

June 2012



The Goldfinch

Daviess County
Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.net

LET'S EAT



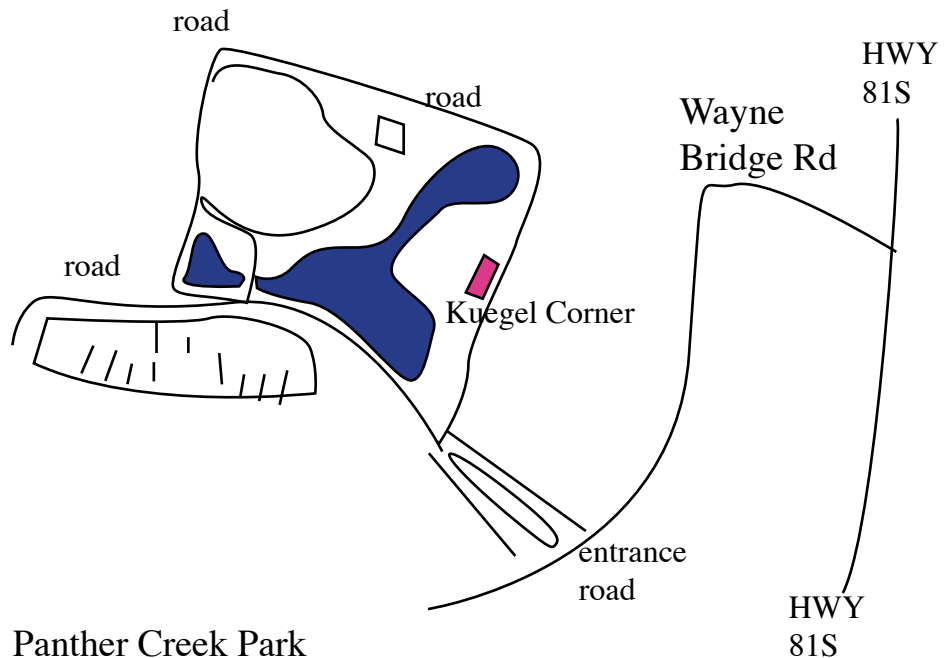
June's Program: Picnic

June 5th, Panther Creek Park, 6 p.m.

The chapter will supply burgers and hot dogs. Sides and desserts are potluck.

IT'S PICNIC TIME!

It's time for our annual picnic, winding up our calendar year, kicking back and enjoying each other's company. As usual, DCAS will provide the hamburgers, hot dogs, and beverages. Plan to bring a side or dessert and meet us at Kuegel Korner shelter at Panther Creek Park on Owensboro's West side (see map). As a special treat this year, Tony and Brenda Eaden will bring a short DVD of a Japanese television interview of DCAS members in Costa Rica! After we officially elect officers, we'll take a bird walk on one of the many trails. So bring a dish and join us!



Panther Creek Park
5160 Wayne Bridge Road
Owensboro, KY 42301

1. From Frederica take Parrish Ave west—3.4 mi
 5. Slight left onto KY-81 S/ Calhoun Rd—2.4 mi
 6. Turn right onto Wayne Bridge Rd
- Destination will be on the right—1.8 mi

June's Calendar:

June 5—DCAS meeting: 6 p.m., Panther Creek Park Cookout

June 13—8:30 a.m.; Digging, planting, mulching native prairie grasses plugs, where the Greenbelt crosses Old hartford road .

June 17th—OCTC Bird Survey at 4:00 P.M. Meet at OCTC South Parking Lot



Mike Brown's amazing power point presentation on Warblers culminated in a field trip to his home in Maceo the following Saturday morning. Eighteen DCAS members were fascinated watching nesting pairs of Purple Martins pop in and out of the starling-proof entrances to Mike's gourd houses. This Purple Martin colony was counted at over 100 pair last year! Mike's patented entry is crescent-shaped to allow entry by the Martins, but not the unwelcome Starlings. We were also treated to the sight of beautiful swooping Tree Swallows and a myriad of Bluebirds in his nesting boxes. Although the Warblers were in short supply (we're thinking that this unseasonably early spring moved some of them through before we got there) Randy spotted

a beautiful Yellow Warbler as we headed back toward the house. He (the Warbler, not Randy) posed very nicely for us. All totaled, we heard or saw thirty-six species. For anyone wanting to improve their Warbler identification skills, a DVD of Mike's presentation is available for check-out. Just call or email Judy Adams to arrange pick-up. Those trekking to Mike's were: Tony and Brenda Eaden, Wendell and Marilee Thompson, Bob and Judy Adams, Jim and Pam Kimsee, Jeff and Edna Murphey, Kenny and Winny Lin, Henry Conner, Randy Holley, Steve Hahus, Madeline Oertinger and Roseanne Radzelovage. Thank you, Mike, for sharing your birding passion with us!

