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

Meet Hueston Woods State Park's New Manager



Kathryn Conner

Kathryn Conner became the new park manager of Hueston Woods State Park and Sycamore State Park on October 24th. She holds an associate degree in Natural and Historical Interpretation from Hocking College. Kathryn has been working with ODNR for the past five years as a Naturalist for Hueston Woods and Pymatuning State Park. She previously worked for Amtrak of Ohio as an assistant operator. Kathryn is an avid volunteer and focuses her time on conservation and humanitarian efforts. She loves spending time with her husband Shawn, one-year old son Aiden and their dog Lily. Kathryn looks forward to making the park a better place for visitors, staff, and wildlife.

Hueston Woods Breaks Ground on New Nature Center



Rendering of HWSP's new nature center

On October 1st, ground was broken on the new nature center coming to Hueston Woods! The building will provide about 1,000 square-feet of exhibit space. Engaging and interactive exhibits await visitors of all ages, including larger terrariums for native non-releasable wildlife and Big Woods-themed displays.

Other features include an improved bird-viewing area and an overview of the park's geological history. The current nature center will remain open during construction. You also can explore the recently re-built raptor enclosure behind the current nature center. This area is home to the park's non-releasable mammals and birds of prey, including, hawks, owls, falcons, vultures, and bald eagles. Please be mindful during your visit that you are near an active construction zone. Park staff is asking visitors to avoid approaching the fenced-in construction area. The new nature center is expected to be completed in summer 2022.

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 set up contact free pickup. Be sure to check our website next fall for the 2022 sale information. Thank you to our volunteers who helped at seed pickup (*pictured left*). From left to right: Jeff Davis, Jim Michael, Neil Poppendeck, Marlene Hoffman and Beth Davis.

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Programs

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Dan Gladish

Mike Wright

Publications

Alexandria Horne

Publicity

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Contact us
AudubonMV@gmail.com

Earth Expeditions Scholarship Recipient Shares Her Experience



Samantha Norris

Scholarship recipient Samantha Norris recently traveled to the South American Country of Guyana. AMV provided Samantha with a \$1,000 scholarship in collaboration with Miami University's Project Dragonfly. The scholarship supports local educators who advocate for environmental stewardship and global understanding. Samantha describes her experience below.

Guyana was the first place I've ever traveled where the people I encountered were completely self-reliant on the land around them. While not a well-known travel destination, I was fortunate to go there with my Project Dragonfly classmates during July 2021.

Surama village is an Amerindian village in the Rupununi region of Guyana. It is a primarily agricultural society, but has also created an eco-lodge that brings in ecotourism monies to help sustain the community. While we were in Surama, we found a way of life that is completely self-sufficient. Electricity for the entire community is provided by solar panels and water comes from wells in the community. The people of Surama do not rely at all on the Guyanese government, rather they rely on their own knowledge of the land and their own hands to keep them going. The people I met were kind and genuine. The place was breathtaking and magical. The experiences I had there changed how I see my day-to-day life, and I learned from my time there just how to enjoy the air, water, and space around me. Each person I met in the village had a wealth of knowledge about the land and the animals around them - even the children. They could identify birds flying overhead that I could barely make out, they had extensive knowledge of the plants growing and how to use them in a multitude of ways.





Surama has become the "happy place" I visit in my memory when I can't take the stress and pressures of everyday life. The people in this village taught me so much about how to live, and there is not a week that has gone by where I think "this would be so different in Guyana."

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Audubon Miami Valley for helping me travel to this magnificent country. My time there truly changed my life and inspires me daily to protect and conserve the beauty of nature around me.

Eastern Bluebird Nesting Project Update



AMV's Eastern Bluebird Nesting Project, located at the Hueston Woods Golf Course, began in the spring of 2017 with the installation of 38 bluebird nesting boxes. Each year, volunteers monitor and record the activity in these boxes. Below are the results for this year as well as the overall project totals to date.

Species	Birds that have matured and left nest (fledglings)	
	2021 total	Overall total (2017-2021)
 Eastern Bluebird	52	311
 Tree Swallow	141	478
 House Wren	39	368
 Carolina Wren	0	9

AMV Eastern Bluebird Nesting Project Results

Audubon Miami Valley's 9th annual Bird Art Exhibition and Festival - February 26



Our annual Bird Art Exhibition and Festival seeks to educate students on birds of the Midwest, birds of the Mississippi Flyway and how Climate Change is affecting bird populations and behaviors.

