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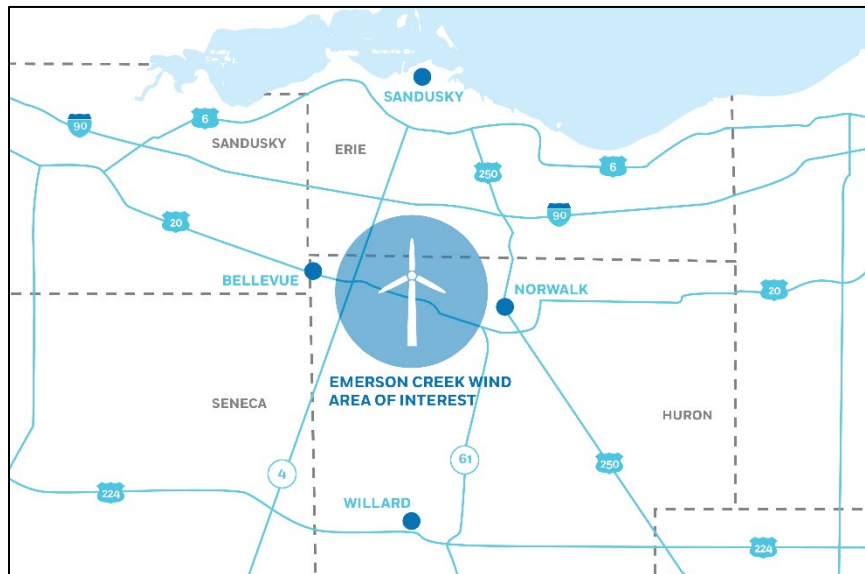
Secretary
Gail Reynolds

We're happy to send you Audubon Miami Valley's (AMV) Spring newsletter. AMV plans a full line-up of meetings and events this Spring. Find the details both in this newsletter and at our website audubonmv.org

Proposed Wind Farm Near the Black Swamp Bird Observatory Faces Legal Challenges

The fate of a proposed 73-turbine wind project in northwest Ohio near the [Black Swamp Bird Observatory](#), is now in the hands of the Ohio Supreme Court. For birders, the proposed wind farm presents an interesting dilemma. The impacts of the wind farm versus that of continued climate change...

The Emerson Creek Wind Project could generate 847,000 to 952,000 megawatt hours of electricity a year, at a time when the average temperature in Ohio has increased by 2.7°F since 1970 (Source: Climate Central). Some local farmers and governments approve of the project, but others oppose it, including 19 landowners and the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, which annually hosts "[The Biggest Week in American Birding](#)," the largest birdwatching festival in the country. The area near Lake Erie is a prime habitat for hundreds of species of migratory birds they travel between Canada and areas in South America.



The court is expected to hear the challenge to the proposal later this month. Read the full article [here](#). Specific details regarding this proposed project are available at the [Ohio Power Siting Board's website](#).



MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Marlene Hoffman

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Kathryn Yurek

APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Conservation

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Programs

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Oxford Community EarthFest – April 22



Celebrate Earth Day at EarthFest, a free festival featuring games, interactive booths and workshops, live music, Oxford Farmer's Market and more. Several organizations from Oxford and Miami University will have educational booths and lead interactive activities during this community event.

EarthFest is a collaborative effort between Miami University and the community to come together and promote efforts to teach how natural environments function and how human beings can manage behavior and ecosystems to live sustainably. In addition, the event will spotlight green businesses in the community. Over 15 student groups and Oxford organizations will be there to interact with the community and have fun activities for all ages.

The event promotes a fun, welcoming environment with music, games, hands-on demonstrations, and interactive learning. The event is free to attend!

[Find more details here](#)

Event Details

Saturday, April 22 from 11am – 2pm

Oxford Memorial Park

2 East High Street

Oxford, OH 45056

AMV's 2022 Christmas Bird Count Results

WE HAD A RECORD NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS THIS YEAR!



Xmas bird count participants

AMV's 2022 Christmas Bird Count was held on December 17. This year, we saw a record number of participants at 43! Our local Christmas bird count is part of the National Audubon Society's [worldwide Christmas Count](#).

Fun fact: The National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count is the nation's longest-running community science bird project. Scientists use the data collected over several years to identify bird species population and location trends to correlate with climate change, habitat loss and other factors such as avian diseases.

