



# THE KIRTLAND WARBLER

Quarterly Newsletter of the Kirtland Bird Club, Cleveland, Ohio

www.KirtlandBirdClub.org and www.ClevelandBirdCalendar.com

2020-2021 Membership Year, No. 4, Summer Issue

## Monthly Meetings

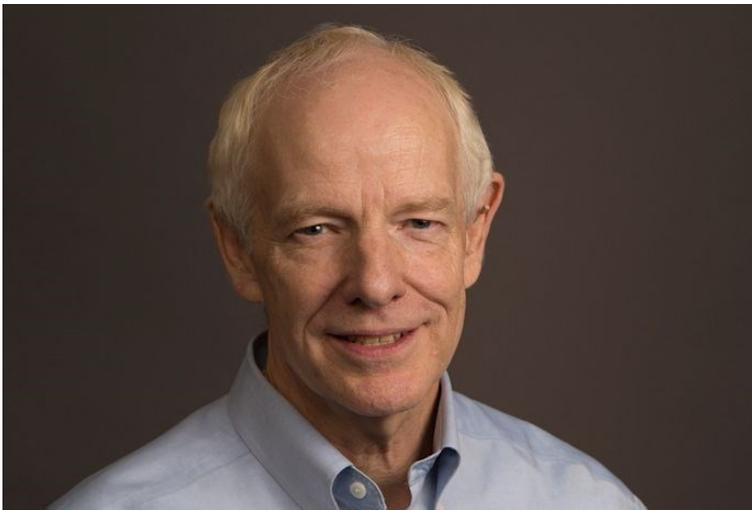
Guests are always welcome — Cleveland Museum of Natural History...  
1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month except July and August, 7:00 PM

*In light of COVID-19 we are currently holding all of our meetings via Zoom at 7:30 p.m.  
If you are interested in attending any of our meetings and are not already a member of our club,  
please email us: [info@kirtlandbirdclub.org](mailto:info@kirtlandbirdclub.org)*

### JUNE MEETING

Wednesday, June 2 at 7:30 pm on ZOOM

**Jim Bissell - Botanist, Naturalist, Conservationist**



Renowned botanist and land preservation specialist Jim Bissell will speak about the rich biodiversity found on properties he's conserved in Northeast Ohio over the last 50 years.

James Kirk Bissell grew up on a dairy farm in Austinburg Township. A 1965 Geneva High School graduate, Jim earned a degree in plant ecology from The Ohio State University in 1969. He earned a Master of Science degree at the University of Wyoming and finished his M.S. thesis on the relationship of plants to geology within the upper Greys River in Western Wyoming.

In 2003, Jim received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from the University of Akron and received the George Fell Award in 2004 from the Natural Areas Association for lifetime achievement in natural areas preservation. In 2009, Jim was inducted into the Ohio Natural Resources Hall of Fame.

Jim was Curator of Botany at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History (CMNH), where he also served as Director of Natural Areas and was in charge of managing the Museum's Natural Areas Program. Jim devoted his professional life to protecting the biodiversity of northeastern Ohio. Under Jim's direction, the Museum's preserve acreage grew from just under 1,000 acres in 1971 to 11,000 acres of unique natural habitats in northeastern Ohio, including North Kingsville Sand Barrens, the best remaining sand barren in northeastern Ohio, Geneva Swamp, the only large swamp forest remaining on the Lake Erie Lake Plain, Singer Lake Bog in Summit and Stark Counties, the finest Poor Fen glacial lake in Ohio, and several forest tracts, from 400 to more than 1,000 acres. During Jim's tenure, the natural areas holdings of the Museum increased from eight to 55 preserves.

