



Greater Mohican Audubon News

YOUR LINK TO TOMORROW'S ENVIRONMENT

www.gmasohio.org

WINTER 2009-2010

GMAS CALENDAR

*Sat. Dec. 12 9AM-11AM

Bird Walk at Malabar Farm, located near Pleasant Hill Lake on Bromfield Road in Lucas. Meet at the Visitor's Center. GMAS Holiday Party following walk at the Malabar Inn. For more information see www.gmasohio.org.

*Sat. Dec. 19

Ashland Christmas Bird Count. Call Tim Leslie at 419-289-2626 for more information.

*Sat. Dec. 19

Mansfield Christmas Bird Count. Contact Steve McKee at 419-884-3764 for more information.

*Sat. Dec. 26

No Bird Walk at Byers Woods today. Happy Holidays!

*Sat. Dec. 26

Wooster Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Bob Evans at Madison exit in Wooster at 7AM. For more information, contact Roger Troutman at 419-884-3529.

NOTE: STARTING IN 2010, MALABAR FARM WALKS WILL BE THE SECOND SATURDAYS OF ODD MONTHS AND SECRET WALKS WILL BE THE SECOND SATURDAY OF EVEN MONTHS—A REVERSE OF PREVIOUS YEARS.

ALSO, BYERS WOODS WALKS WILL ONLY BE HELD FOURTH SATURDAY OF FEBRUARY, JUNE, AUGUST, AND OCTOBER. OTHER TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES WILL BE HELD ON THE REMAINDER OF THE FOURTH SATURDAYS.

*Sat. Jan. 2

Mohican Christmas Bird Count. Meet at Rader's Restaurant at 7AM. For more information, contact Roger Troutman at 419-884-3529.

*Sat. Jan. 2

Millersburg Christmas Bird Count. For more information, contact Dennis Kline at 330-567-3432.

THREE RARE RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRDS VISIT LOCAL FEEDERS

Most of our local nesting hummers, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, moved on to warmer climates by the 3rd week in October. So if you see a hummingbird this time of year, it's probably a Rufous Hummingbird—rare in Ohio. These tiny birds nest in northwestern U.S. and western Canada and occasionally show up here in the fall and winter. We usually find them at homes where either people forgot to take down their hummer feeders, or in some cases, keep them up in hopes of attracting one of these brown hummingbirds.

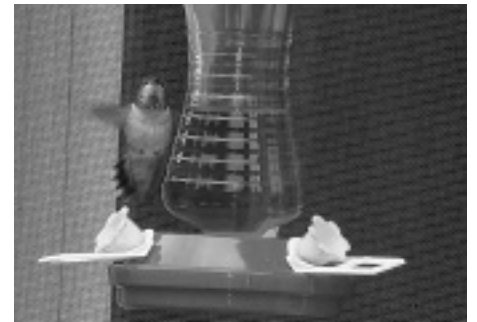
On October 16, I got a call to photograph a probable Rufous Hummingbird coming to a feeder near Butler in Knox County. My photos were examined by an expert and it was determined to be either an adult female or immature male Rufous Hummingbird.

On October 20, a few friends and I watched Allen Chartier from Michigan band a hummingbird coming to a feeder near Loudonville in Ashland County. He set up a feeder in a cage, captured it, banded it, measured it, weighed it, photographed it, then had the homeowner hold in it his palm until the bird flew away. Allen positively identified it to be an adult female Rufous Hummingbird.

On October 24, I was able to photograph yet a third hummer coming to a feeder near Shreve in Wayne County. The bird didn't need banded to be positively identified (although Allen banded this one also). This adult male Rufous Hummingbird was unmistakable—brown with a bright reddish-orange throat. As I write this in early November, it's still here, to the delight of the homeowners.

If you want to try to attract a Rufous Hummingbird to your yard, keep your hummingbird feeders up in the fall even after all your Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have left for the year.

-Su Snyder, Wooster



*Rufous Hummingbird near Butler on Oct. 16
Photo By Su Snyder*

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Bird and nature fans throughout North America are invited to join tens of thousands of everyday bird watchers for the 13th annual **Great Backyard Bird Count on February 12-15, 2010**. A joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, this **free event** is an opportunity for families, students, and people of all ages to discover the wonders of nature in backyards, schoolyards, and local parks, and, at the same time, make an important contribution to conservation. Participants count birds and report their sightings online. Count for fun, count for the future. For more information, go to www.birdcount.org.

