



Ohio Young Birders Club

VOLUME 5 | ISSUE 2 & 3
SUMMER/FALL 2010



Former Ohio First Lady Hope Taft invited the OYBC to participate in a **BioBlitz at the Heritage Gardens at the Ohio Governor's Residence.** We got a BIG surprise when Ohio Governor Ted Strickland walked out the front door to greet us! He even posed for a couple photos.
See page 11 for more BioBlitz photos & details!

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Ohio Young Birders Club
(OYBC)

*"Encouraging, Educating, and
Empowering Our Youth
Conservation Leaders."*

Coordinators
Ken Keffer
John Sawvel

Youth Advisory Panel

Wyatt Miller
Dakota Outcalt
Lukas Padegimas
Sarah Winnicki

The OYBC was founded by

Black Swamp
Bird Observatory

Dedicated to inspiring appreciation,
enjoyment, and conservation of
birds and their habitats through
research, education, and outreach.

Black Swamp
Bird Observatory
13551 West St. Rt. 2
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449

We are located at the entrance to
Magee Marsh Wildlife Area.

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Visit us at
www.ohioyoungbirders.org
www.bsbobird.org
www.bsbobird.org/birding

And be sure to visit:
[www.facebook.com/
ohioyoungbirders](http://www.facebook.com/ohioyoungbirders)

Special Announcements

The OYBC welcomes the Central Ohio
Chapter of Ohio Young Birders Club.

Information about the newest
OYBC Chapter can be found at:

www.columbusaudubon.org
www.ohioyoungbirders.org

Also read a trip report from the OYBC Central Ohio Chapter on page 8.

The OYBC Needs Young Birders
to serve on the club's
Youth Advisory Panel (YAP)

Do you have what it takes to be on the YAP?

YAP members agree to the following responsibilities:

- 1). Attend four meetings per year of the OYBC planning committee
- 2). Serve as a representative and ambassador of the OYBC at all times and conduct yourself accordingly
- 3). List YAP and OYBC membership in your biography
- 4). Serve as a mentor to younger members of the OYBC
- 5). Write one article per year for the club newsletter, *Golden-Wings*
- 6). Be a current member of the OYBC

The OYBC is run by the Youth Advisory Panel with support from BSBO staff and volunteers. Without the YAP - there is no OYBC.
If you are interested in serving on the YAP, please contact BSBO.



4th Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference

November 20 & 21, 2010

hosted by

Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm
1000 Aullwood Road, Dayton, Ohio

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION RATE

Student Rate \$10
Adult Rate \$20

*You do not have to be
a member to attend.
Open to all ages.*

Registration deadline
November 12th

see registration insert in this newsletter

register by calling 419-898-4070
or at www.ohioyoungbirders.org

THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SPONSORS OF THE OYBC CONFERENCE



GOLDEN-WINGS

Many thanks to all those who put time into this newsletter. Special thanks to:

Gerry Brevoort
Ada Cleary
Artemis Eyster
Harold Eyster
Clare Jusdanis
Kayla Parry
John Sawvel
Ryan Steiner
Susan K. Williams
Karen Zach

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Ken Keffer*

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Deborah Griffith*

The *GOLDEN-WINGS* editor is happy to receive for newsletter consideration your:

- Trip Reports
- Species Profiles
- Articles & Book Reports
- Sketches & Photos

*The next deadline for
newsletter submissions is
November 15, 2010*

Email: info@ohioyoungbirders.org

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Cover Photo: OYBC Students Pose with Ohio Governor Ted Strickland and former Ohio First Lady Hope Taft!

Young Birder Profile . . . Spotlight on Harold Eyster, age 17



Black-capped Chickadee, by Harold Eyster

Harold Eyster is 17 years old and resides in Chelsea, Michigan. Harold is the 2009 American Birding Association Young Birder of the Year, and the Ohio Young Birders Club is pleased to announce that Harold will be the Keynote Speaker for the 4th Annual OYBC Conference. The conference will be held November 20 & 21 at the Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm, near Dayton, Ohio. Full conference details can be found throughout this newsletter as well as on the web at www.ohioyoungbirders.org.

GOLDEN-WINGS – Who or what got you interested in birds, and in what year did you start birding?

Harold Eyster – As far back as I can remember I've been watching the birds at our feeder, and looking at birds when I would go on hikes with my family. I've been seriously birding since 2002 when I started drawing and recording many of the birds I saw—and my obsession has only increased since then.

GW – Have you had birding mentors or heroes who helped you?

HE – Back when I first started birding, I would go on walks led by Dea Armstrong, the local city ornithologist. She taught me many of my first bird calls, and found me many lifers. I definitely would not be where I am today without such an excellent mentor. As for heroes, about six years ago I bought the *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America*. I fell in love with it at first sight. On the back of the book it talked about Kenn, saying he was the author of *Kingbird Highway*. I immediately ordered it from the local library and read it from cover to cover. I've since bought every book he's ever

written, and was thrilled to finally meet him when he gave a presentation at the Toledo **Naturalist's Association** several years ago.

GW – Do you have a favorite bird, and if so, what is it and what makes it your favorite?

