

A Bird's-Eye View

Nora Ebie, President

April 1, 2014

Hello, Western Cuyahoga Audubon Members! Today, April 1, 2014, marks the beginning of a new era for Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society. Your long-time President, Tom Romito, has stepped down and I, Nora Ebie, have taken the reins as your new President. No fooling! But don't worry, he isn't going anywhere! Tom will continue serve on our Board of Directors as Immediate Past President.

As many of you don't know me, let me introduce myself. My name is Nora Ebie and my hometown is Mogadore, Ohio, a small village east of Akron. I currently work full-time as an Admissions Specialist II in the Office of the Registrar at Cuyahoga Community College, Metro Campus. I have been at Tri-C for the past 11 years. Prior to coming to Tri-C, I worked as an Information Technology (IT) contractor at various companies.

So, why did I come to Western Cuyahoga Audubon? I am a birder. I enjoy nature and all it has to offer us. I wanted to give back to that which has given me so much joy and happiness. I saw a need and realized I could help using my knowledge and experience. I want to make a difference -- for nature, for WCAS, for you.

During the past year as your Vice President, I have utilized my skills and initiated a few changes. The first change being that we went from a group Facebook page to an organization page, created a Twitter account @WCASOhio, and Google+ account -- WCASOhio. Second, I have started building a new web site for www.wcasohio.org with a sleek new design.

Technology will be at the forefront of many more changes. Some will be obvious, others, not so much. It is now 2014 and, believe it or not, the Internet has been around for 25 years. Social media is mainstream. Non-profits are racing to catch up. WCAS will not be left behind - I won't let it.

In the coming year WCAS will also be embarking on new conservation projects and new joint ventures with other Audubon Chapters in Ohio as well as the Kirtland Bird Club and other local entities (i.e. Metroparks and the Port Authority). Some of these projects and events are currently being discussed.

However, my Board of Directors and I cannot do this alone! **We desperately need YOUR help!** WCAS needs you to take an active role. Help us help YOU continue the good work WCAS is doing in your community. Come to our monthly meetings! Take part in one of our field trips! Bring in new members by spreading the word about WCAS! Use Social Media to Post, Tweet, Like, Share or Blog to your friends who are not currently members and ask them to Join you!

Finally, what do YOU, our wonderful members, want from Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society? Please send me your thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns - they will be very important in helping me continue the WCAS mission and vision. I can't do it without YOU!

Thanks so much for your support!

President
Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society
wcasboard@gmail.com

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FIELD TRIPS

Thursday, May 1, 6:00 p.m. Lake Erie Nature and Science Center

Trip Leaders: Erik Bruder (WCAS) & Christine Cain (LENSC)
Target Species: Warblers

Warblers are arriving in force! WCAS will join Lake Erie Nature and Science Center for an early-evening bird walk through the woods and fields of the Cleveland Metroparks Huntington Reservation. If time permits, we will take a look at arrivals on Lake Erie. Meet at the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center, 28728 Wolf Road, Bay Village.

From the West

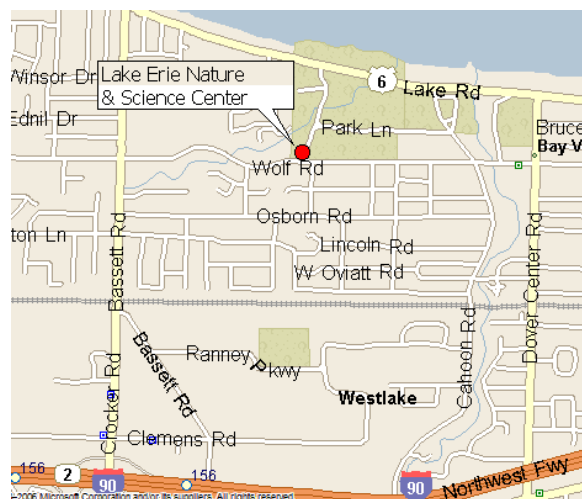
- Exit 156, Crocker-Bassett Roads.
- Turn left on Crocker Road, which becomes Bassett Rd at the railroad tracks.
- Turn right on Wolf Road. Entrance will be .7 miles on the north (left) side of the road.