MAY PROGRAM MERGES INTO SUCCESSFUL FIELD TRIP

SPECIES LIST:

Mike Brown's 5/12/12

Purple Martin (100+ pair)
Common Grackle
Tree Swallow
Eastern Bluebird
Chimney Swift
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Tufted Titmouse

Carolina Chickadee
Northern Cardinal
Northern Mockingbird
Indigo Bunting
Northern Pewee
Field Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Great Crested Flycatcher
Brown Thrasher
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher
Meadowlark
Summer Tanager

Scarlet Tanager
Brown-headed Cowbird
Eastern Towhee
White-breasted Nuthatch
Carolina Wren
Red-eyed Vireo
White-eyed Vireo
Parula Warbler
Swainson's Thrush
Kingbird
Great Blue Heron
Yellow Warbler

Blue Jay
Cedar Waxwing
Downey Woodpecker
American Goldfinch
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Catbird
Red-headed Skink
Box Turtle
Crayfish Holes

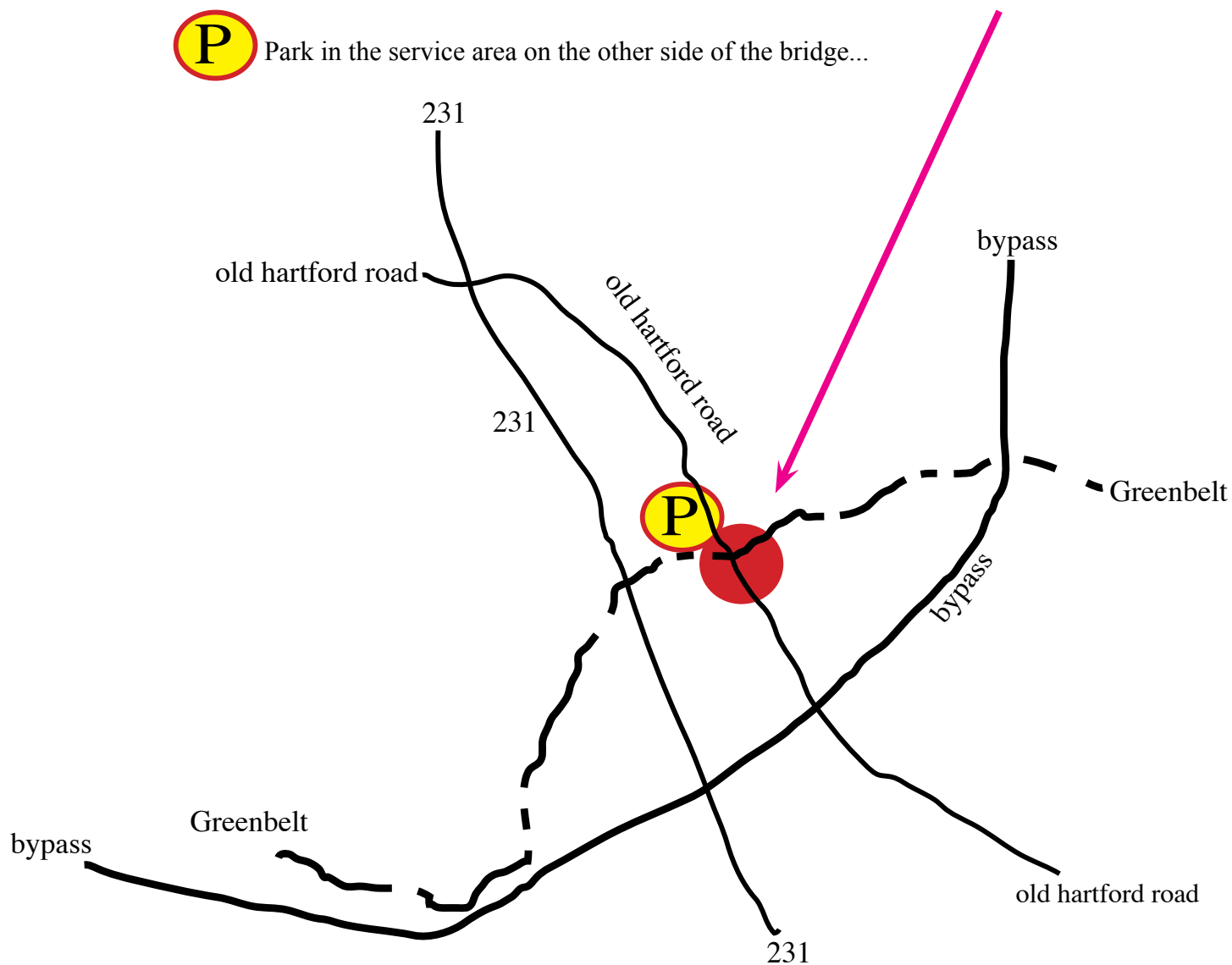
DCAS NATIVE GRASSES PROJECT

NATIVE GRASSES PROJECT UNDERWAY (FINALLY)

After many delays and gnashing of communal teeth, the DCAS Native Grasses Project looks like it is finally underway! Thanks to the hard work of David Stratton and Brenda Little, the city has (we hope) begun spraying herbicide for the initial kill. The plant plugs are on order from Margaret Shea at Dropseed Nursery (you may remember that she presented at our Jan. 2011 meeting) and the workday has been scheduled. David will have informational signs completed so that passers-by on the Greenbelt can learn about this project. Admittedly, it won't look like much for the first year or two, so signage is vital. David will be picking up the plants from Margaret in Goshen, KY on June 12th. A workday has been scheduled for Wednesday, June 13th at 8:30 A.M. We'll be planting 350 plant plugs, so bring your gardening gear and dress appropriately! Let David (davids@brescia.edu) know if you plan to help. The Native Grasses Plot is on New Hartford Road (see the attached map). See you there!



Park in the service area on the other side of the bridge...



One Woman Had a Dream, And For That, the City of Owensboro is Much the Richer

An interview with Dr. Kit Gallagher and Joe Ford who are both community minded octogenarians, Judy Adams, and Steve Hahus, Apollo biology teacher.

