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**AMV 2022 OFFICERS**

President  
Neil Poppendeck

Vice President  
Liz Woodl

Treasurer  
Beverly Thomas

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 Winter. Find the details both in this newsletter and at our website [audubonmv.org](http://audubonmv.org)

**AMV Bird Seed Sale a Huge Success!**

Thank you to all who participated in our 44th bird seed sale; it was a HUGE success! Thanks to [Shademakers Garden Center](#) and staff for hosting, especially Kevin Wilson. Please keep them in mind for your garden needs. This year, AMV donated seed to the Miami University Bird Blind and Hueston Woods Nature Center. Thanks to your continued support, local birds will be supported this winter and AMV can continue having a positive impact on the local environment. Thank you to our volunteers who helped at seed pickup. If you would like to receive an order form via e-mail next year, let us know by e-mailing at [audubonMV@gmail.org](mailto:audubonMV@gmail.org)

**Support AMV While You Shop on Amazon**

Tis the season for shopping! Did you know that AMV is registered as a charity on Amazon? If you select AMV as your charity, Amazon donates 0.5% of each purchase you make to AMV. When shopping online, go to the Amazon Smile website at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and chose "Audubon Miami Valley" as your charity and shop away! Thank you in advance!

**amazon smile**  
You shop. Amazon gives.

Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) Each Time You Shop. A Portion of Your Purchase Will Support Barnert!

**It's as Easy as 1-2-3!**

- 1 Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)
- 2 Select Barnert Temple as Your Charity
- 3 Shop!

**Save the Date - AMV Bird Art Exhibition and Festival – March 18**

Our Annual Bird 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. In addition to artwork, there will be hands-on children's activities. We welcome young artists and birders to enter art works for the exhibition. Artists submitting work will receive a ribbon, gift bag and certificate. Check [audubonmv.org](http://audubonmv.org) for more information.



Past art show submission



## MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Marlene Hoffman

Randy Morgan

Beth Davis

Peggy Branstrator

Mark T. Gilmore

Kathryn Yurek

## APPOINTED COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Advocacy

Peggy Branstrator

### Conservation

Dick Munson

### Education

Libby Birch

Beth Davis

### Field Trips

Eric Hollins

### Finance

Beverly Thomas

### Membership & Publications

Alexandria Horne

### Programs

Mickey Simonds

Dan Gladish

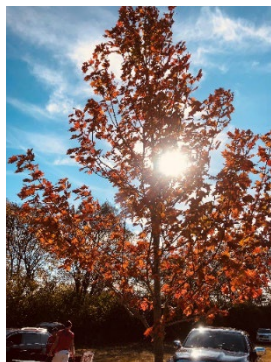
### Publicity

Liz Woeld

Contact us  
AudubonMV@gmail.com



## Plant More Trees!



Red maple planted by AMV

Trees provide food, nesting, and protection for birds and other wildlife. They clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. They provide shade to help decrease fossil fuel use. And of course, they're beautiful! These are a few of the reasons why AMV worked with David Treleven, Oxford's Environmental Engineer, and Kevin Wilson at Shademakers Garden Center, to plant 3 native trees (a sweetgum, red maple (pictured), and tulip poplar). They are planted near the OATS trail along Bonham Road. I hope all of you get a chance to enjoy their shade and beauty in the future.

## AMV's Annual Christmas Bird Count is December 17th



Be a part of the National Audubon Society's 120th winter bird census, involving thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada, and other countries. AMV is responsible for the census in a 15-mile diameter circle around Oxford. Participants work in groups, so both experienced and inexperienced birders are welcome. The count is on **Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**. We will begin at **7:00 AM**.

This is the largest citizen science project in the world. The data collected from this count, combined with other surveys, provide a picture of how bird populations have changed over the years. Local trends can provide strategies for protecting birds and their habitats.

Participants will be assigned areas to hike & count and may meet directly at their designated area. Volunteers who joined us in the past will be given preference to cover the same areas they had last year. Everyone is welcome to participate, regardless of experience. New participants can join groups led by experts covering a portion of the count area. Anyone wishing to participate in the count should contact Larry Gersbach at 513-310-0195 or [larrygers@aol.com](mailto:larrygers@aol.com)

We are also asking those 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](mailto:larrygers@aol.com) and would be greatly appreciated.

Please consider joining us for this important citizen science event. No matter if you are a beginner or an accomplished birder, an enjoyable walk outside with nature looking for birds will refresh the soul.

If you can't make it to our event, please consider participating in the National Audubon's event detailed below.

### Join us after the count for a potluck luncheon

Time: 12:00 pm

Miami University Ecological Research Center  
5806 Somerville Road  
Oxford, Ohio 45056



## National Audubon Christmas Bird Count December 14<sup>th</sup> - January 5<sup>th</sup>



Excitement is building as we wonder whether boreal raptors, winter finches, or both, will grace our binoculars in the months ahead! Preparations are well under way for the upcoming Christmas Bird Count (CBC), which will take place **December 14, 2022 – January 5, 2023**. Compilers are already entering the scheduled dates of their upcoming counts, plus info about their counts for potential participants.

