

WINGTIPS



SHORT-EARED OWL, photo by Chad Wilson

MARCH 2024

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March 2024 Program

Tuesday, March 5th at 7 p.m.

French Creek Reservation

I Only Bird While I'm Awake

Gary Gerrone



Conjure up in your mind the image of a stereotypic birdwatcher...then picture yourself working for one. There was no way this was going to work...until it did...and boy did it! Within a few months, birding consumed my life...and when I wasn't birding, I was...well...still birding...be it at lunch, driving, golfing, traveling, or even sleeping. This seriously funny program tells the tales of learning, seeking, finding, identifying, and enjoying birds. ...and of how birds made me a better Naturalist...and a better person.

Gary S. Gerrone is a Naturalist, Writer, Musician, Bird Caller, Father of Twins, and a Relator of Things. He served as the award-winning Naturalist Supervisor for most of his 30+ year career with the Lorain County Metro Parks. Gary's writing resume includes nearly 400 published pieces, including his long-running nature column and the authoring of the book *Lorain County Metro Parks: The First Fifty Years*. Gary is a highly regarded birder, and well-known for his bird calls, as well as his historical musical presentations. He recently added the title of Park Manager to his career as he currently manages both Geneva and Headlands State Parks.

March Field Trips
All trips are on Saturdays
Guests Are Always Welcome!

March 16th, 2024, 9:00 a.m.
Buckeye Woods
6335 Wedgewood Road Medina, OH
Paul Sherwood to lead

Jack Smith Outstanding Speaker Series

March 23rd, 2024
Carlisle Reservation 3:00pm-5:00pm
Tickets will be available on March 1, 2024

There is no cost for members, but due to limited seating, you must get a ticket. The cost for non-members is \$10. Don't delay, this event will "sell" out!

Jen Brumfield

"The Presence (and Presents) of Birds — a lifetime of chasing wings"



JB scanning for jaegers on a Lake Erie pelagic

JB eagerly combines her passions for extreme birding, field studies, outdoor education and detailed scientific illustration into a truly "wild" career. Her illustrations have appeared widely in birding journals and magazines, and she has written and illustrated six field guides in The Fascinated Naturalist Guides series.

Her over-the-top enthusiasm and passion for studying the natural world is rivaled only by her knack for portraying it through her artwork and

interpreting it to others through natural history education programs as a Naturalist for 18 years with Cleveland Metroparks. Just this year JB said farewell to the education world in trade for the next step in her career - the Natural Resources department - working in the field doing land management.

Notes from the President

By Rob Swindell



The Board of Directors has diligently crafted a comprehensive five-year strategic plan aimed at steering the future of our organization within the community. In recent years, our commitment to our mission, coupled with increased resources and activity, has experienced substantial growth, justifying a clear and purposeful path ahead. You can access a detailed copy of the strategic plan, encompassing our goals and objectives, for your review on our website at www.blackriveraudubon.org.

Enhancements to the strategic plan involved a comprehensive review and revision of the organizational by-laws. Notably, the by-laws had not undergone any updates since 2005, marking an interval of nearly two decades. According to our existing by-laws, it is stipulated that members must be provided with 15-day notice prior to any proposed changes, with the subsequent voting scheduled to take place during the upcoming membership meeting on April 2, 2024.

Noteworthy alterations encompass the transition of our organization to a calendar fiscal year, the elimination of the second vice president officer position, a thorough redefinition and update of both officer and committee responsibilities, the potential hiring of a staff position—

contingent on financial feasibility—and the removal of term limits. On the inside back cover you will find the proposed by-laws. To see them in bigger font go to <https://www.blackriveraudubon.org/constitution-bylaws>. The strategic plan: <https://www.blackriveraudubon.org/strategic-plan>. If you have any questions, please contact me at robwindell@yahoo.com.

Short-eared Owl

Asio flammeus

By Chad Wilson



A Short-eared Owl flying along Lake Erie at the Lorain Impoundment, photo by Chad Wilson

When I first started birding, I drove all the way out to Killdeer Plains to try to see my first Short-eared Owl. Killdeer Plains is a place people drive around rather than walking, so it isn't my favorite kind of birding, but after many laps I finally saw a Short-eared Owl perching on a small tree! I was ecstatic! Then when I came back various birders told me “Hey Dummy, you can see them in Lorain County!”. Oh.