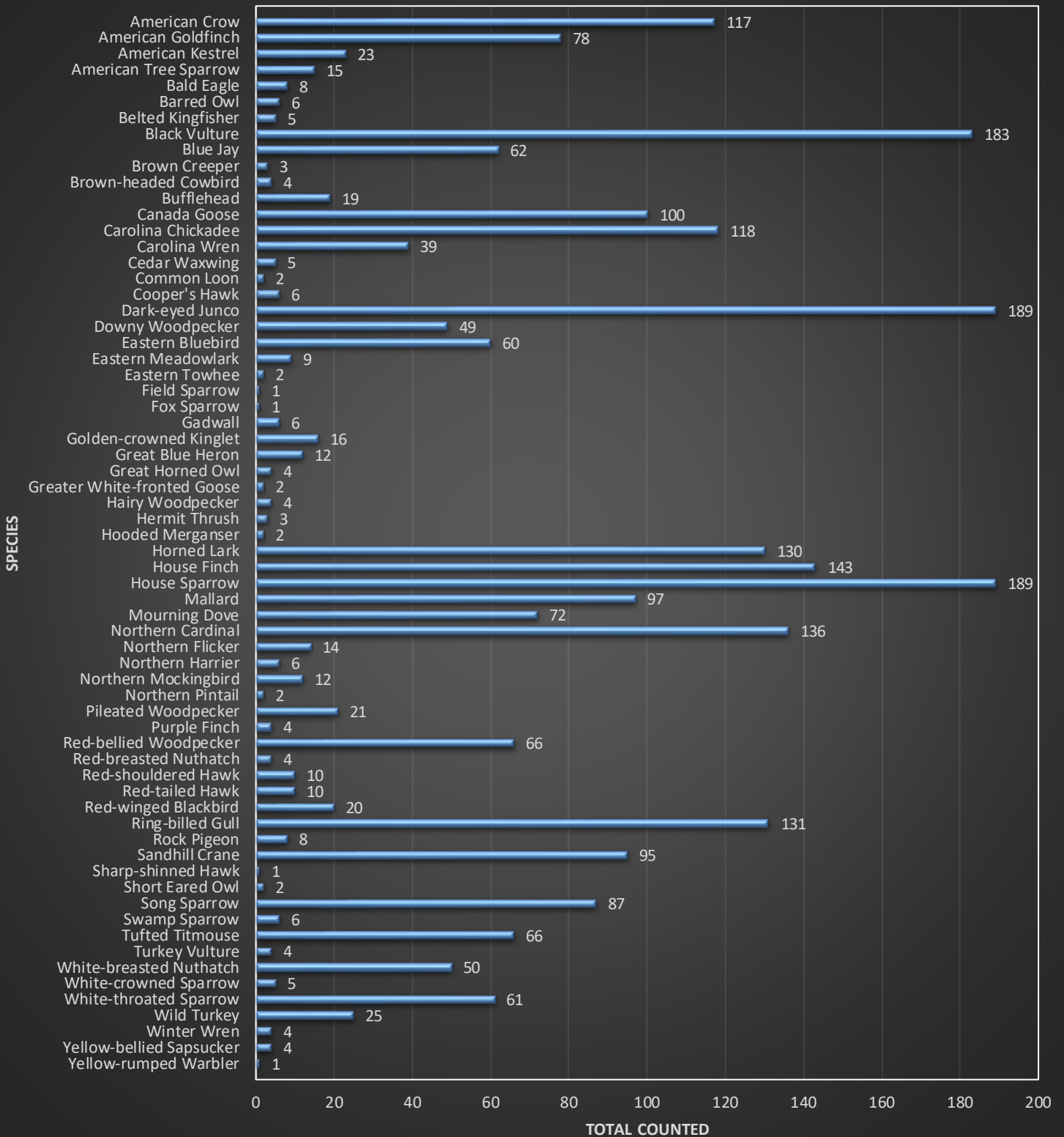
Our 43 participants gathered in small teams on a chilly Saturday morning for our annual count. Each team was assigned to a specific area in the Oxford vicinity, including Hueston Woods State Park, Ruder Preserve, and the Miami University Natural Areas. We were thrilled to see a total of 8 Bald eagles! It wasn't long ago that a Bald eagle would be a rare sight in our area.

At the end of our count, teams gathered to compile their data and enjoy a group potluck. In total, we counted 11,304 individual birds from 69 different species! For detailed results, see the chart below.

A huge thank you to this year's participants and to Larry Gersbach and David Russell for coordinating the event. We look forward to seeing everyone in December for our 2023 Christmas bird count.



2022 Christmas Bird Count Results



Bird species observed during AMV's 2022 Christmas Bird Count

Note regarding chart data:

3 observed species have been omitted from the chart above to improve legibility:

European Starling (4,482 counted)

Common Grackle (2,647 counted)

American Robin (1,631 counted)



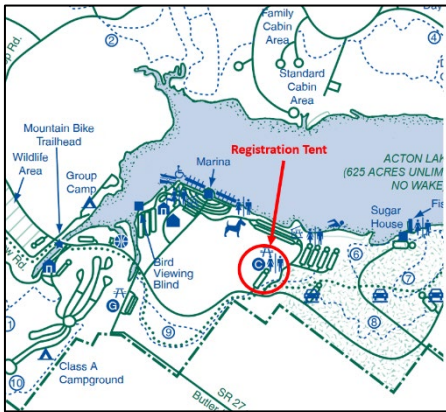
Spring Volunteer Day at Hueston Woods State Park - Volunteers Needed!

