

# Black River Audubon Society

# WINGTIPS

May 2014



NORTHERN PARULA photo by Dane Adams

Editors: Harry Spencer, and Cathy Priebe  
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## Mission Statement

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.

### Help Preserve Wildlife and Wildlife Habitats!

**Charitable giving through planned gifts to the Black River Audubon Society helps make sure that the Society's mission to conserve habitats for wildlife and educate the public about birds continues to thrive. No gift is too small and every gift is welcome. All are deductible.**

**Black River Audubon Society sets aside all sizable bequests, endowments, and other planned gifts in various available trusts in which only the income generated is used for support of the organization or designated programs. Benefactors thus leave this world with a feeling that they made a gift that keeps on giving in perpetuity.**

### Program

Tuesday, May 6, 7 p.m.

Carlisle Visitor Center

#### Min-Sui Keung

Naturalist, Cleveland Metro Parks

Min-Sui Keung has been with Cleveland Metroparks for 16 years and is currently working at Rocky River Nature Center. She has a B.A. in biology from Smith College and a M.A. in Diversity Management from Cleveland State University.



### Patagonia

What's at the end of the world? In Patagonia glaciers, birds and beautiful scenery abound. Find out what naturalist Min-Sui Keung learned from her travels to the end of the world



## **Field Trips**

Saturday, May 3, 9 a.m.

### **Magee Marsh**

Meet at west end of board walk

Saturday June 21, 9 a.m.

### **Holden Arboretum**

## **Summer Hikes**

Saturday, July 19, 9 a.m.

### **Old Woman Creek**

Explore the estuary by canoe or kayak.

Meet at Boathouse

Limited space. **RSVP:** 419-433-4601

Visitor Center tour afterward with Cheryl Wolfe

Saturday, August 16, 9 a.m.

### **Mill Hollow/Bacon Woods**

Meet at bridge

Martin Ackermann leading

## **Lake Erie Wing Watch**

Mark your calendars for next September 20 and 21, 2014, when Lake Erie Wing Watch will be held at Osborn Park in Huron, Ohio. Jen Brumfield (Cleveland Metro Park naturalist) is the featured speaker for the event on Saturday, followed by children's crafts, half-hour birding sessions, and a campfire with s'mores that evening. On Sunday, bird walks will take place at a number of Erie County locations with a canoe trip at Old Woman Creek on Saturday morning. Black River Audubon will have a display in the vendor booth. Come say hello!

## **A Birder's Diary: Wish List**

By **Carol Leininger**

I guess everyone has a wish list of things he or she would like to see before passing on. Birders have wish lists, and here is mine. Please note that the only way to accomplish these wishes is to travel, travel, and travel.



- I would love to walk among the penguins in Antarctica.
- I would like to watch the construction work of a bowerbird from start to finish.
- I would enjoy a front row seat at a grebe ballet.
- I would be thrilled to creep along with ant birds as they follow army ants marching through a rain forest.
- I would like to watch the succession of scavengers after a kill on an African savanna.
- I would like to watch a kiwi lay an egg.
- I would love to see every species of trogon in the whole wide world.

- I would love to see a tailor bird sew together its leaf nest and then have a close up look at the elaborate stitches, loops, and knots.
- I would like to watch as young malefowl scramble out of the nest mound. • I would like to visit birding hotspots like Magee Marsh, but on each of the other continents. What an expansion of my life list would result!
- And, of course, I would love to see an ivory-billed woodpecker.

All I have to do is find a star to wish upon!



TOP: PILEATED WOODPECKER  
 BOTTOM: IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER  
 From WIKIPEDIA

### Editors' Wish

We wish Carol Leininger to continue her diary. She takes us to familiar and exotic places populated with fascinating wildlife, and discusses profound aspects of nature.

### NORTHERN PARULA

*Parula Americana*

By Cathy Priebe

Shortly after our first Magee Marsh spring excursion, a small group of my friends decided to rent a cabin at Mohican State Park to witness spring migration in southern Ohio. Mohican State Park has a unique habitat that attracts warblers that are not often seen in great multitudes at Magee, so we were truly excited. On our list of must sees were the worm-eating, yellow-throated, and cerulean warblers.



