indeed, there can be a certain joy in pouring over flocks of hundreds of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls searching for that lone "white-winger". But when March finds us, we can get truly excited both in the freedom that warmer temperatures bring and the beginning movements of birds back into and through the region.

When the calendar finally flips to the month of March, we know that the waterfowl migration is fully upon us. Ducks, geese and swans all are on the move north including huge numbers of Canada Geese and Mallards. Both dabblers and divers alike fill ponds and lakes on their way here and further north. This is also a great time to be looking for Common Loons and both Pied-billed and Horned Grebes.

As access to water increases, Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets begin their incursion into the northern half of the state joined by the first wave of shorebirds such as American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, Pectoral Sandpiper and the soon-to-be ubiquitous Killdeer! Keep an eye open for increasing numbers of Belted Kingfishers seeking water bound prey. And try to maintain your calm when you see those first Tree Swallows gliding over the water in search of the season's earliest flying insects!

Migrating songbirds also make progress into the region as the first Eastern Phoebes may be heard along streams and forest hiking trails. While American Robins are present in small numbers all winter here, their appearance on the first green patches of suburban lawns (switching from their winter sustenance of berries to protein-laden worms) are also a welcomed sight. *(Continued on page 2...)*



Photo: Scalloped Surface by Alice Merkel at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve, 8701 Lakeshore Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44108.

It may be a little on the early side to start looking for the rush of warblers but the first Pine Warblers and Louisiana Waterthrush are often seen or heard near the end of March along with increasing numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers. A number of sparrows, including both Chipping and Field Sparrows, arrive at the same time our winter visitors, American Tree Sparrows, are departing. Blackbird numbers start rising with the first Red-wings in February but they and their cousins, Common Grackles, both increase in number during the month while Rusty Blackbirds (a declining species) become more conspicuous.

There are many ways to “kick off” spring birding in March but one Ohio tradition provides a combination of bird-related workshops, vendors, and self-guided field trips supported by experts at several birding locations...the Shreve Migration Sensation! The event is Saturday, March 17, 2018 near Killbuck Marsh, Shreve Lake, Brown’s Bog and Funk Bottoms wildlife areas, Ohio’s “largest inland natural wetland complex,” covering over 5,600 acres. Hosted at the peak of the waterfowl migration through Wayne County, large numbers of *Athya* ducks (including Canvasbacks, Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, and Lesser Scaup) rest and feed in Killbuck and Funk Bottoms marshes on their journey north.

Wherever your March birding takes you, returning species help us appreciate the natural migration cycle of our beloved winged creatures in a pattern that has occurred for thousands of years and will, we hope, continue evermore.

BIRD WALKS AND FIELD TRIPS >>>

Second Saturday Bird Walks at Rocky River Nature Center

UPCOMING DATES: Feb 10, 2018 / Mar 10, 2018 / April 14, 2018

Ken Gober, Dave Graskemper and Bill Deininger lead walks on the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM on trails around the Rocky River Reservation, home of the Rocky River Important Bird Area. New to birding? Grab some binoculars and join us. You’ll be amazed how fast you can learn birds by sight and sound. Walks begin at the Rocky River Nature Center parking lot, 24000 Valley Pkwy, North Olmsted, OH.

85th Annual Spring Bird Walk Series

Watch spring migrants return or travel through to their summer breeding grounds Sundays, April 15 – May 20, 2018 at 7:30 AM. Walks are led by experienced birders in Cuyahoga County and surrounding locations and are co-sponsored by Cleveland Metroparks, The Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Geauga Park District, Lake Metroparks, Huntington Reservation at Lake Erie Nature and Science Center, the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, Blackbrook Audubon Society, and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society. All levels of birders, from beginners to experts, are welcome. Visit our Calendar (wcaudubon.org/calendar) for details.

