



Greater Mohican Audubon News

YOUR LINK TO TOMORROW'S ENVIRONMENT

www.audubon.cjb.net

SUMMER 2006

GMAS CALENDAR

- **Wed. Jun. 7-Wed. Jun. 21.** Annual Summer Bird Count. Call Tim Leslie at 419-289-2626 for more information.
- **Fri. Jun. 9 7PM.** "The Melodious Turdidae: Thrushes of Mohican". Join leader Gary Cowell and other GMAS members as we venture out this evening to listen for Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, and Veery. Meet at the Covered Bridge at Mohican State Forest.
- **Sat. Jun. 10 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Malabar Farm, located near Pleasant Hill Lake on Bromfield Road in Lucas. Meet at the Gift Shop at the Big House.
- **Tues. Jun. 20 6:30PM.** GMAS Board Meeting at the Ashland Public Library.
- **Sat. Jun. 24 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Byers Woods, located 4 miles south of Ashland, just east of State Route 60 on CR 1754. Meet in the parking lot.
- **Sat. Jul. 8 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Secrest Arboretum, 1680 Madison Avenue, Wooster, Ohio. Meet at Visitor Pavilion.
- **Tues. Jul. 18 6:30PM.** GMAS Board Meeting at the Ashland Public Library.
- **Sat. Jul. 22 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Byers Woods (see Jun. 24 for address).
- **Tues. Aug. 1 7PM.** "Owl-pollousa" at Gorman Nature Center. See article in this issue for more information.
- **Sun. Aug. 6 4PM.** Annual GMAS Picnic at Malabar Farm. See article in this issue for more information.
- **Sat. Aug. 12 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Malabar Farm (see Jun. 10 for address).
- **Tues. Aug. 15 6:30PM.** GMAS Board Meeting at the Ashland Public Library.
- **Sat. Aug. 26 9AM-11AM.** Beginner's Bird Walk at Byers Woods (see Jun. 24 for address).

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MOHICAN WILDLIFE WEEKEND APRIL 21-23, 2006

This was an outstanding weekend! The weather was sunny and beautiful both Saturday and Sunday. The weekend started at Gorman Nature Center Friday night, with a program by Steve McKee, "Mohican—A Backyard Journey North and South". His presentation was full of pictures of plants and birds in the Mohican. One of the unusual characteristics of the Mohican is that its north-facing slopes are cool, and the climate and soil favor northern species. The south-facing slopes are warm, and the climate and soil favor northern species. To bring home his point, Steve had one slide with both a Kentucky and Canada Warbler!! GMAS provided refreshments.

Don Plant and Su Snyder set up spotting scopes on the fishing dock at Pleasant Hill Lake both Saturday and Sunday mornings. The first morning at the lake started off pleasant and warm, but very foggy. And the fog did not burn off completely until around 10:30. They tallied 37 species of birds, including an Eastern Kingbird, 9 Red-breasted Mergansers, 3 Caspian Terns, 6 Ruddy Ducks, 4 Common Loons, and a Forster's Tern. Sunday morning started off bright and sunny, but probably because of a Fisherman's Bass Tournament, they only found 27 bird species. This included all 3 expected terns: Caspian, Forster's, and Common. A Warbling Vireo serenaded them as it had the day before. The highlight of Sunday was a tail-bobbing Palm Warbler eating bugs within 20 feet of the spotting scopes.

At Clearfork Reservoir, Gary Cowell & Tim Leslie manned spotting scopes, with the assistance of Bill Flanagan, Roger Troutman, Cheryl Harner, and Hugh & Judy Rose. On Saturday, visitors included a troop of boy scouts. Fifty-three species of birds, including an Osprey, 7 Common Loons, 1 Redhead, and a Common Tern were tallied. On Sunday, 46 bird species were spotted at Clearfork.

On Saturday afternoon, Su Snyder, with the help of Tim Leslie, Gary Cowell, Don Plant, Cheryl Harner, Hugh & Judy Rose, led a group at Malabar Farm on a 2-hour bird walk—though nature walk may describe it better. They found a little Brown Snake, lots of turtles, toads, quite a few wildflowers such as Bloodroot and Dutchman's-breeches, and a West Virginia White butterfly. They also tallied 34 species of birds—including wonderful up-close looks at a Yellow-throated Warbler and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. A Barred Owl answered Gary's call, and the group got a nice look at a Pileated Woodpecker on the wing. A Louisiana Waterthrush singing up a storm trying to attract a mate, was a life bird for several in the group.