Artwork Submission Rules:

- We welcome young artists/birders to enter their works.
- The artwork may be made using any 2-dimensional art material.
- The artwork must depict birds in some way.
- Those submitting artwork must be in grades K-12.
- Students must be from a school district within 30 miles of Oxford.
- Artists submitting work will receive a ribbon, gift bag & certificate.

How to Participate

Those interested in participating should contact Libby Birch at ebirch479@gmail.com

Event Location

[Oxford Community Art Center](#)

10 South College Avenue, Oxford, Ohio 45056

Event Details

- The event is free and open to the public
- Will feature hands-on children's activities and a puppet show.
- Runs from 10am – 3pm on Saturday, February 26, 2022.

Family, artists and friends are invited to view the exhibition artwork from February 26 - March 4, 2022 at the Oxford Community Art Center.

AMV Christmas Bird Count – Saturday, December 18, 2021

Did you know that during the AMV 2020 Christmas Bird Count, we set a record for the most species ever recorded at the event with 83 individual species counted!

Join us for AMV's 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, participants will not be gathering before or 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 and yards. This information can be forwarded to Larry Gersbach at larrygers@aol.com 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](#).

Join us as we attempt to break last year's record of 83 species!

Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley 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. For the foreseeable future, field trips will have to comply with the best available guidance for minimizing transmission of the COVID-19 virus. 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

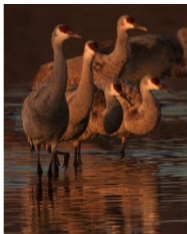
HOW TO ATTEND

- We invite participants to meet us at the destination or
- Meet at the TJ Maxx parking lot in Oxford (550 South Locust Street), unless otherwise noted, to follow our trip leaders to the destination. Times are listed in each trip's description.



AMV Germantown MetroPark Field Trip ©Jim Michael

December 4, 2021 Brookville Lake Area



Location: Dunlapsville Boat Ramp parking area at Brookville Reservoir. [Dunlapsville Boat Ramp - Google Maps](#)

Ornithologist Dr. David Russell will lead us on a birding tour of the Brookville Reservoir area as we visit a number of good spots around Brookville Lake as well as Whitewater State Park. We will be looking for migrating ducks, geese, gulls, sandhill cranes and other species. Please bring a personal lunch if you would like to join us for an informal picnic mid-day. If meeting at destination, arrive at 8 am. If meeting in Oxford, meet at the west side of the **Walmart** parking lot (3720 College Corner Pike, Oxford) at 7:30 am.

January 8, 2022 Wise Woods



Location: 7416 W Alexandria Rd, Middletown, OH 45042. [Google Maps](#)

Brian and Donna Wise will host this afternoon visit to their habitat preserve in northeast Butler County. The Wise preserve is notable in spring and summer for an abundance of native orchids. Year-round, the property exhibits a surprising variety of habitats and biological diversity that have benefitted from restoration and improvement projects initiated by the owners. Recently, a significant population of Rusty Blackbirds have congregated in wetlands on this preserve during early winter and may be available for observation during our visit. If meeting in Oxford, arrive at 2:30 pm. If meeting at destination, arrive at 3:15pm.

February 19, 2022 Ruder Preserve

Location: DeWitt Cabin parking lot, SR 73 (Oxford Trenton Rd) in Oxford. The lot is adjacent to the Four Mile Creek bridge. [DeWitt Cabin Parking - Google Maps](#)



Ruder Preserve ©Three Valley Conservation Trust

During the Great Backyard Bird Count, AMV will visit parts of our own backyard. Sites will include the Ruder Preserve, DeWitt cabin, Miami Natural Areas bird blind and a bank stabilization project on Four Mile creek. Our expedition will meander down a 2-mile loop trail that incorporates segments of the Oxford Recreation Trail, Miami Natural Areas Trail, and Three Valley Conservation Trust trail and boardwalk at Ruder Preserve. The combination of stream, riparian forest, and pasture habitats provides shelter for overwintering birds and other wildlife on the edge of urban Oxford. Please bring a personal lunch or trail snacks if you would like to join us for an informal picnic during our walk. Since the preserve is location in Oxford, we ask all participants to meet at the destination at 11 am. [Click here](#) to read more about the Preserve. A trail map is available [online here](#).