> Sunday, Feb 18, 9:00 AM

Great Backyard Bird Count Field Trip at Lake Erie Nature and Science Center (LENSC)

Date & Time: Sun Feb 18, 2018 at 9:00am - 12:00pm Noon
Location: 28728 Wolf Rd. Bay Village, OH

The annual Great Backyard Bird Count runs from Friday, February 16, 2018 through Monday, February 19, 2018. WCAS will celebrate at LENS on Sunday with a walk from Lake Erie Nature and Science Center to Lake Erie and back. If there is open water on the lake, we may expect to see a variety of waterfowl. The woods and fields around LENS are home to winter resident raptors and songbirds.

> Sunday, March 25, 9:00 AM

Field Trip Joining Kirtland Bird Club to LaDue

Date & Time: Sun March 25, 2018 at 9:00am - 12:00pm
Location: LaDue Reservoir is located near Ohio State Route 44 and U.S. Route 422 in Auburn and Troy Townships in Geauga County, OH
Leader: Matt Valencic
Target Species: Waterfowl

E-bird list shows that historically, 98 species of birds have been seen at LaDue in March. Birders can see 20 duck species, Loons, Tundra and Trumpeter Swans, Coots and Grebes, Osprey in the later part of the month, resident Eagles, Cooper's, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and all the year-round birds in the fields, forest and edges along Valley Road and elsewhere.

> Sunday, April 29, 7:30 AM

Field Trip to Lake Isaac Waterfowl Sanctuary

Date & Time: Sun April 29, 2018 at 7:30am-11:30am
Location: Lake Isaac Waterfowl Sanctuary, Middleburg Heights, OH 44130
Leaders: Nancy Howell, Rich Kassouf
Target Species: All we can see in a variety of habitats

Nancy Howell and Rich Kassouf lead this Spring Bird Walk joined by Western Cuyahoga Audubon.



Photo: Red-breasted Mergansers (*Mergus serrator*) by Laura Gooch.



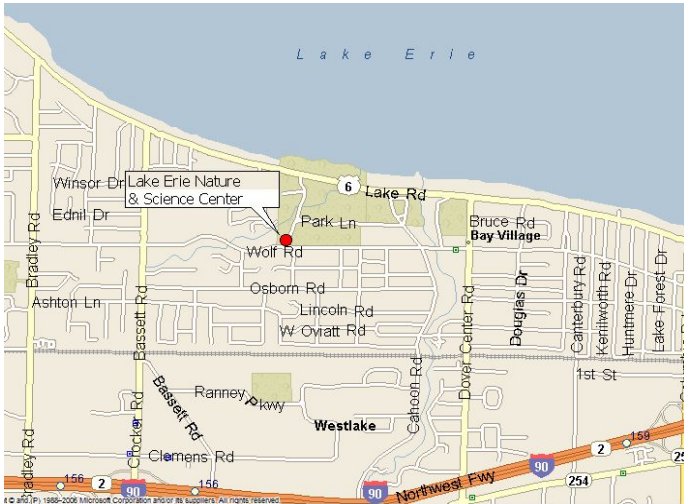
Photo: Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) by Kathy Murphy.



Photo: Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) by Dave Lewis.

Habitats around Lake Isaac includes forest and fields along Baldwin Creek. The **85th Annual Spring Bird Walk Series** is held the last three Sundays in April and the first three Sundays in May, at 7:30 AM in northeast Ohio. Last year's April trip to Lake Isaac tallied 60 species. Join us to locate as many or more species! Walks are sponsored by local Audubon chapters, local park districts, and the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

MAPS AND DIRECTIONS >>>



LAKE ERIE NATURE AND SCIENCE CENTER

(see map, above)

Directions: Meet at Lake Erie Nature and Science Center, 28728 Wolf Rd., Bay Village, OH 44140. The Center is located on Wolf Road, at the corner of Porter Creek Drive in the Huntington Reservation Cleveland Metroparks.

From the West, via Interstate 90 East:

- Exit 156, Crocker-Bassett Roads.
- Turn left on Crocker Road, which becomes Bassett Rd at the railroad tracks.
- Turn right on Wolf Road. Entrance will be .7 miles on the north (left) side of the road.

