



# The Goldfinch

Daviess County  
Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.net

## April Program — *Newts and Salamanders at Brescia*

### NEWTs, SALAMANDERS AND THEIR ILK



chirp

Join us at Brescia's Campus Center on Tuesday evening, April 2<sup>nd</sup> as Jared Handley shares some of his research and interest in amphibian creatures. Jared is with the KY Fish and Wildlife Service and has both B.S. and M.S. degrees in biology from Murray state University (go Racers!). He is currently working as a Private Lands Wildlife Biologist based in Hartford, KY. Jared has promised to try to capture some of his favorite specimens to bring along for us to see. His graduate research involved malformed amphibians and he'll talk a little about them, but expect to learn mostly about Kentucky salamanders (marbled, smallmouth, slimy and zigzag). Plan to come to Brescia University (717 Frederica Street) on April 2nd, in the campus center study pavillion on the second floor.



chirp

### CHANGE OF VENUE!

Due to the awful fire that destroyed Owensboro's First Christian Church, our April 2, 2013 meeting will be held in Brescia University's Campus Center (Student Pavilion, second floor). This is the main building facing Frederica Street at 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Over time, we will be discussing specific ways in which we can begin to return the many years of warmth and kindness we've experienced while meeting at First Christian. Our hearts go out to the congregation as they begin to sort through their memories.



Where's ohio?

### April Calendar: phew!

- 4/2/2013 .....DCAS meeting "Newts & Salamanders of KY" 7:00 PM. @ Brescia Campus Center  
.....Supper with the Speaker 5:30 p.m. @ Moonlite BBQ
- 4/3/2013 .....Spring Break at the Museum 10:00-12:00
- 4/6/2013 .....KY Audubon Council meeting, Elizabethtown
- 4/11, 4/24, 4/25, 5/1 .....WKBG 9 A.M. to 1:00 PM.
- 4/11, 4/18, 4/25 .....Urban Birds @ Girls Inc. 3:45-5:00 p.m.
- 4/15/2013 .....DCAS Board Meeting 9:30 A.M. @ Judy's
- 4/18/2013 .....Earth Day with Sierra Club 7:00 PM. @ O'boro Museum
- 4/20/2013 .....Field Trip to Mammoth Cave 7:30 A.M. @ OCTC South parking lot.
- 4/27/2013 .....Trash for Cash 8:00 A.M. @ Southern Oaks Elem.



chirp—huh?

*Where's Ohio from Mexico?  
What's with the funny dress, and why is that guy  
humming? and what's with the yellow legs?*

**A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZEN SCIENCE:  
from National Audubon**

## **HUMMINGBIRDS AT HOME**

Hummingbirds visit our yards each spring to breed, looking for nectar from our gardens and feeders. Fascinating to watch, hummingbirds captivate us with their magical feats of flight and their showy colors. The Continental US is breeding home to 14 species of hummingbirds, with a few other species making rare appearances.

Recent science reports that flowers are blooming earlier and earlier due to climate change. Some flowers are blooming as many as 17 days before the migrating hummingbirds arrive. The impact for migrating and breeding hummingbirds is unknown.

Building on our Christmas Bird Count (CBC) legacy and the more recent success of the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), Audubon is launching a new program called Hummingbirds at Home.

Through this new program, Audubon's goal is to gather data that will help document the hummingbirds' journey and better understand how changing flowering patterns and supplemental feeding by people relate to hummingbirds' migration and breeding success, and also climate change. Since nectar is critical to hummingbirds, we're asking people to document which flowering plants hummingbirds are feeding on in their backyards as well as whether hummingbird feeders are supplied and used.

The Hummingbirds at Home program will provide an opportunity for citizen scientists to help us learn how these changes in the environment are impacting hummingbirds.

In this family-friendly program, participants will log hummingbird sightings and the flowering plants or feeders they visit, with free mobile technology or on desktop computers. Participants can also view hummingbird sightings online in real time. Scientists will use the data to better understand how hummingbirds are impacted by feeders, non-native nectar sources in gardens, shifting flowering times, and climate change.

Do you enjoy watching hummingbirds and want to become involved in this program? You can participate at a level that fits your schedule – from one sighting to watching hummingbirds over several weekends throughout the program. To learn more about this exciting citizen science project, go to [www.audubon.org/citizenscience](http://www.audubon.org/citizenscience).



## **Lucy Audubon sighted and heard**

March 3rd, Kelly O'Connell-Bregelman brought Lucy Audubon to Brescia University's lecture hall stage. Compelling and fun, her stories of the prairie, Kentucky, John James, and her life in general informed and entertained the small crowd. Ms. O'Connell-Bregelman held her role after her performance to the delight of the younger attendees. Her performance was sponsored by both DCAS and Brescia.



