



Christmas Bird Count 2014 Sunday, December 28

By Nancy Howell

We know the song "The 12 Days of Christmas". If we stepped it up a bit and turned it into "The 87 Species of Christmas Count" it would go something like this; "On the first hour of Christmas Count, nature gave to me ... a Great Horned Owl in a pine tree". Yes, the Christmas Count of 2013 tallied 87 species on count day and count week. Can we do better for 2014? It is NOT too early to consider participating or downright sign up to participate in the Christmas Bird Count for the west side of Cleveland.

The CBC, a Citizen Science Project, has been ongoing for more than 100 years. Data collected goes to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's database giving researchers a glimpse of bird species that are around at the end of December. Each year is different but when data over many years is analyzed, trends begin to appear and questions are raised. Are the birds hanging around in the winter because the weather has gotten milder? Is food more prevalent? Are species located where they have not been seen before?

This year the Christmas Bird Count for WCAS will be held on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2014. The portion encompassed by the west side is centered in Lakewood. The circle takes in a lot of the lakefront; west, slightly into Lorain County around the Avon Lake, Avon and North Ridgeville, south to the northern border of Strongsville and east to Brooklyn and some of Parma Hts. The WCAS website, wcasohio.org/christmas_bird_count1.htm, shows the count circle and a list of areas needing coverage. We can ALWAYS have people walk around their neighborhoods, small parks, cemeteries and any other place to count birds as long as it is within the circle.

Some groups or individuals choose to be out early in the morning; some a little later. Some individuals go "owling" in the pre-dawn hours or later that evening. All species as well as individual birds are counted, and yes, this does include House Sparrows, Rock Pigeons and European Starlings. Some groups and individuals walk in areas, others drive from spot to spot. No matter what the mode of transportation, it is great to cover as much of our count circle as possible. There is even the opportunity to tally the birds at your feeder that day ... but remember it HAS to be within our count circle. As a participant you may consider being out part of the day or all day.

The Christmas Bird Count is free, but if you would like to make a donation to National Audubon Society to help in compiling the information, you may do so at our "thank you" dinner. It will be a catered dinner, held at the Rocky River Nature Center beginning at 5:30 PM that Sunday. We will tally the species and initial numbers at dinner. Note - NAS information from the count will be available electronically only.

Please contact Nancy Howell at 440-891-1710 (home), 216-231-4600 ext. 3225 (work) or nhowell@cmnh.org for more information, to sign up for an area and for further information about the "thank you" dinner. Check out the WCAS website or the National Audubon website - www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/.

It's FUN!
It's FREE!
It BENEFITS the BIRDS!

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FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, November 23, 9:00 a.m. Wellington Reservoir

Trip Leaders: Erik Bruder
Target Species: Migrating Waterfowl

In November, think Waterfowl at Wellington Reservoir. Erik Bruder will lead our field trip at 9 a.m. on Sunday, November 23, 2014. Ducks, geese, gulls and swans congregate here. In the past we have seen Snow Geese, mergansers, grebes, swans, Ruddy Ducks, Common Loons, and more. Wellington Reservoir is quite accessible if you have a handicapped parking tag for your car. You will be able to park next to the water and bird out the window if you like!

DIRECTIONS to Wellington Reservoir

Wellington Reservoir is on Jones Road, in Wellington OH, across the street and just east of the Wellington Visitor Center. From the Cleveland Area, take I-480 West. I-480 splits to become Route 10. Take Route 10 West. Route 10 becomes Route 20. Follow it past the Oberlin exits. At Route 58 turn left (south). Follow Route 58 through the town of Wellington. Just at the outskirts, look for Jones Rd. and turn right (west). The reservoir driveway will be on the right. If you see the entrance for Wellington Reservation Visitor Center on the left, you have gone too far.

A useful map is at: http://www.wcasohio.org/wellington_reservation_visitor_c.htm



Sunday, December 28 115th WCAS Christmas Bird Count

Chief Organizer: Nancy Howell
Target Area: West Side of Cleveland
(see Circle)

Please see the front page for details

Please contact Nancy Howell at 440-891-1710 (home), 216-231-4600 ext. 3225 (work) or nhowell@cmnh.org for more information, to sign up for an area and for further information about the "thank you" dinner.

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Check out the WCAS website or the National Audubon website – www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/.