Twenty-two years ago an English Teacher at the Community College, Dr. Carol “Kit” Gallagher, on her own, without any funding, organized a group of volunteers that worked to set aside a portion of the campus as a natural area apart from all the mowers, weed whackers, herbicides, and leaf blowers.

The Goldfinch Kit, when you got the idea for the Nature Center, were you thinking of a wildlife sanctuary on campus or an outdoor classroom?

Kit Both. In 1990 when I first saw the campus, I had an initial vision of part of it as a natural area with water, food, shelter and varied habitats for different wildlife which would serve as an outdoor classroom, a beautiful learning environment for OCC students and for the community.

The Goldfinch How did you go about recruiting your committee of volunteers?

Kit I tried to involve people from the community. I looked for people with expertise who were respected and were workers who would dig in and make the nature area happen.

The Goldfinch Have you ever realized that through the years, 35 members of the Audubon Society played a role in the Nature Area?

Kit Oh, yes, Bert and Millie Powell, Joe Ford, and Mike Henshaw, as examples, were a tremendous help and later Julian Wilson and Charles Morris organized a bird census that documented sightings of 100 bird species. In the planning stages everything was a struggle and these people were invaluable.

The Goldfinch Joe, do you remember how many people were on the committee you worked with?

Joe All I remember is 4 or 5 people. There might have been more, but like all committees, only a handful does the bulk of the work.

The Goldfinch Joe, how long were you involved with the Nature Area?

Joe Were? I still am!

The Goldfinch Steve, you take your Apollo students to Ben Hawes Park for their outdoor classroom experience. What would it take to get you to bring them to OCTC’s Nature Area?

Steve First they need to decide if they want a park or a nature area. There is far too much mowing with paths cut wide enough for heavy equipment to drive through.

Goldfinch Do you think 18.5 acres is adequate in size for what is needed as an outdoor classroom?

Steve I know it’s big enough because I have 12 acres at my home and I take care of it in a way that there is an abundance of wildlife, great variety, much more than there is here.

Goldfinch The 2011 proposal calls for removing all the growth from the nesting island and planting flowers. What do think is needed on the island that is best for wildlife?

