



WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON SOCIETY

www.wcasohio.org

CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS

SUMMER 2003

The times they are a'changin...

By Tom and Mary Anne Romito,
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Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

You've probably noticed that many things have been changing in the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society (WCAS). We've had changes in officers, a new membership category, a website, and a new newsletter format. All these things are designed to bring WCAS into the 21st century and make it more effective and more fun. This article will discuss each of these issues.

First of all, President Jan Holkenborg resigned early this year. Vice President Andy Hohenbrink stepped up to become president for the rest of Jan's term. Carol Ball, our newsletter editor and membership committee chairperson, also resigned, leaving vacancies in those positions and on the board of directors.

Second, we have a new membership category called Chapter Member. Chapter Members will benefit by having all of their dues stay with WCAS and not be apportioned to the National Audubon Society. WCAS will benefit from

Chapter Members by being able to continue to exist as a chapter and thus continue to offer outstanding programs to its members and be of service to other community programs.

Third, WCAS has contracted with Ralph Siegenthaler of New Directions Technology Corporation in Chagrin Falls to develop a chapter website and assemble a newsletter. The website is under development and will contain information about WCAS. One of the features will be an application for the new membership category of Chapter Member. The newsletter will appear on the website as a regular feature. It will also be available to all WCAS members in print in June and October. After that, it will E-Mailed to all chapter members and will be mailed only to chapter members who do not have E-Mail.

Our constitution calls for elections at the May meeting, but that didn't happen because the Board of Directors hadn't filled its slate of candidates. The election should take place at the next meeting on June 3 at the picnic shelter at Baldwin Lake in Berea. If enough members are present, we will call for nominations from the floor for all offices. We are going to institute a new position of recording secretary. WCAS has never had a recording secretary, but the board of directors feels that position would be helpful. The recording secretary would take minutes of each monthly chapter meeting and each quarterly board meeting and read the minutes at the following meeting.

This is an opportunity for WCAS members to volunteer for service as officers, directors, and committee chairpersons. In addition to the traditional officer positions of president, vice president, treasurer, and recording secretary, we have a board of six directors whose function it is to guide the officers in goal planning. We also have committees for membership, hospitality, programs, conservation, field trips, newsletter, and education. Members who would like to volunteer for any of these positions may call Tom or Mary Anne Romito at (216) 741-2352 or Nancy Howell at (440) 891-1710.

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NEXT ISSUE October 2003

WCAS Information Center

Welcome New Members

Visit us on the web

www.wcasohio.org
info@wcasohio.org

WCAS Chapter News

Published 4 times per year in January, April, July, and October by the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society, 3226 Park Drive, Parma, OH 44134, www.wcasohio.org is the official Chapter Web Site.

Officers

President

Andy Hohenbrink andy@wcasohio.org

Vice President

Tom Romito romito@wcasohio.org

Treasurer Dave LeGallee

Board of Directors

Marie James

Nancy Howell nhowell@wcasohio.org

Mary Jo Lakner-Segal mjconservation@wcasohio.org

Mary Anne Romito romito@wcasohio.org

Newsletter Editor Ralph J. Siegenthaler editor@wcasohio.org

Mission Statement

The mission of WCAS is to educate the public about conservation of the natural world through member involvement in chapter activities and community outreach.

Chapter Members

Delores Comey
Theresa Duncan
Barbara Cromer

Enhanced Members

Nancy Howell

Charter Members

Mary Jane White
Mary Anne Romito
Tom Romito

AUDUBON MESSAGE

Summer tends to be a busy time for everyone, vacations, family outings, yard work ... as a result the activities of Western Cuyahoga Audubon slow down. Once September rolls around however, we are back into the swing of things. As mentioned in the last newsletter - on the web site - the chapter will be doing some changing with keeping our members informed of happenings. BUT, speaking of members, please know that as a chapter we need your input. Ideas for field trips, programs, articles for the newsletter, photos, bird lists from travels ... the sky is the limit! May we count on you?

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

WCAS members who wish to volunteer their time for nature projects, WCAS programs, and special please contact us via email

info@wcasohio.org

WCAS needs your help NOW!

By Mary Anne Romito, WCAS Board Member — romito@wcasohio.org

Here's our financial picture for year July 2002-June 2003.