The map to the right can be seen in color at www.wcasohio.org/christmas_bird_count1.htm



FIELD TRIPS

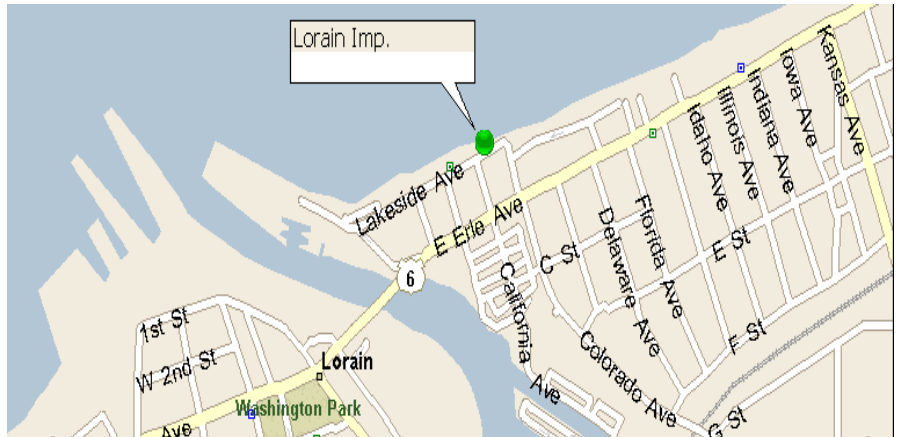
Saturday, January 17, 9:00 a.m. Lorain Harbor & Avon Lake

Trip Leader: Tammy Martin

Target Species: Gulls, Waterfowl & Winter Residents

WCAS will join Black River Audubon for some winter birding on Lake Erie. Dress for the weather, then add another layer or two. Lake Erie winds can be brisk! Bring a scope if you have one. We can expect to see several species of gull, ducks and geese, raptors and a variety of winter resident birds.

Directions: We will meet in the parking lot at Jackalope Restaurant, located at 301 Lakeside Avenue in Lorain. For those familiar with the location of Spitzer Lakeside Marina and Lorain Impoundment, that is where you want to be. From Cleveland, take I-90 west. I-90 becomes Route 2. Take the exit for Route 611 (Colorado Ave.) As you follow Colorado Avenue, keep to the right; stay on Colorado until it appears to dead end at Route 6 (Erie Ave.). Continue straight ahead into the



parking lot and look to the left for birders. A map and more detailed directions to the area (though we will be birding the harbor rather than the impound) are at: www.wcasohio.org/

WCAS Sponsors Second Saturday Bird Walks at RRNC

Ken Gober, Dave Graskemper and Bill Deininger lead walks on the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. on the trails around the Cleveland Metroparks Rocky River Nature Center. Our February 14 walk occurs on the second day of the Great Backyard Bird Count. We will enter our results along with data from observers worldwide. Learn more about GBBC at <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>. New to birding? Grab some binoculars and join us. You will be amazed how fast you can learn to find birds by sight and sound. Meet in the parking lot of the Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Parkway in North Olmsted.

Upcoming dates for Monthly Morning with the Birds

Saturday, November 8, 2014
Saturday, December 13, 2014
Saturday, January 10, 2015
Saturday, February 14, 2015

Saturday, March 14, 2015
Saturday, April 11, 2015
Saturday, May 9, 2015
Saturday, June 13, 2015

Mark Your Calendar for the Great Back Yard Bird Count

Save the dates for the Great Back Yard Bird Count, February 13-16, 2015. WCAS has scheduled two field trips to celebrate:

Saturday, February 14, 2015 at 9 a.m.

"Second Saturday" bird walk at Rocky River Nature Center

(See above article)

Sunday, February 15, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. field trip at Lake Erie Nature and Science Center

WCAS will join Lake Erie Nature and Science Center in the Huntington Reservation of Cleveland Metroparks for birding on the third day of the Great Backyard Bird Count. We will hike the woods and fields above Porter Creek as well as Huntington Beach at Lake Erie. Dress for the weather, then add another layer. Bring a scope if you have one. LENS is located at 28728 Wolf Road in Bay Village. This is a worldwide citizen science effort. You can take part by watching feeders at home for as little as 15 minutes. See <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>.

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.

November 4, 7:30 PM

Report on the Ohio Young Birders Club – Northeast Chapter

Raging northwest lake winds with temperatures in the teens and a Pomarine Jaeger on the river, fog moving over the fields at Killdeer Plains while a Short Eared Owl sits waiting on a barn roof, Worm Eating Warbler near the beach AND a Golden Winged Warbler near the west entrance at Magee SIMULTANEOUSLY!! The students of the Ohio Young Birders Club, Northeast Chapter, have been busy building their bird lists while encountering some AMAZING birds, exciting places and even more amazing birders. Join OYBC leaders, Bev Walborn and Liz McQuaid and perhaps some of the young birders themselves, to learn about the organization, where they have traveled and what is planned for the future in the program, "**Ohio Young Birders Club – Northeast Chapter**".



Left - Pomarine Jaeger
Courtesy birds.audubon.org



Right - Worm Eating Warbler
Courtesy birds.audubon.org

December 2

Potluck Dinner and Silent Auction, 6:30 PM

Program - Veery Song Structure and Geographic Variation, 7:30 PM

For the potluck, bring a tasty dish to share. WCAS provides soft drinks, shade-grown coffee, ham and turkey.

