

# Wild Ohio

Summer 2003

M A G A Z I N E

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE





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*We are dedicated to conserving and improving the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats, and promoting their use and appreciation by the people so that these resources continue to enhance the quality of life for all Ohioans.*

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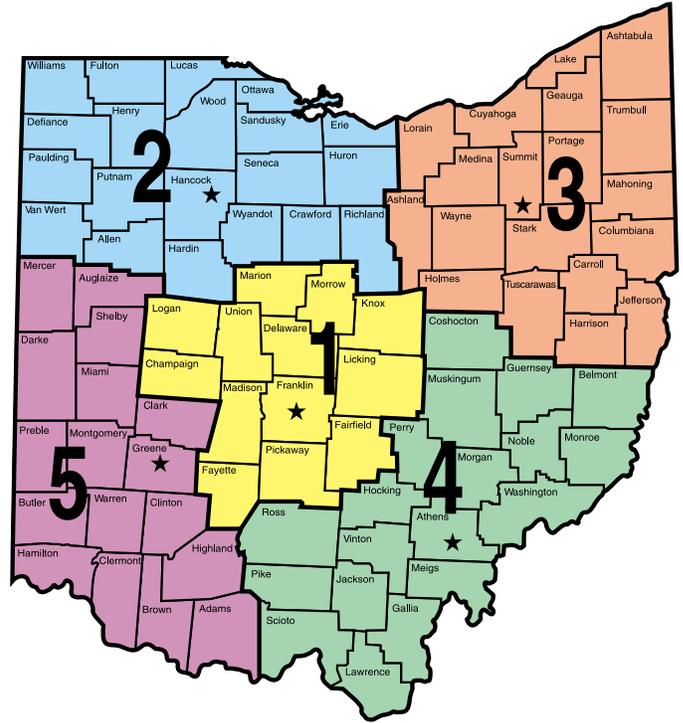
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**On the Wildlife Calendar for Summer . . .**

- June 1-8** National Fishing and Boating Week
- July 19** BUGFEST, Magee Marsh Wildlife Area, Ottawa County (419) 898-0960, ext. 31; noon to 4 p.m. (Call for information on summer hikes and other naturalist programs.)
- August 1-17** Ohio State Fair
- August 1** Avian Ecology and Conservation Conference, Fawcett Center, Columbus. Contact Division of Wildlife Olentangy Wildlife Research Unit at (740) 747-2525 or check the Division of Wildlife Web page at [www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife](http://www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife).

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*We continue to wage war against invasive, non-native species as more and more of these invaders are showing negative impacts on our environment.*



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### Antique Lures and Tackle Hooking Collectors

*"Gone fishing" has taken on a whole new meaning with collectors rummaging through attics, garage sales, and flea markets in hopes of reeling in that catch of a lifetime.*

#### Cover Photo:

**The largemouth bass is among the most popular sportfish and a favorite for pond anglers. See our feature story "Great Ohio Sportfishing PONDerings" ... on pages 12 through 15. (Photo by Tim Daniel)**

## Message from Chief Steve Gray

Summer in wild Ohio is a great time for people like me who enjoy wildlife. Summer days are the perfect time to spend casting a stream for smallmouth bass or fishing Lake Erie for walleyes. I invite the readers of **Wild Ohio** magazine to enjoy all the fun activities our wildlife can provide.



Tim Daniel



Tim Daniel

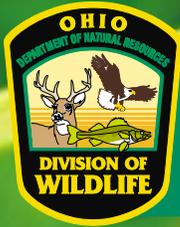
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### Great Ohio Sportfishing PONDerings...

*Landowners can enjoy the great rewards of fishing in the convenience of their own backyard. Whether building a new pond or refurbishing an old one, this article offers tips and advice for the pond owner.*

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# Ohio's watchable wildlife



photos courtesy of Simeon Kresge Okia ©

## Watchable Wildlife • *Dragonflies &*

### Dragons and Damsels

by *Melissa Hathaway*

**D**ragonflies and damselflies are some of the most glittering jewels of the insect world. The quick flashes of iridescent green, blue, red, orange, purple, or black darting about a pond on a warm, sunny day will grab the attention of any wildlife enthusiast. These colorful, graceful insects have been around for a long time—first arising about 300 million years ago.

Dragonflies and damselflies are members of the insect order Odonata. Some 400 to 500 species are known in the United States today, 162 of which have been recorded in Ohio. Within Odonata, Ohio has seven families of dragonflies and three families of damselflies.

These aquatic insects are commonly seen performing

their aerial acrobatics around marshes, ponds, lakes, streams, garden ponds, and backyard pools. They are excellent fliers and can hover, change direction very quickly, loop-the-loop, fly backwards, and fly in tandem (two attached to each other).

Some of their common names are as pretty as the insects themselves. Some of the more common dragonflies found in Ohio include the common green, fawn, and springtime darners; Halloween and calico pennants; Eastern pondhawk; unicorn, midland, and ashy clubtails; common and prince baskettails; painted, widow, and twelve-spotted skimmers; blue dasher; wandering glider; Eastern amber-wing; ruby and yellow-legged meadowhawks; and black saddlebags.

Some common damselflies found in the Buckeye State are the American ruby-spot; ebony jewelwing; common, southern, and slender spreadwings; Eastern red and aurora damsels; blue-fronted, blue-ringed, blue-tipped, violet, and powdered dancers;



Tim Daniel



© Simeon Kresge Okia



familiar, rainbow, azure, double-striped, orange, stream, and skimming bluets; and fragile and Eastern forktails.

In general, dragonflies are larger and more robust than the more slender-bodied, dainty damselflies. Dragonflies also have broader wings. Both have enormous eyes that take up most of their head, although those of damselflies are widely separated and reminiscent of a hammerhead shark. Adults use their large eyes to locate prey (small insects such as mosquitoes, gnats, black flies, horse flies, deer flies, or even other Odonata) during daylight hours.

The mating ritual of dragonflies and damselflies is quite fascinating to observe. Hitched pairs are commonly seen flying about after mating or in search of a mating site. The male grasps the female on the back of her head or on the top of her thorax, (the main body in which the wings and legs are attached). Their joined bodies form a ring, often referred to as a "wheel." It has been suggested that the more heart-shaped ring formed by the damselflies inspired the traditional Valentine's heart.

The female drops the fertilized eggs on the water's surface or injects the eggs into vegetation on, above, or below the waterline. A dragonfly or damselfly observed repeatedly tapping

the water's surface with the tip of its abdomen, is most likely a female depositing eggs. When an egg hatches, the larva feeds ferociously on small aquatic animal life until fully developed and ready to emerge as an adult. It then climbs out of the water onto a stone, stick, plant stalk, floating algae, or other structure emerging from the water. Soon the body and wings expand and cure sufficiently for the dragonfly or damselfly to take its maiden flight.

Wildlife watchers interested in learning more about Ohio Odonata should check out *The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Ohio*. This 364-page book includes color identification photos, and information on the basic biology and life histories of Ohio Odonata with county location maps. The guide is published by the Ohio Biological Survey, Inc. with financial support from the Division of Wildlife through the Wildlife Diversity and Endangered Species Fund. The cost is \$40 plus \$6 shipping and handling for one book. Ohio residents should add \$2.30 state tax. For orders, please make checks payable to the Ohio Biological Survey, Inc. and send them to P.O. Box 21370, Columbus, OH 43221-0370.

## Damselflies



© Simeon Kresge Okia

### Viewing Opportunities

Look for dragonflies and damselflies around bodies of water such as marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers, creeks, ditches, garden ponds, and even backyard pools. The majority of species are most active during warm, sunny afternoons. Because of their speed and flightiness, it is best to identify them when they are perched in a stationary position. Some species are more tolerant than others of a human approach. Damselflies are often easier to identify because they don't flit around as much as dragonflies and are more likely to perch. A field guide is most helpful.



# We're Not in Kansas Anymore, Toto

by Scott Hull • photos by Tim Daniel

**W**e're not in Kansas anymore, Toto. Or are we? If you are driving on I-70 east of Zanesville you may actually think you are in Kansas. Here you will see acres and acres of grasslands and maybe even some beef cattle. What is going on, you ask? You are seeing land that was previously mined for coal that has been re-seeded with grassland vegetation.

Since the 1970s, Ohio mining law requires that coal mining companies "reclaim" previously mined land by planting permanent vegetation. Most often, these areas are seeded to grass after mining is completed. In fact, tens of thousands of acres of former surface-mined land in eastern and southeastern Ohio have been reclaimed with grassland vegetation.