(continues on page 2)

GMAS CALENDAR

(continued from page 1)

*Sun. Jan. 3

Bucyrus Christmas Bird Count coordinated by Warren Uxley. Meet at Bob Evans in Bucyrus at 7AM. Contact the Crawford County Park District at 419-683-9000 for more information.

*Sat. Jan. 9 9AM-11AM

Bird Walk at Malabar Farm, located near Pleasant Hill Lake on Bromfield Road in Lucas. Meet at the Visitor's Center. GMAS Board Meeting will be held following the walk at the Malabar Inn.

*Sat. Jan 9 2:00

GMAS and Gorman Nature Center to host Backyard Birds, Becoming a Citizen Scientist. If you already like feeding the birds, we can teach you to easily collect data for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Held at Gorman Nature Center, Mansfield Ohio. For more information, see article in this issue.

*Sat. Jan. 23

Combined trip with Greater Mohican Audubon Society to Castalia and other venues for winter birds. For more information, see our website at www.gmasohio.org.

*Sat. Feb. 13 9AM-11AM

Bird Walk at Secrest Arboretum, 1680 Madison Avenue, Wooster, Ohio. Meet at Visitor Pavilion.

*Feb. 12-15

12th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. See article in this issue.

*Sat. Feb. 27 9AM-11AM

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. Mar. 13 9AM-11AM

Bird Walk at Malabar Farm, located near Pleasant Hill Lake on Bromfield Road in Lucas. Meet at the Visitor's Center. GMAS Board Meeting will be held following the walk at the Malabar Inn.

*Sat. Mar. 27

Shreve Migration Sensation. See article in this issue.

*Sat. Mar. 27

No Byers Woods walk today. See you at the Shreve Migration Sensation.

DO YOU LIKE WATCHING BACKYARD BIRDS? IT IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK TO BECOME A "CITIZEN SCIENTIST".

If you are one of the millions of Americans who enjoy feeding birds and watching your feathered flock at a backyard feeder, you can help Cornell University collect valuable scientific information. By registering for Project Feeder Watch, your backyard birds will be added to the data for bird populations all across America. Counting Northern Cardinals, American Goldfinches, House Sparrows, and other common birds can help provide clues to the changes in bird populations, as they are impacted by urbanization, global warming and other natural trends.

It is easier than you might think. Let your friends and neighbors in Audubon help you identify birds, and walk you through the easy process of registering for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Join us at 2:00 PM on **January 9th, 2010** at Gorman Nature Center, 2295 Lexington Ave. Mansfield, Ohio.

Local merchants, Wayne's Market and Sandy Hill Fruit Farm, will provide door prizes and discounts on bird seed for your feeders! Meet other bird-feeder watchers and learn more about our fascinating Ohio winter birds!



BOTANICAL BIG SIT! DAY OF THE JAY

For those interested in botany, especially in the **dispersal** of oak trees, you would have been amazed at the science in action at our Greater Mohican Audubon's "Big Sit!" First off, the "Big Sit!" is a friendly competition among birders. Generally a 24 hour gig, we see how many species of birds we can count while confined to a 17 foot circle. That explains *why* we would be sitting outside and readily able to monitor the activity of our local Blue Jays all day on Sunday Oct. 11th.

The Blue Jay is a member of the highly intelligent Corvid family. They are a social group, who are often under appreciated due to their boisterous personalities. But like most Corvids, their interactions and intelligence makes them a fascinating species. Blue Jays are widely known as the major disperser of acorns. If you like Oak trees, you can thank a Jay.

Early in the morning Gary Cowell and I noticed Blue Jays ferrying acorns from some location south of our "Big Sit!" site. Throughout the day the Blue Jays continued flying south with empty maws only to return in short order with acorns protruding from their bills. Flight after flight, hour after hour, the jays continued a relentless pursuit for their cache. One study documented jays transporting and caching 133,000 acorns from a stand of *Quercus palustris* trees! Their diligence is admirable.