From the East, via Interstate 90 West:

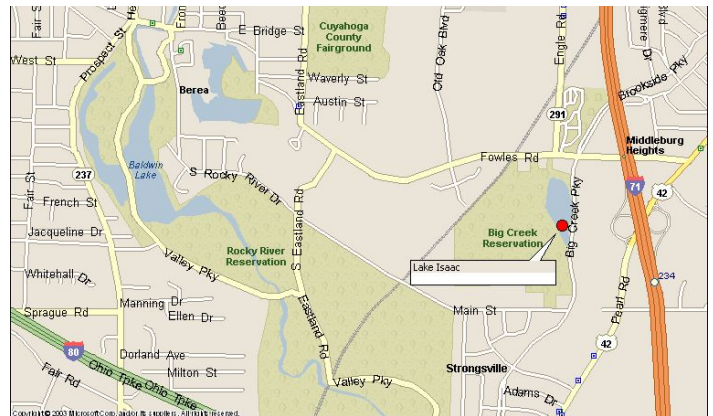
- Exit 159, Columbia Road north.
- Turn right on Columbia Road.
- Turn right on Wolf Road. Entrance will be 1.9 miles on the left side of the road.

From the South, Interstate 480 East OR West:

- Exit 3, Stearns Road. From 480 Eastbound, turn left/ From 480 Westbound, turn right onto Stearns. Stearns will become Crocker Rd. After passing over I-90 at the railroad tracks, Crocker will become Bassett Road. Turn right on Wolf Road.
- The entrance will be .7 miles on the left side of the road.

LaDUE RESERVOIR

From Burton, drive west on SR 87 to SR 44. Turn south on SR 44 and travel approximately 5 miles to the intersection with US 422. At this traffic light turn east to the main parking lot on Valley Road. You may bird all along Valley Road and from various parking areas along SR 44 south of US 422. Meet at the LaDue Marina (aka, Boat House). Lots of parking; can scope a lot of open water; access to The Bayou (backwater area) just north of the parking; field habitat along road leading to boat house; and a stand of conifers next to the parking lot. LaDue has no restroom "facilities".



LAKE ISAAC (see map, above)

The Lake Isaac Waterfowl Sanctuary is located in Middleburg Heights, on Big Creek Parkway, just south of Fowles Road. Take I-71 south from Cleveland to Pearl Rd. (Rte. 42). Go north on Pearl Road and watch for Fowles Road, a short distance. Turn left on Fowles Road. Follow Fowles to Big Creek Parkway and turn left. The parking lot for Lake Isaac is on the right.



Photo: Landing by Kathy Murphy, Lakefront Reservation, Cleveland, OH.

VOLUNTEER SECTION >>>

Preliminary Christmas Bird Count-Lakewood Circle Field Reports 2017

"The 2017 **Lakewood Circle (west side of Cleveland)** Christmas Bird Count was truly a winter wonderland. Snow, whiteout conditions for some, temperatures in the mid to upper teens ... well, maybe not a wonderland. Despite the weather, participants did a bang-up job in locating a great variety of species. As of the writing of this report, 76 species were seen on Count Day and 1 species during Count Week. A final report with all species, the number of each species, as well as participants, will be listed on the Western Cuyahoga Audubon website within a few weeks." ~ *Nancy Howell, Compiler for the Lakewood Circle*

"The weather was challenging, with temperatures in the mid-teens, fog, snow and wind! Our group covered the **lakefront from Edgewater Park in Cleveland to the mouth of the Rocky River in Lakewood**. A King Eider was our most amazing find, a first for the Lakewood CBC. Thanks Jim Heflich, Anna Julnes, and Jim McCarty for a memorable day!" ~ *Paula Lozano, WCAS Member*

From **Lakewood Park, Elmwood Park and nearby areas**: "Really loved looking at the beautiful winter colors the birds were wearing-- especially the Carolina Wrens, Black-capped Chickadees and the White-Breasted Nuthatches." ~ *Jeff and Marian Kraus, Tom Sendry, Sue and Lee Cavano, CBC Volunteers*

