
THE GOLDFINCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

APRIL 2005

MEETINGS 2ND MONDAYS SEPTEMBER-JUNE

1ST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER

AUDUBON STATE PARK IS A JEWEL

MICAH PERKINS, NATURALIST, &
NEWSLETTER EDITOR FOR THE PARK
WILL PRESENT A PROGRAM APRIL 11TH
TOUTING EVENTS AND OFFERINGS
UNDERWAY AT THE STATE PARK IN
NEARBY HENDERSON, KENTUCKY.

Perkins who only recently has made Owensboro his home, is a native of Pekin, IL. He was educated at Murray and then went to the University of Nebraska for his Masters. Perkins came to Kentucky following work with research and management of birds and mammals in southwest Georgia.

Everyone is invited to a 5:30 PM no-host dinner before the April meeting for an opportunity to get to know our program presenter. We're eating at Niko's Italian Cuisine at 2200 E. Parrish Ave. Mary Sublett, an Audubon Society member, will provide harp music and there will be a \$2 per person cover charge to help with the club's cost of the meal for our speaker and his guest. Please phone Niko's 852-1618 to ask for a place to be reserved for you at the Audubon Table.

"You're standing in
the best wildflower
garden there is." Those

were the words of an aficionado sharing the trail with us on the last Saturday in March as Mary Dee Miller, Park Manager at Audubon State Park, described the crane fly orchid she found recently on an off-trail walk in the Park. Winter, when only its leaves are present, is the best time for finding this orchid. Its stalk, with demure blooms, is much harder to see when it blooms in August. See photo at

www.biosurvey.ou.edu/okwild/cranefly.html

One of the first finds in-bloom along the trail, the Dutchman's Britches, displayed not only tiny stems and leaves but really small, 1/16" blooms, as well.

It appeared that the entire plant, blooms and all, was still in the growth stage although blooming was in full form. "Never seen that before" was the observation of everyone huddled around this favorite wildflower.

Here's the list of other field trip finds:

Cut-leaf toothwort	Waterleaf
Squirrel corn	Periwinkle
Toad trillium	Mullein
Bloodroot	Bedstraw
Spleenwort fern	Larkspur
Spring beauty	Wood mint
Wild blue phlox	Henbit
White tooth violet	
False rue anemone	

Mary Dee recommends the just released wildflower guide by Wilson Frances, manager at Natural Bridge State Park which is available in the Park's bookstore. Frances arranged his book by bloom periods, a novel idea because for many people wildflower field guides are not user friendly.

The Park's Beaver lodge was just out of sight from the trail but the toothy mammal that resides there was a real ham. We didn't need to use binoculars to watch him swim, tote twigs, and dive. Nearby a pair of Belted kingfishers also took center stage with their calls and courtship flights. The 2 Bald eagles' nests close to the Park were easy to find, but the birds were not t'home at either site. We'll call again soon.

As is a tradition with Audubon field trips, the day's potluck picnic special features were Salade Nicoise, Banana nut bread, and Key lime tarts.



Mary Dee, daughter of the late Mayor J.R. Miller, paused to pose with Dutchman's Britches as she led the March 26th Field Trip at Audubon State Park.

Points of View

Two sides of an issue

The Red Wheelbarrow so much depends
upon
By William a red wheel
Carlos barrow
Williams glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens.

by Brenda Little

Snowmobiles! Until March 15, 2005, I'd never touched one of the !@#\$\$%^ things. I'd heard about their ill-mannered operators. I'd read about their noise and pollution. My heart broke when the Bush administration waved a green starter's flag for the snowmobilers who asked to have the run of the place in Yellowstone National Park. For Pete's sake, isn't any thing or place sacred?!?

When visiting family in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I'd seen all the signs around motels and public places imploring the snowmobilers to keep away! Translation might be *You can't bring that thing in here, you idiot!* I'd been told about fence cutting, life-threatening intimidation, and more than a few stories about people who had given up home and hearth to escape a pest that had become a danger to them. I considered snowmobiles to be the plaything of the rude, the lazy show-off. Snowmobiles simply did not belong in my world.

The world that I seek when I hike, bike, and bird watch is one of quiet, calm, peace, and tranquility. The world that holds me in awe requires quiet in order that the water rushing over rocks can be heard, and in order that the soft, sweet call of the birds is not drowned out by revving engines and raucous shouts of insane exhilaration. The world I seek is where fur is worn by necessity not for "look at me, see how rich I am". I want to walk trails where a box turtle is safe lumbering across before me. I seek out places where it sometimes happens, not often, but with blessed rarity, when my approach is so quiet that I catch a deer or flock of wild turkeys oblivious of my gaze.

Just like most motorized off-road vehicles, snowmobiles really stink, literally and figuratively. The noisy, smelly things are harmful to plant life, disruptive to wildlife, and dangerous.

Snowmobiles? Not in my world!

