

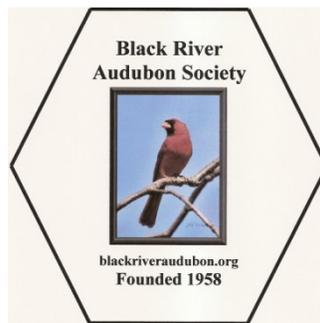
Black River Audubon Society

WINGTIPS

September 2009



Dunlins/John Koscinski



Northern Cardinal/ John Koscinski

Editors: Jack Smith and Harry Spencer
Photographer: John Koscinski
Webmistress: Arlene Lengyel

Program

7 p.m. September 1, 2009

Carlisle Reservation Visitor Center

Dwight Chasar

Research Scientist

Early Ornithologists and Conservationists in the Cleveland Region

The ornithological history since 1830 in the Cleveland region (7 county area) is replete with examples of people who have made significant contributions to birding and conservation, both locally and elsewhere in North America. This presentation will explore many of these pillars upon which birding and bird research was built in the Cleveland region. The audience will learn about these people and their contributions to Cleveland area ornithology and along the way, all kinds of remote and twisted trivia related to these figures and Cleveland history

Dwight Chasar is a research scientist who has been active in birding for over 25 years. He is a past president of the Kirtland Bird Club, a charter member of the Ohio Ornithological Society, and a past member of the Ohio Bird Records Committee. As a 20-year volunteer for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, he has led year-round bird walks during the last 14 years and organized and conducted spring and fall bird censuses. He has published numerous articles on bird field studies in *The Cleveland Bird Calendar*, *the Ohio Cardinal*, and *Ohio Birds and Natural History* and has given talks to various groups about birds.

Field Trip

September 19, 2009 (Saturday)

Sandy Ridge Reservation at 8:00 a.



Pine Siskin/John Koscinski

Advocacy Committee Formed.

By **Erik Bruder**

Black River Audubon has formed an Advocacy Committee to help keep the chapter informed on critical issues that require our voice to be heard. If you are interested in being a member of the committee, have a question, or even just want to make us aware of an issue, please contact Erik Bruder at erikbruder@gmail.com or 440-808-1970. The first formal meeting of the committee will be held in a few weeks and we welcome all interested chapter members



Advocacy Committee Mission Statement

The mission of the Advocacy Committee is to be Black River Audubon's voice for bird conservation, speaking for the birds who cannot speak for themselves. This committee works to research, understand, and document pending local, state, and national legislative and governmental issues and to advise the Board of Directors on areas where chapter resources should be focused. When the Board of Directors decides that BRAS should undertake action on an issue, this committee becomes the key coordinating point to advance the position authorized by the board.

The Advocacy Committee will:

- Maintain a clear understanding of items of concern.
- Make the board and chapter aware of relevant issues.
- Publish regular updates on committee projects and items of concern in Wingtips and on the BRAS website.
- Coordinate communication on the chapter's behalf with appropriate governmental decision makers.

July Field Trip – Columbia Reservation

Saturday, July 18, 2009

By **Tammy Martin**

The cool morning began with a pretty steady shower. Fortunately, the rain stopped for the 8:00 a.m. dedication of the new Forest Hills Club House, which I attended first. Then, a few more drizzles came down as I made my way to the Columbia Reservation for our monthly outing. Six other members joined me (Marty Ackermann, Sally Fox, Dot Macintyre, Jack Smith, Jean Sorton, and Harry Spencer) as we started. Ken Austin met us an hour or so into the walk. An occasional sprinkle attempted to bother us, but the weather finally cooperated for another lovely Saturday.

Bird-wise, we identified approximately 44 species. Not bad for a mid-summer outing. These included--Canada goose, wood duck, mallard, great egret, green heron, turkey vulture, mourning dove, chimney swift, red-bellied, downy, and hairy woodpeckers, northern flicker, eastern wood-pewee, great crested flycatcher, eastern kingbird, warbling vireo, red-eyed vireo, blue jay, American crow, northern rough-winged swallow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, house wren, blue-gray gnatcatcher, eastern bluebird, wood thrush, American robin, gray catbird, cedar waxwing, yellow warbler, common yellowthroat, eastern towhee, field sparrow, savannah sparrow, song sparrow, swamp sparrow, northern cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, and American goldfinch.