On a whim, we brought a portable stereo and my brand new warbler songs cd. (Mind you, this was way before you could summon bird songs with your cell phone). Setting it up on a picnic table inside the screened in porch, we proceeded to listen to bird songs so we would have them fresh in our brains before hitting the trails. Sipping coffee and following the photos in the book as each bird sang, we were suddenly startled by a fierce chirp and whirl of blue and yellow feathers. Bouncing up and down on a branch just outside of the screen was a very excited northern parula! Talk about up close and personal!! And the funny thing was we were not even playing his song!!

The northern parula is one of the smallest of the wood warblers, often mistaken for a kinglet, topping all of 4 ½ inches crammed into a short stout body with a stubby tail. The male's upperparts are blue-gray with a greenish yellow patch on back, a band of black and rusty orange on the breast, two white wing bars and white eye rings broken by a black eye line. He also has a yellow chin and white belly and flanks. The female is similar to the male minus the two chest bands.

This feisty bird breeds in southern Ohio in riparian and hemlock forests, but is slowly expanding northward and has been documented nesting sporadically in Central Ohio and also in Brecksville Reservation in 1994, '95 and '97. Their lichen covered nest holds 4 to 5 white eggs with brown spots. The female incubates the eggs for two weeks.

Foraging high in the canopy for insects, this little bird hovers and hangs chickadee-like from the tips of tree

branches but also occasionally feeds on the ground. Their song is a buzzy trill, zeeeeeeeeeeeeeee-yup, which is very identifiable, once you are familiar with it.

Our little parula was a regular visitor that weekend at the cabin even though we decided to listen to our warbler calls inside so we would not overly excite any more birds. We were also very fortunate to find the elusive worm-eating warbler along with numerous ceruleans, yellow-throated warblers and others. I would highly recommend a spring visit to Mohican State Park and the Hemlock Trail which is located near the cabins.

**References:** *Birds of Ohio*, Jim McCormac; *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion*, Pete Dunne; *Birds of the Cleveland Region*, Larry Rosche; *Stokes Field Guide to Birds*, Donald and Lillian Stokes.

## COMMON YELLOWTHROAT

*Geothlypis trichas*

- Rough translation of scientific name: ground thrush. Named by Swedish biologist, Carolus Linnaeus, in the eighteenth century.
- Size: about that of a song sparrow
- Markings: yellow throat, breast, and undertail coverts; whitish belly, olive upper parts. Breeding male: distinctive black facial mask similar to those of some bandits, white upper border of mask. Female: no mask.
- Similar species: Kentucky warbler has yellow spectacles and underparts, black crown, half mask, and sideburns and is a rare migrant in our area. First winter female mourning warbler resembles female common yellowthroat except it has all yellow underparts. Note: The American Ornithological Union has moved Kentucky and mourning warblers to the *Geothlypis* genus.
- Habitat: wetlands, riparian brush, overgrown meadows.
- Nesting: on or near ground, open cup of weeds and grasses lined with hair and soft plant material.
- Summer range: Most of the US and southern Canada
- Voice: Distinctive *witchety, witchety, witch*. These secretive birds are heard more often than seen.

## March 15 Field Trip

By **Sally Fox**

Eight Black River Audubon members optimistically met at the Oberlin Reservoir. Since old man winter was still hanging on and the reservoir was still solidly frozen we went to plan B. Marty Ackermann led us on a hike through the Oberlin Arboretum and Westwood Cemetery. So even though we didn't see any diving ducks we had a nice assortment of woodland birds. For the day we saw: ring-billed gull, house sparrow, European starling, killdeer, blue jay, red-winged blackbird, red-bellied woodpecker, downy woodpecker, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, red-shouldered hawk, American robin, northern cardinal, American goldfinch, mourning dove, turkey vulture, dark-eyed junco, mallard, and Canada goose.



## Two Hog Island Scholarships Awarded

By **Dick Lee**, Chair, Education Committee

The recipients of scholarships to the Audubon Hog Island summer camp are: Chuck Jakubchak, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist, who will spend a week studying Field Ornithology, and Brenda Koehler, Fifth grade teacher at Midview Intermediate School. She has the distinction of a Best Science Teacher designation by television station WVIZ.



Black River Audubon pays one week's tuition for each scholar.

## Nominations for Board Membership

The Nominating Committee presents four nominees for membership on the Board. Others may be nominated from the floor prior to election to be held at the May 6, 2014 meeting. The four nominees are: Penny Brandau, Tammy Martin, Larry Wilson, and Harry Spencer.

## Forested land within the City of Elyria to be logged

At the January 28, 2014 Black River Audubon Board meeting, Conservation Chair Craig Limpach, whose address is on Courtland Street, informed the Board of a planned logging operation by the 3M Corporation of their land roughly between Route 113 and Lowell Street and west of the West Recreation Park.