Income:

Bank interest	\$ 9.08
Safety net dues from National	\$2535.99
Support donations from members	\$ 275.00
Sales: cups, patches, and misc.	\$ 210.00
Raffles	\$ 76.00
Bird seed sale	\$ 739.00
Local chapter memberships	\$ 40.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$3885.07

Expenses:

Bank service charges	\$ 43.53
Picnic shelter for June	\$ 75.00
Newsletter printing	\$ 612.00
(plus estimate for Ralph)	
Postage for newsletter	\$ 534.42
(plus estimate from Ralph)	
Contributions to other non-profits	\$ 135.00
Refreshments	\$ 121.01
Speakers	\$ 750.00
Audubon Adventures	\$ 547.00
Bird Seed Expense	\$ 591.20
Website	\$ 405.30
(includes initial setup cost)	
Liability insurance	\$ 408.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4222.46

(plus Ralph's estimates)

Our current bank account balance is \$5940.43.

As you can see we are running in the RED.

Next year (the fiscal year ending June 2004) WCAS can expect to receive about the same amount of Safety net dues from National Audubon assuming our membership remains the same. As for future years, the National Audubon board is currently working on a plan on how to best support the local chapters, but also support National programs. A decision is expected by the fall of 2003.

In the meantime, we need your help to keep WCAS afloat. What can we do?

One thing you can do is help us decide what activities and services we provide are important to you. Included on the next page of this newsletter is a short survey. Please take the time to E-Mail your answers to me at romito@wcasohio.org.

Your WCAS board decide where costs can be cut. Our major source of expense is the newsletter. If receiving a printed copy in

the mail is important, please let us know by replying to our survey.

We have changed the format of our newsletter and will publish it quarterly instead of a bi-monthly, thus saving postage charges. We will also offer it by email, thus eliminating more postage charges. The newsletter will be available online on our website at www.wcasohio.org.

We will mail one more issue of the newsletter to all 900 plus members in our chapter. Then we will mail our newsletter to any chapter member who wishes a hard copy instead of email.

Another way to help is to become a chapter member.

What is a chapter member?

Chapter membership is one of the ways WCAS plans to raise revenue. At the December meeting the members present voted to institute chapter memberships. Chapter membership dues will be paid directly to WCAS and the funds raised will pay for our chapter's program expenses. See our membership form on page 6 for details.

Being a chapter member does not mean that you are no longer a National member. What it means is that you are supporting our chapter by paying a separate dues amount to WCAS in addition to the National dues. National Audubon will still bill you for your annual dues for National Audubon.

What do you get for your chapter membership?

Besides knowing that you are supporting your local chapter and it's survival, you will receive our newsletter via email or U S Mail (your choice). There are different levels of chapter membership. Please refer to our membership form for details and other benefits.

What do you get for your National dues?

You receive a free membership in our chapter and the AUDUBON magazine from National Audubon. National only members will always be able to find our chapters activities and programs on our website at www.wcasohio.org.

You can choose to be a member of both organizations. We hope that you do. Both National and WCAS need your support. If you are already a member of National, please do not use the membership to renew your dues. National will bill you for your renewal dues.

We need your help. Please join WCAS.

FIND WORK AND PLAY IN MONITORING MARSH HEALTH

By Tom and Mary Anne Romito, romito@wcasohio.org Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

One of the great pleasures of being amateur naturalists is standing next to a marsh on a perfectly still night in the springtime, uninhibited by the sounds of civilization, and just listening. That's what we did from 1998-2001 at the Strongsville Wildlife Area (SWA). Of course, we did much more than just listen, thanks to our participation in the Marsh Monitoring Program (MMP).

MMP is a cooperative program of Bird Studies Canada and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Now in its eighth year, MMP aids the conservation and rehabilitation of marshes in the U.S. and Canada by studying population changes and habitat requirements of marsh birds and amphibians. The program focuses on Great Lakes marshes because many are polluted and need rehabilitation.



We participated in MMP by conducting two types of surveys at the SWA, which is near the junction of Route 82 and I-71, from spring to early summer. In the amphibian survey, we listened for and recorded the calls of as many as possible of the 14 species of frogs and toads in this area. Another was the marsh bird survey, in which we tried to identify as many as possible of the 50 species of common birds living in and around marshes.

