

Black River Audubon Society

WINGTIPS

Summer 2009 Online Edition



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April Field Trip

Olsen State Nature Preserve

Saturday, April 18, 2009

By **Tammy Martin**

A lovely spring day brought eight members together for our guided walk through Olsen State Nature Preserve. Included were Wendy Akin, Ken Austin, Tammy Martin, Nancy and Wayne Shipman, Mike Smith, Joann Wagner, and Joel Vormelker. John McFadden, ODNR Natural Areas and Preserves, began by giving us a brief history of the preserve, which is now open year-round to the public. Next, John led us on a wonderful botanical adventure through its various habitats. Oh, and we saw a few birds (33 species) as well!

First, let's mention those birds---great blue heron, Canada goose, wood duck, turkey vulture, bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, mourning dove, belted kingfisher, red-bellied and downy woodpeckers, northern flicker, eastern phoebe, tree swallow, blue jay, American crow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, winter wren, ruby-crowned kinglet, eastern bluebird, hermit thrush, American robin, European starling, northern cardinal, field sparrow, song and white-throated sparrows, dark-eyed junco, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, and American goldfinch.

If you're counting, I've only listed 31. Two species deserve special mention. First, we heard a group of birds in a pine grove making a racket. Since a bit of time has passed and I don't specifically recall the species, let's say they were blue jays. Anyway, this group of jays was obviously harassing something else...something big. Fortunately, we approached the pines right as a barred owl flew off, followed by the jays. Seeing an owl in the daytime is always a treat, especially for Mike Smith, as this was his first "in-the-wild" owl, as opposed to those in the raptor center. Way to go, Mike!

The other special bird was actually one we did NOT see, only heard. This bugger sang [loudly!!] in every hollow we approached. Although several members searched for it, none of us succeeded in locating this songster. All of us were convinced that it somehow was throwing its voice to fool us. Finally, Joel Vormelker suggested a water thrush. Luckily, with my warbler CD in the car, Joel and I listened intently to both the northern and Louisiana's calls and determined that our singer was the northern water thrush. Whew!

Ok, now for the flowers – spring ephemerals were everywhere, though not quite at their peak. John McFadden thought that we were simply a week early. Of special notice, but in no particular order, were blue cohosh, dwarf ginseng, dutchman's-breeches, trillium (large-flowered and sessile/toadshade), trout-lily (white and yellow), twinleaf (in bloom!!!), bloodroot, sharp-lobed hepatica, rue-anemone, spring-beauty, cut-leaved and 'regular' toothwort, spring cress, skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, false mermaid, and harbinger-of-spring.

In addition to pointing out these wonderful flowers, John also discussed the Division's ongoing work to eradicate/control invasive species (i.e., garlic mustard). One species included in this work was the small yellow flower, lesser celandine. On one side of the Vermilion River, where we stood, this species was well in check, through manual removal. However, on the other side, it was quickly creating a monoculture beneath the trees/shrubs—a sobering example of an invasive species bullying out the natives.

To round out the trip, the group also found the unusual fungus, gray urn, two garter snakes, and an early morning cloak butterfly. All in all, it was a great outing for spring flowers, with some nice bird sightings thrown in, of course. Until next season...get outside and keep birding!

Highlights of the Magee Marsh Field Trip May 2, 2009

Jack Smith

The twenty or so mile/hour SSW winds brought in an unusual variety of birds on a sunny, beautiful day. Two of species that I welcomed were some worm-eating warblers and summer tanagers. I saw both mature male and female and a first-year male summer tanager.



(Photos by Harry Spencer)



Nancy Miller

One high point of the day was the calls of the sora on the far eastern boardwalk. The young male summer tanager acquiring adult plumage with both red and green feathers was pretty spectacular, also.

Martin Ackermann

The highlight for me was seeing the first-year male and the female summer tanager. The small number of warblers, dominated by yellow-rumps, was disappointing, and the absence of any thrushes except for robins was a surprise.

Harry Spencer

Perhaps for me the highlight was the opportunity to study a Cape May warbler for several minutes as it rested at the foot of a tree only a few feet from the boardwalk. Many yellow-rumped warblers graced the nearby trees on this sunny, pleasant day.