HE – **It's currently** the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, since I saw my first one recently. But my favorite bird

changes quite often; usually it's a bird I've seen lately, or hope to see, or just had a terrific view of.

GW – Where is your favorite place to bird?

HE – It would have to be my ten acre backyard. My yard has a fairly good list—160—but **that's not the only reason it's my favorite.** I really enjoy being able to go to one place on a daily basis and watch as the bird species composition and the number of birds changes over the seasons and years.

GW – What bird would you most like to see, and why?

HE – Green Jay. Many years ago I remember looking in a field guide and being sure that a bird that stunning simply **could not exist, and I've wanted to see one ever since.**

GW – You are the current American Birding Association Young Birder of the Year (see pages 6 & 7 for more on that), but what are some of your other birding accomplishments thus far?

HE – I received first place in Ornithology at the 2010 Michigan Science Olympiad State Competition. A friend and I won the Big Half-day Bird Race at the Biggest Week in American Birding, as part of the **ABA's Tropicbird team, winning a free** guided trip to Ecuador with Tropical Birding. My team and I were second in the youth division in the Great Texas Birding Classic. I have been in charge of an area for the North American Migration Count for the past four years, and some friends and I hold the January Big Day record for Washtenaw County in Michigan.

GW – Are you interested in any other natural science areas besides birds. What are your other interests and hobbies?

HE – I am interested in all facets of the natural world, especially, butterflies, odonata, botany, birds, mammals and herps. My other hobbies include primitive skills, sailing, running, biking, hiking, reading, climbing trees, photography, writing, drawing and playing trumpet. In 2009 I was the youth world champion in atlatl (a primitive spearthrower).

GW – In your experience, what do most people your age think about birding? And if their view of birding isn't totally positive, what can we do to change that?

HE – **I'm delighted to say that everyone I** know has a very positive view of birding.

GW – How could we get more young people interested in nature?

HE – I think OYBC members should go to their schools and convince a science teacher to give students extra credit if they accompany the OYBC member into the field five times. They should also hand out doughnuts or other snacks at the end of each walk. OYBC should get a grant to buy decent binoculars for any promising students.

GW – How do you think the internet can help foster a community of young birders?

HE – I think that Facebook has already done a great deal to connect young birders, and eBird can make counting birds much more exciting.

GW – What are some of the most exciting **birding destinations you've been to?**

HE – Last year I had the opportunity to travel to Hong Kong and go to the Mai Po Marshes. The number of waterbirds and shorebirds was astonishing. It was also interesting to see how some of the birds I saw were the same ones I see in Michigan, yet others were so completely different.

GW – If you could go any place in the world to see a bird, where would you go and what bird would you look for?

HE – I would go to Thailand and look for the Green Magpie. Ever since I first saw a **picture of one, I've wanted to see it.**

GW – You were spotted wearing a BSBO cap at Camp Colorado this year. Which other birding camps, conventions, and/or conferences have you attended?

Young Birder Profile . . . Spotlight on Harold Eyster, age 17

HE – In 2008, I attended the ABA’s Young Birder Conference in Minot, North Dakota, and earlier this year I went to the Biggest Week in American Birding. In May of this year, I had the opportunity to speak at the Wilson Ornithological Society’s meeting on the origin of the MacGillivray’s Warbler’s name.

GW - Besides the OYBC, what other organizations do you belong to?

HE – The American Society of Naturalists, the Wilson Ornithological Society, the American Ornithologists’ Union, the Washtenaw Audubon Society, and the American Birding Association.

GW – Do you plan to go to college, and if so, where?

HE – Yes, but I have no idea where.

GW - What is your dream job?

HE – Something that combines birds with illustrating and being outdoors, but I really don’t have a clear idea.

GW – What is your favorite book, and what makes it your favorite?

HE – I have to say, it’s a three way split between Crossley, Karlson, and O’Brien’s *The Shorebird Guide*, Kaufman’s *Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, and *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. These books top my list for the immense amount of information they contain.

GW – What is your favorite movie, and why is it your favorite?

HE – The Marx brothers in *Duck Soup*; even though it has absolutely nothing to

do with ducks, it’s a truly hilarious movie.

GW – What’s your favorite place to eat?

HE – Seva, a local vegetarian restaurant.
GW - What are your favorite web sites?

HE – www.ebird.org,
www.wikipedia.org,
www.xeno-canto.org,
bna.birds.cornell.edu

GW - Do you have any pets, and if so, what are they?

HE – Yes. Dogs, cats, peacocks, geese, and turkeys.

GW - Do you volunteer anywhere?

HE – I have done extensive volunteering for the local city park system, Natural Area Preservation, the Michigan League of Conservation Voters, the Huron River Watershed Council, and Arc of Appalachia Preserve System.

GW - Have you taken or taught any birding classes/courses?

HE – Several years ago, I started a nature camp for children and taught about birds, plants and natural crafts. I have since led numerous bird and botany hikes and field trips.

GW - Are you involved with any birding projects?

HE – I’ve been surveying birds for the local Breeding Bird Survey for five years.