The concept is that a marsh full of robust sounds of frogs, toads, and birds is indicative of a healthy marsh, whereas a silent spring is the first sign of a depressed area. Additionally, marsh habitat descriptions provide us the opportunity to assess the habitat in the marsh, including floating plants, emergent vegetation, and shrubs and trees. The data we collected on habitat helps identify wetlands most at risk of losing their ability to support marsh birds and amphibians.

This article will not examine specific survey techniques and guidelines we used in conducting the MMP. Suffice it to say that there was a considerable amount of paperwork involved in recording and tabulating data. This was an enjoyable and interesting experience, but there was a time

commitment involved. Our survey route consisted of seven different stations. We visited each station on three nights during our amphibian surveys, and twice in early evening during our marsh bird surveys. We described the marsh habitat only once each year, usually during the first marsh bird survey visit.

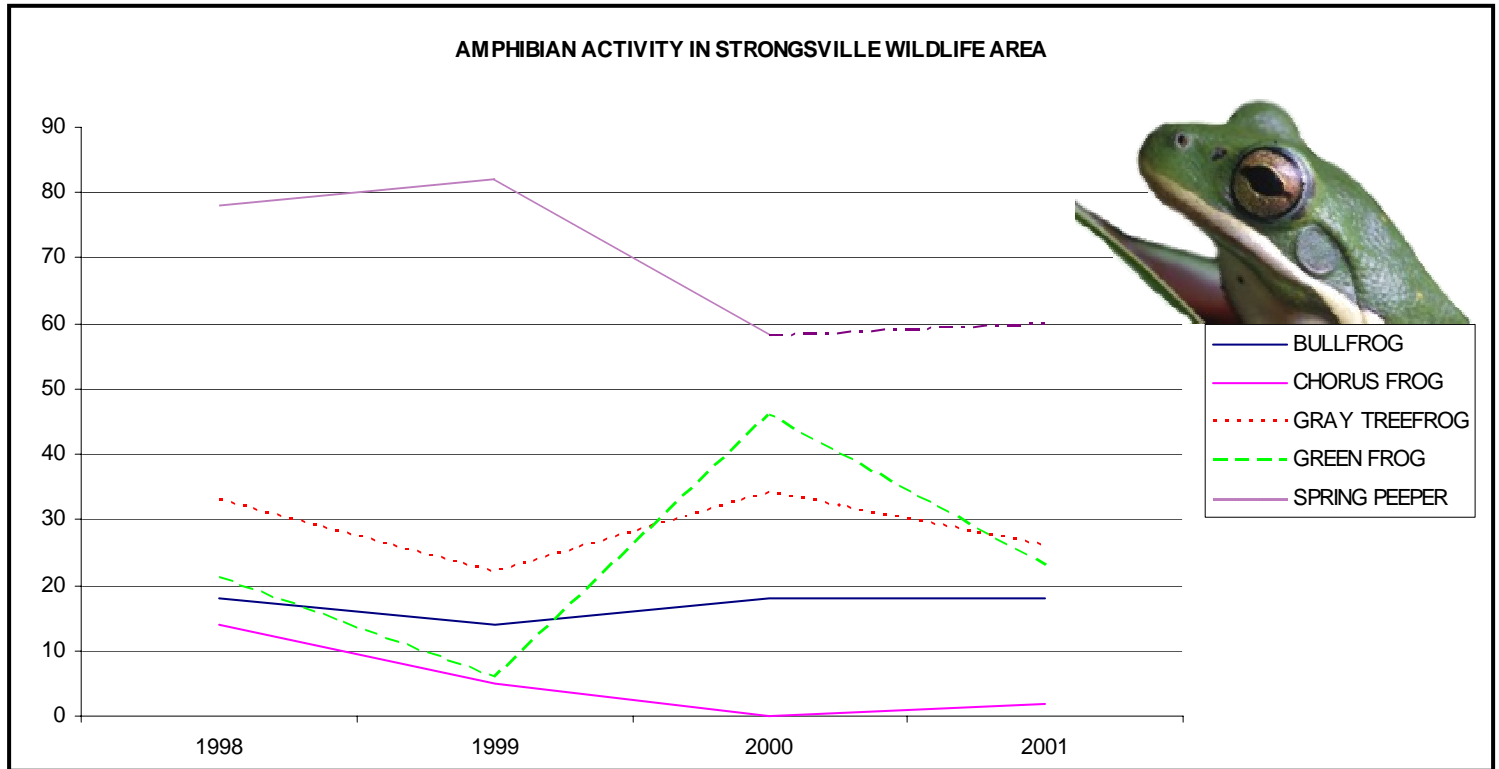
Our four years of surveying the SWA yielded some interesting facts. As the accompanying graph shows, Chorus Frogs (*Pseudacris triseriata*) were least abundant among the amphibians we heard. Bird Studies Canada supported this finding by reporting in its Marsh Monitoring Program Newsletter for 2001 that the Chorus Frog is the only amphibian that has significantly declined in frequency in the Great Lakes basin. In our survey, Bullfrogs, Green Frogs, and Gray Treefrogs occurred at about the same frequency. Spring Peepers by far outstripped all other amphibians.

