

The Goldfinch



Daviess County Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.org

October 2007

Ballard birds wow Daviess visitors

Ballard County lakes yielded plenty of action Sept. 22 as seven members of the Daviess County Audubon Society saw 37 species on the shores and in the trees and skies.

Charles Morris was delighted to add a bird to his life list – a buff-breasted sandpiper, whose signature coloration was easy to detect. Other shorebirds spotted included: killdeer, lesser yellowlegs, short-billed dowitcher, greater yellowlegs, semipalmated sandpiper, semipalmated plover and solitary sandpiper.

They also were thrilled by the antics of a family of red-headed woodpeckers, he said. The birders' identifying skills were tested by a gray juvenile broad-winged hawk. They also spotted several warblers: blackpoll, yellow-rumped, yellow-throated and black-and-white

See Ballard, Page 3

Bring your ideas to October meeting

The October meeting will be a yearly planning session and review of the last 12 months. Bring your ideas. Do you know of speakers who can discuss bird programs? Have a great fundraiser idea? This is the time to speak up! Normally, the session is done in September, but it was delayed so Denise Medley could present her program in September.

The session will be 7 p.m. Oct. 8 at First Christian Church, Seventh and J.R. Miller Blvd.

September to remember

Visitors dazzled by blind at camp's 50th anniversary

Girl Scouts from across the region "came home" Sept. 16 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Camp Pennyroyal Girl Scout Camp. Daviess County Audubon Society members welcomed them to one of the newer structures on the property, the Powell Bird Blind.



Brenda Little introduces the frog pond to Troop 57 Juniors.

Maggie and Lee Boling braved tick bites to help Brenda and Bill Little with their summer-long quest to update the blind using memorial donations for Millie Powell. The sign was painted, the bird identification poster reframed, the pathways trimmed and a solar pump placed in the frog pond to keep water circulating to attract wildlife. The young wildflowers and ferns which survived the drought of 2007 were lovingly mulched and bird feeders were filled, with a new finch feeder in place. The desire to have a dry erase board brought questions, but Donna Wilson

See Camp, Page 3

DCAS leaves mark on Scarecrow Festival

Daviess County Audubon Society members had their footprints all over the Sept. 15 Western Kentucky Botanical Garden Scarecrow Festival.

Charles Morris, Mary Kissel and Grace Ford applied at least 100 temporary tattoos to youngsters, with girls particularly attracted to the colorful wood ducks and blackburnian warblers and boys opting for bald eagles.

Bird feeding materials and DCAS membership brochures were available, and the Daviess County Bird Brain quiz board tested bird identification skills. One boy who kept it buzzing was a veteran of the Whitesville Elementary Yellow Creek Park class and told members he had taken birding materials home with him and was able to ID birds in his backyard.

See Festival, Page 3

Members challenged to slow climate change

The perils of climate change – and the benefits of personal change were in full display Sept. 10 when Denise Medley presented “An Inconvenient Truth” slide show for Daviess County Audubon Society members.

The presentation is a condensed version of the Oscar-winning documentary created by former vice president Al Gore, but the premise is the same – to put the issue in understandable language.

Medley, an avid outdoorswoman, was alarmed to learn about climate change, but hungered for additional information. She applied for training to be a presenter and was pleased to be selected.

What is global warming?

She noted that the exchange of heat and gases between the Earth and sun allows temperatures to be mild enough for human inhabitation. However, the buildup of greenhouse gas has created a thicker layer around the globe, holding in more heat.

The equator gets the most exposure to the sun, but the effects of warmer temperatures are far-reaching. A one-degree temperature change at the equator translates to a 12-degree change at the Poles and reports of melting ice shields which don't refreeze during the winter. Melting of ice shields the size of Greenland could raise sea level 20 feet, swamping coastal Florida or New York City, she said.

Statistics show many of the highest temperatures on record have been reported in recent years. While scientists have stopped short of tying hurricanes to global warming, she noted that in recent years, the number of intense weather events have increased with the rise of ocean temperatures. Oddly enough, parts of one country can be inundated with rain, while another is burning up with drought.