So what exactly is the wildlife connection here? It turns out that these reclaimed grassland habitats have the highest densities of grassland dependent birds in Ohio and perhaps the entire Midwest. These "newly" created habitats host a variety of species of grassland birds including the short-eared owl, Northern harrier, Eastern meadowlark, grasshopper sparrow, and Henslow's sparrow. In fact, the Henslow's sparrow, a bird whose population has been declining across North America over the last 35 years, has actually shown population increases in parts of southeastern Ohio. This population increase is likely a result of the thousands of acres of new grassland habitat in the form of reclaimed surface-mined lands.

To understand the importance of these new Ohio grasslands, a bit of recent grassland bird history is in order. Both professional biologists and amateur birders first began to notice declining grassland songbird populations in the 1970s. The extent of these declines were not fully known until the late 1980s and early 1990s when biologists began to examine survey data from the North American Breeding Bird Survey (NABBS). This national survey is conducted annually by volunteers on over 3,000 routes across the United States (including Ohio) and Canada. Biologists learned that grassland bird populations showed the steepest, most consistent population declines of any group of songbirds in North America. Grassland bird populations in Ohio have not escaped these downward trends. The most recent information shows that all grassland bird species being monitored by the NABBS in Ohio have experienced population declines. In addition, several other grassland nesting birds are so rare in Ohio that they cannot be effectively monitored by the survey.

Why are these birds disappearing? The loss and destruction of native prairie and other grassland habitats throughout the Midwest have left many grassland birds with no place to build



Dickcissel



Short-eared owl

their nests. Studies have shown that to help slow or even reverse population declines, existing grassland habitats need to be restored and new grassland habitats have to be created. Many wildlife conservation organizations, including the Division of Wildlife, Pheasants Forever, and some metropark districts, just to name a few, have advocated and participated in grassland habitat restoration programs.

Perhaps the most surprising benefit to grassland birds in Ohio has come from reclaimed surface-mined lands. The largest contiguous blocks of grassland habitat in Ohio now occur on reclaimed surface-mined lands. Some of these areas are several thousand acres in size. This is particularly important because biologists have determined that some bird species, like the Henslow's sparrow, prefer to nest in large grassland blocks. Ohio is not the only state with reclaimed surface-mined lands. Grassland birds have also benefited from these new habitats in Indiana, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

The Division of Wildlife has recognized the importance of these reclaimed lands and has acquired several thousand acres of reclaimed surface-mined land in recent years. The Division now manages four wildlife areas with significant grassland habitat in eastern and southeastern Ohio. These areas are Crown City Wildlife Area (Gallia and Lawrence counties), Egypt Valley Wildlife Area (Belmont County), Tri-Valley Wildlife Area (Muskingum County), and Woodbury Wildlife Area (Coshocton County). These wildlife areas represent some of the best locations in Ohio for observing grassland birds.



Western meadowlark



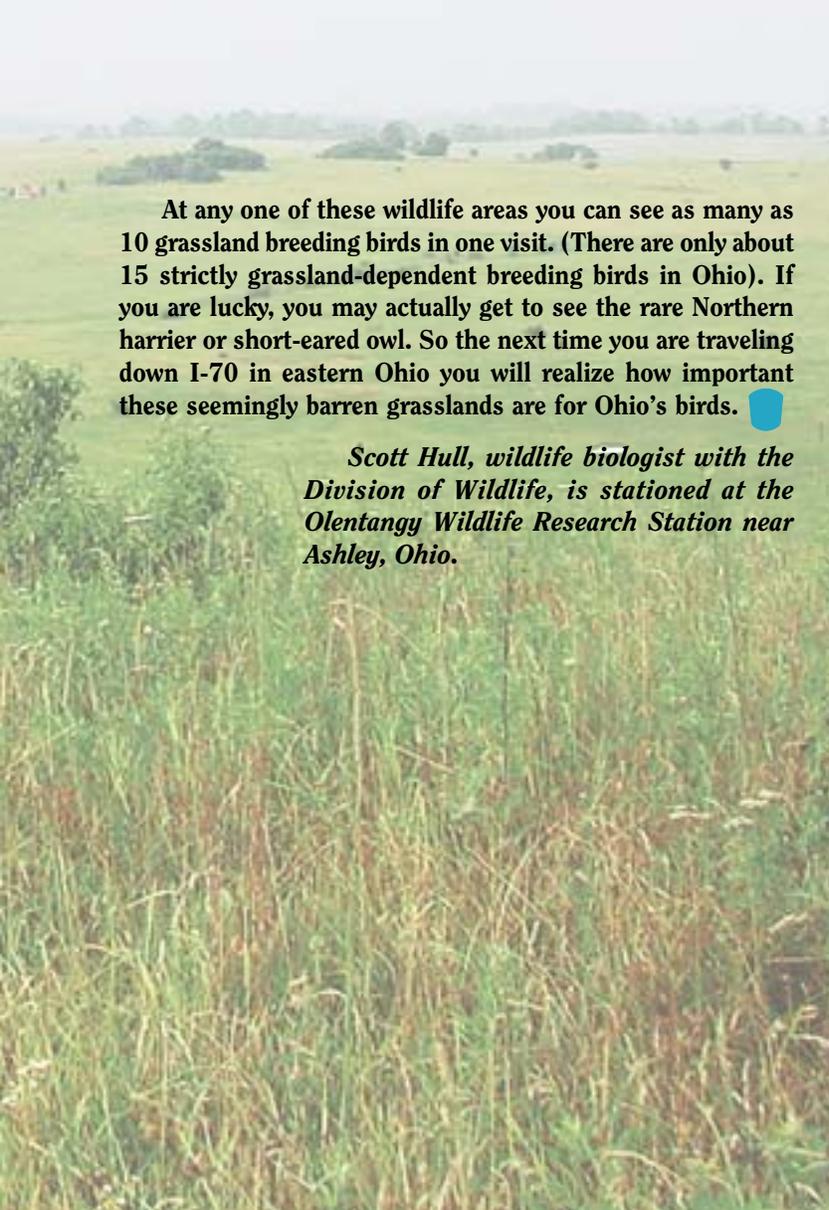
Siri Ibarquien

Henslow's sparrow



Bobolink

Northern harrier



At any one of these wildlife areas you can see as many as 10 grassland breeding birds in one visit. (There are only about 15 strictly grassland-dependent breeding birds in Ohio). If you are lucky, you may actually get to see the rare Northern harrier or short-eared owl. So the next time you are traveling down I-70 in eastern Ohio you will realize how important these seemingly barren grasslands are for Ohio's birds.

*Scott Hull, wildlife biologist with the Division of Wildlife, is stationed at the Olentangy Wildlife Research Station near Ashley, Ohio.*



Indiangrass

# ALIENS AMONG US

## Invasive, Non-native Species in our Environment

by Jennifer L. Windus

Whatever you prefer to call them—exotics, aliens, non-natives, invasives, weeds, or non-indigenous harmful species—invasive species affect us all. While farmers and some other groups have waged war with invasive species for years, many of these silent invaders are only in recent years being recognized as they impact recreational activities, forestry, industry, human health, and natural habitats.

There are now more than 4,500 species of plants and animals of foreign origin established in the United States. Some species are highly visible, such as zebra mussels, sea lampreys, gypsy moths, fire ants, Johnsongrass, and purple loosestrife, while the majority are mostly undetected and their impacts are not readily known. Most of these non-native species do not cause any problems, but at least 15 percent cause severe economic, environmental, or recreational harm. For example, between 1906–1991, 79 non-native species in the United States caused an estimated \$97 billion in losses, mostly in control costs and loss of marketable goods.

Many non-native species were introduced to the United States for legitimate, well-intentioned reasons such as control of other harmful species, erosion control, horticulture, forage, and medicinal use. Others were brought in by accident. Those that are able to tolerate a broad range of conditions, reproduce quickly, disperse widely, and resist eradication have slowly become well established. Once established, they are difficult and costly to control and often impossible to eradicate.

While many *Wild Ohio* readers may be familiar with invasive animals such as the zebra mussel, you may not realize the variety of invasive plants impacting wildlife habitat and natural areas in Ohio. (The Division of Wildlife is responsible for the state's Aquatic Nuisance Species program which covers aquatic and wetland species of both animals and plants. Refer to the article in the Fall 1998 issue of *Wild Ohio*, "Ohio's Aquatic Invaders," for more information on aquatic species.)