*This Yellowlegs was sighted on our trip to the Sloughs—see more on page 6.*



## Ohio Valley Birding Festival Schedule of Events 2013

\*Note: For the hikes requiring pre-registration, the registration and payment must be received by the posted due date. Please send payment including your phone number, street address and email address to "Evansville Audubon Society," C/O LD Harry, 4600 Surrey Way, Evansville, IN, 47725." Please make checks payable to Evansville Audubon Society.

For hikes where transportation is provided, no private vehicles will be allowed to caravan.

Please choose appropriate footwear as many hike areas present marshy conditions.

### Friday, April 19

#### **Eagle Slough Natural Area Birding Hike**

Meet at the entrance to Eagle Slough located on Waterworks Road, just north of Ellis Park at 7:00 AM CDT

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 2 hours

Eagle Slough is one of the most recent local areas to be returned to its natural state.

Join us for a birding walk through this 127-acre urban wetland area. Expect to see warblers and other migratory songbirds. Species observed on this hike may include: Wood Duck, Winter Wren, warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers and late shorebirds.

#### **Birding the Audubon Wetlands**

Meet at 8:00 AM CDT at the Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park.

Fee: Free. Pre-registration required\*

contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or julia.mcdonald@ky.gov. Max 12-15

Duration: approximately 2 hours

Program departs from Audubon Museum. Participants should be experienced bird watchers. Walking component is weather dependent. A new property purchase significantly increased the size of Audubon State Park. Help us identify this bottomland forest property's bird guests. This property has a heron rookery and an active bald eagle nest. Registration ends on April 12.

#### **Howell Wetlands Birding Hike**

Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave at 6:00 PM CDT

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 2 hours

Join us for a birding walk through this 35-acre urban wetland and prairie environment. Species observed on this hike may include: Prothonotary Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Dickcissel, and Pileated Woodpeckers.

### Saturday, April 20

#### **Birding the Audubon Wetlands**

Meet at 8:00 AM CDT at the Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park.

Fee: Free. Pre-registration required\*

contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or julia.mcdonald@ky.gov. Max 12-15

Duration: approximately 2 hours

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property's bird guests. This property has a heron rookery and an active bald eagle nest. Registration ends on April 12.

#### **Audubon's Bird Migration Walks**

Meet at 8:30 AM CDT at the Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park.

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 1.5 hours

John James Audubon State Park's Beech-Maple forest is an urban oasis for woodland and shore birds. In addition to the seven woodpecker species, several neotropical migrants make the park their home. Species spotted on these hikes include: Eastern Bluebird, Yellow-throated Warbler, Baltimore Oriole, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Indigo Bunting, Prothonotary Warbler, and White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos. New birders welcome.

#### **Owl Pellet Dissection**

10:30 AM CDT at the Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 1 hour

Owls hunt for many different types of prey. Discover what critters these nocturnal hunters seek out by dissecting a sterilized owl pellet.

#### **Hands-on Bird Banding Workshop.**

11:30 AM CDT at Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 1.5 hours

Come and help us with an ongoing conservation project as we catch, identify, band, and release birds from the John James Audubon State Park. Bird banding helps us understand bird migration and movements, behavior, social structure, lifespan and survival rates, and population growth. This is a great opportunity for spotting early migratory birds and connecting with nature, so bring a camera! \*

# OHIO VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL Schedule-brochure

#### \* **A Walk with Bluebirds**

Meet at 1:00 PM CDT at the Sycamore Shelter, John James Audubon State Park

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 1 hour

Discover the lives and nesting habits of Eastern Bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Bob and Judy Peak will introduce visitors to their ongoing Bluebird nesting research conducted at numerous parks including Audubon State Park. Attendees may have an opportunity to see eggs and nestlings inside nesting boxes. This walking tour is moderate in difficulty and mostly on concrete. Wheelchairs can likely be accommodated by use of a vehicle. New birders welcome.

#### **Explore Raptors**

2:30 PM CDT at the Audubon Museum, John James Audubon State Park

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 1 hour

Using live birds, participants will learn the characteristics of birds of prey, their role in the ecosystem, and how interactions with humans have impacted these majestic creatures.

### Sunday, April 21

#### **Eagle Slough Natural Area Birding Hike**

Meet at the entrance to Eagle Slough located on Waterworks Road, just north of Ellis Park at 7:00 AM CDT

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 2 hours

Eagle Slough is one of the most recent local areas to be returned to its natural state.

