

**2011 OYBC Conference
November 2011**

by Jacob Stinnett

It was a bright and clear day, the best anyone could ask for in early November. The sun was shining and the birds were chirping all around the Grange Insurance Audubon Center on West Whittier Street in Columbus. A birding group led by Kenn Kaufman set out around 8:30 AM and a bird-banding demonstration was done on a hermit thrush by Mark and Julie Shieldcastle. After our little birding expedition was over, we headed inside to hear the speakers give their presentations. As people were coming inside, I took up my post at the raffle ticket booth with Sarah Seeley and we were very successful at selling tickets.



Watching birds
near the river

Our first speaker, Doug Whitman, spoke about the service projects that the Central Ohio Chapter had done in the past year. One of the coolest projects was the installation of a bluebird box trail that had a handicapped-accessible path next to it. Next, Lukas Padegimas spoke to us about his summer in Alaska banding and checking on nests of shorebirds that migrate

there in the "warm" summer months. Kathleen Seeley gave a presentation about the newly un-endangered Lake Erie Water Snake. She gave everyone that was not there this summer a brief description of what OYBC did to help the expert on the Lake Erie Water Snake, Kristen Stanford. The last presentation before a delicious lunch catered by Metro Cuisine Catering was by Jessie Barry from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. She talked with us about careers in the birding field and about teen camps held at the lab.



Master of
ceremonies
Doug Whitman
works the
crowd

Then, bon appetite! A large array of wraps, fresh fruit, and desserts were quickly gobbled away by hungry birders. After lunch, Robert Reynard gave us a history lesson about bird banding and his experiences doing it at the Cleveland Metro Parks. I really enjoyed his presentation because it talked

about the beginning of birding as we know it today, looking at birds, not shooting them with rifles.



Our keynote speaker,
Rachael Butek

It was time for the keynote speaker, Rachael Butek from Colfax, Wisconsin, to tell about how simple birding can be and how far it can take you. She won the American Birding Association's Young Birder of the Year award and told us how she did it. Everything she did for the contest, she did on her own family's property and without high-tech, high-resolution equipment.



Kenn Kaufman with bird I.D. Quiz assistant, Aaron, with Aspen Ellis, Kristina Polk, and Kayla Parry.

The day concluded with the Kenn Kaufman bird I.D. quiz. Three young birders, Kristina Polk, Kayla Parry, and Aspen Ellis correctly identified all ten birds on the quiz and won a complete set of Kaufman field guides. Congratulations to all who won prizes in the raffle and good job buying tickets from me. We all had a great time at the 2011 5th Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference and I am sure everyone agrees with me that I cannot wait until next year's conference.