Among non-birders, the Short-eared Owl isn't nearly as famous or well-known as the Great Horned Owl, or even the Eastern Screech Owl. They act very differently than most of the other owls that can be found in Ohio. Instead of sitting on trees in forests, they like to sit on the ground in fields during the day, then hunt those same fields starting at dusk. Occasionally they can be seen hunting during the day, which is a treat to watch.

Their flight is reminiscent of a giant moth flitting about. They make crazy turns and seem to have disdain for flying in a straight line. Their flight style alone is good enough for an identification, even at a great distance.

Although they are able to make a wide variety of sounds, they save their voices for their nesting grounds. In winter, silence is golden. I personally have never heard one make a noise in all the times I've seen them.

The owl gets its name from two short “ear” tufts that usually are very hard to see, and, like other owl “ear” tufts, aren't where their ears are at all! A Short-eared Owl's facial feathers create a facial disk, which funnels sound into its real ears, allowing it to hear prey such as mice and voles at great distances and even under snow. Humans can mimic this effect by cupping our hands behind our ears...it really does help.

Short-eared Owls are one of the most widely-distributed owls on the planet, and can be found on every continent save Australia and Antarctica. In Lorain County, the easiest place to see Short-eared Owls is at Margaret Peak Nature Preserve between the months of October and March. Often they don't start flying until full dark, so no pictures are possible, but sometimes they will become active when there is still enough light to see. The bird on the cover photo popped up at Margaret Peak for me around 4:20 in late January and just posed in perfect sunset light for about 15 minutes.

Other than Margaret Peak, sometimes they visit the Lorain impoundment during migration, but usually just for a day or two before they continue on their journey. They also have been seen at the Lorain County Regional Airport, but it's been a few years since they were consistently found there.

Seeing a Short-eared Owl is enough to make anyone's day, and I hope everyone gets to see them at least once in their lifetime!

References: <https://www.allaboutbirds>; <https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/merlin>; <https://peregrinefund.org/explore-raptors-species/owls/short-eared-owl/>; Birds of Ohio by Kennedy and McCourmac

Galapagos Islands – Part IV

By Charlie Weil



Black-capped Tanager and Golden Tanager, photo by Charlie Weil

Quito and Mindo Cloud Forrest

As mentioned in a previous installment, one of the reasons that Ecuador is such a great diverse place for birds, other animals and plants is that it has three ecologically different regions. The Pacific Ocean shore and the Galapagos Islands, the Andes Mountains, and the Amazon basin. In this segment we will report on our brief exploration of the Andes. Our stay was in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, which is in a valley on the Eastern slopes of Pichincha, an active volcano. Quito is at an elevation of 9,350 feet which

makes it the highest or second highest capital in the world. The other defining feature is that Quito is just a few miles South of the equator.

One of the days we were in Quito we took the two-hour drive to the Mindo Cloud Forrest. The town of Mindo is on the Western slope of the Andes mountains at an elevation of 4,265 feet which puts it at the midpoint between the highland Quito area and the Pacific coast. The Mindo area is a humid rainforest in contrast to the arid Quito area. The Mindo Cloud Forrest is known for its rich and diverse bird, insect, and plant life.

The Mindo area has 465 different species of birds. For several years Mindo was ranked among the top 3 areas in the Audubon Christmas bird count. Needless to say, our trip led to great birding but was far too short to give the area justice. The good news is that there is an overwhelming number of colorful bird species, the bad news is that identification of what you see is a challenge. I purchased a field guide to Ecuador Birds to identify the birds of which I took pictures. It turns out there are 132 hummingbird species or 40% of the world population and over 130 tanager species. What follows is a list of the ones I think I correctly identified.

Our first stop was at a hummingbird bird farm near the cloud forest. It had two stations. The first was where the owner had put out bananas and other fruit which attracted several species of tanagers and other birds. I got pictures of Golden Tanagers, Masked Flowerpiercers, Blue Dacnis, Black-capped Tanager, and a Crimson-rumped Toucanet. Also up in the canopy was a flycatcher which our guide was very excited to see. According to him it was quite a rare sighting. Unfortunately, because of our language barriers and my lack of writing it down I missed the name of the species. The Merlin app and the closest picture in the field guide suggest it is a Bright-rumped Attila which was classified as rare.

The second stop was at an area where the owner had hung a dozen or more hummingbird feeders. There was constant activity with

many varieties of hummingbirds coming to feed. All the species were larger than our Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Many had complete iridescent green or purple bodies, some with very long tail feathers. The owner encouraged us to hold the bottom of a feeder in our hands and attract the birds to come in and eat. I am still working on identifying the species. The three that I did identify are the White-necked Jacobin, Fawn-Breasted Brilliant and the Velvet-purple Coronet.

