



Flight Patterns

Serving Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Logan, Mercer, Shelby, and Van Wert Counties in Ohio

Newsletter of the Tri-Moraine Audubon Society

Winter 2014

WEB ADDRESS - <http://www.tri-moraineaudubon.org>

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The **Tri-Moraine Audubon Society (TMAS)** provides environmental educational programming to residents of Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Logan, Mercer, Shelby, and Van Wert Counties in Ohio. For more information, including the latest newsletter, please visit our website at: www.tri-moraineaudubon.org and on Facebook.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

TRI-MORAINES 2014-15 EVENING PROGRAM MEETINGS are scheduled the first Tuesday of the month, September through November and January through May. Meetings are held in the Visitor/Student Services Center, 3900 Campus Dr., OSU-Lima. (Enter campus off Mumaugh Rd.; first building on left). Meetings and events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Dates and times appear in the calendar write-ups below. In case of bad weather (*level 2 in Allen Co.*), meeting cancellations will be posted on WLIO (NBC/channel 35) and WOHL (FOX/channel 25).

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, Indian Lake on **Saturday, December 20, 2014**, and **Grand Lake St Marys**, on **Sunday, December 21, 2014**. To sign up for either count (or obtain additional information), please see details on page 3 of this newsletter. **NOTE: These dates are different (one week later) than the dates printed in the TMAS Annual Calendar. I apologize and hope you will be able to join us!**

ANNUAL PHOTO SAFARI & POTLUCK, Tuesday, January 6, 2015, 6:30pm. Visitor/Student Services Center will open at 6 pm. TMAS will provide fried chicken and beverages. Members and guests should bring any of the following--hot or cold dish, salad, rolls, side dish, or dessert and their own table service. Presentations will be given by those attending who opt to share some of their favorite nature photography accompanied by brief narration. A digital projector, laptop, and screen will be furnished. Join fellow nature enthusiasts for a most enjoyable evening.

TMAS BOARD MEETING, Tuesday, January 27, 2015, 7 pm. All are welcome to attend TMAS board meetings held at the OSU Visitor/Student Services Center, 3900 Campus Dr., OSU-Lima Campus.

PROGRAM MEETING - Lake Erie Adventures - Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 7:30 p.m. This interesting presentation by OSU student and TMAS chapter member Stephanie Harpster is one you will not want to miss. Stephanie will share her experiences at the Stone Laboratory on Lake Erie and the opportunities she was provided. Stone Lab has operated as a freshwater field station since 1895 and as a part of The Ohio State University since 1925. With Stone Laboratory, Ohio State University is a national leader in research that solves the most pressing problems facing the Great Lakes. Stephanie lived on the Flagship Brig Niagara with forty other people while under sail taking a course and conducting research. Stephanie enjoyed the great environment and gained a lot of knowledge from her hands-on experiences.

WINTER BIRDSEED SALE, Saturday, February 7, 9 am-4 pm, DeHaven Home & Garden Center, 775 Shawnee Road, Lima. This restocking sale was requested by purchasers who lack space to store large quantities of birdseed. The sale is by preorder only. Order forms will be mailed on January 2 to those who made purchases in 2013 and 2014. If you would like an order form or have questions, contact Anne (Lima) at 419.222.3271 or download a form from the chapter's website or Facebook page. Mail your completed order by Friday, January 23, to ensure sufficient stock on sale day. All proceeds benefit local conservation projects and education programs. Remember, prepaid orders only and pickup at DeHaven's in Lima. Volunteers are needed. Call Bob Bertrand at 419.227.9231 (Lima) if you can help.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND TMAS's March Program Meeting on Herbal Medicine with Vicki Motz on March 3, 2015 and the Chapter's annual field trip to the Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area to watch and identify waterfowl, hawks, owls, and much more on Saturday, March 28, 2015.