## President's Letter



Happily, between COVID vaccines and the knowledge that COVID isn't spread outdoors, many of us are feeling better about birding near other people – and seeing each other in the field! (What a treat to encounter Dwight and Ann Chasar and John and Judy Wilkinson looking for the Swainson's Warbler, first seen by Dave Hochadel at Station Road in the Cuyahoga Valley. Dwight and Ann found it, Jim and I only heard it – but there's always tomorrow!) COVID is still a public health crisis worldwide and at home, but it's been so nice to get a little break from extreme vigilance.

With our KBC loaner binocular fund drive success and the promise of returning to field trips some day in the not too distant future, a bunch of long time KBC members embarked on an inaugural birding course for beginners – “Birdwatching for Everyone” on Zoom. With an eye to attracting new birders to our club and making bird-

watching more accessible to Black Americans and other marginalized communities, we did attract a diverse audience. Thanks to Black Environmental Leaders and Neighborhood Leadership Institute for spreading the word! Over six Friday evenings new birders from the Greater Cleveland area as well as other parts of the US (Louisiana, New York, Wisconsin) were treated to outstanding presentations by Laura Gooch, Julie West, Nancy Howell, Paula Lozano, Jim Heflich, Matt Valencic, Joe Blanda, and me. Topics covered included Surface Anatomy, Habitat, Bird Song, Family Groups, Backyard Birding, Describing a Bird's Location, Use of Binoculars, Field Guides, eBird, Citizen Science Projects related to birds, Birding Etiquette, and KBC resources. A total of 48 people registered over the course of the six weeks, and though our core audience was on the small side, they were highly ENGAGED! With COVID restrictions lifting some, we did offer one-on-one outings and had several people take us up on this offer – and were able to use our loaner binoculars. Not that binoculars make someone a great birder, but as we all know high quality optics do help! Speaking of optics, BIG thanks to Paul Kardoz at KOWA for helping us make this purchase possible!

On a second note related to binoculars, the KBC board decided to make a four month loan of one of the sets of binoculars to environmental educator and novice birder Monica Marshall. Monica has a bachelor's degree in environmental education and was leading field trips to a new nature preserve next to the Boys & Girls Club in Slavic Village (Cleveland) for kids attending the Boys & Girls Club. KBC member Julie West had gotten to know Monica and introduced her to several other KBC members. Monica has now moved on to North Chagrin Metropark to do environmental education and we thought she would benefit from having a high quality set of binoculars for her work there. We've also tasked Monica with coming up

## President's letter (continuation)

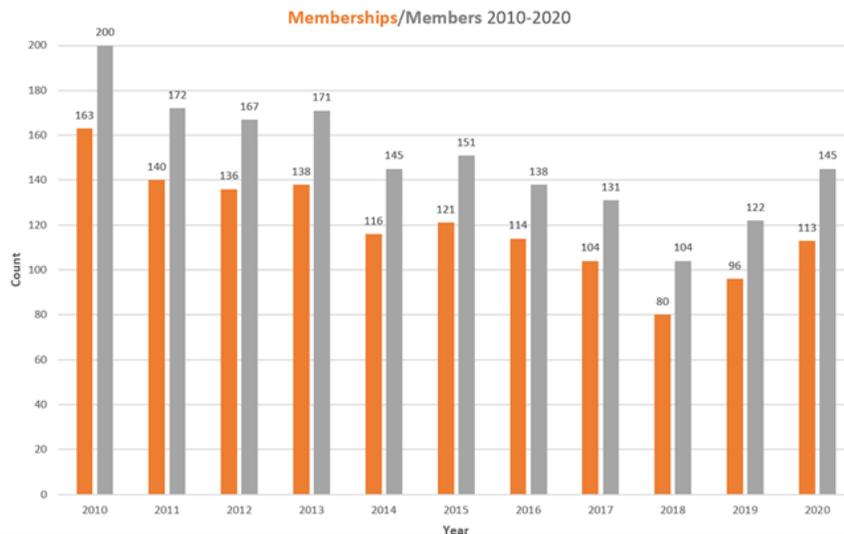
with a process by which we can identify promising young birders who could not otherwise afford high quality binoculars – and get them into their hands. (Anyone up for starting after-school or Saturday bird clubs? Or starting a summer birding camp for kids?) Can we help inspire more young birders like Ben Winger who we heard from in April? If you want to help with any of these ideas, or are open to taking newer birders out birding, let me know! And conversely, if you're a newer birder and would like to go on a one-on-one field trip, say so too!