From the East, via Interstate 90 West:

- Exit 159, Columbia Road north.
- Turn right on Columbia Road.
- Turn left on Wolf Road. Entrance will be 1.9 miles on the right 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. Entrance will be .7 miles on the left side of the road.



Saturday, June 7, 8 a.m. Margaret Peak Preserve, Eaton Township

Trip Leader: Jeanne Williams
Target Species: Indigo Bunting, Horned Lark

Margaret Peak Preserve in Lorain County is a short distance over the Cuyahoga County Line on Butternut Ridge Road. A former farm with woods, ponds and a soybean field, it is a great spot for Horned Lark, interesting sparrows and many other songbirds. Hooded Mergansers have nested here. Our leader for this trip, Jeanne Williams, birds Peak Preserve frequently.

Directions from Cleveland area (see map, next page):

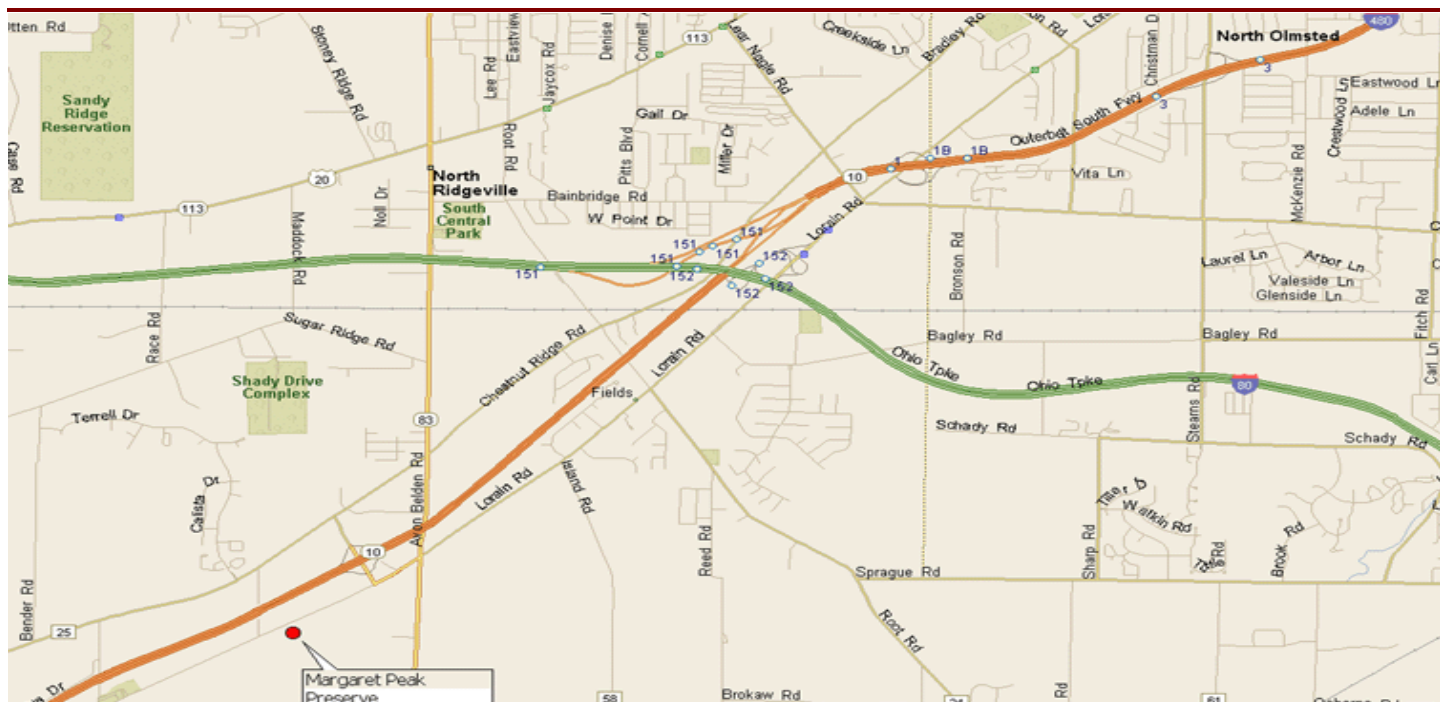
Take I-480 west to Route 10, continue on Route 10 west to Exit 3 for Route 83.

Turn left or south on Route 83 exit, go a very short distance -- it looks like the road dead-ends -- then right or west on Butternut Ridge Rd.