Join us for a birding walk through this 127-acre urban wetland area. Expect to see warblers and other migratory songbirds. Species observed on this hike may include: Wood Duck, Winter Wren, warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers and late shorebirds.

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Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave at 6:00 PM CDT

Fee: Free. No pre-registration required  
Duration: approximately 2 hours

Join us for a birding walk through this 35-acre urban wetland and prairie environment. Species observed on this hike may include: Prothonotary Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Dickcissel, and Pileated Woodpeckers.

### Friday, April 26

#### **Big Day of Birding**

Departure time 4:00 AM CDT from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve parking lot

Fee: \$25 includes transportation only. Pre-registration required\*-contact LD Harry @ 812-867-0144 and please leave a message.

Duration: 12 to 14 hours.  
Expected return 7:00 PM CDT

Join us and participate in our Big Day of Birding event. We will scout the tri-state for most species seen in one day. Please wear appropriate footwear for marshy conditions. Registration ends on April 19. No food or drink will be provided but coolers will be available.

### Saturday, April 27

#### **Birding the Eastern Section of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge**

Departs at 7:00 AM CDT from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve parking lot

Fee: \$20 includes transportation only. Pre-registration required\*-contact LD Harry @ 812-867-0144 and please leave a message.

Duration: approximately 7 hours. Expected return 2:00 PM CDT

Meet at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve and join Wildlife Refuge Specialist Heath Hamilton as he leads an outing to Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. The trip will hit the birding hot spots while traveling through one of the best remaining bottomland hardwood forests left in the Midwest. Participants should expect to see songbirds, shorebirds, and wetland-dependent marshbirds. There will be short walks at Snakey Point and Maxey Marsh. Registration ends April 19. Please wear appropriate footwear for marshy conditions. Maximum 12-15. No food or drink will be provided but coolers will be available.

### Sunday, April 28

#### **Birding the Western Section of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge**

Departs at 7:00 AM CDT from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve parking lot

Fee: \$20 includes transportation only. Pre-registration required\*-contact LD Harry @ 812-867-0144 and please leave a message.

Duration: approximately 7 hours.  
Expected return 2:00 PM CDT

Meet at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve and join Wildlife Refuge Specialist Heath Hamilton as he leads an outing to the western section of The Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. This tour will also include a visit to the Refuge's Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area. Participants should expect to see songbirds, shorebirds, and wetland-dependent marshbirds. There will be short walks. Registration ends April 19. Please wear appropriate footwear for marshy conditions. Maximum 12-15. No food or drink will be provided but coolers will be available.



# Get ready for some serious Bird Watching everyone! APRIL FIELD TRIP...IN SEARCH OF THE CERULEAN WARBLER



*what is a mammoth cave, is that Ohio?*

*ZzzrraaayyyyZzzzrraaaayyyZzzzrrrrreeeeeeeee!!* Yes that is the classic description of the little sneeze descending down from the highest trees in the forest canopy! That is the simple yet so awesome song of the coolest Wood Warbler of them all. The King of the High Canopy and a living, breathing reflection of a truly healthy Kentucky Forest. The most pure “Blue” of all the warblers is none other than our own beautiful Cerulean Warbler. Once common in the river bottom forests all over western Kentucky, the Cerulean Warbler is now only found in the larger, remnant stands of what once was. Their habitat has been nearly destroyed in Western Kentucky except for one huge stronghold and that stronghold is none other than Mammoth Cave National Park. In our government’s desire to protect the cave system underground they also set aside over 90’000 acres of one of the most beautiful forests in all of Kentucky and that forest is along the banks of the Green and the Nolin rivers that snake through this magnificent landscape.

Here, the sound of a chainsaw is never heard and the trees along the rivers grow long and tall, providing endless shade and seclusion for so many species of forest birds. And the Cerulean Warbler still preaches to all below from his high pulpit. Here the Cerulean Warbler still reigns supreme amidst the green canopy of oxygen producing leaves and hearing them takes you into another time. Hearing this bird takes you back to what Kentucky once was before it was raped and pillaged by coal miners, loggers, and grain farmers. The huge Poplars, Sycamores, Oaks, and so many other forest trees remind you of what this country looked like when the first explorers ever laid eyes on it and the bird that exclaims this point over them all is the Cerulean Warbler. If you have never seen a Cerulean Warbler you will miss a great chance come April the 20th when the Daviess County Audubon Society will be taking a field trip there just to see this magical creature of the “Big Woods.” Many other woodland songbirds also thrive here like the Scarlet Tanager, American Redstart, Hooded Warbler, Wood Thrush, Black and White Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and so many others, but the Cerulean Warbler is so special because of how rare they have become the last 50 years.