GW – Do you keep a life list, and, if so, how many birds are on it?

HE – No, I like to appreciate birds for themselves and not just as a check mark. That said, it doesn’t get much better than seeing a lifer.

GW – How has the American Birding Associations Young Birder of the Year program changed birding for you?

HE – First, I want to say that anyone who has the chance should participate in this outstanding contest. It greatly enhanced my writing and field-noting ability, and has given me many opportunities that I did not even realize existed.



OYBC Conference Keynote Speaker
Harold Eyster

Your Organization Can Become an OYBC Sponsor Today!

Do your part to encourage our youth to learn more about birds and the natural world around them.

Support the Ohio Young Birders Club at one of the following levels:

- _____ \$1,000 – BALD EAGLE LEVEL
- _____ \$750 – PEREGRINE FALCON LEVEL
- _____ \$500 – RED-TAILED HAWK LEVEL
- _____ \$100 – AMERICAN KESTREL LEVEL

Visit www.ohioyoungbirders.org for a sponsorship form



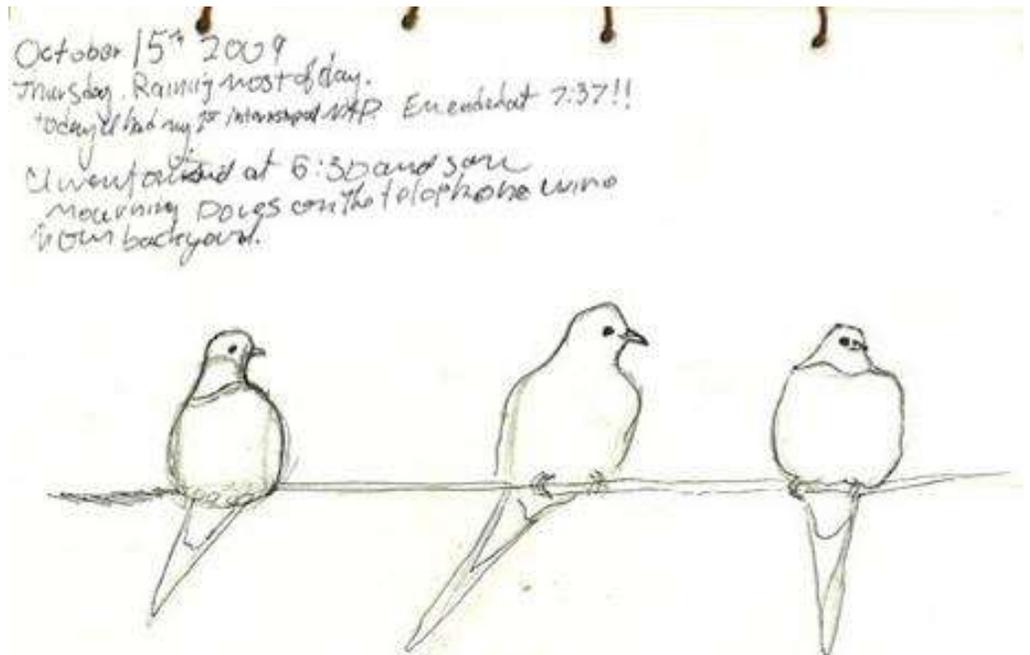
1st Place
 Field Notebook Module
 Harold Eyster, age 17

Harold is the keynote speaker
 for the OYBC Conference.

his presentation is entitled

*The Indispensable
 Notebook: The
 How and Why of
 Successful Field Notes*

As you can see Harold is a gifted
 naturalist, and his presentation
 is sure to be a big hit. You don't
 want to miss it.



American Birding Association Young Birder of the Year

The American Birding Association Young Birder of the Year Contest

The ABA Young Birder of the Year runs from April—October. Materials must be submitted to ABA by **October 29, 2010, to compete in this year's contest.** The two age groups are 10-13 and 14-18. To compete for the Young Birder of the Year title, you must enter at least three modules.

Field notebook, which involves taking field notes and making field sketches of birds as you observe them in the field. This is the only required module for the overall Young Birder of the Year Award.

Illustration, which involves drawing or painting birds that you see or that interest you most.

Writing, which involves writing about birds, birding, and your experiences with both.

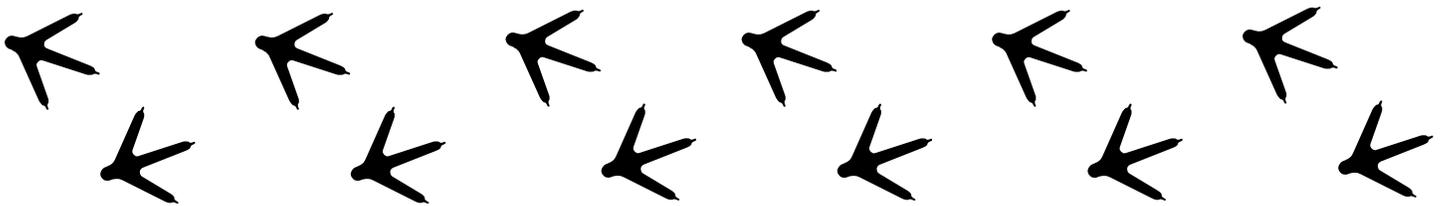
Photography, which is simply photographing birds either on film or digitally

If you are not interested in the title of Young Birder of the Year, but would still like to participate in this event, you may select one or more modules to submit.