Last, we've got a few great talks lined up for the 2021-2022 season, but don't yet have any plans for large group in person gatherings. When it's really safe to gather, I'm thinking we'll perhaps meet in person during good weather, but continue to meet on Zoom in the darker, snowier months. Zoom seems to work well for our club and I don't think anyone is missing the drive to University Circle. We will be looking for a new place – or places – to meet for our in person meetings. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has raised their meeting room rates enough that meeting there is no longer a viable option. If you have thoughts on this or can suggest places to meet, the Board is open to input!

On another happy note, KBC membership is already at 145mem for 2020-2021, up from our low of 122 in 2018-2019. I do look forward to another year of KBC activities – speaker meetings, bird identification nights, connecting with new birders and new KBC members, and hopefully field trips near and far before the year is over. None of this fun would be possible without the contributions of KBC members, particularly Board members and trustees Mary Anne Romito, Toby Briskin, Christi Carlson, Anna Kozlenko, Andy Jones, and Paula Lozano as well as KBC member Ken Vinciquerra, who maintains our membership database and our Northeast Ohio Regional Calendar.

Always open to feedback, new ideas, and contributions – contributions not just of money, but of your many talents!

Patty Kellner



Thanks to members of the *Kirtland Warbler*  
Committee who reviewed and edited this issue:  
Paula Lozano

## Crane Connections & 2021 ODNR Sandhill Crane Survey

*By Anna Kozlenko*

My interest in cranes began when I was a student at Moscow State University. Drujina, the student conservation organization, was researching the possibility of establishing a nature preserve north of Moscow on 300 hectares of swamps and lakes where Eurasian Cranes stopped during migration and, also, nested. After I graduated and moved to work in different region, the Zhuravlinnaya Rodina Reserve became a reality in 1989. <http://www.craneland.ru/>

In the Krasnoyarsk region of Siberia where I did my field work, cranes had not nested or been seen on migration for a long time. However, one time I saw a Siberian Crane, a critically endangered species, as it flew over the flood plain of Yenisei River. My emotional reaction to this experience was felt very deeply, and I wrote the following poem that was published in Russia.

Siberian Crane (rough English translation)

On the early and foggy sunrise  
When the sleep is still ruling the world  
You have spotted Siberian Crane  
Very rare and mysterious bird

And your heart gets connected to sky  
And sunrise get especially bright  
Over gloomy and misty flood plain  
You start feeling yourself in the flight

And forever in mountains and plains  
Will be blessing for every nation  
The appearance and call of the Cranes  
And the people that feel admiration

Later, Sergey Smirenski, my university schoolmate and friend, founded Muraviovka Park, a nature preserve in Russia's Far East on the banks of the Amur River. This was done with the assistance of the International Crane Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and Seattle Zoo. This location was chosen because three endangered species of cranes, Red-crowned, White-naped, and Hooded, nested there. Besides protecting cranes and their habitat, Sergey's goals included environmental education work, with summer camps for children and field trips for adults to ensure the continued success of Muraviovka Park. In addition, connections with multiple environmental organizations in other countries were established to protect cranes on their wintering grounds that continues today. <https://www.savingcranes.org/crane-numbers-growing-at-muraviovka-park-russia/>

In early April I was excited to receive a call from Tom Leiden about Ohio's first survey of Sandhill Cranes, with our data to be added to the Annual Midwest Crane Count. I told him that I wanted to participate, as did my friend Paula Lozano. Matt Valencic, the coordinator for Geauga County, assigned us a route starting at the Burton-Windsor Road, Middlefield. <https://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/park/the-maple-highlands-trail/>

