The Goldfinch

Daviess County Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.org

September 2007

Medley to offer 'Truth' program on global warming

One of the soldiers in the war against global warming will kick off the 2007-2008 Daviess County Audubon Society year. DCAS member Denise Medley will present the "An Inconvenient Truth" slide show at the Sept. 10 meeting.

Since its release, the Academy Award-winning documentary by former vice president Al Gore has created a new dialogue about personal responsibility and the environment. Medley did more than view it passively.

"I was so moved by the information in the movie, that when I read in the Audubon magazine that he planned to train 1,000 people to give the presentation, I searched down the Web site and applied for training," she said. Asked about her qualifications as a presenter and environmental advocate, she was accepted and trained to be a presenter in Nashville. In Owensboro, she has presented the program to high school students and the morning Rotary Club. She also has presentations scheduled in Louisville.

The original slide slow is more than an hour long, but Medley said she has adapted it to a 20- to 25-minute show, to make it more accessible to people with crammed schedules.

"Perhaps most of the members have seen the movie and I'll be 'preaching to the choir,' but it never hurts to reinforce the concepts in the show," she said.

Medley was a "choir" member when she saw the film.

"I have always been a recycler. I carry my own bags

See Truth, Page 2

New year, new president Anderson wants to put an emphasis on birding

As the new president of the Daviess County Audubon Society, Steve Anderson has two words for the membership: Let's go.

"We are all birders, we should bird more," he said. "Do we need to wait for the monthly field trip to bird? Our members are a very varied lot from many backgrounds and



Steve Anderson, left, with Rob Rold hopes Audubon members have fun.

every imaginable schedule in their lives. I think that even an impromptu trip for a couple of hours to a very close location would be worth the effort."

Anderson has been known to hop in his vehicle in pursuit of rarities which find western Kentucky an interesting place to visit. He also has honed his birding skills at his Calhoun home, where he had a one-day yard list of 45 species last fall.

The very makeup of the Owensboro vicinity does have its drawback for wildlife enthusiasts, he notes, since it's just developing a fringe area between the urban area of the city and the rural Daviess County farms. "I think environmental issues are not addressed in either of the areas," he said.

Anderson, who works at Wal-Mart, is the father of three, so he vows to do his best with the limited free time he has to devote to the organization. From tracking down program speakers to introducing members to the joys of bees, he's always managed to do that.

Ford ready for education challenges

One of the community's top environmental educators has agreed to serve as the new education chairwoman of the Daviess County Audubon Society. Grace Ford will be guiding the programs, which help connect children with the natural world around them.

"I saw an opportunity to serve two (groups) who have a common goal of connecting youth with nature," she said. Ford has been busy with the Joe Ford Nature Library, and she is excited about the potential of a "win-win" opportunity to tap into resources with the library and the DCAS. For example, she is pondering how to use Audubon Adventures materials for younger visitors to the library.

During the August planning meeting, DCAS board members conceded that state and federal educational accountability demands limit the amount of time outsiders can work with kids on nature programming. A future dream is to have an after-school nature group based out of the library, and one day, use the Joe Ford Nature Center as an outdoor classroom for members.

As she works with the education team and area schools to build on the program's success and determine its direction, she considers this year a learning year for herself, as well as the kids. How do you keep kids engaged?

"Watch for their body signals of learning and feed into them as those moments happen and to respond to frustrations that surface when kids are not tapping into what is presented," she said. She hopes these frustrations are few and far between.



Grace Ford

DCAS heading for the Falls of the Ohio

Are you in need of a shorebird fix?

The first planned field trip for 2007-2008 will be to Falls of the Ohio, just west of Louisville. Members are asked to meet at 8 a.m. Sept. 22 at the Kroger parking lot off U.S. 60 East.

Members note that the hot summer has dried up much of Kentucky's shorebird havens, such as Lake 9 in far western Kentucky. They're hoping conditions will be favorable for "peeps" and other water birds.

Recent reports from the fossil beds included sightings of black and Caspian terns, a possible least tern, a Bonaparte gull, ring-billed gulls, osprey, lesser and greater yellowlegs, spotted sandpiper, common nighthawks, great blue herons, great egrets, Canada geese, mallards, wood ducks, black and turkey vultures.

Other fall field trips include Higginson-Henry Wildlife Management Area in Union County in October and Peabody Wildlife Management Area in November. Christmas bird counts will serve as December trips.

To make trips more enjoyable for everyone, please follow these field trip etiquette tips:

- 1. Come prepared to drive if necessary -- have a full tank of gas.
- 2. When carpooling, share gas expenses.
- 3. Try to arrive a few minutes before scheduled field trip time.
- 4. If you have questions, call the leader.
- 5. Check the most recent newsletter or Web site for changes or corrections to the schedule.
 - 6. You might want to take a snack and drink on all trips.
 - 7. Keep talking to a minimum and speak in hushed tones.
 - 8. Stay with the leader; do not go ahead of the group.

Truth

From Page 1

to the grocery and other shopping venues, but I've learned about the 'vampires' in my home that suck electricity all the time and have made some changes there," she said. She will address other behavioral changes during her presentation.

Along with the film's look into an uncertain environmental future, Medley was struck by another message of the film: that technology is already available to address global warming.

There are naysayers who contend it's a problem that's been overblown in the name of politics.

"I think that the weather makes people take it more seriously these days. I actually think that the country is reaching a tipping point, and we will start to see a turnaround in people's lives," Medley said.