Of the more than 3,000 species of plants known to occur in Ohio, approximately 25 percent are non-native—that is, they were introduced to Ohio during European settlement since 1750. At least 60 have become well established and are impacting natural habitats. These species threaten Ohio's native biological diversity by displacing native plants, altering the food web, and thus displacing wildlife species that depend on native plants for food, shelter, and breeding sites.

Invasive, non-native plants have often been planted for landscaping and wildlife habitat. While their invasive qualities



Above left: Bush honeysuckles, such as Morrow honeysuckle, invade the woodland understory and displace native wildflowers, and tree and shrub seedlings. Above right: Introduced originally for medicinal purposes, garlic mustard is spreading rampantly throughout woodlands in all Ohio counties.



photos by Jennifer Windus



Invasive plants are now considered the second biggest threat to biodiversity and endangered species, only behind habitat destruction. Phragmites and purple loosestrife are two such wetland species.

may not have been known at the time, many of these species escaped from their original introduction sites and spread quickly into natural habitats.

In wooded areas, non-native bush honeysuckles, such as Amur, Morrow, and Tatarian, invade the woodland understory and displace native wildflowers, and tree and shrub seedlings. These shrubs have been promoted in the past for wildlife habitat by Soil and Water Conservation Districts and even the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). We now realize the detrimental impacts these invasive honeysuckles have on woodlands.



photos by Jennifer Windus

**White and yellow sweet-clover were once planted for forage crops.**

and savannas, a number of invasive plant species were originally introduced for beneficial purposes. Some of these include autumn and Russian-olives for wildlife habitat, roadside plantings, and mining reclamation; multiflora rose for “living fences” in the 1930s; Japanese knotweed for streamside stabilization; and white and yellow sweet-clover for forage crops. All of these plant species escaped from their intended uses and invaded more diverse habitats, displacing native species.

Control of invasive plants usually involves an integrated approach using a variety of management techniques. While manual techniques (pulling, mowing, discing) may be the safest, they are often the least effective and most frustrating. Herbicide application requires

some training, and potentially a license, but is usually the most effective. Prescribed burning and water level control (in the case of water bodies or diked wetlands) are used by many land-managing agencies in Ohio to control invasive plants and natural succession. An example of an effective method of biological control (use of natural controls found in the native homeland) is the use of certain beetle species native to Europe, which feed exclusively on purple loosestrife. The Division of Wildlife has released a species of *Galerucella* beetle to a number of sites with large purple loosestrife populations in northern Ohio. After using a combination of control techniques, native plants may recolonize the area or you may need more involved restoration efforts, depending on how long the invasive plants have been established.



Melissa Hathaway

**One example of an effective method of biological control used by the Division of Wildlife is the use of certain beetle species native to Europe, which feed exclusively on purple loosestrife.**

The Division recently produced a new poster in cooperation with the ODNR Division of Natural Areas and Preserves and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Entitled “Aliens Among Us,” this free poster is designed to promote awareness of aquatic invasive species. For more information about invasive plants in Ohio or to obtain the poster, contact the Wildlife Management and Research Group of the Division of Wildlife at 1-800-WILDLIFE.

*Jennifer Windus is a program administrator for the Division’s Wildlife Management and Research Group.*

**Top: A number of invasive plant species, such as Autumn olive, were originally introduced for wildlife habitat, roadside plantings, and mining reclamation. Bottom: Multiflora rose was planted in the 1930s to create “living fences.”**

Introduced originally for medicinal purposes, garlic mustard is a biennial herbaceous plant spreading rampantly throughout woodlands in all counties of Ohio. Japanese honeysuckle, an evergreen vine still sold in the nursery industry, reduces native plant diversity by smothering the vegetation. While it does provide winter cover and forage for some wildlife, its far-reaching, long-term impacts of reducing biodiversity outweigh its temporary benefits.

In wetlands, purple loosestrife, narrow-leaved cattail, glossy buckthorn, Phragmites (or giant reed grass), and reed canary grass disrupt native plant communities by creating monocultures of single species. In wetlands densely infested with purple loosestrife, predator/prey relationships change due to changes in food and cover, resulting in the reduction of vertebrate and invertebrate populations.

Invasive plants are now considered the second biggest threat to biodiversity and endangered species, only behind habitat destruction. For example, purple loosestrife, Phragmites, and reed canary grass threaten populations of the federally threatened Eastern prairie fringed orchid at Pickerel Creek Wildlife Area. Glossy buckthorn impacts some of the most fragile and unique wetlands in Ohio such as bogs and fens, which contain significant remnants of state-listed plants and animals. Aquatic invasive plants in wetlands also interfere with boating, fishing, and other recreational activities.

In more open and upland habitats such as grasslands, meadows,

**At least 60 of 3,000 species of non-native plants in Ohio, such as common teasel, are now well established and are impacting natural habitats.**



Jennifer Windus

# Vintage Fishing Tackle *Luring Collectors*

by Melissa Hathaway • photos by Scott Mowery



“**G**one fishing” has taken on a whole new meaning in recent years with anglers and collectors rummaging through attics, garage sales, and flea markets in hopes of reeling in that catch of a lifetime. Some of today’s collectors seek out all types of angling tackle and equipment (often referred to as fishing “ephemera”), while others specialize in rods, reels, or lures. Lure collectors are the largest group.

“I think part of what intrigues people about lure collecting is that it is a part of the history of our country,” said Geoff Mowery, a lure collector from Chagrin Falls. Mowery explained that Native Americans created the first lures out of grass or other natural materials to duplicate something that would attract a fish in order to spear it for food. The early pioneers were aware of this Indian fishing method and began making their own artificial objects to attract fish. Once people created artificial devices to entice a fish instead of using a natural bait it became a “sport.” Hence, the word “sportfishing.”

James Heddon of Michigan is credited with being the country’s first fishing lure manufacturer. “It is said that when Heddon first started creating lures, he wanted a number of the anglers’ senses to be involved,” Mowery said. “Once a lure attracts a fish the senses of sight (seeing the fish explode from the water), sound (hearing the splash of the water), and feel (feeling the tug on the line) are all a part of the experience.”

Ohio got its start in the fishing tackle industry in the 1860s when Akron grocer Ernest F. Pflueger created a spinner coated with a luminous paint. The E.F. Pflueger Company went on to become a giant in the tackle industry offering a broad line of hooks, spinners, metal baits, and wooden lures. Other Akron manufacturers followed and the city became known as “Tackle Town, USA.”

Tackle manufacturing was one of Ohio’s fastest growing industries in the early to mid-1900s. Many Ohio manufacturers earned high reputations in the tackle industry. For a time, Ohio ranked sixth in the nation in tackle sales. Items like fishing lures, rods, reels, tackle boxes, live bait containers, hooks, bobbers, sinkers, and nets were made in Ohio and shipped all over the world. In 1963 Governor James A. Rhodes proclaimed a week in October as “Ohio Fishing Tackle Manufacturer’s Week.”

Ohioans who collect vintage lures and related gear have a greater advantage than many other collectors nationwide because Ohio is located in the middle of a fishing tackle hotbed. The region encompassing the states of Indiana, Ohio, Michigan,



James Heddon of Michigan is credited with being the country’s first fishing lure manufacturer.



Ohio is located in the middle of a vintage fishing tackle hotbed. Many of the most successful manufacturers, like Creek Chub of Indiana, were based in the region.

The early wooden lures or “plugs” were hand painted and adorned with glass eyes.



Bill Beagle

The largest group of collectors of fishing tackle and equipment specialize in lure collecting. Geoff Mowery has gathered quite a collection in his 18 years of collecting.

Pennsylvania, and New York is referred to by collectors as “Lure Alley,” according to Mowery. Many of the old manufacturers were based in these states and they are some of the best hunting grounds for collectors today. The most popular of tackle companies to most collectors include the “Big Five”—Heddon, (Michigan), Pflueger (Ohio), Creek Chub (Indiana), Shakespeare (Michigan), and South Bend (Indiana).

Most of the excellent collector material was made between 1900 to 1940 when tackle companies were competing to produce top quality wooden lures, or “plugs.” These early lures were hand painted wooden bodies and adorned with glass eyes. After 1940, WWII and production costs limited the ability to produce quality lures. Also, plastics came on the scene and companies began making cheaper lures and boxes to compete in the rapidly expanding fishing tackle market.



