

The Goldfinch



Daviess County Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.org

June 2007

Renovation work begins at blind

The generosity of friends of Bert and Millie Powell should go a long way toward having a long-term presence at Girl Scout Camp Pennyroyal. Work already has begun to improve the site around the Powell Bird Blind.



Brenda Little and Carolyn Williams dig new depths at the frog pond at the Powell Bird Blind.

As of late May, treasurer

Charles Morris said more than \$780 had been donated in memory of Millie Powell, who died in April after a lengthy illness.

Security concerns surrounding the start of summer camp prompted some early ground work. Brenda Little and Carolyn Williams did most of the grunt work as the frog pond was drained and re-dug to depths of 8 inches, 1 foot, 2 and 3 feet. A new liner has been laid, and rocks placed around the perimeter. A solar fountain was placed in an attempt to attract birds through sound. Its future is uncertain, although a pair of frogs was spotted on it "riding it like Holiday World," Little said. Rob Rold recommended filling the pond with mosquito fish, Little expressed concern that the fish would not survive the winter and wondered if other products could be used to eliminate mosquitoes. Members have expressed little enthusiasm for running electricity to the site for a pump.

The club purchased 30 plants from Salato Nature Center in Frankfort. The native varieties were chosen to attract birds and butterflies. They included: lady ferns, forget-me-nots, wild columbine, lily of the valley, wintergreen, wild geranium, woodland sunflower, Labrador violet, hairy beardtongue, wild pink, woodland goldenrod and Indian pink. These were planted between the blind and the pond. Noting Millie's fondness for wild flowers, Little said daughter Bonnie Terrizzi was thrilled with the prospect of a wild flower area at the blind. Little hopes DCAS gardeners who would like to share their hostas will consider using them for the blind.

Terrizzi also requested a yellowwood tree be planted with memorial funds. Sunlit spots around the blind are being explored, and Charles Morris suggested that it be planted near the main building complex for easier access to watering and maximum sunlight. Other tasks include repairing feeders and posting the memorial plaques and the bird identification chart and restaining the Powell Bird Blind sign on the blind.

Year to end with picnic

Come celebrate the end of another successful Daviess County Audubon Society year by attending the annual picnic. It will be held at 5 p.m. Monday, June 11, at the lakeside north shelter at Panther Creek Park. The club is providing the meats; members are asked to bring side dishes or desserts.

Officers elected

A slate of officers has been elected to a two-year term. Steve Anderson will take over as president in September. Steve Hahus will serve as vice president, and Sherry Henshaw and Charles Morris will continue as secretary and treasurer, respectively. Mary Kissel will stay editor of The Goldfinch but step down as education committee chairman. Anyone interested in this post may contact president Anderson, 273-9747.

May days filled with nature lessons for area kids

The school year ended with a flurry of educational activities for members of the Daviess County Audubon Society.

On May 1, Carolyn Williams, Ken Hurm and Rose Ann Radzelovage met with a handful of students in the 21st Century after-school program at Cravens Elementary. It marked the debut of the DCAS lesson on global warming, the education committee's effort to address issues explored in Kentucky classrooms. Williams stressed the basics of global warming and how it may affect their lifetime. To demonstrate how sea level is rising, along with the temperature, a bottle filled with cold water was put into a hot-water bath. The water soared up a straw in the partially sealed bottle, gaining the kids' attention.

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Clockwise from top: Mary Carrico students watch a demonstration on global warming; Carolyn Williams teaches Sutton fourth-graders how to save the Earth; Charles Morris leads a bird ID session for Cravens students at Western Kentucky Botanical Garden; and Ken Hurm lets kids peer through his scope into Cravens' outdoor classroom.



Williams, Hurm photos courtesy of Cravens Elementary

Rold: Varied waters make state ideal for fish

From mountain streams to sloughs, Kentucky's waterways have been a beacon to the nation's fishermen. During the May meeting of the Daviess County Audubon Society, Rob Rold reviewed many of the native fish species and discussed some of the threats they're facing.

As cold-blooded creatures, their surroundings dictate their metabolism and growth. About 50 percent of all vertebrates are fish, and about 240 of those live in Kentucky. Another 16 non-native species also are prevalent, such as trouts.

While hefty sports fish usually nab the key spots in the sports pages, environmentalists are concerned about tiny fish that have landed on federal and state endangered species and species of concern lists.

Rough darter has been affected by dwindling sloughs and swamps in western Kentucky. Black-sided dace and other species have had their habitat choked with the residue of coal mining.

Sediment-filled water and demand for a culinary (and lucrative) delicacy – caviar – have shifted sturgeons into a concern status. State fish and wildlife officials are trying to do some reintroduction work in the Cumberland River and Lake Cumberland in hopes of boosting numbers.