We identified 45 species of marsh birds at SWA. These included a variety of warblers, sparrows, swallows, vireos, woodpeckers, blackbirds, herons, hawks, and shorebirds, as well as numerous other songbirds. Three species that we saw, American Robin, American Goldfinch, and Mourning Dove, were among the top 20 birds that, according to Bird Studies Canada, have been recorded on MMP marsh bird surveys. In addition, 21 of the bird species we recorded occurred during all four years that we participated in MMP.

Anyone can participate in MMP, but plan on committing about 20 hours a year to the project. This includes traveling to and from the marsh area, recording bird and amphibian data at each station along the route, and tabulating the data after each survey. It's a great way to be outdoors, to either be alone or with a loved one or significant other, and to get some exercise. To get involved, call Bird Studies Canada in Ontario, Canada toll free at (888) 448-2473.

FIND WORK AND PLAY IN MONITORING MARSH HEALTH

By Tom and Mary Anne Romito, romito@wcasohio.org Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society



THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Andy Hohenbrink, Nancy Howell, and Dave LeGallee all deserve thanks in setting up the Science Olympiad - Bird Identification activity for youngsters in grades 4 through 6 on Saturday, March 1.

Thanks go out to Mary Jane White, Mary Ann Romito, Tom Romito and Nancy Howell for setting up the Western Cuyahoga Audubon wetlands display on Saturday, May 17 for the Rocky River Watershed Day event at the Rocky River Nature Center.

Many thanks to Dave LeGallee, Craig Caldwell, Sandy Stroud and Glen Stroud for participating in the SCHOOL DAYS program at Edgewater Park, sponsored by the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, on Wednesday, May 21. They took our Audubon wetlands display along with a few hands-on items to share with the school groups that participated. Hope everyone was warm enough!

WCAS CHAPTER MEMBER APPLICATION

BENEFITS

BASIC MEMBERSHIP

- Newsletter
 - Nametag
- Single — \$20.00
Family — \$40.00

ENHANCED MEMBERSHIP

- Same as basic membership
 - Passport
- Single — \$35.00
Family — \$55.00

CHARTER MEMBERSHIP

- Same benefits as basic and enhanced memberships
- Fee fixed for life of member as long as one stays current
- Only being offered from April 1 until Labor Day of 2003
- Charter members get name on website

Single — \$50.00
Family — \$70.00

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY/STATE/ZIP
TELEPHONE
EMAIL ADDRESS

CATEGORIES

SINGLES/COUPLE/ONE PARENT AND ONE CHILD: One or two people living at the same address

FAMILY: Three or more family members

Mail to WCAS, 3226 Park Drive, Parma, OH 44134

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Would you like to be a member of National Audubon, too?

Benefits include membership in WCAS chapter. Cost is \$20 for new membership; the current one-year renewal price is \$35. Receive Audubon Magazine four times a year. To receive benefits of Friends of WCAS, you must join WCAS at either the Basic, Enhanced, or Charter membership levels.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Chapter Code: 7XCH S63

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY/STATE/ZIP
TELEPHONE
EMAIL ADDRESS

Mail to WCAS, 3226 Park Drive, Parma, OH 44134

WCAS MEMBER SURVEY

Please complete this survey and return it to Mary Anne Romito, either by mail to 4310 Bush Ave., Cleveland, OH 44109 or by E-Mail to romito@wcasohio.org

Please circle your response or fill out this survey online at <http://www.wcasohio.org/members/S2003survey.htm>