About two-thirds of the lures made were lost by anglers while fishing, damaged or worn with use, degraded over time while in storage, or eventually thrown away, Mowery explained. That leaves only about one-third on the collectibles market today and only about one percent of those continue to look brand new and/or are found in their original boxes.

A lure's value is based on a number of things including age, scarcity, and condition. Lures that represent something unique other than a fish such as a frog, snake, or mouse can be very valuable to a collector. As with most any collectible, condition is everything. Even a rare lure with chipped paint or a lost glass eye will lessen its value. On the other end of the scale, an old lure that has never been used, is in pristine condition, and is still in its original box is a true find. The Golden Rule is to leave a lure in the condition in which you found it. Do not attempt to repair it, paint it, or refurbish. And don't throw away the box! The original box is often worth more than the lure itself. Company advertisement leaflets that came inside boxes are valuable as well. Do some research to find out just what treasure (or piece of junk) you have.

Some vintage lures can sell for hundreds and even thousands of dollars. However, most old lures are typically valued at \$25 or less, most often around \$5 or \$10. Mowery is quick to point out that placing a monetary value on a lure can take away from the fun of searching and collecting. For most collectors, it is the "hunt and find" that is the true attraction of the hobby.

So how does one get one's feet wet in the ocean of antique lure or tackle collecting? Sometimes the best sources are family and friends. They may know where old tackle is located such as in a grandfather's attic or basement. There is no telling what kind of angling treasures may turn up at garage sales, local auctions, or estate sales. Some good finds might also be found while browsing in antique shops, flea markets, and pawnshops. But don't expect to find any real bargains here. Many dealers know the value of old tackle and will price it accordingly. Another good way to find old fishing equipment is by attending tackle shows held across the country. (In Ohio, there are shows in Columbus and Kent each year.) eBay is



**Lures that represent something other than a fish such as a frog, snake, or mouse can be very valuable.**



**The original box, as well as a company advertisement placed in the box, can be worth more than the lure itself.**

another source for buying vintage lures and fishing ephemera.

Check libraries and bookstores for reference guides that provide information on identification, determining condition and value, and current price ranges. Titles include the *Fishing Lure Collectors Bible*, *Classic Fishing Lures and Angling Collectibles*, and *Old Fishing Lures & Tackle*, to name just a few.

A general Web search for "antique lures" or "antique tackle" will also lead you to hundreds of Web sites to check out. Mowery advises new collectors of lures and other

fishing-related collectibles to join the National Fishing Lure Collectors Club. Members receive newsletters and other materials, information on tackle shows, and an annual directory of members (a good way to locate other collectors in your area.).

"The hunt is half the fun," said Mowery. "Researching, looking for a particular lure, and meeting people is more fun than the actual collecting. When I go to a show, I enjoy looking for certain lures that I have researched even if I don't plan to buy them. Just finding the ones I am looking for and getting the chance to look at them is exciting."



Bill Beagle

Mowery displays his collection at the Cleveland Sports Show each year. He is also available to speak to civic groups by calling (440) 543-5650.

So for those who want to dive into the world of lure or tackle collectibles, "Happy fishing... or rather, happy hunting!"

# Great Ohio Sportfishing PONDerings...

by Mike Greenlee

**P**onds have dotted Ohio's landscape since pioneers first settled the Ohio countryside. And even before frontier settlement, history indicates that Native Americans used beaver ponds for watering, hunting, and fishing. Beaver, not humans, were actually Ohio's first pond "engineers."

Today, there are over 60,000 manmade ponds in Ohio with hundreds more being built every year. These ponds serve many different purposes, one of the most popular uses being fishing, and are one of Ohio's most enjoyable resources—right in your back yard.

## Pond memories...What do ponds mean to you?

Most of us can probably remember our first fishing trip. And, if it was like mine, it was probably to a farm pond. I have fond memories of those fishing trips as a child—spending time with my family and looking forward to hooking the "big one." I can remember restless nights prior to a trip to our favorite pond (usually on my birthday), pondering over which lure to use on my first cast. After a few anxious casts with that carefully chosen bait, I would soon begin exploring the edges of the pond for live bait to entice a bite. A frog caught on a colorful string torn from my favorite fishing shirt tied to a bare hook, or maybe a large grasshopper from the tall grass along the field edge next to the pond might do. These mini field trip explorations are all part of the wonderful things I remember about ponds. Maybe you can think of some of your own.

According to Bill Lynch, program specialist with Aquatic Ecosystem Management at Ohio State University (OSU) Extension, a recent OSU

**Ponds are great places for children to first experience the thrill of fishing.**



photos by Tim Daniel

Extension survey found that most pond owners listed fishing as the primary reason for constructing their pond. Seventy-six percent said fishing was their top use. However, roughly one in three pond owners indicated they were less than satisfied with the fishing in their pond.

## Ohio Pond Owner Survey

Information was collected by the OSU Extension from pond owners attending pond clinics in 2001 and 2002. Most questions list only the most common response for each category.

- ◆ Pond Size: ½ to ¾ acres
- ◆ Maximum Depth: 12 feet
- ◆ Type of Pond: The majority were excavated with no dam.
- ◆ Drainable?: Most were not
- ◆ Primary Reason for Construction: Fishing
- ◆ Primary Watershed Land Use: Residential
- ◆ Top Three Uses of Pond:
  1. Fishing
  2. Scenery
  3. Swimming
- ◆ Pond owner satisfaction of fishing:
  - 42 percent more than satisfied
  - 28 percent satisfied
  - 30 percent less than satisfied
- ◆ 69 percent were moderately interested in expending effort and dollars to manage pond.

Courtesy of Bill Lynch, program specialist, Aquatic Ecosystem Management, OSU Extension.

Unfortunately, many Ohio ponds are mismanaged or not managed at all, resulting in poor fishing which often discourages the well meaning pond owner. Fortunately, satisfactory fishing is not hard to achieve. With proper planning and a little bit of sweat equity and proper management, "new" ponds and "old" ponds alike can produce excellent fishing for generations to come. If you are considering building a new pond, renovating an old one, or otherwise interested in pond fishing, read on.

## New versus old ponds

When considering how to best manage your pond for good fishing, it often helps to think of a pond in terms of being "new" or "old." New ponds include those that are newly constructed, or ones that have been drained or renovated in some way and have since filled to spillway level and are ready to stock. Old ponds include all other ponds—those that have been previously stocked, are just a few years old or several decades old, and having had some type of management—correct or incorrect. These distinctions will help you when it comes time to consider how to best manage your pond, especially as it relates to stocking.

## Where does a good pond start and what makes a good sportfishing pond?

Location, location, location! If you are considering constructing a new pond, take a deep breath, slow down, “smell the cattails” (remember you’re building a pond, not a rose garden), and seek advice from professionals. Before you or someone else turns the first piece of sod, consult your county Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Soil and Water Conservation District offices. Specialists can offer technical assistance on pond site suitability, design, and construction. Too often eager owners rush into building a pond without this advice, only to find that the location of the pond didn’t have enough drainage area or suitable soils to prevent leaks resulting in widely varying water levels, additional maintenance, and ultimately a pond that won’t support good fishing. Here are a few tips to keep in mind if you are building your pond for fishing:

**Size:** If at all possible, sportfishing ponds should not be smaller than one acre; larger ponds offer better and more sustainable fishing. Smaller ponds will shallow more quickly and are more difficult to manage. Larger ponds are also more cost effective to build.

**Depth:** A minimum depth of eight feet should be maintained in 25 percent of the pond basin. Depths over 12 feet are a waste of money for they create no additional benefits to fish. A 3:1 slope should be maintained along most of the shoreline areas. This will create the best conditions for spawning, provide shallow areas for plants to grow which supply food, dissolved oxygen, and cover while minimizing areas of excessive plant growth, thus minimizing pond maintenance. Extensive areas of water less than three feet become choked with aquatic vegetation.

**Shape:** Create ponds with irregular shoreline to increase the “production zone” in your pond. This is the shallow band of habitat along the shore and is the area of greatest food production and cover. Create ponds with “dish-pan” shaped basins rather than steep sided “V” shaped basins.



Tim Daniel

## What fish should I stock? “It doesn’t really matter, I’ll stock what I want to!”

Often, pond owners look upon their selection of fish to stock more on the basis of personal preference, not giving consideration to whether those fishes are suitable for ponds and if those fish will sustain good fishing. Also, many of the species considered undesirable for ponds are often readily available through fish producers making it more tempting for the pond owner to purchase them.