For someone who doesn't regularly walk at the Columbia Reservation, I was very impressed with how the plant material had developed and filled in the various wetland areas. Apparently the wood ducks concur, as we watched several family groups (females and young) of various sizes feeding among the water plants. Obviously, it was a good year for successful hatches.

Logistically, Columbia Reservation is nearly divided in half by Route 82. Visitors have access to an ice cream/sandwich/pizza stand with putt-putt course and restroom/park facilities. We walked the paved loop trail on the south side. A return visit is now in order to return and walk the north trail. Any takers? Of course, don't forget to try the ice cream after a long hot walk! It's refreshing!

Harriet's Diary

By **Harriet Alger**

June 3, 2009, California

I saw 3 California condors!!! My daughter, Brandi, is on the board of the Ventana Wildlife Society, one of the organizations that releases them. She made no promises but said she knew of a place near the release site where some had been seen. First time there we had no luck. Last day of my visit we tried again and were ready to give up when first one, then two, then three appeared so high that you could barely see them. Then they began circling around a hill and each time they appeared they were lower and larger until the view was spectacular. It was an amazing opportunity to study their flight, behavior, and general appearance. As I followed one with binocs, it headed right in my direction --big orange head looking right at me! I almost dropped the binocs. Of course, with just my normal eyesight, it did not look that close or threatening.



Papa Quail/Harriet Alger

I had another opportunity to study bird behavior. A family of California quails lives in the area around Brandi's house on the top of a hill overlooking a canyon. The quails provided interest and amusement for the five days of my stay, as papa quail acted as scout to survey the area of the canyon from the railing of their balcony or the back of a bench, and mama quail tried to keep track of and discipline about half a dozen little quails. I



Black Oystercatchers/Harriet Alger

added three birds, other than the condors, to my life list: oak titmouse, Pacific slope flycatcher, and western bluebird. Sightings of some of my western favorites in the Monterey area and during two days in Berkeley with my other daughter included: acorn woodpecker, western grebe, black-necked stilt, pigeon guillemot, common murre, black oystercatcher, western gull, spotted towhee, California towhee, Anna's hummingbird, violet-green swallow, western wood peewee,

Oregon junco, Brandt's cormorant, brown pelican, chestnut-backed chickadee, Steller's jay, western scrub-jay, Brewer's blackbird. After years of complaining about only hearing, not seeing red-shouldered hawks here in Ohio, one flew across the yard right below the balcony of the house one morning, and I had good looks several

other times over the canyon.

Special treats were visits to the Monterey Aquarium to learn about the Otter Research with which Brandi works as Coordinator of Volunteers and a walk at Elkhorn Slough, one of the loveliest and most famous birding areas near Monterey.

A Birder's Diary

By **Carol Leininger**

Before I had air conditioning, I slept with my bedroom window open. In the spring I awoke most days to the coo-coo-cooing of two mourning doves sitting on a wire near my window. I understand that birds are affected by light intensity and begin to sing when it reaches a certain point. Some birds are earlier risers (and singers) than other species. Mourning dove and I seem to like the same time. If it is a cloudy day, however, the doves don't begin singing until much later – there goes my reliable alarm clock!



My parents had a mourning dove's nest on the downspout next to their kitchen window. My mother worried throughout the nesting period—mourning doves build a very flimsy nest of just a few sticks so that the eggs and young look like they will fall at any time. At Lorain County Community College mourning doves sometimes nest on window ledges of buildings where students inside the buildings can see into the nests.

When the young hatch, the parents feed them regurgitated food from their crops. This food is often called “pigeon milk”, although it is not like mammals milk. Actually it is not the food of the adult birds either, but the sloughed-off lining of the parents' crops. As the young grow, they begin to feed on solid food such as caterpillars and fruit.

I was sorry to hear about the Ohio open hunting season for mourning doves. They are not game birds in my opinion.

