



THE KIRTLAND WARBLER

Quarterly Newsletter of the Kirtland Bird Club, Cleveland, Ohio

www.KirtlandBirdClub.org and www.ClevelandBirdCalendar.com

2015–2016 Membership Year, No. 2, Winter Issue

Monthly Meetings

Guests are always welcome — Cleveland Museum of Natural History...Parking is free.

1st Wednesday of every month except July and August, 7:30 PM

Wednesday December 2, 2015

"Ornithology Discoveries in 2015 "

Presented by Dr. Andy Jones



Dr. Andy Jones returns for his semi-annual talk to the Kirtland Bird Club to highlight the recent exciting findings from the world of ornithology. There are thousands of academic papers published every year on the biology of birds. These new discoveries are sometimes highlighted in newspapers, magazines, and on your Facebook feed, but far too many simply don't get the public attention that they deserve. Dr. Jones will highlight the taxonomic changes that birders will want to know about, as well as other discoveries that will simply make you a more observant and more informed birder. This talk will cover many exciting aspects of bird biology that were discovered in the last two years.

Dr. Jones received his BS in Biological Sciences from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and his PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from the University of Minnesota. He originally hails from east Tennessee, where his passion for natural history began at an early age; his current research involves the evolutionary history of birds from the Appalachian mountains as well as the Andes and the Philippines. Dr. Jones is responsible for the Museum's collection of avian specimens, which consists of approximately 30,000 study skins and 4,000 egg sets from the Ohio region and western North America as well as approximately 1,000 osteological specimens from Ohio. He is also responsible for specimen acquisition and preservation, maintenance of specimen records, and carrying out original research. His other tasks include providing various services to the scientific community, the media, the Museum's exhibitions and education divisions as well as the public at large. Dr. Jones was among 14 prominent American ornithologists to be named an elective member of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) in 2009, and in 2014 he was elected as Secretary of the AOU.

2015 Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

Saturday December 19, 2015

Please join this historical bird census that began in 1900 to promote conservation of birds rather than killing them. In its second century, the Christmas Bird Count has evolved into far more than a census. The results are accepted and used by scientists and conservationists and are considered to be a good tool to assess the long-term trends of the early winter bird populations.

Since 2013, all CBCs are FREE, with no fee to participate or receive the annual publication from American Birding Association. They are open to the public and birders of all skill levels. Participation in a CBC is a great way to enjoy local birds and the camaraderie of those with a similar passion.

Andy Jones, our count compiler and organizer, will contact people who have counted in the past. If you are not on his list and would like to participate, please contact Andy at ajones@cmnh.org.

Wednesday January 6, 2015

"International Migratory Bird Treaty and its significance for migratory bird conservation "

Presented by Frank Lopez.



Frank Lopez has been the manager of the Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve in Huron, Ohio, since 2003. Since his arrival, Old Woman Creek has promoted the stewardship of coastal resources using its research and education programs. It has also implemented a Lake Erie region coastal training program for decision-makers, partnered in the development of a local watershed program, renovated visitor exhibits, ramped up its community education/outreach, expanded trails, and had a management plan approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Prior to becoming manager at Old Woman Creek, Frank worked for NOAA as a Coastal Management Fellow with the South Carolina coastal management program, assisting the state with storm water management and non-point source pollution prevention. While in graduate school, Frank worked for the state of North Carolina in emergency management and hazard mitigation, helping communities recover after hurricanes Fran and Floyd and reducing risk to future disasters. He began his public service career as a land use planner in Amarillo, Texas, his hometown.

Frank has a bachelor's degree in public administration from West Texas A&M University and a Masters in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Wednesday February 3, 2016

"Famous People in North America and Their Attraction to Birds"

Presented by Dwight Chasar .



Purportedly there are nearly 70-80 million people in North America who watch birds. One would guess that at least a few of these people are (or have been) more famous for accomplishments in their chosen fields other than for their bird watching hobbies. So who are they? From political and sports figures to actors, music composers, and Nobel prize winners, this presentation looks at some of these famous people, with some surprising and interesting facts thrown in, and the impact that their bird watching has or had on their careers and private lives. The speaker will try to identify birds that these people favored in their hobby.

Dwight was a senior research scientist with a PhD in chemistry from Case Western Reserve University. Before retiring, he worked at BFGoodrich, Noveon and Lubrizol.