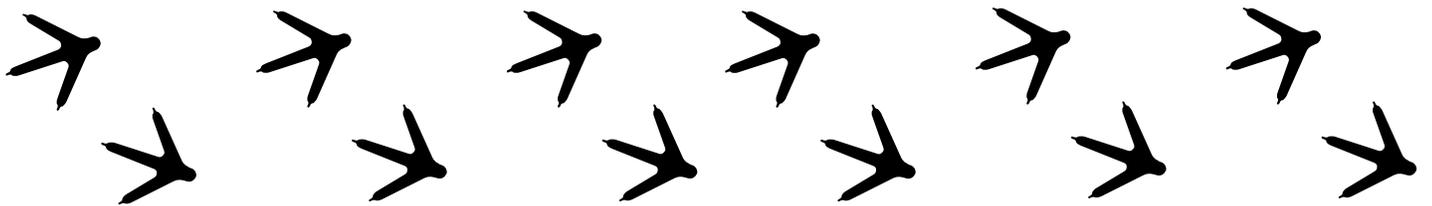
More information, including examples of winning entries, can be found at <http://www.aba.org/yby/reg.html>



2nd Place Illustration Module
Blue-and-Yellow Macaw
Artemis Eyster, Age 12



To see more Ohio Young Birders Club artwork
visit www.ohioyoungbirders.org



OYBC Chapter News

OYBC Central Ohio Chapter Visits Prairie Rose Farm

It was a "picture perfect" day on September 25th, in terms of both the weather and the topic. The Ohio Young Birders Club (OYBC) Central Ohio Chapter met at Prairie Rose Farm in North Lewisburg for a Photography Workshop, led by ODNR Division of Wildlife photographer Tim Daniel.

Ten students gathered from all over the central Ohio area to pick up some great photography tips from Tim. The best thing that OYBC member Clare said she learned were the key elements of a good photo, better known as LLIMBO: lines, lighting, interest, message, background, and off-center.

After Tim's presentations, the students were sent off on a photo scavenger hunt to take shots of something with thorns, **something orange, something that starts with the letter 'L'**, something alive, and other challenging subjects. Cameras in hand, they spread out around the farm and could be seen crouching next to an old water pump, on their bellies near a field of wildflowers, and up in a tree for a true bird's eye view.

As dusk fell, everyone gathered around the campfire for hot dogs and s'mores, while looking over each other's shoulders to compare photos. At the end of a wonderful day with new and old

friends, everyone loaded onto a wagon for a moonlit hayride.

OYBC member Ada summed up her day at the workshop, "My favorite part at Prairie Rose Farm was sitting in the deer stand with Jacob and Clare. It was very scary, but when you looked out **on the field, it was so worth it. I also enjoyed the very 'old time'** swing and going on a hike with Jacob, where we found eight deer ribcages and tried the local raw corn (which I do not recommend). Then, at the end of the day, it was great to sit around the campfire and drink hot apple cider. But, even though that was all really, really fun, I most enjoyed the hay ride because we got to see all the stars and hay rides are awesome!"

For the adults and parents who were there, it was a fantastic outdoor experience that Mindy described as "very enriching" for her kids. "We are thankful to be surrounded by such wonderful people in a very healthy environment," she said, acknowledging one of OYBC's goals: encouraging young people to spend more time outside, appreciating nature.

~Gerry Brevoort
OYBC Central Ohio Chapter Advisor
www.columbusaudubon.org



OYBC Central Chapter members at the Prairie Rose Farm photo scavenger hunt
photo by Gerry Brevoort



"Caterpillar"
by Ada Cleary, age 12



RAPTOR, Inc. staff help with owl pellet dissections at the Birds of Prey Workshop

OYBC Southwest Ohio Chapter Participates in Birds of Prey Workshop

We all know that raptors are cool. The birds themselves know this, so of course there needs to be an entire day dedicated to them, right? On September 25, the Southwest Chapter of the OYBC was treated to all the coolness they could stand at the Birds of Prey Workshop held at the Winton Woods Visitors Center.

The day started with a great talk by Ned Keller on the confusing topic of raptor identification. Beginners sometimes want to drop the **field guide and say, "I give up!" when a bird of prey streaks** by. But Ned was full of extremely useful tips (shape is more important than color!) and the participants got to see some really great photos, illustrating the different silhouettes. I think they will know what to look for next time they catch sight of a raptor overhead! Next up were Susan Williams and Jeff Hays from RAPTOR, Inc., a Cincinnati-based rescue center for birds of prey. Altogether, they presented five of their permanently injured residents, including a Barn Owl, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Red-tailed Hawk, and Turkey Vulture. These birds,

which are non-releasable due to their injuries, travel around Greater Cincinnati to schools and other groups as ambassadors for raptor conservation.

