

Black River Audubon Society

WINGTIPS

November 2013



©Photo by Dane

BARRED OWL

Editors: Harry Spencer, and Cathy Priebe
Photographer: John Koscinski
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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, November 5, 2013, 7 p.m.

Carlisle Reservation Visitor Center

Norman Damm

Damm, prominent member of Northern Ohio Association of Herpetologists, will touch on all aspects of southwestern wildlife, including birds, mammals, and insects. A generous portion of the presentation will also feature reptiles and amphibians. "I like all wildlife, but my passion has always revolved around amphibians and reptiles," he explained.

Field Trip

November 16, 2013, Saturday, 9 a.m.

Mueller Woods, 15023 Indian Hollow Rd. (0.5 miles south of Parsons Rd.), and

Yarish Property, 38259 Crook Street

(Grant Thompson leading)

Meet at Mueller Woods and **WEAR BOOTS!**

Board Meeting

Notice: Date change!

Tuesday, Nov 19, 6:30 p.m.

The Jack Smith House

304 West Ave., Elyria

Black River Audubon offers free Audubon Adventures kits

By **Dick Lee**

Audubon Adventures is an environmental education program for children in grades 3, 4, 5 & 6. Developed by professional environmental educators, Audubon Adventures presents basic, scientifically accurate facts about birds, wildlife, and their habitats, and is packaged as Classroom kits, each serving 32 students, or Individual kits, serving one student per kit.



Each kit contains a newspaper titled AUDUBON ADVENTURES, one for each student covering multiple themes. This year's themes are 1) Raptors: Birds of Prey; 2) Hooray for Hummingbirds; 3) Seabirds, Ocean Travels; and 4) Caring for Our Planet. Each kit contains a Classroom Resource Manual with background information of each topic, detailed lesson plans, tips for outdoor study, hands-on activities, duplicating masters, and more. In addition a kit includes a Class Certificate and information about Activities in Owl-Pellet Dissection.

Audubon Adventure kits are correlated with both National and State of Ohio learning standards.

To promote education about and interest in the wonders of nature, Black River Audubon buys these kits from the National Audubon Society and distributes them free to teachers, including home-school teachers.

Contact Dick Lee at leedck@windstream.net or 440-322-7449

A Birder's Diary: Pribilof Islands 1975

By **Carol Leininger**

I love travelling, and as a teacher, I could travel during the summer, including celebrating my June birthday in a different place each year. One unique birthday trip took me to Alaska and the Pribilof Islands for most interesting birding.



At Fairbanks, Alaska I boarded a small prop plane, the only way to get to the islands. Through a break in the clouds as we were about to land, I saw our landing field, a grassy meadow. But because of poor visibility we could not land, so we returned to Fairbanks.

The next day the fog cleared enough for landing. Then I realized that the grassy field was littered with big rocks. There was no runway. Apparently the pilot knew his job.

A crowd of residents met the plane because a wedding had been planned for the previous day but had been postponed until we arrived with the wedding cake! We visitors attended the ceremony held in a quaint little Russian Orthodox Church.

Most days were heavily fogged with short intervals of sun. But, oh, the thousands of birds that I saw nesting on island ledges or swimming in the sea below. Some of the birds were murrelets, kittiwakes, auklets, puffins, murrelets, terns, gulls, cormorants, fulmars, and scoters. I could stand on top of one cliff and look across to the next cliff, then stand on top of the next cliff and look back where I had stood before. The cliffs went on and on, while the birds just sat or swam. It was truly a bird watcher's paradise.

It was the birthing season for the sea lions, and I saw the entire birthing process of one pup just a few feet away. I was surrounded by a rainy, foggy mist as waves splashed over the rocks. What a time and place to be born!

I want to go back and bird there again. The residents seem happy to accommodate all those crazy birders.

Sometimes the most rewarding experience on a birding trip is not about the birds. That birding trip years ago turned out to have many unexpected and pleasant happenings, even as I spent my entire birthday in the air flying back and forth.