Several fishes considered highly desirable by anglers for their sporting traits and food fare may not be the best choice for small ponds. These include crappies, green sunfish, hybrid sunfishes, bullheads, yellow perch, common carp, and gizzard shad. Once introduced, these fish compete with the desirable fish for food and space, and can ruin the quality of fishing. And, once introduced, they can often be difficult to eliminate!

Most Ohio ponds are ideal for stocking largemouth bass, bluegill, and channel catfish. These fish provide excellent sportfishing qualities and are good to eat. They are also the best combination for the pond owner to manage for quality fishing over the long run. An important principle to keep in mind when stocking your pond is, “keep it simple,” one predator (largemouth bass) and one or two prey species (bluegill and redear sunfish). Fingerling size fish (generally one to three inches in length) are most suited for new or renovated ponds and are less expensive than starting your pond with adult fish. The following table lists stocking combinations recommended for new or renovated ponds.

### Recommended stocking rates of fingerling fish for new or renovated ponds.

Stocking combination	Number of fish to stock per acre			
	Bass	Bluegill	Redear	Catfish
Bass-bluegill	100	500		
Bass-bluegill-catfish	100	500		100
Bass-redear	100		500	
Bass-bluegill-redear	100	350	150	
Bass-bluegill-redear-catfish	100	350	150	100

Fish for your pond should be obtained from a licensed commercial fish propagator. A list of fish propagators can be obtained by contacting your nearest Division of Wildlife district office.

## When an old pond becomes your “new” pond. Supplemental Stockings: A quick fix for poor fishing...right? Wrong!

Too often, pond owners think the quick fix to poor fishing is a good stocking. For existing ponds that may already have adult largemouth in them, this stocking turns out to be nothing more than an expensive feeding for the bass that are still remaining in the pond. This is why it’s important to learn something about the existing population before deciding to

*continued on page 14*

stock an “old pond.” Angler diaries and seining the are two ways the average pond owner can find something out about the fish population before making an expensive mistake that provides no benefit to improving the fishing quality of the pond.

**Seining:** Seining with an inexpensive minnow seine at several locations in late summer will reveal the presence or absence and relative numbers of young bass and bluegill hatched earlier in the year. Seine hauls that reveal numerous one- to two-inch bluegill and bass indicate the presence of adult fish and that they are successfully spawning. The presence of only numerous small bluegill may indicate that the largemouth bass have been over-harvested. Angler diaries will help reveal the rest of the story.

**Angler Diaries:** Angler diaries are simply notes recorded of the types and sizes of fish caught and if the fish was kept or released. A sheet of paper or note card placed on a clip board (with a measuring stick attached) and left in a barn or shelter near the pond would be sufficient to record pertinent information about the angler’s catch. The pond owner should encourage each angler to record this information prior to leaving the pond. A year’s worth of diary information should be sufficient to get a pretty good idea of the types and sizes of adult fish present and how many are being harvested. This information will also help the pond owner develop a management plan suited to his desired type of fishing.

One example of where supplemental stocking of an established pond is appropriate is in the case of the stunted bluegill pond where most or all of the bass have been “caught-out.” This is a frequent occurrence in Ohio ponds that are not managed and where the owner does not put size and harvest limits in place. Stocking larger bass (four to six inches, to avoid them being eaten by any remaining bass) at half the rates recommended for new ponds should be enough to get the bass population established again. However, these bass will need to be protected using size limits in order to maintain adequate numbers and to keep bluegill numbers in check.

### Stock it and let it go...Right? Wrong!

Much like your garden, ponds require maintenance and proper management. Just as a seed is planted in your garden and requires nurturing and proper maintenance to produce a plentiful harvest, so too do the fish in your pond. Stocking

the correct numbers and combination of species is a critical first step for pond owners, but there’s more to producing a good pond than that.

Given the small size of most ponds and the number of anglers they attract, it’s important that a certain number of fish be protected with size limits—especially bass. Bass can easily be over-harvested. It only takes a few successful bass fishing trips and fish fries to dramatically reduce the number of bass in a pond. This will ultimately affect the balance of your pond and the bass population’s ability to keep bluegill from becoming too abundant. Which means fewer fish fries with those prized larger than hand-size bluegill.

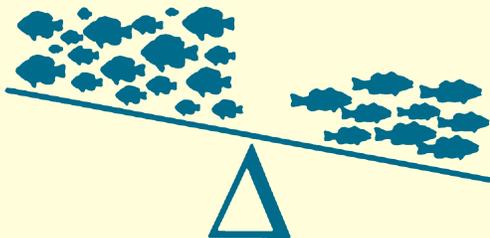
### A “balancing act” to produce the type of fishing you prefer

In a new or renovated pond situation you should allow three years for the bass and bluegill to reproduce and grow. After that, the pond owner needs to decide what type of fishing is preferred, keeping in mind you can’t have it all—lots of big bass and lots of big bluegill. Some pond owners may want to catch fewer but larger bluegills, while others prefer to catch trophy largemouth. Others may want a balanced number of average size bluegill and bass. These management options can be obtained by simply controlling the size and numbers of fish harvested from your pond each year.

For example, if you prefer to manage your pond to produce large bluegill, you will need to protect a lot of bass to keep a lot of “teeth” in your pond. Size limits will help you do this. A 15-inch minimum size limit (every bass caught 15 inches and less goes back in the drink) will maintain high densities of bass, reducing the number of bluegill, decreasing competition for food, which allows them to grow more rapidly and obtain larger sizes. However, over time, the abundant bass...



### RESULTS OF A LARGE BLUEGILL FISHING MANAGEMENT OPTION



Over time, a 15-inch size limit for bass will increase their numbers and keep bluegill from becoming too abundant. This option will produce angling opportunities for lots of bass 12 to 15 inches and jumbo bluegill over eight inches. It is also probably the easiest way to sustain good fishing in a pond.



## Aquatic “weeds” are a fish’s best friend!

- ♻️ Aquatic plants provide important food, cover, and dissolved oxygen for fish. Eliminating them completely will result in a decline in fishing quality.
- ♻️ Generally, good fishing ponds should have around 35 percent of the total surface area of the pond in submerged aquatic vegetation. If more than 50 percent of the pond’s surface area is covered in submerged plants, it is probably too abundant and can be detrimental to fish. Chemical, mechanical, and biological treatment options should be considered.
- ♻️ Triploid white amur (grass carp) should not be “automatically” stocked in new ponds- plants may never get a chance to get started. If plant reduction is needed, stock conservatively and monitor changes over two to three years and add more if the desired condition is not met. Since grass carp are plant eaters, they are difficult to catch and remove if they are overstocked. It’s always easier to add more than it is to remove them if they are “overgrazing.”



you might say, “eat themselves out of house and home,” causing their growth to slow, resulting in fewer large bass. Creating the type of fishing you prefer is a balancing act of numbers and sizes of bass and bluegill.

Creating good sustained sportfishing in ponds doesn’t have to be a lot of work. With proper construction, stocking, management, and a little extra effort, your pond too can provide a great place for you and your family to enjoy sportfishing for many years to come.

***“And like the fish ponds of the abbeys and castles of medieval Europe and the Dark Ages, when all the world fell apart in anarchy and disorder, they provide not only food for the table but peace for the soul and an understanding of man’s relationship with the universe.”***

— Louis Bromfield, *Malabar Farm*

If you are interested in learning more about managing ponds, the Division of Wildlife has a publication to aid in your pursuits of the perfect sportfishing pond—the *Ohio Pond Management Handbook*. This guide

covers many topics that will help owners manage their ponds for better fishing and attract wildlife to their ponds at the same time. Contact your nearest wildlife district office to request a free copy.

Mike Greenlee is an aquatic biologist for the Division’s District Four office in Athens.

photos by Tim Daniel



### New Wildlife Area in Eastern Ohio

Nearly 3,500 acres of reclaimed mined lands in Harrison and Belmont counties have been added to the Division of Wildlife's state wildlife areas acreage managed for hunting, fishing, and wildlife enjoyment. Jockey



Hollow State Wildlife Area is home to white-tailed deer, wild turkey, grouse, squirrels, rabbits, and river otters. Ponds that dot Jockey Hollow offer anglers the opportunity to catch large-mouth bass and a variety of panfish.

The property was purchased from The Conservation Fund for \$1.4 million. Two-thirds of the funding for the purchase came from from the state NatureWorks program and the balance paid for with Division of Wildlife funds.