## Crane Connections & 2021 ODNR Sandhill Crane Survey (continuation)



On Saturday, April 17, the first day of my retirement after working 22 years at Oracle, we arrived at our starting point at 6:30 am. It was a chilly, foggy morning as we started walking north on the Maple Highlands Trail. We were greeted by a chorus of bird song as we passed a few houses, Hardwood Lumber Company with realistic nature murals painted on its walls, forest and wetlands. Pine, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped warblers, Eastern Towhee, and many common resident birds - Black-capped chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, American Robin, Red-winged Blackbird, Song sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Carolina Wren - were heard and/or seen.

As we walked, I entered our sightings on eBird. About

seven o'clock, as we were approaching the Cuyahoga River Covered Bridge, Paula spotted two Sandhill Cranes standing in a wet area on the west side of the trail south of the bridge. Unfortunately, they did not stay long enough to photograph before taking flight, calling as they flew south.



After finishing our assigned route, we covered another one for a group from Michigan who canceled. As we arrived at the Tare Creek Covered Bridge, we saw a single Sandhill Crane circling east of our viewing spot.

As the sun burned off the fog, we ended our first Sandhill Crane survey and celebrated seeing three birds and my first day of retirement with lunch at Jack's Diner in South Euclid.



## Notable Sparrow Sightings on Cleveland's Lakefront

*By Paula Lozano*

Birdwatchers look forward to May, the month when waves of migrants flow through our backyards, cemeteries, parks and hearts. Each FOS (first of spring) sighting is always welcomed and cherished. Occasionally, there are birds that appear only once in a while and create a lot of excitement like two sparrows found on Cleveland's lakefront in mid-May.



By Paula Lozano

Most May mornings Jen Brumfield and a group of avid birders scoured birding spots throughout Cuyahoga County to locate and share their discoveries with other birders. On May 8th Jen found an adult Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), a large sparrow species of the prairies, grasslands, and pastures of the Midwest and West. It was near the roundabout at the entrance to Edgewater Park and later along Whiskey Island Drive near the Edgewater Yacht Club. Its distinctive harlequin facial pattern was enjoyed and photographed by many observers during its three-day sojourn.

Having a Lark Sparrow stay that long was unusual, but that sighting was soon eclipsed by Jen's next find.

Early in the morning of May 11, as Jen was driving in Wendy Park, she heard and immediately identified a bird by its call. It was a Brewer's Sparrow (*Spizella breweri*), a small, slim sparrow species with an unusually small bill found in sagebrush habitat in western states and Ohio's second record! As soon as word of its appearance was shared, birders flocked to Wendy Park on Whiskey Island to soak in every detail of its plumage and song. For most birders it was an addition to their life list or, at least, a new bird on their Ohio list! Read more about these sparrows and hear their songs at:

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Lark\\_Sparrow](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Lark_Sparrow)  
[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Brewers\\_Sparrow](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Brewers_Sparrow)



By Rich Kassouf

## Richfield Heritage Preserve - A Giant Hidden Gem

*By Fred W. Dinkelbach*

In Richfield Township, just over the Summit County line south of Brecksville, lies the Richfield Heritage Preserve: a 336-acre mostly-forested park with hiking and bridle trails. Beginning as an estate of the Kirby family, it was sold to the Cleveland Girl Scout Council in 1937 when it became known as Crowell Hill-aka, which it remained until 2011. In 2014 Richfield Village and Richfield Township voters approved jointly purchasing the property and in 2016 it became the Richfield Heritage Preserve.



eBird shows it has had a few birding visits the first five years, and their species count is a humble 129 as of mid-May 2021. But this is bound to improve. Its popularity is growing, it's a regular location for the Greater Akron Audubon Society's summer breeding bird survey, and birdwalks are now scheduled beginning this year when volunteers are available.