The photo captured a portion of our Greater Mohican Audubon's "Big Sit!" team. Thanks to everyone who helped spot birds, brought food and provided entertaining commentary while we watched Blue Jays- and 49 other species of birds. Article written by Cheryl Harner for Weedpicker's Journal, www.flora-quest.com

Photo By Su Snyder

THE EASTERN HEMLOCK: A KEYSTONE SPECIES IN MOHICAN

As you visit different habitats in the Mohican area, you will see different dominant tree species. In a moist, rolling glaciated habitat you will probably find that the forest is dominated by American Beech and Sugar Maple– the famous beech-maple forest. A south-facing slope in Mohican will be dominated by oaks– usually White Oak, with Black Oak and Scarlet Oak often near the top of the slope. Chestnut Oak dominates some ridge tops in Mohican and the American Sycamore dominates in river valleys.

Perhaps the most attractive and appealing tree in Mohican is the Eastern Hemlock which dominates north-facing slopes. Eastern Hemlock is not only a “dominant” species, it is a “keystone” species. If the keystone is removed from a stone arch, the whole arch collapses. If a keystone species is removed, a whole system of other dependant species also collapses. A “dominant” species can be removed and the forest system replaces it and goes on, such as when the American Chestnut was lost from American forests, but various oak species took its place. But if a keystone species is removed there are more far-reaching consequences. The Eastern Hemlock is just that kind of tree. Below are at least 5 reasons why the Hemlock is so valuable to Mohican.

-Steve McKee

HEMLOCK WOOLLY ADELGID SUMMIT

Gorman Nature Center- Mansfield, Ohio Oct. 8, 2009



What is white and fuzzy and has infested over 1/3 of the hemlock forests in the northeastern United States? The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, the focus of a fact-finding summit sponsored by the US Forest Service, Ohio Division of Forestry and the Greater Mohican Audubon Society on Oct 8th at the Gorman Nature Center.

This alien and invasive insect, which arrived in the US on hemlock used in decorative landscape, has become a concern of major proportions for US Parks and Forests. Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*) is keystone species that hosts an entire ecosystem that cannot be replaced by another tree. Combating the sap-sucking insects has become a high-priority for the managers of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Delaware Water Gap Recreational Area and beyond. Mohican State Park and Forest would be vulnerable to this insect if introduced locally.

The summit was a brainstorming session for representatives from Ohio's ecological and scientific communities throughout Ohio. Summit speakers included Brad Onken (Morgantown , WV) USDA Forest Service, Rich Evans (NJ) Delaware Water Gap, Dr. James Dyer and Nicole Stump from Ohio University, and Dr. Dave Horn, a respected entomologist and Director of Ohio Biological Survey.

Early detection and public awareness will be key to arresting the progress of the adelgid in our native hemlock communities. The Ohio Department of Agriculture is monitoring hemlocks being transported for sale in Ohio, and will continue to be vigilant in eradicating hemlock infested with HWA. Many attendees called for a moratorium on all hemlock importation until better monitoring is in place. Dan Basler from the Ohio Division of Forestry, led the round-table summit, and indicated a desire to get information on recognizing and reporting these silent killers to the general public, especially outdoors men and women.

For more information on Hemlock Woolly Adelgids see <http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/hwa/>

-Cheryl Harner



Nicole Stump-Wayne National Forest, Dr. James Dyer- Ohio University, Brad Onken- US Forest Service discuss the monitoring protocol for HWA.

QUICK TAKES

Suggested Christmas Gifts:

Gift membership to GMAS \$25.00 gives a one year membership and a winter hat or headband-your choice! A Season Greetings card will be sent in your name to announce your generous gift. Call 419-683-8952 to order yours today!



Editor Needed:

Would you like to get the word out about all the GMAS news? Perhaps you are the creative talent we have been looking for! E-mail Cheryl harner1@bright.net and discover what it takes to become editor of this newsletter.

Shreve Migration Sensation:

Join fellow birders from all across Ohio as they migrate to the heart of Mohican Country, to Shreve Ohio. This should be re-named as the "little town that could!" Last year nearly 900 people participated in the Migration Sensation enjoying speakers, vendors and some early spring birding. Mark March 27th on your calendar and plan to join us at Shreve, where GMAS will be selling our new line of winter hats! See you there!