"We had a fantastic time today doing the Christmas Bird Count in the northern part of **Olmsted Falls and the northeastern part of Olmsted Township**. It was around 15 degrees and the snow was about five to ten inches deep in places. Sometimes it was pretty windy and snowing heavy. Kathy Murphy (the leader), Jack Sidor, Mike Williams, and Ray Kutnar, walked and drove a total of about four hours. We walked about two miles and drove seven for a total of nine miles. We stopped at the Renaissance Retirement Community and Herbert, Dave and Hilton joined us for a walk around the property. Everyone enjoyed the snowy walk! We identified 15 different species." ~ *Kathy Murphy, WCAS Member*

Thank you CBC 2017 Leaders Eric Bruder, Nancy Howell, Marian and Jeff Krause, Fred Losi, Paula Lozano, Terri Martincic, Liz McQuaid, Kathy Murphy, Chris Pierce, Mary Anne and Tom Romito, and Linda Sekura.

Science Fair Judging Volunteer Opportunity

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society makes Special Science Fair Awards at the annual Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF), Cleveland State University. Judging is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, March 13, 2018. During the four-day event, approximately 600 students in grades 7-12 from 80-plus schools, plus home-schooled students, show their science projects. They compete for \$35,000 in prizes and a chance to go to the International Science and Engineering Fair or the Broadcom MASTERS event. Western Cuyahoga Audubon selects the best projects relating to birds and/or conservation with emphasis on the local watersheds. If you have some science background, and would like to encourage some amazing up-and-coming science students, please volunteer. Judges must be available on the afternoon of March 13. There is also a fun and interesting reception for judges at the end of the day. Interested? Contact Penny O'Connor, 216-676- 4859 or pjo@earthlink.net.

Thank You Volunteers!

Thank you Amanda Piccirillo, Becky Robinson, Betsey Merkel, Kaoru Tsubone, Len Zimmer, Lisa Tagliaferri, Roxanne Yost, and Vinodh "Vin" Chandrasekaran!

PROGRAMS >>>

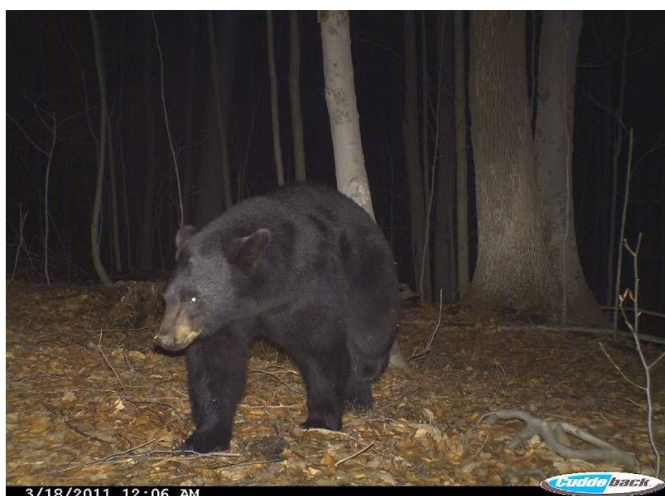
Western Cuyahoga Audubon programs are free and open to the public. Monthly programs are held the first Tuesday of each month, September through May, at the Rocky River Nature Center, Rocky River Reservation, 24000 Valley Pkwy, North Olmsted, OH 44070. Guests are welcome and invited to learn about the Audubon mission. For a map and directions, go to <http://www.wcaudubon.org/rocky-river-reservation.html>



> Tues, Feb 6, 7:30 PM

Lake Erie Critical Issues

Sarah A. Orlando, Ohio Clean Marinas Program Manager, Ohio Sea Grant College Program will talk about critical issues facing Lake Erie, such as algal blooms, marine debris and invasive species. Her presentation covers current research and management strategies as well as ways we can make a difference in our everyday lives.