The National Audubon Society looks forward to running another COVID-safe Christmas Bird Count this season, with [updated guidelines](#) in place. To participate on a Christmas Bird Count either as a field counter or feeder watcher, please [visit this page](#) to find a count near you.

If you're curious about last year's CBC, [take a look at the results](#) which included a wayward and awesome Steller's Sea-Eagle. Who knows what this season will bring!

## AMV Bluebird Project Update







Bluebird house at Hueston Woods Golf Course

For the past six years, Audubon Miami Valley has been monitoring 38 Eastern Bluebird nest boxes on the Hueston Woods State Park Golf Course. The boxes are monitored by various AMV members on a weekly basis from mid-March through mid-September after which, the boxes are cleaned out and left open for the winter season. If the boxes are left closed, various local woodpecker species will enlarge the entrance hole to seek winter protection making repairs necessary the following spring.

On two occasions, Cowbird (a nest parasite) eggs have been found in Tree Swallow nests. In a few other cases, it was apparent that either raccoons or black rat snakes raided the nests and ate the eggs or hatchlings. The predation problem was solved with the application of petroleum jelly on the PVC pipes that surround the fence posts on which the houses are mounted.

### Overall Results

Species	Birds that have matured and left nest (fledglings) Overall total
 Eastern Bluebird	391
 Tree Swallow	591
 House Wren	385
 Carolina Wren	9

The monitoring program will continue in 2023 with the goal of increasing the populations of our native species, particularly Eastern Bluebirds. We encourage our members to setup bluebird nesting boxes only if you accept the responsibility that goes along with them. To learn if your property is suitable for a bluebird nesting box, visit the North American Bluebird Society's website at [nabluebirdsociety.org](http://nabluebirdsociety.org)



## Will the rare Steller's Sea Eagle return to Maine this winter?



Steller's Sea eagle Photo by Downeast Audubon

On the morning of New Year's Eve (December 31, 2021), more than 200 birders descended on Georgetown to catch sight of a rare Steller's Sea eagle, a wayward raptor from Asia that had been making its way around North America. By afternoon, reports estimated twice that many had rushed to see the bird at Five Islands harbor on the Maine coast. In the following weeks, more than 1,000 birders descended on the Midcoast from all over the country to catch a glimpse. By the time the massive raptor moved on to Newfoundland in April, the sea eagle had attained rock-star status among birders. [Visit this website](#) to learn more about this eagle's travels. Now the big question is: Will the bird again choose Maine as its wintering grounds?

A Twitter account, [@WanderingSTSE](#), that is currently tracking the bird's whereabouts posted on November 14<sup>th</sup> that the eagle may have been spotted in Newfoundland....



November 14 Tweet by @WanderingSTSE

## 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. 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](http://audubonmv.org) For questions, email AMV field trip coordinator at [eric\\_hollins@hotmail.com](mailto:eric_hollins@hotmail.com)

### **HOW TO ATTEND**

We invite participants to meet us at the destination at the time listed (unless otherwise noted). Times are listed in each trip's description. Be sure to check our website at [audubonmv.org](http://audubonmv.org) for the latest information on field trips and other events.



### **December 3, 2022 – Brookville Lake Area**



*Location: Dunlapsville Boat Ramp - 3198 S. Old Dunlapsville Rd, Liberty, IN 47353*  
Ornithologist Dr. David Russell will once again lead us on a birding tour of the [Brookville Reservoir](#) area between Liberty and Brookville, Indiana, visiting 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. Please bring a personal lunch if you would like to join us for an informal picnic mid-day.

If meeting in Oxford to carpool, note that we are meeting at the west side of the **Walmart** parking lot located at 3720 College Corner Pike at **7:30 am**. If traveling directly to the destination, arrive at **8:00 am**.

[Dunlapsville Boat Ramp - Google Maps](#)

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### **January 14, 2023 – Cope Environmental Center**

*Location: 1730 Airport Road, Centerville, Indiana 47330*



The mission of [Cope Environmental Center](#) is to promote the sustainable use of the Earth's resources through education, demonstration, and research. The vision is to inspire and challenge individuals and communities to achieve ecologically sustainable lifestyles to secure a sustainable future for all life on Earth. This property demonstrates the green lifestyle vision in the Cope Sustainability Education Center that is powered by solar panels, heated by geothermal, and regulated with a digital

lighting and temperature system. We will meet at noon for a guided tour of the Sustainability Education Center, followed by exploration of the outdoor trails. The variety and proximity of habitats will provide an opportunity to learn about and possibly see bird species wintering in this area. Meet at the destination at **12:00 pm**.

[Cope Environmental Center - Google Maps](#)

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### **February 19, 2023 – Hueston Woods State Park**

*Location: 6301 Park Office Road, Oxford, Ohio 45056*



Audubon's annual Great Backyard Bird Count will be observed February 17-20 this year. To celebrate, AMV will visit a birding site in our "backyard." [Hueston Woods State Park](#) boasts a new Nature Center, is recognized by Audubon as an Important Bird Area, preserves old-growth forest in its designated State Nature Preserve, and is the home of the Avian Research and Education Institute Bird Banding Station.