FROM THE OHIO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE:

A new \$15 *Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp* will be available for purchase March 1, 2010. The stamp features a photo of a Baltimore oriole. Stamp proceeds will support:

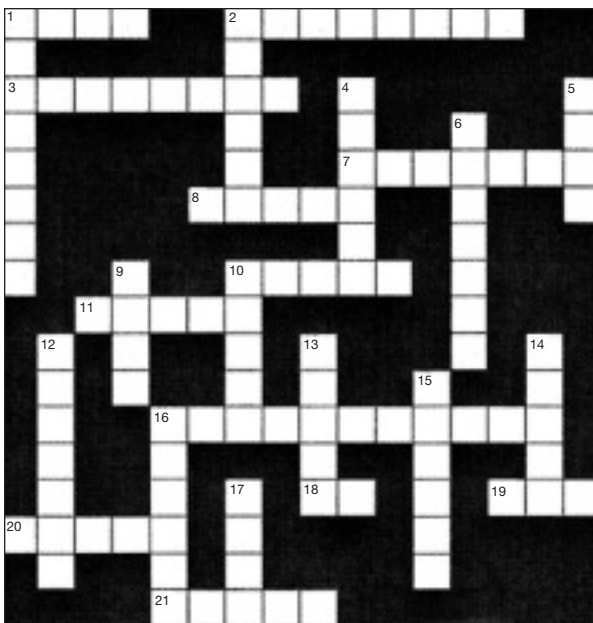
- Endangered and threatened wildlife and its habitat
- Keeping common species common
- Habitat restoration, land purchases and conservation easements
- Educational products for students and wildlife enthusiasts

Keep the Wild in Ohio – Purchase an *Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp*

For more information visit wildohiostamp.com or call 1-800-WILDLIFE

WORDS FOR THE BIRDS CROSSWORD

By Erwin Riedner



Across

1. Bird with lobed feet
2. It feigns injury
3. What Corvids will do
7. Weavers of hanging baskets
8. Woodcock's call
10. Found in polluted rain
11. Fleshy structure on a turkey's beak
16. Folksy name for the Northern Shrike
18. Heading: Arizona from Ohio
19. Beverage advocated by *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*
20. First half of word for a bird's white blood cells
21. High-speed foraging dive

Down

1. Rebel Wren
2. What stacks of hawks and vultures do
4. What the Great Horned Owl did
5. Nursery structure
6. Look for them in California
9. Ohio cold-weather bunting
10. Adjust to a new environment
12. Flight feathers
13. What the Phoenix bird arises from
14. First phrase in American Goldfinch's song (per Peterson)
15. What flight muscles do to spread wings
16. Observation device (abbreviation)
17. Long-eared Owl's genus

FIVE REASONS MOHICAN FOREST'S EASTERN HEMLOCKS ARE A KEYSTONE SPECIES*

1. It cannot be replaced by any other eastern forest tree species.
2. Their root systems prevent erosion on steep slopes.
3. This native evergreen maintains year-round transpiration rates.
4. Their shade maintains cool water temperatures required by trout and other aquatic organisms.
5. They provide critical habitat for Winter Wren and several warbler species.

*A keystone species is one whose extinction would consequently lead to the extinction of other forms of life within its ecosystem.

SNAP SHOTS FROM MOHICAN COUNTRY



They don't call 'em Cattle Egrets for nothing. This one was hanging out at an Amish farm near Butler in Knox County.

Photo by Su Snyder



Rufous Hummingbird at the Rice home near Loudonville.

Photo by Bianca Davis



Trumpeter Swan swimming with their cygnets at Black Fork Bottoms in Ashland.

Photo by Bob Asanoma



Northern Wheatear visited an Amish farm near Dundee, Ohio.

Photo by Jay Lehman

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GREATER MOHICAN AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

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

Make checks payable to: **Greater Mohican Audubon Society**
P.O. Box 907, Ashland, OH 44805

Chapter Code S72

- Chapter Supporter \$10 – GMAS Membership Only
- Chapter Supporter plus Donation \$30 – 1 year GMAS Membership plus a GMAS T-shirt
Size – M L XL – Please circle size

NAME _____

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Phone No. _____

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Would you like to help with programs? _____yes _____no

To join the National Audubon Society, please go to www.audubon.org

The Greater Audubon News is the quarterly newsletter of the Greater Mohican Audubon Society. Four issues per year are part of your membership to the local chapter. Please renew your membership promptly to help us keep the rates as low as possible. Please check your address label to determine when your membership expires. Send dues to GMAS, P.O. Box 907, Ashland, OH 44805. Thank you.

Chapter Code S72

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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

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Greater Mohican Audubon Society