While mostly wooded, there are two lakes, a sizable stream, and good margin habitat along two utility corridors. Access to parking lots inside the main entrance on Rt. 176 (Broadview Road) is dawn-to-dusk,

where two-to-three miles of easy-walking dirt and gravel driveways that led to the former camping areas now allow access to every corner of the preserve. At least as many miles of foot trails branch off here and there, including a segment of the Buckeye Trail that cuts diagonally through the property. And, as a remnant of its Girl Scout days, there are many benches, picnic pavilions, and rustic restrooms throughout.

Birding-in-ohio.com has a map of the miles of meandering trails that is worth printing out to take on your first visit to orient yourself. For short visits, I can suggest several quick walks. West of the parking lot, take the Buckeye Trail as it heads along the creek that empties the upper lake and head downstream. Footing may suffer after a good rain, but you'll be rewarded with the preserve's best scenery along the rocky stream. Halfway to the lower lake along this one-quarter mile stretch you'll cross a utility corridor where a Canada Warbler was on territory in 2020, at the top of the hill to the west along the south margin. After re-entering the woods, the trail winds along a side gully that was home to both a singing male Louisiana Waterthrush and a Junco in two consecutive summers. You'll know you're approaching the lower lake when fir and hemlock trees frame a tiny cabin that sits in one of the creek's loops, and finally you will reach a remnant of a dance hall built in the 1920s that sits at the lake's inlet.



Another walk is the drive leading north from the parking lot that takes you to three original storybook brick and half-timber houses built for the original estate's family. Along this stretch and beyond, a summer Red-breasted Nuthatch and White-eyed Vireo were heard along with dueting Barred Owls and many towhees, tanagers and House Wrens.

More information, including events such as guided wildflower hikes, can be found at <https://www.richfieldheritagepreserve.com/>.

## KBC's Loaner Binoculars

*By Paula Lozano*

Before Bob Finkelstein's passing on January 20, 2021, the Kirtland Bird Club's Board of Directors and membership had approved the creation of a loaner binocular fund. This fund was earmarked to purchase binoculars to loan to new birders, particularly birders from minority communities typically not involved in birding, to use during KBC bird walks and field trips. Subsequently, the club received many memorial donations in Bob's name, specifically earmarked for this fund to honor Bob's legacy of mentoring young birders. With those donations, the club's match of \$1,000.00, and with generous support from KOWA, nine sets of Kowa 6.5 x 32 wide-angle binoculars were purchased. In addition, the Board voted to make these binoculars available to club members to borrow for outings with a new birder, family member, friend or co-workers.



The binoculars are high quality and will come with instructions on their use to share by the borrower with all users. Club members should email [info@kirtlandbirdclub.org](mailto:info@kirtlandbirdclub.org) with requests to borrow these binoculars.

## Miscellanies



**BeTICK  
Smart!**

**Protect · Check · Remove · Watch**

Here's a link to Ohio Dept of Health's Tick website:

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/resources/tickborne-diseases>

## KBC supports Prothonotary Warbler research



BSBO is deeply grateful to the [Kirtland Bird Club](#) and [Inland Bird Banding Association](#) for awarding BSBO \$1,000 each for our upcoming research into Prothonotary Warblers.

<https://www.bsbo.org/prow-research.html>

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# Birding IS for Everyone!

*By Nancy Howell, WCAS Board Member*

As a birder I have found that birders are some of the most giving people. A bit biased perhaps, but when out in the field, if someone spots an unusual or even common species that needs identification, birders will take the time to share their information. Birders often take new birders, young or old, “under their wing” to share knowledge. Birders love their birds and the outdoors. Now is the time to take steps that may not be easy - increase the birding experience with a more diverse and inclusive audience in a more equitable and just manner.