In *EcoWatch.com*, Craig has described the property: "There's a wild place at the end of my street inside the city limits. Sixty acres of very big pin oaks, wild cherry, basswood, some old agricultural fields reverting back to wetlands and forest, and an ancient fencerow of swamp white oaks that may be remnants of the original wilderness. There are a few small ponds, too, that formed after sandstone quarrying a very long time ago. It's a great place to watch red foxes, hear frogs, wild turkey, and wood thrushes singing in the spring....."

Now the 3M Corporation is about to start logging the property.

Debbie Moore contacted a 3M manager and arranged for him to discuss the plans of the 3M Corporation with the Black River Audubon Board.

## Report of the Meeting with the 3M Representatives – March 17, 2014

By **Jim Jablonski**, Secretary of Black River Audubon,

**In attendance:** Debbie Mohr, Diane Devereaux, Penny Brandau, Terri Martincic, Dick Lee, Marty Ackermann, Harry Spencer, Jim Jablonski

**3M Representatives:** John Akey and Joel Berry (forester of the Elyria 3M project)

After a description of 3M's conservation projects around the country with the Nature Conservancy, John Akey discussed the corporation's plans for the land it owns next to West Recreation Park in Elyria.



Mr. Akey said 3M purchased the land for two purposes:

- To serve as a buffer between the manufacturing operation and the residential neighborhood.
- To manage 60-plus of the 108 acres as forestland through a logging operation.

He said this plan would include a selective, not clear-cut, harvest over a two-year period under optimal logging conditions. In addition, there will be a 100-foot setback with no harvested trees in the area bordering the

residential area. He said this would cause no change in the view of the woodland from those homes. This land was originally multi-zoned property for businesses and homes and would have been clear-cut for those uses but now will be managed as forestland by 3M.

Mr. Akey added that the revenue from the logging is minimal and will be used in managing the woods and posting the property as required by law.

Dick Lee led Black River Audubon's response by pointing out that if a buffer is the purpose for the land the woods can serve that function without selective harvesting. He added that if there is no significant financial benefit for 3M there seems to be no reason to manage the land.

Mr. Berry, the project forester, pointed out that 3M has a liability issue that involves costs for the corporation due to trespassers, including individuals on four-wheel vehicles.

The forester also said logging will benefit the woodland and its wildlife by providing multiple tree canopy heights along with a greater variety of trees.

Dick Lee asked whether the EPA has given approval for this project since the property is a wetland. This led to disagreement over whether the land can be considered a wetland with the 3M representatives denying that it is while Dick emphasized that it is wet most of the year.

Dick also pointed out that grapevines, while providing habitat for wildlife, would eventually take out the older trees, making selective harvesting unnecessary to renewing the woods. He added that other damage to the habitat from selective harvesting would include introduction of invasive species, upsetting the wildlife food chain, and destruction of pools for amphibians.

Marty Ackermann asked exactly what costs are involved in managing the property. Mr. Akey said some improved drainage of the land is necessary and that the costs are not large but neither are the revenues, which will be "well under six figures."

Mr. Berry mentioned that 3M plans to regenerate the woods in one very wet area by planting bald cypress trees. Dick Lee responded by saying that these are non-native to this area and the local wildlife depends upon native trees.

Marty Ackermann summarized by stating that he saw no costs to managing the land other than those due to the logging itself and the posting of signs. There seems to be no significant financial gain either while environmental problems are likely to be created by logging. Therefore, it seems the best policy would be to leave the land as it is.

Mr. Akey summed up his position by stressing that the land will not be clear-cut since that goes against 3M policy. Mr. Berry added that the beginning date for logging has not been set, but the contract for the logging is ready to be signed.

**Birding by Tram**  
Sandy Ridge Reservation  
Every Tuesday in May  
(May 6, May 13, May 20, May 27), 9 to 11 a.m.

This program, co-sponsored by Sandy Ridge Reservation and Black River Audubon Society, is designed for walking-challenged birders. Space is limited and participants must pre-register by the Monday prior to each program.

Call 440-327-3626 to pre-register.

### **The Biggest Week in Birding**

Maumee Bay, Ottawa, Magee Marsh

May 8-15

### **International Migratory Bird Day at Magee Marsh**

Saturday, May 10



COMMON YELLOWTHROAT photo by Dane Adams