Warming also disrupts bird incubation patterns and introduces invasive species to areas, such as destructive pine beetles.

“You can drive down the highway and see the entire mountainside – there's nothing but dead trees,” she said. Loss of



Denise Medley

habitat threatens other species. The insects also bring various diseases, citing as an example the rapid rise of west Nile virus in the United States.

The release of man-made gases into the air is complicated by the rapid population growth of the world. She noted that since World War II, it has grown from 2.3 billion to 6.5 billion people. She said we must make better use of available technology to curb emissions. Nowhere is the culprit of wasteful emissions greater than in the United States, because they're tied to luxury items.

Often, an argument comes down to a choice between economics and the environment, which she discards. She points out the energy-friendly Asian cars have swamped their American competition. The same principles can be applied to construction.

One battle in this war that the Earth has been winning is through CFCs. Dwindling the use of aerosol products has helped repair much of the hole in the ozone layer.

The power of the “Inconvenient Truth” series lies much in the visual impact of the land's projected future. However, she also included a slide of the border between ravaged Haiti and the lush

green Dominican Republic to show how policymakers can make a difference with environmental protection measures they pass.

“We put a man on the moon. Surely, we can come up with a way to solve our problems,” she said. “We have the ability. We have the creativity. We just have to do it.”

Some of these actions begin with personal responsibility. She concluded her presentation by offering some easy ways to begin the healing process.

- * Use recycled paper. Using 100% recycled paper saves 5 pounds of carbon dioxide per ream.

- * Buy a reusable water bottle

- * Take your own bags to the grocery.

She noted one California city has gone as far as banning plastic bags from groceries.

- * Take shorter showers

- * Buy food locally when you can

- * Contact retailers and stop them sending catalogs to your house

- * Switch the washing machine from the warm/warm cycle to warm/cold

- * Unplug “vampires,” like cell phone battery rechargers and computers.

- * Put a thermal insulating blanket on your hot-water heater

- * Change computer settings so that the computer and display both go to sleep when inactive for 10 minutes

- * Turn lights off when you leave a room

- * Plant a tree

- * Plug your computer/TV and all peripherals into a strip. Turn the strip off when you finish using them.

- * Use compact fluorescent light bulbs

- * When shopping for appliances and electronics, buy Energy Star

- * Make small adjustments to your home heating and cooling

- * Keep your water heater no higher than 120 degrees.

- * Replace dirty air conditioning and heater filters as recommended

- * Buy the most energy efficient car that meets your needs

- * Combine errands so you drive less

- * Don't top off your tank

Camp

From Page 1

came up with an idea to use a free-standing board after a visit to Wild Bird Unlimited.

The morning of the ceremony, the area was packed. Three crows delighted in the shelf feeders, bobbing about and screaming their heads off. Other species there included: goldfinch, cardinal, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, robin, downy woodpecker, white-breasted nuthatch and blue jay. Many would remain during the afternoon to amaze visitors with up-close-and-personal encounters. Troop 57 Scouts were among the early arrivals and excitedly identified the visitors as they perched inches away, separated only by two-way glass windows before dashing off to see the frog pond.

Sister Sharon Sullivan was in the Mount St. Joseph contingent who helped design and build the adobe structure and hadn't been back since its dedication. She said she was thrilled by how much had been expanded since the fall of 2001. Other DCAS members made a return visit to the blind. Brenda Eaden used the time to reflect on the arduous challenge to build the mud blind and the part she played for something that still delights kids six years later. Rose Ann Radzelovage rejoiced over the wild flowers that survived the summer's heat.

The Littles and Grace Ford did the brunt of the hosting duties, welcoming visitors throughout the afternoon.

Ballard

From Page 1

warbler and yellow-throated and red-eyed vireos.

Other birds seen were: European starling, house sparrow, mourning dove, red-tailed hawk, blue jay, American robin, chimney swift, American kestrel, American crow, fish crow, turkey vulture, great blue heron, northern mockingbird, Canada goose, indigo bunting, American goldfinch, great egret, tree swallow, rough-winged swallow, bald eagle and Eurasian collared dove.