On Sunday afternoon, thirty-some people attended Cheryl Harner's presentation on planting for wildlife, at Gorman Nature Center, entitled "Home Grown Butterflies". Cheryl informed the group that butterflies are a bio-indicator. They are one of the "canaries in the coal mine" in our environmental picture. And sadly, their numbers are in decline. Providing proper pesticide and herbicide free habitat is key in aiding butterflies. Host plants for the larval stages are equally as important as nectar plants. Homeowners can provide habitat spots for benefit of

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Gary Cowell and Roger Troutman at Clear Fork Reservoir

Photo by Cheryl Harner

BATS: A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

Bats may be the most misunderstood animals in the United States, although as consumers of enormous numbers of insects, they rank among the most beneficial. Almost all United States bats, and 70 percent of the bat species worldwide, feed almost exclusively on insects and are thus extremely beneficial. In fact, bats are the only major predators of night-flying insects. One bat can eat between 600 and 1,000 mosquitoes and other insect pests in just one hour.

Bats are very unique animals. They are the only mammals that truly fly. Also, they use a very sophisticated technique in seeing in total darkness, called echolocation (sonar). This sensory adaptation helps them to locate flying insects and avoid collisions with objects, as they search for food.

While most United States bat species are insectivorous (insect eating), bats in other parts of the world feed on a variety of items in addition to insects. Many species feed primarily on fruit, while several types feed on nectar and pollen. Fruit bats perform an extremely important function as seed dispersers. Nectar-eating bats are important pollinators. Many plant species depend almost entirely on bats for pollination.

Of the 45 species of bats found in the continental United States, six are federally-listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. One of these species is the Indiana Bat, found in Ohio. Twenty other species are considered to be of special concern and may be proposed for listing as endangered or

threatened in the future. Populations of several of the remaining species, especially cave-dwelling species, also appear to be declining.

In the State of Ohio there have been a total of 12 individual species of bats that have been identified; with Big Brown Bat, Little Brown Bat, Red Bat, Eastern Pipistrelle Bat, and Hoary Bat being the most common. The Big Brown and the Little Brown species are the most numerous bats found in Ohio. These two species commonly use human structures for roosting and nursery sights. Hollow trees, loose bark on trees, natural caves and mines also provide shelter for bats.

Unfortunately, bats are among the most persecuted of all mammals. The question may be asked, "Why are bats on the decline?" Basically, the reasons for decline are: pesticide use, destruction of habitat, intentional eradication by humans and lack of protection laws. Because of myths and misinformation, bats are killed in incredible numbers. Their populations are declining worldwide, almost entirely because of abuse by humans.

Finally, what can you do to protect this beneficial and unique animal? You can learn more about them, show tolerance, protect and provide "homes" for them, and above all: understand and appreciate them for the important role they play in the environment in which we live.

—Don Plant

Mohican Wildlife Weekend

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butterflies. By using fewer chemical, going totally organic or just banning lawn chemicals- our actions impact the species. Mow less often and plant native flowers such as purple cone flower, asters, dill, milkweed, butterfly weed to encourage population growth. Set out a rock for "basking" and whip up some fresh mud for "puddling" and soon you can be enjoying your own "Home Grown Butterflies."

On Sunday afternoon, Louise Fleming led a birdwalk at Ohio Bird Sanctuary (OBS). It was afternoon, so birds were not very active, but they enjoyed the wildflowers and a few butterflies, including Spring Azure and Tiger Swallowtail. They saw House Wrens, Purple Finches, House Finches; Downy, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers; Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Swamp Sparrow, White-eyed Vireo, American Goldfinches, and Song Sparrows. Afterwards, a few Birders stopped at the bridge on Orweiller Road. In the wetland on the side of OBS, Bill Flanagan spotted a Little Blue Heron! A rare species anywhere in Ohio, the Little Blue was feeding in the cattails while the birders looked on. While they were searching for the heron, they spotted one of the Red-shouldered Hawks that they'd been hearing, but not seeing, all afternoon. It was perched in a willow tree. Soon its mate flew over and perched nearby. The OBS staff knew the pair was nesting, but they hadn't found the nest yet.

This year's Mohican Wildlife Weekend was a great success. We hope our members were able to enjoy it; if not, come next year. Or better yet, help us by leading a bird walk or volunteering on another job.

MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: "All bats have rabies." **Fact:** Less than 1/2 of 1% of bats carry the rabies virus.

Myth: "Bats get tangled in people's hair." **Fact:** Although bats may occasionally fly very close to someone's face while catching insects, they do not get stuck in people's hair.

Myth: "Bats suck your blood." **Fact:** By far the most famous bats are the Vampire Bats. These amazing creatures are found only in Central America and South America – not North America. Vampire Bats do not suck blood, they lick blood from the wounds of animals, not people.

Myth: "Bats are rodents." **Fact:** Bats may resemble rodents in many ways, but they are not rodents.

Myth: "Bats are blind." **Fact:** Although they can't see color, bats can see better than humans do at night. And many bats can also "see" in the dark by using echolocation. Further questions? Contact: Don Plant (419) 938-3737 < ddplantbirds@aol.com >.

