
THE GOLDFINCH

DAVISS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2005

MEETINGS 2ND MONDAYS SEPT-JUNE AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER BLVD

WILD ABOUT WILDFLOWERS



One of the “cool” things about being outdoorsy nature lovers, into the earth, or the much-maligned term “environmentalists” is that we are more likely to be aware of beauty unseen

by the general population. Most people do not have a clue about wildflowers. They don't know their names, when they bloom or where they grow. This lack of knowledge and therefore appreciation can be attributed to our society's fast paced rat race lifestyle with the lure of the couch and TV drowning-out the attraction of the quiet, tiny beauties that begin to appear in March and are so soon out of bloom for another year. Another aspect of modern life that makes the appreciation of wildflowers more and more difficult as time goes by is that mankind is “developing” areas where they grow, paving paradise, so that the places where wildflowers flourish are getting harder and harder to find.

On Monday, February 7th at 7:30, Steve Hahus will speak about Wildflowers of Kentucky along with a slide presentation of photos he has taken of many that grow in his, and our, backyard. Hahus is a teacher at Apollo High School and is 2nd Vice-President of the Daviess County Audubon Society. The history of the Daviess County Audubon Society has a strong background in wildflowers. Millie Powell, one of the founders of the club, was a lifelong admirer and student of the wildflowers she observed on hikes and bird watching trips. “Ask Millie” was an often-heard piece of advice when anyone needed help identifying a newfound flower.

With the February program, the tradition continues. Make sure you don't miss the '05 show.

Swans Gave us a Rain check

Flooding along the rivers and streams in western Kentucky last month covered the roadways needed for reaching the Tundra Swans in Henderson County in the Sauerheber Slough at the time of our planned field trip. The trip has been rescheduled for 9 AM on Saturday February 5th. [Calendar]

Tundra swans breed way far north in Canada and Alaska, therefore their breeding habits are not well documented. Individuals have been fitted with transmitters when they migrated to the east coast with devices that weigh only 30 grams. These transmitters can track the birds by satellite receivers that mark the bird's location with a global positioning system. At least one of the transmitter birds was tracked to Kentucky.

Ken Hurm is leading the trip and will wait for our birders at the Henderson Community College's parking lot nearest to the traffic light/intersection. Ken expects to depart HCC between 9:45 and 10 AM. The trip is expected to conclude around noon.

J.J. & Lucy / Brad & Jennifer

Then and now, things that endure and things that don't.

A book review by Mary Kissel

The mission: Sell a series of bird pictures for hundreds of dollars without the use of a car, plane or e-mail.

Sound like an episode of "The Apprentice"? Such was the life of John James Audubon, a life richly depicted in Richard Rhodes' new biography, **John James Audubon: The Making of An American.**

The engrossing – and sympathetic – account of the quest to publish "The Birds of America" will delight anyone who has marveled at the exquisite paintings of the 19th-century artist. You will gain a greater appreciation for the masterwork after taking a peek behind the laborious process to gain financing, gather and mount specimens, paint and print these portraits. Such portraits, Rhodes notes, were more than pictures of birds, for many, they were the first glimpses Europeans had of the other side of the Atlantic.

While this is a story set in the 1800s, I kept going back to several themes prevalent 200 years later.

The battle between art and commerce: Audubon's art is only made possible by his ability to raise money through his various enterprises, the most lamentable, his failed mill in Henderson, and seems most content out in the wilderness. Rhodes makes his case for Audubon as business genius, rather than a failure, as he's so often portrayed.

