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AMV 2020 OFFICERS

President
Larry Gersbach

Vice President
Liz Woedl
website@audubonmv.org

Treasurer
Neil Poppendeck

Secretary
Gail Reynolds

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

AMV's 42nd Annual Bird Seed Sale a Huge Success!

Thank you to all our patrons who participated this year; our local birds will be well fed this winter! A huge thank you to our host Shademakers Nursery and Garden Center who helped us setup contact free pickup. If you missed us this year, be sure to check our website next fall for the 2021 sale information.

Evening Grosbeaks in Ohio!

Via the Finch Research Network

The Evening Grosbeak irruption for winter 2020-21 is well underway! This species last moved southward in numbers during the Fall of 2018. This fall, sightings have poured in from Ontario and the northeastern states, all the way down to West Virginia and Florida. Within the past month, these birds have also been noted in the Great Lakes region, where sightings have been reported in Ohio and Indiana.

Look for Evening Grosbeaks to be foraging on Maple, Box Elder, Ash samaras, Cherry and Crabapple seeds, and on Sumac fruit. This species will visit feeders and prefers platform or hopper feeders well stocked with Black Oil Sunflower seed. As winter finches go, the Evening Grosbeak is perhaps the most gorgeous of all, and we hope that many of you are lucky enough to enjoy them at your feeder during this winter! [Read the full article here](#)

Pine Siskins Have Taken Over the Country!

Via the National Audubon Society

If you've never seen a Pine Siskin, this is your year! In the past month, these birds have irrupted in astounding numbers! They have been moving southward into the United States in search of food and inundating backyard feeders across the country. Without question, it's one of the biggest irruption years in recorded history for the finches.

Brown and heavily striped with a flash of bright yellow on their wings and tails, Pine Siskins are typically found in abundance across Canada, and to a lesser extent in the U.S., in northern states and higher elevations of the west and northeast, as well as parts of Mexico. This year, though, they are everywhere in-between with reports already coming in from Butler and Preble counties. Keep an eye out for these birds while they're here! [Read the full article here](#)



MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Marlene Hoffman

Randy Morgan

Steve Sullivan

Mickey Simonds

Peggy Branstrator

Mark Gilmore

APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Audit
Citizen Science
Larry Gersbach

Conservation
Dick Munson

Education
Libby Birch

Field Trips
Eric Hollins

Finance
Neil Poppendeck

Membership Beverly
Thomas
membership@audubonmv.org

Newsletter
Alexandria Horne
newsletter@audubonmv.org

Programs
Hardy Eshbaugh

Website
Liz Woedl
website@audubonmv.org

Rare Bird Sightings in the Area

Loggerhead Shrike at Conrey Road Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary on August 30th

American Avocet at Cleves Community Park on August 30th

Parasitic Jaeger at Caesar's Creek on October 7th

Rufous hummingbird at a residence in Germantown on October 14th

Nelson's Sparrow at Ellis Lake Wetlands on October 16th

American White Pelican at Hueston Woods on October 17th

White-Winged Scoter & Black Scoter at Caesar's Creek on October 30th

Northern Saw-whet Owl at Hueston Woods on October 30th

National Audubon Society Addresses Election Winners

Via the National Audubon Society

"Birds are telling us there is no time to lose for bold, equitable and durable action on climate."

In a statement from National Audubon Society President and CEO, David Yarnold: "People are rising up to demand action on climate change and racial equity. And birds are telling us there is no time to lose: more than two-thirds of North American birds are threatened with extinction because of climate change. We need bold, equitable, and durable action on climate. That's why Audubon's 1.9 million members are helping to lead this movement. Rural and urban, progressive and conservative, Black college students and white grandparents all agree that everyone regardless of race or ethnicity should have access to clean air and water and feel safe and welcome in the outdoors.

"Now that the votes have been counted, it's important that the rule of law is respected and the peaceful transition of power proceeds as it has since the founding of our nation. The tone of this election season put a spotlight on the deep divisions in our nation. Audubon members are deeply troubled by the racist, sexist and homophobic rhetoric present in some campaigns. These divisions make it even harder to address climate change and to protect the places both birds and people need to thrive. But Audubon members know there is a better way forward—one that lifts up all people and creates a healthier, more resilient world.