November birds in Angie Adkins' yard

- sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, mourning dove, red-bellied woodpecker, downy woodpecker, hairy woodpecker
- blue jay, tufted titmouse, black-capped chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, white-breasted nuthatch, Carolina wren, golden-crowned kinglet
- American robin, European starling, northern cardinal, field sparrow, American tree sparrow, white-throated sparrow, song sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow
- dark-eyed junco, common grackle, American goldfinch, house finch, house sparrow

Current Board Members

Board Members June 2013	Expiration	Term
JIM MARSEY	JUN/01/2014	FIRST
TAMMY MARTIN	JUN/01/2014	PARTIAL TERM
STEVE CHAVEZ	JUN/01/2014	SECOND
HARRY SPENCER	JUN/01/2014	FIRST
BETTY LAKE	JUN/01/2015	FIRST
CATHY PRIEBE	JUN/01/2015	SECOND
DIANE DEVEREAUX	JUN/01/2015	FIRST
DEBBIE MOHR	JUN/01/2015	SECOND
JOHN RYAN	JUN/01/2016	FIRST
MARTY ACKERMANN	JUN/01/2016	SECOND
JIM JABLONSKI	JUN/01/2016	FIRST
TERRI MARTINCIC	JUN/01/2016	SECOND

Barred Owl

Strix varia

By Cathy Priebe

“Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?” is the common description of the call of a barred owl. It is not unusual to hear two or more birds calling to each other during the day, but the owls generally are more vocal at dusk and throughout the night, especially during mating season.



BARRED OWL photo by DAVE PRIEBE

These large, stocky, and barrel-shaped owls have dark eyes, yellow bill, large, round, tuft-less head, short tail, fluffy barred ruff, and dark streaking below. Their mottled brown plumage always appears disheveled.

My husband and I are very lucky to have a mated pair of barred owls living in and around our backyard in Grafton for the last ten years. They keep our mice population down along with the prevalence of squirrels and voles. Many mornings a perched owl waiting for breakfast has startled me while I feed the birds.

Barred owls eat amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, birds, and small mammals. It is not

unusual for them to hunt on the ground, in shallow water, or on the wing.

The birds prefer deep woods where they nest in tree cavities, sometimes in abandoned stick nests. In Ohio courtship begins in late fall and winter with nesting soon thereafter. The female mostly incubates two or three white eggs for about a month. Owlets, fuzzy replicas of the parents, hunt on their own by late spring.

Our backyard residents have already begun their daytime calling. When the windows are cracked, we hear them conversing late into the night. Despite our familiarity with these nocturnal creatures, their calls can still send chills rippling down our spines, especially when the owls are near the bedroom window!

References: *National Geographic Complete Birds of North America* by Jonathan Alderfer; *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion* by Pete Dunne; *Birds of Ohio* by Jim McCormac.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER

Melanerpes carolinus

By **Angie Adkins**

The noisy red-bellied woodpecker is found in all counties of Ohio and is the most common of our woodpeckers. Because of their love of seeds and suet, these woodpeckers are often seen at backyard feeders.

Because they are named for the usually-unseen reddish tinge on their bellies many birders consider them misnamed. To compound the problem, the red crown and nape of the males and the red nape of females lead some inexperienced birders to confuse the species with red-headed woodpeckers. Both species have black and white barring on their backs and white patches on their rumps.

Red-bellied woodpeckers have a varied diet of berries, fruits, tree sap, nuts, salamanders, mice, and occasional nestling birds. At feeders they eat suet, peanuts, peanut butter, sunflower seeds, apple slices, grapes, grape jelly and raisins. At my house they sometimes eat pears on my pear tree.

These non-migratory residents nest in tree cavities, usually self-made, sometimes in abandoned nests of others, and sometimes in a bird house constructed by a birder. After a male-female pair has selected a nesting tree, both birds construct a suitable cavity eight to twelve inches deep to accommodate four or five white eggs. Both parents share incubation duties for 12 to 14 days. Both parents feed the nestlings for about a month, after which the young fledge but stay in the nest vicinity. The parents continue to feed these fledglings for several weeks.

Most red-bellied woodpeckers live a few years, although some individuals over 20-years of age have been recorded.

Listen for these noisy birds in your backyard and while you walk, bike-ride, picnic, or play golf.

References: *Birds of Ohio* by McCormac and Kennedy; *Ohio Bird Watching, A Year-round Guide* by Bill Thompson III and staff; *The Crossley ID Guide to Eastern Birds* by Richard Crossley



RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER
photo by DANE ADAMS