A hands-on segment finished up the day: Owl pellet dissection! Donning gloves and wielding toothpicks, the young birders (and some older birders, too!) dug into some sterilized owl pellets **made by RAPTOR's owl residents. Owl pellets are like a box of chocolates...you never know what you are going to get!** By consulting some bone charts, they were able to identify what animals were eaten by the owls. They found lots of mice and rat bones, and even some bones from a quail! The coolness of **raptors can't be overstated. Full of knowledge and appreciation** for our tigers of the sky, these young birders left with a new respect for birds of prey. A great day with some great kids!

~Susan K. Williams
Director of Education, RAPTOR, Inc.
www.raptorinc.org

The Ohio Birds 4-H Project *by Kayla Parry, age 12*

The Ohio Birds Project is a two-year experience with an optional self-determined third-year phase. Kayla Parry's article describes the first year, while an article in the next issue of *Golden-wings* will show us how year two is designed. For more information on Ohio Birds, contact your local 4-H Office or the Ohio State University Extension Office.

The Ohio Birds 4-H Project Year One

Like most 4-H projects, Ohio Birds includes sections for Planning Your Project, Interest Areas including project activities and discovery questions, Learning Experiences, Leadership/Citizenship Activities, and a Written Summary.

The Planning Your Project section is pretty much just the dates you plan on doing all of the Interest Areas, it asks for month and year.

The Interest Areas make up the majority of the project. This information tells you all of the things you need to do to help you, in this case, understand and get better at bird watching. All throughout these sections questions and worksheets are included to help you learn.

Interest Area #1

Getting Prepared

It explains the use of binoculars, field guides, and other resources such as a notebook and pencil for recording things about birds, first-aid kit, compass, pocket knife, and a camera. This Interest Area also has tips to help you with bird watching, rules/laws/common sense tips when it comes to bird watching, and the details about the record sheet used for this year. It asks for the date the bird was **seen, the name of the bird, the bird's habitat, and the characteristics of the bird.**

Interest Area #2

Getting Acquainted With Birds

This Interest Area includes tips on bird habitats/environments, migrations, and a section on how birds help us, as in game birds, birds being prey and predators, birds eating weed seeds, and jobs for selling supplies to help birds survive.

Interest Area #3

Learning to Identify Birds



Red-bellied Woodpecker
by Kayla Parry

This Interest Area obviously tells about how to identify birds, by the parts of the birds (which I had to memorize), habitat, size, the shape of the head and beak, behavior, color patterns, and voice, song, and calls. For the first year of this project, you have to record and observe 20 different species of birds

Interest Area #4

Learning About Birds and Their Nests
For this Interest Area, you had to find and observe three different nests. There was an activity on matching a picture of a nest with the bird that uses that nest. I observed a Prothonotary Warbler nest cavity in a tree on the Ohio Young Birders field trip in May.

Interest Area #5

Birds at Your Feeder

This included tips on feeding birds, the types of bird seed, water, where to put your feeder, keeping your feeders clean/healthy, and what not to feed birds. I **found it fascinating that you shouldn't feed birds bread, rice, or popcorn.** Finally you had to build at least two different bird feeders.

There were two Digging Deeper activities, which are optional, and those are basically just experiments that may help you in birding. They were comparing different

types of feed and which birds eat that seed, and a hummingbird experiment that, if successful (which mine **wasn't**), **showed that** hummingbirds are attracted to the color red more than to other colors.

The Learning Experiences are things that you can do. I had to do at least two, and the ones that I chose were participate in county project judging, give a demonstration to my 4-H club, and go on a field trip and talk with a naturalist. Then you had to write down your learning experiences in a chart that was in the book.

The Leadership/Citizenship activities are things you do to help your community, and you have to do at least two. I exhibited a poster on birds to my 4-H Club and helped with **Hamler's community egg hunt.**

I also wrote a one-page essay on what I learned while taking year one of the Ohio Birds 4-H

project.

Year Two to be continued in next *Golden-wings*...

Kayla Parry, age 12 lives in Hamler, Ohio, with her parents, big sister Lindsay, little brother Jacob, 16 chickens and a cat named Milk Way! She has been a member of the Marion Express 4-H club since 2003. At the 2010 Ohio State Fair, Kayla was honored with the Clock Award for Outstanding Ohio Birds Project. This coveted award recognizes her efforts, and the Ohio Young Birders Club congratulates her on this outstanding accomplishment.



OYBC Prairie Rose Farm Campout



Owner Tim Daniel takes OYBC on a hayride tour of Prairie Rose Farm



MacKrea Kilpatrick, an accomplished youth hunter, demonstrates archery for OYBC

THANK YOU TO TIM AND DONNA DANIEL FOR SHARING PRAIRIE ROSE FARM WITH THE OHIO YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB



Susan Seeley & Olivia Burton explore the aquatic habitats of PRF



The Prairie Rose Farm campout is always a favorite OYBC field trip.

OYBC Scholarships Available

John F. Gallagher Memorial Scholarship Fund

Ohio Young Birders Club scholarships are available to help young people who are interested in birds to attend summer camps, workshops, classes, training programs, conventions, and other bird-related activities. Funds for these scholarships come from our partners, private donations, and proceeds from special fund raising events. Applicants must be a current OYBC member between the ages of 12 and 18 to be eligible.