Carlisle Birding

Entry into eBird by **Nan Miller** July 28, 2009

...Equestrian Center North and South Loops. Some birds heard only: cerulean warbler and common yellowthroat. Others in family groups and active: thrashers, orchard orioles, wood thrush, willow flycatcher, etc. Carlisle is one of the best places to bird year round.

San Diego Diary

By **Peg Spencer**

I grew up in southern California. Almost every night we slept with the windows open to admit the cool ocean breeze which is one charm of the area. A flock of mourning doves lived in our neighborhood, and every night the open windows also admitted the cooing of the doves along with the breezes. All night long! My family really was not fond of the cooing. In fact it was down right annoying and disturbed our sleep. Thus my childhood memories of mourning doves are not positive ones.

When I moved to upstate New York the mourning doves of girlhood were among the birds I recognized. I was very pleased, though, to note that the doves went to sleep and were quiet all night like the rest of the birds. What is the explanation for this difference in behavior between the two locations? It is a mystery to be solved, but a mystery that makes my adult thoughts of mourning doves much more positive than those of my childhood.

Congratulations, John!

At Caldwell, Nobel County, Ohio, on June 13 and 14, John Koscinski displayed his photographs along with 39 other artists at the Art on the Square 2009 show. John won awards both for Best Art Display and as Best Artist.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.The Twitter logo, consisting of the word "twitter" in a light blue, rounded, lowercase font with a white outline.

By **Erik Bruder**

Black River Audubon is now on **Facebook** and **Twitter**. You can become our **Facebook Fan** by searching for “**Black River Audubon Society**”, and you can follow our Tweets at **BRAudubon**.

Editor's note: In the May 2009 WINGTIPS, Jack Smith wrote an article titled “The Endangered Beekeeper”. Beekeepers are endangered because bees are endangered, in turn endangering much of the agricultural industry and our food supply. A major portion of that danger to bees is due to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Jack, an experienced beekeeper, readily agreed to write the following essay about his thoughts and speculation about CCD. Because of the pressure of business and other matters, Jack gave up his beekeeping hobby about fifty years ago, but picked it up again after his part time retirement in 1996.

Canary in the Cage

By **Jack Smith**

In the 1980s varroa and trachea mites invaded North America. If left untreated these two, particularly the varroa mites, can wipe out bee colonies. In fact, feral colonies nearly have disappeared. Accordingly, I had to treat my colonies with a powerful miticide every spring and fall. I first used Tau-fluvalinate, trade name “Apistan”, but after a few years the mites became resistant to the chemical. Because the miticide is lipophilic it is absorbed into the wax of the hive, and with continuous use the chemical builds up toxic amounts in the wax combs.

I switched to the newly EPA-approved formic-acid pads after replacing all brood-chamber comb-frames. So far these pads have done a good job in controlling both varroa and trachea mites with one early fall treatment. Because of danger to humans, this treatment requires careful handling, and the jury is still out as to adverse side-effects.

Honey bees fall prey to a myriad of adversities including bacterial, viral, and protozoan diseases. American foul-brood is the worst, but the most insidious adversities are due to pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides, because coping with them is almost impossible. Farmers use copious amounts of these chemicals to meet the ever increasing demand for quality food eaten by the continuously increasing population.

In 2007 a Penn State research group reported forty-six different pesticides and breakdown products in samples of pollen collected by bees. In one sample, seventeen pesticides and breakdown products were detected. Pollen that collects in leg sacks of bees is a vital protein source for bees.

Can you imagine the effect of this contaminated pollen when fed to bee larva? Could this be behind the



mysterious Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) causing widespread failure of commercial bee colonies?

Imidacloprid Olefin is one example of an offending insecticide. It is a neuro-active nicotinoid, particularly potent in insect control, but is systematically absorbed by the plants upon which it is sprayed. Eventually all plant parts, including pollen, are contaminated. Reactions with plant chemicals could produce more harmful chemicals.

I do not believe that scientists will find only a single cause for CCD, but a multiple number originating from the use of man-made chemicals released into the environment.

Further I suggest the Colony Collapse Disorder is like the “Canary in the Cage” and is a warning of an impending world disaster. Is it not time to strive for more ecologically friendly methods to control the pestilences of the world?