The ODNR Division of Wildlife manages 120 state wildlife areas that offer hunting opportunities on more than 173,000 acres.

### National Refuge System Celebrates 100 Years

In 2003, the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Ottawa County is joining with refuges across the country to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Started by President Theodore Roosevelt on March 14, 1903, Pelican Island in Florida was the first step in creating this valuable system of lands set aside for wildlife. Visit Ottawa NWR this year and join them in celebrating this important milestone in conservation. The refuge is located along Lake Erie, 17 miles west of Port Clinton along State Route 2, between State Routes 590 and 19.



photo courtesy of Ottawa NWR

### Hot Wheels Design Winner Chooses Division of Wildlife Vehicle



Bill May

Maisea Hicks, a sixth grader from Mt. Blanchard, was the first place national winner in the "Mattel Hot Wheels My Design Challenge" for her design of the "Division of Wildlife Deer Tracker." She got the idea for her design after getting her first deer on the second day of Ohio's 2002 bow season. Her design for the Hot Wheels miniature car consisted of an SUV in camouflage. She will receive a complete set of 2002 edition Hot Wheels (114 cars) in a special collectors case.

### Deer Found in Death-Lock

Two bucks were found with their antlers entwined in a death-lock on a Wood County farm last November. Jason Langlois, of Toledo, came across the dead deer while checking a trapline on the farm. An investigation revealed that the deer apparently had put up quite a fight for territorial dominance. The smaller of the two received numerous severe injuries including a broken neck that caused its death. It appeared that the weight of the smaller buck forced the face and nostrils of the larger buck into the dirt and it suffocated. The pair consisted of an 8-point buck and a 10-point buck with an 11¾-inch brow tine. The butcher estimated that the 10-pointer would have weighed in the 300-pound range live. It took four men to separate the two deer.



photo courtesy of Wayne Markland

## Charter Captains Offering “Kids Fish Free” Week

The Lake Erie Charter Boat Association (LECBA) is sponsoring “Kids Fish Free” August 11 to 15 (Monday through Friday). Adults booking a charter through the association’s hotline to fish any of those days will be able to bring one youngster age 17 or under at no charge for each paying adult.

LECBA began the Kids Fish Free program to honor one of its founding members and Lake Erie proponent Jim Fofrich, Sr. Reservations can be made by calling the LECBA toll-free number 800-LECBA10 (800-532-2210).



Tim Daniel

## “Fishing Has No Boundaries” Event Slated for Lake Erie



Deb Mayer

The Sandusky Chapter of “Fishing Has No Boundaries” will hold its annual event on Lake Erie August 16 and 17. The key objective is “the awareness of one’s abilities, not their disabilities,” according to Deb Mayer, co-chairwoman of the local chapter. Last year 200 people including 72 participants, along with volunteers, charter captains, and other assistants attended the biggest event in the chapter’s history. One of the 2002 highlights was the 13 ½-inch Fish Ohio perch caught by Percy Johnson of Toledo.

For more information on the organization and other events log on to [www.fhnbinc.org](http://www.fhnbinc.org). Sandusky Chapter information can be obtained through e-mail to the Sandusky Chapter President, Kris Bauer at: [fhnsoc@aol.com](mailto:fhnsoc@aol.com).

## More Karner Blues to be Released



Tim Daniel

Division of Wildlife staff will continue to work with partners on a Karner blue butterfly reintroduction program at The Nature Conservancy’s Kitty Todd Preserve in Lucas County this summer. These endangered butterflies were once very common in the Oak Openings Region of Ohio, but disappeared from Ohio in 1988 as a result of habitat loss. Since 1998, staff from the Toledo Zoo has released over 1,300 Karner blue butterflies in the preserve. A peak transect count of Karner blue butterflies at Kitty Todd in 2002 reached an all-time high resulting in population estimates that compare favorably with sites at Michigan’s Allegan State Game Area, where Karner blues were collected for release at Kitty Todd.

“It is hoped this is an indication that the Karner blue butterfly population at Kitty Todd Preserve is on its way to self sustainability,” said Bill Roshak, wildlife biologist for the Division of Wildlife. “While future releases are still needed, it is hoped that collections of adult butterflies for captive breeding and rearing from the Michigan game area will no longer be necessary. Instead, we plan to use offspring from wild produced butterflies obtained from Kitty Todd for future releases.”

This is the first program of its kind in the United States and is being used as a model by the USFWS and the American Zoo and Aquarium Association to establish similar programs at other zoos in the United States.

## Painting the Marsh

Magee Marsh Wildlife Area is a favorite spot for a group of northwest Ohio painters who visit area parks and wildlife areas to find subjects for their work. The group of about 25 members mostly includes semi-professional painters and retirees. Part of the group that calls themselves the “Monday Morning Painters” (including Don Schinew of Toledo in the photograph) were found painting the Magee Marsh landscape one morning.



Melissa Hathaway



## ***Hunter Education and Today's Options*** ***by Matt Ortman***

The fall hunting seasons may seem months away, but it is not too early to start thinking about preparations for the upcoming season, especially for first-time hunters looking for options to take the required hunter safety course, or others looking for a refresher course.

Hunter education certification has been mandatory in Ohio since 1979. The Ohio Revised Code (ORC 1533.10) states that hunter education is required of all first-time license buyers regardless of age.

The National Rifle Association's Safe Hunter Program was the forerunner to today's Division of Wildlife Hunter Education Program. A hunter education course is beneficial for everyone, whether you are new to hunting, have hunted for years, or even if hunting is not your goal. The course covers topics such as firearms, ammunition, gun handling, archery, hunter responsibilities, outdoor safety, wildlife management, conservation, and other related information. Forty-nine states and all of the Canadian Provinces require hunter education, but because of a mutual agreement, a certification of completion of Ohio's hunter education course is accepted all across North America. This is important for Ohio residents wishing to hunt out of state.

Ohio residents have three options for meeting Ohio's hunter education requirement.

### **Instructor-Led Course**

The traditional (instructor-led) course is a standard lecture-type course usually with larger class sizes. This course is usually spread over multiple days and will take anywhere from eight to 12 hours. Participants can call 1-800-WILDLIFE to find out class locations and dates and to register for a class.

### **Home Study Course**

The home study course is open to Ohio residents of any age. This course requires the student to download the hunter education manual from our Internet site at [www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife](http://www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife), read the manual, and print and answer the review questions at the end of each chapter. Once the student completes the review questions they must call 1-800-WILDLIFE to register for a home study completion session. They must then take the completed review questions to the completion session. These sessions are approximately three to four hours long with smaller class sizes. The smaller class size allows the instructors to work the students through several hands-on



Tim Daniel

activities to reinforce the material learned while working through the manual. These hands-on activities emphasize firearms, ammunition, gun handling, and other hunting safety concerns (tree stand safety, deer drives, personal first aid, and survival).

### **Proficiency Testing**

Proficiency testing is open to Ohio residents 18 years and older. Prospective students should call 1-800-WILDLIFE to register and attend a home study completion session. This method is designed for the student with previous hunting or shooting experience. The student must participate in the hands-on skills based training just as the other students with one exception. These students are not required to complete and hand in the homework (review questions).

Regardless of the hunter education option that is chosen, all students must successfully pass a written 100-question test at the end of the course. To receive a hunter education certification card a passing score of 80 percent is required.

To learn more about hunter education courses call 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543) or visit our Web site at [www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife](http://www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife).

### **Three Options for Taking the Hunter Education Course**

#### **Instructor-Led**

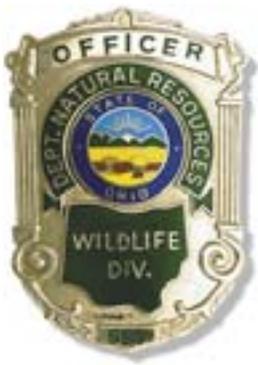
- Open to any age
- Available statewide
- 8–12 hours of class time
- Suitable for people with little hunting or firearms knowledge or skill
- Must pass written test

#### **Home Study**

- Ohio residents only
- Open to any age
- For self-motivated people
- Must have adequate computer and printer
- Must attend three to four-hour home study completion course
- Must pass written test

#### **Proficiency Test**

- Ohio resident only
- Must be 18 or older
- Must have prior hunting, shooting experience or exposure
- Must pass written test



## Wildlife Law Enforcement

# Field Notes

### *Field Notes from Lake Erie*

### Greedy Perch Anglers Nabbed

The jumbo yellow perch and fantastic perch jerking action that have been luring hoards of anglers to Lake Erie has brought out the greed in a few people. Lake Erie law enforcement officers found a few anglers that just wouldn't put down their rods, even after catching their legal limit of 30 perch per angler per day.