Visit www.ohioyoungbirders.org/scholarships.htm for an application form, or call BSBO at 419-898-4070 and we will mail you one.

BioBlitz of the Heritage Gardens at the Ohio Governor's Residence

The OYBC was honored to be invited by former Ohio First Lady Hope Taft to participate in a BioBlitz of the Heritage Gardens. Hope has become a great supporter of the OYBC and we were thrilled to spend the day with her studying all the life at the Heritage Gardens that she helped make possible. **If you've never been there, you REALLY need to go!** Visit www.governorsresidence.ohio.gov/ for more info. A complete list of all the taxa found during the BioBlitz will be published soon on the OYBC website!

Here's a trip summary by OYBC member, Kayla Parry:

On August 28, the Ohio Young Birder's Club got invited to the Ohio Governor's Residence for a BioBlitz of the Heritage Gardens. Not only did we search for birds, but we also identified plants, insects, and spiders. Two of the governor's

neighbors let us use their backyards as well to see if there was any difference in what lived there. We split into three different groups. The first yard we were in had a creek. We heard a Great Blue Heron "barking" but never saw it. **The second yard had sprinklers everywhere so we got "rained out".** Then we came back together for lunch at the residence. It was really good, too. Our group finished off with a tour of the Heritage Garden. It was really amazing some of the plants actually grew in Ohio - they even had a Johnny Appleseed apple tree! I really enjoyed this trip that the OYBC was able to go on.

~ Kayla Parry, age 12

Fiery Skipper
by Kayla Parry, age 12



Hornworm Caterpillar
by Clare Jusdanis, age 11



Carolyn Kammer
photographing biodiversity

Ohio Governor's Residence
by Clare Jusdanis, age 11



Clare Jusdanis and Ada Cleary
photographing biodiversity

States with Young Birders Clubs ... The OYBC Idea is Catching On



Ohio Young Birder Club
New York Young Birders Club
PA Young Birders Club
Tucson Young Birders Club
Indiana Young Birders
Delaware Dunlins Young Birders Club
Central Texas Young Birders Club
Idaho Young Birders Club
Oklahoma Young Birders Club
Illinois Young Birders Club
Wake Audubon Young Naturalist Club
Alabama Young Birders Club
Georgia Young Birders Club
Vermont Young Birders Club
Audubon Young Birders Club, Naples, FL
San Antonio Young Birders Club

Please contact us if we neglected to mention any Young Birders Clubs, or if you are interested in starting a Young Birders Club in your state.

OYBC Members Afield: Bird Banding *by Josh Fitts*

On Saturday September 4th I went to go bird banding at the Black Swamp Bird Observatory's (BSBO) main songbird banding station outside of Oak Harbor, Ohio. My dad took me. We were there with BSBO's Education Director Ken Keffer, Research Director Mark Shieldcastle and Conservation Director Julie Shieldcastle. The banding station is in the Navarre Marsh and it is behind the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant. It was cold and windy but the sun was still out.

We drove the twisting road back to the banding station. As soon as we got there we went around to half of the nets. I carried the bag for the little birds. There were lots of insects there too: Monarch Butterflies, dragonflies and Common Buckeye caterpillars.

Once we finished collecting the birds we went back to the banding station. We processed the birds by identifying them, weighing them, measuring their wings, and checking for body fat. Mark and Julie put

the bands on their legs.

There were 25 nets and we went around them four times. There were eight different species of warblers banded that day. They were Black-throated Blue,

Magnolia, Tennessee, Black-and-white, Blackpoll, Northern Waterthrush and Common Yellowthroat. My favorite warbler that we banded was the male American Redstart. We also caught Swainson's Thrush, Veery, Eastern Phoebe, Baltimore Oriole, American Robin, Northern Cardinal, and Gray Catbird. There were 91 birds banded that day.



Mark Shieldcastle shows Josh and his dad, Mike, a Tennessee Warbler

I had learned a lot about birds that I did not know before I went. I had a really good time and I can't wait to go back. The

last thing I saw when we left was a Bald Eagle flying out of the woods to the lake. That made a great ending to my day.

OYBC Graduates Afield: Studying Black-capped Vireos at Fort Sill, OK



It was an average morning at Fort Sill, a military fort in southwest Oklahoma where I worked during the summer of 2010.

The sun was just beginning to blaze over the tops of the "bite-size" Wichita Mountains, promising another hot afternoon. I was in the territory of a Black-capped Vireo pair on one of these mountains. In order to confirm that they had successfully fledged, I was trying to find their group of fledglings that should have left the nest **approximately one week earlier. It wasn't** going well.

It was a very humid morning and the birds were simply not singing. Without some sort of auditory clues, it was going to be tough to spot the tiny vireo family moving through the dense scrub oak runs that stretched across the mountainside. After some time passed I decided to just sit down in the center of one of the runs in which I had often seen the adults foraging and hope the birds came through.