Dick Lee

I never thought I would ever complain about seeing warblers, but the numbers of yellow-rumped warblers at Magee were a distraction. When you catch a glimpse of a bird and get it in your field of view, most of the time it was 'just another yellow-rump'.



Nancy Shipman

Our yearly field trip to Magee Marsh is always the highlight of spring birding for me. The warblers are marvelous, but the helpful, enthusiastic numerous fellow birders are truly special.

Due to the weather, I did not expect this years' trip to produce record number of sightings. Jack, Jean, Kenny, Dale Carey, Tom Reed, Wayne and I saw eight different warblers: yellow-rumped, palm, Cape May, yellow, black-throated green, black-and-white, chestnut-sided and prothonotary. The prothonotary warbler and rusty blackbird both gave us extraordinary shows and displays. The highlight for me was the show put on by the summer tanagers. It was also a delight to observe the young in the great horned owl nest. All told, we saw 36 species.

Photo of Birding by Tram

Sandy Ridge Reservation, April 30

By **Dick Lee**

Dale Carey is in front with Tim Fairweather. Harriet Alger and Betty Lake are in back.



Board Members, June 2009

{Member, Term expiration, Term}

Betty Lake, June 2010, Second; **Wayne Shipman**, June 2010, Second; **Jean Sorton**, June 2010, Second; **Erik Bruder**, June 2010, First (completion of unexpired term); **Arlene Ryan**, June 2011, Second; **Jack Smith**, June 2011, Second; **Steve Chavez**, June 2011; **Harry Spencer**, June 2011, First (completion of unexpired term); **Kenny Austin**, June 2012, Second; **Kathy Priebe**, June 2012, First; **Wendy Akin**, June 2012, First; **Debbie Mohr**, June 2012, First.



Trumpeter Swan Family
Dane Adams
Caley Reservation May 2009

Secretary's Summary:

Minutes of the May 26 Board Meeting

By Arlene Ryan

- The audit procedure was discussed. An audit committee was formed. The members of the audit committee are: Dick Lee, Eric Bruder and Jack Smith.
- A motion was made and passed to approve the Mission Statement written by the Advocacy committee.
- A Power Point program will be presented to, Community Health Partners by Marty Ackermann.
- The birding weekend display at Sandy Ridge, May 16-17 was a big success.
- BR Audubon will have a display at the Butterfly event at French Creek on July 11. Debbie Mohr volunteered to set-up the display.
- BR Audubon is in 12th place nationwide for the number of Audubon Adventure kits distributed during the 2008/09 school year. Eighty kits were given away.
- Several summer outings are planned. They are: a boat trip on the Black River at 8 A.M. on June 7; birding by Tram May 28, June 11 and 25; and hikes at Columbia Reservation, July 18, and at Indian Hollow Reservation, August 15.
- Cathy Priebe will write a feature article about birding by tram for several publications.
- The bird-banding project has been put on hold. Keith Tarvin's feels he cannot devote the time needed to supervise additional bird banding.
- Arlene Ryan will write a letter of support to the Nature Conservancy endorsing the purchase of a block of forest known as the Vinton Furnace Experimental Forest in Vinton County, Ohio.
- A motion was made and passed to offer program speakers \$100 honoraria.
- Last on the agenda was the election officers and chairpersons. New officers and chairpersons:
- President: Debbie Mohr
- First Vice President: Arlene Ryan
- Second Vice President: Eric Bruder
- Treasurer: Steve Chavez
- Secretary: Wendy Akin
- New chairpersons are:
- Field Trips: Ken Austin, Tammy Martin
- Conservation: Wayne Shipman, Joe Strong, Harriet Alger, Dorothy Hagerling
- Education: Dick Lee
- Membership: Betty Lake
- Publicity: Cathy Priebe
- Social: Jean Sorton
- Advocacy: Erik Bruder
- Programs: Marty Ackermann
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M. We will formulate a budget for the next year at our next meeting on July 28 at the home of Jack Smith in Elyria, Ohio.