Audubon Miami Valley Volunteer Day at the Hueston Woods State Nature Preserve area known as the Big Woods, will be Saturday, April 29 from 10am to 12:30pm. Pizza will be provided.

This area of the preserve is designated as a local Important Bird Area (IBA). AMV adopted this IBA as a stewardship project in 2012. These woods are special because they are a small remnant of the mature Beech-Maple Forest that used to cover much of Ohio. The purpose of our work is to protect the diversity of the woodlands from invasive plants that crowd out the beautiful wildflowers that bloom in April, such as Spring beauty, Dutchman's breeches, and Trilliums, the native shrubs and understory trees such as Spicebush and Pawpaw, and the tree seedlings that regenerate the forest. Wildlife of all kinds, including nesting birds and migratory birds depend on this mature woodland habitat.



Volunteers at Hueston Woods volunteer day



Volunteers should dress for the weather, and for off-trail work: long pants and athletic shoes or boots - no flip-flops or shorts, please! Gloves and tools will be provided. Please bring your own water bottle. We will be hand-pulling and digging invasive plants in the nature preserve. Honeysuckle and garlic mustard are the biggest offenders.



Please register with Gail Reynolds, greynolds27@gmail.com so we know how many pizzas to order! Thank you.

We will be meeting at the Maple Grove Picnic Area. This area is on the west side of the lake near the marina. There will be signs directing you to the registration tent.

Birding In a War Zone: How Ukraine's Top eBirder Pursues His Passion Amid Tragedy

From the National Audubon Society



Oleksandr Nastachenko

A writer's budding friendship with a Ukrainian birder offers a window into the besieged country's small but resourceful community of birders and what they have lost since the Russian invasion.

One year ago, Oleksandr Nastachenko traveled to the southern Ukrainian province of Kherson Oblast, with his 14-year-old nephew, Igor, in search of a Rustic Bunting. The migratory passerine is a rare visitor to Ukraine, and one of the relatively few birds in his home country Nastachenko hadn't yet spotted. During five-plus hours trekking the marshlands outside the territorial capital of Kherson, uncle and nephew logged 59 species: geese, ducks, and cormorants; three types of woodpeckers; a dozen Bearded Reedlings; and, Nastachenko proudly told me, a Great Black-backed Gull, an uncommon sight in far eastern Europe. But, in a story familiar to any birder, the pair missed out on the one they had journeyed nearly 200 miles to see.

Back in his hometown of Dnipro the following week, on the morning of February 24, Nastachenko woke to the news of airstrikes across his country. Russia's most recent invasion of Ukraine had begun.

Last summer, a few months after the war began, I started to wonder if Ukraine's birders were still active. It may seem like an inconsequential thing to consider, given all the invasion's horrors, but I thought about how much birding has meant to me since I took it up early in the pandemic. I've become a resolute life lister over the past couple of years, especially thanks to eBird, where I've spent countless hours scouring maps and lists from global hot spots I'll likely never visit.



That's how I first found Nastachenko, who goes by Sasha. On eBird, he has logged more species than anyone else in his country. And not only was he uploading checklists, I was shocked to discover, but he was posting from Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, the province directly adjoining the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, parts of which have been occupied by pro-Russian forces since 2014. Every few days throughout the summer of 2022, I'd sift through his sightings, struggling to imagine the hazards of birding in a combat zone, filling with anxiety when no new checklists would appear for days at a time, fearing the worst when those quiet stretches went on for weeks. But, sooner or later, the lists kept coming.

In January I scheduled a time to talk via Zoom with Bradbeer, who remains in Dnipro with his Ukrainian wife and daughter, and Nastachenko, now 34 years old. [Click here to view the entire article on the National Audubon's website.](#)

Upcoming Field Trips



Each month (excluding July and August) AMV sponsors a field trip to a regional site of special interest. All are welcome on AMV field trips. Please join us even if you are not an experienced birder. Good walking shoes, personal water supply, insect repellent and sunscreen are recommended for the terrain we may encounter on these outings. More information is available on the events page of our web site audubonmv.org For questions, email AMV field trip coordinator at eric_hollins@hotmail.com

March 19, 2023 – Gilmore Ponds

Location: 7950 N Gilmore Road, Hamilton, OH 45015



We will celebrate the last day of winter with a trip to one of the top birding destinations in Butler County. [Gilmore Ponds](#), operated by MetroParks of Butler County, is an Audubon recognized Important Bird Area. By mid-March, year-round natives will be augmented by peak numbers of migrating ducks, hawks and sparrows returning or passing through. Experienced birders will be on hand to augment our viewing success. We invite guests to meet at the destination at **9:00 am**. Please bring a personal lunch if you would like to join us for an informal picnic mid-day.