THE 18th GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT (GBBC), February 13-16, 2015 is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can now participate from anywhere in the world! It's free, fun, and easy. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year participants turned in more than 144,000 online checklists, creating the world's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded. Please visit the official website at www.birdcount.org for more information and be sure to check out the latest educational and promotional resources. Bird populations are always shifting and changing. For example, 2014 GBBC data highlighted a large irruption of Snowy Owls across the northeastern, mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes areas of the United States. The data also showed the effects that the polar vortex had on bird movement around the country. For more on the results of the 2014 GBBC, take a look at the Halftime Report, and be sure to check out some of the images in the 2014 GBBC Photo Contest Gallery. On the www.birdcount.org website, participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. All participants are entered in a drawing for prizes that include bird feeders, binoculars, books, CDs, and many other great products. Those interested in participating in the GBBC can find more information by visiting www.birdcount.org. For questions and comments, please contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology gbbc@cornell.edu or National Audubon Society citizenscience@audubon.org. The Great Backyard Bird Count is made possible, in part, by generous support from Wild Birds Unlimited.

FALL BIRDSEED SALE RESULTS. Co-chair Anne Smedley reports that the November sale raised \$1,580.74 (including \$303.35 in donations). TMAS thanks all purchasers, the media outlets that helped to publicize our event, DeHaven Home and Garden Showplace, Lima, for providing its facilities for the sale and all the other great backup support, and Northland Quick Print for printing the sale fliers. Thanks also to our volunteers who picked up and distributed seed in their communities, toted all those bags (8,500 pounds), prepared mailing labels, mailed and distributed fliers, made and put up posters, and provided customer service: Judith Magee (Ada); Joanne & Bob Antibus, (Bluffton); George Bilbrey (Delphos); Evelyn Prater (Harrod); Don & Mary Rosenbeck (Jackson Center); Bob & Carol Bertrand, David Betts, Denny Bucholtz, John Daley, Iyad Khalaf, Tom Sciranka, Anne & Jason Smedley, Rita & Wayne Thelen, Carol Wright (Lima); Bill Angel, Jan Heinrich (St. Marys); and Dianne Knipp, (Wapakoneta).

MYEERAH UPDATE - NOVEMBER 2014. A lot has been happening at Myeerah since it was transferred to the City of Bellefontaine with Tri-Moraine Audubon holding a conservation easement on the property. A new agreement was signed with US Fish & Wildlife for phase two of habitat restoration. This phase includes more clearing of invasive species, planting of native trees and shrubs (over 1,600) and creation of a number of small wetlands. Trees have been planted. Seeding of the nectar plots from phase one of habitat restoration was completed this summer. A HydroAxe was brought in for one day this fall to clear another large area of invasives. Some surveying work has been done for the wetland areas. A special THANK YOU to all those who helped with clearing the trees and shrubs from the earthen dam on Little Pond. There were about a dozen volunteers and the entire dam was pretty well cleared by the end of the day. It could not have been accomplished without the assistance of so many. Bellefontaine Parks and Recreation have been clearing old walking trails and have plans to establish a few more. The planned trails include completing a loop trail circumventing the entire perimeter of the property. The property is open to the public from dawn to dusk every day. If you have never visited or have not visited for a long time, it is well worth the visit. Both the Lodge and the former Troop House are available to rent. If you are looking for a special place for a family gathering check it out. Call Kris Meyers at 937-592-3475 for more information.

WAPAKONETA INTERIM RECYCLE REPORT, On Saturday, October 11, twenty one volunteers manned Wapakoneta's Drop-off Center for the 21st consecutive year for this fundraising project. Our check for all recyclables handled won't be received until the new year. We'll let you know results in the spring issue of this newsletter, but we want to thank the following volunteers who sorted all those plastic bottles and other containers and unloaded vehicles: Susie Closson, Judith Magee (Ada); Megan Williams (Alger); Evelyn Prater, Rick Prater (Harrod); Bob & Carol Bertrand, Anne Edwards, Candace Newland, Lois Risser, Arianna Smedley, Jason Smedley, Morgan Smedley (Lima); Eric Juterbock (Rushsylvania); Beth Seibert (Spencerville); Pat Striff (St. Marys); Lexie Kline, Dianne Knipp, Marea Pouzar, Phil Valentine, Ingrid Willmot (Wapakoneta). Thanks also to all those who brought their recyclable materials to the center that day.

TIPS FOR CLEANING YOUR BIRD FEEDERS, Clean bird feeders help control the spread of disease amongst our feathered friends. Feeders should be washed about every two weeks (more often if heavily used) with hot, soapy water. Then they should be rinsed with a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. If preferred, vinegar can be used in a solution of one part vinegar to four parts water. Make sure feeders are thoroughly dried before refilling with seed. The empty hulls on the ground below the feeder should also be removed to prevent mold and attraction of pests.

NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE BY EMAIL, Contact Bill Askins, chapter membership database chair, at waskins@woh.rr.com. State name, mailing address, email address, and your desire to receive "Flight Patterns" via email. You will receive an email notice of website availability containing a URL you can click on that will take you to the newsletter (in PDF format) on the chapter's website.



GRAND LAKE ST. MARYS RESTORATION SUPPORT. Tri-Moraine Audubon Society presented a check to Grand Lake St. Marys (GLSM) Restoration Manager Milt Miller in the amount of \$5000 for work being done to restore the lake. This gift purchased seeds and plantings for Phase Two of the Prairie Creek Treatment Train which is part of the filtering wetland restoration on GLSM's south shore. One positive outcome for this approach to lake restoration is that it also provides habitat for birds of many species and the number of birds returning to this area is increasing yearly. This great project is a direct application of 2014 Annual Appeal contributions and fundraising efforts from recycling and birdseed sales. Thank You to those donors listed in our Fall newsletter. Here are two more: Susan Diane Fennig and Mary Neeley.

AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, Between 14 December 2014 and 5 January 2015, there will be over 60,000 volunteers counting birds across the hemisphere. The Tri-Moraine Audubon Society and other volunteer citizen scientists will be conducting **two counts locally: Indian Lake on Saturday, 20 December 2014, and Grand Lake St. Marys, on Sunday, 21 December 2014.** The CBCs offer an opportunity to participate in a little winter birding, and perhaps see a few of the winter's avian visitors to our area – particularly those that do not hang out in our backyards! Our enjoyment of the winter weather and birds notwithstanding, by far the greatest value of our efforts will be the extremely valuable data that we collect. This year's count will be the 115th, and the data collected are invaluable to our understanding of the status of both local and global bird populations. The volume of data collected for the CBCs could not have been acquired in any other manner. And, the volume of data is huge – more than 2250 counts covering not just North America, but extending into the Pacific, Caribbean and South America. CBCs have revealed the dramatic impact climate change is already having on birds, as well as disturbing declines in common birds, including the Northern Bobwhite quail. The many decades of data not only help identify birds in need of conservation action, but also reveal success stories, like the comeback of the Bald Eagle.

More counters usually translates to a more fun experience, especially for newcomers, and virtually guarantees that more birds will be seen during the count. All are welcome to participate; less experienced birders, or those unfamiliar with the area of the count, will flock with those more experienced. Everyone's eyes and ears can be useful! Although it is okay to show up to count at the last minute, it greatly aids the coordinator in organizing the count to know at least the night before how many birders to expect. To sign up for the count (or for additional information), please contact Eric Juterbock (216-905-8909 (cell), juterbock.1@osu.edu (email), or (surface mail) at 5480 County Road 5N, Rushsylvania, OH 43347.

To be considered an official count, counters must be out for at least 8 hours, but individual counters need not participate for the full time. The count takes place within a circle with a diameter of 15 miles. Assigned routes for mobile counters generally involve some combination of automotive and foot travel; individuals living within the circle may count birds visiting their back yard or feeder. Please remember to dress appropriately for the weather, and to bring such needed items as binoculars, bird guides, food and drinks, etc.

In order to finalize the census routes and be counting by 0800, we will meet at 0730 hrs (a.m.) for both counts. Meet for the Indian Lake count at the McDonalds in Russells Point, and for the Grand Lake count at the McDonalds at the mall at the intersection of SR 29 and US 33 in St. Marys.