Making the trip west were: Steve Anderson, Mike Henshaw, Grace Ford, Carolyn Williams, Henry Conner, Jill Flachskam and Morris.



Tattoos and a bird quiz board attracted kids.

Festival

From Page 1

Other questions surrounded upcoming field trips and the possibility of a College View Middle School art club nature program, proving the benefits of community outreach.

Laura Morris worked the PRIDE booth for much of the festival, alerting residents to ongoing beautification projects, and Joe Ford held court in the garden pond, which was crowded throughout most of the sunny day. At one point, he delighted the youngsters by showing them small water scorpions he had found there that day.

According to the Messenger-Inquirer, more than 1,300 people attended the festival.

Wayland hatches junior Audubon club

The Daviess County Audubon Society is hatching the next generation of wildlife enthusiasts.

The DCAS voted to September to serve as a parent organization for a Junior Audubon Society at Wayland Alexander Elementary School in Ohio County.

Starla Cravens, director of the school's family resource center, came up with the idea. Brenda and Bill Little and biologist Scott Harp are serving as adult sponsors.

"I think kids are our future, and when we get them at the bird blind or Botanical Garden, that's great, but that's one day a year, 20 minutes," Brenda Little said.

The club, with about a dozen students, meets after school on Wednesday afternoons, exploring various nature topics on the school grounds or adjoining Extension property. Harp worked his magic on the kids for the first meeting Sept. 19, combing the ditches around Dundee for specimens that fascinated the kids: a wolf spider, American toad, marbled salamanders, a green frog and other critters.

"When we asked the kids how they liked their first meeting, the first Wayland Audubon meeting ever, they exclaimed, 'It was awesome' and 'We're coming back!'" Little said.

The arrangement with DCAS helps the group avoid filing a lot of paperwork to become established as a tax-exempt organization. On its behalf, the DCAS also would ask for startup funds for field guides, a nature notebook, T-shirt and fanny packs for members. Binoculars already have been purchased for the club.

Topics for upcoming meetings range from water quality to bird calls. They also hope to have a practice Christmas Bird Count in a circle which includes the school. With plenty of adults on hand, Little assured members that the students will be closely supervised.

The Goldfinch/October 2007
c/o Mary Kissel
3440 New Hartford Road, Apt. 1
Owensboro, KY 42303

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Hats on!

The embroidered Daviess County Audubon Society hats are in and are winning raves for their clean look and colorful goldfinch logo. Those who ordered a hat last year may contact Steve Anderson to arrange for pickup. Anderson said there may be a possibility that new T-shirts will be created.

For news, dues

The Goldfinch is printed on 100% Postconsumer Recycled Paper. Please notice the expiration date on the mailing label above. Your newsletter subscription is included in your local dues of \$15 a year. Please keep your local chapter dues current by mailing this page with your check to: Charles Morris, treasurer, 1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, KY 42303. If you have a news item or Goldfinch question, contact editor Mary Kissel at 926-3321, or mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net.

Officers

Steve Anderson, president, 273-9747, stevoander@peoplepc.com
Steve Hahus, vice president, 733-9342, Hshahus.aol.com
Sherry Henshaw, secretary, mikesherry@vci.net, 275-4250
Charles Morris, treasurer, 926-8803, wanderingtattler@yahoo.com
Grace Ford, education chairman, gcarford@aol.com
Mary Kissel, newsletter editor

October events

Meeting, 7 p.m. First Christian Church, Seventh and J.R. Miller, Oct. 8.
Field trip to Higginson-Henry WMA, TBA.

Area students getting hands-on nature instruction this fall

DCAS members continue to assist with school programs at the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. By Sept. 23, more than 300 city and county students had been introduced to beginning bird identification at the garden. In October, sessions will be held for Meadow Lands students on Oct. 3, Sorgho Elementary students on Oct. 5, Tamarack Elementary on Oct. 17 and East View Elementary Oct. 18.

Committee members had their fall meeting Sept. 17 to lay groundwork for upcoming programming and Audubon Adventures classrooms. Chairman Grace Ford also noted the Joe Ford Library will be working with Neblett Center students this year, traveling to various historic and natural sites in the region.