March 19, 2022 - Fernald Preserve



Location: 7400 Willey Road, Hamilton, Ohio. [Fernald Preserve Visitors Center - Google Maps](#)

Clean up and restoration programs have been underway for almost 30 years at this 1,050-acre preserve. Today, an extensive network of ponds and wetlands provides excellent habitat for migrating waterfowl and March is a peak month to see these birds resting here on their way north. If meeting in Oxford, arrive at 8:15 am. If meeting at destination, arrive at 9 am. Learn more about [Fernald at this website](#).

Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley Programs

AMV will now be offering programs on the following dates at 7:30 PM. **WHEN POSSIBLE** programs will be held both in-person and digitally (via Zoom). Be sure to view each program description to see if it will be held digitally-only. These programs are free, open to the public, and typically run until 9:00 PM. **If attending in person**, programs are now held at the Oxford Presbyterian Church's Seminary Sanctuary located on the second floor at 104 East Church Street in Oxford. Be sure to [check our website](#) prior to attending for the latest updates.

ATTENDING IN-PERSON

Programs are now held at the Oxford Presbyterian Church's Seminary Sanctuary located on the second floor of the building at 104 East Church Street in Oxford. Please note, this building is separate from the main church building located on Main Street.

Main Church

Seminary Sanctuary



HOW TO ATTEND DIGITALLY

- Below each program description will be a **link** to the digital meeting. Go to this website to attend.
- 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 13, 2021 (virtual only) - A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds

Presenter – Scott Weidensaul



Scott Weidensaul

Even as scientists make astounding discoveries about the navigational and physiological feats that enable migratory birds to cross immense oceans or fly above the highest mountains, go weeks without sleep or remain in unbroken flight for months at a stretch, humans have brought many migrants to the brink. Based on his newest book "A World on the Wing," author and researcher Scott Weidensaul takes you around the globe -from the shores of the Yellow Sea in China, to the remote mountains of northeastern India and the Mediterranean -- to learn how people are fighting to understand and save the world's great bird migrations.

Weidensaul's writing career began in 1978 with a weekly natural history column which led to a fulltime newspaper job he held until 1988 when he left to become a freelance writer specializing in nature and wildlife. He has written more than thirty books, including his widely acclaimed *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds*, which became a finalist for the 2000 Pulitzer Prize. His latest book, *A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds*, was published in March 2021. Weidensaul is an active field researcher whose work focuses on bird migration. He is co-director of Project OwlNet, a collaborative effort among nearly 125 banding research stations across North America studying owl migration. Weidensaul co-founded Project SNOWstorm, which uses cutting-edge tracking technology to study snowy owls. He is also part of a continental effort to understand the rapid evolution, by several species of western hummingbirds, of a new migratory route and wintering range in the East.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3uUe80q> **Passcode:** 424848

February 14, 2021– Title of this program will be posted on [our website](#) soon

Presenter – Wendi Van Buren

As an Urban Forester for ODNR Division of Forestry, Wendi works with municipalities and townships to develop their tree programs, serving the 14 counties in southwest Ohio. Before working for ODNR, she worked for the City of Cincinnati and at TreePeople in Los Angeles.

Link: <https://bit.ly/31T26LF>

Passcode: 412846

March 14, 2021– State Of Urban Forestry in Hamilton, OH

Presenter – Dave Bienemann

Dave is Hamilton's City Arborist. He is on the Ohio Chapter ISA Board of Directors as the Past President. He is also on the Ohio Tree Care Conference Committee serving both Municipal and Utility Tracks. He serves on the State of Ohio Urban Forestry Advisory Committee as the Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA) Representative.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3wSYiFF>

Passcode: 603409

Show off Those Bird Photos!

We invite Audubon Miami Valley members to send us their favorite bird photos taken in the area. We will feature member photos both in our newsletter and on our website. If you have a great bird photo to share, send it to us at audubonmv@gmail.com Be sure to include the location of the photo and the date it was taken.

The photos below were taken on October 17th by Jon Costanzo at Quail Ridge Farm in Preble County. Great shots Jon! Thanks for sharing them with us!



Henslow's Sparrow ©Jon Costanzo



Song Sparrow ©Jon Costanzo



Lincoln's Sparrow ©Jon Costanzo



Eastern Bluebirds ©Jon Costanzo



House Wren ©Jon Costanzo



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, Eric Hollins, and Gail Reynolds are the proofreaders. 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 2022 newsletter is March 1st.

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