Dwight, who started birding about 35 years ago, enjoys birding with his wife Ann. Confirming nesting of uncommon birds and raptors within the boundaries of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park is their particular interest. As a volunteer
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for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Dwight has led bird walks and organized and conducted spring and fall bird censuses. In addition, Dwight is a leader on the Sunday morning spring bird walks in the Brecksville Reservation of the Cleveland Metroparks. He has helped census birds for the Greater Akron Audubon Society and participate in annual Christmas Bird Counts. Dwight is a past member of the Ohio Birds Records Committee. Dwight and Ann have travelled throughout North America and countries in Central and South America, Europe, and Africa to see birds.

Dwight is a past president of the Kirtland Bird Club. Currently he is the Weather Editor of The Cleveland Bird Calendar and chair of the OAPI committee. Finally, Dwight has published numerous articles in The Cleveland Bird Calendar, the Ohio Cardinal, and Ohio Birds and Natural History. He often is a speaker for various clubs about birds

Upcoming Field Trips

Gulls, Gulls, and More Gulls



When: Saturday, January 23, 2016, at 9:00 am

Where: Wendy Park, 2800 Whiskey Island Drive, Cleveland

Bundle up and meet at Wendy Park to scan through the gulls at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River. Later we will go east or west along the lakefront, depending on the presence of birds in the area and the ice cover.

Note: Access to Wendy Park is limited to the west bound lanes on the West Shoreway at the Edgewater Park exit.

Breaking the Ice at Avon Lake Power Plant

When: Sunday, February 21, 2016, at 9:00 am

Where: Miller Road Park, 33740 Lake Road, Avon Lake

We will be looking for waterfowl and gulls in the open water near the Avon Lake Power Plant. In addition, we may head south to look for owls and other unique wintering birds in Lorain County.

Note: Miller Road Park is a quarter of a mile west of the Avon Lake Power Plant on SR-6. Meet at the pier.



American Birding Association's Camp Colorado

By Ethan Rising



After the long car ride from Ohio and the shuttle, I was very excited to arrive at Camp Colorado. After I got out and stretched, I already had many life birds. That night was orientation, and Bill Schmoker gave an overview of the habitats we would be visiting and what birds to expect. I wrote down my goal birds for each day, and I was pleased that most of them got checked off!

Our first trip was to Wild Basin, the first of many trips to the montane forest habitats. Some of my personal goals were American Dipper, Dusky Grouse, and Steller's Jay. There were also supposed to be Black Swifts nesting by a waterfall way upriver.

We started off downriver, and headed up, parallel to a fast moving swirl of water that would hopefully bring us some cool birds.

We got some easy birds right off the bat, including Cordilleran Flycatcher and the Gray-headed subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco. As we headed up the river, we had good looks at Townsend's Solitaire and Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler, as well as a hungry Gold-mantled Ground-Squirrel. Unfortunately, we didn't make it up to the Black Swift area so that was a missed ABA Area bird. However, we made up for it a different way. On the way back toward the vans. Jen Brumfield, a leader from Ohio, another young birder and I had gone ahead, not knowing that the group had stopped. We looked back at the rest of the group, pointing to a bird that we couldn't see. We moved back a little bit and saw a young American Dipper feeding just across the river from where they were. Jen, Aidan, and I rushed back upriver and got amazing views of the foraging bird. It wasn't a life bird, but I got much better looks than my first bird. The rest of the morning was pretty slow except for a MacGillivray's Warbler nest with a tending female.

After lunch at the YMCA, the weather wasn't very good so we decided to bird around the YMCA. We focused on the areas around the dorms and the feeders, getting some nice birds like Cassin's Finch and Pygmy Nuthatch. After dinner and a quick talk, we headed to the dorms so we could get some rest for the next day.

Wednesday was supposed to be alpine day but, because of bad weather, we decided to do another day in more montane habitats. We went to the Endovalley in the morning hoping to pick up some different birds. One of the first things we saw was a Red-naped Sapsucker nest next to the parking lot. As we walked along the path we had good looks at MacGillivray's Warbler, a Western Wood-pewee, and a young Black-headed Grosbeak. We reached a waterfall area and were happy to see another cooperative American Dipper, giving very good views. It would be at the top of the waterfall (presumably feeding a young bird) and then come down towards us to get more food. The bird was eating small insects, mostly mayflies. On the way back to the vans everyone got good looks at a Warbling Vireo on its nest.

