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# THE GOLDFINCH

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2002

MEETINGS EACH 2<sup>ND</sup> MONDAY SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE

AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7<sup>TH</sup> & J.R. BOULEVARD

## Sauerheber Slough's Waterfowl will be December 9 Program

Robert M. "Mike" Morton is a wildlife biologist and the Area Supervisor for The Sloughs Wildlife Management Area in nearby Henderson County. He has recently completed a major project of improvements restoring habitats to the landscape for the resident and migrating waterfowl that depend on the sloughs area for food, resting, and regrouping during migration. Our chapter has enjoyed many field trips to the slough and thus his presentation will be like a homecoming for many of us.

The National Audubon Society, by way of The Kentucky Audubon Council, is in the process of identifying Important Bird Areas, IBA's, in each state. Our chapter has recommended that Sauerheber Slough be classified as an IBA. We are in the process of appointing a representative to the technical committee that will determine the criteria that will be used to determine if the slough belongs in the listing of IBA's.

Our country has lost most of its natural wetlands to agriculture and development of all sorts. December's program will be geared toward Audubon's mission of public education. We will learn about the many reasons that wetlands are vital to a healthy planet for the entire web of life, not only for waterfowl. Also, we will celebrate one accomplishment of man's effort to make the earth a better place for all of us by putting back habitat that are the best we can create. By working with water level, habitat and food supply, Mike Morton has accomplished improvements that send out ripples of benefit to a wide variety of wildlife.

You are invited to meet the speaker at a no-host dinner at the MoonLite, 5:30 PM. See you there.

<http://audubon.wku.edu/daviess/audubon.html>

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### Community College Countdown of Year Number Three

This month will be the 36<sup>th</sup> time that our members have walked the campus at Owensboro's outskirts. We've noted the numbers of each bird species identified each month from the manmade water feature on the front lawn, around behind the buildings and parking lots, and ending at the shallow pond with its brushy island, boardwalk and gazebo. We have documented 96 species to date and while we realize that it is almost impossible, we dream of finding 4 more species to round out the number 100 as year three of our project draws to a close. Let's make a special effort Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM to search high and low, listen with all our might, for numbers 97, 98, 99 and *drum roll....ta da....* ONE HUNDRED!

# Christmas Bird Count Plans for 2002

For the first time in our chapter's almost 30 years, we have registered with The National Audubon Society the area where we are planning our bird count this month. We have scheduled the count for December 21<sup>st</sup> with a weather delay date of the 28<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas Count guidelines require that we assign a minimum of 10 volunteers to count during a 24-hour period within a 15 mile diameter circle. The circle that has been plotted for the count is in the south central portion of Daviess County out just past the beltline, extending south into Ohio County, and west into McClean County.

Mary Kissel will serve as chairman for this year's count. During the next 3 weeks, Mary and some helpers will be driving the backroads for the purpose of planning assignments for the count that will begin just after midnight and will continue until midnight 24 hours later. For the first time, our volunteers will be made up of night owls and early birds in addition to the crew that goes out to count during daylight hours.

It would be very nice if someone (or someone's) would step forward to lend financial support for the count. By registering our count and implementing stricter guidelines, we also must pay \$50 to cover the cost of data collection, compilation, and dissemination. This would make a great gift to the community and even to the continent of North America where hundreds of Audubon Chapters fan out each year during the holidays to conduct this annual citizens' science project. If you would like to sponsor this project, please contact our Treasurer, Tom Hicks at w 684-0211 or h 684-1548 or by email at [cthicks@mindspring.com](mailto:cthicks@mindspring.com)

Mike Henshaw has graciously offered his home to serve as the operations center for the count this year. This is where the counters will meet at 8 AM, again at lunch for potluck, at day's end, and on Sunday

internet.

If you would like to provide food for the hungry counters, please contact Mike or Sherry Henshaw at 275-4250 or by email at [mikesherry@email.msn.com](mailto:mikesherry@email.msn.com). This gang will eat anything, but warm foods, warm in temperature and seasonings are preferred. They also have a strong interest in sweets, high energy fuel enough for 24 hours.

## What Time Does This Meeting Start?

Some of our members have wondered if our meetings are started late because the program begins at 7:30 and refreshments are served before, rather than after, the meeting. There is a method to what seems to be madness.

The half hour of social time with refreshments is very important for friends and people with common interests to share *fish stories* about the ones that didn't get away. If we began the program right at 7 PM, there would be a tendency for people to whisper, even for some to talk more loudly as they give-in to the urge to talk to friends they haven't seen for quite a while. Chapter leaders use this time to recruit volunteers needed for upcoming events and to go over plans in small groups or one-on-one. If all this were going on with a speaker trying to present a program, it would be rude and distracting.

A study recently found that conversation is the best activity for warding off senility and Alzheimer's Disease. This simple back and forth, give and take, yakity yak is better than doing mental exercises such as trivial pursuit, crossword puzzles, and math games. So what looks like mayhem is actually good for you. Eat, drink and talk!



The holidays are a time when paper used in wrapping and packaging plus junk mail crams our trashcans to overflowing. All kinds of paper may be recycled into cardboard. There are two sites in Owensboro that accept paper for recycling. The parking lot behind the National Guard Armory on Parrish Ave. has a large dumpster labeled '**Cardboard**'. Resource Recycling on Grimes Avenue also will accept the paper you sort from your trash that needs to be taken to the landfill. Please try to recycle during all the busyness of the holidays this year. You can help save a tree and lessen the impact on our landfill.

## Calendar

Monday December 9

7 pm Monthly meeting at First Christian Church

Saturday December 21

Christmas Bird Count. This activity is December's Field Trip.

Sunday December 15

Community College Count  
Meet in the parking lot across from Deer Park Elementary at 2 PM

Because there are so many family obligations, so much going on with religious life during the holidays and because of the demands associated with the 24-hour period of the Christmas Bird Count, there is no Directors' Meeting this month.

## Green in the Heart vs Green in the Head

Last week a Canadian lady quit her political job amidst all the hubub after she was overheard calling the U.S. President a moron. Jay Leno quips that the President can't be stupid because he's made it through life living off his family's money, goofing off through college, and spending over 20 years stoned only to become the leader of the free world.

Environmentalists are scared because not a week goes by when advances in preservation of the natural world that took decades to put in place are being pitched out left and right. Does Mr. Bush know that one snowmobile puts out the same amount of pollution as 100 cars? Does he not value Yellowstone National Park? Is he a moron? Is he for sale? Have environmentalists behaved with such fervor that we're perceived as nothing more than a bunch of Chicken Little's?

Blaming President Bush for disregarding environmental quality might be passing the buck because it is hard to hold him to a standard that the population does not know about. How can they care about something they just don't understand? When fewer than 40% of our citizens vote, how can we claim to care about anything? How can democracy work when the very few of us who vote admit that we get most of our political information from being spoon fed by brief entertainment venues on the evening news?

Maybe the Canadian lady would have been telling it more like it really is if she had said, "Americans are morons" ? Whadaya think?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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- For membership in all three: the National Audubon Society, Kentucky Audubon Council, and Daviess County Audubon Society with 10 issues of *The Goldfinch*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 year membership \$30    \_\_\_\_\_ 1 year membership \$20    \_\_\_\_\_ 1 year Student or Senior \$15
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December 2002**