"We have a long history as community builders, and because we are local everywhere, our membership reflects America. Our membership is 53 percent progressive and 47 percent moderate/conservative, and we have members in nearly every county in the United States. [Read the full article here](#)



AMV Christmas Bird Count - Saturday, December 19, 2020

Join us for AMV's 121st Annual Christmas Bird Count. The data collected from this count, combined with other surveys, provide a picture of how the continents' bird populations have changed over the years. Local trends provide strategies for protecting birds and their habitats. They can also signal an immediate environmental threat such as groundwater contamination or poisoning from improper use of pesticides.

Due to COVID, the Bird Count will be a bit different this year. Participants will not be gathering before & after the outing. Instead, volunteers will be assigned areas and will travel on their own to make their observations. Social distancing will be maintained; traveling separately unless with family members will be required.

Everyone is welcome to participate, regardless of experience. New participants can join groups led by experts covering portions of the count area. Anyone wishing to join the count should contact Larry Gersbach (513-310-0195 or larrygers@aol.com) and he will provide details, count sheets and area maps.

Volunteers who joined us in the past will be given preference to cover the same areas they had last year. We are also asking folks who do not wish to venture out that day to observe the bird activity around their home bird feeders & yards. This information can be forwarded to Larry Gersbach and would be greatly appreciated.

Please join us in this important citizen science event. No matter if you are a beginner or accomplished birder, an enjoyable walk outside with nature looking for birds will refresh the soul. For more details, [view our website.](#)

How the Race for a COVID-19 Vaccine Jeopardizes East Coast Shorebirds

Via the National Audubon Society



Vaccine production requires the blood of horseshoe crabs, whose eggs are a vital food source for several species, including Red Knots. A synthetic replacement for the blood exists, but the United States is stuck in the past.

In the past few weeks, a couple of updates from the pharmaceutical industry provided some highly anticipated good news about the COVID-19 pandemic. First, on November 9, the drug company Pfizer announced that it had seen exceptional results in early clinical trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine candidate, which Pfizer developed with the German company BioNTech, has proven effective in 95 percent of trial participants, with no significant safety concerns. And on November 16, Moderna announced that its own vaccine candidate had achieved 94.5 percent efficacy in early trials.

Both vaccines have the potential to be crucial tools for fighting COVID-19, which has so far killed more than a quarter of a million Americans and is poised to kill thousands more with U.S. infection rates currently on the rise. But while they could save millions of human lives, Pfizer's and Moderna's vaccines may end up having consequences few people realize; the surge in vaccine production and testing could affect migrating shorebirds, especially the threatened rufa Red Knot. That's because both the birds and the pharmaceutical companies depend on the same animal: the horseshoe crabs of the Delaware Bay. [Read the full article here.](#)



Upcoming Field Trips



Each month (excluding July and August), Audubon Miami Valley 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; AMV members are always happy to share their knowledge and help beginning birders. We have a limited number of binoculars available for use during field trips.

For the foreseeable future, field trips will have to comply with the best available guidance for minimizing transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Wearing masks and maintaining appropriate social distancing will require cooperation of all participants. Traditional practices such as car-pooling or sharing binoculars may have to be suspended. Site specific requirements and cancellation of scheduled trips will be a possibility. Visit our website at audubonmv.org for the latest updates.

More information is available at on the [events page](#) of our website. If you have any questions, email AMV field trip coordinator Eric Hollins at ehollins@amvohio.org

December 5, 2020 Brookville Lake Area

Ornithologist Dr. David Russell will again lead us on a birding tour of the Brookville Reservoir area between Liberty and Brookville, Indiana. We'll visit a number of good spots around Brookville Lake as well as Whitewater State Park, looking for migrating ducks, geese, gulls, sandhill cranes and other species. The group will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the west end of the Wal Mart parking lot (on US 27, north of Oxford). Pack food if desired and bring binoculars if possible. View a [map of the area](#).



March 20, 2021 The Oxbow

This will be a self-guided trip. Please check our [website for details](#).

[Oxbow, Inc.](#) is a nonprofit organization formed by conservation groups and concerned citizens of Ohio and Indiana for the purpose of preserving and protecting a wetlands ecosystem, locally known as the Oxbow, from industrial development and to preserve the floodplain at the confluence of the Great Miami and Ohio rivers for use as a staging area for the seasonal migrations of waterfowl. This agricultural area is rich in geological, archaeological, and anthropological history.