After lunch in the field we headed to a different spot where we studied the aspen trees and learned how elk effected them. The elk actually chew the bark off the aspens, which over time kills the plants. We were able to look at an aspen grove that had an elk-proof fence around it and compare the trees and how dense the uneaten trees were. We also learned that the "groves" were actually one or two plants and that the aspen shoot out of the ground in different places and have one central root system. The aspen proved to be good for cavity nesters. We found Violet-green and Tree Swallow nests and more Red-naped Sapsucker nests. At this spot we also had good looks at a male Wilson's Warbler that was foraging in some Ponderosa Pine trees, the most common tree in the Estes Park

The Kirtland Warbler, the newsletter of the Kirtland Bird Club (KBC), Cleveland Ohio, is published quarterly. It contains KBC meeting 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 New President Dave Dvorak or to info@kirtlandbirdclub.org.

American Birding Association's Camp Colorado (continuation)

My favorite experience of the day, however, was actually when we were leaving. I was in the back van and a camper in the front van had claimed to have seen a Dusky Grouse on the left side of the road. We *immediately* stopped and went back. Sure enough, a female Dusky Grouse was walking parallel to us, tending five young chicks. Everyone with any type of camera got great photos, and it was one of my favorite birding experiences that I've ever had.

Next day there was the Camp Colorado Challenge which is essentially a Big Day. You have a time limit and try to see as many birds as possible in that limit. The 2014 record was 89, a number that's pretty hard to beat in Colorado in July.

We woke up at three-thirty or so in the morning. We made a quick stop an hour or two later at a gas station where we picked up some city birds plus a few Bald Eagles. Soon after, we stopped to look for Mountain Plover near Pawnee Grasslands, our main birding spot for the day. After a while, Raymond vanBuskirk, another one of the leaders and a Leica representative, pulled one out of thin air, it seemed. The Mountain Plover was pretty far out, and I was one of the last ones to see it. It was a pale brown bird against a pale brown background. Not the greatest views ever, but still a really cool bird. Afterwards we ate breakfast at the Crow Valley Campground where we picked up some extra birds like Bullock's Oriole, Loggerhead Shrike, and Great-horned Owl. We then headed towards Pawnee, getting good views of Lark Bunting and Grasshopper Sparrow.

Some non-bird sightings: It was interesting to see cacti in Colorado. You think of them as being much farther south, and I was surprised when I saw how many there are out on the grasslands. We also found a Short-horned Lizard, which *can* shoot blood out of its eyes, but didn't (bummer, right?). We also saw a family of Swift Foxes, a really cool mammal to add to the list, along with the abundant Pronghorn that roamed the fields.

On the way to a different spot, we encountered a few new birds. A territorial American Avocet was circling the vans and giving a good show for everyone in the group. We also got amazing scope views of eight different Burrowing Owls. Farther down the road we had good views of the elusive Brewer's Sparrow. We had several of these birds along the way. Once we reached our destination, we saw a distant Ferruginous Hawk which was one of our sought-after raptors for the day.

When we got out of the vans, we saw a few McCown's Longspur. As we headed out into an adjacent field, we witnessed this bird's unique display. The displaying longspurs started on the ground. They would fly upwards, almost hover, and then slowly come back to the ground in a diagonal line, seemingly floating while gliding, all the while giving its melodious, bouncy song. Another very cool birding encounter to add to the day.



After lunch there were no new birds except for Yellow Warbler and a fly-over Franklin's Gull that only one camper besides me saw. We would have passed this off as a California Gull, but I checked my distant photo. The gull had a black head and dark primaries. We stopped at Fossil Creek Reservoir where we picked up some ducks, and I got my lifer Say's Phoebe and Clark's Grebe.



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

American Birding Association's Camp Colorado (continuation)

Back at the YMCA we picked up some final birds, including Northern Goshawk and Band-tailed Pigeon. Time was called and we stopped birding and counted species. After double and triple checking the count, the total was 93!!! I had predicted much lower, and I was pleasantly surprised!

After revealing that Raymond van Buskirk had guessed the exact number, we had a talk about his Rosy-finches project when he was a young birder living in New Mexico. New Mexico seems like an arid state, but the most north-central part gets very cold, and one spot hosts the three species of Rosy-finches in the winter. Raymond talked about how he and a few friends were very young and out of the blue thought *Hey. Let's band these birds and learn about them.* Almost no research had been done on these intriguing birds. As soon as Raymond and his friends got banding permits, they started making intricate traps to catch the Rosy-finches. After years of research, they learned a lot about Gray-crowned, Brown-capped, and Black Rosy-Finches. They had banded thousands of birds, some of which were at least 8 years old. This was my favorite talk of Camp Colorado because it showed that you don't have to have any special criteria or loads of money or be a certain age to really do something in the name of conservation. I think his talk empowered all the campers to use their knowledge of nature to protect it.