Thomas R. Pinkerton, of Conneaut, operating as a charter captain, and four clients caught their daily bag limit of 150 perch on Lake Erie's Central Basin one day in September. The fishing was so good, they decided to go right back out and catch more (referred to as "double-tripping"). They returned to dock with 149 more perch. Lake Erie officers were waiting at the dock when the fishing party returned and not only made the overbag arrest, but charged Pinkerton with operating a fishing guide service without the required U.S. Coast Guard license and Ohio guide's license.

Pinkerton pleaded guilty in Conneaut Municipal Court and received 210 days in jail with 210 days suspended pending no violations for three years, received three years probation, and lost his fishing, hunting, and boat operating privileges for three years. He also had to forfeit rods, reels, and a cooler, and paid restitution of \$1,490 to the Division of Wildlife (\$10 for every perch over the daily bag limit.) The 149 perch were donated to the Veterans Home in Sandusky.

"Most fishermen are ethical anglers and stay within the daily bag limit, which has helped the Lake Erie perch fishery blossom again," said Kevin Ramsey, Lake Erie law enforcement supervisor. "We have the greatest yellow perch fishing in the Great Lakes and we want it to get even better."

Anyone who is aware of illegal wildlife-related activity on Lake Erie should call the Lake Erie Law Enforcement office at (419) 625-8062, or the Division's toll-free Turn-In-a-Poacher hotline at 1-800-POACHER.



### Ramsey Receives Great Lakes Award

Kevin Ramsey, Lake Erie law enforcement supervisor for the Division of Wildlife, will receive a "Buzz" Busedny Award from the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission at an annual meeting in June. Ramsey is being honored for fostering partnerships in the law enforcement community along the Great Lakes. (The award is named for Buzz Busedny, former director of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.)

### Sportsmen Help the Less Fortunate

More than 400 pounds of wild game were donated to local food pantries in the St. Mary's area through Safari Club International's Sportsmen Against Hunger last winter. The meat, mostly venison, was confiscated from poachers as evidence and released to the Division of Wildlife by local courts once the defendants were found guilty. The Division partners with Sportsmen Against Hunger to get the meat to the less fortunate.



Luis Comus, Werner Schmiesing, Julia Swanepoel, Auglaize County Wildlife Officer Dave Sheets, and Pete Swanepoel, Jr. are pictured with 400 pounds of wild game donated to food pantries in Auglaize County through Sportsmen Against Hunger.

photo courtesy of Werner Schmiesing

# Backyards for Wildlife Q & A

by Donna Daniel

Do you have a question concerning wildlife in your backyard? If so, send it to: **Wild Ohio magazine, Attention: Melissa Hathaway, Editor, 305 E. Shoreline Drive, Sandusky, OH 44870.** Due to space limitations, we regret that not all questions submitted may be answered. If you need a quick response to a question, please contact your nearest wildlife district office.

**Last fall's question about feeding hummingbirds really stirred up the mailbag! Here's a sampling of questions received from readers:**

**Q: How many kinds of hummingbirds are found in Ohio?**

**A:** Most hummingbirds seen in Ohio are the ruby-throated hummingbird. But with increasing frequency, the Buckeye State is being visited by another species, the rufous hummingbird. Rufous hummingbirds nest in the Pacific Northwest and winter in Mexico. Sometimes their fall migration brings them east of the Mississippi. Since 1985, the species has only been recorded in the state 14 times. However, in the fall of 2002 there were as many as 13 reports! What caused this rufous hummingbird "invasion?" We may never know for sure. But whenever these anomalies show up there is quite a bit of interest from bird-watchers and hummingbird researchers.

**Author's note: A Humdinger of a Guest**

In September 2002, I noticed a hummingbird that looked similar to a ruby-throat but with a distinctive bit of orange in its tail. Thus, my own backyard had become a stopover point for one of the many rufous hummingbirds reported in the state last fall. Allen Chartier, a hummingbird researcher from Michigan, captured the bird and confirmed it as an adult female. A tiny identification band was put on its leg to help provide information on its migration and longevity, should it be seen again. The hummingbird remained in my yard into January 2003, during which time birders came from around the state to see it.



A November snowfall didn't faze this rufous hummingbird.

Tim Daniel

Tim Daniel



An adult female rufous hummingbird. Inset: Hummingbird leg bands are the smallest of all leg bands used by researchers.

Allen Chartier

**Q: Could a hummingbird survive winter in Ohio and what would it eat?**

**A:** Many people have a tendency to view hummingbirds as fragile because of their small size. In reality they are quite adapted to their way of life and are rather hardy. While rufous hummingbirds can tolerate some cold weather, ruby-throats must migrate to warmer climates for the winter. Surprising to some, hummingbirds don't just feed on sugar water and flower nectar. During the course of its stay, the rufous in my yard was often seen catching insects in mid-air and gleaning spiders from dead and dormant perennial stems left standing in my gardens. There is an amazing abundance of insects for such a bird to eat, even in winter.

**Q: Can Ohio expect to see more rufous hummingbirds in the future?**

**A:** More and more people are feeding hummingbirds. With this comes increased awareness, so "different" hummingbirds are more likely to be noticed. Any hummingbird seen after mid-October should be examined closely as it may be a drifter from the west. As these strays are reported, more is learned about these birds' travels into Ohio. Only time will tell if 2002 was the "Year of the Rufous Hummingbird" or just a preview of more to come.



## The Amazing World of Insects!

by Mary Warren

There are more insects on earth than any other kind of wildlife — yes, that's right — BUGS! Actually "bugs" are just one group or **order** of insects. There are many others.

### Six Legs or Eight??

People often confuse insects with spiders. They are related but here's how to tell them apart:

Insects	Spiders
Usually six legs	Eight legs
Three main body parts— (Head, Thorax, Abdomen)	Two main body parts— (Cephalothorax and abdomen)
Have antennae	No antennae
Usually two compound eyes and several simple eyes	Usually eight simple eyes and no compound eye
Wings	No wings

### Insect Trivia (Hey, kids, test your parents!)

#### How many species of insects are there?

Over one million have been discovered!

#### What is the longest insect ever discovered?

A tropical walking stick from Asia — over one foot long!

#### Do insects have blood?

Yes, but it's not red like ours, it is green or yellow!

#### What is the smallest insect?

Again, from the tropics — a hairy-winged beetle at 1/100 of an inch!

#### What is an entomologist?

A person who studies insects! Maybe you will be one someday!

#### Check out these Internet sites for more bug information:

[www.suite101.com/links.cfm/kids](http://www.suite101.com/links.cfm/kids)

[www.butterflywebsite.com](http://www.butterflywebsite.com)

<http://wings.avkids.com/Book/Animals/advanced/insects-01.html>

<http://www.geobop.com/symbols/animals/insects/>

### Want to learn more about bugs?

### Come to BUGFEST!

July 19, noon to 4 p.m.

Mafee Marsh Wildlife Area, State Route 2 north of Oak Harbor, OH

Different "hands-on" stations will be set up for you to explore the amazing world of insects. Get your feet wet as you dip for aquatic insects in the pond, try Buggy Bingo, or Create-a-Bug. We even have edible insects for you to try! Complete five stations and earn your "Degree of Bugology!"

For more information call (419) 898-0960, extension 31 or e-mail: [mary.warren@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.warren@dnr.state.oh.us)

Fun for the whole family. Free Admission. Wear old shoes for wading.

### Young Outdoor Writers' Competition

The first annual *Wild Ohio* Young Outdoor Writers' Competition is open to Ohio's 4th, 5th, and 6th grade schoolchildren interested in writing about conservation topics. The competition will take place during the fall semester of the 2003 school year. Teachers from the state's public and private schools are encouraged to hold their own writing competitions. One winner per grade level from each school may advance to the state-wide competition. Awards will be given to the final winners. For more information please send e-mail to:

[mary.warren@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.warren@dnr.state.oh.us)

or [tammy.york@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:tammy.york@dnr.state.oh.us).