We will be meeting at the Owensboro Community College back parking lot at 7:30 A:M on the morning of April the 20th and from there we will be heading carpool style to Mammoth Cave National Park. Once there I will try my best to take you to some of the best Cerulean Warbler locations along the trails at Mammoth Cave. The best way to see them is by canoe along the rivers, but we will be able to get close to some of them on foot on the trails. Last year there was a pair right at Houtchens Ferry and if they are there again it will be easy to find them. Just be ready to be quick with your binoculars and bring your best pair. I will also be bringing my Cerulean Warbler recordings to lure a beautiful sky blue male down from the canopy so we can all get the chance to see one really good. It is well worth the effort and when you see them close up like I have no other “Bluebird” can equal this tiny shining jewel of the high trees. The Cerulean is very territorial and when he hears the song of another male on his turf he will come down, usually within seconds of playing the recording. Because of this we all have to be ready and on standby close to the CD player and we all need to stay close together and keep our voices down once we spot a singing male Cerulean in the canopy. If we do these things you will be in for a treat that no other Wood Warbler can provide. The Cerulean is simply Breathtaking! Don’t miss this one if you love Woodland Songbirds. Saturday April the 20th 7:30 A.M. at the Owensboro Community College South parking lot.

Ya’ll come on and head back in time, hearing and seeing one of America’s finest! The Cerulean Warbler!! —Mike Brown



chirp

# EARTH DAY APRIL 18th

Take some time this year to consider our Earth and how each of us might help to preserve it. Many of our species are “one the edge”, including us! The Joe Ford Nature Center has chosen Earth Day as the date for their Trash for Cash effort. Trash for Cash to help the Joe Ford Nature Center will be at 9 a.m. April 18. Roads and the meeting place have yet to be determined.

If you’d like to help, contact the Center [gcarford@aol.com](mailto:gcarford@aol.com) or Roseanne at 683-5972. Maybe add some native (bird-friendly) plantings to your yard or make the decision to cook and eat more locally grown products this year.



chirp, ohio

The Sierra Club has invited Dr. Keith Mountain, KY State Geographer and glaciologist to address the issue of climate change at the Owensboro Area Museum of Science and History at 7:00 P.M. on April 18<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is open to the public, so do your best to bring in friends and neighbors.



chirp chirp

And what better way to celebrate Mother Earth than to trek to Mammoth Cave in search of the elusive Cerulean Warbler, whose old growth forests are diminishing before our eyes? So attend one or all of these activities, but **do something!**

## Owensboro Museum of Science and History Spring Break Activity

“Say Whaaat? Awesome Facts about Awesome Birds” will be this year’s Daviess County Audubon Society Spring Break presentation at the Owensboro Museum of Science and History. It will be from 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, April 3.

The idea is loosely based on an Olympic-themed program president Judy Adams had read about. The PowerPoint presentation will discuss various amazing facts about birds’ physical attributes and behaviors. It is heavy on audience participation as youngsters attempt to measure up to birds’ physical traits and test their ability to do such tasks as eat as much as a baby robin or share sunflower seeds like northern cardinals. It casts a wider net than previous programs which focused solely on backyard birds.

The “make and take” activity for the morning will be assembling hummingbird feeder craft kits. The kits are complete with stems, foam blossoms and feeder tubes. They also come with feeding instructions to be sent home with the kids.

# THE SLOUGHS... BIRDERS' PARADISE

Fifteen members of the Daviess County Audubon Society went on a great field trip on March the 16th to the Sloughs Wildlife Mgmt. Area in Henderson County, Kentucky. The group started out at the Fish and Wildlife building there and right off the bat began seeing the many species of birds that call this area home. We heard the first Eastern Phoebe of the season right at the Fish and Wildlife building along with Song and Field Sparrows. Then a Fox Sparrow was spotted on the gravel road as we were on our way to see most likely one of the biggest Bald Eagle nests in the whole country. The group was blown away by the sheer size of this colossal Eagle Nest that is over 9 feet tall from top to bottom! The female Eagle did not disappoint and she sat there on her eggs while all got to see her atop her huge condo nest.

Then the group headed over to the open sloughs to see many species of ducks and a few species of shorebirds already on



the move. We saw Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpipers and Wilson's Snipe. Some Dunlins were seen in the area by a group of birders from Louisville, Kentucky the same day. Some of the ducks were American Wigeon, Shoveler, Pintail, Gadwall, Green and Blue Winged Teal. The group actually observed 3 active Bald Eagle nests that day.

