
THE GOLDFINCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DAVIESS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2003

MEETINGS EACH 2ND MONDAY SEPTEMBER THRU JUNE
AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7TH & J.R. MILLER BOULEVARD

December 8 Program A Potpourri

At our meeting last month, attendees decided to return to a program idea from the past. Next Monday night will be *Open Mike Night* at the Audubon Society. Members may speak for 5 to 10 minutes about any subject they choose. Some will bring photos for show-and-tell. Anyone who wishes may present a short program that is of interest to them but is not long enough for a full-fledged program. Mike Henshaw plans to discuss Fish and Wildlife projects that are currently underway.

Refreshments for the December meeting will have a holiday theme with Christmas cookies, eggnog, and homemade candy.



Christmas Bird Count Will Be the December Field Trip

Bundle up and join your friends at Mike and Sherry Henshaw's home at 8 AM, Saturday, December 20 for the most fun part of the holidays. Just as soon as we know how many bird counters have turned out, teamed assignments will be given for the area inside a 15 mile diameter in southern Daviess County where we will fan out to scour the roadsides and trails looking and listening for birds.

We will return to Mike and Sherry's at lunchtime to eat, share experiences, and warm up. Sherry will prepare lunch but we are allowed to bring foods to add to the table. In the event of weather that is so bad that a count is impossible, an alternate date will be set. Should you have any questions about the count, please contact Rob Rold at

rerphoto@omuonline.net

or 684-3209. Questions to Mike or Sherry may be by phone 275-4250 or email at

mikesherry@email.msn.com

Driving directions to the Henshaw's: Hwy 231 south to Hwy 140. Turn left on Redhill-Maxwell Road then turn right on Fields Road South. The Henshaws live at 11201.

Janet Howard is hosting a count on Jan3rd at 8AM at her home, 3534 West Parrish Av.

You Can Count on Us, Mr. Chapman

It all began on Christmas Day in 1900 when a handful of conservationists decided to do something contrary to a despicable practice common at the time termed a "side hunt". The object of this senseless holiday activity was a team competition to see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals on Christianity's holiest of days, Christmas.

Led by scientist and editor **Frank Chapman**, 27 conservationists in 25 localities conducted the first Christmas Bird Count and in so doing changed the course of ornithological history. This year it is expected that 2000 counts will be held between December 14 and January 5 in the Americas, Canada, Bermuda, the West Indies and Pacific Islands.

Christmas Bird Count 2003 will be geared to emphasize the importance of the boreal forest of Canada to birds. Boreal means northern. The boreal forest circles the globe beneath the polar ice cap above the temperate hardwood forests to the south. 30% of America and Canada's land birds use the boreal forest as their nesting grounds. The forest is 2 million square miles of woodland and wetland where birds flock every spring and then depart in the fall after mating and raising young.

The Canadian Boreal Initiative has brought together environmental organizations, government, forest product industries, oil and gas companies and the First Nations Indians to put in place a set of conservation principles to protect the vital forest. If the effort to prevent a future crisis is successful, this will be the first such unified effort of diverse interests in

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world history.

Environmental groups such as Forest Ethics based in San Francisco have worked with Staples and are planning to approach Office Depot next to encourage them to sell paper with a greater content of recycled paper as a means of decreasing logging in Canadian forests. This is the season when mail order companies flood our mailboxes with catalogues, 59 annually for every man, woman and child in the U.S. Forest Ethics does not hope to stop logging in the boreal forest, but to raise awareness of what forest products companies are doing there.

Canadian Boreal Initiative has convinced giant Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries, Al-Pac, to agree to a forest stewardship plan that involves research into sustainable logging. Al-Pac has offered incentives where it has logging rights to oil and gas explorers that make it beneficial to them to minimize the harmful impact of cutting roads.

So what does all this have to do with Daviess County Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count set for December 20th? 7 birds that depend on the boreal forest appear to be declining and are among those we will be seeking in the 177 square mile count area assigned to us: the Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin and the very rare Rusty Blackbird.

The National Audubon Society and the Boreal Songbird Initiative are working together to study the health and status of boreal-breeding birds using the Christmas Bird Count as the primary tool. What Frank Chapman and his friends began 103 years ago is going strong. The data, 100% volunteer generated, have become a crucial part of the U.S. Government's natural history monitoring database.

Calendar of Events

December 2-January 18th

Lewis and Clark Exhibit at The Owensboro Area Museum of Science and History at 220 Daviess Street in downtown Owensboro.

Saturday, the 6th

The National Audubon Society's Board of Directors will meet at 10 AM at Northern Kentucky University's Mets Center in Erlanger, Kentucky.

Monday, the 8th

Regular monthly meeting will be held at 7 PM at First Christian Church

Saturday, the 20th

8:00 AM meet at Mike and Sherry Henshaw's house to pick up team and count area assignments for the Christmas Bird Count. The count will have a midday break for lunch and will continue in the afternoon until mid to late afternoon.

There will be no Directors' Meeting this month.

Saturday, January 3rd

Janet Howard is hosting a bird count using her home as the base of operations. Meet at 8 AM at 3534 West Parrish Avenue. There will be a break for lunch and the count is expected to conclude between 3 and 5 PM. For more information or to confirm that the count is good to go, phone Jan at 926-3795 or send email to janbbq@aol.com

Wayland Alexander Elementary School will Install Nestbox Camera

One of our members, Starla Cravens, is on the faculty at Wayland Alexander School in Hartford, KY. Starla mentored a group of students this spring when a nestbox trail was put in place on the school's campus. Then when school dismissed for summer vacation, Starla recruited the head of Wayland's after school and day care program, Sherry Daugherty, to take over the program of mentoring the students who were monitoring the activity in the half dozen boxes placed around the perimeter of the school grounds.

In June, Bill Freels spoke to our chapter about his volunteer work at Heath Elementary School in Paducah. Freels dedicated hundreds of hours planning, installing, and improving a video camera set-up in a nestbox that was chosen by a pair of Eastern Bluebirds for raising 3 clutches of chicks this year for the viewing pleasure of a 4th grade classroom. Following Freels' presentation, our chapter's directors decided that it would be a good idea to sponsor a school with a video camera to transmit sights and sounds from a nestbox to a TV monitor in the classroom. Our chapter has bought a camera and 500 feet of cable for the project. Freels and his wife Mary Ann have visited Wayland, have met Starla and Sherry, and we are now in the process of planning the trenching for the underground placement of cable into the school's cable TV system.

Recycling Reminder

Collectible stamps such as foreign postage stamps are sorted and prepared for selling to stamp collector companies by volunteers at the Birds of Prey Center in Maitland, Florida. You may mail any stamps you've been saving to them at Audubon National Center for Birds of Prey, 1101 Audubon Way, Maitland, FL 32751. Phone 407-644-0190.

The Goldfinch, newsletter of
The Daviess County Audubon Society
306 Hoover Hill Road
Hartford, KY 42347-9522

December 2003

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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. Include this page with your check so that your old address label can be used to update your newsletter subscription which is part of your local membership dues. Thank you.

No longer does a portion of the dues you pay to the National Audubon Society either as a new member or as a renewing member come to our chapter. Therefore 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. Our chapter is actively conducting fundraisers to maintain our treasury, but we need the income of local dues in order to finance the printing and mailing of The Goldfinch. Thank you.

Officers 2003-2005

President	Rob Rold 684-3209
Vice President	Carolyn Williams 683-5863
2 nd Vice President	Steve Hahus
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