Steve The Wood Duck box needs to be moved from the lake to the edge of the island. The Martin boxes need to be taken off the island because Martins won't use them there. The saplings need to be cut back about 2 feet from the edge of the island to prevent growth out into the water. Other than that, the island needs to be left in its natural state.

The Goldfinch Kit, as the "Mama" of the Nature Area what are your concerns about the proposal?

Kit I want the habitat to be protected, an ecosystem in which a diversity of native species thrives. The most important area involves changes to the nesting island. I want it to remain a safe and protected place for small animals and birds to nest and rear young. I tend to be against taking out trees and undergrowth except in rare situations, for the health of the ecosystem.

Goldfinch Steve, what is your opinion about the best way to care for the habitat around the Copper-bellied water snakes' dens?

Steve The Copperbelly is the most terrestrial of all water snakes. The underbrush should be left to protect them from traffic and mowers. Things should be left natural for them.

The Goldfinch Judy, as President of the Audubon Society, what are your thoughts about the Nature Area?

Judy I am proud of our members' role in the planning, development, and utilization of the Nature Area. It was recently brought to our attention that it is the one and only green space in the city, accessible to the public and located on the city bus route, with almost 20 acres containing prairie oak savannah, a lake and nesting island, hardwood forest, wetlands, native grasses, and wildflowers.

The Goldfinch Judy, what is your opinion about the Audubon Society and its role relating to the Nature Area?

Judy Our Directors discussed the possibility of offering input, support and perhaps one of our

members to sit on the OCTC Nature Committee. The Nature Area is listed as a "Field Station" by the Kentucky Academy of Sciences. As part of our chapter's field trips, we have visited 4 other Field Stations: Bernheim Forest & Arboretum, W. KY Biological Preserve, Lily Cornett Woods, and Clay Hill Memorial Forest.

We have a strong interest in the Nature Center. We participate there in Nature Day, conduct bird counts including the respected Christmas Bird Count, and we do Monarch butterfly netting and tagging studies. We have both a vested interest and an interest for the future of this rare jewel of opportunity for the people of Owensboro and surrounding areas to see that it is not only in Europe where people value urban forests and all they have to offer to the citizenry.

I have tapped Brenda Little to put together a committee to study the proposed changes in the Nature Area. She has asked Mike Henshaw, one of the volunteers from the early days and Steve Hahus, a Biology teacher at Apollo High School to serve on the committee of 3 and to offer input from the Audubon Society to the Nature Committee at OCTC.

OCTC Biology Professor Micah Perkins is the Chair of the Nature Committee that oversees the management of the Nature Center.

Perkins recently attended the annual meeting of the Kentucky Academy of Sciences' Field Station Convention in Richmond, KY.

The entire January 2011 5-page Nature Center Proposal can be found at daviessaudubon.net.



Mrs. Dunaway's 2nd graders of Whitesville Elementary School painted the birdhouse that DCAS donated with colorful polka dots and placed them in their memorial garden. Not only that, they also planted some daylilies that Winny Lin donated from her yard near the birdhouse. Now they would like to have some bird feeders next year to add on to their outdoor classroom.

FROM THE BACKYARD

My goodness, is it June already? Where has the time gone? Our chapter has had a busy program year, learning about habitats both local and exotic. We've been to Goose Pond, IN to view Sandhill and Whooping Cranes, to Costa Rica for Quetzals and Hummingbirds. We've taught Girls Inc. members about urban birds and school kids were introduced to birds as part of the Budding Biotech program at the W KY Botanical Garden. The Powell Bird Blind at Pennyroyal Girl Scout Camp got a spring cleaning and we've learned about sloughs and grasslands, voles, doves, healthy forests, and warblers. We've welcomed new members on at both the national and local levels and have been pleased to see these new faces both at meetings and on field trips. None of this would be possible without a dedicated and active Board of Directors. Please take a moment to thank each of them personally, Mike Henshaw, Carolyn Williams, Mary Kissel, David Stratton, Lisa Leonard, and Donna Hanley. Our annual picnic on June 5th will complete our program year and provide some social time as well. Don't forget to let us know if you plan to come, as we want to be sure to have plenty of burgers and hot dogs! And, please, start brainstorming projects, field trips and program ideas for the fall. There will be a program planning meeting in mid-summer and everyone is welcome. We'll be sending out emails through the summer with dates and sign-ups for activities as they come about. Thank you all for supporting DCAS with your presence and enthusiasm.

Judy Adams, President
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