For the silent auction, you are invited to bring your gently-used or new nature-themed items. Bring a few bucks at the same time, and take home some treasures for yourself or for holiday gifts. Proceeds benefit WCAS.



Regarding the program - The Veery is a common, yet poorly understood neotropical migrant thrush. Despite its wide distribution and enchanting song, there is disagreement concerning basic song structure and little information about song variation. Understanding the basic structure of a bird's song and song delivery behavior is needed to further understand the behavioral and motivational contexts of song communication. Geographic song variation may also give insight into the development and learning associated with song production. Courtney Brennan, preparator in Ornithology at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, will present her research on, "**Veery Song Structure and Geographic Variation**".

Veery standing in water, courtesy birds.audubon.org

PROGRAMS

January 6, 7:30 PM *The Return of the Great Blue*

For over fifteen years, citizen scientists, Peg Bobel and Andrea Irland, have monitored the Great Blue Heron nesting colony on Bath Road at the southern boundary of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. These birds have made a comeback as the Cuyahoga River and other habitats improved. The heronry grew to its peak of 176 nests, and is now witnessing a decline in numbers as the herons expand into new nesting colonies nearby. Peg and Andrea will explain their monitoring methodology and results and share what they've learned about these magnificent birds that have become iconic of the park and its wetlands in the program, "**The Return of the Great Blue**". They will also share stories of the park visitors who have become captivated by the birds and look forward to their return each spring.



Great Blue Heron from Nora Ebie

Wind Power Experts Engage Citizens

by Tom Romito, WCAS President Emeritus

Eighty-two concerned citizens participated in an inspiring forum on wind power at the Independence Civic Center on October 19, sponsored by WCAS, Kirtland Bird Club, and the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland. Three noted speakers presented their views on this subject and entertained questions from the audience.

Dr. Michael Hutchins of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) maintained that birds should not become collateral damage to wind power, but the problem is estimating how many birds are actually killed by wind turbines. ABC is studying where to best place wind turbines because Western Lake Erie is the most important migration corridor in Ohio. Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCo) works with Ohio Department of Natural Resources to find places to site turbines that benefit humans and do not threaten birds and bats, according to LEEDCo president Lorry Wagner. The Sierra Club's Ohio chapter fights fossil fuel pollution, protects parks, and tests water quality. Jen Miller, Director of the chapter, noted that there is no perfect energy source, but wants to replace fossil fuels with wind and solar energy. Moderator and WCAS board member Stan Searles followed the presentations with questions for the panelists on various aspects of wind power. On the subject of future development in wind power, Michael Hutchins noted that changes in turbines will feature technology that detects bird strikes and even deter them. Jen Miller said wind power is changing the market because it is cheaper than coal. Lorry Wagner noted that the United States will follow the European model of testing turbines for impacts on wildlife.

The panelists agreed that post-construction mortality on birds and bats is hard to assess offshore because the technology to do so is untested. They also agreed that government must pass legislation that addresses how climate change is impacting wildlife. Michael Hutchins said that citizens can help in this area by educating themselves and getting involved in the political process to get government to look at the big picture. For instance, he said carbon dioxide levels are rising in spite of our growing reliance on sustainable energy sources. Further, we can contact the Environment Protective Agency and thank it for placing a carbon limit on coal plants.

Membership Renewal

Thank you to all of our chapter members who have recently renewed for the 2014-2015 year. If you have not renewed the membership application is on this newsletter or on the WCAS website. We would like to thank these NEW Western Cuyahoga Chapter members for joining us and, as always, we encourage all of our chapter members to attend programs, field trips and become involved!

Welcome New Members



Patricia Ambrose
Lynne Dufenetz
Donald &
Elizabeth Hoffman
Barbara Holub
Michelle Lindsey &
Robert Ewaska

VOLUNTEER SECTION

Kudos to Recent Volunteers

By Nancy Howell

Western Cuyahoga Audubon has been out and about. Our field trips throughout the summer are coordinated by Penny O'Connor who deserves a BIG thank you. Penny plans the field trips, gets the excellent leaders, scouts out the areas and finds the best directions to locations. Not an easy task.

WCAS had a display at the 11th annual Conservation Symposium held at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History on Friday, September 5. Thanks go out to Marti Burrows who staffed the display at break times and chatted with the participants and visitors. Approximately 350 people had registered for the Symposium and Marti did a great job of talking about our chapter as well as promoting the Wind and Wildlife Symposium. By the way, WCAS paid for Marti to attend the Conservation Symposium. Just one of the perks of being involved.