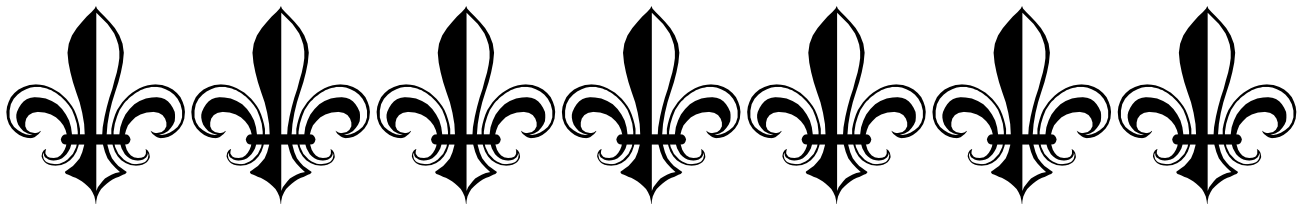
Professional pettiness: Sadly, it's abroad where Audubon's work is most accepted. Particularly damaging to his hopes is his low regard by the cultural elite in the Philadelphia area. Audubon does have his admirers in the scientific community, however, and part of the fun of the book is meeting his contemporaries and saying to yourself, "so that's where a Swainson thrush got its name."

Career versus home life: It doomed Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston after 4 1/2 years. How would they have handled years of separation, sporadic correspondence and the temptations of high society? The real heroine of Audubon's success is the mother bird of the National Audubon Society, Lucy. Her struggles to keep the home fires burning, while encouraging her husband to fulfill his destiny, will have you alternately shaking your head and nodding it in admiration.

Vanishing wilderness: The most poignant parts of this book are details of those species no longer with us, such as Carolina parakeets and passenger pigeons. While Audubon does his fair share of killing creatures in this book, Rhodes puts the acts in context with those times. As he retraces his steps in the Ohio Valley and beyond, Audubon laments the loss of forests to the growing nation and the slaughter of birds and beasts for sport and economic gain. Sound familiar?

Be sure to note the dedication and acknowledgment pages. Rhodes praises our friend and former president, **Don Boorman**, for his help in researching the life of this American original.

John James Audubon: Making of An American is available at Books-A-Million, and two copies are available at the Daviess County Public Library.



February Calendar

Saturday February 5th

Field Trip to Sauerheber Slough

Meet at the GRADD parking lot next door to the Joe Ford Nature Center. Carpool and caravan will depart at 9 AM. For more information contact Ken Hurm khurm@adelphia.net or Charles Morris 926-8803 .

Monday February 10th

Monthly Meeting of the Daviess County Audubon Society at 7 PM at First Christian Church. Use the portico entry on J.R. Miller Boulevard.

KOS FIELD TRIP - February 12, 2005: Ohio County, Peabody Wildlife Management Area for waterfowl, hawks, and owls. Pat and Jane Bell, Leaders (502.326.9610), meet at Arby's in the service center on the Western Kentucky Parkway at 8:00 AM CST, bring lunch.

Monday February 14th

Valentine's Day and Anniversary of Daviess County Audubon Society First meeting was held on this day in 1967 at the Owensboro Science Museum on Sycamore Street. Frank Abrams was elected President. 38 years of doing well AND doing good.

The Weekend, Friday the 18th-
through Monday the 21st

Great Backyard Bird Count

It's the 8th year of this Citizen Science project. Daviess County Audubon Society has a goal of recruiting 8 members and 1 school class to participate. Tally sheets may be downloaded from the Internet and will be available at the February 10th meeting.

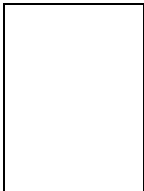
Asset Recovery Services

One, only one, of the many difficulties in the process of replacing a PC or other type of computer and its peripheral equipment [desktops, notebooks, servers, storage, networking, monitors, printers, projectors, and c peripherals such as keyboards and mice] is what to do with the old "stuff". For most people the "old stuff" has no resale value, is not wanted by educational or charitable organizations, but should not be disposed with the garbage which eventually goes to the landfill.

Dell is now offering two possible recycling choices:

Value Recovery –Dell will pass along the money received from the sale of your "stuff" if it is new enough for resale.

Recycling – Dell will recycle used equipment that has n



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