

Black River Audubon Society

WINGTIPS

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LCCC Ecology Students Become Volunteers in Audubon Campus Conservation projects

By **Harriet Alger**

During the spring semester at LCCC, community service projects included Audubon conservation programs on the college campus. Professor Ruby Beil requested that students in her Ecology 101 classes be offered the opportunity to perform five hours of volunteer work in one of three projects:

(1) Maintenance, seasonal inventory, and updating of the marking system and trail guides of the Flora Interpretive Trail with Joe Strong, Dick Lee and Dorothy Hagerling;

(2) Bluebird conservation involving training, box cleaning and evaluation and monitoring with Jack Smith and Dick Lee;

(3) Bird surveys on campus.

LCCC students who completed 5 hours of volunteer time on one of these options were Mark Brunger, Ashley Dusenberry, Austin Jackson, Bruce Strauss, Larry Syrowski and Eric Wilson.



Another option offered students was a semester long volunteer project involving 2-hour weekly surveys of bird populations, residential and migratory, and important bird habitats on campus, with Joe Strong and Harriet Alger. Dick Lee joined for some of the late spring hikes. Two young women, Jennifer Kapucinski and Yuwei Yuan, chose this project, participating in weekly two-hour campus field trips on Friday mornings and four study sessions on bird identification.

Jennifer lives in Lorain, is a graphics artist and photographer. Yuwei is from China, lives with a host family in Elyria, and is here to improve her English through taking college courses this year. This project also involved a link to the ornithological research at the Cleveland Natural History Museum, and included a meeting with Dr. Andy Jones, Director of Ornithology.

Jennifer's participation in this project was exemplary in every way. She was present every Friday morning at 8 a.m. for our 2-hour campus bird hike, despite some very cold, below-freezing, windy, snowy days early in the

semester. Jennifer listened, learned, and contributed. She quickly gained knowledge of physical and behavioral characteristics of the most-common birds and some less familiar. She was successful in conducting research comparing two bird species, chickadees and titmice, using online resources and a bird guide. As a photographer, she was amazingly persistent in trying to capture a photo-record of birds seen and was more successful than we expected, since bird photography is so challenging. She found a dead baby house finch at her home, preserved it and contributed it to the Museum research program when we met with Dr. Jones.

Yuwei was a delightful participant when she was able to be with us, enthusiastic, curious, and knowledgeable about other areas of nature and science. She provided good comparisons with birds she was familiar with in China. The winter weather took its toll on her, however. Even though we made sure that she had warm clothing, she missed some hikes because of illness. Also at the end of the semester, her heavy scholastic schedule, her need to spend extra hours translating term papers, and exam preparations prevented her from completing the requirements for this project.



Northern Cardinal
John Koscinski

Jennifer said in her reflections on her experience: “I hope the college sees how powerful this service learning project is, and we as a community can develop a habitat for all to live in. All birds are drawn to something different, whether it’s long-grassy meadows with wild flowers for insects or a pond with lots of wooded area. Hopefully others can continue to follow up on what we ...surveyed and worked hard on documenting.”

Yuwei’s reflections on this community project included: “It is important to stay involved in the community....you will get to know about the placenot only about the landscape, but also the environment, the surrounding, the people. You will find out what you don’t like about the community, hence improve it. If everyone thinks of how to improve his community, and put it into action, the community will definitely become a better place to live in. I want to be an interpreter as my future career. Most people will only think of the money I may make, but I think about my social

role. In China, community service is getting more popular. I will try my best to raise people’s awareness of the importance of community service, and to participate in community service myself.”

Education Report- Summary 2009-2010

By **Dick Lee**

Scholarship – The Black River Audubon Scholarship to the Hog Island ‘Maine Seabird Ecology and Conservation’ was awarded to David Krasovic. David is a biology/ecology teacher at Elyria High school and Oceanography instructor at Lorain County Community College. He attended the Educator’s Workshop at Hog Island in 2008. His experience at Hog Island will be a valuable asset in teaching his ecology and oceanography classes.



Audubon Adventures- During the 2009-2010 year the chapter donated more Audubon Adventure kits to area educators than ever before. Each of the purchased classroom-kits contained 32 student-newspapers, but we divided the newspapers into smaller groups adjusted to the various class sizes. Hence the number of kits purchased is less than the number of classrooms served. We delivered the equivalent of 112 classroom kits to various schools. Park naturalists and individuals, including homeschoolers and graduate students, received 17 individual kits, each containing a single newspaper. Eighty-seven public school classrooms were provided with kits. Charter and parochial schools received 18 kits. Home schools were given 1 classroom kit and 2 individual kits. Various parks, including Lorain County Metro Parks and Findley State Park, received 5 individual and 3 classroom kits. The Metro Parks used theirs with the Boys and Girls Club. Findley Park used theirs in their

summer educational program. Oberlin College Graduate Teaching program students received 9 individual kits for use in their student teaching practicum.

A survey was sent via email to all classroom teachers. All replies received are generally very positive. Unfortunately, several factors, such as school spam filters and overly busy teachers in late spring, resulted in a low response rate.

Big Birding Weekend at Sandy Ridge- We mounted a display during the May 15-16 weekend at Sandy Ridge Reservation. The general information display boards were used along with brochures and copies of WINGTIPS. The Healthy Yards computer program ran whenever an operator was available. We selectively gave copies of ODNR's *Common Bird* CD to individuals who seemed to be into birding enough to really use them. ODNR specified that the CDs were not to be 'giveaways'.

Odds and Ends

By **Harry Spencer**



Binocular Purchase: The Chapter purchased ten binoculars for use in nature education, especially with young people. The chapter spent \$500 to match a grant of \$500 from the National Audubon Society, who made arrangements with Eagle Optics for half-price purchase of the binoculars. President Debbie Mohr represented the Chapter in the negotiations for this purchase.

Carlisle Birding: When Audubon Ohio designated Carlisle Reservation as an Important Bird Site some years ago, I began birding there frequently, always recording my bird identifications on ebird.org. The many and varied trails of Carlisle wind through a variety of habitats, supporting an aggregate total bird species of considerably more than a hundred. One of my personal pleasures while walking the Carlisle trails is meeting other walkers, answering birding questions, and talking, although briefly. Some of those walkers are portrayed here.



Walkers' Rest: Near the Equestrian Center late in May, I came upon two ladies who frequently walk in the park. They were resting on the Ken and Judy Reed Memorial Bench, installed by Black River Audubon several years ago. Previously the ladies, J.O. Weaver and Eunice Henry, told me that they like to stop for a rest at that bench on their daily walks. They live nearby on Hale Road and Hastings Road, respectively.

Dog Walking: Often the walkers are accompanied by dogs. Shown here are Verne Wahl with Kelly and Jim Balint and Matt Wisniewski walking Mo and Buddy.



VERNE WAHL
KELLY
H.SPENCER



JIM BALINT, MATT WISNIEWSKI
MO, BUDDY
H. SPENCER

Miscellaneous Photo

Harriet Alger contributed this photo of a downy woodpecker and a chestnut-backed chickadee. It was taken in the western United States by her daughter-in-law Cindy Alger, a professional photographer.



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