After lunch, some of the group went to the new refuge that is now a part of Audubon State Park. It is the area just before the Ohio River bridge. We took in the Eagle nest and were enjoying that when, all of a sudden, it began to explode with bird life! We were looking at yet



another female Bald Eagle on the nest when someone says "is that a Hooded Merganser??" Well the telescopes started scanning the water and Hooded Mergansers started popping up everywhere it seemed... out there in the cypress knees and the buttonbush. Also seen were Ring Necked Ducks, Mallards, Green Winged Teal, Shoveler, and a Belted Kingfisher rattled his way atop a dead snag for an awesome look. We saw many other songbirds that day and some Great Blue Herons.

Thanks to everyone for a great day birding and especially to Pam for those awesome treats at Hardy Slough! Here are the species we saw on this wonderful day of birding! —Mike Brown



1. Mallard
2. Canada Goose
3. Turkey Vulture
4. Red-wing Blackbird
5. Common Grackle
6. European Starling
7. Mourning Dove
8. American Robin
9. Northern Shoveler
10. Gadwall
11. Horned Lark
12. Killdeer
13. Field sparrow
14. Phoebe
15. Song Sparrow
16. Carolina Wren
17. Fox Sparrow
18. Northern Cardinal
19. Brown-headed cowbird
20. Blue Jay
21. Red-bellied Woodpecker
22. American Crow
23. Blue-wing Teal
24. Wood Duck
25. Tree Swallow
26. White-crowned Sparrow
27. Carolina Chickadee
28. Tufted Titmouse
29. Greater Yellowlegs
30. Brewer's Blackbird
31. Green-wing Teal
32. Bald Eagle
33. Pectoral Sandpiper
34. Rusty Blackbird
35. Savannah Sparrow
36. Northern Pintail
37. American Coot
38. Lesser Yellowlegs
39. Pied-bill Grebe
40. American Kestrel
41. Great Blue Heron
42. Hooded Merganser
43. Ring-neck Duck
44. Belted Kingfisher
45. Northern Mockingbird
46. Red-tail Hawk
47. Wilson's Snipe
48. Downy woodpecker
49. Hairy woodpecker
50. Pileated woodpecker



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# FROM THE BACKYARD

Brrr...will spring and its warmer temperatures ever get here? Hopefully, by the time you read this you'll be packing away that puffy winter jacket! Despite the cold and rain, DCAS has been busy. Western KY Botanical Garden birding classes are well under way, with 120 children already sharing in the joys of birding. The March 21<sup>st</sup> class was treated to a Red-breasted Nuthatch and a bright yellow American Goldfinch at the feeders. Urban Girls/Urban Birds will start at Girls Inc. on April 11<sup>th</sup> and continue on Thursday afternoons at 4:00 P.M. for five sessions. The program will finish with a field trip to the Joe Ford Nature Center on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

We will join with the local chapter of the Sierra Club to celebrate Earth Day on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Do plan to come to the Owensboro Museum of Science & History at 7:00 P.M. and hear Dr. Keith Mountain share his thoughts on climate change and water issues. And there are two opportunities to help keep our roads clear of bottles, cans, and wrappers. JF Nature Center will be clearing debris on April 18<sup>th</sup> in celebration of Earth Day and DCAS will have our Trash for Cash day on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. Your help with either or both of these projects will be appreciated. Contact Roseanne Radzalovage (683-5972) for the JFNC effort or Carolyn Williams ([cs.williams@att.net](mailto:cs.williams@att.net)) for DCAS .

Our field trips have had "super attendance" since Mike Brown became our coordinator, with fifteen-plus participating on each venture over the past three (chilly) months. As a result, we have purchased a set of six walkie-talkies to enhance communication (and prevent rear-enders) on field trips. They'll have their debut on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> when we car pool to Mammoth Cave National Park. Hope you'll join us! They may also get some use when ten of our members drive to Northern Ohio for the Biggest Week in American Birding in early May.

Remember, flexibility is our middle name... due to the fire at First Christian Church, our **April 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be at the Brescia Campus Center.** Also, since a large group of our members are heading to Northern Ohio, **our May meeting has been rescheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> (location to be determined).**

As you can see, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in DCAS activities this spring. So pull on your hiking boots, grab your binoculars and field guide and come along!



There's a lot going on...be a part of it!  
Judy Adams, President  
[Jadams11\\_2008@yahoo.com](mailto:Jadams11_2008@yahoo.com)  
(334-1391)



*Where's ohio? What are they looking at?*

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