After leaving the hummingbird farm we traveled to the national park where we took a cable car ride up the side of a mountain. It was amazing to look down and see the lush rain forest vegetation with orchids and bromeliads growing in the crotch of the trees. Our next stop was in the town of Mindo where we visited a butterfly farm and a cocoa processing plant. The cocoa process deserves a separate article by itself. While at these two locations we got to see more birds, including a Bananaquit and Thick-billed Euphonia. If you get the chance to take a trip to Ecuador it would be well worth your while. Just plan on staying more than the week that we spent there!



Rumped Toucanet, photo by Charlie Weil

Black River Audubon Membership Only
(but including Wingtips) is \$15/Year

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Email address _____

Send with \$15 check to Black River Audubon
P.O. Box 33, Elyria, OH 44036

“The mission of the Black River Audubon Society is to promote conservation and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife through advocacy, education, stewardship, field trips, and programs for the benefit of all people of today and tomorrow.”

National Audubon Membership Application Only
(Includes membership in Black River Audubon and subscriptions to WINGTIPS and AUDUBON magazine: \$25/year)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Chapter Code S52, 7XCH8
Send your check to: National Audubon Society,
225 Varick Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10014
Attention: Chance Mueleck

To pay online, go to blackriveraudubon.org/membership and select the type of membership you prefer.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: Membership

- Section 1. Any person interested in the mission of this SOCIETY is eligible to apply for membership.
- Section 2. The Board of Directors shall determine membership classes and dues conforming to National Society specifications. Alternatively, Chapter membership, without rights and privileges of the National Society, can be obtained by payment of local dues.
- Section 3. Membership dues are payable at the time of application.
- Section 4. A member in default of dues for six months shall be dropped from the membership rolls.

ARTICLE II: Meetings

- Section 1. The Board of Directors shall schedule the regular meetings of members. No fewer than six meetings shall be scheduled annually.

ARTICLE III: Board of Directors

- Section 1. The control and conduct of the property, policies and business of the SOCIETY shall be vested in the Board of Directors, all of whom shall be members in good standing.
- Section 2. The Board of Directors shall consist of twelve (12) members, four of whom shall be elected each year by a majority of the members present at the Annual December meeting of the SOCIETY. The term of office of each member shall commence on January 1 and shall be for three (3) years.
- Section 3. The Board of Directors shall elect a member to fill a vacancy on the Board until the next regular election, when the membership shall elect a member to fill the unexpired term. If a Director is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board without excuse, the office shall be deemed vacant.
- Section 4. Resignation. Each Board member shall have the right to resign at any time upon written notice thereof to the Secretary, President, or the Executive Director. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof, and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- Section 5. The Board of Directors shall meet six or more times a year. Written notice of these meetings shall be sent to each member of the Board. Half of the current members plus one shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any Directors meeting. A member unable to attend a Board meeting may grant in writing his or her proxy to another member of the SOCIETY.
- Section 6. The President may call Special meetings of the Board. Alternatively, upon request of a majority of the Board, the Secretary may call Special meetings of the Board. Written notice of Special meetings must be given to each Board member at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE IV: Officers

- Section 1. The officers of the SOCIETY shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall be chosen by the Board of Directors from its membership after the January Meeting of the SOCIETY and prior to February 1 of each year and shall hold office for one year or until their successors are elected. The Vice President shall become President if the office of President is vacated. The Board of Directors shall fill any other vacancy among the officers.
- Section 2. Whenever possible, the President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and at all meetings of the SOCIETY. He or she shall direct and administer the affairs of the SOCIETY as its executive head, and shall supervise all phases of its work, subject to the instructions and approval of the Board. He or she shall appoint all committees. The President shall be a member ex-officio of all committees other than the Financial Review and Nominating Committees.
- Section 3. The Vice President shall assist the President in his or her duties. In the absence of the President, the Vice President, and in his or her absence the Treasurer shall perform the duties of President.
- Section 4. The Secretary shall:

1. Keep a record of all the proceedings of the SOCIETY and Board of Directors.
2. Report the proceedings of the Board of Directors to the SOCIETY.
3. Attend to the correspondence of the SOCIETY.
4. Publish a list of officers and committee chairpersons, including addresses and telephone numbers, for the members.
5. Fulfill and ship sales of merchandise to customers.
6. Setup and care for the information table and sale of any merchandise at Program Meetings.
7. The Treasurer shall have custody of the SOCIETY'S funds and securities and shall deposit them in the name of the SOCIETY in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall disperse the funds of the SOCIETY as ordered by the Board. Whenever directed by the Board of Directors, the Treasurer shall render an account of the financial condition of the SOCIETY and of all of his or her financial transactions. The Treasurer shall submit a report of the financial condition of the SOCIETY at each regular meeting and file all applicable state and federal financial reporting. Ordinarily the Treasurer shall sign checks and drafts of the SOCIETY. With the approval of the board the treasurer will select an individual to be an Assistant Treasurer. During periods of extended absence of the Treasurer due to travel or illness the Assistant Treasurer will be responsible for issuing checks, making deposits, and keeping the bookkeeping software current with all electronic and physical transactions. This will include checking account ACH transactions, credit card transactions and all other SOCIETY-related transactions. The Assistant Treasurer will also be responsible for reporting at board meetings in the absence of the Treasurer. The President should be able to issue checks should neither the Treasurer nor Assistant Treasurer be available.

- Section 6. It shall be the duty of each officer and standing committee chairperson to establish and maintain a portfolio or file to aid the succeeding officer or chairperson.

ARTICLE V: Executive Director

- Section 1. The Board of Directors may hire an Executive Director who shall serve at the will of the Board. The Executive Director shall direct the day-to-day business of the SOCIETY. The Executive Director leads and manages a non-profit organization, overseeing operations, finances, programs, staff, and volunteers. He or she drive strategic planning, fundraising, and stakeholder relationships to achieve the organization's mission and goals. The Executive Director shall be an ad-hoc member of all committees. The Executive Director shall report at regular Board meetings as requested by the President or the Board. The President shall prepare the annual report for submission to the National Society.
- Section 2. The Board of Directors provides oversight and guidance to the executive director and the nonprofit's other staff members. The board sets the terms and compensation of the Executive Director. The board ensures that the organization stays aligned with its mission and values in addition to complying with all federal and state laws.
- Section 3. The Executive Director may be hired at any meeting of the Board of Directors by a majority vote and shall serve until removed by the Board of Directors upon an affirmative vote of three-quarters (3/4) of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Directors. Such removal may be with or without cause. Nothing herein shall confer any compensation or other rights on any Executive Director, who shall remain an employee terminable at will, as provided in this Section.
- Section 4. All Executive Director compensation and benefits shall be paid from the unrestricted Jack F Smith Memorial Fund #3, Black River Audubon Endowment Fund held by the Community Foundation of Lorain County. No membership dues or donations shall be used to compensate the Executive Director.

ARTICLE VI: Financial Review Committee

- Section 1. The Board of Directors shall appoint annually a Financial Review Committee, consisting of one member of the Board, two members of the SOCIETY and the Treasurer. The Financial Review Committee shall report at the March meeting upon the scope, character, and accuracy of the Treasurer's records for the financial year ending December 31.

ARTICLE VII: Nominating Committee

- Section 1. The Board of Directors shall annually elect, prior to the SOCIETY'S November meeting, a nominating committee to consist of three (3) members of the SOCIETY. The names of Nominating Committee members shall be announced at the SOCIETY'S November meeting.
- Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates for membership on the Board of Directors and announce them at the Annual December meeting of the SOCIETY. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- Section 3. This Committee shall:

1. Inform potential candidates as to their responsibilities, including that the officers and standing committee chairpersons are elected or appointed from the Board.
2. Endeavor to obtain a good cross section of the membership, focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion.

ARTICLE VIII: Standing Committees

- Section 1. The President shall annually appoint members as Chairpersons of the following committees: 1. Membership Program Conservation 2. Advocacy & Outreach Field Trips Social 3. Publicity Education Fundraising 4. Wingtips

Upon request of the Chairperson of a committee, the President shall appoint additional committee members. Board members are expected to serve on at least one standing committee.

- Section 2. The Membership Committee Chairperson shall maintain close contact with the Membership Department of the NATIONAL SOCIETY. He or she shall keep the SOCIETY'S membership records, prepare mailing labels for the newsletter and annual appeal, conduct membership campaigns to enroll new members, welcome new members, and endeavor to retain those members delinquent in the payment of dues. To welcome guests and new members at social functions, he or she should coordinate with the Social Chairperson.

- Section 3. The Program Committee Chairperson shall make all plans and arrangements for the regular meeting, except for matters relating to SOCIETY business that may be transacted at such meetings. The Program Committee Chairperson shall make arrangements for lectures, discussions, and such other events as may promote interest in and appreciation of the mission of the SOCIETY. He or she shall distribute program information to those committees responsible for promoting events.