[7950 N Gilmore Rd - Google Maps](#)

April 22, 2023 – Indian Creek Farm

Location: 2550 Indian Creek Road, Oxford, OH 45056

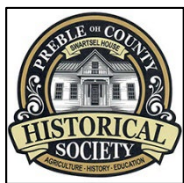


Over the past two decades, the [Ann Geddes farm](#) on Indian Creek Road has benefitted from restoration projects to improve and diversify wildlife habitats on this unique property. As Spring gets into full swing in late April, any bird resident to or visiting Butler County is likely to find a favorite habitat niche within this preserve. To assist human access, at least two golf carts will be available at this event. Feel free to bring a favorite covered dish or picnic treat and join us mid-day for a picnic and celebration of Earth Day. We invite participants to meet us at the destination at **9:00 am**. Look for the AMV flag marking the correct driveway entrance.

[2550 Indian Creek Rd - Google Maps](#)

May 21, 2023 – Preble County Historical Society and Nature Reserve

Location: 7693 Swartsel Road, Eaton, OH 45320



Well known for its historic farmstead buildings and exhibits; a developing network of trails provide access to 250 acres of forest, prairie/meadow, stream, pond, and wetland features. During May, the [Nature Reserve](#) offers opportunities to observe native species singing to attract mates and/or establish breeding territories. Food vendors (on site for an antique car rally in the afternoon) will be available to AMV guests at 1:00 pm. We invite participants to meet us at the destination at **9:00 am**. Look for the AMV flag marking the correct driveway entrance.

[7693 Swartsel Rd - Google Maps](#)



June 3, 2023 – Brukner Nature Center

Location: 5995 Horseshoe Bend Road, Troy, OH 45373



[Brukner Nature Center](#) is a non-profit, privately funded organization promoting the appreciation and understanding of wildlife conservation through preservation, education, and rehabilitation. Brukner is a premier birding spot for spring bird migration, winter feeder watching (Project FeederWatch) and enjoying birds at any time of the year! The Tree-Top Bird Vista is an air-conditioned oasis during summer months and a warm and inviting place to spend the winter hours! The pileated woodpecker visits our feeders on a regular basis year-round. We invite participants to meet us at Brukner's Visitor Center (main building) at **9:00 am**.

[Brukner Nature Center – Google Maps](#)

Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley Programs

AMV programs will be held on the following dates at 7:30 PM. Be sure to view each program description to see if it will be held in-person or virtually. These programs are free, open to the public, and typically run until 9:00 PM. **Meeting location:** our in-person programs will be held in the upstairs Community Room at Lebanon Citizens National Bank (LCNB) located at 30 West Park Place in Oxford. An elevator is available if needed.

April 10, 2023 - The Nature of Van Gogh

Presenter – Carol Mundy

Location: In-person at Lebanon Citizens National Bank (LCNB)



We all know his name, but what do we know about his life? Vincent Van Gogh endeavored to tell his story through his work as a student then teacher, a minister and artist. Join us for this presentation by Naturalist Carol Mundy, where we will look at how nature inspired Van Gogh's art and discuss some of his unpleasant connections to the earth, such as his exposure to naturally occurring elements, minerals and botanicals that affected his physical and mental health. As a naturalist, speaker and writer Carol Mundy taught for the University of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Park District, leading classes on urban wildlife issues, native plants, weed identification and the historical uses of plants. She continues to offer lectures and workshops in her "retirement."

May 8, 2023 – Backyard Pollinating with Native Mason Bees

Presenter – Justina Block

Location: In-person at Lebanon Citizens National Bank (LCNB)



Justina Block will be presenting a program about backyard pollinating with native mason bees, in connection to the [Osmia Bee Company](#). Orchard bees, sometimes called mason bees, are also aptly named because they use damp mud to sculpt their nest within the cavity. You can occasionally find them in muddy areas collecting mud for their nests. These are important pollinators of orchard crops such as apples, peaches, and blueberries. Osmia Bee is a family-owned business based in Cincinnati, Ohio.





OUR MISSION

Audubon Miami Valley works to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

The Audubon Miami Valley newsletter is published three times a year. Alexandria Horne is the editor. Bev Thomas is the proofreader. Caitlin Stone designed the AMV Meadowlark logo. The paper version of the newsletter is printed by Letterman Printing in Oxford on 100% recycled paper.

If you would like to contribute content to the newsletter, please send your content to audubonmv@gmail.com or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Contribution deadline for the Summer 2023 newsletter is July 1st.

We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically, and morally unacceptable.