LONG-TAILED DUCK FALL OUT

A Long-tailed Duck (formerly known as Oldsquaw), first seen Friday, March 24, 2006, at a small pond at Malabar Farm in Richland County by Gary Cowell, stayed until Sunday, March 26, 2006.

This Long-Tailed Duck was one of 3 sightings Friday, March 24, 2006, on 3 small farm ponds in Wayne and Richland Counties. Six were seen on a pond near Apple Creek by Bruce Glick, et al. Two others were seen by Willis Brubaker on a pond northwest of Wooster.



Long-tailed Duck at Malabar Farm on 3/26/06
Photo by Su Snyder

FOURTH ANNUAL FALL HIKING SPREE

We welcome you to participate in the fourth annual Fall Hiking Spree from September 15 through November 15. The program was developed to encourage hiking for enjoyment in a three county area: Wayne, Ashland and Richland. The hikes are selected from existing county and city natural areas, and each year the hikes are rotated from the previous year. Our three-county area has beautiful natural areas and hiking is a slow and healthy way to enjoy this beauty. A reward for completing a minimum of six hikes is a sturdy hiking stick and an annual GMAS Fall Hiking Spree shield which can be mounted on the stick.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a registration form and information about the 2006 Fall Hiking Spree.

"OWL-POLLOUSA" AT GORMAN NATURE CENTER AUGUST 1ST

Julie Davis and Jen Sauter of the Columbus Audubon Society will share their experiences with owls—from banding young Long-eared Owls to finding a nesting Boreal Owl to spotting a pair of Great Gray Owls. Please join the Greater Mohican Audubon Society on Tuesday, August 1, 2006 at 7:00PM at the Gorman Nature Center, 2295 Lexington Avenue, Lexington, Ohio.

After the talk, we will venture outside for an owl-walk. We hope to have owl pellets available, as well as owl callers and more. This program is free and open to the public. If you have any questions, please email Cheryl Harner at harner1@bright.net

MAGEE MARSH/CRANE CREEK TRIP REPORT

On Saturday, May 6, seven members of GMAS joined birders from around Ohio and several other states at Magee Marsh/Crane Creek to seek out birds, many of which were making their northern migration. GMAS members included Bill Flanagan, Louise Fleming, Cheryl Harner, Pam Jordan, Tom Manion, Su Snyder and Dick Stoffer. The bird de jour was a Wilson's Phalarope seen across the road from Magee Marsh. This bird was a life bird for most of us.

Other birds seen or heard by the group included Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Mute Swan, Trumpeter Swan, Canada Goose with goslings, Mallard, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle and nest, American Kestrel, American Coot, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Dunlin, American Woodcock, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Common Tern, Mourning Dove, Black-billed Cuckoo, Chimney Swift, Downy Woodpecker, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Barn Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Tree Swallow, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Waterthrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Cardinal, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, Orchard Oriole, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Sparrow and American Goldfinch.

—Dick Stoffer

GMAS ANNUAL PICNIC

GMAS is having its annual picnic on Sunday, August 6 at Malabar Farm. We will picnic at the tables around the Big House and then, after we eat, we'll take a bird walk and enjoy Malabar's bird life. We start at 4 PM. Water, iced tea, lemonade and fried chicken will be provided. Each family should bring their own table service and a dish to share. We especially want to invite our new members and our supporters. Come and get acquainted with people who love nature!!! Don't forget your hiking boots and binoculars.

GMAS Calendar *(continued from page 1)*

- **Sat. Sept. 9** 9AM-11AM. Beginner's Bird Walk at Secrest Arboretum (see Jul. 8 for address).
- **Sept. 15 – Nov. 15.** Fourth annual Fall Hiking Spree. See enclosed registration form.
- **Tues. Sept. 19** 6:30PM. GMAS Board Meeting at the Ashland Public Library.
- **Sat. Sept. 23** 9AM-11AM. Beginner's Bird Walk at Byers Woods (see Jun. 24 for address).

TIME TO RENEW

MEMBERSHIP GREATER MOHICAN AUDUBON SOCIETY

The GMAS membership offers local newsletter and events and helps us to fund our programs. Each new Chapter Supporter will receive a free nametag to wear to chapter functions.

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| Chapter Supporter plus National Audubon Society | ☐ \$30 - 1 yr. Introductory rate |
| Chapter Supporter | ☐ \$10 - Annual Fee |
| Chapter Supporter plus Donation | ☐ \$30 - Donation - get 1-year chapter supporter membership
(Receive a free GMAS T-shirt Indicate Size: M L XL) |

Make checks payable to Greater Mohican Audubon Society.

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Mail membership form to: GMAS, P. O. BOX 907, Ashland, OH 44805

Greater Mohican Audubon Society (GMAS) is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of birds and other wildlife through environmental education and the conservation and restoration of habitat.

MISSION

P.O. BOX 907 • ASHLAND, OH 44805

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