Will your turnaround begin Sept. 10? Attend the DCAS meeting at 7 p.m. at First Christian Church, Seventh Street and J.R. Miller Blvd.

September events

Meeting, 7 p.m. First Christian Church, Seventh and J.R. Miller, Sept. 10.

WKBG Scarecrow Festival, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sept. 15. Girl Scout Camp Pennyroyal celebration, 1 to 4 p.m., Sept. 16.



Chow down

Donna Hanley was among members who enjoyed the June picnic at Panther Creek Park.

Work still needed at camp's bird blind

There's still work to be done at the Powell Bird Blind as Girl Scout Camp Pennyroyal celebrates its 50th birthday from 1 to 4 p.m. Sept. 16.

Brenda Little said the Daviess County Audubon Society has been asked to present the features of the blind during the celebration. Before then, there's still housekeeping to be done.

The windows need washing inside and out, particularly after being streaked with an assortment of body fluids by a crow which crashed into it. Two windows are so elevated that it will require a tall

See Blind, Page 4

Bucket brigade keeps tree alive

It hasn't been all fun and games this summer ... a hardy group of volunteers has managed to battle drought conditions to nurture the yellowwood tree planted last spring in memory of longtime member Julian Wilson.

"The deluge that came down early in July was a godsend, but it could not possibly have been enough to allow us to get by without watering for very long," Brenda Little said. "We have been dousing the tree's mulched area with 10 to 12 gallons of water every week. Some of the bucket people fill plastic jugs at home and haul water out to the tree. Others, like me, use a 2-gallon bucket with a dog leash tied to the handle grip, and we tote water from the pond near the tree."

Reports have come in from more than one of the volunteers saying the tree looks "happy" and "great!"

Some people have gone beyond their responsibilities. Rose Ann Radzelovage and Donna Wilson didn't stop with watering Julian's tree. They also watered another memorial tree that has been planted nearby. Charles Morris also took his weed trimmer and trimmed around the millstone which holds the dedication plaque.

"That should keep monster mowers away from a project of which we are very proud," Brenda Little said. Her brother, Jerry Bailey, donated his time, a trailer and truck to move the millstone off the Wilsons' farm to the Owensboro Community and Technical College outdoor classroom and even power washed the millstone. Morris used sturdy glue to affix the memorial plaque to the stone.

Once the tree is established, members will be able to suspend the weekly waterings and just watch out for long periods of drought when they might need to return to nurture the tree with some extra care. At this time, the tree is doing very well, and the crew of volunteers is to be commended.

Nesting birds prevail over tough conditions

Extreme conditions couldn't prevent Ohio County nest boxes from welcoming new feathered friends during the spring/summer breeding season.

Southern Elementary reported nests in 100% of its boxes. Despite three chick deaths caused by vandals, the school was still able to fledge 25 young birds.

It was a much more diverse population at Wayland Elementary, Brenda Little reported. The trail fledged 16 tree swallows, a dozen bluebirds and five house wrens. Hoover Hill Road's trail fledged 18 bluebirds and five chickadees.

The extreme spring cold and summer heat did take a toll, Little said. Data of nonhatching eggs in prior years are not available for comparison, but this year may top all others with 13 eggs that were lost to a windstorm that blew a tree down over the nest box and to weather extremes of spring cold and heat in June and July.

Wayland eyes Junior Audubon organization

Is there a young Bert Powell about to get hooked on birds?

That's the premise behind groundwork for a Junior Audubon Society at Wayland Alexander Elementary, the brainchild of family resource officer (and DCAS member) Starla Cravens. Co-sponsor Brenda Little said they hope the club can meet once a week, envisioning a small after-school club of about 10 members. They are trying to figure out ways to fund the program and have applied to the National Audubon Society for start-up monies in hopes of supplying kids with a backpack loaded with such items as binoculars, field guide, nature notebook and water bottle. They also are developing programs and want to plot a circle so Ohio County kids can participate in their own Christmas Bird Count.

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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

DCAS to have booth at Scarecrow Festival

The Daviess County Audubon Society will have an information booth at this year's Scarecrow Festival at the Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. It will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15.

The organization hopes to have free bird tattoos for the kids. Booth volunteers are asked to contact Charles Morris at 926-8803.

Interested persons may participate in the annual scarecrow contest. Scarecrows can be constructed out of traditional and nontraditional materials, as long as they're weather-resistant. Cash prizes are \$100 for first, \$50 for second and \$25 for third. The entry deadline is Sept. 7. For information, contact the garden at wkbg.bellsouth.net

For news, dues

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Officers

Blind

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ladder, with someone securing the bottom rung while the second person climbs and washes. The lettering over the door of the blind needs painting. This will require someone with a very steady hand and patience to keep from "coloring outside the lines." Also needed is someone with handyman skills to install door latch hardware.

The feeder bird poster has been framed but will need to be hung carefully from the adobe walls. A dry erase board also must be hung so visitors can record the species they observed, she said.

Other aspects of the work done at the site will be discussed at the September meeting, including decisions on mosquito fish and additional rock. After disappointing performance by the first solar fountain, a second solar fountain has been purchased and will be tested, she said. It's too soon to tell if wildflowers planted in the spring survived the drought of 2007, but she urges that mulch be added to preserve what moisture is present.

Anyone willing to help with these tasks is asked to contact Little at littlefizgig@starband.net or (270) 298-4237.