Margaret Peak Preserve is about a 1/2 mile west on Butternut Ridge on the left or south side of Butternut Ridge.

Note that there are no restrooms at Peak Preserve. The closest fast food restaurant is McDonald's at I-480/Route 10 Exit 2 for Lorain Rd, 32528 Lorain Rd., North Ridgeville. After exiting McDonald's you can follow Lorain Road west (it becomes Butternut), or go back onto 480/Route 10 Westbound, and proceed to Exit 3 for Peak Preserve (see above).

FIELD TRIPS



An enlarged copy of this map can be seen at www.wcasohio.org/Peak_Preserve_Lorain_County.htm

Sunday, July 13, 8 AM Bath Nature Preserve

Trip Leader: Sandy Brown

Target Species: Eastern Bluebird, Sparrows and Various Grassland Birds

Birds are nesting. Bath Nature Preserve is home to Bobolinks, Eastern Bluebird and other grassland birds. A WCAS field trip in July of 2005 tallied 48 species. What will we see in 2014?

Bath Nature Preserve is a township park located on Hickory Farm Lane at 4160 Ira Road, Bath, Ohio.

Directions from Cleveland:

Take I 77 South to exit 143 (SR 176/Wheatley Road). Turn right onto SR 176 (Wheatley Road). Turn South onto Brecksville Road (Cleveland Massillon Road) and turn right on to Ira Road. The entrance to the parking lot is on the left.

An enlarged version of this map can be seen at www.wcasohio.org/bath_reserve.htm

Making the trip?
Consider a donation to the WCAS Carbon Offset Program!



Preview of August Field Trip, Saturday, August 16, Time TBA

This field trip will be at Daughmer Prairie Savanna, one of the newest State Nature Preserves. There will be a picnic as well. This will be a Carbon Offset trip.

PROGRAMS

All WCAS programs are free & open to the public. Our monthly programs are held the first Tuesday of each month, September through May, at Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Parkway, North Olmsted, Ohio. For a map & directions see www.wcasohio.org.

Tuesday, May 6, 7:30 PM

Migration All Around Us: How Birds Navigate the Americas



A visit to Central or South America will cost several thousand dollars in airfare, hotels and food. While this price can be prohibitive for humans, for some five billion birds, an annual trip to these continents from North America is an absolute requirement. Birds (weighing less than your pocket change) hatch in the boreal forest, eat as many insects as they can manage, and just weeks later find themselves within a tropical forest that is home to competitors and predators that they have never seen before. Why do birds undertake this costly annual trip? How do they manage to find their way to a wintering ground that they have never seen before? Dr. Andy Jones, Ornithologist at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History will answer these questions, as well as detail how ornithologists study the phenomenon of migration in this program.

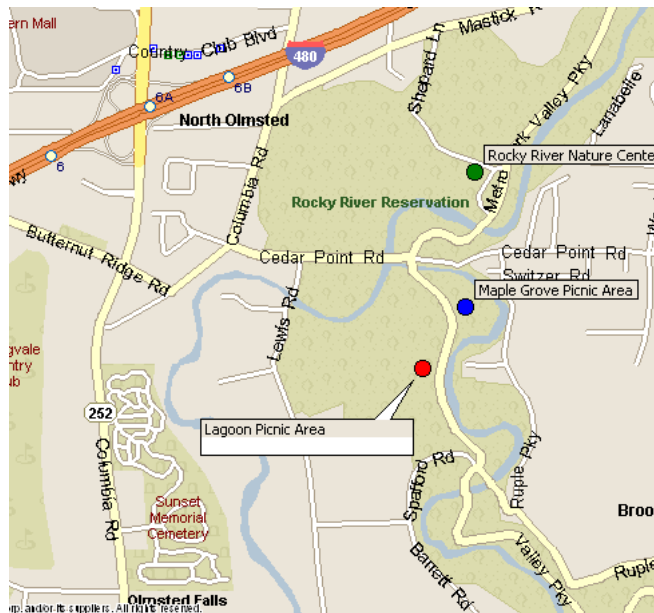
Tuesday, June 3, 6:00 PM

Annual WCAS Picnic and Plant Exchange **(no rain will fall this evening!)**

Our annual Audubon picnic and plant exchange. Bring your dinner (grill will be available for cooking), your family or friends AND bring any plants, seeds, bulbs that need homes. They can be houseplants or outdoor plants. If you don't have any plants to bring that is OK, but adopt an "orphan" plant. We also have a bird walk after dinner.