I didn't have to wait long. After only a few minutes passed, the adult male was upon me, angrily scolding me. Behind him I could see all four of the young and the adult female. Soon the female joined the male above my head, angrily scolding, sounding very loud in an otherwise fairly quiet morning. Initially the little fledglings held back, heeding the loud warnings of their parents. Eventually, their curiosity won over and they began to approach me, peeking around branches and between leaves. Every time one got too close to me, the male would dive down, scolding loudly right next to it, and forcing it to back off.

This went on and on in a very comical matter for a little while, before the male and female had finally had enough of their **fledglings' antics. Moving from above my** head, they went down into the branches with their young and began to round them up. Once he had them all together, the male led them to a branch that allowed a great view of me sitting silently in the leaf litter, but was still safely out of my reach.

It was a scene I will not soon forget. There were all four scruffy-looking fledglings sitting in a line on a branch, staring at me with wide eyes, memorizing the looks of this creature that their parents seemed so wary of. The male and the female sat together on the branch

above them, scolding nervously and keeping a close eye on their young, making sure none of them attempted to get any closer. I had never seen anything **like it up until that point and haven't seen** anything like it since.

When the fledglings lost interest in me, the male and female cautiously led them on a short detour around me and continued down the run. Just as soon as they had appeared they disappeared into the foliage, but not without giving me one last earful of angry scolding.

Although that scene never repeated itself, I saw equally incredible behaviors nearly every day I spent in the field at Fort Sill. The Black-capped Vireos, the focus of our studies at Fort Sill, were always fascinating and had a ton of personality. Every pair had different dynamics and characteristics. Every day you spent with a pair, the more you would learn about their quirks and tendencies, and often I was able to predict the approximate location of where a nest was going to be based on these observations.



Black-capped Vireo Nest

Working on bird projects, whether at Fort Sill, Hubbard Brook in New Hampshire during the Black-throated Blue Warbler breeding season, or Manassas, Virginia in the winter has given me a whole new perspective on birds. Often, when we are just out birding we go to a location, perhaps looking for a rarity, or perhaps just to see what is there, and just get a snapshot of what is going on in that area. Working on a bird project forces you to go to the same place and look at the same birds every day, and you wind up with a more complete picture of what is happening. I find research to be a radically different experience than birding and to be extremely rewarding in its own way.

There is hardly any better feeling than seeing a brood fledge that you have been monitoring since they were eggs. There is nothing more heart-breaking than when

the nestlings in a neighboring territory get eaten by a snake before they can fledge. There is nothing more fun than watching a male dancing and singing around a female in hopes of pairing up with her and raising a family. And there is nothing more rewarding than finding out at the end of the season that, thanks in part to the work that you and your fellow researchers have done, it looks more and more like the Black-capped Vireo will come back from the brink of extinction!

I would encourage everyone to have this experience. Even if you already have a career, I do not believe you are excluded from having this experience. While you **probably don't have time to work on a** research project for a summer, perhaps you can do some of your own research or **monitoring. It doesn't have to be** anything official. Perhaps you could just take an hour every other day to go into the woods and watch the Northern Cardinals. Perhaps you could find a nest and watch it from the building stage until it fledges, something as easy as watching an American Robin that nested in the wreath on your front door (which often happens at our house).

However if you are trying to decide on a career path, I encourage you to consider the field of bird conservation. There are a lot of jobs out there, and many are happy to hire a birder, especially one that has been birding since a young age. Work a summer and see if you like it. If nothing else, you will be able to spread knowledge of birds to the public. Not everyone will talk about birds without knowing you are a birder. But telling people I am getting paid to watch birds, even though that is a great over-simplification of the work, has never failed to provide me a chance to share with the non-birder about how amazing birds are!

The fact of the matter is, bird conservation is rewarding, but also very important. **Most hobbies don't require protection.** It is likely there will always be sports to play, models to build, and coins to collect, but there is no guarantee that there will always be birds to watch. As with all living things on this planet, we as humans are pushing many birds closer and closer to extinction. If we as birders want a future that still allows for opportunities to view birds such as Black-capped Vireos, Golden-cheeked Warblers, and Kirtland's Warblers, and the many other endangered bird species on this planet, there is still

Ryan Steiner is a former OYBC member who is currently studying Biology at Frostburg State University in Frostburg, Maryland.

OHIO YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

4th Annual Ohio Young Birders Conference
Dayton, Ohio, November 20 & 21, 2010
Hosted by Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm
Opening Remarks November 20th at 10:30 a.m.
Reservations required, call 419-898-4070
Cost: \$10 for students, \$20 for adults

Optional field trips Saturday and Sunday mornings
See conference information throughout this issue of *Golden-wings*.
All ages welcome. You do not have to be a member of OYBC to attend.

Registration information online at www.ohioyoungbirders.org
or call 419-898-4070 to register or with questions.