April 11, 2021 Edge of Farm

Please [check our website](#) for updates on this field trip.

May 8 & 9, 2021 Arc of Appalachia

Please [check our website](#) for updates on this field trip.

Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley Programs

AMV will be meeting **DIGITALLY** via Zoom on the following dates at 7:30 PM. These meetings are free and open to the public. Please visit our website at audubonmv.org for information on attending digitally.

HOW TO ATTEND

- Below each program description will be a **link** to the digital meeting click on this link to join.
- You will need to enter a **passcode** to access the meeting. These are also provided under each description.
- If you would like to use your phone for audio during our programs (instead of your computer), call 1-646-558-8656 and you will be able to hear the audio through your phone.



December 14, 2020 Changing Climate, Changing Forests: How New Climate Normals are Shaping Future Forests and their Avian Inhabitants

Presenter – Lindsey Rustad, Ph. D



Dr. Lindsey Rustad

The climate of northeastern North America has changed markedly over the past 100 years and computer models for the region forecast more change to come. “Changing Climate, Changing Forests” traces the rise in greenhouse gases and changes in climate at global and local scales, and summarizes the past, present and potential future impacts of these changes on northeastern forests. We will discuss adaptation and mitigation strategies to conserve our forest and wildlife resources. Lindsey is a research ecologist with the USDA Forest Service Center for Research on Ecosystem Change in Durham, NH and co-director of the Northeastern Hub for Risk Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change. She has several Distinguished Science awards from USDA and in 2019, was selected as an AAAS IF.THEN Ambassador representing women in STEM.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3h8ZwUs> **Passcode:** 368556

February 8, 2021 Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration

Presenters - Kim and Kenn Kaufman – Black Swamp Bird Observatory

Every spring, billions of birds sweep north, driven by instinct to return to their breeding grounds. This vast parade often goes unnoticed—except in a few places where these small travelers concentrate in big numbers. One such place is along the Lake Erie shoreline just east of Toledo, Ohio. There, the peak of spring migration is so spectacular that it attracts bird watchers from around the globe, culminating in one of the biggest bird festivals anywhere. In this program, author Kenn Kaufman, will describe the science and magic of spring bird migration through this region. His wife Kimberly will also join us with a brief update on the bird research, education, and conservation work at Black Swamp Bird Observatory.



Kim & Kenn Kaufman

Link: <https://bit.ly/34MBLOz> **Passcode:** 368747

March 8, 2021 The Birds and the Trees - Trees for Landscapes and Attracting Birds

Presenter – Scott Zanon



This presentation will concentrate on flowering trees to consider for your property. We will also discuss trees that attract birds; some good - some bad. Scott Zanon is an accomplished gardener. He holds a BS degree in both Agronomy and Horticulture from The Ohio State University. Scott has written 2 landscaping books. In June of 2015, he received the Garden Writers Association Silver Award of Achievement for his most recent book. Scott resides in the Columbus (Ohio) suburb of Upper Arlington, a Tree City USA community.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3oLtrq2> **Passcode:** 489944

April 12, 2021 Bird Conservation at the Human-Wildlife Interface: Tackling the Domestic Cat Challenge

Presenter – Grant Sizemore

Domestic cats (*Felis catus*) are a pervasive threat to birds across the country. This talk will examine the magnitude of the risks associated with at-large domestic cats and identify solutions that benefit cats, birds, and people. Grant Sizemore earned degrees in Zoology and Environmental Science from Miami University and an M.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida. He has worked professionally in wildlife conservation since leaving school and is now the Director of Invasive Species Programs at American Bird Conservancy.



Grant Sizemore

Link: <https://bit.ly/3oIarZP> **Passcode:** 240044



May 10, 2021 Freeze-tolerant Frogs

Presenter – Clara do Amaral



Dr. Amaral

Dr. Clara do Amaral will share with us one of her favorite research topics, “cryoprotectant strategies”, used by freeze-tolerant frogs. A cryoprotectant is a substance used to protect biological tissue from freezing damage during cold winter periods. Dr. Amaral began studying amphibian and reptile biology at the University of Lisbon, Portugal where she did her undergraduate degree. She then completed a M.S. in Biology at Western Kentucky University and a Ph.D. (2014) in Zoology from Miami University.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3244som>

Passcode: 632545



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 newsletter@audubonmv.org or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Contribution deadline for the Spring 2021 newsletter is April 1st.

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