Directions to Lagoon Picnic Area:

- Lagoon Picnic Area is in the Rocky River Reservation, Cleveland Metroparks. It is off Valley Parkway between Cedar Point and Spafford Roads.
- Take Brook Park Road to West 220th St. Turn north on W. 220th St. and immediately turn right onto Brookway Drive.
- Follow Brookway into the valley, and turn right on Valley Parkway.
- Follow Valley Parkway past Cedar Point Rd., over a ford, then look for Lagoon Picnic area on the right.



July
No Program!
Go Birding!



Female Indigo Bunting
(left) courtesy Wikipedia.

Brown-Headed Nuthatch
(right) courtesy
nc.audubon.org

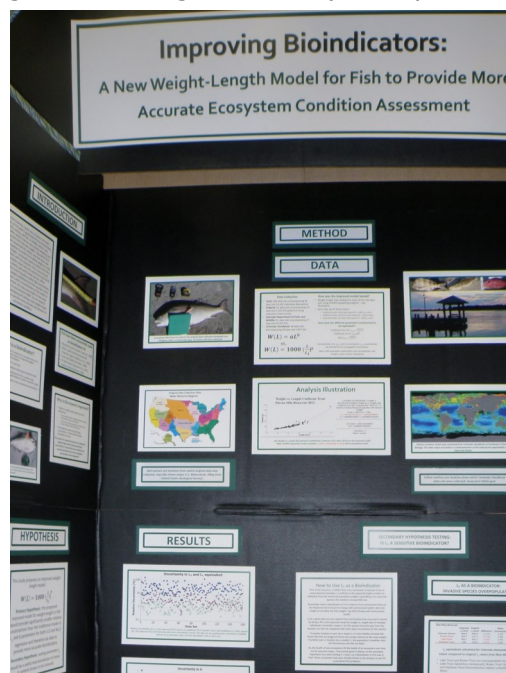


VOLUNTEER SECTION

Science Fair Awards to 7 Top Science Students

Ya'el Courtney and Anthony Crisafi won top special awards from WCAS at the 61st annual Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair held March 11, 2014 at Cleveland State University.

Want to know if a watery ecosystem is healthy? See if the fish are too skinny. Ya'el Courtney's project is entitled "Improving Weight-Length Relationships in Fish to Provide more Accurate Bioindicators of Ecosystem Condition." She studied the literature for expected weight-length relationships of many species of fish, measured fish of several species at several locations, and developed an improved formula for assessing the condition of fish. Her work promises to make ecosystem evaluations faster and more accurate. Ya'el was also honored with the Science Fair's Grand Prize. She is one of four students who will go to Los Angeles in May to represent northeastern Ohio at the International Science & Engineering Fair.



Anthony Crisafi presented a project entitled "The Effect of Parking Lot Runoff on Water Plants." He used a common aquarium plant to study the effect of runoff from asphalt and concrete.

Five other students earned honorable mention from WCAS: Duncan Godwin for a study on acid rain; Jacob Murray and Olivia Sendelbach each of whom assessed water quality by studying macro invertebrates; Marlena Noeth for examining lead hazards from lettuce grown in contaminated soil; and Lauren Zipp who experimented with cilantro, parsley and phragmites as filter material to clear lead contamination from water.

This year's Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering fair involved more than 600 top science students in grades 7-12 from eighty schools in a seven-county area, plus home-schooled students. Sponsors for this year were Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland State University and Great Lakes Science Center. WCAS judges were Debra Jesionowski and Penny O'Connor.

Left: Ya'el Courtney's award winning project on improving bioindicators using the physical condition of fish.
Picture courtesy of Penny O'Connor

"The Lost Bird Project" Collaborative Event a Success

The collaborative event between the Western Cuyahoga Audubon chapter, the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland chapter and the Kirtland Bird Club on Sunday, March 9 was very successful thanks to all who attended and all who helped to make it possible. The event included the video entitled, "*The Lost Bird Project*", and a panel discussion with three panelists working with conservation organizations.