Thanks go out to new member (yay) Patti Ambrose and Nancy Howell who staffed a table at the Cleveland Metroparks Backyard Biodiversity Bash held at West Creek Reservation on Sunday, September 7. The day was beautiful and our location on the trail was great. We had WCAS information available, but the best thing was the Bird Identification Game; it was a hit. About 120 visitors stopped at the display to play the game (and win an awesome prize) or to learn about our organization. West Creek Reservation is in Parma on Ridgewood Dr. between State Rd. and Broadview Rd.

Thank you Volunteer Field Trip Leaders for 2014

Have you had a chance to enjoy a field trip with WCAS? If yes, give a big thank you to our volunteer field trip leaders. They spot the birds and they share their favorite birding hotspots.

Susan Ballard	Jen Brumfield	David Dvorak, Jr.	Dave Graskemper	Rich Kassouf	Jeanne Williams
Sandy Brown	Christine Cain	Tim Fairweather	Nancy Howell	Tim Krynak	Warren Uxley
Erik Bruder	Bill Deininger	Ken Gober	Karen Kassouf	Mary Anne Romito	

Walton School Project Update

By Michele Manzo

The Cleveland Zoo, Walton School, Esperanza, and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society are partners on a grant to establish a Zoo Nature Club at Walton School, Cleveland. The grant is sponsored by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums with support from the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund. The goal of this activity is to connect local families with nature and highlight the benefits of nature play. The grant runs through the current school year and involves a minimum of nine monthly meetings that will rotate between the zoo, various Cleveland Metroparks locations and Walton School. Participation is open to all members of the Walton School community. The meetings are designed to allow club members to participate in nature play learning opportunities throughout the year; exploring different habitats as the seasons change. Activities culminate with an overnight adventure at the zoo for the most active club participants.

As part of this activity, WCAS is taking the lead on a schoolyard beautification effort. After school work sessions are envisioned where, under WCAS guidance, families will work to clean up the school courtyard and plant shrubs and native plants, install and maintain bird boxes and feeders, and establish a compost bin. WCAS members will also serve as a resource to students and families on various nature activities.

Dike 14/Doan Brook IBA Survey Update

By Laura Gooch

Surveys at CLNP are ongoing with at least one full survey (more often two) being performed per week. Although we are off to a good start, we need more surveyors to make this an ongoing success that does not over-burden a few people. I am planning to complete a quarterly report in the near future. In addition to that, I am thinking that it would be a good idea to create a standard "short survey" to get standardized participation from folks who have a bit less time. I would preserve the full survey on a once-a-week basis and continue to recruit a core group to do that survey regularly (and encourage others to do it too, if they have time). I'm thinking of rolling out the short survey in the spring when birding enthusiasm is on its seasonal upswing.

General

National Audubon Report: Ohio Bird Species at Risk

Audubon has released a comprehensive study of how climate change endangers North American birds. Ohio species at highest risk include Horned Grebe, Scarlet Tanager, Ring-necked Duck, Gadwall, Hooded Merganser, Veery, Purple Finch, Wood Thrush and White-breasted Nuthatch. Want to help? 1. Take part in citizen science 2. Create a bird-friendly yard 3. Get involved with your local Important Bird Area 4. Support policies that lower emissions 5. Inform yourself at climate.audubon.org

Carbon Offset Project Update

Our special funds for the Carbon Offset Bird Project, which are used in conservation efforts, has had a change. In the spring of 2014, Western Cuyahoga Audubon was approached to assist with the purchase of land along the Rocky River in North Royalton, yes, in our Important Bird Area. The Board saw an opportunity to utilize the Carbon Offset money collected up until then and add to the funds from WCAS's treasury to total \$2000 and, as a result, the land was purchased. While access to the property by people may not be possible, the habitat protected will be utilized by wildlife and help the watershed of the Rocky River.

Since our funds were utilized we are starting fresh and new with the Carbon Offset Bird Project funds. Thanks to generous members our funds are beginning to grow.

Fund Total as of October 1 - \$60.00

1st Annual WCAS Photo contest is Underway!

Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society's photo contest started September 1 and runs through the end of the year. Entries need to be photos illustrating our mission and goals in our area. These include photos of birds, flora or fauna of our region, or photos showing WCAS activities that involve studying and preserving our natural world, including WCAS meetings, events, field trips, and programs educating children and adults. The WCAS Photo Selection Committee will also be looking for photos taken in each of the four seasons.

Post photos you want considered to the [WCAS Ohio Facebook Photo Contest page](https://www.facebook.com/WCASOhio) between now and December 31, 2014. Only photos properly submitted will be eligible for the contest.

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/WCASOhio> for more information, rules and to enter the contest. You will need to have a Facebook account to enter the contest.

Winning photos will be featured on the home page of our new web site each season, so select your favorites and enter the contest!

Contact Us

WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Visit our website

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www.wcasohio.org is the
official Chapter Web Site

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

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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
				\$_____

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