After my mind was completely blown and I was inspired, I finally was able to go to sleep and get some rest before Friday, our tundra day.

We woke up pretty early and, after breakfast, we headed out and began birding at the Medicine Bow Curve. The campers learned about different subspecies of White-crowned Sparrows and American Pipit. I was more surprised to learn about the *altilcola* American Pipit because the colors seemed very out of place and the differences were very obvious. As we walked along, someone at the front of the group spotted one of the day's target birds: a White-tailed Ptarmigan! (This is a very habitat-specific bird, and I is hard to find one due to its camouflage.) We watched the bird, a male, fly and join a female and walking across the trail. The birds proceeded to feed with twenty feet from us. Everyone got stellar looks at the ptarmigans, and we were all very happy. Afterwards we drove to another spot where we immediately got Brown-capped and Rosy-Finch. There were two females and one male. Despite the cold temperatures and stiff wind, everyone was super excited!



After a stop at Lily Lake to look for American Three-toed Woodpeckers where we found one, we went to the Fawn Brook Inn to look at hummingbirds. There was tons of activity. There could have been forty Broad-tailed Hummingbirds at any given moment. We also saw two Rufous and two Calliope Hummingbirds there.

That night Jen Brumfield of Cleveland, Ohio, gave a talk about finding jaegers on Lake Erie and how she started the Lake Erie pelagic trips. This was interesting to me because you would never think of an inland lake being any good for pelagics no matter how big it is.

The next day was our final birding day, and we descended into a lower elevation area. We were looking for species like Lazuli Bunting, Rock Wren, and Bushtit. Right off the bat we got Lazuli Bunting and Rock Wren and also good looks at Canyon Wren. We went on, and it was cool to see the differences between Colorado's Spotted Towhee vs. my Eastern Towhee. After a hike, which added some cool new birds to our week's list, we headed back to our cars. From there, we were able to see Prairie and Peregrine Falcon, as well as the magnificent Golden Eagle.

After dinner, it was time to pack up! The next day was the shuttle-to-the-airport day, and most people left early. I, however, got to drive home to Cincinnati, Ohio, without air conditioning. Needless to say, I didn't care that much because I had just had one of the greatest weeks of my life!

A Royal Escort

by KBC President **David Dvorak**



When I drive west to the St. Louis area I like to stop at the Cahokia Mounds located off Interstate 70 in East St. Louis near the Mississippi River and within site of the Gateway Arch. The Cahokia Mounds were built by Native Americans long before Europeans arrived in North America. There is an excellent interpretive center that explains the historical significance of the area and the surrounding natural tall-grass prairie of the Midwest.

There are many mounds at Cahokia and they are the largest ones north of the Rio Grande. This is an Illinois state historical site and a world heritage site. There are trails that take you to all the mounds and by some of the prairie restorations near the visitor center. The dioramas are life size and worth viewing.

At the Cahokia mounds I always hike to the top of the main temple mound. Of course I am always birding while hiking. Swallow species, Eastern Bluebirds, Brown Thrashers, Catbirds, House Wrens, and Willow Flycatchers are usually easy to locate.

One year as my x-wife and I got onto the trail to the high mound, known as Monk's Mound, a pair of Barn swallows began flying in circles around us. We stopped to watch the swallows as they continued circling. We felt like royalty because we had an escort. The swallows continued this action above our heads as we hiked all the way to the top. They didn't leave us until another group of people arrived at the high point!

I have always thought that our warm bodies attracted bugs for the swallows to devour. The swallows, in turn, provided us a bug free walk. Together we created a symbiotic micro habitat.



KBC to take part in Museum event “Think and Drink with the Extinct”

Raise a glass and increase your knowledge of birds at one of the brainiest happy hours in Cleveland on Wednesday, December 16 from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Cleveland Museum of Natural History!

Every month, CMNH holds an event called “Think and Drink with the Extinct” that highlights a different field of research. These events offer exclusive access to professional staff and researchers, paired with unique experiences and interactive demonstrations. The events include a cash beer and wine bar, complimentary light snacks, and food available for purchase. About 250 people have attended every month in the past.

The December event is called “Birds and Brews.” KBC is going to staff a table at the event and display an electronic bird identification game for the public to enjoy.

General admission will be \$7.00 per person after 5pm. Museum members and CWRU students are admitted free!



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AUTUMN REPORTS
Due By December 10

Birds Calendar
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seasonalreports@kirtlandbirdclub.org

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