The film highlighted the work of Todd McGrain and his effort to create and place memorials to the five extinct species near the area where the last birds were seen in the wild. The theme of "forgetting is another form of extinction" was highlighted with wonderful cinematography, humor, sadness and music that underscored the visuals. After the video a short break to meet and greet others who were attending, then the panel discussion. The panelists spoke about their organizations and their efforts to improve the future for wild things and wild places so that extinctions would, hopefully, be a thing of the past.

Initial thanks go out to Penny O'Connor for bringing this video to our attention. Those who got the ball rolling are Nora Ebie, Nancy Howell and Tom Romito from Western Cuyahoga Audubon, Lukas Padegimas from the Kirtland Bird Club and Mark Demyan and Harvey Webster from the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland. Additionally, thanks go out to the panelists, Mark Shieldcastle from Black Swamp Bird Observatory, Stan Searles from Global Conservation Initiative and Brett Rodstrom from Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Tom Fishburn and Dale Gaul from WCAS took photographs throughout the program and Vicki Searles helped with some of the technical aspects of running the video. We cannot forget the 130 visitors that attended, asked questions of the panelists and took away information to pass along to friends about the importance of conserving habitats so that other species will not be forgotten.

On an up note, the collaborating organizations are already planning for another event in the fall of 2014.

WCAS CONTINUES PARTNERSHIP WITH CMP

By Tom Romito, President Emeritus

One of the drawbacks of citizen science is that volunteers don't know what happens to their data. That's not the case with Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society's work in the Rocky River Important Bird Area! We managed our data to an important outcome that directly, continuously, and positively affects the East Branch of the Rocky River (EBRR).

Since 2010, WCAS has supported Cleveland Metroparks (CMP) with several letters of support for proposals for grants from Clean Ohio Conservation Fund to purchase private parcels in the East Branch of the Rocky River (EBRR). CMP has been using the data we collected on bird populations in EBRR during the IBA surveys to bolster the validity of their proposals. CMP made several purchases that are creating a contiguous green space around Greater Cleveland.

In December 2013, CMP approached me and requested a letter of support, as well as financial support, for their latest acquisition. They needed funds to purchase an 80-acre property in the City of N. Royalton known as Timberlane Farm. The property is adjacent to a 70-acre conservation easement held by the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District and 138 acres of 2010-2012 CMP acquisitions. Including the proposed Timberlane Farm property, the preserved area in North Royalton would equal 288 acres. CMP was requesting \$711,750 through the Clean Ohio program for this acquisition. The total cost of the land purchase and restoration was approximately \$949,000 and CMP had to match the Clean Ohio funds by \$237,000. CMP told me that any funds WCAS contributed would help to offset their land acquisition expenses, and a financial commitment from WCAS would strengthen their request for Clean Ohio funds.

In the team spirit that has typified the relationship between WCAS and CMP since the dawn of the Rocky River IBA project in 2006, WCAS provided CMP with a letter of support and offered help with a \$2,000 donation to acquire the Timberlane property. CMP accepted our donation, pending approval of funding by the Clean Ohio program. On March 21, CMP notified me that they had been approved for funding. Even better news is that the Board of Park Commissioners has already committed the required amount of matching funds for the project. This means that CMP is well on its way to purchasing the Timberlane property!

CMP told me that our donation made a significant contribution to the project and made a difference for the grant application, which asks applicants to demonstrate other sources of funds. I am proud of our board for its decision because it solidifies our partnership with CMP, adds land to the Emerald Necklace extending south from Mill Stream Run Reservation, provides the opportunity to restore former pasture lands, and improves the stream channel along the eastern boundary of EBRR.

Not bad for a little grassroots non-profit organization! As Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. It is the only thing that ever has."

Remaining Audubon Spring Bird Walks The First 3 Sundays in May

See the spring migrants during the Audubon spring bird walks. April walks are over but 3 more walks will be held **each of the first 3 Sundays in May with the last one on May 18, at 7:30 a.m.** The following is a partial list of local walks: Lake Isaac in Middleburg Hts. Hinckley Reservation at bridge on State Rd. CanalWay Center in Cuyahoga Hts. Rocky River Nature Center, North Olmsted, Station Rd. Bridge Trailhead, Brecksville.