As a birder or nature enthusiast stepping outdoors, do you feel safe? Do you feel that you can walk in your neighborhood and admire the plants and wildlife, enjoy the sun and breeze? If you are walking in your neighborhood with binoculars, are you stopped or questioned? Not everyone shares these opportunities ... why? It may be as simple as not having a greenspace to go to and explore. It may be as complex as not feeling safe going beyond one’s own home. It could be a deeper underlying factor that people don’t feel welcome being outdoors and enjoying nature due to their skin color, economic status, religious beliefs, or gender identity. The outdoors IS for everyone and everyone MUST be welcomed! Not long ago Western Cuyahoga Audubon created a policy that addresses equity, diversity, and inclusivity. See, <https://bit.ly/3wlrLBC> This was drafted shortly after the incident in Central Park with black birder Christian Cooper. More recently, birder, J. Drew Lanhan, wrote a hard-hitting article, “*What Do We Do About John James Audubon?*” in which he questions John James Audubon enslaving “at least nine people”. In response, two articles from National Audubon’s staff, “*Why Audubon Magazine Turned Its Spotlight to John James Audubon*” and “*Revealing the Past to Create the Future*”, brings to light National Audubon’s views. A quote from the first article by Jennifer Bogo reads, “...that puts our own identity in the spotlight or challenges our parent organization (NAS) to reexamine its priorities.” David Yarnold’s quote states, “... we (NAS) can do far more as organizations and as individuals than we thought possible even six months ago. In order to do that, we have to own up to our pasts even while we chart a new future.”

Acknowledging these facts may be the beginnings of opening up the organization, but is it enough? WCAS strives to be more diverse and inclusive, yet our chapter struggles as well. How do we develop a more diverse Board? What steps should our chapter take to go into neighborhoods to share the joy of birds and the outdoors? Is there a way to bring the excitement of birding and the outdoors to others virtually? What community leaders should we communicate with to bring the Audubon message to neighborhoods? We need the assistance of our members and social media community. Audubon chapters are the grass-roots of the parent organization, the National Audubon Society, and chapters will take leading roles in social change. Won’t you join WCAS to help us begin working toward charting a socially just and inclusive future for those who may or may not have experienced a love for the outdoors and birds? You could be the spark and change someone’s life.

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by Sheridan Alford



# BLACK BIRDERS WEEK 2021

MAY 30-JUNE 5

BLACKAFINSTEM.COM



## Sunday

MAY 30

**#BlackInNature**

Introduce yourself and how you enjoy nature

## Monday

MAY 31

**#BirdsOnMyBlock**

Birding can be a hobby or a lifestyle, just get started! Learn how with Cornell Lab of Ornithology

## Tuesday

JUNE 1

**#BirdsEyeView**

Honoring the many identities and activities in the birding world

## Wednesday

JUNE 2

**#LiferMemories**

Share your favorite Lifer moments, stories, or feelings.

## Thursday

JUNE 3

**#SafeInNature**

Highlight ways to stay safe when birding and working the outdoors. Join a discussion with Monique Pipkin, M.S. and Amelia Demery, M.S.

## Friday

JUNE 4

**#OnTheirWings**

Honoring those who came before us and uplifting those who will come after.

## Saturday

JUNE 5

**#BirdsOfAFeather**

Birds are everywhere and so are we. Highlight your endemic species and share your pics and lists!

The Kirtland Warbler, the newsletter of the Kirtland Bird Club (KBC), Cleveland Ohio, is published quarterly. It contains KBC meetings and trip information, web site updates, other events and programs of interest, and issues of local concern. A subscription to The Kirtland Warbler is a benefit of club membership. Your contributions of articles, event information, photos, and drawings are welcome. Please send submissions to the Editor, Anna Kozlenko, to [annajulnes@yahoo.com](mailto:annajulnes@yahoo.com)

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**KIRTLAND BIRD CLUB, a Northeast Ohio Birding Club**



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Publisher of:

***The Cleveland Bird Calendar***  
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***The Kirtland Warbler***

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