To find other counts near you, check: <http://birds.audubon.org/get-involved-christmas-bird-count>



10 SIMPLE TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF THE BIRDS DURING WINTER. Put out feeders with good size capacity and/or use multiple feeders to provide ample food especially during snow and ice storms. **Provide nutritious winter seed foods.** For most birds these often include seed mixes of black oil sunflower seed, hulled peanuts, corn, niger seed and white millet seed. Mixed seed bags can be purchased at the TMAS birdseed sales or at local garden stores. **Offer fatty food too.** Birds need to burn more calories in the winter just to stay warm. Suet is considered a high energy food because it consists of fat that has 9 calories per gram compared to 4 calories per gram for carbohydrates or protein. Peanut Butter is also popular with our flying friends but is more expensive than suet. Suet feeders are a favorite of woodpeckers and other insect-eating birds. **Keep your feeders full.** Winter birds need to stock up on calories, especially for those long, cold winter nights. **Be consistent and keep feeding through the winter.** Birds grow accustomed to your feeders, especially in severe weather when the snacks you offer may mean their very survival. If you leave home for an extended period, try to have a neighbor or friend keep the feeders going. **Remember water.** Birds can become dehydrated in winter, even if surrounded by ice and snow. Putting out a pan of water near the feeder on warmer days is a terrific idea. **Stamp down the snow below.** Ground-feeding birds such as dark-eyed juncos, doves and many sparrows will be able to gather up the seed that drops from the feeders if they don't have deep snow to try to manage. **Hang feeders in cat-safe locations.** Place bird feeders in locations that do not also offer hiding places for sneak-attacks by cats and other predators. Think of placing the feeders ten to twelve feet from shrubs or brush piles. This gives the birds some time to react. **Remember feeder cleanliness.** Your feeders can get a little grimy. Because natural food sources are scarcer in the winter, more birds may be attracted to backyard feeders and those feeders will need to be cleaned with some hot water and dried a few times during the season. **Save some money and stock up on seed.** Bird feeding veterans say it is best to stock up on birdseed in the Fall when many lawn and garden centers are discounting it to make way for winter merchandise. Stored properly, (in cool dry places) seed can easily last for months, particularly seed mixes and sunflower seeds.

TMAS ON FACEBOOK Have you checked out our Facebook page? Did you know you can post your own special bird and nature photos? Did you enjoy a past program meeting? Be sure to tell us on Facebook how much you enjoyed a field trip or program meeting. Please give it a try and share some of your favorite photos.



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Winter 2014 - 2015 Newsletter

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

In September 2014 the National Audubon Society released a special report, BIRDS & CLIMATE CHANGE. This report was intended to make the average person aware of the study results to the devastating effects of climate change on North American birds. It is doubtless that quotes and citations from this report will be used in publications for years to come. It is a comprehensive guide to recent research in habitat disruptions and the impact of industry on the habitat and food supply of wildlife, particularly birds.

On the positive side the report provides some important takeaways, including a list of "at risk" bird species, and how we can lessen the impact and protect habitat for all birds. A short list of solutions includes how the individual person can help. Suggestions include creating a bird-friendly yard, getting involved in your local Important Bird Area, sharing Audubon information and research with your neighbor, meeting with other groups that manage natural resources in your area, and volunteering to help monitor birds and document how they respond to climate change. Your local Audubon chapter, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society (TMAS), is already very active in many of the suggested ways to help the state of birds, but you can do more in your own yards at home and in the workplace.

One of the best ways you can help TMAS is to participate in the Christmas Bird Counts in our area December 20 and 21 (see more information in this newsletter). This is a citizen-scientist activity that has over one hundred years of history to give a snapshot on the state of birds in America. In addition, support all birds by volunteering your time or make a monetary gift to TMAS's on-going commitment to the six Important Bird Areas in our chapter region, including Camp Myeerah and St. Marys River-Grand Lake St. Marys, and promote our monthly programs, special events, and educational programs. Tri-Moraine Audubon Society also has a representative on the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Lima-Allen Co. Regional Planning Commission and the Ottawa River Coalition, two regional groups that assess the health of watershed/rivers, creeks, and habitat.

Another way you and your family can help is to get involved with a program like FeederWatch (www.feederwatch.org or FB Project FeederWatch) which is a "winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broad scale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance." Later this winter (February) Cornell Lab and Audubons' GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT will also give a snapshot of data across the country as to the health and abundance of birds in our area. Both of these activities you can do from the comfort of your own home.

Please take time to read the BIRDS & CLIMATE CHANGE report and reflect about what you can do, or how you can add to the protection of birds in our area. TMAS has many opportunities for you to get involved. Not sure what to do? Join us at a Christmas Bird Count or a field trip to get started.

Wishing you great winter birding and a joyful holiday,

Dianne