1. Do you enjoy the speakers who come to our meetings? **Yes No**
2. How often do you attend our monthly meetings. **Yes No**
3. Do you need a ride to get to our meetings? **Yes No**
4. Can you provide a ride for others who need one to get to our meetings? **Yes No**
5. How often do you come to our field trips? **Never Seldom Often Very Often Always**
6. Is there somewhere special you'd like us to go on a field trip? **Yes No** (Please attach a separate sheet with your ideas)
7. Do you like our website? **Yes No**
8. Is our chapter newsletter important to you? **Yes No**
9. Do you like our new newsletter? **Yes No**
10. Should we continue to provide refreshments at meetings? **Yes No**
11. Should we continue to have ham and turkey at the holiday pot luck dinner? **Yes No**
12. Do you feel that WCAS should participate in special events, such as Science Olympiad, Cornell Great Backyard Bird Count, Rocky River Watershed Day, and Christmas Bird Count? **Yes No**
13. What do you know about Audubon Adventures? Do you think we should continue supporting it? **Yes No**
14. Would you be interested in birding trips in U.S. or abroad that would cost each member a fee? **Yes No**

Please provide your name_____

Provide your E-Mail address_____



***SUPPORT
WCAS***

WCAS Programs

Nancy Howell
nhowell@wcasohio.org

JUNE PROGRAM

Tuesday, June 3, beginning at 6:30 PM.

Audubon's annual "kick-off-the-summer" picnic and plant exchange. We will meet at the reserved W.J. Green Picnic Shelter at the south end of Baldwin Lake in the Mill Stream Run Reservation in Berea. Bring your dinner, dining utensils, yourself and friends. Dine, relax, go on a bird walk and the best part is the plant exchange. Bring your extra flowers, bulbs, seeds, trees ... any indoor or outdoor plant you have in excess and needs a home.

JUNE FIELD TRIP

Sunday, June 15 at 8 AM.

Auduboners will take to the 404 acres of forests, fields, creeks and bogs of the Bath Nature Preserve. Several habitats will produce good sightings of birds including Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Indigo Bunting, maybe an Osprey! Easy to follow trails will permit us to experience the habitats while protecting sensitive areas. Formerly part of the Raymond Firestone Estate, the area is now protected for all to enjoy.

To reach the Preserve: Take Breckville Rd. (Rt. 21) south. When it crosses the Summit Co. line it becomes Cleveland-Massillon Rd. Continue south on Cleve.- Mass. Rd to Ira Rd. (less than 1 mile from the Summit Co. line). Turn right (west) onto Ira Rd. The Bath Nature Preserve will be on the left about 1 mile from the Ira intersection. Look for the Bath Nature Preserve sign.

WESTERN CUYAHOGA AUDUBON LECTURE SERIES for the early part of the 2003 - 2004 season. Presentations are at 7:30 PM at the Rocky River Nature Center located in the Rocky River Metropark. Guests are always welcome to programs and to introduce them to the Audubon mission.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

Tuesday, September 2 at 7:30 PM

It may not be momma, poppa and baby bear all together in your neighborhood, but the Black Bear is here in Ohio! Damon Greer, Wildlife Research Technician with the Ohio Division of Wildlife will present the program, "Black Bear in Ohio". Bear sightings have increased in the eastern and southern parts of Ohio and recently bear have wandered into Cuyahoga County. Learn why black bear are back in the state and how they are faring. Just don't leave any porridge out for them.

OCTOBER PROGRAM

Tuesday, October 7 at 7:30 PM

Prior to Ohio's settlement about 1 million acres of the land was prairie. Small woodland openings to areas of several thousand acres were reported in early surveys. Bob Kehres of Ohio Prairie Nursery is helping to establish, preserve and maintain prairie plants for your yard or planting project. In his program, "Meadows of the Past ... and Present", Bob will discuss the grasses and wildflowers found in Ohio prairies and how you can introduce these native species to your yard. Not only are these plants beautiful in themselves, but many are host plants for butterflies, produce seeds for birds, and actually help to add nutrients to soil. You might consider changing part of your yard to prairie!

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

Tuesday, November 4 at 7:30 PM

In the year 1780, 95% of Ohio was forested. By 1912, a mere 12% of the state had a forest covering, yet today nearly 30% of Ohio is forested. What happened and why? Tom Stanley, Chief of Natural Resources for the Cleveland Metroparks, will share with us some of the reasons for the changes to the landscape and how it has affected wildlife and people in his program, "Changes in the Land."

www.wcasohio.org