- Section 4. The Conservation Committee Chairperson shall carry out the conservation policy and projects approved by the Board. He or shall prepare for review conservation projects, plans and budget. Study and conduct scientific research which is essential to the formation of sound policies in the field of conservation.

- Section 5. The Advocacy & Outreach Committee Chairperson shall keep informed on local, state, and national government policies and actions affecting the natural environment and conservation of natural resources. He or she shall advocate the mission of the board within the community, conducting campaigns to increase the awareness of issues that impact birds and wildlife.

- Section 5. The Field Trip Committee Chairperson shall plan, organize, promote, and arrange for the proper conduct of field trips. He or she shall track participation of all trips for annual reporting and share the results of the trips, including photos, with the membership through the website, email blasts, social media and Wingtips.

- Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Social Committee Chairperson to plan and conduct the social aspects of the functions, including refreshments.

- Section 7. It shall be the duty of the Publicity Committee Chairperson to publicize through Wingtips, Chapter website, newspaper, radio, and other publicity media, the purposes, activities, and programs of the SOCIETY.

- Section 8. It shall be the duty of the Education Committee Chairperson to plan and carry out educational projects concerning bird and nature study in cooperation with the schools and other organizations in the Black River Audubon Society area, including programs such as talks, demonstrations, and exhibits. The Education Committee Chairperson shall also be responsible for publicizing educational programs and scholarships. He or she shall appoint annually a committee of no less than three members to select the Scholarship recipients for the year.

- Section 9. It shall be the duty of the Fundraising Committee Chairperson to secure funding for the organization through annual appeals, fundraising events, grants, donations, and merchandise sales. The Fundraising Committee shall also be responsible for seeking bequests of money and land.

- Section 10. The Wingtips Chairperson shall be responsible for editing and publishing the SOCIETY'S newsletter and preparing it for distribution to the SOCIETY'S membership.

ARTICLE IX: Commitments

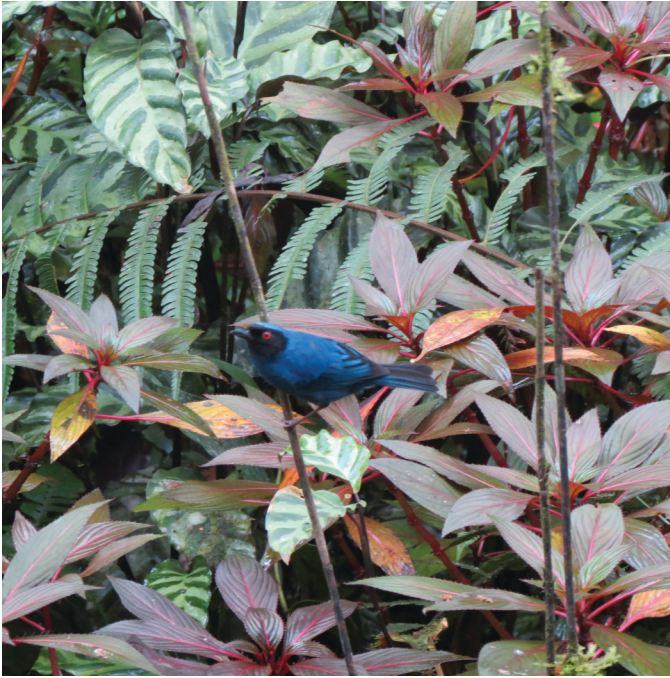
- Section 1. This SOCIETY shall not enter into any commitments binding upon the NATIONAL SOCIETY without written authorization by the NATIONAL SOCIETY, nor shall the NATIONAL SOCIETY, without written authorization by this SOCIETY, enter into any commitments binding upon this SOCIETY.

ARTICLE X: Discontinuance

- Section 1. This SOCIETY may terminate its status as a Chapter of the NATIONAL SOCIETY upon sixty (60) days notice in writing to the NATIONAL SOCIETY. The NATIONAL SOCIETY may terminate the status of this SOCIETY as a Chapter of the NATIONAL SOCIETY upon sixty (60) days notice, in writing, to this SOCIETY.

ARTICLE XI: Amendments

- Section 1. The Constitution and Bylaws of this SOCIETY may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, provided notice of such amendments is mailed to each member at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.



MASKED FLOWERPIERCER, photo by Charlie Weil



BLACK RIVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

"Birding Since 1958"

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440-541-9170

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