Mary Warren



Tim Daniel



Mary Warren



# WILD GAME GOURMET

## r e c i p e s

### Fish and Vegetable Pie

1 onion  
1 red pepper  
1 green pepper  
1 yellow pepper  
1 pound walleye or other fish (bite size cubes)  
2 14-ounce cans tomatoes  
1 small can black olives  
Mashed potatoes, cooked (enough to fill deep dish pie pan ½-inch thick)  
Slivered almonds  
1 to 2 cloves garlic

Line pie pan with mashed potatoes. (Should be similar thickness as piecrust.) Bake at 350 degrees several minutes so potatoes get slightly firm. Remove from oven. In a medium skillet, sauté onions, peppers, and garlic 5 to 7 minutes. Once vegetables are sautéed, add tomatoes and black olives. Cook until about half the sauce is cooked down and not runny. Spread about 1/4 of the vegetable mixture over potato crust, then add about 1/4 of the fish. Repeat until entire vegetable mixture and fish are filled into the pie pan. (Make sure mixture is not too "saucy" or it will make potato crust too wet.) Top with slivered almonds. Bake 25 to 30 minutes at 400 degrees. Watch to make sure potatoes don't get too brown.

Serves 6. *(Contributed by Scott Burke)*

by Vicki Mountz,

the Wild Game Gourmet as seen on Wild Ohio Video Magazine

*These light fish dishes are perfect to serve for a summer brunch.*



Tim Daniel



### Fish Sandwiches

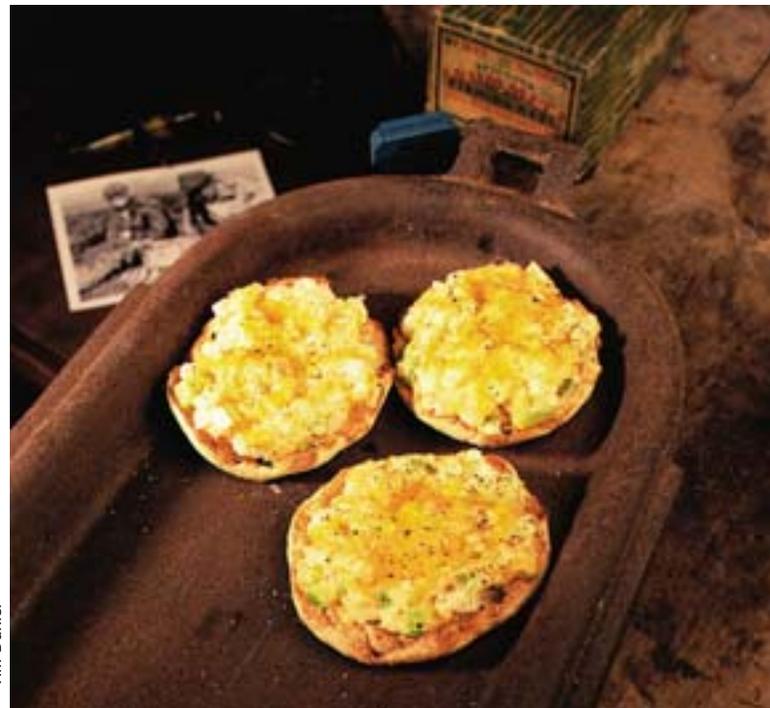
1 cup shredded poached fish fillets, or leftover fillets  
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1 tbsp. pickle relish  
3 tbsp. diced onion  
Several dashes of garlic powder  
3 tbsp. Mayonnaise  
3 English muffins split into halves  
Optional: 3 tbsp. diced celery or olives

Mix all ingredients in a medium mixing bowl. Top English muffin halves with fish mixture. Top with additional shredded cheddar cheese if desired. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes or until cheese melts and mixture is hot.

Serves 6.

Variation: This mixture can be spread on crackers and placed in the broiler for several minutes for hors d'oeuvres.

*(Contributed by Vicki Mountz)*



Tim Daniel

# WILDLIFE Reflections

## Celebrating a Long History of Ohio's Wildlife at the Ohio State Fair

by Melissa Hathaway

Who can remember as a youngster fishing at the Kiddie Fishing Pond at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Park at the Ohio State Fair? The Natural Resources Park has changed tremendously since the early history of Ohio's annual "Big Show." One thing that hasn't changed is its reputation as a relaxing retreat from the fair's blacktop jungle with shaded picnic areas, benches, and a pond. Another unchanged feature is the Division of Wildlife's mission to bring the wonders of Ohio's wildlife up-close for fairgoers with information and fun, hands-on activities.

C. LaVon Shook in his book *A History of the Ohio State Fair* first mentions a wildlife display at the 1876 Ohio State Fair. "Children's Day, a new feature, was announced for Wednesday, September 6... Among the special features scheduled was the Live Fish and Fishing Apparatus exhibit."

By 1920, the State Bureau of Fish and Game's display was a regular feature at the fair. The bureau's exhibit included wild animals on display including foxes, raccoons, skunks, pheasants, grouse, partridges, turkeys, wild ducks, and many kinds of fish from Ohio waters swimming in glass tanks.

By 1939, more than 50,000 fairgoers passed through the Ohio Division of Conservation and Natural Resources exhibit. The fishing contest held each day for boys and girls proved popular with the junior fairgoers and would continue to be one of the biggest draws on the fairgrounds for generations to come.



photos by Tim Daniel

now so popular the Division expanded its facilities to handle more than twice the number of young anglers. A new display depicted a headwater lake in miniature, an exact reproduction of the lakes being constructed across the state by the Division of Wildlife.

In 1950, the conservation display was greatly expanded to include exhibits by all of ODNR's divisions. A new Division of Wildlife display unveiled was a 90-foot long fast water stream. It coursed its way through a simulated natural channel, including a cascading waterfall.

The stream was stocked with various species of fish and was surrounded with natural plant growth and environment that made it as realistic as if you had discovered it in Ohio's great outdoors.

Through the years, the Division of Wildlife has continued to enhance its fair exhibit. More native Ohio wildlife, fish filleting demonstrations, BB gun range, trappers' cabin, butterfly house, bald eagle nest, and wildlife stage shows at the park's amphitheater have been among the most popular attractions.

Division of Wildlife photos

The ODNR emphasis for the 2003 fair will be directed to Ohio's "Natural Wanderings," developed in conjunction with Ohio's Bicentennial project. Ohio's Natural Wanderings includes 30 outdoor sites found across the state that highlight Ohio's many remarkable natural wonders. The park will also highlight 10 natural resource sites for which ODNR has natural history markers representing various Ohio habitats.

See you at the Ohio State Fair!

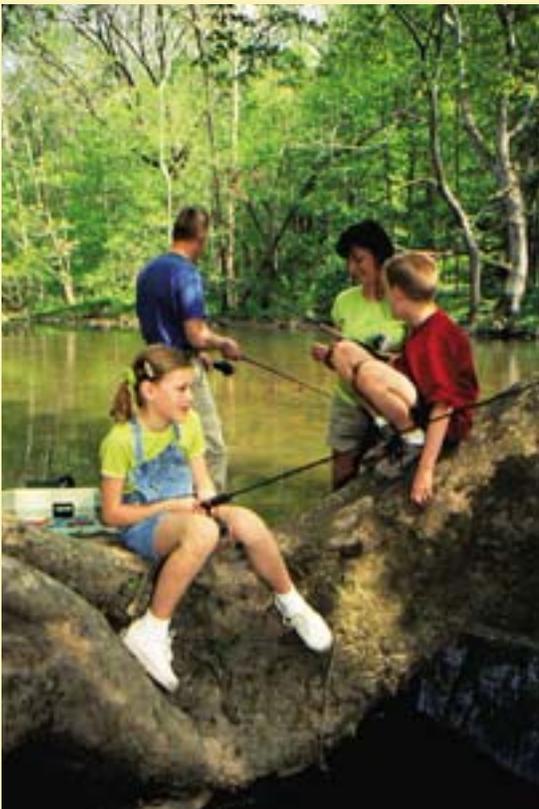


Besides native fish and wildlife on show, displays illustrated the value of wildlife safety zones, farm ponds, fencerow cover, fire protection, predator control, winter feeding, food bearing shrubs and trees, a graphic portrayal of the destruction of game and wildlife species on the highway, and stream improvement and erosion control practices.

In 1940 the Conservation Exhibit was moved to its present location at the southeast corner of the fairgrounds. Kiddie Fishing supervised by Ohio game protectors, was

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Keep a connection  
to Ohio's wildlife  
in your life!



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