Owl Prowl w/ OYBC Central Ohio Chapter
Saturday, November 13, 2010, 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Scioto Ridge Elementary School, Powell, OH

We will meet in the parking lot by the woods side of the front of the school. Scioto Ridge Elementary School, 8715 Big Bear Ave, Powell, OH 43065. The school is on Big Bear Ave, east of Sawmill Pkwy. Big Bear Ave dead-ends into the school. We will go on a bird walk in the woods (Bring binoculars if you have them), returning to the parking lot to learn about owl adaptations & enjoy a special guest. As dusk approaches, we'll call in the owls & watch for their movement. It's never a 100% guarantee, but usually we have success in calling in some Great Horned Owls! Sometimes we're lucky enough to hear Screech Owls who live in this 18-acre wet woods. As it turns dark, we'll head to Graeter's Ice Cream (3762 West Powell Road) for a frozen treat or hot chocolate, depending on the weather!

For more information and possible carpooling, please contact Gerry Brevoort, OYBC Central Ohio Chapter Advisor, at jbrevoor@columbus.rr.com or 614-565-2308

DECEMBER

Lake Erie Pelagic Trip (See registration form in this issue of *GOLDEN-WINGS*)
December 11th, 7:00 - 11:00 a.m. / Cleveland, Ohio

Join us for a cruise on the Holiday to search for winter gulls, jaegers, loons, grebes, and ducks.

Field trip leaders include: John Pogacnik, Kenn Kaufman, Jen Brumfield, and Gave Leidy

Last year's trips were a total blast and we're really looking forward to getting out on the Lake again this winter. We had such a tremendous response to the first two trips we had planned (both sold out really fast) that we've added this new trip to accommodate everyone! Get your reservation in quick by filling out the form included in this newsletter, calling BSBO at: 419-898-4070 and charging it to your credit card, or go to www.bsbobird.org and sign up online using PayPal.

Fremont Christmas Bird Count & Count Compilation Pizza Party

Fremont, Ohio, December 19, 2010, 7 a.m.

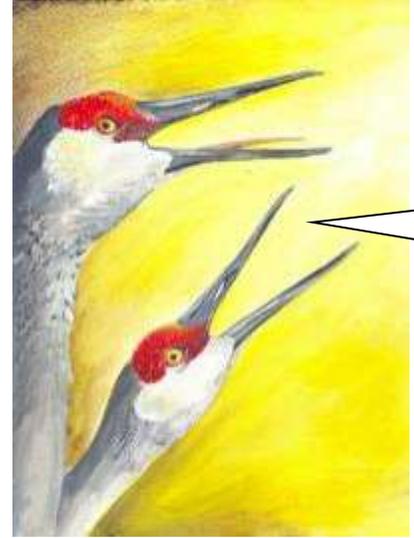
Reservations encouraged, call 419-898-4070, or email staff@bsbo.org

Cost: FREE

Note: Bring a lunch and dress for frigid winter conditions.

Meet at Karen's Restaurant in downtown Fremont at 7 a.m. for team assignments. Karen's is at 921 E. State Street, next to the Double A Motel. After counting birds all day, participants are invited to the post-count compilation pizza party at Green Creek Hunting Club.

Christmas Bird Counts provide an early winter snapshot of bird populations and distributions. With a history spanning over 100 years, CBCs are an enjoyable social birding experience, and have become an annual tradition for many. Counts are held between December 14th, 2010 and January 5th, 2011. To find a count circle near you, go to www.audubon.org.



Sandhill Cranes
by Harold Eyster
Ohio Young Birders Conference
Keynote Speaker

It is time to
renew your Ohio
Young Birders Club
Membership for 2011!

WELCOME TO ALL OF THE
NEW OYBC MEMBERS & ADULT SUPPORTERS

STUDENT MEMBERS

Alex Boggs
Ada Cleary
Allison Dunaway
Benjamin Fine
Joshua Fitts
Clare Jusdanis
Carolyn Kammer
Landon Neumann
Isaiah Pullella
Ethan Rising
Michael Schmidt
Thomas Starrs
Jacob Stinnett
Trinity Trimble
Ian Walker
Anne Winnicki

ADULT SUPPORTING MEMBERS

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Barbara S. Berg
Joan Buechele
Joan C. Clapp
Michele Cleary
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*Look for OYBC Big Sit for
Conservation results in the next
GOLDEN-WINGS Newsletter*

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Follow the OYBC on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/ohioyoungbirders

And on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/oybc

- Connect with young birders from around the world
- Learn about exciting opportunities like summer camps and volunteer programs specific to young birders
- Share your photos, artwork, poems, stories, and more!



Black Swamp Bird Observatory

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Time to renew
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Ohio Young Birders Club
New or Renewal Membership

Name: _____

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If Student, Date of Birth: _____

Yes, I want to conserve trees and expense; sign me up for electronic delivery of all of OYBC's communications.

\$ _____ Donation Amount - Yes I would like to make a
donation to help support OYBC

\$ _____ Membership Dues

\$ _____ Total Amount Enclosed
(Please make checks payable to BSBO)

- ___ \$ 10 - Student
- ___ \$ 20 - Adult Supporting Member
- ___ \$ 100 to \$1000 Sponsorship Levels

How did you hear about us? _____

Are you interested in volunteering? How? _____

Mail to: Black Swamp Bird Observatory, 13551 W. State Route 2, Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449