> Tues, March 6, 7:30 PM

Black Bears in Ohio: Past, Present and Future

The black bear was once extirpated in Ohio, but confirmed sightings of black bears have increased in the eastern half of the state. West Geauga High School science teacher, Mike Sustin, reveals what is known about the occurrence and habits of black bears and highlights the biology and ecology of these animals – from life in the den to foraging behaviors to the management challenges facing Ohio's population.



> Tues, April 3, 7:30 PM

Theropods of a Feather Flock Together: The Evolution of Birds

Backyard dinosaurs? Birds are the descendants of dinosaurs evolving more than 150 million years ago during the Jurassic Period. Lee Hall, Vertebrate Paleontology Preparator, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, takes us through fossil records of evolution and diversity of our feathered friends.

NEWS >>>



Photo: Blackburnian Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*) by Dave Lewis.

It's Winter, Do You Know Where the Birds Are?

For Baltimore Orioles, Scarlet Tanagers and 17 species of warblers—the answer could be Central and South American coffee farms. Forty-two migratory songbird species commonly overwinter in heavily shaded coffee plantations.

Help yourself to keep warm this winter and preserve bird habitat at the same time. Consider making a New Year's Resolution to drink Bird Friendly Coffee, certified by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. It's the real deal. Not just a brand claiming to be shade-grown (i.e., coffee grown under the flimsy cover of banana trees fed artificial fertilizers and pesticides).

Purchase coffee online at <https://goo.gl/HcbbBi> or use the order form available online and at monthly member meetings. Questions? Contact Suzanne Aldrich at SuzanneAldrich@WCAudubon.org or at (440) 465-6612. Place your order by the 10th of every month.

Welcome New Members!

Welcome Alice and Tony Bocchicchio, Evan and Deborah Golder, Terri Rhyner, David Young and Lyn Witwer to Western Cuyahoga Audubon.

Mark Your Calendars!

Event: The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

Date: Fri, Feb 16, through Mon, Feb 19, 2018

Location: Your backyard!

Website: <https://goo.gl/zSULyC>

Event: 18th Annual Shreve Spring Migration Sensation

Date & Time: Sat, Mar 17, 2018, 8:00am - Noon

Host: Village of Shreve, OH

Location: Shreve Elementary School, 598 North Market St. (State Route 226), Shreve, Ohio 44676 and at the nearby Killbuck Marsh

Registration: <https://goo.gl/zC34yD>

Event: 3rd Annual Birds of Lake Erie Day

Date & Time: Sat, April 28, 2018, 11:00am - 4:00pm

Location: Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, 28728 Wolf Rd, Bay Village, OH 44140

Ages: 4+ and older, pre-registration is available

Website: <https://goo.gl/uMXUpN>

The Western Cuyahoga Audubon Chapter Newsletter is published four times per year in February, May, August and November.

Western Cuyahoga Audubon programs are free and open to the public. Donations are appreciated. Consult the calendar for dates www.wcaudubon.org/calendar

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Introducing the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Planned Giving Program

Time is a precious commodity and can get in the way of you and your family doing something to save the planet. Being a worker, parent, or golfer all compete with connecting you and your family with nature. Connecting with nature gets you and your family outside and away from your busy lifestyle, just for briefs of time. By getting involved with nature, you can help preserve the planet. There are things we can all do to help save our planet for the benefit of Ohio's birds, wildlife, and habitat. One thing you can do is remember Western Cuyahoga Audubon in your giving plans. By doing so, you will invest in our chapter's future. And we will honor you for doing it by memorializing you in our Legacy Society. Ask for a copy of our Planned Giving trifold.

Become a Member of Western Cuyahoga Audubon

If you care about the environment and want to maintain diverse habitats for birds and wildlife, join Western Cuyahoga Audubon, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Membership dues support public education, conservation and advocacy programs with a local to global reach. Make a difference by becoming a Member of Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society. You'll be glad you did and the birds will thank you for it! Go to: <http://www.wcaudubon.org/become-a-member.html>



Shop today at **AmazonSmile** and designate Western Cuyahoga Audubon as your charitable organization of choice. When you shop at smile.amazon.com the AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to Western Cuyahoga Audubon.

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