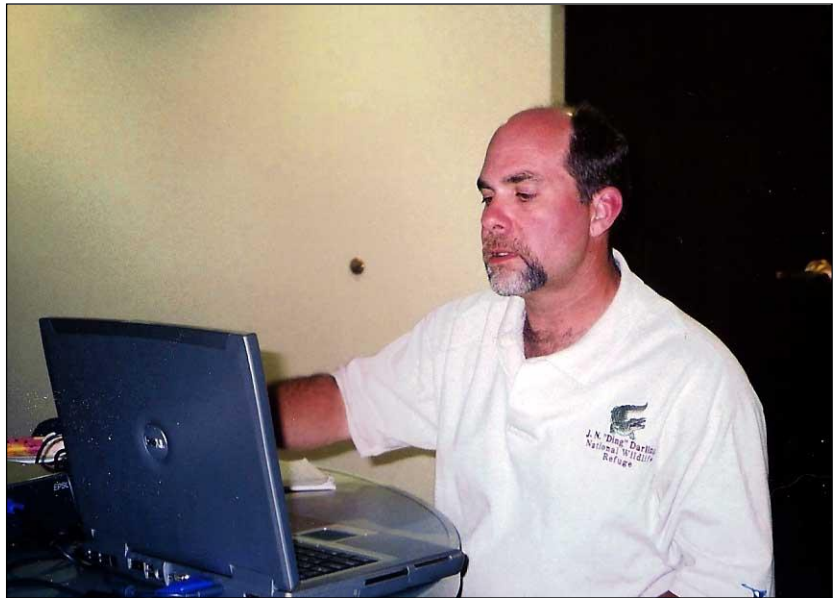
They also are working with paddlefish, prevalent in the Ohio and Green rivers. They are making up the sturgeon shortage with their eggs. At one time, a quart of eggs were worth hundreds of dollars. Because they have no skeleton, they also are often sold as "boneless catfish."

Shads and herrings also are a major source of food. Black-striped top minnow are similar to mosquito fish, because they feed on larvae and other surface creatures.

He also discussed cave-dwelling "blind" species, such as bluntnose minnow and bigeye shiner.

Among the other varieties discussed were smallmouth buffalo, which weigh up to 30 pounds and are used for fish sticks; and variety of catfish, including one of his favorite types, channel catfish, a major sport fish.

Novices in fish were surprised that what is considered patch-cheeked bluegill are actually several varieties of sunfish, including largemouth and smallmouth bass. A lot of money has been spent on developing largemouth bass, because it's so versatile it can survive in many different types of water, he said.



Rob Rold presented a program on Kentucky fish.

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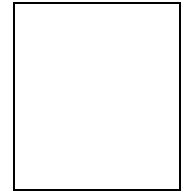
When the program was being developed, committee members stressed the need to show kids they can be part of a solution. They discussed how fluorescent bulbs use a fraction of the energy of regular bulbs and the possibility of riding bikes or walking instead having Mom or Dad fill up the car with gasoline. To get kids excited about recycling, it concluded with a recycling relay.

Cravens' outdoor classroom also provided the backdrop for Hurm and Radzelovage to conduct binocular and spotting scope lessons, and kids were able to watch baby robins in action.

It was Speed Birding 101 May 14 at Sutton Elementary. To accommodate 70 fourth-graders in an hour, students were divided into three groups, which rotated every 20 minutes. One listened to Williams' global warming lesson, a second delighted in seeking birds on the Sutton campus under Hurm's direction and a third competed against classmates on identifying mystery birds described by Mary Kissel. Winners received punch-out birds that could be folded and hung.

When Mary Carrico students arrived at school May 15, they were greeted by DCAS education team members Hurm, Bill Little and Kissel. Hurm and Little split bird-watching duties outside, giving students a chance to use binoculars and a spotting scope. Inside, Kissel inherited the global warming lesson, exhorting the students that "every

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

May

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little thing counts” when it comes to energy conservation.

DCAS members continued their collaborative work with the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. Charles Morris conducted five sessions with students from the Owensboro Public Schools during May. They used Kentucky foldout guides to identify fake birds around the grounds and looked through a spotting scope. They also were able to see some real birds, ranging from robins to a brown thrasher. Morris said the sessions were well-received, cited as a favorite in student polling. Some students asked where they could buy binoculars and guides so they could enjoy birding all summer – evidence of a seed firmly planted.

A rotating group of assistants helped Morris, including Hurm, Kissel and Janet Howard.

Morris will present a morning-long session on birding at 9 a.m. June 15 during summer youth camp at the garden.

For news, dues

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Ohio County nest boxes busy

Hoover Hill Road’s nest box trail fledged 12 bluebirds and seven chickadees, Brenda Little reported.

Unfortunately, one nest with five eggs under a wind-felled tree was abandoned by parent birds.

In the county schools, Wayland Alexander Elementary School fledged its only bluebird nest of five chicks. Three tree swallow nests had 19 chicks.

All of Southern Elementary’s nest boxes were occupied by bluebirds. One nest was vandalized, but the resilient birds rebuilt their nest and were incubating five eggs by the end of the school year. Another nest had three out of four eggs successfully hatched and fledged, and another brood was expected to hatch in early June.

Convert Goldfinch to online edition

Would you like to save a tree ... and the club a little money?

With the recent jump in postage, members are being encouraged to have their Goldfinch newsletter delivered to them online instead through “snail mail.” If you would like to convert your Finch to an online subscription, please contact Mary Kissel at 926-3321 or mjkisselchirp45@bellsouth.net