A complete listing of all the walks can be seen at:
www.wcasohio.org/spring_bird_walks.htm

For all birders, this is a wonderful opportunity to sample the waves of birds moving through some of the top birding spots around Cleveland. New birders, be sure to be out on each of these six Sundays. It is a great way to start birding.

Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland conducts these walks in cooperation with the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, local park districts and the Holden Arboretum. Walks are led by expert volunteers from Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society and other local birding groups. The walks are free to all.

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society Photo Contest

Coming Fall 2014

LIGHTS . . .

CAMERA . . .

SHOOT!

Get your cameras ready because Western Cuyahoga Audubon will be looking for the best photos to become part of a new navigation slider on our new web site.

Photos are to visually define and represent one of four (4) key words as the word relates to the WCAS mission statement: *"Educating our community about conservation of the natural world through member involvement and community outreach."*

Each word will have 4 seasonal photos that will be changed out based on the season.

HELPING (i.e. volunteering, becoming a member, donating, etc.)

ENJOYING (i.e. field trips, programs, special events, Metroparks activities)

LEARNING (i.e. bird id, bird song/calls, migration, wildlife habitats, climate change, wind turbines, fracking)

PRESERVING (i.e. preserve/protect habitat by letter writing, planting native plants, removing non-native weeds, citizen-science research)

Watch this space in our next newsletter for more information!

2014 ELECTION RESULTS

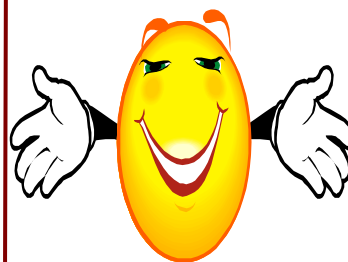
Elections for WCAS offices were held at the April general meeting. Tom Romito, long-standing president, opted to stand down, ending a long run which was, to say the least, very eventful and successful. On top of all of the day-to-day business that Tom managed, he instigated and managed the citizen-science project that resulted in the 2012 *Rocky River Important Birding Area Survey - Breeding Birds*. For an example of the ongoing importance of this survey, see Tom's article on page 6. Tom remains in service to WCAS as a mentor to our new president, Nora Ebie, serving as president emeritus. To learn more about Nora, please see her article on page 1. Nancy Howell was re-elected as Treasurer. Penny O'Connor was re-elected as Secretary. We are in need of a Vice President. Please call Nora if you are interested!

Carbon Offset Project Update

Money generated through this project will go toward habitat preservation & restoration in the Rocky River IBA or other area within the range of WCAS. Consider contributing to the Carbon Offset Project when you take a birding trip. The WCAS website has more information & a form to calculate the amount you wish to donate. Click on Field Trip then Carbon Offset Project.

Total collected to date - \$695.26

Welcome New Members



JoAnn Clark
James Hanslik
John Henderson
Mary Ann Henderson
Joyce Pelz

Contact Us

WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

4310 Bush Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44109
Phone: 216-741-2352

Visit our website
www.wcasohio.org

Check us out on Facebook
www.facebook.com/wcasohio



WCAS Chapter Newsletter

Published 4 times per year
February, May, August & November
By the Western Cuyahoga
Audubon Society

www.wcasohio.org is the
official Chapter Web Site

Like us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/wcasohio

WCAS Board Meetings are open
to all members. Consult the
WCAS calendar or contact any
board member for dates

President

Nora Ebie, 216-688-1758

President Emeritus

Tom Romito, 216-741-2352

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Newsletter Editor

Kurt Miske, 440-835-6700

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Mary Anne Romito, 216-741-2352

Field Trip Coordinator

Penny O'Connor, 216-676-4859

Directors at Large

Liz Clingman	Kit Birch
Stan Searles	Suzanne Aldrich
Mark Hofelich	



WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Chapter Supporter Application

Why wait! Join WCAS as a chapter supporter.

Chapter Membership year: September 1 through August 31

Chapter Dues give you our newsletter, a nametag & a window cling.

Check one:

1 or 2 people

Family

Organization

Dues

\$20

\$35

\$55

Additional Donation (**Check one**)

\$5

\$10

\$20

Other

\$_____

Total enclosed

\$_____

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

TELEPHONE

EMAIL ADDRESS

**Make your check payable to WCAS. Mail to Nancy Howell, treasurer,
19340 Fowles Rd., Middleburg Hts. Ohio, 44130**