And on the other hand..... by Brenda Little

I talked my beloved mother into planning a trip for our entire family up at a mountaintop retreat, Uncle Bud's Hut, located in the Colorado Rockies where my dad trained with the 10th Mountain Division, in World War II. Mom and I dreamed of just family, being together, for a few days spent away from the modern world below, without electricity or central heat, where we would cook on a wood stove and curl-up in sleeping bags to rest. Mom died in September 2002, but before she left this planet, she wrote out her plans for The Bailey's Family Heritage Travels across Colorado.

We knew that not everyone could make the 5 to 7 mile trek from 10,500' to the mountain's log mansion at 11, 400' elevation, either on foot or skis. So I arranged for snowmobiles to take us, any of our group who wished, up, and back down the mountain. As we set out early on March 15th, 2005, I was scooting along a snow packed trail on 2 skinny boards and my heart was thrilled when a snowmobile zipped by. On the back of that snowmobile, hooded in canary yellow and black goose down, sat my precious 90-year old dad. How I wished I could have seen Mom clinging to another snowmobile driver close behind Dad.

3 hours after old canary yellow and black zoomed ahead, the 5 of us on snowshoes and skis radioed for the snowmobiles to return to transport our group's weariest, a 9-year old, the rest of the way up the mountain. "Sorry, no snowmobiles are available." After 5 hours, it was 10 degrees in 30 mph winds when 2 friendly snowmobilers stopped beside our flagging arms and cheerfully agreed to give 2 of us a ride the last quarter mile to the "hut".

Is there a place in my world for snowmobiles? Yessiree, and never mind the diesel fumes, they looked like two angels to me the 15th of March around 3 PM mountain standard time.

April Calendar

Thursday April 7th midday

Cravens School Spring Break

Environmental Education Class Grades Kindergarten through 5. The Education Committee plans to provide checklists of birds most likely to be seen around the school. Binoculars and a spotting scope will be used to see markings and details on paper bird images that will be "planted" here and there. Mary Kissel is Education chair, 926-3321, or mjkisselchirp45@aol.com

Monday April 11th 7 PM

Monthly meeting at First Christian Church

Friday April 22-Kentucky Earth Day, Students at Wayland Alexander and Southern Elementary in Ohio County plan to transplant a White pine and a Red Oak from their school ground's tree nursery which was started following Tornado 2000 that struck in Owensboro.

Saturday April 23rd 8 AM to Noon

Western Kentucky University and U.S. Bank are sponsoring Owensboro Community Pride Day. Meet at U.S. Bank, 700 Frederica where gloves and T-Shirts will be provided for volunteers who will pick up trash around town. Then at 12:45, meet back at the bank for lunch provided as part of the event.

Day and time not determined at press time for:

Monthly Bird Count at Ben Hawes Park.

Contact Steve Hahus at 733-9342.

Tailor-Made Trips

Some of our members are planning to return to Audubon State Park at intervals during the next 2 months to experience the changing display of wildflower blooms and to see the Bald eagles nesting at 2 nearby locations. If you are interested in going along, you may contact Field Trip chair, Charles Morris at 926-8803 or wanderingtattler@yahoo.com



Students at Southern Elementary School have been battling litter around their school. They cleaned the schoolyard in February as they placed a half dozen bird nest boxes around the grounds' perimeter. Then this week they decided to talk with their Principal about the cast-offs they are finding. The students are concerned about the type of garbage left by outsiders. They think messes are being made by people who have no business on their playground and that their school will have a lesser image in the public's eye than is deserved. They plan to ask for a couple more trashcans on their playground so that they will have a place to put litter while they are outside during physical education and recess.

Commonwealth Clean-up Week 2005



At the behest of the Daviess County Audubon Society, this group tackled a dumpsite that edged a mile of hilly and winding roadway. They began at 8:30 AM and finished at 2 PM, pausing only for 2 smoke breaks and lunch. They bagged 81 industrial size sacks of trash and they hauled 25 tires up from the ravine. A neighbor provided a simple lunch of sandwiches, chips, and ice cream for the workers. Daviess County Audubon Society thanks them for their help with a good cause.

The Goldfinch
306 Hoover Hill Road
Hartford, Kentucky 42347

April 2005

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Please check the address label above to determine the expiration date of your membership.

To renew your membership, please send a check for \$10 to Charles Morris, Treasurer

1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, Kentucky 42301. Your newsletter subscription is part of your local membership dues. Please include this page with your check so that your old address label can be used to update your newsletter subscription. Thank you.

We strongly urge you first to keep your membership current on the local level and then if you wish you may renew your membership in The National Audubon Society as well. The National Audubon Society has sent a small amount of money to our chapter the past two years, termed a 'Safety Net'. The amount is not enough to pay for our newsletter. We need your local dues. Thanks.

Officers 2003-2005

President	Rob Rold 684-3209
Vice President	Carolyn Williams 683-5863
2 nd Vice President	Steve Hahus
Secretary/Treasurer	Charles Morris

daviessaudubon.org