Retired Bureau of Land Management Biologist, Sam Fitton, will lead us on a series of visits to birding opportunities at the marina, Nature Preserve and other habitat areas. Hueston Woods is recognized by Audubon as an Important Bird Area and includes the 200 acre "Big Woods", a designated National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service. AMV adopted the HW IBA as a stewardship project in 2012 and has conducted habitat restoration events every spring and fall since then. Participants should meet in the parking lot of the new Nature Center at **12:00 pm**.

[6301 Park Office Rd - Google Maps](#)

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### **March 19, 2023 – Gilmore Ponds MetroPark**

*Location: 7950 North Gilmore Road, Hamilton, Ohio 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. Participants should meet in the parking lot of Gilmore Ponds at **9:00 am**. Please bring a personal lunch if you would like to join us for an informal picnic.

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

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## Upcoming Audubon Miami Valley Programs

AMV programs will be held on the following dates at 7:30 PM. These programs are free, open to the public, and typically run until 9:00 PM.

**Location:** Each program speaker will choose if their program will be held in-person or virtually (via Zoom).

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. Virtual programs: a link to the meeting will be posted on our website. Check our website, [audubonmv.org](http://audubonmv.org) to see if a program will be held in-person or virtually.

### **December 12, 2022 - Let's Dig Into Ants: Behavior, Ecology & Ohio's Own** **Presenter – Randy C. Morgan**

**Location:** in-person at Lebanon Citizens National Bank

Small and seemingly everywhere, ants are easy to overlook, taken for granted or disliked as pests. We'll dig a little deeper into their fascinating behavior, celebrate their sophisticated social organization, and explore their vitally important roles as insect predators, soil creators, seed distributors and more. We'll also spotlight some of the amazing ants found in Ohio. You may never look at ants the same way again! Randy has an M.S. in Entomology from the University of Wisconsin. He worked at the Cincinnati Zoo Insectarium for 32 years and is now retired from his position as Curator of Invertebrates, Reptiles & Amphibians.



*Randy Morgan*

At the Zoo he managed a diverse collection of live insects and other small animals for public education and developed world-class exhibits such as the popular Leaf-cutting Ant display. Randy has been fascinated with ants since early childhood and loves to share his passion for these and other little animals that shape our living world. For inquiries, contact Randy at: [RandyAntMorgan@gmail.com](mailto:RandyAntMorgan@gmail.com)

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### **February 13, 2023 - Mastodons and Mammoths: Megafauna in our Midst** **Presenter – Jon Branstrator**

**Location:** in-person at Lebanon Citizens National Bank



*John Branstrator*

AMV member and Oxford resident, Jon Branstrator will describe the ancestry of North American Mastodons, their Midwestern distribution, their demise and their relationships to Mammoths and modern elephants. His program will feature the discovery and excavation of the Overmyer Mastodon specimen recently installed at Cincinnati Science Museum, located in the former Union Railroad station. The specimen was student excavated from a farm in northern Indiana's Fulton County in the summer of 1978 through a joint venture between Earlham and Cincinnati's former Museum of Natural History. This was Earlham's fourth Mastodon find. Jon will also relate information about Joseph Moore Museum, its' origin, development, significant collections, and programs. Jon Branstrator, professor emeritus of Geology at Earlham College, taught geology for 30 years and was the director of the Joseph Moore Museum at Earlham. He holds a PhD in Paleontology and Geology from the University of Cincinnati.

## Fall Volunteer Day at Hueston Woods State Park was Held on October 29<sup>th</sup>

Saturday, October 29, dawned with clear blue skies, bright sunshine, and temperatures in the 40's at Hueston Woods State Park. Invasive species, including amur honeysuckle, autumn olive, multiflora rose and burning bush, have occupied the State Nature Preserve at the Park for over 20 years growing to massive sizes and crowding out native plants. At 10AM, 39 volunteers descended upon these invasives wielding weed wrenches, saws, loppers, and trimmers. By 1PM, all that remained in the three-acre area were large stumps painted red or blue with herbicide and over ten feet high piles of cut vegetation. The volunteers then gathered in the Maple Grove Picnic Area for pizza and sweet deserts. It was magnificent. AMV has removed over 100 acres of invasive species from the Hueston Woods Nature Preserve since 2012. The return of native species, especially spring wildflowers, spice bush and pawpaw trees has been astounding.



*Volunteers at Hueston Woods volunteer day*



Join us on Saturday April 22 for the next invasive removal at Hueston Woods State Park. Below are photos from this October's event.





#### 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](mailto:audubonmv@gmail.com) or to Newsletter, P.O. Box 556, Oxford, Ohio 45056. Contribution deadline for the Spring 2023 newsletter is March 1<sup>st</sup>.

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

